

## CHRISTMAS DISCOURSE

### **LEAD A LIFE FULL OF LOVE**

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all;  
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;  
You become prosperous when you control your desires;  
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Every object in this world is endowed with five attributes, namely, Sat, Chit, Ananda, Rupa and Nama (existence, knowledge, bliss, form and name). Existence, knowledge and bliss are the three permanent attributes of every Jeeva (individual), while name and form are transitory and unreal. Considering name and form to be real and the ephemeral world to be permanent, man has forgotten his true nature. Though God is beyond all attributes and qualities, man ascribes qualities to Him and leads his life in a strange way, forgetting all about his innate divinity. It is most essential for every individual to know the infinite love, truth and compassion of God.

Since God is the repository of all cosmic power, He is known as Hiranyagarbha. As He is full of effulgence and radiance, He is called Saundaryamaya and Tejomaya (embodiment of beauty and splendour). God is also known as Prajapati as He is the creator of the entire universe. In order to understand the principle of divinity, you have to understand the inner meaning and significance associated with each name of God. God has various names and each of them has a profound inner meaning. That is why our ancients used to name their children after the names of God.

The life of man is the noblest because he is endowed with the principle of Hiranyagarbha. Though man is essentially divine, he is conducting himself like a demon as he has forgotten his innate divinity. Every man is endowed with qualities like Deeksha (dedication) and Dakshata (discretion). He alone is a true human being who develops such qualities in him. Today man is in search of God and is enquiring into the nature of divinity. When God is within, where is the need to search for Him? God is the embodiment of love. Truth is His very Swarupa and Swabhava (form and innate nature). *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). But today man is unable to understand the meaning of truth. He considers untruth to be truth

in order to satisfy his desires. First of all, man should endeavour to understand his true nature. Sathyam, Jnanam and Anantham (truth, knowledge and infinity) are his true attributes. Every man in this world has truth, righteousness and love. He is the embodiment of Sat, Chit and Ananda. These attributes are verily divine. Sat is that which is changeless and eternal. Chit is Chaitanya (awareness). God is referred to as Atma. Brahman is another name of Atma. It is present in every man in the form of Chaitanya. One who understands this principle of Chaitanya alone is a true human being. Sat, Chit, Ananda and Sathyam, Jnanam Anantham are different words but they have the same meaning. God has gifted man with scriptures like the Vedas, Sastras, Puranas and Itihasas to open his eyes to the truth that he is essentially divine.

In this world, we find various schools of thought, like dualism, qualified non-dualism, non-dualism, etc. The essence of all these philosophies is contained in the divine name of Kesava. The word Kesava consists of three syllables, namely, Ka + esa + va, which represent the Divine Trinity of Brahma, Easwara and Vishnu, respectively. Hence, Kesava symbolises the principles of creation, sustenance and dissolution. Man can understand his true Self if he contemplates on the divine name of Kesava and understand its significance.

Our ancient sages undertook deep enquiry in order to investigate and understand Divinity. Ultimately, they declared to the world: *Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Thamas - the darkness of ignorance). They exhorted man to make efforts to have the vision of Divinity. This developed man's faith in God. But with the passage of time, his faith started declining. He is suffering today because of his lack of faith in God. God is one, He has many names.

*He who is worshipped as Allah by Muslims,*

*As Jehovah by Christian aspirants,*

*As the Lotus-eyed Lord by the worshippers of Vishnu,*

*As Sambhu by those who revere Siva,*

*In whatever way He is worshipped, He gladly responds,*

*Grants the grace of fame and fortune,*

*And showers happiness and joy.*

*He is the One,*

*The Supreme Self. Know Him as Paramatma.* (Telugu Poem)

Different religions have come into existence but all of them lead to the same Divinity. Therefore, if man enquires into his true nature, he can experience truth.

*Religions are many but goal is one.*

*Clothes are many but yarn is one.*

*Jewels are many but gold is one.*

*Cows are many but milk is one.*

*Beings are many but breath is one.*

*Castes are many but humanity is one.* (Telugu Poem)

### **Prophetic Declarations of the Magi**

Jesus was a noble soul. He declared that he was the son of God. He never said that he was God. When Jesus was born, three wise men were guided by a star to a stable in Bethlehem where the baby Jesus lay in a manger. He was radiating divine effulgence. One of them said, “This child will love God.” The second said, “He will be loved by God.” The third said, “He will love one and all.” I often tell you that you are not one person but three: *The one you think you are; the one others think you are and the one you really are.* This is the inner meaning of these three statements given in the Bible. You should try to understand the import of these statements.

Jesus was brought up under the loving care of his mother Mary. His father worked as a carpenter. It was the time of a festival in Jerusalem and the child Jesus went there with his parents. A big crowd of people gathered there. The child Jesus was separated from his parents. They could not find him anywhere. Mother Mary naturally got much worried. Finally, they went to the temple. To their astonishment, they found young Jesus in the temple. All the while the child had been in the temple, listening to the holy discourses of the priest of the temple. The anxious mother took hold of her child and started asking him several questions as to what he was doing all the while. The child replied, “Mother, why were you afraid? All the time I was in the hands of God. I have been listening to the

words of God expounded by the priest in the temple.” Thus, Jesus was God-minded from his young age.

After some time, his father Joseph passed away. Mary told Jesus, “Now that your father has passed away, you should continue your father’s profession, so that we may earn our livelihood.” But the boy was not inclined to continue his father’s profession. The mother was also not interested to oppose the natural inclinations of Jesus. One day, young Jesus went to a lonely hilltop. The mother was very much worried, nay, depressed due to the absence of her son. Jesus was sitting and meditating on God all the while. After some time, he returned. As he was returning, he met a group of fishermen. They looked very much worried. When young Jesus enquired from them the cause of their worry, they said that they had been leading their life by catching fish, but they could not catch even a single fish that day. Jesus said, “Oh simpletons! Are there any waters that do not have fish?” He asked them to follow him. He took them along in their boats to the sea and asked them to cast their nets at a particular spot. To their utter astonishment and great joy, the fishermen found that their nets were full of fish. This event created a lot of faith in the minds of the fishermen. Faith is indispensable for man.

Jesus could instill deep faith in those people. One of those fisherman was Peter. He developed intense love for and faith in Jesus. From then on, the fishermen regularly used to take Jesus out on their fishing expeditions and after their return in the evening, Jesus used to expound spiritual matters to them. When Peter’s father passed away, his mother was filled with sorrow. Jesus consoled her by telling, “Death is the dress of life. Why do you shed tears? Death is like changing one’s dress. Therefore, stop grieving. These physical bodies come and go. Therefore, do not worry about such an ephemeral thing. The indweller who lives inside the body is true divinity.”

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

(Telugu Poem)

### **Jesus Gave the Message of Love**

In this manner, Jesus preached these truths and instilled courage and confidence in the people around him. Thus, the fishermen spent their time happily in the company of Jesus. At that time, one Mathew, who was a tax collector, used to visit them on official work. During his visits, he also used to listen to Jesus and take notes of his teachings. As he listened to the teachings of Jesus attentively, he developed faith and ultimately became a disciple of Jesus.

In this world, no one can escape from worries and sufferings. Everyone has to pass through the vicissitudes of life. Life without hardships cannot be imagined. Death follows birth and misery follows happiness. This is the stark truth of human life. *Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau* (one should remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). *Pleasure is an interval between two pains*. The purpose of human life is to transcend this duality and investigate the supreme truth of life. Human life is given not merely for eating, drinking and procreation. Every human being must make an effort to know his inner nature and understand his true identity. Jesus preached such sacred truths and therefore his name and fame started spreading far and wide. A person who earns a good name in this world would become the object of jealousy and hatred of wicked people. So, many people became jealous of Jesus. Jealousy, pomposity and egoism are evil traits which ultimately lead to man's ruin. Nobody will forgive you if you harbour such evil qualities.

You should not hate or ridicule others. Humanness will blossom in man only when he develops equal-mindedness. Man today is undergoing untold suffering because of the absence of human qualities in him. That which has the innate capability to burn is known as fire. In the same manner, only the one with human qualities is a human being. One bereft of human qualities is not a human being at all. One may be very wealthy or highly educated or occupying an exalted position, but if one lacks human qualities, one is not worthy to be called a human being. Hence, get rid of your evil qualities in the first instance.

### **Social Service without Love is Futile**

Today the Messengers of Sathya Sai (Old Students' Association of Anantapur College) are celebrating their anniversary. I have been telling them not to give scope to evil tendencies like Asuya (jealousy), Krodha (anger) and Dwesha (hatred). But,

unfortunately, these evil traits are increasing more and more. Their members, who are working in overseas countries, are imbued with sacred qualities. Today you have heard the speeches made by our former students from Philippines and America. Their thoughts and feelings are noble. Their speech is full of sweetness. The girl from the Philippines who spoke earlier is the holder of a Ph.D. degree. They are highly qualified, yet they conduct themselves with humility and obedience. Their devotion and surrender are worthy of emulation. But some of their counterparts in India are full of jealousy and hatred. What is the reason for jealousy and anger in you? No reason whatsoever except the effect of your destiny. You are highly educated. What is the use of your high academic qualifications and doctorate degrees if they foster infighting amongst you and create evil traits like jealousy and hatred against each other? I really detest such behaviour. With love and sacred feelings, you have established an organisation in the name of Sathya Sai for doing service to humanity. No doubt, a lot of good work is being done but take care that the noble feelings do not degenerate into ill feelings. I do not attach much importance to work. What is important to Me is your qualities.

Wherever you may be – whether on the earth or in the sky, in a forest, town or village, you must develop noble qualities. Jealousy is a very bad quality. Jealous people can never lead a smooth and peaceful life. Jealousy, in fact, is living death. In addition to this, if you have another bad quality of backbiting, you are bound to meet your doom. Why do you criticise others? Instead why don't you criticise your own bad qualities? Remove your own ill feelings and bad thoughts. Do not attribute bad qualities to others. Do not indulge in slander mongering. In spite of My repeated advice, there is no change in many people. I am disgusted with their behaviour over the last five-six years. What is the use of establishing organisations? You have Sathya Sai Seva Samithis and Bhajan Mandalis. You are undertaking social service, conducting study circles. But no purpose is served if such service is not backed by love in the heart. *Love is God. Live in love.* It is unfortunate that some people are developing hatred against one another instead of fostering love. Such people deserve exemplary punishment, for others are also getting spoiled on account of such wicked people. I am prepared to give you anything, even My life, provided you get rid of your evil qualities. I am not in favour of celebrations which serve no purpose. From next year onwards, there would be no anniversary celebrations of the

Messengers of Sathya Sai. What is the use of such celebrations if we are not able to get rid of our evil qualities? When you take the name of Sathya Sai, how nobly should the organisation function? How much respect should you command in society? Whoever establishes an organisation in the name of Sathya Sai must adhere to the principle of truth. Functioning under the banner of Sathya Sai, if you deviate from the path of truth, what purpose does it serve? It is only when you cultivate love and tread along the path of truth and morality will the organisation develop and prosper. Therefore, right from today develop the qualities of truth, love and morality. This is your first and foremost duty. It will not be proper if you undertake demonic activities in the name of a divine organisation.

### **Shed Jealousy and Inculcate Virtues**

God is worshipped by several names, such as, *Sathya Dharma Parayanaya Namah*, *Sathya Swarupaya Namah*, *Prema Swarupaya Namah*, etc. There is a lot of meaning in these names. He is the embodiment of love. In fact, human beings themselves are embodiments of divine love. Love is their chief quality. Life has no meaning if you do not cultivate love. Carrying tales against somebody and backbiting are qualities to be condemned. In the past, women were free from evil traits. But now even women are no exception to these maladies. Even teachers fight with each other. What a shame! In My opinion, this distortion is the result of modern education.

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

(Telugu Poem)

No purpose is served by the education which creates evil qualities. What is important is not education, but good qualities, character and conduct.

If you associate yourselves with people of evil propensities, you too will become evil. *Tyaja Durjana Samsargam, Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam, Kuru Punyam Ahorathram* (give up bad company, join good company and perform meritorious deeds day and night). These three principles are most important for a human being. Karna was a great warrior in Mahabharata. He mastered many branches of knowledge. He was a great archer. In

fact, he even excelled Arjuna in archery. In spite of all this, why did he earn a bad name? It was because of his association with evil-minded people like Duryodhana and Dussasana. What happened to Karna in the end? None of the great Astras (weapons) he mastered could come to his rescue. Therefore, all your education will be of little use if your mind is not channelled in the right direction. Hence, students – boys and girls! Cultivate noble qualities. There is no use acquiring wealth without virtues.

*“Excessive wealth gives rise to ego which in turn paves way for many wicked qualities. When wealth leaves you, ego also vanishes and as a result the evil qualities disappear.”*  
(Telugu Poem)

Greatness does not lie in acquiring wealth. Cultivation of noble qualities is of paramount importance. Talk less. For, the more you indulge in loose talk, the more you are prone to bad qualities. There is no point in joining a service organisation if there is no transformation in you. Some people talk sweetly but their heart is full of poison. Such dichotomy can lead them nowhere. Fill your heart with the nectar of sweetness. That which possesses Daya (compassion) is Hridaya (heart). Your Hridaya must be full of Daya. You deserve to be called a Manava (human) only when your heart is filled with love and compassion.

Jesus Christ developed such noble qualities. He helped poor and destitute people with a loving heart. In fact, several such people sought refuge in him. In the process, he had to face the opposition of many evil people. You should help others even if you have to undergo great difficulties. Never indulge in criticising others, for the same Atma is present in every living being. If you criticise others, it amounts to criticising your own self. If you do not like them, keep yourself away from them but never criticise them. Any amount of good work done by you will be of no use if you do not give up bad qualities. If you cannot do good to others, at least speak good words. *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly.* If you find someone suffering, try to help him. Today the other person is suffering but tomorrow it may be your turn. Always bear this in mind. Nobody can escape from pain and suffering. Always work for the welfare of all. That is why we pray: *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) When you have good feelings, you will have a good life. Let your heart shine like pure gold. Transform it into Hiranyagarbha.



## **Morality has Paramount Importance in Man's Life**

You need not be a great man but you should aspire to be good. You can become a good person only when you cultivate good feelings. You must earn the love of one and all. One of the prayers addressed to God is *Hiranyagarbhaya Namah*. God is loved by everybody. He is always blissful. He has no hatred towards anybody. Whatever He does is for your own good. Everyone must cultivate such divine love towards others. Always tread the path of truth and morality. A nation without morality is bound to suffer. Morality is more important than nationality. Without morality, nationality is meaningless. It is not enough if you have patriotism; you must have morality too. So, you should develop morality. Only morality can make you a true human being.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

God is not moved merely by sweet words. You must translate your words into action. You may be a great hero in giving lectures on platform but if you are a zero in putting them into action, it will be of no use. You must become heroes in practice. That is what gives Me happiness. Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammad were highly noble and great. How could they achieve such greatness? It was their goodness that brought about their greatness. Therefore, you should try to acquire goodness. Then greatness will follow you. In fact, goodness is greater than greatness. Several great souls took birth in this land of Bharat. Saint Thyagaraja in one of his famous Kirtans sang, "*Endaro Mahanubhavulu, Andariki Vandanamulu ...*" (there are many great souls; I prostrate before all of them). Thyagaraja was a great saint. But he was full of humility. As are your feelings, so is the result. Sublime feelings of your heart will make all your actions sublime. Empty words without feelings achieve nothing.

## **Love alone Protects Man**

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today everybody longs for peace. But where is peace? You do not find peace anywhere in the world. You see only pieces! In fact, man's heart is breaking into pieces today. How can then peace be acquired? There is only one solution to this problem. Love God. Have faith in God. Surrender unto Him. Dedicate your whole life to God and perform all actions as an offering to Him. Let all your actions help others. *Help ever, hurt*

*never*. You may think that you need not bother when others are undergoing suffering. Who knows what is in store for you the next moment? If you wish to be always happy, pray for the welfare of others. This is the real Sadhana. Spirituality does not mean simply doing Bhajans and performing ritualistic worship. Cultivate noble qualities. Always be helpful to others and earn a good name. Jesus earned a good name. He even sacrificed his body for others. You must also be prepared for sacrifice. If you give up Thyaga (sacrifice) and indulge in Bhoga (sensual pleasures), you will end up in Roga (disease). In fact, Thyaga is true Yoga (spirituality) and Bhoga is Roga. Do not become a victim of Roga. Develop Thyaga and achieve Yoga.

*Students!*

Love is the most important quality that you should acquire. Whoever acquires the quality of love will never be hated by others. Even wild animals will not harm you when you have love. The great Rishis of yore spent their lives peacefully in dense forests amidst wild animals. The wild animals fought among themselves but they did not cause any harm to the Rishis. What is the reason? The Rishis possessed the weapon of love which protected them from these wild animals. In fact, the wild animals also used to love these great Rishis. What man has to acquire is this great weapon of love. Love alone can protect us, not atom bomb or hydrogen bomb. Consider My own example. I have only one weapon. That is love. Because of this, millions of people from every nook and corner of the globe gather around Me. Did I send any invitation to you? No. It is only My pure and unsullied love that draws you here. (*loud prolonged applause*) In fact, My heart itself is a very powerful magnet. Because of the power of love in that magnet, all these ‘iron filings’ are attracted to this place. In order to be attracted by the magnet, the iron should be free from rust and dust.

Some people think, Swami calls Himself a powerful magnet, but He is unable to attract us. The fault lies in them only. Their hearts are rusted. They will be attracted by the magnet of Swami’s love only when they cleanse their hearts. How can you remove the ‘rust and dust’ accumulated in the heart? Only by rubbing and polishing it with love. Be they Indians or foreigners, all have to purify their heart with love, and that love must be totally selfless. When you cultivate such selfless love, you can attract the whole world. *Self is lovelessness and love is selflessness*. Therefore, lead a life full of love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manse  
Kaho ...*”

**- From Bhagavan’s Christmas Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on  
25th December 2002.**

## CHRISTMAS REPORT

### **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

Christmas Celebrations have a markedly distinctive characteristic at Prasanthi Nilayam not only because it is celebrated in the close proximity of the Lord Himself, but also because Christmas gaiety here is tempered with spirituality, divinity and unity. This is perhaps the reason why more and more devotees throng Prasanthi Nilayam every year from all parts of the world to experience the real joy and true spirit of Christmas celebrations. This year also hundreds of thousands devotees came to Prasanthi Nilayam to experience the bliss of celebrating this holy festival in the Divine Presence of their Beloved Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

#### **Carol Singing by Overseas Devotees**

The venue of the celebrations was Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam which was aesthetically decorated for this occasion with festoons, buntings, Christmas trees and luminous stars. The celebration started on the afternoon of 24th December 2002 with a very impressive musical presentation by the overseas devotees. The programme included Christmas carols by children's choir (50 boys and 37 girls) and adults' choir (411 ladies and 223 gents). It was really a marvellous presentation. While the children's choir presented more than ten songs, the adults' choir sang more than fifteen songs, all in perfect harmony and rhythm, making the Christmas eve lively and blissful. After the conclusion of the carol singing, there was a programme of Bhajan singing in which all the devotees took part. The Bhajans in Hindi were also led by the overseas devotees. While the Bhajans continued, Prasadam of chocolates was distributed to the devotees. This magnificent programme came to a close at 5.05 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

#### **Glorious Christmas Celebrations**

On the day of holy Christmas, Sai Kulwant Hall was fully packed with devotees since early morning. It presented a fascinating look with glittering chandelier lights and bright Christmas decorations. The dais was specially decorated and showed the scene of Jesus's birth with idols of Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus on one side and the three wise man with their gifts on the other. To add to the grandeur of the scene, the devotees in the entire Hall held lighted candles in their hands.

The devotees in the Hall were ecstatic with joy when they saw their Beloved Swami clad in pure white robe enter Sai Kulwant Hall at 5.10 a.m. Their prayers were answered as they experienced the bliss of Lord Sai's Darshan on the auspicious Christmas morning in the holy and blissful environment of Sai Kulwant Hall. After the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in the Hall, the morning Omkaram, Suprabhatam, Veda Parayana and Nagar Sankirtan were conducted as usual. Bhagavan Baba lighted candles and cut Christmas cake at 5.45 a.m. amidst thunderous applause of the devotees. The overseas devotees sang Christmas carols while enjoying the bliss of the presence of the Lord amidst them. At 6.05 a.m. Arati was offered to Bhagavan. As the devotees on the dais offered Arati to Bhagavan, thousands of devotees in the Hall also waved lighted candles and sang Arati to their Beloved Swami. This delightful early morning programme came to a close with Bhagavan's return to His abode at 6.10 a.m.

Bhagavan returned to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.20 a.m. in His usual orange robe and watched the Christmas programme presented by the students. The first item of this programme was an excellent presentation of violin music by the Primary School students. This was followed by a few enchanting numbers on orchestra by the senior students of the Institute. The students of the Institute, playing on their gold-plated musical instruments literally etched in gold this day in the hearts of all those who were fortunate to be present. As they played eight carols in perfect rhythm and synchronisation, the multitude of devotees involuntarily clapped to keep pace in this journey of sheer joy. In between, there were showers of joy and mirth when Primary School students dressed as angels went into the rows of devotees in the entire Hall distributing toffees to the devotees. This programme on orchestra was followed by carol singing by the Institute students. With the accompaniment of jazz drums, guitars and three keyboards, the students sang Christmas carols from the depth of their hearts and seeped everyone deeper in the joy of Christmas day. As they ended with thunderous wishing of Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all, the devotees were overjoyed and filled with gratitude to Bhagavan for such a wonderful Christmas. During this presentation, a student dressed as Santa Claus came to distribute toffees and chocolates after getting them blessed by Bhagavan. In the end, there was a programme of Bhajans, which were led by the students of the Institute. This was followed by distribution of Prasadam to all the devotees. The

morning programme of Christmas celebrations came to a close at 8.50 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

In the afternoon, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.30 p.m. to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the eager devotees. The programme started at 3.10 p.m. with Vedic invocation by the students of the Institute. Thereafter, Sri Arthur Hillcoat made a brief speech exhorting the devotees to look within and recognise their real nature. This, he said, will take them out of duality of joy and sorrow and make their life simple. Referring to the Christmas celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam, Sri Hillcoat observed that nowhere in the world this holy festival was celebrated with such piety and devotion as in the Divine Presence of Lord Sai.

### **Messengers of Sathya Sai**

After this, the Messengers of Sathya Sai, an association of former students of Sri Sathya Sai Women's College at Anantapur, held their Annual Meeting. Bhagavan Baba inaugurated the programme by lighting the sacred lamps on the dais. The first member of the association to address the gathering was Dr. Latha Seetharam. She recounted the phenomenal success of Sri Sathya Sai EHV programme in various countries in a very short span of time, and attributed it to the grace of Bhagavan. On an emotional note, the speaker said that what Bhagavan gave them was the education for life and one could not possibly repay for this invaluable gift in the short span of one's earthly sojourn. The next speaker of the day was Smt. Chethana. She said that the journey of soul's perfection did not end on being embodied in a human frame, and that human beings had to become divine by following the path shown by Bhagavan Baba. She reiterated that a large number of people today had the chance of this evolution due to the Avatar's Advent. The last speaker of the day was Dr. Rajeswari Patel, Reader in English in Anantapur Campus of the Institute. Dr. Patel observed that the values crisis had gripped society today. She stressed the point that girl students and teachers of the nation must play a regenerating role in the transformation of society.

After these talks, Bhagavan blessed the gathering with His Divine Discourse. (Full text of the Discourse has been given separately.) The programme ended with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.30 p.m.

A Christmas has come and gone, but sure enough, for all those who were fortunate to be present in the Divine proximity, it left behind sweet memories to treasure for life.

## LADIES DAY DISCOURSE

### **MOTHER SHOULD INCULCATE VIRTUES IN CHILDREN**

*Divinity shines resplendently in the entire universe and the universe is encompassed by divinity. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between God and the universe. Oh valorous sons of Bharat! Listen to this truth.*

**(Telugu Poem)**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

From time immemorial, Bharat has been demonstrating the pristine values of amity and harmony. Bharat is the very birthplace of spirituality, virtue, charity and righteousness. It is the land of peace and prosperity. Since ancient times, the Bharatiyas have been making great efforts to establish these values in the world. Bharat has the unique distinction of demonstrating and propagating the principle of truth to the entire world.

#### **Spiritual Wealth of Bharat**

Many highly evolved persons took birth in Bharat who made great advancements in the field of spirituality. This is the sacred land which was ruled by Lord Rama. This is the land where Lord Krishna taught the Bhagavadgita. This is also the land where Sage Vyasa taught the Vedas and other scriptures. It is the land where Sage Valmiki composed the Ramayana to teach the principles of truth and righteousness to mankind. None can equal this country in spiritual values. Having been born in this sacred land of Bharat, and having been called Bharatiyas, the people of Bharat should propagate the ideals that this country stands for. Bharatiyas should respect and revere their culture. They should follow their culture and set an ideal to others.

The wind that blows in Bharat is suffused with truth. Dharma pervades the very dust of Bharat. The river Ganga that flows in this land is permeated with love. Bharat has been the fountainhead of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. The Bharatiyas have demonstrated these great ideals since ancient times. The life of the Bharatiyas is saturated with virtues like forbearance, etc.



*“Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The noblest feeling in this country is the feeling of love towards one’s mother.”*  
(Telugu Poem)

Fortitude is the greatest virtue in this land; peace is the protective shield. What a pity that we, having been born in this land of Bharat, are unable to uphold our own heritage of cultural values! Young boys and girls today are acquiring higher education. But education should not be used merely as a means of earning one’s livelihood. The educated young men and women of Bharat should imbibe the sacred ideals of this great culture and disseminate them to the rest of the world.

### **Women should Mould the Children into Ideal Citizens**

Modern boys and girls however pursue their studies with the objective of gaining short-term benefits with the result that they remain devoid of experiencing the eternal truths of the sacred culture of Bharat. Today women are educated; they compete with men for jobs.

*If women go out for jobs, who will take care of the home?*

*When husband and wife go out to office, who will do the household work?*

*If women go out to teach others’ children in schools, who will look after their own children?*

*If women also go to work just like men, who will cook food in the kitchen?*

*Earning money may solve some financial problems, but how will it resolve domestic problems?*

*Women can work and earn money but they cannot lead a happy life if they neglect their home.*  
(Telugu Poem)

There is nothing wrong in going for a job. But the woman must take care of their home first. Only then should they look for a job. As the mother is not at home to guide them properly, the children may take to wrong path. If both the parents go out for jobs, they may be able to satisfy their desire for money, but there is every possibility of their children getting spoiled as there will be nobody at home to discipline them. Whatever moral values you have learnt, you have to impart these to your children. Your education is worthwhile only when you take care of your children’s progress.

Women should recognise their responsibilities and conduct themselves accordingly. There are many ideals set by women in this regard. Rajeswari Patel (previous speaker) said, many women in the past were paragons of virtue. They led ideal lives and set great examples for others to follow. Savitri was one such woman. Women of those days not only discharged their household duties diligently but also brought up their children in the most ideal manner. They taught their children not by precept but by practice. However, we do not find many such ideal mothers today. They are interested in earning money rather than moulding their children into ideal citizens. They would have helped the nation to a great extent if only they could bring up their children in an ideal way. What is the point in women taking up jobs and earning money when their children are going astray with none to restrain them? So, first of all, women should look after their home and children properly. They should devote sufficient time to perform their household duties. The educated women of today employ servants for cooking and other household chores, thereby spending much of their earnings in paying salaries to them.

### **Acquire the Wealth of Virtues**

The women of Bharat have always promoted the culture of Bharat. Chandramati was an ideal woman with sterling character. She always followed her husband, Harishchandra. When they were passing through difficulties, she infused courage in him, saying, “Oh king, you are highly intelligent and endowed with spiritual knowledge. You should never give scope to weakness; you should never waver from your chosen path. We are swimming in the ocean of truth. We should not give up our resolve till we reach the shore.” In this manner, women of those days encouraged their husbands to follow the path of truth. Sita courageously faced all difficulties and did not lose heart even in extremely trying circumstances. Though she was surrounded by demons, she was never afraid of them. She spent her time in the contemplation of her husband, Lord Rama, and thus set an ideal to the world. Damayanti was an exemplar of chastity and purity. With her strong determination, she helped her husband to regain his kingdom. In this manner, women of those days earned name and fame not only as ideal mothers but also as model women of sterling character. Women of today should make them their role models.

The happiness that one derives from virtues is far superior to the happiness that one gets from the possession of wealth. Unfortunately, educated youth today are striving for

wealth, power and friendship. But all these have little value without the wealth of character. For men or women, it is character that is important in life. If one lacks character, one becomes weak in all other respects. In olden days, people strove for noble character. They were prepared to give up their very lives for a righteous cause. Women strove to uphold the honour of their husbands. The strength of an individual lies in his character, not in the wealth he earns. One should be prepared to face any hardship to lead a virtuous life. The country is facing hardship today due to the absence of men and women of character. Material wealth is not what we need today. We need to earn the wealth of virtues. Material wealth cannot give you true happiness.

Women should develop the wealth of virtues and also safeguard the honour of their husbands. Both men and women should have good character. Without good character, all your learning will prove futile.

Modern education helps man only to earn his livelihood. It is not the education for life. In fact, it is responsible for the present decline of moral values in society. Truth, righteousness, morality and integrity are nowhere to be seen today. In olden days, people gave topmost priority to truth and righteousness. They considered love as their very life. The women of Bharat sacrificed their lives for the sake of truth.

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

From time immemorial, Bharat has occupied the exalted position of a teacher to the rest of the world. It has been extolled as Karma Bhumi, Thyaga Bhumi and Yoga Bhumi (the land of action, sacrifice and spirituality). You cannot progress in life if you do not follow the path of Karma. You should discharge your duty diligently without wasting any time.

### **Perform all Actions with Pure Heart**

*Embodiments of Love!*

People today waste a lot of time in meaningless pursuits. *Time wasted is life wasted.* Our ancients never wasted even a minute. They considered God as the embodiment of time and extolled Him thus: *Kalaya Namah, Kala Kalaya Namah, Kaladarpa Damanaya Namah, Kalateetaya Namah, Kalaswarupaya Namah, Kalaniyamitaya Namah* (salutations to the time, to the one who is beyond time, to the one who has conquered time, to the one who transcends time, to the one who is the embodiment of time, and to the one who ordains time).

Why have you forgotten the truth that time is verily God? You eagerly await a Sunday thinking that you can relax and enjoy yourself. In fact, you should feel sad that you are wasting time without doing any work on a Sunday. You have to utilise your time in a proper way. If you do not have any work, undertake social service. Help your fellowmen. Be prepared to make any sacrifice for the sake of your motherland and set an ideal before others. The Bhagavadgita says, *Karmanyevadhikarasthe Ma Phaleshu Kadachana* (you have right only on action, not on its result). People talk of Punya Karma (meritorious action) and Papa Karma (sinful action). When the feelings are pure, the Karma becomes sanctified and the work gets transformed into worship of God. So, purify your feelings and sanctify your Karmas.

Life becomes meaningful only when you make proper use of time in performing sacred actions. Kaya (body) has been given to man to perform Karma (action). Every Karma is associated with Karana (cause) and Kala (time). Man should bring about harmony between Kaya, Karma and Kala, and perform his Kartavya (duty) conscientiously to redeem his life. This is the main teaching of the sacred Bharatiya culture. It is the pristine culture of Bharat which has been protecting and safeguarding it since ancient times. What is culture? You think it is a way of life. But it is not so. Culture is that which transforms your life into an ideal one. Today we do not find many who are interested in talking about the greatness of Indian culture. Even if some people are ready to tell, there are few who are interested in listening to them. Even if they listen, they are not prepared to put it into practice. Some people want to practise but they lack proper support and encouragement.

### **Develop Self-confidence and Self-respect**

*Embodiments of Love!*

This day (19th November) is being observed as Ladies Day. What does it mean? You think that you should spend this day in doing some sacred acts and listening to Swami's Discourse, etc. It is not merely that. From this day onwards, spend all your time in a sacred manner. What you learn today should be an ideal for you for your entire lifetime. Make steady progress on this path day by day. Develop self-confidence. Uphold your self-respect under all circumstances. What is the use of living a life bereft of self-confidence and self-respect? It does not matter if you do not have money, power or fame. All that matters is self-respect which you must foster. Abraham Lincoln led a life of self-respect under all circumstances. His mother taught him, "People may mock at you and ridicule you but never be perturbed. Always uphold your self-respect." Lincoln followed her teachings implicitly. He studied under streetlights as there was no light at home. Ultimately, he became the President of America. It was only because of his self-confidence and self-respect that he could occupy such an exalted position.

The teachings of mother play a vital role in shaping the future of her children. She should make every effort to rid her children of bad qualities. She should infuse human values like Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa in them. There are many who give lectures at length about the importance of these values in our daily life, but how many are translating them into action? Very few. They do not speak truth, nor do they perform righteous deeds. Our ancients never deviated from the path of truth and righteousness under any circumstances. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). The Vedas teach, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Your thoughts, words and deeds should be in harmony with each other. It is said, *the proper study of mankind is man*. Today nobody knows what man has in his mind as his thoughts, words and deeds are at total variance. Such a person wastes his life by unethical behaviour. All great achievements are possible if you follow truth. It is the most precious treasure of man. The tongue is given to speak truth. But man today is misusing his tongue by uttering falsehood.

*"O tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred. Speak truth in the most pleasing manner. Chant the Divine Names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly. This is your foremost duty."*

(Sanskrit Verse)

The tongue which is meant to utter sacred words is being used to criticise others. One cannot describe in words the fate of such a person. Our ancients loved their motherland so much that they wanted to be born again and again in this sacred land of Bharat. But today people have neither Deshabhimana (love for the country) nor Dharmabhimana (love for righteousness). Instead they are developing Dehabhimana (love for the body). What is the body like? It is like a water bubble. How long can you protect it? It will burst sooner or later. Hence, develop Atmabhimana (love for the Atma). Develop faith that the same Atma is present in you and all others. When you have such strong faith, the whole world will become safe and prosperous. One with Atmabhimana is a true human being. One bereft of Atmabhimana wastes one's time in useless pursuits. Such a one verily wastes his life. Perform all your actions with purity of heart. Actions performed without purity of heart are worthless. Even if a little work is done with a pure heart, it gives immense benefit.

### **Easwaramma's Supreme Love and Compassion**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Griham Ammayi (the mother of this body) talked to everyone with love. She could never withstand the suffering of others. She would come upstairs and plead with Me, saying, "Swami, they are undergoing a lot of suffering. Please call them and talk to them." Her heart was filled with compassion. That is why her fame has spread far and wide. In order to attain a good name, you have to utter sacred words and help others. Whenever mother Easwaramma would come to Me with such a plea, I used to pretend to be angry, saying, "Why are you coming here with recommendations? I don't want to listen to them." But she would persist. She would continue to plead, "Swami, please take pity on them. They are in dire need of Your help. Please talk to them once." I used to be happy, thinking, how compassionate and kind-hearted she is! That which is filled with Daya (compassion) is Hridaya (heart). But man today does not possess such a compassionate heart. He utters harsh words and thereby earns a bad name. Always talk softly and sweetly. Never cause pain to others by your harsh words. Only then can you make your life worthwhile.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

First and foremost, women should control their tongue. As men are involved in multifarious activities, it may be difficult for them to control their tongue. Hence, it is the duty of women to look after the home diligently and conduct themselves in a pleasing manner. Treat the guests in a cordial manner, and to the extent possible, extend your help to those who are in need of it. Today people pay only lip service to those who are in difficulty; they do not translate their words into action. You should empathise with those who are in difficulty and try to comfort and console them with soothing words. Who knows when you yourself may get into difficulty and may need their words of comfort. But we do not speak softly and sweetly. We hurt others by our harsh words. This is demonic behaviour. If you hurt others' feelings, you will be hurt twice as much. You cannot escape the consequences of your actions. You have to bear this truth in mind. Your life will be sanctified when you do not hurt others by your words and deeds.

People aspire to attain liberation. What is liberation? *Help ever, hurt never*. That is true liberation. To get rid of Moha (attachment) is true Moksha (liberation). Do not try to find faults with others. If you point an accusing finger at someone, remember that three fingers are pointing at you. In our mistaken notion we think that we are pointing out somebody else's faults, but in fact we indicate our faults three times more. *Sathyam Kanthasya Bhushanam* (truth is the true ornament for the neck), *Hastasya Bhushanam Danam* (charity is the true ornament for the hand). Your hands are useless if they do not perform acts of charity. You have to sanctify each limb of your body by performing sacred actions. Your eyes should look at only sacred things. Do you know what an enormous power is latent in your eyes? There are lakhs of light rays in them. In olden days, people used to invoke the grace of sun god by performing Suryanamaskar (worship of sun god). This added to the effulgence of the light rays in their eyes. On the other hand, if you look for mistakes in others, your eyes lose their power. Hence, make proper use of the limbs given by God.

### **Put the Teachings of the Upanishads into Practice**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

These teachings are simple to practise in your daily life. Just because they are simple, do not take them lightly. Though they appear to be simple, they lead you to liberation. It is your Adrishtam (good fortune) that you are blessed with eyes to see. What is

Adrishtam? A-drishtam is that which cannot be seen. Everything that can be seen and comprehended is not Adrishtam. Adrishtam is that which you cannot see and comprehend. You cannot know what is in store for you. But your meritorious deeds confer on you all the happiness and comforts in due course of time.

*Embodiments of Love!*

This land of Bharat is most illustrious. It is full of prosperity and wealth. But it is not merely material wealth. It has the wealth of Vijnana, Sujnana and Prajnana. But the unfortunate ones are unable to receive this precious wealth. The Upanishads extol Manava (man) in several ways. Manava means one who is sacred, one who is endowed with infinite power and knowledge, and one who can impart this knowledge to others. But man is unable to understand the meaning of his own name and is taking to wrong path. Your fortune or misfortune depends on your actions. Without realising this truth, you indulge in evil deeds. You feel sorry when the consequences of your sins haunt you. What is the use? You have to be careful right from the beginning not to commit sin. God is the eternal witness. You have to make every effort to earn divine grace and perform all actions as an offering to God. Only then will your life be sanctified. What you have to acquire is not worldly wealth and comforts. You have to earn the wealth of Sujnana, Vijnana and Prajnana which will follow you eternally. When you acquire such true and eternal wealth, you would have acquired God's grace.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Women here have been eagerly awaiting November 19th to celebrate Ladies Day in a sacred way. It is really your good fortune if you have a noble thought. Give up all negative thoughts and develop sacred thoughts. Lead an exemplary life. You should understand the significance of purity in life. The Upanishads accord great value to human life. You should live up to it. The Upanishads are the storehouse of knowledge. The study of a Veda is incomplete if one does not master the Upanishad part of it. That is why Upanishads are studied after the study of other Vedic Mantras. The Upanishads take you closer to God. I wish that you follow the teachings of the Upanishads and manifest your latent divine power. I bless you all and bring My Discourse to a close.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...*"



**- From Bhagavan's Ladies Day Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th November 2002.**

## NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES

**Himachal Pradesh:** The programme of the 77th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Baba was initiated at 5 a.m. on 17th Nov. 2002 with lighting of Jyoti in the house of each devotee. Narayana Seva was organised throughout the State, including the tribal areas of Lahul, Kinnaur and Bharmaur on 17th Nov. 2002. More than one lakh people were served food.

20 medical camps were organised in different districts of Himachal Pradesh, with the assistance of doctors of Medical Colleges, Zonal Hospital and local dispensaries. The remote places with least medical facilities, such as Shillai, Mehla, Dhabiri, Deha, Chachiot, etc., were selected for the purpose. About 30,000 persons were treated and were supplied with free medicines.

Active workers of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation visited 7,700 houses in 77 villages which have been adopted in the State by different Samithis. In each house, food packets were distributed as Divine Prasadam. Warm clothings, blankets and other articles as per the needs of the individuals were given to the family members. Veterinary services were rendered at each door of adopted villages throughout the State. More than 3,000 animals were treated with positive results. Every village was echoing with the Name of Sai.

**Karnataka:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Bangalore organised Narayana Seva on Bhagavan's 77th Birthday on 23rd November 2002 and distributed 7700 neatly packed food packets at construction sites for workers, orphanages and in government/ minority schools, etc. The entire city of Bangalore was divided into eight sectors for this purpose. At Brindavan, Sai Sathyanarayana Puja was conducted in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall with 77 couples in the morning followed by Narayana Seva. In the evening, a Jhoola Uthsavam was celebrated with devotional songs by the Samarpana group who sang old songs in Telugu composed by Swami.

**Tamil Nadu:** As a part of Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations, all the Samithis in Tamil Nadu organised weeklong programmes from 16 Nov. to 23 Nov. 2002 with daily Nagar Sankirtans, chanting of Sai Gayatri, Villaku Puja, Sahasranama Archana, Narayana Seva,

Vastradan and Bhajans. Some of the districts celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday by organising Grama Seva.

Sri Sathya Sai Organisation in the District of Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu in a unique way conducted Grama Seva in 77 tribal villages, of which 59 villages were in Kotagiri Taluk and 18 in Gudalur Taluk. The Grama Seva covered around 2000 tribal families with an estimated population of 8000 people.

## DEEPAVALI DISCOURSE

### **REALISE THE ATMIC PRINCIPLE BY DEVELOPING LOVE**

***Life in the world is impermanent. So are youth and wealth. Wife and children are also not permanent. Only truth and good name are permanent.***

**(Sanskrit Verse)**

*Embodiments of Love!*

In this world, everything is subject to change – be it happiness or sorrow, peace or unrest, pleasantness or unpleasantness. Man is unable to understand his true nature because he considers the body permanent and identifies himself with it. But the body is temporary and impermanent. Man is not merely a Vyashti Jeevi (individual). He is a Samashti Jeevi (part of society) and does not like to lead a life of loneliness. The Vedas declare: Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). He is immanent in each and every being. In his delusion, man fails to realise his real cosmic form, considers himself merely an individual and thereby subjects himself to suffering.

#### **Man's Negative Qualities Cause his Ruin**

Recognising and experiencing unity in diversity is one of the main principles of the culture of Bharat. But man today sees diversity in unity, forgets the principle of equality and, consequently, becomes restless. By seeing diversity in unity, he is getting mired in untruth and falsehood. Unity in diversity is the fundamental truth that one has to recognise. Since time immemorial, the Bharatiyas have been making concerted efforts to understand this truth and experience it.

Today the eternal truths of the Vedas are not being studied deeply and the inner meaning of the Vedic teachings is not being disseminated to the people at large. The little knowledge gained by some scholars by going through the sacred texts and listening to the teachings of the experts does not reveal the total truth. In ancient times, many demons also studied the Vedas. But they led a life of untruth even after comprehending the truths contained in the Vedas. Demons like Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were highly learned. They were great scientists. They could reach up to the moon and the sun, and could understand their functioning. But they could not think in a positive way as their

mind was filled with negative thoughts due to their evil qualities. The demon Narakasura also belonged to the same category. He was the master of mighty power and knowledge. But they proved futile because of his negative qualities. One's great devotion and mastery over the Vedas is of little consequence if one does not give up negative qualities. Learning that does not cultivate virtues is useless.

### **Ideal of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Devotion**

Once Chaitanya Mahaprabhu sought his mother's permission to pursue his education. Then his mother said, "My dear one, there are various types of education in this world. All of them do not constitute the real learning; they do not lead you to the goal of life as they are limited in their scope. Only the Adhyatmika Vidya (spiritual education) is true education. It is immortal and has no limitations. It is changeless in all the three periods of time. Make efforts to acquire such education." Having acquired this education, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went from village to village and street to street chanting the glory of the Divine Name of Krishna. He propagated the efficacy of chanting the Name of the Lord by repeating 'Krishna, Krishna' at all times and under all circumstances. His message to mankind was simple, yet profound:

*There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry,  
There are no greater gods than parents,  
There is no greater Thapa (penance) than adherence to truth,  
There is no greater Dharma than compassion,  
There is no greater gain than good company,  
There is no enemy greater than anger,  
There is no disease greater than debt,  
Bad reputation is death itself,  
There is no wealth greater than good reputation,  
There is no ornament better than the chanting of God's Name.*

(Telugu Poem)

True education is that which helps us to shed enmity and develop the feelings of friendliness towards our fellow beings. This is the most essential education that we have to acquire. It is a sign of delusion and a demonic trait to develop hatred towards others

and lead a life of selfishness. The Vedas declare, *Sahasra Seersha Purusha* ... It means that God is not a separate entity. He is Samashti Swarupa (embodiment of the cosmos). He is present in all beings. When God is so close to him, why does man suffer from delusion and face hardships in life? God is permanently installed in the altar of human heart. He is all-pervasive. Man can certainly see Him, touch Him and also speak to Him. But he lacks firm faith in and deep yearning for God. Hence, he suffers.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu prayed to Lord Narayana thus: “Oh Lord, You are all-pervasive. You are the master of all beings and their life principle. You control the entire universe. I do not aspire for Vaikuntha, Kailasa or Swarga (heaven), nor do I crave for liberation. Bless me with love so that I can love You.” When Chaitanya prayed in this manner, an ethereal voice said, “Tathastu” (so be it). One may be well-versed in worldly education and one may be endowed with immense power. But none of these are of permanent value. Everything in this world is temporary and impermanent. Love alone is immortal. Hence, one should consider love as one’s very life. Chaitanya prayed to Krishna to bless him with such eternal love. Kailasa, Vaikuntha and Swarga are like branch offices of God. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was not interested in attaining them. He recognised that his Hridaya (heart) was the correct address of God. He prayed, “Oh Lord, I know that You are installed in the altar of my heart. Bless me with this experience.”

### **Inner Meaning of the Annihilation of Narakasura**

Lord Krishna, accompanied by Sathyabhama, went to fight against the demon Narakasura. A fierce battle ensued and the demon died at the hands of Sathyabhama. Being omnipotent, Krishna could have killed Narakasura without Sathyabhama’s help. Then why did He take her help? Narakasura, being a wicked demon, did not deserve to die at the hands of Krishna. As he had subjected thousands of women to untold suffering, Krishna decided that he should be killed by a woman. Narakasura had imprisoned thousands of princesses who were great devotees of the Lord. They were the very embodiments of love and contemplated on Him incessantly. After getting Narakasura killed, Krishna freed them from his bondage. It is in this context that Saint Thyagaraja extolled the Lord thus:

*“Oh Krishna! You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Is it possible to estimate Your glory and splendour? I have been waiting for Your grace. Oh Lord!*

*Listen to my prayer and redeem me. You are the one who brought back to life the dead son of Your Guru, Sandeepani. You are the one who humbled the serpent Kaliya, freed Vasudeva and Devaki and saved Draupadi from humiliation. You fulfilled Kuchela's desires; You made ugly-looking Kubja beautiful. You protected the Pandavas and saved the 16,000 Gopikas. You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Krishna, it is not possible for even Brahma to describe Your glory. I have been praying for Your grace."*

(Telugu Song)

What is the inner significance of the slaying of Narakasura? 'Nara' means man who is the embodiment of the immortal Atmic principle. When the qualities of an Asura (demon) enter Nara (man), he becomes Narakasura. In such a person, you find only bad qualities and evil feelings. He does not join the company of the noble. He does not make efforts to reach God. He makes friendship only with wicked people. Such a mentality is the consequence of evil deeds over a number of past births. It is dangerous to be in the company of the wicked. It develops demonic qualities in you. Hence, it is said, *Tyaja Durjana Samsargam; Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam; Kuru Punyam Ahorathram* (give up bad company; join the company of the noble and perform meritorious deeds day and night). One should resolve to follow such sacred path and propagate the principle of love to one and all.

Today man is under delusion that he is highly educated. In fact, it is not Vidya (education) but only Avidya (nescience) that he has acquired. How can one be called educated if one does not have good conduct and does not join good company? Ravana had acquired all types of knowledge which Rama had attained. But unlike Rama, he joined bad company, entertained bad thoughts and indulged in wicked deeds. Hence, people revere Rama and censure Ravana. One is revered or ridiculed on the basis of one's conduct. One should not lead a self-centred life. Wherever a good activity is taking place, wherever a prayer meeting is held, take part in it. But there are some people who participate in Bhajans and do not join good company. What is the use of such a life? In this context, Saint Purandaradasa lamented, "*Oh Lord! In spite of having eyes, people are verily blind as they do not yearn to see Your auspicious form. Though they are endowed with ears, they are deaf to Your teachings. Though God is immanent in them, they have drowned themselves in worldly life.*"

(Telugu Poem)

### **Dispel the Darkness of Ignorance**

Man should understand the truth that God is present in all beings. He should lead his life in full realisation of this truth. That is his primary duty. He should contemplate on God and sing His glory. There was joyous celebration in the kingdom of Narakasura when he was killed. With his death, the darkness of ignorance and hatred was dispelled. People symbolically celebrated the occasion by lighting lamps. Just as bats find their way into a house engulfed in darkness, likewise, evil qualities enter the heart filled with the darkness of ignorance and wickedness. Only bats like to live in darkness, not human beings. Men should not live like bats.

Some people put up an appearance of goodness though they are full of wicked qualities. They may say, 'yes', 'yes' on your face and conceal their wickedness. You should avoid the company of such people.

*Sathsangatwe Nissangatwam,*

*Nissangatwe Nirmohatwam,*

*Nirmohatwe Nischalatattwam,*

*NischalatattweJivanmukti.*

(Sanskrit Sloka)

(Good company leads to detachment, detachment makes one free from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind and steadiness of mind confers liberation.)

Do not remain in bad company even for a moment. In olden days, people distanced themselves from demons and demonic behaviour. Hiranyakasipu tried his best to stop his son Prahlada from chanting the divine name of Lord Narayana. But Prahlada was always immersed in the contemplation of the Lord. Prahlada was dear to Lord Narayana, whereas his father Hiranyakasipu was dear to demons. He was an emperor. What sort of an emperor was he? He was an emperor of wicked qualities and evil deeds. Follow the ideal set by Prahlada and sanctify your time in the contemplation of the Lord. In the present-day world, demonic activities are on the rise. It is difficult to stand such sights. It is hard to tolerate even hearing about them. Banish all demonic thoughts. Install God in your heart. God is immanent in the heart of all beings. *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the Indweller of all beings). But we fail to experience this truth. Instead we act in a



manner which is contrary to this truth. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as you think, so you become). If your thinking is demonic, you cause your own ruin.

*Dear Students!*

This is the day on which Narakasura was killed. What does it signify? It signifies the killing of the demon in man. 'Nara' means man and 'Asura' means demon. This demon is present in every human being. Great Astras and Sastras (weapons) are not needed to kill this demon. Man is called 'Nara' because there is Atma in him. The Atma is the embodiment of love. It is eternal and changeless. It is possible to kill the demon only by the weapon of love. Therefore, realise the Atmatatthwa (Atmic principle) by developing love. This is true Bhakti (devotion).

*Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

We are celebrating the killing of Narakasura as a festival by preparing and eating so many delicious dishes. But we are not making any effort to understand the inner meaning of this event. In order to understand the sanctity of this great event, we must join Sathsanga (good company). We should not lead a life of selfishness. That is Vyashti Jeevitam (self-centred life). That is a wasteful life. It is only by associating ourselves with Samashti (community) that we can realise divinity. We must lead a happy life by identifying ourselves with Samashti (society). In fact, Samashti is the embodiment of divinity. The Vedas also advocate this community life by proclaiming "*Sahasra Seersha Purusha ...*" (God is present in all beings). What is the purpose of human life? To eat, drink and roam about? No. No. The birds and beasts also do that. That is not what is expected of a human being. A human being must inculcate the human values of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa. They have to be propagated. They must become part and parcel of our daily life and must be reflected in our behaviour. If they are merely propagated without being reflected in our behaviour, it becomes a futile exercise. Therefore, we must realise the inner meaning of the various festivals and act accordingly.

### **Faith in God Leads to Bliss**

Human birth is most sacred. "*Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, human birth is the rarest). The word 'Manava' (human being) also means one who is sacred. Why should man make this sacred human life unsacred? Man today

advocates several good and sacred things but when it comes to practice, he backs out. That is the result of his past sins. When a conflict arises between precept and practice, man should stand up to the situation with courage and make an effort to tread the sacred path. You will, in your day-to-day life, encounter several people with bad qualities and bad behaviour. Do not join their company. Offer them a Namaskar (salutation) and move away. Even Saint Thyagaraja prayed, “Oh Rama! I offer my salutations to those who have faith in You, and also to them who oppose You.” A question may arise as to why we should offer salutations to both good and evil people. We salute the good people so as not to lose their company. We also salute the evil people to keep them away from us. We should join the company of good people, cultivate good qualities and lead a good life. In this way, we can redeem our life.

History is replete with stories of many demons. Demons personify evil qualities. Kamsa was one such demon who was a contemporary of Lord Krishna. An ethereal voice declared that he would be killed by the eighth son of his sister. As soon as he heard this, he flew into a fit of rage, pulled out his sister Devaki from the chariot and tried to kill her then and there. But her husband Vasudeva reasoned with Kamsa not to indulge in the heinous act of killing his sister just believing an ethereal voice. He told him, “Even if you believe those words, the time for the birth of Devaki’s eighth son has not yet come.” He pleaded with him, “Wait till the eighth child is born to Devaki. Why do you attempt to kill your sister just after her marriage? She has done no harm to you. Then why do you commit such a horrible sin?” On hearing Vasudeva’s advice, Kamsa somehow relented to wait till the birth of the eighth child of his sister Devaki. However, he did not have peace of mind during this period. The ethereal voice had clearly indicated that Kamsa would be killed by the eighth child born to Devaki and Vasudeva, but he killed all newborn babies both of Devaki as well as others in his kingdom. He did not believe the divine voice that he had danger to his life only from the eighth child to be born to Devaki. That was the degree of his faith in God! His was a demonic faith. It is not proper that we have belief in one aspect of God and disbelief in another. Your faith must always be steady and total in all respects. Here is a small example.

Some ten years ago, an eminent person came here and declared, “Sri Sathya Sai Baba is God.” Not only that, he also made the observation that every living being is the

embodiment of divinity. After some time, when some of his desires could not be fulfilled, he propagated, “Baba is not God.” The same man said ‘yes’ and ‘no’; at one time he said ‘yes’ and at another time he said ‘no’. Which of his statements is true and which is false? This type of double-speaking is a demonic quality.

*For those who say ‘yes’, I say ‘yes’. For those who say ‘no’, I say ‘no’. ‘Yes’ and ‘no’ are related to you, but for Sai, there is only ‘yes’, ‘yes’, ‘yes’.*

(Telugu Poem)

For Me, all are good; there are no bad people. I love everybody. All are equally dear to Me. Some people may have some doubts. But they must be made to see reason with a proper explanation and counselling. As far as possible, you should not entertain doubts, for as long as doubts persist, you will not have peace of mind. If you develop negative feelings, you will ruin your life. Cultivate love. When your heart is filled with love, everything is love only. There will be no scope for hatred at all. Where there is no hatred, there will be no anger. When there is no anger, there will be no scope for violence.

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

First and foremost, cultivate faith in God. Then everything in your life will become divine. Further, there should be harmony between your thoughts, words and deeds. When you have no harmony between these three, your behaviour would become demonic. Who is a Vyakti? A true Vyakti is one who is pure in thought, word and deed and who maintains perfect harmony between these three. He acquires divine energy which is manifested in all his thoughts, words and deeds. You must acquire this energy. But you speak of acquiring energy and develop allergy to noble thoughts. What happiness do you derive out of such behaviour? This makes all your Sankalpas (resolutions) a futile exercise.

### **Happiness is a Two-way Traffic**

*Dear Students!*

First of all, develop love. This is easier to cultivate than all other qualities. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu prayed to Lord Krishna, “I do not crave for Vaikuntha or Kailasa. I want only your Prema. Give me a small place in your Prema Samrajya (kingdom of love). I will be satisfied with that.” There is nothing in this world which cannot be achieved with love. What is the inner meaning of Narakasura Vadha (annihilation of Narakasura)? It is destroying evil qualities and demonic nature in man with the weapon of love.

You must develop good thoughts, good feelings and good behaviour. It is only for this purpose that the human birth has been given to you. Man is born not for eating, drinking and roaming about. Even the birds and beasts do that. Human birth is noble, sacred and divine. Therefore, every human being must make an effort to free himself from demonic qualities. Divinity is latent in every human being. He should manifest his latent divinity and share the bliss derived from it with all his fellow beings. Then all will become divine. Always cultivate good feelings, good thoughts and good behaviour. Do not be carried away by others’ opinions – either good or bad. Develop your own line of thinking, based on your conscience. Develop self-confidence. *“Where there is self-confidence, there is self-satisfaction. Where there is self-satisfaction, there is self-sacrifice. And, through self-sacrifice comes self-realisation.”* Self-confidence is like the foundation of a building which remains below the surface of the earth. Self-satisfaction represents the walls; self-sacrifice, the roof, and self-realisation, life itself. Without the foundation of self-confidence, self-realisation cannot be achieved. Therefore, build up your self-confidence slowly. In this process, *“Start early, drive slowly and reach safely.”*

Today people wish each other, “good morning, good night”, etc., as a greeting. Instead, if you say Namaskar, how happy you as well as the other person will feel! People who consider themselves modern think that saying Namaskar is the uncultured way of greeting. What is this ‘good morning’ and ‘good evening’? If you think in a scientific way, there is nothing like morning and evening or sunrise and sunset. All these changes are happening due to the rotation of the earth.

Students! Love and respect your parents right from today. If you love your parents, you will enjoy the love of your parents. It is only those who experience the love of their parents will have a sacred life. The blessings of the mother are most essential in life. Those who make their mothers unhappy will lead a miserable life. Therefore, never cause

pain to your parents under any circumstances. Make them happy. Only then will you feel happy and, in turn, your children will make you happy. Give happiness and take happiness. Happiness is not a one-way traffic, it is a two-way process of give and take. Speak good words and sanctify your life. Develop sacred vision. Listen only to sacred words. Lead a life of purity.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi ...*”

**- From Bhagavan’s Deepavali Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 4th November 2002.**

## **SANKRANTI SANDESH**

### **SATHYA AND DHARMA FORM THE FOUNDATION OF LIFE**

*The sun appears serene and peaceful. The days have become shorter and the cool wind is blowing. The fields are ripe with golden crops. Marigold flowers are blossoming like garlands of pearls on the banks of rivers. The farmers are rejoicing and singing. The chillies have ripened and are looking red. The sweet festival of Sankranti has come, filling our homes with the newly harvested grain.*

(Telugu

Poem)

*Embodiments of Love – Young Men and Women!*

The festival of Sankranti has come in all its beauty and splendour. The joyous state of mind of men and women has added gaiety and bliss to the festivity. This day is no ordinary day. It marks the beginning of the sacred Uttarayana (northward movement of the sun). It confers on us plenty and prosperity and helps us to develop virtues and undertake sacred activities. In addition, this is the auspicious day of Mukkoti Ekadasi, the day on which the Devas (gods) and Asuras (demons) obtained Amruta (divine ambrosia) after churning the ocean of milk.

#### **Do not Become a Slave of your Mind**

As man has filled his heart with worldly thoughts and feelings, he is not able to put into practice his innate divine qualities. Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakasipu, Kamsa, Duryodhana, Dussasana were by no means ordinary mortals. Though they were endowed with enormous physical and mental strength, they lost all their power as they immersed themselves in worldly thoughts and feelings. Man can conquer the entire world when his thoughts are noble. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were great scientists. Hiranyakasipu could reach not only the moon but even the sun. In spite of all his power, he became weak as his heart was full of worldly feelings. Every individual is endowed with mighty power and intelligence. But one should not fill one's heart with worldly feelings. Young men and women of today are the future leaders of the world. The prosperity of a nation depends on its youth. Hence, youth should develop virtues, noble thoughts and sterling

character. One who has filled his heart with noble thoughts can accomplish any great task.

The youth are responsible for the progress of the world. Virtues are of paramount importance for the youth. Today students are able to excel in various fields. But they are not making any effort to understand the fundamental principle, by knowing which they would have known everything. Noble feelings spring forth from the heart of every man. He is endowed with a mind which is most powerful. Such a mighty power is not present in any other being. One who has conquered the mind can achieve any mighty task. There is no power greater than that of the mind in this world. *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayoh* (the mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). But man is unable to conquer the mind. Consequently, bliss eludes him.

*Students – Boys and Girls!*

You have to achieve purity of mind in the first instance. You can accomplish any mighty task by controlling and purifying your mind. The Sports and Cultural Meet has come to an end. You should not consider sports as mere worldly and physical activities. They teach you many moral and spiritual principles. A true student is one who achieves excellence in moral, social and spiritual fields. One should not strive for physical strength and happiness only. One should strive hard for the control of the mind. One who becomes a slave of his mind is bound to lose all his strength, however powerful he may be. So, you should make the mind your slave.

### **Acquire the Wealth of Values**

The power of the mind is matchless. It is from the mind that the most precious virtues originate. If wealth is lost, it can be earned again. If health is lost, it can be restored with the help of an efficient doctor. But, if human values are lost, then life becomes a waste. Human values are the need of the hour. They cannot be acquired solely from sacred texts, nor can they be passed on to us by learned preceptors. They originate from within. When we develop noble thoughts and follow the path of truth in our daily life, human values will blossom in us and protect us under all circumstances.

*Embodiments of Love!*

More than the worldly education, you should strive to uphold human values, for, all powers are latent in them. Truth is God. Righteousness is the very foundation of life. That is why the culture of Bharat declares, *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). You should be prepared to sacrifice even your life to uphold the twin principles of truth and righteousness. You should not crave for worldly Bahumathi (prize). Man is facing hardships as he is unable to control the one Mathi (mind) he is endowed with. What will be his plight if he has Bahu Mathi (many minds)? He will become worse than a monkey. What you should aspire to attain is Nija Mathi (true mind), not Bahu Mathi. Nija Mathi is the Pavitra Sukti (sacred message) that originates in your heart. The mind is the source of all types of powers. Hence, you should exercise control over your mind. Your life is redeemed when you develop this power. This can lead you to experience Divinity. The culture of Bharat has prescribed nine paths of devotion: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship) and Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). Self-surrender is possible only after developing friendship with God. Friendship leads to self-surrender. So long as you do not develop friendship, all your talk of self-surrender cannot be translated into action. More than the action, God sees the feeling behind it. Hence, you should foster noble feelings.

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



anything in life. As the students are the future leaders of the nation, they should develop their strength by fostering and protecting human values.

*Students!*

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

*Where there is faith, there is love;*

*Where there is love, there is truth;*

*Where there is truth, there is peace;*

*Where there is peace, there is bliss;*

*Where there is bliss, there is God.*

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

Students! If you want to experience eternal bliss, you should have a strong and unwavering faith. People have no idea as to what faith actually means. They say, we believe in God, we love God, but in reality they do not understand the spirit behind the terms love and faith. True love has righteousness as the undercurrent. It originates from

the heart and confers bliss. Love is related to the heart, not to an object or an individual. Love is like the air that wafts around in the firmament of human heart. It is around you and sustains you. This is the nature of true love. The synonym of love is Dharma. Love is the main goal of man's life. That is his way of life. When you fill your heart with love, you will become all-powerful. Demons like Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were very powerful. But even they will be no match for one whose heart is full of true love. All other powers are insignificant before the power of love. The culture of Bharat lays great emphasis on the principle of love. It demonstrates the underlying unity in diversity. Names and forms may be different but the inherent divinity is one only. Many people write poems. Some of them have composed lakhs of poems. Our Raju (A.V.S. Raju) goes on composing poems wherever he is. He has composed lakhs of poems. The Lakshya (theme) of all these Lakshas (lakhs) of poems is love.

Human life is very difficult to attain. In fact, man is not ordinary. He is the repository of all powers. He is courageous, valorous and sagacious (Dheera, Veera and Gambheera). Since Hanuman filled his heart with divine feelings, he has been extolled as Santudu, Gunavantudu and Balavantudu (embodiment of peace, virtues and strength). The divine name of Rama was the basis for all his accomplishments. He could cross the mighty ocean because of his steadfast devotion and faith in Rama.

### **Please your Elders to Get their Blessings**

Today is Mukkoti Ekadasi. It is also called Vaikuntha Ekadasi. Bhishma lay on the bed of arrows for 56 days. In the meanwhile, the Pandavas along with Draupadi came there to see Bhishma. They were greatly moved on seeing the condition of Bhishma. In their anguish, they asked Bhishma why he had brought upon himself this painful condition. Bhishma said, "What I have done is my duty. The body has to be sacrificed for the welfare of the country. Of what use is it if we do not perform our duty? I have done my duty and I do not regret for the present condition of my body. But, oh Arjuna! The arrows shot by you are sticking in my body only. There are no arrows under my head. Hence, my head is without a support and is hanging. You gave me a bed but without a pillow. Provide a pillow also for me, so that I can comfortably lie down on this bed of arrows." Arjuna was deeply moved by Bhishma's words. His heart melted. He enquired from Bhishma as to what he was expected to do to provide comfort to him. Bhishma

asked Arjuna to shoot two arrows into the earth and place his head on them. Arjuna did accordingly.

Thereafter, Bhishma further requested Arjuna, “Oh Arjuna! I am called Gangeya as I am the son of Ganga. In this last moment of my life’s journey, provide me the Ganga water and help me to merge in my mother, Ganga.” Arjuna was a great warrior and all-powerful. He earned many titles like Arjuna, Phalguna, Partha, Kiriti, Svetavahana, Bibhatsu, Savyasachi, Dhanunjaya, etc. He shot an arrow into the earth. Immediately, water gushed forth from the earth like a fountain and fell into the mouth of Bhishma. Bhishma was very happy that Arjuna could fulfil his last desire. He expressed his gratitude thus: “Oh! Arjuna! There are several people in this world who help others in many different ways. But there are none to help one to return to one’s mother. Today you have helped me to reach my mother. You have provided great joy to me with the help of your Dhanus (bow).” So saying, he blessed the Pandavas with plenty, prosperity and success. Thus, if you wish to earn the blessings of elders, you must please them and win their heart.

Our students did their utmost to please Swami in the Sports and Cultural Meet. I am happy when the students are happy. But this happiness and satisfaction must not be limited to sports. It should percolate to all aspects of your life so that you may lead a happy and blissful life. *Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya *Tattwamasi*, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas). Every human being must lead a life full of divine bliss. We have the body. We are performing several chores with the help of this body. But we should not attach much importance to the body. It is important to purify the mind. All are endowed with mind. But how many have a pure mind? Today man’s mind is polluted. In fact, everything is being polluted in this world. You find pollution wherever you see. The food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe and finally our behaviour itself – thus, everything is

polluted. You must ensure that your mind is not polluted by bad thoughts. You must always have a positive mind, not a negative mind. You may undertake a great task but it cannot succeed if it is undertaken with a negative mind. You must always have a positive mind to experience bliss. You should also share that bliss with others. That is the real nature of a human being. A human being is also called “Manava”. What is its meaning? It means one who is endowed with sacred feelings, bereft of the negative qualities of untruth, unrighteousness and injustice, etc.

### **Dedicate Everything to God**

*Dear Students – Boys and Girls!*

You have acquired great academic qualifications. Some of you have acquired more than two postgraduate degrees. This is really a great achievement. But that is not enough. The Upanishads address man as son of immortality: *Srunvanthu Viswe Amrutasya Puthra* (Oh the children of immortality! Listen). This is the real degree you have to live up to. Other degrees will pale into insignificance when you have this great degree.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Fill your heart with love. Suffuse your mind with truth. Undertake sacred activities. This is the type of education you have to pursue. No doubt, worldly education is also necessary. But true education is that which teaches unity among all human beings. The main principle of Indian culture is to see unity in diversity. It is not to divide unity into diversity. Seeing the underlying unity in diversity is true culture. What is culture? It is not related to any particular religion. It is purely related to the heart. It is not associated with any caste, faith or ideology. It is fully associated with divinity.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Students! You have provided great happiness to one and all with your grand display of various events of sports and games. Treasure this happiness in your heart throughout your life. Ekatma Bhava (feeling of oneness with God) is true love which does not change with the passage of time. It is eternal. No doubt, you love Swami with all your heart. But your love should not be transitory. You must always develop the feeling, “I belong to Swami and Swami belongs to me.” Only then will you achieve oneness with Swami. Strive to attain this oneness. That is the true path.

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

*Is there a place where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

Truth is God. You may belong to any country or religion – but truth is the same for one and all. There is nothing like American truth, Pakistani truth, Indian truth, etc. Truth is truth.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Lead a life full of eternal truth. Lead an ideal life which sets an example for others to emulate. Education that teaches such a Sadhana is true education. It is not to transform your Mastaka (mind) into a Pustaka (book). True happiness lies in your heart. Realise it.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Wherever you are, whatever circumstances you are placed in, never forget God. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God). Never forget God, never give up God. Devoid of God, man verily becomes a devil. You should be divine, not demonic. As the Upanishads declare, you are the sons of immortality. Live up to that exalted name. Only then will your life become fruitful and sanctified. Whatever activity you undertake, dedicate it to God. All the powers in your body are the gifts of God. In fact, divinity pervades every inch, every cell and every atom of your body. If you waste this divine power, it amounts to sacrilege. Dedicate your body, mind and intellect, in fact, everything to God.

The games you play should not be limited to one day. In fact, *Life is a game; play it*. Unity is divinity. Whatever you do, whatever you speak, whatever you think – in every aspect of your life, unity must be reflected. That is the true culture of the Bharatiyas. The essence of the Bharatiya culture is *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). I exhort you to adhere to these two principles throughout your life. With blessings, I conclude My Discourse.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Sankranti Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 14th January 2003.**

**Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2003, SSSIHL**  
*SPECTACULAR SPORTS AND  
CULTURAL EVENTS*

Discipline, Daring and Devotion were seen at their best in the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet of Sri Sathya Sai institutions held in the sprawling Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium, Prasanthi Nilayam on 11th January 2003. The mega events conducted in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba in a spirit of equanimity, solidarity and spirituality were no doubt on a par with international standards both in planning and execution. However, the cut-throat competition witnessed during the conduct of such events elsewhere was conspicuous by its absence in these events because the objective of the participants here was not to win a medal or reward but to please their Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This is one of the most striking features of these sports and cultural events which form an important part of the integral system of education of this Institute.

**Bhagavan Inaugurates Sports and Cultural Meet 2003**

As early as an hour before dawn on 11th January 2003, the stands of Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium were filled to capacity with eager spectators, some of whom had travelled long distances to witness this grand display. As a beautiful sunrise lifted the veil of darkness from the Stadium and the golden sunlight revealed the scenic beauty of the surroundings, the stage was set for the most spectacular show by the students of the three campuses at Brindavan, Prasanthi Nilayam and Anantapur (which includes B.Ed. students) as well as those of Primary and Higher Secondary Schools.

The Anantapur Campus band offered a splendid welcome to Bhagavan Baba, the Chancellor of the Institute when He arrived in the Stadium in His sparkling white robe at

7.20 a.m. in a white open car. Bhagavan then passed through a canopy of flags held by the House Captains. In a grand procession headed by beautifully bedecked Sai Geeta, and followed by the Institute band, and the horse riders squad, Bhagavan was led to Santhi Vedika where He was offered a reverential and warm welcome by the Vice Chancellor and the Institute Faculty and officers. Bhagavan inaugurated the Sports and Cultural Meet at 7.35 a.m. by lighting the sacred lamp amidst a thunderous applause of the spectators.

Soon after the inauguration ceremony, the programme with bouquets of flowers was presented to Bhagavan. Then the marching squads of students started arriving at Santhi Vedika to offer their reverential salute to Bhagavan Baba. While the Institute brass band provided the marching tunes, smartly dressed students of Primary and Secondary School and those of the three campuses of the Institute presented a magnificent March Past.

After this excellent show of March Past, Bhagavan hoisted the Institute Flag and released a pair of pigeons and bunches of balloons to signal the commencement of the sports and cultural events. The customary oath was then administered to the participants. Lighting of the Sports Urn on the top of the hill by a torch vehicle designed as a white dove, a symbol of peace, was one of the unique features of the Sports Meet of the Institute.

### **Sports Events by the Institute Students**

The Brindavan Campus students were the first to present their sports and cultural events. First of all, they presented an exquisite choreography of dance styles drawn from different parts of the world in the form of free flowing sequences. In their next item named “Celestial Rhythms”, the students made beautiful formations involving strength, courage and balance along with speed, style and elegance on an aerial grid suspended at a height of 60 feet above the ground with the help of two massive cranes. The last item of the Brindavan Campus students was the impressive equestrian events, such as showjumping and tent-pegging. The students exhibited rare skill in controlling the horses and presented a grand show in spite of their short period of training.

The Anantapur Campus students commenced their presentation with a spectacular cultural item of dances expressing the spirit of the onset of Uttarayana and the joy of the harvest festival of Sankranti. This was followed by a series of fast-paced aerobic

exercises and the rhythmic bamboo poles dance of Nagaland. Their next item was an amazing display of martial arts of Shaolin school. The feats on unicycles which demanded balance, concentration and control were another spectacular item of their programme.

Prasanthi Nilayam institutions entered the field with an artistic pageant of a revolving globe resting in Swami's hand depicting the theme of their presentation, namely, "Global Harmony". They began their programme with synchronous acrobatics displaying harmony in group exercises and the joyous splendour of life. This was followed by daring feats at a height of 30 feet on a massive giant wheel. Next, the feats on rings and triple trapeze performed by the Higher Secondary School and the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus students enthralled the audience. But the daredevil motorbike stunts by the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus students displayed their rare courage and skill. They included magnificent formations, ramp jumping, smashing through a wall of glass and manoeuvring through tunnels of fire.

The morning's programme came to a close with a beautiful final formation by the students and staff of Prasanthi Nilayam institutions. Bhagavan blessed them by going amidst them and posing for photographs with them. Arati was offered to Bhagavan at the end of the programme at 10.30 a.m.

### **Sports and Cultural Events by Primary School Students**

The afternoon belonged to our tiny tots. After the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in the Stadium at 3.00 p.m., the Primary School students of Prasanthi Nilayam commenced their presentation with a charming dance and song to offer worship to Lord Ganesh. This was followed by feats on Chinese poles with a presentation of martial arts in the foreground. In these feats, the students showed their amazing skill and dexterity. They made many beautiful formations and climbed the vertical poles with amazing ease. Two of the boys also jumped from one pole to another, defying all laws of gravity. The audience was thrilled by this excellent performance and clapped nearly continuously in great appreciation. The next item was Lion Dance, comprising 30 'lions' who really captivated the gathering. The daredevilry of the little kids on their mini motorbikes was amazingly breathtaking. Their dances with dummy trains and later with costumes of birds



interspersed with the teachings of Bhagavan heralding the Advent of Sai Age and highlighting the various landmarks in the life of Bhagavan was extremely enchanting.

Bhagavan was obviously very happy with the delightful performance of the small children. He went amidst them to shower His grace on them and posed for photographs with them. This most spectacular show of sports and cultural events came to a happy conclusion at 4.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

**NOTICE**

Donations to the project for “Augmentation of Drinking Water Supply to the City of Chennai” qualify for 100% deduction from income under section 35 AC of the Income Tax Act 1961. Cheques and DD’s favouring “Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust A/c Water Supply Project” will be accepted till the completion of the project.

Secretary

**Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust  
Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134.**

**NEW YEAR DAY DISCOURSE**

**VISUALISE DIVINITY IN HUMANITY**

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

*The tongue can earn for one the grace of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth);  
It can also win friends and relatives;  
The same tongue puts one in bondage  
And can even lead to sure death. (Sanskrit Verse)*

### *Embodiments of Love!*

One can attain plenty and prosperity by speaking sweetly. One endowed with sweet speech will have a number of friends and relatives. Sweet words can earn even a kingdom for man. Having been endowed with such a sacred power of speech, man is unable to make proper use of it. No other form of life is endowed with such a mighty power and capacity for inner peace except man.

### ***Divinity is Immanent in Man***

In this world, there are two types of people. The first type consists of those who are totally materialistic in their outlook and are concerned only with physical aspects of objects. They have in their mind only the physical and worldly goals and gains. They are fascinated by the external appearances of objects and are not interested in their deeper and unseen reality. They see only the visible branches and foliage of a tree and waste their time and energy in watering the branches. The second type of people do not go by the external appearance of the tree but try to reach out to its roots. They try to know the inner reality of the objects of the world instead of the study of their exteriors. They are Vedantins who water the roots, enjoy the fruits and lead a blissful life.

Take, for instance, a handful of sand from a seashore in a plate. The scientists can determine its place and country of origin by examining its colour, weight, etc. But the philosophers do not think in this manner. They say that it is God's creation and God's Maya. Thus, there is a gulf of difference between the perceptions of the scientists and the sages. Science is like a semi-circle. It starts at some place and ends at some other place. It is not a perfect whole. But spirituality ends at the same point from where it begins. It is a full circle. This wholeness is the sign of divinity. *Poornamada Poornamidam Poornat Poornamudachyate, Poornasya Poornamadaya Poornameva Avashishyate* (That is the whole, this is the whole. When the whole is taken out of the whole, what remains is again the whole.) This totality of divinity is immanent in every human being. But, unfortunately, man is not making any effort to realise the divinity within. Who is protecting his body while he is fast asleep? How does the body function perfectly even without his knowledge? Nobody knows. It is God who creates, protects and sustains the entire creation. Such a divine power is immanent in every human being. In spite of this, man is depressed in times of difficulties and is elated in times of joy. What is the origin

of joy and sorrow? No one knows. Both have the same origin. This is the truth of human life. Man should understand this truth and try to transcend joy and sorrow. *Pleasure is an interval between two pains.* Therefore, you need not go in search of bliss. It is with you, in you, below you, above you, around you. In fact, you yourself are the embodiment of bliss.

The Bhagavata describes the churning of the Ksheera Sagara (the ocean of milk) by the Devas (gods) and Asuras (demons). They used the Mandara mountain as the churning rod. The churning gave out both poison and nectar. Initially, deadly poison emerged. The demons were frustrated and disheartened to see poison emanating from the ocean instead of Amruta (ambrosia). They wanted to give up the churning process. But the gods did not want to give up. They relentlessly continued the churning with courage and determination. Their sustained efforts yielded rich rewards in the form of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth), Airavata (divine white elephant), Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow), Kalpataru (wish-fulfilling tree) and ultimately the divine ambrosia itself. In the same manner, people should churn their mind and try to know their true identity. They should not be deterred or depressed by the initial impediments and obstacles that beset their path. Those who proceed on their chosen path with determination attain the bliss of ambrosia like the gods.

### ***Realise your True Identity***

In this world, every being has five attributes, namely, Sath, Chith, Ananda, Rupa and Nama (existence, knowledge, bliss, form and name). Existence, knowledge and bliss are the three core attributes of man. They are true and eternal. Name and form are unreal and transitory. Man in his delusion considers name and form to be permanent and thereby wastes away his precious life.

The very nature of man is Sath-Chith-Ananda. But man has forgotten his nature and is wasting his time in the vain pursuit of worldly desires. He is not able to realise the value of his innate nature. Once he realises its value and experiences it, he can reach any exalted state. In fact, then he will become verily God. Man can accomplish any mighty task when he realises his innate divine nature. The power latent in man is not found anywhere else. But having been enmeshed in the web of delusion, man considers name and form to be real, ignoring his innate qualities of Sath- Chith-Ananda. First of all, what

man has to recognise is his own innate divine nature. But man is not making any effort in this direction. He has become a slave of his senses, and is wasting his time on trivial matters. The primary duty of man therefore is to understand properly his innate divine nature and experience his divinity.

It is essential for man to foster humanness by practising human values. Human values are extremely precious. It is only when you practise human values will your life be redeemed. Man is but a spark of Divinity. Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). In fact, the Antarvani (inner voice) keeps reminding man of his divine nature day in and day out. But man is not making any effort to listen to his inner voice. He is craving for physical and ephemeral objects, forgetting his divine nature and thereby distancing himself from the ultimate goal of life. He is being deluded by names and forms which are momentary like water bubbles. In the process, he is losing the very precious gem of divinity. Man is endowed with infinite divine power. A piece of iron can be put to better use after it is put into fire and made into a useful instrument. Human body can similarly become much more functional and sacred when it comes in contact with its inner divinity. Man should therefore understand this truth and make proper use of his body.

***Sanctify New Year by Eternal Values***  
***Embodiments of Love!***

People are full of hopes and aspirations on the dawn of a New Year. They imagine that the New Year will bring new and sacred thoughts to them. But what is New Year? In fact, every moment becomes a New Year when we start fostering eternal virtues, ignoring names and forms.

Man suffers from many afflictions in life. He should develop Atmic feeling to overcome his afflictions. Therefore, he should make efforts to know the Atmic principle. The Atma is synonymous with Brahma which is nothing but Chaitanya permeating every human being. Man has a name and form but Chaitanya has no form. The Chaitanya that is present in the human body is called 'conscience'. The all-pervasive Chaitanya is called 'consciousness'. When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the 'conscience' gets transformed into 'consciousness'. In spite of being

endowed with sacred power, man gets deluded by the ephemeral and transitory world. He gives importance to the New Year which is fleeting. In fact, he should give importance to the changeless principles of truth and goodness. In this world, only truth and goodness remain with us for ever. Their value cannot be quantified. So, we should strive to develop truth and goodness in us. We should not hanker after name and fame. For example, we should not be under the delusion that we are providing Telugu Ganga water to Chennai. Water is not something which one can give to another. It is Nature's gift to all. Each one gets his share based on his Prapti (deservedness). Man's activities yield the desired result only when the Kala, Karma, Karana and Kartavya (time, action, cause and duty) are in harmony with each other. Hence, man should make sincere efforts and wait for the right time. When the action fructifies, he should utilise it in accordance with the time and circumstances.

### ***Do Service with Selfless Love***

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

### ***Embodiments of Love!***

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

### ***Students!***

You are under the mistaken notion that you are rendering service to others. You should give up such a feeling. Only then will the service you perform become real service in the strict sense of the term. What is service? Service does not mean merely helping others. *The best way to love God is to love all and serve all.* Your acts of service should

be suffused with the spirit of love. Without the positive aspect of love, all service you render becomes negative in nature.

Our acts of service are like bulbs and love is the current. When the current is switched on, even a small bulb will give the light of happiness. The main switch is the heart. When we put on the main switch, bulbs radiate light. But you put off the main switch and try to get light. How is it possible? Hrid + Daya (compassion) = Hridaya (heart). Your heart should be filled with love and compassion. All your activities should be suffused with love. There is no power greater than love. Our ancient sages and seers used to live in dense forests amidst wild animals. They did not carry any weapons with them, yet they could move about without any sense of fear. What were the weapons they carried with them? They possessed the single weapon of love which protected them from the wild animals. This has been the sacred tradition of Bharat since ancient times.

The culture of Bharat is divine, most precious, wonderful, full of bliss and giver of bliss. But we are not making any effort to understand its greatness. In fact, some of us try to belittle this sacred culture since it is so simple. This culture is not concerned much with external, physical world as it is that which comes from the heart. We are deluded by the differences based on castes and cultures. The principle of love that emanates from human heart determines man's true caste. In fact, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. The entire mankind is one family. The whole world is one mansion, different countries being the rooms of the same mansion. All the residents of this mansion are brothers and sisters. It is impossible to describe in words the happiness you would experience when you develop such broad-mindedness. Hence, make every effort to visualise divinity in humanity.

### **God is beyond all Descriptions**

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

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

(Telugu Poem)

The glory of God cannot be described in words. Man describes Him on the basis of his own imagination. Truly speaking, God is beyond all definition. Man however tries to know God by various types of Pramanas (proofs) in this world. They are Pratyaksha Pramana, Anumana Pramana, Dvaita Pramana and Advaita Pramana, etc. (proofs based on direct perception, inference, duality and non-duality). As God is beyond all these Pramanas, He is known as Aprameya (immeasurable and indefinable). God is beyond all limitations. He is extolled as Aprameyaya Namah (salutations to the One who is immeasurable). Man tries to know God by various means and Pramanas. When you see the fire directly, it is called Pratyaksha Pramana (direct proof). If you see only the smoke from a distance and not the fire, you presume that there is fire behind the smoke. It is only a possibility. It is Anumana Pramana. It is possible that fog may appear as smoke and, actually, there may not be fire at all. Therefore, Anumana Pramana gives rise to doubt. Love in man is the Pratyaksha Pramana of divinity in a human being. God is present in the heart of every man with all His divine powers.

