

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 (India). It is high time Bharatiyas [Indians] 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 based on universal love. Then only can the objective of human birth be fulfilled. The feeling of oneness is essential for enjoying bliss based on realization of divinity in everyone.

In ancient times, the *rishis* [sages] 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 (*prema-tattwa*) that 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 must 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*) that 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* that is consciousness (awareness). Thus, man's life is a combination of consciousness, vital force, and matter. Without realizing this fact, man is always keen on looking after the body alone, with the wrong conception that the body is all powerful.

All of you know that America (U.S.A.) is a land of plenty where there is 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. Despite such prosperity, there are more suicide cases in this country than anywhere 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 that 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 Bhuvaha Suvaha" represents the three basic principles of godliness in everyone. `Bhu' means matter. `Bhuvaha' is the *prana shakti* or the vibrant principle. `Suvaha' is the *prajna shakti* (awareness). These three constituent forces—material energy, vibration, and radiation—activate the human being. But man is not able to realize 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*, *Bhuvaha*, *Suvaha* meaning material energy, life force, and latent spiritual energy (*atma shakti*).

Man is not making efforts to understand the relationship between *prakriti* (phenomenal world) and *jivatma* (man) and *Paramatma* (Supreme spirit). 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 must 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. To protect nature, man must practice 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 mankind and go on making use of intelligence to produce 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 that 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 because 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 breakup 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 that 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 that the scientists may not be able to realize.

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 keener 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 everyone's duty.

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. 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 Phaleshu*"—You have the right to only perform your duty—says the *Gita*. 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 clamoring 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 that make it fly or like the two wheels of a vehicle that 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 realize 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 these narrow selfish feelings and practice 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 everyone that one should sincerely try to realize. It is not enough only to propagate the theory. There are a large number of people who propagate and preach but those who practice 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 realize 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 spirituality (*atma*). Therefore, one should discard rights and take up 'responsibility' born out of 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 the *chaitanya* (awareness). This awareness is in everyone. It is *Brahmam*. 'The One is in all beings'—This is an aphorism (*sutra*). *Sutra* also means a thread. When you make a garland of flowers, the thread keeping them in position is only one though there are many flowers. 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, grandfather, etc. the *chaitanya* inside is changeless. There is no distinction of woman or man, too. Changes are in the body and not in *atma* that 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* [Dravidian language] 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 skillful use, it is serving well. But actually, man is misusing knowledge. This is termed as technology, that is in fact 'Trick'-nology. Because of this man does not have 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*' and awareness is '*sat*'. Both combine and give *ananda* [joy]. 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 that is '*matter*' only.

Ancient *Rishis* called these three as *Bhur*, *Bhuvaha* and *Suvaha*. When you realize this unity in everyone—child, boy, or old people—how can you hate anybody? 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,

Spirituality is not mere worship, *japa*, or *dhyana*. These may be good activities, but they don't 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 everyone. 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 18 *Puranas* of Vyasa [writer] 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 toward 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 that 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 must be maintained to keep it stable. We utilize the natural resources without any limit and create imbalance.

I have been visiting Madras [Southern India] 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 and 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 and 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 the 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 can 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 others happy. You must do the *sadhana* of sacrifice. You should provide help to other devotees. Charity is the beauty for hands and not the decoration with bangles.

The mind is like a key to the lock of the heart. If you turn it toward God you get liberation; if you turn it toward the world you get into bondage. You should develop the feeling "*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu*"—one should aspire for world unity. Out of unity you get purity and from purity comes divinity. Now there is only community and enmity, which must 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* (devotional song) '*Prema muditha*')

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, February 1993

God Fulfils Himself

Sri V. R. Krishna Iyer was a distinguished senior judge in the Supreme Court of India. He began his career as a brilliant lawyer and was a Minister for Law, Home, Prisons and Social Welfare, Irrigation and Power in the Kerala State Government. Eventually he became a Judge of the Kerala High Court and later joined the Central Law Commission before accepting Judgeship of the Supreme Court. He was well-known for his passion for legal aid to the poor and pioneered judicial activism in India. He was conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 1999. Born in 1905, he completed his earthly sojourn in 2004 at the ripe age of 99.

God fulfils Himself in many ways, and one way, inscrutable to the infidel but understandable to the sensible, which has tradition and evidence in support is incarnation, not always of plenary and often of partial divinity. Does God exist? Call Him by any name, from Walt Whitman to Charles Darwin the divine presence has been undeniable. "I say to mankind," wrote Whitman in the preface to *Leaves of Grass*, "be not curious about God. For I, who am curious about each, am not curious about God—I hear and behold God in every object yet understand God not in the least." And Charles Darwin, who shook Christianity by his '*The Descent of Man*,' did assert: "Another source of conviction in the existence of God, connected with the reason and not with the feelings, impresses me as having much more weight... I feel compelled to look for a First Cause... and I deserve to be called a Theist."

