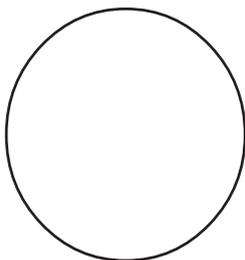


SUMMER SHOWERS IN BRINDAVAN 1974

Part - II

Discourses by
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
on
Bharath

Delivered during the summer course
in Indian Culture and Spirituality
May-June 1974



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

© Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust
Prasanthi Nilayam, India

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 utilized, 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 Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (Andhra Pradesh) India, except for brief passages quoted in book review. This book can be exported from India only by the Publishers Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (India).

International Standard Book No. 81 - 7208-356-4
81 - 7208-113-8 (set)

First Enlarged Edition :

Published by :

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

Printed at

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Book “Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974” was first printed in 1993. As this book was of smaller font, the need for a revised and enlarged version with a bigger font was strongly felt. This has resulted in an increase in the number of pages and, therefore, it is being brought out in two parts – first part dealing with *Brahman* and second *Bharath*. Accordingly, the present volume deals with *Brahman*.

There is no doubt that both parts will be cherished and studied with love, faith and concentration for the solution of every manner of difficulty or dilemma one may encounter in spiritual *sadhana*.

20 June 2004

CONVENER

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Book “Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974” was first printed in 1993. As this book was of smaller font, the need for a revised and enlarged version with a bigger font was strongly felt. This has resulted in an increase in the number of pages and, therefore, it is being brought out in two parts – first part dealing with *Brahman* and second *Bharath*. Accordingly, the present volume deals with *Bharath*.

There is no doubt that both parts will be cherished and studied with love, faith and concentration for the solution of every manner of difficulty or dilemma one may encounter in spiritual *sadhana*.

20 June 2004

CONVENER

Contents

PART II: BHARATH

| | |
|--|-----|
| 17. Historical Interpretations Of The Name “Bharath” | 1 |
| 18. Bharath Is Of Vedic Origin And Is A Sacred Name..... | 15 |
| 19. Different Avathars Are Manifestations Of The One God Without A Second | 31 |
| 20. God Resides In The Hearts Of Righteous People..... | 47 |
| 21. Thath Thwam Asi..... | 63 |
| 22. God Is Above All Sense Perceptions And Is Omnipresent 81 | |
| 23. The Lord Is Always Intimately Associated With His Creation | 95 |
| 24. One’s Learning Is Useless If It Is Not Put Into Practice.... | 109 |
| 25. Immortality Can Be Achieved Through Sacrifice Only.... | 121 |
| 26. Raja Yoga Is The Fusion Of Bhakthi And Karma | 137 |
| 27. Rama Is An Avatar Of Dharma | 153 |
| 28. There Is An Inner Meaning For Every Story In Our Puranas | 173 |
| 29. The Lord Is The Embodiment Of Prema And Can Be Contacted Only Through Prema | 183 |
| 30. Education Should Not Make One Neglect One’s Parents | 199 |
| 31. Words Relating To God Alone Constitute True Poetry | 217 |
| 32. Who Is Sathya Sai Baba? | 233 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 33. Divine Blessing And Words Of Advice To The Outgoing Students | 261 |
|---|-----|

PART II : BHARATH

17. Historical Interpretations Of The Name “Bharath”

Like the rats, while being unable to give up the desire to get at the fried rice in the cage, enter the cage and get trapped in it, men unable to give up the attraction of the sensory desires get caught in them and as a consequence miss the great bliss which they can enjoy by realising Brahman.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

There are three words *Bharatha*, *Bhaarata*, and *Bhaarati* which we must examine, in the first instance, in the context of the meaning given to them by our historians. Later, we will see what kind of support we get for such meanings from our *Sruthis* and *Smruthis*. Our ancient historians on some occasions expressed the

view that the name Bharath has been derived from the name Bharatha, son of Sakuntala. Yet, on other occasions, they said that the name Bharath has been derived from the name of King Manu who was also called Bharatha.

In some places, historians have expressed the view that the name Bharath is synonymous with the name Jambudwipa. In other places they have taken the word Bharatha as *yodhdha*, or one who can fight; and in that context, they concluded that this name refers to Kshatriyas only. Amarasimha got support from the statement, “*Lokoyam Bharatha Varshaha*” and took the view that the name Bharatha refers to the entire world and not any one particular country. Further, just as when one is worshipping a goddess, one uses the name of the goddess in order that his desire may be fulfilled, some historians have regarded the name Bharath as if it arose from the name of the Goddess Bharathi. In addition to this, just as Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, etc. are religious names named after various individuals who first propagated them, so also they thought that Bharatha was a specific name of a religious leader and that the name for this country arose from such a name.

We, also have various names like *Dwaitha*, *Adwaitha*, *Visishta Adwaitha* for the schools of philosophy propounded by great teachers who propounded them. Some have taken Bharatha to mean a school of philosophy prominent in this country. However, the historians who have given all these interpretations never associated the name Bharatha with the *Vedas*. On the contrary, mostly they have taken the view that Bharatha is not a word which has any connection with the *Vedas*. They have been arguing that Bharatha signifies fire. They have been preaching *Agni* Bharatha establishing the identity of fire with Bharath. This fire was looked upon by them as something which arises in a *yajna* or a ceremony and they thought that Bharatha was a name appropriate to the fire that is generated in the *yajna*. But if we enquire into the connection between *agni* that is generated in a *yajna* and Bharath, we come to the conclusion that there is no connection at all. But they argued that there is a connection between the priests and Bharatha. They have established further that there is a particular class of people called Bharathas among the Aryans.

This class of Aryans who were then called Bharathas were living on the banks of river Saraswathi

and were worshipping it as a goddess. Because they were worshipping the river as Goddess Saraswathi, they propagated the view that Bharatha is an alternative name for Saraswathi. This group of Aryans were worshipping *agni* in addition to Saraswathi. Hence, they said that *agni* is an alternative name for Bharatha. However, all these theories and ideas do not seem to have sufficient support behind them. These are worldly usages and names given in the daily context. If we accept that which is in use in our daily life as our primary authority, how can it have any basis in the *Veda*? The historians gave a great deal of importance to the common usage of these words and they built theories based on their own ideas. Their decisions were based mainly on the common usage of this word. We have the authority of the *Rig Veda* to say that the principal priests or the *Rithwicks* have been called by the name Bharatha.

In this context, our *Sruthis* have recognised the *Rithwicks* by their power of *manthras* and the fact that the *Rithwicks* were generating fire in the *yajnas*. Since *agni* has been generated by the *Rithwicks*, it has been regarded as the daughter of the *Rithwicks*. Thus *agni* which is regarded as Bharatha, is also the child of the *Rithwicks*. Because *agni* or Bharatha has come out as a

result of the power or strength of the *Rithwicks*, there is an alternative name for this and that is “*Sahasa Sad Putraha*”.

Having accepted that *agni* is generated by the power of the *Rithwicks*, we should ask ourselves about the process by which the *Rithwicks* generated fire. We know that the *Rithwicks* had the power to generate the fire through the *manthras* and through their constant contemplation of God. That is why the *Rithwicks*, *agni*, and the *Purohit* have also got the name Bharatha.

You may like to know the significance of calling the *Rithwicks* by the name Bharatha. The justification for calling the *Rithwicks* by the name of Bharatha is that at the time of generating the fire, they are thinking of God in many ways and concentrating on God. Since they are completely merged with God and enjoying the Bliss of divinity they are called Bharatha. In this context, our *Sruthis* have taken the three words Bharatha, Bhaarata and Bharati and have synthesised the three names with Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati.

In this context, they had taken these three—Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati—as the three aspects of God and teaching that they relate to the whole world. This is what

the *Veda* has been teaching. Bharatha has been used also for *Vayu* and *Indra*. In the earth there is *agni* and in the space there is *vayu*, and in the sky there are sun's rays. By using *agni*, *vayu* and the sun and in identifying these three as phases of *Bharatha*, the *Veda* has been teaching that this Goddess pervades Bharathi and the entire world.

We should regard these three—*Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharati*—as three phases of one and the same divine aspect. They are not distinct. This has been taught by our *Veda*. By looking at what is commonly seen from a worldly point of view and to say that a particular thing is air or sun's rays and to mention them in isolation is only ignorance. You will notice that even if any one of the three is absent, it is not possible to recognise the existence of the other two. If there is no sun, there is no air and fire. If we do not have air, we shall not be able to comprehend the meaning of fire or sun's rays. If there is no fire there is no possibility of getting air or sun. Therefore, fire, air and sun are all inseparable aspects of *Bharath* and always go together.

While the *Sruthi* teaches the oneness and yet sometimes talks of *agni* in an isolated manner, there is a meaning for this. When we talk of the nature or *Prakruthi*,

we usually mean the gross manifestation of the created world. In addition to this, there is the subtle aspect of human nature which is also included in the word *Prakruthi*. In this subtle aspect of *Prakruthi*, if there is no fire, then the body will perish. It is only through fire that there is a possibility of water coming up for us. In every body air is present in the form of *prana* or life. If air which takes the form of life is not present in our body, then the entire life becomes extinct. In the aspect of fire and that of air or *vayu*, the sun takes the place of the heart. If the heart is missing, even if one is leading a life for outward purposes, it is equivalent to death. Therefore, if there is no *agni*, *vayu* and sun, we cannot recognise human life. In this context, in order that we may understand human life in its fullest sense, it is appropriate to use the word *Bharatha* for all that which encompasses humanity.

This fact has been explained to you several times by Me with the use of many analogies. In understanding the relationship between space, mind and the sun if we compare our mind to the moon, eyes and vision to the sun and the spiritual heart to space or the sky, the thoughts that cross our mind are like clouds that fill the space. There is truth in comparing our ideas and thoughts

with the clouds since they are not permanent. They are continually changing and taking different shapes. Sometimes these ideas come to us as thick clouds and they take some uncommon shapes and forms. They keep on changing from time to time. It is common experience that the clouds take different shapes while they are formed. Sometimes we feel that the clouds that are gathering take the form of a deer while at other times, the form of a fox. However, no sooner do we see one particular form than the cloud begins to break up and reappear in a different form. The clouds thus continually change their form.

The breeze that is blowing is responsible for this changing form of the clouds and their breaking up. This air or breeze can be compared to a kind of desire which breaks up the thoughts which are like the clouds in your mind. The cloud of thoughts is formed because of desires. The desires themselves are responsible both for the forming as well as breaking up of the thought-clouds. When we ask ourselves a question whether there is any connection between the sun, the moon and the desires that we have, we come to the conclusion that there is no connection at all.

In the above analogy, when sometimes very thick clouds (desires) are formed, they often hide the sun and

the moon, in this case the mind and the intelligence. In the same manner, although the mind and intellect of the young people are fresh and bright, they are not able to function properly due to bad thoughts and ideas. It is in this context, it is said that Love is blind.

If we are unable to discriminate between right and wrong and take to wrong path, it is because our mind and intellect are clouded by evil thoughts. Although our intelligence is capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, we do the wrong thing because of the illusion from which our mind is suffering. For us to think that at times we have the power to distinguish between right and wrong and that at other times, this is not there is not right. If this *Prajna Sakthi* or the divine power to discriminate is not there, our ability to eat, sleep, hear, etc., will be completely absent. This *Prajna Sakthi* is an aspect of the trinity and the trinity itself is Agni, *Vayu*, and *Sun* and our mind is made up of these three.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* also it is said that *Buddhi* is the best manifestation of God in Man. Not only that, through *Gita* it has also been explained that everywhere are present the Lord's feet and the Lord's hands and this is what the Lord proclaims about Himself in the *Gita*. In this context, we should realise that the *Bhagavad Gita* is

the essence of all *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* themselves have come as the ultimate wisdom of the *Vedas*. Therefore we come to the conclusion that the *Vedas*, *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads* are intimately and inextricably connected with each other. I often say that “*Gita* is God’s messenger. *Gita* is the mother of the world. *Gita* is the support on which one can lean while leading his family life. *Gita* is also the essence of Sri Sai. One can also say that *Gita* is the Mother Sai”.

Having said that *Gita* is the Mother Sai in relation to the commentaries of the *Vedas*, we may come to the conclusion that the name Bharatha applies to the entire universe and the entire humanity. There is an important thing that we must understand today. The word Bharatha is not narrowly confined in the context of any one particular country or a particular group of people. In due course, you will be able to recognise the truth that the word Bharatha relates to the entire world. You are not likely to comprehend fully the aspect of Bharatha with today’s discourse alone. Today’s discourse is of the nature of an introduction or a foundation and simply consists of what the historians had said about this word. In fact, the entire meaning of life depends on what the historians make out of it. As time progresses, you will

be able to understand whether the picture given by the historians is true and comprehensive.

It is true that the words of the historians have an authority but in the context of comparison and relative assessment, the words of the *Vedas* have a much greater authority for everyone, depending very heavily on the authority or *Pramana* which we get from the *Vedas*. Life has been going on in accordance with such an authority from times immemorial whether knowingly or unknowingly. In fact, in this country whatever task we undertake, whatever work we do, whatever *karma* we indulge in, our ancestors have always relied on the *Vedapramana*.

In the word *Pramana*, the part *Pra* means beginning and the part *Mana* means a measure. It is customary for Indians to prescribe a measure for everything. If we have to measure cloth, we use the unit of a meter. If we want to measure milk, we use the unit of a litre. Similarly for everything there is an appropriate measure or a unit. In order to measure the human nature or what is important in life, there is only one unit and that is what arises from the *Vedas*. For instance, if an individual goes and asks another individual about something and if the other person says that he does not

know the answer, there will be no further questions. On the other hand, if an answer is given there will be a volley of further questions as to how he knows the answer and what the authority or *pramana* is for such an answer. Therefore, all things that you do not know have no measure. Only things which you know are describable in terms of a measure. If your ideas or thoughts about something are such that you cannot describe in terms of a measure, then it means you do not know the thing.

Divyatma Swarupas!

The culture of Bharath is based on the authority derived from the *Vedas*.

Whether in the worldly aspect or ancient thought or modern thought, you should permanently imprint three aspects in your heart. These are: “Do not believe the world that you see around”, “Do not forget God” and “Do not fear death”. The world here refers to the material world. If you are afraid of death, it is not going to leave you. In fact the more you are afraid of death, the quicker will it come looking for you. Death is like a monkey. If we run, the monkey runs after us but if we stand where

we are, the monkey will also stand still. If you are afraid of death, it will come searching for you and will meet you and take you early.

There is a small story which I usually narrate to illustrate this aspect. On one occasion, the epidemic of cholera struck one village. At the entrance to this village, there was the house of the doctor. He was watching as the Goddess of the disease cholera was entering the village. He asked the Goddess where she was going. The Goddess replied that she was going into the village to take the lives of certain number of people. The doctor became very friendly and even invited the Goddess to have a cup of coffee with him. The doctor was informed by the Goddess of Cholera that she will take about a hundred and fifty lives. After some time, the Panchayat President of the Village came to the doctor and asked him to certify that two hundred and fifty persons had been killed by the cholera disease. The doctor then surmised that even the Goddess had not honoured the commitment given by her, according to which she was to take only a hundred and fifty lives. When the Goddess of Cholera was returning, she again met the doctor, who questioned why she had broken her promise and extracted two hundred and fifty lives. To

this, the Goddess replied that she stuck to her word and had taken only a hundred and fifty lives but that the other hundred people died because of fear of death and she was not responsible for their death. In a lighter vein, this story reveals the truth that one should not be afraid of death as it will surely overtake you one day or the other. You must develop the capacities to forget the material world, not to forget God and not to fear death.

18. Bharath Is Of Vedic Origin And Is A Sacred Name

Out of *karma* is born every *Jiva*. He grows and moves in the path of *Karma*. These aspects of work are equivalent to God so far as individuals are concerned. *Karma* is responsible for both sorrow and pleasure in this world, “*Svayam Sarvam Vedati Iti Vedaha*”. In the context of this description of *Veda*, it has been said that *Veda* will remove one’s ignorance and will enable one to become wise and acquire knowledge about everything.

While explaining the features of *Agni*, the *Sruthi* has said “*Brahman Agnihi.*” It has identified *Agni* with *Brahmana*. The *Vedas* have also taught that Bharatha is a name synonymous with *Agni*. *Agni* is used in sacrificial rites for purifying the offerings, it is also called

by the name *Pavaka*. So Bharati is also referred to as *Pavaka* or one who purifies. Further it has also been said that because *agni* bears *Pavakas*, it may also be called *Pavakavahana*. In the name *Pavakavahana*, there is a meaning according to which it is called *Jataveda*.

It becomes clear to us in this context that *Veda* has come with a view to expound the meaning of Bharatha and to make known to people the aspect of *Paramatma*. In order to know for whom and from whom *Veda* has originated, they also referred to *Agni* as *Jativeda* in the statement “*Agnih Jativeda*.” It is necessary to make clear to ourselves that there is no difference between the words *Agni* and Bharatha. These are alternative names for the same thing.

In the triune aspect of God, the names Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi are the three aspects that have been taken from the three *Vedas*, *Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama*. On the same analogy, it has been established that the divine has three aspects—*Sath*, *Chith*, *Ananda*—and He is called the *Sathchithananda Swarupa*.

In the ritual of the sacred *yajnas* with which we are familiar in this country, the master of the *yajna* and his wife have to perform certain duties. The wife has to

utter some *manthras* describing *Agni* and *Veda*. In this context, she uses the terms *Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama* and addresses the God of *Yajna* as one who is *Jnatha*, *Data* and Bharatha. The word Bharatha is thus used in this context. In this context, we have to understand that the three words *Jnatha*, *Data* and Bharatha are only alternative ways of addressing *Agni*.

The three sacred words—Bharatha, Bhaarata and Bharathi—appear together in several places in *Veda*. In the *Yajna*, there is a word called *Kusamushti* and this word has a specific meaning. Here it becomes clear that *Veda* has come for the sake of Bharatha and for giving the meaning of the term *Prajapati*.

It is only when we go deeply into the meaning of the *Veda* that we can understand the *manthras* that occur in the *Vedas*. Unless we recognise that there is a close and inseparable relationship between these words and the *manthras* in the *Vedas* and God Himself, the *Vedas* will appear like any other trivial writing of some unknown author and just a conglomeration of various words and letters. The *Vedas* are indeed much more comprehensive than a mere grouping of words and letters.

It is an ardent desire on the part of the citizens of Bharath to translate the message of the *Vedic* culture into

their daily life. While performing religious ceremonies like naming their children, they whisper three times into the right ear of a child a word like “*vac*”. This is to tell the child that he is no different from the *Veda* and he is the successor to the *Vedic* tradition and *Vedic* culture. It is also common that in addition to giving a worldly name, a divine name such as Devadatta by saying “*vedosi*” is also given.

In this manner when they say *vedosi*, it means “you are born in this world for upholding the *Vedas*” “God has given you this human form so that you may fulfil what is contained in the *Vedas*” and that is why the child is given in adoption to the *deva* himself. In our tradition, it is common to adopt a child if one has no children of his own and this is called (*dattaka*) adoption. Giving one to God in adoption means that one is entitled to receive from God His divine strength and power and therefore, inherit His capacity. There is a further meaning here which says that the birth, growth, decline and death of the human body are all coming from *Prajapati*. He gives all these things as a gift for a human body.

In the aspect of Bharatha is implied and latent the aspects of *Agni* as well. You have already been told that *Agni* is an alternate name for Bharatha. From the sun

comes *agni* and from *agni* comes *vayu* and from *vayu* comes *rasni* and from *rasni* comes Bharatha. In this sequel we must understand that life in the body consists of these five aspects. For the breath that we inhale and exhale, the *vayu* is responsible in the form of *Prana*. For our intelligence and thinking capacity, the sun is responsible. This is to say that there is a divine basis for all the material constituents of our body and that they can flourish only in the aspect of God. This is an interpretation given by the *Vedas* in this sequence of words. *Agni* with the name Bharatha has the capacity to purify anything that it comes into contact with in addition to burning it up. This is one other aspect in the *Vedas*.

Because of this, Bharatha the equivalent of *agni*, is also taken to mean the form of truth. On the basis of this, *dharma* has taken a form which everyone knows as equivalent to truth. That is why it has been said *Satyanasti Paro dharmaha*. There is no truth which is different from *dharma*. *Prajapati*, the embodiment of truth, takes the form of *dharma* and gives to the world the *Ashthanga Yoga* calling upon them to follow the *Ashthanga Yoga* and thus understand the significance of *Prajapati*.

Here we should take the word *sathya* and divide it into “*sa, ta, ya*”. We get the meaning that *ya*

stands for discipline or controlled conduct which is regulated life, *Ta* stands for *thapas* and if we do *thapas* with a rigorous discipline, then we will release the *sa* which stands for *Sathya*. To reach truth, discipline, a regulated life and *thapas* are essential. We should not think of doing *thapas* alone. The *thapas* that we do should be controlled by various rules and regulations. Only then will we realise the truth.

The word discipline here means that one has to discipline oneself and control one's organs. It is only the control of the outer and inner organs that constitutes discipline here. You can give them freedom only to the extent of performing specific allotted tasks. By giving it such a meaning and by performing your tasks and developing an intense desire to become one with God, that becomes *thapas*. Through such *thapas* you can comprehend truth. *Thapas* does not mean giving up everything and going to a forest but still leading a life devoid of thought of God. If in your *thapas* you have not surrendered to God and if your heart does not appreciate and learn to flourish in the aspect of God, it is not possible to realise truth.

If we cannot love and respect the one God who has given us life, our existence and by whose strength

we live and die, and if we cannot prosper in the thought of God, we cannot reach or comprehend truth. God is the Master of everything that we see around us. It is wrong for us to think that man is the Master and that he alone is responsible for everything. While God in the form of *Atma* inside your body, is making you utter the word "I", it is utterly foolish on your part to identify such a divine "I" with your destructible and material body. Any feeling of attachment to the body and the illusion that the body is real is tantamount to death. On the other hand, the realisation that you are the *Atma* is tantamount to immortality and permanence.

We should fix our thoughts on the *Atma*, and all our actions involving the body have somehow to be reconciled to the feeling and recognition of the *Atma*. All prosperity and material wealth are like shadows. If these shadows are in your front and ahead of you, they will continue to be so, however much you may run to overtake them. The underlying meaning here is that this shadow of wealth or prosperity goes ahead of you always. If you do not wish to allow this shadow of wealth to be ahead of you but keep it behind you then as you go farther and farther, the shadow also moves with you, behind you and accompanies you. It does not overtake

you. The inner meaning of the word *Aiswarya* here for which we have been using the word wealth is the aspect of Easwara. Easwara is one who possesses all kinds of wealth and prosperity. The only way in which you can achieve it is to have the aspect of divinity in front of you. Prosperity will then follow you. The *rishis* of our country realised that the aspect of truth and *dharma* would enable them to reach God and become one with Him. This is the way one has to spend one's life if one wants to have *Aiswarya* or Easwara with him.

Our *rishis* realised this and they always followed the path of truth to realise God. Our *rishis* never worried even if their very breath of life had stopped. They were not worried even if their entire body lost its shape. They always lived in bliss because they believed that all the power in them, all that they have in them belonged to the Lord and therefore if the Lord decided to remove something from them, it was done by the Will of God.

They felt that whatever they did was only for the purpose of reaching the Lord and realising Him. From the point of view of the worldly usage, Bharatha was used to signify meanings synonymous with those of *agni*, *vayu* and *rasni*. It has thus become necessary to recognise

four different aspects namely, Mahima, Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi. *Prajapati* is the embodiment of *dharma*. The name Bharatha has come from him and it is not correct to give the name only to a piece of land with geographically limited boundaries. An individual may be named Rama but it does not follow that this Rama is the same Rama as the son of king Dasaratha. Similarly, we may name an individual Krishna but he would not be the same as Yasoda's son Krishna. Similarly the name Bharatha is to be taken as one of the many names of *Prajapati*, and this has been given to the country in which we live. Unless the country acquires all the qualities associated with Bharatha or *Prajapati*, the name will not reflect the original meaning with justification.

Unfortunately, Historians have been explaining that this name has come from one of the names of the Kings that ruled this country or from one of the philosophers who preached in this country at one time or other. This is not correct. We find the usage of the word Bharath in several contexts in the *Veda* itself. In coming to assign an origin for this name, we must ask ourselves whether the Kings came first or the *Vedas*. Similarly whether the philosophers came first or the *Vedas*. The philosophers and their expositions came much

later than the *Vedas* themselves. In fact, the *Veda* came earlier. If the word Bharatha occurs in the *Vedas* themselves, we have to interpret that the origin of the word Bharatha is in the *Vedas* themselves.

Therefore, the words, Bharatha, Bharati, and Bharath have their origin in the *Vedas*. In the very beginning when one starts learning the alphabet, one prays to Goddess Saraswathi and equates her with Bharati. Thus in the very beginning of our education, we use a *Vedic* term Bharati. Our writers have frequently been using the words Saraswathi and Bharati synonymously. Saraswathi, Bhagavati and Bharati have been described as “*Purnendu Bimbanana*”. This can be a description of the *Vedas* only because it implies something which is *Purna* i.e., full and only the *Vedas* are complete in every sense. Therefore, the word Bharati refers to the *Vedas*. The world itself is not complete. The only thing which is full in the universe is divinity. This aspect of fullness is to be found only in *Prajapati* or Brahman and therefore, when we use the word Bharati or Bharath it can refer only to the aspect of the Brahman or the *Vedas*. The desire and the ability to work and the knowledge of how to work, all together will represent the aspect of Bharatha.

The same thing is described in terms of three different paths—namely the path of *Karma*, the path of *Upasana* and the path of *Jnana*. These three have also been referred to as *Sruthi*, *Raga* and *Tala* or the rhythm, song and the beat respectively. An appropriate combination of these three represents Bharath. We can also see that if we split the word Bharath into “*Bha*” “*Ra*” “*Ta*”, we can get a correct description of our country. The synthesis of *Bhava*, *Raga* and *Tala*—or the synthesis of the thought, the song and the beat—represents our country. The oneness of thought, word and deed is characteristic of our country. The oneness of these three aspects has also been called *Triputi*.

If the thought takes one form, the song another and the beat yet another form, such uncoordinated music will be very unpleasant to listen to. The song should accompany a proper thought and should be appropriate to the thought. The song must be tuned to a proper beat. Thus there should be unity between thought, song and the beat. The strength to think out some line of action and to put that thought to work and then lead the work properly to its fruition is contained in the statement that the proper study of mankind is man. If man is such that he has one thought, says something else

and does something different, he should not call himself a man. In other words, if there is no co-ordination between one's thought, word and deed one would not be possessing human qualities. In fact, such an individual may rightly be referred to as an animal. A human being should speak out the thoughts that are in his mind and should act in co-ordination with both his thought and word.

This name Bharatha is a *Vedic* word and has been the sacred name of our country. Hence, it is essential that all citizens of this country should make an effort to justify this name. This is the reason why *rishis* laid down strict regulations and principles of morality and ethics for our conduct. They emphasised that human civilisation can be preserved only if we work within these limitations and controls. In this sacred land of Bharath, the quality of forbearance is the most beautiful quality which we can claim. In all our actions, that particular action of sticking to truth is the noblest act. The sweetest of all ideas we accept is the idea of love and affection to a mother. According to the traditions of our country, nothing can be sweeter than the affection for a mother.

Knowing full well that our character is much more important than even our own life, yet we have let the standard of our character fall very low. Today we have

landed ourselves in a situation where we are borrowing our standards and morals from foreign countries. Our interpretation of freedom is taking the peculiar form of an unsteady and fickle minded person. Alas! how shall I describe the manner in which our country is being ruled? Like the elephant which does not know its own strength, our people, although intrinsically strong, do not know their own strength and have become weaklings. The elephant is very strong and yet it can be tamed easily by its trainer. It will do exactly what the trainer directs it to do. So also, citizens of Bharath are forgetting their inherent strength and adapting the ideas given by foreigners. What has happened to our traditions and why have we forgotten the great strength that is contained in them?

Imitation is one of the greatest weaknesses of a human being. We have a heart of our own, a life of our own and strength of our own. Why do we have to imitate someone else's strength and someone else's way of life? This is one of the greatest weaknesses. Today we are imitating others from the trivial to the vital things. If someone wears a sideburn, another person who looks at him also wants to wear a sideburn; if someone wears a tight pant, others want to do the same thing. If someone

grows a bushy hair, others want to do the same thing. This kind of imitation simply means that you have become a slave. What has happened to your own strength and your capacity to think? Why do you have to imitate others' always? Do not become a slave to others. You should become a slave to yourself or a slave to *Paramatma*.

In this context, if you realise that the *Paramatma* is within you, then it means that you should become a slave to yourself. By this, we mean that you should understand yourself. Until you understand yourself, you are a slave. The moment you understand who you are, you become God himself. God is the embodiment of truth, purity and *dharma*. If you develop this aspect of truth and purity, you become one with God. The strength and capacity that are in God cannot be understood by anyone. The only thing that you can do is to enjoy that bliss and follow them and experience them. To describe God as such and such and to say that He is like so and so is not correct. It has been said that "*Bhramavid Brahmaiva Bhavati*" (one who knows Brahman becomes Brahman himself). If an individual is unable to comprehend his own self, how can he comprehend the aspect of Brahman?

It is in this context that Mira had sung a song with a very significant meaning. "How are we to know you and your nature? Oh Lord! some people say that we can attain you very easily. Yet some others say that to attain Divinity is a difficult task. How are we to reconcile these two statements? Some pray for you in the solitude of a forest while some others say that you are in a mansion. How are we to know the truth of these statements? It is only for Radha, who had surrendered everything to Lord Krishna and totally merged in His thought, to understand and recognise the aspect of the Lord".

Here we must ask ourselves who this Radha is in reality. This is only symbolic and signifies the continuous chanting of the Lord's name. If we take the name "RADHA" and look at it in a cyclic order, we get the next word as "ADAR" and the next as "DARA" and the next as "ARAD" and finally back to "RADHA". From this we can see that Radha is one who continually takes to the *aradhana* of the Lord. One who does this *aradhana* continuously is Radha. One who always has the thought of God is Radha.

19. Different Avathars Are Manifestations Of The One God Without A Second

Whatever work is prescribed in the *Vedas* is desirable work, and one should accept it as worth performing. Whatever is not prescribed in the *Vedas* is forbidden. One who fails to differentiate between work that should be done and work that should not be done is a sinner.