***The beauty and grandeur of God cannot be described in words. He is extolled as “Hiranyagarbhaya Namah” (salutations to the One with the golden womb). Hiranya means gold. Just as the essence of the food partaken is supplied to all parts of the body, likewise, gold permeates His entire body. Hence, He is most handsome. He is the primordial basis of all beings. As He is the fundamental power behind all creation, He is called Manu. Everything happens according to His Will. As He is the creator of all beings, He is called Prajapati. Since He is most intelligent, He is called Dakshinamoorthi. In this manner, God has infinite names. Man attributes names and forms to God on the basis of his limited understanding and worships Him. God is extolled as Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, liberated and embodiment of sacredness). When this divine principle is present within man, why does he consider himself feeble and helpless? You should give up such a feeling of inferiority. There is no greater being than man. In fact, divinity is immanent in the entire humanity. Human birth is most valuable in this creation. But, unfortunately, man considers it trivial and insignificant. Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi (as you think, so you become). Petty thoughts make you petty.***

When anyone questions you about the form of God, the immediate answer is, “God is love”. Similarly, truth is God. Sathya Pramana is the true proof of God. There is nothing

greater than truth. There is no divinity higher than truth. Truth is all-pervading. There are many different countries. But the truth is one and only one. There is nothing like American truth, Japanese truth, German truth, etc. To make such distinction is the sign of petty-mindedness. We are not petty-minded and mean. We are the embodiments of infinity. Man should always remind himself that he is the embodiment of truth, embodiment of love, embodiment of bliss, etc. Man by his very nature is inquisitive and reflective. He has infinite capacity for spiritual quest. But, does he realise his true nature?

*Embodiments of Love!*

Always be happy and cheerful, for your heart is full of bliss. When you are blissful by nature, then why do you worry? The Atma is the source of bliss. The moment you think of bliss, you can attain it. *Happiness is union with God.* Therefore, always be in the company of God. Once you are in the company of God, happiness will follow you like a slave. Today man has become a slave of happiness. This is not correct. In fact, happiness should become your slave. Only then can you call yourself a true human being. Believe it or not, I am always blissful. You can also experience such a state of bliss. You should not run after happiness. Instead, happiness should follow you wherever you go. Hanuman was courageous, mighty and virtuous. He was always happy and cheerful, chanting the divine name of Rama. Bliss followed him wherever he went. You should also develop such noble qualities and do away with the aberrations of your mind which behaves like a monkey. Transcend your monkey mind. First and foremost, you should become a human being in the true sense. Kindness is the essential attribute of mankind. You should develop kindness towards all. Only then can you rise to the level of divinity.

*Embodiments of Love!*

You are acquiring a high level of worldly education. You are reading several great books. You are acquiring great powers. But all this is ephemeral and unreal. Therefore, constantly contemplate on the divine power that fills your heart with bliss. The divine power is infinite. The more you contemplate on the Divine, the more your bliss gets multiplied. When this infinite divine power is within you, why should you suffer from difficulties?

**Villages are Valuable Assets of a Nation**



Today our old students have assembled here. They are undertaking several types of service activities in various parts of the country and even abroad. They are deriving great pleasure out of this service activity. In My opinion, they should undertake service activities in villages in their respective areas as far as possible and make the villagers happy. It is neither good nor necessary to collect people from different places to undertake service activities. This will turn service into business.

There is a vast scope for different service activities in rural areas. A few decades ago, some people invited Me to shift to bigger cities like Mysore, saying that they would provide a big palace for Me. But I don't need palaces. I must stay in this small village. I have not given up My place of birth. Mighty tasks need to be accomplished in a small place like this. So, I refused to move from Puttaparthi which was then a remote village with no modern facilities. In those days, if one were to visit Puttaparthi, one had to alight from the train at Penukonda and then travel to this place in a bullock-cart. But now one can straightaway reach Puttaparthi comfortably by air. One had to go to Anantapur or Penukonda in those days for availing oneself of medical services. Now, we have a Super Speciality Hospital at Puttaparthi itself. Thus, all modern conveniences and facilities are now available in this village of Puttaparthi. There is no better place than a village to live in.

The villages are the most valuable assets of a nation. If you serve the villagers properly, nothing could be a greater service than that. There is no satisfaction in service undertaken in towns and cities. The urban people are indifferent and self-centred. Even if thieves break into a neighbouring house, their neighbours will not bother. On the other hand, in the villages when you have even a small problem, all the villagers will gather around you. Such a type of unity and camaraderie still exists in villages to some extent. Where there is unity, there will be divinity. Where there is divinity, there will be bliss. Hence, unity is necessary. So, all of you should work for the development of your respective villages. Do not turn service activity into political activity by associating various types of people from different places. I am not happy with that. Do come together for Bhajans wherever you are. But do not promote separatism or politics. All should be united. Wherever you are, undertake service activities with a spirit of cooperation and unity. Since ages, India has been a peaceful country and all Indians were united like a big

family. In olden days, whenever somebody visited a village, all the villagers used to gather around him and enquired about his welfare lovingly. But what is the position now? That spirit of love and oneness is now on the decline. Wherever you go, you will find differences and tensions even on trivial matters. Especially, after Independence, disturbances and agitations have increased in the country. The sanctity of human life seems to have been totally lost. People are killing each other. These are inhuman and demonic acts. This is not what is expected of a human being. We must transform the divine power latent in us into skill for undertaking service to society. When knowledge is converted into skill, you acquire balance in life. In such a state of equanimity, you will develop insight. When you undertake service activity with such an insight and divine power, it will be most fruitful and beneficial to society.

Every village in the country has to be developed in all respects. Give up all differences. You have come from Hyderabad, Chennai, America, etc., to participate in service activities. Where is the need for all this? The people of Hyderabad should work for Hyderabad and neighbouring areas. If people from far-off places undertake service activities at one particular place, it will lead to confusion. The confusion ends up in pollution. Do not give scope for confusion and pollution of your mind with unnecessary differences. What is needed is purity in service activities. Unity brings purity and purity in turn leads to divinity. Therefore, always remember the inseparable relationship between unity, purity and divinity and strive to achieve that.

You may come together and work together in a spirit of sacrifice. But if people coming from different places go to villages for Grama Seva, no good accrues to the villages. Everyone has his own ideas, and any difference of opinion pollutes the environment. Then the place becomes a business centre. Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then will the service undertaken by you acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences. A small example. Gold is found in the form of deposits in the gold mines. When you take it out and purify it, it becomes pure 24 carat gold. It acquires great value. However, when you add other metals like copper, its value comes down. Not only that. Its shine also diminishes. If you

add some more metals, it loses its value altogether. Our heart is like a temple of gold. It is Hiranyagarbha. We should never defile that Hiranyagarbha. It should always be bright and shining.

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

- **From Bhagavan's New Year Day Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 1st January 2003.**

## **DASARA DISCOURSES - II**

### **DEVELOP UNITY TO REALISE DIVINITY**

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

(Telugu Poem)

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

(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

The universe is an object of awe and wonder. It is difficult to comprehend its mysteries. Divinity is the basis of its unity. Unity is indispensable, be it for the progress and prosperity of a nation or peace and happiness in a family. The whole world will be plunged into unrest and chaos in the absence of unity. Unity ensures peace and bliss. Disunity leads to discontent and restlessness and makes one forget divinity. Peace is what

man has to aspire and pray for. In fact, one does not need to go in search of peace. You are yourself the embodiment of peace. But modern man has no awareness of these sacred truths.

### **Peace is within you**

People are not ready to believe that man is the embodiment of peace. Does anybody know where peace exists? Man is going all over the world in search of peace as he is not aware that it is present within him. He is like a foolish person who searches for his spectacles while wearing them all the time right over his nose. What is the reason for all the troubles, anxieties and unrest that man is facing today? The reason is that he has forgotten his true Self and is identifying himself with something which he is not. Every man aspires for peace. Is it not a sign of ignorance to look for peace elsewhere when man is himself the embodiment of peace? Due to his ignorance, man keeps on making efforts to attain peace in the external world.

One day Sankaracharya was on his way to the Ganga along with his disciples. He found a Brahmin sitting under a tree and repeating, “*Dukrun Karane, Dukrun Karane ...*” He was trying to master Panini’s grammar to become a great scholar. On being questioned by Sankara, the Brahmin replied that he wanted to obtain a good position and liberal rewards in the royal court. Sankara asked, “What are you going to do with the wealth?” The Brahmin said that he would enjoy all the comforts and luxuries so long as he was alive. Sankara questioned him further, “After death, what will happen to your wealth? Will you be able to remember what you are learning now?” The Brahmin had no answer to this. Then Sankara said, “Oh simpleton, try to understand the divine principle that is always with you – before your birth, in this birth and after your death.” Sankara then sang this song:

*“Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam*

*Govindam Bhaja Mooda Mathe*

*Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale*

*Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane.”*

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

No one accompanied you at the time of birth nor will anyone follow you after your death. You have come all alone and will go back in the same way.

*“Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam*

*Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam*

*Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare*

*Kripayapare Pahi Murare.”*

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

In this world, nobody follows anybody. Once a person was on his deathbed. He was surrounded by his near and dear ones who were wailing over his imminent death. He opened his eyes and asked, “Why do you all cry?” They said, “You are going to leave this world once for all. That makes us feel sad.” He realised that all the material wealth he had acquired had to be left behind and he had to go empty-handed. It was then that he realised his folly of the pursuit of material possessions.

He alone is a human being who enquires into his true nature. Man asks others, “Who are you?”, but he does not ask, “Who am I?” It is delusion which is the root cause of all grief. Prior to birth, in what way is one related to another? After death, who will follow whom? Physical relationship is impermanent. Ultimately, each one is left to himself, nobody will accompany another. Taking such transient and ephemeral world to be real, man is leading a life of delusion. He should make an effort to understand his true identity and experience peace. Being unaware of the fact that peace is within, man is searching for peace elsewhere. You cannot experience peace in the external world. Wherever you go, you find only unrest and agitation. The peace that you aspire for is very much in you. The divine principle in you is verily the embodiment of peace. Forgetting this reality, you are craving for transitory peace in the external world. Stop searching for peace outside. Turn inwards and try to experience peace, which is your very form.

### **Love is your True Reality**

Whatever you seek in the external world is present in you. There is nothing outside which is not within. When you open your eyes, you are able to see thousands of heads.

Once you close your eyes, you cannot see anyone. From this, it is clear that all that you see with your physical eyes is unreal. So long as the physical eyes are functional, you are able to see the world. Once they become non-functional, you cannot see anything. But there is something that you can see whether you open your eyes or close them. That is Divinity. It is changeless and eternal. It has neither birth nor death. In fact, you are the embodiment of such a divine principle. Understand this truth.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Love is your true nature. Nothing can exist in this world without love. You are the embodiment of love. Forgetting your reality, you are craving for mundane things. What you have to aspire for and what you have to experience and enjoy in this world is love and love alone. Other than love, nothing is permanent.

First of all, you have to enquire into your true identity. It is love. Love is present in all names and forms. It is eternal, non-dual and full of bliss. Man is selective in his love; he lavishes it on his kith and kin but is indifferent to others. So long as he is immersed in such a dualistic feeling, he cannot experience non-dual bliss. *A man with a dual mind is half blind.* You should identify yourself with others and experience unity. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of non-duality is supreme wisdom). Man is the embodiment of wisdom. But he has forgotten this reality and is deluded by the transient and ephemeral forms. He reposes his faith in the physical body and craves for worldly gains. Give up body attachment. Understand the truth that all are in you and you are in all. The Atma that dwells in you is the same as the one that dwells in others. Visualise this oneness and experience bliss. As you are unable to experience this oneness, you are giving room to hatred and jealousy.

Considering others as separate from you is a sign of ignorance. A dog searches for food. It finds a dry bone and starts biting it. After some time, a piece of the bone pierces its gums and blood starts oozing out. The dog happily licks its own blood thinking that it is oozing from the bone. In the same manner, man is hurting himself by trying to attain happiness from the external world. In fact, all that he fancies in the external world originates from within him. Pain or pleasure is the result of his own thinking. *Pleasure is an interval between two pains.* Pleasure and pain are within, not outside. All that is seen

is only a reflection, the reality is within. Man is carried away by his own shadow. He has no understanding of his true identity. Hence, Vedanta exhorts man, “Know thyself.”

Once an officer camped in a village. Some villagers cautioned him that the house in which he was lodged was a haunted one. The officer wanted to investigate into the veracity of their statement. He put off the main light and switched on the bed lamp. He reclined on the bed keeping one leg over the other. He was shaking his legs and was lost in thoughts. Suddenly, he noticed a giant shadow of his legs on the wall. The shadow moved as he shook his legs. The foolish officer mistook it for a ghost and was fear-stricken. He took out his pistol and shot at the shadow. Likewise, man’s fears are the result of his own delusion. In fact, nothing other than Divinity exists in this world. All are essentially divine. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one, but the wise call it by different names). Have firm faith in this principle of unity in diversity. Only then will you be free from worries and fear.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

What is the basis of man’s delusion? It is the wrong thinking of man. From his very birth, man starts accumulating wrong impressions of his identity, and his body attachment grows as he moves in the world. Give up Dehabhimanam (body attachment) and develop Atmabhimanam (love for the Self). Divine feeling of love will then grow within you. Eternal truth in the form of love is present in every being. Love alone can give you peace and courage. All that you require is to foster and strengthen this love. Love is God, God is love. Live in love. Lead your life suffused with love. If you do so, then where is the scope for worries?

You see many forms in Nature, each unique in its own way. No two forms are alike. But the divine principle in all these various forms is one and the same. Never forget this principle of unity in diversity. When you forget this unity, you get deluded by the apparent diversity. As you can see, there are a number of bulbs glowing in this hall. Bulbs are different but the current is the same. Likewise, it is the same Atmic principle which makes different bodies function. It is the same Atma that makes the eyes see and the ears hear. That is divinity, that is Chaitanya (consciousness). Try to understand the meaning of Chaitanya. It is not confined to a particular place; it neither comes nor goes. It is present everywhere at all times. Bear this truth in mind always. Enquire, why God has

given you this body. What are you supposed to achieve with this? What is the purpose of human birth? Is it given to you to study or to play or to gossip or to amass riches? No. You are born to know your Self. Hence, question yourself, “Who am I?” Once you know who you really are, you would have known everything.

Fill your Heart with Sacred Thoughts

*Embodiments of Sacred Atma!*

It is easy to know the path of truth. Nothing is simpler than knowing your Self. It is rather difficult to know others. Hence, undertake spiritual practices that help you to know your Self. Sometimes, your body is afflicted with ailments due to wrong food and improper habits. Do not be unduly worried about it. First and foremost, understand the purpose of life. The students who have come here should ask themselves, “Why have I come here? Am I trying to achieve the purpose of my coming here?” They should understand the purpose of their stay and make efforts in the right direction. Only then will they be able to realise their goal. In the same way, man should understand the purpose for which he has come into the world. He should not get immersed in vain pursuits. Instead, he should know the truth. Then he will know everything. Man can know the truth only when he develops love.

Those who take to spiritual path sometimes suffer from doubts. Doubts and mistaken notions cause a lot of confusion. Therefore, one should not entertain doubts or misunderstanding on the spiritual path. So long as there are doubts, one can never experience truth. First and foremost, one should get rid of doubts. Doubts make one oblivious of one’s true nature. Faith is very essential. One without faith is like a blind person. Saint Purandaradasa lamented, “*Oh Lord! In spite of having eyes, people are verily blind as they do not yearn to see Your auspicious form. Though they are endowed with ears, they are deaf to Your teachings. Though God is immanent in them, they have drowned themselves in worldly life.*” (Telugu Poem) Do not depend on the physical eyes; develop divine vision. Turn your mind towards the divine light of the Atma that is present in one and all. The same was proclaimed by Adi Sankara in his famous song “Bhaja Govindam”. Think of God, sing His glory. In fact, God is not separate from you. You are God yourself. You and I are one. Give up the feeling that God is different from you and that you are His devotee.



*The Arishadvargas (six inner enemies – desire, anger, greed, pride, infatuation and jealousy) are responsible for man’s bad conduct and suffering. These are animal qualities. If man behaves in the same way as animals, then in what way is he superior to them? Man is endowed with Prajnana. The Vedas say, Prajnanam Brahma (Brahman is Supreme Consciousness). How can man suffer when he is endowed with Prajnana? All matters relating to the world are like passing clouds. Why should he get attached to them and worry about them? He should hold on to the Atmic principle which is changeless and divine. Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi (The knower of Brahman becomes verily Brahman). As I mentioned yesterday, every being has the spark of divinity within. Lord Krishna said, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (The eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). Such being the case, how is it that man is facing hardships and misery? The reason is that he has filled his heart with bestial tendencies. He has to drive them out. Run away from bad company. Fill your heart with eternal truth. Here is a tumbler filled with water. If you want to fill it with milk, the water has to be poured out. Likewise, in order to fill your heart with noble feelings, you have to get rid of the evil qualities in the first instance. First cleanse your heart. Then fill it up with sacred thoughts and feelings.*

#### ***Pray to God for Love and Peace***

In order to fill his small stomach, man is trying to earn lakhs of rupees. Does he make use of all the money he earns to fill his stomach? No. He neither spends it nor gives it in charity to others. Without understanding the momentary nature of life, he is undergoing various ordeals. Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. Don’t follow the body, don’t follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Follow the principle of love. This is the education that you have to acquire. “*What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.*” (Telugu Poem) What is the purpose of education? Is it only to fill your stomach? Even an uneducated beggar fills his stomach. The purpose of education is not just to fill your stomach but to fill your heart with love and compassion. That which is filled with compassion is Hridaya.

Man uses his love for unsacred purposes and feels disappointed in life. Who is related to whom? Relationships and attachments are of his own making. Prior to marriage, who is wife and who is husband? After death, what relationship exists between them? There are no permanent relationships. The family life is temporary like a passing cloud. One should not be unduly attached to it or worried about it. Instead, one should make efforts to share his love with all and experience bliss. But man today is developing hatred and

jealousy towards his fellowmen instead of sharing his love with them. He is developing this demonic quality of hatred more and more. What is the use of his education? He should share his love with one and all. That is his primary duty.

*Students!*

You are studying various subjects which are related to this physical world. Along with worldly education, you should acquire spiritual knowledge also. Only then can you experience eternal bliss. Worldly education is meant for life here and spiritual knowledge for life hereafter.

A short while ago, you listened to Rasagotra (M. K. Rasagotra). He gave some very valuable ideas. His educational accomplishments are unparalleled. He has held positions of eminence. He has everything that one could ask for. Then why does he come here? He comes here to experience Swami's love. In fact, if you already had that love within you, you would not have come here. You do not have that love. You do not have peace. That is why you come here. You should pray to God for that which is not with you and which God alone can confer on you.

There was a rich businessman named Patel in Gujarat. He travelled all over the world and attained all worldly comforts. One day one of his foreign friends came to his house. At that time, Patel was in his Puja room. His friend had to wait for a long time. When Patel at last emerged from the Puja room, his friend confronted him with a question: "Patel, you are having so much money. You have all the comforts of life. You do not lack anything. Then what are you praying to God for? Why do you pray so long?" Patel smiled at his query and said, "Sir, I do not pray for worldly possessions because I already have them. I do not pray for money or worldly comforts. I pray to God for that which is not with me." His friend was surprised. He asked, "What is it that you do not have?" Patel said, "I lack peace and love. They are with God only. I pray to God to grant me peace and love." One can earn and acquire all worldly possessions by one's own efforts. But one cannot earn peace and love from the world. God alone can grant them. When you have sugar, you can prepare any number of sweets. Similarly, when you have love, you can achieve anything. Hence, develop love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manse Kaho ...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 10th October 2002.**

### **NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

The year 2003 began in the holiest of holy way at Prasanthi Nilayam when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba blessed the devotees with Divine Discourse on 1st January 2003. Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of celebrations, at 7.00 a.m. After showering the bliss of His Darshan on the mammoth gathering of devotees both inside and outside Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan came to the verandah of the Mandir and inaugurated the celebrations by lighting candles and cutting cakes. This was followed by Bhajans led by the Institute students and sung in chorus by the devotees with great devotional fervour. At the end of the Bhajans, Arati was offered to Bhagavan and Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. The morning programme came to a close at 8.35 a.m.

In the afternoon, Bhagavan Baba came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.30 p.m. Three speakers addressed the gathering before Bhagavan's Divine Discourse. The first speaker was Sri S.V.Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Sri Giri quoted from the observations made by the President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam during his recent visit to Prasanthi Nilayam and remarked that the phenomenal success achieved by the Institute had made it a model for the education system of the country. Sri Giri also quoted from the letter of Dr. Abdul Kalam to Bhagavan Baba, in which he had said that his parents were not living and hence he was offering his first two months' salary at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan whom he revered as his mother and father. The second speaker was Dr. G.Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Dr. Venkataraman observed that man should sanctify his time by doing sacred actions. Bhagavan Baba, he said, was the best example to follow in this regard as He spent all his time for the welfare of mankind. The last speaker, Sri K.Chakravarthi, Secretary, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, informed the devotees about the stupendous work being done by Bhagavan Baba to provide water to Chennai without any fanfare or publicity. He also told that the Andhra Pradesh Government had named the stretch of canal

from Kandaleru to Poondi as Sai Ganga Canal as a mark of respect and expression of gratitude to Bhagavan. After these speeches, Bhagavan gave His New Year Day Discourse to the devotees and exhorted them to follow the glorious culture of Bharat and imbibe the virtues of love and compassion in their heart. Referring to the Grama Seva (rural service) work done by the old students of the Institute, Bhagavan observed that real service was that which was done with the feeling of selfless love. Then the service rendered to man became service rendered to God. (The full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.)

After the Discourse of Bhagavan, former students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a scintillating programme of devotional music to make this day all the more auspicious and memorable. Their outpouring of love for Bhagavan in this grand musical presentation touched every heart. Bhagavan immensely blessed them all. He also materialised a gold chain with a locket for one of the singers. At the end of the programme, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. The New Year Day programme came to a happy conclusion with offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 5.10 p.m.

### **SANKRANTI FESTIVAL AND PRIZE DISTRIBUTION**

The holy festival of Sankranti was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 14th January 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. When Bhagavan came to bless the devotees with His Divine Darshan on the morning of 14th January 2003, He was led to Sai Kulwant Hall in a grand procession by the bands of Anantapur Campus and Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute. Bhagavan was offered a reverential welcome by the Sports Captains who formed a canopy of colourful flags when Bhagavan passed between their rows. Bhagavan inaugurated the programme by lighting the sacred lamps at 7.05 a.m. This was followed by chanting of Vedic hymns by the Institute students.

At the outset, Sri S.V.Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning offered his obeisance to Bhagavan Baba and delivered his introductory speech. Referring to the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2003 held on 11th January 2003, Sri Giri observed that the Sports Meet of the Institute was a channel of transformation for the participants. The sports helped them to transform themselves from Thamo Guna (inertia) to Rajo Guna (activity) and then to Sattwa Guna (serenity) as they offered the fruits of

their action at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba, the Revered Chancellor of the Institute. After this, Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan Campus of the Institute introduced the three speakers who were permitted by Bhagavan to share their views with the audience before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan.

The first speaker was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Overseas Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation. Dr. Goldstein observed that the abundant grace of Bhagavan had helped the students to develop sound mind in sound body. This, he said, was evident from their outstanding performance in the Sports Meet of the Institute which concluded a few days ago. It was breathtakingly beautiful to behold the March Past of the students of the Primary and Higher Secondary Schools and those of the Institute in their immaculate dresses. It looked as if an army of magnificent pageantry was saluting the Commander-in-Chief of the entire creation, he further observed. The second speaker was Ms. Sonia Aggarwal, presently pursuing her 2nd year M.A. (English) course in the Anantapur Campus of the Institute. She said that for students, the Sports Meet was their expression of love towards Bhagavan who was the sole inspiration for them to perform to the best of their abilities. Referring to the uniqueness of the system of education of the Institute, she observed that Bhagavan had given to the students the prize of belongingness and there could not be any prize greater than that. The last speaker, Sri Neelratna Chaubal, a student of 2nd year M.B.A., referred to the strenuous day and night work done by the students during the Sports Meet and felt that it was the energy bestowed by Bhagavan that made the students work so hard and be successful in whatever endeavour they undertook. Bhagavan had a special blessing for Sri Chaubal when at the end of his talk, He materialised a gold chain for him and put it around his neck with His Divine hands.

### **Prize Distribution Function**

At the end of these short speeches, Prize Distribution function of the Institute was held to award group and individual prizes for excellence in sports events. Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan Campus called out the names of the prize winners who received the prizes from the Divine Hands of their Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Baba. Bhagavan posed for photographs with the winners who were lustily cheered by the huge gathering of students and devotees. Bhagavan graciously announced special prizes for the Primary

School, Higher Secondary School and the three campuses of the Institute, viz., Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan and Anantapur.

After this, Bhagavan gave His Sankranti Message (full text given elsewhere) in which He emphasised the need for inculcation of virtues by the youth, who were the future leaders of the country. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...” at 8.50 a.m. The auspicious festival of Sankranti and the Prize Distribution function of the Institute came to happy conclusion with distribution of Prasadam and offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 9.20 a.m.

#### NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES

**Andhra Pradesh:** The Khammam Samithi carried out Grama Seva at Karakuvagu village on 21.12.2002 on a large scale from 7.00 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. 257 animals were provided medical check-up in a free veterinary camp, 540 patients were given medical aid and free medicines in a medical camp, and clothes were distributed to 77 needy people. White washing of the village Temple, Church and Primary School was also done. Expert advice to cultivators, tree plantation, Bal Vikas classes to 150 children and cultural programmes, etc., were the other highlights of the Grama Seva programme.

**Assam and N.E. Region:** Inmates of Sivasagar District Jail had a welcome respite from the rigours of prison life when on Bhagavan’s 77th Birthday (23.11.02), the members of the Sivasagar Sai Samithi visited them and organised Bhajan and Narayan Seva programmes. Attended by top civil and police officials and social workers, the function had a healthy impact on the 500 odd inmates as well as wardens.

**Haryana:** A State-level Spiritual-cum-Seva Sadhana Camp for Sai youth was held on 28-29th December 2002 at Panchkula in which more than 100 youth hailing from different districts of the State took part. The youth organised Seva activities during the camp. They organised a multifaceted health awareness medical camp in rural areas wherein a team of specialist doctors treated approximately 200 patients to whom free medicines were also distributed.

**Himachal Pradesh:** The cold weather and snowfall did not deter the Sai youth of Himachal Pradesh from undertaking Seva activity in January 2003. In fact, it infused

more enthusiasm in them to do Seva with love. The youth of Shimla distributed 80 woollen track suits to the children of a labour colony, and 400 woollen garments to old people in different segments of Shimla. Besides, medical camps were held at Anath Balika Ashram and Deaf and Dumb Institute at Shimla.

**Orissa:** Some Samithis of Orissa State celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday from 3.11.2002 to 24.11.2002, some for a week and others for 77 hours. Many units conducted Nagar Sankirtans and Bhajans for 77 days. Various Seva activities were undertaken during these celebrations. These included distribution of new clothes, utensils, food packets and blankets, Grama Seva, medical and veterinary camps benefiting thousands of patients and cattle. As a programme for self-transformation, youth members observed 'Sai Vrata Sadhana' from 17.11.2002 to 20.11.2002 to eradicate bad habits.

A selected group of youth and workers undertook Padayatra (1.12.2002 to 17.12.2002) from Rourkela to Puri (Jagannath Dham) covering about 600 km on foot. During this Padayatra, 30 medical camps were conducted in 30 villages on the way. Free medicines were distributed to about 15,000 patients. This was followed by Satsang, Bhajans and sanitation work. Four orphanage centres were covered en route. The Yatra was terminated at Puri and a get-together of all the devotees was held at Sri Sathya Sai Mandir, Puri to share the joyful experiences of the Padayatris.

**CHANGE IN PREFIX OF "SANATHANA SARATHI"  
SUBSCRIPTION NUMBERS**

The prefix of "Sanathana Sarathi" subscription numbers for the numbers starting from SA 00001 to SA09574 have been changed from SA to SB for administrative reasons. The new numbers are SB00001 to SB09574.

*Convener*

DIVINE DISCOURSE ON 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2002

**THE END OF EDUCATION IS CHARACTER**

*There is no trace of peace anywhere;  
Truth has become equally scarce;  
Though man is afraid of dreadful weapons,  
he is stockpiling them more and more;  
The root cause of all this is his selfishness;  
This is the truth that is being conveyed.*

(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Today education is spreading fast but its impact on human behaviour is not visible. There is emphasis only on the academic achievements of the students and not on their transformation. What kind of education do we need?

**Educare is our Prime Necessity Today**

*Dear Students – Boys and Girls!*

Students today are pursuing only worldly education. Mere secular education is not enough. It must be supplemented with spiritual education. You must develop the



principle of love. You must follow the path of truth. True education is that which is suffused with truth and love. Without truth and love, education is ineffective and devoid of value. Secular education is for making a living, whereas spiritual education is for attaining the goal of life. Therefore, it is the duty of students as well as educators to integrate secular education with spiritual education. The importance of this type of integral education is being recognised in the world today.

The importance of spirituality is well recognised in the world. People also realise that spirituality is not a modern discovery but an ancient wisdom. Although spirituality is being propagated in the whole world, not many people are putting the spiritual principles into practice. Actually, there is a decline in the practice of spirituality in daily life. Therefore, practical education which helps the students to translate these principles into their life is most essential today. Lack of this education is leading the world to unrest. Modern studies can be referred to as education. But spiritual education which influences the heart is 'educare'. 'Educare' brings out the latent divinity of man to establish it as an ideal to the whole world. Modern education ends merely with bookish knowledge. It is confined to what is contained in the books. Educare, however, is not limited to the study of books. It is related to the source of all knowledge that is latent in the heart of a human being. This is the type of education which is our prime necessity today. People are pursuing higher studies in the various fields of secular education. That is not enough. They have also to pursue spiritual education which inculcates values like truth, righteousness, peace, love, etc., and brings about their transformation.

A harmonious blend of secular and spiritual education is ideally suited to the present-day world. One is the inner awakening and the other is the external teaching. Secular teaching is related to the physical world. It is negative, whereas the teaching related to the inner awakening is positive. Take, for example, love. Who can define the form of love? The best way to define love is to love others and be loved by others, and thereby experience the bliss of love. Such teachings which are related to the inner awakening are the urgent need of the hour. Educare is that which establishes love and kinship between human beings.

### **Education should Inculcate Discipline in Students**

Today nobody knows what is there in the mind of another individual. He thinks something, speaks something else and does something that is totally different. This is not the characteristic of true education. *The proper study of mankind is man.* That is real education. You should speak what you think; what you speak, you should translate into action. This is the ideal to be put before the world. There is no unity between thoughts, words and deeds of man today. It is said:

*ManasyekamVachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam*

*ManasyanyathVachasyanyath Karmanyanyath Duratmanam*

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

Man is not striving to become a Mahatma (noble soul); rather he is becoming a Duratma (wicked person) today. It is the so-called 'educated elite' who are the greater culprits in this regard than the unlettered masses. It is they who are causing great damage to the country. The uneducated villagers are leading ideal lives and setting examples to others. Consider this example. Educated people and intellectuals with name and fame live in cities. On the other hand, unlettered rustics who are considered ignorant live in villages. While the people in urban areas lead a miserable life, the villagers lead a very simple, happy and contented life. You will find several schools, colleges and universities in cities. You will also find constant unrest and agitation in cities. On the other hand, there are hardly any such agitations in the villages, where such institutions of higher education are non-existent. What could be the reason for this situation? The influence of modern education is the reason for this.

When you go to villages, you find that the simple villagers receive you with love and enquire about your welfare. They talk to you with respect and reverence. But in towns and cities, such feelings of affinity and kinship are nowhere to be seen. This type of intimate talk is rare in cities even between a father and a son or a mother and a son or between brothers. There is hardly any intimacy in their relationships. The reason for this

situation is modern education. *The end of education is character.* With the decline of character, students lose respect and reverence also. Even parents contribute to this situation. Parents in villages send their children to cities for education. They expect their children to pursue higher education and earn degrees. Their intentions are, no doubt, good. But the children take to bad ways in cities. While they are in villages, they respect elders and obey their parents. Once they enter cities in pursuit of higher education, they lose respect, reverence, character and humility acquired at home. In fact, they forget all good qualities. They do not hesitate to smoke in front of even their parents. Today bad habits are increasing in children. But the situation is somewhat better in villages. The children in the villages behave with restraint in the presence of elders and parents. The healthy parental control is still surviving in the villages. No such control, however, exists in towns and cities. Youngsters smoke and offer cigarettes to their friends; they go to cinemas and indulge in so many other bad habits. There are many people who encourage them to indulge in bad habits; there are few who try to dissuade them from bad habits. The main cause of these evil tendencies in youngsters is modern education. When someone points out their mistakes, they begin to argue saying, “Why should I fear? It is my will. I smoke my cigarette.”

Here is a small example. Once an Indian young man and a foreigner were travelling together in a railway compartment. The Indian was a chain-smoker. Not only that, he was puffing the smoke on the face of the foreigner. Unable to bear the ordeal, the foreigner told the Indian, “My dear son! I am not feeling well. I cannot bear cigarette smoke. If you want to smoke, please go to the toilet.” The Indian, who was the product of modern education, replied haughtily, “If you cannot tolerate my smoking, better you go to the toilet. I have bought the cigarettes. I will smoke as I like and release the smoke as I please. How can you object to my smoking?” Thus, he began to quarrel with the foreigner. The foreigner was helpless and tried to avoid the unpleasant situation. After a while, the foreigner went to the toilet. When he returned, he saw the Indian throwing his shoes out of the compartment. The foreigner thought that it was not wise to argue with this arrogant boy. He, therefore, went up to the upper berth and stretched himself out. After some time, the Indian boy went to the toilet. Before he returned, the foreigner threw

out his coat to teach him a lesson. The boy returned from the toilet and enquired, “Where is my coat?” The foreigner replied, “Your coat has gone out in search of my shoes.” The boy thought what the foreigner did was the reaction to his action. Then he realised his mistake. For everything, there is reaction, resound and reflection in this Kali Age. When you speak softly and sweetly to others, you will receive the same in return. If you are rude to others, others will also be rude towards you. Every individual, irrespective of his age and country, must, therefore, speak softly and sweetly. Whether one is educated or illiterate, one must speak softly and sweetly. One must have humility. Education bestows humility. Humility makes you deserving, and deservedness makes you rich and prosperous. What is education?

*Students should pursue such education which fosters virtues, intellect, truth and devotion, and promotes discipline and duty.*

(Telugu Poem)

### **Watch your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart**

Man today pays scant regard to his duty. Performance of one’s duty is discipline. What is the use of education without discipline? Education without discipline is useless. Therefore, no purpose is served by pursuing education which does not inculcate good qualities in students. One must cultivate good behaviour along with high education. On the contrary, what we find today is high academics and degenerate behaviour. Certainly, you should acquire high education but you should lead a simple life. That is true education.

Once Mahatma Gandhi was shedding tears while holding a book. After reading the book, he found it unwholesome. Meanwhile, a Britisher came there and enquired from Gandhi why he was shedding tears. Gandhi replied that he believed that the heart of education was character but the modern education was promoting hard- heartedness. People might lose the tenderness of their heart because of such education. This could harm the country. Therefore, he was shedding tears.

Students should never utter harsh words; they should speak softly and sweetly. There is a vast difference between modern education and ancient wisdom. The time in which you are pursuing your education may be modern but your behaviour should always be in accordance with the ancient wisdom. Only then will your education command respect. You must respect your parents. If an elderly person comes to your house, welcome him with reverence and respect. Speak to him sweetly and softly. When he enquires the whereabouts of your father, do not show rudeness, saying, "Go and find out." That is not the reply you have to give. Politely tell him, "Sir! My father is in the drawing room, I will call him." When you thus speak sweetly and softly, the visitor will have a good opinion about you. He will think that you are the worthy son of a worthy father. You must protect the honour and prestige of your father. How? With your good behaviour and sweet and soft words. Otherwise, the visitor would form the opinion that the father is a good and respectable person but his son is a rowdy; he is rude and arrogant, and is not a worthy son. We may acquire modern education and live in modern age. But we should not give up our age-old traditions of humility and civility.

Who is a student? A student is one who acquires education and conducts himself with humility, obedience and discipline. He who has no obedience and discipline is not student but stupid. There must be calm and serene atmosphere in campuses where a number of students pursue their education. Today elders hesitate to go to the places where there are students. What is the reason? The elders are afraid that the students might do any mischief. This was not the situation in earlier days. The students of those days used to conduct themselves with humility. But the environment of educational institutions has completely changed now. Modern education is responsible for all this. If education does not inculcate the virtues of honesty, integrity, duty, discipline and devotion in the students, then what is the use of such an education? In olden days, a student was initiated into learning with sacred prayers to God like "Om Namah Sivaya" and "Om Namo Narayanaya". The elders in the neighbourhood were invited for the ceremony and their blessings for the child were sought. Today neither the blessings of the elders are sought nor any prayer is offered to God before initiating the child into learning. The very start of education is improper. Today a child is initiated into learning with nursery rhymes like

“Ba ... Ba ... Black Sheep”, with the result that he ultimately becomes a black sheep in society. This type of education leads the students on the wrong path. We have to be cautious in this respect.

*Dear Students!*

You are pursuing your education in a sacred atmosphere. You are enveloped in spirituality here. You must continue to develop this atmosphere. You are studying modern science. Science is, of course, great. But your senses are at a low level. Along with the study of science, raise the level of your senses also. Today people are leading a high life but their senses are at a low level. This is not the way of ideal life. This is not what is meant by ‘educare’. Educare means bringing out the latent divinity of man. Whatever words you speak, you must watch whether they are the result of your education or educare. Today nobody is keeping this watch. I often tell the students about the word, WATCH consisting of five letters. These letters stand for:

- W - Watch your Words
- A - Watch your Actions
- T - Watch your Thoughts
- C - Watch your Character
- H - Watch your Heart

When you keep a watch on your words, actions, thoughts, character and heart, then this becomes your real watch, not the one you tie on your wrist. The wristwatch may wear out but not the ideals indicated by the word ‘watch’. They will always bring purity of thought, word and deed. How great is this word! Such noble words must be ingested and internalised. In this way, our ancients taught sacred truths and made the people ideal and noble. But today this idealism is nowhere to be seen.

### **Sense Control is Real Education**

Children want their parents to provide them with watch, handkerchief, etc. Some of them want a costly handkerchief so that they can impress others by showing it in their pocket. Actually, we need a handkerchief to wipe our face and hands. It is necessary to maintain personal hygiene. Both personal and public hygiene are important. Some people spit on the road. This is a bad habit. We should maintain our public places clean and tidy. Cleanliness and purity both are very necessary. These two are most important aspects of education. Students must take good care in respect of personal hygiene, involving regular bath, neat and clean dress, etc. Always have a clean handkerchief. Cut your nails regularly and keep them clean. Keep your hands always clean. *Cleanliness is godliness.* Therefore, be clean and pure. Lead a happy and contented life. Always help others. *Help Ever, Hurt Never.* Surely, you can pursue modern education. But along with it, you must also learn ancient wisdom. There must be a harmonious blend of these two. Pursuit of scientific knowledge is, of course, necessary. But today we are looking at science in a perverted way. Science starts at a particular point and ends at a different point like the letter C. There is a wide gap between its two ends, creating a void in between. It is not a full circle; whereas spirituality is a full circle, ending at the point of its origin. That is why it is said:

*Poornamada Poornamidam*

*PoornatPoornamudachyate Poornasya Poornamadaya*

*Poornameva Avashishyate.*

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

Science starts with the enquiry, “What is this? What is this?” On the other hand, spirituality begins its quest with the enquiry, “What is that? What is that?” The enquiry, “What is this?” indicates nearness, i.e., nearness to the senses. This is science. In contrast to this, the enquiry, “What is that?” indicates distance, i.e., distance from the senses. That is spirituality. All that is near is not always dear. That which is at a distance is more

dear. Consider a small example. You all have come here from far-off places like Zambia, East Africa, etc., to have the Darshan of Sai Baba. Since you are living at such distant places, you have a deep yearning for Sai Baba's Darshan. The same eagerness will not be there to see a person in a neighbouring village. It is natural to develop interest in an object that is far away. What is "that"? "That" means beyond the senses, namely, spirituality. All that is below the senses is dirty. We should not aspire for that. We must rise to the level which is beyond the senses. Only then can we lead a sacred life. Today students are becoming slaves of their senses. This is not proper. You must become the Master of Senses, not merely the Master of Science. Today we are thinking of the senses all the time from morning till night. This is a dirty life. Senses are our servants. We should not become a slave of our servants.

You all know about Kaikeyi in the Ramayana. She was an expert in many branches of knowledge. She was a queen. She was the daughter of the king of Kekaya kingdom. She brought along with her a servant called Manthara to serve her in the palace. But she allowed Manthara to overrule her judgement. She yielded to Manthara's advice and made her life most miserable. She lost her husband King Dasaratha who could not bear the pangs of separation from his beloved son Rama. She had also to face the anger of her own son Bharata who did not like the idea of Rama being sent to the forest to make him the king in Rama's place. Everyone in the kingdom hated her for sending Rama and Sita to the forest. That is why, it is said that a servant should be kept as a servant and a master should remain a master. You are the master and your senses are the servants. *Master the mind and be a mastermind.* That is the quality of a student. Only then can you acquire true higher education. I can teach you at great length about education but time is a constraint.

### **Adopt the Principle of Simple Living and High Thinking**

What I teach the students is based on the principle of "simple living and high thinking". I Myself follow this principle. It is not education in terms of degrees that is important; culture is important. If you develop culture, you can acquire any amount of purity and sacredness in your life. Lead a simple and sacred life. Do not take to unsacred path. The



aim of all this training being given to you is to make you self-reliant. You must attend to all your personal chores yourself. For example, you should wash your clothes and keep them clean. You should wash the plate in which you eat food. This is the duty of a student. You should not ask others to wash your clothes. You should do your duty. Do not ask others to perform your duty. If you cultivate such good habits, there is no greater education than this. This is simple living and high thinking. You must lead a noble life, based on this principle.

I am also telling Jumsai that this principle of self-help must be implemented in all the schools run by the Institute of Human Values. The students of the Institute must become self-reliant. The place of their study, the place of their stay, the book shelves, etc., must always be kept clean by the students themselves. No servants should be engaged for this purpose. Your parents worked hard to provide money for your education. Should they pay for your servants also? It is not good. I often tell the students a Telugu proverb – “The vegetables bought are worth two annas; but the charges paid to the porter for carrying the vegetables are four annas.” Will you ever pay a higher amount towards porter charges than the cost of the vegetables? You should not waste your money in such ways. *Misuse of money is evil.* The money you are spending in your student life is contributed by your parents. They earned it by their sweat and blood. Each rupee of their earning must be treated as a drop of their blood. Curtail your expenditure and acquire higher education.

Today several students wish to go to foreign countries for higher education. It requires a lot of money. What do you do after reaching the foreign country, spending such a huge amount? You do not concentrate on your studies. On the other hand, you spend your time in ever so many activities, wasting your valuable money. If you are short of money as a result of this wasteful expenditure, you resort to cleaning of cups and plates in hotels. Instead of cleaning cups and plates in a foreign country, why don't you do some work in your own country and in your own home? By doing so, you will help your parents. Your parents will feel happy. Dear students! Make your parents happy. Make your teachers

happy. Serve your teachers. Only then will you be able to receive good education from them.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Realise the truth that real education is that which teaches humility. It is only when you cultivate this quality of humility can you become ideal students and serve your country well. Keep yourself away from places of violence, for, if you go there, you may come to harm. If possible, try to bring about peace. Otherwise, keep yourself away from it. Be peaceful yourself and spread peace everywhere.

*Dear Students!*

You are full of noble qualities. You are strong in body and mind. You should be strong in character also. Students today are interested in wealth, power and friends. Of what use are all these without good character? Develop the strength of character and acquire friendship with good people. Become ideal students. Lead an ideal life. Propagate the principles of Sathya Sai Education in the world and earn a good name.

- **From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 20th November 2002.**

## SUMMER COURSE DISCOURSES - 4

### **THE RAMAYANA IS THE STORY OF TRUTH**

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all;  
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;  
You become prosperous when you control your desires;  
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

As long as man has ego, nobody will love him. Even his own wife and children will maintain a distance from him. A man with anger in him will have no happiness at all. A man with excessive desires loses control over his mind. The day man shuns greed, he will attain happiness.

#### **On the Way to Siddhashram**

When Rama and Lakshmana were accompanying Sage Viswamitra to his Ashram, they crossed the river Sarayu in a boat and reached the other bank. There, they saw an Ashram. Astonished at the beauty of the Ashram, Lakshmana asked, “What is this place? It is so very beautiful.” Viswamitra replied, “Don’t be in a hurry. I shall explain. This hermitage is not an ordinary one. It is a sacred place because Lord Siva came here. Hence, it is the gift of Lord Siva and his very own place. It was here that Manmatha (cupid) tried to cast his influence on Lord Siva who reduced him to ashes. As Manmatha became Ananga (formless), this domain is called ‘Anga Desh’ – the kingdom of Anga.” They then stayed at night in the Ashram. In the morning, the inmates of the Ashram gave them a very warm send-off. They had recognised that the princes were the sons of Emperor Dasaratha. Hence, they were honoured accordingly and put on a well-decorated boat to proceed on their journey. As they proceeded further, a fearful forest, full of wild beasts, came in view. There they heard a terrific roar at a distance. Rama asked Sage Viswamitra, “Master! Where is this loud sound coming from?” The sage replied, “Son! The terrific sound is caused by the merging of the river Sarayu into the mighty Ganga.

The sacred Ganga is like a huge ocean into which this river Sarayu is merging. This is causing the awesome sound like a roar.” The sage further told Him that the forest was infested with wild beasts and terrible demons.

They soon stepped into the forest. Wild beasts were seen everywhere and eerie sounds were emanating from all directions. A sense of fear struck anyone who dared enter the forest, as every step was fraught with danger.

As they reached the precincts of Siddhashram, they experienced the pleasant vibrations of the Ashram. The cool breeze and the Vedic chants charged the place with holiness. Viswamitra then explained, “Sons! This is our Siddhashram. Lord Vamana was born at this place. Lord Siva resided here.” At Siddhashram, Viswamitra entrusted Rama and Lakshmana with the job of protecting the Yajna. He said, “Sons! You have come here to protect the Yajna. You should assume this responsibility now. This was also the command of your father. From this moment onwards, you are expected to work without caring for your food, rest and sleep. This in itself is a great Yajna for you. You should sanctify it and emerge successful.” Rama and Lakshmana were equal to the task. They never displayed any tiredness, difficulty or weakness.

As the dawn broke, the great Yajna started. The instant the chanting of the Mantras commenced, Rama and Lakshmana went into high alert and patrolled the area. A huge roar was then heard at a distance. One of the sages told the two brothers, “There come the demonic hordes. They are being led by Maricha and Subahu. Be ready.” Rama and Lakshmana were without food, water and sleep. Yet they successfully discharged their duty and defeated the demons. They saw to it that the Yajna was completed without any trouble.

### **The Journey to Mithila**

Rama and Lakshmana performed the task entrusted to them by Sage Viswamitra with total dedication. As the Yajna concluded, a group of soldiers came to the Ashram. They

handed over an invitation to Sage Viswamitra. This was a personal invitation from King Janaka of Mithila. He had sent invitations to all kings and princes to try and lift the bow of Lord Siva and win the hand of his daughter Sita. In such an assembly, he prayed that the great sage too be present to shower his blessings. Sage Viswamitra was happy to receive the invitation. With great excitement, he narrated to Rama and Lakshmana the uniqueness of the great bow of Lord Siva. He said, "Sons! You must come and see the bow. There cannot be another of its kind in this world. It is a gift from the heavens. This bow is not an ordinary one. It is worth going and seeing." Rama and Lakshmana naturally developed a curiosity to take a look at the bow. However, Rama gently reminded the sage, "Master! Our father had asked us only to go with you and protect the Yajna. We have no instructions to go to Mithila and see the bow. We cannot transgress our father's orders." To this Viswamitra replied, "Was it also not Your father's command that You should obey my instructions? Hence, You must obey my orders!" The princes could only keep quiet and made preparations to accompany the sage on the new journey.

As the two brothers walked in the streets of Mithila, they attracted all the citizens towards them like powerful magnets. Even the women working inside their homes came out to catch a glimpse of the two princes. Everyone fixed his/her gaze on the two brothers continuously. They wondered, "Oh! What a heavenly beauty these boys have! They are shining like the sun and the moon. Who are they? Where have they come from? For what purpose are they here?" They asked these questions among themselves. But none could give them a proper answer. Finally, a young housewife explained thus, "My birthplace is the city of Ayodhya. Since I am married into a family in Mithila, I now reside here. These handsome boys are Rama and Lakshmana, the sons of King Dasaratha of Ayodhya. In Ayodhya also, they instantly attract everybody's attention whenever they come out." In this way, she gave to others all the details about the princes.

Though they were the centre of great attraction, Rama and Lakshmana never raised their heads. They were enjoying their walk with their heads bowed down. Some women threw flowers on their path hoping that at least then the princes would look at them. They made every attempt possible to catch the attention of Rama and Lakshmana. Some even waved

sacred Arati. However, the princes remained unperturbed and did not look at anybody. The youth of those days had such sacred vision. At that young age, none of them ever looked at women in those days.

### **The Divine Masterplan**

You should try to understand how Rama handled each situation delicately, correctly and carefully. He killed the demons and safeguarded the Yajna of Viswamitra. All this actually formed part of a Divine masterplan. It was destined that Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna should take birth in the house of Dasaratha so that they could cause the annihilation of the demons.

When Brahma told Ravana to ask for a boon, Ravana said, “My death should not be caused by a Deva, Asura, Rakshasa, Yaksha, Kinnara or Kimpurusha. Grant me this boon.” Brahma saw through the flaw in this boon. The name of Manava (human being) was missing from the list! Since Ravana had made this omission, his death was certain at the hands of a human. Therefore, Lord Vishnu decided to incarnate in human form. Rama, being the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, knew all these secrets. In the entire creation, Divinity is the vital substratum. Rama belonged to the solar dynasty. The sun god was their guardian deity. Without sunlight, life cannot exist on earth. When creation first began, it took a few crore years for light to dawn. It was all darkness till then. Similarly, after the birth of Rama the sun was not seen for fifteen days! Consequently, the moon too remained invisible. Both the sun and the moon lamented that they could not catch a glimpse of the divine incarnation of Lord Rama at His birth. Then the moon god performed penance. Lord Rama appeared before the moon god and said, “I know that you could not see Me for the first fifteen days after My birth. I hereby grant you a boon. In My next incarnation, you shall have My first Darshan – even before anybody else can see Me.” And it proved to be so. When the next incarnation of Krishna took place at midnight, Vasudeva secretly carried the baby in a basket to the safety of Nanda’s house so that no one could see the newborn baby. It was the moon that had the first Darshan of the divine child when it was being thus carried.

There are many secrets and inner meanings in the story of the Ramayana. There are no contradictions or ambiguities in this epic. The story of Rama is ever new. No matter how many times we hear it, we want to hear it again and again. This sacred story can never be forgotten. Among the many ideals that it presents, it shows how brothers should live together in amity and harmony. There was a unique bond of love between the four brothers from their very childhood. Rama strictly adhered to the principles of Dharma. Everything that He did was steeped in righteousness. Some people try to find distortions and faults even in such a sacred epic. There are no such shortcomings in the Ramayana. There is not even an iota of untruth or falsehood in it. The entire story, from the beginning to the end, is nothing but truth – eternal, pure and chaste.

### **Rama Strings the Bow of Siva**

King Janaka invited many kings and princes to his court to settle the marriage of his daughter Sita with a man of valour who could string the bow of Siva. The following day, the bow of Lord Siva was to be displayed. A big function was organised. There were several powerful kings and emperors in the hall. Ravana had also come. On seeing such a gathering, the wife of King Janaka, Sunayana, while watching from behind the curtain started thinking thus: “There are handsome and valiant young princes in this assembly. Will it not be better to select one of them, give my daughter in marriage to him and quickly discharge the responsibility? Why does the emperor need to complicate the issue by announcing that the one who strings the bow of Lord Siva would be the eligible groom? Several valorous kings have attempted and have failed. Will these young princes assembled here succeed? How will their tender bodies bear the weight of the heavy bow?” She was very much worried about the issue and was discussing it with her companions. Her fears came true when no one in the assembly could even lift the bow.

Finally, Sage Viswamitra signalled to Rama to string the bow. Rama went up to the box in which the bow was kept and lifted the bow. When Rama tried to string the sacred bow of Lord Siva, it broke with a thundering sound. Everybody wondered as to how a boy of

such a tender age could achieve such a stupendous task. The bow could not have been lifted even if a thousand men were to make an attempt to do so. Several elephants were required to pull the box into the hall. How could Rama lift such a heavy bow? How could He manage to string it? News of this wonderful feat spread throughout Mithila and created a sensation.

As soon as the great bow broke, a severe tremor shook the earth. All those seated in the hall were also shaken. Lakshmana then got up and pressed down the earth firmly with one foot. Even Viswamitra didn't know what Lakshmana was up to. He asked, "Lakshmana, what is happening? What are you doing?" Lakshmana humbly bowed his head and said, "This is the help I must render to my elder brother." That was the type of love that prevailed amongst brothers in those days. What Lakshmana meant was that when Rama raised the bow, there was a sudden tilt in earth's balance leading to the turbulence. By pressing down the earth, Lakshmana was balancing the shift. There was perfect understanding and deep bond of love between the four brothers since their very childhood. Once Rama was playing with His brothers. Suddenly, Bharata came weeping and fell in Kausalya's lap. Kausalya lovingly enquired, "Child, why are you crying? Did your elder brother beat you? Did your brothers fight with you?" In this way, she tried to find out the cause of Bharata's unhappiness. Bharata replied, "Mother, none of my brothers ever fights with me. They all love me very much. But in order to make me win, Rama always keeps losing the game. He always wants me to win." The younger brothers should win, and for that Rama would deliberately lose. Every brother acted in the same way and strove to make the other brothers win. Rama was happy only when his brothers were happy.

King Janaka sent a message to Dasaratha to come to Mithila for the wedding of Rama with Sita. With Dasaratha and other family members, Bharata and Satrugna also arrived. All those who saw the four brothers together were amazed at their beauty and effulgence. Janaka started making preparations for the wedding of his daughter Sita to Rama. He had a second daughter Urmila. He proposed that she may be married to Lakshmana. His younger brother Kushadhwaja had two daughters named Mandavi and Srutakeerti. Sage



Vasishtha and Sage Viswamitra consulted Kushadhwaja and proposed that his two daughters be given in marriage to Bharata and Satrughna. Kushadhwaja promptly agreed. When this news was conveyed to King Janaka, he shed tears of joy at the turn of events.

### **Setting the Highest Ideals**

The brides and the bridegrooms were then readied and brought to the stage. As they were all seated on the stage, they appeared to light up the entire city of Mithila. The women experienced unlimited thrill. They praised their good fortune at being able to witness the wedding of not just Sita but all the four princesses. This is Divine Will. If God so Wills, He can do anything. Who can do what God does? Who can possess all that God has? God alone is the eternal witness. His Will can accomplish anything.

All the four brothers sat on the stage without raising their heads and without looking at anybody. The four brides similarly did not look at anyone. In modern times, conversations and frivolous behaviour begin much before marriage! But here the brides and bridegrooms sat with their heads lowered in humility and modesty throughout the ceremony. They carried out the instructions of the priest without raising their heads. I am narrating these incidents to you to highlight the high level of discipline and idealism observed in those days. Janaka stood beside Rama to offer the hand of his daughter Sita to Him. He said, “Rama, here is my daughter, Sita.” But Rama would not look at Sita despite Janaka’s entreaties. As per the prevalent custom, the bride becomes wife only when the sacred Mangal Sutra is tied around her neck. Until then, the bride and the bridegroom are not expected to look at each other. This was the strict discipline they observed in olden days. Such discipline has now been forgotten. None can match the ideals set by Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna.

### **As are the Brothers, so are the Brides**

After the conclusion of the wedding, all returned to Ayodhya. There was much festivity and gaiety on their arrival. What we need to look at is not merely the noble conduct of the four brothers. The virtues of Sita, Urmila, Mandavi and Srutakeerti also need to be

elaborated. They too were highly virtuous. They came from a highly reputed royal family. King Janaka was reputed to have mastered his senses. He was an acknowledged expert on Karma Yoga and a great authority on Jnana Yoga. Daughters from such a family could not be ordinary ones. Here is a small example.

Rama alone was given the order to go to the forest. But Sita also wanted to accompany Him. Rama meanwhile went to His mother Kausalya. She was very sad when she got the news of her son's exile in place of His coronation. "So, You are merely obeying Your father's command and going away to the forest! What about Your mother's wishes? I am Your father's Ardhangini (better half). What importance are You giving to my words? I too shall come with You to the forest", she insisted. Rama then pacified her, saying, "Mother! Husband is verily your God. There is no other deity greater than your husband. He is now aged. Added to that, this sad state of affairs has further disheartened him. It is not proper for you to leave him alone at this stage. You must remain here to serve, support and comfort him. Give him strength and courage to bear this pain." In this way, Rama dissuaded His mother from following Him to the forest. Sita heard all this. When Rama returned to the palace, she indicated her desire to follow Rama to the forest. Rama tried to persuade her not to follow Him. Then she reminded Him in a gentle way, "Lord! Why is there one set of rules for Your mother and another for me? Are the rules not common to all married women? Is it not the responsibility of a good wife to make her husband happy? She is supposed to look after his welfare. Is it not my responsibility to serve my husband? I am therefore not able to accept Your advice."

### **Idealism of Urmila and Sumitra**

Urmila was an accomplished painter. She was painting the scene of Rama's coronation in her room. She wanted to send this to her father. At that moment, Lakshmana entered her room. He was full of anger because Rama was not agreeing to his pleas and was bent upon obeying Kaikeyi's orders. He called out to Urmila and informed her that he was going to the forest with Rama. Startled at the dramatic turn of events, Urmila got up in a hurry and in the process, accidentally upset the canvas and spilled colours on it. She

lamented, “Alas! This beautiful picture of Sri Rama’s coronation is totally spoiled now.” Lakshmana said, “Urmila! I am responsible for spoiling your painting. Kaikeyi is responsible for ruining Rama’s coronation. So, both stand spoiled, the coronation as well as its painting. I am leaving now.” Urmila’s courage and strength of character now came to the fore. Lakshmana had already informed her that Sita too was accompanying Rama to the forest. Urmila was happy that her sister was accompanying Rama to serve Him. But she did not insist on following Lakshmana. She advised him to consider Sita as his mother and Rama as his father and serve them with total dedication. She took a promise from Lakshmana that he would not think of her even for a moment. She sent Lakshmana to the forest happily. Like a true Dharmapatni (righteous wife) she counselled Lakshmana to follow the path of Dharma.

Bharata, Satrughna, Mandavi and Srutakeerti were not present when all this was happening. They were away in the Kekaya kingdom. Mother Kausalya was highly distressed at the unfortunate happenings. At this juncture, Sumitra’s noble qualities need to be recalled. As was her name, so was her character. She was verily a Su-mitra (good friend) to everyone. She had a pure heart. She did not weep at the sad turn of events. Instead, she encouraged Kausalya thus, “Sister, why are you so sad? Rama, who has incarnated for the emancipation of mankind, can never come to any harm. If you are concerned about His physical well-being, my son Lakshmana is going with Him to serve Him all the time. He will serve Rama with devotion and dedication. You should not have any fear or anxiety about it.” Yet it was Kausalya’s womb that bore Rama. A mother is after all a mother. Her pain at His exile was, therefore, immense. In this context, the noble and courageous counsel of Sumitra to Kausalya was extremely laudable. However, these noble attributes of Sumitra do not find place in the Ramayana. She further told Kausalya, “This entire drama is the masterplan of God. You and I cannot add or change anything in this. For the welfare of the world and for the establishment of Dharma, God has enacted this play. Hence, sister! Do not shed tears. Your tears at the time of departure of our sons will only prove inauspicious. With cheer and joy, bless them and send them.” In this way, Sumitra stood by Kausalya and gave her a great deal of courage.

### ***Exemplary Conduct of Lakshmana and Satrughna***

As Rama, Lakshmana and Sita got ready to depart from Ayodhya, Dasaratha regained his consciousness and recalled everything. Utterly agitated, he rushed onto the street, shouting, “Rama, are You going? No, no! Please wait!” He called out the charioteer, Sumantra and implored, “ Oh Sumantra! Stop! Stay for a moment! Let me have a glimpse of my Rama just once.” Rama did not tell Sumantra to stop the chariot, nor did He ask him to proceed. Several scholars have given a distorted version of this incident, describing that Rama had asked Sumantra to tell a lie and say that he had not heard the king’s plea to stop. He just told him, “Do your duty.” In such matters of principle and discipline, both Rama and Lakshmana were very strict. They have set high ideals to be emulated with regard to obeying one’s parents’ commands.

*Lakshmana stayed in the forest with Sita and Rama for fourteen years, yet not even once did he look at the face of Sita. When Sugriva met Rama and Lakshmana on the Rishyamuka mountain, Sugriva showed to them a bundle of jewellery. Sita had dropped the bundle to the ground when Ravana was forcibly taking her away to Lanka. Sugriva had preserved the bundle since he did not know to whom the jewellery belonged. During his conversation with Rama and Lakshmana, he had that bundle opened. He enquired whether they belonged to mother Sita or some demons had dropped them accidentally. Rama examined everything but was at a loss to identify any of them. Nowadays, the entire list of the wife’s jewellery, along with its description and shape is readily available with the husband! Rama passed the jewels to Lakshmana and asked him if he could identify any of them. Out of these, Lakshmana could identify only the anklets of Sita. Rama asked him, “How can you say these are Sita’s anklets?” Lakshmana replied, “Everyday after my bath, I offered salutations at mother Sita’s feet. That is how I can recognise her anklets.” What a noble ideal! They were together in the forest for fourteen years, yet Lakshmana never looked at Sita’s face. Since they had such noble character, they were blessed with what has been described as Lavanya. Lavanya in Sanskrit means beauty of character. It is being used as a mere name today. It actually denotes purity derived from strict discipline and sterling character. This was the lofty standard of ideals established by Rama and Lakshmana.*

*Meanwhile, things took a turn for the worse in Ayodhya. Dasaratha, being unable to bear the agony of separation from Rama, shed his mortal coil. There was now a dilemma as to who would perform his last rites. Rama and Lakshmana were away in exile. Bharata and Satrughna were in their maternal uncle's house in Kekaya. Hence, Vasishtha and other sages decided that the body be immersed in oil and preserved. There were no mortuaries in those days. The funeral of Dasaratha was performed when Bharata and Satrughna arrived.*

*Satrughna is another role model that the Ramayana presents. He was as virtuous as Lakshmana. While Lakshmana engaged himself in the service of Lord Rama, Satrughna spent all his time in the service of Bharata. The twins thus spent their lives in serving their elder brothers. Bharata always relied on Satrughna's wisdom and sane counsel. True to his name, Satrughna was one of tremendous strength and valour – one who destroyed his enemies. There was none to surpass him when it came to vanquishing the enemies. It was his presence that enabled Rama, Lakshmana and Bharata to remain safe and secure. Satrughna was one who never talked much. Even Lakshmana would talk and sometimes argue but not Satrughna.*

Today we shall stop our narration with the events of Siddhashram. The nature of Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna is quite unique and wonderful. The stories of the incarnation of Lord Vishnu are full of divine mysteries. These stories are sacred in all the three worlds and dear to all the saints and sages. Some foolish people, who do not understand the inner significance of the events of the Ramayana, distort and misinterpret them. This causes confusion in the minds of true seekers and distracts them from the sacred path. The story of Lord Rama is highly sacred. It is only when you listen to it fully can you understand its sacredness.

Bhagavan brought His Divine Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, “*Rama, Rama, Rama, Sita ...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Summer Course Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan on 18th May 2002.**

### DASARA DISCOURSES - III

#### **UPANISHADS REVEAL THE SECRETS OF DIVINITY**

*They are our true Gurus for all times who are imbued with the spirit of sacrifice and are without any trace of body attachment or worldly temptations. The word of Sai is the word of truth.* (Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

God permeates every cell and atom of the universe, spreading His divine effulgence everywhere. The Upanishads declare that God is all-pervasive and all that one sees is only the manifestation of Divinity. Unfortunately, man today is not making any attempt to understand and experience the teachings of the Upanishads and those of ancient sages and seers.

#### **Divinity Permeates Every Atom of the Universe**

Though the Upanishads have revealed the all-pervasive divine principle in a most simple manner, it is a matter of great surprise that man is not making any effort to understand the same. There are a number of instances to observe the manifestations of Divinity. Who is responsible for the sweetness in sugarcane? Who has made chillies hot and spicy? Who is the cause for the bitterness in Neem and the fragrance in flower? Every object in this world has a unique quality which proves the existence of Divinity as its very substratum. Every atom of it manifests Divinity. Any number of examples can be given which make us understand the existence of Divinity. People say, fragrance is the natural quality of a flower. They do not enquire further. Who is responsible for this natural quality? You feel thrilled when you look at a mountain. Boundless joy flows through you when you see a stream in full flow. You feel ecstatic watching a lush green forest. Is it just the law of Nature or the mystery of God? It is not merely the law of Nature but the mysterious manifestation of God in the form of Nature. How can one explain the presence of bird inside an egg? All these are pointers to Divinity. You do not need to undertake any

particular Sadhana in order to visualise the Divine. You can experience Him in each atom and each cell of the creation.

Man is born to parents. Everyone including you and I are born out of mother's womb. But people have forgotten the truth that God is the mother of all. God knows the desires and feelings of man. He knows all the good and bad thoughts of man but none can understand God's Will. Parents can understand the feelings of the child. Mother knows the likes and dislikes of her child. In the same manner, the child can understand the likes and dislikes of the mother. But a devotee cannot understand what is acceptable to God and what is not. How can one, who cannot understand his fellowmen, understand God? Man's mind is limited, whereas Divinity is expansive and transcendental. This being so, how can man understand God in His fullness? It is a difficult proposition. Hence, it is not easy to please God and worship Him. Understanding of the divine principle in its totality is indeed worshipping God in the true sense. But how can one understand the divine principle which is *Nirgunam, Niranjana, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam* (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness)? Can anyone comprehend the mystery behind the existence of bird in an egg or fragrance in a flower? How has sugarcane acquired sweetness? It is not possible to understand these subtleties. The sweetness of sugarcane, the hot taste of chillies, the sour taste of tamarind, the bitter taste of Neem ... all these are the manifestations of God. God has created these things to make us understand His existence. The mighty mountains, the beautiful rivers and the raging waves of ocean ... all these speak of the mystery, grandeur and beauty of God. It is impossible to describe the splendour of God and to comprehend His powers. But man tries to estimate the infinite divine power with his finite mind and limited capacity.

### **Know Thyself**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Divinity can neither be expressed in words nor can it be comprehended by the mind: *Yatho Vacho Nivarthante Aprapya Manasa Saha* (whence the words along with the mind rebound in futility without comprehending Divinity). People attempt to describe



God on the basis of their own finite understanding. God alone, and none else, knows His plans, mysterious nature and ways. When your mind is unable to comprehend even trivial matters, how can it know the infinite divine principle? Hence, do not try to understand the ways of the Divine. Instead purify your heart and try to know your true nature. Vedanta says: “Know Thyself”. Make efforts to know your Self.

Modern students argue foolishly, “Where is the need to know, ‘who I am’, when I am already aware of it?” They think that knowing their name, place of birth, profession, nationality, etc., amounts to knowing themselves. They say, “I am so and so, I belong to such and such place, I do such and such job, etc.” These answers relate to the body and not to the real Self. These are born out of body attachment and not out of awareness of the Self. The Vedantic statement “Know Thyself” does not mean knowing about your physical body — height, weight, complexion, etc. You are not merely an Vyashti (individual). Your true identity is in Samashti (society). The same ‘I’ is present in you as well as in society. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishtathi* (With hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). The Atmic principle is all-pervasive and is uniformly present in all beings. There may be differences based on names, forms and educational qualifications but the Atma is one and the same in everyone. You have to make efforts to visualise and experience this oneness.

### **The Divine Principle is All-pervasive**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Instead of seeing unity in diversity, man is doing the opposite. Vedanta reveals the secret of visualising unity in diversity. Vedanta is the quintessence of the Upanishads. What is the inner meaning of the term Upanishad? ‘Upa’ - near, ‘ni’ - down and ‘shad’ - sit. It means that the disciple should sit at the feet of the Guru and listen to his teachings. The teacher who teaches is at a higher level and the taught is at a lower level. Even in schools, the teacher sits on a chair and the students sit down close to him. The Upanishads thus specify a higher place for those who are the repositories of higher

knowledge. The Upanishads contain many such lofty ideals and sacred teachings. The Atma is the embodiment of truths taught by the Upanishads. What is the meaning of the Atma? Has it any shape or form? Does it move? It moves everywhere, bestows everything and is present everywhere. It can catch everything but none can catch it. Everything is under its control. This is the mysterious and magnificent power of the Atma.

Here is a small point for consideration. When you respect an individual, he will respect you in turn. But when you respect and love everyone, God Himself will respect you and love you. If you want to be respected and loved by God, you should respect and love everyone. So, you should divinise your thoughts and increase the power of your mind by enlarging the scope of your love to the entire humanity. You should make efforts to become deserving of God's love.

The divine principle of the Atma is present in the entire humanity. It is all-encompassing. Its vastness is beyond description or estimation. However, physical forms can be considered as pointers to it. When someone asks you, "Sir, have you seen Anil Kumar in Prasanthi Nilayam?", you say, "Yes, I have seen him. He wears a nice dress, he speaks good English, he has brown-complexion, he talks in a humorous manner." You are able to recognise only his physical features; you see height, weight, colour and movements of his body. But there are many more things in him which you cannot see. Can you recognise the sacred and unsacred thoughts he has in his mind? Can you see his feelings? It is impossible. You see only the physical body and say, "This is a man." But man is not merely that what you see externally. You are not able to see the divinity immanent in the body of man. You are not able to visualise the sacred thoughts and eternal flow of bliss within the body. All types of powers are latent in man. In fact, man is the embodiment of divinity. Divinity is latent in every being. This is the truth propounded by Vedanta.

The essence of Vedanta is Jnana (wisdom). *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of non-duality is the supreme wisdom). Not all can have the experience of non-dualism. Man today is immersed in dualism. Dual mind is the root cause of his unsteadiness. *A man with dual mind is half blind*. How can such a person understand the sacred teachings of Vedanta? Vedanta is the mine of supreme knowledge. Each verse in Vedantic texts gives supreme bliss if you contemplate on it. Even if you were to use the ocean water as ink, it will not be sufficient to describe the greatness of these verses in full. Each Sloka (verse) is pregnant with such profound meaning. As man is not making any attempt to understand the inner meaning of these Slokas, he is immersed in Shoka (sorrow). Conversely, one who is engulfed in sorrow cannot understand the real meanings of these verses.

### **Highest Ideals of Morality Set by Rama and Sita**

Sage Valmiki composed the great epic Ramayana. Its inner significance is not understood by all. As one reads the Ramayana repeatedly, one is able to get new insights into the sacred epic. Sage Valmiki described the mysterious birth of Sita. It is mentioned in the Ramayana that King Janaka found her while he was ploughing the field for the performance of a Yajna. But nothing more is mentioned about her birth. He called her Bhujatha, meaning, one born out of Mother Earth.

King Janaka did not know the power of Sita. He watched her movements as she grew up. King Janaka had the Siva Dhanus (bow of Lord Siva) in his palace. It was so heavy that no ordinary mortal could lift it. When Sita was young, one day she was enjoying a game of ball with other girls. This game, in fact, was a divine play to make her father realise her real power. It so happened that the ball rolled over and went under the box in which Siva's bow was kept. All the girls tried their might to move the bow aside but in vain. Other strong men were called and they used all their strength to move the bow but it did not budge an inch. King Janaka was watching all this from the balcony with curiosity. After some time, Sita smilingly asked everybody to move aside and casually pulled the box with her left hand and retrieved the ball. King Janaka was astonished at Sita's

mighty power. He thought, “It is because of merits done in many past lives that I could have Sita as my daughter.” He decided that he would give her in marriage only to one who could lift Lord Siva’s bow.

When Rama lifted the Siva’s bow, King Janaka’s joy knew no bounds. He at once came towards Rama along with his daughter Sita, who was holding a garland in her hand. He said, “Rama, I had made a promise that Sita would be given in marriage to the one who lifted the bow of Lord Siva. I want to give my daughter to You and keep up my promise.” But Rama was not willing to accept the marriage proposal without the permission of His parents. He was the paragon of all virtues. *Sarve Loka Hithe Ratah* (one engaged in the welfare of all), *Sarve Jnanopasampannah* (one who is endowed with all wisdom), *Sarve Samudhitha Gunaihi* (one replete with all praiseworthy virtues). Rama embodied these ideals. When King Janaka made the proposal to give Sita in marriage to Rama, Rama said, “Oh Janaka Maharaja! I am not ready for the marriage. I need the permission of My parents for the marriage.” He did not even look at Sita for He considered it improper to look at her before marriage. The conduct of modern youth stands in stark contrast to the exemplary behaviour of Rama. They are beside themselves with joy at the very idea of marriage. The question of their seeking the permission of their parents does not even arise in their minds. Viswamitra also tried to persuade Rama to accept the marriage proposal. But Rama was firm in His resolve. He said, “I have to follow Dharma. Therefore, I am unable to give My consent for the marriage without the command of My parents.” Rama told this in all humility, showing proper respect to both King Janaka and Sage Viswamitra. It was only after obtaining His father’s permission that Rama agreed for the wedding.

During the marriage ceremony, a curtain was placed between the bride and bridegroom as part of the ritual. As long as it was there, they were not supposed to look at each other. But Sita and Rama being highly virtuous did not look at each other even after the curtain was removed. Both were looking down. Then Viswamitra in a lighter vein said, “Oh Rama! Sita is the daughter of Mother Earth. Why don’t You look at her instead of looking at Mother Earth?” Rama had not seen Sita till then as He had not tied the Mangal

Sutra around her neck. He believed that it was a sin to look at other women as He considered all other women to be His mothers. One should try to emulate such exemplary behaviour. In a family, both husband and wife should lead a virtuous life. Even if one of them is wanting in virtues, there cannot be peace and happiness in the family.

It was now time for the garlanding ceremony. Sita waited with a garland in her hands. She, being short in stature, could not garland Rama, who was tall and broad-shouldered. Moments passed but Rama would not bend His head. He did not want to bend His head in order to protect His honour and the honour of His lineage. He looked at Lakshmana and made an almost imperceptible gesture which only Lakshmana could understand. The four brothers were always sharp and alert. This has been depicted in one of the Thyagaraja's songs.

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

(Telugu Poem)

Lakshmana was the incarnation of Adisesha – the heavenly serpent that carried the entire world on its hood. He understood that Rama wanted him to raise the portion of earth where Sita was standing. He indicated that if Sita was raised, so would be everyone else! Lakshmana hit upon an idea. All of a sudden, he fell at Rama's feet and would not get up. Rama was forced to bend down to lift Lakshmana from His feet. Sita was highly intelligent. Grabbing this chance, she at once placed her garland around Rama's neck. There should be such an understanding between husband and wife.

### **Yajnas for the Welfare of Entire Mankind**

If you aspire to attain God, you have to make efforts to acquire the necessary deservedness. That is true spirituality. That is the essence of the Upanishads. Those who understand the essence of the Upanishads and act accordingly earn the grace of God. Do not limit God to name and form like Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Narayana, etc. He is the embodiment of energy. Energy has no specific form. The Navaratri celebrations are meant to worship God in the form of energy which embodies total wisdom. We should develop sacredness to attain this sacred energy. Energy has no specific form. These Navaratri celebrations are meant to worship God in the form of energy which embodies total wisdom. You can attain divine grace by pure, steady and selfless devotion. Once you have divine grace, you can achieve anything. You can understand the effect of this divine energy when you listen to the essence of the Upanishads. You are fortunate to get this opportunity of listening to the sacred Mantras during the performance of the Yajna.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Nobody can understand the efficacy of the Mantras that the Ritviks chant during the performance of the Yajna. The Brahmins assembled here are pure-hearted. I want to tell you a small example. At 12 o'clock in the noon, the Brahmins have their lunch here. But the Brahmin who was doing the Sahasra Lingarchana did not get up from his place as he had not completed the ritual. He got up only at 2 o'clock after completing his task. Similarly, the Brahmin who was reading the Bhagavata and the four Brahmins who were doing Veda Parayanam did not get up from their seats till they completed their daily tasks. It is because of their dedication and devotion that the Mantras they chant assume great significance. You are extremely fortunate if you understand the meanings of the Mantras. Even if you do not understand their meanings, you will derive immense benefit by listening to them. This listening will ultimately take you to liberation. Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender) are the nine

forms of devotion. So long as you do not develop Sneham with God, you will not be able to attain the stage of Atmanivedanam. The first step to self-surrender is Sravanam. By listening, you develop divine thoughts. There are sacred thoughts behind all these sacred rituals.

The Yajna that we are performing here is meant for Loka Kalyanam (welfare of the world). Do not think that we are performing the Yajna in a routine way just because other people are performing Yajnas elsewhere with a limited objective of warding off the calamities like famine or drought in a particular area. This Yajna is being performed with the spirit of total sacrifice. We have no desires or expectations. Our only desire is that everyone should be happy. Whatever you do should confer everlasting happiness on all. It should help you to attain Divine grace.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*”)

**– From Bhagavan’s Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 11th October 2002.**

## NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM

### **DIVINE PHENOMENON OF LINGODBHAVA ON SIVARATHRI**

An unprecedented number of devotees were present in Prasanthi Nilayam who witnessed the divine phenomenon of Lingodbhava (emergence of the Linga) on the evening of 1st March 2003 by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The unique feature of this Sivarathri's Lingodbhava was that first Bhagavan created a golden Hiranyagarbha Linga in response to the prayers of the devotees by His usual wave of hand. Nearly two and a half hours later, another Hiranyagarbha Linga emerged from His mouth during the course of Sivarathri Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall.

Sivarathri celebrations started on the morning of 1st March 2003 with Nadaswaram music by the Anantapur College students when Bhagavan started from His abode in Poornachandra for the morning Darshan at 7.10 a.m. Prasanthi Nilayam Campus students also offered a grand welcome to Bhagavan by their Panchavadyam music when Bhagavan entered Sai Kulwant Hall which was fully decorated for the festive occasion. As soon as Bhagavan occupied His chair on the dais after the morning Darshan, the Institute students started the chanting of Stotras in praise of Lord Siva. These included Viswanathashtakam, Bilvashtakam and Sivashtakam. After the Stotras, the students sang beautiful devotional songs. After this presentation of divine music, the students started Bhajans which were followed in chorus by the devotees. A grand cake was brought by the overseas devotees on this holy occasion. Bhagavan graciously lighted candles on it and ceremoniously cut the cake. This was followed by distribution of Prasadam. The morning programme of Sivarathri came to a conclusion at 8.50 a.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

In the afternoon, the programme started at 3.15 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall. In the beginning, Sri A. V. S. Raju, Chairman, Nagarjuna Construction Company, regaled the devotees with his beautiful Telugu poems. After this, there was Veda chanting by the Institute students. Three speakers blessed by Bhagavan to share



their views with devotees were then introduced by Dr. M. Sainath, a faculty member of the Institute. The first speaker of the afternoon was Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Quoting from the immortal work “Viveka Chudamani” of Adi Sankara, Sri Sahni observed that there were three things which were rare on earth – human birth, aspiration for emancipation and the company of the noble ones. But all these became more accessible to man by the grace of God when He descended on earth as Avatar. This, he said, was the greatest good luck of man today when the Lord of the universe had incarnated on earth in human form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who was showering His unbounded grace on the entire mankind and was leading man to his goal of life. Man on his part should offer his mind to the Avatar to achieve this goal, and Sivarathri was the most appropriate occasion to do so, the learned speaker observed.

The second speaker was Sri B. N. Narasimha Murthy, Warden, Brindavan Campus, who in his scholarly exposition explained the nature of Divinity and extolled the sacredness of Bharat as the birthplace of sages, godmen, prophets and Avatars. Pointing towards the sea of humanity witnessed at Prasanthi Nilayam on the occasion of Sivarathri, Sri Narasimha Murthy observed that the Divinity of the Avatar acted like a most powerful magnet and attracted the entire humanity from all parts of the world without mundane distinction of caste, colour, creed or religion. Bhagavan Baba, he said, was the Neelakantha of this Age who had come to drink the poison of violence and rank materialism which were threatening the very existence of man on this planet earth. Sri Narasimha Murthy remarked that Bhagavan Baba had been taking upon Himself the pain and suffering of others. He therefore prayed to Bhagavan not to undergo the pain of materialising the Linga from His mouth as He could create it just by the wave of His hand.

As soon as Sri Narasimha Murthy concluded his speech, Bhagavan waved His hand and materialised an oval-shaped Hiranyagarbha Linga. Holding it aloft in His right hand, Bhagavan showed it to the ecstatic devotees amidst their prolonged loud applause. This unique event occurred at 4.32 p.m. to the delight of thousands of devotees who witnessed this rarest of rare divine play on the auspicious day of Sivarathri.

The third speaker Sri S. V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, congratulated the devotees on their witnessing the divine spectacle of manifestation of Hiranyagarbha Linga by Bhagavan who in His unlimited compassion had responded to the prayers of the devotees instantaneously. The grace of Bhagavan Baba was ever flowing in full and it was immediately attained when the devotees prayed with purity and sincerity, said Sri Giri. The erudite speaker described the various ways in which Lord Siva was worshipped in many parts of the country and explained the significance of witnessing the manifestation of Hiranyagarbha Linga. Sri Giri narrated two beautiful stories from the Puranas to illustrate the teachings of Bhagavan Baba, the essence of which was “love all and serve all”, as exemplified by Bhagavan Baba in His life.

After these speeches, Bhagavan blessed the devotees with His Sivarathri Message, exhorting them to experience permanent bliss by Satsanga. He said, “You should strive to attain Atmic bliss right from young age. That should be your only endeavour. Your thoughts, words and deeds should be aimed at this. This can be termed as true Satsanga. Worldly experiences, however long one may enjoy, cannot give eternal bliss. You can experience eternal bliss only in the company of God. All the worldly activities and experiences are bound to change. The Atma alone is changeless. This is referred to as Ritam in Sanskrit. In order to experience this eternal principle, you should give up body attachment and understand the truth that the Atma in you is the same as the one in others. Just as the same electric current flows in different bulbs, the same Atma is present in all beings. *Ekatma Sarva Bhutantaratma* (the one Atma is present in all beings). But today man does not have such broad-mindedness. In order to experience divinity, which is the very form of love, you have to become the very personification of love. Divinity and love are not separate.” Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close at 5.55 p.m. with the Bhajan “Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma ...” which the huge multitude of devotees repeated with deep devotion. Sivarathri Bhajans started with this Bhajan of Bhagavan. Boys and girls students of the Institute then led the Bhajans alternately and the devotees followed them in chorus.

Bhagavan occupied His chair on the dais at 6.35 p.m. while the entire Sai Kulwant Hall reverberated with chanting of the Divine Name. Soon after this, Bhagavan started sipping water and wiping His face with His handkerchief, the two symptoms which indicated the emergence of the Linga from Bhagavan's body. As Bhagavan sipped water and wiped His face more frequently, the symptoms of Lingodbhava became more evident. All eyes were now focused on Bhagavan as the Bhajan singing went on with deep devotional fervour. The multitudes gathered to witness this Divine phenomenon were feeling anxious as the emergence of the Linga was getting delayed. The blessed moment arrived at 7.07 p.m. when an oval-shaped Hiranyagarbha Linga emerged from Bhagavan's mouth with great force, sending the devotees into raptures. Soon after the emergence of the Linga, Bhagavan got up from His chair and showed both the Lingas (the one created earlier and the one that came out of His mouth) to the devotees holding each one of them in His two raised hands.

A few minutes after this, Bhagavan left for His abode in Poornachandra while the Sivarathri Bhajans continued throughout the night. Besides the students of the three campuses of the Institute, groups of devotees also led Bhajans at certain intervals. The devotees were ecstatic with joy when their night-long Bhajan singing and vigil was rewarded by Bhagavan's morning Darshan at 5.15 a.m. on 2nd March 2003.

After the morning Divine Darshan, the devotees were blessed with the second Sivarathri Discourse by Bhagavan Baba. Giving the example of the family of Lord Siva, Bhagavan gave the message of unity in the family and the world. "The message of holy Sivarathri is to spread the ideal and sanctity of this most auspicious day to one and all", said Bhagavan. Bhagavan began His Discourse at 5.45 a.m. and brought it to a close at 6.40 a.m. with two Bhajans "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho..." and "Hey Siva Shankar Namami Shankar..." At the end of the Bhajan, Arati was offered to Bhagavan. Soon after the Arati, Bhagavan stood at the edge of the portico of the Hall and showered His profuse blessings on the assembled devotees by raising both His hands in benediction posture. In

the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. To add to the bliss of some fortunate devotees, Bhagavan gave them Prasadam with His own Divine Hands. Thus, the holy festival of Sivarathri came to a close filling the hearts of the devotees with piety, purity and blessedness.

