SUMMER ROSES ON THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, 1976

Discourses of

BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

on

Indian Culture and Spirituality during the summer course held for college students at Ootacamund

PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SRI SATHYA SAI BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS TRUST
Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134
Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, India.
Grams: BOOK TRUST STD: 08555 ISD: 91-8555
Phone: 287375 Fax: 287236

© Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam P.O. 515 134, Anantapur District, (A.P.) India

All Rights Reserved.

The copyright and the rights of translation in any language are reserved by the Publishers. No part, para, passage, text or photograph or Art work of this Book should be reproduced, transmitted or utilised, in original language or by translation, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo copying, recording or by any information, storage and retrieval system, except with prior permission, in writing from the convener Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (Andhra Pradesh), India - Pin Code 515 134 except for brief passages quoted in book review. This book can be exported from India only by the Publishers – Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (India).

International Standard Book Number	81-7208-347-5 81-7208-113-8 (set)

Revised Enlarged Edition : May 2003

Published by:
The Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust
Prasanthi Nilayam, India - Pin Code 515 134
STD: 08555 ISD: 91-8555 Grams: BOOKTRUST
Phone: 287375 Fax: 287236

CONTENTS

1. Opening Address 1

2. Brotherhood Of Man And Fatherhood Of God 11

3. Dharma Never Declines. It Is The Practice Of Dharma That Declines 35

4. Two Great Human Qualities Of Humility And Obedience Characterised The Krishna *Avatar* 59

5. Krishna Was Always A Lover Of Peace And Never A Warmonger 79

6. Mahabharatha Contains Many Valuable Lessons For Us 101

7. A Good and Peaceful Death Is Coveted By All Saintly People 119

8. Man Should Promote Inner Vision For Himself 133

9. Be Good, Do Good, And See Good That Is The Way To God 151

10. Man Should Not, At Any Time, Behave Like An Animal 173

11. The Human Body Is Like A Water Bubble On The Surface Of Water 185

12. Man Becomes Blind By His Ego 201

13. Man's Mind Is Like A Mad Monkey 217

14. The Path Of Love Is The Quickest To Reach God 233

15. Your Conscience Is Your Master And Guide 253

1. OPENING ADDRESS

Without getting rid of your *Thamo Guna* and your anger, how are you going to understand the spiritual background? Without getting rid of your *Rajo Guna* and of your temper, how are you going to take any interest in spiritual aspects? In fact, the best of the three *gunas* or qualities is the *Sathwa* and that itself promotes *Bhakthi* or devotion and that is the best *sadhana*. What I am telling you is the simple and elemental truth.

Divyaatma swarupas, boys and girls, who are the future citizens of this country:

The first thing man does soon after he is born, is to try and understand his mother and father. In the

wider context of the community in which we live, after understanding one's parents, one should make an attempt to understand the full significance and meaning of one's mother country and mother civilisation. The history of our country and the history of our traditions and culture are our true parents. Although more than twenty-five years have lapsed since we have attained the independence of our country, it is a great misfortune that in our entire period of independence, we have not been able to produce one single text or scripture which is typical of the culture of our country. Although, we, in this country, have been listening to real history in many ways, yet we are truly not able to recognise the essence of our civilisation. Such permanent truth, which does not alter with time, such permanent truth which is not affected or altered by revolutions, is the only truth which is the essence and true form of our culture. The inner meaning and significance of such truth represents the history of our country. Forgetting this sacred history of ours, we are taking two alternatives which are temporary, transient, and artificial. Because of this change, no student has been able to assert and say what the true picture of our country is.

Unfortunately, today every student makes all attempts to pass an examination. They do not make any attempt to understand the wisdom that lies behind true

education. The students of today are spending their lives in trying to acquire some cheap texts or notes and somehow or other, by hook or by crook, and by copying from such cheap texts or even by terrorising the teachers, they just want to pass the examination. From the time he wakes up from sleep till the time he goes back to bed, man spends all his time in such a trivial manner.

Today, man's way of living is such that he becomes dependent on others. Man is always in a hurry, he is simply spending his time in running from one thing to another. He runs for a seat in a bus, he runs for a seat in a cinema hall, he runs for a seat in a college, he runs all his life for acquiring one thing or another. Even while undertaking to do things in such a hurry and running for everything, they have the misfortune of having to wait for everything. Our life appears like the life of a bird or of an insect dependent on others for everything. We spend all the time today in reading useless stories. One does not find time to read useful history and useful aspects of one's culture. Not only this, man also wants to take a short cut for everything that he wants to achieve. Man does not want to make an effort in growing crops. He wants to go and steal the harvest prepared by someone else. He does not want to take the trouble for anything. He wants to earn his money by picking the pocket of someone else and such

are the shortcuts that he wants to adopt for everything. How is the breadth of vision of a man going to enlarge if he wants to lead a life like that? A man whose *Atma* has not blossomed and a man whose spiritual background has not blossomed will never understand the whole purpose of his life. Today people think that acquaintance with a large number of books is education. Acquaintance with books can never be called education.

For this enormous creation that we see in this universe, that there is an invaluable strength behind it all, is a truth that we should recognise. Although man's birth and death look to us as common things, yet to understand the secret of birth and of death is a very difficult matter. No one is making an attempt to understand the reason for human life and for human birth and death. No one is trying to understand the basis for this. Man is not making an attempt to understand the duties and responsibilities of himself as a human being. Why is there so much anarchy and confusion in the world today? Why is there no peace? Is it because there are no educated people, and is it because there are no educational institutions? No, there are plenty of them, but the educated people do not have the necessary culture and breadth of vision along with their education. Our country has been known as the

spiritual treasure house. Yet today we are forgetting the spiritual treasure and the real strength of our country.

Children are not understanding even the meaning of education. For the root word "*Vid*" if you add "*Ya*" then you get *Vidya*. Here "*Vid*" stands for illumination and "*Ya*" stands for that. Therefore, that which gives illumination and light is *Vidya.* That which gives you light and sheds your ignorance and that which gives you wisdom and superior knowledge can alone be called *Vidya*. What promotes ignorance and darkness cannot be called *Vidya.* From time immemorial, our country had been the leader of all the countries in the world. It had enjoyed the position of leadership in this world, and that is the kind of sacredness that we have enjoyed in the past. Because there are no leaders today who can set an example of such ideal life and who can hand on such ideals to other countries, we have fallen on bad times. The main reason for this is that in the people, there is no co-ordination between the words that they utter and the acts that they do. You are all the future citizens of Bharath. You are the citizens who will bring up the welfare of Bharath. The entire prosperity and welfare of the country rests on your shoulders. Your lives and your hearts are pure and sacred. They are unwavering. I am hoping that you will not allow the confusion and anarchy prevailing in the country to

confuse your pure, unwavering, and sacred minds; and I am hoping that you will develop into ideal citizens of this country.

We keep on talking about discipline. Simply to keep on talking about discipline and not have the strength and faith to accept discipline is not going to do any good. To discipline and duty we should also add devotion. It is only when these three D's—Discipline, Devotion, and Duty—are together and firmly implanted in your heart, that your heart will be able to develop into a sacred one. Today, unfortunately, even persons who claim to be, and boast of being highly educated, appear as weaklings in practical life. Such people do not understand the value of true education. As one student has just mentioned, the entire education has turned into one begging bowl.

Students, after having a degree in their hands, should undertake to be of some service to the community. If, on the other hand, you search for a job or beg for a job, it is not correct. For the chariot of this body, the axle, namely the *Atma*, has become very distant. It is for rectifying this defect—namely to remove the distance between the body and the axle, we will have to undertake *Yoga*. *Yoga* does not mean that one should give up his family and his house. It does not

mean going to a forest and sitting in meditation. Today man faces many problems in the community that he lives in. To be able to face those problems courageously, and to meet and solve them, is the true meaning of *Yoga*. Every man aspires for happiness and a peaceful life. Every man wants a respectable position in the society in which he lives, and every man wants good health; but to be able to deserve this happiness, this health, and this peaceful life is a part of *Yoga*. To be able to enjoy this peace and happiness, we will have to adopt a path, and the path that we have to adopt for this will constitute the *Yoga* of which we are talking.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* the *Yoga* that was taught to Arjuna was to give him the strength by which he does not turn his back on the problems that he was facing. The lesson that was given to Arjuna was that he should face the problem and find a solution for the problem. This kind of *Yoga*, which the students should undertake in their lives, should enable them to face the country and community and the problems thereof. You find the solutions to the problems, and by God's grace, these problems will be solved. One should regard the country's problems as one's own problems. Put away the selfishness and ego in you and regard the problems of the society as your own problems, and you must solve them. It is necessary that students take the lead in

solving such problems. I hope that those of you who are students will be able to imbibe the messages given by the older people in sacred congregations like this, and that you will shape your lives in such a manner that you will become useful citizens of the country. I hope that this will be possible for you.

Of all the animals that are born in this world, to be born as a human being is the most difficult and fortunate thing. Having been born as human and having acquired that special gift of intellect, you must sanctify your human birth and human existence. You must be prepared to put into practice one out of the ten things that you preach in preference to just saying ten good things. You must be prepared to serve as servants for all your lives. Never think of being a leader. Without becoming a servant you cannot become a leader. You must first learn to follow before becoming a leader. We find the world in an unfortunate state because, today, people become leaders without knowing how to become good followers. In that context you must be prepared to spend all your lives in the service of humanity. In the first instance, you must serve your own home, then you must serve your village, then your state, and then the country. Without acquiring the ability to serve in your own home and produce results in your home, how can you serve your country and hope to produce results?

Students!

In the first instance you must give satisfaction to your father and mother. According to our traditions, mother and father who have gifted us this human body are to be treated like gods; and if we cannot show them gratitude, our lives are meaningless. Many great saints have sacrificed everything else in order to satisfy their mother and father. Saints like Chaitanya and Pundarika have sacrificed everything to be of service to their parents. In the first instance, you should show gratefulness and provide satisfaction to your mother and father. Then you can make an effort to serve the country. You should be sure that the kind of work that you undertake does not cause waste of time. Everything is time for us, in fact, time is the very basis of all that we see in this creation. If we waste time, we will be wasting our entire life and body. The significance of our commencing the summer classes today is that we recognise the spiritual strength in us. We should take such steps as would promote this spiritual strength and let it blossom out and become useful to others. In the world there are many organisations which are devoted to the service of the community; but our organisation, the Sathya Sai Organisation—should have something specific and distinctive—showing an ideal to other organisations. We are commencing our summer classes

today and many experienced and elderly people will come, and they will give you their messages. I am hoping that you will imprint their messages in your heart. Not only imprint them in your heart, but also try and put them into practice. I bless you all and bring this discourse to a close.

2. Brotherhood Of Man And Fatherhood Of God

Children who do not have good qualities, education which does not have character as its objective, and life which has no morality are purposeless and without any use. An individual who has no peace of mind and the world which has no moon shining in it are similar and are without use and purpose in this world.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

Every item of creation in this world has some distinctive feature and a character of its own. If any item in this world gives up this distinctive aspect, it will destroy itself. Here are some examples for this. Fire has the ability and quality to burn. Water has the ability to flow. Man has got the quality of human

nature, and an animal has the quality of being a brute. When the ability to burn disappears, you cannot call it fire. When the ability to flow disappears, you cannot call it water. When the inner vision or the basic human nature disappears, you cannot call him a man. When the external vision or the brute nature disappears, you cannot call it an animal. Here we see that for everything there is an inherent quality, and this constitutes the life for that particular item. To have an inner vision is the natural quality of a human being. By its very definition, an animal can look only externally. One may, in form, be a human being; but if he has only external vision and is unable to see within himself, he cannot be called a human being. He will be called an animal. Because a prescribed quality is being exhibited or worn as a cloak by each one of these items, this quality is also being called its *dharma*. This *dharma* takes many different forms. When any one item exceeds the natural *dharma* or quality characteristic of itself and promotes something in excess, then that will be referred to as an attempt to promote *dharma*. Just as by effort, a student in a particular class can be promoted to a higher class, an individual by promoting his own natural *dharma* and giving attention to something higher and nobler can earn promotion to a higher level. A lifeless piece of iron can be converted to a set of several useful implements by successive heat treatments.

Out of a piece of iron which has not been properly treated, and therefore worth only a few annas, by making suitable changes, we can produce a watch which is worth 300 rupees. You should notice here that it is the *samskara*, or the change that we give to the substance, that brings the value to it and not the inherent value of the untreated material. As in this analogy, an ordinary and unsophisticated human being can, by seeking the company of elevated beings, get an opportunity of elevating himself to the position of a *Paramahamsa* (Realised sage). Man's mind aspires to get such sacred wisdom through the use of the sensory organs. In such a situation, because the mind is not able to distinguish between the good and bad, the intelligence comes forward and puts itself ahead of the mind for the purpose of distinguishing good from bad. Even the intelligence cannot, by its own accord, decide between the good and the bad; but it is able to make a judgement of everything that is put before it. In the case of a judge, we know that he will decide between right and wrong only on the basis of facts that are put before him. As in this analogy, the nature of intelligence is such that it can decide between good and bad only on the basis of facts that are put before it; and it cannot go outside the facts. Conduct and practice of *dharma* is the quality of the mind; and the decision between good and bad, on

the basis of facts put before it, is the quality of intelligence. But in the world today, this kind of intelligence can be classified into four different categories. These are—the first is a selfish type, the second is a selfish-selfless type, the third is a purely selfless type, and the fourth is based upon *Atma*. The first category is always thinking of what is good for one's own self and makes a decision of being good for one's own self. It is like the intelligence of a crow. This is very common today, and we find this category in large numbers in the world.

The second category partly selfish and partly selfless—will think of the good of one's own self along with the good of others. This appears as the ordinary way of life. The third category, which may be described as selfless intelligence, always thinks of others and will think of the kind of happiness that he wants for himself as also the kind of happiness that others must get. The kind of sorrow that he wants to get rid of is also the sorrow that he wants others to get rid of. So long as you feed and look after a dog, it will follow the master. So long as you give a salary to a servant, he will be with you and serve you. If you do not show affection, do not give food, and beat a dog with a stick, even a dog will bite you. Similarly if you do not look after the servant well, and if you push the servant to a distance,

the servant will stop serving you. In the same manner, when you wish good for others, you will get good for yourself, and when you wish ill for others, you will get ill for yourself. In that context, realising that the human body is given to you for the sake of causing benefit to others, this third category of persons will always be trying to do good to others. This has been described as the kind of *buddhi* (intelligence) which is all the time doing and thinking of doing good to others.

The fourth category—the *Atma Buddhi* is always concerned with the aspect of *dharma* and the necessity for safeguarding *dharma*. He always thinks of himself as a messenger of God; and forgetting his own selfish interests, he always thinks of sacrifice and does good to the rest of the world. In this category only truth has the right to make a decision as to what is good and what is bad. Others have no right to make such a decision. It is in this context that our Sruthis have stated *Sathyam nasthi paro Dharmaha* (There is no *dharma* other than truth). It is because of truth that the sun and moon are shining. It is because of truth that the earth is revolving round itself. It is because of truth that the world is going on in the way in which it is going on. Truth is the basis of everything. But today man has no faith in truth and does not want truth. The one thing

that man does not like today is truth. He is always taking a backward step even in regard to finding out and getting the truth regarding himself. He is afraid of coming to know such truth.

How then can such a man, who is afraid of truth within himself, take to the path of truth? On the platform we speak, like a parrot, words like truth, *prema* (love), *ahimsa* (non-violence); and in our daily life we do not have faith in truth, we do not practise *ahimsa*, and we do not follow the path of buddhi. In that context, the young people of today must learn to put into practice these words and not simply utter them in a meaningless way.

Man's life depends upon three things—his words, his thoughts, and his deeds. Whatever desires one gets, one will exhibit them and take them to his mind. For getting a thought, mind is the basis. The thought that comes to your mind will be exposed to the world as the word of the mouth. Once you utter this word of your mouth and expose the thought that has come to your mind, in order that you put it into practice, action comes on. It is only when there is a harmony between this thought, word, and action that man will be in a position to recognise his own true nature. When one is

able to put these three—thought, word, and action along the right path, then do we earn *punya* (merit from good deeds); but if we put them along the wrong path, then we will earn sin. We come to the clear conclusion that for good and bad, the three basic things are thought, word, and deed. In order, therefore, to purify our thoughts, words, and action, we should undertake some kind of *sadhana* (spiritual practice). We should make the right attempt to bring about the harmony between thought, word, and deed. This is what was meant when they said that the proper study of mankind is man.. There is a necessity for us to enquire whether this kind of human nature is present today or not.

The cost of all items in this world is going on increasing, but the value of man is going on decreasing. Because man has not got the fortune to understand the real value of human nature, he himself is acting in a manner causing the value of a human being to come down day after day. In the very first instance, we must make an attempt to purify and ennoble the thoughts that come to our mind. When thoughts come surging to your mind, you should spend at least a few minutes enquiring whether such thoughts are good thoughts or bad ones, and whether they are for the good of your country, and whether they are going to be helpful or not to the community around you.

Students!

As soon as thoughts come to your mind, you must make an attempt to spend time and decide whether those thoughts are good or bad. If they are bad thoughts, you must immediately put them aside; and if they are good thoughts, you must make an attempt to promote them. When a thorny plant is seen, it is removed the moment it is recognised as a thorny plant; but when a good fruit tree comes up, we try to take care of it and promote its growth. In the same manner, in the field of your heart, as soon as bad ideas sprout, you must pull them out and throw them away. As the seeds grow into a big tree, man also must try to grow and become *Madhava* (God) ultimately. For both these paths, our own qualities have the basic responsibility. Whether in lifeless matter or in living matter, the promotion of good qualities will depend on the way in which you promote and nurture those qualities. Everything that is born in this world must change. Change is a natural quality of all things that are born in this world. How can things that change from moment to moment give permanent happiness to people? Permanent happiness and bliss can be got only from permanent things and not from changing things. Today, in the very first instance, we should make the necessary attempt to make sacred the thoughts that come to our mind. The

young people of today get all kinds of meaningless thoughts into their minds. For those who get these meaningless ideas and thoughts, sacred ideas will be of great help. Man has no rest and peace. Man who is suffering from such an anguish can be helped very much by his entertaining such sacred ideas. Our sacred thoughts have prescribed a *Karma Kanda*, the path of work, by practising which, we will be able to generate good ideas and sacred thoughts. Our body has not been given to us for only eating in the morning, afternoon and evening. The body of ours must be sanctified by doing good work at prescribed times. Time, action and duty should be regarded as man's primary responsibility.

From time immemorial, there have been sacred sayings in our ancient texts; and it is not appropriate for us to forget these and not pay any heed to such sacred things. If we make our thoughts, words, and deeds sacred, there can be no better way for man's emancipation. If each student asks himself the question as to why he is going through the process of education, he will get the answer that it is for securing such and such a degree or for securing such and such a job or authority; and he will, all the time, think of what he will get in return as a result of the education and degrees that he is seeking. This cannot be the right attitude of a student. For him, the right attitude should

be to ask himself how his degree will be of use to the community and the country in which he lives, or how he can be of use to others. Life should be a process of give and take, and it should not be a one-way traffic with you being at the receiving end always. All the different branches in education, unfortunately, look as if they have no essence in them. They appear as things which are simply enabling us to just carry on in this world. Good education must be such that it covers both worldly and spiritual matters. Out of education comes humility, and out of such humility comes the right to acquire good qualities and from such a right, you will be able to acquire wealth. Once you acquire wealth, you will be able to follow the path of *dharma*; and once you follow the path of *dharma,* you will be happy in this world as well as in the spiritual world.

Students!

Do not be under the impression and illusion that your education is for the sole purpose of begging for a livelihood. Remember that the education that you get should enable you to do some good to the community that you live in, and the world that you are born into. Just as there is a flash of lightning in the sky whenever clouds gather in the sky, so also, where there is education, there should be wisdom like a streak of

lightning. When such sacred wisdom shines in the clouds of your heart, then only will your education enable you to do some good and be of some service to other people.

Today we regard education as just that which we learn in a school or a college or a university. No, this is not right. The entire universe is a place of education for us. Whether it is a workman, or an agriculturist, or a businessman, there are so many things that he has to learn in this world. In fact, every moment in this world we are learning so many things irrespective of what our profession is. In fact, in our lives that kind of education which goes under the name of general knowledge is very essential. Here is a small example. Let us take the case of a student who has taken an M.A. degree and marries a girl who has taken a B.A. degree. In due course, they have a son. If this son gets a cold or a fever, they will be in a terrible confusion not knowing what to do. They will take the son and run to a hospital. If you have not got the courage and the capacity to handle a situation in which your child gets sick, what is the use of an M.A. degree or the B.A. degree that you acquire. The meaning of this is that in your daily life, if you want to meet a situation and face it, you do not have to take an M.B.B.S. degree; but you have to acquire general knowledge in addition to the knowledge in

your own subject. The very first thing that the student has to understand is what is essential for him in his daily life. Let us ask ourselves a question. If we want to acquire a B.A. degree, we can purchase text books, read in our house and pass the examination. For this, why should we go to a college? By going to a college, you have the company of students of different types, we have different attitudes; and by being with them, you get the necessary discipline by which you can face and find solutions to situations which you might face. While you will get a pass by getting marks in subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Zoology or Botany, there is something else which constitutes the basis of all these subjects and that basis is discipline. If you do not get the necessary qualifications in this broad subject, there is no use of getting marks in a specialised subject. Our students should take care of this aspect. It does not matter even if you do not get marks, but you should have the proper discipline and see that you do not earn remarks. You should make an attempt to respect your teachers. You should make an attempt to satisfy your teachers by your behaviour and conduct.

Prahlada had said that one who teaches you the very basis of education is the real teacher, and one who tells you that all that you have to do is to reach the divinity of God, is the true father. Such is the teacher

and such is the father that you have to seek. But unfortunately, today neither such teachers nor such fathers are available to you. Teachers of today are themselves not following the correct path, and accordingly, the students who learn from such teachers are also not following the correct path. Both are really deceiving the community in which they live. In this young age of yours, while you are still in your youth, the kind of sacred thoughts that generate in your mind and the sacred experiences that you go through will determine the future for you. A young lad by name Mohandas Karamchand attended the drama of Harishchandra, whereby he learnt the importance of truth. He went back to his mother and told her that he would stick to truth in his later life, and by sticking to truth, Mohandas Karamchand evolved into being known as Mahatma Gandhi. Even in those days, there were teachers who wanted to put Gandhi on the wrong path. When the teacher tried to put him on the wrong path, Gandhiji did not yield. He stuck to the truth, and because of this, he ultimately succeeded even though it meant disobeying his teachers.

Maybe today some teachers will try to give you the wrong path; but if your conscience tells you that it is the wrong path, then it is better for you to disobey the orders of the teacher and follow the right path. The

kind of pictures that we witness today, and the kind of dramas that we see today, or the kind of wall posters that we see are such that they cause distortions in your mind and destroy the very human nature and the sweetness of your heart. Because of the destructive nature of what you see, you are getting such bad ideas. The pure, unwavering, and clean minds of people are being changed and spoiled by the atmosphere around us. The kind of attraction is very transient and can never be true. Such artificial attractions can cause great harm to us. This is responsible for several accidents that occur. Because there are several such things that happen in your daily life, there is a necessity for me to tell you about these common incidents. Some persons, either to go to a library, or to a college, or to fulfil some other duty, go on the motorcycle in the bazaar. In such a situation, the person who is driving the motorcycle must keep his attention on driving and must ensure that he reaches his destination without harming others. He should concentrate on reaching his destination safely. But the person concerned is not accepting and following this duty. He goes on his motorcycle at a great speed and he does not have his attention on driving. His attention is directed towards the wall posters and he gets involved in an accident by hitting against a car or another automobile. The only result of this attracting wall poster is harm.

There is a necessity, at this point, for me to narrate an incident which actually took place. In Kerala, the bus accidents used to be very large in number. This issue was taken to the assembly and several people pointed out the reasons for this large incidence of accidents. Following the advice given by the people, the government followed many approaches but still the accidents were not reduced. When I visited Trivandrum and went to the house of a responsible person, he asked me the question, why, in spite of all that they had done, were accidents not reduced? I gave a seemingly trivial advice. Immediately this advice was followed, all the accidents stopped. In the Kerala state, women made a special appeal to the authorities that they should be given reserved seats in the front area of the bus, just behind the driver, so that they may travel comfortably and avoid the jolting that one gets in the rear seats of the bus. Because of this, all the time the driver was looking in the mirror to see these ladies and hence accidents occurred in large numbers. You can see how such a foolish attraction by the driver was causing so much harm.

In man's mind today, he is giving room for and promoting foolish thoughts. In the minds of young men, who are the future citizens of this country, such thoughts are coming and they are becoming traitors to

their own country. Today you call yourselves students, but in fact you are not seeking Vidya, you are seeking material pleasure.

Students!

You should set aside imitation and you should develop your own inner strength. Whether it is in our conduct and behaviour or in the way in which we dress and talk, all seems to depend on imitation. You have a life of your own, you have desires of your own, and you have a mind of your own; but by imitating and following the mind and actions of someone else, you simply turn yourself into a slave. You are an independent person. Where does this come from and what is the meaning of *swatantra* (freedom)? You have freedom of thought or *swechha*. This word *swechha* comes from a combination of "*Swa*" and "*Ichha*." You follow the dictates of your own desires but never undertake to follow the desires of others. Introspect well on your desires and think carefully; and if you feel that it is good, follow it; but if you think that it is bad, give it up. But man today does not take such a step. He is ever ready and is always attempting to imitate others.

What you see with your own vision cannot represent the ultimate truth. Your vision is looking at the entire creation. When the whole creation constitutes

what you see, then you change yourself into the one who sees. When the eye itself becomes what is seen, then your intelligence becomes that which sees. There is an example for this. You are all sitting in this congregation. Your ears are here. Your eyes are here. If at this instant of time, your mind is thinking about something in your village, then even while you are here and while your ears are here, you will not be able to listen to what Swami is speaking. Even though you have your eyes here, you will not be able to see what is in front of you. Thus, while the mind is elsewhere, even if the sensory organs are here, they cannot function as one who sees or one who hears. But sometimes even the mind is seen and the intelligence becomes the seer. In some cases and instances, even the intelligence becomes the seer and the *Atma* becomes the seer. Thus what witnesses everything is the *Atma* and nothing is superior to this. Intelligence is useful to you as seer only with regard to worldly matters, and intelligence is indeed very superior to the sensory organs.

There is a small story to illustrate this. In a village, a blind man and a lame man become friends. The blind man had legs and the lame man had eyes. The lame person sat on the shoulders of the blind person. The lame person was serving the purpose of seeing the passage and steering the blind person. The blind person

had his legs, and he was using his legs to move about. In this way they were moving and begging. They were moving from village to village in this manner. In the middle of their journey, the lame man saw a heap of large cucumbers. He said, “Dear brother, if we can stray a little and go to the left, there are many cucumbers there; and we can collect some cucumbers and then go our way.” The blind man said that if there are so many cucumbers, it is not likely that they are unprotected. Just think a little before we go near the plant. The lame man then said that there does not appear to be any fence or protection. The blind man then suggested the possibility of a watchman keeping watch over the plants. The lame man then said that there was neither a fence nor a watchman keeping watch over the cucumbers. He wanted to go and eat the cucumbers. The blind man then said that if they were truly good cucumbers, would they be left in such large numbers in an unguarded manner? They are surely likely to be bitter cucumbers unfit for eating. Indeed here, the intelligence has worked and the sensory organs have not worked. When they tasted the cucumbers, they were found to be indeed bitter. It is obvious from this story that intelligence is superior to sensory organs. *Atma* is superior even to intelligence. Following the dictates of the ultimate *Atma* it is called *Svechha.* We have changed this word into freedom a kind of freedom that is enjoyed by an animal.

Students!

We all have the form of a *manava* (man). We have the form of a human being. We have the superior intelligence and even after using this intelligence, we still conduct our lives in an inferior way. That cannot be the true nature of human beings. Your desires and thoughts should reach the level of being sacred and good. You should look upon the whole world as a conglomeration of brothers and sisters. In the human family, you should understand and experience this brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. This should be the spirit of all human beings. Only on that day when you are able to practise and proclaim these ideals to the world can we say that you have re-established the glory of this country. Our *Vedas* and *Sastras* have given us the answers to questions like how a man should live, how a man should conduct himself, and how he should die.

Birth is not the important thing for man. He should promote a good mind and good thoughts throughout his life and should have it at the time of death. To man, death is more important than birth. Your rebirth is determined by the type of death that you get. If you want a good rebirth and a good life in the next birth, you must also desire a good death. We should not die an uncared for death like a death of a dog.

We should not devote our life to fulfilling meaningless and sensory desires. Our sensory organs should become our slaves, but we should not become slaves to our sensory organs. The day we become slaves to our sensory organs, we will become slaves to the whole world. If we become slaves to our own sensory organs, what kind of strength can we claim? We should be masters to our servants, but should not become servants to our servants. Today, we should make an enquiry as to whether we are living in our house as a master or as a servant. The servant of the house can know and will be able to tell you where certain external things are present in the house. But the master of the house will know where the valuable things are kept in addition to knowing the articles of daily use. He knows where each of the valuable things is locked up. Today, we talk of many things which are external to ourselves but we are unable to take or recognise the valuable spirit that is present inside of our hearts. In that context, we are living like a servant of the house of the body rather than as a master of the body. If we are really the master of the house in which we are living, why is it that we are not aware of the good ideas and good thoughts that are present in us? God is not something present outside you. He is present inside you. Similarly sin is not something which is

external to you. It is decided by your own action. The moment you realise these two truths, you will not be a servant to your sensory organs. They will be your servants.

Students!

The things that you listen to here must be proclaimed to the community and you must be prepared to put them into practice. If you want the lamp to shed light on all places, then you should keep the lamp at a height. If you put this light in a pit, how is it going to shed light around? So the sacred ideas in you should be put at a height, in an elevated place, so that the whole world can see them. You should not put them inside the pit of your heart and make them stagnant.

Our body is like a machine. We have the machine of a radio and through the radio we listen to several programmes. Where are these coming from? Is the radio generating them or are they generated elsewhere? These programmes are being generated in some other broadcasting station, and those programmes are being transmitted to us through the radio. The radio is not generating the programmes. Like this, when we listen to a person's thoughts or ideas, we must realise that they are not coming from his mouth. They are being

transmitted through him after they are generated from his heart. He only transmits them like a radio. There is an origin, there is a source from where these sounds are generated. Radio is only an instrument through which these sound waves are transmitted to us. The human body is like this radio. The source is the *atma* and all ideas and thoughts are being generated at this source, the *atma*. You may ask the question as to what are good thoughts and bad thoughts if they are all coming from the sacred *atma*. But why should you classify them as good and bad thoughts? In the process of tuning the radio, you are making a mistake. In this process, the thought that we want to listen to is something, and the station to which we tune is something different. Not only this, in order to enable us to listen to the right thing, the manner in which you make the tuning and the adjustment should also be proper. Our desire is one thing, and if our action is not in tune with that desire, we are having this difficulty. We want to listen to one station, and we tune to a different station. It means such sacred ideas which you want to promote and such sacred ideas which you want in your mind should guide your actions. That is, whatever you do must be to promote such sacred ideas. The ideas and thoughts will not be called good if they are good only to you. They will be called good only if they do good to the whole world.

