

17

All *Avatars* Are Embodiments Of Pure Consciousness

*The creation emerges from truth and merges
into truth,*

*Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does
not exist?*

Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.

(Telugu poem)

ONE has to realise what is meant by *Suddha Satwa* (pure consciousness). You have witnessed the creation of *Hiranyagarbha Lingas* several times by Me. That *Hiranyagarbha Linga* is a symbol of pure consciousness. It is omnipresent. (Swami created a *Hiranyagarbha Linga* and showed it to all present.) Look, this is verily *Suddha Satwa* (pure consciousness).

There is no human being in this world, who is

free from desires. Every human being has some desire or the other. There is no place in this universe where this pure consciousness is not present. It is therefore a mistake to limit that omnipresent pure consciousness to a particular form. All are embodiments of pure consciousness. It is present in all human beings in a miniscule form like an atom. The pure consciousness assumes different forms in different ages as *avatars*. It manifested as Narasimha, Vamana, etc., in the *Kritha yuga*. The same pure consciousness assumed the form of Sri Rama in *Treta yuga* and Sri Krishna in *Dwapara yuga*. Sri Rama was accompanied by Sita in *Treta Yuga*, who led the life of an ideal wife and set an example to mankind in chastity. Sita, in spite of the great difficulties she encountered while living in exile and spending ten long months in captivity in Lanka, never lost her poise. She steadfastly held on to *Ramanama* with single-minded devotion. She never wavered even for a moment. She gave up food and sleep totally and constantly contemplated on *Ramanama*. She could not visualise any other form except that of Sri Rama, who was *Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma* (one *atma* that dwells in all beings). Even in birds and beasts, she was seeing only the form of Sri Rama. That one *atmic* principle is referred to as *Hiranyagarbha*, which is pure gold. Pure gold is always referred to as 24 carat gold.

God is always said to manifest 16 facets. Hence, He is referred to as *Purna Tatwa* (Embodiment of

fullness).

*Poornamadah poornamidam,
Poornat poornamudachyate,
Poornasyapoornamadaya,
Poornamevavashishyate.*

(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full, what remains is again the full.)

(Sanskrit sloka)

Desires Keep One Away From Divinity

During the period of Rama's exile in the forest, Mareecha, the demon, donned the form of a golden deer to entice Sita. Sita knew very well that a golden deer could not be found in the world. However, keeping with her role in the Divine drama of Ramayana she expressed a desire to possess the golden deer and requested Sri Rama to capture it for her. Rama then had to run after that golden deer, in order to make her happy. When Sita thus developed a desire for a worldly object, the very next moment she was separated from Rama, the Divinity. It is common knowledge that the more you develop desires for worldly things, the greater you become distant from Divinity. Less luggage more comfort, makes travel a pleasure. Therefore, we have to reduce our luggage of desires. Sita had all along reduced her desires in order to be in close proximity to Rama. But the moment she developed a desire for golden deer, Rama moved away from her. She could

not bear the agony of that separation. Day in and day out, she was contemplating only on Rama and none else. No other thought developed in her mind. That is how she became a great *pathivratha*. Finally when Rama killed Ravana and released her from captivity, He subjected Sita to a test, before taking her back into His fold. He directed her to enter the fire and come out unscathed. The god of fire appeared before Rama and testified, “Sita is a great *pathivratha*. She does not at all think of any other matter but constantly contemplates on Your name.” Why did Rama put Sita to such a test? It is only to make the world know about her chastity. Later, when Rama returned to Ayodhya and started ruling His kingdom, a washerman engaged in a quarrel with his wife commented, “Sri Rama took back His wife Sita who lived for ten months in Lanka in the captivity of Ravana. I am not so foolish.” The news reached Rama. Again Rama put Sita to test by forsaking her. He knew that she was a great *pathivratha*, but he took decision to make the world know about her chastity. There is no other individual who can equal the chastity of Sita. Rama wanted to prove the chastity and devotion of Sita to the world.