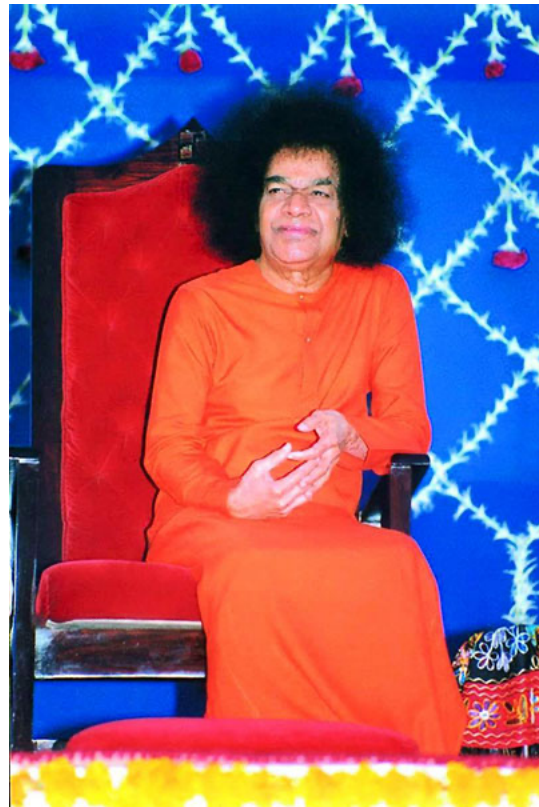
The greatest scientist of our century, Albert Einstein, did believe in God, not in a God who bought and sold rewards and punishments but in a "presence... revealed in the incomprehensible universe." It is astonishing that even Marx and Engels did not deny God but did not permit the gods to be agents for exploitation of men. Marx did protest against "all deities of heaven or earth who do not recognize as the highest divinity the human self-consciousness itself." '*Aham Brahmasmi* [I am the infinite Reality]' is the emphatic and pervasive realization of the self within each man as the universal Self—the sublime basis of *advaita* [non-dualism].

Engels has, in his *Socialism, Utopian, and Scientific*, clarified that Marx and he had only emphasized that "in the materialist conception of history the determining

element in history is ultimately the production and reproduction in real life.” He asserts—and this is important—“More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If, therefore, somebody twists this into the statement that economic element is the only determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract, and absurd phrase.” Marx, Engels, and Lenin argue for sublime feeling, humanist thought, and in this world that is the theatre of action, equal opportunity for everyone to unfold his full potential.

The central theme of the human-divine is the core of the *Bhagavad Gita* [the Divine Song] and of Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s affirmation of Man and *satwic* [pure] action in this world, filled with love or *prem*, not of other worldly assets in after-life and non-activity in this life. Service with love is the rational humanism in God’s mandate. Spiritual realization is not material negation but living the pure life charged with fellow feeling, in a holistic sense of identity and non-duality of all things in Creation as manifestation of that Supreme Power that is also the Absolute Unmanifest.

The living awareness of oneness is the root and fruit of cosmic consciousness. Once this higher supra-mentalism—in Sri Aurobindo’s diction—becomes integral to one’s being, the laws of nature are at one’s command and miracles are thereafter natural, not impossible. Science rises to super-science, matter rises to consciousness, and a harmony, coherence, and total coordination between spirit and other forms of existence emerges. You truly become an *Avatar*, an incarnation of the divine. Then you are a *Paramahansa* [enlightened One], a *Bhagavan*. Among them we may cite Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi, and that radiant light of love Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.



Swami Vivekananda blended materialism and spiritualism into a radical wholeness. Many other lofty names throned but illustratively here I mention that cyclonic *sadhu* [mendicant] whose vibrant voice called bigots to true goodness and atheists to godliness: “First, feel from the heart... Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbors to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming constant with your heartbeats? Has it made you

almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that?"

Illustratively, again, is Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* exposing the hypocrisy of holiness forgetting humanness: "Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee! He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil! Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bounds of creation; he is bound with us all forever. Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow."

God is not a Sunday discourse or Friday *namaz* or temple *bhajan* but a constant presence within oneself that chastens life's stream, raises the states of consciousness and divinizes, never denies, human activity here on earth and therefore guides *karma* or action in tune with *dharma* or righteous values that sustain the happy union of the whole community through a higher enlightenment beyond the grosser pleasures at the sensory levels. God indwells in man and irrelevant if imprisoned in holy books and hallowed spots.

The dynamics of divinity have spoken of spiritual values while believing in atheism. The true objection to religion and God has been the use of this 'opiate' as a treacherous tool of man's systemic inhumanity to man. But once you realize that true religion, the religion of man, is science of the spirit, that matter and spirit are not antithetical, that human liberation is divine mission, and that that cosmic vision is authentic, that sees in all creation the indelible imprint of the imperishable, infinite, all-pervasive power, then religion, in its *advaitic* authenticity, is the most revolutionary ideology against exploitation, injustice, and inequality and for liberty, fraternity, and human dignity. The vice is not in God but in Man's abuse of God. Ingersoll, the agnostic, held: an honest God is the noblest work of man. And Lenin pinpointed the rationale behind the laity to God, the Anti-Man.