### ***NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES***

**Himachal Pradesh:** A medical camp was organised at Indora in Kangra district on 25th and 26th January 2003. More than 2000 patients were treated and were given free medicines as per diagnosis. 30 successful eye operations were also undertaken. Narayana Seva was also organised on this occasion and all patients were served food.

**Rajasthan:** Sri Sathya Sai Educare Training Workshops were held at ten centres all over Rajasthan. These were attended by 476 Sai devotees, in which the participation of Sai Youth was very prominent. Spiritual workshops were held for school students on Personality Development and Leadership.

Pure drinking water facilities were provided in villages Kishanavatn Ki Kheri and Somalia by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Bhilwara.

**Tamil Nadu:** With the Divine grace and blessings of our Beloved Bhagavan, the Second Disaster Management Training Camp was held at Chennai on 1st and 2nd February 2003. Ninety-five youth members drawn from the districts of Chennai Metro (3 districts), Kancheepuram, Thiruvellore and Vellore took part in this training programme. The zonal faculty drawn from Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu conducted this training programme as per the training modules.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Our attention has been drawn to the item put out by “Sai Foundations Organisations Worldwide” in their website, in which it is claimed that “*Sai Foundation – India*” was founded in 1993 “*after obtaining the Divine Blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in person, on the trust deed during a function at the Super Speciality Hospital in Puttaparthi.*” **I am directed to inform the public through this notice that this claim is wholly untrue.**

There is also a claim that the project “*Prashanti Dham set up on the banks of the holy river Kshipra at Ujjain, M.P. (India) is blessed by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.*” **This claim is again untrue.**

The series of write-ups in the website are highly tendentious and self-serving. It is a very clever ploy used to mislead the devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba that the works and projects of ‘Saidas Babaji’ have been in some form blessed by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. **It is brought to the notice of the devotees that these spurious claims are not to be taken cognisance of, or encouraged in any manner.**

The write-up conveys the impression that ‘Saidas Babaji’ is invested in some distinctive manner the appellation of a Dasa of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba when in fact all devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba are Dasas; and the use of appendage ‘Babaji’ with a view to convey the impression that there is a deriving of Divinity of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is full of mischief. The ‘derived divinity’ is made use of by ‘Saidas Babaji’ to appropriate for himself the role of a proxy for Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in regard to people, whom he says, may feel that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is inaccessible, as witness the statement that the “*physical body of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is today busy sorting out problems of national and international magnitude. He can no longer joke about, chit-chat and laugh with ordinary folks like He used to in the good old days ..... He created the pure pristine form of ‘Saidas Babaji’ to enable ordinary folks to savour the Ananda .....*” **This statement is preposterous. I am directed to**

**inform the devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba that there is no truth whatsoever in such a claim being made by ‘Saidas Babaji’ or by his purported followers.**

There is another equally false claim that “*whatever ‘Saidas Babaji’ wants done by Sathya Sai Baba at Parthi gets done miraculously..... the seemingly impossible becomes possible.*” Any such miracle is attributable only to the Grace of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and not to the intervention of or interlocutorship of such persons as ‘Saidas Babaji’. **Any claim of ‘Saidas Babaji’ to special relationship with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is rejected and is to be rejected by the devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.**

Yet another self-proclaimed assignment which ‘Saidas Babaji’ has reportedly taken upon himself is to act as a bridge between the devotees of Shirdi Baba and Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba know that He is Shirdi Sai Reincarnate and they do not need any self-proclaimed bridge-makers.

The various write-ups in the website are wrapped in a language of subtle and devious suggestions, the bottom-line of which is unmistakably an appeal for monetary assistance.

**There have been reports that sustained efforts are being made by ‘Saidas Babaji’ and his representatives to raise funds by misleading devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by various spurious claims. Devotees are therefore warned to be careful and not to get misled.**

Secretary

**Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust**

Sivarathri Discourse - 1

**EXPERIENCING UNITY IS REAL SATSANGA**

*The Yogi who is established in union with Me, and worships Me as residing in all beings (as their very Self), abides in Me, no matter what he does.*

**(Sanskrit Verse)**

Oh spiritual aspirant! When you realise that the same Atmic principle is present in you as well as in others as also in the five basic elements, you will abide in Me in all the three states of existence. It is immaterial whether you are a renunciant or a householder, whether you are attached to the world or not and whether you perform actions or not.

**True Meaning of Satsanga**

Satsanga is very essential to understand the unity of the Atmic principle that exists in all beings. Satsanga does not mean merely to associate with good people, devotees or spiritual aspirants. 'Sath' is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. It is nothing but the Self. When 'Sath' and 'Chit' come together, what results is Ananda (bliss). Sath-Chit-Ananda is the very form of the Atma. This is the Transcendental Truth.

Man should recognise the truth that he is not different from the Atma. In fact, there is no entity in this world other than the Atma. He should also understand that every sound that

is heard is a resound of the Atmic principle. One who realises this will not listen to anything other than the Atma. When one recognises the oneness of the Atmic principle, where is the need for him to undertake any Sadhana? God is one. He is referred to as 'Sath'. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one, but the wise call it by different names). Live in the company of God with unwavering mind and steady vision. That is true Satsanga. Your thoughts, words and deeds should be steady and sacred. But due to the impact of Kali Age, modern youth find it difficult to control their thoughts, words and deeds. They do not have a steady vision. This does not conform to Satsanga. They do not keep their word. Their actions belie their thoughts and words. *Manasyekam Vachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam*. (Those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in complete harmony are noble ones.) Your deeds should be in harmony with your thoughts and words. Harmonising thoughts, words and deeds is true Satsanga.

The Atma is one. It attracts the entire world. What is Prakriti (Nature)? It consists of objects that delude man. All objects in Nature are transitory. You do not find anything permanent. They attract man and delude him. The objects which are temporary in nature will give only momentary happiness. The Vedas speak about the principle of Ritam. It symbolises the truth that is changeless. All worldly objects undergo change. When you understand the principle of Ritam, you will be able to understand the changeless, eternal Divinity.

### **You are in God**

You may question, "How can I have the vision of God?" Oh simpleton! You don't need to search for God. Wherever you see, He is there. He is immanent in every object. You are unable to see Him because you are deluded by external appearances. *Pashyati Iti Pashu* (one who goes purely by external vision is an animal). Whatever you see, whatever you experience is but the manifestation of God. In fact, you are God yourself. Hence, the Vedas exhort man to develop the faith that "I am God and God is none other than myself." Names and forms are many but God is one. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*



(verily all this is Brahman). Such unity in divinity has to be realised. There is underlying unity in apparent diversity. Satsanga means experiencing unity.

Today people think that Satsanga means the company of spiritual aspirants. They join such a company and think that they are in Satsanga. But it is not Satsanga in the true sense of the term because people whom you think to be good may turn out to be bad. They are subject to change. Your association with them is also not permanent. How can such a temporary association give everlasting happiness? It is impossible. Since you do not understand the true meaning of Satsanga, you are not able to derive any benefit. *Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are.* When you associate yourself with ephemeral things, the results are also bound to be transitory. You should develop friendship with Divinity which alone is true and eternal. The physical external world is subject to change. It is nothing but a combination of matter. Everything in this world is transitory; nothing is permanent. All that is seen in this world is illusory. The unseen Atmic principle alone is true and eternal.

If you pose a question as to “Where is God?” some people will say, “He is in me”, pointing to their body. But the body is not permanent. Hence, this is not a proper answer. (Swami holding a rose) When I say the flower is in My hand, the flower is smaller than Me. In the same manner, when you say God is in you, you are bigger than God! In fact, the whole world is in the hands of God. Hence, it is not proper to say that God is in you. You are in God. All are in God. The world itself is the manifestation of God. This is the Transcendental Truth. It is changeless and eternal. It is not related to the body which is temporary and subject to change. Today people go by the physical and worldly meanings and, as a result, debase their mind. Out of their Ahamkara (ego), they do not try to realise the truth. In fact, Asuya (jealousy) and Ahamkara (ego) are like pests which destroy the tree of life. The day man rids himself of these evil traits, he will become a true human being.

What you have to know today is the principle of eternal and changeless truth. Our Narasimha Murthi (one of the previous speakers) said Divinity is in the form of the Self. How can you visualise the Self? The Self has no form. How can you see that which is formless? Its true form is bliss which is present in everyone. In fact, man is the embodiment of bliss. He has forgotten his true nature by associating himself with worldly objects. So, man should not run after physical objects. After all, how long the physical objects last? (Swami showing a flower) This is a flower. Today it is fresh; tomorrow it will fade away. Similarly, all material objects are subject to change. But bliss is changeless. It cannot be expressed; it can only be experienced. You cannot understand it just by listening about it; you can taste it from within. This is possible when you unify your vision, listening and action. Unity of vision, listening and action is true Satsanga. When you practise this unity, you can experience eternal bliss. There is nothing beyond this bliss. It is Nityanandam, Advaitanandam, Nijanandam (eternal, non-dual and true bliss). Some people sit in meditation for some time and start shedding tears of joy. They say, they have experienced bliss. It is only their imagination. Bliss is not something that comes and goes. It is permanent. It stays with you in all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You should strive to attain Atmic bliss right from young age. That should be your only endeavour. Oneness of vision, action and experience leads to non-dual bliss. Your thoughts, words and deeds should be aimed at this. This can be termed as true Satsanga. Worldly experiences, however long one may enjoy, cannot give eternal bliss. You can experience eternal bliss only in the company of God. All the worldly activities and experiences are bound to change. The Atma alone is changeless. This eternal truth is referred to as Ritam in Sanskrit. In order to experience this eternal principle, you should give up body attachment and understand the truth that the Atma in you is the same as the one in others. Just as the same electric current flows in different bulbs, the same Atma is present in all beings. *Ekatma Sarva Bhutantaratma* (one Atma dwells in all beings). But today man does not have such broad-mindedness. In order to experience Divinity, which is the very form of love, you have to become the very personification of love. Divinity

and love are not separate. As man is endowed with such sacred divine principle, it is said, *Jantunam Nara Janma Durlabham* (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest).

### **God is one; Goal is one**

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

Adi Sankara said:

*Punarapi Jananam*

*Punarapi Maranam*

*Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam*

*Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare*

*Kripayapare Pahi Murare.*

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

You are born again and again, seeing, doing and experiencing what you have already seen, done and experienced. You should realise that you are born not to be born again. You should see and experience that by which your life will find fulfilment. That is oneness of the Atmic principle. Once you have experienced the Atma, you do not need to experience anything else. Thousands have gathered here today. Each of you has a different form and behaviour. But the Atmic effulgence that shines in all of you is one and the same. When a bulb is lighted, you may sit and do your homework in its light. Another person may write accounts with wrong calculations. Yet another person may

write a letter with evil motives. But the light is not concerned with whatever right or wrong, good or bad you may do. It remains a witness. Likewise, the Atma also remains an eternal witness to all that man does. External activities undergo change but the eternal truth of the Atma remains the same at all times.

God is one; goal is one. The same is conveyed in the following statements: “I am in the light; the light is in me; I am the light.” (*loud applause*) Here ‘I’ symbolises devotion and light stands for wisdom. When you say, “I am in the light,” it means devotion is contained in wisdom. The statement “the light is in me” reflects the truth that wisdom is contained in devotion. You have to understand the unity of these two – wisdom and devotion. Devotion is an essential prerequisite to know the reality. You should develop love more and more and ultimately transform it into wisdom. You should not follow the vagaries of the mind. Come what may, your vision should be firmly fixed on the Atma. With such one-pointed devotion, sages and seers of yore performed penance and experienced bliss. Today people chant Mantras; they keep turning the beads of their rosary in a mechanical way. They do so only for the sake of their mental satisfaction. How can they attain peace? In fact, what they get out of such practices is not peace but pieces! In a rosary there are 108 beads; they represent diversity. But the thread that strings them together is one; it symbolises Divinity. While the beads keep moving, the string remains unmoved. It is the diversity that changes; Divinity is changeless.

### **Understand the Divine Origin of Man**

Divinity is like a magnet that attracts the entire world. At some places, this power of attraction is at its maximum. It is something very special. Here is an example. So many of you have gathered here. Who sent you invitation? It is the Divine Magnet that has drawn you here. (*loud prolonged applause*) This magnet is present not only here but everywhere. Here, there and everywhere, Divinity is present in the form of the Atmic principle. But here you can experience true Divine attraction. Such power cannot be acquired for the mere asking. It can be acquired only through love. Love is something that originates from the ‘source’ that is within you. It cannot be obtained by any external

‘force’. Worldly knowledge can be thrust on you but love has to spring forth from within in a natural way. Love is God. Love alone can impart true wisdom. *Jnanadeva Tu Kaivalyam* (wisdom leads to liberation).

Worldly knowledge is associated with multiplicity. Love enables you to visualise unity in multiplicity. Hence, you should develop love and understand the fundamental truth that the same Self is present in all. Different people partake of different food items to satisfy their hunger. Food items are different but the hunger is one. Each one of you may undertake a different Sadhana. Whatever may be the Sadhana, the Atmic feeling is the same. You should make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. That alone constitutes true Sadhana. The principle of love in you should be steady. However, the love in modern youth keeps vacillating. One day, it is sacred and the very next day, it is unsacred. Such love cannot be termed as true devotion. *Ekam Sath* (Truth is one). You are in the light and the light is in you. Bear this in mind. Ultimately, you will realise that “I am I”.

If you want to understand the principle of the Atma, you should not give scope to multiplicity. All that you see and hear in this world is merely reaction, reflection and resound. The reality is within you. I see many students here. Where have they come from? They are My reflections. Otherwise, they cannot be seen. Likewise, every person and every object is your own reflection. Life is like an ocean with the waves of Samyoga (union) and Viyoga (separation). The principle of the Atma is beyond this union and separation. For Me, there is neither Samyoga nor Viyoga. Viyoga results only when there is Samyoga. They are but your imagination. In order to realise the principle of the Atma, you have to get rid of such imagination and develop faith in *Ekam Sath* (Truth is one). It is changeless and remains the same at all times and in all the states of existence. You should join Satsanga to know this truth. There should be unity between all that you see, hear and do. This learning is true Satsanga. The human body constituted by Angamu (limbs) should be put to proper use by associating with Sangamu (good company). By Sangamu, you attain Jangamu (detachment) and through detachment you realise the formless and attributeless divine principle symbolised by Lingamu. That is why the Atma

is considered to be of the form of Linga. The Linga has neither a beginning nor an end. It has no head or feet. Hence, when you perform its worship, you can keep it in any way you like. The Atma has a name but not a specific form. Bliss is its true form. It is very much present within us. You should try to experience this innate bliss. When you crave for external happiness, you lose your inner bliss also.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Today is the auspicious day of Sivarathri. What is Sivam? Sivam is that which is auspicious and good. God is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty). These three are in perfect harmony in Divinity. You should achieve harmony in all that you see, hear and experience. This is the true offering to God.

*Tridalam Trigunakaram*

*Trinetram Cha Triyayudham;*

*Trijanma Papa Samharam*

*Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam.*

(One Bilva leaf with three petals offered to three-eyed Lord Siva who is the embodiment of the three Gunas (attributes), who holds the trident in his hand and who destroys the sins accumulated over three births.)

People undertake various spiritual practices and adopt different modes of worship on the basis of their own imagination. Whatever may be the Sadhana, you should not give up your resolve. Your vision, hearing and actions should be one-pointed. You should offer your actions to God. *Karmanyevadhikarasthe Ma Phaleshu Kadachana* (you have right only on action, not on its fruit). Whatever you do, it should be pleasing to God. *Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham* (do all actions to please God). Then no sin will accrue to you. There is no easier path than this to experience the Atmic principle.

Today as different people follow different paths, their delusion is also increasing. This delusion is leading to more and more confusion. As a result of this confusion, you lose the 'fuse' that connects you with God. Today people have lost their connection with God. The fact is that you are God. I am God. He is God. Everything is God. In order to understand this truth, you should rise from the level of the human to that of the divine. You should know the principle of Sath which is the underlying unity in diversity. You should not give scope to differences based on Akara (form). You should know that you can get bliss only from God. God is your true property. You are in God. He is in God. All are in God. Keep this unity in mind. Give up all differences.

*Students!*

You pursue your studies in different ways. All your studies are at the physical level. Along with your studies, contemplate on the principle of oneness at the mental level. Allah, Jesus, Rama, Krishna ... names are different, but God is one. Have unflinching faith in the unity of divinity. Undertake such Sadhana which will enable you to realise the changeless and eternal principle of truth. If you attribute various names and forms to God, you will not be able to realise the truth. Names and forms are subject to change. Who was Rama? He was the son of Dasaratha. Who was Krishna? He was the son of Yashoda. In this manner, you will remember only their physical relationships. When you worship God without attributing any particular name and form, the question of His physical relationship does not arise. There will be no differences whatsoever. Who is the mother of God? In fact, He is the mother of all.

Today we find differences because we attribute various names and forms and physical relationships to God. You should get rid of such relationships. *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the Indweller of all beings). When you contemplate on these twin principles, you can visualise unity in humanity. Then you will recognise the intimate relationship between man and man. When you think of the divine origin of man, you will not have any differences or difficulties. Difficulties come and go like passing clouds. You don't need to worry about

them. Keep your vision on the sun. Sometimes, clouds cover the sun. Then you don't need to be worried about it. Have patience. When the clouds move away, the sun will be visible again. In the same manner, the clouds of worldly delusions come in the way of Atmic vision. In such situations, you should not let your mind waver. Do not become impatient; the clouds will move away and you will see the sun again.

### **Everything is in My Hand**

#### *Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

Some thoughts may cloud your mind. Do not be carried away by them. Do not pay heed to the evil talk of others. If you do so, you will ruin yourself. You should rise to the divine level and not degenerate to the demonic level. In order to rise to the divine level, Satsanga is very essential. One thought, one vision and one action. These three must be unified. Sivarathri is celebrated to recognise the oneness of Divinity. Sivarathri represents truth and sacredness. This night has certain holy moments. When you do Bhajan, you will have only one thought. Naturally, you will experience the bliss of Bhajan. Your entire being will be engulfed in non-dual bliss. Why is it prescribed that you should do Bhajan all through the night? Bhajan is done to control the mind and focus it on Divinity. Some people keep discussing worldly matters even while they are attending Bhajans. Do not go anywhere near such people. *Tyaja Durjana Samsargam; Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam; Kuru Punyam Ahorathram* (Give up bad company; join good company and perform meritorious deeds day and night).

You should constantly think of the Atmic principle. Your parents may try to divert you to some worldly matters. They may lack discrimination. Why should you listen to such matters knowing fully well that they are not beneficial for you? Let them say anything. Do not waver from your chosen path. You should convince your mother by telling her, "Mother, you have your own likes and dislikes and I have my own. You are my mother and I am your son, yet our thoughts and feelings are different. Being your son, I will serve you and express my gratitude to you. But I cannot deviate from the path of truth."



Adhere firmly to the path of truth. Never deviate from it under any circumstances. This is Ritam. It is only by Ritam that you can have the experience of the Self.

Tonight Lingodbhava will take place. I created this Linga in answer to his (B. N. Narasimha Murthi's) prayer. But another Linga will emerge from within. In this manner, I can create any number of Lingas. Everything is in My hand. (*loud applause*) The Lingas that come from the hand or the mouth are all one. Wherever you see, there is the principle of the Atma.

*Students!*

Understand this Atmic principle of oneness. This should form an important part of your learning. When you develop the feeling of oneness, evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, etc., will not come near you. You will not be perturbed by pain and suffering. You will be in a state of non-dualism. That is true bliss. Focus your mind on God. Follow His command. Then your life will be redeemed. Now you can start Bhajans.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma ...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Sivarathri Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 1st March 2003.**

### Sivarathri Discourse – II

#### **FOSTER UNITY AND HARMONY**

*There is nobody in this world who knows everything,  
Similarly, there is none who knows nothing.  
Everybody knows something,  
It is only Sambasiva*

***Who is omniscient.***

**(Telugu Poem)**

*Embodiments of Love!*

The message of holy Sivarathri is to spread the ideal and sanctity of this most auspicious day to one and all. Unity is declining among the people of the world today. The family is beset with a number of problems even if it has only two members.

### **Follow the Ideals of Siva's Family**

In the divine family of Siva, there are four members, namely, Siva himself, his consort Parvati, and their two sons, Subrahmanya and Ganapati. Theirs is an ideal family. There are no differences whatsoever between the husband and the wife or between the two brothers. There is perfect accord and harmony in their family. Parvati and Parameswara have set an ideal of a perfect and loving relationship between a husband and a wife in the whole world. Family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among the family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the family members. Therefore, every family should strive to achieve unity and harmony among its members. The family of Siva is an ideal family. Considering unity as the most fundamental factor for peace, this family set an ideal to the world. Every family should strive to emulate the example of Siva's family, enjoy the bliss of loving relationship and spread peace in the world. If we understand the principle of unity in the divine family of Siva, we will have peace and progress in the whole world. Today even if there are only two sons in a family, there are a number of problems between them; there is no ground for agreement between them. Similar is the case of husband and wife; they contradict and oppose each other.

This is not the position in respect of Siva's family. The vehicles they ride, the circumstances in which they function, the wealth they possess – in fact, in every aspect, the members of this divine family set an example to the whole world. For example, from

the worldly point of view Siva's vehicle is Nandi, the bull. Parvati's vehicle is lion. The younger son, Subrahmanya's vehicle is peacock, whereas the vehicle of the elder son Vinayaka is mouse. They move about in the whole world on the vehicles which are opposed to each other in nature, yet there is perfect harmony between them. Normally, a lion and a bull are opposed to each other. The lion looks at the bull as a prey and the bull fears the lion. But in the case of Siva's vehicle, i.e., the bull and Parvati's vehicle, the lion, there is perfect harmony and absence of fear.

When do we have fear or anxiety? When there is something wrong, there is fear. When you have done no wrong, you will have no fear. Today man is the victim of fear and anxiety even in small matters because he is himself doing wrong things. His own defects are responsible for fear, anxiety, restlessness, hatred and anger. Hence, if we are to live in peace and harmony, we must strive to remove our defects.

#### Unique Devotion of Parvati

Man by his very nature is Ananda Swarupa (embodiment of bliss) but he is engulfed in sorrow. What is the reason? His evil qualities are responsible for his sorrow. Sorrow has not suddenly descended upon him from somewhere. Sorrow is the reaction, reflection and resound of his evil qualities. In fact, all your bad qualities come back to you in the form of reaction, reflection and resound, leaving no scope for good qualities. If someone is ridiculing you, take it that it is not the other person but your own evil feelings being returned to you in the shape of ridicule.

What are the ornaments that adorn Siva? In fact, he has none of those which we call ornaments. However, he has very special ornaments which adorn his body. The serpents that he wears round his neck, the matted locks, the crescent moon, the cool water of the Ganga and the Vibhuti that he smears all over his body are all his ornaments.

*The Lord of Kailasa has manifested his Divine form with the crescent moon adorning his head, the cool water of the Ganga flowing between the matted locks, with his radiant eye in the middle of the forehead and the purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a*

*blackberry. He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt, his entire body is smeared with Vibhuti, his forehead is adorned with a kumkum dot, his ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel, diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from his ears and his whole swarthy body glows with divine effulgence. (Telugu Poem)*

Who wears such peculiar decorations on his body except Siva? Siva has donned this divine form in order to teach a renunciant outlook to the world by his own example. In spite of these strange features of Siva, there were no differences between the husband and the wife. Parvati did not develop any aversion or disgust towards her husband on account of his strange attire or mode of life. In fact, she adored and followed him with dedication. Siva led his life by begging. Parvati never had any ill-will against her husband on this account also. She did not leave her husband, saying, “How can I lead a family life with such a person?” Rather, she faithfully followed him, submitting herself to his wishes with happiness. Both of them lived in peace and harmony.

Even in the form of Siva, there are apparent contradictions. He has Ganga in his matted locks and crescent moon on his head. These are the symbols of coolness. In contrast to these, he has fire in the third eye on his forehead. Thus, there is cool water on his head and fire on his forehead. These two are conflicting forces. Yet they maintain perfect harmony and set an ideal to the world. There is not even the slightest difference of opinion or discordant note in the family of Siva. It demonstrates unity, harmony and divinity in family life. It is a perfectly ideal family which the entire world should emulate.

### **Get Rid of Jealousy and Hatred**

You do not find such harmony in the present-day families. Supposing the younger brother's wife wears some new ornaments, the elder brother's wife becomes jealous. Instead of feeling happy, she loses her peace and happiness. Similarly, in several day-to-day situations, you will find internal bickerings in the family instead of peace and unity. We find bitter hatred prevailing everywhere today. Modern man is, in fact, steeped in

hatred. There is hatred in all fields in the world. Even in the same family, there is discord between husband and wife, between parents and children and between brothers. Siva and Parvati by their own example inspire the entire world to shed hatred and enmity. But who is listening to such teachings? Who is putting them into practice? People chant the Name of God with great devotion but fail to emulate the example shown by Him. What is the use of worshipping God when you do not follow His ideals? How can you obtain divine grace if you go against the teachings of God?

On account of improper food and bad habits, several ill-feelings develop in man. But you should try to control them. You should not allow them to manifest as hatred towards others. You should never allow jealousy to grow in you. Today every human being is afflicted with the diseases of jealousy and hatred. In fact, the root cause of all evil qualities in man is jealousy. Jealousy leads to anger. Jealousy and hatred can destroy a human being totally. Man can really enjoy great happiness if he gets rid of jealousy and hatred. In fact, man is the embodiment of bliss. It is his inherent nature. Sorrow is not his nature. Man is the embodiment of love, peace and bliss. Why then is he afflicted with sorrow? It is because he flouts the divine commands. This is the reaction of going against the Divine Will.

Here is a small example. You see a person approaching you and you think that he is your enemy. The feeling of hatred can lead you to fight with him. Instead, if you try to greet him saying, "Hello brother! How are you?", he may respond by asking, "How are you?" When you extend love to others, others also will extend love to you. On the other hand, if you move away from a person on seeing him, he will do the same. As is the action, so is the reaction. Therefore, we have to ensure that our actions are good. In fact, there are no bad people in this world. All are good. You say that those who oppose you are all bad people. If you do not have any bad qualities, how can the other person behave badly? Your own bad qualities are reflected in others. Hence, every person must cultivate good feelings and good behaviour. You should conduct yourself in such a way that you do not go against the divine commands. Only then will you have peace and security in life. You may participate in a number of Bhajans, worship God in several forms and observe ever

so many religious vows but if you do not cultivate sacred feelings in your heart, what is the use? Man should have a tender heart. His heart should be full of love and compassion. If there are no such feelings, he will become a demon. Man is endowed with the quality of Daya (compassion). That is why he is said to be having a Hridaya. An ideal human being is one who has a compassionate heart.

### **Sivarathri Celebrations Suffused with Peace and Bliss**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

When you are endowed with such a sacred and compassionate heart, why should you suffer from sorrow? All your sorrows and worries are the reaction, reflection and resound of your inner feelings. You read newspaper early in the morning. You read news containing violence, killings, unrest, hatred, jealousy, anger, etc. All this news leads you to a very unhappy state of mind. You must have a peaceful mind when you get up from bed after a sound sleep at night. Right from early morning, you should experience peace and happiness. You may have sorrows and difficulties but they are only passing clouds which come and go. They should not really bother you. It is only when you take them to heart and cling to them, you suffer. If you ignore them, they will not bother you.

You get a postal cover addressed to you. Normally, there will be a 'from' address and a 'to' address on any postal cover. Without these addresses, the cover will go to the dead-letter office. Man should, therefore, see both the addresses, i.e., from and to. You must first enquire, "Where do I come from?" In pursuance of this enquiry, you will discover that your source is God. When you understand this truth, you will always have noble feelings. Your 'from' address is Divinity and your 'to' address is humanness. If you remember these two, you will become a true human being. Follow this ideal and obey the divine command. Among all the living beings in the creation, only human beings have been given this privilege of ennobling their life by following the ideals set before them by God. Further, it is only in Bharat that such noble ideas are passed on from one generation to another. In spite of all these ideals set before us, we are unable to live in peace because we are not following them.

There are nine forms of devotion to God set before man in the scriptures. They are: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). Follow at least one form of devotion with pure feelings. Whatever be the form of devotion, the inner feelings or the motive behind devotion is very important. Your inner feelings must always be pure. Of all the nine forms of devotion, Sneham (friendship) is the most important. When you cultivate this feeling of friendship with God, only then can you reach the last stage of Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). For this purpose, you must have a pure heart full of love and devotion. You must have pure and selfless love towards one and all. Such love is not a one-way traffic. Today we are prepared to receive love from all people but are hesitant to share our love with others. It should be a give and take policy. Love begets love. You must also be prepared to share love with others. Love is the gift of God.

You should rise to such a level that whatever is given by God is accepted by you wholeheartedly. At times, God gives you a bitter pill like the doctor. This is for your own good. Supposing you have an ulcer in your stomach. The surgeon opens your stomach with a knife and removes the ulcer. Since he cuts your stomach with a knife, do you start thinking that he has hatred towards you? No, no. It is only in your interest that he has performed the operation. Similarly, sometimes God also puts you to some difficulties. Even that is in your interest only, for your good only. Both happiness and sorrow are God's gifts. Nobody can know the purpose behind the actions of God.

Do all actions with the spirit of unity. Lead your life in such a way that it fosters the principle of unity. The previous morning, you participated in Bhajans. How sweet, melodious and blissful they were! What was the reason? The reason was that all participated in it in a spirit of unity. The boys of Prasanthi Nilayam, particularly the three boys, Prasanth, Kavi Kumar's son, and Ravi Kumar sang the Bhajans in perfect Sruthi

(tune), Laya (modulation) and Thala (rhythm). The boy who played on the flute gave them a good support. They sang in unity and gave so much joy to the devotees. Where can you get such joy and happiness? Where can you see such unity?

Nowadays wherever you go, you will hear a lot of noise in the name of Sivarathri. But the Sivarathri at Prasanthi Nilayam is surcharged with unparalleled peace and bliss which are not found anywhere else. (*loud applause*) Every activity undertaken at Prasanthi Nilayam is divine and in perfect peace and harmony. It is suffused with devotion and love. God is love and love is God. It is only through love that you can attain God. Hence, all of you should become Prema Swarupas (embodiments of love). Foster unity and lead your life in perfect harmony wherever you are. Not only here but wherever you go, you should promote unity. Never give room for hatred. Only then can you call yourself the true devotees of Prasanthi Nilayam. Even if you meet your enemy, greet him with love. He will automatically respond with love. If you lack love for the other person, he will also not love you. The world is filled with reaction, reflection and resound. You yourself are responsible for everything good or bad. Do not blame others. If you are agitated and restless, the cause of this lies within you. Other people are not responsible for it. In fact, your own deficiencies and faults are reflected in the form of your restlessness and worries.

### **Sivarathri Signifies Unity and Divinity**

Lead a happy life and experience bliss. Follow the ideals set by the family of Siva, Parvati, Subrahmanya and Ganapati. Worship them. You may worship a picture as God but not God as a picture. Therefore, you should worship the Easwara family by following their example. The message of this holy Sivarathri is that all should live in unity and harmony. The brothers in a family should not hate each other; they must be united like the Pandavas. It is only by their unity that the Pandavas could attain the love of Lord Krishna. Anything can be achieved with unity. Take, for example, the five fingers in the hand. We can accomplish any task only when the five fingers join together. The Kauravas were one hundred in number but they were not united for a good cause. Ultimately, what



fate befell them? Similarly, Vali and Sugriva were brothers. Due to some differences, they developed hatred against each other and suffered. We should maintain unity under all circumstances, overcoming all obstacles and difficulties. The chief objective of Sivarathri celebration is to foster unity. You should never make use of harsh words. Always speak sweetly and softly.

*Dear Students – Boys and Girls and Devotees!*

You have all assembled here with a pure heart on this auspicious day of Sivarathri. Every devotee should keep his heart always pure, wherever he is. With pure and sacred heart, you can undertake sacred activities. When the container is pure, the contents also should be pure. You should not put poison in a vessel made of gold. Keep pure material in a pure vessel. Keep your heart as pure as gold and fill it with sweet love.

You are the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. You are the students of Sai. Sai does not expect anything from you. Education in this Institute is totally free. Whatever be your requirements, I am providing them free of cost. Do you find such an educational institution anywhere in the world? Today you will find people booking seats in educational institutions even before the birth of their child. They pay a lump sum amount to the school in advance for reservation of seat in the 1st Standard. But there is no advance booking for anything at Prasanthi Nilayam. The only advance booking is the high ideals that this Institute imparts to the students. Wherever you go, you must live up to the ideals learnt by you and fulfil the objectives of education.

Sivarathri signifies one universal family of mankind. You are a member of this universal family. Do not limit yourself to your individual family. Divinity manifests in the unity of these two. For divinity, unity is most essential. This unity is true Satsanga about which I spoke yesterday. Have Satsanga.

**Sai Students are Recognised by their Speech and Conduct**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Love is My property. Develop love more and more and increase this divine property. I do not seek anything from anybody. Live in love. Share your love with everybody. Let love be your ideal. When you lead a life filled with love, your life will become pure and sacred. All the programmes conducted at Prasanthi Nilayam are full of peace and purity. Though thousands of people have gathered here, there is complete silence. Not even a baby cries. No one sneezes or coughs. The entire place is filled with serenity, peace and calmness. If you are not able to get peace at such a divine place, where else can you? Prasanthi Nilayam is the ideal for the whole world in respect of moral, ethical and spiritual values. Therefore, you should gather peace from Prasanthi Nilayam.

Never speak harshly to anybody. Several people today pose themselves as devotees but take to evil path. This is not a mark of devotion. In fact, their behaviour goes against the concept of devotion. They think one thing, say something else and do something entirely different. This is the characteristic of an evil-minded person. That is why it is said, *Manasyanyath, Vachasyanyath, Karmanyanyath Duratmanam* (those whose thought, word and deed are at variance are wicked). They are totally different outside from what is inside them. You should not join the company of such people. Instead, you should join the company of those who live up to the principle of *Manasyekam, Vachasyekam, Karmanyekam Mahatmanam* (those who maintain perfect harmony between thought, word and deed are noble ones). Practice is most important. If your conduct is different from your speech and thoughts, you are not a devotee at all; you are the worst sinner.

*Students!*

You are the students of this great institution. Wherever you go, you must be recognised as the students of Prasanthi Nilayam by your sweet speech and noble conduct. There are several old students of this Institute living in foreign countries like America, Japan, Germany, etc. They are still recognised in those countries as students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. They bring credit to the institution. You need not give anything to Sai. Lead a life of high character and good conduct. That is the only thing I

want. That is the only thing which gives Me joy. Not only the students, the devotees must also have good conduct. They must feel that they are the members of the universal family of Siva and Parvati.

Parvati represents the body, whereas Siva represents the heart. Humanness is the product of the union of the body and heart. The body represents Pravritti (worldliness), whereas the Atma residing in the body represents Nivritti (inner spirit). The unity of Pravritti and Nivritti is humanness. In spite of such a sacred human birth, man is forgetting his noble ideals. Your human birth is the gift of God. Therefore, there should be no trace of ego in you. Where there is ego, there lies danger. Shed your ego and cultivate pure and selfless love towards one and all. There is nothing in this world which cannot be achieved with love.

(Bhagavan sang two Bhajans, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*” and “*Hey Siva Sankar Namami Sankar...*” which the entire congregation repeated with great devotional fervour. Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with His blessings to the entire mankind on this auspicious occasion.)

I conclude My Discourse with the blessings that the divine vibrations of today’s Namasankirtan may spread to the whole world and foster good qualities, good conduct and good practices in all the people of the world.

**- From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 2nd March 2003.**

“Among youth today, there is no regard for the limits to be observed in any sphere. Whether it is eating or sleeping or wandering about, they indulge in excesses in the name of freedom. What is real freedom? It is Atma Jnana (knowledge of the Self ), Atma Nigraha (self-control) and Atmananda (bliss) which constitute real freedom.”

### **NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** 18 Sai units of Hyderabad City and the Sai Organisation of Mahaboobnagar district together carried out Grama Seva in nine villages – (1) Veldanda (2) Chirkur (3) Bothampalli (4) Pothepalli (5) Cheduru (6) Bairanpalli (7) Chandrayanpalli (8) Gokaram and (9) Timmononpalli – on 22nd and 23rd February, 2003, conducting medical camps, examining 6500 patients, selecting 180 patients for various surgeries and 80 patients for cataract operation to be done in the city hospitals in batches. Veterinary camps were conducted treating 5500 cattle. 100 specialist doctors, 24 veterinary doctors and 630 Seva Dal workers took part in the above camps. Besides, Bal Vikas classes for school children, sports meet for youth, health and hygiene programme from door to door, youth orientation classes for adults, roads and temples repairs, Pallaki Seva for all the nine villages, dramas depicting the evils of drinking and smoking, and a video film show on Bhagavan were conducted. The Hyderabad Samithi also conducted a training programme on Disaster Management at Sivam on 22nd and 23rd February in which 120 selected Seva Dal workers from 5 districts took part.

**Assam and N.E. Region:** It was like a breath of fresh air for Dhansiri area of Karbi Anglong Hill district of Assam, a militant stronghold for many years, when Diphu Samithi of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation comprising mostly of youths organised a free medical camp on 1st February 2003. The Seva Dal and Samithi members moved with doctors and medicines in the difficult roads, jungles to help the poor Karbi tribals devoid of basic healthcare. Eminent doctors treated a good number of patients and distributed medicines free. The highlight was the treatment of malaria patients in this malaria-infested district.

**Haryana:** A district-level spiritual-cum- Seva Sadhana camp was organised by Sai youth of Kurukshetra at village Ram Saran Majra. 100 youth and 25 Seva Dal workers duly co-ordinated by the villagers conducted cleanliness drive – cleaning temples, streets and

drains of the village. An impressive Nagar Sankirtan consisting of a large number of village devotees was also conducted in the morning. Further, a multifaceted medical camp consisting of a team of specialists was organised benefiting 821 patients who were also given free medicines.

**Karnataka:** As a part of Seva as Sadhana, the Bangalore Urban District Seva Dal of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Karnataka selected the Government Kannada Primary School, Pattandoor Agrahara, adjacent to Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield for providing mid-day meals to the students of the school. This school has classes up to 5th Standard with around 80 students. These students come from very poor families and need wholesome and nutritious food. The Seva Dal members have taken up the work of providing mid-day meals to the students everyday all the year round. This Seva was started on 20th March, 2003.

### **DIVINE DISCOURSE ON 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2003**

#### ***DIVINE MAGNETIC POWER***

##### ***Embodiments of Love!***

Everyone aspires to get rid of his worries and enjoy happiness. Satsanga is very essential for this. Satsanga is also essential for man to rise to divine level. In fact, without Satsanga, life becomes meaningless. What is the meaning of Satsanga? It is not merely joining the company of good people. 'Sath' is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. Man should constantly contemplate on this eternal principle.

#### **First and Foremost, Control your Senses**

What is the purpose of human birth? It is not merely to eat, drink and make merry. *Paropakartham Idam Sariram* (human body is meant to do good to others). As long as man is alive, he should dedicate himself to the service and welfare of society. God has endowed man with all powers. The senses of man are responsible for both good and evil.

Hence, it is the foremost duty of man to make proper use of the senses. In the Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna told Arjuna that control of senses was the foremost duty of man. One who lacks sense control is worse than an animal. Even animals exercise some control over their senses. But man, in spite of being endowed with Vijnana, Sujnana and Prajnana, is not making any effort to control his senses. Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy) are bestial qualities. Today man is cultivating such animal qualities and behaving like animals. Man is neither a Mruga (animal) nor Mrunmaya (inert matter). He is, in fact, Chinmaya and Chidananda Swarupa (embodiment of consciousness and bliss). It is unfortunate that man today is degenerating to the level of an animal. Therefore, he should control his senses in the first instance.

### **Good and Evil are Present in the Mind of Man**

You see, hear and experience many things in this world. They are nothing but the reaction, reflection and resound of your inner being. All that you see in the outside world is actually a part of you. Consider this example. There is someone who hates you. Actually, it is the hatred in you that has taken the form of hatred in him. In the same manner, praise or blame, good or evil are reflections of your own self. Whatever you see in the outside world, whatever you experience, has, in fact, come from within you. What is meant by Prapancha (world)? It is the combination of Padartha (matter). Every object in this world is transitory. How can such ephemeral objects give you everlasting bliss? Truly speaking, man has no troubles at all. You blame others for your suffering and criticise them. It is your own bad thoughts that make you suffer. Everything has emerged from you. There is nothing superior to man in this world. Hence, it is said, *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, human birth is the rarest). Man is most sacred and highly esteemed among all beings in the world. But being immersed in delusion, he is unable to realise his true nature. There is neither good nor evil in this world. There are many things that we see hear and experience. We think that it is the eyes that see, the ears that hear and the mind that experiences. In fact, it is not so. Everything is reaction, reflection and resound.

*Embodiments of Love!*

*You are engaged in service, singing Bhajans and undertaking various spiritual practices. What benefit have you derived from these activities? Only good thoughts give good rewards. After sowing a Neem seed, you cannot expect a mango fruit. As is the seed, so is the tree. Likewise, as is the feeling, so is the result. Good and evil are based on your feelings. Hence, develop noble thoughts and spread the message of love to the entire world. Cultivate the feeling that all are brothers and sisters. Whom you consider as others are not others in the strict sense of the term. They are your own. All are the children of God. God is one. Society is the direct manifestation of God. What is the difference between Jeevatwa (individual soul) and Daivatwa (God)? Individual is Vyashti Swarupa and God is Samashti Swarupa. There can be no branch without a tree. There can be no child without a mother. Fish cannot survive without water. Similarly, individual cannot exist without God. Both have an intimate and inseparable relationship. On this basis, Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (all beings are a part of My Being).*

### **Embodiments of Love!**

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

### *Embodiments of Love!*

The entire Nature is suffused with power of attraction. This power of attraction originates from the changeless and eternal principle of truth, which is the basis of creation. This is known as Transcendental Truth. It is present in Trikalas, Trilokas and Trigunas (three periods of time, three worlds and three attributes). It is only one and not two. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). All that we see in this world is only this principle of truth. Man sees the creation of God but he is unable to recognise the Divine principle in it. Out of his ignorance, he fails to understand the truth which is so obvious. All that you find before you are verily the forms of God. Though you see God right before your eyes, you think you are yet to find Him. How foolish it is! *Pashyannapicha Na Pashyati Moodho* (he is a fool who sees, yet does not recognise the reality). When you develop the firm faith that everything is the manifestation of God, you will certainly find Him in everything. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavrutya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). There is nothing in this world which is not the manifestation of God. What is the form of

God? *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God incarnates in the form of a human being). But man is getting deluded by his physical form and considers himself to be a mere mortal.

### **Fill your Mind with Sacred Thoughts**

*All that we see is the form of God. He is the embodiment of bliss. Nityanandam Paramasukhadam Kevalam Jnana Murtim (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss. He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second). Bliss pervades the entire world. There is no trace of sorrow anywhere. But you may not agree with Me. You say, "Swami, You do not see sorrow but we see it everywhere." Whether you see or I see, there is only bliss everywhere. As you think of only sorrow forgetting the bliss, you find only sorrow. But I don't find sorrow anywhere. I see bliss, bliss and bliss alone. When you are the embodiments of divinity, how can you ever be afflicted with sorrow? You suffer from sorrow because of your deluded thinking. Every man is full of bliss and nothing else. So, whatever he experiences in this world is also full of bliss because all that he sees, listens and experiences is only the reflection of God. It is a sin to criticise others; there is merit in praising them. Do not criticise anyone, for criticising others amounts to criticising God whom you worship. Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Isavasyam Idam Jagat (God permeates the entire universe). God is present in all the beings of the world.*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

You may be thinking about the events that are going to take place in the forthcoming New Year (Ugadi). You speculate whether the New Year would bring you happiness or sorrow. The year may be new, but how does it matter if you do not give up your old and mean habits? You aspire for good results, but are you performing good deeds? You expect others to be good towards you, but are you good towards them? How can you expect to be happy if your deeds are not in accordance with your aspirations? Good deeds will certainly yield good results. Today people are immersed in Adambara (pomposity). How can then they attain Ananda?

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Do not lead a pompous life. Adambara is the root cause of Asanthi (restlessness). Give up Adambara and strive to attain Ananda. Bliss cannot be acquired from outside; it lies in your own heart. In fact, bliss pervades the entire world. Your mental perversions are responsible for seeing evil in it.

*Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam*



*Bandhamokshayo* (mind alone is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). Hence, purify and transform your mind. Only then can you become a true human being. You cannot call yourself a human being if you have an evil mind. Perform meritorious deeds. Speak good words. Lead a sacred life. In this manner, you can find fulfilment in life. There is nothing evil in this world. If you resolve to see only good things in life, everything will appear good to you. Everything that you see around you is the reaction, reflection and resound of your own feelings. You see your own reflection in the world. After seeing the reflection if you say it is bad, then who is responsible for it? Never entertain evil thoughts. Fill your mind with sacred and divine thoughts. Then your life will become sweet.

### **Love is Ananda, Ananda is Love**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

#### *Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

Man should lead the life of a true Manava (human being) and realise that there is Madhava (God) in him. Unfortunately, man today is leading the life of a Danava (demon). He is filled with demonic tendencies from top to toe. Such being the case, how can he attain happiness? You should lead a happy life and share your happiness with those who come to you. Sometimes, evil qualities like anger, greed, jealousy, etc., may try to overpower you. They are like passing clouds. Do not get carried away by them. Hold on to the true and eternal feelings that originate in your heart. People chant Lalitha Sahasranama, Vishnu Sahasranama, etc. No benefit accrues from chanting any number

of Sahasranamas if one lacks purity of heart. Truly speaking, heart is the centre of all virtues. But man is not able to realise its sacredness. To be born as a human being is a great blessing. One cannot describe in words the sacredness and the sweetness of human life. Bear this truth in your mind and sanctify your life.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You will certainly experience everlasting bliss when you develop love. Love is Ananda and Ananda is love. Your life will be redeemed only when you develop love and experience bliss. Love cannot be acquired from outside nor can it be bought in the market. It originates from within. When you buy a particular object in the market, you develop love towards it. But such love is temporary, imaginary and artificial. It is not the love that originates in your heart. Love is changeless. Love is God and God is Love. You may celebrate any number of festivals but they cannot confer bliss on you unless you develop love. The bliss that you derive from love is beyond description. It is infinite.

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

### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

### **Swami's Divine Magnetic Power**

Today I want to tell you something very significant. This body of Mine is filled with attraction power from top to toe. It is the Divine magnetic power. From Sivarathri onwards, it has been increasing day by day though it was present in Me earlier also. Worldly magnets attract only iron filings whereas this Divine Magnet attracts the entire world. (*prolonged applause*) You are under the mistaken notion that Swami is having

pain in His legs and therefore He is unable to walk comfortably. I have absolutely no pain whatsoever. As there is immense attraction power in My feet, I have difficulty in lifting them. As you know, the earth has also attraction power. The magnetic power only attracts and does not cause any pain. Swami has no pain at all. (*loud applause*) Whatever I touch with My hand, it also gets attracted. This magnetic power is present in every man. God is present in the form of Hiranyagarbha in everyone. Hence, He is extolled as Hiranyagarbhaya Namah (salutations to the one with golden womb). Pure gold does not undergo any change; it attracts everyone. You should not be under the mistaken notion that only Swami has this attraction power and none else. In fact, it is present in you too. If you put it to proper use, it develops more and more.

Not merely this. I want to tell you another important point. As the attraction power is increasing in Me, the number of people coming for My Darshan is also increasing. Henceforth, huge crowds will be coming for My Darshan. You are going to witness many astounding events in future. God attracts everyone. His attraction power is highly sacred and it attracts one and all. Even while I am speaking to you now, My feet are being pulled by the earth. If I lift one foot, the earth attracts the other foot. Nobody can do anything about it. It is increasing day by day. This is the Divine magnetic power. It originates from the changeless and eternal principle of Transcendental Truth. Everyday devotees are sending various ointments and oils by post. They write, “Swami, apply this ointment and the pain will reduce.” These ointments and oils cannot help in any way. Why should I use these ointments and oils when I have no pain at all? What I want is only your love. This love will get multiplied and fill the whole world.

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

is pain, one should think of a remedy. But when there is no pain, where is the question of remedy? No pain, no remedy.

In this world, everything has to be within a certain limit. In the present situation, this body cannot travel much. The magnetic power is growing day by day. I try to lift My foot but it is very difficult. Even if I use great force, it does not get separated from the earth. It can be separated only through My Sankalpa. It is very difficult to understand the principle of Divinity. No one can understand the Divine Sankalpa. None can estimate the Divine power. People try to understand Divinity on the basis of their own feelings and in the process end up with wrong estimation. People throw stones at trees which are full of fruits. Nobody throws stones at the trees which have no fruits. Similarly, the noble and the pious are subjected to a lot of hardship in this world. It is not possible to understand Divinity and its power.

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

(Telugu Poem)

### **Witness the Divine Glory as it Unfolds**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

I address you as Bangaru (gold) because you are the embodiments of Hiranyagarbha. There are a number of metals in your body, without which the body cannot exist. Doctors

and scientists will also certify this fact. The magnetic power that is present in the earth is present in your body also.

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

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

You are going to witness the Divine glory of Swami as it unfolds in the days to come. He will attract the whole world. There won’t be any place for people to stand even. You can see it for yourself what a great change has occurred during the last one month! All are getting attracted to Swami. Love is very powerful. Such sacred love is available only with God.

This is not an illness. This does not cause any suffering or pain to Me. It cannot be cured by medicines. Love is the only remedy for this. There are many people who are closely associated with Swami for a number of years. Even they are unable to understand the truth. What is the use of leading such a life? First of all, you should try to understand Swami. (Showing a silver plate) Once you understand that this plate is made of silver, you can estimate its value. But Divinity is invaluable. Nobody can estimate the value of Divinity. No medicines can have any effect on Divinity. Love is the only remedy. You are born only for the sake of love. You cannot say that you don’t need love. You have to

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

### *Embodiments of Love!*

In a matter of days, you will see that the Divine glory will increase, imparting joy and bliss to all. All the unrest will soon be eradicated from the face of earth. (*loud prolonged applause*) All the killings and acts of violence that are happening in the world will ultimately come to an end. Everything will turn out to be for your own good. Everyone will develop sacred feelings. All will enjoy divine bliss. Soon the entire nation will enjoy peace and happiness. There will not be any difficulties or suffering. You are afraid of impending sorrows and suffering. In fact, there is nothing like sorrow or suffering. How can they ever afflict you? Always be happy and blissful. Conduct yourselves as the embodiments of the Atma and enjoy divine bliss. This is what I expect from you. Every individual should be happy. Every child should be happy. Let no one shed tears of sorrow. Difficulties may come but they will ultimately lead to happiness.

In a short time, all the people in this world will lead ideal lives. But nothing should be done by force. Use of force leads to fear. Love cannot be acquired by force; it should naturally originate from the source. Love will diminish when there is force. Do not force anything. Let it happen naturally. Let divine feelings spring forth from you in a natural way. Share your joy with others. Everyone should live in unity. Even to hold a small tumbler, there has to be unity between the five fingers. A single finger cannot do anything. In the same manner, you can attain divinity only through unity.

### *Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

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

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma...*”

– From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield) on 16th March 2003.

**MAY 2003**

**UGADI DISCOURSE**

**SANCTIFY YOUR LIFE BY  
SACRED THOUGHTS**

*Today there is no fear of sin. Wicked deeds and acts of cruelty have become an everyday occurrence. Their magnitude is beyond all description. Devotion to the Lord has become extinct. Oh man! Understand that you can attain peace and happiness only by chanting the Divine Name.*  
(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

*Man experiences the cycle of birth and death in Prakriti (Nature) which is the presiding deity of life principle. He gets deluded by the temptations of the world. Prapancha (world) is constituted by Padartha (matter) which is its very basis. The sum and substance of this is that it is matter which tempts man. Matter is not permanent; it does not symbolise truth. How can this false and ephemeral matter bring eternal peace in man’s life, the very basis of which is truth? Yad Drishyam Thannasyam (all that is seen is bound to perish). Whatever is seen by the eyes is subject to change. How can transient matter give everlasting happiness?*

We see various objects in this world and are deluded that they are permanent. It is a grave mistake. Whatever is seen by the eyes is impermanent. Even our body which we see is not permanent. It is wrong to consider it permanent. Since ages, man has been tempted and deluded by the physical, ephemeral and false objects of the world. Man should try to recognise the underlying eternal principle in this impermanent world.

### **Fundamental Principle of Wisdom**

In this world, '*Aham Etat Na*' (I am not this) is the fundamental principle of wisdom. In Vedic parlance, Aham means Atma. '*Etat Na*' means not this. It means that I am not this body which is transient and ephemeral; I am the eternal Atmic principle.

Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (all beings are a part of My Being). Divinity pervades the entire creation. Every man is a spark of divinity. Such being the case, how can man be called a mere mortal? Our ancients used to contemplate on God and worship Him with total faith in His omnipresence. According to our ancient scriptures, there are three crore gods. Who are they? Can there be so many gods? The truth is that the population of the world was three crores when those scriptures were written. This declaration was made considering each individual as a divine being. The declaration: *Sahasra Seersha Purusha* (God has thousands of heads) was made prior to this when the population of the world was in thousands. Today the world population is nearly 600 crores. Every one of them is a manifestation of divinity. Every human being is a divine incarnation. Then why should he waste such a sacred and precious human birth? You should not think that God is separate from you. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (God is one but the wise refer to Him by various names). His other name is Aham. This principle of Aham is present in all beings. So, every individual is the embodiment of God.

### Recognise the Upanishadic Message of Unity

Consider this small example. If you question someone, "Where is God?" he may say, "He is present in my heart." It is not a proper answer. When you say the handkerchief is in your hand, you are bigger than the handkerchief. Likewise, when you say God is in you, it means you are bigger than God! This is not the truth. The truth is, you are in God. Everything is in God. *Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). It is said, *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God incarnates in the form of a human being). You may have seen many pictures of Divine incarnations like Rama and Krishna. They are depicted in the form of human beings only.

Having forgotten the divinity present in humanity, man today is in search of God, thinking that He is at some higher level. That is why he is unable to realise the truth. *Ekam Sath* (Truth is one). The Vedas describe this as Ritam. Ritam signifies oneness. It is



Ekatma Swarupa (embodiment of unity). It is changeless and transcends time, space and circumstances. It is present in one and all. Man attributes various names and forms to such divinity and worships it in various ways. Divinity has no specific form. It is changeless and beyond all attributes. In fact, all forms are the forms of divinity. Such principle of unity in multiplicity is being forgotten today. The Upanishads emphasise the principle of unity in diversity. But due to the impact of worldliness, man today sees multiplicity, division and differences everywhere. He is not making any effort to realise the underlying unity in diversity. Man should undertake such spiritual practices which will enable him to experience unity.

The fundamental basis for the apparent multiplicity is only one. You see a number of bulbs here. All are lighted by the same current. If you put off the main switch, no bulb will give light. Likewise, the Atma is the life principle of all beings. It is the power of consciousness. It is the power of Nityananda, Brahmananda, Yogananda and Advaitananda (eternal, supreme, spiritual and non-dual bliss). Without making any effort to know the principle of non-dualism, man is leading the life of duality. He gets carried away by the deluding multiplicity and wallows in the darkness of ignorance all his life.

*Embodiments of Love!*

**Realise that the same Atma dwells in one and all. Do not harbour differences of any type. The principle of love is one. The principle of bliss is one. This bliss should spread everywhere and engulf everyone. But today people are deluded by worldly Prabhava (effect) and are thereby forgetting their Swabhava (innate nature). ‘Swa’ means Atma. Hence, Swabhava means Atmic feeling. You should develop such feeling. Swabhava also symbolises Chaitanya Shakti (power of consciousness). It is present everywhere, in you, with you, above you, below you and around you. When the Atma is present all over, how can it be divided? Never fragment the principle of oneness. In fact, it is very easy to visualise unity in multiplicity. Do not think that God is in you. You are in God and so too is everyone.**

### **Truth is the Fundamental Basis of the Creation**

Today fear of sin has declined in man. That is why he is taking to evil ways without being bothered about the consequences. *Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God, humanness has declined in human beings. This is detrimental to world peace.* (Telugu Poem) As man does not have fear of sin, he is unable to manifest his innate divinity. The same divinity is present in one and all. Truth is one. Truth is God. The whole world rests on truth.

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

*Is there a place where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.*

(Poem)

(Telugu

You don't need to search for truth. It is everywhere. Wherever you see, there is truth. But you are not making efforts to visualise truth. If only you make a sincere attempt, you can see it everywhere. *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Truth should be spoken in a pleasing manner. It should always be sweet. It should never be harsh. It should not hurt the feelings of others. We say, God is omnipresent. No doubt, He is present everywhere. But He manifests Himself wherever truth is spoken in a sweet and pleasant manner. The truth that is spoken in a harsh manner cannot be called truth at all.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Every man and every creature is the embodiment of love. All the birds, animals and insects want happiness just like human beings. They also enjoy happiness. But there is a difference between the happiness they enjoy and the happiness man enjoys. Man is elated by happiness and depressed by sorrow. Unlike man, birds and animals do not lose their balance in happiness and sorrow. But man lacks balance. He feels elated when his desires are fulfilled and frustrated otherwise. Man today is full of negative qualities like anger, hatred and jealousy. Jealousy and anger are like pests that destroy the tree of human life. One who is filled with anger will create differences and hatred. In the daily newspaper, you find many news items which speak volumes about the anger, hatred and jealousy of man. These evil tendencies are the bitter enemies of man. People are worried about the harmful effects of certain planets. In fact, desire and anger are the two planets which cause the greatest harm to mankind. Yes, desires are necessary for man up to a certain limit. But excessive desires put you in danger. *Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina* (without discipline, there can be no well-being). Desires should be under limit. At one moment you are full of love but in the very next moment you burst into a fit of anger. Such a tendency is the result of improper food and habits. You should maintain balance in life.

### *Sow the Seeds of Sacred Thoughts in your Heart*

Today is the New Year day. People celebrate it as a festival with all festivity and gaiety. But their enthusiasm and happiness are short-lived. They do not last even for one day. It is not the true celebration of the New Year. Your happiness should be forever. It should be permanent. True happiness is not something which comes and goes like a passing cloud. You are born with bliss; you should retain it all your life.

When man emerges from the womb of his mother, one does not find any garland around his neck. There are no jewels made of pearls nor are there glittering golden ornaments. There are no chains studded with precious stones like emeralds and diamonds. There is no garland of flowers either. But there is one garland around his neck. Brahma strings together the consequences of his past deeds into a garland and puts it around his neck at the time of his birth.

*(Telugu Poem)*

*There is bound to be a result for every action of yours, however small and insignificant it may be. Suppose you are mending your clothes with the help of a small needle and thread. The needle may be small but if it pricks your finger, the result is instantaneous in the form of bleeding. In this case, action and result take place almost simultaneously. The food you consume takes at least two hours to get digested. The seed that you sow takes a minimum of one week to grow into a sapling. In the same manner, some actions yield results in a few months or a few years or a few births. Whoever you may be, you have to face the consequences of your actions. However, do not feel unduly perturbed by thinking about the consequences of your past evil deeds. Develop sacred love in your heart and earn the grace of God. This will save you from all sufferings.*

*All the results are based on your thoughts and actions. As is the thought, so is the result. As is the action, so is the reaction. Undertake good deeds in order to sanctify and strengthen your body. Good deeds will have good results. There is no point in undertaking good deeds with evil intentions. The type of seed that you sow within will grow and yield the same type of fruits. Evil motives covered under the pretensions of goodness will never yield positive results. So, you should sow the seeds of sacred thoughts within.*

*You may be speculating as to what this New Year has in store for you. You have to undertake sacred actions if you want to enjoy peace and happiness. Bhadram Pashyantu, Bhadram Srunvantu and Bhadram Kurvantu (see good, hear good and do good). These three principles form the basis of the Dharma Sastra (sacred scripture) given by Emperor Manu to mankind. You should strictly adhere to them in your daily life. If you follow them, you are bound to be good. Nothing else is required to redeem your life. The Vedas say, Srunvantu Viswe Amrutasya Putrah (Oh the children of immortality! Listen). You are the children of immortality. Hence, you should see, hear, think and do all that is good.*

### ***Ingratitude is a Demonic Quality***

*Man's wicked thoughts are responsible for the fear and unrest prevalent in the world today. In order to get rid of evil thoughts, you should run away from bad company in the first instance. You should join good company. Then you will see only goodness in everyone around you. If you come across a person who hates you, do not reciprocate the evil feeling. Tension will mount when you show anger and hatred towards each other. Instead you greet him with love. Then he too will reciprocate the feeling of love and become your friend. Speech plays a vital role in strengthening the bond of friendship. Hence, speak softly and sweetly. You can pacify hatred and anger that is prevailing in the world by your pleasant talk. Spread sacred love by sharing it with others. Peace will reign supreme in the world if you share your love with others.*

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

*When you develop faith, you will attain peace. Therefore, give up hatred and inculcate faith. You should consider that Viswasa (faith) is your true Swasa (life-breath).*

Many students today develop crooked thoughts. You should not give room to such thoughts in your heart. You are enjoying the divine grace day in and day out. In what way are you showing gratitude to God for all that He has been doing for you? God does not expect anything from you. He never waits for your gratitude. But you have to do your duty by expressing your gratitude. An ungrateful person is worse than a beast. It is because of your parents that you have come up in life. So, be grateful to them. *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere your mother and father as God). Your mother nourished you in her womb for nine months, gave you birth and brought you up facing several hardships. How grateful you must be towards your mother for all that she has done for you! In the same manner, your father sacrificed his own comforts and looked after you with love and care. In what way are you expressing your gratitude to your father? Your children will treat you in the same manner as you treat your parents.

Some people have wicked feelings within but talk in a pleasing manner in front of others. Such people are verily demons. Demons are known to become powerful at night. Here night and darkness symbolise wickedness and ignorance. Daylight symbolises Sujnana (wisdom) and darkness of night stands for Ajnana (ignorance). When one is immersed in the darkness of ignorance, one will find only wickedness everywhere. Such a person cannot be called a human being; he is verily a demon. *Jantunam Nara Janma Durlabham* (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest). Having attained such a sacred human birth, it is rather unfortunate that man is behaving like a demon. Even animals express their love and gratitude towards their master but man has no sense of gratitude in him. Having been born as a human being, he should conduct himself like a human and sanctify his life.

#### Bliss is your True Nature

##### *Embodiments of Love!*

Love all. Let there be no trace of hatred in you. Live with your fellowmen in a spirit of tolerance and love. The Vedas teach:

*Saha Navavathu, Saha Nau Bhunakthu.*  
(May the Lord protect and nourish us!)

*Let's move together,  
Let's grow together,*

*Let's grow in intelligence together,  
Let's grow in friendship without conflict.*

(Telugu Poem)

Such sacred teachings of the Vedas have been forgotten today. On the other hand, man is developing evil tendencies. Such a behaviour is not befitting of a human being.

Bliss is man's true nature. Hence, he should always be happy. May all of you lead a blissful life in this New Year! May you fill your life with love! May you develop unity and friendship! True bliss lies in unity. God is the embodiment of bliss. *Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas).

When man is endowed with such sacred bliss, why should he give room to wickedness and hatred? This is contrary to human nature. Consider everyone as the embodiment of divinity. Whomsoever you hate or ridicule, it reaches God. Similarly, whomsoever you love, it reaches God. Respect everybody. Share your love with one and all. Never hate anybody. The hatred in you will come back to you as reflection and put you to suffering.

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

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

(Telugu Poem)

Consider the life people lead today. From the very start of the day, parents start quarrelling with each other. This is the position of parents today. If the parents start criticising each other as soon as they wake up, the children will go a step further and will start beating each other. The children will naturally try to emulate their parents. The parents should therefore lead a peaceful life. When they are happy and smiling, the

children will follow suit. Hence, parents should set an example to their children. They should teach them by practice, not merely by precept.

#### Give up Body Attachment

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

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

(Telugu Poem)

Why do you worry about such an ephemeral body? Instead, think of God. Physical sufferings come and go like a passing cloud. That is the nature of the human body. The nature of the Atma is to treat the dualities of life with equanimity. Troubles of the body come and go. Even if My body has some pain or trouble, I do all My work as usual. There is no change in My daily routine. I do not care for this trouble. You will be put to suffering only when you identify yourself with the body. You are not the body. When you say this is my handkerchief, you are different from it. Whatever may happen to the handkerchief, you will not be affected. In the same manner, you should not be affected by physical suffering.

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

(Telugu Poem)

The indweller is the Atma which is your true identity. Hence, do not become unduly attached to the body. If someone criticises you, do not become worried. If he criticises you loudly, it will vanish into thin air. If he criticises within himself, it will affect him only. In fact, neither praise nor censure will come to you. You should not be affected by

both. In this manner, you should transcend the dualities of life. You will become a true human being only when your mind is fixed on the eternal truth of the Atma.

Today marks the beginning of a very sacred year. Accordingly, you should develop sacred thoughts. Not only in this year but throughout your life, you should cultivate sacred thoughts. The body is made of five elements; it has to undergo ordeals. You should not be affected by them. This is your true Sadhana. All other spiritual practices will prove futile if you do not give up body attachment. Some people keep moving the beads of their rosary in a mechanical way and say that they are doing Sadhana. The rosary will be revolving in their hand and the mind will be roaming in the market. Can this be called Japa (repetition of God's Name)? While doing meditation, your body is steady but the mind is wavering. What is the use of such a Sadhana? A true spiritual aspirant is one who has a steady and unwavering mind. Unsteadiness is the quality of a monkey. Do not have a monkey mind. You belong to mankind. So, you should be full of kindness.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*" and then continued the Discourse.)

### Sing the Glory of God with Bhava, Raga and Tala

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

When you sing Bhajans, maintain the proper rhythm by clapping with your hands. The beat should be according to the tune and the Bhajan. Bhajan should be sung with feeling. The three syllables in the name Bha-ra-ta stand for Bhava (feeling), Raga (tune) and Tala (beat). (*loud applause*) It means that the Bharatiyas are those who sing the glory of God with Bhava, Raga and Tala. Today there are many singers who, while singing Thyagaraja Kritis, give Tala on their lap. They should join both the hands and clap. The five fingers of one hand symbolise Karmendriyas (senses of action) and those of the other hand symbolise Jnanendriyas (senses of perception). When you sing the glory of God, the fingers of both the hands should be joined together symbolising the harmony of the Karmendriyas and Jnanendriyas. Then your feelings will also be harmonised. It was Guru Nanak who started community singing in Punjab. All should sing the divine glory in unison. This was the ideal propagated by our ancients. But today people are disregarding this ideal and are acting according to their whims and fancies. All our actions should be pleasing to God. You may call Him Rama, Krishna, Govinda but God is one. Develop the feeling of oneness and attain the vision of the Atma.

- **From Bhagavan's Ugadi Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 2nd April 2003.**

**Today human values have given place to demonic tendencies. Animality has become dominant. The Divine has been forgotten. Consequently, all spiritual exercises are filled with ostentation. What is needed is sincerity. If one acts with sincerity, one will be duly respected. But if one merely preaches and does not practise, one will be ignored. How can such a person expect to win the grace of the Lord?**

**- Baba**

### SRI RAMA NAVAMI SANDESH

#### **THE STORY OF RAMA IS ETERNAL AND EVER NEW**

*Birds and animals do not have any type of education, yet they lead a life of discipline. But alas! Man, who is endowed with all intelligence, does not lead a disciplined life. What else can I convey to this assembly of the noble and saintly people? (Telugu Poem)*

*The Lord shines effulgently in the universe; so also the universe shines in the Lord. The relationship between the Lord and the universe is intimate and inseparable. What else is to be conveyed to you? (Telugu Poem)*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

The sacred epic Ramayana is verily the Veda descended from heaven on earth. There are four Vedas, viz., Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda. In the Ramayana, Rama symbolises Rig Veda which promotes the performance of Yajnas and Yagas. Lakshmana is the personification of Yajur Veda which contains Mantras that are chanted during the performance of Yajnas and Yagas. When Rama was away in the forest, Bharata left Ayodhya and stayed in Nandigrama chanting His Divine Name all the 24 hours of the day. Hence, he symbolises Sama Veda. Satrugna was the one who annihilated Satrus (enemies). He protected the good and the pious, and followed the commands of his brothers. He is the embodiment of Atharvana Veda. The essence of Atharvana Veda lies in destroying wickedness and fostering sacred thoughts and actions. The Ramayana is the Veda and the Veda is the Ramayana. The Veda is not different from the Ramayana. True humanness lies in understanding this intimate relationship between the two.



### **Rama and His Brothers Represent the Highest Ideals of Unity**

Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna were the four sons of Dasaratha. Merely knowing this physical relationship will not suffice. Who is Dasaratha? Dasaratha is one who controls the chariot of the human body consisting of the wheels of ten senses (five senses of perception and five senses of action). In fact, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna were not born to Dasaratha and his three wives like mere mortals. They were Chaitanya Swarupas (embodiments of divine consciousness). They emerged from the divine consciousness which emanated from the sacrificial fire. They set great ideals to the whole world how brothers should conduct themselves in a family. They delighted one and all by their ideal conduct.

Due to the effect of Kali Age, there is no unity and love among brothers today. They quarrel with each other and make their life miserable. On the contrary, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna had total unity among themselves. They never quarrelled, and tried to make each other happy. They delighted others also by their unity. Even while playing games in their childhood, each one aspired for the happiness of the other. Once when the four brothers were playing, Bharata came running to mother Kausalya, sat in her lap and started shedding tears. She asked him, "Bharata, why are you shedding tears? Have you lost the game?" Bharata replied, "No, mother, I did not lose the game. That, in fact, is the cause of my weeping. When I was about to lose the game, Rama managed to lose the game and made me the winner." The four brothers had that kind of unity among them.

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

When Bharata returned from Kekaya kingdom, he came to know that Rama had gone into exile and would not return for fourteen long years. He was disconsolate. He went to Sage Vasishtha, offered his respects to him and said, "Oh venerable preceptor, I do not want this kingdom which has caused the exile of my brother Rama. Being the eldest son, only Rama has the right to rule over the kingdom. Hence, at this very moment I shall go to the forest, fall at the feet of Rama and plead with Him to come and take over the reins of Ayodhya." Each of the four brothers was ready to sacrifice his desires and aspirations for the sake of his brothers. In this way, they set the highest ideals of self-sacrifice to the world.

In order to uphold the promise of His father, Rama got ready to go into exile. Wearing the dress of an ascetic, He went to the residence of mother Kausalya to seek her permission. Mother Kausalya was joyfully awaiting Rama's arrival as it was the day of

Rama's coronation. She expected Him to come to her in royal garments. But when she saw Him, she became worried and dejected. "Rama, is this the type of dress You should wear on the day of Your coronation?" she asked. Rama smilingly replied, "Mother, I have been coronated as the king of Aranya Rajya (kingdom of forest) by My father. I am going to the forest to protect sages and saints who are being put to suffering by the demons. Hence, kindly do not raise any objection to My sacred mission. I have to obey the command of My father." So saying, He prostrated before His mother and sought her permission to go to the forest. Hearing the words of Rama, mother Kausalya was overcome with sorrow. She pleaded with Him, "Son, You are talking of obeying the command of Your father only. What about the command of Your mother? I am the Ardhangini (better half) of Your father. Hence, it is Your bounden duty to obey my command also. I will not come in the way of Your going to the forest but let me also accompany You. You were born to me as a result of my intense penance and severe austerities performed over a number of years. I cannot live without You even for a minute." Rama pacified her saying, "Mother, it is not proper for you to leave your husband in old age. Moreover, he is very sad due to My separation from him. At this juncture, you should comfort and console him with soothing words. That is your foremost duty. For a wife, husband is God. He is her only refuge."

Sita heard this conversation. She looked at Rama and asked Him, "Rama, is not the Dharma same for all women? Can there be one Dharma for Your mother and another for me? You have asked me to stay back and look after Your father and mother. Now You are telling Your mother that serving the husband is the prime duty of a wife. Does it not hold good in my case too?" Mother Kausalya was moved by Sita's argument. She told Rama, "Son, the same Dharma holds good in the case of every woman. It is destined that I have to suffer in this manner. Why should You put Sita to suffering by leaving her behind in Ayodhya? She has given up everything and has decided to go with You to the forest. Do not disappoint her. Take her along with You. It is Your duty to take care of her." One can very well understand the nobility and broad-mindedness of mother Kausalya from this episode.

In this manner, the Ramayana presents many noble principles. In the Ramayana, we find the sweetest, most loving and harmonious relationships between the mother and the son, between the four brothers and between other members of the family. That is why the Ramayana is cited as the ideal regarding the relationship between brothers in the family. There is no limit to the glory and grandeur of the Ramayana.

### ***The Ramayana Teaches the Highest Principles of Morality***

The birthday of Rama is celebrated in order to remember the ideals He stood for. We have to ponder over the ideals set before us by Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna. Sage Vasishtha described the Divine form of Rama saying, *Pumsam Mohana Rupaya*. He extolled the glory and majesty of Rama: "Rama, the handsomeness that

You are endowed with is not limited to Your physical form alone. Your infinite love and compassion give You this blissful form. All men and women are attracted by the blissful form of Yours. You are the very personification of Sat-Chit-Ananda.”

It is your good fortune that you are able to listen to the sacred story of Rama and sing His glory. As I told you in the beginning, God shines effulgently in the universe and so does the universe in God. The relationship between God and the universe is intimate and inseparable. The universe is full of living beings. Each being is the embodiment of Rama. Do not confine Rama to a particular name and form. All the beings are His forms. Rama means the one who delights. He is present in all. *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). The world is the very form of God. All are the forms of God. Usually, people confine Rama to a particular form with a bow and a quiver of arrows. In fact, every man is Rama Swarupa (embodiment of Rama). That is why people name their children as Rama, Lakshmana, Krishna, Govinda, etc.

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

Lakshmana went to mother Sumitra to seek her blessings. ‘Su-mitra’ means a good friend. Her conduct was worthy of her name. When Lakshmana told her of his decision to accompany Sita and Rama to the forest, she was very happy that Lakshmana had the opportunity of serving Rama and Sita in the forest. She was not at all worried that none of her two sons would rule over the kingdom. Sumitra thought that it was her good fortune that her sons were serving Rama and Bharata. She had such noble feelings. Where there is God, there is His devotee. Where God and the devotee come together, victory is assured. So, Sumitra told Lakshmana, “Son, to be in the company of God is the greatest wealth. Ayodhya without Rama and Sita is verily the forest. The forest with Rama and Sita is verily Ayodhya. Sita and Rama are your parents. Serve them and spend your time blissfully.” Thus, she gave her immediate consent to Lakshmana to accompany Rama and Sita to the forest.

Lakshmana’s wife Urmila was a very good painter. Being unaware of the happenings, she was painting the picture of Rama’s coronation. As she was deeply engrossed in her work, Lakshmana entered the room all of a sudden and called her in a raised voice. She was

startled, and at once stood up. In the process, she accidentally spilled the paint on the picture she was painting. She felt sad that the picture of Rama's coronation was spoiled. Then Lakshmana remarked, "The coronation of Rama which is meant to bestow peace and prosperity on mankind is stalled because of Kaikeyi and the picture of coronation that you are painting is spoiled because of me." He informed her that he was accompanying Rama and Sita to the forest to serve them and said that he would return only after fourteen years. She was least perturbed at his decision. In fact, she was happy, and entreated him to serve Sita and Rama with utmost devotion. Pain and pleasure, sorrow and happiness follow one another. One should treat them with equanimity.

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

### **Imbibe the Ideals of the Ramayana in your Life**

There was great unity and understanding not only among the four brothers but also among their consorts. They are great ideals for every family. Is there any family today where daughters-in-law live in amity? Is there any family where brothers live in peace and harmony without indulging in disputes? We do not find such ideal families today. This Age of Kali has become the Age of Kalaha (conflict). In such a scenario, the Ramayana shines as the beacon of light to every family. How should the brothers, sisters and other members of the family conduct themselves? In the Ramayana, we find the demonstration of these great ideals. Merely reading the Ramayana is not enough; imbibe the great ideals of the Ramayana in your life. The Ramayana delights the entire mankind. It transcends the barriers of time, space, caste and religion. In all nations, at all times and under all circumstances, people will find fulfilment in life if they adopt the principle of unity. Even birds and animals have unity amongst themselves. They do not have the selfishness of hoarding things. Today we find wicked tendencies in man which are not found even in birds and animals.

There is not a single instance of internal dispute in the family of Dasaratha. You may question, "Was not Kaikeyi responsible for the family dispute which led to the exile of Rama?" No, it was not a dispute at all. In fact, Kaikeyi had great affection for Rama. She loved Him more dearly than her own son Bharata. But her mind was poisoned because of the bad company of Manthara. Hence, it is said, Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are. Manthara's seemingly evil conduct was guided by destiny. She acted under the influence of an incident that happened in her previous birth. She was a deer then. One day, her daughter was playing with her husband in the forest. The king of Kekaya came to the forest for hunting. He saw both the deer playing with each other. In an attempt to capture them, he killed the male deer with an arrow. The female deer was grief-stricken. She went to her mother and complained about the cruel act of the king. The mother advised her daughter to bear this loss with courage. Then the mother deer went to the

king and said, “Oh king, your act of killing my son-in-law is not proper at all. You should not have indulged in such a cruel act which separated my daughter from her husband.” She then pronounced this curse on him, “Just as I am suffering now due to the loss of my son-in-law, may you also suffer the loss of your son-in-law in the same way!” The mother deer took birth as Manthara and caused the death of Dasaratha who was the son-in-law of the King of Kekaya.

This life is nothing but an ocean with the waves of union and separation. Everybody has to face difficulties and adversities while traversing the worldly path, which is called Pravritti (worldliness). There is however another path of life, which is known as Nivritti (spirituality). For instance, a child goes to its mother and says, “I am hungry.” The mother who follows the worldly path will say, “Child, go and eat food. Your hunger will be satiated.” This is the Pravritti Dharma. But the mother who treads the spiritual path does not merely say, “Go and eat food.” She would advise the child as to what type of food to eat, when and how to eat. When you are hungry, you should not eat whatever you like without enquiring whether it is good for health or not. The Nivritti mother advises you to eat such food which will bestow good health on you.

The Vedas teach the path of harmony between the principles of Pravritti and Nivritti. We may have many desires. But there should be a limit to these desires. They should be based on truth and righteousness. Do not speak whatever comes to your mind. You should speak only after proper enquiry. These are some of the lessons that the Ramayana teaches to mankind. That is why the Ramayana is called the very form of the Vedas. It teaches harmony between Pravritti and Nivritti aspects of life in a beautiful manner. Pravritti is the Swabhava (innate nature) of Prakriti. Nivritti is the Swarupa (form) of the Atma. Nivritti fosters spiritual outlook to life. Spiritual outlook is of primary importance in our life. Perfect harmony between Pravritti and Nivritti is the main teaching of the Ramayana.

### **Principles Contained in the Ramayana are Eternal**

The Ramayana teaches the principles of Dharma and the path of duty to every individual. Though ages and aeons have passed, yet the eternal principles of Dharma presented in the Ramayana are the source of bliss for the entire mankind even today. We hold the characters of the Ramayana in great reverence even now. You can very well understand its greatness. There is no morality higher than what is contained in the Ramayana. The Ramayana should be the subject of our Parayana (deep study). Install the principles depicted in the Ramayana in your heart and experience bliss.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Practise the noble principles of the Ramayana. Never forget or ignore these sacred principles in life. It is to understand and assimilate the principles of the Ramayana that

we are celebrating the festival of Sri Rama Navami today. It is not enough if the celebration is confined merely to partaking of sweet pudding and other delicious items.

Sage Valmiki declared that the Ramayana would remain extant so long as there were mountains and rivers on the face of the earth. You may be wondering, what relationship exists between the Ramayana, mountains and rivers. The mountains symbolise men and the rivers women. As long as there are men and women in this world, the glory of the Ramayana will continue to shine brilliantly. Women are compared to rivers because they are the symbols of sacrifice. The rivers flow incessantly quenching the thirst of one and all. The Ramayana sets great ideals to mankind. People should contemplate on this sacred story and follow its ideals.

The marriage of Rama and Sita was celebrated in Mithila with all festivity and gaiety. People sang songs inviting one and all to see the divine marriage of Rama and Sita.

*Come let us go and see the marriage of Rama and Sita,  
The sight shall confer great merit.  
The lives of those who see this marriage will be sanctified.  
Oh come one and all to see the sacred marriage,  
Rama, who is riding on an elephant, is shining effulgently.  
Mother Sita is by His side,  
The brothers are at their service.  
Sita and Rama will smilingly enquire about our well-being;  
What else can we aspire for!  
Come let us go anon to see the holy wedding of Rama and Sita.*

(Telugu Song)

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

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “Rama Rama Rama Sita ...”

- **From Bhagavan's Sri Rama Navami Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 11th April 2003.**

#### DISCOVER YOUR DIVINITY

One has only to know oneself in order to contact the springs of bliss and immortality, and experience kinship with all living beings. In Sanskrit, the individual is known as Vyakti because he has to make his innate divinity Vyakta or explicit. That is your reality; discover it, dwell in it, have the desire to divulge it. Discard all low desires for a few acres of land or a fat account in the bank or a few more bungalows or cars. Desire rather the joy that will never fade, that will never cloy; it is deep, steady and strength-giving, the joy of divine realisation. Discover your holiness, your truth, your divinity. You may have doubts about what is Sathya, Dharma, Prema, etc., but you can have no doubt about yourself; is it not? So, find out who you are and be fixed in that truth. That is enough to save you, to give you everlasting joy. That is what the Vedas and the Upanishads teach, what the saints and sages experienced.

- Baba

#### NEWS FROM BRINDAVAN

##### JOYOUS UGADI CELEBRATIONS AT BRINDAVAN

Gaiety and piety marked the celebration of Ugadi at Brindavan, Whitefield (Bangalore) where a mammoth gathering of devotees assembled on 2nd April 2003 to celebrate it in the Divine proximity of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The venue of the celebrations was Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall which was tastefully decorated with beautiful banners, colourful buntings and flowers of many hues. Specially attractive were the decorations done with fresh flowers on the dais.

Sweet notes of Nadaswaram music welcomed Bhagavan Baba when He came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the assembled devotees on this auspicious morning of the Telugu and Kannada New Year at about 7.00 a.m. As soon as Bhagavan came to the Hall, the Institute students started Bhajans which were followed by the devotees in chorus with great devotional fervour. After blessing the

devotees in the entire Hall by His Darshan, Bhagavan came to the dais and occupied His chair. Soon after this, Bhagavan indicated the commencement of the programme by directing the Veda chanting group of students to chant the Vedic Mantras.

After the chanting of Vedic hymns by the students, two speakers addressed the gathering. The first speaker was Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal of the Brindavan College of the Institute. Dwelling on the New Year celebrations and the concept of time, Sri Sahni observed that every moment could become auspicious for man if he attained God's grace. For this, people should adhere to the teachings of Bhagavan, he said. In this regard, he referred to the five invaluable principles given by Bhagavan Baba through the five letters of the word 'watch', namely, watch your words, actions, thoughts, character and heart. After this, Warden of the Brindavan Campus, Sri B. N. Narasimha Murthy addressed the gathering in Kannada. Reciting a famous verse of Purandaradasa, Sri Murthy emphasised the value of Bhakti (devotion) for God realisation. Quoting an axiom of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Murthy observed that faith in God was most fundamental to devotion. The erudite speaker also quoted from the Upanishads to remind the devotees that only those who had devotion for God could attain eternal peace, not others. After these two speeches, Bhagavan Baba gave His Ugadi Message (full text given elsewhere in this issue) and brought it to a close at 8.45 a.m. with the Bhajan, "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...". The morning function concluded with Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam.

A scintillating music programme enthralled the devotees on the afternoon of 2nd April 2003 after Bhagavan Baba's arrival in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 4.00 p.m. The programme comprising a sparkling mixture of various compositions like Bhajans, group songs, Qawalis, etc., kept the audience spellbound for nearly one hour. It was presented by the students of the Institute. Ugadi celebrations came to a happy conclusion at the end of this programme with Arati to Bhagavan at 4.50 p.m.

