

6. THE EXALTED NATURE OF DEVOTION

*Devotion is the key to the spiritual path,
And vital for sailing across the ocean of life;
Devotion heightens the yearning for divinity,
And is the stepping stone for liberation.*

Embodiments of Love! Students, Boys and Girls!

This land Bharat has eloquently proclaimed through the ages the virtues of *bhakti* or devotion. Devotion does not merely mean the observance of rituals, the performance of penance, or meditation. Devotion really means sincere and intense love for the Lord. It implies pure and steady love, untainted by any selfish desires or action. Such love knows no boundaries and is beyond all regulations. The spontaneous outflow of selfless love from man to God is true *bhakti*. Love admixed with worldly desires cannot be called devotion. The only desire one must have is for God; all other desires must be set aside, and nothing must be allowed to come between oneself and God. The love coming from the devotee's heart must flow unimpeded to God. love for God must be totally impervious to the vicissitudes of life.

Constantly meditate on the Lord

Dharmaja, the eldest among the Pandavas, is one example of a person who was able to achieve this kind of one-pointed devotion. He remained unruffled even when his wife Draupadi was being subjected to extreme humiliation in the royal court. Similarly, when Abhimanyu the son of Arjuna was slain in the battle, Dharmaja accepted the verdict of destiny with perfect equanimity. He remained equally calm when Aswatthama the son of Dronacharya mercilessly slaughtered all the Pandava offsprings. Nor was he bothered when he and his brothers had to spend long years in exile in the forest, foregoing all the royal comforts they were used to. All this was possible for Dharmaja because his mind was ever absorbed in the contemplation of Krishna. He was constantly thinking of Krishna, always chanting His Name, and was generally oblivious to what was going on around him.

Dharmaja was not alone in such one-pointed devotion. His wife Draupadi also thought of Krishna incessantly and constantly chanted His Name. After the gruesome murder of the young Pandava children, Arjuna tracked Aswatthama the perpetrator of the atrocity and dragged him before Draupadi. And what did she do on that occasion? Did she curse the murderer? Did she explode in fury? No; with great forbearance she said to Aswatthama,

*These children were at home
And did not enter the battlefield;
Nor did they hunt and kill;
They were just tiny tots,*

*Devoid of all ill feelings,
Why then did you cruelly strike them,
And in the darkness of night slaughter them?
They were the children of Dronacharya's disciples,
That very same Drona,
Who was also your father and guru.
Can you truthfully declare,
That what you did was right?*

Bhima could not bear to see what Draupadi was doing. Here was Aswatthama waiting to be dealt with severely for his dastardly act, and Draupadi was trying to reason with this evil monster! Exploding in anger, Bhima roared:

*Here is this demon,
Who has slaughtered our children,
And this foolish woman,
Is trying to reason with him!
Should the murderer be spared,
Or dealt with as he deserves?
If no one is willing to punish him,
I shall with bare hands,
Crush him to pulp!*

Consumed by fury, most of the Pandavas were about to jump on Aswatthama. Draupadi raised her hand and said, "Stop, you should not kill or harm this person."

*O Partha! It is wrong to kill
One who is afraid,*

*One whom courage has abandoned,
One who is asleep,
One who is intoxicated,
One who seeks refuge,
And finally, a woman.*

“You should not kill Aswatthama, for he is your preceptor’s son. Just shave his head off as a token punishment and set him free.”

This is how Draupadi reacted to the situation; she did not have the slightest hatred for one who mercilessly wiped out all the Pandava offsprings. Among the Pandavas, Dharmaja and Draupadi were two precious gems. It is their constant con-templation of Krishna that enabled them to face all odds with equanimity and display magnanimity as well as forbearance, under the most trying of circumstances.

Draupadi constantly chanted:

Kleem, Krishnaya, Govindaya, Gopijana Vallabhaya, Swaha!

This sacred chant has deep significance. *Kleem* stands for *prithvi* or earth. *Krishnaya* means *jala* or water. Similarly, *Govindaya* is a reference to *agni* or fire. Likewise, the other words refer respectively to *vayu* or air, and *akasha* or ether. In short, the words of this sacred chant refer to the five elements. Through this chant, Draupadi proclaimed her belief that Krishna the Supreme was not only immanent in all the elements, but was Himself the elements. This was the profound way in which both Dharmaja and Draupadi meditated on Krishna. Krishna was everything and

He was also Perfect. Therefore, no matter what the circumstance, He was beyond both criticism and reproach. Such are the shining examples of devotion available to us in Bharatiya Culture.

