

SATHYA SAI SPEAKS

VOLUME 32

Discourses of
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
Delivered from Jan 1999 to June 1999

PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SRI SATHYA SAI BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS TRUST

Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134

Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, India

Grams: BOOK TRUST STD: 08555 ISD: 91-8555

Phone: 87375. FAX 87236

© **Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust**

Prasanthi Nilayam (India)

All Rights Reserved

The copyright and the rights of translation in any language are reserved by the Publisher. No part, para, passage, text or photograph or art work of this book should be reproduced, transmitted or utilised, in original language or by translation, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or by any information, storage or retrieval system, except with and prior permission, in writing from the Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam, (Andhra Pradesh) India, except for brief passages quoted in book review. This book can be exported from India only by Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (India).

International Standard Book No_81 - 7208 - 286 – X

81 - 7208 - 118 - 9 (set)

First Edition: August 2001

Published by

The Convener,

Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust

Prasanthi Nilayam, India, Pin code 515 134

Phone: 87375 Fax: 87236

STD: 08555 ISD: 91 - 8555

Contents

1.	Divinity protects and safeguards man	.....	1
2.	Cultivate love in your heart	.....	18
3.	Manifesting Divinity in <i>Lingodbhava</i>	.....	35
4.	Give up enmity, develop unity	.....	48
5.	Glory of <i>Bharatiya</i> culture	.....	58
6.	Put ceiling on your desires	.....	75
7.	Start New Year with spirit of love	.....	86
8.	Relevance of <i>Ramayana</i> to modern life	.....	98
9.	Do <i>sadhana</i> with pure feelings	.....	113
10.	Royal path to Divinity	.....	127
11.	The ephemeral and the transcendental	.....	142
12.	Dwell in God Consciousness	.....	156
13.	Nature of Self	.....	170
14.	Women symbolise sacrifice	.....	186
15.	Control your senses	.....	205

I

Divinity protects and safeguards man

*If you cannot achieve what you want, do not waver
or get depressed. He is a realised one who is
cheerful in the face of all adversities.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! Students—Boys and Girls!

“*Ekaamsena Sthitham Jagat* (the whole universe is based on one aspect of divinity).” Just as the sun’s rays do not exist in the absence of the sun, so also the world cannot exist without divinity, the primordial basis. Here on this table you find a flower, a cup, a mike, and a handkerchief. The word ‘is’ is used to connote the existence of all these items. Here the emphasis is on the word ‘is’. There is a picture, there is a pot and there is a person. The word is proves their existence.

This ‘is’ explains the principle of divinity in full. The *shakti* (power), *leelas* (divine play), and the effulgence of God are limitless. The five elements are responsible for the protec-

tion and sustenance of the world. The first element, the earth, is the basis for mountains and hills, rivers and oceans, villages and cities, and forests. You can very well imagine the immense power of the earth, which supports all these.

Power of the elements

The earth is endowed with infinite power. Scientists have discovered that the earth rotates. True. Logically speaking, the rivers, oceans, mountains, villages, and cities should also rotate when the earth, the basis, rotates. It is not so in reality. It is only the earth that rotates. The railway track is the basis for the train to move. If the track also starts moving, what would be the plight of the passengers? From this, it can be inferred that the track is the *adhara* (basis) and the train, the *adheya* (the object based on it). The table is the basis (*adhara*) for the mike –*adheya*– to rest upon. Make an effort to understand the relationship between the support (*adhara*) and the supported object (*adheya*). The earth, which is the repository of all powers (electrical, magnetic, etc.) forms the basis, sustains, and protects all the objects on it. There is no power that is not present in the earth. The earth is able to support all the beings on it because of its infinite power.

Seen or unseen, water, the second element, is present all over the earth. It is water that sustains the life principle of humanity. It supports life on earth and is responsible for the evolution of life.

The third element, *agni* (fire), is also all-pervasive. It is present in the form of *jataragni* in the human body. It is this *jataragni* that maintains the temperature of the human body at 98.4 degrees Fahrenheit. There is fire even in the ocean. That is termed as *badabagni*. There is fire even in trees. When two

branches rub against each other, fire is generated. Fire is immanent even in a stone. Fire emerges when two stones are struck against each other. Investigations on these lines will reveal that there is no place without fire.

Similarly, the fourth and fifth elements *vayu* (wind) and the *akasha* (ether) are also all-pervasive. The *akasha* is the basis for all. It is the origin of sound. In fact, all the other elements originated from *akasha*.

Therefore, we can conclude that the divine power, which is omnipresent and omnipotent, is present in all the five elements. When the five elements themselves are so powerful, how much greater the power of God should be! Though the five elements, which are essentially divine, are present in man, he is in quest of divine power, which he feels is present elsewhere. These powers are insignificant for God, who is aware of the past, present, and future. So, make an attempt to understand the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent nature of God.

Swami has no body attachment

The whole world is also a conglomeration of the five elements. The world cannot exist in the absence of even one of the elements. Whether you see them or not, the five elements are present everywhere. Here is a small example. Though air is invisible and intangible, it is everywhere. Similarly, divinity is invisible and intangible, yet is omnipresent. Without realising the divinity within him, man becomes egotistic and feels that all his accomplishments are due to his education, intelligence, and physical prowess. But, in reality, it is the divinity that protects and safeguards man at every step from womb to tomb. No one has the power to protect one's own self. It is only the

divine power and divine will that enables man to protect himself. Only divinity has free will, none else.

Whatever God says or does is for the welfare of humanity. God is selfless. There is no trace of selfishness in God. What is the benefit accruing to the sun by rising and setting? None at all. Sunrise and sunset are for the benefit of mankind. It enables man to discharge his duties during the day and rest during the night. Similarly, every act of God is for the benefit of mankind, not for His own.

As Narasimhamurthi pointed out, Kasturi once urged Me not to neglect this body in the process of saving a devotee. I replied, "This body has come for the sake of devotees and shall be utilised for doing anything and everything for their welfare." Body attachment is human and total detachment is divine. Attachment to the body is responsible for all suffering and misery. Since God does not have any body attachment He does not attach any importance to the suffering of His body. Once He assumes a body, many things are bound to happen to the body. Whatever happens is for the welfare of the whole world.

Students' Safety Pleases Swami

Students, both boys and girls, are very good. Students participate in various activities, be it academic or sports, only with a desire to please and satisfy Swami. I am very well aware of this fact. No doubt, students strive to please Swami and make Him happy. But, they do not enquire what actually pleases and satisfies Him and makes Him happy. Will Swami be pleased if you display your valour by jumping through a ring of fire or for that matter from a lorry moving at a high speed? Will it satisfy Swami if you display your courage by doing dare-devil

stunts on motor bikes like jumping over 10-20 people lying on the ground? I am pleased when you are safe and sound and the audience are pleased and happy with your performance. He is the blessed one who conducts himself in a manner in which neither he is hurt nor others. You should be safe and secure and at the same time desist from activities, which cause apprehensions in others. This is what I want. I am pleased with *nidarsana* and not with *pradarsana* (exhibitionism). Even a small action done with a heart full of love pleases Me.

What happened on the Sports Meet day?

While returning from Bangalore (in the month of December), I instructed the Warden not to bring the boys for the Sports Meet. They attributed various reasons to this word of Mine. There may be many reasons (*karana*) but what I am interested in is the action (*karya*). After coming over here, I told the Vice Chancellor that I do not object to boys participating in various sports and games such as badminton, tennis, volleyball, etc. At the same time, I cautioned him to ensure that no harm is caused either to the participants or to the audience during the course of the programme scheduled for 11 January.

Students are tender hearted, full of noble feelings and love for Swami. They planned various programmes with a view to please Me. I was very well aware of the impending danger. But, students were not receptive to My words. I felt there was no point in advising them in such a situation. Only when they face the consequences of disobeying My command will they realise the value of My words. Till this moment nobody is aware of what exactly happened on the morning of January 11. They said that the Sports Meet was a grand success. I am also happy when you are successful. Students performed extremely

well. Each contributed to the success of this event based on his capacities and capabilities

How Swami protected the students

That morning, as I entered the stadium, I spotted two lorries. Immediately, I could visualise the danger lurking in the corner. I saw the lorries with huge scaffolding placed over them. The boys planned to perform a few acrobatic feats on them. I knew that one of the rods was not fitted properly and was about to give in. If the were to happen, the boys would suffer a major head and spinal injury. I willed the boys should be saved and decided to take it upon Myself.

Prior to this, one boy had suffered a spinal injury and had been admitted to the Manipal Hospital in Bangalore. Without any delay, I arranged for an ambulance to shift the boy to the hospital in Bangalore and gave 10,000 rupees to defray the immediate expenditure. I also ensured that our doctor accompanied him. Parents shed tears of gratitude when they came to know of the love showered by Swami on their son.

The doctor said that the boy would not be able to sit or lie down as his spinal column was badly damaged. I told him, "Don' t entertain any misgivings. Do as I say." Miraculously, by the time the boy reached the hospital, he could sit. He could sit on the bed in the hospital. He regained sensation in all his limbs, which were numb till then. No danger whatsoever. He was protected because of My infinite mercy and boundless grace. I willed that such an untoward incident should not recur. Once the spinal column is fractured, it is impossible to set it right. All students should be safe and secure. I have repeatedly declared that students are My property. I consider student welfare as My welfare and their happiness as My happiness. I

never think of My happiness and My comfort. My one concern is that the students should not be disappointed or put to any inconvenience.

A day before the Sports Meet, I had instructed four boys to surround the chariot and keep a vigil. They are also full of love and devotion for Swami. But I noticed that none of them was present at that spot. Nobody is to be blamed. No one does this deliberately. Swami is the very life-breath of the students. I asked for the chariot to be stopped. A senior devotee was driving the chariot with all sincerity, love and devotion. He stopped the vehicle in accordance with My command. Just when I was about to speak to the Vice-Chancellor, he accidentally lifted his foot from the clutch. That resulted in a jerk and I fell down in the chariot. As a result, I suffered injuries on my head, hand, and spinal column. What the boys had to face, I took it upon Myself.

A Glimpse of Swami's Divinity

Many men and women were seated in the gallery, but I took care that none noticed My injuries. I pretended as though nothing had happened. The Vice Chancellor was worried, thinking that Swami was unable to get up. I knew that any further delay would cause anxiety in the minds of devotees. So, I immediately got up, forgetting the pain, and started blessing the devotees waving My hands. The pain was very severe, and the cut on My hand was so deep as though it was pierced with a knife. Actually the sleeve of the robe covering My hand should have been torn before I got the injury. But the cloth was not torn at all. This incident gives you a glimpse of the infinite power of Divinity.

I found Myself in an awkward situation. I had to walk up to the dais without My injuries being noticed. So I willed that no one should notice My injuries, lest they should become anxious. I walked up to the dais and took My seat. But in the meanwhile the *dhoti* below the robe was drenched in blood. Concerned that the devotees may get to know of this, I walked into the bathroom discreetly. The available towels were insufficient to wipe the oozing blood. I did not want to leave the bloodstained towels in the bathroom, lest someone should notice them. Though there was excruciating pain, I washed the towels Myself with soap, squeezed them and put them up for drying. Under no circumstances do I reveal My suffering, pain, and fatigue.

Some boys were curious to know why I went to the bathroom repeatedly. I replied, "Why are you concerned? It is My job." Usually, I go to the bathroom only twice a day, morning and evening. Since it was bleeding profusely, I had to go to the bathroom five or six times in that short duration.

In the meantime, two students came and prayed that the flag may be hoisted. When I got down from the chair, the sensation was such that it seemed as though I was subjected to electric shock. I smiled at My own Divine *leela*. I could not stand firmly on the ground. I thought I should not be deluded by the attachment to the body and walked forward smilingly to hoist the flag. Then I lighted the lamp. I found Myself in an embarrassing situation. I could not sit in any posture comfortably. When I exhort all devotees to give up body attachment, I should set an example Myself in this regard. Saying this to Myself, I conducted Myself accordingly.

The Primary School children performed extremely well and desired to have a photograph with Me. Acceding to their

prayers I walked up to them to be photographed, as I did not want to disappoint them. Subsequently, I had to walk up to the playground five more times to be photographed with the remaining students. In this manner, I detached Myself from the body. My body was numb. There was no sensation whatsoever. My head was reeling. I resolved to make them happy no matter what happened to the body. I decided to keep this to Myself. Concerned that the bloodstains may be visible while returning to the dais from the playground, I ascended the steps leading directly to My seat. Is it possible for a human being to conceal such a major injury from the public gaze for a long time being amidst such a huge gathering? No. I was seated on the chair for five long hours.

Comprehend the nature of divinity

I am relating all this so that students and devotees may comprehend the nature of divinity. Anyone in My predicament would not have been in a position to sit in the chair even for a second. It would have been impossible even to put a step forward. It was as though the electric shock was piercing My body. It is the electric current that gives shock, but when I am the current Myself, where is the question of Myself being subjected to shock? With that feeling, I sat through the whole proceedings and returned to the *mandir*.

The Central Trust members followed Me, but they were not aware of what had happened to Me. I asked them to have their food. The senior devotee who drove the chariot apologised for what had happened. I told him, "Why do you worry about the past? Past is past. I am happy. Do not worry about Me." All of them had their lunch. After the lunch, it started bleeding again. Students and band boys were waiting outside for photographs.

Again I went into the bathroom to wipe the blood. Noting this Indulal Shah cried out, “Swami, what is this?” I told him lovingly, “Indulal Shah, whatever had to happen to the body has happened.” Saying so, I showed him My injury. All of them cried out in agony. They noticed blood all over the body. I told them that I would not reveal anything in future if they expressed their sorrow like this. No one knew about it until I reached the *mandir*.

Whatever is bound to happen will happen

Likewise, I take upon Myself the untold suffering of students and devotees at various points of time in order to protect them. No one is responsible for this mishap. You may find fault with one individual or the other, but no one is to be blamed for this. Whatever had to happen happened. That’s all.

Whatever is bound to happen will happen

You are bound to experience the pain and pleasure that you are destined to even if you hide yourself in a dense forest. When the time comes, your body is bound to perish, in spite of utmost precautions.

[Telugu Proverb]

Even mighty emperors and kings who had taken all precautionary measures had to give up their body at the appointed hour. Whatever is bound to happen will happen. One should not resist this unduly.

January is the first month of the New Year. If you experience happiness in the beginning, you will be happy throughout. *Start early, drive slowly and reach safely.* The year Pramaadi (Telugu New Year) is fast approaching. There will be dangers

in all fields. This is an indication of the forthcoming dangers. No one needs to worry about My welfare. I can do anything and everything. Here is a small example.

How Krishna protected Arjuna in the war

During the Mahabharata war, Krishna was the charioteer of Arjuna. Bhishma was shooting arrows at Arjuna. Krishna diverted these and all other arrows aimed at Arjuna toward Himself, protecting Arjuna in the process. As a result, every arrow wounded Krishna and He was bleeding profusely. Since Krishna was the charioteer, He had to receive instructions from Arjuna regarding the direction in which the chariot should move. In those days, there were no indicators like left and right as we have today. Therefore, Arjuna had to press the region beside the right eye of Krishna with his iron shoe to indicate that the chariot should move to the right. Similarly, he had to press the region beside the left eye to indicate to Krishna to turn the chariot to the left. Consequently, Krishna's face was also bleeding.

The whole body of Krishna was drenched in blood. No one observed this, since it was wartime and all were busy in discharging their duties and also due to the fact that Krishna was seated at a place much lower than that of Arjuna. Therefore, only Arjuna could be seen and not Krishna.

Krishna protected Arjuna as promised by Him earlier. When Arjuna and Duryodhana approached Krishna for help before the war, Duryodhana opted for Krishna's seven-lakh strong army, whereas Arjuna preferred Krishna to the army. Then Krishna assured him, "Arjuna, you don't need to fear. The army is comparable to the compartment of a train, whereas I am the engine." Compartments can move only when the en-

gine pulls them. So, do not worry, the engine is with you, Arjuna.” Arjuna also responded saying “Krishna, it is enough if you are with me.” Therefore, all the dangers that were to befall Arjuna were taken by Krishna upon Himself. Many such incidents of God protecting His devotees have taken place in the past.

Follow the divine command, be safe and secure

So, whatever happened on that day was entirely due to My Will. Neither the students nor anyone else are responsible for this. Every day, the students used to enquire as to why I was walking so slowly. I told them, “I don’ t have enough place to run, if only it was there I am ready even to run.” I was conversing with them with a smile on My face. I am narrating this episode only to affirm the fact that I go to any extent to protect My devotees who obey My commands

When I returned to the *mandir*, I called those four boys. They noticed My injuries and were crestfallen. I chided them for not obeying My command. I asked them, “Why were you not present there at that time as commanded by Me? If only you had obeyed My command, this incident would not have occurred.” I told them not to feel sorry about it.

All those things that were destined to happen during the course of this year have already happened. So, follow the divine command, be safe and secure, and earn a good name for the institution and make your parents happy.

Free food for seva dal

Tomorrow marks the commencement of holy *Uttarayana*. It is for this auspicious moment that Bhishma waited for fifty-six long days lying on a bed of arrows to give up his mortal

coil. Tomorrow, the sun begins its northward journey, which is most auspicious. In olden days, people used to sing songs describing the arrival of *Sankranti*:

The sun appeared cool and serene,
 The day started getting shorter,
 The cold wind blew fiercely,
 The fields were filled with golden harvest.
 The farmers rejoiced in singing at night
 With the moon shining bright.
 The buds of flowers blossomed
 Like garlands of pearls
 On the banks of rivers;
 Chillies were looking red,
 Farmers were bringing home
 The newly harvested grain,
 Hailing the advent of
 The joyous festival of *Sankranti*.

Telugu Poem

Whatever I will has to happen and none can come in My way. I would like to mention one more point. Last year, on the 19th of November, all the ladies gathered to celebrate Ladies Day. They said, "Swami, we are wearing the saris gifted by You and experiencing the bliss of Your divine presence. What can we do in return to express our gratitude to You? Please give us a chance to serve You." I replied, "You don't need to do anything. Be always happy. That is enough." But some of them pleaded that they be given a chance to provide food to the

seva dal, who are coming in large numbers from various parts of the country to render service in Prasanthi Nilayam.

I assured them that I had already willed it and that it would materialise in a short time. I have willed that the *seva dal* should be provided good food entirely free of cost for all the 365 days of the year. Every day we have about 3000 *seva dals* here. They will have very good food. I have already made arrangements for this. I have got the sheds put up. All the necessary items like gas cylinders, utensils, plates, spoons, rice, dals, etc., have already been procured. None is aware of this. Sathya Sai is a silent worker. From tomorrow onward food will be served to *seva dal* free of cost forever.

Travel concessions for seva dal

Then I summoned the members of the Central Trust and asked them what work they were doing. What is the use of occupying high positions if you do not discharge your duties sincerely? People from all walks of life and from different strata of society are coming to serve as *seva dal* every year. I may give them food free of cost, but who will bear their travel expenses? The railway fare is increasing day by day. In olden days, just 20 rupees were enough to reach Madras from here, but these days even 200 rupees are insufficient. I commanded them to approach the railway authorities for travel concession for the *seva dal*. I talk sweetly but at the same time I am stern when it comes to the question of discharging one's duty. I told them either you do this work or resign.

The Central Trust members have negotiated with the railway authorities and got the travel concessions sanctioned for *seva dal*. Due to the effect of *Kali Age*, people have become selfish. This selfishness makes them lazy. So, they plunge into

action only when told strictly. The railway authorities were very happy. They thanked Me saying, “Swami, it is our good fortune that we got an opportunity to serve Your devotees.”

Not only this. In order to ensure that the *seva dal* and devotees reach Prasanthi Nilayam without any inconvenience, the Central Government has sanctioned 50 crore rupees for the construction of a railway station near the petrol pump. We will have trains connecting Penukonda, Dharmavaram, and Puttaparthi. The other day, the officials of the railway department had a meeting in Delhi and arrived at this decision. Everybody should be able to reach Prasanthi Nilayam comfortably for Swami’s 75th birthday. One may board a train in Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Hyderabad, etc. to reach Prasanthi Nilayam.

Unprecedented marvels!

Once upon a time, this Puttaparthi was a small hamlet, with a population of barely 100 people. In such a small village as this, who would expect a university, an airport, a super specialty hospital, and a railway station to come up in such a short period of time? All these things are happening during the lifetime of the *Avatar*, which is unprecedented in the history of mankind. During the time of no other *Avatar* were such stupendous tasks achieved in such a short period of time. Many more wonderful things are going to happen. Today you are able to see Me from close quarters. But after some time, you may have to see Me from a distance of a few miles.

So, make the best use of the divine proximity of Sai. Once you lose this precious chance to serve the Lotus Feet, you will never regain it. Sai confers devotion, power, and ultimately liberation on you. Never get misguided by the words of others. Keep this in mind and redeem yourself.

I had taken upon Myself this suffering only for your sake, and in response to your prayers I have decided to cure Myself now for your sake. Do not give room for any anxiety. Now Swami is 100% perfect, perfect, perfect.

Follow Swami's command, earn a good name, secure good marks, and set an ideal to the rest of the world. That is what I want. In addition to more facilities for the volunteers, we are making efforts to provide adequate accommodation for the devotees by constructing 100 more sheds. To provide accommodation to the foreigners, a suitable piece of land of 150 acres has been acquired on the hillock. On the 75th birthday, who knows where one would be placed? But, if you have Swami's grace, you belong to Swami, wherever you may be. Swami is always with you. Never entertain the feeling that Swami will be away from you. Have firm faith in Swami.

Spirituality is the sole remedy

Students! In future, you can conduct your programmes without hindrance. In the coming year, you can organise the Sports Meet in ways more grand than this. I will not put any brake on your activities. But in certain aspects, you must follow My commands. It is for your good and not Mine. Be safe and secure and lead an ideal spiritual life.

Today we find restlessness, anxiety and worry prevalent everywhere. Spirituality is the only solution to all these ills of society. Due to lack of spirituality, man is a victim of depression and disease. Diseases are the products of the mind, not the body. Lack of peace of mind results in depression, which in turn leads to disease. Develop physical strength, have faith in God, experience bliss and share it with your fellow beings.

Whatever may happen, never give up spirituality. It is only devotion to God that protects Bharath, nothing else. Distance yourself from animal qualities and develop human qualities and be one with the divine. How can you understand divinity when you are not able to understand the importance of human values? First practice human values, then divinity manifests itself. Take to the path of spirituality, and go to the four corners of the country propagating spiritual ideals and strive for the welfare of the world at large.

Be always happy ... from tomorrow.

14 January 1999

Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Cultivate love in your heart

One who cultivates the crop of love in the field of one's heart is a true Christian, a true Sikh, a true Hindu and a true Muslim. In fact, he is a true human being on earth who cultivates love in his heart.

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the life breath of man. It is the consciousness in all the beings. It is the goal of human life. Human life is suffused with love. Unable to comprehend the eternal principle of love, man is weighed down by the physical, worldly worries and anxieties.

There is the principle of *Hiranyagarbha* within every individual. Hiranya means gold. When gold is mixed with other metals such as copper, silver, brass, it loses its brilliance, value, and identity. Then it becomes impossible to ascertain whether it is gold or silver or brass or copper. Similarly, man's

heart, which is *Hiranmaya*, is losing its brilliance, value, and identity on account of its association with *vishaya vasanas* (sensual desires). Consequently, it is impossible to ascertain whether one is a human being or an animal or a devil or a demon.

Life devoid of love is a devil's life

There is no love at all in human beings today. Life devoid of love is a devil's life. Can a man be called a human being if he has qualities of devils, demons, and beasts? Man is leading the life of a demon, unaware of the path of truth, righteousness, peace, and love. God has not created creatures such as devils and evil spirits. These are the creations of man.

Here is a small example. During the exile of the Pandavas, Krishna visited them to enquire about their welfare. He spent a night with them. The Pandavas had to undergo untold suffering during the period of their exile. Since they had Draupadi also with them, the Pandavas would keep vigil in turns for one hour each every night. Krishna also volunteered to keep vigil for one hour.

Dharmaraja wondered, "When You are the protector of the entire universe, what is the meaning in Your offering to do security duty for an hour to protect us?" But at the same time he cautioned Krishna saying, "Krishna, beware of the devil in the vicinity. My brothers and I encounter it every night. On many occasions, it tried to attack us. Therefore, we pray to you to desist from this act. You have come to enquire about our welfare. It is not proper on our part to put you in danger. So kindly take rest."

Krishna replied, "Dharmaraja, is this what you have understood of My divinity? On the one hand, you extol Me as the

protector of the entire universe and on the other you are apprehensive that I cannot protect Myself. You are worried that the demon will harm Me. Rest assured that no demon can touch Me. Therefore, permit Me also to join you all in doing the security duty.”

Having completed one hour's duty, Krishna sat on a rock smiling to Himself. Thereafter it was Arjuna's turn. He rushed to Krishna, a bit worried thinking that the demon might have attacked Him. Seeing Krishna smiling, Arjuna fell at His feet and enquired whether He had vanquished the demon.

Krishna replied, “Arjuna, I have never created demons and evil spirits. Then, how can the non-existent demons appear in the forest? The demon you are referring to is not a demon at all. It is just a reflection of the evil qualities within you such as hatred, anger and jealousy, etc. The anger in you is manifesting in the form of a demon. Its power is increasing in proportion to the intensity of anger in you.”

Good and bad are man's own creations

The evil qualities of man are the real demons troubling him today. Man is under the mistaken notion that demons exist and that they are responsible for his suffering. These are all nothing but creation of his imagination and psychological fears. In fact, it is only man who puts another man to suffering. There are no demons and evil spirits in this creation.

Arjuna realised the truth of Krishna's words and thereafter did not encounter any demon. Arjuna was beholden to Krishna for opening his eyes. He fell at His feet and expressed his gratitude. Good and bad are man's own creations.

After Buddha became a renunciant, he traveled far and wide. People were wonder-struck to see his brilliant and hand-

some form. Attracted by his effulgence, a lady named Ambashali approached him and said, "O great one, you look like a prince in ochre robes. May I know the reason behind your donning ochre robes at this young age?" Buddha replied that he had taken to the path of renunciation in order to seek the solutions to three problems: "This body, which is young and handsome, is bound to become old at some point of time and will be subjected to sickness and will perish ultimately. I want to know the cause of old age, sickness and death."

Impressed by his quest for truth, she invited him for lunch. In no time, the entire village came to know of this. The villagers started coming to Buddha one by one and requested him not to accept her invitation, since she was a woman of bad character. Buddha listened to all their complaints patiently.

Then he smiled and asked the village headman, "Do you also affirm that she is a woman of bad character?" The village headman replied, "Not once, but a thousand times I will vouch for the evil character of Ambashali. Please do not visit her house."

Holding the headman's right hand, Buddha asked him to clap. The headman said that he could not do so as one of his hands was in Buddha's hold and it was not possible for anyone to clap with a single hand.

Buddha replied, "Likewise, Ambashali cannot be bad by herself unless there are men of bad character in this village. If all the men in this village were good, this woman would not have turned bad. Therefore, it is men and their money that are responsible for the bad character of Ambashali."

Saying so, he wanted to know if there was any individual in that gathering without any trace of evil in him, so that he could visit his house for lunch. No one came forward. Then

Buddha said, “When there are so many bad men in the village, it is not proper to point an accusing finger at one woman. She turned bad due to bad company.” That is why it is said, “Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are.”

Realising their folly, the people fell at Buddha’s feet and sought his forgiveness. Since then they started treating Ambashali as one amongst them. Inspired by the teachings of Buddha, Ambashali also took to the path of renunciation and led a pious life.

No one else is responsible for the good and bad in an individual. Each one is responsible for their own good and bad. Who is good, who is bad? First eliminate all that is bad in you and then imbibe all that is good. It is a sin to accuse others when there is a mountain of evil within you. The same sentiment was echoed by Jesus.

He is true human being who sees only good in others

Man today is not making an attempt to recognise the innumerable faults in him; instead he is magnifying the minutest faults in others. In fact, he is searching for mistakes in others with a thousand eyes. This is the sad state of man today. Man is losing his true identity because he has allowed the evil qualities to enter his heart. People today are more interested in finding others’ faults rather than seeing their merits. He is a true human being who sees only good in others.

He is a true Christian, a true Sikh, a true Hindu, a true Muslim, who cultivates love in the field of his heart. Unfortunately, today no one is sowing the seeds of love in his heart. Then how do you expect the harvest of love? How do you call a person a true Hindu if there is no love in him? When the members of the Viswa Hindu Parishad came to Me, I asked

them the meaning of the word 'Hindu'. Many answers came forth. One said, the word 'Hindu' refers to a person with compassion and righteousness. I asked them for the spelling of the word Hindu in English. They replied H-I-N-D-U. Then I told them: H stands for Humanity, I for Individuality, N for Nationality, D for Divinity, and U for Unity.

A true Hindu is one who embodies these qualities in him. Love is the underlying principle in all these five qualities. A true Hindu or a Muslim or a Christian should be the embodiment of love. Muslims pray "*Allah Ho Akbar*," which means *God is great*.

Islam means peace. So, a true Muslim is one who leads a peaceful life. Peace originates from a heart that is full of love. Without love one cannot be peaceful. So, for any caste, creed or religion, love is the basis. Love is *sivam* and *mangalam*, which means auspiciousness. Love does not hurt anyone. That which does not hurt is referred to as *savam* (corpse). The one with love is *Sivaswarupa* (embodiment of auspiciousness).

Do not distort scriptural teachings

Today we are celebrating *Sivarathi*. What does it mean? *Ratri* (night) is associated with darkness. The *Vedas* declare, "*Chandrama Manaso Jatha, Chaksho Suryo Ajayatha* (the moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the *Purusha*)."
Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. So, mind should be pure and unsullied. There is an immense significance in every statement of *Vedanta*. Confusion prevails when these are misunderstood.

There is a practice of sacrificing innocent and dumb animals such as goats, sheep, etc., on this day in the name of *yajna* and *yaga*. One day, a noble soul noticed some animals be-

ing taken in a grand procession. On enquiry, he was informed that they were being taken to the sacrificial altar. He asked the owner of the animals what benefit was derived from sacrificing the animals. The reply was that the animals would attain liberation as a result of being offered to God.

Then the noble soul said, “O man, your mother, your father, your wife and your son — all crave for liberation. Why don’t you sacrifice them and fulfill their desire in the process? Why don’t you grant liberation to the people who aspire for it instead of the innocent animals, which do not know what liberation means? If you firmly believe that sacrifice grants liberation, then why don’t you sacrifice your parents, your wife and your children?”

Attachment leads to suffering

Today, some people advocate the need for *bhajans*, charity, and service, saying that they confer *moksha* (liberation). If they really believe in what they are saying, why don’t they practice what they preach? It is easy to preach, but difficult to practice. *Moha kshayam* is *moksham*. (Total detachment is liberation). Attachment leads to suffering. So first and foremost, give up attachment.

Prior to their marriage, even if the girl is down with a serious ailment the boy is least affected. Subsequent to the marriage, if the girl develops a mild fever, the boy is extremely concerned. What is the reason for this? It is attachment. Before the marriage, there was no relationship between the two whatsoever. But after the marriage, the boy feels that she is his wife. It is only this attachment that is the cause of all suffering. The closer we move towards attachment, the farther we drift from liberation. Attachment should be within certain limits.

One who is immersed neck deep in water may be able to speak, but not a person who is totally immersed. Likewise, a person who is immersed in divinity completely will have no words to describe the glory of God. Only those who have understood God only partially will try to describe Him in various ways. You should immerse yourself completely in divine feelings and pure love. It is due to lack of love that there are today conflicts between individuals, villages, states, and countries.

Pravritti marga and nivritti marga

Vedanta declares, “Know thyself.” A person who follows *pravritti marga* (outward path) is interested in collecting information about others and their whereabouts. He keeps asking others “Who are you?” “Where do you come from?” etc. A person who treads along *nivritti marga* (inward path) looks within and enquires, “Who am I?” “Where do I come from?” *Nivritti marga* is positive and *pravritti marga* is negative in nature.

How can you expect positive results when your heart is full of negative feelings? External is the reflection of the internal. You will reap what you sow. Having eaten mango, how can you expect the belch of a cucumber? So, in order to get positive results you should fill your heart with positive feelings. Love, peace, and compassion, which originate from the heart, are positive in nature. All the negative thoughts are the products of the head.

Science and technology are associated with the head. Today technology has become ‘tricknology’, because you are traversing along the negative path. What is the use of having high intelligence in the absence of positive qualities?

*Man today has acquired all forms of knowledge,
yet he does not know himself.
In spite of having acquired various forms of
knowledge,
A mean-minded person cannot give up his evil
qualities.
All this worldly knowledge bolsters excessive ar-
gumentation,
But not total awareness.
After all, one has to die in spite of acquiring all
the worldly knowledge.
So, study that which makes you immortal.*

[Telugu Poem]

Today as the acquisition of worldly knowledge is on the rise, noble qualities in the heart are on the decline. What is the use of ten acres of barren land? A small piece of fertile land is better than ten acres of barren land. Develop at least one noble quality, which emerges from the heart instead of ten from the head. All the thoughts that emerge out of the head are useless. Most of the activities of the scientists are based on the head rather than on the heart.

Students are well aware of the fact that it was Newton who discovered the existence of the gravitational force. As a result of excessive dependence on head, Newton had to spend five years in a mental hospital before his death. So, you should not overstrain your head.

Today students spend most of their time in studies. While traveling in the car many a time, I have noticed small children carrying big load of books on their backs. You yourself can imagine the plight of the young children who have to stuff their heads with lots of information contained in the books. As

result, their tender hearts are being polluted with unnecessary information. So, your studies also should be within certain limits. Only then you can retain your intelligence and memory power.

Worst of sins is to search for mistakes in others

The feelings that emerge out of the heart are immortal and nectarine. But are you making use of at least one of them? It is enough if you can develop peace. Everyday at the conclusion of the *bhajan* session, you chant *santhi* (peace) three times, but there is no trace of *santhi* in you. Even if there is the slightest disturbance caused by the person sitting beside you, you feel irritated and your tone of *santhi* becomes harsh, due to anger. Even while chanting *santhi*, there is no trace of *santhi* in you!