Many empires have been built as a joint adventure of the flag and the cross; many millions of women have been denied freedom in the name of *Allah*. Many wars have been fought because Gods have fallen out. Many injustices have been inflicted on masses of men using scriptures as weapons. But universal religion, oneness of God, a vision of the Supreme as the divinity in every person, the affirmation of equality and fellowship, of worship of God through service of man, of compassion for the suffering as the condition of godliness, of spiritual dignity of the prince and the pauper, of the *Brahmin* and the *bhangee* [lower caste], of refusal to share our wealth with the lowly and the needy as denial of God—how can such a spiritual principle that is the strength behind world peace, common prosperity of humanity, opposition

to exploitation, promotion of social justice, and love of fellowmen as basic to religion be condemned concept by the heartless? The great spiritual leaders, seers, poets, and reformers of India and elsewhere have been in the vanguard of revolutionary religious awakening acting on the theme that service of man is worship of God.

Bhagavan Baba has the powers of Super-Nature because He lives in cosmic consciousness. For Him every piece of Creation is divine. For, as has been rightly said: "The ancients have stated that God sleeps in the mineral, awakens in the vegetable, walks in the animal and thinks in Man." (Kanthryn Breese-Whitting)

The great gospel of Bhagavan Baba is love of the living as children of God, and realization of the Self by a holistic consciousness of all things great and small. "The Lord who made us all, made and loveth us all." The devotees of Baba hold *bhajans* and sing themselves unto divine ecstasy. Why? Because it is the *bhakti marga* [path of devotion].

Bhagavan Baba or Sri Sathya Sai Baba is a boon to our generation. Where He walks is hallowed ground; where He sits is shrine; and where His name is chanted, tuned to cosmic vibrations, is Divine presence. His doings challenge the grosser sciences, maybe, but His teachings vitalize our spiritual heritage. His message of compassion, His profound emphasis on high values, and His human-divine expression of truth elevate our emotions and refine our inner being, which we may sum up as the song of Sai. Says He: "There is no creature without Love; the lowest loves itself, at least."

"... Sai has come in order to achieve the supreme task of uniting as one family the entire mankind, through the bond of brotherhood, of affirming and illumining the *atmic* reality of each being in order to reveal the divine that is the basis on which the entire cosmos rests, and of instructing all to recognize the common divine heritage that binds man to man, so that man can rid himself of the animal and rise into the divinity that is his goal"

The melody of Sai, the *raga* of Baba, the music of Bhagavan, surge up from the deepest and constitute, in a strange way, the science of being and the art of living. In moods contemplation, when self-awareness spreads, there is "silence more musical than any song." Nada Brahman is the Key to the Universal Self. It is in the fitness of things that homage is paid to Baba through song and art, silence, and expression.

*Sarvam Brahma Mayam
Aham Brahmasmi
Tat Twam Asi
Prajnanam Brahma.*

The supreme realization in personalized incarnation is Baba. So adore Him.

Source: Golden Age 1980 (55th Birthday Offering)

An Amazing Personal Transformation... From Me to 'Myself'

An IPS (Indian Police Service) officer of the 1996 batch, Ms. Charu Sinha served in different capacities in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Later, she also went on deputation to the U.N. Peace Keeping Mission in Kosovo for a year. After working as DIG (Deputy Inspector General of Police), Anantapur Range, for almost three years, she was posted as the Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission in Hyderabad (at the time of publishing of this article). In September 2020, she created history becoming the first woman IPS officer to take over as the Inspector General (IG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for the Srinagar sector in Jammu and Kashmir, a highly critical position.

She came into the Sai fold in 1989 and since then it has been a story of the transformation Swami brings in each one of us, removing all that is less than divine in us.

A sensitive girl yearns for her personal god

When I was a child, I loved the story of Dhruva and like him, I wanted to sit in the lap of God. I always thought if I pray to Rama, Krishna, Shivji, or Vishnu, the other Gods will get angry. So, I was always confused about whom to pray to. I wanted a God I could see in front of me, talk to, confide in, and laugh with, who would love me unconditionally however I was, and one who would be my best friend and guide. I wanted my own personal God. The idea of a God somewhere up there in the sky, beyond my reach, was not what I could relate to.

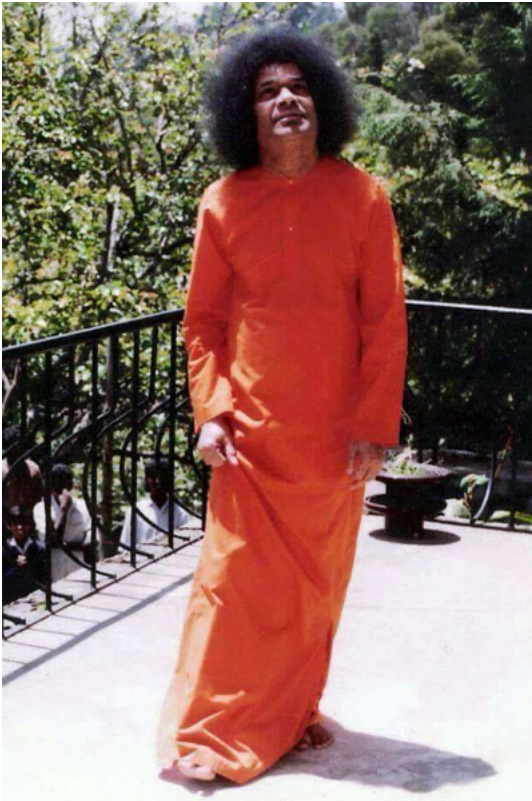
As a child I had a disturbed childhood and never knew how it was to be carefree. I was very shy, sensitive, and had the right values but was quiet, scared of everybody and everything and always felt unloved. I wanted to be loved unconditionally and be totally independent—emotionally, mentally, and financially. I thought when I find my God, I won't need anyone in this world, and no one could hurt me. It was the heartfelt desire of a sensitive child who was badly hurt by the insensitivity and constant comparisons by the people around.