The ideal offerings to God

True devotion is not bound by rituals, set procedures, and prescribed forms. It is exemplified by the flood of tears that originate from the ocean of love in your heart. The *Gita* talks about various offerings to the Lord like *patram* (leaf), *pushpam* (flower), *phalam* (fruit), and *toyam* (water). These words should not be taken literally. By leaf, the Lord does not mean the *tulsi* or the *bilva* leaf normally used in ritualistic worship. Truly speaking, the human body is the leaf that must be offered to the Lord. Like the leaf of the tree, the human body too would one day die and decay. No one can say when that will happen. Before such a fate befalls, the body in its fullness, freshness, and purity, ought to be offered to the Lord with the words:

*Oh Lord! This body gifted by You,
I reverentially offer back unto You,
Treating it as a leaf,
And in the spirit in which tulsi leaves are offered.*

Why is this leaf called the body special? Because it is not the sort of leaf that would dry up in just a day or two. You must say with feeling, “Lord, I don’t know what kind of leaf would please You. I have this body, and I offer it to You. Please treat it as a leaf and accept it.” Next, flower. You must say,

*Oh God who has gifted me a heart,
That same heart I offer back unto You
Along with my humble salutations;
What else is there to offer?*

The flower of your heart is what would please the Lord most and not the flowers purchased from the bazaar. The bazaar flowers fade in a few hours but the heart is not like that. Totally pure, fragrant, soaked in love, and perfect, it does not wither easily. After this, fruit. What fruit would please God? Is it apple, orange, mango, or something else? God is not interested in fruits that grow on a tree; He is interested in your mind! Mind therefore is the fruit that must be offered to the Lord. Lastly, water. Is it tap water, well water, or Ganges water that the Lord wants from you? None of these. What God expects are the tears of joy that flow when your Heart is full of love for Him. These then are the offerings that the Lord expects when you worship Him.

God can be secured with Love alone

Sathyabhama [one of the consorts of Krishna] once got the idea that using her wealth, she could secure Krishna exclusively for herself. Can God be ever bought for money? No! Love alone can get Him; but Sathyabhama did not appreciate this. Sage Narada appeared on the scene at this stage, and the matter was placed before him. Narada is the one who imparts Wisdom. Wanting to teach Sathyabhama a lesson, he decided to stage a small drama. He asked for a big balance to be brought, and then invited Krishna to sit on one of the pans. Krishna of course knew

very well what Narada was up to, and smilingly obliged the sage. Narada then asked Sathyabhama to place gold on the other pan. But lo and behold! No matter how much gold was placed on the other pan, the scale refused to become even. Sathyabhama felt utterly frustrated. Seeking advice, she went to Rukmini [the other consort of Krishna], who at that time was engaged in the worship of *Tulsi*. After hearing what Sathyabhama had to say, Rukmini remarked, “God belongs to all and resides in every being as the Eternal Indweller. No one can have a monopoly of God, nor is it good to even entertain such a desire.” The gold was then removed and Narada now asked Rukmini to try and somehow match Krishna’s weight. Rukmini replied, “O sage, I believe Krishna’s Form can be balanced just by uttering His Name, and that is what I am going to do.” Narada was not prepared to accept such a scheme and said, “The Form is visible and tangible whereas the Name is not. I want you to match Krishna’s Form with something that has a form.” Rukmini agreed. She took a *tulsi* leaf in her hand and prayed:

*O God, Who is worshipped with leaf, flowers, fruits, and water,
If it be true that You submit Yourself
When You are offered Pure Love instead of all these,
I pray that You be balanced by Your Name,
And then tilt the scale with this tulsi leaf.*

So praying, Rukmini said, “Krishna!” Immediately the scale became even, although one of the pans was totally empty. Rukmini then placed the *tulsi* leaf on the empty pan, and the pan carrying Krishna went up instantly; the Lord had been more than matched!

This story teaches that the Lord submits Himself only to pure devotion; He cannot be obtained in any other way; least of all, He cannot ever be bought! There is nothing greater than pure *bhakti*, which is why it is given such an exalted status in *Bharatiya* culture. Our ancients held that devotion is more precious and valuable than all the material wealth one can dream of. It is this wealth that man should really seek instead of gold. In fact, it is the bounden duty of man to acquire this wealth; and he does not have to go far to seek it, for this treasure is already locked up within him.

