

"Christmas is celebrated in innumerable centres in all parts of the globe, mostly by attending service in a church, followed by gala parties where people make merry in drinking and dining. It is only in Prasanthi Nilayam that people from several countries in the world, following different faiths, speaking different languages, engaged in different avocations, join together in the true spirit of brotherhood and start the day by chanting God's name and glory and spend the day in Divine activities. Not even in the birthplace of Christ is Christmas celebrated with such unity and spiritual fervour", observed Bhagavan Baba, in His Christmas Message to a vast concourse of devotees in and outside the Poornachandra Auditorium, on December 25.

Bhagavan began His discourse with the recitation of two poems in which he described the power of words to convey the profoundest message and lead man to liberation or to bondage, and pointed out how the one God is worshipped by members of different faiths, under different names. Bhagavan said:

Embodiments of Divine Love!

In the world today all those who are held in high esteem as great personages have earned their good name only by their character and conduct. To accomplish anything one wants, one should have firm determination. Those with fickle minds cannot achieve anything.

All religions and scriptures agree that going to the aid of fellow-beings in times of need and saving them from distressing situations is the greatest virtue of a person. Every human being has equal rights in the world. All belong to one family. It is essential to practise forbearance and equanimity to enjoy peace of mind. There are persons good and bad, rich and poor, educated and uneducated in every country of the world. Though born in the same family and breathing the same air, some persons are narrow-minded and have crooked ideas and indulge in selfish deeds, while others are good and selfless.

"*Suhrudam Sarvabhoothaanaam*", "*Ekathma Sarvabhoothantharathma*" are well known aphorisms from the scriptures. To be friendly towards all beings is the duty of everyone, since the same Atma is there in all beings. Comprehending this truth, it is the duty of everyone born as a human being to do good to others on the basis of love.

There is no need to search for God anywhere, since God resides in every being. The body is, therefore, to be considered as temple of God. Today man is breeding bad thoughts in the mind, thereby polluting the heart which is the seat of the Divine.

From animal to the Divine

In every human being, there are four kinds of potentialities, namely, animal, demonic, human and Divine.

contemplation of the Athena within and enjoy Atmic bliss and sanctify every moment of his life by doing good deeds. He realises that the same Athena is there in all beings as the Inner Self (Antaratma) and leads a blissful life, discarding selfish thoughts. He is a Brahmajnani or Atmajnani, a realised soul, who is aware of the truth that revering others is revering the Lord and hurting others is hurting the Lord. Such persons radiate divinity though they are in a human body.

The "human" type of persons follow the path of Truth and Righteousness ("Sathya Dharma paro Marthyaha"). They are engaged in activities in strict accordance with Sathya and Dharma (Truth and Righteousness), using their sense of discrimination in the right manner. They discharge their responsibilities without craving for position, power, pelf or fame. Such a person lives in harmony with his fellow beings and discharges his duties with firm belief in the three precepts: fear of sin, love of God and morality in society.

The next type is the demonic person. Such a person does not care for the code of conduct for human beings, indulges in shameless pursuit of sensual pleasures, is filled with ego and pride, and does not hesitate to hurt others for selfish purposes. He goes on nonchalantly committing sinful deeds. Egoism is his life breath and attachment is his backbone. Such a selfish person is termed as demonic.

"Jnana Viheenaha Pasubhis Samanaha". The man lacking wisdom is like an animal. A person who is steeped in ignorance is considered to be no better than an animal. Such a person's life is centered only on sense gratification. His thoughts never go beyond the senses because of his ignorance of the divinity within him. He deems the transient earthly pleasures as heavenly bliss and lives in delusion devoid of discrimination.

Every man must make an effort to rise to humanness, shedding his animal and demonic qualities, and then strive to realise his divine nature. Nowadays, we find that men are going down in the reverse direction, from the human to the demonic and animal states.

The Message of Jesus

On December 25th, when Jesus was born, three kings came to his birth-place. These three gave expression to three different views about the new-born babe. One of them, looking at the infant, said: "This child looks like one who will be a lover of God." A second king said: "God will love this child." The third king declared: "Verily, this child is God Himself." The first one viewed the child from the physical point of view. The second saw the child from the mental view-point. The third saw from the Atmic (spiritual) point of view.

These three declarations indicate how one can progress from the human to the divine level. What is needed is the destruction of the animal and demonic qualities in man. Man today worships inanimate idols and images, but makes no attempt to love his fellow human beings in flesh and blood. This was the first message of Jesus. Though one sees his neighbours day after day, he does not choose to love them. How can one believe that such a person can love an

can he love what is not visible to him? This is not possible. Only a man who loves living beings around him can love, the invisible Divine. Love must start with love for beings that have form. It must be extended to all beings. This is the primary stage in spirituality.

Spirituality does not mean preoccupation with meditation, worship, etc. It involves total extinction of the animal and demonic qualities in man and the manifestation of his inherent divinity. When the attachments and hatreds in which man is enveloped are removed, the inherent divinity in man, the Sat-Chit-Ananda in him will manifest itself.

There is no need to search for the omnipresent Divine in any specific place. When you are yourself divine, why search for the Divine elsewhere? It is a mark of ignorance.

Jesus performed many miraculous deeds, relieved the sufferings of many in distress, preached sublime truths to the people, and ultimately sacrificed his life. For over a hundred years after his martyrdom, Christ's message did not have any impact. Four centuries later, Christianity was accepted by Roman emperors. Even after many centuries humanity is yet to realise the inherent divinity of man.

Man is searching for a reasons for every belief or action. Should you seek a reason for sanctifying the time spent by you on any action? When you are engaged in unselfish activity for the common good of society and discharging your duties with dedication, you are sanctifying your life.

There are four basic elements in every action. They are Karana, Karma, Kala and Kartavyam. Karana is the reason, Karma is the action, Kala is the time and Kartavyam is the duty that has been discharged. We can cite an example for this. Supposing you want to go to Madras to see your relatives; you go to the bus-stand in the morning, sit in the bus, travel for eight hours and reach Madras in the evening. Now, seeing your relatives is the cause (Karana). Sitting in the bus and travelling is the action (Karma). Spending eight hours is the time factor (Kala) and seeing your relatives in Madras and getting satisfaction there from is the goal (Kartavyam).

If you do the same things in your dream, there is no time factor; the cause and action factors are also absent. As soon as you wake up, you find that you are only in the bed and discover that your seeing your relatives in Madras was unreal. All the four factors are absent in the dream state. Only where all the four are present it will be real.

The purpose in view is termed "Lakshyam". You are born as a human being for doing your duty (Karma). Life is given to you only to recognise Divinity and the body is the instrument for achieving this purpose (Karana). When you have spent your life, you have done the action (Karma) in the duration of your life (Kala). You should have the satisfaction of having achieved the goal (Kartavyam).

service to society. This is the teaching of Vedanta. Vedanta declares that the body is intended only to do actions in the world in a selfless way.

The Christmas tree

Jesus was crucified on a Friday and He rose from the tomb on a Sunday. That is why Sunday is taken as the day of worship and service in churches. Catholics gave importance to Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, while Protestants gave importance to the birth of Christ. Catholics celebrate Christmas by worshipping Mary on the evening of 24th and Protestants celebrate the birth of Christ on the 25th.

There is a custom of putting up a Christmas tree on this day and worshipping it. The genesis of this custom can be traced to Germany. A preacher by name Jensen from England once visited Germany. When he was travelling in Germany on his mission, he noticed some Germans attempting to offer a child's life as sacrifice to propitiate God who, they believed, lived in an oak tree. The priest was worried and questioned them why they weave offering an innocent child as sake to a tree. As they asserted that God lived in the tree, he took an axe and cut the tree. To his surprise, he was shaken by an inexplicable vibration from head to foot. He noticed the form of a child between the two portions of the tree that was cut by him.

This incident teaches the truth that, God lives not only in human beings but also in plants and trees. From that time onwards people started putting up a Christmas tree and worshipping it on this Christmas day. The system of worshipping Divinity in many forms including plants and stones, which originated in Bharat, has been prevalent for a long time in other countries also.

There are Sanyasis even among Christians. The men are called monks and the women are called nuns. There is no difference in this regard among the various religions. In all religions the goal is one. Christianity propagated this oneness of God. But nowadays the pure permanent Atmic principle is forgotten in the preoccupation with worldly pursuits." (Bhagavan then described how the practice of having grandfather Christmas wearing a red robe and distributing gifts to children on Christmas day came into existence. Swami related the story of Nicholas, who began this practice when he became head of a church).

In all religions, birthdays of great personalities are celebrated but the ideals for which they lived are not remembered and followed. If you do not care to follow their teachings the celebrations lose their meaning and become artificial observances. It is not doing justice to the good people whose birthdays are being celebrated. Christ taught people to love all beings and serve all with compassion. It is only by practising these ideals one can truly celebrate His birthday. The Divinity within should be reflected in every action. The seat of Truth is in your heart. Worship means loving others with your full heart. You must live in love and lead a life of selfless service based on love. This is the only right way of celebrating the birth of Christ. God, in fact, has no birth and no death. No change is there in God, who is changeless and permanent. The Atma within is but a reflection of God and it is the same in all beings as an eternal witness.

transient body (Sakara) man has to merge in the ultimate Supreme Reality (Nirakara).

The Festival in Prasanthi Nilayam

Embodiments of the Divine Atma! Christmas is celebrated in innumerable places all over the world. Nowhere in the world is it done in the way it is celebrated here in Prasanthi Nilayam. People elsewhere may attend some church service and revel in drinking and dining parties. But, here, people from many countries in the world, speaking many languages, following different faiths and cultures, assemble together unitedly, start the day with singing God's name and glory regardless of their differences, join together in spending the day in carrying the message of Universal love. This is Unity in diversity and true Advaita in action. Every minute we are experiencing this. Whenever one makes namaskaram to elders, what is its significance? It signifies the bringing together of the five senses of perception and the five senses of action into one, thus unifying the different senses. In namaskaram you have "na" and "maskaram"—na means "no", which indicates that your ego is given up, and you have no body consciousness. The unity of all the sense organs will wipe out the "Ahamkaram" or "ego". This will lead to purity and purity will lead to divinity. This unity can be seen only in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Nowadays politicians and preachers talk of unity and purity but in practice it is not followed by the preachers themselves. It is only in Prasanthi Nilayam that this unity and purity are pervading naturally without any effort from anyone. All are living here like brothers and sisters of the same family.

The Power of Love

There are a number of foreigners here, who are very affluent and command princely comforts in their places, who have to put up with an austere life. They live in sheds in a spirit of fellowship and camaraderie though bereft of even the minimum comforts. They could not enjoy their life in their big mansions as much as they enjoy their stay here in such uncomfortable conditions. The reason is the Divine Love in them. If there is no such love in you, you cannot live here in such uncomfortable conditions even for a minute.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Devotees who have come from far off countries! You are putting up with the life here in spite of the lack of amenities to which you are normally accustomed to back home and are feeling happy. This is indeed a big Sadhana and can be termed even as Tapas or penance.

The foreigners, in spite of their discomforts and difficulties, radiate joy through their smiling faces. This is because of their love for Swami. They are spending a lot of money to come here and undergo the rigours of the disciplined life here most willingly and yet are always happy. But in spite of all comforts, the people of our own country who gather here do not present a cheerful countenance.

devotion, will ever be happy whether he is in a village or a city, flying in the sky or in a forest, because God dances in his heart and confers delight.

Because of the lack of unity, this nation is experiencing a lot of difficulties and turmoils. Promotion of unity is essential for peace in the nation and the world. There is no use in simply greeting others with words coming from the lips; greetings should come from the heart with sincerity and love.

(Bhagavan concluded the discourse with the bhajan song, "*Prema muditha*".)

Choodala the Guru

Sikhadhwaja the king had extreme renunciation and he left for the forest for ascetic practices. His queen Choodala had the spirit of detachment in greater measure, but she did not make a show of it as her husband did. She put on male attire, wore ochre robe, spelt a rosary and sought him in the jungle. Discovering him at last, she asked him who he was. The king replied that he was the ruler of the realm, that he had given up his riches, his treasure, his army, his court etc. "For the sake of what did you give up these" asked Choodala. "For the sake of peace," replied the king. But, he had to confess that he had not attained it. Then, Choodala taught him that the giving up of "things" will bear no fruit, that the desire for things, the pride of possessing things, of having once possessed them, has to be given up, that one must be detached from the objective world so that he might turn his eyes inward and conquer the foes of the inner realm and become a master of himself. When the king attempted to fall at the feet of the new Guru that had come to him, Choodala revealed her identity. She was a sati who was the Guru of her pati; there were many such in ancient times, when women were honoured and educated much better than today.

—Baba

Gurudev Vani

Summer Showers in Brindavan

Prajnanam Brahma

*Not all the pleasures and luxuries of the world
Will confer contentment on man;
Without the realisation of the Atmic Principle
He cannot experience peace and contentment.*

There are various kinds of Dharma (rules governing one's conduct) in the world. Brahmacharya (Celibacy), Grihasta Dharma (the duties of the householder), Vanaprastha

Ashram Dharmas (the dharmas relating to different stages in a man's life). The Varna or caste dharmas relate to Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. There are, moreover, dharmas relating to worldly life and spiritual life. In Bharat, man's life is thus regulated by dharmas. All these dharmas are related to the mind. Enquiry will show that these Dharmas are of minor importance.

There is one Dharma which is greater than all these. That is the Dharma concerning the awareness of the "I". (Prajna-dharma) It is the Dharma which pervades equally the body, the mind, the will and the Inner Motivator (Antahkarana). It has been defined as "Constant Integrated Awareness". It expresses itself as "I" and shines forth in its fullness. It manifests itself throughout the world. But man does not recognise its effulgence in spite of its presence within him. What is the reason?

The sun shines in all his glory, but his light is not felt inside a house because of the walls around and the ceiling above. In relation to man, what are these walls and this roof? The Vedas have declared: "The body is a divine temple and the indwelling spirit is the eternal Jiva." The body is like a temple. But, man has erected the walls of attachment and possessiveness (Abhimana and Mamakara) around it and covered it with the ceiling of egoism (Ahamkara). It is only when these walls and roof are removed that the divine "I" principle will be revealed in its true form as the effulgent Prajna.

Out of his egoistic feeling, a man declares: "I did this." "I saw this." "I heard this." "I experienced this." It is true that it is the "I" that sees, hears, and experiences. But when a man uses the "I" today, he identifies it with the body sense and not with an awareness of its "Prajna" nature. Hence there are two kinds of "I"—one may be equated with the term "eye" and the other with the single letter "I". The "I" that corresponds to the "eye" is related to the body. The single letter "I" proclaims the power of the Prajna (Constant Integrated Awareness).

Students! You must realise that when a man with the body-consciousness says, "I have seen", it is not the eyes that have seen. Nor is it the ears that have heard or the hands that have performed actions. Nor is it the mind that has experienced. Behind all these is the power *cry* Prajna which enables man to have all experiences of seeing, etc.

It is only when man gives up the ego sense relating to the body and realises the role of the Atmic power of Prajna that he would be able to comprehend the principle of Divinity within him.

"I" and the conscience

The basic human nature is related to Divinity and not to the body and sensory organs. In this human nature, how does one comprehend the meaning of "I". This "I" shines as an entity that is pure, unsullied and unselfish. In modern parlance this is called "Conscience." Whatever action one does, the Conscience declares whether it is right or wrong. Whatever one may say or do in worldly life, the Prajna Shakti (the power of Conscience) proclaims what is true, what is permanent and what is unaffected by the past, the present or the future. Here is an example: A

suspicion. To escape from the clutches of the police, the man uttered a number of falsehoods saying that he had never stirred out of his house and that he had not committed any theft. Although from a worldly point of view, he was uttering all these lies, his conscience was telling him that he had committed the theft and hidden the stolen articles somewhere and that he should not utter lies. This is the voice of the Prajna-principle which is related to the Universal Consciousness.

To recognise this Prajna-principle there is a certain kind of yoga (spiritual discipline). What is this yoga? Is it Kriya yoga, or Bhakti yoga or Jnana yoga or Karma yoga? There has been a great deal of misinterpretation of the term Yoga from very early times. It has been wrongly associated with some form of physical discipline. This is not the right meaning. Yoga means "Ananda" (Bliss). This is the correct meaning. When is this bliss experienced? When there is an awareness of the "I" principle, this bliss is secured. When life is enjoyed with the full awareness of the Prajna-shakti, bliss is experienced as a result of this yoga. Yoga is the unity of the individual with the Divine. Yoga means an end to dualism. Yoga teaches that the Jiva (the individual Spirit) and the Brahman are not separate but one. This is the significance of the declaration in the Shruti: "*Ekam Sath: Vipraa bahtuthaa vadanthi*" ("The Truth is one: the wise call it by many names"). This Truth is beyond the categories of Time.

The object and the image

So, the individual and the Divine are not separate. Some are of the view that they are like an object and its reflection. There is, however, a big difference between the reflection and the object. The Prajna-principle explains the relationship between the object and the image. The Prajna-shakti teaches that when a person sees his reflection in a trough of water, the reflection resembles him, but he is not the reflection. Students today are not taking to the spiritual path because there are not qualified teachers to tell them the spiritual truths in the proper manner.

The image is you, but you are not the image. The Prajna-principle explains this by the following example. For instance, if someone beats you, you are hit, but the image is not affected by the beating. This demonstrates the fact that you are affected by the beating. If you and the image were identical, the blow that hit you should affect the image equally. Therefore, it is clear you are not the same as your image. But the image identifies itself with you. For instance, if some one insults the image, you get angry. But if you are hit, the image does not suffer any blow.

This is the truth taught by the Prajna-principle, Awareness of this Truth is more significant than—all other truths (Dharmas). The essence of all truths is contained in the truth about the "I" as recognised by Prajna (the constant integrated awareness). Its value is equal to the total value of all other truths, which are only fractions of the whole, like 100 paise making up a rupee.

The significance of Sri Krishna's statement in the Oita, "Sarvadharmaan parithyajya maamekam Saranam vraja", is that by giving up all petty dharmas (observances) and surrendering to the Lord you get the benefit of adhering to all the other dharmas. This is contained in the assurance: "Aham Thvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshayishyaami maa suchah" ("I

Understand the basic truth about the "I" (*nenu*) (the Prajna-principle) and derive the maximum benefit.

Integrated awareness

Apart from Prajna, there are in man entities like the body, the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego. All these appear to be distinct and disparate. But essentially they are one. It is the functional differences of the mind which account for the different terms like intellect, will, etc. It is the same mind that assumes all the forms. Prajna (Constant Integrated Awareness) is present in all of them. To understand the Prajna-principle, what has to be recognised is that Prajna is present in all the constituents of the body and the mind, but under different names and forms. Just as sugar is the common factor in a variety of sweets with different labels, Prajna is the common factor. This common factor is identified with the "I" (*nenu*). How does this happen? One declares: "This is my body." "My" is an expression of "I". Again, one declares: "This is my mind." Here, again, the "I" is affirmed. "This is my chitta" (will.), "These are my sensory organs", "This is my Antahkarana" (Inner motivator). In all these statements, the "I" is repeatedly affirmed in the possessive case. ("naa" in Telugu, meaning "my"). But in Sanskrit, "naa" means "not". The declaration that "This is my (naa) body" also carries by implication the meaning "I am not the body." Similarly when one says, "This is my mind", he implicitly affirms that he is not the mind. It will be seen that even within such simple statements, deep meanings are implicit. The use of "my" in describing one's body or mind also means that he is different from the body and mind.

Here is an example. You have a block of ice. No one terms it as water. Nevertheless the ice block is full of water. Without water there can be no ice. This means that ice is one form of water and is entirely based on it. Likewise, for the body, the mind, etc., the basis is the "Chit-shakti" (the spiritual element) known as "I". It is the Prajna-shakti.

To give another illustration: You go to the Ganges with ten tumblers and fill them with Ganges water. All the tumblers contain Ganges water, but the Ganges is different from them. The "I" principle is like the flowing river Ganges. This infinite "I" principle appears in a myriad objects in multifarious forms. All these objects have emanated from the infinite "I". They are fragments of the Infinite like the Ganges water in each tumbler.

Similarly, in the body, the mind, the intellect, etc. the "Prajna shakti" of "I" (the integrated awareness) is present. All these have emerged from the Infinite and are manifestations of it.

Unity in diversity

Today, in the modern world, there is no attempt at expounding the unity that underlies the diversity. What is the reason for this? It is because many ancient sayings are interpreted in different ways. For instance, there is the saying: "For the achievement of righteousness, the body is primary." ("*Sariram Aadyam Khalu Dharma sadhanam.*") The meaning of this aphorism is that the body is given to you for the pursuit of dharma. Another aphorism is: "Sarvam khalu idam Brahma" ("Verily, all this is Brahman"). The entire creation is pervaded by Brahman (the

the embodiment of the Divine Consciousness". The sutras make such pronouncements on one side. On the other, some unseemly slokas are recited at the conclusion of traditional ritual worship in Brahmin houses. "Papoham, Papakarmaham Papatma, Papasambhuvah" ("I am sin itself, I am a committer of sin, I am a sinful soul, I am born out of sin"). This is a prayer in which the worshipper attributes sin not only to himself but even to his forebears. You may well imagine how unseemly all this is. Such prayers were devised to induce in the pious a sense of guilt and make them atone for their "sins" by making offerings to the priestly class. When the sutra declares that everything has originated from Brahman (the Absolute), when the Upanishads declare that the Lord is the indweller in all beings ("Ishwaru sarvabhoothaanaam"), how could the ideas of "birth in sin" and "I am a sinner" have any place? By arousing baseless fears in men, such sayings have served to undermine whatever little faith the people had in the Divine. This also accounts for the loss of faith among students today. Consequently, I introduced changes in this sloka in Prasanthi Nilayam. The priest in our Mandir used to repeat the old sloka earlier. In the place of "papoham", the term "Prapthoham" was substituted: "Prapthakarmaham", "Prapta sambhuvam". The changes meant: "I am born as a pure being. My parents were pure persons. My spirit is holy. My actions are sacred." The old sloka was changed in this manner.

Divine love—the panacea

On the basis of what happens in the world, people talk about sin and merit, but *inherently* there is nothing of the kind. There are no doubt misdeeds, but these should not be characterised as sins. Wittingly or otherwise man is prone to commit wrongs. Man should not commit such wrongs, because actions arising out of attachment or aversion, anger or hatred are expressions of the animal nature. When a man is filled with lust or hatred, he is a prey to a grievous illness. Vices like envy, anger, ego and hatred are various kinds of diseases. These diseases cannot be cured by ordinary medicines or by professional doctors, who can only deal with physical ailments. These maladies are related to the Antahkarana (the internal instrument of action). There is a divine panacea for curing these diseases. That is Divine Love. Once that Divine Love is got, one can experience the "I" (higher Self) present in the Prajna-principle. When the diseases go, health is ensured.

Hence, the first requisite is to develop the Love principles as the supreme quality of a human being. But this Love should not be mixed up with the myriad forms of affection and attachment found in daily life. These may be called "love", but they are only different forms of attachment (Anuraga).

Students should understand the difference between worldly love ("Anuraga") and Divine Love ("Prema"). Worldly love knows only how to receive and not to give. Divine Love gives and forgives and does not receive. It does not expect any return. In worldly love, there is no spirit of sacrifice. The Shruti declares firmly that immortality can be attained only through sacrifice and by no other means.

Preciousness of atma-jnana

room or a cave or a forest that constitutes solitude. It is the one-pointed contemplation of God that is true meditation. It means merging the mind in thoughts of the Divine exclusively. The mind is a prey to continuous fickleness. The only way to achieve concentration is to merge the mind in the Prajna-tattwa, the integral awareness of the "I". The Prajna-principle is also described as "Guhyam", that which is hidden or held in secret. It is infinitely precious. "Prajnana" is also termed Brahma-Jnana or Advaita-Jnana—knowledge of the Absolute. It is also called "Atma-jnana". This knowledge is so precious that it has to be carefully safeguarded. But when its preciousness is not realised, it is treated lightly. (Swami related in this context the story of a shepherd who found a shining piece of stone in a river and not knowing its value, he tied it round the neck of his favourite lamb. A jeweller saw it and knowing its value as a diamond bought it from the shepherd for ten rupees. When he was gloating over the cheap price at which he had got the highly valuable diamond, the diamond broke into a thousand pieces and an ethereal voice told the jeweller: "I could excuse the shepherd for treating the diamond as an ordinary shining pebble, because he did not know its worth. But when you, who knew its value, got me for a low price, I could not bear the humiliation and my heart broke into pieces. Swami said that students were indifferent to spirituality because they did not know how precious it is.)

Students should first of all realise the supreme value of spirituality. To pursue the spiritual quest with real understanding is yoga. People refer to Raja yoga and associate it with Emperor Janaka. How did Janaka practise yoga? He reigned over the empire as a ruler. He led the life of a householder. He experienced the spirit of a renunciant (thyagi). He merged his entire being in the Atma. To merge the body, the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego in the awareness of "Aham" (the "I" or the Self) is Raja yoga. The goal of life should be to become a Raja Yogi. This is the means to get rid of all worries.

Students! How do you get rid of worry? Worry arises out of attachment (moha). To get rid of attachment for anything, you should turn your yearning towards something that is greater, more beautiful and satisfying than the one to which you are attached. There is an illustration for this from the Ramayana. When Bharata and Satrughna returned to Ayodhya from their uncle's kingdom, they were stricken with grief on learning about the death of their father. They felt sad that they had been denied the chance to be beside their father at the moment of his passing. When they went to Kaushalya to enquire about Rama and Lakshmana, and what their father's last words were, Kaushalya broke into sobs and told them about the exile of Rama and how Lakshmana and Sita had gone with him into the forest to stay there for 14 years. When Bharata heard this, his love for Rama overwhelmed his grief over the death of his father and his greater love for Rama made him even bitter with regard to his father as the cause of Rama's exile. The grief over the death of the father yielded place to the sadness over separation from his beloved brother. A greater grief submerges a smaller grief. A nobler feeling eliminates an unworthy thought. Hence, to get rid of petty and mean thoughts, one has to cultivate noble sentiments and sublime ideas.

Man's entire life is a procession of worries from birth to death. To get over these worries, at least from now on turn your minds towards God because love of God is the panacea for all worries. Develop love of God. This is my sole message to all of you students.

Students! Dedicate all your thoughts towards the single object of realising the Divinity in you. "Prajnanam Brahma", declares the Upanishad. The integral awareness which is your real Self is the Universal Consciousness. Ruminates over this truth. Then you will realise your oneness with the Divine.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema muditha manase kaho Rama, Rama, Ram!*")

From Bhagavan's discourse at Brindavan on 28.5.1992

Our Greatest Heritage

The Mahabharata and the Ramayana which are the most precious jewels of India are like vast oceans. If we look at these oceans from one side, we will have only a limited view but if we climb up a hill and have a look at them, we get a full view and a better understanding of them. What we have to do is to delve into them and try to explore and understand the treasures contained in these big oceans. Ramayana and Mahabharata are very sacred books, which will directly tell us about many things, especially the ways in which we have to conduct ourselves. Ramayana and Mahabharata will help us in our daily life, like our two eyes. We are not able to know the true value of these jewels and we think that Mahabharata is merely a battle between the sons of two brothers, and that Ramayana is a story wherein a demon stole away the wife of Rama and Rama again won her back. It is not like that and these two epics are like the heart and the head of India, are as vital to India as the heart and the head are to a human body.

—Baba

Christmas in Prasanthi Nilayam

Gloria in Excelsis

I am writing this, still under the spell of the most wonderful Christmas I have ever experienced. Swami has said that Prasanthi Nilayam is the only place in the world where the Christmas Message is truly celebrated—what a moving and incredible celebration it was!

It all started when the Christmas Committee first met ten days earlier to formulate a programme, read proposed plays, choose choir leaders, arrange daily satsangs, and, when the play was chosen, meet proposed directors, discuss backdrops, costumes, makeup artists etc.

The theme was set when at the first meeting one Committee member stressed that we must work in harmony, in unity and with love at all times, no matter what dramas present themselves before the main drama on Christmas day. So it was. Friendship and love blossomed and this was evident throughout the whole exercise. Everyone connected with the play and the choir worked so hard and for so long that the results were incredibly beautiful. Swami's love was in abundance and although minor hiccups occurred, problems were soon solved and everyone learnt lessons as a result.

Prasanthi Nilayam filled up rapidly during the final few days and many said it was the largest Christmas crowd ever, with people from all nations. Where else in the world would you find such a gathering of people living in such love and harmony?

Excitement grew, rehearsals lengthened in time and number, but everyone knew that all would be well at the performance.

A few days before "D"—day, the music arrived for Handel's Messiah. Was it too late? Practice after practice and at the final rehearsal at the Poornachandra hall the harmony, sound and discipline were superb. And so it proved on Christmas Eve in the Mandir Compound. The programme was, good, the choir sang with their hearts and the harmony and love melted us all. Swami was *so* pleased. He asked for more and then more and walked around the choir several times", He congratulated the conductor with "Wonderful, wonderful" approached the choir, group leader and lit the Arati lamp for her to wave before Bhagavan. Swami was deeply moved by the love expressed by the devotees. I don't think He wanted to leave—the people certainly didn't want Him to—He waved goodbye several times but eventually departed leaving many moist eyes and tears of joy.

A blissful darshan

Christmas morning arrived and thousands of expectant hearts scurried towards the Ganesa Temple, clutching candles in their hands Suprabhatam was head in the Mandir, the lights around the Mandir came on and we beheld the most magical scene. Decorations abounded, twinkling coloured lights, two Christmas trees with 'snow', buntings and flags everywhere and the Mandir floodlit, glorifying its beauty.

Nagarsankirtan was well organised, with carols ringing out as wave upon wave of loving hearts carrying their candles wound their way around the Nilayam. The magic was enhanced as they entered the compound, singing, "Joy to the World", and Swami came out to the balcony welcoming all to His presence. Several more carols were sung, including the First Nowell, "O Come all ye Faithful" "Joy to the World" (3 times) and, of course, "Silent Night." Tears of joy were coursing down many cheeks as the Lord looking so magnificent and beautiful in a white robe showered His loving smile on everyone and blessed the gathering below. Arati was an incredible personal experience and at the end Swami waved farewell and went through the silver doors to the sound of "Silent Night," hummed by the crowd, only to be seen again walking along the top verandah blessing both men and women at either end of the Mandir ground.

It was then straight to the darshan line for most people to await the Lord's presence once again. Darshan music was a selection of Christmas songs and carols and this was followed by the students' band playing mainly carols linked by a narration on Jesus' birth. This was very enjoyable and a hilarious note was struck when a young student, dressed as "Father Christmas", came skipping and hopping into the compound with balloons and a stick and a satchel of sweets. After Swami threw some of the sweets to the children, Father Christmas skipped his way out throwing sweets all around.

Prasad was then distributed to all the devotees. It was announced that Swami would deliver His Christmas message in the Poornachandra Auditorium in the afternoon, to be followed by a cultural programme.

At 2.00 P.M. the Poornachandra started filling up, soon after 3.00 P.M. it was virtually full, but still they came in, filling every available inch, leaving thousands outside. The proceedings began with talks from three "Messengers of Sai" (former students of the Anantapur College for girls) about their experiences and how Swami guided them at every stage in their lives. An interesting report on the service activities of the "Messengers" throughout the world was presented by the Secretary.

Swami then started his discourse at 4.30 P.M. and enthralled us all us usual with his comments on Jesus' life and teachings, and how the "modern" celebration of Christmas and "Father Christmas" (St. Nicholas 900 years ago) evolved. Swami concluded with the bhajan, "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho" in which all the devotees joined enthusiastically.

Swami took His seat in the audience to watch the play, "Service to Humanity through Unity of Faiths". Swami enjoyed the play immensely and was seen explaining snippets from the play to students on either side of Him. He exclaimed how good the artists were, and appreciated the clever change of backdrop scenery. He loved the three little kids woolly sheep's clothing. The directing of the play was flawless, except for a minor hitch during the Buddha scene when the 'swan' had to ask the princely hunter to aim the arrow properly at her! The audience enjoyed it with good humour. The play choir was superb, with appropriate meaningful chants/songs/hymns between each presentation of a particular religion. Twice Swami exclaimed "Wonderful wonderful" during the play and His eyes glowed with pleasure as in the final scene a giant lotus flower opened up and a little Swami stood there with arms outstretched. The play choir and full choir hit the roof of the Poornachandra with "Om Beautiful God". A little girl angel popped up with a rose for our Lord and beckoned Him to come. He rose from His seat and went to receive it. It was a truly memorable heartwarming play.

There was even more to come. All Western devotees were invited to a free Christmas dinner in the Western Canteen. Before the dinner they were entertained by children from Dubai singing songs and bhajans. Later, the choir joined up and enthralled us by a repeat performance of their earlier repertoire.

part of it. Words cannot express the beauty of it all—the love of our Lord, the love and devotion of all those who took part in the programme and the love and friendships which have emerged from joining in to celebrate the birth of Jesus, in the presence of the Avatar who has now come to bring us all to God.

Harry Mansbridge,
Prasanthi Nilayam

The Messages of the Veda Vakyas

*Of what use is a life lived without chanting the Lord's name?
What happiness is there in reigning over the realm of the Devas?
What is the benefit from possessing all worldly riches?
Without Bhakti (devotion) can one be free from bondage?*

Although in the human, there are animal, demonic, human and divine possibilities, ignoring the human potential, pursuing animal tendencies is a great misfortune for man.

There are some who identify themselves with the body. They do not realise that this body is transient and may pass away any moment like a water bubble. Death overtakes the man who identifies himself with his body. The body is made up of the five elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth). It is bound to perish. The Indweller is permanent, has no birth or death and , is, indeed, the Divine itself. By treating the impermanent body as himself, man is wasting his life.

Five types of human beings

There are other misguided persons who identify themselves with their minds and waste their lives. They are harried continually by thoughts and fancies. Brooding over the past and speculating about the future, these persons ignore the present and land themselves in confusion.

The third category of persons apotheosise the intellect (Buddhi), identify themselves with it, make use of its powers and embark on various plans. By glorifying the discriminating powers of the intellect in this manner, these persons fail to recognise their true (divine) nature. Thereby, man is wasting the divine potentiality of the Buddhi. Life is waste in endless enquiries and experiments. However long one may conduct enquiries and researches, the intellect cannot help one to realise the Divine.

The fourth category of persons rely on the power of the Antahkarana (the Inner instrument of action). Regarding the phenomenal world as separate from themselves, these persons seek to realise the Divine by taking to the spiritual path.

the world apart from me." He believes that the world itself is—unreal. He is one who comprehends the Prajna-principle relating to the "I" ("nenu") (the Prajna is constant Integrated awareness). If one seeks to integrate the body, the mind, the intellect and the Antahkarana and to realise the transcendental goal, he has to go beyond the mind, the Buddhi and the Antahkarana and transcend the states of waking, dream and deep sleep. Only then he can comprehend the "I" principle of Prajna. The body, the mind, the intellect and the Antahkarana are related to the phenomena of Nature (Prakritam). They are all functional variants of the mind. Divinity cannot be comprehended through the mind. Efforts should be made to bring the mind under control.

Four mahavakyas

In this context, the Vedas have proclaimed four great aphorisms ("Mahavakyas"). One is "Prajnanam Brahma". What is this Prajnanam? It is consciousness or awareness (Chaitanyam). This consciousness pervades everything in creation, man, demon or deity, Birds and beasts. This all-pervading consciousness has been regarded as the Absolute (Brahman). Brahman refers to that which is pervasive. It transcends the body and the mind and is beyond the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

Because this all-pervasive Brahman is identical with the "Aham"—the universal "I" principle—the Vedas gave the second aphorism: "Aham Brahmasmi" ("I am the Brahman"). This emphasised the oneness of the "I" and Brahman.

Therefore, Divinity (Brahman), Consciousness (Chaitanyam) and pervasiveness are not entities with different names and forms. They are identical. But Brahman has different organs and limbs. For instance, there is the human body. It has a single name - body. But within the body, you have hands, eyes, ears, etc. In the same manner, the Brahman principle is associated with the Prajna principle, has the attributes of pervasiveness and wholeness (Paripoornatwam), and Consciousness. All these are its limbs. Divinity is the integral form of all these constituents.

Hence, the declaration "Prajnanam Brahma" means "Brahman is Consciousness." Where is this consciousness? It is everywhere. There is no place without consciousness. On this basis, the Vedas proclaimed that the Divine is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient.

"Aham Brahmasmi"

The second great pronouncement (Mahavakya) is: "Aham Brahmasmi". There are three words in this: Aham, Brahma, Asmi. "Aham" signifies "Wholeness" (Paripoornatwam). It is not subject to change on account of time, place or circumstances. "Aham" has another meaning, namely, witness (Sakshi). This means that the Divine is a witness to everything—in the past, the present and the future. But He remains unaffected by any of these. "Brahma" refers to the principle that is the basis for "aakasa" (ether) and other basic elements (Panchabhuthas). There is no difference between "Aham" and "Brahma". They are interdependent and inseparable. The "Aham" principle also has the attribute of pervasiveness. "Aham" is present in the five elements also. "Asmi" unifies the "Aham" and "Brahma". They are not separate but one and the same. This is the meaning of "Aham Brahmasmi".

"Tat Twam Asi"

The third pronouncement is Tat Twam Asi". "Tat" is that which has remained unchanged before and after creation. It has no name or form. That is why it is called "Tat" (That). The Shuddha-Satwa (the pure Satwic principle) is called "Tat". It is changeless. Hence it is called "Being", that which is ever unchanging and transcends the categories of time and space.

The second term, "Twam", refers to that which has name and form. It has body, mind, intellect and Antahkarana. It belongs to the phenomenal world. There is a common bond between the Formless and the object with form. In all the objects with form the Prajna "I" principle is present. Consequently, "twam" also acquires the attribute of "Tat".

This is illustrated by an example. A sculptor produced an idol of Krishna out of a block of stone hewn from a rock. While chiselling the stone for sculpting the idol, he threw away the unwanted stones. He was concerned only with making the idol. After the idol was completed, it was installed in a temple. The idol was the object of daily worship in the temple. After the removal of the idol, the other stone chips remained on the hill. These nameless and misshaped chips of stone proclaimed: "We are the same as That (the idol of Krishna). Once we were together in one rock. But because the other stone was given a name and form, we have become different from it. But the Divinity present in all of us is one and the same."

Likewise, it is from the Shuddha Tattwa, "Tat" that the body, mind etc. have emanated. By separation from the Satwic element, the body and others have been rendered useless. In what way are they useless? So far as ordinary worldly life is concerned, all these—body, mind, etc.—are essential. For performing any sadhana, they body is a prerequisite. To think about anything, you require the mind. To enquire into any matter, you have to utilise the intellect (Buddhi). So, for leading a worldly life, the body, mind and intellect are primary instruments. However, they are only instruments, but the agency that puts them to work is different. That is "Tat" which, residing in the body, the mind, the intellect and the Antahkarana, makes them discharge their respective duties. There is, however, no difference separating them from each other.

To take another example: There is the vast fathomless ocean. Innumerable waves arise from the ocean. The waves appear to be different from each other, but are not really different. They are expressions of the same water of the ocean. Only their forms appear to vary. From the waves arise foam. The foam is inseparable from the waves. The foam cannot separate itself from the waves and the waves cannot separate themselves from the sea-water. The ocean is present both in the waves and the foam. The unity of these three is called "Kootastha" by Vedanta. "Kootastha" refers to the "Tat" that is present in all things (that differ in name and form). This principle of oneness is proclaimed by Vedanta in the pronouncement, "Thath Thwam Asi".

"Ayam Atma Brahma"

The fourth declaration is: "Ayam Atma Brahma". "Ayam" means that which is self-luminous and self-created. It is unmanifested (Paroksha). Its form is self-chosen. Next to it is the term "Asthma". The Atma is present in all beings in the form of Consciousness (Chaitanya).

this appellation is that this Atma is ever present ("Nitya"). Moreover, it is called "Sathyam" because, as pointed out in the Taittiriya Upanishad, the Atma is the basis for all good thoughts and good actions.

Thus, the truth underlying all the four Vedantic pronouncements is the same. It is the principle of "Aham" ("I") as expressed by Prajna (constant integrated awareness). "Aham" ("I") is the Divine swara (sound) in all beings. All other sounds have emerged from "Aham". That is the reason why the term "Shabdabrahmam" came to be used.

"Shabda Brahmam"

Where is this "Shabdabrahmam"? The answer comes from the term, "Characharamayee" (the one that is present in the moving and the non-moving). How does this "Characharamayee" exist? As "Jyotirmayee" (As infinite effulgence). How does the word "Jyotirmayee" issue from the mouth of man? As "Vaangmayee" (in the form of "Vaak" or speech). Even after a man dies, his words survive in the form of electrical waves in the ether. Broadcasts from Delhi can be heard simultaneously in distant places. The sounds are carried by radio waves to all places.

Because of the power of "Vaangmayee", we can experience the bliss indicated by the attribute, "Nityanandamayee" (Ever-blissful). The blissful nature is the characteristic of one who is "Paratparamayee". "Para" is usually regarded as referring to a heavenly abode like Vaikuntha. But it refers to that which permeates everything and is present as a witness. It is also called, "Mayamayee". It is the power which makes one believe the unreal as real and the real as unreal. This illusion-producing power is called Maya. A student, for instance, mistakes a rope for a serpent in the semidarkness of twilight. Immediately he experiences fear. After bringing a torch, he finds that it was not a snake but a rope. His fear disappears. Only the rope existed before he brought the torch. There was no snake in the beginning or later. The snake was a creation of his mind on account of ignorance caused by darkness.

Today the darkness of ignorance has to be dispelled. Ignorance is due to "Aviveka" (lack of discriminating power). "Aviveka" is due to "Bhranti" (imaginary apprehension). These imaginary fears are caused by attachment and anger. The latter are the result of Karma, which is a consequence of birth (Janma).

There is, thus, a close relationship between ignorance and birth. Human birth is the result of Karma (past actions). Actions result in attachments and aversions, which produce imaginary fears. The ultimate source of these fears is ignorance, which has neither birth nor death. There is no specific cause for ignorance. Forgetting his divine nature, man is caught up in the meshes of Maya (delusion) and the fears caused by it. How to get rid of Maya? The answer is: recognition of "Srimayee". What is this "Srimayee"? It is the one that shines effulgently always, being wide-awake and fully aware. Inauspiciousness is alien to it. It is ever auspicious. That is "Sat". That is "Prajna". That is "I" ("nenu").

unify them by getting rid of the body-mind consciousness. Then the oneness of the Divine becomes evident.

Today men's efforts are governed by selfish desires, narrow feelings and mundane objectives. As a result the meaning of divinity eludes man.

The supreme sadhana that has to be practised by man today is to concentrate all his senses on God. This may not appear easy, but with strength of will it is quite possible. It is easier to give up things than hold on to them. Those who declare that "Samsara" (family life) is keeping them in bondage are misusing the language. It is they who are binding themselves to families and possessions.

Man should develop faith in God. Only then he would be able to experience lasting happiness.

(Bhagavan referred to the single-minded devotion of the Gopikas to Krishna and the lesson which they taught to Uddhava regarding the true nature of Bhakti). The mind (Swami said) is continually wavering. To concentrate it on God, the mind should be made to merge itself in the name of Rama or Krishna or any Divine name.

From Bhagavan's discourse at Brindavan on 29-05-1992

Believers & Non-Believers

There are three categories of human beings. There are those who have faith in God, there are those who have no faith in God, and there are those who are indifferent. For instance, in a bush there is a flower, its fragrance goads those who have faith in God to search for its source. These can be termed as Aastikas or believers. Then there are those who enjoy the fragrance but do not bother to question about the source—these can be termed as the believing non-believers. There are yet others who are neither looking for the flower nor perceiving its fragrance. They may be termed as nonbelievers. We presume that the non-believers are those who have no faith in God, but in fact it is not true. There can be no one who has no faith in himself. All people who have faith in themselves are believers.

—Baba

Tenth Anniversary of “Messengers of Sathya Sai”

Women's College at Anantapur, (The Anantapur Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning) celebrated its tenth anniversary on 25th December, 1992, in the Poornachandra auditorium in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba. The anniversary celebrations formed part of the Christmas celebrations. Over three thousand members of the association attended the meeting, besides thousands of devotees gathered in the Auditorium.

The President of the association, in her welcome address explained how some of the old students of the college have been carrying out Bhagavan's teaching that "Service to man is service to God " and rendering service to the poor, the handicapped, the sick, and needy persons in their spare time whatever their professional or domestic responsibilities might be. She said that they were utilising their time, energy, resources and knowledge for the benefit of the socially backward and poorer sections of society, especially in villages, with total dedication, which gave them an opportunity to come back to Bhagavan to get his approbation and blessings. She said Bhagavan was their model for selfless service. The sapling planted by Bhagavan has to be developed into a great tree, strengthened by the motto of "Service before Self" so that future generations will also emulate and carry on this sacred task. She mentioned that the unseen hand of Bhagavan could be discerned by them when they ventured into new areas for service and cited an incident in which the vehicle in which they were travelling was involved in an accident and they were thrown out and were in a pool of blood when some lone youngster came from somewhere, took them to a hospital, rendered great help and disappeared even before they could express their gratitude to him. Bhagavan had told them that when they were engaged in selfless service for the good of others His Divine help would always be forthcoming to save them.

Two members of the association spoke about their experiences as students and how they were carrying on service activities.

The Secretary read a report which mentioned that their members were spread over all the States in India and also in many overseas countries like Abu Dhabi, Nigeria, U.K., and U.S.A. They were taking part in activities of Sai centres and rendering service to handicapped, old and sick people.

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

Words weave words but not His Word
In Shrines, temples and churches
Forms are filled with empty sounds
Information, not knowledge, is crowns

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

In Your Name, they do battle;

Dimmed is love's beacon-light
No sanctuary in sight

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

We know darkness because of light
We see evil and yearn for good
The day's routine is where we fight
Grant us courage to do what's right

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

Learning distills to ignorance
Wisdom's wonders work within
As dawn dispels the darkest night
So His Love puts despair to flight

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

A new time is come at last
Black hair crowns the Face of Love
Orange robed, He reminds, reforms;
His Grace alone transforms

Lord, Let Your Word Be Heard

—Hal Honig, (Prasanthi Mandir, 9-1-92)

A Particle Physicists Perception of God-II

Beyond four dimensions

Many physicists have been engaged in work along these lines for some time now and some of the results they have found are startling and may have far reaching implications. Theories of elementary particles in which the particles, instead of being points, are extremely tiny pieces. of string capable of various modes of vibrations have been under investigation for the last twenty years. The attempt is to identify the different modes of vibration with the different elementary particles and unify all the forces into the grand unified force. When the dictates of quantum mechanics and relativity are imposed, it has been found that it is not possible to construct a consistent theory in the space-time familiar to all of us, namely, the three physical space dimensions and one time dimension. In a version of the string theory which is called the "super-

meaningful theory can be constructed in space-time which must have ten dimensions, that is, six more dimensions than what we are familiar with. In this theory, all the forces are unified into a "unified force" at extremely high energies, energies which do not seem reachable by even the futuristic atom-smashers. If the super-string theory is correct then we, who are ultimately made up of elementary particles which live in a ten-dimensional world, must also be living in a ten-dimensional world, only we are not consciously aware of the six extra dimensions of space. The question may be raised, are there any beings capable of consciously manipulating not only the three dimensions of space we all can but also can manipulate the six extra dimensions? It is this last question the answer to which has some very intriguing possibilities (Of course, physicists would like to interpret the manifestation of the six extra dimensions through the differentiation of the forces into gravitational, electromagnetic, weak nuclear, and strong nuclear forces, in the world of four dimensions, but, that is another story).

Since it is so hard for us to visualise ten dimensions of space all at once, let us consider a much simpler example. Drawing on an example given by Carl Sagan in his book "Cosmos", suppose we visualise people who are "flat-landers" in which beings exist in a (flat) plane. Such a space has only two dimensions. Such beings only know left (and right) (one dimension) and forward (and backward) (the second dimension). These flat beings do not know "up" or "down" (because it is in the third dimension). If one of their friends, a "flat-mathematician", were to tell them that it is very simple to visualise a third dimension "which is perpendicular to their plane" they will wonder whatever he is talking about, just as the statements in the previous paragraph about ten dimensions must leave the reader wondering as to what is being meant.

Two versus three

Suppose a being from the three dimensional world whose nature it is to know, left (right), forward (backward), and up (down) decides to visit the world of the flat beings, what would the flat beings see? The flat-landers, since they cannot see up (down), cannot see all of the three dimensional being at once. They can only see that part of the three-dimensional being which intersects their plane. Suppose the three-dimensional being is in the form of a sphere and suppose he descends down to the plane in the living room of the flat-lander, what would the flat-lander see? At first, he would see a point forming in the living room out of nowhere (corresponding to the points of the sphere intersecting with the plane as the sphere descends through the plane). After some more time he would notice the circular ring becomes smaller and smaller in diameter eventually becoming a point again (corresponding to the other edge of the sphere just leaving the plane). Then he would notice that the point has disappeared from the living room and all is back to normal. From the perspective of the flat-lander, an inexplicable phenomenon has happened in his living room and when he tells his friends about the spontaneous appearance and disappearance of points and ring of varying sizes in his living room they will wonder whether everything is all right with the fellow. On the other hand, from the perspective of the three-dimensional being, nothing could be more natural than for him to move from "up" there through the plane to "down" below.

dimensional world decides to have some fun playing with the flat-landers. He might pick up one of the flat-landers. Being all two-dimensional beings, they would experience the mysterious sudden disappearance of their friend. As far as they are concerned, their friend has dematerialised from their midst. If the three dimensional being brings the flat-lander back "down" from the third dimension to the plane, the flat-lander would mysteriously re-appear on the plane out of nowhere. From the perspective of the flat-landers, their friend would have suddenly materialised somewhere else on the plane out of nowhere. The whole point of this example is simply this: what is completely natural for the three-dimensional being, produces miraculous results in the two-dimensional world.

Dimensions of the Divine

If we extend out thinking from the above example involving two and three-dimensional beings to beings in four and ten dimensions, may not similar phenomena be "natural" for the being in ten dimensions? We human beings, who are made up from elementary particles which live in ten-dimensional space-time, should be able to have access to these dimensions. Actually we are able to control consciously only three dimensions of space and one dimension of time, the time dimension only imperfectly. We can consciously move left (or right), forward (or backward), up (or down). We can consciously recall the past with some effort, but the future is beyond most of us who are not soothsayers. Research in physics tells us that since the extra dimensions of space are curled up in an extremely tiny bit of space, it will require extremely large amount of energy (as was present at the creation of the Universe), to have access to these extra dimensions. In other words, access to the extra dimensions does not seem feasible for an ordinary being through methods known to science.

Is it possible that we might understand God as someone who has natural control of all the ten dimensions? Is it possible for ordinary mortals to get conscious control of the extra dimensions of space through means other than science through spiritual sadhana, for example? God could play his leelas with us in the four dimensional world just as the sphere could with the flat-landers in the example given above. Scientists need not feel a contradiction in believing in God-science, it seems, does provide a framework in which to understand God.

(Excerpts from a lecture given by Dr. M. K. Sundaresan, Visiting professor from Carleton University, Ottawa, to students of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute at Prasanthi Nilayam).

(Concluded from November, 1992, Issue)

I am showing you by my example how you must fill every moment with useful beneficial activity. You talk among yourselves, "O, Swami is having his rest hour; Swami is sleeping." But I have never craved for a minute's rest or sleep or relief. Shall I tell you at what time I feel restful, relieved, content? When I know that you are all earning supreme bliss through detachment and spiritual discipline, not until then. I am ever engaged in some activity or other for your benefit. Things I could get done, I do not entrust to others; I do them my self, so that they may learn

happiness in mind. You can note it in the slightest act of mine. I do all work pertaining to me. I open all letters addressed to me and they are legion.

—Baba

Human Values in Management

I had the privilege to be associated with the Faculty of Business Management of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning at Prasanthi Nilayam for the past three years. During this period I had occasion to listen to Swami speaking to the students of MBA in particular and other students and staff in general, on more than one occasion.

Swami pays a great deal of attention to MBA students. He evinces keen interest in the summer projects carried out by the MBA students. He arranges for students' visits to leading industrial establishments in Bangalore, Madras and talks by eminent business executives and entrepreneurs. Besides, Swami Himself speaks to MBA students. As the MBA students are likely to assume managerial positions in business and industrial organisations, Swami wants to transform these organisations into ideal enterprises through the MBA students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute. For this reason, Swami has emphasised the need for teaching human values through a variety of courses, such as Indian Ethos and Values, Self-development, The Great Indian Leaders, Group Development etc., which are incorporated into the MBA curriculum. This makes the MBA programme of Sri Sathya Sai Institute a unique one.

In the entire creation, all living beings, except humans, are leading a harmonious and orderly life obeying and adhering to the laws of nature. It is indeed a pity that only human beings, endowed with the rare gift of intelligence by God, are flouting and transgressing the laws of nature. Humans are becoming more and more selfish and greedy. Contentment and satisfaction have become rare. This tendency to acquire and possess more and more is the main cause for all the ills of the world today. There is no harmony anywhere at any level. Strife, confrontation, violence, hatred etc., are increasing day by day. Parochial fanaticism, religious, caste and regional dissensions, selfish and self-centred ambitions have combined to degrade the quality of human life to its lowest level. This is further accentuated by the absence of a feeling of patriotism for one's Motherland and regard for a common national culture. To eradicate these evils from our society, Baba has set the propagation of human values as His main mission.

Most of the problems that we see around us, whether it be a strike in a factory, student unrest on campuses, protest marches by government employees, or group clashes, can be traced to the lack of foresight and poor administration and management of institutions/organisations. By and large, persons occupying positions of responsibility and exercising power reveal lack of concern for human values. Recognising the fundamental importance of human values for an efficient and sound management and administration, Swami directs that these values must be

become an integral part of the educational system.

Human Values in Business & Industry

Swami, while talking to MBA students, observed that of the different aspects of management such as marketing, finance, production etc., man management is the most important aspect, and that each country has its own historical and cultural background and Indian managers should not blindly imitate the western management practices, but should keep in mind the Indian milieu and national ethos.

On more than one occasion, Swami stressed that the MBA students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute should infuse management practices in India with human values based on the five cardinal principles of Truth, Right conduct, Peace, Love, and Non-violence. He illustrated how each of these values should be adhered to in managing the affairs of business and industry. Swami explained with an example how these values are interrelated. When the current of Sathya (Truth) flows through the wire of Dharma (Right conduct) connected to the bulb of Santhi (Peace), the lamp of Prema (Love) glows and sheds light. All these constitute a single whole and not separate values.

Swami dispelled the notion that truthfulness in business will result in loss. While there may be some difficulty initially, integrity and honesty will bring their own reward in course of time. He asked the MBA students that when they join a business firm, they should convince their superiors that truthful accounts and audit help to enhance the image of the firm. "Running a business honestly must be regarded as a form of social service and spiritual sadhana", says Swami.

In the practice of Dharma, the marketing and advertising practices should be fair to the consumer, and false claims about the products in the advertisements should be scrupulously avoided. In dealing with workers, the practice of Dharma should ensure that not only justice is done to workers, but it is seen to be done. In other words, workers' grievances must be promptly attended to and problems resolved satisfactorily.

The MBA students, Swami urged, should never get 'upset or ruffled when they have to face a difficult situation. They should ever remain calm and observe peace (santhi). In all situations, they should practice Santhi by conducting themselves with utmost obedience and humility towards their superiors, with friendly feelings towards their equals, and with a spirit of compassion towards their subordinates.

Swami has observed that love (prema) is the most powerful weapon that can be used to find solutions to problems. He says that love must express itself in the business world by the executives developing the feeling that all those engaged in the business—managers, workers, suppliers, customers etc. are but members of one family. By developing fraternal feelings towards all and with mutual love and regard, industrial harmony can be achieved.

wider social meaning than merely avoiding causing harm to others. The avoidance of pollution of the atmosphere or the natural resources like rivers is but one example of how an enterprise can practise non-violence (ahimsa).

Management students are generally taught the principles of motivation and leadership, planning and scheduling, project management etc. It is interesting to watch how these concepts are practised in Sri Sathya Sai Organisations. To observe people of different ages working in the different organisations, whether it is the Convent, the Higher Secondary School, the University, the Super Speciality Hospital, the Canteen, or the Book Trust, with a higher degree of self-motivation and a spirit of dedication is something unique. Swami is the greatest motivator and leader. He motivates them, not by monetary rewards, but by showering His love and grace.

—K. Venkata Rao (From "Sai Vahini", Singapore)

The Predicament of Man Today

The influence of the Western style of life and the alien language has eroded the glorious culture and righteous conduct of the people of Bharat. It is high time Bharatiyas wake up and make efforts to restore the wisdom and culture of their motherland to its ancient glory. (poem)

Embodiments of Divine Love,

The primary requisites for ensuring the safety, security and peace of this great country are tolerance, understanding and unity amongst its people. The feeling that the same Divine Atma is residing in all beings should be cultivated so that wisdom, social justice and real sense of freedom can prevail. The entire humanity should be considered as one brotherhood on the basis of Universal Love. Then only the objective of human birth can be fulfilled. The feeling of oneness is essential for enjoying bliss based on realisation of divinity in everyone.

In ancient times, the Rishis enjoyed fullness of human life. They experienced this bliss of Universal Love within them and conveyed it to all mankind. They propounded the doctrine of Love (Prematattwa) which is the means to know one's Inner Reality.

Today, there is no security or safety for the people in the country and there is disorder all over the world. Hatred and anger are rampant among the people. Under these circumstances, the only path they have to follow is the Path of Love.

With the rapid growth of industrial development in the West, humanness has deteriorated. Because of this, man has moved away from his true inner self. Though man has advanced considerably in the field of Science and Technology and has reached higher levels in the development of secular and physical knowledge he has strayed far away from spiritual and moral goals. Everyone is indulging in selfish pursuits only. In fact, man has become a slave to selfishness.

Triple forces

Because of the scientific and technological advancement man is attaching importance to the physical body, taking it to be the real self, and spends his time in catering to the needs and comforts of the body. He is using the body as a toy and plays with it in a mechanical way. The body is functioning through the power of Integral Awareness (Prajna Shakti) which is directing the functions through the Spandana Shakti (Prana Shakti or Pulsatory force) Man is functioning by the combination of three forces: Radiation, Vibration and Materiality. The body is just matter only. It is called Prakriti. Prana Shakti makes it vibrant. This vibration is directed by the Prajna Shakti which is consciousness (awareness). Thus man's life is a combination of consciousness, vital force and matter. Without realising this fact, man is always keen on looking after the body alone, with the wrong conception that the body is all powerful.

no dearth of food. So the people eat well and enjoy material pleasures. They consume excessive food and lead a life of luxury. But we find that there are more deaths owing to heart diseases in that country, than in other countries. Sweden is a very affluent country in Europe and the government is also providing all possible comforts and looks after the people well. In spite of such prosperity, there are more suicide cases in this country than any where else and the number of divorce cases are plenty. What is the cause for this? It is not lack of any physical or material facilities but lack of spiritual outlook that is responsible for such a situation. It is because they identify themselves with the body, 'which is perishable and impermanent, and are ignorant about their Real Inner Self which is the permanent and eternal entity. They lead an artificial life.

The Gayatri Mantra

In Bharat, from ancient times, through the sacred Gayatri mantra, spiritual awareness has been developed. The mantra "Om Bhur Bhuvas Suvaha" represents the three basic principles of the godliness in every one. 'Bhu' means matter. 'Bhuvaha' is the Prana Shakti or the vibrant principle. 'Suvaha' is the Prajna Shakti, (awareness). These three constituent forces—radiation, vibration and material energy—activate the human being. But man is not able to realise this fact.

In the mythology of Bharat, Narada is a sage well known to constantly travel in the three worlds (Thriloka Sanchaari) Narada represents the life principle. The three worlds are Bhur, Bhuva, Suvaha meaning material energy, life force and latent spiritual energy (Atma Shakti).

Man is not making efforts to understand the relationship between Prakriti (i.e.) phenomenal world and man (Jivatma) and Paramatma (Supreme sprit). These are very intimately interrelated to one another. They are not disparate. The relationship between Paramatma and Prakriti—God and Nature—is the same as that between mother and child. The relationship between man and society is the same as that between the honey-bee and the flower. Just as the child is fed by mother's milk, as the honey-bee is fed by the honey in a flower, man must enjoy the gifts of Nature. From time immemorial man has been plagued by negative ideas. There is a legendary tale in which one greedy man killed the goose that laid golden eggs thinking that he can extract all the eggs from it in one lump. Such acts of folly are committed freely by scientists today by exploiting Nature's gifts beyond all limits creating disastrous imbalance resulting in natural calamities such as earthquakes, spelling danger to humanity. We cannot blame science for this. Those who apply the scientific discoveries without discrimination are to be blamed for this. They fail to consider with deep deliberation the effects of excessive depletion of the natural resources.

Man has to consider himself as a limb of the society and help in the welfare of society, just as the organs of one's body are used for one's well-being. Again society is a limb of Prakriti (Nature) and Prakriti is a limb of Paramatma (Supreme Lord). Thus there is close relationship between man and God. Nature is more progressive than man, and to protect Nature, man has to exploit it within limits. When man tampers with Nature recklessly, it reacts adversely and trouble arises. In order to protect Nature, man has to practise ceiling on desires. He should not trigger the negative aspect of Nature.

In this respect, scientists have no concern for the harmful effects that may accrue to society by their inventions. They don't care for the welfare of the mankind and go on making use of intelligence to produce their weapons of destruction.

Care should be exercised in providing comforts as excessive comforts may spoil man's mind and cause misery instead of happiness. "Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina" Nothing good can be achieved without certain restraints. Because of the advancement of technology and provision of excessive comforts, life has become mechanical and spirituality has declined. Science fragments everything to pieces while spirituality builds up unity in diversity. Today man is not making efforts to cultivate the feeling of oneness among humanity. To quote an example you have the ozone layer in the atmosphere which protects the people on earth from the evil effects of solar radiation. Because of the advance of technology, several

factories have sprung up causing emission of harmful gases in the atmosphere as a result of which the ozone layer has become thinner and if this goes on unchecked it may have disastrous consequences. The scientists are trying to stop the break up of the ozone layer but they are unable to find a remedy. The actual cause for this situation is that more carbon-dioxide is let into the atmosphere, which normally is absorbed by the plants and trees which can assimilate the gas and supply oxygen by the natural process of photo synthesis. But, because there is de-forestation to an alarming extent, the extent of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has considerably increased. Therefore, the remedy for this situation is intensive afforestation, growing more trees everywhere and protecting the existing trees without destroying them for other purposes. Thus the relationship of man, nature and God is very intimate which scientists may not be able to realise.

The concept of dharma

You have to enquire into everything thoroughly. 'Dharma' is a word that has originated in Bharat and is misinterpreted often. The attitudes of the Westerners and our countrymen differ widely. In the West, they are more keen on the rights of the individual. Immediately on birth, the child acquires a right. Father, mother, society and government each has a right. The worker has a right, the ruler has a right. While in the West, they were more concerned about rights the people of Bharat had been laying stress on Dharma or the duty of everyone. The word 'Dharma' is said to be synonymous with culture. It is not so. The word 'dharma' is peculiar to Bharat and no language other than Sanskrit has it in its vocabulary nor any country for that matter. It is interpreted by some as 'Righteousness' and by yet others as 'reason', etc. Dharma is Dharma only. No other word can give the same meaning. 'Dharmo Rakshathi Rakshithaha'. Dharma protects those who protect it. That which controls and encompasses everything is Dharma. There is a lot of difference between Dharma and Religion. Dharma is like an ocean. Religion is just like a small lake. Religion is related to the individual while culture is "fundamental order". They use the terms 'Mohammedan culture', 'Hindu culture', 'Christian culture' and fight against one another. In reality, there is no difference between one Religion and another. There is no difference between man and man as God is in the form of love in everyone. So it is not correct to fight on the basis of religious differences. All belong to the human race. When one understands this truth one can comprehend Dharma.

"Karmanyeva Adhikaarasthe Maa Paleshu" says the Gita. You have the right to perform your duty only. You have no right to demand the fruits of your action. No one has got any right other than doing his duty. He has the responsibility to discharge his duty. But, today people are clamouring for rights and don't want to discharge duties. The result will always be there whether you ask for it or not. Right and Responsibility are like two wings of a bird which make it fly or like the two wheels of a vehicle which facilitate a person to ride on it. How long can you drive with a single wheel? How can a bird fly high with one wing?

If you discharge your duty with responsibility result will take care of itself. This is what everyone should clearly understand today. If everyone does his duty well there will be no trouble in the world. It is because people claim rights without doing their duty there is chaos and confusion. Man is immersed in self-conflict because he is keen on exercising his right without discharging his responsibility.

Man should realise his reality. The body is given to him for performing his duty. What kind of duty? "Paropakartham Idam Sariram" This body is given for helping others. So your duty is to help others. But people don't cherish this broad outlook.

Today there is terrible conflict and misery and disorder in the country because such a broad outlook is not there and people are narrow-minded. They should discard this narrow selfish feelings and practise expansion of love. You should cultivate the feeling that all human beings belong to one family. The divinity in all beings is one.

The triple unity

Bulbs are many but current is one

Jewels are many but Gold is one

Beings are many but Breath is one

Nations are many but Earth is one

People should develop broad feelings on the above lines. Then only humanity will prosper. There is divinity in every one which one should sincerely try to realise. It is not enough only to propagate the theory. There are a large number of people who propagate and preach but those who practise are rare. Many speak one thing and act differently. There should be harmony in thought, word and deed. This is the unity of head, heart and hand. But, now-a-days people think in one way, speak in another and do yet another thing. That is why the Prajna Shakti (conscience), Prana Shakti (life) and material force are diverted in different directions. Matter, life force and conscience should be unified. One should be careful about conscience which will always spell the truth. It will never lead you on the wrong path. Vedas call this 'Prajnanam Brahma' It is present equally in body, mind, intellect and Inner Instruments. This is Constant Integrated Awareness. No one is making efforts to realise the latent Divine Power in him. In the world today, people care only for material things. Selfishness is on the increase. 'Right' is born out of selfishness and ends in conflict. 'Dharma' is born from 'Prema' (love) and merges in

love. Such an individual only will lead a true life.

Divinity within is responsible for the functioning of all organs of the body. That divinity is the Prajna Shakti, the life force and also the Chaitanya (Awareness). This awareness is in everyone. It is Brahman. 'The One is in all beings' This is an aphorism (sutra). Sutra means also a thread. When you make a garland of flowers, the thread keeping them in position is only one though flowers are many. They may be in different stages of bloom and change every day, but the thread is the same today and tomorrow. Similarly the Chaitanya (consciousness) is the same while one is a child or boy, or adult or in old age. Though the description of the person changes as boy, man, grand father etc. the Chaitanya inside is changeless. There is no distinction of woman or man too. Changes

are in the body and not in Atma which is changeless. It exists in all brilliance at all times. There is beauty in it. We should understand the principle of beauty.

For the hand, Charity lends beauty. For speech, it is truth that lends beauty. For ears, wisdom lends beauty. What more beauty do you need than these? For life, service to humanity is beauty. In Kannada there is a wise saying that houses make a village beautiful, flowers make the branch of a tree beautiful, moon beautifies the sky, waves beautify the Ocean and character makes a person beautiful.

Every man has intelligence. When you put it to skilful use it is serving well. But actually man is misusing knowledge. This is termed as technology which is in fact 'Trick'nology. Because of this man is not having peace. An individual utters falsehood to please another person. He may think that he is deceiving the other. But he is deceiving himself. One should not act against the dictates of his conscience. Conscience is 'Chit' -Awareness is 'Sat'. Both combine and give Ananda. They are like syrup got by mixing Sugar and water (Sat + Chit). The syrup is 'Ananda'. I and you should combine to say 'We'. Many don't understand this properly and say "I and You are one". This is not correct. "I and you are We" is the correct statement. 'We and We are One' I am in you and you are in me and so we are one. This is a combination of Atma and Atma and not matter to matter. The bond between matter and matter is the life force. Life is sustained by the infinite force of 'Prajna Shakti'. Prajna is the source and Prana is propelled by this. Even if there is life unless the Prajna Shakti is there this can't work.. Human life is therefore, the combination of the three: 'Prajna' 'Prana' and 'Matter'. Man is ignorant of this truth and concerns himself only with the body which is 'matter' only.

Ancient Rishis called these three as Bhur, Bhuvah and Suvaha. When you realise this unity in everyone—child, boy or old people—how can you hate any body? When one develops this principle of unity there will be peace. The 'divide and rule' policy is driving the society to destruction in the political field. In the spiritual field unity must be the basis. It leads to purity and divinity.

Embodiments of Divine Love,

constitute spirituality. The driving away of animal qualities and proceeding from the human to the divine is real spirituality. There are human, divine and animal traits in every one. You should get rid of the animal nature and develop divine quality.

What is Sadhana? It is doing good deeds with this body. These good works are God's work too. The essence of the Eighteen Puranas of Vyasa is condensed by him as "Help ever; Hurt never" This is true devotion. While doing worship and meditation on one side if you hurt others can it be real Sadhana?

One may get angry. He should not plunge into action immediately. If he does so his hasty action will be fraught with undesirable consequences. "Haste makes waste; waste makes worry". He should think whether it is right or wrong before plunging into action to hurt the other man towards whom he is angry. Slowly as his temper comes down he will change

his mind and desist from hasty action. This is the practical way of controlling oneself in daily life. This is the way of life which is called culture. You should engage in such thoughtful action as will serve the cause of society and foster goodwill and unity. You should foster good thoughts. This is real Sadhana.

God is Love; Love is God

God is Love - Love is God (Bhagavan sang the song Prema Ishwara Hai - Ishwara Prema Hai) Love is one. It is not good to cause hurt to others.

The world is a globe. You know that the balance has to be maintained to keep it stable. We utilise the natural resources without any limit and create imbalance.

I have been visiting Madras for the past 45 years. Now I see that there is traffic even at 2.00 a.m. as it used to be in Bombay. There is more carbon dioxide smoke released. There are factories and industries everywhere. So there is more pollution of the air and diseases are on the increase. All these are dangerous offshoots of technological progress.

One can serve God only through Shrama and Prema, or effort with love. The best way to serve God is to Love all and serve all.

There was an old lady in Mathura. She used to take blankets in the darkest hour of the night and distribute them to poor people who were shivering in cold. One day she was bending her head and serving the poor. A few youths gathered there and asked her "Oh! Old lady! While you are doing such selfless work why are you bending your head and walking?" She replied: "God has given so much of wealth to the people with so many hands. But I am able to serve the people only with my two hands. Is it not a thing about which I should feel ashamed?" We are not prepared to share with others and are only ready to receive whatever we can get. This is one way traffic, "There is no chance of immortality without doing sacrifice" say the Vedas. You should sacrifice and share what you have with others. Then only you may have peace. You should make

Charity is the beauty for hands and not decoration with bangles.

The Mind is like a key to the lock of the heart. If you turn it towards God you get liberation; if you turn it towards the world you get into bondage. You should develop the feeling "Lokas Samasthas Sukhino Bhavanthu" You should aspire for world unity. Out of unity you get purity and from purity comes divinity. Now there is only community and enmity which has to be eliminated.

Prema is the binding factor to unite all humanity together. Therefore, cultivate Prema or Universal love.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan song `Prema mudith')

(From Bhagavan 's discourse in the Kamaraj Memorial Hall, Teynampet, Madras, on 21.1.1993)

Stick to Your Inner Nature

A hermit was one day bathing in the Ganges, when he saw a scorpion. This is God encased in the scorpion form and name, he felt; he wanted to save the scorpion. So, he took it on his palm, but, when it stung him, he dropped it on the waters. Then he was stricken with remorse and so, he lifted it up again. Thus it stung him five or six times; but, he persisted in his mission of mercy and at last, managed to drop it on dry land so that it could go its way, alive and happy. Many people who watched his efforts laughed at him for his stupidly exaggerated sympathy. The hermit told them that the scorpion had taught him a lesson and he was thankful for it. They asked, what? He said, "Stick to your innate nature, whatever may happen—that is what it has taught me". Its nature is to sting; it stung, regardless of whom or when. Man's nature is to achieve Jnana; Ananda is man's essence; Love is the bloodstream that sustains him; peace is the vision that guides and directs him. That is the reason why he is addressed as 'Amritasya putra', in the Upanishads: he is the son of immortality; he has no birth, no death.

—Baba ("Chinna Katha")

VIDYAGIRI SAMACHAR

Spectacular Sports and Cultural Festival-1993

1993 was inaugurated by Bhagavan Baba, Chancellor of the Institute on January 11, 1993, in Vidyagiri Stadium. Rich fare of cultural programme by students of the different campuses and the Higher Secondary and Primary Schools was provided besides breathtaking, dare devil stunts on ground and on air as well as on moving vehicles by the students which evoked the admiration of the special and distinguished guests as well as the mammoth gathering who attended the entire festival lasting from 7 to 11 in the morning and 4 to 8.30 p.m. in the evening. Air Chief Marshal Suri, the Chief of the Air Staff, His Excellency the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Krishna Kant and Prof. S. K. Khanna, Vice-Chairman, UGC, were among the distinguished guests. Prof. Khanna exclaimed that he had never witnessed such a fantastic show put up by the University students throughout his association with so many universities.

The stadium was gaily decorated with flags and festoons all around and the Santhi Vedika, where Bhagavan sat along with special guests and invitees and watched the spectacular show by the students, was artistically decorated; multi-coloured umbrellas adorned the pavilion as well as the galleries all-round adding aesthetic beauty to the splendid setting for the sports festival. The galleries of the stadium were filled to capacity long before the commencement and the open spaces on the northern and eastern sides were also filled by people young and old.

Bhagavan Baba arrived at the stadium precisely at 7 a.m. preceded by a procession led by the caparisoned elephant Sai Geeta, followed by student flag bearers of the respective houses, motor cycle outriders both boys and girls serving as escorts, roller skaters, and folk dancers dancing in front of Bhagavan was seated in an artistically designed silver chariot in majestic pose blessing all those assembled.

As Bhagavan alighted from the chariot a special contingent of students carrying banners and playing the Institute band escorted Bhagavan to the Santhi Vedika.

Impressive March Past

A colourful march past of all the participants clad in different uniforms and carrying the colours of their respective institutions followed. Bhagavan lit the Olympic torch of the sports festival which was carried in relays to the hill top where the Olympic flame was lit. Professor Khanna lighted the lamp and His Excellency the Governor of A. P. hoisted the flag which was borne by students. Bhagavan released the pigeons and balloons, heralding the inauguration of the festival. Two tiny children presented bouquets to Bhagavan.

Stunts by Elephants & Horses

A wonderful exhibition of cultural events that depicted the rich heritage of India and the spirit of adventure inherent in every man was presented by the students of different campuses of the Institute. The morning session started with a programme offered by students of Brindavan Campus which included extraordinary display by elephants and horses apart from the amazing exhibition of parachute jumps and skillful navigation of power gliders singly and in pairs, and gymnastic feats of a very high order.

pranams to Bhagavan and also sat on the Stoll much to the admiration of the huge crowd of spectators.

The equestrian events evoked spontaneous appreciation from the huge gathering. Six horses took part in the display of sprinting fast and jumping over hurdles and barricades in striking fashion. One of the horses on which a nine year old boy was riding, performed such feats of crossing all the obstacles without a single miss due to the deft handling by the boy. Bhagavan summoned the boy to the dais immediately on completion of this amazing feat and awarded him a special cup.

Hill Climbing

The students presented karate feats and several gymnastic feats. Students exhibited their bravery and skill too in the wire rope descent and hill climbing, etc. They did some exercises on moving motor cycles and jeeps and jumping through fire rings, etc. The morning session concluded at 11.15 a.m.

Afternoon Session

Fine display by girls

The afternoon session commenced at 4 p.m. Bhagavan Baba arrived in the car which was piloted by motor cycle riders and horse riders. Bhagavan blessed the entire crowd with his darshan.

The girls from Anantapur Campus offered a programme of attractive cultural events and display of physical skill and endurance in a number of exciting events.

The girls exhibited admirable synchronisation in presenting the Institute emblem and Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram. The programme of dance and music depicting animal worship in India was graceful. The float depicting the scene of "Gajendra Moksha" was well got up. The girls exhibited several yogasanas in unison, perched on a set of poles in eight groups. The harmony maintained by them in all the poses was admirable. They balanced on the poles with balls and pitchers on their heads. Balancing on single wheel cycle evoked unanimous acclaim.

Girls doing exercise on parallel bars being borne on the shoulders of, two girls was a fine feat of endurance and balancing skill. There was exhibition of sword fighting too. The girls parading a formation in the shape of map of India was very strikingly attractive.

Then followed the programme offered by the Prasanthi Nilayam Secondary and Primary Schools.

Impressive show by school children

which all the children performed without any blemish. Children with small umbrellas stuck on their heads gave an excellent piece of group dance with flawless uniformity and synchronisation. The children formed a human tree made up of students in different difficult poses balancing with amazing skill. Children with torches, seven of them perched on the posts, at different heights presented a beautiful scene of the night sky lit with stars. They presented another scene depicting the Heritage Museum with three spires as existing in Prasanthi Nilayam.

The Prasanthi Nilayam Campus students presented their programme next. They had presented in the morning students of dare devilry on moving vehicles and commando training skills of various levels. There was an impressive demonstration of motor ball, that is, football played by players riding on motorcycles—a central Asian game. Two mock displays of games of baseball and American football were also demonstrated. A combination of dare devil stunts and gymnastic exercises on moving motorcycles and jeeps, monkey-crawling and exercises on Tarzan ropes were demonstrated.

Mansion of peace

They continued their programme in the evening by presenting a mass participants' fantasy called "Manthan" based on the puranic myth of churning of the ocean of milk with Manthara hill as the churning rod and Vasuki the giant serpent as the rope. Avatar of Lord Vishnu as giant tortoise to bear the Manthara hill on the back was picturesque. The emergence of various mystical fights from the ocean became successively symbolic of man's conquest of geographical locations plant world, animal world and human world. These were graphically depicted in the fantasia of light and sound spectacle.

In his ultimate search for peace, man prayed to God Almighty for help. The concluding prayer song was sung in front of a massive 45 feet x 30 feet "Mansion of Peace" (Prasanthi Nilayam) which the students took only thirty minutes to erect.

Bhagavan went up to this mansion and gave darshan to the participants. This was a grand finale to the day long festival comprising of fun, music, dance, physical feats and demonstration of extra ordinary physical prowess, endurance and balancing skill of the students of the Institute. There was fire works display signalling the conclusion of the festival.

Love for the Lord should not degenerate into fanaticism and hatred of other names and forms. This type of cancer is affecting even eminent men nowadays. But you must avoid it. Believe that all who revere the Lord and walk in fear of sin are your brothers, your nearest kith and kin. Their outer dress or language or skin-colour, or even the methods they adopt to express their reverence and ear are not important at all. Sugar-dolls are valued for the sugar, not the shapes they are given by the manufacturers. Their sweetness makes men purchase them. Elephant, dog, cat, rat, jackal or lion—it does not matter. That is a matter of individual fancy. Each is sweet, that is the essential thing. The sweetness draws Manavas (human beings) towards Madhava; the

AVATAR VANI:

NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Purity—the Path to Divinity

*The Lord of the Universe permeates the entire Cosmos
Remaining invisible in the visible Universe,
The Cosmic Consciousness illumines everything
Like the thread that runs through a necklace of gems.*

The phenomenal world that is perceived by us is called "Vishwam" (the cosmos). This Cosmos is "Karyam" (action or effect). Every action is preceded by a cause. This cause is God. Hence, God and the Cosmos are related as Cause and Effect. The relationship is inter-dependent and inseparable.

"Vishwam" means that which has emerged from the Divine with many limbs. Vish + Wam means that which is pervaded exceptionally. Another meaning for "Vishwam" is "Vaayu" (air). Air is all-pervading. "Vishnuh Vishwaswaroopah". The Cosmos is the embodiment of Vishnu. Vishnu also means all-pervasive.

There is no specific proof for the Divine. Hence, He is called "Aprameya" ("Immeasurable"). For such an infinite being Time is the proof and Time is the basis. God is adored as "Samvatsaraya Namah". "Samvatsara" means the form of the Divine (Daivaswaroopam). The mere passage of 365 days does not amount to "Samvatsara". "Samvatsara" refers to one who is the Time-Spirit (Kalatmah). "Spirit" means "Brahman" (the Supreme Absolute). The Brahman Principle refers to the Consciousness (Chaitanyam) that is omnipresent. Brahman has no specific form. It is present in all human beings as Consciousness.

For man to recognise the Brahman, he has to comprehend the nature of that which transcends Time. Time is consuming the body. God is the Consumer of Time itself. Hence, the Vedas have declared that Time is powerless against those who have taken refuge in the Over-Lord of Time ("Kala-Kala prapannaanaam, Kalah kim karishyathi").

Man's joys and sorrows, happiness or misery are not dependent on Time. They are based on man's actions. Time has no relations or friends. Time is not subordinate to anyone. All are subject to Time. Hence, if one has to realise the Divine, who is the Lord of Time, one has to carry out His injunctions. God looks with love only at such a person.

In this context, the Gita has described the traits of the devotee who is dear to the Lord:

*"Anapekshah suchir-Dakshah Udaaseeno Gathavyathah
Sarvaarambha parithyagi Yo madbhaktah sa me priyaha"*

("That devotee is dear to me who is free from desire, who is pure in body and mind, who is resolute, unconcerned, free from sorrow and has renounced all sense of doership")

Anapeksha: In this world, man, with his body, senses and mind cannot be free from desires. But how is he to become "desireless" (Anapeksha)? When he performs actions, regarding himself, as the doer, the actions become fetters that bind him. All actions which are performed with the feeling that they are intended as offerings to please the Divine, do not lead to bondage. They become "desireless" (Anapeksha) actions. One has to recognise that it is the Divine principle in all beings which is getting all actions done through human beings as instruments. As long as man regards himself as the doer (kartrutwa) and enjoyer (bhoktrutwa) he cannot escape from the consequences of his actions. When a man regards a certain piece of land as his, the crops grown on it will belong to him. The Gita teaches that when actions are done as offerings to God, they become "desireless" actions. Man has taken birth to perform his duties and not to enjoy power or assert his "rights". When one's duty is performed, the right comes of its own accord. Men today fight for their "rights" and forget their duties. Hence discharge of duty comes first. It is through duty that man realises God.

Inner purity

Suchi: This refers to purity. It is not enough if the body is clean. Inner purity is essential. The latter, in fact, is more essential than the former. For the proper enjoyment of all things, purity of mind is essential. Whatever sacred acts you may do in the external world, if you have no purity of mind and heart, all of them are valueless. (Swami gave the example of food cooked in an untinned vessel that will be spoilt even if all the ingredients are good). Likewise, in the vessel of the heart, the inside must be purified by love (prema). Then, all that one consumes will be wholesome. Hence, purity is vital for all aspirants; without it, all man's actions get tainted. Actions done with an impure heart can only produce undesirable results.

Whatever good results you want to secure in the external world, inner purity is the basis.

Daksha: This refers to the determination that is needed to accomplish anything. One must have the fortitude and resoluteness to achieve one's purpose, whatever might be the obstacles in the way. To accomplish any sacred task one has to possess this determination. "Daksha" signifies this quality of unwavering determination in the devotee.

Udaseenah: One who is unaffected by whatever happens. This means that one should be totally free from selfishness. He must consider the performance of his duties as the sole purpose of his existence. The human body is the result of past actions. Man is bound to the world by his actions. The body is the primary requisite for the performance of right action (Dharma).

selflessly. Do not be swayed by any consideration other than your duty. Whether it be in a political organisation or in regard to a personal matter, or in relation to national issues, you should act according to the dictates of your conscience, without any other concern. One can become a courageous leader only if he performs his duties in this spirit. All actions must be done in a spirit of service. Only one who serves is fit to become a leader. The man who seeks a position, can he be pure hearted? No. Forgetting power and position, concentrating only on one's duties, men should engage themselves in action. This is the true import of "Udaaseenah".

Act in the present

Gathavyathah: "Vyathah" refers to anguish in the mind. Falling a prey to mental anguish, man is totally confused. Man has a tendency to brood over the past. Of what use it is to worry about what has happened? Nor should one worry about the future which is unknown and uncertain. Bear in mind only the present. This is the way to get rid of mental anguish ("Gathavyathah"). The present is the product of the past and the parent of the future. When you act properly in the present, the future will take care of itself. Do what is appropriate for the present moment. If there are no expectations, there will be no disappointments.

Sarvanrambha-parithyaagi: This means do not give room for ostentation in any of your undertakings. The world today is immersed in ostentation and egoism. What does it matter whether the world praises you or decries you? For instance, why should a devotee show off his devotion to earn the approbation of others? His devotion must be for pleasing the Lord and not for earning the approval of the world. In the spiritual path, what matters is the inner joy you experience. That is the key to self-satisfaction. "Sarvarambha parithyaagi" means preparedness to relinquish all your possessions and acquisitions including wealth, knowledge and strength.

Thus, it is only the devotee who has these six qualities that is dear to the Lord. It is such a devotee whom the Lord loves.

Man is ruined by six enemies (lust, anger, delusion, greed, pride and envy). Equally man is redeemed by the six qualities mentioned in the Gita sloka ("Anapekshah" etc.,)

Without cultivating these qualities, without cherishing such pure feelings, what is the use of immersing one's self in so-called devotion? It is only a hallucination, which cannot lead man to the experience of the Divine.

Wasted years

If you are true devotees, examine for yourselves how long you have been listening to Swami's discourses? Years have gone by. To what extent have you gone spiritually? How far have you put into practice Swami's teachings? What is the use of merely listening? Is it not all a waste? You are listening, but not putting the teachings into practice. Hunger can be appeased only when the cooked food is eaten. Only the devotee who practises what he has learnt is a true devotee.

Such a life is led by birds and beasts. Even these exhibit selflessness often. Man alone leads a totally selfish existence. It is a shame to call such persons as devotees. One must strive at least to practise one or two of the teachings. This calls for "Trikarana shuddhi", purity in thought, word and deed. Without such triple purity, man ceases to be human.

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. One should not do anything for the sake of earning other's approbation. If one acts with sincerity, he will be duly respected. But if one merely preaches and does not practise, he will be ignored. How can such a person expect to win the grace of the Lord?

(Swami went on to say that self-interest cannot be totally given up, but there should be a limit to it. Every thing in the world, including the body, organs like the eyes and other things are governed by strict adherence to limits. When the limits are exceeded disease sets in and the consequences may be serious).

Real freedom

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

Man is mortal and the Divine is immortal. In the mortal human being, there is the immortal Divine Spirit. In the field of the heart, there is a wish fulfilling tree (Kalpataru). The tree is surrounded by bushes and briars. When these are removed, the tree will be visible. This wish-fulfilling tree is within each person, but it is encompassed by the bad qualities in man. When these qualities are eliminated, the celestial tree will be recognised. This is the sadhana that each one has to perform. This is not the quest for something new. It is to experience what is yours. The entire cosmos is within you. The Universe is permeated by Brahman. One should be lucky to get this experience.

How is the Atma experienced? It is the consciousness that is experienced in the interval between one thought (sankalpa) and another. This may be illustrated by an example. Once, a man holding a time-piece in his hand and listening to the endless tick-tick of the second-hand, asked the time-piece whether it had any rest at all. The timepiece announced—"You simpleton! I have all the rest I need. It is the interval between one tick and another!" The "rest" is given by the "Rest watch". "Watch" means "look out". Seeing the watch, you have to look at the "rest" indicated by it. This is the way lessons are learnt in the spiritual journey.

When you want to swim across a river, you push the water ahead of you, behind you so that you may move forward. Today, people do not make this effort. They remain stagnant, going

ideas.

The ocean and the cloud

For instance, there is the example of the ocean. All kinds of rivers flow into the ocean. It absorbs all the waters, but its level hardly rises and all the water that comes in becomes saltish. What happens to the water that rises from the sea as vapour and cloud? It is pure and sweet. The clouds, when they produce thunder, proudly declare that by going up from the sea, they have achieved eminence as well as purity. Moreover, the clouds come down as rain and nourish the crops on earth. Can all the waters of the ocean nourish a farm? No. Only the transformation of the seawater into vapour and clouds can serve this purpose.

If one wishes to go up spiritually, one has to get away from the lower level. Only then, will it be possible for a person to engage himself in service to others.

Need for unity

It is not time that is responsible for all the chaos and violence in the nation and for all the difficulties experienced by the people. Men's thoughts are responsible for all these. These thoughts are filled with selfishness. It is because of these selfish and self-centered people that the nation is suffering from so many troubles.

As long as self-interest prevails there can be no unity. Without unity you cannot experience happiness. Therefore, unity is all important. With the strength derived from unity, you can accomplish anything. The weakness of the nation is due to growing discord between man and man. Unity is supremely important. This calls for the shedding of selfishness to some extent.

The years are passing endlessly. It is now 1992 years since the birth of Christ. After nearly 2000 years what is it the people have learnt? What ideals are they upholding? People are celebrating the advent of the New Year, but what are they doing to improve their conduct? This is what matters. Without it the celebrations are meaningless.