In 1989, my father's German friend Frank introduced me to "The Autobiography of a Yogi" and my spiritual quest began. I had never doubted the existence of God, but I wanted to feel and experience it and find my personal God. My yearning increased. We would visit Shirdi every year. I had some amount of faith in Shirdi Baba but, since I could not see Him or talk to Him, I still wanted something more.

In a time of despair baba becomes her true friend

In August 1989, Papa took the whole family to Puttaparthi. Something in that trip had affected me. On returning home I found myself turning to Baba whenever I would pray in the *pooja* room. In the meantime, all the people I had faith in started letting me down. I could not understand why I was suddenly without a friend in the world, for no fault of mine. I was plunged into the nadir of despair, hopelessness, and diffidence. I did not know whom to turn to. In those young and foolish days, I

wanted a soulmate, as I thought that that would be the solution to all my problems and my insecurities, little realizing that my quest would bring me unbearable pain. Baba made me experience and realize that He was the only soulmate I ought to look for, trust and have faith in. Betrayed trust, humiliation, broken friendships, and relationships left me badly mauled, with a mutilated heart and soul, absolutely alone, with no emotional support and no job to sustain myself—I was heading nowhere, had no one to turn to, and there seemed to be no way out. I cried for help from the depths of my being. I did not want to live anymore. Only God could have saved me—and He did.



Selected for the Indian Police Service

In January 1996 when I went to Puttaparthi I had a number of dreams and was selected for the Indian Police Service the same year. I realized that it was He who got me selected. He had told me in a dream that He was selecting me to protect something. As usual I did not understand what the dream was all about. That was the turning point in my life as I turned to Him completely. Had it not been for Him, I could never have done my National Police Academy training. It was He who made me do the rock climbing, push-ups, sit-ups, rope climbing, back roll, front roll, cross country running, drill, marching, swimming, horse riding—every step of the way, in spite of severe breathing problems, fractures, and bruises.

In December 1997, after 8 years He gave me *padnamaskar* and took away all the pain. He also taught me that forgiveness was important, and I am not my past. I learnt to put my past behind me and understand the role of different people at different stages in my life for my learning and progress, however hard the lessons were.

Success comes by Swami's grace

Then came the field training—the initial shock of policing—I saw for the first time the different social values of different people and sections of society. The deceit, lies, crimes, insensitivity, and different interpretations of truth as per convenience. I saw what motivated people to commit crimes, where the subtle line of distinction between right and wrong, good and bad was so thin that people justified every act they committed on various grounds, morality being brushed aside completely. I was also exposed to various methods of policing and control, and I learnt to differentiate between what was right for me and what clearly wasn't, what I should or should not

do, and at the same time while doing my duty how not to judge other people and the situations they are in, and how to be tough with criminals (a complete turnover from the soft me).

I had to evolve my style of functioning—mature, strict, sensitive yet tough—for the people and my own subordinates. I survived a grueling and exacting first 3 years in my job thanks to Him. Slowly but surely, He helped me gain command over my work and people. Though several times I thought I was a complete misfit, now I know I was destined only for this. I could never have been anything but a police officer.

Then came my experiences in policing. Once when I was posted in an extremist affected area, the extremists were out on a rampage, blasting and destroying property, and everyone was tense. As Addl. SP Operations, I had to take care of the situation. The extremists we were searching for day and night simply came to the police station and surrendered! In another complicated case that I was dealing with for the first time, I was wondering what to do. And I felt His direction that I must take one step at a time and what do I mean what should I do? Didn't I know that He is always with me? I also felt His guidance that my decision making was poor, so He would ensure that I was always in situations where I was forced to make decisions on the spot and soon became very good at it.

In one case when I was Superintendent of Police of a district, the extremists kidnapped four of my policemen, held them captive in a forest and threatened to kill them if the demands they laid forth were not fulfilled. I only prayed, and I taught the families of the kidnapped men to pray. After 10 days, despite no demand being fulfilled, my men were released by the extremists (why, even they could not understand!) and they came back home walking from the forest! It was unprecedented in the history of extremism to have policemen kidnapped and released like this without any demand being fulfilled, without any reason whatsoever. But I knew the reason was Baba!!!

Hard lessons are learnt

In one of my postings where I had worked very hard, after my transfer all the work I had done was destroyed by another officer who thought differently. Swami taught me how to accept someone else destroying a system I had built up carefully, how to detach myself from the result of my work, how to work without expecting appreciation and move ahead.

Swami also taught me that I must not look at only one quality in a person and judge them according to that—I must look beyond that quality and see the whole person. He taught me how to do my work, my duty and forget about the result. Justice or no justice, things were happening just as He willed it. Everybody was playing the role assigned to them. Acceptance on my part of His will was important on the road to total surrender to Him.

Inner acceptance and love

I always found it very difficult to love myself. I had no tolerance for myself, least of all for the mistakes I would commit. Swami taught me to love myself and be more patient, kind and tolerant with myself. Since He was in me how could I hate myself? Was that not tantamount to hating Him? He also taught me how to leave behind the emotional baggage I was always carrying on my back. I learnt to travel light, though I still have the tendency to make the same mistake.

