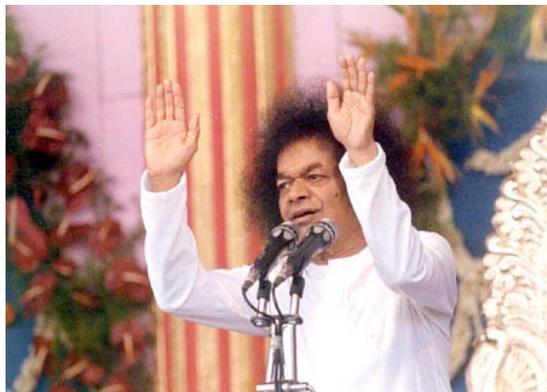


Sathya Sai Speaks

Volume 36



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1. STRIVE FOR UNITY, PURITY, AND DIVINITY

Date: 01 January
2003

Occasion: New Year
2003

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

Intellect, education, prolific scholarship,
Victory in verbal battle,
Vanquishing the adversary in physical strife,
Sovereignty over kingdoms vast,
Charity profuse of cattle and gold,
Piercing vision counting the countless stars,
Numbering each of creatures unnumbered,
Achieving the mystic eightfold powers,
Or even stepping on lunar dust --
All these are easy to the man of strength.
But to restrain the urges of body and its parts,
To turn the senses inward,
Difficult far is it to attain the vision
And still the mind in supreme peace.
(Telugu Poem)

A skilled tongue entices even the goddess of wealth,
A sweet tongue wins family and friends,
Tongue it is that ties your life in knots,
A vicious tongue begets instant death.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

Having been endowed with such a sacred power of speech, man is unable to make proper use of it. No other form of life has the mighty intellect and capacity for inner peace but the human kind. In this world every object has five aspects, namely, sath, chith, ananda, rupa, and nama (being, awareness, bliss, form, and name). Being, awareness, and bliss are the three core attributes of a man. They are true and eternal. Name and form are transitory. The delusion of permanence of name and form leads mankind to waste away its precious life.

In this world, there are two types of intellectuals. The first type is the scientists who are totally materialistic in their outlook. They have in their

mind only the physical and worldly goals and gains. They are fascinated by the external appearance of a gigantic tree with its numerous branches and twigs, but they are not interested in finding its "roots". Vedantins (philosophers) are the second type of intellectuals, who are not fascinated by the external appearance of the tree but evince great delight in finding the "roots". People who are worldly in outlook waste their time in watering the "branches", whereas, the Vedantins water the "roots" and thereby enjoy the "fruits".

Once, the asuras (demons) and devas (demigods) churned the ocean of milk with the hope of acquiring divine ambrosia (amrita). They used the Manthara mountain as the churning rod. But, initially, they had to put up with the emergence of deadly poison. The demons were frustrated and disheartened to see poison emanating instead of (amrita). They wanted to give up the churning process. But the demigods relentlessly continued the churning with courage and determination. Their sustained efforts yielded rich rewards in the form of the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi Devi, Iravatha (divine white elephant), Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow), Kalpatharu (wish-fulfilling tree), and ultimately the divine ambrosia itself. In the same manner, man should churn his mind and try to know his true identity; He should not be deterred or depressed by the initial impediments and obstacles that beset his path.

Sath-chith-ananda (being-awareness-bliss) are the very nature of man. But man has forgotten his very nature and is wasting his time in the vain pursuit of fleeting pleasures. He is not able to realise the value of his innate nature, sath-chith-ananda. Once he realises its value and experiences it, he can reach any exalted state. In fact, he becomes verily God. Man can accomplish any mighty task when he realises his innate divine nature. The power latent in man is not found anywhere else. Every man is endowed with the three chief attributes of sath-chith-ananda. But having been enmeshed in the web of delusion, man considers that the "name and form" are real, ignoring his innate qualities of sath-chith-ananda. First of all, what man has to recognise is his own innate divine nature. But man is not making any effort in this direction. He has become a slave to his senses, and is wasting his time on trivial matters. The primary duty of man therefore is to understand properly his innate human nature and then putting it into practice.

The value and significance of human nature is beyond all estimation. Only when you practise human values will your life be redeemed. Man is but a spark of Divinity. That is why Lord Krishna said in the Bhagavadgita, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhutah Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). In fact, the antarvani (inner voice) keeps reminding man of his divine nature day in and day out. But man is not making any effort to listen to his inner voice. He is craving for physical and ephemeral objects, forgetting his own divine nature and thereby

distancing himself from the ultimate goal of life. Names and forms are momentary like water bubbles. He is being deluded by names and forms and is losing the very precious gem of divinity. Man is endowed with infinite divine power. A piece of red-hot iron can be put to better use than the fire itself. The body can be compared to an iron piece and the divinity within to fire. Man should therefore understand this truth and make proper use of his body.

Embodiments of Love!

People are full of hopes and aspirations on the dawn of a New Year. In fact, you should consider every moment as the beginning of a New Year. Names and forms have no value without the eternal virtues. Man suffers from various ailments, some internal and others external. A doctor can cure the external ailments. The Atmic feeling is the only remedy for all the internal ailments. You should make efforts to know the principle of Atma. The Atma is a synonym for Brahma, which is nothing but the Chaitanya permeating every human being. Man has a name and form, but Chaitanya has no form. The Chaitanya that is present in the human body is called "conscience". The all-pervasive Chaitanya is called "consciousness". When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the "conscience" gets transformed into "consciousness". In spite of being endowed with such a sacred power, man gets deluded by the vagaries of the world. He is giving importance to the New Year, which is fleeting. In fact, he should give importance to the changeless "Time" and sanctify it by proper use.

In this world, only truth and goodness will remain with us for ever. Their value cannot be quantified. So, we should strive to develop truth and goodness in us. We should not hanker after name and fame. For example, we should not be under the delusion that we are providing Telugu Ganga water to Chennai. Water is not something that one gives to another. It is nature's gift to all. Each one gets one's share based on one's prapti (deservedness). Man's activities yield the desired result only when the kala, karma, karana, and kartavya (time, action, cause, and duty) are in harmony with each other. Hence, one should make sincere efforts and wait for the right time. When the action fructifies, he should utilise it in accordance with the time and circumstances.

Boys (former students of Swami) are doing a lot of good work. They are going to various villages and giving happiness to the people there by performing service activities and bhajans. They should undertake all these activities with the spirit of love. There is nothing greater than love. You should lead your life filled with selfless love.

Embodiments of Love!

The service activities and the bhajans that you perform alone are not enough. You should give up the feeling that you are serving others. That is very important. You are serving your own self when you serve others. You should consider all as yours. In fact, others are not others but are the very forms of God. Hence, service rendered to humanity is service rendered to God. All service activities are meant to foster this feeling in you. You should plunge into the field of service with selfless love. That alone is true service. All other service activities are worldly and momentary.

Students!

You are under the mistaken notion that you are rendering service to others. You should give up such a feeling. Only then does the service you perform become real service in the strict sense of the term. Service does not merely mean helping others. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Your acts of service should be suffused with the spirit of love. Without the positive aspect of love, all service you render becomes negative in nature.

All bodies are like bulbs, and love is the main switch. Only when the main switch is pressed will the bodies radiate light and happiness to one and all. You are switching off the main switch and trying to enjoy happiness. It is impossible. Hrid + daya (compassion) = Hridaya (heart). Your heart should be filled with compassion. All your activities should be suffused with love. There is no strength superior to love.

Our ancient sages and seers used to live in dense forests amidst wild animals. They did not carry any weapons with them, yet they could move about without any sense of fear. What was the source of their courage? They possessed the single weapon of love, which protected them from the wild animals. The ancient culture of Bharat is divine, most precious, wonderful, and blissful. But you are not making any effort to understand its greatness. In fact, you are belittling such a sacred culture. You are deluded by the differences based on caste and culture. In fact, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. The love that originates in the heart is true religion. The entire humanity is one family. All are brothers and sisters. The whole world is but one mansion. It is impossible to describe in words the happiness you would experience when you develop such broad-mindedness. Hence, make every effort to visualise divinity in humanity.

God's creation is most wonderful and mysterious. There are innumerable stars in the sky. The light emitted by some of them is yet to reach the earth, in spite of the fact that light travels at a speed of thousands of miles per second. Such being the case, you can very well imagine the distance between earth and stars. When the creation itself is such an infinite and indescribable phenomenon, how mighty and powerful must the creator be!

The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds.

They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage.
(Telugu Poem)

The stories of God cannot be described in mere words. Man imagines and describes Him based on his own estimates. Truly speaking, God is beyond all definition.

There are various types of pramanas (experiences) in this world. They are pratyaksha pramana (direct experience), anumana pramana (experience based on inference), dvaita pramana (experience based on duality), and advaita pramana (experience based on non-duality). As God is beyond all these pramanas, He is known as Aprameya (immeasurable and indefinable). God is present in the heart of every man with all His divine powers.

The beauty and grandeur of God cannot be described in words. He is extolled as "Hiranyagarbhaya Namah" (salutations to the one with the golden womb). Hiranya means gold. It is present in His heart. Just as the essence of the food partaken is supplied to all parts of the body, likewise, gold permeates His entire body. Hence, He is the most handsome One. He is the primordial basis of all beings.

Everything happens according to His Will. Since He is the creator of all beings, He is called Prajapati. Since He is the most intelligent One, He is called Dakshinamurthi. In this manner, God has infinite names. Man attributes names and forms to God based on his limited understanding and worships Him: Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, and Nirmala Swarupinam (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, liberated, and embodiment of sacredness). When such a divine principle is present within his own self, why does man consider himself to be small and feeble? You should give up such a feeling of inferiority. There is no greater being than the human being. In fact, divinity is immanent in the entire humanity. But, unfortunately, you are considering such a sacred human birth as trivial. As you think, so shall it become. These petty thoughts are the result of your petty mind.

When you see smoke emerging from the hills, it is an indication that there is fire. When you see the fire directly, it is called *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience). If you see only the smoke and not the fire, you presume that there is fire behind the smoke. It is only a possibility. It is *anumana pramana* (presumptive experience). It is possible that sometimes fog appears as smoke and, actually, there may not be fire in the hills. Therefore, *anumana pramana* gives rise to doubt.

Love is the only *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience) of divinity in a human being. When a question arises as to where God is, the immediate answer is God is love and love is God. Similarly, truth is God. There is nothing greater than truth. There is no divinity higher than truth. Truth is all-pervading. Countries may be different; but, truth is one and only one. There is nothing like American truth, Japanese truth, German truth, etc. To make such distinction is the nature of petty-minded people.

We are not petty-minded and mean. We are the embodiments of infinity. Man should always remind himself that he is the embodiment of Truth, embodiment of Love, embodiment of Bliss, etc. Man has got infinite capacity for spiritual thoughts and spiritual quest. But, does he realise his true nature?

Take, for instance, a handful of sea-sand in a plate. The scientists determine the sand as belonging to such and such country on the basis of the colour and weight of the sand. But the philosophers do not at all think that way. They say that it is God's creation and God's *maya* (illusion). Thus, there is a gulf of difference between the perceptions of the scientists and the sages. Science is like semi-circle. It starts at some place and ends at some other place. But, spirituality originates and ends at the same point of origin. It is a full-circle. It is verily Divinity. That is why it is said,

Poornamadah poornamidam poornat poornamudachyate
Poornasya poornamadaya poornameva avashishyate.
(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full,
what remains is again the full).

Such a divinity, which is the embodiment of fullness, is immanent in every human being. But, unfortunately, man is not making any effort to realise the divinity within. Who is protecting his body while he is fast asleep? How does the body function perfectly, even without his knowledge? Nobody knows. For creation, protection and sustenance --for everything-- , God is responsible. Such a divine power is immanent in every human being. In spite of this, man is depressed in times of difficulties and is elated in times of joy. But this is not the goal of his life. His true goal is to maintain a perfect state of equanimity at all times and not to get caught in "sorrows and joys". Pleasure is an interval between two pains.

Therefore, we need not go in search of pleasure. It is very much within us. In fact, you, yourself are the embodiment of bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

Always be happy and cheerful, for your innate nature is bliss. You need not go in search of happiness. Bliss emerges out of Atma. Whenever you wish for it, you will get it. Happiness is union with God. Therefore, always be in the company of God. Once you are in the company of God, happiness will follow you like a slave.

Today, man is in search of happiness, and, in the process, is becoming a slave to happiness. This is not correct. In fact, happiness should become a slave to you, for you are verily the embodiment of Divine Atma. Believe it or not, I am always blissful. You can also experience such a state of bliss. You should not go in search of happiness. Instead, happiness should follow you wherever you go.

Hanuman was a great hero in the episode of Ramayana. He was courageous, mighty and invincible. He possessed good qualities of character and peace. He was always happy and cheerful, chanting the divine name of Rama. You should also develop such noble qualities. First and foremost, you should become a human being in the true sense. You should develop kindness toward all. Only then do you deserve to be identified as belonging to mankind.

Embodiments of Love!

You are acquiring a high level of worldly education. You are reading several great books. You are acquiring great powers. But, all these are ephemeral and evanescent. Therefore, always keep your thoughts steadily fixed on the divine power that fills your heart with bliss. The divine power is infinite. The more you contemplate on the divine, the more and more the bliss gets multiplied. When such an infinite divine power is within your own self, why should you be exposed to difficulties?

Today, our old students have assembled here. They are undertaking several types of service activities in various parts of the country and even abroad. They are deriving great pleasure out of this service activity.

In My opinion, they should confine themselves to their own areas and render service to society, within their means. It is neither good nor necessary to associate others in their service activity, which will turn it into business. As far as possible, they should undertake such activities in their respective villages and give them happiness.

In rural areas, there is a vast scope for different service activities. A few decades ago, some people invited Me to shift to bigger cities like Mysore, saying that they would provide a big palace for Me. But, as for Me, I don't need palaces. I must stay in this small village. I have not given up My place of birth. In such place alone, mighty tasks need to be accomplished. So, I refused to move from Puttaparthi, which was then a remote village with no modern facilities.

In those days, if one were to visit Puttaparthi, one had to alight from the train at Penukonda, which was the nearest railhead, and then travel to this place in a bullock-cart. Such were the conveyances in those days. But now, one can straightaway reach Puttaparthi comfortably by air. One had to go to Anantapur by bus in those days for availing oneself of medical services. Now, we have a Super Speciality Hospital right at our doorstep. Thus, all modern conveniences and facilities are now available in this village of Puttaparthi.

Therefore, there is no better place than a village to live in. The villages are the most valuable assets of a nation. If you serve the villagers properly, nothing could be a greater service than that. Grama seva is Rama seva.

There is no satisfaction in service undertaken in towns and cities. The urban people are indifferent and self-centred. Even if thieves break into a neighbouring house, they will not bother. On the other hand, in the villages, even for a small commotion, all the villagers will gather. Such a type of unity and camaraderie still exists in the villages. Where there is unity, there will be divinity. Where there is divinity, there will be bliss. Hence, work sincerely for the development of the village in which you are placed. Thus, all of you should work for the development of your respective villages.

Your activities should not be on the lines of political activities. By associating with various types of people, this turns into a political activity. I am not happy with that. Do come together for bhajans wherever you are. But do not allow separatism. All should be united.

Wherever you are, undertake service activities with a spirit of cooperation and unity. Do not strike discordant notes. For ages, India has been a peaceful country and all Indians were united like a big family. But what is the position now? In the olden days, whenever somebody visited a village, all the villagers used to gather round him and enquire about his welfare lovingly. Now, that spirit of love and oneness is lost, totally. Wherever you go, you will find differences and tensions even on trivial matters. Especially, after Independence, riots and disturbances are taking place in almost every part of the country. The sanctity of human life seems to be totally lost. Human life has no value. People are killed like

ants and mosquitoes. These are inhuman and demonic acts. This is not what is expected of a human being.

We must transform the divine power latent in us into skill, for undertaking service to society. When knowledge is converted into skill, you acquire balance in life. In such a state of equanimity, you will develop insight. With such an insight and divine power when you undertake service activity, it will be most fruitful and beneficial to the society.

Every village in the country has to be developed in all respects. You have come from Hyderabad, Madras, America, etc., to participate in service activity. Where is the need for all this? This is not a fair where different people from different parts gather to sell their commodities. Wherever you are, develop your area with your service. People of one place may even go to another place for developing that place. But this kind of mixing up of people from different areas adulterates the very purpose. It ends up in confusion, turns into pollution. Do not give scope for confusion and pollution of your mind with unnecessary differences.

You should always undertake service activities with a pure mind. Unity brings purity, and purity in turn leads to divinity. Therefore, always remember the inseparable relationship between unity, purity, and divinity and strive to achieve that. You may come together and work together in the spirit of sacrifice. But if people from various places come together this way for Grama Seva, no good accrues to the villages. Each has his own feelings and by mixing they get polluted. Then the place becomes a business centre.

Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then that the service undertaken by you will acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences. A small example. Gold is in the form of deposits in the gold mines. When you take it out and purify it, it becomes pure 24 carat gold. It acquires great value. However, when you add other metals like copper, its value comes down. Not only that. Its brightness also comes down. If you add some more metals, it loses its value altogether. Our heart is like a temple of gold. It is Hiranyagarbha. We should never defile that Hiranyagarbha. It should always be bright and shining.

Embodiments of Love!

Share love with everybody. Always maintain unity and purity. As you have planned earlier, you can commence your musical programme now.

Date: 01 January 2003, Occasion: New Year 2003, Place:

Prasanthi Nilayam

2. DEDICATE YOUR EVERYTHING TO GOD

Date: 14 January 2003 Occasion: Sankranti Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

The sun appears serene and peaceful.
The days have become shorter.
And the chill wind is blowing.
The fields are ripe with golden crops.
Marigold flowers are blossoming like garlands on the banks
of rivers.
The farmers are rejoicing and singing.
The sweet festival of Sankranti has arrived,
filling our homes with the newly harvested grain.
(Telugu Poem)

The festival of Sankranti has arrived in all its beauty and splendour. The sports and cultural activities of our students --boys and girls-- have added grandeur and bliss to the festivity. This day is no ordinary day. It marks the beginning of the sacred Uttarayana (summer solstice). It confers on us plenty and prosperity and helps us to develop virtues and undertake sacred activities. In addition, this day happens to be the auspicious one of Mukkoti Ekadasi also. That is, the day on which the devas (gods) and asuras (demons) obtained the pot of divine ambrosia (amrita kalasa) after churning the ocean of milk.

Since man has filled his heart with worldly thoughts and feelings, he is not able to put into practice his innate divine qualities. Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakasipu, Duryodhana, and Kamsa were by no means ordinary. Though they were very strong in their body and mind, they became weak as they were immersed in worldly feelings. Man can conquer the entire world when his thoughts are noble. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were great scientists. Hiranyakasipu could reach not only the moon but even the sun. In spite of all his power, he became weak because he was full of worldly feelings. Every individual is endowed with mighty power and intelligence. But one should not fill his heart with worldly feelings. Young men and women of today are the future leaders of the world. The prosperity of the nation depends on its youth. Hence, youth should develop virtues, noble thoughts and sterling character. One who has filled his heart with noble thoughts can accomplish any great task.

Students - Boys and Girls!

You have participated in the sports and cultural activities with all enthusiasm and gave joy to one and all. Virtues are of paramount importance to youth. Today, students are able to excel in various fields. But they are not making any effort to understand the fundamental principle by knowing which they would have known everything. In every man there are noble feelings springing forth from within. Every man is endowed with a mind which is most powerful. Such a mighty power is not present in any other kind of being. The mind is but a bundle of thoughts. One who has conquered the mind can achieve any mighty task. There is no power greater than the mind. Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayoh (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). But today, man is unable to conquer the mind. Consequently, bliss eludes him.

Students - Boys and Girls!

You have to achieve purity of mind in the first instance. The Sports and Cultural Meet has come to an end. You should not consider sports as mere worldly and physical activities. They teach you many moral and spiritual principles. A true student is one who achieves excellence in the moral, social, and spiritual fields. One should not strive for physical strength and happiness only. One should strive hard for the control of the mind. One who becomes a slave to his mind is bound to become weak, however powerful one may be. So, you should make the mind your slave. The power of mind is matchless. It is from the mind that the most precious virtues originate. If wealth is lost, it can be earned again. If health is lost, it can be restored with the help of an efficient doctor. But if human values are lost, human life becomes a waste. Human values are the need of the hour. They cannot be acquired solely from sacred texts nor can they be passed on by learned preceptors. They originate from within. When we develop noble thoughts and follow the path of truth in our daily life, human values will blossom in us and protect us under all circumstances.

Embodiments of Love!

More than the worldly education, you should strive to uphold human values, for, all powers are latent in them. Truth is God. Righteousness is the very foundation of life. That is why the culture of Bharat (India) declared, Sathyaannasti paro dharma (there is no dharma greater than adherence to truth). Hence, you should be prepared to sacrifice your life to uphold these twin principles of truth and righteousness. You should not crave for worldly bahu mathi (prize). Man is facing a lot of hardship, as he is unable to control the one mathi (mind) he is endowed with. What will be his plight if he has bahu mathi (many minds)? He will become worse than a monkey. What you should aspire to attain is nija mathi (true

mind), not bahumathi. Nija mathi is the pavitra sukta (sacred message) that originates in your heart. Mind is the source of all types of powers. Hence, you should make friendship with the mind. Once the mind becomes your friend, it redeems your life.

The culture of Bharat has prescribed nine paths of devotion: sravanam (listening), kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), vandanam (salutation), archanam (worship), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender). Self-surrender is possible only after developing friendship with God. Friendship leads to Self-surrender. So long as you do not develop friendship, all your talk of self-surrender cannot be translated into action. More than the action, God sees the feeling behind it. Hence, you should foster noble feelings.

Students!

Wherever you are, develop divine feelings and a steady mind. Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat (Divinity pervades the entire universe), Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). God is not confined to a particular place. He is with you, in you, around you. Just as the eyelid protects the eye, He protects you always. How is it that you have lost faith in such divine power? Having attained human birth, you are supposed to develop human values. On the contrary, you have lost them. Consequently, you have become weak in body and mind. You may secure high marks in your examinations. At the same time, you should also take care that you do not get any adverse remarks. Today students are going abroad in pursuit of education and wealth. One can acquire the true wealth of values only when one searches the recesses of one's heart. True wealth and prosperity are present in our heart and not outside. Hence, students should turn their mind inward and develop values. Only then will they have the strength and capacity to emancipate the nation.

Students!

For the past one week, I have been observing the enormous amount of hard work you have put in to make this Sports Meet a grand success. You strove hard, even forgoing your food and sleep. Here, people have to understand the difference in the sports activities of our students and the students elsewhere. The students outside have only one goal in their mind, i.e. to win a prize or a medal, whereas our students only aim is to please Swami. How can you please Swami? First of all, you have to develop virtues. You should have unwavering mind and a steady vision. You should have firm faith that God is all-pervasive. With faith in God, any mighty task can be accomplished.

Where there is faith, there is love;
Where there is love, there is truth;
Where there is truth, there is peace;
Where there is peace, there is bliss;
Where there is bliss, there is God.

Faith is the seed and bliss is the fruit. When a seed is sown, it gradually grows into a huge tree and yields flowers and fruits. In the same manner, when man sows the seed of a sacred thought in the field of his heart, it grows into a gigantic tree of spiritual power and confers the fruits of peace and bliss. Everyone aspires for peace. It cannot be acquired from outside. Peace originates from faith within. But modern man does not have strong faith. He just pretends to have faith. Today, there are very few true devotees; most others are merely pretending. When you have steady mind, your faith will also be steady.

Students!

If you want to experience eternal bliss, you should have a strong and unwavering faith. People have no idea what faith actually means. They say, we believe in God, we love God, but in reality they do not understand the spirit behind the terms love and faith. True love has righteousness as the undercurrent. It originates from the heart and confers bliss. Love is related to the heart, not to an object or an individual. Love is like the air that wafts around in the firmament of human heart. It is around you and sustains you. This is the nature of true love. The synonym of love is dharma. Love is the main goal of our life. That is our way of life. When you fill your heart with love, you will become all-powerful. Even mighty personalities like Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu will be no match to you. All other powers pale in comparison to the power of love.

The culture of Bharat (India) has laid great emphasis on the principle of love. It demonstrates the underlying unity in diversity. Names and forms may be different but the inherent divinity is only one. Man is the repository of all powers. He is one of courage, valour, and majesty (dheera, veera, and gambhira). Hanuman is extolled as santhudu, gunavantudu, and balavantudu (one of peace, virtue, and strength). The divine name of Rama was the basis for all his accomplishments. He could cross the mighty ocean because of his love and faith toward Rama.

Today is also the most auspicious day of Mukkoti Ekadasi. It is also called as Vaikuntha Ekadasi. The great warrior of Mahabharata war, Bhishma laid down his arms after fighting a heroic battle and lay on the bed of arrows for 56 days. His body was pierced all over with arrows. As he lay on the bed of arrows, his body rested on the arrows, but his head was sagging down for want of support. Meanwhile, the Pandavas along with

Droupadi went there to see Bhishma. They were greatly moved on seeing the condition of Bhishma.

Bhishma said, "I have done my duty in the Kurukshetra war. The body is given to us to protect truth and righteousness. It is dedicated for the welfare of the country. Of what use is it if we do not perform our duty? I have done my duty and I do not regret for the present condition of my body. But, Oh! Arjuna! The arrows shot by you during the war struck only my body. They, however, did not affect my head. Hence, as I lay on this bed of arrows, my head is without a support and is hanging. You gave me a bed, but without a pillow. Please provide a pillow also for me, so that I can comfortably lie down on this bed of arrows."

Arjuna was deeply moved by Bhishma's words. His heart melted. He enquired from Bhishma what he should do to provide comfort to him. Bhishma requested Arjuna to shoot two arrows into the earth into an X position and then place his head on them. Arjuna did accordingly. Thereafter, Bhishma further requested Arjuna, "Oh! Arjuna! I am the son of Ganga. I, therefore, acquired the name of 'Gangeya'. I am now in the last moment of my life's journey. Please, therefore, provide the Ganga water and help me to merge in my mother, Ganga."

Arjuna was a great warrior and all-powerful. He earned many titles: Arjuna (the pure one), Phalguna (the one born under the star Phalguna), Paarthah (scion of the Prithu clan), Kireeti (crowned one), Swetavaahanah (rider of a milk-white horse), Beebhatsu (eliminator of disgust), Vijayah (embodiment of victory), Krishnah (swarthy one), Savyasaachi (ambidextrous), Dhananjayah (winner of wealth). He shot an arrow into the earth. Immediately, water gushed forth from the earth like a spring and fell into the mouth of Bhishma.

Bhishma was very happy that Arjuna could fulfil his last desire. He expressed his gratitude thus: "Oh! Arjuna! There are several people in this world who help others in different ways. But there is none to help one to return to his mother. Today, you helped me to reach my mother. You provided great joy to me with the help of your dhanus (bow)." So saying, he blessed the Pandavas that they would win the Mahabharata war.

Thus, if you wish to earn the blessings of elders, you must provide comfort and solace to them and win their hearts.

In the Sports and Cultural Meet held two days ago, our students participated in several sports and games and displayed their talent to please Swami. But this happiness and satisfaction must not be limited to sports. It should pervade every aspect of your life. Your entire life must run smoothly and happily.

Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim,
Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam,
Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam,
Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam
(Telugu Poem)

(God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute,
the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites,
expansive and pervasive like the sky,
goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi (I am That), the
eternal, pure, unchanging,
the witness of all functions of the intellect,
beyond all mental conditions and the three gunas (qualities)
of sattwa (purity), rajas (passion), and thamas (inertia, laziness)).

Every human being must lead a life full of joy. We have the body. We are performing several chores with the help of this body. But, that is not of much importance. There is a great Atmic principle in this body. We must strive to realise that principle. Every human being has a mind. But today, that mind is polluted. Wherever you see, pollution and pollution. The food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and finally our behaviour itself --everything is polluted. Therefore, ensure that your mind is not polluted by bad thoughts. You must always have a positive mind, not a negative mind. You may undertake a great task, but it cannot succeed if it is undertaken with a negative mind. You must always have a positive mind to experience happiness. You should also share that happiness with others. That is the real nature of a human being. A human being is also called "manava". What is its underlying meaning? It means: he who conducts himself with peace and joy, without doing injustice to others. You must cultivate such noble feelings, free from pollution.

Dear Students!

You have acquired great academic qualifications. Some of you have acquired more than two postgraduate degrees. This is really a great effort. But it is not enough. You must also acquire the degree of "amruta puthra" (son of immortality), since the Upanishads exhort Srunvanthu viswe amrutasya puthrah (Oh! The sons of immortality, listen!). The degree of "amruta puthra" is the real degree one has to acquire. We should not hanker after trivial titles.

Embodiments of Love!

Fill your hearts with love. Undertake divine activities. This is the type of education you have to pursue. No doubt, worldly education is also necessary. But, true education is that which teaches unity among all human beings. The main principle of Indian culture is to seek unity in

diversity. It is not to divide unity into diversity. That is true culture. What is culture? It is not related to any particular religion. It is purely related to the heart. It is not a caste or a faith. It is fully associated with divinity.

Embodiments of Love!

You have provided great happiness to one and all with your display of talents in various events of sports and games. Keep up this happiness throughout your life. True love lies in realising the Ekatma Bhava. That is the real love which does not change with the passage of time. It is eternal. No doubt, you love Swami with all your heart. But that love should not be a fleeting love. You must always develop the feeling, "I belong to Swami and Swami belongs to me." Only then you will achieve oneness with Swami. That is the real sadhana (spiritual exercise). That is the true path.

The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,
Is there a place where truth does not exist?
Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.
(Telugu Poem)

It is said, "Truth is God." You may belong to any country or religion, but truth is the same for one and all. There is nothing like American truth, Pakistan truth, etc. Truth is truth.

Embodiments of Love!

Lead a life full of truth. Lead the life of an eternal being. Lead an ideal life, which is an example to others to emulate. An education that teaches such a sadhana (spiritual exercise) is the true education. It is not to transform your brain into a book shelf. True happiness lies in your own heart. Realise it.

Embodiments of Love!

Wherever you are, in whatever circumstances you are placed in, do not ever forget God. Sarvada sarva kaleshu sarvatra Hari chintanam (Everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God). Devoid of God, you will become devils verily. You must live like embodiments of Divine Atma, not devils.

The Upanishads declare, Srunvanthu viswe amrutasya puthrah (Oh! The sons of immortality, listen!). You are "amruta puthras" (sons of immortality). Live up to that name. Only then your life will become fruitful and sanctified.

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Whatever activity you undertake, dedicate it to God. All the powers in your body are the gifts of God. In fact, divinity pervades every inch, every cell and every atom of your body. If you waste such a divine power, it amounts to sacrilege. Dedicate your body, mind, and intellect, in fact, everything of yours, to God. The games you play should not be limited to one day. In fact, Life is a game; play it. Unity is divinity. Whatever you do, whatever you speak, whatever you think --in every aspect of your life-- that unity must reflect. That is the true culture of the Bharatiyas (Indians). The essence of Bharatiya culture is: Sathyam vada, dharmam chara (speak truth, practise righteousness). I exhort you to cultivate these two principles throughout your life. With blessings, I conclude My discourse.

Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Hari bhajana bina sukha santhi nahi".

Date: 14 January 2003, Occasion: Sankranthi, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

3. EXPERIENCE OF UNITY IS REAL SATSANG

Date: 01 March 2003
(evening)

Occasion:
Mahasivarathri

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

Oh spiritual aspirants!
Whether one is a renunciant or a householder,
whether one is attached to the world or not,
whether one performs actions or not,
when one realises that the same Atmic principle
is present in oneself as well as in others,
one will always experience and enjoy
the company of God in all three states of
existence.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Devotees should recognise the unity of the Atmic principle that exists in all beings. Satsang (good company) is very essential to understand the oneness of Atmic principle. Satsang does not mean association with good people, devotees, or spiritual aspirants. 'Sath' is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. It is the Atmic principle. When sath and chit come together, what results is ananda (bliss). Sath-chit-ananda is the very form of Atma. This is referred to as Transcendental Truth. In order to understand this truth, three mantras are to be practised. They are Bhadram Trunvantu, Bhadram Srunvantu, and Bhadram Kurvantu. When you practise these three principles, you don't need to search for God.

BBhadram Trunvan means, "I am not different from the Atma." There is no entity in this world other than the Atma. Bhadram Srunvantu means "I do not listen to anything else." Bhadram Kurvantu means "I don't need to perform any sadhana (spiritual exercise)." When one recognises the oneness of the Atmic principle, where is the need to undertake any sadhana? Every sound that is heard is a resound of the Atmic principle. One who realises this will not listen to anything other than the Atma.

Divinity is the essence of all actions. Bhadram Trunvantu, Bhadram Srunvantu, and Bhadram Kurvantu means that the divine darshan, divine sambhashan and divine activities are embodied only in God. Hence, to live always in the company of God is true satsang.

God is one. He is referred to as Sath. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (Truth is one, but the wise call it by different names). That which is changeless in all the three periods of time is Sath'. You should live in the company of the One who is changeless, with unwavering mind and steady vision. Your thoughts, words, and deeds should be steady and sacred. But due to the impact of Kali Age, modern youth find it difficult to control their thoughts, words, and deeds. They do not have steady vision. They do not keep up their word. Their activities belie their thoughts and words.

Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam
Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam

Those whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in complete
harmony are noble;
Those who lack harmony of these are wicked.

Your deeds should be in consonance with your thoughts and words. Harmonising thoughts, words, and deeds is true satsang. To experience the oneness of Self is true satsang. The Atma is only one. It attracts the entire world. What is prakriti (nature)? It consists of objects that delude man. All objects in nature are transitory. You do not find anything permanent. They attract man and delude him. The objects that are temporary in nature will give only momentary happiness. The Vedas speak about the principle of ritam. It symbolises the truth that is changeless. All worldly objects undergo change. When you develop ritam, you will be able to understand the changeless and eternal Divinity.

You may question, "How can I have the vision of God?" Oh simpleton! You don't need to search for God! Wherever you see, He is there. He is imbued in every object. You are unable to see Him because you are deluded by external appearances. Pashyati iti pashuhu (that which goes purely by external vision is an animal). Whatever you see, whatever you experience is but the manifestation of God. In fact, you are God yourself. Hence, the Veda exhorts man to develop faith that "I am God and God is none other than myself." Names and forms are many, but God is one. Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). Such unity in Divinity has to be realised. There is underlying unity in apparent diversity. Satsang means experience of unity.

Today, people think that satsang means a congregation of spiritual aspirants. People join such congregations and think that they are in satsang. But it is not satsang in the true sense of the term because people whom you think to be good may turn wicked. They are bound to change. How can such temporary association confer everlasting happiness? It is impossible. Till this day, people have not understood the true meaning of satsang and its significance.

Tell me your company I shall tell you who you are. When you associate yourself with ephemeral things, the results also are bound to be transitory. You should develop friendship with Divinity, which alone is true and eternal. Divinity is very much present in you. You cannot find it outside. The external world is subject to change. The world is nothing but a combination of matter. Everything in this world is transitory. Nothing is permanent. All that is seen in this world is illusory. The unseen Atmic principle alone is true and eternal.

If you pose the question, "Where is God?" some people will say, "He is in me", pointing to their body. Body is not permanent. Hence, this is not a proper answer. (Swami holding a rose) When I say the flower is in My hand, the flower is smaller than Me. In the same manner, when you say God is in you, you are bigger than God! In fact, the whole world is in the hands of God. Hence, it is not proper to say that God is in you. You are in God. All are in God. The world itself is a manifestation of God. This is the Transcendental Truth. This is the changeless truth. The word Sivam symbolises truth. Here, truth does not correspond to your body. It corresponds to the changeless and eternal Sath. Today, people go by the physical and worldly meanings and, as a result, spoil their mind.

Man's life can be compared to a tree. Asuya (jealousy) and ahamkara (ego) are like pests that destroy the tree of life. The day man rids himself of these pests, he can become a true human being.

What you have to know today is the principle of eternal and changeless truth. Our Narasimhamurthi (one of the previous speakers) said Divinity is in the form of the Atmic principle. How can one visualise the Atma? The Atma has no form. How can one visualise that which is formless? Bliss is the form of the Atma. It is present in everyone. Man is the embodiment of ananda. But he is unable to experience bliss because he is deluded by the material objects.

One should not crave for materialistic possessions. How long can they last? Here is a flower. Now it looks fresh, but by tomorrow it will fade away. Likewise all objects are bound to change with the passage of time. The Atma is permanent. Ananda is permanent. Bliss can only be experienced; it cannot be expressed in words. None can explain the nature of bliss. It can be understood only by experience. As I told you earlier, your drishti (vision), sravanam (audition), and karma (action) should be constantly focused on the Atma. Then you will certainly experience nijananda, nityananda and advaitananda (true, eternal, and non-dual bliss).

People sit in meditation for some time and start shedding tears of joy. They say they have experienced bliss. It is nothing but their imagination. Bliss is not that which comes and goes. It is permanent. In whatever

state you may be, waking, dream or deep sleep, you should be able to experience it continuously.

Embodiments of Love!

You should strive to attain Atmic bliss right from a young age. That should be your only endeavour. Your thoughts, words, and deeds should be aimed at this. This can be termed as true satsang. Worldly experiences, however long one may enjoy them, cannot confer the eternal bliss. You can experience the eternal bliss only in the company of God. All the worldly activities and experiences are bound to change. The Atma alone is changeless. This is referred to as ritam in Sanskrit. In order to experience this eternal principle, you should give up body attachment and understand the truth that the Atma in you is the same as the one in others. Just as the same electric current flows in different bulbs, the same Atma is present in all beings. Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma (the one Atma is present in all beings). But, today, man does not have such broad-mindedness. In order to experience divinity, which is the very form of love, you have to become the very personification of love. Divinity and love are not separate. Since man is endowed with such sacred divine principle, it is said, Jantunam nara janma durlabham (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest).

Today man does not enquire as to what is gamyamu (goal of life). Instead of trying to know the goal of life, he is worrying about his janmamu (worldly life). Even animals and insects are concerned about their worldly existence. It is not essential to know the secret of life; one should know the purpose of life. That is very important. The goal of our life is Truth which is symbolised by the principle of Atma. Instead of enquiring into the goal of life, man is trying to know the secret of life. It is a futile exercise. Any number of births will not be sufficient to know this. Fix your mind on the gamyamu (goal). Do not worry about the janmamu (life).

The Adi Sankara said,

Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.

Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death;
time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying
in the mother's womb.

It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life.
Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.

You are born again and again, seeing, doing, and experiencing what you have already seen, done, and experienced. You should realise that you are born not to be born again. You should see and experience that by which your life will find fulfilment. That is the oneness of Atmic principle. Once you have experienced the Atma, you do not need to experience anything else.

Thousands have gathered here today. Each of you has a different form and behaviour. But the Atmic effulgence that shines in all of you is one and the same. When a bulb is glowing, one may sit and do his homework. Another person may write accounts with wrong calculations. Yet another person may write a letter with evil motives. Whatever one may do, the light is unaffected and untainted. It remains a witness. Likewise, the Atma also remains an eternal witness to all that man does. External activities undergo change, but the eternal truth of Atma remains the same at all times.

God is one; goal is one. The same is conveyed in the following statements: "I am in the light; the light is in me, I am the light." Here 'I' symbolises love and devotion and light stands for wisdom. When you say, "I am in the light," it means devotion is contained in wisdom. The statement "the light is in me" reflects the truth that wisdom is contained in devotion. Light and love --you have to understand the unity of these two.

Devotion is an essential prerequisite to know the reality. You should develop love more and more and ultimately transform it into wisdom. You should not follow the vagaries of the mind. Come what may, your vision must be firmly implanted on the Atma. With such one-pointed devotion, sages and seers of yore performed penance and experienced bliss. Today people chant mantras and perform japa (soft repetition of the name). They do so for the sake of their mental satisfaction. They want to attain peace. In fact, what they get out of such practices is not peace but pieces! In a rosary there are 108 beads, but the thread that strings them together is one and same. It symbolises Divinity.