Precepts and practice

Jesus taught many good lessons. Allah gave many high teachings. Rama and Krishna taught many good lessons. What have people gained from all this? How far have they tried to put this into practice? There are numerous persons who read the Bhagavad Gita every day. There are persons propagating the Gita in every street. Preachers have multiplied but the number of those practising the precepts is dwindling.

People talk about what Swami has been saying. How many are practising what Swami says even to the slightest extent? No. What, then, is the use of all this?

Whether it is Swami's teachings or the instructions given by elders, whatever is good you should put into practice. You must act according to whatever your conscience tells is good. This is the way to honour the great ones. Not to practise their teaching is to disrespect them.

New Year Prospects

Joy is not derived from the mere advent of a New Year. All people want to know whether the New Year will bring better progress and improvement in the general condition. Having regard to time, place and circumstances, some good and bad things may occur. If, however, people desire an improvement in the state of affairs they have to change their attitude. It will be helpful if the time factor is favourable for change. This month, January, is not quite promising. January 1 starts on Ashtami, the eighth day after the New Moon. The end of the month January 31 will also be an Ashtami. All kinds of difficulties are likely during the month.

The New Year appears to have started on an Ashtami, which is considered inauspicious but this should not cause any apprehension among the people. With purity of heart, anything can be accomplished. Even the course of destiny can be changed by human will power.

Some students today talk about free will. Only the Divine has free will. Man is endowed with a Will but not a free Will. When the Divine free Will moves, the human Will also operates. There are a myriad leaves in a tree but not a leaf will move in the absence of wind. The leaves have no free will but they have a will which can be swayed when a breeze blows. In the tree of life human beings are like leaves. When the Divine Will blows the human Will begins to move. Thus, there is need for the coming together of Divine Will and the human will. Then, there will be a blossoming of human nature. Man can never achieve anything by his own efforts. There is something which a man accomplishes without much effort on his part. There are other things which he is unable to accomplish even with his best efforts. What is the reason? It is on account of the play of the Divine Will.

The Divine at Work

How the Divine operates may be known from two examples from every one's experience. The heart beats and the lungs breathe without any conscious human effort. These are the results of the operation of laws of nature according to the Divine Will. There is nature on one side and human effort on the- other. The two should function in unison. When there is such unity you have purity. That purity leads to divinity. These are not three different things but three stages in the process of a tender fruit achieving ripeness.

Bharat's foremost need today is unity. When the nation is in peril all parties should come together. There is no room here for ideological or partisan interests. All should regard themselves as the children of Bharat. All should have the nation's interest in their forefront. When this view prevails the nation's welfare is assured.

Students! Regard every second as a new year and act on that basis. You need not wait for the passing of twelve months to embark on any enterprise. Transform yourselves every moment. Get rid of the bad old ideas; that will herald the birth of the New Year. Take part in service activities to sanctify your lives. Adhere to righteous conduct. Live up to the motto: Help ever - Hurt never. This is the essence of the message of Vyasa's eighteen Puranas.

In rendering service you must have total dedication. For instance when you have to attend on a patient you should not leave the patient for the sake of having Swami's darshan. Your first duty is to look after the patient. Your devotion will be mere show if you leave the patient in the lurch and go for Swami's darshan. Duty is God. Work is Worship. Some nurses are behaving in this manner. They imagine that they are filled with devotion but this is not devotion. This is hurt, not help. This is not proper. God will not be pleased with this kind of "devotion". You must be by the side of the patient when he is in pain. This is real service to Swami. But this does not happen. When delivery cases have to be attended to, instead of looking after them people come to Swami. This is not right at all.

In our old hospital some nurses used to behave in this manner. They are not good devotees at all. They are merely putting on the cloak of devotion. Duty comes first. Divine grace will come according to your desserts. Devotion may be there, but duty should be the first concern.

This applies to students also. They have to attend to their duties first. If duties are neglected, any pretence of devotion is merely a show. It is even a form of deception.

A patient should be regarded as Narayana Himself. You may come to Swami in your free time. I have been saying these things for many years. But how many are acting up to them? Very few. In this manner, they are not only neglecting their duties but also acting against the directive of Swami. Hence, you should see the Divine in every patient and render service in the feeling that God is the Indweller in all beings. This will promote your spiritual progress. When you regard yourselves as devotees of Swami, you have to bring glory to Swami's name. If you behave in a wrong way, you are betraying Swami.

All the world's problems today are due to selfishness. Individuals are concerned about the welfare of themselves and their families and do not care what happens to the rest of the world. It should be realised that the welfare of the individual is related to the welfare of society, the nation and the world. Students must develop a broad outlook. Selfishness and narrowness of outlook are more prevalent among the educated than among the villagers and tribal folk. The evil practices prevailing in big cities are not to be found even in jungles. Yudhishtira learnt that the educated man who had bad qualities was truly blind. Educated persons should develop discrimination, humility and a right sense of values. Students should try to enquire into the cause of the world's problems, seek remedies for them and live in unity.

If you carry out the injunctions of the Divine all will be well with you. Every one is selfish in this world. God alone is selfless. He alone has the authority to confer joy even on selfish persons. He alone is the Master. Follow the Master.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Hari bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*").

—From Bhagavan's discourse on 1.1.1993 at Prasanthi Nilayam

Himself. At that instant another incident too will happen: the group of six vices that had infested the place will quit without so much as a farewell. When these vices quit, the wicked retinue of evil tendencies and vulgar attitudes which thrive on them will also break camp and disappear, without even leaving their addresses! Then man will shine in his pristine splendour of Truth and Love, and finally succeed in merging with the Supreme.

—Baba

BHAGAVAN'S VISIT TO MADRAS

Divine Benediction on Ecstatic Devotees

For lakhs of Sai devotees in Tamil Nadu, who had been eagerly awaiting Bhagavan Baba's visit to Madras after a lapse of nearly three years, Bhagavan's four day visit to the city in January was like a sharp down pour of rain to parched fields. Eager and enthusiastic crowds greeted Him wherever He went and one look from Him was enough to enrapture thousands of young and old devotees.

Darshan en-route

Bhagavan started from "Trayee Brindavan" Whitefield, on' the 18th morning at 9.30 a.m. By the time Swami reached Palmaner near Chittoor, it was clear that Swami would be greeted by large gatherings of devotees at almost every place on the route to Madras. In nearly every village all along the Road, banners had been put up across the highway welcoming Bhagavan. Near Chittoor, Bhagavan made a short visit to the Lakshminagar Colony in response to the pressing request of a devotee, to give Darshan and bless the huge gathering of devotees from the Town and the surrounding areas. Almost the entire town had assembled in the colony as Bhagavan was visiting Chittoor after many years. The gathering became ecstatic when Swami got in to an improvised platform and gave Darshan and blessed them all with His Abhayahastha sign. Despite the difficulty in getting in and out of the surging crowds, Bhagavan was deeply moved by the devotion of the gathering.

From Chittoor, Bhagavan proceeded straight to Madras, with brief halts at Ranipet, Watjapet, the Kancheepuram by pass and some villages where the local Sai Organisation had made arrangements for welcoming Bhagavan.

Before reaching 'Sundaram', Bhagavan inaugurated the new temple for Shirdi Sai Baba built within the precincts of the Factory of M/S W.S. Industries. A large gathering, of workers had assembled there. Bhagavan was received with Poornakumbam and Vedic chants. Bhagavan performed the consecration ceremony of the idol of Shirdi Baba in the sanctum of the Temple. The walls of the temple outside the Sanctum sanctorum displayed artistic panels depicting scenes from the life of Shirdi Baba.

By the time Bhagavan was nearing 'Sundaram', large crowds had lined up on both sides of Greenways Road and Chamiers Road over a stretch of half a mile. Bhagavan blessed all of them moving slowly in His Car and arrived at 'Sundaram' at 6.30 p.m. Immediately on arrival Bhagavan got down and walked along the Road blessing the huge crowd that had thronged outside 'Sundaram' and had patiently waited for more than 2 hours.

A ceremonial reception with Poornakumbham and other honours was accorded to Bhagavan at the entrance to 'Sundaram'. As Swami walked over the red carpet leading to the main building, tiny children lined up on either side offered flowers at His Lotus Feet while Vedic chanters and Nadaswaram troupe went in front. Bhagavan blessed the crowd with darshan from Santhi Vedika where Arati was offered. After going in, Bhagavan appeared again on the balcony of the first floor of 'Sundaram' to give 'Darshan' to the vast multitude that had gathered both inside and outside the compound. Bhagavan's appearance on the lotus-shaped balcony was indeed a glorious sight, as the entire face of 'Sundaram' had been brilliantly illuminated with multicoloured lights.

19th January

On the morning of 19th immense crowds of devotees started gathering near 'Sundaram' from as early as 3 a.m. to ensure entry into the premises for Omkaram and Suprabhatam followed by Nagarsankirtan and to have the advantage of Darshan of Bhagavan at 6 a.m. As only a couple of thousands could be accommodated inside the premises, those who came later took positions on the ground opposite and waited patiently for nearly two hours for the Darshan at 6 a.m. This happened every day till the 22nd. The crowds swelled from day to day for the early morning Darshan, going up to nearly fifty thousand on 22nd morning when Bhagavan left for Brindavan. The morning Darshan was so singularly captivating and blissful that few liked to miss it. It was a wonderful experience to have. Darshan of Bhagavan standing on the lotus shaped balcony and marking time for the Arati Song and finally blessing the crowd of devotees raising both His hands in Abhaya-hasta turning in all directions.

On 19th at 8.30 a.m. Bhajan commenced at Abbotsbury where huge crowds had gathered and children and their parents also had assembled in large numbers to witness the Bal Vikas Rally.

Bal Vikas Rally & Exhibition

An exhibition was arranged in a make shift building near the entrance gate in which models, pictures, photos and explanatory notes were exhibited depicting the Sai activities in Tamil Nadu in the educational, spiritual and service wings. Bhagavan, on arrival at Abbotsbury, opened the exhibition and then moved on to the open grounds to inspect the rally of the Bal Vikas students numbering about five hundred. The Bal Vikas children were dressed immaculately and presented a mass drill followed by a display depicting the theme of Unity of faith and national integration. The children grouped in different formations each with symbol of one major religion finally merged into one with the Sarva-dharma Symbol and paid obeisance to

the Hall where Bal Vikas Gurus & children who were recipients of prizes in Bal Vikas Examinations in 91 & 92 had assembled. Bhagavan blessed the prizes and certificates by His Divine hands and asked the children to sing one or two Bhajans. The prizes and certificates were distributed later by the State Educational Co-ordinator.

Public Meeting at Abbotsbury

In the evening, Bhagavan arrived at Abbotsbury at 5.30 p.m. He blessed the large gathering outside before getting up the dais for the afternoon meeting. There was Vedic invocation by a group of boys. Maj. Gen. S. P. Mahadevan, President of the Tamil Nadu Sathya Sai Organisation, in his speech extended a reverential welcome to Bhagavan, who was visiting Madras after a lapse of 2 years and prayed to Him to bless the eager devotees with a visit every year. He mentioned that Bhagavan had blessed Sri Kandaswami, retired I. G. of C. B. I., an old devotee, and Sri V. Ratnam, Chief Justice of Madras High Court, to speak on the occasion.

Sri Kandaswami, in a moving speech, expressed his gratitude to Bhagavan who had saved him from the jaws of death on two occasions, when he was suffering from serious ailments. He detailed the great part played by Bhagavan in not only alleviating the physical sufferings of mankind but also inspiring them to progress in spiritual pursuits by means of service to humanity. Mr. Justice Ratnam, in his speech, described Bhagavan as the only hope of saviour in the modern world which is torn by troubles and turmoils and calamities due to the evil forces that are rampant creating disharmony in the name of religions and regional affiliations. He made special mention about the promotion of human values undertaken by Bhagavan through the Seva organisation and Educational Institutions of unique calibre and prayed Bhagavan to bless them all.

Bhagavan, in His Discourse, dwelt at great length on the necessity for recognition of oneness of all beings which have the same basic life force as Atma in them irrespective of the differences in names and forms. Bhagavan emphasised that though Bharat was a great country with a glorious and hoary tradition as a leader among the nations of the World in imparting spiritual knowledge, it has descended to a low state with internecine quarrels and regional, political, and linguistic factions. The cause for this downfall is lack of unity and the growth of selfishness. Bhagavan stressed on the limitless power of unity citing example of how even small ants when they join together can kill a python. Bhagavan said the people of the country should sink all differences of region, religion language or state and unite as one people to face their challenging problems. He quoted Rama who declared that he revered his motherland greater even than heaven. He exhorted the people to consider their motherland equivalent to their mother and work for the progress and prosperity of the nation as a whole discarding narrow selfish pursuits. Bhagavan concluded the discourse asking the people to cultivate love as the binding factor and sang the Bhajan song '*Prema Muditha*'.

Visit to Perambur

Abbotsbury at 8.30 a.m. and blessed the vast multitude of devotees assembled there for Bhajan and Darshan. He then left for Perambur.

At Sathya Sai Nivas, Perambur Bhagavan blessed the thousands that had thronged outside and those that participated in Bhajan inside the Hall. The children of the Balagurukulam at Sathya Sai Nivas presented a dance programme which was appreciated and blessed by Bhagavan. Particular mention must be made of a tableau of 'Ashtalakshmi' in which the goddesses representing eight aspects of prosperity were depicted by eight little girls who appeared like dolls and were so still that only on close examination of the winking of the eyes one could find out they were live children posing in those roles. Bhagavan went through the newly built annexe of Balagurukulam and after taking Arati left for the Southern Railway Employees' Sangh office 'Unity House' where the president Sri T. V. Anandan received Bhagavan with traditional honours. Bhagavan blessed the vast gathering of Railway workers and other devotees. Sri T. V. Anandan spoke explaining the compassion and infinite Grace of Bhagavan who is the living Divinity for them. After blessing the gathering and Arati Bhagavan left for Sembiam to visit the Factory of Amalgamations Group.

Visit to Factory

About 7000 workers had assembled in the premises of Tractors and Farm equipment factory. Sri Sivasailam, the Chairman of Amalgamation Group of Companies extended a prayerful welcome to Bhagavan and described Him as the Yugavatar. Bhagavan blessed the workers with a divine discourse in which He compared the workers to the limbs of a body while the management was the heart. The limbs can function only when the heart is healthy and heart also has to co-ordinate the limbs to function to achieve any effective results.

Cultural Programme of Bal Vikas

On 20th evening, Bhagavan graced the Bal Vikas children of Madras Metro and Chengleput Districts by His presence to witness the dance drama programme put up by them. The first was on 'Nayanmars'. Selected episodes from the life of the four principal nayanmars Appar, Sundarar, Manickawasagar and Tirugnana Sambandar were presented by the Bal Vikas girls of Madras Metro Region. The choreography was excellent, the make up and performance of the girls were of a high order with the costumes also captivating. The songs were rendered melodiously and on the whole it was a very gallant effort on the part of the Bal Vikas children and the producers.

The second one was on the life of Jnaneshwar, the great Maharashtra Saint whose name is eternal and who gave the great Jnaneshvari masterly commentary on Bhagawat Gita widely acclaimed as a literary marvel. The drama was enacted with superb artistry and the message of the great saint's life was brought home to the audience effectively. Particular mention must be made of the girl who played the role of Jnaneshwar as to the manner born. Bhagavan blessed the children by posing for photograph with both the groups.

Darshan at 'Sundaram' Bhagavan arrived at Abbotsbury at 8 a.m. and gave his blessing to the children of adopted slums of Madras city and adopted villages from Chingleput District. He witnessed a small play 'Vamanavatar' put up by the Slum children and, presented clothes to old people and blessing to the large gathering of people from slums and villages who had assembled in the separate shed. Later Bhagavan blessed the High Court Judges, IAS Officers and Doctors who had assembled in adjoining hall at Abbotsbury. Bhagavan then visited the Shirdi Sai Mandir at Guindy and blessed the large gathering of disciplined devotees who were singing bhajans there.

Meeting of Special Invitees

On 21st evening, after blessing the large gathering of devotees assembled at Abbotsbury, Bhagavan arrived at Kamaraj Bhavan, Teynampet where a meeting of special invitees drawn from all sections of society had been arranged. Thousands of devotees were squatting at the lawns outside the magnificent building which could accommodate only 3000 invitees. Video screens were provided to facilitate the people outside to watch the proceedings.

The meeting commenced with Vedic invocation by Bal Vikas boys. Maj. Gen. Mahadevan in his welcome address, extended a prayerful welcome and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for having consented to give His Message for, the invitees and welcoming the Governor of Madras Sri Bhishma Narayan Singh who presided over the function, detailed the services rendered by him for the country.

The Governor, in his address, expressed his gratitude for this opportunity to be in the hallowed presence of Bhagavan Baba who has come into this world with great Divine power as a Reformer to redeem mankind and mentioned about the great institutions founded by Bhagavan for the imparting of education, medical aid and service to mankind. He extolled the silent service rendered by the Sathya Sai Organisation in many countries.

Bhagavan, in His Divine Discourse, pointed out that people are now clamouring for rights without discharging responsibilities and this is the cause for lack of peace in the world. (The detailed report of the Discourse is published separately).

The meeting concluded with singing of National Anthem.

On 22nd morning, Bhagavan granted Darshan after Nagarsankirtan. The crowd had swelled to more than fifty thousand. All the approach Roads to Sundaram were filled with crowds on both sides eagerly expecting to have a glimpse of Bhagavan before he left for Brindavan.

Bhagavan blessed the Seva Dal Volunteers who had done a tremendous job with cheerful faces despite facing such an unprecedented surging of crowds at every place and regulating traffic in co-ordination with Police at all important junctions and cross roads. Bhagavan blessed also the crowds assembled for Bhajans and the Bhajan Groups. Bhagavan left Sundaram at 9

farewell to their beloved Lord praying for Him to visit every year.

Return to Brindavan

On the way back to Whitefield, Bhagavan visited the Administrative Officers of E.C.C. Co. of L & T and Ramachandra Medical College at Porur. Before reaching Bangalore Bhagavan blessed large gatherings assembled with devotion at several places en-route.

During the Madras trip Bhagavan took with him 55 students of the I & II M.B.A. Course for whom a special programme of lectures by eminent industrialists and Bankers was arranged at Sundaram.

During his stay in Madras Bhagavan blessed some old and prominent devotees by accepting their invitation to lunch or dinner at their residences.

"Dharma Bodha" (True Dharma of a Mahatma)

Samartha Ramadas appeared before Sivaji, with his usual call for alms: Bhavati Bhikshaam Dehi. Sivaji realised that the guru is God; so, he wrote something on a piece of paper and deposited it reverentially in the alms bag of Ramadas. For the relief of hunger how can paper suffice, asked Ramadas. Sivaji prayed that the paper may be read. The paper recorded a gift of the entire kingdom and all that Sivaji owned to the Guru. Samartha Ramadas replied: "No, my dharma is dharma-bodha, the teaching of dharma, instructing the people in the right way of life; kshatriyas like you must follow the dharma of ruling the land, ensuring peace and content to the millions under your care". Yajnavalkya too once refused a kingdom, because he cared more for the kingdom of moksha, the realm of freedom. Vasishta is also said to have renounced a kingdom offered him by Rama.

—**Baba**
(Chinna Katha)

The Middle Path

What do you do when you're on a road
traveling, you know not where?
Do you charge ahead, or just lay back
and pretend not to care?

Can one be good and one be bad?

I believe you'll find the answer's
between a smile and a frown

It's opposing pairs that shape the world
causing the ebb and flow.
It's on the wings of circumstance
that we ride the winds that blow.

At times we may be brilliant,
at times we play the fool.
But I think we walk the middle path
when we live by the golden rule.

Do you think that Allah can be praised
and the living Christ denied?
Fire won't burn your sins away
if to the wheel you're tied.

All is one,
and one is all there needs to be.
Just ask your favorite form of God,
and He will help you see.

-Jon Bruns
Kalispell, Montana

Back Again to God

They tell a story, back in the days when carts and horses were used instead of automobiles, about village elders who had decided to organize the working day to suit their desires.

The eldest man told the others that since he'd spent his whole life toiling, he now wished to relax more since it seemed that all was well. The idea of less work was exciting to many. "Oh yes," they agreed, "let's do only the things we choose and forget the rest."

They organized each day of the week to include long rest periods, elaborately prepared meals, and only pleasurable activities. They also had excluded time for prayer. Now those villagers had always had reverence and gratitude for God. They knew that God had always provided for them. But they forgot where all these wonderful gifts they were partaking of, came from.

were running out of supplies because very few people were working. Things were looking bad. It was as though they had all but forgotten how to work and what their lives were like before.

One man and his wife ignored the new ideas. They had kept on working as usual. The others treated them badly in the beginning, but now they were jealous of the robust, cheerful attitude this couple had.

The eldest man, now quite weak, came to the couple, "Oh please," he begged, "Can you help us remember what our lives were like before?" The couple glanced at each other and the wife said, "We take our direction from God. He is in our hearts." The old man implored, "But how do we get Him back with the rest of us?" The woman reminded him that God had not gone away. He had been there all the time.

The husband took the eldest man by the hand and led him back to the center of the village. "Come with me, my elder, and I will remind you of who organized our ways since the beginning. I will show you and the others how to organize again, with God directing us."

They had walked a long way back to the village, and as the younger man spoke, the elder gained strength.

—Joy Frank Los
Angeles, California
(from the SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, USA)

Prayers Answered

For cons long I must have prayed to God
By different names his praise I sang
Each prayer must have searched for truth
Each answer must have come from Sai.

Oft times the answers were so strong
But with guided faith your will I chose
Always let me seek your guidance
Never doubting Sathya Sai

The wonder that these eyes
your form can see
Will always draw my prayers true
The wonder that I am a part of you
Assures my soul of Moksha one day

In this present birth I took
It was many years before your name I heard
But I had always prayed to God
And often wished his form to see
And now behold! my prayers answered
To earth has God come as
Bhagavan Sathya Sai.

Shirley Lalla,
Trinidad & Tobago

*What can Kali or the forces of evil do
To one whose heart is filled with compassion,
Who wears the jewel of truthful speech,
Whose limbs are devoted to the well-being of others?*

If man is to be free from the sway of evil forces, he has to achieve the triple purity of thought, word and deed. It is only when the heart, the tongue and the body are pure that man can fully comprehend the Supreme Principle (Paratattwa).

This world that is inhabited by man is called 'Prapancha'. 'Pra' implies that which is shining or blooming. It is a prefix. It is only when this 'Pra' is prefixed to every sense organ that 'Prapancha' (or the world) emerges.

"Prapancha" and "Paramatma"

There are the five basic elements (space, air, fire, water and earth), the five sense organs (relating to hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell), the five sheaths (Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya), and the five life-breaths (Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana). When the prefix 'Pra' is added to each of these five categories (pancha), the 'Prapancha' emerges. This means that the world is made up of the five elements, the five senses, the five sheaths and the five vital airs. Consequently, wherever you turn, you see in the world differences: differences among material objects, variety among individuals, differences in experiences, etc. Wherever such differences exist, there are bound to be likes and dislikes, attachments and aversions (Raga and dwesha). If man has to transcend these differences, he has to recognise the all-pervading Divine Principle. Only then both attachment and hatred can be totally eliminated.

The five elements are manifestations of the Over-self (Paramatma). So are the five sheaths and the five vital airs. Hence, man cannot exist without these manifestations. That is why the scriptures declare: "His (God's) feet and hands are everywhere; his head, face, eyes and cars are everywhere". The omnipresence of the Divine can be experienced in the Cosmos.

Nature of the Divine

When a man embarks on some undertaking, he imagines that no one is observing him. But no man can do anything unseen or unnoticed by God. Is it possible to deceive the Divine whose 'face and eyes are everywhere?' "Sarvam Aavrithya tishtathi" (Encompassing everything, He remains). The Divine shines in every object. It is a mark of supreme ignorance to imagine that you can conceal anything from God. Nor is that all. God is described as "Acharam Chameva Cha" ('He is nonmoving and moving'). That is, though appearing to be moving, He remains unmoving. God has no hands, but He can grasp anything. He has no feet but He can move everywhere. He has no eyes, but can see everything. This is the significance of the statement, "Acharam Chameva Cha".

Here is an example. Man in the dream state feels that he is moving about. In the dream he wanders over all places. He experiences many actions done by the body. But despite the movements and activities in the dream, his body is still and motionless on the bed on which he is sleeping. The same body is moving about in the dream. The Divine is in that body. Equally the Divine is in the body that is motionless. Thus, He is both the unmoving and the moving. It is not easy to recognise this subtle truth (Jnana).

The one and the many

What does 'Jnana' mean? 'Jna' means 'to know'. 'Na' refers to "that which cannot be known". 'Jnana' therefore refers to that which cannot be easily comprehended. "Advaita Darsanam Jnanam", declares the scripture. 'Jnana (Super-knowledge) is the perception of the One without a second'. Only the One exists. There is no second. In such a situation, there is nothing to be known. There is no knowledge, knowing or knower (in that state). In comprehending the One, the nature of the many has to be properly understood. Every man has to recognise the Divinity that is present in all human beings.

God is one. That One is the Indweller in all beings. Did the Divine fragment Himself in a myriad ways? The answer is: without fragmenting Himself, the Divine is present in all beings. In his ignorance, man notices only the manifoldness around him.

This may be illustrated this way. The sun's image can be seen in an ocean, a river, a lake, a pond or a well. Everywhere the sun appears to be shining. Are there so many different suns? No. The objects reflecting the image of the sun are varied and different from one another. But the image is that of the sun alone. Likewise, names and forms may be different, but in all beings, the same God, without being divided, shines as the Indweller. Thus, although bodies may appear with different names and forms, the Divine in them is one.

Love, nearness and obedience

To recognise this omnipresent Divine, man has to get rid of attachment, fear and hatred (Raga, Bhaya and Dwesha). These three are worldly qualities. But, merely by shedding these qualities, man cannot have God-realisation or comprehend the Divine principle. This table before me has no qualities. Can it comprehend the Divine? The mere absence of (bad) qualities is not enough. There must be love. You must develop love towards God. But love alone will not serve to make one comprehend the Atmic principle. One must move towards the Divine. But, here again, nearness to God is not enough. You have to carry out the injunctions of the Divine. It is only when love, nearness and obedience to the Divine commands are present that one can realise the Atmic principle.

Recognition of the Divinity inherent in the human state calls for spiritual sadhanas (disciplines) of various kinds. Today man is enveloped in a certain disease. It is peacelessness (Asanthi). For curing any disease, there are normally three methods. One is to take the prescribed medicine. After taking the medicine, the prescribed diet regimen has to be followed. Taking the medicine without observing the diet regulations will not help to cure the disease. Adhering to the

diet control are essential to ensure a cure.

If the disease of peacelessness afflicting man is to be cured, he has to take the medicine of Love and adhere to the diet of following the injunctions of the Divine. Only then will the mental unrest go.

It is true that many have love for God. But they do not live up to the dictates of the Divine. Those who follow the Divine injunctions in a formal manner, do not act with love for God. It is only when there is a union of love and obedience that man can recover peace of mind.

Three kinds of argument

In this context, a Vedic aphorism declares: "Vaadah pravadataam". ("Let the argument be expounded"). There are three different ways of carrying on an argument ("Vada"). Without attachment or hatred, with the desire to understand the Atmic principle, with a sincere heart, engaging oneself in a spirit of enquiry, is termed a discussion, "Vada" (purposeful argument). This means that one conducts the debate with a heartfelt yearning to know the truth, with a pure mind filled with noble thoughts. Without such an attitude, if one is keen only to assert his own opinions and defeat the others in the argument by any means, condemning the beliefs of others and defending one's own views in an egoistic spirit—this type of argumentation is termed "Jalpa" (wrangling).

The third type of argumentation is condemning everything and indulging in such condemnation habitually, without any regard for one's own defects, finding faults in others perpetually, magnifying those faults and broadcasting them. Such an attitude is termed "Vithandavaada" (perverse argumentation).

Of these three types, unfortunately we notice these days only the third type of perverse logic prevalent. "Vada" and "Jalpa" are not very much in evidence. One pretends to be all knowing in any argument. Such people enter into an argument only for furthering their selfish ends. These persons can never realise the Atmic principle even after any number of lives.

The urge to know

The first requisite is the urge to comprehend the Atmic principle. Only when this arises in man will his humanness become worthwhile. In spite of human birth and the inherent Divinity in them, men are failing to recognise their Divine nature. Man is learning all about other things, but is making no effort to understand himself.

What is the real meaning of Jnana? It is to know the truth about one's self by a process of refinement. What is spirituality? What is the refining of one's nature? It is discovering one's true self.

One is searching for something in a room. He sees everything in the room except himself. Likewise in this vast room of the cosmos, man is searching for everything and perceives all

is God? Where is God?" This query is like that of a man who asks others where he is. "Where am I? Who am I?" What is the meaning in putting such questions to others? He knows where he is. How can others tell him where he is?

Likewise, it is sheer ignorance to search for God. There is no need to search for God. He is everywhere, all pervading, inside and outside. You have to know the Divine which is here, there and everywhere. The Bhagavata says: "Dooraath doore anthike cha" ("He is farther than the farthest and close by as well"). There is none who is nearer to us than He. But there is also none who is farther from us than He. What is the reason for this nearness or remoteness? One's feelings alone are the primary reason. If you feel He is near, He is near; if you feel He is distant, He is remote. It is on account of this that the scriptures declare: "As is your feeling, so is the outcome".

"Om Tat Sat"

God has been given three names: Om Tat Sat. Man has a fascination for names. When the name of his native place or his own name is mentioned, he feels happy. But with regard to the Divine, the name is not important. If the inner significance of all the different names of the Divine is understood, it will be found that they mean one thing alone. "Om" is Parabrahma (the Supreme Absolute). "Tat" is 'that'. "Sat" is the Real. "Om Tat Sat" means "The Supreme Absolute is that Reality". By describing "Om" as Pranava, made up of the three letters A, U, and M and elaborately commenting in this manner, the pedantic expositors confuse the aspirants. By such expositions, devotion is weakened. Each one expounds these statements in his own way. When the question is asked whether these exponents practise any of the teaching they preach, the answer is in the negative. When such is the case, how can spirituality grow?

Hence, practice is more essential than preaching. When you practise the teachings, others will follow your example. When you preach to a lakh of people what you don't practise yourself, all of them lose their faith in the teachings and are indifferent to them.

Three stages to the Divine

Moreover, the Atmic bliss to be derived from practising spiritual truth cannot be derived by any other means. No preceptor's teaching will be of any use. Nor will the reading of scriptures be of any avail. The gain from study or listening is precious little. It is only when you practise what you have seen and heard that you can experience Atmic bliss. In the Gita, Krishna declares: "Jnatum, Drashtum, Praveshtum" (as the three stages in Self-Realisation). "Jnatum": You have heard about something. You wish to see what you have heard about. That is "Drashtum". And then you wish to have the experience of what you have seen: that is "Praveshtum". Only when these three take place can the human being attain the Divine.

At present, you are merely studying the scriptures or listening to the expositions of scholars. You must embark on an undertaking to ascertain whether what you have heard can be found and put into practice. You have to begin the quest. But where is the quest to be made? Not outside you. Everything is within you. All that is outside is a reflection of the Inner Being.

Experience of sages

In ancient times, the great sages performed rigorous penances to experience the Divine. Some of them gave up the attempt after a time, considering the Divine as unattainable. Some others persisted in their attempts with the determination to achieve the goal. Thereby they realised the Divine. What did they proclaim to the world after their Realisation? "Vedaahametham Purusham Mahaantham Aadithyavarnam Thamasahparastaath", "We were able to see the Lord, the Effulgent One, bright as the Sun". Where did they see God? "Tamasahparastath". "Beyond the Tamo-guna", came the answer. Today man is enveloped in a thick cloud of Tamo-guna. The effulgent Lord can be seen beyond the Tamo-guna (the quality which is the cause of all man's ignorance and wrong doings) This Tamo-guna, which holds every man in its grip, should be got rid of. For this purpose, men should perform good deeds and render service.

(Swami then related the story of an encounter between Hanuman and Vibhishana, Ravana's youngest brother, in Lanka, in which Vibhishana asked Hanuman why he (Vibhishana) had not secured a vision of Rama in spite of his chanting Rama's name. Hanuman replied that mere chanting of Rama's name was not enough. Vibhishana had failed to engage himself in any act of service to Rama. He had done nothing to render help to Sita, who was held captive in Lanka by Ravana).

Do the Lord's work

It is not enough to recite the Lord's name. One has to render service to the Lord. Only then, there is a unification of the Name and the Form and the Divine is experienced.

People are chanting the name of the Lord today. They are dwelling in the Ashram. Why have they come here? To secure Bhagavan's grace and experience spiritual bliss (Atma-anandam). Those who have come maybe reciting the name of the Lord. But are you engaging yourselves in any of the Lord's work? What part are you playing in Swami's work? Without participating in Divine service, your stay here for any number of years will be as futile as the presence of a frog on a lotus. While bees coming from long distances taste the nectarine sweetness of the honey in the lotus, the frog derives no benefit from its nearness to the lotus. This truth is not recognised by devotees.

Hence, it is not enough to come to the Ashram. You have to take part in the Ashram activities. You must render service according to your capacity. You are not asked to do more than that. Swami does not ask for your services. He is saying all this for your own sake.

Duty of ashramites

Hence, from today everyone staying in the Ashram, whoever he may be, should render service according to one's capacity. There is no use merely in consuming food and taking one's seat in the Mandir Verandah or the Darshan line. Everyone must render service to the limit of one's ability. Those who cannot render such service should quit the Mandir. Why have you come here? What are you doing? Consult your conscience for the answers. You have come from

wasting your time. This is a grievous mistake. Time is a manifestation of God. Time is consuming man. God is the consumer of Time itself. Therefore, you should strive to earn the grace of God. If you waste time, you will forfeit God's grace.

Many persons are wasting their time in this manner. Whatever you tell them, they say: "Sai Ram! Sai Ram!" Even a tape-recorder can repeat this. What is the use of uttering the name? Embark on active work. Even for eating a `masala dosa', you have to engage your hands and mouth in action. Likewise, you have to use your hands for service. Chant the name with your tongue. And experience bliss in your heart. Only when all these three are done will you qualify for God's grace.

Therefore, everyone who has joined the Ashram should take part in service activities according to one's capacity. Some are doing this. There is one devotee who is 86 years old. He is engaged in some work or other right up to 10 p.m. in the night. For doing work earnestly, is age a bar? He has difficulty in climbing stairs or coming down. But he carries on his work by using a vehicle. There is another devotee who is also an aged person. According to his strength, he renders service in the Canteen by serving water. There is a third devotee. His energies have declined. Despite this, he is carrying on the editorial duties assigned to him.

Therefore, each one may do what lies within his power. But there are quite a few younger people who don't do any work. They take food several times. They sit in the verandah and do nothing. There is no room for such persons in the Verandah. You have to work. Those who do not work, should leave.

This is the import of the Gita declaration: "Karmanyeva Adhikaarasthe maa phaleshu kadaachana" ("You are entitled only to do your duty, not to the fruits thereof") Practise and propagate this Karma Marga (the Path of Action). When one is told to take up some work, he says: "I won't be able to do this". Now, what is it such a person can do? He must at least say what it is that he can do. He is not being asked to build walls or dig wells. No one is asked to do such arduous work in the Ashram. All tasks are easy ones. We want persons who will take up such work. It is not for the development of the Ashram. It is for fulfillment of your life. The work can always be got done by wage earners without your service. But if you do that work, get involved in Karma Yoga, aim at Dharma Yoga and merge in Brahma Yoga (union with the Divine), you will have Self-Realisation. This is the teaching of Swami.

Three-fold purity

Dear devotees! All actions should be done with a view to achieving purity in thought, word and deed ("Trikarana shuddhi"). Everything is in the heart of man. Divinity is installed in the heart. A foolish person is carried away by the wealth and pomp of the outside world. The conceit that accompanies the fascination for these possessions is not recognised. Grief follows happiness like a shadow. Under the shadow of Authority (Adhikara) flourishes the demon of self-conceit (Ahamkara). Do not be carried away by the lure of power. Self-conceit, which comes in its wake, will overwhelm you. Beware of its presence. Only then you will be well. Do

demon of covetousness (*durabhimanam*). You must take note of such dangers.

When there is a lightning you see a sudden burst of effulgence. This is followed in the next moment by intense darkness. Darkness lurks all the time behind light. Hence, man is advised to treat pleasure and pain, profit and loss, victory and defeat with an equal eye. There is nothing in the world without these opposites. This is termed "Dvaita" or duality. Darkness and light, heat and cold, good and bad, sin and merit, truth and falsehood - these pairs are always there. Man has two eyes, two ears and two nostrils in one nose. Thus the world presents a picture of dualism. And because of this, we have the phenomenon of constant change in the world (Jagat). "Jagat" means that which "comes and goes" ("Ja" + "gat"). Nothing is permanent. There is only one thing that is unchanging and eternal, and that is Divinity. To experience that Divinity, man must first of all get rid' of his bad qualities. He must suppress his ego and render service to the Divine along with chanting the Lord's name. That is the way to redeem one's human life. Moreover, both the chanting of God's name and rendering of service should be done with a love-filled heart.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema Muditha manase kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram!*") Arati was offered to Bhagavan and then prasadam, blessed by Bhagavan, was distributed to all the devotees).

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 20.2.1993

GURUDEV VANI:

Sanctify Sports and Games

Students, Teachers and Patrons of Education!

The advent of the Sankranti festival is greeted by farmers who have brought home their harvest, singing with joy.

This sacred and auspicious Makara Sankranti is a divine occasion for people to transform their lives so that they may experience the divinity, the grandeur and greatness of human birth. "Whatever possessions and luxuries one may have, they *will* not confer peace of mind. Only when Godly feelings are developed, man will realise peace and bliss". (Poem)

In this mundane world, what people regard ordinarily as jnana (knowledge) is not proper jnana at all. Atmajnana (knowledge of the Self) alone is true knowledge. Atma and Jnana are synonymous. Jnana is fundamental. It cannot be got through thought or sense perceptions. All that is acquired as knowledge about the things of the world is not jnana. Jnana is that which remains after the mind is stilled.

Students! Remember that wealth lost can be regained, health lost can be recovered, but time lost is lost forever. Hence, do not waste time. Time is God. Sanctify the time given to you by worthy deeds, experience bliss and share it with others.

Commercialisation of Sport

Sports and Arts are intended to give pleasure. But the commercialisation of sports and music has lowered their value, together with the decline in human values. There should be no room for hatred or jealousy in games and sports. Our Institute students should engage themselves in sports for health and enjoyment. The participation of students coming from different regions and different backgrounds in games should be conducive to the promotion of unity. Even games should be regarded as sacred. Thereby, the participants become holy.

Students! Uphold your human status by developing firm faith in the Divine. Men act on faith in a hundred trivial things in daily life but why don't they have firm faith in the Vedic dictum that they are one with the Divine. ("Tat Twam Asi") Because immersed in sensual pleasures, they are oblivious to their real potency and state.

In worldly matters, every action has a subject, object and predicate, as in the statement: "Rama killed a dog." But this rule does not apply to the actions of the Divine. He is the doer, He is the deed and He is the object of action (Karta, Karma and Karana). No one is competent to enquire into the actions of the Divine. One cannot know how the Divine is directing his actions in relation to his past. Each one should carry out his self-examination himself. Students should continue spiritual exercises together with academic studies.

Duties and destiny

Men should realise that they are entitled only to carry out their duties without concern for the fruits thereof. Duties come first. The results will come in due course. Men should realise how so many vital things are happening without any conscious efforts on their part. Their breathing, the functioning of their hearts and digestive organs are taking place naturally without any effort on their part. Even the time and manner of one's death are dependent on the will of the Divine. However, man should regard himself as an instrument of the Divine. This was the advice Krishna gave to Arjuna. After Arjuna had exhausted all his questions to Krishna and got the answers from Krishna, his final decision was: "I shall abide by what you say" ("Karishye vachanam thava").

Priding himself on his talents and powers, man ruins himself. He does not realise that all his powers come from God. But it is in his power to ruin himself by the misuse of his talents.

No one can know the origin of anything. For example, there is a green-gram seed. Who can trace its genealogy? But one can recognise its future. The moment it is placed in the mouth and munched, that will be its end. Its origin is not known, but its end is in our hands. This is the reason why man is enjoined to concern himself about his end. Do not worry about rebirth because that is not in your power. Strive only to ensure that your end is pure and sacred. That

need to search for God. When the God is all-pervading, inside and outside, where is the need to search for Him? The only sadhana one has to practise is to get rid of the "Anatma bhava" (identification of the self with the body). "Anatma" is that which is impermanent. When you give up the impermanent, you realise what is permanent and eternal.

Man today foolishly seeks to enjoy all things indiscriminately. This is wrong. One must enjoy what is good and wholesome and eschew what is bad and unwholesome. In spiritual terms, this means that one should give up the impermanent physical objects and realise the Atma that is permanent. This alone is true sadhana—not various forms of worship and meditation, which are not genuinely concentrated on God.

Studies and samskaras

All acts should be performed in a spirit of dedication, realising that God is omnipresent. Then bliss will be experienced.

Students should combine normal studies with the refinement of their way of living (through Samskaras). This refinement cannot be got from teachers or books, but only by one's daily conduct.

Some students refrain from taking part in sports and games on the pretext that they are not interested in winning prizes. This is not genuine detachment, but only a form of laziness. Participation in sports and games is necessary for your health and recreation.

Our Institute students are doubtless filled with devotion and faith. But together with these, they should cultivate humility and discipline. Their behaviour should be exemplary. When Swami's car is going, students run beside it faster than the car. This is a bad example to others. During bhajan sessions students are eager to sit as near as Swami as possible. But in their eagerness they rush forward and fall upon each other in a manner which may cause serious collisions. Is this a good example for others? No. Students should set a good example even in small matters like these.

Students have abundant love for Swami but this is exhibited in unseemly ways. There should be restraint in doing anything.

Life is a game

Students think that sports events are confined to a few days in January. On the contrary, they should regard life itself as one continuous game. Life is a game! Play it! Treat the play as an ideal. Thereby you will be adhering to your ideals wherever you go.

Understand the true meaning of discipline. It is not something that should be observed only when you are in the hostel. Discipline must accompany you like your shadow. After leaving College, when you get employed, then also you should observe discipline. Discipline is the life-breath of man. It is like the spine for the human body.

Moreover, students should take care to avoid undue risk in their physical feats. You may desire to please Swami to the maximum extent. But if you sustain injuries, will it give joy to Swami? Your safety is important. All the spectators should feel happy. Your displays should be attractive without being unduly hazardous. You may perform thrilling feats: But do not give room for anxiety to others. Swami is concerned about your welfare. Whatever you do, it should be pleasing and enjoyable. Where there is devotion and earnestness, nothing serious may happen, thanks to the grace of Bhagavan. One student fell from a height with the head downwards. Doctors felt that it was a serious case and that the boy should be sent to Hyderabad. But I declared that it was nothing serious and that all would be well with him. The boy is full of devotion for Swami. Without any bandage or treatment, he was all-right. (Swami summoned the student to come on the stage. The entire audience cheered as the student came walking to Swami). Look at this boy. The doctors said that his entire leg had sustained a fracture. How did he come here after the severe fall? His devotion and faith helped him to overcome the effects of the fall.

Devotion and grace

Hence, if devotion and earnestness are present, even great dangers can be averted. Dangers may come from any cause. But even mountains of danger can be removed by the grace of God. But that does not mean you may take any risk. You should be cautious. Moreover, when some hazardous exercises are performed, there should be safety measures to meet any untoward contingencies. Soft mattresses should be kept on the ground. Such precautions should be taken by the organizers of the sports events.

Cars for hostels

The students from the Brindavan Campus put up a good show. They spent money from their own pockets to go to several places and arrange for attractive programmes. They suffered from lack of adequate facilities. Our Prasanthi Nilayam students, despite the nearness of the old hospital, oftentimes need to go to the speciality hospital by taxi or auto rickshaw. You have witnessed the superb performance of the Primary School children. Not even the grown-ups reached the level of their excellence. All their programmes were designed by themselves without any outside help. This is an amazing achievement. Their displays were done with ease and were thoroughly enjoyable. Likewise, the performance of the girl students from Anantapur was splendid. Even they desired to perform some hazardous feats. They showed great presence of mind in their exercises. No accidents occurred. Their only concern was to please Swami and win His approbation.

All the students from all the three Campuses are full of devotion to Swami. To meet the needs of the four Institutions in regard to transport facilities during emergencies, I am presenting cars to each of the three Institute campuses—Brindavan, Prasanthi Nilayam and Anantapur—and one for the Primary School (cheers). In view of the high cost of petrol, they are being given diesel driven cars. Students, however, should use the vehicles carefully. The wardens and Principals must see to this.

the Wardens of the Brindavan Campus, the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus and the Primary School. (The key of the car for the Anantapur hostel has already been given).

I bless you all that you should continue to give joy to your parents and others by your performances in the future and acquit yourselves well in every way.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*").

From Bhagavan's Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 14.1.93

Your devotion to God is best expressed by achieving the control of the senses. For the senses rush towards the temporary and the tawdry; and they foul the heart. I require from each of you no other gift, no more valuable offering than the heart I have endowed you with. Give Me that heart, as pure as when I gave it to you, full of the nectar of Love I filled it with.

—Baba

Avatar Vani

CARDIAC SPECIALITY SYMPOSIUM

Integral Approach to Human Ailments

The three basic elements in a human being are body, mind and Prajna (Integrated Awareness). All the three should be taken into account in the treatment of diseases and the promotion of health. This is the basis of the ancient system of Ayurveda (the Science of Longevity), observed Bhagavan Baba, in an inspiring discourse to an international gathering of Cardiac specialists present at a symposium held in the Auditorium of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam, on February 6, 1993.

Besides a large number of cardiac specialists from India, the symposium was attended by veteran doctors from the U.S., the United Kingdom, Spain and other countries.

After the welcome address by Dr. Safaya, Director of the Super Speciality Hospital at Prasanthigram, and the inaugural address by Sri B. Sankaranand, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Bhagavan delivered His address, which was listened to with rapt attention.

In the course of His address, Bhagavan said:

Members of the medical fraternity!

One whose heart is filled with compassion, whose words spell truth, and who works for the welfare of others will never suffer from difficulties or diseases even in the Kali age. (poem)

essential if one has to achieve the four goals of human life, namely, Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation). Science and technology have made great strides in contributing to the progress of human society. But man has deteriorated morally and spiritually.

Ayurveda and Allopathy

Among the four Vedas, the Atharvana Veda is the one that has given the science relating to longevity, known as Ayurveda. Ayurveda transcends time and space and is valid for all places, at all times. It relates to the spirit, mind and the body and has an integrated approach. The Allopathic system came much later. It is based on an objective, external approach while Ayurveda is subjective. Both have to be coordinated for better results. Since Ayurveda is subjective it is more efficacious than the Allopathic system. There is a superior artistic sense in Ayurveda.

Doctors have to realise the distinction between subjective and objective approaches. The latter has an external outlook while the former has an inner view. The object is a reflection of the subject. Without realising this relationship between Ayurveda and Allopathy, doctors are wasting their time in arguments. Ayurveda affirms that purity of mind is more essential for one's health while Allopathic doctors do not consider the mind as so important. They give importance to the eradication of disease-causing germs and consider this as the only means to cure diseases. This does not take into account the role of the mind and the Spirit in the eradication of disease. Allopathy is based on external knowledge and experimentation, while Ayurveda is based on inner knowledge and experience. There is a gulf of difference between experiment and experience. Because of the difference between the subjective and objective approaches, in course of time, Allopathy resorted to the use of antibiotics to deal with various diseases. The antibiotics act powerfully and yield quick results in curing a disease. But, in the process of curing a disease they give rise to adverse side-effects.

Three basic factors

Allopathic doctors experiment only with matter. They do not take the inner consciousness (Self) into account. In spite of the prodigious technological developments in the world, man is not able to enjoy peace. Peace cannot be achieved by knowledge of the physical. Peace should come from inner feeling or the Spirit within. It is only when the body, the mind and the Spirit are in harmony that peace will prevail. Medical science should recognise the role of the mind in causing sickness. Good health confers mental peace. Mental worry impairs physical health. Ayurveda, therefore, lays emphasis on mental peace and aims at the elimination of the root cause of disease.

There are three basic factors which are responsible for health or disease in the human body according to Ayurveda. They are vata (vital air), pitta (bile) and sleshma (phlegm). Vata accounts for 36 diseases, pitta accounts for 98 and sleshma for 96 diseases. These three factors are essential for the human body but they should be in proper balance without exceeding their

rule for good health.

For the treatment of diseases, arising out of vata, pitta and sleshma, gingelly oil, ghee and honey respectively are prescribed as remedies. These should be taken in moderation.

The body is a gift of God and cannot be made by doctors. The human heart beats 1,03,000 times a day. The blood circulation in the body is computed to cover 1,68,000 miles per day. Man breathes 21,600 times and consumes 438 cubic feet of air every day. These are based on Divine Will and are regarded as a Law of Nature.

God is the preceptor of Prakriti (Nature). The body is unclean in many ways and is subject to various diseases. But in such an inherently unattractive abode dwells the most valuable divinity. Man should always act in harmony with Nature, which is reflection of Divinity.

Hurry, Worry and Curry

What is the cause of heart ailments? Many doctors say that they are due to smoking, consumption of fatty foods, overeating and other habits. The relationship between food and habits should be properly understood. We should see that proper balance is maintained between the physical body and inner feelings (Spirit). Modern man is continuously in a hurry. Hurry causes worry which affects the physical health. The main causes of heart troubles may be said to be hurry, worry and curry. Curry means fatty foods. Many doctors have made investigations in this field but the results have not been made known widely. Heart diseases are found to be more rampant among non-vegetarians while vegetarians are not prone to heart ailments to the same extent. This is because of higher percentage of fats in non-vegetarian food which increases the cholesterol in the blood. Worry causes high blood pressure and hurry causes diabetes. Both of them are like twins, one acting on the heart inside and the other externally on the blood. Every one should know how to control these causes. Some people do not do any physical exercises and lead a sedentary life. My advice to office-goers and students is that it is good for them to commute by cycle at least 5 or 6 kilometers a day. This cycling exercise is very useful not only for maintaining health but also for reducing the expenditure incurred on automobiles. Another advantage is the avoidance of accidents. Moreover, it serves to reduce atmospheric pollution caused by the release of harmful fumes from automobiles. The carbon dioxide smoke from motor vehicles and factories is already polluting the air in cities and is affecting the ozone layer above the earth.

Purify the environment

The primary task is to purify the environment which is affected by pollution of air, water and food. All the five elements are affected by pollution. People should, therefore, try to reduce the use of automobiles and control the emission of harmful industrial effluents.

In the ancient times, sages and scientists commended the Ayurvedic system of treatment as it was considered a natural system for curing diseases. Trees play a vital role in helping

by human beings. Hence, the ancients favoured the growing of trees to control atmospheric pollution. But nowadays trees are cut down indiscriminately and pollution is on the increase. The relationship between man and trees is indicated by the term "Vanaspati" employed in Ayurveda.

Body, mind and prajna

Man is leading an artificial life today. One should understand that he is not merely the body but a combination of body, mind and Spirit. In the Gayatri mantra, "Om Bhur Bhuvas Suvah" is the first line. In this, "Bhu" refers to matter, that is the body, "Bhuvah" refers to the Life Principle (Prana Shakti) which animates the body, and "Suvah" refers to Prajna Shakti (Awareness or Conscience) which acts through radiation. Hence man is made up of Prajna (awareness), Prana (the vital force) and the body (the material substance). The doctors should not consider only the body (matter), but should take into consideration the Life Force (Prana) and Prajna Shakti (Integrated Awareness). Prajna Shakti is the radiation energy that promotes wisdom. Vibration is the expression of the Vital Force (Prana). In every action, there is a vibration which is in between the consciousness and the physical body. We should see that the mind is not influenced by any external force but by the internal source, which is Prajna or integrated awareness.

Doctors' duty to serve

Esteemed Doctors! You must strive to ensure long and healthy life for the people. In my view a godly life is more important than mere longevity. What is the use of a selfish person leading a long life without rendering service to society? Only those who serve the society and the nation should have a long life. The essence of the Eighteen Puranas of Vyasa was given by him in the motto: Help ever, hurt never.

Not money but service

It is true that doctors generally work with devotion and dedication. It will be better if they develop more devotion towards God instead of being concerned with earning money. Obviously money is needed to carry on worldly life but there should be a limit to the acquisition of money. The use of money should be properly regulated. When one does not observe restraint in daily life, he is a prey to disease. The body is governed by limits and controls. The temperature should be 98.4 neither more nor less, the blood pressure should be 80-120. Any increase or decrease spells illness. Doctors should not compete with one another in earning huge sums and acquiring more and more possessions.

They should render free service to the needy and the poor. The spirit of sacrifice is the hallmark of true education. Money earned should be usefully spent in a spirit of sacrifice.

Health and human values

There should be a harmonious blend of religion, philosophy and art for man to live healthily in the world. In this context religion means the religion of love. This is the only religion in the world. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. One should cultivate human values for healthy living. This calls for harmony in thought, word and deed. When you cultivate this

science and other branches of sciences, the world is rocked by many hazards and calamities.

Doctors should educate laymen about the various reasons for heart ailments. Whenever people think of heart disease, the prospect of an operation looms large before them as a bugbear. As far as possible you should avoid surgery and try to cure the patients by drugs. Doctors should treat operation as a last resort. As the word operation creates fear in all types of people, whether rich or poor, high or low, you should help them to develop self-confidence and remove the cause of fear.

What the hospital signifies

Divine members of the medical fraternity! It is not my intention to extol the excellence of our Hospital here. I wish to highlight the fact that the people in these areas used to be mortally afraid of heart diseases because there was no facility for high-grade medical or surgical treatment nearby and they had to take the patients to far off places entailing enormous expense. But, from 22nd November 1991, when the Super Speciality Hospital started functioning, even kids entered the hospital smilingly without any sense of fear. Their courage and faith ensure successful treatment. This is the only hospital where you can see patients, doctors, nurses, technicians and paramedical staff with smiling faces. Even the relatives accompanying the patients are all smiles. Wherever you move in the hospital, you can see smiling and cheerful workers doing their duty with devotion and dedication.

How has this happiness come to the people who go to the hospital for treatment of dreaded diseases? Happiness arises out of union with God. Because there is lack of faith in God elsewhere, there is grief. But in our hospital there is full faith in Divinity. Most people who have all physical comforts do not have inner peace. We get peace only from within us. If one acts in consonance with one's conscience one gets peace. A spirit of sacrifice is essential for securing peace.

People's Hospital

This hospital is not Swami's. It belongs to all of you. This hospital was established with the noble aim of serving suffering humanity. Besides excellent equipment of the highest quality, we have here the most modern facilities for medical and surgical treatment and, above all, a team of dedicated doctors and other staff who render selfless service with a smile. The construction of the hospital was completed in an incredibly short period of five months. The construction of a hospital of this magnitude might have taken even ten years if the Government had taken up the work. When I announced on 23rd November, 1990, that this hospital will function from 22nd November, 1991, many eyebrows were raised, doubting the possibility of the date being kept up. But it became an accomplished fact as willed by Swami. Dr. Venugopal came from Delhi to conduct the operations on 22nd November, 1991. Ever since he took up the work, it has been a saga of success. It has not been mentioned in the public before that he is a doctor in government service working in the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences. He used to start from Delhi on a Saturday, arrive here and perform operations on Sunday and return to Delhi for work on Monday. He has not taken any remuneration for his work and has defrayed

and sense of selfless service. His entire team is of the same type. They are very happy to have the opportunity to serve here. Their purity of heart and selfless service have helped the hospital to achieve such splendid results.

Dedicated Staff

Most of the nurses and technicians are our college students. They were sent to Delhi for technical training in the operation of highly sophisticated equipment. They have often been working smilingly from 6 a.m. to 12 midnight. They serve here only out of devotion to Swami and not for money.

To cite an example of the spirit of dedication of the staff, yesterday while Swami was returning from the hospital, nurses who had done hard and strenuous work for more than three days were found walking on the road and on enquiry it was learnt that their bus broke down and they decided to trek the long distance back to the Mandir on foot. Swami asked them to wait there and arranged for a relief bus to pick them up. The relationship between Swami and devotees is heart to heart based on love.

Not a single paise is collected from patients for anything, right from diagnostic tests to surgery and after-care. Even nutritious food is supplied free to the patients. In the beginning, the innocent and simple village folk did not know how to use the hospital beds. Some of them slept under the cot saying in utter simplicity that they were not worthy enough to sleep on such expensive beds. Patients do not show any sign of worry in this hospital.

Doctors and patients

I wish to give a word of advice to the doctors. While you are examining the patients you should have smiling faces and talk to the patients sweetly. If you check the pulse with a grim face the patients may collapse fearing that there is something radically wrong. Some patients even dread the very sight of a doctor when he approaches to examine. This is not good. Doctors should infuse courage in the patients and speak soothingly, radiating compassion and love. The kind approach of the doctor will have greater healing effect on the patients than the medicine itself. Doctors must instill courage in the patients. Swami wants more hospitals to render free treatment to the poor. Doctors should cooperate and work with unity.

A disease - free society

It is only by sense control and steadfastness that one can lead a happy and healthy life. Along with control of the mind, one should control the temper and avoid tension. Prevention of disease should be the goal. We should aim at a human society free from diseases. It will be a happy day when a hospital gets no patients at all.

All of you have assembled here to discuss and exchange your knowledge and experience in the field of medical science, particularly relating to treatment of cardiac and cardio-vascular cases. I wish you should discuss freely and find solutions to problems and render service to the people.

Doctors, Patients and Society

*Charity is the ornament for the hand.
Truth is the adornment for the tongue.
The scriptures are the ornament for the ears.
Of what avail are other ornaments?*

Embodiments of the Divine Practitioners of Modern Medicine!

It is charity (danam) that lends adornment to the hand. Only Truth lends beauty to speech. The scriptures serve to adorn the ears. Man needs no more beautiful ornaments than these. The glory of Divinity consists in sanctifying human existence by these ornaments.

The human body is a thing of marvellous beauty. Men cannot easily comprehend the secret of God's creation. No one can explain how the eyes have acquired the power of seeing this phenomenal world. The beauty of all the organs in the human body is a secret of creation. Doctors try to find out how each sense organ and how each limb functions. No one tries to find out why they are functioning in this manner. This secret can be grasped only through the Atmic Principle.

Human life is based on six constituents in the five basic elements (Panchabhutas) and the Atma. To recognise this fact, three paths have to be pursued. One is to recognise within one's self the presence of Nature and the Divine. A second path is to recognise in God the cosmic creation and one's self. The third path is to see in Nature the presence of God and one's self. It is only when knowledge is acquired by these three paths that Knowledge of the Self (Atmajnana) arises. This three-fold path is termed Prajna (Integrated Awareness). Every man should try to understand this three-fold path. This can be done at all times in all places. It has universal application. It has permanent validity everywhere. But, man gets involved in what is impermanent and ever-changing.

There are in the world today highly intelligent and experienced doctors of great renown. They are, however, concerned only with the cure of diseases and not the redemption of the patient. It is more important to cure the mental condition of the patient than to relieve his physical illness. Doctors treat the disease and not the patient.

Treat the patient; not the disease

During the past two days, the doctors have been discussing how to cure diseases. They have presented statistics as to the number of cases handled, the number of cures effected and the incidence of mortality. The doctors have had some doubts about how all diseases are cured in our

any action, if it is done with a pure heart and good intentions, it is bound to be successful. Man today regards self-interest as a way of life. This has become the philosophy of the modern world. But, we should consider sacrifice alone (Tyaga) as the true philosophy for the world. When you approach the patient in a spirit of sacrifice, the patient's feelings get purified.

Our body is surrounded by Divine vibrations. If you look at the thumb, there are vibrations of light around it. Few attempt to recognise this phenomenon. The body is surrounded by vibrations of light. When these vibrations of light from one person and another meet, several good things happen.

Head, heart and hand

There are two important organs for man. One is the heart and the other is the hand. The head is preoccupied with enquiring into mundane phenomena. It is concerned with the external. Its focus is on objects outside. The heart looks at what is within. The concern with the external has been termed "Pravritti marga". All man's actions today, including the knowledge he acquires and the wealth he gets, are all related to the Pravritti Marga. The six vices of Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Moha (infatuation), Lobha (greed), Mada (pride) and Matsarya (jealousy) are related to the Pravritti marga. These undergo constant changes. Because the body is associated with these qualities, it is also subject to change.

But the heart remains unchanging. It is associated with the Nivritti Marga, the Inward Path. What are the qualities associated with the heart? Truth, compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy, and sacrifice—these human qualities emanate from the heart. So, in human life, the head and the heart play crucial roles. These two are kept in balance by the hand. Thus, the heart, the head and the hand are the three H's which are important in studying the human predicament.

Diseases and the mind

What are the causes of diseases of the heart? All diseases are a reflection of Pravritti, the disposition of the mind. Hence, in worldly matters, man should follow the right path. In this context, two elements among the five basic elements are important. "Bhikshaannam Deharakshaartham, Vasthram Seethanivaraaranam" ("Food is essential for protecting the body: raiment is necessary for protection against cold") Associated with food is water. These two occupy pride of place in human life. Life is the subtle form of the water consumed by man. The mind is the subtle form of the food taken by man. Hence a close nexus should be established between the mind and life (Prana). As is the food, so is the head. Man's thoughts, desires and aspirations are related to the kind of food he consumes. For instance, you may discern from practical experience how food affects the mind. The cyclic process which starts with the formation of clouds and ends in the harvest of grain, determines the kind of food one can have. Heat (or fire) is the basis of this process. This fire is present within man as Jataragni, the digestive fire, which accounts for the conversion of the food consumed by man into various forms of energy. This fire has to be in proper balance. When the balance is upset, you have illness. The state of man's body depends on the maintenance of this balance. Man's entire life depends on preserving this balance. When is the balance upset? When there is no mental

keep the mind steady. When serenity of mind is achieved, there will be no disease. Illness will not approach you at all.

Food habits

There should be some regulations with regard to food. Many doctors emphasise the value of proteins and recommend meat, eggs, etc. But proteins got in this form serve only to build the body, but do considerable harm to the mind. Doctors are primarily concerned with the gross physical body. They pay little attention to the subtle form of the mental make-up. Most of the diseases that are prevalent in the world today are related to the mind. Mental illnesses seem to outnumber physical ailments. The Vedanta has declared that the mind is the cause of man's bondage or liberation. This means that the mind has to be used properly and turned god-wards. Equally the mind is responsible for health or sickness. In this context, food is all-important. Proteins are present in milk, curds and vegetables as much as in meat. If, in the matter of diet, the doctors give the right prescription, diseases can be averted.

Prevention is better than cure

In my view, instead of treating people after the onset of illness, it is better to ensure that they do not fall ill at all. Both doctors and the authorities should educate enceinte women about pre-natal care of children in the womb. It is distressing to find that new-born babes suffer from congenital heart diseases. Dr. Iyer showed the picture of a smiling child that had grown up after a heart operation shortly after birth. While one rejoices at such a sight, it is frightening to think of the operation that had to be done on a ten-day-old infant. In the case of congenital heart diseases, neither the parents nor the child can be happy. Nor can society be happy with such a situation. Something must be done to prevent heart troubles developing during pregnancy. There are medicines for preventing congenital heart ailments. For instance, if the mother is given various vitamins, the child's heart can be strengthened. The mother should be taught all about prenatal care and given the necessary medicines. Pregnant women should be periodically checked in the hospital. It is better to take all preventive measures before the birth of a child than to carry the burden of bringing up a weak and crippled child all his life.

Doctors alone cannot impart this message to all women. They can only advise those who come to them. But doctors can bring home to the authorities their responsibility in the area of preventive measures. What is the use of spending crores on curative measures without promoting health? It is a waste of money. (Swami then referred to the hazards in the use of antibiotics in the treatment of certain diseases like tuberculosis and the use of pesticides in agriculture).

Doctors and society

Doctors should realise what they owe to society, which has preserved and imparted to them their knowledge of the medical sciences. Medical knowledge has been enriched by the contributions of dedicated investigators over centuries. Doctors should be grateful to society for all the knowledge and skills they have acquired from the dedicated labours of others. They

they will use their knowledge and skills in .the right way.

People today think in terms of only their personal interests. They should develop a social consciousness, realising what all they owe to society. Men today have become so utterly selfish that they behave in inhuman ways. They do not make proper use of their talents and resources in the service of their fellowmen.

Doctors are embodiments of the Divine. As such, it is their duty to see that people do not shed tears of grief. They may doubt how far this is possible. Do as much as lies within your power. What happens thereafter need not bother you. Treat Duty as God and Work as Worship. If you carry on your work in this spirit, the world will be a happier place for all.

Warning against over-specialisation

I have to give a word of advice to the doctors present here. There is a tendency to specialise in the treatment of heart diseases which has gone to absurd lengths. I would advise the doctors to treat the heart as a whole and not fragment every part of it for specialised treatment. Specialisation has grown to alarming proportions in the world today. Doctors should be "generalists", who know how to treat different ailments of a patient.

The heart teaches an important lesson to man. It appears to beat tirelessly without stopping. But, in fact, it is able to rest in brief intervals between one beat and another. The heart teaches you how to take rest even while at work. I often tell the students that "change of work is rest". This is the way the heart functions when it pumps the blood from one chamber to the other.

Lessons from the human cell

Few can realise the limitless potentialities of each cell in the human body. It is one of the great secrets of creation. The cells teach man the lesson of sacrifice (Tyaga). For the progress of human life, sacrifice is essential. The scripture declares that immortality can be attained only through sacrifice. Immortality means the removal of immorality. The various cells in the body account for the performance of various functions by the senses and other limbs of the body. The power of the cells comes from the Divine. No one can explain it. Modern scientists term it as a "law of Nature". But wherefrom has this "law" emerged? There should be some one who lays down the law? For every product, like this silver tumbler, there is a maker. Silver is God's creation. The tumbler has been made by a goldsmith. It has not come as a ready-made tumbler. You have on the earth water and clay. They are God's creation. By mixing them both, the potter makes pots out of them. The creator for the pot is the potter. God is the Creator for the five elements (Space, air, fire, water and earth). No one else can create these elements. But man makes use of these natural elements for making objects for his enjoyment. One man produces an aeroplane for flying. Another makes a parachute for safety if something happens to the plane. Scientists should be concerned with producing things that ensure safety.

How the Divine works

not have any worry. When I embarked on the construction of such a big hospital (the Super Speciality Hospital), Joga Rao used to say: "We are drawing up such gigantic plans. We don't have enough money. How are we going to construct this hospital?" He was highly apprehensive. I told him: "What we are undertaking is good work for the welfare of others. There is no selfishness in Me. We are doing everything for the well being of the world. Do not give room for these depressing thoughts. It is bound to come up. Have this confidence."

When does such confidence arise? When you know you are engaged in a good cause. (Swami pointed out the difference between an optimist and a pessimist when they viewed a glass half-full of water. One was glad that the tumbler was half-full, while the pessimist was sorry that the tumbler was half-empty). You should not give way to pessimism. You must feel content with whatever you have. With contentment, anything can be achieved.

Medical education

The plight of doctors (in India) deserves sympathy. Many of them have to spend large sums to get seats in medical colleges and to complete their education. The doctor is worried how to recover the money that has been spent on his education. Something must be done to solve this problem. For instance, no one should be admitted in a medical college merely because he is able to pay a large capitation fee (of lakhs). Only those who have the talents and aptitude for medical studies should be admitted. Such students will immensely benefit from medical education and will be of use to society. Today you must have either plenty of money or influential backing to get into a medical college. Students who get admitted this way take even twelve years to complete the (five year) medical course. Of what use are such men? The stress should be on quality and not quantity in the sphere of medical studies.

In earlier years, medical students used to work hard spending even 18 hours a day. Without such hard work, no one would get his degree. Alas! Today things are otherwise. Students pass without much study. Such ill-educated doctors are a calamity to the nation. Not all doctors are of this kind. There are quite a few competent doctors.

It is the duty of the medical profession to rectify this situation. They should contact the authorities to bring about reforms. Only then will the nation progress.

Love towards patients

We do not need many hospitals. Patients can be treated easily. In my view, there is no need for you to worry about money and resources. Treat your patients with love: Duty is God. This love should be mutual give and take. You may charge fees for your services, but do it with love. This is the right course for you. When you render service in this spirit, you will be successful in all cases. When you treat the patient with love, you will win the patient's love. Hence, your motto should be: Start the day with love, fill the day with love, end the day with love. This is the way to God.

...speak sweetly to patients. Whatever you do should be filled with love. A patient feels reassured when he sees the smiling face of a doctor.

Tribute to participants

Embodiments of Divine Love! You have come from long distances, undergoing many strains. Conferences and symposia of all kinds are held all over the world all the time. But none of the decisions arrived at these gatherings are implemented. Our Symposium is different. You have all come in a spirit of dedication. The decisions taken here should be implemented. You came here to learn from others as well as to share your experiences with others. You should return all the better for your visit. You should feel encouraged by your experiences here. Elated by this experience, you should be able to achieve many things. Return to your countries with joy in your hearts. You have had edifying experiences. It is fortunate that highly experienced doctors have been able to participate in this Symposium. They have also visited our Hospital and given many useful suggestions for enlarging its usefulness in the years ahead. We shall try to give effect to these suggestions. We are making plans for developing the Urology and Neurology wings. Please convey your experience and suggestions from time to time and encourage our doctors to do better. We wish that you should also make occasional visits to our Institute and Hospital. You are always welcome. Do not have any hesitation. This is your Hospital! Not mine. You are my property (cheers). Do not wait for invitations from here. There can be no objection to your coming to your own home.

Highly experienced professional men have come here. No conference could have taken place in such a peaceful atmosphere as here with such pure hearted participants. In most conferences there are heated debates. Here everything was peaceful and calm. It was a sacred exercise. As Dr. Somaraju said, we have here a temple, where proper prayers should be offered. What should be this prayer? It is: All patients should get well "Lokassamasthas Sukhino Bhavanthu!" ("Let all people be happy").

I conclude my discourse with the benediction that in the years to come all people should lead healthy and ideal lives. (Bhagavan then sang the bhajan "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*" in which everyone in the Auditorium joined).

—From Bhagavan's address to the Valedictory session of the Cardiac Speciality Symposium on 7.2.1993

Become entitled to the honoured title of Bhakta. My glory is spread daily through those who call themselves My Bhaktas. Your virtue, your self-control, Your detachment, your faith and your steadfastness are the signs by which people read of My Glory. Not that I want any such prop. But, it just happens so, in this World, where men estimate others indirectly, rather than directly. Let me tell you, such Bhaktas are very rare. That is the reason why I do not address your gathering as "Bhktulara" You can lay claim to that name only when you have placed

Historic Symposium at Prasanthi Nilayam

To hold an International Cardiac Speciality Symposium in Prasanthi Nilayam, within less than 15 months of the inauguration of the Cardiology wing of the magnificent Super Speciality Hospital at Prasanthigram, is by any test a remarkable achievement. Bhagavan Baba, who was the inspirer and guiding spirit of the project, made the participating delegates realise, by Ks scintillating discourses as well as by the striking accomplishments of the new Hospital, that a spiritual approach to the problems of health and disease could make a world of difference between what the Allopathic system is doing and what can be achieved by an integrated approach to the body, mind and spirit of the patient.

The Symposium was conducted at the Auditorium of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning on 6th and 7th February 1993. Well before the date of the Symposium, Bhagavan arranged for the reception and accommodation of the participants. Special arrangements were made for their food in the overseas devotees' canteen. Prasanthi Mandir was decorated with buntings, flowers and festoons, which enhanced its natural beauty. The approaches to the Institute Auditorium were also decorated with festoons and welcome arches, greeting the participants in the traditional Indian fashion.

The stage in the Auditorium presented a strikingly attractive setting of a beautiful garden replete with flowers of various hues. Bhagavan's divine aesthetic touch could be seen in every decorative arrangement on the stage and elsewhere.

The participants started arriving from the evening of 5th February. They were received by a specially selected group of students who had been assigned the duty of looking after the comforts of the delegates and meeting their requirements.

The Union Health Minister Sri B. Sankaranand, who had been invited to inaugurate the Symposium, arrived on the morning of 6th February, and had Darshan of Bhagavan Baba. Cardiac Specialists from several countries and from different parts of India arrived in time and assembled for the inaugural ceremony at the Auditorium. Bhagavan Baba arrived at 10.45 a.m. along with Sri B. Sankaranand and blessed all the participants and the others present in the Auditorium. The function started with Vedic Invocation by students of the Institute.

Bhagavan—the guiding spirit

Dr. A-N. Safaya, Director of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences Hospital, in his welcome address, expressed his gratitude to Bhagavan for having blessed the

countries taking part in it. He thanked Bhagavan for personally directing all the arrangements for the Symposium. He extended a hearty welcome to the Union Health Minister for consenting to inaugurate the Symposium and to the participants for having responded to their invitation and being present here in spite of their professional preoccupations. He referred to the Super Speciality Hospital established by Bhagavan and explained how such a marvellous edifice could be completed in record time in keeping with the declaration of Bhagavan Baba that the first operation would be performed on 22nd November 1991. He said that 1051 heart operations have been performed free of cost within a period of 260 working days out of 25,000 patients examined.

The Hospital is open to all citizens of the world irrespective of nationality, caste, creed, language or status. The Hospital is manned by a highly competent team of doctors, assisted by dedicated paramedical staff who are looking after the Blood Bank, Diagnostic Laboratory, and the material supply system. Students trained in operating the most modern and sophisticated equipment are among them. The infection rate was 0.8% and the net mortality rate was less than 2%. He went on to describe this as a gift of Divine Grace. He explained how Primary Health Centres are being developed in the Villages by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. There are now thousands of Health Units which have a link with the Hospital at Prasanthi Nilayam. "This Institution is born in the lap of Divinity adding a spiritual dimension to the treatment of diseases with Bhagavan as the beacon-light", concluded Dr. Safaya.

"A boon to humanity"

Sri B. Sankaranand, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, offered his Pranams to Bhagavan Baba at the outset and commenced his address with the declaration that "this is one of the godliest places in the world and Sri Sathya Sai Super-Speciality Hospital is a boon to suffering humanity established in a remote rural area by Bhagavan Baba". He said he had paid a visit to the Hospital after having Darshan of Baba, and had no hesitation in saying that "by all standards this is second to none in the whole world in cleanliness, efficiency of service, various amenities, equipment and quality of dedicated service by doctors and nurses".

Turning to Bhagavan Baba, he said "Revered Swamiji, the nation is grateful to you for this blessing you have conferred on the poorer sections of people, not only for physical healing of the heart but also healing the heart of humanity by spirituality". He mentioned how, during the past three decades a considerable advancement has been made in treating heart cases in this country, including conducting of Bye-pass surgery and providing pacemakers in both private and government hospitals. But they do not meet the needs of the large number of patients most of whom are unable to get treatment in the Government or private Hospitals for various reasons.

Speaking of the need for preventive care in the field of heart diseases, the Minister suggested that people should be educated on the importance of exercises. Since most of the complications in heart ailments are self-inflicted due to wrong living habits and pollution of the atmosphere, he appealed to the doyens of the medical profession to devote attention to the preventive aspect also. He hoped that the Symposium would provide valuable opportunities for

fruitful in promoting new approaches in the areas of prevention and cure of the cardiac disorders.

Bhagavan Baba was requested by Dr. A. N. Safaya to bless the gathering with his Divine Message. Bhagavan's discourse, which was listened to with rapt attention by the participants, is published separately.

Dr. Bonchek's keynote address

Dr. Lawrence Bonchek of Lancaster, USA, then delivered his keynote address. He prefaced his talk with a reference to the sylvan surroundings of the Institute, the serene atmosphere prevailing here, and the wonderful gift of Bhagavan Baba to the people in the shape of the magnificent Super Speciality Hospital offering absolutely free treatment. He recalled with gratitude his meeting the Dalai Lama together with an Indian colleague and described the Dalai Lama as a symbol of peace, whose teachings concerning the brotherhood of man, non-violence and religious tolerance, are the same as Baba's teachings.

He then referred to his association with the National Institute of Health in USA which is providing free treatment to people and rendering financial assistance for medical treatment in other developing countries. The budget

of the Institute for medical aid overseas was considerable. He mentioned that India ranked 5th in the world in sending visiting scientists to the NIH and in presenting technical papers. He explained at great length with the help of slides, the improvements effected in pacemakers which prolong the life of patients, young and old.

Case Studies

In the afternoon session, teams of specialists presented, with the help of numerous slides, case studies of heart patients and the different procedures adopted in surgical treatment using the latest technology.

The Symposium discussions continued on the 7th February, when Cardio-Vascular experts from Spain, UK, USA and other countries exchanged vital information of professional interest.

The following specialists presented papers at the Symposium and took part in the panel discussions: Dr. Lawrence I Bonchek, Dr. Carlos Mestres, (Barcelona, Spain), Dr. Gopinath, Dr. N. A. Shah, Dr. N. Trehan, Dr. N.R. Girinath, Dr. Namish A Shah, Bombay, Dr. V. K. Saini (Boston), Dr. Sunil Kapoor (Hyderabad), Dr. Roger White (Honolulu), Dr. U. Kaul, Dr. D.S. Gambhir, Dr. Dilip Saxena, Dr. B. Das, Dr. Sanjay Parikh and Dr. P. K. Iyer.

Bhagavan arrived at the Auditorium at 12.35 p.m. for the valedictory function.

Congenital Heart Troubles

infants with congenital heart disorders. Dr. Iyer explained with slides how surgery was performed on a ten-day old baby to rectify a congenital disorder in the heart which would have proved fatal but for the surgery. He showed a picture of the mother with the baby taken two years after the surgery which indicated how healthy the baby was. He regretfully remarked that out of 2,40,000 babies that are affected by heart diseases in the country, only 214 cases could be operated in a year with the facilities now available. He pleaded for more Hospitals like the Super Speciality Hospital to be established all over the country.

Two members of the Faculty of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences spoke about the work done by them under expert guidance with dedication and devotion.

One doctor participant from India and one from abroad were requested to speak about their impressions of the Symposium. Dr. B. Soma Raju from Hyderabad stated that the dream of several visionaries to provide the best medical aid to the poor and needy was fulfilled by the establishment of the Super Speciality Hospital by Bhagavan Baba. The happenings here are such as could be expected only from a Divine power.

“A unique symposium”

Dr. Lawrence Bonchek said that Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences was being run according to the highest international standards, and young people trained for short periods only were working with discipline, humility and high efficiency, with a sense of dedication. More young people should be trained to serve with love. All the participants in this unique symposium, he said, will carry with them happy memories of the wonderful experience they had here with the blessings of the Divine personality.

Bhagavan then delivered His valedictory address in which He reminded the doctors of their sacred duty to humanity which they have to discharge in a spirit of service, without regard to monetary rewards.

Bhagavan commended the services of Dr. Venugopal, who bore the brunt of the efforts to organise the Symposium, and Dr. Rajiv Mahajan, who personally looked after all the arrangements for the conduct of the Symposium.

Bhagavan distributed mementos to all the participants of the panel discussion. The function came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan Baba.

Where Death is an Ecstasy

In the twinkling of an eye Life ended.
A thousand Lamps went out in unison.

Your friends talked in hushed silence
But suddenly all of them exclaimed
in one voice

How glorious to die in tire
Presence of our Lord

In the Holy of Holies Prasanthi Nilayam
They say Death is an ecstasy.
It is true
For we saw you die with a smile on your lips.

You put the God of Death to shame.

—G. K. D. Prasanthi Nilayam 21-02-93

Secure God's Grace by Shraddha and Vishvas

*Why does the sun rise and set in the sky regularly every day?
Why do the stars that shine so peacefully in the sky
at night hide themselves during the day?
Why does the wind that blows tirelessly protect living beings?
Why do the murmuring brooks flow ceaselessly?
Why are there among the myriad human beings
in the world differences of race, religion, caste and wealth?
Who is the Lord of all this?
Who is their Controller?
Come forward, all ye, to learn to carry out His commands!*

*Isaanah sarvavidyaanaam
Iswaras—sarvabhoothaanaam
Brahmaadirpathih Sadaa Sivoham.*

The entire creation is the cosmic dance of the Lord. It is a marvellous and incomparable dance. It is an enchanting scene to behold.

In this world, birth and death, happiness and sorrow follow each other in ceaseless succession. However, Sumati, an exemplar of chastity, could stay the sun from rising to prevent the death of her husband. In order to restore her husband to life, Savitri confronted successfully the Lord of Death. Such extraordinary power is given only to human beings.

Dharma and adharma

In this creation, both Dharma (Righteousness) and adharma (Unrighteousness) are prevalent. At one time Righteousness is predominant. At another time Unrighteousness reigns. Only a man filled with devotion can attain the triune embodiment of the Divine—Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Auspiciousness and Beauty).

When confronted with his final destiny, man becomes a prey to many fears and doubts. The moment Kamsa heard that the child that would be born to his cousin, Devaki, would prove his slayer, he wanted immediately to kill her. Vasudeva saved his wife's life by promising to hand over to Kamsa every child born to Devaki. To kill or to save a life, the power vests in man alone.

Every human being is a fragment of the Divine. Only when a man discharges his duties will his life find fulfillment. Duty is man's primary obligation. If a man is endowed with wealth and possessions, he has a duty to enjoy them. But to covet or seize other people's wealth is a crime. Wealth is not confined to money or gold or other possessions. All the knowledge and skills acquired by a person also constitute his wealth. Even health is wealth. The power to think is also

his wealth.

Hence, it is man's primary duty to utilise his time and every other form of wealth in the right manner. Unfortunately, today man wastes the time, wealth and talents of others. This is Adharma—opposed to righteousness.

Oftentimes, I advise the students not to indulge in excessive talking for the reason that it is a gross abuse of the time available to them. Moreover, by excessive talk with another person, he is robbing the latter of his time. This is also wrong.

Dharma or righteousness implies the right use of one's time and resources. Adharma is the abuse of one's time and wealth and depriving others of their wealth.

Shraddha and Vishvasam

Every person has a mind of his own in which thoughts arise based on his "Iccha-Shakti" (willpower). One person favours adoration of Rama. Another prefers Siva. A third one enjoys worshipping Krishna. A fourth is inspired by contemplation of Jesus. Another is musing over the thought of Allah. All these are based on individual preferences.

But, in the minds of all persons, in whatever country or region, whatever form one wishes to adore, whatever deity one wants to worship, whatever name one likes to chant, two things are essential: Vishvasam (faith) and Shraddha (earnestness). Without earnestness, even the most trivial act cannot be performed well. Without Shraddha nothing can be accomplished.

"Shraddhavaan labhate Jnanam" (says the Gita). Only the earnest seeker can acquire knowledge of the Divine. However intelligent one may be, without earnestness he will achieve nothing. A man with earnestness can convert a small burning cinder into a huge bonfire.

Earnestness ("Shraddha") is the means to the realisation of the Divine. What does "Shraddha" signify? It signifies Divine power (Daiva-shakti). "Shraddha" is called "Bhavani". It refers to a goddess, to "Shakti" (Divine energy) or Prakriti (Nature).

Next comes "Vishvasam" (faith). What is faith? It symbolises Ishwara-twam (the Divine Principle).

The three potencies

Through "Shraddha" (earnestness) Iccha-shakti, Kriya-shakti and Jnana-shakti (willpower, the power of action, and the power of wisdom) are manifested. The essence of these three potencies is Ishwaratwa (Divinity). They constitute the power of faith (Vishvasam).

Thus, "Shraddha" and "Vishvas" represent Parvati and Parameshwara. Humanness represents the combination of Shakti (or Prakriti) and Siva. These two are not disparate. Just as fire and the power to burn go together, these two go together. Sugar and sweetness are similarly

Likewise "Shraddha" and "Vishvasam" (earnestness and faith) are symbiotically related to each other. Hence these should be regarded as present in man in the form of Siva and Shakti.

The whole of Prakriti (Nature) is "Ardhanaariswaroopam" (the feminine half of the Divine couple). Any man who has no "Shraddha" and "Vishvasa" is verily a corpse.

Although both Shraddha (God) and Vishvasa (Prakriti) are present in man, by ignoring God (lacking earnestness) man wastes his life.

Earnestness and faith together constitute spirituality. Without these, all spiritual exercises have no value.

Dedicate all actions to God

How is man to realise the presence of Siva and Shakti in him? It is by doing all actions as a dedication to the Divine. "Mathkarmakrith, mathparamah, Mad-bhaktah", declares the Gita. "Whatever actions you do, dedicate them to Me. Consider me as your Supreme Lord. Be devoted to Me": This is the message of the Lord in the Gita. This is the right way to worship the (Sakara) attributeful Lord. This kind of worship promotes devotion.

Only a land that is properly ploughed, weeded, manured and sown with good seeds will yield a rich harvest. Likewise, after the field of the heart has been cleared of the weeds of bad thoughts and qualities, fertilised by good feelings and virtues, and the pure seed of Love (Prema) is sown, the sacred crop of Jnana (wisdom) can be enjoyed.

Based on this two paths have been laid down in the spiritual field: Vidhvamsaka and Vidhayaka (the destructive and the constructive paths). Vidhvamsaka path refers to the clearing of a field of bushes, thorns and the like before it is got ready for cultivation. Vidhayaka path refers to the planting of good seeds in the form of good qualities which will yield a harvest of joy. Hence everyone's heart has to be filled in the right way by "Shraddha" and Vishvasa".

It is not enough for a devotee to claim that he loves the Lord. He must find out whether the Lord loves him. You must see whether God showers His grace on you. Only then, your devotion becomes meaningful.

In all his actions, man should not be concerned only with self-interest. He must find out whether his actions are approved by his conscience. Just as the Divine is always blissful, the devotee should be ever-blissful ("Santushtah"). But in the present, times, men have no contentment or sense of joy. They are racked by doubts and apprehensions. How can such persons ever experience divine bliss? It has been said that one who is vacillating is merely a living creature, but one who is firm and unwavering is divine.

God as Friend

an element of selfishness in the display of affection. God alone showers His love with no trace of selfishness. Man fails to understand this sacred, Divine Love principle. (Bhagavan illustrated what it means to have God as friend from the example of the Pandavas for whom Krishna was all in all. When Arjuna returned to Hastinapura from Dwaraka after the passing of Krishna, he could not bear to answer his mother Kunti's question as to what had happened to Krishna. With tears in his eyes, he said that Krishna, who had been their charioteer, their counsellor, their preceptor, friend, lord and everything else, had left the world). There can be no greater thing than to have God as one's friend ("Suhrid").

Dwell in God

Another appellation of God is "Nivasa" (the Supreme Abode). Our aim should be to dwell in the Lord. This cosmos is the abode of the Lord. We are living in this cosmos. We are not separate from it. But the sacred feeling that we are living in the abode of the Lord should be cherished by everyone. Such sacred feelings do not arise in man because of the barriers created by attachment, fear and hatred (Raga, bhaya and dwesha). Attachment is the feeling that one develops when he considers that something other than himself can give him satisfaction and joy. This sense of separateness should go. The consciousness that the same constituents are present in one and all should be realised. Then, there will be no room for differentiation and alienation. The sense of oneness will be experienced.

Where there is attachment, there is hatred (dwesha), which is a reflection of "raga". Fear is born out of attachment—the fear of losing what one has. Attachment and fear breed hatred. These three lead man to stray from his adherence to "Shraddha" and "Vishvasa". Hence, these three have to be brought under control.

Look within

To realise the Divinity within man, everyone has to turn his vision inward. All that is perceived in the external world is subject to changes. Man cannot derive happiness from an unchanging world. He desires change. But the change he should seek is a divine change, not changes in the mundane world. He should seek to know the truth about himself. Ignorant about his true self, man today is harried by fears. As long as the fear remains, God will elude him. He has to develop faith in the Divinity (Siva) within him, to get rid of this fear and acquire the strength of the Divine (Brahmabalam).

Ratri and Sivaratri

Every night is marked by darkness. But tonight it is Sivaratri. What is the difference between ratri (night) and Sivaratri? For the man who has recognised his divinity, every night is Sivaratri. For the man immersed in worldly concerns, all nights are the same. That night is marked by darkness. This night (Sivaratri) is marked by light. Spirituality is the lighthouse that spreads light for the man who is full of despair, immersed in insatiable desires. The name of God is the lighthouse. By chanting the name, the bearer of the name can be realised.

Man has to proceed from the body to the Divine. Man is a limb of society. Society is

a limb of Nature. Nature is a limb of God. The Atma is present in everyone. It knows no territorial barriers. It is omnipresent. To recognise the omnipresence of the Divine is the purpose of observing Sivaratri. This purpose is not served by fasting and keeping awake all the night. These are mere auxiliaries to what is considered the ultimate goal. But God-realisation should not be put off to some distant future. It has to be taken up here and now. That is the purpose of Sivaratri.

