



## Experiencing the Omnipresence

*In His discourse to the students, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that among the gifts of God, time is the most important gift. The secret of human existence is to make the best use of time to realize one's divine destiny.*

**T**he spring that has gone will come again. The waning moon will wax again. But one's youth and the flowing water in a river will not come back. It is essential for students in the precious period of their youth to cultivate pure thoughts and good habits. Among the gifts of God, time is the most important. Only when time is properly utilized in sacred acts will the body and the deeds get sanctified.

At present, half a lifetime of man is spent in eating and sleeping. Much of the remainder is wasted in useless talk and pranks or in back-biting and slanderous



gossip. Little time is devoted to thinking about how he can improve himself or serve others. No attempt is made to understand the purpose of life, despite the preciousness and sacredness of human birth. Man has to discover, as enjoined in the *Bhagavatam*, how he can get back to the source from which he came. This is the natural destiny of all beings. The secret of human existence is to know how to make the best use of time to realize one's divine destiny.

Modern man has no idea of sense-control. He has no conception of self-restraint. He leads the life of a libertine. This kind of licentious living can only result in degradation and ruin.

The aim of sense-control is to achieve one-pointed concentration. It helps also to steady the mind. Without mental steadiness man gets dehumanized.

Three things are essential for everyone: recognition of the goal, understanding the truth (about human life), and realizing the eternal. Today, students should realize the importance of the goal they have to aim at. Ignoring the goal, students are leading aimless lives without achieving peace or joy. In spite of being near to the Divine, they are forgetting the Divine and taking to wrong paths. However, many years they may have studied here, there is no change in their thoughts and behavior.

### **The Lord and *maya* are twins**

This is because they have not really understood spirituality though they profess to know all about it. It is because they are completely wrapped up in the body-consciousness, they cannot grasp the nature of divinity. The body consciousness is the product of *maya* (illusion) or ignorance. It is not easy to get rid of this *maya*.

There is a story to illustrate the hold of *maya*. Once Bhagavan summoned *maya* and told her: "*Maya!* I am acquiring a great deal of bad name on account of you. Every man blames God as *mayopadhi* (wearing the disguise of *maya*). I am getting into disrepute because you are always following me. Hence do not any longer remain with me. Get away from me." In all humility, *maya* bowed to the Lord and said, "Oh Lord! I shall certainly carry out Your command. But please tell me any place where You are not present, and I shall go there." The Lord had a hearty laugh and said, "There is no place where I am not present. You and I are twins. I put you this poser only to get your reply."

Every individual today declares that God is omnipresent. But no one conducts himself as having realized the truth of this omnipresence. It is not clear whether they are using this word with any understanding of its meaning or experience of its truth or out of ignorance. Every student similarly speaks breezily about Swami's omnipresence and omniscience. It may be based on book-knowledge.

### **Omnipresence and self-control**

God's omnipresence is certainly true. But one gets the right to speak about it only when he has experienced it at least to a small extent. Even if a few drops of nectar are swallowed, a modicum of purity may be achieved. Of what use are pots full of nectar that remain untouched? Hence, one should strive in however small a measure to experience the omnipresence of God. Merely talking about it would amount to practicing a deception on God. It is a grievous sin.

Some high-souled beings have striven to experience the omnipresence of the Divine. But the prevailing educational system cannot enable any student to get this experience. This is because they have lost the capacity to control the senses, which is the prerequisite for experiencing the Divine. The first step is control of desires. There must be unity in word and deed. You have also to enquire by what means you can experience the omnipresence of the Divine.

Take the example of a tree. One fruit cannot nourish another. All fruits are nourished by the tree. The tree is sustained by its roots. It is only when you look

after the roots, you will have the tree and its fruits. When you nourish the roots by supplying manure and water, the tree comes up well. Likewise, it is only when you realize that the entire cosmos is sustained by the Divine that you can experience the omnipresence of the Divine.