Krishna Was A Man Of Character

In the *Dwapara yuga* that followed, Sri Krishna performed several *leelas*. But, none was able to recognise His Divine nature. The *gopikas* were much older in age to Sri Krishna. At the time when Krishna was performing Divine *leelas* in the company of *gopikas*,

He was a young lad of seven years. How can anyone attribute any bad motive or impropriety to such *leelas*? He played with them just as any boy of seven years would play with his mother. Unable to realise this truth, people created several misapprehensions and branded Krishna as '*gopikalola*' (one who indulged in pranks with the *gopikas*, the milkmaids). They tried to insult Him, attributing bad motives to His actions. In fact, Lord Krishna too manifested His divinity on several occasions through His *leelas* and established ideal humanness, like the earlier *avatar*. Sri Krishna always maintained His humanness. The *gopis* and the eight consorts like Sathyabhama were all meant to declare the divinity and glory of the Divine *leelas* to the world. They are not to be taken as ordinary women. Krishna Himself was a man of exemplary character and noble qualities.

God incarnates in several forms for the purpose of protecting His devotees and transforming their minds. In *Dwapara yuga*, He incarnated as Krishna in answer to the prayer of Devaki and Vasudeva. He grew up in the house of Nanda and Yashoda and constantly protected them. He destroyed the demon Kamsa and fulfilled the yearning of Kuchela, his childhood friend and devotee. Kuchela, though a childhood friend of Lord Krishna, suffered acute poverty. He could not provide even a square meal to his wife and children. He, therefore, approached Lord Krishna on the advice of his wife to seek relief from poverty. But, the moment he saw

Krishna he forgot the purpose of his visit and told Him “Oh Krishna! I don’t need anything. I am aware that you protect not only me, but the entire universe. You incarnated for the purpose of establishing *Dharma* and protecting mankind.” He began extolling Lord Krishna thus:

You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Is it possible to estimate Your glory and splendour? I have been waiting for Your grace. Oh Lord! Listen to my prayer and redeem me. You are the one who brought back to life the dead son of Your preceptor. You are the one who suppressed the serpent Kaliya, freed Vasudeva and Devaki and saved Droupadi from humiliation. You fulfilled Kuchela’s desires, You made ugly-looking Kubja beautiful. You protected the Pandavas and saved the 16,000 Gopikas. You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Krishna, it is not possible for even Brahma to describe Your glory. I have been praying for Your grace.

(Telugu song)

Do Not Confine God To One Name And Form

God is *Ekatma Swarupa* (embodiment of one Divine Principle, which is indivisible). There is no parallel to Him. He dons all forms and He permeates all bodies. *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). *Isavasyam idam jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). In fact, it is the weakness of

human beings to confine Him to a particular name and form and start describing Him in many ways. Let us take, for example, the story of that Divine principle that incarnated as Sri Rama. ‘Dasaratha’ was the name of the father of Rama. What is the inner meaning of this name, Dasaratha? It means a human body comparable to a chariot, having ten *indriyas* (senses) as horses. Kausalya was the first wife of King Dasaratha. He had two other wives, Sumithra and Kaikeyi. Kausalya gave birth to a female child, named Santha, who was given in adoption to a king. She had no further issues. The family custom in those days was that a husband cannot marry for a second time without the consent of the first wife. Dasaratha therefore took permission from Kausalya to take Sumithra as his second wife. The name Sumithra implies a good friend to one and all. She had a pure heart. She too could not bear a son for him. He therefore approached the King of Kekaya Kingdom with a request to give his daughter Kaika in marriage to him. The King of Kekaya kingdom, however, insisted on a promise from Dasaratha that the son born to Kaika shall be crowned as the King of Ayodhya. He asked, “Oh Dasaratha, You already have two wives. Now you wish to marry for a third time. For what purpose? Is it not for begetting a son who can rule the kingdom? Then, can you make a promise that the son born to my daughter will be made the king of Ayodhya?” Dasaratha hesitated to give a promise. He replied that he would come back to him after sometime. He straightaway went to his two wives and consulted

them enquiring, “Will you both agree to the condition that the son born to Kaika whom I wish to marry now should be made the King of Ayodhya?” Will you both agree for this condition?” Kausalya and Sumithra readily agreed for the same. They informed King Dasaratha, “We will be happy if you beget a son who can rule the kingdom.” Dasaratha then conveyed their consent to the King of Kekaya and married his daughter Kaika. He returned to his kingdom along with Kaika.