How do you expect to experience peace if you do not cultivate love in the field of your heart? Instead of cultivating love, you are cultivating the evil qualities of jealousy and hatred. If someone criticises you, do not take it to heart; consider that it is for your own good. It is the worst of sins to search for mistakes in others. In the first instance, correct your mistakes accept the good in others.

If you do not grow the harvest of love in your heart, you are not a true Christian, true Sikh, true Hindu or true Muslim. You are a demon in human form. When you develop love in your heart, you are verily God. You become God or demon on the basis of your feelings. Do not find fault in others. Buddha was criticised by many when he accepted the invitation of Ambashali. She alone was not responsible for her character. There were many who encouraged her.

For every act of sin, five persons are mainly responsible. One who commits the sin, one who is the cause, one who en-

courages the act of sin, one who shows the ways and means to commit the sin, and one who witnesses it. All five will have to face the consequences.

When Draupadi was being humiliated by Duryodhana and Dussasana in the court, elders like Bhishma and Drona remained as spectators. They did not oppose Duryodhana's heinous act. It is in this context that Vidura has pointed out that not only the sinner but the other four persons mentioned above will also go to hell. Since Bhishma, the one of wisdom, was a silent spectator to the humiliation of Draupadi, he had to lie on the bed of arrows for fifty-six days. Had he prevented the humiliation of Draupadi, he would not have suffered thus.

Plunge yourself in sacred activities

It is rather difficult to say how one gets merit or sin. In order to escape from sin, one should take to the path of spirituality. Knowingly or unknowingly, you commit sin. Consequently, you suffer. You are unable to trace the root cause of your suffering. So, undertake meritorious deeds. Cultivate sacred feelings. Serve your fellow beings. Taking to this path amounts to devotion.

Devotion does not mean performing worship and offering flowers to God. Worship amounts to good actions alone. One should have good thoughts within. One will not be redeemed if one undertakes good actions with bad intentions.

For instance, if someone offers a donation of 10 lakh for a charitable cause, another person may come forward with a donation of 15 lakh only to attract public attention. In reality, he may not give even 10 rupees. Such people are heroes at platform and zeroes in practice. There should be unity in thought,

word, and deed. That is what is meant by “the proper study of mankind is man.” This is true humanness.

One should shed only tears of joy, not tears of grief

Embodiments of Love! In order to redeem yourselves, you should grow the harvest of love in the field of your heart; water the field of your heart with love. Water is the very life of man. How can you sanctify your life if you cannot provide at least drinking water to the people who are in need of it? Water is divine. Water in Sanskrit is called *naaram*. Eye is known as *nayanam*. So, the *naaram*, which comes out of *nayanam*, should be for the sake of Narayana (God) alone. One should shed only tears of joy, not tears of grief. When do you get tears of joy? Only when you are successful in your endeavours.

You all know that here are many people from Mahaboob Nagar and Medak districts in this gathering. Swami has consented to provide drinking water to these two districts. Many people hailing from these two districts have never seen Swami before. Their joy knew no bounds when they came to know the love and grace showered on them by Swami. Men and women, young and old, were ecstatic. Every week many people from these two districts come to Swami to express their gratitude. You should all plunge into such sacred activities for the benefit of mankind at large.

Sage Vyasa declared, “*Paropakara punyaya papaya Parapeedanam* (help ever, hurt never).” If possible try to help others. Never hurt anyone. Love even your enemies. Never use harsh words and hurt the feelings of others. If you hurt someone today, you will have to suffer ten times more in future.

You will be observing *Sivaratri* in the true spirit of the term only when you give up bad qualities and cultivate divine love.

Merely observing vigil on *Sivaratri* is not sufficient. You have to contemplate on God incessantly. Many people claim that they have observed *jagarana* (vigil) on *Sivaratri* night by playing cards. The fisherman goes on watching intently to trap the fish in the net. Can this be termed meditation? If one abstains from food on account of quarrel with one's wife, can it be called fasting? No. Similarly, observance of sacred vigil on *Sivaratri* night is not achieved by playing cards the whole night. You should spend this night chanting the name of God, using the time in doing good deeds.

Follow in My footsteps

You should not waste your valuable time in vain gossip. Instead undertake service activities in villages and slum areas. Provide the basic necessities of life such as food and clothing to the poor and needy. It amounts to the greatest service. I am practising this right from My childhood.

When someone appeared at the doorstep begging for alms, the people in the household would say 'not now, not now,' but I would surreptitiously dole out alms. If anyone needed clothes, I would provide them. The *griham ammayi* (mother of this body) used to recollect and narrate all these incidents. Believe it or not, I had only one pair of school uniform to be used throughout the year. Everyday after returning from school, I used to don a towel and wash My only dress, put it up for drying, and then press it by using a container with embers as an iron box. When I was provided with a new dress, I used to give My old dress to the poor and needy. The *griham abbayi* (father

of this body) never reprimanded or punished Me. He would compliment Me by saying, “You are a *mahathyagi* (one of great sacrifice). It is impossible for us to be like You.” He would endearingly address Me as *Vedanti* (philosopher).

The same was the case with *griham ammayi*. She looked after Me with great love and affection. People used to fall at her feet, pour out their tales of woe and plead with her to recommend their case to Me. But, I used to put her off softly by saying, “Don’t worry about others’ problems.”

In spite of this, she used to carry on, saying, “Swami, what is the use of My human birth if I don’t help people in distress? My sincere feeling is that they will be relieved of their suffering if I convey their problems and feelings to You. So, I will not refrain from doing this even if you object or scold Me.” In this manner, the parents of this body led a very pious and sacred life. The whole clan has benefited from this.

Never blame God for your difficulties

Develop good qualities. Do not give scope for evil by joining bad company. In this train of life, youngsters are the long distance passengers. The elders may get down at the next station, but you have a long way to go before you reach your destination. First and foremost, you need to have self-confidence. Today people suffer because of lack of self-confidence. If you have total faith in God, you will be able to overcome all difficulties. There may be a few difficulties in your way, but do not be unduly perturbed. You should face all hardships with courage and conviction. Only then you will attain true happiness. Never blame God for your difficulties. You are bound to face the consequences, whether good or bad,

of your actions. But if you have God's grace, even bad will be turned into good. So, develop faith in God more and more.

You trust your friend whom you have met only a few years ago, but not God who is with you, in you, around you, throughout your life. You believe in the dhobi and part with your valuable clothes. You are prepared to bend your head in front of the barber. You are prepared to put your life in the hands of the driver. But you do not believe in the omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient divinity. Why can't you bend your head in front of God? There are some evil-minded persons who criticise people for bending their heads before God. Such people will never have the good fortune of bending their heads before God.

The real worth of the human head

One day, King Bhoja was proceeding to a village in his chariot along with his minister. On the way, he found a Buddhist monk coming from the opposite direction. Immediately, he got down from the chariot and paid his respects to him by placing his head on the feet of the monk. The minister did not relish this act of King Bhoja. He said, "O king, how could you keep your most valuable head on the feet of an ordinary monk?"

The king waited for an opportune moment to give his reply. One day the king, giving his minister the head of a sheep, a goat, and a human being, asked him to sell them in the market. The minister succeeded in selling the head of the sheep and the goat, but not that of a human being. He returned to the king and said, "O king, no one is willing to buy this human head."

Then the king said, “O minister, do you remember the day when you objected to my falling at the feet of a Buddhist monk saying mine was the most valuable head. At least now you would realise the value of the human head.” One should prostrate at the feet of noble souls when one is alive, for even the vultures and dogs do not value human head after death.

Self-confidence cannot be purchased or obtained through learning. It is based on deservedness. Develop the divine thoughts to attain deservedness. In fact, you are the most fortunate people. Otherwise, how could only a few thousand of you have come here when there are millions in this world? Make the best use of this golden opportunity. Follow the divine path. If you have faith in God, He will protect you in the face of all adversities. He is always with you, in you, above you, beside you, around you.

Do not give scope for bad feelings and bad thoughts. Do not criticise anyone. You are well aware of the fact that every day in the newspapers you find headlines describing the conflicts between various parties. One party criticises and finds faults with the other. They are accumulating sins by doing so. That is why I do not read newspapers. Why should I go through all this? Many people waste so much money buying these newspapers. It is a form of madness. Read good books. Slander is the worst of the sins.

Emergence of Atmalinga

Embodiments of Love!

As pointed out by the Vice Chancellor in his speech, I used to bring out *Atmalingams* from this body on the occasion of *Sivaratri* in the earlier years. *Lingodbhava* (emergence of *Linga*) used to take place on every *Sivaratri*. To witness this

sacred event, lakhs would gather in a small hall. Consequently, there used to be stampede resulting in injuries to devotees. Due to this, I discontinued *Lingodbhava* in public.

There is a specific time for this. It may take place at any moment between 8 and 10 in the night. It takes place at the right time irrespective of the place I am in. It is bound to take place. It is natural on *Sivaratri* night. Those who are fortunate to witness this sacred *Lingodbhava* are freed from all sins. One must see how it emerges. But, some people may not be able to see this even if they are sitting close by. Witnessing the emergence of the *Lingam* is of utmost importance. Once it emerges, everyone will be able to see it and it has its own benefits. There are many such important aspects attached to this auspicious occasion.

You will be immensely benefited if you keep awake and sing the glory of God at least on this night. Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Moon has 16 *kalas* (phases). On *Shivaratri*, 15 *kalas* merge in God and only one remains. By constant remembrance of God, the 16th phase also merges in God. Can you not spend a single night in the whole year singing the glory of God? Sanctify this night by participating in *bhajan*. The bliss that you get from *bhajan*, the sweetness you experience in the divine name, the happiness you derive from visualising the divine form cannot be obtained elsewhere. Everything is possible only through love. So, cultivate love and sanctify your life.

14 February 1999
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Manifesting Divinity in Lingodbhava

*He is a realised one who forgets the past,
Doesn't worry about the future, and
Discharges his duties in the present.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love!

Past is past, future is uncertain, only the present is in our hands. It is the foremost duty of man to live in the present and share his joy with his fellow beings. Truly speaking, the human being is the most fortunate one among all the living beings. Compared to the entire cosmos, man is very small, like an atom; yet he is able to comprehend the magnitude and vastness of the creation, which is very startling indeed. He attains immortality by understanding the unity between the microcosm and macrocosm. As mentioned by Me yesterday, whosoever cultivates the harvest of love in the field of his heart is a true Christian, a true Sikh, a true Hindu and a true Muslim. In fact, he is the true human being on earth.

Love originates from Hiranyagarbha

Man cannot exist without love. This Principle of Love is *Hiranyagarbha*. This *Hiranyagarbha* is situated on the right side of the human body, with the physical heart is on the left. The physical heart on the left side has to be left one day or the other, in some circumstance or the other. *Hiranyagarbha*, located on the right side of the human body is always right. It is immortal, divine, eternal, and all-encompassing. It is present not only in human beings but also in birds, beasts, and all other living beings. The *Vedas* declare: “*Eswara Sarvabhoothanam* (God is present in all living beings),” “*Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (God pervades the entire cosmos).”

Love is the reflection of *Hiranyagarbha* and originates from it. The three principles of reaction, resonance, and reflection have also originated from *Hiranyagarbha*.

Unable to recognise his true identity, man is wasting his life in this pursuit of temporary, fleeting, transient, and ephemeral pleasures. As I told you yesterday, gold loses its value, brilliance, and identity when it is mixed with different metals such as silver, brass, and copper. So also, the heart, which loses its value, brilliance and identity on account of its association with the impurities of worldly desires. This is the present plight of mankind. Man is behaving like a demon, devil, and a beast because he has forgotten his divine nature. Divine love originates from *Hiranyagarbha*. This selfless divine love lives by giving and forgiving, whereas selfish love lives by getting and forgetting. Such divine love is essential for man.

Here is a small example to illustrate this. After Ravana was killed in the battle, Hanuman went to Sita and conveyed to her the good news. Sita was overjoyed and started extolling Hanuman thus: “O Hanuman, you are the *Puravarashoura* (the

valiant one), who entered Lanka in the face of all dangers; you are the *Bhadraparakrama* (the performer of acts of valour) who crossed the ocean in a single leap, and you are the *Kapirajashikamani* (the crown jewel of the monkey clan) who fulfilled the command of Rama.” But Hanuman did not relish any of these titles conferred on him by Sita.

Sita then said, “O Hanuman, I have not seen a virtuous one like you. There is none equal to you in terms of physical strength in this world.” She also conferred the titles of *Gunavantha* (full of virtues) and *Balavantha* (full of prowess) on Hanuman. None of these titles pleased Hanuman.

In the end, Sita blessed Hanuman saying, “May Rama love you forever and install Himself in your heart.” Then Hanuman leapt in joy. He said, “O mother, there is nothing greater than God’s love in this world. I do not crave any title. I pray only for Rama’s love. In the absence of the love of Lord Rama, I would not be happy even if the whole world were to come under my control. My life will find fulfillment only when I am the recipient of His love.”

Such a virtuous, valiant and ardent devotee like Hanuman craved only the love of Rama, nothing else. So, a sincere devotee should yearn for God’s love and love is everything. Human quality lies in kindling love within, speaking with love and acting with love. On this basis, it is said, “The proper study of mankind is man.”

Controlling the senses is the highest sadhana

Once, a pundit challenged Buddha to enter into a debate with him. The terms were that if he was the loser, he would follow Buddhism along with his 3000 disciples and serve Bud-

dha lifelong. But, if Buddha was the loser, it would be obligatory on his part to become a follower of the pundit.

Buddha smilingly said, “*Pundita samadarshina*” (a true pundit is one who has equal-mindedness). A true Pundit makes no distinction between the dualities of life, such as pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow. A person with anger and ego is unfit to be called a pundit. In pilgrim centres such as Haridwar, Rishikesh, Badrinath, Kedarnath and Amarnath, you find *pandas* who give mantras that would grant liberation to the departed souls. These *pandas* cannot be called pundits. In this world, there are many who have gone through sacred texts. Knowledge of the Self cannot be acquired by mere scholarship or by sitting at the feet of a guru.

True meaning of ‘Kavi’

There are many who go through voluminous books, but is there a person who practices at least one teaching? When you spend all your life in reading, when are you going to practice it? Scholarship bereft of practice is futile. The *Bhagavad Gita* declares: *Kavim Puranamanushasitharam* (the Supreme Being is all-knowing, Indweller and Ruler of all).

Who is a *kavi* (poet)? A *kavi* is one who knows the past, present, and future; not one who merely plays with words. This implies that God alone is *kavi* (poet).

What is the inner meaning of *Purana*? Body is *pura* in which divinity pervades. The divine principle that pervades from top to toe in the body is referred to as *Purana*. So, God Himself is *Purana*.

Next comes *anushasithara* (one who commands and controls). You may imprison a person who has committed a crime, but you cannot prevent his mind from going all over the world.

There is no judge in this world who can punish the mind. It is only God who has the power to command the mind of man. Therefore, God alone is *Anushasithara*.

Explaining thus, Buddha silenced the pundit and advised him to shun the pride and ego of his scholarship. He told the pundit not to get carried away by the worldly knowledge. He exhorted him to acquire and practice divine knowledge and surrender to God. Buddha said, "I undertook spiritual practice for a long time and went through various sacred texts in quest of knowledge of the Self. Ultimately, I realised that mastering the senses is essential for acquiring knowledge of the Self. The five senses are the gift of God. Make proper use of them. Only then you can realise the Self. What is the use of going through sacred texts and undertaking spiritual practices without proper utilisation of the five senses? I have controlled the five senses and put them on the right path, as a result of which I am experiencing bliss."

Nirvana is nothing but merger in bliss

Buddha attained *Nirvana* by controlling his five senses and making proper use of them. What is *Nirvana*? It is nothing but merger in bliss. Water bubble is born in water, is sustained in water and ultimately merges in it; likewise, human being is born in bliss, is sustained in bliss and ultimately merges in it. Bliss can be experienced by controlling the five senses. This is the true *sadhana*. Mere chanting of the Lord's name will not suffice. First and foremost, the senses have to be controlled.

At the time of attaining *Nirvana*, Buddha saw his cousin, Ananda, shedding tears. He called him near and said, "Ananda, true to your name, you should experience *ananda* (bliss). You should never shed tears of sorrow. You are the embodiment of

ananda. All of us are embodiments of Brahma.” Saying so, Buddha put his hand on Ananda and attained *Nirvana*.

Whoever understands this truth can experience bliss and attain divinity. When attaining liberation is so easy and simple, why do you struggle hard for it? It only means that you are not making any effort to understand the inner truth. You are mixing the metals of worldly desires with the gold of your heart. As a result, the heart has become polluted and has lost its true identity, i.e. bliss. Ancients have said that bliss lies in visualising and experiencing your true form, that is, the Principle of the *Atma*. Proper utilisation of the senses will lead to the knowledge of the *Atma*.

Sage Patanjali said, *Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha* (control of senses is true *yoga*). No *sadhana* is greater than this. All spiritual practices such as *japa* (chanting the Lord’s name) and *tapa* (penance) will be of no avail if senses are not controlled. You may be under the impression that it is not possible for a human being to control the senses. Here control does not mean total cessation. Discharge your duties as a householder, student or businessman. But whatever you do, do it with a feeling that it is to please God (*Sarva Karma Bhagavath Preethyartham*). Once you develop this feeling, all your senses will naturally be controlled.

Total faith makes surrender easy

Embodiments of Love! You feel that *arpitham* (total surrender) to God is rather difficult, but according to Me, nothing is easier than this. It may be difficult to make a garland out of flowers or to pluck the petals of a flower, but total surrender to God is easier and simpler than this. You find it difficult because you do not have steady and firm faith in God. God is.

There is no place without God. There is no being without divinity. Each and every being is the embodiment of God.

If you have total faith in this truth, you will never have difficulties. When your faith is defective, you find it difficult to achieve anything. Have faith in God and love Him. Love is God. You are bound to be successful in all your endeavours if you have faith in God. Any task, however difficult it may be, can be accomplished with God's grace.

That is what happened in the case of Hanuman. With Rama's grace he leapt across the ocean, reached Lanka, and found Sita. He returned to Rama and described the untold suffering of Sita:

*“O Rama, please listen to what I say.
I saw Mother Sita surrounded by demons,
shivering like a fear-stricken parrot in a cage.”*
[Telugu Poem]

On hearing this, Rama and Lakshmana immediately took their bows and arrows. Rama said, “I cannot bear the suffering of Sita. Let us not waste even a moment, let us go to Lanka” Rama reacted in this manner not because of attachment toward His consort. Sita symbolises *prakriti* (nature). God cannot bear the suffering of nature. In order to alleviate the suffering of nature, Rama decided to go to Lanka immediately.

Objectives of human life

Dharma (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (desire), and *moksha* (liberation) are considered to be the four objectives (*purusharthas*) of human life. In fact, these correspond to the four stages of human life: *brahmacharya* (student), *brihastha* (householder), *vanaprastha* (hermit) and *sanyasa* (renunciate).

They do not correspond to *Purusharthas* in the true sense of the term. Today, people are under the mistaken notion that the term *purusha* corresponds to man but not to woman. But actually, *Purusha* means *Atma* or *Chaithanya* or *Prana* or *Jivi*. For *Atma*, there is no gender like masculine or feminine. So, *Purushartha* means *Atma Dharma* or the *dharma* of the Awareness Principle or the *dharma* of the Life Principle. This is the true *Purushartha*, the prime objective of human life.

Without understanding the true meaning of the term *Purushartha*, people talk of one *dharma* for men and another for women. Sayujya (merger) is the true *Atma Dharma*, and that is true *Purushartha*.

The second objective is *artha*. *Artha* does not mean money or gold. Earning money or gold is not the objective of life. Money comes and goes. Wisdom is the true wealth. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (vision and experience of Divinity is true wisdom). One has to earn this wealth of wisdom.

The third objective is *kama* (desire). This does not correspond to sensual desires. One should have desire for liberation (*moksha kama*). One should have the desire to understand the *Atmic* Principle and attain divinity.

Liberation is complete merger with the Divine

These are the main objectives of human life. Each word in *Vedanta* has many meanings associated with it. Different people interpret it in different ways. Today, what people understand of the four objectives of human life corresponds to the *ashrama dharma* such as *brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha*, and *sanyasa*. They do not correspond to *Adhyatmika dharma* (Spiritual *dharma*). Spiritual *dharma* is the true *dharma*. Only that can confer liberation.

What is liberation? It is not just reaching God, it means complete merger with the Divine. Rivers like Ganga, Godavari, and Saraswathi have different names and forms, but once they merge in the ocean, they lose their name and become one with the ocean. Similarly, once you merge in God, there will be no difference whatsoever. Experiencing such non-dualism is the true objective of human life.

Unity of Purusha and Prakriti

Embodiments of Love! Today is the sacred day of *Sivaratri*. Legend has it that when Siva, in order to save the world, swallowed *halahala* (poison), He lost consciousness and fell down. The resultant heat affected the world. In order to cool down the world, Siva created the Himalayas. Then He placed the Himalayas on His stomach. As a result, the Himalayas absorbed all the heat from His body and He got up. People celebrate this event as *Sivaratri*. But, this is only a worldly interpretation.

Truly speaking, the Himalayas are within you. In fact, the whole world is within you. The Divinity within you has neither birth nor death. The body may undergo change, but the Divine Principle remains the same. Love never undergoes any change. It remains love always. The quality of sugar is sweetness. It does not change whether it is added to coffee, tea, water or rice pudding.

That which remains changeless is referred to as *Sath* (Being). This *Sath* is within you. Love is its sweetness. We have to turn this love toward Visweswara (God), but not towards *vishayas* (sensual pleasures). *Sath* can be compared to sugar, *Chith* (*Chaithanya*) to water. When sugar is added to water, it becomes syrup. Likewise, when *Sath* and *Chith* come together,

what results is *ananda* (bliss). *Sath* is associated with the *Atma* and *Chith* with the body. The *Atma* is *Purusha* (Brahman) and the body is *prakrti* (feminine principle). The unity of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* is human life.

So, every human being is *ardhanareeshwara* (androgynous). The Principle of Siva (*Sivathatwa*) teaches the unity of *Prakriti* and *Purusha*. This is the true meaning of *Sivaratri*. Forgetting this principle, man considers this physical body to be made up of merely blood, flesh and fecal matter. No doubt, it has these constituents, but one should not forget the fact that divinity permeates this body. To set an ideal to this world, the body is very important.

Attachment to the body leads to dualities

Embodiments of Love! The body is Parvati, and the *Atma* is Eswara. There was a spiritual aspirant who used to repeat the mantra *Sivoham*, as commanded by his guru. One day, someone asked him the meaning of the mantra. He said *Sivoham* meant, "I an Siva." But when questioned what his relationship with Parvati was, he slapped his own cheeks and said with a tone of having committed a great sin, *Aparadham* (blasphemy)! If he really had faith in the mantra he was chanting, he would have surely said, "Parvati is a part of my own being." He could not say so because he was attached to his body. Attachment to the body leads to dualities, because of which man is suffering.

Eswara and Parvati are present in every individual. The combination of these two aspects constitutes *Manavatwam* (mankind). *Manava* refers to human being. *Ma* means 'not', *nava* means 'new'. So, mankind is not new, it is ancient and eternal. But you are not able to understand this truth.

Here there are three letters: *ma - na - va*. *Ma* means *maya* (illusion), *na* means without, *va* means *varthinchuta* (to conduct oneself). He is a true human being who conducts himself without being under illusion. But today, man is acting in a contradictory manner. At least from today try to understand the truth. Your *deha* (body) and *desha* (country) can be compared to object and reflection. Just as you safeguard your body, keep in mind the welfare of the country too.

Significance of Lingodbhava

Understand the true meaning and inner significance of *Sivaratri*. *Hiranyagarbha Lingam* is present in everybody's *hridaya* (spiritual heart) and is on the right side of the body. The principle of *Hiranyagarbha* permeates My whole body. It assumes a form when I will it. Whoever has seen this *Lingam* at the time of its emergence will not have rebirth. One should see its form as it emerges. In order to sanctify your lives, such sacred manifestations have to be shown to you every now and then. Only then can you understand the divinity in humanity. This *Lingam* will not break even if it is dropped from a height with force. This is *amruthatwam* (symbol of immortality). It is changeless. You cannot see such a manifestation anywhere else in the world. It is possible only with Divinity. This is the manifestation of changeless Divinity.

For the past twenty years, devotees did not get the opportunity to witness *Lingodbhava*. The reason was that lakhs of devotees used to gather in the Poornachandra Hall to witness this grand spectacle. Since the Poornachandra Hall cannot accommodate large gatherings, there used to be stampedes. As a result, devotees were put to a lot of inconvenience. In order to avoid this, *Lingodbhava* was discontinued.

Not only this; three types of *Lingams* emerge. They are *bhur*, *bhuvah*, and *svaha*. *Bhur* refers to materialisation (body), *bhuvah* to vibration (*prana*), and *svaha* to radiation (*Atma*). I often say, you are not one, but three: The one you think you are (physical body), the one others think you are (mental body), the one you really are (*Atma*). On every *Sivaratri*, all the three *Lingams* used to emerge. Even now, the other *Lingams* had started to emerge, but I prevented them, because there are many things to be told to you. In the future, you will be a witness to many more manifestations of Divinity. Understand that this bliss can be experienced only in the proximity of the Divine and nowhere else.

There is no trace of selfishness in Me

Don't get deluded just because I talk, laugh, walk, and eat like you. Don't get deluded by the body feeling. All My actions are selfless, selfless, selfless. There is no trace of selfishness in Me. Have firm faith in this truth. If you have total faith, wherever you are, all your desires will be fulfilled without your asking. Only those who don't have total faith suffer. Develop self-confidence. That is the first *sadhana* you have to undertake.

Truly you are all most fortunate. Today is *Somavar* (Monday), very endearing to *Somasekhara* (Eswara). That is why Siva is extolled as *Someshwara* and *Somasekhara*. This body was also born on Monday. In every Siva temple, special prayers are offered on Mondays.

Hanuman is worshipped on *Mangalavar* (Tuesday). When Ravana was killed in the battlefield, Hanuman rushed to Sita to convey the good news. Sita was overjoyed and blessed Hanu-

man profusely saying, “Hanuman, I don’t know what day it is, but since you have conveyed the much awaited *mangalakara vartha* (auspicious news), this day shall be called Mangalavar (Tuesday), and may you be worshipped on this day!”

In the *Treta Yuga*, names of the days such as Monday and Tuesday were not in existence; they are of recent origin. Therefore, in the culture of Bharat each term has an inner significance. But, the *Bharatiyas* themselves are not making any effort to understand them and are going along the wrong path. Culture is important, not caste. We have to uphold the culture.

Embodiments of Love! Understand the truth that love is the *Atma* and the *Atma* is love.

Sivaratri, 15 February 1999
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Man has to pay attention to three basic duties in his quest for happiness: (1) He has to forget what he has to forget, namely, the world around him and its tantalizing pleasures; (2) He has to reach where he has to reach, namely, the goal of the Divine, the Presence of the Almighty; and (3) he has to give up what he has to give up, namely, material desires and pursuits.

—Baba

Give up enmity, develop unity

*In this sacred land of Bharat, forbearance is the
real beauty.*

*Of all forms of rituals, adherence to Truth is the
greatest penance.*

*Is there any ritual more sacred than the feeling of
love toward the mother?*

*What else is to be communicated to you more
than this?*

O members of this noble and august assembly!

[Telugu poem]

Embodiments of Love!

Bharat (India) is the birthplace of spirituality, charity and righteousness. It is the abode of peace and non-violence. Having been born in this sacred land of Bharat, it is the bounden duty of every *Bharatiya* (Indian) to foster the noble qualities of truth, peace, charity and non-violence. This sacred land is the birthplace of the *Adi Kavi* (first poet), Valmiki, and sage Vyasa, who classified the *Vedas*. This is the meritorious land

that gave birth to Gautam Buddha, who declared *Ahimsa paramo dharma* (nonviolence is the highest *dharma*). This is the noble land that was ruled by Lord Rama Himself. This is the divine land where Lord Krishna sang the song celestial, *Bhagavad Gita*. It is most essential for the *Bharatiyas* to follow the ideals of these sages and *Avatars*. Having taken birth in this sacred land of Bharat, the *Bharatiyas* should make every effort to keep their hearts sacred.

This Motherland of ours gave to the world noble souls renowned in all the continents.

It is the land that ousted the foreign rulers and achieved freedom.

This Bharat is reputed for its scholarship.

It is the sacred land that stood forth as the exemplar in the realms of music, literature and sacred lore and is noted for its fine arts and natural beauty.

Born in the land of Bharat, oh devotees, it is your bounden duty to foster the glory and prosperity of the Motherland.

[Telugu Poem]

Bharatiyas should develop unity

Embodiments of Love! The *Bharatiyas* achieved independence, but not unity. The pristine glory of Bharat can be restored only when the *Bharatiyas* achieve equality, integrity, unity, and fraternity. These sacred values should be imprinted in the heart of every *Bharatiya*. There are many men of sacrifice, highly educated and affluent people, eminent statesmen and politicians and very good administrators in this country. But what is the use? There is no unity and cooperation among

them. That is the reason for the present plight of the country. They should give up individual differences and work for the welfare of the society. If all *Bharatiyas* stand united, none can ever attempt to attack us. Since the unity is on the decline, others are trying to take advantage of this situation.

Bharat stands first in respect of adherence to truth

Embodiments of Love! In the past, foreigners ruled over the country for hundreds of years treating the *Bharatiyas* like slaves. At least from now onward, take care that no foreign force enters our country. That is the vow all the *Bharatiyas* should resolve to take. The *Bharatiyas* have immense strength and power. But, they are facing hardships because of lack of unity.

Spirituality is very essential for the welfare of the country. Since ancient times, Bharat has radiated peace and happiness to the rest of the world through the message of spirituality. It occupied the exalted position of teacher to the rest of the world. Bharat stands first in respect of adherence to truth. No other country in this world can ever match Bharat in respect of charity and sacrifice.

Our ancestors took great pains and made great sacrifices in order to protect and safeguard this country. But, unfortunately that spirit of unity and sacrifice is lacking among the youth today. Moreover, it is not enough if we have unity unless we resolve to work for the welfare of the society. Only when you realize the value of service to the society, can you achieve the noble qualities of unity, integrity, and fraternity. For this you have to take to spirituality. *Eswara sarva bhoothanam*, the same divinity dwells in all beings. The same was declared by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita: Mamaivamsa jeevaloke*

jeevabhutha sanathana (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). The culture of Bharat has propagated this principle of unity in diversity.

Uphold the culture of Bharat

Since ancient times, Bharat has advocated the ideal *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (may the whole world be happy!). But, due to the effect of modern age, selfishness and self interest are on the rise. The need of the hour is to develop spirituality, love, unity, and forbearance. All these can be achieved only through God's grace. In fact, you do not need to undertake any rigorous spiritual practices. *Japa*, meditation, and *yogic* practices confer only temporary satisfaction. It is enough if you develop love in your heart. There is no God other than love. Love is God, live in love. it is only love that can bring about unity.

But, today everyone is struggling for their selfish ends. Individual differences are on the rise. There may be individual differences and party differences and differences in ideology, but when it comes to protecting the country, you should stand united, giving up all differences. Sacrifice all self-interests and develop love. Experience bliss and share it with others. This is what the culture of Bharat teaches.

There is no culture greater than the culture of Bharat. This culture is eternal, universal, and acceptable to everyone. But, unfortunately today the *Bharatiyas* are imitating the Western culture ignoring their own culture. As a result, they are losing their identity. There is no greater misfortune than forgetting one's own culture. A true *Bharatiya* is one who upholds *Bharatiya* culture. The epithet *Bharatiya* does not mean a person born in the land of Bharat. Whoever follows the culture of

Bharat is a *Bharatiya*. But the modern educated people are not fascinated by this culture because they have not understood it properly. The culture of Bharat is vaster than oceans and mightier than mountains. In order to understand this glorious culture, you need to develop broad feelings, become broad-minded and expand your love. Extend your support to those administrators who adhere to these sacred principles. Do not get carried away by those who give platform speeches but practice none. You should be prepared to sacrifice even your life in order to uphold the culture of Bharat.

Unity rests on Truth and Love

Hastasya bhushanam danam (charity is the true ornament of the hand); *sathyam kanthasya bhushanam* (truth is the true ornament of the throat); *srothrasya bhushanam sastram* (listening to sacred texts is the true ornament of the ears). This is the teaching of the culture of Bharat. *Sathyannasthi paro dharma* (there is no greater *dharma* than Truth). It is truth that protects the world. It is love and nonviolence that sustain the world. Unity can be achieved only through truth, nonviolence and love. My advice is that all parties should unite. Only then Bharat will become a divine land.

Very soon this is going to happen. The present-day administration is noble and good. You should safeguard it because it supports spirituality and divinity. It was lack of unity among the *Bharatiyas* that was responsible for Bharat to be under British rule for hundreds of years. Past is past. At least in future take care that India will never be under foreign rule. Do not hate anybody. Love even the worst of your enemies. Develop love. Only then the country will progress. Imagine what

a formidable force India will be if all its 98 crore people stand united! Bharat will not have any problems.

Very soon, peace and security will prevail in this land. Today we do not find peace anywhere, only pieces! Peace is present in the *hridaya* (heart). You can experience peace only when you develop heart to heart relationship with your fellow beings.

Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows

The *Vedas* declare, “*Anoraneeyan Mahatomaheeyan* (God is subtler than the subtlest atom and vaster than the vastest object).” The *Vedantins* say the *Atma* pervades the entire world. The scientists say the whole world is made up of atoms. Names are different, but the power is the same. Einstein referred to matter and energy. But matter and energy are not separate from each other. Matter becomes energy and vice-versa. This energy is divinity. You should lead your lives taking divinity as the basis. You will ruin yourself if you take the world as the basis. All the worldly matters come and go like passing clouds. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. Morality fosters spirituality. Humanity will progress only when there is morality. So, today we have to foster morality.