In man, there are four kinds of desires that emanate. One aspect is to regard the faults of others and one's own faults as being on the same footing and speak on that basis. Another aspect is to speak about the good that is in him and speak about the faults that are in others. The third aspect is to speak about the good in him as well as the good in the others. The fourth aspect is to claim the good that is not in him and speak about the faults that are not in others. This is the worst aspect of the whole lot. Today, we must make a determined effort to root out this fourth aspect. We must be prepared to put into practice the ideas that we want to proclaim to the world.

Divya Atma Swarupas,

When Sankaracharya wanted to propagate his philosophy in the entire country, he did it with only four disciples. In each college, even if we get ten students who are willing to practise and proclaim these ideals to the rest of the world, that is enough. Every student should make an attempt to make this determination.

It is not as if there is no obvious reason for organising this summer course in Ooty. As soon as the summer vacation comes, it is customary for students to

plan for different things, and they have many ideas. They want to have the pleasures of life in this vacation. Submitting oneself to these desires and wasting one's time is one aspect. There are ample opportunities for the students, in the summer vacation, to misuse the facilities that they have. Wasting time is like wasting life. In order to make sure that you do not waste your time, we are making efforts to convert these holidays into holy days in this sacred place. In this sacred time, you should acquire sacred and good ideas and you should be prepared to communicate these ideas to others with whom you come into contact. From tomorrow we will take some specific topic like the *Mahabharatha* or the *Bhagavatha* or the *Ramayana* and will make it possible for you to have sacred ideas and thoughts. Today is your first day, and I have given whatever is necessary for you to lay a strong foundation for what you are going to get in the rest of the days. Without spending more time, I will bring the discourse to a close.

3. Dharma Never Declines. It Is The Practice Of Dharma That Declines

Do you know why this life has been given to you? It is not for searching for food all through nor for eking out a livelihood, but it is to enable you to search and search for God.

Pavitratma Swarupas,

The moment we hear the word Bharath, the name of our country, the Himalayas come to our mind. For centuries in the past, the essential and the great principles of Hinduism were symbolised in truth and *ahimsa*. These two great principles of truth and *ahimsa* are also symbolised in the silvery mountains of the Himalayas. These lofty mountains are the places where great men and great saints have performed their *thapas* (austerities

and sense control). Those mountains appear to us as the symbols of purity attained through truth and through *dharma*. When we look at those mountains, we get the feeling that those silvery mountains are lost in the meditation of Madhava. In those mountains, where the *rishis* (sages) had performed their thapas, lies the origin of Ganges, the sacred river. Ganges is the flowing symbol of Hinduism. Ganges also symbolises what flows through the blood vessels of our country from its spiritual heart. We have to compare the blood vessels and the arteries of Bharath and of its citizens to the flow of the sacred Ganges. The moment we hear the name of Ganges, we are reminded of the two banks thereof on which are the centres of pilgrimage, and on which lie the great places of learning. We visualise, when we think of Ganges, the great spiritual centres like Benares, Prayag, Rishikesh, and Hardwar.

In the same manner, as in this analogy of Ganges, we should also recognise the great pilgrim centres of our mind which lie on either side of the blood vessels. Our own intelligence and *Anthahkarana* (inner consciousness) are the great pilgrim centres of our body. It is customary that in these sacred places of pilgrimage, sacred tasks are performed; and as a consequence thereof, sacred ideas are generated. In the inner body, alongside the life flow of blood, our mind,

our *Chitta* (mind), our *Anthahkarana,* etc., can all be recognised as places where good ideas can be generated.

The fact that Ganges flows in our country has itself got a spiritual significance. The moment we hear about the name of our country, Bharath, we are reminded of the great epic the *Mahabharatha*. The hero of this epic is Lord Krishna. However, the great deeds of Lord Krishna are being pictured in a distorted fashion, and one gets the feeling that we are forgetting the true nature and true character of Lord Krishna. Krishna is one who had mixed with the *gopis* (cowherd maids) and *gopikas* (cowherds) as water mixes with milk. He moved intimately with *gopis* and *gopikas.*

In order to recognise the sacred truth behind the actions of Krishna, we should realise that in the great battle between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, he took Arjuna to the centre of the battlefield and has taught the philosophy of *Karma* or the path of work to Arjuna and to us in the world at large, through the ears of Arjuna. It is said in this context that Dhritharashtra asked a question and described the battlefield as *Dharmakshetra* (Field of virtue)—*Kurukshetra* (Field of action.) Dhritharashtra asked a question according to which he wondered about the name Kurukshetra. We should understand the hidden meaning and significance

of this question. The question says "*Mamaka*"—that is, those people to whom I am bound down by attachment and Pandavas who are known for their *sathwic* (pure) qualities—what is it that these two groups are doing in the battlefield of Dharmakshetra? We have to understand here that Dhritharashtra, in his ignorance, asked a question which really means, from an inner significance point of view, what are the *thamo* (slothful) and *rajo* (passionate) *gunas* (qualities), represented by the Kauravas, doing in the battlefield with the Pandavas who represent *sathwic gunas*. His ignorance was about what these *thamo* and *rajo gunas* were doing in the battlefield of his heart along with the *sathwic gunas*.

In this context, to limit this battle between these qualities to a period of eighteen days is not correct. This battle between the *thamo* and *rajo gunas* on the one hand and the *sathwic gunas* on the other hand, is continually being waged, for all time, in the body which is the Dharmakshetra, in Kurukshetra which symbolises the sensory organs. This continuous battle is always going on and when the battle is on, Lord Krishna in the form of *atma* or the witnessing consciousness is a witness of this battle all the time. Krishna here should be understood as the very essence of *Mahabharatha* come in the human form. This Krishna symbolises the inner consciousness, the unseen *atma* of Hinduism.

With a view to propound this aspect of the cult of Krishna in an ordinarily understood language to the people of the world, to the people in the political, in the cultural, and social spheres, Krishna, the Lord, has come in the ordinary human form.

When we think of the situation in the world today, we see that it is a very diverse and a complicated situation. We are trying to create a new society in the name of socialism wanting to make all human beings come to the same level and wanting all human beings to be exactly the same in regard to their food, requirements, wealth, etc. We are regarding this as socialism, but truly this aspect cannot be called socialism. There is no support in our history or in our traditions to call this socialism. Today, we may be ready and in a position to distribute the wealth and property and to distribute the houses equally among all human beings, but we are not in a position to distribute the totality of desires of all humanity equally between all human beings.

Only when all the human beings have the same desires, can we say this. In fact, all the material wealth, earthly possessions, etc., will be distributed automatically if the desires of all human beings are the same. The process of equitable distribution between all

people from the worker to the agriculturist, really started with the French revolution. With this original concept as the starting point, the feeling has arisen that, with every individual, there must be a position of authority. It has given rise to desires, and the feeling grew that authority and power should not be concentrated in the hands of a few people, but that it should be distributed equally among all men. Gradually this concept underwent several changes; and when it took a distorted form, it acquired the name of Communism.

During both these revolutions, the ideas that gave birth to them are indeed good and sacred and are worth accepting; but in practice, the original concept and the ideals got distorted. As a result of this, the revolutions were unsatisfactory.

These basic ideas of giving equal opportunity and of distributing wealth equally amongst all human beings are being regarded as something new and novel, but this is not correct. Fifty centuries ago, Krishna, in fact, did these very same things and started these ideals. This historic figure, whom we call Krishna, really established the root of what we, today, call the new society of Bharath. This great figure in our history brought the worker, the agriculturist, and the educated person to the same level and exposed the political

hypocrisy which the rulers of the country showed even at that time; and brought them to understand these concepts well. He ruled like an uncrowned king. From ancient times, we have had the sacred idea of referring to Krishna as Gopala. In the word *Gopala,* we have traditionally come to regard *Go* as representing a cow or an animal. This is not correct. In the historic times, everything that gave us prosperity and happiness we regarded as *Go*. We now regard *Go* as meaning an animal; but in reality whoever looks after the happiness of humanity and provides for the prosperity of humanity should be regarded as Gopala.

In those days, Krishna propagated the view that what gives prosperity to the world is the Cow. Man, today, is ignorant and is unable to recognise what is true wealth and what gives true prosperity to humanity. We are now in an unfortunate position of looking at currency notes and thinking that they constitute prosperity or wealth. Krishna pushed aside the foolish concept that these artificial printed notes constituted wealth. This is not wealth; and he regarded the cow which gives us milk as wealth, and this wealth was distributed equally among the people. Not only do we get milk, ghee, butter, curds, and other food material from the cow, but from the cow emanate the cattle; and we use these for purposes of agriculture. We generate

all the food that we need from the cow and the cattle. When we talk about the harvest and the milk and the curds, these are in two different categories. The requirements of humanity are essentially of two kinds. One is the milk and related products and the other is the agricultural harvest. These were distributed between the two brothers. Gopala looked after the milk and other related products and the cows; and Balarama, symbolised by the plough, looked after the agriculture and the various products that come through agriculture. Truly the prosperity of the human race depends on the harvest and the milk and milk products. These requirements of the people do not drop from the sky nor do they generate out of the earth of their own accord. They must come through the cattle and the land.

Balarama and Krishna were examples who showed that they do not care about their own physical strength and that they would sacrifice everything. They were willing to do hard work and showed through hard work that prosperity can be achieved by sincere hard work. The Lord Krishna was all-knowing, all-powerful, and divinity incarnate, and yet he worked as a charioteer for Arjuna. Krishna was one who recognised the importance of service to the community; and by his own practice and by setting an example to others, he

showed that service to others was important. After the battle of *Mahabharatha*, these were the people who took the horses to the river, washed them and tended their wounds and applied medicines. They thereby demonstrated that hard work and compassion to all living beings constitute the duty of all human beings. These two people set such an example in those days.

If we hear of Krishna or Balarama, we immediately think that they were just ordinary sons of either Yasoda or Devaki. This kind of feeling is on an ordinary human level. But if we look at the root meaning of the name Krishna, we understand that "One who is an object of attraction to everyone is Krishna." There is another meaning for this and we can say *Karshayateethi Krishna*. According to this, Krishna is one who ploughs the field. Of course, we must realise that the field that Krishna ploughs is the field of your heart. By this ploughing of your heart, he produces the fruits of peace and distributes them amongst the human beings. Krishna symbolises the great person who planted the seeds of peace in the hearts of the people, and he distributed the fruits of peace among human beings. Such is the ideal picture of Krishna which we should form in our mind. He used to talk to great people and tell them that this represents the thinking of the great sages of this country, Bharath. There is another aspect to this. He made a

sacred determination that he would bring peace and happiness to all human beings by setting an example. He was unmindful of the obstacles that came his way and was always showing a happy and blissful life. Such was the life of Krishna.

He had the nature by which he radiated happiness, irrespective of whether he was in a battlefield, or a cremation ground, or in a peaceful place. This was a great quality of his. This is the reason why even in the midst of a battlefield, he taught the *Gita* to Arjuna. *Gita* means and stands for a song. We sing only in our happy moments, but Krishna was singing even in a battlefield and was radiating happiness. He was permanently in bliss and he was permanently happy. This is the reason why he was also called *Sath-chith-ananda* (Being awareness bliss).

As a human being, the divine power that was present in him can be seen more in the *Mahabharatha* than in the *Bhagavatha*. In a story of *Bhagavatha,* he was simply showing some childlike *leelas* (Divine sport), but in the *Mahabharatha* he exhibited a unique combination of human nature and divine nature. In order to proclaim and establish *dharma* from time to time, he himself stated in the *Gita* that he will come again and again. It has been said that he will appear

and reappear every time that *dharma* declines. He appears in order to save the good people and punish the bad people and re-establish declining *dharma*.

Here we should understand what *dharma* is. If *dharma* is destructible, then why should the embodiment of *dharma*, God, reappear to establish *dharma*. If *dharma* can disappear like all other destructible things, then it will not be *dharma* at all. *Dharma* is not something which can be destroyed or weakened. If *dharma* is not destructible, then where is the question of *dharma sthapana* (establishment of *dharma*)? We should interpret this as the establishment of the practice of *dharma* and not the establishment of *dharma* itself. What is declining is the practice of *dharma*, but not *dharma*. When we look in the traditional way, we see that *dharma* in the earliest times, in the *Kritha Yuga*, was on all four legs, and we believe that later in the *Thretha Yuga*, *dharma* was standing only on the three legs. Still later in the *Dwapara Yuga*, it was only on two legs; and it is believed that in the *Kali Yuga* it is standing only on one leg.

We are also learning from our *Puranas* and sacred texts that *dharma* was declining in the *Kritha Yuga* and that Rama came to save *dharma* and re-establish *dharma* in the *Thretha Yuga*. But if Rama re-established *dharma*

in the *Thretha Yuga*, what is the meaning of saying that *dharma* had only three legs in *Thretha Yuga*? Once again, as *dharma* was declining, we believe that Krishna came in the *Dwapara Yuga* to re-establish *dharma*, and yet we believe that in *Dwapara Yuga, dharma* stood on two legs only. What is the meaning in saying that one leg has disappeared in the *Dwapara Yuga* in spite of Krishna coming to save it. Krishna came in the *Dwapara Yuga* and came for the purpose of re-establishing *dharma* and yet we say that in the *Kali Yuga, dharma* has only one leg. If this is so, what is the great thing that Krishna has done in *Dwapara Yuga* for the protection of *dharma*? These legs have to be interpreted as relating to the practice of *dharma*.

These *Avatars* never come to re-establish *dharma*—*dharma* was never destroyed—but the practice of *dharma* went on decline. In the *Kali Yuga*, only one way of practising *dharma* remained and that is *Namasmarana* (Remembering God through the Name), and hence we say that there is only one leg in the *Kali Yuga*. When man is born, he is born on two legs. After a few months he walks on four legs. After a few more months he gets back to the use of two legs. When he gets old, he walks on three legs as he uses a stick. All these legs cannot be called legs. They are simply supports to enable him to move his body in the daily

life and do his duty. They are instruments which enable him to fulfil his life. So also, as *Yugas* went on, in order that *dharma* might be practised by people, various methods have been introduced, and these methods have, from time to time, been described as legs which enable him to carry on in his life.

The basis for *dharma* is truth and truth is something which is permanent and so *dharma* is also something which is unchangeable. Today some people give a meaning to *dharma* which is different from the original meaning. But at the time when Krishna lived, he was explaining the meaning of *dharma* in a different way. Today we want to interpret *dharma* by saying that such and such a person is entitled to be happy, and such and such a person is entitled to all comforts. Today's question is why should a wealthy person alone enjoy life? Why should a rich man alone enjoy the pleasures of life? Why should not a poor man also be given wealth? The wealth should be distributed equally between the poor and the rich people. These questions constitute what we call socialism of today.

In today's socialism, we find a hidden and concealed intent of wanting to provide prosperity to only a certain kind of people, and not wanting the same prosperity for another category of people. But the

embodiment of *dharma* in the human form of Krishna was one who desired the well-being of the entire humanity. The true interpretation of *dharma* is to ask for the well-being of the entire human community in the universe. In this context, you may begin to argue that Krishna himself behaved as if he wanted to like some people and favour some people and dislike other people. But the situations were such that Krishna, who was all-knowing, had to make the determination of taking a certain line of action. We should look back and see what Krishna said when Arjuna, in a state of great despondency, refused to go to battle against his own kinsmen, kill them, see their blood and yet become a ruler. Krishna told Arjuna, "I am giving the future of Dhritharashtra and his family. Listen to it. He has one hundred sons but they are all selfish. There is no place for selfishness in this world, and all these must be killed. Even though Dhritharashtra had one hundred sons, there will not be even a single son left to perform the obsequies for him when he dies. Good or bad, *punya* or *papa* are not something which others will give you. These are simply direct results of whatever actions we perform." What Krishna said and agreed to was that under such circumstances, to fight a battle was the right kind of *dharma*. The reason for this is that these people were born to destroy such a nice family. For this process of destruction, the one, who is born of

a slave, has become the help. And in order to add fuel to this fire, there was Sakuni. The battle that was going to come up, the fire that was about to rage was something that cannot be stopped. If you want to save the world and the destruction thereof by this fire, battle cannot be avoided. You have to accept the power of the battle and of the arrows. The fire of *adharma* has spread and taken possession so much that if you want to remove this fire, the only way that can be done is to have a heavy rain and not just ordinary drops of shower. Also this rain must be the rain of arrows. Krishna believed that the battle and this shower of arrows was necessary to stop the fire of *adharma* engulfing the whole world.

The youth of today may get a doubt. Krishna wanted the peace of this world and yet he encouraged this big battle in which forty lakhs of people were killed. Is this called *himsa (violence)* or *ahimsa* (non-violence)? Even then, Krishna gave an appropriate answer to this. He said, "Arjuna! Let us take the case of a cancerous growth on the body. This cancerous growth gives pain to the whole human body, although the growth itself is confined to a localised area. In that cancer, you have so many small germs present in the wound. When the doctor performs an operation on this cancerous growth, he will no doubt kill millions of

germs. He will not think that he is going to kill a million germs and therefore stop the operation. If he does not perform the operation, the germs will be saved but the patient will suffer. He will surely kill the disease-causing germs and save the patient." Krishna further said, "In this body of the world this is the situation now. The cancer has come in the form of the Kauravas who are ruling. The whole world has got upset, and a state of anarchy is prevailing in the world now. There is also a decline of *dharma*. All families who are living peacefully are being broken up. Therefore, I will be the doctor, with Arjuna as the compounder. I will perform the operation of cancer in the form of the battle of *Mahabharatha*. In this battle or the operation, 40,00,000 (four million) of disease-causing germs will be killed for the benefit of the world. Is this bad or is this good for the world?"

We can also look at this from another angle and we will see that all kinds of attachments and relationships are only bodily relationships. God is present in everyone and some people suffer because of their past actions while the others will not suffer because of the good actions done by them. In this context, we cannot decide what is right and what is wrong. Right and wrong depend on the actions. One body gets relationships with another body because of the bodily

relationship, but there is no such relationship between one *atma* and another *atma*. There is only one *atma* in every human body.

In our body there are several organs. Although the body is composed of so many organs, if one of the organs gets sick and has to be separated, we will be prepared to cut it away and remove it. In the same way, if we recognise that the very ancient *jiva* (individual soul) who has entered this body, taking it as a temporary residence; and if a portion gets diseased, there is nothing wrong in cutting away and removing the diseased part of the body. Here Krishna is only demonstrating his authority.

It is a very difficult matter to recognise and accept authority. There is a small example for this. In a hospital you may find a very proficient and capable doctor. He may be a very reputed person in his field. He comes to a decision that for a particular person an operation has to be performed at a particular time the next morning. This will be notified in the notice board and all concerned relatives will be informed. There is no secret about this. Everybody will know about this and the patient will be carried into the operation room. The doctor takes him into the operation room and performs the operation; but due to some misfortune, the patient

dies. As a result of this, the police will not come and arrest the doctor. In the same context, if two people enter into a quarrel and one of them inflicts a small wound on the other man with a razor blade, the police will immediately come and register a case and arrest the man who has caused the injury. In the second example, the person does not have the authority to inflict a wound with a razor blade while in the first case, the doctor has the right to perform the operation, even in public.

Sometimes we interpret and call one of these as a help or a good deed while the other one is called a harm. We take the case of a diabetic patient with a wound on his hand. The wound may not heal and may spread to the whole body in the form of gangrene. The doctor will have to come and say that to prevent further spreading of this, the hand will have to be removed. He will then amputate the whole hand, and this is a good deed done to the body.

In another case, if there is a lady who is wearing bangles on her hand, a thief may come and decide to take away the bangles by cutting the hand and taking away the hand with the bangles. While the thief and the doctor have both done the same thing, what the thief has done is harm and what the doctor has done is good.

When there is a young child who unknowingly sets fire to a house, we think that he has done great harm and we begin to punish him. However, when Hanuman burnt down the whole of Lanka, which was as prosperous as heaven itself, we not only did not punish him but we regard him as a sacred person. The reason for this is that in the first case something good was burnt down while in the second case what Hanuman burnt down was the sin itself. He caused injury to the demons and the Rakshasas while the small boy caused injury to good people.

Thus, in order to remove or promote the demoniac qualities in us, we have the complete right and power. It is in the context of recognising these various conflicting situations, in order to preach the inner meaning of these conflicting situations, Krishna gives various instances which will proclaim to us what good things are. Krishna was a selfless person, and he always desired the well-being of the human community. In that context, whatever he may have done, was always good, and there was never anything bad in what he did. He himself conquered many kingdoms, but he never became a king of any of these kingdoms. He gave those kingdoms to several people. Whatever he may have done, there was always an inner meaning. All his actions were directed towards preaching an inner meaning.

To take another instance, the battle went on for eighteen days, the Kauravas were defeated and the Pandavas were victorious. In the victory, Krishna was the charioteer and Arjuna was in the chariot. After the victory, they came back to their mansion. Arjuna was in the nature of a human being and there was a little remnant of ego in him. As is the common practice even today, the driver of a car is expected to come and open the door of the car when the owner will get down from the car. In the same way, on that day also, when the chariot came and stood in front of his house, he insisted on Krishna getting down first and opening the door. Krishna did not agree to this; and, in fact, in somewhat strong language, he admonished Arjuna, asked him to get down first and go inside. Not recognising the inner significance of what has been given to him as a command, Arjuna still indulged in an argument with Krishna. Arjuna thought that in the battle, victory was on their side because of Krishna; and he was afraid that some danger might come to him if he enters into an argument with Krishna; and so somewhat reluctantly, he finally accepted what Krishna has said. As soon as Arjuna got out and no sooner did Arjuna go inside, Krishna, in one leap, jumped out of the chariot. As soon as Krishna jumped out, the entire chariot was in flames. All the Pandavas who were witnessing this were surprised and asked Krishna why the chariot had

burnt away like that. Then Krishna explained that during the battle, very powerful weapons were sent by heroes like Karna, Bhishma, and others and all these weapons were subdued and kept under his feet. If he had not got down first, the weapons would have exploded, killing Arjuna and the others. Krishna explained that this was the reason for asking Arjuna to jump out first and his jumping out later.

In order to save his devotees, God plans so many different actions in several different ways. Devotees, not being able to recognise and understand the inner meaning of such actions, misunderstand and think that God is giving them unnecessary difficulties. Man has only external vision. God has inner vision. *Paramatma* is always caring for the well-being and good of his people. Whatever he does, he does it for the well-being of his devotees. Even if a son, who has been brought up very carefully by the mother, makes a mistake, the mother will punish the son by giving a slap. When we see this, we feel that a mother who has brought up the son with such care, love, and tenderness is harsh in beating the child; but the mother who beats the child does so with affection. In the same manner—God, the universal father, will punish his devotees, when need be with *prema* and with love. Just as a consequence of that, we should not get the idea that God is wanting to

punish people. God is always full of grace. He never gets angry. However, at times He uses words which are harsh, but He is not harsh. It is only the words that are harsh, His heart is soft like *Amritha* (Divine nectar).

We must first acquire competence to understand the kind of love and tenderness which God entertains towards His devotees. Pleasure comes out of pain. We should recognise that all pain will ultimately end in pleasure. Because the Pandavas were in the jungles for twelve years and were hiding themselves unrecognised for another year, the people had an opportunity to see their divine qualities.

Because of the many obstacles and troubles that came to Prahlada, and because of the punishments that were given to him, it was possible for the rest of the world to know how great Prahlada's devotion was. Prahlada never had tears in his eyes and he never exhibited any pain when the Rakshasas were harming him. He was only uttering the name of the Lord and was asking the Lord to come to him. Because of such a situation, he was able to promote devotion and show others what real faith and devotion can do. On the other hand, had Prahlada been looked after by his father with care and tenderness and if he took him in his lap, how would Prahlada's devotion and faith be known to the rest of the world?

So all the pains and difficulties that we get will ultimately turn out as means of getting happiness and pleasure. Even a quality diamond does not get its value unless we cut the facets on it. Even pure gold will not be turned into a beautiful ornament unless it is repeatedly beaten hard and put into fire. In all pains and troubles, we should recognise only paths for getting ultimate happiness. So we should be prepared to accept pain. To seek pleasure alone and not to welcome pain is not right. This sacred content of the *Mahabharatha* and the sacred teachings of Krishna regarding the conduct of devotees and other aspects will be given to you from tomorrow. I hope that the students will listen, understand, and benefit by this story of the *Mahabharatha*. I will bring this discourse to a close now.

4. Two Great Human Qualities Of Humility and Obedience Characterised The Krishna Avatar

Do you know why you have been given your vision and your eyes? Is it for seeing everything that is around you? No, certainly not. It has been given to you to help you to see the supreme one, the omnipotent Divinity.

Pavitratma Swarupas,

Today what our country requires is idealism. In the social and political sphere, we have to have a goal which will be our ideal which we have to aspire for. In any country and in each sphere, one particular individual may be an ideal. But an individual who in all spheres—in the social, political, spiritual, and economic—is able

to guide us is a very rare thing. When we take an overview of our ancient history, we find that there is one such individual who was able to give a lead and set an ideal example in all spheres of activity. Krishna was a rare individual. He could be regarded as an ideal for the entire world. But to be able to understand these aspects of Krishna, we have to make some attempts and effort. Truly, if we want to comprehend these ideal aspects of Krishna, we have to push aside, to some extent, the divinity present in him and concentrate on the human aspects of his life and work. So long as we concentrate on his divine aspects, the good human qualities in him will not come to our attention in the proper perspective. Also, if we remain in the position in which we now are, and if we want to experience the great human qualities which he exhibited, this is not possible.

We will have to make a journey backwards in time and move to the times in which he lived. It will be a difficult matter to make a comparison between the time and environment in which he lived and the time and environment in which we now live. Today, the citizens of this country are prepared to worship man; but they are not prepared to understand man. Understanding the kind of divine strength that is present in human beings is possible only if we attempt to do so through human nature.

Therefore, if today we want to understand and comprehend the human aspects of Krishna, we will have to make a journey into the times in which he lived. Many may not have understood this; but if we look at the legends around Sri Krishna, then it will become perfectly obvious to us that humility and obedience were two characteristic features of him. People of these times are likely to get some doubt whether humility and obedience are qualities which were, at all, really present in him. The reason for this doubt is that the kind of Krishna which we see depicted in the cinemas today, and the description of Krishna that we read in the texts of today, differ very much from facts, and hence we get this doubt. In that context, we are also likely to get a doubt as to whether there were such sacred ideas in those times, in Bharath.

Just for the sake of earning some money and for the sake of temporary pleasure, we have been distorting our own sacred history. In fact it has become common practice for us to misrepresent our sacred history. When we see these things, we get the picture that Krishna was always fighting with kings and removing them from their thrones. We also think that he was blindly worshipped by his devotees. These are the only two features that we notice. But if we carefully look at the contents of the *Mahabharatha,* written by Vyasa, we

get the unmistakable feeling that humility and obedience were present in Krishna in a large measure. In fact, we will see that they were present in excess of what a common man would accept.

There is one simple illustrative example for this. One day, the battle was raging in a terrible manner, and on that day, Karna was using his deadly weapons. Unable to withstand the fury of Karna, the Pandava army was running hither and thither and the Pandavas were very hurt. Dharmaraja hurried to his camp. When he returned to his camp, he found that Arjuna was engaged in another part of the battlefield and Dharmaraja had no help. Dharmaraja was suffering from his wounds, suppressed his excitement, and was waiting for Arjuna's return to camp. Arjuna returned to the camp after some time. Dharmaraja was, after all, a human being and was suffering a great deal from the physical injury that was caused by the weapons and could not bear it. In his excitement, he started blaming Arjuna and his Gandiva. Dharmaraja looked at Arjuna and said, "What is the use of your Gandiva and all your penance by which you acquired these sacred weapons? Karna has been causing havoc in our camp and you have not been able to retaliate." In this manner, when Dharmaraja showed excitement, Arjuna also showed excitement, and both of them were in an excited mood. Each one tried to

console the other. Arjuna went into such a fury that he could not contain himself and was about to hit Dharmaraja with the Gandiva.

At that critical moment, Krishna entered the camp and the humility which was shown by Krishna was such that the Pandavas could never forget it thereafter. Krishna held the hands of Arjuna and pleaded with him and said that in the excitement of war, he should not disobey his brother; and then he went to Dharmaraja and touched his feet and said that he will not let go of his feet till he has excused Arjuna with the fullness of his heart. He told Dharmaraja that the Five Pandavas are like the five *pranas* (vital airs). If among the five brothers, who are like the five *pranas*, such differences come up and if these differences be known to the world, what was going to happen to this world? He would not leave the camp until he was assured that Dharmaraja had excused Arjuna.

In that situation, when Dharmaraja found that Krishna was showing an unprecedented amount of humility and obedience, tears came out of the eyes of Dharmaraja. He said that the humility and obedience shown by Krishna were because of the great love which Krishna had for the Pandavas. Immediately he went up to Arjuna and asked him to forget about the quarrel and

apologise to him. We should ask ourselves why Krishna put himself in this situation where he had to go and touch the feet of Dharmaraja. We will then get the answer that this is because of the affection and love which Krishna had for the Pandavas.

As a result of his *prema* to his devotees, God will be willing to put himself in any objectionable position. Krishna is one who demonstrated that as a result of his *prema* to his devotees, he is willing to subject himself to any situation. Here, we should ask ourselves whether we should take the human qualities in Krishna and appreciate them or take the divine qualities in Krishna and take that as an example. In the later case, we will immediately get a doubt as to why he is submitting himself to these things if he is a divine personality. In the context of the society in which we are living, a society which is decrepit in many ways—we should take the human qualities of Krishna and study them. Such a study will benefit us.

He never modified what he wanted to say either to please others or displease others. He always uttered the truth, irrespective of whether it pleases or hurts others. On one occasion Dharmaraja wanted to perform a *Rajasuya yagna*.[1] He called all his brothers and told them that they should support him. The brothers

immediately accepted the orders of the eldest brother and said that he was the right person to perform such *yagna*, and they were ready to help him. The next day he called for various pundits and priests, and he mentioned to them his intention of performing the *yagna*. The pundits also praised the idea and said that Dharmaraja was the right person to do such a thing. They said many things to please him. Next day he also sent for Dhaumya and Vyasa and told them of his intention of performing the *Rajasuya Yagna* and sought their blessings.

