



Shivaratri: Its Significance

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Baba in His discourse on Shivaratri in 1971 explained the significance of the Lingam, the Lingodbhavam, and why Sita was separated from Rama during the exile.

The scriptures composed by the sages of *Bharath* [India] are testaments of genuine experience. They are to be interpreted and observed in practice after reverential study by persons who have clarified their intellects by rigorous disciplines. They can confer eternal *ananda* (bliss) when they are thus utilized. But scholastic or philological or grammatical inquirers that seek to comment and confuse can only lead to the neglect and loss of the precious content. They are ready to teach the truth and lead the student toward the goal of *ananda*; they are eager to grant immortality and save man from the dreary round of birth and death.

Really speaking, children of *Bharath* are fortunate to have this invaluable heritage. The *Vedas* and *Sastras* (scriptures) speak of this fortune; the sages extol this land on this score; the *Upanishads* (scriptures) acclaim the people who have such *gurus* [teachers] and guides; the achievements of generations of aspirants and seekers stand witness to this treasure and its worth.



But some blind cynics discard the treasure and condemn it as something that draws men away into futility! One can only pity them for their lack of vision. *Bharath* is the name of a way of life, not an extent of land between the seas and the Himalayas. It is another name for tolerance and mutual love, which have made it a garden of multicolored religions and philosophies, creeds and faiths.

Dharma [righteousness] means a lot of things, do's and don'ts

It is the land where the identity between man and God has been declared by persons who have attained that realization. The individual is encased, while God is unbound; the individual believes himself bound, as having name and form, as the body and its appurtenances. The fire that is latent in the fuel can manifest only when it is lit by external fire. So, too, the divinity of the intellect, the mind, and the inner instruments of cognition can manifest only when the *atma* [soul] is prompting and urging them. Otherwise, if they are prompted and urged by the senses, they will lead only to perdition and delusion.

Every directive given in the scriptures on discipline is intended to help the *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) to realize this identity and to derive the *ananda* that recognition of this unity confers. For example, take the exhortation in the *Gita shloka* [verse] that says, *Sarva dharmaan parityajya maam ekam sharanam vraja*. What is the *dharma* that has to be given up? Are all duties and responsibilities to be discarded? Or does *dharma* here refer only to some of these? *Dharma* is an omnibus expression, which means a lot of things, attitudes, behavior patterns, and more. Often it includes mere rules, which are known as *vidhi* (fate) and *nishedha* (do's and don'ts). If you are anxious to catch a bus, board a plane, or entrain for some place, you have to be at the stop, port, or station before a particular time. That is a *vidhi*. When two brothers divide among themselves the possessions left by their father, they share half and half; this is *dharma*, that is to say, right and proper, moral, approvable. Now, *Dharma* of this nature is laid down and observed so that we get peace and content, so that *sukha* (happiness) may be promoted. It belongs to the relative world; the Absolute has no concern with these relative advantages or benefits. It is in the realm of *ajnana* (ignorance) that *sukha* is desired and *dukha* (sorrow) is avoided.

Know that you are the ever full, ever blissful

Kama (desire) is the urge for *karma* (action). It is regulated and modified by *dharma* (righteousness) so that happiness may be gained and sadness avoided. *Kama* is the product or expression of *ajnana*. So when the *Gita* directs that all *dharma* be given up what is meant is that *ajnana* that induces *kama*, the progenitor of *karma* that has to sub-serve *dharma*, is to be conquered and overcome. Acquire *jnana* (spiritual wisdom); know the truth of thyself. Then you will be free from lust and hate, because you will know that you are the ever full, the ever blissful.

Imagine a person searching for things in a room. His eye falls on all the articles he wants to secure, but he does not notice the person who searches! The seeker does not see himself! When you give up the search for objects, for things other than yourself, you see yourself and know yourself. When the *draishta* (seer) is seen, the *drishya* (seen) is negated; when the *drishya* is seen, the *drishta* is ignored!