Not being a very good judge of people initially, I would always trust the wrong people and would regret it later as they would always betray this trust. Swami always let me go through the experience, but each time helped me learn how to judge for myself to what extent to trust people. It was learning the hard way, but it made me never forget my lessons. He is a hard taskmaster. He puts us through different tests, and with each new step up the spiritual ladder comes another more difficult test. Each time one must remember that it is a test and tell Him that you are going to be strong, will put up a good fight and pass the test, and make Him proud of you.

At each step Swami taught me how to introspect and evaluate myself and what I was doing and be absolutely disciplined, truthful, and a person of total integrity. I am not the perfect daughter He would like me to be, but I am trying. He taught me how to take one step at a time when in doubt and how things would then automatically work out. He also taught me how to care for my subordinates, and how to stand up for right things and values, come what may. He taught me how to be a leader and lead from the front.

Learning to see each experience as a lesson

What Swami taught me in a few years in my job about assessing people and situations, I probably could never have learnt all my life. He would give me experiences putting me in the place of other people and help me understand people and situations better and then take fair decisions. I learnt that all the people we meet, we do so for a reason. Either they have a role in our lives or vice versa and once the lesson is learnt, everyone moves on. But if the lesson is not learnt then we keep attracting the same experiences to ourselves.

In one case He warned me that there are people around me I should be careful of. I had sensed it, but this message helped me confirm what I felt vaguely. Once when I was SP of a difficult district, a person from the USA travelled all the way to my area of posting and told me to be careful of a senior who would backstab me. It happened exactly as foretold, seven months later. I could not prevent it, but I was prepared for it and could face it courageously.

When I once had to take a very important professional decision involving life and death and was very disturbed, He told me that like Arjuna I must do my duty. He would never let me do anything wrong. If I take a decision that is wrong, He would not allow it to happen, and if right then there was nothing to worry about. That was

the most fantastic assurance I had received in my life. My God was taking care of me every step of the way in my life.

Once while travelling when I was perturbed about something and asked Him for help, a water tanker overtook my vehicle and loomed large in front of me, with Baba's photo behind it with the message: "24hrs at your service!" Swami's responses were always tremendous and spontaneous. At each step He taught me to have faith that He is there for me.

God Knocks to wake us up

From the year 1992 to 2000, for about 8 years, I had been hearing someone knock on my door every night and sometimes this person would call out my name. I couldn't understand and never slept properly. Once while travelling in a train, I read that Baba stated that God knocks on the door of people to wake them up to the reality of who they really are. He also said that if we do not open our hearts to Him, He will break it and enter! I prayed to Baba and thanked Him for telling me that. Since that day the knocking stopped. I guess I was a poor learner, He kept knocking at my door patiently for 8 years and I never understood!!!

Swami has come in about 130 dreams to me—each one signifying something—either care or precaution to be taken or something which is about to happen or expressing His happiness or otherwise at something. He is a hard taskmaster, too, who knows how much to push you and to what extent. Whatever He gives in one's life, whether sorrow or happiness, it will not be anything more than what one can bear.

The joy of working at Prashanti Nilayam

I always wanted to do *seva* at the *ashram* but my job would not permit me to take a long time off and do *seva*. So when called on official police duty for His Birthday celebrations, I was thrilled. I wanted Him to see me in uniform and when He passed by me, I saluted Him and He did look at me.

After one week of very demanding duty when I was completely tired and my seniors were happy with the way I had controlled things at the *ashram*, I thought to myself, 'what is the use of these praises, if the lord of the universe appreciates my work then that would be something'. The next day when I was sitting for *darshan*, He came to me and when I said, "Baba thank you for giving me this opportunity of coming here," He said, "*Chala santosham* [very happy]" and gave me *Padnamaskar*. The Lord of the universe knew how hard I had worked. Oh, what wouldn't I do for that smile and *padnamaskar*!

Granting of the precious interview

In 1999, on 17th July, Mummy's birthday, Baba called the whole family for an interview. Those 15 minutes with Him were like ages. That time we spent with Him, the assurance He gave to each one of us that He is there for us, and His comments about each one of us revealing His omniscience were wonderful. I was sitting near

His feet, in the same place where I would sit in my dreams, and He put His hand on my head twice, while talking. I was thrilled. Baba gave us strength to face the bad times ahead.

Each visit to Parthi would be for learning a lesson. Either we would meet someone who would clear our doubts about something, or share someone's experiences and grow richer, or Baba would help us find the answers to our questions and give us food for thought and practice. Love, truth, patience, ahimsa in thought word and deed, understanding, *seva* was His message, continuously reiterated in different ways. The way He loves all unconditionally, the capacity He must forgive, the patience with which He deals with everyone, the transformation He brings in oneself, the love, devotion, the desire to give up everything and follow only Him that He incites, can't be compared even remotely to anything that exists in this world. He is the most wonderful teacher, who taught me patiently what I needed to learn, though I went on making mistakes all the way.