### **The three spiritual giants**

In the Andhra country, there were three "Rajus"—Potharaju, Thyagaraju, and Goparaju. All the three were spiritual giants. Potharaju is Pothana, the great author of the Telugu *Bhagavatam*. Seeing the extreme poverty of Pothana, his brother-in-law, Srinadha, appealed to him to dedicate his *Bhagavatam* to some ruler who will reward him with material riches. Srinadha said that by dedicating his work to Sri Rama, Pothana was getting no visible benefit and was steeped in poverty. Pothana felt that rather than seek material rewards from petty earthly rulers, it was far better to dedicate his work to God even if it meant living a life of penury. He declared that he would not choose to live on the largesse of proud and unrighteous rulers. He preferred to lead a godly life as a farmer living on the fruits of his toil.

Because Pothana chose to dedicate his work to the Lord, his *Bhagavatam* has earned undying fame. From the moment he started composing the *Bhagavatam*, Pothana recognized that it was entirely the work of Sri Rama and should be dedicated to Him as a pious offering. He regarded Rama as the inspirer, the writer, and enjoyer of the poem. Pothana told Srinadha that God was the Lord of everything in creation—the creator, the protector, and destroyer. "Instead of offering the work to the Supreme Lord, it is not fitting to dedicate it to worldly men clothed in pomp and pride," he said.

Coming to Thyagaraja: Seeing the plight of the saint-composer, the Raja of Tanjore sent him many valuables in a palanquin. Looking at these presents, Thyagaraja smiled and prayed to his mind to declare truly whether these treasures would bring him real happiness or the constant vision of Sri Rama. He felt that proximity to Rama was his greatest wealth and turned back the presents sent by the Raja. Thyagaraja lived up to his name by renouncing all worldly things. He declared that God alone was all that he needed, and he sought nothing from anybody.

### **God is the supreme protector of all**

The third devotee is Goparaju, who worshipped Sri Rama installed in the Bhadrachalam temple. He offered all his earnings and possessions to Sri Rama. He devoted even the dues collected by him as a revenue official to constructing the temple for Rama and making ornaments for the deities in the temple. When the Thanisha harassed him, he declared that he had offered everything to Rama and nourished no desires of his own. "I have surrendered to Rama totally," he declared.

These three saints had recognized the omnipresence of God. They firmly believed that God is the supreme protector of all. They are verily *Bhagavatas*—devotees of God. Many who claim to be devotees today are not real devotees at all. The so-called devotees are only seeking external security—security from the authorities, from

marauders, and similar external dangers. These are mercenary devotees and not genuine devotees.

The *Bhagavatas* of the old days lived a carefree life, placing their full trust in God as the supreme protector. Because of this faith, they were fully competent to declare that God is omnipresent. Those who use that epithet today are simply mouthing what seems expedient for the occasion. You can find God everywhere today, but you can find few true devotees of God. Today's devotees are not devotees who have totally surrendered to God.

### **A sinner's corpse**

Once a traveler going on his journey approached an *ashram* near which there was a cemetery. He sought shelter in the *ashram* from the heat of the day. The *guru* of the *ashram* was giving a talk to his disciples. The traveler welcomed the opportunity to listen to a sacred discourse. At sunset the *guru* and the disciples came out of the *ashram*. They saw a strange spectacle, and the disciples asked the *guru* what was happening. The *guru* smilingly said that what they were seeing was a corpse that the jackals and dogs were trying to carry off. They had dug up the body that was buried in the morning and were trying to make a meal of it.

Just then a big jackal came there and conveyed some message to the other jackals. Immediately all the jackals abandoned the body and retired into the jungle.

The disciples asked the *guru* why the jackals abandoned the body that had come their way. The *guru* meditated for a time and then explained to the disciples the reason for the strange phenomenon. The *guru* said, "The life-story of this corpse is a remarkable one. This man during his entire lifetime had not listened to the words of elders or the name of God. Even if he heard something, he never cared to follow them. He never did any good deed in his life. His eyes never turned toward anything holy. His hands were never used for anything sacred. He was greedy after other people's wealth, but never once fed a hungry man in his life. His feet never went to a temple or any holy shrine. The elder jackal that came to the cemetery told the other animals that the dead body of such a person was unfit for consumption even by animals. The sins of the dead man would infect them also if they touched the body of such a sinner. The jackals abandoned the body on getting this warning."