“*Brahmithi Bharatha Bhasha*” “*Girivag Vani Saraswathi.*” This is the description of the language of Saraswathi and of Bharatha given in our scriptures. Our tradition has been prescribing that the words which occur in the *Vedas* show the right way in which one can group the letters. To regard the *Vedic manthras* as mere groups of words without understanding the sacred

meaning thereof has become customary. The words like Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi are sacred words of *Vedic* origin. They represent the essence of *Veda* and *Veda* itself. The words *Indra*, *Vayu* and *Brihaspati* convey to us some aspects. They together contain the meaning of the words Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi. The summary meaning of these three words is also contained in the three words *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Aditya*. The synonymous nature of the meaning that is contained in the two sets of three words makes it impossible for either set to come to the place of *yajna* by itself. They always come together to the place of *yajna*. Along with *Aditya* comes Bharatha and along with *vayu* and *agni* comes Saraswathi and Ida. The combination of all these is represented together at the ceremony of *yajna*. The word Bharatha has been considered as synonym or equivalent to *Aditya*.

Bharatha, Saraswathi and Ida are *Vedic* terms. They represent *Veda* itself. They have a *Vedic* origin and *Vedic* significance. We have to recognise and appreciate this aspect.

There is also a well-known alternative name for Bharatha and that is *Dravanodam*. *Dravana* can be interpreted to mean wealth and strength. For one who gives wealth and strength, there is a name *Dravanodaha*.

This aspect of *Dravana* is also a name for the *havis* or the offering to the god of fire. The one who makes the offering is also called *Dravanodaha*. For this *Rithwick*, the *agni* is in the position of the son. For the statement that *agni* is in the place of a child for the *Rithwick*, the support is that the *Rithwick* uses his physical strength and generates the fire by rubbing two pieces of wood. Thus we figuratively regard *agni* as being in the position of a child for the *Rithwick*.

So the *Rithwick* is also called Bharatha. In that context, the word *Dravina* will apply to Bharatha. It is because of the *Rithwicks* who have the name Bharatha and because the name *Dravana* is applicable to the *Rithwicks* there is also a class of people called Dravidas. In this country, whether it is a name taken by an individual or a philosophical principle, that name must have our acceptance in the *Vedic* context. If this does not happen, it cannot be taken as a name by anyone in this country.

The people of this country regard all kinds of work they do as something ordained by and emanate from the *Veda*. They are passed on from generation to generation. It is not as if we learn them afresh and put them into practice. To believe in the statement, *Sakuntalayam*

Bharatha, (which means that the name which Sakuntala's son had, has been given to our country) is a mistake. In fact, the name Bharatha was derived from *Veda* and given to Sakuntala's son. We must realise that the country did exist even before the birth of Sakuntala's son and that the *Veda* did exist much earlier.

These statements are made by the historians and are all false. These three names Bharath, Bharati and Bharatha are *Vedic* names and have *Vedic* origin. It will be appropriate to come to the conclusion that from time immemorial, our country has been called Bharatha. The name came to us from the *Vedas* where the *Rithwicks* were using the term in various ceremonies. Its origin is purely and wholly *Vedic* and is not from anywhere else. It has not come from any kings or philosophical expositions. By virtue of its sacred origin, the name Bharatha has significance for the entire world. Bharatha is a significant name for the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the world. Although the world appears as one, it manifests itself in all the three aspects. When we examine this aspect of Bharatha in the light of the three modes of time, namely the future, present and past they reflect Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi. When we look at this name in the aspect of *agni*, it has been referred to as

“Ida”. When we look at it by the aspect of *vayu*, this has been referred to by a second name Saraswathi. The same thing looked at in the aspect of Indra, is referred to as Bharatha.

You must realise the truth that the name Bharath has not been divided from any individual and its significance is universal. The sound which spreads all over is also referred to as Bharatha. Since there is no direct connection either with *agni* or *vayu*, it is regarded all over the world as *Dwiloka* and is called Bharathi. Since the Brahma Dharma is spread all over the world, it also is called Bharathi. If today the citizens of Bharath are not able to recognise the full significant meaning of this sacred name, it is a very unfortunate situation. All aspects represented by the name of our country must be realised by one and all. Today, the youth are not able to understand the significance of their own names. The name of their country and the stories contained in the *Puranas* convey no meaning to them. If you want to raise your country back to its glorious past, you must read and understand the sacred texts of *Bharatha*, *Bhagavatha*, and so on. The appropriate authority for these sacred texts is not an individual, but *Vedas* themselves. Since the *Veda* has not originated from

any individual, its authority is infinite. The *Vedas* are verily the embodiment of Truth.

Any particular text of history or literature which is the result of the work of an individual, is bound to reflect his attitudes. Our ancient *Puranas* and commentaries on scriptures are being written now by persons who live in the present age. These people are certainly influenced by the environment in the present age of Kali and this is reflected when they rewrite these stories. Since we are forgetting the original meanings of these sacred texts and relying on the statements of individuals, we are missing what is important.

The *Mahabharatha* is regarded as the fifth *Veda*. The stories in the *Mahabharatha* are often misinterpreted by commentators. From *Mahabharatha*, it is known that the Pandavas were living incognito at King Drupada's palace. At this time, according to some writers, Kichaka fell in love with Droupadi and Bhima got angry and killed him. This is not the truth. The actual fact is that Kichaka was ill-treating Droupadi who was at that time in the role of a servant. Bhima was enraged at this and killed Kichaka. There is nothing like Kichaka was in love with Droupadi, because at that time Kichaka was twenty-two years old and Droupadi was seventy-six years old.

Modern writers have in several instances created confusion in regard to stories they have rewritten due to lack of faith and considerable amount of doubt in their own minds in respect of our *Puranas*.

It is now a common experience that some foreigners who look at the religious practices of Indians think that we have too many deities, while God is, in fact, only one. They think we are foolish enough to regard God as having different names and forms. We are not so foolish and ignorant as these outsiders think us to be. It is time that they realise the truth behind the belief and recognition of these aspects of God. Even in the very early stages, our people have realised and asserted that God is one and only one and that there is no second. But for reasons of interpretation to suit each one's attitude, each one has created his own image of the one and only God that exists. It is time that the outsiders realise this aspect. Taking into account the situation that prevails in a country at a certain time we have to experience and regard the one God as manifesting Himself in so many different ways. This is only a phase which has been brought about by environment and conditions.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is the essence of all *Vedas* and in this Krishna had given a very beautiful and apt

analogy. Suppose we are seeing a big tree. In this big tree we see a number of leaves, branches, roots, fruits and so on. We see all this in the big tree. We do not call the flowers by the name of the leaves nor do we call the leaves by the names of the fruits or roots. We use an appropriate name for each part of this single big tree. The branches are branches but they do not become fruit. Similarly the leaves do not become roots. When we want to enjoy the fragrance of the flowers we must smell the flowers and not the roots. Similarly, if you want to taste the fruit you must eat the fruit and not the branches. This big tree which has so many different components and so many different parts is really one in the sense that the seed which gives rise to this tree is only one. Just as there is only one seed for the entire tree, there is only one divine being and all other parts are related to this one source.

The recognition of this oneness in the entire and diverse aspects of divinity is really the basis of *Adwaita*. *Beejam mam sarvabhutanam* or I am the seed for all being, is the basis of Indian philosophy in the form of *Adwaita*. We are witnessing all these different forms and parts of the tree although they have arisen from the same seed. So also we are experiencing different aspects of the one God. God is only one. All other names and

forms we create are only aspects to suit our own experience. As the time changes and the ideas of an individual change, the name and form that he gives to God also change. These names and forms are things which are manufactured artificially in the factory of your own thoughts and mind. For so many different names and forms, our mind is responsible. It is not as if God has in fact all these aspects.

One does not have to go so far to understand this fact. Even in a single human body we have so many different forms that appear at different stages of one's life. As soon as a baby is born, we refer to him as child. As time goes on, the same child becomes more mature and is called a boy. As this boy grows older and acquires different qualities, he will be called a man; and as the same man grows older, he will be called a grandfather. Therefore, the child, boy, man and grandfather, all refer to the same individual although at different times in different forms he is called by different names. The name and form of these different stages are, therefore, different but all these really refer to one and the same individual. These are all different names but appropriate to the same individual only at different times. Similarly good and bad also go on changing more or less in the same manner.

What is good at one time and in one place may be bad at another time and in another place. There is an example which young people understand very well. This evening we eat some very good and tasty food but by next morning the very same thing becomes waste and is rejected. Thus, what was good and tasty the previous evening has been rejected as waste material the next morning. As in this case, the change has come about with time, so also in the world what is good now becomes bad a little later and if there is a change in name and form of some material, we should recognise that such changes from good to bad are coming not because of any connection with the divine but only because of changing times.

In the same manner, we must understand the aspects of *agni*, *vayu* and *adithya* (Sun). When we make fire for cooking, we use for the purpose of cooking. We do not attach any importance to it. If the same fire is prepared for a sacred purpose of performing a *yajna*, then people prostrate before the fire and show great reverence to the fire. Fire is also used to burn dead bodies in cremation grounds. If such fire is seen, not only will people not give any respect to it, but treat it as an evil. No one will cook his bread or food on such a fire. Such

a fire will be treated as unsacred and no one will use it for any other purpose. If the same fire is put in the front of a sacred house, then it is the custom in our villages for people to go to such sacred houses and light another *jyothi* from such a *jyothi* in a sacred house. It was the belief in those days, that if a *jyothi* was brought from a sacred and good house, the other houses will also enjoy prosperity. In the olden days, they used to regard this as a very good custom.

In this context, I will give you a story from the *Bhagavatha*. If you are continuously taught the aspects of *Veda*, then your interest in the subject will decline. So I propose to narrate some light stories from *Bhagavatha* or *Bharatha* to make things easy and give you some relief. In Repalle, Nanda was a well-known and rich *zamindar* (land owner). The inhabitants of that village had great respect for Nanda and they would not disobey him at all. In fact, Yasoda and Nanda were treated by the villagers as if they were their very life-breath. People were lighting up their *jyothis* from Nanda's house in the hope that if they lit their lamps from such a sacred house, they would imbibe the good ideas and behaviour for which Nanda and Yasoda were famous. In those days, people did not have artificial and unreliable lights as we now have.

These lights and microphones which we now use may fail us at any moment. If there is a wick and oil, the lamp will continue so long as the oil and wick are there. These three components are called *Karma*, *Akarma* and *Vikarma*. *Karma* here stands for the wick and *vikarma* stands for the oil and if the wick and the oil are there, we can get the *jyothi*; but if either of them is exhausted, the *jyothi* would disappear and the disappearance of *jyothi* is called *akarma* or disappearance of all action. This kind of *jyothi* was lit and put in the verandah of their house by Yasoda every day. All the ladies of Repalle had the tradition of going in a line and light their own lamps from the particular lamp lit by Yasoda. As Krishna was growing and coming of age, the number of women coming to that verandah was dwindling gradually. The reason was that the mothers-in-law and the husbands in each household who could not recognise the true form and nature of Krishna were preventing the young women from going there. However, those husbands and mothers-in-law who had good feelings at heart permitted the women to continue this tradition. They not only permitted but encouraged the continuance of such a practice. In the pretext of lighting this *jyothi*, the Gopikas used to go to Nanda's house and come back with their hearts filled with bliss.

To that village came a new daughter-in-law by the name of Suguna. Neither the husband nor the mother-in-law of Suguna liked her going to Nanda's house. Suguna was a great devotee. In fact, when she got married she was very happy that she would be going to Repalle where she could watch and enjoy the *leelas* (Divine sport) of Krishna. On arrival at her mother-in-law's house, she found that she was bound by certain harsh rules and regulations. She was told never to look at Krishna and the windows should be closed if Krishna was ever to be found walking on that street. When other women from the neighbouring houses came to describe the *leelas* of Krishna, she felt very sorry that she was not in a position to enjoy these *leelas*. As faith and devotion grew, it was not possible for anyone to stop such devotees from fulfilling their desires. Fortunately, in that house the mother-in-law was herself bringing the traditionally-lighted *jyothi* from Nanda's house.

One day the mother-in-law became very ill and she asked Suguna to go and light the lamp from Nanda's house. The mother-in-law knew that Krishna was away from Repalle. When Suguna came to Nanda's house, she was very unhappy that Krishna was away. She was completely engrossed in the thought of Krishna and as

she was completely lost in the thought of Krishna, her hand was being burnt by the flame, but she was not aware of this. At this time, Yasoda saw this and enquired her how she was not mindful of her hand burning. She asked her if she did not have enough sleep the previous night. Suguna then replied that she was quite unmindful of herself because she was seeing Krishna in that flame and hence she did not feel the pain of her burning hand. When she was narrating this experience to Yasoda, other Gopikas also came to light their own *jyothis* and heard this. On hearing what Suguna told Yasoda, they came running into market place and started singing, “Our Suguna had the vision of the Lord in the flame in Yasoda’s house. It seems in Nanda’s house, our Gopal had given His Darshan to Suguna in the Flame and the very flame burnt her finger”. When this song was heard by the mother-in-law, her fever disappeared and she came running into the street.

From the above story, we have to learn that whenever God does anything, He does it with a purpose and out of it comes some specific good result. Here we see that pleasure is an interval between two pains and in this case Suguna’s mother-in-law realised that Suguna had such great devotion that she had the vision of the

Lord and she began saying that it was a great honour to have Suguna as the daughter-in-law in her house. She also began singing in praise of the Lord. Since it is difficult for common people to understand what is ordained as *dharma* in the *Vedas* and put such *dharma* into practice, our *Puranas* have given several stories which common people can understand and put into practice. This is the reason why our *Maharishis* have written the *Puranas*. Thus, sages like Vyasa and Valmiki have immortalised the stories of Krishna and Rama for the benefit of mankind in the form of *Puranas* so that common people can understand and follow them in their daily lives.

20. God Resides In The Hearts Of Righteous People

Jivas are born in this world as a result of the good or bad contained in the various actions in which they got involved during their previous lives. One who is associated with good actions will always have God with him as an unfailing companion. Both for those who have passed away from this world and for those who are still living, the *Vedas* have remained an ancient source of wisdom. The word of the *Veda* has been the constant companion, along with *Vasu*, *Rudra* and *Aditya* for all people in this entire creation; and it has been guiding and helping them to follow the good path. It has encouraged adherence to good work and so it has acquired the name *Ida*. While people have been involved in the performance of *Karma*, the same *Veda* has been called by name *Vasu*. For the sake of the prosperity of

the world and in order to direct all the *karma* for securing the prosperity of the world, the *Veda* has ordained certain restrictions within which all such work should be done. In that context, Ida has also been called “*Sasini*” or one who lays down rules and commands. At the time of sacrificial ceremonies with *Agni*, several Gods are invited and hence another name given is *Devahu*. All the attempts that we make so that such of the *devas* whom we invite may be identified with the *yajna* and so that they may participate in the *yajna* have been called *Yagnahu*. Because this sacred Goddess is always involved in the utterance of the *manthras*, this Goddess Ida has also been called *Manuhu*. There are thus several synonymous names for this goddess Ida and they are *Sasini*, *Devahu*, *Yagnahu* and *Manuhu*. This goddess with such diverse names has been looking after the prosperity of the world.

For the prosperity of the whole world, the primary basis is the goddess of speech. From speech comes the word, and from the word comes the meaning. Thus, speech is the basis for the total meaning that we see around us in the world and so for the entire material world. It is in this context that we call all matter by the name *Padartha* or meaning of a word. When we utter a

word, say *vastra*, it means a piece of cloth and this in itself is the meaning of the word. In this world, every material that can be perceived is inter-linked with a word and the meaning of the word indicates the material of *Padartha*. So *Padartha* means the material item indicated by this word. For the word, the basis is the speech and the speech is the basis for all matter in this world. This is what has been explained by the word Ida. This word of the *Veda* has been called by another name and that is Saraswathi. Those who are well-versed in the *Vedas* fill their hearts with the contents of the *Veda* and at the time they do the *yajna*, they utter the *Vedavani* from the depths of their hearts and this ability has been called *Saraswan*. This has been called *Saraswan* because the words which constitute the *Vedavani* are within their mind. If these very ideas are expounded in words, it will be called Saraswathi. The ultimate form of this in one’s mind and what comes out as one’s word are called the stream of Saraswathi.

This stream of words flowing from a stream of thoughts has also been called spring of water. This has been compared to a well in which water comes out swelling. In this analogy, we should note that the more water we take out from the surface, the more will come

from the spring, which is the source. In a stream, as much water that flows out will come from the upstream to the downstream. In the same manner, those who are knowledgeable in the aspect of the *Vedas*, when they give out their thoughts, the Goddess Ida gives them strength by which they generate more thought and more words. These flow out like a stream. As such a knowledgeable person on the *Vedas* gives more ideas to the world, the strength of Ida will generate more and more noble ideas so that the stream may flow continuously for the benefit of the world.

This goddess of speech, namely Saraswathi, has been named *Hamsavahini* or has *hamsa* the swan for her carrier. In calling this Goddess of Saraswathi by the name *Hamsavahini*, we should understand the inner meaning. This Goddess Saraswathi who has the swan as her carrier, converts our thoughts into words and in this process she is using the breath we inhale and exhale as the carrier of our thoughts and words. If there is no inhaling and exhaling of the breath, it will be difficult even for the words to emerge from within. The inner meaning of this is that the breath we inhale and exhale appears as the word *Soham*. The word *Soham* signifies the thought that is riding on the swan.

Since this is also an aspect where *Gayatri manthra* has been set to the poetic metre or *chandās*, sometimes this has been referred to as the *Hamsagayatri*. *Chandas* should not be used in the context of the ordinary metre. The *chandās* should be used only in the context of the metre that occurs in the *Vedas*. Other words cannot be appropriately called *chandās*. Maharishi Panini has said that this word *chandās* can be used only for describing what appears in the *Vedas* and any reference to any other sentences is not proper. Even while using the word *vak* one should be careful to see that it is used only for words that come out of the *Veda*.

This sound of *Soham*, which is synonymous with the *Hamsagayatri* aspect which emerges out of the depths of our heart is sacred and has also got the name *Vasuhu*. The three names *Vasu*, *Rudra* and *Aditya*—are synonymous with each other. They appear different but they stand for one and the same thing. Whether it is with reference to the three modes of time, past, present and future or the three worlds (*Bhu*, *Bhuva*, *Suvah*) or the three gunas *sathwa*, *raja* and *thama* in all these aspects they appear as one and do the same function. It is only in the case of people who give their heart to God and have their total attention fixed on God that this word *Vakvani*

takes the form of *Veda* and enters their heart. Only such people are called wise persons with respect for the *Vedas*.

For people to always entertain useless and trivial ideas and to think of actions which cause harm to others and to involve themselves in such actions is contrary to the injunctions that are contained in our *Vedas*. In this human life of ours which is transient and lasts only for a short while, to learn so many words and indulge in so many actions not prescribed in the *Vedas* is unsacred. Such conduct is not approved by the *Veda*. The mind has been given to you for cultivating sacred thoughts, and the speech for speaking only good and sweet words, useful and palatable to others. Man knows that ultimately he will drop down dead, but he deceives himself into participating in actions which are harmful and wrong.

We have already learnt that due to such rigorous conditions of discipline being laid down and ordained by Ida, it is also referred to by another name *Sasini*.

Does the tree know the sweetness of its own fruit? Does the creeper enjoy the honey that comes from a flower on it? Does the book of poems enjoy the sweetness contained in the poetry? How can the writers and literateurs who deal with the material world,

understand the beauty of *nivriti*? It is very difficult for man steeped in the material world to understand the beauty of detachment. It is in this context that it has been said *yad bhavam tad bhavati*. We often think that others also have ideas similar to whatever we have. All that has been said by the historians is a reflection of their own thoughts on people and events. God lives in the hearts of those individuals who always walk along the path of *dharma* and will not swerve from it under any circumstances. This is an unquestionable truth. God is always merciful on those who follow the righteous path.

This truth has been illustrated in a very nice manner in the *Mahabharatha*. Krishna wanted to negotiate a truce between the Kauravas and Pandavas with a view to prevent the war. But when he entered the court of the Kauravas, the wicked people there like Duryodhana and Dussasana, did not receive him well. It is natural that irrespective of their bad qualities, King Dhrutarashta was trying to protect his children. The blind King Dhrutarashtra asked Krishna as to which side he would extend his help and support, in the event of a war. Krishna replied that he would be on the side of the Pandavas. Dhrutarashtra was very agitated at this statement of Krishna and was arguing vehemently with

Krishna. He told Krishna that he should not show favour towards the Pandavas especially as both the Pandavas and the Kauravas were related to him. He said that to support one side and not the other was not right. At this insinuation, Krishna was very angry and retorted by saying that there is no comparison between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Pandavas were the embodiment of *dharma* and righteousness whereas the Kauravas were wicked people.

He explained the close relationship that obtains between Krishna and the Pandavas in the following terms. In Pandavas, Dharmaraja the eldest is like one's head. Arjuna is like the shoulders, Bhima is like the stomach while Nakula and Sahadeva are like the two legs. These five brothers constitute one body. In this one body Krishna is the heart. It is not possible for the body to live without the heart and vice-versa. The inseparable connection between Pandavas and Krishna is like the connection between the heart and the body and to compare them with Kauravas is meaningless and shameful.

The Pandavas were humiliated on many occasions. They faced several troubles and losses, and in spite of all that they never lost faith in Krishna and never swerved from the path of *dharma*. The Pandavas who were the

children of a great King suffered much more than even common men. But because Krishna was always installed permanently in their hearts they could withstand all the troubles and overcome anything that came their way. They treated Krishna's words as if they were more important than their own lives. The Pandavas liked, loved, and respected Krishna.

You can understand this aspect of their love, with a small example. When Krishna returned to report to the Pandavas that his attempts at reconciliation had failed, the young Sahadeva began shedding tears of joy and embraced Krishna. At this, Krishna asked why he was shedding tears of joy, instead of being afraid of war. Sahadeva replied "I want to exhibit the feelings that are in my mind. When we were sending you, our brother-in-law to Hasthinapura to negotiate peace, I wished within myself that the peace negotiations should fail. Only I could not express that feeling openly. When we gave you this task, I was very much afraid that you were entering into the midst of the wicked and cunning Kauravas. I was praying that you should return safely." The Pandavas have thus demonstrated that besides devotion and attachment, *prema* or love was equally important. Even if they had not undertaken rigorous

thapas and performed any *yajna*, the very name of Krishna was everything for them.

It is said that “Love is God, Live in Love”. The Pandavas had put this into practice. The Pandavas are the only true examples to illustrate such feelings. They looked upon Krishna as an embodiment of love and lived in that love. In difficult times, they believed that Krishna was the Lord Himself. In happy times too, they believed that Krishna was the Lord. At all times, they believed that Krishna was the *Paramatma*.

The Pandavas did not become elated when they were happy nor did they pine when they were in sorrow. They were never proud of their success nor were they depressed at their losses. They were showing the same feeling of equanimity at all times. Hence, the Pandavas are considered to be a noble example of unwavering faith and steadfastness.

Our devotion and prayer to God should not be for the sole purpose of obtaining something or fulfilling some desire of ours. This should be for the sake of *Atma* or for becoming one with the Lord and for the sake of getting the bliss that one can get by being close to the Lord. The first thing one should attempt to do in this context is to

make one’s speech sacred. The spoken word is the form of Saraswathi, and our heart is the embodiment of Ida. Our thought and word together have the form of Bharatha. This Bharatha may also be understood by us as signifying the stream of love or *prema*. If such a stream of *prema* is turned backwards, it will be very difficult to return it back to the right direction. The by-gone days of man’s youth and the water of a stream that has flown down cannot be retrieved. Therefore, if we let Saraswathi, the embodiment of our speech, go astray without control, then it is very difficult to bring her back. We should not use the wrong word and abuse our speech causing trouble or harm or deceit to others.

In an attempt to fulfil our desires, we sometimes get wrong and crooked ideas. I will tell you a small story to illustrate this. There was a Brahmin who was quite knowledgeable in *vedas*. He had the practice of inviting any individual moving in front of his home, giving him food and treating him like an important guest. Even if he did not have the necessary resources in his house, it was his habit to go to a neighbour’s house and beg for food to feed his guests. He was suffering from great poverty but he never allowed his poverty to subdue him. He was always fulfilling his duties as a *grihastha*. One day he

found a person in front of his house at twelve noon and invited him to come into his house and receive his hospitality.

In that house were living with him his wife and only son. Because this *Vedic* Brahmin was inviting every day someone or other and providing hospitality, the wife and the son were frequently cautioning him that there was nothing left in the house. They said that there was no food to eat or water to drink. The mother and son were wondering if something was wrong with the Brahmin because he was inviting someone every day although there was not sufficient food for even the inmates of the house. In this way, they were always trying to discourage and displease their guests.

The mother and son thought that they had a nice opportunity on that day and they managed to see that there was not even a leaf on which to serve food. The owner of the house invited the guest to wash his hands and feet and showed him all respect and it was time to serve the food. The owner of the house was informed by his wife that there was not even a leaf in the house. The owner of the house went to a neighbouring house with the intention of borrowing a leaf. That day, may be as a

result of the evil intentions of the mother and son, he was not able to secure a leaf anywhere. On that day, the mother and son kept a stout stick ready in the place where they were to serve food. The guest asked them what was the purpose of that stick. Then the mother and son explained that it was the practice of the owner of the house to invite a guest every day and give him a good beating with that stick. They said that they were sorry that it was his turn that day and that they were wondering whether a lean Brahmin like him would be able to survive the heavy blows.

As soon as this weak Brahmin heard to these words, he started running away. On seeing the guest running away, the owner of the house rushed to the spot with a leaf and asked where the guest was. The Mother and son began telling another lie as they had their plan ready. They said that he asked them for a stick and when they did not give him the stick, he ran away wondering how those who could not give him even a stick can provide him food. The father scolded them by saying that they failed in their duty for not only had they not given him any food but they failed in giving him even a simple thing like a little stick which he had asked for. So with a view to give him what he wanted, he started

running with the stick, behind the guest. But, this guest under the impression that the stick was meant for beating him, started running even faster. He thought that the host was running with a stick only to beat him. Not knowing all that had happened, the host was shouting and requesting the guest to go slow and telling him that he was going to give him the stick. Here, what has actually taken place is one thing and the ideas that were in the mind of the concerned persons are quite different. Hence, this undesirable incident happened. This unfortunate incident has happened because there are wicked people who are engaged in the task of making impure the thoughts and ideas of a pure *Vedic* Brahmin.

The tongue is the most important of the organs and it should not slip and utter bad words. It should use all its capacity for uttering the name of the Lord Govinda and always speaking good words. Speech and words constitute Saraswathi and should never be misused. This aspect of Saraswathi is most important for students. Young students must take great care to keep their tongues sacred by not using bad words or bad speech. Not only students but all people should install Saraswathi in an important place. People usually think that Saraswathi is important and has a special significance only for the

students. In fact, Saraswathi is present in the hearts of everyone and it is the function of Saraswathi to see that no improper or impure words come out of the tongue of any person. You should take care to see that your tongue does not utter impure words.

Today unfortunately in the name of Saraswathi, people are pursuing education that does not lead one on the right path. All our education today is directed primarily towards earning a pittance of a living. Our education becomes completely purposeless if it were to be used to earn a mere living. Education today does not broaden your vision and teach you any aspect of *Atma*. We should use our education to sanctify our lives and not merely to earn a pittance of food. As lightning accompanies clouds, there should be humility accompanying true education. That kind of humility will always accompany intense and deep knowledge. Today we do not see any humility in persons who claim to be educated. Some do not even understand the meaning of the word humility. When we do not know what humility is, how do we know what *jnana* or knowledge is?

We are only carrying on our head the load of useless degrees which have no real value at all. I have said before that people spend a lot of time in learning

algebra but they would not be able to assess the area of their own house. Everyday they involve themselves in doing physical exercises and drill but they get into great trouble when they are asked to sit in *Padmasana*. They learn in great detail the science of Botany but they do not know the use of tulasi. It is not proper and befitting for the citizens of Bharath to acquire such education and feel proud that they have acquired a high level of knowledge in a special area. To think that they have acquired higher knowledge especially when they have lost track of all general knowledge, is being very foolish. One should first attempt to get knowledge of the *Atma* and only after that the worldly education to make a living in this world. In other words, one should have knowledge of both *dharma* and Brahma with a view to enjoy the worldly as well as spiritual aspects.

Sacred-minded students!

Your hearts are very tender. You are still young; your minds are very pure and you are selfless. You should start very early, even now with your selfless and unwavering mind and acquire the right type of education. That is why we say, “Start early, drive slowly and reach safely.”

21. Thath Thwam Asi

Atma is permanent. No one can destroy this *Atma*. There is no death or destruction for *Atma*. As one changes a worn-out garment for a new one, so also, when the body is worn out, the *Atma* will get into another body.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

Our *Sruthi* has been teaching us that there is nothing in this world other than Brahman. Not only in this world but any where there is no second to Brahman. There is nothing which existed prior to Brahman. Therefore we cannot get proof for the existence of Brahman from any place other than Brahman itself. There are no special qualities which can be attributed to Brahman. The point to be noted here is

that Brahman existed even before all the commentaries or expositions. Hence, no commentary can really expound the true nature of Brahman. *Prakruthi*, the material world or *nivritthi*, the process of taking recourse to the non-material world, both of them revolve round Brahman and they are close to Brahman. All that is existing in the form of knowledge including ignorance is simply Brahman. The basis for everything is Brahman itself. While Brahman is flowing like a stream continually and unbroken, to comprehend it becomes a very difficult task. What we should recognise is that while the stream is flowing in an uninterrupted manner, it is not losing its completeness. This kind of completeness takes the form given by the three names Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati. It also takes the corresponding three places of *Vasu*, *Rudra*, and *Aditya*. This strength and form also take three names, i.e., Sasi, Gouri and Savitri. These goddesses are laying down the form in which the world should move. Our *Sruthi* has also been preaching that the connection between this trinity of Goddesses is inseparable. These three are always together. The natural place which *Aditya* takes is Bharatha. The natural place which *Rudra* takes is Savitri and the natural place which *Vasu* takes is Ida. *Vasu*, *Rudra* and *Aditya* represent the natural form of

Veda Vani. For the name *Aditya*, we can take the word Bharatha as the true equivalent.

The name Bharatha is synonymous with *Aditya*. We have to recognise that this word does not apply only to one country but that it applies to the entire world. For us to think that this word Bharatha which has adorned the aspect of *Aditya*, has a limited connotation is an incorrect way of interpreting it. These are sacred and *Vedic* words. It is not possible to describe them fully in terms of words which are not of *Vedic* origin.