Tideman [the previous speaker] said just now that in the very first meeting he had with Me, I told him that I am God. In fact, everyone is God, limiting oneself into this particular name and form in which one is encased! If you believe yourself to be the label that is now affixed on you and call yourself by the name that others have given

you, you can never know your reality and have unshakeable joy. This is the lesson that *Vedanta* teaches. Each one is "*Sathyam jnanam anantam Brahma* (truth, total knowledge, infinity is *Brahman*).\" But sunk in the morass of *ajnana* that multiplies endlessly the desires that haunt the mind, man forgets the core of his being. Everyone must get convinced that he is the *atman*, not the body that is its material residence. To instruct you about this is the special purpose of the festival of *Mahashivaratri*.

Linga is the symbol of the beginningless and endless. People ask, \"Why does Swami produce the *Lingam* (formless form of God) from within Himself on this day?\" But let Me tell you, it is impossible for you to understand the attributes of the Divine and to measure Its potentialities, or to gauge the significance of the manifestation of Divinity. It [Divinity] is *agamyā* (unreachable) and *agochara* (un-understandable, mysterious). Therefore, in order to bear witness to the fact that Divinity is amidst you, it becomes necessary to express this attribute. Or else the atmosphere of hatred, greed, cruelty, violence, and irreverence will overwhelm the good, the humble, and the pious.

The *Linga* is just a symbol, a sign, an illustration, of the beginningless, the endless, and the limitless—for it has no limbs, no face, no feet, no front, or back, no beginning, or end. Its shape is like the picture one imagines the *nirakara* (formless) to be. As a matter of fact, *Linga* means—*leeyathe* (that in which all forms and names merge) and *gamyathe* (that toward which all names and forms are proceeding, to attain fulfilment). It is the fittest symbol of the All-pervasive, the All-knowing, and the All-powerful. Everything is subsumed in it; everything starts from it; from the *Lingam* arises *jangam* (universe), from the *jangam* arises *sangam* (association, attachment, activity), and as a result of the *sangam* one realizes the *lingam* (attributeless *atma*). Thus, the circle is completed—from the beginningless to the Beginningless. This is the lesson that *Lingodbhavam* (emergence of the *Linga*) teaches. The *lingasharira* (the causal body) that is inhabited by the *atma* is but a vesture worn for this particular sojourn! Many a vesture has this soul worn, though its reality is eternal!

The lesson that Ramayana teaches

People have not imprinted on their hearts the lessons that the ancient *Hindu* scriptures and epics seek to teach. I have been, for example, asked often why some persons who have associated themselves with Prasanthi Nilayam for years leave and do not appear again! The reply is evident for those who have studied the Ramayana well. After 10 or 12 years of 'devotion' suddenly these people take a turn for the worse and stray away. As the *Shastras* say, \"When the accumulated merit gets spent, they slip into the depth of mortality.\" Sita is the daughter of earth, of *prakriti* (nature), seeking the eternal comradeship of *Purusha*. She weds the *Purusha*, the Lord come as Rama. When Rama agrees to go into exile and proceeds to the forest for a stay of 14 long years, Sita, too, gives up all the luxuries she was accustomed to. She braves the perils of jungle life for the sake of being in the presence of Rama. She renounced desire from her heart for the sole goal of Rama.

Thirteen years she spent with the Lord in perfect bliss as a consequence of the sacrifice she dared to make. Then quite suddenly desire sprouted in her mind and carried her away, far away from the Lord! She saw a golden deer and she coveted it! She who had renounced huge treasures of gold and diamonds was attracted by a fantasy and this led to the agonizing separation.

So, too, for those long attached to Me there arises some desire—for lands, jobs, family life, fame, position, possessions—and they move away! But Sita repented for her mistake, and her mind suffered extreme anguish at the separation. She called on her Lord to redeem her, calling out in contrition, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, with every breath. And, finally, Rama Himself moved toward her and restored Himself to the devotee! So, too, if you are agonizingly repentant and aware of the loss and anxious to re-join, craving for the presence, this Sairam, too, will move toward you and grant you grace.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 11

My Unsent Telegram

I am writing this from Brindavan. I came here from California about a month ago. In that time, I feel like I have died and been reborn!