The moral of this story is that we should not think that it does not matter what happens to the body after death. Even the body should be sanctified and for that purpose good deeds should be done during one's lifetime. Every limb of the body should be devoted to sacred purposes. A body that has not been sanctified in this way will be despised even by jackals. Remember the preciousness of the human body that has been given to you. Use it for rendering service to others. See that every organ in the body is utilized for doing sacred acts.

There is an appropriate time for doing anything. Krishna chose *Kurukshetra* battlefield for imparting the message of the *Gita* [The Lord's Song] to Arjuna, though

they had been moving together closely for many decades. Remember that Swami knows all that is happening though He may appear as if he knew nothing. Recognize the difference between the Divine and the human. Divinity, although all-knowing and all-powerful, acts as if it does not know anything. The human being, though he is totally ignorant and incompetent, pretends to be all-knowing and all-powerful.

Students should realize that Swami knows all about their misbehavior. Because individual warnings in the past have had no effect, Swami has chosen to reprove them in public. Most of the students are well-behaved. It is the few undisciplined, spoilt ones who are setting a bad example to the rest. If they do not reform themselves, they have no place in this Institute. We are not concerned about numbers. We are content even if we have a few good students.

### **Aim of Sai Institute**

This Institute has been established for rejuvenating the nation and promoting the *dharmic* [righteous] way of life in the country through a generation of righteously educated students. It has no commercial aims. You must see that the good name of the Institute is preserved. Each one should examine himself. The senior students should be exemplary in their behavior. If all of you behaved well, what a change would there be in the world!

I am devoting 75 percent of my time to the students and giving only 25 percent to the devotees from all parts of the world. Realize how much love I am lavishing on you. If you waste this sacred opportunity, you will not get it again. Conduct yourselves as the children of one mother. The elder students should be an inspiration to the younger ones. Be more concerned about acquiring good character than getting degrees. When parents and teachers are indifferent to their responsibilities, Swami cannot evade His obligation to highlight your lapses and to correct you. The good students will be helped in every way. But the bad ones will be given no quarter. Always bear in mind that the Sathya Sai Institute is a sacred institution. It has been set up for promoting the welfare of the world. Only good students can serve to improve the nation. We will be content even if we have a handful of them.

**Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 22***

*No one who is filled with pride and conceit is fit to wield power. It is only the person who is imbued with humility and appears to be not very knowledgeable that is fittest to wield authority. Hanuman is an example of such a person. Although he was endowed with enormous prowess, he appeared as a simple person. This humility enabled him to leap over the ocean. Socrates, who was hailed as the wisest man among the Greeks, always professed that he knew nothing.*

**—Baba**

## Forty Years to Find God

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Sometimes disaster proves to be a steppingstone in life, and so it proved with me when I broke my neck in the summer of 1949. Throughout the 1950s, I suffered periodic spells of intense pain due to a slipped disc in my neck resulting from the original injury. Medical treatment was of no avail, but in 1958 a friend told me to go and see a famous spiritual healer called Ted Fricker. I went there in great pain, hardly able to move my head, but a few minutes later I was able to turn my head virtually back to front, and for good measure I bent forward to touch my toes.

On any basis it was a miracle and showed me that there was more in the world than I realized. More important, Ted Fricker asked me if I realized that I had the same healing gift and told me to get started! A month later, a clairvoyant whom I met at a party told me exactly the same thing, so I started my healing work, with very interesting results. I joined the National Federation of Spiritual Healers who published a monthly magazine. But as the years went by, I seldom opened it, realizing that there was nothing to learn except that I was a channel and God was the healer.

Years later in November 1979 the magazine dropped through my letter box and I opened it at random. My eyes were immediately drawn to some indented words in the middle of the page:

There is only one God, He is omnipresent  
There is only one religion, the religion of love  
There is only one caste, the caste of humanity  
There is only one language, the language of the heart

The article was entitled *Love Walking on Two Feet* and was about our beloved Bhagavan Baba. I knew at that precise moment that I had found God, even before I read the article. And I had been searching for God since 1940.