To try and explain the sacred *manthras* in terms of words which have come much later will be doing something incomplete, because the *manthras* themselves are coming from times immemorial. If we make an attempt to use ordinary words which have come into vogue much later to describe the aspect of Brahman, it would not be correct as in that way we would be limiting the aspect of Brahman. It is in this context that it has been said that it is not possible to comprehend divinity with either one's mind or eyes or even intellect. This is because Brahman existed long before mind and intelligence came into existence. Hence something which was there already cannot be described by means of words which came much later. Is it possible for a newly born

son to describe the qualities of his father who has been living even before the son was born? To describe the infinite aspect in terms of limited words and limited experience is not possible. The *Maharishis* who were very well versed in the *Vedas* and *manthras* realised that it is not possible to explain and describe the aspect of Brahman in terms of words. Hence, they have been indicating it only by their silence. They have been saying that experience alone can be the correct way of comprehending Brahman and exposition is not the correct thing to do.

In the realm of physical world, it is quite easy to describe something which we do not understand, by means of certain words. We created words like *nirguna*, *nirakara*, *niranjana* etc., but we do not even know the meaning of these words. What is the use of describing something we do not know in terms of words we do not understand? This is a common error which we all commit. Sankara gave a beautiful example for this. It is only when something is in existence that we can describe its *anti* or opposite. If there is not something which relates to the *para* or spiritual in the material world, we cannot think of explaining its opposite i.e *apara*.

If you accept that all materials are one and the same and there is no difference between one another,

where is the question of your accepting one thing and rejecting another? Thus, if you have reached a stage where you are able to recognise everything as an aspect of Brahman, then where is the question of rejection of something and acceptance of another? In that stage, whatever you do, such as accept or reject, is only a reflection of your own mind.

If you have not developed a concept of the basic unit, you cannot have the concept of many. You can move on and comprehend the meaning of many only if you have a clear concept of the one basis. That is why we say *Ekoham Bahusyamiti*. We have to realise the truth that it is from the one that several different manifestations arise. The knowledge of wisdom with the help of which we realise this aspect of oneness is called *bhakthi* or devotion. This is what devotion enables one to realise.

It has been the practice in our country that when one wants to worship God, he wishes to visualise the Lord in a form similar to his own form. He will associate with the Lord a head, a body, limitations etc., like those he has. That is based on his own idea about himself. He wants to picture God after his own self. There is also a natural feeling for an individual to think that God is something much bigger and higher than himself in

stature. If you ask a he-buffalo how God is, it will probably reply that God is like a He-buffalo, only many times bigger and many times stronger. So also, it is natural that each *Jiva* will picture God as something much bigger than himself, many times more in strength and in abilities. Here we see that God is being given a name and a form by us depending on our own concepts but He Himself has no form or *gunas*. The *gunas* that are ascribed to Him are given by us and even the form that we associate with Him is dependent on our notions but God himself has no name, form or *gunas*.

A new born baby is not coming with a name attached to it but on the tenth or the eleventh day, the parents or close relatives give a name to the baby. For a new born baby, parents or relations existed prior to its birth. Therefore, they are able to give it a name. For the *Parabrahma*, there is no one who existed prior to Him and so no one can give any name to Him. The devotees who worship God begin to give the Lord some name which is in accordance with their own experience and their own notions of the Lord. What people actually do is to visualise this omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent Divinity with some name and form of their liking and then experience the bliss in it. Depending on

the strength of devotion of the devotee who worships God and also in accordance with the depth of attachment which the devotee develops for Him, God becomes his companion and helper.

One may ask what about people who do not worship God? Does God not help them? Neither grace nor kindness, neither anger nor pleasure have their origin in God. These things depend only on the devotee. To understand this we can have an example. If one goes close to a fire, the coldness will be removed and he will experience the warmth of the fire. If he does not go close to the fire, neither will the coldness be removed nor will the warmth be experienced by him. In other words, to feel cold or warm depends on how close he is to fire. Similarly, whether or not you experience the grace or the kindness of the Lord will depend on how close you get to the Lord. It does not depend on God.

It is in this context that two words have been used by our ancestors, namely *Upasana* or *Upavasa*. *Upa* means close and *vasa* means residence and *upavasa* simply means that when you are close to God, all your bad qualities will be removed and you will attain good qualities. The word *upasana* means that you are sitting close to the Lord.

The word *Upanishad*, also, can be interpreted as—*Upa* means close and *Ni* means at a slightly lower level and *shad* means sitting. Thus, *Upanishad* means to go near the Lord and sit down. The implication of the word is that you have to go close to the Lord and sit down as you cannot take a position higher than the Lord because you are full of doubts. Here you are in the position of *Thwam* and God is in the position of *Thath*; that is, He is in a position to clear all your doubts and you have to sit down and get your doubts clarified. The relationship between *Thath* and *thwam* is such that knowledge has to flow from *Thath* to *thwam* and that is why it has been called *Thath thwam asi*. *Thwam* is the place from where questions generate and *Thath* is the place from where answers come. Because *Thath* is a position of knowledge, there can be no question from that place. *Thath* is full of knowledge.

In this context, we say that depending on the extent of *Prema* or love and affection with which one goes close to the Lord, God will reciprocate and look at the devotee with the same amount of *Prema* and grace. There is a small example for this. To such devotees who worship and respect God and who believe in God from the depths of their heart, God becomes a companion and

a guide to them. On the ninth day of the battle of Mahabharatha, the old grandfather Bhishma was waging war in many ways against the Pandavas. All the arrows that were coming from the side of the enemy towards the Pandavas were full of fire and power of destruction. All these harmful weapons which were intended to harm Arjuna actually protected Arjuna, and the reason for this is that the Lord Himself was the charioteer for Arjuna and under such circumstances the weapons not only did not cause harm but they even helped Arjuna. Krishna never told Arjuna the secret of this. But on the ninth day Arjuna, finding that victory was on his side and on returning to his camp, was a little bit arrogant and developed some pride.

The moment one gets pride and develops ego, it is natural that a situation develops where he forgets even the human nature. It is common experience that when we ride in a car the owner does not get down first but some assistant first opens the door for the owner to come down. Following this practice, Arjuna would not get down from the chariot first. He had an idea that Krishna the charioteer should first get down and open the door for him and then only he wanted to get down with great pride. But, Krishna addressed Arjuna as his brother-in-

law and asked him to first get down and go inside. Arjuna did not listen to this. Arjuna had the quality of being stubborn on certain occasions. He felt that Krishna should first get down and then he would get down. However, a little later, he realised that it would be unwise to enter into argument with Krishna, especially when the war was still going on. Hence, he got down from the chariot and went inside. But, Krishna insisted on his going further into the house. After Arjuna went inside, Krishna jumped down in an instant and immediately thereafter the whole chariot burnt down and was reduced to ashes. When asked for the reason, Krishna explained that all the weapons that were used that day in the war were deadly and were full of fire power and that He had to keep them under control until then by putting them under His feet. He also disclosed that if He were to get down earlier, Arjuna would have been burnt along with the chariot. He said that in order to protect Arjuna, he had waited until Arjuna got down and then jumped out in a moment.

It is in this context that Krishna was also called Bharatha because of His all-pervading nature. The meaning of this is that the aspect of Bharatha is connected with *Aditya* and *Aditya* is in turn connected

with *agni* and therefore if you want to control *agni*, you have to put it only in another place where there is *agni*.

Two days prior to this, Krishna undertook to protect the Pandavas in a different manner. Bhishma was swearing before Duryodhana that he would now enter a crucial and terrible phase of battle with the Pandavas and would even finish them off. When Droupadi heard such a statement emanating from Bhishma, she was quite afraid. She was afraid because she knew that Bhishma was very strong and that in one moment he could kill all the Pandavas. She was afraid that Bhishma would kill all her husbands and render her a widow. In this terrible fear, she had no one to go to and express her fear. She had only one person and He was the omnipresent, omnipotent Lord Krishna. She went and prayed to Krishna that in view of Bhishma's threat, He had to save her and protect her *Sumangalyatva*. The nature of God is such that He would submit Himself to the limitations which He himself has created. The Lord told Droupadi that He was prepared to rescue and protect Her but said that she must also make her efforts. The Lord said "I am residing in your heart as the *Atma*. Therefore, when you make an effort on your own, I will supplement your efforts." If we take a piece of wood

and go on moving it up and down, fire is not going to be generated. We have to take two similar pieces of wood and rub one against the other vigorously. It is only then that fire will be generated. Similarly, Krishna said “When my aspect of divinity manifesting externally and my own aspect which is residing in you internally as *Atma* come together, then only useful results will come.”

As in the analogy of an electric current, we will not get any benefit of the electric current if only we have the negative or the positive aspect. Unless the negative and the positive come together, current will not be produced. The Lord has emphasised, “I can give God’s grace. But you will have to supply human effort. Unless God’s grace and human effort come together, the result cannot be achieved.”

Immediately Droupadi enquired as to what she should do. She assured Krishna that she was willing to do anything to save her husbands. The Lord told Droupadi that she should go to the house of Bhishma that night and act as he advised her. It is true that in the battlefield, Bhishma swore but later when he went home he was in a great dilemma and was asking himself how he could fulfil his promise and how he could kill the Pandavas who were the embodiments of *dharma*. He was

also troubled because if he did not fulfil his promise, his entire life would be useless. In such a dilemma, he was walking up and down in his tent in the battle field.

While Bhishma was struggling in his own mind in this way, everyone else was sleeping in their respective camps after the tiresome battle during the day. Then Krishna woke up Droupadi and said that she should somehow disguise herself by using a big blanket to cover herself and follow Him. Krishna was leading and Droupadi was following him. The reason was that even Droupadi did not know the residence of Bhishma and so Krishna was leading her. As soon as they approached Bhishma’s camp, Krishna moved aside a little and told Droupadi that Bhishma was struggling because of sleeplessness and that she should enter the house quietly and fall at Bhishma’s feet. When Droupadi was moving gently, Krishna found that she was wearing shoes which were appropriate to wealthy people in those days and they were making some noise. Then Krishna stopped Droupadi and asked her to remove the shoes as they were making a lot of noise. She removed the shoes and Krishna wrapped them and held them in his own hands. She went into Bhishma’s tent where he was moving up and down restlessly. As soon as she was face to face with Bhishma,

she, with her bangles and ornaments making a lot of noise, immediately fell at his feet. Bhishma realised that she was a family woman and a married woman and he immediately blessed her by saying *Deergha sumangali bhava*. That was the blessing which he spontaneously gave to Droupadi.

Then Droupadi got up and she was shedding tears of joy. Bhishma saw her in that state and was very much surprised. He said “I have now given you blessing that you should be a *deergha sumangali* whereas I took a vow to kill your husbands; what a conflicting situation have I landed myself in. Surely you would not have come by yourself at this dead of night. Someone must have given you this idea and made you do this and extract the blessing from me that you will remain a *sumangali* for a long time.” Droupadi said that no one else except Lord Krishna would help her at this juncture, and immediately on hearing that Krishna brought her there, Bhishma started looking for Krishna. Krishna walked in with Droupadi’s shoes in his hand, tied in a cloth. Bhishma touched the bundle of cloth and saw that they were Droupadi’s shoes. Then Bhishma shed tears of joy and said that Krishna was so great and if his grace was achieved, he would even carry the shoes of his

devotees. The next day it so happened that all the weapons released by Bhishma aimed at Arjuna were received by Krishna and thus Arjuna was protected.

Krishna found that Arjuna’s body was in great discomfort and the latter felt very hurt because for his sake, Krishna had to suffer all this. By thinking like this, he became weak in mind and Krishna was sure that if he allowed this situation to continue Bhishma would surely kill him and victory would be on Bhishma’s side. At this juncture, Krishna jumped out of the chariot and was himself going out to fight Bhishma and Bhishma realised that the very God Himself was coming down to kill him and protect Arjuna. Then Bhishma prayed to the very person coming to kill him because He was the Lord Himself, in the following terms.

“As you jump out of the chariot with a leap, the brightness with which your earrings shine fills the whole sky. The universe that is inside you gets so shaken that the world is unable to bear the jolt. As you advance with the wheel in your hand, the cloth on your shoulders slips down. Even as Arjuna pleads again saying ‘I have staked all my reputation with full faith in you. Pray do not let me down.’ Like a Lion, you roar, ‘Today, I shall kill Bhishma and I shall save you’ and you ask Arjuna to

step aside to let you go; Oh God! You are advancing like a thunder; you alone are my saviour and none else. Save me as I seek thy protection!”

The whole situation had changed suddenly and Krishna took great pity on Bhishma. Here it is necessary for us to understand the context in which Bhishma had offered his prayers. It is quite natural for us to pray to God to save us if someone else is coming to harm us. Here we must realise that Bhishma did not recognise any other form of God. The Lord Krishna who was advancing towards him was the only God for him and therefore he addressed Krishna himself to save him. We have to observe the oneness of the God to whom Bhishma prayed here. Divine strength can be understood only by divinity and divine strength can be controlled only by divinity. No one else can either understand or control divine strength. The aspect of Brahman is that which is in possession of such divine strength which can be controlled only by divine strength. These aspects of Brahman which enable us to realise the oneness of divinity are the aspects contained in the trinity of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi. These are the three forms which protect and give satisfaction to the entire world. It is unfortunate for us to think that the word Bharathi which

expounds such an infinite meaning comes from the name of some king and that it is not a *Vedic* word. This is a *Vedic* word. It has not come from any king or country. There are many words in our *Veda* which describe the aspect of Bharath and which expound the greatness of Bharath.

22. God Is Above All Sense Perceptions And Is Omnipresent

Man is ready to indulge in sinful acts but when it comes to reaping the fruits of such sinful acts, he shows much hesitation. On the other hand, he will give up doing good work knowingly and with considerable ease. He is always ready to give up doing good deeds.

Pavitratma Swarupas! students, boys and girls!

You have already learnt that *Veda* teaches you things which are beyond direct as well as inferential evidence. There is a definition of *Veda* which states *Vedayati iti vedaha* which makes some people think that *Veda* is preaching to you something secret and special which we are not able to understand easily. When

we ask the question “What is it that the *Veda* tells us?” we begin to learn that the *Veda* has certain supplementary branches of knowledge such as *Gandharva Veda*, *Ayur Veda* and *Natya Veda*. These occur as additions to the *Veda*. In other words, we see that for the word *Veda* there are certain prefixes which are added. These prefixes explain what those *Vedas* deal with.

What is it that the word *Veda* without a prefix tells us? There are four *purusharthas* namely *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* which are dealt with in the *Veda* in relation to an individual and the kind of work an individual has to undertake in his life. Thus actions of all kinds that concern man at every moment of his life are being dealt with by the *Veda* in the words *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*. *Artha* and *kama* or wealth and desire, are natural to human beings. One should not in that context think that *dharma* and *moksha* relate to some higher state of life.

To think that wealth and desire only are important for human life and *dharma* and *moksha* are related to a higher aspect is not correct. It is only when we understand this clearly that we will be able to understand the aspects, teachings and the significance of the words contained in the *Veda*. We should understand the significance of the

life principle in the manifold *jivas* and know how it has come into them and what happens after that life principle departs from the body of a *jiva*.

It is only when we understand the significance of the words creation, sustenance, dissolution, life and grace, in this world, will we be able to get at the full meaning of what is contained in the *Vedas*. These words are synonymous with the five *pranas* (airs). These five *pranas* are the basis for the five *kosas* (sheaths). These five *kosas* have also been called the five elemental substances. Amidst these five elemental substances there is also something which is divine and lets us know the nature of the inner self. The five *karmendriyas*, the senses of action, are externally visible. But we also know of the five senses of perception.

Besides these, we should recognise the inner organs called *Antahkarana*. Associated with this inner *Antahkarana* is the *Atma* or the inner self and in the context of this *Atma*, you have to use the word *Hiranya*. *Hiranya* signifies to us the life force. The word *Hiranya* literally means gold. Through the help of fine gold, one can get rid of all impurities. Because of this capacity to remove the impurities and to cleanse with the help of fire, *agni* or fire has been associated with the word

dharma and such fire has another name *Pavaka*. This strength or capacity by which it can purify matter is also called an aspect of *pavaka*. Because it is filled with the aspect of *Hitaramya* it is also called *Hiranya*. The subtle body is to be described as *Hitaramya* but gradually the name has changed into *Hiranya*. *Hitaramya* became *Hiranya* and in common parlance it became *Hiramyā*. Here the aspect of Brahman associated with *Hiramyā* has been dealt with in the aspect of Saraswathi. Just as *agni* can cleanse, purify and remove all impurities in matter, the inner organs can be purified by Saraswathi.

In this context, because of its ability to cleanse the inner organs, Saraswathi has also got the name *Pavaka*. You can remove your ignorance, if you listen to Saraswathi. Therefore Saraswathi has the capacity to remove your ignorance through this process of listening. Because of this capacity by which it can remove your ignorance and give you *Prajnana*, Saraswathi has been called *Pavaka*. It has also been called by a sacred name *Pavana*. This word *Pavana* means breeze or air. This divine air or breeze takes the form of life in every individual. This aspect of life which we recognise as being present in everyone is referred to as the aspect of Bharatha. This aspect of Bharatha which is synonymous with the aspect of life in everyone has also been identified

with *Aditya*. As such, the synonym *Pavaka* became common for *Aditya* also and has become common for Bharatha as well.

Thus, Ida, Saraswathi and *Vayu* have become synonymous with the aspect of Bharatha. Therefore in the inner place where the *Atma* resides because of the aspect of Ida and Saraswathi also being resident, the aspect of Bharatha is also resident. The coincidence of the inner *Atma* and the aspect of Bharatha is not being recognised by us. Hence, we are not giving the word Bharatha its due prominence. We are just thinking that it signifies the name of a country. This is wrong. The poets, writers and historians did not go into details of the origin of the word Bharatha and they drew conclusion which are not fully acceptable in the context of what is being said now about *manthras*.

Only those of our *rishis* who had mastery over the *Vedas* were the people who could claim to be true poets (*kavi*). It is appropriate to call only such people who are well-versed in *Vedas* as poets. To assume that a person who has only poetic abilities can become a *rishi* is very inappropriate.

The *rishis* of the old days had pure and clear minds, and hence they could comprehend Divinity. Hence they

were called *kanta darahana*. They could have the vision of the past, present and future in one glance. On account of their purity, they could comprehend the three modes of time. Here we can recognise the fact that the name *rishi* is appropriate to only those who can comprehend all the three divisions of time and the three worlds and the triune aspect of divinity. Since such sacred *rishis* undertook the job of compiling the *Puranas* and *Ithihasas*, they acquired fame and importance. People like Valmiki and Vyasa were great *rishis* first by their *thapas* and clarity of mind. It is only afterwards they became writers and poets. One may ask why these *rishis* had to be poets when they already had the aspect of Easwara in them. This they did because they wanted to convey to the rest of the world the subtle aspects of divinity in an easy manner through their writings. The *rishis* of old not only enjoyed the bliss and happiness associated with the aspect of God, but were also anxious to convey the same to others and so they earned God's grace and undertook to write sacred stories which brought happiness and bliss to others. This is an easily recognisable feature of the citizens of Bharath in the ancient times. They realised that the bliss flowing from divinity which they enjoyed was not for their selfish

purposes, but they shared it with people who are engaged in the worldly aspect as well.

There are three methods of learning namely *sravana* (listening), *manana* (constant contemplation) and *nididhyasana* (to assimilate). In these three levels of learning, they installed Saraswathi, Bharati and Ida. You have by now realised that these three names are the three parts of the same aspect. Truly, what you have listened to cannot be easily grasped and assimilated just by listening. You have to do some *manana* or think it over again and again and then absorb what you have listened to. This is *nididhyasana*. If you do all three—listen, think over and absorb—then only can you enjoy the fruits of what you have listened to.

There is a small illustration for this. Suppose some food is cooked in your kitchen. Will your hunger be relieved merely by looking at what has been cooked? Even if you just eat what has been cooked, will you be able to derive the necessary strength from the nourishment? Only if you digest the food that you have eaten, can you get the nourishment. As cooking, eating and then digesting are three essential processes to get the ultimate result, so also, *sravana*, *manana*, and *nididhyasana* must follow one another in that order, so

that it may give you the ultimate result. Then only can you acquire some aspects of the *Atma Vidya*. People who just listen and do not do any *manana* are like those who just see cooked food in a kitchen and do not attempt to eat it.

There may be a number of eatables in the kitchen but this in itself is not enough and does not relieve one's hunger. Only if one eats them will one get some benefit. This stage can be compared to listening and giving some thought to what one has heard. After this what you have listened to must be absorbed into yourself. Then only will you get full benefit out of what you have listened to. These three steps are called *sravana*, *manana*, and *nididhyasana*. Poets are of the view that just by listening to things, one gets full benefit. The *rishis*, having experienced the *Ananda* or bliss after going through various stages and absorbing such *Ananda*, will transmit the same to ordinary people and they will follow up with *manana* and *nididhyasana*.

A small illustration. A scholar takes into his hand a big book and goes through it page after page. His attention is drawn to the contents of the book. On the other hand, we can take the case of a small child who is looking at the same book. The child's attention is drawn only to the pictures in the book and nothing else. The

implication of this example is that the child enjoying only the pictures in the book can be compared to a poet, whereas the scholar who is reading the contents of the book and absorbing them is comparable to a *rishi*. If you look at the pictures only, can you understand the detailed contents?

Will the darkness on the earth disappear merely by listening to the news of a lamp existing somewhere? Will the hunger of a hungry man be relieved by hearing names of several sweets? Will the poverty of a poor man disappear simply by hearing the potential of great wealth and prosperity? The disease of a man is not going to be cured if he simply hears the names of all the medicines that are available. Similarly poets and writers have been reading and writing things without realising the essential meaning of what they have been writing. They are misinterpreting the word Bharatha and hence they do not get the full meaning thereof.

If you stand at the same level as the ocean and look at it, it will appear as a vast sheet of water. On the other hand, if you look at the same ocean from a height, it will appear like a lake. On the same analogy, since the *rishis* were on a higher level in spiritual knowledge and away from the world, they could recognise this vast world as a very small and insignificant entity. When one is at a

lower level, he thinks that the world is big, important and manifold. The diversity and the differences will be seen more clearly. But when one goes to a high position, everything will look smooth, small and even. When we have a narrow vision, our country, our people, our languages will all appear as full of problems and differences. If you can go to a high place and look at the world, it will appear in one unified aspect and all the people and all languages will appear as one.

The word Bharatha is associated with *Aditya*, the Sun. *Aditya* or sun belongs to the whole world and in the same manner, Bharatha does not apply only to a portion of this world. It applies to the entire world. Each of the countries in the world cannot think that the sun belongs to that country. For instance, there cannot be an Indian sun, African sun, or an American sun. There is only one sun which is giving light and brightness to all the countries in the world.

There is another illustration for this. Suppose we have a mud pot, a silver pot, a copper pot and a bronze pot. When water is poured in these four pots, the reflection of the sun will be seen in each of these four pots. We have to realise that it is the same sun that is reflected in all the four pots. The only difference is in the value of the vessel but not in the sun. These pots may

be compared to different countries. The people who live in each one of these countries may be compared to the water in each one of the pots and the reflection of the *Aditya* or the sun is to be compared to the concept which people of each country form of the one and the same divinity.

On account of their good fortune, the people of this country are able to understand the full significance of this word Bharath and hence gave this name for our country. People living in other countries did not understand the full significance of this *Vedic* word and so they did not adopt this name. We have already stated that *Pavaka* is a name synonymous with Bharatha. This name *Pavaka* signifies the aspect of cleansing the individual and therefore *Pavaka* and Brahman are words placed very high in our country. People who have the proper *Samskara* or tradition alone can appreciate the full meaning of the *Vedic* words Bharatha and *Pavaka*. It is in this context that the *Sruthi* has been teaching us that *Paramatma* is made out of the aspects which are above the five sense perceptions.

We should make an attempt to understand what is meant by the phrase above sense perception. There is a small example for this. In the five elemental substances,

matter or earth is the first one. Earth is bound by five qualities—sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The next stage of elemental substances is water. In water, we find that one of the qualities, namely smell, is not found. Thus water becomes a little lighter and more mobile than earth because one of the binding qualities is missing. Water can therefore move from place to place on its own. In the third elemental substance *agni*, we have the qualities of sound, touch and form, but there is neither taste nor smell for fire and so fire is much lighter and can move freely upwards. The next element is air. We find that it is characterised only by sound and touch. The other three qualities of form, taste and smell are not to be found in air. Air becomes very light and it moves freely from place to place in all directions. We come to the fourth element, namely space. Of all the five qualities of perception only the quality of sound is left. It has neither taste, nor smell, nor touch, nor form. Therefore, space has become still lighter, in fact the lightest, and is present everywhere.

So by referring to *Paramatma* as being above the sense perceptions, we mean that He is free from all attributes or *gunas*. It is in this context that our *Sruthis* have taught us that *Paramatma* is beyond all the five elements and is so light that omnipresence becomes His attribute. This is described by saying that He is present

in the smallest of small particles as *Anu* and in the largest of large things as *mahath*. He is both infinitesimally small and infinitely large. What we have to learn here is that as we shed our desires and illusion, we will be able to lead a life with broader views.

The process of gradually giving up desires is referred to as *vairagya* in the language of the *Vedanta*. Less luggage and more comfort makes travel a pleasure. When our ancestors referred to *vairagya*, they meant that you must give up the luggage of your desires and wishes and thus make life less burdensome. By *vairagya* is not meant giving up your family and children and going away to a forest. This is not the meaning of *vairagya*. It is the practice of our countrymen to stand before an idol and pray to it. We may ask how one can reach the infinite by worshipping a transient thing like a picture or an idol? We must realise that one may worship a picture as a God but not God as a picture. That is, you can raise a picture to the level of God by your worship but not bring down God to the level of a picture. Knowing such inner meanings, you should raise your ideas to a higher level. I am hoping that the youth will realise the true import of these statements and take it as their duty to re-establish *dharma* and take this country to greater heights.

23. The Lord Is Always Intimately Associated With His Creation

One can control even a wild elephant with a tool called *Ankusa*. In the same way, for controlling an animal, one would need a big stick. The tool which we use to control an elephant is like a medicine for the elephant. Similarly for an animal, the big stick is the medicine. For curing a disease in a human being, one has to use an appropriate chemical as a medicine. But is there a medicine at all on this earth for transforming an evil person?

Pavitratma Swarupas!

The word *amnaya* refers to the various aspects of God. The words of *Veda* are given many

names and have also told us in many ways this aspect of the divine. The word *amnaya* has got a special meaning in the context of the *Veda*. *Amnaya* is comprehensive and signifies that there is a continuous and uninterrupted practice consisting of *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*, that is to listen, to think over and then to digest or absorb. These three aspects are together called by one comprehensive word *amnaya*. If one does not involve oneself in *amnaya* or in the uninterrupted practice of listening and digesting, then it will not be possible for him to recognise the identity of that with this because he is usually immersed in family matters and other domestic problems.

The *Veda* has taught us the importance of various *purusharthas* such as *dharma* and *Brahma*. We can say with good authority that true education deals only with those matters which pertain to *dharma* and *Brahma*. All education referring to aspects other than these cannot be called true education. The knowledge of Atma or the knowledge that relates to Brahman and the knowledge that gives you some idea of *Paramatma* alone is knowledge and that is what the *Veda* says. Everything else cannot come under the description of knowledge. Mere recitation of the *manthras* contained in the *Veda*

cannot be called knowledge. In other words, true education is that which connects *Karma Yoga* with the *Brahma Yoga*. The connection between the two must become evident to you, must be accepted by you and you must put it into practice in your everyday life. That alone will be called real and complete education. If there is no appreciation of the *Karma Yoga* or the need for action and the spiritual aspects thereof, it cannot be called education.

There are many people who every day recite the *manthras* in the *Vedas* but unless they put into practice what they are learning from the *manthras*, they cannot really be called *Vedic* persons. They may be so called only for external descriptive purposes. If one is able to practise what he learns in the *Vedas* and derives the spiritual pleasure, such a person can readily be called a truly learned person. The three processes namely *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana* which one has to adopt for reaching the end of the *manthras* in the *Vedas* have already been mentioned. Without going through these three processes, mere recitation can be called just scholarship, knowledge in the context of the world. Such knowledge will not go to the depths of his heart and will not reveal the aspect of Brahman to him at all. The kind

of knowledge where one does not follow up the process of listening with the process of thinking it over and digesting it, will at best, be learning without proper background or the requisite culture in it. Any piece of matter or even a living individual that has not been purified and attended to and has not been given the transformation that is necessary, will not be in a proper and natural form.

Every individual has to go through a process of cleansing. There is an illustration for this in the *Ramayana*. While Sita was living in Lanka as a captive, Hanuman entered Lanka in obedience to Rama's orders. Hanuman did look at several people in the chambers of Ravana who had good qualities, good appearance and good ethical standards. While Hanuman thus did see many beautiful women who exhibited great character, he did not find anyone whom he could picture as Sita. Because Hanuman had never seen Sita before coming to Lanka, he had to go by the description of Sita given to him by Rama. Rama had given certain qualities to enable Hanuman to recognise Sita. He did look at several women, but none coincided with the picture of Sita he had in his mind. He began to think about this matter and climbed a tree and went up very high and

was in deep thought asking himself if there were other places where he should search for Sita.

At that instant he saw a beautiful garden—the Asoka Vana—where there were many mansions and other attractive things. He immediately made a beeline for the Asoka Vana. Under a tree, he noticed a woman who did not seem to have any *samskara* or attention to her personal appearance for several months. Around her were many demons who were causing fear with weapons in their hands. When Hanuman saw that woman, he came to the conclusion that she was unattended to for several months and also that she had no desire to show her face to anyone. But when he looked at the clothes that she was wearing, he found that they were dark and black. This dark colour did not tally with the description given by Rama. Hanuman was told that Sita would be wearing a light yellow-coloured cloth because that was the cloth she was wearing when she was preparing for the coronation and when they were asked to go to the forest. As he approached that woman, he was sure that the woman looked as if she was a captive in the hands of someone and she also looked as if she was very distant from all her relations. When he went closer and had a close look, he was sure that she was no other than Sita

described by Rama. He realised that she was practising *manana* and *nididhyasana* that is constant thinking of and constant absorbing of the glory of Rama. He concluded that this lady must be Sita and that if this was any other lady, she would have gone into one of the beautiful mansions in the Asoka Vana and would not have stayed outside.