A good government should always be supported. One should not hate the government on the basis of individual differences. It has been fifty years since this country attained independence. But what have we achieved? Murders, hijacks, and kidnappings! Is this what we dreamt of? Today, fear and restlessness are rampant all over the world. Man is haunted by fear wherever he is: at home, in a car, in a train or in a plane! Why? Because the human mind is polluted with desire, greed, anger, etc. If man wants to enjoy peace and security, he should

get rid of these bad qualities and lead his life keeping in view the welfare of the society. He should give up selfishness and develop unity. Only then the pristine glory of Bharat can be revived.

Our ancient sages coronated *thyaga* (sacrifice), welcomed Truth, and upheld righteousness. Today there is no trace of *thyaga* in man. He is always immersed in *bhoga* (worldly pleasures). As a result he is subjected to *roga* (disease). The culture of Bharat teaches that only sacrifice confers immortality. But today, unfortunately, the *Bharatiyas* themselves do not have faith in the *Bharatiya* culture.

Motherland is greater than heaven

After the annihilation of Ravana, when Rama was requested to take over the reins of Lanka, He declared: *Janani Janmabhoomischa Swargadapi Gareeyasi* (mother and motherland are greater than heaven itself). One who does not have love and regard for one's own motherland, one's own mother tongue and one's own religion is a living corpse! But, one should not show disrespect towards other countries. *Advashtha Sarva Bhoothanam* (one should not hate anybody). One should not criticize anybody. But, today if one goes through the newspapers one finds one party criticizing and abusing the other. It is nothing but mean-mindedness. No one has any right to criticize others. Each party should see to it that it is free from all defects instead of pointing an accusing finger at others.

All of you know what a nice person Vajpayee is. Even in olden days, whenever Vajpayee or Jayaprakash Narayan would visit Andhra Pradesh, people, especially the youth, used to gather in large numbers to listen to their speeches. Naturally,

the people are attracted to those who adhere to truth and righteousness. Such a leader should be given all support.

Pleasure in an interval between two pains

You should strive hard to uphold *dharma*. In the process one may have to face hardships, but one should not get disheartened. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. One should be prepared to face all challenges and work for the uplift of the society. Today, no one seems to be interested in the welfare of the society. Each one is concerned about his position and power. A true leader is one who works for the well-being of society. The government is safe only when the people are safe and secure and vice versa. So, the government and the people should stand united and work for the progress of the nation.

Bharat (India) is the land of merit, the land of sacrifice. When Humayun, son of Babar, was ruling over this country, one day his father wrote a letter to him describing how fortunate he was to become the ruler of this sacred land. He wrote, "Humayun, it is your great good fortune that you have become the ruler of Bharat. See to it that Bharat does not suffer any hardships. Understand the cultural values of Bharat and put them into practice. Make the people of Bharat happy." So, you see, even the Muslim rulers had great regard for the culture of Bharat. Since ancient times, the Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs have been living in amity in this sacred land. Due to the effect of *Kali* age, hatred and enmity are on the rise among different religions. There will be no scope for hatred and enmity if people realize that there is only one religion, the religion of love, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity, and there is only one language, the language of the heart. Give up

hatred and enmity from today. Develop unity. The country cannot progress unless and until hatred and enmity are uprooted.

When the safety of the country is at stake, all parties should stand united giving up individual differences. Dharmaraja stood as an ideal in this regard. Once, while speaking to Krishna, he said, "Krishna, the Pandavas and the Kauravas belong to the same family. When there is any difference of opinion within the family, we are five on one side and they are hundred on the other. But if there is any external threat and the safety of the country is at stake, all 105 of us will join hands." Similarly, all political parties should come together to safeguard the interests of the nation.

Develop friendship with other countries

I have been observing Vajpayee for the last so many years. Now this body is seventy-four years old. Vajpayee always keeps the welfare of the society in mind in whatever he speaks or does. He is broadminded. There will certainly be peace and security in the country if these principles are followed.

Vajpayee and Kulwant Rai have requested Me to visit Delhi at least once in a year. Today we have inaugurated the International Sai Center. We should cultivate broad and noble feelings. I will certainly come to Delhi every year provided you develop broad feelings, and put them into practice. In the Sai Organization, there should be no differences of opinion. All should live like brothers and sisters. More than a hundred years ago, when Vivekananda spoke in a religious congregation in Chicago, addressing the audience as brothers and sisters, he was greeted with a thunderous applause. In olden days, brothers and sisters attained supreme state living in harmony

with each other. But, today brothers and sisters go to Supreme Court due to lack of unity.

Develop love. Devotion bereft of love is no devotion at all. You may undertake any number of spiritual practices, but love should be the underlying principle. Friendship is one of the nine paths of devotion propagated by the culture of Bharat. So, develop friendship with God. God is not separate from you. You are God. God is in you and around you. God is all pervasive just as an atom. Conduct yourselves with the firm conviction that God is everywhere. Only then will Bharat regain its pristine glory of being the leader of all nations.

I want Vajpayee to develop friendship with countries like Russia, Japan, and Pakistan. How nice will it be if all these countries come together! Vajpayee is also making efforts in this direction. He has full control over his mind, but how can he be expected to have control over the minds of others? He has spiritual feelings in him. That will give him all the necessary strength and courage and ultimately confer success. Vyasa declared, "*Paropakara punyaya papaya arapeedanam* (helping others is meritorious, harming others is sinful)." So, Help ever, Hurt never. This is what I want you to do. Delhi is the stomach of Bharat. If the stomach is good, the whole body will be good. Likewise, if Delhi is good, the whole country will prosper. So, see to it that there is peace and harmony in De/hi. The people of Delhi should stand united. If you have unity, there is nothing that you cannot achieve in this world. I bless you all and bring My discourse to a close.

12 March 1999

Delhi

Glory of Bharatiya Culture

*Punar Vittham, Punar Mithram, Punar Bharya
Punar Mahi Etath Sarvam Punar Labhyam Na
Sareeram Punah Punah*

[Sanskrit Verse]

Embodiments of Love!

If money is lost, one need not be worried about it, for one can earn it again. If a friend is lost, one can have another. If wife is lost, one can marry again. If one loses one's piece of land, one can purchase another piece of land. All these can be regained; but if body is lost, one cannot get it back.

Human body is highly sacred and invaluable. So, it has to be looked after with utmost care. *Janthoonam narajanma durlabham*, human birth is the rarest and noblest of all living beings. But man, unable to understand his true identity, is wasting his life. Since time immemorial, the culture of Bharat (India) has propagated three important values. *Sathyam bruyath* (speak the truth). Never utter a lie to please someone. This

is the moral value. *Priyam bruyath* (speak in a pleasing way). This is the social value. *Na bruyath sathyamapriyam* (do not speak unpleasant truth). This is the spiritual value. The *Bhagavad Gita* says, “*Anudvegakaram vakyam sathyam priyahitham cha yat*” (one should speak only truthful, pleasing, and well-intentioned words, which are beneficial to others).

Cultivate selfless love

Man today has forgotten his true Self and is getting carried away by illusion. What is the reason? A small example to illustrate this. Pure gold shines brilliantly and has a very high value. However, when it gets alloyed with metals like silver, copper, brass, etc., it loses not only its identity but also its value. Similarly, man, who can be compared to pure gold, has lost his true identity and also his value as his mind is polluted with worldly thoughts and unsacred feelings. Man today cannot be called a human being in the strict sense of the term. He has lost his humanness because of bad thoughts and bad company.

What man needs to cultivate today is the value of the ever brilliant and effulgent Self. Human values cannot be acquired from outside. They are innate and inborn. But, man has forgotten these values, which are inherent in him right from his birth. Modern man is human only in form, but not in behavior.

Right from ancient times, Bharat has been in the vanguard of human values, namely, *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa*. Man is gifted with love, but he has highly adulterated it with selfishness and self-interest. He should cultivate selfless love. Only then will his life shine brilliantly. When the electric current enters the bulb through the wire, you get the light. Truth, righteousness, peace, and love can be compared to the

electric current, wire, bulb, and light respectively. So, in order to experience the light of love, you must cultivate truth, righteousness, and peace. Love is God, God is love. So, live in love. Right from a pauper to a millionaire, none can survive without love. Man loves his wife, wealth, and children. But greatness lies in sharing your love with everyone, not merely with your kith and kin.

Vedanta says, love everybody, but do not trust anybody. The reason is that the human body is temporary.

It is made of flesh and bones and is full of dirt.

It is afflicted with many diseases.

It cannot cross the ocean of *Samsara*.

Oh mind! Realize that this body is ephemera,
and take refuge at the lotus feet of the Lord

[Telugu Poem]

This body is valued and considered to be *Sivam* (auspicious) as long as there is life in it. It becomes *savam* (dead body) and absolutely useless the moment life principle forsakes it. So, understand the transient nature of the body and conduct yourself accordingly. Share your love with everybody. Your entire life is based on love.

Man should realise his innate divinity

Embodiments of Love! Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has laid great emphasis on the need for good thoughts, good company, and good actions. “*Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak the truth and practice righteousness).” Man can attain exalted heights by following this dictum. Only the *Bharatiyas* (Indians) understood this truth. But alas! Today the *Bharatiyas* themselves have forgotten it.

Today the Bharatiyas themselves are not making any effort to understand their own culture, which is suffused with noble and divine feelings. Human-ness has become extinct in man due to the lack of fear of sin and love for God. What greater misfortune can befall on humanity than this!

[Telugu Poem]

Man should realize his innate divinity. This is possible only when man makes proper use of the five elements and five senses gifted by God.

Protect your senses from evil effects

The primary duty of man lies not in protecting his wealth and valuables but in conserving the five elements and protecting the five senses from evil effects. The same message was propagated by Gautama Buddha. In the beginning, he studied many scriptures, approached many preceptors, and undertook various types of spiritual exercises. But his spiritual thirst was not quenched. Ultimately, he realized that proper utilization of the five senses would alone confer peace of mind.

First and foremost, he stressed on the importance of *samyak drishti* (right vision). All that you see, be it good or bad, gets imprinted in your heart forever. So, see no evil; see what is good. Hear no evil; hear what is good. This is called *samyak sravanam* (right listening). *Samyak drishti* and *samyak sravanam* will lead to *samyak bhavam* (right feelings). Your life will be sanctified once you cultivate *samyak bhavam*. Human life is based on feelings. Human life *sans* feelings cannot exist. Today, man lacks peace of mind because he does not have *samyak drishti*, *samyak sravanam*, and *samyak bhavam*.

We blame others for our sufferings. Do not accuse others for your sufferings, because you are yourself the cause of your misery. Happiness or sorrow is of your own making. All that you experience is nothing but the reflection, reaction, and re-sound of what is in you. Buddha, having understood this truth, put his five senses to proper use through which he could attain *Nirvana*. He was in a state of supreme bliss at the time of attaining *Nirvana*. That state could be described as ever blissful, granting happiness, embodiment of wisdom, beyond duality, infinite as the sky, primordial, final goal, one, eternal, pure, immutable, omnipresent witness, beyond emotions, devoid of the three *gunas* (qualities).

When Buddha was at the verge of attaining *Nirvana*, his stepbrother Ananda, who was by his side, started shedding tears. Seeing this Buddha smiled and said, "My dear one, it is rather surprising that you should feel sad about my attaining the state of highest bliss. Instead you should also try to attain this state of supreme bliss by controlling your senses".

Sacred values of Bharatiya culture

Bharat is the motherland of many noble souls. It is therefore essential for all the *Bharatiyas* to understand the sacred history of Bharat. But, today, no one seems to be interested in knowing the history and culture of Bharat. The culture of Bharat is based on *dharma*. The word *dharma* has been misinterpreted as religion. *Dharma* is like a vast ocean, whereas religion is like a pond. The culture of Bharat is pure, unsullied, eternal, and immortal. In olden days, the children were taught the sacred values of Indian culture right from the age of five. Their education would begin with the sacred *mantras* like *Aum Namah Sivaya* and *Aum Namo Narayana*. But in the modern

education system, the divine names such as Siva and Narayana have no place. The children are taught meaningless rhymes like “Ba. Ba. black sheep”. People are not making efforts to understand the efficacy of these *mantras*.

In the Kali age, everyone is a doubting Thomas!

No doubt, worldly education is required, but along with this secular knowledge, one has to make an effort to imbibe cultural values too. It is because of the growth of worldly knowledge without cultural values that man has become a repository of doubts. Even the parents and children, wife and husband lack faith in each other. During the times of Jesus, there was only one doubting Thomas, but in the *Kali Age*, everyone is a doubting Thomas!

Rama and Ravana were equally proficient in 36 forms of knowledge. But sage Valmiki, the composer of the *Ramayana*, portrayed Ravana as a fool and Rama as a noble one because Ravana misused his knowledge, whereas Rama put his knowledge to proper use. That is why Valmiki described Rama as virtuous and noble. Ravana became the root cause for the death of his sons and brothers, because he was unable to control his lust. His entire clan perished due to his wicked qualities and wicked actions. Rama led an ideal life. Today, many people aspire to occupy positions of authority in the political field, though they do not deserve. But Rama renounced the kingdom itself though, being the eldest son, He richly deserved to be the king. He sacrificed everything for the sake of truth. He had firm belief in the *Vedic* dictum, *Sathyannasti paro dharma* (there is no greater *dharma* than truth). He made such a great sacrifice and went to the forest to uphold his father's word. The *Vedas* also clearly state *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thya-*

genaikena amruthatwamanusu (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it). In fact, *tyaga* (sacrifice) is true yoga. If you do not exhale the air that you inhale, your lungs will be affected. If you do not excrete the food you eat, you will have stomach disorders. Likewise, you should give money that you earn in charity with a spirit of sacrifice. There lies the bliss.

The culture of Bharat does not give scope for differences based on caste, creed, color, religion, and nationality. It says,

Let us move together and let us grow together.

Let us share the knowledge and improve upon it.

Let us live in amity and peace without any differences whatsoever.

[Telugu Poem]

It speaks of the principle of equanimity. It says, *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May the whole world be happy!). It treats everyone alike irrespective of caste, creed, color, religion, and nationality. The same principle was stated by Jesus also. He said, "All are one, my dear son, be alike to everyone." In fact, the underlying principle of all the religions is one and the same. But, people have forgotten this unity and have become narrow-minded.

Search for Truth

Embodiments of Love! Love is life. So, one has to channelise this love in the proper direction. Do not let it go in the wrong direction. You can accomplish anything in life if you exercise control over it. The culture of Bharat speaks of *Sathyanveshana* (search for truth). Why should one search for

truth, which is all-pervasive? What is the inner meaning of the word *Sathyanveshana*?

The culture of Bharat gives a beautiful analogy for this. The eyes that see your mother, your wife, your daughter, and your daughter-in-law are the same, but the feelings with which you see them vary. Here *Sathyanveshana* refers to the enquiry into the feelings that you should have when you look at each of them. The culture of Bharat lays great emphasis on self enquiry.

God is everywhere and in everything

Some people say that since God has no form, He does not exist. But, God has form. In this world, there is nothing that exists without form. According to science, the entire world is made up of atoms. They too have form. The *Vedas* say, *Anoraneeyan Mahatomaheeyan* (God is smaller than the smallest atom and bigger than the biggest object).

The atom is God. Right from the water you drink and the food you eat, everything is pervaded by atom. It took thousands of years for the scientists to understand this truth. But the same truth was proclaimed by the tiny tot Prahlada ages ago. He said, “Do not have the feeling that God is here and He is not there. In fact, He is everywhere. You can find Him wherever you search for Him.”

Bharat has been the birthplace of many noble souls like Prahlada who had experienced the omnipresent Divinity. Since ancient times, the *Bharatiyas* worshipped earth, trees, anthills, and mountains because they believed that God is everywhere and in everything.

*Sarvata pani padam tat, sarvatokshi siromukham,
sarvata srutimalloke, sarvamavritya tishtati.*

With hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouths and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe.

God is everywhere. This is the teaching of our ancient culture. Since the human mind has become weak, man is losing faith in these ancient values. Just as the alloys mixed with gold make the gold lose its shine and value, so also the bad qualities and bad feelings have made man lose his value and brilliance.

Only the Atma is true and eternal

Embodiments of Love! Develop faith in God for your own happiness and bliss. If people develop faith in God, the whole country will be happy. You are subjected to misery because you lack faith in the Self. Self confidence is very essential.

Do not get carried away by the worldly education. In fact, all that is related to the mind and senses is nothing but ignorance. The annihilation of mind is true wisdom. Mind is a bundle of thoughts and impulses. So, all that is related to the mind is subject to change. Only the *Atma* is true and eternal.

Many changes occur in man with age, but man remains the same. At the time of birth, you are a child. After ten years, people call you a boy. After thirty years, you become a man. After 75 years, you are called a grandfather. The child, boy, man, and grandfather are one and the same. But you are getting deluded seeing the physical changes. You should always have the changeless truth in your mind. That is the real human value.

Worldly knowledge is also required, but that is not the be-all and end-all of human life. Worldly knowledge is for the happiness in this world and spiritual knowledge is for the happiness thereafter. It is only the spiritual knowledge that is in

you, above you, below you, and around you and that protects you.

Some people deny the existence of God because He is not seen by the naked eye. Can you, with the same analogy, deny the existence of air, which is also not visible to the naked eye? Though the human eye cannot see God, the *hridaya* (heart) can see Him, hear Him, and experience Him. This is the teaching of our ancient culture. This great culture has remained vibrant for thousands of years. Einstein said that energy can be neither created nor destroyed. It only changes its forms. The same thing can be said about our ancient culture also.

Put into practice at least one sacred teaching

Among the numbers one and nine, one is greater because you cannot have the latter without the former. It is only out of the number one that millions have emerged. Zero gains value if the number one precedes it. The value becomes more and more with the increase in the number of zeros. One is the hero, world is zero. That hero is God. You are all like zeros. So, try to have the hero by your side.

Develop the faith that God is. Mere repetition of the names potato and *chapati* will not appease your hunger. Likewise, merely reading the spiritual texts or listening to the discourses of holy men will not grant you fulfillment. Instead put into practice at least one sacred teaching. Only then can you experience happiness.

Consider this example: Put two spoons of sugar in a tumbler containing water. The sugar gets collected at the bottom of the tumbler. If you drink the water without mixing the sugar, the water will not have any taste. Take a spoon and stir it; then the whole glass of water will taste sweet.

The human heart is like a tumbler containing water. Divinity can be compared to sugar. Stir it with the spoon of *buddhi* (intellect). The process of stirring is enquiry. Once this is done, the sweetness of divinity will spread to all the limbs of the body. Then all that you see, hear, talk, and do will be suffused with divinity. Your life itself will be filled with love.

You have to grow in faith in order to develop love. Many people consider faith as mere foolishness. But truly speaking, bookish knowledge *sans* practical knowledge can be termed foolishness. You should never be satisfied with mere bookish knowledge and superficial knowledge. You need to develop general knowledge and discrimination knowledge also. Only then you will attain practical knowledge, which is very essential. But, today very few seem to be having practical knowledge. Most of the people are wasting their lives in acquiring superficial knowledge.

Surrender all your thoughts and worries to God

In the field of spirituality, you cannot attain anything if you do not have faith and determination. When you go to the market, you cannot get even a small handkerchief if you do not pay a certain amount of money. Likewise, you cannot attain divine grace unless you offer your love to God.

God is also like a business man. What sort of business is He engaged in? Not worldly business, purely spiritual. He receives your love and showers His grace on you. Surrender all your thoughts and worries to God and receive bliss in return.

This is the business you are supposed to do with God. But in this *Kali* age, people are engaged in a different type of business with God. Students go to temple and pray, "O God, I will offer two coconuts if You make me pass the examination."

What will God do with your coconuts? It is because of such foolish vows that spirituality has become a matter of ridicule in the eyes of many.

Many of you may be aware that in Andhra Pradesh, there is a very famous pilgrimage center named Tirupati, where Lord Venkateswara is the presiding deity. Some people go there and pray,

‘Swami, I will offer my hair to You if I win the lottery.’ They do not realize that God is not in need of their dirty hair.

You have to offer all your wicked qualities and wicked thoughts to God and receive sacred qualities and sacred thoughts in return. Suppose you have a damaged currency note. None will accept it except the Reserve Bank, where you can get a brand new note in exchange of the damaged one. Likewise, your mind and heart, which are polluted with wicked thoughts, can be compared to damaged currency notes. Not even your wife and children would accept them. So, offer them to God who, like the Reserve Bank chairman, will give you good mind and good heart in return. Thereafter, you will lead a happy life.

Take to the path of spirituality

According to the *Vedas*, human life is highly sacred. Do not make it profane by wicked thoughts and wicked actions. Fill your life with love and take to the path of spirituality. Spirituality does not mean outward worship and rituals alone. You should have the feeling of worship within. You may also do it externally if you are interested. There is nothing wrong in it. But it will be a futile exercise if it is not done with the proper feelings. All these rituals should awaken the spiritual awareness in you. Otherwise, you will be leading the life of an

animal, always aspiring for the worldly pleasures and comforts.

*Ahara nidra bhaya methuneshu
Samanyametata pasubir naranam
Jnanam naranam sdhikam visesham
Jnanena soonya pasubhissamana.*

Food, sleep, fear and progeny are common to mankind and animals.

Only man is endowed with wisdom.

Man bereft of wisdom is equivalent to an animal.

Today, people are amassing wealth, but only a few of them are making proper use of it. Many are receiving high salaries. But, their work is not commensurate with the salary they receive. “*Sarvakarma Bhagavad preethyartham* (whatever you do, do it to please God).” Only then your life will be redeemed.

Proper utilisation of wealth

Embodiments of Love! There are innumerable rich men, educationists, judges, scientists, and intellectuals in this country. But not many are putting their wealth and resources to proper use. Very few are discharging their duties properly. This is the reason the country is facing hardships today. All those that amass wealth must realise that they cannot carry even a naya paisa with them when they leave this world. The money that you earn from the society should be used for the welfare of the society only.

You all know that Kulwant Rai spent crores of rupees to build this magnificent building. There are many rich people in this country, but how many are engaging themselves in such acts of service and sacrifice? Sacrifice is the highest virtue.

Some people are building hospitals and educational institutions with business motive, spending crores of rupees. If they invest 50 crores on a hospital, they expect a profit of 100 crores. Similarly, with the investment of 50 crores on an educational institution, they want to make 200 crores. This sort of business is an unhealthy practice. Whatever you do, do it for the benefit of others.

When you stepped into this world, you did not bring anything with you, nor can you take anything with you when you leave. No benefit accrues to you from having palatial buildings and huge bank balances if you cannot use them for the service of the society. Spend your money for the welfare of society. Only then you can win divine grace. Serve the needy by providing comforts and conveniences.

Consider every good work as God's work

There are many poor people in Delhi who cannot afford medical care. There are many more who are unable to send their children to school owing to financial constraints. Establish hospitals and schools, which will render free service to the poor. A third person need not tell you these noble ideas. You should take the initiative on your own. I never instructed Kulwant Rai to construct this building. It was his own idea that took this shape. Such noble ideas originate due to the merits done in past lives. There may be many people who feel jealous of him. It is his good luck to have built this building and it is their misfortune to feel jealous about it. Everyone must undertake work. Consider every good work as God's work. Truly speaking, Kulwant Rai has done a great service to the Organization by getting this beautiful building constructed. He has

done this not for his benefit, but for the service of others. Every rich man should develop the spirit of sacrifice.

It is a mistake to think that Bharat is a poor country. It is the very abode of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. In the olden days, in Punjab, there were houses made of silver. The foreign invaders plundered those houses and took away all the silver on camels. They looted all the gold from Somnath temple. If Bharat were a poor country, it would not have suffered such foreign invasions in the past. There is no dearth of wealth in Bharat. It is unfortunate that some people call Bharat a poor country. Bharat is the land of plenty and prosperity. Bharatiyas are not poor; they are very rich.

Who is the richest man in the world? He who has much satisfaction. Who is the poorest man in the world? The one who has too many. The one imbued with the spirit of sacrifice is the richest man. If you have, ten rupees in your pocket, give at least one rupee to the needy. However the beggars are not satisfied with one rupee because they cannot buy even a small piece of bread with it these days.

Whatever I do is only for the welfare of other

Our ancients used to attach more value to their word than to money. It is your good fortune that you are born in such a sacred land of Bharat. You should uphold and propagate *dharma* to the rest of the world, befitting your nationality. It gives me great joy to find anyone practicing and propagating *dharma*. Believe it or not, there is not an iota of selfishness in Me from top to toe. Whatever I do is only for the welfare of others. Be good, see good and do good. That is true human quality.

God is the embodiment of *Sath*, *Chit* and *Ananda*. *Sath* means Being (that which is permanent). *Chit* means Aware-

ness. The combination of *Sath* and *Chit* results in *Ananda*. So, in order to experience bliss, one has to make friendship with God. God is the only true friend. All of you are aware how the worldly friends are. As long as there is water in the tank, you find thousands of frogs living there. But all the frogs desert the pond once it gets dried up. Likewise, all worldly friends swarm around you saying hello, hello as long as you are in position of authority and have wealth. Once you lose both, none will look at your face even to say goodbye. But friendship with God is true and eternal. God is always with you in times of both pain and pleasure. King Harischandra underwent many trials and tribulations to uphold truth. He always had the protection of God because he stuck to the path of truth. So, have faith in God and tread along the path of truth. Money comes and goes like passing clouds and makes many rounds, but morality comes and grows. This is the thing you have to note today.

Delhi is the capital of Bharat. So, if Delhi is good, the whole country will be good. Anything can be achieved through unity. Give up individual and political differences. Have the national interest uppermost in your mind. Stand united and be prepared to sacrifice even your life for the welfare of the country. Uphold the prestige of the country and spread it far and wide.

Truth has to be conveyed in a fearless manner

Embodiments of Love! If you strive hard to put at least five of your fellowmen on the right path every day, you can bring about unity and transformation among the 98 crore Indian population. Pray for the welfare of the nation. Develop the spirit of patriotism. Then the society and nation will prosper. I hope I am not causing inconvenience to you by speaking for a long

time. But, such sacred teachings have to be imparted. Truth has to be conveyed in a fearless manner. There is no need to fear if you are following the truth. Human life is governed by four F's:

Follow the master
Face the devil
Fight to the end
Finish the game.

Your conscience is your master, so follow your conscience. Life is a game, play it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is love, enjoy it. If you understand this and put at least one teaching into practice, your life will be redeemed. Always contemplate on God. The secret of happiness lies in chanting God's name. You can chant any name of God and redeem your life.

12 March 1999
Delhi

When you install God in your heart, there is no room in it for anything else. But today's aspirants treat the heart as a musical chair. They go from one "swami" to another and shift from one kind of sadhana to another. Of what avail is this kind of merry-go-round? It is a waste of time and of life itself. One heart, one thought, one God, one Goal. Whether you utter the name Allah, Jesus, Buddha, Zoroaster, or Guru Nanak —it is all the same.

—Baba

Put Ceiling On Your Desires

*Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred
land of Bharat.*

*Of all the sacred virtues, adherence to truth is
true penance.*

*The nectarine feeling in this country is the
feeling toward ones mother.*

*Character is valued far more superior to the
very life itself.*

*People have forgotten the basic principles of
the culture of Bharat*

*And are following and adopting Western cul-
ture today.*

*Bharatiyas are not aware of the greatness of
their own cultural heritage*

*Just as the mighty elephant is not aware of its
own strength.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love!

Today man has taken to many paths to acquire wisdom. All the knowledge that he has acquired is not true knowledge in the strict sense of the term. Knowledge of the spirit, *Atmic* knowledge, is the true knowledge. That is *Brahma Jnana*. *Atma*, *Brahman*, and *Jnana* are synonyms. On this basis, the *Vedas* declare: *Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma* (*Brahman* is truth, wisdom and eternity).

Work, worship, wisdom

Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has laid emphasis on these three aspects: work, worship, and wisdom.

Work, worship, and wisdom all begin with service. No matter what service it is, if it is done with love and divine feelings, it becomes *upasana* (worship).

What is wisdom? All that is related to our senses, the fleeting objects of the material world, and our actions, speak of our ignorance. Wisdom dawns the moment the mind is withdrawn. The thoughtless state between two consecutive thoughts is *Brahma Jnana* (*Atmic*, spiritual wisdom). Man is not able to experience this thoughtless state of Brahman and is carried away by fleeting, ephemeral, and momentary things. True wisdom dawns when all thoughts are decimated. Sai's philosophy speaks of the unity of work, worship, and wisdom.

The culture of Bharat believes in unity in diversity, which is true wisdom. Many intellectuals observe multiplicity or plurality in unity, but there are very few men of wisdom who observe unity in diversity. Since ancient days, the inhabitants of this holy land have been practicing these principles and have

been sharing them with the rest of the world. This country has always prayed for the advancement and welfare of the whole world. That is the meaning of the *Vedic* dictum, *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May the whole world be happy!) Our prayer is not limited to Bharat only. We pray for the welfare of the whole world. But the modern *Bharatiyas* (Indians) are not able to know the culture of Bharat, which is endowed with noble virtues of broadmindedness.

Embodiments of Love! You have to understand the sanctity of the culture of Bharat. You may go through any number of books, you may visit noble souls, you may listen to sacred teachings, but the reality is one. People read hundreds of books, but very few translate them into action. It is enough if you put into practice at least one principle.

Man is making every attempt today to be happy, blissful. Where do you get bliss? Is it in the material things, in the world, in individuals, in books? No, not at all. Bliss is within one's own Self. You have forgotten your true Self, the source of bliss. You are struggling hard for artificial happiness outside. You are not aware of the reality that lies in the heart. In fact, all the bliss is there. The principle of love originates from the heart, not from the world.

Everyone should develop love more and more. But, today, there is hatred and anger everywhere. Wherever you see, there is desire, enmity, and fear. How do you expect to be in peace? How do you expect to be blissful? Light the lamp of love within. Then fear and illusion can be removed and you can have the vision of the Self. Otherwise you are bound to suffer.

You have to exercise a ceiling on your desires. There are rules for ceiling with regard to land and property. But you have no ceiling on your desires. Ceiling on desires means exercising

control over them. You can be happy once the desires are controlled.

Your life is a long journey. You should have less luggage (desires) in this long journey of life. Therefore, it is said: less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. So, ceiling on desires is what you have to adopt today. You have to cut short your desires day by day. You are under the mistaken notion that happiness lies in the fulfillment of desires. But, in fact, happiness begins to dawn when desires are totally eradicated. When you reduce your desires, you advance towards the state of renunciation.

You have many desires. What do you get out of them? You are bound to face the consequences when you claim something as yours. When you claim a piece of land as yours, then you will have to reap the harvest. This instinct of ego and attachment will put you to suffering. You will be blissful the moment you give up ego and attachment.

Independence without unity is meaningless

The Prime Minister, Ministers, Chief Justice of India, and other high officers assembled in the capital, Delhi. All of them mentioned that we underwent tremendous sufferings and hardships, and lost many lives to achieve independence. But we have not achieved unity in this country.

What is the use of achieving independence without unity? We find that murders, kidnappings, hijacks have increased after attaining independence. Is this the type of independence we wanted? No. Independence is meant to confer peace, and it should develop the culture of the nation. We should not be dependent on others. We should be independent in every way.

Bharat is a sacred land. Noble souls were born here. Bharat was ruled by Sri Rama Himself. This is the land of the song celestial, the *Bhagavad Gita*. This is the birthplace of the first composer, Valmiki. This is the birthplace of Veda Vyasa, who classified the *Vedas*. This is the land traversed by Lord Buddha. This is a land of merit and sacrifice. This is the birthplace of spiritual aspirants, seers and sages.

But, the modern man does not have even an iota of sacrifice. “*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike arnritat-vamanusu* (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it).” So, cultivate the spirit of sacrifice. It is possible only when you develop love within.

Develop love, practice sacrifice

There are many rich people in this country. There are many intellectuals. We have also men of valor. All are here. But what is the use? There is hatred between person and person. There is hatred and enmity between people of the same profession. It is a very bad quality. All are one; be alike to everyone. You have to love everybody. But, today, people are not broadminded. There should be expansion love. Today, there is only contraction love.

The man who goes by the mind will ruin himself.

He is worse than an animal.

The one who goes by the intellect is the one of wisdom.

[Telugu Poem]

So, you have to grow in intellect. As long as the mind persists, you are bound in illusion, you are bound to suffer.

It is the mind that causes misery. It is the mind that is full of desires. It is the mind that makes heaven or hell. *Mano moolam idam jagat* (this world is the creation of the mind). Since you are caught up with the whims and vagaries of the mind, you have forgotten the eternal path.

Embodiments of Love! Love everybody, but do not trust anybody. You have to repose your trust only in God. What is the reason? Why should you not trust man? Man is not permanent. The *Gita* says the world is transitory, fleeting, and impermanent.

Human body is not permanent.

It is full of dirt and diseases.

It cannot cross this ocean of life.

Oh man, never think that this life is eternal.

[Telugu Poem]

Love is within you

People go by this body and forget the divinity within. Have strong faith in God. Do not have faith in this body, which is temporary. Body is like a water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the body, don't follow the mind. Follow the conscience. That is the principle of the *Atma*. You will experience divinity only when you follow your conscience.

You may worship God in any name and form. God does not take into consideration your caste or community. He expects only love. You don't need to do penance or undertake any rigorous spiritual practice. You can cultivate love easily. Love is within you. Develop love, which already exists. You have to share this love with everybody. Love even the one who hates you. To harm a person who harmed you is nothing great. Real greatness lies in loving the person who harmed you.

Know your true identity

Embodiments of Love! Human life is full of love. What is the purpose of life? It is love and love alone. Love is God. Live in love. Divinity manifests only when you develop love. There is no need to search for Him anywhere. The Bible said so. Today, man is in search of God. Why should you search for God when He is everywhere? You are God. All *sadhana* (spiritual practice) will go in vain if you do not know your true identity. Instead of asking others, “who are you, who are you,” better ask yourself, “who am I, who am I.” This is my book. This is my tumbler. Then who am I? This feeling of “my”, is *maya* (illusion). First know who you are.

All this is matter. All this is negative. You are the master of this material world. Master the mind and be a mastermind. You should make an effort to know your true identity. To know this, you should first give up body attachment.

This is my handkerchief. When I say this is “my handkerchief,” I am separate from the handkerchief. Similarly, when I say this is “my body,” I am separate from the body. “My mind” means I am separate from my mind. Then who am I? Constant enquiry on these lines would lead you to self realization.