Alienation from the Divine

But today, people have forgotten their Divine destiny and are wasting their lives in worldly pursuits. They have no faith in their future. Where there is no faith, there is no Siva. They lack the power of Shraddha (earnestness). So Parvati is also not there. Man's pathetic condition today is he has denied himself the grace of both Parvati and Siva. He can obtain it only by cultivating human values. He has to acquire the wisdom (Jnana) that comes from spiritual earnestness (Shraddha). The true values for man are: Iccha-shakti, Kriya-shakti, and Jnana-shakti. These represent the triple aspects of the Divine: Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Auspiciousness and Beauty). These are the eternal verities. Though endowed with these divine powers, man goes after petty trinkets. When the Divine is ready to confer liberation, why get involved in the bonds of worldly life?

Man should seek God alone. Once God's grace is secured, all else will be got with ease. For this purpose, man has to get rid of attachment, fear and hatred. He must perform all actions as an offering to God; who is omnipresent.

The vigil and fasting observed on Sivaratri night have become farcical. True vigil and fasting consist in concentrating all one's thoughts on God during the whole night. God's grace is a direct sequel to one's actions. Each one has to examine for himself in what spirit he is performing his worship.

The Divine can be realised only through Shraddha and Vishvasa. The Divine is within everyone. Once man recognises this fact, he will give no room for bad qualities.

Do your duty

Embodiments of Divine Love!

Dedicate yourselves to the performance of your duties. Do not waste your time or that of others in idle talk. Starting with the duties of the individual, man should aim at achieving oneness with the Divine as the ultimate goal. Sivaratri is an auspicious; occasion for concentrating the mind on God. Devote at least this one night entirely to the contemplation of God, to the exclusion of all other thoughts and worries.

(After the end of His discourse, Bhagavan initiated the Sivaratri bhajan programme with the bhajan: "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi!*")

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 19.2.1993

Power of Divine Love

Love is the form of the Divine. Love alone can merge in love. When one is filled with Divine love he can experience oneness with the Divine. Happiness arises from pure love which is also the source of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Forbearance (Poem).

Students! Embodiments of Divine Love!

The ancient renown of Bharatiya culture is tainted today by the proliferation of three evil tendencies: indulgence in self-praise, scandalising others and hypocrisy. What is the reason for this? It is the pursuit of mundane pleasure by man, forgetting the glory of pure love.

There is no one in Bharat who does not know the word Prema. The entire cosmos is steeped in it. Prema is incomparable and indescribable. The sage Narada declared: "Anir-vachaneeyam Prema". Love transcends speech.

At the human level, this love assumes many forms. The word love is used in common parlance in the context of the relations between mother and child, husband and wife, master and servant, the preceptor and the pupil. But this is not true love. It cannot be termed love (Prema). It is only attachment (Anuraga).

Prema can be applied only to the total love towards the Divine. It is utterly selfless. It has not come from the world nor has it fallen from the sky. It is *suigeneris* (sahajaswaroopam).

Today man has forgotten this sacred and enduring love. There is nothing equal to love in this world. Even nectar is insipid in comparison with the sweetness of love. This love makes even the Divine dance in ecstasy, as well as the devotee. It expresses itself in dance.

Such a love can find no place in the heart of self-seeking persons. It will dwell only in the hearts of the pure, the unselfish and the godly.

The scriptures have compared this love to a precious diamond. Where is this gem to be found? When even ordinary diamonds are preserved with great care in a strong safe, how much more safely should the precious diamond of love be preserved? Who is entitled to offer this diamond to others? Only the person who is filled with love and who sustains himself by love always. Only the Divine is qualified to offer such love. Only the Divine, who is the embodiment of love, knows the value of love.

bliss declines in the measure of the diminution in your love. The extent of your love determines the magnitude of your bliss.

The love which men today show towards God is filled with selfishness. The love is for the purpose of securing some desires. But love is not a commercial commodity to be got in exchange. It is offered spontaneously.

There are many ways of realising God. Among them are: the Path of Peace (Santhi marga); the Path of Friendship (Sakhya marga); the Path of Affection (Anuraga marga); the Path of Maternal Love (Vatsalya marga); the Path of Sweetness (Madhura marga). In all these five paths, there is some element of self interest. But in the path of Pure Love (Prema marga), there is no trace of self-interest. Hence, all other paths merge in the path of Love. Love is therefore the royal road.

We should consider that this Love is present in all. It is the form of the Divine. Because the Divine is present in all, whomever you love, you are loving the Divine. Forgetting this sublime and all-compassing conception of Love, men today have lost themselves in narrow alleys.

To promote among men love between humanity and god, the Divine descends on earth from time to time. What for is the advent? To promote the Love Principle is His primary purpose.

Many forms of love

Failing to understand the true meaning of this Love Principle, man is undermining his life. Everyone should realise that Love is present equally in all beings. But this love assumes many different forms when it is exhibited in different relationships in worldly life. The love between husband and wife is termed Moha (infatuation). The love between a mother and child is called Vatsalya (maternal love). The love between kith and kin is called Anuraga (affection). The love towards God is termed Bhakti (devotion).

Thus, love is one, but is expressed in many ways. Experiences are varied, but the goal is one. To carry on this life in this phenomenal world, love has assumed these manifold forms. The forms of love keep changing according to one's relationships.

But Pure Love is unchanging. Such Pure Love is limited today by man's self-interest.

Immediately after birth as an infant he clings to the mother's bosom and considers it as paradise. As he grows, he gets interested in education and forgets the mother. In his boyhood, one experiences this love in sport and games, in studies and recreation. After completing his education, he enters on family life and immerses himself in sensual pleasures. Later, he gets interested in earning wealth and loses interest in wife and children. Later on he loses interest even in wealth and turns his thoughts towards God. Thus, man exhibits his love for different objects at different stages in his life. (Swami sang a song describing how man's love changes from time to time and how he wastes his life at the end without developing love for God).

Students! Love is not something which enters your lives mid-way. It is the Atmic Principle which is always with you at all times. You should not allow this love to change from moment to moment. You must transmute all your thoughts into expressions of love. To regard whatever actions you perform as an offering to God is the best form of sadhana. Whatever good deeds or spiritual acts you may perform, if they are not suffused with love they are worthless.

A Mariner's compass

Love is like a mariner's compass, which always points to the north. Love should direct you God-wards in every action that you do. There is no greater path or goal than this. Scholarship or ritual worship will not serve to transform your spirituality. Fill your hearts with love of God. Then the nation will enjoy peace. Your view of the world depends on the colour of the glasses you wear. When your vision is filled with love, the whole creation will appear as Divine (Brahma mayam). This is what the youth of today need most.

This love is not related to the body. It is based on the heart. It is present equally in all. There may be varied bodily relationships but the kinship based on the Atma is one and the same. "Ekovasi sarvabhoothaantharatma". "The One dwells in all beings". It is like the current that is common to all bulbs of varying power.

Faith in God

There should be no trace of selfishness in love. Unfortunately today men's hearts have become barren without love. Hence, there is no compassion in them. Men today behave in a more cruel manner than wild animals in the jungle. There is hatred between man and man. Maternal love has become rare and fraternal feelings between brothers are absent. The love among the Pandava brothers and that among Rama and his brothers are supreme examples of fraternal love. The Pandavas overcame all their trials and tribulations by their faith in God. The eldest of the Pandavas, Dharmaja, had his mind always centered on Krishna. He was known for his one pointed, simple minded devotion to Krishna. He always thought of Krishna even while experiencing all kinds of difficulties in exile. Even when his children, the Upapandavas were killed by Ashwathama, he did not give way to grief because of his faith in Krishna. When he reigned as a mighty emperor, he did not feel elated and he was not overwhelmed by grievous ordeals. For the Pandavas, the Lord came first, the world next and their own interests last. First God, then the world, last "I".

The Kauravas had a different order of priorities. First "I", then the world, and God last, with the result that they lost everything. Because the Pandavas kept God in the forefront, they were ultimately successful in their endeavours.

If you want to succeed in life, you have to develop love of God as the most potent weapon. It was love which enabled the ancient sages to live in harmony with wild animals in the forest. Such is the power of love. But students today are not recognising the power of this pure love. Instead, they are immersed in impure desires and are ruining their precious lives.

which the Gopikas addressed to Krishna, praying to Him to fill their parched hearts with nectarine showers of His love).

Love of God is greater than nectar. It is called "Para Bhakti", Devotion to the Lord. It transcends the four Purusharthas (goals of life).

Man may love the body, the mind, the Buddhi or the Antahkarana (the Inner Instrument). Love for the body ends with the death of the body. Love for the mind results in bondage because of the aberrations of the mind. Love for the intellect results in endless speculation and enquiry. Love for the Antah Karana promotes the ego feeling. It encourages dualism (separating man from God). Only the one who realises his oneness with the Atma can experience infinite bliss—the bliss that is eternal.

Every one should undertake an enquiry into the ultimate goal of life. For instance, we find that ghee is the ultimate product derived from milk after it goes through the processes of conversion to curds and butter. This process of enquiry is known as "Mimamsa" you have to investigate the nature of the "I", which claims ownership of the body, the mind, the senses and other things ("my body," "my mind," and so on). If you are not the body, the mind, etc., who are you? Does anyone pursue this line of enquiry?

Man is called "Manava". This Sanskrit term has two meanings. One is, man is a being who lives free from ignorance. The other meaning is that he is not a new being, but has had a long past, in many previous lives. When such meanings are recognised in terms of Vedantic parlance, the greatness of human birth becomes evident. It fills one with joy.

Students! The world today is simmering with discord and violence. Peace and security are absent. Fear stalks the land everywhere. To get rid of fear, you have to acquire fearlessness ("Abhayatvam"). How is it to be got? When you reduce desires and attachments.

Students! Develop morality and good conduct. Lead exemplary lives and serve the nation. The sole purpose of education is to develop humility and discipline. Respect your parents and have love for God. This is true education.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan: "*Prema muditha manase kaho!*"

From Bhagavan's discourse at Brindavan on 30.5.1992

GURUDEV VANI

VIDYAGIRI SAMACHAR

New Horizons for the Sai Institute

Students!

knowledge is humility. Eschewing pride and self-conceit, pursue the right goal. (poem).

Students today are acquiring considerable scientific knowledge. It serves only to promote civilised living in the phenomenal world. But what the students need today is the refinement of the heart. This is possible only through an internal process. Students who have imbibed modern culture should not only develop their intellects, but should also develop a broad outlook.

The students today have a two fold duty: One is to face the challenges of modern civilization, the other is to protect and preserve the ancient spiritual and cultural heritage of the country. Students should shine as ideal citizens of the nation.

A complete education is that which makes a man compassionate. Besides giving appropriate exercises to the body, students should strive to cultivate the heart and keep it pure.

There are two kinds of learning in the educational system today. One relates to information about various subjects. The other relates to the rectification of the individual's life. The first relates to the physical. The second relates to the spiritual. The former is concerned with earning a living. The latter is concerned with the basic goal of life.

In the first type of education, you have opportunities to investigate various matters and arrive at scientific truths. For instance, you find out that water is composed of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen. You thereby know the composition of water. This enhances your scientific knowledge. But what is relevant from the social and spiritual point of view is how to ensure fair distribution of water among all people.

A national system of education calls for the cultivation of humility, devotion and obedience. When students go through such a national system, they will not only manifest the inherent divinity in them, but also develop discipline. If education consisted only of scientific knowledge, the world will be a hopeless place. Scientific knowledge alone does not constitute the content of education. Character is knowledge. Character is power. Character is life itself. Character is the hallmark of true education.

Unfortunately, the student today fills his head with a lot of information, but his personality is impaired in the process. Filling his mind with physical facts and absorbed in physical investigations, he undermines his basic humanness.

Education and elevation

Selflessness, humility, unostentatiousness are qualities that underlie the human personality. Along with academic excellence, a student should aim at the cultivation of good qualities. Education enables you to score marks, but you need also elevation (of your personality). Qualities contribute to elevation. Education and elevation combine to develop the human personality.

cultivation of good qualities. Today the progress of scientific and technological education has virtually destroyed the sacredness of the human personality. Even the Great War leader and Prime Minister of Britain, Winston Churchill, once declared: "Man has conquered everything, but has not conquered himself." Prahlada reproved his father, Hiranyakasipu, by telling him that though he had conquered the three worlds, he had not learnt to conquer his senses.

Self-control and self-knowledge

Without being able to control the senses, what is the use of learning every kind of knowledge? All knowledge is useless, if one has not acquired Self-knowledge. Such a person may be regarded as intellectually clever, but cannot be called intelligent. The first step, therefore, is to know one's self. Spirituality is the means to acquire knowledge of yourself. Hence, as much importance should be assigned to the promotion of good qualities in the educational process as is given to academic studies.

During the past two centuries, many marvellous and even dangerous achievements have resulted from the pursuit of science. Exploiting the resources of the earth, they are boasting about their accomplishments. They have produced atomic bombs which can cause terrible destruction. Is it a sign of wisdom to boast about one's capacity to destroy the world? This is a demonic power. The Western nations are now worried about the consequences of their dreadful discoveries.

Vijnana and prajana

It is essential that the development of science should be accompanied by a corresponding development of the power of discrimination (Viveka). Science (Vijnana) is, doubtless, necessary. But it should be combined with Prajnana (divine wisdom). Prajna is the essential principle in man. This 'Integrated Awareness', in Vedantic parlance, 'Prajnanam' has been equated with Brahman (the Supreme Absolute).

When science is combined with Prajna, discrimination follows as a corollary. By forgetting Prajna and pursuing science (Vijnana), man is making a mockery of his existence. It is not enough to make a mere man out of a person through education. Education should aim at making him a "full man".

It is well known that the Indian economy is passing through a critical phase. But this is not so grievous a problem as the decline in morality and character. If this moral decline is not reversed, education will be utterly ruined. Students therefore must endeavour to promote morality and ethics. Without these, the entire nation will be ruined.

The fourfold formula

Earning of money should not be the primary aim of students. Education should be for developing human qualities, not for securing jobs. There are four requisites for promoting this attitude to education and life. First is: Give up all association with the evil-minded ("Thyaja durjana samsargam"). Pray for the company of the good. ("Bhaja Sadhu samagam"). Engage

permanent and what is transient ("Smara nithya-anithyatham").

You should run away from bad company. A bad man can spoil even a good man. A renunciant may be turned into a covetous man. This is the effect of bad company. The ancient sages considered association with the evil-minded as companionship with a poisonous snake. It was to escape from the danger of such association that they resorted to the solitude of forests.

A snake may bite a person once in a way but a bad man infects others with poison all the time. A bad man is one who is filled with bad thoughts, speaks bad words and does bad deeds.

The wicked quartet

The Mahabharata offers four examples of bad men (called "Dushta Chathushtayam"). The first one is Shakuni (Dhuryodhana's maternal uncle). Shakuni was all the time filled with bad thoughts (Duralochana). He is a total stranger to good ideas. He was always plotting something bad for someone or other.

Duryodhana was having Shakuni as his adviser. Duryodhana was engaged in bad deeds ("Duscharya"). They were comrades in evil.

Then came Dussasana (brother of Duryodhana). In association with Shakuni and Duryodhana, Dussasana became notorious for his bad behaviour ("Dushpravarthana"). When these three evil-minded men came together, "even stars started falling during daytime", as the saying goes. The whole cosmos rebels against such evil-minded men.

Karna, out of a false sense of attachment ("Dhurabhimanam"), joined this trio. Gratitude is doubtless a good quality. But because Duryodhana came to his rescue on a critical occasion, Karna developed a wrongful attachment to Duryodhana. Karna was a good natured person. He was noble-minded. But because he was associated with evil-minded men he also became a bad person. Despite his valour, physical prowess and intellectual abilities, Karna met with disaster because he had made himself remote from God. (Poem). What was the defect in Karna? Misguided attachment ("Dhurabhimanam").

Evil thoughts, evil deeds, evil conduct and attachment to the evil-minded, these are the four bad qualities. ("Dushta Chathushtayam").

Hence, students should, at the outset, give up the company of bad persons. Once you have achieved maturity in moral stature, you can associate with anyone. At this stage, when your hearts are tender and your minds are not developed, you should not move freely with all and sundry. When you are spiritually immature, you should not associate with one and all equally.

Service to the guru

These four rules should be the guiding posts in your life. If you adhere to these four rules, you will be able to acquire all knowledge, by the grace of the Divine. This is illustrated by

devoted service to the preceptor, without any attention to scriptural studies. Service to the preceptor was the meritorious deed (Punya-karma) which he performed all the time. This sanctified his life. While bringing the clothes of his guru from the other bank of the Ganges, the river was in spate and rose to the level of his neck. He prayed to Lord Sankara to enable him to serve his preceptor. He could reach the other bank by walking over lotus shaped slabs which appeared on the swollen river. He got the name Padmapada and received all spiritual knowledge from Adi Sankara by sheer grace.

(Bhagavan then related the story of Ashwathama, who had secured the Choodamani by the grace of his preceptor for his devoted service to the guru. Swami described how the Choodamani which Ashwathama wore on his head, saved him from being beheaded by Arjuna, who had taken a vow to cut off Ashwathama's head for his crime of slaughtering the Upa-pandavas (infant children of the Pandava brothers). Though Arjuna was keen on carrying out his vow and took Ashwathama before Draupadi, she out of the largeness of her heart and from the inspiration of Krishna, found a formula to punish Ashwathama without cutting off his head. She said that if a Brahmin was kept captive in a house and sent out as a free man, it was equivalent to beheading him. She also told Arjuna that it was not Dharma to kill a Brahmin who carried on his head the precious jewel given to him by his guru).

Students have to bear in mind these four principles: Give up association with the evil-minded. Welcome the company of the good. Do meritorious acts ceaselessly. Remember always what is transient and what is eternal.

You must remind yourselves that you are human beings and not animals. You must give no room to bad thoughts. Develop the inner vision to realise the Divine within you. This is the significance of devotees closing their eyes when they are in the inner sanctum of a temple. They pray to the Divine to open their inner vision.

"Welcome to Both"

In today's programme, we regard two items as important: one, a send-off and the other, a welcome. That is not so. Both are welcome. There is no such thing as a "send-off" with Sai. Swami will not stand in the way of those who wish to leave. But I will not ask anyone to go.

Unique Chancellor

However, during the past two years, Prof. Sampath moved among the staff and the students as among the members of one family. The teachers, the students and others lived as members of the same family. In other educational institutions, the Vice-Chancellor puts in his appearance once a year. Chancellors are hardly to be seen at all. But in our Institute, even more than the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor is ever present. (Cheers).

The most amazing fact is that the Chancellor spends all twenty-four hours with the students. How should they answer their examination papers? How should they face their examinations? Speaking to the students even about these simple matters, Swami gives them *boy*.

discusses their problems with the students. He (Prof. Sampath) is a devotee. He did not come here seeking an office. To lead a sacred life in close proximity to Swami was the sole desire of the couple (Mr. and Mrs. Sampath). Coming here, he carried on his duties, to the limit of his capacity, without any deficiencies on his part. This is his home, not mine. So everyone carried on his respective duties. It is not merely to praise him that I say all this. He performed his duties well. That is enough.

New assignment for Prof. Sampath

Do not consider that from this day he is relinquishing his post. Spending the rest of his life with Swami, giving to the students the benefit of all his knowledge, he should contribute to the growth of our Institute in a unique way. He has specialised in electronics. In addition, he is interested in the harnessing of solar energy. Bharatiyas revere the sun. The sun is an immense ball of hydrogen and helium. There is immense scope for harnessing a small fraction of the energy coming to the earth from the sun. My desire is that "our Sampath" should remain here and make use of his knowledge to utilise solar power. The sun is the embodiment of effulgence. Wherefrom does this light come? How does it come? No scientist has yet found how this light reaches us. It comes from a Divine power. The Divine is fully effulgent. He has the splendour of a billion suns. Today you are not able to make use of the energy from a single sun. How can you measure the power of One who has the splendour of a billion suns? The solar system is like a candle to the effulgence of the Divine.

For harnessing the solar energy, with the realisation of its divine source, special efforts should be made in our Institute to develop research in electronics and solar energy. I desire that Prof. Sampath should ascertain what arrangements should be made for this purpose and carry on his work here in the years ahead.

Dr. Hanumanthappa's services

The new Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Hanumanthappa, has been a devotee of Swami for the past 25 years. When the Sai college was started in Brindavan, he used to come all the way from the city and hold classes in Commerce for our students. Nor is that all. He has been closely associated with our educational institutions from their inception. At that time our college in Brindavan was affiliated to the Bangalore University. From those days he has been rendering service in various ways. He is an ardent devotee. Both of them (the outgoing and the incoming Vice-Chancellors) should work in perfect harmony, make our Institute an ideal institution and do pioneering work in new fields for the progress of our students. They should be like Rama and Lakshmana. Our Institute should be like Sita. When you have these three, Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, our students will develop like Bharata and Satrugna. The Ramayana should be reenacted in this form and presented to the world.

What is the inner significance of the Ramayana? Dharma "Sathyam Vada: Dharmam Chara" (Speak the truth and follow Righteousness). Today, these two have to be upheld. Without these two, life is worthless.

He (Prof. Sampath) could have continued for some more time. But official regulations have prescribed an age-limit, which has to be complied with. Therefore, he had to retire. But this is only in conformity with external regulations. He will not depart from Swami's heart. For the single service rendered by him during the past two years, he has to be appropriately honoured. We are binding him closer to ourselves. The bonds we are placing on him are that he should impart all the knowledge he has acquired to our students and offer to the nation the new discoveries made by our institutions in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Bhagavan then fastened on the wrists of Prof. Sampath two gold Kadiyams and observed: Sampath! We are going to bind both your hands. Henceforth, you will be a bondman, engaging yourself to the full measure of your capacity in Swami's work, and rejoicing in the service you render. (Prolonged cheers)

Swami brought the function to a close with the singing of the bhajan, "*Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma*".

After the offering of Arati to Bhagavan, prasadam (laddus) was distributed to the entire gathering.

Avatar Vani

Yugadi Sandesh

Through Self-Enquiry to Self-Realisation

*The entire Cosmos is governed by God
God is governed by Truth
Truth is governed by the Supremely Wise
Such a noble one is equally Divine*

The entire cosmos is subject to the sway of the Divine. The cosmic Divine Lord is governed by Truth. That Truth is governed by a supremely wise person ("Uttama"). Such a noble being is the very embodiment of God ("Uttamo para Devata").

God is the embodiment of Time. Time is eternal. It has no end. It is boundless. As against this eternal Time, the life-span of man is very limited. Because of his limited time-span, man is bound by the passage of time in terms of hours, days, months and years. All the latter are by their intrinsic nature transient. The Lord declares: "I am the Eternal Time" ("Akshya Kaalah"). It is indeed a pity that this eternal time should be considered as a fleeting moment. Man's actions are governed by the change in time and circumstances.

was known as Angirasa. To bid farewell to Angirasa and to welcome Srimukha are considered a natural action among common people. Not realising the infinite and sacred nature of Time, men set bounds to Time and bid farewell to one year and extend welcome to a new year. In this context, all actions of men appear to be artificial.

On this day, when one person meets another, he greets the other with the words: "Happy New Year!" The other man replies: "The same to you!" These words have no meaning at all. If, for one moment on one day one wishes someone happiness, will he secure happiness? People's entire lives are consumed by artificial behaviour.

Time and mind

Time is moving fast like a stormy gale. Man's life is melting away every moment like a block of ice. Months and years are rolling past in the Wheel of Time. Everything around is undergoing change, but man's mind and intellect (Buddhi) remain unchanged. Years are passing before our very eyes. How many eras are disappearing in our own epoch!

Eras come and go, epochs roll on, but man's mind remains as before. What can the greeting "Happy New Year" mean in the context of such a human predicament? It appears to be a scene in a drama on the worldly stage.

The practice of offering worship and revering elders (on New Year's Day) also appear to be artificial acts in a play on life's stage. When the source of all happiness is within you, if you go about seeking happiness from others, it is unnatural. If you desire to elevate yourself and attain a higher level, you have to adopt the appropriate means. This does not mean trying to fly like birds. What you aspire for is Liberation ("Mukti"). The Vedas declare: Liberation will not fall from the sky. Nor is it to be found in the Nether World or on the earth. It can be got only by the elimination of desires which constitute knots in the heart.

To take an illustration from daily life: Bits of paper or pieces of cotton float in the air because they are lighter than air. Man is unable to go up spiritually because he allows himself to be weighed down by the heavy loads of his possessiveness and pride. (Mamakara and Ahamkara). Man is becoming heavier every day. His desires are getting insatiable. His selfishness and self-interest are reaching the skies. How can a heavy-loaded mind and over-burdened senses help man to attain liberation? This is impossible.

A man seeking liberation cannot attain it by merely revering elders or practising meditation. These are formal acts. By these artificial means one cannot realise the sacred, subtle and boundless experience of the Divine.

Liberation and self-realisation

"Moksha" or Liberation is not a specific place. Nor is it something that can be got from any preceptor or other person. To realise one's own true self is Liberation. Obsessed with the external world, preoccupied with the acquisition of external objects, man's life is becoming more and

spiritual heights.

Spirituality is associated today with exercises like attending religious discourses, reciting slokas, counting beads, and conducting bhajans. It is imagined that by these means Liberation can be secured. This is not real spirituality. At the outset, the animality in man has to be got rid of. Getting rid of the animal qualities, entering into the human estate, man should embark on the realisation of the Divine.

In every man, animality, humanness and Divinity are present. Today what is happening is the growth of the animal tendencies in man. As a consequence, qualities like kindness, compassion and sympathy are not to be seen anywhere. Selfishness and self-interest are animal qualities. An animal is only concerned with external objects. It has no internal vision or any power of discrimination. Man, however, is endowed with internal vision as well as the power of discrimination.

The spirit of enquiry

Man, unlike an animal, is endowed with a mind, which confers on him the power to enquire into the how and why of things ("Vicharana Shakti"). Man, therefore, should undertake an enquiry into what is permanent and what is temporary, what is truth and what is false, what is bad and what is good. Only when man transcends the animal tendencies can he become truly human. Then, his divinity will manifest itself in due course. This Divinity is inherent in man. It is not got from outside from anyone. It has to manifest itself from within.

Man's inherent quality is divinity. It has to be realised by him by his own efforts. The Atmic Principle is not derived from an external "force". It is based on an internal "source".

Man should be engaged in perpetual enquiry. He has to realise his humanness. Because of the influence of the Kali age, humanness has declined. Wickedness, immorality, cruelty and other vices are growing beyond all limits. Men are behaving worse than animals. They are harassing the innocent and the ignorant. They are behaving as demons.

To get rid of the demonic qualities, man has to embark on self-enquiry: "Who am I?" Scriptural scholarship is of no avail in this enquiry. Atmic bliss (Atma-ananda) can be realised only by recognising that the same spirit dwells in all beings. This realisation can be got only by spiritual enquiry. Conning the slokas of the Bhagavad Gita will not rid a man of his sorrow. The transformation must take place within.

"Kalaha Yuga"

Today is celebrated as Yugadi because it is the first day in the first month of the new year, marking the beginning of the Spring season (Vasanta Ritu).

Of the four Yogas—Krita, Treta, Dwapara and Kali—the present yuga is called Kali yuga. In truth, it is "Kalaha Yuga", the Age of Discord. There is discord everywhere—between

reason for this discord? The absence of mutual trust. No one trusts another. As a result, hatred and bitterness are growing in the social, ethical, political, economic and every other field. There is discord even in the scientific field. The lack of trust has blinded people towards each other.

People have belief in things which should not be believed, but do not believe that which they ought to believe. People are ready to believe in the statements of the author of an almanac or the predictions of a parrot kept by a pavement astrologer or a roadside palmist, but will not believe in the sacred pronouncements of the Vedas.

The Vedas have declared: "Tat Twam Asi", "Aham Brahmasmi", "So-Ham" ("Thou art that", "I am Brahman", "He is I"). The Vedic dictum, "So-Ham", is confirmed by the inhaling and exhaling that go on in everyone. But no one believes in it. People believe in the films, in novels and newspapers and many other sources. But one does not believe in the truth of his own Self (Atma). As a result, man is growing weaker and losing his humanness because of the lack of faith in his own Self. A man without Self-confidence (Atma-vishvasa) is no man at all. Without self-confidence, how can he get self-satisfaction? Lacking self-satisfaction, how can he hope for Self-Realisation? This is impossible.

Hence, the mansion of Self-Realisation has to be erected on the foundation of Self-confidence, with the walls of self-satisfaction and the ceiling of self-sacrifice. Confidence is at the root of it all. Live with faith and confidence.

"Vishnupriya"

The New Year Day begins with Nature shining in all her glory, decked with flowers, with the tender leaves rustling in the wind and the cuckoo calling to its mate in mellifluous notes. The spring (Vasanta Ritu) has come in all its beauty and freshness. It is the season when Nature presents her most beautiful and glorious appearance. The beauty of the spring season has been dubbed "Vishnupriya" (Beloved of the Lord). Indeed, it is not merely dear to the Lord, it is the very form of the Lord. There are well-known sayings: The Lord loves adornment ("Alankaaro Vishnupriyah"). The sun loves salutation ("Namasakaro Arunapriyah") The Lord loves the advent of spring when every tree is in bloom.

Today we are welcoming this spring. But it is not enough to greet it on one day. Some people figure the position of the planets at the commencement of the New Year and try to predict the shape of things to come. The New Year should not be judged by its name, Srimukha. It is well known that there are many who belie their names. "Sri" means "happiness", "honour", "auspiciousness". The year makes its appearance with a happy, respectful and auspicious face. But, the prospects for the year are the very opposite of what the name suggests.

Hard times ahead

Astrologers make their predictions on the basis of the relative position of the planets. The sun is expected to confer valour ("Sauryam"). The moon is said to confer prosperity. Rahu is

physical fitness. But during this year, the results will be contrary to these beneficial effects.

One of the consequences is the thinning of the ozone layer above the earth. As a result, there is the threat of fire disasters. There are also threats from bomb blasts of the kind you have noticed in newspaper reports. The country is faced with such dangers from man-made calamities.

These dangers can be averted if men realise the sacredness of human existence. People have to ask themselves how they are using the time that is given to them. In a year there are 3,15,36,000 seconds. How is man using these precious moments? How many seconds is he devoting to respecting elders and honouring his parents? How many seconds does he spend for earning his food? And how many is he wasting on useless activities? How many is he devoting to seeing films and T. V.? How many is he spending on reading meaningless novels? And how many on studying worthwhile books? How many does he devote to God? How many to rectify his inner feelings? If this sort of enquiry is made it will be found that the average man spends most of his time on mundane activities. Not even ten minutes or ten seconds are devoted whole-heartedly to spiritual enquiry or self-examination.

All are ostensibly engaged in the pursuit of Truth. All are devoting their time to God. They go on pilgrimages. But even in these trips, they do not concentrate their thoughts on God for a few moments. They don't make any internal enquiry.

To seek the Truth and experience God, there is no need to go out anywhere. By going to a forest or visiting temples, the inner being is not purified. Renouncing all worldly things, one must explore his inner life. This prescription of sacrifice is what the Vedas recommend for attaining immortality.

Practice and precept

Those who claim to be spiritual aspirants (Sadhakas) are really striving for selfish ends. The Divine is omnipresent. To experience the Divine, you have to undertake an enquiry with a steady mind. People today pursue studies all their life, but hardly practise what they have learnt. Practice is more essential than the mere acquisition of knowledge. It is not accumulation of information that is important, but the transformation of himself. Of what use is all the information you have gathered? How much of it have you put to practical use? How much bliss have you derived from it? The answer will be: a hero in gathering information; a zero in putting it into practice. In this way, life is being wasted rather than being purposeful.

The first step is for each one to comprehend his true Self. In many cases, as they grow in years and study more and more books, they develop doubts. Apart from filling their minds with bookish lumber, of what use is all their studies? There is no difference between books without consciousness and minds filled with bookish knowledge. Both are equally sterile. It is a case of "living death" for both. Book knowledge without practice maybe useful for teaching others, but is of no value to the man himself. A man who does not practise what he preaches is wasting other people's time. To begin with, make right use of your time. In this context, I repeatedly

practise at least a fraction of what you learn.

Today we are supposed to bid adieu to the old year Angirasa and to welcome the New Year. But, in fact, we should not bid farewell to Angirasa because the name suggests the presence of the Divine in every limb (anga) of our body. Welcome all the years. Don't give a send off to any year. Develop equal mindedness towards everything. Do not brood over the past.

Reduce Desires

The joy you experience will be in inverse proportion to your desires. The greater the desires, the less the happiness you will experience. Therefore, try constantly to reduce your desires. In the journey of life, as in a railway journey, the less luggage (desires) you carry the greater the comfort you will have.

True Moksha

Embodiments of Love!

Recognise what holiness is associated with human life. But because of the vagaries of the senses, man develops attachments to various objects and persons entirely for selfish reasons. All the love he professes is not out of affection for others but out of self-love. If this selfishness goes, there will be real oneness. Both love and hatred will be absent. There will be equal-mindedness (Samatwam). There will be no sense of separateness. That is true Liberation (Moksha).

"Moksha" does not mean attaining some divine state. Divinity is within you. All you have to do is to manifest it. That which does not exist, will not come forth. That which exists, will not go away. Everything is present here and now. Hence, there is no need for any search or for any sadhana. Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God. Do not make a distinction between "my work" and "God's work". When you make a division, you give rise to enmity, because of differences. Where there is enmity, there is no room for Divinity, Purity or Unity. When you install God in your heart, there is no room in it for anything else. But today's aspirants treat the heart as a musical chair. They go on from one "Swami" to another and shift from one kind of sadhana to another. Of what avail is this kind of merry-go-round? It is a waste of time and of life itself. One heart, one thought, one God, one Goal. Whether you utter the name of Allah or Jesus, Buddha or Zoroaster, or Guruji (Nanak)—it is all the same. Today is sacred to the memory of Guru Nanak, who commenced the propagation of his teachings on a Yugadi day.

We celebrate Yugadi today. But each one can choose his own day for celebration of the new year. God is one. All names are associated with the Divine. You should have no aversion to anything. You should develop this feeling of equality. Only then you will be aware of the unity that underlies the diversity.

Purity, unity and divinity

Today, you must concentrate first on purity. For this, you have to reduce gradually your desires. It is not practicable to give up all desires totally. But limit your desires to the essential minimum. Do not cherish excessive or endless desires in respect of wealth or other possessions.

contented man can experience real joy. The man with endless desires is the poorest man. The man with no desires is the richest man. The rich man can have no sleep. You must no doubt earn enough to meet your reasonable needs. But excessive wealth is undesirable.

People have been listening to spiritual discourses. How far are they practising the teachings? Without the cultivation of human values, all studies and spiritual exercises are of no use. If each examines himself, he will find how far he has failed in this respect. (Swami related an incident from Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life in which he slapped Rani Rasmani on the cheek at a spiritual gathering when he noticed that while appearing to follow his discourse, her mind was thinking about some legal matters. Many resented Swami Ramakrishna's action, but after his explanation, the Rani admitted her lapse. Swami said that today no one could inflict punishment on erring devotees. Each had to examine his own lapses and correct himself).

It is not very important that you should rejoice over the advent of the New Year. You should develop new ideas and ideals. Feel your oneness with all, because the same Divine dwells in everyone. Do not hate anyone or any religion.

Embark on self-enquiry to acquire Self-knowledge. For the refinement of the heart, the first requisite is seeking the company of the good (Sat-sangam). It is because you have assembled here that you have been able to derive the benefit of Swami's message. Along with good company, you must listen only to what is sacred.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Bhajan bina sukha Santhi Nahi!*") The entire gathering, which not only filled the Sai Ramesh Hall, but overflowed into the open spaces around, joined in the bhajan. The function concluded with Arathi to Bhagavan).

From Bhagavan's discourse on Yugadi day, March 24, 1993, at Brindavan

Atma Discriminates Best

Buddhi or intelligence exhibits greater discrimination than the senses and Atma exhibits greater discrimination than Buddhi. In one village there were two beggars. One was blind and the other lame. The two of them became friends. The blind man could use his feet and the lame man could use his eyes. They came to an agreement. The lame man climbed on the back of the blind man and gave directions like a driver. On going from one village to another, they came to a field of cucumbers. The blind one asked if there was fence or watchman around and the lame man said that there was none. The blind man then said that if the cucumbers were really good, no farmer would leave them like that in a field without a fence around or without a watchman. This meant that the cucumbers probably would be bitter to eat. The blind man could easily find out the truth of the matter because he had intelligence. This is the exercise of Buddhi. The senses cannot

because it does not have the sense organs.

-Baba ("Chinna Katha")

Vighneshwara Idol for Brindavan

Bhagavan visited Brindavan during February and stayed there for a week during which period two marriages were performed in the Divine presence, on the 11th and 12th, and an upanayanam was performed by Bhagavan on the 13th.

Bhagavan consecrated a Vighneshwara idol on the 13th instant, in the newly-built Sai Ramesh Hall, where Bhajans are held and Bhagavan grants Darshan to devotees. This spacious hall, in front of the Santhi Vedika, has 15,000 sq. feet. More than 5,000 devotees can sit comfortably. It is open on all sides and has a high fibreglass top in a pleasing shade of light green. It was inaugurated by Bhagavan on December 6th, 1992. It is a boon for the devotees who throng Brindavan in thousands during Bhagavan's stay for Darshan and blessings and conducting bhajans. It provides the much needed shelter from sun and rain. (The new Hall has replaced the old Sai Ram Mandap, under the giant Ashwatha tree, which served its purpose).

Visit to Muddenahalli

On the return journey from Brindavan to Prasanthi Nilayam, Bhagavan paid a visit to the school and college run by the Sathya Sai Lok Seva Trust at Muddenahalli on 15th February. The entire campus was tastefully decorated with flags and buntings and floral designs. Bhagavan was received with traditional honours and was taken in procession with Vedic chants by the students to the Guest House where He had lunch. Later, Bhagavan inspected the school and blessed the students who were doing Bhajans in the school Auditorium. Bhagavan went round the new Mandir building under construction before leaving for Prasanthi Nilayam.

God draws the Individual towards Himself; it is the nature of birth to have this affinity, for they are the same. They are like the iron and the magnet. But if the iron is rusty and covered with layers of dirt, the magnet is unable to attract. Remove the impediment; that is all. you have to do. Shine forth in your real nature and the Lord will draw you into His Bosom. Trials and tribulations are the means by which this cleansing is done. That is why Kunti prayed to Krishna, "Give us always grief, so that we may never forget Thee." They are like the dietary and other restrictions that the doctor prescribes to supplement the effect of the drug of Namasmara. Sai is Sarvajana-priya and so any name which gives you joy, you can take up. Tastes differ according to temperament and the character one has earned by generations of activity as a living being in this world. The proprietor of a coffee house goes to the nearby druggist for a pill to ward off his head-ache; and the druggist when he gets a head-ache goes to the coffee house for a cup of coffee which he thinks will cure him. Men are like that; loko bhinna ruchih. The Jnani says, 'Sarvam Brahma mayam': God is All; another a Yogi, says all is Energy; a third, who is a

progress in spiritual Sadhana. Do not blame or ridicule them, for they are all pilgrims trudging along the same road.

-Baba

The Ways of God

March 10 is sacred as Tukaram Jayanti. The following is an English rendering of one of Tukaram's abhangas:

Thy ways, O God! are past understanding:
Who can fathom them?

If thou wilt, indeed, live,
Learn first to die!

I see Thy Lotus-feet
Here, there, everywhere!
Not a grain of dust but Thou art there!
Yet, O Lord of Life! I see

That Thou art vaster than Space
And all the Seas!

Whether thou be in sorrow or in joy,
Have God within thy heart.
Love not the world,
Nor yet forsake its gifts
In fear and hate.
Offer thou thy life to God!
To Him and in His Love
Thy whole heart dedicate!

The Cup and the Needle

Thiruvalluvar, the renowned Tamil Saint, who has written the immortal work called 'Kural', used to keep by his side, when he sat for meals, a needle and a small cup filled with water. Once, his host asked him why he insisted on having these two placed by the side of the plate. He said, "Food should not be wasted. Even a grain is precious. Sometimes, stray grains of cooked rice or

off the floor, with the help of this needle and stir them in the water to clean them, and eat them."
What a great lesson this is, for those who waste more than they consume!

—Baba

Mahasivaratri at Prasanthi Nilayam

There was an unprecedentedly large gathering of devotees from all parts of the world for the Mahasivaratri Festival this year at Prasanthi Nilayam. On the morning of 19th February, the students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning greeted Bhagavan while He came out for Darshan with welcome songs to the accompaniment of their Orchestra. Bhagavan blessed the vast multitude of devotees who were standing outside the precincts of the Mandir due to want of space within, and went round the Darshan Lines inside two or three times while the students were singing devotional songs in different languages and rendered the Sivapanchakshara stotra, Linga-ashtakam, and Bilva-ashtakam befitting the sacred occasion.

In the afternoon, the Poornachandra Auditorium was packed to capacity even at 3 p.m., while it had been announced that Bhagavan would bless the devotees with a Discourse at 4.30 p.m. The crowd outside the Auditorium outnumbered those inside. Bhagavan came precisely at 4.30 p.m. and blessed first the crowds waiting outside. Sri Anil Kumar, Principal of the Brindavan Campus spoke about the significance of the Festival and the Divine Love of Bhagavan and prayed to Bhagavan to bless the vast gathering with His Divine Discourse. Bhagavan, then, gave the Divine Message for the occasion and initiated the Akhanda Bhajan which was continued throughout the night by the students of the three campuses of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

On the morning of 20th February, Bhagavan blessed the vast gathering again with His Divine Message in which He emphasised the necessity for devotees to do service along with Namasmarana. Bhagavan personally supervised the distribution of prasadam to all devotees. (Full details of Bhagavan's Discourses are given separately).

The Journey to Jnana

You have been born for one purpose; to die. That is to say, to kill the "I". If Bhrama dies, you become Brahman, or rather you know that you are Brahman. All literature, all effort, all Yajna, all teaching is just to hold a mirror before you, so that you may see Yourself.

all humanity on these three: it has the Karmakanda, the Upasanakanda and the Jnanakanda. Of course, Bhakti or Upasana (through the Karma which it sublimates and sanctifies) will lead you on to the highest Jnana. It is enough if you take a ticket and sit in the "through" carriage of the train; it will take you through many junctions to the distant destination. The Karma of purchasing a ticket and getting into the carriage and the Bhakti or intense desire to reach the terminus (without any urge at intermediate stations) will take you through a series of junctions and stations, right to the very place where you want to go.

-Baba

Historic Sai Gathering in St. Petersburg

Our journey began on a typically English wintry morning, grey and overcast. Yet Terminal 2 at Heathrow Airport our group of six devotees were terribly excited as we were to commence a voyage to St. Petersburg-now reverted to its original name from Leningrad.

We were hoping to be met by Galina and Sofia, twin sisters, one living in England and the other in St. Petersburg, who were the main instruments for the Inauguration of the Brotherhood of Sai Devotees in Russia. I say 'instruments' because as the week's events unfolded so magically it became crystal clear that the organiser was none other than our Mother Sai who manifested the powerful beauty of loving service in the hearts of all who participated in the Inauguration.

Saturday 12th December, 1992, shall remain a historic day in Russia because Sai installed Himself formally in the Russian nation. 300 delegates and devotees assembled in the Palace of Peace and Friendship, flocking from all parts of Russia, including the Ukraine, Bylo Russia, and Moscow to install the light of love within, sing bhajans in English, Sanskrit and Russian, and share their moving experiences of Sai's presence in their lives. *Representatives from the media world of newspapers and television were also present to film and report on this unique event.*

The purpose of the Inauguration, other than formally bring the St. Petersburg Centre into the Global family of Sai, was to clarify the unique life and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and the devotees' fantastic opportunity for spiritual growth in the context of the Organisation.

Mr. Bernhard Gruber of Germany, the Coordinator for Europe, officially inaugurated the day's proceedings with a simple and profound synopsis of Swamis teachings, the greatest being the cultivation and demonstration of the Love principle. Five candles were lit as a symbolic gesture to light the flames of love in Russian hearts and, indeed, in all hearts from that day on.

Mr. Thorbjorn Meyer of Denmark, (Education Convenor for Europe then spoke on the special significance of the Education in Human Values programme. A group of E.H.V.

teachers.

A moving yet practical address was given by Mr. Richard Friedrich of Austria, who is the Seva Convenor for Europe. He has been instrumental in co-ordinating Tony Budell's Convoy of Hope programme of aid to Croatia.

One of the most memorable events of the day, for me, was the singing of Christmas Carols. During the lunch interval a Russian lady in her fifties came up to me, saying, "I see on the programme you will be singing Christmas Carols this afternoon. I am an English teacher at the Conservatoire for Music here in St. Petersburg, and I have never heard a Single Christmas carol in my life. I am so looking forward to hearing them!" Jai Sai Ram.

—Renu Gidoomal

Are we doing our part?

Have you noticed lately how time seems to be accelerating more and more as we move closer toward the end of this century? There will be, no doubt plenty more hurdles to overcome, challenges to meet, as well as opportunities for growth toward higher levels of consciousness and truth. It's up to us to make the most of them. No wonder Baba is forever urging us not to waste time! For time is truly running short.

What mankind in its ignorance and selfish pursuits has done to this planet is obvious. It will take the conscious, sincere effort and cooperation of each one of us to reverse the damage done. *It's in our hands.*

Some may be under the delusion that since we now have the Avatar here on Earth, that He will set everything right for us. And no doubt, we know He is doing more than His part. But are we doing ours? Baba said that He has come to guide and to transform a faltering humanity. But that ultimately we have to achieve victory over our lower animal nature through our own efforts. Perhaps that old adage 'God helps those who help themselves' is more true than we'd like to believe. All too often we hide behind a wrongly justified spiritual indifference as an excuse to avoid full participation in life, and with it the duties that are ours as citizens of Planet Earth. Temporary as our stay may be, we must fulfill our duty here.

As Swami most humbly once said, *I have come for the transformation of humanity, and I shall be most grateful to each child of mine who helps in my task'.*

The transformation process

In our true, original state, we are beings of brilliant light, Some, in their awakening, are now experiencing a deep soul desire to know *Self*, and a yearning to return to our true home. Our

originally anticipated and our return is long overdue. Our purification process of body, mind and consciousness is being accelerated by the ever higher vibrations, which now surround us. We are so fortunate to be living now. For we are literally being raised in consciousness and awareness from within and without.

However, in our eagerness to leave this Earth plane, we must not forget about our commitment as *caretakers* of Planet Earth and its various life forms, which have been entrusted to us by our most loving Creator. It's clean up time! And we must each begin with ourselves. It's time to clean up our inner house and weed our inner garden. Before we can graduate from our appointed post here, we must first learn to live in love, harmony and unity with all living and non-living things; before we can be turned loose throughout the Universe. We have much work to do to make this planet the beautiful Paradise it was originally intended to be. As Baba once said, each of us has a unique and valuable part to play in this lifetime, in His mission to bring about the 'Golden Age'. The thousands years of 'Peace on Earth'.

How can we contribute? The ways, of course, are as varied as there are people on Earth. By tuning into our own higher Self we will, more and more now, be gently guided and shown the part we are to play. Our inner gifts are unfolding. Like little children, we need only open ourselves without fear and in full trust and faith, to our own God self within. We must learn, as Swami has continually pointed out, not to separate the practices we so often consider only spiritual from our worldly duties. By doing so we only foster duality. In truth, God exists everywhere and is the love force which sustains and permeates everything. To bring this awareness into our everyday life and work is true spirituality and the highest form of devotion. Once we have this awareness, it becomes our duty to share it.

Sometimes we become too lopsided. We tend to lean too much to one side and forget that there is also a practical side to living. That in order to contribute to the cleanup of our visible world, it is also most important that we share information which is vital to our Planet and to all life upon it.

For instance, as pointed out by the facts in the Pulitzer Prize nominated book *Diet for a New America*, a reduction in meat consumption (and I personally say, why not eliminate totally) is probably the most potent single step individuals can take in the effort to halt the destruction of our environment and preserve our precious resources. Reducing consumption conserves water, saves energy, preserves topsoil, reduces our dependence on chemical pesticides and fertilisers and protects forests. All this while improving health. Consider these facts:

The risk of death from heart disease by the average meat-eating American man is 50%. The risk for an American man who does not consume animal products is 5%.

220 million acres of land in the U.S. have been deforested for livestock production.

intake by just 103'0, the savings in grains and soybeans could adequately feed all 100 million.

Livestock production consumes more than half of all the water used for all purposes in U.S.

Cows contribute to the greenhouse effect by producing 100 million tons of methane—a powerful greenhouse gas which, molecule for molecule, traps 25 times as much solar heat as carbon dioxide.

Yet, despite all of this, it is sad to see how even among people on the spiritual path, many have not yet made the commitment to give up the eating of flesh. And the waste of food in the West could literally help feed millions of starving people the world over. Baba has pointed out that, particularly in the West, there is shocking amount of waste! He says: *Don't waste food! Don't waste money! Don't waste energy!*

In a letter I just received from a Sai devotee who has returned from a first visit to Baba and to India, this was so beautifully expressed. Baba made sure, I suppose, that he return with a greater awareness of waste in the West, so he may share such with others. He says:

'For myself, getting back to North America was more of a culture shock than arriving in India! I can still remember the first meal at a dinner somewhere north of Seattle. The food seemed outrageously rich and far more than I could consume. Some people feel that Sai Baba took on the greatest of challenges by incarnating in such a poor and troubled country. But when I look around at all our material abundance won at the cost of our environment I wonder if the greatest challenge would have been to incarnate here.'

It is of vital importance that we reflect upon our living habits of the past and boldly march forward into the future with goals of less desires; less waste; and a more simple, straightforward, and peaceful life. One that will hopefully be loving and kind and make a difference to our environment and to our fellow pilgrims here on Earth.

I shall end with these words by our beloved Sai:

"The secret of liberation lies not in mystic formulas and rosaries, but in stepping out into action".

—Reni Donahue. (U.S.A.)
(From "Sai Quarterly Magazine of U.K.)

The most direct method of achieving spiritual success is Nishkama karma, action without any attention or attachment to the fruit therefrom—action as duty, action as dedication, action as worship. But, action and the fruit thereof are not two separate entities, the fruit is the action itself, in its final stage, the climax, the conclusion. The flower is the fruit; the fruit is the flower;

becomes the consequences. One's duty is to act; act well, act in fear of God; act within the bounds of morality; act in love; continue acting; the consequences will naturally follow as the fruit follows the flower. One need not worry or exult. Act enthusiastically, with faith—success is yours.

—Baba

Bhagavan Honours Prof. Sampath

A special function, unique of its kind, was got up by Bhagavan Baba, Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, on March 4th, in the Institute Auditorium, to honour the retiring Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Sampath, and to welcome the new Vice-Chancellor, Dr. K. Hanumanthappa.

The stage of the Auditorium had been exquisitely decorated for the occasion, with a beautiful backdrop displaying artistically the Institute's motto: "Sathyam vada; Dharmam chara" ("Speak the truth; Adhere to righteousness") The Auditorium was fully packed with students and faculty members and a few special invitees.

Bhagavan Baba arrived at the Auditorium from the Mandir precisely at 7.30 a.m. and was received by Prof. Sampath and others. Bhagavan proceeded to the stage, headed by a band of Vedic chanters from the Institute. Prof. Sampath and Dr. Hanumanthappa were seated on either side of Bhagavan.

After the invocation, Sri K. Chakravarthi, Registrar of the Institute, speaking on behalf of the staff and students of the Institute, expressed their gratitude to Bhagavan for graciously agreeing to bless the function. Sri Chakravarthi made a special reference to the unique spectacle of the presence of both the incoming and the outgoing Vice-Chancellors on the same platform, together with the Revered Chancellor.

Describing the achievements of Prof. Sampath, in his illustrious career and the academic distinctions won by him, which included the heading of two major Institutes of Technology, Sri Chakravarthi recalled the valuable contributions made by Prof. Sampath to research and development in Electronics and Computer Science and in the field of technical education, culminating in his appointment to the coveted post of Vice-chancellor of "this great Institute" established by Bhagavan. He had often delighted the staff and students with several entertaining and enlightening talks, punctuated with humorous anecdotes drawn from his rich experience and wide-ranging scholarship. "His sincerity and transparent simplicity, with malice towards none and charity to all, endeared him to one and all," said Sri Chakravarthi. He prayed to Bhagavan to confer on Prof. Sampath and his family long life and prosperity.

Chakravarthi said that Dr. Hanumanthappa was the Vice-Chancellor of one of India's major Universities, Bangalore University, with as many as 150 colleges affiliated to it. He had acquired many distinctions of high merit in the field of Commerce and had contributed several papers to conferences held in India and abroad. He was President of the Commerce Association of India and the recipient of the National Award of "Eminence in Education". The International Biographical Society of Cambridge had conferred on him the Award of "International Man of the Year". He has also authored ten books. Sri Chakravarthi expressed the hope that Dr. Hanumanthappa would be a worthy captain of a good team of educators and staff at the Institute and continue the fine tradition of eliciting co-operation from the faculty members and others.

"Humanistic touch"

Sri Sanjay Sahni, Warden of the Hostel at Prasanthi Nilayam Campus, speaking on behalf of the students, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Sampath, who brought to his exalted position a humanistic touch in dealing with all concerned. Prof. Sampath used to give a patient hearing to every one, be he a student, a member of the staff or other functionary. He spoke obligingly even if he was not in a position to oblige. He was a source of inspiration and a pillar of strength to his colleagues. He was known to have pleaded the cause of the students with Bhagavan. He often spoke to the students about their good fortune in having the Avatar as their Chancellor. He guided and motivated the students tirelessly for the achievement of excellence in academic and other spheres. Sri Sahni extended a hearty welcome to Dr. Hanumanthappa, who was well known to them as a member of the Sai family and also as a member of the Commerce Faculty. He expressed the hope that Dr. Hanumanthappa would also become a vital link between students and Bhagavan.

A testament of faith

Prof. Sampath began his farewell address by placing at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan an expression of his deep gratitude for having been given an opportunity to serve in the University under Divine guidance. He recalled that he had mentioned to Bhagavan, when he was called upon to take up the Vice-Chancellor-ship of the Institute: "Bhagavan, my boat is a small one. You are putting this small boat in a big ocean". Bhagavan said: "It is a small boat that has the best chance of survival provided one has full faith in oneself and trust in God." The faith denotes self-confidence and trust signifies integrated awareness. Prof. Sampath stated that with such Divine guidance, he had been able to do his work "in this great Institution which had Divinity at its helm". The two glorious years he spent here constituted the most memorable period in his life.

Prof. Sampath recalled his student days in Stanford University, U.S.A., an Institution that laid emphasis on the quality of education and the building up of the character of students rather than on magnificent structures and costly equipment. It is the same ideal that Bhagavan has made the sheet-anchor of the Sri Sathya Sai system of Education. Prof. Sampath also referred to the non-denominational Church that had been built by the Stanford University, which was open to all, irrespective of religion, for prayer and meditation.

who, in his view are fit to adorn a chair of any University in the world with distinction, the Registrar of the Institute, who brings his consummate administrative skills to good effect in implementing the Sathya Sai System of Education, and a band of talented students who were most responsive to the Divine commands. He expressed his gratitude to all the other staff, the Controller of Examinations, the Principals of the three Campuses, the members of the Governing Body and Trust.

Prof. Sampath made special mention of Bhagavan's infinite Grace showered on his family. It was Bhagavan who made possible his daughter's wedding in May 1992. Bhagavan cured both his wife and himself of their serious illness in the recent past. Placing his services at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan, he concluded with a prayer that he should be blessed to be born again, become a student at Prasanthi Nilayam and receive his degree from the Divine Hands.

He offered his warmest good wishes to Dr. Hanumanthappa on his assumption of the venerable post of Vice-Chancellor of Bhagavan's Institution.

Dr. Hanumanthappa's hopes

Dr. Hanumanthappa expressed his humble gratitude to Bhagavan for having chosen him to be the Vice-Chancellor of "this Unique Institute", which he described as "a celestial Institute, under the Leadership of Divinity Itself". Bhagavan had established this Institute to spread the Sai System of Education which is "the only solution for the problems of the world today." He wanted this Institute to become a reputed International Centre of Learning and a pace-setter and trend-setter in education for the whole world. He also wished that it should function as a Spiritual Epicentre so that spiritual vibrations emanating from here could be experienced all over the world. "This is the only hope for the emergence of a new human community based on love, brotherhood and feeling of oneness with God", he said.

Dr. Hanumanthappa observed that among the two hundred Universities in India, the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning stood at the top in terms of quality, because of adherence to Swami's philosophy of Education with emphasis on 'human values'. He expressed his gratitude to Bhagavan Baba, but for whose Grace, he could not have risen to this high position in the educational field, starting from scratch. He sought the co-operation of the Faculty members, staff and students in the task of upholding the highest standards of excellence for which this Institute has earned a reputation under the direct guidance of Bhagavan.

Bhagavan then delivered His Divine Message. (Published separately)

Man's life is meaningful only because he can use it to see God. The goal of life is the final merging in the sea, God. You should not fill life with the world; that will make it a vanity fair, an insanity fair. Listen to all such things as will draw you towards the principle of Godhead; then, think it over in silence, make it part of your consciousness. This process of Manana makes you a man; that is the test of man—Mananahood!

—Baba

The Vain Quest

A woman visited the village fair to purchase a cow. She wandered along the long lines of cattle, brought for sale. She could not get the cow she sought. For she wanted a cow that was hornless, tame; she must have a female calf; she must eat very little grass; she must yield a good quantity of milk; she must give a sizeable quantity of dung, black-green in colour, so that she can use it for flooring her hut; she must be of the holy Kapila (brown, tawny or reddish) colour. No wonder she had to return disappointed.

—Baba ("Chinna Katha")

Trust in God: The Sole Protector

A person who has a compassionate heart, whose words spell truth and whose body is utilised to serve others will never be affected by any evil forces. Such a person's life will be truly sanctified (poem).

Face tests cheerfully

Sandalwood gives more and more fragrance when it is subjected to more and more grinding, so does sugarcane yield juice as it is chewed more and more. Gold gets refined when it is burnt and melted in fire. So also a true devotee will never falter in his love for God even when he faces troubles and obstacles in his life. God tests His devotees only to lift them up to a higher level in the spiritual ladder. A true devotee leads a sacred life which is sanctified when he faces the obstacles and problems with full faith in the Divine. The body is only for leading a sacred life.

"I am the infinite Time" says Krishna. Time has no measure, and it is unlimited, infinite. It is experienced by man in his life by dividing it into years, months, weeks, days etc. It is only to facilitate man to pursue his daily activity that time is brought under some convenient standard division.

Recognise divinity in all

"Mamaivaamso jeevaloke jeeva bhootah sanaathanaha" God is as a spark in every one. To recognise this Divinity man has to do some sadhana. A mirror though clean may not reflect your image if it is not having the mercury coating behind it. So also the heart may be pure but there should be the coating of love behind it to facilitate reflection of God.

There are multitudes of waves in the Ocean which are not all alike and vary in shapes and forms, but there is no difference in the sea-water that is contained in every one of these waves. Similarly names and forms of people are different but the spark of Divinity that is Satchitananda is the same in every one. Every one, in fact, is an embodiment of Satchitananda. When we realise this, sacred feelings will prevail and no petty ideas will arise in the mind.

Three in one

God manifests in man in three forms described as—Bhur Bhuvah Suvaha. Bhu is the material form (padartha). Bhuvah is spandana sakthi or Prana (Life Principle). Suvaha is the form of Prajna. Prajna Shakti is the Radiation which through vibration (Prana Shakti) gives the material form represented by the body. God manifests in all these three forms. The body is a combination of water, iron, lead, phosphorus and other things which are but inert matter. The body is inert but is made to function actively through vibration or the Life Force. Prajna Shakti or Radiation causes vibration to act. This radiation or Prajna Shakti is conscience. It occupies a special place in the body. God, in the form of conscience, activates the body. If man only

body is itself a mystery.

Seek good company

We use old newspapers generally to wrap different types of articles purchased in a shop. If jasmine is wrapped in the paper the paper smells sweet like jasmine. Another person may wrap some edible like pakoda and the paper gives that smell. If dry fish is wrapped, the paper emits the smell of dry fish. Though the paper has no smell of its own it takes on the smell of the thing with which it is associated (sangha). In the same way our mind, too, gets polluted because of the illusion of body consciousness and attachment. When you think of a material object, it gets object oriented but if you turn the mind towards the Life Principle it makes the life sacred. If you turn it towards the world, it is binding you to the world. If you turn it towards Awareness, which is Brahman, you become Brahman.

Self-confidence as base

Embodiments of Love! If you enquire carefully you will find that the entire universe is pervaded by God (Vishwam Vishnu Swaroopam). The human body is bound by time, karma (work) and duty. Everyone has the responsibility to do his duty. The effulgent Divinity within is not realised by man and he leads a useless life indulging in mundane pleasures. The entire universe is made up of matter which is transient and subject to decay. Therefore, one should develop devotion to the Lord who is the permanent Reality.

Absence of self-confidence is the cause of all miseries and troubles man encounters in the world: One should have confidence in his own inner Self that is the 'Atma'. If one has this self-confidence, he will have self-satisfaction, which will lead to self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice leads to liberation or self-realisation. Everything is based on "Self" and everyone is an Atma-swaroopam or embodiment of the Self. The body is just an instrument. There is water in the tumbler before me. Without the tumbler water can't be kept; the tumbler is the basis for the water which is needed to quench the thirst. So also the body is the vessel to hold the water of Divinity. To drink the water is Sadhana. Your thirst for realising Divinity is quenched by Sadhana.

Significance of Srimukha

You call this day as New Year Day. There is nothing new. It is as old as any day. We take it as a new year every time one year ends and another begins. The time is divided on the basis of the motions of the Moon and the Sun. The former is called Chandramana, which is followed by some people, and the latter is called Souramana, which is followed by another section of people. Today, we bid farewell to the year Angirasa and welcome the year Srimukha. 'Sri' means very sacred. It is the highest among the eight types of wealth (Aishwarya) of which God is described as the master. Shabdabrahmamayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi, Srimayi are the eightfold wealth of which Sri is the most important. In order to foster immortality in mortals it is customary to use 'Sri' as prefix to the names of males and 'Srimati' to those of females. Even when God comes down to earth as Divine Incarnation such as Rama and Krishna, the prefix 'Sri' is added to their names and we call them

assumes the mortal human form.

The name of this year is 'Srimukha' The name implies that it should give brilliance to all faces. But you will not find this year as favourable as its name indicates. One should not get discouraged by these prospects. You cannot always have pleasure. Pleasure is an interval between two periods of pain. They are like sunshine and shadow. You should make efforts to look on both with equanimity. Man wants to get all that he desires and gets disillusioned and disappointed. The lighthouse of hope for this ocean of life is God, who is the only permanent entity. This lighthouse never fails. So you should engage yourself in Godly activities with unstinted devotion.

Cleanse the heart

God is omnipresent. He has hands, legs, mouth, faces everywhere and pervades the entire Universe. Where is the need to search for Him? Such a search may be termed as folly. All forms of God are in you. Anytime is auspicious to realise this. You need not wait for the New year. There is no need for a new religion or a new culture or a new philosophy. What is needed is only a pure heart. You should not give room for impurity or pollution in the heart. You can make your life sacred by following the golden rule; "Help ever; hurt never".

Speak softly, sweetly and truthfully. There are two eyes to see different things, two ears to hear good and bad, there are two hands to do good and bad, but there is only one tongue to speak only the Truth.

Real bliss consists in sanctifying the senses. The ornament for the hand is charity, that for the tongue is truth and that for the ears is listening to divine scriptural talks. What other ornament is needed than these! "Anandame Andamu" Bliss is beauty. It is the nectar of life. You should enjoy the sweetness of bliss.

Embodiments of Divine Atma! Spend your life in cherishing sacred thoughts, listening to good things, speaking good words, and doing good deeds. If all of you adopt this path, happiness and prosperity will reign in the world. No government or politician or any one in the world can protect you from troubles and disasters. There is only one who can protect you and that is the Supreme Lord. To seek His protection, all of you must wholeheartedly pray. "Lokaas Samasthaas sukhino Bhavanthu" Let all people in the world enjoy bliss.

(From Bhagavan's discourse at "Sai Sruti", Kodaikanal, on April 14, 1993)

reached there in the evening. He was received with Poornakumbham and Veda chanting at "Sai Shruti" by a large gathering of devotees. This year the congregation of devotees had increased considerably with the daily attendance exceeding three thousands including a considerable proportion of overseas devotees. Devotees hailing from U.K., France, Germany, Italy, Holland, U.S.A., Latin America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were among those who came to "Sai Shruti" for darshan in the morning and afternoon.

Bhagavan gave discourses from April 5th to April 26th. The discourses were preceded by speeches by some students or senior devotees and by Prof. Anil Kumar, who spoke on various aspects of Bhagavan's life and Message. We give below excerpts from some of Bhagavan's discourses

Potency of spiritual power

Those who assemble here come for 'satsang' or good company so that they can advance in the spiritual path. They should shed some undesirable habits like smoking which retard their progress in the spiritual path. The fire in the cigarette is so mild that if you pile up two or three pieces of fire-wood on it that fire will be put out. But, when a huge jungle-fire is raging, it can burn even green banana plants that are thrown into it. The power of the physical body is like the fire in the cigarette tip while spiritual power is like the forest fire. Once you are advanced in spirituality even the association with evil persons may not affect you. But, when you have not developed your spiritual power you should avoid bad company just as you spit out unpalatable food even at the first taste.

From concentration to meditation

Devotees are generally confused about meditation. Just as you can't receive the radio programme broadcast from any station clearly unless you tune to the appropriate wavelength perfectly, even in meditation you will not get the desired communion with God until you attune yourself to the divine perfectly. Some aspirants mistake concentration for meditation. Concentration is needed for every activity in your daily life such as reading, writing, walking, talking, eating, etc. Concentration is below the senses, contemplation is in the middle and meditation is above the senses. Meditation, in fact, is transcending the senses and the mind. During meditation, the mind is actively thinking of several things of the past, the present and the future. The thoughts are running fast. Scarcely does any one concentrate on the Divine even though one sits in the lotus pose (Padmasana) and closes his eyes. There is no need for sitting for meditation and wasting time in this manner. One can transform every act in daily life as worship of the Divine. Daily chores like making chapattis can be transformed into acts of worship of the Divine. Since the body is an instrument, you can make God happy through this instrument and enjoy happiness yourself in the process. In this way you practise meditation in your daily duties.

Three phases of happiness

There are three phases in the act of securing a desired object and enjoying happiness out of it. They are Priyam, Modham and Pramodham. 'Priyam' is the desire to experience happiness from a particular object. 'Modham' is the initial satisfaction derived from getting the desired

if you get the object which you desired to have, but you should experience the joy of using it. For example, you like to taste a mango fruit. The first phase is to buy it, the second is to hold it in hand (possessing it) and the third phase is to eat it. It is only while eating the mango that you derive the fulfillment of your desire. It is also described in the Bhagavad Gita as Jnatum, (Knowing), Drashtum (Seeing) and Praveshtum (entering into). For instance, you hear about Sai Baba and come to know that He is at Puttaparthi, situated in Andhra Pradesh in India. You make preparations to undertake the journey to the place and have His Darshan. The first phase is getting the knowledge about the place where He is and how to get there, the second phase is making the journey and coming face to face with Him (seeing) and the third phase is "Praveshtum", that is getting practical knowledge of and experiencing the Divinity. All the scriptures of different religions (the Bible, the Quran, the Gita, etc.) explain how to reach the same goal but through different paths.

The goal is one: paths are many

Here so many of you have assembled in one place though you are coming from different countries like U.K., Italy, France, Germany, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Madras, Delhi etc. Though all of you followed different routes to come to this place, all of you have the common goal of meeting here. You should realise that there is only one God who is Omnipresent, only one language, that of the heart and only one caste of humanity. You are all bound by one thing and that is Love. Love is God, live in love. The relationship with God breeds love alone and nothing but love. All other relationships with your mother, father, spouse or children are temporary. So you should have confidence only in the one relationship that is ever-lasting and that is with God. (From the discourse on 5.4.93)

Vision should be good

In his discourse on 6th April, Bhagavan pointed out the paradox of human behaviour in that, having the power of discrimination to identify good and bad, man is not able to get away from bad pursuits. This, Bhagavan said, is due to the weakness of the human mind, which in turn is the result of desire and anger. Bhagavan quoted the example of Ravana, who was a great scholar and master of many arts. Ravana looked at Sita with a bad vision. The eye is a sacred organ. Good vision generates good thoughts. In Ravana, the bad look created bad thoughts, which led to his downfall.

Desire is all right as long as it is within reasonable limits. For example, if you feel thirsty, it is a reasonable desire to seek water to quench the thirst. Not satisfied with water, if one seeks cool drinks it is tantamount to excessive desire.

To illustrate the disastrous consequences of excessive desire, Bhagavan narrated a story. Once a wayfarer, who was making a long journey by foot in the hot sun, was feeling tired and sought the shade of a tree to rest for a while. It so happened that the tree was a wish-fulfilling tree. Sitting under its shade, he wished for a cup of cold water for quenching his thirst. To his astonishment a cup of water was placed before him. After quenching his thirst, he felt that it would be good if he could get a bed to recline on and enjoy a siesta. Immediately, a bed was

flash, he found his wife there. At this stage, he had a doubt in his mind as to how his wife, who was far away at home could come there and thought that it might be a demon in her form which might even devour him. As he thought in this manner, the woman turned into a demon and devoured him! This is the result of excessive desire, which is the enemy within you.

Will-power

Developing good thoughts fosters the will-power. (Iccha Shakti). Iccha shakti fosters Prana shakti, (Life principle). Medha shakti (Intellectual power), Grahya shakti (Power of understanding), Nirnaya shakti (Power of determination) and Vaak shakti (Power of Speech).

One who uses one's will power in the right manner shines as a virtuous person, but one who uses it in the wrong direction becomes wicked. The will power increases as and when one reduces desires. When excessive desires are entertained, the will power declines. By reducing just one of your several habits like smoking or coffee addiction, you can experience an increase in your will power and intellectual ability.

When the will-power is weak, even when one sits in meditation he cannot steady his mind and it will only be a waste of time. One should reduce desires to progress in spiritual sadhana. (From Bhagavan's discourse on 7.4.93)

Man is bound by seven types of ropes. They are (1) the body; (2) desire; (3) anger; (4) ego; (5) fate; (6) ignorance and (7) lack of discrimination (Deham, Kamam, krodham, ahamkaram, karma, ajnana and aviveka or avidya). Ignorance is the cause of ego, which breeds attachment and hatred (Raga-dwesha). For getting liberation one has to get rid of the ego, ignorance and attachment. The ego gives rise to Raga (desire) which plunges man in Karma which, in turn, causes Janma (birth).

Ego is like an inflated football. When one is inflated with the air of ego, both the good and bad qualities kick the body. The moment ego is gone, the kicking stops and one attends to his legitimate duties with the feeling that he does not do anything but is only an instrument.

In spirituality, experience is the method of gaining wisdom while in science it is experiment. When you put some sugar in a glass of water you can't see it or touch it as it gets dissolved. But you can find out its presence by tasting the water. Similarly you can realise Divinity, which is present in every being and within you, only by experiencing Bliss by Sadhana.

When fire on a piece of charcoal is left unattended for some time, you find that ash is covering the fire. This ash came out of the fire only because of negligence. If you blow off the ash you can see the fire. You are not bringing it afresh from outside. Similarly, the fire of wisdom in you (Jnana-Agni) is covered by the ash of illusion (Maya) which obscures it from your vision. Just blow off the ash of Maya, covering the fire of wisdom, by renunciation (Vairagya or sacrifice), you can realise the wisdom within you, which is constant integrated awareness.

Everyone is busy in protecting, decorating and painting the chariot of the body but does not have any concern for the charioteer. How do you expect it to move without the direction of the charioteer? The senses are the horses of the chariot of the body, the mind is the rein to control them.

The way to realise the Divinity that is in everyone is to cultivate love, which is the only divine trait. There are three sides to love forming a triangle. They are: (1) Love gives and never receives; (2) Love is fearless; (3) Love is changeless. The love that develops between a mother and child or a husband and wife is subject to change as it pertains to the body. It is only Bhrama or illusion. You should become Brahman shedding Bhrama.

The divinity in you is changeless, blemishless, without beginning or end. Just as a dhobi removes the dirt in a cloth and restores its original whiteness by washing with soap and beating it on stone, man should try to regain his vision of the pure effulgent Atma by washing his heart in the water of love with the soap of Shraddha (earnestness) on the stone of Tyaga (Sacrifice). This is the way to realise one's Inner Reality, which is Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam and Brahma. (Bhagavan concluded his discourse on 8.4.93 by singing the song, 'Sathyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma.)

Suka teaches Vyasa

Air is all-pervasive. It is within you and outside as well. Similarly God is pervading everywhere in the Universe. If you look at everything with the divine feeling you will not fail to see Divinity, pure and unsullied. If you see the idol of Krishna in this hall with a divine feeling, you feel you are seeing the form of Krishna. But, if you are keen on finding out the material from which it is made, you see only the bronze or other metal of which it is made and not Krishna. You can realise that what you visualise depends on the nature of your vision. (Drishti is Srishti). If you look at the world with coloured glass you see every-thing differently and not in its real colour. The mind is the cause for your feelings. If you see with the feeling that this Vishwam or Universe is Vishnu Swaroopam, embodiment of God, it will be so!

Every object has a Swaroopam (its own form) and Swabhavam (its own nature). Man is completely unaware of his real nature, which is love and compassion. He is so much immersed in selfishness that he only does every action to further his own self-interest and accumulate possessions for himself. Even the love that man exhibits today towards other persons or objects is only with a selfish motive to gain something out of them and not for their sake.

Once Suka, son of Vyasa, wanted to leave his home and go to the forest to undertake Tapas. Vyasa, overcome by parental attachment, entreated him not to go to the forest but to remain there and serve his parents as it was his duty to serve them.

But Suka told Vyasa: "Oh! Vyasa! You are not my father. I am not your son. We came from Bliss. Everyone wants to be blissful. I am going to seek the Bliss which is our common

to his Inner Reality, which is the same in all beings. (From Bhagavan's discourse on 9.4.93)

In His discourse on April 10, Bhagavan reminded everyone that the purpose of human life is to do one's duty without regard for results, which will automatically accrue. When there is rain, water will flow in the river and one need not pray for both. It is enough if you pray for rain. Man can't live without activity even for a moment, as blood circulation and breathing are going on nonstop as long as one lives, whether one is sleeping, walking or sitting. It will be folly to attribute these natural activities to man's efforts. It is Divine action. Krishna spells this out in the Gita: "Aham Vaiswaanaro Bhoothwaa Praaninaam Dehamaasrithaha - Praanaapaana Samaayukthah Pachaamyannam Chathur Vidham" God is in every being as Vaishwanara, aiding digestion of all types of food.

God is described as Isa, Gireesha, Naresha, Paresha and Bilvesha. The term Isa means master of all types of Aishwarya or wealth (sakala aishwarya sampanna). Aishwarya includes not only property, movable and immovable, but also strength, knowledge, skill, intelligence and prosperity. Ishwara is the master of all wealth. "Gireesha" means master of "Giri" or Hill. What does this signify? People often go to Tirupati Hills and offer their hair in fulfillment of vows. The inner significance of this sacrifice of hair must be understood. God is not expecting your hair, which is of no value at all. Does He relish this lowliest of offerings? Certainly not! The head is the peak of the human body. Ignorance or Tamasic quality is supposed to be dark or black. The black hair is enveloping the peak of the human body which is the head. By removing the hair on the head you expose the white surface of the peak. This is symbolic of surrendering the dullness or Tamasic quality. This is an age-old practice, which is followed without comprehending its inner significance. Since God is the master of the light of wisdom, as opposed to dullness on the head at the top of the human body, He is termed as "Gireesha".

Naresha: In the term Naresha (master of 'Naraha'), 'Na' means 'no', 'Raha', means ignorant of one's sacredness. 'Naraha' means 'man' who is not ignorant. He is not a sinner. He is the embodiment of pure Atma. The Master of man is "Naresha".

Paresha: Para means "above all". God transcends all. He is 'Akhandam' or limitless and "anirvachaneeya" meaning beyond description by words. As God transcends the three stages of time—past, present and future—and transcends space, pervading everywhere, He is termed Paresha.

Bilvesha: He is termed "Bilvesha", the lover of the Bilva leaf which is having triple leaves in a single stalk, "Trinetra", one with three eyes and Trigunam, transcending the three gunas or qualities of Satwa, Rajas, and Tamas. His weapon is 'Trishul', the three - pointed Javelin. One should offer the three qualities to God, symbolised by the offer of the triple-leaf Bilva for worship. One should do worship with full understanding of the inner significance of the rituals.

God-realisation

In the course of his discourse on April 11, Bhagavan said:

You are all embodiments of Divinity, which is within you. God is in the form of Vaishwanara to digest your food. You listen to such teachings many many times but don't practise. Instead of having tons of knowledge an ounce of practice is enough. Sadhana is essential to realise divinity. 'Saa' means divinity (Daivatwam) 'Dhana' means wealth. The acquisition of the wealth of divinity is sadhana. Saalokyam is entering the world of God; saameepyam is going nearer to God; Saroopyam is acquiring the feeling that you are part of God; and Saayujyam is final merging with God.

You know there is butter in milk. But you have to subject it to the process of turning into curd and then churning it to get butter. Similarly, in the pot of the body there is the milk of Divinity. You have to churn it using Buddhi or Intelligence as churning rod and Bhakti or devotion as the rope. Out of the churning, comes butter which is Self-realisation you got it from what is already there inside you.

You should never divorce spirituality from worldly life. The cloth in my hand (a kerchief) is spirituality. It is made up of threads which represent worldly life. The cloth is there only because of the threads. If you segregate the threads there will be no cloth.

"Twameva Mata, Pita thwameva". We say: God is father, mother, friend, relative, knowledge, wealth and all. God is the energy which drives us to action. We should not waste our energy on useless things.

The senses and values

In his discourse on April 12, Bhagavan observed:

The five values of Truth (Sathya), Righteousness (Dharma), Peace (Santhi), Love (Prema), and Non-violence (Ahimsa) are related to different inner instruments of the body.

The value of Truth is expressed through speech or words. The value of Dharma is expressed through the body. This is related to the Annamaya Kosa or physical sheath. Santhi or peace can be experienced only in the mental plane (Manomaya Kosa or Mental sheath). For Sathya, Dharma and Santhi one has to purify the instruments of speech, body and mind. This is called purity of "Mano, Vaak, Kaayam" Prema (Love) comes out of the mental and bliss sheath (Anandamaya Kosa). Non-violence (Ahimsa) comes from Bliss sheath. Prema flows as an undercurrent in all the inner instruments and purifies them. So all the five values are having relationship with the five sheaths.

Now these values are mostly absent in human beings. Thinking in one way, talking in another way, and indulging in action not related to the talk or thought is the mark of a wicked person. He may be in human form but he is to be deemed to be a demon only. Because such people are in abundance, the world is in turmoil. "Sathya" is full of sanctity if one deeply enquires into this value. 'Sat' means Prana or life force. 'Ya' means Aharam or food. "M" stands for Sun. It is a combination of life, food and sun. For life, food is essential and food comes from

use of the food created by the Sun to sustain life. If you analyse this word 'Sathya' in the reverse order 'ya' stands for 'Mama', 'ta' stands for Tapas and 'sa' stands for 'Sarveshwara'. It conveys the truth that by practicing Yama and Tapas one can realise the Almighty. Yama is not the God of death but is the five-fold discipline one should maintain. They are Non-violence, Truth, Celibacy, non-stealing, and non-covetousness (Ahimsa, Sathya, Brahmacharya, Astheya and Aparigraha)

God is said to be of blue colour. It does not mean that His skin is bluish! He is the embodiment of Jnana or Jnana Bhaskara, shining with the light of wisdom. He is also 'Ananta' or endless like the sky or fathomless like the Ocean. Since both are of blue colour God is also described as bluish. He is not born with blue-coloured skin. He is infinite and fathomless.

The heart of the human being is like the sky in which the 'Self' is the sun shining constantly. Just as passing clouds obstruct the vision of the sun temporarily, attachment to world and worries and troubles will obstruct the vision of the Inner Self but once the clouds clear, you can have vision of the Inner Self which is resplendent within. By means of Dhyana Shakti and Prana Shakti, you can experience Divinity in the Bliss sheath, which fosters the five human values.

Santhi comes from Manomaya kosa
Sathya comes from Vijnanamaya kosa
Dharma comes from Annamaya kosa
Prema comes from Pranamaya and Manomaya kosa
Ahimsa comes from Anandamaya kosa

In these five sheaths are encased three types of bodies: Physical (Sthoola), Subtle (sookshma), and Causal (kaarana) sariras or bodies. Annamaya Kosa represents physical body. It is like the tyre of a lorry. If you increase intake of food it grows and the weight of the body increases.

Divinity is there in all the sheaths of the body. It is Constant Integrated Awareness in different forms in speech, action and feelings.

A Lesson from the Ocean

In His discourse on March 17th, '93, Bhagavan related a story from the life of Dakshinamurthy, the renowned and widely adored Sad-guru, to teach the students the lesson to be learnt from the behaviour of the ocean.

Bhagavan described how in the course of his wanderings in Bharat, Dakshinamurthy reached the shore of the ocean. As the great preceptor sat gazing at the waves of the ocean, a

that the sea was throwing back all the rubbish on to the shore.

Dakshinamurthy was annoyed at the way the sea was casting off the flotsam and jetsam and admonished it thus: "Oh Lord of the waters! How pitifully narrow-minded are you! With all your vast expanse and unfathomable depths, could you not find room for the small rubbish that was thrown on you?" The sea replied: "Sir, if I am not alert in casting off such rubbish then and there, a time will come when the entire ocean is covered with dirt and filth. In order to maintain my purity, I take care not to give room for such unwanted rubbish all the time."

Dakshinamurthy recognised the truth behind the ocean's reasoning and reflected on the lesson the ocean had taught him "The sea has taught me the lesson that if I want to keep my Manasa Sarovar (the Lake of my Mind) ever pure, I should be always vigilant to, keep out every trace of impure thought and desires as soon as they try to enter the mind."

All should learn this valuable lesson and always try to keep their minds and hearts pure by not allowing even the slightest polluting thought to enter their minds.

BHAGAVAN IN BRINDAVAN

GURUDEV VANI

Chaitanya and the "Outcast"

"It never rains but pours" goes the saying. For the students of the Brindavan Campus, Bhagavan's visit in March provided a constant flow of nectarine discourses, replete with edifying stories from the lives of the great saints of Bharat and inspiring spiritual teachings.

Bhagavan left Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of March 9th after the bhajan. The large gathering of students and devotees in the Mandir and outside were deeply moved by the thought that Swami would be away from Prasanthi Nilayam for nearly twelve weeks, but many were heartened by the hope that they would be having the company of Bhagavan at Brindavan or Kodaikanal in the coming weeks.

During His three weeks' stay in "Trayee Brindavan" before He left for Kodaikanal on April 1st (early in the morning), Swami gave regular darshan to devotees in the morning and afternoon in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, gave interviews to devotees from overseas and others and held regular meetings in the evenings in "Trayee Brindavan" with all the students and a few old devotees present. The evening sessions in Swami's sanctum were eagerly looked forward to for speeches by students and the principal, Prof. Anil Kumar, on various aspects of Swami's life and message and, above all, hopefully for discourses from Bhagavan in response to the importunate entreaties from the students.

discourses.

In His discourse on March 16th, Bhagavan chose for His theme a significant episode from the life of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to underline the truth that the Godly man should rise above differences of caste and creed.

Bhagavan said:

Once, a mendicant with tattered clothes, unkempt hair and dirty body, came and stood at the threshold of Chaitanya's room and was meditating with closed eyes. On seeing him Chaitanya came out and asked him, "Who are you? You can come inside." On hearing these soft and sweet words, the mendicant opened his eyes and replied in all humility, "Swami. I don't deserve to step into your room. I am a despicable person belonging to the caste of Chandalas (Untouchables). I am unfit to defile your sacred residence." Full of smiles, Chaitanya went closer to him and said endearingly: "My son, never say that you are mean, despicable or unworthy. Who is mean and who is sacred on this earth? All are sacred because the same God shines in every one's heart. So, please come inside without any hesitation."

Power of the Lord's name

When the mendicant was still hesitating to go inside, Chaitanya questioned him about the purpose of his visit. The visitor replied, "Swami, I am repeatedly chanting God's name but I feel it lacks chaitanya (spiritual power) just as a person in a state of coma has mere life without any consciousness. I seem to be mechanically chanting the Lord's name without experiencing the power of the Divine. I have come to you with the hope that if you initiate me, in one of the Lord's names, it will be charged with spiritual potency and I will be benefited by chanting such a name."

Chaitanya replied, "All the names of God are full of chaitanya or divine power. God's name is omnipotent and self-effulgent. Hence it is not proper for you to underrate the efficacy of any of the Lord's names. However, for your satisfaction, I will give you initiation (Mantropadesha) as desired by you. Please step into the room." The visitor responded by slowly entering the room, full of humility, hesitation, nervousness and fear, and sat in one corner of the room. Noticing his plight, Chaitanya gently told him, "My son, why are you so full of fear? Freedom and fearlessness are the birth-right of every man. Freedom being your real nature, why do you give room for fear? You must recognise that the Atmic power is behind all thoughts, and give up fear."

God is above caste

Saying this, Chaitanya came closer and closer to the mendicant. Seeing this, the mendicant cried out apprehensively, "Swami, please don't touch me. If you touch me, both of us will be guilty of breach of the traditional norms of our society. I say so particularly because it is winter now, and if you touch me, you will have to take a cold-water bath again and that will tell upon your health. I have accepted you as my Guru (Preceptor) and since, according to the scriptures, the Guru is verily God, I shall be sinning against God by hurting you in any way. I

Because of my sins in my past life, I am now born as an untouchable. I don't want to add to my load of sins by allowing you to touch me now."

On hearing this, Chaitanya remonstrated: "What a simpleton you are! You are only betraying your ignorance by observing untouchability, ignoring the divinity inherent in every being. God has no distinctions of caste and creed. There is no caste for any of the five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air and sky, all of which have emanated from God. Irrespective of the castes and creeds professed by men, all are equally sharing the bounties of Nature offered by the five elements. Therefore, there is no need to observe such differences of caste and creed. Come closer to me."

Freedom from fear

However, the mendicant could not shed his fear, because he had been nurturing this fear from his childhood. This shows that feelings such as fear, love, hatred etc., become ingrained in a person if he nurtures them for a long time from an early age in his life. Chaitanya told the mendicant, "God never endows man with fear. It is one's own weakness that fosters fear, because of some shortcomings in one's self. One who has not committed any wrong or evil act will have no fear and hence will not need any protection or security. Fearlessness is the hall-mark of divinity. One can become fearless through (Tyaga) renunciation or sacrifice. For example, if you have some valuables with you, there is room for fear. But if you give up those valuables, you will be free from fear wherever you may be, even in a jungle infested with robbers. My dear child, realise that your very nature is absolute fearlessness in all circumstances. Remain true to your nature."

Saying this, Chaitanya hugged the mendicant. But the latter began shaking with mixed feelings of bliss and fear, bliss because of the embrace of such a holy saint like Chaitanya, and fear because of the misapprehension that Chaitanya would be polluted by physical contact with him. He cried out, "O Swami, let not my sins pollute you." Laughing at this statement, Chaitanya told him assuringly: "O innocent one, you and I have now become one. We are no longer separate." So saying, Chaitanya hugged him in a warm embrace and whispered the Lord's name into his ear. The name went straight into the old man's heart, and so transformed him that he exclaimed in ecstasy,

"Swami, there is no one as lucky as myself. I have now become sanctified, sacred and pure. I have got rid of my wrong notion that I am only the body made up of the five elements and have realised my true nature, because of your grace and the grace of the Lord's name which you gave me."

From "Chandala" to Haridasa

One's life becomes sanctified by treasuring the Lord's name in one's heart with a feeling of intense love. In the absence of such love, all so-called spiritual practices will prove futile. Various spiritual disciplines are necessary only for the purification of the heart. Once the heart becomes pure, there is no further need for study of the scriptures or spiritual practices.

wards, the mendicant became known as Haridasa.

The moral of this story is that we should give up all differences based on one's birth and position in life and chant or sing the Lord's names with intense love and devotion. First, the Name should melt the devotee's heart; then only it can melt God's heart and draw His Grace upon the devotee. God does not care for how long and in what ways you have practised Sadhana. What He wants is sincere, whole-hearted and intense love for Him. (In this context, Swami sang a melodious Telugu song exhorting man to shed all his fears and take to the Divine Name with genuine love).

Samartha Ramadas: The Errant Boy Who Became a Saint

On 19th March, Bhagavan gave a detailed account of the life of Samartha Ramadas, the great Maharashtra saint. Bhagavan said:

In a place called Baadar in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra, a son was born to a couple highly devoted to God. He was named Narayana. He grew up as a naughty boy, neglecting his studies and quarrelling with other children. At the age of eight years, he lost his father. His mother, Rama Devi, found it hard to control her mischievous and delinquent son. Her relatives and neighbours advised her to get him married so that he might realise his responsibilities and change for the better. Although the boy was only 13 years old and too young for marriage, his mother yielded to the persuasions of others and arranged for his marriage. At the time of the wedding, a screen of thick cloth was held in between the bride and bridegroom, according to the prevailing custom, and the purohits removed the curtain to hand over the Mangalasutram (the sacred and auspicious thread of wedlock) to the bridegroom for him to tie it round the bride's neck. Lo and behold! The bridegroom had disappeared behind the curtain, without anybody's notice. A thorough search was made to trace him out, but in vain. So, the marriage could not be performed.