As Hanuman was having these thoughts in his mind, it so happened that Ravana came there with his entourage. As the King Ravana was coming into the garden, the demons around Sita cautioned Sita and on hearing this caution she slightly lifted her head. At that time Hanuman noticed that there was a small patch of yellow colour in the sari which had been covered all the while by her bent face. Hanuman was an intelligent person and had the quality of thinking for himself and he concluded that he was unable to recognise Sita because she did not have any cleansing attention or *samskara* either for her body or for the clothes that she was wearing. But Hanuman knew the strength of Rama's glory, of listening thereto and thinking it over again and he immediately realised that simply because of the *manana* and *nididhyasana* which Sita was going through, he was able to come to the decisive conclusion about

her. He realised that she did not go through *sravana* during the past several months and that is the reason for her being in this condition.

After some time, Ravana came into the garden and uttered many cruel words and threatened her, but Sita would not yield at all. Ravana finally said that he would give one month's time to her to make up her mind and finally went away. The harsh word which Ravana uttered did not change her mind at all. In fact they did not shake her at all. She was quite firm and she was all the while thinking about Rama and had pictured Rama quite clearly in her mind. Whatever she was thinking about was all the name and form of Rama.

Hanuman realised that her condition was so bad because she had not heard the glory of Rama and he climbed up a tree and sang the glory of Rama. He was convinced that Sita had been reduced to an unrecognisable condition because she was unable to listen to the glory of Rama. Hanuman began singing the story of Rama, how Rama married Sita, how Rama met Hanuman, how he defeated Vali, how he gave *moksha* to the bird Jatayu, and how Rama took fruits from Sabari and so on. As soon as Sita listened to this song, what was lacking for her had been supplied and the necessary

samskara had come about and she appeared in her full glory. All the description which Rama gave to Hanuman appeared in her. On hearing Rama's name, Sita immediately lifted her head and started looking up at the tree from which the sound was emanating, asking herself how such a sacred sound could be uttered in Lanka. When she looked up, she found a small monkey with a diminutive head. This caused her great satisfaction and happiness simply because the name of Rama was being uttered by this small monkey. This vision had given her far greater happiness than the beautiful Asoka Vana and its mansions. She was not attracted by the ornaments which were brought to her by Ravana. She was not happy at all at anything, but the sight of the small-headed monkey uttering the name of Rama made her extremely happy.

The three aspects—*sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*—are respectively representative of the three *Vedas*, the *Rig*, the *Yajur* and the *Sama*. These are also represented by the three aspects of the divine, namely *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi*. Here *Saraswathi* corresponds to *Sravana*, *Ida* corresponds to *Manana*, and *Bharathi* corresponds to *Nididhyasana*. Since one of them was absent for Sita, Hanuman could not recognise her.

Because *Manana* and *Nididhyasana* were present for her, it was possible for Sita to safeguard her honour and respect, but because *Sravana* was not present, totality of the aspect of *Veda* was not present and therefore the complete picture of Sita and the total happiness which comes with the three aspects of the *Vedas* were absent in her.

From this story, it becomes clear that with *manana* and *nididhyasana* one should also have *sravana*. People who merely recite *Veda* will not get the benefit. To get the full benefit they should recite, listen to it and absorb it. All these three aspects together only will present a complete picture of the *Veda*. However strong and cruel your enemy may be and with whatever strength and cruelty he may hit you, if the aspects of *manana* and *nididhyasana* are entrenched in your heart, you can never be hurt or harmed. This aspect is comprehensive and covers all the three—*Sravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyasana*—but that is not enough. What you get from these three has to be put into practice in your daily life and that is why the whole picture has been described by the word *amnayardha vachaspati*. One should not regard *Sravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyasana* as if they are impositions on you. You should adopt them from the

bottom of your heart and put them into practice wholeheartedly and not as a compulsion.

Some people ask that while *Parabrahma* who is self-effulgent, omniscient and omnipresent should be visualised by everyone, why is it that he is seen and recognised by only some people. It is common experience that even the bright shining sun at a great distance from us is not seen when it is enveloped by thick clouds. The clouds hide the sun to some extent. When these thick clouds are blown away by the wind, then the bright sun presents itself to us again. In the same manner, however much you might try, you will not be able to see your own image when you stand in front of an impure and dusty mirror. When you remove the dust on the mirror and stand in front of it, then you can see your image clearly in the mirror.

Thus, to say that the sun is not perceptible when the thick clouds are hiding it is only a result of ignorance on your part. While the heart is unclean and filled with several impurities, you cannot have the vision of the Lord. In such a case, it is not correct to say that He does not exist. The sun is not visible only for that individual who is under the cover of the dark cloud. On the other hand, if he comes out of the clouds, he can certainly see the

sun. For those who are unable to get the vision of the sacred *Paramatma*, it is necessary that they remove the impurity from themselves before they make another attempt.

The sun is called *aditya*. The aspect of *aditya* is synonymous with the aspect of Bharatha. *Vayu* which is the life principle is like the cloud between *aditya* and yourself. The aspect of *Jiva* is something related to the *agni*. If the aspect of *Jiva*, which is comparable to *agni* is to some extent able to control *vayu*, we will be able to see *aditya*. But this *vayu*, *agni* and *aditya* are inseparable. But if you take to the path of *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*, it will enable you to make the cloud of *vayu* thinner and thinner and you will certainly be able to see the aspect of *aditya* with the help of the *Jiva*.

Whether it is the total meaning of the set of words—*Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi*—or the total meaning of the three aspects of learning—*sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*—all these are contained in one word *Amnaya*. In the *Bhagavad Gita* also Krishna has been addressing Arjuna as Bharatha on several occasions. On some occasions, he addressed him as Kurunandana and as Partha. To a large extent, we are

associating with these words a meaning which relates only to our country. We have never been used to give meanings which have a *Vedic* origin. Earth is a symbol of the Lord and is an image of the Lord and one who is born on the earth gets the name Partha. In fact, the name Partha should apply to everyone born on this earth. In this word, differences either from place to place or from country to country are not relevant. When we take a word with universal application and give it a narrow meaning and apply it only to Arjuna, it amounts to a narrow interpretation.

There is another meaning for this aspect of Arjuna. One who has a pure heart is called Arjuna. Some of you know that in the pilgrim centre of Srisaïla, there are two deities, namely, Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba. The name Bhramaramba is given to Sakthi and Mallikarjuna to Easwara. In this *Malli* means jasmine flower. The word Arjuna can be explained by saying that it stands for a white, pure jasmine flower. In the word Bhramaramba, the first letter *Bhra* means bee. When Easwara has taken the form of Mallikarjuna or is represented by the white jasmine flower, then *amba* the mother takes the form of a bee and sucks the honey in this white jasmine flower which is symbolic of Easwara.

Here the name Bhramaramba refers to Arjuna. This shows us the relationship that exists between *Paramatma* and *Prakruthi*, the Lord and His creation. We see that it is only the bee that has the right to go into a flower and suck the honey from the flower. No other insect can go into the flower. All other insects simply go round and round the flower, but it is only the bee that has the capacity to go right into the flower.

This is the reason why an individual born in *Prakruthi* and who wants to attain the Lord will have to adopt this kind of close relationship with *Paramatma*. “Oh Lord! if you become a flower, I will become a creeper and entwine round you. If you become the big Meru mountain, I will become a small stream and go round the mountain. If you become the infinite sky, I will become a small star and be shining in you. If you become the mighty ocean, I will become a small river and merge into you.” It is only when the relationship between the Lord and His devotee is of this inextricable and inseparable type that one can enjoy the unity of the Lord and His creation. This aspect of nature will not allow it to be separated from the Lord even for a moment. Since Arjuna, who was born on the earth, never liked to be away from the creator, he was called Partha. He is one in the creation and very close to *Paramatma*.

The second name Kurunandana has two words, namely *kuru* and *nandana*. The first word *kuru* signifies work and the second one *nandana*, pleasure in work. Arjuna derived pleasure and happiness in involving himself in work. What kind of work? Work related to Krishna; Arjuna derived pleasure in doing Krishna's work and therefore he was called Kurunandana but what is the type of work in which we derive pleasure today? We derive pleasure in idling our time on a holiday when we have no work; but, Arjuna considered holiday as a hollow day. All the names given to Arjuna had a *Vedic* origin. Not a single name of Arjuna had a different origin.

The *Upanishads* constitute the *Vedanta*, which is the sum and substance of the *Vedas*. While compiling these *Upanishads*, sage Vyasa used only words which have a *Vedic* origin. I am hoping that you will install the aspect of *Aditya* in your hearts and since *Aditya* is identical with Bharatha, every word should be regarded as coming from *Aditya* and every word should be regarded as coming from Saraswathi and Ida and therefore you should recognise the sanctity and sacredness of every word that comes from your heart.

24. One's Learning Is Useless If It Is Not Put Into Practice

If Lakshmi the Goddess of wealth decides to come to you, she will come of her own and unnoticed like the water in a coconut. If she decides to leave you, she will go away on her own and without any notice like the soft pulp in the wood apple swallowed by an elephant.

Pavitratma Swarupas! students, boys and girls!

For some time now, we have been trying to get at the inner meaning and significance of the word Bharatha. The *Vedas* are authoritative texts not only for the people who live in this country but for the entire world. All people, irrespective of whether they know and understand the significance of the *Veda* or not, follow

the instructions of the *Veda*. All that you see and enjoy in the material world, the *maya* or the illusion that shows you this material world, the life force in the world, have all been described by one comprehensive word *Purusha*, in the *Veda*. This word signifies the shining and self-effulgent Brahman.

This kind of self-effulgent Brahman is present in the human body in three different names that is *Viswa*, *Taijasa* and *Pragna*. In the world, the same Brahman is present in three different aspects of *Virata*, *Hiranyagarbha* (Golden Womb) and *Avyakruta*. The meaning of such Brahman was being propagated and protected by teachers and scholars from time immemorial. We have to understand the significance of the statement that the meaning of this word was being protected by the *Acharya*. We may think that the word “protect” here means that the teachers have been keeping it secure. This is not correct. The word is used to signify the fact that the *Acharya* teaches this aspect to his disciples who in turn pass it on to their disciples, undistorted.

Indra is one who has the form of *Virat* and gives all the *Aiswarya* or wealth. *Surya* the sun will have the form of *Hiranyagarbha*. *Vasu* stands for one who removes the sorrow. In this context, we know that Indra is present in the waking state, the sun in the dream state

and *Vasu* is present and takes care of the deep sleep state. While they correspond to these three respective states, they are not functioning independently in these states. Since these three are not fully independent, they do not act on their own in these states. Brahman is the only principle which is fully independent and remains as the basis for all the three states.

In this context, the *Veda* has conducted a deep enquiry into the aspects of *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi* and also *Indra*, *Surya*, and *Vasu*. *Veda* has established the sacredness of these aspects. Since *Paramatma* can create Himself and function independently, He has also got a name *Sudrutha*. If we wish to understand this self-creating, self-establishing aspect of *Paramatma*, we will have to listen to those well versed in this matter. The ruling deities of this world, namely *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Adithya* have also reached the status of Brahman.

A statement which says *Jagatah Pitarou Vande Parvathi Parameswarau* is to be found in the *Vedas*. In this verse it is clear that *Parvathi* and *Parameswara* are in the position of parents to the entire world and they look after the welfare and prosperity of the entire world. Understanding the meaning of the position of mother and father, our ancestors have been following the dictum *Mathru*

Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava, that is regard your mother and father as God. Just as every son and daughter have to recognise their relationship with their father and mother and respect them, so also recognising that Parvathi and Parameswara are in the position of mother and father for the entire world, we must revere them.

In this context, if we can recognise the underlying unity in the three divisions of time—past, present and future—the three worlds and of the three *gunas*, then we will realise that Parvathi and Parameswara are to be regarded as parents of the entire world. If we are able to comprehend the meaning of the words—*Bhur, Bhuvaha* and *Suvaha*—then we will understand that these are said in the context of *Prajapati*. If these are looked at in an individual aspect, then we will see that they are represented by Indra, *Vayu* and Sun. Indra, *Vayu* and *Aditya* are individual and specialised in themselves, but *Prajapati* connotes the totality of all these three. Indra is in the place of Ida, *Vayu* is in the place of Saraswathi and *Aditya* is in the place of Bharatha. Hence, Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi are also words which refer to Paravathi and Parameswara, the parents of the entire creation.

These three deities—Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati—are understood as deities who are journeying

through the whole universe. When we understand the universal aspect of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati, we also understand the universality of the three words Bharatha, Bharati and Bharath.

When we said *Pitarau Vande*, we have to regard Parvathi and Parameswara as the father and mother of the whole world. We should understand the true nature of Parvathi and Parameswara when we refer to them as the parents of the entire creation. Here the word Easwara refers to one who possesses all kinds of *Aiswarya* or prosperity. He is one who possesses *Aiswarya* of knowledge or wisdom. How do we recognise the meaning of the aspect of Easwara or *Aiswarya* of all types? The word Sankara signifies one who confers happiness. We may ask ourselves what kind of happiness. This does not refer to a particular variety of happiness like that of the body or that relating to the world. It represents all kinds of happiness that is the basis of the bliss we enjoy.

In those days *maharishis* used to worship the Lord as the embodiment of all bliss and happiness. This happiness does not deal with worldly or temporal matters. It deals with a different kind of spiritual happiness. Such spiritual happiness deals with matters

which are not worldly. The person who confers such bliss is called Sankara. They have also been using the word “Shiva” because the Shiva represents this kind of spiritual prosperity or happiness that has been referred to as *Shivam*. How do we understand one who can give all forms of *Aiswarya*? In fact, it is very difficult to understand the working of this universal father and his divine will. If only we can understand the grace of happiness in him and recognise the oneness in which all these qualities are represented in him, we would have learnt the right way to live. Although he is attributeless and formless he assumes a human form for conferring prosperity on the world. It is possible to recognise some form and *gunas* only in a human form.

We have learnt from books and elders that Easwara has *Nandi* or Bull and Parvathi the Universal Mother the lion, as their carriers. The head of her son is like the head of an elephant. His carrier is a mouse. Her second son has for his carrier a peacock. Thus, the four members of the family, Parvathi, Parameswara, Vinayaka(Ganesha) and Subramanya represent the four *purusharthas*: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. In this family, consisting of four members, we can recognise the unity that exists in spite of the fact that their respective carriers

are in conflict with each other. We know that the lion and the bull do not go together at all. While the lion is the *vahana* for the mother, the son Vinayaka (Ganesha) has an elephant for his head. The lion and the elephant cannot bear to even see each other. The elephant will die of fear if it sees a lion even in the dream. The vehicle of Vinayaka is a mouse. All the ornaments which his father wears are serpents. There is enmity between the mouse and the snakes. The carrier of Subramanya is a peacock. The serpent, peacock and mouse are totally inimical to each other. Easwara wears *Agni* or fire in his forehead and water Ganga on his head. Water and fire do not go together at all. While their carriers and the ornaments they wear and their appurtenances are all mutually contradictory and inimical to each other, yet this closely-knit family of Easwara and Parvathi has been demonstrating to the entire world how a family, though consisting of contradictory elements, should live in concord.

From times immemorial, it has been an established fact that only when the leaders and elders follow good ideals and set good examples in their living, others could follow them and take to a good path. Although the *rishis* were realised souls they have no selfish motives; yet for the sake of setting an example to others they have been

doing certain things. Unfortunately, today some people calling themselves elders and scholars are not able to put into practice even a small fraction of what they have learnt. Thus, by not being able to set a good example, they are degrading the name of Bharath.

The most essential thing in this *Kali yuga* is that one who calls himself a leader must put into practice what he preaches and thus set an example to his followers. If a teacher is not able to set an example to others, one can say that all his scholarship is useless and he can be considered as an ignorant person. Every elderly and learned person has to control himself and his senses. If he is not able to do this, others will think that all his scholarship and his experience are useless.

All the sensory organs are symbolic of desire. This is not a natural quality. If this is natural to us, there is no need for our *Veda* to tell us what is permissible and what is not permissible and there is no need for a *guru* to tell us about the do's and the don'ts. Since the excessive indulgence of desire is not the natural fulfilment to us, it becomes absolutely essential that we should accept some teaching or *upadesa* from our elders and we should take them as examples. They advise us to take food when hungry, water when thirsty and sleep when we feel sleepy,

but there are also conditions attached, namely that you cannot eat anything that you want to eat when you are hungry. They do say that you should drink water if you are thirsty, but they also say that you cannot drink any kind of water. They say that you should sleep if you feel sleepy, but we are asked to be cautious as to the place where we sleep. You should sleep in a place which is conducive to your safety.

In the same manner, just because we have several sensory organs, we should not go on using them without any control. We should give freedom to the sense organs but use them within the limits set by one's country, time and circumstances. Even if the horse belongs to you, it cannot be used without proper reins. Simply because a car is in your name, you cannot use it without applying the brakes at the appropriate time. Simply because the sensory organs belong to you, you cannot use them without proper control. The *Vedas* have been serving a useful purpose by explaining to you the nature of the human sensory organs and how, when and in what manner to use them for the benefit of the world.

The aspect of Shiva Sakthi is responsible for all creation in the world. The force behind the creation has also been mentioned in three different ways namely *Agni*,

Vayu and *Aditya*. Those who accept and follow the *Vedic* practices regard *Agni* as an important item in their *Sadhana*. *Agni* is an important deity and constitutes the life force for the sustenance of the human body. In the human body, *Vayu* takes the form of *Prana* or the life force. *Aditya* also takes the aspect of the heart and is as if it is propelling the whole machine of the human body. One regards *vayu* as a *manthra*, body as a *yantra* and heart as a *tantra* or a propeller for the entire body. Here the three aspects *Yantra*, *Manthra* and *Tantra* that are the machine, the mind and the propulsion are respectively represented by *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharati*. These are required for anyone in any country and are essential features of life.

Divyatma Swarupas,

Develop a firm conviction that this word *Bharati* has not come up as a result of one particular country taking it on. Be specific in understanding that it is a *Vedic* word obtained from the *Vedas*. By taking these sacred meanings and sacred aspects, our sacred texts like *Bhagavatha* and *Ramayana* have given important meaning to these things. It is this *Vedic* aspect that was understood by the *Gopikas* and they used to sing in a beautiful manner addressing Krishna their Lord “Sing a

song, Oh Lord Krishna! Speak such words which give the meaning of the *Vedas*. Extract such words from *Vedas* and change them into *Nada Brahma*, that is Brahman of sound and pour it into your flute and sing a song out of what you have poured into the flute!” Thus, the *gopikas* realised that the song of the flute is identical with the song of the *Veda*. Such situations and such sweet songs which exhilarate our minds and give us bliss are seen in plenty in the *Bhagavatha*.

When we are able to convert this human body which has nine holes, into a flute which also has nine holes and make it function like a flute, we will be able to hear the divine song. At one time, all the *gopikas* were discussing the process and the path by which they can reach *Paramatma* and enjoy that bliss. They made enquiries as to what kind of *vratha* and *thapas* they should undertake to have *Paramatma* their constant companion. One *gopika* suggested that if only they could convert themselves into a conch and a wheel they could be in the hands of *Paramatma* at all times. Another *Gopika* said that the conch and the wheel were used by the Lord only occasionally, and so she suggested that they should turn themselves into something which is always used by the Lord. On further introspection, they

learnt that the items which are continually with the Lord are his flute and his slippers. Krishna will not leave his flute and slippers wherever he may go. By this, one cannot conclude that all those who do not leave their slippers are like Krishna. Nowadays people do not leave their slippers even in their bedroom and puja room. All such people cannot be compared to Krishna.

Radha who was listening to all this discussion said that if one really wants to be like a flute and constantly be with the Paramatma, then one must realise that the flute is hollow and like the flute one must also completely rid one's self of all desires and become hollow. Then Paramatma will come and reside in his heart. If you want to be like the slippers, you must be able to bear all the burden that is put on the slippers. You should be able to withstand the tests put by the Lord. Even in the worldly aspects, there are a lot of thorns on the ground and the slippers have to withstand the thorns as well. Only when you can withstand both the thorns from below and the tests from above can you hope to be like the slippers of the Lord. This is what Radha told them.

25. Immortality Can Be Achieved Through Sacrifice Only

One's wealth is inconstant and wares and wanes like the phases of the moon. It will vanish with the passage of time. Do not develop an attachment for the fleeting wealth. What I am now telling you is the plain truth and is what actually happens in this world.

Students, boys and girls!

Saraswathi which is the embodiment of our speech is also referred to by an alternative name *Vagdevata*. Sacred Saraswathi, starting as the embodiment of our speech and spreading all over the place, has been exhibiting her divine power. She has thus been identifying herself with speech, in the broad street

of your heart and harmonising herself with the intelligence and the thought that one has. By identifying herself with *vayu*, she has been moving about in the entire space and revealing herself to us as the *adhibhoota* and *adhidevata*.

Saraswathi has also another alternative name, *Saraha*. This sacred deity that we associate with the speech also takes the place of *aditya* the sun, *agni* the fire and *vayu* the air in our heart and represents the one common thing in these different aspects. It is said *Vacha Saraswathi Bishak* and *Bishak* is another synonym for Saraswathi. It is the common practice in this world to cure any disease of the human body by some medicine. While we cure the disease in the physical body by appropriate medicines, the impurities in our minds are cured by Saraswathi in the form of *vak* or speech. Thus, the name Saraswathi is justified by her capacity to cure the diseases of the mind. Because Saraswathi has the capacity to fill us with the *rasa* or *vijnana*, she is also given the name *Adhidevata*. Since Saraswathi with such capacities fills the sky, she also gives importance to *vayu* and *agni*. Because she fills the sky with water in the form of clouds, Saraswathi sometimes stands for a stream of flowing water.

There is need for us to enquire into the origin of this water that is filling the sky. The sun's rays fall on

the ocean and these rays change the ocean water into clouds bearing water vapour. *Aditya* or the Sun is responsible for the formation of these drops of water which later collect into clouds and become deposits of water. You have already learnt that *Aditya* is a name synonymous with Bharatha. Therefore, Bharatha joins *Aditya* and produces this aspect of Saraswathi. Here, we notice that *Aditya* joins water and thus the drops of water are produced. We see the oneness or the identical nature of the three aspects Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati. Latent in these three aspects of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati are Indra, *Vayu* and *Vasu* as well.

In the light of the above analysis, if we try to understand the sacred meaning and place of Bharatha, we will understand that the sacred word Bharatha has got a *Vedic* origin and all the meanings of the word Bharatha can be ascribed to a *Vedic* origin. This aspect of Bharatha when it is regarded as having a *Vedic* origin with the necessary *Vedic* authority behind it, then it is possible to understand this aspect as capable of removing the faults inherent in a human being.

However careful and thoughtful a man may be and however much he may want to lead an unblemished life, five faults always stick to him. While breathing air, while

walking on the ground, while making domestic fire and while drinking water, we do cause great harm to *Jivas* and sometimes we may even have to exterminate several *Jivas*.

While performing these five actions we make use of our senses of action. In that process, we kill and destroy various *Jivas*. Hence, the *Vedas* have prescribed certain *yajnas* (sacrificial rites) to atone for the sins we commit in these actions of ours. The *yajna* relating to the *devas*, the *yajna* relating to the ancestors, the *yajna* relating to the *rishis*, the *yajna* relating to the lives of various *Jivas* around us and the *yajna* relating to the guests are the five different *yajnas* prescribed by the *Vedas*. If you perform these *yajnas*, it will be possible for you to compensate for the sins you may have knowingly or unknowingly committed in these five different actions.

The *Deva Yajna*, or the *yajna* relating to the *devas*, consists of your reciting the *Vedic manthras*, the *Upanishads*, and involving yourself in various ceremonies associated with *agni*, and reading the *Bhagavatha* and other sacred texts. All these actions constitute the *Deva Yajna*. All work and all actions which relate to God—constant contemplation of God in your mind—will constitute the *Deva Yajna*.

Pitru Yajna relates to the ancestors. In particular, it deals with the task of gaining the blessings and goodwill of your ancestors, ensuring their welfare in their afterlife and provide for their needs in their state of existence. This constitutes the *Pitru Yajna*.

Rishi Yajna stands for your understanding the aspect of *dhyana* which was the way of life of the *rishis*. The process of *Sravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyasana* of the various things which the *rishis* have handed down to us constitutes the *Rishi Yajna*. To be able to participate in *japa* or *Kirtana* as a tradition would also be a part of *Rishi Yajna*.

Bhuta Yajna relates to your loving care and service to the living beings. For example in one's own house, there may be cattle, pet birds and pets like cats and dogs. The process of caring for them and feeding them will be called *Bhuta Yajna*. There may be people in the hospital who need your help and to do such things which will relieve the sorrow of living beings will be called *Bhuta Yajna*. Thus, *Bhuta Yajna* consists of serving and satisfying all living beings. They may be suffering from various kinds of sorrow and to relieve them of their sorrow and make them happy will be an aspect of *Bhuta Yajna*.

Since it is not possible to spend all your time in this kind of service, it has become the tradition in our country that once or twice a year we feed poor people and distribute clothes to them. It has become the tradition in our country to undertake such services occasionally. It is in this context that they have said “There is no gift greater than giving food to a hungry man.” There is no other person to whom you can show greater respect than to your father and mother. “In this world, there is nothing more sacred than *japa*, *dhyana* and following the path of *dharma*.” These are the most sacred things.

There is no greater enemy than your own anger. Such noble feelings have been given a very high place in our daily life and traditions. The next duty is extending hospitality to the guests. Either to the relations who come to your house or to the hungry people who knock at your door and ask for food, it is mandatory to offer them whatever you can and relieve their hunger.

A word of caution here. Do not attempt to undertake such sacred work beyond your capacity. You need to do it only within your means. A portion of whatever resources you have, must be set apart with a view to do some service and provide satisfaction to the *Jivas* in need. It is not correct to incur debt when you do

not have your own resources to do such service. Not only is it wrong to incur a debt to do service to the living beings, but it is also wrong to incur a debt even to go on a pilgrimage. Instead of going on pilgrimage with borrowed money, it is much better to give up such pilgrimage and make your own heart a sacred temple.

The *Veda* has given certain injunctions with regard to our daily life. These injunctions are given with a broad meaning. Not only have the *Vedas* given us injunctions regarding the duties of our daily life, but they have also given a code of conduct for us to follow in our daily life such as *dharma* and *moksha*. Thus, *Veda* has been telling us about various aspects which are beyond direct evidence and sometimes even beyond inferential evidence. *Veda* has always been taking the view that you cannot divide your duties and life into two compartments—temporal and spiritual. By regarding all the work—whether it is worldly or godly—as interrelated, different kinds of duties are prescribed by the *Vedas*.

The *Veda* has told us that it is a sin to divide our work into parts and say that something is your work and something is God’s work. In all the work that we do in our life, there is nothing that you can call your own work.

Everything is God's work. You should do all your work believing that it is God's work and then only the omnipresent Lord will take care of the results. He resides in you as the *Atma* and ensures success in all your endeavours if you have firm faith. If you are not able to satisfy and serve the human beings who are with you and who are like you, then how can you satisfy God whom you cannot see with your physical eyes and who does not live with you and who is not like other human beings? The *Veda* has also declared that if you cause harm to the *jivas* who are living with you, there is no meaning in worshipping the *Deva* (God).

Sage Vyasa who codified and demarcated the *Vedas* into different sections and undertook the compiling of the eighteen *Puranas* declared that the essence of all the *Vedas* and scriptures lies in doing good to others. He concluded that to help others always is *Punya* (virtue) and to hurt others is *papa* (sin). If for some reason you are unable to do a good turn to others, at least refrain from doing harm to others. That in itself is the greatest good.

Such sacred things which are connected with the incidents in our daily life are dealt with by the *Veda*. *Veda* does not differentiate between small and big things. An example or an ideal of this kind has been given by

Rama in the *Ramayana*. When Sumanthra came to take Rama to the apartment of Kaikeyi, Rama followed him although he knew everything that was to unfold later. When he reached the apartments of Kaikeyi, Rama learnt about what was happening, but Rama resolved to respect the wishes of his father as he knew that it was his duty to follow a path which would give happiness to his father and therefore he came back to Sita with a resolve to obey his father's commands. When he came home he found that Sita was doing puja to the Lord. Sita is herself divine and there is an inner meaning in the act of her worshipping the Lord. It was mentioned yesterday that great people, persons who have all the sacredness in them also do such things only because they want to set an example for others to follow.

Every individual looks to a leader whom he can follow. Thus, when Rama looked at Sita in worship, he asked Sita what she was doing. She replied that she was worshipping the Lord for the sake of maintaining the reputation of Rama and for the sake of happiness of the people in the kingdom. Considering that it was a good opportunity for him to give good advice for people in the world, Rama told Sita that it is not right for her to worship an abstract God when father and mother who

sacrificed so much to bring them up were available right in front of us as living gods. He said that one's father and mother were equivalent to living Gods.

You must understand that all life on earth is the aspect of God and in particular Father and Mother are to be regarded as living gods. If you cannot pray for the welfare of the community around you in whom God lives, how is it possible for you to worship an invisible God? The first thing that you have to do is to look after the welfare of the community around you.

In ancient times, even ordinary kings had such a broad view and they were always doing certain things with a sense of duty and were looking after their people very well. There is a small story to illustrate this. Once there was a king who considered the welfare of his people as his first duty and hence he was doing many things to promote this. He used to think that the people constitute the body of the king and that the king constitutes the heart of the people. In this way, a close relationship between the king and his subjects was established. Whatever the king did, he always had the welfare of the people in his mind.

One day he wanted to have an oil bath and sent for the queen to apply some oil to his body. In the olden

days, they were not engaging servants more than the minimum required. Whatever had to be done for the husband was being done by the wife only and not by a servant. Even if it is a small work, the work was done by the wife even though she was the queen. She may be a queen for the rest of the world, but she is a wife for the husband. The queen in this story is a broadminded person who was devoted to the service of her husband.

In the olden days there were long and big mirrors in all the rooms in which the king and queen were moving. The king was sitting and the queen was applying oil. The queen found that there were some grey hairs on the head of her husband. When the wife found that there were four or five grey hairs on the head of the king, she thought that the king was becoming older day-by-day. The appearance of grey hair is treated as the first indication for the onset of old age and a steady march in the life's journey. The eyes developing long sight is the second step and losing one's teeth is the third step and the last step is to develop wrinkles on one's face. The queen thought that the first step was already visible. She was very much worried and was shedding tears.

Today, due to the influence of the *Kali Yuga* everyone wishes to invent artificial things like

Viswamithra who created the Trisanku Swarga. When white hair appears, they dye the hair. When the teeth fall away, they put up false teeth. When the eyes develop cataracts, they undergo an operation and when there are wrinkles on the face, they apply some makeup and try to hide the wrinkles. In this way, they may try to counteract the first few steps, but the end has to come ultimately and nothing can be done about it.