To explain: Let me go back to about a year ago, when I was here last. At that time, when I took leave of Swami, He gave me permission to return to India for a prolonged stay, starting this October. "You come then," He said, "I will have some work for you to do." I began planning for a Sabbatical from my teaching duties at an institute in California.

But then during the Summer serious illness struck. The diagnosis was a probable cancer in the liver area. Tests indicated 'positive'. A biopsy and liver scan were recommended. But I had heard of a metabolic therapy called 'Gerson Therapy' that was effective against all types of cancer. So I went to Mexico and commenced this very intensive cancer regimen. For two months I battled the illness. All thoughts of the Sabbatical in India vanished as the available energy was directed toward staying alive.

Even though the body was very sick and oftentimes the mind got discouraged and was ready to give up, yet the inner man never doubted that Swami was with me, that He knew of this illness, and that, in time, He would pull me through.

After two months, the therapy took hold and I felt very much better. I knew then that I must go to India, if only for a short visit to thank Baba and re-dedicate my life

at His Lotus Feet. I couldn't stay in India for more than a few weeks, since the therapy needed to continue for several months more to make sure there could be no relapse.

I wrote to my aged parents (my father is 88 and my mother is 85) who live on the other side of the U. S. Continent, that I planned a short visit to India, to see Baba. They got terribly worried. "You are not well enough to undertake such a trip. They are having floods and epidemics there. There won't be any good food for you," they wrote back. "Why don't you telephone Him instead of going; it will be much better for your health and cheaper, too," they suggested.

I got their letter on 10th October, the day before Yom Kippur, the Jewish high holy day. They are devoted Jews. In honor of them and gratitude to Swami for my new feelings of well-being, I decided for the first time in many years to observe this Jewish holy day of Atonement, by fasting and immersing myself in prayer. This was the first interruption in two months of the therapy, which called for hourly feedings of specially prepared juices and medications. I asked my nurse-helpers to take the day off. I felt I had only one duty to perform that day, and that was to write to my parents and wish them the very best for the Jewish New Year and also to explain to them that it was not possible to telephone Baba, but to make them happy I would at least try to send Him a telegram and ask for His directions.

As I went to the institute office to mail the letter to my parents, I thought about what I might say in a telegram to Swami. While absorbed in these thoughts, I heard my name being called by the Secretary, who had seen me approaching the Office. "Al, there is a long-distance phone call for you from the International Telegraph Office in San Francisco."

I very rarely receive phone calls in the office since I am there so infrequently, and I have never received a telegram before. So I was startled, to say the least. The operator on the other end of the line relayed the telegram message to me, [saying] it is from Prasanthi Nilayam, India. It says, "Please come immediately."

I couldn't believe my ears. "My God! Is this real?"

Up to that moment, I was immersed in my life at the institute, teaching, keeping up with the rigorous demands of the therapy, and all the hundred daily involvements and chores that we have in our home setting. Now everything changed instantly. I was galvanized into action. I didn't know when I could actually leave, but I ran home and started packing. Some friends heard the news and came over to help. One called the airlines to find out what flights were scheduled that day. Another offered to drive me to the nearest airport at Monterey, 75 kilometers away. Another got together some food for the long journey ahead, since I was on a restricted organic diet. Another brought me 600 dollars in cash, with the statement, "You'll need money for the trip. You can pay me back when you return." Another, a Catholic sister studying there, gave me her treasured Cross to take along to ask Swami to bless it.

Still others came by just to give their well-wishes for a safe journey and asked to be remembered to Baba.

It was as if Swami's *shakti* [power] and *prema* [love] had suddenly crystallized in this remote place. Busy as I was with packing, I choked up at this unfolding scene of love. In no time, the packing was done, and all the other matters, related to my house and classes and the people helping me with the therapy, were taken care of.