Hanuman's blessing

The boy Narayana, who had escaped from the marriage hall, ultimately reached a place called Nasik near the source of the sacred river Godavari. He stayed there for sometime and then moved to a nearby mountain called 'Chitrakoota' which is considered holy, because Sri Rama lived there for nearly 12 years. There he selected an exquisitely beautiful spot by name Panchavati. The boy was enraptured by the grandeur of the scenery of the place, and its sanctity, associated with the stay of Sri Rama there during his exile, sent thrills of ecstasy in Narayana. He was always immersed in the contemplation of Sri Rama.

What was the cause for the naughty boy turning into a pious young man? Apart from the fact that his latent good Samskaras (accumulated tendencies) were aroused by the sudden shock of the prospect of being saddled with the heavy responsibilities of married life, the boy, during his journey to Nasik, entered a famous Hanuman temple en route, and wholeheartedly prayed to the Deity to bless him with all the noble qualities for which Hanuman was renowned. And he had

spiritual vibrations in the direction of the boy.

After 12 years of intense penance at Panchavati, Narayana gained the three-fold realisation of Sri Rama, as did Hanuman, namely, when he had body consciousness, he was the servant and Rama the Master, when he was conscious of his being a Jiva (individual soul) he was a part of Rama (Visishta-advaita) and when he was aware of his being the Atma he and Rama were one (Advaita)

Service with devotion

After this realisation, he returned to Nasik from Panchavati. While there, he came to know that the country was in the grip of a severe famine. Then he began to reflect that to spend his time thinking of only his own liberation, when all his countrymen were suffering due to famine, amounted to extreme selfishness. So, he coined the slogan, "Dil Mae Raam, Haath mae Kaam" (i.e. Rama in the heart, and work in the hand), and entered the arena of social service with all his energy and zeal, giving to himself and his band of dedicated workers mottos such as: "Manava seva (service to man) is Madhava seva (service to God)" and "Grama seva (service to the villages) is Rama seva (service to Rama)." He filled the tank of his heart with the holy water of Ramanam (Rama's name) which flowed through the top of his hands to quench the thirst of the multitudes of his countrymen.

Sivaji and Tukaram

Proceeding thus from village to village, doing social work, coupled with chanting of Ramanam. Narayana finally reached Rameshwaram at the southern tip of the Indian peninsula. From there he went to the pilgrim centres of Tirupati (where he had the darshan of Lord Venkateshwara) and Hampi (where he worshipped Lord Viroopaksha). Ultimately he returned to Nasik. On the way to Nasik, he saw saint Tukaram, who was singing the glories of Rama so melodiously that a large number of people including Sivaji, the ruler of Maharashtra, were attracted to him. As Sivaji listened to Tukaram, and told him about his decision to give up his kingdom and to devote himself fully and whole-heartedly to the pursuit of the spiritual path. Tukaram admonished Sivaji for his narrow-minded view of spirituality and exhorted him to consider duty as God, and work as worship. Thereupon Sivaji prayed to Tukaram to give him initiation. Tukaram declined saying, "Ramadas is your Guru, not I, so you have to receive initiation only from him." Rather disappointed, Sivaji returned to his capital.

Sivaji's offer to Ramadas

When Sivaji came to know that Narayana alias Ramadas was in Nasik, he sent his Ministers and other high dignitaries to invite Ramadas to the royal court with a band of music and other traditional honours befitting a highly distinguished personage. When Ramadas arrived, the king received him with due honours and reverence, arranged for his stay in the palace itself, and after washing his feet, he sprinkled the holy washings on his own head and submitted to him in all humility: "O revered Master! From this moment this kingdom belongs to you; and I too, am yours." Thereupon Ramadas replied, "My son, I am an ascetic who has renounced everything. I have neither the right nor the desire for your limited kingdom. God's kingdom is

don't want this kingdom of yours. I am now coronating you as the ruler of this kingdom which you have offered to me. From now onwards, you will be king with a difference. You should consider that the kingdom really belongs to God and that you are only His instrument or trustee administering the kingdom on His behalf."

From Ramadas to "Samartha Ramadas"

Since Ramadas had the extraordinary capacity to do many great things, he came to be known as Samartha Ramadas; the appellation Samartha meaning a man of versatile skills. There is an episode in his life which describes the context in which the title of "Samartha" was conferred on him. He used to dress himself and move about like Kodandapani (Ram a armed with his bow and arrows). Once when he was walking along the banks of the Godavari in this dress, some Brahmins who were taking bath there questioned him whether he belonged to the community of Koyas (hunters belonging to a hill tribe were called Koyas). Ramadas told them that he was Ramadas (a servant of Rama) and not a Koya. Thereupon, they questioned him why he was dressed and equipped with bow and arrows like Rama if he was only a servant of Rama. They heckled him saying, "What is the use of merely trying to imitate Kodandapani in appearance only? Are you capable of wielding the bow and arrows as Rama did?" Just then a bird was flying fast at a great height across the sky above their heads. The Brahmins pointed the bird to Ramadas and asked him whether he could shoot that bird. With Rama's name on his lips, Ramadas immediately aimed an arrow at the flying bird and brought it down right in front of the Brahmins. Seeing the dead bird, the Brahmins accused Ramadas saying, "There is no harmony of thought, word and deed in you and therefore you are a duratama (a wicked person); you chant Rama's name and at the same time you have committed the sin of killing an innocent bird, to show off your skill." When Ramadas replied that he shot the bird at their instance only, they remonstrated, saying, "If we ask you to eat grass, will you do so? Don't you have your own independent thinking or discrimination? Then Ramadas gently replied, "Sirs, past is past. Kindly tell me what I should do now?" They asked him to repent for his sin. Ramadas promptly closed his eyes and prayed to God wholeheartedly, repenting for his sin and asking for His forgiveness. Then he opened his eyes and pointed out to the Brahmins that the dead bird had not regained life, in spite of his repentance. The Brahmins said reprovingly, "What a madcap you are! Repentance cannot undo what you have done; but its purpose is to enable you to make up your mind not to repeat such misdeeds in future." "That is no repentance in my humble view" countered Ramadas, "God and His name are so powerful that if we pray sincerely, His grace will bring the bird back to life." So saying, he picked up the dead bird, hugged it to his bosom, and with tears flowing down his cheeks, he wholeheartedly prayed, "O Rama, if I have been chanting your name with all my mind, heart and soul and if it is a fact that I have killed this bird out of ignorance and not with an intent to kill, may your grace either revive this dead bird, or take away my life also along with that of the bird." As he concluded his prayer the bird fluttered in his hands. Then he opened his eyes, thanked the Almighty and released the bird into the sky: `Astonished at this miracle, the Brahmins exclaimed in one voice, "Revered sir, forgive us for not recognising your greatness. Since you have the capacity to kill a flying bird with a single arrow, and also the capacity to revive the dead bird, you will hereafter be known by the worthy name of 'Samartha Ramadas'."

After this, Ramadas visited Pandaripuram where he was an eye-witness to the ideal way in which a man by name Pundarika served his parents as veritable gods, making Lord Panduranga Himself wait in front of his house standing on a pair of bricks, till he completed his service to his parents.

Then he visited Sivaji and gave him three things as mementoes to guide him in his royal duties: one, a coconut to remind him that just as our intention in buying a coconut is to consume the white kernel inside, so also the purpose of owning and administering the kingdom is that the king himself should lead a Satwic

life and also to ensure that the Satwic quality prevails in his kingdom; second, a handful of earth to remind the king and through him his subjects, about the sanctity of Bharat, their motherland; third, a pair of bricks to symbolise that just as bricks are used to construct houses for the safety of the inmates, the king should use his powers to protect the people and promote their welfare and progress.

At this time the memory of Pundarika's devoted service to his parents at Pandaripuram was revived in Ramadas' mind and he hastened back home with the idea of serving his aged mother. When he reached home, his old mother could not recognise him, particularly because of his long beard and strange dress. He told her that he was her son, Narayana, who was popularly known as Samarth Ramadas. Thereupon, his mother exclaimed ecstatically, "O my dear son, I have been hearing so much about Samarth Ramadas and have been eager to see him for a long time. But I never knew that it is the popular name of my son, Narayana. I am proud of you and thank the Lord for making me the mother of such a great one. My life is fulfilled." So saying she breathed her last on her son's lap.

Ramadas duly performed the obsequies of his mother. Shortly thereafter, He heard about Sivaji's death in A.D. 1680 (just six years after he was coronated by Ramadas in A.D. 1674). He went to the king's capital, installed Sivaji's son as the king and blessed him so that he might rule the kingdom, following the foot-steps of his noble father.

How the Lord Transforms

Two and half years have passed since Bhagavan Baba's guidance resolved what was to me a serious moral dilemma. The growing number of hungry and homeless people begging on the streets of New York City left me feeling helpless, sad and guilty. His guidance changed all this very quickly. Never leaving home without carrying food to give has become for me a way of life that immediately began to eliminate the problem. To each needy person I say, "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" This has become a habit as ingrained as saying, "Good Morning" and "How are you?" but with vastly different and surprising results.

I sought relief from a disturbing problem. What I received was a profound, gradual, ongoing character transformation. It did not come from a deeper study of the Lord's teachings or from some miraculous revelation. It came almost imperceptibly, like a child's growth. It came as His sure and unfailing grace comes when we listen to and apply His instruction and example. In this case, it came through the daily, steady practice of giving food to the hungry. It happened like this:

The first morning that I prepared sandwiches was most unusual. There were simply no homeless people around, none on the streets, none in the subway and not even one person during my lunch hour. I began to wonder if I had exaggerated the problem. This was not at all what I expected. By mid-afternoon, I was so perplexed that I decided to take a walk around the office block. There was no one. As I was about to re-enter my building, I caught sight of the first person with a paper cup in his hand, and I went up to him and said, "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" His clear eyes held mine with a strong and steady gaze. He spoke very slowly and distinctly, with a long pause between each of his four words: "Thank ... you very ... much", he said, and smiled and took the sandwich and cookies. Although his words were common enough, the cadence and feeling with which they were spoken stunned me. "Thank...you....very... much" were the last four words that my mother spoke before she, died. Her words were spoken with the same slow cadence! I could not help but feel strongly that this was Bhagavan's clear confirmation and blessing. It has proven to be just that.

From that point on, with each sandwich given, I have combined the service with the saying of His Name and the seeing of His Form. The food I give is His food and it is given to Him whom I see before me. Before speaking, I say silently within, "Swami", and only then out loud, "Excuse me, would you like to have a sandwich?" The results are unfailing. Although on a rare occasion the food is refused, there is never any unpleasantness, but rather a notable sweetness that is very uplifting. The Lord's Presence, the Lord's Example, has inspired the giving of the food and the act of giving the food has strengthened my practice of Namasmaraṇa, saying His Name. The practice of one supports the practice of the other for they are one. He is One and there is no other.

Lessons from service

I am learning that it is not possible to love God without loving and serving Him in other people and serving other people binds us closer to Him, for the nature of love is expansion. The simple act of giving food daily did just that.

Very close to my apartment in New York City, clusters of homeless live in cardboard boxes. The local residents feel resentful, for they look dirty and smell bad. The commercial interests complain that they ruin tourist business. The newspapers complain that many are mentally unstable, alcoholics, drug addicts. Most people keep away from them, fearing that they may be dangerous. I had always avoided these temporary communities. The police continually move them from one place to another. They are society's throwaways. Gradually, I came to know several of the homeless on the streets by name. I found that some were part of these cardboard

as his "Sandwich Man" and the name has stuck. Although the turnover in the groups is high, there are a few who are less transient. Over a period of time, all of them have taught me a great deal. I do not want to glamorize their serious plight but only to look at what has been gained from the experience. This is what I have learned:

They are so grateful for any simple act of kindness. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me this opportunity to serve.

They remind me how very little we really need to survive. I am determined to diminish my desires and to be thankful for what I have been given.

They are lost and confused. They remind me to make ever greater efforts to fulfill the potential that He has given me. Saint Francis said, "While we have time, let us do good." I must use His precious time to benefit society.

They live one day at a time. Their concern is now. I remind myself that the past is dust and the future is a product of today's right action. Dedicating to Him what I think, say and do today is all that matters. Remembering that, all is always very well.

They share generously with each other. It has frequently happened that one person will say that others have not had food and their need is greater. "Give it to them." Selfishness is reduced by the shared common experience. I try to remember to give more generously, for what I have is not mine but His.

They teach me humility, for they are constant reminders that I have much good to learn from all others.

They are aware of other forms of life. When I said that I had too much bread for the number of people, Rahim answered: "Don't worry about too much bread. We will give it to the birds—they eat too." I appreciate the reminder.

They need love for survival as urgently as they need food. One day, when I ran out of food, I avoided walking near them. A woman from the group ran across that street to ask why I hadn't come to them. I explained why. "Even if you don't have food, come by. Good people are important." I am reminded that we live not by bread alone.

They teach me that giving isn't work, it isn't an obligation, it is Grace. It is the highest form of happiness.

Growing response

In order to save both time and money, I began to buy food supplies in bulk. That simplified everything. One day, a sandwich fell out of my shoulder bag when I had a business meeting at an excellent mid-town restaurant. The manager wondered why I carried them. The answer led to my

we give some to the staff and throw the rest out." I asked if the owners would consider giving the food to me for distribution to the homeless. It took several weeks of discussion before it was agreed to allow me to distribute left-over food. In the year and a half since then, I pick up the leftover food 4 or 5 nights a week. Although initially hesitant, the restaurant staff have become enthusiastic about their participation. After a while, they became aware of how the food was being used and I can always count on a smiling, cheerful greeting. "We couldn't find your phone number yesterday, and we all felt so badly that so much food went to waste", the manager said after the first few months. Clearly, there has been a change of consciousness on the part of the entire staff of the restaurant. They are all happy to be part of a company that helps others. Their happiness shows.

With a greater supply of food, help was needed in the distribution and that too developed easily and quickly. An elevator operator in my building, who lives in another part of the city, asked if he and his father could help give out food. They now do that regularly. "We were concerned about doing this at first," Albert said "but after just a few times, we knew that this is a very good thing to do. There are so many people out there who are hungry, and children too. When I went on vacation, I felt that something important was missing from my life. It's such a wonderful thing for us."

Some devotees help out as well whenever needed. Then came the surprise of a national TV Christmas interview (1991) on this homeless service that I had initiated. As a result, others have started to do the same thing both here and elsewhere. How widespread the service is I cannot tell, nor is it so important. It is the love with which it is done that matters. It is the giving of the Lord's Love that counts. I remember Saint Matthew's words "Whatsoever you do unto the least of these, you do unto Me."

Baba banishes fear

Tests and trials are not what we seek, yet we welcome the passing grade. As we take one step up, His Hand helps us to take the next one. Step by step, He uses experience to teach, to uplift and to transform us.

Knowing the city well, I am naturally careful about where I go and when and have always been quick to take any detour, to avoid a troublesome situation. I accepted the fact that my more cautious than courageous nature would never change. Then an experience on a New York subway early on an April Sunday evening showed me that He had guided me up an important step. Returning home from a visit in Brooklyn, I found the subway car was not crowded. Seated opposite me were five tourists from the mid-West, three adults and two children. From their conversation, this appeared clearly as their first ride on the New York subway system. They noted that the door to the next car was broken so there was no access from our car to the next. This was a big adventure for them. The children were excited and the adults apprehensive. At the next stop, the attention of all the passengers was drawn to the far end of the car where a man entered. He was tall and powerful looking with dishevelled hair, dirty clothes and erratic movements. Dragging behind him two large black plastic garbage bags, he looked wild. His

Their worst nightmare was being enacted before them. Friends had warned them of the dangers of visiting New York and here they were, trapped and menaced. Why hadn't they listened? The man came closer, his voice louder and more abusive. People gave money. He moved slowly down the car. My first reaction was not very different from that of the tourists opposite me. But it was short lived. Immediately, the flash of fear disappeared and I heard myself saying silently: "Swami, please help. Swami, please help." Over and over again. Then I found myself getting up from my seat and as the man approached, I took several steps towards him, looked at him and then actually heard myself say what I always say: Swami (spoken silently within), "Would you like to have a sandwich?" He just stared at me, eye to eye and then, in the smallest voice imaginable, he said: "I'm....so.... hungry" and he took the sandwich and the cookies from my hand and sat down next to where I had been sitting. He ate the food so quickly, with such relish that there was no doubt of the need. I was seated next to him when he finished and he then turned to me, his eyes no longer wild, but gentle, and he very softly whispered, "Thank you."

The train pulled in to the first stop in Manhattan. The five tourists raced for the salvation of the open doors. The man slowly followed, dragging his garbage bags behind him. The doors closed and I returned home enriched by the experience. He had given me clear evidence that all transformations are possible and all are His Grace.

His guidance taken and applied
Seeds courage and strength inside
The Lord's Presence dissolves fear
Steady practice brings Him near.

—Hal Honig, New York

(The Editor welcomes articles from readers on how they are applying one or other aspect of Bhagavan Baba's message in their daily life)

The Martyrdom of Mansuri

It is not scriptural scholarship or formal observance of rituals that lead to God-realisation, but deep and unshakable faith in God, observed Bhagavan Baba in His discourse in "Trayee Brindavan" on 26th March. Bhagavan illustrated this by relating the story of Saint Mansuri, who died as a martyr four centuries ago with the mantra, "Aham Brahmasmi" on his lips. Bhagavan said: About-400 years ago, there was a man by name Mansuri in the city of Benaras. By virtue of his good Samskara (good inherited tendencies) and his preceptor's teachings, he had developed firm faith in the Vedic dictum: "Aham Brahmasmi"—("I am God"). When people heard him always repeating this aphorism, they questioned him whether he was really God. He used to

and hatred among the prominent men in Benaras, including Vedic scholars and heads of religious institutions. They went in a body to the King of Benaras and complained against Mansuri, saying that he had no knowledge of Sanskrit or scriptures but was going about shouting, "I am God", thereby insulting eminent scholars and pandits. The King summoned Mansuri to his court and asked him, "Who are you?" Promptly came the reply, "I am God." The King got him examined by medical experts and found that he was not insane. Then the King advised him to give up saying, "I am God", in "view of the complaints from scholars and Mata-adhipatis that he was guilty of blasphemy. Mansuri firmly refused to obey the King's command and declared that he would sooner give up his life than forswear his unshakable faith and firm conviction in his oneness with the Divine. He questioned the King boldly, "Why do you want me to give up truth? The truth is: I am God; you are God; everyone is God."

As he did not change his attitude despite all kinds of persuasions and threats, the King ordered that his hands should be cut off for the offence of disobeying the King. As the King's minions held Mansuri tightly and raised their gleaming swords to cut off his hands, Mansuri went on boldly shouting aloud: "Aham Brahmasmi" unceasingly and smilingly. After severing both his hands, the executioners went to the King and reported that Mansuri was fearlessly and smilingly repeating his declaration even after his hands had been cut off and he was bleeding profusely.

The King went to the scene of Mansuri's ordeal and found that the place was reverberating with the sacred sound of "Aham Brahmasmi" coming unceasingly from the tongue of the smiling Mansuri as well as from the blood flowing profusely on the ground from his hands. In a short while, Mansuri fell down dead with a smiling and calm face and "Aham Brahmasmi" on his lips.

The King was deeply moved and he prostrated at the feet of Mansuri. He sent for the scholars, priests, pundits and heads of religious institutions who had complained against the saintly Mansuri. On their arrival, he reprimanded them saying, "What is the use of your book learning? You could not recognise or understand the greatness of Mansuri. He was a man who established unity in thought, word and deed. You don't practise what you read and teach. You are all, a pack of conceited book-worms, envious of truly great persons. Misled by your complaints, I have committed the sin of virtually murdering such a saintly person. However, he has become a martyr in upholding the highest truth of "Aham Brahmasmi". In order to teach you a lesson and to provide a source of inspiration to you and your progeny, I am building a memorial for Mansuri in your Agraharam itself."

The criterion for true devotion is not proficiency in scriptures or routine performance of so-called spiritual practices, but the realisation of the divinity in oneself as well as in all others which can be attained only through steadfast adherence to truth, purity, of heart and universal love. Where there is Chitta Shuddhi (Purity of mind and heart), there will be Jnana Siddhi (attainment of wisdom). One with Chitta Shuddhi need not go to the forest or pilgrim centres in search of God. He will find God in himself and in others too.

In all lands the true sense of values has to be restored, and faith in the divinity of man has to be implanted. This is the work for which I have come. The world has to be saved from the consequences of limited knowledge, and from the blinding pride that precedes a fall.

'Love is the vital force. Love is the governing principle. It is only when the precious diamond of love is shining in one's heart that sacred and divine thoughts about God will arise in the mind.'

Compassion and love are vanishing in today's world. Ostentatious living is the order of the day. The manifestation of true love is totally absent. Everyone may claim to love God. Hardly one in a million is a true lover of God. True love should remain unaffected by weal or woe. To deride God during times of adversity, and to praise Him during conditions of prosperity cannot be called true love. Divine love is that which does not flinch in times of difficulties, and does not gloat over prosperity, but remains equally serene in all circumstances.

Man should become the very embodiment of love. When he is filled with love the entire world will be transformed into a love-filled world. As long as he is filled with hate the world will appear as a hate-filled world.

It is only when love is developed that the dualism of good and evil can be transcended and the joy of oneness with the Divine experienced.

—Baba

“Anthaa Swami Daya”

It is not easy for a simple God fearing village housewife to assume the mantle of "Mother" of the Avatar and recognise in her "son" the incarnation of the Divine. How Easwaramma faced this difficult situation and gradually came to realise the extraordinary role of Bhagavan Baba is described by Prof. Kasturi in his book, "Easwaramma—the Chosen Mother" As devotees from far and wide came to Puttaparthi to adore Baba, Easwaramma got new insights into the Divine attributes of Baba. Describing this phase in the life of Easwaramma, Prof. Kasturi writes:

The pioneers of independence were straining their every nerve to break down the hide-bound taboos of society, but this simple woman of the village who had hardly heard of the crusade against orthodoxy, found that she too was hustled willy-nilly against the barricades of tradition. She sat beside not only princesses but women of the Anglo- Indian community and those of castes considered 'un-touchable'. Who dares pick and choose among devotees-it is the inalienable right of all mankind to reach towards the Divine! And Easwaramma was 'Mother' to whole neighbourhoods in the cities. Her 'daughters' gathered around, speaking a medley of

Telugu. The only language she knew. "Anthaa Swami daya, Amma." "It is all Swami's Grace, my child." But it was uttered with so much benediction and assurance, that no one wished to miss the sweetness of hearing them spoken.

Among the devotees were Hanumantha Rao, the Inspector-General of Prisons of the Madras Presidency, Navaneetam Naidu, the Commissioner of Excise, Mysore, Ranajodh Singh, Mysore's Inspector-General of Police, the Raja of Sandur and others, seeking Swami's advice on matters both official and personal. Easwaramma sat confounded as she watched this line-up of the powerful and the prestigious. "How is he going to set right the affairs of palaces?" she wondered when the aristocrats of Mysore sat at his feet. "What does he know of Patel (Vallabh bhai Patel) at Delhi?" She questioned herself anxiously as she overheard Swami's words to the Raja. But she did not have to worry that Swami was over-reaching himself. Soon enough these people were back with beaming smiles on happy faces.

Sathya's absence from Puttaparthi became more frequent. Who heeded the 'boon' she had extracted from her son that he would remain at Puttaparthi? Certainly not the devotees like Sakamma from Bangalore, the Princesses from Mysore, the Chincholi family from Hyderabad, the Mudaliars of Madras and the Chettiars from Kuppam, Karur, Udumalpet and Trichinopoly. They were convinced that Swami belonged to them, for had he not indeed come for his devotees? And not Sathya either. He, like Krishna, wished to bless the poor, the sick and the old who could not afford or survive the journey to Puttaparthi. And all those who delighted so greatly in Swami's company, in his pranks, songs and conversation, wished to share this incomparable discovery of theirs, this unfailing source of joy, with every one they knew, their relatives and their rivals, their friends and their foes, their neighbours and non-believers too. They begged Swami to stay a 'few' days with them but not even a whole month ever amounted to a 'few' days as they counted!

Easwaramma longed to accompany him whenever he left his 'Sthan' (that is, his permanent place of residence as she loved to refer to Puttaparthi, feeling the comfort and reassurance of this possessive phrase). But how could she do so every time when so many family problems pressed upon her? When Sathya went off on his journey Easwaramma could only pray to the guardian gods and goddesses to protect him from the many strange types of food and perhaps the unfamiliar varieties of air and water too that he would have to imbibe!

Swami was just out of his teens and at Bangalore when he did fall ill just as Easwaramma had feared. His hosts, Raja Setty and Sakamma, called in the doctors. But no one could diagnose the trouble. How could they, for Swami announced, "I have willed the illness!" He quoted precedents, from the lives of Rama and Shirdi Baba to show that they too had had an apathetic distaste for food and fun for some years during their teenage. This 'illness' was therefore indispensable for him, Swami said, spending hours trying to reassure his devotees.

At last, besieged by insistent questioning, Swami confessed that he was in the process of remoulding his physical frame so that it might withstand the Divine Energy stirring within, for

mysterious happenings ...whoever had the experience of anything like this? Men and women stood around him dumb and distraught.

When I saw Swami for the first time I was told that his body had only just got back to normal. His voice was still feeble and faint then, his walk, slow and hesitant and his mop of hair almost too heavy for his neck. I could imagine the mother's anguish as she helplessly watched the tender body of her son being 'overhauled' by the very Source of its sustenance. And this wasn't all. There were many such moments of tension in store for her still. They were obviously lessons designed to promote her from the consciousness of being 'Amma' to an awareness of being 'Easwaramma'. From the delusions that she was the 'mother of Sathya' to the truth that she was the 'woman blessed to be the mother of Easwara' (Easwara is the concept of the Absolute as conditioned by name and form). She was therefore soon to be a mother showering affection on all living beings. "I do not belong to you." Sathya told her. "To whom then do I belong?" was her response. "To you belong the world and its peoples," was the answer, the lesson he was giving her.

It was on Vijayadashami, the tenth day of Dasara, that Shirdi Sai Baba had given up his mortal body. Now at Puttaparthi even as puja, bhajans, processions and the mass feeding of the poor were being organised by devotees, Swami who had announced that he was that Shirdi spirit come again to expand and continue the same task, would 'fall' at Puttaparthi to 'rise' at Shirdi and bless the devotees, during the festivities there. When Swami came back he told the gathering at the Mandir that he had been to Shirdi and had decided to grant Darshan there on every Vijayadashami day. Year after year, Easwaramma witnessed this scene that strengthened her faith in the Divine origin of her son.

But, these incidents were not limited to Vijayadashami day. Easwaramma was soon to make the discovery that Swami belonged to the world, that even as his body was there before her very eyes, he himself flees to answer someone who calls on God. There were out-of-the-body journeys at all hours of the day and night. He would often tell them the details of his errands of mercy when he returned from these distant sojourns—dacoity in a Telangana valley, floods in Rajahmundry, a car accident on the roads of Karnataka, a fire in Madras—he was here, there, everywhere, in homes, hospitals or jungles with his miraculous help.

Easwaramma listened with rapt wonder. It was only natural that her mind ran to the stories from the epics in which the villages are steeped. Didn't Krishna rush to the city of Hastinapur to save the honour of the Queen of the Pandavas when their enemies, the Kauravas, tried to disrobe her in open court? Wasn't he there again with them in the jungles where they lived in exile when the Kauravas arranged a provocative situation to expose the Pandavas to the curses of the bad-tempered Sage Durvasa? As soon as Swami came back to consciousness there would be excited questions from Easwaramma. "Did Draupadi call you to Hastinapur or to the jungle? Did you hear the elephant trumpet in despair when the crocodile gripped its leg?" (This last refers to a story from the Puranas when the Lord Narayana hurries to save the king of the elephants.) And Swami would say, "Yes, There are Draupadis now too and wicked Kauravas

the helpless and parade their power to curse. There are human crocodiles hiding in calm waters waiting to pounce on their victims. I have come to show them all that I am here to protect whoever calls on God."

Swami's words to Easwaramma were the same that once were spoken by the Lord to Joshua: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed for the Lord thy God is with thee whither-so-ever thou goest."

"Neither be thou dismayed?" But who would not be alarmed at Swami's ever increasing display of his powers? He had begun surgical operations now! He did a tonsils operation on a child who was the nephew of no less a dignitary than the Inspector General of Prisons of the Madras Presidency. He coolly invited Dr. Padmanabhan of Bangalore to send his 17-years old brother to Puttaparthi saying, "Why take the trouble to put him in the Victoria Hospital? I shall do the hernia operation and he will be up and about, perfectly fine ten minutes later." There was an operation on Thirumala Rao, another VIP from Bangalore. The surgery was done with knives, scissors, needles and swabs, all created in seconds with just a few circular movements of his right or left hand. The Vibhuti he produced was anaesthetic, antiseptic and tonic, all in one. The patients recovered in record time. And the wonder grew in Easwaramma's voice and eyes. There was greater and greater fervour each time she spoke the word 'Swami' now.

It was not wonder alone but a measure of resignation too that had come. The old puzzlement and fear were dying fast in her. She grew to accept the fact that the circumstances of her life, the who and the what, the where and the why, were unalterable and most often incomprehensible Acts of God. The stories from the epics, the great 'oral culture' of India that pervades the subconscious of its people, had long ago taught them that the truths of life are mysteries that lie beyond the mind's mere understanding. But there still did linger a thin haze of dust that hid the total Swami from her view. She could not quite rid herself of the belief that the 'evil eye' could affect this wondrous boy of hers. He would protest but she insisted on carrying out the ritual of averting it-the coconut waved around the body to draw the subtle waves or particles of evil towards it which was then broken in a symbolic act of destruction.

The Nectar of the Lord's Touch

*I went in great pain to my Lord
nursing a broken shoulder
The Doctor gave up all hope of
recovery, saying I was too old.
I am four score and fen now
They condemned me to lasting
pain and sorrow to drag on my*

*All of a sudden I heard the call of the
Flute
And word went round that the Lord had
arrived at "Brindavan"
I rushed to "Him" with a prayerful heart
in a spirit of total surrender
And stood near the closed
Mandir door awaiting His arrival
Suddenly the door opened
and the Lord came out walking softly
with the radiance of a thousand Suns.
My joy knew no bounds when
He gave me a smile
But my joy was short-lived as
He walked away without speaking a
word of comfort to me.*

*The pain from my broken shoulder
increased a hundredfold then
And many thoughts troubled my mind:
"Have I disappointed Him in any way?"
But soon He came back straight to me
after darshan to the assembled
devotees.
He held my body in a soft grip full of
love and stroked my shoulder thrice
with His Loving Hands.
I tasted the Nectar of His Divine Touch
Miracle of Miracles! The pain vanished
quickly to the wonder of the doctors
The broken bone was set right and
I cast off the sling.
Now I walk the earth with joy
chanting His Divine Name putting
the Lord of Death to shame!
I now wait for His Final call to merge at
His Lotus feet.
Glory Be to the Lord!*

G.K. Damodar Row, Brindavan.

*Develop Prema (Love) towards the Lord, the Param-Prema (Highest Love) of which He
is the embodiment. Never give room for doubts and hesitations, for questions, to test the Lord's*

not get a room for staying here? Why did He not call me?" you whine! Do not think that I do not care for you or that I do not know you. I may not talk to you, but, do not be under the impression that I have no Prema. As a matter of fact, it is to give you the chance of darshan (to see a holy person) that I move along the verandah from this room to that. Whatever I do, it is for you, not for me. For what is it that can be called mine? Only you.

—Baba

What Great Mothers Mean to the Nation

*The father, to teach the child the truth,
May chide, reprove or beat,
The mother may pinch the cheek
To make the child drink the milk
Forget not at any time
These marks of paternal Love*

*Doing good deeds, one will never reap bad results;
Wickedness will never yield good fruits
Will the neem seed produce mango fruits
Or the mango seed yield neem fruits?*

Embodiments of Love

The earth is one. But, if you sow neem seeds, you will get only bitter fruits. If you plant sweet mango seeds, you will get sweet mangoes. The earth makes no difference between them. Only the differences in the seeds account for the differences among the fruits. Likewise, the womb of a mother is like the womb of Mother Earth. The thought which prevails at the time of conception results in the kind of child that is born. If the parents desire to have virtuous, exemplary and noble children, they have to observe righteous practices and lead virtuous lives.

It was because Aryamba was a devoted and pious woman and, observed sacred practices that the great world teacher, Adi Sankaracharya was born to her. For Vivekananda to achieve worldwide renown, his mother's sacred life was responsible. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was able to preach the sacred doctrine of love to the world and achieve greatness because of his mother's good qualities.

Gandhi earned the appellation of "Mahatma" because of the sacred "Kokila vrata" observed by his mother. Gandhi's mother used to observe every day a vow ritual known as "Kokila Vrata". As soon as she completed the ritual, she would wait for the call of the Kokila (the Indian cuckoo) to have her breakfast. However, on one day, she waited for a long time, without taking food, for the call of the cuckoo. Noticing this, the young Gandhi went out of the house, imitated the cooing of the cuckoo and then told his mother, "Now that the cuckoo has made its call, please, mother, take your food." Unable to contain her grief, the mother slapped on the cheeks of Gandhi and wailed: "What sin have I committed that such a liar should be born to me! What a great sinner am I to have begotten such a wicked liar as son, Oh Lord"! She was shedding tears as she spoke. Deeply moved by his mother's words, Gandhi made a promise to her "In my life, henceforth, I will not utter falsehood."

them on the right path. Gandhi became a Mahatma because of the severe punishment meted out to him by his mother.

Gandhi's mother Putlibai, had a maid called Rambha. One day, Gandhi came running to her saying: "I am afraid, I am afraid!" Rambha was a worthy maid of Putlibai. She told the young fear stricken lad: "Don't have any fear. Whenever you feel afraid, repeat the name, 'Ram, Ram,' and your fear will leave you." That teaching was remembered by Gandhi all his life and he died with the name of Rama on his lips.

Mothers of those days led a pure and pious life, cherishing sacred thoughts, fostering virtues and setting an example to the world. Parents today get up from their beds quarrelling with each other. When the parents wake up hurling abuses at each other, the children wake up levelling blows at each other. As is the seed, so is the plant. Parents today should ponder over the sacred ideas cherished by parents in the olden days. For all the bad ways followed by youth today, for all their wayward behaviour and bad conduct, the parents are to blame. If the mothers are good, there will be no room for bad behaviour by the children. Although parents may appear innocuous like fig fruits, they are responsible for the misbehaviour of their children, like the worms inside the fruits.

However, in some cases, through the grace and intervention of the Divine, some children are rescued from going astray and are guided on the right path despite the desires of their parents. For instance, King Sudhdhodhana adopted many methods to prevent his son Siddhartha (who later became The Buddha) taking to the path of renunciation (Vairagya). But he could not prevent it. This is due to the will of the Divine. It is only when human effort and Divine will are in unison that the great consummation takes place.

Ranthideva declared, "Jeevanam Sarvabhodtheshoo" He proclaimed the truth that he who regards food as the primary thing in life is ignorant, while the wise one is he who regards the Spirit as primary. How many of those who have plenty of food taken to wrong ways? Even with abundance of food, lacking the spiritual urge, these men have become destitute. Food may sustain the body, but it will not nourish the soul.

Chaitanya, the son of Sathidevi, once went to Puri and had darshan of Lord Jagannath. He worshipped Jagannath with these words: "Oh Lord! You are not merely the Lord of the earth. You are the Lord of the Universe. You are the Lord of Life! You are the Lord of Love! Swami! I do not need wealth or vehicles. Even less do I seek devotion, wisdom or renunciation. I do not aspire for worldly pleasures or possessions. It is enough if I am endowed with the love to love you. If I have that love, all other things will come of their own accord. The only thing I seek is love towards you. Grant me this boon."

Young people do not realise that there is this Divine spirit in human beings. They consider human existence as nothing more than living like birds and beasts. This they consider as the primary purpose of life. This is wrong. They should realise that beyond the Annamaya,

supra-mental sheaths associated with. the body), there is the Anandamaya Kosa (the Sheath of Supreme Bliss). When do you attain this Bliss?

He is not a great ruler who possesses all kinds of wealth. The real great ruler (Maharaja) is one who has surrendered everything to the Divine. He is a Tyagi (renunciant), he is a yogi (one; who is in communion with the Divine). It is for this reason that in Uttar Pradesh whatever sacred shrine you visit, you will find pilgrims greeting the sadhus and ascetics as "Maharaj!" They are hailed as "Maharaj" because they have renounced everything, taken refuge in the Lord, sought to merge in the Lord and practised spiritual disciplines for this purpose.

Chaitanya declared: "My property is not 'Sri' but 'Hari' I value not Lakshmi (the Goddess of Wealth), but the Lord of Lakshmi (Vishnu)." If you aspire for the Lord, you will not suffer from any want. There is no greater wealth than love of the Lord.

*What gift is greater than the gift of food?
Is there a greater deity than one's parents?
What virtue is greater than compassion?
what is more valuable than good company?
Is there a worse enemy than anger?
Is any disease worse than debt?
Can any death be worse than infaming?
What can be greater than a Good name?
What wealth is greater then God's love? (poem).*

It is to acquire this supreme wealth that man has taken birth on earth.

There have been many mothers in the world who have sought, by their strenuous endeavours, noble thoughts and sacred practices, to bring up their children in the path of righteousness. In the city of Calcutta, there lived a mother and his son. For the education of the son, the mother made many a sacrifice. She, however, impressed on the son one lesson: "Dear son, do not be concerned about worldly education. The foolish ones acquire all kinds of scholarship, but have no understanding of what they are. By study alone, a man does not get rid of his lowly ways. Through scholarship, one learns only to engage himself in controversy but does not acquire complete wisdom. Why pursue studies which end up only in death. One should study that which frees him from death. Only spiritual knowledge can lead to immortality. It is enduring. Worldly knowledge is temporary. For earning one's livelihood, worldly education is necessary. But this education should be acquired only to lead an independent life, with limited desires. Therefore, dear son, while pursuing your studies, embark also on the spiritual quest."

Prahlada told his father that he had learnt the essence of all education, namely, to adore the name of Narayana. For the realisation of the four Purusharthas, there is no need for any education. Maitreyi told King Janaka that there was no purpose in having a human birth, only to

sacrifice. The mother taught her son in this manner the true aim of education.

The boy completed his education and took up a small job. One day, in that village, there was a folk festival ('Jatra'). The womenfolk of the village donned their best clothes and jewellery to attend the festival. The mother also went with tattered clothes. The son could not bear to see that sight. He said, "Mother, you have no good clothes or any jewellery. I am distressed to see you like this. Please let me know what ornaments you wish to have, mother!" The mother replied: "This is not the right time. I shall let you know at the proper time."

Thanks to the good behaviour and diligence of the lad, he rose to higher positions in service. Once again, he returned to his mother and asked what ornament she desired. "I shall get them as far as I can," he said. The mother told him that she wished three ornaments, but she would disclose what they were later on.

The son in the course of years reached a very high position. Once again he entreated: "Mother, I have now some money. Please let me know what jewels you would like. I shall get them for you." The mother said. "Dear son! I am now not in a state when I can wear jewels. However, there are some ornaments in which I am interested and I shall tell you what they are." Drawing the son nearer to her, she said, "In our small village, I am grieved to find that the children have to go to distant places for education. My first ornament I desire is that you should set up a primary school in the village. Secondly, our people have no facilities for medical relief even for small ailments. I spend sleepless nights thinking about their plight. If you set up a small hospital for the village folk, that will be your second ornament for me. The third ornament is something which you have to do by yourself. In the days to come, your reputation may grow. If anybody asks, 'who is your mother?' You may mention my name. Your conduct must be such that you will uphold your mother's name. You must share with others the benefits of the education you have received. Do not go after wealth. The worshipper of Mammon will not yearn for God. The seeker of God will not seek for wealth. Observance of this is the third ornament I desire from you."

The young man who heard these words from his mother and later became famous and earned the people's esteem was none other than Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar. He earned a great name in Calcutta. Once he was proceeding to a neighbouring village to deliver an address. People used to gather in large numbers to listen to his lectures. A young officer, who wanted to listen to Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar's lecture, got down from a train with a suitcase to go to the Lecture-hall. Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar also got down from the same train. The young officer was calling for a porter to carry his suitcase. Ishwara Chandra went to him and said, "Why do you need a coolie to carry this small suitcase? Can't you carry it yourself and save the money?" He replied, "It is not in keeping with my dignity to carry my suitcase. I am an educated person." Ishwara Chandra told him: "The hall-mark of education is humility, not pride. If you cannot carry your own bag, how are you carrying your body? If, however, you cannot carry your bag, I shall do so." And Ishwara Chandra carried the officer's bag. He acted on the motto: "Plain living and high thinking." Ishwara Chandra left the bag where the officer got off. The young

reward."

The young officer left and was later proceeding to the venue of the meeting. There people were offering garlands to Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar to welcome him to the meeting. The young officer realised that the man who had offered to carry his bag at the station was none other than the respected lecturer of that evening, Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar. He felt ashamed that he had made such a great man carry his bag. He reflected: "What is his education and what is mine? I have behaved like a little monkey. I am like a glow-worm before the Sun."

Ishwara Chandra's mother shed tears of joy when she realised the great fame her son had achieved. "Having begotten such a son, my life has been redeemed. It does not matter what happens to me hereafter," she said to herself.

That is why, the saying goes: "The father does not rejoice merely at the moment of a son's birth." These days, the petty-minded people celebrate the birth of a son with the distribution of sweets, etc. This is not a sign of wisdom. It is said: "The father truly rejoices when people praise his son for his great qualities." The father may feel that a son has been really born to him when he hears the praises of his son for his character and good qualities.

In this manner, from ancient times the relations between mother and children have been hallowed as a result of the purity, the virtue and the integrity of the children. The relationship was full of love, mutual esteem, intense devotion and nectarine sweetness. The children had deep love for the mother. Today the children have no respect for the mother. Mothers have also little concern for the children. With the result, the Kali age has become "Kalaha" age—the age of discord.

Who are responsible for this situation? The mothers are the root cause. It is because of the pampering of the children in all sorts of ways by the mothers that the children tend to go astray.

After the Burma war (in the Forties), a mother and her son came to Madras as refugees. This son used to go out begging for food and bring it home for both of them to eat. Seeing the pathetic condition of the young one, the mother said that from the next day she herself would go out for getting food, leaving the boy in the shed. Moreover no mother would like to see her son going out as a beggar. For this reason also she decided to go out herself. For some days she went out begging, but could manage to get only a small amount of food. She gave the food to the child and starved herself, but told him that she had already eaten. After some time the woman was too weak to go out begging. The son started going out to beg for food and kept feeding his mother. Her condition deteriorated from day to-day. She could not bear the pangs of hunger. The son went out and begged for food at an officer's residence. The officer, who was glancing through the day's newspaper, heard the boy's cry for food to appease his hunger. The Officer brought some food and gave it to the boy and asked him to eat it in his presence. The boy said he would not eat there, but take the food home. The Officer questioned him why he would not eat there when he was hungry. "You are not really hungry. You are lying", shouted the officer. The boy was too

noticed that the boy was muttering some words to himself. He went close to the boy's mouth and heard him say: "First for mother, first for mother" Saying those words, the boy passed away.

What an example is this of the love of a mother and the devotion of a son. Even though he was hungry, he wanted to give the food first to his mother. Does this kind of feeling exist even a little among students today? Of what use is education or office, wealth or authority? Children who have no love for their mothers have no reason to live at all.

We must have children who revere the mother as God. Abiding by the mother's injunctions, you may do anything.

Bharat has become a prey to numerous troubles because of the lack of exemplary mothers. What is it the mothers ask for today? Not compassion, good character, integrity and such virtues. They want their children to get educated, secure a big job, marry a wealthy girl and lead a comfortable life. Is it this kind of animal existence that one should seek? "Earn a good name. Become an ideal son. Use your wealth in righteous ways. Develop compassion. Lead a just moral life." This is what mothers should impress on their children. Such high-minded mothers have become rare these days. Integrity and morality are going down day by day in the country.

The nation needs noble mothers, who lead an exemplary life. They should manifest in their life the great culture of Bharat. Then, the culture will be transmitted to their progeny. Many great men in the past brought up such worthy children and enhanced the name and glory of Bharat. Today the children are being spoilt only by the parents. If the children are brought up on right lines from childhood, they will grow up properly. The fathers today are behaving like Dhritarashtra (the father of the wicked Kauravas). The mothers today are behaving like Kalakanti (the woman who had Chandramati's son bitten by a serpent). The fathers, instead of chastising children who take to wrong ways, pamper them and encourage them. Children who misbehave should be severely dealt with. Youth today are forgetting God, revelling in sensual pleasures and ruining their lives. They have no reverence for the mother or the Motherland.

After the war in Lanka, when Rama was entreated by Vibhishana and others to crown himself as ruler of Lanka, Rama told them that the mother and the Motherland were greater than Heaven itself and nothing on earth would tempt him to give up his love for Ayodhya. How many today are observing the great teachings of Rama regarding love of the Motherland? There are today many sons who will deprive their mothers of their earnings and spend the money for their own pleasure. Are such sons human beings? They are not human at all. Their education is a waste. Of what use are they to the nation?"

Students today should develop a healthy patriotism. They must honour their mothers. Only then they will be ideal men. Today corruption and dishonesty are more rampant in cities with universities, high courts and all other paraphernalia than in forest areas where illiterate tribal people live. There is greater cooperative spirit among the hill tribes than among the denizens of metropolises.

The spirit of sacrifice should grow among students. They should develop a broad outlook.

Once Rama told Sita, while they were staying on the Chitrakoota mountain, that as few could comprehend the subtle principle of Divinity, people should adore their parents as the visible embodiments of God.

Only when there are good mothers and good sons will the nation be free from troubles. Otherwise, the nation will break into pieces. This is the lesson of the Mahabharata (Swami related how the wicked Kauravas brought ruin upon their entire clan by their evil ways.)

What the nation needs today is not material prosperity or high education. It needs men and women of character.

The people should develop faith in God, have concern for the good name of society, cherish fear of sin and dedicate themselves to Godly activities. Then the nation will enjoy peace and security.

Every mother should be regarded as an embodiment of the divine. Then every son will enjoy peace and prosperity.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Bhajan Bina sukha santhi Nahi!*"

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindavan, on Easwaramma Day—May 6th, 1993

VALEDICTORY FUNCTION

U.G.C. Chairman Commends Sai Education

I have come here as a student, to get enlightenment. I have known and been associated with the Sri Sathya Sai educational Institutions, which are models of excellence and perfection. What the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning thinks today, the rest of India will think tomorrow. The course and curriculum here are far ahead of other Institutions," said Dr. Rami Reddy, Chairman of the University Grants Commission, delivering the Valedictory address of the 15-day-long summer course on Indian Culture and Spirituality (on June 3) in the Institute Auditorium of Brindavan Campus.

Continuing; Dr. Reddy said, "We have a large educational system in the country with 7500 colleges, 190 universities, 12.5 million students and over 2.5 lakh teachers, and some of our Universities are larger than some countries like Barbados. If uniformly high quality Standards

good recommendations made by National Committees. Lists of values have been prepared but with the accent on provision of mere information and the passing of examinations, values are lost."

Stressing the importance of values as the basis of existence of society, he stressed that attention should be paid to values like democracy and care of the environment through the realization that man's relationship with water, earth, flora and fauna is divine.

Bhagavan Baba, in his discourse said, "Today there is no sacrifice and the only sacrifice that exists is sacrifice of character! Students should give up all selfishness which is nothing but darkness. They should never indulge in politics nor go after pleasures and comforts."

Continuing Sai Baba said, "Youth is a golden age and this should not be wasted. The dharma of students is to earn self-respect through self-confidence and self-sacrifice. Then only will they achieve self-support and self-satisfaction."

The Summer School came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan.

(Full details of Bhagavan's discourse will be published separately)

AVATAR VANI

SUMMER SHOWERS IN KODAIKANAL

The Juice, the Sugar and the Sweet

Embodiments of the Divine Atma,

From ancient times, the culture of Bharat has been upholding high ideals. Foremost among its teachings was the concept of reverence for the mother and the father as embodiments of the Divine. "Matru Devo Bhava! Pitru Devo Bhava!" ("Esteem the mother as Divine, Adore the father as Divine").

Human life is indeed extremely sweet. Without this sweetness, life will be worthless. Man struggles in a myriad ways to secure sensual enjoyment, but there is a sweetness which transcends these physical pleasures. This is the precious fruit of Bharatiya culture.

Greatness of the mother

The mother sacrifices her all for rearing the child, protecting him and bringing him up well. Hence, the sweetness manifest in material love cannot be found in any other object or experience, "What greater sweetness is there in our land than a mother's love? One's honour is greater than one's life", goes the saying everyone should realise the sacredness inherent in motherhood.

When Rama went to the forest with Sita, one day he told her: "Bhoojaata! In this world there are no greater adorable deities than one's mother and father. When one has near to him a loving mother, who cares for him continually and fosters his well-being, without adoring her as Divine, how can a man contemplate on a Being that is subtle and beyond his daily experience? The Divine transcends all human understanding. How can this be recognised? People who cannot comprehend the hearts of parents who are close to them, whose love they, experience in daily life, how can they comprehend the Absolute, which the Upanishads declare is beyond the reach of speech and the mind? Hence, the injunction that the mother and the father should be adored as Divine. It was my foremost duty to carry out the will of my father."

However, if we wish to understand the Divinity that transcends the human understanding, we should seek to reach a level above the human. Till that is reached, we have to experience everything at the human level alone. Living as a human being, how can one recognise That which transcends the human capacity?

Experiencing divinity

Therefore, in the first instance, man must try to live as a human being. He has to recognise the divinity that dwells in the human form. Man has to cultivate faith in this truth and live accordingly. Leading a life of dedicated service, man must enjoy the fruit of Love (Prema). The best way to love God is to love all and serve all.

Swami was telling the students the previous day that though the Divinity that resides in all human beings is one and the same, the capacities and personalities of various individuals are different. Depending on the ripeness of their experience on the cultural practices they have pursued, on the nature of their spiritual disciplines, and on their parental background, these individuals have a wide or narrow outlook. The attitudes of individuals are determined by their day-to-day experiences. Hence, people should engage themselves in good deeds. Only through hard striving can the Divinity in man be realised, like the fire that emerges from the rubbing of two sticks and butter from the churning of butter-milk.

Adi Sankara's Advaita

Adi Sankara, at the age of five, after the performance of his Upanayana ceremony, approached his preceptor and was able within three years to master the four Vedas and the six Shastras. Through earnestness, anything can be accomplished. From his studies, Sankara realised that oneness (Ekatvam) is the essence of all knowledge. This is the doctrine of "Advaita". "Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma" "The Absolute is one alone, not two." There is no second, but there is the appearance of an enormous multiplicity. How, then, can oneness be claimed? Here is an example. You have the number one and the number nine. Of the two numbers which is the bigger? The natural answer will be: nine. But this is not so. One is really the bigger number 1+1+1+1 up to nine, make up nine. Hence, the Vedas declare: "Ekoham bahusyaam". "I am One; I willed to be many", only the one exists. But it has assumed numerous forms. Sankara declared: that the Many (Anekatvam) is subsumed by the one (This is the unity in diversity). There may

many, but the breath is the same. Nations are many, but the earth is one.

In this manner, Sankara proclaimed to the world the unity that underlies the apparent diversity. He used the analogy of the same sweet juice that is present in all sugarcane stalks.

Visishta-Advaita and Dvaita

Ramanuja asked the question: How long can the sweetness of the juice last? Not for long. If the sugarcane juice is converted into some other lasting form, it could be used for sweetening many things. The conversion should be in the form of sugar, which could then be used for making any sweet preparation. Without the sugarcane juice there can be no sugar. The sugarcane juice represents the Advaitic principle and sugar represents the Visishta-advaita principle.

Then came the declaration of Madhva: "Pishtaadi gunasampakaath". The variety of sweet preparations is the result of the bringing together of flour (Pishta) and sugar. Without some kind of flour, the sugar by itself cannot appear in different forms. Flour of the sort or another, combined with sugar, can serve to produce any number of sweets. However, it is not the flour that is the source of sweetness. It is the sugar in the sweet that is made out of the flour which accounts for the sweetness. This is the analogy employed to explain the dualistic doctrine (Dvaitam).

Sankara, as the exponent of Advaita (Non-dualism). Ramanuja as the exponent of Visishta-Advaita (Qualified Non-dualism) and Madhva, as the expounder of Dvaita (Dualism), stood out as great teachers who taught the path of spirituality to the world. However, there is a common sweetness in all the three schools of philosophy.

Sankara insisted on the recognition of the unity that underlies all diversity. "Isa, Girisha, Naresha, paresha, bilebiyabhusha namo Saambasadaasiva Sambho sankara saranam meythava charanayugam", declared Adi Sankara, in praise of Siva. In listing the different attributes of Siva, the Acharya declared that Siva is everything, by whatever name He is called. Thereby, the omnipresence of the Lord is proclaimed.

The Advaitic doctrine of Sankara propagated the view that bodies are manifold, and in these separate bodies the one Divine is present. With regard to Advaita, however, it is possible only to experience it as a "Bhava" (a conscious feeling), but not apply it as "Kriya-Advaita", to carry on one's activities in daily life. There is the divine in a tiger, a snake and a human being. You can recognise this as a concept, but on that account, you cannot go and embrace a tiger. The tiger must be treated as a tiger and a snake must be treated as a snake. The human being must be given the status that is appropriate to the human. You must have the faith that the same Divine dwells in all beings. This is indicated by the presence in all beings of three divine characteristics. Asti, Bhaati, Priyam (Existence, recognisability and Utility). This is also expressed in other terms as: "Sat-Chit-Ananda" (Being Awareness-Bliss). "Sat" refers to that which is unchanging. This is a Divine attribute. "Chit" refers to total Awareness to know the complete nature of anything. When "Sat" and "Chit" are together, there is "Ananda" (Bliss). This Bliss is

water, resulting in a syrup.

Being-Awareness-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda) is Divinity that is unchanging. Forms and names are continually changing. They are transient and momentary. The forms of a Tiger or a snake are impermanent. They have, therefore, to be dealt with as transient.

If you sustain a fall, your foot may suffer a fracture and you may have a bandage. But irrespective of the love your mother bears for you, she cannot bandage her leg to relieve you of your pain. She may feel sympathy for you, but she cannot take over your fracture by bandaging her leg. In the phenomenal world, such differences are inherent.

From Bhagavan's discourse at Kodaikanal on April 26, 1993

AVATAR VANI

SUMMER SHOWERS IN BRINDAVAN-II

Tame the Mind and Realise the Self

Embodiment of love!

To see the lamp that gives light you don't need another lamp. So also no other means of cognition is needed to realise the self-effulgent Atma or Self. The Self is changeless. The intellect (Buddhi) has no light of its own but it shines by the effulgence of the Atma. If the intellect is able to apprehend and judge everything in the world, it is due to the power of the Self. Buddhi or intellect is based on intelligence (Medha-shakti). The power of the intellect is only a reflection of Atma Chaitanya or the effulgence of the Atma.

Control mind and rise higher

The mind has two aspects, as doer and experiencer. It is the cause of the sense of attachment and possession. Human action is more evident in the wakeful state than in the dream state or deep sleep state. In the deep sleep state, the Super Intellectual Consciousness is shining and the mind, senses and intellect are dormant. Just as a red-hot iron glows more brilliantly than fire itself, though the fire is the cause thereof, the individual intellectual consciousness shines more because of the Cosmic Consciousness. When the mind is dormant in the deep sleep state, the Super-Mind becomes active. In this state, man has no desire or fear or anxiety.

Man is bound by the mind and the senses. In the pursuit of the spiritual path, first of all the mind should be brought under control. When the mind is steady, you reach the state of Super-Mind. In this state there is no room for physical or transient worldly feelings. As long as the mind is pure, no evil can enter the heart. When it is polluted with bad feelings, there is room for evil thoughts to breed.

We have to recognise the fact that human life depends on the functioning of the mind. As long as one is governed by the mind one continues to be human. Once one goes beyond the mind, one can enjoy the vastness of the limitless expanse of Cosmic Consciousness. Here is an example: Suppose you construct a spacious house with a number of bed rooms, living rooms, dining room and bath room. The spacious house appears divided into a number of small rooms. This is because of the walls put up for partitioning into rooms. If the walls are pulled down, the house will be one vast mansion. Similarly, the body is the Upadhi or wall which limits one's perception to the narrow confines of the body. Once you get rid of this body consciousness, you will experience the vast expanse of the Universal Cosmic Consciousness which is all-pervasive.

Cast off barriers:

Just as the hands, ears, eyes and legs are all limbs or organs of other individual human body (angas), the bodies of all human beings are the limbs of society. Again, society itself is a limb of mankind. And humanity is a limb of nature (Prakriti) and Prakriti is a limb of Divinity. One should understand this Anga-Angee Bhava-relationship between Divinity and human beings, in the proper perspective.

Master the senses:

Though man is endowed with Buddhi (intelligence), he is not able to master the senses. One should understand the great significance of human life, which is superior to that of all other species. Because of the body consciousness, man is forgetting his inherent divinity. You study a great deal about nature (Prakriti) and worldly things, and lead an artificial life, without realising that the heart is the seat of Divinity. If you allow bad feelings to enter the heart, it will be polluted and the Divine will have no place therein.

Pollution everywhere:

The whole world today is replete with pollution of not only the individual senses but also the five elements. The air is impure; water is polluted and everything you see or hear or touch is polluted. How can you expect to have peace in the world? Vedanta teaches that we should go beyond the mind and realise the inner vision to prevent bad feelings entering the heart and polluting the seat of God.

Refinement

Rama, when questioned by Sage Agastya why he acted like a man, asked him "Am I God?" It is because of the body-consciousness that one does not realise his divinity. The body is just an instrument. We eat to sustain the body. We need food for the protection of the body and clothes for protection from cold and heat. The body is a source of all diseases arising out of desire ("trishna"). Desire gives rise to "Raga and Dwesha" (Attachment and Hatred). There is nothing wrong in having desires for food, shelter and clothing. It is excessive desire that causes attachment and disappointment. Desire should be within limits. It should not become a hidden sickness. The desire to hoard is not there in birds and beasts, but it is rampant only among human beings. Man loses his human quality because of this greed for hoarding for selfish purposes.

How is man to be transformed? Here is an example. If there is a piece of charcoal, it cannot be made white by applying soap. You know that the charcoal came out of wood. The wood when put into fire became charcoal. When the charcoal is put back in the same fire, it burns fully and becomes glowing white. The charcoal was originally wood and when the wood was burnt, it turned into the middle form of charcoal and when it was further burnt, it reached the end form of ash, which is Vibhuti, representing the end-form of all beings. This teaches the truth that all materials in the world must be refined by fire and reach the final state of Brahman. The human body also reaches this end. But the inner reality of man is permanent. This is the significance of human life. God is "Sarvabhootha antaraatma"—the Indweller in all beings. Man passes through many bodies, but there is no change in the Atma. Human lives will continue to be generated like the waves of the ocean. But the ocean of Cosmic Consciousness remains unchanged.

God and the universe:

Suppose you make an idol of Krishna in silver. All parts of the idol are silver. When you see the form of Krishna in the idol, you are not aware of the silver. When you want to see only the silver out of which the idol is made, the form is out of your view. Similarly, when you turn your mind towards God, who is pervading the entire Universe, the mind will be wholly filled with God and you won't see the different forms of the objects in the world. If the mind is directed towards worldly objects, you fail to see the Divinity that pervades all objects. "Vishvam Vishnu Swaroopam"—The Universe is the form of God. God is the cause and the Universe is the effect. Failure to understand the cause and the effect results in delusion.

The most precious human life is devalued. A beggar calls himself an "Anatha" (one without anyone to support him), while asking for alms. This is not correct. For everyone, God is the support or "Natha". It is only God who is "Anatha", because there is no one above Him. Thyagaraja considered Rama as his saviour and protector and did not care for the wealth of the world. He considered service at Rama's feet as the greatest treasure. Kabir was a poor weaver and he used to share his food with others. When the King sent gold and provisions to him through his officials, Kabir exclaimed: "For whom has the king sent all these? They said: "the King sent these things to you as you are "Anatha" (helpless)." He replied: "I am not without support. Rama is my 'Natha' or master. You cannot say I have none to support me. It is only Rama who has none to support Him. Give these to Him." Kabir said "Anatha" means God. We should understand the correct meanings of words.

Your real identity:

Embodiments of the Divine! Have faith in Atma alone. The body, mind and intellect are all like the dresses you wear. Do you cry when you change your old clothes to new? Death is a change of dress. Because of the long association you have established with the body, you cry at the time of death. If you consider the relationship as temporary, you won't cry. You must attach yourself only to God and not to anyone or anything in the world. God is the permanent friend. After death, where does the Atma go? This is a question on many people's minds. What happens to the Atma after the body is cast off and how long does it take to be re-born. These are ridiculous questions. This can be explained by an example. If you put on the switch, the bulb

happens to the energy which is still there, though bulb is gone. Similarly, the body comes and goes but the Atma is eternal.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma, You must get rid of all narrow ideas and attitudes. All worldly things are like passing clouds. There is only one that is permanent and changeless. That is Brahmatattwa. It should be realised through the path of pure Love.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse by singing the bhajan "*Prema Mudita*".

**From Bhagavan's discourse on the evening of 20-5-1993 at the Sai Ramesh Hall,
Brindavan**

AVATAR VANI

SUMMER SHOWERS IN BRINDAVAN:

Man, the Mind and the Atma

Student and Teachers,

Man struggles hard ceaselessly night and day for the sake of bodily pleasures. One who recognises that the Atma (Spirit) is distinct from the body will not be a prey to any troubles. If, indeed, every person in the world recognises the nature and purpose of human existence, these difficulties will not arise. The Upanishads declare that if one, who is born as a human, grows up as a human in society, does not know the meaning of the term "man" (Manava), he is worse than birds and beasts.

Humanness is a marvellous thing. It is boundless. It is significant. The term "man" does not refer only to the physical body. A human being is a composite of body, mind and Atma. To perform actions with the body, to understand them through the mind, and to have the Atma as a witness to both these, these three constitute human existence (Manavatwam). Action, Awareness and Realisation—these three manifest the inner meaning of human life.

It is a sheer ignorance to equate human existence with the body alone. Students have to understand at the outset how a man should grasp the nature and aim of human existence and have to lead a meaningful life. First of all, there is the mind. Only the one with a mind can be called man. "As a man thinketh, so he becomes."

The five sheaths

Man is enveloped by five sheaths—Annamaya (Food), Pranamaya (the Life Force), Manomaya (the Mental), Vijñanamaya (the Integral Consciousness) and the Anandamaya (the Blissful). The physical body is sustained by food. Hence it is called the gross body (sthoola sarira). Next comes the subtle body (sookshma sarira) which is covered by three sheaths of

pains experienced by man. All experiences of man are based on this subtle body.

Next comes the sheath of Bliss (Anandamaya Kosa). It is the base for the entire Cosmos. The Cosmic Consciousness that is present in the bodily sheath (Annamaya Kosa) is called "body consciousness." This means that even in the gross body, consciousness (Chaitanyam) is present. The consciousness that is present in the Pranamaya Kosa (The sheath of the Life Principle) not only indicates the Life-Principle, but also proclaims the basis of the vital force.

The third is the Atmic Principle, which illumines the mind (Manomaya Kosa). The fourth is the consciousness in the Vijnanamaya Kosa. This is the basis for the entire Cosmos. It is called "Chit" the all-pervading Cosmic Consciousness.

Transcending all these is the Pure Divine Self—the Supreme Purusha. This is the source of all power. It is the embodiment of the Infinite Will. This is the power that protects the Cosmos. The ancient sages strove to explore the nature of the Anandamaya Kosa (The sheath of Bliss). They sought to discover how they can experience Bliss.

'Manava means atma'

To begin with, the meaning of the term "Manava" (Man) has to be properly understood. It means "Atma" (the Self). It is from the Atma that the five basic elements (ether, air, fire, water and the earth) have emerged. Man has brought under his control these five elements. Thereby he has become their master. Failing to comprehend the basic nature of human existence, man today has become a slave of his senses. The Vedanta has declared that one can know everything if he knows his own reality. To discover who you are, you have to rid yourself of the external vision. All the experiences based on the sense perceptions are external impressions. These are merely reflections of internal responses. To regard these as real and permanent and to ignore the Divine, which is the permanent entity, is the cause of man wasting his life. Hence, man has to utilise the mind to realise his divinity.

The mind is the cause (bestower) of man's joys and sorrows. It is also the means of man's liberation (Mukti). It is the mind which leads man to progress from the human to the Divine and forget the ephemeral world. The very name, "Nara", for man implies that he is imperishable. This is the Atmic truth of man. Man, therefore, is not the body, but the immortal Self.

Four levels of mind

The mind functions at four different levels. The first is Super Mind. The second is Higher Mind. The Third is Illuminated Mind. The fourth is Over Mind. Man can comprehend his real human nature only when he understands these four states of the mind.

Super Mind: An internal enquiry has to be made to understand this. This calls for turning the external vision inward. When this is done, it is realised that the physical body is inert. The mind is a reflecting mirror. The Buddhi (Intellect), Chitta (Will) and Ahamkara (Ego) are aspects of the mind. All these are subject to change. But they are based on something that is unchanging.

entity in man.

From this realisation, one proceeds to the awareness of a Cosmic Divine. This realisation comes out of the recognition that the Divine Consciousness experienced by the individual is also present in all other individuals. This is the Cosmic Power. The all-pervading Divine Power is one and the same. There is no second power. Bodies may be multifarious like electric bulbs. But the energy that makes them shine is one. When this truth is realised, you have the awareness of the Cosmic Divine.

It is not enough for one to realise his true Self. He cannot seek his individual salvation. He must experience the oneness that underlies the multiplicity in creation. Only when that oneness is realised can the true meaning of humanness be understood.

At present, all man's endeavours and enquiries are limited to exploring the physical, the vital and the mental. The journey ends there. Man has proceeded only up to the mind. But he has to go beyond it to the Over-Mind.

How far can the mind take you? It can take you up to the extent comprehending the physical world (Jagat). The mind is needed for understanding the variety of physical objects and phenomena in the world. But as long as he confines himself to the powers of the mind he remains as a human being. But, to rise to a higher level, he has to become "Amanaska"—one who transcends the mind. He should progress towards the Super-Mind.

The Super-Mind is related to the subtle body (Sookshma sarira). In the subtle body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, the will, the ego and the physical body are absent and only consciousness is present (Chetana-shakti). One has to proceed further to the Causal body (the Karana sarira). The Causal body contains the power which can control the body, the senses, the mind, etc.

Man's limitless powers

This means that man possesses within himself all potencies. Man's powers are limitless and astonishing. Nothing in the world is beyond his comprehension.

Man today appears as a highly knowledgeable and vastly capable being. But these capacities only proclaim his powers over the physical forces of Nature. There is, however, an unseen, unknown, unmanifested infinite power within him. This is the Cosmic Power in man. It is all-pervasive. It is in every human being. Only when one goes by the form, there is an apparent distinction between the microcosm and the macrocosm, like the difference between the air in a balloon and the air in the vast atmosphere outside. But when the balloon bursts, the small air inside becomes one with the infinite air outside.

Human bodies are like the balloon. The infinite potency within each body is regarded as infinitesimally small. But this potency is a part of the universal Cosmic power.

"Anoraneeyaam Mahathomaaheeyaam" declares the Upanishad. "Minuter than the atom and vaster than the vastest." But the power in both is the same.

However, though the thoughts of the mind, the actions of the body and the role of the Atma as Witness appear as disparate, yet they are all integrally interrelated. The differences are in form, but the bliss that is experienced is one. Hence, the Upanishads declared the truth of the One in the Many.

Humanness and divinity are same

Humanness is not separate from Divinity. Both are one. So, in the second stage, when you develop a broad vision, you experience the feeling of the oneness of the individual, of the Universe and God. This is called the Divine Universal Form. How do you cognise this? Not by perceiving the myriad diversities among objects, but by recognising their underlying unity (the recognition of the divine in each of them). This means that human beings are not to be seen as so many innumerable separate entities. The Consciousness (Chaitanyam) that is in each of them is one and the same Universal Consciousness. It is all-pervading. For example, the air that a man breathes is not exclusive to him. It is the same air that is breathed by others. The air that is all-pervading is inhaled by each according to his needs.

Judging himself by the limitations of his body, man considers himself a weak and powerless being. Once he is conscious of his Divinity, he will realise his boundless potentialities.

Cognition of inner reality

Therefore, the first requisite is for man to realise his divinity. The students have to find out who they are (their inner reality). Modern education, however, attempts to teach students everything about the world except what they are. This is sheer ignorance. Along with the stupendous progress of science, there is a corresponding growth in ignorance. Such lopsided growth of Science can only result in ignorance of the reality. As long as men are immersed in differences and discord, they are only steeped in ignorance.

Man must go beyond the (lower) mind to the Over-Mind. This is quite possible. There is nothing that is beyond human capacity if man has confidence in himself. But he is weighed down by the doubt whether he can accomplish anything great with his limited physical abilities. The body is finite, but man is not. When the limited body is placed next to the "I" (Nenu), the individual is lost in the limitations of the body, forgetting the potentialities of the Self (the "I"). All doubts in man arise from this error. Man has to realise the impermanence of the body (deha) and the immortality of the indwelling spirit (Dehi). That Spirit is the Divine.

The human body is called "Kshetra" because the indwelling Divine is "Kshetrajna" (the Knower of the Field). He is the embodiment of the Atma. Students should understand the nature of the Kshetrajna, the Divine Knower within each of them. Students should have Self-confidence. This means that they should get rid of the barrier that separates them from the Self,

enveloping the human body.

Student should realise the Cosmic power that is possessed by each individual. They should not be misled by the limitations of the form. If man did not possess great abilities, how could he have made so many wonderful discoveries.

Spiritual development needed

While man has made astonishing progress in science and technology—in the realms of nuclear energy and electronics—he has been steadily going down in the moral, social and spiritual spheres. You have economic development on one side. On the other, you have divisions of class, caste and creed, language and territory. Unrest among students is growing. It is the animal nature in man that breeds these divisions. There are in man four traits: the animal, the demonic, the human and the divine. Man is developing his intellectual abilities, but not his divine attributes.

Man has to develop faith in himself and in God—this is the secret of greatness. Students should not consider themselves weak and imbecile beings. Rely on your Conscience and not on the impermanent body or the fickle mind. Make faith your life-breath.

Atma—the source

The Atma or Conscience is the source of all your strength. The reality is manifested in you by the "SO-HAM" that is produced by every breath. This "SO-HAM" is also known as Hamsa Gayatri. Hamsa (the Swan) is credited with the capacity to separate the milk from the water with which it is mixed. Hamsa Gayatri is recited to separate the body-consciousness from the Spirit (the Atma). Gayatri signifies the mastery over the senses. Gayatri has two other names—Savitri and Saraswati. Savitri is the master of Life. Saraswati is the presiding deity for speech ("Vaak"). The Gayatri mantra, "Bhur-Bhuvah-Suvah" refer to the body (Bhur), Life (Bhuvah) and Prajna (Suvah) or Awareness. "Bhur-Bhuvah-Suvah" does not refer to three worlds outside man. All the three are in him. Hence, man is not an ordinary being. He is the embodiment of the Cosmic Divine Consciousness (Chaitanya-Swaroop).

This jewel of divinity is being bartered away by man for petty carnal pleasures. This is totally wrong. If one recognises his godliness, he will be engaged in godly actions. This transformation must be effected in human attitudes—Man should transcend the mind and reach the state of integral—"Chit". It is total comprehension of humanness. Out of that comprehension emerges Ananda (Bliss).

All the discord and violence in the world are due to differences arising from selfishness. This selfishness should go. This calls for adherence to universal truth, which is common to all humanity and valid for all time and places.

The ancient sages proclaimed two eternal verities: "Sathyam Vada: Dharmam Chara" (Speak the Truth; Adhere to Righteousness). These were regarded as two eyes for man. Today man has lost these eyes and is helpless. Man has to realise that he has emanated from the Divine Atma.

Students should develop a universal outlook and seek to serve all without regard to race or religion. That is the true purport of education. It must lend to realisation of the Self that is in everyone. Education should lead to elevation of the consciousness. Make use of Summer Course for the purification of your minds so that you may lead selfless lives. For this, there is no other path but the Spiritual.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan "*Bhajan bina sukha shanthi nahi*".

(From Bhagavan's discourse at the Institute Auditorium, Brindavan on the occasion of the inauguration of the Summer School on May 20, 1993)

FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS' VIEW OF SUMMER COURSE

SUMMER SCHOOL IN BRINDAVAN

Call of the Sublime

The Summer Course of 1993 at the Brindavan Campus (May 20th - June 3rd) was a thrilling experience for it reaffirmed the expanding call of Universal Transformation that He has undertaken. It is the Lord's mission to change man from the lowest level to the very highest reality which is His true nature. 'I am man. I am not animal' He tells us and then His words open wide the access to our divinity. The theme of the transformation runs through the experience of this Summer Course. Swami continually stressed an understanding of the central role of the mind and the purification of thoughts.

Every day, starting with 5 a.m. spiritual practices of Omkar, Suprabhatam and the Gayatri Mantra, the theme of transformation was expanded. Daily speakers gave powerful and moving examples of His miraculous workings in their lives. The teachings and life of Jesus are given by His four disciples, Mathew, Mark, Luke & John. The teachings and life of Bhagavan Baba are detailed by countless thousands in all parts of the world. This phenomenon is without parallel in man's history. A sense of that progressive change was clearly felt at this Summer Course as everyday was crowned by His Divine discourse. The Lord's words lead us back to the right road built with His eternal building blocks of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema, Ahimsa. We have only to follow Him a little way to understand that His corrections cancel the calamities of careless living. His words are loving and simple. He patiently directs, corrects, admonishes and encourages us to practice His teachings and return to the path of meaningful, successful living. His words inspire, uplift and transform. They stimulate the intellect and touch the heart.

It is into this radiant world that 18 U.S. students entered when Swami gave me permission to bring them to Summer Course of 1993. The very fact of our being present is an indication of the expansion of Sai teachings throughout the world. The boys represent a true cross section of our country both ethnically and geographically. They come together from Maine, Texas, Arizona, New York, California, Colorado, Wisconsin, Connecticut, New Jersey and Indiana. In order to develop a deeper understanding of the Lord's message, we all met several times over a period of a year and a half. The focus of these meetings was to develop a harmonious team and to prepare an original musical drama to be presented to Swami. In seeking a title for the play, I was led to a quotation from Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 4 which perfectly sums up the state of Western life:

"Sunk in the search of passing pleasures and cheap recreation, man has become deaf to the counsels of the past and the call of the sublime."

It was agreed that "The Call of the Sublime" was the appropriate title for a drama which describes the transformation in the lives of a group of U.S. college students who put His teachings into practice. The play takes place in an American college town in September 1992. One of the boys has returned from his first visit to Sathya Sai Baba in India and his ways have undergone major changes for the better. With hair cut short and a vegetarian diet and a noble urge to do service, this boy influences the lives of his college roommates. Frequently appearing on stage serving as key to the play are two allegorical characters which we are all very familiar with: Monkey Mind and Conscience. They influence the course of dramatic action just as they do in all our lives. From singing actors and musicians to martial artists and jugglers, individual talents became one unified team working together to perfect an offering of Love to the Lord. A series of original songs underscore key ideas throughout the drama. Here are some of the lyrics

HOLD ON

When dark clouds fill your skies, hiding sunshine from your eyes;
Say His name, see His Form, hold on.

When things are getting rough, and you feel enough's enough;
Say His Name, see His Form, hold on.
Hold on, Sai Ram, say His Name, see His Form, hold on.

When life seems so unfair, and no one seems to care;
Say His name, see His Form, hold on.
Hold on, Sai Ram, say His Name, see His Form, hold on.

Keep a smile and say "I can," love and serve your fellow man;
Say His Name, see His Form, hold on.
Hold on, Sai Ram, say His Name, see His Form, hold on!

Dear Lord, sweet Lord, please do speak to me.
Dear Sai, sweet Sai, please do sing to me.
Dear Lord, please stay with me. (sing the REFRAIN)

(REFRAIN) Oh! No one but You can fill up my heart with love and bliss,
Oh! No one but You can fill up my heart with love and bliss—Sathya & Baba.

Love Him, serve Him in everyone you see.
Be happy, don't worry, His love will set you free.
No matter what happens, he's always there for you.
His love will see you through. (sing the REFRAIN)

Do good, be good, see good all your days.
Follow your conscience, He guides you through the maze
Ask yourself always, "Is this what Swami wants?" —
And follow what Swami wants. (sing the REFRAIN)

The Key

The key to joyous living
Is finding God within
Begin by serving others
And seeing Him in them.

Act only after asking
"Is this what Swami wants?"
His love protects and guides you
His shrine is in your heart

Sai shrine is in your heart

Do you see His Form beside you
And take His Hand when you walk
Repeat His Name with feeling
Keep company with the good

Act only after asking
"Is this what Swami wants?"
Then fears and doubts are ended
His shrine is in your heart

Swami attended a rehearsal one week before the performance date (May 30th), that He set for us. He said the drama was "Perfect". He then gave His Divine help by expanding the orchestra with some of His students and by providing technical help in lighting, sound, costumes, props, programs and make-up. We were surrounded by students and some teachers whose expertise was to invaluable help to us. Perhaps most important was the opportunity to work together with these young men. They were all hard working, knowledgeable, smiling loving examples of the Lord's message. We are all deeply grateful to Him and to those He sent to help. They are an inspiration for all and the drama was a great success.

The team experiences intense love for Swami as well as for the need for strict discipline and order for any group or community to develop well.

We are all of us forever grateful for the transformation of the Summer Course.

He has given us the opportunity to learn.
Foolish is he who knowing, practices not
Ignorant is he who calls not on Him
Empty is he who loves not the Lord
Blissful is he whose thoughts are stayed on Him
Sublime is he who installs Him in their hearts.
How great a blessing we have shared together.

—Hal Honig, New York

Summer School

Air Chief Marshal Suri Inaugurates Summer Course

The summer course in Indian culture and spirituality for the students of the Sri. Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was inaugurated on 20th May 1993 at the Institute Auditorium at Brindavan Campus. The Auditorium was austere yet elegantly decorated for the occasion.

Bhagavan arrived at the Auditorium at 8.45 A.M. accompanied by the Chief Guest Air Chief Marshal N.C. Suri, Chief of Air Staff of the Armed Forces of India, and preceded by students chanting Vedic Hymns, while Bhajan was going on. The Registrar and Vice-Chancellor of the Institute received them at the entrance and conducted them to the dais.

The Chief Guest lighted the lamp signifying the inauguration.

the gratitude of the students and staff to Bhagavan for His gracious blessing for the conduct of the course and His divine guidance. He explained how this deemed University is unique in several respects especially in offering free education of the highest standard helping every student to develop an integrated human personality reflecting high human values and service to mankind. He also explained the purpose of this Summer Course which benefits the freshers of the Institution in giving them exposure to the fine culture and high tradition of Bharat, with spiritual background.

He extended a hearty welcome to the Chief Guest Air Chief Marshal N.C. Suri whom he described as a highly distinguished son of Bharat who had won several laurels and distinctions in serving the country and who is an ardent devotee of Bhagavan, and requested him to deliver the inaugural address.

Air Chief Marshal N.C. Suri, in his address, referred to the degeneration that has set in all over the world due to the failure of his generation to spread the message of brotherhood of man and fatherhood of god. He saw the present generation was very fortunate to enjoy the benediction and direct guidance from the Divine Avatar and he looked upon the students of this Institute and their contemporaries elsewhere to understand the purpose of human life in true perspective and retrieve the human society from the highly materialistic pursuit to which it has fallen prey. He expressed the hope that the present generation would establish a new society reflecting human values imbued with a new orientation of human excellence based on spirituality and faith in God. He commended the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning as the only hope for training the future leaders to carry the message of unity in diversity which is being stressed by Baba day in and day out and set examples for future citizens to make the world a better place to live. He described the Institute as a place of religious worship. He made mention of the three tier structure of religion composed of god, worker and karma and added that all religions teach the same truth and portray different paths to the same goal with love as the basis. He concluded his address by hoping that with the Avatar being here to guide us it is certain that the younger generation will fulfill their responsibility and act up to the trust reposed in them by Bhagavan Baba.

The Vice Chancellor then prayed to Bhagavan to bless them with the Divine Discourse and placed a request at Bhagavan's Lotus feet to enlighten them as to how in one's limited life span, man can rise up from Manava (Man) to Madhava (God).

Bhagavan then delivered His Divine Message.

(Details of the morning and evening Divine Discourses on opening day are published separately).

must keep pace with the other and help the other to drag the weight quicker. Jnana has to help the increase of Bhakti; Bhakti has to contribute to the growth of Jnana.

It is on account of this mutual help, this collaboration that the Gopis of Brindavan were able to attain Moksha; their Bhakti towards Lord Krishna endowed them with the Highest Jnana also. Now, the essence of Bhakti as well as Jnana is Santhi the highest type of Santhi, Prasanthi. Prasanthi leads one on to Prakanti, the Glory of Spiritual Effulgence, and thence to Paramjyoti, the Super-effulgence, of the Highest Revelation.

—Baba

Freedom and Fate

Few words have been used for so many things as 'freedom' has. The term is imprecise and so can have many different meanings. As preliminaries for discussing the nature of freedom and trying to decide what is true or false about the subject, we may try to make it clearer by asking (1) freedom from what? and (2) freedom for what?

Political and social freedom:

Political freedom from suppression of individuals or groups and for individual justice appropriate in each case. Nations or races seek freedom from certain external forces, whether military, economic or otherwise and for socioeconomic and political justice. Democracy is based on the freedom of the individual to vote on who should govern. That such freedoms can and do exist is a historical and social fact. But the particular extent or scope of such 'social freedoms' obviously varies with time and place.

Social freedom is also for the good of all society, being the rights a person should have so as to be able to do his duty (dharma) as a member of society. It is not a right or an open license to do whatever one wants; that is anarchy. Our 'human rights' are whatever is necessary or reasonable to enable us to serve our fellowmen and thereby also God. Whatever denies human beings the minimum of means of doing those duties is a compulsion from which they must seek freedom. Some examples are: the suppression of the right of religious belief or worship and the denial of the general opportunity of caring for others through work (and of not being an undue burden oneself).

Freedom of the will

"At first the will is your own which has to be strengthened by the thought of God until you convert it into the almighty will of God." ("My Baba and I" p. 144)

Christians hold that freedom implies the capacity to deny God and err from the right way (i.e. dharma). Some people use their freedom to act well, some to err. Moreover, Saint Augustine

free option of surrendering.

The will is what enables us to choose a course of action and decide to follow it, after having arrived at a judgement of how to act in the given circumstances. The freedom to discriminate morally (or not do so) is a human faculty which other living beings do not have, nor do they suffer as we must from the necessity of having to choose.

When Baba always asserts that we must discriminate and make efforts to do good, not bad, He is also referring to individual freedom, even though it is always bounded by limiting circumstances. If our choices between alternative actions were not willed 'voluntarily', all moral exhortation would be impossible. There could be no such thing as responsibility and no philosophy other than fatalism.

Omnipotence and fatalism

At the same time, Baba has said that no blade of grass can move without God's will and that we are all but actors in a vast play, written and directed by God, of which we do not know the whole script or the outcome. He even uses the image of 'puppets on a string' to describe our predicament. Though probably none can claim to know what Baba really means by this, it surely cannot be in support of fatalism. At the same time Baba insists that we try to play our parts well! I take this to mean that everything, including the power we have to exercise a limited 'free will', depends for its existence on God's all-sustaining Will, just as does the entire cosmic continuum of space, time and matter. I can see that we are like puppets in that nothing we do, from moving our limbs to digesting our food, from thinking to dreaming, is done without the motive power of some mysterious energy that is created somehow beyond our ken.

Does our having a measure of freedom conflict with the omnipotence of God? Can these apparently opposed views really be reconciled? If we see the connection between two viewpoints between which we are necessarily always moving, either that of the mundane ego or that of the sublime 'I', the questions of freedom and destiny become easier to understand.

The worldly 'ego'

Though we appear to have the free will to do anything we like this is the illusion of the individual ego viewpoint, Baba says. The freedom to pursue one's 'individual' instincts and inclinations, wherever they happen to be, is a miasma for no good purpose and is therefore really not freedom at all. It may seem to be freedom but it is really only bondage to one's karmically obtained inclinations (vasanas) and ones acquired desires. What one thought were 'free choices' are sooner or later seen to have consequences that work back upon the doer (both of the good or pleasurable and bad or painful sort). One's free will was thus 'used' only so as to create future limiting condition, for oneself.

From the mundane viewpoint, the conditioning of our minds by our wants and desires is itself obscured... and the more so the stronger the ego. The sense of 'me' and 'mine' hides from us

end result of many previous acts (whether before or since birth).

The Divine "I"

In contrast to the mundane self, there is 'The I'. 'I' am not my ego, but a spark of Divine Consciousness. Is not this witnessing awareness an expression of Divine energy working in and through us? Scriptures tell us that human beings are created in His own image by God, who is All-knowing and has Almighty will. Firstly, an omnipotent being is free to will that human beings have some share of this potency and to apportion some responsibility to us, whether we like it or not. Secondly, God is omnipotent. Christian divines, such as St. Thomas, held that He has endowed us with a small measure of knowledge and freedom of will in some matters, all subject to the general laws and limits within which the cosmos is regulated.

As the divine qualities latent in us are realised and become actual, the reflection of God's will within us as moral intelligence (or conscience) enables us to do what is right. Selfless and dedicated action is the cessation of egoistic 'doership'. We progress very gradually from the mundane to expand towards the divine viewpoint.

We regard the Omnipotent Divine Will as that which encompasses, sustains and orders the entire cosmos. Yet latitude is somehow allowed in the plan of creation, some divergence from the general rule, some chance in the play of events (what physicists have proved to be 'indeterminacy' in micro physical events). Otherwise it would be as if the rules for the 'game of life' that we are to play determined every tiniest movement in advance and left nothing to the players' initiative or efforts. However, if we could but know directly the inconceivable intricacy and vastness of Creation from God's eternal viewpoint and the plan that lies beyond our ken, would not even real individual freedom and chance be seen to be so minimal in effect as never to be able to upset universal order? Well, certainly not when God Himself comes as the avatar to re-establish right and save the world!

Between freedom and fate

How can we in practice meet the challenge of surrendering our will to God without thereby giving up positive action based on self-confident willpower? To counteract the passivity of fatalism, we can quote the Jewish sage Maimonides: "We ought to exert our efforts in everything as though they were absolutely free, and God will do as he sees fit." On the other hand, against an excess of active (self-willed) voluntarism, we must learn from experience how identifying with our own acts and their fruits is but ego-attachment that further binds us up in accumulating karma. Then we realise more how destiny and fate (karma) do set bounds to our ambitions.

So as to reconcile our worldly perspectives with the eternal viewpoint that we cannot yet experience as such, God may be thought to be 'behind' any action in a similar way that a President is behind the actions of the many executives of a government. He leaves some judgement, the details of the doing and some responsibility to them, yet he never loses control of the overall plan nor fails to know what his delegates are up to. Similarly, when in doubt we

us.

A President who establishes a law doesn't himself physically do all the things the law is intended to regulate. Nor does the author-director of a drama himself script all the parts in every detail. God's (latent) knowledge of every single thought and act, therefore, need not itself mean that each of these is directly pre-ordained by God's will. If they were, then God would directly be responsible for every error, unrighteous and evil act too, which seems totally absurd. That would also have absolved us from all moral responsibility.

Selfless action and liberation

When I choose an end and a means to reach it, some of my freedom is then expended to that end and I am bound to suffer all the consequences. However, Baba assures us that there is one great exception to the entangling web of karmic action and reaction. It is being able fully to surrender the act and its fruits to God (nishkarma karma). To the extent that my aim is to become a mere instrument of God's will, I sacrifice my selfish choices (desires) and do whatever duty arises for me.

We might say that a great devotee 'invests' her or his freedom by doing nothing from selfish interest and thus becomes 'duty bound'. Is not the same also seen in Swami sacrificing Himself by always using His freedom for the good of all of us, for dharma? Scriptures assert that God uses his Omnipotence for ensuring the good of all mankind, just as Baba has said that the devotion of exceptionally great devotees binds Him (for example, to ensure their liberation).