In the big mirror in front of the king, he saw the queen with tears in her eyes and immediately he turned to the queen and asked for the reason for her tears. The queen told him the truth and explained the problem worrying her mind. The king was a good-natured person and he immediately realised that the thoughts crossing the mind of the queen were, in fact, true. He therefore, tried to convince her that no one can live for ever and that the body is sure to fall one day or the other. In the context of the inevitability of death, he resolved to hand over the reins of the kingdom to the ministers and go to the forest and spend the remaining time in the contemplation of God. This was the decision the king took at once. He had his bath and sent for the ministers. The requests of the ministers to change his mind had no effect on him. The king stuck to his decision and told the ministers that they should look after the kingdom and

that he was going away to the forest in order to enjoy the kingdom of the *Atma* and the kingdom of the Divine.

He requested the minister to inform the people of his decision. In a moment, the king's decision spread throughout the city. All the people-children, old people and young people came running to the king. They prayed to the king that he should not leave the city and go to the forest. They told him that he was like the heart in their bodies. If the heart leaves the body how can the body live? They informed that they would all give up their lives if the King went away.

The king however, did not mince matters and explained his position very clearly. The human body consisting of the five elements is not a permanent thing; it will have to fall one day or the other. Our ancients have told us that the life-span of a human being is one hundred years normally; but one should not trust this statement. Death may come anytime either in the childhood or in the youth or in the old age. The body is sure to fall at sometime or the other. One does not know whether it will fall in a forest or in a city or in the midst of water. Death is the only thing that is certain. Already old age has set in and I wanted to spend the remaining years of my life in the contemplation of God!

On hearing the firm decision of the king, all the people were in tears, and they informed the king of their resolve to accompany the king to the forest and pray to God that He might grant the king long life. As soon as he heard this, the king thought that it was not proper for him to act contrary to the wishes of his people and advised them that they may do as they like. These people prayed to the Lord whole-heartedly and the Lord was pleased with their sincere prayers. He appeared before them and enquired what they wanted. All the people in one voice requested the Lord that their king might be granted another hundred years of life.

Then God said that because of the unanimous request and their devotion He was very much pleased and that He would grant the king two hundred years of life. The people rushed back to the king with great joy and conveyed the good news of God's blessing to him. The king too was very pleased. The queen came to the king as soon as she heard this and told him that she was now going to the forest.

The people thought that the queen was angry because they had secured the boon from the Lord for the long life of the King but not of the queen. The queen went into deep meditation and had the grace and vision

of the Lord. When the Lord appeared before her, the first thing she asked was whether it was true that the Lord had granted two hundred years of life to the king. The Lord said that it was so. The queen said she was happy to hear that the king would live for two hundred years but asked "What is the good if the king lives for two hundred years, unless the loving people who secured this boon for the king should also live for two hundred years." Then the Lord granted the boon that the people would also live for two hundred years. The queen said "it is only when such good people can have a long life in the kingdom that the king's long life for two hundred years would acquire a meaning". This should be the kind of inseparable relationship between the people and the king.

The Lord was so much pleased with the queen's argument that He granted two hundred years of life to the king and the people, because she had such a broad mind. God was pleased with this broad-minded sacrifice on the part of the queen and granted her also a long life. The moral in this story is that the greatest of *yajnas* is sacrifice.

To be able to sacrifice is the most important of all qualities. Here, because the people had sacrificed and prayed for the long life of the king they deserved to live

for two hundred years. Similarly, the king was willing to sacrifice and leave everything and so he was able to get the boon and the queen too by her broad-mindedness and sacrifice was able to get a long life. There is nothing greater than sacrifice. Here we shall also try to understand the inner meaning of the word sacrifice. Whether it is for a house we occupy or for a piece of land or whatever it is that we own, we pay tax to the government, so that we can use them. If one does not pay the tax on any of these items, the government will sell away the property and realise the tax. This is the common practice.

In the same manner, to atone for the sins and the bad deeds that we commit, *yajna* is something like a tax which we must pay to the Lord. We should be able to sacrifice and with happiness pay the tax to the Lord for our sins. Sacrifice will give you such happiness which nothing else can give. Work, scholarship or anything else will not give you the same amount of happiness as is obtained from sacrifice.

26. Raja Yoga Is The Fusion Of Bhakthi And Karma

One should accept both pleasure and sorrow and wealth and poverty with the same feeling. They always go together. One should display same attitude towards fame as well as calumny.

Divyatma Swarupas!

It is a very difficult task for an ordinary human being to decide what he should do or what he should not do and thus to steer himself carefully between the good and bad. He often does not have the independence to choose and decide. In view of this, the sacred *Sruthi* has undertaken the responsibility to guide the human beings as to what is right and what can be done rightfully and what is wrong and what should be

avoided. *Brihaspati*, *Vachaspati* and *Brahmanaspati* are names which we hear in *Sruthi* and all these names are contained in one name *Angirasa*. Another equivalent name is *Sama* and together with these three aspects the *Sruthi* has explained what is right and what is wrong in this world.

Sama is a word about which you learnt before. In this word *Sa* stands for speech and *ama* stands for the life force. Thus, this word *Sama*, which represents speech and life force has an important place in both the living and non-living aspects in this world. Whether it is an infinitesimal living being or a huge elephant, life is common to both. This word *Sama* has established this commonness of life. There might be a difference in their appearance outwardly, but the life principle in both of them is the same. This truth has been established by *Sama*, which is in fact, an admixture of speech and life force present in all human beings. It manifests itself as *Angirasa* in all the organs of a living being.

In order to make one's life sacred, the *Sruthi* has prescribed some types of *karma*. In this context, whatever work you do with your limbs or senses of action is called *karma*. Not only the senses of action, but the senses of perception as well are called organs. Whatever work you

do with any of these organs can be called *karma*. All the work done with the help of your body, mind and organs comes under one word namely *karma*. Only that portion which is not covered by the functioning of these organs or is above these organs has been referred to as Brahman.

The word Brahman has originated from the root word *Brahmana*. The meaning of this is that it is something which you cannot measure. It can grow and can become bigger and bigger and it grows in a manner that you cannot measure. The extent of this potential spread is something which cannot be described in words. Also, it is something which cannot be seen with the eyes. In view of this, the aspect of Brahman has been described as something which one cannot comprehend. This is man's destination and also man's goal in life. This aspect of Brahman must fill our lives. We are forgetting this important aspect and are paying attention to transient things in this material world. Thus, we are wasting our precious time. Only when one can develop an equal-mindedness towards everything in one's life can one understand the aspect of Brahman.

For developing, this quality of equanimity, *Sruthi* has laid down three methods. One path is described as

the *Meena Marga* or the path taken by a fish. Another one is the path taken by an animal. The third one is the path taken by a tortoise. It is the characteristic of the fish that it can live only in water. Once it is taken out of water, it cannot survive for long. The animal on the other hand can survive only on land. If you put the animal into water, it will not be able to survive. A tortoise is an amphibian and can live both in water as well as land with ease.

When we compare this with the three kinds of human behaviour, we note that man wants to live in the society because he cannot survive in isolation. This is comparable to the *Meena Marga*. Here he is like a fish and just cannot survive if he gets out of the society or family. On the other hand, an individual who always enjoys being in isolation, who always wants solitude and who feels uncomfortable if he is put in the midst of society is like the animal.

On the other hand, an individual who will never forget God—whether he is in the family or in the society or whether he is isolated or not—is like the tortoise. Wherever he may be, he will have his thoughts fixed on God and he will be perfectly in ease whether he is in the society or in isolation. This path—the path of the

tortoise—is very essential for man. We know that one of the *avatars* of the Lord was in the form of a tortoise and the purpose of this is to explain that the attitude which the tortoise adopts is the right one for human beings too. This *avatar* of the tortoise played an important role in preventing the whole world from submerging in the ocean. The *sruthi* has thus explained about the different paths *Jnani*, *Jignasu* and *Aruha*. However all the three different paths are relevant for us.

These three can also be mentioned in three different ways. One is the stage of the student and the other one is the stage when he is working as an officer. The third one is the stage when he would have retired from all the worldly work. Here we should recognise that a retired officer does not go to work in any institution. He stays at home and involves himself in activities that interest him. Looking at such an individual, if a young boy in the house says that he will also not go to the college because the older person is not going, it is not correct. This retired officer would have attended a college and would have done what one has to do in a college and thereafter he would have attended his office and would have done his duties prescribed for him as an officer and then retired and taken rest. It is in that

context that one should realise that everyone must undergo the stage of a student and learn what has to be learnt and thereafter undertake one's duty in any particular line of action as an officer and then only enjoy a retired life. That is why our *sruthi* has taught us *Karma Jignasa* and *Brahma Jignasa*.

Without being a student first and then fulfilling your duty as an officer, you cannot become an officer deserving a pension and rest. If what has now been said is interpreted in the context of spiritual education, the steps through which one has to go are: you must first learn the education relating to the *Atma*; thereafter involve yourself in work that is ordained and then take rest and enjoy the bliss that is given by the knowledge of the *Atma*. Without working, it is not possible for us to understand the aspect of right conduct. Without knowing the full meaning of *dharma* or right conduct one cannot reach Brahman.

Brahman is a state of wisdom. The aspect of Brahman should not be understood as conferring as some strength and power. The realisation of the oneness of everything in the world is the understanding of Brahman. This state of *Adwaita* or the realisation of the oneness of everything in this creation is understanding

Brahman. There are different aspects of *dharma*. You have to go through all these stages. If you simply go on repeating *Sarvam Brahmamaya jagat*, you are merely uttering words and statements. Such statements without practical experience do not carry any significance.

One who lives in this world should in the first instance become human in nature. To learn the *Atma Vidya* is tantamount to knowing the Brahman. For attaining *Raja Yoga*, this is the path. The word *Yoga* indicates sacrifice and also indicates union with something that is sacred. *Raja Yoga* in particular signifies something which has a very high place. The one who attained *Raja Yoga* in a remarkable manner is King Janaka. If *Raja Yoga* to be explained in simple terms, we can say that it is a union of *bhakti* and *karma*. By involving yourself in action in accordance with the scriptural injunctions and performing it in the name of God, you will be combining *bhakti* and *karma* which will lead you to *Raja Yoga*.

It is said that King Janaka was performing all his daily work in this manner and thus enjoyed the fruits of *Raja Yoga*. It is in this context that Janaka is also called by the name *Videha*, that is one who has no attachment to the body. There is a small story illustrating this aspect

of Janaka's life. In a forest near Mithilapura there used to be a great *rishi* by name Suka. Several disciples used to gather round him and he used to teach them spiritual knowledge leading to the realisation of the *Atma Thathwa*. Janaka came to know of this *ashram* of Suka and went there and prayed to Suka to permit him to be one of his disciples. Suka thought it very desirable to have such an ideal king among his disciples and readily agreed to his request. He asked him to come every day at a particular time. In this manner, many days went on. One day Suka came a little early and all the other disciples gathered to hear his discourse. But Janaka did not come yet. Hence, Suka decided to wait for the arrival of Janaka.

In the meanwhile the students began to develop some peculiar feelings bordering on envy. Each one was telling himself that Suka was partial to Janaka because of his wealth and position. They thought that Suka was willing to wait for Janaka, the king, but never for others. Does Suka also suffer from partiality towards people in position? They were thinking that it was not proper for a *rishi* of Suka's stature to make a distinction between kings and commons. Suka in fact did not have any such feelings. He was one who attained equal-mindedness to

a very high level. Suka on the particular day delayed the commencement of his discourse with the specific intention of making his disciples realise the greatness of king Janaka and his devotion.

After some time, Janaka entered the class. Soon after, Suka commence his discourse. Suka was a very pious and divine person. He wanted to teach his disciples a lesson. He made it appear as though the entire city of Mithilapura was in flames. The moment Suka created such an illusion, all the students immediately bundled up their seats, mats and books and began to run to Mithilapura thinking that their houses were burning and their parents were trapped in the flames. But, Janaka was not at all disturbed, as he was deeply engrossed in Suka's teaching. After a little while Suka declared that even the King's palace was on fire, but Janaka would not stir and refused to even think of Mithilapura as he was deeply engrossed in the teachings and was completely lost in the thought of God. He was enjoying such supreme bliss that he forgot everything else.

After some time, the students who rushed towards Mithilapura had all come back reporting that nothing really was burning. Suka then explained that each one had only one small house in Mithilapura and they ran in

great anxiety to save these houses. On the other hand, Janaka who was the king of Mithilapura was not disturbed in the least even when he was told that his own palace was on fire. Nothing could move him. Thus, the difference between Janaka who had a steady mind and all the others who had wavering minds could easily be seen. It is enough if one student like Janaka whose attention is steadily fixed and who is engrossed in the lesson, is available. There is no point in having several students with distracted attention. That is the reason why I was awaiting Janaka's arrival. It was not because he was a king or a rich person. You should understand the reason for my being more anxious to convey my knowledge to Janaka rather than to you people with wavering minds. From this incident, you can understand that the words of elders and the teachings of great teachers are not to be ignored. They are to be taken right into your heart. You have to understand and assimilate them so that when the occasion arises, they can be put to use.

As our attention and our care begin to grow, so also the fruits of our knowledge begin to grow. It is in this context said that where there is care and where there is a desire to learn with attention, wisdom will appear. This *prema* or devotion is also like a creeper which can

grow quickly. Only when we are able to absorb the fire of wisdom into our heart will it be possible for us to quickly burn away our distracting desires.

The fire always tries to rise higher and higher. Even if you put the fire in a low ditch, it will try and rise higher. Water, on the other hand, will rush down even if you pour it on a higher level. Water cannot go higher up on its own. Our sensory desires relating to the material world are like the water. On the other hand, our thoughts of the Lord are like the fire. Once we understand and appreciate what is true and what is permanent, then these transient things will not give us any trouble whatsoever. If you want to establish one truth, it is possible to do so only by following and practising other related truths.

Just as we have to use a thorn to remove another thorn and a diamond to cut another diamond, so also, if you want to remove the effect of bad actions, you can remove them only by good actions. A good action is needed to remove a bad action. Following this principle that a good karma has to be performed to sanctify a bad karma, our *Vedas* have taught us how to distinguish between forbidden work and prescribed work or the right type of action. Therefore we should make every effort to recognise the aspect of speech and the life force.

I had explained this earlier while giving you the meaning of *Angirasa*. Since this aspect of *Angirasa* is present in every limbs of our body, it has been called *Angirasa*. That limb in which there is no life force will deteriorate. This *Angirasa* is the form of life. This is the reason why we should see that whatever limb you put into action must be full of *rasa* of life force. In this context, it is said that out of *rasa* comes only *rasa*; weakness cannot come from *rasa*.

With regard to our speech, we should take care to utter only such words which have life in them. You should utter such words which carry strength with them. Today, the words coming out of the mouths of young people are lifeless. They are not attaching any importance to the principle of quality in their work. They think that whatever work they do is for their own benefit. We also see that people develop interest to hear only unnecessary things. This is the reason why the value of a human being has come down to so low today.

To be born as a human being is a very sacred thing. That is why it is said *Jantunam nara janma duralabham*. That is: among all the animals, to be born as a human being is something very difficult and sacred. Even the *devas*, at one time, longed to have a human birth. Such a

sacred birth is not being respected by us today. We think that man is simply a mass of flesh. One must make a firm resolve to use all the organs in the body for sacred purposes. Why do you not utter the name of the Lord? Why do you wander here and there aimlessly with bad intentions?

Oh mind! are you not ashamed to be so wavering? Why do you wander from place to place like a lunatic? Why do you run after worldly pleasures? If you spend all your time in seeking worldly pleasures, what remains for you at the end? You are not able to spend your time usefully; you simply want to go and listen to stories about others, stories about people with whom you are not concerned. You are willing to talk ill of others all the time. You do not have the time to go and listen to good things about the Lord and good people. What is wrong with your ears? They are ever ready to hear scandals about neighbours with whom you are not concerned. They have no time to listen to the stories about the Lord. You are not performing the duties enjoined on you. You are attending to movies. You are very happy to go to a cinema, but you do not want to use your eyes to witness the beautiful and auspicious form of the Lord even for one moment. Like a dog which has no other work, you

want to run about in the streets and use your legs for that useless purpose rather than for going near God. Is it difficult for you to stand near God even for one moment? What is the use of your learning cinema songs and singing them?

If only you can listen to the good words of the elders and follow the straight path contained in the words of your elders, there is every chance of your becoming wise. Therefore, you must make an attempt to sanctify all the limbs of your body and engage them to undertake the right type of work. Simply because God has given you hands, if you use them to do wrong things, even the hands will dry up and become like dry wood and useless.

It is in this context that Prahlada said that if you cannot use your hands for praying to God, they are useless. If you cannot use your mouth to sing the praise of the Lord, then your mouth will be useless. If you are born in such a way that you neither use your hands nor your mouth in the praise to the Lord, your birth itself is a burden to your parents. No useful purpose will be served by your being born as a human being.

Divyatma Swarupas!

For a moment, you think of the good fortune of your birth as a human being. Undoubtedly you have got

an unparalleled opportunity to grasp the teachings of the sacred texts like *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha*. You must make the best use of the opportunities which you have. I am hoping that you will derive the best possible advantage from such teachings. Youth of today should remember the sacredness of a human being and also bear in mind the prosperity they can bring to society of which they are a part. They should think of the welfare of the country. I hope that you will be paying attention to these things and be able to revive and re-establish the fair name of our country.

27. Rama Is An Avatar Of Dharma

When the serpent of time is chasing you relentlessly, you run away in great fear not knowing where to seek shelter. You try to escape from it. It is not possible for you to receive any kind of protection from anywhere even if you run into the different corners of the world. You cannot escape this serpent of time which is after you.

I have been searching, I have been searching then and now, all the time I have been searching so that I may find a true human being. For one single human being with true human qualities, I have been searching and none have I found. In form and outward appearance, there are 5000

crores of people but how many of them are true human beings and how many are monkey like?

Pavitratma Swarupas, students, boys and girls!

The words contained in our *Veda* appear meaningless to ignorant people. On the other hand, for knowledgeable people, the *Veda* is like the *Kamadhenu* (Wish-fulfilling cow) which gives everything. Since the sacred *Veda* contains infinite *rasa* and infinite power, it gives the people according to what they desire and what they need; therefore, it is called the *Kamadhenu*. In as much as even the *Veda* looks after the worldly as well as the spiritual aspects, and even the economic aspects it is called the *Kamadhenu*. In the *Sruthi* this has also been described as *Apushpam*, *Aphalam*, that is one which has neither flowers nor fruits and so is like the *Kalpa Vriksha*. If we look after the tree with great care, there is no objection for us to get the desired flowers or fruit from that tree. If we do not show the necessary care in looking after the tree with the kind of attention which we should show, there is a possibility of the tree perishing. In the same manner *Veda* is like a *Kalpa Vriksha* or a tree which gives whatever we desire;

However, in order to protect it, we have to practise or constantly recite *Veda*. That is a kind of water which we have to give so that the tree may flourish. We also have to provide a proper fence around this tree and the discipline with which you conduct yourself will be the fence. Your *sadhana* is the fertilizer for the tree to grow. It is only when you have this *adhyayana*, discipline and *sadhana* that the *Vedic* tree will give you flowers of *dharma* and the fruit of *Prajnana*. Thus, the *Veda* can help us in fulfilling all our desires. Whatever activity we undertake, unless we take the necessary care and bestow the necessary attention, we cannot enjoy the results. The *Vedas* are being handed down from generation to generation from times immemorial. But, we are neglecting them thinking that they relate to the older people or the ancients. We are not making efforts to reap the fruits of this tree of *Veda*.

In this context it is necessary for us to make a detailed enquiry about two aspects. One of them is the life force into individual *jiva*, which is called the *pindanda* (Microcosm) and the other is the aspect relating to the entire universe which is called *Brahmanda* (Macrocosm). In the *pindanda* of the *jivas* the presiding deity is the *Nara*.

In this context, God or *Paramatma* who is also the presiding deity for the entire universe consisting of moving and non-moving things, is also called *Nara*. All the life in this world is created by divinity in the form of *Nara* and therefore the entire creation has also been referred to as *Nara*. The source which is responsible for spreading this aspect in the world has been called *Ayana*. Here we can see that the source as also presiding deity together become Narayana. God who is formless and attributeless is in this context called as *Nara*.

In these three—*Nara*, *Narayana* and *Ayana*—there is some common aspect implied. Amongst the lifeless materials and the living beings, they have always considered the living beings as something more distinctive and important than the lifeless material. The aspect of Narayana has always been considered to be something superior to the aspect of *Nara* or the *Jiva*. This superior aspect has been described by the *Veda* as *sathyam*, *jnanam* and *anantam*. This aspect of *satyam*, *jnanam* and *anantam* is also referred to as *Narottama* or the superior *Nara*.

These three steps in the hierarchy of the universe—the *Nara*, *Narayana* and *Narottama*—are experienced at different times and in different circumstances. They

have also been referred to as *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharati*. For the three *Nara*, *Narayana* and *Narottama*, *Saraswathi* is in the place of the mother. *Saraswathi* is the Goddess of speech and is in the form of a mother to *Nara*, *Narayana* and *Narottama*. Here, when we refer to the place of *Saraswathi* as a place of a woman, we imply that she makes the child play and enjoy and take part in all activities. The mother teaches the children how to play.

Saraswathi should not be understood here as the wife of *Brahma* as we do in the mythological context. Here *Saraswathi* should be regarded as the Goddess of speech. It is from the speech that the three aspects—*andanda*, *pindanda* and *Brahmanda*—arise. This is the reason why *Saraswathi* has been given an important place in the *Vedas*.

To learn the meaning of such words, we must have a *guru* and the *guru* himself is a *jnani*. From times immemorial, the *Veda* has been transmitted to different people, not in the form of printed text books but by memory from a *guru* to a disciple. Whatever has been learnt by sitting at the feet of the *guru* has been referred to as *jnana* or wisdom. On the other hand, if what you listen to is later absorbed by repeating and recapitulating it and contemplating thereon it has been referred to as a

kind of superior wisdom, namely *vijnana*. Here we should differentiate between *jnana* and *vijnana*. What you have listened to by *Sravana* will only get into your head and thereafter only certain limited experiences follow from what you have listened to. That is the reason why it is called *jnana*. Later it may slip out from the head under some circumstances. But once you recapitulate, contemplate and absorb what you have listened to, then it will be like taking a print of these things on our heart. The knowledge that is acquired by mere listening will be like a responsibility; on the other hand what you have learnt after constant contemplation and finally absorbing, will be rightfully yours. Therefore, *manana* and *nididhyasana* consists of listening and then absorbing what you have listened to.

There is a small example for this. There is a vast ocean. Suppose you collect water from this ocean and bring it home. This water which you have collected directly from the ocean will taste salty. When the same ocean water is converted by the sun's rays into vapour and then comes down as rain from the clouds an amount of sweetness will be added to the same water. The knowledge which we get by reading or listening to *Sastras* is to be compared to the water collected directly

from the ocean. On the other hand, *vijnana* is comparable to the sweet water raining from the clouds.

Here, we have to recognise the clear difference between the knowledge that we can get from just reading and listening to books and the knowledge that we get from our own direct experience. All our education today is confined to mere acquaintance with the material contained in the printed books. This kind of acquaintance with many books is not going to help us in anyway. From this kind of education not only do we not get any satisfaction but this results in our developing a lot of ego and pride. Because of this small amount of knowledge that we acquire about some small aspect of creation, we begin to forget the country and behave in a very foolish manner. Man should not allow this ego to grow. He should look carefully behind him and ahead of him. When you are troubled by ego, open your eyes and look upwards. When sorrow overtakes you, open your eyes and look downwards. If you continue to search and find out who you are, then you will develop equal-mindedness. You should acquire peace and satisfaction and thereby you will be happy every day.

There is no need for us to give place for ego to set in. In this vast world, our country appears to be a very

small one. In this small map of Bharath, you will find that Karnataka State occupies a tiny little space. In this state of Karnataka, if you try to locate Brindavan you will find that it is a speck in the map of Karnataka. In the large number of people who have assembled here, if an individual wants to locate himself and assess his dimensions, he will be a very tiny person indeed. Being such a small and tiny person that you are amidst such a vast universe, if you feel proud of your individual skills, there is absolutely no meaning at all. On the other hand if you identify yourself and feel that you are only a tiny individual entity in this vast universe, there is no room for you to feel proud or to let your ego develop. When you identify yourself with the universe there is no room for ego. On the other hand, when you want to treat yourself as a separate individual, you are so small and tiny that there is no room for ego. Unfortunately, education of today which is just acquaintance with books is only promoting ego and there is no chance of such education bringing any one happiness.

Whatever good things you have listened to (*Sravana*) must be recapitulated (*Manana*) and contemplated upon (*Nididhyasana*) with a view to absorbing it into yourself. The three aspects *Sravana*,

Manana and *Nididhyasana* are identified respectively with *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharati* and there is a kind of harmony that exists between these three aspects. We must make an attempt to experience this harmony or oneness.

Divinity is not something which you can find in a place external to you. It has to be found in one's own heart. Many people feel that the *Vedas* and *Sastras* are intended to give us commands and curtail our freedom and thereby diminish our stature. Such people say that *Vedas* and *Sastras* are only bringing us down. Such statements and attitudes are meaningless. Truly, the *Vedas* and *Sastras* are implements which enable us to rise to higher levels. They do not bring us down. *Veda* has been teaching how man should live as a human being and how one should conduct himself and try to realise the aspect of Brahman. Without recognising such truth, if you simply go on talking about human nature, you will never be able to realise the divine aspect.

A tree without fruit, a cow which does not give milk and a man without intelligence are of no use. What is the use of being born as a human being if you do not know the truth about yourself? The truth which we aspire to realise is the peace connected with the aspect of Brahman. The fragrant flower on the tree of life is our

righteous conduct. The pure heart is the sacred milk that we can get out of it. Today, we are lacking such pure heart and the flower of righteous conduct. As a result, we are missing the bliss and happiness that we get out of the aspect of Brahman. The human nature has completely disappeared and we remain human beings only in name. The essential qualities that go to make a human being have disappeared. Just because we have the form of a human being, to think that the respect due to a human being will also be given to us is not correct.

There are two horns on the head of a he-buffalo, but can we give the same value to it as we give to the two tusks of an elephant? The qualities that have to be present in a human being are *vijnana* and *prajnana*. To give the same value to a person who possesses these two and to a person who does not possess them is not correct.

You are at a young age. In this youth, your mental and physical capabilities are in a very good condition. You have the fullest possible strength in you. While that is so, you should not do things which are unsacred. You should utilise your time, energy and resources in undertaking only sacred activities. If you now render the sacred strength which you possess as waste, as time goes

on it will not be possible for you to regain such strength. You should recognise the greatness of the culture of our country and conduct yourself in such a way that you become useful to the country and society and to the people who are living in your country.

Recognising that this word Bharatha comes from something which relates to the entire world, and yet to make it unsacred is a great sin. You should understand that the name Bharatha of our country has a *Vedic* origin. It is not as if someone has given this name to our country from a non-*vedic* source. Many names have been taken from the *Veda* and have been given to individuals and to countries. So also, this word Bharatha has been taken from the *Veda* and has been given to individuals and countries. Thus, this word Bharatha has been taken from the *Veda* and has been given to this country. You have already been told that *agni* is in the place of *Ida*, *Vayu* is in the place of *Saraswathi* and *Aditya* is in the place of *Bharatha*. This word Bharatha represents the sacred aspect of *Aditya*. *Agni* and *Aditya* are important and sacred for the entire world and therefore this word Bharatha has a significance in the context of the entire world. Bharatha here stands for *Brihaspati*, *Prajapati*, *Virat* and *Hiranyagarbha*. To think that this great word

Bharatha, which has so many different sacred meanings in the context of the *Veda* is related to some king or the son of a king is not correct.

I hope you will understand the noble meaning of the word Bharatha which applies to our country. I also hope that not only will you understand but you will communicate the sacred and noble meaning of this word to the future citizens of this country. It is, therefore, necessary in the first instance for you to realise the distinctive aspects of your country, of your language, of your birth and of your life. The authority which we draw from the *Vedas* is much more important than the authority derived from any other sources.

Bharatha could not bear the separation from his divine brother and he was very much hurt at his father's death. In such a condition he went in search of Rama hoping that he will be happier if only he had the *darshan* of Rama. When Rama saw Bharatha in the forest, the first question that he asked of Bharatha was if the people in the country were happy and if he was performing the rituals like the *agnikaryas* regularly. What is the meaning of such questions which were asked by Rama? What is the sanctity which he attached to such things in our country? This is something which you should enquire.

The human bodies have to drop away sometime or the other and they will be cremated. They will then disappear. But as long as the body lasts, if you are not able to make it do such sacred things as are enjoined upon that body, then what is the purpose of this sacred body? Whether this body remains or not, it is an important task for us to lead a life which is an ideal one in this world and which will set an example for the others. Provided you have propagated good ideas and shown good conduct and handed over such good things to others during your life time, then you will be remembered as an immortal person. So we must try to become immortal in this sense and then only will you be able to enjoy the fruits of immortality even during your life time. Until you reach the destination which you ought to reach, you will not get the desired happiness and pleasure even if you have all the material comforts. Permanent happiness is present only at the destination that you ought to reach. In the intermediate stages there is no permanent happiness.

There is a small example for this. Whatever may have been written in the traditional story of *Ramayana*, I am now giving you the underlying meaning. It has been stated that the sweet porridge which was handed over to King Dasaratha by the *yajna purusha* was distributed to

his three wives in a particular manner. I am not very much concerned with this detail, but I am concerned with the attitude which Dasaratha displayed towards the three wives. Dasaratha distributed this *payasam* to the three wives as per the instructions of his *gurus*. If it is something which he distributed by himself out of his own discretion, then there is scope for displaying a partial attitude. But, when he was distributing God's gift, he had no right to show any partiality and he had to distribute it equally to the three wives.

Amongst the three wives, the ideas and the thoughts that came were like the ones which come naturally to any other woman. The youngest among them, namely Kaikeyi, remembered the promise from her husband, the king. This was what she had in her mind and therefore she kept her portion of the *payasam* very carefully. The eldest wife, namely queen Kausalya, naturally believed that the son to be born to her will become the King and so she also kept her portion of the *payasam* very carefully. The middle one, Sumitra, did not have any ambition and so did not have any particular desire for having a son. Not only did she not have any ambition, but she was even feeling a little bit despondent and unwell. The feeling is quite natural to Sumitra. She thought that if a son was born to the eldest

queen, Kausalya, he may become the King and if a son was born to the youngest, Kaikeyi, he may also become the King on the basis of the promise which the King made to her. But if a son was born to her, that son would have to attend on and associate himself with the son of either Kausalya or Kaikeyi. Sumitra thought that there was no point in her looking for children under such circumstances.