Divinity is like a magnet that attracts the entire world. In some places, this power of attraction is maximum. It is something very special. Here is an example. So many of you have gathered here. Who sent you invitations? It is the Divine Magnet that has drawn you here. This magnet is present not only here, but everywhere. Here, there, and everywhere, Divinity is present in the form of Atma. Here you can experience the power of divine attraction. Such power cannot be acquired for the mere asking. It can be acquired only through love. Love is something that originates from the 'source'. It cannot be obtained by 'force'. Worldly knowledge can be thrust on you, but love has to spring forth from within

in a natural way. Love is God. Love alone can confer true wisdom. Jnanad evatu kaivalyam (wisdom leads to liberation).

Worldly knowledge is associated with multiplicity. Love enables you to visualise unity in multiplicity. Hence, you should develop love and understand the fundamental truth that the same Self is present in all. Different people partake of different items to satisfy their hunger. Food items are different, but hunger is the same. You should understand such unity.

Each one of you may undertake a different sadhana (spiritual practice). Whatever may be the sadhana, it should be performed with Atmic feeling. You should make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. That alone constitutes true sadhana.

The principle of love in you should be steady. However, the love in modern youth keeps vacillating. One day it is sacred and the very next day, it is unsacred. Such love cannot be termed as true devotion. Ekam Sath (Divinity is one). You are in the light and the light is in you. Bear this in your mind. Ultimately, you will realise that "I am I". If you want to understand the principle of Atma, you should not give scope to multiplicity. All that you see and hear in this world are merely reflections, reactions, and resounds. The reality is within you.

I see many students here. Where have they come from? They are My reflections. Otherwise, they cannot be seen. Likewise, every person and every object is your own reflection. Life is like an ocean with the waves of Samyoga (union) and Viyoga (separation). You should treat this duality with equanimity. The principle of Atma is beyond union and separation. To Me, there is neither samyoga nor viyoga. Viyoga results only when there is Atma. They are but your imagination. In order to realise the principle of Atma, you have to get rid of such imagination and develop the faith Ekam Sath. It is only one and not two. It is changeless and remains the same at all times and in all states of existence. You should join satsang to know this truth.

This body is an angamu (limb) of society. There exists a sangamu (association of attributes) in angamu, a jangamu (individual soul) in sangamu, and Lingamu (Paramatma) in jangamu. Linga is Atma, which is our very life principle. That is why the Atma is considered to be of the form of Linga. A Linga has neither a beginning nor an end. It has no head or feet. Hence, when you perform worship, you can keep it anyway you like. The Atma has a name but not a specific form. Bliss is its true form. It is very much present in us. When you crave for external happiness, you lose your innate bliss also.

Today is the auspicious day of Sivarathri. What is Sivam? It means auspiciousness. God is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Auspiciousness, Beauty). All that you see, hear, and experience should be offered to God.

Tridalam Trigunakaram Trinetrancha Triyayudham;
Trijanma Papa Samharam Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam.

Offer a trifoliate Bbleaf to Lord Siva, the three-eyed Lord, having trident in His hand, which destroys the sins of three births.

People undertake various sadhanas (spiritual exercises) and different modes of worship on the basis of their own imagination. Whatever may be the sadhanas, one should not give up the resolve. One should have single-pointed attention. One should listen only to the principle of oneness. One should offer one's actions to God. Karmanyevadhikarasthe ma phaleshu kadachana (Action is thy duty, fruit is not thy concern)

Whatever you do, let it be pleasing unto God. Sarva karma Bhagavad preethyartham (do all actions to please God). Then no sin will accrue to you. There is no easier path than this to experience the Atmic principle.

Today, as different people follow different paths, troubles are on the rise. Such delusion is leading to confusion. As a result of this confusion, you lose the 'fuse' that links you and God. In fact, you are God. I am God. He is God. Everything is God. In order to understand this truth, you should rise from the level of the human to the Divine. You should know the principle of Sath, which is the underlying unity in diversity. You should not give scope to differences based on akara (form).

You should experience ananda (bliss) by being in the company of God. God is your true property. When you experience ananda, you become God yourself. Give up differences. All are in God. Keep this unity in mind.

Being students, you may pursue your studies. All your studies take place at the physical level. Along with your studies, contemplate on the principle of oneness at the mental level. Allah, Jesus, Rama, Krishna -- names are different, but God is one. Have unflinching faith in the unity of divinity. Undertake sadhana that will enable you to realise the changeless and eternal principle of Truth.

If you attribute various names and forms to God, you will not be able to realise the Truth. Names and forms are subject to change. Who was Rama? He was the son of Dasaratha. Who was Krishna? He was the son of Yashoda. In this manner, you will remember only their physical relationships.

When you worship God without attributing any particular name and form, the question of His physical relationship does not arise. There will be no differences whatsoever. Who is the mother of God? In fact, He is the mother of all. Today we find differences because we attribute various names and forms and physical relationships to God. You should get rid of such relationships.

Isavasyam idam jagat (the entire world is permeated by God). Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the Indweller of all beings). When you contemplate on these twin principles, you can visualise unity in humanity. There will be intimate relationship between man and man. When you think of Divinity, you will not have any differences or difficulties. Difficulties come and go like passing clouds. You don't need to worry about them. Keep your vision fixed on the sun. Sometimes, clouds cover the sun. Then you don't need to be worried about it. Have patience. When the clouds move away, the sun will be visible again. In the same manner, the clouds of worldly delusions come in the way of Atmic vision. In such situations, you should not let your mind waver. Have patience. The 'clouds' will recede and the 'sun' will reappear.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

You may get some thoughts, which are like clouds. Do not be carried away by them. Do not pay heed to all and sundry and ruin yourself. You should rise to the level of Divine and not degenerate to the level of demon. In order to rise to the level of divine, satsang is very essential. "One thought, one vision, and one action." These three must be unified. Sivarathri is celebrated to recognise the oneness of Divinity.

When you do bhajans tonight, you will have only one thought. You will experience the bliss of bhajans. It is the nondual bliss. Why is it prescribed that you should do bhajans all through the night? Bhajan is done to control the mind and focus it on Divinity. Some people keep discussing worldly matters even while they are doing bhajan. Do not go anywhere near such people.

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam;
Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam;
Kuru Punyam Ahorathram.

Give up bad company;
join good company; and
perform meritorious deeds day and night.

You should constantly think of the Atmic principle. Your parents may try to tell you about some worldly matters. They may lack discrimination. Why should you listen to such matters knowing fully well that they are

useless? Let them say anything. Do not waver from your chosen path. You should convince your mother saying, "Mother, you have your own likes and dislikes and I have my own. You are my mother and I am your son, yet our thoughts and feelings are different. Being your son, I will serve you and express my gratitude to you. But I cannot deviate from the path of truth."

Tonight, Lingodbhavam will take place. I created this Linga in answer to his (B. N. Narasimhamurthi's) prayer. But another Linga will emerge from within. In this manner, I can create any number Lingas. Everything is in My hand. The Lingas that come from the hand, from the stomach, from the mouth --all are one. Wherever you see, there is the principle of Atma. Understand this unity. Along with your education, develop Atmic feeling. When you develop Atmic feeling, evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, etc., will not come near you. You will not be perturbed by pain and suffering. You will be in a state of non-dualism. That is true bliss.

Focus your mind on God. Follow His command. Then your life will be redeemed. Now you can commence bhajans.

Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma".

**Date: 01 March 2003 (evening), Occasion: Mahasivarathri,
Place: Prasanthi Nilayam**

4. LET UNITY BE THE UNDERCURRENT EVERYWHERE

Date: 02 March 2003
(morning)

Occasion:
Mahasivarathri

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

None there is who is all knowing
Nought are there of heads empty
Some there are who are of something aware
Alone is He, the omniscient
Sambasiva.

Embodiments of Love!

The message of holy Sivarathri is to spread the ideal and sanctity of this most auspicious day to one and all. The principle of unity is slowly declining among the people of the world. There is strife and discord between even two brothers of the same small family.

In the divine family of Lord Siva, there are only four members, namely, Lord Easwara, his consort Parvati, and the two sons, Subramanya and Vinayaka. This is an ideal family. There is no difference of opinion whatsoever either between husband and wife or the two brothers. There is perfect accord and harmony in their family. Mother Parvati and Lord Parameswara wanted to set an example to the whole world in the matter of a most harmonious, perfect and loving relationship between a wife and husband and between brothers.

A family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among the family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the lives of the family members. Therefore, every family should strive for achieving unity and harmonious relationship among its members. Every family should strive to emulate the example of Lord Siva's family. Today, even if there are only two sons in a family, there is no harmony between them. Similar is the case of husband and wife. This is not the position in respect of Lord Siva's family. The vehicles they ride, the circumstances in which they function, the wealth they possess --in fact, in every aspect, the members of this divine family set an example to the whole world.

For example, Lord Siva's vehicle is Nandi, the bull. Mother Parvati's vehicle is the Lion. The younger son, Subramanya's vehicle is the peacock, whereas the elder son Vinayaka's is the tiny mouse. They move about the whole world on such strange vehicles, which are antagonistic in nature, they but still lead a perfect and harmonious family life.

You do not find such harmony in present day-families. Suppose the younger brother's wife wears some new ornaments; the elder brother's wife becomes jealous. Similarly, in several situations in day-to-day life, you will find internal bickerings in the family instead of peace and unity. Normally, a lion and a bull are not good friends. The lion looks at the bull as a prey and the bull fears the lion. But, in the case of Lord Siva's vehicle, i.e. the Bull, and Mother Parvati's vehicle, the Lion, there is perfect harmony and absence of fear.

When do we have fear or anxiety? Only when there is some fault in us. When there are no faults of any kind in anybody, there is no scope for fear at all! Today, man is exposed to fear and anxiety even in small matters, since he is suffering from faults. These faults are responsible for fear, anxiety, restlessness, hatred, and anger. Hence, if we are to live in peace and harmony, we must strive to remove the faults in us.

In fact, there is no sorrow in man. He is Anandaswarupa, the embodiment of divine bliss. In spite of that, if he suffers from sorrow, it is because of his own evil traits. Sorrow has not suddenly descended on him from somewhere. The sorrow is the reaction, reflection, and resound of the evil qualities in him. If someone is ridiculing you, take it that it is not the other person but your own evil feelings being returned to you in the shape of ridicule.

Lord Siva has no special ornaments on His body. All his ornaments are the serpents that He wears round his neck, the matted locks, the crescent moon, the cool water of the Ganga and the vibhuti (holy ash) that he smears all over His body. This Divine form of Lord Siva is beautifully portrayed thus:

Lo! Behold The Lord of the icy peak
Crowned with crescent moon,
Glistening matted locks,
Bedrenched by heaven descending Ganga
Flaming eye in the forehead,
Venomous potion - poison - Halahala Purpling the beauteous
neck
Live bracelets of wriggling Serpents and
a belt of Cobra holding up the Elephant hide, his sole
garment.
Pearly ash smearing the chest

A blinding white Spot of vermilion on the Forehead beside the
searing eye Ruddy lips smeared by Fresh chewed betel,
Diamond studded earrings Of purest gold, dancing like
Stars twinkling in the sky,
Vision negating form
The fair person of the Lord Radiating Effulgence Divine.
(Telugu Poem)

Lord Siva has donned this divine form in order to teach a renunciant outlook to the world, including his consort, Parvati. His another habit is to beg for alms.

The opulent form essaying
Total detachment, begging bowl
In hand, seeking alms
For a frugal meal
At the heavenly abode, Kailasa.

Parvati, however, did not develop any aversion or disgust toward her husband, Lord Siva, on account of His strange attire or habits. She did not run away from Him saying, "How can I lead a family life with such a person?" She faithfully followed Him, submitting herself to His wishes and happiness. Both of them lived in peace and harmony.

Now about their sons. The vehicle of the younger son, Lord Subramanya, is the peacock, which is by nature an enemy of the serpents worn as ornaments by the father. The serpents begin hissing at the sight of a peacock. They hate each other. Similarly, the vehicle of the elder son, Lord Vinayaka, is the rat, which again is a natural prey of the serpent. They are bitter enemies. In spite of such divergent natures, all the members of the family of Lord Siva lived happily in perfect peace. Each member, while discharging their duty, provided happiness and joy to others.

Even in the form of Lord Siva Himself, there are apparent contradictions. He has Ganga on His head and the crescent moon in His matted locks. These are signs of coolness. In contrast to these, He has literally fire in the third eye in His forehead. Thus, there is cool water on His head and fire below on His forehead. These two are conflicting forces. Yet they maintained perfect harmony and set an example to the world. Thus, there was not even slightest difference of opinion or discordant note in the universal family of Lord Siva. It is a perfectly ideal family, which the entire world should emulate.

In sharp contrast to this situation, there is bitter hatred today between one person and another. Hatred is ruling all fields in the world. Even in the same family, there is discord between husband and wife, between

parents and children, and between brothers. Lord Siva and Mother Parvati by their own example are exhorting the entire world to shed hatred and enmity.

But who is listening to such teachings? Who is putting them in practice? People chant the name of God with great devotion but fail to emulate the example shown by God. What is the use of worshipping God when you do not follow His ideals? How can you obtain divine grace if you go against the teachings of God? On account of food and habits, several ill-feelings develop in man. But you should try to control them. You should not allow them to manifest as hatred toward others. You should never allow jealousy to grow in you. Today, every human being is afflicted with the disease of jealousy and hatred. In fact, the root cause of all evil qualities in man is jealousy. Jealousy leads to anger. Jealousy and hatred can destroy a human being totally.

Man can really enjoy great happiness if he gets rid of jealousy and hatred. In fact, man himself is an embodiment of bliss. It is his inherent nature. Sorrow is not his nature. Man is an embodiment of love, peace, and bliss. Why then is he afflicted with sorrow? It is because of flouting the divine commands. This is the reaction of going against the divine Will. The reaction, reflection, and resound of this calamity is the root cause for all the sorrows of a human being.

Here is a small example. You see a person approaching you and you think that he is your enemy. The moment this feeling of hatred develops in you, you start fighting with him. Instead, you try to greet him saying "Hello brother! How are you?" When you extend love to others, others also will extend you love. On the other hand, the moment you see a person, if you move away from him, he will do the same thing to you. As the action, so is the reaction. Therefore, we have to ensure that our actions are good.

In fact, there are no bad people in this world. All are good. You say that those who oppose you are all bad people. If you do not exhibit bad qualities, how can the other man behave badly? Your own bad qualities reflect in others. Hence, every person must cultivate good feelings and good behaviour. One should conduct himself in such a way that one does not go against the divine commands. Only then will one have peace and security in your life. You may participate in a number of bhajans, worship God in several forms, and observe ever so many religious vows --yet, if you do not cultivate sacred feelings in your heart, what is the use?

Man should cultivate the noble quality of a tender heart. Love and compassion should reflect in his heart. If there are no such feelings, he will become a demon, verily. That is why it is called hridaya. The etymology of the word is hri + daya = hridaya (storehouse of compassion). Among all the living beings, the human being is the only

one endowed with the quality of daya (compassion). That is why he is said to hav a hridaya. An ideal human being is the one having a compassionate heart.

Embodiments of Love!

You have such a sacred and compassionate heart. Why then you should drown yourself in sorrow? This is all because of the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner feelings. You will be going through a newspaper early in the morning. Wherever you see, you will find unrest, news items of someone killing another, hatred, jealousy, anger, etc. All this news leads you to a very unhappy and polluted atmosphere.

When you get up from bed after a sound sleep in the night, you must have a peaceful mind. Only then there will be no scope for unrest in your life. Right from the early morning you must lead a life of peace and happiness. You may have sorrows and difficulties; but they are only passing clouds, which come and go. They should not really bother you. It is only when you take them to heart and cling to them that you suffer. If you ignore them, they will not bother you.

You get a postal cover addressed to you. Normally, there will be a 'from' address and a 'to' address on any postal cover. Without these addresses, the cover will go to the dead-letter office. Man should, therefore, see both the addresses, i.e. from and to. You must first enquire into yourself "where do I come from?". In pursuance of this enquiry, you must discover and assure yourself that your source is God. Since you come from God, you will have noble feelings. Your 'from' address is God and your 'to' address is human nature. If you remember these two, your life will go on smoothly. Since your origin or 'from' address is Divinity, you should always obey the divine command. Among all the living beings in the creation, only the human being has been given this privilege. In fact, this is the ideal set before him by God. Further, it is only in the Bharatadesa that such noble ideas are imparted from generation to generation. In spite of all these ideals set before us, we are unable to live in peace, since we are not following them.

You may follow any one or all the nine forms of devotion like sravanam (listening), kirtanam (singing), vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), padasevanam (serving His lotus feet), vandanam (salutation), archanam (worship), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender). More than following any or all the nine forms of devotion, it is the inner feeling or motive behind the forms of bhakti (devotion) that is important. Your inner feeling must always be pure.

Of all the nine forms of devotion, sneha (friendship) is the most important. It is only when you cultivate this feeling of friendship with God that you can reach the last stage of Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). For this purpose, you must have a pure heart, which in turn is based on love and devotion. You must have pure and selfless love toward one and all.

Such love is not a one-way traffic. Today, we are prepared to receive love from all people, we but are hesitant to share our love with others. It should be a give and take policy. Love begets Love. You must also be prepared to receive love from others. Love is a gift of God. In fact, you must rise to such a level that whatever is given by God, you must be prepared to receive wholeheartedly. At times, God also gives you a bitter pill like the doctor. This is for your own good.

Suppose you have an ulcer in your stomach. The surgeon opens your stomach with a knife and removes the ulcer. Since he cut your stomach with a knife, do you charge him with hatred toward you? No, no. It is only in your interest that he has performed the operation. Similarly, at times, God also will put you to some difficulties. Even that is only in your interest; for your good only. Both happiness and sorrow are God's gifts. They are His divine grace. Nobody can comprehend His divine leelas.

You must always live in unity. Whatever activity you undertake, unity should be the undercurrent. All people should live in peace and harmony. The previous morning, you sang some bhajans. How melodious and devotional they were! How joyous they were! It was only because all of you sang the bhajans in one voice. Particularly, the three boys, Prasanth, Kavi Kumar's son, and Ravi Kumar, sang the bhajans in perfect sruthi (tune), laya (modulation) and thala (rhythm). The boy who played the flute gave them a good support. They gave so much joy to the audience. Where can you get such joy and happiness? Where can you see such unity?

Nowadays, wherever you go, you will hear a lot of noise and sound in the name of Sivarathri. You will not find anywhere in the world this type of divine atmosphere surcharged with devotion. Every activity undertaken in Prasanthi Nilayam is divine and in perfect peace and harmony. Everything is surcharged with love and devotion. God is love and love is God. God has to be attained only through love. Hence, all of you should become Premaswarupas (embodiments of divine love). You should live in perfect harmony wherever you are. Never give room for hatred. Even if you come across an opponent, greet him with love. He will automatically respond with love, since the whole world is filled with reaction, reflection and resound. Suppose there is unrest in you mind. It is not because of external factors. Your own deficiencies and faults are being reflected in the form of unrest.

If you wish to attain happiness, live in happiness. The universal family of Lord Siva, Mother Parvati, Subramanya, and Vinayaka are the perfect example for this principle. Cultivate their example. Worship them. But a caution: you may worship a picture as God, but not God as a picture. Therefore, you worship the Easwara family by following their example.

The message of this holy Sivarathri is to live in unity and harmony with everyone. Particularly, the brothers in a family should never fight; they must be united, like the Pandavas. Only by their unity could the Pandavas obtain the divine grace of Lord Krishna. Anything can be achieved with unity. Take for example, the five fingers in the hand. It is only when the five fingers join together that we can accomplish any task. The Kauravas were one hundred in number, but they were not united for a good cause. Ultimately, what fate had befallen them? Similarly, Vali and Sugriva in the *Ramayana*. They were in fact brothers. Due to some differences, they developed hatred against one another. In the end, Vali met his end in the hands of Rama.

The ultimate goal of this Sivarathri is to develop unity among humanity, whatever be the obstacles, whatever be the difficulties and whatever be the provocations. You should never make use of harsh words while speaking to others. Always speak sweetly and softly, with a loving heart.

Dear students and devotees!

You have all assembled here with a pure heart on this auspicious day of Mahasivarathri. Wherever you are, you must always have a pure heart. When the heart is pure and sacred, you can undertake sacred activities. When the vessel is pure, the contents in the vessel can also be pure. Even if the vessel is made of gold, if there is poison in the vessel, the contents get poisoned. On the contrary, even if the vessel is made of earth, the gold that is kept in the vessel will remain pure. It is not the vessel, but the material that is important. We must always keep our heart as pure gold and fill it with sweet love.

You are students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. You are growing under the loving care of Swami. Swami does not expect anything from you. Education in the Sathya Sai Institute is totally free. Whatever your requirements, I am providing them free of cost. Did you come across anywhere in the world such educational institutions? Today, you will find people booking seats in educational institutions even before the child is born. They pay a lump sum amount to the school in advance for reservation of seats in the 1st standard. It is only in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning that you will not find such advance bookings. There is no advance for anything in Prasanthi Nilayam. Wherever you go, you must live up to the ideals of your education. Whatever you have learned here, share it with all.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is My only property. In fact, it should be the same with you as well. I do not seek anything from anybody. You live in love. Share your love with everybody. Only when you lead a life filled with love your life will become pure and sacred. In fact, every activity undertaken in Prasanthi Nilayam will be pure and peaceful.

Thousands of people have gathered here on the holy occasion of Mahasivarathri. Did you here any noise? No. Not even one child cries. No one sneezes or coughs. Such a calm, serene, peaceful, and divine atmosphere is pervading this hall. If you are not able to get peace in such a divine atmosphere, where else you can?

Never speak harshly to anybody. Several people today pose themselves as devotees but take to evil ways. This is not a mark of devotion. In fact, such behaviour goes against the concept of devotion. A dissonance between thought, word, and deed is the characteristic of an evil-minded person. That is why it is said, "Manasyanyath, vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath durathmanam (those whose thought, word, and deed are at variance are wicked)." You should not join the company of such people. On the other hand you should join the company of real devotees who live up to the principle of "Manasyekam, vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam (those who maintain perfect accord between thought, word, and deed are great)."

The most important characteristic of a devotee is good behaviour. If he does not possess this characteristic, he is not a devotee at all, he is a great sinner. You are students of this great institution. Wherever you go, you must be recognised by your good behaviour. There are several past students of this Institute, living in foreign countries like America, Japan, Germany, etc. They are still recognised in those countries as students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. They bring credit to the Institution.

You need not give anything to Sai. Lead a life of character and good behaviour. That is the only thing I want. That is the only thing that gives me joy. Not only the students, the devotees must also ensure good behaviour. They must feel that they are the members of the universal family of Lord Siva. Mother Parvati constitutes the body, whereas Lord Siva represents the heart. When the body and heart join together as a dwelling, human nature resides there. This is called Prakriti. The human body represents Pravritti, whereas the Atma residing in the body represents Nivritti. The unity of this Pravritti and Nivritti is human nature. Having been born in such a sacred human nature, people are forgetting their innate divinity.

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Lastly, I wish to advise you that you should never give scope for ego to dominate your actions. Wherever there is ego, there lies danger. Therefore, shed your ego and cultivate pure and selfless love toward one and all. There is nothing in this world that cannot be achieved with love. I conclude My discourse with the blessing that the divine vibrations of today's namasankirtanam spread to the whole world and grant good qualities, good practices, and good behaviour to all people.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with the bhajan "Prema Muditha Manase Kaho".

**Date: 02 March 2003 (morning), Occasion: Mahasivarathri,
Place: Prasanthi Nilayam**

5. EXPERIENCE INNATE DIVINITY TO ATTAIN PEACE AND HAPPINESS

Date: 16 March 2003 Occasion: Discourse Place: Brindavan

There is none in this world who knows everything.
Similarly, nowhere do you find a person who does not know anything.
One who knows a little is also ignorant.
It is only Sambasiva, who is all-knowing.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Everyone aspires to get rid of sorrow and enjoy happiness. In order to rise to the level of Divine from the level of human, satsanga is very essential. Life becomes meaningless if one does not join satsanga. What is the meaning of satsanga? Many are under the mistaken notion that satsanga means joining the company of devotees. 'Sat' symbolises the principle of Truth, which is changeless in all the three periods of time. Man should constantly contemplate on such eternal principle.

What is the purpose of human birth? It is not merely to eat, drink, and make merry. Paropakartham idam sariram (human body is meant to serve others). Man should dedicate himself to the service of society. God has endowed man with all powers. Human body is bound by senses, which are responsible for both good and evil. Hence, it is the foremost duty of man to make proper use of the senses. Lord Krishna taught the same to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita.

One who lacks sense control is worse than an animal. Even animals exercise some control over their senses. But man, in spite of being endowed with vijnana, sujnana, and prajnana, is not making any effort to control his senses. Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, and matsarya (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and jealousy) are bestial tendencies. Today man is cultivating such animal tendencies and becoming an animal himself. Man is neither a mruga (animal) nor a mrunmaya Swarupa (made of inert matter). He is in fact chinmaya and chidananda swarupa (embodiment of consciousness and bliss). It is a matter of shame that such a human being is cultivating animal qualities. Man should control his senses in the first instance.

Spiritual practices prescribed to control one's senses. Sravanam (listening), kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), vandanam (salutation),

archanam (worship), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender).

These are the royal paths to Divinity. Giving up such royal paths, man is conducting himself like an animal in a forest. Firstly, one should get rid of their animal qualities. Only then can one rise to the level of the divine.

You see, hear, and experience many things in this world. They are nothing but the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner being. All that you see in the outside world is actually a part of you. Consider this example. There is someone who hates you. Actually it is the hatred in you that has taken the form of hatred in him. In the same manner, adulation or denigration, good or evil are reflections of your own self. Whatever you see in the outside world, whatever you experience, be it pleasure or pain has in fact come from within you.

What is meant by prapancha (world)? It is the combination of padartha (matter). Every object in this world is transitory. How can such ephemeral objects give us everlasting bliss? Truly speaking, man has no misery at all. You blame others for your suffering and criticise them. It is your own bad thoughts that make you suffer. This world is like an ocean consisting of the waves of samyoga and viyoga (union and separation). Everything has emerged from you. There is nothing superior to man in this world. Hence, it is said, Janthunam narajanma durlabham (out of all the living beings, human birth is the rarest). Man is the most sacred and highly reputed one among all beings in the world. But being immersed in delusion, he is unable to realise his true nature. There is neither good nor evil in this world. There are many things that we see, hear, and experience. We think that it is the eyes that see, ears that hear, and mind that experiences. In fact, it is not so. Everything is reflection, reaction, and resound.

Embodiments of Love!

You are engaged in service, singing bhajans and undertaking various spiritual practices. What benefit have you derived from these activities? When good feelings emerge from you, you get rich rewards. After sowing a neem seed, you cannot expect a mango fruit. As the seed, so is the tree. Likewise, as the feeling, so is the result. Good and evil are based on your feelings. Hence, develop noble thoughts and spread the message of love to the entire world. Cultivate the feeling that all are brothers and sisters.

Whom you consider as others are not others in the strict sense of the term. They are your own. All are children of God. God is one. Society is the direct manifestation of God. What is the difference between jeevatwa

(individual) and Daivatwa (God)? Individual is vyashti swarupa and God is Samashti swarupa.

There can be no branch without tree. There can be no child without mother. Fish cannot survive without water. Similarly, individual cannot exist without God. Both have an intimate and inseparable relationship. On this basis, Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita, Mamaivamsho jeevaloke jeevabhuta sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

Embodiments of Love!

In this world, we see and hear about the dualities of good and evil, merit and sin. What is the origin of all these? They originate from man's sankalpas and vikalpas (resolutions and negations). Good and evil are present in his mind, not in the world. When man cultivates sacred thoughts, he will find sacredness all around.

Embodiments of Love!

The entire nature is suffused with power of attraction. The world attracts one and all. This power of attraction originates from the changeless and eternal principle of Truth, which is the basis of creation. This is known as Transcendental Truth. It is present in trikalas, trilokas and trigunas (three periods of time, three worlds, and three attributes). It is only one and not two. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). All that we see in this world is only this principle of truth. Pashyannapicha na pashyati moodho (he is a fool who sees, yet does not recognise the reality). What man sees in front of him is not the world, but verily God. But, out of his ignorance, he fails to understand this truth and tries to search for God in the external world. All that you find before you are verily the forms of God. Though you see God right before your eyes, you think you are yet to find Him. How foolish it is! When you develop the firm faith that all are the embodiments of God, you will certainly find Him in everyone.

Sarvata panipadam tat sarvathokshi siromukham, Sarvata sruthimalloke sarvamavruthya tishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). There is nothing in this world that is not the manifestation of God.

What is the form of God? Daivam manusha rupena (God manifests in human form). But man is getting deluded by his physical form and considers himself to be a mere mortal. All that we see is the form of God. He is the embodiment of bliss. Nityanandam paramasukhadam kevalam jnana murtim (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss. He is wisdom

absolute, the One without a second). The entire world is pervaded with bliss. There is no trace of sorrow anywhere.

But you may not agree with Me. You say, "Swami, you do not see sorrow, but we see it everywhere." Whether you see or I see, there is only bliss everywhere. As you think of only sorrow, forgetting the bliss, you find only sorrow. But I don't find sorrow anywhere. I see only bliss, bliss, and bliss alone. When we are the embodiments of Divinity, how can we ever be afflicted with sorrow? You are afflicted with sorrow because you don't realise the temporary nature of the world. Whatever you see and experience is only the reflection of God. Do not criticise anyone, for criticising others amounts to criticising God, whom you worship. Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Isavasyam idam jagat (the entire universe is permeated with God).

Embodiments of Love!

You may be speculating about the events that are going to take place in the forthcoming New Year (Ugadi). You think that the New Year would bring you happiness or sorrow. The year may be new, but what does it matter if you do not give up your old and mean habits? You aspire for good results, but are you performing good deeds? You expect others to be good toward you, but are you good toward them? If you act against the dictates of your conscience, how can you expect to be happy? Your deeds should be in accordance with your aspirations. Good deeds will certainly yield good results. Today people are immersed in adambara (pomposity). How can such people attain ananda (bliss)?

Embodiments of Love!

Do not lead a pompous life. Adambara is the root cause of asanthi (restlessness). Give up adambara and strive to attain ananda. True bliss cannot be acquired from outside; it lies in your own heart. In fact, bliss pervades the entire world. Your mental perversions are responsible for seeing evil in it. Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo (mind alone is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). Hence, purify your mind. Only then can you become a true human being. You cannot call yourself a human being if your mind is polluted. Perform meritorious deeds. Speak good words. Lead a sacred life. In this manner, you can find fulfilment in life. There is nothing evil in this world. Whatever evil you find is but a reflection of your own feelings. Everything around you is your own reflection. If you point at something and say it is evil, it means that the evil in you is reflected outside. Never entertain evil thoughts. Fill your mind with nectarous thoughts. Then your life will be sweet.

Embodiments of Love!

You do bhajans and think that you are doing it in order to please God. But God does not need anything. You do bhajans for your own happiness. Share your happiness with others. God is the embodiment of bliss. Hence, He does not require anything from you. When He is the embodiment of eternal happiness, what else is required for Him? He is not interested in worldly and ephemeral happiness. When you do bhajans, your heart becomes purified. The worship and the bhajans that you sing are meant for your own happiness and not for the happiness of God.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

It is enough if man leads the life of a true Manava (human being); because there is Madhava (God) in him. Unfortunately, man today is leading the life of a danava (demon). He is filled with demonic tendencies from top to toe. Such being the case, how can he attain happiness? You should purify your heart, experience bliss therein, and share your happiness with those who come to you. Sometimes evil qualities like anger, greed, and jealousy may try to overpower you. They are like passing clouds. Do not get carried away by them. Hold on to the true and eternal feelings that originate in your heart.

People chant Lalitha sahasranama, Vishnu sahasranama (names of Vishnu), etc. No benefit accrues from chanting any number of sahasranamas if one lacks purity of heart. You should fill your heart with the essence of all these sahasranamas.

Truly speaking, heart is the centre of all virtues. But man is not able to realise its sacredness. To be born as a human being is a great blessing. One cannot describe in words the sacredness and the sweetness of human life. Bear this truth in your mind and sanctify your life. Satsangatwe nissangatwam (good company leads to detachment). You should join satsanga. It does not mean joining the company of those who perform noble deeds. 'Sat' is the changeless and eternal divinity. It is the embodiment of chidananda (everlasting bliss). To be in the company of Sat' is true satsanga, which will confer on you everlasting bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

You will certainly experience everlasting bliss when you develop love. Love is ananda (bliss) and ananda is Love. Your life will be redeemed only when you develop love and experience bliss. You can experience all types of happiness through love. It cannot be acquired from outside, nor can it be bought in the market. It originates from within. When you buy a particular object in the market, you will develop love toward it. But such love is temporary, imaginary, and artificial. It is not the love that

originates in your heart. Love is changeless. Love is God and God is Love. You may celebrate any number of festivals, but they cannot confer bliss on you unless you develop love. The bliss that you derive from love is beyond all description. It is infinite.

What is the difference between worldly love and divine love? The love you have toward your friends and relatives is termed as anuraga (attachment). This cannot be called love at all. Divine love is related to the heart.

Embodiments of Love!

No doubt, there is love in you. But you are not putting it to proper use. You have to experience the true and eternal love, which develops heart-to-heart relationship. Such divine love is all-powerful. It has no limitations whatsoever. It attracts one and all.

Today I want to tell you something very significant. This body of Mine is filled with attraction power from top to toe. It is the divine magnetic power. From Sivarathri onward it has been increasing day by day, though it was present in Me always. Worldly magnets attract only iron filings whereas this divine magnet attracts the entire world. You are under the mistaken notion that Swami is having pain in His legs and therefore He is unable to walk comfortably. I have absolutely no pain whatsoever. If I put one foot forward it is being pulled by the other, since there is immense attraction power in My feet. As you are aware, even the earth is endowed with attraction power. It only attracts and does not cause any pain.

Swami has no pain at all. This attraction power in Me is increasing day by day. Whatever I touch with My hand gets stuck to it. Such magnetic power is present in every man. God is present in the form of Hiranyagarbha in everyone. Hence, He is extolled as Hiranyagarbhaya Namah (salutations to the one with golden womb). Pure gold does not undergo any change. It attracts everyone. You should not be under the mistaken notion that only Swami has this attraction power and none else. In fact it is present in you too. If you put it to proper use, it develops more and more.

I never had any pain at all. I am walking around as usual. But sometimes it becomes difficult to lift the foot due to the earth's attraction power. Therefore, I am walking slowly. Unable to understand this truth, you are imagining that Swami has pain in His legs. Let Me reiterate that I have no pain whatsoever. I have no suffering, no worries, and no anxieties. I am always blissful. There is nobody in this world who can come in the way of My bliss. But because of your worldly feelings, you think otherwise. If there is pain, one should think of a remedy. But when there is no pain, where is the question of remedy? No pain and no remedy.

In this world, every thing has to be under a certain limit. In the present situation, this body cannot travel much. The power is growing day by day. I try to lift My foot, but it is very difficult. Even if I use great force, it does not get separated from the earth. It can be separated only through My Sankalpa (Will). It is very difficult to understand the principle of Divinity. No one can understand the Divine Sankalpa. None can estimate the divine power. People try to understand divinity on the basis of their own feelings and in the process end up with wrong estimation. People throw stones at trees, which are full of fruits. Similarly, the noble and the pious are subjected to a lot of hardship in this world. Divinity cannot be understood.

The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds.
They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Follow the path of truth. That is the ultimate goal of your life. Human birth is very sacred. It is not meant merely to eat, drink, and enjoy worldly pleasures. You may discharge your worldly responsibilities. You may help others. You may look after your family. But this is not your goal of life. Love God. That is your ultimate goal. There is no property greater than love. Only love can redeem your life. So, develop love, bangaru!

I address you as bangaru (gold) because you are the embodiments of Hiranyagarbha. There are a number of metals in your body without which the body cannot exist. You may seek clarification from a doctor or a scientist in this regard. The magnetic power that is present in the entire world is present in your body itself.

Some people do not understand the power of divine magnet. They argue, "If there is attraction power in the 'magnet', why is it not able to attract us?" How can a magnet attract an iron piece, which is full of rust and dust? When the rust and dust are removed, the magnet will attract the iron piece at once. Likewise, you should clean your mind of impurities in order to be attracted by Divinity. You don't need to undergo any physical strain for this. No spiritual practices are required. It is enough if you cultivate love in your heart. Only through love can you attain the principle of Transcendental Truth. You might have read various books on Transcendental Truth. But nobody has really understood what it means. It is the changeless and all-pervasive Atmic principle. Such sacred love is available only with God.

Embodiments of Love!

You are going to witness the divine glory of Swami unfolding in the days to come. He will attract the whole world. There won't be place for people to stand even. You can see for yourself what a great change has occurred during the last one month! All are getting attracted to Swami. Love is very powerful.

This is not a disease. This does not cause any suffering or unrest in Me. It cannot be cured with medicines. Love is the only remedy for this. There are many people who are closely associated with Swami for a number of years. Even they are unable to understand the truth. What is the use of leading such a life?

First of all, you should try to understand Swami. Once you understand that this plate is made of silver, you can estimate its value. But nobody can estimate the value of Divinity. No medicines can have any effect on Divinity. Love is the only remedy. It should be associated with the eternal principle of truth. Such love will spread to one and all. You are born only for the sake of love. You cannot say that you don't need love. You have to attain Divinity through love. This is the purpose of human birth.

If you do not realise this goal, what is the use of being born as a human being? Who is the Creator? Could you have taken birth of your own accord? No. It is the Will of God. He has given you the body. It should be sanctified in His service and adoration. You should set an ideal to the world. Work for the peace and happiness of all. Do unto others what you expect others to do unto you. If you do not want suffering, try to alleviate the suffering of others. Share your comforts and happiness with others. Pray for the happiness of all.

Embodiments of Love!

In a matter of a few days you will come to know. The divine glory will increase day by day, conferring on you joy and bliss. All the unrest will soon be eradicated from the face of earth. Today we find acts of violence everywhere. But whatever is happening, in a way, is for your own good. Everyone will develop sacred feelings. All will enjoy the divine bliss. The entire nation will enjoy peace and happiness soon. There will not be any difficulties or suffering.

You are fear-stricken thinking that there is going to be suffering. In fact, there is nothing like sorrow or suffering. How can they ever afflict you? Always be happy and blissful. Conduct yourselves as the embodiments of the divine Atma and enjoy divine bliss. This is what I expect from you. Every individual should be happy. Every child should be happy. Let no one

shed tears of sorrow. Difficulties may come, but they will ultimately lead to happiness.

Very soon, everyone in this world will lead ideal lives.

Love cannot be acquired by force, it should naturally originate from the Source. Force leads to fear. It will make love diminish. Let divine feelings spring forth from you naturally. Share your joy with others. Even to hold a small tumbler, there should be unity among the five fingers. A single finger cannot do anything. In the same manner, you can attain Divinity only through unity. God is Samashti Swarupa. Individual cannot achieve anything by himself. He has originated from God. So, he should become God.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

Today I decided to address you all of a sudden. May you develop love and lead a happy life! May you attain divinity through love! There is divinity in every one of you. Make every effort to manifest and experience the same. Once you realise your innate divinity, you can see God everywhere. May you all attain peace and happiness, and work for the welfare and progress of the country. With these words, I bring My Discourse to a close.

Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma".

Date: 16 March 2003, Occasion: Discourse, Place: Brindavan

6. RISE ABOVE BODY CONSCIOUSNESS

Date: 2 April 2003 Occasion: Ugadi Discourse Place: Brindavan

Fear of sin has declined; wicked deeds have become the order of the day.