People are heroes in doing experiments in the laboratory, but zeros in experience. You should be heroes in the practical field. It is useless to be a hero in reading books or in giving lectures. There is only one hero, and He is God. *Ekam sath vipra bahudha vadanti* is the teaching of the *Vedas*. God is the only truth. All the rest is falsehood. Everything becomes truth in the company of God.

Zero preceded by one becomes ten. As the number of zeros increases, the value also increases. If the number one is erased,

nothing remains. Therefore, hero becomes zero if he forgets God. You may be an intellectual with great erudition and exalted position. But, you cannot call yourself intelligent if you forget God.

Easy way to know God

Science has progressed to a great extent in Bharat. Man has undertaken space travel also. But what is the use? Man wants to know what is there in space. He wants to know what is there at the moon. He wants to reach even the sun. First recognize the divinity within yourself. Open the doors of your heart. Develop love more and more. Understand the truth. Experience God. There lies the bliss. It is very easy to know God, but man does not understand this.

You have to make every effort to understand the immanent divinity. The divinity within is covered by ego and anger. Therefore, it is said, “*Moham hithva punar vidya* (real knowledge dawns when attachment is destroyed).” Where does this attachment come from? Excessive desires lead to attachment.

Embodiments of Love! All are embodiments of God. “*Sahasra seersha Purusha sahasraksha sahasrapad* (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet).” You will experience it once you enquire deep within.

You may attain peace by undertaking *Japa* (repetition of the name), *dhyana* (meditation), and *yoga*. But this peace is not permanent; it is temporary. To attain permanent peace, develop love within. Love can turn earth into sky and sky into earth. This sacred love is within you. But, you direct it in the wrong direction and thereby it gets perverted. You are responsible for the loss and suffering. You are responsible for the wicked actions and agitations outside.

The previous speaker spoke about diseases and their cure. Why do diseases arise? The number of doctors is increasing day by day. Today, we have a doctor for every family. Each house has at least two patients. Most of the diseases are psychological. You are bound to be sick if you go on feeling you are sick. Never think you are sick. Always have the feeling that you are happy and healthy. Develop sacred love and experience your innate divinity. This is the culture of Bharat. Bharata — *Bha* means effulgence. Effulgence is God, *Rata* means “to love”. One who has love for God is a true *Bharatiya* (Indian).

Intelligence is gifted to mankind to know God, not to amass wealth. Why do you study? You have to study to get rid of ignorance. True education lies in giving up ignorance and recognizing divinity.

Man faces problems in life because he lacks unity

Embodiments of Love! Repeated teachings do not help you to understand Divinity. You are not able to understand Divinity due to the consequences of your actions in many past lives. Today, human values are on the decline. Man originated lakhs of years ago. But, till this day, he has not understood human values. It is said, “Proper study of mankind is man.” What is this proper study of mankind? It is the unity of thought, word, and deed. Man faces problems in life because he lacks unity.

Let there be perfect harmony in thought, word, and deed right from this day. You should say what you think and do what you say. You do not need to search for God. You are God. God is in you, with you, above you, below you. and around you. Understand this truth and turn your vision inward. Only then you can attain bliss.

I have been coming to Mumbai for many years. What have you achieved during this period? What spiritual practices have you undertaken? What truths have you known? Today, people crave bookish knowledge, superficial knowledge, and general knowledge, but they do not have practical knowledge. The one who has practical knowledge will have understanding of the divinity. But, today, people are heroes at platform and zeros in practice. You should be heroes in practice. Put into practice at least one sacred principle. At least speak the truth or develop love. That is enough. There is no greater *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) than this. *Sathyannasti paro dharma* (there is no greater *dharma* than adhering to Truth). What is *dharma*? True *dharma* lies in developing love. It is love that unifies all. This love will help you to experience unity in diversity.

Bhajan singing makes the heart sacred

Embodiments of Divine Atma! Whatever spiritual path you tread, it should help you to uproot ignorance. What is ignorance? It is the belief in all that is outside, the external scenario. You have to discriminate whether it is right or wrong, good or bad. You should have *samyak drishti* (right vision). Then you will attain deservedness.

I am always ready to tell you the easy path to Divinity. I will be happy only when you are happy. Make every effort to put into practice what you hear.

Bhajans are highly sacred. *Bhajan* singing makes the heart sacred. What is important is that it should come out from the heart. *Bhajan* is not just rhythm, tune and beat. You should sing God's name with love. You will see the manifestation of Divinity with your physical eyes when you sing His glory with all love.

Many noble souls merged in God through love. Don't you know Mira, who attained liberation by chanting Krishna's name? Prahlada was bitten by serpents, trampled upon by elephants, and given poison. Yet, chanted God's name and attained liberation. He considered everything divine. *Yad dhavam tad bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the experience). So, you should think of God with love.

14 March 1999.
Mumbai

This Sai has come in order to achieve the supreme task of uniting the entire mankind as one family through the bond of brotherhood; of affirming and illumining the inner reality of each being in order to reveal the divine, which is the basis on which the entire cosmos rests; and of instructing all to recognise the coming divine heritage that binds man to man, so that man can rid himself of the animal and rise to the divine, which is his goal!

—Baba

Start New Year with spirit of love

If the feelings and intentions
Behind your actions are good,
The results will also be good.
If your intentions are bad,
You will certainly meet with failure.

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! Thoughts are the permanent asset of man. Thoughts are based on feelings and feelings on the mind. As the thoughts, so the mind. If thoughts are good, humanity will blossom into Divinity. Today man's behaviour is not good because his thoughts are polluted. Because the thoughts and actions of man have become perverted, the country is passing through troubles and turmoil. Man has filled his mind with thoughts about mundane, ephemeral, and transient things. This is totally negative in nature. Only thoughts based on Truth are positive.

Spiritual wealth of Bharat

In ancient times, the *Bharatiyas* (Indians), before partaking of food, used to chant the prayer. “*Annam Brahma, Raso Vishnu, Bhokta Devo Maheswara* (food is Brahma, the essence is Vishnu, and the one who partakes of it is Maheswara)”. The essence of food permeates the whole body and gives physical strength and satisfaction. It is the food that sustains the physical body. The subtle part of the food becomes the mind, and the subtler part of the food becomes speech. Human quality is expressed through thoughts, words, and deeds. The gross part of food is Brahma, the subtle part is Vishnu, and the subtlest part is Siva. So, the Divine Trinity is present in the food that we eat. Sacred thoughts, good words, and noble deeds are the true human values. But modern man lacks in human values.

Today, man is bereft of gratitude, which is one of the most essential qualities. He forgets the help rendered to him by others. As long as man is alive, he should be grateful for the help he received from others. There are two things you have to forget: the help you have rendered to others and the harm others have done to you. If you remember the help you have rendered, you will always expect something in return. Remembrance of the harm done to you by others generates in you a sense of revenge. You should remember only the help you received from others. The one with these sacred qualities is an ideal man.

In this ephemeral and transient world, man always aspires for peace and security. But money, education, position of authority and physical comforts cannot confer peace and security. Peace originates from the heart. Man can experience peace and security only when his heart is filled with love. Love is God, love is Nature, love is life and love is the true human

value. Bereft of love, man is equivalent to a corpse. You should lead a life filled with love. Love even the worst of your enemies. It is on the basis of the principle of love that the culture of Bharath has declared: *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May the whole world be happy!).

The land of Bharat is suffused with love

Since ancient times, this sacred land of Bharath has shared its spiritual wealth with the rest of the world to foster peace and security. It is because of its immense spiritual wealth that Bharat continues to be a land of peace and security in spite of many foreign invasions in the past. Without Bharat, there would be no trace of spirituality in this world. There is truth in the air of Bharat. There is *dharma* in the dust of Bharat. The land of Bharat is suffused with love. The water of Bharat overflows with compassion.

Having taken birth in this sacred land of Bharat, you must uphold and sustain the principles of truth, love, righteousness, and compassion. For whose sake should you uphold these principles? Is it for the sake of society or for the country? No. You should uphold these principles for your own sake. Only when everyone fosters these principles will the country prosper.

Today man is engulfed in selfishness and self-interest and is leading an unsacred life. Our ancient seers used to partake of food with the feeling that food is Brahma, the essence is Vishnu, and the one who partakes of it is Siva. Such a feeling would foster pure and sacred thoughts in us. Today, man has strayed away from the path of truth and righteousness. People criticise those who follow truth and righteousness. It is very easy to criticise, but very difficult to understand. The *Vedas*

say: *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak the truth and follow righteousness). Since ancient times, the *Bharatiyas* have considered these two as their two eyes.

True spirit of celebrating Ugadi

You would have celebrated many *Ugadi* (New Year day) festivals in your life. Certain traditional practices go with every festival, such as having a sacred bath, wearing new clothes, cleaning the house and decorating it with buntings of green leaves. Greatness lies in purifying our thoughts, not merely the transient human body. The significance of a festival does not lie in wearing new clothes but in cultivating new and noble thoughts. The house should be decorated not merely with the buntings of green leaves, but with buntings of love. Share your love with everyone who visits your house. Only then would we be celebrating the festival in its true spirit.

Today, we are celebrating Ugadi, which means the commencement of a new era. It denotes the beginning of *Kali Yuga*, not *Krita Yuga* or *Treta Yuga*. This is the beginning of *Nuthana Samvathsara* (New Year). *Vathsara* is another name of God. That is why God is extolled as *Vathsaraswarupaya Namah* (salutations to the one who is the embodiment of *Vathsara*). Time is God. *Vathsara* is its cosmic form. So, time and *Vathsara* connote the same Divinity.

The New Year has to be sanctified by sacred thoughts and broad feelings. Today, humanity is stricken with fear and restlessness. Courage and strength are on the decline, because you have unsacred thoughts and wicked feelings. Your enemies are not outside. Your bad thoughts are your worst enemies and thoughts based on Truth are your best friends. But today, people do not befriend the thoughts based on Truth, which are es-

entially divine. You have to make friendship with *sath*, the eternal truth. *Sath* means Being, the ever-existent God. The worldly friends and enemies change with the passage of time, but *sath* is the true and eternal friend. This friend is always with you, in you, around you, above you, below you and protects you just as the eyelid protects the eye.

Exemplary devotion of Delhi seva dal

Embodiments of Love! There is nothing great in going round the world and getting accolades. Lakhs and lakhs of people in Delhi and Mumbai enjoyed the divine bliss during Swami's visit last week. It was not a temporary joy; it was the everlasting love etched in their hearts. That is why, while I was leaving Delhi, they expressed their feelings by putting up a huge banner with the words, "*Thanks for the visit. Please come back soon!*"

The aerodrome is situated miles away from the city. During Swami's drive, thousands of youth of the age group of 25 to 30 flanked both sides of the road with devotion, discipline, and enthusiasm. Usually, one does not find such well-behaved youth in cities like Mumbai and Delhi. It was a clear indication of the transformation brought about in them.

What wonderful service they have rendered! I have been observing the service activities of various *seva dal* groups for the past fifty years, but the service rendered by the Delhi *Seva Dal* (the Sai volunteer service organisation) was of very high standard. They discharged their duties, forgoing even food and drink. They said, "Since Swami says duty is God and work is worship, we are ready to sacrifice even our lives in following Swami's commands. Only then we shall have pleased Swami." Such was their devotion!

No one exactly knew Swami's schedule. Therefore, one could find a *seva dal* every nook and corner of Delhi carrying a cellular phone to exchange minute to minute information regarding Swami's movements. There was no complaint whatsoever from any quarter. You are all aware of the fact that neither the police nor the media take note of our *seva dal* activities. But this time in Delhi, the police personnel as well as the newspapers extolled our *seva dal* sky high. They said such selfless and dedicated youth are found only in Sri Sathya Sai Organisation.

The *seva dal* youth were ten thousand in number. Whomsoever I asked, "What do you want, boy?" the reply was one and the same, "Swami, I want You, I want Your love." They were very humble in their approach and spoke softly and sweetly. I often say, "You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly." That obliging nature was very much evident in Delhi *Seva Dal*. They brought a good name to the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation by their exemplary behaviour. In other states also, *seva dal* are doing good work. The whole world has recognised the truth that if there is any organisation where love, unity, friendship, co-operation, and selfless service are practised, it is only the Sri Sathya Sai Organisations. There are many organisations in this world, but nowhere would you find the idealism that is found in Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation.

Revival of ancient culture of Bharat

While I was in Mumbai, the Health Minister of Maharashtra came to Me and said, "Swami, we have many doctors here and we would like to work in collaboration with the Super Specialty Hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam. Every little activity

that Sri Sathya Sai Organisation undertakes is an ideal to the rest of the world. We have seen many organisations, but the spirit of sacrifice that is found in Sri Sathya Sai Organisation is not found anywhere else. We have spoken to many members of *Sai Seva Dal*. They are all highly devoted, dedicated and disciplined. Such an ideal organisation should spread all over the world.”

Be “bigger”, not beggar

Swami does not ask anything for Himself. Today there are many Swamis and *Ammas* who are making money in the name of spirituality. The Sri Sathya Sai Organisation has no connection whatsoever with them. You should not have anything to do with them. The Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation should progress with the spirit of sacrifice. Only then will the pristine culture of Bharat be firmly re-established. It will not be long before you will be a witness to this. Very soon, we are going to revive the ancient culture of Bharat. All the members of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation should develop sacred thoughts and noble feelings. We should perform all our actions based on Truth. Then victory will certainly be ours.

Keep this in mind: never ask anything from anybody. If you want anything, come to Me, I will give. Only beggars stretch their hands in front of others, not devotees. You should be “bigger”, not beggar. Help the poor and the needy, serve society, and lead an ideal life. Only then you will be called a true devotee. I have explained to you many times the qualities of a true devotee. They are: virtues, good intellect, truth, devotion, discipline, duty. Participate in service activities.

This morning I am going to Kadugodi to inaugurate a *vridhashram* (home for the aged). There are many old people

in society who are leading a miserable life, since they have been deserted by their children. Anybody is welcome in this home for the aged. This is started to see that the old people may lead a peaceful life till their last breath. One should be in bliss at the time of death, and not be shedding tears of sorrow. One's last moments are the foundation for one's next birth.

Life bereft of sacrifice is inhuman

All members of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation should cultivate the spirit of sacrifice and service to help others. There are many affluent people in the society, but few have this spirit of sacrifice.

Life bereft of sacrifice is inhuman. The *Vedas* said: “*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amruthatwamanasu* (one can attain immortality neither by rituals nor by progeny nor wealth; only sacrifice confers immortality).”

We do not need any publicity or advertisement. Work silently. Before leaving for Delhi, I instructed Kulwant Rai not to give any prior publicity about My impending visit. Why worry about newspapers? There should be heart to heart and love to love connection. Love expands automatically all over the world. We are able to listen to the programmes broadcast from the Delhi radio station through radio waves. Similarly, good thoughts are like radio waves. These waves should spread through love, not through publicity. *Prachar* (publicity) is not the *achar* (practice) of Sai Organisation. We should work for the progress of the Organisation through practice and spread the message of love throughout the world. The entire humanity should unite and live like one family.

Ushering in an era of Peace

The name of the New Year is *Pramadi*, which implies dangerous prospects. But no danger would befall this world. The name may imply danger, but in reality the world will attain prosperity. We shall escape from all dangers. Be prepared to face anything with love and broadmindedness. There are no dangers either for the world or for the nation or for the society or for the family. A person bearing the name Dharmaraja may not follow *dharma* at all. Similarly, this year, although named *Pramadi*, will not bring any calamities.

Embodiments of Love! Do not get elated by listening to what happened in Delhi and Mumbai. They have done it for their satisfaction. I have nothing to do with that. Praise or censure does not affect Me. Your devotion also should be steady. Some people shower praise on Me only when their desires are fulfilled. Happiness is obtained not when desires are fulfilled, but when desires are destroyed. Whether your desires are fulfilled or not, always be happy. Strive to attain this state of bliss. Develop friendship with God. Worldly friends have their dwellings outside, but God, your true friend, resides in your heart. So, you need not search for Him outside. Turn your vision inward and there you will find God.

Love is the most essential of all the qualities we should possess. So, cultivate selfless love. Love is God, God is love. Today is the New Year day. In this New Year, drive away all bad thoughts, breed good feelings, and spend time in contemplation of God. When you tread this path, you can achieve anything. You will not have any problems. Many of you are apprehensive of what lies in store for you this year. Nothing will happen. What we encounter depends on our thoughts. So, entertain good thoughts, and you are bound to be successful.

Keep in mind the welfare of nation and society

Embodiments of Love! I bless you with a long, happy and healthy life. Set an ideal to the rest of the country. Very soon, all countries will come together and will attain peace and security. I told Vajpayee, “Vajpayee, you are a good person, making efforts in the right direction. But develop friendship with Pakistan and China. If India, Pakistan, and China become united, they will make a formidable force.” I told this on 11th evening. Vajpayee again came on the 13th and informed that he was happy that both Pakistan and China had responded positively to his invitation. He said, “It is Swami’s Divine Will that has made it possible.”

But, in fact, there is no unity amongst *Bharatiyas* (Indians) themselves. Today, one finds several groups in a single party. Parties may vary, ideologies may differ, but all should stand united. Never attach undue importance to parties and ideologies. Keep in mind the welfare of the nation. The welfare of the world depends on the welfare of the nation. The welfare of the nation depends on the welfare of the society. So, whatever you do, bear in mind the welfare of the society and the nation. There may be differences of opinion, but they should not stand in the way of unity. This is what the ancient culture of Bharat taught in the beginning.

*Let us move together, let us grow together
In intelligence and share the knowledge
That we have acquired.
Let us live in peace and harmony
without any conflicts.*

[Telugu Poem]

Only then Bharat will prosper. Bharat is the leader and an ideal to the rest of the world in the field of spirituality. So, all *Bharatiyas* should foster broad feelings. Today the country is facing problems because people have become narrow-minded.

The worst enemies of man

Every human being has the evil tendencies of *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), etc. in him. The great epics, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata*, and *Mahabharata*, teach good lessons to control lust, greed and anger, which are the enemies of man.

Ravana, who had mastered all sixty-four branches of knowledge and was a great scholar and a mighty warrior, lost his life and caused the ruination of his entire clan because of lust. It is not enough if you merely read the *Ramayana*; you should grasp its real significance.

Hiranyakasipu was a great scientist. Today, scientists have traveled only up to the moon, but Hiranyakasipu could travel even to the sun. He had control over all five elements, but he became a victim of his anger. His anger was directed at God Himself. Ultimately, what happened? He ruined himself. He subjected his son to all sorts of trials and tribulations and sought to kill him by many means, like throwing him from the hilltop, casting him into the sea, putting him in a pit of poisonous snakes and making elephants trample upon him. Because Prahlada was chanting the name of Narayana (God) ceaselessly, all the obstacles became Narayana for him and he came out unscathed. That is why it is said, *Yath bhavam, that bhavathi* (as is the feeling, so is the experience). God manifests on the basis of the feelings of the devotee. If you pray to God with purity of heart and love, you will experience God.

In the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana personified greed. He refused to share the kingdom with the Pandavas and denied them their rightful share. Due to this greed, he perished along with his entire clan.

These three illustrations echo the need for the eradication of the feelings of lust, anger and greed. The Pandavas emerged victorious because they practiced all the human values of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa*. If you follow these values, success will follow automatically.

Today, New Year has begun. With sacred feelings and divine thoughts, cultivate the spirit of love in you. God is not found separately in a temple or in an Ashram, etc. Truth is God. Love is God. *Dharma* is God. When you worship God by following these principles, He will manifest Himself then and there. There is no doubt about this. Love God wholeheartedly. Pray to God and make friends with Him. You can achieve anything if you have God as your friend.

Learn today to fill your heart with love and adorn your hand with the ornament of sacrifice. Sacrifice is the jewel for the hands. Truth is the necklace one should wear. You must develop the habit of adorning these jewels in the New Year. In this New Year, develop divine love and foster peace in the country. Pray with a broad feeling: *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May the whole world be happy)! Start the New Year with this prayer. Then, you will lead a blissful and peaceful life full of enthusiasm. To lead such a life, cultivate noble thoughts. Love God and make friendship with Him, and you are bound to be successful in all your endeavours.

18 March 1999

Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan

Relevance of Ramayana to modern life

*The whole universe is under the control of God.
God is governed by Truth.
Noble souls are the guardians of Truth.
Such noble souls are verily
The embodiments of Divinity.*

[Sanskrit sloka]

Embodiments of Love! All are essentially the embodiments of Divinity. *Eswara sarva bhoothanam* (God dwells in all beings). *Isavasyam idam jagat* (God permeates the entire universe). Where is the need to search for such an all-pervasive Divinity?

Sarvata Pani Padam Tath Sarvathokshi Shiromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thisthati.

[Sanskrit sloka]

How can you search for Him who is moving about with thousands of feet, thousands of eyes, and thousands of ears? It

is utterly foolish to search for God. God is within you. Since you have forgotten your true Self and are carried away by the temporary and transient physical body, you are unable to understand the Divine. When you get rid of body attachment and develop attachment towards the Self, only then you can understand the divine *Atmic* Principle.

Values contained in Rama's story

Embodiments of Love! Life is like a game of chess; not merely that, it is like a battlefield. The story of Rama teaches us the threefold *Dharma* (code of conduct) pertaining to the individual, the family and the society. You have to make every effort to understand the duties of the individual, the family and the society. Rama is the ocean of compassion. He is love personified. It is possible to understand His divinity only through the path of love. Love is the undercurrent of human life. Man will be able to manifest his innate divinity only when he develops love within.

Modern society needs to follow the *dharma* that is contained in the epic *Ramayana*. Why? Today, the son is not paying heed to his father's advice, and the parents are not concerned about the future of the son. Devotion to the *guru* should be the aim of the students. But students are not having regard for their teachers and the teachers are not imparting anything good to them. In such a situation, everyone needs to follow the ideals of the *Ramayana*. The *Ramayana* speaks of the true identity of the individual, the real significance of the family, and the sanctity of the society. The *Ramayana* teaches the importance of human values. Today, corruption is rampant in all fields such as business, education, and politics. Under these circumstances, the principles of the *Ramayana* are very im-

portant. It explains in detail the relationship that should exist between brothers, the father and the son, the preceptor and the disciple.

The moral, social, and spiritual values om Ramayana

All of us live on the same earth. The same sky is above all of us. We breathe the same air and drink the same water. Ignoring this underlying principle of unity man visualizes multiplicity, which is a big mistake. The *Ramayana* centers on the principle of unity in diversity. Today, since man has lost the ability to see unity in diversity, he is immersed in restlessness. What we need today is to see unity in diversity and the divinity behind this unity.

The culture of Bharat says: *Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath sathyam apriyam* (speak the truth, speak sweetly and softly, and never utter truth in an unpalatable way). *Sathyam bruyath* is the moral value. *Priyam bruyath* is the social value. *Na bruyath sathyam apriyam* is the spiritual value. So, the moral, social, and spiritual values are all contained in the above statement.

The *Ramayana* teaches these values in the simplest way. But man has forgotten the message of the *Ramayana* and is leading the life of a Ravana. Ravana did not understand this principle of divinity. There was no transformation in him, though he had acquired all forms of knowledge and had done severe penance. He ruined himself on account of excessive desires. Before his death, he gave a message to the people: "O people, with all my skills and expertise in different forms of knowledge I became a victim of desires. I lost my sons, ruined my clan, and burnt my kingdom to ashes, since I could not control my desires. Do not become a victim of desires like me.

Follow the path of truth and righteousness and be like Rama. Experience divinity.”

Put Ramayana's teaching into practice

The relationship that existed between the brothers of Rama is an ideal to the rest of the humanity. They lived in unity in spite of troubles and turmoil. Mother Kaikeyi wanted her son Bharata to ascend the throne of Ayodhya, but Bharata never had any such desire. He went to Chitrakoota mountain, fell at the feet of Rama, and prayed, He, being the eldest, should take over the kingdom of Ayodhya. But Rama did not yield to his request. Quoting the *Vedic* dictum *Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava*. He exhorted Bharata to obey the command of the father and fulfill the desire of his mother by becoming king of Ayodhya. Rama promised him that He would render all help and support. That is why even today, people extol Rama as *Sathyavakparipalaka* (one who adheres to truthful speech).

Today, many people read the holy *Ramayana*, but few understand its essence. They spend their time in acquiring bookish knowledge and superficial knowledge but fail to have practical knowledge. There are many people who can explain the teachings of *Ramayana* in a beautiful way, but how many of them obey the command of their fathers in their daily life? Not many! What is the use of reading various texts if we do not put into practice the message contained in them? Can anyone enjoy the taste of various delicious items such as *mysore pak*, *gulab jamoon*, and *jilebi* by merely repeating their names? No. One can enjoy the taste only when one eats them. Mere textual information is of no use. But, today, man is interested only in information and not transformation. Intellect will blossom only when there is transformation.

*If your ambitions are not fulfilled,
do not waver or get depressed.
He is a realized one who is cheerful
in the face of all adversities.*

[Telugu Poem]

One has to face many obstacles in life, but one should never get depressed. Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is a game, play it. Life is love, enjoy it. Be cheerful and courageous in the face of adversities; never give scope to any weakness whatsoever. The *Vedanta* declared, *Na Ayamatma balaheenena labhya* (a weak-minded person cannot realize the *Atma*). A weak-minded person cannot accomplish anything. So, be strong-minded. Develop faith in that which is good.

*Since there is no fear of sin and love for God,
Humanness is on the decline in human beings.
This is the cause for lack of peace in the world.*

[Telugu Poem]

Therefore, man should cultivate *Daiva preeti*, *papa bheeti*, and *sangha neeti* (love for God, fear of sin and morality in society). Though Rama and Ravana were equally well versed in all forms of knowledge, sage Valmiki extolled Rama as Divine and condemned Ravana as a foolish one. What is the reason? Ravana did not translate into action the knowledge he had acquired; on the contrary he used it for wicked purposes. On the other hand, Rama translated all his knowledge into action and gave joy to one and all. *Sarvaloka hithe ratah* (Rama was engaged in the welfare of all). *Sarvajnanopasampannah* (He was the master of all forms of knowledge). *Sarvasamudhita guna-*

ihi (He was the embodiment of all good qualities). These are the three aspects that manifested Rama's divinity.

Whoever has these three aspects is essentially divine. In fact, everyone is divine. But because of attachment to the body, man is not able to understand his divine nature. Man can experience and enjoy divinity only by treading along the path of love. Love is God; God is love. So, live in love.

*Start the day with love
Spend the day with love
Fill the day with love
End the day with love
This is the way to God.*

The best sadhana: love everybody

The cause for man's suffering is that he has constricted his love to himself and his family. He should develop the broad feeling that all are his brothers and sisters. Expansion of love is life; contraction of love is death. All are the children of God. All are sparks of the Divine. Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagavad Gita: Mamaivamso jeevaloke jeevabhutha sanathana* (eternal *Atma* in all bodies is a part of My Being). So, man should have the broad feeling to identify himself with everyone. Humanity can never progress without broad feelings.

*See no evil, see what is good
Hear no evil, hear what is good
Talk no evil, talk what is good
Think no evil, think what is good
Do no evil, do what is good
This is the way to God.*

When there is such an easy path to divinity, why do you trouble yourself by undertaking rigorous spiritual practices such as *japa*, *thapa*, and *yoga*? Divinity cannot be attained by all these austerities. How easy it is to love everybody!

Love all and think of divinity. Moses used to think of Jesus all the time. As a result, his face shone with divine effulgence. He resembled Jesus so much that people used to mistake him for Jesus. Ratnakara, a robber, on being advised by Narada started chanting the name of Rama incessantly, as a result of which the radiance of Rama was seen on his countenance and he became sage Valmiki. Rama is *Lokadatha* (the giver of the world) and Valmiki became *Slokadatha* (composer of the holy hymns). There is no difference between the giver and the composer. The *Vedas* declare, *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi* (the knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* himself). So, you should always think good, do good, talk good, and hear good. Only then you can become good. A true human being is one who is good. A wicked person can never be called a human being.

The divine nature in man

There are four qualities in man: the divine, demonic, animal and human. What is the divine quality in man? *Sarvaloka hithe ratah*. (engaged in the welfare of everybody). That is the divine nature. What is the human quality? Always undertake meritorious deeds (*punya*). Never indulge in sin (*papa*). *Paropakara punyaya papaya parapeedanam* (rendering help to others is merit, harming others is sin). Help ever, Hurt never. What constitutes the animal quality in man? *Jnanena sunya pasubhir samana* (devoid of wisdom man is equivalent to an animal). The purpose of human life does not lie in merely eat-

ing, drinking, sleeping, and indulging in materialistic comforts. Even animals indulge in such activities. But unlike man, animals do not possess the evil qualities of amassing, robbing, and stealing. Today man is human only in form, but not in behavior.

Less luggage, more comfort

Janthoonam narajanma durlabham (human life is the most difficult to attain of all living beings). The good that you experience in this life is the result of meritorious deeds done in several past lives. This human life is not new. This message is contained in the word *manava*. *Ma* means 'not'; *nava* means 'new', which means human life is not new.

Today man has degenerated to the level of an animal due to excessive desires. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. But, the desires (luggage) in man are multiplying day by day. Human life is a long journey. One should lead a divine life (*divya jeevanam*), not a mean life (*deena jeevanam*). Always be happy. Difficulties do come in life. That is the law of nature. Never get disheartened by them. Difficulties are like passing clouds. Difficulties come and go, but morality comes and grows. Unfortunately, there is decline in moral values in the society today.

Rama stood as a shining example of upholding the moral values in the society. Even when he was asked to leave for the forest at a time when he was supposed to be coronated, he was not perturbed in the least. *Sukhadukhe samekruthva labhalabhau jayajayau* (he is an equal minded one who treats the dualities of life —pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, gain and loss— alike). Rama displayed this virtue of equanimity. Today, man aspires for positions of authority though he does not

deserve them. But Rama relinquished the position even though He deserved it. Rama was courageous in the face of adversities. He never gave any scope for weakness. He led the life of a *dheera* (courageous one), not a *deena* (weak-minded).

The same is the case of one who is in His company. Hanuman, by contemplating on Rama incessantly, became a *dheera*. He displayed this quality of courageousness in the court of Ravana. But the same Hanuman stood like a *deena* (humble one) in Rama's presence. This drives home the point that one should be a *deena* (humble one) in front of divinity and *dheera* (courageous one) in the face of evil.

Control your desire to the extent possible

Annihilate the evil qualities of *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), and *lobha* (greed). Ravana ruined not only himself, but also his dynasty because of *kama*. Therefore, to the extent possible control your desires. Today the Government has imposed ceiling on land and property through legislation, but what is essential is ceiling on desires. Not only did Hiranyakasipu refrain from chanting the name of Lord Hari, he also insisted that his son Prahlada follow suit. He developed hatred toward his own son for singing the praise of Lord Had against his wishes. This evil quality of anger led to his doom.

Duryodhana was greed personified. He was not prepared to part with even a small piece of land. He subjected the Pandavas to enormous hardships. What happened to him ultimately? He became a victim of his own greed.

Desire, anger and greed are the greatest impediments in the path of spirituality. Render help to others, if possible. Never hate anybody under any circumstances. The essence of eight-

een *Puranas* is contained in these two maxims: Help ever, Hurt never.

Spirituality promotes spirit of unity

The story of the Ramayana reveals the ideal relationship that should exist between brothers. Lakshmana and Satrughna served Rama and Bharata respectively, with utmost devotion and sincerity. When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama lamented, “In this world, I might find another mother like Kausalya, a wife like Sita, but definitely not a brother like Lakshmana.” A brother should be like this —one who respects elders and brings name and fame to the whole family. It is the unity amongst the brothers that brought reputation to the whole family.

The same was the case with the Pandavas also. The five Pandavas could defeat hundred Kauravas because they stood united. Even though Vali and Sugriva were just two, they fell apart because of lack of unity. Rama restored the kingdom to Sugriva, since he completely surrendered to Him. Similar was the case with Ravana, Vibhishana, and Kumbhakarna. Any big task can be accomplished if the five fingers are united. Otherwise even a small task becomes extremely difficult. So, everyone should strive for unity.

Spirituality destroys narrow mindedness and confers unity, cooperation and universal peace.

[Telugu Poem]

Unity is very essential. Through unity, you can understand spirituality. Do not hate anybody. Do not develop ill feelings towards others. Then you can become a true human being. Spiritual practices are just a waste of time if you cannot over-

come your selfishness. Do not engage in spiritual activities aspiring for your own liberation, because it would amount to selfishness. Work for the redemption of one and all. Let everybody attain divinity and experience divine bliss. You should have such broad feelings. Your welfare lies in the welfare of the society.

Spend your life in selfless service

Embodiments of Love! You do not need to undertake any spiritual practices. Experience the innate divinity in everyone by following the path of love. Love is God. Spend your life in selfless service. This is the teaching of Rama.

In order to demonstrate to the world the ideal character of Lakshmana, Rama subjected him to a test. When Sita, Rama and Lakshmana were residing on Chitrakoota mountain, one day Lakshmana went into the forest to fetch some food. Taking this opportunity, Rama decided to test Lakshmana. He asked Sita to play her role in this divine drama. As Lakshmana was returning with food, Sita pretended to be asleep under a tree, keeping her head on the lap of Rama. Rama asked Lakshmana to keep Sita's head on his lap without disturbing her sleep as He had some other important work to attend to.

Rama wanted to observe the feelings of Lakshmana. So, He assumed the form of a parrot and perched on the same tree. Considering Sita as his mother, Lakshmana closed his eyes and went into deep contemplation of Lord Rama. Rama in the form of a parrot started singing:

*It is easy to wake up someone who is fast asleep,
but is it possible for anyone to wake up a person
who is pretending to be asleep?*

[Telugu Poem]

Sita pretended to be fast asleep and even started snoring! In all respects, Sita and Rama were a perfect match for each other. After some time, Rama returned as if from somewhere and 'woke up' Sita. Sita opened her eyes as if from deep sleep and expressed her satisfaction to Rama that she had a sound and undisturbed sleep. The *leelas* (pranks) of God are mysterious, wonderful, and sacred. God tests a devotee in order to shower His grace on him and protect him. Lakshmana fell at Rama's feet and said, "I am Your servant. It is my duty to serve You in the way You want me to."