The chakras and their significance

In every human being there are seven *chakras* or centres of psychic power, *Shad chakras* as they are called. These *chakras* have been interpreted in various ways. Among these, the two most important ones are the *hridaya chakra* and the *sahasrara chakra*. They are described as being special kind of lotus flowers, the former having eight radiant petals, and the latter a thousand petals. It is said that a thorough understanding of the principles underlying these two *chakras* would facilitate the attainment of divinity. The flower of the heart represents God, while each petal of the *sahasrara* represents sixteen aspects of Divinity. Thus, the thousand petals of *sahasrara* represent in all, sixteen thousand aspects of Divinity. The sixteen thousand *gopikas* (cowherd maids) that the scriptures talk about represent nothing but sixteen thousand variants of Divinity. They say that one gets liberated when one ascends from the *hridaya chakra* to the *sahasrara chakra*. What does this really mean? Simply this: Just as the

petals dissolve their individual identity and merge together to form a radiant flower, the *gopikas* merged into the Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient God. The coming together of the *gopikas* and God is, in the *chakra* language, the coming together of the two important *chakras* mentioned earlier. God is the Ultimate Divine Master, and everything in creation belongs to Him. All beings are His property. The *sahasrara* flower [representing the mind] is His property, and it must be offered to Him alone. The *Ramayana* provides an illustration.

Sita is the daughter of Mother Earth and the consort of Rama – this is as far as the *Ramayana* is concerned. In spiritual terms, Rama is *Paramatma* (God) and Sita is *prakriti* (nature). Nature was created by God and belongs to God. In the *Ramayana*, this is symbolised by the marriage of Sita and Rama; this marriage represents the eternal unity and the inseparable nature of God and His Creation. Ravana, who did not understand all these subtleties, tried to abduct Sita and paid dearly for it. Toward the end, Ravana's wife Mandodari said, "Ravana, Sri Rama is God Himself and Sita is the embodiment of Mother Supreme. You have committed a heinous crime in abducting Sita. What right do you have to take away what belongs to someone else? Repent at least now for what you have done. Go to Rama, fall at His Feet, seek His pardon, and restore Sita back to Him." But alas, when disaster beckons, the mind gets perverted; so Ravana ignored Mandodari's advice and later paid the price for his rashness.

Being aspects of Divinity, the *gopikas* were the property of God. Through their lives they demonstrated how God and His property

became one. In a subtle sense, the *sahasrara* with thousand-petals and representing sixteen-thousand Divine aspects is derived from the *hridaya*. The petals and the flower are not separate. The *sahasrara* is the Mind and the *hridaya* is God. The enormous powers of the mind belong to God, and they cannot be appropriated as one wishes. Dissolving one's ego, the mind must, in its entirety, be offered to God. It is this principle that is described by way of the *chakras* on the one hand, and through the *gopikas* on the other. The *yogis* and *rishis* of yore understood all this and tried to elevate themselves so that the two *chakras* came together. This is described as ascending from the *hridaya chakra* to the *sahasrara chakra*. It implies the unification of the mind and the heart. Why were the *rishis* so particular about this unification? Because this union led to Infinite Bliss. Happiness is union with God. The heart is the seat of God, and the mind is born of the heart. Thus the mind is the property of the heart. When the Master and His property are united there is Bliss.

Krishna created the *gopikas* and enacted a drama involving them in order to demonstrate how one must relentlessly go in quest of God. The *gopikas* recognised Krishna as Divine and described Him in numerous ways. When they were separated from Krishna, they became very depressed. Life without Krishna seemed totally empty and meaningless. In their hearts they prayed, "O Krishna, won't You come and visit us at least once?" Krishna eventually responded to their prayers and came. Pangs of separation had by this time reduced the *gopikas* to skin and bones. They were beyond hunger and thirst. Krishna saw their pitiable condition and said, "You should not starve like this. Eat something." They

replied, “Krishna, our food is the melody of Your flute. We know no food other than Your music.” Radha added:

*O Krishna! Sing please a sweet song,
And fill our hearts
With nectarine words and Bliss.
Distil the essence of the Vedas,
Transform it into lilting music,
Play it on Your enchanting flute,
And captivate us with Your melody.
Sing, O Krishna! Sing for us!!*

This is the way Radha appealed to Krishna. Krishna then picked up a bamboo twig, made it into a flute, and played music for the *gopikas*. Radha was transported to the height of ecstasy and said, “Krishna, this is the moment I have been waiting for so long. I am now full.” So saying she gave up her body and merged into Krishna. After this incident, Krishna never again touched the flute.