Devotion to the Lord has become extinct.

Evil actions, which cannot be described in words, are on the rise.

Oh man! Understand that only chanting the Divine Name
can confer peace and happiness on you.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

The duality of birth and death is experienced in prakriti (nature), which is the presiding deity of life principle. World attracts man and deludes him. padartha (matter) is the basis for prapancha (world). World is a combination of matter. The sum and substance is, it is the matter that attracts man. Matter is not permanent; it does not symbolise truth. How can the ephemeral objects confer on you the eternal peace? Yad drishyam thannasyam (all that is seen is bound to perish). Whatever is seen by the eye will undergo change with the passage of time. Such transient objects cannot give you everlasting happiness.

'Aham yetat na (I am not this).' It is the fundamental principle of wisdom. The principle of Parabrahma has no specific form. In Vedic parlance, 'Aham means Atma. 'Aham yetat na' means, I am not the body which is momentary and ephemeral. The letter 'I' (Aham) symbolises the eternal Atmic principle.

We see various objects in this world and are deluded that they are permanent. It is a grave mistake. Whatever is seen by the eyes is impermanent. Even our body is seen by the eyes; hence, it is also not permanent. It is a sign of ignorance to identify oneself with the body. For ages, man has been under the delusion that physical and ephemeral objects will give him happiness. True happiness results when man recognises the underlying eternal principle of Atma in this ephemeral world.

Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (all beings are a part of My Being). Hence, every man is a spark of Divinity. Such being the case, how can man be called a mere mortal? Our ancients used to contemplate on God and worship Him with the total faith that He was all-pervasive.

According to our ancient scriptures, gods are 3 crores in number. Who are they? Can there be so many gods? The truth is that the population of the world was 3 crores when those scriptures were written. This declaration was made considering each individual a divine being. The declaration Sahasra seersha Purusha (God has thousands of heads) was made prior to this when the population of the world was in the thousands. Today the world population is 580 crores. Every one of them is a manifestation of divinity. Every human being is a divine incarnation. Why is man wasting such a sacred and precious human birth? You should not think that God exists separately with a specific form. Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti (God is one, but the wise refer to Him by various names). 'Aham, the principle of Atma that is present in all of us, is God. So, every individual is God Himself.

If you question where God is, some people say that He is present in their heart. It is not a proper answer. When you say the kerchief is in your hand, you are bigger than the kerchief. Likewise, when you say God is in you, it means you are superior to God! Hence, it is not proper to say that God is in you. The truth is, you are God. Everything is in you.

Sarvatah panipadam Tat sarvathokshi siromukham, sarvatah sruthimalloke sarvamavruhya tishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). In fact, the entire world is present in your heart. Hence, it is said, Daivam manusha rupena (God appears in the form of a human being).

You would have seen many pictures of Divine personalities like Rama and Krishna. They are depicted only in the form of human beings. But man today has forgotten the innate divinity in humanity. He is in search of God thinking that He is at a higher level. That is why he is unable to realise the truth. Ekam Sath (Truth is one). The Vedas describe this as Ritam. It is the principle of oneness (Ekatma swarupa). It is changeless and transcends time, space, and circumstances. It is present in one and all. Man attributes various names and forms to such divinity and worships it in various ways. Divinity has no specific form. It is changeless and beyond all attributes.

In fact, all forms are the forms of divinity. Such principle of unity in multiplicity is forgotten today. All the Upanishads emphasise the principle of unity. But because of worldly feelings, man views multiplicity in unity.

He is not making any effort to visualise unity in diversity. Man should undertake such spiritual practice that will enable him to visualise unity.

The fundamental basis for the apparent multiplicity is only one. You see a number of bulbs here. All are illumined by the same current. If you put off the main switch, none of the bulbs will glow. Likewise, the Atma is the undercurrent in all names and forms. Atma means the power of consciousness. It is the power of nityananda, Brahmananda, yogananda and advaitananda (eternal, supreme, spiritual, and non-dual bliss). Man is not making any effort to know the principle of non-dualism. He is carried away by multiplicity and thus is leading a life of ignorance.

Embodiments of Love!

Realise that the same Atma dwells in one and all. Do not entertain evil qualities like anger and hatred. Develop love and experience bliss. Share it with others. In fact, love is your swabhava (innate nature), bliss is your swabhava. But today people are deluded by worldly prabhava and thereby are forgetting their swabhava. This is the year of Swabhanu. Swa' means Atma. Hence, swabhava means Atmic feeling. You should develop such feeling. Swabhava also symbolises chaitanya shakti (the power of consciousness). It is present everywhere, in you, with you, around you, above you, and below you. When Atma is present all over, how can it be divided? Never fragment the principle of oneness. In fact, it is very easy to visualise oneness in diversity. Do not think that God is in you. You are in God and so too is everyone.

Today, fear of sin has declined in man.
That is why he is taking to evil ways
without being bothered about the consequences.
Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God,
humanness has declined in human beings.
This is detrimental to universal peace.
(Telugu Poem)

Since man does not have fear of sin, he is unable to manifest his innate divinity. The same divinity is present in one and all. Truth is one and Truth is God. The whole world rests on Truth.

Creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,
Is there a place where truth does not exist?
Visualise such pure and unsullied truth. (Telugu Poem)

You don't need to search for the principle of Truth, It is all-pervasive. Wherever you see, there is truth. But you are not making efforts to visualise truth. If only you make a sincere attempt, you can visualise truth everywhere. Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath

sathyamapriyam (speak truth, speak pleasantly, and do not speak unpalatable truth). Truth should be uttered in a pleasing manner. It should not hurt the feelings of others. People say God is all-pervasive. No doubt, He is present everywhere. But He manifests Himself wherever truth is spoken in a sweet and pleasant manner. Truth that is spoken in a harsh manner cannot be called truth at all.

Every man and every creature is an embodiment of love. All the birds, animals, and insects aspire to attain happiness just as man does. They also enjoy happiness. But there is a difference between the happiness they enjoy and the happiness man enjoys. Birds, animals, and insects are neither elated by happiness nor depressed by sorrow. They accept happiness and sorrow with equanimity. But man lacks such sense of equanimity. He feels elated when his desires are fulfilled and frustrated otherwise. Desire and anger are like pests that destroy the tree of human life. Today desire and anger have become rampant in man. One who is filled with anger will find differences and starts developing hatred. In the daily newspaper, you find many news items that speak volumes about the anger, hatred, and jealousy in man. These evil tendencies are the bitter enemies of man. People are worried about the harmful effects of certain planets. In fact, desire and anger are the two planets that cause the greatest harm to mankind. Yes, desires are essential for man. But excessive desires wreak danger. Na sreya niyamam vina (without discipline, there can be no well being). Desires should be under limit. Man sometimes has love in him and at other times goes into a fit of anger. Such a tendency is the result of improper food and habits. Never translate your thought into action in haste. Take time and enquire whether what you want to do is right or wrong.

Today the New Year has commenced. People celebrate the arrival of New Year with all festivity and gaiety. But their enthusiasm and happiness is only short lived. It is not the way to celebrate the arrival of New Year. Your happiness should remain forever. True happiness is not something that comes and goes like a passing cloud. At the time of birth, your heart is pure and you are full of bliss. You should retain such purity of heart for the rest of your life and enjoy everlasting happiness.

When one emerges from the womb of one's mother,
one does not find any garland round one's neck.
There are no jewels made of pearls,
nor are there glittering golden ornaments.
There are no chains studded with precious stones
like emerald and diamond.
But there IS a chain round your neck.
Brahma strings together the consequences of your past
deeds,
makes it into a garland, and

puts it round your neck at the time of your birth.
(Telugu Poem)

There is bound to be a result for every action of yours, however small and insignificant it may be. Suppose that you are mending your clothes with the help of a small needle and thread. The needle may be small, but if it pricks your finger, the result is instantaneous in the form of bleeding. In this case, action and result take place almost simultaneously. The food you consume takes at least two hours to get digested. Here there is a gap of two hours between the action and result. The seed that you sow takes a minimum of one week to grow into a sapling. In the same manner, some actions yield result in a few months or a few years or a few births.

Whoever you are, you have to face the consequences of your actions. However, you don't need to be depressed and dejected, thinking that you cannot escape from the results of your past evil deeds. You can certainly escape from them if you win the grace of God by developing love in your heart. All the results are based on your thoughts and actions. You have to undertake sacred activities in order to sanctify your body. There is no point in undertaking good deeds with evil intentions. The seed that you sow within will germinate into a 'tree' and yield 'fruits'. Some people have evil motives within but put on a veil of goodness. Such pretentious attitudes will never yield positive results. First, you should sow the seeds of sacred thoughts within.

You may be speculating as to what this New Year has in store for you. You have to undertake sacred actions if you want to enjoy peace and happiness. You should join satsanga. Satsanga means to join the company of 'Sath', which is changeless in all the three periods of time. Satsanga does not merely mean doing bhajans and listening to spiritual discourses. Bhadram pashyantu, bhadram srunvantu, and bhadram kurvantu (see good, hear good, and do good). These are the three important mantras that emperor Manu has given to mankind. The teachings of Manu form the basis for dharmasasthra. Man should strictly adhere to these three mantras in his daily life. Nothing else is required to redeem oneself.

The Vedas say, Srunvantu viswe amrutasya puthraah (Oh listen! The son of immortality). You are not mere mortals; you are the children of immortality. You should conduct yourself in such a manner that would befit your stature as the children of immortality.

Man's wicked thoughts are responsible for the agitation and unrest you find in the world today. In order to get rid of evil thoughts, you should run away from bad company in the first instance. You should join good company. Then you will see only goodness in everyone around you. If you come across a person who hates you, do not reciprocate the evil feeling.

Tension will mount when you show anger and hatred toward each other. Instead you greet him with love. Then he too will reciprocate the feeling of love and become your friend. Speech plays a vital role in strengthening the bond of friendship. Hence, speak softly and sweetly. You can pacify hatred and anger that is prevailing in this world by your pleasant talk. Love begets love.

Where there is confidence, 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.

In order to enjoy peace, you should give up hatred and develop self-confidence. You should consider that viswasa (faith) is your true swasa (life-breath).

You are enjoying divine grace day in and day out. In what way are you showing gratitude to God for all that He has been doing for you? God does not expect anything from you. But you have to do your duty by expressing your gratitude. An ungrateful person is worse than a cruel animal. It is because of your parents that you have come up in life. Matru Devo bhava, pitru Devo bhava (revere your mother and father God). Your mother bore you in her womb for nine months, gave you birth, and brought you up facing several hardships. How grateful you must be toward your mother for all that she has done for you! In the same manner, your father sacrificed his own comforts and looked after you with love and care. In what way are you expressing your gratitude to your father? Your children will treat you in the same manner as you treat your parents.

Some people have wicked feelings within but talk in a pleasing manner in front of others. Such people are verily demons. Demons are known to become powerful at nights. Here, night symbolises wickedness and darkness of ignorance. Daylight symbolises sujnana and night stands for ajnana. When you are immersed in the darkness of ignorance, you will find only wickedness everywhere. Such a person cannot be called a human being, he is verily a demon. Jantunam nara janma durlabham (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest). Having attained such a sacred human birth, it is rather unfortunate that man is behaving like a demon. Even animals express their love and gratitude toward their master, but man has sense of gratitude in him. Having been born as a human being, he should conduct himself as is expected of him and sanctify his life.

Embodiments of Love!

Love all. Let there not be even a trace of hatred in you. Join hands with your fellowmen in a spirit of tolerance and love. The Vedas have taught, Saha navavatu. Saha nau bhunaktu. Saha veeryam karavavahai. Tejaswi-navadhitamastu. Ma vidvishavahai (May we be protected and nourished together! May we perform heroic deeds! May we be filled with divine energy! May we never hate one another!). Such sacred teachings of the Vedas have been forgotten. On the other hand, man is developing evil tendencies. Such a behaviour is not befitting the stature of a man.

Bliss is man's true nature. Hence, he should always have a cheerful countenance. May all of you lead a blissful life in this New Year! May you fill your life with love! May you develop unity and friendship! True bliss lies in unity. God is the embodiment of bliss.

Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the aphorism Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three qualities of purity, passion, and dullness (sattwa, rajas, and thamas).

In spite of being endowed with such sacred bliss, why should man give room to wickedness and misery. This is contrary to human nature. Consider everyone as the embodiment of divinity. Whomever you salute or ridicule, they will reach God. Offer your respects to everybody. Share your love with one and all. Never hate anybody. The hatred in you will come back to you as reflection and put you to suffering.

Hence, embodiments of love, develop love in you. Experience love and share it with others. This is the most important message of this New Year, Swabhanu. You are not merely mortals. You are the sparks of divine. You should lead your life in such a manner. It is only when you understand your divine origin, will your thoughts, words, and deeds become sacred.

Oh man!
Examine and enquire for yourself
what great happiness you have achieve
by spending all the time from dawn to dusk
in making efforts to fill your belly
while forgetting God.
(Telugu Poem)

Get up from your bed with a peaceful mind. Think of God. There are some people who get up from bed with a disturbed and agitated mind. If the parents criticise each other as soon as they get up from bed, the children will go a step further and will start beating each other up when they wake up in the morning. The children will naturally try to emulate their parents. Hence, parents should set an example to their children. They should teach them by practice, not merely by precept.

Under all circumstances, do not give room for anger or hatred. You may have to face some difficulties and sorrows, but never mind. Be calm and composed. What did I tell you in the beginning? 'Aham yetat na'. Realise that you are not the body. You are the embodiment of eternal Atma. When you understand this truth, you will not be affected by the physical suffering. Since you are aware, I am showing you this by example. I know that I am not the body. Hence, I do not care for any sufferings that afflict this body. The physical body of man is bound to be afflicted by disease and suffering at some point of time in his life. One should not be unduly worried about it. In fact, the body is born and brought up through various difficulties. It cannot escape difficulties. But you should not care for them. Difficulties and suffering are but natural to the human body. Bliss is natural to the Atma. Follow the nature of the Atma and not of the body. Give up body attachment.

This body is a den of dirt and prone to diseases;
it undergoes change from time to time.
It cannot cross the ocean of samsara.
Oh mind! Do not be under the delusion
that body is permanent.
Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.
(Telugu Poem)

Why do you worry about such an ephemeral body? Instead, think of God. The physical suffering comes and goes like a passing cloud. That is the nature of human body (pravritti). The nature of Atma (nivritti) is to treat dualities of life with equanimity. Troubles of the body come and go. In spite of the pain, I am going around as usual. There is no change in My daily routine. I do not care for this pain. You will be put to suffering only when you identify yourself with the body. I am not the body. When you say this is my kerchief, you are different from it. Whatever may happen to the kerchief, you will not be affected. In the same manner, you should not be affected by the physical suffering.

The body is made up of five elements and
is bound to perish sooner or later,
but the indweller has neither birth nor death.
He has no attachment whatsoever.
Truly speaking, the indweller is verily God Himself,

who is in the form of the Atma.
(Telugu Poem)

The indweller is Atma, which is your true identity. Hence, do not be worried about your body. If someone were to criticise you, do not be agitated. If he criticises you loudly, it will vanish into thin air. If he criticises within himself, it will affect himself. In fact, neither praise nor censure will come to you. You should not be affected by either. In this manner, you should transcend the dualities of life. You will become a true human being only when your mind is fixed on the true and eternal Atma.

Today marks the beginning of a very sacred year. Accordingly, you should develop sacred thoughts. Not only in this year, but throughout your life, you should cultivate sacred thoughts. The body is made of five elements, so it is bound to suffer. You should not be affected by it. This is your true sadhana. All other sadhanas will prove futile if you do not give up body attachment. Some people keep telling the beads in a mechanical way and say that they are doing sadhana. The rosary will be revolving in their hand and the mind will be roaming in the market. Can this be called japa (chanting)? While doing meditation, your body may be steady, but the mind will be wavering. What is the use of such a sadhana? A true spiritual aspirant is one who has a steady mind and an unwavering vision. Unsteady mind is the nature of a monkey. But today man is developing monkey-mind. He should fill his heart with kindness for he belongs to mankind.

Bhagawan sang the bhajan, "Prema mudita manse kaho" and then continued the discourse.

Embodiments of Love!

When you sing bhajans, maintain the proper rhythm by clapping your hands. The clapping should be done according to the bhajan. Bhajan should be sung with proper tune and wholeheartedly. The three syllables in the name Bha-ra-ta stand for bhava (feeling), raga (tune) and tala (beat). It means Bharatias (Indians) are those who sing the glory of God with bhava, raga, and tala. Today there are many singers who, while singing Thyagaraja kritis, play tala on their lap. They should join both hands and clap.

The five fingers of one hand symbolise karmendriyas (senses of action) and that of other hand stand for jnanendriyas (senses of perception). When you sing the glory of God, there should be harmony between these two. If they are not harmonised, even your feelings will not be steady.

It was Guru Nanak who introduced the concept of community singing in Punjab. All should sing the divine glory in unison. This was the ideal

propagated by our ancients. But today, people have brushed aside such ideal and are acting as per their whims and fancies. All our actions should be pleasing unto God. You may call Him Rama, Krishna, Govinda, but God is one. Develop the feeling of oneness and attain the vision of the divine Atma.

Date: 2 April 2003, Occasion: Ugadi Discourse, Place: Brindavan

7. RAMA NAVAMI DISCOURSE

Date: 11 April 2003 Occasion: Rama Navami Place: Brindavan

Birds and beasts which do not have any type of education,
have learnt to lead a life of discipline.

But alas!

Man who is endowed with all intelligence
does not lead a disciplined life.

What else is to be conveyed,
oh people of this august assembly!

(Telugu Poem)

The Lord shines effulgently in the universe,
so also the universe shines in the Lord.

The relationship between the Lord and the universe
is intimate and inseparable.

(Telugu Poem)

The sacred epic Ramayana is verily the Veda descended from heaven to earth. The Veda is classified into four: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharvana Veda. The Rig Veda helps, sustains and protects the yajnas and yagas. In the Ramayana, Rama symbolises Rig Veda. Lakshmana signifies Yajur Veda, which contains mantras chanted during the performance of yajnas and yagas. When Rama was away in the forest, Bharata stayed in Nandigrama singing His divine Name day in and day out. Hence, he symbolises Sama Veda. Satrughna was the one who annihilated the satrus (enemies) and protected the pious. He was obedient to his brothers. He stands for Atharvana Veda. The essence of Atharvana Veda lies in destroying wickedness and fostering sacred feelings and activities. The Ramayana is verily the Veda. The Veda is not different from the Ramayana. True humanness lies in understanding this.

Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna are the four sons of Dasaratha. Merely knowing this will not suffice. One should enquire and understand the inner meaning. Who is Dasaratha? He represents the human body consisting of ten senses (five senses of perception and five senses of action). Strictly speaking, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna are not the sons of Dasaratha and his three wives. We should not think that they were born like mere mortals. They are the chaitanya swarupas (embodiments of divine consciousness) who emerged from the sacrificial fire. They set an ideal to parents, brothers, and sisters in every family and to humanity at large.

Today, due to the impact of Kali age, there is no unity and love among brothers in a family. There are conflicts among them leading to disturbances. On the contrary, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna had total unity among themselves. They delighted others by their unity. Even while playing games in their childhood, each aspired for the victory of the other. Once the four brothers as young lads were playing a game. Shortly thereafter, Bharata came to mother Kausalya, sat on her lap, and started weeping. She asked him, "Bharata, why are you feeling sad? Have you lost the game?" Bharata replied, "Mother, I would have been happy if that were to be the case, but when I was about to lose the game, Rama managed to lose the game and made me the winner. I am upset at the defeat of my elder brother." What an example of fraternal love!

When Lakshmana fell unconscious in the battlefield, Rama was crestfallen. He considered Lakshmana as His very life. He lamented saying, "If I were to search in the world, I may get a mother like Kausalya and a wife like Sita but not a brother as noble as Lakshmana. What is the use of this life without Lakshmana?" The four brothers had such unity, harmony, and love among themselves.

When Bharata returned from Kekaya kingdom, he came to know from sage Vasishtha that Rama had gone into exile and would not return for fourteen long years. He was disconsolate. He went to the sage, offered his respects and said, "Oh venerable preceptor, I do not want this kingdom, which has caused the exile of my brother Rama. Being the eldest son, only Rama has the right to rule over the Kingdom. Hence, at this very moment I shall go to the forest, fall at the feet of Rama and plead with Him to come and take over the reins of Ayodhya." In this manner, each of the four brothers was ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of the other.

In order to uphold the plighted word of His father, Rama was ready to go into exile. He donned the clothes made of tree bark and went to the residence of mother Kausalya to seek her permission. Mother Kausalya, being unaware of the sudden turn of events, was eagerly awaiting Rama's arrival. She was ecstatic thinking of Rama's coronation and expected Him to come to her in royal garments. She was very much worried to see Rama and Sita in bark clothes. "Rama, is this the type of garment you should wear on the day of your coronation," she asked.

Rama smilingly replied, "Mother, I have been coronated as the king of Aranya Rajya (kingdom of forest) by My father. I am going to the forest to protect sages and saints who are being put to suffering by the demons. Hence, kindly do not raise any objection to My sacred mission. I have to obey the command of My father." So saying, He prostrated before His mother and sought her permission to go to the forest.

Hearing the words of Rama, mother Kausalya was overcome with sorrow. She pleaded with Him, "Son, You are talking of obeying only the command of father. What about the command of Your mother? I am the ardhangi (better half) of Your father. Hence, it is Your bounden duty to obey my command also. I will not come in the way of Your going to the forest, but let me also accompany You. I have borne You as a result of many rituals and severe austerities performed over a number of years. I cannot live without You even for a minute."

Rama pacified her saying, "Mother, it is not proper on your part to leave your husband in this old age. He is getting burnt in the fire of My separation. At this juncture, you should comfort and console him with soothing words. That is your foremost duty. For a wife, husband is God. He is the only refuge for her."

Sita, who was standing by, heard this conversation. She at once asked Him, "Rama, is not the dharma same for all women? Can there be one dharma for your mother and another for me? You have asked me to stay back and look after Your father and mother. Now, You are telling Your mother that serving the husband is the prime duty of a wife. Does it not hold good in my case?"

Mother Kausalya was moved by Sita's argument. She told Rama, "Son, the same dharma holds good in the case of every woman. It is destined that I have to suffer in this manner. Why should You put Sita to suffering by leaving her behind in Ayodhya? She has given up everything and has decided to go with You to the forest. Do not disappoint her. Take her along with You. It is Your duty to take care of her." One can very well understand the nobility and broad-mindedness of mother Kausalya from this episode.

The birthday of Rama is celebrated in order to remind us of the ideals for which He stood. We have to ponder over the ideals set before us by Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrugna and also by Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi. Sage Vasishtha declared, Ramo vigrahavan dharmah (Rama is the embodiment of Dharma). He described the Divine form of Rama saying, Pumsam Mohana Rupaya (one whose form enchants all). "Rama, the beauty and handsomeness that You are endowed with are not limited to Your physical form alone. Your infinite love and compassion give You this blissful form. Even men are attracted by the blissful form of Yours. You are the very personification of sat-chit-ananda (being-awareness-bliss)." Thus, Sage Vasishtha extolled the glory and majesty of Rama. It is your good fortune that you are able to listen to the sacred story of Rama and sing His glory.

As I told you in the beginning, God shines effulgently in the universe, and so does the universe in God. The relationship between God and the

universe is intimate and inseparable. The universe is full of living beings. Each being is the embodiment of Rama. Do not confine Rama to a particular name and form. All the beings are His forms. Rama means the One who delights. He is present in all. Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Isavasyam idam jagat (the entire world is permeated by God). The world is the very form of God. Sahasra seersha purusha sahasraksha sahasra pad (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet).

In those days, the population of the world was only in thousands. Considering each of them the form of God, it was declared, Sahasra seersha purusha. With the passage of time, the population swelled from thousands to lakhs and from lakhs to crores. Then it was said, God is mukkoti devata swarupa, meaning He is in the form of three crores of beings. Today the world population has increased to nearly 600 crores. All are the forms of God. Usually people confine Rama to a particular form with a bow and a quiver of arrows. In fact, every man is Rama swarupa (embodiment of Rama). That is why people are named after Rama, Lakshmana, Krishna, Govinda, etc.

Not only the four brothers, even their consorts demonstrated great ideals. Sita and Urmila were the daughters of King Janaka. Mandavi and Srutakeerti were the daughters of his younger brother. They were women of sterling character and were endowed with supreme sense of detachment. They considered the happiness of others as their own. When Rama was leaving for the forest, Sita insisted that she should be allowed to accompany Him. She said, "Swami, You have come for the redemption of mankind. I too have a part to play in it. How can I remain here when You are going to the forest renouncing everything?" She removed all her ornaments, wore bark clothes, and followed Rama.

Lakshmana's wife, Urmila was a very good painter. Being unaware of the happenings, she was painting the picture of Rama's coronation. As she was deeply engrossed in her work, Lakshmana entered the room all of a sudden and called her in a raised voice. She was startled and at once stood up. In the process, she accidentally spilled paint on the picture she was painting. She felt sad for having spoiled the picture. Then Lakshmana remarked, "The coronation of Rama, which is meant to bestow peace and prosperity to mankind, is stalled because of Kaikeyi, and the picture of coronation that you are painting is spoiled because of me." He informed her that he was accompanying Rama and Sita to the forest to serve them and said that he would return only after fourteen years. She was least perturbed with his decision. In fact, she was happy and entreated him to serve Sita and Rama with utmost devotion. Pain and pleasure, sorrow and happiness follow one another. One should treat them with equanimity.

Pleasure and pain, good and bad co-exist,
none can separate them.
You cannot find pleasure or pain, good or bad
to the exclusion of the other.
Pleasures result when difficulties fructify.
(Telugu Poem)

Lakshmana took leave of his wife and went to mother Sumitra to seek her blessings. 'Su-mitra' means a good friend. Her character was worthy of her name. When Lakshmana told her of his decision to accompany Sita and Rama to the forest, she, being a noble mother, was very happy. She was not at all worried that either of her two sons would not rule over the kingdom.

When her cup of pudding was taken away by an eagle, both Kausalya and Kaikeyi sympathised with her and shared their pudding with her. Lakshmana was born of the share of Kausalya's pudding and Satrughna of the share of Kaikeyi's. Hence, Lakshmana and Satrughna are the aspects of Rama and Bharata, respectively. Lakshmana served Rama, and Satrughna served Bharata. Sumitra thought that it was her good fortune that her sons were serving Rama and Bharata. She had such noble feelings. Where there is God, there is His devotee. Where God and the devotee come together, victory is assured. Sumitra told Lakshmana, "Son, to be in God's company is the greatest wealth." So, she gave her immediate consent to Lakshmana to accompany Rama and Sita.

When Rama went to Kausalya to take leave of her, she lamented saying, "Son, you are leaving me in Ayodhya with all the royal comforts and going to aranya (forest) to lead a life of hardships." To this, Lakshmana, who was at Rama's side, said, "Mother, this Ayodhya without Rama and Sita is verily the forest. The forest with Rama and Sita is verily Ayodhya. Sita and Rama are my parents. I will serve them and spend my time blissfully."

There was great unity and understanding not only among the four brothers but also among their consorts. They are ideals for every family. Is there a family where daughters-in-law live in amity? Is there a family where brothers live in harmony without indulging in property disputes? Nowhere do we find such an ideal family. This age of Kali (the age we are now in) has become the age of kalaha (conflict). In such a scenario, the Ramayana shines as the beacon-light to every family.

How should brothers and sisters conduct themselves? In the Ramayana, we find the demonstration of such great ideals. Merely going through the sacred text of Ramayana is not enough; you have to emulate the ideals. The Ramayana transcends the barriers of time, space, caste, and religion. In all nations, at all times and under all circumstances, unity is very

essential to find fulfilment in life. Even birds and animals have unity amongst themselves. They do not have the selfishness of hoarding things. Today we find wicked tendencies in man that are not found even in birds and animals.

There is not a single instance of internal dispute in the family of Dasaratha. You may question, "Was not Kaikeyi responsible for a family dispute that led to the exile of Rama?" No, it was not a dispute at all. In fact, Kaikeyi had great affection for Rama. She loved Him more dearly than her own son, Bharata. But her mind was poisoned because of the bad company of Manthara. Hence, it is said, Tell me your company, and I shall tell you what you are.

Even Manthara was one of good nature. She was only acting under the influence of an incident that happened in her previous birth. She was a deer then. One day she was playing with her husband in the forest. The king of Kekaya had come to the forest on hunting. He saw the deer playing with each other. In an attempt to capture them, he killed the husband deer with an arrow. The female deer was grief-stricken. She went to her mother and complained about the cruel act of the king. The mother consoled her saying, "My dear child, pain and pleasure, good and bad coexist in this world. We have to withstand the vicissitudes of life with equanimity. You may go to the king to seek justice."

Then the female deer went to the king and poured out her anguish thus, "Oh king! We were leading our lives peacefully and blissfully. You have inflicted untold grief on me by killing my husband. You have ruined my life." The king ruefully said, "Nobody can escape the consequences of his actions. You are grieving over the death of your husband. I can also understand the agony of your mother having lost her son-in-law. As a result, one day I too will suffer from the loss of my son-in-law." The female deer took birth as Manthara and caused the death of Dasaratha who was the son-in-law of King Kekaya.

This life is nothing but an ocean with the waves of union and separation. Everybody has to pass through the adversities of life. It is the nature of pravritti (outward path). There is another aspect to life, i.e. nivritti (inward path). A child goes to its mother and says, "I am hungry." The mother who follows the outward path says, "Child, go and eat food. Your hunger will be satiated." This is the pravritti dharma. But the mother who treads the inward path does not merely say, "Go and eat food." She would advise the child as to what type of food to eat, when and how to should eat. When you are hungry, you should not eat whatever you like without enquiring whether it is good for health. The nivritti mother advises you to eat such food which will bestow good health on you.

Even the Vedas have dealt with the principles of pravritti and nivritti. One may have desires, but they should be under limit. They should be based on truth and righteousness. Do not eat whatever you get. Do not speak whatever comes to your mind. You should speak only after proper enquiry. These are some of the lessons that the Ramayana teaches to mankind. That is why the Ramayana is compared to the Vedas. It teaches the pravritti and nivritti aspects of life in a beautiful manner. Pravritti is the swabhava (nature) of prakriti. Nivritti is the swarupa (form) of the Atma. Nivritti broadens our outlook, whereas pravritti does the opposite. Hence, we should base all our activities on nivritti.

The Ramayana teaches the principles of dharma and the path of duty to every individual. Though ages and aeons have passed by, the Ramayana remains ever fresh guiding humanity on the path of truth and righteousness. Even today we think of the characters of Ramayana with respect and reverence. You can very well understand its greatness. There is no morality higher than what is depicted in the Ramayana. The Ramayana should be the subject of our parayana (worship). You should install the principle of Rama in your heart and experience bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

Practise the teachings of Ramayana in your daily life. Obey the command of Lord Rama. It is to understand and assimilate the principle of Ramayana that we are celebrating the festival of Rama Navami today. It is not enough if the celebration is confined to merely partaking of sweet pudding and other delicious items.

Sage Valmiki declared that the Ramayana will be there so long as there are mountains and rivers on the face of the earth. You may wonder, what is the relationship between the Ramayana and the mountains and the rivers. The mountains symbolise men and the rivers women. As long as there are men and women in this world, the glory of Ramayana will continue to illumine the world. Women are compared to rivers because they are the symbols of sacrifice. They flow incessantly quenching the thirst of one and all.

The Ramayana sets great ideals to men. People should contemplate on such sacred story and follow its ideals. The marriage of Rama and Sita was celebrated in Mithila with all festivity and gaiety.

They sang songs inviting people to see the divine marriage of Rama and Sita.

Come let us go and see the marriage of Rama and Sita,
The sight shall confer great merit.

Oh come one and all to see the sacred marriage,
Rama, who is riding on an elephant, is shining effulgently.

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Mother Sita is by His side,
The brothers are at their service.
Sita and Rama will smilingly enquire of our well-being;
What else can we aspire for!
Come let us go anon
to see the holy wedding of Rama and Sita.
(Telugu Poem)

People sang songs like this, rejoicing at the marriage of Rama and Sita. The people of Ayodhya as well as Mithila were greatly delighted. The entire city of Mithilapura rejoiced in great celebration. The divine marriage conferred immense joy on one and all. The story of Rama is mysterious, sacred, and blissful.

Embodiments of Love!

The story of Rama is not an ancient one. It is eternal and ever new. It is full of auspiciousness. May you fill your heart with the sacred ideals of the Ramayana! May you give up hatred and all differences! May you live in peace and harmony! When you contemplate on Rama incessantly, you derive great joy and delight.

Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Rama Rama Rama Sita ..."

Date: 11 April 2003, Occasion: Rama Navami, Place: Brindavan

8. CHANTING GOD'S NAME --THE ROYAL PATH TO LIBERATION

Date: 14 April 2003 Occasion: Tamil New Year Place: Brindavan

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat.
Of all the vows, adherence to truth is the greatest vow.
The nectarine feeling in this country is the feeling of
motherhood.
Self-respect is valued far more than the very life itself.
People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture
and,
in the name of freedom, are imitating Western culture today.
Alas! What can I speak of the governance of this country?
The Bharatiyas (Indians) are not aware of the greatness of
their cultural heritage
just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Today everyone is rejoicing celebrating Tamil New Year's day. Swabhanu is the name of this year. 'Swa' means Atma. In the spiritual parlance, we have four stages towards liberation: Salokya, Sameepya, Sarupya, and Sayujya (mental proximity to the Divine, physical proximity to the Divine, identifying oneself with the Divine, becoming one with the Divine). The letter 'Sa' is associated with the Atmic feeling. With the onset of the New Year, 'Swabhanu', one should also develop new and divine feelings.

Many New Years have gone by. But to what extent man has transformed himself? Man should tread a new and noble path and set an ideal to others. Only then would he have celebrated the arrival of New Year in the true sense. He should practise and propagate newer ideals in his daily life. Vedanta declares, Aham etat na (I am not this). Aham means 'I', the Atmic principle and 'this' refers to body. Man should not give scope to ahamkara (ego) by identifying himself with the body. 'I' does not correspond to the body. 'I' corresponds to the eternal and immortal Atma, which is not tainted by ego, pomposity, and immorality. Only when man develops such Atma viswasa (Self-confidence) can he set an ideal to others. Man today does not understand the meaning of Self-confidence. First of all, man should have faith in himself.

Where there is confidence, there is love;
Where there is love, there is truth;
Where there is truth, there is peace;
Where there is peace, there is bliss;
Where there is bliss, there is God.

Truth is the direct manifestation of God. People attribute various names to God. Sahasra seersha purusha sahasraksha sahasra pad (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). Names are many, but God is one. Be it any State or country, God is one. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). What is truth? It is not merely reporting what is seen, heard or experienced. It is the transcendental truth which is not bound by time, space and circumstances. Be it any nation, any time, any circumstances, Truth is Truth.

The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,
Is there a place where truth does not exist?
Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.
(Telugu Poem)

Truth cannot be different from nation to nation like American Truth, Russian Truth, Pakistani Truth, Indian Truth, etc. Truth is one and the same for all nations. Hence, we should recognise that Truth is God and worship Truth by strictly adhering to it.

We find unrest and agitation in the world today because people have forgotten truth. Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath sathyamapriyam (speak truth, speak pleasantly, and do not speak unpalatable truth). Only truth and righteousness can confer peace and prosperity on the world today. Sathyam vada; dharmam chara (speak truth; practise righteousness). This is the most important principle of Indian culture.

Once you develop truth and righteousness, peace and love will automatically follow. Righteousness is the head of Indian culture and, Truth its feet. But today people have severed the head and feet of Indian culture. They are clinging on to the trunk of artha and kama (wealth and desire). What is the use of a mere trunk without the head and the feet? People are striving to protect the country. If you protect and practise truth and righteousness, they will in turn protect the country. You don't need to make any special efforts to protect the country. It is enough if you protect truth and righteousness. The entire world is based on these two principles.

Embodiments of Love!

New Year does not bring new principles of truth and righteousness. They are changeless and eternal. When they are practised, the whole world will be taken care of. Hence, we have to always keep in mind these two principles. For man, truth and righteousness are his two eyes. In fact, they are his very life principles. He may undertake any activity, he may do any job or business, but he should make truth and righteousness the undercurrent of all his endeavours.

Man has to take to a newer path. Years have rolled by, but man has not given up his old and mean feelings. He has to purify his heart. Humanness will blossom only when there is transformation of the heart. Merely putting on new clothes is not enough, man has to change his character and behaviour. His conduct should be based on truth and righteousness. He has to understand the principle of Transcendental Truth. It is present in everyone. In fact, man is not a mere mortal, he is God. The Vedas say, Raso Vai Sah (God pervades everything in the form of essence). God moves about in the form of rasa (essence) in every limb and every cell and protects the body. Hence, He is known as Angirasa. If God does not protect the body, who else can? Body is not permanent.

This body is a den of dirt, and prone to diseases;
it is subject to change from time to time;
it cannot cross the ocean of samsara.
It is nothing but a quiver of bones.
Oh mind!
Do not be under the delusion that body is permanent.
Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet. (Telugu Poem)

Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. Do not follow the body; do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Conscience is your God. You are forgetting God, who is present in you in the form of conscience and who is protecting your body in the form of Angirasa.

God is changeless, pure, and eternal. He has absolutely no trace of selfishness in Him. He is always concerned about the welfare of the devotees. Do not superimpose your selfishness on God and get deluded. When everything is in His hand, how can there be selfishness in Him? Whatever He does is for the welfare of all. Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu (May all the people of the world be happy)! This is what God aspires for. He is known as Aprameya, since He is beyond all measure. He is present in man's hridaya (heart) in the form of bliss. He shines as prema swarupa (embodiment of love). He practises dharma, being the embodiment of dharma. He leads from the front, setting an ideal for humanity and helping everyone. He says, "Oh man! Why fear when I am here. Follow Me." Why should one fear when God has given such an

assurance? If you follow Him, He will certainly bestow on you pure and unsullied bliss.

Saints and sages of yore performed intense penance in order to have the vision of God. Some of them died during their penance, but the others did not give up their resolve. They continued their penance with unflinching faith and determination. Ultimately, they had the divine vision. Then they declared to the world that they had seen God. Vedahametham purusham mahantham adityavarnam thamasa parasthath (I have visualised the Supreme Being, who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond thamas (the darkness of ignorance)). They exhorted people to make efforts to see God and experience bliss.

If you contemplate on God with pure and selfless love, you can also see Him. Today, many are in the quest of God. God is everywhere, but you should have the eyes to see Him. Today people are trying to see God with their charma chakshu (physical eye). That is why they are unable to see Him. One can see God only with jnana chakshu (the eye of wisdom).

Sarvatah panipadam tat sarvathokshi siromukham, sarvatah sruthimalloke sarvamavruthya tishthathi (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Where is the need to search for God, who is everywhere? What we have to search for is not God but a true human being! But he is not to be seen anywhere. Nowadays, we find only akara manavas (human beings in form), not achara manavas (human beings in practice).

Practice is very essential. Without acharana (practice), what is the use of merely having akara (form)? Do not repose your faith in the body and consider it to be permanent. It is merely an instrument given by God. Make proper use of this instrument by discharging your duties and serving society. Help the needy and the forlorn. Take good care of the destitute and the poor with love. Dedicate your life for the cause of sathya (truth) and dharma. That is how you have to celebrate the arrival of New Year. You should give up your old and mean thoughts, fill your heart with novel, fresh and noble feelings and lead a new life.

But where is such a new life in the present-day world? Days have changed but feelings have not. Guddalu (clothes) are changed every day but gunamu (character) has not changed. Merely donning ochre robes will not make a sannyasi (renunciant). You should develop good qualities and become a sarvasanga parithyagi (totally devoid of attachment). Only then can you be called a true sannyasi.

Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutatthwamanasuh (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Who has this quality of sacrifice in the present-

day world? One in a hundred or in a million is endowed with such a noble quality. Though God is present in everyone, He manifests Himself in a man of sacrifice. Sacrifice is of paramount importance to man. He should become a thyaga jeevi (one of sacrifice), not a bhoga jeevi (one who leads a life of pleasures). Thyaga leads to yoga, whereas bhoga gives rise to roga (disease). So, give up bhoga and take to the path of yoga.

There are people who do Rama Chintana (contemplation of Rama) day in and day out. Every moment of their life and every cell of their body is filled with the name of Rama. Such a life is a life of fulfilment. Indeed their lives are sanctified. Man should contemplate on God, his only saviour incessantly. The world will never come to your rescue. The world has witnessed many changes in the fields of politics and philosophy. Old Siddhantas (Schools of Thought) have given way to new ones. Many political parties have come and gone. But in what way has the world benefited from all these changes? There is no progress whatsoever. The world is where it has been. Everyone is interested in only filling their belly. No one is making any effort to understand the principle of Divinity.

You have to think of God every moment. If you win the grace of God, you can overcome any obstacle and acquire any type of wealth. Once Ramdas prayed, "Oh Lord! What did I do to deserve Your bounteous grace? I have not offered anything to You, yet You shower Your grace on me." Then the Lord replied, "My dear, the spirit of thyaga (sacrifice) that you have developed is the true yoga. I know the sense of sacrifice that is there in your mind, you may not be aware of it. Only God can understand the sacrifice you have made mentally. Others need not understand; they cannot understand any way. Only God can understand your thyaga, yoga, and prema (love)."

Saint Thyagaraja composed a song in praise of Rama, the meaning of which is as follows:

But for the power of Rama, could a mere monkey cross the
mighty ocean?
Would Lakshmi Devi, the goddess of wealth, become His
consort?
Would Lakshmana worship Him?
Would the intelligent Bharata offer his salutations to Him?
But for the mighty power of Rama, would all this happen?
Indeed, Rama's power is beyond all description.
(Telugu Poem)

Nobody can estimate the infinite power of Rama. It can only be experienced in the heart. Love is the only yardstick to measure the power of Divinity. Hence, we have to develop love to experience Divinity. Hanuman could jump across the vast ocean because he chanted the

Name of Rama always. With the power of Rama's Name, he could lift mighty mountains.

How could the monkeys build a bridge across the ocean? In the beginning, the boulders were getting drowned in the ocean and the monkeys were frustrated. Then Hanuman thought of a plan. He inscribed the letter 'Ra' on one boulder and 'ma' on another and threw them in the ocean one after the other. They stuck together to make the Name 'Rama'. With the help of many such boulders bearing the letters 'Ra' and 'ma', a bridge was constructed. The boulders became light and floated on water only due to the power of Rama's Name

There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between the love of a devotee and the grace of God. Only love can win divine grace. You have to practise righteousness and tread the path of sacrifice to experience everlasting happiness. The name and principle of Rama will give you tremendous strength and power. The divine principle underlying the Avatars of Rama and Krishna can neither be explained in words nor understood with the help of worldly education. Only through love can one understand them. Fill your heart with love and chant the name of Rama forgetting yourself in bliss. Then Rama will certainly give you His divine darshan.

Once there lived an ardent devotee of Rama in Chengalpat near Madras. He wanted to attend the marriage of Thyagaraja's daughter in Thiruvayyar. He wanted to present a picture of Rama to the bride. In those days, there were no buses, cars, or planes. Therefore, he walked all the way from Chengalpat to Thiruvayyar, carrying the picture of Rama.

On seeing the picture, Thyagaraja was ecstatic and burst into a song, "Oh Rama! You walked all the way in order to protect me. You have taken so much trouble Oh Lord." In this manner, he went on extolling Rama's love and compassion. He experienced unity with Rama's Divinity. He considered Rama his dear old friend. You don't need to observe any formalities or use respectful words when you address your old friend. Thyagaraja addressed Rama with the same intimacy in the song, "Ra Ra ma inti daaka ..." (Oh Rama! Come to my house).

There is another song that reflects the feeling of friendship: "Enta vedukondu Raghava E panthamelara Oh Raghava ?" (How long should I plead with You, Oh Raghava! Why are You so obstinate and not responding?) Thyagaraja felt, "It is my duty to pray till Your heart melts. But the warmth of my prayer does not seem to have touched Your heart. One day or the other, Your heart will surely melt. I will wait till such time. I am in no hurry." In this manner, he consoled himself. It was only then that Rama granted him His divine vision. No one can comprehend how and when God is going to shower His grace on a sadhaka (spiritual

aspirant) and what type of boons He is going to grant him. He gives so many gifts and ultimately gives Himself and makes you ecstatic. Why then are you distancing yourself from such all-merciful Lord?

You are aware that everyday you chant the following prayer before partaking your food:

Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam
Brahma Karma Samadhina.

You say that the food is an offering to Brahman. Then where is Brahman? He is within. So, immediately God replies from within:

Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva
Praninam Dehamasrita
Pranapana Samayukta
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham

God says "My dear one, I am in you in the form of Vaishvanara. I receive and digest the four types of food that you partake of. You don't need to send any special invitation to Me nor extol Me. I am yours and you are Mine. I am with you, in you, above you, below you, around you." God has given you such a great assurance. He has promised that He will be always with you. But you are not able to understand this.

Embodiments of Love!

God is the ocean of love and compassion. He is sweetest and most enchanting. That is why Rama is described as Pumsam mohana rupaya (One who enchants even the males). He captivates and attracts everyone. There is divinity in every object in this world. But man is unable to understand this divine principle. In spite of all his education and listening to the discourses of saints and holy men, he is unable to comprehend the nature of the divine. There is only one way by which you can understand God. Love Him wholeheartedly. Do not hate anyone. If you come across a person who hates you, do not reciprocate the same feeling. Greet him saying, "Hello friend, how are you?" Then all the hatred in him will vanish. He too will develop love toward you. God is your true friend and is most intimately related to you. Love is the only path that can take you to God. When you develop love, God will give Himself up to you and will protect you always.

Embodiments of Love!

It is a grave mistake on your part to consider yourself a mere human being. Contemplate on the fundamental principle of wisdom, Aham etat na (I am not this (body)). I and you are one. When you understand and experience such intimate relationship with God, there will be no differences whatsoever.

In this New Year, develop new and noble feelings; contemplate on God with full faith that He will grant you all comforts and happiness. Lead your life with love and enjoy peace and happiness. You should strive for the happiness of not merely yourself, your friends, and relatives, but for the welfare of all. Strive to make everyone happy with the constant prayer, Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu (May all the people of the world be happy)! Then you will certainly experience true peace and bliss. Those who help others will always be helped in turn; they will never be put to harm.

Bhagavan sang the bhajan, "Rama Rama Rama Sita ..." and then continued the discourse.

Embodiments of Love!

When you chant the divine Name with love at least once, you will experience inexplicable and overwhelming bliss in your heart. The divine Name melts even a stone-hearted person. Even ice takes some time to melt, but God's heart melts instantaneously when you chant His Name with love. So, chant the Name of God. Even while you are traveling, you can chant His Name silently without attracting others' attention. Sarvada sarva kaleshu sarvatra Rama chintanam (everywhere, at all times and under all circumstances, contemplate on the divine name of Rama). There is no greater sadhana (spiritual exercise) than this. The essence of all sadhanas is contained in this. In the Kali yuga, chanting of God's Name is the royal path to liberation.

Harer Nama Harer Nama Harer Namaiva Kevalam,
Kalau Nastyeva Nastyeva Nastyeva Gathiranyatha.

Chanting of the divine Name is
the only path to liberation in this age of Kali.

**Date: 14 April 2003, Occasion: Tamil New Year, Place:
Brindavan**

9. PRACTISE AND PROPAGATE OUR SACRED CULTURE

Date: 15 April 2003 Occasion: Vishu celebrations Place: Brindavan

The sun appears serene and peaceful.
The fields are ripe with golden crops.
Marigold flowers are blossoming
 like garlands of pearls on the banks of rivers.
The farmers are rejoicing and singing.
The chillies have ripened and are looking red.
The sweet festival of Sri Vishu has come,
 filling our homes with the newly harvested grain.
(Telugu Poem)

Today is the day of great happiness for the people of Kerala. The farmers reap the harvest, bring the grains to the home, and rejoice. Food is very essential for the nation. It is the farmers who feed to the nation and bring peace and prosperity to it. It is their good fortune to be able to render such joyful service to the nation. Only when the farmers who give us food are happy and contented can the nation be peaceful and prosperous. Right from dawn to dusk, they toil in the fields and render great service to the nation.

Embodiments of Love!

This land of Bharat is very sacred and meritorious. Since time immemorial, Bharat has been imparting spiritual education to all nations of the world and thus bestowing peace and happiness on all. This is the eternal glory of Bharat. The motto of the Bharatiyas (Indians) has been Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu (May all the people of the world be happy!) Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). As Brahma pervades the entire world, dharma should permeate all actions of man. Karma (action) will be sanctified only when it is based on dharma and Brahma. It is said, Karmanubandheeni manushya loke (human society is bound by action). Nobody should waste time. Right from the time he wakes up in the morning, man should utilise his time and energy for the welfare of society. This is his main duty. He should realise that his welfare lies in the welfare of society. I have seen that the people of Kerala are always engaged in some activity or the other. They work very hard. They are not interested in comforts and pleasures. They derive happiness in working hard and serving society. They strive for peace and security of one and all. That is their most sacred virtue.

Embodiments of Love!

Kerala is the seat of education. It is the land which stands as testimony to the profound truths enunciated in the Vedas, Sastras, Puranas, and Itihasas. In such a land of peace and sacredness, today people are unable to experience the unsullied happiness that their ancestors were able to enjoy in the past. However, there is no cause for worry. A time will come, when Kerala will regain its past glory. Time plays an important role. We have to discharge the duties ordained on us by God and thus sanctify our time. Whatever actions we perform are the reflections of our inner feelings only. You should undertake such actions that will provide internal as well as external happiness. Nobody can remain without performing action.

Man is born from action, is sustained by action, and ultimately merges in action.

Action is the cause for pleasure and pain.

Truly speaking, action is God for man.

(Telugu Poem)

Man's life is bound by kala, karma, karana, kartavya (time, action, cause, duty). Due to the effect of Kali age, man does not work hard. Both the educated and the uneducated have become lethargic. You have to sanctify your life by doing righteous actions. Action is the cause for everything. Action is life. It is very unfortunate that man has not understood the importance of action. He wants to lead an easy life. Even students want to pass the examinations without putting much effort. They want to secure jobs without working hard. After securing jobs, they want salaries without discharging their duties. This type of conduct is not good. It is said, kashte phali (hard work yields rich rewards). The rewards that one gets will be commensurate with the efforts one puts in. One should recognise this truth and work hard accordingly. Unfortunately, such a spirit of work is not seen these days. There are people who go to office only to give attendance. Each one has to question oneself whether one is discharging one's duty properly or not. It is most essential that man becomes duty conscious.

Embodiments of Love!

You have to bend your body and work. Discharge your duty with the sweat of your brow. Only then can you get the right reward. Today, people are suffering for want of food and drinking water. What is the reason? Man is not undertaking righteous actions. When man does his duty sincerely, there will be no shortage of food and drinking water. Without working hard, one cannot lead a happy life. Na sukhat labhyate sukham (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). We can get happiness only when we work hard. For every action of ours, there is

bound to be reaction. For every sound that we make there will be resound. When we undertake righteous action and utter sacred words, the same will come back to us in the form of reaction, reflection and resound.

Embodiments of Love!

Our actions should be such that they bring happiness to ourselves as well as others. First of all, we have to enquire what true happiness is and what sorrow is. People think that happiness lies in eating to the fill and having a sound sleep. That is no happiness at all. Happiness lies in working hard and serving society. We can experience peace and happiness only when we help the poor and needy. After our daily prayer, we utter the word peace thrice: santhi santhi santhi. Where is peace? It is inside, not outside. Outside there are only pieces! You are the embodiment of peace, you are the embodiment of truth, you are the embodiment of love, you are the embodiment of God. How foolish it is to look for peace outside when it is present within! You have to put in proper effort to experience the peace within. You have to turn your vision inward. When two branches rub against each other repeatedly, fire is produced. Similarly, continuous hard work will produce jnanagni (fire of wisdom).

Embodiments of Love!

Today, nobody wants difficulties. Everybody aspires for happiness. Where is happiness? It is everywhere. We should earn the deservedness to experience it. Our Judge (who spoke earlier) mentioned in his speech that he was disappointed when Swami did not speak to him in spite of having worked hard. He did a lot of self-introspection. As a result, he got a good chance today. Without working hard, you cannot get any reward. But today, man is not prepared to work hard.

During Upanishadic times, people would offer their salutations to the karma (action) before undertaking it --thasmai namah karmane (salutations to action). We have to offer our salutations to the karma in the first instance so that it gives us good result.

In Bharat, some people follow this sacred tradition even today. A cricket player pays his respects to the ball before starting to bowl. A dancer salutes the anklets before tying them to her feet. Even an uneducated driver offers his obeisance to the steering wheel before driving the vehicle. But most of the educated people have forgotten such an ancient tradition and culture. That is why accidents are on the rise. There is a sense of fear and insecurity among people.

First of all, we have to offer our respects and express our gratitude to karma before undertaking it. Every one has to understand his duty and perform it to the best of his ability. Before the commencement of any

music programme, musicians pray to Vinayaka, the remover of obstacles. One who has no nayaka (master) above him is Vinayaka. He is the master of all. Hence, we have to offer our prayers to him before the commencement of any activity. Since ancient times, Bharatiyas (Indians) adhered to such sacred traditions implicitly. People decorate their houses with buntings of green leaves on festival days. Big pandals of mango leaves and plantain leaves are erected at the time of marriages. Green leaves are given place of prominence in such decorations. What is so special about them? Can't we have a shamiana instead?

No, that is not in accordance with our ancient tradition. What is the logic behind this tradition? As you are aware, we inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, which pollutes the atmosphere. At the time of marriages, many people gather at one place. As a result, more and more carbon dioxide is released into the air and the atmosphere gets polluted. The green leaves of the pandal inhale the carbon dioxide and release oxygen and thus purify the atmosphere. In this manner, they bestow health and happiness on us.

Thus, every tradition of Bharat has a profound inner meaning. Such sacred traditions are ignored today. Wherever a marriage is performed or a big meeting is held, people prefer decorative shamianas to pandals, plastic festoons to green leaf festoons. Can you get oxygen from plastic festoons? Can they absorb carbon dioxide? The shamianas and plastic festoons may be aesthetically pleasing but they serve no purpose in keeping the atmosphere pure. We should never forget our ancient traditions.

In Kerala, even today ancient traditions are followed. On festival days, they place a lamp on rice, with beautiful decorations around. It is very auspicious for the house. Onam and Vishu are the sacred festivals that the Keralites celebrate. You must understand the tradition and significance associated with the celebration of Vishu. It is not merely meant to wish each other 'hello' and shake hands. Vishu is that day when your house has grains in plenty and the State attains prosperity. This is how the festival was celebrated in ancient times. Today Vishu celebration is confined to wishing each other. This is not the way to celebrate Vishu. You have to aspire and work for the happiness of others. True celebration of Vishu lies in each sharing the happiness of the other. Give and take. It is not 'one way traffic'. You have to give happiness to others. Only then will you have the right to receive it from others.

Kerala has plantain trees and coconut groves in abundance. You find greenery all around. Keralites prepare various types of puddings with plantains. There is a special type of plantain called nendra pazham, which they distribute to others.

The Gayatri Mantra begins with the syllables Om, Bhur, Bhuvah Suvaha. Om is the primordial sound, Pranava. Bhur represents bhuloka, the world of materials (materialisation). Bhuvah is related to the mind (vibration). Suvaha represents prajna (radiation). When you understand these three principles, your life will be sanctified. But today man is not interested in such divine principles. He craves for worldly gains. How long can he enjoy physical pleasures? They are momentary. They do not give true happiness. This is what Adi Sankara said in his famous Bhaja Govindam song thus:

Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam,
Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam

Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny, and youth;
the tide of time may destroy them in a moment.

Hence, you should not crave for worldly happiness. You should strive for eternal peace and everlasting happiness. You should not be caught up in the endless cycle of birth and death. You should transcend birth and death and attain immortality.

Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.

Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death.
Time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying in the
mother's womb.
It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life.
Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.

Once a person was sitting under a tree on the bank of river Ganga and trying to master the nuances of Panini grammar. He was repeating Dukrun karane, Dukrun karane. Sankara was going to the river with his disciples for a sacred bath. He took pity on the person, went up to him and said, "My dear one, by learning the rules of grammar, you may become a great scholar. But it is not going to save you from death. Hence, chant the name of Govinda, who alone is your saviour." It was then that Adi Sankara sang the famous Bhaja Govindam song.

Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam
Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe
Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale
Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane.

Oh foolish man, chant the name of Govinda;
he rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the
end approaches.

Some of the other verses of this song were composed by the disciples of Sankara. It is said, Yatha raja, thatha praja (as the king, so are the subjects). The same can be said of guru-sishya (teacher-student) relationship. Yatha guru thatha sishya (as the preceptor, so are the disciples). The preceptors of those days were highly noble. They set great ideals, which their disciples emulated. We don't find such masters and disciples today.

One should not crave for scholarship or name and fame. They come and go. When there is plenty of water in the pond, frogs make their way into it. When the water dries to a trickle, you do not find a single frog there. In the same manner, when your pocket is full, many people swarm around you. But when your pocket is empty, no one will look at your face. This is the way of the world. Do not get deluded by the loka (world). Contemplate on Lokeshya (Lord of the world) incessantly. Sankara made a great contribution to the spiritual wealth of this country. We should express our gratitude to him by following his teachings. We should never forget our cultural heritage. Each State has its own traditions. They have to be followed in letter and spirit. Today, fashions have displaced traditions. Do not be carried away by fashions. Let the ancient traditions be imprinted on your heart.

In villages, people sprinkle cow dung mixed with water in front of their homes. It is considered to be auspicious. What is the reason? Cow dung destroys disease-causing germs and thus helps maintain good health. It can cure many diseases. Today people of other countries have recognised this truth and are taking full advantage of it. But the Bharatiyas (Indians) are not making efforts in this direction.

In earlier days, cow dung was used as a remedy for wounds. People used to bandage the wound with cow dung. In modern times, people have a wrong notion that the wound becomes septic if cow dung is bandaged over it. It may become gangrenous also, they argue. It is a baseless argument. If cow dung is applied, the wound will be healed in three days. Cow dung has such sacred power. Even cow urine has medicinal properties. It is mixed in water and sprinkled on people infected with the pox. But the modern trend is against such natural remedies, which are in fact, beneficial to one and all.

The Bharatiyas have to revive such ancient traditions. Let people say what they want, we have to follow our sacred traditions.

On the day of Vishu, people have a sacred bath and put on new clothes. Mere external cleanliness is not enough, you have to cleanse your mind and develop inner purity. Antarbahischa tatsarvam vyapya Narayana sthita (That all-pervasive God is present within and without). We have to offer obeisance to our elders and seek their blessings. We have to develop good relationship with all. Therein lies the true celebration of Vishu. Today, even among the Keralites, many do not know the true significance of Vishu. It is a symbol of our great cultural heritage. Today people are not aware of the greatness of Bharat. It is said, Yenna Bharate thanna Bharata (what is not found in Bharat is not found anywhere else). Bharatiyas are those who sing the glory of God with bhava, raga, and thala (feeling, tune, and rhythm). Music will be pleasing to the ears only when these three are in harmony.

Right from young age, the children should be taught the greatness of our ancient culture. They should be moulded into ideal citizens. They should be made to practise our traditional values. For anything, practise is very important. The responsibility lies with the parents and teachers to make the children adhere to our ancient tradition. Then society will certainly progress and enjoy peace and prosperity. If you practise our ancient values, society will attain kshemam (welfare), otherwise, it will be afflicted with kshamam (famine). Do not think about the welfare of you and your family alone. Strive for the welfare of everyone. Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu (May all the people of the world be happy!)

Students!

Make efforts to understand the greatness of our ancient culture and traditions. Respect everyone. Do not be rude to elders and guests who visit your house. Whether your parents are at home or not, offer them a seat and give them a glass of cold water or buttermilk. Speak to them with love. However, such noble practices are not to be found among students of the present times. If somebody rings up asking for father, even if he is at home, the son keeps down the phone saying he is not there. Even over the phone, you should talk in a respectful manner. You can earn the respect of others only when you respect them. Respect does not mean merely saying, 'hello'. You should offer your namaskara with humility and reverence. Na-maskara means offering your respects without a trace of ahamkara and mamakara (ego and attachment).

Matru Devo bhava, pitru Devo bhava, acharya Devo bhava, atithi Devo bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor, and guest as God). Since our ancients adhered to such sacred principles, our nation earned the respect of the entire world. We should develop humility, love, and reverence toward elders like the ancient Bharatiyas. We should practise and propagate our sacred culture. That is the true sign of education.

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Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajans, "Prema mudita manase kaho", "Govinda Krishna jai Gopala Krishna jai", and "Om Sivaya Om Sivaya".

**Date: 15 April 2003, Occasion: Vishu celebrations, Place:
Brindavan**

10. LOVE AND RESPECT YOUR PARENTS AND SANCTIFY YOUR LIFE

Date: 06 May 2003 Occasion: Easwaramma Day Place: Brindavan

When man comes out of the mother's womb, he does not bring any
money with him.

Money does not follow him either when he departs from the world.

Even a millionaire has to partake of salt and rice.

He cannot swallow gold to satiate his hunger.

One may feel proud of his wealth, but he cannot take even a single pie
with him when he leaves the world.

Just as man enjoys the honey collected by the bees, the wealth one
amasses

may ultimately fall in the hands of either donga (thief) or dora (king).
(Telugu Poem)

When man emerges from the womb of his mother,
one does not find any garland round his neck.

There are no jewels made of pearls

nor are there glittering gold ornaments.

There are no chains studded with precious stones
like emeralds and diamonds.

There is no garland of flowers either.

But there is one garland round his neck.

Brahma strings together the consequences of his
past deeds into a heavy garland and

puts it round his neck at the time of his birth.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Every individual has a mother. One who does not please his mother and become the recipient of her love is not a true son. In today's world, mothers who bring up their children with proper love and care are very rare. It is said, Deho devalaya proktho jeevo devah sanathanah (the body is a temple and the indweller in the body is God). In every temple, we find a bell. But, the bell present in the temple of a human body is not visible outside. This bell is known as anahati. It is not a bell that one can ring. However, it rings continuously on its own day in and day out as long as life remains in the human body. This is nothing but the human heart. When the bell stops ringing, the body becomes lifeless. Then, we call the

body a savam (corpse). When the bell is ringing, the body is considered to be sivam (auspicious).

The entire universe is the temple of God. In this temple of the universe, one can continuously hear the sound of the bell Om. That is why God is described as Sabda Brahmamayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi, and Sreemayi (the embodiment of sound, movable and immovable, light, speech, eternal bliss, transcendental, delusion, and wealth). Today, instead of attuning ourselves to that sacred sound of Om, we are lending our ears to worldly talk and vain gossip. We are unable to listen to the divine voice of Akhanda Satchidananda Swarupa (God, the embodiment of existence, consciousness and bliss).

Once upon a time in the temple of Visweswara in Kasi, the Pujari was offering Arati to the deity. Suddenly, a big gold plate fell from above. The Pujari was surprised and happily picked it up to have a closer look at it. There was an inscription on the plate, which read as follows: "It should be given to the greatest devotee. One who does not chant the Divine Name is not qualified to get it." Then the Pujari thought to himself, "everyday, I am performing Sahasra Lingarchana and Abhishekam to the Lord. I am sanctifying my time by chanting the sacred mantras from the four Vedas. Can there be a greater devotee than me?" When such ego and pride clouded his mind, the gold plate

From that day onward, whoever visited the temple was asked to touch the plate to find out if he deserved to receive the gold plate. But it so happened that the plate would turn into an earthen one whenever somebody touched it. It continued for a few days.

There was a devotee who always chanted the Name of God, but did not perform any other sadhana (spiritual exercises) like japa (soft repetition of the name), thapa, dhyana (meditation), etc. He had no desires. He had achieved dama (sense control). One day he visited the temple. On being requested by the Pujari to touch the plate, he said, "Sir, I don't have any desires. Hence, I don't want to touch it."

The Pujari requested him to touch the plate at least for his satisfaction. The devotee did not want to displease the Pujari and therefore he touched the plate. No sooner did he touch it than it started shining with added brilliance. People who were witness to this event surrounded him and started asking, "Oh noble soul! What is the method of worship you follow, what is the sadhana you perform?" Then he replied, "I have not performed any japa, thapa, yajna or yaga (sacrifices or rituals). I only serve the poor. They are very dear to God."

Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious.
(Sanskrit Verse)

From then onward, many rich people started visiting Kasi to see this devotee. Wherever there are rich people, it is but natural that the poor also gather begging for alms from the rich. This devotee was moved on seeing their pathetic condition and resolved to himself, "God loves the poor very much. That is why He has drawn so many of them to His abode. God will be pleased only when they are looked after well. That is what I love to do. I will be happy only when I am able to alleviate the suffering of these poor people and make them happy." From then on, he continued to serve the poor and the needy with greater devotion and enthusiasm. This was an eye-opener for the rich who had gathered there.

Even a millionaire has to partake of salt and rice. He cannot swallow gold to satiate his hunger. One may feel proud of his wealth, but he cannot take even a single pie with him when he leaves the world. Such being the case, why should one struggle to amass wealth? Instead, it is better one strives to attain divine grace. When you contemplate on God all the time continuously with single-minded devotion, He will take care of all your needs. This was what the devotee taught to all those who had assembled there.

The money we accumulate will not follow us. To whom will it go ultimately? Nobody knows. It is not possible to take even a paisa with us. You have to undertake righteous deeds and earn merit so as to deserve divine grace. When you are born out of your mother's womb, you do not find any garland round your neck. But there is one garland surely. Brahma strings together the consequences of all your past deeds, be they good or bad, into a heavy garland and puts it round your neck. Nobody can come into the world without that garland of karma. But man forgets this truth and always craves for pleasures and comforts. How long can the worldly pleasures last?

Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam,
Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam

Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny and youth;
the tide of time may destroy them in a moment.

People feel proud of their youth and wealth. But they are momentary. Realising this truth, we have to accumulate the wealth of divine grace.

After imparting such sacred teaching to the people around him, the devotee started coming out of the temple. As he stepped out, the gold

plate also followed him. Along with the plate, all the coins started rolling behind him. Then the beggars started going behind him asking for the money. The devotee said, "My dear ones, what is the use of asking me God is the guardian of all. He is the richest of all. Hence, pray to Him." As he was moving away, many coins started falling from the gold plate. The beggars collected those coins.

The devotee went into a state of bliss and closed his eyes. He had the vision of Lord Visweswara. He prayed, "Oh Lord Visweswara, You are the master of the whole universe. Can't You take care of these poor people? Please shower Your grace on them."

To pray for the welfare of all with selfless love is the noblest prayer. The devotee had no trace of selfishness in him. He prayed for others with selfless love. Hence, God was pleased with him. You should always pray in a selfless manner. Only such a prayer will melt God's heart. There is no point in praying to God with worldly objectives. God, who is the embodiment of love resides in our hridaya (heart). Hridaya is known as anahati. It is the bell that rings continuously. God residing in our heart keeps it ringing. We should listen to the sound of that bell.

Our scriptures have prescribed nine paths of devotion

Sravanam (listening),
Kirtanam (singing),
Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu),
Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet),
Vandanam (salutation),
Archanam (worship),
Dasyam (servitude),
Sneham (friendship),
Atmanivedanam (self-surrender).

Self-surrender is the true offering that you have to make to God. He is not interested in the worldly offerings you make. What you have to offer to God is the same heart that He has given you.

O God, I offer the heart which You have given me.
What else can I offer at Your Lotus Feet?
Please accept my salutations.
(Telugu Poem)

God is not interested in the wealth you have earned or accumulated. He has no dearth of wealth. He is Vishnu Swarupa. When goddess of wealth Lakshmi herself resides on His chest, what is it that you can offer Him? The Pakshi Vahana (Lord Vishnu who has Garuda as His vehicle) has goddess Lakshmi on His chest. Why should He ask for bhiksha (alms)

from others? Hence, you don't need to give anything to God. The sacred heart that He has given you should be given back to Him.

Due to the effect of the Kali Age, people are not prepared to offer their heart to God which He has given them. They are offering the wealth they have accumulated. How can you make such a low and mean offering? You should offer your heart to God. That is called Anahata Dharma. This is the true treasure that we have to safeguard always.

Embodiments of Love!

Due to the effect of Kali Age, devotion and detachment have also become artificial. People are trying to please others, but not God. You have to undertake activities that are pleasing to God. If you go by your own likes and dislikes, how can God be pleased with you? What God likes the most is Anahata Prema. Your hridaya (heart) should overflow with love, sacrifice, and bliss. You may make any number of offerings, but if you do not offer your hridaya to God, He will not accept them. He may pretend to have accepted those offerings, but He will throw them away. You should offer Him that which pleases Him. That is hridaya, which is called Anahati. It is the centre of love and bliss. In fact, it is the basis of everything. If you do not offer such a sacred heart to God, what is the use of other offerings? God is not interested in such artificial offerings. If you come across poor people, give them what they require. If they are shivering in the cold, give them a blanket. You should give them what they need, but not what would you like to give them.

In those days (Swami's school days), when we returned from the Bukkapatnam school in the evenings, mother Easwamma would lovingly enquire as to what happened in the school that day. She had no formal education at all. One day the children told her, "Mother, today a teacher by name Kondappa made our Sathya stand upon the bench." They started criticising him.

Mother Easwamma intervened and said, "Children, you should not talk ill of your teacher. No teacher would punish his student without a proper reason. Our Sathya might have committed some mistake." Then she asked Me, "Sathya, what is the mistake You committed?"

I told her the facts as they happened. Kondappa ordered, "Whoever has written the notes should place it on his table. Others should stand upon the bench." I had not written the notes. That was My mistake. Hence, I stood upon the bench. I also said something which was more than necessary. I said, "Sir, can all those boys who have taken down the notes answer your questions? Though I have not written the notes, I can answer any question that you may ask."

Kondappa thought that I was egotistic and ordered Me to stand upon the bench for three periods. I obeyed him and stood upon the bench. Meanwhile, the other teacher, Mahboob Khan, came to the class. He was a Mohammaden and a noble person. He was pained to see Me standing on the bench. He asked, "Kondappa, why have you made this boy stand upon the bench?"

"He has not taken down the notes, hence the punishment", said Kondappa.

Mahboob Khan defended Me saying, "So what if He has not taken down the notes? He can answer all your questions, and that is enough. Ask Him to sit down."

But Kondappa insisted that I should be punished as I had disobeyed his command. The bell rang and Kondappa had to go to another class. But he was unable to get up from the chair. Initially he thought that his dhoti had got entangled to a nail in the chair. But that was not the case. He was stuck to the chair! When he tried to get up from the chair, the chair also came along with him.

Then Mahboob Khan said, "Kondappa, He is not an ordinary boy. He is one of great divine powers. You have punished Him without a proper reason. At least now, ask Him to sit down."

Kondappa realised his mistake and told Me to sit down. Immediately, he could get up from the chair.

When all this was narrated to mother Easwaramma, she said, "Dear Sathya, you should not punish your own guru (teacher)."

I said, "I did not punish him; in fact, he punished himself."

She imparted a sacred teaching to the children, saying, "My dear ones, you are going to school to study. Whatever you learn, put it to proper use. Only then will you be called truly educated and earn the appellation Sakshara. If you do not make proper use of your education, you become a rakshasa (demon). Make efforts to earn the title of Sakshara."

Then she told Me, "Sathya! At any time and under any circumstances, do not cultivate hatred toward anybody. Love all and You will be loved by all."

In fact, there is no trace of hatred or enmity in Me at any time. I love all. That is why everyone loves Me. If we do not love others, how can we expect others to love us? Give love and receive love. It is not a one-way traffic. You should give and take.

In this manner, mother Easwaramma taught the children many sacred ideals. One need not have any formal education in order to impart such sacred teachings. There are many who are highly educated, but what is the use? They do not put their knowledge to proper use. Having received many sacred teachings, you should practise at least one of them. You perform worship and sing bhajans with devotion. It is enough if you practise and experience at least one word of the bhajans you sing. For example, you extol God as 'Premaswarupa' (embodiment of love). Accordingly, you should develop love and share it with others. Only then can you understand and experience divinity.

Mother Easwaramma used to impart many noble teachings to the devotees when they gathered around her. I had given her a small room in Prasanthi Nilayam. Many ladies would go there and plead with her, "Mother, we have been here for a long time. Please tell Swami to grant us an interview." She would tell them, "My dear, Swami may look small to our eyes, but He does not listen to anyone. He will not act on recommendations. He will give you what you deserve. You should try to understand the divine principle of Swami." In this manner, she would give proper guidance to the devotees.

One day she told Me, "Sathya! Your name and fame have spread far and wide. The whole world is coming to You. Please bestow peace on the world with Your Sankalpa (Will)."

I told her, "It is not that I have to make a Sankalpa for world peace. Each one has to attain peace by himself, because man by nature is the embodiment of peace. He is the embodiment of truth. He is the embodiment of love." You have to manifest your love. You have to experience peace within. You have to follow the path of truth. Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak truth and practise righteousness). You can achieve anything when you follow this principle.

Since ancient times, there have been many noble mothers who have guided their children on the right path. The future of the nation rests in the hands of mothers. That is why one calls one's own country as motherland. Bharat (India) is the birthplace of many noble mothers. Our ancient culture has accorded first place to the mother. Father comes only next. Even on invitation cards we write Smt. and Sri. The husband may be highly educated and occupying a position of authority. He may be the president of the nation. Yet, we cannot write Sri and Srimati while sending an invitation. Srimati has to come first. Since ancient times, women are treated with great reverence and respect in Bharat. This land of Bharat is highly sacred. But unfortunately, people have lost love for their motherland.

He is a true human being who loves his mother and becomes the recipient of his mother's love. One who cannot earn his mother's love is verily a demon. Hence, respect and revere you mother. Experience and enjoy your mother's love. Dedicate your life for the happiness of the mother. You may acquire any number of degrees; you may undertake any number of sacred activities; but all of them will prove futile if you do not please your mother. There is none superior to the mother in this world. The Veda has accorded the place of highest prominence to the mother when it declared, Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor, and guest as God). There may be a son in this world who does not love his mother, but there cannot be a mother who does not love her son. There may be differences of opinion between them, but the motherly love will never diminish.

Embodiments of Love!

It is your foremost duty to love your mother. As soon as you wake up in the morning, the first thing you should do is to touch your mother's feet and offer your salutations. Such a noble practice will protect you always and bestow on you all types of wealth.

Students, Boys and Girls!

You are going to be fathers and mothers in future. You will be loved and respected by your children only when you love and respect your parents now. You are bound to face the reaction, resound, and reflection of your actions. When you respect your parents, there will be rich rewards for you in the future.

Today we are celebrating Easwaramma Day. I want to tell you an incident that speaks of her immense compassion and love for children. In those days, students from various States and countries attended Summer Classes. Gokak, who used to conduct the classes, was a strict disciplinarian. He was a man of great character and sacrifice. He was a great academician too. He was conducting the classes in an exemplary manner. One day, the students were having lunch in the dining hall. One of the boys got up and went outside before others could finish their meals. Gokak, who watched this through the window, called him and chided him for his act of indiscipline. "When your fellow students are having their food, you should not get up in the middle even though you have completed your meals. It amounts to insulting them." Saying so, Gokak suspended him from the classes. The boy was in tears, but Gokak was not moved.

The boy came to mother Easwaramma's room, fell at her feet and started crying. He told her about the harsh punishment meted out to him by

Gokak. He pleaded with her to come to his rescue. Easwamma consoled him and sent him away. She was sitting on the steps where Gokak would pass by. After a while Gokak came there. She offered her Namaskar to him and he reciprocated the same most reverentially. Then she said, "When I did Namaskar to you, you reciprocated the same. In the same manner, if you punish others, you will be punished in return. The boy out of his innocence has done a mistake. Please forgive him and allow him to attend the classes."

Then Gokak replied, "Mother, if I forgive him, it would set a bad precedent for others. Anyway, I will forgive him only for your sake." In this manner, she would go out of her way to help and provide comfort and solace to others.

You are bound to face the consequences of your actions. If you talk to others in a harsh manner, it will come back to you as resound. If you hit others, it will come back to you as reflection. Hence, do not hurt others. Do good, be good, see good, and speak good. Then, you will be blessed with rich rewards. Though mother Easwamma had no formal education, she conducted herself in an exemplary manner. She was one of profound wisdom. The teaching that mother Easwamma imparted remained etched in the heart of Gokak. Later on when he came as Vice Chancellor to Puttaparthi, he used to recollect her words of wisdom. He would remember her everyday. He would say, "I see Easwamma in my dream quite often. I follow her advice implicitly."

We should not criticise others. We should not hurt others or make fun of them. We should love all. This is what mother Easwamma taught everybody. Do your duty sincerely. Then, you will certainly progress in life. Whoever he may be, follow the sacred teachings of our elders. People attribute certain teachings to Rama, Krishna, and so on and so forth. It does not matter whether it is Rama or Krishna; enquire what, why, when, where, and under what circumstances they had given those teachings. You should remember the context in which those teachings were imparted and act accordingly. When you obey the command of elders and divine personalities, you will certainly attain exalted position in life.

Many students do not pay heed to the words of their mother. It is a grave mistake. Mothers speak from their heart wishing the welfare of their children. You should understand their feelings and give due respect to their words.

Embodiments of Love! Boys and Girls

Obey the commands of your parents. You will certainly be blessed with all types of education and strength. You do not need to make any special efforts to acquire them. Discharge your duty sincerely. Never disregard

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the words of your parents. Follow them with love and sanctify your life. Wishing that you give happiness to your parents and thereby set an ideal to your children, I bless you all and bring My discourse to a close.

(Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan "Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma").

**Date: 06 May 2003, Occasion: Easwaramma Day, Place:
Brindavan**

11. SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE IS THE HALLMARK OF A TRUE DOCTOR

Date: 05 July 2003 Occasion: Doctors' Day Place: Brindavan

If you look to Me, I will look to you.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat (India). Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love toward one's mother. Character is valued far higher than the very life itself. People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating Western culture. Alas! The Bharatiyas (Indians) are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength. (Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Man is born in action, is sustained by action and ultimately merges in action.

Action is the cause of pleasure and pain.

Truly speaking, action is God for man. (Telugu Poem)

Man by and large considers himself to be healthy and tries to lead a happy life. But in fact there are 326 diseases that haunt man day in and day out. Excessive vaata, pittha, and sleshma (wind, bile, and phlegm) are responsible for various diseases. Vaata gives rise to 80 types of diseases, pittha to 82 types, and sleshma to 164 types. Such being the case, how can man enjoy a healthy life? Only when he develops Atmic Consciousness and distances himself from the adverse effects of vaata, pittha, and sleshma can he be healthy.

For the past one month, you could not see Swami. What is the reason for this? It is because of the indisposition of this body. I have neither taken upon Myself the illness of anybody nor has it emerged from this body. Today, I am revealing the truth to you.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later, but the indweller has neither birth nor death.

He has no attachment whatsoever.
Truly speaking, the indweller is verily God Himself,
who is in the form of the Atma. (Telugu Poem)

Man is always concerned about his health. He has become a victim of various ailments as he is steeped in body consciousness rather than Atmic principle. It is very essential for man to realise that diseases underscore the need for getting rid of body consciousness.