Lakshaman's sincerity and devotion

When Sita was being taken away forcibly by Ravana, she bundled all her jewels and dropped them from above. The *vanaras* (monkeys) found the jewels and took them to Sugriva. When Rama and Lakshmana met Sugriva, he showed them the jewels and asked if they belonged to Sita. Since Rama did not know, He asked Lakshmana to see. Lakshmana replied, "Brother, I don't know whom these earrings and bracelets belong to. But I am sure that these anklets belong to Mother Sita."

On being questioned as to how he could recognize Sita's anklets, Lakshmana said, "It was my practice to prostrate at her lotus feet every morning. While doing so I had noticed Mother Sita's anklets."

Rama was pleased with Lakshmana's sincerity and devotion and showered praises on him and said that he could not find a brother like Lakshmana anywhere in the world. Later Rama said that it was because of Lakshmana's strength and support that He could defeat Ravana and bring Sita back to Ayodhya.

The *Ramayana* demonstrates that anything can be achieved through sincerity and devotion. The story of the *Ramayana* is so enchanting and captivating that one feels like listening to it again and again. *Bharatiyas* (Indians) have been singing the story of Rama since ancient times. Everyone should try to understand the essence of the *Ramayana*. The *Ramayana* teaches that one should have a good character, one should obey the command of the father and respect the parents, and there should be unity among brothers. If you follow these teachings in letter and spirit, your life itself will become a living *Ramayana*.

Heart is the real temple

Students should understand that God is their best friend. All the worldly friends are lured by your position, power, and pelf. Once your position and power are gone, gone are your friends too. God is the only friend, in the real sense of the term. The whole world is a book, and your conscience is your real *guru*. Why trouble yourself going after various worldly *gurus*? Follow your conscience and experience divinity. The Principle of the *Atma*, which reveals the secrets of your mind, is your true *guru*. *Guru* is one who is formless and beyond all attributes.

Gurur-Brahma Gurur — Vishnu
Gurur - Devo Maheswara,
Guru Sakshath Param Brahma
Thasmai Sri Gurave Namah.

Consider God as your mother, father, friend, and everything. Take God as your *guru*, follow Him and merge in Him. If you have God as your *guru*, you can achieve everything in

life. Develop love for God and be recipients of His love and grace. Develop friendship with God and the whole world will be under your control. Troubles and turmoil are part and parcel of one's life. Overcome them by chanting the divine name. Be fearless.

Do not restrict God to temples and pilgrimage centers. He is *Hridayavasi* (indweller of the heart). He is in you, with you, above, you, around you. You do not need to visit various pilgrimage centers. Your heart is the real pilgrimage center.

Mira also echoed the same feelings. When her husband asked her to leave the temple premises, she said to Krishna, "None can separate You from me. My heart is Your temple." In the *Gita*, Lord Krishna declared, *Kshetrajnām Chapi Maam Viddhi* (recognise Me as the indweller of all beings). The body is the field, and the *Atmic* Principle is the indweller of all fields. So, the *kshetra* (field) and the *kshetrajna* (knower of the field) are within you. Bliss is not present in a foreign land; it is present within you. In order to experience bliss, develop love in your heart.

You should pray to God to grant you that which He possesses and you do not. What do you lack? Peace and bliss. Ask and it shall be granted. Do not ask God for the fulfillment of mean desires. All the worldly things are fleeting and momentary. Only God is immutable, pure, eternal, and immortal. So, spend your time in singing the glory of God. By sincere prayer, you can discover your latent divinity.

At the time of his departure to the forest along with Rama and Sita, Sumitra counseled Lakshmana thus: "Never be under the impression that you are going to the forest. Wherever Rama and Sita are present, that itself is Ayodhya. This Ayodhya without Sita and Rama is a veritable forest. Consider Sita

and Rama as your mother and father and serve them to the best of your ability with all love, sincerity, faith and devotion.” You cannot find a woman greater than Sumitra in this world. She blessed her son to serve God wholeheartedly. The term Sumitra means good friend (*Su* - good, *Mitra* - friend). Such noble mothers like Sumitra and sons like Lakshmana with total devotion to God are needed today.

Unity is the need of the hour today. It is unity that protects the world. The prosperity and welfare of the society depends upon the individual. Our thoughts are our greatest asset. If the thoughts are sacred, you will have sacred results. Pleasure and pain are the consequences of your thoughts. So, sanctify your thoughts. When thoughts are good and powerful, you can achieve anything.

25 March 1999
Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan

Do Sadhana with pure Feelings

Truth is your true mother and Wisdom

the true father,

Dharma is the true brother and Compassion

the true friend;

The true wife is Peace and the true so

Forgiveness,

These six are in fact the true relations of man.

[Sanskrit sloka]

Embodiments of Love! Life is like an ocean with waves of joy and sorrow. Spirituality is the lighthouse to the people who are traveling in the ocean of *Samsara*. Spirituality does not mean rituals and worship alone. Spirituality is that which demonstrates unity in multiplicity. God is love personified and is installed in the heart of every man. That is why since time immemorial, the *Bharatiyas* have prayed for the welfare of all people in the world. Spirituality has a certain discipline. *Na sreya niyamam vina* (Nothing noble and great can be achieved without discipline).

Spirituality and welfare of humanity

In Tamil, there is a sacred book named *Thirukural*, which is equivalent to the *Vedas*. It was written by Thiruvalluvar. He took to the path of spirituality, worked for the welfare of humanity, and led a disciplined and peaceful life. He used to ask his wife to keep a cup of water and a needle by his side while he ate his food. As per the command of her husband, his wife did accordingly day after day, but not even once did she find him putting them to use while having food. When his wife asked him for the reason, he replied, "I don't want to waste even a single grain of rice. The purpose of this needle is to pick up the grain of rice if it were to fall outside my plate and to wash it clean with water before putting it back in the plate. So far I have not used this needle, since I have been very careful not to spill rice grains."

Annam Brahma, raso Vishnu, bhokta devo Maheswara (food is Brahma, the essence is Vishnu, and the one who partakes of it is Maheswara). Food is called Brahma since its essence pervades the whole body and gives it strength. The prayer to Vishnu is to purify the mind, so that the body may be utilised in a proper way. The Eswara Principle demonstrates how to make use of the strong body and pure mind in a proper way. God resides in the heart of everyone in the form of love. But no one is making any effort to realise the Principal of Love in the heart. There is no life without love. Love is God. God is love.

Today, man is leaving no stone unturned in order to experience happiness. But his desires are increasing day by day, just as the ants that come out of an anthill. Increase in desires will only lead to restlessness but not happiness. Man aspires to be happy through the fulfillment of his desires; on the contrary,

he is becoming more and more restless. The lesser the desires are the greater the happiness will be. The *Vedas* teach that all the education that man acquires should be utilised for the welfare of society. The *Vedas* say, *Sarvaloka hithe ratah* (man should involve himself in the service of society). *Sarvajnanopa sampannah* (man should be a treasure of wisdom), *Sarvasamudhita gunaihi* (man should cultivate all good qualities). But today's education does not confer these noble virtues. Modern education bestows mere bookish knowledge, which in turn becomes superficial knowledge. Today, there is no trace of practical knowledge in man.

After his education, man should work for the welfare of society and the world at large. He should not have the narrow feeling that he and his family alone should be happy. Without the world, where is the family? Man and his family are dependent on society and the world at large. So, man and his family can be happy only when the world is safe and secure. Today in all fields of life, be it political or social, no one seems to be concerned about the welfare of the world. Selfishness and self-interest are widespread in all the fields. As long as there is selfishness and self-interest in the people of a country, it cannot prosper.

Brahma and Bhrama

Today man aspires to have the vision of Brahma, but is getting immersed in *bhrama* (illusion). Unity in multiplicity is Brahma and viewing multiplicity in unity is *bhrama*. Man has lost the vision of unity in diversity. He has become highly "intelligent", so as to divide unity into multiplicity. Fie upon such intelligence! Man should make an effort to see the unity in diversity. That is the real *sadhana* (spiritual exercise).

Practice the teachings of the Vedas to experience bliss

Reading the sacred texts such as the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Puranas* does not confer the vision of Brahma. Narada had studied the four *Vedas* and six *Sastras*. He was a great exponent of the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Upanishads*. In spite of all this, he could neither attain peace nor get rid of his delusion. So he approached the sages Sanaka, Sanandana, and Sanat Kumara and requested them to grant him peace and wisdom. Sanat Kumara asked Narada what made him feel that he deserved to attain peace and wisdom.

Narada replied that he had studied the four *Vedas*, the six *Sastras*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Brahma Sutras*.

Then Sanat Kumara said, “Narada! No doubt, you have studied the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, but have you put them into practice? It is a mistake to think that mere study of the *Vedas* and *Sastras* can confer peace and wisdom. One has to practice the teachings of the *Vedas* and *Sastras* in order to experience bliss.”

Will the darkness in the world be dispelled by the message of light?

Can the disease be cured by merely listening to the efficacy of medicine?

Can the poor get rid of poverty by listening to the principles of Economics?

Can hunger be satiated by mere repetition of the names of various delicious dishes?

No. Similarly, you can attain bliss only when you put your knowledge into practice.

[Telugu Poem]

Sanat Kumara went on to say, “Narada, you say you have gone through the *Upanishads*. But have you understood the first declaration of the first *Upanishad: Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (God permeates the entire cosmos)? Have you recognised the Truth that God exists in everybody. You are chanting the *slokas* (verses), but you are not trying to experience them.”

Dharma leads to divinity

Today spiritual aspirants are wasting their time in such futile exercises. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. Instead the aspirants should try to enter a path that will endow them with wisdom. There are nine paths of devotion. They are: *sra-vanam* (listening to the stories of the Lord), *kirtanam* (singing the glory of the Lord) *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on the form of the Lord), *Padasevanam* (serving the Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship of the Lord), and *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender). Are you putting any of these into practice in your daily life? No. You are merely mouthing words, but not practising.

The proper study of mankind is man. What is the proper study? Your thoughts, words, and deeds must be in harmony with each other. *Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam* (he is a wicked one whose thoughts, words, and deeds are not in harmony). In the modern world, you find such wicked people everywhere. But there are good people also. If there are no good people in the world, how can the sun rise? Good people are there in the world, no doubt. But, the present-day scenario is such that only the wicked seem to be prospering.

Sathyam matha, pitha jnanam (truth is your mother and wisdom is your father). A true father is one who imparts the knowledge of non-dualism to his son. But the present-day parents are not concerned about truth; whatever untruths their son utters to cover up his mistakes, they take that as truth! It is only because of such parents that the children are going in the wrong direction. Parents are to be blamed if the children take to the wrong path. As the parents, so are the children. If the parents themselves are found arguing with each other, the children will go a step ahead and engage themselves in fighting with each other! The condition of the country depends upon fathers and mothers. But today, the situation of the family is very unfortunate.

Humility bestows deservedness

Since ancient times, Bharat has radiated peace and happiness to the rest of the world with its power of spirituality. All the aspects of the culture of Bharat are suffused with divinity. The eyes, the ears, the nose and the hand are the different limbs of the body. Body is a limb of the society. Society is a limb of mankind. Mankind is a limb of nature. Nature is a limb of God.

It is because of the impact of modern education that man is misusing his limbs. He has forgotten the truth that humility is the hallmark of true education. Education confers humility. Humility bestows deservedness. Deservedness will lead to *dharma*. It is through *dharma* that one can attain Divinity. Modern education has become job-oriented. Without *yoga*, what is the use of *udyoga* (job)? One has to attain *yoga*, which means control of the senses.

Buddha did penance (*thapas*) for many years in order to attain *yoga*. Ultimately, Buddha attained *Nirvana* (liberation). But, today, people are ruining themselves because they are immersed in *thamas* (dullness). Buddha laid emphasis on *samyak drishti*, *samyak vak*, *samyak sravanam*, *samyak chintanam*, and *samyak karma*. This can be interpreted as:

See no evil, see what is good.

Talk no evil, talk what is good.

Hear no evil, hear what is good.

Think no evil, think what is good.

Do no evil, do what is good.

Buddha made proper use of the five senses, experienced bliss and shared it with others. But, today all five senses are being misused. Actions are based on thoughts. So, man has to cultivate noble thoughts. *Hridaya* (heart) is the temple of God. Thoughts, words, and deeds will be pure, steady and selfless only when man has a pure *hridaya* and noble feelings. Purity, patience, and perseverance are very essential for mankind. Without firm faith, man cannot achieve anything in life.

Happiness and sorrow co-exist

Ages have passed, years have rolled by, but there is no transformation in man. When you have a bitter thing in your mouth, even the sweet tastes bitter. Sweet will taste sweet only when you spit out the bitter thing and rinse your mouth. What is that you have to do in order to pour milk into a glass, which is already full of water? You have to pour out the water and then pour in the milk. Likewise, man has to get rid of evil thoughts in order to cultivate sacred feelings.

Man's life is like an ocean full of opposite waves of union and separation. These waves co-exist; in fact one cannot exist without the other. So, one has to be equal-minded.

*Happiness and sorrow co-exist.
It is impossible to separate them.
One cannot have comforts alone.
Comforts accrue from troubles and sufferings.*

[Telugu Poem]

Man should purify his mind with pure thoughts

Today we find pollution everywhere. The air that we breathe, the water that we drink, the sound that we hear, the food that we partake of, all are polluted. The root cause for all this is that the mind itself is polluted. It is because of evil feelings in the mind that everything appears evil. *Mano moolam idam jagat* (the whole world is based on the mind). Even if man dies, mind will not die. So, man should purify his mind with pure thoughts. Pure thoughts can be cultivated only by chanting the divine name.

Some people may talk derisively about the efficacy of the divine name. But, the joy and bliss that you derive by chanting it is supreme. Today people think of only worldly matters, but not God. What is the benefit that accrues from thinking of mundane matters? Nothing at all. In fact, it makes you more and more restless.

People find the reflection of their own defects in others. Those that find mistakes in others do not know their own mistakes. How can you get the belch of a mango if you have not eaten it? The belch you get depends on the food you take. The good and bad that you see and experience are the results of your own thoughts. First recognise the defects in yourself and

get rid of them. It is a great sin to criticise others. God is in everyone. So, criticising others amounts to criticising God Himself. Do not criticise or ridicule anyone. Respect everyone; only then will you be respected. It is foolishness to expect others to respect you without yourself respecting them.

If your feelings are good, you will see only good in everyone. Mind is the root cause for everything. Man cannot exist without the mind. A torch cannot function without cells. Body is like a torch, eyes like bulbs, and intellect like a switch. But, without the mind, which can be compared to a cell, the body cannot function. So, the mind has to be kept in good condition.

Cultivate noble qualities in New Year

Embodiments of Love! You have been celebrating the New Year Day year after year. But are you cultivating new and sacred qualities? No. You are unable to give up bad qualities. With each New Year, new and noble qualities should be cultivated. Desires have to be controlled. The lesser the desires, the lesser your sorrows. Excessive desires lead to the ruination of will power (*ichcha sakthi*). Decline in will power leads to loss of power of action (*kriya sakthi*). Develop unity of *ichcha sakthi*, *kriya sakthi*, and *jnana sakthi* (power of wisdom). Will power will increase only when desires are reduced. Happiness is eluding man due to limitless desires. Excessive desires spoil health and cause depression in the mind. Reducing desires amounts to reducing the burden on the mind. Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Life is a long journey. How can you enjoy the journey if you are carrying heavy luggage? Go on reducing your luggage. The same message is conveyed in the *Vedas* too. *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutathwamanasu* (immortality can be attained

only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it).

Have fear of sin and love for God. Only then there will be morality in society. If you do not have fear of sin and love for God, you will not be respected even by your own mother, wife, and children. If you have fear of sin and love for God, the whole world will love you. Sage Vyasa has given the essence of the 18 *Puranas* in the dictum, *Paropakara punyaya papaya parapeedanam* (to help others is merit; harming others is sin). Help ever, Hurt never. If you cannot render help, at least restrain yourself from hurting others. That itself is a great help.

Master the mind and be a mastermind

The sacred land of Tamil Nadu is the birthplace of many great saints and sages, who undertook many spiritual practices with great determination and led noble lives of peace and happiness. They gave up body attachment and developed love for the *Atma*. But, today, man is developing attachment to the body more and more, forgetting the Principle of the *Atma*.

*This body is a heap of rubbish
and is full of diseases.
O mind, do not be under the illusion
that body is permanent.
Take refuge at the feet of the Lord.*

[Telugu Poem]

The body and the mind are negative; only the *Atma* is positive. You say, my body, my mind, my intellect, my senses, and so forth. When you say, my handkerchief, the handkerchief is separate from you. Similarly, when you say, my body, my mind, etc., you are separate from them. Then who are you?

Put a question to yourself. All this is matter and you are the Master. Master the mind and be a mastermind.

On the spiritual path, *japa* and *dhyana* are not that important. Purity of mind is most important. You do not need to undertake spiritual practice. Love everyone. Do not limit your love to you and your family alone. Do not spend your life in narrow-mindedness. All belong to the same universal family. All are one; be alike to everyone. Divine love is pure, selfless, attributeless, and eternal. He is a sinner who tries to find faults with divine love. Worldly love is negative and full of selfishness. Man can attain Divinity only when he gives up selfishness.

Develop morality. Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. Today man entertains only negative thoughts. Man cannot expect to have positive rewards when his heart is filled with negative thoughts. When the heart is full of worldly desires, how can you have love for God? It is impossible. Cultivate positive feelings; only then you will have positive results.

Only God is your true friend

If you have selfless love, you need not be afraid of anything. Even if the sky were to fall on your head, be fearless. Never be afraid of following the truth. Truth is God, love is God. Live in love. Get immersed in the divine love. The wicked and evil-minded people cannot understand the divine love. Do not enter into friendship with such people. Only God is your true friend, who has no trace of selfishness and who helps you always under all circumstances. Have the firm conviction that God always helps and never hurts anyone. Whether you are in the forest or in the sky or in a city or in a village or

on the top of a hill or in the middle of a river, God is always with you, in you and around you.

Worldly friends are such that they say hello to you only when you have money and power. Hello becomes hollow once you lose both. As long as there is water in the pond, thousands of frogs gather there. Once the pond gets dried up, not even a single frog will be seen around. Same is the case with worldly friends. But God's friendship is not like that. He is with you at all stages and in all situations. Love him from the depth of your heart. Take refuge in Him. He will definitely protect you. Did He not come to the rescue of Prahlada, who surrendered to Him completely? *Yad bhavam, tad bhavathi* (as is the feeling, so is the result). God will come to your rescue if you have total faith.

Some actions will yield instant results, whereas others may take a few hours, a few days, a few years or a few births. For example, when your finger is cut, bleeding starts immediately. It takes a few hours for the food to get digested. It takes a few years for a seed to grow into a tree and yield fruit. Be it good or bad, you have to face the consequences of your actions. So, do not indulge in bad actions. Always do good, be good, and see good. This is the way to God. Do not say "I will try;" you must do it.

God is love, so He always gives only love

Some people, when faced with difficulties, think that God is punishing them. It is a mistake to think so. God never punishes anybody. It is only the king who gives punishment, not God. God is love, so He always gives only love. The punishment you suffer is the result of your own actions. God neither punishes you nor protects you. You are punished by your own

sins and protected by your own good deeds. You may utilise light for writing wrong account or for reading the holy Ramayana. But, the light is not affected by what you do. Similarly, God is the eternal witness. He is like the light, not affected by what you do, be it good or bad.

Spiritual practices and purity of mind

Embodiments of Love! Many New Years have come and gone, but what is that you have achieved? You may have participated in *bhajans* any number of times. But, you still continue to be immersed in negativity. Put a question to yourself what have you gained by participating in *bhajans*. *Bhajans* should develop positive feelings in you. Any *sadhana* (spiritual practice) done with noble feelings will yield good results. You may be doing a lot a spiritual practices for many years without any result. But, never give up any spiritual practice. Continue your *sadhana*. One day or the other, you will get the reward.

You think that you have attained *swatantrata* (independence). *Swa* means *Atma*. So, the true independence lies in following *Atma Dharma*. Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. So, do not follow the body; do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Your conscience always gives you the right prompting. It is a sin if you do not follow the dictates of your conscience. Conscience is your master.

Follow the master

Face the devil

Fight to the end

Finish the game.

Some people say that they have not got any benefit in spite of chanting the divine name for twenty to thirty years. No benefit accrues from chanting the divine name if the mind is filled with impurities. First purify your mind and fill it with positive feelings. Only then you can experience the benefit of chanting the divine name. Bad thoughts and bad feelings will not help you in any way. Even if you happen to come across anything bad, do not let it enter your mind.

God's work will never fail. So, all the work that is done with divine feelings will never meet with failure. If you fail in your endeavour, it means you do not have divine feelings. You will always be successful if your feelings are pure and divine. At least from today onward, cultivate noble feelings. Talk sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly.

Embodiments of Love! On New Year day, it is a practice to mix sweet, sour and bitter things and eat them. It is to indicate that joy and sorrow have to be treated with equanimity. It is the tongue that tastes the delicacy and it is the heart that tastes love. The taste of love is peerless. It is sweeter than even nectar. Love alone can match love. God is love, love is God. Live in love. Whatever *bhajans* you sing, sing with love. God is *Bhavapriya*. He sees your feelings, not the rhythm or tune. If your feelings are pure, God will take care of everything.

Tamil New Year, 14 April 1999

Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan

Royal Path to Divinity

*Run away from bad company;
Join good company.
Perform meritorious deeds day and night.*

Embodiments of Love! Since times immemorial, Bharat (India) has been the treasure house of spirituality and has been radiating peace and serenity to all the other countries. But, today, people do not understand even the sacredness, significance, and uniqueness of the human body. Many people are under the false impression that the body is meant to eat drink, sleep, and make merry. You can understand the purpose behind God gifting you this body only when you understand the sacredness and mystery of human birth. The primary goal of man is to recognise the Truth in daily life.

Every man has a body. It not only acts as an instrument but also sets ideals in every respect. What are the ideals? It inhales the life-sustaining oxygen and exhales the poisonous carbon

dioxide. It partakes of delicious items and excretes foul smelling faecal matter. What is the inner significance of this activity? Man has to accept those things that are beneficial to the society and the country and discard those which are maleficent to the interests of the society and the nation at large. Thus, the body demonstrates that man has to take in noble and sacred feelings and leave out the unsacred and worldly thoughts.

Life is a combination of body, mind, and Atma

Unfortunately, today, man takes in unholy and unsacred thoughts discarding pure and sacred feelings. What is truth and what is untruth? What is permanent and what is temporary? What is good and what is bad? Man does not undertake such an enquiry today. He is using his power of discrimination for wrong purposes. He is accepting bad and giving up good. Do you prefer a rotten fruit to a luscious one or inhaling carbon dioxide and exhaling oxygen? No. If you do that, you will not only spoil your health, you will put your life also to risk. Man should achieve physical health, mental satisfaction, and *Atmic* bliss. Man's life is a combination of the body, mind and *Atma*. The body performs actions, the mind enquires, and the *Atma* remains a witness. These three are essential for the human life to blossom. But no one is trying to understand this mystery.

Nature also shows the truthful and right path. If you do not breathe out the air that you breathe in, your health will be spoilt. Likewise, if you do not excrete the body waste, your health will suffer. The lesson one has to learn from this is that one must accept good and give up bad. *Tyaja durjana samsar-gam* (discard bad company). Bad company does not mean the company of bad people alone. Even bad thoughts constitute

bad company. You should not only discard bad company, but give up bad thoughts also.

However, one does not become a noble soul by just giving up bad company and bad thoughts; one has to join good company and also cultivate good thoughts. One can have good thoughts only by constant contemplation on God. *Kuru punyam ahorathram* (perform good deeds day and night). At all times, at all places and under all circumstances, man has to contemplate on God and involve himself in His work. *Bhaja sadhu samagamam* (join good company). You will get sacred feelings only when you are in good company.

Undertake sadhana right from childhood

Right from an early age, you should develop devotion to God. It will be of immense help in old age if you undertake spiritual *sadhana* right from your childhood. It is impossible to think of God in your old age if you squander your precious time in worldly matters in the early stages of your life. The divine feelings that you develop from your childhood are your true treasure. Thoughts based on Truth (*sathya sankalpas*) are your true wealth. But, you are giving up such sacred wealth and are hankering after the transient and ephemeral wealth. Start early, drive slowly and reach safely. It is impossible to remember God and contemplate on Him in old age unless you think of Him right from your childhood. It is easy to remember Him in your old age only when you practice contemplating on Him in your childhood.

*When the messengers of death
start dragging you away,
When the relatives make hurry to shift you
outside the house saying there is no hope,*

*And when the wife and children
start weeping and wailing bitterly,
Is it possible to think of God at that moment*

[Telugu Poem]

Turn senses Godward from early age

I keep telling the students often that the childhood of man is like a tender banana leaf. At this age, this 'banana leaf' is very pure, attractive, and lively. This 'leaf', containing the delicacies of five senses (sound, touch, form, taste, and smell), should be offered to God. But, due to the impact of the *Kali* age, man is offering these five types of 'delicacies' to the six demons: *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada*, and *matsarya* (lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride, and jealousy). After the demons eat away the delicacies, spoiling the leaf in the process, man is offering the leftover unsacred food to God in old age. Is it proper to offer to God the remains of the food eaten by the demons?

If man cannot recognise the uniqueness of humanness, what is use of taking the human birth? *Janthoonam nara janma durlabham* (among all beings, human birth is the rarest and noblest). Having got such a sacred human birth man should turn his senses Godward from his early age. From early age, man should contemplate on God and win divine grace.

*In old age, when you cannot see properly,
When there are wrinkles on your face,
When your hair turns grey,
When children start making fun of you,
calling you a decrepit monkemy, and*

*When your limbs start shivering,
How do you expect to think of God?*
[Telugu Poem]

Those that start thinking of God only in old age have no sense of shame.

Today man is wasting his youth by misusing his senses. He is seeing and listening to unsacred things and indulging in talking ill of others. In the early age, the five senses are like five delicacies. Your life will be sanctified, only when you offer them to God. Otherwise, it is better to be deaf, dumb, and blind! For what purpose are the eyes given to you? Is it to see anything and everything? No. Eyes are given in order to see God. The eye, which is not even an inch in size, is able to see the stars millions of miles away. Such a powerful and sacred eye is being used for seeing unholy things? Why don't you use your eyes for seeing the omnipresent God and the beautiful panorama of nature and having the *darshan* of holy men?

Peddalu or Gaddalu?

Today the so-called *peddalu* (elders) are discouraging the young from taking to spiritual path. They say one can start contemplating on God after retirement. Can such people be called *peddalu*? No. They are *gaddalu* (hawks)! They neither think of God nor allow their children to do so. Actually, some elders are spoiling the lives of their children. They are trying to make their children tread the wrong path as though they had benefited immensely by doing the same earlier. *Tyaja durjana samsargam*, give up the company of such evil-minded elders, even if they happen to be your parents.

This was the ideal set by Bharata in the *Ramayana*. Rama, being the eldest, was the legal heir to the throne of Ayodhya,

but Kaikeyi sent Him to the forest, as she wanted her son Bharata to become the king. When Bharata came to know of this, he became very furious. He even did not like to look at his mother and set off to the forest immediately to bring back Rama.

Disassociate yourselves from wicked persons

Hiranyakasipu could not tolerate to hear his son, Prahlada, chant the name of Lord Narayana. He would at once close his ears whenever Prahlada uttered *Om Namō Narayanaya*. He even tried to kill him as he continued to chant the name of Lord Narayana against his wishes. Ultimately, Prahlada disassociated himself from his father as he was a *durjana* (wicked person).

Sukracharya warned Emperor Bali that the Vamana was none other than Lord Vishnu Himself and that it would be disastrous for Bali to make the gift sought from him by Vamana. Bali reacted to the preceptor's warning, saying that there was no greater sin than going back on one's word. He had given his word to the Lord Himself. Is it not a sin on the part of Sukracharya to ask him to break his promise? That is why Bali told Sukracharya, "You are not my preceptor; you are my enemy." So saying, he forsook Sukracharya and fulfilled his promise to Vamana.

Mira all the time thought of only *Giridhara* (Lord Krishna) and chanted His name. Her eyes were filled with the form of Krishna, and her mind was filled with the thoughts of Krishna. But her husband thought that she was crossing her limits in the name of devotion to Krishna. So, one day, he threw her out of the Krishna temple for the sake of false worldly honour. Then she wrote a letter to Tulsidas seeking his advice as to what she

should do, whether to give up Krishna, the eternal companion, or to forsake her husband.

Tulsidas sent a reply saying, “Mother, God is the greatest of all and the path leading to God is the noblest of all. Husband is like a passing cloud, but God is always with you, even before your birth and after your death. *Trikalabhadbyam sathyam* (Truth transcends all the three periods of time). How can you give up God, who is the Embodiment of Truth? Husband entered your life in the middle and will go away in the middle. You may serve him as long as he is alive. But, when he himself discards you, there is nothing wrong in leaving him for the sake of God.”

It is not proper to expect the wife to suffer at the hands of a wicked husband. If the wife commits a mistake, the husband may punish her. But, it is a sin to punish a woman who is absolutely faultless. Mira prayed,

*Krishna, I went deep into the ocean of Samsara
and caught hold of the pearl of Your divine name.
How can I allow it to slip away from my hand? I
will safeguard this 'pearl' even at the cost of my
life.*

[Tamil Verse]

Better die rather than lead an untruthful life

Worldly life is *pravritti marga* (outward path) and spiritual life is *nivritti marga* (inward path). It is a great mistake to give up God and His name for the sake of worldly gains. You need not be afraid of anybody when your conscience is clear. Truth and sacrifice are like your two eyes. *Sathyam nasti paro dharma* (there is no greater *dharma* than adhering to truth). But in this Age of Kali, people are giving up truth and right-

eousness. Better to die than to lead an untruthful life. It is better to live like a swan for a few minutes than to lead the life of a crow for a hundred years.

Education is for serving society

Today, students are becoming highly educated, acquiring degrees and occupying positions of authority. They think they are great intellectuals. What is the use of education and intelligence if they are misused? Why study and die ultimately. Study to be immortal. Bookish knowledge may feed your stomach but will not help you attain Divinity. You should experience the bliss of your life after offering everything to God. The *Vedas* declare: *Sarva karma Bhagavad preethyartham* (whatever you do, do it with a desire to please God).

It is enough if you have God with you. Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Sarva dharman parityaja maam ekam saranam vraja* (give up all the worldly *dharmas* and surrender only to Me). All the worldly *dharmas* are burdensome. They are like ten thousand naya paisas. A hundred rupee note is equal to ten thousand naya paisas. It is rather difficult to bundle up ten thousand naya paisas and carry them with you. So, offer all the ten thousand 'naya paisas' to God. He will give you a 'hundred rupee note', which is light in weight and also safe and secure. The former refers to quantity and the latter to quality. You should look for quality, not for quantity. One teaspoon of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk.

This country, Bharat, is the land of sacrifice, the land of love and the land of *yoga*. If you do not have love for your motherland, you are as good as a living corpse. The modern students are neglecting their motherland and are going abroad

in search of greener pastures. You may go abroad, but never give up motherland. It is foolish to give up the motherland and get enticed by foreign countries.

Once, Vivekananda had gone to London and America. While returning to India, the American journalists asked him what he thought of his motherland, Bharat. He said, "I have a great regard and love for my country. I respect even the dust, the air and the environment of Bharat. I offer myself completely to the service of my motherland." He who has no love for his motherland, mother tongue and religion is no better than a living corpse.

Only good and bad follow you when you die

Today, people waste their time and energy in amassing wealth. They do not realise that one day or the other they will have to leave everything and go.

*Many great kings like Harischandra, Nala, and
Mandatha ruled over this land
But now, where are they?
Is Sri Rama, who built a great bridge across the
mighty ocean, alive today?
Many kings have come and gone, but none could
take even a fistful of
Earth when they left the immortal coil.*

[Telugu Poem]

If the people could take even a fistful of mud with them when they die, there would have been rationing of mud also! No one can take anything. Only good and bad follow you.

Rama and Ravana were equally well versed in thirty-six forms of knowledge. But Valmiki called Ravana a foolish one

and Rama a noble one. Why did Valmiki say so? Did he receive any favour from Rama? No. Here, Rama and Ravana can be compared to a cuckoo and a crow respectively.

*The crow did not steal anybody's property but the
people hate the very sight of a crow.
The cuckoo did not do any favour to anybody, but
still it is loved by one and all.
One is respected if one's speech is good.*

[Telugu Poem]

Though both look alike, people eulogise the cuckoo and criticise the crow. They throw stones at the crow when it caws, but feel joyous listening to the mellifluous singing of the cuckoo. Similarly, though Rama and Ravana were equally well-versed in all forms of knowledge, Rama set an ideal by practising what He learnt, whereas Ravana suffered from 'indigestion', since he merely acquired knowledge without practising it.

Only God is your true property

Education is for life, not for money. Every educated young man should serve society. Youth is very precious; let it not be wasted. Start early, drive slowly, reach safely. You must resolve to work for the welfare of the society even if your parents at first oppose you. Never mind if they do not give you a share in their property. Only God is your true property. Do not aspire for temporary and ephemeral wealth. Enter the path of truth and lead a sacred life. That will make your parents also happy. If parents are not happy when the son leads a sacred life, then they are no parents at all. Such parents are fit to be called demons.

Today is the holy festival of Vishnu. All the Indian festivals are sacred and demonstrate great ideals. The Keralites celebrate their festivals Onam and Vishnu in the most sacred way. With each festival one should cultivate divine feelings. When you contemplate on God with all sincerity and devotion, you become God yourself. This is what the *Vedanta* says: *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi* (the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman himself.) You will become what you think. Ratnakara, a highway robber, was transformed into a great sage, Valmiki, because he thought of Rama continuously with a pure mind. His face shone with the divine effulgence of Rama. Even the young Prahlada's face reflected the divine radiance of Lord Narayana as he contemplated on Him continuously. He had no sense of fear; he always put on a smiling face in the face of adversity. All the time he was chanting the name of the Lord.