Within less than two hours of receiving the telegram message, I was on my way, on a 13,000-mile journey to Swami. A new non-stop service from Los Angeles to London and London to Bombay that was leaving within an hour of the arrival of my connecting flight in Los Angeles would get me to Bombay in record time!

Coming to that first small airport at Monterey without reservations and learning that the various flights were all fully booked posed no real problem at all for me, since I knew that Divine energy was fueling my present journey. Somehow a seat always appeared. I made good my promise to myself that day to take no food or drink for 24 hours. Somewhere over the North Atlantic, I untied the food basket that my friend had fixed, and closing my eyes offered a shiny, juicy apple to the Lord. Then opening my eyes, I looked around the darkened aircraft. I remember the sense of awe I felt at finding myself in these surroundings as I broke the Yom Kippur fast. A sweet sleep followed, high up at 40,000 feet. Soon enough we were in London and 12 hours later at Bombay.

I had no visa; but the customs official decided that last year's visa would do. I didn't argue! Collecting my luggage, I ran for the Indian Airlines flight that was to take off for Bangalore in 30 minutes. Of course, it was full; but as with the other flights, space became available. Anyway, I landed at Bangalore. It happened that the Chief Minister of Karnataka was on the plane. A driver who was a Sai devotee had delivered someone to the Bangalore Airport. Hearing that his Chief Minister was aboard, and curious to see him, he hung around the airport until my flight landed. Coming out of the terminal, I connected with the driver just as he was about to drive off to the West End Hotel, where he was stationed. "Sai Ram. How about taking me to Prasanthi Nilayam?" I asked him.

"Yes," he said, "but Baba is supposed to be coming back to Bangalore tomorrow," he replied. Let us go, anyway," I told him. "O.K. We can stop at my place on the way and I'll tell my wife I won't be home this evening." "Good," I said. I felt at peace inside; the journey was coming to an end.

Three hours later, we were at the *darshan* line and my heart rejoiced as I again saw the Lord. He greeted me, with, "*Achha* [ok]! When did you arrive?" I knew I was home.

That is really the end of the story. Baba stayed for a week more in Puttaparthi and then came to Whitefield, Bangalore. At the time of this writing, the daily *darshan* has

been continuing for three weeks and a half, and my heart is filling up as I sit happily at His feet basking in His grace. Can you now see why I said I feel a little like I died and was reborn?



Swami has given me permission to teach at the College in Brindavan. It looks like the Sabbatical has started after all, although under totally unexpected

circumstances! Even if He tells me to leave tomorrow there is never really any return to the previous life.

Every time one comes anew to Baba, one's life starts anew. Clearly the illness was a purification that He sent. Baba told me during the interview that the body was now healed. "I am always with you. I never forget you for a moment. I am in your heart; and you are in mine," He said.

When our beloved Sai says that to us what else is there to do but to fall at the Feet in gratitude? What a wonderful good fortune we all enjoy to be alive in this time in the presence and knowledge of the Yuga Avatar, our dear Swami.

He says He never forgets us even for a moment, if only we would follow His lead and never forget Him even for a moment. Truly, what other *sadhana* (spiritual practice) is there for us, but to steadily and constantly love Him, love Him, love Him?

~Alvine Drucker

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Jan. 1979

The Garden of my Heart

I've laid out a garden in my heart
Removing all nettles, rocks and bushes
Such as anger, desire and pride upstart
To grow the rarest flowers fresh from blemishes.

I water the plants with my pellucid tears;

I tend the sacred plants with utmost care.
They produce blossoms that last for years
As they are of the heavenly beauty rare.

They are plucked for the special worship of Baba;
They are of various kinds and colors loved of Baba;
They are the white sweet-smelling '*ahimsa*',
The pale soft-perfumed '*Indriya-nigraha*'.

'*Sarva bhutha daya*' is another variety;
'*Kshama*' is the red and glorious variety.
'*Shanti*' is the flower, yellow in color;
'*Tapah*' is the flower, violet in color.