The highest ultimate freedom we can think of is for liberation from the karmic cycle of birth-death (Mukti or Nirvana), yet no mortal soul can presume to know its full meaning. Those who surrender totally to Divine will presumably have no desire to exercise individual freedom or act separately from the Universal Will. It is self-evident that Liberation cannot be an absence of freedom! Do not the Liberated use their will freely in unity with God and as God? Full equanimity and thus detachment from all sense of good and bad, pleasure or pain, is what Baba tells us is freedom. The best we can do is quote what the illumined tell us, such as:-

"... Swechha means the free will of the Atma. Swechha in ordinary usage means freedom or liberty. We should not take it in the-ordinary sense. Swechha means the will of the Atma. If we take it in the true sense and follow it up, we will be much benefitted by our action." (Summer Showers in Brindavan. 1972. p. 141)

Elation at profit, joy and cheer; dejection at loss and misery, these are the natural characteristics common to all mortals. What, then, is the excellence of the Sadhaka? He should not forget the principle: "Be vigilant and suffer the inevitable, gladly." When difficulties and losses overwhelm you do not loose heart and precipitate some action; but meditate calmly on how they ever came to be. Try to discover simple means of overcoming them or avoiding them in an atmosphere of Santhi.

Work, Worship and Wisdom

You tell me that you have read the Bhagavata Vahini and all the other Vahinis that I have written for you. Good! But let me ask you, have you put even a single direction given in them into daily practice? Question yourself calmly and decide to benefit by practising the process mentioned in them. This is the proper plan of study: Reading, Reflection and Regular Application in life. Study is Work. Inquiry into the value and applicability of what is studied is Worship. The experience of the validity and value of the practice is Wisdom.

—Baba

Modern Science and Ancient Philosophy

In ancient times, there was no dichotomy between spiritual and natural philosophies. The parting of company is a more recent phenomenon. Indeed, science has drifted so far apart from philosophy that one often thinks of it (mistakenly) as anti-God. On the contrary, our scriptures solemnly affirm that secular sciences, as much as the Vedas and the Shastras all together, describe the Lord and His creations.

In the late twenties, there was a major breakthrough in physics. While clearing up the mystery of the atom, this breakthrough, i.e., the discovery of quantum mechanics also shook the commonly accepted concept of physical reality. For centuries it was believed that physical reality was independent of observation, e.g., the sun and the moon exist whether we observe them or not. Einstein strongly believed in such a reality. Quantum mechanics, on the other hand, implies that reality is created by the act of observation. Quantum mechanics has been so successful that one is forced to come to terms with this rather strange concept.

There has been much debate as to what exactly is meant by observation. Nobelist Eugene Wigner has remarked that observation may be considered complete when information is registered in one's consciousness. Although scientists dislike talking about concepts like consciousness which they cannot quantify, nevertheless, they are compelled to come to the belief that thoughts, emotions, consciousness, etc., can be explained purely on the basis of matter. However, perceptive scientists freely concede that there are many things that lie far beyond science. Some, like Schroedinger, one of the founding fathers of quantum mechanics, have pointed out that comprehensive understanding is possible only through Vedanta.

Bhagavan Baba has often reminded us that there are actually three states of consciousness. Firstly, there is the consciousness that makes us aware of the external world. This is associated with the waking state and helps us to perceive what physicists call physical reality and what Vedantins refer to as empirical reality. Next, there is the sub-consciousness associated with the dream state; what appears real to us in dreams is actually an illusion. Then, there is the deep-sleep state. Although the body might be blissfully unaware of anything during deep-sleep, the super-consciousness within us experiences the perfect calm associated with deep sleep. The reality perceived in this state is the Absolute Reality.

Our sages and seers realised that Absolute Reality is the most important of all the three types of realities, and further that the quest for it must be by Self-enquiry or Atma-Vichar. Seen in this light, science deals with just one aspect of the various realities that encompass human experience. Thus modern science is merely a subset of Vedanta, a compartment that deals purely with the external world.

The question then arises as to why our ancients did not write down all the laws of science being discovered today. Judging by the comments made in several places, it would seem that the

am I? Thus, although they knew how the Divine Master used the energy of pure Consciousness to create the material Universe, they did not bother to write it all down, apart from leaving a few hints.

Today, Science has placed man at the edge of the Universe making him wonder: "Where did it all come from?" The answer cannot come by continuing to look outwards but by turning the gaze inwards, for, the answer to the mystery of creation lies in the answer to the other question: "Who am I?" And the answer to the latter can come only from Vedanta and by following the injunctions laid down therein rather than merely from still more science.

G. Venkataraman

(From the address to the Summer school at Brindavan in May 1993)

Service without idea of self is the very first step in the spiritual progress of man

—Baba

Love... Love... Love First... Love, as long as life lasts. For myself, I can say I shower more blessing on those who decry or defame me than on those who worship and adore me! For, those who spread falsehoods about me derive joy there from; I am happy that I am the cause for their exultation and joy. You too must accept this line of argument and be very happy when someone derives joy by defaming you. Do not respond by defaming that person; then the chain of hatred will bind both down. Life will become a tragedy. Conquer anger by means of fortitude; conquer hatred by love. Do not feed anger with retaliation; do not feed hatred with fury. Meet hatred with your innate Prema; meet grief with innate joy; meet anger with shield of Santhi, Inner Peace. You are bound to win.

—Baba

AVATAR VANI

SUMMER SCHOOL IN BRINDAVAN:

Man, Mind and the Cosmos

Embodiments of Divine Love!

The gross body is formed by the combination of the five basic Elements (Pancha Mahabhutas) and the operation of Karma (Past deeds). This body is the cause of both pleasure and pain.

*Only he is truly a man
Who knows that by which*

*And without knowing which
All else is not worth knowing,]
He is the knower of the Supreme Truth
(Poem)*

In human life, what every one should try to understand is the truth relating to the Gross, the Subtle, the Causal and the Super causal Bodies (Sthoola, Sukshma, Kaarana and Mahakaarana). Only then man can understand the phenomena in the world. He will then comprehend the nature of man, of the world and the relationship between God and man.

The physical body is inert. It is formed by the aggregation of physical constituents. The body is composed of elements like iron, water; phosphorus, calcium, lead, etc. Hence, the gross body is described as inert matter. The subtle body (sukshma sarira) is "Mayaswaroopa" (illusory form). In the dream state, the mind not only creates itself but also experiences pleasure and pains, worries and fears. In the subtle body, these illusory creations of the mind are experienced. These experiences are felt to be real only at the moment. "Maya" is that mental state in which what does not exist appears to exist and what exists is not perceived as real. All the experiences in the dream state are seen in the waking state as unreal. "The mansions witnessed in dreams vanish when the eyes open".

What is real and true must be that which exists in the waking, the dream and the deep sleep (sushupti) states. Truth is that which is true and unchanging at all times—past, present and the future. Hence the subtle body is associated with "Maya".

Then there is the Causal body (Kaarana sarira). It is only an image or reflection. It is the image of the Super-Causal body. (Mahakaarana). The Mahakaarana represents the Supreme Principle. It is as a reflection of the Supreme (Paratattwa) that the causal, subtle and gross bodies function. It follows from this that all these aspects are contained in the human being. The mind, the Super Mind, the Higher Mind, and the Illuminated Mind are all present in these (bodies).

States of consciousness

In the waking state, the mind functions in response to the sensory organs by seeing, listening, talking, etc. The mind is bound by the limitation of time and space.

In the dream state the mind creates its own world. It is related to time alone. For example, you get into the train tonight, and reach Bombay the day after tomorrow. In this you see the mind at work in respect of four things: the reason (for travel), the actual journey, the arrival at the destination and completion, of your duty. How did you go? You went by train. How long did the journey take? Thirty-six hours. What was your destination? Bombay. What was the reason for your journey? Some job to be done in an office. Time, action, and result—all these are involved in the operations of the mind. At night you had a dream. In the dream, you reached Bombay and saw various things there. You were pleased. But in this dream, none of the four things, experienced in the waking state were present neither time, nor movement, nor objective, nor any

and what was the outcome? None of these things happened. All that took place in the dream was over in five minutes. This is the mystery and the marvel of what happens in the realm of the mind. All that happens in the dream state, the experiences and events, occurs in fleeting moments. What is experienced in a life of forty years is covered in two minutes in the dream state. In those forty years, you have completed your education, got married, had a son, educated him and sent him abroad. The entire panorama of these events appear in your dream in a few minutes. But what you experience in a dream vanishes in a moment in the waking state. What is active in the dream state is the Super-Mind. It is more powerful than the ordinary mind, because it encompasses in a brief moment all that happens in space and time over long distances and periods.

The higher mind

Next, you have the Higher Mind. This functions in the deep sleep state (Sushupti). In this state, there is no thought or worry. The mind is absent. The senses are not functioning. There are no experiences of any kind. But on waking from deep sleep, the individual experiences a feeling of delight (Ananda). He declares that he felt extremely happy in sound sleep. This state confers a sense of bliss without any experience. This bliss is beyond the mind and the senses. In the deep sleep state, there is life, but no mind. Only bliss remains. In deep sleep, there is no pleasure or pain, because there is no consciousness of the phenomenal world. You are conscious of the world and experience pleasure and pain only when the mind is active. Because in the deep sleep state the ordinary mind is not present, the consciousness in that state is attributed to the Higher Mind. This is associated with the Causal Body (Kaarana-sarira). Here you have the cause. But there is the Doer, there is action and there is a reason for action. The relationship between cause and effect accounts for all the happenings in 'the world. The Divine is the cause and the Cosmos is the effect.

The illuminated mind

Who is this cause? It is the Divine, who is the prime cause (Mahakaarana)? This Divine Causal Principle underlies all that happens in the universe. This Principle is termed the Illuminated Mind. This is the Power that illumines everything in the world.

To experience this cosmic principle, we need a divine form. That is the Super Divine Self. It is called Purushatwa. This is a primary attribute of the Divine.

Above the mind, the Super-mind, the Higher Mind and the Illuminated Mind is the Over-Mind. "Purushatwa" is the over-Mind. It is Divinity.

It is from this `Purushatwa' that the sense of `I-ness' emanates. This `I-ness' is present in all beings, from the highest to the lowest. It is the index of the cosmic consciousness (Purushatwa). Why is man called `Purusha'? The human body is called "Puram" (a city), as he dwells in the body he is called "Purusha". All bodies are the same, irrespective of differences in sex. The three states of consciousness are common to all. The effects of qualities (Satwa, Rajas, Tamas) are the same for all. In sorrow, one grieves, whether man or woman. Hunger and anger have the same effects on both men and woman. The intensity of the experience may vary from person to person.

may make a show of it. Such differences are relative to the individuals concerned. But the experiencing body is a common factor.

God and the cosmos

In every body, the Mahapurusha Principle (the Supreme Divinity) is present. The entire cosmos is a reflection of the gross, subtle and causal bodies. The primal Doer (kaaraka) is the Supreme Lord. The cosmos is the effect (creation). This relationship can be recognised in the daily life of every individual. There are the five basic elements (Panchabhutas), the five sheaths (kosas), the five sense organs (Panchindriyas), the five vital airs (Panchapranas), the mind, the intellect (Buddhi) the will (chitta) and the Ego (Ahankara). All these together make up twenty-four principles. The Supreme who pervades all these twenty-four entities is the Mahapurusha, the Supreme Person, the twenty-fifth Principle. Thus, the human body is made up of these twenty-five constituents. Similarly, the entire universe is made up of these twenty-five constituents. There is no difference between the body (deha) of the individual and the phenomenal world (desha). But, when one looks at the external world with the physical vision, numerous differences appear. All these differences are the handiwork of the delusive power of Maya. Not recognising the mystery relating to this delusive power, man falls a prey to many difficulties.

The power of maya

"Maya" envelops man in its multifarious coils. The cosmos is made up of the twenty-five constituents. All is subject to delusion. In the waking state, you see, you hear and you experience many things. In sleep, you are steeped in a dream. In that state, what happens to your experiences in the waking state? Everything is forgotten. You consider the experiences in the dream state as real. This lasts only till you wake up. Then you dismiss the dreams as of no account. What is the truth? The experiences of the waking state or the experiences in dreams? The former is a day-dream the latter is a night-dream. Both are dreams.

Janaka's poser

Once, the Emperor Janaka, a great Jnani and Yogi, devoid of body-consciousness, was having a colloquy with his ministers after dinner at night. He fell into deep sleep. Sometime later, he got up and started putting the questions: "Is that true or is this true?" (that is, whether what he experienced in the dream was true or whether his experience in the waking state was true).

Nobody could give the answer. Seeing the agitated state of mind of the Emperor, the ministers tried to find an answer, but no one came forward to solve the riddle posed by the Emperor. "Is that true or is this true"? At last, the sage Vasishtha was called and he, after yogic meditation, gave the reply to the emperor's question. "Your Majesty! Neither that is true nor is this true. You are the only reality. You experienced certain things in your dream and some in the waking state. In the waking state, there was no dream. In the dream, there was no waking state. But you were present both in the dream and the waking states. Therefore, you are the truth. You were the experiencer in both the states!"

the Self exists in the past, the present and the future. Humanness is thus associated with Divinity and is no ordinary existence. All the sacred pronouncements in the Vedas and the Upanishads apply to man.

The Divine is described as possessing eight forms of wealth. In fact, man is endowed with all these eight forms of wealth ('Ashtaishwarya'). "Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathanam, Niketanam, Nitya-Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swaroopinam". (Beyond qualities, untainted, eternal, ever-abiding, ever pure, intelligent, liberated and immaculate). Out of a sense of weakness, man assumes that these attributes relate only to the Divine and not to him. This feeling should be totally eschewed.

An individual, through considerable effort, acquires many kinds of knowledge. Wherefrom has this knowledge come? How did he acquire it? At the time of birth he was totally ignorant. But by diligent endeavour ('shraddha') anything could be acquired.

Man and society

Man today is preoccupied only with the concerns relating to himself and his family. Immersed in selfishness, he does not think of the society beyond his family. But what would happen to him and his family if society was not there?

All man's desires are centered on his own welfare, even when he appears to desire the welfare of the world. But, in fact his welfare is bound up with the well-being of the world. Hence, one should proceed from the 'I', to the family, to the society and to the world at large.

All the world's problems today arise out of the obsession with selfish interests and lack of concern for the well being of society. If every individual strives for the welfare of society, all these problems will cease to exist. Millennia ago, the Vedas declared: 'Let all the people of the world be happy' ('Lokasamasthaas-sukhino Bhavanthu!')

When men get rid of the narrow egoistic feelings born out of ignorance, they will experience the Divine, as declared by the Vedic seers. The Vedas summoned human beings to strive together in unity for achieving the highest goals of life. The essence of the Vedas is summed up in one phrase, the sense of the spiritual unity of all human beings ('Ekatmabhava'). This is the realisation of the Divine. This is true Non-dualism (Advaita).

Unity in spirit

Declarations like 'Aham Brahmasmi' and 'Tat-twam-Asi' are cited as pronouncements proclaiming non-dualism. But this is not correct. These statements themselves refer to two entities- Aham and Brahma. Tat and Twam ('I' and the Absolute, That and You). The recognition that the one and same Atma dwells in all beings is true Advaita. The bulbs maybe of different sizes, colours and wattage, but they are illumined by the same electrical energy.

propagated in the right manner that we have today so many divisions, giving rise to conflicts. Differences between people professing different faiths are not due to differences in the teachings of the different religions but in the mental attitudes of those belonging to these faiths. "All religions teach the same good ideals. Understanding them, men should learn to live in harmony." (Poem) Those who preach hatred on the basis of religion are verily men with perverted minds. The broad vision of Bharatiya culture, the infinite sacredness of Bharat, the unfathomable faith in unity- all these proclaimed the glory of the Divine and upheld the fundamental oneness of humanity. Today, because unity has been lost, humanness has reached its nadir. Morality and integrity have disappeared. This is the progress humanity has made!

This is not progress. What we should seek is spiritual progress, progress in righteousness and morality. People today talk about saving the world and safeguarding their nation. There is no need to protect the world or the nation. If you safeguard Truth (Sathya) and Righteousness, the nation and the world will be automatically protected. This is the profound message of the ancients: Speak the Truth; follow Dharma (Righteousness).

The Divine is the basis of everything in the cosmos. The integral relationship between the Divine and the Universe should be properly understood.

Adoration of truth

Through many lives people have tended to identify themselves with their bodies and pursue wrongful practices. The Omnipresence of the Divine from a piece of stone to a mighty emperor should be recognised. Man should be grateful for the innumerable benefits provided by the Divine. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was an illiterate person. But he achieved worldwide fame by his pursuit of Truth and his realisation of the Divine. Self-Realisation is the goal for every human being. This is the message of the Bhagavata.

Today almost every person is wedded to untruth. Once a year they perform 'Sathyanarayana Puja'. But every moment should be employed in the worship of 'Sathyanarayana' (the Lord of Truth). This calls for unity in thought, word and deed, which is the form of Truth.

Men think that to reach the spiritual height is an arduous adventure. Swami assures you that this is not so. The spiritual journey is much easier than the worldly struggle in which men are engaged. Men should aim at reaching the Supreme state instead of carrying on their wrangles upto the Supreme Court. Man has all the divine potencies for realising the Divine Self. His consciousness can comprehend the cosmos, even as a mirror can reflect the firmament. The heart is a mirror in which one can see the entire universe. Realise from this moment that man is the embodiment of the Divine. Transcend the feeling of smallness. As you think, so you become. Therefore, divinise yourselves by constant reminder of your inherent divinity.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap with the bhajan, '*Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma*')

Jealous—the Root Cause of Evil

"The Demonic qualities produced by Asuya (Jealousy) results in the destruction of the discriminating power and lead men to pursue evil ways" observed Bhagavan Baba, in the course of an inspiring and reassuring discourse to a vast gathering of devotees from all parts of the world, who had assembled in the Poornachandra Auditorium on Gurupoornima Day.

Bhagavan referred to the incidents which had happened in the Prasanthi Mandir on the night of June 6th and said that the root cause of the untoward incidents was Jealousy. Bhagavan, however, assured the devotees that His life was in His own hands and that nobody could diminish or tarnish His name.

In the course of His discourse, Bhagavan said:

The main purpose of human life is to realise one's true identity. It is only when you recognise the sacredness of human life that you can realise the Divine. It is sheer ignorance to consider man as made up of merely the body, mind and sense, which are only instruments (upadhis). To identify yourself with the body is as absurd as to consider yourself as the house in which you dwell or the car in which you travel. It is essential to realise the truth of your divine identity through the instruments of the body, mind and intellect. The Inner Self of Divinity is referred to by several synonyms such as Drishta (Seer), Chit (Awareness), Chaitanya (Consciousness), Sat-chit-ananda (Existence, knowledge and Bliss) and so on. It is Paripoornam (complete or whole) and Sthiram (Permanent). You may enquire whether the Inner Self is the subtle, causal or super-causal body, whether it is Bhakti (devotion) or Jnana (wisdom), whether it is inert or awareness, whether it is Hiranyagarbha (cosmic womb) or Vishwam (cosmos), whether it is Pinda (microcosm) or Brahmanda (macrocosm), whether it is the beginning, the middle or the end. The answer is in the negative. All these are related to duality, while the true self is non-dual. (Ekameva Advitheeyam), There is only one and no second at all.

However, when you perceive the principles of Pramada, Prameya and Pramana, you can understand this Supreme Principle. Pramada is reflected in the individual intellect. Prameya is that which is reflected in Prakriti (Nature). Pramana is the nature of Chitta (The mind principle). These constitute the triple aspects of seer, seen and the act of seeing.

The inner self

The question is how to realise the sacred Inner Self. Even in worldly things, Divinity is present. We see endless waves emanating from the vast ocean. Though the ocean is one, the waves are innumerable and apparently not of the same form. But all the waves contain the

infinite forms of beings in the world, each of them contains the essence of Divinity within. The same Divinity is everywhere. This Divinity existed in the past, is in the present and will continue to be there in the future. It is, therefore, beyond the three categories of time and is eternal.

Every human being is a combination of Brahmatattwa and Jivatattwa (Over Self and individual Self). The waves in the ocean are caused by the wind blowing over it. Similarly, Maya (delusion) causes the diversity of names and forms in the world. The original basic entity, Sat-chit-ananda, is the only one that exists and all the variety of beings in the world are all like the waves of the ocean. This Sat-chit-ananda is termed as Asti, Bhaati and Priyam, which are changeless, while name and form will always be changing. This phenomenal world is called Jagat, which implies it is "coming" and "going". The only one that is ever-present is the collective form of Divinity. Human life emerged from the Divine, is sustained by the Divine and merges in the Divine.

Birth and death to man

Though the body is transient, it is given only to do righteous deeds (dharma) and reach the goal. "Sareeram Aadyam khalu Dharma-Sadhanam". The body is essential for realising Dharma. Birth and death go together. Death follows birth like a shadow. One cannot say when, where and how death will occur. It may be in childhood, youth or old age, in a house or outside, in a town, or in a forest, on the ground, in water, or in the sky. One should realise that death is a natural phenomenon and avoid worrying about it.

Since you are provided with the faculty of discrimination, you should use it in the right way and not with selfish motives. When you use it for collective benefit, with social awareness, it is very beneficial. It is because man is using his intellect for selfish purposes, he is not happy. If it is used for the common benefit of all, one can enjoy real happiness.

Sujnana, vijnana and prajnana

Ravana was a most powerful king, fully accomplished in all the arts, with mastery of the Vedas. He had performed a severe penance. But, because he used all his talents for his selfish purposes, he met with an ignominious death. He was warned by his wife Mandodari, who was a paragon of virtue, standing for Sujnana (good worldly knowledge), that he was not following the righteous path as he had stealthily kidnapped Sita, wife of Rama. She questioned him whether he would keep quiet if his wife had been kidnapped. She thus taught Sujnana (worldly wisdom). But Ravana ignored her advice. His brother, Vibhishana, tried to teach him Vijnana (Discriminatory wisdom) by telling him that he was not using his Buddhi (intellect) in the right way and was doing a reprehensible act which was unbecoming of an emperor like him. Ravana ignored this too. Later, Hanuman advised him in terms of Prajnana (Supreme Wisdom). He told Ravana that in spite of his vast scholarship and knowledge of Adhyatma Vidya, he had failed to recognise the Atma as the reality of an individual and with body consciousness he was indulging in a despicable act, losing control over his senses and mind. He had brought Sita, the Mother of the Universe, with a base motive.

Ravana paid no heed to the three types of advice and as a result courted disaster. The life of one who acts out of selfish motives is in the hands of others, while the one with a pure heart and selfless motive, seeking the welfare of the world, has his life in his own hands. Rama was an example of this.

A really virtuous human being will see divinity in himself and also in others. Human life is nothing but a reflection of Divinity. It is ignorance to consider God as living elsewhere in a remote place. When you are yourself the embodiment of Divinity, of what avail is it to seek the Divine elsewhere? You are the Supreme Brahman. Forgetting the truth of man's inherent Divinity, worrying themselves about what is happening somewhere, people lose their moorings. These worries are not natural, but acquired from outside. All have to realise that death is the end of everyone who is born. Birth is what is important. When the meaning of birth is realised, one transcends birth and death (Janmarahityam). Therefore, in human life, one should understand this profound truth and seek to realise the Divine (Paratattwa). That is the main task of the aspirant.

Jealousy the cardinal evil

However, many kinds of aberrations are appearing in human life. The root of all the evils arising in the world can be traced to the operations of "One hand". When something untoward happens, people try to attribute it to some foreign "hand" or to the hand of some religious sect. These are meaningless speculations or wild conjectures. They are exercises in untruth.

There is a "hand", indeed. But what is that hand? It is the hand of jealousy (Asuya) (Cheers). This is a dire malady which has entered all spheres of life in the world today. There is a remedy even for the dreaded disease of cancer. But there is no way of curing the malaise of Jealousy. The final end is the only cure for it.

The June incidents

Today the malady of jealousy has invaded every field of activity. As a result, such gruesome events occur from time to time. There are three off springs for Jealousy (Asuya). They are Dwesha (hatred), Krodha (Anger) and Lobha (Greed). There are three children begotten by Anasuya (The one who is totally free from Jealousy). They are: Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, symbolising Forbearance (Sahana), prema (Love) and Sahanubhoothi (compassion). This is the difference between Asuya and Anasuya. The former gives birth to demonic qualities. The latter begets Divine qualities. The demonic qualities produced by Asuya (Jealousy) result in the destruction of the discriminating power and lead men to have no sense of what is temporary and what is permanent. Consequently they pursue evil ways.

We often ask what is the reason for a particular action or event. There is no need to search for reasons. Just as hunger arises out of digestion, jealousy arises out of the disappearance of noble motives. The jealous man cannot bear the sight of a noble person or of one who is handsome and attractive. He cannot bear to look at one who is getting a good name or who has secured an eminent position. This jealousy has "no reason or season". Those afflicted with this malady begin to entertain many evil thoughts.

Envious propaganda

In the world today, Sai's name and achievements are getting known the world over. To counteract this and to diminish it by some means or other, envious persons are resorting to certain types of propaganda. These propaganda campaigns will not affect my reputation in any manner. My purity is the root cause of the glory of my name. (Applause) It is not due to any publicity or propaganda. My all-pervading selfless love is the cause. No one can affect this pure love. I have no ill-will towards anybody. Swami has done no harm to anyone. How can anyone harm Swami? It is impossible (Applause).

"Do not be perturbed"

These happenings should be attributed to jealousy. Devotees should not be perturbed by such events. Those who have true and firm faith will not be shaken in any way by these happenings. You have listened to the speeches of Goldstein, Sinclair and Haksar. What has impelled them to make these declarations? It is their firm faith. Although they are living in far off places, they are sustained by their firm faith. For those consumed by envy, only the false is apparent. They cannot have even a glimpse of truth.

So, whatever may happen, this "Sathya" will remain unmoved. Adhere, therefore, to truth. Observe purity in life, embark on a life of selfless service. Believe it or not, there is not a trace of selfishness in me. No one is qualified to point a finger at my purity. How can anyone recognise the grandeur of my divine purity? Only an intelligent person can recognise another's intelligence. How can a fool recognise intelligence?

My goodness is the cause of my invulnerable purity. It is not that I want to glorify Myself. It is because the time has come when I have to speak out.

All activities of Sai are utterly selfless and aimed at the well-being of the whole world. You are aware that we built the Super Speciality Hospital. In this Hospital, we have given a fresh lease of life to many mothers and fathers and many children were enabled to enjoy the love of their parents. Who could do this? What great good fortune it is that this small, obscure village has found a notable place on the world map? This is a source of jealousy.

False propaganda

Nobody can fully comprehend the significance of Sathya Sai's actions, whether small or big. Human beings cannot accomplish such things. (Applause) Only those who do not choose to come here, see and find out the truth about what is being done here, and derive joy from that experience, are preaching all kinds of things to the world, sitting in their airconditioned rooms. Are these persons qualified to preach to the world? People whose minds are polluted should be ashamed to claim that they are striving for the welfare of the world. Let them enter the social arena, do good deeds and engage themselves in selfless activities. Only then can the truth be understood.

Truth is the life of the spoken word. A word without truth is lifeless.

All the propaganda that is being done is false. It is a form of cheap publicity. Do not be affected in any way by such publicity. Adhere to your truth and your purity.

Sanctity of Sai Trust

There are some other matters on which I have to speak because of the large gathering here and what you may have read in the media. Fire cannot burn our Sathya Sai Central Trust. It is such a sacred trust. We alone know with what sacred concern we are spending every naya paisa. The world cannot know this. For the past twenty years, the members of the Central Trust have been rendering selfless service. When they have to go to Madras, Delhi or other places, they travel at their own expense, pay their hotel bills and do not draw a single paisa from the Central Trust. In the case of other trusts, the members submit their bills even for their conveyance charges. The Sathya Sai Central Trust members are using the funds in such an utterly sacred manner. Reports have been published that the trust members are after power and position. They are not interested in office. They have not lacked positions in life. They have come out of love for Swami, and not for any position (Applause).

You must also note how the funds of the trust are drawn from banks. During the past 20 years not once have we drawn any cash from the bank. All payments are made only by cheques. Our Institute teachers are paid their salaries not by cheques but by the amounts being credited to their accounts from month to month. The accounts are being maintained in this strict manner. It is because the funds are handled in this pure manner that we have not sought or have had any need to solicit donations.

This body (of Swami) is now 67 years old. Not once have I stretched my hand to seek any donation (Applause). What is the reason? When we are engaged in sacred tasks, there is no need to seek funds. Our purity will bring in funds of its own accord. There is a dearth of men of integrity. Where there are such persons there is no problem at all in securing funds.

I do not mispend even a single naya paisa of trust money. Nor is there any room in our trust for anyone else to draw money. Every cheque has to be signed by two persons. On every cheque, nobody can sign without My signature on it.

Trust funds well spent

There are reports that some crores of trust funds in cash have been swallowed by some persons. This is totally false. We do not handle cash at all. If anybody offers cash, we see to it that the money is given to the bank manager in the presence of a trust official in the residence of the donor himself. Therefore, no one can point an accusing finger at the way our trusts are managed. In these circumstances, it is a sin to level such charges against our Central Trust.

That is why our institutions are growing ceaselessly. Not now alone, but as long as the sun and moon last, there is no danger to our institutions (Applause).

This propaganda stems from the frustration born of jealousy. In the peaceful atmosphere that was pervading here, such propaganda has caused perturbation. This is highly sinful. It is not good to indulge in such acts. Do good if you can, but if not, remain silent. You will be rendering help if you don't do any harm. But it is not good to do harm.

Some may ask why Swami had so far refrained from answering the traducers. For everything there is a right moment. The Kauravas, for instance, were harassing the Pandavas in many ways, insulting and humiliating them. The Kauravas were well aware of the Pandavas' divine potencies. Each of the Pandava brothers was a man of great prowess. But they did not make use of their strength. They bore their troubles in silence. The Kauravas attribute this silence to cowardice and weakness. But this was not so. No one can realise the strength that underlies forbearance. Likewise, the Sathya Sai Trust chose to maintain forbearance. This forbearance represents courage, strength, truth and non-violence.

And, now, about our students; you may compare them with anybody, you cannot find anyone like them anywhere (Applause). It is now 28 days since the events (of June 6th) happened. Our students have been offering prayers everyday, observing fasts, and thinking day and night, without food or drink, as to how they can remove the stain that has been caused by this episode. They are in anguish and distress.

Are there not likely to be a few stones in a bag of rice? In a big group there may be a few black sheep. On account of a few miscreants, it is an outrage to blacken the entire body of students. Our students are like pure refined gold (Applause). They are prepared to do anything for Swami's sake.

You have all listened to the song sung by a young lad (at the beginning of the function). He sang; "We are ready to offer our lives to you (Bhagavan)". It is not proper to blame all for the crimes of a few. We have to put up with this situation for some time. Have patience. When you go to sleep at night, one or two mosquitoes may bite you. The next day you use Flit to get rid of all mosquitoes.

It is because of the association of other mosquitoes with the troublesome one that they also get killed. Hence the advice: "Thyaja durjana Samsargam" (Give up association with wicked persons.) Never get into bad company". You must gain good company. You have to put up with calumny. A good man becomes a victim of calumny even if he is remote from bad people, just as a moth damages all kind of cloth, whether it is ordinary cloth or valuable silk, because it cannot discriminate between what is useless and what is precious. So also an envious person does harm to good and bad people alike.

worry about what has happened. Such things happen in the world from time to time. There is one other matter about which I have not spoken to any one so far.

There are many devotees who ask why, when such things were impending, Swami did not warn Radhakrishnan or try to save him. I am explaining the matter from the spiritual aspect and not from the mundane viewpoint.

Both of us took our meals at 7.00 p.m. Radhakrishnan was sitting in the ground floor. Swami told him; "Radhakrishna, Let us go upstairs. Don't sit here". "Swami, If I go there, I cannot get sleep at 7.0' clock itself", said Radhakrishna. Swami asked him; "If you cannot sleep, what are you going to do here? You can do upstairs what you intend to do here. I don't ask you to go to sleep. Get up immediately. Come, come" I insisted repeatedly.

See how things happen. Death overtakes one in whatever way you attempt to circumvent it. At last Swami assumed an angry tone and rebuked him; "Your misfortune: your stubbornness." I pretended as if I was very angry with him. He felt pained. Swami retired upstairs. He reflected for some time. He had been with Swami for 22 years. He knew that whatever I said was for his good. He went to the kitchen and brought a tumbler of buttermilk. He came smilingly. "Swami, you have been angry with me. Please drink this buttermilk and calm down." "Radhakrishna! It is not anger, I have said everything for your good," said Swami. Radhakrishna said, "Swami has perhaps some doubts that I may go out somewhere and talk to others". I replied, "If I have such doubts, will I keep you with me? Not at all. There are no doubts. I am saying this for your good".

And then I said; "I am not used to drinking buttermilk at night. Why have you brought it for the first time tonight?" He replied; "I felt like giving buttermilk to Swami tonight and hence I brought it". "It is good that you got this idea. I shall take it, but, on one condition; I shall take the buttermilk as desired by you, but you must give me your word that after going down to place the tumbler in the kitchen, you will return upstairs". He said; "I will certainly return".

I do not take buttermilk at all. I took a little quantity and told him "I have taken buttermilk to please you." He had a pure heart. He asked me; "Swami! Can I drink the rest of the buttermilk? I said; "Why throw it away? You may drink it". He drank it there itself. Swami said; "But put back the tumbler and come up." He went down. He had given his word. But, he had perhaps the doubt that if he remained downstairs Swami might call him. This kind of stubbornness is one of the traits of young people. They will not listen to the words of elders. If only they listen to their words, no danger will befall them. Apprehending that if he remained downstairs I might call him, he placed the tumbler in the kitchen and went to his sister's house. The messenger of death dogged him at 10.00 p.m. This is how it has happened. Whatever I say is for the good of others.

I say only sacred things and nothing that is unholy. Whether you believe or not, I may tell you that all the time I only think of what good I can do to better the lot of the people. Swami never thinks about Himself.

After the Summer Course was over, Indulal Shah, V. Srinivasan and others came to me with plans for various projects to be carried out in the next three years. Each year they wanted to carry out one project. I told them "You should not do anything for me. You may do anything you desire for the sake of the people, the society and the poor." I told Srinivasan: "I have three desires. Even I have some desires, not for My sake." Today, middle class farmers are experiencing difficulties in cultivating their fields. Owners of five or six acres are not able to get labourers to work on their farms and do not have cattle for ploughing the fields. Therefore, you get 70 tractors to be presented to small farmers on My Seventieth birthday (in 1995)". Action followed right in the wake of my words. The Escorts people were immediately contacted on the phone and the tractors were brought for the selection of those that would be suitable for small farmers. As Swami was offering the tractors free to small farmers, the Escorts people offered a concession in price. Orders were placed immediately for 70 tractors.

Srinivasan asked what was Swami's second wish. Swami said that young people were going about in Puttaparthi without any occupation and taking to bad ways. Some useful work should be provided for them. The Super Speciality Hospital is far from the township. Even the Post office is at a great distance. Many people are having difficulty in going to these places. To provide employment to these unemployed youth and provide an essential amenity for the public, Swami suggested that 70 autorikshaws may be provided to the unemployed. "If these young men are given these vehicles, it would please me," I said. Orders have been placed for these autorikshaws. The third wish was this: There are a number of women belonging to good families, who have no independent means to sustain themselves and are not in a position to take up jobs outside. I felt that such women should be taught tailoring and given a sewing machine so that they can earn some income independently. Immediately 70 sewing machines have been purchased.

A fourth wish: Marriages should be performed for 70 poor couples without regard to caste or creed. The marriage should be such that they should feel happier beyond all their previous experiences in life. It is not enough to give them wedding clothes and the Mangalsutram. The Mangalsutram should be attached to a gold chain. In addition, to enable them to lead a life of ideal householders, each couple should be provided with a home.

In this manner, all my thoughts are devoted to promoting the good of others. Is any Government or wealthy person thinking along these lines? None at all.

When such sacred things are being done, jealousy rears its head in some persons. This is the outcome of their sins. These envious folk will not do anything good themselves, nor will they allow others to do good. This is not a human quality. A true human being should be filled with large-hearted sentiments.

The truth can be known only when one comes and sees what is being done here. Instead, if men whose hearts are filled with the poison of envy indulge in all kinds of slander from remote places, it can be described only as demonic conduct and not that of a human being. Nowhere in

elsewhere in or outside India on the lines offered here? One has to spend at least Rs. 20,000/- to get a child admitted in the 1st Standard. Here, from kindergarten to post-graduate studies, education is totally free.

As for heart surgery cases, in hospitals outside, no patient will be admitted unless Rs. 4 to 5 lakhs are deposited in advance. In our Hospital, we are spending one crore of Rupees a month (Rs. 10 million). Which Government or millionaire is doing such a thing? There are some such persons who spend 10 lakhs of rupees in a Hospital with the hope of earning Rs. 10 crores. They are making it a business. Here, we are not charging anything.

There is no place for business here. It is not proper that such good and sacred work should be misrepresented.

Sai's heart is as wide as the sky. Even the sky may have its limits. Sai's heart is boundless (Applause). Some say Sai is in the hands of some persons. Yes, I am indeed bound; bound by the devotees as well as by the wicked. In my view, I have more love for the wicked than for the good. The good devotees remember me only occasionally. But the wicked remember me all the twenty-four hours. I am thus in the hearts of the devotees as well as the wicked. I cannot be caught in the grip of anyone.

In regard to every matter, my thoughts are always sublime and exemplary. You must note that Swami's life is in His own hands and not in those of anyone else. If I will it, I can live for as long as I please. I can also terminate it at will. It is my will that decides and not any other person. The reason is my purity, selflessness and divinity. What other testimony is called for? The life of the pure hearted is in their own hands and not in those of others.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma,

Today is Gurupoornima. Who is a Guru? Truth is the Preceptor for the whole world. Uphold truth with steady mind and a pure and selfless heart. That truth will be your protector, your armour and your unfailing companion. There is no Dharma higher than Truth. Dharma protects its protector. If you protect Dharma (righteousness), that Dharma will protect you.

Therefore, without being cowed down or shaken by these incidents, you must go forward with faith and fortitude. Keep truth as your ideal. Fill your hearts with purity and love all and hate none. Then Divinity will manifest itself in you.

(Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the bhajan; "*Prema Mudita manase kaho Rama, Rama Ram*"!)

Try and prevent the five sins that the body commits: Killing, Adultery, Theft, Drinking intoxicants and the Eating of flesh. It is great help for the highest life, if these are kept, as far away as possible.

—Baba

“Thy Will Be Done”

N. Radhakrishnan's fervent and total devotion to Bhagavan was expressed as long ago as 1979 in an article which he contributed to "Golden Age" brought out by the old students of the Sathya Sai College at Brindavan. In this article, Radhakrishnan revealed not only his deep devotion, but his great love for the motherland and the ideals he cherished. The Following are the extracts of the article

India, the abode of the gods, of peerless spiritual seers and sages, of divine bards and devotees, has been glorified for its untiring efforts in elevating humanity from abysmal depths of brutality to the pinnacle of human perfection and nobility. Her noble sons have always been striving over successive years, to uphold the supremacy of the spirit over the matter and have held at bay cultural and materialistic winds that threatened to destroy the basic ethos of this sacred land.

During the struggle for freedom, as in every other task or work, Indians have shown nobility of a rare kind by adopting dignified, non-violent methods. It is indeed of great credit to us that we have had great personalities of exceptional calibre and unimpeachable integrity to properly guide the destiny of our country. With all this, however, within 30 years of achieving independence, contemporary guardians of the nation's destiny have fallen a prey to the malicious epidemic of greed and corruption. They have turned politics, the sacred science of statecraft and state administration, into the most obnoxious means of achieving their selfish ends. With illusions about possessing Midas's touch for what it is worth—the present—day politicians have been exploiting the youth of the country in various nefarious ways. Creating "student unrest" on any scale and instigating them to express "public opinion" for their own private betterment has become an integral part of the *modus operandi* in the sordid game of the power politics that politicians play today.

Bhagavan—the Hope

Total darkness seems imminent, but there is Hope. That Hope for the nation lies at the Feet of the Avatar, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Pure Light has descended on the earth at the appropriate time to radiate peace and love in the world at large and illumine every human with a heart to feel and eyes to see. The Lord who dwells in the Kingdom of Heaven has come to us as Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to rekindle in us the flame of divinity.

If our Country is to be redeemed from the present predicament of moral degradation and cultural bankruptcy, and brought back in international reckoning as the 'Leader of Nations', then the youth of India have to awaken themselves and act before the situation becomes irretrievable. Their tremendous physical, mental and spiritual energies have to be properly harnessed for bringing back the days of yore when the sacred name of Bharat reverberated in the four corners of the world as the 'punya bhumi', 'tyaga bhumi' and 'yoga bhumi'. Verily, ours has been the land of God in a special sense inasmuch as He has chosen India as the stage for bringing about spiritual renaissance every time moral degradation raised its ugly head in the world.

We have a sacred task to fulfill and that is to strengthen the citadels of peace, love and goodwill in the world. It is we, the youth of this country, with our vast and rich spiritual heritage to draw from, who have to give the lead to the youth of the other countries. We have to show by our example that while the glamour of the materialistic life drags us into misery and sorrow, the legacy left unto mankind by saints and spiritual seers of all lands is immeasurably richer and affords to us the supreme delight of God's company.

Bhagavan has shown us the way. By his mercy, a new age shall dawn. India will regain her pristine position in the nations of the world and shall bring about the fulfillment of our prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven....." Let us strive to make this earth a Heaven for us to live in—ever in His remembrance.

(Radhakrishnan is no more physically, but his spirit of dedication to duty and life of sacrifice should be a perennial inspiration to all our youth— Editor)

Portentous Gurupoornima at Prasanthi Nilayam

This year's Gurupoornima celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam, on 3rd July, were of portentous significance in many ways. The concourse of devotees from all parts of the world from Argentina in the Western Hemisphere to Japan in the East was unprecedented. Leaders of the Sai Organisations from many countries were present in full strength to testify to their unwavering dedication to Bhagavan's global mission.

Above all, Bhagavan gave a significant and reassuring message to Sai devotees all over the world that seva activities under the auspices of the various Sathya Sai Trusts—in the areas of Education, Medical Relief and others will go on as before under the watchful and inspiring guidance of Bhagavan Baba.

The steady inflow of devotees started even before 1st July and swelled to a spate by the morning of 3rd July. It was apparent that thousands of devotees of Bhagavan had chosen to

about the incidents in the Prasanthi Nilayam on June 6th and the duty of devotees.

The Mandir premises wore a festive look with floral decorations and buntings, (lags and festoons. On the morning of 3rd July, the number of devotees was three times as large as could be accommodated inside the Mandir compound. They had assembled from the early hours of the morning and sat with commendable discipline in the open space outside the Mandir compound.

Bhagavan came at 7.15 A.M. from the Auditorium, and gave Darshan to the large gathering by going round the serried ranks of devotees, both inside and outside, more than twice. Students chanted slokas in praise of the Guru and followed it with Bhajans.

Bhagavan arranged for distribution of special sweets prepared for the occasion through students and members of Seva Dal and personally ensured that every one in the mammoth gathering of nearly hundred thousand got the prasadam. It was announced that Bhagavan would give His Divine Message in the evening in the Poornachandra Auditorium.

The Auditorium was filled to capacity even an hour before the scheduled time of the meeting. Vast numbers of men and women devotees had to be content to squat outside the Auditorium to listen to the eagerly awaited message of Bhagavan.

The function commenced with a special song for the occasion and Vedic chants by a group of students. Then Sri V. Srinivasan, member of the advisory council of the Sathya Sai Central Trust, announced that Swami had graciously permitted a few senior devotees and office-bearers of the organisation abroad to speak on the occasion. They were Dr. Goldstein, President of the Sathya Sai Council of America, Mr. James Sinclair, a leading businessman from U. S. A., Mr. Justice Bhagavati, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, Mr. Ryuko Hira, head of the Sathya Sai Organisation in Japan, Sri A. N. Haksar, former Chairman of I.T.C., and Sri. V. Srinivasan.

Dr. Goldstein, in his moving address, hailed Bhagavan Baba as the Divine Incarnation of the age and expressed the unshakable faith of the devotees in America in Bhagavan's mission of service to humanity in which all of them were taking part as His Instruments. He said more and more people were rallying round the Sathya Sai Organisation to do selfless service to all people, irrespective of religion, race or nationality. Mr. James Sinclair then spoke about his experiences of the Divine intervention of Bhagavan in his life at moments of crisis to save him from disastrous and perilous situations.

Justice Bhagavati recounted his experience of Bhagavan's miraculous cure of his orthopaedic complaint by Vibhuti materialised by Him, while doctors had considered an operation as the only remedy. He described the great institutions of education and medical relief established by Bhagavan to render free service to the People. He gave details of the constitution and functioning of the Sathya Sai Central Trust in full accordance with the law.

not only of his physical maladies but had also given him the awakening that one should do at least one good deed a day in a selfless manner. If everyone undertook to fulfill this simple task, it would be a fitting way of expressing one's gratitude to Bhagavan for the grace He showered on devotees.

Mr. Srinivasan then spoke about the late Radhakrishnan and Sai Ram Mahajan, the two young men who sacrificed their lives during the incidents at the Mandir on 6th June. He spoke of the unique devotion of Radhakrishnan, who was literally the 'pratibimba' (Reflected image) of Bhagavan. He lived in glory doing service to Bhagavan and died in glory. He said that several countries have come forward with proposals for commemorating these two valiant devotees, but, Bhagavan had chosen to accept the offer of the Japanese. They are instituting a Chair in Commerce in the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in memory of Radhakrishnan and instituting a Gold Medal to be given to the best student in M. B. A. every year in memory of Sai Kumar Mahajan.

Mr. Hira expressed the gratitude of the devotees from Japan to Bhagavan for having provided them with the opportunity to commemorate the supreme sacrifice made by N. Radhakrishnan and Sai Ram Mahajan.

Then Bhagavan gave His memorable and inspiring Gurupoornima Message (published separately elsewhere).

The Divine in Action

Gurupoornima in Prasanthi Nilayam

The Poornachandra Auditorium in Prasanthi Nilayam on the eve of Gurupoornima was like the sky at the days end, bejewelled and colourful. In it were all hues of the fast-fading twilight, shades of blue, pilgrim clouds, and everywhere a star or two winking through the darkness.

To my mind the sky always represented the Quranic concept of the One and only—Allah—All Comprehending, the Gatherer (Al Jamiu).

Also, of late, extending the same approach, I would try to understand in Baba's discourses and His life Quranic values and ideas of Allah as the One Supreme. For me, He had become the Holy Book in action.

Working on this mental pattern, I could see in the Gurupoornima gathering twenty times the image of the One as was described in the Quran. Only three could be related into words.

First of all, the congregation itself was a miniature picture of the assembly mentioned as the prehistoric "Ancient Covenant". It must have been a similar multitude when God called the children of Adam yet to be born. Faces would have turned to Him in trust and love, speeches and songs must have echoed similarly the obedience to the One Supreme Power. There was no consciousness of nationality, race, religion, no sense of duality. Mankind faced the Creator. The holy Revelation recorded the pledge

"Am I not Your Lord
(Who cherishes and sustains you)?"
They said: "Yes! We do testify".
(The Quran VII: 172)

In that bond of Affirmation, the Creator, the Pledge and the Creation had become One. So too it happened on the 3rd of July at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Call of supplicants

The second perception emerged from the voices that called out, in song and prose, for mercy, projecting in the rhythm of language and the sound the gratitude and the agony of the supplicants. The pattern was sketched in the following words

I listen to every supplicant when he calls on Me; let them also with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me. (II: 186)

There was in both instances the mystic pronoun "I" and "ME". In the repetition of these words there was the sign of the One, Self-Subsisting (Al Samad).

Bhagavan's gifts of grace

The third image, kaleidoscopic in its strokes, was assimilated around Baba Himself. He was the "best disposer of all affairs" (III: 173). "The Irresistible" (VI: 18). In the Mercy that He bestowed on the aspirants, ignoring their shortcomings, He was "Ample in forgiveness (LIII: 32). In His immense plans of bounty for the needy and the poor, to be executed during the 70th Birthday, He could be comprehended as "the most merciful of those that show mercy". (VII: 151) His positive view of men and situation, his gentle but firm advice, showed that Divinity could never be negative.

Varied were the gifts of His grace that evening. They were distributed according to the need of each. Little wonder it was that the Book of Wisdom asserted that the Divine "feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them (creations), for He is the Most High, the Supreme" (II: 255).

—Zeba Bashiruddin

calumny and cruelty. Mohamed, who sought to establish the primacy of the One Formless Absolute, lead a large share of persecution, defamation, and privation; Jesus, who attempted to rebuild mankind on the basis of Love, was crucified by little men who feared that their tiny towers of hate and greed will be toppled by his teaching. Harishchandra, who had resolved never to waver from Truth, was submitted to ordeal after ordeal, each more terrifying than the previous one. Those who seek to know God, must steel themselves to bear insult, injury and torture, with a smile.

—Baba

Bhagavan's Interest in Solar Energy Sciences

In a Divine discourse, delivered at the Institute Auditorium in Prasanthi Nilayam on March 4, 1993, Bhagavan said:

"To the people of India, energy from the Sun is of paramount importance. It embodies a supreme element of sacredness. On account of the stupendous order of temperature in the core of the sun, enormous quantities of hydrogen—several million tons—get transformed to helium every second. By this process, which began with creation and will go on for aeons of time, a tremendous quantity of energy is radiated by the sun. If even a tiny fraction of the solar energy that reaches the surface of the earth is put to use, intelligently and diligently, the energy needs of the human race will be met in an adequate measure".

"Scientists continue to be baffled by the mystery surrounding the origin of Light. Light is God's gift to mankind. While we are greatly impressed by the power and grandeur of the radiance of the Sun, we need to ponder deeply over the effulgence of the Divine, which is more than that of a million Suns put together.

"Using electronic devices and associated instruments and facilities, we should devise effective steps to convert part of the Sun's energy that reaches us to electricity directly. I want this Institute to devise ingenious ways of putting the energy from the Sun to productive and humanitarian uses."

Power of the sun

The Rig Veda highlights the importance of the Sun in these words:

"Let the world focus its constant attention at the centre of the planetary system, where the Sun, the supreme power of the Universe, resides."

The Sun is a star with a mass which is more than 330,000 times that of the earth. It is said that, if the weight of the earth is notionally one ounce, the sun would tip the balance at 10 tons. Sunshine reaches the earth across 93 millions miles of space in a little over 8 minutes. Infra-red

less than one-thousandth of one millionth of the total radiation. The fusion of hydrogen into helium, whereby the sun is continuously converting its substance into radiant energy, takes place at an estimated temperature of 30 million degrees Fahrenheit. Even the sun's Corona is believed to reach a temperature of 2 million degrees. The surface, at about 10,000° F or so, is relatively cool! A square yard of the earth's surface, exposed to direct sunlight, continuously receives the radiation equivalent of 2 horse-power of energy. It has been suggested that, in three days, the earth receives as much energy as some estimates of the total fossil-fuels remaining on earth; and in forty days, enough solar energy is received to last a century, if only we can make diligent use of all of it.

Nature provides us with energy far beyond our dreams, in spite of the easy lives we have led on our fuel reserves. Solar energy is available in staggering quantities. It is free and it requires no transportation or maintenance. The power is there for the taking; but the taking is not easy for man spoiled by the luxury of access to stored energy—not as easy as digging holes in the ground and mining coal or drilling holes into the handy, subterranean storage tanks of gas and oil. Yet the harnessing of sunlight should be easier than unleashing nuclear energy—which, despite all our efforts, remains a tricky and treacherous source of power.

Serious attention to the application of solar energy has had to wait till man realized that he is dangerously close to the bottom of the stock-pile that the Sun had gifted to him. He should have begun to use solar energy directly a long time ago. The dubious promise of Nuclear Energy has also delayed this process. Astronomer Donald Menzel likens the Sun to a husband who is so dutiful and dependable that he is not fully appreciated. "The Sun's extreme regularity keeps us from noticing it. In the ultimate analysis, it is the squeaking wheel that draws our attention and gets the grease. The Sun is just too quiet to get our attention".

The energy gap

It is estimated that fossil fuels have been produced over a period of 600 million years. This process is continuing at about the same rate. We are using up energy at a much faster pace from fossil-fuels than the Sun replaces it. In the last century, we appear to have withdrawn 20 times, as much capital energy as we did in the previous seven centuries.

Both population and energy consumption are destined to climb up. Coal, natural gas, oil and hydro-electric power are the principal contributors in the energy scenario. A century from now, nuclear energy may match coal in producing power. The awesome reality is that there is a 20% gap between demand and supply and this is likely to increase to 30% in a couple of centuries. If the gap is sought to be covered by increased deployment of non-renewable energy sources, there are two great dangers, rapid depletion of these resources; the pollution enhancement which will have a gruesome impact on the quality of life on earth. We must drastically reduce our demands on power or find a new source of energy. We are at present dumping waste-heat into the environment. It is estimated that, by 2000 A. D. the ambient air-temperature will increase by 2.5° F. This will have a most deleterious effect on the ecological balance of the earth.

Once in a few decades, a new source of energy surfaces. In 1870, coal began to replace wood, water-power and wind-power. Some 45 years later, gas entered the fuel picture. Oil was discovered in 1859; and hydroelectric power became a reality in 1890. The first nuclear power-plant was set up in 1957. In this cyclic process, by the year 2000, another major source of power has to emerge. It could be 'nuclear fusion'. Hopefully, we can make it 'Solar Energy'. Solar batteries have no moving parts. No fuel is required; and no waste product is produced. There is no question of thermal pollution at all. For simple elegance, nothing can match the marvellous bank of solar cells that simply sits under the sun and converts light to electric power.

The photovoltaic

A photovoltaic Cell, or Solar Cell as it is popularly known, is an electronic device that produces electric power when light falls on it. The principle underlying this is the Photo-voltaic effect. It is for the discovery of this effect that Albert Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize. The current produced may be made to flow through a circuit and perform several useful functions.

The main challenge today is the imperative to improve the conversion efficiency of the Solar Cell and to reduce the production-cost of the device. Scientists all the world over are working on the related problems.

The energy-conversion brought about by a solar cell is fundamentally different from other forms of electricity generation. Without turbines, generators or other mechanical equipment, it more closely resembles photo-synthesis—the bio-chemical process that forms the energy basis of life on earth. This ubiquitous device contains the seed of a peaceful transformation toward an ecologically sound and sustainable energy system.

Photo-Voltaic Cells have been pressed into service, in terrestrial applications, only over the last thirty years or so. A stimulus was imparted to this effort by the Oil Crisis of the 1970's. Early on, they were used exclusively for powering satellites in space, because of the twin-advantages of low-weight and no-fuel requirements. In today's scenario, we see Solar Cells being used for water-pumping, lighting, drying and such functions. Solar electricity systems are being set up to provide refrigeration in remote locations. There is scope for solar-powered houses in rural areas which have no access to utility power lines. There is the prospect also of Photovoltaic Systems being installed at large Centralized solar-electricity Stations operated by public utilities, helping to diversify energy-sources feeding into power-grids.

Photovoltaics have a strategic value which other energy sources lack. They make power, though in small quantities, available in virtually any corner of the world. Rarely have the common people had a chance to benefit from an advanced technology as in this instance. Photovoltaics not only help to remove drudgery from the lives of rural people but, by helping power communication systems in these locations, educate them and bind together sections of society. The potential contribution becomes visible through the joy experienced by those, living in remote locations, who see running water for the first time and those using solar electricity to refrigerate their food and medicine. Arising from the use of this technology that seeks to deploy

improve in the decades to come. It is a blessing that man's attention is being focused on the direct use of solar energy for his survival. It is equally fortunate that 'none is hidden from the heat of the Sun'. This is the essence of Bhagavan's Message.

Miracles in Prasanthi Nilayam

Bhagavan Baba has produced the miracle of unique educational system which radiates its message world-wide from Prasanthi Nilayam. It demonstrates the power behind the synthesis of 'intellectual knowledge' with 'spiritual wisdom', out of which emerges the vision of 'integral education' that grows in an environment that promotes truth, love and reverence. The second miracle is the Institute of Higher Medical Science, which with its superbly constructed habitat, fine array of technical equipment and health-care programmes of surpassing excellence, provides to numerous persons in need the bounty of medical attention and cure in the same spirit in which God provides sunshine, air, water, soil and sky to all mankind. The third miracle which is just unfolding, is, by the Divine command, the beginning of a high endeavour to capture a tiny part of the Sun's energy falling on the earth and convert it to a form of power that people may use facilely for a variety of useful purposes-because such an effort will do good to human society and make the world more viable and more livable than it is today.

We are at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba, who is ceaselessly at work for the good of mankind and commands the supreme wisdom to know what that good is. He demands from us our consecration to a noble endeavour. Let us execute His Will sincerely and integrally in every detail of our evolution as His beloved children.

—S. Sampath, *Prasanthi Nilayam*

Five Vital Points of Code of Conduct

What exactly is your duty? Let Me summarise it for you. First, tend your parents with love, reverence and gratitude. Second, speak the truth and act virtuously. Third, whenever you have a few moments to spare, repeat the Name of the Lord, with the Form in your mind. Fourth, never indulge in talking ill of others or try to discover faults in others. And, finally, do not cause pain to others, in any form.

Ten Fold Sin

Keep away from the ten-fold sins, the three physical, the four verbal and the three mental. Physical tendencies are: Injury to life, adulterous desire and theft. The verbal sins are: false alarm, cruel speech, jealous talk and lies. The mental attitudes are: greed, envy and the denial of God.

—Baba

The Lords Infectious Ecstasy

It is Prasanthi Nilayam, the hallowed darshan time.
A vibrant hush, feverish activity, action without motion,
A shifting of legs, hands folded in reverence,
Eyes transfixed to the verandah in elated suspense,
Mounting exhilaration, beaming smiles, joy, Ecstasy,
Lo! the flowing Ochre, the radiant Being!

Hands raised aloft in ardent supplication, "Ah' Baba!"
Silent eloquence, hearts overflowing, touching the soft lotus feet,
Hectic speculation, "Will He come to this line?"
"Will he pause in front of me?" mounting anxiety,
Clutching the letter, "I must give this, there He comes nearer."
Ah! the electric moment, hand stretched out with letter,
The Compassionate One pauses, takes and looks intently,
Mischievously queries: "Where is your payar, has he not come?"

Elderly dame, abashed, but discovers the bright twinkle in the eyes.
Infected by divine glee she smiles all over her face
Liltingly the Divine passes on, detached yet loving,
"Eh, pakoda! When did you come, are eating less?"
My! My! how endearing is the nomenclature!
She laughs, everyone laughs, the divine infection spreads.

The Divine calls someone sitting far off, "You Chandralekha
Where did you go this morning? Speak the truth"
Christened anew, a little apprehensive, yet adoring,
She sees the hovering smile playing upon the lips,
Fascinated and captivated, a responsive smile lights up her face.
The Divine feet glide on, someone is waiting breathless!
"Swami, please, my legs are aching badly",
Says He, "Is that so? Cut them and throw them in the Chitravathi".
The jocular rejoinder evokes a rejuvenating smile that brightens up her face.

A shy youngster offers the tender rose of her pristine heart,
Pat come the words, "Where is your husband? Give it to him".
Coyly she smiles, the husband has not yet been unearthed.
A mischievous glint in the eyes, a suppressed smile on the lips,
He looks gravely at old married matrons in mock seriousness

sympathetic smile. And, all over burst forth wreaths of smiles spreading like undulating waves.

Someone there, "eh, you Dunnapotha, with whom were you talking this morning?"

Perplexed, taken by surprise, confounded, she fumbles for a reply.

Thus Divinity enjoys human discomfiture, and spreads the infectious divine glee.

The supreme and peerless actor delights in his scintillating play,

Entering softly into tender hearts, He sows joy's enlivening seed.

He has walked along the lines; there, he is on the verandah again.

He turns the divine beatific smile once again. The infection catches,

It is smiles, smiles, a blaze of smiles, everywhere.

Mrs. Jayalakshmi Gopinath

(Anantapur)

My country is India. My religion is the religion of India. My ideals and traditions have been born in India. You must develop such thoughts in your mind. You must develop great respect and attachment to the culture that has flourished in this country from time immemorial. You will have to dedicate your life for the future of this country.

—Baba

The Divine and Destiny

*The Goddess of Wealth (Lakshmi) flourishes at the tip of the tongue.
Friends and kinsfolk grow from the tip of the tongue;
Bondage and realisation emanate from the tongue;
The tip of the tongue makes death certain.*

Embodiments of the Divine Atma!

Speech constitutes the wealth of the world. Speech promotes friendship and kinship. It is speech that lends sweetness and affection to all relationship. Speech, again, leads the way to death.

Speech is endowed with immense power. The power and potentialities of speech represent the Divine feelings of man. Hence, one has to be very vigilant in speech.

The mysteries of creation are marvellous. When two persons meet at any time or place, the differences between them are patent. Their forms and manners differ. They differ in their cleverness and intelligence. Their opinions also vary. Without understanding what underlies these differences, the materialist thinkers emphasise the differences. Today, growing numbers of intellectuals, ignoring the unity that underlies the diversity, propagate the cult of differences. The good persons who realise the unity behind the apparent diversity are dwindling in numbers from day to day. This is highly unfortunate.

Our common heritage

Man's foremost task is to recognise the unity that underlies the multiplicity. If one enquires into the matter with a pure and unselfish mind, one will see what is common to all beings. Birth and death are common to all men. Hunger and thirst are experienced by every person. These are truths that apply to all persons, whether they are destitutes or millionaires, whether they are scholars or ignorant men.

Every human being has a body and a spirit. Consequently everyone enjoys a certain degree of freedom. This is described as "Free Will". Not comprehending the nature of this freedom, men tend to stress the differences rather than the unifying factors.

Man is a combination of two kinds of traits. One is the animal nature. The other is divinity. Swayed by evil qualities like lust, anger, greed, delusion, conceit and egoism, (the six enemies of man), he degrades himself to the level of the animal. On the other side is the one who makes right use of the good qualities conferred by God such as intelligence, wisdom and virtue, pursues the path of truth and righteousness, engages himself in divine activities and ultimately realises the Divine. Man can choose either the path that leads him to animality or to Divinity because the potentialities are common. What is important is the path one chooses. "As the thoughts, so the

the right path and realize the true nobility of human existence. If you have a knife, you can use it for slicing vegetables and preparing a good meal. The same knife can be used for taking away another person's life, behaving in a demonic manner and ceasing to be human.

Power of the mind

Thus, the same mind is responsible for either animal or divine behaviour. In Vedantic parlance, this is stated as: "The mind is the cause of human bondage or liberation." The state of the mind depends on the nature of the thoughts with which it is filled, even as the smell of a paper depends on what is wrapped up in it, flowers, fish or potato chips. When the mind is used properly, man achieves fulfillment.

Censure and praise

Men perceive the world in terms of diversity. But, as the scripture declares: "There is only the One. The wise call it by many names". People experience heat and cold, joy and sorrow, darkness and light, profit and loss. All these are opposite aspects of the same thing, and not two different things. For instance, darkness helps one to enjoy light. If there were no darkness, light would have no value. Darkness is absence of light. Light is absence of darkness. Darkness lends value to light. Sorrow contributes to the value of happiness. Likewise, censure has its value. It enhances the value of praise. Censure is the stepping-stone to praise. The two are inter-dependent.

For all the experiences in the world relating to pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, the cause is one. All the troubles one experiences are stepping-stones to happiness. This is the essence of Vedanta.

Hence, for man, the proper spiritual sadhana consists in cultivating equal-mindedness, without succumbing to grief or getting elated over a happy event. In daily life, people experience all kinds of happiness and distress. The scripture declares: "Treat joy and sorrow, profit and loss alike."

Peace, truth and the self

Embodiments of Divine Love! What is the purpose of your joining the ashram? What is its inner meaning? You have come to lead a peaceful, sacred and blissful life dedicated to the Divine. This peace does not lie in the external world. Peace is your very form. Truth is equally so. It is folly to think that you have to search for Truth somewhere. To know one's Self is Truth. To experience the Self within is Peace. Peacelessness is caused by involvement in external experiences, ignoring the Self within.

Potency of forbearance

All things, good and bad, in the world are related to man's actions. Your well-being is based on your conduct. Your wealth is dependent on your actions. You will secure peace and prosperity when your conduct is good. This calls for forbearance ((Sahana). The Upanishadic

strive together".

Forbearance is a potent instrument. Dharmaja (the eldest of the Pandavas) was able to score many victories with the weapon (astra) of forbearance. Forbearance is not a sign of weakness or cowardice. No other weapon has the power of forbearance. It should not be used only as an individual instrument. It has to be experienced collectively also. That is the reason why the scripture has commended collective forbearance at the very outset of the spiritual quest. What is its inner meaning? "Let us live and move in harmony. Let us grow together. Let us cherish the wisdom that we have acquired together. Let us live in complete harmony without any misunderstanding." Therefore, do not have any misunderstanding amongst you. All of you should live in amity as the children of one mother.

God's grace and human effort

God is all-powerful. But, at the same time human effort is also necessary. Without it, man cannot enjoy the benefit of God's grace. It is only when you have both Divine grace and human endeavour that you can experience bliss, just as you can enjoy the breeze of a fan only when you have both a fan and the electrical energy to operate it.

Rules of the cosmic play

In the great drama of cosmic life, the Cosmic Director, God, is also an actor. The Cosmic play is governed by certain rules and regulations. Because He is the Almighty, God cannot behave in an arbitrary manner. His actions have to be in accordance with His role in the cosmic play. There are certain rules as to how one should act according to the time, the place and the circumstances. He cannot behave according to His whims just because He is all-powerful. For instance, the officer who lays down the rules for controlling traffic cannot disobey them on the ground that he is their author. Likewise, the Creator has to conform to the rules laid down by Him for creation.

Not recognising this truth, men, who are involved in worldly ways, ask questions as to why in certain situations God did not use his limitless powers to avert certain untoward events. These arise out of a narrow conception of things, without understanding how the Divine operates. They are concerned only about themselves and their interests. They ask: "Here is a sacred temple. How could something unholy occur in such a place?" They see things from a narrow perspective. They do not realise that for God the entire universe is His temple. So, whatever happens anywhere happens in God's temple. The Cosmos is the form of God (Vishnu). God is immanent everywhere in the cosmos. When a temple is constructed on a piece of land, it becomes a temple. If it is knocked down, it becomes mere land again. For God, every place is a temple. "His feet and hands, his mouth and eyes and His ears are everywhere. Encompassing all, He remains pervading everything." (Stanza from the Gita)

Death and destiny

When things are seen with this broad perspective, it will be recognised that anything can happen to anyone at any place or any time. No one is competent to determine where a certain

in the place, the manner and at the time prescribed for him. This is inescapable. This is according to the operation of Nature's law based on the pairs of opposites in life (dwandwa). There is a continual conflict between these opposites (pleasure and pain, birth and death, etc.).

Krishna's role as envoy

By way of illustration, here is an episode from the Mahabharata. Krishna was all-powerful. He was aware that peace parleys with the Kauravas would be of no avail because of their stubbornness. He knew that war was unavoidable. But, in the context of worldly affairs and having regard to public opinion, he had to make an effort to promote peace. Consequently, he went as an envoy of the Pandavas, made a vain effort to convince the Kauravas to accept a peaceful settlement, acted as if his peace mission had failed and told the Pandavas that war was inevitable. All these were scenes in his play.

It is asked, when Draupadi was being humiliated in various ways, when Duryodhana was unabashedly behaving in a wicked manner in pursuance of his evil intentions, why did not Krishna intervene to prevent them. Why did not Krishna destroy the wicked Duryodhana? The reason is the time had not yet come for it. Bhima was the destined instrument for slaying Duryodhana. Duryodhana had to meet with his death at the hands of Bhima and not of Krishna. Krishna was waiting for the appropriate time.

Therefore, whatever has to happen, how, at what time and in what manner, has been predetermined and the mere fact that I am nearby will not serve to alter them.

In Duryodhana's audience hall, Shishupala was hurling abuses at Krishna. But Krishna waited. The appropriate time had to come. Only when the cause, the time and the necessary action are in fruitful combination will the event happen. Krishna was patient till the time was ripe. When the moment for action came, Krishna put an end to Shishupala.

How the Lord acts

The Lord always adheres to His laws, the rules and regulations laid down by Him. Man does not always abide by the rules when he faces trouble. But, whatever the situation, the Lord observes His rules and regulations. Therefore, no one can determine what limits and laws govern the Lord's actions.

Jesus Christ declared: "I am the Son of God". But when he was crucified, God did not come to his rescue. Christ even cried out in anguish: "Oh Father, Why are you not coming to save me?" But the Lord acts having regard to the time, place and the circumstances, He accords to each person the honour and esteem that is due to him. Christ became a glorious figure in the moment of his crucifixion.

Abhimanyu's destiny

Thus by a certain action, in a certain context, a person achieves name and fame. For instance, Abhimanyu pleaded with his mother to be allowed to fight his way through the maze

ways. In the last resort, she told him: "The maze is a dreadful trap. The great Bhishma is commanding the enemy's hosts. Neither your father Arjuna, nor your uncle Krishna is near. Your wife is enceinte. It is not proper in these circumstances for you to embark on this perilous adventure." She spoke all this as a mother.

But Abhimanyu had to speak out from the son's point of view. "Oh Mother: Is it right for you to ask a lion's cub to refrain from attacking a herd of petty animals? You should have ordered me to go and fight them like a warrior and return victorious. Instead, is it not infamous if I am asked to keep away from the fight?" Saying so, he left for the battlefield.

Abhimanyu could not refrain from going to the battlefield. No warrior can fail to respond to the challenge for a fight. Death is preferable to the infamy of cowardice.

Recognising the validity of Abhimanyu's reasoning, his mother permitted him to go. "Son! You may go. May all the goddesses protect you even as they blessed their sons when they set out to fight the demons. Above all, let Sri Rama be your protector." All these blessings did not save Abhimanyu.

Abhimanyu was destined to die in the Padmavyuha (the Lotus Maze). Could the blessings save him? Because he died in the Padmavyuha he found, a place in the Paradise reserved for heroes. Such fame is not got by dying in an accident or from a disease or old age. For every kind of fame, there is a specific form of death.

The Lord as witness

Death, however, is born together with birth. And death must come in the way it is bound to come. The Lord, however, is a witness to all happenings. In some instances He gives prior indications and warnings. When these are heeded, the person concerned gets sanctified. When one disregards them, he forfeits his sanctity. One, therefore, should do his duty. The Lord's heart is boundless. He is concerned about the collective well-being of all. Man, however, tends to have a narrow and limited perspective. A narrow outlook can lead only to a limited result. God makes no distinction between one group and another. He loves all equally. He blesses all. He wishes good for every one. "Let the whole world be happy" is His benediction. Whatever people's desires are they will be fulfilled by God only according to their deserts. One cannot go to the Ganga with a small tumbler and hope to get more than a tumblerful of Ganga water. But when one acts according to the Lord's command, the capacity of the container may get enlarged.

In the Mahabharata, Krishna wished to avoid the charge that he had done nothing to prevent the great battle. Hence, he chose to go as an ambassador of peace to the Kauravas, though Arjuna expostulated with him in strong terms that there was no use in having peace parleys with the wicked Kauravas.

The noble and the pure have been subject to calumny in all ages. From ancient times to the present, the evil minded have assailed the high-souled men who have sought to serve their fellowmen. Such untoward events happen from time to time. Only when these attacks are faced and overcome does the glory of the Divine become manifest. No great man has ever achieved eminence without overcoming abuse and calumny, trials and tribulations. Gold acquires greater brilliance by being heated in the crucible. Likewise a diamond becomes more brilliant when it is cut to produce more facets. Trials and tests are stepping stones to fame for good people.

Devotees' duty

The world is steeped in trouble because of the divisive forces which have broken up human society on various irrational grounds. Devotees should develop unwavering faith, disregarding whatever happens in the world. Those who have pure and unselfish hearts will remain unshaken in their faith like an iron ball which remains unmoved even in a storm. But those who are swayed by mundane desires will waver like a dried leaf blown by a slight breeze. Let your devotion be firm. It is good for you.

Eschew hatred

Consider for a moment where you are and for what purpose you have come here. You have come to this ashram to fill your hearts with sacred thoughts. Not the ashramites alone, but everyone has to develop fraternal feelings and eschew hatred altogether. You have to develop equal-mindedness and face all situations in life with equanimity and fortitude. Anger, hatred, ostentation and pride are animal qualities. Love, kindness, forbearance, compassion and sacrifice are natural human qualities. Spirituality does not consist merely in offering worship, doing bhajans. It calls for the elimination of the animal qualities in man and striving for the realisation of oneness with the Divine. "Adveshtaa servabhhothanam" said Narasimhan (in his speech earlier). Bear no ill-will towards anybody.

Hatred, envy and anger

The means to prolong or shorten one's life lie in one's own hands. Your lifespan is prolonged when you are full of joy, when you are calm and filled with pure thoughts. When you are filled with envy, anger, hatred and conceit your lifespan gets shortened. The envious man gets no sleep at all. Sleeplessness ruins the health even more than lack of food. Envy torments a man all the time. These troubles lead to shortening one's life. As for hatred, the man filled with it cannot even bear the sight of his enemy. He suffers from hallucinations which consume his body and spirit. Anger is the cause of destroying the divine potencies in man. Hatred ruins a man's circulatory system. Envy drives the man crazy by depriving him of his sleep. In that condition he cannot relish his food. Thus, these three evil qualities, hatred, envy and anger are wasting diseases. When you consider yourselves as devotees of God you should get rid of these three evil qualities. Lead peaceful and pure lives. To call yourselves devotees but to look with envy at others is totally unbecoming. True devotees should be always smiling. Exude joy always. That joy will manifest itself when you experience your oneness with the Divine within you. If you are unhappy, it is because you have not experienced the Divine.

Don't worry about what has happened, what is happening or what is to come. Let things happen in their due course. You have, however, to learn lessons from what has happened. "Tasmat Jagrata! Jagrata!" ("Therefore, be vigilant, be, vigilant"). In many matters people tend to be careless. Troubles occur from time to time to warn us to be on our guard. Recognise the truth that whatever happens is for your good. Realise that even what seems to be bad is for your good. Even calumny is a precursor of greater renown. Alongside of ensure, praise also grows, as in the digging of a pit, when a mound rises by its side. Look up to the good name that is in store for you. Do not bother about the trifles that happen. Nor should you blame others or revile at them. Be vigilant and foster your good nature. Share your goodness with those around you and experience the joy that results from such sharing.

Advice to students

Our young students are tenderhearted. As Sainath, (a student who spoke earlier) said, the students have been resorting to parayanas (reciting scriptures), fasting, prayer and other such practices by way of atonement for what they regard as their lapses. They are a prey to all kinds of apprehensions and fancies. They should not bother about what is past or what is likely in the future. They must concentrate on the present, which is a product of the past and the parent of the future. Live in the present and be happy. Entertain only happy thoughts. Behave like brothers.

Keep away from bad company. Even a noble and a generous hearted warrior like Karna suffered grievously because of his association with the evil minded Shakuni, the wicked Duryodhana and the malicious Dussasana. You must cultivate good company. How do you decide who is good and who is bad? Think over the matter deeply. The one who sees the bad in what is good is a bad man. The one who sees good even in what is bad is a good man. Therefore seek the company of the good alone.

Man, it is said, is a combination of Truth and Righteousness. Truth is God. Righteousness is Divine. Verily there is no greater righteousness than adherence to Truth. We must live in the mansion of Peace, whose foundation is Truth, whose walls are Righteousness and whose roof is Love.

Dear students! You are yourselves the exemplars of your pure hearts and unselfish lives. You are feeling sad because of the feeling that a slur has been cast on the good name of the Institute students. Don't give any thought to this. When you are free from blame why should you worry? In a bag of rice there may be a few grains of paddy. You should not feel that because of the misbehaviour of a few, the taint affects all students. Act on the conviction that no blame attaches to any of you. Act according to the promptings of your conscience. That will lead you to Divinity.

Carry on the Sadhana which you have taken up. You are bound to earn a good name and bring credit to your parents. Even the Institute will be vindicated. As youth, your journey is long. You must stick to the path of Truth and lead ideal lives.

Devotees also should conduct themselves with fortitude. Fear sin. Show gratitude to the Divine. When you have fear of sin and love of God, you are bound to observe morality in society. Carry on your activities with zeal and faith. Swami will return soon to Prasanthi Nilayam and fill you all with joy and enthusiasm. Never cease to meditate on God. Cultivate a spirit of broadmindedness. Devotees, men and women, tend to magnify trifles. Avoid commenting on others. Love all, greet everyone with a smiling face, and eschew harsh language. A soft answer turneth away wrath.

Recognise first of all that the Divine is in every one. Understanding others is the key to adjustment.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan: "*Prema Mudita manase kaho*")

From Bhagavan's discourse in Prasanthi Mandir on 21-7-1993

GURUDEV VANI

SUMMER SCHOOL IN BRINDAVAN

Man Mind and the Cosmos

*God has endowed mankind
with the great weapon of the Mind
Only the one who subjugates the mind
Can achieve victories on earth.
We cannot imagine anyone who is a slave of
the mind and has attained happiness or peace.*

Embodiments of Love!

Human existence can become meaningful only when man, at the very outset, recognises the nature of the mind and bases his actions on that understanding. The mind is extremely powerful. It runs at great speed. It is subtler than the sky and even more subtle than electricity. When such a mind is turned to bad purposes, a man becomes a prey to all kinds of sorrow.

The mind can run faster than light. Just as you are able to hear a broadcast of music from a radio station in Delhi simultaneously in Whitefield, the mind also operates like radio waves. Thought waves emanating from the mind have got also the properties of radio waves. There is no end to the waves arising from the ocean of the mind.

The power of thought is adamant. Thoughts outlast the human body. Thought waves radiate very much like heat waves, radio waves and light waves. The thought waves are the cause

understood by man and his conduct has to be based on this awareness.

The whole cosmos is made up of thought waves. Hence, the scripture declares: "The mind is at the root of the cosmos". There is no place, or form or action wherein the mind is absent. Hence, all thoughts of man should be turned in the right direction.

Make the mind pure

When good thoughts, good feelings and good intentions are developed, the mind becomes pure. Only when the mind is pure, can the actions be pure and the fruits thereof be pure.

Today we sow the seed of thought and reap the fruit of action (karma). From the seed of karma arises the fruit of behaviour (swabhava). Out of the seed of behaviour comes the fruit of character. The seed of character yields the fruit of "fortune" (adrishtam). Thus, from thought to fortune, the chain of human progress can be perceived.

Our good and bad luck are thus linked to our thoughts. The mind immerses man in impenetrable darkness through bad thoughts. The same mind can lift man to sublime heights by good thoughts. Thus, thoughts are supremely important for man. They constitute his very life-breath. Without understanding this truth, man allows evil tendencies like anger, envy, hatred, and conceit to fill his mind and thereby courts disaster.

A man seeking to harm others nourishes many evil thoughts in his mind. But these thoughts cause him ten times the harm they do to others. He is not aware of this truth. Consequently, he indulges in abuse of others and in doing harm to them. But there are no "others", but only manifestations of the Divine. Not realising the divinity in others, man tries to harm them. But whoever wields the sword against others, will perish by the sword. The harm which he does to others will be the undoing of himself. Whoever abuses others, will also be the target of abuse by others. As are the thoughts, so is the outcome. The entire human existence is based upon thoughts and their results.

Face is the index of the mind

Man perpetually tries to conceal his faults like the ostrich which buries its head in the sand hoping that thereby the hunter will not see it. In fact, the ostrich becomes an easy target for the hunter. Likewise, a man filled with ego and wickedness imagines that his thoughts are not known to anyone else. But a man's mind is like a gramophone plate. His good and bad thoughts are reflected in his face, though he does not notice it. But any outside observer can observe it well. The face of a man filled with evil thoughts appears like that of a man with pimples. The face becomes like a board indicating what goes on in the mind.

As thoughts lead to actions, man's behaviour, speech and conduct affect the tendencies of the mind and give rise to good or bad impulses. Man imagines that no one can know his thoughts. While entertaining evil thoughts about others, he acts as if he rejoices in their

evil thoughts and degrading himself.

The natural state of a man's heart is pure. But by letting in the poisonous snakes in the form of evil thoughts, he is inviting trouble.

How can a man have peace in his home if there is a snake in it? Bad thoughts in the mind are worse than poisonous reptiles in the house. Absolutely no room should be given for bad thoughts.

Seek good company

By our thoughts we can even cure the ills of others. When the friendship of good persons is acquired through good thoughts, the union of the good leads to the realisation of the Divine.

One's thoughts determine the kind of people with whom one associates. A drunkard seeks the company of drunkards, thief joins the company of thieves, a lawyer with lawyers; and so on. So, good-intentioned persons should associate only with like-minded persons. If they get into the company of evil-minded persons, even their good thoughts may get polluted.

Men do not realise today the prodigious powers of the mind. The five elements, the five life-breaths, the five sense organs, the five sheaths are all based on the mind. It is because the immense power of the mind is not recognised, human life is ruined. By belittling the mind, man is dehumanising himself and behaving either like an animal or as a demon. When man broadens his mental vision, he can realise his Divinity.

If the nation has to improve and progress, if you want to experience the Divine that pervades the cosmos, you have to cultivate thoughts. Do not treat thoughts as trifles. A giant banyan tree grows out of a small seed. There is a saying in Telugu that even a small serpent has to be beaten with a long stick. In the same manner, even a small bad thought has to be rigorously eschewed.

(From Bhagavan's discourse to the Summer School at Brindavan on 23.5.93)

What exactly is the aim and purpose of all the shastras, the Bhagavatam, the Puranas, these discourses and the Harikathas? It is to tell man the truth about himself. There is no plot to mislead you. That is not the desire of the Sages who wrote down these annals and their own experiences. You know only the present and what is happening before your eyes. You do not know that the present is related to the past and is preparing the course of the future. It is like the head-lines and titles of a film on the screen; as the letters gleam one after the other, you read them and pass on to the next that comes to view. Each new letter or word wipes out the one already before your eye, just as each birth wipes out the memory of the one already experienced.

Glorious Days with Bhagavan

Many intimate glimpses of Bhagavan in various moods and attitudes are given in Prof. Kasturi's autobiography, "Loving God", which Bhagavan released on Christmas Day, 1982. Prof. Kasturi relates in his own inimitable style how Bhagavan directed him to go on a pilgrimage with his mother some time after he had settled down in Puttaparthi in 1955.

Prof. Kasturi had not received his pension for a whole year after his retirement from a Government College on "All-Fools' Day" in 1954. When he did receive the amount in a lump sum, his first act was to inform Baba. "When I went to Puttaparthi to tell Him that I had received a full year's pension amount (12 x Rs. 180 and 14 annas) in one lump, He suggested (that is to say commanded) that we go on a pilgrimage to the Gangetic region, to Haridwar, Kasi, Prayag, Gaya, Dakshineswar. When I delayed a few seconds to respond, Baba put His hand on my shoulder, saying Go! Take your mother to Kasi, Triveni and Gaya. She has prayed for years for the chance. She believes that your father's soul can get peace only if obsequial offerings are made at Holy Gaya. Why do you hesitate? Purchase three railway tickets (for Kasturi, his mother and his wife) for the railway journey. We four can travel on those" "That remark clinched the programme," he wrote.

Sankalpa and Sadhana

After describing the pilgrimage in graphic detail, Prof. Kasturi writes about their return to Bangalore and the life at the ashram:

Reaching Bangalore after a day's stop at Madras, I wrote a letter to Bhagavan who was known to be at Kodaikanal, a hill resort, near Madurai. I described the thrilling experience, clearly not the result of hallucination or mental ideation, at Haridwar and Benaras, and offered my gratitude to Him for guiding us through Ramakrishna Land safe and smooth. I received a Kannada language reply from Baba, written in Roman script. He wrote to me, "I am happy that you returned, full of joy after visiting the holy places with your Matru Devi (Venerable mother) and Graha-Lakshmi (Blessed bringer of domestic prosperity). How can delay, disappointment or danger cross your plans when Swami is ever with you? My name is not distinct from my Form. The Name brings the Form before the mind's eye, as soon as it is pronounced or remembered or heard. When the Form is before the eye, the name comes into the consciousness that very moment. Since the Name is dancing ever on your tongue, the Form has to be ever before you and beside you. What need was there to mention this in your letter as a gift from Me? I have to manifest the Form, whenever and wherever my name is remembered with faith or is sung in devotion.

"You might say that those 'Visions were boons of Grace from Swami'. No, I always say, Sadhana first, Sankalpa later. My Sankalpa (will) confers bliss only after assessing the depth of

you can easily understand this. You must have evaluated the answer scripts of many students. You assign marks only after careful scrutiny to discover how diligent they have been in their studies. I also measure and weigh the steadiness of the Sadhana you have imposed on your thoughts, words and deeds, and I frame my Sankalpa in accordance with your progress. Many are not aware that the misery in which they find themselves can be negated by Sadhana and the Sankalpa that can be won through it.

This letter, I must add, does not reveal the amazing spontaneity of Baba's compassion. Sankaracharya describes the Divine Taskmaster as "Ahethuka daya sindhu," "the embodiment of Inexhaustible Compassion which does not examine credentials". Measuring and weighing Sadhana in order to measure out Sankalpa is operative only after His Grace has led the straying steps into the fold. Even while a youth emerging out of teenage, Baba had announced to the world, through a letter to His elder brother, that he had decided to 'hold by the hand' and save the unfortunates who miss the road to 'freedom from fear', Abhaya, identified in the Upanishads with Moksha itself.

"Hold by the hand"

I asked Him once why He had to hold them by the hand. "Lead, kindly Light" is all they pray for, "I said. Baba said," Light can help only those who have insight. The blind, purblind and those whose imagination has raised fumes of fanaticism or clouds of fog have to be led by the hand. There's many a slip between one step and the next. Moreover, I have to inoculate them against cowardice with the vaccine of courage. I have to administer injections in order to reinforce faith and fortitude. How can the doctor use the needle if he does not hold the patient firm by the hand?

He has announced often while addressing thousands in many places, "If you need me, you deserve me". And, he is the judge of the urgency and intensity of the need. One may not even be aware that one is mortally ill or that the nectar that can confer immortality is available in the palm of His Hand. Trust the physician and undergo the regimen, the Sadhana. All will be well.

We resolved to spend the rest of our lives in the hallowed sanctuary, Prasanthi Nilayam. The atmosphere was inviting, vibrant with fraternity, felicity, charity and love-unfolding and enfolding. We were glad we had sailed into the calmness and coolness and we decided to drop anchor there. We were only about fifty residents and at the Bhajan sessions in the mornings and the evenings, about twenty visitors joined us. On some days, the headman of the villages around came, with a few farmers, to lay before Baba local conflicts for solution, or seek His blessings for ventures in cultivating commercial crops. They led newly bought bullocks to His presence so that His Blessings could endow them long life and sound health.

"One of the few"

I remember an old man whose animal was greeted by Baba with a welcoming exclamation. He was a witness of Baba's childhood years at Puttaparthi but since his sons had secured jobs in Government offices at Penukonda, he had to exile himself away from Baba. His

fortnight. Baba conversed endearingly with him, for hours on end, on Sadhana, on Epic Heroes, on Saints and Sacred Places. Baba evinced concern for his health and the happiness of his sons and grandsons. Whenever he was sighted during the Bhajan session, Baba used to leave the silver chair on which He was, move out into the lawn and squat beside him under the rain-tree before the Mandir, and exchange intimacies. I remember His telling me one day; "This Thirumalappa is one of the few people in the village who believed in my uniqueness. He pleaded with the parents to recognise and respect my Reality as the embodiment of God. I was then quite a little boy."

During those years, Baba came down from His room on the first floor usually about four in the evening. It had become quite an unchanging schedule. There were eight tenements on the right of the building, five on the left and a row of six single rooms at the back. These latter were so close to the Mandir that the kitchen fumes were wafted into the Bhajan Hall when the wind turned mischievous.

The Divine visitor

Baba would stand still for a while on coming down, keeping us wondering whither His steps would turn. But, He made up his mind pretty quick whom to bless first. O! How happy He made us! He would enter every home and spend a few enlivening minutes with the occupants.

Every noon, we prepared the house anew for receiving Him. We swept and scrubbed, washed and dusted. Designs were drawn on the floor, greens were hung across the door. There was a chair for Him in every house, artistic and comfortable, placed on: a carpet, with the low footstool in position. The metal lamp in the tiny altar occupying a niche on the wall or a corner of the only room, was lit and kept merrily burning. Each family had a pretty little pan-box for Baba's use, while He sat and chatted. Light green pan leaves, softly scented supari and rose flavoured lime were procured by us for offering to Him.

Every one watched without winking for the orange robe and the crown of hair, though He seldom missed a house while on His mercy march, and though one could be certain of His visit to one's place immediately after His leaving the adjacent house. My house was on the right side of the Mandir. Baba had facetiously named that row of tenements "Brindavan" with an emphasis on syllable three, which means "Jungle". For we had behind our block of houses, a line of thick thorny bushes fencing us off from the road which took the villagers to the river on the east. The row of houses on the left of the Mandir was named by Him as "Gokulam", the "Cluster of cattle", because the most prominent structure there, was for a few cows.