### *SRI RAMA NAVAMI*

#### AT BRINDAVAN

Delivering His Divine Message on the holy day of Sri Rama Navami, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasised that the highest ideals set in the Ramayana were most essential in today's world which was full of divisions, dissensions and disturbances. Addressing the mammoth gathering of devotees at Brindavan Ashram on 11th April 2003, Bhagavan said, "Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna set great ideals to the whole world how brothers should conduct themselves in a family. They delighted one and all by their ideal conduct."



The venue of the celebrations was Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall which was beautifully decorated for this holy occasion. Special decorations were done on the dais. An electronic board displayed two important messages for this occasion, viz., “Mother and Motherland are Greater than Heaven”, and “May Peace and Goodwill Prevail in the World!” On the morning of this sacred day, Bhagavan Baba came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 7.00 a.m. Sweet notes of Nadaswaram music heralded the arrival of Bhagavan in the Hall, which started reverberating with Bhajan singing as Bhagavan proceeded slowly towards the dais. The programme started at 7.15 a.m. with Veda chanting by the Institute students.

Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, two former students of the Institute addressed the gathering. The first speaker was Sri K. Arun, who narrated several incidents when Bhagavan Baba gave Darshan in the form of Lord Rama to many of His devotees including the Raja of Venkatagiri and Mother Easwaramma. Explaining the meaning of the sacred word ‘Rama’, Sri Arun remarked that Rama signified joy. “When joy takes birth in our heart, that is Rama Navami,” he said. He concluded his speech with a song of Bhadrachalam Ramadas depicting Rama as Veda Swarupa. The second speaker, Sri Sriram Parshuram commenced his speech with a song of prayer to God to make the parched field of his heart fertile and to grow the crop of love in it. Citing the example of supreme devotion of Sabari for Rama, the speaker observed that it was the offering of pure and unsullied love that pleased God who was prepared to give everything including Himself to His devotee.

After these two speeches, Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourse explaining the relevance of the ideals of the Ramayana to the present-day world. Full text of Bhagavan’s Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue of “Sanathana Sarathi”. The morning programme in the Hall concluded with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.45 a.m. In the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. This programme was followed by Narayana Seva. Bhagavan inaugurated it by distributing food and clothes to the needy who had assembled in large numbers outside Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall to receive the blessed Prasadam from Bhagavan.

In the afternoon, Bhagavan came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 4.00 p.m. The afternoon programme comprised an inspiring speech, devotional songs and Bhajans. The speech was delivered by Dr. D. J. Gadhia of U. K. who has been an ardent devotee of Bhagavan since 1960’s. Dr. Gadhia narrated the incident of his miraculous escape in a car accident and stated that the greatest miracle of Bhagavan was His love which was transforming the entire mankind. Dr. Gadhia’s speech was followed by Bhajans by the Institute students. After this, the renowned classical singer Ms. P. Susheela enthralled the devotees with her devotional songs. Sri Rama Navami celebrations came to a happy conclusion at 4.50 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

#### *TAMIL NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS*

## AT BRINDAVAN

Addressing a huge gathering of devotees at His Brindavan Ashram, Whitefield on the Tamil New Year day on 14th April 2003, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba exhorted them to imbibe new and divine feelings in the New Year. He said that in Kali Yuga chanting of the Divine Name of God was the surest path of salvation. “So, chant the Divine Name at all times, at all places and in all circumstances”, He said. Bhagavan called upon the devotees to practise Sathya and Dharma, the two cardinal principles of Indian culture. He said, “There is nothing like American Truth, German Truth, Japanese Truth, Indian Truth, Pakistani Truth, etc. Truth is one and the same for all nations. Hence, recognise Truth as God and worship it by strictly adhering to it. The world is full of unrest and suffering today because people have forgotten truth. *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Only truth and righteousness can bring peace and prosperity on the world. *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). This is the most important principle of Indian culture. Once you develop truth and righteousness, peace and love will automatically follow. Righteousness is the head of Indian culture and truth its feet. But today people have severed the head and feet of Indian culture. They are clinging on to the trunk of Artha and Kama (wealth and desire). What is the use of mere trunk without the head and the feet? People strive to protect the country. However, if truth and righteousness are practised by the people, the country would be safe and secure. You need not make any special efforts to protect the country. It is enough if you protect truth and righteousness. The entire world is based on these two principles.”

Celebrations of Tamil New Year started on the morning of 14th April 2003 with the Darshan of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, the venue of the function, which was beautifully decorated for the auspicious occasion. Bhagavan came to the Hall at 6.40 a.m. and showered the bliss of His Darshan on the devotees. Simultaneously, Bhajan also started suffusing the milieu with devotional fervour. The programme started at 7.20 a.m. with chanting of the sacred Vedic Mantras. After this, Sri B. N. Narasimha Murthy introduced the two speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to address the devotees before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan.

The first speaker was the renowned educationist Prof. Chitti Babu, former Vice Chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University. Prof. Chitti Babu observed that by giving the Mantras like “Love All, Serve All” and “Help Ever, Hurt Never”, Bhagavan Baba was showing the royal path of divinity to mankind. Describing Bhagavan as the world teacher and benefactor and protector of humanity, the learned speaker remarked that Bhagavan had incarnated on the earth because of His unbounded love for mankind. Expressing gratitude to Bhagavan for all that He had done for the good of all, Prof. Chitti Babu advised the devotees to put the teachings of Bhagavan into practice. The second speaker was Sri G. K. Raman, Convener of Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Tamil Nadu State. Sri Raman observed that the welfare of the world depended upon the behaviour of

individuals. So, every individual had to work for his evolution and play a role in the transformation of the world. For this, he stressed the need for purity of thought, word and deed and service of those who were not so fortunate. Expressing gratitude to Bhagavan Baba for the Water Project for the city of Chennai ( Tamil Nadu), Sri Raman said, Bhagavan had undertaken to solve this acute problem of scarcity of water even without asking when all human efforts failed to solve it.

After these two speeches, Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourse and exhorted the devotees to practise and protect Sathya and Dharma and redeem their life. The morning programme came to a close at 8.40 a.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam.

An excellent musical programme delighted the devotees in the afternoon when the Sundaram Bhajan Group presented their programme of devotional music in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Comprising vocal and instrumental compositions, this beautiful presentation touched the heart of one and all and left them spellbound for nearly one hour from 4.00 to 5.00 p.m. Obviously pleased with the performance of the Group, Bhagavan went up on the dais at the end of the programme to bless them. He created a gold chain with a locket for one of the boys and distributed clothes to all the participants. Bhagavan also posed for photographs with them. With this, the celebrations of Tamil New Year came to a happy conclusion. Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 5.10 p.m. at the conclusion of the programme.

### **KERALA DEVOTEES CELEBRATE VISHU AT BRINDAVAN**

This year's Vishu celebrations at Brindavan presented a grand and colourful spectacle with thousands of Kerala youth participating in it. The decorations in the traditional Kerala style inside and outside Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall were simply marvellous. Bhagavan was greeted with Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam music when He came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 6.55 a.m. to bless the devotees on the morning of 15th April 2003. Bhagavan blessed the children of Sai Niketan (orphanage) who stood with Thalam (ceremonial plates) to receive Him. The Bhajans that started at the arrival of Bhagavan continued during the time Bhagavan completed His full round of morning Darshan. When Bhagavan came to the dais and sat in His chair, the Kerala devotees sang an invocation group song in praise of Bhagavan in Malayalam.

After Vedic chants by a group of students of Sai Niketan, the programme began with an introductory speech by Prof. Mukundan, State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala. Prof. Mukundan extended his greetings to all on the auspicious New Year, Vishu and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for His unbounded love, particularly on the Kerala youth who were participating in the Sadhana Camp at

Brindavan. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, Justice Jawahar Lal Gupta, Chief Justice of Kerala High Court, addressed the gathering. Narrating his personal experiences, Justice Gupta told how he received Bhagavan's grace and blessings at several critical periods of his life. He prayed to Bhagavan to give strength to the youth of the country so that they grow up as nation builders and restore the pristine glory of the country.

After this, Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourse. Referring to the significance of the festival of Vishu, Bhagavan said, "Today is the day of great happiness for the people of Kerala. The farmers bring home the harvested crop and rejoice. Food is very essential for the nation. The farmers feed the nation and bring peace and prosperity to it. It is their good fortune that they are able to render such great service to the nation by toiling in the fields from dawn to dusk. The nation can be happy and peaceful only when the farmers, who grow food, are happy and contented." Showering His blessings on the devotees, Bhagavan had a special word of praise for the beautiful land of Kerala which stood as a testimony of the truth of the Vedas. The people of Kerala were very hard working and they excelled in education, He added.

Bhagavan further said, "I have seen that the people of Kerala are always engaged in some activity or the other. They work very hard. They are not interested in comforts and pleasures. They derive happiness in working hard and serving society. They strive for peace and security of one and all. That is their most sacred virtue. Kerala is the seat of education. It is the land which stands as testimony to the profound truths enunciated in the Vedas, Sastras, Puranas and Itihasas. In such a land of peace and sacredness, people today are unable to experience unsullied happiness which their ancestors were able to enjoy in the past. However, there is no cause for worry. A time will come when Kerala will regain its past glory." Bhagavan exhorted one and all to work hard and perform their duty sincerely. "Man's life is bound by Kaala, Karma, Kaarana, Kartavya (time, action, cause, duty). Due to the effect of Kali Age, man does not put his body to hard work. Both the educated and the uneducated have become lethargic. You have to sanctify your life by doing righteous actions. Action is the cause for everything. Action is life. Action is our duty. It is very unfortunate that man does not put his heart and soul in action. He wants to lead an easy life. Even the students want to pass the examinations without putting in much effort. They want to secure jobs without working hard. After securing jobs, they want salaries without discharging their duties. This type of conduct is not good. It is said, *Kashte Phali* (hard work yields rich rewards). The rewards that one gets will be commensurate with the efforts one puts in. One should recognise this truth and work hard accordingly. Unfortunately, this type of work ethics is not seen these days. There are people who go to office only to mark their attendance. Each one has to question himself whether he is discharging his duty properly or not. It is most essential that man becomes duty conscious." At the end of His nectarine Discourse, Bhagavan sent the devotees into raptures by singing three Bhajans in His mellifluous voice. The morning programme came to a close at 8.35 with offer of Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam to all.

The afternoon of 15th April 2003 came alive with a musical presentation by a group of renowned artistes from Kerala. Bhagavan came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 4.15 p.m. The music programme started soon after Bhagavan's arrival and continued up to 5.00 p.m. The artistes who presented this programme were: Sri M. G. Sreekumar, Sri T. S. Radhakrishnan, Sri Kavalam Sreekumar, Sri Babu, Sri Ramesh S. and Smt. Radhika Tilak. The artistes enthralled the devotees with new compositions specially composed for this auspicious occasion. Vishu celebrations came to a happy conclusion with this excellent devotional presentation at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan. In the end, Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 5.05 p.m.

### **20TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRAYEE BRINDAVAN**

The abode of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Brindavan on the outskirts of Whitefield (Bangalore) is not only a building of great architectural beauty, but it is also a centre of spiritual reawakening of the world. It is appropriately named Trayee Brindavan since it is the abode on earth of Poornavata Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who has incarnated as the embodiment of Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara, the Trinity responsible for the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. Every year, the devotees of Bhagavan Baba and the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning celebrate the day of its inauguration with enthusiasm and devotion. This year also a solemn and simple function was held on the morning of 26th April 2003 to celebrate its 20th Anniversary.

Beautiful decorations were done on this occasion in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall for the celebrations. Trayee Brindavan building, particularly its gates looked really very charming with decorations of flower patterns. However, the main centre of attraction was the lawn in front of the Trayee building, where the creative genius of the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning had set up a piece of ethereal beauty. A cut-out of Bhagavan Baba with figures of students formed the background of the setting while the aesthetic patterns in granite amidst blooming lotuses formed the main centre of this grand display. Obviously, it showed the love of the students for Bhagavan and Bhagavan's love for the students, which was the theme of this piece of art.

Bhagavan Baba looked at this beautiful display of artistic skill of the students with great appreciation while going to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall for giving Darshan to the assembled devotees on the morning of 26th April 2003 at 6.40 a.m. On His return from Darshan, Bhagavan came to see this marvellous display of great artistic beauty. He blessed the students who created this and showered His Divine Love on them. Standing amidst the students with beaming faces, Bhagavan ceremoniously cut the cake placed in the centre of this display, and posed for photographs with them. Prasadam was distributed to all on this auspicious occasion.

## NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES

**Assam and N.E. Region:** A good deal of enthusiasm was generated in Jhorabari, an outlying village near Guwahati on 6th April 2003 when 65 doctors and specialists from various disciplines like medicine, paediatrics, E.N.T., dermatology, dentistry, gynaecology and ophthalmology, etc., set up a day-long free medical camp at the local Girls' High School. It was organised by the Guwahati Samithi in association with neighbouring Sarpara-Uparhali Samithi and local village leaders. 1459 patients, primarily women, children and old people received free treatment along with medicines.

**Haryana - Chandigarh:** *Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Haryana - Chandigarh conducted district level multifaceted health awareness medical camps, veterinary camps and other spiritual activities in the districts of Chandigarh (Maloya, Hallo Majara), Panchkula (Nada), Kurukshetra (Ram-saran Majra), Shahbad (Madanpura), Jind (Ahirka) and Hissar (Baari) during the months of February and March 2003. Sai Youth conducted all these activities and camps in the remote villages of these districts. The camps were attended by a team of medical specialists and veterinary surgeons who treated 2228 patients and 615 animals. All the patients were given free medicines with regular follow-up schedule.*

Sai Youth opened a Gram Seva Kendra at village Kunjpura in Karnal district where a Vocational Tailoring Centre for ladies was opened with daily schedule, enrolling 25 ladies. A Bal Vikas Centre was also opened with 42 children on roll.

**Himachal Pradesh:** Two medical camps were organised at Poanta Saheb and Bilaspur on 23rd March and 29th March 2003 respectively. 2502 patients were given proper medical check-up and free medical treatment. Special arrangements were made for the treatment pertaining to ophthalmology, E.N.T., paediatrics and dental care. All the patients were served food.

The State Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of the State was held on 30th March at Hamirpur. 1150 active workers participated in the Conference. Stress was laid on the assimilation and practice of the teachings of Bhagavan Baba in different facets of life and to carry them to different sections of society by organising awareness programmes.

**Orissa:** The 28th State Conference of Orissa Sai Organisation was held at Baripada from 16th March 2003 to 18th March 2003. 2063 delegates attended the Conference. The theme of the Conference was "Transformation through Seva". A spiritual exhibition was

set up depicting the message of Bhagavan Baba, dynamic parenting, Sri Sathya Sai educare, disaster management, teaching aids for Bal Vikas classes, etc. A rally of devotees with beautifully decorated chariot of Swami and cultural programmes based on Swami's message left an indelible impression on the hearts of participants and general public. Some important decisions were taken on Bal Vikas, Mahila Vibhag, youth activities, vocational training, phase-wise planning of 80 ideal villages, planning for 80th Birthday of Bhagavan and action plan for the implementation of the decisions of the International Seva Conference.

*Sri Sathya Sai Rural Community Centre-cum-Cyclone Shelter, inaugurated by the All India President on 6th January 2001 has been providing regular medical assistance and vocational training to a cluster of nearby villages with the help of specialist doctors. During Jan-March, 2003, the number of patients who benefited from the service was 6803 (allopathy) and 982 (homoeopathy). The Second Annual Day of the Centre was observed on 5th January 2003. A special medical camp and a veterinary camp were organised with specialist doctors on that day. 890 patients and 127 cattle were treated. Sai Youth extended loving service by organising Narayan Seva and village sanitation on the occasion.*

It was a dream come true for 1170 youth from Kerala who had the rare good fortune to attend a two-day Sadhana Camp on 12th and 13th April 2003 at Brindavan in the Divine proximity of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Bhagavan delivered three nectarine Discourses during the Camp. Besides, the participants were addressed by a galaxy of erudite speakers.

### **Sadhana Camp for Kerala Youth at Brindavan**

#### **Bhagavan Inaugurates the Sadhana Camp**

The youth along with other devotees experienced the bliss of Bhagavan's Darshan on the morning of 12th April 2003 in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall when He came to the Hall at 7.00 a.m. After Darshan, the youth assembled in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam to attend the first session of the Sadhana Camp. Bhagavan came to the Kalyana Mandapam at 8.50 a.m. He was offered a hearty welcome with a devotional song which expressed the happiness of all those who were present there. After this, Bhagavan graciously inaugurated the Sadhana Camp by lighting the sacred lamp.

Before the Inaugural Address of Bhagavan Baba, two speakers addressed the gathering. The first speaker, Sri B. N. Narasimha Murthy, Warden, Brindavan Campus of the Institute observed that all people from princes to paupers were coming to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan because of His love and compassion for the entire mankind. The second speaker Sri K. Arun, a former student of the Institute narrated his personal experiences

and told how he was drawn towards the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba. Thereafter, Bhagavan delivered His Inaugural Discourse.

### **Bhagavan's Inaugural Discourse**

Emphasising the need for development of character in the youth, Bhagavan said, "The end of education is character". Bhagavan elaborated further:

Merely acquiring knowledge from books is not enough; knowledge should be put into practice. Learning is a continuous process. It is not limited to what is learnt in school and college. Bookish knowledge is only superficial knowledge. One should have practical knowledge which comes from the heart. Practical knowledge leads one to inward path. Inward path is the spiritual path. God is within man in the form of Angirasa, which pervades every cell of his body.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse by advising the youth to control the senses, master the mind and be a mastermind. They should see, hear, think and do all that is good and avoid all that is evil. That is the way to God.

After concluding His Discourse at 9.50 a.m., Bhagavan left for His abode and directed the proceedings of the Sadhana Camp to be continued. Thereafter, Sri B. N. Narasimha Murthy gave an illuminating talk on the topic "Your Life, Swami's Message". This was followed by a talk on the qualities of youth by Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The gathering was also addressed by Prof. E. Mukundan, State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala. Another talk was given by Sri Ruchir Desai, a faculty member of Brindavan Campus of the Institute on the topic "Sai Message for the Youth". This was followed by a question and answer session on "How to Imbibe Bhagavan's Message."

The afternoon session was conducted in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall. The programme started with Bhajans which were led by the students of the Institute after the arrival of Bhagavan in the Hall at 4.00 p.m. This was followed by Veda chanting by a group of students. In the beginning, Prof. E. Mukundan presented the summary of the proceedings of the sessions conducted in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam. After this, Bhagavan gave His second Discourse to the participants of the Sadhana Camp. As the venue of the Discourse was Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, other devotees also got the benefit of listening to Bhagavan's Discourse.

### **Bhagavan's Second Discourse**

Addressing the young boys and girls, Bhagavan said:



Youth does not indicate a particular age-group. It indicates purity, sacredness, good character and a sense of adventure. One who has perfect love and perfect bliss is a youth. Young boys and girls should know the right principles of life and adhere to them. For this, they should have Satsanga. Satsanga does not merely mean good company. Sath is changeless and eternal. The youth should get rid of the six evil qualities of Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy). Where there is anger, love cannot enter there. When anger enters, all evil qualities also enter. The youth should imbibe love; they should fill their heart with love. Then anger and hatred cannot approach them. Anger is followed by ego. When anger, ego and hatred take possession of man, he loses his humanness. The youth should remember their three debts – debt to God, debt to the preceptor and debt to parents. When one pays these three debts, one attains the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara.

Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, "Pibare Rama Rasam ..." at 5.20 p.m. The programme concluded at 5.25 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Second Day's Proceedings of the Sadhana Camp**

The second day's programme of the Sadhana Camp started in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam after the morning Darshan of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall on 13th April 2003. Bhagavan came to the Kalyana Mandapam at 8.30 a.m. The first speaker who addressed the gathering was Sri K. Arun. Narrating some inspiring incidents from the life of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Arun observed that Bhagavan is the greatest ideal for the youth today because He is always young at heart and He has the greatest strength of character. Sri Arun concluded his talk with advice to the youth to follow the example of Bhagavan and adhere to the values taught by Him.

The second speaker of the session was Sri Sriram Parshuram. He also narrated a few incidents from Bhagavan's life to illustrate that Bhagavan is the embodiment of selflessness. Emphasising the value of sacrifice in man's life, Sri Parshuram said that one should always think that one was the universal Self and not the little self.

The third speaker was Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan College of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Sri Sahni congratulated the participating youth on their great good fortune for this great opportunity of such a sacred camp in the hallowed precincts of Brindavan and in the immediate Divine Presence of the Avatar of the Age Himself. Narrating a few experiences of his life as a student and a teacher in Sai institutions, Sri Sahni observed that Bhagavan always made the students remember their divine origin, so that they could realise that they were the children of immortality.

After this, Dr. Ravi Kumar, a faculty member of the Brindavan College addressed the gathering. Dr. Ravi Kumar referred to Swami's letter to His elder brother Seshama Raju

which He wrote at the age of 17 years explaining that He had incarnated on the earth to relieve the suffering of mankind and put man on the path of righteousness. Dr. Ravi Kumar felt that youth today should follow the ideals set by Bhagavan to the world and dedicate their life to the Divine Mission of Bhagavan.

The last speaker of this session was Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. Sri Srinivasan congratulated the youth of Kerala who were recipients of Bhagavan's grace in such abundance. Bhagavan, he said, is loving and compassionate but He always maintains very high standards of excellence in every work. Sri Srinivasan advised the youth to make efforts to come up to Bhagavan's expectations and become a Sai devotee by their perfect conduct.

After the talk of Sri Srinivasan, Swami proceeded to His abode at 9.55 a.m. After Swami left, Sri Sanjay Sahni addressed the gathering on "Transformation". After this, Dr. Ravi Kumar shared with the audience a few of his experiences on "Sai Mahima". It was followed by Sri Narasimha Murthy's address on "Faith". That evening, the All India President addressed the gathering on "The Role of Youth in the Sai Organisation".

#### **Bhagavan's Valedictory Address**

In the afternoon, the programme was conducted in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall. Bhagavan came to the Hall at 3.55 p.m. Two youth representatives from Kerala were blessed by Bhagavan to address the gathering before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan. First, Sri Gopakumar, youth in-charge of the State presented the future action plan and the decisions taken by the participants in the course of the Sadhana Camp. This was followed by a brief speech by Ms. Shyama on Swami's Message of love. Bhagavan gave His Valedictory Discourse after these speeches. Bhagavan advised the youth to practise what they had learnt during the Sadhana Camp. He said:

Devotion, duty and discipline are the qualities every student must possess. Due to the effect of Kali Age, the students today are adopting bad qualities and are leaving good qualities. It is very rare to find students with good thoughts and good deeds. In this scenario, Sai Youth must become ideals for the whole country. They should set high ideals for their brothers and sisters in the country. Only then can the country make progress. The youth must have *Papa Bheeti*, *Daiva Preeti* and *Sangha Neeti* (fear of sin, love for God and morality in society). Only then can they become true human beings. Wherever they are, whenever it may be, they should develop only good thoughts. Today there is only sadness, violence, suffering and fear all over the world. Bad qualities are the cause of bad deeds. Therefore, the youth should develop only good qualities. They should develop self-confidence and self-respect. Lives of Abraham Lincoln and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar are worth emulating. The youth should respect their parents. Swami Himself is the example how He fulfilled the

wishes of Mother Easwaramma. The youth should develop love. They have love, but it is going in different directions. It should go only in one sacred direction, viz., God.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse at 5.25 with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ..." The programme concluded with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

Thus concluded the Sadhana Camp of the Kerala youth. With hearts full of gratitude for the infinite love and grace of Swami, the Kerala youth members and devotees returned to Kerala after the Vishu celebrations on 15th April 2003.

### **TAMIL NEW YEAR SANDESH**

#### **CHANTING OF GOD'S NAME**

#### **IS THE ROYAL PATH TO LIBERATION**

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

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today we are experiencing great happiness in celebrating Tamil New Year day. Swabhanu is the name of this year. 'Swa' means Atma which indicates that man should develop Atmic feelings in this New Year and start a new life. Many new years have gone by. But there is no change in man at all, with the result that new feelings have not taken root in him. Man should tread a new and noble path and set an ideal to others. Only then would he have celebrated the New Year in its true sense. He should practise and propagate new ideals in his daily life.

#### **Adhere Firmly to Truth and Righteousness**

Vedanta declares, *Aham Etat Na* (I am not this). Aham means 'I', the Atmic principle and 'this' refers to the body. Man should not give scope to Ahamkara (ego) by identifying himself with the body. 'I' does not correspond to the body. 'I' corresponds to the eternal and immortal Atma which is not tainted by ego, pomposity and immorality. Only when man develops such Atma Viswasa (self-confidence) can he set an ideal to others. Man today does not understand the meaning of self-confidence. First of all, man should have confidence in himself.

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

Truth is the direct manifestation of God. People attribute various names to God. *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). Names are many but God is one. Be it any State or country, God is one. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (truth is one but the wise refer to it by various names). What is truth? It is not merely reporting what is seen, heard or experienced. Truth is transcendental; it is not bound by time, space and circumstances. Truth is truth in all countries, at all times and under all circumstances.

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

(Telugu)

There is nothing like American Truth, German Truth, Japanese Truth, Indian Truth, Pakistani Truth, etc. Truth is one and the same for all nations. Hence, recognise truth as God and worship it by strictly adhering to it. The world is full of unrest and suffering today because people have forgotten truth. *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Only truth and righteousness can bring peace and prosperity in the world. *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). This is the most important principle of Indian culture. Once you develop truth and righteousness, peace and love will automatically follow. Righteousness is the head of Indian culture and truth its feet. But today people have severed the head and feet of Indian culture. They are clinging on to the trunk of Artha and Kama (wealth and desire). What is the use of mere trunk without the head and the feet? People strive to protect the country. However, if truth and righteousness are practised by the people, the country would be safe and secure. You need not make any special efforts to protect the country. It is enough if you protect truth and righteousness. The entire world is based on these two principles.

*Embodiments of Love!*

New Year does not bring with it new principles of truth and righteousness. They are changeless and eternal. When they are practised, the whole world will be taken care of. Hence, we have to keep in mind these two principles. Truth and righteousness are verily the two eyes of man. In fact, they are his very life principle. He may undertake any

activity, he may do any job or business but he should make truth and righteousness as the undercurrent of all his endeavours.

Years have rolled by but man has not given up his old and mean feelings. Man should take to a new path in the New Year. He should purify his heart. Humanness will blossom in man only when he transforms his heart. Merely putting on new clothes is not enough; man has to change his character and conduct. His conduct should be based on truth and righteousness. In fact, man should dedicate his whole life to truth and righteousness. Only then will humanness prevail in the world. What is humanness? It is not limited merely to human form. Each and every limb of the body should be suffused with truth and righteousness. This is the Transcendental Truth. It is changeless. It is the basis of humanness. In fact, man is not a mere mortal; he is the embodiment of divinity. How does God pervade the body? The Vedas say, *Raso Vai Sah* (God is in the form of essence). God is present in the form of Rasa (essence) in every limb and every cell of the body and protects it. Hence, He is called Angirasa. If God does not protect the body, who else can? However, the body is not permanent.

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

(Telugu Poem)

### **Develop New and Divine Feelings in the New Year**

*Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the body; don't follow the mind. Follow the conscience.* Conscience is your God. You are forgetting God who is present in you in the form of conscience and who is protecting your body in the form of Angirasa. God is changeless, pure and eternal. He has absolutely no trace of selfishness in Him. He is totally selfless and looks after the welfare of His devotees who have selfless love for Him. Do not superimpose your selfishness on God, and do not get deluded. When everything is in His hand, where is any scope for selfishness in Him? He is selflessness personified. Whatever He does, it is for the welfare of all. *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) This is what God wants. He is called Aprameya (immeasurable) as He is beyond all measure. He is present in man's Hridaya in the form of bliss. He shines as Prema Swarupa (embodiment of love).

Being the embodiment of Dharma, God practises Dharma. He leads by His example, setting an ideal to the entire mankind. He says, "Oh man! Why fear when I am here? Follow Me." (*loud applause*) Why should one fear when God has given such an assurance? If you follow Him, He will certainly bestow on you pure and unsullied bliss.

Saints and sages of yore performed intense penance in order to have the vision of God. Some of them died during their penance, but others did not give up their resolve. They continued their penance with unflinching faith and determination. Ultimately, they had the vision of the Divine. Then they declared to the world that they had seen God. *Vedhametham Purusham Mahantham Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Thamas - the darkness of ignorance). They exhorted people to make efforts to see God and experience bliss. If you contemplate on God with pure and selfless love, you can also see Him. There are many people who search for God. God is everywhere but you should have the eyes to see Him. Today people try to see God with their Charma Chakshus (physical eyes). That is why they are unable to see Him. One can see God only with Jnana Chakshu (eye of wisdom). *Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavrutya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Where is the need to search for God who is everywhere? What we have to search for is not God but a true human being! But he is not to be seen anywhere. Nowadays we find only Akara Manavas (human beings in form), not Achara Manavas (human beings in practice). Practice is very essential in the present-day world. Without Acharana (practice), what is the use of merely having Akara (form)?

Do not consider the body to be permanent. It is merely an instrument given by God. Make proper use of this instrument by discharging your duties and serving society. Help those who are needy and helpless. Take good care of the destitute and the poor with love. Dedicate your life to the cause of Sathya and Dharma. That is how you should celebrate the New Year. Get rid of your old evil feelings. Fill your heart with novel, fresh and noble feelings and lead a new life. But where is such a new life in the present-day world? Days have changed but feelings have not. Guddalu (clothes) are changed everyday but Gunamu (character) has not changed. Merely donning ochre robes will not make you a Sannyasi (renunciant). You should develop good qualities and become a *Sarvasanga Parithyagi* (one totally devoid of attachment). Only then can you be called a true Sannyasi.

*Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaike Amrutatthwamanasuh* (immortality is not attained through good actions, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Who has this quality of sacrifice in the present-day world? One in a million is endowed with this noble quality. Though God is present in everyone, He manifests Himself in a man of sacrifice. Sacrifice is of paramount importance to man. He should become a Thyaga Jeevi (man of sacrifice), not a Bhoga Jeevi (pleasure-seeker). Thyaga leads to Yoga, whereas Bhoga gives rise to Roga (disease). So, give up Bhoga and take to the path of Yoga. There are some people who do Rama Chintana (contemplation on Rama) day in and day out. Every moment of their life and every cell of their body is filled with the Name of Rama. Such a life is a life of fulfilment. Indeed, their lives are sanctified.

Man should incessantly contemplate on God, who is his only saviour. The world will never come to your rescue. The world has witnessed many changes in the fields of politics and philosophy. Old Siddhantas (schools of thought) have given way to new ones. Many political parties have come and gone. But in what way has the world benefited from all these changes? There is no progress whatsoever. The world is where it has been. Everyone is interested only in filling his/her belly. No one is making any effort to understand the principle of Divinity. You have to think of God every moment. If you win the grace of God, you can overcome any obstacle and acquire any type of wealth.

### **Tremendous Power of the Name of Rama**

Once Ramdas prayed, “Oh Lord! What did I do to deserve Your bounteous grace? I have not offered anything to You, yet You shower Your grace on me.” Then the Lord replied, “My dear, the spirit of Thyaga (sacrifice) is true Yoga. I know the intense penance that you are doing in your mind, though you may not be aware of it.” Only God can understand the sacrifice you make in your mind. Others need not understand; they cannot understand anyway. Thyaga and Yoga lead us to Prema.

Nobody can estimate the infinite power of Rama. It can be experienced only in the heart. That is why Thyagaraja sings the praise of Rama:

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

(Telugu Poem)

Love is the only yardstick to measure the power of divinity. Hence, we have to develop love to experience divinity. Hanuman could jump across the vast ocean because he chanted the Name of Rama always. With the power of Rama's Name, he could lift mighty mountains. How could the monkeys build a bridge across the ocean? In the beginning, the boulders were sinking in the ocean and the monkeys were frustrated. Then

Hanuman thought of a plan. He inscribed the letter 'Ra' on one boulder and 'ma' on another and threw them in the ocean one after the other. They stuck together to make the Name 'Rama'. With the help of many such boulders bearing the letters 'Ra' and 'ma', a bridge was constructed. The boulders became light and floated on water only due to the power of Rama's Name. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between the love of a devotee and the grace of God. Only love can win divine grace. You have to practise righteousness and tread the path of sacrifice to experience everlasting happiness. The Name and principle of Rama will give you tremendous strength and power. The divine principle underlying the Avatars of Rama and Krishna can neither be explained in words nor understood with the help of worldly education. One can understand them only through love. Fill your heart with love and chant the Name of Rama, immersing yourself in bliss. Then Rama will come to you Himself.

### **God is the Ocean of Compassion and Love**

Once there lived an ardent devotee of Rama in Chengalpat near Madras (now Chennai). He wanted to attend the marriage of Thyagaraja's daughter to present a picture of Rama to the bride. In those days, there were no buses, cars or aeroplanes. Therefore, he walked all the way from Chengalpat to Thiruvayyar, carrying the picture of Rama. On seeing the picture, Thyagaraja was ecstatic and burst into a song – "Oh Rama! You walked all the way in order to protect me! Oh Lord! You have taken so much trouble!" In this manner, he went on extolling Rama's love and compassion. He experienced unity with Rama's Divinity. He considered Rama his dear old friend.

You don't need to observe any formalities or use respectful words when you address your old friend. Thyagaraja addressed Rama with the same intimacy in the song, "*Ra Ra Ma Inti Daaka ...*" (Oh Rama! Come to my house). There is another song which reflects the feeling of friendship: "*Enta Vedukondu, Raghava ... Panthamelara, Oh Raghava ...*" (How long should I plead with You, Oh Raghava! Why are You so obstinate and unresponsive?...). Thyagaraja felt, "It is my duty to pray till Your heart melts. But the warmth of my prayer does not seem to have touched Your heart. One day or the other, Your heart will surely melt. I will wait till such time. I am in no hurry." In this manner, he comforted himself. Then Rama came and granted him His Divine Darshan. No one can comprehend how and when God is going to shower His grace on a Sadhaka and what type of boons He is going to grant him. He gives so many gifts and ultimately gives Himself and makes you ecstatic. Then why are you distancing yourself from such a merciful Lord?

You are aware of the prayer that is chanted before partaking of food:

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



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

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva  
Praninam Dehamasrita,  
Pranapana Samayukta  
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham.*

God says, “My dear one, I am in you in the form of Vaishvanara (digestive fire). I receive and digest the four types of food that you partake of. You don’t need to send any special invitation to Me or extol Me. I am yours and you are Mine. I am with you, in you, above you, below you, around you.” God has given this promise to man. But man is not able to understand the value of God’s promise.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

In this New Year, develop new and noble feelings. Contemplate on God with full faith and He will grant you all comforts and happiness. Lead your life with love and enjoy peace and happiness. You should strive not only for your happiness and that of your friends and relatives, but for the happiness and welfare of all. Pray for the happiness of all. *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) Then you will certainly experience true peace and bliss. Those who help others will always be helped in turn; they will never be put to harm.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Rama Rama Rama Sita ...*” and then continued the Discourse.)

*Embodiments of Love!*

When you chant the Divine Name with love even once, you will experience inexplicable and overwhelming bliss in your heart. Divine Name melts even a stone-hearted person. Even ice takes some time to melt but God’s heart melts instantaneously when you chant His Name with love. So, chant the Name of God. Even while you are travelling, you can chant His Name silently without attracting others’ attention. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Rama Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times and under all circumstances, contemplate on the Divine Name of Rama). There is no greater Sadhana than this. The essence of all Sadhanas is contained in this. In the Kali Yuga, chanting of God’s Name is the royal path to liberation. *Harer Nama Harer Nama Harer Namaiva Kevalam, Kalau Nastyeva Nastyeva Nastyeva Gathiranyatha* (chanting of the Divine Name is the only path to liberation in this Age of Kali). There is no path higher than this.

- **From Bhagavan’s Tamil New Year Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 14th April 2003.**

*If we desire peace for the individual, for society and for the nation, it can be achieved only through spiritual means. Hence, we must make every effort to acquire spiritual growth without attaching excessive importance to worldly comforts.*

- Baba

**Easwaramma Day Celebrations  
at Brindavan**

Celebration of Easwaramma Day on 6th May is an event of global magnitude in which lakhs of Bal Vikas children in all parts of the world take part. A series of cultural, spiritual and social welfare programmes are organised in memory of the Divine Mother Easwaramma who set great ideals to the world by her exemplary life. More particularly, her love for children and concern for the poor and downtrodden make her life a shining example of ideal womanhood for the entire world. Sai Organisations all over the world celebrate this day to express their love and gratitude to the Divine Mother Easwaramma. At Brindavan, this event assumes added glory and majesty since it is celebrated in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Himself. Bhagavan not only blesses the Bal Vikas children and Gurus who organise this event, but also inaugurates many programmes for the welfare of the poor and needy. Like previous years, this year also week-long programmes were organised to celebrate this event of great cultural, social and spiritual significance.

The celebrations started on 6th May 2003 with early morning Omkaram, Suprabhatam and Nagar Sankirtan led by Bal Vikas children of Bangalore. The entire premises of Brindavan Ashram bore a festive look with decorations of flowers, colourful buntings and festoons. Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, the venue of the celebrations, was aesthetically decorated with banners and flowers. Beautiful floral decorations adorned the dais where portraits of the Divine Parents, Mother Easwaramma and Sri Pedda Venkama Raju, were prominently displayed to enable the devotees to pay their homage to them. The electronic display board above the dais displayed the message "Mother and Motherland are Greater than Heaven". The same theme was conveyed in beautiful lettering in Kannada and Telugu on the velvet arch set up at the entrance of the Hall.

Nadaswaram music welcomed Bhagavan when He came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall to bless the huge gathering of devotees and Bal Vikas children at 6.55 a.m. on 6th May 2003. As soon as Bhagavan came to the Hall, Bal Vikas children started Bhajans which concluded after Bhagavan occupied His chair on the dais at 7.20 a.m. The programme began with Veda chanting by Bal Vikas children who won the appreciation of the entire gathering by chanting the Vedic Mantras in perfect rhythm and intonation. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Sriram Parshuram, a former student of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, addressed the gathering. Emphasising the prominent role played by the mother in leading her children on the Godward path, Sri Parshuram narrated several incidents from the life of Mother Easwaramma how she guided children on the virtuous path. After this, Bhagavan gave His Easwaramma Day Message exhorting the devotees, particularly the children and youth, to sanctify their life by attaining the love of their parents. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue of "Sanathana Sarathi".) The morning programme came to a close at 8.30 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam to all the devotees. After the conclusion of the morning programme, Bhagavan distributed food and clothes to the underprivileged and needy people.

An excellent drama entitled "Adi Sankara" was presented by the Bal Vikas children and Gurus of Bangalore on the evening of 6th May 2003 in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam. Bhagavan came to the Kalyana Mandapam at 4.45 p.m. and sat through the entire programme. The drama consisting of five significant events from the life of Adi Sankara was a superb presentation from all accounts - planning, direction, acting, music, choreography, etc. Bhagavan blessed the children at the end of the drama and posed for photographs with them. He also materialised a gold chain for the child who enacted the role of child Sankara. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.25 p.m.

From 7th May to 13th May 2003, the celebrations were conducted in different parts of Bangalore by the Karnataka State Sai Organisation. These included Narayana Seva and

Vastra Daan (clothes distribution) at various places, and competitions in sports, literary and cultural items for the Bal Vikas children. The concluding function was held at Sai Gitanjali, Bangalore on 13th May 2003 in which a large number of Bal Vikas children, Bal Vikas Gurus and devotees took part.

## **VISHU SANDESH**

### **HARD WORK IS THE KEY TO A NATION'S PROSPERITY**

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

Vishu is the day of great happiness for the people of Kerala. The farmers bring home the harvested crop and rejoice. Food is very essential for the nation. The farmers feed the nation and bring peace and prosperity to it. It is their good fortune that they are able to render such great service to the nation by toiling in the fields from dawn to dusk. The nation can be happy and peaceful only when the farmers, who grow food, are happy and contented. The farmers experience great happiness as they do hard work for the good of the nation. Their whole day is filled with sacred and divine feelings.

### **Righteous Actions Sanctify Life**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Bharat is the land of sacredness and merit. Since time immemorial, Bharat has been disseminating spiritual knowledge to all the nations of the world and has thus been bestowing peace and happiness on all. This is the eternal glory of Bharat. The goal of life of the Bharatiyas has been *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is Brahman). As Brahma pervades the entire world, Dharma should permeate all actions of man. Karma will be sanctified only when it is based on Dharma and Brahma. It is said, *Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke* (human society is bound by action). Nobody should waste time. Right from the time he wakes up in the morning, man should utilise his time and energy for the welfare of society. This is his main duty. He should realise that his welfare lies in the welfare of society.

*Embodiments of Love!*

I have seen that the people of Kerala are always engaged in some activity or the other. They work very hard. They are not interested in comforts and pleasures. They derive happiness in working hard and serving society. They strive for peace and security of one and all. That is their most sacred virtue. Kerala is the seat of education. It is the land which stands as testimony to the profound truths enunciated in the Vedas, Sastras, Puranas and Itihasas. In such a land of peace and sacredness, people today are unable to experience unsullied happiness which their ancestors were able to enjoy in the past. However, there is no cause for worry. A time will come when Kerala will regain its past glory. Time plays an important role. We have to discharge the duties ordained by God and thus sanctify our time. Whatever actions we perform are the reflections of our inner feelings only. You should undertake such actions which provide worldly happiness as well as inner bliss. Nobody can remain without performing action. Man should take delight in the performance of action. In fact, performance of Karma (action) is the primary work of the Kaya (body).

*Man is born in action, is sustained by action and ultimately merges in action. Action is the cause for pleasure and pain. Truly speaking, action is God for man.*  
(Telugu Poem)

Man's life is bound by Kaala, Karma, Kaarana, Kartavya (time, action, cause, duty). Due to the effect of Kali Age, man today does not put his body to hard work. Both the educated and the uneducated have become lethargic. You have to sanctify your life by doing righteous actions. Action is the cause for everything. Action is life. Action is our duty. It is very unfortunate that man does not want to devote his heart and soul to action. He wants to lead an easy life. Even the students want to pass examinations without putting in much effort. They want to secure jobs without working hard. After securing jobs, they want salaries without discharging their duties. This type of conduct is not good. It is said, *Kashte Phali* (hard work yields rich rewards). The rewards that one gets will be commensurate with the efforts one puts in. One should recognise this truth and work hard accordingly. Unfortunately, this type of work ethics is not seen these days. There are people who go to office only to mark their attendance. Each one has to question himself whether he is discharging his duty properly or not. It is most essential that man becomes duty conscious.

### **Happiness Lies in Hard Work**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Bend your body. Discharge your duty with the sweat of your brow. Only then can you get the right reward. Today people are suffering for want of food and water. What is the reason? Man is not undertaking righteous actions. When man does his duty sincerely, there will be no shortage of food and water. Without working hard, one cannot lead a happy life. *Na Sukhat Labhyate Sukham* (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). We can get happiness only when we work hard. For every action of ours, there is bound to be reaction. For every sound that we make, there will be resound. When

we undertake righteous actions and utter sacred words, the same will come back to us in the form of reaction, reflection and resound.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

*In the world today, people do not want to put in hard work. But they aspire for happiness. Wherefrom does happiness come? It does not come from a life of ease. Happiness comes only from hard work. Therefore, you have to do hard work. You can find happiness everywhere in the world if you earn the deservedness to experience it. Our judge (Justice Gupta who spoke earlier) mentioned in his speech that he was disappointed because Swami did not speak to him in spite of the fact that he was doing hard work and coming here often. But it is due to his hard work and deep contemplation that he has got a good chance today. Without working hard, you cannot get any reward. But today man is not prepared to work hard.*

#### ***Inner Meaning of the Sacred Traditions of Bharat***

*In Upanishadic times, people used to offer their salutations to Karma before undertaking it – Thasmai Namah Karmane (salutations to action). We have to offer our salutations to Karma in the first instance so that it gives us good results. In Bharat, some people follow this sacred tradition even today. A cricket player salutes the ball before starting to bowl. A dancer salutes the anklets before tying them to her feet. Even an uneducated driver salutes the steering wheel before driving the vehicle. But most of the educated people have forgotten this ancient tradition. That is why there are so many accidents today. There is a sense of fear and insecurity among people. First of all, we have to offer our respects and express our gratitude to Karma before undertaking it. Everyone has to understand his/her duty and perform it to the best of his/her ability. Before the commencement of any music programme, musicians pray to Vinayaka. Vinayaka is the remover of obstacles. One who has no Nayaka (master) above him is Vinayaka. He is the master of all. Hence, we offer our prayers to him before*

*commencing any activity. Since ancient times, the Bharatiyas have been adhering to such sacred traditions implicitly.*

*People decorate their houses with buntings of green leaves on festival days. The people of Kerala give great importance to this tradition and make big festoons of green leaves on all sacred occasions. Mango leaves and plantain leaves are used for making big Pandals at the time of marriages. Green leaves are given a place of prominence in such decorations. Even a small family puts up buntings of green leaves on the doors on festive occasions. What is so special about them? Can't we have a Shamiana instead? No, that is not in accordance with our ancient tradition. What is the logic behind this tradition? As you are aware, we inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide which pollutes the atmosphere. At the time of marriages, many people gather at one place. As a result, more and more carbon dioxide is released into the air and the atmosphere gets polluted. The green leaves absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen and thus purify the atmosphere. The buntings of green leaves not only decorate the doors, they are a source of health and happiness also. Thus, every tradition of Bharat has a profound inner meaning. Such sacred traditions are being forgotten today. Wherever a marriage or any function is held, people put up decorative Shamianas and plastic festoons. Plastic festoons are in fashion today. Can you get oxygen from plastic festoons? Can they absorb carbon dioxide? The Shamianas and the plastic festoons may present a grand show but they serve no purpose in keeping the environment clean. We should never forget our ancient traditions.*

*In Kerala, even today ancient traditions are followed. On festival days, the people of Kerala place a lamp in the midst of rice, with beautiful decorations around. It is very auspicious for the house. Onam and Vishu are the sacred festivals which the Keralites celebrate. You must understand the tradition and significance associated with the celebration of Vishu. It is not just meant to wish each other a happy New Year and shake hands. It is not merely wishing; it is Vishu, signifying a great tradition of giving respect to others and receiving respect from them. When every house has grains in plenty and the State attains prosperity, then only can we call it true celebration of Vishu. In ancient times, people harvested the crop, tasted the new grains and experienced joy. This is how the festival was celebrated in the past. Today wishing each other has become Vishu. This is not the way to celebrate Vishu. You have to aspire and work for the happiness of others. True celebration of Vishu lies in sharing your happiness with others. Give and take. It is not one-way traffic. It is not just grabbing everything that comes your way. First give and then think of receiving. This is the ancient tradition of our country.*

*Kerala has plantain and coconut trees in abundance. You find greenery all around. The Keralites prepare various types of puddings with plantains, give them to others and share their happiness with them. There is a special type of plantain called 'Nendra Pazham' which they distribute to others. Coconut is considered very sacred. What is the principle behind this belief? Coconut contains the power of radiation.*

*The Gayatri Mantra begins with Om Bhur Bhuvah Suvaha. Om is the primordial sound, Pranava. Bhur represents Bhuloka, the material world (materialisation). Bhuvah is related to the mind (vibration). Suvaha represents Prajnana (radiation). Gayatri Mantra synthesises the three principles of materialisation, vibration and radiation. There is great merit in chanting it.*

### ***Immortal Teachings of Adi Sankara***

*But today man is forgetting these divine principles. He craves only for worldly gains. Worldly gains are temporary. They are not permanent. This is what Adi Sankara said:*

*Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam,  
Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam.*

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

*Hence, do not crave for worldly happiness. Strive for eternal and everlasting happiness. Do not get caught in the endless cycle of birth and death as Adi Sankara cautions:*

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

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

Many people in Kerala used to learn Panini grammar. It is very valuable for those who want to become scholars in Sanskrit language. Once Adi Sankara was going to the river with his disciples for a bath. There he saw a person sitting under a tree and trying to master the rules of Panini grammar. He was repeating 'Dukrun Karane', 'Dukrun Karane'. Sankara went close to him and told him that by learning the rules of grammar, he might become a great scholar, but it was not going to save him when death approached him. Hence, he advised him to chant the Name of Govinda. It was then that Adi Sankara sang the famous 'Bhaja Govindam' song.

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

*(Oh foolish man, chant the Name of Govinda; the rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the end approaches.)*



Some of the other verses of this song were composed by the disciples of Sankara. It is said, *Yatha Raja, Tatha Praja* (as is the king, so are the subjects). The same can be said of Guru-Sishya relationship. *Yatha Guru, Tatha Sishya* (as is the preceptor, so are the disciples). The preceptors of those days were highly noble. They set great ideals to their disciples. The disciples also emulated their preceptor. We don't find such masters and disciples today.

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

In villages, people mix cow dung with water and sprinkle it on the floor in front of their houses. It is considered auspicious. What is the reason? Cow dung destroys disease-causing germs and thus helps maintain good health. It can cure many diseases. Today people of other countries have recognised this truth but the Bharatiyas are not making any efforts to understand this. In earlier days, cow dung was used as a remedy for wounds. People used to bandage the wound with cow dung. In modern times, people have a wrong notion that the wound becomes septic if cow dung is applied on it. It may become gangrenous also, they argue. It is a baseless argument. If cow dung is applied, the wound will heal in three days. Cow dung has such sacred power. Even the urine of the cow has medicinal properties. It is mixed in water and sprinkled on people infected with any type of pox. But the modern trend is against such natural remedies which are, in fact, beneficial for one and all. The Bharatiyas have to develop such ancient traditions. Let people say what they want, we have to follow our sacred traditions.

On the day of Vishu, people take a sacred bath and put on new clothes. Mere external cleanliness is not enough; you have to cleanse your mind and develop inner purity. We have to offer obeisance to our elders and seek their blessings. We have to develop good relationship with all. Therein lies the true celebration of Vishu. Today even among the Keralites, many people do not know the true significance of Vishu. It is a symbol of our great cultural heritage. Today people are not aware of the greatness of Bharat. It is said, *Yenna Bharate Thanna Bharata* (what is not found in Bharat is not found anywhere else).

The Bharatiyas are those who sing the glory of God with Bhava, Raga and Tala (feeling, tune and rhythm). Music will be sweet only when these three are in harmony.

Right from young age, children should be taught the greatness of our ancient culture. They should be moulded into ideal citizens. They should be made to practise our traditional values. For anything, practice is very important. The children will take to wrong path if they are not made to practise traditional values. The responsibility lies with the parents and teachers to make the children adhere to our ancient traditions. Then society will certainly progress and enjoy peace and prosperity. If you practise ancient values, society will attain Kshemam (welfare); otherwise, it will be afflicted with Kshamam (drought). Do not think about your welfare and that of your family alone. Strive for the welfare of all at all times. You can be happy only when your neighbour is happy.

*Students!*

Make efforts to understand the greatness of our ancient culture and traditions. Respect everyone. Do not be rude to the elders and guests who visit your house. Whether your parents are at home or not, offer seats to the guests and give them a glass of cold water or buttermilk. Speak to them with respect. However, such noble practices are not to be found among students these days. When someone wants to talk to his father on phone, the son puts down the receiver, saying “Father is not here,” even though father is at home. Even on phone, you should talk to others in a respectful manner. You can earn the respect of others only when you respect them. Respect does not mean merely saying, ‘hello’. You should offer your Namaskar with humility and reverence. Na-maskar means offering your respects without a trace of Mamakara (pride). But we do not try to understand the sacred meanings of our traditions.

Give respect and receive respect. Respect is the basis of good life in the world. Since our ancients adhered to such sacred principles, our nation earned the respect of the entire world. We should develop humility, love and reverence towards our elders like the ancient Bharatiyas. We should practise and propagate our sacred culture. That is the true sign of education.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajans, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*”, “*Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai ...*” and “*Om Sivaya Om Sivaya ...*”

– ***From Bhagavan’s Vishu Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 15th April 2003.***

***Demon of Self-interest***

All beings in creation, except man, live according to the laws of Nature and carry out their functions. Without any concern for the morrow, they lead their lives, content

with whatever they can enjoy. Nature sees to it that they do not lack anything needed for their existence. Man, on the contrary, is never contented, however much he may acquire and whatever comforts he may enjoy. He craves for various things and looks upon the craving for these objects as love. But if such attachment to objects is fostered, there is no end to the process. He does not realise that such love is based upon self-interest and self-centredness. In every thought, every word, every action of his, the demon of self-interest is present in man.

- Baba

### NEWS FROM BRINDAVAN

#### **MASS MARRIAGES FUNCTION**

The service wing of the Bangalore Urban District of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Karnataka State organised mass marriages of 26 couples drawn from economically weaker sections and mostly with a rural background on Thursday, 22nd May 2003. The couples with their parents, relatives and guests arrived at Brindavan on 21st May 2003. Essential Puja articles, Dhotis, Saris, watches and other gift items blessed by Bhagavan Baba were distributed to them on the same day. On the morning of 22nd May 2003, the brides and bridegrooms in their bridal dress along with their parents came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall to receive Bhagavan's blessings. After receiving the blessings of Bhagavan, they were taken to the venue of the mass marriages. Amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras by the priests, an elderly couple performed all the preliminary rituals and at the appointed time of Muhurtham (9 a.m. - 9.45 a.m.), the "Mangalya Dharana" was performed for all the couples. A sumptuous feast was offered to the newly-weds along with nearly 1300 guests after the marriage ceremony.

**Andhra Pradesh:** The Prakasam District Sai Organisation carried out a number of service activities from 13th to 17th March 2003. It distributed Saris and blouses to 194 poor ladies, footwear to 95 students and old people, bed sheets to 21 old people, school uniforms to 21 poor students, 10 kg rice, 1 kg Dal and other provisions to selected 55 poor families (to be given every month), Dhotis and Banians to 22 old men, steel tumblers to 80 school students to be used in their mid-day meals, cooking vessels to 54 poor families and wrist watches to poor but deserving 10th Class students. Besides, healthcare of six poor pregnant ladies till delivery was undertaken and two tricycles were given to two handicapped students. The Youth Wing of the Organisation came forward to construct houses for two poor families by laying foundation for the same on 14th March 2003.

The Srikakulam District Sai Organisation has selected 156 poor families in the district and supplies 10 kg rice and other provisions to each family every month. It has also selected 21 helpless persons to whom food is provided daily.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** To spread the message of love and harmony of Bhagavan Baba and also to take up socially beneficial schemes under the aegis of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, 250 Sai Youth of Manipur assembled in a special conference in Imphal on 12th April 2003. Resource persons drawn from Sai fraternity delivered lectures on the various facets of the Sai Mission and on the path to be followed by the youth to help contain the unrest and bring back normalcy in the State. For this, Sai Youth were urged to be role models for other youth of their respective localities.

**Gujarat:** By the Divine grace of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Gujarat has organised a marathon 'Sri Sai Sandesh Yatra' as an awareness programme for the people of the State of Gujarat regarding Bhagavan Baba and His mission, motto and goal of the Organisation, humanitarian activities carried out by the Organisation mainly in the areas of health, education, spirituality, ethics, social welfare, etc. This Sandesh Yatra with two identical Sai Rathes (chariots) started simultaneously from Ahmedabad on 21st March 2003 and will end on 5th June 2003, one at Valsad and the other in Ahmedabad – both at Shirdi Sai Mandir. This Yatra carries an exhibition on wheels, depicting unity of faiths, human values, various activities of Prasanthi Nilayam and Gujarat State. There are two identical Rathes for the entire State (one from Ahmedabad to Saurashtra and another from Ahmedabad to South Gujarat). The Yatra will cover more than 7700 km within 77 days. During the Yatra, various service activities such as blood donation camps, medical camps, veterinary camps, Narayana Seva (more than 10000 families have been given a packet of 1 kg rice with 250 gm Dal), distribution of clothes are undertaken. Pamphlets regarding activities of Prasanthi Nilayam, Gujarat State and also local Sai Centres, Bhagavan's photos, Sai literature are distributed freely. Daily public meetings are held where VCD's regarding our activities are shown through LCD projector. There was an overwhelming response, wherever the Rathes went.

**Jammu and Kashmir:** Sai Youth clean the temples twice a month in Rehal village. They also clean a Muslim place of worship. Drainage system of this village is also cleaned by Sai Youth twice a month, which is being appreciated by the villagers. Daily Nagar Sankirtan is conducted in village Rehal and Jammu City.

Sai Youth visit the Old Age Ashram at Ambaphalla, Jammu and provide necessary requirements to the inmates. They also visit an orphanage twice a month and provide notebooks, clothes, etc., to about 100 students. They also conduct Narayana Seva and serve meals to them.

**Kerala:** District level one-day Sadhana Camps were arranged for youth members in all districts. Two important projects are being carried out by the youth members - Sri Sai Anna-poorneswari Project and Sri Sai Vidya Project. One is for providing food to the needy and the other, for providing educational assistance to poor students. "Matru - Pitru Puja" was conducted in all Samithis by the Sai Youth members. They did Pada Puja of

their parents. After returning from the Sadhana Camp at Brindavan, Sai Youth members are now having one-year programme of study, Seva and Sadhana as a follow-up.

District level Mahila Samagams were conducted in all the districts on 20th April 2003. 2700 Mahilas participated. There were talks on Dharma of Mother, Daughter, etc., as a part of spreading the message of Sai. Mahila Vibhag of all Samithis conducted the programme "A Day in the Village" on 29th March 2003. There were Bhajans, Narayana Seva, talks, medical camps, etc., on this day.

**Sikkim:** Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Sikkim organised sixth State level Youth Conference on 19th and 20th April 2003 at Gezing, West Sikkim near Khechperili Lake. Inspired by Bhagavan Baba's teachings, more than 400 youths hailing from different districts of the State took part in the Conference.

**Tamil Nadu:** A Seminar on "Humanising Medicare" was organised by the Sai Organisation of the State on Sunday 9th March 2003 in Chennai. An "Interactive Panel Discussion on Human Values" based on Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa was also conducted with active participation of eminent specialists in different fields of medicine. At the end of the panel discussion, a small play on "The Importance of Character" was enacted by the Bal Vikas children which was appreciatively received by the delegates to the Seminar. A total of 278 doctors from various specialities attended the Seminar as invitees. An exhibition of photographs of our Beloved Bhagavan's Hospital Projects and other humanitarian projects was arranged, which was appreciated by the delegates who attended the Seminar.

#### ***NEWS FROM OVERSEAS SAI CENTRES***

**Russia:** A Sai Youth Seminar was organised from 21st to 23rd February 2003 in St. Petersburg. The youth came from Russian speaking countries (about 40 people from different towns of Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia). The topic of the Seminar was "Work of the Youth in Sathya Sai Organisation".

A medical camp was organised in the village Nizino, Lomonosov Region, St. Petersburg District on 12th and 13th April 2003. About 40 people took part in it. Doctors treated 250 patients; repair work was done in the ambulance station; elderly people in need were helped (Sai devotees cleaned their houses, chopped firewood, carried clothes and food for them).

## **DIVINE DISCOURSE AT KODAIKANAL**

### **Know Your True Identity**

*What you say exists, does not exist in reality. What you say does not exist, actually does exist. Only God exists everywhere and at all times. The world is but an illusion. Understand this truth.*

(Telugu

Poem)

Since time immemorial, people have made concerted efforts in quest of God. Our ancient sages did intense penance in dense forests and dark caves to have the vision of God.

### **Divinity is the Seed of all Living Beings**

They dedicated all their lives to achieve this goal. However, only some of them could succeed in their endeavour. They declared, *Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines

with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Thamas - the darkness of ignorance). They revealed this truth to the entire world. Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita: *Sarva Bhutanam Beejam Tadaham* (I am the seed of all living beings). This very seed has grown into a gigantic cosmic tree with many branches and sub-branches. Many crores of living beings have emerged out of this tree. They are like fruits, each of them containing the seed of divinity. Ancient Rishis of this sacred land understood this truth and disseminated the message of divinity to all corners of the world. They made all efforts to protect and safeguard this cosmic tree.

Lord Krishna made another declaration, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). Every being is a part and parcel of divinity. There is no separate entity. Divinity is present in the form of a seed in every individual. Individual is not merely an aspect of divinity, but God Himself. Never doubt that God is here and not there. He is present everywhere and in all beings. Our ancient sages propagated this truth with strong faith and determination. Divinity shines resplendently in one and all. Who is God? Does He really exist? Many people are obsessed by such doubts. It is foolish to entertain such doubts. God is present in all. It took many years of research for scientists to recognise that atom is all- pervasive. However, the same truth was proclaimed by child Prahlada thousands of years ago. He said, *Never doubt that God is here and not there. Wherever you search for Him, He is there.* (Telugu Poem)

There is no scope for doubt in this regard. You cannot deny the existence of a person who is standing right in front of you. Likewise, you cannot deny the existence of all-pervasive God. How can you say that He is present here and is not there? Wherever you look for God, He is there. There is nothing in this world that is not a manifestation of God. He dwells in every object and in all beings. How is this possible? Here is a small example. When you sow a seed, it grows into a tree bearing a large number of fruits. In every fruit, you find the same seed that you have sown. Likewise, the seed of divinity is present in all. God is present not only in human beings but also in birds, animals and insects.

### **Develop Steady Faith to Experience God**

Today science has advanced but the senses have degenerated. Consequently, doubts are ever on the rise in man. What is the impact of science? What science discovers today may not hold good tomorrow. Science is concerned merely with the investigation of matter. You should not merely investigate but enquire into the truth with discrimination. Only then can you understand divinity. You cannot say so and so is not here unless you know the person. Likewise, you have no right to deny the existence of God. In fact, He is here, there and everywhere. He is present in all forms. Names and forms may vary but God is one. Everyone must strive to recognise and experience this truth. God is not a separate entity. He resides in all beings. He is the embodiment of bliss. *Nityanandam, ParamaSukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect).

One cannot comprehend the divine principle by merely reading books. You have to transform bookish knowledge into practical knowledge. You should develop a sacred heart. You should not give room to even a trace of impurity or doubt in your heart. Due to the effect of Kali Age, man has become a doubting Thomas. One must have a steady and strong faith in order to realise God. God exists for those who think He exists. He does not exist for those who deny Him. He responds to you in accordance with your feelings. You have to change your vision to realise Divinity. Positive change in your vision will take you closer to God.

*Embodiments of Love!*

You should have unflinching faith in God. You may call Him by any name. You may contemplate on any of His forms. You may call Him Jesus, Allah, Rama, Krishna, Zoroaster or Buddha. Different religions attribute different names and forms to God. These are only external forms. The fundamental principle of all names and forms is within you. All that you see in the external world is only a reaction, reflection and resound of the fundamental principle. But you are deluded by the reflection and consider it to be the reality. You suffer from self-created delusion. In this manner, you deceive yourself. You betray yourself. Your feelings are responsible for this. Your doubts are the cause of this.

*Embodiments of Love!*

According to the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads, man should be totally free from doubts. He should be firm and steady. But today man is filled with doubts. Where do doubts come from? They arise out of his own imagination. Truly speaking, man is the very embodiment of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute). He is the repository of truth and righteousness. He is a spark of divinity. But his doubts bring about his doom. He sees God everywhere, yet he thinks he has not seen Him. God is in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. He is present all over. There is no place where God does not exist. Who are you? You are yourself the embodiment of Divinity.

The seed of divinity is present in everyone. Consider this seed as the fundamental principle of life. When you sow a seed, it grows into a tree and bears many fruits. There is a seed in each fruit. You sow one seed and it gives rise to so many seeds. Similarly, every living being is like a fruit containing the seed of divinity, i.e., the Atma. But you are not making efforts to know the seed. You eat the fruit, drink the juice but discard the seed. Today man is not able to discriminate between truth and falsehood. He craves for ephemeral things and ignores the true and eternal principle. He feels he does not need it. He fails to understand that everything is contained in the eternal principle, i.e., the seed of divinity.

It is possible for everyone to experience God, who is the embodiment of love. You do not need to search for Him here and there. Wherever you look for Him, He is present there. Why are you forgetting such a compassionate Lord who is easily accessible to you? He is present in everyone in the form of consciousness. Consciousness pervades the entire universe. You cannot pinpoint even a single place where consciousness does not exist. As you do not realise that consciousness is God, you are ignoring its presence. You have to experience truth by your own efforts. Consciousness shines in everyone. It has no form.



Here is a small example. Are you able to see the air you inhale and exhale? Are you able to hold it in your hands? No. But you cannot deny its existence for the simple reason that your survival depends on it. In the same manner, divinity is present in you. It is foolish to look for it elsewhere.

You have to develop faith in the first instance. Consider Viswasa (faith) as your Swasa (life-breath). Love originates from faith. You love your mother because you have faith that she is your mother. Hence, faith is very essential for everyone.

*Where there is faith, there is love.*

*Where there is love, there is truth.*

*Where there is truth, there is peace.*

*Where there is peace, there is bliss.*

*Where there is bliss, there is God.*

How can you experience God if you do not have confidence? Firstly, have confidence in yourself. One without self-confidence cannot have faith in God.

### **Divinity Pervades the Universe**

You see God day in and day out. Where do you see Him? All forms that you see are His. *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). You are seeing thousands of heads, yet you think that you have not seen God. How foolish it looks! You think they are mere external forms. In fact, what you see outside is the reflection of your inner being. You are forgetting the reality and getting deluded by the reaction, reflection and resound.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

You see only God everywhere. There is no second entity. (Showing His handkerchief) What is it? You say it is a cloth. But it is not merely that. Without threads, there can be no cloth. Without cotton, there can be no threads. Cotton is the fundamental basis for a cloth. Similarly, divinity is the fundamental basis of all names and forms. Divinity shines in every man. You find different bulbs here but the same electric current is passing through all of them. Bulbs cannot shine without the current. Each individual is like a bulb. There is divinity in everyone in the form of Tejas (radiance). You should make efforts to visualise this radiance. A blind person or one whose eyes are closed cannot see light. A person with his eyes open can see light everywhere. The light of divinity is everywhere. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

The eyes have the ability to see. Where does this power come from? That is divinity. The power of vision in your eyes is divinity. The power of taste in your tongue is divinity. The food you eat is divine. Your Maatalu (speech), Aatalu (games) and Paatalu (songs), everything is divine. A bird hatches out of an egg. A huge tree emerges out of a tiny seed. A flower gives fragrance. Divinity alone is responsible for all this. Divinity is present in everything. You cannot deny its existence. Some argue that there is no God. Such an argument is totally baseless. Even the words you utter come from God. Sound is God. That is why God is described as, *Sabda Brahmamayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi*,

*Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Sreemayi* (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, perfection, delusion and wealth). God is present in the world in all these eight forms of wealth. You can see these eight treasures of God everywhere.

One may be a fool or a wise person. One may be a scientist or a saint. But there is God in all of them. A scientist speaks of experiments whereas a saint speaks of experience. A scientist says atom is all-pervasive but a saint says Atma is all-pervasive. *Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagat* (Vishnu pervades the entire universe). *Sarvam Ramamayam Jagat* (Rama pervades the entire universe). Scientists may not agree if you say God is all-pervasive. They say atom is everywhere. Their argument is based on experiments. God cannot be understood by experiments; He can only be experienced. Physical experiments reveal only temporary truths. But inner enquiry into the Atma reveals the eternal principle.

Child Prahlada said God is everywhere. His father Hiranyakasipu pointed at a pillar and asked, “Does your God exist in this?” “Certainly exists”, replied Prahlada. Hiranyakasipu at once hit the pillar with his mace. Lo and behold! There emerged the Narasimha Avatar. What is the inner meaning of this incident? It is said, *Deho Devalaya Proktho Jivo Deva Sanathana* (the body is a temple and the indweller is God) God is present in the body. When you break body attachment, He will at once manifest before you. You cannot have the vision of God so long as you do not give up body attachment.

God exists everywhere. But you are unable to experience this truth because your heart is filled with doubts. Suppose, you have a matchbox in your pocket. There is fire in each matchstick. But will it burn your pocket? No. Fire is produced only when you strike a matchstick on the matchbox. In the same manner, there is the matchbox of divinity in every man. When you strike the matchstick of Divine Name on the matchbox of divinity, the fire of wisdom is produced.

### **Remove Doubts, See God**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

God exists in everyone in the form of love. Love is God. There is nothing superior to love. When you fill your heart with love, you can see God everywhere. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). God responds to you in accordance with your feelings. You are unable to see God because you lack love in your heart. You have love for your friends and relatives. But it cannot be called love in its true sense. It is termed attachment. You have to get rid of body attachment in order to develop true love and realise God. Body attachment gives rise to doubts which will ultimately ruin your life.

Today man is filled with doubts. There was a doubting Thomas among the disciples of Jesus. He always had doubts regarding the divinity of Jesus. Even Vivekananda once had a doubt whether Ramakrishna Paramahansa was really divine. He put a coin under his bedsheet and waited to see his reaction. As soon as Ramakrishna touched the bed, he at once started back as if ants had bitten him. When the bedsheet was removed, a coin was found there. He asked, “Who kept the coin here?” Vivekananda accepted his mistake saying, “I kept it in order to test you.” Ramakrishna told him, “Son, I do not want test. I

want love. Love is my taste. Share your love with everyone.” During the time of every Avatar, there are doubting Thomases. So long as one is filled with doubts, one cannot recognise divinity. Doubts ruin the very human nature. Hence, give up doubts in the first instance. Have faith in yourself. Only then can you have faith in God.

You cannot deny God just because He is not visible to you. You can see Him only when you develop love and faith. You should have full confidence that God is everywhere. Even if there is an iota of doubt in your mind, you cannot see Him. Our eyes, each barely an inch long, are able to see distant stars in the sky. Who has endowed them with such a mighty power? It is the power of divinity latent in our eyes. Doubt is like cataract that blurs our vision. A person with cataract in his eyes cannot see his own wife and children even if they are standing by his side. Similarly, one with doubts cannot see God. You have to undergo ‘cataract’ operation to have Sakshatkara (vision of God).

### **Realise your Divine Nature**

Man is endowed with immense power. The power latent in man is unparalleled and cannot be found anywhere else. There is nothing that he cannot accomplish. He has made great progress in the field of science and technology. He has travelled thousands of miles into space and reached the moon. But he is unable to travel inward and look into his heart. What is the use of all your worldly knowledge if you do not know yourself?

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Everyone is endowed with the sacred qualities of love and truth. Contemplate on these divine principles. Truth is one and the same for all. There are no different truths like American truth, Pakistani truth, Russian truth, etc. Truth is truth; it is all-pervasive. Truth is God. Strictly adhere to truth. Never utter untruth under any circumstances. Speak truth with love. Love is God. Live in love. Develop love more and more. Love is your true nature. There is love in every man but he is diverting it towards his wife, children, friends, relatives and worldly possessions. Divert your love towards God and contemplate on Him. Then you can certainly see Him everywhere. You may wonder whether it is possible. Believe Me, it is possible. You are searching for God here and there without realising your own divine nature. You are God yourself. How can you search for yourself elsewhere? Know your true identity. All of you are the very forms of God. That is why you have gathered here. As there is divinity in you, you have developed love towards this Divine Form. You and I are not different. There is only one divine principle. Do not give room to any differences based on caste, religion and nationality. Share your love with everyone with the firm faith that there is God in all. You are God. There is none superior to you. Develop such faith in yourself. Once you develop faith, you will develop love.

#### *Embodiments of God!*

You don’t need to search for God. You don’t need to travel miles to see God. People go to the Himalayas and visit various pilgrim centres to see God. But where is God? He is within. How can you find God if you search for Him outside forgetting your innate divinity? Know yourself. Divinity pervades everything right from an atom. *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). God is smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest.

In order to attract children, people make sugar dolls in the shape of various birds and animals and sell them in the market. You may break any part of the doll, say, the tail, the ear or the trunk, and put it in your mouth. Every part tastes sweet. Just as sweetness pervades a sugar doll, divinity pervades the entire universe. Without realising this truth if you go in search of God, you will only be wasting time. Time is God. God is the embodiment of time. He is the embodiment of Karma (action). That is why you have to offer your salutations to Karma before undertaking it. You can never escape from Karma. It follows you like your shadow wherever you go. Once you realise Divinity, the shadow disappears and the reality remains.

### **Consider Love as God**

First and foremost, develop faith that God is everywhere. Then you can really see Him. Do not think that God is present only at a particular place. You don't need to travel long distances to see Sai Baba. He is within you. You cannot attain Him if you look for Him somewhere else. There is a great treasure in the earth under your feet. But you cannot acquire it unless you dig at the right place. Likewise, you have to develop love, discharge your duty sincerely and follow the path of truth with unwavering faith to attain Divinity. The Upanishads describe man as Manava. Who is a Manava (human being)? One cannot be called a Manava just because one has a human form. One who is endowed with love, truth and faith is a Manava.

Suppose you see a baby in the arms of its mother when you are walking on the road. When you smile at the baby, it also smiles at you. Likewise, whatever you see in the world is only a reaction, reflection and resound of your inner being.

Foolish people go here and there in search of God. You don't need to go elsewhere. Just close your eyes and look within. You will certainly find God. No Jiva (individual) can exist without Daiva (God). In fact, Jiva is Daiva. Individual is known as Vyashti (individual) whereas God is in the form of Samashti (society). Hundreds of individuals make society. Hundreds of trees make a forest. Hundreds of houses make a village. Names may change but the fundamental basis is the same.

Divinity is not confined to a particular place. It exists everywhere. There is only one divine principle. It is present in all of us in the form of 'I'. You and I are not different. We are one and the same. Make efforts to understand this truth. God is not separate from you. He is in you, with you, around you, above you, below you.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Develop love in you. Love everyone. Do not hate anyone. The hatred you show towards others will come back to you as reflection. You should control your senses. Suppose you come across a person who hates you. Greet him saying, "Hello my friend, how are you?" Talk to him with love. Then he too will reciprocate the same feeling. On the other hand, if you hate and abuse him, he too will do the same. Hatred and anger are your worst enemies.

*One with anger will not be successful in any endeavour. He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by one and all. (Telugu Poem)*

*His own people will abandon him. He will lose all respect. His anger will ruin him completely. (Telugu Poem)*

Truly speaking, evil qualities such as anger, jealousy and hatred are contrary to human nature.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Do not have hatred towards anyone. Be friendly with all. But remember that God alone is your true friend. Friendship is one of the nine paths of devotion. In order to develop friendship with God, you need to cultivate love in your heart. You can conquer anyone, even a wicked person, with the weapon of love.

Once when Buddha was walking in a forest, a demon approached him with the intention of harming him. The eyes of the demon were red with anger. In a thunderous voice, the demon asked Buddha, “Who are you?” Buddha smiled at the demon and replied, “I am your friend.” At once there was a total transformation in the demon. He said to Buddha, “I am also your friend.” He assumed the form of a dove, a symbol of peace, and flew away. Wherefrom do you get peace? You get peace from love.

So, love all. Do not hate anyone. Love even your worst enemy. Then you will certainly attain peace. Today people are in search of peace. But there are only pieces in the world. There is no peace anywhere. Peace is in you. You are the embodiment of peace. You are the embodiment of love. You are the embodiment of truth. You are the embodiment of God. Buddha taught, *Buddham Saranam Gachchhami, Sangham Saranam Gachchhami, Dharmam Saranam Gachchhami*. All noble personalities have laid importance on the need to cultivate love. One without love is not a human being at all. Love is our life. We will experience everlasting bliss once we fill our heart with love.

When Buddha was on the verge of attaining Nirvana (liberation), his cousin Ananda, started shedding tears. Buddha said, “Ananda, does my attaining Nirvana cause grief to you? Why are you shedding tears? You too should strive to attain this blissful state by developing love.” With these words, Buddha left his mortal coil. Ananda followed the teaching of Buddha implicitly and experienced Ananda (bliss).

First and foremost, develop love. Where there is love, there is God. There is plenty of money in the bank. Can you get it for the mere asking? No. You cannot withdraw money from the bank unless you have deposited money earlier. Likewise, you have to deposit the money of faith and pure love in the divine bank. Only then can you get the wealth of divine grace.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*”

– **From Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 18th May 2003.**

### **DIVINE DISCOURSE ON 2ND JUNE 2003**

**Character is the  
Crest Jewel of Education**

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all;  
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;  
You become prosperous when you control your desires;  
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.*  
(Sanskrit Verse)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today we find that not only the field of education but all other fields of human activity are beset with unrest, unrighteousness and injustice. Wherever we see in the world today, we find only misery, sorrow and unrest. In fact, unrest is on the rise in all walks of life, be it politics, finance or even spirituality.

#### **Develop Courage and Fortitude to Overcome Fear**

Wherever man goes, he is haunted by fear. In the present-day world, it is difficult to find a person who is without fear. What is the cause of this? Every moment of man's life is full of fear which emerges from within. He is haunted by fear whether he is in home, street, office, college or bazaar. Is there any place where there is no fear? The only place which is free from fear is a temple which is suffused with the love of God. The fundamental cause of this widely prevalent fear is man's own defects and shortcomings. "Man has conquered everything but he has not conquered himself," said the British Prime Minister Churchill. The same thing was said by Prahlada to his father. The little boy Prahlada was full of courage; he could state spiritual truths even before his father without any trace of fear. Man today needs to understand how he can develop courage like Prahlada. Though they are quite capable of developing courage, yet the youth and even adults are full of fear today. It is necessary for man to develop courage and fortitude to overcome fear. He can get courage only from God. For this, he has to develop faith in and devotion to God.

#### *Students - Boys and Girls!*

You have to face the world with courage. In the present situation of the world, our true strength is in courage and fortitude. When you cultivate devotion to God, you can face the challenges of the world with confidence and courage. *Life is a Challenge, Meet it. Life is a Game, Play it.* You become a victim of fear because of lack of courage. So, develop courage to face all the challenges of the world.

Education does not mean merely the ability to read and write. What is Vidya (education)? *Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye* (True education is that which liberates). True education develops courage and fortitude in the learner. It is the need of the hour that we should lead our lives with courage without faltering at any step so as to achieve success in all walks of life.

#### **Wisdom is not Confined to Books alone**

People study sacred texts, acquire scholarship and achieve success in many fields, yet they lack true knowledge. Once King Janaka was presiding over an assembly of Pundits (scholars). At that time, a great saint and scholar Ashtavakra entered the assembly hall. At the very sight of this person, the assembled Pundits burst into laughter. On seeing

them laughing in this manner, Ashtavakra also started laughing rather more loudly. Seeing Ashtavakra laughing, one Pundit got up and said, “We have a reason to laugh at you. We laughed at the crooked shape of your body which has eight bends. But why are you laughing at us?” Ashtavakra replied, “Oh Pundits! You started laughing at the crooked shape of my body. I am laughing at the crookedness of your mind. You should first master your mind.”

As the saying goes, *Master the mind and be a mastermind*. Ashtavakra continued, “Your laughter is unreasonable and meaningless. I thought that this was an assembly of great scholars. But I find no true scholar here. All are mere cobblers in this assembly.” On hearing this insulting remark, the scholars got angry. They asked Ashtavakra, “Cobblers are those who make sandals and slippers. We are scholars. How can you equate us with cobblers?” Ashtavakra said, “Only cobblers evaluate the skin, not the Pundits. *Pundita Samadarshina* (A Pundit is one who is equal-minded). In this assembly, there is none endowed with equal-mindedness.”

While all this was going on, Janaka sat there totally unruffled. He watched everything with undisturbed mind. His heart was full of purity as he had given up all attachments. He was very happy to hear what Ashtavakra said. He said, “Oh Sage Ashtavakra, what you have said is absolutely true. There is no one in this assembly who is equal-minded and who treats all with equanimity. The mark of education and scholarship is equal-mindedness, purity of thoughts and adherence to truth. We are indeed very fortunate to have a man of wisdom like you in this assembly.”

Modern education gives only bookish knowledge. Bookish knowledge is superficial. It does not fill the heart of the learners with love. What is the use of such an education? You should acquire practical knowledge which can provide you fulfilment in life. Only then can you earn the status of a true scholar. Today’s students acquire first rank and score high marks in examinations. But what is the use if the heart is not filled with the fragrance of love? King Janaka was endowed with great strength, scholarship and virtues. He admired the teachings given by Ashtavakra in the assembly of scholars.

In ancient times, there were many eminent scholars and sages like Janaka and Ashtavakra in Bharat. Such scholars and rulers are not seen in modern times. Modern educationists lack the effulgence of virtues found in the scholars of yore. Hence, the type of knowledge acquired by them is meaningless. Education without character is no education. You may have everything in life but all this is a waste without character and good qualities. Do not boast of your so-called high education. What is the type of education you are having today? It is not education at all in the true sense of the term. It will be shameful to exult over this type of shallow education in an assembly of true scholars. Education is not merely the study of books. Education is meant to uphold human values in society and achieve the welfare of society. But education today is being made a business enterprise. Moreover, there is lack of understanding among people about what is meant by true education. We should acquire education which helps to achieve liberation. We become truly educated when we acquire such education. There are many good students. They should aspire for this type of education.

What is it that you learn today when you go to school? You learn “Ba ... Ba Black Sheep”. Is it what you have to learn? Do you want to become black sheep? This is not

what you have to learn. You have to learn about God. You have to acquire courage and good character through education. True power comes from the heart. You should acquire that education which develops the power of the heart.

Students! Modern system of education has become crooked. Ashtavakra had only crooked body but educated people today are having crooked mind. First and foremost, we have to get rid of this crookedness of our mind. Only then can we become truly educated. What we learn today is utterly meaningless. Even the bookish knowledge acquired by us is not proper. In the world today, there are many scholars. Even all of them put together cannot match Ashtavakra. You cannot find today even one Ashtavakra of the type that came to the court of King Janaka.

### **The End of Education is Character**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

We must enquire as to what is that we are studying. There are many kinds of education in the world today. The scope of education has become limitless. What is the essence of this education? Hiranyakasipu called his son Prahlada and asked him what his teachers Chanda and Amarka had taught him. Prahlada said:

*Father! The teachers have taught me many subjects. I have understood the four objectives of life – Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation). I have studied many things; in fact, I have understood the very essence of education. (Telugu Poem)*

His father asked him to tell him what the essence of all education was. Prahlada said, “The essence of all education is: Om Namo Narayanaya.” Hiranyakasipu got enraged on hearing this. He admonished him not to utter the name of Narayana and pushed him away. The father got angry on hearing the essence of education from his son. This sort of hatred against spiritual education is found even today. Naturally, there is no trace of devotion, love or sympathy in today’s education. How can love develop in such a situation?

#### *Students!*

You are all studying. All that you learn should get imprinted on your heart. In ancient times, the parents did not have formal education but they taught profound truths to their children. Even illiterate mothers imparted great wisdom to their children. Are you learning even an iota of that sacred wisdom today? First and foremost, you should learn to pray to God and sing His glory. Spend your time in contemplation of God and earn His Grace. This is the essence of true education. We have to give to the students this type of education. The children should always obey their parents. They should adhere to sacred path in life. What is the use of all your education if you cannot know yourself? You have to know your own truth before knowing everything else. In olden days, it was said:

*Get up early in the morning at the crowing of the cock,  
Have a bath after your morning ablutions,  
Wear a proper dress.  
Eat properly and moderately.  
Go to school and study diligently.  
Earn a good name.*



*Don't move out when it is raining,*

*And never go near the ditches.*

*Take part in games,*

*Run and play.*

*If you abide by all these rules,*

*You will have both health and wealth.*

(Telugu Poem)

Parents of those days used to teach great lessons. We have to learn such good practices from our parents and elders and not from books alone. Today you go to school to learn. The word 'Badi' is used for school. But the same word is also used for yoke, which holds the bullocks so that they do not go out of control. The yoke works as a regulating system. A school should have regulation and discipline. What is the use of a Badi (school) which has no regulation? You go to school and come back home. What is the use of this going and coming if you are not learning regulation and discipline? Modern education has only profusion of voluminous books devoid of all wisdom. They are fit to be used only as pillows to sleep on. What you need to acquire is true wisdom.

*Students – Boys and Girls!*

First of all, you should learn Daiva Chintana (contemplation on God). Try to understand the meaning of "Hari" (God). When you chant the Name of Hari, you will have true education. Without learning this, your learning of all other things is of no use.

You are not making efforts to acquire true education; you are studying just to eke out your livelihood. Today even highly educated people lack true wisdom. Bookish learning is not that important; it is the behaviour that matters. You should tread sacred path in your daily life. There is no use of your education if your behaviour is not good. Of what use is all your learning?