You are all aware of the fact that Swami fractured His hip, and it was in three pieces. The ball in the hip was in two pieces. The pain was so excruciating that it cannot be described in words. It was impossible to move this way or that way. It pierced the body as if it were an electric shock. But I was unaffected by it. I underwent all this suffering only to demonstrate that one should not be attached to the body. Instead, one should develop divine consciousness. I am not this body. Body consciousness leads to untold suffering. One has to get rid of body attachment in order to enjoy peace and happiness. What is this body composed of?

This body is a den of dirt and prone to diseases;
it is subject to change from time to time;
it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara.
It is nothing but a structure of bones.
O mind, do not be under the delusion that body is permanent.
Instead, take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet. (Telugu Poem)

Dehabhimana (body consciousness) will disappear once you develop Daivabhimana (Divine Consciousness). The first step on the spiritual path is to keep body consciousness under check. You are subjected to misery because you are immersed in body consciousness. Body consciousness and Atmic consciousness are inversely proportional. Nobody can escape the consequences of karma (action). Karma is the cause for birth and death.

The Bhagavad Gita declares:

Karmanyevadhikarasthe Maaphaleshu Kadhachana.
Man has right over action but not over the fruits of action.

Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke.
Human society is bound by action.

Man should develop Atmic consciousness and plunge into the field of action without aspiring for the rewards. Dharmaraja, eldest among the Pandavas, was the very embodiment of righteousness. Yet, he had to undergo the ordeals in the court of King Virata as a result of karma.

Were not the mighty Pandavas compelled to go into exile and lead a life full of troubles?

Did not emperor Harischandra, having lost his kingdom, become caretaker of a graveyard?

Everyone is bound to face the consequences of their action. However, man does have the capacity to escape from the consequences of karma. He has become weak since he is unable to harness his innate potential due to body attachment. Having assumed a human body, one cannot escape from suffering. Body is momentary, like a water bubble.

I was all smiles when I was being taken to hospital. Many doctors surrounded Me at the hospital. They were anxious. I told them not to worry. "This body is not Mine. It is yours. You can do whatever you deem fit to this body. I have no pain whatsoever.", I assured them. I came back after three hours. I was full of smiles. A true spiritual aspirant is one who undergoes difficulties with a positive frame of mind. Do not care for the suffering of the body. Suffering is quite natural to human body. One has to face suffering with Atma balam (will power).

Today, being Doctors' Day, doctors have to set an ideal by infusing courage and conviction in patients. Doctors, after putting in lot of efforts, have been able to find remedies for various ailments. But there seems to be no end to diseases. There are many doctors all over the world, but the number of patients and ailments are on the rise. If there are two doctors for a family, there are four patients! Patients outnumber doctors. Man's lifestyle and habits are responsible for this spurt in diseases.

After the surgery, I was able to walk within a short span of three days. The reason being I have no body attachment. I see all of you with Atmic consciousness and hence am blissful. I teach everyone, "My dear! don't fall a prey to body attachment; develop Atmic consciousness and lead a blissful life". Your Aananda (bliss) is My aahaara (food) and aarogya (health). You call a person healthy when all their limbs are functioning properly. All the organs of My body are functioning effectively.

Physical afflictions are temporary, like passing clouds.

Life is a Challenge, Meet It;
Life is Love, Enjoy It;
Life is a Game, Play It.

You have to play the game of life in the right spirit. I have been doing the same. I have absolutely no pain. Generally, the pain arising out of hip fracture is unbearable. But I am unaffected by injury to any organ of the body, let alone the hip. Suffering arises when you identify yourself with the body. I have no pains since I have no body attachment. I take delight

in your love. Your prayers are responsible for My speedy recovery. In all the corners of the world devotees have been praying intensely. Through prayer you can achieve the impossible.

Embodiments of Love!

Gradually give up body attachment. Develop Atmic consciousness. Atma alone is true and eternal. Atma is our life. Everything else is a passing cloud. Today, we are celebrating Doctors' Day. This is the day when doctors rededicate themselves to the alleviation of suffering. There are very few doctors who discharge their duties with a spirit of sacrifice, keeping the welfare of patients as their sole objective.

Dr. Sundareshan took great pains to ensure the well-being of Swami. He was monitoring Swami's progress every moment. I was telling repeatedly, "Sundareshan, I am all right, do not worry." But he would not be satisfied. He would keep on enquiring about My welfare; whether I had pain in any part of the body. He is equally concerned about the welfare of other patients. When one of our college students met with a motorcycle accident, Dr. Sundareshan used to monitor his progress day in and day out. He used to make frequent visits to Puttaparthi without taking any rest just to treat that patient. If all doctors in the world were to be like Dr. Sundareshan, there would not be any disease at all. Today diseases are on the rise because doctors have become money-minded.

One day, nine years ago, after having a head bath, I wanted to dry My hair. One of the American doctors had lovingly presented a hair-drier to Me. When I was trying to use the same, the power supply was cut off. It was restored when I was having a close look at the drier. Consequently, a sudden gust of hot air ripped through My eye damaging the retina. I was not the least perturbed. One eye is sufficient to see this wide world.

Sahasra Seersha Purusha,
Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad.
God has a thousand heads, eyes, and feet.

Dr. Hemanth Murthy (ophthalmic surgeon) pleaded with Me to undergo an eye operation as well, along with the hip surgery. The damaged retina, which was removed from My eye, was as dark as charcoal. Since then I am able to see clearly with both My eyes. With such doctors around, any surgery can be performed successfully. Eye surgeons like Dr. Hemanth Murthy and orthopaedic surgeons like Dr. Sundareshan are few in number in this world. Such doctors should be given all encouragement and support. Even the government is unable to provide the necessary infrastructure. Consequently the doctors are handicapped and are unable to give their best. Doctors' Day is being observed to encourage and motivate these doctors. However skilled a doctor may be, he cannot

discharge his duties diligently unless he is provided with proper equipment. Swami's intention is to support and encourage such doctors by providing the necessary facilities.

Health and education are the two most important aspects of life. One can put knowledge into practice only when one has good health.

Embodiments of Love!

In today's world, many people are suffering for want of proper medical facilities. It is your bounden duty to help the suffering humanity. Only then will the country prosper. Money comes and goes; Morality comes and grows. Today many doctors are commercializing the field of medicine. Such doctors are sinners of the worst kind. He is a true doctor who aspires for the well-being of the patient. We have to encourage such noble doctors.

Embodiments of Love!

One has to take good care of one's health with proper food and habits. There are many poor people in our country who lack the basic necessities of food, raiment, and shelter. Who will take care of them when they are afflicted with diseases? Our hospitals are doing yeoman service to suffering humanity. Do not think that I am lavishing praises on our own hospitals. You can see it for yourself when you visit these hospitals. If you go to our General Hospitals and Super-Speciality hospitals, you will find a number of poor people being treated for various ailments totally free of cost. Elsewhere, the Super-Speciality hospitals are established with commercial motives. They collect fees even to check the temperature of a patient. How can the poor afford such costly treatment? Doctors should render free service to patients to the extent possible.

Embodiments of Love!

Doctors should serve the poor with spirit of sacrifice. There is no greater service than this. God is the sole refuge of the destitute and the forlorn. As man is the embodiment of God, it is his primary duty to help the destitute and the forlorn. Medicine should not be commercialised. It is meant to promote heart to heart and love to love relationship between doctor and patient. A true doctor is one who realises this truth and conducts himself accordingly. One with commercial outlook is not a doctor at all. In fact, he is a patient himself! Spirit of sacrifice is the hallmark of a true doctor.

The doctors who are working in our hospitals are endowed with that spirit of sacrifice. Dr. Savitri and others are working tirelessly day in and day out in our General Hospital. I often tell them, "take proper care of your

health in the first instance. Only then can you serve the patients more effectively." How can you look after the patients if your health is spoiled? Our Principal in his speech mentioned the axiom: Vaidyo Narayano Harihi (doctor is verily God). Being the very embodiment of Lord Narayana, the doctor should serve everyone. God is ever engaged in service.

Paropakaraya Punyaya

Papaya Parapeedanam

One attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them.

One need not be a doctor in order to serve others. One should help one's fellow beings to the best of one's ability. We have established hospitals at various places like Puttaparthi, Bangalore, Alike, Muddenahalli, etc. I feel very happy to see the doctors working there with great dedication. We have opened a hospital in Alike quite recently, which is catering to the needs of many poor patients. I am thrilled whenever I see their happy faces. Their happiness gives me immense strength.

Only through service, can one become the recipient of divine Grace. Life is meaningless if one does not participate in service activities. The best way to love God is to serve God. You should aspire for the welfare of all and follow the path of Love and Service. Only then will your life find fulfilment.

There is a General Hospital at Puttaparthi. There is one more at Whitefield. Amazing cures are taking place in these hospitals. It is the happiness of the patients that gives Me happiness and health. If you aspire for the health and happiness of Swami, look after the patients well. The patients' welfare must be your topmost priority. Serve them with dedication. Service to patients is service to God. There is no service higher than this.

Celebration of doctors' day will be meaningful only if service activities are undertaken with dedication and not merely by donning grand attire. As you are aware, Dr. Savitri and Dr. Santha are doing yeoman service in our General Hospital here. Several other doctors also come from city regularly and render voluntary service.

[The programme concluded with singing of the National Anthem.]

Date: 05 July 2003, Occasion: Doctors' Day, Place: Brindavan

12. CAST OFF BODY ATTACHMENT 'TO DEVELOP ATMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Date: 13 July 2003 Occasion: Guru Purnima Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

Embodiments of Love!

The entire universe has been created out of the Will of God. God creates the universe and sustains it. The universe ultimately merges in God, the source of its origin. The universe, which has originated from Divine Will, is known as Viswam. The correct meaning of Viswam is that which is self-expansive and full of bliss. God has created the universe with a purpose, but man is acting contrary to it. Viswam is not merely a manifestation of physical matter. It is a direct manifestation of God. It is the very embodiment of the Cosmic Personality, with all His limbs. The Viswa symbolises the expansive nature of God, which can be understood only through viveka (discrimination). God is beyond time and cause. The physical world functions by so-called reason, but the Divine Will is not bound by reason. God is the primal cause behind the universe. The universe is the reflection of God. Viswam and Vishnu are not different from each other. The letter 'V' in the name Vishnu stands for Viveka and Vistara (expansiveness). Hence, Viswam is the very form of Vishnu. The entire creation constitutes various limbs of God.

Every object in the creation has five aspects, namely, sath, chit, ananda, rupa, and nama (existence, consciousness, bliss, form, and name). The first three are eternal principles, whereas name and form are ephemeral. Sath, chit, and ananda are the basis for name and form. All human activities are based on name and form. It is God who decides who has to do what. Some people are rajasic (passionate, active) in nature and some others are thamasic (slothful, dull). Evil qualities like hatred and jealousy are predominant in such people.

People attribute various names and forms to God on the basis of their own feelings. They forget the three main principles of sath, chit, and ananda and assume name and form to be the sole reality. In reality, name and form are not permanent. But people are overwhelmed by name and form and ignore the eternal principles of sath, chit, and ananda. Consequently, they are deluded and tend to forget the mighty power of God behind the name and form. He is called Padmanabha (One who has a lotus emerging from His navel). Here, the lotus represents the Divine Sankalpa (Will). He is also called Hiranyagarbha, since He has a golden womb. He is known as Vaastha, since He is present in the form of 'I' in all beings. The principle of 'I' is all-pervasive.

God has no specific name. All names are attributed by man to God. Each name, like Padmanabha, Hiranyagarbha, and Hiranmaya, has a profound inner meaning. Spirituality is meant to explain the principle of Divinity and the inner meaning of the names attributed to Him. One who follows the spiritual path should make efforts to understand and experience the principle of Divinity and propagate the same. But, man today has not really understood what spirituality means. He is under the mistaken notion that spirituality means merely offering worship and prayers to God and performing rituals. People should be taught the inner significance of spirituality and various names and forms attributed to Divinity.

In 1968, the First World Conference of Sathya Sai Seva Organisations was held in Bombay (now Mumbai). It was the time when the foundation stone of Dharmakshetra was laid. Indulal Shah was mainly responsible for the construction of Dharmakshetra. He has been working tirelessly for the propagation of Swami's message. His wife Sarla Shah has been a source of strength to him. She played an active role in the development of bal vikas and mahila vibhag. In this manner, both husband and wife have contributed to a great extent for the furtherance of Sai movement in the entire world. Even at this advanced age, they are exerting a lot in the service of Sai Organisation.

It is not possible for all to understand the nature of Divinity. This world looks like a picture painted on a wall that has no support. One has to make efforts to understand the principles of adhara (basis) and adheya (object). Do not waste your time in merely performing rituals. True spirituality lies in realising the truth that man is but a spark of Divinity. This is what is declared in the Bhagavad Gita: Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana (all beings are a part of My eternal Being). Vaasudeva-sarvamidam (the whole world is permeated by God, Vaasudeva). You have to experience this truth and propagate to the world.

Many Sai centres are established all over the world. Each centre has a history of its own. Dharmakshetra is no exception to this. Only Swami knows the innumerable difficulties that Indulal Shah faced during the construction of Dharmakshetra. In those days, there were no approach roads to the place where Dharmakshetra stands now. He had to walk through thorny bushes to select a suitable site for the construction of Dharmakshetra. He showed Me the place for approval. It is situated on the Mahakali Caves road. He worked hard for its construction. Many people helped him in the fulfilment of this task.

It is not possible to undertake a work of this magnitude without the help of others. When you undertake a good work there are bound to be certain obstacles in the beginning. But you should not lose heart. When the ocean of milk was churned by devas (gods) and *danavas* (demons), it was a

deadly poison that emerged first. But that did not deter them. They continued their efforts with unflinching determination, and ultimately obtained the divine ambrosia. Our heart can be compared to the ocean of milk and the sadhana (spiritual practices) to the process of churning. Initially, there are bound to be obstacles when you undertake sadhana. We should not be deflected by these obstacles but should continue our efforts with full faith. Only then can we attain an exalted and blissful state. Many individuals in the past had to put up with a lot of difficulties while constructing pilgrimage centres. Bhadrachalam is one such pilgrimage centre. Adi Sankara, unmindful of the physical strain, walked all the way from the deep south to the north to establish pilgrimage centres at Badrinath, Amarnath, and Kedarnath.

No matter who one is, one has necessarily to enlist the cooperation of others to accomplish stupendous tasks. Where there is unity, there is bliss. In this age of Kali, people have that spirit of unity no longer. There is neither unity nor purity. Hence, enmity has found a place in the human heart giving rise to troubles and turmoil. In fact, unity is the need of the hour. The true strength of humanity lies in unity. As the thought, so is the action. As the action, so is the result. Today, man is unable to reach the goal of his life because he does not entertain sacred thoughts. In the first instance, he should develop sacred thoughts.

There are many who have deluded themselves that they love God. But they are full of body consciousness and crave for money and material things. Such love cannot be true love at all. It is artificial love. Many people write to Me, "Swami we love You. Please keep us near and dear to You." In this context, let Me emphatically tell you that Sai cannot be attained so easily. You may say that you love Me. But how can I believe you? Is there a spirit of sacrifice in your love? There is no consistency in your words and deeds. You make a promise one day and go back on it the very next day. How can one believe the love of such impostors?

True and eternal love originates from the heart. Real love is a heart to heart relationship. It is associated with the Atmic principle, which is present in everyone. Atma is the source of consciousness. Atma and Brahma are one and the same. The love that originates from the heart confers on you the eternal, immortal and non-dual bliss.

But where is such love nowadays? You are heroes in speech but zeros in practice. Today, the world is being duped by such people. Those who have true love in their heart will not indulge in tall talk. They demonstrate their love in action. Today people speak a lot without translating their speech into action. Such people are verily thieves. How can you attain the goal of life if you believe in such unscrupulous people and rely on them?

Your heart should melt and flow toward God. Only then can you attain His grace. People may talk as they please; do not be carried away by them. Unmindful of hardships and difficulties, hold on to the principle of divinity and reach the goal of life. Today, people lack the will and determination to reach the goal of life. How can those who do not understand the goal of life, attain it? True love cannot be fragmented. One cannot have love for God as well as for ephemeral objects and relationships. The love which is fragmented is artificial only. You have only one heart. You cannot break it into pieces and distribute to various people. It is not like a laddoo or sugar cane, which can be broken into pieces and distributed. It is the eternal truth. It is nectarous and full of bliss. Ignoring the immortal bliss within, people tread the worldly path thinking that bliss lies therein. It is only a figment of their imagination. He is a true devotee who makes efforts to attain God with full faith and determination without caring for trials and tribulations.

Having resolved what ought to be resolved, hold on to it till you have succeeded.

Having desired what ought to be desired, hold on to it till your desire is fulfilled.

Having asked what ought to be asked, do not leave the hold till you get it.

Having thought what ought to be thought, hold on to it till you have succeeded.

With heart mellowed, the Lord must yield to your wishes.

With no thought of yourself, ask Him with all your heart.

Persevere, be tenacious, and never give up, for it is the quality of a devotee never to retreat, abandoning the resolve.

(Telugu Poem)

Devotees of modern times are trying to hoodwink even God with sweet talk and artificial love. Such people can never attain God. You should have unwavering faith. Even in times of dangers and difficulties, your faith should remain steady. God can be experienced only in times of difficulties. Kashte phali (hard work yields rich rewards). It is also said, Na sukhat labhyate sukham (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). Consider difficulties as God's gifts and accept them in the right spirit.

Sarla Amma and Indulal Shah had to face innumerable difficulties those days. They overcame all those with courage and fortitude. They reside in Bombay (now Mumbai) which is not an ordinary place. It is like a 'bomb'. Whatever you do, be it good or bad, you have to face difficulties. Being in such a place, they did good work. In fact, Indulal Shah was troubled by many. But he continued his work with unwavering devotion and achieved success. You need to have God's grace to accomplish anything. You cannot but seek the help and cooperation of others to fulfil a mighty task.

Those who are engaged in God's work must be prepared to face any obstacle. Indulal Shah's life bears ample testimony to this. He has been serving Sai for the last forty years with strong faith and determination. He went round the world propagating the message of Sai. Whenever people approached him with doubts, he would give most appropriate answers and clear their doubts. One should be prepared to take up any challenge, be it worldly or spiritual. They have spent a great amount of their physical energy working tirelessly for the Organisation.

I want to share a small incident with you. Last month, Sri Shah had come to Brindavan to see Me. He saw Me resting on the bed and felt very sad. He did not tell it outwardly, but he was praying within that Swami should get well soon. He did not have proper food and sleep during the last one month because he was constantly worried about Swami's well-being. Consequently, his body became weak. Otherwise, he always maintains good health. He has a number of plans for the future of the Organisation. He is praying that Swami should give the necessary strength to implement those plans. Both Sarla Amma and Indulal Shah were very anxious about Swami's health and were all the time thinking of Swami. They do not go by what others say. They depend on their own conviction.

Nobody needs to be worried or anxious about Swami's well-being. No danger can ever befall Swami. Swami comes out of all difficulties and troubles unscathed. He will achieve all success. There may be some changes at the physical level. They are only temporary and not permanent. Hence, Swami wants all of you to be courageous. Now I have recovered and am standing before you.

What medicine did I use? The intense prayers of the devotees are My medicine. During the last one month, be it in Madras (now Chennai), Hyderabad, Bangalore, or Mumbai, devotees have intensified their prayers and spiritual activities. Each and every house conducted bhajans and Namasmarana. Some devotees undertook penance and performed Yajnas. In this manner, a number of spiritual activities were undertaken praying for the well-being of Swami. It is as a result of such fervent prayers that I am able to stand before you and address you. Neither did I want this suffering nor did I desire its cure. You wanted this body to be cured of the pain, and you achieved it through your prayers. This body is not Mine. It is yours. Hence, it is your responsibility to look after this body. I am not the deha (body); I am the Dehi (Indweller).

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later,
but the Indweller has neither birth nor death.
The Indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.
Truly speaking, the Indweller, who is in the form of the Atma,

is verily God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)

The Atma has neither birth nor death. It has no pain or suffering. You may not believe it, but the doctors have seen the extent of injury to My hip. For anybody else, it would have taken at least two to three years to walk normally. The ball in the hip joint broke into pieces. There were no muscles for support. My bones are as strong as diamonds. It was not possible to join them together. Hence, they put a rod and performed the surgery. After undergoing such a complicated surgery, it takes a number of years to walk normally. Without caring for all this, I started walking. Doctors made every effort to protect this body. They did their duty. But I did not think of this body at all. I demonstrate the ideal that one should not have body attachment. Not only now, for the last two years, I have been repeatedly exhorting you to give up body attachment. Gradually reduce your dehabhimana (body consciousness) and develop Atmabhimana (Atmic consciousness). You are not the body; you are the embodiments of the Atma. The physical body comes and goes. The body only has suffering, not the Atma.

When I fractured My hip, it was not possible to even move My leg. The slightest movement caused excruciating pain like that of an electric shock. I told the doctors, "This is not My body. This is yours. You may do whatever you deem fit." One who has given up body consciousness will have no suffering at all.

Satyajit was with Swami all the time. He has a strong determination and has taken a vow to be with Swami always. When I was being taken to the hospital in a van, he sat right near My head. When I was taken into the operation theatre, he followed. Usually, when surgery is done, nobody is allowed into the operation theatre. But Satyajit did not want to leave Swami. He wanted to see what the doctors would do to Swami's body. Hence, he wore the surgeon's dress and entered the operation theatre. I told Satyajit, "You will not be able to bear the sight of blood. Hence, you remain outside." But he lovingly insisted that he might be allowed to stay inside. He was with Me at the time of operation. He saw the doctor making a hole in the bone with a hammer. After the operation was over, he asked, "Swami, how could you bear such pain and suffering?" I told, "The love of devotees like you is My strength." The power of love is the ultimate. You can overcome any pain or danger with the power of love.

You should have strong and unwavering faith without even a trace of doubt. Your thoughts, words, and deeds must be in harmony with each other. Many devotees who have such strong and steady faith became recipients of Swami's grace. During the last month, bhajans were held in every village. Their only prayer was that Swami should recover quickly and grant them darshan. Swami's well-being was uppermost in

everybody's mind. I received lakhs of telegrams from devotees wishing for My speedy recovery. Many devotees were very anxious and were praying within. Their anxiety turned into penance. The power of their penance bestowed good health on Swami. It is because of their love and devotion that Swami is hale and healthy now. I have never used My divine power to cure Myself. If I were to use it, I would have been cured of the suffering in a trice. I don't have the selfish feeling that I should get cured. There is not even a trace of selfishness in Me. Everyone should be happy. This is My only desire.

Everybody should experience happiness. This is the essence of the culture of Bhar (India). This is the Age of Kali. In this age, people will have several doubts, particularly the younger generation who are highly educated --post-graduates and double graduates. It is but natural that under the influence of the Kali Age and with their modern educational background, the younger generation will not be able to develop firm faith in Divinity.

During midnight, at the odd hour of 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock when I get up from the bed and look around, I find these two boys Satyajit and Dilip sitting one near My head and the other at My feet, safely guarding this body. One of the boys, Dilip is working in the Super Speciality Hospital here. He had a fracture recently in his leg and it was still in a plaster cast. In spite of that, he came over to Bangalore, the morning he heard of Swami's indisposition, to serve Swami. Both these boys were attending to the needs of Swami with great devotion. I can emphatically say that none can equal them in their love and devotion to Swami. People may pay lip service, uttering the word 'love', 'love' mechanically; but no one can do such a great service as these two boys have done.

Even at an odd hour, if I just utter the word 'Satya' in a feeble voice, the boy would immediately get up and attend to My needs. He was so alert and attentive. They used to attend to all My needs, including feeding Me. In fact, they completely forgot their own personal needs while serving Swami. All this is due to the great merit accumulated by their parents. It is only because of their parents' devotion to God and the merit accumulated by them that these boys are able to cultivate such noble feelings of devotion and service. Therefore, the parents should first become devotees of God.

I used to tell these boys often that I was feeling better and that they could go and take food. But they would not leave Me. Whenever they received any phone call from devotees making anxious enquiries about Swami's condition, they simply used to reply that Swami was fine. Never did they give any details. They used to answer the queries of devotees with great love and tact. How did they acquire such great love and tact? Not because of higher education or age. It is only because of their intense

devotion and faith in Swami. That is the real quality. Basing on such a noble quality, they did great service to Swami. There are several people ready to undertake Swami's service, provided they got an opportunity. But, none could get such an opportunity. They got this unique opportunity and they made the best use of it. What greater sadhana (spiritual discipline) could there be than serving Swami? What greater fulfilment could there be than Swami acknowledging their love? You will not find people doing such great service for a full month continuously, day and night, at such a young age. Several people may talk of love and service, but you will not find such loving and devoted boys. I have seen great faith, devotion and steadfastness in these boys. That is why they are able to win the heart of Swami. With faith and devotion, one can achieve great tasks, even lifting a mountain.

Take the example of Hanuman. When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama was in great distress. Then Hanuman was sent to bring the Sanjeevani herb to revive Lakshmana. Hanuman did not know where exactly the herb was. Therefore, he lifted the whole mountain on which the herb existed and placed it before Rama. Similarly, a devotee of God must be prepared to undertake any service, however mighty the task may be. Generally, people will have a tendency to run away from difficulties and rush forward to enjoy happiness. That should not be. One must be prepared for anything. The human body is susceptible to several diseases and difficulties. You should not get depressed by them. You must develop firm faith in Divinity. That viswasa (faith) must be your swasa (breath).

Today, I am able to stand before you and give a discourse, only because of the great service rendered by these two boys.

I must tell you one more thing. Millions of people all over the world during the period of Swami's indisposition have ceaselessly prayed for Swami's speedy recovery. Several people have undertaken several vratas (religious vows). Countless telegrams and telephonic enquiries have been received about Swami's health. Particularly, Geetha Reddy, chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh Congress (Mahila Vibhag) stayed for one full month in Brindavan praying for Swami's welfare and hoping to have His darshan somehow. Because nobody was allowed at that time into Swami's residence, she could not get an opportunity to have His darshan. Nevertheless she stayed back with a firm determination, even though she had pressing engagements in Hyderabad. She was almost shuttling between Bangalore and Hyderabad daily by aeroplane during that period. She did not even care for the huge expenditure involved and the difficulties at home. What she wanted and craved for was Swami's speedy recovery. She considered Swami as her very life. That is real love and devotion, which can please Swami. Devotion and surrender to God can cure any amount of suffering.

Another small incident I wish to reveal to you. There was a patient in the U.S.A. She was extremely afraid of the disease diagnosed by the doctors. The diagnosis revealed that she had cancerous growth in the heart region. She and her husband came to Bangalore praying for Swami's grace. I assured them that I would cancel the cancer and that they should not have any fear in the matter. She took treatment for one week and the cancer disappeared! A little malignant portion was left and I instructed the doctors to remove it by surgery. The doctors performed the surgery as instructed by Me. On the very next day she started walking! She is now quite normal and healthy.

There are several such cases. The chanting of the Divine Name can cure even the most incurable disease. That is exactly what she has done. The lady is in the habit of chanting the Divine Name "Sairam", "Sairam" continuously. There are several such people who chant the Divine Name. I have cured several people of the most dreaded and incurable diseases. There are also a number of people whom I have helped in ever-so-many ways. All of them have now prayed for My recovery. It is only their prayers that helped My speedy recovery.

Not only this, I lost vision in my left eye some 9 years ago. All these years I was seeing with one eye only. Now the doctors in our hospital, and also Narasimha Murthy (Warden of Sri Sathya Sai College Hostel, Brindavan), prayed that I should undergo an operation for the left eye, along with the operation for the hip bone. I told them that since I was able to manage with one eye, so there was no necessity for operation to the second eye. But they prayed and prevailed upon Me to undergo the eye operation.

When I wanted to come down to the Sai Kulwant Hall in Prasanthi Nilayam at 7.00 a.m., to give darshan to the devotees, Satyajit prayed that I must slightly postpone My darshan to 7.30 a.m., keeping in view the physical strain I would have to undergo in early morning darshan. Thus, he is anxious about My welfare every moment. Not only he; there are several such devotees with noble thoughts. That is why, Saint Thyagaraja sang his immortal Kirtan, "Endaro Mahanubhaavulu (Many are the great souls)". In fact, it is only because of such noble souls that the country of Bharat (India) has been able to exist peacefully. Bharatadesa is not just a mass of earth. Bharat is verily the heart of the entire world. If Bharat is safe and secure, the entire world will be safe. Unfortunately, the people of Bharat do not realise this truth. Wherever you see, selfishness is rampant. Therefore, cast away your selfish motive and engage yourself in activities that help others. Pray for the welfare of elders. Pray for the welfare of all. That is the real meaning of the prayer, Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu. Pray for the welfare of the entire world, wholeheartedly. You will definitely prosper. I think I have taken a lot of time and caused inconvenience to you.

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Taking the example of these two, Sarla Amma and Indulal Shah, I wish you should inculcate a spirit of service in everybody. I also wish that the bal vikas and Mahila Vibhag should progress well. I wish both of them a long, healthy and happy life.

Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin".

Date: 13 July 2003, Occasion: Guru Purnima, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

13. GOD'S BIRTHPLACE IS A PURE HEART

Date: 19 Aug
2003

Occasion: Krishna
Janmashtamia

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

***All the names and forms are but the manifestations of the Supreme Being who is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute, and non-dual. He is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Auspiciousness, Beauty).
(Sanskrit Verse)***

Embodiments of Love!

Krishnajanmashtami is celebrated to commemorate the birthday of Lord Krishna. Man's Hridaya (heart) is the birthplace of Krishna. To worry over why Krishna and Rama were born on such inauspicious Thithis (8th and 9th phases of the waning and waxing moon) is foolish. It is only when the Hridaya becomes cool, pure and peaceful like the Himachala (the Himalayan mountains), that is the true birthday of Krishna. God makes such a heart His dwelling place which is pure, sacred and peaceful.

From the worldly point of view, Krishna was born on Ashtami in the midnight. People consider Ashtami to be inauspicious. How can the birthday of a Divine incarnation be inauspicious? In fact, all days are auspicious and are meant to confer welfare and prosperity. God incarnates to bestow auspiciousness on all. Hence, His birthday should be treated as highly sacred.

Krishna was born in a prison. All the guards of the prison, who were supposed to be on high alert as per Kamsa's instructions, were overpowered by sleep. Only Devaki and Vasudeva were awake at the time of Krishna's advent. Fearing danger to the newborn child in the hands of wicked Kamsa, Vasudeva decided to take the child away to a safe destination. He gently wrapped the child in a cloth, placed it in a basket, lifted it up on his head and came out of the prison. The doors of the prison opened of their own accord. As there was a heavy downpour, Vasudeva prayed that the child be protected. By the Divine Will of Krishna, a huge serpent appeared there and started following Vasudeva with its hood raised over the Divine child, thereby protecting it from the downpour. By the time Vasudeva reached Yashoda's house on the opposite bank of river Yamuna, it was very late in the night. Just then she had given birth to a female child. Everyone including her husband was fast asleep. Vasudeva quietly placed the divine child Krishna by the side of Yashoda and picked up the female child born to her and quickly returned to the prison.

The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds. They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage. They are most ennobling and elevating. They confer bliss on the sages and seers doing penance in forests.

(Telugu Poem)

None can comprehend the ways of God. Even Vasudeva was not fully aware of what he was doing. He took the child Krishna to Yashoda's house and brought the female child with him. He did all this as if he was in a trance. Radha, a small girl then, was a witness to the entire episode. It got imprinted on her heart. People think Radha was younger to Krishna and talk in derogatory terms about the relationship she had with Him. In fact, she was much older than Krishna, 26 months to be precise. Her feeling towards Krishna was very sacred and became stronger day by day.

Vasudeva became his normal self after he went back to the prison. As he entered the prison, the doors closed behind him and locked automatically. No sooner did he place the female child by the side of Devaki than the bell rang. The guard of the prison at once got up and informed Kamsa about the birth of the child. Kamsa promptly arrived at the prison with all his paraphernalia. As was his wont, he lifted the child with his left hand and threw it into the sky. He held a sword in his right hand and was ready to behead the child as it fell down. But the child vanished as it went up and in its place, a goddess appeared and warned Kamsa that his nemesis Krishna was born and that He would kill him. She was very powerful and none could do any harm to her. After warning Kamsa about his impending peril, she too vanished. Devaki was perplexed beyond words about the happenings. She understood that the entire episode was Krishna's Will. Kamsa became restless and agitated as he came to know that Krishna was being brought up elsewhere. Day and night, he was thinking of ways and means to capture Krishna and kill Him.

Krishna was growing up under the loving care of Yashoda and the story is known to everyone here. Krishna demonstrated His Divine powers in innumerable ways. Kamsa was at a loss how to capture Krishna. He issued an order that all the newborn babies of Repalle be killed. Initially, he wanted only the male babies to be killed. Later on, he changed his mind and wanted even the female babies to be killed. He resorted to such heinous acts only out of fear. As days progressed, the stories of child Krishna's divine pranks spread far and wide. God's deeds are wonderful and mysterious. All the while, the messengers of Kamsa were in intensive search for Krishna. Ultimately, they spotted Him in Repalle and informed Kamsa.

It is said, *Vinashakale Vipareeta Buddhi* (discrimination fails to work when one is destined to be destroyed). Kamsa started sending many powerful demons to Repalle to kill Krishna. But Krishna, with His mighty power, destroyed all of them. Kamsa's end approached fast. He devised a nefarious scheme to lure Krishna and Balarama to Mathura and kill them. Kamsa sent his messengers to Repalle to bring Krishna and Balarama to Mathura to attend some Yajna which he was performing. He deputed Akrura, who adored Krishna and Balarama to persuade and bring Krishna and Balarama to Mathura.

As the brothers entered the city, the citizens of Mathura were mesmerised by the charming forms of Krishna and Balarama. They were already suffering from deep frustration and anguish over the atrocities committed by Kamsa and they prayed to Krishna to come to their rescue. As Krishna and Balarama were proceeding towards Kamsa's palace, they came across a lady who used to supply garlands to Kamsa everyday. Krishna took two

garlands from her. He and Balarama garlanded each other. Then they encountered the royal washerman, took Kamsa's silk garments and dressed themselves in regal style. Later they met a hunchback lady Kubja, who was carrying scents and perfumes for Kamsa. She had an ugly appearance with a crooked body. She knew that Krishna was God. Seeing the two brothers, she was overjoyed and she sprinkled the perfumes on them. She said, "Krishna, today my life has found fulfilment. I must have performed great penance in the past, to have deserved this opportunity to serve You." She then prayed to Krishna to straighten her body. Krishna planted His foot on her feet, caught hold of her chin and lifted it up. Lo and behold! Her hunchback was gone. She assumed the form of a beautiful lady. In this manner, Krishna demonstrated His divine powers by performing many stupendous feats and in the process relieved many from their curses.

On coming to know that Krishna and Balarama were wearing his royal garments, Kamsa was furious. In the meanwhile, Kubja approached Kamsa and said, "Oh master, none can comprehend the divine play of Krishna and His mysterious powers. Don't make any attempt to understand his powers. It is better that you ignore the matter." Kamsa wondered, "How could she speak to me with such impertinence! Surely Krishna has instigated her." At that moment Kamsa's attention was diverted by someone and Kubja, seizing the opportunity, quietly left the scene.

Krishna and Balarama entered Kamsa's court like two lion cubs. They defeated the court wrestlers. Thereafter, Krishna, in a trice, leapt on the platform where Kamsa was seated, pinned him down and rained severe blows on him. Balarama, who was equally strong, joined him. Together they crushed Kamsa to pulp. Seeing the gruesome killing of Kamsa, the assembly was fear-stricken. They were amazed how such a young boy as Krishna could vanquish the mighty Kamsa. There was a platoon of soldiers specially deployed by Kamsa to kill Balarama and Krishna. They too could not withstand the onslaught of Krishna. Ultimately, they fell at His feet and prayed for mercy.

Krishna and Balarama left for Repalle unnoticed by others. The inhabitants of Repalle were anxiously awaiting their return. They were highly depressed as they could not see any sign of their arrival in the vicinity. Mother Yashoda was very nervous thinking of the well-being of her sons. The Gopikas too were drowned in sorrow and started abusing Kamsa, presuming that he must have harmed Krishna and Balarama. All the men and women of Repalle were praying to Krishna all the time chanting His Name. All of a sudden, Krishna and Balarama appeared in their midst to their astonishment and joy. Krishna spoke to them soothing words and pacified them.

Kamsa had two wives. After his death, they went to stay with Jarasandha, their father. Jarasandha was very furious with Krishna and wanted to avenge the killing of his son-in-law. Many of his relatives had also developed hatred towards Krishna. This news reached Yashoda and Nanda as also Devaki and Vasudeva. They were concerned about Krishna's safety. However, Devaki was one of courage and also a great devotee. That is why she could withstand all the suffering caused by her brother Kamsa with equanimity. She was sure that none could harm Krishna. She had total faith in Krishna's Divinity. As the enemies could not dare to challenge Krishna, they tried to harass the residents of Repalle. Krishna at

once came to their rescue and drove the enemies away.

Days rolled by and it was time for Krishna's marriage. Rukmini, princess of Vidarbha loved Krishna and wanted to marry Him. But her brother Rukmi wanted to give her in marriage to his friend Sisupala and was making arrangements for the same. Krishna was well aware of all this. He had a masterplan of His own. Devaki and Vasudeva, after they were freed from prison, were staying in the house of Nanda and Yashoda. Meanwhile, Rukmini had sent a message to Krishna through a brahmin in which she wrote, "Krishna, I can no longer bear the pangs of separation from You. My father has decided to perform my marriage with Sisupala, against my wish. The marriage is scheduled to take place tomorrow. If You do not come before that and take me away from here, I will put an end to my life."

As per Rukmini's wish, Krishna devised a strategy to bring her to their house. In those days, it was customary for the bride to offer special worship to the village goddess prior to her marriage. As per the tradition, Rukmini was proceeding to the temple to offer special prayers. Rukmi, the evil-minded brother of Rukmini had made elaborate security arrangements fearing an attack from Krishna. He had joined hands with Sisupala and Dantavakra, who were bitter enemies of Krishna.

Rukmini was walking slowly towards the temple. She was deeply dejected thinking that Krishna had not come to her rescue. She was unaware that Krishna had indeed come to rescue her and was waiting at the entrance of the temple without being noticed by others. As she reached the entrance, Krishna deftly put her in His chariot and drove away. A fierce battle ensued between Krishna and Rukmi and his associates. Krishna defeated them all. He took Rukmini along with Him and married her. Krishna had incarnated to punish the wicked and protect the pious. Sisupala hated Krishna from the core of his heart because He had taken away Rukmini whom he was supposed to marry.

Krishna had to encounter many odds and hardships all through His life. That is why people consider Ashtami, His birthday as a day that brings difficulties. Right from the time He was born, Krishna faced difficulties at the hands of Kamsa. During his infancy, people of other villages also had to undergo sufferings inflicted by Kamsa. He had to face the challenges posed by wicked people like Sisupala and Dantavakra. Even His marriage with Rukmini resulted in battle. However, He vanquished all His adversaries and emerged victorious.

Krishna spared Sisupala's life for a long time in spite of his hostility. When Dharmaraja performed Rajasuya Yajna, he gave Agratambulam (first offering) to Krishna. Watching this, Sisupala flew into a fit of rage and hurled abuses at Krishna. He described Him as a mere cowherd boy and said that He did not deserve the honour.

"When elders like Bhishma are seated in this assembly, how could you choose a cowherd boy for this great honour", he questioned Dharmaraja. He was ready to fight with Krishna. He said to Him,

Do you think that you deserve this honour because you stole the saris of the Gopikas when they were having a bath? Or do you think that you deserve this because you spent all your time in the company of cowherdesses? Stop this self-aggrandisement and

shut up! **(Telugu Poem)**

It was then that Krishna killed Sisupala. Many are under the mistaken notion that Krishna used His divine weapon, the Sudarshana Chakra (disc) to behead him. In fact, Krishna just threw the plate, in which He received the first offering at Sisupala. In this age of Kali, people talk of Vishnu Chakra and Sudarshana Chakra as the weapons of Krishna. But whatever Krishna used served as Chakra with His Divine Will.