As soon as the *yajna* was over, Dasaratha brought the *payasam* along with the *gurus* and the *Rithwicks* of the *yajna* and distributed it equally between the three wives. He advised them to have a bath and wait for the *rishis* to come and bless them and thereafter to take the *payasam*. The three wives had their baths and were keeping the *payasam* very carefully, but so far as Sumitra was concerned she was not very enthusiastic but she did not want to display her emotions to her sisters. So she went up to the terrace of the building and was drying her hair pretending that she was quite unconcerned about what was going on around. She kept the *payasam* in a golden cup in a corner; but as ill luck would have it, a bird came and took away the *payasam* from the golden cup. Sumitra was not very sorry for having lost the *payasam*, but she was worried what the King Dasaratha would say if he comes to know of the loss of *payasam*.

She immediately ran down and told her sisters, Kausalya and Kaikeyi, about the incident. The three sisters were living as friends. They had no envy or jealousy among them. Each one was sympathetic to the difficulties of others. So, Kausalya and Kaikeyi immediately shared their *payasam* with Sumitra by redistributing it among themselves what was with a view to assure Dasaratha that everything was normal and there is no cause for unhappiness. In the meanwhile, Vasishta, the *guru*, arrived there, blessed them and advised them that they might now go to their respective puja rooms and take the *payasam*.

You all know the story that unfolds thereafter. Kausalya and Kaikeyi each had one son born to them. Sumitra, who was not interested in children at all, had two sons. God's will is always incomprehensible. If man wishes to do something, something else will happen. That is why it is said "man proposes God disposes". There is no meaning in man wishing something to happen and working out a plan accordingly. On the other hand, man has to adjust his plans according to God's will. It is not correct for him to stick to his own plans and take decisions.

Whether it is pleasure or pain, happiness or sorrow, everything is to be taken as the grace of the Lord. You

cannot get pleasure out of pleasure. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Normally, man cannot understand what kind of pleasure comes out of what kind of pain.

Rama, who was born to Kausalya, was taking his feed normally and happily; and similarly Bharatha, who was born to Kaikeyi, was also happy and was taking his feed normally; but the two sons born to Sumitra would never take their feed normally and they were crying continuously all through the day and night. They were very much agitated. Sumitra was very unhappy that these sons troubled her even before their birth and were troubling her after their birth. She sent for various doctors and tried to get them cured so that they take their normal feed and be happy. But they would not be cured by any kind of *manthra* or medicine. Neither they would stop crying.

As a last resort, she represented her problem to sage Vasishta, the family *guru* and requested his help. Vasishta was an all-knowing saint and could see quite easily what had happened and what had to be done to remedy the situation. Vasishta told Sumitra that she should take Lakshmana and put him in the same cradle in which Rama was sleeping and put Satrugna in the

cradle in which Bharatha was sleeping. The moment Lakshmana was near Rama, he became quiet and went to sleep very easily. He also had his feed normally. Since out of a portion of *payasam* intended for Rama came Lakshmana, he was not happy till he joined the original part. Same is the case with Satrughna, who was united with Bharatha. In this context, we have to understand the truth that until we join the place from which we have come, we will be very unhappy and we will not have any peace of mind.

Neither Lakshmana nor Satrughna could bear any separation from their counterparts and that is the reason why, although they were born to a different mother, Lakshmana was inseparable from Rama and he was always moving with him. Their views and ideas were also similar. Similar is the case of Bharatha and Satrughna. For the purpose of demonstrating to the world what an ideal life should be, what an ideal brother should be, what an ideal family should be and what an ideal relationship between husband and wife should be, Vasishtha felt that Rama incarnated as the embodiment of *dharma*. That is why, he declared *Ramo Vighrahan Dharmaha*, i.e., Rama is the embodiment of *Dharma*.

Students, boys and girls!

Whatever line of action you wish to take and whatever position of authority you may come to occupy, you should not forget that your ultimate goal is *Brahmananda*. Whatever work you do, you may do it with the aspect of Brahman in your mind. That should lead you back to your original source that is Brahman.

28. There Is An Inner Meaning For Every Story In Our Puranas

A good-natured person should never feel proud and boast that he knows everything. It is a sign of culture that one tries to put into practice the few good things he has learnt and not merely talk about them.

Occupying the position of authority, assuming the qualities of a demon, causing fear and terror to people, if one conducts oneself in an inhuman and ferocious manner, will he be entitled to be called a man? I have been searching, I have all the time been searching, then and now I have been searching for a man who is truly a human being and who displays righteous conduct and good qualities.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students! boys and girls!

From time immemorial our *Vedas* have been prescribing sacrificial rites like *yajnas*. In these *yajnas*, two parts are contained, namely *manthras* and *stotras* or recitations. Some people think that *manthras* and *stotras* are the same. That is not so. It is common knowledge that different flowers are collected and put together in the form of a garland. Here the flowers are not new. They are already there. The garland is new and is made by a person who puts the flowers together. On the same analogy, the *manthras* are like the flowers and the *stotras* are like the garland. The *manthras* are already there and are not new. The *stotra* is like a garland and is composed by the *Rithwick* by grouping the *manthras* together. This *Rithwick* or the *hota*, is protecting the *stotra* and is also called *Pushthi* (one who protects the *manthras* by regrouping them into *stotras*). This kind of song which comes from the two *Vedas* has been called *Sruthi*. Not only this, Indra is invited to come to the *yajna* with his chariot having the two *Vedas*—*Rig* and *Sama* as the horses. Here the word *Sama*, which has several other meanings in a different context, means a song. In order to invite Indra to the hall of *yajna*, they sing a song with one *rik* and it is called “One Rik Song”.

Sometimes, the inviting song consists of three *riks*. Then the three *riks* are associated with *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Aditya*. They have also been mentioned as *Bhuh*, *Bhuwaha*, *Suvaha* or earth, space and sun. The basis for all the three aspects is the primordial sound or *Pranava*.

This sound of *Pranava* has been recognised by the *Sruthi* as identical with *Aum*, the only letter that is significant. From time to time, people are making enquiries as to who can chant this sacred *Pranava Manthra* and who cannot. The *Vedas* however have made no such distinction. Since this sound of *Pranava* or *Aum* has been recognised as universal and is the life force in all the *Vedas*, it has been accepted that anyone can utter it at all times. Without the sound of sacred *Pranava*, the *Vedas* will become lifeless. Any individual, if he utters this sacred sound *Aum* towards the end of his life, will merge in God. The *Bhagavad Gita* has declared that this sound *Aum* is sacred to everyone and forms the basis of all creation.

We all know that the *Aum* sound consists of three distinct sounds, *A*, *Uh* and *Ma*. In *Bhagavatha*, *Bharatha* and in all our *Puranas*, this sacred sound of *Aum* runs like the life string. There are three reasons for man to be born. One is the sin, the second is an unfulfilled desire

or some experience and the third is lack of knowledge or ignorance. The feeling that he has not fulfilled a desire and his wanting to take birth again to fulfil such a desire is one main reason. Man does several bad things and commits a sin. He has to be reborn to experience the consequences. Ignorance makes you seek a rebirth under these circumstances. These three constitute the basis for our rebirth.

Sage Valmiki has stated in his *Ramayana* that uttering the name of Rama will enable us to free ourselves from the three shackles which lead one to be reborn. He has also given the meaning of Rama by splitting the name into three parts *Ra*, *Aa* and *Ma*. *Ra* is the basic letter for *Agni* or fire, *Aa* is for sun and *Ma* for the moon. The three letters respectively signify *Agni*, Sun and Moon. The fire burns away all the sins, the sun sheds light and removes the ignorance and the moon cools the agitation in one's mind. Thus, the utterance of the name Rama removes your sins, your ignorance, your agitation and eliminates the possibility of your getting a rebirth. In this context, he has also identified the sound of *Aum* with the name Rama since both bring the same result. As *Aum* is the very basis of all the *Vedas*, so also Rama is the basis of all the creation. The three important

aspects of *Agni*, *Vayu* and Sun contained in the name Rama are synonymous with *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi* and are the basis for the whole world.

Although *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi* are apparently different and described as distinct, yet they are inseparably connected to each other. Just as *Aum*, the sound of *Pranava*, is a total manifestation of three different and distinct letters and their aspects, the word *Brihaspati* or *Prajapati* is a total manifestation of all the three aspects of *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi*. This aspect of *Brihaspati* is also known as *Vachaspati* or the word of *Veda* and the same thing has been referred to as *Brahmana* or a *Rithwick* well-versed in *manthras*. *Bharatha* is a *Vedic* word and has nothing to do with *Bharatha*, the son of *Sakuntala*. There is a saying that one derives pleasure from the thought of God is *Bharatha* and the name *Bharatha* has a connection with this.

It has been mentioned earlier that *Hamsa* or the Swan is the vehicle for *Saraswathi*. *Hamsa* is synonymous with the sound “*Soham*” which stands for in haling and exhaling breath. By uttering *Soham*, the word is created and *Saraswathi* represents the word. That is why we say that *Saraswathi* rides over the swan. This is the inner meaning. In our *Puranas*, different Gods have

been described as riding over different kinds of animals making it look absurd. These are symbolic descriptions, all of which have sacred and significant inner meaning. But, the modern people fail to appreciate our culture, due to their ignorance of these inner meanings.

Just as we point to the moon who is far away in the sky with our finger, the indescribable contents of our sacred *Vedas* and the invisible divinity have been described, to some extent, in terms of commonly understood items like carriers, chariots and so on. This is only a method of conveying abstract ideas to people in terms of things they know in their daily lives. Sometimes, this process of learning causes confusion and error.

There is a small example for this. At one time a learned *pundit* was explaining a particular description of Lord Vishnu in our *Puranas*, to a group of people. Amongst the group was present an illiterate cowherd who had complete faith in God. He listened to the *Pundit* who described Lord Vishnu as riding on a white Garuda and giving *darshan* to devotees who pray earnestly, and answering their prayers. With implicit faith in what he had heard, he went to the forest as used along with his cattle and started praying to the Lord to come riding on a white Garuda and partake in the rice porridge which he

had brought for himself. He also took a vow that he will not eat his food until the Lord appeared before him and partook the food brought by him. The Lord did not appear before him. Days went by and the devotee was starving and becoming thinner and thinner. The Lord was moved at this distress of the devotee and came in the guise of an old Brahmin. The devotee saw the old Brahmin and since his appearance did not match with the description of God which he had in his mind, namely a dark-complexioned individual riding on a white Garuda, he would not recognise Him and closed his eyes and started praying for His *darshan*. After a little while, he opened his eyes and asked the Brahmin who he was. The Brahmin replied that he was the Lord come in that form; but the illiterate devotee would not believe it as the idea that the Lord would come riding on a white Garuda was so firmly imprinted in his mind. Thus, by adhering to a symbolic description intended only to help the illiterate people, without knowing the sacred inner meaning, he deprived himself of food and water for a long time.

We have to learn from this story that the *Puranas* have always described the Lord in many different forms as conceived by the writers, from time to time. In reality, no one can declare with any definiteness that the Lord has one form or another. The Lord is omnipresent and

can assume several forms. It is best for us to realise this truth and accept divinity in all living beings. Whoever comes to us and in whatever form he comes and seeks our love and attention should be given the love and attention we would give to God Himself.

God is immanent in all the living beings. When you see any one of them, you should respect him as you would respect God. If you cannot respect a living human being who is right in front of you, how can you respect God who is unseeable and unreachable? Your mother and father are the first people whom you should regard as God. Neglecting your mother and father, even if you spend all your time in God's worship, it becomes futile. You should worship God as a life force and not as an inanimate picture.

One devotee started worshipping Rama as a picture or a photo. Ever since he started this, he met with several difficulties. He thought that probably worship of Rama does not suit him. He kept that photo in a closed *almirah* and brought the picture of Easwara and started worshipping the picture of Easwara. Then his troubles not only did not disappear but they became worse. He was very disappointed and put away the picture of Easwara, also, in the closed *almirah*. He brought the

picture of Gayatri and started worshipping Gayatri. That day he prayed to Gayatri in the traditional manner and put up some incense for Gayatri. He found that the smoke coming from the incense sticks was going into the closed *almirah*. He felt very upset that the offering he made was going to the pictures of Rama and Easwara who never responded to his prayer. In his anger he took a piece of cloth and tied up the mouth and nose in each of the pictures, believing that thereby he would be preventing them from receiving his offerings and the fragrance of his incense. Immediately, the Gods appeared before him and he wondered how and why they did not respond to his prayers but responded spontaneously when he decided to punish them. However, he wanted to clear his doubt by asking the Gods themselves and ventured to enquire why they responded with their grace the moment he decided to tie up their mouths and noses. To this, the gods replied that all his prayers earlier were directed towards lifeless pictures, but the moment he started tying up the mouths with a piece of cloth assuming the gods as filled with life, they appeared before him.

The lesson we have to learn in this story is that God will respond only if we accept Him as being full of life force and not as a lifeless picture. We should develop firm faith in the divinity present in all human

beings and respect them. The respect should come from the depths of your heart. The fruits thereof will also be full of life. Worshipping the external form and ignoring the commands of God is simply turning ourselves into disbelievers. In this way several devotees today are turning into fake devotees. Even though you do not worship God, if only you bear in mind the orders that emanate from God and put them into practice, there will be no greater devotee than you.

Respect for mother, father, *guru* and God will be real and meaningful only when it comes from the depths of your heart. If it is superficial, the world may be deceived; but the Lord will not be deceived.

Pavitratma Swarupas! students, boys and girls!

It is not only in the spiritual sphere, but also in the worldly sphere that every action of ours is met with reaction and everything we say will have an echo. So, do good, see good and enjoy the good that comes to you as a reaction.

Today, if you smilingly give trouble to your parents, tomorrow, with sorrow, you have to suffer similar treatment from your children. So, if today you respect your parents, tomorrow, with pleasure, you can enjoy similar treatment from your children.

29. The Lord Is The Embodiment Of Prema And Can Be Contacted Only Through Prema

Acquaintance with the contents of the various *Sastras* or *Vedas* is not going to remove the screen in front of one's mind. On one side of the screen is the *jiva* or the individual and on the other side is the *deva*. On one side of the screen is the creation and on the other side is the basis for all that we see. The previous birth is not known to us. Also, the present birth is not permanent. Similarly, no one knows his future birth. Is there anyone who knows about the future? The human body is impermanent and transient, and the *Jiva*, residing in the body, is indestructible. He is the permanent one

and he is the Sadasiva and the one who is the *sutradhari* or the basis, of all that we see. It is His greatness that manifests in many different ways. I have been searching, I had searched in the past and I am still searching for one who can understand the basis of all these manifestations.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

To understand and absorb the *Vedanta* into our selves, all the three processes—*Sravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhayasana*—are necessary. Just as the sun gives us the essence or the *rasa* of the sunshine, so also the *Vedavani* or the words that are contained in the *Vedas* give us the *rasa* or the essence in the *Veda* to all who are well versed in *Vedas*.

There is an alternative name of *Aditya* to one who is well versed in the *Vedas*. The *Rithwicks* who have the strength of the *Brahmanas* have been making an attempt to understand this aspect of the *Aditya*. When we say that the *Rithwicks* have the strength of the *Brahmanas*, the word *Brahmanas* means the *manthras* of the *Veda*; and the *Rithwicks*, with the help of the

manthras, have understood the aspect of *Aditya*. The statement *Bharatha Adithya tasyabha Aditya* explains how the word *Bharatha* is associated with the word *Aditya*. This *Aditya* has undertaken to give us the meaning of the word of the *Veda*. The essence of the words of the *Veda* has been given to us in the aspect of *Bharatha* by *Aditya*. The same *Vedavani* has been described by the name *Vasu* in the early years of its existence and later on when it grew a little older it got the name *Rudra* and when it became older, the same *Vedavani* was called *Aditya*. This *Vedavani*, in its later aspect of *Aditya*, has been giving out the rays of divine effulgence to the world. Just as the rays of the sun emerge from the sun spontaneously so also the rays of the *Vedavani* emerge spontaneously in the form of divine effulgence.

There is no one who is the originator of either the form or the content of the *Vedas*. They are self-effulgent. Just as the sun's rays are not created by anyone, so also the rays which come from the *Vedavani* and the names and forms which arise from *Vedavani* are spontaneous emissions of the *Vedavani*. They are not created by anyone. It is only in the context of the fact that the *Vedavani* is called by the names *vasu*, *rudra*, and *aditya*

in different stages that we should realise that these three names respectively represent Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati. In this context, the kind of sound or the word that comes from the *Vedavani* is called Bharati and this Bharati has also been referred to as the consort of Bharatha. In this context Bharati has also been referred to as Deepti.

We have to understand that the kind of relationship existing between the rays of the sun and the sun itself is the same as that existing between Bharati and Bharatha. Similarly, the relationship between the moon and the cool air that emanates from the moon is the same as that existing between Bharati and Bharatha. The relationship between Bharatha and Bharati is again like the relationship that exists between milk and the white colour of the milk. You can convert milk into curd and curd into butter. But, in all these modifications, the milk still retains its colour, namely the whiteness. Just as it is not possible to separate the pure white colour from milk, although you can transform milk into curd or butter, the kind of relationship that exists between Bharatha and Bharati is such that one cannot be separated from the other. Here the names Vasu, *Aditya* and Rudra are relevant. *Agni* is also an appropriate name for Bharatha.

In this context, the *sruthi* has been telling us the different names of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati. In the very first stage of vasu, Ida grants us grace. It also lays down the commandments. As Saraswathi it teaches us. And finally as Bharati it confers the boon of self-realisation. While Ida and Saraswathi give the first two steps, the end result is granted by Bharati. The final result of self-realisation is an outcome of the commandment of Ida and the path laid down by Saraswathi.

Since Ida is the place where the command is originating, it is also associated with the place of the heart by the *Sruthi*. When we talk of the heart here, it does not represent the physical heart but it represents a place a little below the physical heart that is the spiritual heart. It is in accordance with the commandment that the heart begins to involve itself in a thinking process. Without accepting the preaching of Saraswathi that is being given to you, you cannot move on to the next stage of realisation. Sometimes the head undertakes to decide about the destination even before Ida lays down the commandment. Whenever any person takes to the path decided by the head before he gets the command from the place of Ida, he will realise that the path he has chosen is not the right one and he will regret for the same at a later date.

In this context it is necessary for you to examine whether the thought generated in your head is proper and whether the action is in keeping with the command of the Ida. You must take sufficient time and make sure that the command comes from the place of your heart and only then think with your head, and finally get into action. Thus, it is necessary to give sufficient attention to the place of the heart, Ida and the commandments that come from it. Sometimes it is possible that you are guided by your excitement and emotion and undertake to read some books or do something, although the commandment is not coming from your Ida. This is not right. When you want to read a book or involve yourself in a *sadhana*, it is better to take some time and let the decision come from the Ida rather than make the decision in haste.

There is a small example for this. For several years many people have been reciting the slokas in the *Bhagavad Gita* or a particular chapter of *Ramayana* as a matter of routine without giving any thought to the basis or the place from where they are getting the orders to undertake these activities. Such *sadhakas* sometimes go to elders and seek an *upadesa*. Truly, an individual who has been reciting *Bhagavad Gita* or *Ramayana* for fifteen years does not need any message or *upadesa* from

another person. If you enquire this individual who is the author of the *Bhagavad Gita* he will unhesitatingly reply that Lord Krishna directly gave it to Arjuna in the battlefield. If he really had faith in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which came from the Lord himself, then where is the need for him to go to a third person and ask for an *upadesa*? If he has no faith in what he knows to be the words of Lord Krishna, where is the guarantee that he will have any faith in the words of any other *guru*? If the very words uttered by Krishna and which he was reciting for the past several years have not created any faith in him, the words which a *guru* gives are sure to be forgotten in less than fifteen seconds.

Such situations will come for people who are unable to perceive and comprehend the orders that come from Ida. What is coming from the place of Ida is not being taken seriously by such people and they want to go directly to the third step of *Aditya* and experience the aspect of Bharatha without starting from the orders of Ida. It is absolutely necessary for every individual to search his conscience. It is in this context it is said that one should essentially have faith in one's own *Atma* or have self-confidence. Only when one develops self-confidence will he be able to develop peace of mind and

experience the satisfaction or *Ananda* of the *Atma*; and then he will sacrifice everything else.

Experiencing *Ananda* and removal of sorrow are simultaneous events. Just as darkness automatically and simultaneously disappears as soon as you put on a light, sorrow disappears when *Ananda* comes, without any further attempt. Light and darkness are like the obverse and reverse of the same coin. These are one and the same and in fact two aspects of the same thing. In the same manner, *Ida* and *Saraswathi* are one and the same thing. They are different aspects of the same thing. If we follow the commandments of *Ida*, we can realise *Saraswathi*. In realising the aspects of *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi* the first step is to realise the importance of *Ida* and then, develop self-confidence. Such an effort will surely produce results.

In this *sadhana marga* are involved two steps, viz., the *Vidhwamsaka* or the removal of something, and the *Vidhayaka*, or the conscious effort of developing something. If a farmer wants to sow some seed in his land and get produce, the first thing he will have to do is to remove all the unwanted bushes and weeds, in the land. Thus, the first step is *Vidhwamsaka* or destroying the unwanted things. Then he would plough and water the land and make it ready for sowing the seeds. The land

here is the *kshetra* which also stands for our heart. This heart is comparable to a land and the first thing that you have to do is to cleanse it and remove the impure thoughts which are already there. You must then plough that land with compassion and kindness and then fill it up with the waters of *prema*. Only after filling it with *prema*, you can sow the seed of the Lord's name. If you sow the seed in such a clean place which is well prepared, it will sprout easily. Thus cleaning your heart is the first step and sowing the seed of the Lord's name is the second step. Then, you can reap a good harvest.

It is in this context that the *Gopikas* prayed that the rain of *prema* should come down on the land and out of this rain of *prema* rivers of *prema* should flow. If our heart is devoid of *prema*, then the land is like a desert land. In such a land whatever seed you sow will not sprout at all. Therefore, the first step in your *sadhana* is to fill your heart with *prema*. Then, the world will appear as the embodiment of Brahman. The result of whatever *sadhana* man does is contained in one single word *Bharatha*. This *Bharatha* is in the form of *Aditya*. The *Aditya* or the sun of *Bharatha* is moving in the sky of your heart. It would be very dark in the sky of your heart if this effulgence of *Aditya* is not there.

In fact, when we say *Thamaso maa jyothir gamaya*, we are praying that this effulgent *Aditya* should lead us from darkness to light. The prayer *Asatho maa sad gamaya* has for its basis, the Ida. We are praying that the thoughts generated in our head should not be allowed to go unchecked and they should be guided by Ida to go in the proper direction. In the prayer *Tamaso maa jyothir gamaya*, it is *Aditya* that is present as the presiding deity and in the prayer *Mrthyor maa amrutham gamaya*, which means that we should be led from death to immortality, we have Saraswathi as the presiding deity.

In this context, we have to examine what really death is. Normally, the process of breathing coming to a halt is regarded as death. There is, however, some deeper meaning here. Saraswathi has, for her carrier, the *hamsa* or the breath and the stoppage of breath would mean the absence of Saraswathi and thus Saraswathi is regarded as one who can lead you on from death to immortality. The significance of addressing this prayer to Saraswathi is that you are praying to Saraswathi (who is present in your body in the form of *Hamsavahini* presiding over the process of breathing) that such breath should not enter another human body and again create the same trouble of being reborn. Thus, you are praying to Saraswathi to lead you on from death to immortality.

Young students!

You should therefore give Ida an important place in your heart and give it all the prominence in deciding your actions. Your heart contains such a sacred deity. Hence, do not fill your heart with unsacred ideas. You are able to speak because Saraswathi is riding over your breath and such a sacred Goddess is the very basis for your speech. Do not make it unsacred by uttering unclean words. The seat of your thinking or *buddhi* is filled with *Aditya* and therefore this sacred aspect should be kept in mind and the unsacred thoughts kept away from you.

Many people think that their intellect or *buddhi* is in their head and they point to their head when they think that something has gone wrong. This is not correct. The intellect or *buddhi* is not there. In the head there is only your brain but, your intellect or power to think is not there. *Buddhi* or Intellect is associated with the internal instrument by the name *Anthahkarana*. It has a connection with the brain. It is only when we recognise that the *buddhi* should be kept sacred that we will realise and enjoy the bliss of *Aditya*, who is the basis or the seat of intellect. This is why, in *Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord says that amongst all the human organs He represents, *buddhi* is the most important one.

After going through all these steps we learn that Bharatha is synonymous with the most important aspect, namely *Aditya*. Through Bharatha and *buddhi* we get the aspect of *Aditya* which is the same as *Prajapati*, which is only a combined aspect of Ida and Saraswathi. This word Bharatha has several meanings which have their origin in the words of the *Veda*. They are not meanings which are given by individuals' fancies nor are they names given after Kings and warriors. To think that this word Bharatha has trivial meanings or meanings related to some historical issues is wrong. The word Bharatha has a *Vedic* origin and you should identify this with the aspect of *Aditya* where *buddhi* or our intellect resides.

We undertake several activities to achieve something or other in our daily life. In all these efforts, however, we do not recognise the purpose and hence they will end up in failure. Once, a rich person wanted to do some good act and therefore started to supply drinking water to the people in the city. He spent a lot of money and got a big water tank built in that city. That tank was beautifully designed and from the tank he laid out taps in all the streets in the city. He wanted such a sacred project to be inaugurated by some big political personality such as a Minister or a Governor. This person thought

that because water is the basis of life, this inauguration should be done with a lot of publicity and pomp. He decided that this important person should open one tap first on a ceremonial occasion. In order that the particular tap to be inaugurated by the high dignitary should look good, he got it made out of silver. The *Vedic* scholars were invited to recite *manthras* on the occasion. He also arranged for some auspicious music on the occasion. He welcomed the Governor and requested him to open the tap amidst the auspicious music and chanting of the *Veda manthras*. The Governor opened the tap but not a drop of water flowed out of it. Everyone was surprised and began to enquire why water was not flowing even though a big tank was built and the tap was also made of silver and there was sacred music on the occasion. They ultimately found that there was no connection between the tap and the tank.

In the same manner, we have the big tank of God which is filled with His grace; we also have devotees in the form of taps but the connection between this tap and the tank which is God's grace is missing. If there is no *prema*, how can grace of the Lord flow? The pipe which connects the devotion of the devotee and the grace of God is the *prema*. God is always an embodiment of

prema and if the devotee is filled with *prema*, then *prema* can establish the connection.

Unless you have all these three—namely the devotion of the devotees, God who is the embodiment of *prema* and the link of *prema* between the two—a connection cannot be established. God, who is the embodiment of *prema*, can be attained only by *prema* and not by any other method. Water mixes easily with water and oil mixes with oil, but oil cannot mix with water. Hatred is like the oil whereas *prema* is like fresh and clean water. Thus, we can mix pure water like *prema* in a devotee with the *prema* in the Lord. That is the only thing you can do. *Prema* is present in everyone. We should make an attempt to experience that *prema*.

There is an example for this which I had given once before. I am giving it once again. Suppose we put water in a cup and add sugar to the water. The sugar settles down at the bottom. When we take water from the surface, it will be tasteless; but if we take a spoon and mix the sugar which is at the bottom, then every drop of water will taste sweet.

In this analogy, our heart is the cup and divinity is like the sugar which is at the bottom of the cup of our heart. Our desires of the world are like the water on the

surface of the cup. When we drink the water from the surface we do not find it sweet. Therefore, we have to use the spoon of *buddhi* and mix it by way of *sadhana*. As a result of this stirring, the divinity in the form of sugar which is at the bottom, will come up and get mixed with the worldly desires and then you will find that even the worldly desires will turn sweet. Those people whose *sadhana* cannot stir up the divine sugar will find the superficial water tasteless since all the taste of sugar is at the bottom.

The process of mixing the divine sugar and the worldly desires is called *Yoga*.

The path of *Yoga* is to control the desires of the mind. Alternatively we may take the divine sugar which is at the bottom of the cup and make it flow in all the organs and this is also the path of *Yoga*. In this context, you should believe that this act of making divine sweetness flow into all the work you do is *Yoga*. The physical exertion which you put in with your limbs will give you physical health but whatever exertion is there in the heart and mind will result in spiritual health and a combination of the two is *Yoga*.

30. Education Should Not Make One Neglect One's Parents

Students!

For the past one month we have been learning many things about Indian culture. We have also learnt that for all our culture, the source is the *Veda*. There is a sacred meaning for every *manthra* in the *Veda*. It is necessary for students to know about these aspects. Also, we have understood, to some extent, the inner meaning of the *Vedas*. It is only by understanding the inner meaning of the *Vedas*, is it possible for human nature to blossom and flourish. It is necessary to recognise the truth that fulfilment of man's aspirations and his pleasures is not limited to worldly aspects. Permanent happiness and bliss are things which have to be generated from within your heart. They cannot be brought from outside and given to you. These are things

which you cannot search for and obtain from the external world. Such education which cannot confer bliss and provide the security and firmness you seek, cannot be called true education. Only that education which can give you bliss in your heart, peace in your mind and happiness in your life is true education. To convert education as a prop for your life and a breadwinner is a mistake. Your life itself should give you the strength to live. Education should not be made a breadwinner. There are crores of people in this country who are not educated and are still living a good life.

To think that education is necessary to enable man to live is quite wrong. Education should enable you to lead an ideal life and set an example to others. Your knowledge is not to be used just to fill your stomach. That education is the correct type of education which enables you to lead an exemplary life and provide you the discrimintaory power. Education should promote humility in you, should enable you to become more humble than the uneducated person. It should enable you to serve your mother, father and country selflessly. If you become a selfish person and simply acquire degrees which become a burden on your shoulders, that kind of education is of no use.

Selfishness, exhibitionism and immorality are seen in an extensive measure only in the educated class of people today. Education that makes you proud and removes all the good qualities such as humility and simplicity cannot add to the prosperity of the country. It can only cause harm to the country and create confusion and trouble. As you become more and more educated, your ideas should become broader and broader. As our knowledge increases more and more, humility should also increase more and more. You should be prepared at all times to spend your energy in providing help and encouragement to others. The moment a student acquires a degree or two, he becomes a burden to his own parents. He brings tears of sorrow to the parents. The father of the house struggles hard even in his old age to provide for the family. In spite of the son being aware of struggle, he does not raise even his little finger to help him.