*Nobody can change what is written on your forehead. If you do not use your discrimination and do not prevent wicked thoughts from entering your head, then what is the use of all your education?*

(Telugu Poem)

First and foremost, you have to change your way of thinking and your mind. Your behaviour will be good only when your mind is good. Without setting right your mind, there will be no use of education. You should have an independent mind; you should avoid borrowing others' thoughts. Only then can you set good ideals to others. I wish that from today onwards, our students develop good character, foster good behaviour and nurture good qualities. You may have everything in life but if you do not have character then everything will be a waste. *The end of education is character.* Without character, education is useless. Every student should shine forth like a man of sterling character. His speech should be full of sweetness, purity and wisdom.

Aswatthama was the son of a great teacher but he was not a man of character. He had a jewel in his head which gave him the power of protection. When this jewel was removed from his head, he lost all his power. When Hanuman went to Lanka, Sita gave her crest jewel to him which enhanced his power immensely. He could perform great acts of valour because he had this gem in his hand. He considered it as his very life. Can we see such a gem today? (Bhagavan mentioned that He materialised this gem of Sita and showed it to the students in Kodaikanal recently.) In today's situation, this gem is the

gem of character. What man needs today is the gem of character. What is the use of other gems when you do not have the gem of character?

### **Sacredness of Hanuman's Devotion to Rama**

At the time of His coronation, Rama wanted to give rewards to all those who helped Him. Then Sita said:

*Here is Hanuman, the crest jewel among all the monkeys, who fulfilled Your mission. He is the one who found me out in Lanka. He is full of valour who destroyed the city of Lanka.*  
(Telugu Song)

Sita asked Rama what reward He was going to give to Hanuman in this assembly. Rama said, "Sita, Hanuman would not like any ordinary reward. I know what he wants and I shall give." Sita, however, gave Hanuman the pearl necklace given to her by Janaka. Chewing the pearls one by one, Hanuman threw the pearls away. What is the use of a pearl which does not contain the Name of Rama? Then Rama got up, hugged Hanuman and said, "This is what I want to give you as your reward. I am with you and you are with Me. We can never be separated. This bond of love between you and Me is eternal." Hanuman was overjoyed. He said, "I do not want anything except You. What more can I ask for? I am not interested in any wealth. Your Name is my only treasure and Your form is my wealth." Sita was also very happy to hear this.

Once upon a time, Sri Rama's Birthday was being celebrated. Kausalya prepared many delicious sweets and distributed them to all. She invited many persons for the function and distributed gifts to them. On this occasion, Kausalya applied vermilion on the forehead of Sita. Then Sita went with Rama to their room. Hanuman also wanted to follow Rama. But Kausalya told him not to enter the room of Rama. She said, Sita with vermilion mark had the right to enter Rama's room but Hanuman had no right to do so. At this, Hanuman got angry, went to the bazaar, bought a lot of vermilion and smeared it on his body. He then exclaimed, "When Mother Sita with a little vermilion on her forehead can enter Rama's room, why not I with so much of vermilion?" Hanuman's devotion was full of innocence and sacredness. People had very sacred feelings in ancient days. We do not find such sacred feelings in people today. But past is past. You cannot get back that type of time. Without bothering about the future, you should make the best use of your present. Whatever you have got today, you have to maintain.

Once Anjana Devi, the mother of Anjaneya, came to the residence of Kausalya. Kausalya enquired who she was. Anjana Devi introduced herself, saying, "I am the mother of Anjaneya, who could cross over the mighty ocean in a leap." After some time, the mother of Sage Agastya also came there. On being asked, she introduced herself, saying, "I am the mother of the one who swallowed the entire ocean in one gulp." Then Kausalya said to them, "Your sons could accomplish such stupendous tasks because of the mighty power of the Name of my son, Rama." As they were conversing, Rama came there and asked, "Mother, what is it that you are discussing?" Kausalya replied, "Son, we are discussing the glory of Your Name." Then Rama said, "Mother, it is not merely because of My Name that they were able to perform such mighty tasks. Their purity of heart was also responsible for this. There are many who chant My Name, but are all of them able to

reap its benefit? Purity of heart is very essential.” Mothers in those days were women of great merit. But many children today do not respect their mother.

### **The Ideals every Family should Uphold**

Once all the people of the village gathered to celebrate Swami’s Birthday. They invited Mother Easwaramma to take part in this function. They said to her, “Today is your son’s birthday. You should participate in this function.” She happily agreed to come and said that it was her great good fortune to take part in it. She came walking from the village and sat down at the doorstep of My room, saying, “Swami, I could walk up to Your room but am unable to walk further.” On hearing this, Venkamma offered to help her. Then Easwaramma said, “Venkamma, I do not need anybody’s help. Only Swami will help me. Swami will protect me at all times.”

The Summer Course was going on at Brindavan. Easwaramma had her breakfast and coffee. After that, she was chewing betel. Suddenly, she shouted, “Swami, Swami, Swami” three times. I said, “I am coming, I am coming, I am coming.” I came down immediately and she breathed her last. She had an easy death without any suffering at all. Who can pass away with such ease? All those related to this body had such experience. Pedda Venkama Raju also passed away likewise. He came to Me when I had called a lot of people for interview. He said to Me, “Swami, I want to speak to You for a minute.” I said, “There are so many people who are waiting as I have called them for interview.” Then he said, “It is very urgent.” He took out some money and put it in My hand. He said, “I am a poor man. On the 12th day after my death, use this money to feed poor people.”

The parents of this body were generous. Those who are born to such parents are very fortunate. Easwaramma always helped the poor women who approached her for something or the other. Some women told her that they did not have bangles. Easwaramma would go in the house and bring some grains to buy bangles for them. Those days, people did not have money. Things were bought with grains.

The grandfather of this body Kondama Raju was also a man of very charitable disposition. He was a man of high character. He looked at everyone with equal-mindedness. He said, “I do not want any wealth. Pedda Venkama Raju, Chinna Venkama Raju, Subba Raju and Venkatarama Raju can share the property between them. I want only one property.” All the people were gathered there. They asked, “Father, what do you want?” He said, “Give me only Sathya. If Sathya is with me, that is enough.” At that time, I was very small. At the age of nine, I used to run to Bukkapatnam to study and return in the same way. In the evening, grandfather would call Me, “Sathya, come here.” He never called Me Sathyanarayana. He always called Me Sathya. All others used to call Me Raju. He would call Me near and say, “Sathya, our neighbour is having fever. Prepare some Rasam for him.” I would prepare the Rasam and give to the sick person. Rasam prepared by Me was treated as a medicine and would cure everybody.

In this way, I gave all help to My grandfather Kondama Raju. One day, I was pretending to sleep. As he also lay down near Me, he heard My breath sounding as “Om”. When he got up in the morning, he said, “Sathya, come here. Today we have to celebrate a festival.” I asked, “What festival, grandfather?” He said, “I have heard Your breath

producing the sound of Omkar.” I said, “It is nothing new. It is always there.” In this way, Kondama Raju experienced the Divinity of Swami and felt immense happiness. The family had a good name and every member tried to uphold its reputation. None of them ever indulged in any act of injustice or unrighteousness. Before his death, Kondama Raju gave Me some coins and told Me, “I have some money left with me from the earnings of my small business. May be I have committed some wrong to somebody. After my death, when my dead body is taken out, throw these coins over my dead body so that poor people can pick them up. This would free me from the debt which I might have incurred by mistake.” I told him, “Why do you want to give Me money? I have enough money.” Then he said, “No, I do not want anybody’s money. I want to give only my money.” All the members of this family were imbued with sacred ideals and spirit of sacrifice. Janakiramaiah (younger brother of Swami) is also doing a lot of charity. All the men and women of this family upheld the ideals of self-sacrifice and truth.

We have to uphold the principle of truth in our life. If we have it, that is enough. Before he passed away, Kondama Raju one day called Me near and said, “I know you are God though people don’t know it.” Every morning, he used to come walking with a walking stick from the village. I would pretend to sleep when I saw him coming. He used to lift the rug, touch My feet and go away. One day, he called Easwaramma, asked her to prepare ‘Obbattu’ (a delicious dish he very much liked) and said, “Now my end is very near.” Easwaramma asked, “You are quite healthy. Why do you talk like this?” He replied, “I know; do as I say.” She prepared the dish. Kondama Raju asked Me to eat it but I refused. He said, “I am now 112 years old and I have never fed You. Today I want to feed You with my hands. In the previous Yugas, You were fed by Yashoda and Kausalya. Today I have this good fortune.” He put a little in My mouth. But it was neither in his hand nor in My mouth. Easwaramma, who was watching this, wondered where it went. Kondama Raju said, “Swami’s Leelas (divine pranks) are many. This is just one more.”

Kondama Raju had a peaceful death. As a matter of fact, all the members of this family had such peaceful end. They faced hardships but remained always happy. They helped others even though they themselves were not very affluent. In every respect, this was an ideal and noble family. All should emulate the ideals of this family. Every man should try to become a member of such ideal families.

### **Be Grateful to your Parents**

*Students!*

Try to help others to the best of your ability and strength. Help them to get good education. I am here to help you always. Give food to those who need it. There is no charity higher than Annadana (giving food to the hungry). Give food free. Give everything free to the needy people.

*There are no greater gods than parents,*

*There is no virtue greater than character.*

*There is no greater Dharma than compassion,*

*There is no greater gain than the company of the good,*

*There is no enemy greater than anger,  
There is no greater misery than infamy.  
There is no greater fortune than good reputation,  
There is no wealth greater than contentment.  
There is no ornament better than the chanting of God's Name. (Telugu Poem)*

Daiva Chinthana (contemplation of God) is the greatest Sadhana. You should give utmost satisfaction to your parents. Consider it as your bounden duty to offer water to your parents at the time of their passing away. You should touch their feet and pay obeisance to them everyday. Being born as son or daughter to them, you have to do your duty and show respect to your parents. Only then will you attain fulfilment in life. Even when you are not seeing your parents physically, you should feel that they are with you. After their departure from the world, you perform the rite of Tarpanam to them (ceremony in memory of the parents). What is true Tarpanam? Performing the formal ritual of feeding Brahmins is not enough. You should shed tears of gratitude. Remembrance of your parents with gratitude is the most important thing that you should do. This is the greatest act of Punya (merit).

Blessing you all to continue showing such meaningful and heartfelt gratitude and reverence to your parents to sanctify your life, I bring My Discourse to a close.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*”

- **From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 2nd June 2003.**

### **News from Brindavan**

#### **Bhagavan Visits Kodaikanal**

The prayers of the devotees of Kodaikanal were answered when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba paid a visit to this beautiful hill resort of Tamil Nadu from 11th to 20th May 2003 after a long gap of three years. Bhagavan was accompanied by a group of students, staff and devotees.

Bhagavan was given a warm send-off at His residence in Trayee Brindavan when He left for Bangalore airport at 12.10 p.m. on 11th May 2003. Arati was offered to Bhagavan on this occasion and coconuts were broken before His car as a mark of auspiciousness. From Bangalore, Bhagavan along with His group journeyed to Madurai by aeroplane. Bhagavan showered the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the Madurai devotees who had gathered in Ananda Nilayam in thousands to welcome Him. After a short stay at Madurai, Bhagavan left by car for Kodaikanal. A mammoth gathering of devotees welcomed Bhagavan to His abode in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal when His motorcade reached there at 8.00 p.m. With their hearts filled with joy, the enthusiastic multitudes filled not only Sai Sruthi but also all the passages leading to it.

The devotees of Kodaikanal were beside themselves with joy when they had their first Darshan of Bhagavan on the morning of 12th May 2003. There was a virtual shower of

divine love and grace during Bhagavan's stay in Sai Sruthi up to 20th May 2003. Devotees basked in the effulgence of His Divine Darshan in the morning and tasted the bliss of Bhajans in the evening everyday. Students and devotees inside Sai Sruthi had a glimpse of Bhagavan's Divinity when He materialised a small statue of Buddha from the clay of Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, on the evening of 12th May 2003. Commenting on this intricately carved marvel, Bhagavan explained the importance of Chakras (energy centres) located in the human body. On another evening, Bhagavan materialised the gem of Mother Sita and showed it to the entire gathering. Stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and incidents from His own childhood days formed the subject of Bhagavan's intimate talks on other days. To the delight of all devotees, Bhagavan delivered a Discourse on 18th May 2003 in the Bhajan Hall. (Full text of this Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue of "Sanathana Sarathi".)

Bhagavan left Kodaikanal on 20th May 2003 and reached Coimbatore by road. It was a sight to be witnessed. Lined along the stretch of every kilometre of the road were groups of villagers in hundreds and thousands eagerly awaiting a glimpse of Bhagavan. They sang Bhajans as they waited for Bhagavan, and offered Arati to Him when His motorcade came near them. Compassionate Lord ordered the car to be moved slowly so as to make the dreams of these devout multitudes a reality. The city of Coimbatore wore a festive look in expectation of Bhagavan's arrival there. Roads were decorated with flowers and banners. Welcome arches were put up on the road to offer a hearty welcome to Bhagavan. After filling the hearts of Coimbatore devotees with bliss, Bhagavan boarded the aeroplane from there to reach Bangalore the same afternoon.

Brindavan Ashram was beautifully decorated in expectation of Bhagavan's arrival from Kodaikanal. Devotees, students and staff offered a hearty welcome to Bhagavan as He arrived in the Ashram on the afternoon of 20th May 2003 and proceeded to His abode in Trayee Brindavan. Arati was offered to Bhagavan as He alighted from the car in front of His abode at 3.50 p.m.

Ten days in Bhagavan's Divine proximity passed like a dream. The fortunate devotees who could go to Kodaikanal with Bhagavan would treasure the sacred memories of these ten glorious days like ten invaluable gems.

### **Drama on the Unity of Faiths**

An excellent drama on the theme of Unity of Faiths was presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Education, U.S.A. in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam, Brindavan (Whitefield) on the morning of 26th June 2003 soon after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall. The drama entitled "There is only one Religion" beautifully depicted Bhagavan's message to mankind that there is only one religion and that is the religion of love. The drama began at 7.45 a.m. after Bhagavan's arrival in the Kalyana Mandapam.

As the scene opens, the children belonging to different religions meet and ask each other questions about their respective religions. They are then taken on a spiritual journey and are shown the core tenets of all religions through appropriate dialogues, beautiful songs and meaningful stories. In the end, the children come to realise that the teachings of all the religions are meant to unite mankind. Their spiritual journey culminates when the Sarva Dharma Pillar with a lotus at the top is shown and the lotus gradually opens to

unveil the picture of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who is uniting mankind with the power of His Divine Love.

The drama not only summed up the main teachings of the different religions of the world, but it also beautifully demonstrated that it was only the religion of love that could unite mankind. At the end of the drama, Bhagavan Baba showered His blessings on the cast and posed for photographs with them. He also materialised a gold chain for one of them. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.45 a.m. Prasadam was distributed to all in the end.

### **News from Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** All the eleven Samithis in the district of Medak carried out 7-day programmes to observe Easwaramma Day. As part of Easwaramma Day celebrations, Srikakulam district distributed Saris to 108 poor ladies, conducted free medical camps benefiting 1204 Bal Vikas children, carried out Bal Vikas rallies in 26 villages, conducted competitions in different cultural events and gave prizes to 550 children besides arranging grand cultural programmes on a large scale. The Vizianagaram district conducted (1) a free medical camp in Kothavalasa village on 4th May treating 495 patients, (2) a mega medical camp in Chinnabantupalli village on 9th May treating 576 patients of different ailments. Nalgonda district conducted 50 mass marriages on 4th May in Miryalguda, liberally giving to the couples clothes, utensils, suitcases, blankets, etc.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** Easwaramma Day was celebrated at Imphal, Manipur in Gandhi Memorial Hall on 6th May 2003. The eminent guests at the function included Sri Ved Prakash Marwah, Governor of Manipur and Sri Bijoy Koijam, Minister, Family Welfare, Manipur. The function included chanting of Veda Mantras, talks by guest speakers and cultural programme by Bal Vikas children. The speakers at the function highlighted the ideals of Divine Mother Easwaramma who set great ideals to the world by her love and concern for children and weaker sections of society.

**Delhi:** Apart from organising regular cultural, spiritual and social welfare activities, the State Sai Organisation has started serving the following hospitals on a regular basis: Safdarjang Hospital (South Delhi), Hindu Rao Hospital (North Delhi), Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital (West Delhi), Swami Dayanand Hospital (East Delhi). Youth and active workers clean the hospital wards and compounds enthusiastically while our senior members counsel and interact with the patients to the entire satisfaction of medical staff of the hospitals. Sai Youth of Delhi have adopted many villages and slums where they undertake regular Seva activities.

**Himachal Pradesh:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of the State organised week-long Easwaramma Day celebrations from 1st May to 6th May 2003. Various cultural and social welfare programmes were held in all parts of the State. A significant feature of these programmes was the participation of the blind, deaf and dumb children in the Bal Vikas cultural programme at Shimla. Their deep love for Sai was expressed in the devotional songs that they had composed themselves.

**Uttar Pradesh and Uttranchal:** Jhansi Sai Samithi organised a free camp for heart diseases check up on 27th May 2003. A team of 21 doctors including paramedical staff along with the required mobile sophisticated cardiac equipment checked up 230 patients

and gave free treatment. The doctors also gave talks to the gathering on the care of the heart.

**West Bengal:** On 15th April 2003, the Bengali New Year Day, Sai Youth of Kolkata moved around the streets and distributed new dresses among 130 street children. Sai Youth of North 24 Parganas took 36 destitute children from the platforms of Dum Dum Metro Railway Station by car to the Barrackpore Sai Seva Kendra on this day. After breakfast, they were taken for a bath and new dresses were given to them. In a loving atmosphere, they enjoyed themselves, singing and dancing with the youth. After a wholesome lunch, the children rested in the Seva Kendra. With sunset, it was time to go back, for the youth to their homes and to the children the railway platform. The children and the youth departed with eyes full of tears and heart full of hope. The youth prayed to Bhagavan for His blessings so that in the very near future, these children could be kept in a loving environment.

### **Bhagavan Inaugurates New Academic Year of SSSIHL**

The new Academic Year 2003-04 of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning had a very auspicious beginning when the Revered Chancellor of the Institute, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba inaugurated it on the morning of 2nd June 2003 and blessed the gathering of students, teachers and devotees with His nectarine Discourse. The function was held in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall in Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore which was appropriately done up for the occasion. Besides decoration of flowers and colourful buntings, a decorative arch was set up at the entrance of the Hall which portrayed on its both sides two important sayings of Bhagavan, viz., "the Soul of Education is the Education of the Soul" and "Education is for Life and not for a Living". In addition to the beautiful floral decorations, the Institute Emblem and the Sarva Dharma Symbol adorned the dais.

Bhagavan came to the Hall at 7.05 a.m. Simultaneously, Bhajans were started by the Institute students. The programme started at 7.15 a.m. with the chanting of Vedic Mantras by a group of Institute students. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, the Principal of the Brindavan Campus of the Institute Sri Sanjay Sahni addressed the gathering. "From my experience as a student and teacher of this Institute, I can tell you that the best years of your life have just begun", remarked Sri Sanjay Sahni while welcoming the new entrants to the Institute. Giving an outline of the history of the Institute which became a university in November 1981 just two years after the establishment of the college in Prasanthi Nilayam in 1979, Sri Sahni referred to the recent comments of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (the official certifying authority for quality of university education in India) which accorded topmost rank to this Institute in the country after reviewing its progress. Sri Sahni concluded his speech with a valuable piece of advice to the students: "Be focused on Bhagavan during your stay in the Institute."

After the speech of Sri Sahni, the Revered Chancellor of the Institute Bhagavan Baba gave an illuminating Discourse in which He exhorted the students to acquire education which could bring fulfilment in their lives and lead them to liberation. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) Bhagavan concluded His



Discourse with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ..." at 8.45 a.m. The programme came to a conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam.

## **DIVINE DISCOURSE ON DOCTORS DAY**

### **DEVELOP ATMIC CONSCIOUSNESS**

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

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

*Man is born in action, is sustained by action and ultimately merges in action. Action is the cause of pleasure and pain. Truly speaking, action is God for man.* (Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Generally, man behaves as if he is quite healthy. He tries to attain happiness and remains engaged in enhancing the beauty of his body. But human body is prone to hundreds of diseases caused by the imbalance of Vata, Pitta and Sleshma (wind, bile and phlegm) in it. Such being the case, how can man be really healthy? Man can lead a healthy life only when he develops Atmic consciousness and checks the imbalance of Vata, Pitta and Sleshma.

#### **Body Attachment is the Cause of Untold Suffering**

For the past one month, all of you could not have Swami's Darshan. What is the reason? The reason is the ill health of this body. I have neither taken upon Myself the illness of anybody nor has it emerged from this body. Today I am revealing the truth to you.

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

Man is always concerned about his health. He becomes the victim of many diseases as he forgets the Atmic consciousness and gets enmeshed in body attachment. The diseases are the reminders to man that he should give up body attachment. It is very essential that he recognises this truth.

You are all aware that I suffered a fracture of the hip joint; the bone broke into three pieces and the ball also got separated. The excruciating pain one suffers in such a condition cannot be described in words. It is not possible to move this way or that way. The body suffers pain as if subjected to electric shocks. But I was unaffected by it. I underwent all this suffering in order to demonstrate that one should transcend body consciousness and develop Atmic consciousness. I am not this body. Body attachment is

the cause of untold suffering. One has to get rid of body attachment to enjoy peace and happiness. What is this body after all?

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

I was all smiles when I was being taken to the hospital. Many doctors surrounded Me in the hospital. They were all very anxious. I told them not to worry. I said, "This body is not Mine. I am handing this over to you. You can do whatever you deem fit to this body. I have no pain whatsoever." I came out of the operation theatre after three hours. I was smiling all the time. A true spiritual aspirant is one who undergoes all suffering smilingly.

After the surgery, I was able to walk within three days. This is because there is not even a trace of body attachment in Me. With Atmic consciousness, I give happiness to all. I teach everyone, "My dear! Don't fall a prey to body attachment; develop Atmic consciousness and lead a happy life." Your Ananda (happiness) is My Ahara and Arogya (food and health). What is health? You call a person healthy when all his organs are functioning effectively. All the organs of My body are functioning most perfectly.

The body is prone to physical afflictions. But these are temporary like passing clouds. They come and go. *Life is a Challenge, Meet It. Life is a Game, Play It.* You have to play the game of life in the right spirit. I have been doing the same. I have absolutely no pain. Generally, the pain due to the fracture of hip bone is unbearable. But I am unaffected by injury to any organ of the body, leave alone the hip bone. Suffering arises when you identify yourself with the body. I have no pain since I have no body attachment. I take delight in your love. What is the reason for My speedy recovery? The prayers of devotees are responsible for it. (*loud applause*) The devotees in all the corners of the world have been constantly praying. You can achieve anything by the power of prayer. It is the power of prayer that has restored the health of My body so soon.

The suffering caused by Dehabhimana (body attachment) will disappear once you develop Daivabhimana (divine consciousness). The first step in the spiritual path is to overcome body attachment. You are subjected to all kinds of suffering as your body attachment increases. As body attachment increases, Atmic consciousness decreases.

Nobody can escape the consequences of Karma (action). Karma is the cause of birth and death. *Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke* (Man in the world is bound by action). How can man escape this bondage of action? The Bhagavadgita declares: *Karmanyevadhikarasthe Ma Phaleshu Kadachana* (You have right only on action not on its fruit). While performing actions with the body, man should give up the desire for fruits and develop Atmic consciousness. Dharmaraja was the very embodiment of righteousness. Yet he had to undergo suffering. Were not the mighty Pandavas compelled to go into exile and lead a life full of troubles? Did not King Harischandra, having lost his kingdom, become a caretaker of graveyard? Everyone is bound to face the consequences of his or her actions. However, man does have the capacity to escape from the consequences of Karma. He has become weak as he is unable to harness his innate potential due to body attachment. Having assumed a human body, one cannot escape from suffering. Body is momentary; it can collapse in a moment. Hence, gradually reduce your body attachment.

### **Doctors Day to Honour Selfless Doctors**

Do not care for the suffering of the body. Suffering is quite natural to human body. Face all suffering with Atmic power. After putting in a lot of hard work and study the doctors have been able to find remedies for various diseases. There are many doctors in the world today. But if there are two doctors in a house, there are four patients! The number of patients goes on increasing with the increase in the number of doctors. But it is not the fault of doctors. What is the reason? The reason is man's lack of control over his desires.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Gradually give up body attachment. Develop Atmic consciousness. The Atma alone is true and eternal. The Atma is our life. Everything else is a passing cloud. Do not get deluded by body attachment. Today we are celebrating Doctors Day. On this day, the doctors should rededicate themselves to make the patients happy by alleviating their suffering. Some doctors discharge their duties selflessly with the spirit of sacrifice, keeping the welfare of patients as their sole objective.

Dr. Sundaresh exerted a lot to look after My body. He monitored the progress of My recovery every moment. I kept telling him repeatedly, "Sundaresh, I am all right, do not worry." But he would not be satisfied. He would keep on enquiring whether I had pain in any part of the body. He is equally concerned about the welfare of other patients too. When one of our college students met with a motorcycle accident, Dr. Sundaresh used to monitor his progress day in and day out. Without caring to take rest even at night, he made frequent visits to Puttaparthi to look after this student. If there were doctors like Dr. Sundaresh in the world, there would not be any disease at all. Today diseases are on the rise because doctors have become money-minded.

One day, some nine years ago, I was trying to dry My hair with a hair dryer presented to Me by an American doctor. I am not accustomed to using modern gadgets. When I was trying to use the same, the electricity went off. While I was having a close look at the dryer to know why it was not working, electricity was restored. Consequently, a sudden gust of hot air blew into My left eye and damaged the eye lens. But I was least perturbed. I thought, one eye is sufficient to see this wide world. *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet).

When I was in the hospital for hip surgery, Dr. Hemanth Murthy (ophthalmic surgeon) prayed to Me to undergo an eye operation as well. He performed the operation and replaced the lens. Since then I am able to see clearly with both My eyes. (*loud prolonged applause*) With such doctors around, any surgery can be performed successfully. Eye surgeons like Dr. Hemanth Murthy and orthopaedic surgeons like Dr. Sundaresh are very rare in this world. Such doctors should be given all encouragement and support.

Today there are many diabetic patients who come for eye surgery. Sophisticated equipment is needed to operate upon such patients. But the government is unable to provide the necessary equipment and infrastructure to these doctors. Consequently, the doctors are handicapped and are unable to do their best. However skilled a doctor may be, he cannot discharge his duties effectively unless he is provided with proper equipment. I want to support and encourage such doctors by providing the necessary infrastructure and equipment. Doctors Day is being celebrated to encourage and felicitate such doctors.

### **Medical Practice is not a Business Enterprise**

Health and education are the two most important requirements of man's life. Of what use is a life without education? Besides education, one needs good health also. One can put one's knowledge into practice only when one has good health. In today's world many people are suffering for want of proper medical facilities. It is your primary duty to aid the suffering humanity. Only then will the country prosper. *Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.* Today many doctors are making their medical practice a business enterprise. They aspire for the patients' wealth and not their health. Business in the field of medicine is a great sin. Doctors should develop the spirit of sacrifice and help others. A true doctor aspires only for the well-being of his patients. We have to encourage such noble doctors. If such doctors are encouraged, patients will be happy.

*Embodiments of Love!*

One has to take good care of one's health with proper food and healthy habits. There are many poor people in our country who lack even the basic necessities of life like food, raiment and shelter. Who will take care of them when they are afflicted with diseases? Do not think that I am lavishing praise on our own hospitals. You can see it for yourself when you visit these hospitals. If you go to our general hospitals and super speciality hospitals, you will find a number of poor people being treated for various diseases totally free of cost. Elsewhere, super speciality hospitals are established with a commercial motive. They collect fee even to check the temperature of a patient. How can the poor afford such costly treatment? Doctors should render free service to the patients to the extent possible. The patients should not be subjected to even the slightest suffering.

**Service to Patients is Service to God**

*Embodiments of Love!*

There are many doctors who treat the patients with the spirit of sacrifice. Helping the patient is a great service. There is no service higher than that. God is the sole refuge of the destitute. As man is the embodiment of God, it is his primary duty to help the destitute and poor people. Many big hospitals are being started today only to earn money. Medical practice is not a business. It is meant to promote heart to heart and love to love relationship between the doctor and the patient. A true doctor is one who realises this truth and conducts himself accordingly. A doctor who has greed for money is not a doctor at all. In fact, he is a patient himself! Spirit of sacrifice is the hallmark of a true doctor.

The doctors who are working in our hospitals are endowed with the spirit of sacrifice. Dr. Savitri and others are working tirelessly day and night in our General Hospital. I often tell them, "Take proper care of your health in the first instance. Only then can you serve the patients more effectively. How can you look after the patients if your own health is spoiled?" Our Principal in his speech said: *Vaidyo Narayano Hari* (The doctor is verily God). Being the very embodiment of Lord Narayana, a doctor should serve everyone. God is ever engaged in service. *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

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

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

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

Celebration of Doctors Day lies in undertaking service activities, and not merely in donning a grand attire. As you are aware, Dr. Savitri and Dr. Shanthala are doing great service in our General Hospital here. Not merely this. Many doctors come from the city regularly and render voluntary service.

(The programme concluded with singing of the National Anthem)

- **From Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 5th July 2003.**

#### **Notice**

It is noted that some of the subscribers and other devotees are sending currency notes in postal covers while subscribing for “Sanathana Sarathi” or placing orders for books / audio visual items. Please DO NOT send currency notes by post, as it is illegal as per the rules of the government. Further, it is likely to be tampered with while in transit, for which no one can be held responsible.

*Convener*

**Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust**

#### **Doctors Day at Brindavan**

In an era in which healthcare is becoming more and more hi- tech and getting out of the reach of the common man due to the gross commercialisation of the medical profession, the super speciality and general hospitals set up by Bhagavan Baba have become beacons of hope for the world by providing state-of-the-art healthcare to the poorest of the poor totally free of cost. The dedicated team of highly competent medical experts working in these hospitals has demonstrated the highest standards in the medical profession by following the ideals of selfless service and self-sacrifice set by Bhagavan Baba as part of His Divine Mission for the transformation of mankind.

To recognise the services of these selfless medical experts and to honour them, Doctors Day was celebrated in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 5th July 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Sri T. N. Chaturvedi, the Governor of Karnataka was the Chief Guest of this grand function in which the Chief Minister of Karnataka Sri S. M. Krishna was also present among other dignitaries. The

programme included Bhajans, talks by distinguished speakers, presentation of awards to doctors and Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The students of SSSIHL started Bhajans when Bhagavan came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 7.50 a.m. Soon after the Bhajans, bouquets were offered to Bhagavan, Sri T. N. Chaturvedi and Sri S. M. Krishna. The programme commenced with chanting of Vedic Mantras by a group of students of the Institute. After Veda chanting, the Principal of Brindavan Campus of the Institute, Sri Sanjay Sahni extended a hearty welcome to the esteemed guests, doctors and devotees and referred to the exalted status given to the medical and teaching professions in Indian culture. The learned speaker said that even in this age of commercialisation of all areas of human activity, Bhagavan Baba had chosen to restore the noble ideals of Prema and Thyaga (love and sacrifice) in these professions by setting up free institutions of education and healthcare for the common man.

After this, Sri C. Sreenivas, Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Health and Education Trust addressed the gathering. Referring to the phenomenal growth of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital set up by Bhagavan Baba to provide free healthcare with love to the villagers of Whitefield in 1974, Sri Sreenivas informed that this hospital had treated over 2.25 million cases in almost every branch of medicine and was now serving more than 2,600 villages from a large surrounding area. Expressing gratitude to Bhagavan Baba for His Divine inspiration, the distinguished speaker told that this was perhaps the only hospital in the world where there was a waiting list of medical experts who were eager to offer their selfless voluntary service to this institute of Bhagavan. Praising the dedication and spirit of sacrifice of the doctors working in this hospital, Sri Sreenivas announced the names of Dr. D. C. Sundaresh and Dr. Hemanth Murthy, chosen to represent this dedicated team of doctors, to come on the dais and receive a shawl and cash award from the Governor Sri T. N. Chaturvedi and the Chief Minister Sri S. M. Krishna respectively. The doctors were lustily cheered when they came to the dais to receive the awards.

After this, Dr. A. N. Safaya, Director, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences gave an illuminating talk on how Bhagavan had spiritualised the medical profession by His Divine inspiration. Referring to the enormity of the work done by Sri Sathya Sai medical institutions, Dr. Safaya cited facts and figures to show that free services offered by these institutions were worth more than 100 crores per year. Nobody had ever planned and thought of offering service to society of this magnitude except Bhagavan Baba, asserted Dr. Safaya.

After these speeches, Bhagavan gave His nectarine Discourse in which He exhorted the devotees to develop Atmic consciousness and get rid of body attachment so as to attain freedom from diseases and suffering. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) At the end of His Discourse, Bhagavan honoured Dr. Savitri and Dr. Shanthala of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, Whitefield, and gave Saris to them. This grand function came to a happy conclusion at 9.15 a.m. with singing of the National Anthem by the entire gathering.

**GURU PURNIMA SANDESH**  
**GIVE UP BODY ATTACHMENT**

*Embodiments of Love!*

The entire universe has been created by the Sankalpa (Will) of God and is sustained by Him. It ultimately merges in God, the source of its origin. The universe which is the manifestation of God's Will is known as Viswam. Viswam denotes expansiveness and bliss. These are the main objectives behind the creation of the universe. But man is acting contrary to it. Viswam is not merely a manifestation of physical matter. It is the direct manifestation of God. It is the very embodiment of the Cosmic Personality with all His limbs. Viswam symbolises the expansive nature of God which can be understood only through Viveka (discrimination). God is beyond time and cause. The physical world functions by so-called reason but the Divine Will is not bound by reason. God is the primal cause of the universe. The universe is the reflection of God. Viswam and Vishnu are not different from each other. The letter 'V' in the name Vishnu stands for Viveka and Vistara (expansiveness). Hence, Viswam is the very form of Vishnu. In fact, the entire creation is constituted by the various limbs of God.

**Know the Real Meaning of Spirituality**

Every object in the creation has five aspects, namely, Sath, Chit, Ananda, Rupa and Nama (existence, knowledge, bliss, form and name). The first three are eternal principles, whereas name and form are ephemeral. Sath, Chit, Ananda are the basis for name and form. All human activities are based on name and form. It is God who decides what each name and form should do. Some people are Rajasic; some others are Thamasic. Evil qualities like hatred and jealousy are predominant in such people. They lead their life on the basis of their name and form. They forget the three main principles of Sath, Chit and Ananda and consider name and form to be the sole reality. Name and form are not permanent; they do not represent truth. But people go by name and form and ignore the eternal principles of Sath, Chit and Ananda. Consequently, they are deluded and tend to forget the mighty power of God behind all names and forms. The lotus in the navel of Lord Vishnu represents Divine Sankalpa (Will). Therefore, he is called Padmanabha (One who has a lotus emerging from His navel). He is also called Hiranyagarbha (the golden egg, out of which all creation emerged). Each name like Padmanabha, Hiranyagarbha, Hiranmaya, etc., has a profound inner meaning. Spirituality is meant to explain the principle of Divinity and the inner meaning of these names. But man today has not really understood what spirituality means. He is under the mistaken notion that spirituality means merely to offer ritualistic worship to God. Hence, the need to explain the inner significance of spirituality and the various names and forms attributed to God.

**True Strength Lies in Unity**

It is not possible for all to understand the nature of Divinity. God is the sculptor who does not need a chisel. He is the painter who does not need paint and brush to draw the world. This world appears to be standing without any support. God is the support of all. One has to make efforts to understand the principles of Adhara and Adheya (object and its

support). One should know this truth and conduct oneself accordingly. Do not waste time in merely performing rituals. True spirituality lies in realising the truth that man is but a spark of Divinity. This is what is declared in the Bhagavadgita: *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). *Vaasudevasarvamidam* (the whole world is permeated by God Vaasudeva). You have to experience this truth and propagate it to the world.

In 1968, the First World Conference of Sathya Sai Seva Organisations was held in Bombay (now Mumbai). It was the time when Dharmakshetra was inaugurated. Indulal Shah was mainly responsible for the construction of Dharmakshetra. (*loud applause*) He has been working tirelessly for the propagation of Swami's message. His wife Sarla Shah played an active role in the development of Bal Vikas and Mahila Vibhag. In this manner, both husband and wife worked hard to spread the message of Sai in the entire world. Even at this advanced age, they are exerting a lot in the service of Sai Organisation.

Many individuals in the past had to put up with a lot of difficulties while constructing pilgrimage centres. Bhadrachalam is one such pilgrimage centre. Adi Sankara, unmindful of the physical strain, walked all the way from deep south to far north to establish pilgrimage centres at Badrinath and Kedarnath. Many pilgrimage centres have been established all over the world. Each centre has a history of its own. Dharmakshetra is no exception to this. Only Swami knows the innumerable difficulties that Indulal Shah faced during the construction of Dharmakshetra. In those days, there was no approach road to the place where Dharmakshetra stands now. He had to walk through thorny bushes to select a suitable site for the construction of Dharmakshetra. He showed Me the place for approval. It is situated on the Mahakali Caves road. He worked hard for its construction. Many people helped him in the fulfilment of this task. It is not possible to undertake a work of this magnitude without the help of others. When you undertake a good work, there are bound to be certain obstacles in the beginning. But you should not lose heart. When the ocean of milk was churned by Devas (gods) and Danavas (demons), it was the deadly poison that emerged first. But that did not deter them. They continued their efforts with unflinching determination and ultimately obtained the divine ambrosia. Our heart can be compared to the ocean of milk and the Sadhana to the process of churning. Initially, there are bound to be obstacles when you undertake Sadhana. We should not be deflected by these obstacles, but should continue our efforts with full faith. Only then can we attain an exalted and blissful state.

Sarla Shah and Indulal Shah had to face innumerable difficulties those days. They overcame all those with courage and fortitude. They reside in Bombay which is not an ordinary place. Bombay is like a bomb. Whatever you do, be it good or bad, you have to face difficulties. They did good work in spite of all the problems. In fact, Indulal Shah was troubled by many. But he continued his work with unwavering devotion and achieved success. You need to have God's grace to accomplish anything. But at the same time, you cannot but seek the help and cooperation of others to fulfil a mighty task. Where there is unity, there is bliss. In this Age of Kali, people no longer have the spirit of unity. There is neither unity nor purity. Hence, enmity has found a place in the human



heart giving rise to distress and turmoil. In fact, unity is the need of the hour. True strength of humanity lies in unity. Those who are engaged in God's work should be prepared to face all obstacles with firm determination. Indulal Shah's life bears ample testimony to this. He has been serving Sai for the last forty years with strong faith and determination. He travelled all round the world to propagate the message of Sai. Whenever people approached him with doubts, he gave most appropriate answers and cleared their doubts. One should be prepared to face challenges in all walks of life, be they worldly, ethical or spiritual. Both of them have spent all their energy working tirelessly for the Sai Organisation.

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

As is the thought, so is the action. As is the action, so is the result. Today man is unable to reach the goal of his life because he does not entertain sacred thoughts. In the first instance, he should develop sacred thoughts. There are many who have deluded themselves that they love God. But they are full of body consciousness and crave for money and material possessions. Such love cannot be true love at all. It is artificial love. Many people write to Me, "Swami, we love You. Please keep us near and dear to You." In this context, let Me emphatically tell you that Sai cannot be attained so easily. You may say that you love Me. But how can I believe you? Is there any spirit of sacrifice in your love? What is the intensity of your love? You make a promise one day and go back on it the very next day. How can one believe such a false person? True and eternal love originates from the heart. It is a heart to heart relationship. It cannot be fragmented. One cannot have love for God as well as for ephemeral objects and relationships. The love which is fragmented is artificial only. You have only one heart. You cannot break it into pieces and distribute to various people. It is not like a Laddoo or sugarcane which can be broken into pieces and distributed. It is eternal, nectarine and full of bliss. Ignoring the immortal bliss within, people tread the worldly path thinking that bliss lies in the external world. It is only a figment of their imagination. True love is associated with the Atmic principle which is present in everyone in the form of consciousness. This consciousness is the embodiment of the Atma and Brahman. There is no difference between Atma and Brahman. Man has no existence without consciousness. It is the source of eternal, immortal and non-dual bliss in him. Who is responsible for this bliss in you?

People are heroes in speech but zeros in practice. Today the world is being duped by such people. Those who have true love in their heart will not indulge in tall talk. They demonstrate their love in action. Today people speak a lot without translating their speech

into action. Such people are verily thieves. How can you attain the goal of life if you believe in such unscrupulous people and rely on them? Your heart should melt and flow towards God. Only then can you attain His grace. People may talk as they please; do not be carried away by them. Unmindful of hardships and difficulties, hold on to the principle of divinity and reach the goal of life. Today people lack the will and determination to reach the goal of life. He is a true devotee who makes efforts to attain God with full faith and determination without caring for trials and tribulations. You should have firm determination if you want to reach the goal of life.

*Having resolved what ought to be resolved, hold on to it till you have succeeded. Having desired what ought to be desired, hold on to it till your desire is fulfilled. Having asked what ought to be asked, do not leave the hold till you get it. Having thought what ought to be thought, hold on to it till you have succeeded. With heart mellowed, the Lord must yield to your wishes. With no thought of yourself, you should ask Him with all your heart. Persevere, be tenacious, and never give up, for it is the quality of a devotee never to retreat, abandoning his resolve. (Telugu Poem)*

### **Prayers of Devotees is My Medicine**

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

Nobody needs to be worried or anxious about Swami's well-being. No danger can ever befall Swami. Swami will come out of all difficulties and troubles unscathed. He will achieve all success. There may be some changes at the physical level. They are only temporary and not permanent. Hence, I want all of you to be courageous. Now I have recovered and am standing before you. What is the medicine I have taken? The intense prayers of the devotees is My medicine. (*loud prolonged applause*). During the last one month, be it in Madras (now Chennai), Hyderabad, Bangalore or Mumbai, devotees intensified their prayers and spiritual activities. Bhajans and Namasmarana were conducted practically in every house. Some devotees undertook penance and performed Yajnas. In this manner, a number of spiritual activities were undertaken praying for the well-being of Swami. It is as a result of such fervent prayers that I am able to stand before you and address you. Neither did I want this suffering nor did I desire for its cure. You wanted this body to be cured of the pain, and you achieved it through your prayers. This body is not Mine. It is yours. Hence, it is your responsibility to look after this body. I am not the Deha (body); I am the Dehi (Indweller).

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

The Atma has neither birth nor death. It has no pain or suffering. You may not believe it but the doctors have seen the extent of injury to My hip. For anybody else, it would have

taken at least two to three years to walk normally. The ball in the hip joint got separated. There were no muscles for support. My bones are as strong as diamonds. It was not possible to join them together. Hence, they performed the surgery and put a rod. After undergoing such a complicated surgery, it takes a number of years to walk normally. Without caring for all this, I started walking. Doctors made every effort to protect this body. They did their duty. But I did not think of this body at all. I demonstrated the ideal that one should not have body attachment. Not only now, I have been repeatedly exhorting you to give up body attachment for the last two years. Gradually, reduce your Dehabhimana (body consciousness) and develop Atmabhimana (Atmic consciousness). You are not the body; you are the embodiment of the Atma. The physical body comes and goes. Only the body has suffering, not the Atma.

### **Unparalleled Devotion Worth Emulating**

When My hip was fractured, it was not possible to move My leg even a little. The slightest movement caused excruciating pain like that of an electric shock. I told the doctors, “This is not My body. This is yours. You may do whatever you deem fit.” One who has given up body consciousness will have no suffering at all. Satyajit was with Swami all the time. He has a strong determination and has taken a vow that he will be with Swami always. When I was being taken to the hospital in a van, he sat right near My head. When I was taken into the operation theatre, he too followed. Usually, when a surgery is done, nobody is allowed into the operation theatre. But Satyajit did not want to leave Me. He wanted to see what the doctors would do to Swami’s body. Hence, he wore the surgeon’s dress and entered the operation theatre. I told Satyajit, “You will not be able to bear the sight of blood. Hence, you remain outside.” But he lovingly insisted that he might be allowed to stay inside. He was with Me at the time of operation. He saw the doctor making a hole in the bone with a hammer. After the operation was over, he asked, “Swami, how could You bear such pain and suffering?” I told, “The love of devotees like you is My strength.” (*loud prolonged applause*) The power of love is the ultimate power. You can overcome any pain or danger with the power of love.

You should have strong and un-wavering faith without even a trace of doubt. Your thoughts, words and deeds must be in harmony. Many devotees who have such strong and steady faith became recipients of Swami’s grace. During the last one month, Bhajans were held in every village. Their only prayer was that Swami should recover quickly and grant them Darshan. Swami’s well-being was uppermost in everybody’s mind. I received lakhs of telegrams from devotees wishing for My speedy recovery. Many devotees were very anxious and were praying within. Their anxiety turned into penance. The power of their penance is the cause of My health and happiness. It is because of their love and devotion that I am quite healthy now. I have never used My Divine power to cure Myself. If I were to use it, I could have cured Myself in a trice. I don’t have the selfish feeling that I should get cured. There is not even a trace of selfishness in Me.

Everyone should be happy. Everyone should experience and see goodness. This is the essence of the culture of Bharat. You should imbibe this noble ideal in your life. In this Age of Kali, people have several doubts, particularly the younger generation who are highly educated – post-graduates and double post-graduates. It is but natural that under

the influence of the Kali Age and with their modern educational background, the younger generation will not be able to develop firm faith in Divinity.

Satyajit and Dilip served Me with total dedication. At midnight, even at the odd hour of 1 o' clock or 2 o'clock when I got up from the bed and looked around, I found these two boys Satyajit and Dilip wide awake, one sitting near My head and the other at My feet, taking care of this body. Dilip is working in the Super Speciality Hospital here. He had a fracture recently in his leg and it was still in a plaster cast. In spite of that, he came over to Bangalore to serve Swami after hearing about Swami's ill-health. Both these boys have been attending to the needs of Swami with great devotion. I can emphatically say that none can equal them in their love and devotion to Swami. People may pay lip service uttering the word 'love', 'love' mechanically; but no one can do such a great service as these two boys have done. Even at an odd hour, if I just uttered the word 'Satya' in a whisper, the boy would immediately get up and attend to My needs. He was so alert and attentive. They used to attend to all My needs, including food. In fact, they completely forgot their own personal needs while serving Swami. It is only because of their parents' devotion to God and the merits accumulated by them that these boys are able to cultivate such noble feelings of devotion and service. Therefore, the parents should first become devotees of God. I used to tell these boys often that I was feeling better and that they could go and take food. But they would not leave Me. Whenever they received any phone call from devotees making anxious enquiries about Swami's condition, they simply used to reply that Swami was fine. Never did they give any details. They used to answer the queries of devotees with great love and tact. How did they acquire such great love and tact? Not because of higher education or age. It is only because of their intense devotion and faith in Swami. That is the real quality. Because of such a noble quality, they did great service to Swami. Today I am able to stand before you and give a Discourse only because of the great service rendered by these two boys. (*loud applause*)

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

With faith and devotion, one can achieve great tasks, even lifting a mountain. Take the example of Hanuman. When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama was in great distress. Then Hanuman was sent to bring the Sanjeevani herb to revive Lakshmana. Hanuman did not know where exactly the herb was. Therefore, he lifted the whole mountain on which the herb existed and placed it before Rama. Similarly, a devotee of God must be prepared to undertake any service, however mighty the task may be. Generally, people will have a tendency to run away from difficulties and rush forward to enjoy happiness. That is not proper. One must be prepared to face all difficulties. Human body is susceptible to several diseases and difficulties. You should not get disheartened

by them. You must develop firm faith in Divinity. That Viswasa (faith) must be your Swasa (breath).

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*” and continued the Discourse).

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

Another small incident I wish to mention to you. A lady in the U.S.A was extremely afraid of the disease diagnosed by her doctors. The diagnosis revealed that she had a cancerous growth in the heart region. She and her husband came to Bangalore praying for Swami’s grace. I assured them that I would cancel the cancer and that they should not have any fear in the matter. She took treatment for one week and the cancer disappeared! A little malignant portion was left and I instructed the doctors to remove it by surgery. The doctors performed the surgery as instructed by Me. On the very next day, she started walking! She is now quite normal and healthy. There are several such cases. The chanting of the Divine Name can cure even the most incurable diseases. That is exactly what she has done. The lady is in the habit of chanting the Divine Name “Sairam”, “Sairam” continuously. There are several such people who chant the Divine Name. I have cured several people of the most dreaded and incurable diseases. There are also a number of people whom I have helped in ever-so-many ways. All of them have now prayed for My good health. It is only their prayers that helped My speedy recovery.

Not only this, I lost vision in My left eye some nine years ago. All these years I was seeing with one eye only. Now the doctors in our hospital as also Narasimha Murthy (Warden of the Brindavan Campus), prayed that I should undergo an operation for the left eye along with the operation for the hip bone. I told them that since I was able to manage with one eye, there was no necessity for the operation. But I had to accede to their loving prayers to undergo the eye operation.

When I wanted to come to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.00 a.m. to give Darshan to the devotees, Satyajit prayed that I should slightly postpone My Darshan to 7.30 a.m., keeping in view the physical strain I would have to undergo in early morning Darshan. Thus, he is anxious about My welfare every moment. Not only he, there are several such devotees with noble thoughts. That is why, Saint Thyagaraja sang his immortal Kirtan, “*Endaro*

*Mahanubhaavulu...*” (Many are the great souls ...) In fact, it is only because of such noble souls that the country of Bharat is safe and secure.

Bharat is not just a mass of earth. Bharat is verily the heart of the entire world. If Bharat is safe, the entire world will be safe. Unfortunately, the people of Bharat are not realising this truth. Wherever you see, selfishness is rampant. Therefore, cast away your selfishness and engage yourself in service activities that help others. Pray for the welfare of all. That is the real meaning of the prayer: *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu*. Pray for the welfare of the entire world wholeheartedly. Then you will also definitely prosper. I think I have taken a lot of time and caused inconvenience to you. All should follow the example of Sarla Shah and Indulal Shah and inculcate the spirit of service. I wish both of them long life, healthy life, happy life.

–From Bhagavan’s Guru Purnima Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 13th July 2003.

#### **DASARA DISCOURSES - IV**

##### **The Divine Principle of Soham in Man**

*Brahma is the creator of the whole universe,  
Vishnu preserves and sustains it,  
And Siva is responsible for its dissolution.  
This is the truth that is being conveyed.*

(Telugu Poem)

##### **Embodiments of Love!**

Immersed as he is in an ocean of worries, what is man seeking in this vast and limitless universe? What for is he doing Sadhana? Some people waste their valuable time in seeking worldly things; some others waste their time in trying to satisfy their unfulfilled desires. But those on the spiritual path aspire to have Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan of God (to see God, touch Him and converse with Him).

##### **Soham Permeates your every Breath**

Many people contemplate on God as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. But Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara have no form or Upadhi (attribute). It is said *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). But in what form is He present in all and how can one contemplate on Him? Divinity is present in man in the form of his life-breath that he can perceive, hear and recognise. How can one hear it? What is to be done to comprehend it? The Upanishads have given the names of Brahman and Atma to this invisible breath in human beings. The sound that permeates the breath is called Sabda Brahman (primordial sound). In what way can we identify Easwarathwa (Divinity) which is present in man in the form of Sabda Brahman? Easwarathwa is present in the very

breath of man in the form of Soham. 'So' (Sah) means That (Divinity). Soham means "I am That". The primordial sound in man in the form of Soham establishes the presence of Divinity in him. Is it possible to recognise this form? If you recognise this form, you recognise your very Self.

If one tries to contemplate on the form without recognising the sound, one will not be able to recognise Divinity. The form is determined by the Guna (quality). Soham is endowed with Sattwa Guna. This Sattwa Guna is Easwarathwa (Siva principle). Another principle embodied in Soham is Vishnuthwa (Vishnu principle). What is the form of this Vishnu principle? The thoughts of the mind represent this principle. The mind is made up of Sankalpas and Vikalpas (positive and negative thoughts). This is the Vishnu principle. There is yet another form which emerges from the navel of Vishnu, namely, Brahma. Brahma is Vaak Swarupa (embodiment of speech). It means that every word emerging from the human being is Brahma; every thought arising out of the mind is Vishnu and every breath coming out of the body is Easwara. Thus, Divinity permeates the human being in the form of Soham. It never leaves him at any point of time. It is there with him as long as he is alive. Hence, the principles of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are embodied in the Soham Tattwa present in every human being. The sound that comes out of the navel of Vishnu forms the principle of Brahmattwa. So, the root of Brahmattwa lies in Sabda (sound). Divinity is Sabda Brahmayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Sreemayi (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, perfection, delusion and wealth). Soham is being chanted by man in his each and every breath. Without this Soham sound, breath cannot exist. Similarly, Sankalpa cannot arise without the mind. And without Sankalpa, the word cannot emerge. Thus, there is an inseparable and interdependent relationship between the Soham sound, the Sankalpa in the mind and the word. Man should make efforts to understand this relationship by deep investigation.

Some people engage themselves in the study of the Upanishads. What is the essence of the Upanishads? The Upanishads reveal the reality of man. They teach the principle of unity in diversity. Forgetting the essence of the Upanishads, man today is engaged only in nourishing and nurturing his body. What is the benefit accruing out of this nourishment? In fact, nothing. As long as the body exists, we have to feed it. We also need sleep. During sleep, we experience happiness. Are we able to experience the same happiness when we wake up? No. Forgetting the real teachings of the Upanishads, man runs after temporary and illusory happiness. He is deluded by names and forms, and is at a loss to know the essence of the Upanishads. In order to experience everlasting bliss, man should realise the true meaning of the teachings of the Upanishads. God has no name of His own. Yet all names and forms belong to God. There is no place at which He is not there. Nor is there any object in this world which does not belong to Him. The essential nature of Divinity is love. However, few make efforts to recognise this principle of love.

### **Hridaya is the Veda**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

The human body is a sophisticated machine, the functioning of which is not easy to understand. But there is one main switch which controls all the systems in the body. The eyes see several colours. The tongue tastes several delicacies. The ears hear several types of sounds. But, what is the basis for all these experiences? That basis or the fundamental

principle, because of which man is able to experience all this, is the Atma. Because of this Atmatattwa, Bhavas (feelings) arise in the heart. Hridaya (heart) is the Veda. The Vedas are also known as the Srutis. The essence of these Srutis is Vedanta. Hence, do not presume that the Vedas are far away from you. The all-pervading sound of the Srutis is constantly in you, with you and is a part of you. Therefore, recognise the sound that emerges from the Veda of your heart. Not only that, you should understand its significance and inner meaning.

In the morning, you must have listened to the chanting of Vedic Mantras with several intonations by the Pundits in the Poornachandra Auditorium. You experience bliss when you listen to the chanting of the Mantras even though you are not able to understand their meanings. There may be several meanings of the words in these Mantras. There may be many interpretations of the same Mantra. Do not get confused by pondering over these. In order to know the true meaning of these Mantras, enter into the process of spiritual enquiry by going into deep silence. If your contemplation is steady, the true meaning will be revealed to you.

Yesterday, I told you in My Discourse about the inherent nature of objects. How did sweetness come into sugarcane? How did chillies acquire hot taste? How did leaves of Neem tree get bitterness? How did fragrance come into the jasmine flower? We call it Nature. No, no. It is Divinity that expresses itself through Nature. However, it is not easy to comprehend Divinity in Nature.

### **Understand the Divine Principle of Soham**

In order to understand Paramatma (Divinity), we must fix our mind on Paratattwa (transcendental principle). Where does the mind come from? It comes from the Sankalpas and Vikalpas (positive and negative thoughts). Thoughts are the basis of Sabda (sound). Sound is truly Brahmatattwa (Brahma principle). The Soham principle in the Brahmatattwa is in essence Atmatattwa. Therefore, in order to understand Atmatattwa one has to recognise the nature of the Swasa (breath). Soham permeates your every breath. You cannot live without the divine principle of Soham. Soham is the source of all other sounds. What is the purpose of life? The purpose of life is to know the meaning of Soham. Without attaining the knowledge of Soham, life is meaningless. Soham is also called Hamsa Gayatri. 'So'(Sah) means That, and 'Ham' (Aham) means I. Thus, Soham means "I am That". What is this "That"? Is it the mind? But if your mind is fickle like a mad monkey, how can you progress on the spiritual path by relying on it? Steadiness and purity invest the mind with divinity. Manas (mind) is verily the embodiment of Vishnu. There cannot be Swasa (breath) without the mind. In order to understand such subtle meanings, one has to take to the method of enquiry.

When you meditate on the Soham principle, you will observe that 'So' comes in and 'Ham' goes out with each inhalation and exhalation respectively. This process has to be watched carefully. Here 'So' relates to the divine principle and 'Ham' to Ahamkara (ego). While divinity enters our body, ego leaves us. That divine principle which thus enters our body should be held firmly in our system by the process of Kumbhaka (holding the breath). People doing Pranayama Sadhana call these processes Puraka (inhalation), Kumbhaka (holding) and Rechaka (exhalation). Soham consists of inhaling the breath through one nostril while chanting 'So' and exhaling the breath through the other nostril while chanting 'Ham' and in between holding the breath for some time. The



most effective method lies in observing strict timings for all the three processes involved in Soham. If one does Prana-yama disregarding the timings, it can endanger one's life itself. The time spent for the three processes of Puraka, Kumbhaka and Rechaka must be exactly the same. Brahma is Kaalaswarupa (embodiment of time) and Soham is Brahmatattwa (principle of Brahman). Time is therefore very important in this Sadhana. Moreover, we should always have pure thoughts and maintain purity of mind. The mind represents Vishnu who is the embodiment of purity. Our Sankalpas must always be pure and Sattwic in nature. In order that we have Sattwic Sankalpas, our Swasa must also be pure and Sattwic. Thus, the principles of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are inseparable and interdependent. They are one and the same. We must try to understand the essential nature of their unity. The Upanishads reveal these truths.

### **Try to Know the Inner Meanings of the Upanishads**

But today no one is trying to realise the true meanings of the Upanishads. To describe, analyse and properly understand the deep inner meaning of each one of the Slokas in the Upanishads, you will require at least one month. Each word has several meanings, and we must take the meaning that is appropriate in a given situation. Even the minutest sound must be taken into consideration to understand the correct meaning of a word. For this, subtle differences between the sounds of the letters of the alphabet must be understood.

Time, place and situation impart specific meaning to words. Each country and each language has its own way of portraying a given situation. So, it is important to understand these factors to grasp the real meaning of words.

*Dear Students!*

If you want to know the meanings of the Upanishads, you have to approach the great souls who are well-versed in them. The essence of all the Upanishads is derived from Brahmatattwa. And this Brahmatattwa is the embodiment of Vaak (speech). The mind embodies Vishnutattwa. It should have good thoughts. When the thoughts in the mind are good, they will find expression in good words. And good words in turn will convey good meanings. The Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are not three separate entities. Swasa (breath) represents Easwara, Manas (mind) represents Vishnu and Vaak (speech), Brahma. The unity of these three signifies Atmatattwa.

*Embodiments of Divine Love!*

You will not be able to understand these concepts if I go on repeating them like this. It is also possible that those who do not know the real meanings of the Upanishads may have some misconceptions. Therefore, the Upanishads have to be taught in a peaceful, sacred and calm environment. Purity of speech faculty is essential for chanting the Mantras of the Upanishads. The breath has also to be purified. In the process of explaining Swasatattwa, a particular Mantra has been prescribed in the Upanishads for purifying the breath. Several diseases can be cured by chanting this Mantra along with following the process of breathing. First and foremost, our breath will become sacred and pure. The blood that becomes thick due to the presence of higher levels of cholesterol in it will become thin and flow freely in the veins. The cataract in the eye will also get cured, and the sound coming out of our throat will be purified. However, we must chant these Mantras with correct intonation. Only then will the proper meaning of these Mantras be revealed to us. The entire nature of the body will be revealed to you by knowing the

essence of the Upanishads. How does the tongue know the tastes of different food materials? How is it possible? There are lakhs of taste buds on the tongue, with the help of which it recognises different tastes. Similarly, there are lakhs of light rays in the eyes which enable us to see different objects. We should sanctify our vision by its proper use. The chanting of Upanishadic Mantras enables you to cure several diseases of the body. Also, when you realise their correct meanings, your conduct itself will undergo a tremendous change. With the change in conduct, you will have proper thoughts. Proper thoughts will find expression in proper words.

### **The Correct Way of Chanting Aum**

#### *Embodiments of Divine Love!*

In this world, there are numerous words, and each word has many meanings. It is essential to know the correct meaning of the words we come across. You cannot go by the literal meanings of words, especially in the realm of spirituality. Besides knowing the correct meaning, the proper Swara (intonation) in chanting the various Mantras is very important.

I often quote the example of people chanting Aum in a most mechanical way. Aum contains three syllables, 'A', 'U' and 'M'. 'A' comes from the throat, 'U' from the tongue and 'M' from closed lips. (Swami practically demonstrated this by chanting Aum.) The combined form of these three syllables, namely, Aum emerges from the navel. However, some people chant Aum by segregating the three sounds. (Swami demonstrated this incorrect manner of chanting Aum also.) This is not the correct way of chanting Aum. All the three syllables must be chanted simultaneously in unison. (Swami here demonstrated the correct way of chanting Aum.) The sound should originate from the navel. It should gradually grow to the highest pitch after coming into the throat. After reaching the highest pitch in the throat, it should gradually decline and finally come to a stop when it comes to the lips. It is only when a Mantra is chanted in the proper manner that you get good feelings. Several people tell Me, "Swami, I have been chanting Omkar for several years. But I am unable to have a steady faith." How is it possible when you are not chanting with correct intonation and without understanding its true meaning? The chanting of Omkar requires proper intonation, proper rhythm and proper timing.

The Upanishads appear to be very difficult to understand. But if you know the correct meanings of the words, then they become very easy. So, instead of knowing the essence of all the Upanishads, one should make all efforts to know the correct meanings of the words in the Upanishads. One should chant the Mantras of the Upanishads with proper understanding of their meanings. Those who have lost their teeth will have difficulty in chanting the Mantras correctly because they will not be able to have correct intonation. However, it is not necessary to chant the Mantras loudly. You can chant them within yourself.

### **Mind your Facial Expression while Singing**

In music, some people concentrate on the Swara (tune) and change their tone in accordance with the Swara. As they do so, their facial expression also changes. Very often this expression looks very awkward. Those who make this mistake cannot experience the bliss of singing. You know that when one starts learning music, one is taught to keep the Swara according to Sruti; otherwise, it becomes Apaswara (discordant

note). In order to avoid this, one has to control one's body also. You must have observed that some singers change their tone when they sing Bhajans at a higher pitch. The tone should not be changed. This must be controlled. Some people close their eyes while singing. Some others raise one eye while keeping the other eye low. All these contortions present an awkward picture. Some singers keep a small mirror over the harmonium in order to observe their lips, eyes, etc., when they sing. If the song is not sung in a proper tone, the face will look awkward. If one cannot keep one's form decent, one's singing will lose its worth. It is therefore important that one's facial expression should also be good during singing. Absolute concentration is necessary while performing such things.

### **Perform Sacred Actions to Sanctify Time**

We often do certain acts inadvertently. For example, we indulge in conversation while drinking milk. This can cause the milk to spill over our dress. It may even choke our throat. We should never talk while drinking or eating something. In the olden days, our ancient Rishis used to maintain silence while eating or drinking. Not only that; they invariably chanted the Mantras offering food to God before partaking of it.

If you talk while eating, your digestive system may also be spoiled. Disorders of the digestive system lead to many diseases. Pray to God silently keeping your eyes closed and then partake of your food. Many people do not know all this. Take your food in silence in a calm atmosphere. Do not laugh or cry while eating. Do not have any worry before or while taking food. These are some of the rules one has to follow to lead a happy and truthful life.

### ***Embodiments of Divine Love!***

You speak of Sadhana. But Sadhana is not that easy. You should make earnest efforts to understand the inner meanings of Brahmatattwa, Vishnutattwa and Atmatattwa. It is not enough to just remember the Slokas of the Upanishads. You should study each Sloka deeply, understand its inner meaning and experience the truth contained in it in your life. It is quite easy to speak on the nine steps of Bhakti like Sravanam, Kirtanam, etc., but putting them into practice is difficult. When do you reach the ultimate step of Atmanivedanam (self-surrender)? You can attain it only after Sneham (friendship). Surrender is not possible without friendship. Many people do not know what is real friendship. In their opinion, friendship means wishing each other 'hello, hello'. What is this 'hello, hello'? It is in fact 'hollow, hollow'. It simply does not mean anything. It is not friendship. Friendship presupposes an inseparable relationship between two individuals. Their bodies may be different. But their life principle is one and the same. When two individuals have different thoughts and feelings, it is not friendship. It is said: "*A man with a dual mind is half blind.*" Where there are two kinds of thoughts, it becomes a dual mind. How then can you contemplate on the Divine with a dual mind?

Many students are serious about their Sadhana. Considering their Sraddha (steadfast faith) I wish to elaborate on this aspect. Never leave the sacred path. If you adhere to it, you will have a sacred life. You are sure to achieve success in no time. Do not waste time. You waste time due to ignorance. Time is our life. It is said, *Kaalaya Namah, Kaala Kaalaya Namah, Kaaladarpa Damanaya Namah, Kaalateetaya Namah, Kaalaswarupaya Namah, Kaalaniyamtaya Namah* (salutations to the time, to the one who is beyond time, to the one who has conquered time, to the one who transcends time, to the

one who is the embodiment of time, and to the one who ordains time). Time is everything. You make time unsacred by indulging in unsacred activities. God has given you Kaya (body) to sanctify Kaala (time). You should perform sacred Karma (action) to sanctify Kaala (time). There should be harmony between Kaala (time) Karma (action) and Kartavya (duty).

### **Welcome Difficulties as they Take you Closer to God**

What is this human body after all? It is just a water bubble. Any moment it may burst. It is bound to perish any day – today, tomorrow or the day after. We should not grieve over such a perishable body for that which has come is bound to go; and that which has gone is bound to return. Therefore, we need not attach much importance to this coming and going. We must make efforts to realise that which has no birth and death.

Sacredness and unsacredness, happiness and sorrow are relative terms. Some people may consider difficulties as the cause of sorrow. But it is not really so. In fact, happiness comes from difficulties and not from comforts. So, it is not prudent to pray for happiness and comforts. The wisdom you gain in times of difficulty cannot be attained in happy times. You ask any realised soul or a saintly person as to how he acquired great wisdom. He would tell you that he had to undergo several sorrows and difficulties and then only he could attain wisdom. You can attain happiness when you undergo difficulties and suffering. Experience the bliss inherent in troubles. But modern students do not want difficulties. They desire to have Kaivalya (liberation) without undergoing any difficulty and without spending even a single penny. How is it possible? You must work hard. Just by sitting somewhere comfortably, you cannot have happiness. It is only after undergoing difficulties that you really experience happiness.

Once Krishna came to Kunti to enquire about her welfare. Kunti asked Krishna, “When did You come? How is the war going on?” Krishna replied, “Mother, good and bad do happen in war; birth and death are common to everybody. Do not worry about all this. Tell Me what you want.” Then Kunti said, “My son, I have only one request: continue to give me difficulties until I leave my body and merge in You.” Then Krishna said, “Oh Mother! You have been undergoing difficulties right from the time you married King Pandu. Will that not suffice? Why are you asking for more difficulties?” Then Kunti replied, “Oh Krishna, I have experienced great happiness in undergoing difficulties. It is because of difficulties that I enjoyed the bliss of Your proximity constantly. All the sons born out of my womb became the recipients of Your Divine Grace. That itself gives me great happiness. What is the use of having several children if they do not earn Divine Grace? There is no gain in having many sons nor is there any loss in not having them. What is important is that a son should bring a good name to the family. He should lead a good life. He should spend his time in good company and earn divine proximity. All my sons are devoted to You. From dawn to dusk, they constantly chant Your Divine Name. What more happiness do I desire? Grant me that I continue to enjoy this happiness.” Will modern mothers pray like this? They want their sons to be good but they do not desire that they should live close to God. They are afraid of such a prospect. In fact, parents should encourage their children to attain proximity to God. This indeed is the most desired objective of man’s life. What is the purpose of human birth? Man does not make

efforts to realise this objective of life. Having been born as a human being, we should achieve the goal of human life.

### **Yearn for Divine Proximity**

You have to face sorrows, losses and difficulties in life. You should not mind them. Consider the divine proximity as the greatest treasure that you can seek. Develop an unwavering and abiding devotion to God. Never lose faith in the eternal truth, that is, Divinity. That is the only thing you should pray for. Your devotion should be steady, pure and selfless. People want devotion as well as everything else in the phenomenal world. How is it possible? You have only one mouth and you want to drink both milk and water at the same time! That is not possible. Therefore, you must desire only one, that is, Divinity. If you develop yearning for God, He will look after all your needs.

What was the main factor that gave eternal bliss to the Pandavas in spite of their numerous difficulties? It was their proximity to Lord Krishna. Divine proximity will give you real happiness. It is the only permanent happiness in this world. There is no sorrow, no unhappiness and no worry in divine proximity. When you attain divine proximity, all your troubles and worries immediately leave you. Someone came to Me and told Me, “Swami, I am a devotee of God but I am always afflicted with sorrow.” I replied, “If you are really a devotee, how did this sorrow come to you? What you derive from God is happiness and not sorrow. If you say that you are experiencing sorrow, it is not correct. God always gives happiness and bliss. There is nothing like sorrow with God. Then how can God give you sorrow? You are in sorrow due to some other factor but you attribute it to God. That is not correct.” God is the embodiment of bliss. He always gives bliss only. You, who are the Amsa (part) of the Divine, will get only divine feelings. Will God’s Prasada be ever bitter? No, never. But people out of their ignorance think that way.

### **Shun Rituals and Futile Arguments**

Madhwacharya, the great devotee of Lord Krishna, used to live in the Kannada region. He chanted the name of Lord Krishna constantly. Once he told his disciples that Bhishma Ekadasi was on the next day and they should observe the Ekadasi Vrata without taking food or drinking water for three days. Commencing from that day, they should observe total fast, without even a sip of water, contemplating on God all the time. They were forbidden not to swallow their saliva even. On the third day, Lord Krishna appeared in the dream of Madhwacharya and told him that Sadhana did not mean observing the rituals. He advised him to adhere to the principles, and not to indulge in rituals. People observe Ekadasi Vrata and fast for three days. On the fourth day, they make preparations for making forty Dosas. Is this Ekadasi Vrata? This is not correct. What you have to do is to add love to your Sadhana. Once you cultivate love for God, you will forget hunger and thirst.

Sage Viswamitra was taking Rama and Lakshmana to the forest to protect his Yajna. Rama and Lakshmana were of tender age at that time and had never experienced any difficulties. Dasaratha was much worried about their welfare in the forest. When they reached the banks of the river Sarayu, Viswamitra wanted to teach them the Bala and Atibala Mantras so that they would not be bothered by hunger and sleep. They happily followed Sage Viswamitra who initiated them into these Mantras. Did Sage Viswamitra not know that Rama was an Avatar? In spite of knowing this fact, why did he initiate

Rama into these Mantras? Several people argue like this. It is true that Rama and Lakshmana were divine personalities. But they had taken up human frames which needed food and sleep. Viswamitra initiated them into Bala and Atibala Mantras so that they did not suffer from hunger and sleep. If one is not bothered by hunger and sleep, any amount of Sadhana can be undertaken. Anything can be achieved. Even the most dreadful demons can be defeated in the battle. That is why Sage Viswamitra initiated them into these Mantras. Mantras are taught by noble souls to establish peace in the world. Therefore, it is futile to argue why Sage Viswamitra taught Mantras to Rama and Lakshmana who were divine incarnations. The Mantras were taught to them keeping in view the requirement of the situation at that time.

The quintessence of the Upanishads centres around the Atma, the mind and the Vaak. I shall explain to you these great truths of the Upanishads.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*”

– From Bhagavan’s Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 12th October 2002.

#### LOVE IS THE BASIC QUALITY OF MAN

True love is the sweet fruit that grows out of the fragrant flower of good deeds. Love rules without recourse to the sword. It binds without laws. Only one who has such true love can be described as human. The man without such love is only human in form. Like the lotus which blooms when the sun rises, the heart of man blossoms when love enters it. Like the glow of the flame in a fire, like the rays of the sun, like the waves in the ocean, divine love is the basic quality of a true human being. It is only when one is filled with pure, unselfish love that one can be called a human being.

- **Baba**

#### A REPORT

#### GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS

Guru Purnima is the sacred festival when disciples honour and revere their Guru. At Prasanthi Nilayam, devotees come from all parts of the world to offer their salutations at the Lotus Feet of their Divine Sadguru, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on this holy occasion. The mammoth gathering of devotees this year experienced supreme bliss when they had Bhagavan’s Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan during the Guru Purnima celebrations, particularly when they saw Him in normal physical health after a painful period of physical discomfort in June 2003. A wide variety of programmes were held during these celebrations which included musical presentations, dramas and illuminating talks by a galaxy of distinguished speakers besides the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

**Ashadi Ekadasi**

The celebrations began with the holy festival of Ashadi Ekadasi on 10th July 2003. The devotees of the States of Maharashtra and Goa organised two cultural programmes on this auspicious day, one in the morning in Sai Kulwant Hall and the other in the evening in Poornachandra Auditorium. The Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba during these celebrations gave indescribable happiness to the devotees who had gathered in large numbers in the sacred precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam after hearing the happy news that their Beloved Lord Bhagavan Baba had come back to Prasanthi Nilayam on 9th July 2003 after His long stay at Brindavan. Sai Kulwant Hall was beautifully decorated with attractive floral designs and cloth hangings for the Ashadi Ekadasi function. A beautiful idol of Lord Vitthala adorned the centre of the portico where Bhagavan Baba sat to witness this programme. Bhagavan inaugurated the programme at 7.15 a.m. by lighting the sacred lamp. It commenced with the customary Palki procession and Varkari dance performed by the devotees of Maharashtra.

#### **“Devudi Chirunama”**

This was followed by a musical play “Devudi Chirunama” (God’s address) by the Bal Vikas students of Mumbai. Dwelling on the theme of man’s eternal quest for God, the play highlighted the truth how inculcation of virtues, firm faith and sincere prayer to the Saguna leads one ultimately to the realisation of the Nirguna (formless God).

The play opens with posting of letters to God by Manava (man), the lead actor of the play, who asks, “Where are You, Bhagavan? Please respond immediately.” But the postman brings back his letters with the remarks “addressee not found”. Manava then learns from the sun god the value of Nishkama Karma (selfless action) and from Moksha Patamu (snakes and ladder game), the consequences of good and bad acts of man. Both these episodes are beautifully presented by appropriate models. Ultimately, he realises that he has to fix the stamp of 5 D’s (duty, devotion, determination, dedication and discrimination) on the letters so that they can reach the addressee. In the end, Manava prays to Saguna in the form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to get the experience of Nirguna. At this time, Bhagavan Baba called the boy who was playing the role of Manava near and materialised a gold ring for him as if to confirm that this was the correct way of communicating with God.

Meaningful dialogues, thought provoking songs and superb acting of the children embellished this delightful presentation. This presentation was followed with Bhajans led by the Institute students. The morning function came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.25 a.m. Prasadam was distributed to all in the end.

#### **Sant Namdev**

Synchronising with the theme of the morning presentation, the Bal Vikas students of Goa and Maharashtra presented a musical drama based on the life of Sant Namdev in the evening in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Sant Namdev, one of the most famous singing saints of Maharashtra, was a great devotee of Lord Vitthala. Namdev considered Vitthala as his best friend. Their relationship was like that of Lord Krishna and Arjuna. This led Namdev to get attached to the beautiful form of Lord Vitthala so that at one stage the Lord Himself had to show Namdev that Saguna Bhakti had to be translated into Nirguna Bhakti. The drama depicted the journey of

Namdev from attachment to the physical form to realisation of the Omnipresent One. Excellent sets, superb performance of the children and melodious compositions full of devotion made this drama a memorable presentation. In the end, Bhagavan blessed the participants and distributed clothes to them. The programme ended with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.25 p.m.

### **Talks by Distinguished Speakers**

Both the cultural programmes presented on 10th July 2003 on the occasion of Ashadi Ekadasi dwelt on the theme of man's journey from Saguna to Nirguna.

*From Saguna to Nirguna:* The same subject was illustrated in an illuminating talk given by Sri Anil Kumar on the morning of 11th July 2003. God, Sri Anil Kumar said, is not a person or object to be possessed; He is a presence to be felt and experienced. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is not limited to His body; devotees experience His presence in all parts of the world, said the learned speaker. Referring to the drama on the life of Sant Namdev presented on 10th July 2003, Sri Anil Kumar remarked that Namdev could see God everywhere after getting wisdom from his Guru. Sakara is the basis of Nirakara (form is the basis for the formless), Sri Anil Kumar said. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba teaches these Vedantic truths in a most easy way; He is not merely a teacher; He is Sanathana Sarathi (Eternal Charioteer), observed Sri Anil Kumar and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for redeeming the lives of millions by His Divine teachings and guidance.

*Sathya Sai Educare:* On the afternoon of 11th July 2003, Bhagavan came to the Hall at 3.35 p.m. and indicated to a group of Institute students to recite Vedic Mantras. After this, Dr. G. Venkataraman addressed the huge gathering of devotees and introduced the speakers. Introducing the subject of the talks, Dr. Venkataraman observed that God had provided man with everything in abundance but man had polluted all the Panchabhutas (five elements) on earth due to his polluted mind which was full of evils like jealousy, greed, selfishness, etc. Underlining the delicate interplay between man and the forces of Nature, the learned speaker elaborated that inculcation of human values as taught by Bhagavan Baba was necessary to check the pollution of human mind which was the fundamental cause for all pollution on earth.

After Dr. Venkataraman's introductory speech, Dr. Art-ong Jumsai, Director, Sathya Sai Institute of Education, Thailand addressed the gathering. At the outset, Dr. Jumsai expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan who had appeared in their house in Bangkok in the guise of a young man and had given Vibhuti to be spread on their roof to protect him and his family from the bombings of the Japanese during the Second World War. Referring to the havoc caused by two atom bombs dropped on two big cities of Japan in the war, Dr. Jumsai cautioned that man's misadventure in the fields of science and industry and unchecked pollution of the five elements could cause untold misery in the world. Quoting from an earlier Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, Dr. Jumsai exhorted all to follow the teachings of Bhagavan and practise the ideals set by Him in the fields of educare, healthcare and sociocare by putting the human values into practice in their lives.

Endorsing the views of the previous two speakers, the next speaker Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, emphasised that Sathya Sai Educare programme was not merely meant for students or Bal Vikas children but it was for the entire humanity. Sri Srinivasan felt that man on his part should also do his best to realise



his divinity and to see the Divine in every atom of the universe while praying to Bhagavan for guidance and help in his endeavour.

The last speaker of the programme was Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Sri Giri observed that the life of Bhagavan Baba was the best example for man to learn and imbibe human values in his life. Referring to the exploitation of Nature by man, Sri Giri observed that the greed of man could cause irreparable damage if man did not learn to practise human values.

The programme was followed by Bhajans. At the conclusion of this session, Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 5.30 p.m. In the end, Prasadam was distributed to all.

*Transcending Body Consciousness:* Continuing the programme of talks on 12th July 2003, Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Prasanthi Council, introduced the two speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to share their views on the subject with the devotees. The first speaker was Sri B.N. Narasimha Murthy, Warden, Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Giving an eyewitness account of the events from 4th June to 22nd June 2003, Sri Narasimha Murthy disclosed how Bhagavan Baba had undertaken physical suffering by His Divine Will to raise the level of consciousness of millions of devotees and to demonstrate to them by His example the ideal of rising above body consciousness. This episode, he said, had deepened the bond of love between Bhagavan and His devotees whose earnest prayers had brought about amazingly speedy recovery of Bhagavan's body. In this regard, he quoted the words of Bhagavan who said, "I am the support of My devotees and devotees are My support; if this body is all right, it is due to the prayers of the devotees." This deepening of the bond between the devotees and Bhagavan was a vital step towards their redemption, the learned speaker said.

Describing the sequence of events, Sri Narasimha Murthy remarked that Bhagavan remained in His usual blissful state and was smiling all the time even when He was being taken to the operation theatre for operation. Bhagavan was in a state of perfect equanimity totally beyond body consciousness which was a practical lesson for all of us, he said. Commenting on the miraculously speedy recovery of Bhagavan, Sri Narasimha Murthy revealed that after the operation, Bhagavan was up on His feet the very next day and He could walk with support. The surgeons, he said, were amazed at this impossible feat on which Bhagavan Himself commented, "It is possible only for Sai Baba." Sri Narasimha Murthy referred to the special relationship between Bhagavan and His students and told that Bhagavan's first Darshan to students on Sunday 15th June 2003 was historic in the sense that the first sentence He spoke to the world after this episode was addressed to the students. Bhagavan said, "If I have come out of this critical stage, it is for your sake. I have no pain. Do not worry about Me. Be happy."

Describing a personal experience of Bhagavan's Divinity and glory, Sri Narasimha Murthy told that after Bhagavan came to Brindavan on 8th March 2003, devotees were feeling that Bhagavan had pain in His legs. To clarify this misconception of the devotees, Bhagavan gave a Discourse on 16th March 2003. Sri Narasimha Murthy stated further, "After the Discourse was over, I put out my hand to extend support to Bhagavan. But Bhagavan put His left foot forward and asked me to lift it. In spite of my best efforts, I could not move it even a millimetre." In conclusion, Sri Narasimha Murthy observed that

these events contained the message of Bhagavan to the devotees to rise above body consciousness and realise their unity with the Divine.

The second speaker was Sri C. Sreenivas, Member, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. At the very outset, he endorsed all that was narrated by Sri Narasimha Murthy in his speech and offered his heartfelt gratitude to the millions of devotees who had prayed for Bhagavan's speedy recovery. Sri Sreenivas told that Bhagavan had said that He was well immediately after the surgery due to the love of His devotees. Sri Sreenivas had a special word of praise for Sri Satyajit and Sri Dilip who served Bhagavan with utmost devotion during this critical period. He offered gratitude to both of them on behalf of millions of devotees also. Last, but not the least, Sri Sreenivas expressed his deep gratitude to the doctors who attended on Bhagavan and performed the surgery of the hip bone as well as His left eye. Sri Sreenivas prayed to Bhagavan to give strength to the devotees that they could follow in His footsteps and rise above body consciousness. The afternoon programme came to a close with these two speeches. After this, Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 5.20 p.m.

### **Ali's Hajj**

What is the real meaning of religion? This was best illustrated by the drama "Ali's Hajj" presented by the Bal Vikas children and Youth Wing of Kuwait Sai Centre on the evening of 12th July 2003 in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. It also aptly illustrated Bhagavan's well-known saying: *The hands that serve are holier than lips that pray.*

Ali is a devout Muslim and conducts himself according to the injunctions of the Holy Quran. He believes in one God, offers prayers to God five times in a day, gives charity to the needy and observes fast in the holy month of Ramadan. His only desire is to perform the holy pilgrimage of Hajj to Mecca and Medina. He works hard and saves enough to undertake this pilgrimage. One day before he is required to pay the money for the pilgrimage, his dear friend Narayanji suffers a heart attack. Money is required to perform the heart operation of Narayanji immediately. At this crucial moment, Ali decides to spend the money to save the life of a fellow being than to go on a pilgrimage. But most surprisingly, Ali's friends Ashraf and Khadar see Ali in Mecca and Medina when they go there for pilgrimage. However, when they come back Narayanji vouchsafes that Ali had all along been here. All of them then realise this great miracle of God who showers His grace on those who have true devotion and spirit of sacrifice.

The touching story of the drama was perfectly enacted by the children who were blessed by Bhagavan at the end of the drama. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.45 p.m.

### **Guru Purnima Function**

The holy festival of Guru Purnima was celebrated on 13th July 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall which was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Bhagavan was welcomed into the Hall with the blowing of a conch and Panchavadyam music by the Institute students when He came to shower the bliss of His Darshan on the mammoth gathering of devotees at 7.10 a.m. The programme began with a function to felicitate Sri Indulal Shah and Smt. Sarla Shah on the completion of 40 years of their meritorious service to Sri Sathya Sai Organisation. After the chanting of Vedic hymns by the school students, Dr. G.

Venkataraman requested Smt. Sarla Shah and Sri Indulal Shah to take their seats beside Bhagavan on the dais.

### **Rare Honour for Selfless Dedicated Service**

The first speaker who felicitated Smt. and Sri Indulal Shah was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Prasanthi Council. Dr. Goldstein referred to Sri Indulal Shah as the source of great power and strength of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation and paid glowing tributes to him for his most dedicated service of nearly four decades to Bhagavan. Narrating his experiences of working with Sri Shah at close quarters in the Sai Organisation, Dr. Goldstein told that Sri Shah was the personification of dignity, responsibility and resolve. Referring to the selfless work done by Sri Shah, Dr. Goldstein observed that Sri Shah never wanted anything for himself; all his endeavours were to further the work of Bhagavan Baba.