However, Dharmaraja was not satisfied with the approval which he got from these quarters. He thought that Krishna was the very basis of all things and he asked Arjuna to go and bring him. When Krishna came, Dharmaraja touched his feet and told him of his intention of performing the *Rajasuya Yagna.* Krishna listened to all that Dharmaraja had to say, very quietly, and with a smile. Krishna was not prepared to approve the idea just to please Dharmaraja. For a moment he lifted his eyebrows and told Dharmaraja that he should give up the idea of performing the *Rajasuya Yagna* because he did not yet have the right to do so. So long as Dharmaraja was not the undisputed king of this country and so long as there were other kings like Sisupala, Dantavakra, and so on, who were equally

strong or stronger than him, he would not have the right to perform the *Rajasuya Yagna.* When he is able to conquer and subdue these other kings such as Sisupala, Dantavakra, and Jarasandha, he will acquire the right to perform the *Yagna*. The reason for this is that to perform any *Yagna*, a certain amount of right was required. To perform a certain *Yagna*, there has to be a lot of wealth and a lot of help coming from the other kings. At that time, Dharmaraja could not count on the support of many powerful kings. So long as there were kings who did not regard themselves as his subjects and were ready to help, there would, in fact, be a lot of trouble for the people.

Here, we should really enquire as to what the reason was for Krishna to tell Dharmaraja to go and conquer powerful kings like Sisupala, Dantavakra, and others. These kings were intensely selfish and would do anything in order to maintain themselves in the ruling position. In that process, they were doing a lot of harm to the people with the ultimate objective of selfishly retaining their possessions.

Krishna had the idea that if there are kings who do not have the welfare of the people in their minds, who are only selfish in their approach, there will not be any peace in the world. He thought that such rulers were

undesirable and felt that they should be removed. When the ruling power is in the hands of selfish people, knowing that the king will do things which will simply help him in his selfish ambitions, even at the cost of the interests of the people, Krishna told Dharmaraja that such rulers should be removed. Krishna felt that the people in a country are like the organs of a body of the ruler, and the ruler of the country is like the heart of the country so far as the people are concerned. The intimate relationships that exist between the heart and the body should be the kind of intimate relationship that should exist between the ruler and the ruled in a country.

The country and the body are like the object and the image. Just as an individual makes all attempts to escape from an injury that may be coming to his body, so also when there is some harm that is foreseen for the country, the people of the country should make all attempts to remove such danger. Without any personal motive, Krishna very clearly stated that so long as there are such selfish rulers in the country, the country is not going to have any peace and security. So, if Dharmaraja wanted to have the right to perform such a *Yagna*, he must first remove such kings.

Dharmaraja accepted the orders of Krishna. With the blessing of Krishna, he started to first conquer and

remove King Jarasandha. With the help from Arjuna and Bheema, it was possible for Dharmaraja to remove king Jarasandha from the kingdom. Having done this, Dharmaraja prepared for the *Rajasuya Yagna*. Krishna himself was ready to give all help to Dharmaraja in the conduct of the *Rajasuya Yagna,* and Krishna was helping him in every way.

Dharmaraja was entrusting each individual with a specific task. Vyasa was nominated as the chief priest. Arjuna was asked to attend to all the preparations for the *Yagna*. Sahadeva was entrusted with the task of receiving the guests. Kripacharya was given the task of giving gifts to various people. As each individual was being given tasks, Krishna was also standing with folded hands, and he said, “Dharmaraja, you are now the undisputed king of this country and I am one of your subjects, I stand before you and ask that I be given an appropriate task.”

Dharmaraja was somewhat hurt and said that all the territory and Kingdom of which he was the ruler and all the wealth which he was enjoying were all the result of the divine blessing of Krishna, and it was not right for him to ask to be entrusted with work. Then Krishna said that at that point of time, Dharmaraja should see only the human aspect of Krishna and forget

the divine aspect. He further said, "You should not look at me and regard me as one individual citizen amongst your people and you should not think of me in the aspect of the divine *atma*." Dharmaraja then addressed Krishna and said that he should choose any work that he would like. Krishna said that he would like to serve everyone, and that he would like to wash the feet of all the guests and sprinkle the water on his head. He requested that this duty be given to him. He stated further to Dharmaraja that he was the leader while Krishna was the follower and that as a follower he would like to serve people.

Krishna was all-knowing and all-powerful and one should try to understand the meaning of Krishna offering to do such service and the humility that underlies such an offer. Truly, in the books that we read, or the cinemas that we see, or in the dramas that we see, when we look at Krishna, we come to the conclusion that all the aspects in which he is portrayed are indeed divine aspects and that there is nothing human in him. Krishna lived in the *Dwapara Yuga*; and for us who live in the *Kali Yuga*, it will be very difficult to understand the human qualities of Krishna. If we want to understand Krishna's conduct, then the right thing for us to do is to go back to Krishna's time and not bring Krishna to our time.

The young people who really want to understand and comprehend Krishna as an ideal human example must be prepared to travel back and look into the times when Krishna lived. He was the great individual who set up an example for ideal conduct in the social, political, and spiritual fields.

On one occasion, Arjuna was very despondent and he was preparing to commit suicide. Realising and feeling that if this was to be allowed, it would be a very shameful act and a blot on the entire family of the great Pandavas, Krishna went and entreated Arjuna to refrain from such an act, and convinced him that it should not be done. Under many circumstances and in many difficult situations, he was protecting the Pandavas as eyelids protect the eyes.

On one occasion when Krishna went as an Ambassador, Dhritharashtra insulted him and told him that the Pandavas and Kauravas were all brothers, and one set of brothers should not be looked at in any special and privileged manner. Even in that situation, Krishna was prepared to tell the truth to Dhritharashtra without fear or favour. He told Dhritharashtra that there can never be friendship between fire and water. He said that he was always on the side of Pandavas because the Pandavas were the embodiments of *dharma* and they

always protected *dharma*. On the other hand, the Kauravas were evil and bad people. While the evil and bad people were giving trouble to those who follow the *dharmic* way of life, Krishna could not remain a passive witness to such a situation. In the body, Dharmaraja was like the head, Arjuna was like the shoulders, Bheema was like the tummy, Nakula and Sahadeva were like the legs, and in that body composed of the Pandavas, Krishna was the heart. So the kind of close relationship that existed between the Pandavas and Krishna was like the relationship that exists between the various parts of the body and the heart. If the Pandavas that constitutes the body are not true, there is no heart called Krishna; and if there is no heart called Krishna, there is no body called the Pandavas. This kind of a relationship that exists between the Pandavas on the one hand and Krishna on the other was told without fear or favour in an assembly where evil people were sitting, with the intention of hurting Krishna and insulting Him. For this, we should take Krishna as an ideal example of a person who is willing to speak the truth, irrespective of the consequences.

This was not a one-way love. The Pandavas were also regarding Krishna as their very life. It is only as a consequence of the *prema* which the Pandavas had for Krishna that such a two-way relationship existed.

The kind of tree that sprouts will be determined by the nature of the seed. The smell which one gets when one has a belch will be determined by the kind of food which one eats. The kind of cake you will get will be determined by the kind of flour you will use in making the cake. When Krishna was sent to undertake peace negotiations, the amount of trouble and the hesitation which the Pandava brothers had is not easily understood by others. It is very well-known to Krishna. The Pandava brothers, particularly Nakula and Sahadeva, were worried that their elder brother was sending Krishna, the Paramatma, into a court filled with evil people. They were greatly worried about a possible harm these people might do to Krishna. Until Krishna returned safely after completing the negotiations, Nakula and Sahadeva did not even take a sip of water. They were living in fear and dread of getting bad news about Krishna and were constantly thinking of Krishna and his welfare.

When Krishna returned, the youngest of the Pandavas, namely Sahadeva, embraced Krishna and expressed himself in the following terms, “I was in great hesitation and doubt when Krishna, my brother-in-law, was being sent to negotiate peace. I was worried that harm would come to him. Indeed, I was wanting to ask them to drop the idea of sending him for the

negotiations; but I thought that if I gave rise to such an expression, it would have been considered a bad omen. So I kept quiet. However, I am glad that Krishna has now returned safely." So saying, he embraced him and expressed great pleasure.

Because the Pandavas had such great faith and affection towards Krishna, Krishna in turn was also protecting them at all times. The kind of connection that exists between God and his devotees is always strengthened by the bonds of *prema*. Even Lakshmi could not bind Narayana to herself, but Narayana was bound down by the *prema* of Prahlada.

When we look at the *Avatar* of Narasimha,[2] we get a feeling of terror. When we look back at the story of Prahlada and Narasimha, we will realise that when Narasimha was giving *darshan* (Seeing the Lord) to Prahlada, he showed great kindness. But it looked as if Prahlada was standing in a corner full of fear. At that time, Narasimha looked at Prahlada and asked him if he was afraid of the fearsome figure which had come to punish his father; but Prahlada explained that he was not afraid of the Lord as it was the sweetest form one can comprehend. He said that he was indeed happy to be able to see the Lord. Narasimha then asked why Prahlada was afraid. To this Prahlada replied that he

was afraid because the divine vision which he was then having was likely to disappear in a few moments and he would soon be left alone. The fear which was troubling Prahlada was that God will leave him in this world and disappear. Prahlada wanted to ask God not to leave him. God's divine vision and divine beauty are such that only his devotees can appreciate. Hiranyakasyapu went on saying that God does not exist anywhere. On the other hand, when Prahlada said that God will be found wherever we want, to him indeed, God was present wherever he sought him, and this is simply the result of *Yad Bhaavam tad Bhavathi* (The thoughts will determine the action). Whatever you have in mind will be reflected back to you as a reality.

Today, we are performing *Puja* (ritual worship) to God, and we are worshipping and wanting to follow him. For whose benefit are we doing all these? We are doing all this for our own benefit and not for the benefit of God. The reason why we do all this is that by thinking of the good qualities that are present in God, we will also get such good qualities.

There is a small example for this. When we have a thought in our mind about something which is exciting, then we find that our words show excitement and our actions also show excitement. On the other hand, if in

our mind there are thoughts which are sorrowful, then our external body will show the sorrow that our mind is experiencing. We need not go so far. If we think of a lime and think that we are cutting it, you will find that there is saliva on the tongue in your mouth. Actually, the lime juice has not come and touched your tongue. The thought of the lime juice makes your tongue water. If we think of some dirty matter while eating our food, there will be some disturbance in our mind. That is why it is our traditional practice that while people are eating their food, no one should go and talk to them of dirty matter. The reason for this is that the moment we think of something and a thought passes through our mind, our heart attunes itself to that kind of thought. When we are sitting here, if somebody shouts out that there is a scorpion which is seen, irrespective of whether there is a scorpion or not, the very word will make us all shudder and go away from here. Therefore, a particular thing which enters our mind will make us get attuned to that thought in all our actions. So it follows that if we keep on thinking of the divine qualities of God, there is a chance of ourselves developing those divine qualities in us.

It is in this context that it has been said *Brahma vid Brahmaiva Bhavati*. The knowledge of *Brahman* will turn you into *Brahman* himself. Therefore, we

should promote good ideas, good ideals, and good thoughts. The result of that is that good will be promoted in us. The real meaning of this is not that God is somewhere and listening to our prayer and that he will come all the way from somewhere to solve our difficulties. In a worldly plane, if someone goes near a person in a position of authority and praises him then he may do some good for the person who praises him, but God is not like this person who is in a position of authority. Even if you pray to God in your mind, His grace will help you. Therefore, prayers to God, singing the glory of God, and thinking of the divine qualities of God are being done by us for our own good and for the purpose of acquiring some of them for ourselves.

Students!

In many ways you are attempting to understand various sacred aspects like the *Mahabharatha*, *Gita*, etc.; but so long as you just listen to them and do not put them into practice, there will be no good at all. Will the Brinjals described in the *puranas* help you in any way? However hungry a tiger may be, will it eat a poori? There may be any kind of attraction, but a real devotee will never think of things which are worthless. Whatever obstacles may come in your way, provided you do not bend in the context of those obstacles and

have your faith firmly implanted in your mind, then we can build up a Krishna army.

You must all make up your minds to have an unwavering faith and a steadfast vision. This is an attempt which you should make. Whatever you have grasped in your hand, you have already got. Until your objective is achieved, do not let go the hold. Whatever you have desired for, you have expressed it; and until your desired objective is fulfilled, do not turn back. What you have asked, you have asked. Until what you have asked is granted to you, do not give up. Whatever you have in your mind, you have already thought of it. Never move away from that thought till it is fulfilled. Seeing your determination and devotion, God will yield and grant your desire and what you want, or it may be that you will be tired and you may collapse. Until then, do not change your mind. That is the right path, but to give up your determination is not the right path.

Students!

I am hoping that you will turn back a little into the history of Bharath and look at the ideal life and ideal example which Krishna has set before us. You should have that as your objective and develop yourselves as future citizens of this country. I bless you and bring this discourse to a close.

5. Krishna Was Always A Lover Of Peace And Never A Warmonger

Do you know why you have been given legs? Are these legs given to you to go round all the streets and the narrow lanes in a purposeless manner? No, they have been given so that you may visit the temple of God.

Prema Swarupas!

By superficial observers, Krishna is not regarded as a peace-loving person. People generally think of him as one who encouraged battles and fights. They also think that the bloodshed that was caused in the battle of *Mahabharatha* was due to Krishna's love for war. This is not a true picture of Krishna. In fact, he was very peace-loving; and the efforts he made and the trouble

he took to prevent war between the Pandavas and Kauravas and to establish security and peace in the country, at that time, will be evident if only we look at Vyasa's Sanskrit text.

Krishna started for Hastinapur in order to negotiate for peace. When Duryodhana, Dussasana, and other Kauravas learnt that Krishna was coming to negotiate peace, they made all preparations and arranged a reception and welcome for Krishna in the very outskirts of the city of Hastinapur. When the great chariot came, it was brought to the front of the city so that a fitting welcome could be given. As soon as Krishna got out of the chariot, Duryodhana and Dussasana met him and appraised him of the fact that a special welcome had been arranged for him and a spacious mansion had been prepared for his stay. They invited him for a special dinner on that day in the palace.

Krishna, who was the very embodiment of peace, appraised Duryodhana and Dussasana that he came there as an Ambassador to negotiate for peace and that it was not right for one who had come in the role of an Ambassador to accept their hospitality even before one's mission was completed. He said that he would gladly accept their hospitality after the mission was completed as it would be proper to do so. With these pleasing

words, he went to the house of Vidura. It was a great surprise to Vidura to see Krishna come to his house for he never even dreamt that Krishna would come to his house. He was overjoyed, and he thought that it was his great fortune, and he made all arrangements accordingly.

Vidura gave a hearty welcome to Krishna and they both sat down for a meal. After the meal, both Vidura and Krishna sat together for conversation. Then Vidura said that to him it did not appear proper that Krishna should come, for negotiating peace, to the house of bad people who may do him harm. He felt that knowing everything, Krishna should not have come there to negotiate for peace.

Then Krishna said that it was not as if he did not know that Kauravas were people with bad qualities and evil intentions. Despite this, he felt that when innocent people were being troubled and bloodshed was forthcoming, then everyone who had a responsibility should try his best to prevent injustice and bloodshed, and it was in this context that he was trying to negotiate.

If we really look at the inner significance of what Krishna had said at that time, we will find that Krishna was really concerned with the peace and security of the people; and we will understand that Krishna was truly

peace-loving and that he was not a warmonger. All these aspects and acts of Krishna, which were being done on a human plane, should be understood by us as having been done by a human being on a human plane and not by divinity.

Vidura then expressed his doubt and said that these peace negotiations were not going to reach a successful completion because he knew that the Kauravas had everything ready. All those who were connected with them were also invited to be ready. The weapons were made ready. Under these circumstances, he did not expect any peace.

Krishna then told Vidura that according to *Dharma*, which was only too well known to Vidura, all efforts should be made to establish peace. He said that irrespective of the success or failure, we must do our duty.

The day dawned and Krishna got into his chariot and moved into the city of Hastinapur. That day the city looked gay, the streets were decorated with arches, and all the streets were a pleasant sight to see. In Hastinapur, the people came forward to welcome him like the waves of an ocean would welcome the moon. In that environment, he moved on, smiling and looking at the people of Hastinapur. As soon as he came near

the Palace, Duryodhana and Karna were standing there to welcome him.

Women were bringing flowers so that they may be showered on Krishna. Fragrant flowers were showered on Krishna from the terraces. It appeared to Krishna that all this was prearranged by the Kauravas to please him. However, all these external symptoms did neither elate him nor bother him; and he entered the mansion. As Karna and Duryodhana were showing him the way to go into the assembly, Kritavarma was following Krishna. As soon as Krishna entered the assembly, all the kings and subordinate kings stood up and made obeisance to him.

As soon as Krishna entered the assembly, Dhritharashtra, with the help of others, came to greet him. He embraced Krishna and was moving ahead of Krishna with the help of Bhishma, and Drona requested Krishna to occupy the seat of honour. Krishna did not occupy the seat of honour and told Drona that, as he very well knew, there were very learned and eminent Maharishis and yogis who were gathered in that assembly to observe what was going to happen to the peace and prosperity of the country; and it was not proper to offer the seat of honour to him. In accordance with Krishna's instruction, Bhishma called various

persons and arranged to seat them in accordance with their importance.

As soon as all these persons were seated, Krishna made obeisance to the members and then occupied his seat. After that Duryodhana, Karna, Bhishma, and Drona occupied their respective seats. After all these elders were seated, the other subordinate kings also took their seats, making obeisance to the assembly. In that assembly, everyone was anxious to hear what Krishna was going to say and know what message Krishna had brought. In their anxiety to listen to him and not miss anything, they all maintained pin-drop silence. Every individual in that assembly had probably looked at Krishna many times earlier, but they were all still looking at Krishna anxiously with wide-open eyes, expecting something very special from him. While his black curly hair and pearl-white teeth were attracting people, he turned towards Dhritharashtra.

The first words uttered by Krishna were that there should be peace between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. He then said, "Let the two families of Kauravas and Pandavas remain friendly forever and establish peace and prosperity in the world. The entire world wanted peace and this was the only word that they were looking for." He further said that he had come there as a

messenger and ambassador in the context of wanting peace. He did not stop at this. He went to Dhritharashtra and said that whatever was going to be decided in that assembly was a matter of great concern to him and that Dhritharashtra should think carefully before arriving at a decision. The Pandavas lost their father when they were children. Such innocent children were brought up by Dhritharashtra, and he was responsible for their well-being. The Pandavas were happy that, although their natural father was not alive, there was someone who was affectionate to them.

Krishna went on to say, "Like your natural sons, you have looked after these adopted sons as well as brought them up. It is not right for you to show hatred towards such children whom you have yourself brought up. In obedience to you, they were in a forest for twelve years; and they lived incognito for one year; and because you told them that you would give them their kingdom if they came back after those years, they have now come back.

I am now going to tell you what Dharmaraja told me before I came here. Dharmaraja asked me to convey to you, if they had committed any mistake knowingly or unknowingly, they should be forgiven and all that they were seeking was the affection of Dhritharashtra. He said that your love and affection were more important

to them than any kingdom which may or may not be given to them. Dharmaraja said that there were no reasons whatsoever for any hatred on the part of Dhritharashtra towards the Pandavas. If there were any, they were prepared to come and ask for pardon from Dhritharashtra. When we hear such words from the Pandavas, we see how good and how sacred they were. We will also realise that Krishna, the negotiator of peace, was in no way interested in promoting war.

People, particularly students like you, should understand how much trouble Krishna took, and to what extent he went in the promotion of peace. All the kings and monarchs assembled in the hall heard all this; and while reflecting on the circumstances of negotiations, their eyes were filled with tears of sorrow. All those who were sitting in the assembly were deeply moved at the noble qualities of Krishna who was showing great respect to the elders and great love to everyone. But what could they do in the presence and in the context of the evil-doers, the Kauravas? No one could object to what the Kauravas were doing. Every individual in that assembly developed good feeling towards the Pandavas.

In this manner, Krishna was telling Dhritharashtra in addition to negotiating for peace, various things

which will help the cause of the Pandavas. It is not as if Dhritharashtra did not know the truth and strength of what Krishna was saying, and it was not as if he did not understand the sacredness thereof. He also knew that his sons were undertaking something which was wrong. But he had no alternative. He had become a weakling and had to submit himself to the wickedness of his sons. Although Krishna told him in so many words to accept peace, he could not do so, because he was surrounded by his evil children.

When things became unbearable, Krishna told Dhritharashtra, "When a person had no right over a kingdom and still wanted to have the kingdom, he was to be regarded as a thief." The meaning of the word Dhritharashtra is, "one who thinks that a kingdom which does not belong to him is his, and enjoys it." He further told him, "As a consequence of what your sons are doing, the entire country was going to be thrown into confusion and bloodshed. A situation is coming when innocent women and children are going to be involved in this bloodshed. You are taking the world to a situation where the sages and the rishis, who are generally confined to the forest in their *thapas,* will also be drawn into this bloodshed.

"The battle is not going to be confined to the Kauravas and the Pandavas only. Every individual in

the kingdom will be drawn into the battle. The forest fire, when it starts raging, will not think that the mango trees should be saved from the fire because they give fruits. This fire of war is going to spread to the entire population and all the people will be burnt." In this context, Krishna advised Dhritharashtra that he should not undertake this war. Dhritharashtra did not know how to meet this situation and what reply to give, and he asked for some time to take rest. Krishna who understood the inner meaning of Dhritharashtra wanting rest took him aside and explained to him the background of the situation.

Then Krishna consoled him and talked with him. In this context, Dhritharashtra said that he realised that his sons were bad people and that they had evil intentions; but being their father, he could not go against their wishes.

Krishna then thought that it was an opportune moment, and he was prepared to use some harsh words. He asked, "If bad things are emanating from our body, are we protecting them and keeping them simply because they have come from your own body? The excreta and urine are coming from our body and are we not throwing them away and cleaning ourselves? Simply because they have come from your own body, are you protecting them and keeping them with you?"

To that, Dhritharashtra said that excreta and urine were lifeless but his sons were living beings. Then Krishna asked, "If bad living bodies are born from us, are we going to keep them and protect them? Similarly, your living sons who were born out of your body are like evil bugs." Because of these words of Krishna, the mind of Dhritharashtra changed a little.

The Kauravas guessed that Krishna was trying to change the mind of their father, and they were planning to catch hold of Krishna and bind him down so that he did not further attempt to influence their father. Vidhura was afraid that some physical harm may be done to Krishna, and he was making attempts to pull Krishna back from the assembly. But Krishna's main purpose was to secure peace and prosperity for the people, and for this he was prepared to sacrifice even his life.

By just reading what people write in sundry books, without recognising the essential basis of all these negotiations, we think that Krishna was promoting war rather than peace. This is quite wrong. Unfortunately, because in our country there are no people who are willing to present even historical events in the proper perspective, we are prepared to regard Krishna, this embodiment of peace, as a warmonger. The generality of people unfortunately do not know Sanskrit and are,

therefore, not in a position to read the original text of the *Mahabharatha* as written by Vyasa.

There is one other instance which can be cited to illustrate the peace-loving nature of Krishna. The Pandavas prepared an assembly, and they were preparing to give the first respectful salutation to one who was most respected. The Pandavas did all preparations and wanted to choose one who was universally regarded as the top person in that assembly. Many of the elders in the assembly like Bhishma, Drona and others were all indicating that this honour was to go to Krishna. So Dharmaraja went to Krishna with a view to honouring him.

At that instant, Sisupala, who was sitting therein, got up to decry Krishna in many ways. He was preparing to talk in a very irresponsible and irrelevant manner. People sitting in the assembly could not even bear the harsh words which were being uttered by Sisupala. In a few moments, such irresponsible words spread throughout the assembly. However, Krishna was not at all affected by this tirade and he stood smiling. Sisupala did not stop at this. He got up and shouted, "For what great act of yours are you going to be honoured? Is it for stealing the clothes of the gopis when they were bathing? Is it for stealing the butter from the cowherds

that you are going to be honoured today?" Immediately he walked up to Bhishma and asked him to stop his praise of Krishna. At that point, Bhishma started to say something and Sisupala retorted, "Do not be arrogant. Shut your mouth."

At this fearful and most disrespectful situation, all those sitting in the assembly were afraid that something serious was going to happen and they were all showing great concern. But Krishna was completely unperturbed and he was seen smiling. There was no anxiety in his face nor was there any hatred or fear seen in his face. He was regarding all that was going on as something that was being done by Sisupala out of ignorance. Arjuna and Bheema, from among the Pandavas, were very angry. Krishna, noticing that they were getting very excited, signalled to them not to get excited and that they should remain peaceful.

At this instance, the grand old man, Santanu, Bhishma's father, got up and said that the only person in the assembly deserving the honour was Krishna. He said that Sisupala was so excited because of personal jealousy caused at the time of Rukmini's marriage, and he challenged Sisupala to show even one person in the assembly who deserved the honour better than Krishna. Every king sitting in that assembly had already been subdued by Krishna. If you talk of good qualities, no

one else had better qualities than Krishna. If you take the question of learning of the *Vedas* or *Sastras* or even the sixty-four different types of art, no one can equal Krishna. If we talk of the practice of *Dharma*, Krishna is the embodiment of *Dharma*. If we talk of selfless service, Krishna stands right on the top. If we talk of *prema* and love, then the entire blood flowing in the body of Krishna exhibits peace and love at all times. Krishna who possesses all these good qualities is the only one in the entire assembly deserving this honour. Santanu again challenged Sisupala to show another individual who deserved this honour more than Krishna.

To these words, all the kings sitting in the assembly nodded their agreement; and Drona and Bhishma also said that there was no one who deserved this honour more than Krishna. Sisupala was very disturbed and behaved madly, because his end was drawing near. He was still wanting to talk like a madman. Because his end was drawing near, he challenged Krishna to a duel and pulled at Krishna's hand. Even then, Krishna was completely unperturbed and was smiling. But time was passing and Sisupala's conduct was becoming more and more unacceptable.

Noticing this, Arjuna started moving closer to Krishna. At that time, Krishna told Arjuna that he

should not get excited and should not worry about what Sisupala said, particularly because that was an assembly and not a battlefield. Their reputation was not going to be lowered just because of what Sisupala says.

But if we read the modern text and the description of this event therein, we learn that Krishna was very angry and that he simply threw the disc in his hand at Sisupala and killed him. This is very untrue. In fact the peace-loving nature and the composure which Krishna showed were indeed a surprise to many of the people in the assembly. Here again, the unperturbed attitude exhibited by Krishna, under those trying conditions as a human being, is an ideal example to the world.

In another situation, one other king wanted to imitate Krishna in many ways and his name was Poundarika Vasudeva. He thought that, after all, Krishna was not the only Vasudeva and that he was also a Vasudeva; and in that belief, he used to behave and dress himself exactly like Krishna. He was going everywhere where Krishna went and was saying that he was Krishna. He was behaving as an exact prototype of Krishna. He did not stop there and he was creating a lot of confusion. He was saying that he was the real Krishna and that the real Krishna was, in fact, putting on a show as an imitation. This was the confusion that he was creating.

This was going beyond all limits and many people came to ask Krishna about the meaning and purpose of all this. Krishna gave them a reply in perfect composure and was not in the least perturbed. “Who has the right to say that the kind of dress that I wear should not be worn by me and who has the right to say that I should not do such and such a thing? So, if someone is wearing exactly the same dress as I am wearing and has the same appearance as I have, I have no right to tell him not to do that. Each one has the liberty to wear such dress on his body as he chooses.” He told those people that in a matter like that, it was not good to take any action. It was for the people who were undertaking such imitation to see that they should not do so, and it was for them to take proper steps.

But this situation was trespassing all limits, and it came to a stage when the imitator went to the extent of saying that Sathyabhama and Rukmini belonged to him. Even then, Krishna was very calm and unperturbed. He only said that it was not correct for one to interfere in the affairs of another’s family. Krishna said that one may do what one likes with regard to one’s own self and his family, but it was not right for him to interfere in another’s family, particularly with regard to the women members. Krishna thus warned him that he should exercise great care in such matters. It was only in an extreme situation that Krishna interfered.

In this manner, Krishna always demonstrated perfect composure and a peace-loving attitude. It is only when we understand the ideal nature and qualities of Krishna in the proper perspective, that we will be in a position to get a correct assessment of the ideals of our country in such matters. Young people as you are, on whom rests the future of our country, it is very important for you to understand these aspects of Krishna. Living a selfless life, desiring only the welfare of the country, and taking care of the people amidst kings who were terrorising the people, he wanted to hand over the kingdom to good and honest people. Thus he never wore a crown and was the uncrowned king doing all this good.

Young students, if you really want to understand the true nature of Krishna, you can do so only by travelling backwards in time to the situation when Krishna was living and doing his work, in the conditions which existed at that time. But for us to try and understand the aspects of Krishna from our present position is not possible. What I am now telling you is contained in what I have often been stating in the words, "You may worship a picture as a God but never worship God as a picture." What you should do is to elevate whatever you see to the position of God. Thus you may worship this tumbler, this table, or this cloth

as God; but do not attempt to lower God to the stage of this table or tumbler. You must elevate all things to the high position of God.

If you understand the ideals for which Krishna stood, what you should do is to make a journey and put yourselves in the context of where Krishna lived. If you want to remain where you are and understand various aspects of Krishna, who lived five thousand years ago, it is not the correct way. If you want to understand an ideal, it will be possible only when you make a journey, mentally, to a period when the person who demonstrated those ideals lived.

There is a small example for this. A boy of eleven years of age was married to a girl of nine years of age, but unfortunately the boy died in an accident. The girl had a photograph of the eleven-year-old boy. As time went on, the girl grew up and attained the age of seventy. This seventy-year-old woman takes the photograph of the eleven-year-old boy and says that he is her husband. This statement looks ridiculous if you look at the form of the seventy-year-old woman. When she says that the eleven-year-old boy is her husband, the statement has meaning only when she regards herself as the nine-year-old girl. It is not as if the seventy-year-old woman was married to an eleven-year-old boy. The

nine-year-old girl was married to a boy who was eleven years old. In the same context, the statement has a meaning only if she puts herself back in time in the position of a nine-year-old girl. In the same manner, those of us who are born now, if we want to understand the ideals of Krishna, we will be able to do so only if we take ourselves back to the times of Krishna.

Whatever ideals which he demonstrated to the world, be they in the political sphere, or the economic sphere, or the social sphere, will be appreciated only if we take ourselves back to the environment and time—politically, socially, and economically when Krishna lived. Therefore, young people like you should make an attempt to read and understand the sacred text of the *Mahabharatha* in the proper perspective. As a result of our foolishness and lack of understanding, we regard *Mahabharatha* as a very insignificant text and compare it with the ordinary food like a Vadai that we eat.