Had Baba not given me wonderful parents and sisters, who supported me always in whatever I did, it would have been very difficult to survive. I was inspired by my mother and sisters to learn *Vedic* chanting and to meditate and move ahead in life spiritually. My younger sister was blessed with several visions and visitations from Baba. Papa's relationship with Baba was very interesting. Papa fought with Baba for some reason and refused to acknowledge or talk to Him. But the more he resisted, the more Baba ensured that all the spiritual activities were carried out from our house and slowly he started participating enthusiastically in all activities like *Laksharchana* (chanting a *mantra* in a group), study circle, *nagar sankirtans* (singing while walking), *bhajans*, etc. That was Baba's way of bringing an unwilling sparrow into His fold!

Reward comes as service for the UN

In September 2005, I was selected for the UN Mission in Kosovo for a period of one year. The entire process of selection that takes just a month and involves tests for police personnel from the whole country took one year. It was something I wanted for a long time.

When I wanted to know why the delay was taking place, the message that came said that it was because I was not well!! This was true. For some time I was suffering from a severe backache. My Baba delayed the entire process of selection and gave me time to recover so that I could join the mission.

Heartfelt Prayers

I can only pray: O lord, where would I be without you? What can I do to thank you? Nothing I can do will express my gratitude to you. I can only offer you myself—a tiny speck in your universe, confused and tainted—with all my heart and soul. I am where you want me to be, doing what you want me to do. Make me your instrument to do what you want me to. Make me the daughter you would like me to be. Show

me how to fill my heart with love for everyone, just like you. Make me a part of you where I lose consciousness of myself. I would like to see you in everything. If I look left, I should see you. If I look right, I should see you. If I look at someone, I should see you. If I am asleep, I should dream of you. If I am awake, I should see you. If I listen to anything it should be only your voice. If I talk it should be only to discuss your glory. I want to be God *drunk*—I love you Baba.

Source: Heart 2 Heart, Radio Sai, April 2006

The Moving Finger Writes

The moving finger writes—
The fingers that play the flute in every human frame—
The moving finger writes
The history of Time and Space.
The moving finger writes
The destiny of man.
They write, they draw, they wave, they twirl
They rise and fall, full circle or arc or curve
In playful lilt or sport; but, meaningful most
Marking time, all the time, though time is but a wink
And space, a span
In Baba's Mighty Move.
What do they do, these light and lovely digits of the Lord
These active agents of Grace and Godly Majesty?
They rise—
As they rose to raise a peak against the flood
Let loose on man by a jealous god—
They rise ... and they stop a flood!
The onward marching troops of alien brood
Go reeling back, over the range of peaks!
They wave,
They pass smooth over a tormented brow, a tortured mind

They have the Lotus petal touch
(The fingers held the Lotus once)
They rise in a sweep
And scatter the surging clouds.
(They wielded the *Chakra* once.)
The inner foes of someone He blesses
Do flee when the fingers rise to warn;
Those fingers domesticate the brutal throng.
The moving fingers write an undeciphered script
And, somewhere on this earth, tragedy becomes a tale of joy.

A mother gets news of long-lost son; a father learns his son is good;
The moving finger writes
Some *Sadhak* He seeks to bless
Sits up; and reads the symbol Om
He bows, he knows; his daze, his doubt, what name to rear
In the nursery of his heart is gone.
The Om he got when he wrote it here, is to him the only hymn.
The finger comes down quick, you are puzzled when you see!
But a monk is *hit* in a far-off place
Straight on the back of his head!
He has slept the sleep of tired search
In lanes of labyrinth libraries
He wakes; he sees His Heavenly Form; He asks; is answered
He is blessed by that blow.
The fingers jerk—
The same little jerk that broke the bridal bow
The same little jerk that swished the whip on fiery battle steeds—
The fingers make a jerk ... but, now
In far off Jammu vale a poison cup is snatched from desperate hold
A loaded rod of death is shifted quick
A life revived with tonic touch.
Those fingers draw an arc—a tiny arc, on air, from where He is
And, lo, a scientist lost in the maze of doubt in
Ankara, or Prague perhaps (is it Ankara?)
Sees the arc in a flash ...ah, just the thing, the size!
He uses it to fill the diagram gap...and he wins.
He earns both name and fame.
The fingers turn, not just a turn; all turns are good
When he turns them so.
For he is Mercy come as Man.
The fingers turn, they turn the scales
To favor simple faith,
To favor repentant hearts, yearning minds.
They draw, they draw lines and curves and squares on sand!
And, lo, along the lines, the sand is changed to sweetness, fragrance, holiness.
The fingers come down in a curve
And, mark! A spaceship, rocket with two aboard
Drops safe on earth, right on spot!
The fingers come down in a curve—and mark,
Auspicious things are scattered everywhere
For all who earn His Grace!
The finger rises a tiny height.
That instant, the ancient Linga of a shrine
Is rich with his picture, inside the stony sanctity
A tiny height, for all to see for ever more.

The fingers twirl and turn around
And all the spheres and stars obey
They move around so smooth, in ordained orbits true,
They calm the flood, they scotch the flame;
They direct the pilot over the Rockies peaks
To the spot where the wreckage lay.
They rise! The two fingers are wide apart and swing,
They wave in rhythmic melody
That and this, you and He, inner outer, Knower Known
Both of the self-same Hand.
The fingers doodle in the air
But, he is doodling on your heart
And, as the lines run round
The heart becomes the seat of Beauty, Truth and Bliss.
Every line is a direction which reveals
The destination we miss.
The moving finger writes the history of Time and Space
The moving finger writes
The Destiny of Man.