Paying rich tributes to both Smt. Sarla Shah and Sri Indulal Shah, the next speaker, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, gave biographical details of Sri Indulal Shah's illustrious life and told that he came to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan in 1965 and totally devoted himself to Bhagavan's work thereafter. Tracing the growth of Bal Vikas movement and the Sai Organisation from their inception, Dr. Venkataraman observed that the contribution made by Smt. and Sri Shah was stupendous.

The next speaker who offered felicitations to Sri Indulal Shah was Sri Robert Bozzani, Chairman, Sathya Sai National Book Centre of America. At the outset, Sri Bozzani expressed great happiness that Bhagavan was so much better today so that all were sharing the joy of Bhagavan's Divine proximity on this holy festival of Guru Purnima. Recalling his first visit to Prasanthi Nilayam in 1974, Sri Bozzani observed that then there were very few overseas devotees. But thanks to the untiring work done with devotion, sincerity and seriousness by both Smt. Shah and Sri Shah, Sai Organisation had now become worldwide and its name had reached every nook and corner of the world. In conclusion, Sri Bozzani paid respects to Smt. and Sri Shah for the good work they had done in the Sai Organisation and also for the worthy example they had set for all others to emulate.

Praising the qualities of head and heart of Sri Shah, the next speaker Sri K. Chakravarthi, Secretary, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, observed that Sri Shah had the rare capacity of grasping the core of the issue in view and had the quality of quick disposal of men and matters. Referring to his long years of dedicated service at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan and his commitment to the message and mission of Bhagavan, Sri Chakravarthi observed that he would continue to remain a source of inspiration for the countless number of devotees at all times.

The last speaker of this session was Sri C. Sreenivas, Member, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. Sri Sreenivas observed that the personality of Sri Indulal Shah was a rare combination of national fervour, spirit of service to humanity and earnest quest for God, which were worthy of emulation for all. Referring to the pioneering role and immense contribution made by Sri Shah to Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri Sreenivas expressed deep gratitude to Sri Shah and prayed to Bhagavan to release the felicitation volume brought out in his honour and also to hand over the first copies to Sri Indulal Shah and

Smt. Sarla Shah. Amidst the thunderous applause of devotees, Bhagavan gave the copies of this volume to both of them and also gave a plaque of honour to them for their service and devotion. Later in the evening, Dr. Michael Goldstein made the announcement that on the request of all the Zonal Chairmen of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation (Overseas) and by Bhagavan's grace and permission Sri Indulal Shah had been given the responsibility of International Advisor of the Organisation.

After these talks, Bhagavan Baba gave His Divine Guru Purnima Message to the devotees. (Full text of this Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) The morning programme concluded at 9.05 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam. Bhagavan also cut the cake brought by overseas devotees and distributed sweets to some of them.

### **Meritorious Performance of Institute Students**

At a function held in Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan gave degrees to two Institute students who had successfully completed a course in hospital administration in the U.S.A. last year. Dr. Ram Setty of California in the U.S.A. narrated how both the students completed their course with distinction in minimum time to the amazement of the faculty of the Loma Linda University, California where they were admitted. He observed that all impossible things became possible in the case of these boys. Bhagavan Baba's Divine intervention was seen at every step, Dr. Setty remarked.

After these introductory remarks of Dr. Setty, Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning addressed the gathering. Expressing his happiness at the grand success of the two students of the Institute who had brought good name to the institution by their academic excellence and exemplary conduct in the U.S.A., Sri Giri observed that nothing gave more happiness to a teacher than when his students excelled. Sri Giri narrated how miraculously both the students cleared with high marks the GRE test with one week's preparation which usually the students take a minimum of one year. The students returned the sum of \$ 5,000.00 offered to them for their apprenticeship to the amazement of the hospital staff in the U.S.A., Sri Giri told. After this brief speech, Sri Giri prayed to Bhagavan to hand over the degrees to the two students. The students were lustily cheered when Bhagavan gave degrees to them. Bhagavan also posed for photographs with them.

Thereafter, Sri Shriram Parshuram recounted his experiences how the Divine Hand of Bhagavan guided him and Sri Praveen to complete the training in hospital administration in a short time of one year in the U.S.A. Giving details of how things move with speed when the Divine Wills it, Sri Parshuram told that they had their passport made in 45 minutes and their visas were delivered at their doorstep. To sum up, he said, to undergo a course at the command of Bhagavan was experiencing His Divinity at every step.

After this programme, Bhajans were started by the Institute students in which the huge gathering of devotees took part. The day's programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.10 p.m.

### **Choir Music and Classical Songs**

A very memorable musical presentation was made by The Netherlands Sathya Sai Seva Choir on the auspicious Guru Purnima evening of 13th July 2003 in Poornachandra

Auditorium. The presentation which started soon after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in the Auditorium at 5.55 p.m. concluded at 6.50 p.m. with the singing of “Sivaya Namah Siva” in which the audience also joined the singers. The programme featuring choir music of well-known European classical composers and devotional songs of different modern styles delighted every heart in the Auditorium and kept them spellbound for nearly one hour. The programme was conducted by Ms. Alma Badings who has been presenting these programmes for the last nine years when this choir was founded. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan. Bhagavan Baba blessed the participants not only by His Presence but also gave clothes to each one of the participants with His Divine Hands and posed for photographs with them at the end of the performance.

### **Classical Hindustani Music**

A soul-stirring musical presentation of devotional music was made by the renowned Hindustani classical singer Ms. Parveen Sultana on the afternoon of 14th July 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme consisting of a classical Raga, a Sai Bhajan and Mira Bhajans kept the audience spellbound for full one hour from 4.35 p.m. to 5.35 p.m. The programme concluded with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Sri Krishna Gostha Leela**

This dance drama was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Manipur on 14th July 2003 in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba.

Gostha Leela, also known as Gopa Ras (dance of cowherds), commemo- rates the day on which Krishna, after growing into boyhood, went to graze the cows with other Gopas for the first time. The cowherds come to Mother Yashoda to request her to send Krishna and Balarama to accompany them to graze the cows in the pastures. Yashoda initially shows her reluctance because she is afraid lest any harm should come to Krishna in the forest. Finally, she agrees to send Krishna under the care of His brother Balarama. She then tells the Gopas to show her the dance they perform in the forest. So, the Gopas along with Krishna and Balarama perform a most enchanting and captivating dance which makes Yashoda happy. After obtaining the consent of Yashoda, Krishna, Balarama and other cowherds joyfully leave for the Bhandir forest for grazing the cows.

The drama began at 6.15 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan in Poornachandra Auditorium. Bhagavan saw the entire presentation. At the end of the drama, Bhagavan graciously blessed the children, posed for photographs with them and distributed clothes to them. The programme came to a close at 7.00 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

## **NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** The Medak district arranged gruel centres at Siddipet in May and June 2003 and served 200 people daily in view of the drought conditions. This district distributed school bags, notebooks, pens, pencils and erasers to 98 poor students selected from five schools at Narayankhed. This district conducted two free medical camps – one

on 18th June 2003 in Pallepahad village treating 650 patients and another on 22nd June 2003 in Thippadu village treating 600 patients out of which 40 patients with eye problems were given spectacles free of cost.

The Vizianagaram district organisation rendered help to 400 families in Ommi village when they lost everything they had in a fire accident on 10th June 2003. Each of these families was given one Sari, one blanket and steel tumbler besides clothes. Sai Gayatri Japa Yajna was carried out in seven centres in the district from 12th June 2003 to 18th June 2003 in which 3467 devotees took part. One free marriage was performed on Easwaramma Day (6th May 2003) at Saluru village.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** The backward plain district Dhemaji in Assam had a healing touch when the Guwahati Samithi with the active participation of Gogamukh Bhajan Mandali organised a free medical camp in the flood ravaged Gogamukh areas recently. Deprived as they were of basic medical facilities, the villagers felt greatly relieved when the doctors arrived in their village supported by Seva Dal volunteers with the adequate stock of medicines.

The local Janki Panoi ME School became the hub of activity when it temporarily housed the departments of ophthalmology, paediatrics, gynaecology, E.N.T., medicine, etc., with a view to provide benefit to the rural community mostly Mising tribals. Over 300 beneficiaries got free treatment and free medicines and the camp ended with smiles of the patients as well as the doctors and Seva Dal volunteers. Love added to the occasion was the participation of devotees from the neighbouring State of Arunachal Pradesh.

**Haryana and Chandigarh:** Seva Sadhana cum health awareness multifaceted camps were conducted in the villages of Maloya, Kishangarh (Chandigarh), Dabkauri, Bahera (Panchkula), Babayan (Kurukshetra), Kunjpura (Karnal), slums of Gurgaon and Faridabad. A team of specialist doctors treated 1100 patients who were given free medicines.

Easwaramma Day was celebrated throughout the State and concluded with cultural programmes by Bal Vikas children. Narayan Seva was also conducted in all the districts feeding approximately 20,000 Narayanas. Solar eclipse was an eventful day and the organisation at Kurukshetra operated 'Drinking Water', 'May I Help you?' 'First Aid Medical' and 'Free Food' counters on 30th and 31st May 2003 for the benefit of the pilgrims.

**Kerala:** Three-day summer camps were conducted in all districts for selected Bal Vikas children. In all, 1008 children between the ages of 10-13 participated. They were divided into groups of 10 each and put under one Guru for complete follow-up. These Gurus are closely contacting parents and teachers of these children regularly.

Apart from the three-year master plan for the State, each district finalised its special projects also. The three-year plan was blessed and accepted by Bhagavan on 14th May 2003 at Kodaikanal. As a part of district programme, Palakkad district has decided to give 81 houses to the needy people. The keys of three houses were handed over to the needy Adivasis on 21st June 2003.

As a part of expanding Sai Seva, the Organisation has started Sai Advocates' Cell and Sai Paramedical Cell. A meeting of advocates and their family members was held at

Ernakulam on 21st May 2003. Nearly 150 members participated. To spread Sai message among the doctors, the organisation has started a Quarterly 'Sai Med'. Now this is reaching many doctors in Kerala.

**Orissa:** Easwaramma Day was observed by all units. Bal Vikas rallies, competitions for Bal Vikas children and school students, exhibitions, cultural programmes were the main items.

The youth of Khandamal district organised Sai Grama Darshan Abhijan on 19th April 2003 covering 200 km and 23 villages with Bhajans, Satsang and sanitation work.

Bhadrak district organised six health camps, benefiting 349 patients. It covered 20 villages under Gram Darshan in which sanitation and spiritual activities were undertaken. Free coaching is being given to 75 students.

**Punjab:** Easwaramma Day was celebrated at Jalandhar in Red Cross Bhawan on 4th May 2003. The programme was attended by 1310 persons. All District Presidents, Trust Members, Samithi Conveners and Bal Vikas Gurus from six districts attended the function. A 45-minute programme on national integration was presented by the Bal Vikas children. The children also depicted how our Beloved Lord was re-establishing moral values on the pillars of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa.

A free medical camp was held in village Malko-Trar. Five doctors from Civil Hospital, Jalandhar offered their services in this camp. The camp was inaugurated by the Civil Surgeon at 10.00 a.m. sharp by lighting the lamp. The five doctors included a gynaecologist, an eye specialist, a chest specialist, a T.B. specialist and a child specialist. Free medicines were distributed to all the 315 patients who came from five villages. The Civil Surgeon invited the patients to the Civil Hospital for follow-up treatment. He declared that all the further tests would be conducted free of cost and medicines would be provided by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Jalandhar. (The Samithi already has an office in the Civil Hospital for the Seva which is being conducted regularly.) Follow-up of 30-40 patients has begun and patients are coming on a regular basis to the hospital for various check-ups.

**West Bengal:** On the sacred occasion of Easwaramma Day, a new homoeopathy medical centre was inaugurated at Jangipara, Howrah district on 6th May 2003 which will run once a week to serve the needy villagers in and around Jangipara. As a part of Easwaramma Day celebrations, the Bal Vikas children of Behala Samithi, Kolkata district offered Prasadam to 80 physically challenged children at a rehabilitation centre followed by distribution of 50 bedsheets to the physically challenged children on 11th May 2003.

A specialised paediatric health check-up was organised at Gouranga Nagar village of Dum Dum (East) Samithi, North 24 Parganas, where two child specialists examined and treated with medicines 108 children from different village primary schools.

**SEPTEMBER 2003**

**Krishna Janmashtami Sandesh**

**KRISHNA INCARNATED  
TO ESTABLISH DHARMA**

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

(Sanskrit Verse)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Krishna Janmashtami is celebrated to commemorate the birth of Lord Krishna. What is the true birthday of Krishna? Krishna takes birth in the Hridaya (heart) of man when it becomes pure and sacred. It is no use worrying over the dates of birth of Divine incarnations. Since man's heart is the birthplace of the Lord, it should always be cool and calm like Himachala (the Himalayas). Krishna was born on the day of Ashtami at mid-



night. Some people consider Ashtami to be inauspicious. But being the day of Lord Krishna's birth, how can it be inauspicious? God incarnates to bestow auspiciousness on all. Hence, His day of birth is full of auspiciousness and sacredness.

### **Birthdays of Divine Incarnations are Sacred and Auspicious**

Krishna was born in prison. All the guards of the prison, who were supposed to be on high alert as per Kamsa's instructions, were overpowered by sleep. Only Devaki and Vasudeva were awake at the time of Krishna's advent. The newborn baby showed His Divine Form to Vasudeva and Devaki and told Vasudeva to take Him to Gokul and bring back Yashoda's newborn daughter. As instructed by the Lord, Vasudeva gently wrapped the child in a cloth and placed it in a basket. Carrying the basket on his head, Vasudeva came out of the prison as the doors of the prison opened automatically. There was a heavy downpour at that time. Vasudeva prayed for the protection of the child from rain. By the Divine Will of Krishna, Adishesha in the form of a huge serpent, started following Vasudeva with its hood raised over the Divine child, thereby protecting it from the downpour. By the time Vasudeva reached Yashoda's house on the opposite bank of the river Yamuna, it was very late in the night. Just then Yashoda had given birth to a female child. Everyone including her husband was fast asleep. Vasudeva quietly placed the Divine child Krishna by the side of Yashoda, picked up the female child born to her and quickly returned to Mathura.

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

(Telugu Poem)

None can comprehend the ways of God. Even Vasudeva was not fully aware of what he was doing. He took the child Krishna to Yashoda's house and brought the female child with him. He did all this as if he was in a trance. Radha, a small girl then, was a witness to the entire episode. It got imprinted on her heart.

Vasudeva became his normal self after he went back to Mathura. As he entered the prison, the doors closed behind him and got locked automatically. No sooner did he place the female child by the side of Devaki than the bell rang. The guards of the prison at once got up and informed Kamsa about the birth of the child. Kamsa promptly came to the prison with all his entourage. As was his wont, he lifted the newborn baby with his left hand and tried to kill it. But it got released from his hand and vanished in the sky. There it took the form of a goddess and warned Kamsa that his slayer had already taken birth. The goddess was very powerful and none could do any harm to her. Devaki was perplexed beyond words at these strange happenings. She understood that the entire episode was Lord's Will. Kamsa became restless and agitated as he came to know that his killer had taken birth. Day and night, he was thinking of ways and means to capture and kill him.

Kamsa was at a loss to know how he should capture Krishna. He gave orders that all the newborn babies in his kingdom be killed. Initially, he wanted only the male babies to be killed. Later on, he changed his mind and wanted the female babies also to be killed. He

resorted to such heinous acts only out of fear. Krishna was growing up under the loving care of Yashoda. With the passage of time, the name and fame of child Krishna spread far and wide. Krishna demonstrated His Divine powers in innumerable ways. God's deeds are wonderful and mysterious. All the while, the messengers of Kamsa searched for Krishna intensively. Ultimately, they spotted Him in Repalle and informed Kamsa.

### **Annihilation of Wicked Kamsa**

It is said, *Vinashakale Vipareeta Buddhi* (intellect gets perverted when one is destined for destruction). Kamsa started sending many powerful demons to Repalle to kill Krishna. But Krishna, with His mighty power, destroyed all of them. Kamsa's end approached fast. He devised a nefarious scheme to bring Krishna and Balarama to Mathura to kill them. He deputed Akrura, who adored Krishna and Balarama, to persuade and bring Krishna and Balarama to Mathura. He wanted him to invite them on the pretext that they participate in the Yajna and the wrestling match he was organising.

As Krishna and Balarama entered the city, the citizens of Mathura were mesmerised by the charming forms of the two brothers. The people of Mathura were already suffering from deep frustration and anguish over the atrocities committed by Kamsa and they prayed to Krishna to come to their rescue. As Krishna and Balarama were proceeding towards Kamsa's palace, they encountered the royal washerman. They took Kamsa's silk garments from him and dressed themselves in regal style. Later, they met a flower vendor who used to supply flowers to Kamsa everyday. The flower vendor offered two beautiful garlands to Krishna and Balarama. As they proceeded further, they met a woman called Kubja, who used to carry scents and perfumes for Kamsa. She was a hunchback. She had an ugly appearance with a crooked body. She knew that Krishna was God. Seeing the two brothers, she was overjoyed and offered the perfumes to them. She said, "Krishna, today my life has found fulfilment. I must have performed great penance in the past to have deserved this opportunity to serve You." Expressing happiness at the devotion of Kubja, Krishna placed His foot on her feet, caught hold of her chin and lifted it up. Lo and behold! Her deformity was gone. She assumed the form of a beautiful lady. In this manner, Krishna demonstrated His Divine powers by performing many stupendous feats and in the process relieved many of their troubles.

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

Krishna and Balarama entered Kamsa's court like two lion cubs. They defeated the court wrestlers. Thereafter, Krishna, in a trice, leapt on the platform where Kamsa was seated, pinned him down and rained severe blows on him. Kamsa was crushed to pulp. Seeing the killing of Kamsa, the assembly was fear-stricken. They were amazed how such a young boy as Krishna could vanquish the mighty Kamsa. There was a platoon of soldiers

specially deployed by Kamsa to kill Balarama and Krishna. They too could not withstand the onslaught of Krishna. Ultimately, they fell at His feet and prayed for mercy.

### **How Krishna Overcame all His Adversaries**

Krishna and Balarama left for Repalle. The inhabitants of Repalle were extremely anxious as they could not see any sign of their arrival in the vicinity. Mother Yashoda was very worried thinking about her sons. The Gopikas too were drowned in sorrow and started abusing Kamsa, presuming that he must have harmed Krishna and Balarama. All the men and women of Repalle were praying to Krishna fervently and chanting His Name. All of a sudden, Krishna and Balarama appeared in their midst to their astonishment and joy. Krishna spoke soothing words to them and pacified them.

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

Days rolled by and it was time for Krishna's marriage. Rukmini, the princess of Vidarbha, loved Krishna and wanted to marry Him. But her brother Rukmi wanted to give her in marriage to his friend Sisupala and was making arrangements for the same. Krishna was well aware of all this. Meanwhile, Rukmini sent a message to Krishna through a Brahmin. She wrote, "Krishna, I can no longer bear the pangs of separation from You. My father has decided to perform my marriage with Sisupala against my wish. The marriage is scheduled to take place tomorrow. If You do not come before that and take me away from here, I will put an end to my life." As per Rukmini's wish, Krishna devised a plan to rescue her. In those days, it was customary for the bride to offer special worship to the goddess Gauri prior to the marriage. As per the tradition, Rukmini was proceeding to the temple to offer special prayers. Rukmi, the evil-minded brother of Rukmini, had made elaborate security arrangements fearing an attack from Krishna. He had joined hands with Sisupala and Dantavakra, who were bitter enemies of Krishna.

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

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

Krishna spared Sisupala's life for a long time in spite of his hostility. When Dharmaraja performed Rajasuya Yajna, he gave Agradambulam (first offering) to Krishna. Watching this, Sisupala flew into a fit of rage and hurled abuses at Krishna. He described Him as a mere cowherd and said that He did not deserve the honour. "When elders like Bhishma are seated in this assembly, how could you choose a cowherd for this great honour?", he questioned Dharmaraja. He was ready to fight with Krishna. He spoke against Krishna using most foul words:

*Do You think that You deserve this honour because You stole the Saris of the Gopikas when they were having a bath? Or do You think that You deserve this because You spent all Your time in the company of Gopikas? Stop this self-aggrandise-ment and shut up!* (Telugu Poem)

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

### **Actions of Avatars Defy Human Understanding**

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

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

Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, was a great devotee of Krishna and considered Him as her very life. She anxiously awaited the return of Arjuna from Dwaraka to hear the well-being of Krishna. Age had made her weak. Her anxiety increased at the delay of Arjuna's return. As soon as Arjuna returned, he came to his mother, calling, "Mother, Mother" in an agitated voice. She at once asked him, "Son, where is Krishna? How is He?" Arjuna was crestfallen. He said, "Mother, what can I say? Krishna, who was our friend, relative,

guide, guardian and God, is no more.” As soon as she heard this tragic news, Kunti left her mortal coil. She was such a great devotee that she could not live without Krishna. After Krishna’s departure, the entire Yadava clan perished as a result of intense infighting that followed. It was the consequence of a curse pronounced earlier on Yadavas by a sage.

After these tragic events, the Pandavas decided to renounce the world and go to the Himalayas. It was a strange situation. On the one hand, the coronation of Parikshit had to take place. On the other, the last rites of Kunti had to be performed. Placing her head on his lap, Dharmaraja issued instructions to Bhima to make arrangements for the coronation of Parikshit. He told Arjuna to make necessary preparation for Kunti’s funeral. At the same time, he instructed Nakula and Sahadeva to make arrangements for their going to the Himalayas. All the three events took place at the same time. Only those with unwavering faith in God can perform such tasks simultaneously with equanimity. Everything happens according to God’s Will.

### **Glimpses of Divinity**

Here is another point that needs mention. When this body was born, there was a lot of chaos and confusion among people of this village and also in the neighbouring villages. The epidemics of cholera and plague were prevalent those days. People were afraid of visiting others’ houses or even to drink a glass of water from them. Such was the situation at that time. Griham Ammayi (Mother Easwaramma) would not visit others’ houses. Kondama Raju, grandfather of this body, was also one of strict discipline and principles. He would never accept anything from others. In those days, I was staying with Kondama Raju. He did not permit other children, including Parvatamma and Venkamma (Swami’s sisters) to come near Me, lest I should be infected with a disease. But I used to slip out of the house without his knowledge. On coming to know of this, he would gently chide Me saying, “Sathya, why don’t you listen to Me? You should not go here and there.” Kondama Raju did not like My visits to others’ houses. He was anxious about My safety and well-being. He instructed the villagers to bring Me home at once if they spotted Me outside. This way, he would try to restrain My movements. But can anyone restrain Me? I moved around in the entire village but nobody could notice Me. There were occasions when people of ten different houses would invite Me for food. I would visit all those ten houses, dine with them and satisfy them.

Sometimes, Karanam Subbamma would call Me from the window of her house and pass on food packets to Me. I also visited Subbamma’s house quite often as she was a great devotee. A woman from a rival family was extremely jealous of Karanam Subbamma and did not like My frequent visits to her house. Hence, she decided to poison Me. One day she invited Me to her house, saying, “Sathya, today You must come to our house for snacks. I will make delicious Vadas for You.” When I visited her house, she served Me poisoned Vadas. I knew her evil intentions, yet I ate the Vadas without hesitation. My body at once turned blue. People who saw Me, ran to inform Karanam Subbamma and Easwaramma. When Kondama Raju came to know of this incident, he became furious. He summoned the people of the village and asked them to teach a lesson to the woman. I told Kondama Raju, “Grandfather, being an elder of the village, you should not resort to

such vindictive acts. If you do not stop the people from attacking her, I will go and stay with her forever.” Both Kondama Raju and Karanam Subbamma acted on My advice and stopped the people from going to the errant woman’s house. In this manner, I removed hatred from the minds of people and strove for unity in the village.

There was no trace of fear in My mind. I would eat whatever others offered Me without any hesitation. Once the thatched hut I was staying in was set on fire by some miscreants. You may be knowing that there was a hut at the place of Patha Mandir (old temple). As the hut was engulfed in flames, there was a heavy downpour. It fell only on the hut and nowhere else. People then realised My Divinity. Right from that day, people of Puttaparthi, Kammavaripalli, Janakampalli, etc., started coming to Me with veneration. They started conducting Bhajans in their villages.

### **My Devotees are My Property**

I want to tell you something that happened in the recent past. When I was at Bangalore, the news spread that I had a fall and suffered a fracture. People of all villages including Puttaparthi conducted special Bhajans praying for My well-being. In many villages, Sathyanarayana Vrata was performed. In this manner, they all became recipients of Swami’s love. During this period, there was none who did not think of Swami. The glory of Swami spread far and wide.

Whenever I return from Bangalore, people stop My car at every village enroute and offer Arati. The road at Chikballapur is blocked by eager devotees who do Bhajans and wave Arati. They hail My arrival with full-throated, “Sathya Sai Babajiki Jai”. People at Kappalabanda and Mamillakunta also express their love and devotion for Swami in a similar manner.

The doctors said that one year’s rest was required for the hip injury to heal completely. I told them that it would not take one year. “The loving prayers of the devotees would cure Me in no time”, I assured them. (*loud prolonged applause*) I also told the doctors that I did not need any medicine or further treatment. The prayers of the devotees are the panacea for all the ailments of this body. Their prayers have given Me immense bliss. In spite of the fracture, I was smiling always. When I was taken to the hospital, everyone was in tears but I was smiling all the time. The doctors who operated on Me were astonished to see Me smiling. Usually, the pain that results from a hip fracture is like that of electric shocks. But I was least affected by it. I have no pain whatsoever and I walk easily. There is no suffering whatsoever. Devotees are My property and I am the property of My devotees. I have no fear or anxiety. Even in such a situation, I can happily go round the country. Hereafter, I will travel to different places more frequently. You need not worry about Swami’s well-being. I am always happy and blissful. May you all be happy and prosperous always!

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam, Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe ...*” )

- **From Bhagavan’s Krishna Janmashtami Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th August 2003.**

## **Dasara Discourses – V**

### **PURIFY THE MIND AND FOCUS IT ON DIVINITY**

*Oh man! Why do you go hither and thither in search of God when He is present within you? Turn inward and you will find Him there. There is no greater fortune than having the vision of God within. What more is there to communicate to this assembly of noble souls?*

(Telugu Poem)

#### ***Embodiments of Love!***

God's creation is wonderful and mysterious. Spiritual aspirants yearn to have the vision of God. For this, they undertake various spiritual practices, like chanting of Mantras. Every Mantra is a combination of words with profound inner meanings. There may be many meanings of a Mantra but we have to take that which is most suitable.

#### **Power of the Pure Mind**

Sage Dakshinamoorthi revealed the inner meanings of these Mantras to enable the seekers to understand them easily and experience bliss. He explained the Mantras in a simple and lucid way and showed the sacred path of spirituality to people. He laid special emphasis on three words: Jiva (individual soul), Deva (God) and Manas (mind). The mind is in between Jiva and Deva. What is the role it plays between them? It plays the role of transforming the individual into the Divine by bringing together Jada (inert) physical body and Chaitanya (consciousness). God is the embodiment of Chaitanya (consciousness). The individual, the mind and God together constitute the Mantra Jiveswaraprakriti. How does the mind perform this function of transforming the individual into the Divine? The individual is represented by the term Vyashti (individual), whereas God is the embodiment of Samashti (cosmos). The mind is the combination of Vyashti and Samashti. Sometimes, we use the term monkey mind to denote the fickleness of the mind. But its correct description is not monkey mind but sacred mankind. It acts as a link between man and God. Hence, the mind is highly sacred and powerful. *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). The power of the mind is unique. Due to their lack of understanding of the power of the mind, people are not able to grasp the glory and majesty of God. They do not understand the correct meaning of the word mind and use it in a trivial worldly sense. It is closely connected with the individual and the Divine. It is endowed with the qualities of purity, valour, courage and sacredness. The nature and power of the mind cannot be easily understood. Without the mind, one cannot understand the value of Jiva and Deva. It is the mind that demonstrates the mighty power connecting the individual and God. One has to make efforts to understand the difference

between the mind, the individual and Divinity. The power of the pure mind is no less than the power of Divinity.

### **The Message of the Vedas and the Upanishads**

As I told you yesterday, the mind represents Vishnu, the breath, Easwara and the speech, Brahma. It is said that Brahma has emerged from the navel of Vishnu. Likewise, speech originates from the mind. Speech is endowed with immense power. The four Vedas, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda, contain one profound statement each, viz., *Prajnanam Brahma* (Supreme Consciousness is Brahman), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman), *Tattwamasi* (That Thou Art), *Ayam Atma Brahma* (This Self is Brahman), respectively. Besides, the Vedas and Upanishads contain axioms like *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is Brahman), *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* (the knower of Brahman becomes verily Brahman himself), etc.

All these axioms are in fact very sacred and powerful Mantras. They are pregnant with profound meanings which all cannot understand. They can be interpreted in many ways. They give the very essence of all the four Vedas. In fact, each Mantra contains the essence of all the Mantras. Take, for instance, *Tattwamasi* and *Aham Brahmasmi*. When you enquire deeply, you can very clearly see that both mean the same. The Mantra, *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* also conveys the same truth. In this manner, all the Mantras essentially proclaim the same truth. True spiritual practice lies in understanding this unity. One who understands this unity verily becomes God. This is the message of the Upanishads.

### **Identify yourself with God**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Understand the truth in the first instance that you are God. Everyone is divine. You may then wonder, “Where is the need to worship God?” You have to worship Him till you understand and experience this unity. You are leading a very ordinary and worldly life. Such being the case, how can you understand the transcendental divine principle? You are Vyashtiswarupa (individual), whereas God is Samashtiswarupa (Cosmic Form). Hence, it is not possible for Vyashti to understand Samashti. Neither spiritual practices nor chanting of the Mantras can transform Vyashti into Samashti. Transformation is possible only when Vyashti identifies himself with Samashti. You should understand this fundamental truth that you are God. But you cannot say so unless you have firm faith. So, you should develop firm faith. Your source is divine and your goal is also divine. Every object in this world ultimately merges with the source of its origin. Here is a small example.

A potter collects clay from river bank, mixes it with water, puts it on the potter’s wheel and makes pots. The clay pot cannot hold water unless it is baked in fire. Man is perishable and valueless like a doll of clay. Just as a pot becomes strong and valuable when it undergoes Agni Samskara (refinement through fire), man attains value and strength when he becomes refined and pure by the fire of wisdom. What is wisdom? *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of non-duality is wisdom). One should refine oneself in the fire of wisdom and experience non-dualism. Gold gains added value and



brilliance when it is made into a beautiful ornament. Likewise, refinement makes the latent divinity of man manifest, and increases his value.

### **Role of Food in Spiritual Growth of Man**

God is known as Hiranyagarbha (the golden egg from which the universe emerged). He is present in everyone. As you are the embodiments of God, I address you as Bangaru (gold). It is not enough if you have gold. It has to be made into an ornament. In order to make an ornament out of gold, you need to add a few metals like copper, brass, etc. Only then will gold become strong, heavy and sturdy. Science students can easily understand this. The food that we eat contains many metals like gold, copper, iron, etc. Iron content is more in leafy vegetables. Our food is responsible for the formation of lakhs of cells which constitute human body. So, it is food that develops and strengthens our body.

Food plays a vital role in our spiritual progress as it is endowed with divine power. When we consume pure and Sattwic food, it helps us in our effort to understand Divinity. There is an intricate and inseparable relationship between food, head and God. As is the food, so is the mind. Only one with pure mind can understand Divinity. In order to cultivate purity of mind, you should partake of pure and Sattwic food. You should consider food as God. It is said, *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as you think, so you become). If you consider food as mere Padartha (matter), it will remain so. Depending on the feeling, it undergoes change.

Take, for instance, the magnetic power in the body. The body acts like a generator and by a subtle process, the magnetic power is transformed into electric power. This in turn gives rise to sound energy and also develops Tejas (effulgence). A jewel shines with added brilliance when it is polished. Likewise, man's Tejas increases with his purity. Every man is endowed with Tejas which is known as Chaitanya Shakti (power of consciousness).

### **Refine your Mind by Divine Thoughts**

If you enquire deeply, you can visualise this divine power of consciousness in every human being and in every material. Padartha (matter) should not be looked upon as mere Padartha. It should be considered as Parartha (the essence of divinity). There is a gulf of difference between Padartha and Parartha. Padartha corresponds to worldly matter, whereas Parartha is the transcendental divine principle. Since Padartha is viewed as mere matter and not as Parartha, it loses its value. In fact, we attach great value to that which has no real value. On the other hand, we do not value that which has to be valued most. The mind is responsible for all this. Hence, we have to purify the mind and focus it on Divinity. When the mind is focused on Divinity, our Tejas also increases. On the contrary, we waste a lot of energy by suffusing the mind with evil thoughts.

Today man is wasting his energy by entertaining bad thoughts and feelings. To keep bad thoughts in check, one has to develop divine thoughts. What are divine thoughts? You should consider that every drop of blood in your body is suffused with divinity. Food generates blood and energy in the body. This divine energy has to be properly utilised by entertaining divine thoughts. When we develop divine thoughts, we can keep a check on worldly thoughts. You should consider every Padartha as Parartha.

Consider a small example. Suppose you bring a bagful of paddy. You cannot partake of it in its raw form. It has to be refined to get rice from it. The process of refinement involves pounding, separating the husk and removing the dust. In the same way, hard work is a rewarding experience. *Kashte Phali* (hard work yields rich rewards). One cannot get happiness for the mere asking. One has to work hard for it. The more one engages in right actions, the greater will be the reward. So, one should be prepared to work hard and get refined. You are students. Your studies bring about refinement in you. Similarly, eating, walking, sitting, running, smiling and weeping, all these constitute the process of refinement. How does weeping refine man? When one weeps, one sheds one's impurities in the form of tears.

The process of refinement lies in accepting all that is good and rejecting all that is bad. We inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. Wherever a marriage function is held, people gather there in large numbers, and hence more carbon dioxide is released polluting the atmosphere. Green leaves absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. That is the reason our ancients used to decorate the venue of marriage and other auspicious functions with buntings of fresh mango and plantain leaves. Unfortunately, people have forgotten the inner significance of such sacred traditions. They decorate their houses with buntings of plastic leaves because they are long lasting and easy to procure. The world today suffers from pollution of air. In the name of modernism, people are spoiling their health. They do not understand the sanctity of food. Similarly, they adopt modern methods to prepare food and in the process waste a lot of money. Modernism has made them lazy. They pay double the price of the vegetables to the coolie for carrying them to their home. Such is the sorry state of affairs. Consider food as *Parartha* (divinity) and not mere *Padartha* (matter). Take care that the food you eat helps you to maintain good health. Do not consume stale food. It is like poison.

*Students!*

You should put into practice what you are studying. You have learnt that the combination of hydrogen and oxygen results in water. But how far is it useful in your daily life? What is the use of doing experiments in the laboratory if people are not benefited by them? The result of these experiments should be useful to people in their life. Today people in several places are suffering from water scarcity. Is it possible to mix hydrogen and oxygen and provide them water? No. There are many rivers in Bharat, but what is the use? Their water is flowing into the ocean without being properly utilised. Today different States are engaged in conflicts with each other over the water issue. Why don't they make proper use of the water that is available? Make proper use of the rivers that are flowing in Bharat. Bharat is a highly sacred and auspicious land. It is called *Annapurna* (land of plenty of food). But many people today suffer for want of food. What is the reason? The reason is that we are misusing the available resources. If we put them to proper use, we as well as our fellowmen can lead a happy life.

**Waste of Water, Food, Time, Energy, Money is Evil**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Do not waste anything. Even while washing their hands, some people open the tap too much and in the process much water gets wasted. Wastage of water really pains Me. Use

as much water as is necessary. Close the tap immediately after using the required water. Then you will be able to save water. Don't waste water, don't waste food. Eat only that much food as is necessary. Many people in the world are dying of hunger. Hence, instead of wasting food, give it to those who are in dire need of it. There are some who argue that the food they throw will not be wasted because dogs and other animals would feed on it. Even dogs would not touch the food that is completely spoiled. In this modern age, not only human beings but even animals are very intelligent. They decide to eat or not to eat it only after sniffing at it. So, don't waste water, food, time, energy and money. Understand that time is very important. *Time waste is life waste*. Yesterday, I spoke to you at length on various topics. As I am speaking everyday, My voice is becoming louder and clearer. It only shows that when you speak good words, you will get more strength. Do not indulge in unnecessary talk. Speak to the extent needed. Don't waste your words. If you talk loudly, it amounts to wasting your words. Only those should hear your words for whom they are meant. There are some who talk very loudly even while walking on the road. Nobody will respect such people. They will lose all respect. You have to uphold your self-respect and manifest it by your speech and conduct. *Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina* (without discipline, there can be no well-being). We should talk and walk in a dignified way to earn the respect of others.

Some people walk fast. But I do not want to walk fast. Why do I walk slowly? It is only to give you Darshan for more time. I can walk much faster but I don't like to do it because if I walk slowly all of you can have My Darshan to your heart's content. I am happy when you are happy. I walk slowly only to make you happy. (*loud applause*) If I walk fast, many people will feel miserable because they may not get Darshan in a satisfactory way. We should follow the principle of *Help ever, Hurt never*. We should always help others. What you have to learn today is that you should not waste food or water. Do not talk without restraint. You will earn the respect of others only when you respect your words.

### **Be Humble and Respect All**

*Students!*

You may study well and get good marks and a degree but that is not enough. It is also necessary that you should take to noble path. You should develop self-confidence and follow the dictates of your conscience. When you satisfy your conscience, you will certainly attain an exalted position in life.

You all know about Abraham Lincoln. He was born in a poor family. In his childhood, he did not have even proper food to eat. He did not have a good dress for school. His fellow students hailing from rich families used to make fun of him. One day, he came back from school crying as he could not bear the humiliation he was subjected to by his fellow students. When his mother questioned him, he said that his classmates were making fun of his poverty. He asked his mother to get him a new dress. His mother consoled him and said, "Son, let others say what they want. You respect all. Do not hate anybody. Understand our family position and act accordingly. With our meagre income, we cannot afford to buy a new dress for you. Keep your dress neat and clean. Develop self-confidence. Uphold your self-respect." The words of his mother made an indelible

impression on the tender heart of Lincoln. He was very courteous and respected all. He followed his mother's teachings and ultimately became the President of America. He could occupy such an exalted position because he respected all and developed self-confidence. Never disrespect anyone under the influence of your ego.

I am giving you My own example. When I was studying in 3rd and 4th Standards, I had only one pair of shorts and shirt. I could not afford to give them to Dhobi for washing and ironing. Everyday, after returning from school, I would wear a towel and wash My clothes. I used to put live embers in a small metal container for ironing My dress. Later on, I had two pairs of dresses for the whole year. Whenever Pedda Venkama Raju (the father of this body) enquired whether I needed a new dress, I used to say, "I have enough number of dresses. I don't need anything." I did not want to waste money. *Misuse of money is evil*. In those days, a pair of shorts and shirt cost only a few annas. Clothes were very cheap those days, yet I never asked for them. I always did My work Myself. Even now, I do My work Myself. People may think that Swami is having a number of servants to do His work. I do not need anybody to serve Me; I do not expect any service from others. Since My childhood, I have been respecting everybody. Today the whole world is respecting Me. (*prolonged loud applause*) As I told you the other day, when you love and respect all, you will be loved and respected by all. Love everybody irrespective of caste, language, religion and nationality. Then God will shower His love on you. The more you serve others with the spirit of sacrifice, the higher you rise in stature. After all, you suffer no loss if you respect everybody.

Students should be humble and respectful towards others. They should not talk to elders in a disrespectful manner. But modern students lack respect and concern for even their parents. They wear all types of fancy dresses and roam about aimlessly. If you want to attain good name, your conduct should be good. Love and respect everyone. Then everyone will love you. Today the whole world respects Me because I respect everyone. I address the devotees as Bangaru and talk to them lovingly. Likewise, you too should learn to talk in a pleasing manner. You should never speak harsh words. Always talk softly and sweetly. Lincoln faced acute poverty and yet could come up in life because of his humility and self-confidence. Emulate his ideal. His mother worked hard to bring him up. All women work hard to maintain the dignity and respect of their family. These ideals are missing in the lives of people today. They want to lead a life of extravagance. This is not good. Be satisfied with what you have. Do not entertain excessive desires.

*Students!*

Many sacred teachings are contained in the Upanishads. Put them into practice and earn a good name for yourself.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*" )

- **From Bhagavan's Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 13th October 2002.**

## **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

## KRISHNAJANMASHTAMI CELEBRATIONS

The festival of Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th August 2003 with great devotional fervour. Huge crowds thronged Prasanthi Nilayam to celebrate this holiest of holy festivals in the Divine proximity of Kali Yuga Avatar Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sweet notes of Nadaswaram music heralded the celebrations on the morning of 19th August 2003 in the Mandir premises just after Omkaram and Suprabhatam. Sai Kulwant Hall and adjoining areas along with Bhagavan's abode in Poornachandra bore a festive look with decorations of colourful buntings, shining globes and beautiful festoons. Special decorations were done at the gates of Sai Kulwant Hall and various temples of the campus with buntings of fresh mango and plantain leaves.

Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 6.40 a.m. on 19th August 2003. Soon after Bhagavan's arrival, the Institute students started Bhajans in praise of Lord Krishna and Bhagavan Baba. As the Bhajans continued, the procession of cows led by Sai Geeta (Bhagavan's dear elephant) entered the Hall from Gopuram Gate with the accompaniment of Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students. The cows from Gokulam with students dressed as cowherds formed the rear of this grand procession. The cows and other animals were adorned with ornaments and silk garments. Bhagavan Baba walked down to the centre of the Hall and lovingly caressed and fed Sai Geeta with His Divine Hands. After feeding Sai Geeta, Bhagavan fed the cows and calves from Gokulam, and other animals including some fawns and rabbits. Surcharging the milieu with His Divine love and supreme peace, Bhagavan released white pigeons after feeding and caressing the animals. In the end, Bhagavan broke coconuts as a mark of auspiciousness. At 7.45 a.m., Bhagavan came back to the dais where Arati was offered to Him. The students had placed a cake with a pot overflowing with curd in the verandah. Bhagavan lovingly lighted the candles and cut the cake. At the end of the morning programme, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees.

The programme in the afternoon started at 4.40 p.m. with chanting of Vedic hymns by the students of the Institute. Two speakers addressed the gathering before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba. The first speaker was Dr. M.Sainath, a faculty member of the Institute from its Prasanthi Nilayam Campus. Dr. Sainath referred to the prevalent intolerance in all walks of life today and identified the reason for it as man's short-sighted objective of aiming at all that was ephemeral and transient in this world. Explaining a well-known saying of Bhagavan Baba (*Follow the Master ...*), Dr. Sainath observed that man should listen to the voice of his conscience and strive to identify himself with Divinity. The second speaker Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of the Institute, observed that the message of the Bhagavadgita given by Lord Krishna was most significant but it could have its impact on us only when we put it into practice. Referring to the teachings of the Kali Yuga Avatar Bhagavan Baba, Dr. Venkataraman observed that Bhagavan was practically demonstrating them to us by living His teachings. The learned speaker explained how Bhagavan's concern for the suffering humanity had resulted in yet another massive project, viz., Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project for Chennai. Though started and executed without any publicity and fanfare, it

was being considered as one of the most beautiful and useful projects of the country for the welfare of the masses at international forums, remarked Dr. Venkataraman.

After this, Bhagavan Baba gave His Krishna Janmashtami Message, full text of which has been given elsewhere in this issue. Krishna Janmashtami celebrations came to a close at 7 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

**Glory of the Lord sung by Overseas Devotees:** Millions of people come to Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world every year to experience the bliss of Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan of the Kali Yuga Avatar Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Some of them come in groups by chartered planes. Sometimes, Bhagavan graciously permits them to present cultural or musical programmes. Three such groups made their presentations in the month of August 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The first group under report was from the U.K., who presented individual and group songs, and Bhajans on the afternoon of 7th August 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme started at 4.40 p.m. with Omkaram and Guru Vandana, and came to a close at 5.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan. The programme comprised devotional group songs and Bhajans mostly in Hindi. Bhagavan Baba sat through the entire presentation and showered the bliss of His Darshan on all the devotees during this excellent musical presentation.

The second fortunate group to get the opportunity to sing the glory of the Lord in His Divine Presence was from Germany. They presented their programme on the afternoon of 8th August 2003. The programme started at 4.30 p.m. and concluded at 5.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan Baba. The group first presented devotional group songs alternately by ladies and gents, and then led the Bhajans in which all the devotees took part. It was an impressive presentation of Hindi Bhajans by the German devotees who sang not only in perfect rhythm and tune but with exquisitely perfect pronunciation also.

The third programme in the month of August 2003 was presented by a group of devotees from the Hollywood Sai Centre, U.S.A. The programme started on the afternoon of 18th August 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The Bhajans sung by the group were all in Hindi and were led alternately by gents and ladies. This programme concluded at 5.10 p.m. This was followed by Bhajans by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The programme came to a close at 5.35 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

**Bhagavan Distributes Sewing Machines to the Needy:** In a solemn and brief function held in Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of 17th August 2003, Bhagavan Baba distributed 30 sewing machines to selected ladies to enable them to become self-employed. This function was organised by the doctors of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital who also arranged for the training of these beneficiaries in embroidery and tailoring for one year under the guidance of two voluntary experts. Bhagavan also distributed Saris and Prasadam to the beneficiaries besides giving them the sewing machines.

## **NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** West Godavari district distributed 81 tricycles to physically challenged students selected from all parts of the district at a solemn function arranged at Tanuku on 20th July 2003. This district performed Narayana Seva and distributed bed

sheets to 81 needy people at Gowrishankarpuram on 21st July 2003. One newly-built Sathya Sai Bus Shelter was inaugurated at Narasannapalem village on 21st July 2003 and bed sheets were given to 81 selected needy people.

Hyderabad district honoured 16 well-known Vedic Pundits at Shivam on 26th July 2003 and distributed seven wet grinders and 14 sewing machines to helpless ladies, five tricycles to physically challenged students, four wheelchairs to physically challenged persons, five electronic repair kits, two radio and T.V. repair kits, five watch and clock repair kits to selected persons on 27th July 2003 with a view to enable them to earn their livelihood. Besides, one hearing aid was provided to a deaf person and 100 Saris were given to selected needy ladies.

Rangareddy district distributed cooking vessels to 16 families, new clothes to 53 needy persons and 82 needy students, notebooks to 90 selected students, five tricycles to selected physically challenged students, artificial limbs (forearm and leg) to two persons, paid college fee to one student and school fees to four students as part of Bhagavan's 80th Birthday Celebrations. This district honoured a Vedic Pundit and built a hut for an aged poor family.

Uravakonda Samithi of Anantapur district started Annasathram on 20th July 2003 in the premises of Sri Bala Sathya Sai Sila Mandir where Bhagavan gave His first Divine Message. Midday meals to 80 selected poor people for 80 days, i.e., till 7th October 2003 will be served by the Samithi.

Visakhapatnam district youth conducted a blood donation camp on 25th July 2003 in which more than 200 youth gave blood. This district gave three sewing machines to helpless persons, adopted a poor but very intelligent student pursuing engineering studies, distributed cooking vessels to 82 families, new clothes to nine poor people, blankets to 74 people, books to five needy students, food provisions to 20 families, new clothes to 17 students and one wheelchair to a physically challenged person.

East Godavari district arranged a mega service camp at Rajahmundry on 29th July 2003 in which 1000 Seva Dal volunteers (men and women) did Seva in connection with the Godavari Pushkaram. Similarly, the West Godavari district arranged a camp at Kovvur with 500 Seva Dal volunteers. These camps continued up to 10th August 2003.

**Karnataka:** Sri Sathya Sai Bhajan Mandali, Cantonment (Bangalore) was uniquely fortunate to be the recipient of a beautiful three feet high marble idol of Sri Shirdi Sai Baba from the Divine Hands of our Beloved Sai on 7th August 2003. Bhagavan graciously blessed and approved the installation of this idol in the premises of the Unit on Saturday, 16th August 2003. With Bhagavan's blessings, the rituals commenced on the evening of 15th August 2003 ending with Prana Pratishtha, Maha Kumbhabhishekam, Puja and Mahamangalarati, followed by Prasadam distribution to all the devotees who gathered on this occasion. The programme concluded in the evening with Bhajan for two hours and Arati.

The Bangalore Urban District launched three-year projects as part of 80th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan Baba on 17th August 2003 in the exquisitely designed Sathya Sai Samskrutha Sadanam. On this occasion, scholarships were offered to 18 deserving, diligent students to pursue their higher education.

**U.P. and Uttaranchal:** A one-day State Conference was held at Lucknow on 27th July 2003 in which a large number of Bal Vikas Gurus and office bearers participated. Some parents of the local Bal Vikas children also attended the Conference. Speeches given by young Gurus, one from each of the 11 zones, included their experiences, and how they were inspired and motivated during their Bal Vikas work by the grace of Bhagavan Baba. The Conference came to a close after Arati to Bhagavan.

**Tamil Nadu:** An extensive Grama Seva activity by the youth of Kancheepuram and Chennai Metro (West) was undertaken in Arasan Colony of Mannivakkam village in the district of Kancheepuram. The activity consisted of temple cleaning, a general medical camp, a veterinary camp, water purification of the village well followed by Narayana Seva for the villagers. A total of 260 villagers benefited in the medical camp, and 360 animals were treated in the veterinary camp. Ten Mahila youth members conducted rural Bal Vikas classes and explained to them the importance of personal hygiene. The number of beneficiaries was 48. A door-to-door Narayana Seva was undertaken and 1000 food packets were distributed. Vastra Dan was made for 80 gents and 80 ladies with distribution of Dhotis and Saris. Grama Seva concluded with a procession of Pallaki Seva in which the entire village participated.

The youth of Nilgiri district performed Grama Seva in the village Kunjappanai, a tribal village in Kothagiri. The Seva activities included Nagar Sankirtan, Bhajan, Vastra Dan, village cleaning and Narayana Seva. The total number of beneficiaries was 500. This activity was conducted on 5th June. Besides, the youth of Nilgiri made arrangements for drinking water supply to the village of Dhavani with four mobile tankers of 10,000 litres each. The number of beneficiaries was 750.

An extensive Grama Seva by the youth and Seva Dal of Trichy district was organised at their adopted village Marudhur. Marudhur is a remote village which is nearly 18 km from Trichy. Seva consisted of cleaning and washing of Siva and Vishnu temples at Marudhur, planting of 42 tree samplings and flower plants. A medical camp was organised at the local Panchayat School, Marudhur. The number of beneficiaries was 720. Seva Dal of Trichy organised an eye camp at Marudhur village. Out of the 194 patients screened for cataract, 49 patients who had developed cataract were operated at A.G. Eye Hospital, Trichy.

A unique Grama Seva at Songandi village in Kancheepuram district was organised to create self-employment opportunities for the youth of the village like motor car driving, screen printing and litho offset printing. Besides, with the help of the villagers eight of their hutment dwellings were reconstructed and made habitable which included provision of cement flooring to the huts.

### **DIVINE DISCOURSE: KERALA YOUTH CAMP**

**YOUTH IS CHARACTERISED**

**VIRTUES**

**BY STERLING**



*Neither the study of the Vedas and Vedangas nor the other scriptures can cut asunder the veil of Maya that separates the individual soul from God. The individual is on one side of the veil of Maya and God is on the other side. The action is on one side and the cause on the other.*

(Telugu

Poem)

*Young Men and Women!*

People think that youth means young boys and girls. But this is not so. Youth denotes certain qualities. The main qualities of the youth are purity, sacredness and courage. But today the youth are generally associated with Arishadvargas (six inner enemies), namely, Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy). The youth should understand the power of the senses and make proper use of them. They should possess courage and strength of character. Their speech and behaviour should be proper.

### **Put Human Values into Practice**

The youth should have Satsanga. People think Satsanga means the company of good people but it is not so. Sath means truth which is changeless in all the three periods of time. It is uniformly present in Trikalas (three periods of time), Trilokas (three worlds) and Trigunas (three attributes). Sath is very sacred. It gives happiness in all the three periods of time. To live in the company of Sath is true Satsanga. Satsanga is very essential to develop good behaviour. Manu, who first codified Dharmasastra (treatise on Dharma) and propagated it to the world, laid great emphasis on the importance of Satsanga. The three main principles of his teachings are: Bhadram Pashyantu (see good), Bhadram Srunvantu (hear good) and Bhadram Kurvantu (do good). These are most important ideals for the youth. But if we enquire deeply into the truth, we will realise that these three principles are necessary not only for the youth but for one and all. You should not think that it is difficult to practise these ideals. It is not difficult at all. To practise noble qualities is the easiest of all paths. We find it difficult because we do not follow the right approach. First and foremost, you should have right vision, right hearing and right actions.

*Your eyes should be filled with compassion. Your words should be as sweet as honey.*

*You should have a smiling countenance and your heart should be filled with nectarine feelings giving joy to one and all. (Telugu Poem)*

*Students!*

Dharmasastra propounded by Manu is very important for man. Based on Manu's Dharmasastra is what is now called law. But law is not practised in life today.

Man should always be smiling. Only then can he radiate peace to others. Smile adds beauty to humanness. Sacredness is an essential quality of a human being. But when does he become sacred? He attains sacredness when he practises human values in his life. Man loses his sacredness if he lacks human values. So, man should put human values into practice. One bereft of human values is not a human being but verily a demon. Suppose you come across your enemy while walking on the road. If you look at him as an enemy, the hatred in him will increase manifold and there may be a fight between you and him

on the road itself. Instead, if you greet him with a smiling face, “Hello, my friend”, he too will reciprocate the same and the hatred between you and him will be removed. You can develop friendship only by talking in an amiable way. Through good words, you can develop unity among youth and spread happiness everywhere.

### **Develop Nearness and Dearness to God**

There are three stages on the path to self-realisation. *I am in the Light. The Light is in me. I am the Light.* When you realise that you are the Light, you will find light everywhere. You can attain this ultimate state through devotion and self-surrender. When a question is raised, where is God, some people say, He is in my heart. It is not the correct answer. (Bhagavan showing His handkerchief) Where is this handkerchief? It is in My hand. Hence, My hand is bigger than the handkerchief. Likewise, when you say, God is in your heart, it means you are superior to God. Hence, do not say God is in you. You are in God. Once you realise this truth, you will naturally develop humility and devotion. Then the feeling of hatred will be totally eradicated.

Self-enquiry can lead man to bliss. As I said in the morning, anger is the root cause of hatred. Love cannot grow in you until and unless you uproot anger.

*One with anger will not be successful in any of his endeavours. He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by one and all.*

(Telugu Poem)

*His own people will abandon him. He will lose all respect and wealth. His anger will ruin him completely.*

(Telugu Poem)

Hence, do not give room to anger. Once anger enters your heart, all other wicked qualities will follow. Fill your heart with love. Then hatred and anger cannot approach you. Due to the impact of Kali Yuga, anger, ego and jealousy are on the rise among the youth today. Consequently, humanness is being totally forgotten.

### ***Embodiments of Love!***

Let love permeate each and every drop of your blood. Shun all wicked qualities. The Upanishads declare: *Tattwamasi* (That Thou Art). ‘Tat’ denotes the transcendental principle of Divinity. It is referred to as ‘That’ because it is beyond the senses. ‘Twam’ corresponds to the individual ‘I’. Hence, *Tattwamasi* denotes, “You are That”. Vedanta mainly deals with two aspects – ‘That’ and ‘this’. ‘That’ is beyond the senses and ‘this’ is within the purview of the senses. You are not ‘this’. You are ‘That’. You should understand and experience this truth. Since ‘Tat’ transcends your senses, you are unable to understand its form. ‘Twam’ is near you. So, you can visualise its form clearly. In order to visualise ‘Tat’ clearly, you have to transform it into ‘Twam’. Only then can you say, “I am I”.

Suppose you see a rope at a distance while you are walking on the road. A question arises in your mind, what ‘that’ is. As it is at a distance, you mistake it for a snake. When you go near the rope and flash torchlight on it, you will realise, ‘this’ is a rope and not a snake. So long as the rope is far away (‘that’), you have doubts. When you go near and see (‘this’), the doubt is cleared. When you mistake it for a snake, you are fear-stricken. When you go near and see, the fear vanishes. What is the cause of fear in man? He thinks Divinity is away from him and has doubts regarding its true form. First and foremost, go

near Divinity. Then you will be free from fear. This is the teaching of the Upanishads. 'Upa' means near, 'ni' means down and 'shad' means to sit. Hence, Upanishads take you closer to Divinity. Once you go near Divinity, you can visualise your true form. The Upanishads prove the nearness of Divinity. Wherever you are, you should think that you are in Divine proximity. It is not enough if you are near God, you should be dear to Him. Once you develop nearness and dearness to God, you will be rid of fear.

*Students!*

The teachings of the Upanishads and the Dharmasastra of Manu are very subtle. Only on deep enquiry will you be able to comprehend their significance. Your entire being is divine. But you are unable to understand the latent divinity in humanity. You are studying a number of books and acquiring various types of education. You are able to know everything except yourself.

Once Narada met Sanat Kumara and requested him to grant him the knowledge of the Self. Sanat Kumara asked, "What makes you think that you are eligible to acquire the knowledge of the Self?" Narada replied that he had mastered the four Vedas and the six Sastras. Then Sanat Kumara said, "Narada, what is the use of studying the Vedas and scriptures without putting them into practice? If you had practised what you have learnt, you would have certainly acquired the knowledge of the Self." In this manner, Sanat Kumara imparted a great teaching to Narada. All your study of the Vedas, scriptures and your visits to pilgrimage centres will be of little value unless you know your true Self. Instead of questioning others, "Who are you?" first question yourself, "Who am I?" Who am I? I am Sai Baba. Once you know who you are, you will know about everyone else. Lord Krishna said, *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). Every being is a reflection of Divinity. The object and its reflection are not different from each other. When you understand this unity, you will not be deluded by multiplicity. You should see unity in diversity. But today man is doing just the opposite. He feels proud of his intelligence and tries to show that he is very clever. Consequently, he becomes egoistic. Ego ruins his very life.

### **The World is your Reflection, Reaction and Resound**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Know yourself in the first instance. When you know yourself, you will know everything else. It is very essential that youth understand this truth. You cannot call yourself youth on the basis of your age and physical strength. Who is a youth? A youth is one who is endowed with love, truth and bliss. When you realise your true Self, you will be full of bliss. Then you will be free from all worries. If you are devoid of bliss and haunted by worries, it only means that you do not know who you really are. You are the reflection of God. Whatever you see is reflection, whatever you hear is resound and whatever you experience is reaction. Such being the case, why should you worry?

Once upon a time, a cowherd boy took some cows for grazing to a nearby hill. As the cows were grazing, he started singing a song. He heard the echo of his own singing and was perplexed. He thought another person was trying to imitate him and ridicule him. He was very angry. He shouted, "Who are you? Why do you sing the song I sing?" He at once heard the echo of all that he said. He felt humiliated and wanted to know the person

who was imitating and insulting him. When he returned home in the evening, he narrated all that had happened to his mother. The next day, his mother accompanied him to the hill and asked him to sing again. Again the echo was heard. The mother smiled and said, “Son, what you hear is the echo of your song from the hills.” The boy was amazed. Till then he was ignorant of such a phenomenon. He was never again upset when he heard his song echoing in the hills, for he knew it was merely a resound. Man’s lack of knowledge of truth is the cause of anger, hatred and jealousy in him. When he realises that the whole world is but a resound and reflection of his own feelings then he will not develop anger, hatred, jealousy, etc., against others. Saint Thyagaraja sang, *Telisi Rama Chinthana Cheyave Manasa* (Oh mind! Know the truth and contemplate on Lord Rama). There is no point in chanting the Name of Rama without realising its efficacy.

Whatever you hear outside is only a resound of what you utter. It is not coming from elsewhere. As I am speaking to you, all of you are able to hear My voice. If I do not speak at all, how can there be resound? Reaction, reflection and resound emerge from within. Happiness and sorrow arise from within. We are the cause of our own sorrow. No one else can pass on sorrow to us. We will not take it if others want to give it to us. It comes from within us. Whatever you experience outside is your own reaction, reflection and resound. When you understand this truth and conduct yourself accordingly, you will be full of bliss. If you want to understand the principle of Divinity, try to understand who you are.

### **Three Debts of Man**

Every man is born with three types of debts – Daiva Runam (debt to God), Rishi Runam (debt to sages) and Pitru Runam (debt to parents). You have to perform noble deeds in order to repay the debt to God. God pervades each and every limb of your body. He is present in every atom and every cell of your body in the form of Rasa (essence). That is why God is extolled as Angirasaya Namah (salutations to the One who pervades everything in the form of essence). In the waking state, you think that you protect your body. But who is safeguarding your body while you are asleep? He is none other than God. He pervades your body from top to toe in the form of Rasa and protects you in all the three states of existence – Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupti (waking, dream and deep sleep). Such being the case, is it not your duty to be grateful to God? In order to express your gratitude to Him, you should have Satsanga, develop noble feelings and perform sacred actions. As God is protecting you at all times, it is your foremost duty to repay your debt to Him. When you conduct yourself in a noble way and help others in society, you repay your debt to God.

The next debt you have to clear is the debt to sages who compiled the Vedas, Sastras, Itihasas and Puranas (scriptures, epics and mythologies). They understood the nature of Divinity and propagated it to the world. You can repay their debt by putting their teachings into practice. The third debt is debt to parents. Mother carries you in her womb for nine months and looks after you with love and care. Father provides you food, clothing and education. That is why our scriptures extol mother and father to the level of God. *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere your mother and father as God). It is your bounden duty to express your gratitude to your parents. Once you repay all these three types of debts, you will attain the heavenly abode of the Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu

and Maheswara. But the present-day youth lack respect for their parents. They do not even talk lovingly to their mother who gave them birth and brought them up with love and care.

Students!

You may study well and earn name and fame in society but never forget that you owe all this to your parents. He is a worst sinner and betrayer who does not pay respect and express gratitude to his parents. Mother, father, teacher and God; this is the order of priority given by our ancients. The mother is accorded the highest place because it is in her lap that the child learns its first lessons. Mother Kausalya earned great esteem as she gave birth to Lord Rama and brought Him up in an ideal manner. It is in this context that Saint Thyagaraja sang thus:

*Oh Rama! What great penance did Mother Kausalya perform to deserve the good fortune of planting kisses on Your radiant and tender cheek? What great penance did King Dasaratha perform to earn the right to address You affectionately as his son?*  
(Telugu Song)

Divine personalities are born to such noble parents only as a result of great penance performed by them. Saint Thyagaraja described at length the great good fortune of Mother Kausalya and King Dasaratha.

Women in general symbolise love and devotion. In the palace of God, women have the right to enter the Antahpura (inner chambers) whereas men have access only to the Durbar Hall (outer chambers). It means that those who are filled with devotion and sense of surrender have a closer access to God.

### **You can See God with Eyes of Wisdom**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Fill your heart with devotion and sense of surrender. Contemplate on the Name of God at all times, both in times of happiness and sorrow. Then you will remain unaffected by worries. Never be in haste. *Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry.* Understand that God is everywhere. He is in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. There is no place without God. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavrutya Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

When I say God is everywhere, you may ask, “Where is He? Show me.” Yes, I am ready to show God, but do you have the eyes to see Him? You have the tongue to ask but not the eyes to see. Here I mean the eyes of wisdom and not the physical eyes. Even the birds and insects are endowed with physical eyes which can see the external world. Snakes, scorpions, frogs, etc., all have physical eyes, but are they able to see God? You cannot expect to see God with physical eyes. You have to acquire the eyes of wisdom by developing love, devotion and sense of surrender. Once you have the eyes of wisdom, you will consider God very close to you. You will treat Him as your dear old friend. Saint Thyagaraja developed such intimacy with the Lord. That is why he could compose songs in which he addressed Lord Rama in intimate terms, just as one addresses one’s close friend. One of those famous songs is, “*Ra Ra Maa Intidaaka...*” (Oh Rama, come to our house). When you invite a new friend to your house, you will address him using

respectful words. On the other hand, when you invite your old friend, you don't address him in a formal honorific way. You will call him in an informal way with all intimacy and freedom. You should experience such intimacy with God because He is your dear old friend. Do not consider God to be someone above you. Treat Him as your own. It is possible only when you develop love.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Make every effort to repay the debt to God, for He pervades your entire being and safeguards you. Who is responsible for the blood circulation in your body? How is it that the blood does not ooze out as it moves in the body? You think you are sustained by food. But neither food nor blood can sustain you. God alone is responsible for your sustenance. However, you owe every drop of your blood to your parents. Their food takes the form of your blood. Hence, it is your foremost duty to respect and revere your parents. If you do not respect your parents today, your children will not respect you in future. What is the use of lamenting then? Respect your parents and set a good ideal to your children. One who does not respect his parents is verily a Rakshasa (demon). Do not lead the life of a Rakshasa, live like a Manava (human being). Who is a Manava? 'Ma' means ignorance, 'Na' means without and 'Va' means to conduct oneself. One who conducts himself without ignorance is a true Manava.

**Revere your Parents as God**

*Embodiments of Love!*

It is a mistake to consider yourself youth on the basis of your age and physical strength. One can be called a youth only when one has virtues like love, forbearance, adherence to truth and righteousness. Youth are endowed with immense strength and are the emancipators of the world. It is not enough if you strengthen your body by doing physical exercises. You have to strengthen your intellect. When you respect and revere your parents, God will manifest before you. The story of Pundarika bears ample testimony to this. When he was massaging the feet of his parents, Lord Panduranga appeared and said, "Oh Pundarika, I have come to shower My grace on you." Pundarika replied, "Oh Lord! I am serving my parents. Please wait for some time." He pushed a brick which lay by his side towards the Lord and requested Him to sit. The Lord wanted to test him. He said, "Oh simpleton, when I, the Lord of the universe, am standing before you, where is the need to serve your parents? Instead, come and serve Me." Pundarika replied, "Oh Lord, now You have come to grant me your Darshan; but where were You all these days? My primary duty is to serve my parents because they have given me birth and fostered me with love and affection. After I serve my parents, I will come and serve You. Please wait until then." The Lord was very pleased with Pundarika's devotion to his parents. He came near Pundarika and commended him, "My dear one, this is the true love and devotion that I expect from My devotees." No benefit accrues from worshipping God without serving the parents with love and devotion. Everyone should emulate Pundarika's ideal and serve his parents. First serve them, and then you can think of God. If you want to realise God, first and foremost develop love and devotion towards your parents.

*Embodiments of Love! Young Men and Women!*

At least from today onwards, serve your parents and become recipients of their love. That is the sign of true devotion. That is true humanness. I want to tell you an incident that happened in My life. One day, Mother Easwaramma came to Me and said, “Swami, You have all powers in You. There is nothing impossible for You. Ours is a small village. People are suffering for want of proper medical care. Please construct a small hospital to treat the children of the village.” I assured her that a small hospital would be built to suit the needs of the village. Within a short period of time, a small hospital was constructed and Gopala Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, was invited for its inauguration. He remarked, “Swami, where is the need for a hospital in this hamlet?” I said, “Are the villagers not human beings? Don’t they require medical care? It is for the welfare of the villagers that I have built this hospital.”

After some time, Mother Easwaramma requested Me to build a school in the village. She said, “Swami, I feel very much pained to see children walking all the way to Bukkapatnam to attend school.” I at once acceded to her wish and built a small school to begin with. As days rolled by, Swami’s glory spread far and wide. One day Mother Easwaramma again came to Me with a request, “Swami, You have built a hospital and a school as per my wishes. I have yet another wish to be fulfilled. The people of our village have to trek long distances to fetch a potful of water. Their shoulders get swollen as they carry water day after day. Kindly get a borewell dug in the village and solve the water problem.” She had requested for a small school; now a university has come up. (*loud applause*) She wanted a small hospital to be built; Swami has established super speciality hospitals. She wanted a borewell for the village; I have provided drinking water for the entire district of Anantapur. I give you so much even when you ask for so little. But nobody comes forward with such noble desires. People do ask, but how do they ask? They ask from their lips, not from the heart.

*I am searching, I am searching, I have been in search of a true human being then and now who practises righteousness.* (Telugu Song)

I am going round in search of a righteous person but I am unable to find one. One can understand the true form of God only when one follows the right path.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Serve your parents and fulfil their aspirations. Undertake service activities in your own village and work for its development. First have respect for yourself. When you develop self-respect, you will have respect for others also. There are many more things to be taught to you. Swami will address you again tomorrow.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Pibare Rama Rasam ...*” )

– **From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 12th April 2003 on the occasion of Kerala Youth Camp.**

## SUMMER COURSE DISCOURSES – V

### **LIVE UP TO THE IDEALS OF THE RAMAYANA**

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

(Sanskrit Verse)

*Embodiments of Love!*

No one can comprehend the power and capacity of the Divine. Though they know precious little about it, yet people are ready to criticise Divinity. They may praise or deride, the power of Divinity remains the same. Criticism will not diminish its power, nor praise, enhance it. Ups and downs are the characteristics of this ephemeral world. Divinity is unaffected by both. Those who hanker after name and fame can never comprehend Divinity.

**Models of Unity and Harmony**

The Ramayana clearly demonstrates the Divinity of Rama. After securing Rama's sandals, Bharata did not live in Ayodhya. Instead, he built a small Ashram at Nandigram and started living there, contemplating all the time on the Name of Rama. His wife Mandavi spent her time in serving Bharata and contemplating on Rama's Name. Meanwhile, Rama and Sita were wandering in forests and Lakshmana was dedicatedly serving them. But very little is known about Satrughna because none of the texts mentions much about him. There are many intelligent people. There are thousands of intellectuals. But, unfortunately, there are few who enquire into sacred and sublime spiritual matters.

From the times of Dasaratha, Sumantra was the Chief Minister of the kingdom. He implicitly obeyed Dasaratha and carried out the administration of the kingdom according to his orders. The present situation was such that the legal heir Rama was in the forest and His representative Bharata was in self-imposed exile in Nandigram. Then who looked after the governance of Ayodhya? It is here that we must probe deeply. From dawn to dusk it was Satrughna who stayed in Ayodhya, enquired into the problems of the citizens and managed the affairs of the kingdom. Every night he faithfully reported everything to Bharata. Satrughna handled the governance of the kingdom without causing the least trouble to Bharata. Though he did so much, yet there is no mention of it anywhere.

Both the sons of Sumitra engaged themselves in serving their elder brothers. They fostered unity between the brothers by their sacred actions without caring for name and fame. Satrughna dedicated himself totally to Bharata and executed all his commands. He was highly intelligent, capable and competent. Satrughna dedicated himself fully to the governance of Ayodhya for fourteen long years. He never bothered Bharata with the affairs of the kingdom because he felt that it might disturb Bharata's concentration as he was in constant contemplation on the Name of Rama.

Sumitra had promised the other queens that her sons would engage themselves in the service of their elder brothers. She said, "Kausalya! Your son may become the king. In such a case, my son Lakshmana will serve Him. Kaikeyi! My son Satrughna will always serve Bharata. Both my sons are born to serve and not to rule over the kingdom. Service is their aim, and not name and fame." How noble were the two brothers Lakshmana and Satrughna! Without them, both Rama and Bharata would not have achieved fame and



glory. They always stood by their elder brothers giving them solid support. This cooperation further cemented the bond of love between the four brothers.

When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama lamented thus, "If I search, I may find a wife like Sita; I may even get a mother like Kausalya but a brother like Lakshmana can never be found." Rama was ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of Lakshmana. At that time, Rama asked Hanuman to go and bring the Sanjivani herb. Hanuman always obeyed Rama's command. He went about as one amongst the brothers of Rama. He promptly left to do the bidding of Rama. As he was unable to identify the herb, he uprooted the entire mountain to carry it to Lanka. When he flew over Ayodhya, Bharata saw this huge figure in the sky and mistook him to be a demon who intended serious harm to Rama. Bharata in fact was getting regular reports that the demons were troubling Rama in the forest. He took out his bow and shot an arrow at Hanuman. Hanuman fell down along with the mountain. Paying his respects to Bharata, he said, "Oh King! Lakshmana has fainted in the battlefield. I am taking this mountain containing the Sanjivani herb to revive him. I don't know where the herb is on this mountain. Hence, in order to carry out Rama's command, I am carrying the entire mountain."

#### **Ideal Spouses of Ideal Brothers**

After hearing the account of events from Hanuman, Bharata told mother Kausalya, "Mother! This messenger has news about Rama." Hanuman then narrated the details of the battle to her: "There is a fierce battle going on between Rama and Ravana. It shall definitely be over in a day or two. Lakshmana has fainted and these herbs are meant to revive him." Bharata called Sumitra also. She did not express any anxiety at the news about Lakshmana. On the contrary she said, "I am not worried about my son's welfare. My only worry is that Rama is being put to inconvenience. I want that there should be no interruption in the service of Rama. If my son Lakshmana were to die, I shall send my other son Satrugna to serve Rama. My only aim is to see Rama happy. It is with this intention that I had sent Lakshmana to the forest with Rama." Before resuming his journey to Lanka, Hanuman was taken to Lakshmana's wife, Urmila. She was engaged in painting the picture of Sita and Rama. In fact, she spent all her time in painting after the departure of Lakshmana to the forest. Bharata approached her and broke the news about Lakshmana. He said, "Lakshmana's life is in danger. I don't know what to do."

When Bharata told this to Urmila, she did not show any fear or worry. She said, "My husband's heart is filled with the Name of Rama. Therefore, he is perhaps sleeping peacefully. All the pain and suffering must be Rama's alone. No danger can befall my husband. He will always remain safe." What we need to recognise here is that the wives of the four brothers were as virtuous and noble as their husbands. The noble qualities, good conduct, high character and sacred virtues of the wives were responsible for the happiness and prosperity of their husbands.

While the four brothers set great ideals to the world, their wives too demonstrated the same by their exemplary conduct. As Satrugna was engaged in the governance of the kingdom, Srutakeerti lent admirable support to him just as Mandavi stood by Bharata. Both of them were the repositories of great virtues. They never aspired for anything for themselves. Both of them went to mother Kausalya everyday. After prostrating at her feet, they received her blessings and thereafter engaged themselves in their duties. It was Kausalya's great good fortune to get daughters-in-law of such noble virtues.

Satrughna's able administration brought about peace, prosperity and security in Ayodhya. Truth was spoken and righteousness was adhered to in every nook and corner of the country. Satrughna's adherence to Sathya and Dharma was the cause of his success. He would forego sleep and rest to run the administration smoothly. He strove to avoid any lapse in his administration lest it should bring a bad name to Bharata. Satrughna was extremely cautious to see that Bharata's name was not tarnished due to any mistake of his. He looked after the kingdom with care and concern. Bharata did not play an active role in the administration of the kingdom. He would merely nod and accede to anything that Satrughna proposed. What was the reason for this implicit trust? Bharata knew Satrughna's selfless love. He also knew that Satrughna was very capable and would never allow any enemy to venture into the territory of Ayodhya. True to his name, Satrughna could destroy any enemy. This led to lasting peace in Ayodhya. The main principles of Indian culture, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness) were followed in the entire kingdom. People prayed for the happiness and safety of the whole world. They laid emphasis on unity of all. Everyone led a good life following the path of virtue. Everyone earned a good name; none faced disrepute.

Though Satrughna ruled the kingdom on behalf of Bharata, he could never summon courage to advise his elder brother. He never talked back to his elders. When you are replying to your elders, you must think carefully and answer. It is a grave mistake to talk to them as you like. Such actions may even lead to some unpleasant situations. Truth must be spoken. Righteousness must be adhered to. Brothers and sisters must live as a closely-knit unit, with understanding among themselves. In this way, Bharata and Satrughna spent their time in Nandigrama and Ayodhya, waiting for the return of Rama. Srutakeerti always encouraged and helped Satrughna. She always tried to lighten the burden of her husband by giving him suitable advice. She would never utter harsh words. 'Sruta+Keerti', as the name suggests, would always listen to good only. In turn, she would always speak what was good and conveyed that which was pleasant and pleasing to the ear. She would encourage only what was good and beneficial to others. Dasaratha's daughters-in-law were real gems.

In the story of Ramayana, Rama and Sita have been depicted as the principal characters. Not much has been said about the role played by Mandavi, Srutakeerti in the epic. If Lakshmana, Satrughna, Urmila, Mandavi and Sruta-keerti were not there, the glory of Rama and Sita could not have been highlighted. Rama could not live even for a minute without Lakshmana. He would not eat His food without Lakshmana. The four brothers and their spouses demonstrated the ideal of unity and harmony to the world. The Vedas propound the message of unity and harmony of mankind.

*Let us all move together, let us all grow together,*

*Let us all stay united and share our knowledge,*

*Let us live together with friendship and without disharmony.* (Telugu Poem)

The four brothers displayed exemplary unity and harmony. Today if there are four children in the house, they take to four different directions.

### **Encounter with Khara and Dushana**

In those days, kings used to appoint special messengers to keep them informed about the happenings in and around the kingdom. Once, a message was conveyed to Bharata relating to the enormous trouble that the demons were causing to Rama. A particular mention was made of the terrible duo Khara and Dushana. They were close associates of

the demon king Ravana. They attempted to secretly harm Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. Bharata was informed of these developments. It was Surpanakha who poisoned the ears of Khara and Dushana and instigated them to attack Rama and Lakshmana. Bharata was hence anxiously awaiting further news about Rama from his messengers. He was also hesitant to approach the elders with this news. Such news was generally conveyed only to Sumitra. She was noble and gentle. She would always use soft words and advise aptly. Therefore, she was relied upon. Bharata conveyed this news to Sumitra and sought her advice. He did not mention this to his own mother Kaikeyi. At this moment of Bharata's anxiety, Sumitra allayed his fears and said, "Rama will not come to any harm. He is Divinity incarnate. Therefore, do not worry at all."

Khara and Dushana brought a forty thousand-strong army to fight against Rama. Meanwhile, Rama instructed Lakshmana to take Sita into a cave and remain there while he destroyed the demon army.

Sage Viswamitra had given to Rama all the mighty weapons he had acquired. Rama discharged one such powerful arrow from His bow. That one arrow multiplied into hundred arrows, the hundred became thousand and the thousand in turn became forty thousand arrows and annihilated the Rakshasa army in a trice. Gods from heaven hailed the victory of Rama and showered flower petals on Him. When this news reached Ayodhya, Bharata, Satrughna, Kausalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi, and all the inhabitants were extremely happy. Everything could be achieved by the Divine power of Rama.

### **Sojourn at Panchavati**

When Rama, Lakshmana and Sita reached the hermitage of Sage Agastya, he also offered him all the weapons that were at his disposal. Moreover, he advised Rama thus: "Oh Ramachandra! Being a householder, it is not possible for You to stay in my hermitage. There is a place called Panchavati in Dandakaranya which is suitable for You to stay during Your exile."

Accordingly, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana stayed at Panchavati and spent their time peacefully. It was here that the demoness Surpanakha made overtures to Rama and Lakshmana. She was attracted by their charming personality. She assumed the form of a beautiful lady and approached Rama with a request to marry her. Rama said, "No doubt, you are beautiful. But what can I do? I am already married and My wife is with Me. So, it is better that you marry Lakshmana whose wife is not present here." When she expressed her desire to Lakshmana, he said, "Rama is my master and I am His servant. If you marry me, you will have to spend your entire life in the service of mother Sita. So, it is better that you marry Rama only." In this manner, Rama and Lakshmana were having fun. After some time, Surpanakha became enraged. She thought, "It is because of the presence of Sita that Rama is not accepting me. If she is not there, Rama will certainly yield to my request." With such a feeling she made an attempt to swallow Sita. Immediately, Rama signalled to Lakshmana. He, being highly intelligent, understood its implication and cut the nose and ears of Surpanakha. He spared her life as he did not want to kill a woman.

Surpanakha ran to her brother Ravana in Lanka with bleeding nose and ears, wailing all the while. She complained to him, "Brother! There are two princes Rama and Lakshmana in the forest. They are the sons of King Dasaratha. They are responsible for my sorry state." Ravana had a very pertinent question to ask her. He said, "Sister! Your nose is at one place and your ears are at another place on your face. Both could not have been cut off at the same time. How is it that you did not run away after your nose was mutilated?"

Why did you remain standing till your ears were also cut off?” Surpanakha replied, “Brother! I cannot explain this. The moment Lakshmana touched me, I was lost in a trance. Their handsome and regal bearing enraptured me. It was as if I lost all my consciousness and remained rooted to the spot.” In this way, she kept eulogising the noble bearing and virtues of the two princes.

There are several such incidents and descriptions in the Ramayana. Today we have seen what an important role Satrughna played in administering Ayodhya for fourteen long years. He demonstrated how powerful, intelligent and able ruler he was. Bharata was the ruler only in name. The actual work was carried out entirely by Satrughna. He alone was responsible for keeping the boundaries of Ayodhya safe. During the fourteen years of his rule, not a single enemy dared to attack Ayodhya. There was no unrest in the kingdom. Initially, there were fears about an Ayodhya without a king. Rama advised Bharata regarding the duties of a ruler. He said, “Bharata, you are now the king. Our father was a mighty emperor who ruled over the kingdom well. After his death, it is your responsibility now. Do not talk back to elders. Never use harsh words. Always talk sweetly and pleasantly. There should be no unrest among the people of the kingdom.” Both Bharata and Satrughna received the advice and followed it faithfully.

#### **Give Help without Publicity**

Today Ravi Mariwala (an earlier speaker) has spoken extensively about the achievements of our hospital. I always advise the doctors not to publicise what we do in the hospital. There are several wonderful things that are happening. One patient from Nepal had his heart on his right side! Our doctors have shifted it back to the correct location. The surgery was understandably highly complicated. Still it was carried out. I told the doctors that no one needed to be informed about this. People may accuse us of praising ourselves. I told them that their main task was to make everyone happy. Today Mariwala has narrated so many incidents that he had never briefed Me about. These boys from the hospital sleep on the ground floor while I stay on the first floor. They discuss hospital related matters. I keep telling them, “Do not speak about them anywhere outside. You do your duty sincerely. Extend every possible help to all those who come.”

The other day, I was informed that a particular injection was to be administered to a patient in order to save his life. That injection costs Rs 80,000. Mariwala came and asked Me whether they could go ahead and buy such an expensive injection. I replied, “Any amount should be spent to save the life of the patient. I shall bear the expenses but get the medicine and save his life.” Instantly, we sent a courier to Bangalore and obtained the required injection. There are several such expensive medicines that need to be used in the hospital. No one knows about these details. I believe that we must not look at the cost if it can save a life. I tell our doctors to do their duty and keep the patients healthy and safe. The patients should not be subjected to any kind of inconvenience. Thousands of students have received education in our university totally free of cost. But we have never publicised this fact. I am happy when others are happy.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*”)

- **From Bhagavan’s Summer Course Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan, Whitefield (Bangalore) on 20th May 2002.**

## DASARA DISCOURSES – VI

### **FOLLOW THE PATH OF TRUTH**

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,  
Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?  
Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

*Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). These are the profound teachings of the Vedas.

#### **Truth is the Fundamental Principle of all Creation**

For all living beings, food is indispensable. Without food, no being can survive. The sun gives sunlight and causes rainfall which help the growth of crops that provide food to us. The Upanishads declare that food originates from Sathya (Truth). Sathya does not merely mean reporting facts as they appear to be. The three syllables in Sathyam, viz., ‘Sath’, ‘Ya’, ‘M’ connote life, food and sun respectively. It is Sathya that satiates hunger, gives strength to the body and in fact safeguards and sustains the whole world. This is what I mean when I say that the creation emerges from truth and merges into truth. This is the inner significance of the word Sathya.

This can be interpreted in a different way also. If you read the three syllables ‘Sa’, ‘Tha’, ‘Ya’ in reverse order, it becomes ‘Ya’, ‘Tha’, ‘Sa’. It means that when one adheres to Yama and Niyama (restraints and observances) and performs Thapa (penance), one attains Sakshatkara, i.e., the vision of God who is the Embodiment of Truth. Truth is God. Where is Truth? It is all-pervasive. It encompasses the entire creation. *Trikalabadhyam Sathyam* (Truth remains changeless in all the three periods of time – past, present and future). Truth is the power of penance which enables one to have the vision of God. *Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma* (Brahman is the embodiment of truth, wisdom and eternity). Truth is wisdom. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (Experience of non-dualism is wisdom). Truth is one, not two. Wisdom is the means of attaining truth. Wisdom is infinite. It is not mere information available in books. It is limitless. It has neither a beginning nor an end. Truth cannot be attained without wisdom. In reality, truth is wisdom and wisdom is truth. Truth is the essence of the Vedas. Truth is the source of the Vedas. It is in fact the very form of the Vedas. Truth is the foundation of all that exists in the world. If there is no truth, there can be no world. In this manner, if you enquire deeply, you will realise that truth has a number of interpretations.