God’s response depends upon how much you yearn

God offers Himself to His devotees in exactly the same manner in which devotees offer themselves to Him.

Yad bhavam tad bhavati.

As you feel, so you become. If you constantly cry out, “O God, O Most Loving God,” He responds by saying, “O My devotee, My dearest devotee.” (Applause.) God has no thought other than for

His devotee. If the devotee always thinks of God, then God too will always be thinking of the devotee. No one can come between the two. The Pandavas demonstrated this to the world. They had to face innumerable difficulties, humiliation, and suffering but, in the midst of all their travails, they never forgot Krishna. They always said, “Krishna’s glorious Name is our food, water, and nectar.” It is by such thoughts that they sanctified their time. For them, Krishna was always first; everything else came later. For the Kauravas on the other hand, the priorities were radically different. For them, Kauravas first, relatives next, and Krishna last. They left Krishna and in the process got lost! This shows the importance of having God as priority number one. In the priority list, the world must come only after God. How can there be a world without God? God is Eternal whereas the world comes and goes; that is why it is called *jagat*; *jagat* = *ja* + *gat*; it comes and goes. Your focus must always be on the permanent and not on the temporary. Then alone can you become Immortal.

Embodiments of Love! It is not enough to merely do *japam* (ritualistic chant of the Name), and *dhyanam* (meditation). You must in addition have a deep yearning for the Lord for He alone is Eternal and Permanent. It is from Him alone that you can get Eternal Bliss. Do not go after ephemeral pleasures. Do not be deluded by false attractions. The world is transient and all the pleasures it can offer are fleeting too. That is why in the *Gita* it is said:

Anityam asukham lokam.

The world is illusory and full of miseries too.

Imam prapya bhajasva Maam.

Constantly pray to Me. The world comes and goes, whereas God is always there. He neither comes nor goes; He neither makes an entry nor an exit, for He is ever present. That is why the *gopikas* always thought of Krishna and were constantly praying to Him.

It is impossible for anyone to describe even in a small measure the Love of God or His Sweetness. The more you describe, the more you feel these are indescribable. How can anyone describe the Infinite? One must instead be absorbed in the contemplation of the Glory of God, which is what the Pandavas did; and that is why Krishna was prepared to do anything for them.

Examples of Krishna's compassion

Once during their exile, Dharmaja and Draupadi were walking through the forest when Draupadi saw a huge fruit on a tree. She wanted to have the fruit since it could make a sumptuous meal for all of them. Arjuna happened to come by and, responding to Draupadi's wish, brought the fruit down by shooting an arrow. He then tried to lift the fruit but could not; it was very heavy. Dharmaja and Draupadi gave a helping hand but the three of them together still could not lift the fruit. Then Dharmaja said:

*“O Krishna, not a blade of grass can move without Your will;
Is it necessary to mention all the details?
From the tiny ant to the vast galaxies,
It is You who pervade and prevail everywhere.*

*The ignorant do not realise this,
And arrogantly imagine,
That it is their intelligence that makes the world go.
Clever and intelligent they might be,
But can they forecast what will happen when?"*

“O Krishna, nothing can happen without Your divine Will.” Meanwhile, Bhima, Nakula, and Sahadeva arrived on the spot. The arrival of Bhima was greeted with joy for he was the mighty one and could be depended upon to lift the fruit. Bhima tried at first quite casually, using just one hand; but the fruit would not budge. Realising that it was not such a simple matter, Bhima then made a serious try using both his hands but no luck once again. All six then tried to heave the fruit but still it was of no use.

Now there is a story behind this unusual fruit. In this forest there lived a *rishi* named Roma *Rishi* – this name means the one with long hair. It was he who had nursed this tree and was doing intense penance to attain the fruit. This fruit was known as *amrutaphala*, by eating which one would be for ever free from hunger and thirst. That was why Roma *Rishi* was keen on having it. Seated in meditation, the *rishi* sensed that some intruders were trying to take the fruit away. His long sprawling hair then automatically started extending in search of the culprits; once the culprits were located, the hair would tie them down. Draupadi was frightened by the approaching coils of hair. She prayed, “O Krishna who saves us all the time, You must come to our rescue once more. We have no refuge other than You.”