After my awakening in November 1979, I quickly read all the books I could find about Bhagavan Baba and His teachings. I found immediate confirmation of so much that I had worked out the hard way during the previous 40 years, and of course much more. The truth was at last revealed. What a revelation I read in one book that Bhagavan had said, "I am like a radio set, anyone can call me up." This fascinated me as I had been a radio ham since 1938, and the idea of communication always

interested me. So, I called up Bhagavan during my meditation and was not unduly surprised when I seemed to receive a reply instantly. I assumed everyone else, all His devotees, were doing the same thing.

Early communication was short and simple. However, this early experience of the omnipresence of God gave me the urge to dash out to India to find this extraordinary holy man, apparently God incarnate. But when I meditated on it, I received such a clear response... "Not now, later." That was early in 1980, and during the summer of that year when I was on holiday in Greece I received another message that said... "I will speak to you in Bombay." The date was 13th August.

It was not until January 1981 that I made my first pilgrimage to find Bhagavan, although by this time I was in daily contact with Him in meditation and through the messages. We spent two and a half weeks in Bangalore as Bhagavan was at Brindavan, and we attended *darshan* [sight of a holy man] there twice a day. I was longing for an interview, but although Bhagavan looked at me and right through me on several occasions, there was no interview. Then Bhagavan left for Madras and was due to go on to Bombay. In a message, He told me to go and wait for Him in Bombay and that is what we did. Then He arrived and I had the most wonderful *darshans* at Dharmakshetra, His abode in Bombay. Again, Bhagavan looked at me and right through me.

However, on the last morning, just before He left Bombay, He called our little group of four people for an interview. Once inside the interview room, time became timeless, and it seemed as though Bhagavan enjoyed playing with us, His children, and would give us anything we wanted. The whole atmosphere was utterly divine. We returned to London but knew that we would be back in India before the end of the year. So in October 1981 we arrived at Puttaparthi just in time for the *Dasara* festival.

What an incredible experience it was. Once again Bhagavan looked at me, sometimes looking right into me or right through me, and at other times giving me that divine smile that melts the heart. Then one day, without warning, I discovered that I was in the "repair shop"! Bhagavan totally ignored me and did it in such a way that there could not be any doubt about what was happening. One day when I was in the front row, Bhagavan came out of the *Mandir* [Temple] and walked very slowly straight toward me. He seemed to be looking straight at me and I thought I was in for some wonderful experience. That indeed I was! He stopped right in front of me and then called in for interview everyone around me. But I was ignored and found myself sitting in a sort of void. What a message!

When I got back to the room, somewhat shattered to say the least, I sat down and decided to meditate and try to find out what was wrong. In an instant, I got the answer, just one word: "*Surrender*." However, I had no idea how to surrender or even what it really meant. Years later, I came across some words of Bhagavan that

seemed very relevant... "How can you surrender when you do not know what you are surrendering?"

Yes, that is so true and even today I am still struggling to surrender. Fortunately, I have received some lovely messages from Bhagavan that throw light on the meaning of surrender, but in the end we have to make our own effort and find our own way.

Early this morning, before I had given any thought to writing this article, I asked Bhagavan to give me a message for the day. This was the message: Sacrifice and Surrender. What is the meaning of sacrifice? Sacrifice is a



steppingstone toward a better future, an essential step on the spiritual path. What is the most important sacrifice in life? It is to give up desire, and in particular desires for your own personal pleasure, comfort, satisfaction, and gain. Desire is the biggest challenge that man can experience. Inevitably all desires are related to selfishness and act as a brake on spiritual progress. How can a man progress spiritually if he spends his whole life thinking about himself, his body, and its many desires? Desires of the senses can become unlimited unless strictly controlled. And yet these same senses are there for a purpose, and if used correctly fulfil that purpose. Everything depends on balance, and that is in your own hands.

