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Prayers Of Mothers Sustain The World

*The more you grind the sandalwood, the
more it yields sandal paste.*

*The more you crush the sugarcane, the
more it yields sweet juice.*

*As the gold is heated more and more, it
becomes purer and shines with
added brilliance.*

*Likewise, the good qualities in a noble
person blossom more and more as
he passes through the vicissitudes of life.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

THE difficulties of life do not cause any hindrance to a person pursuing a noble course of life. In spite of these, he always remains at peace and contemplates on God constantly.

In Bharat, the relationship between the mother and the child has been considered highly sacred and nectarous since ancient times.

*Rama's Divinity blossomed under Kausalya's
loving care;
Because of the tender feelings and
austerity of Sita,
Lava and Kusha achieved name and fame;
Fostered with the love of his mother
Putlibai, Gandhi became a Mahatma;
The loving care of Jijabai made
Shivaji a great warrior.*

(Telugu Poem)

You cannot expect sweet mangoes when you sow Neem seeds. If you want mangoes, you have to sow the seeds of mango. The earth is one but the seeds are different. You must sow what you want to reap. The womb of the mother is like the earth. The children will be good or bad depending on the thoughts of the parents. *Janthunam Naajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human life is the rarest). It is a great good fortune to be born as a human being. Having been blessed with human birth, man should develop noble thoughts and experience bliss within. Only then will he be called truly fortunate.

Sacredness Of Mother - Child Relationship

Putlibai, the mother of Mahatma Gandhi, used

to observe a vow wherein she would not partake of food unless she heard the singing of cuckoo. One day, it so happened that the song of cuckoo was not heard. Gandhi, who was a small boy then, could not bear to see his mother fasting for a long time. Out of love and concern for his mother, he went behind the house and mimicked the singing of cuckoo. Then he came inside and told his mother that she could have her food as she had heard the song of cuckoo. The intention behind this act was no doubt good. But Putlibai felt very sad as she knew that her son was uttering a lie. With tears in her eyes, she bemoaned, “What sin have I committed that I gave birth to a son who speaks untruth!” So saying, she reprimanded him for telling a lie. Gandhi took a vow that he would never indulge in falsehood thenceforth. As per the command of his mother, he adhered to truth till the very end of his life and attained good reputation.

Putlibai had a maid-servant named Rambha. As the saying goes, “*Yatha Raja Thatha Praja*” (as the king, so the subjects), she was also pure-hearted like Putlibai. One day, Gandhi came running to her and told her that he was haunted by fear. She asked him to chant the Name of Lord Rama whenever he was fear-stricken. From then onwards Gandhi chanted the Name of Lord Rama till his last breath. Thus, we see that when the mother and other members of the household

take to sacred path, the children would certainly emulate them and attain exalted position in life.

Aryamba, the mother of Sankaracharya, spent all her time in the worship of Easwara. Everyday she performed *Abhisheka* (sacred bath) to the Siva Linga, sipped the sanctified water and gave it to her son too. She constantly chanted the Divine Name of Lord Siva. Sankaracharya became a world teacher and attained great fame as he was born to such a noble mother.

After the war for the liberation of Rangoon, a mother and her son somehow managed to reach Chennai. They neither had shelter over their head nor any food to eat. The mother was concerned more about her son than herself. Such is the love of the mother. The love of the mother transcends all descriptions. A bus stand became their home. Everyday the mother would go for begging alms from house to house, give most of it to her son and partake of whatever little was left. When she would not get enough, she would give the entire food to her son, and would herself go without food. As a result, her health gradually deteriorated. One day the son told her, "Mother, you have been taking care of me all along. Now it is my duty to take care of you. From today you take rest, I will bring food for both of us." Everyday he would go for begging, give most of it to his mother and partake of whatever little was left. Consequently, he too became very weak.