~N. Kasturi Kavisammelan 22-10-66

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

Gurus

Bhakta: Swami, can we ask you freely about any topic concerning the spiritual path, which we do not know?

Swami: Certainly. What is the objection? Why this doubt? What am I here for? Is it not for explaining to you the things you do not know about? You can ask me without any fear or hesitation. I am always ready to answer; only, I want earnest inquiry with a desire to know.

Bhakta: But some elders say it is wrong to vex the *guru* with questions. Are they right, Swami?

Swami: That is not correct. Whom else can the disciple approach? Since the *guru* is everything to him, it is best that he consults him in all matters and then acts.

Bhakta: Some say that we should reverentially carry out whatever the elders ask us to do without raising any objections. Is that your command also?

Swami: Until you develop full faith in them and know that their words are valid, it will be difficult for you to carry out their orders reverentially. So, until then, it won't be wrong to ask them the significance and the validity of their orders, so that you may be convinced.

Bhakta: Swami, whom are we to believe, whom are we to discard? The world is so full of deceit. When those whom we believed are good themselves turn out to be bad, how can faith grow?

Swami: Well, My boy! Where is the need for you in this world or any world to grow faith in others? Believe in yourself, first. Then believe in the Lord, *Paramatma*. When you have faith in these two, neither the good nor the bad will affect you.

Bhakta: Swami, faith in the Lord, too, diminishes sometimes. What is the reason for that?

Swami: When one is deluded by the mere external world and when one does not attain success in such external desires, faith in the Lord diminishes. So, give up such desires. Desire only for the spiritual relationship; then you won't become the target of doubts and difficulties. The important thing for this is faith in the Lord; without that you start doubting everything, big and small.

Bhakta: Until we understand the Reality of *Paramatma*, it is important, they say, to be in the company of the great and the good and also to have a *guru*. Are these necessary?

Swami: Of course, the company of the great and the good is necessary. To make that Reality known to you, a *guru*, too, is important. But in this matter, you should be very careful. Genuine *gurus* are scarce these days. Cheats have multiplied and teachers have retreated into solitude to realize themselves undisturbed. There are many genuine *gurus* but they cannot be secured easily. Even if you get them, you must thank your destiny if they vouchsafe to you more than one single *Sadvakya* [true word]; they won't spend time telling you all kinds of stories! There should be no hurry in the search for a *guru*.

Bhakta: Then what in the world is the path?

Swami: Why, it is just for this that we have the *Veda*, *Shashtra*, *Purana* and *Ithihasa* (scriptures). Study them; adhere to the path they teach and gather the experience. Understand their meaning and the trend of their message from *pundits*; follow them in practice; meditate on the *Paramatma* as the *guru* and as God. Then those books themselves will help you as your *guru*. For, what is a *guru*? The *guru* is that through which your mind gets fixed on God. If you consider *Paramatma* as the *guru* and do *sadhana* with unshakable love, the Lord Himself will appear before you and give

Upadesha [instructions] just as a *guru*. Or He may so bless you that as a result of the *sadhana*, you may meet a *Sadguru*.

Bhakta: But nowadays some great big persons are granting *Upadesha* to all who ask; are these not *Sadgurus*, Swami?

Swami: I won't say they are or they are not. I declare only this: It is not the sign of a *Sadguru* to grant *Upadesha* to any and every person who comes to him with praise, without considering the past and the future, without discovering the qualifications of the pupil and testing whether he is fit.

Bhakta: Then Swami, I have committed a blunder! When a great person arrived at our village and all were receiving *Upadesha* from him, I, too, went and prostrated before him and asked him for it. He granted me a good *Upadesha*; I repeated the *mantra* for some time, but soon, I came to know that the great person was a cheat. Since that day, I lost faith in the *mantra* he gave me and gave up *mantra*. Was this wrong? Or am I right?

Swami: Do you doubt the right and wrong of this? It is very wrong. Just as the *guru*, as I told you now, examines the qualifications of the disciple, the disciple, too, has to critically examine the credentials of the *guru* before receiving *Upadesha*. Your first mistake was that you did not pay attention to this but hastily accepted *Upadesha*. Well, even if the *guru* gave it without the necessary qualification, why did you break your vow and stop repeating the Name? That is the second mistake: casting the fault of another on the sacred Name of God.

Before receiving *Upadesha*, you should have taken time and known his genuineness and developed faith in him. Then, when the desire to accept him as *guru* emerged, you should have received the *Upadesha*. But once you accept, you must repeat it, whatever the difficulty; you should not give it up. Otherwise, you commit the wrong of accepting without deliberation and rejecting without deliberation. That wrong will be on your head. You should not accept a Name when you are still afflicted by doubt or a Name which you do not prefer. Having accepted, you should not give it up.

Bhakta: What happens when it is given up?

Swami: Well, my boy. Disloyalty to the *guru* and discarding the Name of God—on account of these, your one-pointed endeavor and concentration will wither away. As the saying goes, "The diseased seedling can never grow into a tree."

Bhakta: But if the *guru* grants the *mantra* though we lack the merit?