There is a proverb which says, "If you listen to a text, you must listen to the text of *Mahabharatha*; and if we eat anything, we must eat a Vadai." This comparison is ridiculous. If you really want to understand the level at which the *Mahabharatha* was written, you should recognise the sacred contents. One who cannot understand the value of the *Mahabharatha* and of its sacred contents is ignorant and foolish.

There is one small example for this. A shepherd took his sheep and goats and went into the forest. One day, when he was looking after the sheep and goats, there was a heavy rain. As a result of this, some stones on the hill became loose and started rolling down. He found that a particular stone was shining very brilliantly. That particular place was known to be a place where diamonds were found. But the shepherd did not know anything about diamonds. He took this bright stone and tied a string round it and put this bright shiny diamond round the neck of a black goat. This bright stone round the neck of the black goat was shining and the goat was attracting him very much. He frequently went to this goat and was looking at it affectionately.

While showing such affection to this goat, he was sitting under a tree and relaxing when a group of people were passing that way. Among those passers-by was one individual who knew the value of diamonds. This person was a diamond merchant, and he quickly realised the value of the diamond tied round the neck of the goat. He recognised the fact that this stone was worth several lakhs of rupees. He thought that poor shepherd boy would not know the value of the stone and he offered him ten rupees in return for the diamond. The shepherd boy said that this bright stone was very beautiful round the neck of the goat, and that he was

not going to part with it. The diamond merchant tempted him and offered him a hundred rupees. The shepherd boy thought that with a hundred rupees he could buy a hundred such stones and tie each stone around the neck of each goat and he agreed to part with the stone for a hundred rupees.

We see that in the hands of the shepherd who did not know the value of the diamond, it was happy, safe, and sound. The moment this stone came into the hands of the diamond merchant, he thought that he had secured a valuable thing; and as soon as this thought came into his mind, the stone suddenly broke into several pieces. When the stone broke into so many pieces and fell to the ground, the merchant was surprised. This diamond, in a formless divine voice, said that as long as it was in the hands of person who did not know its value, it was satisfied; but when a person who knew its worth paid only one hundred rupees, its heart broke into pieces at the unjust act.

As in this analogy, in the vicinity of a person who does not understand divinity, it does not matter how things are; but if, knowing the nature of divinity, we begin to communicate and trade with it in a cheap manner, how can we obtain God's grace? How can God's grace come to individuals if we do not conduct

ourselves well? Thus, after knowing the greatness and value of Krishna's ideals if we do not put them into practice, we will really be making a mistake. When one is moving with you, you regard him as an ordinary man and only when you see something extraordinary, you ascribe divinity to him. When you recognise divinity, you should make all efforts to follow the divine injunctions. When we read the lives of *Avatars* and when we are told such stories, we should learn their ideals and put them into practice. Only then will we be responding to divinity. But merely to read any text which comes our way and not put it into practice is not the right thing for educated people to do. In *Mahabharatha*, we must understand the human aspects of Krishna. I am hoping that by understanding this true form of Krishna, you will also follow the ideals of Krishna. I am blessing you in this manner and bringing this discourse to a close.

6. Mahabharatha Contains Many Valuable Lessons For Us

Do you know why you have been given your hands? They have not been given to you so that you may continually feed your mouth with those hands. They have been given to you so that you may perform *puja* with flowers to the Lord.

Students!

It is not easy or possible for us to understand the level at which *Paramatma* functions because we are at a human level. If we recognise that the level at which divinity operates is different from, and higher than, the ordinary human level at which we all operate, there is a possibility of raising ourselves to a level in which we can try and understand divinity.

For doing any kind of work in this world, there should be some order and discipline. Any work that you may do without discipline will not yield good results. In order to get this limitation in the worldly plane, some discipline is necessary. That which rules the world is the rule of law. What is required to control oneself and put oneself under the rule of law, is discipline. This control of oneself is like *thapas*. A life, in which there is no discipline and control, will fail and fall one day or the other. If you put yourself on the wrong side of *thapas* which is "*pata*," it means that you are going to fall. One must recognise the truth that there should be controls on, and limits to, human nature.

The five elements that constitute the earth are also controlled by certain laws. Even the infinite ocean moves under certain laws and regulations. In the context of the whole world, man's life is only a part. Therefore, man's life has to be regulated. Whether it is for *prema*, for hatred, or for anger, some regulation is necessary. Such regulation has been shown to us, as an example, by Sri Krishna in his lifetime. It has become the tradition of our country to accept the stories of the *Mahabharatha* as ideal examples. Since this kind of respect and tradition has come to us from the time of the *Vedas*, our citizens are always anxious to listen to such stories and welcome an opportunity to do so. It is also very necessary for us

to accept and study the human side of such *Avatars,* and the stories about them, and implement them.

That day was the *Karthika Bahula Triodasi.* The sacred land of Kurukshetra was close to Panipat. In this sacred land of Kurukshetra, the armies of the Kauravas were lined up for battle. In the front of the army and leading it was a white-turbaned, lion-like man sitting in a white chariot drawn by white horses. This aged, lion-like man was Bhishma.

On the opposite side, the army of the Pandavas was also lined up for battle, and Bheema was leading that army. This aged Bhishma had performed three hundred *Aswamedha Yagas.* The Pandavas were filled with fear when they saw such a powerful person leading the armies. They expected some tragedy to befall them. On the one hand, the roaring battle sounds from the conches were being heard. The horses were neighing and the elephants were trumpeting loudly. The flags symbolising the chariots of each army were being flown. The weapons of each army were shining brightly.

In this situation, as if coming from nowhere, a chariot came and stood in the centre of the battle. It appeared that in that chariot there was one individual who was very despondent and discouraged. There was another person who was giving him courage and patting

him on the back. Those two were Arjuna and Krishna, the best of men and the best of gods, respectively. These two represented the deserving human of Arjuna and the supreme *Avatar* of Krishna.

We should notice here that the *Avatar* has descended from his high pedestal to the level of the best of human beings who deserved to be taught, and the *Avatar* was teaching and giving the necessary encouragement to the human being. After a few moments, Krishna descended from his chariot and began moving towards the chariot of Dharmaraja. It is not known what Krishna told Dharmaraja at that time, but it could be seen that Dharmaraja removed his armour and weapons and started walking with folded hands towards the Kauravas.

When the Kauravas saw this scene, they began to shout loudly. They thought that Dharmaraja was coming to surrender and seek peace on behalf of the Pandavas. Arjuna and Bheema, who saw this situation, were also very perturbed. The thought which Dharmaraja had and the noble feelings which made him undertake this task were not understood by Arjuna and Bheema. In the next few minutes, Krishna came and signalled to Arjuna and Bheema that they should also follow their brother.

In spite of the confusion and excitement in their own minds, Arjuna and Bheema obeyed the injunctions of the Lord and followed their brother. Dharmaraja, followed by his brothers, went along to Bhishma. When Bhishma looked at the brothers, he understood what was in their minds, and he knew the noble ideas that were passing in the mind of the eldest brother, Dharmaraja, and was praising Dharmaraja within himself.

They went close to Bhishma, touched his feet, addressed him as grandfather, and said, "Ever since we lost our father, you have looked after us and brought us up; but today, unfortunately, we have to fight with you. Please give us permission for this battle." Bhishma's heart was very much moved when he saw that even under those terrifying battle conditions, Dharmaraja was willing to do his duty by *dharma* and came all the way to seek his permission.

Bhishma embraced Dharmaraja and said, "Even in the battlefield, you are observing *dharma* and this gives me great pleasure. You will be victorious in this battle because you are acting according to *Dharma*. *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah*. Those who protect *dharma* will in turn be protected by *dharma*. You are protecting *dharma* and so *dharma* will protect you and victory will be yours."

Immediately after that, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva also sought the blessings of Bhishma. They approached Dronacharya and touched his feet and said, "You are the guru and we are the students. Unfortunately, today such bad times have come that disciples have to fight with the teacher. In such a situation we are begging you to bless us." Dronacharya recognised the right conduct in this, and he also embraced them and blessed them towards victory. Such regulatory conduct was shown by Krishna; and this example makes us wonder if we, as human beings, are observing any rules and code of conduct.

Why should the all-powerful and all-knowing Krishna undergo all these troubles and tribulations? Did he do all this for himself with a selfish motive? All this was done for someone else and in the interest of promotion of peace. He underwent all these troubles and tribulations in order to help and support those who sought his grace and support. As a result of the love which God has for his devotees, God has been going through several kinds of troubles for their sake. Moreover, while he taught the *Gita* to Arjuna, there were several occasions when Arjuna had doubts; and there were situations when Arjuna became despondent. Krishna was undertaking this *yoga* in order to enable Arjuna, the human, to overcome the obstacles that were

coming in his way, and to take courage and move forward.

We generally think that the *Gita* consists of certain teachings which will help us and teach us renunciation and take us along the spiritual path. This is not the correct aspect. We should recognise that the *Gita* gives us teachings which will help us to run our daily lives and meet the situations which we come across.

Krishna established the truth that our spiritual life and our daily worldly life are not two distinct compartments. He demonstrated that our daily life is something intimately connected with spiritual life. He showed the need for harmony and connection between man's thoughts, words, and deeds. He proclaimed that in order that man may have good thoughts, his mind is very important. In order that he may communicate these thoughts to the world, his word is very important. In order to put this into action, his deeds are equally important.

Many people argue and say that God could do anything, and they say that God should have avoided the war by his own *Sankalpa* (Will). Here, we must notice that Krishna was not willing to use his divine strength for the benefit of mankind directly. He was living as human beings do, and he wanted to use the

normal human methods by which to control various actions. There are thousands of people in the world who are willing to demonstrate these spiritual aspects in a manner which is quite easy to understand. There are great people who will help you to follow the essence of the *Vedas* in an easy manner. Were there not kings who acquired wealth and ruled over kingdoms? Where have all those kings and kingdoms gone now? What is it that they have taught to the world? Today also, we have a large number of people who preach and say that there are short cuts to teach the essence of the *Vedas*, but there are very few people who put them into practice in their lives.

All these individuals and the lessons that they teach are merely like guideposts. The best that a guidepost can do is to tell you that if you travel in that way, you will reach such and such a destination; and if you travel along another path, you will reach another destination; but the actual ups and downs along a particular path will be understood only by the people who undertake the journey. The guidepost cannot tell you anything about the ups and downs. One can speak about a crore of things, but one cannot put even one of them into practice by merely speaking. You should put into practice what you say and set an example. You should be prepared fully to put into practice what you say and hear.

The situation in the country is not something which you do not know. Today, hatred, injustice, and fear have filled all aspects of our lives, and the young students are the only people who can remove those evils. You have the capacity to do this. You should make an attempt to understand the sacred ideals that are contained in our sacred texts. The spirit of sacrifice which pervaded the lives of the citizens of this country at all times is contained in the blood flowing in you. In such a sacred country, the Pandavas have led lives in a manner which are ideal examples. They were persons who were the leaders in all aspects—the political, ethical, moral, and all other aspects.

On one occasion when Dharmaraja, Arjuna, Bheema, and others were in some other place in the battlefield, Abhimanyu was lured into the *padmavyuha* (Labyrinth of the lotus shape). His mother cautioned him by saying that the situation at this time was very precarious. The times were not very good for them: his wife was in the family way, his uncle Krishna was not present. He was only being lured into the battle, and he should think twice before going into the battle. When the mother was thus entreating him not to go into the battle, Abhimanyu, because of his brave family traditions and because of the sacrificing spirit in his blood, was begging his mother to let him go. He told his mother,

"Instead of telling me to be a lion and jump into the battlefield, you are trying to prevent me from going there."

The mother, herself, was a great heroine, and she realised the greatness in Abhimanyu's heroism. She thought that if she let him go forward, it was bad; and if she stopped him, it was also bad. She was unable to decide between the two evils. This was the situation in which she found herself. In this unfortunate situation, you can imagine what the people of today would have done. They would have cursed God and cried out, "Oh, cruel God, why did you put my son in such a situation!" But this heroic mother was blessing her son by saying that he should go and secure victory on the battlefield. The kind of blessing which she gave her son was an unparalleled one. We should ask ourselves if any mother would give a blessing like that these days.

Every part of the *Mahabharatha* is such that it has an ideal lesson for us. The ideals demonstrated by the Pandavas and taught by Krishna are very essential for the people of our country even today. As I explained yesterday, when Krishna went to negotiate peace and was asked by Duryodhana to accept his hospitality, he said that as he had come on a mission; he had no right to accept the hospitality till the mission was completed.

Until the peace negotiations were completed, he did not want to accept the hospitality offered by Duryodhana; and he went and stayed in Vidura's house. Because such rules of conduct were being observed in those days in the matter of political negotiations, they were always of a very high order. Today, if ambassadors come from other countries, they are driven to the Raj Bhavan straight from the airport; and even before the negotiations begin, a dinner is arranged and other types of hospitality is given to the visitor. In the conditions that are existing today, if we accept and put into practice the ideals that were demonstrated in the *Mahabharatha*, our country will certainly prosper. We are thinking and taking the view that the *Mahabharatha* simply consists of people who were warmongers. This is not correct.

The *Mahabharatha* is an ideal text for people who are peace lovers. The *leelas* and the stories that we learn from the *Bhagavatha* are not as important as the lessons and morals that we learn from the *Mahabharatha*. So long as we are human beings, and have to live as human beings, we cannot understand and follow the actions of divinity. We have to accept and follow the actions done by God as a human being. When the chariot was kept between the two armies, Arjuna begged of the Lord, in many ways, for enlightenment. He accepted that all that was said by

Krishna was truth and was backed by what had been said in the *Sastras*. Because Arjuna was an ordinary human being, he could not understand Krishna's divinity; and he prayed that he be given the strength to understand the potency of what was told to him. He requested that the great divine vision of Krishna be shown to him. He also requested that the weaknesses that were in his mind and body be removed. He requested that mercy may be shown to an ordinary human being like him and that he might be elevated. In all humility and in a devoted way, he was begging Krishna.

Arjuna's anxiety and sincerity were noticed by Krishna; and convinced of his devotion, he told Arjuna that his divine form could not be perceived by the ordinary eyes; and he touched his forehead and said that the eye of Wisdom, which he could give, would enable him to perceive the Lord. By this touch of Krishna, the Wisdom eye had entered Arjuna. This gift had come only through grace and did not come by right. Thus, Krishna had given this gift to Arjuna as a Grace.

Through this eye of Wisdom, Arjuna realised that the entire creation was contained in the divine vision. He realised that all living beings—human as well as

animal and insect—were part of this vision. He realised that Krishna was responsible for all creation. He perceived that Krishna was present in every minute particle. Arjuna closed his eyes and the divine vision was there in all directions. He then addressed Krishna and said that he did not have the strength to bear that divine vision any longer and said that he had seen his greatness and his divine strength.

Arjuna prostrated before Krishna and was overwhelmed and began singing in ecstasy and said, "How can I know you Krishna? You are smaller than the smallest thing in this world, and you are greater than the greatest thing in this world. You are the very basis of the eighty-four lakhs of kinds of *jivas* in this world. You are infinitely great, and you cannot be compared even with the greatest thing in this world, and you are the source of everything that can be seen. I now surrender to you and will do whatever you ask me to do without any question."

An *Avatar* is capable of all things at all times, yet the *Avatar* will not undertake to demonstrate his powers at all times. An *Avatar* will undertake to demonstrate such powers when exceptional circumstances demand it, and will shed the grace on a deserving person only. Although such *Avatars* were present in our country for

thousands of years, and although our people were exposed to such *Avatars*, they have not fully understood all the aspects of such an *Avatar*.

We should examine the reason why the formless Lord takes the form of a human being and comes into the midst of humans. This formless being comes in the form of a human being so that he may mix with the human beings and set up examples and ideals for human beings and convey to them all aspects which they should learn. Many people ask very innocently and ignorantly why an *Avatar,* who possesses all powers, should subject itself to all troubles; and why should it tolerate hunger and suffering all around. An *Avatar* who has all the powers should be able to remove all such suffering in one moment. If there is any meaning in such a question, why should an *Avatar* come in human form at all? The *Avatar* can remain as a formless divinity and do all these things from that position itself. In time, and under certain conditions and environment, whatever has to be done must be done and such acts, at a human level, have to be performed.

Certain things are essential for remedial action and without doing those things, to expect an *Avatar* to simply remove all suffering is a very foolish thing. First of all, you should make an attempt to make good

use of the mental and physical strengths that have been given to you. When you are so lazy as not to use the mental and physical strengths that have been given to you, what are you going to do with divine strengths? Suppose that you have been given food and drink by the divine grace and strength of the Lord. Because God has given you enough food on your plate, for you to think that God has also to help you in transferring this food to your stomach is a very lazy idea. For taking the food to your stomach, God has given you hands, a palate, and a mouth. You should make good use of them. If you are not able to use the organs that have been given to you, and if you are not able to use the mind and mental strength that have been given to you, it is better to die than to live in that condition. That we may learn to make good use of our mental and physical strengths and other organs, God comes in human form to demonstrate how these may be used.

The essential quality of an *Avatar* is to teach you how to make good and proper use of your thought, word, and deed. Depending on the conditions in the country and the environment in the country, the *Avatar* comes to teach you and show you the right use of all your organs. In Bharath, a country which is like heaven on earth, so that you may be able to make good use of the facilities and faculties that have been given to you,

I am hoping that the sacred texts of the *Bhagavatha* and *Mahabharatha* will provide good examples.

Divya Atma Swarupas, Boys and Girls,

To some extent you should make an attempt to master your sensory organs and not become a slave to them. I am hoping that by mastering your sensory organs, you will become ideal citizens and representatives of our ancient culture. The ideals that have been demonstrated to us in the *Mahabharatha*, and the close relationships between the Pandavas and Krishna that have become evident from this sacred text, and the lessons from such a relationship must be understood by us and put into practice in our daily lives. The *Mahabharatha* is not an ordinary text. In fact, it has come to be known as the fifth *Veda*.

Every individual character in the *Mahabharatha* has some powers which are attributed to God. They are not people who are born like other ordinary people. As they are not just ordinary people, every act that they perform is an exemplary act. They are individuals with superhuman powers, and so whatever they had done should be taken as an ideal act. That text has, in the context, been compared with the *Vedas*. As days go on, you will hear more stories from the *Mahabharatha*, and you will learn how Krishna had set aside his divinity,

and as a human being, taught how human beings should behave and conduct themselves. I am hoping and blessing you that you will take these lessons and put them into practice and develop yourselves into useful and worthy citizens of our country.

7. A Good And Peaceful Death Is Coveted By All Saintly People

Do you know why you have been given your intelligence? It is not to be used for the purpose of accumulating wealth. Intelligence has been given to you so that you may realise that all that you see around is a very temporary and transient phenomenon.

Pavitratma Swarupas, Students! Boys and Girls,

Man is like a seed. As the seed sprouts and then becomes a plant, finally becoming a tree giving you fruit, so also man should grow and blossom and should put out flowers of peace and distribute those flowers to the rest of the world. Man has two aspects of his life. One relates to his livelihood and the other to the ultimate

objective of his own life. The former is the ability to get one's livelihood and relates very much to the material world whereas the latter relates to the spiritual world. But today man develops capacities in the former aspect to be able to eke out his livelihood but does not have the capacity to seek out the objective of his life. The spiritual world and the material day-to-day world cannot be two separate worlds. When we talk of the capacities to suit this world, we mean the capacity to acquire all the conveniences to give comfort to this body. What we do in this world, what we see around us, and what we do to keep our body healthy are all called the ability related to this world. If we want to describe this briefly, we can say that this is the capacity related to the external world.

There is another aspect which can be briefly described as the inner world. But unfortunately today, from the time that we get up to the time that we go to bed again, all our efforts are directed to accumulating the capacities relating to this external world. Whatever we do relates to our daily lives and what we see around us. However, it is not possible to think of the day-to-day world without thinking of the internal or spiritual world, just as we cannot develop external vision without the help of the inner vision. Religious texts of all categories have been teaching people how to promote

and how to develop this inner vision. Most religious texts have always been teaching methods and paths related to the spiritual world.

The *Bhagavad Gita* has not been making a distinction between the external and the inner vision and has been saying that both of them have to be studied together. This spiritual text has been teaching us that whether you stress on the external vision or the inner vision, the ultimate objective is the same. There is also a small story which has been given as an example for this. Let us take the case of a woman who carries a pot filled with water on her head. She will be talking and joking along with other women and is quite free as she walks along. Yet she takes great care of the pot of water on her head.

As in the above analogy, while we live in the normal world taking things lightly as they come, we will have to take great care of the spiritual aspects as well. We cannot forget them. Whatever work and task you may undertake, if you have your attention on divinity, then God will take care of you.

There is one more example for this. A mother will put the baby to sleep. After the baby is asleep, she will go to the first floor and will be attending to her work. All the while, her attention will be on the baby, and her

thought is always about when the baby will get up. Even if she is engaged in urgent and pressing work, her attention will be on the baby and as soon as she hears the cry of the baby, she will come running. She will not stop to consider in what *raga* (tune) and *tala* (tempo) the baby is crying. Just as the mother comes running from her work as soon as she hears the baby crying, so also, if man cries to the Lord from the depths of his heart, even if the Lord is busy, he will come out of his place and help the devotee. God does not ask what path this devotee is adopting or what bhajans are being sung by him, etc. But he will only look at the sincerity with which the devotee has cried out.

God is all-powerful and can melt even stony hearts, yet he will not undertake to do so. But man has the strength to correct his path by the *Purusharthas* (Goals of life—*dharma, artha, kama, moksha*), and so God will expect that man should first set right his thoughts by his own efforts. In this context, man should not go on arguing about God's capacity but should examine his own capacity and use it to set things right. God behaves like a human being when he comes amidst them, understands the psychology of the behaviour, and investigates the manner in which he can change the minds and hearts of men.

In the battle of *Mahabharatha,* Bhishma was in a ferocious condition. During the first nine days of the war, Dussasana and Duryodhana went to Bhishma on one particular day and asked why they have been suffering defeat after defeat practically every day and had not seen victory even on one day. Bhishma realised that he was then in the service of the King and said, "Yes I understand your difficulty, I will bring you victory in the war tomorrow." Dussasana then suggested to Bhishma that the objective should be to capture and kill the Pandavas rather than just to secure victory over them in the war.

In that context, Bhishma promised that before the sun rose the next day, he would kill the Pandavas. The Pandavas came to know of this and realised that the promise made by the grand old man would indeed be fulfilled by him. Anyway, the Pandavas had no alternative, and they were preparing themselves to be killed by the grand old man who brought them up. This news came to be known to *Droupadi* as well. She could not sleep or eat her food and she was terror-stricken.

The dark night had set in. In the whole drama, Krishna also had a part to play, and he was thinking of how to bring the *Purusharthas* to operate and change the minds of people. Bhishma realised that he had

made the promise in the excitement of the moment. He was fully aware of the greatness of the Pandavas and their qualities and was much agitated. He could not eat his food and was moving from one place to another. However, Krishna was divine and he knew what was happening on both sides, and he knew the difficulties on both sides.

Droupadi, anticipating the terrible future, came to Krishna, touched his feet and sat down. Then Krishna said, "Sister, do not get excited. Do what you can and I will do the rest." Although this assurance was given, being a woman, she was very agitated. At midnight, when all were asleep, Krishna came to *Droupadi* and said, "Simply follow me and do not ask any questions." It was dark and it was the battlefield. *Droupadi* did not want to be recognised and so she covered herself with a cloth.

In the battlefield, there were no mansions, and they were living in small improvised tents. However, the place where Bhishma was living was quite a big place. In the dead of night, Bhishma was wondering how he was going to fulfil the promise that he made and perform the act of killing the righteous and good-natured Pandavas, who were indeed very brave. He was anxiously moving about hither and thither. Krishna

noticed this opportunity when Bhishma was very excited and agitated, and he signalled to Droupadi that she should leave her shoes behind, as the shoes of wealthy women in those days made a great deal of noise and could be heard even from a long distance, and go and fall at Bhishma's feet. She was only following Krishna's orders. She left the shoes at one place, covered herself, and quickly ran inside and fell at Bhishma's feet and begged him to save her husbands' life.

Because of his inherent good qualities, Bhishma immediately reacted without a thought and blessed her by saying, "May you remain a *Sumangali* (married woman with her husband alive) for a long time!" To *Droupadi*, the assurance coming from Bhishma that for a long time she would be a *Sumangali* with living husbands was quite enough. Bhishma had made the promise that he would kill the Pandavas before the sun rose the next day and also assured that *Droupadi* would remain a *Sumangali* for a long time to come, and now it was for Bhishma to fulfil one or both of these promises.

At that moment, when Bhishma saw that the person whom he thus blessed was *Droupadi*, he was in utter confusion as a conflicting situation had risen. The conflict which troubled Bhishma was which of these promises was he going to fulfil. At that moment,

Bhishma asked her who gave her this plan of action, for she certainly could not have come alone, at the dead of night, with this grand plan.

At that time, Krishna, the master architect of the whole plan, came inside with a cloth bundle in his hands. Bhishma expressed his pleasure at seeing Krishna and said that this plan was drawn up by Krishna in order to save his devotees and that Krishna was the only person who could save even Bhishma from the conflicting situation. At this moment, he noticed the cloth bundle in Krishna's hands and asked what the bundle contained. When the bundle was opened, it was seen that it contained the shoes of *Droupadi*. In demonstrating his grace and love, God will be prepared, not only to help his devotees, but even to carry the shoes of his devotees if it became necessary. At this unparalleled grace shown by Krishna, *Droupadi's* eyes were filled with tears and she asked, "Is it not sufficient that you have been taking care of our lives? Is it not sufficient that you made a plan for my husbands to be spared instead of being killed the next day? Did you have to carry my shoes which have no value at all?"

Is Krishna doing all these things as God on earth? These are being done by him to show what one human being must do to another human being at a time of

need. Man alone can demonstrate the kind of relationship that should exist between man and man. So he was conducting himself like a human being. That *prema* is the very basis for one's own life has been demonstrated by Krishna.

Bhishma fully understood this *leela* of Krishna and came to the conclusion that whatever he might do, the Pandavas will not be subjected to any harm. But he did not make any attempt to get out of his promise, as he was a great adherent of truth. On the next day he went to the battlefield with all his determination to fulfil the promise that he had made. On that day, the battle was very fierce and the Pandava army ran helter-skelter, but because of the divine grace of Krishna, the Pandavas were able to save themselves. The evening came and Bhishma fell down. Krishna had to play all this drama to demonstrate that one's physical and mental strength are not very important, and it is the divine strength that was real strength.

The day when Bhishma fell down was the tenth day of the battle. From that day till the eighteenth day of the battle, Krishna was conducting various events of the battle, but Bhishma was lying on the bed of arrows which he made for himself. After the last day of the battle, the victorious Pandavas came to Bhishma. The

kind of battle that took place, at that time, was subject to its own rules and code of conduct in accordance with the times. The battle took place 3138 years before the advent of Christ. The war in which Bhishma took part was for nine days, and the period for which he was on the bed of arrows was fifty-eight days. These two together constitute a total of sixty-seven days. After this, the Pandavas along with *Droupadi* went to see Bhishma and had his *darshan.*

Lying on the bed of arrows, Bhishma showed great affection to the Pandavas and preached to them what has since come to be known as the *Shanthiparva.* In that context, while Bhishma was preaching the code of conduct relating to peace in the *Shanthiparva*, *Droupadi* had some thought in her mind; and she laughed loudly and attracted everyone's attention. The Pandavas thought this to be very inappropriate, and they did not like *Droupadi* laughing in this manner in the presence of the elders. Bhishma was all-knowing and he knew the thoughts that were passing in the minds of the Pandavas. In order that an appropriate explanation might be given to the Pandavas, Bhishma asked *Droupadi* to come closer to him. He blessed her and said that she would remain a *Sumangali* for long and went on to say that she would not do anything without good reason. He asked her to explain why she laughed so that her husbands might know the answer.

Droupadi addressed Bhishma in great reverence and humility and asked Bhishma, "At the time when I was humiliated in the court of Duryodhana, you never spoke of any code of conduct; and at the time when my husbands were banished into the forest for twelve years and were to live incognito for one year, you never preached any code of conduct. You are now teaching the *Shanthiparva* to the Pandavas who are the very embodiments of *dharma*. Why are you now teaching this to the people who do not need to be taught? This should have been taught to Duryodhana and his accomplices. Such a thought came to my mind and I laughed. Not only this, in the court that day Dharmaraja lost in the game of Dice and also lost when he placed himself as the stake. Then he offered me as the stake. It was then decided that the Pandavas were to go to the forest and I was humiliated. Was this *dharma*? You are an embodiment of *dharma* and right conduct. Do you think that on that day, after losing himself in the game, Dharmaraja had the right to bid me? I was married to five husbands, and in that context, belonged to all of them. If only one husband wanted to bid me, was that right? At that time, what had happened to all your professed adherence to right conduct.

Secondly, Dharmaraja offered me as a stake, after he lost himself in the wager. He had no right to do this.

On that day itself, I questioned whether Dharmaraja lost himself first and then offered me as a stake or whether he offered me as a stake first and then lost himself. You did not give me an answer then. What had happened to all your right conduct at that time? Today, when there is no need at all, you are preaching all this to the Pandavas. This, indeed, is a laughing matter and has induced laughter in me."

While Bhishma was lingering between life and death, the fact that *Droupadi* was arguing so vehemently and asking inconvenient questions upset even Dharmaraja. Bhishma, however, laughed loudly and praised *Droupadi* for asking such questions and said that the answers to such questions would be of great importance to the coming *Kali* age and asked the Pandavas to calm down. Bhishma said, "For many years, I had been serving evil kings and sinners and had been living on the food that they had given me. Therefore, all the rights and *dharma* in me were submerged. As a result of the arrow that struck me from your husband's hand, all the evil blood has flown out and now the *dharma* that had been submerged has come up; and I am preaching the need for good conduct."

From this *Shanthiparva*, preached by Bhishma, we have to learn the lesson that if anyone promotes

himself with the help of money accumulated by bad and evil ways, then the good in him will be submerged by the bad blood in him. It is in this context that Krishna had taught that the pot in which you cook, the material which you use to cook, and the food itself should all be clean.

In this dialogue, Bhishma had taught to the world that there can be evil in the food that you take. From the food that we take, come the thoughts. From the thoughts that are generated in us comes the action. From our actions, will come our good and our bad. After giving the appropriate lessons to the Pandavas, Bhishma gave up his life.