This kind of education which makes one not to serve even his father, how is it going to help him serve the country? Mother and father would have struggled and starved on many occasions to feed and support their son as a student. When the parents are in difficulty, if the son would not do anything to help them and relieve their distress, but eats and sleeps like Kumbhakarna, it is utter

selfishness. What is the use of education which he has received if it does not teach him to look after the welfare of the mother and father when they are in difficulties?

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

Do not join the company of such youngsters who are doing bad things. Remember the sacred Indian culture and Indian traditions. I am hoping that by not joining this band of youth, you will maintain the culture and traditions of Bharath and you will proclaim its greatness by putting it into practice. Use all the strength of your mind, body and speech to do hard work and get results of a good kind. If we do not come forward and involve ourselves in hard work, then the country itself will deteriorate. In this workshop of the universe, a group of people is like a machine and in this machine each person is like a small part. In this workshop, whatever duty is allotted to an individual, it must be done diligently, however small it may be. If you fail in your duty, not only would you harm yourself as an individual, but you would be harming the whole country in which you are living.

The culture of India teaches you the aspect of *Soham*. It does not approve of idleness or sloth.

Laziness is dust and rust, whereas selfless work is rest and the best. If you really want rest, you should involve yourself in work that is ordained by the scriptures. If you do not work during day time and exert your body, even if you go to bed in the night you will not get sleep. You will simply be tossing around in the bed. On the other hand, if you give the necessary physical exertion to your body, you will get rest and in this manner rest follows hard work.

There is a saying that one who cannot sleep well will be having all kinds of bad thoughts and schemes. If you sleep well, there is no room for such bad planning in your mind. Thus, you young people should work hard and bring good name to your own home, village and to the society to which you belong and thereby bring good to the whole country itself. In the old days, those who were enrolling themselves as students of the *Vedas* were involved in doing hard work and thus had developed good qualities. Their parents were also happy. Today's education is such that even the teachers do not understand the lessons they are teaching. It is not giving us peace of mind or security in the daily life.

The *Vedic* learning is not like that. Whosoever wants to learn the *Vedas* has to necessarily undergo

physical exertion and should not waste even a second. If an individual wants to learn thoroughly all the sections of the four *Vedas*, he will have to spend nearly forty-eight to fifty years. There are thirty-one sections in the *Rig Veda* and one hundred and one sections in the *Yajur Veda*. There are a thousand sections in the *Sama Veda*. There are nine sections in the *Atharvana Veda*. For learning each *Veda*, it would take at least twelve years, and for four *Vedas* it used to take something like fifty years and for these fifty years the disciple had to remain in the *guru's ashram*.

Many people used to feel that it is difficult to learn all the four *Vedas*. Hence, a number of students used to confine themselves learning one or two *Vedas*. Also, those who were not able to completely learn even one *Veda* would learn a few sections depending upon their family tradition. Learning only a few sections of the *Vedas* has been referred to as *swadhyaya*. *Swadhyaya* refers to reciting what is customarily natural to him. This word is not used in a narrow sense. There is a meaning here for *swadhyaya*, that is to be able to recite what is necessary for understanding Brahman.

Swadhyaya does not mean reciting *Veda* with a selfish desire to earn reputation or money. Unfortunately, today one does not learn or recite *Veda* for the noble

purpose of realising the supreme being. Most people recite *Vedas* either for getting monetary benefit or reputation or for some selfish reason. That is why the power of the *Vedas* is on the decline and people's faith in the *Vedas* is eroding. In the ancient times, the *Vedic* scholars had the ambition of realising the *Atma thathwa*, which was the real purpose of learning the *Vedas*.

In the early years, when one would be doing all the *karmas* prescribed in the *Vedas*, he would be called a *vasuvu*. Later when he begins the practice of the *Vedas* and takes to *swadhyaya*, he would be called a *rudra*. *Vasu*, the student of *Veda* moves on from the early years to the time when he is doing *upasana* and is called *rudra* and then he moves on to the stage of wisdom or acquiring *jnana*. Then he is called *Aditya*. This aspect of *Aditya*, when he is in the final stage of acquiring wisdom, is also referred to as *swadhyaya*. It can also be stated here that the stage of *Aditya* is associated with the stage of Bharatha. In the intermediate stage of *upasana* or *rudra*, Saraswathi is present.

In the early stage, *Vasu* has to be identified with the aspect of *Ida*. This disciple of *Vedas* or of the *vedavidu* has also been called *Swasa*. For this word *swasa*, there

is an alternative meaning called sister and for this feeling of the sister the other name given is Saraswathi or Bharathi. The same Bharathi has also been called Deepti. As was mentioned yesterday, the kind of inseparable relationship that exists between the Sun and the Sun's rays also exists between Bharathi and Bharatha. Thus for words like Bharatha, Bharathi and Bhaarathi, the *Sruthi* has been giving meanings which are synonymous with each other. When we want to understand the aspect of God, it will be possible for us to come to a conclusion only when we understand the meaning of Bharathi.

As the next step, it is only when we understand the meaning of Bharatha that we can say proudly that we are citizens of Bharath and that we understand the meaning of that word. The students of the *Vedas* who really understood the *Vedas*, or those who understood the real meaning of the *Vedas* were prepared to sacrifice anything and everything. The kind of devotion which they used to proclaim cannot be described easily. That could only be experienced. They could never be described easily either by words or thoughts. But the devotion of today is continually changing. What there is in the morning is not there in the evening and what there is in the evening is not there the next morning. If one's

desires are fulfilled, he will praise the Lord very much; but, if one's desires are not fulfilled, there is no room for any respect for God in the mind. Whether it is loss or gain, our faith must be unshakeable. This kind of faith is also called *ananya bhakthi*. We must be prepared to accept failures as well as successes with equanimity.

There is a small story to illustrate this point. There was an individual who had a desire that others should accept him as a great devotee and so he was using several exhibitionist methods. Everyday he used to go to the temple early in the morning and sit with closed eyes doing some *japa*. This individual used to sit till very late and long after all the other devotees had left. Because of him the priest also had to remain late in the temple and return home very late. This priest was feeling that he was being detained every day and was wondering how he could attend to his normal duties if he was detained like this every day. At the same time he was not prepared to disturb this man who was sitting in deep meditation. He thought that there was something strange in this person who was sitting in the temple late every day as if he could not do it in his own home. He thought that there must be definitely something wrong about this individual.

The priest with the intention of finding out the truth behind all this went behind the idol and said, “I am very much satisfied with your devotion and will take you into myself.” The moment this devotee heard this, he thought that God was really speaking and was so much afraid that he never came to the temple again.

Our devotion and our attitudes today are of this kind. If you really want relief from this life, then even while God is prepared to take you away any moment, you should be prepared to give up your life and become one with God. If you do not want this and you still want to become a realised soul and merge in God how is it possible? While it is necessary for you to plan for your future, you must not have a fear of death. Do not be afraid of death, do not forget God, do not get yourself involved too much in this world. It is necessary for you to remember all these three and have faith in the divine.

Therefore while you are doing work, fill your heart with the thought that Ida is the presiding sacred deity. When you are in *sadhana* and entertaining good thoughts, remember that all the words that are coming out of your mouth are coming from the Goddess Saraswathi, the Goddess of speech. Instil the aspects of Ida, Saraswathi,

and Bharathi in your heart and get them firmly implanted in your mind and have faith that these are responsible for all your actions.

It is not easy for anyone to understand and unravel the strength and power of God. All the descriptions which we give of the Lord are not really descriptions of the strength and power of the Lord but are merely being given for our own satisfaction. They are not the true description of the infinite strength of God. To some extent you must understand the limitations of your own speech and strength and you must be prepared to do your work consistent with your strength of thought word and deed. But today we are hesitating even to utter the name of the Lord. We are willing to utter useless and purposeless words.

At one time, there was an individual who had great respect for our traditions. He had one son. This father who was tradition-bound, performed the *Upanayanam* of his son. While putting the sacred thread, he told his son that he must chant the Gayatri *manthra* at least one hundred and eight times every day. Unable to bear the pressure that the father was bringing on him, the son was repeating the Gayatri *manthra* under compulsion. As time went on, the son wanted to decrease the number

of times he had to repeat the Gayatri *manthra*. One day the father remarked, “It looks as if you have not been repeating the Gayatri properly. Let me see how you do it today.” At first he did repeat the Gayatri *manthra* properly and thereafter he simply said “Ditto, ditto.” Not knowing what this means, the father asked him what “Ditto, ditto” meant. The son said that it refers to the fact that the same was being said several times. This word “ditto” has no specific meaning and in turn the original sentence also turns out to be one which has no significant meaning. The father was very much upset at this and lamented, “Oh what a son have I got. He is not able to repeat even the Gayatri *manthra*.” He thought that he should somehow bring him back to the old traditions. This boy went to the college, passed out of the college and even while he was in college he corresponded with institutions abroad and arranged to go abroad. The father was very desirous to see that the son maintained the traditions even if he went abroad; and so he told him that he should try to chant the Gayatri *manthra* every day even while living abroad.

The father wanted the son to return from foreign countries with good qualities. Hence, he took the son to the Devi temple and asked him to pray to the Devi so

that he may return with good qualities. Although unwilling, the son prayed to the Devi because he thought that if he prayed to Devi his father would let him go abroad. He therefore offered his prayers to the Devi and went abroad. After living for three years abroad, he changed his mind and did not want to return to India. However, because of the father’s pressure, he reluctantly returned to the mother land.

Since the son was returning after a long gap of three years, the father and mother went to the airport with great hopes to receive their son. But they were very much disappointed to find their son speaking to them in a foreign language. It looked as though he had forgotten his mother tongue. The Mother requested her son to speak in Telugu as she was not able to understand the foreign language, but the son immediately replied that he had forgotten his mother tongue. The father was very angry and was feeling hurt, but he controlled himself as he felt that he should not displease his son as soon as he landed from a foreign country. He controlled himself and sarcastically told his son that he was glad that atleast he had not forgotten his father and mother, even though he forgot his mother tongue which he had been speaking from his childhood. He felt thankful for this.

From the airport, the parents took the son directly to the Devi temple to offer their grateful thanks to the Devi for having brought back the son to his country. Before going inside, the parents asked him to remove the shoes, but he said that he cannot walk if he removed the shoes. The father was again very angry at this and he asked his son why he was so proud even while going into the presence of the Devi, and he said that it was a shame that he forgot the traditions of the country. Somehow, yielding to the compulsion of the father, the boy removed the shoes and was going into the temple; but as soon as he entered the temple he addressed the Goddess and said, “How are you, mummy, how do you do?” He wanted to give the Goddess a hand shake. The father was very angry and in spite of the fact that he was in the presence of the Goddess in a temple, he gave the boy two or three good beatings. The youth of today are developing attitudes which are more or less like this. One who forgets his mother land, his mother and father and his divine and noble traditions cannot in fact be called a human being.

In this story, since the father belonged to a time when the traditions were respected, as soon as he realised that the son had gone astray, he hit him hard.

Unfortunately, the parents of today would have taken a different approach and felt proud of the change that has come over the son. In fact they would have felt happy that their son has become very modern, so modern that he has even forgotten his mother tongue. This is the unfortunate situation today. In several cases it is the parents who are responsible for the wrong path which the children are taking to. The responsibility for ruining the children squarely rests with the parents. They must learn the correct attitude they should take to put their children on the right path. The children will accept the advice given by the parents and will take to the right path only if the parents conduct themselves in a correct manner.

Teachers who wish that their students should go on the right path should themselves practise what they preach to the students. Today, in my assessment, the students are faulty to some extent, but the teachers and the parents are largely responsible for this pitiable situation in which the students are.

It is in this context that Kabir in one of his famous songs advised *Dil me Ram, hath me kam*. Here the *dil* or the mind is like the tank, and out of the tank will come good water; and devotion is like the pipe and out of the

pipe will come good water if the tank of the mind is filled with good water. The teachers and the parents are like the tank and it is only when the teachers and the parents have good ideas and adopt good conduct, out of them will flow good ideas to the students.

Giving the students excessive and uncontrolled freedom and more money than they really need are the primary reasons for this state of affairs. When the son requires a hundred rupees, if the parents give him a hundred and twenty rupees the surplus of twenty rupees will be used by him for a wrong purpose. On the other hand, when the son wants a hundred rupees, the father should give him only ninety rupees. Only then will he take to the right path. Such a restriction will at first appear to be harsh, but as time goes on, they will find that this very restriction is helpful to them later in their life to develop strength of character.

Students!

You must understand the purpose for which the various traditions are laid down. You must also understand the significance the language in which they are conveyed. You must learn to respect your parents. You must also be able to put all these things into

practice. In future, you will have to shoulder many responsibilities. You must learn to explore how you can deserve God's grace and distinguish good from bad. I am hoping that you will have all these capacities and earn God's grace. It is not enough if you have devotion to Swami. Your *prema* towards Swami is not necessarily going to result in Swami's *prema* on you. Unless you find ways and means by which you can earn Swami's grace, your effort is useless.

You should follow a path by which you will be able to experience and enjoy *prema*. To know the path by which you will receive *prema* is more important than simply saying that you have *prema*. Your *prema* alone is simply like one-way traffic. If your *prema* results in your receiving *prema* from the other side, then it becomes two-way traffic. It is give and take. If you have good ideas, develop good thoughts, and adopt good practices, then you do not have to ask for God's grace. God by Himself will shower His grace and *prema* as a reward for your good conduct.

31. Words Relating To God Alone Constitute True Poetry

Oh man, just as you cannot see the stars shining during the day, you are not able to see God who gives you prosperity, as a result of your ignorance. Just because of this, do not think that God does not exist. Your inability to see Him is a result of your ignorance. There is no death for the two great qualities *Sathya* and *Dharma*, Truth and Righteousness. Do not think that people who are teaching and propagating *Sathya* and *Dharma* are dead and gone. Do not also think that people who have faith in the *Atma thathwa* are not available on this earth. It is the seeds which they have sown earlier that sprout and give rise to great men in this world. Truth is Eternal; *Dharma* or righteousness will always be victorious. I have been searching and I have been searching then and now for a single person who has true human qualities.

In the old days, even worldly weapons used to be closely linked with *Vedic manthras*. There is a nice example for this. The weapons used by Arjuna in tackling the magical demon or *maya kirataka* have been explained to us in terms of the words of the *Veda*. Those weapons have been described by a Sanskrit word *geerbana*. If such weapons are not used with a sense of discriminate discipline, self-control and with right attitude or position, they become powerless and useless.

In the old days, the power of the weapons depended on the *manthras*. It was necessary for the person who wanted to use them to follow certain spiritual rules and *Vedic* injunctions.

In this context there is another aspect which we must recognise and appreciate. We have already learnt that the life principle in a person is called *vasu* in the early years and in the intermediate stages, it is referred to as *rudra* and in the later stage the same has been referred to it as *Aditya*. In this context, we have to examine what exactly is meant by early years. It is appropriate to call the first twenty-four years of one's life as the first period. The next forty-four years of one's life will be referred to as *rudra*. The remaining years or the third period of his existence will be referred to as the

last or third period. It is in this context that the *Sruthi* has stated that the total life-span for a man is one hundred and sixteen years. Thus the three periods—*vasuvu*, *rudra* and *Aditya*—put together, account for the one hundred and sixteen years of a man's life. This period if spent according to the *Vedic* injunctions can be referred to as a life of happiness.

Since life-span of a man is taken to be one hundred and sixteen years, it is necessary to recognise all the aspects that contribute to this life-span. This is what the *Sruthi* has laid down. Since the first twenty-four years relate to *vasuvu*, the commandments laid down by *vasuvu* form part and parcel of one's discipline and one has to necessarily obey the commandments.

In the next stage of *rudra* if we look at the origin of this word, we realise that it is a deity who is associated with sorrow. This is how the word *rudra* or its equivalent *rodana* (wailing loudly) signifies that all life forces function on account of divine strength. For instance, as soon as a child is born we expect the child to cry loudly. In fact, if it does not cry loudly it implies that all the life forces are still silent. It is only when the new born child is able to cry loudly and freely that we come to the conclusion that all the life forces in the child are

functioning normally. We think that there is going to be some disaster for the child if it is not crying properly. This has to be interpreted as saying that the newly born child is proclaimed to the world with *rodana* or a loud cry. This is the power of *rudra*. The meaning of this is that God is present in that child in the form of *rudra* and by uttering a loud cry God is handing in the *rasa* or the life force to all the organs in the form of *rudra*. There is an alternative name *Angirasa* for this situation. Since God takes the task of giving the life principle to all the organs in this case He is called *Angirasa*.

The child that is born proclaims itself its arrival in the world with a loud cry and the same child will end its life also with the same cry. This individual who is born questions himself with a loud cry, “Who am I?” “Who am I?” When the same person ends his life, he ends it by crying, “*Soham, Soham*”. The individual who begins his life by asking the question, “*Koham*” or “Who am I?” ends his life by finding the answer to the question saying, “*Soham*” or “I am He”, this process of realising one’s true nature is called *Vedavid* or one who knows the *Veda*. It is in this context that divinity makes one utter a loud cry and is in this aspect called *Rudra*.

In common parlance we understand *rodana* as something connected with sorrow or pain. This, however, is not the correct understanding. Here, we must understand that divinity is being expressed by one’s breath—by inhaling and exhaling. God is expressing himself by means of the loud cry and that is why he has the name *Rudra* which has its origin in *Rodana*. In calling this sound which comes with a view to protect one’s own body by the name *Rudra*, there is an inner meaning.

We generally associate the word *rodana* with something which causes pain or suffering to the body. That is not the correct meaning here. This period of *Rudra* has been mentioned as the intermediate period and we have to understand this word to mean that in this period divine energy is being handed down to you.

In the third stage of one’s life named *Aditya*, just as the sun takes away all the essence out of water in the form of vapour, so also *Aditya* extracts the life force out of all the organs in the human body in this period and therefore this is called *Aditya*. Here we have to understand the significance very carefully. When the rays of the sun fall on the salty ocean or impure water, the sun leaves the residue or the impurity behind and only takes out pure water in the form of vapour. On the same

analogy, when we say that *Aditya* is taking away the life force from our organs, he is leaving behind all the bad thoughts, bad qualities and bad work and taking away only your good qualities and good ideas in the form of essence. The inner meaning here is that the good and noble ideas that you have are going to be imprinted on the heart of the *Aditya* or the sun of your life. We should understand here that the impure thought in you is not going with the Lord in this period. Therefore individuals who want to reach God and become one with Him or merge in Him should see good and do good in their lives. It is only the impure portions of you that are left behind and are stuck in the world. The *Sruthi* teaches us that impure thoughts are not taken by *Aditya*. It is only the sacred ideas that are taken by him. The *Veda* preaches such noble and sacred thoughts and ideas.

Since *Veda* has emanated from the *Paramatma* Himself, it was considered as a poetical text. The work of a poet takes the form of poetry and this is the meaning in calling the *Veda* a poetic text. This poetic text of *Veda* was composed by *Paramatma* Himself as the author and therefore the divinity of *Paramatma* as well as poetic beauty are both to be found in the text of *Veda*. The *Sruthi* has declared that since the *Vedas* had emanated from the

Lord, the poetic texts are regarded as the outcome of the Lord and God is here regarded as a Poet par excellence who composed the *Vedas*.

In this context, we should analyse what is it that characterises a poet. Here, a poet stands for one who is able to visualise in one moment the past, present and future. The poet is one who has this capacity. It is in this context that the *Bhagavad Gita* has extolled the Lord as a *kavi* (poet), as a *purana* and as an *anusasita* or one who lays down the metre. During the past one month, those of you who have been reciting *Purusha Suktha* must have learnt that the word *kavi* can be applied only to *Paramatma*.

In addressing *Paramatma* as a poet, the implication here is that he has handed down to the world some selfless and spiritual texts which are full of noble ideas. That is why he has been called the poet. That which is intended to look after man's welfare and contains the noblest of ideas and that which contains the aspect of the *Atma* alone can be called true poetry. It is only in the context of the divine poetry contained in the *Vedas*, that the word *kavi* becomes significant. However, today even those who write a few meaningless words and produce a few useless sentences are also called poets. Everyone is not eligible to be called a poet. It is only he who is well

versed in the *Vedas* and has the capacity to visualise God in his mind can be called a *kavi*. Whatever words or writing which come from an individual if they come in the form of *vedavani* from the depths of his heart having a divine aspect, can really be called poetry.

It is in this context that the text of *Bhagavatha*, which describes the divine *leelas* of God, has been acclaimed as one of the greatest texts. Potana, the author of that *Bhagavatha*, himself declared “the words that emerge from my mouth describe the divine *leelas* of the Lord; the Lord who is making me utter these sacred words is none other than Srirama; why should I speak anything other than the Lord’s story? I will narrate only His story since it liberates the mankind from the cycle of birth and death”. That is why the *Bhagavatha* has become a masterpiece of divine poetry.

If anyone writes with ego and if while writing he thinks that he is a scholar and is doing something extraordinary or if he does it with jealousy, that work can only be described as exhibitionism and it cannot be poetry in the true sense of the word.

The students possibly know that Saraswathi’s picture in our mind is one in which she is wearing clean, white and pure clothes which is a symbol of purity. It is in

this context that we say *Suklambara dharam Vishnum* etc. Saraswathi is the goddess of speech and her name is synonymous with *Vedavani*. This is the reason why it is said that if one’s words come from the depth of his heart and are selfless, then it can be concluded that these words are coming from the goddess of speech and constitute true poetry.

One may ask why we have brought in Vishnu here in the saying, *Suklambara dharam Vishnum*. The concept of Vishnu here is not the traditional description of Vishnu with the conch, wheel and mace. The word Vishnu here signifies the aspect of omnipresence. There is another word coming here and that is *sasivarnam* and this stands for the colour of *vibhuthi*. Traditionally *vibhuthi* symbolises divinity. This fact is obvious from the various ways in which Easwara is described. One of the descriptions of Easwara is that his entire body is smeared with *vibhuthi*. The colour of that *vibhuthi* is greyish white (*sasivarnam*). This simply means that amongst the several strengths which Easwara possesses is the strength of *maya*.

There is yet another significant meaning for this. What remains of the human body when it is burnt away is a small quantity of ash. The human body consisting of different organs—the senses of action and the senses of

perception, undertaking ever-so-many activities while it is alive, is burnt away after death like a piece of firewood and is reduced to a small quantity of ash. You can purify or transform any matter with *agni* or fire and all matter is reduced to ash ultimately. The *Vibhuthi* is a sacred substance and its colour or form does not change further. If you burn iron, it reduces to ash; if you burn wood, it reduces to ash; if you burn the human body, it reduces to ash; if you burn anything, it reduces to ash. Thus, ash is the ultimate substance which does not change its form. When it is burnt, it still remains as ash. The one thing that remains permanent and which does not change is the ash.

This is the lesson one has to learn and constantly remember. It is in this context that several *pundits* take this ash in the name of the five different elements and bear it in the centre of their eyebrows. The meaning of this is that all the elements in the world are identical with ash. What remains ultimately as an unchanging substance is the ash and this is the reason why Easwara himself wears ash all over His body.

Ash is the only substance which is symbolic and equivalent to God and that is the reason why I create and

give *vibhuthi* to the devotees who come to me. This is to convey to them that ash is permanent and even liked by Easwara. Since the aspect of Vasuvu, Aditya and Saraswathi are all present in this ash, it is neither pure white nor dark but is a combination of both these colours and is described as *Sasivarnam*.

You are all familiar with the word *Chaturbhuj*. In one hand, He holds the wheel of time, and in another, He holds the conch, a symbol of sound, and in the third, He holds a mace, a symbol of physical strength and in the fourth, He is holding the lotus, a symbol of the heart. This is the meaning of the four divine hands holding time, sound, strength and heart and this is why He is called *Chaturbhuj*. In the insignia that are given to the Lord, the *chakra* represents the wheel of time, the conch represents the aspect of sound, while the *gada* or mace represents the physical strength and the lotus represents the heart.

We have understood easily the meaning of the word *Chaturbhuj*, and the next name is *Prasannavadana* and this signifies the aspect of the ever-smiling face of the Lord.

While true poets thus describe the Lord with devotion and purity in their hearts, there are others

nowadays who give perverted meanings for the same description of the Lord. They also call themselves poets. According to such people, *Suklambara Dharam* means one who carries clean white clothes (washed and dried clothes) and Vishnu stands for omnipresent or that which can be seen everywhere and *Chaturbhujam* is taken to mean one with four legs and *prasannavadanam* is interpreted as expressionless and resigned countenance. They have concluded that that which has an unchanging and expressionless face, that which moves about everywhere aimlessly, that which has four legs, and that which carries white clean clothes is the donkey. Thus, they equate Lord Vishnu with a donkey. People who give such twisted meanings to sacred poetic expressions are the real donkeys.

When we talk of poetry, it should describe sacred things and should give us noble ideas and an elevating experience. Only such can be called poetry. Everything that is written cannot be called poetry. But today it is unfortunate that individuals who give such twisted and incorrect meaning to various sacred words, and who defile sacred *dharma* and duty have become several in number and because of this all faith is disappearing and disbelief and lack of faith is taking its place.

Pavitratma Swarupas! students,

It is absolutely necessary that you should fill your heart with ideas which are divine. You must think that the words are coming from the seat of Saraswathi in your body. You should also think that any work that you undertake is arising from the seat of *Aditya* or Bharatha within yourself. Our whole life is intertwined with the aspect of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati. It is necessary that you should use your physical body for fulfilling the purpose of your life which is to remember the commandments of Ida and the words of Saraswathi. Also, remember that the words that you utter come from Saraswathi and are thus sacred. Remember also that you should undertake sacred work that will take you close to the aspect of *Aditya*.

What you have heard in the past one month has two important aspects that is Bharatha and Brahman. Constantly contemplate on them and recapitulate again and again. Remember the inner meaning of these words and put into practice. It is only when you put them into practice that you will be able to propagate these ideas to others with whom you come into contact. If you only hear what is told to you and do not put it into practice you will only be hearing all your life and you will not be putting anything into practice. Put into practice what you

have listened to and prepare yourself to listen to more good things. These two words Bharatha and Brahman are not limited to a particular time or country or a community. They are not limited to any one sex or religion. They are very much wider in application. They do not relate themselves to either the *brahmacharya ashram* or the *vanaprastha ashram* or to the *grihastha* or *sanyasa ashram*. They refer to the totality of life. They do not refer to one individual or one country. They refer to the whole of mankind. They are broad ideas and refer to all countries and to all times.

You should get rid of all the narrow ideas that you might have had in your mind earlier. All these days I have been talking to you about things which are essential for you to lead your normal daily life in this temporal world. I have also stressed certain aspects of the spiritual world. Thus I have spoken about the material as well as the spiritual world. In the few days that are left, I will join you wholeheartedly and sing with you, play with you and talk with you and in this way I will be able to communicate to you what is here at Brindavan and why you have spent all your time at Brindavan. You should also know who is in Brindavan and what is the aspect of the person that is heading this

Brindavan. I hope that in the next two days, I will communicate to you the answer to the question—Who is Sai Baba?—by being one with you, by mixing with you and by talking to you. In this manner I expect to give you immense happiness and send you back with pleasure to your places.

32. Who Is Sathya Sai Baba?

Giving the appearance of a strange person, having a basket-like hair on his head, showing no signs which indicate any particular religion or sect, with no specific mark on his face indicative of any particular caste, he appears quickly in a moment and vanishes equally quickly, then suddenly comes into your presence, wearing a robe that comes right down to his feet and sometimes covers the feet and sometimes does not cover the feet. Inherent beauty and attractiveness are obvious in his playing and singing. These are the aspects of Shiva Sakthi that are contained in him. Neither his hair nor any particular mark on his body nor the kind of robes that he wears give any clue to his divinity. All these signs point to the young Sathya Sai as he appears in his external form. He always smiles. In him, you will find the aspects of Shiva and Sakthi.

How is it possible for anyone to understand the secret of Sathya Sai whose form answers this description?

Students, boys and girls!

During the last several days taking the aspect of the goddess of learning and speech—namely Saraswathi and names like Bharatha and Prajapati—we have understood their significance. It has been said that many people from time immemorial have been desirous of knowing what God is and what, if any, are his attributes. What are his special powers and strengths? This is the kind of enquiry that has been going on for many millennia.

There are replies to these questions. *Maharishis* in ancient days, did *thapas* and got answers to these questions. They realised that the self-effulgent Lord is very much present within their ownself in the form of *Prajna*. They also realised that what they seek to know in the external world is present within themselves in each individual in the form of *Prajnana*. By using one's external vision one can certainly realise this divinity to a limited extent. But, by using one's inner vision, one can realise Him as the very essence of *Atma*. This is what they understood and taught people.

The two words that are used in this connection are *charma* and *sarma*. These have been mentioned

before and you have known the essential difference between these two words. *Sarma* stands for *Ananda* the inner bliss whereas *Charma* is an outer cover, that is skin which covers the human body. This has been created to protect the inner organs of the human body. It is, however, not meant to hide the human nature. The individual who realises or recognises that the human body is an implement intended to realise the inner aspect of *sarma* or bliss is on the right path.

We have already learnt the methods by which we can experience this bliss and happiness. Mere knowledge of how to acquire this bliss is not going to bring it to you. It is only when you are able to put such knowledge into practice that you will be able to enjoy the real bliss. If you want to find precious stones, you will have to look for them in the midst of dust and rubble in the earth. If you search for the precious stones on the surface of the earth, you are not going to find them. This body is equivalent to dust and in this body alone can you find the Lord. Man's duty is to make such an attempt by which he will find the jewel of the divine aspect in this human body.

Today, man's efforts are like taking a golden vessel studded with precious stones and using it to cook

some daily food. The human body containing the divine jewel of *atma thathwa* is being used to fulfil one's base desires. Will there be a fool who will take a golden plough to till a fertile land and finally put useless plants in it? Will there be a fool who will go round the city begging for food when tasty food is available in his own house? In the same manner while sacred peace and happiness are present in your own heart, is there any meaning in your going in search of them everywhere else except turning inwards into your own heart? It is foolishness to look for *Paramatma* elsewhere. While we regard God as omnipresent, in practice, we are looking for Him everywhere except within our own heart.

The *Puranas* described *Paramatma* in ever so many ways and having such and such attributes. All these descriptions arise from their own internal feelings and the picture of God that they have created for themselves. There are very few people who can describe the real nature of the Lord. While the Lord is present in everything and is responsible for everything, it is not possible for anyone to understand the full significance of the Lord. Everything is God and every aspect of creation is a facet of God. While stating and saying that God is present

everywhere but looking for Him in some specific places is not correct. It is meaningless.