Divine Pranks

Oftentimes, He played pranks with us, pretending to enter but actually moving on, with a puckish curl of lip, to the neighbour's house, plunging us in laughter and tears. We turned green with envy when we were by-passed and the person next door preferred. Often, He exasperated us from there, flavouring His grace with songs and jokes. We heard the bursts of giggle which his impish puns provoked. We condemned ourselves for the misfortune of missing them. All of

or even ten! Had he risen from the chair? Is he moving out? Will He come to us? Is He chewing pan? Is he sipping orange juice? Is He walking along the sides of that room looking at the pictures on the walls? But, no! He usually hums a tune when He does that. Yes. He must have strayed into their kitchen. Ah! That is the sound made by the door which opens to the backyard! Is he looking at the cosy little grass-thatch hut where 'father' Venkataraju resided? Is he about to descend the three stone slab steps and walk across the dusty road?

"Do not doubt"

We dare not peep through the slit of our kitchen door. It would be sacrilege. How can our gossamer guesses fathom His infinite potentiality? Ah! That was a knock at our own kitchen. It is He! He enters our home through that door, with a song designed to sweep our gloom away—a song composed five centuries ago in the Kannada language, so dear to our ears, by Saint Purandaradasa. It began, "Do not doubt the Lord"—the assurance was an admonition.

GURUDEV VANI

SUMMER SCHOOL IN BRINDAVAN

Beyond the Mind

*What can the evil forces of Kali do
To the man whose heart is filled with compassion,
Whose words are immersed in love,
And whose body is dedicated to the service of others?*

*Knowledge of all the shastras and Vedas
Will not serve to remove the curtain of the mind
Which stands between the individual and God.
This curtain makes it appear
That God and man are separate
Though both are one.
Only when the mind is subdued
Will God and man, Nature and God,
The Cause and the Effect become one.(Poem)*

Embodiments of Divine Love!

The mind is responsible for differences in opinions, likes and dislikes, and diversity in attitudes. The world is perceived through the mind. The world is permeated by the mind. Without the mind there can be no world and no attachments and hatreds, no joy and sorrow.

the root cause of all this, man has to go beyond the natural infirmities of the mind to the Overmind to be able to recognise Divinity.

In the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, man is bound by the mind. When man transcends these three states by developing his Inner Vision, he can progress from the human to the Divine.

The seed and the tree

There is a Sanskrit saying "Yaddrisyam thannasyam" (That which is seen is subject to extinction) "Yaipindam thad Brahmaandam:" is another saying that is in the microcosm is in the macrocosm. All that appears in the microcosm are miniature replica of the macrocosm. It is 'like the tree that is latent in the seed. The seed and the tree are not different things. When the tree emerges, the seed disappears (becomes formless). In both the form and the formless, the principle of "Sat" (Being) exists as one and the same. When one looks at the seed, the tree is not visible. When 'one looks at the tree the seed is not visible. But all that are seen in the tree, the branches, the leaves, the flowers and the fruits, were immanent in the seed. When you enquire into the divinity inherent in man, this profound and sacred reality can be recognised.

As long as man sees only with his external vision, he can experience only the external. When man develops the internal vision and experiences the Divinity within, the cosmos will appear as a reflection of the Divine. This is called Realisation of the Cosmic Divine. What is the difference between the cosmic Divine and the Inner Divine? There is no difference between the two. But when it is experienced by the individual, it is described as Inner Divine. When the individual experience is extended to the entire universe, it is called Cosmic Divine. The Individual Self and the Omni-Self (Paramatma) are one like the rind of a fruit and the juice inside.

The differences one notices in the world arise not from the nature of creation but from the perspective from which one looks at the world. Man's view of the world has to change. This cannot be done by intellectual argument. When the mind is subdued, the oneness of the Jivi (Individual) and the Divine will be experienced.

Beautify your heart

From the time he wakes up, till he goes to sleep, man looks at everything externally. He hardly spends a few moments to develop his inner vision. All the external objects can only confer momentary pleasure. Pursuing these pleasures, man wastes his precious and sacred life. He can never achieve peace in this way.

Man devotes considerable time and energy to decorating his home, expecting to derive joy from it. But how long can this last? What he should seek to beautify is his heart. This is not visible to anyone, but the beauty of a pure heart is beyond description. What is it that lends beauty to the heart? The heart is beautified by qualities such as love, forbearance and

sweet. He is worthy of adoration. Every man should aim at becoming such an ideal human being.

What does adoration of the Lord mean? It is not mere offering of worship with the paraphernalia of rituals. It is an attempt to merge in the Divine, experiencing the bliss of oneness with the Divine, recognising unity in diversity and [lie Divinity that is present in all beings.

The triple pollution

Nature will not give real bliss as long as it is viewed from a physical and worldly point of view. The pleasure to be derived from any object in the world depends on the condition in which it is enjoyed. For instance, a mango will be tasteless if it is tender, sour if it is half-ripe and sweet when it is fully ripe. Likewise Nature is a sweet fruit. But if it is seen from a purely sensory point of view, it will give only bitter taste. But when it is viewed as a manifestation of the Divine, its unique sweetness will be apparent.

Thoughts influence the vision, which, in its turn, affects the mind. Thoughts assume good and bad forms. Good thoughts, good speech and good actions make a man truly human. This is the message of the three monkeys pictured as one with closed eyes, another with closed ears and the third with a closed mouth ("See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil").

Today the entire environment is polluted by evil things which offend the eyes, the ears and the tongue. Everyone should free himself from this three-fold pollution. The mind has to be turned towards God.

From the mind to the over-mind

To enjoy the fragrance of the sandalwood, it has to be rubbed on the grinding stone vigorously. Likewise, to experience the great fragrance emanating from Nature, its unity with the Divine has to be realised. For this, it is necessary to transcend the limitations of the ordinary mind and proceed to the Super-Mind, the Higher-Mind, the Illuminated Mind and the Over-Mind.

It should not be presumed that this is a difficult task. In fact it is quite easy. For instance, people feel that adhering to truth is difficult. Actually it is uttering untruth that creates difficult problems. All kinds of plans have to be made to cover up a lie. But to stick to the facts as they are is easy. Men should realise that it is easy to be good. It is going astray that causes difficulties. One cannot always avoid committing a wrong. But one should learn the lesson from it and avoid repeating it. That is sadhana.

When it is admitted that God is in all beings, one should strengthen that conviction and act on that basis. On the contrary, men who profess to believe in God, do not live up to their belief because of their attachment to useless trifles. Here is an illustration from the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa:

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to ecstatically enjoy himself in the worship of the Goddess in the temple built by Rani Rashmani. One night thieves broke into the temple and carried away all the jewels on the idol of Krishna in the temple. With a view to carrying on his regular priestly duties, he went to Rani Rashmani's nephew, Mathuranath, and told him: "Sir, thieves have stolen all the jewels on the idol." Mathuranath was angry and proceeded with Ramakrishna to the temple. Losing his temper and balance of mind, he burst out in anger: "Oh Krishna! Are you not ashamed of yourself? If you are unable to protect your jewels on your own idol, how are you going to protect the whole world? Were you paralysed when the thieves were carrying away the jewels? Or were you asleep? This is a disgrace to your Divinity."

Hearing these words, Sri Ramakrishna said: "Mathuranath! Shut up your mouth! For the sake of your petty jewels and trinkets, is this the way you should berate God? When the Goddess of all wealth, Lakshmi, is the Consort of the Lord, why do you get so agitated over the loss of a few trivial ornaments? The Lord can have no such petty feelings. You are feeling so much for the action of a few thieves who loved some jewels and came to the Lord to get them. It is because of your love for jewels that you are getting distressed so much. But the Lord has no desires. He is ready to give Himself away. God is prepared to offer Himself. Such a One, will He be worried about this petty loss? Hence, change your vision. Don't comment on God." At these words

Mathuranath felt ashamed of himself.

Then, Ramakrishna sat near the idol of Sri Krishna and prayed: "Oh Krishna! As long as one is caught up in the coils of the world, he will speak like an intoxicated man. Only when he gets immersed in God will he become oblivious to himself. Therefore, do not let me get intoxicated. Confer on me the boon of self-forgetfulness." This is what is meant by the saying: "The knower of the Brahman becomes Brahman himself." When one experiences the Divine, he sees the Divine in everything.

Experiencing the Divine

When does man experience the pure Divine Self? It is in the Turiya state, the fourth state of consciousness (beyond the waking, dream and deep sleep states). This is the state of the Over-Mini. In that state man is one with the Divine. He has no attributes. Therefore, he is all-pervading. Nature is bound by the five qualities of sound, touch, form, taste and smell (these are the qualities of space or ether, air, fire, water and earth, the five basic elements). With the loss of each quality, starting from smell, a process of expansion takes place. Finally, we have Akasa (ether or space) which has only one quality (sound) and is all-pervading. That being the case, how much more pervasive must be the Lord, who has no attributes.

If man asks the question, "I am posing this query to the entire world: I have nothing to do with the world. Am I the Truth or not?" The answer that he is the Truth will be evident in a few words. We see before our eyes many persons dying, being cremated or buried after death. In spite of this, everyone has a desire, "I must live for ever." What is the inner meaning of this desire? You are eternal and the idea of immortality arises in you because of this. The body is

one always declares to himself, "I must live, I must live", and does not say, "I too must pass away one day." Even if this idea occurs, it is followed by the desire to live a little longer. Even a hundred-year old ailing man tells the doctor: "Please give the injection gently and don't cause any pain." The mind perpetually seeks comfort.

Truth, Bliss, Beauty

Truth, Bliss, Beauty are forms of the Divine. They are also known as "Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram." These represent the true form of man. Sivam is that which has no death. Sathyam (Truth) is that which is not subject to change (on account of time, place or circumstance). Beauty is the form of the Divine. Vishnu is described as a lover of beauty (Alankar Priyah). Man is described as a lover of food. ("Bhojana priyah") What is this food? This body (gross) flourishes on food. But it is bound to perish some day. But the subtle body, made up of the Life Force (Prana), the mind (Manas) and intelligence (Vijnana) lasts longer. But, for how long? Only as long as the mind lasts. When the mind is absent, what happens? This state is described as "Sushupti"—deep sleep state. In this state, there is only the causal body (Karana Sarira). There is no mind. This is a state of bliss.

Hence, it is essential to understand the functioning of the mind. Man and mind are not separate. To treat the mind as something apart and becoming subject to it is wrong. It has to be treated as a servant as long as the body-mind consciousness remains. Then the mind obeys you. Today man follows the dictates of the mind.

The mind and vijnana

Dear students! It is not easy to subdue the mind immediately. But you must begin to bring it under control. When the mind desires something, you must immediately set the intellect (Buddhi) at work. Why? So that the intellect may give you the proper advice. The mind has to be taught the lesson: "Oh Mind! Don't play your petty pranks. Examine your desire, using the power of discrimination to find out whether it is good or bad, right or wrong. Do not wish to acquire whatever you desire." When you try to teach the mind in this manner, it loses its potency (the keenness to acquire what it wants). This Vijnana is full of intelligence and common sense. It is called Divine Intellectual Will. The Divine Will power has to be acquired by everyone. Only then, they can realise their true human nature. It is through this Will Power that the Cosmic Divine nature of the universe can be recognised. This Cosmic Power has to be seen with the eyes, experienced mentally, practised through the body and made an integral part of one's being. Do not speculate whether this is possible or not. If one has the determination anything is possible. If an ant has determination it can travel any distance. But, even an eagle, if it has no will to fly, will be confined to the ground. Resolve to accomplish what you want to with a firm determination.

Develop the feeling, "I and God are one." This should not be purely a verbal exercise. You must realise the implications of the mantra you recite such as "So-ham" ("He is I") and live up to it. That is true concentration.

Most students do not listen attentively (to the discourses). How can they ever practise the teaching? The eyes are turned towards Swami, but the ears do not absorb Swami's words. Such persons, how can they put into practice Swami's teachings? A few may benefit from these discourses. Even if one or two practise the teachings, that is good enough

Listen carefully. Ruminate over whatever you have heard. Put into practice whatever you have absorbed. This is the meaning of the Upanishadic injunction: "Shravanam (Listen), mananam (ruminate), Nidhidhyasanam (practise)." "Just as there is no meaning in preparing delicious food unless it is consumed and digested, it is useless to listen to discourses unless you put into practice what you have learnt. Only then can the bliss of learning be experienced. Metaphysical lectures alone will not transform the mind. What is learnt must be put into practice. This is the real Vedanta you have to learn today. This is the spirituality that is vital for you. The Lord's name on your lips, thoughts of God in your mind, seeing the Lord with your eyes and meditating on the Lord with love—these four will give you ineffable bliss. Strive to experience this bliss.

From Bhagavan's Discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindavan, on 22-5-1993

The character of the children must be made strong and pure. Give them all the confidence and courage they need to become good, honest, and self-reliant children. It is not enough if they learn something by which they can make a living. The manner of living is more important than the standard of living. The children must also have reverence towards their religion, their culture, their educational attainments and their country. They must learn well their mother-tongue, so that they can appreciate the great poetical works and epics written by the Seers of their land. This will give them valuable guidance in the stormy days ahead

—Baba

VIDYAGIRI SAMACHAR

Bhagavan's Visit to Student's Exhibition

Bhagavan Baba conferred boundless joy on hundreds of students of the Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School at Prasanthi Nilayam on July 13th, when he went round an exhibition on the Sai Message organised by the students in the school premises.

It was a cool morning when Bhagavan drove to the school after the bhajans and Arati in the Mandir. He was greeted with Vedic chants by the students and was escorted by the principal to the class-rooms in which the exhibition, appropriately called, "Sai Sandesh", had been organised by the Students of the various standards, from VIII to XII. Every student of the school had participated in getting up the exhibition, contributing models and posters as exhibits. The exhibition was housed in six halls of the school. Bhagavan visited all the six halls, posed

and a half with the students.

Inspired by the teachings of Bhagavan, the students sought to show in the exhibition the multifarious facets of the Sai Message through models and posters.

The exhibition highlighted prominent themes from Bhagavan's teachings such as oneness of mankind, the unity of religions, the need for spirituality, the methods of Sadhana for Self-Realisation, the glory of Indian culture, the cultivation of human values and spirituality in daily life.

One model titled, 'The Tree of the World', with its roots as God, different branches as nations and leaves as people, sought to present the basic unity of mankind. A model called 'Free of Liberation' showed how the tree is sustained by the waters of Faith and the manure of Patience. "The Match Box and the Match Stick", a model inspired by Bhagavan's discourse at the recent Summer Course at Brindavan, showed how the matchstick of the Mind and the matchbox of the Heart have to act in unison to produce the divine flame of Enlightenment. If the matchstick of the mind is dampened by immersion in the water of sensuous pursuits, it has to be dried in the sun of Vairagya to produce the flame of Enlightenment.

Another model: 'The Shoes of Sense Regulation', showed how man has to walk in the jungle of life, wearing the shoes of sense control without hurting oneself. The consequences of gentle speech and harsh speech were effectively shown through a poster, "The Good Tongue and the Bad Tongue". In a model of a "Department Store", it was explained how one has to pay the price of Sadhana to earn liberation. Another poster on "The Divine Family" presented Jnana as father, Love as mother, Dharma as brother and Dhyana as friend.

An interesting aspect of the exhibition was the number of working scientific models made by the students to demonstrate the great spiritual truths through scientific know-how. For instance, the scientific exhibit, 'Automatic Tap', working on electrical circuits, was used to demonstrate the spiritual truth that self-effort is necessary to drink at the tap of Divine Grace. Similarly the scientific model, "Shoot the Hidden Target", pictures how one should make earnest endeavour to search for hidden lapses and shoot them to reach the final goal.

—R.R.

The spark of Love in you has to be cherished and fed so that it may reach God. Every act will be Divine; every reaction you get from the outside world will be charged with Prema and sweetened with nectar. You love the God in all beings and the God in all beings responds with Love. Love God, though tribulation may be your lot. Love Him, though you are refused and rebuked; for, it is only in the crucible of travail that the metal is purified and cleared of dross. Adoration of God has to be through one name and one form; but, that should not limit your loyalty to that particular form only.

—Baba

Eschew Envy and Greed

Hatred, Jealousy and Avarice exist in the form of social evils in modern society. The Dictionary gives their meanings as ill-will, envy and greed, respectively.

Ego is the root cause of these three bad qualities. Lack of mental control gives rise to unlimited dismays. When worldly success is not achieved, the mind becomes agitated and frustrated. Due to frustration, one becomes jealous. This gradually leads to his downfall. The Kauravas are a classic example to us of persons who became the victims of jealousy and brought about their own destruction.

The sense of separation or superiority makes a person narrow-minded. On account of this, one finds in himself the inability to share the joys of others. Selfishness breeds in him hatred. He thus cannot appreciate another person who is more prosperous and happy.

Bhagavan has said that hatred in spirituality is very dangerous. It ruins the aspirant completely. We know that till the sage Vishwamitra became free from hatred towards sage Vasishta, he could not attain the status of "Brahmarishi".

Coming to the third quality, we find that Avarice is nothing but insatiable desire and lack of self-discipline. It makes a man greedy. When the longing for material pleasures reaches its zenith, man thoughtlessly employs immoral means to achieve his ends. Thus, in the long run, he ruins not only himself, but also pollutes the society. Today we find that corruption and accumulation of black money has taken its root everywhere. The so-called aristocratic class, big business tycoons and multi-millionaires try to acquire money through wrong and illegal means. When they are caught in the trap of income-tax officers, they find their prestige and honour at stake.

Love is the answer

What can we do to cleanse the society of this pollution? One word 'Love' spells out the entire solution. If its significance is understood it may even be equated to God.

When we love someone, we always take care not to hurt that person's feelings. Jesus has said that there is nothing great in loving those who do good to us. Even a sinner does that. We should be able to love our enemies.

True love is unconditional and without any reservations. It is only through such love that we can hope to touch the heart of God. Gandhiji has taught us to hate the evil and not the evil-doer. After all, the evildoer is also a human being with a human heart. If we remember that

anyone because by doing that we would be hating Lord Sai.

Love is nothing but being sensitive towards others' feelings. I am reminded of an incident which illustrates the glory of love. It is an example set by a primary school teacher in the district of Kangra in Himachal Pradesh.

This teacher had a student, Sunil, who was studying in the second standard. He was very dull in his studies. The teacher tried to make Sunil work hard but in vain. She tried to contact his parents to draw their attention to Sunil's future. She sent notes in Sunil's diary to the parents. But all attempts proved futile. Finally, the teacher decided to detain Sunil in the school, hoping that some one would turn up from his house. She was flabbergasted to find that till 7 O'clock in the evening no one cared to know where Sunil was and why he did not return to his house. On reaching his house, she found the door of the house open and a dim light burning in the verandah. An uneasy silence enveloped the place. She felt a sort of vacuum within her. She found a lady sitting in the verandah with a vacant look in her eyes. She showed no reaction on seeing the teacher.

In the meantime, Sunil had kept his school bag in a corner and went and sat next to that lady. The teacher was puzzled. She enquired in the neighbourhood. What did she find? She found that the lady was none other than Sunil's mother. She had gone mad three years ago. Added to this, Sunil's father was a truck driver who used to come home only twice a week. This child of hardly seven years used to get up early in the morning, dress himself, have his breakfast in a nearby small restaurant, and go to school. He was leading the life of an orphan unguided, unloved and uncared for. How could this child rise up to the expectations of the teacher?

Hearing this story of Sunil, the teacher could not bear to look at his face. She kept remembering the innocent face of Sunil throughout the night. By the next morning, she had resolved something in her mind. She went to the principal of the school and told her that she was going to adopt Sunil.

The Principal asked how she could adopt Sunil. The teacher was unmarried. Would not society point a finger at her? But the teacher remained firm. She said that she would not deprive an innocent child of love which he deserved. This was an example of true love set by an ordinary human being, a noble teacher at that. There are various other methods by which we can avoid hatred and avarice in our daily life.

We will have to conduct ourselves with great care. Every word we utter must be spoken with due deliberation. We should keep away from bad company and places which give rise to hatred and jealousy in us. Control of speech is highly desirable. Too much of talk leads to heated exchange of words which turns friends into foes:

only lead the students in a dry competition against each other for grabbing ranks, and thereby creating ill-feeling and politics within the students community.

For this, schools and colleges should adopt the 'Education in Human Values Programme'. Youth should be acquainted with the virtues of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Ahimsa.

We should not get disheartened if the first attempt we make does not give any result because it is said: "When you feel how slowly you climb, it is well to remember that things take time." And efforts made with sincerity, devotion and dedication towards our goal will always bring about success and our hearts will have no more hatred, jealousy and avarice. Love and love alone should guide us in our day to day living.

Suparna Gupta (From "Ten-fold path to Divinity")

"Love My Uncertainty"

He pushes us further and further away when He wants us to discover proximity
He undoes our good works behind us and we are not bound
He plays hard to get when He wants to be caught
And He calls from above so we can keep our feet on the ground.

He loves us close when He seems cross from afar
He builds up our enemies when He wants us confident and making friends
He pretends the world is beyond redemption when redemption is nigh
He talks of beginnings when we are nearing the end.

And His disposition is peace and we know no rest in His churning pot
And His name is Truth and we are to make sense of this
In the end after spinning and spinning in ever-increasing astonishment
We give up looking for truth and are left in bliss!

He gives us clarity so we can speak only to find we confuse
He gives us a mission so we learn to detach and through the
striving to put over a clear message
We come to a door with an unopenable latch,
And His name is Love and we find estrangement our only companion
And what He does is dharma—dharma is what He demonstrates
and He lives as a monk though He says He is no ascetic
And He encourages discrimination though He never hesitates

"You cannot understand Me," He says though He says
"come, examine, have faith"
No, not even if till mankind joins in the effort can we understand Him
Yet we can recognise His ways
And being with Him is love, of that we have no doubt
And His name is Truth and we tire to see His life as His message
We travel thousands of miles to see Him when He is omnipresent
And He has come to foster the ancient Vedas so we can enter the New Age

—Sarah Edwards, U. K.

My Pilgrimage

Has the time come at last when I may go in and see Thy Face?

—Rabindra Nath Tagore

On July 4th, 1991 at 10 p.m. I was raised into the depths of the sky. A strange feeling filled me, for I was destined to reach the land of lands and reside in the Abode of Peace.

Flying in the heavens aboard the German Lufthansa airliner, my thoughts were centered on God as the bestower of everlasting grace and compassion.

My pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam was blissful. During my ten weeks of stay, I was captivated by the divine melodious discourses on the special occasions of Guru Poornima, Onam, and Krishna Janmashtami.

Beautiful, adorable, Sai Gita, with so much love and devotion for Swami, makes me wonder if she really is a four footed animal. Well attired and decorated, she entered the darshan ground on Krishna Janmashtami day. Bhagavan Himself greeted tier. Sai Gita gave several caresses to Sai Krishna... a feast to the eyes. How lucky Sai Gita is! How fortunate are the cows from Gokulam. Sai Krishna Himself is feeding them, patting them and performing their Arathi.

I reminisce about one particular black cow who like a stubborn child kept refusing the banana that Bhagavan was offering her. Baba as a caring mother didn't let her leave without that blessed fruit. I thought it was an act on her part so that she could be with tier Sai Krishna for a longer time.

I remember vividly one particular morning when I was jubilant after Baba's superb darshan. It was a serene morning. A gentle breeze was blowing from the coconut trees. Even the monkeys were very quiet that day (I enjoyed watching their somersaults and gymnastic tricks

for the Bhajans (I saw them sitting there everyday for morning and evening bhajans.)

Bhagavan stepped out in the Verandah and started conversing with college boys. I noticed two big crows started walking towards the verandah. The walk was slow but steady and rhythmic; a confident walk I would say. They had no fear from the students, not even from the volunteers. The graceful walk ended at the Lotus Feet which was covered with orange robe. The touch of the robe was more than enough for those two courageous souls. Their return walk was even more confident and gracious.

Besides the festivals and daily darshans, by Bhagavan's grace I was fortunate enough to attend a wedding ceremony performed by Bhagavan Himself in the Kalyan Mandap.

*As Lord Dattatreya sat on His throne
I sat near His feet
He would glance at me and smile
His face looking ever so sweet.
Baba, the red rose You gave me
Is the most precious gift of all
Will treasure and cherish it forever and ever
Thank you my dearest Baba
For letting me touch those
Soft ever-vibrating lotus feet
I'm overwhelmed with gratitude
For letting me read
Inspiring books from Your library
Thank you my Sai Krishna
For signing in my poem book
Grant me a heartfelt of devotion
So that I may sing Thy glory
Over and over again!!*

—Gunjan Verma, Grade V Freehold, New Jersey

Swami's Post

*With letters handled through the post
You need a stamp or two at most
To have your message carried through
To family or friends you cannot view.
But write to Bhagavan a line*

*The letter folding do with care,
To envelope just add a prayer.
Address it if you please—above
The stamps you'll need are Pure Love.*

Swami's Line

*I sit and wait: "Australia on the line."
So much confusion, difference of time.
But Swami talks to me each day;
No charge, delay in what He has to say.
There's never static on the line
And with my questions I can take my time.
My line's constructed by Belief,
Available through joy or grief
Available through night or day
Or any tune I want to pray.
But let me say before I end this page,
With Swami's Line there never is "Engaged".*

—Joan Miller, N.S.W., Australia

From the Mind to the Over-Mind

*Can life be redeemed merely by performing Japa?
Only when the mind is subdued, can man become sublime.
(Poem)*

The mind proclaims its astonishing uniqueness to the world by its capacity to express feelings, recognise forms, appreciate the beauty of, colour, enjoy different smells, as well as its power of thought. As the world is permeated by these qualities of the mind, these five qualities are all-pervasive. The mind is highly powerful. Once the powers of the mind are understood, the nature of the whole world can be comprehended. When you taste a single drop of sea-water, you know the taste of all the water in the ocean. The drop and the ocean are the same. Likewise, the mind is the world and the world is the mind.

In this vast world, there are today more than 500 crores of human beings. There may be differences among them in name and form and in their food and recreation habits. But when you view them from the physical point of view, all human beings are one. In every human body, there are four forms, which can be understood through proper ("Tattwa") enquiry. In this enquiry into truth, "That" refers to the Omni-Self (Paramatma). The Omni-self is infinite and immeasurable. To understand the infinite Paramatma you have to pursue one of the innumerable paths. Vedanta laid stress on nine of these paths: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing the glories of God), Vishnunamasnam (remembering the names of the Lord), Vandanam (offering salutations), Archanam (ritual worship), Padasevanam (Service to the Lotus feet of the Lord), Dasyam (service), Sakhyam (friendship) and Atmanivedanam (total surrender). All these nine paths of devotion have been prescribed to enable man to experience their varied novelty.

Four bodies of man

To begin with, there is the physical body. It is visible to the eye. The body is made up of twenty-five constituents: five organs of action (Karmendriyas), five sense organs (Jnanendriyas), five life-breaths (pancha-pranas), five sensory faculties (pancha Tanmatras). In addition, there are four inner instruments: the mind, the will, the Ego and the Inner Motivator (Antahkarana). All these total twenty-four. When these are associated with the Life-Force, you have altogether 25 constituents. As these twenty-five constituents have emanated from the cosmos, the embodied being is called "Vishwudu". The physical body is cosmic in form. It is not something that is individualistic. The human state is a manifestation of the collective.

The second body is the subtle one (Sookshma deham). This is made up of seventeen constituents: the five sensory faculties, the five senses and the five vital airs. Together with the mind and the Intellect (Buddhi), they make up seventeen constituents. As these constituents have the quality of luminescence (Tejas), the subtle body is called Taijasudu. The results of man's good and bad actions are experienced by this subtle body. All the pleasant and unpleasant

happenings in the world are experienced by the subtle body. This body is also called "Yathana" body because it is a prey to various experiences.

The third is the Causal body (Kaarana sarira). It is made up of only two constituents: Chitta (consciousness) and Prajna (Constant Integrated Awareness). Because of its association with Prajna, this body is called Prajnanam or Prajna.

Awareness and forgetfulness

The fourth one is Mahakaarana (the Over-Mind). This is self-luminous effulgent in its original form. This is called "Uniki", that is, a Being that is knowing. Because of its capacity for self-knowledge, it is also called "Eruka" (or Awareness). As against Awareness, there is its opposite, forgetfulness. The physical, subtle and causal bodies belong to the latter state (of forgetfulness). The three states of waking (Jagrat), dream (Swapna) and deep sleep (Sushupti) also belong to the state of forgetfulness (or non-awareness of the true Self).

Hence, the true form is Awareness. Awareness is the subtle base. Forgetfulness is gross. But in both the subtle Awareness and the gross Forgetfulness there is a Divinity that is present equally. This is described in metaphysics in a different way. The Jivatma is present always in all the three states of consciousness and in Awareness as well as Forgetfulness as the Inner Being.

Matter and energy

In every object (padartha) in the world, the Transcendental (Parartha) is immanent. The physical object (padartha) is perceptible. The Parartha (Transcendental element) is present in it as energy. Although matter (padartha) and Energy (Parartha) appear to us as two different entities, their unity constitutes the Divine principle immanent in the cosmos. Energy is the subtle base, matter is its gross expression. They are inextricably inter-related. The Gita has described this relationship as the one between Kshetra (the Field) and Kshetrajna (the Knower of the Field). The whole of Nature is "Kshetra". The Kshetrajna is the One who pervades the whole of nature and animates it. Without the Kshetrajna (the Knower), the Kshetra cannot exist. Without the Kshetra, the Knower (Kshetrajna) cannot be perceived. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna declares: "Know me also as the Knower in the Kshetra."

In this context, it should be realised that it is by the power of the mind that creation, sustenance and dissolution take place in the cosmos. This truth is expressed in the Brahma Sutra as: "Thath Jalaan". "From that everything is born, is sustained by it and merges in it" "Thath" (That) is also called "Akshara Purusha" (the indestructible Supreme Person).

Kshara and akshara

"Akshara" in common parlance means that which is indestructible, "kshara" means that which is liable to change. The secret of life is contained in the terms "Kshara" and "Akshara". The body is subject to decay. The Atma (Self) is indestructible. The word "Akshara" contains both the indestructible and the perishable. "A" refers to the Atma, which is indestructible. "Kshara" is the perishable body. "Akshara" represents the unified form of the perishable body

and the imperishable Self. "A" also signifies that which is infinite (Anantham) and immortal (Amritam). "Kshara" is that which is impermanent and unreal.

From the "Akshara" emerges the effulgent Divine, which is a combination of both the Omni-Self (Paramatma) and Nature (Prakriti). Nature is not something apart. The Divine is immanent in Nature. The One is present in both. This was what Prahlada proclaimed when he told his father, Hiranyakasipu, "Do not have any doubts that He (God) is here and not there". Prakriti is not inert. It is by the union of Nature and the Divine that humanness acquires its effulgence.

The mind, the heart and the matchbox

Here is a match-box in my hand. The match-box does not burn my hand. I keep it in this towel. The towel is not burnt. We know that there are matchsticks in the box. When you strike the match-stick, a flame bursts forth. This flame will cause a burn if we hold it in our hand. It can set fire to a towel. Where does the fire lie? In the matchstick or the coating outside the matchbox? It is in both. But only when the match-stick and the outer coating are brought together does the flame emerge. Likewise, there is divinity in the mind and in the heart. But only when the mind and the heart unite does the radiance of Divinity shine.

When the match-stick is dipped in water, you cannot produce fire by striking it, because the fire-producing element in it loses its power. Likewise, when the mind is immersed in the waters of sensuous desires, it loses its power to radiate the Divine effulgence. When will it recover this power? When it is rid of its dampness by going through the drying process of detachment (Vairagya). It is only when this detachment grows in one that he can experience the bliss of oneness with the Divine.

As long as man is immersed in sensuous pursuits, he cannot experience the effulgence of his true nature. When man cultivates detachment by realising the transience of sensory pleasures, then he begins to be aware of his true essence. All forms of ritualistic worship are of no use because they are rooted in duality. Man has to outgrow this state and realise his oneness with the Divine.

God and the cosmos

Man is continually seeking to have a vision of the Divine. But he fails to realise that the Divine is present everywhere in the cosmos. Failure to see the Divine in the visible universe is a mark of ignorance. Everything in the phenomenal universe is pervaded by God. When you see Nature, you see only its worldly aspect. When your mind is centred on God, you see the Divine in everything. The fault lies, therefore, in your outlook (drishti) and not in creation (srishti). Transform your perspective.

Therefore, from the outset, you have to view everything as a manifestation of the Divine. The difficulty in recognising the truth about the Divine was expressed by the Saint Surdas when he sang, "Oh Krishna! How can I recognise you? You are subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest. You are present in the eighty-four lakhs of species in the universe, permeating

everything in the cosmos, from a blade of grass to the vastest thing in creation. How can I recognise your infinite form?" (poem) The great ones experienced God in this infinite form, recognising that the Divine was present even in the wicked and the evil-minded.

The ocean and the waves

The infinite number of human beings in the world are like the waves of the ocean. The waves may differ in form. But however innumerable the waves, each of them is essentially the same as the ocean. From the ocean of Sat-Chith-Ananda (Being-Awareness-Bliss), endless waves of human beings arise. Each of them has the attributes of Sat-Chith-Ananda the Divine. You may be drop in the ocean of Sat-Chith-Ananda. But the difference is only in quantity (size) and not in quality. The divinity present in man and the divinity in God are one and the same, just as bulbs may vary but the current that makes them shine is the same. The differences in luminosity are related to the wattage of the bulbs and not to the current that flows in them. This applies equally to the differences among human beings. When a person is filled with narrow feelings, he appears inferior to one who is more broad-minded and good-hearted. A man may consider himself ignorant, foolish or stupid. But this is utterly wrong. He is, in fact, not ignorant or foolish. He is intelligent, well-intentioned and wise. All that he needs is a change in attitude to experience these inherent capacities. You have to make the divine effulgence in your heart shine.

The mind and the heart

People often recommend that one should "enlarge" his heart. But "enlargement" of the heart will compel you to go to a cardiologist. What you have to do is to broaden your mind, your vision. The heart, meaning not the physical heart but the spiritual heart, is inherently broad. It is one with cosmic consciousness. There is no need to broaden it. Only a broad mind is needed to recognise the vastness of the (spiritual) heart. Narrow-mindedness should go. Narrow ideas of "me" and "mine" should be totally given up in all forms. On the contrary, starting from the "I", you should go on expanding your consciousness to embrace your family, your village, your nation and the entire world. Then your divinity will shine forth in all its brilliance. This is described as having the vision of one's own true universal Self. This is called the Infinite Divine (Maha-purushatwa). You have to become this Infinite Divine. You are Divine even now. But this is only a temporary phase as a result of your devotion. What you should aim at is the Infinite Divine that is unchanging. This divinity is within you. You do not need to acquire it from outside, from anyone else. It is inherent in you. Strive to realise it. When can you realise it? When you have got rid of the consciousness of the waking, dream and deep sleep states, then you can recognise the Maha-Kaarana state (the state of the Super-Causal consciousness). You have to transcend the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies and realise the Super-Causal body. By this process you proceed from the Super-mind, the Higher Mind and the illuminated Mind to the Divine, which is called the Over-Mind. This is the state beyond the mind; it is called "Amanaska" (where the mind is absent). It has also been described as the state of "Videha" (where the body consciousness is absent). The mind is associated with the body. The world is associated with the mind. And the world is bound up with pleasure and pain. All these are sources of bondage rather than of Bliss. Bliss can be experienced only through the Over-Mind.

Experiencing the over-mind

How is one to reach the Over-Mind? Vedanta prescribed the offering of four things as the means: A leaf, a flower, a fruit or water ("Patram, Pushpam, Phalam, Toyam") the Lord is not secured by offerings of wealth or by flaunting one's power or position. The proper significance of the four kinds of offerings mentioned in the scripture should be understood. Out of the selfish desire to secure Krishna entirely for herself, Sathyabhama made an offering of Krishna to sage Narada and tried to buy Him back by offering all her wealth and jewels to be weighed against Krishna. But all of them did not equal Krishna's weight. Then Rukmini was brought and she taught a wise lesson to Sathyabhama regarding the power of devotion. Something, however, small has to be offered to the Lord to secure his grace. This is evident from the experiences of Draupadi and Kuchela. This is also the rationale for the Bharatiya practice of taking some flower or fruit as offering to the Lord when one visits a temple.

In reality, the mere name of the Lord is equivalent to the form of the Lord. When Rukmini invoked the name of Krishna, that was enough to balance the two sides of the scales, in one of which Krishna was seated. Narada said that something more should be offered to tilt the scale in which the offering was being made to him. Rukmini then placed a Tulsi leaf above the jewels and prayed: "If it is true that an offering of a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water by a devotee will win the favour of the Lord, Oh Krishna, submit yourself to this Tulsi leaf." The scale in which the tulsi leaf was placed, uttering the name of Krishna, went down immediately.

The body, the heart, the mind and the tears

What is the inner significance of the reference to the four kinds of offerings? "Patram" refers not to a kind of leaf which is subject to withering. Your body is the leaf that has to be offered. "Pushpam" refers to the flower of your heart. "Phalam" refers to the fruit of your mind. And "Toyam" signifies the tears of joy flowing from the devotee's eyes. These are to be offered to God.

When one offers these things to the Lord, he enters the state of the Over-Mind. This devotion, moreover, should not be a part-time exercise. It should be present all the time, through weal or woe, pleasure or pain. "Satatam Yoginah" declares the Gita. The yogis are in constant communion with God. To be yogis in the morning, lovers of food at noon and victims of disease in the evening are the ways of men today. The true devotee is immersed in the Lord all the time and performs all actions as offerings to the Lord. Any action you do, as a teacher or a student or an employee, when you do it in the name of the Lord, it becomes a pious offering. This is the easiest way to sublimate the mind. When you consider your body as a gift from God, you will not do any sinful act. When you consider your wealth as a gift from God you will not misuse it. You will make the right use of it. Likewise, when you regard all your talents as endowed by God, you will use them in the service of the Divine.

In the Sathya Sai Organisation, a fourfold programme of ceiling on desires has been laid down. This enjoins on everyone not to waste food, money, time and energy. Avoiding waste of these four forms of gifts from God is spiritual sadhana. It is the means to Self-realisation.

Sanctify every action

Spirituality consists in forgetting worldly concerns and immersing oneself in God. This means sanctifying every action in life, whether it be talking or walking or anything else. Reading and writing are also forms of meditation, because they call for concentration: Everything in life can become a form of meditation.

Avoid doing anything in a hurry. It is not difficult to attain the state of the Over-Mind if one has the determination to realise it. Crores of rupees are being spent on exploring space. But very little effort is made to explore the heart within one's self.

When everyone tries to act according to the dictates of his conscience, he will realise the sublime consciousness within him. There are two basic elements in man, the head and the heart. When these two are put to right use, the hands will act in the right way.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi!*")

(From Bhagavan's Discourse to the Summer School at Brindavan on 1.5.93)

AVATAR VANI

SWANTANTRA DINA SANDESH

Bharat: Then and Now

*What greater misfortune can there be than the failure of
Bharatiyas to know the unique greatness and sacredness of
Bharat's ancient culture*

(Poem)

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

In ancient times, the spiritual culture of Bharat spread the message of peace and harmony to various countries in the world. Then, as well as now, the Aryan tradition has proclaimed to the world the benediction: "Let all the worlds be happy!" (*Loka as-samasthassukhino bhavantho!*) This tradition was upheld even at the sacrifice of their lives by the ancient kings, the savants and the noble women of the land.

Today the rulers as well as the citizens are caught up in worldly concerns and are forgetting this great cultural heritage. In the sphere of the physical and the material, man has achieved many significant victories. But he has not made the slightest progress in the fields of morality, spirituality and wisdom. What is the reason? It is the deep-rooted selfishness in human beings.

Reign of selfishness

All of man's thoughts, desires and actions are saturated with selfishness. Man today has become a puppet in the hands of selfishness. Whatever object one desires, he does not seek it for its own sake. When he loves anyone, it is not for that person's sake. He loves the other for selfish reasons.

Those who have not understood the sacredness of Bharatiya culture cannot realise the sacred nature of love. The ancient Bharatiyas were votaries of truth and practitioners of righteousness. They stood for justice. Today the people have forgotten this legacy. This is the calamitous influence of Time.

It is only when, spiritually and morally, the character of the nation is developed will Bharatiya culture come into its own.

Our youth today are unable to appreciate the value of this ancient culture because its values are not being properly propagated among the people. With the waning of the hold of this culture on the people, humanness itself is being undermined. If human values are not upheld, of what use is the human birth? As a human being, a man should manifest human values.

Moreover, human beings can realise their inherent divinity only when they recognise the unity that underlies the apparent diversity. There are today many intellectuals who propagate divisive tendencies, but there are very few good men engaged in promoting unity.

The human family

Despite differences in names and forms, in food habits and in speech, all men belong to one human family, of which God is the Father. Not realising this truth, men are victims of divisive forces.

Every man has to develop the divine faculties in him. God is the embodiment of Love. Love is his nature. Such sacred love is in every man. Even as God is manifesting to the world His selfless love, every man should manifest his unselfish love to everyone. Man is not apart from God. The Lord has declared in the Gita: "Every human being in the world is a fragment of My Eternal Self". This implies that man is not an aspect of Nature or of the physical elements. He is Divine in spirit. This is the repeated declaration of the Lord.

God is love

The ancient sages described this Divine Love as "Atmavaan", implying that Love is the form of the Divine. This is called "Swashakti", meaning the power of the Atma ("Swa"). Today people are oblivious to this Atmic power. Relying on the strength of the physical and the material world, men are forgetting the boundless power of the Atma. The physical body is perishable. Only the indwelling Spirit (Dehi) is Divine.

Today, there is great need for propagating the doctrine of Love. Divine love is beyond comprehension by the mind or description by words. Love is the very form of the Absolute (Brahman). When men forget love, are they not forgetting the Divine Itself?

People speak about freedom, calling it "Swechha". What is this "Swechha"? Knowledge of Brahman is "Swechha". It is Absolute Bliss (Brahmanandam). Instead of seeking this kind of spiritual freedom, people today are going after freedom in worldly terms. In the place of the pure, sacred, eternal Divine Love, men are lost in transient and momentary attachments.

The Divine cannot be realised through wealth, scholarship or by any other means except love. This sacred love is being fragmented in many ways out of worldly attachments and is being treated as a trivial thing. This is the manner in which people today reject truth and welcome falsehood and go afar to consume alcoholic drinks while refusing wholesome milk and curds offered to them at their doorstep. It is the bad feelings within them which make them behave in this way. Hence, there is great need for people to cultivate good thoughts and good feelings.

Love can be promoted only by the grace of God's love. The world has no dearth of wealthy men, intelligent men, or powerful men, but there are few spiritually realised persons. What is it that great emperors like Harishchandra, Nala and Rama took with them when they left the world? What is in store for the men of wealth and power today? What is it that they will take with them? Nothing, God alone is the eternal truth that will accompany the lover of God.

Freedom sans unity

Bharatiyas got their freedom (in 1947), but did not achieve unity. True education consists in teaching people to live in peace and harmony with a feeling of common fellowship. Life today is riddled with differences and discord. Hatred reigns everywhere. Of what use is our freedom (Swatantram). "Swa-tantram" really means freedom of the Spirit ("Swa"). It is not related to the physical. People speak about "Independence". What is this Independence? It was meant to convey the idea that freedom means not depending on any outsider. But are we really self-reliant today? We are dependent on many in several respects. How can we claim we are independent when we are dependent on others? There is only one difference between the old British days and now. In those days we used to accuse the white men of oppressing the coloured natives. Today the natives are oppressing the native population. Did we achieve freedom only to inflict suffering on ourselves through our own men? Is it to besmirch our culture that we got our freedom?

We must certainly safeguard our freedom. But essentially that freedom is spiritual freedom. Any other kind of freedom is not freedom at all.

Youth today have no sense of patriotism. In the pre-independence days, many young men made great sacrifices for the sake of freedom. This was because the leaders of those days also made great sacrifices for freedom and inspired the youth to do likewise. However, leaders today talk in one way and act in another way. They deliver lectures on Bharatiya nationalism. The moment they get down from the stage, they talk about caste and creed and promote divisions

among the people. How, then, can youth develop a genuine feeling of nationalism? The result is there is hardly any sense of national love and pride among the young people.

Dear students! Whatever anyone may say, regard this country as the land of your birth. It is your Motherland. It is your own native land. Love of the country must get firmly rooted in our young persons. You have to take a firm resolve to protect your Motherland.

Aurobindo's call to youth

Once, Aurobindo asked a group of students in Calcutta: "For what purpose are you studying? If you are going to make use of your education for the benefit of the nation pursue your studies. Otherwise, you better burn your books. If you are studying only out of selfish motives, the education is of no value at all. If you are intent only on earning a living, you may as well beg from door to door. You must be prepared to sacrifice yourselves for your Motherland". "Breathes there the man with soul so dead who never to himself has said: This is my Motherland, this is my mother-tongue. To love my country is my religion."

Service to the nation

A youth who is not prepared to sacrifice his life for his country is as good as dead. Service to the nation is the greatest thing one can think of. All religious practices are worthless without service to one's fellow-men. Without the spirit of service, holding any office or position (udyoga) is meaningless. "Ud-Yoga" (official position) must stem from "Yoga" (realisation of the Divine).

True Bharatiya culture consists in developing a spirit of service, with a feeling of all-embracing love. A man can get on without many things in life. But he cannot get on without love. Love is at the root of all action. This love is Divine. It is unchanging, pure and unsullied. It is unaffected by joy or sorrow, loss or gain. Feeling elated in a moment of joy and getting depressed in a moment of grief is the mark of worldly love.

Divine love is spiritual and is infinitely precious. It is not fickle and changing from moment to moment. One who is immersed in the ocean of Divine love will have no words to express its greatness and sweetness. He will speak in the language of silence. He will keep away from idle talk or debate. Those who experience the bliss of Divine love will be filled with an inner joy, whatever the external troubles they may encounter.

Eliminate pollution

It is only when we cultivate this kind of love that we can claim to have achieved real freedom. Today there is no unity in the country. In its absence, enmity has taken its place. Where there is enmity, there is no purity. Today; the air is polluted. Even the sound vibrations in the ether, air, fire, water and earth, are polluted. How are they to be purified? Everyone should purify and sanctify the atmosphere by chanting the name of the Lord (Namasmarana). Every sound emanating from man enters into the radio waves in the atmosphere and gets permanently recorded. If the sound waves in the world today are polluted, it is because of the unsacred words uttered by people. By chanting the name of the Lord, the sound waves in the atmosphere must be sanctified.

Thereby, these waves can bring about a great transformation. The world, it is said, can be destroyed by an atomic bomb. Sacred sound waves can achieve greater things for the world. They can create a new world.

The power of consciousness

Man has to understand the power of three kinds of potencies: Iccha-shakti, Jnana-shakti and Kriya-Shakti. Iccha Shakti (the power of the will) should combine with electrical energy. There is, for instance, an aura round my thumb. If this energy were not in the body, it cannot move at all. This is called "Chaitanya" (the power of Consciousness). This Consciousness is all-pervading consciousness, every individual derives what is called Conscience. This Conscience, when it functions through the sense organs, brings about the conscious state. All actions belong to the conscious state. All functions of the mind are related to the Conscience. All that is done through the Buddhi (the intellect) is related to Consciousness (Chaitanya). The Consciousness that is all-pervading is present in the human body from top to toe. In spite of the presence of this Consciousness, men are misusing it or making no use of it. Just as barely 2 percent of the energy coming from the sun is used by the world, hardly a minute fraction of the power of the Divine Consciousness in man is being properly used. Make use of it to help society. Do not live only for your own sake. When you use your energies in the service of society, the Divine power in you gets surcharged. It will not diminish to the slightest extent.

Consider every human being as the embodiment of the eternal Devine. The very name "Nara" for man means that his essence is imperishable. It also means he is the embodiment of the Atma. Born as the immortal Spirit, if man leads the life of an animal, there can be nothing more disgraceful.

Freedom of the spirit

We celebrate what we call our "Swatantram"—the freedom of the Spirit ("Swa"). "Swatantram relates to external freedom. "Swatantram" is concerned with inner freedom. It is through the internal that we enjoy the external freedom. Hence, the first requisite is purity of the heart. If the heart is pure, all that you think and do will be pure, just as water from a tank filled with pure water will be pure in any tap. If your thoughts and actions are impure, you are the cause of their impurity because you have polluted your heart. You are the cause of your joy and sorrow. Do not blame others for your troubles. It is a sin. Blame yourself for your condition. Self-punishment is as important as Self-Realisation. Through Self-punishment you get self-satisfaction, which promotes self-sacrifice. That is the prelude to self-Realisation.

You must engage yourself in a constant process of self-enquiry to determine whether you are right or wrong. This is a spiritual exercise. It enables you to understand the true nature of freedom, namely, harmony in thought, word and action. Essentially freedom consists in maintaining complete accord between thought, word and deed.

It is supremely important to have good feelings. One ends his life in a good way if he entertains always good feelings. These who are racked by doubts and suspicions are ultimately a

prey to their own doubts. It should be realised that death is more important than birth. The manner of one's death indicates the way he lived.

Therefore, fill your hearts and minds with good feelings and thoughts. What is good? It is love alone. Eschew hatred, envy and other vices.

Fill the heart with love

Fill your hearts with love. Students today tend to fill their minds with all sorts of stuff about the world. What is necessary is to fill the heart with love and the head with wisdom. Engage the hands in service. This alone will manifest the significance of human existence.

To lead a peaceful life, you should bear no ill-will towards others. Cultivate unity as the key to peace in the home or outside. Consider your body as a home. The mind, the tongue and the limbs are like members of a family. If they all function harmoniously, there will be peace. But if the three are at variance with each other, there can only be discord and disharmony. Therefore, in unity lies strength, peace and success.

"Act as one"

This was the lesson that Dharmaja taught when he declared that as against the rest of the world, they were 105 (the five Pandava brothers and the 100 Kaurava brothers), but when they had internal differences, they were five against hundred. When the country is faced with an external threat, all parties should come together. They should not divide the country. You may fight among yourselves tooth and nail, but when the nation is in peril, you should act as one. You must protect the security and integrity of the nation. That is the way to cherish our freedom. Unfortunately, today, this unity is lacking. There is too much struggle for the loaves and fishes of office. How can the nation progress in this situation? The parties that have mushroomed in the country are tearing the nation to pieces.

This is utterly wrong. You must all live in unity. All are children of Bharat. All are equally entitled to a share in the patrimony. You have to earn your right to this patrimony by your love for the country. Without earning the right, people are fighting over the spoils. They are not entitled to this right.

Dear students and devotees! Cultivate love and cherish divine feelings and pray for the welfare of the nation and the world. Bharat has always upheld the concept of universal well being. All the five hundred odd crores of human beings in the world are the children of one God. Don't foster narrow regional loyalties. The world is one vast mansion. Countries like America, Russia, India are rooms in that mansion. The national barriers are like walls. Once the barriers are removed, humanity will be one family. National attachments should be got rid of. Differences of race and religion should go. Then alone will peace reign on earth. Therefore, develop love.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan "*Prema muditha manase Kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram!*")

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindavan, on August 15, 1993

AVATAR VANI

GOKULASHTAMI SANDESH

Inscrutable are the Ways of the Lord

"Kleem Krishnaaya, Govindaaya, Gopijanavallabhaaya Swaha!" "Kleem" means the earth. "Krishnaaya" Means water. "Govindaaya" means fire, "Gopijanavallabhaaya" refers to air. "Swaha" refers to ether (or Akaasa). Krishna's name encompasses the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. This signifies that the Cosmos is permeated by the Divine.

Embodiments of Divine Love!

“The Cosmos is under the sway of the Divine. God is subject to the sway of Truth. Truth is subject to the noble one (Uttama). The Noble one is the embodiment of the Divine” (Sanskrit-sloka).

It is not easy for all to recognise the truth about the Divine. Only the person who can comprehend the inner meaning can recognise the mature of the Divine. The Divine, which has both an internal and external significance, cannot be understood by exercising the imagination alone. Every person born on earth should recognise his inherent divinity and make his life meaningful by leading a Godly life. This is the primary goal of life. Only that person has re-deemed his life who recognises every moment the Divine in every atom and in every, cell and who inspires in others this consciousness about the Divine. It is not enough to secure a vision, of the Divine. One has" not only, to lead a Godly, life himself but help others to live likewise This is the supreme purpose of human existence.

Man does not devote any thought as to how he should make his life meaningful. The human heart is the seat of the Divine. Every devotee should adore the Lord seated in the heart. The spiritual aspirant should fill his heart with divine feelings and lead a life of fulfillment.

The Chataka bird and gopikas

You have the example of the Chataka bird. It is in continuous search of pure rain-drops falling from clouds. There is no lack of water on the earth. But the Chataka bird desires only the pure unsullied raindrops falling from a cloud and will go through any amount of trouble to secure them. It has no use for any other kind of water associated with the earth. Likewise, the true sadhaka, devotee or disciple, will only desire to secure the nectarine love of the Lord and for its sake will be prepared to go through any trouble or sacrifice.

The Gopikas (Cowherdesses) exemplified such deep devotion in their love for the Lord. They offered, all they had in the service of the Lord and performed every act as an offering to the Divine. The term "Gopi" is derived from the word "Gop". The term "go" means the Vedas. It has another meaning, "the earth". It also refers to the cow. The Gopikas used to chant the Vedas. They protected the cows. They sanctified the earth. Not understanding this sublime aspect of their nature, people have misrepresented them in various ways, regarding them as ordinary women. Even their devotion was misconstrued because of the failure to understand the true nature of their love for the Lord. On account of their narrow-mindedness, these critics could not grasp the deep significance of the Gopikas' devotion.

The lotus of the heart

In every human being, there are what are known as the "Shadchakras" (the six chakras). Among them, two are important. One is the "Hridaya Chakra" the Chakra relating to the heart. The other is the "Sahasrara Chakra". The "Hridaya Chakra" is described in Vedantic parlance as "Hridaya Kamala" (the Lotus of the Heart). This "lotus" has eight petals. Every petal is called "Prakriti" (Nature). All the eight petals are under the sway of the Lord. This means that God is the master of the eight petals ("Adhipati"). Because Krishna is the "Pati" (or husband) of these eight petals, he is said to have eight "Queens", according to the scriptural text. Those who did not understand the esoteric meaning of all this, described Krishna as having eight queens and as having sported with 16,000 Gopikas. The real meaning of the reference to Krishna's "eight queens" is that he is the Lord of the lotus of the human heart. As such, he holds sway over the heart. When this is rightly understood, the supreme greatness of the Divine will be apparent.

Vishnu and Vishwam

God is called in His Cosmic form as Vishnu, who permeates everything in the cosmos. God is the cause' and the cosmos is the effect. You must try to understand the various attributes of the Lord. Vishnu is depicted as having a conch in one hand and a wheel in another. In a third hand he carries a mace and in the fourth a lotus. What is the esoteric significance of all this? The conch is a symbol of Sound. Hence, God is described as the embodiment of Sound. The Wheel (Chakra) symbolises the Wheel of Time (Kalachakra). The Lord is the master of Time and Sound. The mace signifies strength or power. This means that the Lord holds in his hand the strength of all beings. The lotus in the Lord's hand is a symbol of the heart. This means that the Lord holds in His hand the hearts of all beings. Because the symbolism of these attributes of the Divine was not properly explained by the commentators on the scriptures, a great deal of misunderstanding and confusion came to prevail in later years.

As regards the "Sahasrara Chakra" (in the head of the human body), it is a thousand petalled lotus, each petal having sixteen "Kalas" (or phases). There are thus 16,000 kalas in the Sahasrara. These phases were symbolically described as the wives of the Lord. The inner meaning of these expressions should be properly understood. Going only by the superficial and literal meaning of these terms, the nature of the Divine is misconstrued and misinterpreted.

The Lord confers freedom

It is necessary to get at the inner meaning of what is said in the Ramayana, the Bhagavatha or the Bible or any other scriptural text. The good is liable to be misunderstood and construed in perverse ways. There is need for protecting carefully what is good and sacred. A beautiful parrot is kept in a cage. No one bothers to safeguard the crow. Likewise, the wicked are without restraint. Only the good are subject to restraints, ordeals, tests and difficulties.

Krishna was born on Ashtami (the eighth day of the lunar month). From the moment of birth, He was subject to troubles. But whoever cherished the name of the Lord in the heart was free from bondage. Vasudeva was a prisoner. But the moment Devaki placed the infant Krishna on her husband's head, he became free. The moment the Lord touched his head, Vasudeva's fetters dropped away. As long as he carried Krishna on his head and till he deposited the child in Repalle, he was free. He placed the child in Yashoda's house. Then he returned to his prison and became bound as before. What is the meaning of this episode? As long as Divine thoughts fill our minds, there is no bondage. But when you give up the Lord, you get bound in every way.

Krishna and his foes

There are deep inner meanings for the actions of the Lord. Kamsa tried every conceivable means to kill Krishna. But the Lord is beyond the grasp of anyone. Small-minded persons, consumed by hatred and jealousy, may entertain such designs. But these evil plans only recoil on the plotters and can cause no harm to God. They will only enhance His glory.

There were reasons for Kamsa's hatred. An ethereal voice had declared that Kamsa would meet with his death at the hands of the eighth child of Devaki. Out of the selfish desire to save his own life, Kamsa sought to do away with Krishna by various means. All his efforts were of no avail. Kamsa carried out a slaughter of the children in Repalle in the hope of killing Krishna. Krishna eluded his grasp. A man's intellect turns crazy when he is facing destruction. Because of his wicked actions, Kamsa came to a disastrous end.

This, however, is not the end of the story. Two other wicked men, Shishupala and Danta Vakra, rose against Krishna. After these two had been slain by Krishna, Jarasandha came forward. Many demons in human form sought to eliminate Krishna. They all failed utterly. They brought disaster upon themselves.

Thus, from aeon to aeon, the Divine is confronted with such hostile elements. Happiness cannot be got without going through difficulties. Fame is the product of blame.

Such incidents happen in the life of every Avatar and in every age. They serve to promote the greatness of the Avatar and not to tarnish it.

Yantra and mantra

Is it possible for any ordinary individual to make his appearance simultaneously in numerous different places? If it is stated that the same person appeared simultaneously in the homes of 16,000 Gopikas, not only will people today disbelieve in it, but many will ridicule it. But this is the reaction of petty, unthinking people, who have no spirit of enquiry. If one enquires

into the truth, it will be seen that even in modern times such a phenomenon is taking place. The broadcast of a music programme from Delhi is heard in millions of homes in its completeness, all at the same time in a myriad different places. A person speaking on T. V. can be seen in a million homes. If a manmade contrivance (Yantra) can have such a far-reaching power, why should it not be possible for the power of mantra to reach millions simultaneously?

How God's grace operates

The image of Krishna could appear in the hearts of the Gopis, though they were far away from Him. What is necessary is to purify the heart. The image of the Divine will not be reflected in an impure heart. There is no limit to the power of the Divine. Only the small minded have limited power.

God alone knows to whom, in what circumstances, at what time, to what extent and in what form His grace should be showered. For example, take the case of Draupadi. In his vast audience-hall, Duryodhana was inflicting humiliation on Draupadi. Unknown and unseen by anyone, Krishna was giving to Draupadi an endless number of saris. How are ordinary persons likely to view the situation? They might ask: How is Krishna tolerating this kind of disrobing of Draupadi? Why does he not reduce Duryodhana to ashes that very moment? Why does He not put an end to his life? When the devotees are in agony, should the Divine merely look on? The ignorant may tend to react in this fashion.

God's role in cosmic drama

But the Divine, who is the embodiment of peace, love and truth, has to take note of the cause, the remedy and the task to be done (Karana, Karya and Kartavya). In the great cosmic drama, the Lord is also an actor. The time should be ripe for the role he has to play in a particular sequence of events. His action should be appropriate to his role. He cannot act otherwise.

For instance, if Krishna decided to kill Duryodhana at the moment of Draupadi's humiliation, he would be going against his role in the play. He has to play his specific part. Krishna knew that Duryodhana's end lay in the hands of Bhima and not in His. It would be against his dharma if he did what Bhima had to do. Bhima alone should slay Duryodhana with his mace. This is the law of creation. Krishna waited for the ordained event.

Thyagaraja's faith in Rama

Likewise, in various situations, the Lord remains as a witness. Is the Lord powerless or is the devotee's prayer ineffective? This sort of doubt arose once in the mind of saint Thyagaraja. Thyagaraja's elder brother subjected him to many ordeals. Resenting the action of Thyagaraja in rejecting the treasures sent by the ruler of Tanjore to the saint, the elder brother cast into the river the idols of Rama and others worshipped by him. Thyagaraja made a frantic search for the missing idols. Although a great devotee, Thyagaraja felt frustrated. He asked the Lord, "Oh Rama! Why are you subjecting me to these difficulties? Is it because my devotion has weakened"? Or has your power declined?" Thyagaraja felt that his devotion had not diminished. So Rama's power must have weakened. But, pondering over it further, he realised that Rama's strength remained undiminished. He began to sing a song in praise of Rama's prowess. "Without

Rama's power, could a monkey have been able to cross the ocean? Or would the Goddess of wealth have chosen to be his consort? Or Lakshmana serve him? Or the supremely intelligent Bharata revel in beholding him and worshipping him?" Thyagaraja ecstatically extolled the infinite prowess of Rama and blamed his own ignorance for having doubts about Rama.

Many devotees, out of their worldly pre-occupations & narrow-mindedness, tend to develop doubts about the Lord. The Lord, however, always remains at the same supreme level. He is not elated by praise or depressed by censure. The Lord is unchanging.

Lord's concern for world's well-being

The Divine, therefore, has to be viewed from a wide perspective. Whatever the Lord does is for the well-being of the world. His sole concern is the welfare of the world.

It was this which made Bharat declare from ancient times, "Let all the world's people be happy." From early times Bharat held forth great ideals to all other countries in the realms of ethics and spirituality.

With the passage of time, faith in these ideals has waned. Man today is plagued by scepticism. He is racked by doubts. The combination of these two is the cause of all troubles.

The wicked quartet

In the Mahabharata, Shakuni represents doubt (anumana). Kama symbolises lack of faith (Avishwasam). When these two come together, Asuya (envy) in the form of Duryodhana emerges. Envy is accompanied by wickedness in the form of Dussasana. When the four come together, the fate of the Kauravas is sealed. The Kauravas represent bad thoughts, bad intentions, bad actions and bad attachments.

Krishna clearly foresaw the fate of the Kauravas long before the Kurukshetra war. He told Arjuna: "Get up. Be prepared for war. Justice will prevail. Selfishness will suffer disaster. This is the Dharma of every age. The parents of these wicked ones will have none of their children left to offer them the last rites. That is the decree of fate." Krishna concluded His call to Arjuna with the declaration that there has to be a downpour of arrows to ensure world peace after the wicked Kama, Shakuni and others had been destroyed in the fires of hate stirred up by them.

Death and destiny

Over the ages, the wicked have behaved in the manner of the Kauravas and have met with the fate they deserved. There is no escape for anyone from the consequences of his actions. Death may come at any time, in any place, in any form. No one can tell the time or manner of anyone's death. It is pre-ordained. There is no meaning in analysing the pros and cons of such happenings. Even good devotees sometimes develop doubts and argue over trifles.

Once Krishna set out to kill Jarasandha. But whenever Jarasandha came out of his city to fight Krishna, the latter would flee from the battlefield. Was Krishna afraid of Jarasandha? Not at all. But Krishna wanted to find out the appropriate means of slaying Jarasandha. Krishna had a

strategy. Each time Krishna went to challenge Jarasandha, he would get enraged and he would come out to pursue Krishna. Krishna would go on retreating. By repeating these tactics several times, Jarasandha was made to expend his strength in futile rage. A man's strength is considerably reduced by his anger. A man's life-span is cut to pieces by the shears of envy, anger and hatred. Envy is the main cause of shortening a man's life; when a man gets angry, his whole body trembles. His blood gets heated. It takes three months for the blood to get cool again. One moment of anger may consume the energy got from six months of eating. This is the way anger debilitates a person. By systematically weakening Jarasandha in this way, ultimately Krishna managed to slay him.

Prahlada and the Lord

Consider the cases of Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu. They were not ordinary men. They were the incarnations of Jaya and Vijaya, the divine guards at the gate of the Lord's mansion (in Vaikunta). Hiranyakasipu developed bitter hatred towards Vishnu as the slayer of his brother, Hiranyaksha. He searched for Vishnu in every conceivable place—in the ocean, deep in the earth and in the sky—but could not find him. Had Vishnu run away from Hiranyakasipu out of fear? No. He was omnipresent. But, He could not proclaim it Himself. He made Hiranyakasipu's son Prahlada declare it. He asked Prahlada: "You simpleton! You, go on praising Hari. Where is that Hari? Show him to me. I have explored every particle of the Universe. I have not found him. Hence I am the Lord whom you should worship." Prahlada replied: "How can I worship the enemy of Hari? Hari is everywhere." "Can you show Him?" asked his father. "Certainly", replied Prahlada. "Is he in that pillar?" "Yes, he is", said Prahlada. The Lord came out of the pillar to confirm his devotee's faith. Prahlada had affirmed the omnipresence of the Lord and the Lord testified to the truth of his belief. The Lord is not visible to the non-believer.

Rules of the cosmic game

Whether the Lord makes his presence felt in certain situations or not should not be judged by narrow human considerations. The Lord will reveal his powers only at the appropriate moment, when the time is ripe. Just as a fruit takes time to ripen, God also bides his time. It is improper to speculate on the nature of the Divine's actions. Even the omnipotent and omniscient Lord has to respect the time factor. He has to observe the rules of the Cosmic game. He cannot violate His own rules and regulations even as a traffic authority cannot transgress the traffic rules made by him.

For instance, God has endowed a lamp with the power to shed light and the wind with the power to blow out the lamp. When a lamp is exposed to the wind, the Lord will not direct the wind not to blow out the lamp. Everything in creation has to act according to the laws of its existence. The five elements are governed by laws which they have to observe.

The Bhagavatha relates many episodes which give rise to questions. The answers to these questions may vary according to the understanding of the persons concerned. But no one can fully comprehend the ways of the Lord. Whatever is destined to happen must happen. No one is competent to ask of God why he has not prevented something? God alone can decide this matter.

The Divine Mystery

Few can account for the actions of the Lord. For five thousand years, men have been exploring every kind of phenomena in this Universe. But no one has been able to unravel the mystery of the Divine. God is all-powerful, all knowing and all-pervasive. But whatever happens in the Universe is governed by cosmic laws. Their working cannot be easily understood. That is why a devotee said: "Is it possible, Oh Krishna, to recognise your, mystery? You are subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest thing in creation. You are present in the 84 lakhs of species in the Universe and permeate every place in the cosmos. You are present in the good as well as the wicked -and make them play their respective roles. You are in the accuser and in the accused. How can anyone understand your Divine mystery?"

Submitting to God's will

When men declare their belief in the idea that God is one, irrespective of differences in names, they should act up to their belief by developing equal-mindedness towards everyone. This is the cardinal principle of Bharatiya culture: to treat joy and sorrow, loss and gain with equal serenity.

Realise that it is not possible to comprehend fully the ways of the Divine. Strengthen your faith in God, carry out the Lord's injunctions, experience the bliss derived there from and redeem your lives. Do not indulge in futile speculation or controversy. All are aspects of the Divine. Whatever happens is for your good. Fill your hearts with this conviction. Consider everything as coming from God for your good. God knows what is good for you even as a loving mother knows what a child needs. No one can expect to receive whatever he prays for, because in his ignorance he may ask for what is not good for him. The wise man will not seek anything from God, but leave everything to God.

The example of chaitanya

Chaitanya exemplified this quality of unquestioning faith in the will of the Divine. When he was going about in his native village Navadweep, chanting the name of Krishna, some envious persons attacked him and took away the cymbals from his hands. Chaitanya accepted the loss as a sign of grace from Krishna and continued singing, using his hands for clapping. He said: "Oh Lord! I am using these hands you have given to me for clapping, while singing your praise. I can do without the cymbals." The miscreants then bound his hands to prevent him from clapping. Chaitanya exclaimed: "Lord! I shall keep the rhythm of my chanting with my voice. Your love will be my tune. I know no yoga. I have done no penance. I do not care for the treasures of the world. My greatest and only wealth is your love. Confer this wealth on me."

Of what avail are japa and penance without the love of the Lord? They are like preparing an excellent food in an untinned vessel. The entire food gets poisoned. Likewise, one may practise the nine forms of devotion, but without love of God in the heart, they are useless. Chaitanya declared. "Oh Lord! I want your love alone and nothing else."

At his birth, the name given to Chaitanya was Gauranga, because of his white complexion. But as he was always chanting the name "Krishna, Krishna" (One who was immersed in Krishna consciousness). He got the popular name "Krishna Chaitanya". The moment he repeated Krishna's name he used to lose his consciousness.

In this manner, there are many great ones who have the names given to them at birth and the names by which they get known later on. The lives of these great ones should be regarded as ideals for the rest of mankind.

Embodiments of Divine Love! It is not enough if you merely celebrate this day as a festive occasion because it is Krishna's birthday. Krishna was the very embodiment of love. He attracted every one by His love. He melted the hearts of one and all. He made the lives of many meaningful. Love was at the root of all He did.

Develop divine love

All must strive continually to develop love. In earlier ages, men had fear of sin. The Lord's command was: Fear sin, love the Lord. Unfortunately, today, in the Kali Yuga, people love sin and abhor God. Why should anyone fear God? Those, who ought to be afraid to commit sin, are having fear of God. Instead of loving God, people are loving sin. This is the reversal of what ought to prevail. People are leading lives opposed to what is proper.

The Chataka bird will not shrink from being near a cloud to catch the fresh raindrops even if there are dreadful thunder and blinding lightning. It prays constantly for the pure unsullied raindrops. This is the attitude sadhakas should cultivate today. They must be prepared to face any kind of censure, criticism, trouble or obstacle. They should adhere to their goal regardless of anything. The Gopikas exemplified this type of devotion. They had no fear of any threats or abuse. They were totally unaffected.

Hence, stick to your truth. Love God and fear none. Only the guilty need fear. Why fear when you are innocent? Without any fear in your hearts, meditate on God. This is the royal road to the Divine in the Kali Age.

There is no protector like the Divine. This was demonstrated in the case of Draupadi, when none of her valiant husbands or others came to her rescue, and Krishna alone saved her from humiliation.

The Lord alone is the saviour of the helpless and the forlorn. Do not waver in your faith in the Lord in any circumstance. Go ahead with your tasks with faith and determination. God tests people in many ways. They are intended only to promote your spiritual progress. None can affect God in any way. Why lose your faith in Him? They are signs of weakness. Give no room for such unfortunate doubts. Strengthen your faith and realise God by your devotion.

(Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the thrilling Bhajan, "Govinda Krishna Jai! Gopala Krishna Jai". The vast concourse of devotees in the Mandap and outside joined in the bhajan with ecstatic enthusiasm.)

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindavan on 10.8.1993,
Gokulashtami Day**

Offer what is yours

I went to the Temple of our Lord Sai
I looked round to see what
I could offer to Him
I found the gold, the silver,
the flowers and the fruits were all His.
I stood in confusion, not knowing what to offer.
Then a Voice within me whispered
Offer thy love and service to the poor
Because they are your own.

—G.K. Damodar Row

Living becomes a glorious experience only when it is sweetened by Tolerance and Love. Willingness to compromise with others' ways of living and co-operation in common tasks, make living happy and fruitful. Certain modes of behaviour have been laid down and proved beneficial by centuries of practice. These have to be observed with modifications to suit the conditions of today. We are developing in each department of life, but it is a pity that we are not developing the unique qualities of human beings. Develop the Atmic awareness, the consciousness of the Divine and the acquisition of Divine attributes. Expand love and understanding.

—Baba

Memorable Onam at Brindavan

Bhagavan Baba, in His Divine Message on the holy occasion of Onam on 30-8-1993, emphasised the need for people to cleanse their hearts of evil qualities so that the divine love can be enshrined therein. He added that they should share the love with others rendering selfless service to their fellow beings. He reiterated the fact that Mahabali is believed to revisit this land on this Onam day every year in order to renew his contact with the people whom he loved and served so dearly as an Emperor upholding the principles of Truth and Righteousness. He never

hesitated to sacrifice himself, surrendering all his worldly possessions at the feet of God setting a noble example. If the people do not manifest the same spirit of selfless service and sacrifice, he will be disappointed and may not like to revisit the earth.

After a lapse of several years, Bhagavan graciously permitted the celebration of Onam Festival at Brindavan in response to the prayer of the Kerala devotees, who make it a point to celebrate this unique annual festival in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba.

Keralites exceeding six thousand in number thronged the Brindavan Campus even on 29th August, arriving by special buses, vans- and other modes of transport, with the sacred intention of celebrating the holy Onam festival in the Divine presence of Bhagavan. The massive Seva Dal contingent of Kerala worked tirelessly throughout the night bravely withstanding the continuous rain to decorate the entire premises of Brindavan right from the entrance gate to Trayee Brindavan. The Sai Ramesh Mandap presented a magnificent appearance with the traditional Keralite decorations of palm leaves, banana plants, flags and festoons, giant flower garlands and multi-coloured umbrellas lending a typical Kerala touch to the whole area.

The day's function commenced with Omkaram and Suprabhatam at 5 a.m. on Monday the 30th, attended by thousands of devotees. The crowds started forming queues even as early as 6 a.m. Special arrangements were made to accommodate the Kerala devotees on priority in the Sai Ramesh Mandap. The Hall was filled to capacity and thousands were seated outside in all the open spaces available and the grounds were jam-packed up to the entrance gates.

The Bhajans started at 7.50 a.m. Bhagavan came from Trayee Brindavan in procession, headed by the band played by the Sri Sailam Sai High School students immaculately dressed in shining uniforms, Veda chanting group of boys from Bal Vikas, Panchavadya and Nadaswaram music all from Kerala. Swami entered from the farther end of the Mandap and moved slowly blessing the devotees on both sides. On ascending the dais, Bhagavan lighted the twin mega lamps (Kuthuvilakus) signifying the inauguration of the festival.

The dais was tastefully decorated with the eight feet high imposing bronze icon of Krishna playing the flute in dancing pose standing majestically with a commanding view captivating the eyes and hearts of devotees in all parts of the massive congregation. The icon was adorned with a background resembling that at Guruvayoor Temple and exquisite floral garlands that added to its grace and elegance. Swami sat through the Bhajan for half-an-hour and then descended from the dais and sat in a swivelling chair amidst the students, listening to the programme of devotional music which included an orchestral offering of Layavinysa consisting of instruments like violin, Nadaswaram, Mridangam, Kanjeera, Taval, Mohrsing, etc. Two boys sang a few devotional songs of Saint Thyagaraja and others.

After the music programme was over, Bhagavan again moved among the devotees and blessed them, and then arranged for distribution of special sweet prasadam to the entire gathering of more than fifteen thousand. He stayed to ensure that everyone in the vast gathering received

the holy prasadam. After Arathi, the morning function came to a close. Narayana Seva was conducted at which hundreds of poor people were offered food.

In the public meeting at Sai Ramesh Mandap in the evening, Justice Eradi spoke about the significance of the Onam festival and expressed the gratitude of all Keralites to Swami for permitting it to be celebrated in the divine presence of Swami who was Mother, Father, Teacher and God to them. He spoke on what Baba meant for him in his entire career starting as an Advocate in Cochin and ending as judge of the Supreme Court.

Sri Natarajan, State President of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala State, announced that three students of Bal Vikas had been permitted by Bhagavan to speak on the occasion.

The first student hailing from Nepal by name Bishmal Chettri, studying in the 12th standard of Sri Sailam Sai High School spoke with great felicity explaining the significance of the festival tracing its history from Vedas to Ithihasas where the story of Mahabali finds a place.

The second student by name Hari Krishna, a Bal Vikas student of Kerala, spoke about the importance of Bal Vikas in shaping the student to blossom as an excellent citizen useful to the society.

The third speaker, Kumari Anuradha, a girl Bal Vikas student of Kerala, explained how Bal Vikas helps to mould the character and broaden the outlook of the youngsters and develop the spirit of fellowship, love and selfless sacrifice amongst them. After these speeches, Bhagavan gave the Divine Discourse for the Onam Festival (details of the discourse will be published in the next issue).

After the discourse, the events of the memorable one-day Onam festival came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan

Africa's Response to Sathya Sai EHV

That education is the highest form of Seva remains an indisputable proposition. For, while other forms of Seva give temporary relief to the perennial problem of satisfying man's basic needs, education provides the foundation, structure, and edifice for the permanent satisfaction of these needs as well as man's eternal quest for ULTIMATE REALITY—GOD. This view has been clearly and succinctly confirmed by Baba and Jesus—the very reason for their incarnation.

"All are tainted by wickedness, and so who will survive if the Avatar decides to uproot (wickedness)? Therefore I have come to correct the Buddhi (intelligence) by various means. I have to counsel, help, command, condemn and stand by as a friend and well-wisher to all, so that

they may give up evil propensities and recognize the straight path, tread it and reach the goal. I have to reveal to the people the worth of the Vedas, the shastras and other spiritual texts which lay down the norms"—Baba.

In other words, Swami has come for the supreme task of educating mankind. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4. "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that passeth out of the mouth of God."

To live by the word of God presupposes an understanding of the teachings of God. This can only be brought about through education.

The problems facing Africa can legitimately be attributed to the absence of the right kind of education—that education which integrates the word of God into His works and thereby liberates man from both material and spiritual poverty.

Based on empirical evidence relating to the economic and social performance of individual African countries, it is tempting to conclude that the 'African Problem' is purely and simply economic and social and that what is needed most is increased productivity where the means to do so are already in existence or, in the absence of these variables, their supply in appropriate quantities has to be ensured.

Bhagavan Baba—the hope of Africa

Such a conclusion is untenable because despite the strenuous efforts made by African Governments and their people in this direction since independence, there has been no corresponding change either in economic and social performance or in political stability. The essential ingredient for development embodied in the right kind of environment - in the widest sense of this expression - still remains as elusive as ever.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the Hope of Africa for two principal reasons: (1) He is God Incarnate; (2) The permanent solution to the 'African Problem' lies in His system of education as exemplified in the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme (SSEHV).

Sai Devotees from Africa first attended courses of SSEHV at the First Bal Vikas Training Course for Overseas participants held in the Divine Presence in 1983. The course opened their eyes, ushered them into new educational dimensions, and evoked in them a deep sense of appreciation and awareness of the inadequacies of the multifarious systems of education prevalent in Africa. Thereafter, attendance at similar and more intensive courses on SSEHV at Prasanthi Nilayam and Europe became compelling. Thus the period 1983 to 1985 witnessed the rapid expansion of the SSEHV programme in training and development. Numerous workshops, seminars and symposia were organised in the UK, in particular, for the specific purpose of taking the programme to public educational institutions.

EHV on the march

These varied activities acted as catalysts; spring-boards from which the SSEHV programme could be launched by Africans elsewhere in Africa. The launch was made in August 1986 when "The African Conference on Education in Human Values and Service" was held in Accra, Ghana. Successive workshops were subsequently held in Nigeria (two in Lagos and one in Ibadan), Zambia (Ndola), Kenya (Nairobi), and Zimbabwe (two in Bulawayo), and South Africa. The response was tremendous. The programme was unanimously acclaimed and accepted by participants as the key to the solution of the crisis in education in Africa.

In spite of this astounding success, however, there was nothing that was readily available to show the real working of the programme—its effects on pupils, teachers and the community at large. What was being propounded was simply theory. There was no empirical evidence in the Continent of Africa to justify the theories. Only the products of Sathya Sai Baba's educational institutions in India could be cited as evidence. Again the citation was either verbal or written.

There was yet another difficulty. It was impracticable to follow up the thousands of teachers who had been trained in SSEHV by the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation. They came, they participated and acclaimed the programme, only to disappear into thin air later on. There was no way in which trainees, who were not under the jurisdiction of the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, could be monitored and qualitatively controlled so as to ensure that the programme's purity and sanctity were maintained—not diluted or debased. The much-dreaded possibility happened sooner or later. Varieties of EHV (the SS now being deleted), differentiated EHV programmes emerged. A market for EHV with numerous suppliers and buyers was created. Many new writers appeared and slanted the programme to suit their individual preferences.

The need for the people of Africa, educationists in particular, to have the programme in its purest form presented through a model school that was easily accessible to them and could therefore be observed and evaluated at close range, became ever-pressing. If the SSEHV programme was to have the much desired impact in Africa, a school that reflected its purity and totality had to be built and run on African soil by Sai devotees. This reasoning marked the beginning of the Sri Sathya Sai School in Ndola, Zambia—the turning point, as it were, from rhetoric to practicality.

The Sri Sathya Sai School

The major construction work commenced on 10th June, 1990, with Bhagavan Baba's permission, and completed in December 1991. This modern day School complex for boys caters for Grades 1 to 12 (Primary Section Grades 1 to 7; Secondary Section: Grades 8 to 12). As a non-profit-making educational institution, the school has been built for the supreme purpose of spreading Bhagavan Baba's Message of Love, and thereby taking an active part in the task of building the Zambian Nation, and thus becoming a model for Africa.

The object of the School is twofold: (1) Spiritual and Moral excellence through the inculcation of the basic Human Values of Truth, Love, Peace, Righteousness and Non-violence. (ii) Academic excellence.

The School operates within the statutory framework of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Zambia. It prepares boys for the well-conceived and proven Zambian General Certificate of Education/School Certificate. Specific emphasis is placed on the SSEHV programme which is taught directly, indirectly and integrally throughout the school curriculum. The school reflects not only the life, teachings and works of Sri Sathya Sai Baba but, also, His schools in India. It has adequate and up-to-date facilities. The staff is an excellent blend of professional and experienced local and overseas teachers.

The school complex consists of an Administration Building containing offices for Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Studies and Secretariat. The Primary School Section has 14 classrooms with teachers' marking anterooms; a library, staff-room and prayer building. In the Secondary School Section are 10 classrooms with teachers' ante-rooms, 2 extra large science rooms/ laboratories and adjacent stockrooms; a large library, staff-room and prayer building. There is a separate auditorium with seating capacity for 2000 pupils: used mainly for assemblies, cultural programmes, celebration of major Festivals of World Religions, and Dramas. Additional emphasis is placed on Teacher Training in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV). For this purpose a specially designed building with two extra large rooms for seminars, conferences and workshops is provided.

The health of pupils and staff is given a high priority. There are 51 modern water-borne toilets and 40 washbasins plus showers. A 65 metre deep bore hole, electrically operated provides continuous and sustained water supply.

The complex is spread over an area of 13.85 acres—partly used for playing and sports field as well as for agricultural production.

The distinctive features of the school are:

- i No tuition Fees; an open admission policy enabling boys to seek admission irrespective of income, class, creed or religion.
- ii Value orientation to primary and secondary school education.
- iii Strong school and community links.
- iv Strong primary and secondary subject links

—Victor Kanu

Understanding the Lord's Love

Bhagavan has often enlightened us on the truth that God is Love. In each one of us, He says there is Divinity. To realise this truth is the ultimate goal of man's life. The soul, therefore, is essentially of the nature of love. He has often quoted the Upanishadic truth that lovability is the nature of the soul. In the hierarchy of bliss-experiences, the above truth is evident. One enjoys an

object of love, be it a Rajput Painting or a Rishi-artist's joy in the Ideal before they carve out the image they envision in dhyana and tapas.

The love that our Lord speaks of, is that kind of radiance that emanates from the innermost recess of our being free from body, mind and sense relationship. The love that the Lord speaks of, is the subtlest of the subtle, untainted by temporalities, falsities, selfishness, etc. Such a love seeks no reward, nor requital. It knows no logic, no reason. It is Cosmic in nature which can be extended to the rational and the non-rational; to the animate and to the inanimate alike. It sees no barriers of caste, creed, colour, etc. It is ageless and infinite, unbound by space-time relativities.

Man is usually deluded by love where turmoil precedes it and grief follows it. But the Lord's love is like the Word of the Lord itself—it endureth forever. It is not like the Mimasa or the Poppy; the moment you touch them, they fade forever! The Lord's Love involves tapas and yagnas, daya (compassion) and dana (charity) and dharma, shown with utmost truthfulness. His love has no entrance; it sees no exit. It has its "Source" in the beginningless realm of Reality. It may be described as the "pathway" to God. Though unknowledgeable yet knowable; it has been revealed to the enlightened ones. Saints like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Saivite and Vaishnavite saints tasted the supreme bliss of the Lord's Love which the Upanishads have referred to as "Taste Par Excellence" (Raso vai Sah). Christian martyrs have lived and died for this kind of supreme Divine Love. Mystics and saints have sung in praise of the inexplicable joy experienced through the Lord's Love. It has to be understood as the ultimate inner experience arising from the spiritual sadhana. God's Love is Truth—revealed to the aspirant by God Himself. The urge to know this truth is a spiritual impulse in man's journey of life going from one birth to another. The urge itself is resolved finally in the soul.

A measure of understanding this Love is granted to us devotees who are face to face with the Embodiment of the Supreme Divine love who radiates this love to us at every darshan, sparshan and sambhashan with which we are blessed.

That face of a resplendent form,
Whose love illumines
the dense dark clouds
that obstruct the rays of the Sun.

Revealer of all virtues
Sustainer of the Eternal Rita
Inspirer,

That face beloved of all
enlightening all,
responding to all offerings,
big and small

Unto That Resplendent Face,
Gather We
With all exclamation
Svaha!

Dr. Mrs. Dharma, (Former Head of Dept. of Philosophy, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur Campus).

The Biggest Goal

To know and be as one with God
That is my biggest goal.
To feel the wondrous joy of love,
To understand my soul.
To lend an ever-helping hand
To friends along the way;
Share love with those so close to me
A love that grows each day.
And if it is my fortune
That these things will come to pass,
I know I'll see my own true self
As in a mirrored glass.

—**Joan Miller, Australia**

Follow the Intellect: Not the Mind

O foolish man, why do you seek God outside like the ignorant musk deer? Like the fragrance in a flower, God is right inside you, if you look with insight.

God is in man; nay, man himself is God. But strangely and foolishly man searches for God in the outside world. However just like the ash that covers the fire on the charcoal, desire and hatred envelop this divinity in man. Even as the fire is revealed when the ash is blown off, the Self (Atma) will reveal Itself to man when he gets, rid of desire and hatred. (poem)

Embodiments of love!

One and the same man plays different roles in his family and society as the husband of his wife, the father of his children, the child of his parents, the boss of his employee or vice versa depending on physical relationships, mental attitudes and inclinations, or other circumstances, Love is showered on the daughter but not on the daughter-in-law. The son-in-law does not enjoy the same affection as the son. One does not have the same attachment for one's mother as for one's wife. What is the reason for such differences based on temporary bodily relationships, giving rise to all kinds of attractions and aversions, likes and dislikes, joys and sorrows? It is because man's mind is subject to five types of distortions or complexes (Klesas).

The five mental complexes

Avidya klesam (Ignorance Complex):

Man becomes a prey to several afflictions due to narrow, deluded feelings such as, "I am the body", "I am a Jiva or Individual Soul," and "I am separate and different from God". This is called Avidyaa Klesam (Ignorance Complex), which demeans the status of man and results in many kinds of sorrows.

Abhinivesa Klesa: (Attachment complex):

The mind is the abode of all desires, sorrows, likes, dislikes, attachments and aversions. In spite of knowing that the mind is the culprit, which causes attachment to "Samsara" (transmigratory existence) and the attendant miseries, man is unable to detach himself from his mind or otherwise control its vagaries and thereby to escape from sorrow and suffering. This is termed as Attachment Complex.

Asthitha Klesa (vacillation complex):

The world is full of various sense objects (or vishayas) which entice the weak-minded persons who go on flirting from one sense object to another, not realising that these "Vishayas" or sense objects will ultimately turn out to be "Visham" or poison which deprives them of all sense of discrimination and dispassion. As a result of this men are plunged in endless suffering throughout their lives. This is termed as Asthitha Klesam (the Complex caused by mental unsteadiness).

Lobha Klesam (greed complex):

Labouring under the delusion that the goal of life is to acquire gold, wealth, vehicles, mansions, and the like, man toils ceaselessly from dawn to dusk, to acquire and hoard such possessions beyond his needs. In the process he foregoes even food and sleep, thereby endangering his health. In spite of knowing that all such possessions are temporary, he pollutes his mind by excessive greed and falls a victim to untold suffering and sorrow. This is known as the Lobha Klesam (Greed Complex).

Dwesha Klesam (Hate complex):

For his own selfish ends, man gets trapped in a maze of unending desires of various kinds. And when his desires are not fulfilled, he unreasonably blames it all on other men as well as on God Himself and thus he develops hatred against both man and God. Hence this is designated as "Dwesha Klesam" or Hate Complex.

All these complexes are nothing but mental aberrations which are injurious to man himself. Having become a victim of such aberrations, man forgets his real Atmic nature and falls a prey to all kinds of sorrow and misery. In this world we find very few people who are always blissful. A large majority of people are found to be swinging between joy and sorrow. There are some others who are always sad and depressed and have never tasted bliss even once. There again, are some others, who are not bothered about anything and who lead a sort of mechanical life like animals. What is the reason for such a state of affairs? It is not due to Nature (Prakriti) but due to the different ways in which man is influenced by his own mind.