When you surrender to God, you do everything for Him. At that point, a perfect balance is established, and your own life is transformed. It is like stepping out of the darkness into the sunshine where you can see everything as it really is, the real and the unreal, the permanent and the transient. Everything is revealed in its true state and the divine hand can be seen everywhere. Sacrifice is indeed a steppingstone to enlightenment and to the realization of your own divinity.

Every visit to India is a new experience, and a new learning opportunity. Will I ever learn? Will I ever put all the divine teachings into practice in my daily life? These are questions that I ask myself as each year passes. Am I making the most of this unique opportunity when I am here on earth at the same time as our Lord, and with the chance to be so close to Him on all my visits to India? I think everyone should ponder this question for they are not here at this time by accident.



I have been doubly blessed as the recipient of so many divine messages, direct from Bhagavan. And it was some years before I had the courage to ask Him whether they were genuine and directly from Him. I will always remember His simple reply, "Yes, yes, where do you think they come from, the sky?" He then told me to put the messages together and publish them in a book so that everyone could share the teachings. Today there are two books, *Sai Messages for You & Me* and the third book should be ready for the 65th Birthday. The first book has already been translated and published in seven foreign languages so that Bhagavan's teachings have reached many different parts of the world in this way.

If I have learnt one thing about Bhagavan, it is that God is inscrutable! He Himself tells us so. And when we look out into the universe at the Milky Way and beyond, it is not difficult to understand why we are puzzled. Light from the nearest star takes four years to reach us, travelling at 186,000 miles a second. The universe is so vast that no human mind can begin to understand how it all began. And yet our beloved Bhagavan holds the whole world and indeed the entire universe in His Divine hand.

Sometimes I wonder how we can reconcile Bhagavan Baba, the Ultimate God, with the divine playful Baba that we meet in the interview room. At that time He is our Mother and we witness such love and sweetness. I have come to the conclusion long ago that we will never understand Him. He is indeed inscrutable. But we can experience Him, and equally important study His teachings and put those teachings into practice in our daily lives. We learn to see God in everyone, and eventually we treat them as though they are God. In this way, we also transform our own lives and become aware of the presence of God everywhere.

Bhagavan also teaches us to live in the present, often by creating so much uncertainty. For Him, time is timeless; past, present, and future are all one. For us, we try to understand that the moment is now. Every moment is now, and we must live in that moment and take action now. Only when we do this and concentrate our minds on the divine teachings can we hope to progress along the spiritual path and return to our source, God Himself.

What source of energy can we use for such an incredible journey? Love and love alone can propel us forward. Love is the divine energy that created the world, the whole universe, and everything within it. Love is that unlimited source of energy that is there for everyone, there for the world. Love can move mountains, cure the sick, purify the mind.

God is love. It is God's gift to the world and in truth He has given Himself to the world, for there is nothing in the world other than God.

**Source:** *Sai Vandana 1990* (65<sup>th</sup> Birthday Offering)

## **Thanks to Lord Sai, Hope Eternal Springs in Our Hearts**

To Thee, dear Lord of all creation, I surrender all my fears and hopes,  
In my struggle for sanity in times of tragic tales and torrential tears,  
I see Thy smiling face sending forth love, eternal divine love to all,  
Like a beacon streaming light to forlorn sailors tossed in a stormy sea,  
Thou art everywhere, brighter than million suns, showing the path.  
A path to tread, lighted with hope born of faith, a lantern to guide us,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

To Thee, dear Lord of the vast cosmos, I pray for Thy divine rules,  
What cannot be changed, what destiny decrees, graciously accept it,  
With flapping wings and flailing arms, our fierce fight ends in naught,  
As you dive deep within, thoughts miraculously stilled, silence sweeps,  
In that stillness, in that vast expansiveness, listen to the voice of Sai,  
That voice whispers words of courage, words of wisdom and hope,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

To Thee, dear Lord of effulgence, I oft seek Thy refuge and succor,  
With my seeking, an energy so soothing envelops me with hope,  
I see Thy divine hand at work, I open my eyes to enjoy Thy breath,  
I strain my hearing to listen to Thy invisible footsteps everywhere,  
I open my heart, wide to welcome Thy Love that flows so fast,  
I feel so content and peaceful with all dark thoughts chased off,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