'*Dhyana*' is the flower, orange in hue;
'*Satyam*' is the flower, green in hue;
All these eight varieties never fade
As they are of immortality made!

K. Vaidyanathan

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Dec. 1959

Understanding the Sathya Sai Phenomenon

Dato Jagadeesan was the Director of Industrial Promotion for the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority in Kuala Lumpur. He authored the books, 'Journey to God: The Malaysian Experience with Sai Baba', 'Journey to God II: Sai Baba and the World,' 'Unity of Faiths and The Mission', and 'The Message: Some Often Asked Questions About Bhagavan Baba.' He has also served as President of Sathya Sai Central Council for Malaysia.

Jagadeesan, an agnostic until the age of 32, asked the question, 'Did God create man or man created God?' I thought I was an atheist at heart until Bhagavan Baba Himself called me an agnostic. As a graduate at 21, I travelled around the world several times in my official capacity in government service, successful, with wife, children, house, and a car—who needed God?

Baba came into my life at the age of 32, only to be faced with an anti-Sai tirade that I launched on all devotees who came within the radii of my relationship. It was on June 8, 1976 in Kuala Lumpur that Lord Sai appeared. I asked Him mentally, "If you are truly what you are, show me a sign!" The sudden materialization of the *vibhuti* [holy ash] on His picture, the stunning revelation, the realization that "Oh God! There is truly a power beyond science and this power can reach into my world even

in a physical form," that was the moment of my transformation, that began my journey to God.

Subsequently, my life changed and my travels around the world both on behalf of the government and on behalf of the Sai Education in Human Values [EHV] program have made me come in contact with a great number of beautiful people, Sai devotees, sometimes in very strange places. Though many devotees know of the Sai groups and centers in the USA, South America, Europe, Japan, Australia, and Fiji, very few maybe are aware that Sai devotional groups exist in East Berlin (even before the fall of the Berlin wall), Seoul in South Korea, and Beijing in China. The world that forever has been and will be the mansion of the cosmic divine principle is rapidly becoming the mansion for the "manifested Divine principle."

What about this omnipresent, Divinity principle? Well! Bhagavan is introducing His "calling cards" everywhere. In my travels around the world, I have seen for myself and shared miraculous experiences with others regarding His omnipresence. Manifestation of holy ash, *amrit* (divine nectar) from statues and photographs are happening not only in India, Malaysia, Fiji, the USA, Europe, and Africa, but most recently I was thrilled to see a photograph of *vibhuti* manifestations in the home of a Japanese devotee in Japan. The picture was covered with holy ash and there was a huge *vibhuti* 'OM' (in Sanskrit) and what appeared like gold flakes over His palm. We can but only stand in awe when we see the miracles that take place in homes of devotees thousands of miles away, in different continents, within different cultural heritages, with only but one universal bond, the bond of love. This perhaps is the greatest divinity principle that Baba displays.

But other than the manifestations of ash and *amrit*, what about the water that flowed for two days from the knees of a figure of Christ on a cross in the home of a Sai devotee in Fiji, what about the strange Indian man in orange robe and afro hair-do who got into a cab of a Chinese taxi driver in Malaysia, who only a week later realized it was Baba; what about the shower of bangles, the materialization of dates,



pendants, small statues and the like that appear on altars of devotees in Malaysia and around the world; what about the lady in an African village who was comforted by a strange, bearded man, only to recognize Him a week later as Shirdi Sai Baba (as

was the case of one of the first Chinese devotees in Malaysia); what about the miraculous cures that occur not even by consuming *vibhuti* but by just calling out Baba's name from the depth of one's heart as was the case of an African lady in Zimbabwe who went to hospital to undergo heart surgery, who on the way called to Baba to manifest His love and was sent back home the same day by the hospital saying "there appears to be nothing wrong now." Greater than all these physical manifestations, the cures, the physical manifestations of Sai Himself, greater than all these miracles is the miracle of the transformation of man.