One day he stood in front of the house of an officer and cried, “Oh sir, I am hungry, I am hungry.” The officer was relaxing in an easy chair and was going through the daily newspaper. Hearing the pitiable cries of the boy, he went inside, brought food in a leaf plate and asked him to sit and eat. But the boy said that he would take it home. The officer said, “Why should you take it home? If you are really hungry, sit here and eat.” As the officer was insisting that he should eat the food there itself, the boy felt giddy and collapsed on the ground. He was trying to say something, but could not say it loud enough as he was very weak. The officer went close to the boy and tried to hear what he was saying. The boy was saying, “First to my mother, to my mother.” With these words, he breathed his last. Seeing this, the officer was moved to tears. He thought, how lucky this boy was who had sacrificed his life for the sake of his mother. Blessed was the mother, who gave birth to such a noble son.

It is impossible to describe the love that exists between the mother and her child. The *Bharatiyas* consider the love of a mother as true love. But, unfortunately, modern youth do not realise the sacredness of mother’s love. They keep their self-interest above their parents. They do not try to understand the love their parents have for them. He or she alone is a true son or daughter who gives happiness to the parents.

Noble Mothers Have Noble Wishes

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar lived with his mother in a village near Kolkata. Financially they were poor, but they were endowed with the wealth of virtues. The mother often told her son, “My dear one, the education that merely caters to the needs of the stomach is no education at all. You should study so as to serve society. You should utilise your education for the emancipation of the country.” Vidyasagar used to study under streetlights or at the bus stand because of his poverty. He followed the words of his mother in letter and spirit and put his heart and soul in his studies. Mother’s blessings can make anybody great. The children may be good or bad, but the mother always loves her children and aspires for their welfare. The mother’s heart is full of love and compassion for her children.

After completing his education, Vidyasagar took up a job. Once there was a religious festival in the village. The rich people of the village participated in the festival in their best clothes. But Vidyasagar’s mother had to wear an old sari even on that festival day, as she had no good sari to wear. Seeing this, Vidyasagar felt very sad. When he received his first salary, he placed it at the feet of his mother and pleaded with her to buy a good sari for herself. She said, “Son, I don’t want you to spend your earnings on my saris and jewels. Utilise it to serve the society. All that I

want is that you should come up in life and earn a good name.” Then she added, “I have a few desires, but I will express them only at the appropriate time.”

Gradually, Vidyasagar rose to a higher position and accordingly his salary too increased. Then he requested his mother to express her desires. She made him sit by her side and said, “My dear one, you are highly educated and are holding an exalted position. But as a mother I must tell you what is good for you. Whatever I tell you is only out of my motherly love towards you. I don’t want anything for myself. Ours is a small village. The children of our village have no opportunity for education, as there is no school in our village. So, I want you to construct a small school.” Complying with his mother’s wish, he established a small school in the village. After some time, he said to her, “Mother, as per your wish I have got a school constructed in our village. Is there anything else that you want?” She told him, “Son, in our village, people are suffering due to lack of medical facilities. There is nobody to treat them even for small ailments like cough, cold and fever. So, it would be convenient for everybody, especially the children, if you establish a small hospital here.” Obeying the command of his mother, he promptly built a small hospital.

Easwaramma, The Chosen Mother

Mother Easwaramma too had such noble desires. As Sai’s glory began to spread far and wide, she

came to Me one day and said, “Swami, I am pained to see small children of our village walking all the way to Bukkapatnam to attend school. Please construct a small school.” Conforming to her wish, I established a small school. After some time, she wanted a small hospital also to be established here. She said she could not bear to see the mothers taking the trouble of carrying their children to Bukkapatnam for medical treatment. Accordingly I got a small hospital built. The small school that I established has become a big university today. The small hospital that I constructed has become a Super Specialty Hospital (cheers). These mighty tasks could be accomplished as a result of the Sathya Sankalpa (noble wish) of Mother Easwaramma and Nitya Sankalpa (Divine Will) of Sai. Her last wish was to provide drinking water to the village. She pointed out that the women had to take great pains to draw water from deep wells, which had almost dried up. I immediately provided drinking water to the village. Now under Sri Sathya Sai water Supply Project, I have provided drinking water to the entire district of Anantapur.