Krishna promptly arrived on the scene, smiling as usual. He enquired, “Sister, why are you crying? You wanted the fruit;

you have got it; now go ahead and enjoy it!” Draupadi replied, “Krishna, I desired the fruit without realising the implications. We are humans and cannot be expected to be aware of supernatural consequences. You must save us now.” Krishna then said, “Draupadi, My hands are tied. The *rishis* too love Me, and they are constantly thinking of Me. I am installed in their hearts, so I am obliged to them also!” Though Krishna appeared to be wriggling out, was He the one to give up the Pandavas so easily? No, and He came up with a neat trick that would save the Pandavas from the wrath of Roma *Rishi*. Whatever God does or says is always for the benefit of His devotees; He is never driven by personal or selfish considerations. Krishna said, “Now all of you, Draupadi included, go to the hermitage of Roma *Rishi* and pay your respects to the Saint. Don’t be afraid. Just go there, and I shall follow soon. Whatever happens, remain tight-lipped, especially after I arrive. Be careful and remain silent throughout.”

The Pandavas went to the hermitage in accordance with Krishna’s Master plan. There they found the *rishi* fuming and all set to curse. Angrily the *rishi* asked the Pandavas, “Who are you and where do you come from?” Precisely at that moment, Krishna entered the hut of the *rishi*. Roma *Rishi* hastened to welcome Krishna and said, “Lord, how lucky and fortunate am I to have You visit my humble abode!” The sage was bubbling with joy. Meanwhile, Krishna appeared to be surprised to see the Pandavas there. Instantly He started prostrating most reverentially before them one by one. He even fell at the feet of Draupadi. The *rishi* was stunned to see all this. He said to himself: “Krishna is verily God, and He is prostrating before these people. Does that mean

that these people are even greater than God?” But he did not spend too much time analysing what was going on. Obviously the visitors must be exalted ones. So, following Krishna’s example, he too started falling at the feet of the Pandavas one by one. Having prostrated, he could no longer curse them! That was just not done – one does not curse those to whom salutation has been offered. The *rishi’s* anger quickly came down, even as Krishna was chanting *santhi*. Incidentally, *Santhi* is always chanted three times. Do you know why? Because one wants peace at the level of the body, mind, and soul. The *rishi* then asked Krishna, “Lord, what is all this mystery? There is none greater than You and yet, You are prostrating before these humans! What is the inner significance of this?” Krishna smiled and replied, “O Noble One, I dwell in the minds of My devotees. I am the captive of My devotees. These Pandavas have extraordinary devotion for Me. No matter what the circumstance, they never forget Me. I am under the control of such devotees!” The sage realised the greatness of the Pandavas and said, “Please take this fruit; I do not need it.” The *rishi* then wished them all a long life; not just a long life but a long, long life, happy life, and a peaceful life! Sure enough the Pandavas were happy till the very end. With this particular episode, God taught an important lesson to humanity. If you have steady devotion for God, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. God Himself would come running forward to help you. Numerous such incidents occurred during the incarnation of God as Krishna.

Here is another example of Krishna’s limitless compassion. On the ninth day of the Kurukshetra war, Bhishma took a terrible

vow to exterminate all the Pandavas before sunset the next day. Draupadi came to know of this and became highly perturbed. She said to Krishna, “O Lord, this must not happen. You have to do something. I don’t know how, but You must make sure that I do not become a widow.” Krishna smiled and was non-committal. He just said, “Wait and see what happens.” God may appear non-committal but when you appeal to Him with deep sincerity, He will certainly respond.

Night came, and quiet descended on the battlefield, everyone having withdrawn to their respective quarters. In his tent, Bhishma was restless and was pacing to and fro. Meanwhile Krishna came to Draupadi and said, “This is the moment. Bhishma is unable to sleep and is pacing back and forth in his tent. He is regretting the vow he has taken. You must slip into his tent this very moment and throw yourself at his feet.” Draupadi nodded and started moving toward Bhishma’s tent. She was wearing special slippers used by royalty, that made a squeaking noise. The noise could be clearly heard in the stillness of the night. Krishna signalled to Draupadi to stop and said, “If Bhishma hears this sound, he would know that a lady is coming. He should not know about your approach. So remove your sandals and give them to Me.” Draupadi did as instructed. Krishna collected the slippers, wrapped them in His upper cloth, and started walking behind Draupadi, some distance away.