Agnostics, drunkards, drug addicts, gamblers, businessman, and politicians, who had made money and power their God have now turned to the God of spirituality and have started the process of transformation, of self-improvement, to make themselves useful to themselves, their families, and society. One cannot guess the number of tearful wives and mothers raising their hands in thankful prayer to Bhagavan Baba for the transformation that He has wrought in their husbands or children.

But over and above all the manifestations and miracles, over and above all this transformation of man, is there any other proof of the Divinity principle that Bhagavan Baba manifests?

Where is God? What is God? For every individual, according to his religion and cultural background, the word God creates conditioned reflexes, reciprocating ingrained mental images. For a Hindu, the word God conjures in the mind's eye the beautiful form of Krishna or Rama, the powerful face of Shiva, or the gentle aspect of the 'divine mother.' For the Christian, God would conjure the picture of Christ, the Good Shepherd, or Christ on the cross; for the Buddhist, though "God" may not be in the context of their worship, the closest image would be the meditating Buddha; for Muslims it would be the formless Allah.... and so it goes on. Though no spiritual or religious text in the world describes God by His physical features, all do describe the characteristics of God, i.e. He is Omnipresent, Omniscient, He can create, preserve, dissolve, He can grant boons, He can cure and save, He is love, glory, and beauty; this all religions will agree.

There is yet another way that the divinity principle can be examined. If tomorrow the sky was to open up and from the heavens above a divine voice thundered to mankind, what would the voice say? Surely words to the following effect:

- 1) Belief in God: Truly believe that He exists and is able to listen and respond if the call is from the genuine love of devotees.
- 2) Follow your religion but do not be a hypocrite: study and understand the teachings of your religion and put these into practice in daily life, not merely the rituals and prayers. Every thought, word, and deed in daily life is the true manifestation of your religion.

3) Respect all religions: All religions have been motivated by the one divine principle.

No religion urges negative behavior in life; all religions exhort man to see well, speak good; think, act, and hear good. All religions try to move man from the state of animal behavior, through human to Divine.

4) Perform selfless service to the sick, the poor, and needy. As you would visit your own sick blood brother in the hospital to give him comfort, spend some time serving your other brothers as all are children of God. This service should not seek fruits, recognition, name or even gratitude; instead serve and thank God that He gives you the opportunity of strength, love, and grace to serve.

5) Uphold in life and thus promote the five great human values of truth, right conduct, peace, love, and non-violence. From these five values all other values emanate, and they enrich every part of the human personality, ultimately transforming all those who pursue this path into divine incarnations.

The above summarizes also the principal pillars of Bhagavan Baba's teachings, the voice of the invincible God, manifesting through the love of Sai. Bhagavan Baba started His great program of *Dharmasthapana* [the establishment of righteousness] at the age of 14 with *bhajans* [sacred hymns] and the chanting of God's name as a foundation. As His mission grew He introduced *seva* [community service] and study circles for adults. Subsequently, to foster children He introduced the *Bal Vikas* (called Sai Spiritual Education in the West) program for children of Sai devotees. Once that had taken root, He urged the transplanting of these divine ideals from the nursery of Sai centers into the field of society and thus started the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program. Finally, on His 60th Birthday, Baba unveiled 10 principles that he enjoined all to uphold and with this He called for "Integration of the World Community," through respect for laws, cultural practices, and unity of religions, urging all to practice their respective religions and to build bridges of love between religions.

Thus has been the Sai phenomenon. The world is indeed His mansion, every country a room, every yearning heart a light, as the world watches in awe, respect, and reverence. He is moving at His own pace, according to His own plan. We can only pray that all of us are given a role in this divine drama.

Source: *Sai Vandana* 1990 (65th Birthday Offering)

Visit *Sai Sarathi* on the web at SaiSarathi.com

Sai Sarathi welcomes submissions of articles, transcriptions of talks, and student stories about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, His teachings, and personal experiences at His lotus feet. We also welcome SSE projects and announcements for regional events. To submit text or photos, please email them to "editor@SaiSarathi.com."

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

Baba Explains the *Indriyas*

Bhakta: *Namaste* [greetings], Swami.