Once you become the recipient of your mother’s love, you don’t need anything else. You may be aware or not, but even after 30 years of her passing away, Mother Easwaramma continues to express her love for Swami in a number of ways. Even to this day, she moves around in her physical body. At times, she

comes to Me and expresses her motherly concern for My well being. Once she cautioned Me not to accept handkerchief from everybody. I told her that I had to accept when people offered it with devotion. She said, “Swami, no doubt there are crores of such noble persons. But there are also a few evil-minded persons who may smear poison on the handkerchief and offer it to You. This can prove dangerous when You use it to wipe your lips.” I promised her that I would follow her advice. Even to this day she makes her appearance in My room. The boys who sleep in My room too have witnessed this. Whenever she comes and talks to Me, they sit up on their beds and listen.

One day, I asked the boys for a belt to keep the silk Dhoti tight around My waist. The belt that they gave Me had a shining buckle and could be seen through the robe I wear. I did not want to use it lest people should think that Sai Baba wears a gold belt. After this, one day Easwaramma came to My room early in the morning and started talking to Me. Then Satyajit, Sainath and Srinivas woke up and wanted to know with whom I was conversing. They wondered how anyone could enter My room since the lift was locked and the key was with them. Then I told that Griham Ammayi (Mother Easwaramma) had come. I showed them the belt that she gave me. It had no buckle. There are many such noble mothers in this world. But Easwaramma was the chosen one. I chose

her to be My mother (cheers). That is the intimate relationship between Mother Easwaramma and Myself.

True Devotion Of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Once Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to a temple and prayed, “Oh Lord, I know that you are the Master of the world. You are omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. You can grant any wish that I ask for. But I don’t have any worldly desires. I don’t aspire for money, jewelry and material objects. Neither am I interested in devotion or renunciation nor do I crave for liberation. But I do have one desire. Grant me the strength to love You. It is enough if I can love you. There is nothing superior to this.” As Chaitanya Mahaprabhu loved God dearly, he propagated the message of love to the entire world. “Think of God incessantly. Chant His Name. There is nothing in this world except God.” This was the message propagated by Chaitanya.

His mother wanted him to get married to a girl named Lakshmi, who hailed from a good family and was highly devoted. But Chaitanya was not interested in marriage. He said that he had dedicated his life to the Lord. His mother said, “You might have offered your mind to God, but what about your body? Life should have both spiritual and physical aspects.” On the insistence of his mother, Chaitanya married Lakshmi. Immediately after the marriage, he set out on a

pilgrimage. He wanted to propagate the Divine message. Chaitanya did not return home from his pilgrimage for a long time. His wife Lakshmi was a pious lady. She had a pure heart full of selfless love. She left her mortal coil while constantly thinking of Chaitanya. Chaitanya returned home after her death. His mother felt highly depressed at the turn of events. She felt that it was impossible to get another girl like Lakshmi who was pious and pure-hearted. Then she got him married to another girl named Vishnupriya. After his second marriage, he again set out to propagate the Divine message and in the process totally forgot his home. He considered God as His only refuge. He had no other thought in his mind.

Once when he was singing the glory of Lord Krishna in the streets, some miscreants, who were jealous of his growing reputation, snatched away the cymbals from his hands. Thereafter, he started playing on a drum while singing the Divine Name. Even the drum too was broken by the miscreants, but he was least perturbed. He felt there was no necessity to use the musical instruments to sing the Divine Name. Then he started clapping and singing Bhajans. Now the miscreants beat him up mercilessly. His body started bleeding profusely, yet Chaitanya continued to chant the Divine Name. But when his mother came and saw, there was no trace of blood on his body. It had all disappeared miraculously because Chaitanya firmly

believed that his body belonged to God and was not attached to it.