In this manner, Krishna had to wage a number of wars during His lifetime. That is why elders say that the birthday of Krishna, Ashtami, is associated with difficulties. When Krishna was born, the day was Ashtami and the star was Rohini. It is a common belief that whoever is born with such a combination of day and star, will face hardships throughout his life. There is another belief that such a person will be the emancipator of the nation. Krishna destroyed the wicked and protected the righteous. He established Dharma. Hence, do not consider the time of Krishna's advent to be inauspicious. It is a noble and a sacred day.

Later, as time passed by, it was Arjuna who brought the shocking news that Krishna shed His mortal coil. Mother Kunti had become very old. She had lost the power of vision and her limbs had become very weak. She was a great devotee and considered Krishna as her very life. She was eagerly waiting for Arjuna to come and tell her about Krishna's well-being. Arjuna came to her calling, "Mother, Mother" in an agitated voice. She at once asked him, "Son, where is Krishna? How is He?" Arjuna was crestfallen. He said, "Mother, what can I say? Krishna, who is our friend, relative, guide, guardian and God, is no more." Hearing this tragic news, Kunti at once left her mortal body. She was such a great devotee. After Krishna's departure, the entire Yadava clan perished as a result of severe in-fighting that followed. It was the consequence of a curse pronounced earlier on Yadavas by a sage.

The Pandavas decided to renounce the world and retire into the forests. It was a strange situation. On the one hand the coronation of Parikshit had to take place; on the other the last rites of Kunti had to be performed. Making her head rest on his lap, Dharmaraja issued instructions to Bhima to make arrangements for the coronation. He told Arjuna to make the necessary preparation for Kunti's funeral. At the same time, he instructed Nakula and Sahadeva to make arrangements for them to go to the forest. All the three events took place on the same day. Only those with unwavering faith in God can perform such tasks simultaneously with equanimity. Everything happens according to His Will.

Right from the beginning till the end, the tasks performed by Krishna were wonderful, sacred, mysterious and beyond human comprehension. Therefore, it is not proper to consider the birthday of Krishna to be inauspicious. It is a highly sacred day and is to be celebrated with unbounded joy.

Here is another point that needs mention. When this body was born, there was a lot of chaos and confusion among people of this village and also in the neighbouring villages. The epidemics of Cholera and Plague were rampant everywhere. People were afraid to visit each other's house or even drink a glass of water outside. Such was the situation in those days.

GrihamAmmayi(Mother Easwaramma) would not visit others' houses. Kondama Raju, grandfather of this body, was also one of strict discipline and principles. He would never accept anything from others. In those days, I was staying with Kondama Raju. He did not permit other children, including Parvatamma and Venkamma (Swami's sisters) to come near Me, lest I should be infected with the epidemic. But I used to slip out of the house without his knowledge. On coming to know of this, he would gently chide Me saying, "Sathya, why don't you listen to Me? You should not go here and there." He instructed the villagers to bring Me home at once if they spotted Me outside. This way, he would try to restrain My movements. But can anyone restrain Me? I used to move around in the village without being noticed. There were occasions when people of ten different houses would invite Me for food. I would visit all those ten houses, dine with them and satisfy them. Sometimes, Karanam Subbamma would call Me from the window and pass on food packets. She was a great devotee.

Kondama Raju did not relish My visits to others' houses. He was anxious about My safety and well-being. In those days, Reddy and Karanam were the two heads of the village. Subbamma was the name of Karanam's wife and Reddy's wife was Subbulamma. She was feeling jealous that I was making frequent visits to Karanam Subbamma's house. Hence, she decided to poison Me. One day she came to Me and invited Me to her house, saying, "Babu, today you must come to our house for snacks. I will make delicious vadas for You. Come alone, do not tell others about this." When I visited her house, she served Me poisoned vadas. I knew her evil intentions, yet I ate the vadas without hesitation. My body at once turned blue. People who saw Me, ran to Karanam Subbamma and Easwaramma and informed them about this. In those days, there was bitter rivalry between Reddy Subbulamma and Karanam Subbamma. Not only here, in most of the villages, such animosity existed between Reddys and Karanams. People came down heavily on Reddy Subbulamma for her evil act.

Kondama Raju lived in a tribal locality. When he came to know of the incident, he became furious. He summoned the tribals and goaded them to teach a lesson to Reddy Subbulamma. I told Kondama Raju, "Grandfather, being elders of the village, you should not resort to such harmful acts." If you do not stop the tribals from attacking her, I will go and stay with her forever. Both Kondama Raju and Karanam Subbamma acted on My advice and stopped those tribals from going to Reddy Subbulamma's house. In this manner, I removed hatred from the minds of people and strove for unity in the village.

There was never any fear in all my actions. I would eat whatever others offered Me without any hesitation. Once the thatched hut I was staying in, was set on fire by some miscreants. You may be knowing that there was a hut in the place where the Kalyana Mandapam stands now. As the hut was being consigned to flames, there was a heavy downpour of rain, only on the hut and nowhere else. People realised My Divinity. Right from that day, people of Putta-parthi, Kammavaripalli, Jankampalli, etc., started coming to Me with veneration. They were conducting Bhajans in the surrounding villages.

I want to tell you something that happened in the recent past. When I was at Bangalore, there was a wide propaganda that I had a fall and had

sustained a fracture. People of all villages including Puttaparthi conducted regular Bhajans praying for My well-being. In many villages Sathyanarayana Vratam was performed. In this manner, they became recipients of Swami's love. During this period, there was none who did not think of Swami. The glory of Swami has spread far and wide. Whenever I travel from Bangalore by road, at every village enroute people stop My car and offer Arati. On the previous occasion, the road at Chikballapur was blocked by eager devotees, doing Bhajans, waving Arati. They hailed My arrival full-throated, "Sathya Sai Babajiki Jai". People at Kappalabanda and Mamillakunta also expressed their love and devotion for Swami in a similar manner.

The doctor had said that a rest of one year was required for the hip to heal completely. I told that it would not take one year. "The loving prayers of devotees would cure Me in no time", I assured them. I told the doctors that I did not need any medicine or further treatment. The prayer of the devotees is the panacea for this body. Their prayers have given Me immense bliss. In spite of the fracture, I was smiling always. When I was taken to the hospital, everyone was in tears, but I was smiling all the time. The doctors who operated on Me were astonished to see Me smiling. Usually the pain that results from a hip fracture is like that of an electric shock. But I was least affected by it. Even now I have no pain whatsoever. Devotees are My property and I am the property of devotees. I have no fear or anxiety. Even in such a situation, I can happily go round the country. Hereafter, I will travel around far and wide more frequently. You don't need to worry about Swami's well-being. I am always happy and blissful. May you all be happy and prosperous always!

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "***Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam, Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe ...***"

**Date: 19 Aug 2003, Occasion: Krishna Janmashtamia, Place:
Prasanthi Nilayam**

14. GIVE UP DEHABHIMANA, DEVELOP ATMABHIMAN

Date: 05 Oct 2003 Occasion: Vijayadashami Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

The Vaishnavites say that Lord Vishnu is the greatest while Saivites declare that Lord Siva is the greatest of all. People may speak on the basis of their feelings, but in truth there is only GOD and the rest are names.

(Telugu Poem)

You will not be respected if your thoughts and words are at variance. You may speak sweet words, but if your mind is filled with evil thoughts, how can you earn the respect of others? One can be called a human being, only when one's thoughts, words and deeds are in total harmony.

Embodiments of Love!

The Navaratri festival is celebrated all over India, but nobody seems to make any effort to comprehend the inner significance of this festival. The Hridaya (heart) is the abode of the Atma. No being can exist without the principle of Atma. God, who resides in all as the principle of Atma, has no specific name and form. But, People attribute various names and forms to Him. The Gaanapatyas (worshippers of Ganapati) consider Lord Ganapati as great; the Saivites consider there is none superior to Lord Siva. The devotees of Sai consider Him to be the greatest. Some devotees say all are one.

In fact, all names and forms belong to the same God. He responds to the prayers of devotees in whatever form they worship Him. Hence, each one considers the form he worships to be superior to the other forms. It is a sign of ignorance to consider one form superior to the other. What is important is that your prayers should not be confined to mere words. They should be translated into action. It is easy to speak but not so easy to practice. True prayer is that which is translated into action.

During the Navaratri celebrations, the Divine Mother is extolled in various names and forms. All names and forms are based on your feelings. God has no differences whatsoever. No one can comprehend the nature of Divinity. Actually, the principle of love that exists in all beings is the principle of Divinity. Love has no specific form. Divinity transcends name and form. **Love is God. Live in love.** Truth is God. Truth is all-pervasive.

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,
Is there a place where truth does not exist?
Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.*
(Telugu Poem)

There are no different truths for different countries such as American truth, Russian truth, Indian truth, Japanese truth, etc. Truth is one and the same for all. It is uniformly present in everyone. True celebration of

Navaratri festival lies in contemplating on Sathyaswarupa (the embodiment of truth). Respect one and all, for, the divine Atma is present in all. To respect all is true worship. If you want to be respected, you should respect others in the first instance. Give respect and take respect. Understand the principle of oneness, that is Divinity. The Vedas declare, *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). You may call Him by any name and form, but God is one. This principle of unity should be firmly installed in your heart.

God is present in everyone in the form of love. Wherever you go, He is with you. He is the eternal witness. Share your love with others and receive their love in turn. Love is your greatest virtue. Love confers the ultimate joy and bliss. God resides in the heart filled with love. Hence, it is essential that you fill your heart with love. Where there is love, there is God. You don't need to search for Him. He is always in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. Adhere to the principle of love. Never hate anyone. Hatred is your worst enemy. Once you develop love in you, hatred will naturally vanish. If you were to come across your bitter rival, greet him with love. He too will reciprocate the same feeling. How can you expect love from others when you do not have any love for them? It is love and love alone that I practice and propagate. Try to understand the power of love. It is your greatest wealth. None can estimate its value. What does God expect from you? It is only your love. Love is the tax that you have to pay to God for all that He has given you.

During the Navaratri worship, you have to express your love to the Divine Mother in nine different ways. Sraavanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). God wants your love and nothing else. Your love should not branch out in different directions. It should flow directly towards God. If you love others, you will be loved in turn. If you utter harsh words, they will come back to you as resound. Fill your heart with love and compassion. Hridaya is that which is filled with Daya (compassion). Compassion is the hallmark of a true devotee. One who lacks compassion cannot be called a human being. When you practice truth and righteousness, you will be successful in all your endeavors. That is why the Vedas teach, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practice righteousness). Your heart should melt with compassion when you see the poor and needy.

Embodiments of Love!

Having spent this Navaratri in the worship of Divine Mother, your heart should be filled with love and compassion. The heart bereft of love and compassion is verily a cemetery. Right from dawn to dusk, love should be the undercurrent of all your activities. The moment you get up from bed, resolve that you would tread the path of love. Only then can you have the vision of God, who is the very embodiment of love. True spiritual practice lies in connecting love to love. Love can transform even a hard stone into butter. Swami always teaches the principle of love. **It is enough if You call 'Baba' with love from the depth of your heart. He will come to your rescue.** Consider love as your life breath. If there is no love in your prayer, it will prove futile. Love should be 'heartful' and not artificial. Be friendly with all and have a smiling countenance always. What is the use

of talking sweetly if your heart is filled with bitterness? Only love can fill your heart with nectarous feelings.

Embodiments of Love!

Your entire life is based on love. Without love, you cannot exist even for a moment. Hence, develop love considering it as the very form of God. Today marks the culmination of Navaratri festival. Worship of Divine Mother is meant to destroy evil qualities and foster virtues in you. The more you distance yourself from evil, the nearer you will be to the principle of love. You don't need to make any efforts to acquire love. The moment you eschew evil, love will automatically enter your heart.

Students!

There is love inherent in all of you. But, you are diverting it on worldly matters. True love is related to the Atmic principle. Worldly love is bound to change with the passage of time, whereas spiritual love is permanent. Even your breathing process speaks of the presence of love in you. When you inhale, you make the sound 'So' and When you exhale 'Ham'; together 'Soham' means, 'I am That'. The principle of 'I' is uniformly present in all. This can be experienced by following the nine paths of devotion. Never give scope for differences. Understand the unity, "I and You are one". Your love gets fragmented when you fail to visualize unity in diversity. There is only one heart, which is changeless.

Your words may vary, but your heart remains steady. The Gopikas used to pray,

*O God, I offer you the heart which You have given me.
What else can I offer at Your Lotus Feet?
I pray to You I to accept it.
(Telugu Poem)*

Heart is not your property; it belongs to God. There is nothing in this world that you can call as your own. You may consider the worldly wealth and materials as your property. But, they are not permanent.

Lord Krishna declared, *Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam* (as the world is temporary and full of misery, contemplate on Me constantly). Divine love alone is true and changeless. The mariner's compass always points towards northern direction; likewise your love should always be directed towards God. You cannot claim to belong to the mankind unless there is kindness in you. Your life should be suffused with love and kindness. You should dedicate your life to love. You may wonder as to how to pray to God. In fact, you don't need to pray to God. You should let your love flow incessantly towards God. Then you will understand the unity, "I and You are one." There is no second entity.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

You see the body but you don't understand the feelings associated with it. The body is made up of five elements and five senses. But you are not the body.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later but the Indweller has neither birth nor death. The Indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness. In fact, the Indweller who is in the form of Atma is verily God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)

You say it is my head, my heart, etc., then who are you? When you engage in self enquiry in this manner, you will realize that YOU are different from the body. God pervades each anga (limb) of your body in the form of essence. Hence, He is extolled as *Angirasaya Namah* (salutations to the one who is in the form of essence in all my limbs). It is a mistake to confine God to a particular form. So long as you limit God to a form, you cannot attain Him. **You should** realize that God is attributeless, formless and He is the very essence of life. Physical form is bound to change. A child becomes a boy, boy becomes a man who in turn becomes a grandfather. In this manner, your physical form undergoes constant change. But you will remain the same. You are the embodiment of God. Once you understand this truth, you will not be affected by physical changes.

Many of you are anxious thinking that Swami is not keeping good health over the last few days. In fact, My health is very good. Real health is not related to the body. As you equate Swami with this physical frame, it appears as though Swami is not well. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). Do not identify Me with this physical body. I am not Dehaswarupa (body), I am Dehi (the indweller). There is no difference between you and Me. I have all powers in Me. But you are deluded seeing My physical form. Whatever I am doing is only to satisfy the doctors and other devotees. As a matter of fact, there is no trace of ill-health in Me. I am always healthy. **Not only today, till 96 years I will be like this.** I can do whatever I want. But those who go by the physical form think that Swami is ageing. Youth and old age are related to the body and not to Me. I am always the same. I can do anything. However, this body is yours. This has come for your sake. You can change it the way you like. If you think that Swami is strong and healthy, yes so He is. There is no weakness in Me. My angas (limbs) may appear to be weak. But I am not Angaswarupa, I am Atmaswarupa. Wherever you may go, worship God as Atmaswarupa. Do not identify Him with an Akara (form). Give up body consciousness and develop Atmic awareness. Only when you lead a spiritual life, will you be able to visualize the Atmaswarupa. If you identify Me with the body, I cannot walk even two steps. Do not think about the Akara. Have faith that I am the Atmaswarupa. Then I will always remain healthy.

Realize the Atma as your very life. Everyone of you is endowed with divine energy. But you are misusing it. Your youth is in your hands. Your very life is in your hands. You are not the body; you are the life principle. Body is meant to serve as an instrument in your quest for truth. The same Atma is present in all. Here you see a silver tumbler with water. The tumbler is the basis for water, silver is the basis for tumbler and Divinity is the basis for silver. Divinity is not made up of material. Hence, give up the materialistic standpoint. Realize that your Swami is not constrained by Akara, He is full of Ananda (bliss). When you develop such faith, you too will experience Ananda. Many devotees were worried, "Why has our Swami not given a single discourse during the last one week though many others have spoken?" Of course, whatever I speak is love in verbal form.

But remember whenever I come amidst you, the love, the bliss and the strength that manifest in Me cannot be described in words. In fact, I don't require food or drink. Bliss is My food. Develop such faith.

Sage Viswamitra. was taking Rama and Lakshmana along with him for the protection of the Yajna he had undertaken. When they reached the banks of Sarayu, he told them, "My dear ones, you are coming with me **for the protection** of Yajna. In order to do so, you have to remain without food and water and wage a fierce battle with the demons, for extended periods without respite. Hence, I will teach you two Mantras, which will make you free from hunger and sleep." This is the power of Maya. When King Dasaratha, fearing danger from the demons, was reluctant to send his sons with Viswamitra, the sage counseled him, saying, "Oh king, do not get deluded by seeing the physical forms of your sons. They are not ordinary mortals. They are verily divine." But when they reached the banks of Sarayu, the sage was overcome with Maya and taught them the Mantras as if they were ordinary humans. He told them, "Do not identify yourself with the physical body. You are the embodiments of the Atma. You are Chaitanyaswarupas. You are endowed with divine power. Always bear this in mind. You will be free from hunger and sleep."

After the protection of the Yajna, Rama went to Mithila with the sage. They walked a long distance for sixteen days. Yet, Rama was always cheerful and full of bliss. In fact, bliss was His form. Hence develop bliss more and more. Do not confine God to a physical form. I am not this body. Body is made up of food materials.

This body is a den of dirt, and prone to diseases; it is subject to change from time to time; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. It is nothing but a structure Of bones. Oh mind! Do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.
(Telugu Poem)

It is a grave mistake to identify yourself with the body. Give up body attachment and develop Atmic consciousness. Only then will you understand and experience your true form, i.e., Atma. Otherwise, even the smallest physical ailments like stomachache, headache etc., will make you feel anxious. Physical ailments are like passing clouds. So long as you are deluded by body consciousness, you will be affected by them. Once you give up body attachment, you are no more bound by the body and its limitations. When you sit in meditation, you forget your body. Meditation means giving up Dehabhimana (body attachment) and developing Atmic awareness. Everyone While referring to one's self uses the term "I", the principle of Atma. Hence, you are not related to the body. It is only an instrument. "I" is your true identity. You may add any number of "I's", yet it will always remain "I". Such principle of unity is present in all. It is the same for you and Me. It has no difference whatsoever. If you do not give up Dehabhimana, all your education will prove futile. Understand that you are not the body. You are I. Never forget this truth. The physical form is bound to change.

Embodiments of Love!

True Navaratri celebration lies in giving up Dehabhimana and developing Atmabhimana. You can see for yourself what an exalted position you will attain once you give up body attachment. You may be weak physically

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and mentally. But when you develop Atmabhimana, all your weaknesses will vanish in a trice. Establish yourself in the firm faith, "I am God".

(Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan, "***Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*** ")

Date: 05 Oct 2003, Occasion: Vijayadashami, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

15. DEVELOP SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD

Date: 17 Oct 2003 Occasion: - Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth; Sita who proved her chastity by coming out of the blazing fire unscathed and Damayanti who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all nations of the world because of such women of chastity

(Telugu Poem)

Human life is meant to demonstrate an ideal to the world. Man is endowed with infinite powers. But, he leads a life of ignorance, being unaware of his innate powers. Though everyone is endowed with divine powers, only a few are able to manifest them. In others, these powers remain hidden. Everyone should make efforts to realise their inherent divinity. Man appears and behaves as if he is an ordinary human in spite of being one with infinite divine powers. Janakiramaiah (Swami's younger brother) is one such divine power. He was younger to this body by 2 ½ years. However, he was an expert in the field of politics. He would mince no words in expressing his opinion. At times, I used to caution him, "Ramaiah, you do not know the abilities of others. Do not use harsh words. Talk with restraint." He might have used harsh words when the situation demanded, but he was always tender-hearted.

When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama lamented thus, "If I were to search in the world, I may get another wife like Sita, a mother like Kausalya, but not a brother like Lakshmana." In this manner, Rama was deeply touched by the fraternal love of Lakshmana and extolled his qualities. There are many such families in the world where the parents, brothers and sisters have demonstrated great ideals. You don't need to doubt whether such ideal brothers exist even today. They do exist. There may be temporary differences of opinion, but they always have love for each other.

Every man must necessarily make efforts to realise the principle of Atma, which is present in all. The sweetness of Atmic experience is unparalleled. In the spiritual field, what one has to attain is the experience of Atmic bliss. He, who realises the inherent divinity in humanity is a true human being. The Atma has no specific form. It is full of love and bliss. This has to be realised and experienced by every individual. One may know the nature of an individual, but it is not possible to understand and estimate

the nature of the Atma. In order to understand the principle of Atma, you have to emulate the ideals demonstrated by Rama and His brothers.

One day as the brothers were playing a game, Bharata came running, sat on the lap of Mother Kausalya and complained, "Mother, whenever I am about to lose the game, Rama manages to lose and makes me the winner." Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna would tell their mothers that it was their great good fortune that they had Rama as their elder brother. They would praise Rama saying, He was full of love and nowhere they could find a brother like Him. They always wanted to be in the company of Rama and serve Him. There was such unity and love among them. They enjoyed intimate and inseparable relationship. Even today, there are many such brothers in the world. But, the situation of the world is such that people are not encouraged to practise brotherhood of man. Our institutions should demonstrate the ideal of brotherhood and show the way to the rest of the world. You call each other brothers and sisters. Mere verbal expression will not suffice; it should be reflected in your conduct. While in exile, Rama would not bear separation from Lakshmana even for a moment. He would anxiously ask Sita about Lakshman's whereabouts whenever he was not found by His side. In this manner, Rama taught the ideal of brotherhood by His example.

Today, students are acquiring education with the sole purpose of occupying high positions in society. They are not prepared to share their love with their fellowmen and demonstrate the ideal of brotherhood. The need of the hour is to practise the ideal of brotherhood. Brothers should lead their lives in an ideal manner. Bodies may be different, but their life principle must be one and the same. There is no dearth of such ideal brothers in this land of Bharat. But, there are some who are not able to translate their sacred feelings into action and set an ideal to others. It is only when we share our love with fellowmen, can we experience Divinity.

What is the hallmark of a true student? *Manasyekam Vachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam* (those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in perfect harmony are noble ones.) It is said: *The proper study of mankind is man*. But, today we do not find true qualities of mankind. People may show respect towards each other outwardly, but they do not experience true love, unity and happiness inwardly. They say they that belong to mankind, but in reality they have monkey mind.

What is true humanness? You should treat your fellowmen as your own brothers. You deserve to be called a human being only when you cultivate the spirit of unity. Where there is no unity, there you find enmity and hatred. Consequently, the principle of love is lost altogether. Man's foremost duty is to share his love with others. Only then can he realise the dictum: *Brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God*. But, unfortunately, such idealism is not found today. You may not believe in the fatherhood of God, but you must have faith in the brotherhood of man; practise it and experience bliss therefrom. Our country, Bharat will regain its pristine glory only when we achieve such unity. There should be

unity and love not only among brothers but also between the husband and wife.

Today, you have heard that a doctor from Singapore (Dr. Pillai) wants to establish an institution in memory of his late wife. Pillai has been a devotee of Swami for the last 20 years. His wife was also a highly virtuous lady. She always had a smiling countenance and would always speak softly and sweetly. There are many such noble women in this country. It is because of such women that the country is full of auspiciousness, plenty and prosperity. There are many such devotees who express their love in an unostentatious manner.

The country of Bharat is highly sacred. But people are flocking to foreign countries with the false hope that they would find happiness there. The happiness that you do not find here cannot be found anywhere in the world. It is said, *Yanna Bharate Thanna Bharata* (that which is not found in Bharat is not present anywhere else). That is why, Bharat has been able to live in peace and amity with the rest of the world for the past thousands of years. The Bharatiyas share their love with others and maintain brotherly relationship. In fact, they have lived up to the ideal of *Brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God*. In spite of many foreign invasions, the love and unity of Bharatiyas has not diminished a bit. At times, you may find infighting, but this is only a passing cloud. There is, however, the sweet fragrance of love in everybody's heart.

There is no point in talking sweetly if there is no sweetness in your heart. Sweetness in speech and bitterness in heart is not the quality of a human being. There should be sweetness in your thought, word and deed. This is the true sign of a human being. You should fill your life with love. There is nothing superior to love in this world. Man is considered to be most sacred because he has the unique quality of love in him. But you are not able to realise the value of human birth. God incarnates in human form in order to spread the message of love. Once you have love in your heart, you can conquer the whole world. There is love in you, but you are not able to express it in the proper way.

Students!

You read a number of books. You also study history. But, do you go through the history of Rama? Have you understood the strong bond of love that existed between Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna? First and foremost, you should develop the spirit of brotherhood. Even when you come across your bitter rival, address him as brother and talk to him with love. When you address him as brother, his heart will melt and hatred will disappear at once. You can conquer the whole world with the weapon of love. There is nothing that you cannot achieve with the power of love. Love is the supreme power. True human value lies in sharing and experiencing the supreme love. But, today man wastes this noble quality of love in worldly pursuits. This has become his taste. He does not realise that love is Divine. The Gopikas had realised this truth. That is why they prayed to Lord Krishna thus:

Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of our loveless hearts.

Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow.

(Telugu Song)

The power of love is unmatched. When you fill your heart with love, all people will become your brothers and sisters. You will not have enemies at all!

Embodiments of Love!

Truly speaking, you are the very embodiments of love. Let the stream of love flow from one heart to another. Consider love as your life. This is your foremost duty. You may search anywhere in the world, you cannot find anything greater than love. Here is an example. So many of you have gathered here today! What is the reason? It is Swami's love that has attracted all of you. Love is the divine magnetic power present in man. In all the sacred epics like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata, you find love as the undercurrent. Once you cultivate love, you do not need to acquire any other property. You can attain God only through love. He cannot be attained by any other means. Love is the magnetic power that can transform even your bitter enemy into a dearest friend.

Students!

Develop love. This is more important than your worldly education. Love is life. Not merely that. Love is light. It illumines your path and helps you reach the goal. Your journey of life will be safe and secure when you carry the light of love with you. You will never find darkness. Fill your heart with love. *Love is God. Live in love.* This is what you have to learn today. Today, people merely utter the words "love is God", but they do not actually live in love. This should not be the case. Your life should be suffused with love.

Embodiments of Love!

You have heard the talks given by C. Sreenivas, the present and the former Vice-Chancellors. They spoke with love in their hearts and emphasised on the need to cultivate love. They are, in fact, ringing the bells of love in your heart, but you don't seem to pay attention to them. Once you hear the bells of love, you cannot waste even a moment. You will dedicate your whole life to the cause of love and ultimately merge in love.

Students!

You may acquire various types of knowledge and travel across the globe. But, in spite of all your worldly achievements, you may not be able to understand the principle of love. Once you have the taste of love, you will see the world in its real form. Therefore, become truly embodiments of love. Let love flow incessantly from your heart. Immerse yourself in the flow of love. Out of love, emerge truth and righteousness. *Sathyam Vada,*

Dharmam Chara (speak truth, practise righteousness). Truth and righteousness are the two pillars on which the mansion of human life rests. It is love that gives rise to these two principles. There is no knowledge greater than the knowledge of love. You may read a number of Pustakas (books), but love cannot be acquired from such books. What is the use of reading Pustakas when your Mastaka (head) is filled with 'dirt'? It is because of such 'dirt', you become an animal losing the sense of discrimination.

Adore love. Live in love. There is no greater education than this. Traverse the path of love. Partake of the food of love. It is not enough if you merely partake of love, you should also assimilate and digest it. Only then the essence of love will spread to every cell of your body giving you immense strength and wisdom.

Students!

Today's education is leading to agitation. True education lies in assimilating and digesting the principle of love. You are the embodiments of love. You are filled with love. You may not know this, but I can see love in you from top to toe. In future, the principles of Ramayana will be manifested in a glorious manner. The Ramayana will fill your lives with love and make you forget yourselves. Let your love be directed towards Rama. Rama + Ayana is Ramayana.

Students!

I hope I am not causing any inconvenience to you by speaking at length. In fact, it should not be a trouble at all for you. You cannot find the love that Swami showers on you, anywhere else. Day after day, I will fill your hearts with more and more love. I have no other work. My only job is to fill your hearts with love.

(The programme ended with Bhajans by students)

Date: 17 Oct 2003, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

16. THE CULTURE OF BHARAT

Date: 20 Oct 2003 Occasion: - Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

***Verily like a massive tusker
Knows not its own might
The sons of Bharat are quite unaware of the greatness of their
culture,
Tolerance and compassion its beauteous form,
Truth above all other rituals strict,
Mother's love and reverence, the very elixir eternal,
Character, true, greater than mere living of comfort,
Unmindful of ones own heritage,
The Bharatiya runs after fashions occidental,
Sad is the sight, sadder the plight.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

It is enough if there are one or two organisations like this; Bharat can be restored to its pristine glory. The service activities have brought about a great transformation in the hearts of youth. If such sacred activities are undertaken in every village and in every street, the ancient culture of Bharat can certainly be revived. Today, there are very few people who practise and propagate the sacred values of our culture. The Bharatiyas have completely forgotten their rich cultural heritage and are imitating the Western Culture, losing their sanctity. Though the culture of Bharat is ancient, it is ageless and as relevant in the contemporary scene and, hence, it should be practised and propagated in every village.

A few elders of the Organisation have approached Me for guidance in carrying out the service activities. Tomorrow I will speak to the organisers from Hyderabad and the youth, and give them the necessary guidelines. You are well aware how the values have degenerated in the city of Hyderabad which was once known as Simhapuri. People have lost faith in our ancient values and are ruining their lives by aping the Western Culture.

Embodiments of Love!

Words of appreciation or any type of compliments are inadequate to describe in full the great ideal demonstrated by you. I shall provide buses in which you can travel to various villages and perform service activities. Today, the world is witnessing a strange scenario. People preach spirituality on the one hand and act quite otherwise on the other. This has become common especially in the big cities. People in cities, however well educated they are, have completely forgotten our ancient traditions and are behaving in a perverse manner in the name of modernism. The

enthusiasm, dynamism and the ancient traditional values that are found in you, the youth in particular, are not found anywhere else. It is only those who know the greatness of our ancient culture will be able to understand and appreciate the sacred feelings of your hearts. It is most essential that you propagate our ancient culture in every village and in every hamlet. Though the people of villages are interested in disseminating our ancient culture, they are unable to do so for want of resources. Hence, I will give all necessary support and encouragement for the furtherance of this sacred cause. Such ideal students who participate in this sacred activity of Grama Seva will be given admission in our educational institutions. Do not think that you are outsiders. All this is yours. I am yours and these institutions belong to you. You have every right to be here. I am always ready to provide any help that you may require.

Tomorrow, I will address all of you separately and give you guidelines for your future activities. Never give room for disappointment. March ahead with all hope and enthusiasm. Tomorrow, with full of happiness in your heart, wait for Swami to address you. I may come any moment. Never give up chanting the Name of God. The Divine Name is like a boat that can take you across the ocean of life. I will give the necessary strength to your units. Be prepared to undertake rural service activities with great enthusiasm. Today, right at this moment, you must take a firm resolve to develop and expand your activities.

Embodiments of Love!

Today, while watching your excellent programme depicting the rural development activities, I lost Myself in joy. Tomorrow, I will spend more time with you and bestow immense happiness on all of you.

Bhagawan sang the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*" and continued the Discourse.

Embodiments of Love!

Never get yourselves entangled in politics. Keep yourselves away from all political activities. Continue your sacred social work and sanctify your time by chanting the Divine Name. Follow your chosen path with determination and achieve success. Today selfishness is rampant in the field of politics. You should lead a life of selfless service contemplating on God all the time and thus redeem yourselves. Tomorrow morning, I will come and address you at length.

Date: 20 Oct 2003, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

17. THE ATMA TATTWA IS ONE IN ALL

Date: 21 Oct 2003 Occasion: - Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

Oh foolish man! Why do you go in search of God here and there when He is very much within you? Turn your vision inward and you will find Him there.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You are under the mistaken notion that God is separate from you. In order to have the vision of God, you follow various paths such as Japa, Dhyana, Bhajans, etc. So long as you think God is present elsewhere, you cannot find Him. He is present in you. Make efforts to realise the indwelling divinity.

On 20th October 1940, while going to school after returning from Hampi, Baba's collar pin was lost and could not be found. The collar pin symbolised worldly desires. That pin was presented to Me by Narayana Raju, the then Municipal Chairman of Bellary.

The Municipal Chairman took us to the Virupaksha temple in Hampi. After reaching the temple, Seshama Raju (elder brother of Swami) told Me to keep a watch over their belongings as they went inside to have Darshan of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. They went inside the temple. To their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum in the place of Lord Virupaksha. Seshama Raju could not believe his eyes. Seshama Raju said to himself: "Why has He come here when I told Him specifically to remain outside and take care of our belongings?" He thought it was improper on My part to have entered the sanctum sanctorum. He at once came out of the temple only to find Me there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was having doubts. He told his wife, "You go outside and keep a watch over Sathya. Do not allow Him to go anywhere. Meanwhile, I will go inside and see whether He is still there." She did accordingly. He again saw a smiling Sathya standing in the sanctum sanctorum. He wondered whether it was a dream, a mere hallucination or reality.

In those days, wearing a collar pin was considered to be a fashion. Narayana Raju presented Me a collar pin with a prayer that I should remember him always. After we returned from Hampi to Uravakonda, the collar pin dropped on the way as I was proceeding to the school holding books in one hand. It could not be found. But I was least affected by its loss. Yet, I pretended as though I was anxiously searching for it. Some boys who were coming behind Me enquired, "Raju, what are You

searching for?" I told them that I lost the collar pin. They too started searching all over the place. I laughed and remarked, "You are going to school to study. Why are you bothered about the collar pin? Don't worry about it." They said, "It looked so good when You were wearing it." One of those boys ran to Seshama Raju's house. At that time, Seshama Raju and Narayana Raju were discussing as to what could be inferred of My mysterious behaviour. When the boy reported the matter to them, they at once rushed to Me. Narayana Raju very lovingly put his hand around My shoulder and asked, "My dear, what are you searching for?" I said, "I am searching for something." He understood that there was some inner significance in My reply. He said, "Raju, how can You search for something that You do not know?" I told him that I had lost the collar pin which he had presented to Me. He said, "I will give you ten such collar pins. Don't worry about it. Come, let's go home."

That day was the day of change. The link with worldly ties had gone in the form of the pin; the pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose. Baba left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.

(Telugu Song)

Man has two types of desires: One is worldly and the other spiritual. It is said, worldly education is for life here while spiritual knowledge is for the life hereafter. However, man gives importance to worldly education only. He is always in search of worldly happiness. However, I am not interested in such happiness. I told Narayana Raju that the bondage of worldly attachment was lost in the form of collar pin. On coming to know of this incident, the Excise Commissioner Hanumantha Rao came in his car and said to Me, "Raju, what are You looking for? Please come with me. I will give You whatever You want." He had intense love for Me. I told him that I was not searching for anything. People around Me asked, "Are You searching for God?" I replied, "One need not search for God, for He is everywhere. Nor am I searching for a trivial thing like a collar pin." Then I was taken to the house of one H.S. Ramana, who was a lecturer in English. They questioned Me, "What do You want? Is it the pin or God?" I told them, "I don't need a pin. I can get any number of pins, for everything is in My hand. Then, do you think that I am searching for God? He is everywhere. I don't need to search for Him." Narayana Raju asked, "Where is God? Can we see Him?" Earlier I had given him a ring. It disappeared from his finger and appeared on My finger. He was stunned. He asked, "How did it happen?" I said, "I can do anything. Everything is in My hand." (Swami with a wave of His hand, materialised the same ring which He had given to Narayana Raju. He held it aloft and showed it to the congregation.) Watching all this, Seshama Raju was also astonished. He gave up the feeling that He was My elder brother. Shedding tears of joy and repentance, he asked, "My dear, You are all-knowing; everything is in Your hand. Then, what are You searching for?" I also did not address him as brother. I told him that I was no longer bound by worldly relationship. I held the hand of Narayana Raju and asked, "What is this?"

He said, "It is my hand." I took out the pen from his pocket and asked, "What is this?" "It is my pen", he said. "You say, it is my hand, my pen, my body, my mind, my senses, etc. The word 'my' indicates that you are different from all this. Then who are you?" I asked him. Then everyone started thinking, "Yes, what Raju says is correct. We say, this is mine and that is mine, but we do not know who we are." Everybody was silent. They accepted that they did not know their true identity. I told them that I had come down in human form only to make people realise their true identity.

It is the eye that sees and the mind that thinks. (Showing the ring and handkerchief, Bhagawan said) Your eyes can see the ring and the handkerchief. On what basis can you call this a ring? Similarly, what makes you say that it is a handkerchief? You say, mind is the basis for all this. What is mind? Whom does it belong to? You do not know. What you think you know, in reality, you do not know, that is your true Self. Make efforts to realise it.

From that day onwards, many seekers of Truth started visiting Me. They used to say, "Raju, what You are saying is correct. But how are we to realise our true identity?" People quote from scriptures and talk high philosophy but do not know their real meaning. "You say, this is my ring, my body, my handkerchief, so on and so forth. Then who are you?" I questioned them. They had no answer. Then I started explaining thus: "There are two important aspects that you have to consider, one is Drishyam (seen) and the other is Drashta (seer). *Yad Drishyam Thannasyam* (all that is seen is bound to perish). So, whatever you see is only an illusion. You are the Drashta, that is your true identity."

The English lecturer, H.S. Ramana was a noble person. His house was on the way to My school. He used to sit in the front verandah of his house. As soon as he saw Me, he used to call 'Raju!', take Me into his house and offer Me coffee and snacks. But, I was not interested in these worldly things. Earlier, I used to address him as 'Sir'. But, from that day onwards, the worldly relationship of teacher-student had ceased between us. I used to tell him that all that was seen by the eye is merely Drishyam which was perishable and that one had to go beyond and search for the Drashta. From that day onwards wherever I went and whomever I met, I used to teach these higher principles.

Then, one day Ramana called Seshama Raju and told him, "Seshama Raju! Do not trouble yourself much in trying to understand the behaviour of Sathya Sai. This boy is delving deeper and deeper into the mysteries of life. It is not possible for anybody to fathom His true nature. Let us wait for some time and see", saying thus, he took Me into his house and offered snacks, coffee, meals, etc., with great love. Poor man! He did not realise that I was never interested in those worldly matters. I did not touch any of these food stuffs. In My view, they were all worldly things which underwent constant change. They were never permanent. I explained to him, "You brought this Upma for Me. How real is this stuff?"

Only till one consumes it. What happens to it after eating? Nobody can see its shape thereafter. It just disappears. You are all considering these unreal worldly things as real." Thus, I started teaching them higher Vedantic concepts. H.S. Ramana was astonished at My knowledge of these higher principles. Till then, he was addressing Me as "Raju! Raju!" But, from then on he started addressing Me as 'Guruji!' Holding My feet, he pleaded with Me "Guruji! Please come to my house." Those who were witnessing the scene were amazed that this elderly gentleman who was a teacher was holding the feet of this young boy, his student.