Sages and saints of yore considered truth as their very life-breath. They renounced the world, went to secluded forests and did severe penance to know the real nature of truth. Sath is sacred power. It is the very expression of Brahman. A deep enquiry reveals that Sath is the fundamental basis of life. Without Sath, Chit (consciousness) cannot exist. Chit functions on the basis of Sath. Sath is positive and Chit is negative. When Sath combines with Chit, what results is Ananda (bliss). Sath can also be compared to sugar and Chit, to water. When you add sugar to water, you get syrup. Likewise, Sath and Chit together give bliss. Where is God? In what form does He exist? Just as sugar is present in every drop of syrup, God pervades the entire creation. Sugar and syrup are inseparable.

The same can be said of milk and butter. Similarly, God and the universe are inseparable. Our ancient sages realised this truth by performing intense penance.

### **Vision of the Supreme Being**

Once a congregation of sages was held to discuss the principle of Divinity. Some of them said that they could not have the vision of God in spite of performing intense penance and undertaking severe austerities. Then a sage by name Sathya Swarupa came forward and declared, *Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of the sun and who is beyond Thamasa - the darkness of ignorance). He said, "Divinity cannot be explained in words." The sages questioned him, "Where did you see the Supreme Being? Did you see Him during the day or at night? Was it in the waking state or in Turiya state or in meditation?" They kept on questioning him in this manner. Then the sage replied, "Divinity transcends time and space. It is not limited to any form. It is ageless; it is beyond the duality of day and night. In the waking state, we see with our physical eyes. Such physical eyes are not confined to human beings only. Most living beings like animals and birds and even worms and insects possess this faculty. Physical eyes can see only physical objects. There is nothing so great about it. But it is the eyes of wisdom alone that can reveal the subtle internal form. Therefore, Divinity can be seen irrespective of place, time or circumstances. Why wait, right now you turn your attention inward and concentrate on that Effulgent Being." Saying this, he touched the centre of their eyebrows with his thumb, and at once they had the vision of the Supreme Being. In a state of supreme bliss, they also started chanting *Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham...* They asserted to the assembly of saints, scholars and common people that they also had the vision of that Effulgent Being, a being of the effulgence of the sun. The vision of the Effulgent Being is not confined to any particular place; a deserving person finds it everywhere. That is why it is said, *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). He is omnipresent and the embodiment of bliss.

### **Develop Yearning for the Self**

What is bliss and what is its nature? Bliss is divine in nature. Its origin is in truth. The sages were taught in this manner by direct perception. After all this happened, they enquired from the sage as to who he was. "*Thamasa Parasthath* (the one beyond darkness)", he replied. Wherefrom does darkness come? It comes from light; it is a product of light. The effulgent divine truth is embedded in the darkness of the objective world. This divine truth sees everything but is not seen by anybody. This is the reality that we have to know today. Everything that you see in the objective world is actually a reflection only. That is why the sage said, "*Adityavarnam Thamasa Parasthath* (the brightness of the sun beyond the darkness). It is not possible to conceive of light without darkness. This unity has to be understood. Good and evil are inseparable. One cannot appreciate goodness without the existence of evil, and evil cannot be judged but against the background of goodness. It is not possible for you to know me. All that you see is my form."

But when the sages persisted with their prayer, Sathya Swarupa revealed that the entire universe was his form. *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (The Cosmic Being has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). How can one visualise with ordinary eyes such a cosmic form? There is Chaitanya (consciousness) in each of these forms but you

are not able to see it. The Chaitanya in all these forms is one and indivisible. It is rather difficult to understand this spiritual principle. To understand the principle of truth and to visualise the blissful form of Divinity hidden in this objective world is true spirituality. But few are making any effort in this direction. People sit for meditation, close their eyes and start imagining a particular form. But these forms are only reflections and not the reality. One should go beyond reaction, reflection and resound and visualise the reality. For example, now I am speaking to you. Where does the sound emanate from? You say, it is from the mouth. But, in fact, the sound emanates from the navel. That is the reality. Reaction, reflection and resound are concealing the reality. In order to visualise the reality, you should give up Dehabhimana (body attachment) and develop Atmabhimana (yearning for the Self).

Today people have no regard for truth. Many people do not really mean what they speak. They have something in their mind but say just the opposite. They manipulate their words according to the person and situation. Truth is that which does not change with time. Truth is changeless in past, present and future. Truth is one, not two. The Upanishads extol the principle of truth in many ways. Truth cannot be described in words. Bliss is its form. When you close your eyes and start contemplating on truth, you will experience inexpressible bliss. Unknowingly, you start smiling. Where has this smile come from? It has come from your feelings of bliss. And what is the source of bliss? The source of bliss is God. The happiness you get by your union with God is eternal. *Happiness is union with God.* When you are dual-minded, you cannot experience this happiness.

Worldly happiness is transient. Such happiness is no happiness at all. You might have noticed, I am always blissful and ever smiling. Did you ever see Me putting on a 'castor-oil face'? Never. What is the source of My happiness? It comes from within. Some people are very temperamental. They are cheerful one moment and sorrowful the very next moment. One should always be cool and composed. Bliss is something that does not change. It cannot be acquired. It manifests from within when we understand the Upanishadic teachings and put them into practice.

### **God always Protects His Devotees**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Once during their exile, the Pandavas were walking through a forest. There 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. Responding to Draupadi's wish, Arjuna brought the fruit down by shooting an arrow. He then tried to lift the fruit but could not; it was very heavy. Dharmaraja and Draupadi gave a helping hand but even the three of them together could not lift the fruit. Meanwhile, Bhima, Nakula, and Sahadeva arrived on the spot. Bhima saw the fruit and remarked, "Are so many people required to lift a single fruit? It is rather surprising that my younger brother Arjuna, who can lift the Gandiva (Arjuna's bow), is unable to lift this small fruit." He tried at first quite casually, using just one hand; but the fruit would not budge. He then became serious and used both his hands but failed. All the six then tried to lift the fruit but still they could not succeed.

Now there is a story behind this unusual fruit. In that forest, there lived a Rishi named Roma – meaning the one with long hair. His hair had spread all over the place. It was he who had nursed this tree doing intense penance to attain the fruit. This fruit was known as Amrutaphala, by eating which one would be free from the cycle of birth and death. That was the reason why Roma Rishi was keen on having it. As the Pandavas were trying

desperately to lift the fruit, the Rishi felt the disturbance as strands of his hair were being trodden upon and pulled. He realised that there was someone trying to steal the fruit and he became very angry. His long sprawling hair then started extending in search of the Pandavas in order to tie them down. Draupadi was frightened by the approaching coils of hair. She prayed, "Oh Krishna! You have been protecting us all along. You must come to our rescue once more. We have no refuge other than You."

In response to her prayer, Krishna appeared there, smiling as usual. He came up with a plan that would save the Pandavas from the wrath of Roma Rishi. He said, "If you want to be saved, you have to implicitly obey My command." Then Dharmaraja said, "Krishna! Did we ever disobey Your command? We are prepared to do whatever You say." Then Krishna said, "Dharmaraja! There is not much time to lose now. You cannot remain here any longer. All of you go to Roma Rishi's Ashram at once. I will come there after five minutes. Whatever happens there, remain tight-lipped. Be careful and remain silent throughout."

Roma Rishi was very angry and was about to curse the Pandavas. At that very moment, Krishna entered the Ashram of the Rishi. Roma Rishi hastened to welcome Krishna. He fell at His Feet and said, "Lord, how lucky and fortunate I am to have You in my humble abode!" The sage was bubbling with joy. The Pandavas were there in the hermitage in accordance with Krishna's masterplan but Krishna ignored them. He was busy conversing with the sage; He pretended as though He had just then noticed the arrival of the Pandavas. God's attention is always fixed on His devotees. As soon as Krishna noticed the Pandavas, He started prostrating most reverentially before them one by one. He even fell at the feet of Draupadi. The Pandavas were feeling very embarrassed but remembering Krishna's command, they said nothing. The Rishi was stunned to see all this. He thought to himself: "Krishna is the incarnation of God, and He is prostrating before these people. These people must be even greater than Him!" So, following Krishna's example, he too fell at the feet of the Pandavas. As he saluted them, the Rishi's anger quickly vanished.

The drama was enacted by Krishna to annihilate the anger of the Rishi and to protect the Pandavas. Then there was no scope left for him to pronounce a curse on the Pandavas. 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, "Oh noble one, I dwell in the hearts 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. Offering the fruit to the Pandavas, he said, "Please take this fruit; now I do not need it." Draupadi sliced the fruit and offered a piece to Krishna. Then Krishna said, "Are you not aware that I do not eat fruits?" Then Draupadi prayed to Krishna to at least touch the fruit with His Divine Hands so that they could have it as Prasadam. Women are endowed with such devotion. It is because of them that men take to the path of valour and devotion. Moved by Krishna's love for His devotees, Roma Rishi was shedding tears of joy. Krishna told the sage that his life had found fulfilment. He then placed His hand on the sage's head and he merged in Krishna. Seeing this, the Pandavas too prayed for merger. They said, "Krishna, we have no more desires. We have experienced everything in life. Please grant us liberation too." Then



Krishna said, “Your part in this drama of life is not yet over. You have many more things to achieve.” A drama consists of many scenes. An actor cannot ask the director to relieve him at the end of the first scene. He cannot leave till the whole play is over. Krishna told the Pandavas, “There is a lot more to be achieved in this drama of life. You have to set an ideal to the world. Dharma has to be established. How can you leave the world without accomplishing your assigned task? Every human is born to understand and experience truth. What is the use of your human birth if you do not achieve this? Play your roles to perfection in this drama of life.” Saying so, Krishna vanished from there. After experiencing the Divinity of Krishna in this way, Dharmaraja advised his brothers to follow the teachings of Krishna implicitly.

### **Divinity is beyond all Descriptions**

When Krishna killed Kamsa, many wicked kings wanted to take revenge on Him. They made several attempts to capture Krishna and harassed the Yadavas time and again. The Yadavas then prayed to Krishna to come to their rescue. Krishna told them, “Tonight, you sleep in Repalle and tomorrow morning, see for yourself where you will be.” When they woke up the next morning, they found themselves in Dwaraka. The mere Will of Krishna transported them along with all their belongings to Dwaraka. In this manner, Krishna performed many stupendous feats. The Divinity of Krishna cannot be described in words.

After the Mahabharata war, Arjuna went to Dwaraka to see Krishna. He did not return for a long time. Mother Kunti became anxious and worried. At last, Arjuna arrived and conveyed the shocking news that Krishna had left for His Divine abode. On hearing this, Kunti at once left her mortal coil. She kept her head on the lap of Dharmaraja and breathed her last. After these tragic events, the Pandavas decided to coronate Parikshit as the king and go to the Himalayas to end their life.

Immediately after Parikshit’s coronation, Dharmaraja started walking in the northern direction. Draupadi and the four brothers followed him one behind the other. They were not conversing with each other. They did not even look at each other. Draupadi, Sahadeva, Nakula, Arjuna and Bhima fell down dead one after the other. But Dharmaraja was unperturbed. He continued his journey. He was one who adhered to the path of truth strictly. He reached Yamaloka (the abode of the Lord of Death). Dharmaraja was moved by the pitiable cries of the beings undergoing punishment. As soon as Dharmaraja entered Yamaloka, all those beings were relieved of their sufferings. They said, “Dharmaraja! Your presence has relieved us of our suffering. Hence, please remain here.” Meanwhile, the messengers of heaven wanted to take Dharmaraja along with them. But Dharmaraja wanted to remain in Yamaloka and serve the beings there. Such were his noble feelings. Nobility was in fact his life-breath. However, during the Mahabharata war, he uttered, *Aswatthama Hatha Kunjara* (an elephant by name Aswatthama killed). While saying so, he intentionally uttered the word Kunjara (elephant) in a very low tone. Consequently, Dronacharya though this son Aswatthama was killed, and he too gave up his life. As a result of this sin, Dharmaraja had to spend some time in Yamaloka. After this, Yama Dharmaraja extolled the virtues of Dharmaraja and sent him to heaven. Today nobody realises the greatness of Sathya and Dharma. Whoever follows the path of Sathya and Dharma will never be put to suffering.

*Students!*

Sometimes, you may be tempted to utter falsehood. But never tell a lie even if you have to sacrifice your life. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (There is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Hence, follow the path of truth and revive the ancient glory of Bharat. Distance yourself from untruth, unrighteousness and injustice. Sage Yajnavalkya performed intense penance to know the nature of truth. Ultimately, he experienced eternal bliss and attained the Divine. So, by adhering to truth, you can achieve anything. Truth can transform earth into heaven and heaven into earth. Hence, consider truth as your very life-breath and experience bliss therefrom. This is the education you are supposed to acquire. Always speak truth; never be afraid of the difficulties you may have to face by speaking truth.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma ...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 14th October 2002.**

## **GANESH CHATURTHI AND ONAM FESTIVALS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

Solemnity and piety marked the celebrations of Ganesh Chaturthi festival at Prasanthi Nilayam. The celebrations started on the Ganesh Chaturthi day on 31st August 2003 and concluded with the immersion ceremony on 4th September 2003. On 31st August 2003, the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall felt blessed when Bhagavan Baba came to the Hall to grant the bliss of His Divine Darshan to them at 4.30 p.m. Bhagavan was welcomed by the chanting of Sai Gayatri by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. After this, Bhajans led by the Institute students were sung in chorus by all the devotees. The programme came to a close at 5.30 p.m. with Arati and distribution of Prasadam.

The idols of Lord Ganesh which were propitiated by sacred rituals and worship for three days were brought to Sai Kulwant Hall in a grand procession by various groups, viz., school students, Institute students, hospital staff, airport staff, etc. The idols of different designs on vehicles of various shapes demonstrated the innovative skill of the participants. The idols brought by various groups started arriving in Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.25 p.m. As the organisers neatly lined them up to facilitate their view to the devotees, the students started chanting Stotras in praise of Lord Ganesh and Lord Sai. Bhagavan Baba came to the Hall at 3.50 p.m. Sweet notes of Nadaswaram played by the students of the Institute welcomed Bhagavan on His arrival in the Hall. Bhagavan blessed all the groups of participants as they lined up along the passage. Chanting of Stotras and Bhajans continued as Bhagavan showered the bliss of His Darshan to the students and devotees. The programme came to a close at 4.05 p.m. with Arati and distribution of Prasadam.

### **Onam Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Onam celebrations spread over three days started on 6th September 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall. The Hall was beautifully decorated with flowers and leaves in the traditional Kerala style. Colourful umbrellas, cloth hangings and banners gave it a festive look. Another unique attraction was the traditional Kerala Panchavadyam music which was played on all the three days of the festivities.

A mammoth gathering of devotees thronged Prasanthi Nilayam from Kerala and other parts of India to celebrate this holy festival in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The devotees were blessed by the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan on 6th September itself when Bhagavan came to the Hall at 4.15 p.m. Kerala devotees were overjoyed to receive Bhagavan's blessings at the very start of the celebrations. A presentation of devotional music was made in the evening by the noted singer Sri T.S. Radhakrishnan. The devotees had Bhagavan's Darshan on 7th September morning also when Bhagavan came to the Hall to shower His blessings on the devotees. Another programme of devotional music was presented on the evening of 7th September by the famous playback singer Smt. Radhika Tilak who enthralled the audience in her mellifluous voice. Bhagavan blessed her when He came to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the devotees at 4.20 p.m. On the day of Onam festival, 8th September 2003, Kerala devotees presented a magnificent programme of devotional music in the morning in Sai Kulwant Hall. Bhagavan showered the bliss of His Darshan on the devotees and received Arati offered by the Kerala devotees. The morning programme concluded after Bhagavan's departure to His abode in Poornachandra at 9.00 a.m. Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees in the end. On the afternoon of 8th September 2003, Bhagavan Baba came to the Hall at 3.30 p.m. As soon as Bhagavan was seated on the dais, the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music, Prasanthi Nilayam made an excellent presentation of classical vocal music. Those who presented this programme were Sri Hari Rag Nandan S., Sri Ajit Prasad R., Sri Ananth R. and Sri P.S. Sreenivasan, all diploma (vocal) class students of the college. They were accompanied by Sri J. Sai Dath on Mridangam and Sri Shankar T.K. on violin. This was followed by devotional songs presented by the renowned singers Sri K. Sreekumar and Sri T.S. Radhakrishnan. Bhagavan Baba sat through the two presentations to encourage and bless the artistes, and to shower the bliss of His Darshan on devotees. The day's programme concluded with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

Another spectacular feature of Onam celebrations this year was a medical camp organised by the Sai Organisation of Kerala on 6th and 7th September 2003. In this camp, 90 doctors and 38 para- medical staff took part. They went in batches to 20 centralised camps to cover 150 villages of Anantapur Taluka and rendered free medical check-up and distributed medicines to nearly 1400 villagers.

#### **NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Mahaboobnagar District Sai Organisation has built 27 houses each costing about Rs. 30,000 in different parts of the district under Deenajanoddharana Pathakam. These were handed over to selected beneficiaries between 9th and 13th August 2003 along with cooking vessels, new clothes and food provisions sufficient for a month. Besides, monthly food provisions were distributed to 108 families and school uniforms to 80 students at Mahaboobnagar on 9th August 2003. Sri Sathya Sai Bus Shelter at Turakalapally gate cross, Sri Sathya Sai Rural Service Centre at Medpur, Sri Sathya Sai Nitya Anna Dana Seva Kendram and Sri Sathya Sai Prayer Hall at Kalawakurthy were inaugurated by the All India President on 10th August 2003. Sri Sathya Sai Youth Seva Dal District Conference was held at Kalawakurthy on 10th August 2003 in which 1346 youth and Seva Dal members, both men and women, took part. The district organised a veterinary camp in which 452 animals were treated. It distributed Saris and Dhotis to 27 people in Lingamdhana village, laid foundation stone

for Sri Sathya Sai Community Hall at Kalwakole village, distributed blankets to 78 people, sewing machines to two needy persons and honoured 12 Vedic Pandits at Kollapur on 11th August 2003.

Sai Organisation of Srikakulam district distributed 10 kg rice to 186 needy families and provided pension of Rs 50 per month to 21 deserving old persons. Exclusive Mahila Medical Camp was conducted on 19th August 2003 by Srikakulam Mahila Vibhag in Muddada village treating 225 female patients.

Guntur District Sai Organisation distributed new clothes to 80 poor people, both men and women on 10th August 2003 after completing 80 days Narayana Seva to selected 80 poor people. This district gave one tricycle to a poor girl student and blankets to 40 old people on 19th August 2003. It conducted a free medical camp in Modukuru village on 30th August 2003, treated 957 patients of different ailments and distributed free medicines.

Prakasam District Sai Youth constructed a shed and handed it over to a poor family to run “Sri Sathya Sai Tiffin Centre” to enable them to eke out their livelihood. The necessary tables, benches, utensils and provisions for a week were also provided to start the hotel.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** After a long wait, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi made its debut at Agartala, the capital of Tripura State, when Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations were held at the beautifully decorated ONGC Auditorium, displaying banners with Bhagavan’s teachings. The highlights of the function were Gita Recitation Contest, a cultural function presented by small children and a talk on the Divinity of Lord Krishna.

A vast area on the north bank of Brahmaputra near Guwahati witnessed great havoc due to surging flood waters. Villages were abandoned and relief camps were set up for the affected people. A group of Seva Dal volunteers from the Guwahati Samithi arranged a relief camp at Barua Bari ME School near Hajo on 17th August 2003 and distributed essential items like rice, pulses, salt, washing soap, biscuits and clothes to about 500 affected men, women and children.

Tezpur Sai Samithi of Sonitpur District organised a Bal Vikas Gurus’ training camp and an awareness programme at Tezpur on 31st August 2003. Enthusiastic active workers including youth, both male and female, of the district participated in the training camp.

**Kerala:** Samithi level and district level functions were organised all over Kerala to honour teachers from different schools and colleges. Hundreds of teachers participated in these functions. A talk was given on Sai ideals for the teaching community. Sai literature on this topic was also presented to them. Our Bal Vikas children did Padapuja of the teachers.

Thousands of Onam Kits were distributed all over Kerala to needy families to help them celebrate Onam. Every year, the devotees leave for Puttaparthi to celebrate Onam in the Divine Presence only after the distribution of these kits. During the Onam celebrations, 100 members of Sai Lawyers Cell, 150 members of Sai Doctors Cell, 500 members of Sai Teachers Cell and 40 members of Sai Paramedical Cell came to Prasanthi Nilayam for Seva and Darshan. Everyday, there were evening sessions for them. Besides, 800 Bal Vikas children between the age of 12-15 years who had undergone a summer course also reached Prasanthi Nilayam to take part in Onam celebrations. To spread Sai Message among lawyers, a quarterly magazine entitled “Sai Neethi” was presented at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba during Onam celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Sai Annapoorneswari Project is being successfully conducted by the Kerala Sai Organisation. In Thiruvananthapuram district alone 975 kg rice is distributed every month benefiting 175 poor families.

**Rajasthan:** Door-to-door Narayan Seva to 61 families who are in distress is being continued in villages and slums by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithis of Padampur, Dholpur, Ajmer, Jaipur and Udaipur. Homeo medical camps are organised every month by Bhilwara Samithi in Kishnavaton Ki Kheri village involving village youth and covering 9 surrounding villages. Disaster Management training was organised on 9th and 10th August 2003 in Sri Sathya Sai College for Women, Jaipur where 42 youth from 8 centres were trained in rescue and relief operations for calamities like flood, fire, cyclone, landslide, etc. A seminar on Indian Culture and Spirituality was held on 13th September 2003 at Jaipur for college and school students in which 230 students took part. Talks on Indian Culture and Spirituality were presented by eminent Sai devotees from Delhi. Spiritually-oriented personality development training was imparted to higher secondary school students in rural schools around Jaipur city covering over 180 students.

**West Bengal:** The Youth of Darjeeling Sai Samithi started their third drinking water project at Phoobsering, Lebong in June 2003. Catchment tank, filtration tank and distribution tank are under construction in a village near Lebong to supply drinking water to 350 families in and around Phoobsering. 3.6 km long 2 inch pipes are being used to transport the water from the filtration tank to the distribution tank. 50 Sai Youth are actively participating in this project.

Doomuria, Talmatal and Dubrajpur villages near Jhargram, Midnapore (West) were having scarcity of drinking water for a long time. The Youth of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Jhargram bored a deep tube well in Doomuria village which has helped the villagers to overcome drinking water crisis.

After the successful completion of the 8 km-long motorable road named “Sai Marg” in Sanksay village, Darjeeling, Sai Youth have started constructing a 3 km- long road named “Sai Highway” in Sourani village, Sanksay, connecting this village with the main road. On an average, 30 Seva Dal youth are actively participating in this project on a weekly basis.

Sai Youth of Howrah motivated villagers to donate pieces of lands where they have started constructing two Sai Community Centres. All necessities like material and labour are being arranged by Sai Youth on their own. One centre is in Mansinghapur Village Samithi and the other centre in Mashilay village, Andul Samithi.

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th Disaster Management Training Camps were organised in the districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Burdwan in which 167, 75 and 90 youth took part respectively.

**Admission Notice**

With Bhagavan's Grace and Blessings

Sri Sathya Sai Trust (Delhi) is starting

**SRI SATHYA SAI MUSIC & CULTURAL SCHOOL**

at Block - A, Kalkaji Extn. Area, New Delhi – 110019.

The school will be offering classes in Vocal and Instrumental (Sitar, Casio, Violin, Mridangam, Tabla) Music & Dance (Kathak and Bharatnatyam) for GIRLS (12 years onward) and LADIES.

Classes will commence from 25th December 2003.  
Prospectus & Admission Form can be obtained from  
The Accounts Officer  
Sri Sathya Sai Music & Cultural School  
Block - A, Kalkaji Extn. Area, New Delhi – 110019  
after 15th October 2003.

KERALA YOUTH CAMP DISCOURSE: 13TH APRIL 2003

**SAI YOUTH SHOULD TREAD  
THE IDEAL PATH**

*We can see a smile dancing on each and every flower. We can experience love in the smile of the flower. How can then we cut the flowers and make a garland out of them by piercing them with a needle?*

(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love – Young Men and Women!*

Youth does not signify tender age or physical strength. It refers to those who have filled their heart with the six virtues of Utsaham (enthusiasm), Sahasam (courage), Dhairyam (fortitude), Bhakti (devotion), Shakti (strength), Parakramam (valour). A true youth is one who is endowed with these six virtues. These are the hallmarks of Sai Youth. It is unfortunate that modern youth have instead filled their heart with the six evil qualities of Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (infatuation), Mada (ego) and Matsarya (jealousy).

**The Youth are the Torch-bearers of Truth and Righteousness**

You should enquire what you have learnt after coming here. You see people with good as well as bad qualities. But youth should adhere to good thoughts and good actions only. They should live like brothers and sisters. They should get rid of all evil thoughts and bad qualities and fill their heart with noble feelings. They should acquire the education which can inculcate in them truthfulness, devotion, discipline and duty. These sacred qualities should manifest in the conduct of a student. Every human being is essentially divine. Humanity does not lack divinity. But due to the effect of Kali Age, man today is acquiring evil qualities instead of cultivating good thoughts and good behaviour. The youth should join good company, develop good conduct and do good deeds. But such ideal young men and women are rare in society today.

It is the youth who have to set ideals to the country. They are the torch-bearers of truth and righteousness. It is their responsibility to set ideals to their brothers and sisters and give joy to one and all. Youth is the most important stage of life. Let it not be wasted.

Help your fellowmen and foster sacred qualities in them. Encourage and exhort them to perform sacred deeds.

Wherever we see today, we find unrest and unrighteousness. How modern young men and women are behaving, the less said the better. Such being the state of affairs, it is the responsibility of Sai Youth to show the ideal path to others. Only then can the country make progress. Since ancient times, the land of Bharat has been propagating the principle of spirituality and thereby setting ideals to the entire world. Men and women of ancient India attained great name and fame by practising and propagating sacred divine principles. Unfortunately, in recent times, we do not find such idealism among men and women. It is only when the students develop devotion, steadfastness and humility can the country progress.

The need of the hour is Daiva Preethi, Papa Bheethi and Sangha Neethi (fear of sin, love for God and morality in society).

*Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God, humanness has declined in human beings. This is detrimental to universal peace. (Telugu Poem)*

Today Papa Bheethi (fear of sin) is on the decline. Instead, people have developed Papa Preethi (love for sin). Nobody understands what devotion actually means. Devotion signifies unselfish love for God. We have to foster Sangha Neethi (morality in society). True humanness lies in fostering morality and integrity. But such morality and integrity are not seen in society today. Morality and discipline are in fact the two main limbs of a human being.

Today science has advanced but humanness has declined. The advancement of science has led to creation of bombs and other weapons of warfare. What is the use of science if it is used only to create bombs which can cause untold destruction? Science should be utilised for the advancement of society. The universe is like a gigantic tree. Scientist is interested only in its branches. Saint, on the other hand, tries to find its roots. We have to find the roots; we should not be carried away by the external appearance. We have to focus our mind on God who is the fundamental basis of the universe. Where is God? Once Sage Narada approached Lord Vishnu with a request, "Swami! As You know, I go round the three worlds singing Your glory. I want to give You a report of all that I come across. Could You please give me Your permanent address?" Lord Vishnu replied, "Narada, I am present wherever My devotees sing My glory. Pilgrimage centres like Badrinath, Kedarnath, Amarnath, Tirupati are only My 'branch office' addresses. My permanent address is the heart of My devotees."

*Embodiments of Love!*

Wherever you go, wherever you study, whomsoever you meet, sow the seeds of sacred qualities in everyone. This is the purpose of holding this youth camp here. You should inculcate virtues, develop love and shine as ideal youth. People do not understand what true love is. Love is the life-breath of man. Love is the other name of God. *Love is God; live in Love.* There is love in you but you are diverting it to your friends and relatives. Love that exists between brothers, sisters, friends and relatives is worldly in nature. It is temporary like a passing cloud. It cannot be termed as true love. Only love for God is true and eternal. Once it enters your heart, it will remain with you forever.

Your love should be based on the principle of oneness. True love is heart to heart. Develop this sacred love and share it with others in society. You can be called a true human being only when you develop this sacred love. The principle of love is divine and

eternal. It can neither be understood nor can it be acquired by reading books. It comes from one's heart. It connects one heart with the other. When you develop such love, you carve out a divine path for the whole world.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Injustice, untruth and unrighteousness that prevail in the world today are beyond all description. Wherever you see, you find unrest and agitation. Talk to anyone; you will find him immersed in sorrow. What is the reason? Evil qualities and unrighteous conduct of man are responsible for this sorry state of affairs. You have to develop virtues and follow the righteous path if you want to enjoy peace and happiness. Develop faith in the Atmic principle. But, unfortunately, man today lacks faith.

Whether others respect you or not, you should respect others, for God is present in all. This is the first lesson you have to learn. I have often cited the example of Abraham Lincoln who became the President of America. He was born in a poor family. He could not afford even a proper dress for going to school. Due to this, his classmates once humiliated him. When he expressed his agony to his mother, she advised him that he should not show disrespect towards anybody even if others humiliate him. These words made a lasting impression on the tender heart of Lincoln. He acquired self-confidence and self-respect with the encouragement of his mother. Ultimately, he rose to the position of the President of America.

**Serve your Parents with Dedication**

Give respect and take respect. Mothers in those days taught such principles of self-respect to their children. There were many such noble mothers who brought up their children in an ideal manner in the face of all difficulties. Your parents undergo a lot of hardship to bring you up. You should always be grateful to them. An ungrateful person is worse than a beast.

During the war for the liberation of Rangoon, many people died due to bombing. A mother and her son somehow managed to reach Chennai having lost their near and dear ones. They had no shelter over their head nor any food to eat. They took shelter under a tree. The mother would go begging for alms from house to house, give most of it to her son and partake of whatever little was left. When she would not get enough, she would give the entire food to her son and would herself go without food. Consequently, she became weak day by day. One day the son, unable to see her suffering, told her, "Mother, from today, you take rest and I will fetch food for both of us." From that day, he would go begging for alms from house to house, give most of it to his mother and partake of whatever little was left. Sometimes, he would lie to his mother that he had already taken his food. Consequently, he too became very weak. The son had no strength to look after his mother nor did the mother have any strength to protect her son.

One day, he stood in front of the house of an officer and begged alms. The officer was relaxing in an easy chair in the verandah and was reading newspaper. He took pity on the boy, went inside and brought food on a leaf. He told him to sit and partake of it. But the boy said that he would take it home. The officer said, "I don't think you are really hungry, otherwise why you should take it home?" When the officer was uttering these harsh words, the boy felt giddy and fell down. The officer heard him utter the words, "First to my mother, to my mother..." in a faint voice. Saying so, he breathed his last. When this sad news reached the mother, she was immersed in grief. Unable to bear the grief of the tragic death of her dear son, the mother also breathed her last. Both the



mother and her son sacrificed their lives, each for the sake of the other. It is only because of such sacred beings that the world is able to sustain itself. If there are no good persons on the face of earth, how can the world keep going? The mother of this body Easwaramma was the embodiment of self-sacrifice. She had to put up with a lot of hardship to bring Me up.

Similarly, the mother of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar adhered to high ideals in spite of her poverty. Vidyasagar worked hard and passed his examinations with distinction. When he secured a good job, he fell at the feet of his mother and said, "Mother, it is only because of your blessings that I have attained this position today. Without you I have no existence. I have earned some money and wish to utilise it to serve you. Please tell me if you have any desires."

Vidyasagar's mother was as much concerned with the welfare of others as Mother Easwaramma. She told her son, "My dear, the people of our village are facing hardship due to lack of drinking water. I feel pained to see them trekking long distances to fetch water. I will be happy if you can get a well dug in our village." Vidyasagar immediately got a well dug and fulfilled his mother's desire. On some other day, Vidyasagar asked his mother if she had any more desires. She said, "Son, the children of our village are going to the neighbouring village to attend school. I am pained to see children walking such a long distance everyday. So, please construct a small school in our village." Accordingly, Vidyasagar established a school in the village.

After some time, she told him, "Son, you have provided water to the village and also established a school for children. But it is the lack of medical facilities in our village that is troubling my mind. Please build a small hospital here." As per her wish, he constructed a small hospital. His mother was overjoyed at this. She hugged him and said, "You have fulfilled all my desires. I am extremely happy that I have given birth to a noble son like you. There cannot be a greater happiness for a mother than this. Our entire lineage is redeemed because of you. Even if I die now, it does not matter. I am very happy. What is the use of having a hundred sons like the Kauravas? One good son like you is enough."

Gradually, his name and fame spread far and wide. As he was reputed for his oratorical skills, people would gather in large numbers to listen to his speeches. Once he was invited to deliver a speech in another town. An I.C.S. officer was also travelling by the same train in which he was travelling. Both of them got down at the same station. The officer started looking for a coolie to carry his suitcase. Seeing this, Vidyasagar volunteered to carry it. The officer handed over his suitcase to him. Vidyasagar was happy that he got an opportunity to serve. He asked him, "Sir, where should we go?" The officer replied, "Take me to the place where Vidyasagar is going to address a meeting today. I have come all the way to listen to him." Hearing this, Vidyasagar smiled and took him to the meeting place. The officer offered him some money but Vidyasagar politely refused, saying, "Sir, I have carried your suitcase only to help you, not for money." The meeting was about to commence. Everybody was eagerly waiting for Vidyasagar. As soon as Vidyasagar arrived, he was garlanded and given a grand welcome. The I.C.S. officer instantly recognised Vidyasagar as the one who had carried his suitcase. He repented and thought to himself, "Though he is highly educated, how simple and humble he is!" He approached Vidyasagar and begged his pardon. Vidyasagar replied, "Why should you seek pardon when you have not committed any mistake? I took the suitcase from you myself and carried it. Having been born in the sacred land of

Bharat, we should consider serving others a great pleasure and privilege.” Saying this, Vidyasagar himself thanked the officer for giving him an opportunity to serve.

### **Education should Make the Students Humble and Obedient**

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who served as the President of India, was an eminent educationist. For some time, he worked as a professor in the State of Mysore. He was very kind-hearted. He helped many a poor student during his stay there and attained good reputation. When he was transferred to Kolkata, his students wanted to express their gratitude to him. They went to his house, packed his belongings, put them in a horse carriage and requested him to be seated in it. Radhakrishnan was reluctant to do so but ultimately had to accede to their request. The students themselves pulled the Jutka (carriage) up to the railway station. The passersby were wonderstruck, watching this scene. They were talking among themselves, “He commands such respect from the students. Who is this great man?” One of the students told them, “We are poor students and he is our most respected teacher. He has spent his earnings on our education. We are expressing our gratitude in this manner.” They kept his luggage in the train, saluted the teacher and prayed, “Sir, you should come back to Mysore within a short period.” Radhakrishnan was moved by their humility and obedience.

In ancient times, students showed utmost respect and reverence towards their parents and teachers. Unfortunately, we do not find such student-teacher relationship today. Respect your teachers. Love and serve your parents. Make proper use of time, for time is God. That is why God is extolled as *Kaalaya Namah, Kaala Kaalaya Namah, Kaaladarpa Damanaya Namah, Kaalateetaya Namah, Kaalaswarupaya Namah, Kaalaniyamtaya Namah* (salutations to the time, to the one who is beyond time, to the one who has conquered time, to the one who transcends time, to the one who is the embodiment of time, and to the one who ordains time).

Even if you get a few minutes’ spare time, serve your fellowmen. Only then will your life be redeemed. You are not born merely to eat and sleep. You should participate in service activities. Share your food with the poor. If you do not perform acts of charity and follow the righteous path, your life is useless. Do not feel proud of your education. Remember, there are many in this world who are more educated than you.

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

(Telugu Poem)

Having acquired education, you should lead a respectful life without any trace of ego. Develop humility. When you come across your teachers, do not shout “Good Morning, Sir”, etc. Bend your head in humility and offer your Namaskar. It is your duty to express your gratitude to your teachers. Spend your earnings not merely for your selfish ends but also for the welfare of the poor. Be grateful to those who give you an opportunity to serve. Remember, there is no Sadhana higher than service. You should become role models for the educated. In many villages, people are living in miserable conditions. Go to them and find out their needs. Try to meet their requirements. Conduct yourself in a manner that people remember you forever for your nobility and service. Look after your parents well. Help the people of your village in whatever way you can.

### **Swami Keeps His Promise**

I want to tell you something about My student days. I had to face a lot of hardship during My childhood. I need no education, for I know the essence of education. Yet I went to school in order to demonstrate an ideal to others. Everyday I would walk from Puttaparthi to Bukkapatnam to attend the school. In our school, there were some boys hailing from rich families. They used to bring tiffin carriers filled with rice and various types of curries. I did not have a tiffin carrier. I would bundle Ragi Sankati in a small piece of cloth and take it with Me for lunch. Seeing this, Griham Ammayi (Mother Easwaramma) would shed tears saying, “Son, I feel miserable for not being able to provide proper food for You.” I would console her saying, “Mother, how does it matter whether one eats rice or gruel in order to satiate one’s hunger? We have to be contented with whatever we have. Do not be worried about My food.” She looked after Me with great love and concern.

In Puttaparthi village, there was a thatched hut in place of Old Mandir where I used to stay. One night some rowdies set it on fire while I was inside. Seeing the hut engulfed in flames, Subbamma and Easwaramma came running anxiously and started calling ‘Swami, Swami.’ I told them, “Do not panic. I am absolutely fine.” Within a minute, there was a heavy downpour. It rained only on the hut and nowhere else. When I came out, they asked Me, “Swami, how could You remain inside the hut perfectly calm and composed when the hut was burning?” I told them, “That is where exactly I am supposed to be present. I, being the embodiment of happiness, should be present where there are difficulties. Pleasure and pain coexist. They cannot be separated. In this world, good people are bound to face troubles. But they should remain unruffled.”

In those days, Griham Ammayi was concerned to see many eminent persons coming to Swami. She feared that they might take Swami away to their own place. She was also worried about the politics in the village. She said, “Swami, the situation is not good. People are quarrelling in the name of political parties and many other issues.” I assured her that I had nothing to do with politics and it could not come in My way. One day the Maharani of Mysore, Desraj Urs and a few others came to Puttaparthi by car. They stopped the car at Karnatanagepalli and came to Me. Easwaramma said, “Swami, these rich people may request you to come with them. They have come in a car. Please do not go with them.” I told her, “They may have a car. We have two legs to walk. They may live in big mansions. We have a shelter over head. It is enough. We are happy with what we have. I will not go with them. Do not worry about it.” But she wanted a promise from Me. She said, “Swami, You should give me one promise.” I asked, “What promise?” “First give me the word, then I will tell You,” said Easwaramma. She was very determined to extract a promise from Me. She had great love and concern for Me. I said, “All right, what do you want? Tell Me.” She said, “You are God. I know it very well. You are going to attain great name and fame. But you should not leave Puttaparthi under any circumstances. You should remain here so long as You are in this body.” I told her, “I can’t say that I will always be at Puttaparthi. But I can promise one thing. I will not go over to reside at any place except Puttaparthi.” As I made this promise, She became very happy. She immediately brought some buttermilk rice and put into My mouth. “Swami, today I am very happy that You won’t leave Puttaparthi. You may go to all places. You may go round the world. But You should come back to Puttaparthi always.”

Once she prayed that My name should be on her lips at the time of her death. When she passed away here in May 1972, Summer Classes were in progress. She was hale and

hearty. All of a sudden she called out, “Swami, Swami, Swami...” I replied, “I am coming, I am coming ...” When I came down the stairs, she breathed her last. She had absolutely no pain whatsoever, neither was she suffering from any disease. She had a peaceful end.

The father of this body was very hard working. He had no big business. Whenever he had some money with him, he would purchase coconuts for devotees. Everyday he would go to Bukkapatnam for purchasing provisions. I am narrating all this only to give you an example how parents work hard for the sake of their children. It is the primary duty of children to help their parents. One day many devotees were sitting in the verandah. They were about to be called inside for interview. Pedda Venkama Raju (father of this body) came and requested, “Swami ... Swami ... Please give me two minutes time.” “First let Me talk to these devotees, then I will talk to you,” I said. But he wanted to talk to Me urgently. I knew what was going to happen. So, I called him in. He said, “Swami, I have undergone many hardships in life. I worked hard, sold coconuts, vegetables and saved a few rupees. Here is the money. After I die, please feed the poor on the 12th day. I have also kept aside three bags of rice and one bag of jaggery for this purpose.” “Don’t worry about it. I will do it. I don’t require your money. Keep it with you,” I said. Father replied, “You will do it, I know that very well. But I have to spend the money that I have earned. I should not leave behind any debt. Change this money into coins and throw them over my body when it is taken for cremation.” I told him, “You are quite healthy. Why do you think of death now?” He had no pain nor was there any disease. He went home, drank some water and passed away peacefully.

The grandfather of this body Kondama Raju was a great devotee. He lived for 112 years. Every morning, he would walk from the village to the New Mandir to have My Darshan. One day he asked Me, “Swami, please tell Me when I would die.” I said, “Why do you talk of death now? You are quite healthy. When the time comes, I will see.” He said, “Swami, our lineage is sanctified by Your Advent. Your glory has spread all over the world. My only desire is that You should pour water into my mouth when I breathe my last. King Dasaratha was not fortunate to drink water from Lord Rama’s Divine Hands at the time of his death. Today the same Lord Rama has incarnated as Sai Rama. Hence, I pray to You to grant me my last wish.” I said, “All right, we will see.” One day, early in the morning he came to the Mandir and had My Darshan. He returned home and lay down. After a while, he told Easwaramma to go and see near Sathyabhama Temple whether Swami was coming. She told him, “Yes, Swami is coming in His car.” Swami had a small car then. Swami would drive that car not only in the village but even up to Chennai. People would be wonderstruck to see the speed with which Swami drove the car.

Kondama Raju said, “Easwaramma, get a tumbler of water and put a Tulasi leaf in it.” She did accordingly. He held the tumbler in his hand and was waiting for Me. He knew that his end was near and that I had come there to keep My promise. Nobody else knew this. Holding the tumbler, he said, “Swami, I am ready.” “I am also ready,” I replied. As I poured water into his mouth, he gave up his life peacefully. Before passing away, he said, “What a great fortune it is to drink water from Your Divine Hands before departing from this world! Even King Dasaratha, who performed great penance and sacrifice, did not have such a fortune. My life is redeemed.” Saying this, he closed his eyes.

**Spend Every Moment of your Life in Contemplation of God**

The elders of the family had such peaceful death. They had filled their hearts with sacred feelings. Sacred feelings will earn sacred rewards. When you are good, the results are bound to be good. Hence, always contemplate on the Divine. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (Think of God at all times and at all places). Never forget God. At the appropriate time, He will shower His grace on you.

I would like to tell you about Karanam Subbamma before I conclude My Discourse. She was a woman of great merit. After I came back from Uravakonda, many people from nearby villages were coming to see Me. Subbamma would say, “Swami, I have no children. I consider service to devotees as service to God. Hence, please permit me to feed all those who come here to see You. You too should stay in my house.” I granted her prayer. She would cook food and feed all devotees. One day she said, “Swami, I am extremely grateful to You for giving me an opportunity to serve You and the devotees all these years. My life is redeemed because I had the good fortune of cooking food for You. My only desire is that You put water into my mouth at the time of my death.” I promised that I would.

Once I had to go to Chennai on some urgent work. In the meantime, Subbamma passed away. As I was returning from Chennai, I noticed many people at the cremation ground. I asked one of them, what the matter was. “Swami, Subbamma has passed away. We are making arrangements for her cremation,” came the reply. I at once turned the car and went to the house at Bukkapatnam where her body was kept. Her mother and sisters started crying loudly on seeing Me. They complained, “Swami, all these years she served You. She had only one desire. She waited with great hope that You would give water to her before her death. But she died without her wish being fulfilled. Did she not deserve at least this much for all the service she rendered to You over the years?” They were praising Me and at the same time complaining that I had not kept My promise. I told them to keep quiet, saying, Subbamma was still alive. But in reality, she was no more. Ants were crawling into the eyes and nose as there was no life in the body. I said, “I always keep My promise. Having given My word, I will not deviate from it.” I went near Subbamma’s body and called her name, “Subbamma ... Subbamma ...” She immediately opened her eyes. (*loud applause*) People around could not believe their eyes. “Subbamma has come back to life,” they shouted. But actually she did not come alive. She returned to her body for My sake. I had made a promise, so she came back. Seeing this, her sisters were very happy. I wiped her face to remove the ants with My handkerchief, and poured water into her mouth. She looked up at Swami’s face, shed tears of joy and gave up her life. She attained Sadgathi (salvation). Once I give My word, I will never forget it. I always keep My promise. Many people do not believe this. They think, “Swami is saying all this only to please us.” But believe Me, My word will never be false. Whatever I say, I will certainly do it.

*Embodiments of Love!*

If you want to attain fulfilment in life, spend your time in the contemplation of God till your last breath. Swami will certainly give you Darshan wherever you are. The lives of Karanam Subbamma and the parents of this body bear ample testimony to this. Every year on Easwaramma Day, I used to visit the Samadhi of My parents. But nowadays as the crowd has increased, it is not possible to go there. Hence, I send clothes to be placed on their Samadhi. I have kept My promise all along.

I am Sathya Sai and I shall always adhere to Sathya (truth). Understand this truth. You will get what you deserve. The people of Kerala are very fortunate. This is the first time that a group of such good students and youth has come here.

*Students - Boys and Girls!*

You should become ideal citizens and earn good reputation. I do not want anything from you. You should express your gratitude to your parents and make them happy. That is what I expect from you. I am happy when your parents are happy. I bless you all and wish that all of you should grow up as ideal men and women. Thus, I conclude My Discourse.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with the Bhajan “*Hari Bhajan Bina...*” and declared: Every year, the youth and students of Kerala can come here with their brothers and sisters.

**- From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan (Whitefield), Bangalore on 13th April 2003.**

## **NOVEMBER 2003 – SPECIAL ISSUE**

### **EDITORIAL**

#### **GRAMA SEVA – A SILENT REVOLUTION**

WHEN BHAGAVAN BABA started Grama Seva in October 2000, nobody had the slightest idea that Bhagavan was ushering in a silent revolution to transform the life of rural masses, specially the underprivileged sections of rural population. During the last

four years, the staff and students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning have been carrying Bhagavan's Prasadam at the doorstep of villagers. These worthy messengers of Bhagavan not only carry with them food packets and clothes for the village people, they also carry the Prasadam of Bhagavan's Divine Name and Love as also His Message of spiritual awakening to the villagers. This has had a tremendous impact. It is only seen to be believed how this simple act of Bhagavan has sown the seeds of love in millions of hearts.

In a short period of four years, Grama Seva has already become a movement of village uplift and reconstruction. A glimpse of how the youth of the country are coming forward to make it a crowning success was recently witnessed at Prasanthi Nilayam when 8,000 youth from all the 23 districts of Andhra Pradesh came to seek Bhagavan's blessings and guidance after providing succour and support to 5,000 families in 80 villages. Bhagavan showered His blessings on them and assured them all support. The youth reaffirmed their determination to make every village an ideal village vibrating with Divine Name in an environment of love, unity and harmony. Sai Organisations of many other States have also adopted several villages to bring about a qualitative change in the life of our rural masses, particularly the deprived sections of society who have remained neglected even after 50 years of our Independence. Let us hope and pray that with the blessings of Bhagavan every village becomes an ideal village. Glory of our villages is the glory of Bharat as Bharat lives in villages.

Bhagavan says, "Service is the highest Sadhana, for God Himself takes human form and comes down to serve mankind and lead it to the ideals it has ignored. Therefore, consider how delighted God will be when man serves man!" When man serves his fellowmen with the realisation that God is the indweller of all beings, then Manava Seva becomes Madhava Seva and Grama Seva, Rama Seva. Hence, Seva is for our own evolution and redemption. God's task does not wait for workers. The words of Swami Vivekananda who became a worthy instrument of his master Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa are very relevant to quote in this regard. He says, "The work of the Lord does not wait for the like of you or me. He can raise His workers from the dust by hundreds and by thousands. It is a glory and a privilege that we are allowed to work at all under Him."

Bhagavan's projects like Grama Seva provide a golden opportunity to man to redeem his life by becoming an instrument of His Divine Mission. As Sri Aurobindo says, "There are times when the Spirit walks amongst men, and even a little effort brings immense results." It is an opportunity to earn the grace of the Lord and also to rebuild our society on the firm foundations of love, justice, harmony and equality. The clarion call has come: Uthishta Jagrat Prapya Varannibodhat (Arise! Awake! Stop not till the goal is reached).

Editor

## **VIJAYA DASAMI MESSAGE**

### **DO NOT IDENTIFY GOD WITH FORM**

*The Vaishnavites say that Lord Vishnu is the greatest while the Saivites declare that Lord Siva is the greatest of all. People may speak on the basis of their feelings but in truth*

*there is only God and the rest are names.*

(Telugu Poem)

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

There is Divinity in Oneness

*Embodiments of Love!*

Navaratri festival is celebrated all over India but nobody seems to make any effort to comprehend the inner significance of this festival. The Hridaya (heart) is the abode of the Atma. No being can exist without the principle of the Atma. God, who resides in all as the principle of the Atma, has no specific name and form. But people attribute various names and forms to Him. The worshippers of Ganapati consider Lord Ganapati as great; the Saivites consider there is none superior to Lord Siva. The devotees of Sai consider Him to be the greatest. Some devotees say all are one. In fact, all names and forms belong to the same God. He responds to the prayers of devotees in whatever form they worship Him. Hence, each one considers the form he worships to be superior to the other forms. It is a sign of ignorance to consider one form superior to the other. What is important is that your prayer should not be confined to mere words. It should be translated into action. It is easy to speak but not so easy to practise. True prayer is that which is translated into action.

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

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

*Is there a place where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.* (Telugu Poem)

There is nothing like American truth, Russian truth, Indian truth, Japanese truth, etc. Truth is one and the same for all. It is uniformly present in everyone. True celebration of Navaratri festival lies in contemplating on Sathya Swarupa (Embodiment of Truth). Respect one and all, for the same Atmic principle is present in all. To respect all is verily to worship God. If you want to be respected, you should respect others in the first instance. Give respect and take respect. Understand that Ekatwam is Daivatwam (oneness is Divinity). The Vedas declare, Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti (truth is one but the wise refer to it by various names). You may call Him by any name and identify Him by any form but God is one. Everyone should treasure this principle of unity of Divinity in his heart. There is no truth greater than love.

### **Real Worship of the Divine Mother**

God is the embodiment of love. He is the eternal witness. He is present in everyone in the form of love. Share your love with others and receive their love in turn. Love is your greatest virtue. It is the ultimate joy and bliss. God resides in the heart filled with love.



Hence, it is essential that you should fill your heart with love. Where there is love, there is God. You don't need to search for Him. He is always in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. Adhere to the principle of love. Never hate anyone. Hatred is your worst enemy. Once you develop friendship with hatred, enmity towards others will grow in you more and more. If you develop love in you, enmity will naturally vanish. First develop love within yourself. Then you will get positive response from even your enemies. If you come across your bitter enemy, greet him with love. He too will reciprocate the same feeling. How can you expect love from others when you do not have any love for them? All are the embodiments of love. There are no differences whatsoever among human beings. Love is the principal feature of Sai's teachings. It is love and love alone that I practise and propagate. Try to understand the power of love. It is your greatest wealth. None can estimate its value. What does God expect from you? It is only your love. Love is the only offering that you can make to God for all that He has bestowed on you.

During Navaratri you worship Devi. There are nine paths of worshipping the Divine Mother. These paths of devotion are: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplation), Padasevanam (serving the Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). There is no path greater than these paths of devotion. God wants your love and nothing else. Therefore, let your love flow directly towards God. If you love others, you will be loved in turn. If you utter harsh words, they will come back to you as resound. Fill your heart with love and compassion. Hridaya is that which is filled with Daya (compassion). Compassion is the hallmark of a true devotee. One who lacks compassion cannot be called a human being. When you practise Sathya and Dharma, you will be successful in all your endeavours. That is why the Vedas teach: Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak truth, practise righteousness). Your heart should melt with compassion when you see the poor and needy.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Having spent this Navaratri in the worship of the Divine Mother, fill your heart with love and compassion. The heart bereft of love and compassion is verily a cemetery. Right from dawn to dusk, love should be the undercurrent of all your activities. The moment you get up from bed, resolve that you would tread the path of love. Only then can you have the vision of God who is the Embodiment of Love. Love is the very form of Brahman. True spiritual practice lies in connecting your love to this Embodiment of Love.

#### *Students – Boys and Girls!*

You should develop love more and more. A heart without love is worthless. It becomes hard like a stone. Even a heart which is hard like a stone will become soft like butter when love enters it. Swami always teaches the principle of love. If you utter 'Baba' even once with love from the depth of your heart, you will become deserving of His love. It will be futile if you utter it without love. Consider love as your life. Love should never be artificial; it should be 'heartful'. Develop friendship with all; talk to everyone with a smile on your face. Fill your heart with the sweetness of love. What is the use of talking sweetly if your heart is filled with bitterness? Only love can fill your heart with nectarine feelings.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

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

*Students - Boys and Girls!*

Love is divine. It is inherent in all of you. But you are changing it into worldly love. True love is related to the Atmic principle. Worldly love is bound to change with the passage of time, whereas love for God is permanent. Brahman is present in you in the form of love. You can recognise it in your breathing process. When you inhale, you make the sound 'So' and when you exhale 'Ham'; together 'Soham' means, 'I am That'. Love is uniformly present in all. It is the life principle of man. There can be no life without love. Devi is worshipped during Navaratri in all her nine forms in nine ways of Bhakti (devotion) like Sravanam, Kirtanam, etc. If you follow the path of devotion, you will have no differences whatsoever. All are one. Understand the unity, "You and I are one". You and I are not different from each other. Where there are differences, there is no love. Heart is one; it is changeless.

Your words may change but your heart remains the same. The Gopikas prayed to Krishna, "Oh Lord! We offer You the heart which You have given us. What else can we offer at Your Lotus Feet? We pray to You to accept it. (Telugu Poem) Heart is not your property; it belongs to God. There is nothing in this world that you can call as your own. You may consider the worldly wealth and materials as your property. But they are not permanent. Lord Krishna declared, Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam (as the world is temporary and full of misery, contemplate on Me constantly). Divine love alone is true and changeless. The mariner's compass always points towards northern direction; likewise your love should always be directed towards God. You cannot claim to belong to mankind unless there is kindness in you. Your life should be suffused with love and kindness. You should dedicate your life to love. You may wonder as to how to pray to God. In fact, you don't need to pray to God. You should let your love flow incessantly towards God. Then you will understand unity. You and I are one. There is no second entity. (loud applause)

### **Worship God as Atmaswarupa**

*Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

You are endowed with human body but you are not aware of its true nature. The body is made up of five elements. But you are not the body.

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

You say it is my head, my heart, etc., then who are you? When you engage in self enquiry in this manner, you will realise that you are different from the body. God pervades each Anga (limb) of your body in the form of Rasa (essence). Hence, He is extolled as Angirasaya Namah (salutations to the one who is immanent in the form of essence in all the limbs). God in the form of essence sustains and nourishes life. But He has no form. It is a mistake to confine God to a particular form. So long as you limit God to a form, you

cannot attain Him. You should realise that God is attributeless, formless and He is the very essence of life. Physical form is bound to change. A child becomes boy, a boy becomes a man who in turn becomes a grandfather. In this manner, your physical form undergoes change. But you will remain the same. You are the embodiment of God. Once you understand this truth, you will not be affected by physical changes.

Many of you have been worrying that Swami has not been keeping good health during the last few days. My health is very good, very good, very good. (loud applause) As you identify Swami with this physical frame, it appears as though Swami is not well. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). Do not identify Me with this physical body. I am not *Dehaswarupa* (body), I am *Dehi* (Indweller). There is no difference between you and Me. I have all powers in Me. But you are deluded by My physical form. Whatever I am doing is only to satisfy the doctors and other devotees. As a matter of fact, there is no trace of ill-health in Me. I am always healthy. Not only today, I will remain healthy till 96 years. I can do whatever I want. But those who go by the physical form think that Swami is ageing. Youth and old age are related to the body and not to Me. I am always the same. However, this body is yours. It has come for your sake. You can change it the way you like. If you think that Swami is strong and healthy, so He is. There is no weakness in Me. My *Angas* (limbs) may appear to be weak. But I am not *Angaswarupa*, I am *Atmaswarupa*. Worship God as *Atmaswarupa*. Do not identify Him with an *Akara* (form). Give up body attachment and develop *Atmic* consciousness. You will be able to visualise the *Atmaswarupa* only when you lead a spiritual life. Do not think about the *Akara*. Have faith that you are the embodiment of the *Atma*. Then you will always remain healthy.

### **Give up Body Attachment**

Realise that the *Atma* is your life. Everyone of you is endowed with divine energy. But you are misusing it. Your youth is in your hands. Your life-force is in your hands. You are not the body; you are the life-force. Body is meant to serve as an instrument in your quest for truth. The same *Atma* is present in all. Here you see a silver tumbler. There is water in it. The tumbler is the basis for water, and silver is the basis for tumbler. But Divinity is the basis for everything. Divinity does not comprise any material. Similarly, the *Atma* is not composed of any material. If you look at the *Atma* as material, it will appear to you as material. Hence, change your vision. Do not limit yourself to materials only. Realise that Swami is not bound by *Akara*; He is full of *Ananda* (bliss). Think of bliss and experience bliss. Some people are feeling that Swami has not given even a single Discourse during the last one week though many others have spoken. Of course, whatever I speak is love in verbal form. But remember whenever I move amidst the devotees, I am filled with immeasurable love, power and bliss. I am always full of bliss which I bestow on the devotees. Bliss is My form and bliss is My food. I need no other food. Give up body attachment to experience this bliss.

Rama and Lakshmana transcended body consciousness. When King Dasaratha was reluctant to send his sons with Sage Viswamitra, fearing danger from the demons, the sage counselled him, "Oh king, do not get deluded by seeing the physical form of your sons. They are not ordinary mortals. They are divine incarnations." But when they reached the banks of Sarayu, the sage was overcome with *Maya* and taught them the *Mantras* to conquer sleep and hunger as if they were ordinary humans. He told them, "My dear ones, you are coming with me for the protection of *Yajna*. In order to do so, you

have to remain without food and sleep and wage a fierce battle with the demons for extended periods without respite. Hence, I will teach you two Mantras which will make you free from hunger and sleep.” He further told them, “Do not identify yourself with the physical body. You are the embodiments of the Atma. You are Chaitanyaswarupas (embodiments of consciousness). You are endowed with divine power. Always bear this in mind. You will be free from hunger and sleep.”

After the protection of the Yajna, Rama and Lakshmana went to Mithila with the sage. They walked a long distance. Yet they were always cheerful and full of bliss. In fact, bliss was their form. You should also develop bliss more and more. Do not confine God to a physical form. I am not this body. Body is made up of food materials.

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

. (Telugu Poem)

It is a grave mistake to identify yourself with the body. Give up body attachment and develop Atmic consciousness. Only then will you understand and experience your true form, i.e., the Atma. Otherwise, even the smallest physical ailments like stomachache, headache, etc., will cause anxiety and suffering to you. Physical ailments are like passing clouds. So long as you are deluded by body attachment, you will be affected by them. Once you give up body attachment, you are no more bound by the body and its limitations. When you sit in meditation, you forget your body. Meditation means giving up Dehabhimana (body attachment) and developing Atmabhimana (Atmic consciousness). While referring to his self everyone uses the term 'I', the principle of the Atma. Hence, your true identification is the Self or Atma. Body is only an instrument. 'I' is your true identity. You may add any number of 'I's, their sum total will always remain 'I'. Such principle of unity is present in all. It is the same for you and Me. It has no difference whatsoever. In spite of all your education if you do not give up body attachment, then all your effort is an exercise in futility. I Myself demonstrate this Truth before you so that you can follow My example. Have firm faith that you are not the body. You are I. Never forget this truth. The physical form is bound to change.

*Embodiments of Love!*

True Devi Navaratri celebration lies in giving up Dehabhimana and developing Atmabhimana. You can see for yourself what a higher state you will attain once you give up body attachment. You consider yourself weak only due to your body attachment. Once you develop Atmic consciousness, all your weaknesses will vanish in a trice. Have firm faith that you are God. Today it is very necessary for man to develop divine consciousness.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina ...*”)

- **From Bhagavan's Vijaya Dasami Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 5th October 2003.**

## **DASARA CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

DEVI NAVARATRI and Dasara celebrations held at Prasanthi Nilayam from 27th September 2003 to 5th October 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba virtually inundated the hearts of devotees with divine bliss. Soul-elevating chants of Vedic hymns during these nine days in Sai Kulwant Hall and Poornachandra Auditorium along with the performance of Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna filled the entire milieu with divine vibrations. Another feature which added a new dimension to these celebrations this year was the soul-stirring musical presentations throughout these nine days of Devi Navaratri by the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music, Prasanthi Nilayam. The deliberations of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha and illuminating talks by erudite speakers during these nine days culminating in the grand finale of Veda Purusha Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Divine Discourse on 5th October 2003 were virtually a feast for the soul. Besides this Jnana Yajna, the Karma Yajna of Grama Seva was undertaken by the staff and students of Bhagavan's institutions this year also like the previous three years.

#### **Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna**

Devi Navaratri celebrations began with Kalasha Puja which commenced in the Bhajan Mandir of Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of 27th September 2003. This sacred Kalasha was taken to Poornachandra Auditorium in a grand procession of Ritwiks and Institute students led by Sai Geeta and Nadaswaram musicians amidst chanting of Vedic hymns on the morning of 29th September 2003. Bhagavan Baba who came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.45 a.m., blessed the Ritwiks in the Bhajan Mandir before the start of this grand procession which arrived in Poornachandra Auditorium at 9.40 a.m. for conducting the Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna. As soon as the Ritwiks and groups of students occupied their places at the Yajnasala, they started chanting Vedic Mantras. While the entire Auditorium started resounding with Vedic chants, two priests produced the sacred fire in the traditional way by churning one piece of wood on the other in the Divine Presence of Veda Purusha Bhagavan Baba. After putting the sacred fire in Yajna Kunda, the Yajna was started by the Ritwiks at 9.45 a.m. One group of Ritwiks offered oblations in the sacred fire and another group of Ritwiks chanted the Krishna Yajur Veda. Simultaneously, Sahasralingarchana and recitation of the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Durga Sapthashati and other scriptures started. One priest started performing Surya Namaskar and the head priest with his wife performed the worship of the Kalasha. The Yajna continued up to 12 o'clock surcharging the milieu with divine vibrations. The performance of Yajna continued for seven days with sacred chants. Arati was offered by the priests to Veda Purusha Bhagavan Baba everyday.

On the seventh day, i.e., on the day of Vijaya Dasami on 5th October, Poornahuti was performed.

Bhagavan Baba Himself offered Akshat (sanctified rice) and precious materials in the Yajna on the day of Poornahuti amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras by the Ritwiks and students at 9.20 a.m. Bhagavan Baba blessed all the Ritwiks after Poornahuti by sprinkling sanctified rice on them. They were offered clothes, a watch and eleven thousand rupees each as Dakshina. Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 10.00 a.m. and after this the Pandits and students chanted Mantra Pushpam in chorus. With Poornahuti, the Yajna came to a grand conclusion.

#### **Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha**

One of the most significant features of Dasara celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam has been the meeting of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha in which erudite scholars and Institute students share their views and experiences with the assembled devotees.

**First Session:** The deliberations of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba on the afternoon of 29th September 2003. Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.45 p.m. As soon as Bhagavan entered the Hall, Veda chanting was started by the Institute students assembled in the Hall. Soon after this, first session of the Mahasabha began with introductory remarks of Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan Campus of the Institute. In his introductory speech, Sri Sanjay Sahni said that Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha had been conducting its annual meetings of scholars at Prasanthi Nilayam during Navaratri celebrations in order to foster Vedic knowledge and promote Vedic scholars. Sri Sahni then introduced the three speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to share their views with the assembled devotees.

The first speaker, Sri Jaipreet Singh Bhandari, a student of 2nd year M.B.A. class from Prasanthi Nilayam Campus remarked that no harm could come to a person who took refuge in God with implicit faith. He narrated how Bhagavan restored the health of his mother and showered His love and grace on his entire family. He observed that Bhagavan's grace could do anything and everything if we prayed to Him with steadfast faith and devotion. Our faith today, he said, would decide our fate tomorrow.

The second speaker of this session was Kum.V. Sai Latha, a student of B.com 2nd year from Anantapur Campus of the Institute. Kum. Latha narrated a few incidents of devotees from the U.S.A. , Indonesia and India to tell how omnipresent Bhagavan could reach out to his devotees instantly in every part of the world to help and save them in critical situations in life. God, she said, was with us every moment and knew even the smallest incidents of our life.

The last speaker of this session was Dr. T. Ravikumar, a senior faculty member of the Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Describing Bhagavan Baba as the embodiment of Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Dr. Ravikumar narrated instances from personal experience to illustrate how omniscient and omnipotent Bhagavan acted like a loving mother and averted many events which could cause major tragedies.

The day's proceedings of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha concluded with this talk and were followed by Bhajans led by the Institute students. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan.

**Second Session:** The second day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced at 4.10 p.m. on 30th September 2003 after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first speaker of this session was Sri Dinesh Talreja, a 3rd year student of B.Com (Hons.) from Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Recalling the old Leelas of Bhagavan on the sands of Chitravati when He changed pebbles into sugar candy and Chitravathi water into Panchamrit, Sri Dinesh remarked that Bhagavan was still continuing these Leelas in a different way by transforming even most wayward persons into useful instruments of service for the welfare of mankind. Bhagavan, he said, was always giving and responded to the sincere prayers of devotees.

The second speaker, Kum. Deepti H. Bhagia, an M.Sc. (Home Science) student of Anantapur Campus of the Institute, narrated her personal experiences of Bhagavan's Divinity and stated that Bhagavan's Leelas could not be described; they had only to be experienced. In her speech full of touching incidents, Kum. Bhagia revealed that she was

saved from death many a time by the Divine intervention of Bhagavan and owed her life to Him and Him alone. She concluded her talk with an equally moving poem in praise of Bhagavan.

The last speaker of this session was Sri Srinivas Srirangarajan, a faculty member of the Institute from its Prasanthi Nilayam Campus. Sri Srirangarajan spoke about the concept of Grama Seva given by Bhagavan Baba and explained that service done with the feeling of oneness and selfless love for God helped in erasing our ego and in bringing about our own transformation. It was more important, he said, what Seva did to us than what it did to those for whom it was performed. So, we must thank those who give us the opportunity to serve, observed the learned speaker. In the end, he remarked that by engaging himself in selfless service, an aspirant could attain everything including Bhakti, Jnana, Vairagya and even Moksha. After the speech of Sri Srirangarajan, Bhajans led by Institute students and sung in chorus by a mammoth gathering of devotees with great devotional fervour filled each heart with bliss. The day's programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.15 p.m.

**Third Session:** The third session of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha was held on the afternoon of 1st October 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall. Bhagavan came to the Hall at 3.55 p.m. Simultaneously, the Institute students started Vedic chants. The deliberations of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced after Bhagavan occupied His chair on the dais. A new glorious chapter was added to the deliberations of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha when this session of the Mahasabha was entirely devoted to devotional vocal music. Music by its very nature has a divine quality. But when it is rendered in the immediate Presence of Divinity Incarnate, it becomes purely celestial and heavenly. The classical compositions of Thyagaraja and other composers presented by the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music, Prasanthi Nilayam on the 1st of October 2003 were really soul-elevating. Naturally, the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall remained spellbound during the entire presentation. This special session of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha came to a close with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

**Fourth Session:** The fourth day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced on the afternoon of 2nd October 2003 after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.35 p.m. amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras by the students of the Institute. The first speaker of this session was Sri Gunaranjan Turaga, a student of M.B.A 2nd year, Prasanthi Nilayam Campus. Describing Bhagavan Baba as the unique Avatar, Sri Gunaranjan observed that we should never let go this rare opportunity of redeeming our lives. He observed that for this we should inculcate the five virtues of steadfastness, self-control, devotion, faith and complete surrender.

The second speaker of the session was Kum. C. Bhuvaneswari, a 2nd year student of B.Sc. (Home Science) from the Anantapur Campus of the Institute. Kum. Bhuvaneswari referred to the significance of Vedic chants during the performance of Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna and observed that even if we did not fully grasp the value and essence of these Mantras, they would elevate, energise and spiritualise our lives.

The next speaker, Sri Ruchir Desai, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Commerce, Brindavan Campus of the Institute narrated a couple of incidents how a drug addict and a gang of thieves were reformed by Bhagavan. He remarked that Bhagavan Baba had incarnated to reform all men belonging to all sections of society which included those who had taken to wrong path.

The last speaker of the session was Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Sri Giri referred to the miracles of Bhagavan and remarked that though such materialisations and cures of diseases were natural for an Avatar, Bhagavan Baba used them to create faith in the devotees so as to bring them on the path of spirituality and divinity. Making a mention of Grama Seva being performed by the students and staff of the Institute, Sri Giri observed that it was an opportunity for students and staff to imbibe egolessness, duty consciousness and selflessness in them. The day's proceedings came to a close at 4.45 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

**Fifth Session:** The fifth day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha started after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.35 p.m. on 3rd October 2003. Introducing the speakers of this session, Sri Anil Kumar, a faculty member of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute, expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan for the opportunity to assemble at His Lotus Feet on the auspicious day of Durgashtami. Durga, he said, represented cosmic energy, without which the entire universe would be in chaos. Man worshipped divine energy because the functioning of the cosmos depended on it, he observed. The learned speaker then introduced the speakers of this session.

The first speaker, Sri Shriram Parshuram, a former student of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, remarked that Bhagavan Baba had limited Himself in this human form out of His immense love and compassion for mankind. Sri Parshuram told that Bhagavan by His example was teaching mankind to take to the path of love, compassion and sacrifice to redeem their lives.

"Man today has plethora of knowledge but very little wisdom; he has all gadgets of communication but has forgotten the art of heart-to-heart communication", said the next speaker Dr. M. Sainath, Lecturer in Physics, Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute. Wisdom, the speaker said, could be attained by imbibing the qualities of purity, patience and perseverance in life as taught by Bhagavan Baba.

The last speaker of this session was Sri Sanjay Sahni, Principal, Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Narrating his experiences of Grama Seva, Sri Sanjay Sahni remarked that it was an eye-opener for all of us to see how much love and reverence the villagers had for their Beloved Swami. Their participation in Nagar Sankirtan, Bhajans, Arati and above all their sincere prayer for Bhagavan's good health showed that they had absorbed the essence of all the principles of Bhakti in their life. The learned speaker then explained the principles of Bhakti which could lead man to the ultimate state of merger with the Lord. At the end of these illuminating talks, Bhajans were held. The programme came to a conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.10 p.m.

**Sixth Session:** The sixth day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha started at 4.15 p.m. on 4th October 2003 after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first speaker of this session was Prof. (Mrs.) Jayalakshmi Gopinath, Warden, Sri Sathya Sai Hostel, Anantapur. An ardent devotee of Bhagavan for the last five decades, Prof. (Mrs.). Gopinath shared the rich treasure of her old experiences of Swami's Divinity with the mammoth gathering of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. She gave an eyewitness account of how Dasara used to be celebrated in Old Mandir in 1940's and how Bhagavan inculcated faith and devotion in the devotees by showing them the glimpses of His Divinity.

The second speaker of the session was Sri Deepak Anand, a Research Scholar of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Citing the analogy of a rainbow, Sri Anand



stated that people of all religions, faiths, countries, nationalities formed a fascinating rainbow at Prasanthi Nilayam in the benign Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Narrating the experiences of persons from different faiths, Sri Anand observed that Bhagavan Baba is the embodiment of all gods and goddesses.

The next speaker, Sri B.N. Narasimha Murthy, Warden, Brindavan Campus of the Institute quoted from Narada Bhakti Sutras to explain that love for God was the panacea for all the miseries of man; it was the ambrosia which could secure eternal bliss for him. Referring to the path of love, service and sacrifice shown by Bhagavan Baba by His own example, the learned speaker told "If there is any person on earth who has always thought of the welfare of others all His life, it is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba."

The last speaker of the day was Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Referring to the celebration of Devi Navaratri at Prasanthi Nilayam, Dr. Venkataraman observed that the real objective of worship of the Divine Mother during Navaratri was to turn the innate divine energy of man towards its source, i.e., God. Dr. Venkataraman stated that the role of education was to align this energy to its source, because knowledge without compassion was inhuman. He lamented that modern education was making the students clever, not compassionate.

The day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.50 p.m.

**Seventh Session:** Proceedings of the final day of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced on the auspicious day of Vijaya Dasami on 5th October 2003 after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall at 4.15 p.m. Three speakers were blessed by Bhagavan to speak on this day. The first speaker was Dr. Narendranath Reddy, a practising physician from California, U.S.A., and an ardent devotee of Bhagavan for the last two decades. Dr. Reddy said that it was a rare great opportunity to be in the Divine proximity of Bhagavan Baba who is the embodiment of all gods and goddesses and the Supreme Lord of the universe.

The next speaker of this session was Sri Ajit Popat, a financial consultant from London (U.K.) and an ardent devotee of Bhagavan since 1983. Sri Popat emphasised the value of faith on the path of spirituality. Man of faith, he said, becomes deserving of God's love, grace and bounty.

The last speaker of this session was Sri Anil Kumar, a faculty member of the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute. Quoting from the poems of some well-known Telugu poets, Sri Anil Kumar stated that nothing can match the bliss and fulfilment one gets in the Divine proximity of Bhagavan Baba at Prasanthi Nilayam. The learned speaker exhorted the devotees to take refuge at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan to realise the goal of human life.

The proceedings of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha came to a grand finale with the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba in which He exhorted the devotees not to identify God with form. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) At the conclusion of the Discourse, Arati was offered to Bhagavan. With this, the proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha came to a close at 6.10 p.m.

## **RICH TRIBUTES PAID TO SRI R.V. JANAKIRAMAIAH**

SRI R.V. JANAKIRAMAIAH, the younger brother of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's body merged with the Lord at 10.10 a.m. on 17th October 2003 in Sri Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital, Puttaparthi. Bhagavan was with him on the previous day of his passing away for nearly an hour, and He poured sanctified water into his mouth with His Divine Hands. Sri Janakiramaiah (76) was a member of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and a prominent public figure who did his utmost for the implementation of public welfare schemes. He is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters.

As soon as the news of Sri Janakiramaiah's death became known, all the business establishments in Puttaparthi and surrounding areas were closed in honour of the departed leader. The body was brought from the hospital at 2.00 p.m. and was kept in his house at Puttaparthi to allow the public to pay their homage. The funeral procession was taken out at 4.00 p.m. His mortal remains were laid to rest in Samadhi in his family farm near Yenumulapalli crossroad in the presence of a large number of dignitaries, his well-wishers and friends.

In a meeting held in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the afternoon of 17th October 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, rich tributes were paid to Sri Janakiramaiah. In His Discourse on this occasion, Bhagavan Baba called him a divine person who had a tender heart though he was used to plain speaking without mincing words.

Other dignitaries who paid their homage to Sri Janakiramaiah were Sri K. Chakravarthi, Secretary, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of the Institute and Sri K. Anil Kumar, a senior faculty member of the Institute. Recalling his long association with Sri Janakiramaiah, Sri Chakravarthi said that Sri Janakiramaiah was a frank, bold and straightforward person who always gave wise counsel to the Central Trust. Sri S.V. Giri in his speech said, Sri Janakiramaiah was a great benefactor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and did his best to promote the interests of the Institute. Dr. Venkataraman observed that Sri Janakiramaiah had a great love for Swami as a brother, but he was also an equally great devotee of Swami since he had realised Swami's Divinity. Paying his tributes to Sri Janakiramaiah, Sri Anil Kumar praised the qualities of nobility, simplicity, fearlessness and idealism of Sri Janakiramaiah. He not only helped to solve the problems of the people of Puttaparthi but he was also very helpful to the devotees who came for Bhagavan's Darshan to Prasanthi Nilayam, said Sri Anil Kumar.

### **DIVINE DISCOURSE ON 17TH OCTOBER 2003**

#### **TREAT YOUR FELLOWMEN AS YOUR BROTHERS**

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

(Telugu Poem)

### *Embodiments of Love! Students Boys and Girls!*

HUMAN LIFE is most sacred and ideal in the entire creation. Man is endowed with infinite power. But he leads a life of ignorance because he remains unaware of his innate power. Though everyone is endowed with divine power, only a few are able to manifest it. In others, this power remains dormant. Everyone should make efforts to realise his innate divinity. Man considers himself weak and powerless even though he is a repository of infinite divine power. Janakiramaiah was one of such divine power. He was younger to this body by 2 ½ years. He was an adept in the field of politics. He did not mince words in expressing his opinion. Sometimes, I used to caution him, “Ramaiah, you do not know the abilities of others. Do not use harsh words. Talk with restraint.” He might have used harsh words when the situation demanded but he had a tender heart.

### **Sweetness of Atmic Experience**

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

Every man must necessarily make efforts to realise the principle of the Atma which is present in all. The sweetness of Atmic experience is unparalleled. This has to be realised and experienced by every individual. One may know the nature of an individual but it is not easy to understand the nature of the Atma. The Atma has no specific form. It is full of love and bliss. In order to understand the principle of the Atma, you have to emulate the ideals demonstrated by Rama and His brothers. He who realises the inherent divinity in humanity is a true human being.

### **Follow the Ideals set by Rama and His Brothers**

One day when Rama and His brothers were playing a game, Bharata came running, sat on the lap of Mother Kausalya and complained, “Mother, whenever I am about to lose the game, Rama manages to lose and makes me the winner.” Even in playing games, Rama showed His love for his brothers. Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna would tell their mothers that it was their great good fortune that they had Rama as their elder brother. They praised Rama and said, “Rama is full of love; we cannot find a brother like Him.” They always wanted to be in the company of Rama and serve Him. There was great unity and love between them. They experienced the bliss of intimate and loving relationship between themselves. Even today, there are many such brothers in the world. But the situation of the world is such that people do not encourage the feeling of brotherhood of man. Our institutions should demonstrate the ideal of brotherhood and show the way to the rest of the world. You call each other brothers and sisters. Mere verbal expression will not suffice; it should be reflected in your conduct. While in exile, Rama could not bear separation from Lakshmana even for a moment. He would anxiously ask Sita about Lakshmana's whereabouts whenever he was not found by His side. In this manner, Rama demonstrated to the world the ideal of love between brothers by His example.

Today students acquire education with the sole purpose of occupying high positions in society. They are not prepared to share their love with their fellowmen and demonstrate

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

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

What is true humanness? True humanness lies in treating your fellowmen as your own brothers. You deserve to be called a human being only when you cultivate the spirit of unity. Unity is very essential today. Where there is no unity, there you find enmity. Enmity leads to hatred. Consequently, the principle of love is lost altogether. Man's foremost duty is to share his love with others. Only then can he realise the ideal of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. Unfortunately, today this ideal is not seen anywhere. Even if you do not believe in the Fatherhood of God, you must have faith in the brotherhood of man. Practise it and experience bliss therefrom. Our country Bharat will regain its pristine glory only when we achieve such unity. There should be unity and love not only between brothers but also between spouses.

Today you have heard that Dr. Pillai, a doctor from Singapore, wants to establish an institution in the memory of his late wife. Pillai has been a devotee of Swami for the last 30 years. His wife was also a highly virtuous lady. She always wore a smile on her face. She always spoke softly and sweetly. There are many such noble women in this country. It is because of such women that the country is full of auspiciousness, plenty and prosperity. There are many such devotees who express their love in a silent way. The country of Bharat is highly sacred. But people are flocking to foreign countries with the false hope that they would find happiness there. The happiness that you do not find here cannot be found anywhere in the world. (loud applause) It is said, Yanna Bharate Thanna Bharata (that which is not found in Bharat is not present anywhere else). That is why, Bharat has been able to live in peace and amity with the rest of the world for the past thousands of years. The Bharatiyas share their love with others and maintain brotherly relationship. In fact, only they have lived up to the ideal of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. In spite of many foreign invasions, the love and amity of Bharatiyas has not diminished a bit. At times, you may find infighting but that is only a passing cloud. There is, however, the sweet fragrance of love in everybody's heart.

### **Realise the Power of Love**

There is no point in talking sweetly if there is no sweetness in your heart. Sweetness in speech and bitterness in heart is not the quality of a human being. There should be sweetness in your thought, word and deed. This is the true sign of a human being. You should fill your life with love. There is nothing superior to love in this world. Man is considered unique because of this quality of love in him. But you are not able to realise the value of human birth. God takes human form in order to spread the message of love.

Once you have love in your heart, you can conquer the whole world. There is love in you but you are not able to express it in a proper way.

*Students!*

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

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

*Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow.* (Telugu Song)

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

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

**Let the Light of Love Illumine your Path**

*Students - Embodiments of Love!*

It is not so important to acquire secular education; more important task is to develop love. Love is life. Not merely that. Love is light. It illumines your path and makes your journey of life safe and secure. When you carry the light of love with you, you will never find darkness. Fill your heart with love. There is no wealth greater than love. Love is God. Live in love. This is what you have to learn today. Today people merely utter the words "love is God"; they do not lead a life of love. It is the life of love that is important. Realise the truth that it is the principle of love that permeates your entire body from top to toe.

*Embodiments of Love!*

You have listened to the talks given by C. Sreenivas, and the present and the former Vice Chancellors. They spoke with love in their heart and emphasised the need to cultivate love. You should follow the direction shown by them. They are, in fact, ringing the bells of love in your heart but you are not trying to listen. Once you start listening this, you will not waste even a moment. You will be instantly immersed in the ecstasy of love.

*Students!*

You may have acquired various types of knowledge. You may have visited many countries. Despite all this, you may not have tasted the sweetness of love. Once you taste this, you will see the world in its real form. Therefore, become truly embodiments of love. Let love flow incessantly from your heart. Immerse yourself in love. Out of love, emerge truth and righteousness. Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak truth, practise righteousness). Truth and righteousness are the two pillars on which the mansion of human life rests. Truth and righteousness emerge from love. There is no knowledge greater than love. You may read a number of books, but love cannot be acquired from books. What is the use of reading Pustakas (books) when your Mastaka (head) is filled with 'dirt'? It is because of such 'dirt' that you degenerate to the level of an animal, losing your sense of discrimination.

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

*Students!*

Lead your life in love. Experience love. Taste love. Live in love. There is no other education greater than this. What you call education is, in fact, all agitation. You are the embodiments of love. You are filled with love. You may not know this but I can see love in you from top to toe. You are not able to see the fountain of love that is springing forth from your heart. Make Lord Rama your ideal and fill your life with love. Immerse yourself in the divine love of Rama. Then the principles of Ramayana will become manifest before you in a glorious manner.

*Students!*

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

**- From Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 17th October 2003.**

## **ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND DECLARATION OF AVATARHOOD**

### **BHAGAVAN BLESSES THE YOUTH OF ANDHRA PRADESH**

INSPIRED by the Grama Seva undertaken by Bhagavan's students every year during the months of September-October since the year 2000, the Youth Wing members of Andhra Pradesh Sathya Sai Seva Organisation undertook Grama Seva in 80 villages spread over 23 districts of the State keeping in view the forthcoming 80th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. These youth visited the concerned villages and distributed "Sai Amruta Kalasha" (consisting of 10 kg rice, 2 kg red gram Dal, 1 kg cooking oil, 1 kg sugar and 2 kg wheat flour) to each of the 5000 families. They also distributed new clothes to 700 villagers. In addition, they conducted a free medical camp and a veterinary

camp in every village. Bal Vikas and cultural activities, health and sanitation, dental care, rural leadership training and Palanquin festivals were also organised in these villages. Particular care was taken to identify the needs of the concerned villages and provide the appropriate services. The culmination of this grand village service activity was the congregation of the youth, who participated in this Mahayajna, at Prasanthi Nilayam to seek the Divine blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. 8000 youth drawn from all over the State of Andhra Pradesh reached Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th October 2003 to participate in the celebration of Grand Declaration of Avatarhood of Bhagavan Baba on 20th October. Bhagavan, in His infinite grace, granted His Divine Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan to these youth from 19th October 2003 to 21st October 2003 and filled their hearts with Divine inspiration.