The day before that was an auspicious day because on that day the sun commences his northward journey. That day is also called *Ratha Saptami.* The previous day to Bhishma's death, *Ratha Saptami,* was a sacred day; and on that day, all the Pandavas came near him and he performed the rituals to his forefathers. On the next day, he gave up his life. But at this time, according to our *panchangas* (almanacs) we think that Bhishma died on an *ekadasi* (eleventh day of the lunar fortnight) and we call it the *Bhishma Ekadasi*. Actually this is not correct. The day on which Bhishma died was an *Ashtami* (eighth day), and the prevailing star was Rohini. Krishna was also born in the star on Rohini. Thus, Bhishma

died on a day similar to the day on which Krishna was born.

Also, that was the beginning of a very auspicious period in the year. They regarded that day to be very auspicious for a death. Bhishma had waited for fifty-eight days in order that the sun might start its northward journey. He was thinking of the Lord on all those days and was waiting for an appropriate time to die. In this aspect, Bhishma taught to the world that the time of death was more important than the time of birth. More than being born on an auspicious day, it is to be coveted that one dies on an auspicious day and time as well. If one dies like that, rebirth will be a good one.

Today, we all want a good birth, but we are not seeking a good death. The inner meaning of a good birth is to enable one to have a good death. We must recognise the truth that all the *sadhana* that we do is not for the sake of a pleasurable life but for a good and peaceful death. All the great saints and *yogis* direct all their prayers towards aspiring for an easy and good death, and they pray that they be enabled to merge into the Lord easily. Our attempts should be directed to the objective of ultimately merging with divinity. This is the sacred lesson that is contained in the *Shanthiparva*, and it is my hope that you understand this and put it into practice.

8. Man Should Promote Inner Vision For Himself

Do you know why you have been given your mouth? Is it to utter all kinds of words? No, it has been given to you so that you might sing the glory of the Lord.

Pavitratma Swarupas,

Today man is very eager to listen to the news that comes to him from all corners of the world. He thinks that it is his mission to know everything that is happening, but he does not make an attempt to hear what is coming from within himself. An individual who cannot understand and recognise his own nature has not achieved anything. All that he is learning by way of education is apparently only for eking out a

living. This has become common with us and has become an illusion of our mind. This is something which has no basis worth mentioning. This kind of attitude was criticised in a downright manner by Krishna. The basis for such a desire is your attachment and hatred. This attachment and hatred are commonly found in one who thinks that he is different from the environment around him. So long as one thinks that a particular car or house or land belongs to him, then there will be attachment to whatever he thinks belongs to him, and he will have a dislike of things which he thinks do not belong to him. Man does not have the capacity to distinguish between things which belong to him and things which do not belong to him. In a human body, there are several organs and the body itself is composed of those several organs. From amongst these several organs, even if one is hurt or damaged, the pain is experienced by the entire body; and this is the reason why man regards all the organs in the body on the same footing; and he desires the well-being of all the organs of his body.

In the same manner, the grace and kindness of the creator will fall equally well on all living and non-living things with *gunas—sathwic*, *rajasic,* and *thamasic.* Although light emanating from the same lamp, when it falls on a group of white pieces of glass, will

be scattered in several different directions, we think that it consists of light from several sources. If the same light falls on a large number of coloured glasses, it appears as if it is composed of different colours. If the same light falls on the ground, we will not be able to see the light, because the ground obstructs and absorbs the light.

In the same manner, if the brilliant shining grace from *Easwara* falls on a *sathwic* person, he will shine brilliantly. If the same grace from *Easwara*, falls on a person with *rajasic* qualities, it will make him develop several desires of the world. If the same grace falls on a person with *thamasic* qualities, it will not only go through without having any effect, but it may even lose some of its lustre.

Just as the various facets of diamonds all scatter light and throw brilliance in all directions, so also the greatness of Krishna was scattered in all directions. As we cut the diamond and polish the facets, the value of the diamond goes on increasing.

In the same manner, the culture of Bharath has become more and more through greater and greater exposure and experience. The more we experience it, the more we learn about our culture, newer ideas come to us. We will know, more and more, about the

sacredness of Krishna's teachings if we look at them from the aspect of their being object lessons to other human beings.

If you want to remove a thorn from your foot, you will have to do this with the help of another thorn. You cannot use an axe to remove the thorn from your foot. To cut a diamond, you need a diamond. In the same manner, to understand and comprehend a human being, you will have to use the essential qualities of a human being. Krishna, who was born as a *Yogeswara,* came down to the level of men when preaching to Arjuna who was the best among men and holding his weapon, the Gandiva. Krishna wanted to deal with Arjuna in a manner in which a human being will deal with another human being. On the very first day, Dhritharashtra asked Sanjaya who the victor will be in the battle and Sanjaya replied, "Wherever there is the Lord *Yogeswara* and wherever there, in his presence, is Arjuna holding the weapon in his hand and ready for action, there will be victory, good, prosperity, and all that is best." This close and intimate relationship can only be understood by Arjuna, the best among men, and by Krishna, the best among the *Avatars*. Here, Arjuna represents the most deserving of human beings.

So if you want to understand and comprehend the teachings of Krishna, you must either become the best

of men or at least a person who acquires the right to understand them. Arjuna had the right, and he was also the best of men; and so he was given the *darshan* of the Universal God. We should also recognise the truth behind the fact that this divinity, while it is associated with the universe, is also something which is inherently present in every human being.

You will have seen many trees. Certain big banyan trees look as if they are very big, and they also have many sub-branches and look as if they are a big mansion. Such a banyan tree gives us the impression that it is very big, having many branches; but if we take the seed, we see that it has a very small dimension like a mustard seed. Is it the truth that such a big tree is contained in such a tiny little seed or is it just an illusion on our part? No, this is not an illusion, it is a truth. But in what form is this seed seen? It is in the infinitesimal form. If we put this tiny seed in the earth, feed and nourish it, it will sprout, become big, and grow. The fruit, the flowers, and the leaves all come out of this tiny seed. Therefore, it is not as if the branches, the fruits, and the leaves are all different. They are all parts of the same seed.

Thus, everything that you see in this big tree of the universe has all come from one seed, the seed of

divinity. In the same manner, in this huge body of yours, there is an infinitesimally small seed called the aspect of *Atma*. If you take this seed which is in you, give it nourishment, and let it grow and prosper, then it will show the divine form of the universe. But where should we put this seed, how do we protect it and promote it to grow into a big tree? Can we put this seed in our palm and pour water on it? Will it become a tree? A seed will become a tree only if it is put in the soil and watered suitably. Even in that soil, if you put the seed too deep or too shallow, it will not become a tree.

In the same manner, in the soil of our heart, if we can put the seed of God's name, and if we can water it with the water of *prema*, it will sprout into a good tree. It is in this context that a divine vision of *Vishwavirat* has been described as one consisting of thousands of heads, legs, and hands. Wherefrom has this *Vishwavirat* vision come? It is simply the magnified version of what is within ourselves. When I open my eyes, I see so many thousands of heads; but when the eyes are closed, I do not see even one head. When the eyes are open, I not only see these thousands of heads, but I also see this wall, this window, all the photos, and everything around me. If I go outside and see with open eyes, one sees the mountains, the sky, the rivers, and the distant

land; but, at that instant, if one closes one's eyes, why is it that one does not see even a small ant in this entire creation?

If the eyes are open, we see the entire creation; and if the eyes are closed, we do not see anything of the creation. Thus, we conclude that this entire creation has come from our own vision. If there is vision, there is creation; and if there is no vision, there is no creation. Just as with extrovert vision we are able to see the external creation, so also with the help of inward vision, we can see the inner self. This is what Krishna taught Arjuna. It was with a view to help Arjuna develop this inner vision, that the Lord had given him so many directions.

What does not flow is not water, what does not burn is not fire, and as in these analogies, a person who does not have inward vision cannot be called a human being. Capacity to burn is natural to fire. Water has the natural capacity to flow. Similarly man should have the natural capacity of inner vision. An animal has only external vision.

The *Vedas* have told us that what we see is only a reflection of what exists internally. That which we see inside or outside is essentially one, and the same thing is what has been taught to us in this aspect of

Vishwavirat darshan of Narayana. There is only one thing and that one thing is perceived in many ways. This is what has been demonstrated in this vision and is described as *Ekoham bahusyam* (I am one. I shall become many).

You go to sleep in the night, and you dream that you are a part of the summer camp. You see so many other companions sitting along with you. In your dream you also see Swami speaking. You see the congregation and other parts of the house. You should ask who has brought all that there in front of you in your dream. No one has brought them, your own mind has created the form of Swami and this mansion, your companions and all. All that is the creation of your own mind.

Man's mind alone is responsible for man's bondage and his freedom. Krishna taught Arjuna, in the very first instance, that the most important thing is the control of one's mind. Thus, the first thing to do is to control your mind. The very first thing that we must do is to try and burn away the desires that come to our mind. The desires that are in your mind, may be known to others or may not be known to others, but are bound to come out some day or the other. You may pretend as if there are no desires in your mind, but the desires will never allow you to hide them. They will always come

out. These desires are like fire. If you take fire and try to hide it in a cloth, the desires will burn the cloth and come out. The desires and thoughts of yours are bound to come out and show themselves.

Krishna taught Arjuna that it was better to throw out the desires than to keep them hidden. Arjuna was told in the very first instance that neither he nor the Pandavas are the persons who were going to kill the Kauravas. Neither to Arjuna, nor to the Pandavas, nor to even Krishna was there birth or death. There is neither birth nor death to the essential in us, namely the *Atma*. Therefore it is not right to subordinate ourselves to this body which is like a leather bag, forgetting the indestructible *Atma* that is within us.

So long as we are human beings, it is difficult to comprehend the difficult divine aspect taught by Krishna to Arjuna. This is the reason why Krishna came in human form, created a bodily relationship with Arjuna and others, and pretended as if he was the brother-in-law of Arjuna and vice versa. In the ordinary daily matters, Krishna was always leading a sacred life. What we see in the *Mahabharatha* or the *Bhagavatha* or what we see in the cinema do not constitute a true picture of the life of Krishna. What we see today is created artificially; but if we go fully into the conduct

of Krishna, we will understand that he was pure, steadfast, and sincere. He was always supporting truth and practising it. That is the reason why Arjuna was always addressing Krishna as the embodiment of truth rather than as his brother-in-law.

When the battle was over, Krishna went to Dwaraka and went to the place where his father, Vasudeva, was living. Vasudeva asked him, "You have always spoken the truth; and I would like to know from you, as the protector of truth, what are the true changes that came about in the Kauravas and the Pandavas." Even if a son is always speaking the truth, no father will come forward and say that his son speaks the truth and protects the truth. In this context, we should really try and understand the deep significance of the father addressing the son and telling him that he had always spoken the truth, and protected the truth. But unfortunately, in the books that we read and the cinemas that we see, Krishna is depicted as a cunning and tricky person. The picture of Krishna formed in this manner is not correct. This is not what is contained in the *Mahabharatha*. People write such stories in order to make money and make their stories more attractive. That our own countrymen do this and distort the truth for the sake of acquiring money is deplorable.

It is not that Krishna alone was speaking the truth and protecting truth. The Pandavas were also great adherents of truth. The great protectors of truth, Krishna and the Pandavas, gave this country the sacred text of *Mahabharatha*. The forbearance and the great breadth of vision which the Pandavas exhibited, as well as the strength of character and determination which they exhibited in their conduct, cannot be seen in any other citizens of this country. Because the Pandavas had always obeyed Krishna, they directly imbibed from Krishna the sacred qualities of truth and forbearance. When Ashwatthama, who killed the *Upapandavas*, (Pandava children) was brought before Droupadi, in spite of her great grief at the loss of her children, she moved forward and touched his feet and paid respects to him. It is such great qualities of truth and forbearance that we should observe in the Pandavas and respect them for such qualities.

If the mothers of today were in such a state of suffering as *Droupadi* was, they would have pounced on Ashwatthama and strangled him to death, even if they did not have the strength to do that. But Droupadi had such sterling character that in her great suffering she only asked, "These *Upapandavas* who were killed by you did not come to you in any emotion or excitement. They did not have any weapons in their

hands. How did you bring yourself to cut their throats and kill them when they were sleeping?" In spite of the fact that all her sons were killed by Ashwatthama, she was telling him with great forbearance and equanimity of mind, "My husbands were the disciples of your father, Dronacharya. They learnt all aspects of weaponry from him; and you, who are the son of Dronacharya, killed my sons who should be like your disciples." This was the way in which she was pleading with Ashwatthama. Bheema was unable to bear such sorrow; and because of this, he was in great emotion which drove him to the point of exhibiting his physical prowess to the world. In fact, he was looking at this quality of forbearance of Droupadi as a laughing matter.

Bheema was greatly surprised at the peaceful attitude of Droupadi. He thought that the suffering of having lost all her children had driven her to insanity, for, otherwise he was not able to understand how a true mother could show such forbearance when the person who had killed all her children was standing before her. He said, "If you do not kill Ashwatthama, I will kill him with my fists."

Droupadi was a great woman with exemplary character. If only the women of today take her as an example and follow her qualities of forbearance and

calmness, our country will improve very much. When Bheema, the strong person, was preparing to kill Ashwatthama with his fists, would it be possible for a weakling like Droupadi to go and stop Bheema? It was only the purity of her thought that was her strength. She had no physical strength. Then she tells Bheema, "It is not right for you to kill a person who is afraid, who comes to you asking for shelter, a person who is asleep, or a person who is drunk and has forgotten himself. It is not right to kill such helpless people." Droupadi was such a great woman that in order to protect right conduct, she would even oppose her husbands. She was not a woman who would bring disrepute, by any of her acts, either to her husbands, or to her father, or to her sons. She did not want anyone to get hurt by her acts.

When Pandavas were preparing to go to the forest, Dharmaraja sent for Droupadi and asked her to sit by his side. Dharmaraja told her, "Owing to certain personal differences between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, a situation has come about by which we will have to go to the forest." He told Droupadi that these troubles and tribulations were something which they could not avoid, and that it was a very hard thing to be living in a forest for twelve years and follow it up with one year in which they had to remain incognito. Dharmaraja told

her that the men will somehow bear the difficulties and that it was not an occasion for women to go into the forest, and he advised her to remain back and take care of the old Dhritharashtra and Gandhari.

The Pandavas had asked Droupadi to take care of Dhritharashtra and Gandhari, the two main people who were cruel and responsible for their having to go to the forest. This is a very great quality in the Pandavas, and we must learn a lesson from this conduct. If the Pandavas really hated the Kauravas, is there any meaning in this act; and can we justify the fact that the Pandavas asked Droupadi to stay back and serve the Kauravas? The moral of this is that whatever has to happen in one's life will happen, but to take such inevitable events and use them to promote hatred is not the correct thing to do, and it is not a good human character.

The pain which we have to experience, the misfortunes which come to us and the troubles which we have, are not things which arise externally, nor are they God given. They are simply things which are the result of our own actions. It is only as a result of one's own weakness, that man blames someone else for the troubles and misfortunes that he gets. This is not a right attitude. Mahabharatha teaches us that it is not right to blame others for our troubles.

You want to eat food and fruit which is very good and tasty, but in order to get such fruit, you cannot use seeds which will give poisonous plants. The kind of fruits that you get on a tree that you plant will depend on the kind of seeds that you put in. If you put in seeds of poisonous plants and expect tasty fruits, how can you get them? The troubles that you have or the good that you have now will depend upon the kind of actions you have done in your previous birth. Not to recognise this and blame others is not correct.

The *Mahabharatha* has taught us a lesson that we should regard our actions as being responsible for our sorrows or joys. But as a human being, you should perform whatever actions you have to perform. The capacities that have been given to you under the name of *Purusharthas* must be fully utilised. Do not think that you will achieve this or that, and do not think that you will be able to do great things without the grace of God. Do not get tired out in that process. The kind of seeds which you have put in, which have brought you to the position in which you are today, will determine the results that you will get later on. If the seed belongs to one kind of plant, how can you aspire to get a different kind of fruit? Therefore, the kind of seed which you use will determine the kind of fruit that you will get, and you will have to accept that fruit. You

may be very intelligent and clever. All your intelligence and cleverness will not enable you to get over your own *Karma*. Brahma, the creator, prepares a garland of all the good and the bad that you have done, without making any change, and will put it round your neck and will send it along with you into this world when you are born.

It is necessary for us to recognise this causal relationship. We are responsible for the good that we do and for the bad that we do, and the desires that we get are merely consequences of this. The *Mahabharatha* has been teaching us this lesson. While this is as it may be, Droupadi, to maintain the reputations for her husbands, her parents, and parents-in-law, is talking about this code of right conduct. She said, “I was born to the great king Droupadi, I have become the daughter-in-law of the world famous king Pandu, I have married the great Pandavas who are proud of themselves, I have given birth to sons who are heroes. How can I be a servant?” These words of Droupadi will move one’s heart. She wanted her parents to be proud of her, she wanted her children to feel that they are the children of a great mother, she wanted her husbands to feel that they were married to a great woman, she wanted her parents-in-law to be proud of her, and she wanted to please them. The *Mahabharatha* is a text of great events

and Droupadi herself was always behaving in a manner in which she maintained the reputation of her great family and her country.

Truly Bharath can be regarded as a true reflection of the qualities of the Pandavas and Krishna. It is customary for us to regard The *Mahabharatha* as a story of a group of people who are warmongers and who have no respect for peace, sanctity, and security of mankind. One can say that Krishna is the *Paramatma* and has taken the five Pandavas as the five elemental substances which are the basis of creation and Droupadi as the *jiva,* and has created the text of *Mahabharatha* for us. The first thing we should try and recognise in *Mahabharatha* is that Krishna took the form of a human being, and we should examine in what manner he gave us the lessons of code of conduct for other human beings. Whatever part of *Mahabharatha* we may be studying, if we regard Krishna as God, we will never be able to understand the inner significance of that particular portion of *Mahabharatha*. It is only when we regard and pay attention to the human aspect of Krishna and look at the whole story from the angle of Krishna in the human form, that we will understand his greatness. All your ideas and thoughts have to be transferred to the time when Krishna lived, into the time when the story of *Mahabharatha* took place. Only then will you

understand their true significance. If you are remaining mentally in the position in which you are now existing, it will not be possible for you to understand and appreciate the true context of the story of *Mahabharatha* which took place 5000 years ago.

As was told to you yesterday, worship a picture as God; but do not worship God as a picture. Do not bring him down to the level of a tumbler or a table or a piece of cloth. If you want to understand Krishna, take yourself to the position where Krishna lived and worked; but do not bring him to your position. If you want to rise high and go to a high place, it will be possible only if you read good stories and understand them. Therefore, students, boys and girls, with the help of your sacred hearts, understand the ideal lives that were portrayed in *Mahabharatha* and put them into practice in your own lives and follow the paths indicated in *Mahabharatha*. In the hope that you will be able to do this, I am bringing this discourse to a close.

9. Be Good, Do Good, And See Good That Is The Way To God

Do you know why you have been given ears? Is it for hearing all the sounds that are uttered near you? No, the ears have been given to you so that you may listen to songs relating to the glory of God.

Divya Atma Swarupas,

All the creation that you see emanates from the Lord. That the great variety that we see around us is coming only as a result of the change in our own qualities is a truth that is asserted by the sacred texts. Man is sometimes very happy, sometimes he is afraid, and at other times he is courageous. These changes come about in quick succession and in a casual way.

Let us examine the main reason for all these changes. The main reason for all these changes is the change that comes in our own mental attitude. These are manifestations of one's own qualities. Man has three distinct *gunas* or qualities. They are called *sathwa*, *thamo*, and *rajo gunas*. If these three qualities are mixed in a balanced manner, there will be no drastic change in one's nature. Sunlight is composed of seven different colours. When these colours are mixed in appropriate proportions, there will be no change, and the sun will be shining in its natural colour. On the other hand, if there is an imbalance in the manner in which these colours are mixed, then you will find that some special colours show themselves. In the same manner, if the *sathwa, rajo*, and *thamo gunas* are mixed in balanced proportions, there will be no big change in what we see around us; but if there is an imbalance, and if one of the qualities has gained the upper hand, then you will find that there are drastic changes.

These *gunas* have certain natural qualities. The quality of *sathwic* nature appears to us as if it is the very essence of peace. The *rajasic* quality appears to us as a mild *jyothi* (light). The *thamasic* quality appears also as a *jyothi* but covered by smoke. In these qualities, on some occasions, depending on how they are mixed, we find that there are some changes. When a mouse for

example, has been saved by a lion from the trouble in which it has found itself, we find later on that the mouse expresses its gratitude to the lion when the lion is in distress.

When Sugreeva found that his own brother took away his kingdom, turned him away into the forest, and took away his wife, he wanted to take revenge and sought the help of Rama. This is a manifestation of his *gunas*. Not only this, many attitudes such as equanimity come out of these *gunas*.

If we add sour buttermilk to sweet milk, we can get tasty butter and curds out of the milk. In the same manner, sometimes bad people join good people and become good in the company of the good people. Men who have good qualities sometimes transmit their good qualities to the bad people who join them. The good people in the world cause good to the bad people in the world also.

The analogy for this is found in the case of an axe, which is a bad one, when used to cut a sandalwood tree. In this case, the fragrance of the sandalwood tree comes to the axe as well. When we mix cold water with warm water, we will have neither cold water nor warm water but we will get a middle temperature. So also, when we mix two qualities, the extremes disappear and we get an intermediate mixture.

It is in this context that we can conclude that the good or the bad, the joy or sorrow, calmness or excitement come to man as a result of the *gunas* in him. For man, it is very essential to see that his qualities are protected. Man should promote an appropriate admixture of his *gunas* for the practice of *sadhana*.

The life of Krishna is not an exhibition for man but it is an ideal example. His life is to be followed by men as a worthy example. His life was intended to be an ideal example to be put before every human being. Krishna told these words to Dhritharashtra on several occasions during the peace negotiations. Not only this, when Uddhava came to conduct the negotiations, it was demonstrated that justice is something which is natural to man. Thus he argued that everyone, when he wants to do his duty, has a right to insist that he should be allowed to perform his duty. In order that man may claim what is rightfully and justly his, he has the right to protect his own responsibilities and to insist on rightfully performing his duty.

The Pandavas never wanted to get anything which they did not deserve and which they did not have the right to ask for, and the Pandavas never tolerated injustice. Krishna told the Kauravas in very clear terms that the Pandavas were always insisting on their right

to both responsibilities and duties. Sometimes we misinterpret it, and we think that he was promoting war. What Krishna did was not warmongering. Krishna was an ideal example, and he always insisted on one's rights and responsibilities.

There is an incident which brings out that he clearly demonstrated and demarcated one's rights and claims. There was always a close and intimate relationship between Krishna and Arjuna. In this context of close friendship and taking advantage of such close friendship, Arjuna went close to Krishna on one night and tried to get answers for some of his doubts. Arjuna asked Krishna, "Have I got the right to get a sacred text like the *Gita* taught by you, especially when I know that I am suffering from ego and when I know that I do not have any superior knowledge? There is the all-knowing Bhishma, who is very wise, and in his presence, I am like a small lamp in the presence of a huge light. Under such circumstances, have I the right to learn the *Gita* from you? What is the meaning of picking me up and teaching me the *Gita*? Perhaps Bhishma was not suitable because he was on the side of the Kauravas, but we have Dharmaraja who is the embodiment of *dharma,* and on all counts, he deserves to be taught the *Gita*, and why is it that he was ignored? There is also my elder brother Bheema who was bypassed? While

these superior persons Bhishma, Dharmaraja, and Bheema were there, why is it that they have been ignored and I, who am immersed in seeking material benefits all the time, have been chosen for this; and do I have the right to be chosen like this?"

Then Krishna drew Arjuna close to him affectionately and said, "You are thinking that I, in my divine compassion, am doing you some favour. This is not true. You are not able to recognise the great human qualities, and you think I am doing you a favour. This is not correct. As you said, Bhishma is a very learned man; but in spite of his wisdom and in spite of his recognising that the Pandavas are the embodiment of truth and they follow *dharma* and his accepting that the Kauravas follow *adharma,* he has gone and joined the side of Kauravas. What is the meaning of this? I do not like this riding two horses at the same time. I do not agree to this. You people have been regarding Bhishma as a great man. I do not agree with this attitude of yours. A Mahatma is one in whom the thought, word, and deed harmonise completely. A person in whom the thought is one, word is another, and deed is yet another cannot be called a great man. He will be called a *duratma* (an evil person). He is unable to recognise the meaning and the significance of his action when, on the one hand, he says that the Pandavas are good people

and that victory is going to be on the side of good people and yet leads the army of the Kauravas, whom he acknowledges as bad people.

Now, we will come to the aspect of Dharmaraja. He is one who has no forethought, and he will always repent after his action. Repentance is a very natural quality. So, what is exceptionally great in him? Repentance is a common quality seen in many people and it is seen in him also. He always talks of justice and righteousness. These do engage his attention always. He is not recognising the duty at the right point of time. An individual, who does not recognise his immanent duty, has no right to listen to such a sacred text as the *Gita*.

As regards your brother Bheema, he only has animal or physical strength; but he does not possess the intellectual or the mental strength. You are characterised by forethought, more than repentance. As a forethought, you have already asked me how you could kill your kith and kin; and even if the kingdom is won after so much bloodshed, how you could enjoy it. You said that it is better to beg and eat rather than get a kingdom by killing your relatives. Thus, you have forethought. You are not the person who runs after the kingdom. You have no such desire to rule over a kingdom. You have

recognised your duty. What is troubling you till now is the aspect of your right. To some extent you are thinking about what is just and what is not just. Man's duty is to be able to pursue justice and sacrifice everything in order to behave in a just manner. Man who recognises his sacred duty has the right to listen to this sacred text of the *Gita*."

Today, the biggest drawback in human beings is that men are not recognising what is just, and men are not recognising their right and the duty which they have to perform. Man is always hankering after something which is not his own and which is not rightfully his. Man is struggling to acquire various things in an unjust manner. Man is pushing away his real duty and is simply thinking of his present convenience.

Krishna's example and ideal is to make you recognise your duty. His second ideal is to show people that for the sake of justice, they should be willing to sacrifice everything, even life. (For the sake of justice, even life must be sacrificed.) In this context, it is necessary for us to understand the inner meaning of the conversation between Arjuna and Krishna. When Krishna was conducting negotiations for peace, Arjuna was very apprehensive and he asked Krishna, "The

Kauravas are not going to accept peace in any way, so why are you conducting these negotiations and spending so much time in negotiating for peace which is not going to come about anyway?"

Krishna explained that an individual who stands by and watches *dharma* being overcome by *adharma* and truth being destroyed by falsehood is better dead than alive. One should not remain passive when injustice pushes aside justice. To that Arjuna asked, "Is it possible to get *Amritha,* the immortal liquid, from poison? Is it possible to put flowers in a raging fire? What is the use of talking of peace in these impossible conditions? The Kauravas have such a narrow vision; are they going to come and accept our peace offers? It is better that you stop here. Is it possible to bring the north pole and the south pole together? This is an impossible task, and we should undertake the war as everything is ready for the war."

When we listen to these words of Arjuna and contemplate on how Arjuna regarded peace as an impossible achievement, we can understand how much Krishna had done and to what lengths he went in order to negotiate for peace. But many writers and citizens of India have characterised Krishna as one who never cared for peace, not recognising the efforts that he

made for peace. They thought that he was wanting to promote war. This is not right. Arjuna, who regarded peace as impossible said just before the battle began, "How am I going to kill so many people who are my relatives! This is impossible. My head is reeling, let us abandon the battlefield and go home." Here Krishna took the contrary view, and admonished Arjuna, "You have come into the battlefield like a hero and now you talk like a coward. Battle is not something which has come suddenly at this moment. There is a long background for this and the preparations have been going on for a whole week. You have all taken out your rusty weapons, cleaned them, and made them ready. All the arrows, which gathered cobwebs, have been cleaned. You have asked for the help of all your relations in the battle. Having made all these preparations, what is the meaning of all this talk of going back home without fighting? If you had told me this earlier, I would not have taken all this trouble. This is disgraceful. You are turning into a coward. You must fulfil your duty and not become a coward."

Here Krishna taught Arjuna how he should be prepared to fulfil his duty. Here we see a conflict. Till then Krishna was trying to negotiate peace and avoid war; but at that critical juncture, the same Krishna, who

wanted to avoid war, is telling Arjuna that he must take part in war.

We must understand the inner meaning of this. In the first instance, Krishna wanted to establish peace and as a result of that he wanted no loss of life in the world. Thus he wanted to give prosperity to the world. This was Krishna's first attempt. Later as time went on, he was insisting on justice and right and was telling the Pandavas that, in the context of one's justice and right, one should fulfil one's duty. Thus, in the performance of one's own duty and acceptance of one's right, we see an ideal example in Krishna's life. It is very necessary for young students like you to understand the inner significance of Krishna's using words like "duty", "justice" and "right".

Today students read a large number of books which are totally unnecessary. They read a large amount of useless literature which does not give them any ideals. Instead of pursuing true education which gives you knowledge and *Vidya* (wisdom), you are simply pursuing material information and becoming *vithyarthis*. A few minutes ago, talking about education, one of our speakers gave you the essence of what true education should be and gave some good examples of it. Truly, if we look around the country, we will get a doubt whether there is any education which can be called true education

at all and whether any individual can be called a teacher in the true sense of the word.

I will give an example of what really happened in one of our universities. Today's teachers are such that they are not willing to go into a class which they are to teach. This particular teacher put the tape recorder on, and he himself went to the staff room and was sleeping. On that day, as the lesson was given on a tape recorder, the students took down notes and they went home. On the second day again, the teacher brought the tape recorder, started the tape and left the classroom. Some of the students also brought their tape recorders, and they left their tape recorders to record what the teacher was saying through the tape, and they also left the class. By some good fortune, the principal happened to walk into the class that day and, to his surprise, found only tape recorders on all the tables; and there were no students at all. There was neither the teacher nor the student. If the education is like that, can we call it education at all?

Therefore, in order that you may develop yourselves into ideal citizens, it is essential for you to understand and comprehend the basic aspects of our civilisation. In the first instance, it is very necessary for you to understand the qualities which enable you to be

called human beings. Morality, truth, and sacredness of your heart and pursuit of self are the qualities which you should have; and these are the things which will entitle you to be called a man. We can assert, without any fear of contradiction, that the man who has lost fear of sin and love of God is only a man in form; and at the core, he is not a human being.