To Thee, dear Lord beyond names and forms, I turn to thee often,  
With Thy walking beside me to hold me in Thy embrace, I rejoice  
Now I see all the beauty around me, spring is here with its bloom,  
Cherry blossoms a pretty pink canopy in my yard, a beauty to behold,  
Daffodils dancing in the breeze, peonies with the dormant buds  
Hint of a glory yet to be seen, maple bush spreading its red mantle,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

To Thee, dear Lord of infinite compassion, I see Thy golden touch  
In every bit of nature's glory, a glory that drives these fears away,  
The sun in the horizon awakening to the birds' symphony, so melodious,  
Red Robin sat motionless beneath the branches, as if in sync with us all,  
Sensing our sadness for awhile but its innate joy made it hop and sing,  
Regaining its motion, it hopped from bough to bough, twittering loud,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

To Thee, dear Lord of our strength and hope, Thou art our sole refuge,  
Though seemingly vanquished by this invisible foe, we shall arise soon,  
A nightmare dream that engulfs us now shall soon fade into shadow,

A terrible ordeal that binds humanity in a happy unison, strong in love,  
Divisions losing its grip, families united in strength, money with no hold,  
That is the glorious picture I envisage, with Thee by our side for survival,  
Thanks to Thee, Dear Lord Sai, Hope eternal springs in our hearts.

~ Kanaga Ranganathan, April 4, 2020

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# Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

## Prakriti & Paramatma

Swami: Oh! How is this? You have come so early this time?

*Bhakta:* You made me come, and so I have come. Is there anything I can call mine?

Swami: That is true; but will even a scrap of paper move without some cause? So, too, for you to come so early, there must be some reason.

*Bhakta:* Nothing else, Swami! Hearing that You are going to Trivandrum on the 16th itself at the invitation of Sri Ramakrishna Rao, the Governor of Kerala, I felt that I may not get a chance to speak to you if I came on that day itself. So I came earlier, excuse me!

Swami: That is well done! But why do you ask that I should pardon you? Really speaking, one should not ask for pardon even when one commits wrong. Then what is the fun of asking for it, when you have done the right thing?

*Bhakta:* Why, Swami? Why should we not ask for pardon when we commit a wrong?

Swami: No, you must not ask either for pardon when wrong is done, or for reward when right is done! Doing right is but man's duty; it is its own reward. What other reward can there be? The joy of having done one's duty is your reward! Doing wrong is against the duty of man. So one should pray repentantly for the intelligence and discrimination necessary for not repeating the wrong already committed. Beyond this, it depends on His grace whether He punishes and protects or pardons and corrects.

*Bhakta*: That is very fine. Henceforward, I shall do so, Swami

Swami: Let that be. Are you treasuring the gems given on the Birthday and making good use of them?

*Bhakta*: As far as possible! With my maximum effort, using the quality of *buddhi* [intelligence] granted by You, I am putting them into action.

Swami: What do you mean by 'as far as possible'? For *bhaktas* [devotees] like you, what other task is greater than this? Why is it not possible? You only need faith and the will. Then it should not be difficult at all to carry out the duty.

*Bhakta*: Swami, You have Yourself said that even when there is faith and even when one has the will, putting things into practice may be difficult for want of favorable circumstances and also because the meaning of things may not be grasped clearly.

Swami: Oh! That means that both these, want of favorable circumstances and want of understanding, are bothering you! Well, if you have not understood, ask; and if you have no favorable atmosphere, tell me what is the obstacle?

*Bhakta*: Doubt is the biggest obstacle; what can be bigger than that? Even after hearing so much, the demon catches hold of me off and on. I do not know why.

Swami: The first reason for that: you do not have faith in yourself born out of the conviction that you are really *atmaswarupa*. The second reason: taking the Divinity in humanity as humanity only and getting lost in the pursuit of sense enjoyment. These demons pounce on you for just these two reasons only. Instead, if you establish yourself in God, understanding the Divinity in man as Divinity itself, this demon of doubt will not attack you. You simply must give up this *adhyasa* that makes you mix things up.