Four categories of human beings

Based on their mental predisposition, human beings may be classified under four categories as follows:-

Godly Man (Deva-manava):

"Brahma Nishtha Ratho Devah", it is said. This means; he is a Godly person, who rejoices in communion with Brahman, and is ever established in Brahman, dedicating all actions to God, looking upon all things as His manifestations and joyfully experiencing all forms as reflections of the Divine. The Godly man finds self-fulfillment in his life.

The Human Man (Manava-manava):

"Sathya-Dharma Ratho Marthyaha". He alone is a man who takes delight in truth and righteousness, having faith in the scriptural injunction, "Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara", (Speak the truth and practice righteousness). He conducts his life according to the twin principles of truth and right conduct. He considers duty or responsibility as more important than rights or privileges. He is endowed with virtues such as kindness, compassion, generosity, charity and forbearance. Thus, the human-man leads the peaceful life of a house-holder.

Demomic Man (Manava danava):

intoxicating liquors. The demonic man spends his time in such Tamasic activities as eating, drinking, sleeping etc. He is concerned solely with his own selfish interests and enjoyments, and never with the happiness of others. Kindness and compassion are alien to him. Not even a trace of discrimination and dispassion could be found in him. It is his nature to deride, abuse and hurt others. What is worse, the very sight of great and holy men will arouse in him feelings of jealousy and hatred. A person whose mind is filled with such evil thoughts and feelings is called a "demonic man".

The Animal Man (Manava-pasuvu):

This type of man wastes his life in seeking only sensual pleasures from birth to death. In this respect he is worse than beasts, because the latter are at least governed by instinct, while there is no consideration of reason and season for the human brute who has no control over his ever-growing evil qualities.

The mind is at the root of all such perversities. If the mind is properly understood and disciplined and is applied to get rid of wicked qualities based on selfishness, it will lead to a purposeful and fruitful life. It is basically owing to selfish thoughts that one fails to achieve the goal of human life.

All is sat-chit-ananda

We should first of all have firm faith in the inherent divinity of man. On the one hand, there is the manifested world, which attracts the attention of our body and senses and also entices our mind, and on the other hand there is the unmanifested divinity, which is the substratum of the manifested universe. The two are only aspects of one and the same divine principle of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Being-Awareness-Bliss). Since all is Sat-Chit-Ananda, the Upanishads have declared; "Poornamadah, Poornamidam etc." meaning that both the unmanifest and the manifest aspects are fully divine. Although man's essential and true nature is "Being-Awareness-Bliss" (Sat-Chit-Ananda), he is perpetually haunted by all sorts of problems, difficulties and sorrows. What is the reason? It is because he follows the mind and not the intellect (Buddhi).

Follow the intellect

To live as a human man (Manava-Manava) is only a mediocre life. Man's aim should be to live as a Godlyman (Manava-Deva). But man today is leading the life of an animal because of desires and hatred only. Non-fulfillment of one's desire results in hatred. The true nature of man is neither joy nor sorrow, but it is Sat-Chit-Ananda (Being-Awareness-Bliss) that transcends both joy and sorrow, which are transient. Hence man should endeavour to experience this Sat-Chit-Ananda. Living in this vast universe, you should try to cultivate correspondingly broad feelings. But, misguided by the mind, people are harbouring narrow feelings and thus making their lives miserable. The solution to this is to follow the guidance of the intellect, eschewing the vagaries of the mind. "The foolish man who relies on his mind will degrade himself, by becoming worse than a brute while the wise person who follows the guidance of his intellect (Buddhi) will become "Pashupati" (i.e. Siva, the Lord of all creatures). (Poem)

body, the mind is superior to the sense organs and the intellect is superior to the mind. The Atma (the Self) is superior to the intellect. Thus it can be seen that the intellect is the nearest (of all) to the Self and hence it has the advantage of receiving the maximum potency and effulgence from the Self. Therefore, man should utilise his intellect to understand and experience the Self and lead a blissful life.

What man owes to God

From birth to death, man is spending his time and energy for the sake of food and sleep. Is this an achievement befitting the status of man? Some may boast about their scholarship or their pilgrimages, or about the worship and rituals performed by them, and about the high offices held by them. To think high of themselves based on such achievements is a sin.

Only when people recognise whole-heartedly that they owe all such achievements to God's grace, they would be true to their salt. Man is degrading himself into the state of a demon by thinking one thing, saying another thing and doing quite a different thing, violating the much-needed harmony among these three activities.

The triple unity

Once Adi Sankaracharya reached the holy city of Kasi (Benaras) after the successful completion of his country-wide campaign of (Digvijaya Yatra) philosophical debates. There, while having "Darshan" of the presiding deity of the place, Vishwanath, he offered the following prayer: "O Lord! I have come to you for the expiation of my sins." How strange? Adi Sankaracharya had sanctified his short span of life by studying all the scriptures of the land as well as writing many volumes of brilliant expositions and profound commentaries on the Veda, the Upanishads and other texts. Also he had conducted his life on the lines laid down in the scriptures. Because of his glorious achievements, he is acclaimed as the very incarnation of Lord Shiva. It may, therefore, seem strange and even paradoxical that a great person of his standing should have prayed like that. What, then, were the sins committed by him? He himself gave the answer as follows:

"O Lord Sankara! My first sin is that in spite of my knowing (and also teaching others) that God is beyond mind and speech, I have tried to describe you through the several hymns (Stotras) composed by me. This betrays lack of conformity between my thought and my word."

"Next, having been convinced of the scriptural sayings that God pervades and permeates everything in the manifested universe, I have been preaching this truth to one and all. Nevertheless, I have come to Benaras to have your Darshan. This shows that my thoughts, words and deeds are at variance with one another. This is my second offence."

"Thirdly, I have firm belief in the teachings of the scriptures that one and the same Atma (Self) is immanent in all beings and there is no difference between the so-called Jivatma (Individual Soul) and the Paramatma (Over-soul). While I have been proclaiming this truth in all my discourses, I have now come here to stand before you as if we two are separate and different

sins, of which I am guilty."

From the above episode in the illustrious life of Sankaracharya, we have to learn an important lesson. The popular notion is that indulging in activities like accusing, abusing or physically hurting others alone are to be considered as sin. But contrary to this notion, thinking one thing, saying another thing, and doing quite a different thing, constitute a sin which is committed by most people. Only when man gives up this kind of sin and ensures harmony and unity in his thought, word and deed, can he be considered a perfect man (Poorna Manava). This is why the Upanishads have declared that a Mahatma (great souled person) is one who practises purity and unity of thought, word and deed, whereas he whose thoughts, words and deeds are at variance with one another, is a Duratma (wicked one). In this connection, the mind plays a crucial role, and it can either elevate a man to the greatest heights or degrade him to the lowest depth. We should be masters and not slaves of our mind. Proper mastery over the mind is the challenging task confronting mankind today.

Cherish high ideals

Man should develop high and noble ideals and feelings in all spheres of life—physical, moral, religious and spiritual. He must not be content with sensual pleasures which are temporary and leave a trail of misery. It is the mind that is responsible either for one's upliftment or downfall. One should not hastily rush into action based on the whimsical dictates of the mind. It is only after considering whether the action is good or bad, right or wrong, that a person with a disciplined mind acts. Such a man will ultimately reach the goal of self-realisation.

(From Bhagavan's discourse to the Summer School at Brindavan on 25.5.93)

GURUDEV VANI

SUMMER SCHOOL IN BRINDAVAN

Essence of the Shad-Darshanas

Bhagavan Baba blessed the students attending Summer School in Indian culture and spirituality with a lucid exposition of Shad Darshanas, the six systems of philosophical thought vouched by great sages after severe penance and deep enquiry.

A summary of the Divine Discourses from 27th May to 31st May on that topic is given below:-

The shad darshanas

These are six great works (Philosophical systems) that shed light on Indian culture, which many consider to be based on blind belief. Explaining explicitly the Vedas, they share with the world the wisdom contained therein. The six texts are based on (a) The Veda (b) Non-belief and (c) Inner Vision. They explain incidents and events that pertain to all the three times of past,

lead a good life by removing the dirt in him. They explicitly state that the Vedas the Vedanta and the knower of Vedas are all one and the same. They explain the nature of the mind which is responsible for all intelligence, intellect and discrimination. These six great texts (Darshanas) are (a) 'Nyaya' (b) 'Vaisesika' (c) 'Sankhya' (d) 'yoga' (e) 'Poorva-Mimamsa' and (f) 'Uttara Mimamsa'.

1. The Nyaya Darshana

Nyaya Darshana was given by Sage Gautama and hence it is also called Gautama Shastra. This forms the life for the remaining five 'Darshanas'. We have measures to judge the quantity and volume of material in the world. Even in respect of Divinity, a measure must be available by which the proof may be obtained. Vedas speak of four kinds of proofs. They are (1) 'Pratyaksha'—direct perception (2) 'Anumana'—inference (3) 'Upamana'—by comparison and (4) 'Shabdha'—sound.

Pratyaksha Pramana

This is called direct proof, as it is perceived by the sense organs. These organs are only instruments. The mind enters them and helps them to function. There are some limitations on the senses like disease and imperfection, that make proof obtained by this method to be infirm. For example, a normal eye can see all colours, a jaundiced eye sees everything as yellow. Though the laddoo is sweet, the tongue of a malaria patient classifies it as bitter. Here, there are two points of view. From the point of view of the matter it is sweet. But from the point of view of the senses it is bitter.

It can be concluded, therefore, direct proof is not complete evidence for real justice.

Padartha and parartha:

Students must remember that the findings of ancient Indian sages were based on extensive investigations that went beyond the four regions of mind and even the Over mind. They were the expositions of saints who had the vision of the Divinity.

Many scientists today are anti-God and are proud that they have discovered something our ancient sages could not. How wrong! Our ancient seers concluded that all these findings of today pertain to the 'Low-mind' and are associated with 'Padartha' (matter). Their findings were based on the study of the 'Over mind', associated with the 'Parartha' (Supreme Source) and were hence of a highly elevated nature. Before the shining splendour of these, today's investigations and discoveries look like glow worms.

Any enquiry made with machines is subject to errors just like the machine itself. It is the investigation of the heart that will vouch as real proof.

These four methods of obtaining proof is very important because all religions attach great importance to justice. It was said of Mohammed the Prophet, that when his son committed a sin, he was awarded the 100 strokes by whip prescribed by the religion for that particular mistake.

son's grave!

Anumana Pramana

This is based on doubt and inference. One sees cranes in the distance, for example, and infers that water could be available there. Similarly, one infers about fire by seeing the smoke. From the 'Swabhava' (natural traits), one makes out about the 'Swaroop' (the real form).

Upamana Pramana

This kind of testimony is based on comparison. It enables us to understand many things that cannot be otherwise easily understood, by comparing them to some others that can be. By studying the 'Prathibhashika' (apparent reality) and the 'Vyavaharika' (empirical reality), one can infer about the 'Paramarthika' (transcendental). For example, by studying the foam (empirical reality) that originates from the waves (apparent reality), one can understand the reality of the Ocean (transcendental reality). This is possible because both the foam and the waves originate from the Ocean, and mirror its character in them. This is the example cited for all beings emanating from the Ocean of Divinity as waves.

Shabda Pramana

It is the proof garnered on the basis of sound. It is considered to be the ultimate proof. It is based on the testimony of the sound that the Vedas, Vedangas, Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita came into existence. But, to be able to perceive this testimony, one must be properly attuned and extremely careful. It needs one to travel beyond the mind and the senses. At this stage of equanimity, (Samanachitta), sound becomes the very form of God. (The eight forms of God are: Shabda Brahma mayi (sound), Charachara mayi (All pervasiveness), Paratpara mayi (Transcendental nature), Vaang mayi (speech), Nityaananda mayi (blissful), Jyotir mayi (Effulgence), Maya mayi (illusion) and Sree mayi (Prosperity)).

Another significance in this is that God is most pleased with sound (in the form of 'Samagana'—songs in praise of God). It is said that Lord Vishnu once told Narada that He would always install Himself wherever his devotees sang his glory with a full and devoted heart. This is the actual 'sound'—the songs that contain the glory of the Lord.

In this way, 'Nyaya Darshana' lays down the four methods of gathering proof.

Radiation, Vibration and Materialization

Students must listen to sounds that are Divine in nature. Nyaya Darshana declares that it is the human conscience that is the best judge. Conscience is beyond the mind. It is the vibration of life.

Words originate in the mind. But, when it comes to the tongue (body), it appears different under different situations. When it goes beyond the mind, the word becomes Truth itself. Vedas call this Truth as 'Bhur'. It is the radiation. In the materialization of body, this truth is all-

comes Vibration: from Vibration comes Materialization.

The Vedas and their form

It is said that the word is itself Rig Veda. It is all-effulgent. The mind is the Yajur Veda and life is itself Sama Veda. Life gives breath. From this breath comes the song. Hence Sama Veda is the form of life itself. The Yajur Veda is the form of the 'Mantras' that originate in the mind. The three Vedas hence collectively state that God who is the effulgent One (as stated by Rig Veda) must be prayed to and worshipped with the Mantras (as stated in Yajur Veda) and pleased by sweet songs that are most endearing to Him (as said in the Sama Veda).

God is most pleased by songs alone and not-by words or speeches.

Once you understand and follow the six Darshanas, you need not do any other sadhana. Without understanding such lofty ideas, Indians are today groping in ignorance. Our ancient truths are eternal. You must know that they are based upon investigations of a kind unattained or unattainable in the world today.

2. Vaiseshika Darshana

Sages and seers, in a state of deep meditation understood and grasped the spiritual reality in all matter. They hence gave little importance to the kind of secular education seen today. They understood that the same five elements within the human body constituted the tree, mountain and the entire creation. Only the forms differed.

The saints propounded that matter is constituted of atoms, but each atom was unique in itself. The difference between two atoms is the 'Visesha' and the 'Vaiseshika' Darshana (that which brings out the speciality—Visesha) speaks about this speciality.

Matter and Nature are Reality

Matter is unchangeable. It is only the form that changes; for example, the mud and water are creations of God; they are matter. The pot made out of mud and water may assume various shapes. It may break and splinter but the mud and water remain. Hence matter being unchangeable, is reality.

Nature consists of the five elements that are unchangeable. For example sound is of different kinds, but the Primordial Sound, 'Aum' is unchanging. All the 'Saptaswaras' of 'Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni' are the different forms of the Primordial Sound (Vikaras of the Omkara). Matter and Nature are hence both unchanging.

Equality of men and women:

This is another truth propounded by the Vaiseshika Darshana. Men and women differ only in gender and one is not weaker than the other. Just as woman cannot work without man's help, man also cannot function without woman's help. Basing its proof (Adhara) on the world, this

to diversify the essential unity in both men and women.

Give to the world:

When man constantly asks for happiness, he expects the society to give it to him. He asks for peace and expects the world to give him peace. How is it possible? If he asks himself the question what he has done for the good of the society, there is no answer. If he asks himself the question what he has done to promote peace in the world, there is no answer. Only if one does good to the society and strives to promote peace in the world can he expect good from the society and peace from world. This is another specialty (Visesha) expressed in the Vaiseshika Darshana.

Inherent unity of all humans:

This Darshana explains that there is enormous power in the microcosm that man can harness by learning with discretion. It is this kind of study that explains the differences in the past, present, future and also the truth that remains the same in all the three times.

The 'Shukla Yajur Veda' has made an exhaustive study of unity in diversity. The same shows up in the 'Vaiseshika Darshana', which states "All are birds of the same house (family), all men are children of the same mother; all are flowers of the same creeper; all are citizens of the same nation."

1. The first statement is 'All are the birds of the same house': The house is the body. It is like a nest that restricts the bird. The bird remains in the nest till it acquires wings. It then leaves its nest and flies away to freedom. In the same way, with the wings of Wisdom (Antarjnana), man can develop detachment and fly away to liberation. This much is common in all men.
2. The second statement explains "All are children of the same mother", this mother is 'Mother Earth'. All of us are born from earth, as we are composed of mud. A newly born baby is bathed and made to sleep in the cradle. But yet, in the baby's hand can be found mud, after a few hours. This is ample proof that man's body is made of mud.
3. The third statement is "Flowers of the same creeper". This creeper is the heart. The flower is the sweetness of the heart-to-heart relationship that each man has with another. All hearts are thus interrelated.
4. The fourth statement is "All are citizens of the same nation. We are all members of the human race. Ours is a nation of men and not animals or rocks. We form the human society. Just as the waves originate from the ocean, all the different forms come from the 'Sat-chit-ananda'.

With these explanations, the Vaiseshika Darshana points out that: essential unity among all men. Thus the 'Vaiseshika' appeals to them not to fight over petty matters.

Nimmittadhara and mooladhara:

has to experience both. It is said;

"For one who lacks Intelligence and wisdom, detachment becomes a burden.

For one who lacks knowledge, the body becomes a burden.

For one who lacks love, the mind becomes a burden."

Man must develop discrimination to be free from all these burdens. It enables him to understand the Truth or the basis of everything what is this truth? One must know two things: The 'Nimittadhara' and the 'Mooladhara'. Mooladhara is the basis on which the Nimittadhara (Instrument) builds something. Example: Mud and water are the Mooladhara—the basis. The potter becomes the Nimittadhara, who uses them and makes pots of different shapes and sizes.

Know your inner reality

The child Prahlada told his father Hiranyakasipu "O father! You have earned victory over all the three worlds, but are a slave to your senses." Such a one who knows not himself and is a slave to his senses has no 'authority' at all. He, who succumbs to the enemies within, can never defeat the foes without.

Man must control his senses to the extent possible. Otherwise, he will suffer grief. Man must not commit the blunder of resigning every thing to his fate. With enquiry and determination, one can achieve anything. But today, man is becoming a slave to the mind. Man is the master of mind. He alone is a real man who understands the reality—that the microcosm is in the macrocosm and the macrocosm is in the microcosm.

3. The Sankhya Darshana

It was Sage Kapila who gave to the world this philosophical text. Sankhya Darshana is also called 'Kapala'. Elucidating that only a person with sense control is a true man, it states that it is impossible otherwise for man to live in this physical frame with infinite powers.

At first sight, this Darshana appears to refute the statements in the 'Nyaya' and 'Vaisesika' Darshanas. It argues that Nature is a combination of numbers—Sankhya (and, hence the name)—and is full of conflicting forces. It explains how to reach God with the help of numbers.

Divine exists in this Nature like oil in the oil seeds and fragrance in the flowers. Like the seeds and the flowers, Nature is just the external form of the Divine. This truth is called Sankhya or Tattwam. It is the power of enquiry that shows the Truth.

Yet another testimony to this cause-effect theory was also placed forward by the Sankhya Darshana. Creation can only be made by a combination of two forces. These two forces are God and Nature.

This Darshana says that Nature is composed of 24 aspects—the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, the five senses, the five life breaths, mind, (Manas) intellect, (Buddhi,) reflective mind (Chittam) and ego (Ahamkaram). Each one appears as a conflicting, unique force. For example: where there is fire, there can be no water. But yet the Sankhya Darshana splits these conflicting forces into just 3 subheads to facilitate an easy understanding—that of the Jeeva (individual), Prakriti (nature) and Paramatma (creator). But the Sankhya does not stop with the Creator. It says that: "When, to the 24 numbers are added the Self, the number becomes 25. While the 24 numbers are matter, the 25th is the Self-the Creator. The process of evolution of the human soul begins with all the 24 numbers of matter, crosses the 25th (Self) as well and finally merges in the 'Shiva' aspect—the 26th.

While the 'Self' forms a part of the human being in the heart, it is also in the nature. He is only a noble one who can see the two-in-one aspect of the Self being within as well as in the nature. Man is like a bridge between the visible Nature and the invisible all pervasive Divinity. He is hence called 'Madhyudu'—the middle one. What we consider as invisible is what is actually guiding the consequences contrary to our belief.

Mind is a white paper on which is recorded the life-records of several births of ours. It is called the 'Chitta'. He who is hidden in this and does the recording is called "Chittagupta"—the hidden recorder. This power is also called the 'Prajnashakti'—the Radiation. This Radiation vibrates the life force (Vibration) that helps this body to be alive and function—(Materialization).

What is moksha—(liberation)?

It is not something that needs to be specially earned. The Sankhya Darshana explicitly states that actually, no special effort need be made to attain liberation. When man realises his true form, he is liberated. When man destroys all the desires in him, he is liberated (Moha Kshaya is Moksha). In terms of numbers, the Darshanas explain that as long as man identifies 24 numbers and the Self (Purusha aspect), he can never realise that he is the truth. It is only when he travels beyond, to the Super-mind that he can fathom the Truth. That is the Divine mind. It is sacred, and, from this stage, one can step on to the Illuminated-mind from where is visible only the Higher-mind and nothing else.

When the roof is removed, one can see the sky from where he is sitting. Similarly, when the roof of the Lower-mind is removed, one can see the Higher-mind, and finally the Overmind. In this way, by showing the numbers, this text helps in guiding man from Nature to God.

The goal of human life

Yet another fact elucidated in the Sankhya Darshana is the relation between man and Atma. Atma can never be obtained by investigations of the secular kind. It is natural and all pervading, whether the body is present or not. For example, though one cannot see the electricity flowing through the wires, the moment a bulb is connected to a socket attached to the wire, the

body comes and goes.

Saint Thyagaraja sang that however high a bird flies, it will have to come down and rest on a tree at some time. Similarly, man has to submit to Divinity one day whatever be his reservations. That is the goal of life. Instead of realising it at some later stage of life, it is better to do it now and start the process.

How to see the divinity?

This Darshana states that it is a demonic quality to forget God. Man must remove the demonic quality, develop the human quality and reach divinity. Just as one blows off the ash to see the latent fire, one must blow away the ashes of bad qualities on the self with the air of 'Namasmarana'. Just as one removes the moss on the water with the hands to reveal crystal clear water, man must remove the moss of sensual pleasures with the hands of good-acts. Namasmarana is the best way prescribed for the Kali age to attain liberation.

When man submits to illusion, man himself becomes illusion. This illusion is an aspect of the 25th number. When we understand the secret between the illusion and Divinity, we ourselves become the 26th aspect Divinity. One cannot gather all the five organs of action and knowledge, and the five senses together. But exercising control and following some limits, Divinity may be realised. A scrupulous adherence to discipline is essential.

In England, it was discovered that when a farmer fed and milked the cows at erratic times due to some tensions in the family, the quality of milk was much poorer than what was originally obtained when feeding and milking was done on a strict schedule. That is the importance of sticking to discipline in life.

Nature does not deceive

Man must never neglect anything however small. Tiny termites may destroy an entire block of wood.

The Nyaya darshana states the differences between two atoms. But the Sankhya darshana states that the entire creation is in the microcosm an atomic structure. So why talk of a separate atomic structure? God is this microcosm. That is the significance of the Vedic statement: 'Smaller than the smallest, mightier than the mightiest. (Anoranooyan Mahato Maheeyan)

(To be Continued)

Anapeksha" means one who is free from any kind of "Apeksha" (desire or expectation). Is it possible in this vast world for any man to be free from "Apeksha"? This is not possible. Some things may be attractive to some persons and some high aims may interest others. The objects that are desired are sensual pleasures and comforts and things of the world. The higher aims ("Sreshta") relate to the non-sensual, non-physical and ultra mundane. Almost all desires fall into one or other of these two categories. How, then, is it possible to be rid of both kinds of desires? This is possible.

In the Bhagavad Gita, the Lord has declared that he is present in all righteous actions. Therefore, those who perform righteous actions can develop "anapeksha" (desirelessness). This means that when a man performs all actions as offerings to the Lord, they become "desireless" (anapeksha) actions. The Lord is one who from within makes a person act, speak, listen, see and do many other actions. He is the doer and the enjoyer. If a person performs all actions with the conviction that the Indwelling Lord is the real doer, then his actions become "desireless". Hence every sadhaka should regard his actions as offerings to the Divine.

Purity: Internal and External

"Suchihi": This means "purity". This term does not merely refer to the external cleanliness of the physical body. Sadhakas need internal purity also. What are the implications of inner purity? All the actions a man does issue from internal impulses and not from external forces. They are a reflection of his inner being. It is only when man has pure feelings within him that his actions can be pure. When he is polluted within, all his actions will be impure. How are the internal impulses to be purified? These relate to the mind, speech (vaak) and the body. Of the three, speech is the most important. How is purity in speech to be achieved? "Anudvegakaram Vaakyam Sathyam priyahitham cha yath" (says the Gita). Every word you utter should be free from causing excitement or agitation ("Anudvegakaram"). It should be true (Sathyam) and pleasing (priyam). There are four factors which account for the pollution of the tongue. One is, uttering falsehood; two, excessive talking; three, carrying tales against others; four, abuse or criticism of others. The tongue is prone to indulge in these four types of offences in speech. Unfortunately, in the Kali age, all these four are rampant, Untruth has become ubiquitous. People freely indulge in slandering others. Tale-bearing goes on. Indulgence in loquacity is widespread. It is only when one gets rid of these four evil tendencies can his speech become pure and unpolluted. Hence, the first task is to purify one's speech.

Next comes the mind. The mind is polluted by wrong thoughts and bad feelings. Man should strive to keep away all bad thoughts from invading his mind. When a man is ceaselessly filled with bad thoughts, he can only reap bad consequences. To purify the mind, all bad thoughts have to be expelled. No room should be given to them. Bad feelings should be banished from the mind. Only then the mind will get totally purified.

Then comes purity of the body. One must have a body that is free from the taint of violence or harm ("Himsa"). Men commit many acts of violence and many sinful acts with their hands. The body has been given to man primarily for practising Dharma (righteousness). Such a sacred gift should be used only for rendering service to others and doing Godly actions. This is the way to purify the body.

Therefore, when speech, mind and the body are purified, internal purity is ensured. "Suchi", thus, calls for internal purity as well as external cleanliness.

Determination in Action

"Dakshah": This means that one should have firm determination in performing actions. The determination should be confined to actions that are pure, helpful to others and sublimate man. No man can refrain from action (of some kind or other) even for a moment. In no circumstance should one engage himself in an impure act. This is the way to achieve purity through firm determination. Only such a person can be called a "Daksha" (a resolute person).

The fourth quality is "Udaaseenah". This means freedom from attachment to anything. It means remaining serene and unruffled by fame or blame or sorrow, loss or gain, pleasure or pain, not elated by prosperity or depressed by failure. One should not succumb to calumny. Nor should one exult over fame. Fame and censure are like passing clouds. One should look upon them as a mere witness. They should be treated with indifference ("Udaaseena"). To treat them seriously is to give rise to agitations in the mind, which may lead to demonic tendencies.

Freedom from Worry

"Gathavyathah" "Vyathah" represents the greatest weakness in man today. Man ignores the duties he has to perform in the present. He broods over what has happened in the distant past. He is constantly speculating over what is likely to happen in the future. Why worry about the future or about dead past? The past is beyond recall or remedy. Forget the past. The future is uncertain. No one can be sure about what is likely to happen the next day. Don't think about the future, as you cannot be sure about it. Concern yourself with the present, which is the child of the past and the parent of the future. This attitude is represented by the term "Gathavyathah". Brooding over the past and speculating about the future, man is failing in his duties in the present. This is the cause of his misery. Make right use of the present and a good future is assured. The aspirant should bear this truth in mind and concentrate his attention on the present. Mental worry about the past or the future is a Rajasic quality. It should be got rid of.

"Sarvaarambhaparithyaagi": This quality calls for the renunciation of egoism in any form. The ego is rooted in the possessive instinct ("Mamakara"). When egoism and possessiveness come together in a man, he is utterly ruined. Hence, one should be free from egoism (Ahamkara) and attachment.

The aforesaid six qualities are sacred virtues. The opening stanza declares that a devotee with these six qualities is dear to the Lord.

Apart from these six good qualities, man has six vices: Kama (lust), Krodha (anger) Lobha (greed), Moha (delusion), Mada (conceit), and Matsarya (envy). These "six enemies" of man have to be got rid of and the six good qualities should be cultivated. Only then human life can be made meaningful.

Bali's greatness

Emperor Bali was one who was endowed with these noble qualities. For this reason, the Lord came down to the earth and sought a gift from Bali. There are many philanthropists in the world. There are persons who make gifts of land, or of cows, or food, or clothes, or gold, but few can be found who are prepared to make- an offering of themselves. Emperor Bali was one who was ready to give himself away as a gift "I am offering to Thee, Oh Lord, everything that is mine, my wealth, and family. Only the Atma remains. Save me, who is taking refuge in Thee" (sloka). "I gave my word to you. I am giving my kingdom to you. At this instant, I am offering my body to you." Declaring thus, Emperor Bali bowed before Vamana.

In ancient times, there were many such noble and high-minded rulers. Bali was wedded to Truth. He cared only for the welfare of his people. He was a protector of Truth. He practised Dharma.

Such a ruler was reigning over Kerala at that time. He derived all his multifarious virtues from his grandfather, Prahlada. However, Bali's father, Virochana, was engaged in wicked thoughts and bad deeds like Hiranyakasipu, Prahlada's father. All three belonged to the same clan. Virochana attempted to make Bali pursue wrong paths. But, good and bad ways cannot be imposed on others. The marks of good behaviour of persons reflect their inherent goodness.

Prahlada as Judge

Once, there was a contest between Virochana, the son of Prahlada, and Sudhanva, the son of the Sage Angirasa. It was agreed that whoever lost the contest should forfeit his life to the winner. Both of them prayed to Prahlada to act as the judge for the contest, being convinced that he would be totally impartial and fair. Prahlada agreed to act as judge because he was pledged to uphold truth, without any other consideration. After watching the contest, Prahlada declared Sudhanva as the winner and his own son, Virochana, as the loser.

Unable to control his joy over the verdict, Sudhanva embraced Prahlada and said: "Prahlada! It is because of unflinching upholders of Truth like you that the world shines in all its glory. If there were no meritorious people on earth, how can there be light in the world? Prahlada! Because of your adherence to truth, you gave the verdict against your own son". Prahlada knew that whoever lost the contest should pay forfeit with his life. But that did not deter him from pronouncing the verdict against his son. "There is no greater Dharma than Truth." ("Sathyaannaasthi Paro Dharmah"). Prahlada was not swayed by any sense of paternal love. He shed no tears. He watched the outcome of his judgment with a sense of fulfillment.

declared: "Prahlada! Your devotion to Truth will restore the life of your son. I am not claiming his life (as the reward for my victory). I am giving back your son's life to you.

"Dharmaeva Adharmo hanthi. Dharmo Rakshathi Rakshitah"(Dharma destroys the one who harms it. Dharma protects its protector). "Prahlada! You have stood by Dharma. Thereby you have saved your son." In this manner Sudhanva praised Prahlada.

Bharat then and now

Prahlada's life exemplified innumerable virtues and ideals. Because of such great and virtuous rulers in those days, the world was blessed with peace and prosperity. Today everywhere disorder, discontent, distrust, injustice, indifference to what is good and indulgence in what is bad, excessive attachment to sensuous pleasures, selfishness and self-centredness, are rampant among people. It is unfortunate that Bharat, which was once famous for its morality and righteousness, its dedication to Truth and Dharma, should have degenerated to this level today. This is a blot not only on the country but a matter of shame for the people of Bharat. If we have a look at the state of the society, we find that all activities in society are related to self-praise, abusing others and duplicity in speech. These triple vices are now ubiquitous. Bharatiya society, which was once so glorious, is now plunged in darkness, enveloped in discord, agitation and pollution.

Pollution everywhere

Man considers the air as polluted, water as impure and the sounds reaching him as intolerable. Even the food is polluted. The Government also considers the entire environment as polluted. Enormous sums are being spent on purifying the environment. It is not the environmental pollution about which we should be concerned. What is of concern is the pollution of the heart (Hridaya). Man's mind is polluted. Man's heart is polluted. All his feelings are polluted. It is because of this basic pollution, all other things appear polluted.

The primary need today is to eradicate the pollution in the human mind. How is this to be accomplished? The mind today is immersed in worldly desires and pleasures. As a result, there is mental dissatisfaction as well as bitter frustration. The mind should be turned back to the source from which it came. A fish out of water has to be restored to the water for it to regain its life. Can it survive if it is placed on a couch and fed with coffee? It will regain peace and life only when it returns to its native home. Likewise, man's mind has to be restored to its original home in the Self (Atma). Without doing this, how can peace be got? Thus, mental peace has to come from the Atma. This calls for turning the mind towards the Atma by the use of the conscience.

Don't rely on the body. It is a water bubble. Don't rely on the mind, which is like a mad monkey. Follow the conscience. When you follow the conscience with full self-confidence, you can accomplish anything.

Bali's pledge

wanted to dissuade Bali from making the gift which Vamana asked, pointing out that the young lad was no ordinary Brahmin but the incarnation of Vishnu Himself, Bali declared: "If the young lad is Vishnu Himself, as you say, that is all the more reason for me to stand by the offer I have made when the supplicant is the supreme Lord. Is it not my great good fortune to be in the position of a giver to the Lord? All human beings seek favours from the Lord. When such a Divine approaches me with a request for three foot-lengths of land, how fortunate am I? This opportunity has come to me because of my good deeds in previous lives. I am ready to go against the injunctions of the preceptor, but I will not transgress the commands of the Lord. The plighted word stands. You may see two objects with the two eyes and listen to two different things with the two ears. But the tongue is one. The word that is given must be honoured. I cannot go back on it. The man who does not fulfill his promise is dubbed a sinner. I am determined to keep my pledge. God is the Supreme person and Lord of all beings. I will abide only by His words."

Love for his subjects

Emperor Bali was such a resolute ruler. Thereby, he secured a glorious opportunity. However, Bali had one special attachment-attachment for his subjects. The subjects also were equally attached to the emperor. The people bore devotion towards the ruler. The ruler was attached to his subjects. Their mutual relationship was intimate and indivisible. It was because of such a ruler and such subjects that the country was happy and prosperous.

Significance of Onam

Unwilling to forsake his subjects and, at the same time, unable to go back on his promise to the Lord, Bali gave a pledge to the people that he would visit them once a year. This Onam day is the auspicious day of Bali's annual visit to the earth. It is the sacred day on which Emperor Bali returns to bless his people. In the month of Shravana, when the moon is nearest to the constellation Shravana, Bali said he would make his appearance. Today that auspicious combination is present. As Sri Eradi said (in his speech earlier), this is the twenty-fifth year in which the Onam festival is celebrated (in Bhagavan's presence). What is the lesson to be learnt from this Silver Jubilee of "Onam"? Over the past twenty-four years you have been listening (to Bhagavan's discourses) experiencing (His presence) and enjoying the celebration. How far are you practising (Swami's teachings)? Every human being has a heart (Heart). This heart is filled with love. With how many are you sharing the love in your hearts? With none at all. What, then, is the use of that love if it is not shared? You must share with all the love in your hearts, not with humans alone, but with all beings in creation. Love, which is the gift of God, has to be shared with everyone in the world.

Share love with all

All human troubles arise out of the failure to share this love with one and all because of selfishness. Everyone repeats the benediction: "Lokasamasthas-sukhino Bhavanthu!" (Let all the people of the world be happy"). To how many are you giving happiness? You are repeating the words mechanically, but are you praying from your hearts for the well-being of the world? No, not at all. You are concerned only with your selfish interests. The day you root out selfishness from within you, divinity will blossom in your heart.

People talk about "Sakshatkaram". What is it? It is not something external. "Sakshatkara" is contemplation of the Divine at all times and in all states within one's self. "Sarvada, sarvakaleshu sarvathra Hari Chinthanam". (Thinking of God at all times, in all places continuously). People do recite the name of "Rama" incessantly. But will liberation be got by this repetition? To gain liberation, to win Rama's grace, it is not enough to repeat his name you have to act up to Rama's Principles. Rama sacrificed everything for the sake of Dharma. You have to make a similar sacrifice. Keep Dharma as your ideal. Engage yourself in righteous activities. Only then will Rama shower His grace on you. If, on the contrary, you perform no Dharmic acts but only repeat Rama's name, it is tantamount to abusing Rama.

Likewise, there is no meaning in repeating Krishna's name. What the devotee should do is to experience the ecstasy of Krishna Consciousness. Nor is that all. You should develop the equal-mindedness of Krishna. Krishna maintained the same serenity of mind whether he was in a Yoga-Bhumi, or a Yuddha-Bhumi (battlefield) or Smasana-Bhumi (a cemetery). He was always in a state of bliss. You should aspire to experience such bliss. Only then can you be said to experience Krishna consciousness. Whatever deity you may worship, you should experience the lessons of the deity within you.

Love the Sai Truths

Swami's main teaching is Prematattwa.(the Love Principle). You are all experiencing this love. With how many are you sharing it? All around there is only hatred. Only egoism is present all the time. Equally ostentation is displayed all the time. How then, can you be deemed to have experienced the Sai truths? Whoever has imbibed those truths must be filled with Love. That is the true mark of devotion.

Emperor Bali was one who was filled with the sense of justice, with forbearance, compassion, Truth, Dharma, and devotion to the people. Are you cultivating at least one of these good qualities? Bali gave his promise to the people to appear before them every year because his people had all these qualities. The people of today are different. How can anyone know whether Emperor Bali is appearing? People celebrate Bali's visit as a festival but Bali is not coming. Why? Because the qualities of the people of those days are not present today. Doubtless, Bali loves his people. But the people today must have the power to draw him to visit them. They should be like a powerful magnet which can attract a heavy block of iron. They will then be able to move and melt the heart of the Divine. You are doubtless magnets. But you have to purify yourselves to increase your magnetic power. That purity consists in the triple purity of mind, speech and body.

Merger in the Lord

Whatever anyone may do, there can be no deficiency in the Divine. Whether you praise or blame God, neither affects Him. (Bhagavan then related the episode from the Mahabharata in which Dharmaja watched with anguish the abuses levelled against Krishna by Shishupala and which Krishna tolerated for quite sometime. Then he hurled a plate at Shishupala which severed his head. Dharmaja saw the blood from Shishupala's body flowing towards Krishna and a divine

person like Shishupala could merge in Krishna. Narada explained that good and bad, fame and blame relate only to the body and not to the Atma. The merger in the Divine of devotees who have worshipped the Lord in many ways takes place after a long period of trials and tribulations, but it lasts eternally. In the case of the wicked, who remember the Lord constantly out of hatred, the merger takes place quickly but remains only for a short spell. The merger of souls in the Divine takes place for different reasons. In the case of Kamsa it was fear (of Krishna, which made him always remember Krishna), hatred in the case of Shishupala and Dantavakra, maternal affection in the case of Yashoda, who merged in Krishna through love. The Gopikas merged in the Lord through single pointed devotion and Radha merged in the Lord owing to Ekatma-bhavana (complete sense of spiritual oneness). All attained merger. But in each case, it was up to a specific level.

Do not follow the body. Follow the mind and the Atma. The one who follows the Atma is the real spiritual seeker.

Contemplating on God with all your heart, chanting his name and surrendering to him, redeem your lives. The name and fame of God are not derived from outside. They are not the creations of newspapers and pamphlets. They do not change because of any circumstance. The Lord's name and fame grow out of their sacredness and love. Therefore, do not bother about anything. Develop your love. Promote your divine nature. Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice.

(Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the bhajan "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*")

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap on August 30, 7 993

AVATAR VANI

“Let Unity Prevail”

Bharat achieved freedom, but it has not achieved unity. All the ills from which the country is suffering today are traceable to the absence of unity and the predominance of selfishness among the people" observed Bhagavan Baba, addressing a large gathering of the elite of Bangalore, in the Chowdaiah Memorial Hall, Rajajinagar, on 12th September.

Bhagavan was the chief guest at a function organised by the National Integration Committee presided over by Mr. B. D. Jatti, former Vice-president of India. The National Integration Committee has been trying to promote national integration by a programme of music concerts in which artistes from all parts of the country participate. Bhagavan had blessed the Committee's efforts on earlier occasions by His Divine presence at programmes in Delhi.

The concert programme in Bangalore was spread over some days.

because of Bhagavan Baba's presence as Chief guest. Bhagavan arrived at the Hall precisely at 4.45 p.m. Special traffic arrangements had been made for the speedy movement of Bhagavan and His entourage from Brindavan.

Bhagavan was received with "Poornakumbham" at the entrance to the Hall to the accompaniment of Nadaswaram music.

National level classical musicians rendered a few specially composed songs on Bhagavan Baba.

The Secretary of the National Integration Committee, Sri T. V. K. Sastry welcomed the gathering and conducted the guests of honour to the dais. Among them were Sri Jaffer Sherif, Union Minister for Railways, Sri Veerappa Moily, Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri T. N. Seshan, Chief Election Commissioner, and Sri B. D. Jatti. When Bhagavan started ascending the steps to take his specially decorated chair at the centre, the entire audience stood in reverence till Bhagavan took his seat.

Sri Jaffer Sherif addressed Baba as "Bhagavan" and prayed for his blessings. Sri Veerappa Moily said that Bhagavan Baba was the only hope and refuge for the nation. Sri Seshan reminded the audience that Baba is God, who has incarnated on earth according to His declaration in the Bhagavad Gita.

After the brief speeches of Sri Jatti and others, Bhagavan delivered his discourse.

Bhagavan referred to many aspects of the situation in India and the world and emphasised the need for unity and the revival of ancient culture of Bharat. Bharatiya culture, he said, was beyond time and space and remained unaffected by the vicissitudes experienced by the country. Bharat, which stood for Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, the basic human values, is now in a pitiable state, with no morality or honesty among the people. Among the four goals of human life, "Purusharthas", people had given up the first, Dharma (righteousness) and the last, Moksha, (liberation) but pursued the two goals in between, Artha (wealth) and Kama (desire). There was no unity in the country as there was no purity and hence Divinity was out of sight. Only "community" and "enmity" are prevailing. In spite of tremendous progress in science and technology, man today is neither happy nor is he able to travel an inch inward. It is not scientific, technological and industrial progress that will confer peace and happiness on mankind. Only faith in God can ensure peace and security. If man enquires into his true nature, he will find that he is not the body or the senses and that his true self is the Atma. It is only the spiritual path that can make people feel as one. People should not be divided on provincial, linguistic and religious grounds. There is only one Religion, the Religion of Love, only one Caste, the Caste of humanity, only one Language, the Language of the heart, and only one God, who is Omnipresent. People should always bear in mind three things: Daivapreeti (Love of God), Papabheeti (fear of sin) and Sanghaneeti (morality in society).

those striving for national integration and progress on righteous lines.

VIDYAGIRI SAMACHAR

Symposium on Sai System of Education

The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning had arranged for a symposium on "Challenges and Responses of Higher Education in India-Relevance of Sri Sathya Sai system of Education", on 26th August 1993, at the Institute Auditorium.

Prof. U.S. Rao, Dean of the Business Administration School, who was the programme Co-ordinator, delivered the welcome address in which he explained the purpose of this symposium and the details of the discussion proposed to be held.

Dr. K. Hanumanthappa, Vice-Chancellor of the Institute delivered the key note address. He traced the circumstances which have led to the present world trend "Advent of anxiety" in the words of Auden. He emphasised the need for reforms in the educational system to bring out the best human values in the youth and make them worthy citizens capable of building a tension-free and peaceful world. He detailed the recommendations made by several commissions on Education appointed by the Government of India and regretted that even these recommendations with limited scope could not be implemented due to political, economic and other compulsions. He commended the Sathya Sai system of Education, which had elicited maximum appreciation from the authorities in the educational and other fields. Quoting extensively from Bhagavan's address to the conference of Vice-Chancellors and other speeches, he pointed out that the Sai system of education stood for human excellence and the development of a total integrated personality among the students. He concluded his talk with the words of Bhagavan that "The nation can prosper and be happy only when education develops in an atmosphere of Truth, Love and Reverence".

Dr. C. Kuppuswamy, reader, Department of Philosophy, and Prof. J. Hemalatha spoke on aspects of value based higher education.

Prof. U.S. Rao spoke on the Indian perspectives in Business Management. Sri N. Sivakumar, Research Scholar in Business Management, also spoke on new perspectives in Management Education. Sri K. Chakravarthi dwelt at length on the economics of Higher Education quoting profusely from the reports of the World Bank and other institutions.

Prof. S. Sampath, former Vice-Chancellor of the Institute spoke about the challenges of higher education and stressed that Sri Sathya Sai Institute of higher learning was a model for other educational institutions to follow as proclaimed by the Prime Minister in his Convocation

unconnected with the administration or teaching of collegiate Education and commended the practical value of the Sai System of Education.

In the afternoon session, Sri M. Nanjundaiah, Controller of Examinations of the Institute, spoke about the practical working of the Sai system. Prof. P. V. Bhairavamurthy, Head of the Department of Bio-sciences in the Institute and Prof. Roger Packham, Director, P. G. Programme of the University of Western Sydney, Australia, gave interesting talks with illustrations on slide projector on environmental awareness through education.

Dr. G. Venkataraman, eminent Scientist and honorary professor of physics in Sri Sathya Sai Institute, gave a stimulating talk on the present system of education, especially in Science and Technology, and regretted the contagious mania among students to go abroad to work there. It was nothing but sheer ingratitude to their Motherland. He pointed out how thousands of these Indian scientists were helping the USA space programme, nuclear programme, etc., while the USA is reluctant to supply strategic requirements for our own projects. Dr. G. V. Prabhakara Rao gave a very instructive talk about the operation of Computer which has revolutionised the system of management, finance and accounting in a very big way.

Dr. R. Kumar Bhaskar, Reader, School of Business Management, summed up the proceedings of the symposium and Dr. A. Sudhir Bhaskar, Reader in the School, proposed a vote of thanks.

There was a music programme by students of the Higher Secondary School and the Institute of Higher Learning, which served as a pleasing finale to the day-long symposium.

Love Conquers All

I have been to India many times since 1977, and invariably, people ask, "How was the Taj Mahal?" My answer is always the same, "I have never been there." "So, where have you been?" they ask. "To see Sathya Sai Baba." The question is always, "And who is He?"

I have experienced many aspects of Baba. I've seen Him heal people, watched Him smile and talk to many while seeming to ignore others. I've looked on as He walked among the multitude; He is there, but-you know not really there; yet, He is everywhere. Yes, I have been blessed with personal interviews, as well as personal miracles, both at Prasanthi Nilayam and in New York. Throughout the years I have come to see Baba as mother, father, friend, and holy man.

In the many books I've read, He has been represented as the image of God, something I've never truly understood. Consequently, there had been a kind of separation between us. It wasn't

message, not just intellectually, but from a new space that He opened up. All through the fall of '92, I had been trying to visit Baba. I wanted to go when the ashram was less crowded, for now that I had retired, I did not have to wait for a school break or for summer vacation. I thought I was free to go anytime.

Yet, each way I turned, the path was blocked. I made plans, but they kept falling apart. To my surprise, I was pushed to go in November, at birthday and conference time. My intellect said this was not the right time, it would be far too crowded. But my heart knew it was destiny, and I had little choice. Baba was indeed leading the way, and it was interesting that, at that time, all plans fell into place. There was no longer any trouble getting on with the trip. What ensued was the greatest miracle, the real transformation!

The game of life

I arrived in India, alone for the first time, tired, worried. However, the minute I stepped into the Ashram, all I could hear was, "Life's a game, play it!" This remained the theme of my visit.

This served me in good stead when I was told, "There is no room at the inn," despite the letters of recommendation I had brought. The theme, "Life's a game, plan it!" also echoed as I was repeatedly seated far back during darshan, and, yet, I kept my cool. For the first time, I was not preoccupied with thoughts of myself. I did not ask Him for anything. I sat and observed; my eyes were only on Him. This was a far cry from the many times my mind churned with, "Baba, I'm here, look at me, help me." Instead, I was thankful to be there, to breathe in His glory and blessings, and to ask for nothing.

And so, I received! No matter where I was placed, there was Swami, as visible as could be. When the temple compound was so very crowded, and I was placed last, all of a sudden a new row would form, and I was there with Baba in full view.

Not only did I wind up with a room, but in the midst of hundreds of thousands, I had a dream fulfilled; I was in a room by myself able to meditate in silence, to eat and sleep when needed, not to talk, to be alone with my own thoughts. I had never been privy to these luxuries before.

So, what was happening? Baba was showing me how to play life's game. In a real sense, I was finally giving of myself. There, in the midst of throngs attending the birthday, convocation, and conference activities, I was given the opportunity to recognise Baba in His true form—more than mother, father and friend. I comprehended the meaning of omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient.

The rest of my visit was supercharged, constantly reinforcing who He really is. Here it is, months later, and I'm still filled with gratitude. The miracle of who Swami is, still remains. It is He who has enabled me to face my trials and tribulations—to hear of my grandson's problems, to

good. I remember His words, "It is like baking a cake. I stir, I knead, I pound, I twist, I bake you. I drown you in tears. I scorch you in sobs. I make you sweet and crisp, an offering worthy of God." And His statement to my husband and myself, "This Avatar has come to console, correct, guide, and love you. There is nothing to fear."

And so, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has created a new being, not only freed in mind and emotions but changed on a physical plane. He has erased many of my face wrinkles and turned my lips upward, allowing sadness to give way to a smile, showing me that Love conquers all. Yes, the Lord is truly here!

—Bea Flaig
Ithaca, New York

Seeing the Hand of God

A book entitled *The God Particle* A has just been released by Houghton Mifflin Publishers. Its author, Leon Lederman, shared the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1988 for his discovery of several pieces of the subatomic puzzle. In this book, he traces the 2,500-year search for the invisible particle which is the building block of all matter. In 432 B.C. a Greek philosopher named it the a-tom, meaning "that which cannot be cut." Lederman clearly distinguishes it from the atom, which can be subdivided into neutrons, protons, etc., and terms it *The God Particle*, the original source of all matter.

In the book, *Sree Sai Sudha* (pages 1-2), Sathya Sai Baba inspired the author to describe the origin of all matter as follows: "From the totality of Creative Energy (Brahma Loka) to the smallest indivisible particle of creation (Brahma Beeja), the basic form of creation is spherical in shape. The spheroids of creation conglomerate in different formations to form different creatures.

"Each spheroid of creation from the Brahma Loka to the Brahma Beeja moves in an elliptical or circular orbit. The Brahma Loka is to the Planet Earth as the Planet Earth is to a proton, and as a proton is to a Brahma Beeja. Each of these spheroids of creation is created, controlled, and moved in an elliptical and circular orbit by Cosmic (Divine) Energy."

An article entitled "Science, God, and Man," in the December 28, 1992, issue of Time Magazine, discusses the paradox which seems to exist between "the explanatory sweep of science" and religion. However, it continues, "Stepping back and looking at the big picture, scientists see an overarching pattern that encompasses the many feats of 20th century science: a universe all but destined to create platforms for life, a still unknown but increasingly suspected physical law that all but destined some of these platforms to be peopled by little living specks; an evolutionary process that was almost destined, given enough time, to turn those specks into

who read articles about how they came to be here. With a little effort, some people say, you can see the hand of God."

For those of us who have witnessed Baba's materializations and dematerializations, perhaps the most interesting scientific development of recent years is the one described in *The God Particle* as the particle accelerator. The original "atom smasher" was only a few inches in diameter. "Today, the world's most powerful accelerator is housed at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) in Batavia, Illinois. Fermilab's machine, called the Tevatron, is four miles around and smashes protons and antiprotons together with unprecedented energies." Describing the machine's function in popular idiom, Lederman explains, "We pop matter in and out of existence all the time." However, he goes on to say that this is not done by will alone but that it is necessary to add energy to the process, thus creating an enormous electric bill.

Sathya Sai Baba pops matter in and out of existence by force of Divine Will, explaining that He simply thinks of a thing and it appears. Perhaps it will not be another 2,500 years before the God Particle, a-tom, or Beeja Loka, can be recognized by scientists, along with the Divine Will which created and energizes it.

Joy Thomas
Cherry Valley, California

"You must see, hear, study, observe, experience and reflect; only then, can you understand me. You will learn then that I am Love (Prema); that I give only one thing, bliss (Ananda) through Love. My task is to grant solace, courage and peace (Santhi). That is to say, my characteristics are the ancient, authentic ones; only the manifest form is new. My desire—if I can put it that way—is this: More and more should yearn for me. That desire can be realised only if I assume this form and come among you. Those of you who have been following the unfolding of my story will have discovered this by now...My purpose can be understood in a general way only by earnestly and vigilantly watching, trying to get to the meaning of every word, and acting with patient attention."

—Baba

Two Nations as One in Prasanthi Nilayam

On the first of June of this year, fifteen American Sai devotees from Arizona, New Mexico, Florida, and Wisconsin gathered in Moscow and later went on to India for what was to become a magical and truly Sai-full adventure.

(See Sathya Sai Newsletter, Summer, 1993, pages 2325), at which Dixie Cooper and Marya "Mosha" Stetnoy from Phoenix and Moscow, respectively, were guest speakers. Later, after spending a long quiet evening immersed in stories of Sai Baba and tales of Russia, Mosha invited some devotees to go to Russia to talk about Swami. She indicated that there were many Russians who were beginning to learn about Baba, and they were eager to know more. The idea of accepting Mosha's invitation was discussed, and several of us decided that we would like to be part of this exciting endeavour. There were some obstacles that would have to be overcome and an organizational protocol would need to be followed for a journey of this type to be realized.

The light-hearted detachment that bubbled up within us, was a joy to behold. A tentative date was set, and the tasks of investigating airline fares, visas, corresponding with the Russians, and other information gathering duties were delegated among the devotees. In a short time, the small group had grown to over twenty people, all with different needs regarding travel arrangements. The size of the group fluctuated continually until the number stabilized at fifteen, just prior to departure. What was truly amazing was to see the obstacles arise and miraculously vanish. Even more amazing was to watch our own light heartedness in the face of continual ups and downs. Many who were cautious at first, became truly excited about the adventure as it began to unfold. The loving kindness and support that was extended made everyone feel that the Lord's hand was guiding this journey.

From our arrival in Russia, to our last good-bye before departure, the Russians exemplified Swami's teaching, "Service to man is service to God."

Sai Bhajans in Moscow

We were greeted at the airport in Moscow and taken by bus to the home of our host family who was waiting to meet us. After we were introduced, they laid out plates of delicious food, and we then sang devotional songs (bhajans). Finally, we were completely exhausted from our journey. It was then that we were taken to our respective homes to stay with Russian families.

A week long itinerary was prepared for us that included sightseeing, talks, bhajans, and a visit to a children's home, which ultimately became the most moving experience many devotees had encountered. We travelled as a group on the Metro Subway throughout our visit. Because the crowd of Americans and Russians was large, our hosts carried a photo of Swami throughout the subways of Moscow which they would hold up while chanting a thunderous chorus of "OMs" at each station, to guide us along.

Very few of the Russians spoke English, though many could understand a little, if we spoke slowly. Some of us prepared by studying Russian, but it was hardly enough to have verbal interaction beyond simple pleasantries. The communication was literally heart-to-heart. Certainly, a sense of humour helped.

Although the economic and political climate is unstable in Russia, the people we met were hopeful. We were surprised that the Russians we had seen in documentaries, with long lines of

lines were those for gasoline and other petroleum products.

During the preparation for our trip, it was agreed that each American would prepare a fifteen-minute talk on an aspect of Swami's teachings and its effect in their daily lives. It was wonderful to listen to both old friends and new-especially those who had never spoken in public-speaking so sweetly from their hearts. Also, the joy of the Russian and American bhajans was overwhelming. Everyone agreed that it seemed as though we were already in Prasanthi Nilayam, crowded conditions and all!

The trip to India

On June 7, twenty-seven Russians and the group of Americans, left Moscow for Bombay. The excitement was palpable. In preparation for the trip, the Arizona Centres had gathered enough sari and Punjabi outfits for each of the Russian women. They were ecstatic! Upon arrival in Bombay, we were greeted by a bus that had been arranged to take us to the Dharma kshetra to rest before the trip to Prasanthi Nilayam. Of the Russians, only two women had been to see Swami. You can imagine the happiness and eager anticipation! The Russians were to leave by train to Dharmavaram and on to Puttaparthi. The Americans caught a flight to Bangalore. Our plan was to arrange for the rooms and prepare them before the Russians arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam.

When the Americans arrived at the Ashram on the evening of the eight, it was discovered that all accommodations were ready and waiting. Eleven rooms were allotted and each was equipped with buckets and bedding. There was little, if anything, for the Americans to do. Since the Russians were due to arrive in the early morning, we purchased food items that so they could eat something before having their first darshan (sight of a holy being of Sathya Sai Baba).

Baba as Mother

What a joy it was to sit together and watch Sai Baba. He was like a mother gathering her children around her. The love and compassion He demonstrated, especially after the incident at the Ashram a few days prior, was astounding. The lessons He conveyed had a profound effect on us all. It is so very difficult to put into words just how deeply, being in His presence, affected all of us. Someone recently said that it is as if He had changed the very structure of our DNA.

He spoke immediately to the Russians and continued to shower lavish attention on them throughout their stay. I hesitate to use the word "them" because I did not feel a distinction, but, instead, experienced great joy watching both Russians and Americans interact with our Sai. He would look at the Americans and call us Russians. There were not two nationalities, but one. One nationality, united in His love.

During an interview, He called "Russians" into the private room. The Americans continued to sit in the outer room only to be waved in, as if they didn't understand when He called the first time. He gave reassurance to the "Russian" Russians (as opposed to the "American" Russians) about their country's difficulties and answered personal questions.

Mutual love for Sai

When half of the group left after two weeks to return to Russia and the United States, the parting was of age-old friends, united by their mutual love for Sai. The others who remained continued to feel the love and joy and were able to share it at the feet of the Lord on Guru Poornima day. What a fitting climax to this wonderful adventure!

There is no greater bond among souls than the deep desire for the love of God. We saw no distinction between us. We spoke the language of the heart, sang the songs of the soul, and loved each other as Sai brothers and sisters. That is not to say that there weren't difficulties, but what are difficulties in the face of the All Powerful? They are merely ripples on the surface of the deep ocean of Love.

One thing is certain, there wasn't one of us who remained unmoved by the gift of this experience. And for this, we extend our heartfelt gratitude and praise to the One who brought it about.

**-Jackie Davis,
Phoenix, Arizona**

Mighty and Gentle

Who is this mighty one who befriends me,
Who cries 'Come, little one, join with me'.
Whose look burns into my soul and
Transports me with delight.
Who is this gentle one who calls across the sea,
'Come hither and learn the true meaning of life,
'No longer be shut in your prison of desire,
'Be free-transcend the mundane and the petty,
'Live a larger life.'

He is my soul calling out to me,
'I am here, come know me.'
He is my dream of greatness
No longer trapped in its cage of fear,'
He is the silence of the starry night,
The loveliness of the moon,
He is the nearest and dearest to my heart,
Its confidant.
He walks with me until I'm free.

-Kay Ratijens, Australia

Role of the Avatar in the Cosmic Play

*Like oil in the til sees
Like ghee in milk,
fragrance in a flower
juice in a fruit,
fire in wood,
Divinity is everywhere*

Embodiments of the Divine Atma!

From ancient times, the questions, "Where is God?" and "How does He appear?" have been agitating the minds of people. The answers have been sought by different ways of investigation. The believers, non-believers, those with doubts and others have not been able to get clear answers to these questions. To comprehend the truth, one should look within oneself. This cannot be learnt from text-books or from teachers. Chaitanya (Consciousness) is there in the mind and pervades everywhere. The power of vision in the eye and of taste in the tongue are derived from this Chaitanya. People are using the sense organs but do not know the source of the power which activates them.

Chaitanya cannot be comprehended by the physical vision. It is within everyone in very close proximity. People undertake external exercises and spiritual practices in vain to find it. The entire Creation is a manifestation of the Divine Will. Prakriti or Nature is the manifestation of God. Man is also part of Prakriti and thus has the Divine power in him. A seed germinates and grows into a plant and then into a tree with branches, leaves, flowers etc. The seed of the entire Universe is Chaitanya (Pure Consciousness). It is Sath-Chith-Ananda. It grows in full bloom in the human being and blossoms into the flower of Awareness. Thus God incarnates in man. To understand this truth is the goal of human life. It is the mind that stands in the way of this realisation. The mind is perverted when it is centered on the ego (body consciousness) of a person but when it is directed towards the Atma, it becomes sublime. One puffed up with ego forgets Divinity. Thinking on the physical plane and looking at the external world, man is not able to understand the Divinity within him.

It is wrong to think that spirituality has nothing to do with worldly matters. The physical world also reflects Divinity. There are two entities, 'Swabhava' and 'Parabhava' the former emanating from the True Inner Self and the latter from worldly pursuits. Because man forgets his true Divine Nature he is wallowing in troubles and tribulations. He is reflecting only animal qualities in his actions. Only when one enquires within, one has the chance of realising Divinity.

Today we are celebrating 'Ganesha Jayanti', the birthday of Vighneshwara. Who is He? What is His greatness? What has He taught to the world? We celebrate the Jayanti but do not make any effort to understand the tattwa or principle behind it. His supreme teaching by His own example is oneness of the Universe. When He was asked to go round the universe to get a prize from his

completed the trip around the universe by going around them, as Lord Shiva and Parvathi represented Universe.

Swami described how the vehicles of Shiva, Parvathi, Ganesha, Subrahmanya and the objects worn on his body are all getting on harmoniously though they are in their original nature antagonistic to each other. He cited the examples of the lion, the vehicle of Parvathi, living in peace with the elephant, the form of Ganesha, and the bull the vehicle of Shiva; the peacock, the vehicle of Subrahmanya, bearing no enmity towards the snake, the garland of Shiva.

Unity in a family is the basis of unity in society. Though there are lots of common features among mankind, people are not able to visualise their unity, but promote only their differences. The cause for the lack of peace in the world is the absence of harmony in thought, word and deed in each individual, which is reflected in the lack of unity among different individuals.

Bhagavan went on to say: Spiritual values have been given up, resulting in the turmoil that we see today. Ganapati taught that one should respect one's parents and thereby win their grace and secure bliss.

The form of Ganapati cannot, by any human standards, be termed as handsome. He has a small head, big stomach and uncouth form. But still we are captivated by His form and like to see him more and more and worship him. Beauty does not lie in the 'Aakara', the external form but in 'Vikara'. Ganesha sacrificed his own tusk and used it as a pen to write down the Mahabharatha to the dictation of Vyasa, for the benefit of humanity. Man worships God only for selfish purposes. No one is prepared to sacrifice anything for getting Divine Bliss, while men are prepared to go to any length for worldly pleasures. Your mind and heart should be rendered pure to worship Divinity. You should see unity in diversity.

The Divine Cosmic Drama

In the cosmic drama, the Divine has His own role to play. When one takes up a role in a drama, he should act according to the role and not according to his state in real life. Behind the screen he comes into his own. You should understand this truth clearly. A man may take up the role of Rama in a drama. Then he has to adhere to the principles of Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema which governed all Rama's actions, though in actual life, he may not be righteous. Similarly God assumes a role in the drama of the world in human form. He has to behave as a human being only. This should be clearly understood by all.

Krishna was Paramatma (Supreme Power) and Sarvajna (All-Knowing). Though He was very close to Draupadi, at the time when she suffered humiliation in the court of Duryodhana, who ordered that she be disrobed, Krishna made an endless supply of saris to protect her honour. Some persons ask why Krishna did not punish Duryodhana on the spot when he was perpetrating such a heinous crime against a noble woman who was so devoted to him. No doubt, Draupadi was highly devoted to Krishna and Krishna had also the power to punish Duryodhana. But in this drama several more scenes had to be enacted. Duryodhana was predestined to be killed by Bhima

Krishna and Ravana's life was in the hands of Rama. Both Rama and Krishna are forms of Vishnu. But each had to play His specific role in His incarnation. For every incarnation there are certain rules and regulations which the Avatar will not transgress. Mere mortals cannot understand the ways of the Divine.

In the Divine family of Lord Shiva, we should understand that Shiva represents Energy, Parvathi represents Nature (or Prakriti). Buddhi (Intellect) and Siddhi (fulfillment) are symbolic of Ganapati and Subrahmanya, their sons. They are all one, though conceived in different forms. All the five fingers in the hands are not alike but different in size and shape. But when you do any work, they join together to give maximum effect. If all are of equal size, it will not be conducive to effective functioning. This is one of the secrets of God's creation.

(Swami related a story about a mathematician taking rest under a tree, who wondered why a pumpkin creeper bore such a huge fruit, while the huge banyan tree over his head bore only tiny fruits. He was doubting the sense of proportion of God. During his sleep some fruits from the banyan tree fell on his body. On waking up he realised that if the huge tree which attracted people to take shelter under its shade, had big fruits, like pumpkins, their fall would be harmful to those resting under it. This experience made him realise the wisdom of the Divine.)

Bhagavan said: You should try to have complete knowledge of anything. Partial knowledge is dangerous. You should study the nature of the heart. God thinks of Loka-Sreyas, (the welfare of the whole world). He has a broad vision, while human beings have a narrow selfish outlook. You should also expand your heart—not the physical heart, which may call for surgery if it expands. I am speaking about the spiritual heart. It is called 'Hridaya', meaning one which is filled with "daya" or compassion. It is all pervading. If you think of America, your heart goes there at once. The physical heart is like a machine with limited scope. The heart with 'daya' or compassion is Daivam (God). If one has no 'daya' his nature is devilish. Compassion is the most essential quality of a human being. Without compassion, man is "inhuman". A compassionate heart reflects divinity.

God has no birth or death. He remains an Eternal Witness. How to realise such an entity who is Aprameya and Apramana—beyond description and beyond proof. He responds only to love (Prema). You should understand God through love and spend your life with love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan song, "*Prema Mudhitha Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram!*"

From the Divine Discourse on 19.9.93 at Sri Ramesh Hall al Brindavan

Glory of the Lord's Lotus Feet

*Observance of right conduct has declined;
Dharma has been endangered'
Morality has nowhere to abide;
What can I say about human existence?
Morality and ethics are confined to books;
The heart has become a foul dustbin. (Poem)*

Embodiments of the divine atma!

Wetness is the natural trait of water. Hardness is the attribute of stone. Sweetness is natural to sugar. Heat is the quality of fire.

These are the natural behaviour (Dharma) of substances. For the individual, desire (Vaancha) is natural. Because man is sustained by desire, it is considered a natural trait (Dharma) of man. "Dhaarayathi ithi Dharmah" ("Dharma is that which sustains"). Man is sustained by desire. Man's primary duty is to offer all his desires to God.

This means that the practice of Dharma calls for the offering of all worldly desires to God and developing the inward vision. "Sarvadharmaan parthithyajya maamekam saranam Vraja", says Krishna in the Gita. ("Renouncing all Dharmas, take refuge in Me alone"). This implies that man must make it his primary aim to offer to God all external sensory, physical desires and cultivate spiritual thoughts centered on the eternal.

The triple purity

To develop such a spiritual outlook and to inspire it in others, one has to possess purity of heart (Chittashuddhi). Spiritual wisdom can dawn only when there is purity of heart. Just as removal of weeds, tilling the land, sowing the seeds and watering them, are required before the crop can be harvested on a plot of land, the field of the human heart has to be cleared of bad thoughts and bad feelings, watered with love, tilled by spiritual practices and the seeds of the divine Name sown. Only then one is entitled to reap the harvest of Divine Wisdom (Jnana).

Today the spiritual exercises are confined to listening to talks and not to practising the teachings. Listening has become a kind of disease. Merely after listening, men go about bragging that they know everything. This crazy boastfulness is deepening men's ignorance.

One should ruminate over what has been heard. After rumination, one should put into practice the lessons (Nidhidhyasa). Only then there is the triple purity of thought, word and deed. Today people are content with mere listening (to discourses). This will not lead to Realisation.

Srinivasaraghavan referred to the practice of "Nama Likhita japam" (repeated writing of the Lord's name as a spiritual exercise).' This practice promotes harmony in thought, word and deed (first thinking about the name of the Lord, then uttering it and then writing it). All these three processes should be carried out with a pure heart.

Total Purity is essential for all spiritual disciplines (Sadhana). To achieve this purity one has to understand the difference between "Shreyas" (spiritual well-being) and "Preyas" (mundane happiness). True humanness consists in knowing the nature of the Atma (the Indwelling Spirit). Vaak (speech), Manas (the mind) and Prana (the life-force) together constitute the Atma. The three syllables contained in the Sanskrit word "Sathyam" indicate the true form of man. "Sath" represents food. "ee" represent water and "Yam" represents the Sun (Surya). The implied meaning of the term is that the sun provides the water which helps man to grow food. When "Sathya" is interpreted in the reverse order, it means that the Reality ("Sath") is realised by the penance ("Ta" for Tapas and control of the senses). ("Ya" represents Yama and other forms of control over the senses).

Man's Inherent Divinity

Control of the senses (and the desires arising from them) is almost impossible.. What can be done, however, is to turn all the desires towards the Divine. This will be rendered possible when one realises that all the sense organs—the eyes, the ears, the nose and the tongue—derive their functional capacities from the Indwelling Spirit (Atma). It is the Chaitanya (the atmic consciousness) that animates the sense organs and enables the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the tongue to taste. The role of consciousness is like that of the current, which enables a bulb to shed light.

It is because this Atmic consciousness is present in all beings, it has been described as Brahman.

Caught up in worldly desires, man does not realise his Divine nature. He identifies himself with the body, not realising that it is temporary and perishable. The human body is nothing but an instrument for realising one's inherent Divinity. Man tries to know all about the universe but makes no attempt to know who he is. Man is leading an artificial life because of his ignorance of his reality. Man's foremost endeavour must be to realise his divine nature. He is not a mere human being. He is truly Divine and has to realise this basic truth.

Sanctify the Limbs

Man has to realise that all the limbs in his body function because of the divine power animating them. Too much importance should not be attached to these limbs intrinsically. Are not blind persons able to live without eyes? Are not deaf and dumb persons able to get on without the powers of hearing or speech? What matters is how these organs are used.

The saint Surdas wails in a soul-stirring song, 'Oh Lord! In spite of being endowed with eyes, people are not able to see your beauty. In spite of having ears they don't hear your

things. Having eyes, they look upon people with hatred and jealousy.

Monkeys, donkeys, dogs and pigs also have the same power of sight as humans. What is the difference between these animals and human beings? Animals eat, sleep and procreate. If men are also doing these things, what is the difference between them and human beings? Animals love their young ones, but that love is temporary but human love can last one's entire life.

The body and chaithanya

Man has to understand what it is without which he cannot exist. He can get on without eyes or ears or other organs, but not without life ("Prana" or Atma). This is called "Pranapratishta". (The installation of the divine Life-Force in man). In the mirror of the human body, the image of the Divine is reflected. Man considers foolishly the mirror as the Reality (Chaithanya). It is this consciousness that accounts for all that one is able to do and not the physical body.

How, then, is this body to be sanctified? By involving the body in actions related to the Atmic consciousness. This lesson was taught to Vibhishana by Hanuman. Hanuman told him that by mere repetition of Rama's name, the vision of Rama cannot be experienced. Only by dedicating himself to the service of Rama, together with chanting His name, can he (Vibhishana) experience oneness (Saayujyam) with Rama.

Practice and precept

Of what avail is it to recite all the 700 slokas of the Gita, if one does not practise even a single teaching of the Gita? "Adveshtaa Sarvabhoothaanam" proclaims the Gita. "Do not bear ill-will towards any living being". This is the primary injunction of the Gita to mankind. This is based on the dictum that one Divine (Atma) dwells in all beings as the Indweller (Antaratma). What use is there in reciting the Gita if one has hatred towards others? You worship the Divine and hate the Divine in others. Your worship and your hatred cancel each other out and nothing remains to your credit.

The Ramayana is regularly read and Rama is worshipped by the vast majority of the people in Bharat. There is a Rama temple in every village. But how many are living up to Rama's commands? Rama chose to go to the forest to comply with His father's promise. How many today obey their fathers' injunctions? Rama sacrificed the Kingdom and all comforts for the sake of upholding Truth. He said his sole aim was to promote the people's welfare. He sought to serve the people in whom he saw the image of God. "No penance, no pilgrimages to sacred rivers, no study of scriptures nor the recitation of the Lord's name will be of any use for crossing the ocean of Samsara without service to men (sajjana)" (Poem) "Sajjana" refers to those in whom "Sath" (the Atma) dwells. As the Atma dwells in all beings, "Sajjana" refers to one and all. When you serve "Sath", which is the Reality in every being, you get the Awareness of "Chith" (Consciousness). With this Awareness, the heart is filled with Ananda (Bliss).

The Lord's Feet

Annamacharya hailed the feet of the Lord as those which had been washed by Brahma himself which are Brahman Itself, which bear the burdens of the entire universe, and the burden of all human bodies. How is this done? The Divine is Purna-Swaroopa (All-encompassing form), Just as the feet of the individual bear the burden of the human body, the subtle body of the Divine bears on Its feet the entire universe. Without the feet the body cannot move.

Recognising that the macrocosm and microcosm are constituted by the same five basic elements, man should realise that the Divine is present in everything. Hence, man should chant the name of the Lord from the core of his heart and take refuge in the feet of the Lord. Annamacharya declared "Oh mind! Take refuge in the lotus feet of the Lord. They will relieve you of all your miseries and lead you to the Divine." (Bhagavan sang with vigour songs addressed to Lord Venkatesha ending with the refrain: "Sri Ramaa Ramani Manohara! The entire audience was in rapture listening to Bhagavan's singing.)

When Bharata enthroned the Padukas (sandals) of Rama, Ayodhya was really protected by Rama's sandals. Bhadrachala Ramadas also sang in the same strain. "Oh Rama! I am holding on to your feet. I will not let you move even one step until you assure me your protection."

Thyagaraja, in a similar vein, declared that he would not allow himself to be tempted by the treasures offered by the Raja of Tanjore and he preferred the lotus feet of Sri Rama to all the wealth of the world.

The glory of the feet

"Feet" do not mean sandals made in silver or gold. "Feet" refers to the Divine that sustains everything. Why is such greatness conferred on the feet? Viewing the matter from the point of view of science, it will be noted that blood flows from the feet upwards to all parts of the body. It is this blood which sustains the entire body. The feet that bear the burden of the entire body are essential for life itself. When you seek refuge in the Lord's feet, you can secure a vision of the Divine form.

Yashoda and Krishna's feet

Here is a small example from the early life of Lord Krishna in Gokulam to show what the Lord's feet mean. Krishna was known as one who used to steal butter from all houses and feed his friends and playmates too. As there were a lot of complaints about this naughty child, Krishna's mother Yashoda caught hold of him one day as he was running away and asked him: "Why are you stealing butter from other houses while I offer you so much at home? Your mouth always smells of butter. Give up this habit. Otherwise, I will tie you to a mortar to restrict your movement. How do you do such things, being so small a child?" He smiled and ran away. Yashoda went from house to house in search of Krishna. He played a small trick. Yashoda could not move fast as she had a heavy body. She was in a fix how to trace him. Krishna dipped his feet in milk in a house and ran from there, leaving behind the trail of his footprints caused by the milk. It was only with the help of Krishna's own footprints that she was able to catch him. In

was able to catch the Lord only through footprints of HIS Feet.

Sound and time

The Lord's feet are glorious in many ways. But they will confer blessings only if they are sought with real faith. The Lord's feet contain the Divine insignia of Sankha (Conch) and Chakra (Discus). Sankha symbolises Sabda Brahman (the Cosmic Divine sound). The discus represents the Wheel of Time. The Sound and Time together represent the different cosmic aspects of the Lord. The entire universe originated from sound vibrations. These vibrations are related to Time. Sound and Time are inseparable and interdependent.

It is a common practice among rural folk to advise anyone who has committed a wrong to hold the feet of the person whom he has wronged. Once a man holds the other's feet, it means that he has sought and secured the latter's forgiveness. Nowadays, with all the Courts and legal processes, no one attempts to hold the feet of anyone. In the old days in the villages, if a man fell at the feet of another, the latter had no options but to forgive the supplicant.

Seeking forgiveness

The inner meaning of seeking the Lord's feet is that thereby the Lord will forgive the sins of the penitent. But mere holding of the feet is not enough. One must be genuinely repentant and declare that he will not commit similar offences again. Only then he will secure atonement.

Banish the ego

Embodiments of the divine atma!

Different persons pursue different kinds of Sadhana. To realise the benefits of this Sadhana, they go to Ashrams. They adore elders and offer worship to them. As long as egoism remains in them, all these exercises are of no avail. Your egoism may even lead to your expulsion from the Ashram. Hence suppress the ego, bury the sense of possessiveness and develop attachment to the Atma to realise your true humanness. Envy, hatred and anger are causing havoc among men. Even residents of the Ashram are filled with anger, Anger has been described as incense offered to sin. Therefore while you are worshipping the Lotus feet or writing the Lord's name, you have to get rid of these three evil traits.

At the outset, the ego has to be destroyed. Then anger will subside. Do your duty. Do not-project your ego. Develop mutual helpfulness. Carry on your work with joy. Be friendly towards each other. It is only when you behave in this manner that you will realise the benefits of "Likhita japam" and worship of the Padukas.

In the Sai organisations, the primary requisite is unity and mutual trust. Only with unity can you promote the well-being of the world. If there is discord within the organisation, how can you serve others? Make forbearance your ornament. Through love, eliminate your bad traits. Leading members of the Sai organisation, who undertake sacred activities such as "Nama Likhita japam" and "Paduka Seva" should develop sacred qualities.

worship to Padukas. Together with these they should also purify their hearts.

Today in many parts of the world Nature is causing various disasters such as earthquakes, famines, floods and volcanic eruptions. What is the reason? The spiritual lapses of man account for these calamities. Disturbances in the heart (human heart) are reflected in earthquakes. Fill your minds with good thoughts and engage yourselves in good actions. Chant the Lord's name. When the ether is surcharged with the vibrations of the Divine name, the entire environment gets purified. Those who breathe this sanctified air will have pure thoughts. Purify the atmosphere, which is now polluted.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan "*Bhajan bina Sukha Santhi nahi*".

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on October 7, 1993

AVATAR VANI

DASARA SANDESH

Bharat's Glorious Vedic Heritage

*There is no greater eye than knowledge (Vidya).
There is no greater penance than Sathyam (Truth).
There is no worse misery than greed.
There is no greater Sukham (Happiness)
than sacrifice (Thyaga). (Poem)*

Knowledge is the real eye. Truth is real penance. Penance does not consist in forsaking food and drink and roaming in a forest. Seeking the eternal Truth is real penance. Desire is the main cause of grief. Desire will go on multiplying. As and when one is fulfilled, it gives rise to another and this goes on endlessly. True Bliss consists in controlling desires. Sacrifice gives the greatest and lasting happiness. That is why the Vedas have declared that it is not by work, progeny or wealth, but by sacrifice alone, one can get immortality.

Sacrifice is the life-force of a human being. The Veda teaches Thyaga, Yoga and Bhoga (Sacrifice, spiritual practice and material pleasure). The word 'Veda' itself has many meanings. It means intelligence, knowledge, awareness etc. To lead a meaningful life man has to follow certain regulations (Niyama) of discipline. It is also necessary to know one's own Inner Reality. Mere intelligence and acquisition of knowledge are not enough. Knowledge should foster wisdom leading to awareness. This is what the Veda teaches. The word 'Jnana', which is translated as wisdom, contains two syllables! "Jna" and 'na'. That which is not true at all times—past present and future—cannot be termed Jnana. Awareness of the one—Adwaita Darshanam is the real Jnana.

Brahma", is the Upanishadic declaration.

The Veda should not be treated as mere Mantra. It helps to realise full knowledge and wisdom. The sages in ancient times had the inner vision and experience of the Divine and they gave expression to this revelation through the Vedas. They are applicable to entire humanity for all times. They confer security on humanity and show the way to happiness and peace. The goal of human life is to sacrifice desires and realise the Divine.

Since the Vedas are "Anantham" or infinitely vast, it is difficult to master them within the short life-span of human life. That is why Vedavyasa divided them into four sections. He compiled the 'Riks' into one part and called them 'Rig Samhita'. He put all the 'Yajus' together and named the collection as 'Yajus Samhita'. All the Sama hymns were presented in the 'Sama Samhita'. Other Mantras were compiled in a fourth section termed "Atharvana Samhita". The Yajus Samhita was further divided into Shukla Yajur and Krishna Yajur Veda, bringing the actual number of Veda samhitas to five.

The Samhitas

Each Samhita was further divided into three parts, namely, Brahmana, Aaranyaka and Upanishad. The first part is full of mantras for rituals, and for doing acts of charity and other shastraic rites. Mantra has Life-Force in it and, when properly interpreted, every Mantra is related to Divinity. The Second part, Aaranyaka, relates to the chanting of Mantras during Vanaprastha-ashram, when one finished his Grihasta-ashram (family life) and retires to the forest to lead a life of austerity.

The chanting of Mantras should always be synchronised with practising of the prescribed 'Karma'. By such practice one can realise the Divine. By merely listening to Mantras and failing to practise, one can never get happiness or peace. In order to realise the Divine, you have to practice the precepts prescribed in the Vedas. No doubt, even listening to the recitation of the Vedas is itself capable of purifying your mind. It is 'Sabda Brahman'. Sound is the first attribute of God. Veda Sabda is all-pervasive.

Today a great deal of wickedness, troubles and turmoils are prevalent in the world because of the decline of the influence of the Vedas. Water, Air, food, noise are all tainted by pollution. We are forced to lead a polluted life. When the air we breathe is itself polluted, how are we to lead a pollution-free life? The environment and the elements should be pure to ensure purity of heart. The cause of this pollution lies nowhere else except in our own actions. Whatever words we utter, they spread to the entire atmosphere. We can purify the atmosphere of the world by chanting the Vedas and singing the glory of God.

The Rishis in ancient times used to move to forests and chant the powerful Vedic Mantras to purify the atmosphere of the whole world. These Vedas are neglected today. The people

they have not tasted the sweetness of the Vedas. The Vedas should be cherished for sublimating life and not to earn a living.

The Upanishads, which are termed as Vedanta or the concluding part of the Vedas, detail the method of achieving the four fold goal of life (Purusharthas), namely, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. These can be achieved by one's own efforts through Vidya (acquisition of right knowledge), which is of two types-one is Para Vidya (the Higher Knowledge) and the other Apra Vidya (lower knowledge). Para Vidya shows the way to Moksha (Liberation), while Apra Vidya deals with worldly pursuits, which cause bondage. For acquiring spiritual wisdom this worldly education is not necessary. The vision of Truth (Sathya-drishiti) is the only requisite for spiritual pursuits. Since ancient times Bharatiyas have taken to spiritual pursuits as their goal in life.

There are nine different appellations for the Vedas. They are: Sruthi, Anusmara, Trayee, Aamnaaya, Samanaamnaya, Chandas, Swadhyaaya, Nigama and Agama.

Shruti

The Vedas were taught by teacher to disciple by oral recitation, adhering to the right swara and tune. There were no gadgets such as tape recorders or gramophone records in those ancient times. The students used to learn the text only by constant repetition with intense devotion day and night and get mantras by heart. Even if the words are missed, the swara or tune of the chanting should be without the slightest blemish, since swara is its basis. Hence it is called Shruti (that which is learnt by hearing).

Anusmara: Since the Vedas were learnt by memorising and constant chanting, they got the name of Anusmara.

Trayee: Originally there were only three Vedas, Rig, Yajur and Sama, which formed the basis of all rituals, the Mantras for Yajna and musical notes. Hence they were termed as "Trayee" (the three).

Aamnaaya means practice. The practice of chanting and memorising was followed even in the dream state and deep sleep state, apart from the waking state. So it is called Aamnaaya.

As the Veda is preserved in the heart of the students it is called Samanaamnaaya.

The Sama Veda lays down the basic meter for the Vedic mantras, meter which is Chhandas. Hence the Vedas are termed as Chhandas.

The Vedas were learnt by son from father or disciple from teacher. Thus it was passed on from generation to generation, from grandfather to grandson. Since it is preserved only by constant self-study and practice after learning, it is called "Swadhyaaya".

called Nigama and Agama. For example, when one inhales the air the sound is "So". While exhaling, the sound is "Ham". With every breath this "Soham" meaning, "I am He", is being repeated. This goes on 21,600 times per day. This is verily and practice of the Mahavakyas of the Veda, "You are That" "Tat Twmasi" This goes on all through life by every human being in the breathing process. When breathing stops life will be extinct.

Many sages and saints did penance for realising Divinity. They said, "Vedaahametham Purusham Mahaantham", "We have seen God Almighty". Where did they see Him? "Aadhithya Varnam Thamasah-Parasthaath". "We have seen God beyond the darkness of ignorance". This darkness is the identification of oneself with the body and attachment to the senses. To realise the Inner Self, you have to transcend the body consciousness and attachment to sensual desires.

Purity and unity

Veda teaches many things with emphasis on unity and purity. Some say that the Veda discriminates between people, declaring only some that are qualified to chant the Veda. This is totally wrong. In the Santhi Sloka, the Veda says, "Sahanaa Vavathu; Sahanou Bhunakthu Sahaveeryam Karavaa Vahai, Thejasvinaavadheethamastu; Maa Vidhvishaavahai". What is the meaning of this? Let us grow together; let us live together, let us study together, let us develop knowledge together, without conflict, with friendship, with broadmindedness". While this is the teaching of the Veda how can any one say that it discriminates against some? The Veda teaches a subtle form of equality and equanimity.

Each Veda has many branches. The Rig Veda has 28 branches, of which 26 have faded out of memory and only 2 remain now. The Yajurveda had 17 branches out of which only two are in vogue, while the Sama Veda had 1000 branches of which 998 are lost. Even with this fraction of the original Vedas existing now, the world is progressing at least to the present extent. Imagine how powerful this planet would have been if all the branches of the Vedas were in vogue now!

This sacred land of Bharat, which was reputed to be the Tyaga Bhumi (Land of Sacrifice), and Yoga Bhumi (Land of Yoga), has now become a Roga Bhumi (Land of diseases). The reason is people are turning to Bhoga (Worldly pleasure) forgetting Yoga and Thyaga. People should learn to live in Yoga.

The Vedic injunctions have infinite meaning. All may not be able to comprehend the inner meaning of the teachings. The truth that the earth has a gravitational force was there since the world was created. But it was discovered only by Newton after some experiments. Similarly, the truth hidden in the Vedas was perceived by the Rishis after intensive penance and Sadhana. They have given to mankind the Eternal truth which was revealed to them. The vibrations of their spiritual sadhana have spread throughout the Universe. They are not limited to Bharat or any particular place.

(Sathya Swaroopa), Embodiment of Truth. It cannot change according to time or place. It is beyond time and space and that is why it is called the Transcendental Reality. Some people think lightly of the Vedas and even make fun of them.

EMBODIMENT OF LOVE!

Even if you cannot chant the Vedas, if only you listen to the sounds with devotion they will elevate you to a higher level. Though the child does not know the meaning of the lullaby sung by its mother, it is induced to sleep hearing the tune. Similarly, learning the chanting of the Veda with undivided attention will give you immense benefit. If you ruminate over it and practise it in your life, you can imagine the magnitude of the bliss you will attain. The hymns of the Vedas constitute "Nadabrahmam" (God in the form of sound), which is highly potent. Devotees who go to a temple ring the bell. The general belief is that it is intended to attract the attention of the Deity. Does it mean that God is asleep and you have to awaken Him by ringing the bell? God is always awake and is listening to the prayers of everyone. It is just like a visiting card which you present to any important person whom you want to meet for any favour or help. Ringing the bell is only to draw the attention of the Lord towards you. The sound of the Veda is also like ringing the temple bell.

Sound emanates from the Primordial Pranava, which consists of the three syllables A U and M. The correct address of the Lord is Omkaram. The sound of the bell and the sound of the Vedas also radiate the Omkaranada. The uttering of Omkara should be done in a sweet and smoothly progressive way starting with the sound of "A" which should come from the navel, and then the sound "U" from the throat, and finally conclude with "M" from the lips. It should resemble the sound of an aeroplane when it is far off, gradually increasing in volume as it approaches the aerodrome and finally subsiding after landing. (Swami demonstrated the correct way of chanting the Omkara). The Veda teaches this very clearly.

The Vedas lift the individual to higher levels. People are not realising this truth. Many Vedic scholars send their wards to convent schools and seek to impart to them a secular education without caring to pass on to them the sacred legacy of the Vedas, which will protect them. Because of lack of encouragement and proper propagation and promotion, knowledge of the Vedas is declining day by day in this great country, which is the home of this sacred treasure.

Swami expects the people to foster the Vedas and is showing the way by making all the thousands of students of the Sai educational institutions, right from the primary school, to learn Veda chanting. You have watched the children of the primary school, ranging from 5 to 8 years, chanting the Vedas at the commencement of this meeting. There is actually no compulsion to learn the Vedas. All the students willingly come forward on their own to learn Veda chanting. There are Vedic schools (pathshalas) elsewhere where they impart this teaching, but the students discontinue the chanting later on. You should make the children learn the Vedas with enthusiasm, without compulsion. They should be made to realise the greatness of the Vedas by sweet persuasion.

cared to realise the beneficial influence of the Vedas in contributing to the welfare of the nation, the country is facing a lot of troubles. The propagation of Vedas should be taken up by the people.

The essence of the Upanishads is given in the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahmasutra, Several saints have related stories to explain clearly the import of the Upanishadic truths. The Isavaasyopanishad is the first among the Upanishads, It declares that God pervades the whole universe. Because people have neglected the study of Sanskrit they are unable to enjoy the treasures of knowledge contained in the Upanishads.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan, "**Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi**".