Swami: *Shubhamastu* [let there be auspiciousness].

Bhakta: With Your grace, everything is *shubham* [auspicious]; without it, everything is *ashubham* [inauspicious].

Swami: Good, but have you realized how both these are based on grace? In one, both subsist; both are conferred by the self-same grace. Well, let that topic stand by. Last time you got a folk poem to digest and it must have affected your thoughts deeply. Now, in what stage of equanimity is your brain?

Bhakta: Ah! Everything appears like a puppet show now, Swami. But only off and on. The mind forgets and gets caught by the fascination of the objects. What mystery is this, Swami?

Swami: Well, the mind is associated with all kinds of activities or *vrittis*. It always follows the trail of the *vasanas*, or trails of impulses and instincts. This is its very nature.

Bhakta: That is as much as to say we cannot set it right. Then what is the hope? Ultimately, Swami, do we have to get immersed in *vasanas* and become degraded?

Swami: There is hope, my boy! No need to get immersed and lost. Though it is its nature, it can be changed. Charcoal by its nature blackens all that it gets mixed with. But you should not take that as final. When fire enters it, the charcoal becomes red. So, too, though the mind is always wandering in the illusion of darkness, when through the Lord's grace the fire of *jnana* [knowledge] enters it, its nature changes to the *satwic* [pure] nature pertaining to the divine comes into it.

Bhakta: Swami, they speak of something called *antah-karana*; what is it?

Swami: The mind is referred to it like that. *Karana* means *indriya*. *Antah-karana* means internal *indriyas*.

Bhakta: So, are there two types of *indriyas*: internal *indriyas* and external *indriyas*?

Swami: Yes, of course. The external *indriyas* are called *karmendriyas*; the internal *indriyas* are named *jnanendriyas*.

Bhakta: Swami, please tell me which are the *karmendriyas* and which the *jnanendriyas*.

Swami: Well, all bodily acts are done by *karmendriyas*; they are five in number. Those that impart *jnana* from inside are named *jnanendriyas*. These are: hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell. Both these together are called *dasendriyas* (the ten organs.)

Bhakta: So, what is the work that both these do together? What is the connection between their function and the *manas* or mind?

Swami: Well, really, whatever work they do, they can't achieve anything without the mediation of *manas*. The *karmendriyas* perform acts in the world and receive knowledge, and the *jnanendriyas* discriminate between the good and the bad and offer them to the *atma* through the *manas*. If there is no mind at all, how can these transmit? When we have to reach the other shore of a flooded river, we rely on the medium of a boat or a raft. When the *karmendriyas* and the *jnanendriyas* that are connected with *prakriti* [nature] desire to attain the *atma*, they have to accept the help of the boat—*manas*. Otherwise, they cannot attain.

Bhakta: If so, where do these other things you spoke about, *buddhi* [intelligence], *chittam* [will], and *ahamkaram* [ego] reside?

Swami: They, too, are in this only. The *jnanendriyas* and *karmendriyas* are together called *dasendriyas* [ten senses]. These four are distinguished and referred to as *antah chatushtaya* or the internal four *indriyas*. These four are *manas*, *buddhi*, *chittam*, and *ahamkaram*.

Bhakta: Very nice. That is to say, all are in the same thing. Life is indeed funny. But Swami, what is the function of these four?

Swami: *Manas* grasps the object; *buddhi* examines arguments for and against; *chittam* understands the object; *ahamkaram* changes the decision for or against and by attachment slackens the hold of *jnana*. These are the things they do.

Bhakta: Excuse me, Swami, I am asking only to know; where do these exist in the body?

Swami: I am glad; don't worry. *Manas* is in the *cupola* [head], *buddhi* in the tongue, *chittam* in the navel, and *ahamkaram* in the heart.

Bhakta: Excellent. So, *buddhi* and *ahamkaram* are in the most important places! These are the chief causes of all the world's miseries. Then, if we examine it with reference to Your words, it looks as if there will be no misery when these two places are made pure!