Then Ramana declared in front of all those people, **"Not only me; a day will come when the entire world will fall at His feet."** The people gathered there on that occasion were all powerful, holding high positions in society. There was a neighbour by name Ramanarayana Sastri, who was an astrologer. He was called in and appraised of all those higher truths of life which I was explaining to them. Sri Sastri was amazed at My knowledge of Vedantic concepts at such a young age and shed tears of joy. One or two drops of tears fell at My feet. From then onwards, everybody in Uravakonda started addressing Me as Sathya Sai Baba. I told them that I had come only for the purpose of revealing this truth. Unable to comprehend the full truth about My revelations, some of them questioned Me, "How can You declare Yourself to be Sai Baba?" I just took some flowers in My hand and threw them on the floor. Lo and behold! The flowers arranged themselves as Sathya Sai Baba in Telugu letters. On witnessing this miracle, they were wonderstruck and dumbfounded! Then, everybody started chanting in chorus "Sathya Sai Baba Ki Jai", "Sathya Sai Baba Ki Jai"! I emphatically told them that this was a name which they themselves had ascribed to Me and, in fact, I had no name at all! I declared thus on the occasion thus:

***Know that I am Sai in reality,
Cast off your worldly relationships,
Give up your efforts to restrain Me,
The worldly attachments can no longer bind Me,
None, however great he may be, can hold Me.***

(Telugu Poem)

I got up and started walking away. In the meanwhile, all those assembled there including Ramana and Sastri tried to follow Me. I advised them not to be after Me, but, to strive for self-introspection and mental transformation. Since I am not the body, none can hold Me. Therefore, I advised them to follow My ideals. Only then can they realise My true nature.

In this vast expanse of the universe, right from the minutest atom to the mightiest, everything is permeated by the Atmic reality. It appears as the minutest of the minute and mightiest of the mighty. In fact, the principle of oneness that pervades microcosm and macrocosm is the fundamental reality which you have to enquire into. That is why Ramana Maharishi

used to say, "Enquire, who you really are?"

You are not a single entity. You are, in fact, three-in-one,

*The one you think you are, (body)
The one others think you are (mind) and
The one you really are (Atma).*

The Atma is known as conscience and the body which consists of the senses is called conscious. The Chaitanya (consciousness) which is present in all, transcends the senses. There is yet another principle that is beyond consciousness. It is called Super Consciousness.

In the earlier days, not many people knew who Sai Baba was. He was considered a Muslim saint. When I first returned to Puttaparthi declaring Myself as Sai Baba, people thought that I had taken a Muslim name. But, no one can bind Me to a particular religion like Hinduism or Islam.

The Vaishnavites say that Lord Vishnu is the greatest while the Saivites declare that Lord Siva is the greatest of all. Gaanapatyas (the worshippers of Ganapati) declare that Ganapati is the greatest. The educated say Goddess Sarada is the greatest. Shaaktas (worshippers of Shakti) proclaim that Goddess Shakti is the greatest. My devotees say I am the greatest. Some others say all are one. People may speak on the basis of their feelings but in truth, there is only one GOD and the rest are names.

(Telugu Poem)

Different people may ascribe different names to the Atmic Reality and try to define it in different ways. But, the underlying Atma Tattwa is one and the same. This truth has to be explained to the people in an understandable language. You can see that there are some houses beyond. In the front portion of the house, you will find a verandah; then a living room and then a kitchen. Thereafter, you will find a bathroom and a toilet. Thus, there are different names for different utilities. How did they acquire these names? It is only because they are so divided by walls, for different purposes. But, the truth is they are all parts of the same house. Similarly, different people have different names and they establish different relationships with people like mother, father, brother, etc. From where did you acquire these relationships? Everything is your own making. Remove these barriers. What remains is a vast expanse of oneness. One person refers to Divinity as Atma, another refers to it as Brahman and the third one calls it as Vishnu. These are only names ascribed by human beings to the nameless, formless, attributeless Divinity. The Brahma Tattwa is one that has no names ascribed to it.

Where did the Brahman come from? The Atmic consciousness that permeates every living being is referred to as Brahman. When it is individualised, it is called conscience. It is also referred to as Jiva. When the Atma Tattwa is encased in a body, it becomes an individual. The

individual, the Atma and consciousness - all the three are one and the same. People think they are different because they are given different names. Remove the names. There is only one Atma Tattwa in every individual. It has no form. It assumes different forms by joining different individuals. Supposing you name this object (showing a handkerchief) as Atma. It is a handkerchief in common parlance. But, when you look at it from a spiritual angle, it is an object. I call it as thread. Again, after some time I refer to it as cotton; whether we call it as handkerchief or thread or cotton, it refers to only one object. Only different names are given to the object. Take for instance the names of Rama and Krishna. Rama was not born with that particular name. He was christened Rama only after His birth. No. Similarly, the name Krishna. Since He was an embodiment of bliss, He was referred to as Krishna. *Akarshati Iti Krishna* (because He attracts, He is Krishna). But, His real nature is Ananda. He is Ananda Swarupa (embodiment of bliss). The same principle of Ananda has taken different names. This one single principle of Ananda is:

*Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, KevalamJnanamurtim,
Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam,
Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam,
Trigunarahitam*

(God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas).

Divinity has no attributes. How can one give a name to it? Since it is not possible to assign any particular name to this principle, they named it as Atma. This Atma Tattwa is permeating every individual. It has no specific form. Explaining thus, I told those people that it is only for making them realise this principle that I have come. Then, Seshama Raju put a big question. He was a Telugu Pandit. Whatever question he put, had certain value. He questioned, "Who are You?" I answered, "Since you are calling Me as Sathya, I am Sathya. Since you are referring to Me as your brother, I am your brother. Since you call Me as a student, I am a student. By whatever name and form you refer to Me, I assume that name and form. In fact, no one is able to realise the truth. No one has any relationship whatsoever with Me. Call Me by any name, I will answer. If you call Me "Sai", I will answer. If you call Me "Baba", I will respond. By whatever name you call Me, it is the same for Me. All these names are only names ascribed to Me. I have, in fact, come to make you realise this truth."

In the classroom, three of us used to share a desk - Myself in the middle, flanked by Ramesh and Suresh on either side. They were very young. One was eight years old, the other nine years and I was 8 ½ years old. Ramesh and Suresh were not good in studies. Whenever the teachers asked them questions, they would give the answers prompted by Me. It

was the time of our E.S.L.C. public examination. The roll numbers of our seats in the examination hall were so arranged that we had to sit separately, quite at a distance from each other. It was not possible for them to get any help from Me. They were much worried. I infused courage in them saying, "You need not write anything. You just attend the examination. I will take care of the rest."

I completed My answer paper in a few minutes. I took some more answer sheets from the invigilator and wrote the answers in Ramesh's handwriting. After completing it, I took another set of answer sheets and wrote the answers in Suresh's handwriting. I also wrote their names on the answer sheets. When the final bell rang, all the students got up, and I silently placed all the three answer sheets on the table of the examiner. When the results were announced, only we three got first class. The teachers were surprised as to how Ramesh and Suresh also got first class. The mathematics teacher Thirumal Rao called the three of us. He asked Ramesh and Suresh whether they had written the answers on their own. Prior to this, I had cautioned Ramesh and Suresh not to reveal the truth under any circumstances. I told them, "If they ask you any question, tell them that you remembered the answers then and now have forgotten. If you follow My command, I am yours and you are Mine." They obeyed My command and told Thirumal Rao that they had written the answers on their own. There was no scope for any doubt. They could not have copied from Me, since we were seated far from each other. Their answer sheets were in their own handwriting. The local people were overjoyed. They took out a grand procession carrying us on their shoulders.

There was a businessman by name Kote Subbanna. Somehow he came to know that I could compose excellent poetry. One day he came to Me and pleaded, "Raju, there is a new medicine by name Bala Bhaskara in my stores. Please write a song on the efficacy of the medicine which would serve as an advertisement. I will give You whatever You want. I am prepared to pay You any amount of money." I told him, "I am not here to sell My poetry. You give Me the details of the medicine. I will certainly compose a song for you." Then I composed the following song:

***There it is! There it is! Oh, children! come, come!
There is the medicine Bala Bhaskara;
Be it an upset stomach or a swollen leg;
Be it a joint pain or flatulence;
Be it any ailment, known or unknown;
Take this Bala Bhaskara for an instant cure!
If you wish to know where it is available:
There is the shop of Kote Subbanna;
It is in that shop that you can pick it up.
Come here boys! come here!
It is an excellent tonic
Prepared by the famous physician Gopalacharya himself,
Come here boys! come here!***

(Telugu Song)

This song was taught to ten children who went about carrying placards and singing the song composed by Me in the streets. Everybody came to know of the medicine and all the stock was sold out in no time. Kote Subbanna became very popular. His joy knew no bounds. He brought a new pair of dress stitched for Me as an expression of his gratitude, but I refused to accept them.

Meanwhile, our headmaster Lakshmipathy Sastri was transferred. All the students felt sorry about it. Seshama Raju was also transferred from Uravakonda to Kamalapuram. Hence, I had to leave Uravakonda. Ramesh and Suresh were very much attached to Me. Such intense love cannot be found even among parents and siblings. When I left Uravakonda, the other children in the school became inconsolable. Ramesh and Suresh did not shed tears but they could not bear the separation from Me. I was very young at that time and had to obey the command of Seshama Raju. Hence, I boarded the bus and left Uravakonda. Ramesh, utterly dejected, fell into a well and died. The second boy went on repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ..." and ultimately turned mad. He was taken to various mental hospitals but there was no improvement. Finally, his father came to Me and prayed, "Suresh will be cured of his madness if he sees You at least once. Please come and see him." I went to the mental hospital to see him. He was continuously repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ..." Seeing Me, he shed tears and breathed his last.

Later, Ramesh and Suresh were born as two dogs and were brought to Me by an officer from Bangalore. They used to be with Me always when I was in Old Mandir. They were named Jack and Jill. One day, the Maharani of Mysore came to have My Darshan. She was a great devotee and a very orthodox woman. She would always maintain distance from others. She would not touch anything that was touched by others. She was so orthodox that she would insist upon giving a bath to the cow before milking it. As there was no proper road to Puttaparthi, she alighted from the car at Karnatanagepalli and walked the rest of the distance to the Old Mandir. How did she come? She did not want to put her foot on the road used by others. Hence, she had brought four wooden planks with her. She put her steps on each of those planks and reached the Mandir. The Maharani decided to rest for the night in the Mandir. The driver had his dinner and was returning to Karnatanagepalli where the car was parked. During night, there was heavy rain. The driver slept in the car and Jack slept under the car near the wheel. Next morning, the driver started the car, not knowing that Jack was sleeping under it. The wheel of the car ran over the back of Jack and its backbone broke. Jack dragged itself across the river, wailing all the while. A washerman named Subbanna used to take care of the Old Mandir day and night. He came running to Me and said, "Swami, Jack might have met with an accident. It is coming wailing in pain." I came out at once. Jack came close to Me, wailing loudly, fell at My feet and breathed its last. It was buried behind the Old Mandir and a Brindavanam was erected there. As Jack had passed away, Jill stopped

eating food and died after a few days. It was also buried by the side of Jack. In this manner, Ramesh and Suresh did penance to be with Me always. Even after their death, they took birth as dogs to be with Me.

During My childhood, I used to compose several songs with deep meaning and gave joy to the villagers by having them sung. One day, a communist party leader by name Narayana Reddy from Bukkapatnam, approached Me with a request to compose some songs which could inspire our freedom fighters. A doll was placed in a cradle on the stage. I then composed a song in the form of a lullaby to the doll.

***Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
If you cry, you will not be called a valiant son of Bharat.
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.
Did you get scared because the terrible Hitler has invaded the
invincible Russia?
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.
Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
For the Red Army is marching under Stalin.
They will put an end to Hitler.
Why do you cry my child?
Is it because the country is suffering under foreign rule?
Do not cry, my child, do not cry.
All the countrymen shall unite and fight to win freedom;
Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep."***

(Telugu Song)

The villagers listened to the song with appreciation and amazement. Many of them wondered as to how this young boy Sathyanarayana Raju had come to know about Hitler and Stalin. These names were unknown to the people in this region. This song was printed in a pamphlet and distributed in the villages. People from other political parties started coming to Me, requesting Me to write songs for them. Seshama Raju scolded Me, saying that I should not involve Myself in political affairs. I told him, "I have nothing to do with political parties. I don't belong to any party. All parties are Mine. I belong to all."

The song became very popular in the village. They brought a few pants, shirts and towels for Me. But I refused to accept them. I distributed them to other children right in their presence. I told them, "I composed the song only to encourage you, not for any monetary benefits." From that day I stopped writing such songs. Nowadays, I don't even compose Bhajans. I am not writing any articles even for Sanathana Sarathi. Kasturi used to plead with Me to write articles. He would say, "Swami, unless Your Name appears in Sanathana Sarathi, it has no value at all."

All the children in the school were very fond of Me. I too loved them dearly. Whenever there were any special preparations at home like Vadas and Pakodas, I used to take them to school and distribute to other

children. I was friendly with all. I had no enmity towards anyone. Seeing My noble deeds, Ramesh and Suresh developed great attachment towards Me and ultimately offered their lives to Me. Because of their love and devotion, I helped them in their examinations. After that I never involved Myself in matters related to examinations. Once a government official asked Me, "Swami, how could You write exams on their behalf?" I replied, "Why not, Ramesh and Suresh are also My names." In this manner, I can go on narrating various incidents in My life story. There is no end to it. In fact, words are inadequate to describe My story.

I always have special love for students. Similarly, students have intense love for Me. They seek My guidance whenever they have any problem. Even yesterday, a research scholar prayed for My guidance in the preparation of His thesis. He is writing a thesis on Mahabharata. He asked Me a few questions about characters like Bhishma, Bhima and Dharmaraja. I told him that he should find the answers by himself. Right now, you can find the research scholar sitting behind in the verandah. I told him to enquire within to find the right answers.

Students are full of love for Swami. They consider Swami as their mother, father and everything. They address Me as Sai Matha. They sing, "We are the children of Sai Matha." When they consider Me as their mother, how can I not respond to their prayers? Hence, I too shower motherly love on them. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). It is only a reflection of the love they have for Me. The love that exists between Swami and students is that of a mother and her children. Let anybody say anything, Swami is Your mother. I am the mother to those who consider Me as their mother, father to those who believe I am their father. I respond to you in accordance with your feelings. Even your own mother cannot give you as much love as Swami showers on you.

Students!

Work hard and study well. The two boys who are sitting down by My side are feeling anxious that Swami has been standing for a long time. They have been praying that I should sit.

(In the end, Bhagawan permitted two former students of the Institute, who are presently working in different institutions of the Ashram to address the youth.)

Date: 21 Oct 2003, Occasion: -, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

18. LOVE IS GOD – LIVE IN LOVE

Date: 28 Oct
2003

Occasion: Vice-Chancellors'
Conference

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

***One may master all forms of knowledge,
One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,
One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,
One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,
One may count the countless stars in the sky,
One may tell the names of different living creatures on the earth,
One may be an expert in eight-limbed (Ashtanga)Yoga,
One may reach even the moon,
But it is near impossible to control the body, mind and senses,
Turn the vision inward
And achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Today, a number of discussions and deliberations are being held in the field of education. First and foremost, we must try to recognize the true meaning of education. One may read all the available books and elucidate the meaning contained in these books. But, that does not entitle one to be called an educated person. There are several highly educated people today in the world. But, what transformation and discriminatory power have they achieved on account of their education? What benefit has accrued to the world on account of these so called educated people? None tries to understand and evaluate this aspect. It is only when an educated person looks inward that he will be able to realize the true meaning and philosophy underlying education. In contrast to this situation, people are applying their intelligence in worldly matters.

There are, however, some who enquire into the nature of Atma Tattwa. Realising the importance of an enquiry into the nature of Atma Tattwa, we have introduced this concept in the M.B.A. course in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The letters M.B.A. stand for understanding the nature of the mind (M), the physical body (B), and the Atma (A). It is easier to understand the nature of the mind and body. But, to understand the nature of the Atma is not that easy. No one can understand what Atma is. It has no form. It is pure consciousness. Even the educated people are unable to understand that the Atma Tattwa is consciousness. Most of them are able to go up to the stage of conscious. Some others are able to reach the next stage of conscience. The sum and substance of all this is that man today is unable to understand the Atma Tattwa, The pure consciousness. It is only when one is able to understand the conscious, he

can understand what conscience is. Again, it is only when, one is able to understand conscience, he can really understand the principle of consciousness. Thus all the three categories of conscious, conscience and consciousness are interlinked.

Dear Students!

You may feel that spirituality is too abstract and not easily understandable. The Atma Tattwa cannot be understood and realized by merely developing material knowledge. In fact, Atma Tattwa is beyond the scope of material knowledge. It is transcendental. It is fundamental knowledge. It is at the base of all physical, material and secular knowledge.

Dear Students!

You may be under the mistaken impression that spirituality is that which cannot be understood. But, this is not correct. Spirituality is consciousness which has an inner meaning. What is awareness? Our normal understanding of this term is awareness about a particular object or aspect. Take for instance (showing a handkerchief), this object. When a question is put as to what it is, the answer comes that it is a handkerchief. This knowledge about the object is considered to be awareness. Again, when I question you (showing a flower) what it is, you reply that it is a flower. This is also considered to be an awareness. All these are the outer forms of different material objects. This is a cloth (showing the handkerchief). What is the basis for this cloth? The thread. Again, what is the basis for this thread? The cotton. Thus this cloth cannot be made without the thread and cotton. The cotton is the fundamental object that forms the basis for the thread and the cloth. Unfortunately, today we are only recognizing the cloth, but not the fundamental object of cotton, the basis for the cloth. Therefore, what is of paramount importance today is to recognize the Atma Tattwa that is at the root of all knowledge. If one is able to realize this Atma Tattwa, he can easily realize every other aspect.

What is Atma Tattwa? For example, we have the physical body. This body has several limbs which function continuously. But, what is it that makes the limbs in the body function? We hold a particular object, say, a flower with one hand. What is it that gives power to the hand to hold the flower? We smell the flower. From where did we get this power of smelling? We do not make any effort to understand and recognize the inner source of all these powers; i.e., the Atma Tattwa. We say this is my hand, my leg, my finger, my head, etc. But, who are **you**? This "**you**" has to be understood first, so that you can say my hand, my leg, my finger, my head, etc. Whose head is this? Whose leg is this? Unless you understand this aspect how can you say "I" and "Mine"? Vedantha is that knowledge which is concerned about "who are you?" and "who am I?" But, none makes any effort to enquire into himself "who am I?" The fundamental question for the basis for everything in this universe is: "Who am I?" If one has understood this "I", he would have understood everything else. Spirituality is not something ununderstandable or a futile exercise. There

is a fundamental principle in this universe which is the prime mover. We must make efforts to understand that fundamental principle.

Embodiments of Love!

What is Love? What is its nature? From where does this originate? Can a human being live without love? Impossible. That is why, it is said, "Love is God; Live in Love". One has to understand this principle of Love, which is the basis for everything in this universe. Without Love, there cannot be life in this world. There is an underlying power that permeates the entire universe. That is Truth. What is Truth? Truth is said to be "*Trikalabadhyam Sathyam*" - It is present in all the periods of time: past, present and future. However, we cannot come to a conclusion only on account of that dictum. "Sathyam" (Truth) is that which transcends time. There is no tangible form for the concept of Truth. But, there is meaning. We say, "Truth is God, Love is God". We go on repeating the word "God". We make use of this word "God" in different circumstances. Even an atheist says "Oh! My God!", whenever he commits a mistake. People use this word "God" even without knowing its meaning.

However, none can define the term properly. Similarly, none can define the term "Truth". The most appropriate method would be by one's own experience. How can one correctly describe that experience? For example, one can go on repeating $1 + 1 = 2$, $2 + 2 = 4$ and $2 - 1 = 1$ etc., *ad infinitum*. He can only repeat plus and minus, no one can define the basis for the calculations. We are able to give names of different objects in this world. But, we are not making any effort to understand the true nature of these objects. The whole world is full of material objects. This is a material world. However, there is something beyond this material world. That is, "*Buddhi grahyamatheendriyam*" (that which is unintelligible and beyond the grasp of the intellect). That is transcendental. We can count the objects in this world and say that there are so many crores of objects. What is there beyond that number? Thus, when you go on enquiring, you will end up nowhere. The fact is there is a fundamental principle that is present in every human being. When you say "Love is God", that "Love" is everywhere, omnipresent. This fundamental principle of Love is present in every human being, nay, in every living being. When you say "Truth is in me" and "I am Truth" what does it mean? What is that "I" and "Me"? If you analyse carefully, this "I" in you is also the "I" in others. This is the only Truth. This Truth can be understood only by spiritual enquiry. And that too by a steady and sincere enquiry into one's own nature. Few undertake such an enquiry today. We are making use of several terms in a casual manner, without understanding their real meaning .

Embodiments of Love!

You need not have to waste your time, however, in trying to understand some abstract concepts which you are unable to comprehend. You just develop firm faith in the existence of God. You firmly believe that there is God and **you are God**. We cannot understand anything without developing faith. Hence, first and foremost, develop firm faith in the concept of "I". Only then can you understand the second concept "you". A

small example. When "I" and "you" join together, it becomes "we". However, "we" + "He" becomes only "He", who exists forever. The "I" and "you" change constantly. When you are a child you say "I am a boy". When you are a youth, you say "I am a man". Similarly, when you are old, you say, "I am an old man". Thus, you are undergoing constant changes in different stages of life. Hence, there is no use in sticking on to this changing principle. Attach yourself to the changeless principle, i.e., "He". That **"He"** is **God**. That "He" is present in you, him and in every person. "He is everywhere - within you, above you, below you and around you". Therefore this "He" principle represents the omnipresent Divinity. People should develop firm faith in such a Divine Principle. Supposing you say "I love Him" and none else. How can this be true? It means that you do not love yourself. When you say "this is my body", can you believe this body? You cannot, since it undergoes constant changes and is perishable. However, the non-dual principle of Atma Tattwa immanent in the body is eternal and transcendental. It has no other name, except "Atma". Then, the question arises as to who has given that name. In fact, this name did not come from somebody. The Atma is omnipresent. "He" is everywhere. How can one give a name to such an all-pervading Atma Tattwa? It is only a futile exercise.

Do not waste your time in this futile exercise. Develop firm faith in this omnipresent Atma Tattwa and propagate it. That faith is awareness. Without that awareness you cannot exist. This is a rose flower (showing a rose flower). You have recognized it as such. But, who gave that name to this flower? You do not know. You simply repeat a name that is given to a flower in the English language. Thus, we go on repeating the words without understanding the underlying Truth. Hence, first and foremost, one has to turn his vision inwards and meditate upon the Atma Tattwa present in him. This Atma Tattwa can be realized only by constant sadhana. It is only after realizing this Atma Tattwa can one enter into any discussion. Also understand the nature of the physical body. The physical body consists of various limbs. In all these limbs, you will find the principle of "I", immanent. That is why, you say that this is my body, my hand, my finger, etc. When you go on enquiring into the nature of the body, you will realize that the same principle of "I" is present in all the limbs. It is very difficult to understand the spiritual concepts. But, you should not give up your sadhana on that score. On the other hand it has to be pursued vigorously. It is futile to run after the worldly objects. If you are able to understand the Atma Tattwa, it amounts to understanding everything else. If you go on enquiring "who am I", you will ultimately realize the Truth that the "I" principle is nothing but the Atma Tattwa. Develop firm faith in that Atma Tattwa.

Several people give different names to the principle of Atma Tattwa. But, it has no name and form at all. It is beyond all names and forms. It is transcendental. The power of consciousness immanent in man is not to be found anywhere else. One has to understand and realize this consciousness. This is possible only by constant sadhana and enquiry.

Embodiments of Love!

You students cannot understand spiritual concepts so easily. However, if you develop firm faith, you will be able to understand these things easily. But today people have become blind having lost the eyes of faith. What is Prema (Love)? You do not know. What is darkness? Is there anybody today who has seen darkness? Just close your eyes. What do you see? You reply that you are seeing darkness. It means that you are able to see and recognize darkness. Otherwise, how can you say that it is darkness? Therefore, it is established that there is a basis for everything in this world. In order to realize the Truth, one has to develop faith. You carry on your life's journey with firm faith as your guide. You are going somewhere, unless you know where you are going, how can you reach your destination? Hence, make a firm resolve that you are going to the Mandir. Only then can you reach the Mandir. Similarly, first and foremost, make Atma Tattwa as your goal in life's journey.

Embodiments of Love!

You are not able to understand what real Prema (love) is. You love the physical body and its beauty. You love wealth. You love the external form. You love one's outward behaviour. Wherefrom do all these things come? What is the basis for all these aspects? How long will these external forms remain? All of them undergo changes continuously. What is the use of clinging to these changing external forms? You must direct your love to the changeless principle of Atma Tattwa. The Atma Tattwa does not undergo any change, whatsoever. Nothing can be added to it nor deleted from it. Therefore, you must develop firm faith in such a changeless principle. You often say that you love so and so very much. But, what do you know of him? Do you love his physical form? Did you develop liking for his behaviour? Do you love his sweet disposition? What is it that has drawn you to him? In fact, all these factors are only transitory. There is, however, one quality in you that is responsible for all this. That is love. That love of God. Love is His form.

Hence, you cultivate love for love's sake. There cannot be life without love. A small example to illustrate the point. A mother has a son. He is 20 years old. After sometime, the son died. Then, the mother was wailing over the body of the son "Oh! Son! I was able to live as long as you were alive. How can I live now?" Such type of grief is the result of attachment of the mother developed towards the physical form of the son. It is not true love. What is important is love; but not love for the physical form. It is only those who are able to love for love's sake, can attain real love. Those who love the physical body do so as long as the body is present. Thereafter the love ebbs away. Therefore, love for love's sake. Such love is life. That life is God. That is Atma Tattwa, verily. Atma Tattwa is the only reality.

Embodiments of Love!

You have to seek love through love only. The Gopikas prayed thus:

Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of loveless hearts.

Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow.

(Telugu Song)

The rivers of love must flow continuously. It is enough, if you can understand the one principle of love. This love is everything. Treat this love as the be-all and end-all of your life. Do not direct your love towards material objects. If you continue to love for love's sake, then such a love will be eternal. It is not the body that is to be loved, but the principle of love. All the names and forms are evanescent and impermanent. We should not love such things. Love directed towards such things is physical, whereas love for love's sake is eternal. Consider Truth as Truth. You should not associate Truth with material objects. Similarly, love should not be associated with material objects. Love is simply love. As such, love is God. You must attain Divinity with such love.

Dear students!

You encounter several appointments (expectations) and disappointments in life. When you have an appointment, you will have a disappointment also when it is not fulfilled. Therefore, do not have appointments (desires) at all. Then, there is no scope for disappointment. Do not give importance to the form. In fact, your Atma Tattwa represents your true form. Do not confine Divinity to a particular name and form. The names like Rama, Krishna, Govinda are only names attributed by man to God. They are not innate. Not much of importance can be attached to them. However, one has to take a particular name in the initial stages of his spiritual quest. For instance, it is necessary to acquire different types of education. It is also necessary to realize the essence of all the education. That is, of course, the Truth. But how long? Until you experience that essence. Once you experience the essence of knowledge, even that vanishes. Hence, do not depend upon the name and form. Truth is Truth. That is the only Truth. It has no form. Love is God. Love has no form. Cultivate such Divine Love. God exists. There can be no doubt about it. If God does not exist, there is no scope for nature to exist. From an experience of Prakruthi (Nature) emerges apprehension of Paramathma (the supreme self). From Paramathma, the realization of Paratattwa (Supreme Reality) springs. That Paratattwa is Atma Tattwa. Therefore, always love that Paratattwa. Do not confine your love to the particular, which is always susceptible to change. Time permitting, I will delineate on this Prema Tattwa (Principle of Love) in greater detail. When students are able to understand the nature of this divine love, there can be no scope for disappointment. They are always engrossed in appointment and disappointment. Love has only a name, but no form. You can direct that love towards any form.

Embodiments of Love!

God can be attained only through one route. That is Love. That is Truth. Do not confine the principle "I" to a particular form. A small example. Janakiramaiah (younger brother of Swami's physical body) died recently. There are several people who loved him. They have been making obituary references everyday in the newspapers, saying "Janakiramaiah! You have left your mortal coil, leaving us alone. You please take birth again, so that we can love you again". Is it necessary for Janakiramaiah to take birth once again in order that these people may love him? Is that what these people wish for? Should we confine our entire life to birth and death only? In fact, both birth and death are unreal. Where there is birth, there is death surely. The twin stages of life, i.e., birth and death are only for the body, not for the Atma. We have to direct our love towards the Eternal Atma Tattwa, not the body which is subject to birth and death. I often address you as "Bangaru!" What is the underlying meaning in addressing you in that manner? Gold as a metal does not perish. Its shape changes when it is melted and made into different types of ornaments. You, as gold may take different forms, but your Atma Tattwa does not undergo any change. You have to strive to attain the changeless principle of Atma Tattwa, but not the changing forms. I address you as "Bangaru!", reminding you of your real nature, i.e., the changeless Atma Tattwa. Gold is always gold. It is Truth. It is eternal. You have to always crave for attaining such an eternal reality. Keeping this aspect in view only, Adi Shankara in his famous "Bhaja Govindam" sang thus:

*Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.*

(Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death; time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying in the mother's womb. It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life. Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.)

We have to crave for that principle which has no birth and death. Why should we wish to be born again?

Embodiments of Love!

There is Divine Love in you which has neither birth nor death. You direct your love towards that Divine Love. That love is always with you. If you cultivate such love, you will always remain as embodiments of love. Have firm faith in this Divine Love. Do not believe the worldly love, lest you should be deceived. The worldly love is like passing clouds. Such clouds come and go. They are not permanent. Love the eternal love. That is the Atma Tattwa. Love that Atma Tattwa. People who wish to enter the spiritual field and to know the path that leads to Divinity, please come to Me. I will explain. Do not be deceived by worldly love that causes only disappointment. Cultivate such type of love that will not cause disappointment. Pursue any type of education; but, understand the inner

meaning of education. Then put it into practice, experience and enjoy that essence of that education. Do not be disappointed by directing your love towards all and sundry. Several students are being disappointed in that manner. In the end, they are unable to love anybody. That is not the right way. Love the principle of Love itself, which is Divine and Eternal. The more you love that Divine Love, the more it grows.

Embodiments of Love!

I always address you as "Embodiments of Love!" Cultivate such type of love only. When you cultivate such love, it will, in turn, protect you. That is what is meant by the saying, "with you, in you and around you".

(Bhagawan concluded the Divine Discourse with the Bhajan "***Prema Muditha Manase Kaho...***")

(The Programme ended with singing of the National Anthem.)

**Date: 28 Oct 2003, Occasion: Vice-Chancellors' Conference,
Place: Prasanthi Nilayam**

19. DIVINE DISCOURSE

Date: 22
Nov 2003

Occasion: Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai
Institute of Higher Learning

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

This land of Bharat is the motherland for great people, who acquired name and fame in different continents. This land of Bharat is the battlefield where the warriors of the foreign country were driven out and freedom from foreign rule acquired. This land of Bharat has acquired great name and fame for erudite scholarship. This land of Bharat is a divine land which has produced great intellectuals in the fields of music, art, literature and various sciences. Having been born in such a great land of Bharat, Oh students! The responsibility to protect the wealth of righteousness of this country is yours.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Bharat has earned great reputation in all fields of human endeavour, be it physical, spiritual, moral and ethical. It is a matter of great pride to declare "I am a Bharatiya". Having been born in this sacred land of Bharat and having enjoyed its wealth, water and food, it is unfortunate that some people feel ashamed to identify themselves as Bharatiyas. Many people born in this sacred land have earned good reputation. But unfortunately, Bharatiyas instead of marching ahead with courage and determination are falling back. Truly speaking, to earn the epithet of Bharatiya is in itself a great honour. Having earned such appellation, the citizens of this country should become role models for the rest of the world. The culture of Bharat is renowned worldwide for its sacredness. It has demonstrated great ideals in moral, ethical and spiritual fields. Having taken birth in such a sacred land, how noble a Bharatiya should be! You should uphold the prestige and honour of this country.

Embodiments of Love!

The sacred culture of Bharat should be practised and propagated in every nook and corner of the country. It should be passed on to generation after generation. But alas! many Bharatiyas are migrating to foreign lands forgetting their own motherland. To forget ones motherland amounts to ingratitude. Every son of Bharat should live true to his name and bring glory to the motherland. But instead some are bringing bad name to the country. Bharat is a sacred land, its glory keeps increasing day by day. You need not make any special effort to bring good name to the country;

it is enough if you lead your life in an ideal manner like a true Bharatiya.

Embodiments of Love!

Bharat is the crest jewel among all nations. It rests on the strong foundation of love. It has demonstrated ideals in all fields of life. One who forgets such a sacred land will certainly be put to disrepute. Wherever you go, you should feel proud to proclaim that you are a Bharatiya. People with such patriotism and nationalism are very rare these days. Instead of bringing glory to the motherland, people are going abroad to meet their selfish ends. Having gone there, they forget the motherland and spend their time and energy for the progress of that country. You can very well imagine the fate of a person who forgets his mother. Mother and the motherland are to be revered by one and all. Bharat is the land of the Vedas. The glory of Bharatiya culture cannot be described in words. You should make effort to uphold this sacred culture and earn a good name for yourself. You should strain every sinew and discharge your duties to perfection. But Bharatiyas who are supposed to demonstrate idealism to others are failing in this regard. Since ancient times, Bharat has demonstrated idealism to all nations. The name and fame that Bharat has acquired is unmatched. Bharat is the centre of righteousness. It lays great emphasis on the practise of truth and righteousness. Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak truth, practise righteousness). But today people have lost regard for truth and righteousness. Dharayati iti Dharma (that which supports is Dharma). The code of conduct as prescribed by the culture of Bharat is most ideal and should be practised by one and all.

Embodiments of Love!

Ancient Bharatiyas never craved for name and fame. They attained glory on account of their nobility. The culture of Bharat has laid great emphasis on the spirit of sacrifice. Our ancients placed national interest above self-interest. They had no trace of selfishness in them. That is why their glory has not diminished a bit with the passage of time. They took refuge in righteousness. They considered truth as their life-breath. But today are we making any efforts to uphold the pristine glory of Bharat? Days are rolling by but Bharatiyas are not striving for the uplift of the nation, instead they are forgetting their own culture. He is a true Bharatiya who is prepared to sacrifice even his life for the sake of Dharma.

This land of Bharat is the motherland for great people, who acquired name and fame in different continents. Bharat Matha (mother India) was adorned with the garland of righteous people. But such garland has faded today. But the culture of Bharat will never fade with the passage of time. It is eternal and immortal. Ancient Bharatiyas adhered to Sathya and Dharma even in small matters. Sathya and Dharma were their guiding principles. That is why their lives continue to inspire people even after many aeons and generations. But today Bharatiyas are after money. How

long will the money last. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. You can be called a Bharatiya only when you develop morality.

Students - Boys and Girls!

Remember always that your education is not merely to amass wealth or to eke out a livelihood. Money cannot confer true happiness on you. Do not deviate from Dharma for the sake of Dhana (money). Dharma is our life, truth is our breath. Good reputation is our wealth. You should not crave for worldly name and fame. Once you practise Dharma, you will naturally attain good reputation. Dharma is related to the heart. Practise of Dharma is termed as Ritam which will make you immortal. But today we do not find anybody adhering to Ritam. Bharat has given birth to many great scholars, poets and men of sacrifice who demonstrated great ideals. But today people have forgotten them. We should always remember people who have sacrificed their life for a noble cause and try to emulate them. It is the spirit of sacrifice that has protected and sustained this country for many ages and generations. Sacrifice is the Dharma of Bharatiyas. You should offer your lives for the protection of Dharma and not for amassing wealth.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the eternal principle that is present in all. There is no human being without love. But he is using his love for selfish purposes. You should eschew selfishness and self-interest and develop spirit of sacrifice with courage and conviction. How can you become courageous? It is possible only when you practise Dharma. Bharat has given birth to many noble persons who sacrificed their lives for the cause of Dharma. Endaro Mahanubhavulu, Andariki Vandanamulu (there are many great souls; I prostrate before all of them). They never craved for name and fame. They led a life of Thyaga (sacrifice). Thyaga is true Yoga. You should practise this Yoga and become deserving of Divine grace. Your studies are not meant for the acquisition of money but for understanding the nature of mind. Today wherever you see, money is given prime importance. Even the field of music has become money-centred. Music can captivate the heart. It is divine. M.S. Subbulakshmi has earned great reputation with her melodious singing. She never craved for money. She dedicated her music to uphold the glory of Bharat. Everyone should strive for the honour of the country. No doubt man has acquired expertise in the fields of music, literature and fine arts, but he is using his skill to earn money. He has become business-minded. Any activity done with a business mind cannot please the heart. You should conduct self-enquiry and develop spirit of sacrifice. Only then can there be a transformation of heart.

Where there is self-confidence, there is self-satisfaction. Where there is self-satisfaction, there is self-sacrifice. And, through self-sacrifice comes self-realisation.

So long as you do not give up selfishness, you cannot achieve anything worthwhile in life. Fish is better than selfish. You should cast aside selfishness and cultivate selflessness.

Embodiments of Love!

You are acquiring various types of education. In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his evil qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu Poem)

You should acquire the knowledge of the Self. Consider it as your very life. Knowledge is your true energy. But man is ruining his energy because of his selfishness and self-interest. You should sacrifice your self-interest. Only then can you be truly called the children of Bharat.

Students - Boys and Girls!

Give up selfishness. Develop the spirit of sacrifice. Be prepared to sacrifice your life for the sake of Sathya and Dharma. Today people are afraid to follow the path of truth. Why should one be afraid to speak truth? In fact, one should be afraid to utter falsehood. One who adheres to truth is always fearless. When you do not follow the path of truth, the fire of fear will burn you to ashes.

Embodiments of Love!

Consider love as your life and truth as your breath. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between love and truth. Today man uses the word love without actually knowing its meaning. As he does not know the value and meaning of love, he is utilising it for trivial and mundane purposes. He is under the mistaken notion that worldly and physical attachment is love and considers such love as his life. True love will reign supreme only when he gets rid of selfishness and develops spirit of sacrifice. Love is God, God is love. But you are craving for worldly love which is bereft of life. You should aspire for divine love which is your very life.

Today there are many who are highly educated. But what is the help they are rendering to society? Practically nothing. They are acquiring degrees for the sake of earning money. They do not serve society with the spirit of love and sacrifice. Love is the very form of Brahman. True spiritual discipline lies in connecting your love with divine love. Your life will be sanctified when you have steady and selfless love.

Embodiments of Love!

Modern students are taking to wrong path in the name of love. They do not understand what true love is. Love is the gift of God to every man. It should be utilised for the service of society. Unity is very essential for the progress of community. Man should share his love with others. Only then will he have the right to be a part of society.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is a small word, but it is pregnant with profound meaning. But people use it in the worldly sense, "I love you, I love you ..." You should be prepared to sacrifice for others all that is dear to you. That is true love. Love is God, live in love. Only then will you be able to understand the true nature of love. Do not misinterpret love in the worldly sense. Do not equate love to physical relationship. You should be prepared to give up your love for love. But today nobody is prepared to sacrifice their life for love. People are ready to take others' life to meet their selfish ends.

Students!

You might have acquired high educational qualifications. But all these will prove futile if you do not earn Divine love. Only God's love is true and eternal. Worldly love is transient. It attracts you for a moment like a twinkling star. Acquire divine love which is the fundamental principle of your life. Be prepared to offer your life for the sake of Divine love.

Students!

All of you should live like brothers and sisters. All are the children of God. When you realise this truth, you will experience true love. You are born to different parents but the life principle in each of you is one and the same. Consider love as your life. Only then the education you acquire will be meaningful. If you forget love, your life becomes meaningless. Live for the sake of love. Share your love with your fellowmen and become recipients of Divine love. What you have to share with others is not worldly love. True love is related to the heart. People talk of Divine love but get intoxicated by drinking the deep wine of worldly love. Love everybody without a trace of selfishness. That is Divine love. Only when you develop such love can you attain the ultimate merger with the Divine. Pray to God for His love. Lead your lives spreading the message of love. Love is the goal of your life. Once you become the recipient of God's love, you will be loved by the whole world. Such is the power of God's love. It is totally selfless and sacred. Hence, always pray for His love.