(From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on October 18, 1993)

“Miracles with a Difference”

"It is the miracles of Sri Sathya Sai which present a mighty challenge to modern minds, a challenge that has to be met with reason. If there be no answers to the questions raised, the Lesson of Faith will provide the only solution" observes Dr. Manmatha Nath Das, a former Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, in a path-breaking study of "Miracles of Mankind's Saviours from Zoroaster to Sathya Sai".

In the final chapter of his book, Dr. Das sets the conclusions of his study. The following are excerpts from that chapter:

Miracles are like mere means to an end, the end being the message which Sathya Sai wants to convey to the world at large. All messiahs of past performed miracles to carry the point to man's mind that divine power was above human power. Their supreme aim was to divert man's thought from his ego to his soul. They wanted man to realise the divine origin of his soul and to enjoy spiritual bliss in transient existence. The world of today being what it is, the message of Sathya Sai carries the same eternal meaning to mankind when it needs it the most.

Still the question persists in many minds—why miracles in this advanced age of a superior intelligence! Is not mankind more learned than ever before? Yes, mankind is, of course, more intelligent, more learned and more advanced than in the days of Buddha, Christ and Muhammad. But has mankind really progressed far enough on the spiritual path? Is intelligence same as consciousness; is learning same as awakening, and is material advance same as the mind's progress? Above all, has mankind realised the divine when at the summit of its success? Or at the apex of civilisation, does it find itself in spiritual regression?

which mankind needs to realise. "It is a sign which helps to turn into faith, devotion, inquiry and realisation of their (men's) own Atma," he affirms.

Natural laws and spiritual laws

One may, however, feel encouraged to think that if by the virtue of spiritual power food can be multiplied, things can be materialised, and diseases can be cured, why not then Sathya Sai Baba exercise his omnipotent authority to transform all water of sea to oil, all rocks of mountains to candy, all sands on river-beds to sugar, all water of rivers to milk, and cure all diseases of men to keep mankind healthy? If Sai Baba can stop rains, why should he not bring rains in times of drought, or if he can create sweets, why not he create food in times of famine? Why should he not replace the natural laws by spiritual laws?

There can be many answers to these simplistic questions. Supposing that God can do it or a Buddha or Christ or Sathya Sai, should it mean that by these material changes, the character of man would also change in spiritual directions? Supposing the natural sea is changed into a sea of petrol while man's ego remains as it is, is it not likely that by putting a match stick to the sea, he can. set the earth in flames? By making milk and honey flow on earth, the Divine cannot transform man. Transformation will come when milk and honey can flow from the human heart.

One may carry this point further. Man, by knowing the potency of a few elements of Nature, has carried his power to the point where he can annihilate mankind. If the same man is endowed with a more egoistic existence without his sickness or suffering, decay or death, needs or want; what could he ultimately do to himself and his race?

The Messiah's mission

The mission of a messiah is not to create a materially more prosperous earth for man, but to recreate a spiritual spark in him. A miracle is shown only to serve the purpose of providing evidence that spiritual exist. When Sai Baba changes a piece of rock into a piece of candy in a scientist's hand, he only gives the latter an elementary lesson about faith in the spiritual. When he heals a sick person, his aim is to create faith in him that there is an ultimate power to respond to his suffering.

So the question does not arise of changing the earth to a paradise of material prosperity by replacing natural laws which cause calamities like famines or droughts, earthquakes or epidemics, and man's personal miseries or misfortunes, when the existence is viewed from a higher spiritual angle. Sathya Sai Baba makes this point clear when he says

"Any instant solution would go against the fundamental quality of nature itself as well as the Karmic law of Cause and effect. Most people live in the material world of their desires and egos which is governed by this law. They reap the fruits of their actions. This brings about their evolution or devolution. If the Avatar intervenes to instantly solve their problems, it could stop all action, development, even evolution. This solution can be ruled out because it totally negates the natural laws".

The avatar's role

To transform man by incarnating the indwelling God in him is the purpose for which the divine presents itself. Instead of solving all problems through instant methods, it aims at a different design. As Sathya Sai explains:

"The other and more effective alternative presents a long-term solution whereby the Avatar leads the people to a higher level of consciousness to enable him to understand the truth of spiritual laws so that they may turn towards righteousness and steadfastly work for better conditions. This will relate them back to Nature and Karmic Law of causation. They would then transcend the cycle of cause and effect, in which today they are involved as victims, and thereby command and control the natural forces to be able to avert the calamities..."

It is a miracle with a difference—the miracle of message—by which Sathya Sai wants to raise the consciousness of the individuals and of mankind to a state of divine awareness in order that human destiny is guided under spiritual conditions. It is only by realising a higher reality that man can even be the master of natural laws which regulate his existence on earth. So, too, may mankind as a collective entity rise to a higher level of existence, in the process of evolution.

Transformation of man

It is the transformation of man with which Sathya Sai Baba is primarily concerned. He may cure one's body, only to indicate his power, but his aim is to cure man's mind in general. "If I cure everything instantly leaving the people at their present level of consciousness, they would soon mess up things and be at one another's throats again, with the result that the same chaotic situation would develop in the world." he says.

Creation itself goes by its own laws. Mankind is not above the universal inescapable laws of action, the Karma. One invites his suffering by his deeds, may not be in his present life, but in other lives unknown to him. By coming to realise the continuity of his soul he may understand the nature of the laws which makes him suffer. The mission of the Saviour is to remind man to rise above his ego to a transcendent consciousness so that he can try to escape the results of his deeds. Sathya Sai has pointed out:

"Suffering and misery are the inescapable acts of the Cosmic Drama, God does not decree these calamities, but man invites them by way of retribution for his own evil deeds. This is corrective punishment which induces mankind to give up the wrong path and return to the right path so that he may experience the God-like condition of Sat-Chit-Ananda, that is, an existence of Wisdom and Bliss. All this is part of the grand synthesis in which the negatives serve to glorify the positives. Thus death glorifies immortality, ignorance glorifies wisdom, misery glorifies bliss, and night glorifies dawn."

Unity through love

It is through man that Sathya Sai aims at the transformation of mankind. Himself born to a religion, he is for all religions, born to a race, he is for all races, and born to a land, he is for all

word 'Love'. "What else can save the world from thermonuclear fires? Everything points to the terror of that conflagration coming; and my mission is to preempt the fires by reestablishing Dharma and the spiritual law of one God, one Religion, one Language, embracing one Humanity", he says.

It is his love for every man and for all mankind which constitutes the real miracle of Sathya Sai in its spiritual context. Religions, having gone petrified under forms and dogmas, have demanded of him revitalization in spiritual perspective. Without dislocating their basic structure, Sathya Sai thinks of a spiritual faith encompassing all religious beliefs without limiting thoughts and projections. Reminding all groups that all men are of one lineage, of divine origin, he presents his own concept of human unity in the following words:

"There is only one caste, the caste of humanity; There is only one religion, the religion of love; There is only one language, the language of the heart; There is only one God; He is omnipresent.

"Let the different faiths exist; let them flourish; let the Glory of God be sung in all languages, in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as valid as far as they do not extinguish the flame of unity".

It is a miracle of Sri. Sathya Sai Baba that his abode today is the only place on earth where people of all faiths gather to sing in unison the songs of love for God. All paths lead to Prasanthi Nilayam for the bliss of a divine feeling and for a peace of mind that spiritual urge inspires. It is an atmosphere in which millions forget their countries and continents, creeds or cultures, distinctions and differences and even age or phase of life. There, too, the agnostic feels for the inward and the scientist for the spiritual. The materialist and the experimentalist also come to realise that "Matter is reality as seen externally; consciousness is the same reality lived from inside—the Divine is not to be found in the temple any more than in the laboratory".

A more valuable miracle manifest, itself far above or far beyond materialisation of gifts or healing of pains—the miracle of the transformation of the human personality. This experience has moved countless men and women of the East and the West, an experience that is vitally realised though verbally impossible to express. What is the sublime spiritual law by which man sheds his anger and hatred, his greed and lust, his meanness and malice, and comes out a nobler and better person than when he entered? It is Sathya Sai who knows the answer. Also vanish his or her petty anxieties and small or big fears under a feeling never experienced before! One comes back from Sathya Sai relieved and free, with ever-present loads on mind gone forever. The same loads may yet reappear in men's earthly existence, but the burden is no longer, heavy or oppressive to the mind—they are detached and the mind is relaxed! This is the divine law of nature with which Sathya Sai administers men's destiny.

Extinction of the ego

dignitaries, intellectuals of high order or sadhus of higher attainments, holy men of fame or high priests of religions, as well as people of different ranks, from princes to paupers, all might come with their natural ego, but the miracle of transformation works in moments, for Ego is the first victim in Sathya Sai administration. An invisible sword emanating from visible love slays it down. In its place, one finds a different gift, the gift of humility, the merit of which is spontaneously realised even by the highest ones from their positions of pride.

Thus humility which a man gains is no mere external gesture of good behaviour, but something much deeper. It is the result of a sudden mental experience of devotion which is accompanied by feelings of love, mercy, and non-violence. A heart that is dry turns soft with sympathy. Millions of these transformed individuals are like the citizens of a new world order. Their influence on others goes on working ceaselessly.

The spirit that moves millions

This leads to yet another miracle. Those who come in continuous streams to the presence of Sathya Sai Baba from far distances of Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia, and the two Americas, may number many. But they form only a microscopic element of the vast continental populations. Those who come are indeed blessed. They believe in the divinity of Sathya Sai. And the millions who do not come also believe. It is the spell of Sathya Sai which works wonders. It is his spiritual influence that manifests itself in millions of hearts. Investigations show that even a picture of Sai Baba or a bhajan in his praise, in far away places, stirs up devotion in men's mind. Many of these people, as they say, feel the presence of Sai Baba in their homes, a phenomenon which nobody can explain.

(To be continued)

SHRI SHIRDI BABA'S BIRTHDAY

Bhagavan Baba stated in a discourse in November, 1992, that Sri Shirdi Baba was born on September 27, 1838. In an earlier issue of "SANATHANA SARATHI" the birth-date was wrongly given as September 28, 1835. Readers are requested to note that the correct date, according to BABA, is September 27, 1838.

—Editor

Youth is the stage in life when the slightest turn towards wrong will spell disaster. Thoughts shape the career. You plan to earn much wealth, because you imagine that rich people are very happy. The rich have plenty to eat, but they have no appetite. The rich wield power over others but they are held down by disease. The rich can have many servants but they cannot live in

sovereign character. Steady adherence to Truth, Renunciation, Genuine Prema (Love) Self-less service these are the essential components of character. Follow the dictates of your conscience. You can never be wrong.

—Baba

Memorable Dasara at Prasanthi Nilayam

The Dasara celebrations, which used to be an annual feature in Prasanthi Nilayam from 1964 to 1989, with the performance of the Veda Purusha Jnana Yajna occupying the primary place, were revived this year after an interval of three years.

The celebrations commenced on 16th October with chanting of Vedas by the students of the Sri. Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning en masse. The holy water kept in a Kalasa (Pot) in the Mandir was sanctified by the chanting of Mantras. The golden Padukas (sandals), blessed by Bhagavan and sanctified by special pooja on the 7th and 8th October, were brought to the Mandir and installed in front of the Shirdi Sai idol in the centre of the altar. The Kalasa containing the holy water was taken in procession by the Pandits, to the accompaniment of Vedic chants by the students, to the Poornachandra Auditorium. The sacred water from the Kalasa was sprinkled all over the new abode of Bhagavan reconstructed at the south-eastern end of the Auditorium. The new apartment conforms to the architecture of the Mandir and presents a strikingly beautiful appearance from the Mandir compound. Bhagavan gave the long-awaited and coveted Darshan from the exquisitely designed semi circular balcony on the first floor, much to the ecstasy of the vast multitude of devotees and thousands of students from all the three campuses of the Sai Institute gathered there.

On 17th morning, Vedic chants by hundreds of students and scores of Rithwiks reverberated in the Mandir and spread vibrations of the sacred Mantras, purifying the atmosphere. After Bhajans at the Mandir, Bhagavan visited the Vidyagiri Stadium where more than 15,000 men and women from all the surrounding villages had gathered to receive the Divine Prasadam in Narayana Seva. A large force of volunteers and students had been mobilised to regulate the crowd and distribute food to the unprecedentedly large number of villagers. Bhagavan first served sweet sugared rice and fried rice to a few persons and directed distribution simultaneously to the thousands of villagers. Clothes, sarees and dhotis were also distributed to the villagers.

There was Vedic chanting in the Mandir by hundreds of students during the evening Darshan Session. It was announced that the Vedapurusha Saptah Jnana Yajna would be inaugurated by Bhagavan at 10 A. M. on the 18th in the Poornachandra Hall.

and buntings put up overnight by the students. Nadaswaram music heralded the commencement of the auspicious function in the morning. Nearly 50 Vedic Pundits and scholars from various places in Andhra Pradesh who had come for participation in the Yajna, were honoured by Bhagavan by the presentation of silk clothes to be worn by them for the occasion. Along with the pundits, hundreds of students also took part in Vedic chanting. The holy Kalasam was brought in procession from the Mandir to the Auditorium, the venue of the Yajna, accompanied by the students and Pundits chanting Vedas. The institute's band troupe headed the procession playing auspicious tunes.

Bhagavan blessed the vast gathering of devotees, who had filled the Auditorium to capacity, and inaugurated the Yajna as Veda Purusha by lighting the camphor which was placed in the Yajna Kunda (Holy Fire Place). Swami directed the Pundits to take up their position at the allotted places for performing the different rituals, with the Homa kundam serving as the nucleus. The sacred fire for the Yajna was generated by the churning of two Arani (wooden) sticks. The Homam commenced at 10 A. M. and went on till about 1 P. M. It was announced that there would be lectures daily evening followed by Divine Discourse till 24th.

The meeting on the 18th evening commenced with Vedic chants by tiny tots from the primary school in the age group of 5 to 8. After speeches by Raghavendra student of the 8th standard and V. K. Narasimhan, Bhagavan delivered His Discourse on the supreme message of the Vedas. (Full text of Discourse is given separately)

The Yajna continued for 7 days, from 7 A. M. in the morning till 12 noon. Simultaneously, hundreds of students continued to chant Vedas in the Mandir from 7 A. M. when Swami was giving his usual Darshan to the devotees. In the afternoon, there was Harikatha daily for 2 to 3 p.m. In the evening session students selected from higher secondary school and college and a few staff members were graced by Bhagavan to address the gathering and Bhagavan gave his Discourses daily with expositions on Vedas and Upanishads, particularly, Isavasyopanishad. Cultural programmes included a Kavi Sammelan on 21st which was the high light when leading poets from Andhra Pradesh excelled in presenting highly interesting compositions. They thrilled the audience with extra-ordinary skill and mastery over the art of composing poems extemporiously in Telugu language. Bhagavan materialised a gold chain and put it on the neck of the presiding poet of the Sammelan and gave handsome presents of silk clothes and silver tumblers to all the participating poets.

There was a Kavi Sammelan by students of Sathya Sai Institute on 22nd in which they offered poems and songs composed by them in different languages. They were honoured by Bhagavan, who presented them with shawls. The programme was compared by Anil Kumar. Principal of Brindavan Campus.

On 23rd a programme of devotional songs on different musical instruments was offered by Bal Vikas boys of Madras.

materialised Navaratna. (Nine types of gems) and offered them in the fire along with silk clothes and other precious items.

Bhagavan thrilled the vast multitude of nearly 50,000 devotees that had gathered for this sacred occasion with an inspiring discourse in which he appealed to the devotees to engage themselves in service of humanity as service to God with purity of heart and declared that the Sai organisation which is open to all the people irrespective of caste creed and religion is giving equal opportunity to do service to mankind. It will be recognised all over the world very soon as the best organisation doing service with purity and unity reflecting Divinity.

Bhagavan sprinkled the holy water on all devotees including thousands waiting outside as the Auditorium was filled to capacity. Then Laddu Prasadam was also distributed to all in the immediate presence of Bhagavan.

In the evening, Bhagavan appeared in white robe for the Jhoola function when two boys of 8th standard of the High School hailing from Bhopal and Bahrain dressed as Lava Kush enthralled the mammoth gathering with their melodious singing of Ramakatha (the story of Rama) in Telugu. This won the unanimous admiration of all and Bhagavan materialised 2 gold chains and put them around their necks by his Divine hands.

The celebration came to a close with the Jhoola function. It was a memorable week for those who had the Divine Grace of attending this sacred Yajna.

-(K.S.S)

Installation of Golden Padukas at Prasanthi Nilayam

A unique function was witnessed at Prasanthi Nilayam when a pair of golden sandals, mounted on a silver lotus-shaped pedestal, was consecrated with traditional Vedic chants and rituals and installed ceremoniously.

The sandals were brought to Prasanthi Nilayam by the Golden Paduka Pratishtha Committee from Tamil Nadu, headed by Sri Subramania Chettiar, a long-time devotee of Bhagavan from Madurai.

When he was blessed by Bhagavan on his 81st birthday (Sathaabhishekam), Sri Chettiar sought the benediction of Bhagavan for a pair of silver Padukas (sandals) made by him for worship. Bhagavan blessed him by placing His Lotus Feet on the sandals. Sri Chettiar wanted to share this worship of Padukas with other devotees, as it was tantamount to worshipping the Lotus Feet. Therefore, he started getting silver Padukas prepared and supplying them to devotees on their request. He also arranged for sanctification of the sandals by Bhagavan. In this manner, 108 pairs of Padukas were installed at different places in Tamil Nadu with the blessing of Bhagavan.

On reaching this sacred number of 108, Sri Chettiar sought the blessings of Bhagavan for making a pair of golden sandals for installation in Prasanthi Mandir. Having obtained Bhagavan's approval, he formed a committee to undertake this task. The Committee arranged for getting together all the couples who had taken 108 Padukas and assembled them at Prasanthi Nilayam on 6th October. The consecration and Installation of the golden Padukas was fixed for 7th October.

Bhagavan arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam from Brindavan on 6th afternoon. About 4,000 devotees from Tamil Nadu gathered at Prasanthi Nilayam for this event and they brought with them the decorators, the materials for decoration, band and Nadaswaram Troupes. Floral decorations were done at the entrance gate to the Nilayam and Mandir, etc.

The function was held in shed numbers 2 and 3 where a shamiana was also put up for extra space. The Homam, Lakshaarchana and pooja were conducted by priests and all the 108 couples for the Silver Padukas and by Sri Chettiar for the golden Paduka. The golden sandals were exquisitely done by expert goldsmiths. The puja went on till 12 noon.

Bhagavan graciously agreed to deliver the Divine Discourse in the evening at the Poornachandra Auditorium, where the golden Padukas mounted on a magnificent silver lotus pedestal were on display.

The meeting commenced with Vedic chants. Sri Srinivasan, son of Subramanian Chettiar, in his welcome address traced the genesis of the Paduka. Pratishtha movement and extolled the worship of the Lotus Feet as a devotional Sadhana. Sri Srinivasa Raghavan, who spoke next on Namasmarana, recalled the Likhita Japa practice which was popularised by Sri Chettiar and mentioned how he had collected 60 crore names written by devotees and submitted the note books at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan on His 60th Birthday. This Japa was now nearing 108 crores and the collected volumes will be submitted next year at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan.

Bhagavan then delivered His discourse (Published separately). On the 8th, all the 108 Silver Padukas were taken in procession followed by a Chariot with attractive floral decoration, bearing the golden Sandals. The procession was blessed by Bhagavan at the Mandir and culminated at the Poornachandra Auditorium.

Bhagavan blessed all the couples who were doing Puja to the Silver Padukas with Pada Namaskaram and sat on the special "Simhasana" prepared for Him by the Committee and placed His Feet on the golden sandals. Sri Chettiar and other members performed "Pada Puja with silver coins, flowers etc., Bhagavan blessed Sri Chettiar for the elaborate efforts made by him for the successful celebration of the event. The memorable function concluded with Mangala Arati to Bhagavan.

(4) Yoga – Patanjali's Eight Fold Yoga (Ashtangayoga)

Sage Patanjali has prescribed eight kinds of Yoga in his text for man to enjoy health and happiness. These eight are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Prathyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. It states explicitly that Yoga is not just for the ochre clad monks, renunciates in the forest and celibates. Modern investigations show that in today's machine age, it is the ordinary man who actually needs Yoga.

Man struggles the whole day to feed and foster his family. This exertion and motive makes him restless and robs him of his sleep. He then resorts to artificial means to induce sleep and rest to the body, like taking sleeping pills or taking intoxicating drinks. This artificial induction has disastrous side effects and combined with the lack of rest, causes heart diseases, blood pressure etc. Research has hence concluded that Yoga is ideally suited for all these problems.

The misfortune of India

The sacred texts were all born in India. But due to the rise of blind beliefs that are consequences of modern education and civilisation, Indians show scant interest or belief in these works of brilliance. It is the misfortune of Indians that today, these sacred texts are much more fostered and believed abroad, who were quick to realise their importance. They investigated and understood that due to lack of rest, the body weakens. This causes the breathing process to speed up. This in turn spoils the lungs. As the blood circulation also speeds up, a stage arrives when blood pressure sets in. Medicine cannot cure it completely and hence Yoga is prescribed. This was a finding, supported by researchers at the International University in America and some others at the University of Hawaii. Some of these researchers even reversed their views on Yoga after they saw the results of their studies.

Health is very important

It was shown that the bliss and vitality enjoyed after two hours of sleep, could be got by just twelve minutes of Yoga. Though man can adjust without food, he cannot do the same without sleep and rest. Lack of sleep is a common problem in several countries, including India. This extracts a heavy toll on one's health. To achieve the four goals of life-Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha—a healthy mind and body is essential.

In old Mexico, an experiment conducted on the inmates of a prison showed amazing results. While previously the inmates were all restless and sick, after the practice of Yoga, within two months, they were all hale and healthy.

Yet other investigations resulted in inducing addicts of drugs, smoking, drinking etc. to give up their habit. It is currently estimated that about 3 to 4 lakh students abroad practice Yoga.

In India, the birth-place of Yoga, there is not much progress or interest. Devaki was said to have lamented that though she had suffered the birth pangs, it was given to Yashoda to enjoy and foster the Baby Krishna. In the same way, though Patanjali gave up his life to experience and share this great Yoga in India, it has only fallen on barren soil. The main cause for this is the lack of Shraddha (Interest) and Bhakthi (faith) in not only Yoga but also in all the scriptures.

Importance of discipline

Yoga prescribes some major disciplines as pre-requisites for deriving its benefits, notably with respect to diet. The food taken is to be both 'Mita' and 'Hita', i.e. both limited and nutritious. Since food and water are only 'medicines' to cure the ailment of hunger and thirst, they should be taken in that spirit. Taste should not be the yard-stick to eat food, for it is only to protect the body that one eats, after all.

Foreigners realised this and found that by reducing chillis, salt, tamarind etc. from their diet and by eating limitedly, they could stay healthy. Patanjali states that excess food weakens the nerves, causing blood pressure problems. Man becomes prone to excitement easily.

Lack of health among men also causes agitations and restlessness in society. In Germany, a research conducted on monkeys showed that the primates, when practiced sitting silent for 3 to 4 hours daily, soon became very intelligent, developed their memory and were highly enthusiastic—in some cases, even more than man! A similar experiment on a student considered a dullard and roguish, showed that with the help of Yoga, in just a few months, the boy became one of the most intelligent and well-behaved boys. Encouraged, even the boy's 70-year old father took to Yoga. Soon his body was functioning with the vitality of a 50-year-old man!

Pranayama

This Yoga consists of three parts, each to be done one after the other. It starts with Puraka, then Kumbhaka and finishes with Rechaka. **Puraka:** This is the inhalation of breath. One must note carefully the time taken for this process. The duration of time can be justified as per the capacity of the person. Care must be taken to see that gasping and such kinds of exhaustion must not occur during the process. **Kumbhaka:** The breath taken in must be retained for the same duration as it had taken for the inhaling process. **Rechaka:** Once thus retained, it must be exhaled in the same time limit as that taken for inhaling and retention.

While doing Pranayama, one must not concentrate or aim to hold the breath for as long as possible. One must instead concentrate on assuring that all the three processes take the same amount of time. Otherwise, this process spoils the lungs. Doing the same under an inexperienced teacher also can prove to be disastrous.

The next step is to breathe in through the right nostril alone. This is the Ida. One must then retain the breath at the Sushumna (between the eye-brows) for the same time duration as that taken for inhaling, then release the breath through the left nostril only, again taking same time. The last step is Pingala.

The Concurrence of the Darshanas

The Yoga Darshana combines with the Nyaya and Vaisheshika Darshanis in many of its contents.

Through the Nyaya Darshana, one understands that a proper decision ought to be made regarding the measure to be appropriately selected for the Yoga. This is evident in the way caution is advised in limiting the time factor during the Pranayama, taking into consideration the individual capacity.

These good thoughts are Divine thoughts and Yoga prescribes a process called Angarpanam as the method to achieve this end. Angarpanam means to offer all of one's limbs and organs to the Lord. It does not mean to cut them off and place them at the Lord's feet. It means to use these limbs and organs only in actions that will please God. This is where the importance of discrimination is stressed in Yoga.

When such Angarpanam is done, real Bliss (Ananda) results. Bliss is related to the heart. When used in pursuit of sensual pleasures, only happiness results. This is called Santhosha, as it means some + thosha = limited happiness. This Santhosha is related to the head, the centre of responsibility. One must hence take care to think well, contemplate on the thought and then put it into action. This is the real 3HV—the values of Head, Heart and Hands. It is the unity of thought, word and deed.

Dharana

Students must cultivate tolerance to the extent possible. Though difficult at first, it will become second nature to you with constant practice, as stated in the Bhagavad Gita. Even if students find Pranayama difficult, they can still do Dharana. It is the single-pointed concentration of some chosen object. It is not very difficult. If practiced well, it leads us on to Dhyana (Meditation) easily.

It is said that with the power of Yoga, one can control anything, including the evil from entering the mind through the senses, in any form. Senses are like doors to houses, where only authorised personnel may enter. Yoga helps strengthen this guard. This absolves us of animal qualities like ego, restlessness, fickleness, anger, jealousy etc.

In the first place, if you see God in each form, within three days you can feel the Divine feelings latent in you beginning to develop. Otherwise, even 30 generations of sadhana will be of no use.

The Poorva Mimamsa and Uttara Mimamsa

Sage Jaimini's concentrated and persistent life-long efforts resulted in this work. 'Mimamsa' means enquiry. It is called 'Poorva' because it was in existence even before the Vedas.

The Poorva Mimamsa deals with the regulations and methodologies of devotion and wisdom. Both are related to the field of action or the Karmakanda. It traces the route to realising Brahman

Karma Jignasu Dharma Jignasu and finally Brahma Jignasu.

Karma Jignasu: It pertains to all the actions performed by man. Even breathing and blood circulation are described as a kind of Karma. In terms of worldly explanations, it may be compared to the mixing together of ingredients like salt, tamarind, chilli etc. to prepare chutney. Just as the ingredients must be mixed in correct proportions, the actions in daily life, must also be in ideal proportions.

Dharma Jignasu: This may be compared to the tasting of the chutney made, Tasting brings out any defects in it. This may hence be compared to the identification of defects.

Brahma Jignasu: Having identified the lapse, rectifying it is the Brahma Jignasu state. It may be said that experiencing worldly life is the Karma Jignasu; Understanding that there is no permanent joy obtainable from this world is the Dharma Jignasu and introducing this bliss into daily life through introspection is the Brahma Jignasu.

How Man Introduces Himself

Man is unable to absolve himself of all worries and anxieties despite worshipping all the deities. This is because he has forgotten moral and ethical living methods and takes the body to be the real self. When questioned as to one's identity, he introduces himself -by his name first. When asked for more details, he gives his profession next. When probed still further, he names his country. But man is not the name, or the profession or the country. He is the Atma. The correct answer is "I am Atma". One may assume an alias; one may change his profession or even migrate abroad in search of better living. But, his true self is changeless.

Shivam and Shavam

When a person keeps saying "I" and "Mine", "I" actually is related to the Atma; "Mine" is related to the body. (Dehi and Deham). It is only when all the organs and limbs combine together that a body results. Similarly, the Atma is a combination of Mind, Intellect and Samskara. It is the Atma that enters and prompts the organs and limbs to operate. A body; with Atma in it is hence called "Shivam" (auspicious). When the Atma leaves the body, all organs and limbs come to a standstill. The body becomes inert. Hence such a body is called "Shavam" (dead-body).

Atma is a combination of Mind, Intellect and Samskara. The mind thinks, reflects and forms, thoughts based on the promptings of Atma. The intellect, endowed with the triple power of discriminating, analyzing and deciding also functions due to Atma.

Samskara

This means culture and. is the basis of rebirth. Our present actions become seeds of samskara that decide the fruit in the next life. It is hence advised that doing good and constant contemplation of God, will enable one to be peaceful at the end of one's life. This can surely be achieved by constant practice, as is stated in the Bhagavad Gita. 'Good actions lead to good' samskaras that confers a good birth.

Jaimini investigates the paradox that though the body is temporary, why emphasis is, laid on our

must enter into actions. But today, people use this karmakanda to use whatever part is useful to them and discard the others. A story is said about a lazy celibate, who came to a house to beg for alms. The kind lady, though it was an odd time, did not want to break a family tradition. She requested the celibate to have his bath and ablutions at the river nearby, while she cooked something for him. The lazy person answered that "Lord Govinda's name, is itself a hearty bath". The wise lady saw through the fake sadhu and countered: "Very well then! The same Govinda's name will also be your food".

It is because of this kind of selective adherence to karmakanda, that man has become so impure.

Cultivate Patience

People argue that nature is a natural entity, in the sense that, no one has created it. Matter and energy need someone to combine them. Oil, wick and container may be present. But it needs someone to strike a match and light the lamp. Though the subject and intelligence are present, a teacher is needed to impart a proper guidance for being educated. Jaimini states that good education must impart good habits, ideals, truth, responsibility and discipline besides intellectual knowledge.

To achieve all these, Jaimini advises purity. Without this inner purity, Divinity is a distant illusion. Clouds arise from the sun and cover the sun itself. But, it is a temporary effect. Man must also have patience to wipe away the ignorance that covers his self. Patience is another virtue mentioned in the Poorva Mimamsa.

Method to control anger

The text advocates a very logical method to counter obstacles. For example when grief strikes, it advises that one must think of joyful incidents. This gives joy. It also conducts enquiries into the fields of Ajnana-Prajnana.

Control of anger and overcoming the obstacles in daily life, is also dealt with. The Poorva Mimamsa states that one must slowly analyse the situation when angry. By the time a conclusion is reached, tempers cool down considerably. One may also do any one of the following to control temper; (1) drink a glass of cold water (2) see the mirror, where your distorted features will repulse you enough to cool you down (3) walk fast and alone. This speeds up your circulation that draws away anger (4) open a tap and watch your pitch of song with that of the falling water.

In all these attempts, the time and attention definitely help cool tempers.

Do not give in to excitement

One must try to involve Uttara Mimamsa into practice as well, to the extent possible.

Man must not give in to excitement. Arjuna was highly perturbed when Krishna, was leaving to make peace with Kauravas, as a last ditch attempt. He entreated that a war was best suited as the Kauravas would not concede their demands (of the Pandavas).

But, the same Arjuna collapsed at the sight of his grandfather, teachers, cousins, relatives and friends lined up to do battle. He did not want to live with their blood on his hands.

Hence students must stay calm and composed. You need not become excited to acquire something. If it is destined to reach you, it shall be delivered to you wherever you are. You must remember meanwhile to concentrate on protecting your righteousness; which in turn will protect you. "Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah" it is said. Hence, while following your daily routines, contemplate always on God. Wherever you are, whatever you do, do it with divine feelings.

Baba concluded His Discourse series by asking students not merely to listen and enjoy now and forget about it later but follow at least a couple of what they had learned here.

(Concluded)

Significance of “Yajnas”

*Neither Charity, nor the performance of sacrifices,
Neither penance, nor the highest knowledge,
Nor any other thing can be equal
To the power of control of the senses,
Whatever enquiry or investigation one may make. (Poem)*

Few men in the world are able to recognise what is the primary goal of life. Many are not even worried about this inability.

What is life? What is its highest goal? Man has to enquire into these basic questions. Man's highest aim, however, appears to be to obtain food, clothing, shelter and progeny. All these are, no doubt, necessary to some extent. But these are related to mere living and have no relation to the supreme goal of life. Along with leading one's ordinary life, one has to take note of the great aim of life.

Man must recognise the immense preciousness of human life. Every householder has to consider not only his duties as a householder living in the "forest of family life" (Grihastaranyam), but also about "Brihadaranyam" (the message of the Upanishad of that name). Those living in the jungle of the family, need to know about the life envisaged in "Brihadaranyaka".

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

What is this Brihadaranyaka? It is the immense (Brihad) hermitage. This ashram is the combined expression of the mind, speech and life. "Tejas", or effulgence, symbolises speech ("Vaak"). Mind is represented by food (Annamaya). Prana (The life of Principle) is "Rasmaya" (Essential sweetness). The effulgent speech, in association with the mind as food, becomes the essence of the Life Principle. This truth was proclaimed by the sages in the Upanishadic declaration; "Raso vai Saha" (He, the Divine, is all sweetness)—the form of Brahman.

The "Rasa" principle is present only in the Life Principle (Prana). The cosmos is based on life. There is, however, the Atma, which transcends the Life Principle.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is the unified form of "Vaak", mind and Prajna. As the sages in the forest contemplated on this form and realised the bliss of experiencing the Divine, this got the appellation "Aranyaka" (Forest) as fire arises in forests, Fire (Agni) got the name "Aranya". Man's life originates in fire, grows on fire and ends in fire (Agni). Born from the warm womb of the mother, sustained by the fire of his digestive organ, man ultimately ends on the funeral pyre. Fire is thus the basic cause of human birth and death.

Fire (Agni) is an embodiment of the Divine. Fire is effulgent. It nourishes the whole world. But it needs to be kept under control. "There is nothing great without restraint".

The ancients started performing Yagnas and Yagas (sacrifices) to propitiate the Divine in the form of Fire. The sacrifices were performed not to secure personal benefits or to get desires fulfilled, or to get over difficulties. They embarked on sacrifices only to secure the Bliss of the Spirit (Atma-anandam).

Once, Emperor Janaka performed a big Yagna. Many scholars participated in the sacrifice, including scholarly women. Among such women were Maitreyi, Gargi and others. At that Yagna a pandit called Aswala started putting questions to the sage Yagnavalkya. "How many deities are there?" he asked. Yagnavalkya, being a very shrewd person, took the cue from the word "here". He answered: "There are 3306". The entire assembly was taken by surprise at this figure. They wondered whether there could be 3306 deities present at the Yagna.

What lay behind Yagnavalkya's reply? He considered everyone present at the Yajna as divine. "God appears in human form". Hence, in those days, men were not regarded as mere human beings at Yagnas and Yagas. Every individual was considered as a manifestation of the Divine.

Aswala then posed another question to Yagnavalkya. He asked: "Is it possible to reduce this number of deities?" "Yes, it is possible," said Yagnavalkya. There was no mention of "here" in the second question. Yagnavalkya answered, "Thirty three deities".

Asked whether he could state who these deities were, Yagnavalkya said: "There are eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Adityas, Indra and Prajapati" (All these together make 33).

The assembly was satisfied with the answer.

Then, Gargi got up and asked: "Venerable sage! Is it possible to reduce this number further?" "Certainly, yes", declared Yagnavalkya. "There are six! Agni (Fire), Bhumi (Earth), Vayu (the Wind-God), Aditya (the Sun God), Amaratwam (Immortality), and Adhvara". These six are the true deities, he said.

Aswala got up and asked whether the number could be reduced further. Yagnavalkya said the number could be reduced to three: The Past, the Present and the Future. The answer was accepted by the assembly.

In answer to further questions whether the number could be further reduced to the most important deities, Yagnavalkya said: "They are two: Food and Prana (Life)".

Asked whether the number could be further reduced, he said that it could be reduced to one-and-a-half and he explained that the all-pervasive air (the Wind God) is known as

reduced to one, namely, Prana (Life).

The life-force and yajna

When enquiries from the scientific, the spiritual and other points of view are carried out to find out the ultimate divine entity, Prana, the presiding deity of Life, emerged as the only one.

Where does this Life Principle dwell? The answer is: it has no specific place or time. It is everywhere. The purpose of the Yajna is to propitiate this all-pervading Life-Force.

What is Yajna? It is not merely offering oblations to the sacred fire (homam), "Yagna" means acquiring the highest wisdom by "Yama" and "Niyama", (Control of the senses and practice of spiritual discipline). This wisdom is not related to worldly knowledge. All the knowledge acquired through the intellect is illusory. It is based on dualism and is tantamount to ignorance. It may serve to score debating points; such debates also promote discord.

The knowledge that transcends all controversies and is related to the eternal verities is the Knowledge of the Self (Atma-Jnanam). It is for acquiring this supreme knowledge that the ancient Rishis performed Yajnas and Yagas.

Atma jnana

Practices like reciting the Lalita Sahasranama cannot be considered Yajna in the true sense. Only when one embarks on the internal quest for the realisation of the Self within can he acquire Atma Jnana (Knowledge of the Self).

For this purpose there is no need to study any books. Only by direct experience and one's own spiritual Sadhana can this awareness of the Self be realised.

Man has to understand that he is the cause of his own happiness or misery and that all that he seeks or loves are not for their sake, but for his own sake. Hence, he has to understand his own true nature. Realising the ephemerality of all worldly objects, man should recognise that enduring happiness can be got only by developing love for God.

A great sage like Yagnavalkya declared that the whole cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine.. The Divine is omnipresent. This awareness of the Divine has to be experienced by everyone.

Message of pranava

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad pointed out that this oneness is proclaimed by the all-pervading sacred Pranava "OM". This pervasiveness can be experienced in a myriad ways, above all, in the sound that can be heard when one is alone and closes his ears. Man has to realise the redemptive power of Pranava Mantra. It is the means to overcome the vicissitudes of life and realise union with the Divine. The body is like a water bubble that originates in water, grows in

from Narayana and has to merge in Him.

The Yajnas and Yagas are designed to teach such spiritual truths. But human beings, caught up in the coils of worldly life, are a prey to all kinds of troubles and tribulations. Some of them are always prone to doing harm to others. They convert even the good to evil. For such persons there is no end but utter destruction. Everyone, therefore, has to know something about human life and the life Divine. There are many who cannot see anything good, but see only what is bad. There are others who always see what is bad, but consider it as good. Both these ways of looking at things are false. The man with a godly outlook sees the good always.

In human life, one should not have any kind of bad thoughts. Even when someone reviles you, you should practice self-restraint and remain calm. There is no power equal to such self-restraint. Everyone should develop such tranquility (or peace). The more peaceful you are, the greater your longevity. People today easily lose their peace. They get enraged on the slightest provocation. There are four types of men who view the good and the bad in different ways. Of these, worse than demons are those who deride all that is good and picture it as evil. These perversions are a reflection of the bad times confronting mankind. Such attitudes are indications of impending disaster.

Portents of the kali age

Once Krishna and Balaram were engaged in a lively conversation. Balaram asked Krishna: "How is it many untoward things are happening today? Apart from the differences between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, discord is rearing its head even among our own Yadavas. There are growing conflicts amongst them. Bitterness is rampant. Enmity is growing". Krishna smilingly replied: "This is a manifestation of the power of Kali. The Kali Age is dawning. These are its portents. These evil tendencies are an indication of the disasters to come".

All the evil tendencies that are manifest today are indications of the impending disasters. The future is in your hands. To avert disaster, all evil thoughts have to be eschewed. You have to develop always peaceful thoughts. When any thought of doing harm to somebody arises in - your mind, examine whether it is right or wrong. If you wish to make any public statement examine whether it is true or false. Don't broadcast any kind of bazaar gossip. Investigate the truth. Do not be in a hurry. Wait till you have got all the facts. To draw conclusions in haste on the basis of imperfect information is a sign of stupidity.

A Lesson from the Mahabharata

Why do untoward events happen? Only to promote what is good. They have a cleansing effect. Rise and fall are natural events. When any such thing takes place in relation to the Divine, it must be regarded as the prelude to something elevating and sublime.

Here is an illustration from the Mahabharata. The battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas had gone on for nine days. On all the nine days, the Pandavas were the losers. Yudhishtira and Arjuna were dejected. At that time Krishna told them: "Why are you getting so

forces of righteousness, peace and truth gain the upper hand. Therefore, do not have any worry. Get up, Dhananjaya (Arjuna). Dharma is bound to win. Selfishness will be destroyed. Alas! the parents of a hundred sons will ultimately have not even one to perform their obsequies. What a fate! What is the reason? It is the result of the crooked stratagems of evil-minded men. They are full of low cunning. They have the worst traits in men. Such persons bring ruin on great royal dynasties. Only a rain of arrows can bring about peace". Krishna thus roused the drooping spirits of Dharmaja and Arjuna.

The Kauravas were unable to tolerate the popularity and good name of the Pandavas. The Pandavas were the very embodiments of Righteousness. They were totally wedded to truth. Were it otherwise, would valiant heroes like Bhima and Arjuna remain inactive when Draupadi was sought to be disrobed? They allowed events to take their inevitable course.

Hence, mishaps in life should be regarded as happenings which serve to further one's spiritual progress.

Uniqueness of Sai seva activities

Today when the Sai Seva organisations are rendering glorious service all over the world, there are some persons who, like the Kauravas, are consumed by envy. They have their abettors and accomplices like Shakuni (Duryodhana's uncle). Such men cannot be considered as educated or intelligent persons. If they were really educated, they would not indulge in such mean tactics. But what is the outcome of all this? The malingers will be defeated by their own weapons. Very soon the glory of Sai will spread to every part of the world. It will increase a thousand-fold. (Cheers) The reason is the essential goodness of the Sai Mission. It is totally free from any taint. Every act is done out of the purest of motives. Everything that is said is based on truth. All activities are conducted without depending on any outsider. Hence, there is no room for fear.

After the harvest when the sheaves of grains are winnowed, the wind blows away all the chaff, leaving only the grains behind. Through this process, the true devotees will remain steadfast. The wavering puppets will drift away. This is the process of winnowing.

Hence, adhere firmly to the truth of your convictions. Be prepared to meet any challenges. Life is a challenge, meet it. Be ready to face any situation. How is this to be done? Not by tit-for-tat or blow for blow. You have always to be truthful. Do not accuse anyone. You have no need to harm anyone. Adhere to the truth and esteem it as the life-breath of a true devotee. Strengthen your faith in God. Envious people invent all kinds of stories. They feed the flame of hatred in others. All these belong to the evil brood of Shakuni. And where do they find their moorings? In the company of evil-minded men like Duryodhana and Dussasana. They will never go near righteous men like Dharmaja (the eldest of the Pandavas). There is only a bad end for such persons. The good will never come to grief. Good causes are bound to flourish. Hence establish your life in truth.

Carry on the good work

Making good use of the present opportunity, see that the Sai organisations grow from day to day. Every street must reverberate with the name of Sai. Every heart should be purified. Every mind should be full of happiness. Love even your enemies. Treat even the one who hates you as your friend. Then, there will be no need to accuse anyone. When you adhere to your truth and live upto it, you are bound to be successful. Truth is one. That is the truth which should be the sheet anchor of your life.

As many are gathered here, I wish to inform you that the programme for the Seventieth Birthday is being got up. Whatever may happen, these celebrations will go on. Sai's resolve will be fulfilled (Cheers). Even if the heavens fall, Sai's resolve will not alter. We do not speak about these resolves, nor are they broadcast among the public. In the world only goods that are not easily sold, are advertised. Goods that have a ready market are not advertised.

During the next two years, many important events are going to happen. Programmes are afoot to help the poor and the needy. On November 18th, 70 marriages will be performed. People often talk about mass marriages. They are rather simple affairs. The marriages we intend to perform will be different. The weddings will be such that the married couples will say: "We never imagined that such a thing could happen in our lives!" Each bride will be given a wedding medallion (bottu) in a gold chain. The bridegroom will receive a gold ring. A set of cooking utensils will be presented along with some provisions. The brides will be given valuable Kanjeevaram saris. The couples will also be given houses in due course.

It is also intended to provide sewing machines to women who are confined to their houses and cannot support themselves by working outside.

All are our people. The Divine is in all. But owing to their past actions, and their misfortunes, some of them entertain silly ideas. They are transient and not lasting. Even Duryodhana and Dussasana praised Krishna in the end. Therefore, do not have ill-will towards anyone.

Love everyone and pray for everybody's well-being.

To the extent possible, take part in the work of Sai Organisations. Today there is no nobler work in the world.

I shall not speak about the numerous other Organisations in the world. But the purity that obtains in the Sai Organisations cannot be found anywhere else. Gossip mongers may talk as they please. But so far as our Organisations are concerned their watchword always is Help! Help! Help! Serve! Serve! Serve! This is their primary aim.

I do not have any differences based on race, caste, or creed. The weddings will be performed without regard to any of these considerations. Every couple will be blessed with

married should abide by the laws of the country.

Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the Bhajan, "*Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Brahma*".

—**From Bhagavan's Discourse on Vijayadashami Day, 24-10-93, in the Poornachandra Auditorium**

AVATAR VANI:

JANMADINA SANDESH:

Purity, Patience, Perseverance: Steps to Divinity

In this sacred land of Bharat
Forbearance is our best wealth;
Of all forms of rituals, the highest
Is the observance of Truth and morality;
Of sweetness of disposition
The greatest is maternal love;
Jettisoning the national ideal
That honour is greater than life itself
What a pity people have
Fallen a prey to exotic practices!
What can I say about
The plight of Bharat!
Like the elephant unaware of its strength
Bharatias have become docile today.

When the heart is filled with compassion, the hands are dedicated to the service of others the body is engaged in constant help to others, the life of such a person is sacred, purposeful and noble.

The entire Cosmos is based on the bed-rock of Truth, Wealth and Welfare and all comforts and pleasures are dependent on truth. Wherever you turn, Truth shines effulgently. The Goddess of Wealth, Lakshmi, dwells in the abode of Truth. The world cannot exist without Truth, just as the rays cannot exist without the sun. Truth is the Cosmos and the Cosmos is Truth.

The entire Cosmos is permeated by the Divine. ("Isavasyam idam Jagat"). It is foolish to imagine that the natural, physical and mundane is unreal and there is something else that sustains it. The Cosmos is Vishnu and Vishnu (the Supreme) is the Cosmos. The Cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine.

the ancient sages embarked on a spiritual enquiry and realised the Truth. , It is because this profound and eternal Truth has been forgotten by man that the world is a prey to all kinds of troubles and difficulties.

The five elements

Among the five elements, the primary one is the earth. It is all-pervasive. All the mountains, rivers, villages, towns, etc. are based on the earth. The scientists found that the earth is revolving round itself. In that case, all the objects on the earth should also be revolving. But that is not so. The earth has a divine power of attraction. This power of attraction holds all the objects together. Hence, the earth alone cannot be regarded as the basis for all the objects. If we enquire more deeply, it will be found that even the earth is supported by something else. The earth is based on a higher power, the Divine power.

Thus, the Divine is firm, pure and changeless. Without this divine power, nature and the physical world cannot function well. If, for instance, the rails on which a locomotive runs. were also to move along with the train, the results would be disastrous. Likewise, if the road were also to move along with the car running on it, there will be accidents. It is the car that moves and not the earth.

In this manner, many objects are in motion in the universe, but-the Divine remains steady and unchanging.

The next is the water element which is present everywhere whether we perceive it or not, Life is impossible without water.

The next one is Fire (Agni). This fire element is present in every living being including humans, as the digestive fire (Jataragni). This fire is not only on the earth, but is even in space. When clouds clash against each other, fire is generated in the form of lightning. When two inert flint-stones are struck against each other, fire emanates from them. Likewise when two sticks are rubbed against each other, fire emerges. Thus, fire also is an all-pervading power.

Then, there is Aakasa (space or ether). It pervades everything. There is air (Vayu). There can be no life without air. You experience the presence f air during a storm or a whirlwind. But air is present all the time everywhere.

When the five elements have such immense power, you can imagine what must be the potency of the Divine which sustains them. The five elements are manifestations of the Supreme Omni-Self (paramatmaswarupa). No one can deny Its existence, whether one is a theist, an atheist or an agnostic. Today, these five elements are not being properly used. Instead, they are very much misused. Their misuse is the root cause of all the travails of the world. As the five elements are based on Truth, the ancient Rishis observed restraint in speech so that they may adhere to truth. Restraint in speech nourished truth. Excessive speech is the cause of great unrest.

consonance with that awareness.

The mind demonstrates the nature of the five elements. Belief (mathi) has emerged from the mind. Religion (matham) is a reflection of belief. Religion is not what it is normally understood to be. There are many engaged in destruction of religion. If religion is destroyed, belief (or faith) will be destroyed and then the mind itself will be destroyed. Religious hatred has to be got rid of, not religions as such. Adherents of all faiths recognise the power of the five elements and worship them.

The triple unity

Bharatiyas have upheld unity in thought, word and deed by their conduct. The Vedas have proclaimed that the Divine is present in all five elements. This truth is accepted by the adherents of all faiths. But while professing belief in this truth and proclaiming it, they are not acting up to it in practice. Only the Bharatiyas practised this truth and experienced the bliss derived from it. Bharatiyas adored hills, birds and trees. Adherents of other faiths ridiculed such practices. This is due to thoughtlessness and is not a sign of sanity. All people say that God is in all beings and all things. But to deride Bharatiyas, who act on that saying, is sheer folly. How can one, who acts according to his words, be regarded as a fool? Should not the one who does not live up to his words be treated as a fool? Let the wise determine the right answer.

Bharatiyas are known to act up to their words. People of other faiths may profess one thing and practise differently. We need not criticise any religion. "All religions teach only what is good. People should lead their lives on this basis. If the minds are pure, how can religion do any harm?" (Poem)

People are spoiling their minds. Religion is not at fault. Today what is needed is transformation of minds and not of men. When the minds are reformed, men will automatically change for the better. Men's lives are based on how their mind thinks. Today men should develop mental purity and sacred feelings.

Reality is one

The Supreme Reality is one. It is God. Men of all faiths - whether they are Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Parsis or others, —have recognised that God is one. It is only when men develop feelings of forbearance, compassion and unity, that men will have fraternal feelings towards each other and foster equality and justice. It is only when men develop oneness in Spirit (Ekaatmabhava) that bitterness and discord will cease. Men must act on the conviction that the same Divine dwells in all beings.

The Cosmos is an organism with multifarious limbs. A human being has eyes, ears, mouth, etc. All these organs are limbs of the human body. The body is a limb of society. Society is a limb of humanity. Humanity is a limb of Nature (Prakriti). Nature is a limb of the Omni-Self (Paramatma). This shows the relationship between the sense organs in man and the Divine.

sustains them and lead a meaningful life.

There is the body. There is the world. There are forests, trees and many other things. In referring to all these, we use the word "is"—that it exists. This term "is", signifying existence, proclaims the fundamental fact about man. There is only one thing that exists. But man forgets this Divine Reality because of his selfishness and self-centredness. The latter reflect his egoism and ostentatiousness. It is only when the last two are extinguished, will man's inner Divinity manifest itself.

The bad traits which are found in man are the result of his food and other habits and do not arise from his Atma. Vices like lust, anger, envy and pride are the outcome of bad food and improper associations and are products of external factors. They do not arise from within. Qualities like love, compassion, consideration for others arise from within one's self. These are human values. Forgetting these values, following animal qualities, men are leading an animal existence. This is wrong. Men should lead lives based on their human estate.

Divine love

Wealth may come and go. Strength may grow or decay. All things in the world may pass away. But there is one thing that is imperishable and unchanging. That is permanent Divine Love. All other forms of love are not real love at all. They are temporary, worldly attachments, based on physical, communal or other desires.

True love is related solely to the heart (hridaya). Man today is not cherishing such an unchanging and enduring love. He is wasting his life, pursuing temporary allurements. Wandering about aimlessly in the pursuit of evanescent and trivial pleasures, man is immersed in all kinds of troubles. He can discover his true path only by seeking spiritual illumination. Spirituality does not mean performance of ritual worship. It calls for the removal of the animal traits in man. Only then sacred feelings will arise in him. That is real spirituality. Regard all beings as children of God. Bear no ill-will towards anyone. It is because of hatred and ill-will that mankind is plunged in violence and bloodshed. Man's blood is inherently pure, divine and unsullied. To misuse that blood in wrong ways is a sign of animal or demonic nature.

Human unity

Bharat today is in a crisis created by a myriad difficult problems. But not Bharat alone, all other countries are also facing similar crises. What is the reason? It is the total failure to remember the spiritual oneness of mankind. Only the sense of spiritual unity will generate universal love. That love alone will bind men together in unity. This love principle should emanate from the heart. Only then true unity will emerge.

Embodiments of Love: Do not be deluded by the belief that life has been given to you for eating and drinking and other physical pleasures. This is not the reason for human birth, which is a rare blessing. What is the difference between a human being and the animals? It is qualities like kindness, compassion, forbearance and sympathy which differentiate human beings from

desires. Those wearing the glass of selfishness can only see selfishness all around them. A defective vision produces an apparent defect in creation. There is nothing wrong with creation (srishti). Every defect is related to the defective vision (drishti).

Duties and rights

Men must realise that true humanness will be achieved only when the five elements in the universe are properly used. The earth is a sacred base of the Supreme. The other four elements are super-imposed on it. Without the base, the other elements will be functionless. Hence all human beings living on earth should cooperate with each other, engage themselves in socially helpful activities and redeem their lives. Every man has duties to perform, but can claim no rights. Today people tend to assert their rights without regard to their responsibilities (or duties). Duties and rights go together. Today men tend to assert their rights but have no regard for their responsibilities. Absolute unconcern for responsibilities has become a kind of epidemic in all spheres of life today.

When you discharge your responsibilities, your rights will be automatically ensured.

In Bharat today everybody is clamouring about rights. What is the meaning of "right"? It is that to which you are entitled. How do you get it? Can you get the fruit without sowing the seed? Without a tree can there be a fruit? But you aspire for the fruit without sowing the seed or rearing the tree? What folly is this? No one has any inherent claim to any right. He has only responsibility. Do your duty. Duty is God. Work is worship.

When you perform your duties, you will be acquiring the title to your rights. Every man should discharge his duties. Performance of duty is your yoga. It is your enjoyment. It is your sacrifice. Discharge of duty is the basis for everything.

If duties are performed according to one's respective role—as householder, student, renunciant or ascetic—the world will not suffer from lack of peace or prosperity. People are not attending to their respective functions. They are not carrying out their duties properly. Ignoring their duties, they interest themselves in the activities of others.

Respect for all faiths

This attitude is prevalent in the religious sphere also. Members of one faith consider it supreme and deride the faiths of others. No one is qualified to make such a claim. Even as you prize your faith, you must realize that others are equally entitled to prize their faiths. You may esteem your religion greatly. Adhere to it accordingly. But do not criticise or despise the religions of other people. Unfortunately men have lost this sense of respect for other faiths. If all people recognise this truth, there will be no room in the world for conflicts and discord.

Man strives for peace in many ways. Where is peace to be found? It is not in the external world. Peace must be found within. Outside you have only pieces. You must seek to manifest the peace within you.

There are millions in the world who preach and propagate what is good. But not one in a hundred practises the good teachings. The world will pay no heed to those who do not practise what they preach.

Whether others esteem you or not, you must be content to act according to your conscience. The inner conviction that you are acting righteously is your best witness. There is no greater Dharma than adherence to Truth. You need have no fear as long as you adhere to truth. It is the liar who is haunted by fear.

Therefore, go forward to render social service with faith and fortitude. Eschew religious hatred, which is the cause of conflict. Respect every religion.

People today talk about protecting the nation. The nation does not need protection. If you protect and foster truth and righteousness the nation will be automatically protected. In the name of protecting the country, arms and bombs are piled up which are ruining the nation.

At the root of all troubles is human selfishness. Some amount of concern for selfish interests is justified. But when anything is carried to excess, it proves calamitous. Man is endowed with the discriminating power to control his desires. This power must be used to decide whether any action is right or wrong.

"Be", "do", and "speak"

All of you are embodiments of the Spirit (Atma). You are all manifestations of the Divine. The Indwelling Spirit is one and the same in all beings irrespective of their external differences, like the current that illumines bulbs of different wattage and colour. Fill your hearts with love. Then you can experience real bliss. With a narrow mind and heart, if you indulge in magniloquent words, no one will care to listen to you. First of all "Be", be good yourself. Then you "Do" act likewise. Then "Speak", tell others (about what is good). Only thus you will be setting an ideal example.

Do not entertain bad feelings about anyone. They do you more harm than to others. As the saying goes: "One's own anger is one's enemy and one's peace is one's friend and kinsfolk. One's happiness is heaven and one's sorrow is hell." (Telugu poem) Develop sacred and pure feelings. We claim to celebrate the birthdays of people. But the birthday is truly celebrated when there is the birth of pure ideas in one.

You celebrate the birthday of Bhagavan. But do you follow the teachings? You will experience the fruits of celebrating the birthday only when you follow the teachings.

Jesus said, "Love everyone". Christmas is celebrated, but how far does one practise love? None at all.

seldom done. People are more keen on receiving than on giving. They are willing to give away only things which they do not relish. There is no sacrifice in this.

This was the message given by Vyasa in his eighteen Puranas. "It is meritorious to help others. It is sinful to inflict harm on them".

Devotees' duty

You should not be concerned with how many have come (for Swami's birthday) but how many are following Swami's teachings. If every devotee is able to influence two persons, soon the whole world will be reformed.

Embodiments of love! There is only one thing you have to offer to me today. Pray that people in all countries, nay, the entire humanity, should be happy and at peace. ("Lokassamasthassukhino bhavanthu") ("Let all the worlds be happy"). Then alone there will be real unity. Do not wish merely for the peace and prosperity of India alone. Pray for the welfare of all countries. All are our brothers, whether they are in Pakistan or America or elsewhere.

Whether you believe it or not, realise that I am able to attract people from so many countries because of my all-embracing love (cheers).

The three P's

If every person observes three things, he will be one with Swami. You will experience the Divine in you. As these three are in me, I can declare firmly about them. They are three P's: Purity, Patience, Perseverance. These three are in me and around me. Anyone with these three qualities will be unafraid wherever he may be.

The most important quality is "Purity". Today everything is polluted. Water, air and all the five elements are polluted. As a result the mind of man is also polluted. How is purity to be achieved? Fill your minds with thoughts of God, dedicate all your actions to God and consider God as the inner motivator. Contemplation of God is not a matter for derision. You need have no fear on that account. You must have full faith in God, who is the universal sustainer. He is the protector, but not the punisher. The punishment you get is the consequence of your own actions.

Therefore, chanting the name of God, doing bhajans and performing good deeds, engage yourselves in service of your fellow-beings. Nourish love in your hearts. Love will drive away all bad thoughts. It will promote the spirit of forgiveness.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan: *"Prema muditha manase kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram!"*

From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 23-11-93

Education Should Develop Human Values

*Education confers beauty on man;
It is his secret treasure;
It confers pleasure, fame and happiness;
It is the teacher of teachers;
It is one's kinsman when abroad;
It confers supreme vision;
In a royal assembly it is learning alone,
Not wealth, that counts;
A man without learning is an animal.*

Students and teachers!

Today neither students nor teachers are aware of the true meaning of education. Education should foster morality, righteousness and character. Man today has acquired prodigious knowledge in the fields of science and technology. But this serves only to promote a material civilisation and teaches only knowledge of the external world to students. What man truly needs today is not this external knowledge. He needs refinement of the heart. This can be got only by internal culture.

It is not enough today to make a man a mere human being. He has to be transformed into an ideal human being. Education makes a man compassionate. That is the fulfillment of the purpose of education. Education should not be equated with book knowledge or the acquisition of skills for leading one's life in the world. The modern student is unable to determine what is the basis of his life and what is important in it. Hence, he loses confidence in himself. Because they lack the patriotism, born out of love for the country, and the devotion to God, which instills a spirit of sacrifice, students today have lost all self-confidence.

Most of the troubles tormenting the world today stem from loss of self-confidence (Atma-Vishvas).

"Devoid of the fear of sin and love for God, mankind today is plunged in a grave crisis" (Poem) The eternal verities proclaimed in the scriptures have assumed bizarre forms. Sacred nature is divorced from humanity. The ancient wisdom is in eclipse. Perverted knowledge is growing. In such a situation, how can ethical and spiritual values appeal to youth?

The entire educational system should be changed. The true purpose of education should be understood. "Reading and writing cannot make a man educated. Are those acquiring degrees scholars? Without right knowledge and proper conduct, can one be deemed educated? If learning

learning?" (Poem)

Education and life

Education should be the life breath of human beings. By converting education into a means of earning a livelihood, people are forgetting the meaning of life. Character determines life. It is power. It is pure and holy. Without character how can man lead a worthwhile and sacred life? For this reason, from ancient times, Bharatiyas fostered a life-style based on ethics. Students are forgetting this ancient culture of Bharat. Pursuing worldly, ephemeral knowledge, they do not understand the nature of life.

Man should recognise the cosmic basis of education. Education today is based on mechanical skills. Students should strive to promote blossoming of the heart together with development of the intellect. Intellectual knowledge alone cannot suffice for the conduct of life on right lines.

It is true that Bharat is lagging behind in the economic sphere. But what harm does this do to the world? There is a greater danger from another source. This arises from the fact that people are immersed in material pursuits, ignoring moral and spiritual values. Unless this process is reversed, education cannot make headway.

Two hundred years ago, scientists in other countries started exploring the powers of nature and experimented with control of the five basic elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth). They invented dreadful bombs and envisaged terrible wars. This is a wholly misguided effort.

Role of science

The arrogant claim that they have achieved scientific progress is utterly unwarranted because this is not true science at all. Does knowledge of how to cause mass destruction merit the name of Science? Cannot their scientific investigations be devoted to causes which promote human welfare and betterment?

All the Scientific discoveries of today were excelled by the achievements of Hiranyakasipu. The powers obtained from them are prone to be misused. Deluded by their scientific and technological progress, the nations are losing their wisdom. What is the purpose served by these discoveries? While they promote temporary pleasures, they virtually destroy the sources of inner strength. The education that we must aim at is one which will direct the children towards the right path and promote the well-being of the nation. Only when mankind realises this need will world peace be a reality.

Man needs today a mind free from attachment and hatred, speech that is untainted by falsehood, and a body that is totally free from violence. Of these, truthful speech is most essential. Unfortunately, man is not free from these taints. Hence, students should receive an education that produces purity of mind speech and body.

Of what use is man's conquest of the external world if he cannot realise his own true nature? Scientists are only helping to satisfy man's selfish desires. They are keen on securing accolades for themselves, but are not concerned about the welfare of society or the goals of life. How glorious will be their achievements if their discoveries are useful to the people and promote the prosperity and welfare of nations?

Today every step of man is marked by unrighteousness. Every word is tainted by untruth. His thoughts are not free from evil. All his desires are rooted in selfishness. Caste and religious conflicts are rampant. Parochialism is growing. In short, humanness has reached its nadir. How then, can man be called a human being, when there is no harmony in thought, word and deed?

Bad example of elders

Moreover, there are no ideal leaders today. Even exemplary parents are not to be found. Nor are there ideal teachers. In olden days, the leaders, the parents and the teachers led exemplary lives. It is because such persons are absent today that students are without ideal examples to follow. There is a Telugu saying that the calf follows the cow. Because the elders set a bad example, the students also are going astray.

The students are not to blame. They are inherently good-hearted and good-natured. But they take to bad ways because of the elders. Therefore, the first requisite is for the national leaders and the parents to understand how the educational system should function. They should realise that education should aim at developing good qualities in the children and should not be regarded as a means to acquire wealth. Character is based on good conduct. Only a young man with good qualities can become a good leader. He must take part in social service as a preparation for leadership. Everyone should realise that his happiness is bound up with the happiness of society as a whole. Parents and teachers should develop such attitudes in the students.

Despite all his achievements in the physical world, how far has man been able to develop his human qualities? This is the question facing the world today. If people study the ancient history of Bharat, they will realise the importance which the ancients attached to Truth.

Need for unity

There may be differences at the individual level, but when national interests are involved, these differences should be forgotten and all should act in unity. This was the attitude of Dharmaja in respect of his Kaurava cousins. At the individual level, Dharmaja said that the five Pandava brothers might be ranged against the hundred Kauravas "But if the nation is in peril, we are 105 against the rest. It is our duty to protect the nation".

Unfortunately, today, each party is ranged against the other and there is discord among the people. This should go. All should bear in mind the interests of the people.

Once Gandhiji told a foreigner that he was feeling sad because education was making students heartless and lacking in fellow-feeling. Students do not show any sweetness in speech. They have no sense of gratitude. Of what avail is such an education? The foremost quality students should have is humility. They must be free from conceit. They must be unselfish. Without these a student lacks lustre. Students today lack these qualities. They have little concern for the plight of their parents. But, there are also parents who pamper their children like Dhritarashtra (the father of the Kauravas). If parents do not correct their children, who will correct them? How can parents cherish children who misbehave and earn a bad name?

The birthday that should be celebrated is the day when good qualities are born in one. You must become ideal students. Students must work hard. They have to be grateful to their parents for all that they have received from the latter. Children who cannot please their parents, how will they serve the nation?

Every human body is sustained by five life-breaths—Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana. What are the five life-breaths for a student? They are: Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence. All these five principles have to be rigorously observed to sublimate one's life. Each one should cultivate the qualities of compassion, patience and oneness. These qualities will promote the unity of mankind. These are based on the love-principle. Without love, there is no life. Love gives rise to truth. Love begets peace. When you have love, you practise nonviolence. Love is the under-current in all these.

Education has to be reformed. But Ministers are only trifling with changes. Reports of Committees are gathering dust in shelves. Educational reforms should be related to the five basic human values, without which education has no Meaning and life itself is devoid of purpose. A student today has no conception of the value of sacrifice (Tyaga). He has to learn to do his duty without expectation of any reward. This is a form of Yoga (spiritual discipline).

Dear Students! Giving up the craze for going abroad after the completion of your studies, take a resolve to dedicate yourselves to the service of your village, your state and your nation. Act according to your conscience. In your heart shines the knowledge of the Spirit (Atma-Vidya). Knowledge should beget wisdom like the lightning in a cloud.

Every one of our students should stand forth as a shining example to others. The light of their example should spread all over the world and bring about spiritual unity among mankind.

All changes in the educational syllabi or other changes in the economic and political spheres are of little value. There should be a change in the mental attitude of people, as the prelude to a change in the national scene. Transform yourself first and then preach to others.

True science should foster the well-being of the people and promote unity amongst them. Unity will lead to purity and both will lead to Divinity. Today there is none of these. We have only "Community" (or caste). It is this communal feeling that is the cause of conflict. Giving up

human family. There is only one religion, the religion of humanity. Students should develop this spirit of unity.

Truth and righteousness

Students! The future of the country, for good or ill, depends on you. The older generation cannot reform the nation. Only a disciplined and well educated younger generation can serve the nation well as future leaders. Treat the whole world as a vast mansion. Strive for the well-being of all nations equally with Bharat.

The Sri Sathya Sai Institute has been established to promote sacred ideals among students. Adhere to your principles and beliefs regardless of what others may say. Have the example of the Gopikas in mind. Their devotion to Krishna was firm and unwavering. Consider truth as your life-breath. If you speak the truth and practise righteousness, you will attain the highest state.

Truth and Righteousness are interrelated. Together they constitute humanness. Bear in mind the glorious example of Harishchandra, who sacrificed everything for the sake of truth.

Adhere to truth in earning a living or in experiencing anything in life. Ill-gotten wealth will be lost in the same way. Engage yourselves in some kind of socially useful activity in the educational, medical or other fields. Sacrifice is more important than earning money. Students imbued with this spirit of service may go to any country. Do not use your diplomas as begging bowls for jobs. Make proper use of your education to render service to the nation and to lead noble lives. This is my benediction to all of you."

**—From Bhagavan's address to the convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute
held in the Vidyagiri stadium on 22-11-93**

After the discourse, students of the Institute presented a play in English on the life of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

When the sun rises, all the buds of lotus in the lake will not open out in full bloom. Only those which are full grown can blossom; so the rest have to bide their time and grow.

—Baba

Miracles with a Difference

(Continued from November Issue)

The miracle of the message

softening the rigid attitudes of acknowledged communities of men in their respective domains of religions, science, politics, and intellectualism. This is due to his miracle of message. It opens up new vistas of thinking in a world of wayward pursuits.

For example, to the high priests of religions, Sathya Sai gives the message:

"When a tree first shoots forth from the seed, it comes up with a stem and two incipient leaves! But, later, when it grows, the trunk is one, and the branches are many! Each branch may be thick enough to be called a trunk, but one should not forget that the roots send food as sap through one single trunk. God, the same God, feeds the spiritual hunger of all nations and all faiths, through the common sustenance of truth, virtue, humility and sacrifice."

To the world community of scientists, the message of Sathya Sai runs:

"God is denied, and man is relying on himself. He exaggerates his own intelligence and sense of adventure and prides himself on the advance he has made through science and technology. But intelligence without equanimity is filling mental hospitals. Peace is fleeing from the hearts of men and women; social harmony is becoming distant dream, international concord is a mirage pursued by a few. Man travels to the moon, but does not explore his own inner levels of- consciousness, to understand them, cleanse them and control them".

For men in power, ever hungry for glory and ever in pursuit of limited objectives for self-aggrandisement, Sathya Sai says:

"By removing all causes, sources, barriers, and provocations of class, caste, creed, colour and race, and replacing the existing hate and violence with love and non-violence, I expect to provide humanity with an evangel of peaceful co-operation to replace the present escalation to death by co-destruction."

To the community of intellectuals who are running after knowledge and education, of several kinds and devoting their thoughts to enrich culture, Baba's advice is

*The end of wisdom is freedom;
The end of culture is perfection;
The end of knowledge is love;
The end of education is character."*

The messages and discourses of Sri Sathya Sai constitute the most captivating spiritual literature of this age. Words which continually drop from his lips every day form mines of divine wealth for those who desire to know the inner meaning of the real as different from the unreal. An awareness of the eternal and the superior consciousness to attain divinity form the essence of his teachings.

moves in front of you. However fast you run, you cannot catch it, on plain or mountain. Or, the shadow may pursue you and you cannot escape from it. This is the nature of desire. You may pursue it or it may pursue you but you cannot overcome it or catch it. Desire is an insubstantial shadow. But turn desire inward, towards spiritual treasure, then it yields substantial results", he says.

"Service in all its forms all the world over, is primarily spiritual discipline-mental cleanup! Without the inspiration given by that attitude, the urge is bound to ebb and grow dry or, it may meander into pride and pomp. Just think for a moment: Are you serving God? Or, is God serving you? When you offer milk to a hungry child, or a blanket to a shivering brother on the pavement, you are but placing a gift of God into the hands of another gift of God!

Through transformation of the individuals, Sri Sathya Sai aims at transforming the larger whole mankind.

—Concluded (Extract from a book by Manmath Nath Das)

"The very first lesson of the Primer of the spiritual text is "Control of Speech". The speech is the armament of man; other animals have fleetness of foot, sharpness of claw, fang, horn, tusk, beak and talon. But man has sweetness of speech which can disarm all opposition and defeat all the designs of hatred. Sweetness makes you "Pashupati"—Divine; harshness makes you "Pashu"—bestial. Mere outward politeness or sweetness is hypocrisy; sincere speech must flow from real sweetness of heart, a heart full of love. Remove all evil from the monasarovar, pellucid lake of your mind, and make it a fit abode of God head."

—Baba

Another Memorable November

In the Sai Calendar, November is the month of months. Millions of devotees all over the world eagerly look forward to the events at Prasanthi Nilayam in this month, when the Birthday of Bhagavan Baba is celebrated.

This year's celebrations became memorable for two reasons. One was the celebration of 70 marriages of young brides and bridegrooms from the villages around Prasanthi Nilayam in an atmosphere of unforgettable sacredness and rejoicing, with the blessings of Bhagavan showered in abundance, materially and otherwise on the newly weds. The other was the participation of the Prime Minister of Mauritius in the convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute and in Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations. This was the first time when the Prime Minister of another country paid his homage to Bhagavan in such a signal manner.

Earlier, Bhagavan gave a series of special unscheduled discourses on Katha, Prashna and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads daily evening in the Mandir from 3rd to 10th November. This appeared to be a continuation of His Discourses on Upanishads during the Dasara week.

Akhanda Bhajan was conducted in the Mandir from 6.00 P.M. on Saturday 13th to 6.00 P.M. on Sunday 14th. Bhagavan inaugurated the Bhajan by lighting the Akhanda Jyoti by His Divine Hands. The students of the three campuses of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning were leading the Bhajan right through the twenty-four hours sustaining the tempo and devotion filling the atmosphere with Divine vibrations fulfilling the loving command of Bhagavan.

The weeklong celebrations began on 18th November with the most auspicious event of performance of seventy marriages in the Poornachandra Auditorium. Bhagavan had announced on October 24th that the marriages would be celebrated this year as part of a three year programme in connection with Bhagavan's 70th Birthday in November, 1995.

As usual, the day started with Nadaswaram music and Darshan of Bhagavan to the vast multitude of devotees. The annual Rathothsavam for the idols of Rama and Sita in the Mandir was preceded by the Kalyanothsawam performed in the Mandir. Then the idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana with Anjaneya at their feet, were taken to the Gopuram Gate and mounted on the tastefully decorated chariot (Rath). Bhagavan inaugurated the festival by drawing the Chariot and breaking coconuts. The Procession was headed by Veda chanting students and Nadaswaram music. Sai Geetha, gloriously caparisoned in glittering robes, led the procession.

The scene shifted to Poornachandra Hall where arrangements had been made for seating the couples and their parents in separate groups. Bhagavan blessed the couples individually by going round all the seventy groups. The marriage parties had arrived on 17th and were provided accommodation in sheds. Profusely laced silk sarees and dhotis for the Brides and Bridegrooms had been given on 17th which they donned for the wedding. The priests chanted the relevant mantras on the mike giving directions to the couple to carry out every item of the ritual. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Vijayabhaskara Reddy was present and handed over the first Manglasutra (Bottu) with gold chain to the bride and gold ring for the groom and they were distributed to all others by other dignitaries. Each couple were given a set of cooking utensils, tiffin carriers etc. The newly wed couples were blessed by Bhagavan again individually. All the seventy couples will be given also residential houses free of cost for commencing their wedded life in due course. It is worthy of note that as many as two hundred students joined in chanting of Vedic Mantras on this occasion.

As part of the programme for 70th Birthday, 70 new sewing machines were distributed to seventy deserving women to enable to support themselves by working at home.

Bhagavan attended the special wedding feast He had arranged for all the marriage parties, who had come from their respective villages, in the Nilayam Canteen. All the villagers who

life.

On 19th November, there was a meeting of delegates from all countries implementing the Sathya Sai EHV Programme.

As this year is observed as the spiritual year in the three year programme of 70th Birthday celebration, Bhajan groups from different countries of the world offered an hour-long programme of Bhajan in various languages such as Spanish, French, Japanese, Chinese, Korean etc. on 20th November from 4 to 5 p.m. This was followed by a talk by Dr. Jung Sai from Thailand on how the Sathya Sai EHV programme was being implemented in different countries.

Mr. Swaminathan, member, Planning Commission spoke on the necessity for reforms in the present educational system to make it value oriented.

Bhagavan then delivered an inspiring discourse in the course of which he emphasised how it is essential for teachers to practise the human values while seeking to teach them to children.

On 21st November, there was a devotional music programme by Smt. Shoba Rao from 4 to 5 P.M. A Telugu Drama "Krishna Raayabhaaram" was enacted at the Hill view Stadium from 6.30 P.M. by the Sathya Sai Drama Troupe from Guntur.

On 22nd November, there was the usual Darshan and Bhajan at the Mandir in the morning. A new unit which has been added to the Super Speciality Hospital for facilitating Kidney Transplant was inaugurated by Bhagavan at 10.00 A.M. The first Kidney transplant operation was also successfully performed on a poor villager to whom his brother had donated a Kidney. A new Gamma-Ray unit established at a cost of nearly Rs. Two crores was also inaugurated.

The Twelfth convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was held in the afternoon at Hill View Stadium (Detailed Report of the convocation is given separately).

The most eagerly awaited day dawned while long lines of devotees started trekking towards the Vidyagiri stadium to occupy vantage positions for Darshan of Bhagavan on the 68th Anniversary of His Advent.

The vast grounds of the stadium and the galleries to the South and West were filled, to capacity by 8 a.m. when Bhagavan arrived at the entrance to the ground in His eye burning silver Chariot. Sai Geetha, the richly caparisoned elephant, decorated with glittering laced blanket and bedecked with sparkling head-ornaments headed the procession. Girl students doing Dandiya Raas, followed by younger boys doing Bhangra dances went before the Chariot, providing a delightful sight to the vast gathering. They were followed by a large group of students chanting Vedas and the Institute students' Band Troupe playing lilting tunes.

Swami took His Seat on the Silver Chair to the cheering of the hundreds of thousands of devotees drawn from more than fifty countries. Bhagavan blessed the huge gathering with both hands raised in the Abhaya pose.

Amar Singh and Sanjay Krishna both students of III B.Sc. (Hons) spoke about the universal love of Bhagavan which has drawn devotees from all corners of the world to Prasanthi Nilayam which has grown from an obscure village into a very prominent township and a global spiritual centre.

Vijay Sai, Lecturer, in the Brindavan campus of the Sai Institute, in his talk regaled the gathering with a few melodious songs and Bhajan numbers depicting the love of students for Baba and Baba's motherly love towards them. He exhorted all to show their gratitude to Bhagavan on this auspicious day by pledging themselves to follow his teachings of love and compassion to all fellow beings and render service to Society.

Bhagavan in his Divine Message exhorted the devotees to realise that practice is more important than precept. (Details of the Divine Discourse are published separately.).

After the conclusion of the Discourse and the offer of Arati, Bhagavan fed Sai Geetha with a few Laddus and distributed Prasadam to some of the distinguished guests including the Home Minister Sri S. B. Chavan, the Prime Minister of Mauritius, and Dr. Channa Reddy, Governor of Tamil Nadu.

Later, the Laddu Prasadam was distributed to lakhs of the devotees along with free lunch.

There was a music programme by Anup Jalota and Anuradha in the evening in which Meera Bhajans and special Bhajans in praise of Baba were sung.

On the 24th evening, a dance drama in Telugu "Pahlada" was presented by Bal Vikas Girls from Tamil Nadu. The young artists gave a superb performance matching that of professionals. The music and Choreography were excellent. The girl who acted as Pahlada did her part so well that Bhagavan materialised a gold chain for her. Bhagavan presented saris to all the participants.

With this programme, the weeklong Birthday celebrations came to a happy and successful conclusion.

XII CONVOCATION OF SAI INSTITUTE

Mauritius p.m. Lauds Baba's Mission

of Bhagavan Sri. Sathya Sai Baba, whose divine wisdom provides answers to our questions and doubts, reminds us of the teachings of the ancient sages and deities, strengthening our faith in divinity, helps us to find god in all creation,” observed Sir. Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius, in his address to the twelfth Convocation of the Sri. Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, on November 22, in the vast Vidyagiri Stadium.

A large concourse of devotees from all parts of the world had gathered in the amphitheatre, besides the candidates receiving their degrees, and the staff and students of the Institute from its three campuses. This was the first time when the head of a Government from another country was participating in the Convocation and in the birthday celebrations on the following day.

Sai Institute XII Convocation

Precisely at 3.30 P.M. Bhagavan Baba, the Chancellor of the Institute, and the Chief Guest, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, arrived at the Stadium and went in a ceremonial procession to the Santhi vedika, accompanied by distinguished invitees, Sri. S. B. Chavan, Home Minister of India, Sri. Channa Reddy, Governor of Tamil Nadu, and followed by the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Hanumanthappa, the members of the Governing Body of the Institute, the Deans of Faculties and members of the Academic Council. The Institute Band Troupe, in their shining white and red uniforms, marched in front, playing marching tunes.

The stage of the Santhi Vedika had been beautifully decorated with floral draperies providing an artistic backdrop. Students and staff of the Sai School at Muddanahalli worked all through the night to complete the decorations. After the Chancellor and others had taken their seats on the dias, the proceedings commenced with the chanting of Vedic hymns by students of the Institute.

V. C.'s Address

Offering His Salutations to Bhagavan Baba and welcoming Sir. Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, Sir Armoogam Parasuraman, Minister of Education and Science, Mauritius, Sri. S. B. Chavan, Dr. M. Channa Reddy and others, Sri. Hanumanthappa referred to the brilliant academic and public career of Sir. Anerood Jugnauth and said:

"When Sir Anerood Jugnauth became the Prime Minister in 1982, he had insurmountable problems facing the country like chronic unemployment, rapidly rising inflation and economic instability. But, Sir Anerood's political sagacity, foresight, ingenuity, strong sense of duty, truthfulness, integrity, indomitable courage, and his belief in the essential Unity of all religious faiths, gave him the strength to lead his country into a new era of prosperity and stability. Mauritius is a very fascinating country. Under the dynamic leadership of Sir Anerood Jugnauth the people of Mauritius took full advantage of a favourable international climate, rose to the occasion and transformed the Mauritian economy into one that is the envy of many in the world today".

Parasuraman, Minister of Education and Science, a Master Plan for Education for the year 2000 A.D. was introduced in June 1991. They have drawn inspiration from the Sri Sathya Sai system of Education".

Sai Education

Referring to the role of Bhagavan Baba in the present Crisis facing the world, he said: "Bhagavan Sri. Sathya Sai Baba represents a synthesis of all earlier Avatars and even transcends them by the power of His personality and the universality of His Message. Bhagavan Baba's greatest work is in the field of education, which is the only hopeful sign in an otherwise heart-breaking and depressing landscape. The Sathya Sai Philosophy of education has a profound positive content based on spiritual heritage, national goals, universal perceptions and cultural perspectives. It promotes Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-Violence in the individual, the family, the society, the nation and the World."

Giving a report on the activities of the Sai Institute during the present academic year, Sri Hanumanthappa said: "During 1993-94, 390 students (213 boys and 177 girls) were admitted to various courses of study. The total enrolment of students, which was 1066 in the previous year, is now 1104. At this Convocation 109 P. G. students (77 boys and 32 girls and 220 undergraduate students (128 boys and 92 girls) will receive their degrees. So far 43 students have been conferred Ph.D. Degree in various Faculties by the Institute. Steps were taken to strengthen the Honours Programme in various Science Courses. The Institute also introduced an Honours Programme in the Faculty of Commerce this year. Research work in the Science Departments has been continued with the same zeal as had marked the efforts earlier".

The Vice-Chancellor then invited the Chancellor to declare the convocation open. After the Chancellor had formally declared the Convocation open, Prof. U.S. Rao presented to the Chancellor the candidates for various degrees to be awarded at the Convocation. All the candidates got up at their places and bowed to the Chancellor, who conferred His benediction on them.

The Vice-Chancellor then administered the Institute's Pledge to the candidates.

Medals for Academic Excellence

The Registrar, Sri Chakravarti, then read out the names of those who had been awarded medals for academic distinction. The recipients of the medals are:

Mr. Vijaya Gopal (B.A.), Ashok Sundaresan (B.Com.), Mr. Navneet Kumar Jain (B.Sc. BioScience), Siddhartha Pal Das (MA. Eng. Lit), Jagdish Rao, (M.Sc. Bio-Science), S. Prashanthkumar Srinivasan (M.A. Maths), O.S.K. Subramanya Sastry, (M.Sc. Physics), C. Krishna Saikumar (M.Com), Amit Mehrotra, (M.Com.) Vinayesh Sawhney (M.B.A.), Kumari M.N. Sai Geeta (B.Sc., MPC), P.K. Lakshmi (B.Sc, Home Science), Kumari M.N. Srividya, (M.Sc. Home Science), Kumari Suman Rajput (B.Ed).

I wish first to convey my personal humble respect, that of my family and the people of Mauritius, to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I am deeply moved that Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has invited me to be the guest of honour at its annual Convocation Ceremony. The kind invitation bestows great honour upon me and I deem it, in all humility, as the Divine blessing of the revered Bhagavan Baba to me and through me to all the people of my country.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express the feelings of sympathy and brotherhood of the people of Mauritius to all the men, women and children, who have suffered from the earthquake in Maharashtra.

The daily happenings around us show that our world is increasingly becoming a place where hatred and rivalry have predominance, where selfishness and materialism lead to violence, where perverse social behaviour and immorality are intensifying, where children are being abused and where elders are neither respected nor cared for and where solidarity, brotherhood and humanitarianism are becoming distant dreams.

The time has come for mankind to awaken from its slumber in order to reform its attitudes and to change its priorities. There would be no light at the end of the tunnel unless we reconsider our mode of living, unless we become disciplined, self-reliant and useful to others. But, in order to follow the right path, we would need guidance and support.

Bhagavan Baba's Guidance

We, who are living in the present century have the good fortune to be blessed by the presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose divine wisdom answers to our questions and doubts, reminds us of the teachings of the ancient sages and deities, strengthens our faith in divinity, helps us to find God in all creation. The Divine teachings of Baba symbolise the light of hope and enlightenment in a bleak world which is being obscured by gloomy clouds. In the holy presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Prasanthi Nilayam is like an oasis in the desert, offering soothing freshness, calm and serenity to devotees coming from all parts of the world.

Voyage of Discovery

A Journey to Prasanthi Nilayam is a voyage of discovery, a pilgrimage towards the world of spirituality and an urge to learn from the words and the actions of Bhagavan Baba and the example he sets to humanity.

Everything here, from the University to the Hospital and the Spiritual Museum, is an expression of spirituality, imbued with divine inspiration. The spiritual Museum is a vivid illustration of the concept of unity in divinity—it reflects the commonness in all religions and the universality of human values. It is indeed rare to find institutions of higher learning like the Sri

service prevails, and where the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom is combined with duty and devotion. What is unique at this Institute is that it is founded by Bhagavan Baba; it is inspired by His teachings and is guided by His concept of a wholesome education, based on the fundamental values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Selfless Love and Non-Violence.

Call to Students

His powerful message of Love and peace is not confined to any religion or the rigidity of any ideology or dogma. It appeals to humanity and is the language of divinity itself. What is equally important is that the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning is the concrete and tangible expression of what and how our world should be. The aura of peace and spirituality, of service and humanism, that emanates from this place is the hopeful sign of a changing world.

Students have to imbibe the spirit of selfless service, friendliness, discipline and observe a Code of Honour. No one can remain insensitive to the new concept of integral education which is propounded here and which focuses on the building of the character of a new generation. Education does not mean earning degrees and getting lucrative jobs. Baba reminds us that true Education leads us from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality. It is a sign of hope for the whole world that the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba have reached the hearts of many citizens of this world and his mission does not and will not remain unachieved.

"The Rainbow Nation"

Bhagavan! Mauritius is a small country, with a multicultural population which has been living in peaceful co-existence and harmony.

Thanks to Divine grace, we have experienced economic and social advancement. Thanks to the Divine blessing, we have been inspired by the policy of Unity in Diversity, which calls for understanding and mutual respect and has allowed us to resist any attempt to shake the foundations of the much prized unity and stability of our people. Just as the rainbow assembles different colours, in perfect celestial beauty, in Mauritius different religions and cultures live side by side, with devotion of the same intensity for the Motherland. It is my fervent prayer that my country preserves its uniqueness as the rainbow nation, as the land of peace and brotherhood.

Bhagavan Baba! Conscious of the necessity to raise the quality of life of our people, we have, along the lines of your own vision of education, initiated the teaching of human values in our schools. This teaching is based on the universal values propounded by all religions and comes close to the concept of Unity in Divinity of which you have been a promoter. We shall continue with our programme of human values with the help and collaboration of all religious groups living in Mauritius.

Advice to Graduates

Dear young graduates of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning! You have had the blessed opportunity of reading at this highly esteemed university. You have acquired a wealth of

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I am confident that you will leave this Institution not merely as graduates but as citizens with a strong motivation to serve your country and its people, to work for the upliftment of humanity, and to build a peaceful world. Let your life be a mission just as Bhagavan Baba's life is a vow to "foster all mankind and ensure for all of them lives full of bliss, to lead all who stray away from the straight path again into goodness and save them and remove the sufferings of the poor".

I would like, before concluding, to express, on behalf of the people of Mauritius and especially of the devotees of the Sai Centres, our gratitude for this privileged opportunity to be present at this convocation ceremony and to be graced by the holy and sublime blessing of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. On the eve of the birthday of His Holiness Bhagavan Baba, our best gift to him would be our vow to follow his message of righteousness, truth, selfless love, peace and nonviolence. It is our sincere and unwavering pledge to make of our lives a sacred mission of service to our country, to humanity and God.

After Sir Anerood Jugnauth's address Bhagavan Baba delivered His benedictory message. (Published separately).

The institute band then played the National Anthem and with this the Convocation came to a close. The Chancellor, the Chief Guest and others left the Stadium in procession.

In the evening, there was a drama, "Chaitanya", by the Institute students, which won the acclaim of the huge gathering. Bhagavan went up to the stage and blessed all the actors and others who had taken part in the presentation of the play.