Swami: You have indeed listened to me attentively. Yes, that is right. First, if words are used in a clean and pure manner, that is proof of *buddhi* treading the right path. When *ahamkaram* is suppressed and conquered, that is proof of the heart being pure. Therefore, be very careful with regard to these two. Then, even your *manas* and *chittam* will come to have good *vrittis*. Then only will you be free from pain and misery.

Bhakta: So, among all these, who is the 'I'? Who is the experiencer of all this?

Swami: We have arrived at the right point. 'You' are none among all these! All these exist only so long as the feeling—'this body is mine'—exists. They are all associated with some activities or *vrittis*. The *atma* that observes all these *vrittis*, that is 'you'. The joy and sorrow, the loss and misery, the good and bad of these activities are all related to the body only, and so they are not yours; they will not be yours. You are the *atma*. Until this truth is realized, you sleep the sleep of 'I' and 'mine'. In that sleep, dreams appear of loss, misery, sorrow, and joy. The dreams persist only until you are awake, and after you wake up the fear you had while dreaming the sorrow you experienced all disappear and are no longer true. Similarly, when delusion is thrown off and you 'awaken' in *jnana*, you will understand that all this is not 'you'; that you are the *atma*.

Bhakta: Then Swami, for whose sake do these—the *manas*, *buddhi*, *chittam*, and *ahamkaram*—do all this work?

Swami: For no one's sake! They are engaged in their own work! The *atma* observes everything, and its shadow the *jiva* that is deluded by the association of the body-consciousness plays this drama through all these acts.

Source: *Sandeha Nivarini*

Thought of the MONTH

Sankalpa

The mind wills, yearns, prompts and insists on effort and action. This process is named *sankalpa*. These are like *shasanas* (commands). Everyone has to be aware of the variety and validity of the actions induced by these promptings. The mind is host to fifty million such! Of the thoughts that appear and vanish, the clouds that pass silently, many stay and stir the mind into activity. These are referred to as *sankalpas*. Until these are well understood against their vast background, man cannot live happily and in peace. Good *sankalpas* can elicit the best out of man and help him to use all strength for his uplift. Man has to recognize bad *sankalpas* or urges as soon as

they arise and render them ineffective by the systematic cultivation of beneficial *sankalpas*. These alone can save a person from disaster and keep him close to *prashanthi* (supreme calm).

The face is molded by the mind. Every single *sankalpa* (or thought accepted and acted upon) is a streak or line which affects its shape. We can picture it as the notice board, which announces to all concerned, the activities inside the institute. The *sankalpa* cannot be hidden or kept under cover...

A *sankalpa* affects the consciousness more subtly than an electric charge. It manifests as a need, a motive with a name and form. It colors the thought stream in a distinct way. It is no scribble on a blank mind; it causes clusters of reaction in the blankless mind. Its potency depends on time and circumstance. *Sankalpas* breed further *sankalpas*; they play their role, unaided through their own latent force.

Therefore, as soon as a passing thought sprouts in the mind as an urge or desire, one has to examine it with care to discover whether it would tarnish or promote one's reputation, hinder or help one's progress, weaken or strengthen one's character. If it is of the former category, cast it away, as a foul stinking object! And save yourself by saturating the mind with good intentions.

The mind travels quicker than sound, far quicker than even light. Just as one holds under greatest control a car that moves at a speed faster than the rest, one has to exercise great control and mastery over the mind. Obey the mind's vagaries; you become a beast. Let discrimination control the vagaries; you become a candidate for Divinity. Every urge must undergo test, must be cleared by a judge, namely Buddhi. Does it prompt one to ridicule or defame another? Then, dismiss it as unworthy. Good intention sprouts as action; action fructifies into *sadhana* (spiritual discipline), from *sadhana* emerges *sheela* (virtuous character) that draws down the shower of Grace. Intentions can all be beneficial when the person persists in good company. Of course, one cannot gain them from without; they have to grow from within, from the heart, freed from the weeds of pride and greed. Good company helps to purify the heart.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. XIX

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