King Dasaratha subsequently performed the *Puthra Kameshti Yaga*, seeking to be blessed with a son. The *Yajna Purusha* who emerged from the *Yajna Kunda* handed over a vessel containing the sacred *payasam* (sweet pudding) as *prasadam* to be partaken by Dasaratha’s wives. He instructed King Dasaratha to distribute the *payasam* equally between his three wives. He did so in consultation with the *Pundits*. Kausalya and Kaikeyi felt very happy to receive the *payasam*. Kausalya was the eldest wife of King Dasaratha and it was but natural that a son born to her should be the King of Ayodhya. Kaika too had a claim to the kingdom as a result of the promise made by the King to her father before marrying her, that her son would be the future king. However, Sumithra had no such claims. She took her share of the *payasam* and kept it on the parapet wall of the open terrace of her residence. She wanted to partake of it after drying her hair, as she just had a head bath. There were no electric fans or dryers in those days, as of now. Meanwhile, an

eagle descended from the sky with great speed and took away the cup containing her share of *payasam*. The eagle dropped the cup containing *payasam* on a mountain where Anjana Devi lived. She picked up that cup and consumed the *payasam* happily. As a result, Hanuman was born to her.

Sumithra was very unhappy that she lost her cup of *payasam*. She went down and informed Kausalya about the incident. Kausalya counselled her saying, “Oh! Dear younger sister! You need not feel sorry. I will give a part of my share of the *payasam*.” Kaika too promised to give a part of her share. Such was the love between the wives in those days. Kausalya and Kaikeyi then poured some *payasam* from their cups into one of Sumithra. All the three then went to the *Purohit* (chief priest) to seek his blessings. The *Purohit* blessed the three queens saying, “This is the most auspicious moment for you to partake of the *payasam*.” The three queens partook of the *payasam* as directed by the *Purohit*. King Dasaratha’s first wife Kausalya gave birth to a son, who was named Rama. Kaikeyi too gave birth to a son and he was named Bharatha. Sumithra, however, had two sons, born out of the share of *payasam* given to her by the two queens Kausalya and Kaikeyi. She realised soon the reason for having two sons.

True to her name, Sumithra was a woman of noble qualities. She then decided that the son born out of the

share of *payasam* given to her by Kausalya, namely, Lakshmana should always follow Rama. Similarly, the other son born out of the share of *payasam* given by Kaikeyi, namely, Sathrughna should serve Bharatha. Sumithra called her two sons to her side and instructed them accordingly. From then onwards, Lakshmana became a constant follower of Rama, while Sathrughna followed Bharatha, with the blessings of their mother. Thus, all the four brothers were happily spending their time. Lakshmana could not leave the company of Rama even for a moment; so was Sathrughna's, yearning for Bharatha's company.

When Rama started to leave for the forest as per the command of King Dasaratha, Lakshmana was the first person to accompany him on his own volition. Bharatha and Sathrughna were not present in Ayodhya then. Once when Rama and Lakshmana were walking in the Dandakaranaya, Lakshmana suddenly felt dejected and told Rama "Dear elder brother, Why this exile in the forest for us! Why should we leave Ayodhya and undergo so many difficulties in this forest? Come, let us get back to Ayodhya and lead a comfortable life there." Realising the reason for Lakshmana's strange behaviour, Rama held the hand of Lakshmana lovingly and said, "Lakshmana, do not be hasty in your conclusions. Come, come along with Me." So saying, He brought him out of that place by walking some distance. Then Lakshmana regained his poise. He realised his mistake and begged Rama to pardon him. Then Rama pacified

Lakshmana saying, “Look, these are not really your thoughts. This is the effect of the place through which we passed just now. Several *Rakshasas* (demons) tread this forest. Their demonic qualities entered you. I know very well that your heart is very sacred and pure.”