How can anyone, who steadfastly chants the divine name, be afraid of anything? Fear and grief will overpower those who forget the Lord and get immersed in worldly life. You will become divine if you contemplate on the Divine continuously. God is not somewhere else, He is within you.

What is true happiness?

Embodiments of Love! Every festival in India is suffused with divinity. On each festival day, people go to temples and offer their prayers to the Almighty. This is a positive trait. Forgetting God and always thinking of the world is a negative quality. Today, we find elaborate arrangements and gala celebrations in marriage functions. One is filled with joy when one gets married, but one does not realise that the happiness of married life is but momentary. Even dogs and foxes experience

this happiness. This is not true happiness. Thyagaraja said, “O mind, tell me what gives the real happiness, is it *nidhi* (wealth) or the *Eswara Sannidhi* (divine proximity)?” Consider *sannidhi* (proximity) as your *pennidhi* (great treasure). Then your life will be full of joy and bliss. Only devotees can understand this joy and bliss.

Without peace, man is just pieces

A true devotee always keeps singing the name of the Lord. Radha and Mira were always deeply immersed in Nama-sankirtan. They had broad feelings and broad mind. Broad mind is life, narrow mind is death. Mind can be broadened only through divine contemplation. Peace is a precious jewel, without peace man is just pieces. So attain peace and bliss by contemplating on the divine. Divine contemplation is possible only for the fortunate. They wear the crown of peace. The unfortunate ones can never contemplate on the divine and can never attain peace. You may get fed up of eating *laddus* and other sweets, but you will never get fed up of chanting the divine name. The more you chant, the more you will feel like chanting.

Embodiments of Love! Today injustice, unrighteousness, and falsehood are on the rise because faith in God is on the decline. The nation can attain peace only when people think of God. God is always with you, in you, around you, behind you, above you and below you. Today some people are prepared to give up God for the sake of worldly relations. But how long will the relations last? This body is only a doll, which may perish at any moment of time. Bliss cannot be attained as long as one has body attachment. This body is *Sivam* (auspicious) as

long as there is the divine breath of life in it. It becomes *savam* (corpse) once it loses the divine breath.

When man is born, he cries asking the question, “*Koham, Koham* (who am I).” What is the use of living if he has the same question on his lips at the time of death too? At the time of death, man should be able to declare cheerfully, “*Soham, Soham* (I am God).” Realising one’s own divinity is the purpose of life.

Man is never satisfied. He is greedy for more and more wealth. There should be a limit to greed for wealth. What man has to earn is divine grace. No matter what he earns, he cannot take a single pie with him when he leaves the body. Alexander conquered many nations and became a mighty emperor. But, when the hour of death approached, no doctor could save him. Before passing away, he summoned his ministers and told them to keep his empty hands raised above when his body was taken for the final journey through the streets so that the people would understand that even a great and mighty emperor like Alexander, who achieved so much in life, had to go empty-handed.

Only sacrifice will lead to immortality

Alexander wanted to conquer the entire world. Today also, we find one country trying to overpower the other. People are becoming power crazy. People who have greed for power can never be good leaders. In fact, they are the persons who destroy the nation. Many ministers, prime ministers, kings, and emperors have come and gone. But everybody was concerned only about their position and power. Fie upon such leaders, who had no concern for the welfare of the nation! Such leaders

are not human beings; they are demons. Leaders should have a sense of sacrifice. Only sacrifice will lead to immortality.

Students! After you complete your education, do not confine yourself to your jobs alone. Work for the welfare of society. The culture of Bharat says: *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak the truth and follow righteousness). Uphold these principles even at the cost of your life. Help the poor and the downtrodden. Have the national interest foremost in your mind. Your welfare depends on the welfare of the nation. Creation (*srushti*) emerged from the Creator (*Parameshti*); society (*samashti*) emerged from the creation. From society emerged the individual (*vyashti*). There is no individual without society. So, the *vyashti* should serve the *samashti*, then serve the *srushti* and ultimately merge in *Parameshti*. This is the royal path to Divinity.

Contemplate on God till your last breath

I am not perturbed by criticism. What I am teaching you is good, only good and nothing but good. If you follow these teachings, you are bound to attain your goal. Take to the right path right from your young age; otherwise you are bound to repent in your old age. Cultivate sacred thoughts and offer them to God right from the young age. Knowingly or unknowingly you might have committed some mistakes. There is no point in worrying about the past. At least now, wake up from your slumber, think of God and sanctify your life.

Divinity is the goal of life. You can attain divinity by following the path of truth, righteousness and love. Give up body attachment and develop divine feelings. Body is weak, made up of five elements and is bound to perish some time or the other. People say that the life span of a human being is hun-

dred years, but you cannot take it for granted. No one can predict when death will occur. It may occur either in childhood or in youth, or in middle age or in old age. Death is certain. So, try to know yourself while you are alive. Contemplate on God till your last breath. That is your primary duty.

Discharge your other duties also such as taking care of your family and children, but consider even that as God's work and treat all your family members as divine. All actions should be undertaken for the pleasure of God. Many people undertake *japa* and *dhyana* only after their retirement. Their hand turns the rosary, mouth utters 'Ram, Ram, Ram,' but the mind wanders in the market, goes to the club and starts playing cards as they might have indulged in all this earlier in life. What is the use of such a *japa*? So, it is better to take to the spiritual path right from childhood. It is a great fortune and merit to take to the spiritual path from childhood.

Sanctifying your heart is true pudding

Embodiments of Love! Today the people of Kerala are celebrating the festival of Vishnu. The inner significance of Vishnu is to cultivate sacredness. It does not end with preparing *payasam* (pudding) and partaking of it. Sanctifying your heart is true pudding. You will be celebrating Vishnu in the true spirit only when you make efforts to purify your heart.

You may not undertake any *sadhana* (spiritual exercise), but never forget the Principle of Love. Never be afraid of troubles; sanctify your life with love. Love everyone. Where love is, there God is. Love is God. God is love. All the time we should think of God and contemplate on Him.

15 April 1999

Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan

The ephemeral and the transcendental

Life without love is like
An electric wire without power supply,
A field without water,
A temple without deity,
A school without teacher. [Telugu Poem]

Speech is the cause of prosperity,
Speech is the cause of friendship,
Speech is the cause of bondage, and
Speech may even cause death. [Sanskrit Verse]

In this world, speech carries also more value than the currency note. In ancient times, people used to give immense value to speech. With the help of speech they were able to become rich and prosperous; they could even win kingdoms. Man becomes virtuous only when his speech is good; he be-

comes evil when his speech is bad. Speech promotes friendship. It also brings about differences between friends. Speech promotes affinity among relatives. It also creates discord. Effects of speech are not confined to ephemeral and worldly matters only; speech affects our spiritual progress also. Speech may even cause death. Speech can save one's life, too. Sweet speech brings you name and fame. Since man today has lost his pleasant speech and sweet temper, he is subjected to innumerable ordeals and sufferings. That is why I tell the students now and then, you cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. When the speech is good, man becomes a hero. But man will become a zero if the speech is not good.

Root cause of restlessness in the world

Who is hero? God is hero and the world is zero. So, you should make friendship with that hero. The eternal nature of Divine Love, which is blemishless, selfless, and pure, alone stands the test of true friendship. When you enjoy the proximity of such a friend, you will be free from fear even in the face of insurmountable difficulties. Lack of faith is the cause of fear in man. So, cultivating faith in the Divine is the foremost task of man. Endowed with such faith, one can achieve success in every kind of task. What is the root cause of disturbance and restlessness in the world?

*Due to their ignorance, people have lost
Fear of sin and love for God,
Resulting in the depravity of human nature.
What a blow to the cause of peace in the world*

[Telugu Poem]

Man today has made giant strides in all fields. But the progress he has registered can be compared to an electric wire without current, since he does not possess human values. Love of God has infinite power. Here is an example. People are coming here from far off places in India and from different countries, spending a lot of money and time. Why do they gather here? What is the reason? They find something here that they do not find in their family members, in friends, in relatives, in the society they live in, and also in their countries. If they were able to find it in themselves or in their societies or in their countries, they would never come here.

What do they find here? You find love here. For the sake of experiencing Divine Love, you all embark on long and arduous journeys. But, if you make a thorough observation and investigation into the matter, you will be able to know that love is present within you only. In the *Gita*, Lord Krishna declared: *Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhutha Sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in every human being is a part of My Being). Hence, Divine Love is present in every individual.

But the human being, unable to realize the truth that love is present within himself, thinks that it is something separate or different from him and undertakes long journeys searching for love. Know that the Divine is not different from you. *Sarvata panipadam Tat sarvathokshi siromukham* (That omnipresent *Brahman* has His hands, feet, eyes, and mouth everywhere).

Our foremost task is to cultivate sadgunas

To have a vision of God, who is omnipresent, you have to make certain enquiries. The *Vedas* proclaim that *Brahman* is all-pervasive. *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (the Divine is immanent in every being). Man should cultivate good qualities if he

wants to realize the truth of these statements. Without such qualities, man cannot realize even a fraction of the truth of the statement *saryam khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is *Brahman*). Only by means of good qualities can one recognize the Divine, who is omnipresent. Cultivating good qualities is the basic tenet of devotion. Cultivation of virtues, right attitude, adherence to truth, discipline, and sense of duty are the signs of devotion. Only those who develop these qualities can be called devotees.

Our foremost task is to cultivate *sadgunas* (good qualities). The Sanskrit word *sath* stands for eternity, which is called *Being*. We should acquire the qualities of *Being*. What are these qualities? They are attributelessness, purity, steadfastness and enlightenment. It is not an easy task to acquire all these qualities. However, there is one way out. Since all the virtues are embedded in pure, selfless, and divine love, if you develop love, all the virtues will manifest in you. The true nature of love should be cultivated to experience the Divinity latent in you.

Who am I?

Several ways were enunciated in *Vedanta* to clarify one question: “Who am I?” What is its inner significance? The “I” is all-pervasive. Question yourself, “Who am I?” A doubt may also arise as to why you should try to know “Who am I” when there are so many other things of interest in this age of information. If you find an answer to this question, you will be able to realize not only your true nature, your true identity, but also the true identity of the millions of people in the world. You will be able to recognize the true nature of every individual.

Whenever you come across a stranger you ask him, “Who are you?” and waste your time. Instead, question yourself, “Who am I?” By finding out the answer to this question you will be able to very easily find out who he is, since the true nature of every human being is one and the same. Every human being refers to himself as “I”. The word “I” is applicable to every individual. If you understand this one word “I”, you can understand the real nature of every being in the world.

There is only One without a second

Here is an example. Look at these bulbs and tube lights. Their colors, wattage, and shapes are different. You know that the electric current that flows through these different bulbs is one and the same. *Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (Truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names). Likewise, forms are different, names are different, but the divine vibration is one and the same. So, there is only One without a second. That is Divinity. If you recognize Divinity, you will be able to understand the nature of the Self immanent in all individual beings. Everything has emanated from the Divine.

Here is an example. First you were alone. Later you got married. Before marriage you had only two legs and you enjoyed greater freedom. You could go wherever you wanted to go. After marriage, you acquired two more legs and your movements were restricted, since you did not feel like leaving your wife alone at home. This is bondage. Your wish to have a son might be fulfilled after two years. With the arrival of the son, you added two more legs. Your movements were further impeded. With the passage of time, you might feel bad for not having a baby girl, though you had a son who could uplift your family and bring name and fame. Two more legs were added

with the birth of a daughter. The greater the number of legs, the lesser the freedom would be. You would give away your daughter in marriage. Members of the bridegroom's family would become your relatives. With the arrival of the daughter-in-law, the members of her family too would become your relatives. In this manner one becomes many. Here oneness is the cause of multitudinous.

If you realize this truth, the *Vedantic* axiom *Ekoham Bahusyam* (one *Brahman* multiplies itself into many) can be understood easily. To realize this oneness as the unifying force of the multitudinous is the *summum bonum* of the Indian culture. But, man today is not thinking on these lines. He is dividing oneness into many. He is carried away by attachments at the physical level and is fully immersed in worldly relations like son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandson, and the like. This attachment leads to bondage, if he realizes the truth that the nature of the Self is one and the same in every being, there will be no suffering.

Cultivate purity and divinity

The world is like a cinema, and the *Atma* is the screen. The different projections that appear on the screen are transient, whereas the screen remains as it is. That is why *Vedanta* proclaims *Brahma sathyam jaganmithya* (*Brahman* is truth, the world is an illusion). The pictures in the form of projections on the screen come and go, but the screen does not change.

Let us analyze this from the standpoint of the *Vedantic* statement *sarvain khalvidam Brahma* (the entire universe is *Brahman*). When the pictures appear on the screen, it become invisible. Where does it go? It is there within the picture, but it is invisible. But without the screen you cannot see the pictures.

Observation reveals the fact that the screen is not at all affected either by the innumerable visuals or by the sound effects. The fire that appears on the screen does not burn it. A tempest appears, it may even uproot the trees. The screen depicts the scenes, but it is not affected by them. Sometimes, we see floods on the screen. Rivers like the Ganga, Yamuna, and Godavari may overflow, but the screen is not drenched. What is the reason? Floods, earthquakes, and tempest that appear on the screen are not real, so the screen is not affected by them. It remains as a witness. Your heart is a big screen, which is changeless. On the screen of the heart, you see sufferings, happiness and ordeals. All these are transient scenes, like passing clouds. None of the scenes is permanent. Only the screen of your heart is permanent. That is Divine. It is also called conscience which is the eternal truth.

Where do you find consciousness?

The conscious perception of what is going around and the people we come across through bodily senses and mental powers is transient. Conscience is within. It vibrates throughout the body, whereas conscious perception is associated with the senses. Where do these two, conscience and conscious perception, come from? Both have their origin in the all-pervading universal consciousness. Where do you find consciousness? It is not confined to one place. It is infinite, immutable, invisible, and all-pervasive. First, you should understand this consciousness. You can then attempt to merge it with Divine Consciousness. This merger leads to bliss and liberation.

What should we do to attain this? Air is everywhere. It is invisible and we cannot catch it. But nobody has got any right

to deny its existence. It is our life force. So, it does exist and it is all-pervasive. In your body, this air is in a limited quantity.

If you inflate a balloon, the air, which is all-pervasive, enters the balloon. But its quantity is limited. If you tie the balloon securely with a string, the air in it cannot merge with the air outside. What is the reason? It has a limitation, since it is encased in a balloon. What should be done to overcome the limitation? The encasement should be destroyed. How? Pump more and more air into the balloon till it bursts. Then the limited air in the balloon will get merged with the infinite air outside. Likewise, the body, which is only a vesture of the divine, is the cause of bondage. In the body too there is the air of divinity. But it is limited and bound. If you cultivate purity and divinity more and more, attachment to the body gets destroyed, which will lead to liberation.

The body is composed of the five elements.

It is subject to change and death.

*It is stated that life span of man is hundred years
but do not trust these words.*

*It may drop away in childhood or in youth
or in the middle age or in old age.*

*It may fall away, Oh man, in a village or
in a forest or in the midst of waters.*

*The body is full of filth and is subject to
all sorts of afflictions and diseases.*

It is bound by the cycle of birth and death.

It cannot cross the ocean of life.

Oh mind! Believe not that it will exist forever.

Take refuge at the feet of the Lord.

[Telugu Poem]

For the sake of physical gratification, you undergo many ordeals from dawn to dusk. What do you gain out of it? You are able to experience only ephemeral pleasures. But you should realize the truth that eternal bliss is within you. You should strive to experience that bliss.

God is not different from you. He is not confined to places like temples, mosques, and churches. He is omnipresent. He is the resident of your heart. The body is the temple of God. So, you should strengthen the feelings of love within you. You do develop love, but it is based on bodily relations. You love your son, father, and mother. You identify yourself with the body, so you direct your love toward those with whom you have got a relationship at physical level. You are not able to manifest the kind of love that is beyond name and form. Love has no form. It does not differentiate between young and old or man and woman. Love is love. It cannot be compared to anything else. Love is the very form of the Divine. Love is God. Live in love. How to do that?

*Start the day with Love
Spend the day with Love
Fill the day with Love
End the day with Love
This is the way to God.*

You can cultivate love in several ways. But, do not limit it to the bodily needs and relations. However, as long as you live in the world, you do need the warmth of relationship. You can wish for the welfare and progress of someone else. You can also share his happiness. But all these feelings are limited to the physical relationship, which is transient.

The human being has both a head and a heart. Whatever comes from the head is related to worldly affairs only. Read-

ing, writing, walking, and feelings of pain and pleasure belong to the head. These are all ephemeral.

Eternal values like truth, love, patience, and compassion emanate from the heart. What comes from the head is worldly and ephemeral. What comes from the heart is transcendental and eternal. That which comes from the heart leads to *nivritti* (inward path). But, all that comes from the head lead to *pravriddhi* (outward path). The head carries responsibility, whereas the heart is bestowed with right. Whatever is done by the head is temporary. You feel hungry. You go to canteen and eat two *chapatis* to satiate your hunger. But, after two hours. you feel hungry again. It is cyclic in nature. You feel hungry, you eat something, the food gets digested, and again you feel hungry. This can be compared to the cycle of birth and death.

Sankaracharya said:

The cycle of birth and death is repetitive.

World is an ocean of woes;

win the grace of God and transcend it.

Oh fool! Chant the Lords name instead of

memorizing the rudiments of grammar.

Grammar would not come to your help

at the time of death

[Sanskrit Verse]

The three states of consciousness

As long as you are awake, you aspire for many things and indulge in many activities. You are also subject to manifold experiences. But you forget everything while sleeping.

The state of sleep can be compared to a short death, and death can be compared to a long sleep. It is not easy to understand the true meaning of birth and death. You forget in sleep

state what you experienced during the day. So, sleep state can be considered as a short death. Similarly, waking state can be considered as long life. However, the waking state and the sleep state are temporary. But in both the states witness-consciousness exists, which experiences everything.

Here is an example. During the waking state, you move around with the help of the body, listen to many things, and experience happiness. When questioned, you claim that it is you who is experiencing all this. But, in the dream state, who is experiencing the dream? It is you only. In the deep sleep state, you forget everything and enjoy bliss. Here, who is experiencing bliss? Again, it is you only. So, in all these three states —waking, dream, and deep sleep— you do exist, and it is you who experience everything.

Trikal badhyam sathyam (Truth is changeless in all three periods of time). You remain the same in all the three states. So, you are the very form of Truth.

Live in the present

Embodiments of Love!

Time undergoes change. Waking, dream, and deep sleep states are subject to change. Matter, worldly things and bodies composed of the five elements also undergo change. Mind, intellect, feelings, and senses also undergo change. Senses are afflicted with various diseases. So, they are all transient.

But you are permanent and experience everything. Do not brood over the past. Past is past; forget it. Future is not certain. It is beyond your perception. So, live in the present, since it is permanent. It is not ordinary present; it is omnipresent. How? Past is in the present, since the present is the result of past ac-

tions. Future is also in the present, since it depends on the present actions. So, you should pay attention only to the present.

Instead of giving importance to ephemeral pleasures, you should follow the right path. That is all you are supposed to do now. But you are not doing what you are supposed to do. You simply brood over the past and worry about the future. In this way, you ignore the present. As a result, you are subjected to suffering. Why should you not derive happiness from the present state of affairs?

Brooding over the past and worrying about the future are the main cause of man's suffering. Why do you think about the past? You treaded that path consciously. Then why do you look back? Be happy in the present. That is all you should aspire for. You may face many ordeals. But do not pay too much attention to them. Lead your life happily till the end.

Experience divine bliss, which is within you

Man yearns for happiness in every act, in every kind of experience. He pines for happiness. All his actions are aimed at deriving happiness. Whether he does business or work in an office, his aim is to derive happiness. But does he find it? No. It is a temporary phase only as it is worldly happiness. He may be happy for a while, but permanent happiness is attained only by contemplation on God. So, contemplate on the Divine.

You must understand that the final product depends upon the original material. From clay you can make a doll of clay. Is it possible to make a doll of gold from clay? Your bodies are composed of the five elements. They survive on food. You may prepare a several course meal. But, you should eat it before it gets stale. If you waste time, the food may decay and become unfit for consumption. Likewise, you should experi-

ence the eternal divine bliss at the right time before the body decays and becomes decrepit. This is the task of the human beings today.

You try to experience many things. Instead, experience the divine bliss, which is within you. That is the supreme bliss.

It is the very form of supreme wisdom.

It is one without a second.

It is expansive and pervasive like the sky.

It is eternal, pure and changeless.

It stands as a witness of everything.

[Sanskrit Verse]

Cultivate Divine Love

Look at those glowing lights. In this assembly, some persons are listening to My discourse, some are moving away. and some are sleeping. Different people are doing different types of work. The light stands as a witness. It is not affected by your sleep. It is not affected by your movements. It is not affected even though you do not listen to My discourse. It simply remains as a witness.

Divinity, like light, is the witness of everything. Its effulgence illuminates everything else. Where does it exist? We find *santhi* (peace) within *asanthi* (unrest). In the depth of the *santhi* (peace), there exists *prakanthi* (supreme splendor). In this *prakanthi*, one can experience *Param Jyothi* (Divine Effulgence). *Param Jyothi*, in the form of *Atma Jyothi*, (the light of the *Atma*) is within you. That is the light of nonduality and eternity. That is the light of immortality. That is the light of the Self.

Since you possess that light within yourselves, why should you be afraid of anything else? Why should you worry? Be

happy. Where is happiness? How to experience it? Union with God is happiness.

You should realize that love is the form of God. As long as Divinity, in the form of love, exists within you, unrest cannot reach you. But, these days, people are subjecting themselves to unrest and unhappiness by misinterpreting the nature of love and by attributing to it certain impure feelings. It is a blunder. Know that Divine Love is unsullied, selfless, and pure. Without any hesitation you should try to acquire that love. Strive to possess it.

The world today is full of misery. There is no place without fear and grief. People are afraid to travel by air, by trains or by cars, because they are wary of evil elements. Even walking has become unsafe.

People are not happy at home also, since they are haunted by numerous fears. They are terribly fear-stricken. What is the reason? They are unable to bear difficulties and ordeals. But, think who is facing ordeals? Who is undergoing suffering? It is the body only, which is the composition of the five elements. Reduce attachment to the body. Then you will experience eternal bliss. Reducing body attachment and increasing attachment to the Self is the true meaning of devotion. Attachment to body leads to *pravritti* (outward path), while attachment to the Self leads to *nivritti* (inward path). The combination of these is human life.

Embodiments of Love! Strengthen love, saturate your lives with love and live in that Divine Love.

26 April 1999
Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal

Dwell in God Consciousness

*Bend the body
Mend the senses
End the mind.*

This is one of the chief governing principles of the culture of Bharat. Every *Bharatiya* (Indian) is the inheritor of this legacy. So, *Bharatiyas* should make proper use of this legacy to redeem their lives. If a person abuses another, he really abuses his own self, because the abuser and the abused are both one and the same, because the indwelling *Atma* is the same in both. Who reprimands whom? The principle of the *Atma* is the same in all. On this basis, the scriptures declare: “*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (the truth is one, but wise men speak of it in many ways).”

There is water in this tumbler. Telugu people call it '*neeru*', Tamilians call it '*thanni*', Hindi speaking people call it '*pani*',

Englishmen say 'water', while those who speak Sanskrit say 'vaari'. Though it is called by different names, yet water remains the same; its basic quality does not undergo any change. In this vast world of diverse species, human beings have different names and forms. Despite these outward variations, the *Atmic* principle in all of them is the same. The recognition of this unity in diversity constitutes spiritual *sadhana*. When one enquires deeply into the question whom one is praising or denigrating, loving or trusting, it will become *evident* that one indeed praises, denigrates, loves, or trusts only one's Self and none else.

Fundamental unity of mankind

Though lakhs of years have passed since the advent of man on this earth, yet he does not know his real Self even today. The entire creation has divine origin, and the Creator is God. He willed: "*Ekoham Bahusyam* (I am alone, let Me be many)," and the creation manifested by His Will. *Srishti* (creation) has its origin from *Parameshti* (supreme power). *Samashti* (society) is a limb of *srishti*. Similarly, *vyashti* (individual) is a limb of *samashti*. Without *srishti*, *samashti* has no existence, and without *samashti*, there can be no *vyashti*.

Since man has limbs such as hands, feet, head, etc., which constitute his body, likewise man is a limb of society and society is a limb of creation (*srishti*). Man is therefore not separate from *samashti*, *srishti*, and *Parameshti*. All human beings are just the limbs of the same body of God.

If man realizes his intimate relationship with *samashti*, *srishti*, and *Parameshti*, he will not hate or abuse anyone because all are the limbs of the same body. To recognize the truth of the relationship between the limbs and the body, i.e., the

relation between the part and the whole is a major element in *Sadhana*. One who recognizes this truth will be unaffected by praise or blame.

Story of a noble person

Once, a noble person was proceeding from one village to another. He was followed by an ungodly man, who went on criticizing and abusing the noble person all the way. But the noble man was unaffected by the abusive attacks on him. He never paid any heed to them, nor did he show any anger or worry. As they approached the village, the villagers came in large numbers to welcome the noble man. This was noticed by the other man also. The noble soul spoke to one of the villagers, "Before attending to my needs, please serve this person with some butter milk and food, since he is very much tired from continuously abusing me all along the way."

The critic then realized the greatness of the person whom he had abused all along. He thought to himself, "He is unaffected by abuse and is indifferent to praise or blame. He must be very noble and worthy of veneration." He fell at the feet of the noble soul and said, "Swami, even though I abused you so much, you did not show any anger."

The saintly man replied, "You simpleton, you do not realise that the same spirit resides in you and me. What are you condemning, the body or the self? If you are condemning the self, you are condemning yourself, because the same self is present in you and me. If you are abusing my body, I am, myself, every moment condemning this body of mine, which is made up of the five elements and is full of foul smelling dirt and fecal matter. I decrying my own body because I am myself

disgusted with it. So, if you are abusing my body, you are only helping me.”

The nature of Brahman

Thinking that you are only a body is delusion (*Bhramatathwa*) since you see multiplicity in unity. On the other hand, when you see unity in multiplicity, you attain self realization (*Brahmatathwa*). So, the perception of unity as diversity is *Bhramatathwa*, while discerning unity in all things is *Brahmatathwa* (perception of the divine).

The stories of the Lord (Vishnu Charitra) are full of wonder (*chitra*). They sanctify the lives of the people of all the three worlds (*Trailokya Pavitra*) and are the tools that cut the creepers of worldly bondage (*bhavalatalavitra*). They are like noble friends (*sanmitra*). For the gardens of sages and seers, they are like spring season (*munijanavanachaitra*).

The Divine is beyond description. Even great sages like Narada, son of Brahma, could not understand the majesty and mystery of God. Some people have a wrong notion that Narada is one who always creates discord. This is not correct. Narada means one who propagates wisdom. It was he who proclaimed that understanding nonduality is wisdom. He could go to *Kailasa* (Siva’s abode) or *Vaikunta* (Vishnu’s abode) in a moment.

The ever-wandering Narada once went to *Vaikunta*. He met Vishnu there. Vishnu wanted to test Narada. He said, “Narada, you have no attachments. You are constantly wandering in the three worlds, chanting My name continually. But have you tried to understand the mystery of My creation? I created the five elements. This entire cosmos is made up of these five elements. Which of these five elements is most important?”

Narada replied, “How can I not know this, my Lord? I have cognized everything in this creation. If I cannot understand this truth, who else can?”

The Lord then asked, “Which among the five elements is most important?”

Narada replied, “Water is most important, for three-fourths of the earth is enveloped by water. Land is only one-fourth of the earth's surface.”

Vishnu remarked, “But the sage Agastya drank up the ocean in a single gulp. So, is Agastya greater or water?”

Narada replied, “You are right my Lord, Agastya is greater than water.”

Vishnu asked again, “But this Agastya is a tiny star in the sky (*akasa*). Now, is this star greater or the sky?”

Narada replied, “It is the sky that is greater.”

The Lord agreed and said, “Your understanding is correct. The sky indeed is greater. In His incarnation as Vamana, the Lord asked for three steps from king Bali. And in the course of taking the gift of three steps, Vamana assumed the form of Thrivikrama and covered the entire earth in one step, the space from the earth to the sky in second, and there was no room for the third step. King Bali had to offer his head for the third step. So now, is God great or the sky?”

Narada replied, “Swami, when the mere foot of the Lord covers the entire sky, how much greater His full form would be? God indeed is greater.”

Vishnu now asked, “God, who envelops the entire cosmos dwells in the heart of His *bhakta* (devotee). So now, is the heart of the devotee greater or God?”

Narada replied, “Indeed, the devotee’s heart is greater.”

So, you see there is nothing greater than the heart of the devotee. The infinite God is enshrined in the heart of a true devotee in His subtlest form. That is why He is described as "*Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan*" (subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). How can anyone grasp or describe the truth about the Divine?

Live like a lotus

If you want to understand the divine principle, you have to understand the essence of *Bharatiya* culture. The culture of Bharat teaches that to be reputed as a great man is of no consequence. To acquire a good name is all that matters. Ravana was a great personality in the *Ramayana*. But Rama was the embodiment of goodness. Ravana was great; Rama was good. What is the difference between greatness and goodness? A great man sees *nara* (man) in Narayana (God), while a good man sees Narayana in every *nara*. Greatness lies in seeing the divine in man. This is true *Vedanta*. *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (all this is verily *Brahman*). *Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat* (the universe is permeated by the Divine). *Ishwara sarva bhutanam* (God is immanent in all creatures). The one who knows this truth is a good man.

What is the difference between man and God? The one with the feeling of separateness and individuality (*vyakti*) is human, while God sees everything in the cosmos as His manifestation. Recognizing the truth that all are His forms is the perception of the divine. A noble man will perceive himself as part of society (*samashti*). The nobler man will perceive himself as part of the entire creation. The one who perceives the entire creation as the manifestation, of God (*Vishnumayam*) is a *Paramahansa* (fully self-realized one). He sees the divine in

every part of this creation. What are the attributes of a *Paramahamsa*? The heart of a *Paramahamsa* is like a lotus. Where is the lotus born? It is born in mud. Where does it live? It lives on the surface of water. The lotus is neither defiled by mud nor wetted by water. Yet it cannot survive even for a second without mud and water. Man's accumulated *samskaras* of past lives are like mud. The present life can be compared to water. A *Paramahamsa* is one who is not affected by his past life. Though his present life is the consequence of his past *samskaras*, yet it can be pure and free from the mud of past traits.

Jealousy and its three sons

The divinity present in man endows him with sacred qualities as mere means of his worldly existence. He wastes time by spending it in mundane activities. Why? The main reason is man's *ahamkara* (ego) and *mamakara* (attachment). Besides these two, man is also a victim of *asuya* (jealousy). Jealousy is the source of great danger. No matter how great a scholar one may be, or a man of authority and position, or one with great virtues, when once one falls prey to jealousy, one loses everything in life.

Here is a green tree full of blooming flowers. A pest enters this tree and destroys it in a short time. The pest is not visible as it eats away the tree's roots. Jealousy is like this pest. The Kauravas met their ruin due to jealousy. A jealous man is not happy to see the happiness, health, wealth, or higher performance of others. The feeling that no one should excel one in life is the root of jealousy. Jealousy has three sons. They are *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger) and *dwesha* (hatred). But this jealousy has a sister named *anasuya* (one without jealousy).

Anasuya, the wife of sage Atri, made Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara, the Supreme Trinity, into babes. She could make the gods forget their Divinity. She could make Divinity her child. However, in this world, jealousy is growing beyond limits. It is highly dangerous. Jealousy causes the fall of man. One should eschew jealousy. Jealousy is totally contrary to the culture of Bharat. *Bharatiya* culture has always considered humanity as one entity. That is the import of the *Vedic* prayer:

Saha Navavathu
Saha Nau Bhunakthu
Saha Veeryam Karavavahai
Tejaswi Navadheethamasthu
Ma Vidvisavahai
Om Santhi Santhi Santhih.

May we be protected and nourished together!
 May we perform heroic deeds!
 May we be filled with divine effulgence.
 May we never have any hatred between us!
Om peace, peace, peace.

How sacred are these words of the *Vedas*, which are a part of the heritage of Bharat! There are so many similar sacred tenets in the *sanskriti* (culture) of Bharat. What is *sanskriti*? That which refines. Man has forgotten his tenet of refinement. He has also forgotten his humanness. He is fostering animal nature. This animal nature in turn becomes demonic. Strive to get rid of the animal traits and develop human qualities.

Offer the sacred food to God first

Man undertakes several spiritual practices today. But what is their effect on him? The body of man is like a tender plan-

tain leaf. On this fresh green leaf, you serve five items of delicious food of nectarine qualities. These items of food are composed of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), the five life principles (*prana, apana, vyana, udana, and samana*), and the five senses of man. To whom do you offer this sacred food first? Instead of offering to God first, you offer it to demons of *kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya* (desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, jealousy). Thus, you offer all your five senses to these demons. After these demons have satiated themselves, and when the tender plantain leaf of the body has become a tattered remnant, you turn to offer it to God. Is this what you should do? As soon as the food is served, it should be offered to God. Then you partake of it. Why do you offer this wonderful feast to the demons of desire, anger, greed, pride, jealousy etc.?

*When old age overtakes you, the body becomes
weak, vision fails, the face is full of wrinkles;
Urchins surround you and tease you as stuffed
monkey
And your body itself becomes a burden of misery.
Is that when you should offer your body to God?
No, not at all. Offer yourself to God in your youth,
when all your faculties
Are at their peak performance and the body is full
of vigor and vitality.*

[Telugu Poem]

Start prayer and devotion to God at early age

How can you do that? You can do it by following the principles of *sathya, dharma, santhi, prema, and ahimsa*. These are sacred delicious items of food to be offered to God. And they

must be offered on the fresh, green plantain leaf of tender, supple, and efficient body. Prayer and devotion to God at early age will bring fulfillment in your life. You have forgotten this truth. When somebody asks why you don't think of God, you say, there is still time for it; you can do so after retirement. Even after retirement, some people run after re-employment.