On the afternoon of 19th October 2003, select youth from all the 23 districts of Andhra Pradesh under the banner of “Sri Sathya Sai Yuva Chaitanya Vahini” presented cultural programmes and dance dramas in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall. They also carried richly decorated palanquins with Swami's photograph in them. While there was torrential rain outside, these youth were drenched in the Divine grace of Bhagavan Baba inside Sai Kulwant Hall. Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall on this day were also led by the Youth Wing members from Andhra Pradesh.

Again, on the morning of 20th October 2003, the youth assembled in Sai Kulwant Hall and sang melodious Bhajans in the Divine Presence. In the afternoon, Bhagavan had graciously permitted the youth to organise a public meeting in His Divine Presence. After the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.50 p.m., the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music presented a magnificent programme of Hindustani classical devotional music. After this, Dr. N. Anjanaiah, State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Andhra Pradesh, offered his grateful Pranams to Bhagavan and explained about the Divine inspiration behind the Grama Seva Mahayajna. He made a fervent appeal to Swami to declare 20th October as Youth Day. Thereafter, two youth members from Andhra Pradesh Sri Y. Srinivas and Sri S. Balachandra addressed the vast gathering and explained the significant events and their experiences of Grama Seva. After these speeches, members of Hyderabad Youth Group presented a musical dance drama entitled “Pallelo Oka Roju” (A Day in the Village). The drama conveyed the message 'Grama Seva is Sai Seva' in a powerful way. It received the appreciation of the audience and blessings of Bhagavan.

After the cultural programme, Bhagavan gave His Divine Message to the youth. He gave a clarion call to the youth to sanctify their lives by engaging themselves continuously in the village service programmes. He also assured the youth that he was prepared to extend every possible help and assistance to the youth in their village service programmes. He exhorted the youth to extend the service activities to every village and spread the Divine Name through Nama Sankirtan in every street and every house. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.)

On the concluding day, i.e., on 21st October morning, Swami gave a Discourse describing certain important events that happened in His childhood. These events revealed a profound message for the youth. In addition, Bhagavan asked two of His former students now working in the Ashram, Sri K. Arun and Sri Rameswar Prusti to address the youth. These students during the course of their brief talk emphasised that the qualities of unity, love, oneness and humility are of paramount importance for the youth.

They also exhorted the youth to realise the truth that it is Bhagavan Baba who is the driving force behind all the service activities undertaken by them. After this, devotees from Andhra Pradesh presented a programme of devotional music. The meeting came to a close at 10.10 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

On the afternoon of 21st October 2003, Bhagavan graciously called a meeting of all the District Presidents of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Andhra Pradesh including some select youth members. During the course of His Benedictory Address to the youth in the Bhajan Mandir, Swami graciously launched the “Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva Trust”. He advised the youth to undertake the village service programmes in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh, for which He would supply the necessary infrastructure. In the end, Bhagavan had a group photograph with the participants in the meeting.

After spending three fruitful days in the Divine Presence, Sai Youth offered their humble Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and left for their respective destinations keeping Bhagavan's Divine Message installed in their hearts and with a firm resolve to spread the message of service in every village of Andhra Pradesh.

## **BHAGAVAN'S ADDRESS TO THE YOUTH OF ANDHRA PRADESH**

### **REVIVE THE ANCIENT CULTURE OF BHARAT**

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

(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

EVEN one or two good organisations are enough to restore the ancient pristine glory of Bharat. The service activities (undertaken by the Sai Organisation of your State) have brought about a great transformation in the hearts of youth. If such sacred activities are undertaken in every village and in every street, the ancient culture of Bharat can certainly be revived. Today there are very few people who practise and propagate the sacred values of our culture. The Bharatias have, in fact, completely forgotten their rich cultural heritage and are imitating the Western culture, losing thereby their sanctity. Though the culture of Bharat is ancient, yet it is very relevant to modern times. Hence, it should be practised and propagated in every village.

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

*Embodiments of Love!*

Words of appreciation or any type of compliments are inadequate to describe the great ideals demonstrated by you. (*loud applause*) I shall provide transport facilities so that you



can go to various villages and perform service activities. Today the world is witnessing a strange scenario. People preach spirituality on the one hand and act quite contrary to it on the other. This has become common particularly in big cities. People in cities, however well educated they are, have completely forgotten our ancient traditions and are behaving in a perverse manner in the name of modernism. The enthusiasm, dynamism and the ancient traditional values that are found in you, the youth in particular, are not found anywhere else. It is only those who know the greatness of our ancient culture will be able to understand and appreciate the sacred feelings of your hearts. It is most essential to spread this culture in every village and in every hamlet. Though the people of villages are interested in adopting the ancient culture, they are unable to do so for want of resources. Hence, I will give all the necessary support and encouragement in the furtherance of this sacred cause. *(loud applause)* The youth who are undertaking rural service activities will be given admission in our educational institutions. Do not think that you are outsiders. All this is yours; I am yours and these institutions belong to you. You have every right to be here. I am always ready to provide any help that you may require.

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

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*” and continued the Discourse.

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

- **From Bhagavan's Address to Sai Youth of Andhra Pradesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 20th October 2003.**

## **SEMINAR OF VICE CHANCELLORS ON VALUE EDUCATION AND ETHICS**

SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE of Higher Learning was requested by the University Grants Commission to host its Golden Jubilee Seminar of Vice Chancellors devoted to “Value Education and Ethics”. The historic Seminar was inaugurated by Bhagavan Sri

Sathya Sai Baba, the Revered Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in the morning on Tuesday, October 28th with His Divine Discourse. The inaugural function was also addressed by Dr. Arun Nigavekar, Chairman, University Grants Commission, Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, SSSIHL, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, SSSIHL and Justice Ranganath Mishra, former Chief Justice of India. Dr. Nigavekar expressed his gratitude to Bhagavan, and prayed for His blessings for the success of the Seminar. He also stressed how SSSIHL which had the unique distinction of actually putting into practice a value-oriented educational system under His Divine guidance, was the most suitable venue for the Seminar.

In His inaugural Divine Discourse, which gave the most appropriate direction to the deliberations of the Seminar, Bhagavan declared that education without values was not only useless but certainly dangerous. He emphasised that Love was the basic ingredient of all human values be it Dharma, Sathya, Santhi or Ahimsa. Love is God and God is Love. Clearly, no system of values is meaningful unless it is God-centred. Drawing a distinction between information, knowledge and wisdom Bhagavan explained how the power of discrimination leads a student from one to another, through a system of true education. Only such a system of education aiming at character building would ensure a happy world. But today man had forgotten that he had three layers of existence - mind, body and Atma (MBA). While most are only conscious, some experienced conscience, and very few live in consciousness. The Atma indeed is consciousness. It was indeed reassuring to hear Bhagavan's declaration that spiritual knowledge and self-transformation were within everyone's reach. Education must inspire students to enquire "Who Am I?" This was the key to everything else. With these inspiring words, Bhagavan blessed the deliberations of the Seminar.

The Seminar was attended by 25 Vice Chancellors from reputed universities across the country from Himachal Pradesh in the north to Kerala in the south and from Orissa in the east to Maharashtra in the west. The variety of universities they represented was quite rich in many ways. Women's universities, agricultural universities, deemed universities (State and Central universities), and open universities were all represented at the Seminar. In addition to the inaugural and the valedictory functions, the deliberations of the Seminar were spread over several sessions devoted to policy framework and an operational model; integral approach to education and educational philosophy; science, technology and value inculcation; service orientation and responsible citizenship; management education and value orientation; and the basic role of teacher education.

The afternoon programmes on the first two days held in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba consisted of recapitulation of the day's proceedings in the Business Sessions, followed by presentations by the students of SSSIHL. These presentations showed how inculcation of values formed an essential ingredient of the Institute's educational process. On the first day, three students Sri Deepak Anand, Sri Sanjay Mahalingam and Sri Jaipreet S. Bhandari led by one young faculty member Sri Srinivas Srirangarajan made a marvellous presentation of the purpose, modus operandi and spiritual dimensions of the "Grama Seva" programme involving teachers and students of all the three campuses. On the second day, five students of the Institute Sri Shashank Shah, Sri Y. Sriranganatha Raju, Sri V. Jagannandan, Sri S. Jagadish Chandra and Kum. Deepti Bhagia spoke in English, Sanskrit, Telugu and Hindi. The loftiness of the thoughts, lucidity of expression and the emotional touch of the feelings flowing from

their hearts held the entire audience in rapture and total admiration. The students outlined what they were learning at the Institute to enrich their lives and how this type of education would make them better citizens of tomorrow in the service of the country and the world.

On the third afternoon (on 30th October), Prof. V.S. Prasad, Director NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) and two of the Vice Chancellors Prof. K. Sudha Rao and Prof. N. Jayasankaran expressed their sense of fulfilment on visiting Prasanthi Nilayam and how much they had learnt about true education during their three-day stay in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. Afternoon functions in Sai Kulwant Hall started with soul-stirring vibrations of exquisite Veda chanting on all days.

The Vice Chancellors were of the unanimous view that Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning should be recognised as the National Centre of Excellence for Value Education and, in a step-by-step process, the success story of Integral Education of the Institute should be disseminated for wider adoption in the country's Higher Education system.

### **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

LIKE previous years, Dasara festival at Prasanthi Nilayam this year also marked the commencement of Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna and Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva, both of which are events of great spiritual significance. The Yajna started in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba amidst the chanting of Vedic hymns and recitation of sacred scriptures on the morning of 29th September 2003.

Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva 2003, like the ones performed during the previous three years, was undertaken by the staff and students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning with the help of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam in which many senior devotees and staff of other sections of the Ashram also took part. The Grama Seva was carried out from 29th September 2003 to 5th October 2003 and the Prasadam sanctified by Bhagavan was distributed to over 125 villages in a meticulously planned manner.

On 29th September 2003, the first day of the Grama Seva, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall after blessing the start of Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna in Poornachandra Auditorium. The participants of Grama Seva circumambulated the Mandir amidst singing of Bhajans. Bhagavan blessed the Prasadam and the staff and students embarking on this Karma Yajna. Soon after this, more than 30 vehicles loaded with sacred Prasadam of food packets, Laddus, Saris and Dhotis commenced their journey towards different directions along with staff and students. Bhagavan blessed the participants of Grama Seva and sanctified the Prasadam in a similar way on all the days of this Seva. And everyday, the staff and students went to different villages to distribute Prasadam. Many touching scenes were witnessed when the staff and students reached the villages. The villagers made altars on the outskirts of the villages, and made buntings of mango and coconut leaves to welcome the staff and students as they came to their village. They cleaned the streets, poured water in them and decorated them with colourful

Rangoli. Many of them joined the students in Nagar Sankirtan and Bhajans and gave active cooperation in the distribution process.

Simple villagers expressed their love and gratitude for Bhagavan Baba in numerous ways. It was only to be seen to be believed how Bhagavan's love was overflowing in the hearts of millions of villagers who received Bhagavan's Prasadam with love and reverence. Wherever these messengers of love of Bhagavan went, the villagers welcomed them as if Bhagavan Himself had come to their village. This Karma Yajna of the students was turned into Prema Yajna by the villagers. Thus, the Grama Seva started by Bhagavan Baba has an example for the entire mankind to follow.

#### **A Magnificent Cultural Programme**

A magnificent cultural programme consisting of dance numbers on the theme of annihilation of Mahishasura by the Devi and other folk dances including the Punjabi Bhangra were presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Delhi on the afternoon of 6th October 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme which began with the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall at 4.30 p.m. came to a close at 5.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

#### **Sri Sathya Sai Manonmani Nursing Campus**

Bhagavan blessed the foundation laying ceremony of "Sri Sathya Sai Manonmani Nursing Campus" to be constructed at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Prashanthigram on 17th October 2003. Initially, one hundred family quarters will be built to accommodate nursing and technical staff of the hospital.

Bhagavan in February 2003 addressed this dire need of the hospital in a meeting with the staff. He said appropriate accommodation for the nurses and technical staff with families would be provided and interestingly went on to add that He would have work on this project commence this year itself. In keeping with this assurance, Bhagavan personally blessed the foundation ceremony by placing His Divine Hands on the first nine stones for construction amidst Veda chanting in Sai Kulwant Hall. On this occasion, He materialised a gold necklace with a Goddess Lakshmi pendant for Ms. Roshni Pillay, daughter of Dr. V.K. Pillay from Singapore, who was given the opportunity to serve in the construction of the Campus. To many at the Institute it was a gracious blessing granted in time and yet another promise kept.

#### **Illuminating Deepavali Celebrations**

The festival of Deepavali was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 25th October 2003 in a most sacred way. There were Vedic chants and Bhajans both in the morning and evening in Sai Kulwant Hall where the festival was celebrated in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Besides, two erudite speakers gave illuminating talks on this occasion.

Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.40 a.m. Instantly, Veda chanting was started by Institute students. It was a grand spectacle to witness and experience when more than 1800 students, both boys and girls, chanted Vedic hymn in perfect rhythm and harmony for one hour and fifteen minutes from 7.40 a.m. to 8.55 a.m. Lost in the ecstasy of this spellbinding chants, the devotees were virtually transported to another world. Veda Purusha Bhagavan Baba Himself listened to these chants and inspired the students with His Divine Presence. These chants which included Purusha Suktam, Narayana Suktam, Rudram, portions of Taittiriya Upanishad, Mahanarayana Upanishad, Narayana Upanishad and Mantra Pushpam, were followed by Bhajans. The morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 9.25 a.m.

The chanting of Vedic hymns was repeated in the afternoon also for nearly an hour after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.30 p.m. These chants were followed by an illuminating question-answer session related to the supreme wisdom contained in the Vedic texts.

The flow of this stream of divine knowledge continued unabated in Sai Kulwant Hall with two erudite speakers addressing the gathering after this. The first speaker was the Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri S.V. Giri. The learned speaker explained the significance of Dasara, Navaratri and Deepavali festivals and said that while Dasara signified the vanquishing of Thamas represented by Mahishasura, Deepavali was significant for the annihilation of Narakasura, the epitome of ego, cruelty and misdirected activity. Referring to the chanting of Vedic texts by the students, Sri Giri observed that this represented man's evolution to Sattwa which earned for him Divine proximity.

The second speaker, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, referred to the mammoth gathering of youth at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan from all parts of Andhra Pradesh from 19th to 21st October 2003, and observed that God did not want anything for Himself; those engaged in Grama Seva and other service and spiritual activities were, in fact, working for their own redemption since Bhagavan has incarnated with the Divine Mission to transform man through such means. These illuminating talks were followed by Bhajans which all the devotees sang in chorus with great devotional fervour. The Deepavali celebration came to a conclusion with offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 5.25 p.m.

#### **Gujarati New Year Day Celebrations**

Two cultural programmes were presented by the Bal Vikas children and youth of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Gujarat on the Gujarati New Year Day on 26th October 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The first presentation was a drama entitled "The Journey of Life" which was enacted in Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of 26th October 2003. The drama showed man's journey from Koham (Who am I?) to Soham (I am That) in a realistic manner with the set of a railway station. Bhagavan blessed the cast, posed for photographs with them, and also materialised a ring for one of the boys. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.50 a.m.

The second drama entitled "Saint Jalaram" was enacted in the afternoon. It depicted the life story of this famous saint of Saurashtra, Gujarat who devoted his life to feeding the poor and constantly chanting the Divine Name of Rama. The drama depicted that service to the poor was the sure way to attain the Divine. There were Bhajans led by Gujarati devotees after the drama. The Bhajans were followed by a short musical presentation and Rama Katha by the students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music. The programme came to a close at 5.25 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

**Andhra Pradesh:** As part of Bhagavan's 80th Birthday celebrations to be carried out from 2003 to 2005 in Andhra Pradesh, the Ranga Reddy district Mahila Vibhag selected 85 needy and helpless women from all parts of the district, trained them in tailoring and distributed 85 new sewing machines on 28th September 2003 in a grand function arranged in Sri Satya Sai Mandir at B.H.E.L. This Ranga Reddy district organisation also distributed new clothes to 579 needy persons and school uniforms to 101 needy students, honoured 17 Vedic Pandits, distributed cooking vessels to 18 families, selected 15 very

helpless persons for giving daily food for 80 days and supplied monthly food provisions (10 kg rice, 2 kg Dal, 1 kg edible oil, etc.) to selected 6 families.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** In order to arouse public awareness about Bhagavan Baba's Divine Mission, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Assam, Manipur and N.E. States organised a two-day programme on 13th and 14th September 2003 in the historic town, Sivasagar. The programmes included Bal Vikas Rally, Bal Vikas students meet, exhibition, youth meet and public meeting.

**Haryana / Chandigarh:** Two State-level spiritual-cum-Seva Sadhana camps were conducted at Karnal (Kunjpura) and Kurukshetra (Sunarian) wherein 102 and 91 Sai Youth participated respectively. They along with village youth and villagers organised a cleanliness drive, cleaning streets, drains and religious places in these villages. Nagar Sankirtan was also conducted. A health awareness medical camp with a team of six medical specialists of different streams was also organised treating 326 and 700 patients respectively who were also given free medicines.

Five free coaching centres at Panchkula and Gurgaon for the session 2003-04 have been started benefiting 612 students.

**Himachal Pradesh:** Blood donation camps were held throughout the State on 14th September 2003 at district headquarters in which 270 young members of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation volunteered for blood donation. The atmosphere was vibrating with Bhajan singing at all the places while the donors were donating blood.

**Jammu and Kashmir:** For the last 14 years the State of J & K has been confronted with militancy related activities. In spite of these terrorist activities and abnormal conditions prevailing in the State, Sai Youth are doing several activities in the State relentlessly.

Regular Narayana Seva on every 2nd Sunday of the month is being conducted by Sai Youth wherein food packets are distributed to nearly 300 people in the slum areas. Apart from this Sai Youth also arranged special Narayana Seva for Amarnath pilgrims on 20th and 26th July 2003 where food was served to nearly 909 and 872 Sadhus and pilgrims.

**Orissa:** Computer awareness programme for a period of one month was organised by the Bhubaneswar Samithi. 51 youth underwent the training in which four modules on word processing, web page design, Adobe Photoshop and Tally accounting package were covered. Balichandrapur Samithi organised training programme on electrical appliances repairing, scooter repairing and preparation of Sai protein, etc., for the youth of Cuttack district. Two-day district level training on soft toys making was conducted by Koro Samithi of Kendrapara district. West Zone of Bhubaneswar Samithi organised vocational training on mushroom cultivation, puppet making, Bindi making, paper flowers making, etc.

**Tamil Nadu:** A seminar on "Educare and Humanising Medicare" was organised at IRT Perundurai Medical College, Perundurai, Erode District on 23rd August 2003. The Seminar was attended by 65 eminent doctors of the district of Erode, 220 medical students of IRT Medical College and 70 staff members of that college.

As a part of our three year action plan for our Beloved Bhagavan's 80th Birthday celebrations, Chennai Metro (West) district organised free mass marriages for 8 couples on 7th September 2003 at Kalyana Mantapam. Each couple was provided with wedding Saris, Dhotis and a complete package of utensils and materials essential for setting up a household.

**Forthcoming Celebrations  
at Prasanthi Nilayam**

19th November..... Ladies Day

22nd November..... 22nd Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

23rd November..... 78th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

**RADIO SAI GLOBAL HARMONY'**

Dear Devotees,

As the world gears itself to celebrate the 78th Birthday of our Beloved Bhagavan, Radio Sai Global Harmony will bring to you the proceedings of the 22nd and 23rd November, including Swami's Divine Discourses, on the same day, within just a few hours of the programme at Prasanthi Nilayam! Do not miss!

Log on to [www.radiosai.org](http://www.radiosai.org) for detailed timings of the broadcast.

**DECEMBER 2003**

Birthday Message

**THE LORD OF PUTTAPARTHI WILL ALWAYS PROTECT YOU**

*All your education, all your positions of authority, all your acts of charity and service have little value without the four qualities of Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Santhi (truth, righteousness, love and peace).*  
(Telugu Poem)

*Embodiments of Love!*

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

**Parents Shape the Character of their Children**

Man's life is greatly influenced by the qualities of his parents. The loving care of Jijabai made Shivaji a great warrior. Rama's divinity blossomed because of the noble qualities of His mother Kausalya. Lava and Kusha could become powerful and famous due to their noble and virtuous mother Sita. Similarly, our ancient sages and seers sanctified their lives because of the noble influence of their parents. Today people neglect their parents and fail to recognise their influence on their lives. They forget that they owe their exalted position in life only to their parents.

Gandhi became a Mahatma because of his pious mother Putlibai. She used to observe a fast and would wait for the cooing of the cuckoo before partaking of her food. However, on one day, she had to wait for a long time for the call of the cuckoo without taking food. The young Gandhi could not bear to see his mother fast for such a long time. Hence, he went out of the house and imitated the cooing of the cuckoo. Then he came inside and said, "Mother, now that the cuckoo has made its call, please take your food." She at once recognised that her son was telling a lie. Unable to contain her grief, she slapped Gandhi on his cheeks and lamented, "Oh! What sin have I committed that such a liar should be born to me!" She was shedding tears as she spoke. Gandhi repented and prayed for her forgiveness. He took a vow that he would never utter a lie thenceforth. In this manner, our ancients developed virtues and attained exalted position only because of their mothers. Today the country is facing hardship as people have no regard for truth and are



indulging in falsehood in their thoughts, words and deeds. The welfare of a nation depends on the teachings that its mothers impart to their children. When parents tread the path of truth, children would naturally emulate them.

### **The Advent of the Avatar**

In olden days, it was a common practice among the women of Bharat to perform the sacred ritual of Sathyanarayana Vrata on every full moon day. Likewise, Easwaramma (mother of this body) used to perform Sathyanarayana Vrata every full moon day in the company of Karanam Subbamma who was her neighbour. Karanam Subbamma would often tell Easwaramma, “You are performing Sathyanarayana Vrata. With the blessings of Lord Naryayana, you will give birth to a son. I want you to name him Sathyanarayana.” On a particular full moon day, Easwaramma did not have food till very late in the afternoon as she was participating in the Sathyanarayana Vrata being performed in Subbamma's house. The family members including her husband Pedda Venkama Raju were very much upset to see her remain without food for such a long time. Pedda Venkama Raju argued that there was no need to observe such severe austerities. But Easwaramma was determined. She told them not to wait for her, saying, “I am not at all hungry. Sathyanarayana Vrata is more important for me than food.” After completing the ritual of Sathyanarayana Vrata, Subbamma brought Prasadam (blessed food) for Easwaramma. Only after partaking of the Prasadam did Easwaramma have her food that day. Women in those days used to perform such rituals with all sincerity and devotion. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). Some people have faith in scriptural injunctions and adhere to them with earnestness, whereas some others ignore them. Easwaramma was the one who followed the injunctions strictly. Only after performing the Vrata and partaking of the Prasadam would she commence her household chores. She had no formal education. But she had unflinching faith in God. During the seventh month of her pregnancy, one day Subbamma told her, “Easwaramma, the child in your womb is safe only due to the grace of Lord Sathyanarayana.” She extracted a promise from her that the child would be named Sathyanarayana. The mother of Pedda Venkama Raju was also a great devotee of the Lord. She too was of the opinion that the child should be named after Lord Sathyanarayana.

Prior to the birth of the child, a very significant incident took place. Puttaparthi was then a tiny hamlet. In the centre of the village, there was a well from which people would draw water. One day, Easwaramma went to fetch water from the well. All of a sudden, she saw a white luminous light emerging like lightning along with a gust of breeze from the sky and entering her womb. Subbamma who came out of her house at that time saw the light entering the womb of Easwaramma. Till this day, I have not revealed this to anyone. I am disclosing this today so that you may understand the significance associated with the Advent of the Avatar. A day prior to the Advent, Pedda Venkama Raju was passing in front of Subbamma's house. She called him inside and told him, “Venkama Raju, tomorrow when the child is born, name him Sathyanarayana.” But he did not take her advice seriously thinking that it was her own imagination.

Early in the morning, at an auspicious moment, the child was born. It is natural for any child to cry when it is born. But this child did not cry at all. The midwife and the people

in the household were anxious that the child might be stillborn. Easwaramma too was very much worried. Without anybody noticing her, she pinched the child to make it cry. On the contrary, to her utter surprise, the baby started smiling. Everyone was mystified to see the newborn baby smiling. Just then Subbamma entered the house and said, "Easwaramma, I have heard that you have given birth to a male child at an auspicious moment. Can I have a glimpse of the child?" Easwaramma wrapped the child in a cloth and placed it in front of Subbamma. In those days, orthodox Brahmins would maintain distance from others. If they happened to touch them inadvertently, they would at once have a bath. Though Subbamma was a Brahmin, she had no such narrow feelings. She was, in fact, an ideal for others. Watching Easwaramma place the baby at a distance from Subbamma, Easwaramma's mother-in-law also told Easwaramma to let Subbamma hold the child in her arms as she had come with so much love for the child. Subbamma had already told Easwaramma to name the child Sathyanarayana. People in ancient times liked to name their children after the names of God.

### **Early Manifestations of Divinity**

Mother Easwaramma brought up the child with love and care. Days rolled by and the child grew up to be a boy. He was Mithabhashi and Mithahari (moderate in speech and eating). Easwaramma was mystified by the strange behaviour of her son. Usually, children are fond of eating. Some of them eat non-vegetarian food like fish or meat. But her son was totally averse to non-vegetarian food. He would not even visit the houses where non-vegetarian food was cooked. Seeing his noble qualities, Easwaramma realised that the child was not an ordinary one, but one of divine nature. Her eldest daughter Venkamma also recognised the divine nature of the child. Together, they brought up the child with love and care. They would sing devotional songs as lullabies. The child was brought up in such a noble environment.

The power of motherhood is indescribable. It is the righteous conduct, deep devotion and strict adherence to moral values of the mothers that contribute to the greatness of their children. Never criticise or ridicule your parents even if they are illiterate. Always revere your mother. She may be illiterate. Her greatness does not depend on literacy or bookish learning. It was illiterate Easwaramma who brought great name and fame to Puttaparthi. But it is a matter of regret that people tend to forget Easwaramma, while her son is being extolled. Where is Sai without Easwaramma? Therefore, one should uphold the glory of the mother. One should never neglect one's parents. This is the message of Sathya Sai Baba.

At this period of time, some differences arose between the sons of Kondama Raju. In fact, the four brothers – Pedda Venkama Raju, Chinna Venkama Raju, Venkatarama Raju and Venkata Subba Raju – decided to live separately. Kondama Raju divided the property equally among them. Pedda Venkama Raju then asked, "Father, whom are you going to stay with?" Kondama Raju replied, "I will not stay with anyone. I do not want any property for myself. Give me Sathya. That is enough. (loud applause) He will look after me." In those days, nobody used to call Me by the full name Sathyanarayana. Everyone used to address Me as Sathya. From then onwards, I stayed with Kondama Raju and served him.

The name given to Easwaramma by her parents was Namagiriamma. Having recognised My Divinity, Kondama Raju suggested to Pedda Venkama Raju to change her name to Easwaramma, meaning mother of God. One day, Kondama Raju called Venkamma and told her, “Venkamma, our people are living in ignorance; they are unable to recognise the Divinity of Sathya. He is verily God Himself. He is never hungry, never thirsty. He has transcended hunger and sleep.” In the middle of the night, Kondama Raju would quietly come near Me and try to listen to the sound of My breathing. Sometimes, he did not notice any breathing, yet he would hear the sound of Soham coming from Me. People started pouring into Kondama Raju's house to see Me. If anyone questioned them, they would reply, “The grandson of Kondama Raju is endowed with divine powers. He appears in our dreams and solves our problems.”

Once Seshama Raju came to Puttaparthi during holidays. He did not like so many people visiting the house of Kondama Raju. At that time, he was thoroughly sceptical. He argued with Kondama Raju and told him not to allow anybody to come to his house. In those days, the educated were highly respected in the villages. Seshama Raju had just completed teachers' training. Hence, people in the village respected him as he was considered highly educated. He told Kondama Raju, “Grandfather, do not allow anybody to come to this boy. He does not have any divine power. Some sort of madness has overtaken Him. Perhaps, He is suffering from hysteria.” In this manner, he spoke derisively about Me. He persuaded Pedda Venkama Raju, the father of this body, and took Me to Uravakonda. I became famous in Uravakonda also.

As people were coming in large numbers, it was not possible for Seshama Raju to keep Me with him. Hence, he wrote a letter to Pedda Venkama Raju to come and take Me away to Puttaparthi. In those days, Puttaparthi was such a remote village that it would take several days for letters to reach. However, Pedda Venkama Raju received the letter in Bukkapatnam where he had gone to make purchases in the market. The letter said, “Father, it is not possible for us to keep Sathya with us any longer. Please come and take Him home at once.” Pedda Venkama Raju came to Uravakonda from Bukkapatnam straightaway. He did not have sufficient money in his pocket. He took the bus fare from Seshama Raju and brought Me to Bukkapatnam by bus. From there, we had to walk all the way to Puttaparthi, as there was no transport facility. In fact, the name of Puttaparthi was hardly known beyond the nearby localities.

At that time, there were many exorcists who were supposed to possess cure for madness and evil spirits. Instead of recognising My Divinity, people thought that some evil spirits were haunting Me. So, I was taken to an exorcist in Kadiri who was considered to be an expert in driving away evil spirits. I was put in a cart and transported to Kadiri. Venkamma accompanied Me. At no time would she be parted from Me. This so-called exorcist of Kadiri was a thorough drunkard. He asserted that I was possessed by some powerful spirit and boasted that he would rid Me of the evil. He beat Me severely and My body was full of scars. As if that was not enough, he applied poisonous collyrium to My eyes, which caused severe burning in them. I submitted Myself to all this torture without demur. In the evening, I asked Venkamma to put the juice of cow dung in My eyes. With

this treatment, My eyes became clear again. Many types of tortures were inflicted on Me but I cured Myself with the help of Venkamma. Finally, the exorcist shaved My head and made deep cuts on it with a sharp knife. Blood started oozing from these wounds. After this, he started rubbing lemon juice into the wounds. Many pots of water were then poured on My head from a height of 10 feet. It was a terribly painful operation. Venkamma could not bear the sight of this torture. Quietly, she called the cartman in the darkness of night and took Me back home to Puttaparthi.

### **Casting off Worldly Ties**

Seshama Raju, the elder brother of this body, did not understand My Divinity. He thought, I was wasting time in Puttaparthi. So, he took Me to Uravakonda and admitted Me in the school again. The then Municipal Chairman of Bellary, Rama Raju was a friend of Seshama Raju. He took us to the Virupaksha temple in Hampi during holidays. I was reluctant to enter the temple. Hence, Seshama Raju instructed Me to keep a watch over their belongings as they went inside to have Darshan of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. At that time, the priest was offering Arati to the deity. To their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum in place of Lord Virupaksha. Seshama Raju could not believe his eyes. In fact, he was very angry, thinking that I had entered the temple unnoticed. He thought, it was improper on My part to have entered the sanctum sanctorum. He at once came out of the temple only to find Me there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was having doubts. At that time, his friend Rama Raju noticed a brilliant aura around My face. He revealed this only to his wife and not to anybody else including Seshama Raju. In fact, Seshama Raju was full of doubts.

The vacation was over and we were returning to Uravakonda. Rama Raju brought a pair of knickers and shirt for Me as parting gift. But I refused to accept them. In those days, wearing a collar pin was considered a fashion. Hence, Rama Raju presented a gold collar pin to Me with the prayer that I should remember him always. Wearing a collar pin was very common among the children hailing from rich families. The collar pin dropped on the way while I was proceeding to the school in Uravakonda. It could not be traced. I at once returned home and discarded the books. I declared:

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

(Telugu Poem)

Seshama Raju was not at home when I sang this poem. Later on when his wife told him about it, he laughed and brushed it aside saying, I would have got it composed by somebody. Being a poet himself, he thought it was impossible for a young boy like Me to compose such excellent poetry.

Excise Inspector Anjaneyulu had great love for Me. Even his children were highly devoted to Me. When Anjaneyulu came to know about the happenings, he at once came in his car and took Me to his house. He went on questioning, “My dear, did Your brother

or sister-in-law scold You or did they beat You? Why have You left home?" I sang a song:

*The link with the world has gone in the form of the pin; the pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose. Baba left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.*  
(Telugu Song)

I said, "The worldly attachment is like a small pin which I gave up. Hence, I have left the house. I will no longer stay there." I did not enter the house of Anjaneyulu either. There was a big rock in front of his house. I sat there and did not speak to anybody. Everyone was stupefied beyond words to see the change that had taken place in Me. In the evening, Seshama Raju who was on his way back home from school, tried to take Me with him. But I was firm in My decision not to go home. Then Anjaneyulu persuaded him saying, "Do not compel Sathya to go with you. Let him remain here for some time. I will bring Him to you myself afterwards."

I remained there for some time. Many people came to Me and put all sorts of questions like "Are You a ghost or a demon? Who are You?" I told them, I am neither a ghost nor a demon, "Know that I am Sai Baba in reality." (*loud applause*) They asked Me, "How are we to believe that you are Sai Baba? Can you prove Your claim?" In fact, in those days nobody had even heard the name of Sai Baba. I took some flowers in My hand and threw them on the floor. People were wonderstruck to see that the flowers arranged themselves as Sai Baba in Telugu letters. Somebody brought a camera and took My photograph when I was sitting on the rock. There was a small stone in front of Me. When the photograph was developed, the stone appeared like Shirdi Sai Baba. Many copies were made of the photograph and distributed to all. The rock on which I sat that day is still there even today. Anjanaiah, State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Andhra Pradesh has built a beautiful Mandir with a spacious hall at that place.

Gradually, My fame spread far and wide. People from various villages and cities started flocking to Me. People possessed by evil spirits were brought to Me in bullock-carts. They believed that I could drive away the evil spirits. People who were mentally retarded were also brought to Me. True to their faith, the evil spirits were driven away and the patients were cured of their mental ailments. Then they started believing in My Divinity.

Everyday morning and evening, Venkamma used to come to Me. She used to ask Me many questions. Sometimes she would ask, "Sathya, do You get dreams? Does anyone appear before You and talk to You?" However, I would not say anything to her. She had developed immense faith in Shirdi Sai Baba. One day, she prayed, "Sathya, please give me a photograph of Sai Baba." I at once materialised a photograph of Sai Baba and gave her. Nobody can tell what will come out of My hand. She kept the photograph with her till her last breath.

### **Singular Devotion of Subbamma**

When I came from Uravakonda to Puttaparthi after declaring My Avatarhood, My fame had already spread far and wide. There was such a rush of people that there was hardly

any space to accommodate them. Then Pedda Venkama Raju told the people to come to the house only on Thursdays. But people did not like this as they wanted immediate cure of their suffering. Then Subbamma called Venkama Raju and told him that it was not practical to accommodate the surging crowds in his house; she offered to take Me to her house and meet all My needs and also of the visitors.

As Subbamma was a Brahmin and Swami belonged to the Raju caste, the Brahmins of Puttaparthi took objection to Subbamma's proposal and decided to boycott Subbamma. She was not worried by the proposed boycott as she had no children, and had no inclination to go about visiting anybody. "I shall never forsake Sathya", she said. In the village, there were a few houses of Harijans. These Harijans loved Swami and would invite Swami to their house. I used to visit their houses. Subbamma also accompanied Me. She would not bear separation from Me even for a moment. She looked after Me as her own son. All the Brahmins of the village were completely inimical to Subbamma and even her own mother and brother turned against her. On the path of spirituality, such impediments do arise and she was quite aware of the situation. She declared that she was unconcerned about the enmity of anybody. She was quite firm in her resolve to hold on to Me. Soon, even her house started overflowing with visitors. So, once Venkama Raju approached Subbamma and said, "Why should you undergo this kind of ordeal on account of my son? Let us put Him in a separate house." Then Subbamma gave some land between the Sathyabhama Temple and Venugopal Swamy Temple. A small room was constructed there. They used to lock Me up in the room. But, in spite of the locked room, I used to get out and sit on the top of the hill. These kinds of wonders were of daily occurrence.

Meanwhile, those who were opposed to Subbamma on caste grounds decided to get rid of Swami by poisoning Him. I was very fond of Vadas (Indian savoury) in those days. So, these people made some Vadas and mixed poison in some of them. Subbamma was warning Me all the time against visiting those houses. But I used to go to all places despite her objection. On this occasion, I visited this house and ate the poisoned Vadas. The sequel to this attempt is already known.

Another attempt of this kind was made when some of them set fire to the house in which I used to stay. It had a thatched roof. At night some miscreants set fire to the house. As flames were rising high, people were worried as to what would have happened to Me inside. Suddenly, there was heavy rain which poured down just above the house and put out the fire. There was not a drop of rain anywhere else. Venkamma, Subbamma and Easwamma came there weeping. The roof was fully burnt and only the walls were standing. They found Me totally unharmed. Then Subbamma took Me away to her house. After several such trials and tests, people developed faith in Sai Baba. In Penukonda, another person started claiming miraculous powers, saying that he was a devotee of Sai Baba. Several others started imitating My dress and hairstyle and started calling themselves as Sai Babas. But you cannot cheat the people for long. The people ultimately came to know their reality.

### **The Glory of Puttaparthi**

When I started going to Bangalore, Easwaramma and Venkamma entreated Me that I should not leave Puttaparthi. I promised them that I would never leave Puttaparthi and would stay here forever. At that time, people of many royal families started coming to Puttaparthi. Those days Chitravathi flowed for the most part of the year. Their devotion was so great that they crossed the river by improvising temporary causeways of wooden planks. As the number of My followers increased, the opposition of the local miscreants melted away. After I promised Easwaramma, I never abandoned Puttaparthi. The whole world may come here but I shall not leave Puttaparthi. Generally, Avatars stay at their place of birth. If you uproot a plant from its place and plant it elsewhere, how long will it survive? A tree grows strong where it is planted first. In this manner, Sathya Sai Baba has retained his roots in Puttaparthi and has made Puttaparthi a place of pilgrimage.

Puttaparthi has come to assume a glorious name in the world. 'Putta' means anthill. As the place abounded in anthills, it got this name Puttaparthi. What is the origin of the name of this village Puttaparthi? There is a strange story associated with it. Near the Patha Mandir, there is Venugopal Swamy Temple. A snake lived in an anthill near it. Everyday the cowherds would take their cows for grazing to the outskirts of the village. One of the cows would go to the anthill and the snake would drink milk from its udder. Everyday the cow would return home with empty udder. The cowherds found out the reason behind this and planned to kill the snake. One day as the snake was drinking milk from the cow, they hit it with a stone. The snake pronounced a curse on them that cows and cowherds would no longer be able to live in the village. That is why, the cowherds left this village and built their houses near Gokulam. You can see this yourself even today. The stone with which the cowherds tried to kill the snake is now being worshipped in Venugopal Swamy Temple.

Today I narrated at length all this in order to tell you the significance of Sai Baba and Puttaparthi. Puttaparthi has a great history behind it. Many eminent and affluent people visited this place. In those days, the Maharaja of Mysore and his mother used to come here quite frequently. Many such eminent personalities recognised the greatness of Puttaparthi and revered it.

*The Lord of Puttaparthi will protect you always,  
He is the embodiment of compassion,  
He will hold your hand and take you across the ocean of life,  
He will never forsake you under any circumstances.* (Telugu Poem)

*Embodiment of Love!*

You are really fortunate, for you are able to enjoy the Divine proximity of Sai. It is the result of the merits earned by you in your previous births. It is your great good fortune that you are singing, talking and walking with Him. You are with Sai and Sai is with you. As I often say, "You and I are one." So, develop unwavering faith in God.

*Students!* Having come to Puttaparthi and studied here, you should make every effort to uphold the prestige of Puttaparthi. I want to tell you another small thing. Usually, students like to spend their vacation at home. But here the students do not like to go home

even during the vacation. Only very few of them go home. Even after completing their postgraduation, many students stay here. What is the reason for this? Here is the greatest Divine magnet. (*loud prolonged applause*) God attracts one and all. His power is beyond all limits. In the years to come, you will experience the power of this magnet more and more.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina ...*” and continued the Discourse.)

(Pointing to Dr. Anjanaiah, Swami said) He has constructed a Mandir at Uravakonda. The Mandir enshrines the rock on which I sat when I gave My first teaching to mankind. He did his M.Sc. Ph.D. and was doing a job. Later on, he resigned and dedicated himself to the service of Swami. At present, he is the State President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Andhra Pradesh. (Pointing to an elderly devotee) He is the father-in-law of Dr. Anjanaiah. He also stays at Uravakonda. He has kept aside 100 acres of land for Swami. He is growing various types of fruits there and sending them to Puttaparthi. At present, he has completed 100 years of his life.

I want to tell you another important thing. Here in Prasanthi Nilayam, all the devotees who dedicate their lives to Swami live for full 100 years. Kasturi came here and lived a full life. Similar was the case with Pujari Kistappa. All of you might have heard of Kamavadhani. He was a great Vedic scholar. He came and stayed here for 30 years. Never did he leave Puttaparthi. One day after performing Rama Kalyanam here in the Mandir, he told Me, “Swami, I am going to My room. I will have a sacred bath and come back.” I told him, “You don't need to come back. After bath, have your food and sleep peacefully.” He went home and had a bath. As instructed by Swami, he had his food and rested. He died peacefully in his sleep. The name of Sai was always in his mind. He never had any illness. There was another devotee by name Surayya. He was a bachelor. He had no desires. Prior to coming here, he was working for the Raja of Venkatagiri. One day, he expressed his desire to the Raja that he wanted to go to Puttaparthi. The Raja was very happy and made all arrangements for his coming here. He stayed here for more than 30 years and served Swami. He too lived for 100 years and died peacefully in his sleep.

(Swami called Sri Gopal Rao to the dais and said) Many of you might have heard of Gopal Rao. He is also approaching 100 years. Even at an advanced age, he used to go to the canteen regularly and serve water to the devotees. When he was the Chairman of Andhra Bank, there was a major strike. Many prominent people were arrested. Indira Gandhi sent him a telegram. That day I happened to go to his house for lunch. I told him, “Gopal Rao, do not yield to political pressure. What you have chosen is the path of truth. Do not budge from it.” He obeyed My command. Nobody could touch him. He served in the Andhra Bank for 40 years. At present he is living in Prasanthi Nilayam happily doing Namasmara. You know Dr. Padmanabhan of Bangalore. His uncle Seshagiri Rao came here at the age of 63 after his retirement. He also lived for 100 years and had a peaceful death. All these devotees led a happy and healthy life. At no point of time did they seek the service of others. I told Gopal Rao that he would lead an healthy life and would not be dependent on anybody. In this manner, many devotees led a long and peaceful life in Divine proximity. Physical body is bound to perish one day or the other. But one should not become dependent on others.



- From Bhagavan's Birthday Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 23rd November 2003.

**SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING**  
(A Deemed University accredited by  
NAAC at the A++ level)  
Vidyagiri, Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134,  
Anantapur Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India  
Ph: (08555) 287191, 287239 Website:  
srisathyasai.org.in E-mail: sssihl@hotmail.com

**Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music**

**Admission Notice**

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, (Deemed University) offers the following courses under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music in Prasanthi Nilayam (For boys). The admissions will be made for the Academic Year commencing from June 2004.

**FULL-TIME COURSES**

**1) FOUNDATION COURSE:** (Carnatic, Hindustani) Vocal, Veena, Mridangam, Sitar, and Tabla.

-- (Duration 2 years)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Candidates should have passed 7th Standard of study, and be 13 to 20 years of age.

**2) DIPLOMA COURSE:** (Carnatic, Hindustani) Vocal, Veena, Mridangam, Sitar, and Tabla.

-- (Duration 3 years)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Candidates should have passed 10th Standard of study and also a Course in Music equivalent to the Foundation Course from any recognised college/institution, and be 16 to 23 years of age.

Application forms will be available from 1st December, 2003 to 28th February, 2004.

Admission to the above Courses will be on the basis of Admission Test and Interview, which will be held in May 2004, at PRASANTHI NILAYAM, Andhra Pradesh.

Interested candidates may apply to the Registrar, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134, Anantapur Dist., A.P. along with Indian Postal Order or Bank Draft for Rs.50/- for the above courses. The Indian

**Postal Order or Bank Draft should be drawn in favour of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, payable at Prasanthi Nilayam / Puttaparthi. Name, postal address and phone number of the candidate should clearly be mentioned in the requisition letter.**

**REGISTRAR**

### ***22nd Convocation of SSSIHL***

#### **VICE PRESIDENT APPRECIATES SATHYA SAI SYSTEM OF EDUCATION**

Expressing deep appreciation of the spiritual ambience of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Vice President of India and the Chief Guest of the 22nd Convocation of the Institute remarked, "This campus has a unique serenity and sublimity of atmosphere. It is not just that your buildings and gardens are beautiful, which they undoubtedly are. It is not just that the climate is pleasant, which it surely is. But beyond all this, there is a certain intangible quality about the atmosphere of this place. There is a refinement and a soothing power about your campus. Every teacher and student, every administrator and worker here seem to know intuitively that this Institute of Higher Learning is also a centre of Higher Behaviour and a seat of Higher Understanding."

Sri Shekhawat was delivering the Convocation Address at the 22nd Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning held in beautifully decorated and glittering Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd November 2003. Commending the integral system of education of the Institute, Sri Shekhawat said, "Your Institute is known for imparting integral education. Welfare of the poor and the downtrodden through several humanitarian projects is the running theme of this Institute which shapes the outlook of the students and forms a part of their mental make-up; they are trained to think in terms of giving more to society than to take from it. Gandhiji's noble advice when he said, 'The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others', convincingly reverberates in the ethos of this Institute."

The ceremonial procession was led from Poornachandra Auditorium to Sai Kulwant Hall by the brass band of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. At the head of the procession were the Chief Guest, Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Revered Chancellor of the Institute, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and Vice Chancellor of the Institute, Sri S.V. Giri. The procession received a rousing welcome by the students and devotees when it entered the glittering Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.10 p.m.

The Vice Chancellor, Sri Giri garlanded the Chief Guest after the procession reached the dais. The Convocation was then declared open by the Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Baba on the request of the Vice Chancellor after invocatory Vedic chants by the Institute students.

#### **Vice Chancellor's Introductory Speech**

In his introductory speech, the Vice Chancellor of the Institute, Sri S.V. Giri extended a warm welcome to the gathering on this auspicious occasion of the 22nd

Convocation of the Institute. He had a special word of welcome for the Chief Guest of the function Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, the Vice President of India.

Sri Giri elaborated how the integral education being imparted to the students of this Institute had helped them to develop Samanvaya – a harmoniously balanced outlook and insight. Commenting on the academic excellence achieved by the Institute, Sri Giri informed the august gathering that the Peer Team of the NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Committee) which visited this Institute awarded A++ grade to the Institute in the university system. The Team said: “The Peer Team feels that this Institute stands out as a crest jewel among the University education system in the country and this model is worthy of emulation by the institutions of higher learning in the country and elsewhere, so that these benefits would be reaped fast and on the widest possible scale.” Sri Giri then dwelt on the significant events of the last year and referred to many projects of social concern undertaken by the Institute including the recent one of rehabilitating the physically challenged persons from the lowest rung of society.

The source of inspiration and guidance behind all these achievements of the Institute is its Revered Chancellor Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, remarked Sri Giri.

#### **Graduands Presented to the Chancellor**

After these introductory remarks of the Vice Chancellor, the candidates who had successfully completed their studies were presented to the Revered Chancellor by Prof. U.S. Rao, Principal, Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute. The candidates stood up on their seats and bowed to the Revered Chancellor with folded hands who bestowed His benedictions on them. Thereafter, the Vice Chancellor administered the pledge to the candidates who had been conferred the degrees by the Revered Chancellor. After this, the names of meritorious students who had won gold medals were announced. They were lustily cheered by the students and devotees when they came to the dais to receive their medals and certificates from the Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

#### **Convocation Address by the Vice President, Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat**

At the outset, the Chief Guest, Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Vice President of India expressed deep gratitude to the Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for giving him this opportunity to come to Prasanthi Nilayam which was his long-cherished desire. “To visit these precincts is to undertake a pilgrimage; to be in Holy Baba's enlightened presence is to witness the self-renewing spirit of India's spiritual heritage,” said Sri Shekhawat.

Sri Shekhawat then congratulated the graduating students and wished them a successful career. He hoped that those coming out of the portals of this prestigious institution would address themselves to the problems of the country. “I have no doubt that the humanistic culture of this Institute will positively orient your attitude towards the imperative need to help the poor to come out of the shackles of poverty, disease, ignorance and illiteracy,” said Sri Shekhawat.

Referring to the social concern of Bhagavan Baba to help the downtrodden and the needy, Sri Shekhawat observed, “Holy Baba's social concern is unparalleled. He has started a water supply project which provides drinking water for over 700 villages in a hardcore drought prone area proverbially known for its scarcity of drinking water. He has established an Educational Institution, such as yours, which provides the best quality education without charging any fees whatsoever. He has founded an institution which provides the most expensive medical care to those who can least afford it, and totally free. I wish all religious organisations derive inspiration from Baba and in addition to spiritual upliftment, also work for the amelioration of the poor, the hungry and the diseased.”

In conclusion, Sri Shekhawat urged the students to play a meaningful and constructive role in promoting universal peace and harmony as envisaged by Bhagavan Baba in the axiom: “There is only one caste, the caste of humanity ... There is only one God, He is omnipresent.”

#### **Benedictory Address by the Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

In His Benedictory Address, the Revered Chancellor of the Institute, Bhagavan Baba reminded the students of the glory and pristine culture of Bharat, the mansion of which rested on the pillars of Sathya and Dharma. He therefore advised them to uphold the prestige of this great land by adhering to the values enshrined in its great culture. The Chancellor advised the students to use the education acquired by them for the good of others and not to amass wealth. He said, “Remember always that your education is not merely to amass wealth or to eke out a livelihood. Money cannot confer true happiness on you. Do not deviate from Dharma for the sake of Dhana (money). Dharma is your life, truth is your breath. Good reputation is your wealth. You should not crave for worldly name and fame. Once you practise Dharma, you will naturally attain good reputation. Dharma is related to the heart. Practice of Dharma is termed as Ritam which will make you immortal. But today we do not find anybody adhering to Ritam. Bharat has given birth to many great scholars, poets and men of sacrifice who demonstrated great ideals. But today people have forgotten them. We should always remember people who have sacrificed their life for a noble cause and try to emulate them. It is the spirit of sacrifice that has protected and sustained this country for many ages and generations. Sacrifice is the Dharma of the Bharatiyas. You should offer your life for the protection of Dharma and not for amassing wealth.”

The Revered Chancellor concluded His Benedictory Address by exhorting the students to imbibe love for God in their heart. He said, “Love is your life. Love is your goal. The Bhagavadgita also lays great emphasis on the principle of love. Having studied here for a long time, you should fill your life with love. You have immense love for Me. It cannot be described in words. Love others as you love Swami. Give Me your love. Take My love in turn. There is no trace of body attachment in Me. Doctors said they would perform hip surgery on Me. I told: You can do whatever you want. I am not the body. This body is yours. Your love becomes worldly in nature when you have body consciousness. You should develop such love

which transcends body consciousness. Only then can you understand the eternal truth. When you truly experience Divine love, you will not lead a worldly life. You will make your love flow incessantly towards God.”

The proceedings of the 22nd Convocation of the Institute came to a close at 5.00 p.m. with the singing of the National Anthem by the entire congregation.

### **Tera Tujkho Arpan**

The students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a powerful drama entitled “Tera Tujkho Arpan” on the occasion of 22nd Convocation of the Institute on 22nd November 2003 in Poornachandra Auditorium, Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of the Revered Chancellor of the Institute, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Based on a theme which is pertinently relevant to modern times when even fine arts and spirituality have not been spared by the onslaught of commercialisation, this excellent drama depicted how music loses its divine quality when it is put to commercial use for money, power, name and fame.

As the story unfolds, one of the two disciples of a saint musician goes to city to earn name and fame lured as he is by his youthful ambition, while the other disciple keeps following the teachings of his Guru to sing for God and serve the poor. Meteoric rise of the ambitious disciple has an equally steep fall when he suffers a catastrophe and loses his voice. This leads to his homecoming in the Ashram and ultimately at the Lotus Feet of the Avatar Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba through the loving persuasions of his saintly brother- disciple.

Scripted under the direction of Bhagavan Baba Himself, the drama was an unrivalled piece of excellence which brought the dramatic art to absolute perfection. Besides, matchless direction, superb acting of the cast, appropriate dialogues, soul-stirring devotional songs, perfect choreography and excellent stage management made it an outstanding presentation from all standards.

The drama which began after the arrival of Bhagavan in Poornachandra Auditorium at 6.30 p.m. kept the audience spellbound till the end at 7.50 p.m. when Bhagavan went up on the stage, blessed the cast, posed for photographs with them and distributed watches to them. The dignitaries who watched this play included the Vice President of India, Sri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat.

Man must get rid of the feeling that he is the doer. As long as the ego is dominating, the Atma or God consciousness will not be realised. The egoist cannot recognise the Atma. Therefore, first crush your ego. It is egoism that is the root cause of all troubles of man.

- Baba

Divine Discourse: 12th November 2003

## REHABILITATE THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

*There is no disease like debt,  
There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry,  
There are no greater gods than parents,  
There is no greater Dharma than compassion,  
There is no greater gain than the company of the good,  
There is no enemy greater than anger,  
There is no wealth greater than good reputation,  
Bad reputation is death itself,  
There is no ornament better than the chanting of God's Name.*  
(Telugu Poem)

### *Embodiments of Love!*

The body may be handicapped but the Atma does not suffer from any disability. The Atma is changeless, pure and eternal. One who is physically challenged need not worry that he does not have a particular limb and that some calamity has befallen him. Even if you suffer from a handicap due to loss or deformity of a particular limb, you must discharge your duties as far as possible. In this way, you can teach a lesson to those whose limbs function normally, yet they spend their time in idleness. What work are such people doing? They join bad company and engage themselves in evil deeds. On the other hand, there is no scope at all for you to engage yourself in bad company, bad behaviour and evil deeds. In fact, you must be grateful to God for having been given such a physical condition that you engage yourself in continuous prayer to Almighty God. There is not much difference between those who are physically challenged and those whose limbs are perfectly normal. The physically challenged may not be able to engage themselves in certain beneficial activities to society. But the question arises as to how far the people with normal limbs are undertaking such beneficial activities. Practically nothing. Do not be under the impression that possessing a normal body with all the limbs functioning perfectly invests you with any greatness. In fact, those who are having a normal body are committing more sins than the physically challenged. In spite of enjoying perfect health and all conveniences, they create problems for themselves as well as for others due to their carelessness and arrogance.

### **Temporary Charity is of Little Use**

I am happy that the teachers and the former and present students of Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions are doing some useful service to the physically challenged. However, it is not enough if you undertake such service as a short-term activity limited to one or two days. I am observing that several of our students are undertaking some beneficial service activities to society. They are supplying some useful items like callipers, crutches, tricycles, etc., to the physically challenged, so that they may be able to attend to their daily routine. Along with this, it is also necessary to ensure that these implements continue to function efficiently and be of use to the beneficiaries since their entire life is dependent on them. For this purpose, it is necessary to get them serviced and repaired periodically. Only then will they be of

use to the persons concerned. It may not be possible for you to come and seek My help every now and then. I, therefore, propose to establish a permanent fund of ten lakh rupees for this purpose. (*loud applause*) With this fund, you will be able to serve the physically challenged on a continuous basis and thus set an example to others in society.

The parents of the physically challenged may feel “Alas! Our children are not able to lead a normal life like others; they are not married; who will marry them?” I wish that you undertake service activities which will relieve the mental agony of such parents. You must provide peace and comfort to them by rendering service to their physically challenged children. Most people have normal limbs. But, of what use are they? For example, the hands. With these hands, we can undertake good as well as bad actions. The eyes can be used to see good as well as bad things. The mind can be filled with good as well as bad thoughts. Therefore, do not be under the impression that those whose body, mind and intellect function perfectly normal are all that great. In spite of their high intellectual abilities, there are several people among them who misuse their capabilities. I wish that you, who are physically challenged, should lead your lives in constant contemplation of God, thus setting an ideal to others.

#### **Serve the Physically Challenged on a Continuous Basis**

The teachers of our Anantapur College have, of course, been undertaking such useful service activities now and then. But that is not enough. The implements we supply to the physically challenged may require repairs sometimes. You should not rest content with the mere distribution of these implements. You should also check up periodically whether they are in good condition; if not, you should get them repaired immediately. This is your responsibility. I wish that you should visit these physically challenged people periodically on Sundays and holidays and enquire whether the implements are in working condition and whether they are leading purposeful lives. You should also counsel the parents of the physically challenged children and provide them comfort and solace.

Some of the physically challenged persons may be homeless. Hence, they may be roaming about in the streets and market places and begging for alms. They may even go to the extent of selling away the implements we supply them, and in a few days come back to square one. I am of the opinion that whatever service we do must be of lasting benefit. I am, therefore, prepared to arrange for the construction of houses for such people. You teachers and students should constantly monitor the progress of these physically challenged children. There are several people in the world who perform acts of charity which meet the immediate needs of the beneficiaries. But that is not enough. All these activities give only temporary benefit to the recipients. Unlike these people, you should undertake service activities which benefit the physically challenged children throughout their life.

#### **Provide Opportunities for the Education of the Physically Challenged**

There may be some among these children who are very enthusiastic to pursue higher education but they may be lacking the means to do so. You should encourage such

children and provide them necessary help. I will also provide necessary assistance to them. You ask Me whatever is needed. I will provide. But one point is to be remembered in this context. Today several people in the academic field think that they are highly educated. So, they become egoistic. Bangaru! You should acquire good education and make good use of it. You should not develop ego. Only then will your education serve the desired purpose.

*In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his evil qualities.*

(Telugu Poem)

*Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring education which cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.*

(Telugu Poem)

Today people are not able to derive the real benefit from education because they indulge in endless argumentation and reasoning. You should not give scope to such argumentation. Some of the physically challenged children present here told Me today that they could not continue their studies after 8th or 9th Class due to lack of opportunities. If they are enthusiastic to pursue higher education, I will provide the necessary means. Do not worry. In fact, education is the real property. It will last forever. Money can be misused or may be stolen. But education can never let you down. Therefore, pursue education up to whatever stage you wish to. Make good use of your education by taking up small jobs in your own village and be helpful to your parents. Become self-reliant and self-supporting and thereby provide comfort and solace to your parents. Serve your parents. If you do so, our purpose behind this endeavour will be served. Your own life will also become purposeful.

It is true that you undergo some suffering on account of your physical handicap. I know your suffering. Some of these handicaps may be for a temporary period and some may be lifelong. Some may also be due to your recklessness and arrogance. I am seeing several highly educated persons misusing their education and indulging in evil deeds. I wish you should not go their way. Whatever education you are able to acquire make proper use of it by imparting it to the less privileged and those younger to you. If you wish to take up a job, certainly you may do so. There is nothing wrong in it.

### **Contemplate on God Constantly**

Bharat is a great country. It is a sacred land. People born in this country are really fortunate. But, of what use is all this greatness? Today nobody cares for the suffering people in this country. There are several rich people in India but they do not help the suffering people. To tell the truth, people with virtues are better than people with wealth. My advice to all of you is that you make proper use of your limbs and help others. You are really fortunate, my dear ones! Be constantly in the contemplation of God. It is only God who can come to your rescue. Without God's help and grace, no one can perform even a small job. Pray to God both morning and evening "Oh God!



May you help us in sanctifying our bodies by undertaking good activities.” If you pray to Him thus, He will certainly help you. In fact, the very purpose of God's existence is for helping such noble souls. He readily responds to the prayers of sincere devotees. He is the sole refuge of the suffering and forlorn.

*God is your sole refuge wherever you may be, be it in a forest or in the sky or in a city or in a village or on the top of a mountain or in the middle of a deep sea.*  
(Telugu Poem)

After the day's work, before you go to sleep, pray to God, “Swami! Today I have been able to perform this small Seva with Your grace. Sanctify this small Seva.” Thus, dedicate all your effort to God and then go to sleep. Similarly, as soon as you get up from your bed pray again to God, “Oh God! Having given this body to me, please help me in undertaking activities that would sanctify this body.” If you pray to God thus, He will be pleased and will grant you all the necessary strength to undertake service activities. Therefore, do not forget God under any circumstances. He will always be with you and protect you. Do not ever revile God. Whenever you are in difficulties, you may condemn your fate out of frustration but never condemn God. Love God. God is love and love is God. Today love for God has declined. That is why people are undergoing difficulties in ever so many ways; you must cultivate love for God and show compassion towards the poor. If you can cultivate both love and compassion, there cannot be a more fortunate person than you. One may be a millionaire. One might have built great mansions. Of what use are they without God's grace? Hence, pray for God's grace and carry on the service activities to the extent possible.

### **There is no Greater Service than Helping the Physically Challenged**

I wish that Jayamma, Warden of the Anantapur College, the teachers and students undertake more and more such service activities in future and help the physically challenged lead a normal life in society. In fact, the purpose of all your education is to serve the poor and destitute. There is nothing greater and nobler than such service. Service is the greatest Dharma. It is only service to the poor and needy that will take you near God. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Hence, love all and serve all. That is what is ordained for a human being. There is no use merely doing Japa, Thapa and Namasankirtan. Your life will be sanctified only by undertaking service to the poor and forlorn. There cannot be a greater service than this, Bangaru! You are all fortunate that all your limbs are functioning normally. Therefore, I ordain you to undertake service to the physically challenged and relieve them of their frustration and despair. If you really wish to undertake service, you must undertake such type of service. What is the use of your serving those who are perfectly healthy and whose limbs are functioning normally? You have Sundays and holidays. Instead of sitting idle in the house and spending time in gossiping, you may visit the villages and give some help to the physically challenged. If you talk to them lovingly, it will boost their morale. Serve those people and derive happiness out of your service.

Bangaru! You all know I have taken up a project by name “Deenajanodharana Pathakam” to help the children who lost their parents. Under this project, we have given shelter to 65 such children. We provide them food, shelter and clothing. Not only that, we provide them education to become self-reliant and self-supporting. For this purpose, we have made a fixed deposit of one lakh rupees in the name of each of these 65 children. When they grow up and set up independent family, they can utilise this amount. Thus, whatever help you wish to render to somebody must be on a permanent basis. You should not dole out temporary charity. One must be provided with food, shelter and clothing. I wish that you should undertake such service lovingly to the poor and forlorn, and encourage them to become self-reliant. I conclude My Discourse with blessings to all of you.

The beneficiaries of this service activity may go to the canteen, have sumptuous lunch and then go back to their places happily.

- **From Bhagavan's Address to the Physically Challenged in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 12th November 2003.**

**SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER MEDICAL SCIENCES,  
PRASHANTHIGRAM 515 134, ANANTAPUR DT.(A.P) INDIA  
E-mail: sssihms@sancharnet.in Phone No.08555-287388, Fax No.287544**

Applications containing complete bio data and enclosing thereto a passport size photo are invited from qualified medical personnel for the following post in the department mentioned below of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Prashanthigram, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh - 515 134.

Department Experience	Category of post	Qualifications
Cardiology years / 8 years teaching	Senior Consultant/ Additional Senior Consultant and / research experience	DM or its equivalent 12
		or
	clinical experience in a recognised Institution after obtaining D.M or qualification recognised equivalent thereto	

**Scales of Pay:- Central Government scales of pay are applicable  
D.A & PF as per rules.**

**The applications should reach the Institute by 31/01/2004.**

A Report on Bhagavan's 78th Birthday Celebrations

**DEVOTIONAL FERVOUR MARKS BHAGAVAN'S BIRTHDAY  
CELEBRATIONS**

Birthday function of Bhagavan Baba is an occasion for a wide variety of programmes of cultural, social and spiritual significance which include Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam.

**Global Akhanda Bhajan**

As part of global Akhanda Bhajan for world peace held every year in all parts of the world by the Sai Organisations, Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam was held from 6.00 p.m. on 8th November to 6.00 p.m. on 9th November 2003. Prior to the start of the Akhanda Bhajan, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning chanted Vedic hymns in chorus for two hours from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. first in Sai Kulwant Hall and later in the Bhajan Mandir. At 6.00 p.m. sharp, the students of the Institute started the Akhanda Bhajan in the Bhajan Mandir in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Bhajans were led by the boys and girls students alternatively. Some groups of devotees were also given the opportunity to lead the Bhajans for short durations in the night on 8th November 2003. Bhajan singers and devotees were exhilarated when Bhagavan came to the Bhajan Mandir to shower His blessings on them both in the morning and afternoon of 9th November. In the afternoon, Bhagavan came to the Bhajan Mandir at 4.00 p.m. and sat there up to the conclusion of the Bhajan. During this time, Bhagavan distributed watches to the singers inside the Mandir and to workers outside the Mandir who received Bhagavan's special blessings of Prasadam and clothes also from His Divine Hands. Before the conclusion of the Bhajan at 6 o'clock, Bhagavan broke coconuts in the Bhajan Mandir as a mark of auspiciousness and sanctified Prasadam for distribution to all the devotees. At the conclusion of the Bhajan at 6.00 p.m., Bhagavan received Arati in the Bhajan Mandir. Thereafter, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees inside and outside Sai Kulwant Hall. With this, Akhanda Bhajan came to a happy conclusion filling the hearts of the devotees and students with divine bliss.

**Rathotsavam**

Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba began with the holy festival of Rathotsavam at Prasanthi Nilayam. Sai Kulwant Hall reverberated with Vedic chants of Institute students when Bhagavan came to the Hall from His residence on the morning of 18th November 2003. Soon after His arrival, Bhagavan entered the Bhajan Mandir and blessed the beautifully decorated idols of Sri Krishna as well as Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman. With the blessings of Bhagavan, the idols were brought out from the Mandir in palanquins at 7.30 a.m. followed by Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students. The procession of Rathotsavam started from Gopuram Gate after the idol of Sri Krishna was placed on an

attractively decorated Ratha. Led by a group of musicians and followed by Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students and devotees the procession wended its way to Venugopala Swami Temple through the main road of Puttaparthi. As the Ratha moved slowly, villagers in large numbers came out of their houses to watch this grand event and offered Arati and worship to the idols with flowers and by breaking coconuts before the Ratha. After the termination of the procession at Sri Pedda Venkama Raju Kalyana Mandapam (Old Mandir), the Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students returned to the Bhajan Mandir. While they kept chanting Vedic hymns inside the Mandir, other students sang Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall, thus keeping the entire Prasanthi Nilayam reverberating with devotional chants for nearly half an hour. In the end, Arati was offered to Bhagavan with great devotion. With this, the festival of Rathotsavam came to a happy conclusion at 8.50 a.m.

### **Helping the Physically Challenged**

To celebrate the 78th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the teachers and students of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur Campus organised a social service project in which 78 physically challenged persons were selected from various villages in the Mandals of Anantapur District such as Anantapur, Dharmavaram, Hindupur, Pamidi, Kothacheruvu, Madakasira, Kadiri, and Bommanahal, to be the recipients of tricycles, crutches, callipers, artificial limbs, wheel chairs, walking sticks, etc. With the permission of Bhagavan, the beneficiaries were called to Prasanthi Nilayam where they had the good fortune of receiving these different props from the Divine Hands of Beloved Bhagavan Himself.

As 12th November 2003 was Bhagavan's Birthday according to the Indian calendar (Bahula Tadiya Karthika Maasam), the function in Sai Kulwant Hall began with Bhagavan lighting the lamp and cutting the birthday cake. The Compassionate Lord blessed each and every patient. It was a moving sight as each one of them came forward, assisted by one of the teachers, and received a pair of new clothes from the Divine Hands of Bhagavan.

After the formalities were completed, Bhagavan graciously sat for a time and listened to some songs sung by the girls of the Anantapur Campus.

Throughout the function, Bhagavan's love seemed to flow to the handicapped patients. He called Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath, Warden and Head of the Department of English, and asked her to speak to them. When she started to speak in English, Bhagavan turned towards her, and said that she should speak in Telugu so that they would understand what she spoke. Prof. Gopinath reminded the beneficiaries of their great good fortune in being the recipients of Divine grace, and advised them not to disregard the value of what they had received.

To the surprise and delight of all the people gathered in the Hall, Bhagavan expressed a desire to speak, too! Bhagavan spoke for nearly twenty minutes in Telugu without any translation! (English translation given elsewhere.)

After Mangalarati, Bhagavan announced that all the patients should go to the canteen and, after a sumptuous meal, happily return to their home towns. He once again blessed everyone with Abhayahasta.

### **Ladies Day Celebrations**

Ladies Day is celebrated every year on 19th November at Prasanthi Nilayam as a mark of reverence for womanhood. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has accorded special significance to this day by making it as part of His Birthday celebrations every year. Like the previous years, Ladies Day was celebrated this year also with gaiety and piety. Right from the start of the day, all the programmes on this day were conducted by the ladies. This included morning Omkaram, Suprabhatam, Nagar Sankirtan and even Veda Parayanam. Ladies were privileged to offer welcome to Bhagavan Baba when He came to Sai Kulwant Hall for showering the bliss of His morning Darshan to the devotees on this day at 6.50 a.m. Bhagavan was led into the Hall in a procession by a Veda chanting group of Primary School girls and Anantapur Campus girls and their bands. As a mark of special welcome, girls with lighted lamps lined the passage of Bhagavan in the Hall.

On His arrival in the Hall, Bhagavan was led to dais where He lighted the sacred lamps to inaugurate the programme. Special decorations had been made on the dais to observe this day in a befitting manner. A portrait of Mother Easwaramma adorned the dais amidst decoration of flowers of various colours and designs. The programme began with introductory remarks by Smt. Chethana Raju, a former student of the Institute, who offered tributes to Mother Easwaramma as the universal role model for ideal womanhood. The first item of the programme was a grand display of band music by the girls students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School. This was followed by a dance drama “Shakti Ek Roop Anek” presented by the Bal Vikas children of Delhi. The drama showed some episodes from the lives of Mother Yashoda, Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi, Florence Nightingale and Mother Easwaramma who were the embodiments of Shakti and of sterling virtues such as love sacrifice and compassion. The drama which began at 7.30 a.m. came to a close with a group song in praise of Mother Easwaramma at 8.10 a.m. Bhagavan showered His special blessings on the ladies on this day by distributing Saris to them.

The afternoon programme began after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Poornachandra Auditorium at 3.50 p.m. The chanting of Vedic hymns by school girls was the opening item of the programme. Then followed a very unique programme of devotional music by overseas ladies who sang devotional songs in five languages, viz., Sanskrit, English, Latin, Chinese and Hebrew, displaying how spiritual milieu of Prasanthi Nilayam was bringing about synthesis of cultures, religions and languages.

The speakers who shared their views with the devotees on this occasion represented many areas of women's activities. In her introductory speech, Smt. Sarla Shah invoked the blessings of the Divine Mother Easwaramma and exhorted the ladies to follow the path of ideal womanhood shown by her. She also expressed gratitude to

Bhagavan for allowing the ladies to celebrate Ladies Day as part of His Birthday function, thereby inspiring them to play their role in His Divine Mission. Smt. Shah then introduced the speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to speak after her.

The first speaker of the function was Smt. Genoveva Kanu, one of the pioneers of African Institute of Sathya Sai Education. To play their role in the Divine Mission of Bhagavan, women should themselves first become models of purity, unity and divinity, said the learned speaker. This, she said, was the significance of celebrating Ladies Day on 19th November each year. Smt. Kanu also told how ladies in Sai Organisation in Africa were helping in various service activities.

The next speaker who addressed the gathering was Smt. Barbara Bozzani, the Editor of “Sathya Sai Newsletter” of U.S.A. Smt. Bozzani narrated how she and her husband realised Bhagavan Baba's Divinity 30 years ago and started coming to His Lotus Feet every year. Smt. Bozzani observed that women were the embodiments of sweetness and sacrifice, and these qualities of women could bring about unity and harmony in the family and build the character of the children. Women, she said, should play the role of moulders of children's character by their own example.

After Smt. Bozzani, a reputed businesswoman Smt. Mallika Srinivasan addressed the gathering. Smt. Srinivasan observed that Bhagavan had initiated the celebration of 19th November as Ladies Day to foster reverence for the mother in society because it was the mother who moulded the character of her children, specially in early years of their lives. Cautioning the modern women about the dangers of careerism, Smt. Srinivasan observed that women should always remain repositories of virtues like modesty, morality, sacrifice and sweetness.

The next speaker was Smt. Vera Alvarez de Rafrez, Coordinator, North Central Zone of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, Mexico. The speaker referred to the teachings of Bhagavan Baba and observed that we should first know who we are. She also dwelt on her experiences of Bhagavan's Divinity and His unique way of teaching spiritual truths. Referring to the system of Educare, she observed that those who undertook to teach human values should undergo personal transformation themselves first.

The last speaker of the function was Smt. Chethana Raju. Smt. Raju referred to the values enshrined in the ancient Indian culture and observed that this culture was based on highest spiritual truths. She regretted that modern man had become spiritually dwarf in spite of his advancement in science and technology. Smt. Raju emphasised on value based life. Through surrender and conscious effort, man could move forward for the creation of an ideal world which would reflect in all its areas simple, sacred and profound teachings of Bhagavan Baba, said Smt. Raju.

After these illuminating speeches, renowned Carnatic music exponent Smt. Sudha Raghunathan regaled the devotees with her classical songs in her mellifluous voice. This spellbinding presentation was the most befitting finale to the celebrations of

Ladies Day at Prasanthi Nilayam. The programme came to a close at 6.15 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Bhagavan's Birthday Function**

Bhagavan's Birthday function is one of the most important events at Prasanthi Nilayam. Devotees from all parts of the world throng Prasanthi Nilayam for Divine proximity on this auspicious occasion. This year also mammoth crowds gathered at this abode of supreme peace to take part in the Birthday Celebrations of their Beloved Swami. The venue of celebrations was Sai Kulwant Hall which was aesthetically decorated with various types of decorations especially fresh roses of various colours. Flower decorations at Bhagavan's abode in Poornachandra Auditorium were simply marvellous. Lights of many designs and colours illumined the entire Mandir complex, especially the lawn in front of Bhagavan's residence.

On the morning of 23rd November 2003 Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.30 a.m. in a grand procession led by the bands of Primary School (Girls), Primary School (Boys) and the Institute. Veda chanting groups of school and college students also formed part of this procession. As soon as Bhagavan entered the Hall, the students in the Hall commenced Veda chanting. Bhagavan was offered Arati by many ladies when He came in the Hall. Bhagavan showered the bliss of His Divine Darshan to all the devotees and took a round of the entire Sai Kulwant Hall. Bhagavan also cut birthday cakes and lighted candles on them.

The proceedings of the function commenced after Bhagavan was seated in His chair on the dais. Three speakers were blessed by Bhagavan to address the gathering before His Divine Discourse. Sri K.Chakravarthi, Secretary, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, who introduced the speakers, greeted all the devotees on this holy and happy occasion of Bhagavan's 78th Birthday and prayed to Bhagavan to keep showering His blessings and benedictions on all the devotees here at Prasanthi Nilayam and also on those who were far away in other parts of the world.

The first speaker who addressed the mammoth gathering was Justice P.N. Bhagawati, former Chief Justice of India. Justice Bhagawati said that it is impossible to describe the glory of Bhagavan who has miraculously transformed millions of people by the power of His Divine Love. The message of Swami is the message of love, love that is undemanding, pure and unselfish, said Justice Bhagawati. That is the type of love Swami wants us to have for God, observed the learned speaker.

The next speaker, Dr. Art-Ong Jumsai, Director, Sathya Sai Institute of Education, Thailand, observed that Swami always teaches by His example. He said, Bhagavan is teaching us that we should transcend body attachment and remain calm and unperturbed in both pleasure and pain. The learned speaker delineated the power of prayer and said that we should pray for others with our heart full of love, and not for the fulfilment of our petty desires. The best prayer to Bhagavan was, he said, to put Bhagavan's teachings into practice in our daily life. Referring to the efficacy of

Sathya Sai Educare, Dr. Jumsai observed that values would naturally take root in children's heart if the teacher had the capacity to touch their heart.

The last speaker of the function was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Prasanthi Council. The real joy of celebrating the Birthday of Bhagavan Baba, the Avatar of Kali Yuga, is to experience the God consciousness within us, to bask in the warmth of Bhagavan's Divine love and to recognise the Divine wisdom that illumines our mind, said Dr. Goldstein. What can we offer to Bhagavan on this auspicious day? asked Dr. Goldstein. And then he replied that we should get rid of our animality, purify our heart and offer our pure heart full of love to Bhagavan. God has taken human form to uplift us, but if we do not learn the lessons He is teaching us, then what is the purpose of human birth? he asked.

After these speeches, Bhagavan gave the bliss of His Divine Message to the devotees. (Full text of Bhagavan's Birthday Message has been given elsewhere in this issue). The morning function came to a close at 10.10 a.m. with offer of Mangalarati to Bhagavan. Prasadam was distributed to all in the end.

The devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall basked in the bliss of Divine proximity when Bhagavan came to the Hall in His yellow robe in the afternoon at 4.00 p.m. amidst the chanting of Vedic hymns by the students. The afternoon programme commenced with a musical offering at the Divine Lotus Feet by the famous Hindustani classical singer Ms. Parveen Sultana. First she kept the audience spellbound by a Raga specially composed for this occasion by her husband, Ustad Dilshad Khan. This was followed by Mira Bhajans and Bhajans in praise of Bhagavan Baba. After this excellent presentation of devotional music, well-known English singer Dana Gillespie regaled the audience with English and Hindi devotional songs. Instrumental support was given to her by the students of the Institute. The befitting and grand finale of the celebrations was the recitation of devotional poems by Sri A.V.S. Raju, Chairman, Nagarjuna Construction Company. Bhagavan blessed the collection of his devotional poems and also honoured him with a shawl. Before the conclusion of the proceedings, Arati was offered to Bhagavan. The programme came to a close at 6.10 p.m.

### **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

#### **CULTURAL PROGRAMMES AS PART OF BHAGAVAN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

##### **Bhakta Purandaradasa**

The Bal Vikas children of Kerala (Ernakulam district) staged a dance drama on the life of Saint Purandaradasa in Sai Kulwant Hall on the evening of 18th November 2003 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The drama portrayed the life story of this famous saint of India in a very impressive way by the talented acting of the



children. Elaborate backdrop settings, excellent costumes, perfect choreography and melodious songs were the other striking features of this drama. At the end of the play, the children prayerfully formed a group in their colourful costumes at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan who blessed them and posed for photographs with them. The programme which began at 3.15 p.m. came to a close at 4.15 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **A Journey towards Divinity**

The students of Sathya Sai Spiritual Education, Singapore presented this drama as part of 78th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the afternoon of 20th November 2003. Based on one of the well-known sayings of Bhagavan Baba, viz., “If there is Righteousness in the Heart ...”, this beautiful drama showed man the royal road to world peace and to Divinity by inculcating the virtues of purity, unity and love. The superb acting of the children was equally matched with excellent planning and direction to make it an outstanding presentation. The drama began at 3.30 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall and came to a conclusion at 4.15 p.m. Bhagavan sat through the entire performance and blessed the children.

### **Devotional Vocal Music**

An excellent musical programme of devotional songs regaled the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall on the afternoon of 20th November 2003 soon after the drama “A Journey towards Divinity”. This programme was presented by the famous singer Ms. Padmaja Joglekar in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The programme which began at 4.25 p.m. ended at 5.10 p.m. and kept the audience spellbound throughout.

### **Family, a Drama**

A drama entitled “Family” was presented in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by the Bal Vikas children of Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Middlefield, Toronto (Canada) on the afternoon of 21st November 2003. This short and simple drama dealt with the crisis that most families were facing today, particularly in the West where parents had no time to look after their children who felt lonely and forlorn. The drama delineated how Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual Education could become an effective medium of inculcating values in children and in bringing about unity, peace and harmony in the family. The drama which began at 4.00 p.m. concluded with a group song by the entire cast at 4.30 p.m. Arati was offered to Bhagavan in the end.

### **Cultural Programme by Primary School Students**

The students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School presented a very beautiful cultural programme entitled “Sai Mahima” consisting of a variety of cultural items, viz., band display, speeches by children, recitation of “Bhaja Govindam” of Adi Sankara and dances on the theme of creation and the teachings of Bhagavan Baba, particularly regarding the unity of mankind on 24th November 2003. The programme which started at 2.50 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in Sai Kulwant Hall came to a close at 3.30 p.m. with the prayer “Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu” chanted in

chorus by the entire group. Bhagavan showered His blessings on the children and posed for photographs with them.

#### **Bhakta Ambarisha**

This dance drama was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Tamil Nadu on the afternoon of 25th November 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall as part of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's 78th Birthday celebrations. The drama depicted the story of King Ambarisha whose devotion to Lord Narayana was so powerful and intense that He sent His Sudarshan Chakra to teach a lesson to Sage Durvasa who had pronounced a curse on the king on a flimsy pretext. Excellent performance of the children, appropriate costumes and make-up and judicious mix of commentary and songs enhanced the impact of the play, which displayed the power of devotion to the Lord. At the end of the drama, Bhagavan blessed the children and posed for photographs with them. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.00 p.m.

#### **Dasya Bhakti**

This dance drama was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Bihar and Jharkhand on 26th November 2003 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The drama depicted some selected episodes from the life of Hanuman which portrayed him as the crest jewel of Dasya Bhakti (devotion of servitude). Though enacted without the usual props of stage and curtains, the innovative skill of the directors and the brilliant acting of the children made it a lively production. The drama which began after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall at 3.45 p.m. came to a conclusion at 4.35 p.m. Bhagavan watched the entire drama and posed for photographs with children at its conclusion. He also materialised a gold chain for the child who enacted the role of Hanuman.

### **NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Medak district selected five very poor women for regular feeding till 31 October, 2005. The youth of this district carried out Grama Seva at Thirmalpur village on 21-9-2003, conducted medical camp treating 460 patients, conducted veterinary camp treating 450 animals, planted 78 saplings, distributed food provisions (10 kg rice, 2 kg Dal, 2 kg wheat flour, 1 kg sugar, 1 kg edible oil, etc.) to 78 selected families, distributed notebooks, pens, toothpastes, etc., to 78 students after conducting Bal Vikas classes, carried out Swami's Pallaki Utsavam and conducted cultural programmes.

**Assam, Manipur and N.E. States:** It was with an ardent desire to create an awareness of the Sai Mission and to provide opportunity for the devotees to deliberate on the glory of God that a Sadhana Camp on Indian Culture and Spirituality was arranged on 7th September 2003 within the premises of 'Sathyam Shivam Sundaram' at Borjhar near Guwahati City. Faculty members while deliberating upon the topic stressed the urgent need to revitalise the true concept of Indian culture and inculcate the concept of Educare in day-to-day life.

**Rajasthan:** A special medical camp was organised for auto rickshaw drivers at Chittorgarh on 12th October 2003 in which 470 drivers were given medical treatment by 19 medical experts. Each auto rickshaw driver was given a sticker of Bhagavan's photograph with divine message for display on his auto rickshaw.

### **SATHYAM SIVAM SUNDARAM**

#### **Publication of Subsequent Volumes**

With the Divine Blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust has undertaken the sacred work of publishing the subsequent volumes of 'Sathyam Sivam Sundaram'. Prof. Kasturi had authored the first four volumes depicting the life and mission of Bhagavan Baba from 1926 to 1979. We propose to bring out the fifth volume (covering the saga from 1980 to 1985) on Bhagavan's Birthday in 2004. It will be our endeavour to publish one subsequent volume on every subsequent Birthday of Bhagavan.

We request the devotees from all over the world who are in possession of any related authentic chronicles, pictures and documents to send them to:

The Convener

The 'Sathyam Sivam Sundaram' Committee

Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust

Prasanthi Nilayam

Andhra Pradesh

Pin 515 134.

The devotees may please send the above in whatever medium they are available and in whichever form it is convenient for them (documents, diaries, audio/video tapes, CD's, etc.). A quick and prompt response will be deeply appreciated.

Our E-mail identity is:

[sssbpt\\_psn@rediffmail.com](mailto:sssbpt_psn@rediffmail.com)

Convener

### **SRI SATHYA SAI HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL PRASANTHI NILAYAM - 515 134**

Admission to Class I (Boys and Girls) and Class XI (Boys only) of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Vidya Giri, Prasanthi Nilayam Post. (Anantapur Dist., A.P.), 515 134, will take place in June 2004. It is an English Medium, wholly residential school.

Prospectus and Admission Forms can be obtained from the Principal from 1st December 2003 on cash payment or remittance of Rs. 50/- through D.D. drawn on SBI, Prasanthi Nilayam (Code: 2786) in favour of the Principal with a self-addressed 15 cm x 24 cm cover with postage for Rs. 15/- .

Last date for issuing the forms from the Principal's office is 15th February, 2004 and last date of receiving the filled in forms in this office is 1st March, 2004.

Only students coming from English Medium classes should apply.

PRINCIPAL