Once when Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were living in the forest by the side of a river in a beautiful *Parnasala* surrounded by fruit-bearing trees, a golden deer started moving in the vicinity. Sita was enchanted by its beauty and developed a desire to possess that golden deer and keep it under her care. She requested Rama to catch that deer and bring it to the *Parnasala*. Rama obliged her request and went after the deer, leaving behind Lakshmana to guard her. The deer played hide and seek with Rama and took Him deep into the forest. When Rama found that the deer was eluding Him, He shot an arrow at it. The golden deer was none other than Mareecha, who assumed that form to draw Rama away from Sita. While dying, Mareecha, imitating the voice of Rama, cried loudly, “Ha! Lakshmana! Ha! Sita!” Sita heard these words and became agitated and asked Lakshmana to go and find out what had happened to Rama. Lakshmana tried to explain and convince Sita that no danger had befallen Rama and that He was safe. But, Sita was not convinced. She implored, Lakshmana to go immediately in search of Rama. She even used harsh words saying, “Oh! Lakshmana! Perhaps you wish to make me your wife when Rama dies.” Unable to bear the words uttered by

Sita, Lakshmana decided to go in search of Rama. But, before leaving, he drew a line around the *Parnasala* and told Sita, “Oh Mother, I am going in search of Rama. Both Rama and myself will not be available in the *ashram* to protect you. I therefore request you not to cross this line under any circumstances.” She agreed to it. The moment Lakshmana left that place, Ravana came there and begged for food saying he was very hungry. Sita felt very sorry on hearing the word ‘hunger’. She decided that it was her duty to offer food to a hungry person. She therefore invited him to come in. But, Ravana was very much afraid to cross the *Lakshmana Rekha*. He dared not cross the line, but started shouting ‘hungry, hungry’. Then Sita was constrained to cross the *Lakshmana Rekha* and come out to offer food to Ravana. Immediately, Ravana abducted Sita and took her away in his chariot.

By the time Rama and Lakshmana returned to the *Parnasala*, Sita was not to be found there. Rama then asked Lakshmana why he left Sita alone and came in search of Him. Lakshmana replied, “Oh elder brother, she talked very bad words to me. I could not bear those abuses. She accused me that I was entertaining the idea of taking her as my wife in the event of Rama’s death.” When Rama heard about these harsh words uttered by Sita, He was deeply hurt. He could not believe that Sita whom Lakshmana was treating as his own mother could hurl such abuses on him. He realised that Lakshmana could not bear such insinuations and

only for that reason he left her alone in the *ashram* and came in search of Him. In fact, after Lakshmana left the *ashram*, Sita too was deeply distressed at her own behaviour towards Lakshmana, She wailed,

*Oh! Lakshmana! My brother-in-law dear!
I spoke bad words about you. Oh! Man of noble
qualities!
Unable to bear those words and deeply hurt
Did you move away from me?*

(Telugu song)

She begged to be pardoned for her unbecoming behaviour. But, alas! What had happened had already happened. The damage had already been done. Ravana abducted Sita and took her along with him.

Subsequently, Rama waged a battle against Ravana to retrieve Sita from his captivity. A fierce battle was going on. One day, during the battle, Lakshmana fell unconscious. Hanuman then went on his mission to bring the *Sanjivini* herb, so that the life-restoring herb could revive Lakshmana. He could not locate the particular herb on the mountain and therefore he lifted the entire mountain and started returning to the battlefield. He had to pass over the city of Ayodhya on his way to Lanka. The residents of that city wondered who could be that monkey carrying the whole mountain? Bharatha was at that time pining alone, worried about his brother Rama and his life in the forest. He saw Hanuman

moving with the mountain in his palm in the sky and inferred that it must be a *Rakshasa* proceeding on a wicked mission. Seizing his bow, he shot an arrow aimed at Hanuman. Immediately, Hanuman fell down with a shrill cry ‘Rama’! Bharatha ran towards him and learnt about the story of Hanuman’s mission and its urgency. He informed Bharatha, “Oh noble one! Rama is engaged in a battle against Ravana, to release Sita from his captivity. Lakshmana fell unconscious in that battlefield. In order that he may be revived I am carrying this *Sanjivini* mountain to that place, as per the command of Rama. Since I could not locate the particular life-restoring herb, I am carrying the mountain itself.” Bharatha repented for his hasty act and Hanuman set on his mission once again.