Wicked People Do Not Spare Even God

When the mother's heart is pure, her children too would be pure-hearted. One should respect one's mother and never hurt her feelings. When Swami was staying in the Old Mandir, one day there was an unusual crowd. Sensing danger, Easwamma came to Me and said, "Swami, these people seem to be having some ulterior motive. I am afraid they may try to harm You. I am unable to sleep peacefully." I infused courage in her, saying, "Be fearless. The body is bound to perish one day or the other. So, give up body attachment." Those days I used to sleep all alone in a thatched hut. That night, as Easwamma feared, some evil-minded people set the hut on fire from all four sides. There were raving flames all around. Seeing this, Subbamma and Easwamma came running. When they reached the spot, they found to their utter amazement, there was a heavy downpour on the hut. However, there was absolutely no rain in the surrounding area (*loud applause*). When I came out of the hut, both of them were overjoyed to see Me safe and sound.

There is a similar incident in the *Mahabharata*. Lord Krishna went to the Kauravas as an emissary of the Pandavas to bring about a compromise and avert the war. Before going to the Kauravas, He approached the Pandavas one by one and sought their opinion.

Dharmaraja was of the opinion that a person of Krishna's stature should not approach the mean-minded Kauravas in the role of an ambassador. Arjuna and Bhima who were filled with *Rajo Guna* (quality of passion) were in favour of Krishna going to the Kauravas, but they wanted him to settle for war so that the wicked Kauravas could be punished. Then Krishna sought the opinion of Droupadi. Women are by nature tenderhearted. She did not want war because it would cause immense grief to both the sides. Then He went to Nakula and Sahadeva who did not say anything.

Krishna went to Hastinapur, spoke to the blind king Dhritarashtra and tried His best to bring about a compromise, but all in vain. When Krishna returned, Nakula and Sahadeva hugged Him and shed tears of joy. They said, "Krishna, it is enough for us that You have returned safe from the den of the wicked Kauravas. You had asked us what we wanted before setting out on Your peace mission. Your safe return is what we wanted. Your welfare is our welfare. You are everything for us."

Women Are The Embodiments Of Compassion

Droupadi said to Krishna, "Oh brother, I too was of the opinion that You should not go to the wicked Kauravas. People may say that women are weak-minded. But, in fact, women are highly courageous and when it comes to sacrifice, women stand first."

During the Mahabharata war, on a certain night, Aswatthama, the son of Dronacharya, slaughtered the Pandava children while they were asleep. Arjuna took a vow that he would behead Aswatthama. He told Droupadi that she could anoint herself with his blood as an act of revenge. He tracked down Aswatthama, tied him with ropes and dragged him before Droupadi. Will any mother forgive the one who has mercilessly slaughtered her children? But what did Droupadi do? Instead of cursing the evil doer, she fell at the feet of Aswatthama and said: *It is at the feet of your father, Dronacharya, that my husbands have learnt all that they know. Being the son of Dronacharya, was it proper for you to kill my children? How could you have the heart to kill them, who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep, were not having any grudge against you, and were not contemplating any harm to you?*

(Telugu Poem)

Consumed with fury, Arjuna was about to attack Aswatthama. Droupadi raised her hand and asked him not to kill him. She said: *Oh Parhta! It is not righteous to kill a person who is afraid or has lost courage, who is asleep or intoxicated, who seeks refuge or is a female. You should not kill Aswatthama, for he is your preceptor's son.*

(Telugu Poem)

She said, “Arjuna, today I am crying over the death of my children. If you kill Aswatthama, just imagine what would be the plight of his mother! One should never cause grief to a mother. So, restrain yourself from killing him.” But having taken the vow, Arjuna was bent upon killing him. She stood in front of Aswatthama and stopped Arjuna from going towards him. Bhima could not bear to see this. Exploding with anger, he roared: *“Do not release him but kill him. If you do not do that, I myself will hammer his head with my powerful fist.”* Droupadi pleaded with him to forgive him:

“Forgiveness is the highest virtue. It is the truth, righteousness, nonviolence. It is the heaven and everything in all the worlds.”