Quietly, Draupadi slipped into Bhishma’s tent. Absorbed as he was in thought, Bhishma did not notice her entrance. Immediately upon entry, Draupadi threw herself at the feet of Bhishma. As she did so, the bangles in her hand made a sound. Bhishma heard

the sound and realised that a lady was prostrating before him. Without a second thought, he blessed the lady in the traditional manner, “May you have a long and happy married life.” Draupadi was happy when she heard the benediction. She said, “This is enough for me,” and rose. It was then that Bhishma realised whom he had blessed. He exclaimed, “What! You, here at this time?! Who brought you here?” Draupadi replied, “Who else but Krishna?! He is the One who suggested this strategy to prevent the slaughter of my husbands. You have blessed me with a long and happy married life and so you now have to spare my husbands!” Precisely at that moment, Krishna entered. Bhishma was happy about the turn of events, though it meant going back on his vow. The Pandavas were ideal men and great devotees of the Lord. God in His Infinite Mercy had staged a drama as a result of which the Pandavas were now secure.

Bhishma was tired, having paced up and down for a long time. He sat down and said, “Krishna, have You brought any eatables for me? You seem to have a bundle slung on Your shoulder. Why don’t You open it and give me some of the food it contains?” Krishna smiled and said, “Do you think it is My job to bring food for you? This bundle does not contain food but the sandals of Draupadi. I carried them so that there was no sound when Draupadi entered your tent.” Krishna then opened the bundle and the sandals fell on the ground. Tears flooded Bhishma’s eyes. In a voice choked with emotion he said, “Lord, there is no limit to the extent You are prepared to go in order to save Your devotees!”

The *Avatar* is beyond petty worldly considerations and, where devotees are involved, no task is too mean or lowly for Him.

He will do what has to be done, anytime, any place. Protection and the welfare of devotees is His priority number one. Krishna always protected the Pandavas and they, for their part, worshipped Krishna with great feeling. Krishna's Name was always on their lips. The Lord was ever uppermost in their minds. The feeling was mutual, and Krishna too constantly concerned Himself with the welfare of the Pandavas. As is the sound, so is the resound. The Lord's yearning for the devotee matches the yearning the devotee has for the Lord. God is inscrutable. People think: "How can God do such lowly things?!" God does not have such distinctions or gradations. For the welfare of His devotees, God is prepared to do anything. Without devotees, where is God?! God's greatness and noble acts are all due to devotees.

The magnetism of Sai's prema!

So many of you have gathered here. Why have you all come? There is only one reason for this. You have come for that which is not in you, that which cannot be got at home, that which is not available in your village or town, or even country. What is that? Pure Divine Love, or Sai's *prema*! That is the reason why all of you have come, and not because someone invited you [loud applause]. That which you don't have is Sai's *prema* or selfless love! That which you cannot get in your village, town or country is Sai's *prema*! That love is available only here and it is in search of that you all have come! In short, you have come here in search of something that you desperately want but cannot get anywhere else. Having come in such a quest, collect all that you can before you return. Fill your hearts with this divine love. Without devotees, where is Baba? And without Baba, where are the devotees?! There

is an unbreakable bond between Baba and His devotees. The two are inseparable and inter-dependent. Devotees are Baba's very life. Likewise, Baba is the very life of His devotees. The two lives have the same breath. If you thoroughly grasp this principle, then, wherever you are, you will always enjoy Baba's protection. Those who are firm and steadfast in their devotion will never face any troubles or difficulties. Surely, you must have heard or read many stories that illustrate that those who repose full faith in God and are always pure, never come to any harm. You must have pure, unsullied, and steadfast devotion.

Your heart must stand firm like a rock. There are rocks on many seashores. Huge waves constantly dash against these rocks but the rocks remain firm. Waves repeatedly bash the rocks but they do not give way. Your heart must be like those boulders on the oceanfront. You may be constantly bombarded by worldly problems, but your faith in God must remain firm like a rock. That is true devotion.

Embodiments of Love! You can give up everything but never give up God! Never forget God! Engrave this lesson in your hearts. God is your most assured insurance and source of protection.

At the conclusion of the discourse, Bhagavan sang the lively *bhajan*, "*Subrahmanyam ...*", at a vigorous tempo!

19 May 2000.