Sumithra, the mother of Lakshmana came to know about the incident. Though it saddened her for a while, she quickly regained her composure. Sumithra was a noble lady. No one has attempted to describe her qualities so far in the *Ramayana*. Not only she comforted herself, but she also counselled Kausalya saying, “Oh elder sister, You need not feel sorry that Rama is engaged in a battle against Ravana. Sri Rama is not an ordinary person. He is a great warrior, who can conquer the entire world and rule over it. Hence, Rama Himself will protect Lakshmana.” Meanwhile, Lakshmana’s wife Urmila also came to know about the incident and she was happy that her husband was under the divine care and protection of Rama. Urmila

too was a noble and courageous woman. At the time when Lakshmana started to accompany Rama to the forest, she offered her *pranams* to Lakshmana and advised, “You do not waste your time thinking about me. You engage yourself in the service of Rama all the while. Do not neglect your duty in the least.” At that time she was painting a sketch of Rama’s coronation. Such was the nobility of Urmila. Thus, Sumithra, the mother, and Urmila, the wife of Lakshmana were all great and noble women. It is only because of such noble women, the four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Sathrugna were happy and safe.

Hanuman took leave of Bharatha and the people who had gathered there saying, “Very soon Ravana will be defeated in the battle and we will all return to Ayodhya safely.” Bharatha spread the news of the whereabouts of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita to all the people of the city of Ayodhya. Everyone was happy that Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were safe and they thanked Hanuman who brought the news.

Soon, Hanuman appeared in the sky over the battlefield carrying the *Sanjivini* mountain on his upraised palm. He touched the ground and with the help of the life-restoring plants, Lakshmana was revived. Thereafter Rama, Lakshmana and the *Vanara* chiefs assembled on the battlefield and discussed the strategy for defeating Ravana and his army.

During the battle, Ravana's son Meghnath too fought valiantly, but was killed later. Then came the turn of Ravana. On the advice of Vibhishana, Rama shot an arrow right below the navel of Ravana and he breathed his last, within two minutes. That was the end of the great Rama-Ravana battle.

The news of the fall of Ravana was conveyed to Sita by Hanuman. As per the command of Sri Rama, she was brought to the presence of Rama with all respect and reverence, by the *vanaras*. The *vanaras* had no opportunity to see her before. Hence, they were jumping over the shoulders of one another to have a glimpse of her. They prostrated before her and felt very happy. Now, it was time for her to meet her beloved Lord. She walked slowly towards Rama. When she came within a short range, Rama declared that she had to enter the fire and come out unscathed before she could be taken into His fold. As per Rama's command, the *vanaras* collected dry sticks and fuel for lighting and feeding the fire for the rite. The fire was lit. Sita went round the fire and before leaping into it took a vow saying, "Oh Receiver of sacred offerings! By thought, word and deed I have not dwelt in my mind on anyone other than Rama, my Lord. I am the daughter of earth and the chaste wife of Rama. If that be so, may I come out of this fire unscathed." So saying, she entered the fire. Immediately, the fire god appeared there along with Sita and offered her at the feet of Rama, saying, "Oh Rama, You are the omniscient Lord. You know

very well the pure heart of Sita. How then could you not recognise her purity?” Rama declared, “It is true that I am aware how pure and chaste Sita is. Yet, I have a responsibility to make her purity known to the world. It is only to prove her unblemished character to the world that I ordered her to enter the fire and come out unscathed.”