All these statements by different people depend on their own ideas, their strengths and weaknesses, their likes and dislikes. Depending on their whims and fancies, they have been giving various descriptions of the Lord. What is perceived by them in the world and what constitutes their own daily experience form the basis for their description of *Paramatma*. However, it is not possible for any of them to give a correct description of the Lord. In fact, those who had really experienced the glory of the Lord cannot and will not undertake to give a description to others. For one who did not overcome his own weaknesses, his desires and qualities, to describe God as having such and such form is not correct. Such descriptions are hollow. When an individual is himself subservient to *gunas*, how is he going to recognise the Lord who is above *gunas* and give a description of Him? Thus, when such an individual describes God, it is not based on his own experiences but, what he has read in the books written by others.

The ocean is very deep, vast and infinite. From this ocean, an individual can draw water to the extent of the

size of the pot which he carries and nothing more. Each person is bound by certain limitations. They will be able to grasp only a particular aspect of the Lord and they think that that particular aspect represents the total picture of the divine.

How can the infinite nature of Divinity be confined to a limited space? The devotees of Vishnu proclaim that Lord Vishnu is the greatest of all. The devotees of Shiva proclaim that the aspect of Shiva is the greatest. The devotees of Ganapati say that Ganapati is the greatest of all deities. The devotees of Sarada vouchsafe that she represents the best aspect of God. The devotees of Allah proclaim that he is the greatest and the mightiest. Still some others say that all are the same. How can anyone say who among the different forms of Divinity is the greatest? What could be the true picture?

I wish to quote a nice example in this context. Seven blind people approached a big elephant. One of them went near the elephant and touched its leg. Based on his own experience, he described that the elephant is like a big pillar. Another person touched the ear of the elephant and described the elephant as one big fan. A third person touched the tail of the elephant and

concluded that the elephant is like a thick rope. Another person touched the stomach of the elephant and decided that the elephant is like a big wall. In this manner, each of the blind men touched and felt a particular part of the elephant and came to his own conclusion. Each one concluded that the particular part of the elephant which he touched is the total form of the elephant. They have been describing correctly and completely the particular part of the elephant which each one touched, but a single part can never represent the totality of the elephant. It is the combination of all these parts that can be called an elephant.

In this way, when people try to understand the universal religion, people are getting hold of some particular aspect and they are thinking that what they have got hold of is the total religion. The universal religion is really the totality of all these aspects of different people. It is the common harmonised content of all different religions of the universe. In all these components, the same kind of healthy blood must flow. It is true to say that *prema* or love is the blood that is flowing through all the religions of the world. There is only one religion and that is the religion of love. This love flows as a stream through all the religions and this

is the essence of all the religions. Without recognising this essential stream of love that is contained in all the religions and by paying attention to only the external form and ritual, people have been quarrelling with each other about the greatness of their own religion. Those who aim at only the external form, cannot comprehend the full truth.

In the same manner, with regard to the nature of Sai as well, different people formulate different opinions based only on the external appearances. They do not make any attempt to recognise the fundamental truth, the unchanging permanent qualities of truth that are in Sathya Sai. All powers are under the control of Sai. Unfortunately many educated people who call themselves *yogis*, *mahayogis*, *pundits* and people who have all kinds of qualifications talk only of the miracles that I perform. They do not make an attempt to recognise the power and the true nature of Sai. Today many people who are educated and who are proud of the kind of education they possess come here but they do not realise the truth that is present here. They spend their time only in talking about their knowledge of the *Upanishads*, *Vedas* and *Sastras*. They do not realise that the very basis of all that they talk about is present here. They do not make an

attempt to realise this truth. Many people attach great importance to their own knowledge and are anxious to exhibit their knowledge. Such people do not realise that they are right in a place which is the very basis of knowledge and that they should try and get the *darshan* of this basis rather than make an exhibition of their own knowledge.

When one looks at people with such an attitude, it becomes clear that they do not have any experience of true divinity and that what they have acquired is only acquaintance with several books. They do not have any knowledge of things that really matter. It is not possible for anyone to recognise the true aspect of God. From ancient time to the present times, although God appeared right amidst the people, it has not been possible for them to realise and appreciate the true nature of God. The reason for this is that they are deluded.

There is no limitation to my power. There is no reason to limit or confine my power and my grace to any one place. Infinite powers and grace are present in my hands. To state these things with regard to myself becomes necessary sometimes. There is no use telling people who refuse to know. For people who know, there is no need to tell them. But for people who know and yet

do not know, it becomes necessary to present what I call my visiting card. Therefore, if today I have undertaken to tell you about myself, it is with a view to present you with my visiting card and not for any other purpose which you may be having in your mind.

In the whole of our spiritual history, we find that only Lord Krishna had proclaimed his own divinity clearly in this manner. Even in the *Avatar* of Krishna, there was some apparent setback and there were some difficulties at certain times. But this is nothing unusual. It is only a put-up appearance and it is part and parcel of the divine aspect. Such setbacks are made to appear in order that people know that an attempt has been made, but became futile.

During the time of the Krishna Avatar, many kings enquired him as to why while he was present, the dreadful war of Mahabharatha should take place and why he should not try and prevent the war through peace negotiations. To this Krishna replied that he did make an effort, but it had not succeeded. This should not be interpreted as a failure for Krishna. Actually this is according to a plan which Krishna himself conceived. He wanted the world to see and know that he had made all possible efforts but the wicked Kauravas would not

heed his advice. This way the people would also be convinced that efforts had been made but the Kauravas were wicked and so did not listen to Krishna. Thus, he conducted negotiations and showed to the people that the Kauravas were wicked and were not interested in having peace.

Depending on the nature of the country, upon the people and the environment it becomes necessary for God to enact such situations and pretend to do certain things. In this *Avatar* of Sai, there is no room for such deceptions and there is no place for such setbacks at all. What I have taken as a *sankalpa* will surely be fructified; but, I need not take on a *sankalpa* if I do not wish to. My own thoughts, *sankalpas* and ideas depend on how the devotees conduct themselves. My grace is available in full measure for the benefit of all the devotees. Since I move about like an ordinary individual talking and playing with you, many people do not understand my true nature. In this context, even people with great strength of mind cannot recognise the true nature of this Sai and the difference between the outward appearance and the real internal aspect. My objective is to establish unity in mankind and to reveal to them the aspect of divinity which is Brahman, the only goal which one

should look for. It is also my duty to make you realise the kind of relationship that should exist between man and man and that divinity is present and latent in all human beings. Persons are not going to become great merely by reciting *Vedas* and making speeches in a very flamboyant manner. Simply because I do not do such things, I am not going to become small. I have the capacity to solve the most intricate of problems but simply because I pretend not to have this capacity and talk as if I cannot solve the problem, it is very foolish for people to think that I am just a man of miracles and no more.

The miracles that I perform are the kind of feeling which an elephant has when a mosquito lands on its body. These miracles have an insignificant place in my totality. Sometimes I feel like laughing at the ignorance of people when they attach importance to my miracles. People talk of only such small things and forget the much bigger aspect in me. The most sacred quality in me is *prema*. This *prema* is immeasurable. However much a person may try, he cannot get a measure of the extent of my *prema*. It is immeasurable and unrealisable. Only such people who have recognised the existence of such *prema* in me can get some idea of who and what I am.

Students!

Realise and understand fully well that the only royal path to reach God is the path of *prema*. You will be able to taste this sweet honey of *prema* only at the lotus feet of the Lord. Such honey is available in the Lotus and it is not as if honey is applied to the feet of the Lord. When we refer to the word lotus, we must realise another significant meaning of the word. A lotus has its origin in the muddy waters and is born in the mud. Yet it does not assimilate in itself either the mud or the water. If there is no water, the lotus cannot survive even for a moment. The interesting thing is that even though it survives only in the presence of water, it does not allow water to get into it.

On the same analogy, human life is born in something comparable to mud, and grows in the material world which may be compared to water. Having been born out of mud and living in water and yet keep uncontaminated by the mud and water is the nature of the feet of the Lord. That is the reason why all the different limbs of the Lord are referred to as Lotus—such as the Lotus feet, the Lotus eyes and so on.

Thus, whatever *Paramatma* does is without attachment and He is not affected by it. He is always

clean and pure. His vision is always pure and His mind never tainted. A vision which is pure and a mind which is unwavering are the characteristics of the Lord. It is common experience that if one holds anything greasy in one's palm, the palm also becomes greasy and one has to wash it with a soap or shampoo. But remember that the tongue never attracts this greasiness even when it is used to eat the greasy material. Since the tongue does not attract greasiness, it is always considered to be pure. Such a tongue has to be used to utter only sacred words like Govinda, Madhava and so on. The tongue alone is entitled to utter these sacred words because all other organs let the grease stick to them.

It is customary for women in India to apply collyrium to their eyelids to beautify them. While applying this collyrium, no one allows it to stick to the eye ball. Just as the eyeball will not take the collyrium, our *Sastras* have told us that our vision should always be perfectly clear and should never entertain dark ideas. Another meaning for the word *Jnana* is vision. The *Sruthi* has taught us that the realisation of the aspect of non-duality is itself a vision. When we use the word vision, we imply that it is only the eyes that can see because no other organ in the body has the capacity to see. It is in

this context that we understand that our vision itself is the *Jnana Drishti*. In addition to this, our vision has also been teaching another lesson. If any individual comes and stands in front of us, we can also see our own image in his eyes and he can see his image in our eyes. In this process, we note that to enable him to see his image, the eye is being used as the reflecting mirror. In the same manner, if we want to have a vision of the Lord, we will have to use the eye of wisdom as the reflecting surface. When we want to see the worldly objects, we open our eyes and see very well. If we are not able to see, we use glasses to help.

If, however, we go to a temple to have the vision of the Lord, we close our eyes and offer a *namaskar*. What is the significance of this? You go to the temple, want to see God and then you close your eyes. You should examine the meaning of this. The physical eye is of no use in your attempts to get a vision of the Lord and you will have to use your wisdom eye or the *Jnana Nethra*. Closing your eyes implies that you understand that the physical eyes are not appropriate for seeing the Lord. It follows that all that you see with your physical eyes is untrue and only those who can use the eye of wisdom can get a true picture of Divinity.

In the court of Janaka, there used to be a practice by which he invited great scholars and conversed with them. The kind of conversations that were permitted in the court of Janaka were of three kinds. The first type is the argument or exchange of words. The second type is *Jalpa*, and the third is *Tarka* or logic. The first kind signifies the fact that the individual pays complete attention to what he wants to say and he can adopt any method to present his view point. The second method, *Jalpa* consists of using a *Sastra* or quoting from scripture and establishing one's view point with the help of such quotation. The third method, *Tarka* consists of using intense logic by quoting from the *Vedas* to confirm his ideas. This method is one of deep analysis and logically establishes what one wants to by quoting authority from the *Vedas*.

In this manner, arrangements were made to have three kinds of presentation in Janaka's court. Many reputed scholars used to enter the court. People who had several titles to indicate their expertise used to participate and were wearing *Rudraksha* symbolic of their scholarship. Among them was one scholar by name Ashtavakra, who was very young and ambitious. When he was trying to enter the court to participate in the

deliberations, the elderly scholars thought that it was not befitting of them to argue with this young Ashtavakra. Such an attitude indicates intellectual arrogance and pride of scholarship. They tried to prevent his participation in many ways. But Ashtavakra was very stubborn and after praying to King Janaka, he was allowed to enter the court.

As soon as Ashtavakra entered the court, all the *Pundits* who looked at him laughed loudly. In return, Ashtavakra also laughed more loudly. The *pundits* were rather surprised because they thought that there was a valid reason for their laughing, but they did not see any valid reason for Ashtavakra laughing. Ashtavakra was stopped by one of the *Pundits* and was asked to state the reason for his laughter. One of the *Pundits* said that anyone who sees the crooked body of Ashtavakra cannot refrain from laughing. Then Ashtavakra offered to tell the reason for his laughter if they wished to listen to it. He said that he had come to the court of Janaka to participate in the function when he heard that several scholars would be present, but he was forced to laugh when he found that King Janaka had mistaken such *charmakaras* to be real *pundits* and scholars. Ashtavakra used the word *charmakaras* which denotes the community of cobblers and at this all the *pundits* were

enraged. Ashravaka said that he addressed them as cobblers because only cobblers can understand the nature of leather used for making footwear and they behaved like cobblers when they attached much importance to the skin covering the external body.

Pundits will be true *pundits* only if they are able to see inside the heart with their inner vision. On the other hand if people only look at the external form and give undue importance to it, they will belong to the same class of cobblers described by Ashtavakra. To always talk of the *vibhuthi* which I give or to talk of the things that I materialise and of the miracles that I perform is not correct. Even erudite people are not able to recognise my Divinity. Is this the result of their education? What value can we attach to their education when they are not able to see the inner and more important aspects but attach significance only to the other details?

Students!

You must not go that way. You must take a path by which you can see deep into my heart and experience the various divine aspects of mine. You must try to realise my omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. Do not be led astray by people who always

talk of having got a locket or a watch or a ring from Me. These things are of little significance. If you can earn my grace, it is as good as getting the entire world. Do not talk of my miracles but talk of the *prema* which you can get from me by your conduct. This is what is most important and you must make an attempt to get it. When there is an invaluable diamond in me, you must try and acquire that. What is the meaning in your wanting to acquire smaller things? You must not go away from this invaluable treasure. You must be as close to it as possible. It is necessary for you to take it and treasure it. You may ask what the necessity is for us to earn such a thing as divine grace and *prema*. In this context, it will be helpful to know the kind of love which comes from the divinity present in me.

I would have given a protective talisman to a devotee and that individual would have worn it either on his neck or somewhere on his body. You do not have to constantly think of Swami. He will be with you and looking after you, even if you do not have such a protective talisman on your bodies. My grace is always available to all people. The purpose of this talisman, however, is that if the individual wearing it is

in some danger or difficulty, then the talisman will immediately bring to me in a flash the news and go back with my grace to him. This is the function which the talisman that I give performs. It constitutes a kind of link between the wearer and me in times of danger. Such material gifts have been protecting thousands of people.

To give a specific example, I can cite the case of a person who is right here now. In the month of April this year, he came with me to Bombay and took part in several programmes. However, on the last day he had to leave Bombay at midnight to go to a foreign country. He finished his work there and as he was preparing to return to India, he became ill and was unconscious. When he came to the Airport to board the flight, he did not have his ticket and the relevant papers with him. If one has to come from such a far off country, it would not be possible for one to do so even if one tried to get into the place stealthily and without a ticket. He was not conscious and he did not know himself. He searched everywhere but could not find his ticket and was in great trouble. At that time, the ring which he was wearing had brought the message to me in a flash. In one moment, the Airport Officer came and put him on the plane even without a ticket and he does not even know how he came to India.

There is another example of this kind in the case of a devotee from Calcutta who used to stay in London and who came to this Summer School a few days ago. When I intended to give him a ring, he said that as he never wore a ring in his life, he might be excused. I insisted that he should wear the ring which I gave him. He replied that he would wear the ring as it would give him Swami's grace. He wore the ring and went to London. When giving him the ring, I told him that whatever dangers he might be in, such dangers would be passed on to Swami and he would be saved. If one looks at the terrific speed with which the cars move in London, one would feel much safer in an aeroplane. It so happened that the car in which this devotee was travelling was hit by another car and his car was badly smashed up and the parts of the car were thrown helter-skelter on the road and the whole thing was broken to pieces. So far as the occupant who was the devotee wearing the ring I gave him is concerned, he did not know what happened as he was sitting nicely on the ground in the centre of the road in apparently good shape. While he was so sitting, another car came to take him away and he looked at the ring which I gave him and found that my photo in the ring was completely smashed

to pieces. By the time he reached home, he received a telegram from me. If a telegram has to go from Brindavan to Whitefield, it takes six or seven minutes at least, but within the few minutes the devotee took to reach his home in London from the place of the accident, the telegram was already waiting for him. The telegram said, "Be happy; I am with you. Do not worry about accident." He looked at the telegram and was very much moved. He immediately returned to India.

Why I am telling this to you young people sitting here is to make you realise that my nature is such that it relates to the heart. These external things and material gifts provide the link from heart to heart and they function when they are required to function. Such functioning and heart-to-heart experiences are happening not by ones or twos but by the thousands. In fact, such incidents are as many as there are hairs on my head. The purpose for which I have come is not to fulfil small desires or attend to the small incidents like what you have now heard about. There are great truths which I have to establish. There is a considerable change in human outlook which I have to bring about. No one can stop Me or deter Me from fulfilling the tasks for which I have come, namely the establishment of the one Eternal

Truth. You have a part to play in the fulfilment of the Sai mission which is ahead of us.

Establishment of *dharma* is the task to which we have to attend to immediately and I hope that you will all play your part, however small it may be, in fulfilling the Sai work. Since everything depends on truth, such truth is not something which has to yield to anyone. Untruth has to subordinate itself to almost everyone with whom it comes into contact. Truth will never be subservient to anyone. This form is the form of Sathya Sai who is the embodiment of truth. In the name Sai Baba the word *Sa* stands for divine and *Ayi* stands for mother and so Sai stands for Divine Mother. Baba means father. This name Sai Baba thus means divine mother and father. The words *Sambasiva* and Sai Baba mean the same thing. *Sa Amba Siva* means Divine father and mother and so does the word Sai Baba. Because there is the aspect of mother and father and because both are present, this form is rightly to be described as Shiva Sakthi Atma Swarupa. Like mother, I will be tender and soft and give you happiness and like father, I punish you, criticise you when needed and through these methods I take you to a higher level. Even your own mother and father, in the worldly sense, will sometimes become selfish and may

punish you in a manner which smacks of selfishness, but this divine mother and father in me have no selfishness of any kind in them. They are selfless and such punishment as I give is intended only to take you to a higher plane.

If a mother has two sons and if one of them is sick, she will give the sick son only bitter medicine while she may give the other son anything that he may ask for. The mother gives the sick son only bitter medicine. If she gives bitter medicine to one son and sweet to the other, it is not because the mother likes one more than the other. The mother realises that it is for the good of the sick child to take bitter medicine and so she gives him a bitter medicine; but it is not because she likes him less. If an individual who has good qualities comes close to me, I am sweet to him. On the other hand, I am harsh to one who has bad qualities; and I do not let him come close to me. It is not that I like one more than the other, but I give the medicine to cure the bad qualities where they are present.

Also, there are people who are believers and people who are non-believers. Believers are always prepared to enjoy the bliss of being near the divine. The

non-believers feel very much disturbed even at the mention of the name of God. Here we must examine the reason for the non-believers disliking the name of God. It is not as if they do not like God. This is a disease in them. In functions like marriages or in congregations like this, we serve sweets to all the guests. While we offer sweets to all, some persons say that they do not want them. It is not as if they do not like the sweets, but they reject them because they suffer from diabetes. Such people who do not want to go near God are like diabetic patients. They are suffering from a disease and if only that disease is cured, they will enjoy the sweet name of God as much as anyone else.

When one is suffering from malaria, anything that he eats will taste bitter to him. The bitter taste is not the quality of what he eats but arises from his sickness. After the malaria is cured, a sweet will taste sweet. In such a situation one should try to cure the disease where a disease exists rather than force the patient to take the sweet.

In my view, in this entire world, there is no one who is a non-believer. Truly, the individual has some selfish motive like his wanting to establish an organisation of his own. His attention is diverted to the fulfilment of such a task. Only one who cannot love

himself may be called an atheist or a non-believer, but in this world there is no one who does not love himself. There are many people who say, “I have no faith in God,” but they also say, “I have confidence in myself.” But he does not think who this self in him is. The self in him is the God. He keeps on saying, “My body, my eyes, my mind, my *Antahkarana*,” and so on; but who is this “I” who is claiming ownership? In so saying, you are not identifying yourself with the body. You are not the body. Therefore, mind, *buddhi*, *chitta* and all these things really belong to the “I” and are not the same “I.” Thus self-confidence is synonymous with faith in God. All persons who have faith in their own self must be called believers. They cannot be called non-believers. The divine Atma is shining in everybody as a self-effulgent flame in the form of *prajnana*. It is in this context that they have said *Prajnanam Brahma* or “The self is identical with Brahman.” Brahman is present in everyone in the form of *Prajnana* or divine wisdom.

There is no meaning in calling anyone as being devoid of God.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

Today I have talked at length and caused you some trouble. My discourses are coming to an end today.

However, the closeness between our hearts is such that it is not going to come to an end. Keep the essence of Sai in your heart. I wanted to convey to you some aspects of Sai which many people want to know although it is not possible for anyone to understand or fathom the depths of Sai’s divinity. This is the background of my wanting to talk about myself. I wished to convey to you some things which others cannot convey. From tomorrow, try to put all these into practice, enjoy the divine bliss and become one with divinity. Do not fill your head with mere information and knowledge. Fill your hearts with *prema*. I am hoping that you will thus fill your hearts with the essential content of my discourses and prepare yourself for meeting the future life.

33. Divine Blessing And Words Of Advice To The Outgoing Students

Will the tanks get filled with a few drops of rain? Can we quench our thirst by taking a few drops of water from a spring? Simply by holding our breath, will it be possible to get plenty of water? By burning a small bundle of twigs, can we get coal? These are not possible things.

This land of ours has earned fame from far and wide, beyond its borders. This land of ours has given birth to men of great reputation. This land of ours has driven away the western rulers and earned for itself independence. This land of ours has given birth to many sons who are learned scholars. This land of ours has shown great capacity and attainment in many branches of knowledge like music, fine arts and sculpture. This land of ours has been the source of *dharma*. Bharath, our

motherland had the great fortune of spreading *dharma* and good conduct. The responsibility of maintaining these and protecting them in the future rests on the shoulders of you young people.

Prema Swarupas, Students, Boys And Girls! Other People Who Are Assembled Here This Afternoon!

Our country, Bharath, is one which has handed over spiritual strength to all parts of the world. While civilisation under the pretext of modernity is spreading all over and is bringing about many changes in man's life, yet we see that the basic spiritual aspects are not undergoing any change. From this we should learn and understand how strong and how very deeply rooted the spiritual facets are. It is not possible for anyone to stop or slow down this flow of *Jnana* or spiritual wisdom. While the lamp of spirituality shines brighter and brighter, we will recognise that the so-called individual freedom, advocated by modern civilisation will lead one only to the darkness of ignorance. How long will this kind of foolishness sustain to obscure the spiritual facets? How long can walls which have no foundation stand? From times immemorial, our ideas and traditions have stood firmly on the foundations of *Vedas* and religious practices.

We have had the strength of spiritual gems behind them. Such foundations cannot be disturbed by perverse ideas in the name of modernity. The so-called educated people are caught in the fangs of lust and desire and are unable to extricate themselves from their vicious hold.

Education today cannot be called education at all, since it is not accompanied by the necessary purification. From time to time it is necessary to introduce reforms in education. If man is not able to take good education to his heart and if his education has no culture behind it, he will be worse than an uneducated washerman. A person who is educated in several branches of knowledge thinks that he has great wisdom, but in reality, he does not know himself. Such a person cannot give up meanness inherent in his nature. If one really goes into the details of the kind of education which one is getting today, one finds that it is of an argumentative type not helping man to become wise. Why submit yourself to such education? You should really acquire such education which will lead you to immortality. When we ask the question, "Who is the blind man in the world?", the answer that comes is, "An educated person who in spite of his education does wrong things, is the blind man." There is no meaning whatsoever in feeling proud of such education.

That kind of knowledge alone can be called real education which will enable you to open your heart and reveal to you the nature of *Atma*. Education which does not enable you to understand the divine essence and control your senses cannot be termed education at all.

Education should inculcate divine feelings in you. It should enable you to understand that the daily events occurring in man's life are as per the Divine will and that there is what is called "Eternal Truth", which links man's life to the environment and community around him. True education consists of character, truth and good conduct. Character, truth, good conduct and the ability to sacrifice are the essential components in any type of education. Devoid of these qualities, it becomes worthless. True education gives you humility; from humility you get the deservedness; from such deservedness you will get wealth; from wealth you will get *dharma* and from *dharma* you will get happiness in the material as well as spiritual world.

Prema Swarupas!

Dharma is not something that has been created by man. Man's ideas have no power to shape or change the form of *dharma*. You can only follow *dharma*. It is not something that you can change. *Dharma* has been in

existence long before you came into this world and therefore you have to follow it. *Dharma* is not going to change for you. A man can select a woman as his companion and vice versa, but no one can select and exercise his choice regarding *dharma*. *Dharma* is like a mother. One can choose a wife, but no one can choose a mother. *Dharma* is in the same position as one's mother. We have no choice to change *dharma*. We have to follow *dharma* and enjoy the fruits of *dharma*. If there are people who say that there is nothing like *dharma*, it is like saying that there is nothing like a mother for them. Man is using such meaningless words and is undertaking to follow a path which is utterly wrong. This country of ours, Bharath, which was ever cheerful and smiling is passing through difficult times now. The main reason for it is our modern ideas, which have destroyed all our value systems. The students of today must push aside such foolish ideas which are totally wrong and be prepared to lead our country into a prosperous future by following the prescribed *dharma*.

Students!

The duty to uphold what has been taught to you during the past one month lies on you. The first thing you should do is to accept your mother and father in your home as living gods, satisfy them and keep them happy. Every

Mother and father will be hoping and dreaming to see their children have good character. In order that their dreams may materialise, they will put themselves to many troubles. Do not undertake any step to cause pain to your mother and father. This should be the very first good quality which the education you receive should inculcate in you.

After that, make an attempt to understand the sacred principles of our culture and try to put them into practice. If we simply go on using the word *dharma* and not putting into practice even a bit of what goes under the name *dharma*, all that will simply be *adharma*. Today the situation everywhere is such that we think of one thing, say something else and do something entirely different. Such things are not going to promote peace in the world.

How can one get peace if one holds the atom bomb in his hand and simply goes on shouting from house-tops that peace is wanted in the world? Similarly if you always practise *adharma* and keep on shouting that *dharma* is to be protected, how is *dharma* going to be protected?

Students!

Your hearts are very sacred and pure. In those pure and unwavering hearts, you have to fill the sacred

aspect of the *Paramatma*. You are all wearing white clothes and assembled in this Hall in the Whitefield. Just as you are wearing pure white clothes outwardly, you must also make your hearts pure and white internally. You should remember that the characteristic feature of education that you have acquired here is to make you clean and pure both internally and externally. Further, all of you who have to become the future citizens of this country and uphold the honour and dignity of the country should also uphold *dharma*. If you find a person who preaches peace and *dharma* but himself practises violence and *adharma*, you should be prepared to oppose him with all your strength. Students should be prepared to punish anyone who has his legs and yet behaves like a lame person, anyone who has his eyes and yet behaves like a blind person, anyone who has mental strength and yet behaves like a weak-minded person. The word punish used here should not be interpreted as causing physical harm or trouble. The word punish here means that you must teach them good ideas and good habits to enable them to distinguish right from wrong.

Having in your mind the sacred aspect of Saraswathi in several forms such as *Brihaspati*, *Vachaspati* and *Prajapati*, you should see that you do

not behave in a violent manner—shouting slogans in the street. If you do so, you will be promoting anarchy and not the divine spirit which you are entrusted with. Do not take to wrong path in the educational institutions. If you find other students doing this, you have to tell them that the purpose of education cannot be what they are indulging in. You should adopt the right attitude and help other students also to adopt the right attitude. It is possible that you have some inconveniences in your college. You should then approach the concerned persons in authority and see that the inconveniences are removed. Instead of this, if you take to the wrong path and turn violent, you will bring disrespect to the very name and avocation of a student. You will be abusing the culture and training that you have received. By following anarchic practices, you are simply ruining the reputation of not only your own Institution, but the whole country.

Agitation is not the proper method. It is a characteristic of weakness. It is only a weak person who gets excited and agitated. In their excitement, some say that they have achieved their objective, but this achievement is often temporary. If you look at a problem in a peaceful manner and spend some time in thinking it

over in depth and arrive at a proper solution, the result will always be of lasting nature.

Students!

Some of you have expressed the feeling that you have spent a very happy one month. Since the time has now come for you to leave Brindavan, you have tears in your eyes and that those tears have manifested themselves in the form of rain drops. Instead of having a feeling that leaving Swami is causing you pain and hurt, it is better to take a firm resolve that the ideas acquired here should be put into practice in your daily life. Many learned people and scholars have told you several things which made you happy. The best way of showing your gratitude to these teachers is by adopting at least a few of their teachings in your daily life. That is the best return you can give to your teachers. Do not have the idea that Brindavan is a summer camp and your home is somewhere else. This is not the right type of thinking. You should think that you are in your home when you are in Brindavan. All people here in Brindavan constitute one single family. There is no question of having a feeling of separation, when you develop such an ideal. Although from a bodily aspect you are away from each other, from

the point of view of closeness of the heart it can always be said that all of us are very close to each other.

Students!

You should not forget all the happiness that you have had here immediately after you reach your home. If you forget all the happiness that you have acquired here for the past one month, it is of no use. After you reach home, you will find that there are Sathya Sai Organisations doing spiritual work. I am hoping that you will join such organisations and recall to your mind all that you have learnt here and continue to live in this experience. Only when the boys and girls who participated in the summer camp go back to their places and pass on the bliss and happiness which they have acquired here to others with whom they come in contact, can they be said to put into practice what they have learnt here. The kind of happiness and the good ideas that you have learnt here must be retained by you till the end of your life, enabling you to enjoy a peaceful and purposeful life.

One student expressed the idea that a workshop had been started in Brindavan on the 20th May and that a large number of cars which were out of order and in need of servicing had been brought and left in this

workshop and that during the one month they had all been repaired and they are now returning home. This metaphor should not end in mere verbal expression. You must realise in practice that you are going back as repaired cars. Then only there is some justification for these words. If you can keep them as repaired cars and take the cars along the royal path and not put them back in lanes and bylanes, then you should have really meant what you are saying. If these cars which have now been repaired deviate from the royal road, they will again return to the workshop for repair. Such frequent repairs will in fact render the cars useless junk and they will become irreparable.

Students!

You have now reconditioned the cars of your body and having reconditioned the car, you must also drive it carefully. Because you are not good drivers, the cars were getting frequently out of order. The car can not be kept in a good condition unless you have a good driver. Having now reconditioned your cars, take Sai as your good driver who will drive your car for the rest of your lives. Then the car of your lives will not be spoilt. You have listened to many good things. There is no need for

me to keep on repeating these things again and again. I am hoping that you will constantly think of what you have learnt here and put it into practice.