God's *leelas* and actions are very surprising, and an ordinary man cannot easily understand them. In that context, when God himself comes down in the form of an *Avatar* and preaches the essentials, many people who do not understand, begin to misinterpret his words and actions, and the true meaning completely disappears from the minds of everyone. *Avatars* come to propagate truth, to proclaim truth, and to make you practise truth. There is an incident in the *Mahabharatha* to illustrate this. In the open assembly, the Kauravas, who were very evil-intentioned people, wanted to put Droupadi to shame. Her powerful and heroic husbands were sitting on one side. When Droupadi was being humiliated, she realised that her husbands could not rescue her and she was asking and praying for help from Krishna. However much and however intensely she prayed to Krishna, he was not to be seen at all. In many ways, she was describing Krishna and his greatness. She addressed him as one who lives in Dwaraka, as one who lives in

Mathurapuri and so on, but there was no response. In utter disgust and as a last resort, she addressed Krishna as *Hrudayavasi*, i.e., one who lives in one's own heart. In the very next moment, Krishna appeared on the scene and protected her in the required manner and saved her honour.

After all the trouble was over, when they were sitting and talking like brother and sister, she asked Krishna why he had not responded to her many prayers when she was being humiliated in the Kauravas assembly. Krishna asked her in what manner she had addressed him. She replied that she had addressed him as one who resided in Dwaraka. Then Krishna said, "Oh, sister, what a mistake it was. How far was Dwaraka and how could I respond to your call especially because your call had to go so far and I had to come from there. You also say that you addressed me as Mathurapurivasi. Even Mathurapuri was very far and it would have taken a long time for me to respond to your call. You were in Hastinapura and you wanted to call me from Mathurapuri. How is that possible? Then you had also addressed me as Gokulavasi. Even Gokula was very far away and it would have taken time for me to respond. But when you addressed me as *Hrudayavasi*, as the dweller in your heart, I readily responded and came to your rescue."

If you write a letter to Puttaparthi, it will go to Puttaparthi, but not to Bangalore, where I will be staying sometimes. In the same way, if Krishna was addressed as *Dwarakavasi* when he was really a *Hrudayavasi*, he will not receive the prayer. In order to show the devotees true faith and determination, God sometimes does such things. So, at no time is a camp address more important than the permanent address. Then Krishna said, "I will now give you the correct address, listen to it. Where my devotees sing my glory, there I am permanently installed and that is my correct address." The *Mahabharatha* contains such beautiful stories as if it were written in jasmine flowers.

It is not right to keep such sacred meanings aside and go after some misinterpretations given by misinformed people. The ideals which we have to follow, the rights that we should claim, and the duties that we have to perform are all contained in the *Mahabharatha* and are good examples. Sometimes God's *leelas* are quite surprising. As a result of such surprise actions, many doubts arise in the minds of men. There is one small example for this. On one occasion, the battle of *Mahabharatha* was very fierce and was taking place in all the corners of the battlefield. In one direction, Aswatthama had prepared the *Padmavyuha.* On another side Bhishma was preparing

for a terrific fight. On the other side, there were other warriors preparing for war. Karna was standing ready for a fight. On the side of the Pandavas, some of the brothers undertook to fight Karna. Dharmaraja and Sahadeva took the other direction and were preparing to give battle. Arjuna was preparing to fight with other heroes. In this way, the battle became fierce in all the four directions. At home, in the camp, was young Abhimanyu. Dronacharya sent a message to Abhimanyu that *Padmavyuha* was ready and that it must be fought against. When a message is sent inviting one to come and fight in a battle, it is not right to refuse the challenge. If he had refused to answer the challenge, he would bring disrepute to his father; and in order that such disrepute does not come to his father, he readily accepted the challenge.

Abhimanyu thought that if he refrained from going to war because he was a young lad and because he did not have his father's permission, his father might be annoyed with him and say that he had brought disrepute to the family by not accepting the challenge. In this conflict of ideas in his own mind, he came to the conclusion that whatever may happen, he was going to safeguard the reputation of his father; and he went to the *Padmavyuha* and lost his life. Of course, Krishna knew that Abhimanyu went into the battle and lost his life.

Arjuna and Krishna came back together and even as they approached the camp, Arjuna felt uneasy and saw bad omens. Arjuna was feeling that Abhimanyu, who usually would come to receive him, had not come that day. There were bad omens and Arjuna felt that there was something wrong. Even from there, Krishna started preaching *Vedanta*. He said, "The body is impermanent, it is made of the five material elements; and the body is sure to fall one day or the other; and the permanent aspect is the *Atma*." He also preached about all the relationships and said that a wife is not even known to the husband before marriage, and a son is not related except by marriage. We should never give any regard to such bodily relationships; and any moment, death may occur. One must be prepared to shed one's body at any time.

While teaching such *Vedantic* truths to Arjuna, Krishna asked him whether these were true or not; and on this Arjuna replied that it was the truth and, in fact, one does not know when one is going to die; and he accepted this as truth. Krishna even asked him if he was saying that these were the truths from the bottom of his heart, believing in them, or whether he was saying that they were the truths simply because Krishna was saying so. Neither Krishna nor Arjuna were people who would simply speak without conviction. Arjuna

was not the kind of person who would support what Krishna said unless he felt from the depths of his heart that it was true. Krishna then said, "If you accept all this as truth from the depth of your heart as your own conviction, suppose you now get the news that your son Abhimanyu is dead, are you going to weep or accept it in line with the *Vedanta* that you have now accepted as the truth?" Arjuna was thrown into confusion and he asked Krishna if Abhimanyu was safe or not. Then Krishna said, "Arjuna, your son Abhimanyu has attained the heaven where heroes of the war go."

As soon as Arjuna heard this, he never waited for a moment and immediately accused Krishna of having destroyed a whole family. He said, "O, Krishna! what have you done to the Pandavas who had great faith in you and surrendered to you? A situation has come where there is no continuation for the dynasty of the Pandavas? He was thus accusing Krishna all the way till they reached Hastinapura. The situation at that time was such that whatever reply Krishna gave and whatever philosophical truth he may have communicated, it would have had no effect on Arjuna. So, Krishna simply listened to all the abuses that were being showered on him. While Arjuna was accusing him in many ways, Krishna realised that it was not an opportune moment

for him to retort; and he was silent all the way. Whatever questions one may ask and whatever doubts may be expressed, in order that an appropriate answer may be given, a suitable time should come. *Avatars* will never reply unless such suitable time comes. In an *Avatar,* there will never be a situation in which you can find fault with Him. The individual who accuses an *Avatar* will be hurting himself in his eyes with his own finger. God is always a non-interfering witness. He will simply look at things which take their own course. That is the reason why God is always described as one who has no qualities and attributes in an ordinary human manner. After reaching home, they found that all the relations were very sad and were weeping because Abhimanyu had died. But neither sorrow nor pleasure can ever be permanent.

Sorrow cannot remain all the time and happiness cannot remain for all the time. After sorrow, happiness must come. Pain and pleasure always come together and it is not possible for anyone to separate them from each other. Pleasure alone, isolated from pain can never be seen. When pain fructifies, such pain will be called pleasure. Therefore, between pain and pleasure, we talk of some pleasure and some sorrow. As time went on, Subhadra was feeling very sad. At that time, Uttara was in the family way and was approaching the time of

her delivery. But the son, who was born to Uttara, was almost lifeless. The situation at that time was such that Droupadi had become old and Subhadra also was approaching old age. The only way in which the dynasty of the Pandavas could be propagated was by the birth of a son to Uttara. The Pandavas were anxiously waiting for the news concerning the delivery of Uttara's baby. Only if a son was born, would it be good news for the Pandavas.

Such grief-stricken Pandavas were sitting anxiously and Droupadi brought a practically lifeless son to the Pandavas, and she also broke down in tears. The day on which Aswatthama and Arjuna fought with each other they used weapons of great power and potency, which were responsible for the damage to the pregnancy of Uttara. Today when we use an atom bomb, it is reported that pregnancy is destroyed in the wombs of mothers. This is not something which has been recently found out. It was known even in those days. Today, all the power is only that of a machine. If we let loose a bomb, there is no way in which it can be retracted. The damage is permanently caused; but in those days, it was more the power of the *manthras*. When once this *manthra* has been used, it could also be retracted if so desired. But today, if a bomb is used there is no way of retracting. When the Pandavas looked at the sight of

a lifeless son, they were greatly stricken, and they did not know what to do.

Dharmaraja immediately sent Arjuna to bring Krishna to the place. Krishna came there and found the Pandavas in great sorrow. As a cat enjoys the situation when it is a matter of life and death for the mouse, Krishna was smiling when the Pandavas were literally steeped in misery. He was talking in a very light manner and asked Dharmaraja and Arjuna why they were so sorry and glum. At this, Droupadi brought the cradle in which the lifeless baby was kept and placed it before Krishna and asked him why he had done this tragic thing to their family. Krishna took the cradle into his hand, and he started looking at the baby and describing it in nice terms by comparing the nose to that of Abhimanyu and the face to that of Arjuna.

Dharmaraja took up the cue and said, "Yes, even his breath is like that of Abhimanyu." Then Krishna exclaimed, "Why, is there no life in the baby?" and he started to shake the baby vigorously, and the baby started to cry. At that instant, the pleasure and joy of the Pandavas knew no bounds and Arjuna exclaimed, "Oh, Krishna, the protector of our family!" They praised him in that manner.

Krishna smiled and came to Arjuna and said, "Be aware of whatever you are saying. Now, you say that I am responsible for the continuance of your family. That day you described me as one who completely destroyed your family, and today you are praising me as one who is a protector of your family. Was that the truth or is this the truth?" Although Arjuna had forgotten what he had said, Krishna did not forget, and he reminded Arjuna about the old incident. "All that we do, either good or bad, knowingly or unknowingly, will always produce a result. So it is necessary for us to do good so that the consequences will also be good. When one is born out of a mother's womb, one does not come with a garland. You do not have, even as a specimen, a chain of gold around your neck. There is only one chain around your neck. All the *karma* that you have done in your previous births constitute the only gold chain round your neck. But that necklace is something which is not visible. In order that we do not have a chain of bad actions around our neck when we are born, it is necessary for us to recognise, as a primary lesson of the *Mahabharatha*, that we should do good deeds in our daily lives. It is in this context that it is said, *"Do good*, *Be good, and See good."* That alone will take you to Madhava!"

10. Man Should Not, At Any Time, Behave Like An Animal

Do you know why you have been given a human body? Is it to take it to all the corners of the world? No, that is not the purpose. You have been given this body so that you may demonstrate, with its help, the truth of the statement that the body is intended for doing good to other human beings.

Divya Atma Swarupas!

It is for us to recognise that the compassion that all the living beings deserve from us forms the essence of our being able to get a vision of the *Atma*. The greatest thapas is the bringing together of the compassion that is present in all beings. The sacredness of life that has been given to a human being is at a very high level.

The life of a cow, of a horse, and of an elephant are at a lower level. These lower forms are being looked after by the human being who is at a higher level. Sometimes these forms are also being worshipped by the human beings. The reason for this is that they live a life which is *sathwic*.

When we look at the other categories of animals like lions and tigers, we see that man hates them and even tries to kill them. It is essential for us to understand the inner meaning and significance of our trying to kill some animals while we respect and adore another class of animals. The *sathwic* qualities of a group of animals represented by the cow, and the *rajasic* qualities of a group of animals represented by the tiger, are responsible for this difference of approach.

We know that of all the animals in this world, to take birth as a human being, is a very difficult matter. Having attained this difficult human birth, we should not behave, at any time, like an animal. We should think and take note of this aspect. The reason for this is mainly the kind of food that we take. The kind of food that we take determines the kind of behaviour that we develop. If a tiger enters a herd of cows, then the cows cannot survive and live.

So also, as in that analogy, in the heart of man there are good and *sathwic* qualities comparable to the

qualities of a cow. If into that group of good qualities, we send in food represented by the *rajasic* qualities of the tiger, it is impossible for the good to survive any longer. If you put seeds in a land which is not fertile, the seeds are not going to sprout. So also in a man who has *rajasic* qualities in his heart, the kind of *sathwic* qualities like *puja* or compassion cannot thrive. It, therefore, becomes necessary for man to do such things by which the field of his heart can be purified and cleansed. Therefore, man in this life must take courage and move forward in his journey of life.

Krishna has taught in the *Gita* that the purity of *karma* is extremely important. The kind of work we engage in will determine the kind of fruits that we get. The kind of food that we eat will determine the smell of the belch that follows. The quality of bread that we will be able to prepare depends on the kind of flour we use. God never does things which do not have a good reason behind them. God never utters words which have no meaning. Whatever He does, sees, and says carries with it an inner deeper spiritual meaning.

There is a small example for this. The two armies of the Kauravas and of the Pandavas were standing on either side. On the side of the Pandavas, there were seven units of armies. On the side of the Kauravas, there were eleven units of armies. It is not as if Arjuna

was ignorant of the number of units on the Kauravas side and the number of units on the Pandava side. Knowing this fully well, Arjuna requested Krishna to take his chariot and put it right in the middle of the two armies. When Krishna asked him for the reason for his behaviour, he replied that he wanted to determine with whom he should really fight, if he should fight at all.

When we examine this in the context in which he made this statement, we realise that he made this statement after he had gone with the intention of fighting. Krishna prepared the chariot and Arjuna prepared all his weapons including the Gandiva, and they were all set for the battle. After reaching the battlefield, why did he change his mind? Was it his weakness or did he become despondent? He began asking the question as to who will benefit from the battle and who will get prosperity from the battle. He realised that the very people for whose sake he was fighting the battle will probably be killed, and so he felt that the battle had no purpose. The kings want to rule over people and build up the prosperity of the people and the kingdom. If the people are going to be killed in a battle, where is the question of prosperity and a kingdom? After the entire family and group of people are wiped out, for whose sake was he going to establish a kingdom and rule over it? Some people have described

this as *moha* or attachment to his kith and kin, and they named the chapter *Vishada Yoga.*

This cannot be described as a period of internal controversy or discussion within himself. He has entered this argument within himself to decide between truth and untruth, between propriety and impropriety. He discussed within himself the aspect that the Kauravas have been ruling unjustly, and the fact that they have been having untruth and impropriety on their side, and did not, himself, want to undertake the same impropriety and untruth. There were certain distinctive features and distinctive qualities on the side of the Pandavas, therefore, God was also on their side.

Here it becomes clear to us that Krishna was on the side of the Pandavas because of their good qualities. If we look at this situation in a somewhat superficial manner, then we will see that because Arjuna was thrown into this despondent and confusing situation, an opportunity had risen for Krishna to preach the sacred text of the *Bhagavad Gita.* If Arjuna did not fall into an introspective and despondent situation like that, Krishna would not have had an opportunity to preach the sacred *Bhagavad Gita.*

Just as we know that pleasure is an interval between two pains, so also in the interval between two situations,

sometimes good comes about. Krishna here plays the part of a typical human being, and by making Arjuna behave as a typical human being, Krishna created a situation whereby the *Gita* could be expounded. Man's life is transient. It is momentary, and in this context Arjuna had a chance to recognise the permanent truth. The Pandavas were held up as an example by which the sacredness of the heart of a devotee could be understood. Sometimes, as a result of difficulties, the devotees have their hearts merged in sorrow. This results in their ego and other bad qualities in their hearts, coming to the surface and troubling them. To get such ego, jealousy, and bad qualities out of the heart of devotees, God sometimes undertakes certain programmes.

On one occasion, Arjuna performed the *Aswamedha Yagna* and let loose the horse. According to the rules of that *Aswamedha Yagna*, if a horse was let out and someone else captured that horse, then the owner had to fight with the person who had captured the horse; and if he lost the fight, he had to forfeit his kingdom to the victor. The Mayuradhwaja Raja caught the horse, and he was fully aware of the then code of conduct regarding the horse. Krishna and Arjuna went in search of the horse, and they found that the horse was captured by the Mayuradhwaja Raja. Krishna and

Arjuna were contemplating whether to undertake a fight with Mayuradhwaja. Krishna told Arjuna that Mayuradhwaja was no ordinary man and that he was a great devotee of his, and it is not easy for Arjuna to fight with him. Arjuna stated that according to the code of conduct he had to fight with the person who captured the horse.

Then Krishna commanded Arjuna to fight the battle. Arjuna fought with Mayuradhwaja in many ways; but it was not possible for him to defeat his opponent and even his principal weapon, the Gandiva, was damaged in the process. As Arjuna was asking Krishna for help, he too was preparing for the fight. Mayuradhwaja was no doubt aware of Krishna's greatness, but the code of conduct required that Mayuradhwaja engage in battle, and so Mayuradhwaja took out each one of his weapons and sent them at Krishna after uttering the sacred name of Krishna. The arrows were so hard and so powerful that Krishna started running hither and thither. Arjuna started shouting to Krishna that he should use his sacred *chakra*; but Krishna replied that against Mayuradhwaja, neither Arjuna's Gandiva nor Krishna's *chakra* will have any effect.

Arjuna did not take this matter seriously. He thought that Krishna was only joking and that Krishna

was really not intent on fighting. Arjuna thought that if Mayuradhwaja was really a devotee of Krishna, would he undertake to fight against Krishna? He thought that Mayuradhwaja was not a true devotee.

Krishna wanted to demonstrate to Arjuna that Mayuradhwaja was indeed a very ardent devotee. So Krishna and Arjuna disguised themselves as two brahmins and came to Mayuradhwaja's house. According to the tradition, it was the duty of the householder to receive the guests and honour them, and in this aspect there was none better than Mayuradhwaja. As soon as Mayuradhwaja saw the two brahmins coming, he himself threw away the King's garb and wore clothes typical of the brahmins. He brought water and washed the feet of his guests and honoured them suitably. Mayuradhwaja requested them to be his guests. With a view to making Arjuna realise the depth of the devotion of Mayuradhwaja, Krishna had been planning this meeting for quite some time. When Mayuradhwaja asked Krishna and Arjuna to accept his hospitality and be his guests for food, Krishna replied, "We do not have the time to accept your hospitality. We have come here with a specific problem and require your help. While coming to your house, my son has been swallowed by a tiger and, at this time, only half the body of my son has been swallowed and the other half

is outside. A formless voice said that if the body of my son was to be freed, I will have to get half the body of King Mayuradhwaja as a meal for the tiger and then, I was told, my son would be set free."

As soon as Mayuradhwaja heard of this, he saw an opportunity to be of some service to his guest. He knew very well that immortality comes out of sacrifice, and he was prepared to sacrifice his body. He knew very well that the human body was given to him so that he might be able to help others. He knew that the human body would drop off some day or the other, and so he was prepared to sacrifice his body to satisfy others. He called his wife and son and asked them to cut his body into two halves with a sword. His wife and son thought that Mayuradhwaja was preparing to fulfil a sacred task and so they also prepared to cut the body into two halves. Arjuna and Krishna were watching this situation without even batting their eyelids once.

As they were watching intently, they found that the left eye of Mayuradhwaja was shedding a tear. Finding that the situation was developing, Krishna wanted to test him even further and said, "What is the value of the gift which is given with sorrow and tears in one's eyes? I do not want such a gift. A gift must be given freely and willingly." Mayuradhwaja, who was

undisturbed and sitting peacefully with closed eyes, opened his eyes and said that he had no sorrow in giving his body. If, at all, he had any sorrow, both eyes should shed tears. Why is it that only one eye is shedding tears? You must consider and understand why tears are coming from only one eye. It is not as if Krishna did not know the truth behind this. He only wanted to show Arjuna the depth of the devotion of Mayuradhwaja. Mayuradhwaja replied and said, "Oh, Lord, this body is going to be cut into two parts and the right part is going to be gifted to you for a sacred purpose. The left part is crying and shedding tears because it will then be thrown away and simply become food for the crows. It is crying because it is going to be thrown away in such an unsacred manner." As soon as Arjuna listened to these words, he started to repent and realised that this was a lesson taught to him and that there were more ardent devotees of Krishna than himself.

The world is full of devotees of varying types. If it was in the aspect of devotion, Mayuradhwaja would place at the feet of the Lord everything that he possessed. If we look at it from the angle of a householder, we have seen that he will honour any guest that came to his house by giving him anything. If we look at it from the point of view of the proper code of conduct of a ruler, Mayuradhwaja was one who would observe this

fully. He was fully prepared to fight and establish the code of conduct. Mayuradhwaja was thus one who was always prepared in any sphere of activity whether it was worldly, material, or spiritual, and was ever ready to sacrifice and do anything. In order to proclaim this aspect of performing one's duty in different spheres, Krishna brought this example to the world and to Arjuna.

Having passed through a period of slavery for several centuries and having attained our independence by our own struggle, if we become unmindful of our traditions which are 5000 years old, and if we are not able to understand the sanctity of the ideals that were established by the examples shown by Krishna, there is no wonder that we are in such an unfortunate situation as we are in today. Krishna was one who taught that one should be prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of justice. Krishna taught this in the form of *Vedanta*. Krishna's teachings and ideals were not such that while teaching that if you get a slap on one of your cheeks, you should be so considerate as to show the other cheek, yet you go ahead and produce an atom bomb in practice for the destruction of the world. This irreconcilable situation between preaching and practice did not belong to Krishna. Holding an atom bomb in one's hand, people keep on shouting for peace. The kind of peace which they want cannot be attained, even

if they go to the moon. All the time preparing for war and heading for agitation and revolution, we just talk of peace in the world. This is not the kind of philosophy which Krishna stood for or taught.

Krishna was one who undertook to bring under one rule, the eighteen different kings and kingdoms that were existing at that time. That was the ideal which Krishna stood for. Who was the king under whom Krishna brought all the different kingdoms? It was Dharmaraja. Krishna did not want to become the king himself. If we really pay heed to the ideals of Krishna or what Krishna did, we will not be in the unfortunate situation today when the country is divided into many parts.

Boys and girls:

Recognise the ideals of this country and *Dharmarajya* that it stands for. Use all your physical and mental strength to get back this sacred *Dharmarajya*. I hope and bless you that this should be possible.

11. The Human Body Is Like A Water Bubble On The Surface Of Water

It is easy to talk of principles and codes of conduct but it is a very difficult matter to put them into practice. Whether it be for the young people or whether it be to the grandfathers, it is the same. This is the truth and the simple truth that I am giving you.

Students, boys and girls!

The results of your examinations as announced today are indeed happy news; but so long as the education that you get is such that it promotes only ignorance and does not give you the needed strength to promote the prosperity of our nation and traditions, then the education is useless. Of all the branches of education, spiritual education is the real education. When

we compare this with the other branches of education, we can see that the spiritual education is like the ocean while the other branches of education are like the rivers. When the rivers go and merge in the ocean, they acquire the depth and glory of the unfathomable ocean. In a similar manner, when all other forms of education go and merge with the spiritual education, they acquire the form and grandeur of the spiritual education. It is only when your education is combined with *thapas* that there is a possibility of the blossoming of your heart and the ennobling of your ideas.

Thapas does not mean that you should give up everything and go to the forest and stand there with your head on the ground. *Thapas* is one, with the help of which, you can make your thought, word, and deed harmonise with each other. It is only when such a sacred type of education is given along with proper culture, that there is a chance of the great ideas blossoming properly in you. It is only then that the noble and good ideas that are inside you can be exhibited properly. Education cannot be entirely and wholly related to worldly matters. Education should promote your character.

It is necessary for the students of today to acquire such sacred education and that alone will give us the

good results. If today we really want to understand the history and culture of ourselves, then it becomes necessary for us to learn and study the *Sruthi* and *Ithihasas*, the components of our *Vedanta*. When we read such texts, we should take great care to see that our own ideas, concepts, and prejudices are not injected into what we read. We should try to understand the original content as far as possible. In the centuries that have gone by since the creation of such texts, several aspects have undergone a great deal of transformation.

As a result of the passage of time, we find that the continents on the earth, the seas, and the very sources of the rivers have undergone great changes. A river which may have flowed in a particular direction some centuries ago will be flowing in a different direction now. That river may have changed its course. We will find that there is a very marked difference between the course taken by a river some centuries ago and the course taken by the same river at the present time. But when the man of today looks at the course taken by the river today, he transfers it to what is in his concept; and he thinks that the river took the same course some centuries ago also. This is not right.

There is a small example for this. We ask ourselves the question, is the land which we now call Lanka the

same as the one which existed in the *Thretha Yuga* as the land ruled by Ravana at the time of *Ramarajya*? No, this is not so. At that time, Lanka was hundreds of miles away from the tip of India and at that time, it was at the equator. As time went on, and as we moved from the *Thretha Yuga* to the *Kali Yuga*, this particular island, which was on the equator, drifted hundreds of miles northwards. When we look at this island, which we now call Lanka, we find that it has shifted to the north of the equator.

It was recorded in the Greek history that this island, which we now call Lanka, was completely submerged under water when the oceanic catastrophe called the Atlantis occurred. The Greeks were no ordinary people. They were very advanced in sciences and were very knowledgeable in many fields. They were describing the fact that Lanka was submerged in the ocean and drifted away and this phenomenon was being accepted by them. At that time, these people were so advanced that they had travelled to the moon and designed several types of air transport and were such that they had mastered the science of flying.

As we know, today the entire world regards the standard of time as the Greenwich standard time. In World History, it is known that the astrologers of that

time were taking the longitude passing through Lanka and when the sun rose on this longitude they took it as the standard time for the calculation. It is on the basis of this standard of time that our people decided on the time of the birth of Krishna, the time at which Krishna gave up his mortal body, and the dates of the *Mahabharatha* battle, and so on. When the Pandavas lived, the time scales were determined on the basis of this longitude which passes through Lanka. When we take this as the basis, we come to the conclusion that the period which we now call *Kali Yuga* started in the year named Pramadi, in the month named Sravana, and in the fortnight named Bahula and on the day called Ashtami. According to the English calendar, this will be described as February 20, 3102 years before the advent of Christ. In order to bring out this aspect of the commencement of a new *Yuga* on February 20, 3102 B.C., our ancestors have been calling that day as Ugadi, or the day of the beginning of a new era. As this was the commencing day of a new *Yuga*, it was called the Ugadi.

When looked at from this angle, we should also learn a different aspect, although it is not very pleasant. This particular day called the Ugadi is also the day on which Krishna gave up his mortal body in a sacred place of pilgrimage called Prabata near Dwaraka. There

is a proverb, according to which we think of all kinds of extraordinary and unusual ideas when we near our end.

The Yadavas, the community in which Krishna was living, had some such strange ideas then; and they brought about their end themselves. Although Krishna was preaching the acceptance of only *sathwic* food, the Yadavas violated this sacred injunction on a holy day. When they were performing a religious ceremony, they used articles which should not have been used and prepared food containing meat. They also partook of alcoholic drinks and consumed these articles. On account of such food and drink, they became intoxicated and lost their balance. They began to beat each other and they reached a stage when they prepared to kill each other. In this manner, they extinguished the entire Yadava clan. It is in this context, bearing in mind the ideals which Krishna had promulgated, that Gandhi also wanted to forbid meat eating and alcoholic drinks; but unfortunately he did not succeed.

The Yadava community, which was then subjected to this distress, lost their lives. In this battle even Vasudeva was killed. However, many Yadava women, who were not there, survived. Balarama also was killed in this battle. Within a short time, Vidura came to that

place. When Vidura looked at that place, it struck him as a place of terror. Uddhava also reached the place at that time. When Uddhava looked at that situation, he was afraid that his close friend Krishna may also have given up his mortal body, and he was looking for Krishna's body. Arjuna also helped Uddhava in this quest. They were looking everywhere for the body of their dear friend. In that gruesome fight, they were told that the body of Krishna was cut and dismembered and parts thrown at different places. Arjuna and Vidura thought that they could not identify Krishna's body. In that situation Vidura and Arjuna thought that it was no use for them to live in a world in which Krishna was not living, and they prepared to drown themselves in the Yamuna river. It was a time of great disaster, and as a consequence, all the air and surrounding waters became greatly polluted and that was polluting the whole atmosphere.

While both Vidura and Arjuna were looking at the river, they found a blue cloth fluttering at some distance and heard a sound from that place. Vidura was greatly surprised and wanting to know what it was, he ran towards the sound. Under a tree, he found Krishna sitting in a very peaceful manner. It looked as if Krishna was also preparing to give up his body, but Krishna did not think it proper to give up his body when his friends

and relatives were so near. With a view to sending Uddhava away, he taught him the *Bhagavatha* and asked him to go and bring Arjuna. Uddhava appeared to be happy and wanted to share the news of Krishna's safety with Arjuna, and he ran towards Arjuna.

Observing that Uddhava was now far away, Krishna gave up his mortal life. When Uddhava and Arjuna came near the tree, they found that the body was no longer there. They watched this situation for two to three days. They felt that Krishna had decided that the purpose of his human existence was over and he had given up his mortal body at that time. They then came back to Dwaraka. Sathyabhama, Rukmini, and the *gopikas* were in great sorrow as they had lost everything in their lives, and Arjuna and Uddhava were unable to look at their suffering. Arjuna thought that it was not good to leave the women alone at that place. So he took his Gandiva and proceeded to take them to Hastinapura.

On the way, the forest tribes attacked them and wanted to take away the women from the group. Since Arjuna was leading them, Sathyabhama, Rukmini, and the other *gopikas* were shouting for his help and requested him to save them from this situation. Earlier, Arjuna took part and was victorious in several battles.

He had showed great strength in the battle of the Mahabharatha and in the battle of Khandavavana. Arjuna had shown great courage and strength on many occasions.

On this particular occasion, he could not even lift his Gandiva and take aim. Then Arjuna thought, "All that strength shown was because of Krishna; and when Krishna is not there, I am not even able to lift the Gandiva." He felt that although his hand had been holding the Gandiva all these years, it was the strength of Krishna that was using it, and he felt very helpless at that time. As Krishna was his *Antaryami* (inner motivator) all those years, he had felt strong; but now that Krishna was no longer in him, he felt like a bag of leather.

The inner meaning of this is that, so long as Arjuna felt that Krishna was there in an ordinary human manner, he had all the strength; but as soon as he felt that He was no longer there, he had lost all the strength and the will to fight. Just because Krishna's gross body had left, Arjuna thought that Krishna had left him. Because he was under the illusion of identifying Krishna's gross body with Krishna himself, he lost all his strength. To think that one is full of weakness is not correct. The correct attitude is to regard God as formless,

without attributes. We should take it that God is present in us. That should be the right attitude. So long as one has a form, it is quite natural that he thinks of that form; but since that form has to be forgotten some day or the other, it is good to concentrate on the formless supreme and give up attachment to a form. Our *Vedanta* has taught us the philosophy of *vairagya,* or detachment, to help in this process of concentrating on the formless supreme power which is behind every form.

It is inevitable that the *jiva* should leave the body; if the *jiva* does not leave the body, then the body has to leave the *jiva.* This body is like a water bubble on the surface of water. This water bubble is born out of water, lives on water, and survives on water, and finally it gets dissolved in water. It is only when we develop a correct attitude to the formless supreme power that we will be able to have permanent happiness.