(Telugu Poem)

Though the Pandavas were highly virtuous and brave, the spirit of compassion that Droupadi possessed was not found in them. The heart of a woman is highly sacred as it is filled with nectarous love and compassion. So, it melts easily. At times, women may also get angry, but they immediately repent and reconcile. Due to the impact of the Kali Age, modern women are sometimes found lacking in the spirit of love. But even today, there are many women of virtue and character. Bharat is what it is today because of such noble women. The progress of a nation depends on its women. So,

never look down upon them. Treat all elderly women as your mothers and the younger ones as your sisters. The country will remain safe and secure only when men have such noble feelings. When you understand this truth and act accordingly, you can attain even Divinity. Mother is not just an ordinary woman; she is verily God. Worship her and attain her grace. Once you have the blessings of your mother, you can achieve anything in this world. Never disobey or displease her.

Abhimanyu ventured into the battlefield against his mother's wish. His mother Subhadra said, "Son, your father Arjuna and uncle Krishna are busy fighting the enemies elsewhere. At this juncture, it is not proper for you to enter the battlefield." But Abhimanyu did not pay heed to his mother's advice and insisted upon going to the battlefield. She blessed him thus, "Son, you are going against my wish. May victory be yours!" Then she prayed: *"May such blessings be with you and protect you which mother Gowri conferred on her son at the time of the killing of Tarakasura and those received by Bhargava from his mother when he slayed Shambharasura!"*

(Telugu Poem)

Love And Serve Your Motherland

Even today, there is no dearth of noble mothers. They feel pained to see their children straying away from the right path. They leave no stone

untuned to correct them. It is impossible to describe the love of a mother. The love of the mother is much more than that of the father. Once Mother Parvati and Easwara saw a person sitting on the branch of a tree, which was about to break. Then Mother Parvati pleaded with Easwara to save him. Easwara teasingly remarked, "Why should I protect him? You have seen him first. It is your duty to save him." She said, "How can I protect him without your grace. I am negative and you are positive. Unless you shower your grace on him, he cannot be saved. Please do not delay any further." Then Easwara replied, "Is it not his duty to call Me for help? How can I go to his rescue without being called? As the proverb goes, one should not attend a function without being invited." Parvati, out of her motherly compassion, wanted to protect that person at any cost. So, she said to Easwara, "If that person, when he falls down, cries out Amma (mother). I will go to his rescue and if he cries out Appa (father), you should protect him." Easwara agreed to her proposal. Both of them eagerly waited, but the person fell down crying Ayyo! (alas!). The words Amma or Appa did not come to his lips as he never respected and revered his parents in his lifetime. Such was his fate. How can God come to the rescue of a person who has totally forgotten his parents? Mother is God; father is God. With such feelings, offer gratitude to your parents.

Today we are celebrating Easwaramma Day to propagate the glory of motherhood. The world is sustained by the prayers of mothers. A woman's prayer is more powerful than a thousand prayers of men because women are pure and tender-hearted. Never cause displeasure to your mother. Never hurt her feelings. Then God will help you in all your endeavours. One calls one's country motherland and not fatherland. Thus, mother is given an exalted position in the world. Consider your country as your own mother and work for its progress. Under any circumstances, do not cause any harm to your mother and motherland. This is the significance and main teaching of today's celebration.

In a few minutes from now, you will listen to a music programme presented by P. Susheela and others. She has been a devotee for the past 40 years. When she had no children, I blessed her with a son. I performed her son's marriage too. Her daughter-in-law is also a musician. They are all here today to sing a few devotional songs and give happiness to one and all. After this music programme, Bal Vikas children will present a drama in the Kalyana Mantapam. You know why these programmes are arranged? Man's mind is like a mad monkey. Discourses, music programmes and prayer meetings are meant to control the waverings of

the mind. *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.* Contemplate on what you have seen and heard here. Put it into practice and derive bliss therefrom.

Easwaramma Day, 6 May 2001, Brindavan