When Sita came out of fire unscathed, the gathering of *vanaras* and others there and the gods above expressed their joy by loudly clapping and sounding heavenly drums and trumpets. Sita bowed in reverence to one and all. Rama walked a few steps and brought her near Him by holding her hand. Thereafter, an aerial chariot (*Vimana*) by name *Pushpaka* was brought. Bharatha made Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Sugriva and Vibhishana seated in the *Vimana* and brought them to Ayodhya. The people of Ayodhya were extremely happy to welcome their dear Lord Rama and loving Sita, whom they did not see for 14 long years. They brought garlands to welcome them, but they were confused in locating Rama. Bharatha sitting in front as the charioteer resembled Rama in all respects, since for fourteen long years he constantly contemplated on Rama. *Yad bhavam tad bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). Immediately, Bharatha drew their attention to the real Rama. The people of Ayodhya garlanded Rama profusely and welcomed Him to the city. They danced and sang in ecstasy, singing the song, “*Rama! Kodanda Rama !*”

Finally, Sri Rama was crowned the King of Ayodhya. This is the story of *Ramayana*. The essence of *Ramanama* (the holy name of Rama) is unparalleled and unique. This is the only truth. Rama never went back on His word. His word is truth. His word and the path that He tread were very auspicious. The people of Ayodhya conscientiously followed the word of Rama and tread the path shown by Him and made their lives sanctified. You all know that the story of Rama dates back to thousands of years. In spite of passage of such a long time, people still chant *Ramanama*. There is no village in Bharath where there is no temple for Rama or the *Ramanama* is not chanted. The *Ramanama* is no ordinary name. It is so sacred.

Dear students! You might have read several stories. They are all stories only! But, the story of Rama is very sacred. Hence, you all chant *Ramanama* at all times. This is the gift I would like to hand over to you today. Today is the holy Krishnashtami day. The chanting of *Ramanama* is very important on this day also. The divinity of Rama and Krishna *Avatars* is not different. Both the *Avatars* represent the same Divine Principle. Hence, you may take any name and chant that name constantly. You can also chant 'Ramakrishna'. Or, you can chant 'Sai Rama' or 'Sai Krishna', with love for *Swami* (*Bhagawan* Sri Sathya Sai Baba). You may pursue any type of education and acquire high academic degrees; yet, you should not give up chanting the divine name. You should not forget the divine name.

The mere chanting of the divine name is enough. It will take you across the ocean of *samsara*. It will relieve you of all the sorrows and difficulties. The *Nama* is like a bridge, crossing which you can go to any place.

*Krishnashtami, 4-9-2007,
Prasanthi Nilayam.*

Control of the senses is most important. In fact, this is the basic difference between a man and an animal. Only if man can control his senses, can he be better than an animal. One should not let his mind go uncontrolled. One should control and train the mind in such a way that it will be subservient to him. For the process, an amount of Yoga is necessary. Students like you should promote a healthy and sacred mind. Only if you are able to do this, will our country be able to move along a prosperous path. If you go along the wrong path, the motherland will suffer a thousand times more than what your parents suffer when you do not progress in your education. Every student should shape himself as an ideal example.

Baba

It is not easy for man to live his life satisfactorily in this world. When a student is in a school, there will be a new lesson each day, and a new class each year. It will not happen that he will sit in the same class in all the years and learn the same lesson at all times. In the same manner, every sadhaka on the spiritual path should introspect and find out if his Sadhana is correct and improving day after day. If not, he should change his ideas and attitudes and improve himself.

A sadhaka should not always remain on a dual path. As the first step, we should move on from a dual path to one which we call qualified non-dualism. This is the duty of every sadhaka. To worship God with flowers and to offer incense to him is only the first step in Sadhana. A sadhaka who has good qualities and a sacred mind, will always grow in his spiritual stature as he moves along the spiritual path. It is the duty of every sadhaka to keep on improving from his first step. A sadhaka should not spend all his life in doing worldly puja to God and remain a beginner. He should strive to improve his mental attitude.

Baba