If we take a ball and hit it on a hard ground, it will rebound to the extent determined by how hard we hit the ball on the ground. If we hit this ball on a soft muddy ground instead of hard ground, it will not be able to recoil, and in fact it will even get entangled in the muddy ground. In a similar manner, if the pure aspect of divinity goes and hits a sacred heart, it will rebound. If, on the other hand, we have a muddy and

impure heart, when divinity impinges on such a heart it will get stuck and entangled. Therefore, purity of one's mind, and an exemplary life are essential. Truth and honesty are to be regarded as two eyes for us. For these two eyes, we have a disease of selfishness; and because our eyes are inflicted by this disease, we are not able to have a pure and clean heart. Young people should have purity of mind. They should take great care to protect truth and honesty. This was the ideal taught and demonstrated by Krishna.

Krishna and his aspect of Love are known to the citizens of Bharath. He is one who has eternal youth. We should understand the significance of saying that he is eternally young. By saying that he is eternally young, we should not imply that he has a young and youthful body forever. This should convey to us the meaning that he has no anxiety and that he has a smiling disposition always. This kind of bliss and happiness also gives happiness to one's body and bodily health. It is in this context, that it has been said that happiness is union with God. Either for the decay of the body or for the ageing of the body, our own conduct is responsible; and for our conduct, our desires are responsible. For the sake of desires which are connected with the world, we should not use this body. Pain and pleasure are like clouds which move away from our heart. So, all these desires should be regarded as clouds.

It is in this context that the *Vedas* have compared our minds to the moon and our eyes to the sun. The *Vedas* have also taught us that our heart is like a sky; and in this sky of our heart, our mind is like the moon in the sky, and our eyes and intelligence are like the sun. In this sky of our heart, our thoughts must be treated like passing clouds. Thus, in the sky of our heart, there are millions of names of the Lord shining like the stars; and on the sky, if we have our mind shining like the moon, that will be a correct situation. This moon, which we have compared with our mind, must be given the status of the full moon. When the mind has been trained to get the form of a full moon, there will be an opportunity to correct and set right our hearts. This sacred text of *Mahabharatha* has given us so many lessons which will help us make our heart comparable to a full moon. Krishna's ideals wanted that you should all make your minds pure and accept truth and honesty as the basic things on which our life should be based.

Basing on this, it is also correct for us to decide the day on which he was born. That day on which Krishna was born, according to these calculations, will come to be the 20th of July, 3228 years before the Advent of Christ. If this has to be put in our calendar, it will be in the year Srimukha, month by the name

Sravana, fortnight by the name Bahula, and the day of Ashtami. The star will be Rohini and the time will be 3:00 a.m. after midnight. If we count backwards from today, the day on which Krishna gave up his mortal body will work out at 5078 years. If we want to check this, we see that 3102 B.C. and 1976 add up to 5078 years. Thus, since the *Kali Yuga* has started, we have now gone through 5078 years.

That is also the time when Krishna gave up his life, and that is also the day when the *Kali* age commenced. This day is also the first day of the *Kali Yuga* and we call it Ugadi. But the *Kali Yuga* started in the year Pramadi and so it appears that this *Yuga* is full of danger and harm. Truly, instead of calling this *Yuga* as the *Kali Yuga,* it is right and appropriate to call it the *Kalaha Yuga*, or the age of quarrels. Whether you go to a house, a village, or a country, we see quarrels. Young people of today should do such things by which this name of *Kalaha Yuga*, or age of quarrels, is changed to an age of prosperity by living up to the ideals of Krishna.

It is necessary that in this world there should be two categories of people. Without knowing pain, pleasure will not be enjoyed. Pleasure comes as an interval between two pains. Without sorrow, you can

never understand the meaning of happiness. Although two aspects are always present, we should try and promote good, happiness, and pleasure. In our own body while good blood is flowing on one side, we find that simultaneously impure blood is also flowing. Even in our homes, we see that while good and pure drinking water is brought from a pipe from one side, the ugly and bad drainage water is sent away by another pipe. They are both present in the same home. In a village or a city, while the drinking water is brought through certain pipes, alongside this will also be pipes which carry the drainage, and both will look similar and clean externally. In the same manner, in our mind there are always two streams going. One will be a stream of good ideas and the other a stream of bad ideas, both flowing together. But, you must make an attempt to accept the good and reject the bad.

In the world there are agitations, there are revolutions, and these are common. In the midst of such revolutions in the world, man must make an attempt to distinguish the right from wrong and separate truth from untruth. People who are young have to make a long journey in this train which we call a society. The older people in this train are such that they will drop out on wayside stations. In this train of society, you are the people who have to travel a long distance, and you

should be prepared to take the necessary steps to rectify the defects in that train. You are to set right the faults in this country, and you should imprint the good ideas in your mind. Today, if you think that a particular thing your elders are doing is not right, you should not yourselves do the same thing when you grow up. When you become older you should be prepared to put into action what you now think are the good actions of your elders.

No one amongst us wants to have the consequences of a bad act, but yet we are prepared to continually do bad things. We only do not want to accept the consequences of such bad acts. We all want to have the consequences of good things, but we are not prepared to do good things. If you believe that in order to get good consequences, you must do a good act, then the very first thing that you must accept is to do good things. What you regard as sin should be kept away and you should never participate in such actions.

The harmony of the word that you utter, the deed that you do, and the thought that you get has been referred to as thapas. Krishna told Arjuna that this co-ordination between thought, word, and deed is the real meaning of thapas and that thapas cannot be interpreted as standing on one leg. In fact, Krishna described

standing on one leg as a mere physical exercise. The ideals that were handed over to us in the *Mahabharatha*, the ideal and exemplary life which Krishna led are important to us. I am hoping that the youth will put them into practice in their lives.

12. Man Becomes Blind By His Ego

For one who is blinded by his ego and is unable to see anything around him, is life going to give him any sweetness at all? For one who never does any good, is it going to be easy at all? For one who is leading a sinful life, is any pleasure going to come his way? Who are our friends and who are our enemies? Who is God and who is the devotee? Who is the teacher and who is the disciple? Who is the writer and who is the actor? Is there a way of finding out who is what? If there is one who has not got the intelligence to understand, is there anything wrong in calling him a monkey?

For everyone, his own Self is his friend or his enemy. Truly, in one's daily life, man is establishing

connection with so many other persons. Amongst them, he thinks that some are his friends and some are his enemies. With some, he wants to talk more and more and spend time. With others, he does not like to continue conversation or spend any time. Because the world is full of such dualities and contradictions, man is unable to decide what really gives him pleasure and what really gives him pain.

When Krishna took birth, simultaneously Kamsa also took birth. When there was Rama, there was Ravana contemporaneously with him. When Buddha took birth, there was a Devadutta. When Prahlada appeared, there was a Hiranyakasyapu. In this way, when good and bad get mixed up in creation, a situation arises in which we cannot decide what is good and what is bad. What is the basis of all this? Who is the object and who is the subject? The basis or the reason for this is not something which is behind us and unseen.

The ideas that come up in our own mind are the cause for all these. Those who respect us and our ideals, and those who have a concern for our well-being are considered as our relations or friends. Those who hate us, and those who go contrary to our expectations, and those who cause pain and loss to us are regarded as enemies. Truly, in this context, it

becomes impossible for us to decide who our friends and who our enemies are. On one occasion, Kabir has said that we should keep the company of those who abuse us. The reason for this is that although we may commit several sins, the people who point out our sins are going to remove our sins by their abuse. It is in this context that we say that if someone ridicules us, then this will result in the removal of our sin.

In reality, those people who help us to get rid of our sins are our friends. Those people who promote sins in us are our enemies. Thus, it is those who abuse and ridicule us who are to be considered as our friends as they remove our sins. In this situation, Prahlada said that your own chitta is your enemy. He addressed his father, "You are such a capable warrior. You are able to conquer all the world but you are unable to conquer your own sensory organs."

Therefore, in trying to control and conquer our organs, it is very necessary to have confidence in ourselves and faith in God. For one who has no confidence in one's own self nor faith in God, it becomes impossible to conquer his organs. Before we undertake to control our senses and our organs, we should first promote faith in God and confidence in our own self. Without controlling our senses and organs, all the

attempts that we make in order to improve our lives will end in failure.

There is a small story for this. On one occasion, when Radha was travelling to Mathura in the evening, she was alone. All the other *gopikas* who saw this started following her. By the time she reached Yamuna, it became dark. The *gopikas* cautioned Radha and said that she should not go to Mathura in the darkness; but if she had to go, they would accompany her. With the feeling that Brindavan belongs to all and Govinda also belongs to all, she agreed to take them along with her. They all went to the banks of the Yamuna, and they took turns in rowing the boat so that no single individual got tired. It was dark and they did not pay any special attention to other things, and they were rowing in turns. Although they were rowing in this manner all night, yet they did not reach Mathura. As the day dawned, they found that people who were residents of Gokulam were coming to the river. The boat had been rowed all night but they found that they were still near Gokulam. They found that they had not removed the rope which tied the boat to the post at the bank. Without untying this rope, although they were rowing the boat the whole night they remained where they were. In spite of the fact that the boat was being rowed, and in spite of the fact that water was there, and they had the strength to

move the boat, the boat did not move at all. The reason for this is that the rope that was binding the boat was not untied at all, and the boat did not move at all.

In the same manner, without removing the bondage in regard to our senses and organs, we will not be able to move forward at all. Therefore, it is necessary to control our senses; but before we do this, we must first undertake to promote love, compassion, and sacrifice. When we can fill our heart with these three qualities, our heart will blossom into a *Nandanavana* (garden of many coloured flowers). On the other hand, if we fill our heart with qualities like hatred, jealousy, and anger then it will become a stinking pool.

We should ourselves go into this matter and decide whether we want to convert our heart into a *Nandanavana* or an unclean stinking pool. Every individual must make an attempt to fill his heart with these sacred qualities and turn his heart into a *Nandanavana*. Truly, when we look at happy people, we should feel happy at their happiness. When we look at suffering and trouble, we should also share their sufferings. If we are able to develop these qualities, we will be making our heart a *Nandanavana*. We must make all attempts to promote compassion and goodness. This is called *maitri* or good sense. If we develop these

good qualities, God also will appear to be close to us. Whether we are in pain or in pleasure, in sorrow or in trouble, at all times we must develop our heart in such a way that we will be able to get *Paramatma's Prema*.

On the other hand, if we have bad qualities like wanting to commit sin, wanting to listen to things which we should not listen to, hurting and harming others, then justice, goodness, and honesty will never remain anywhere near us. Therefore, people should develop sacred qualities. The Pandavas were such people and by right they enjoyed the proximity of the Lord. For the Pandavas, the life-giving breath was Krishna; and to Krishna, His body was the Pandavas. So far as the Pandavas were concerned, there was not a single moment when Krishna was not present. Whatever they saw or did, it was by the prompting and by the strength which Krishna gave them.

There is a small incident which may be narrated in this context. Krishna gave up his mortal body after completing the task for which he had come to the earth. In this context, Arjuna was accompanying the *gopikas* and bringing them to Gokulam, and they were attacked by the tribals, and there was a lot of confusion. Arjuna lost all his strength and in that weakened state, he somehow managed to come to Hastinapura. Because of

the sacred, pure, and selfless name of Krishna which was present in the heart of the Pandavas, whatever they looked at appeared to them as sacred. Because of the fact that Krishna was no longer in this world, everything that the Pandavas saw appeared unsacred to them.

Unlike these days, if one had to send a message in those days, either to Mathura or Dwaraka, it took months to reach the destination. Even before this news of the death of Krishna reached Hastinapura, Dharmaraja was encountering many bad and inauspicious omens. On one evening, when he was walking out, he found one agriculturist returning home with a plough on his shoulder. Dharmaraja looked at this unusual sight and asked the man why he was carrying the plough on his shoulders. This man replied that the previous day, the plough that he left in the field had been stolen, and so he was carrying the plough with him back home that day. Dharmaraja was greatly surprised and agitated and began to doubt if Krishna was still alive, for he could not explain thefts in his kingdom.

On another day, when he was walking in the city, he found a big steel bolt on the door of a house. He met some people at the door and asked what this steel bolt was. They replied that the steel bolt was put there in order to secure the door against the possible theft by

other people. After listening, he was even more agitated and surprised, and he surmised that the *Yuga* must be changing; and for such events to take place *Kali* must be entering.

On another occasion, he found a woman talking to a man in the middle of a street. At this sight, Dharmaraja's head started to reel. He was astonished to find a woman, belonging to Bharath, talking so freely to a man on the street. He did not want to rule over such a kingdom at all. He quickly ordered his charioteer to take him back. When we look at these events and incidents, we can realise how *dharmic* Dharmaraja's rule was. How good and how kind he was can also be seen from these incidents.

As Dharmaraja was thinking of these inauspicious events, Arjuna arrived. As soon as Dharmaraja saw Arjuna's face, he realised that there must be very bad news. Arjuna was standing in a dumbfounded manner. He could not convey the bad news to Dharmaraja. Although Dharmaraja asked several questions of Arjuna, he could not get any replies because Arjuna was in great sorrow and he was just silent.

That Arjuna had come and that he was full of sorrow was quickly known to all the inhabitants in the royal mansion. The old mother, Kunthi, sent word that

Arjuna should immediately come and see her. Kunthi was over one hundred and eighty years of age and she was infirm. She was just sitting on a cot. As the Pandavas were such that they would implicitly obey the orders of their mother, they went to Kunthi immediately. The Pandavas knew very well the ancient custom according to which the father, mother, teacher, and guest were to be respected as God. In their life and conduct, they fully demonstrated this respect to their mother, their teachers, and their guests. They did not have a father to demonstrate their respect to a father. When the brothers touched her feet, Arjuna could not get up at all because he was so grief-stricken. Immediately, Kunthi began asking several questions about the welfare of Krishna, Vasudeva, and other relations in Dwaraka. Unable to answer her questions, Dharmaraja at once cried out that their Gopala was no more. Kunthi was a very shrewd person and she immediately guessed what had happened, and she started crying out for Gopala, and she gave up her life. In the very next moment, Dharmaraja ordered all preparations for the ritual after Kunthi's death. He summoned Nakula, Sahadeva, and Bheema. Nakula and Sahadeva were sent to do the last rites for their mother. Bheema was ordered to make all arrangements for their going away to the jungle.

Arjuna was called and told that arrangements must be made to crown Parikshith as the king of the land. While the dead body was on his lap, he was making arrangements for the coronation of Parikshith as the king, and he was also making arrangements for their sojourn to the forest. No human beings will be able to do such things at the time of such sorrow. The Pandavas are the only persons who could be cited as examples for such sacred behaviour and exemplary conduct. No one else had this courage and sacrifice. The last rites were performed and the pundits were sent for and told that the coronation must be gone through immediately. They all felt that the moment was not very auspicious and advised that the coronation be postponed, but Dharmaraja insisted that they would not be able to live in a world in which Krishna was not present and they wanted to leave for the forest immediately. The brothers—Arjuna, Bheema, Nakula, and Sahadeva—were also of the same view. They expressed that Krishna's death was in reality the death of the Pandavas. They said that Krishna could not die as he was an immortal person, and the Pandavas were the ones who had actually died. Arjuna was also arguing with the pundits that it was impossible for the Pandavas to remain in a world in which Krishna was not physically present.

In many ways, Dharmaraja asked the pundits to traditionally perform the coronation and insisted that if they did not do this, he would simply give his crown to Parikshith and move away to the forest. The last rites were completed and Parikshith was sent for.

But it is written in the sacred texts that Parikshith was crowned when he was very young and was not mature enough. This in fact was not the case. Parikshith was thirty-five years of age. When the battle of Mahabharatha took place, it was 3138 B.C. It was then Dharmaraja's rule also commenced, and at that time, Parikshith was present in the womb of his mother Uttara. Dharmaraja ruled over the Kingdom for thirty-six years. After the battle was over, Krishna went to Dwaraka and stayed there for thirty-six years. While the battle started in 3138 B.C., Krishna gave up his mortal body in 3102 B.C. and there was a gap of thirty-six years; and so at that time Parikshith was of the age of thirty-six years. He was really fit to rule over the kingdom. But so long as his father and his father's brothers were present, he did not agree to take over the kingdom. Those were the sacred codes of conduct that were present in those days. Parikshith begged his father and uncles to take him with them to the forest as he would not be able to rule the kingdom well because of his inexperience.

In those days, the code of conduct was such that one could not disobey the orders of one's parents, elders, or grandfather. He touched the feet of Dharmaraja and said that when so many elders were present, it was not correct for him to be crowned as King. Parikshith was born in the ruling family and had every right to become the king, but he did not hesitate to say that other elders should be considered first. Dharmaraja did not agree to this but kept his chariot ready. He wanted to leave immediately after crowning Parikshith.

While this situation was developing, Droupadi came out of the house and said that Krishna had saved her on many occasions and she would not consider living even for a moment without Krishna, especially if her husbands were not there. "When my Lord and my husbands are both not here, I do not want to stay here." The Pandavas exhibited to the rest of the world what an ideal family should be. When we give attention to all these incidents, we see the kind of compassionate friendship that existed between Krishna and the Pandavas.

If we look at the condition of Arjuna after the passing away of Krishna, we find that he was like a lifeless body only following his brother as if a lifeless body was being dragged. He was not even thinking of

his dead mother, was always in constant thought of Krishna, and was behaving like a madman. For a hundred years, wherever there was Krishna and *Yogeswara*, there was Arjuna, the best of men. Wherever both of them were present, there was prosperity, victory, wealth, and morality. They lived like inseparable persons for all that time. They were different only in body; but the ideas, thoughts, and ideals were one. Whether it was in Hastinapura or in Dwaraka, whenever Krishna and Arjuna came together, Kunthi, the mother, always served them food in one big plate but never in two different plates. Rukmini also never hesitated to put their meal in one plate as if she was sharing the meal in one plate with Krishna. If Arjuna came to Dwaraka, Krishna and Arjuna kept constant company with one another. Krishna never spent any time with Rukmini or Satyabhama. The reason for this is that Arjuna was the best of men and Krishna was an *Avatar* of the highest level.

These two were typical representatives of *Nara,* the man, and Narayana, the God. In some circumstances, *Nara*, the man, can become Narayana; and Narayana can appear on the earth as man. When man lives in the ecstasy of the *prema* of the Lord, and when he is intoxicated with the thought of the Lord, he transforms himself into Narayana. But when there is injustice and

ill-will all over, then God will, himself, come down to the earth as an *Avatar*. So the relationship between man and God is such that when man gets the grace of God and changes himself into God, he rises to the knowledge of *Brahman*. When man acquires the knowledge of *Brahman*, he takes the form of *Brahman*. On the other hand, when Narayana takes the form of man and wants to help humanity, he will act like a man.

Suffering from the separation from Krishna, the Pandavas were moving, not noticing the presence of each other. All the time uttering the name of Krishna, each one dropped dead without noticing the presence of the other. While they were moving like that, Droupadi lost all her energy and realised that her end was also approaching, and she shouted out to the Lord. Dharmaraja said that each of them was worried because their Lord had left this earth and so they could not share Droupadi's grief. In that moment of great distress, the Pandavas were only thinking of Krishna and this teaches us a lesson about the intimate connection between the Pandavas and Krishna. The Pandavas were being protected by Krishna as eyelids protect the eyes because of the sacred *prema* which the Pandavas had towards Krishna. The Pandavas always had Krishna as their companion. He stood by them in times of difficulty as well as when good fortune was theirs. He stood by

them when they were living in the forest unrecognised for a whole year. He stood by them at all times. The meaning of the aspect of true companionship was demonstrated by this relationship between Krishna and the Pandavas.

On the other hand, if we look at the *maitri* or friendship of these days, we notice that one will become a friend only if one sees a ten rupee note through the transparent terrylene shirt pocket. If this is not found, there will not be any friendship. In the world today, there is no evidence of true friendship. There is no one whom we can call a true friend. When a lake is full of water, the frogs gather round; and when the lake is empty, all the frogs simply disappear. So also, when a person is prosperous and wealthy, everyone will be his friend; but when this wealth disappears, everyone will disappear and no one will be a friend.

All your relations will continue as relations only up to the entrance to the cremation ground. The only friend who will continue to be with you for all time is the divine friend—GOD. I bless you and hope that you will learn from these sacred ideals.

13. Man's Mind Is Like A Mad Monkey

The basis for the entire world is the *prema* of the Lord. Even if one is able to learn by heart the essence of all the *Vedas*, and even if one is able to compose poetry in a very attractive manner, yet if that person does not have a purified heart, he is a useless person. What other greater truth can I communicate to you.

The education of today is not real education. It appears that the education of today is merely an avocation to enable you to make a living. While pursuing such a path which enables you to eke out a living, you also promote individual selfishness. The aim of real education is character. That kind of education in which there is no sacredness and character is useless. What is the use of acquiring so many different types of education? You must try to learn that, by which you

can escape death. You may have acquired a degree like an MA or BA. You may have acquired a position in life. You may be doing many good things on this earth. Maybe you will also be practising *japa* or *thapa*; but whatever you may do, you will not be equal to the devotion of devotees.

One may have acquired a lot of knowledge and spent all his life in education; but what is the use of being educated if he cannot shed his mean qualities. You may spend a lot of time and learn many things but you will only become argumentative in your life. By education of the type that you are having, you can never acquire complete wisdom.

Divya Atma Swarupas,

If you want the security, the safety and the well-being of the country, and if the country is not to fall into danger, then it is essential for you to develop three things. They are: service to the country, sacrifice without being selfish, and devotion to spirituality. There is a great need to train young people who have a strong determination in this regard. Today, the entire life appears to consist of simply imitating others. The student is destroying his own ideas and his individuality. A student is becoming a slave in the process of imitating others.

Divya Atma Swarupas, students, boys and girls!

I am hoping that the students of the Sathya Sai Colleges will not only excel others in getting marks and credits in the examinations but will also take care to see that there are no remarks about them. In fact, not getting remarks on one's behaviour is more important than getting marks. Therefore, I am hoping that the students will keep this sacred quality and bear in mind the important requirement that they should accept discipline, devotion, and duty; and that they should serve the country.

Today, while being students and acquiring various degrees like M.A., M.Com., Ph.D., and so on, students wear clothes which give the feeling that they are street beggars, and they have no humility at all. Today's students call themselves citizens of this great country of Bharath and they move about like beggars and hippies on the street, without any good qualities. The students of the Sathya Sai Colleges should set an example by their behaviour and see that this aspect is completely eliminated. I am hoping that you will develop good qualities and set an example to others.

The country should be proud of you and your qualities. You should not think that you are being educated only to get a degree and imitate others like a

slave. You should conduct yourselves in such a way that you bring credit to your country. You should acquire such education which will enable you to stand on your legs and not be a weak person who always depends on others. You should not become beggars with a begging bowl of a degree and move from office to office in search of a job.

As a student, your father and mother have brought you up, and the first thing that you have to do is to show respect and gratitude to your parents. How can students, who cannot do this, show gratitude to their mother country? Your parents have given you the gift of your body, of your clothes, of your entire life. If you cannot show gratitude for this, what kind of service will you be able to render your country?

The Sai Organisations should be such that they will look at all religions with equal-mindedness. There is only one religion—the religion of love. There is only one caste—the caste of humanity. There is only one God—He is omnipresent. There is only one language—that is the language of the heart. You must recognise this truth and be prepared to propagate it in the world. It does not matter to which religion, sect, or community you may belong, you should accept the basic principles like—"*Mathru devo bhava. Pithru devo bhava"*—and

respect your mother and father. The concept should be implanted in your heart firmly. Yesterday you were told that man without God is not a man. God without man is always God. This implies that God is still God, even if man is not there; but man without God is not human. Man then becomes inhuman.

Divya Atma Swarupas,

We see that animals and birds are also eating their food, looking after their offspring, and doing other similar things. Unless human beings do something distinctive and different from what the animals do, what is the use of calling themselves human beings or educated people? If we are not in any way different from the animals, why should we get educated at all? We see educated men behaving like animals, why should the students of today live the kind of life which in some respects is similar to that of street dogs?

The first thing which students should ask themselves is what is meant by affluence in life. The kind of pleasure and joy experienced by a Maharaja is also being experienced by a dog in the street. Do we conclude that a dog and a Maharaja are on the same footing? This is not correct. Man is not born merely to eke out a livelihood. Animals, birds, and other living things are also eating food. What kind of special effort

are the animals making? They do not grow food. They are getting enough to eat at appropriate times. If you spend all your life in merely searching for your food, what is the use? This cannot certainly be the purpose of your life.

Truly man's requirements for his daily sustenance and upkeep are very few, but the time men spend in fulfilling their requirements is much larger than their needed demands. Time is God and so time should not be wasted. Time wasted is tantamount to waste of life. We must save time and such saved time should be used for a good purpose and should be used for resuscitating the culture of our country. Today we talk of establishing a new society and a new culture. This is a colossal waste of time. It is only when we can recognise and understand the faults that are contained in the ancient society and ancient culture that we will get the right to establish a new society and culture. The culture and traditions of our country have been applauded and praised from time immemorial by millions of people. To regard those traditions as useless and replace them by a new society and a new culture is something very foolish. This kind of objective is very selfish and wants to establish a selfish gain. This is desire which seeks to promote individual selfishness. It is not aimed at the good of the community. The youth of the country must make an attempt to resuscitate our ancient culture.

Your life is sacred and your age is a sacred age. The period between sixteen and thirty-two is a golden age. This is an age when you have the strength to overcome the obstacles that come in your way, to control your actions and thoughts. At this age, if you feel angry, jealous, or excited, you must use your strength to control your anger, jealousy, or excitement. If at this age, you do not have the strength to control your emotions, how and where will you get the strength to control your emotions when you grow old?

It is the duty of every young student to recognise every bad idea or thought that sprouts in his mind and exterminate it completely. Mind is like a mad monkey and you should not surrender to it. You should control the mind and keep it under your direction. You should not be prepared to yield to all the desires that sprout in your mind. As soon as a thought comes into your mind, you should examine whether it is a good thought or a bad thought.

For example, let us look at a piece of cloth. In reality, it is a bundle of threads; and if you examine it more carefully, you will say that it is just cotton. The first stage is cotton, the second stage is thread, and the final stage is the cloth. What would you do if you do not like this cloth? You remove the threads one by one

and the cloth will not be there. In the same manner, mind does not have any specific form. It is simply a bundle of desires. These desires themselves come from the thoughts of your mind which can be compared to the cotton. Thus the three stages are the cotton or the thoughts, the thread or the desires, and finally the desires constitute the mind which is the cloth in this analogy.

So we must try to diminish these desires as far as possible. These desires are like heavy luggage in the journey of your life. The journey of life for the youth is a very long one. If you want to make your journey a comfortable one, you will have to make your luggage less; and this bundle of desires is your luggage. Today the kind of desires that enter the mind of young people are such that even an eighty-year-old man would not have had such desires in the older generation.

There is a small example which I want to give here. Many people of different categories come to Swami. They have so many different ideas and thoughts. Amongst these was a young sixteen-year-old boy. He appeared very sad and dejected and full of thoughts in his mind when I was giving him an interview. I asked him in what class he was studying. He said that he was not studying and that he had discontinued his studies.

I then asked him whether he was doing anything at all. He said that he had lost all his will power and concentration. He said that for the past six months, his life had become meaningless and disgusting. When asked what made him so dejected in the past six months, he said that his second wife had divorced him six months ago. When we look at his age, he is hardly sixteen years and he talks of his second wife having divorced him. His life was so miserable that it would have been better if his second wife had burnt him alive. Such a life is characteristic only of dogs. We should not lead such a life. We should be proud of the fact that our culture is very sacred and calls for respect to our parents.

It is the beauty of your heart that is important. It is not the external beauty of the body that matters at all. When you have a pure and clean heart, you will have the strength to cleanse the world. Young people are not prepared to respect their parents. You may ask a question as to why one should respect one's parents. Always, whatever actions you undertake, the reactions will come to you in the future. It is your duty to respect your parents for all that your parents have done for you. If today, you show respect to your parents, then your children will respect you when you grow up. If you make your parents suffer now, your children will do the

same in return for you; and tears will flow from your eyes.

If a student wants to lead a life of security and happiness in the future, he must undertake to lead a good life now. For this, appropriate teachers must be prepared. The teachers should show sacred and good habits to the students. If there are bad habits among the teachers, the students will also take the wrong path. When these tender-hearted young students are placed in the hands of teachers, the teachers should have the determination to develop good habits and proper thoughts. If a student is bad, he will himself be spoiled; but if a teacher is bad, several thousands of students will be spoiled. Therefore, in the first instance, teachers should get good habits. Really good students are themselves like teachers.

Today students will be students for one or two years, and after that they go and take a job. Then the students are not going to touch the books again. But teachers cannot be like that. They have to keep in contact with books all their lives. Teachers should not exhibit short temper or jealousy at any place. If there are such teachers, they will ruin the entire community of students. It is correct to say that teachers alone are responsible for the students going the wrong way.

There are many things which you have to experience in the coming year. For your ideas, thoughts, and conduct going wrong, the cinemas are responsible to a large extent. In addition to this, because the parents witness the cinemas, these bad ideas come to the students.

There is also an example in the sacred story of the *Bhagavatha*. When Krishna was not at home, Arjuna went to Subhadra and was telling her all about the *Padmavyuha*. At that time, Krishna came in and told Arjuna that whatever was being told by Arjuna was in fact being listened to by the child in the womb of Subhadra. Because of this early lesson, Arjuna's son got into the *Padmavyuha* but could not get out of it, because he had learnt only the method of getting into it. In view of this, our tradition has been that pregnant women should listen only to sacred and good stories. It had been customary that as the pregnancy reached five months, recitation of sacred stories and festive celebrations were arranged.

Unfortunately, today it has become the practice among pregnant women to see many cinemas. In order to give her satisfaction, the people in the house would take her to two or three cinemas a day. Looking at the immoral pictures which have no good characters in

them, the babies in the womb will also get such ideas. The young baby acquires such bad ideas even in the womb of the mother; and as he grows older, he begins to add on to these bad qualities and grows from bad to worse.

Unfortunately, pictures which are intended to extol the sacred traditions are becoming rare; and the young people, not knowing what to do, go and see these bad pictures. If you go back into history and look at the sacredness of the women in India, you will realise their greatness. Instead of learning from the sacred history of the great women in the country, we put our women for sale on the streets of the country. The culture and traditions of our country were such that they have protected the sacredness of our women all through the years that have gone by, and such culture is being neglected and forgotten by us. I am hoping that the students of the Sathya Sai Colleges will make a determination to resuscitate this sacred culture of ours.

We no doubt need material education to carry on in our lives. We need also spiritual education so that we may elevate our souls and lead a good life. We also need the right kind of culture so that we may lead a life which is appropriate to the education which we have. Education without the necessary culture is like chalk

powder. Our culture is like an electric current. It can be called the positive of the current. Our education is like the negative in the current. Unless this positive and negative come together, there is no use of the electric current.