Embodiments of Love!

I am prepared to do anything, even sacrifice My life for your welfare. I expect from you only one thing - Love God, Live in God. Only then can you be called a true student. If you crave for worldly love, you will become a stupid. Heart-to-heart, love to love - This is the type of relationship you should develop. Do not crave for money. It comes and goes. Share your love with everyone wholeheartedly. Bereft of love, heart becomes dry. Fill it with love and keep it always pure and fresh. Love is not related to materials. It is related to the heart.

Students!

What is Vidya (education)? It is not study of matter. True education is the experience of effulgent love. Any number of electric bulbs cannot match the effulgence of love. Hence, develop love Bangaru! Only then will your education be fruitful. Knowledge is God's gift. It should not be offered to

others; it should be offered only to God.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is your life. Love is your goal. The Bhagavadgita also lays great emphasis on the principle of love. Having studied here for a long time, you should fill your life with love. You have immense love for Me. It cannot be described in words. Love others as you love Swami. Give Me your love. Take My love in turn. There is no trace of body attachment in Me. Doctors said they would perform hip surgery on Me. I told "You can do whatever you want. I am not the body. This body is yours." Your love becomes worldly in nature when you have body consciousness. You should develop such love which transcends body consciousness. Only then can you understand the eternal truth. When you truly experience Divine love, you will not lead a worldly life. You will make your love flow incessantly towards God.

(The function concluded with the singing of National Anthem.)

**Date: 22 Nov 2003, Occasion: Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai
Institute of Higher Learning, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam**

20. MOTHER'S ROLE IN HUMAN VALUES

Date: 23 Nov
2003

Occasion: Birthday
Celebrations

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

***Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace, the value of all your education is zero,
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace, the result of all your good deeds is zero,
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace, the utility of holding positions of authority is zero,
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace, the sanctity of all your acts of charity is zero,
These four qualities are the four pillars that support the mansion of Sanathana Dharma.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

The mansion of human life rests on the four pillars of truth, righteousness, love and peace. The safety and security of life depend on these four values. Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has been able to sustain itself as it is built on the bedrock of these values. Our ancestors led their lives strictly adhering to these eternal values. Bereft of these values, the mansion of life will collapse in a moment. Humanity continues to exist till this day only due to the fact that he/she is practising these four values at least to a certain extent.

The individual child's life is greatly influenced by the qualities of the parents. The loving care of Jijabai made Shivaji a great warrior. Rama's divinity blossomed because of the noble qualities of His mother Kausalya. The twins Lava and Kusha could become powerful and famous due to their noble and virtuous mother Sita. The same can be said of our ancient sages and seers. They could sanctify their lives because of the noble influence of their parents. Today, people neglect their parents as they fail to recognise the impact and influence they bear on their lives. They forget the fact that they could attain exalted position in life only because of their parents. Gandhi became a Mahatma because of his pious mother Putlibai. She used to observe a strict vow wherein she would wait for the cooing of the cuckoo before partaking of her food. However, on one day, she had to wait for a long time for the call of the cuckoo without taking food. The young Gandhi could not bear to see his mother fasting for such a long time. Hence, he went out of the house and imitated the cooing of the cuckoo. Then he came inside and told, "Mother, now that the cuckoo has made its call, please take your food." She at once recognised that her son was telling a lie. Unable to contain her grief, she slapped Gandhi on his cheeks and said, "What sin have I committed that such a liar should be

born to me!" She was shedding tears as she spoke. Gandhi repented and prayed for her forgiveness. He took a pledge that he would never utter a lie thenceforth. In this manner, our ancients developed virtues and attained exalted position only because of their mothers. Today, the country is facing hardship as people have no regard for truth and are indulging in falsehood in their thoughts, words and deeds. The welfare of a nation depends on the teaching that the mother imparts to her children. When parents tread the path of truth, the children would naturally emulate them.

In olden days, it was a common practice among the women of Bharat to perform the sacred ritual of Sathyanarayana Vratam, on every full moon day. Likewise, mother Easwamma used to perform Sathyanarayana Vratam every full moon day in the company of Karanam Subbamma, who was her neighbour. Karanam Subbamma would often tell Easwamma, "You are performing Sathyanarayana Vratam. With His blessings, you will bear a son. I want you to name him Sathyanarayana." On a particular full moon day, Easwamma did not have food till very late in the afternoon as she was participating in the Sathyanarayana Vratam being performed in Subbamma's house.

The family members including her husband Pedda Venkama Raju were very much upset to see her remain without food for such a long time. Pedda Venkama Raju argued that there was no need to observe such severe austerities. But Easwamma was determined. She told them not to wait for her saying, "I am not at all hungry. Sathyanarayana Vratam is more important for me than food." After the ritual was completed, Subbamma brought Prasadam (blessed food) for Easwamma. Only after partaking of the Prasadam did Easwamma have her food that day. Women in those days used to perform such rituals with all sincerity and devotion. It was only after partaking of Prasadam could Easwamma conceive. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). Some people have faith in scriptural injunctions and adhere to them with earnestness, whereas some others ignore them. Easwamma was the one who followed the injunctions strictly. Only after performing the Vratam and partaking of the Prasadam, would she commence her household chores. She was unlettered. But she had unflinching faith in God. During the seventh month of her pregnancy, one day Subbamma told her, "Easwamma, the child in your womb is safe only due to the grace of Lord Sathyanarayana." She extracted a promise from her that the child would be named Sathyanarayana. The mother of Pedda Venkama Raju was also a great devotee of the Lord. She too was of the opinion that the child should be named after Lord Sathyanarayana.

Prior to the birth of the child, a very significant incident took place. Puttaparthi, was then a tiny hamlet. In the centre there was a well from which people would draw water. One day Easwamma was fetching water from the well. All of a sudden she saw a white luminous light, emerging like lightning from the sky, entering her womb. There was a sudden gust of wind. Subbamma who came out of her house at that time

saw the light entering the womb of Easwamma. Till this day, I have not revealed this to anyone. I am disclosing this today so that you may understand the significance associated with the advent of the Avatar. A day prior to this, as Pedda Venkama Raju was passing in front of Subbamma's house, she called him inside and told him, "Venkama Raju, tomorrow when the child is born, name him as Sathyanarayana." But he brushed her advice aside saying, it was her foolish imagination.

At 3 o'clock in the morning, at an auspicious moment, the child was born. It is natural for any child to cry when it is born. But this child did not cry at all. The midwife and the people in the household were anxious that the child might be stillborn. Easwamma too was very much worried. Without anybody noticing her, she pinched the child to make it cry. On the contrary, to her utter surprise, the baby started smiling. Everyone was mystified to see the newborn babe smiling. Just then Subbamma entered the house and said, "Easwamma, I heard that you have given birth to a male child at an auspicious moment. Can I have a glimpse of the child?" Easwamma wrapped the child in a cloth and placed him in front of Subbamma. Subbamma was an orthodox Brahmin lady. In those days, orthodox Brahmins would maintain distance from others. If they happened to touch them inadvertently, they would at once have a bath. That was the reason, why Easwamma kept the baby at a distance from Subbamma. Watching this, the mother-in-law said, "Easwamma, she has come here with a lot of love and concern to see the child. Why don't you let Subbamma hold the child in her arms? Why do you keep him at a distance?" Easwamma said, "Oh mother! Subbamma is a very pious and orthodox brahmin lady. She may not like to touch the newborn baby. Hence, we should maintain distance from her." In fact, Subbamma herself had no such discriminatory feelings.

Mother Easwamma looked after her child with love and care. Days rolled by and the child grew into a boy. He was *mithabhashi* and *mithaahari* (one who spoke less and ate less). Easwamma was mystified by the strange behaviour of her son. Usually children are fond of eating. Especially some people would prefer non-vegetarian items like fish or meat. But her son was totally averse to non-vegetarian food. He would not even visit the houses where non-vegetarian food was cooked. Seeing his noble qualities, Easwamma realised that the child was not an ordinary one, but one of divine nature. Her eldest daughter Venkamma also recognised the divine nature of the child. Together, they brought up the child with love and care. They would sing devotional songs as lullabies. The child was brought up in such a noble environment.

As there was no proper school in Puttaparthi, Seshama Raju, the elder brother of this body, took Me to Uravakonda and admitted Me in a school. The then Municipal Chairman of Bellary, Rama Raju was a friend of Seshama Raju. He took us to the Virupaksha temple in Hampi during holidays. I was reluctant to enter the temple. Hence, Seshama Raju instructed Me to keep a watch over their belongings as they went inside to have Darshan of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. The

priest was giving arati to the deity. To their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum in place of Lord Virupaksha. Seshama Raju could not believe his eyes. In fact, he was very angry thinking that I was transgressing My limits. He thought it was improper on My part to have entered the sanctum sanctorum. He at once came out of the temple only to find Me there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was having doubts. He told his wife, "You go outside and keep a watch over Sathya. Do not allow Him to go anywhere. Meanwhile, I will go inside and see whether He is still there." She did accordingly. He again saw a smiling Sathya standing in the sanctum sanctorum. He wondered whether it was a dream, hallucination or reality. At that time, his friend Rama Raju noticed a brilliant aura around My face. He revealed this only to his wife and not to anybody else including Seshama Raju. In fact, Seshama Raju was full of doubts.

The vacation was over and we were returning to Uravakonda. Rama Raju brought a pair of knickers and a shirt for Me as parting gift. But I refused to accept them. In those days, wearing a collar pin was considered a fashion. Hence, Rama Raju presented a gold collar pin to Me with the prayer that I should remember him always. Wearing a collar pin was very common among the children hailing from rich families. The collar pin dropped on the way while I was proceeding to the school in Uravakonda. It could not be traced. I at once discarded the books and returned home. I declared:

***Know that I am Sai in reality,
Cast off your worldly relationships,
Give up your efforts to restrain Me,
The worldly attachments can no longer bind Me,
None, however great he may be, can deter Me.***

(Telugu Poem)

Seshama Raju was not at home when I sang this poem. Later on when his wife told him about it, he laughed and brushed it aside saying, I would have got it composed by somebody. Being a poet himself, he thought it was impossible for a young boy like Me to compose such excellent poetry.

Excise Inspector Hanumantha Rao had great love for Me. Even his children were highly devoted to Me. When Hanumantha Rao came to know about the happenings, he at once came in his car and took Me to his house. He went on questioning, "My dear, did Your brother or sister-in-law scold You or did they beat You? Why have You decided to leave the house?" I sang a song:

The link with the world had gone in the form of the pin; the pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose. Baba left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.

(Telugu Song)

I said, "The worldly attachment is like a small pin which I gave up. Hence, I have left the house. I will no longer stay there." I did not even enter the house of Hanumantha Rao. There was a big rock in front of the house. I sat there and did not speak to anybody. Everyone was stupefied beyond words to see the change that had taken place in Me. In the evening, Seshama Raju who was on his way back home from school, tried to take Me with him. But I was firm in My decision not to go home. Then Hanumantha Rao persuaded him saying, "Do not compel Sathya to go with you. Let him remain here for some time. I will bring him to you myself afterwards."

I remained there for some time. Many people came to Me and put all sorts of questions like "Are You a ghost or a demon? Who are You?" I told them, I am neither a ghost nor a demon. "Know that I am Sai Baba in reality." They asked Me, "How are we to believe that you are Sai Baba? Can you prove Your claim?" In fact, in those days nobody in Anantapur District had even heard the name of Sai Baba. I took some flowers in My hand and threw them on the floor. As people were watching wonderstruck, the flowers arranged themselves as the letters *Sai Baba* in Telugu. Somebody brought a camera and took a photograph of Me sitting on the rock. There was a small stone in front of Me which appeared like Shirdi Sai Baba in the photograph. Many copies were made of the photograph and distributed to all.

The same rock on which I sat that day remains there even today. At the same place, the Andhra State President of Sri Sathya Sai Organisations, Anjanaiah has built a beautiful Mandir with a spacious hall.

Gradually My fame spread far and wide. People from various villages and cities started to flock around Me. People possessed by evil spirits were brought to Me in bullock-carts. They believed that I could drive away the evil spirits. People who were mentally retarded were also brought to Me. True to their faith, the evil spirits were driven away and the patients were cured of their mental ailments. Then they started believing in My Divinity.

As people were coming in large numbers, it was not possible for Seshama Raju to keep Me with him. Hence, he wrote a letter to Pedda Venkama Raju to come and take Me away to Puttaparthi. In those days, Puttaparthi was such a remote village that it would take several days for letters to reach. However, Pedda Venkama Raju received the letter in Bukkapatnam where he had gone to make purchases in the market. The letter said, "Father, it is not possible for us to keep Sathya with us any longer. Please come and take him home at once." Pedda Venkama Raju came to Uravakonda from Bukkapatnam straightaway. He did not have sufficient money in his pocket. He took the bus fare from Seshama Raju and brought Me to Bukkapatnam by bus. From there, we had to walk all the way to Puttaparthi, as there was no transport facility. In fact, the name of Puttaparthi was hardly known beyond the closest localities.

When we reached Puttaparthi, Kondama Raju (grandfather of this body)

was at home. He was very austere and God-minded. He told Venkama Raju, "Venkama, let Him do whatever He wants, do not raise any objection. He is immersed in divine consciousness. Let him stay with me for some time." He kept Me with him and looked after Me with great love and care.

The four brothers - Pedda Venkama Raju, Chinna Venkama Raju, Venkatarama Raju and Venkata Subba Raju decided to live separately. Kondama Raju divided the property equally among them. Pedda Venkama Raju then asked, "Father, whom are you going to stay with?" Kondama Raju replied, "I will not stay with anyone. I do not want any property for myself. Give me Sathya. That is enough. He will look after me." In those days, nobody used to call Me by the full name Sathyanarayana. Everyone used to address Me as 'Sathya'. From then onwards, I stayed with Kondama Raju and served him. Everyday morning and evening, Venkamma used to come to Me. Sometimes she would ask, "Sathya, do You get dreams? Does anyone appear before You and talk to You?" However, I would not say anything to her. She had immense faith in Sai Baba. One day, she prayed, "Sathya, please give me a photograph of Sai Baba." I at once materialised a photograph of Sai Baba and gave her. She kept the photograph with her till her last breath.

One day Kondama Raju called Venkamma and told her, "Our people are living in ignorance, they are unable to recognise the Divine nature of Sathya. He is verily God Himself. He is never hungry, never thirsty. He has transcended hunger and sleep."

Namagiramma was the actual name of Easwamma, given by her parents. As Kondama Raju recognised My Divinity, he told his son, Pedda Venkama Raju, to change her name to Easwamma as he was very well aware that she was the mother of Easwara Himself.

In the middle of the night, Kondama Raju would quietly place his hand near My nostrils, just to see whether I was breathing or not. Sometimes, he would not notice any breathing process taking place. He would only hear the sound Soham coming from Me. People started pouring into Kondama Raju's house to see Me. If anyone questioned them, they would reply, "The grandson of Kondama Raju is one of divine powers. He appears in our dreams and solves our problems."

Once, Seshama Raju came to Puttaparthi during holidays. He did not like so many people visiting the house of Kondama Raju. At that time, he was thoroughly sceptical. He argued with Kondama Raju and told him not to allow anybody to come to his house. In those days, the educated were highly respected in the villages. Seshama Raju had just completed teachers' training. Hence, people in the village considered him to be highly educated. He told Kondama Raju, "Grandfather, do not allow anybody to come near this boy. He does not have any divine power. He is suffering from hysteria." In this manner, he spoke derisively about Me.

There used to be an exorcist in Kadiri who was considered to be an expert in driving away from people the evil spirits that had taken possession of them. I was put in a cart for transporting Me to Kadiri and Venkamma accompanied Me. At no time would she be parted from Me. This so-called exorcist of Kadiri was a thorough drunkard. He asserted that I was possessed by some powerful spirit and boasted that he would rid Me of the evil and belaboured Me with canes, sticks, whips and the like. He even went to the extent of pouring some highly corrosive liquids into My eyes expecting to drive away the spirit in this manner. I submitted Myself to all this torture without demur. In the evening when I got free, I approached Venkamma and asked her to put a little fluid of cow dung dissolved in water. With this treatment overnight, My eyes became clear again. So, for every maltreatment of this kind, I used to go to Venkamma and got the situation remedied. Finally, he had My head shaved and scratched deeply with a sharp knife. The scalp became bloody with severe wounds. Seating Me, water was poured from a height of 10 feet above; it was a terribly painful operation. After this treatment failed, he started rubbing lemon juice into the wounds. Venkamma could not bear the sight of this torture. Quietly, she called the cartman and in the darkness of night, she took Me back home to Puttaparthi.

Steadily the fame of Sai's greatness was spreading far and wide. There was such a rush of people that there was hardly any space for people to stay in the house. Then Pedda Venkama Raju told the people to come to the house only on Thursdays every week. But people protested saying that they could not bear their sufferings till Thursday. Then Subbamma called Venkappa and told him that as it was not practical to accommodate the surging crowds in his house, she would take Me to her house and meet all My needs and also of the visitors. As Subbamma was a Brahmin and Swami belonged to the Raju caste, the Brahmins of Puttaparthi took objection to Subbamma's proposal and decided to boycott Subbamma. She however said that as she was childless and had no inclination to go about visiting anybody, she was not worried by the proposed boycott. "I shall never forsake Sathya", she said. In the village, there were a few Harijan residences.

These Harijans were highly devoted to Swami. I used to visit their houses. Even Subbamma accompanied Me to those places. She would not bear to be separated from Me even for a moment. She was looking after Me as her own son. All the Brahmins of the village were completely inimical to Subbamma and even her own mother and brother turned against her. In the path of Divinity incarnate such impediments do arise and she was quite aware of the situation. She declared that she was unconcerned about the enmity of anybody. She was quite firm in her resolve to hold on to Me. Soon, even her house started overflowing with the throng of visitors. So, once Venkappa approached Subbamma and said, "Why should you undergo this kind of ordeals on account of my son? Let us put Him in a separate house." Then Subbamma gave some land between the Sathyabhama and Venugopala Swami temples. A small room was constructed there. They used to lock Me up in the room, but, in spite of

the locked closed room, I used to get out and sit on the top of the hill. These kinds of wonders were of daily occurrence.

Meanwhile, those who were opposed to Subbamma on caste grounds decided to get rid of Swami by poison. I was very fond of *vadas* (Indian delicacy) in those days. So, these people made some *vadas* and mixed some virulent poison in some of them. Subbamma was warning Me all the time against visiting those houses. But, I used to go to all places despite her objection. On this occasion, I visited this house and picked up the specific *vadas* that had been poisoned and ate them. The sequel to this attempt is already known.

Another attempt of this kind was when some of them set fire to My improvised house. The house had a thatched roof. Some miscreants set fire to the house. As the fire was raging, people were worried as to what would have happened to Me inside. Suddenly, there was a cloudburst which poured down just above the house and put out the fire. There was however, not a drop of rain anywhere else. Venkamma, Subbamma and Easwamma came there weeping. The roof was fully burnt and only the walls were standing. They peeped over the wall and found Me sleeping peacefully. I was totally unharmed. Then Subbamma had the lock broken open and took Me away to her house. After several such trials and tests, people developed greater faith in Sai Baba.

In Penukonda, another person started claiming miraculous powers, saying that he was a devotee of Sai Baba. Several others started imitating My dress and manners, started going about trying to collect a following at different places. Merely assuming My name and manners, one cannot have a following indefinitely. People realised the truth very soon.

After this, My sojourn to Bangalore began. Easwamma and Venkamma entreated that I should not forsake Puttaparthi. I promised them that I would never abandon Puttaparthi. Various royalties including the Maharani of Mysore used to visit Puttaparthi. Those days Chitravathi was flowing most of the time. They used to cross the river by putting planks and driving the cars over such improvised causeways. As, such following by the high and low of the land increased, all opportunities for creating obstacles by the local opponents vanished.

All great men have been moulded by their mothers. It is the high moral character and behaviour of the mothers that would result in the greatness of their progeny. It is the virtues of Kausalya that resulted in the greatness of Rama. Similarly, Sita brought up Lava and Kusa to be great. In this manner, virtuous mothers were responsible for ideal children. After I had promised Easwamma, I never abandoned Puttaparthi. The whole world may flock here but I shall not leave Puttaparthi. Generally, the Avatars adhere to their place of birth. If you uproot a plant from here and plant it elsewhere, how long will it survive? A tree should grow where the seed sprouted. In this manner only, Sathya Sai Baba has retained his roots in Puttaparthi and has made Puttaparthi a place of pilgrimage. When

the High School at Bukkapatnam was established, they requested Me for a prayer song and I composed a suitable verse emphasising the unity in diversity of the people of Bharat.

The power of motherhood is indescribable. It is the righteous observances and strict adherence to moral values of the mothers that manifest in their children. They (mothers) may be unlettered. Their greatness does not depend on literacy or book learning. It is the unlettered Easwaramma's virtues that have brought about this greatness of the name and fame of Puttaparthi. It is a matter of regret that Easwaramma is forgotten, while her son is extolled. Without Easwaramma, how could there be such a phenomenal Power? Never neglect your parents.

What is the origin of the name of this village Puttaparthi? There is a strange story associated with it. Near the temple of Venugopala Swami, there used to be an anthill in which there was a snake. Everyday the cowherds would take their cows for grazing to the outskirts of the village. One of the cows would go to the anthill and the snake would drink milk from its udder. Everyday the cow would return home with its udder empty. The cowherds found out the reason behind this and planned to kill the snake. One day as the snake was drinking milk from the cow, they hit it with a boulder. The snake got enraged and pronounced a curse on them, saying, the cowherds and their cows would no longer be able to live in the village. That is why, the cowherds left Puttaparthi village and built their houses near Gokulam. Even today you can see it for yourselves. The boulder with which the cowherds tried to kill the snake is now being worshipped as Venugopala Swami idol.

Today I narrated at length all this in order to make you aware of the significance of the names Sai Baba and Puttaparthi. Puttaparthi has a great history behind it. Many eminent people visited this place. Many people of affluence lived here and brought great name and fame to this village. In those days, the Mysore Maharaja and his mother used to come here quite frequently. Many such eminent personalities recognised the greatness of Puttaparthi and revered it.

***The Lord of Puttaparthi will protect you always,
He is the embodiment of compassion,
He will hold your hand and take you across the ocean of life,
He will never forsake you under any circumstances.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You are really fortunate, having done great merit, for you are able to enjoy the Divine proximity of Sai. It is your great good fortune that you are able to sing with Swami and play with Him. You are with Sai and Sai is with you. That is why I often say, "I and you are one." The power and glory of God is beyond the ken of human understanding. Develop unwavering faith in him.

Students!

Having come to Puttaparthi and studied here, you should make every effort to uphold the prestige of Puttaparthi. I want to bring to your notice one important thing. Usually students like to spend their vacations at their respective homes. But here the students do not like to go home even after the vacation starts. Only very few of them go home. Most of them like to stay back even after completing their post graduation. What is the reason for this? Here is the greatest Divine magnet. God attracts one and all. His power is beyond all estimation. In the years to come, you will experience the power of this magnet more and more.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, "**Hari Bhajan Bina ...**" and continued the Discourse.)

(Pointing to Dr. Anjanaiah, Swami said) He has constructed a Mandir in Uravakonda. The Mandir enshrines the rock on which I sat when I gave the first teaching to mankind. He completed his M.Sc. Ph.D. and was doing a job. Later on, he resigned and dedicated himself to the service of Swami. At present, he is the State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Andhra Pradesh. (Pointing to an elderly devotee) He is the father-in-law of Dr. Anjanaiah. He also stays in Uravakonda. He has kept aside 100 acres of land for Swami. He is growing various types of fruits there and sending them to Puttaparthi. At present he has completed 100 years of his life. I want to tell you another important thing. Here, in Prasanthi Nilayam, all the devotees who dedicate their lives to Swami live for full 100 years. Kasturi came here and lived a full life.

Similar was the case with Pujari Kistappa. All of you might have heard of Kamavadhani. He was a great Vedic scholar. He came and stayed here for 30 years. Never did he leave Puttaparthi. One day after performing Rama Kalyanam, here in the Mandir, he told Me, "Swami, I am going to My room. I will have a sacred bath and come back." I told him, "You don't need to come back. After bath, have your food and sleep peacefully." He went home and had a bath. As instructed by Swami, he had his food and rested. He died peacefully in his sleep. The name of Sai was always in his mind. He never had any illness. There was another devotee by name Soorayya. He was a bachelor. He had no desires. Prior to coming here, he was working for Venkatagiri Raja. One day he expressed his desire to the Raja that he wanted to go to Puttaparthi. The Raja was very happy and made all the arrangements for his coming here. He stayed here for more than 30 years and served Swami. He too lived for 100 years and died peacefully in his sleep.

(Swami called Sri Gopal Rao to the dais)

Many of you might have heard of Gopal Rao. He is also completing 100 years. Even at an advanced age, he used to go to canteen regularly and serve water to the devotees. When he was the Chairman of Andhra Bank, there was a major strike. Many big people were arrested. Indira Gandhi

sent him a telegram. That day I happened to go to his house for lunch. I told him, "Gopal Rao, do not yield to political pressure. What you have chosen is the path of truth. Do not budge from it." He obeyed My command. Nobody could touch him. At present he is living in Prasanthi Nilayam happily doing Namasmarana. Dr. Padmanabhan's father, Seshagiri Rao came here at the age of 63 after his retirement. He also lived for 100 years and had a peaceful death. All these devotees led a happy and healthy life. At no point of time did they seek the service of others. I told Gopal Rao that he would die peacefully without depending on others for service. I told him to be courageous. In this manner, many devotees led a long and peaceful life in Divine proximity. Physical body is bound to perish one day or the other. But one should leave the body peacefully without being wholly dependent on others. (At the end, Swami permitted Sri Gopal Rao to speak a few words.)

Date: 23 Nov 2003, Occasion: Birthday Celebrations, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

21. YOU ARE GOD YOURSELF

Date: 25 Dec
2003

Occasion: Christmas
Celebrations

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

***For the sake of young Prahlada,
For the desperate elephant king,
For the infant Dhruva, steadfast in devotion
For the indigent Kuchela, prolific in family, pauper in substance,
The lotus-eyed Vishnu, extolled by the Vedas,
The ever compassionate one of manifold bounties conferred:
Take all these together, the Lord of Lords is now incarnate,
The embodiment of love and compassion of all the above,
And more.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Where is God? When does He incarnate? Where does He incarnate? These are the questions that are troubling the minds of people today. God is omnipresent. All are the embodiments of God. Today, people attribute various names and forms to God like Rama, Krishna and Jesus, and celebrate their birthdays. Truly speaking, can there be a birthday for God? No. To think that God took birth on a particular day in a year is a sign of ignorance. God is in the form of breath in every man. 'Soham', this symbolises the process of inhalation and exhalation. 'So' means 'That' (God), 'Ham' stands for 'I' (individual). Though there are two words, namely God and individual, there is no difference between them. They are one and the same. God in fact has no birth. He does not need to achieve any goals. However, in order to instill faith in the minds of people, He incarnates. If there is birth, there has to be death too. But, God is beyond birth and death. He has neither a beginning nor an end. To think there is a birthday for God is only your imagination. Devotees limit God to a physical frame, worship Him and celebrate His birthdays. That is all a figment of their imagination and does not correspond to the truth.

Every day, in this world, many are born and many die. What is meant by birth and death? To assume a body is birth and to cast off the same is death. It is out of illusion that man experiences the dualities of birth and death, whereas God transcends both. Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya *Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). It is out of ignorance that man is caught in the cycle of birth and death. Birth and death are caused by the Will of God.

God is the very personification of love. He is present in all beings in the

form of the life-breath. Since ancient times, people have made concerted efforts to understand the mystery of birth and death. One need not go that far to understand this mystery. The body which we have assumed makes us experience it every moment. The process of inhalation symbolises birth and exhalation death. Man is unable to understand the inner significance of this breathing process. What is it that man is supposed to do, to escape from the cycle of birth and death? He should develop love more and more. But, today man does not love his fellow human beings even. That does not mean that he lacks love. There is love in him but he is unable to experience it. He should attach value to the principle of love and not merely to individuals.

When we inhale ('So'), the life principle enters our body and when we exhale ('Ham'), it goes out. Every moment, this process of inhalation and exhalation reminds us of our inherent divinity (I am God). So long as there is life-breath, the body is considered to be Sivam (auspicious). Once the life-breath ebbs away, it becomes Savam (corpse). Both birth and death are related to the body and not to the life principle. Many changes take place between birth and death in a mysterious way. It is God who is responsible for all these. But some people deny the existence of God and waste their time in vain argumentation. God DOES exist. He neither comes nor goes. He is present everywhere at all times. Man experiences birth and death because of his body attachment. He will be released from the cycle of birth and death only when he gives up body attachment and surrenders himself completely to the Will of God.

Oh God, I offer the sacred heart to You which You have given me. What else can I offer at Your Lotus Feet? I pray that You accept my humble offering.

(Telugu Poem)

Birth and death arise out of illusion. Every day in this world, many beings are born and many die. Birth and death happen according to the time and circumstances. Between birth and death, man gets deluded by the physical body and develops various relationships at the physical level. He identifies himself with the body and gets carried away by the feeling of I and mine. This is a grave mistake. So long as the body lasts, you are related to so and so. Once the body perishes, what happens to your relationship? True relationship lies at the Atmic level and not at the physical level. Prior to birth who is related to whom? What happens after death? In fact, both birth and death are the results of *bhrama* (delusion) because of which you are unable to realise Brahma (Divinity). As we are enmeshed in this worldliness, we are unable to comprehend the transcendental principle.

True spiritual practice lies in understanding one's true identity. One should enquire, "Who am I"? All the spiritual practices are meant to make you realise who you really are. Everyone uses the term 'I' while introducing himself. It means that the principle of 'I' (Self) present in you

is the same as the one in others. But man is unable to understand this oneness. He is carried away by the differences based on physical body. Consequently, he is giving room to conflicts and unrest.

Embodiments of Love!

Birth and death are related to the body and not to the individual soul. Mind is responsible for both. Everything is man's own making. Life is a dream. How can anything that appears in a dream be true? It is all a mere illusion. So long as you are immersed in this *bhrama* (delusion), you cannot have the vision of Brahma. It is only when you break the shackles of illusion, can you experience the reality.

You can understand your true identity by observing your breathing process. But man is not interested in such an easy and simple path. He is taking to rough and difficult paths and is ultimately getting frustrated. So long as there is a thorn in the flesh, it hurts. Body attachment is like a thorn which is the cause of all suffering. Once you give up body attachment, you will know your true Self. You suffer because you identify yourself with the body. It is but an illusion. That is why Sankaracharya said:

*Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.*

(From birth to birth
From death to death
From womb to womb
Tarrying a while
Such is the sojourn
Of this transient life,
Oh destroyer of the demon Mura,
Be my boatman
On this turbulent ocean
By your bounteous grace.)

One need not undertake intense spiritual practices to cross the ocean of Samsara. All that one has to do is to contemplate on God incessantly. Though God is within, man is unable to realise Him. In the dream state, man may experience death and feel sad about it. When he wakes up, he will heave a sigh of relief realising that what he saw was only a dream. Then who was the one who died in the dream? It was just a creation of the mind. Similarly, even in the waking state, whatever man experiences is a creation of the mind. My father, my mother, my wife, my children, etc., all such feelings arise out of illusion. They do not correspond to the reality. It is because of illusion that man develops physical relationship and ultimately subjects himself to suffering. When man develops pure and

unsullied love, he will not experience pain or suffering. Love for the physical body is false and fleeting. Love for the Self is true and eternal. In order to understand the truth of your identity, you should enquire within.

Once Sankaracharya was proceeding to the river Ganga along with his disciples. On the way, he found a person sitting under a tree and repeating *Dukrun Karane*, *Dukrun Karane*. He was in fact trying to master the rules of Panini's grammar. Sankara took pity on him and advised him to contemplate on the Lord instead of wasting his time in the acquisition of worldly knowledge.

Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam

Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe

Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale

Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane.

(Oh foolish man, chant the name of Lord Govinda; the rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the end approaches.)

Bhrama and Brahma are based on your mind. They are not present outside. Brahma is within you. But as you are immersed in *bhrama* (delusion), you consider Brahma (Divinity) to be a distant entity. Once you realise that you are Brahma, you will be free from *bhrama* once for all. You suffer because you identify yourself with the body. Once you get rid of body attachment, you will experience everlasting happiness.

Embodiments of Love!

Pleasure and pain are your own making. They are not given by God. You are the cause of your suffering, none else. Understand this truth. From the spiritual point of view, pleasure, pain and the worldly relationships are illusory. They are not real. Right from dawn to dusk, man is leading a life of delusion. Having been born as a human being, man should experience the truth. The physical body grows for a certain period and later on becomes weak and decrepit. Birth and growth are related to the body which is unreal. But man considers body to be real and thereby suffers. When you see with your eyes wide open, you are able to see many people. But, when you close your eyes, you cannot see anybody. From where do so many people come when you open your eyes? Where do they go when you close your eyes? You do not know. In fact, you do not know the place of your origin and also your destination. That is why you suffer. Once you realise that you are not the body and nothing in this world belongs to you, you will not suffer. Everything in this world is of your own making. Nothing is real.

Embodiments of Love!

It is only God, the embodiment of love, who is with you and in you always. Bereft of love, man cannot exist. Love is your life. Love is the light that dispels the darkness of ignorance. One who does not cultivate love will be born again and again. *Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam*. Whoever is born will die one day and whoever dies will be born again.

Birth and death are the Prabhava (effect) of the objective world. As he is deluded by the Prabhava, man is subjecting himself to Pramada (danger).

Embodiments of Love!

Worldly love is transient; it cannot be called love at all. True love is immortal. You should cultivate such love. Physical body grows and decays. How can you consider it to be real? In fact, nothing in this world is real. Body attachment is the cause of delusion. Hence, gradually reduce your body attachment. This is the most important sadhana you have to undertake. Japa (chanting), Thapa (penance), Dhyana (meditation), Yoga (communion with God), etc., do not constitute true sadhana. Whatever you consider to be real is in fact unreal. Whatever is unreal has to be given up. This truth has to be understood in the first instance. It is very easy to give up body attachment. I wonder why people are not able to do so!

You can see a number of bulbs glowing in this hall. But the electric current passing through them is the same. Bodies are like bulbs and the principle of Atma is like the current passing through all the bulbs. Understand this oneness and share your love with one and all. Do not consider anyone to be your enemy. You consider the one who loves you to be your friend and the one who hates you to be your foe. In fact, there is neither friend nor a foe. It is only your imagination.

Today, people perform various sadhanas to experience divinity. Will God come closer to you because of these sadhanas or does He go away from you if you do not perform them? No. It is only the *bhrama* that goes away from you when you perform the sadhanas. As a result, you become closer to Brahma. You should make every effort to get rid of *bhrama*. Give up the feeling that you are the body and you are the doer. Only then can you be free from delusion and fear. Reduce your body attachment. That is the sadhana you are supposed to undertake. Spiritual practice does not lie in the performance of Japa, Thapa, Dhyana, etc. They are done only for your mental satisfaction and not for having the vision of God. Give up all these practices. Develop firm faith that you are God. Remind yourself constantly, "I am God, I am God, I am God". Then you will become God. Body is merely the vesture you have put on. It is not your true Self. As the body attachment increases, the suffering also increases.

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam; Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam; Kuru Punyam Ahorathram (Give up bad company; join good company and perform meritorious deeds day and night). In this world, you see many names and forms. Does it mean that they are all different from each other? No. All are one. It is only divinity that expresses itself as mother, father, brother, sister, etc. Names and forms may be different, but the underlying truth is one. When you keep this principle of truth in view, love will flow from you incessantly. Immerse yourself in the river of love. Do not give up love under any circumstances. Even if someone were to hate you, treat him as your own brother. If you were to meet him on the road, do not show anger; greet him with love. Your love will certainly bring about

transformation in him. True happiness lies in the spirit of sacrifice. Thyaga (sacrifice) is the true Yoga. Man, today, does not cultivate Thyaga. On the other hand, he seeks Bhoga (pleasure) and thereby subjects himself to Roga (disease). When you develop the spirit of sacrifice, you will be free from suffering. True spiritual practice is that which helps you to overcome delusion. What is the use, if you get drowned in delusion more and more with the advancement of age?

I am not the body, nothing is mine." This is what you should know. Question yourself, "Who am I"? You will get the reply, "I am I". When you understand and experience this truth, nobody can cause any suffering to you. You cannot escape from suffering so long as you are immersed in the dualistic feeling that you are a mere mortal and God is separate from you. The feeling that "I am separate from you" is your own imagination. When 'I' and 'you' are joined together, it becomes 'we'. However, 'we' + 'He' (God) becomes only 'He' who is changeless. 'I' and 'you' change constantly.

Embodiments of Love!

Many people do sadhanas like Japa and Dhyana, but they are not of much use. However, they lead to some change in due course of time. They may confer temporary results but they cannot grant eternal bliss. You should not worry for temporary results. The feeling of 'I' and 'mine' is the root cause of worry. You will be haunted by worry so long as you don't realise Hari (God). You are worried because you identify yourself with the body. Once you identify yourself with the Self (God), you will be free from all worries. Hence, you should make every effort to realise your true Self. Under any circumstances, do not shed tears of sorrow. One will be free from sorrow when one gives up body attachment. In order to be free from worry and fear and to attain everlasting peace, you should realise that "I am I". When you have firm belief in this statement, nothing can shake you. Do not develop undue attachment to the body and material possessions. You will be redeemed only when you lead your life with a spirit of sacrifice. What you should achieve is Thyaga and not Bhoga. To consider something as yours ('mine') is Bhoga. To realise that nothing is yours ('not mine') is Yoga. This Yoga bestows on you the true strength.

Jesus performed various types of sadhanas and ultimately realised this truth. Once Mary and Joseph took their child Jesus to a fair in Jerusalem. In the crowd, the parents lost trace of Jesus and searched for him everywhere. All the while, Jesus was sitting in a corner of the temple and listening to the sermon of the priest. The parents were searching for him outside the temple. Mother Mary ultimately found him in the temple. She rushed towards him and affectionately embraced him saying, "My son, what happened to you? Where had you gone? We have been in search of you." Jesus told her, "Mother, I have not stepped out of the temple. I have been listening to the sermon of the priest. Why should you have any fear? Those who believe in the world will have fears. But, why should anyone believing in God, fear at all? I am in the company of my Father, why do you fear?"

Forgetting your innate divinity, you are in search of God in the external world. You are God yourself. Is it not foolishness to search for yourself in the outside world? Look within, only then can you find God. It is very easy to understand this oneness. However, you should have firm faith to begin with. You should believe that God is not separate from you. On a deep enquiry, you will realise that God is in you and also outside.

Embodiments of Love!

Turn your vision inward and search for your true Self. Self-enquiry leads to true Sakshatkara (vision of God). Once you have Sakshatkara, you will be free from all worries. It is a mistake to say that you have not experienced God. He is present in you. A person kept a ten rupee note in a book and forgot about it. He was carrying it all along. One day he was in need of ten rupees. He asked his friend to lend him ten rupees. His friend readily agreed. But before giving the money, his friend wanted to see the book he was carrying. As he opened the book, the ten rupee note fell from it. He was happy that he had the required amount with him and that there was no need to borrow it from his friend. Likewise, today man is in search of God, as he has forgotten his innate divinity. Man can realise God only by self-enquiry.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

You are making various efforts to experience Divinity. Do not search for God outside. He is in you. Everything is in you. All that you see outside is illusory. Do not be carried away by the illusory world. Only then can you attain peace and ultimately realise the truth "I am I". To know this simple truth, you need not go through various sacred texts. Keep the texts aside. Enjoy the taste of divinity within. Develop inner vision and visualise your true Self.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "***Bhaja Govindam ...***")

**Date: 25 Dec 2003, Occasion: Christmas Celebrations, Place:
Prasanthi Nilayam**