*What is the use of all your earnings,
when your end is near?
You fool, think, who will follow you in death.
It is a folly to forget God while striving to live.
Look after your family, perform your duties,
but hold in your heart always God.*

[Telugu Poem]

Lead a worthy and noble life as a human being

That is the real meaning of *manava* (human being). What does *manava* imply? *Ma* means ignorance, *na* means without, and *va* is to act. Thus, *manava* is one who acts without ignorance. There is another interpretation of *manava*, viz. *ma* = not, *nava* = new. Man is not new. He has had several previous lives. He has not become a human being all of a sudden. So it is quite natural for him to know how to lead a worthy and noble life as a human being.

Here is a small example. A cow gives birth to a calf. The new-born calf instinctively goes to the udder of the cow to drink milk. Who has taught the calf? Similarly, a new born babe seeks its mother's milk. All this is only carryover from several previous births. A new-born animal needs no training to seek milk from its mother. You must realize from this that you are not a brand new creation, but one in fact truly ancient.

You have taken several births, but you are yet to realize God. Merely repeating Krishna, Rama, Govinda is of no use. You must have full faith in God. Only then can you attain salvation. You should consider *viswasa* (faith) as your *swasa* (life breath). Without *swasa* (life breath), you cannot live.

Where there is breath, there is life.
 Where there is faith, there is love (*prema*).
 Where there is love, there is peace (*santhi*).
 Where there is peace, there is truth (*sathya*).
 Where there is truth, there is God.
 Where there is God, there is bliss (*ananda*).

Experience inner bliss

Human life should begin with faith and end in bliss (*ananda*). When you have no faith, how can you attain happiness? Increase your faith in God and attain peace (*santhi*). Through truth experience God. God is bliss. The experience of divinity is true bliss.

Bliss is with you. Bliss is in you. It is behind you, above you, below you and all around you. When you are immersed in bliss, what is it that you need to search? The way to experience this bliss is what I mentioned in the beginning —bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind. This is true culture. Have faith in this culture, lead a pure and meaningful life and attain the goal of human life.

Perform your duty. *Karthavyam yogamuchyate* (performing your duty properly is indeed *yoga*). Duty is God. Today, you have forgotten *yoga* and are running after *udyoga* (job). In the job you may get promotion, but you have to face retirement too. There is no retirement in *yoga*. It is *nithya* and *sathya* (eternal and true). *Yoga karmasu kausalam* (perfection in ac-

tion is true *yoga*). Discharging one's duty efficiently and with love is *yoga*. Duty is God.

Divinity permeates everything in this universe. God has ingrained mystery and beauty in nature. Everyone must try to discover this divine mystery in nature. Nature is invested with divine beauty. No man can create this wonderful beauty. At sunrise, everything looks golden. God's creation is described in various ways. If God's creation is so beautiful, how much more beautiful would God be? Before trying to visualise the beauty of Creator, discover and appreciate beauty of nature.

As long as you are in this world, carry out your duties diligently. While discharging your duties, spend time in thoughts of divinity. Today, you waste time. Time is the very form of God. The *Vedas* says: "*Samvatsaraya Namah.*" In fact, *Samvatsara* is God's name. We even say *Nutana Samvatsara* (New Year). God is ever new. This ever new effulgent God takes the form of man, and is called *Avatar*. Actually, every new human birth is an *Avatar* as God resides in each heart as the *Atma*.

There is no living body without *Atma*. It is not possible to realize *Atma* without the body. The body and soul are related. They are interdependent. The body should be maintained strong and healthy to experience the divine bliss. Do not waste all your time in eating, sleeping, and in sensual pleasures. Perform your worldly duties at their proper time, and set apart the time when you offer yourself to God.

Start early, drive slowly, reach safely

Perform all your actions in the service of God. "*Sarvaka-rma Bhagavad preethartham* (all your actions should be to please God)." Do not have any worldly preferences. Actions performed for personal satisfaction are attributed to *pravritti*

marga (worldly path); those to please God relate to *nivritti marga* (inward path). Do not wait till you are unable to move, your vision fails, folds and wrinkles appear on the face, and hair turns gray. Why don't you think of God from the beginning? Start early, drive slowly, reach safely. This should be your guiding principle for your life's journey as well.

*Think of God early in life.
Be not proud, oh man, of your beautiful body,
youth, and power.
Do not forget the fact that very soon you will have
to face the misery of old age.
Your body is nothing but a mere puppet, a doll of
skin.
Understand the truth of this 'puppet dance'.*

[Telugu Poem]

This is not life. Make proper use of the body and experience the ultimate reality. Within this *mrinmaya* (body of clay) is *Chinmaya* (awareness of the *Atma*), which imparts value to the body.

*The body is a box of rusty tin.
Inside the box are priceless gems — diamonds,
emeralds, sapphires.
The box is worthless,
but the gems are highly valuable.
The body is of little worth,
but the indwelling Lord is of real worth.
The body is a mud doll, leather puppet,
a delusive toy.*

[Telugu Poem]

But the nectarine, non-dual, eternal bliss (*amritananda, advaitananda, amarananda*) is in you. With this treasure inside you, you search around and undertake pilgrimages. No need. Bliss is inside you. Make it come out. This is real *sadhana*. Do not bother about worldly problems. They are passing clouds. There is only one permanent truth. This is the principle of the *Atma*. The body is temporary. But what is inside is the permanent, eternal *Atmatathwa*.

Embodiments of Love! All of you are embodiments of divinity. God is in you as the *Atma*. Make proper use of the body. How? Speak in a pure way, speak the truth. Act righteously. Discriminate between right and wrong and act accordingly. Do not act under the impulses of anger and hatred. Do not lie or abuse. Do not cause hurt to anybody.

We see pollution everywhere. We should not give room to this. What is the solution? Fill your heart with love.

27 April 1999

Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal

My mission is to raise the consciousness of man to a level at which he neither rejoices nor mourns over anything. In that supreme state, one is going through re-birth and re-death each moment, for these acts are one and the same, emerging from the formless into form, merging from the form into the formless. Then, there is no success or adversity, no joy or pain. When the devotee attains this Oneness, their journey toward Me ceases. For, they will be with Me endlessly.

—Baba

Nature of Self

*Trees bear fruit for the benefit of others;
Rivers flow for the betterment of all;
Cows yield milk for the benefit of others;
Human body has been given to man to help others.*
[Sanskrit sloka]

In this world, trees, rivers, and cows help others without any trace of selfish motive. They do not expect anything in return. Without trees, rivers, and cows, the world cannot exist. In fact, it is they that sustain it. But the irony is that man does not make any effort to help and serve others. The spirit of sacrifice evident in trees, rivers, and cows is absent in man today. He spends all his time in fulfilling his selfish desires and does not give even a moment for doing good to others or for helping them. *Sai Avatar* has incarnated in this *Kali* age with the divine mission of making every individual realize his relationship with the community, and ultimately with Divinity.

True individuality of man

Transformation at individual level is absolutely essential. But today, man is wasting his time in evil practices. He indulges in unholy activities day in and day out. He demeans himself by his evil habits. He kills animals and eats their flesh. Instead of purifying his mind, he debases it by taking intoxicants. He defiles time, which is the very form of Divinity, by gambling. He nurtures evil qualities by indulging in evil activities. In addition to this, he involves himself in demeaning activities like stealing and denigrating others. He reads vulgar books, which generate evil thoughts and violent feelings in him. As he indulges more and more in wicked activities, he also pollutes and corrupts the society. When individuals take to evil ways, the entire society degenerates. Teaching and propagation of spirituality is essential for the purification of the individual and the society.

What is spirituality? That which destroys man's animal nature, nurtures humanness, and finally transforms him into a Divine being is spirituality. Worshipping, singing devotional songs, and performing rituals are acts of secondary importance. They cannot be identified with true spirituality. The word **SAI** spells out to the world the significance of transformation at three levels. The letter **S** stands for transformation at spiritual level, **A** for transformation at association (social) level, and **I** for transformation at the individual level.

Individual transformation is the basis for the other two. Therefore, this is the first step. But, these days, the word *individual* is not properly understood. You usually take only the human form into consideration and identify it with an individual. Who is an individual? He, who manifests his *Avayakta* (unmanifest) Divinity through his conduct is an individual

(*vyakti*). This latent divine principle permeates the entire being of an individual from head to foot and is called conscience. To manifest and demonstrate the presence of this conscience is the characteristic of a human being. Instead of manifesting the pure inner being, the Self, man today is manifesting evil qualities and evil tendencies, which are related to his outer being i.e. the body. The *Chaitanya* (Divine Consciousness) latent in every human being is his true individuality. This consciousness should be put on the right track.

Put your senses in right direction

I said the other day, “*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is *Brahman*).” This is a mantra. “*Easwara sarva bhutanam* (God is the indweller in all beings)” is another mantra. It is essential for everyone to understand and realize the inner significance of these mantras. Every mantra is pregnant with deep inner meaning. It is impossible to understand the true meaning of the mantras without acquiring virtues.

What are these virtues? Right vision (*samyak drishti*) is one. Humanity will be in danger without right vision. The image of every seen object gets imprinted in the mind. Therefore, first of all one must have right vision. Right vision is that which is untainted by the baneful influence of evil feelings, evil thoughts, and evil deeds. See no evil; see what is good. That which develops your insight to understand what is good, eternal, and true is right vision.

Next comes right listening (*samyak sravanam*). You should lend your ear only to good speech. Under no circumstances should you listen to evil talk. For this, you should listen to sacred texts, *bhajans* (devotional songs), and talks about sacred acts.

Everything in this world is impermanent. The *Vedas* say, "*Yath drisyam thannasyam*" (all that is seen is bound to perish). All that you see will disappear one day or the other. For the nine-fold path of *bhakti* (devotion) good listening (*sravanam*) is the beginning. *Sravanam*, *keerthanam*, *Vishnusmaranam*, *padasevanam*, *archanam*, *vandanam*, *dasyam*, *sneham*, and *Atmanivedanam* (listening, singing the glories of the Lord, constant remembrance of the name of Vishnu, serving the Lord's feet, worship, salutation, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender) are the nine paths of devotion. The first step to the final act of self-surrender (*Atmanivedanam*) is *sravanam* (listening). *Sruti* (divine sound e.g. *Vedas*) is derived from *sravanam* only.

Right thoughts lead to right action

The next virtue is right speech (*samyak vak*). Right vision and right listening lead to right speech. Your speech should be good. Never utter harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly. That is why I tell you often, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." Say what you have to say without harshness. Speak softly so that only the person for whom your words are intended may hear you. Such soft and sweet speech should be developed. Good vision, good listening and good speech lead to good thoughts. "*Yad bhavam that bhavathi* (as are your thoughts, so is the result)." Right thoughts lead to right action (*samyak karma*). Without good thoughts it is not possible to perform good actions.

Buddha performed *tapas* (penance) for many years to put his five senses on the sacred path. Mere bookish knowledge is of no consequence. It is related to art, and is in fact artificial. Mere textual knowledge will not lead you to right vision.

Similarly, your sense of hearing does not become holy by listening to the expositions of a teacher. Good thoughts cannot be acquired by reading scriptures or by listening to the teachings of the preceptor. By self-effort you should put your senses of *sabda* (sound), *sparsa* (touch), *rupa* (form), *rasa* (taste), and *gandha* (smell) to right use. That alone leads you to proper *sadhana* (spiritual practice).

Senses are the cause for the wrong attitude of man

When you put your senses in the right direction, your life will also enter the right path. For the wrong attitude of man today, senses are the cause. As the senses become impure, the entire life too becomes impure and unsacred. If you want to make your life sacred, you have to first sanctify your senses. So, Buddha who did penance for several years, understood that all ritualistic practices were useless. He declared right vision, right listening, right speech, right thoughts, and right acts as the five primordial principles for the guidance of man.

These five principles are the *pancha pranas* (five life forces) and five *koshas* (life sheaths) of man. Physical body is *annamaya kosha* (food sheath). Body is transient. But you should nourish it, because only a properly nourished healthy body can support the *pranamaya kosha* (life sheath) and *manomaya kosha* (mind sheath). *Pranamaya kosha* helps in the balanced flow of *prana* (life force) in the body.

Human beings limit themselves up to these three *koshas*. Nobody attempts to reach fourth sheath, *vijnanamaya kosha* (wisdom sheath), which is beyond food sheath, life sheath, and mind sheath. This sheath is reached only after transcending the first three sheaths. What is the nature of these three sheaths? The one you think you are is the food sheath (physical body).

What others think you are is the mind sheath. The one you really are is the life sheath.

When the human being enters the wisdom sheath, only then does he experience true bliss. So, man has to maintain sound body. But he should know that as the body is associated with the senses, he should channelise them into the right path. When the senses follow the right path, only then does the life force vibrate in the body properly. This vibration is Divine in nature.

In the *Gayathri Mantra*, the word *bhur* refers to the body. Body is composed of gross materials such as water, lime, lead, iron, etc. All these materials may not cost more than one rupee. But the value of the body is not one rupee. Its value is immeasurable. *Bhur* also stands for the earth. The earth is made up of matter, which is transient.

The word *bhuvah* in the *mantra* stands for vibration. The body is made up of gross matter, which cannot have any movement without the life force of vibration. In the absence of this vibration, the body is mere lifeless matter.

What is the source of this vibration? This vibration originates from radiation (*suvaha*), which is related to spiritual knowledge.

Purity in thought, word, and deed

This spiritual knowledge comes from the *Vedas*. The four *mahavakyas* (profound statements) of the *Vedas* that give this knowledge are *Prajnanam Brahma* (knowledge is *Brahman*), *Ayatma Brahma* (*Atma* is *Brahman*), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am *Brahman*) and *Tatthwamasi* (That you are). Life force (*prana*) or vibration works only through radiation. Without the radiation of *prajnana*, vibration cannot have any movement. It becomes inert. True humanness lies in harmonizing these three

principles. Man should therefore achieve the unity of materialization, vibration and radiation. Harmony in thought, word, and deed, is referred to as *trikarana suddhi*.

Example of trikarana suddhi

I shall relate to you an example from the *Mahabharata* to illustrate this. Dharmaraja, the eldest brother of the Pandavas, was an embodiment of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa*. Draupadi, born out of fire, represented *prana*. Bhima, the son of the wind God, symbolized *chaitanya shakti* (power of awareness). You know that life without awareness is *jada* (inert). Arjuna symbolized the *antahkarna shakti* (power of the inner motivator). Nakula and Sahadeva represented the *jnanendriyas* (organs of perception) and *karmendriyas* (organs of action), respectively.

Truth, righteousness, peace, and love join the senses of action and cognition, enter the *antahkarna* (seat of thought and feeling) with the help of life force called vibration and live there. So, Divinity, which exists in every individual, is associated with the five cognitive senses: sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell. To recognize the nature of this truth, man should first attain the unity of thought, word, and deed and bring about complete harmony in them. This is the real spiritual practice.

Today, the typical individual thinks something, speaks something else, and acts in altogether a different way. “*Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam.*” Such a manner of functioning is typical of a wicked person.

Arjuna was the epitome of *trikarana suddhi* (purity of the triad thought, word, and deed). Nakula and Sahadeva, who symbolized the senses of cognition and action, provided the

right sources. Bhima, the son of the wind God, stood by the side of Dharmaraja. His presence was as vital as the presence of oxygen in the environment. Draupadi symbolized life force. Only with the help of this life force could Dharmaraja foster truth, righteousness, peace, and love. The Pandavas thus represent the proper use of all the powers in the body in purity and harmony.

Idealism of Draupadi

Epics like the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata* and other *Bharatiya* (Indian) scriptures expound these spiritual realities. Though Bhima and Arjuna were seethed with anger and revenge when their sons were killed by Aswatthama, Draupadi pacified them. Though she was grief-stricken at the loss of her children, she maintained a perfect state of equanimity. When Arjuna, in a fit of anger, was ready to kill Aswatthama, she quoted the scriptures and changed his mind. Draupadi was known for her immaculate character. She was also called *Panchali*. This word is often misinterpreted as a woman married to five men. No, it is not correct. She was able to coordinate the functions of the five cognitive senses — sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell— in an impeccable manner. When Arjuna was about to kill Aswatthama, she advised him in the following manner:

*Oh Arjuna, it is an unrighteous act to kill
the one who is fear-stricken,
the one who is in distress,
the one who is asleep,
the one who is unaware,
the one who has surrendered himself,
the one who is helpless,*

*the one who is unarmed, and
the one who is a female.*

[Telugu Poem]

*Your speech is full of anger.
It is a dangerous trait.
No human being should possess anger.
The one who is filled with anger
achieves nothing but disgrace.
Anger motivates one to do evil deeds.
Such an individual is despised by everyone.*

[Telugu Poem]

Bhima was also furious. Draupadi spoke to him thus:

*Anger destroys one's riches.
It destroys one's respect.
It distances one from relatives.
It causes loss of everything.*

[Telugu Poem]

Aswatthama had killed all her five sons. One can imagine the state of her mind. She would have been justified in using the harshest language. But she did not have harsh feelings. She ran and fell at the feet of Aswatthama and questioned his ruthlessness in a gentle way:

*They didn't wear weapons and rage against you.
They were not in the battlefield.
They didn't cause you even the least harm.
They were not adept in fighting.
How did you feel like killing such
innocent children who were asleep!*

[Telugu Poem]

Draupadi spoke in such a gentle manner. She never used harsh words. Even in moments of extreme distress, Draupadi could speak softly and graciously. In fact every individual should speak softly.

What should a man learn today? He should utilize his senses in the right way and thereby make an endeavor to attain Divinity.

Purpose of the Avatar

In this human life, the most significant thing to know is devotion. *Jnana* (wisdom) is the root of the tree of love. Its fruit contains sweet juice. It is the juice of devotion. The juice or essence (*raso*) is the very form of the Divine. *Raso vai sah* (He is sweet essence). So, *bhakti* (devotion) is the very essence of Divinity. Sweetness of *bhakti* should reflect in your speech. Hence, every word uttered by you should be sweet. Only then do you deserve to be called a human being. When can you speak sweetly? When you contemplate on the Divine, your speech becomes sweet.

However, it may sometimes necessary to use harsh words to correct people who act and behave in evil ways. Though the words may appear to be harsh, the feelings behind them should be saturated with love. Sometimes when it rains, hailstones also fall along with the gentle raindrops. They are nothing but water in frozen form. In this context, I give you an example.

During the *Mahabharata* war, one day Aswatthama vowed that he would behead the Pandavas before the sun sets. Draupadi came to know of this vow. She prayed to Krishna, "I don't want anything. I don't want the kingdom. Save the Pandavas" Krishna said, "That is not in my hands. The vow cannot be changed?" Draupadi pleaded with Krishna, "Nothing in this

world is beyond Your capacity. Everything is in Your hands. If You will, You can do anything.” And she fell at His feet.

Krishna’s plan to save the Pandavas

Lord Krishna blessed her and immediately chalked out a plan. In the darkness of night, He went to sage Durvasa. The Pandavas, who accompanied the Lord, waited outside as instructed by Krishna. To protect His devotees, the Lord has to enact many roles. If He does not act, the play simply loses its significance and it becomes uninteresting. Durvasa gave an ecstatic welcome to Krishna.

Krishna said, “I have come here with a purpose. It is a very difficult task. You have to help me.” Durvasa said, “I am ready to do any task except telling a lie.” Krishna said, “Uttering lies is not acceptable to Me also. I am Divine Myself. I always adhere to truth. How can I tell you to utter a lie? I have made a plan. Please act according to it. That will fulfil My desire.”

“Lord, do You have a desire?” asked Durvasa. “I have desires for the sake of others. I have no desires for My own sake. Whatever I do, whatever I speak, it is for the welfare of others. I never seek My own welfare,” Krishna replied.

“Lord! what should I do?” asked Durvasa. Krishna said, “Dig a big pit. Put a strong plank over it and place your throne on it. Then sit on the throne. The Pandavas will hide in the pit. When Aswatthama comes here along with his accomplices and asks the whereabouts of the Pandavas, tell him that the Pandavas are under you. But say this in a harsh tone.”

Durvasa was known for his temper. Aswatthama searched everywhere and at last came to Durvasa. He offered salutations to Durvasa and asked about the Pandavas. Durvasa said in an angry tone, “Pandavas are under me.” He spoke truth but

changed the intonation. Fearing that the sage would curse him, Aswatthama ran away from that place.

In this way, God has to contrive some situations for the protection of the world. His attempts are not only to protect the holy people but to protect holiness itself. This sacredness is present in every being. To protect this sacredness the Lord incarnates. "*Paritranaya Sadhunam Vinashay Cha Dushkritam Dharma Sansthapanarthaya Sambhavami Yuge Yuge* (to protect the righteous and destroy the wicked I incarnate from time to time to establish *dharma*).” Righteousness can never be annihilated. It is ever present in every age. But occasions arise when its very existence is threatened. The Lord incarnates to re-establish *dharma* and to accord proper place to it. If *dharma* is vulnerable to destruction, how can we call it *dharma*? So, *dharma* can never be vanquished. But, it becomes obscure. To make *dharma* more manifest is the purpose of the *Avatar*.

Saturate your life with Love

The question arises, “Who is God?” You are all the forms of God. The *Atmatathwa* (Self) present in every being is in fact God. It is Divinity in its true sense. "*Mamaivamsa jeevaloke jeevabhuta sanathana*," (an aspect of My Divinity is resident in each being). Do not search for God. Look within. Divine will manifest in you.

Spiritual texts may be many, the teachings of spirituality may be different, but the *Atma* is the same. In any country, at any time, in any surroundings, the *Atma* is the same. There is no such thing as a Japanese *Atma* or American *Atma* or *Atma* of any other country. It transcends all divisions of creeds and castes. It has no distinctions like man and woman. It is beyond all distinctions. *Nirgunam, niranjanam, sanathanam, nicket-*

anam, nithya buddha mukta nirmala swarupinam (The nature of the Self is described as attributeless, pure, eternal, free from bondage, unsullied and immortal). This eternal *Atma* is present in every human being.

Love is the essence of all fruits

At one time, someone questioned Shirdi Sai Baba, “Are you God?” What was His reply? “All are the forms of the Divine. I am not only Divine, but also the Divinity that is present in the Divine,” said Baba. So, the same Divinity is present in every being as all are the forms of the Divine.

But, people are not able to realize the Divine because they drink intoxicating wine of worldly desires. Wine leads to ignorance but not to the Divine. So, you should consume something that promotes Divinity. What is it? It is love. If you taste the fruit of love, you need no other nourishment. Love is the essence of all fruits. It is the goal of all goals. It is the end of all spiritual practices. Cultivate such love with pure and steady mind. For this, you should keep the body, mind, and senses on the right track.

I told you yesterday the three ways that would help you to streamline your life: *Bend the body, mend the senses, and end the mind*. What does the maxim, *bend the body* stand for? Is it bending the body to carry out some task? No. You should bend your body with humility, respect, and love when you see elders and your parents. In olden days, in town and country, the entrances to the houses were a bit low. Visitors had to bend their heads to enter the houses. To highlight the significance of the maxim, *bend the body*, the ancients used to keep the height of the entrances low deliberately.

Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure

Mend the senses. Through right vision, right listening, right speech, right thoughts, and right actions you have to control your senses. That is the end of the mind. Here is an example. This is a piece of cloth. You call it cloth as long as the threads are intact. If you remove the threads one by one there will be no cloth. The threads symbolize your desires.

It is said, “less luggage, more comfort make travel a pleasure.” You are increasing your luggage day after day. This burden has become a great hindrance to your progress and happiness. You should remove this hurdle and move closer to Divinity. *Salokya* is closeness to Divinity. *Sarupya* is to attain the form of Divinity. How is this possible? The *Vedas* say, “*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* (the knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman*).” Prahlada, who contemplated on Lord Narayana, became Narayana himself. The dacoit Ratnakara recited the name of Lord Rama and transformed himself into sage Valmiki. Hanuman contemplated on the name of Lord Rama. He is worshipped by the devotees of Rama. *Sayujya* is complete integration or merger with the Lord. This is the end of all *sadhanas* (spiritual exercises).

Several ways of spirituality are enunciated in the *Vedas*, the epics and the *Puranas*, but love is the essence of all these ways. Love is changeless. There should not be any change in love. Cultivate this changeless love and redeem your life.

*Start the day with love,
Fill the day with love,
Spend the day with love,
End the day with love,
This is the way to God.*

Saturate your life with love and end your life with Divine love. All other thoughts will disturb your equanimity.

Gifts of God

Man possesses all types of wealth except two. These two are possessed by God. You can attain them by praying to God. These two are *santhi* (peace) and *ananda* (bliss). You may feel happy otherwise too, but know that such happiness is transient. Eternal peace and eternal happiness are the gifts of the Divine. So, you should pray for these gifts. Your prayer should be like this: “My Lord, I do not want anything that can be found in this world. Please grant me that which is with you alone, *santhi* and *ananda* (peace and bliss). I want nothing else other than these two.” Pleasure and happiness obtained from objects of this world are short-lived. “*Anithyam Asukham Lokam, Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam,*” says the *Gita*. Let not your prayer to God be for these impermanent things. Pray to God for *santhi* and *ananda*. With such prayer you can win God’s love and grace. Once God’s love is obtained, you can win the whole world. When you pray to God for His love, your worldly desires also get fulfilled automatically.

Once, a king did penance. He had no children. God manifested before him and asked him to tell his wish. The king said, “Lord, I want to see my great grandson ruling the kingdom.” How many desires are contained in one desire! He should have children. His children should also beget children. The kingdom should be under his control till his great grandson grows up and rules over it. His eyesight should be intact to watch this progress. This single desire expressed by him contains all the other desires. Likewise, if you pray to God for love, all your worldly desires too will be fulfilled.

*Man is seated under a tree
 Bearing twelve worries.
 Birth is a worry, life is a worry,
 Family is a worry, death is a worry,
 Childhood is a worry, old age is a worry,
 Success is a worry, failure is a worry,
 Action is a worry, obstacles are a worry,
 Joy itself is a worry, all uncertainties are a worry.
 Oh ye, all come and carry away this gift.
 All your worries will end.*

[Telugu Poem]

This tamarind tree of worries is not a fit tree for shade. If you receive God's love, all these worries will vanish. This is your only need. This should be your only desire. All other spiritual practices are of no use. Love cannot be acquired by these practices. Prayer and *bhakti* (devotion) with intense yearning for Gods love and grace will fill your heart with love. Chant the Lord's name ceaselessly to attain that love.

28 April 1999
 Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal

I have repeatedly declared that students are My property. I consider students' welfare as My welfare and their happiness as My happiness. I never think of My happiness and My comfort.

—Baba

Women Symbolize Sacrifice

*Rama's divinity blossomed under Kausalya's loving care;
 Lava and Kusa could become powerful and famous
 Due to their noble and virtuous mother Sita;
 The love and care of Jijabai made Shivaji a great warrior;
 Fostered with the love of
 his mother Putlibai, Gandhi became a Mahatma.
 Is there anyone in this world who can
 Take care of you the way your mother does?
 Amma (mother) is the first word that man picks up in life.
 The first letter of the word 'Amma' also happens to be
 The first letter of the alphabet.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love!

In this world, there are many types of relationships, but none equals the relationship that exists between the mother and the child. It is because of this intimate relationship with the mother that one's own country is called motherland. Similarly,

one's own language is called mother tongue, not father tongue. Among the parents, the first place is given to the mother; next comes the father. Not only in day-to-day life but also in the field of spirituality, mothers and women are given the highest regard. For example, when we mention the names of Divine couples such as Sita Rama, Radha Krishna, Lakshmi Narayana, etc., the names of the goddesses come first. What is the inner significance of this? Mother represents Nature, which is the manifest aspect of Divinity. Similarly, the body and the *Atma*, the creation and the Creator, are closely interrelated. The body cannot function without the *Atma*. The *Atma* cannot be experienced without the body.

The *Bhagavad Gita* refers to *swadharma* and *paradharma*. *Swa* refers to the *Atma* and *para* to the body. But today, people are under the mistaken notion that *swadharma* refers to the *dharma* of one's own caste and community such as *brahmin*, *kshatriya* (warrior), *vaisya* (merchant), and *sudra* (labourer). *Swadharma* is *Atmadharma*. The letter *Sa* denotes Divinity. It also signifies the four stages such as *Salokya* (contemplation on God), *Sameepya* (nearness to God), *Sarupya* (identity with God), and *Sayujya* (merger with God). Today, man performs all his activities having faith in the external world. All that is physical and external is temporary. Only the *Atma* is permanent and eternal. In fact, the *Atma* is the real mother. It is not proper on your part to forget this divine mother.

Mother is one's first God

Mother is given the utmost importance in human life. There may be a wicked son, but not a wicked mother. It is because of the noble feelings of the mothers that sons become virtuous, intelligent, attain exalted positions and earn name and

fame. The *Vedas* declare: *Mathru Devo bhava, pithru Devo bhava, acharya Devo bhava, atithi Devo bhava* (worship the mother as God, the father as God, the preceptor as God and the guest as God.) It is the mother who fosters you and nourishes you. It is she who knows your choices and preferences and fulfils all your needs. So, be grateful to your mother always.

Though you cannot see Rama, Krishna, Siva, and Vishnu, you are worshipping them because you believe in scriptures and what the elders say. But how is that you are forgetting your parents, who are responsible for your progress in life? First and foremost, you should show gratitude to your parents, love them, and respect them. Your blood, your food, your head, your money are all the gifts of your parents. You do not receive these gifts directly from God. All that is related to God is only indirect experience. It is only the parents whom you can see directly and experience their love.

So, consider your parents as God. God will be pleased and will manifest before you only when you love and respect your parents.

Children can understand the meanings of the word fox or dog only when they see their pictures. Similarly, it is only after seeing the parents that one can understand the existence of God. When you love and respect your parents, only then you can understand the love of the Divine Parents (*Jagatmatha* and *Jagatpitha*). This is what I tell you often: if you understand the 'I' principle in you, you will understand the 'I' in everybody. *Vyashti* (individual) has emerged from *samashti* (society), *samashti* from *srushti* (creation), and *srushti* from *Parameshti* (Creator). Only when you understand the principle of creation, can you understand the Creator.

It is the mother who teaches you the sacred principles like love, compassion, forbearance, tolerance, and sacrifice. Mother shows the father, father takes you to the preceptor and preceptor directs you to God. That is why among mother, father, preceptor and God, mother comes first.

Woman is embodiment of virtues

When Hanuman went to Lanka in search of Mother Sita, he found her sitting surrounded by demons under a tree in Asokavana. Hanuman felt very sad seeing Sita being harassed by the demons. He went back to Rama and told Him,

*Lord Rama, I have seen Mother Sita
being harassed and frightened by
demons pointing sharp swords at her.
She was shivering with fear like a parrot in a cage*

[Telugu Poem]

On hearing this, Rama and Lakshmana immediately set out to Lanka with the army of *Vanaras*, fought a battle with Ravana, and killed him. As per the command of Lord Rama, Hanuman went to Sita and conveyed the good news to her. Then he requested Sita to permit him to punish the demons surrounding her, who had put her to great suffering.

Sita said, "O Hanuman, it is the responsibility of the subjects to obey the commands of the king. Just as you obey the command of Lord Rama, these demons also had to obey the dictates of their king. It is not their mistake. They acted according to the instructions of the king. So, it is rather unfair to punish these demons. In fact, I suffered not because of these demons, but because of separation from Sri Rama." So saying, she narrated the following story.

The story of the ungrateful man

Once, in a forest, a hunter, on being chased by a tiger, felt tired and climbed up a tree. There was a bear sitting on the top of the tree. The tiger was waiting under the tree, since it could not climb up. It was very hungry, so it wanted to gobble up the hunter. It asked the bear to push the hunter down, so that it could kill him and appease its hunger. The bear refused to do so, saying that the hunter was its guest and it was its moral duty to extend hospitality to guests. But the tiger continued to wait under the tree.

After some time, the bear started to doze. Noticing this, the tiger addressed the hunter, "O man, I am very hungry. It does not matter whether I eat you or the bear. I will go back once my hunger is satiated. The bear is dozing. So, push it down without delay. I will eat it and spare you."

The man did not have the morality of even the bear. He thought he could escape from the clutches of the tiger by offering the bear as bait. So, he committed the ungrateful act of pushing the bear down. As luck would have it, the bear, as it was falling, caught hold of a branch, climbed up, and saved itself from the tiger.

The tiger said, "O bear, you should never believe human beings. This hunter tried to harm you, though you were kind enough to give him shelter and protect him. So, without further delay, push the ungrateful wretch down, I shall devour him."

But the bear said, "I have done my duty. Each one has to face the consequences of his own actions. I will not harm him just because he tried to harm me."

Narrating this story, Sita said, "No doubt, these demons have put me to a lot of suffering without knowing what is truth and what is *dharma*. Being the consort of Lord Rama, I cannot

stoop down to their level and seek revenge. I do not want to cause harm to anyone.”

Hanuman said, “O Mother, it is but natural that you, being the consort of Lord Rama, are broadminded and noble hearted. You are the embodiment of *dharmā*. It is a mistake on my part to think that you would permit me to punish these helpless demons.”

Sita said, “Hanuman, not only me but all the women are endowed with the noble qualities like compassion and love.”

There is a proverb in Telugu that the house mirrors the qualities of the housewife. The women, barring a few exceptions, never stray away from the path of truth and righteousness even in the face of adversity. When the mendicant stands at the doorstep stretching his hands for alms, the husband may possibly drive him away, but the housewife always comes forward to give alms. There may be dispute over property matters between the father and the son, but the mother always tries to calm down the son with good counsel. The mother will always pray for the welfare of the son wherever he may be. At times, she may be angry or have a difference of opinion, but such differences are only passing clouds. One should not disregard one’s parents yielding to the vagaries of the mind.

Easwaramma, the Divine Mother

Easwaramma, the mother of this physical body, was first christened as Namagiriamma at the time of birth. But after her marriage, Kondama Raju, the grandfather of this physical body, being a *jnani* (one of wisdom) and blessed with a vision of the future, started calling her Easwaramma (mother of Easwara). He used to worship Venkavadhuta. His was a joint family. He had two sons. The elder son, Pedda Venkama Raju, was

the father of this physical body. His younger son was Chinna Venkama Raju. Two sons of his deceased brother, Subba Raju and Venkatrama Raju, also lived with him. One day, as there was some difference of opinion, it was decided to divide the property.