Our sacred Bharathiya culture should be carefully protected. If we find young primary school children, as we find today, addicted to smoking, drinking, and playing cards, can we call such a person a human being? The first step is that man drinks wine; the second step is, wine drinks wine; and the third step is that wine drinks man. Our students should never take to such bad practices.

On the other hand, our students should exterminate such bad practices and show themselves as good examples in the country. This kind of bad practice will simply ruin the person and his life. Our respect is disappearing because of these bad practices. We should conduct ourselves in a manner befitting our name *"Manava"*. *Manava* means one who conducts himself in a manner by which his ignorance is removed. In this context, it has been said that death is sweeter than the blindness of ignorance. Our respect to the elders must be shown by service and sacrifice.

You may have only two dresses, but you should wash them and wear them clean, and then you will command respect. On the other hand, students go and buy a new pair of pants, cut them in certain places and put patches. Such a person must have been a beggar in his previous life and continues to be so in his present life. Amongst the students, some are becoming so lazy that they are not washing their faces daily. What is such a lazy man going to do for his country? There are many students who do not bathe continuously for two months. What kind of examples can such students set? What is it that they can do for the country? Laziness is rust and dust, realisation is best and rest. Everyone should think for himself whether this is good or bad.

Today an unfortunate situation has developed where if a student is approaching us, we have to stand at some distance because he smells. Students who have acquired education should turn themselves into instruments of good for the country. Wherever there are students, there is confusion. You should make an effort to remove this black mark. This is a disgrace to the student community. You should make the determination to serve your country in a humble way. It is only then that you will be able to exhibit the goodness of your education. You should also be of service to others. Do not always hanker after leadership. Work is worship, duty is God.

Work and worship are your two eyes and between those two eyes, you must carry on your life.

***Students*,**

You have a sacred and tender heart. You are young; do not go and enter politics. When you grow older and gain some experience, then you can enter politics and serve the country. You should take that path which does not cause obstruction to your education. If you join politics during your education, you miss the opportunity of being of any service, and you will also miss the opportunity of being of any use to the country. You are neither a student nor you are able to serve your country. You are thus deprived of both aspects.

After completing your education, if you get the good idea of serving your country, you can join politics and do so. As a student, you should be a *Vidyarthi* and seek knowledge. You should not be a *vishayarthi* seeking material comforts. For the past ten days and more, you have all been listening to various aspects of Indian culture from the grownups as well as from the younger students. I am hoping that you will be able to put what you have heard into practice for the benefit of your country. I bless you in that direction.

14. The Path Of Love Is The Quickest To Reach God

In areas where there is no *prema*, plant the seeds of *prema* and get the ecstasy of *prema* to pour out in the form of rain in such a dry area. Get the rivers of *prema* to such places. "Oh! Krishna, play your *murali* in such a way that the rivers of *prema* will flow in the hearts of men."

Pavitratma Swarupas,

Boys and girls, so long as we have the illusion that the surroundings and the material world are realities, our troubles are not going to leave us. Today, in the context of the present situation, young people like you should develop faith in God and thus progress in life. You cry when you are born, you cry when you die, you

cry for so many things between your birth and death. Have you at any time cried for *dharma* or for attaining something good in life? Why and for what purpose did you cry? Did you cry for the sake of crying? We should not cry and feel sorry simply to spend our time.

All the effort that we make should be towards attaining our objective and the ideal for which we stand. This can happen only through love. From time immemorial, the love which one shows towards God has been called *bhakthi* by the citizens of Bharath. To enable us to earn the grace of the Lord, there are so many different paths. To reach God, to be close to God, and to understand the Lord and his miracles, it is this kind of *prema* and *bhakthi* that will help us. *Bhakthi* has also been used by man as an instrument in order to go closer to the Lord in some way or the other. The meaning and significance of *bhakthi* is to get close to the Lord by some means such as by showing love as a father, as a mother, as a brother, as a wife, or as a son, etc.

There are other paths also for achieving the same objective. These paths are described as the path of *jnana* (wisdom) and the path of *karma*. However, to take the path of *jnana* is a difficult matter because certain qualities like perseverance, wisdom, intelligence

are required if you want to follow this path. So, the path of *jnana* appears somewhat more difficult in comparison to the path of *bhakthi*. If we talk of the path of *karma*, then self-confidence is very necessary. In this path of *karma*, one depends on one's own strength and capacity, and one does not depend on God. To follow this path of *karma*, depending on our own capacity all the time, appears somewhat difficult. If we consider the path of yoga, we come to the conclusion that it requires certain discipline to go through the various types of yoga such as the *Astanga Yoga* (eight-fold discipline), and also you will have to have a correct type of guru. These other paths—the paths of *jnana*, *karma*, and yoga are somewhat more difficult than the path of *bhakthi*. The path of love is an easy and short path. This kind of love or *prema* is not something which is fixed either on an individual, or on a community, or a specific object. It is a wide-spread aspect. It is only when we can broaden this concept of love that we will be able to understand and experience the sacredness of love and the divinity of such love. God is an embodiment of love. To reach God and to understand his divinity, the only path that is available to us is the path of love.

When the moon comes up in the sky, you can see it directly. You do not require the aid of a torch light,

or a petromax lamp, or any other artificial light. The reason why you do not require another light is that it is possible for us to look at the moon by the light of the moon. In the same manner, if we want to go near God, who is an embodiment of love, or if we want to understand God, it becomes possible to do so only by means of love which is characteristic of him. God, who is the embodiment of love, is not confined to one place or spot. He is present everywhere, in every nook and corner of the world. It is very essential for young people to love all and to regard loving all as loving God, who is present in all of them. Since God is selfless, we also should promote our love in a manner in which it becomes selfless love.

To enjoy the love of God (who is selfless) in a selfish manner and confine his love to yourself is not the right thing to do. But until we reach a certain level, we should try and experience the Lord in a limited manner. When we are in a limited position, and when our own life is not broad enough, it is not possible to experience the love in a broad manner. Therefore, the first step for us is to practice certain methods by which our love can be broadened sufficiently. We have a small example.

Suppose we take a small incense stick. In that small incense stick, we see fire. If you are smoking a

cigarette, you will find fire in that cigarette also. If there is a forest fire on a hill, we see a big fire in that as well. The fire that we see on the incense stick, that we see on a cigarette, and the fire we see in the case of the forest fire, all constitute fire. In the feeling that all the three constitute fire, if you bring some logs of firewood and put them on the cigarette or on the incense stick the fire will be extinguished, the firewood will not catch fire. On the other hand, if we take even tender and green leaves and put them in a raging forest fire, they will catch fire and burn away. In the same manner, if the fire of love in you is not broad enough, you will not be able to sustain the great fire of love of God. If you begin to talk of the all-pervading love and widespread *prema* of the Lord, then there is a danger of the feeble fire of love in you getting extinguished. Before you can experience such equal-mindedness and before you can experience this love in everyone, the first step is to promote the love within yourself and raise it to a sufficiently high level. For this, it is necessary for you to recognise a form and the appropriate time for this. If you do not take cognisance of the situation and the time around you, then you will not be able to promote *prema* in yourself. God's love is like an infinite and endless ocean. Simply because God's love is infinite and endless, you cannot carry all

of it with you. What you can carry with you will depend on the size of the pot that you take.

So the first thing to do is to enlarge the size of your pot, and this can be done by the practice of *sadhana*. In this *sadhana*, the first step is respect for your mother. The *bhakthi* or love towards the mother should be such that you recognise the great love and affection with which your mother has brought you up. You must return gratitude to your mother in the form of love or *bhakthi*. The mother will also show *bhakthi* in the form of *vatsalya* (affection of mother for child), in return, to the love of the son. Mother will bathe, dress, and cajole the baby and put the baby to sleep. While doing all these, she will be attending to her daily duties. In this way, the attachment and affection between the mother and the son can be promoted. If promoted properly, that itself can be shaped in the form of *bhakthi* towards the Lord.

It is in this context that this type of *bhakthi*, or devotion, or love between mother and son has been described as *Vatsalya Bhakthi* in the *Bhagavatha.* The mother in Yasoda was looking after the Lord in the form of a baby, was dressing and cajoling him. This attachment was such that she used to put the baby on her lap like a jackfruit. Not only this, although Krishna

was born to Devaki, Yasoda was looking after Krishna as if he were her own son, and she was developing *Vatsalya Bhakthi* towards Krishna. In spite of the fact that several *gopikas* used to complain about Krishna, Yasoda loved him all the more; and she never bothered about the complaints. On one occasion when these complaints became too many, the mother was not able to hear any more; and she asked Krishna why he did not eat what she gave him and why he had to go and steal from other houses as if they did not have enough curds or milk in their own home. She was cajoling him and asking him about this in a very endearing manner. When Balarama and Satyaki came and complained to Yasoda that Krishna was eating mud, she was very confused and asked Krishna to open his mouth. When the mouth was opened, she found that the mouth was smelling of butter instead of mud. She was in confusion that she did not know what was the truth.

Although Krishna was a tiny little boy, his greatness was being seen in his own mouth. He asked, "Am I a child? Or am I so foolish as to eat dust?" When a small baby asks such a question, we must see here that he is expressing his own greatness in a remarkable manner. The greatness in Krishna can be seen in this answer itself. "When the whole universe is within me, is it possible for you to feed me with some little sweet?

While I am present in every *jiva*, is it possible for you to give me an appropriate name? While I am present in all the oceans of this world, is it possible for you to give me a bath with water?" When all the universe is present in him, really what is the meaning of feeding him? When his brightness is like that of a million suns, what is the meaning of taking a lamp to see him? When he cannot be understood and approached by the biggest of people in this world, how can anyone understand or comprehend his form. In spite of hearing and seeing all this, and in spite of being told about the greatness and the divinity of Krishna by Krishna himself, yet the mother in Yasoda was such that she always wanted to see the young boy in Krishna and in that *vatsalya prema* of a mother to a son, she was getting immense pleasure and emancipation.

Therefore, if you want to get realisation, then it is not necessary for you to follow all the various types of *bhakthi* that have been described. If you attach yourself to the Lord through one chosen path like *prema*, it will be possible to realise him. Yasoda was such that she was filled with *prema* at all times. She never spent one moment separated from Krishna or not thinking of Krishna. She used to ask if there were any bliss greater than being near to the tender rosy cheeks of the child, Krishna. She regarded this baby form of Krishna as the

form of the Lord, she expressed *prema* to that form, and thus she realised God. This has been called *Vatsalya Prema* (affection of a mother for a child) in our *Bhagavatha*.

The next is *Sakhya Bhakthi* (Devotion to God as a friend) and this was demonstrated by the gopalas. They played with Krishna and were one with him. They never thought that he was God or an incarnation or an *Avatar*. They thought that Krishna was one of the gopalas and that kind of intimate relationship of being one with the Lord is described as *Sakhya Bhakthi.* They used to play hide and seek with Krishna and regarded him as one of their playmates, and thus they became one with him. This was the manner in which they expressed their devotion to him.

During the afternoon all the cattle were kept under a tree and all the gopalas and Krishna used to sit under the shade of another tree. They would share the food between them; and in this manner, a close relationship developed between them. Not only this, the gopalas never strayed away even for a moment from Krishna, and they were always looking after the cattle. When the cattle were grazing happily, they used to come and sit with Krishna and ask him to narrate stories. Thus they spent every moment with Krishna. In their playing,

singing, and living, they took Krishna as part and parcel of themselves and they were living together.

In those days, Krishna used to play on the *murali* very well. In fact, he used to play on it much better than any other Gopala could play. He could send everyone into ecstasy when he played on the *murali*. One of the gopalas would come to Krishna and say, "Sing, sing to my heart's content and utter sweet words so that I might feel happy, take the essence of the *Vedas* and sing it through the golden voice of your flute and fill it to my heart's content." Another Gopala would come and tell Krishna, "Our cows are the *Upanishads* and the four feet of the cows are like the four *Vedas*, and out of the cows' milk, take the *Vedas* and the essence of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* and pour it into your flute and sing it for us."

In this manner, the gopalas moved around Krishna and they regarded him as a friend and identified themselves with him. These gopalas used to go to the banks of the river, Yamuna, and swim in the river. When they swam, they would try to catch the legs of the Lord, and it looked as if the big fish was going ahead with the small fish coming behind, trying to catch the legs of the big fish. Thus, in their daily lives they regarded Krishna as a common human friend, and

they were enjoying the humane qualities of Krishna. Gopalas were not worried, even if their own brothers and sisters were at a distance from them, but they used to grieve if they were separated from Krishna even for a moment. Thus, we see that the gopalas wanted to get close to Krishna by some method or the other. They were not doing any *thapas* or *puja*. They were adopting methods of *prema* and love to be near Krishna.

Krishna was regarded as the ocean of love, and the gopalas regarded themselves as drops of water which have come out of this ocean of love. Their sole purpose was to take their own lives and merge them with the infinite ocean of love. So long as we hold a drop of water in the palm of our hand, it remains a drop of water; but if we take this drop of water and mix it with the ocean, then there is no more a drop of water, as it loses its individuality and merges with the ocean. Thus, the gopalas tried to take their individual drops of *prema* and merge them with the infinite ocean of *prema* of the Lord. What better objective can there be beyond wanting to merge with the Lord?

The third type of *prema* is called the *Virodha Prema* or inimical *prema*. In some way or the other, they also became close to the Lord. Kamsa, Dantavakra, Jarasandha, and Poundarika Vasudeva were examples

of such persons. They hated Krishna so much that even during their sleep, if Krishna's name was heard, they would jump in excitement. For people who have faith, a look at the form of God or hearing the description of the Lord, will make them joyful; but for people who are inimical, they are such that even when they are sleeping or eating, they will always be thinking of the person whom they hate.

There was an incident when Sisupala was sitting at a place and the shadow of his leg was seen on the wall. Looking at this shadow, he was terrified because he thought that Krishna had come. The inimical *prema* is such that, at all times, and under all circumstances, they are afraid of the Lord, although they think of the Lord only in an inimical way. In this way, God's name and form get permanently imprinted in their hearts. By such a close relationship, they also become close to the Lord. How does it matter how you achieve your sleep as long as you sleep? Does it matter whether you sleep in the choultry or in the veranda? Fire has the quality of burning, and it will burn you whether you touch it knowingly or unknowingly. The shining brilliance of Krishna was such that it always purified whether one came near it willingly or unwillingly. It does not matter how or why one does it, but when one thinks of the name and form continuously, he gets liberated.

The fourth one is called *Gopika Bhakthi* or *Madhura Bhakthi.* In this category, the *gopikas* always thought of Krishna and they completely surrendered themselves, their thoughts and ideas to Krishna. They would say that all their wealth, their body, their mind, and whatever else they had was all surrendered to Krishna. Whatever they did, or ate, or talked was all in the name of Krishna. They regarded their entire life as being dedicated to Krishna. If there was any moment of time, it had to belong to Krishna. If Krishna was not there even for a moment, they regarded themselves as lifeless. When Krishna used to go away with the cowherds, these *gopikas* always used to think of him and his comfort. They were always worried whether he had proper protection or not, whether he had slippers on or not, whether he had any discomfort of any kind, and so on. They would always think of Krishna and his comforts. One of the *gopikas* would be thinking that originally Krishna was dark-complexioned and was worried whether his visit to the forest would make him darker because of sunburn, and was thinking how nice it would be if he would take an umbrella the next day to protect his skin. In this way, all the time they were thinking of Gopala and his comforts. They were always thinking of Gopala. During the time they were eating their food, they were wondering whether Gopala was

getting the correct food or not. While they were resting, they were thinking whether Gopala had a good place to rest. Thus while they were eating, sleeping, or resting, they were always thinking of Gopala and enjoying their own life, *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati.* So if we think of God and if our ideas are turned towards God, we will become one with God. At all times, because their thoughts were completely filled with Krishna, they were turning themselves and their bodies into being like Krishna.

Under these circumstances, there came a new daughter-in-law to the village of Gokula. When this new daughter-in-law came, the older people described to her the beauty and greatness of Krishna. Even before she came to this village, Niraja, the new daughter-in-law, knew about the greatness of Krishna and she was longing to get an opportunity to see Krishna.

Niraja's mother-in-law was a very harsh woman. She gave the injunction that Niraja should not stir out of the house, should not attempt to see Krishna, and should not even utter the name of Krishna. The reason for this is that there was a feeling amongst the people that by playing various games with these girls, Krishna was actually spoiling the reputation of various families. Krishna, at that time, was a seven-year-old boy and

there was no room whatsoever for entertaining such thoughts; but because of certain ill-feeling, there were people who were spreading such irresponsible views and stories about Krishna. Such bad people existed even at that time. In truth, there was no basis for such statements.

There was a custom in that village, according to which, Nanda was regarded as a leader of the village, and all the people used the light in Nanda's house to start a light in their own house. It was considered auspicious if a light was got from the house of the leader. One day the mother-in-law of Niraja was having fever, and, therefore, Niraja was asked to go and light the lamp and bring it back. She was also told that she should not enter the house of Nanda and not attempt to look at Krishna. Niraja felt very happy that she had this opportunity of going to Nanda's house and at least look at the sacred house in which Krishna lived. But when Niraja went there, all her attention and all her thoughts were immersed in Krishna; and she was waiting for the opportunity of Krishna coming there at that time.

She was so immersed in the thought of Krishna that she was unmindful of the fact that the wick was already lighted and that the fire had spread onto her hand. Yasoda came out and saw this, and said that

Niraja was apparently new in the village, and was surprised to see that her hand was burning, and yet she was not mindful of the event. At these words of Yasoda, Niraja regained her consciousness and was begging Yasoda not to tell about this incident to her in-laws as they would only harm her if they had known about this. She explained that she was lost in the visions of Krishna which she saw in the flame which she was lighting.

As she was saying these words, other *gopikas* quickly rushed in and saw this event. The *gopikas* who surrounded Niraja were not silent, and they were quick in reporting this incident to all the others in the village. When the *gopikas* were singing like this, Niraja was very much afraid of the consequences and was worried what her mother-in-law would say; but she felt happy that all this was not half as important as the *darshan* of Krishna which she had had. She was prepared for the consequences. Such love is the best with which to approach the Lord. In this matter, the *gopikas* were thinking of the form of Krishna all the time.

To all these *gopikas*, there was one who was like a leader and this was Radha. It was not as if Radha wanted to be the leader, but the other *gopikas* chose her as their leader. Whenever there was any difficulty, they would go and tell her. Radha should not convey to you

the picture of the kind you see in cinemas or dramas today. She was the kind of person who was always in the thought of Krishna, and her name, itself, conveys her greatness and sacredness. If you start with "R" you get Radha, if you start with "A" you get Adhar, if you start with "D" you get Dhara and if you read backwards, you get *Aradh*. This means that the very basis of Radha is the *Aradhana* (adoration of the Lord) of Krishna.

If you really want to understand the intimate relationship between Krishna and Radha, you will have to note an incident which took place when Radha went out into a bamboo thicket and was sitting in a lonely place. Her attachment to Krishna can be understood from her words. She was sent out of the village and in agony she sings, "There is trouble in the village and there is not a shade where I can take shelter! So I have come and I am maintaining this life breath in myself for your sake. This life exists for your sake. Show yourself at least in my dreams. My mind cannot rest even for a moment if I cannot see you. You are like my eyeball within myself if I am to describe you; but if I have to see you, you are like a small baby who is outside me. But if I have no eyeball in me, then I cannot even look at this small baby. You are the one who shows and you are the one whom I aspire to see. In your gross human form, will you not show yourself to me at least once?"

At that time, Krishna was in Mathura, where he had gone to kill Kamsa. In that prayer of Radha, we notice that even though there was no place for her to take shelter, yet she was maintaining the life breath solely for the sake of Krishna. While she was engaging herself in this kind of introspection, it looked to her as if her companions were playing some games. One group of *gopikas* were singing and saying that Gopala had returned to Repalle. As soon as she heard that song, she thought that Gopala had really returned, and she jumped out of the bamboo thicket into the hot sand and she was running forward to meet Gopala, not minding the heat of the sand. Radha's *bhakthi* was such that she was always on the banks of the Yamuna, both in the heat and in the cold. In the heat, her body was getting scorched and as the body was getting scorched she never bothered. She always remained on the banks of the Yamuna braving the ravages of the heat and the cold. She was singing to the Lord, praying that he should come to her with the jingling of the anklets which he used to wear at the time of the killing of the great serpent. She was singing in ecstasy and addressing her Lord and asking him to come to her. In such ecstasy, she dropped dead.

Gopikas had such sacred ideas and had such selfless *bhakthi* and selfless *prema*. We are unable to

understand the sacredness of their *prema*, and we misinterpret all their actions and give them wrong meanings. Because of this selfless and sacred nature of the *bhakthi* of the *gopikas* towards Krishna, they remain very strongly in the minds of the people of this country, and we talk of them even today. On the contrary, we do not talk so much about Rama as he was insisting on *Karma* or work. He was of a different kind and was insisting on action, *karma*, or work. When we talk of Krishna *Bhakthi*, we should not misinterpret it and give it a wrong meaning. The *Bhagavatha* preaches the sacredness of Krishna *Bhakthi*. There is no hatred, jealousy, or anger in divine love; and so it can give happiness to the entire world.

Students, boys and girls,

We should accept selfless *prema* as an essential type of *bhakthi* and promote it in our country. We must make it an ideal so far as our relationship with God is concerned, and make Bharath an ideal to other countries. If there is any unsacred or selfish *prema* in your heart, throw it away and promote selfless divine love. I am hoping that you will do this and purify your heart.

15. Your Conscience Is Your Master And Guide

> The reputation of Bharath, which has been known for centuries, has now been sharpened by the teachings of Sai. You young people should take hold of this sharpened reputation and carry it higher. Will the lakes get filled up just by a few drops of rain? Will you be able to quench your thirst by swallowing a little saliva? If you hold your breath, are you going to become big? Can you get coal by burning a little hair?

For the past fifteen days, we have been engaged in this sacred *Karma Yoga*. Just because you have spent these fifteen days here and because you have received a diploma, it is not correct to think that you will set

right the whole world. Your degree or diploma should be within your heart. You should make a determination to serve the country. Man is making an effort to learn and understand many different things and is only partially succeeding in this objective. In fact, man is inventing complicated machines; and with these machines he is trying to conquer the universe. Man is using machines to get service for himself. Man travels into the sky and soars to the very heights of the empty skies. He goes into the depths of the ocean; and in many other ways, man is doing incredible things and is achieving many things. With the help of science and technology, he is discovering and inventing things which are not accessible to common human beings. He is producing many things. But come to think of it, all the achievements of man today are not things which would surpass what was known at the time of Hiranyakashyapu.

After acquiring all these strengths and capacities, if man does not have the wisdom to use them well, all these inventions become useless. Prahlada told his father that while he possessed the strength to conquer the entire world, he did not possess the strength to conquer his own sense organs. We should conclude that man is able to conquer many things but is unable to understand his own self.

Man's daily life begins with the sunrise and comes to an end with the sunset. Sun always rises in the east and sets in the west. Depending on this phenomenon, man determines the direction of east and west. When the sun rises above the horizon, we call it morning; and when it sets below the horizon, we call it evening. Every man's life depends on sunrise and sunset. But if we look at the same phenomenon from another angle and realise that the earth is spherical, then all concepts of east and west disappear. If we stand on a table and if that table shakes, we shake a little. If the bus in which we are travelling shakes, we shake. If the car in which we travel shakes, we shake; but we do not feel anything when we stand on the earth which itself is moving at several thousands miles per hour. While this earth of ours moves at a very fast pace, along with other planets in the solar system, we do not even feel the motion of the earth.

We see here that truth is one thing and our experience is a totally different thing. We imagine that the earth is not moving at all, although it is moving at a very fast pace. Although in truth, there is nothing like east or west, many eminent scientists keep saying that there is an east and that there is a west. Now we have to enquire whether what we experience is truth or what we say is truth. Many eminent people, having gone to

the moon and come back, tell us that the moon is lifeless. This is not an accurate description. On the one hand, they say that the moon is lifeless. On the other hand, they say that all matter is composed of tiny particles called the atoms, which are in perpetual motion. If you have a piece of matter which is composed of atoms in perpetual motion, is it correct to say that it is lifeless? There are emanations of motion that constitute these ultimate particles called electrons, protons, and neutrons. The manner in which these ultimate particles come together, conglomerate and form matter has been described as a condensed form of energy by our ancients. Moon is also a conglomeration of these fine particles which constitute energy. In this context, how can we say that the moon is lifeless?

We can take another example for this. What we see there is a wall. Why do we call it a wall? We call it a wall because it is an obstacle and we cannot see or go through it. Since it is an obstacle, we call it a wall. But when we look at if from the scientist's point of view, there is an enormous amount of vacant space between the atoms that constitute the wall. Although we call it a wall looking at it with our bare eyes, when a scientist looks at it, he says that there is a lot of space just as there is a lot of space between several stars that we see in the sky. Thus, we undertake to get a clear picture of many things with the help of sciences.

What we see is one thing, what we experience is another thing, and the basic truth is yet another thing. In order to recognise the basic truth, we should all make a serious attempt. In order to proclaim such basic truth, we will have to follow three basic paths. They are the worldly path, the spiritual path, and the ethical path. Today many people make an attempt to remove all the injustice in the world, but they do not succeed. You must make a determined effort by which you can propagate the truth and remove this injustice. We think that whatever we see superficially with our eyes is the basic, essential truth. This is not so. Behind what we see is the real, hidden truth.

Today man has three kinds of faiths. One of them is the lowest kind, and the second is of a middle kind, while the third is of the highest kind. If our *prema*, our belief and our affection are confined to our nearest kith and kin, that will be called the lowest kind of *prema*. On the other hand, if you go a little beyond the narrow region of your family and extend your faith and belief to your country and other people, then we say that it is the intermediate kind of *prema*. If you treat the entire world as one and regard all the people living in the entire world as one and extend your faith and sympathy to all of them, then it is the highest kind of *prema*.

Thus, gradually we should move from the limited circle of our family to the wider circle of our country and then move on to the broadest aspect of one world. When we talk of humanity, it should not be confined to a small community or group of people. There is only one caste, and that is the caste of humanity, and when we talk of humanity, we must extend our *prema* to the entire caste of humanity.

You should make your own conscience secure, and you should have confidence in yourself. Your conscience is your guide and it should dictate your behaviour. Either for the good or for the bad, it is your conscience that is responsible. The guilt in you causes the bad; the strength and confidence in you should, therefore, do such things which will promote your confidence in your own self. That is why I have told you, on some occasions, that you should follow the four F's. Follow the master, and that is your conscience. The second thing is to Face the devil. The third is Fight to the end. Then you should Finish the game. If you remember all these four injunctions and keep remembering them, so that they are resounding every moment in you, there can be nothing more sacred than this in your life.

It is not right that you are in a hurry for everything in your life. If you are in a hurry, it will lead you into

trouble. Depending on your capacity to think, you should ask yourself whether what you are doing is right or wrong. You should follow the right dictates of your thinking. Because of this hurry, you are in a confusion; and when you are in confusion, you will commit errors and mistakes. Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So do not be in a hurry. In your tender heart, such sacred ideas must be implanted and you should lead a good life.

Today, in the world, there are several economic problems which are troubling us. We should also enquire from the spiritual angle, how these economic problems have arisen. We should first try and understand what this economic problem is. Today, the available commodity is limited, and our desires are unlimited. As our needs and desires are high and the available commodities are low, this kind of economic imbalance is arising in the world. Many people, without realising its significance and importance, only make attempts to increase the commodities that are available to us. As a consequence of that, all kinds of reactions are coming up. To take only the steps which will increase the economic output is not the correct thing to do. It is indeed a weak point. If you can find an easy and convenient way of solving this problem, then you will reduce misery in the world. The shortest cut for this is

to contain our desires to match the available material. If we want to increase the available material and commodity, it involves a lot of expense and effort.

If we learn to contain our needs, there is neither effort nor expenditure. This aspect of decreasing our desires and needs has been described as *vairagya* in our *Vedantic* parlance. The word *vairagya* does not mean that you should run away from your family and sit in a forest and close your nose and put yourself to physical torture. This is not the meaning of *vairagya*. The true meaning of *vairagya* is that you should stay in the society, do your duties, and learn to contain your desires and needs. Our life is like a long journey. In this long journey of life, you should make an effort to diminish your needs and desires. It is part of *vairagya* to see that the food that you take is just sufficient and there is no waste.

Boys and girls,

By reading some books, you get the impression that *Sathwic* food means milk and fruit. *Sathwic* food should not be interpreted as something which you take by way of your mouth alone. We have five different organs—*sabda, sparsa, rupa, rasa,* and *gandha*—that is your ears, eyes, mouth, skin, and nose. What you smell, see, hear, touch, and eat will all constitute what

you take in as food. It is not right to think that only what you eat is important and that it is enough if that is *sathwic*. You should take *sathwic* food through all these organs. You should see only good things, then alone will it be described as *sathwic* food. If you see bad things, that is also bad. If you smell something bad through your nose, then it is also bad. If you touch something bad with your body, it means that you are taking in something bad.

If we look at it from the point of view of science, from every little part of our body several small particles are going into our body. These particles and radiations which are going in by the millions are invisible and you do not see them. It is not as if they emanate from outside and go inside. Even from our body, they are being continuously sent out. These emanations go inside as well as outside. This is the reason why there is a possibility of your getting a disease if you go to a bad place. If a place is unclean and dirty, we should immediately cleanse the place and cleanse ourselves.

Our students should go to the four corners of the country and cleanse the place and keep away from doctors by themselves being clean. If the aim is to do good to others, then God himself will take care of the selfless aim of doing good to others. This is the essence of Vyasa's eighteen *Puranas*.

To be able to do good to others is a great *punya* and to be able to keep away from doing harm to other is also a *punya*. Therefore, even if you are not able to do good, just sit quietly and keep silent; but do no harm to others. The students should take care to see that all the five organs are without any blemish. You should not see any bad with your eyes. You should not talk anything unworthy with your mouth; you should not touch anything unclean. You should thus keep all the five organs in a *sathwic* state.

Students should take great care to see that they do not waste food. They should take only what they need and not waste anything. This is the greatest service that they can do for the country. Everything should have a limit. To exceed these limits is very harmful. If you eat too much, that will cause mental derangement. If you eat sufficient food, it is good. You should not waste food, and you should share your excess food with others. If today we want to rectify the economic problems of the country, then you should prevent wastage of food; and you will be able to add to the economy of the country. Truly, the boys and girls who have listened to these sacred ideals should remember them all their lives. It is not enough if you just listen to them and then refrain from putting them into practice. These ideals should be carried by you all through your life, and you should put them into practice.