*Bhakta*: There! You use now and then un-understandable words! That makes me even more confused, Swami!

Swami: I will never tell you un-understandable words. You have no power to understand, so you feel worried. I use them, really, in order to make you understand their meaning! Now, in what I told you which is the difficult word?

*Bhakta*: You used the word, *adhyasa*. What does it mean, Swami?

Swami: What? You do not know the meaning of that! "Seeing one form and taking it to be another, superimposing one thing upon another."

*Bhakta*: How is that? On which object do we superimpose another? Tell me.

Swami: Well, seeing a rope and imagining it to be a snake; seeing waves of hot air in the sun and imagining them to be horses; seeing a mirror shining in the sun and taking it to be a lamp.

*Bhakta*: But what is it that I see and what do I take it to be?

Swami: You see *Paramatma* in this form of *prakriti* [nature], and take it to be mere *prapancha*, or the world, and you are afraid. It is on account of this delusion that you have become the victim of all these varieties of weakness, and you are declining through doubt and illusion. If you see it right, the delusion will vanish; the fear will disappear; the faith that it is *Paramatma* will be firmly and boldly established in you. To get that firmness, the lamp of *viveka* [sense of discrimination] is necessary. How much a man suffers so long as he sees the rope as a snake! How much is the fear! The delusion! Can it be realized how all that vanished as soon as it was seen in the light? Similarly, these doubts and delusions, too, will vanish unawares as soon as you know that *prakriti* is *Paramatma*. Imposing a delusion on a delusion, imagining one object to be another, this is called *adhyasa*, my boy!

*Bhakta*: But Swami, how can *prakriti* be said to be *Paramatma*? When you ask me to discern this world that appears as *prapancha* to the eye as *Paramatma*, doubt is sure to arise.

Swami: That is true. Still, if the reality is reasoned out, even what you now see will appear as *Paramatma*. Cloth cannot be formed without yarn, isn't it? Yarn is essential for cloth. In fact, it is all yarn. In spite of this, yarn is not spoken of as cloth, nor is cloth called yarn. This is exactly the relationship between *prakriti* and *Paramatma*. *Paramatma* is the yarn of which the cloth, *prakriti*, is formed. Has the yarn and the cloth become separate? No. The yarn is used in one way, the cloth in another way. But just for this reason it would be wrong to consider yarn and cloth as different.

*Bhakta*: Yes, Swami. Since *prakriti* is formed of *Paramatma*, it is clear that they are not separate. Now, if both these are the same, which among these is *jiva* [living being]?

Swami: That is exactly the doubt that is tormenting you, my boy. The *jiva* is the 'I' consciousness, me, *jiva* is associated with the limitations of the body and the senses. But He is the *atma*, *jivatma*, *prathyagatma*, *chidatma*—doer, enjoyer, and everything.

*Bhakta*: Again, another word *jada* is used to mean inert matter. What is it, this *jada*? How does it operate? Tell me.

Swami: From *buddhi* to body, all transformations of *prakriti* are *jada*. This is the unreal, the unconscious, the *asath* [untruth], the *achethana* [insensible]. You must

take everything that is not *sat* [truth] and *chit* [consciousness] as *jada*. In essence, the world is really *jada* and nothing else. But *jada* is inseparable from *chaithanya* [consciousness], or *chit* and *sat*, just as air is inseparable from the atmosphere. It has been said in the *Gita* in the past that all movable and immovable creation is due to the union of *prakriti* and *purusha*, don't you know?

*Bhakta*: Then what is the relationship between *buddhi* [intelligence] and *manas* [mind] on the one hand and *atma* on the other?

Swami: Well, really there is no special relationship between them and the *atma*; *atma* is pure and without blemish; *buddhi*, too, is pure and without blemish. Just as the Sun is reflected in a mirror, the splendor of the *atma* is reflected in the *buddhi*. Then the shining *chaithanya* of the *buddhi* is reflected in the *manas*; the shining of the *manas* falls upon the senses; the light from the senses falls upon the body. Now, what is the connection between all these? The relationship of all is the splendor of the *atma*, is it not? The activity of every other thing is caused by the fact that there is a *buddhi* that can reflect that splendor, is it not? So, note how the *buddhi* is related: this side with the *atma*, and that side with the *manas* and the *indriyas*, senses!