How Kondamu Raju craved Swami

At that time, this body was eight years old. Kondama Raju said he did not want any share in the property and told them to divide it among themselves. The four brothers asked Kondama Raju to spend the rest of his life staying with each one of them. But Kondama Raju said, "I do not want to stay with you, I do not expect anything from you. Whatever I have earned, distribute among yourselves. But give me one property, *Sathya*. If He is with me, I don't want anything else." He asked me, if I was willing to stay with him. I readily agreed.

Both of us were staying in a small room. I used to get up early in the morning, clean the vessels, and cook food for both of us. After making the food ready, I used to run to Bukkapatnam to attend school. The lunch bell would go at 1 o'clock. I would run back to Puttaparthi, serve him lunch, have it myself, and then rush to school for the afternoon session. I maintained punctuality both at school and at home.

Kondama Raju, being one with wisdom, always craved Me. One day, he called Pedda Venkama Raju and told him to change his wife's name to Easwamma. He told this because he felt the divine vibrations originating from within. His intention was to convey that she was the mother of *Easwara*, God Himself. But Pedda Venkama Raju was not aware of the inner meaning of this name. He implicitly obeyed the command of his father and changed the name of his wife to Easwamma.

Kondama Raju's last desire

The new *mandir* was built before Kondama Raju left his mortal coil. He lived for 116 years. But, even at that ripe old age his eyes and legs were in good condition. So, he used to walk from old *mandir* to the new *mandir* every day, without a walking stick.

I used to say, “Why do you walk the distance? There may be cows and buffaloes on the way. You can take the help of a walking stick at least?” He would say that his legs were in perfect condition and that he did not need the help of a walking stick.

He was an ardent devotee of Swami. He used to come to Me early in the morning at 5 o'clock. Seeing him coming at a distance, I used to cover Myself with a blanket, pretending to be asleep. He would come slowly, lift the blanket, touch My feet, and return. He used to come early in the morning because he did not want anyone to notice him touching My feet. He was a little apprehensive about what the villagers would think if they noticed a 116 year-old grandfather touching the feet of his grandson.

On a particular evening, I went to Puttaparthi to see him. At that time, he was sitting on a cot, deeply immersed in singing a ballad, which described Rama lamenting over the fainting of Lakshmana in the battlefield. He was very fond of this particular episode from the *Ramayana*.

Rama lamented, “In this world, I might find another mother like Kausalya, a wife like Sita, but definitely not a brother like Lakshmana.” This is what he was singing to himself when I entered his room. I said, “O grandfather, what are you doing?”

He exclaimed, "O Swami, You have come," and fell at My feet. He said, "Swami, I am fully aware that You are not an ordinary child, but *Easwara* Himself. You are born in our clan to redeem all of us. But, I pray that You fulfil a small desire of mine. Dasaratha did not have the good fortune of drinking water from Rama's divine hands at the time of his death. But Jatayu was fortunate enough to be the recipient of such an act of grace in his last moments. Swami, let me also have the good fortune of sipping water from Your divine hands when my end approaches." I promised that I would certainly fulfil his desire.

Easwaramma's motherly affection for Swami

The following week, I went to see him again after visiting Subbamma's house. Kondama Raju came to know that I was coming to his house. Immediately, he called Easwaramma and told her, "I am not going to live any longer. Having known that my end has approached, God is coming to shower His grace on me?"

She responded in an innocent way saying, "Where is God? How do you know that He is coming?"

Then Kondama Raju said, "O mad woman, still you are deluded by the feeling of a mother toward her son! Look there, God is coming." So saying, he pointed at Me as I was entering his house. She too was aware of My Divinity. But she used to get carried away by her motherly affection toward Me. Similar was the case with Yashoda. Though she had seen all the fourteen worlds in Krishna's mouth, she thought it was a dream or an illusion.

Kondama Raju told Easwaramma that Swami did not take sweets. Right from birth till today, I have not touched sweets. Why? If I were to take sweets, thousands of devotees would

start bringing sweets for Me. I do not take fruits either. I do not even touch milk or curds. I lead a very simple life. I take only *ragi* gruel and groundnut chutney. Kondama Raju also used to relish this food. He used to say, “Sathya, serve me whatever you eat.”

Early in the morning, I used to prepare tasteful *ragi* gruel, groundnut chutney and some green leaves curry. The whole street was very fond of My cooking. Sometimes, on My return from Bukkapatnam, I used to find all those afflicted with fever making a beeline in front of the house waiting for Me. Kondama Raju would tell Me that they were all waiting to take the pepper *rasam* from Me as it would give them relief. Immediately, I used to prepare pepper *rasam* and distribute a glassful to each of them. They used to feel very happy, and later on expressed their gratitude saying, “Swami, your pepper *rasam* has given us great relief.”

Swami’s culinary skills

In those days, on festival days such as *Sankranti* and *Ugadi*, the *dhobis* and barbers used to come to the house for food. In the house, there was no one else other than Kondama Raju and Myself. So, I had to prepare food for many people. Easwaramma (Swami’s mother) and Venkamma and Parvathamma (Swami’s sisters) used to prepare various delicious items including sweet *puris* in their respective homes on festival days. When they could prepare sweet *puris*, why couldn’t I also prepare them and serve grandfather? So, I also would prepare sweet *puris* and serve not only grandfather but also the washerman, the barber, and others. On one such occasion, Pedda Venkama Raju (Swami’s father) came to see us at lunch time. Kondama Raju invited him for lunch, since it was a festi-

val day. Pedda Venkama Raju had his lunch with us and felt that the food items were very delicious. He went home and chided Easwamma and Venkamma for not being able to make the items tasteful. He said, "Look at Sathya, what a fine cook he is! Why can't you prepare the food items the way Sathya does?" From the next day onward, he started sending them to Me asking them to bring whatever food items I prepared. They would come and complain that it was because of My cooking that they were being blamed at home.

How things happened they way they were destined

When I was nine years old, Seshama Raju, the elder brother of this body, decided to take Me with him to Kamalapur for studies. He felt that I was wasting My time staying with Kondama Raju. But, grandfather objected to this, saying that I did not require any studies. But things happened the way they were destined to happen.

After the construction of Prasanthi Nilayam, one day I went to see Kondama Raju. He asked Easwamma to get a glass of water. He told her, "God has come to take me away. He made a promise that He would pour water into my mouth with His Divine hands, before I leave this body. He has come to fulfill His promise."

Puzzled by Kondama Raju's request, Easwamma said, "You are not suffering from any disease, you don't even have fever or a cold. What makes you think that your end has approached?"

Kondama Raju said, "Death occurs as per the Will of God. Just as birth has no reason, death too has no reason. This is the Truth of truths." Easwamma did not want to argue with him. According to his wish, she brought a glassful of water and

gave him. He sat down on the floor and made Me sit on the cot. He kept his head on My knees and said, “Swami, please listen to My prayer.” Easwaramma was watching all this. She wondered, how is that he had so much love and regard for his young grandson. Kondama Raju said, “As You know, I was doing a small business to make both ends meet. Perhaps I may still have to pay a paisa or an anna to certain people. Please bless me so that I am not indebted to anyone in my death.”

I said, “So shall it be,” and started pouring water into his mouth. He breathed his last as he was drinking water. His desire was fulfilled.

Before leaving his mortal coil, he told Easwaramma not to get deluded by body attachment. He said, “Bodily relationship is temporary, whereas *Atmic* relationship is permanent. So, give up body attachment and develop attachment to the *Atma*.”

Three wishes of two noble mothers

From that day onward, Eswaramma never stayed at home; she started staying in Prasanthi Nilayam. Every day, in the morning and evening she used to come upstairs and talk to Swami. She also understood My Divinity very well. When I appeared in the form of Lord Siva to her, she would ask, “What Swami? Why are you adorning the snakes around your neck?”

I would act innocent, “Well, I don't have snakes on Me.”

She would move away saying, “Look, there are some snakes inside.” But later, on not finding any snake inside, she would ask for forgiveness. Like this on many occasions, she had the experience of My Divinity. Similar was the case with Kausalya and Yashoda. Though they knew that their sons were divine, they used to get carried away by their motherly affec-

tion toward them. Mothers are highly noble and virtuous. Their nobility cannot be described in words. It does not matter if you do not acquire worldly wealth, but try to win the wealth of your mother's grace. Only then your life will be sanctified.

Three wishes of a noble mother

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a noble soul. He was born in a poor family. He was living with his aged mother. He used to feel very sad seeing his mother wearing old and torn *saris*. After he completed his studies, he took up a job and started earning some money. One day he sat by the side of his mother and said, "Mother, please tell me if you have any desires. Now that I have started earning money, I am in a position to fulfil them."

She said, "Son, I don't have any desires. It is enough for me if you lead a noble life."

After some time, he got a better job and started earning thousands of rupees. Again, he asked his mother to tell him if she had any desires. She said she had three desires and could not live in peace unless and until they were fulfilled. "Ours is a small village, and there are many children who are wasting their time without going to school. So, please construct a small school out of the money you have earned." As per the wish of his mother, Vidyasagar got a school constructed in his village.

Then he asked his mother to express her second desire. "Our villagers are suffering for lack of medical facilities. There is nobody to take care of them when they are afflicted with fever, cough or cold. So, I want you to construct a small hospital." Vidyasagar built a hospital, too.

After some time, he asked his mother, what her third wish was. She said, "The villagers are suffering due to lack of

drinking water. They are being afflicted with various diseases as they are drinking polluted water.” Immediately, he got a few wells dug and provided drinking water to the villagers.

Story of Viduasagar’s humility

As the days rolled by, Vidyasagar's name and fame spread far and wide. He was a good orator. His speeches were not based on bookish knowledge. He used to speak on matters of daily relevance. So, people in large numbers used to throng his meetings to listen to his speech. He was a very simple and humble man.

One day he was going to a neighboring village to address a gathering. He boarded the train carrying a small suitcase. An I.A.S officer, who was going to attend his meeting, was traveling by the same train. He was carrying a small handbag with him. He had not seen Vidyasagar before. As soon as he got down from the train, he started calling out for a coolie. Seeing this, Vidyasagar went up to him and asked where his luggage was. The officer showed his handbag. Vidyasagar said, “Why do you misuse your money? Do you need a coolie to carry your handbag? Let me carry it for you.” He took the bag from the officer and carried it.

After reaching the destination, the officer asked Vidyasagar how much money he wanted for carrying the bag. Vidyasagar said, “I do not want your money, I did it as an act of service.”

The officer proceeded to the meeting place where Vidyasagar was supposed to deliver his speech. He was stunned to see the same person who carried his bag giving a speech on the dais. What a humble person he was, he thought to himself and felt ashamed of his behavior. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar spent all his earnings to fulfill the desires of his mother.

Easwaramma's similar wishes

Easwaramma had similar desires. Once, she told Me, "Swami, our Puttaparthi is a small village. Since there is no school in this village, the children are forced to walk long distances to attend schools in the neighboring villages. I know that You are the ocean of compassion. Please construct a small school in this village." I asked, where she wanted the school to be built. She said she had a piece of land behind her house. She wanted the school to be constructed there. As desired by her, I got the school constructed. Though it was a small school, the inaugural function was a grand affair, attended by many devotees.

The next day, Easwaramma expressed her happiness over the inaugural function and said that she had one more desire. She wanted a hospital also to be built in the village. She said, "Swami, I don't want to put You to trouble. If You are troubled, the whole world will be in trouble, and if You are happy, the whole world will be happy. So, if it gives You happiness, please construct a small hospital." As per her wish, I got the hospital constructed. Bejawada Gopal Reddy, a highly reputed person in those days, was invited to inaugurate the hospital.

The inaugural function was a grand one, attended by thousands of people from the neighboring villages. Easwaramma did not imagine that this would be such a grand affair.

Next day, she came up to Me and said, "Swami, it does not matter even if I die now. I have no more worries, you have fulfilled my desires and mitigated the suffering of the villagers to a great extent."

I said, if you have any more desires, ask Me now.

She replied hesitantly that she had yet another small desire. "You know that the river Chithravathi is in spate during the

rainy season. But in summer it dries to a trickle and people do not have drinking water. So, please see that some wells are dug in this village.” I told her that I would not stop with these small wells and that I would provide drinking water to the entire Rayalaseema region. Easwamma said, “I don't know what Rayalaseema is. I am satisfied if our village is provided with drinking water.”

Easwamma's sacred love for Swami

Once, on a Sivaratri day, after I had completed My discourse, and the *Lingas* were ready to emerge from My mouth. I sat on the chair and was in severe pain. Seeing Me suffering, Easwamma got up from the gathering, came up to Me and said, “Swami, why do You suffer like this? Come inside, come inside.”

I said I would not come inside.

She cried and tried to persuade Me, but I did not budge an inch. Unable to see My suffering, she went inside. As soon as she left, *Hiranyagarbha Linga* emerged. All the devotees burst into thunderous applause. Listening to this, she came back, but by then the *Linga* had already emerged and I was showing it to the devotees. All the people got up to have a glimpse of the *Linga*. As a result, Easwamma could not see it.

Next day she pleaded with Me to show the *Linga* to her. I said I had given it to somebody. But she said, “Swami, I have not seen. I want to see.” I told her that she would see in the future anyway. She said, “I do not want to put You to inconvenience,” and went away.

She never had put Me to trouble any time. Whenever she asked Me for something, she would come back and ask if she had given any trouble. To all the devotees who came, she used

to entreat not to cause any inconvenience to Swami. She used to be very much worried whenever any minister came to have My *darshan*. The situation in those days was such that even a policeman with a red cap was enough to frighten the villagers.

Easwaramma used to be very much afraid of the ministers, thinking that they might cause some problem to Me. This was only the result of her sacred love for Me. That is the greatness of mother's love. That is why she could lead a life of fulfillment and peace. In order to propagate this sacred ideal, this day is being celebrated as Easwaramma Day. This is to emphasize that each one of you should make your mother happy. If your mother is happy, Swami is happy.

Sacrifice everything for God

Everyone should love and respect their parents. But, if any relation becomes an obstacle in your path to God, there is no harm in leaving them.

Here is a small example. Mira was the wife of Maharana of Chittor. She was always seated in Krishna's temple, forgetting herself while chanting His name. One day, Emperor Akbar came to the temple and offered a gold necklace to Lord Krishna. Mira accepted it and put it around Krishna's idol. Akbar was an enemy of Maharana. When Maharana came to know that Mira had accepted a necklace for Krishna from his enemy, Akbar, he became very furious. He took it as an insult and threw her out of the temple. Mira felt very sad.

Crows start cawing at the cuckoo when it begins to sing, but that does not deter the cuckoo from its singing. The people of the world are like crows. They speak as they like. But the noble souls will not be affected by what others say.

Mira was in a dilemma, whether to give up Krishna or her husband Maharana. She resolved that she would not give up Krishna even at the cost of her life. Then she wrote a letter to Tulsidas seeking his advice in this regard.

Tulsidas sent her a reply: “From the worldly point of view, you should respect your father, mother, preceptor and husband. But when it comes to God, everything else is secondary. God alone is important. Bharata left his mother Kaikeyi for the sake of Lord Rama. Prahlada gave up his father Hiranyakasipu for the sake of Lord Narayana. Emperor Bali forsook his preceptor, Sukracharya, for the sake of God. So, there is nothing wrong in giving up your husband for the sake of Krishna.” Taking the advice of Tulsidas, Mira left her husband.

She sang,

*O mind, go to the banks of the
sacred rivers Ganga and Yamuna,
the pure water of which cools
and purifies the body.*

[Hindi Song]

These two rivers stand for the primal nerves *ida* and *pingala*, which converge at the center of two eyebrows. She started singing the praises of Krishna and proceeded toward Brindavan.

You can sacrifice anything for the sake of God

Many such great devotees sacrificed everything for the sake of God. Women symbolize sacrifice. The *Vedas* declare: *Na karmana, na prajaya, dhanena thyagenaike Amruthatwamanasu* (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it). You

can sacrifice anything for the sake of God. But, sacrifice should not be done with a selfish motive or for self satisfaction.

Do not hurt mother's feelings

The *Bhagavad Gita* says that a woman has seven qualities, whereas a man has only three. So, never look down upon women. They are most virtuous. They are the very embodiments of nature.

Some women may think that they would have enjoyed greater freedom had they been born as men. This is a wrong notion. In fact, women are more powerful than men. With all the sacred feelings in your heart, respect women and be respected. Respect your mother, obey her commands. Mother protects her children in many ways. Even after death, she comes back and helps you in various ways. Never disrespect your mother or disappoint her. Do not hurt her feelings. Try to satisfy her in all respects. Only then will the seed of devotion sprout in you. Everyone should follow the dictum, *mathru Devo bhava* in letter and spirit and be a recipient of his mother's love.

6 May 1999
Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal

Control Your Senses

*If money is lost, one need not be worried about it,
For one can earn it again.
If a friend leaves, one can have another;
If wife is lost one can marry again.
If one loses ones piece of land,
One can purchase another piece of land.
All these can be regained; but
If body is lost, one cannot get it back.*

[Sanskrit sloka]

Embodiments of Love!

If wealth is lost, nothing is lost. If health is lost, something is lost. If character is lost, everything is lost. This is the teaching of the culture of Bharat. But, for the modern man, everything is lost if wealth is lost; something is lost if health is lost and nothing is lost if character is lost.

Since time immemorial, the Bharatiyas have been adhering to the principles of spirituality. Thus, they attained bliss and shared it with others in the world. The Himalayan mountains

form the boundary of Bharat on the northern side. *Hima* means pure and sacred. Mountains symbolize steadiness. Purity, sacredness, and steadiness are the hallmarks of the *Bharatiyas* (Indians).

The perennial rivers, the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswathi (underground) flow in this land. These three symbolize the threefold path of work, worship, and wisdom through which man can attain Divinity. The holy texts of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavata* set noble ideals before mankind. What is the inner meaning of the word *Bharat*? *Bha* means light, effulgence, and divinity. So, *Bharatiyas* are those who spread light and effulgence of wisdom. The Indian scriptures like the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Brahma Sutras* are shining resplendently, showing the path of divinity to man.

Spirituality starts with faith

Buddha was born in this sacred land of Bharat. He declared to the world *Ahimsa paramo dharma* (nonviolence is the greatest *dharma*). He undertook penance for several years, met many noble souls, listened to spiritual discourses, and studied various scriptures. But he was not satisfied. Man aspires for bliss, but how can he attain it? Where there is faith, there is love. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is God. Where there is God, there is bliss. The path of spirituality starts with faith and ends with bliss. Bliss cannot be attained from materialistic pleasures or people of the world. It can be experienced only when the five senses are put to proper use.

Today, man reads sacred books to attain bliss, but all these books have their own limitations. One cannot get infinite bliss

by studying scriptures. One must study an infinite book in order to experience infinite bliss. This world itself is an infinite book. There are so many things to be learnt from this world.

Who are your friends? Not your classmates or roommates. Only God is your true and eternal friend. It is only with the help of this friend that you will be able to study the infinite book, the world.

When one undertakes the study of this infinite book, one has to put into practice the five important teachings of Buddha. They are *samyak drishti* (right vision), *samyak bhavam* (right feeling), *samyak sravanam* (right listening), *samyak vak* (right speech), and *samyak karma* (right action). A true human being is one who follows the path of truth. Truth, righteousness and sacrifice should be the way of life. Buddha said, *Buddham sharanam gachhami, dharmam sharanam gachhami, sangham sharanam gachhami*. It means: *buddhi* (intellect) should follow the path of *dharma*, and *dharma* should be fostered in society. Only then the country will prosper.

This is also the inner meaning of the word SAI. **S** denotes spiritual change, **A** denotes association (social) change, and **I** denotes individual change. Man's mind will become pure and sacred only when these three changes take place.

Life principles of man

Divinity is latent in every individual. But, today, man has forgotten his divine nature and is getting deluded by the worldly, ephemeral pleasures. *Sathya, dharma, santhi, prema,* and *ahimsa* are verily the five life principles of man. They are like his *pancha pranas*, namely, *prana, apana, vyana, udana,* and *samana*. Losing *sathya* amounts to losing one part of his life-breath. And when he loses all the four, viz., *sathya,*

dharma, *santhi*, and *prema*, he loses four parts of his vital life breath. As a result he is confronted with sufferings and violence from all sides. Who is responsible for this? Man himself is to be blamed for this.

Buddha said nonviolence is the greatest *dharma*. Love will be fostered only when nonviolence is practiced. When love is fostered, there will be peace in the world. When there is peace in the world, man will naturally take to the path of *dharma*. When man follows the path of *dharma*, he will attain Truth. It is, therefore, the primary duty of every man to foster these life principles.

The sacredness of Bharat is unmatched

Once, Buddha was traveling from village to village giving spiritual discourses. One day, he felt tired and asked one of his disciples to address the gathering. He went inside to take rest.

The disciple during the course of his speech said, "In this world, there has never been a spiritual master greater than our master, Buddha, and there will not be another like him in future." The audience gave a thunderous applause.

On hearing this, Buddha came out. One of the disciples told him the reason for the people's joyous applause. Buddha smiled and called the disciple who delivered the lecture. "What is your age?" he asked.

The disciple said he was thirty-five years old.

"How many kingdoms have you visited so far?" Buddha asked him again.

The disciple said he had visited only two kingdoms.

Buddha said, "You are thirty-five years old and have seen only two kingdoms. You have not understood the present completely. Then how can you say anything about the past and the

future? It is meaningless to say that a master like Buddha was never born before and will never be born again. Many *Avatars* and sages have taken birth in this sacred land of Bharat. Many more *Avatars* and noble souls will be born here in future also. There are many noble souls in this world, I offer my respects to all of them.”

In this way, Buddha reproached his disciple. It is foolish for a man with little knowledge to behave like a learned man.

No one can estimate the sacredness and greatness of this country, Bharat. To be called an Indian is in a great qualification and honor. How can one describe the great good fortune of the *Bharatiyas*, for the Lord Himself has taken birth several times in this sacred land to show the path of divinity to mankind? Many saints, sages, and men of sacrifice were born here. The sacredness and renown of Bharat are unmatched. That is why Buddha chose this country as his motherland.

Character is important, not money

The story of Buddha is highly noble and sacred. He sacrificed everything and went around in search of truth. He said, "*Dharmam sharanam gachhami* (I take refuge in *dharma*).” One has to practice, propagate and experience *dharma*. But, today, *dharma* has declined. People think that money is everything. Just as the earth revolves around the sun, people go around money.

*Some people take to corrupt ways to earn money.
They may cheat others,
But can anyone hoodwink God?
They will certainly reap the
Consequences of their misdeeds.*

[Telugu Poem]

This was the teaching of Buddha. Character is important, not money. Bliss can be attained only through control of senses, not through penance, *japa*, or meditation. Neither by penance nor by going through scriptures nor by having a dip in holy rivers can one attain liberation. Only by serving noble souls can one cross the ocean of *Samsara*. There is no easier path to peace and bliss other than controlling one's own senses.

Right vision confers double promotion

But today, man has given up this easy path and is craving sensual pleasures, which confer only misery and grief. Even birds and beasts enjoy sensual pleasures. The happiness that results from sensual pleasures is no happiness at all. So, first and foremost, man should try to control his senses. This is possible only when the vision is properly utilized. Once the vision is controlled, other senses can also be easily controlled. But, today, man has no control over his vision. He looks at things that he is not supposed to look at. Whatever man looks at gets imprinted in his heart. So, develop sacred vision.

There are forty lakh light rays in the human eye. But their radiance is destroyed on account of wrong vision. When you look at wrong things, you waste the enormous power of radiance of the eyes. There are thirty lakh taste buds on the tongue. But they get destroyed because of bad talk. So, first and foremost vision and tongue should be kept under check. Otherwise man may lose his humanness and ultimately ruin his life.

Along with right vision and right talk, cultivate right listening. If someone were to indulge in bad talk in your presence, leave the place at once. Right vision confers double promotion, it strengthens the will power and enhances the power of radiance of the eyes. Having understood this truth, Buddha made a

concerted effort to control his senses. Meditation and penance confer only temporary happiness. Eternal happiness results only from control of the senses. Buddha was the crown prince and had the entire kingdom under his control, but he sacrificed everything and tried to control his senses. He could experience bliss and attained *Nirvana* only after controlling his senses.

Man can get limitless powers through love of God. But, today, man is not making any effort to understand the principle of Love. Man's love is like an atom when compared to divine love, which is infinite, eternal, and nectarine. It is foolishness and ignorance on the part of man to think that he knows everything without understanding the Principle of Love. He should see through the eyes of love, hear through the ears of love and cultivate the feelings of love.

Giving up body consciousness is liberation

No benefit accrues from doing spiritual *sadhana* if man does not have unity of thought, word, and deed. The unity of these three constitutes humanness. The proper study of mankind is man. What does MAN stand for? **M** stands for giving up *maya* (illusion); **A** for gaining the vision of *Atma*; and **N**, denotes attaining *Nirvana*. Man has to give up materialistic pleasures in order to attain liberation. What is *moksha* (liberation)? Getting rid of *moha* (attachment) is *moksha*. Giving up body consciousness is liberation. But, today, man is immersed in body attachment. He can attain liberation only when he develops attachment toward the *Atma*.

*Humanness has declined in man
Since he lacks fear of sin and love for God.
This is the root cause of
Unrest in the world* [Telugu Poem]

Man should develop love for God and fear of sin. Only then there will be morality in society.

Embodiments of Love! You may celebrate any number of festivals and undertake various types of spiritual exercises, but all this will go waste if there are no divine feelings in your heart. Do not look at things that are unsacred. Let your vision be suffused with divine feelings. You will understand and experience the sacred principles like *Sarvam khaividam Brahma* (Brahman is immanent in everything), *Viswam Vishnumayam* (Vishnu pervades the entire universe), *Easwara sarvabhoothanam* (God is the indweller of all beings) only when you cultivate noble qualities. In order to cultivate divine feelings and noble qualities, you have to control your senses. Your life will be ruined if you do not control your senses.

A doubting man perishes

A river should flow within its banks; otherwise it will flood the villages causing untold sufferings. Similarly, human life, which can be compared to a river, should also have two eight-lettered dictums as its banks: *sraddhavan labhate jnanam* (only a person with steadfast faith can attain wisdom) and *samsa-yatma vinashyati* (a doubting man perishes).

Only then will the river of life merge in the ocean of grace. If your river of life does not flow within its two banks, not only will your life be wasted but you will also cause harm to others.

One who has doubts about God cannot have divine grace. One who has no sincerity of purpose cannot come up in life. A man with sincerity will make the best use of even the smallest opportunity given to him. For example, he can turn even a small bit of live ember into a big fire.

On the other hand, a man who lacks sincerity cannot make fire even if large quantities of live embers are given to him. He will turn all the live embers into charcoal with his lackadaisical attitude. You should have utmost sincerity in matters pertaining to divinity.

Individual, society, creation, and Creator

You are struggling hard to acquire worldly education. You are spending hours together concentrating on it. What is the benefit that accrues from it? You acquire this education merely to fill your belly. Even this education can be used for the welfare of the society. Leave selfishness and aspire for the happiness of all. *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be: happy!). This should be our prayer and aspiration. That is the true spiritual practice.

Vyashiti means individual, *samashti* means society. So, you should progress from *vyashiti* to *samashti*, from *samashti* to *srushti* (creation), and ultimately merge in *Parameshti* (God). You should attain the unity of individual, society, creation, and the creator. Only spiritual transformation can bring about social welfare. The first letter **S** in the name Sai stands for service (work), **A** for adoration (worship), and **I** for illumination (wisdom). So, the very name of Sai symbolizes the unity of work, worship, and wisdom.

Today, man has failed to understand the sacredness and purpose of human birth. Having taken human birth, you should try to experience bliss. You have the desire to attain bliss, but you are not making the necessary effort. You cannot collect even a drop of water if you keep the vessel upside down, although there may be a heavy downpour. Some water will be collected in it if the mouth of the vessel is turned upward. So,

if you want to attain divinity, you have to practice *dharma*. That is the meaning of *dharmam sharanam gachhami*. But, this must also lead to the welfare of all (*Sangham sharanam gachhami*). This is the inner meaning of the teachings of Buddha.

Once, Buddha entered a village along with his disciples. A lady approached him and requested him to have food in her house. Buddha blessed her and accepted her invitation. Seeing this, many villagers, including the village headman, warned Buddha, saying, “O Buddha, you are one of wisdom and have renounced everything. She is not a woman of good character. It is not proper for you to have food in her house.”

Buddha smiled and asked the village headman to come forward. Buddha, holding the right hand of the headman, asked him to clap. The headman said, it was not possible for him to clap since one of his hands was in Buddha’s hold.

Buddha said, “True, it is possible to clap only when two hands come together. Likewise, this lady cannot turn bad by herself unless there are men of bad character in the village. The men of this village are the root cause of her bad character.”

The villagers realized their folly, fell at Buddha’s feet and sought his forgiveness. Through his teachings, Buddha instilled sacredness and wisdom in people. Buddha’s teachings are highly sacred, with profound inner meaning.

Develop friendship with Truth

Buddha’s mother, Mayadevi, passed away when he was just 8 days old. His stepmother Gautami brought him up. That is how he got the name Gautama. He was christened as Siddhartha at the time of his birth. He came to be known as Buddha because he developed *buddhi* (intellect) and discrimi-

nation power. Discrimination is of two types: individual discrimination and fundamental discrimination. Individual discrimination arises out of selfishness, whereas fundamental discrimination is concerned with the welfare of one and all. One should discard individual discrimination and have only fundamental discrimination. This was the teaching of Buddha to Ananda, son of Gautami, before he attained *Nirvana*.

When Buddha was on the verge of attaining *Nirvana*, Ananda started shedding tears of sorrow. Then Buddha consoled him, saying, “Ananda, why are you unhappy over my attaining *Nirvana*? I have been craving this state of *Nirvana* for the past many years. Why do you shed tears of sorrow when I am experiencing supreme bliss?”

Ananda understood the truth and followed the teachings of Buddha. Ultimately, he too attained *Nirvana*.

Divinity transcends space and time

True ideal is to give practical knowledge of *dharma* to others. One should be a hero in practice, not merely in preaching. This was the ideal of Buddha. All the *Avatars* and noble souls led their lives in the most exemplary manner and helped people experience divinity. Buddha said, “O man. you don't need to search for God anywhere. You are God yourself.”

The *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Vedas* also echo the same principle. The *Vedas* declare: *Tat Thwam Asi* (Thou art That). Man today does meditation in the morning like a *yogi*, eats sumptuous food during the day like a *bhogi* (pleasure seeker), and sleeps at night like a *rogi* (sick person). This is not the way one should lead one's life. *Sathatham yogi-nah* (one should be a *Yogi* all the time). Be filled with divine feelings all the time. *Sarva karma Bhagavad preetyartham*

(whatever one does, one should do it to please God). Divinity transcends space and time. *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (everything is *Brahman*).

In order to understand this truth, one should cultivate *sadgunas*. *Sadgunas* do not denote good qualities alone. *Sath* means Being, that which is permanent. So, *sadgunas* mean having divine feelings. Similarly, the word *sathsang* means being in the company of the Divine, not merely in the company of good people. Divinity is within us. That is *Sath*. One has to develop friendship with *Sath*. That is true *sathsang* and true friendship.

Never depend on worldly friendship. Worldly friends come and go. Only friendship with God is true and eternal. God is your true friend, world is a text and *hridaya* (heart) is your preceptor. Your life will find fulfillment if you understand this truth and put into practice.

All the worldly *gurus* are not *gurus* in the strict sense of the term. How can they be called *gurus* if they cannot tell you the goal of life? Mind itself will become your *guru* once you understand its mystery.

One God has many names

Embodiments of Love! You may call Him by any name, be it Jesus, Buddha, Allah, Rama, Krishna; God is one. *Ek prabhu ke anek nam* (one God has many names), if you understand this truth, you will realize that all are divine. *Sarva jiva nama-skaram kesavam prathigatchhathi* (saluting the individual amounts to saluting God). Your life will be sanctified only when you cultivate such broad feelings. Develop broadmindedness. Never give any scope for any doubt on divinity. All

such doubts are but imaginations. Never succumb to them. Follow only divine feelings.

Follow the Master,
Face the devil,
Fight to the end,
Finish the game.

That should be the goal of your life.

Embodiments of Love! Many devotees from Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, and other countries have gathered here today with great devotion and dedication. Truly speaking, their hearts are highly sacred. Though they do not have many comforts and conveniences here, they have considered it a *sadhana*, treated everything with a sense of equal-mindedness, and are experiencing bliss. Their devotion is true devotion. In path of spirituality, have the determination to face any constraint that you may come across. That determination is the true *thapas* (penance). Bereft of determination, it becomes *thamas* (sloth).

*You are determined to achieve something,
do not give up until you achieve what you want.
You have desired for something,
do not give up until your desire is fulfilled.
You have asked for something,
do not give up until you get what you have asked for.
You must pray to God forgetting yourself and
make Him accede to your request.
It is not the quality of a true devotee
to give up half way.* [Telugu Poem]

Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice and be prepared to face any difficulties. *Na sukhath labhyathe sukham* (happiness cannot be attained through happiness). Ancient sages and seers had to

undergo a lot of difficulties. They had to live in the forest eating leaves and tubers. They could have the vision of God only after all this suffering. They declared to the world: *Vedhametham Purusham mahantham aditya varnam thamasah parasthath* (O people, we have seen God who is beyond the darkness of ignorance, shining resplendently like a thousand suns.) They also declared, “He is all-pervasive. We have seen Him not outside, but within ourselves. You can also see Him if you turn your vision inward.”

In order to attain divinity, one has to undertake spiritual *sadhana*. What type of *sadhana*? Not penance or meditation. One has to control the senses. Talk less and work more. Only then will the individual, society and country as a whole prosper. Don't waste time. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. The *Upanishads* declare that human life is highly sacred and unique. So, sanctify your life by contemplating on the Divine. Offer all your actions to God. Only then you can attain peace.

30 May 1999
Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan

Santhi is full of spiritual feeling and wisdom that is the natural accompaniment of bliss. Genuine santhi is won only by control of the senses. Then it can be called prasanthi. The experience of that stage is as a stream of peace.

—Baba