*Bhakta*: Then what is the relation between the *jiva* that says 'I' and the senses and the body?

Swami: There is no relation at all! The 'I' is separate from the body, the mind, etc. The 'I' simply superimposes on the *jiva*, that is, Itself, the body-consciousness and the internal behaviors of the mind. 'I am fair' says the *jiva*, superimposing upon itself something with which it has no connection. I am dumb', it says, making the same mistake about the senses. It says it has this desire and that and imposes on itself the activities of the *manas*, etc. All this is mere superimposition. The basic truth is only One: the *Paramatma*, the *Paramjyoti* [supreme light], the Eternal, the True, is only One! Understand this well.

*Bhakta*: Ah, what superb teaching, Swami. If only this teaching of the Principle of the *atma*, which even children can grasp, spreads over the whole world, the world will emerge from darkness to light.

Swami: That is the reason why I converse with you about every point and allow all to partake in it. The sun's light falls upon the mirror, the light from the mirror falls upon the bungalow, the light upon the bungalow falls upon the eye. Similarly, this "*Sandeha Nivarini*" [doubt dispeller] has been decided upon in order that the illumination of My Teaching may fall upon the *bhakta* mirror and thence onto the "*Sanathana Sarathi*" bungalow, in order that from there its effulgence may shed light on the peace and harmony of the world.

**Source:** *Sandeha Nivarini*

# Thought of the MONTH

## Recognize the Power of Mind

Today man has to understand the true relationship between matter and mind. When one is asked about the mind, he says, "Don't mind." When he is asked about matter, he answers, "It doesn't matter". By this sort of casualness, man is failing to understand mind and matter.

Only when man understands the nature of the mind can he recognize the true nature of humanness. What is the mind? it is not something negative. It is positive. It represents the power of the *atma*, the power of *sankalpa* (Will). It can travel any amount of distance in space. It is capable of exploring the powers of the atom. The mind is capable of recognizing the truth that is valid for the three categories of time—the past, the present, and the future. The mind is therefore very essential in man's daily life. It is the source of all strength. Man today is indifferent to the importance and the powers of the mind.

Man is seeking happiness from birth to death. The search starts with education. But education does not confer happiness. He desires a job, but that does not make him happy. He then seeks marriage as the means to happiness. Happiness eludes him because the wife claims equal rights. Then he declares: "my life is a total darkness." What is the reason for this feeling? It is the ego that is the cause. As a man grows, his egoism also grows. One after another, desires go on increasing. Their fulfilment does not bring him the happiness he seeks.

Where is the *ananda* (bliss) to be found? It does not exist in material objects. It is not to be found in physical pleasures. The truth is man is the embodiment of bliss. He is searching for it outside himself. This is the mark of ignorance. When he is the embodiment of bliss, how can he secure bliss outside himself?

*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 28. pp.182-183

Those who experience this Presence within them can experience a joy that is indescribable, wherever they may be...People should realize that time is fleeting and one's life span is melting away every moment like a block of ice. Man is nearing his end even before he realizes his primary duty. What is that duty? It is to discover the purpose of life. Man seeks wealth, comforts, position, and happiness. How are these to be got If moving away from God's grace, man seeks all these kinds of worldly happiness. Of what avail are these transient physical pleasures?...

Hence seek God's grace at the outset. Does real happiness lie in enjoying creature comforts? No. True happiness consists in manifesting all the potentialities in man. When you put into practice all the sacred thoughts that emanate from your mind,

you will realize true happiness. Most people do not practice the sacred impulses that arise in them, with the result that they do not experience the bliss within them.

Embodiments of Love! The most important thing you have to recognize is that your heart is a *Ksheerasagaram* (Ocean of Milk). But because of the invasion of bad thoughts and feelings, your humanness is vitiated. Humanness consists in harmony of thought, word, and deed.

*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 28. pp.206-207



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