Swami: Such a *guru* is no *guru*. The result of his wrong act won't fall on you. The evil of that wrong will devolve on him only.

Bhakta: If the disciple acts according to the promise made to the *guru*, irrespective of what the *guru* may turn out to be, and honors him as before, can he realize the goal?

Swami: Certainly, what doubt is there? Don't you know the story of Ekalavya? Though Dronacharya did not accept him as his disciple, he installed an image and took it as Dronacharya himself; revering as such, he learnt archery and achieved mastery of all arts. Finally, when the *guru*, blinded by injustice, asked for his right thumb as his fees, he offered it gladly. Did Ekalavya take to heart the injury done by the *guru*?

Bhakta: Of what avail was that offer? His education was all a waste, that was all. What was the net result of his achievement?

Swami: Though Ekalavya lost all chance of using his skill, the character that he earned by that training was never lost. Is not the fame he acquired by his sacrifice enough compensation?

Bhakta: Well, what is past is past. Hereafter at least I shall hold fast and try not to discard the name. Please grant me *Upadesha* Yourself.

Swami: Your attitude is just like that of the person who, after having witnessed the Ramayana being enacted throughout the night, asked someone at daybreak how Rama was related to Sita! I was telling you that the *guru* and the *Upadesha* will come when your qualifications ripen. It will come by itself. There is no need for you to ask! Really speaking, the disciple should not ask for *Upadesha* on his own. He cannot be aware of his being ripe for it. The *guru* will be watching for the proper moment and he will himself bless and help. You should not get *Upadesha* more than once. It is not repeatable. If you give up one *Upadesha* and take up another whenever you feel like it, you will be like a married woman gone astray.

Bhakta: So what is my fate now? Is there no way to save myself?

Swami: Repent for the mistake committed, but continue meditating on the Name you received. For *Namasmarana*, apart from *Japa*, you can use as many names as you like. For *dhyana*, the Name got by *Upadesha* alone should be used, remember. Don't change that sacred Name; transform yourself by persistent yearning and effort and proceed.

Bhakta: Swami! Today is indeed a great day, for all doubts have disappeared by the message you gave. As you said, *Upadesha* created the doubt; Your *Sandesha* [message] dispelled it. If permitted, I will return now to my place, and when I come again I will bring some new doubts to be cast away in Your presence in exchange for peace and joy. If You so command, I shall come next month.

Swami: Very good. That is exactly what I want—that persons like you should rid themselves of doubts, should grasp the real significance of life, and welcoming the *Sandesha* with faith and steadfastness dwell in constant remembrance of the Name of the Lord. Whenever you come, whatever comes, learn from Me the method and means of ridding yourself of grief and doubt and worry. Never suffer from grief; for with that pain inside you, you will not be able to do any *sadhana*. Whatever *sadhana* you do will be like rose water poured on ash. Very well, go now and come later.

Source: *Sandeh Nivarini*

Thought of the MONTH

How to experience Divinity

Embodiments of Love!

Your names and forms are different, but the principle of love is the same in all of you. That is why I address you as the "embodiments of love". Love is always one, it should not be divided. Consider God as one and love Him wholeheartedly. Such one-pointed love toward God can be termed true devotion. Devotees like Jayadeva, Gauranga, and Eknath developed such divine love and sanctified their lives. Likewise, Mira and Sakkubai had unwavering love and devotion toward God. They did not worship various names and forms. They followed one path. They installed one name and one form in their heart and contemplated on their chosen deity incessantly.

Those who are dual-minded and change their path every now and then are bound to ruin their lives. Hence, never be dual-minded. Experience divinity with *ekatma bhava* (feeling of oneness). You may choose any name you like—Rama, Krishna, Eashwara, etc.— and contemplate on the form. You will certainly reach the goal of life. Lead your life with your mind always focused on the goal.

Once Radha could not find Krishna anywhere. Since she was deeply attached to Krishna's physical form, she went in search of Him everywhere. She always yearned and pined for His physical proximity. The name and the form are one and the same. However, people are unable to enquire deeply and experience such oneness.

The power of love is unparalleled. It is beyond the ken of human understanding. Love can be understood only through love.

Mira's husband, Rana, had built a *mandir* (temple) for Krishna. Being a great devotee of the Lord, Mira was always found in the *mandir* singing His glory ecstatically. Consequently, she earned the wrath of Rana. He commanded her to leave the

mandir. This came as a great shock to Mira. She thought to herself, "When Krishna is all-pervasive and not confined to this *mandir* alone, how can Rana take me away from Him?" She left her home and hearth and set out to Mathura. Where is Mathura? It is not some geographical location. The heart suffused with nectarine love is Mathura.

She sang, *Chalo Re Man Ganga Yamuna Teer* (Oh mind! Go to the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna). Here, Ganga and Yamuna symbolically mean *ida* and *pingala* (left and right nostrils). The central part of the eyebrows where *ida* and *pingala* meet stands for Mathura. This is the esoteric meaning of the song.

She proceeded toward Mathura, chanting the name of Krishna incessantly while crossing rivers, hills, dales, and forests. When she ultimately reached Brindavan, she found the temple doors closed. In spite of her repeated prayers, the doors did not open. Then she said, "Oh Krishna, my heart is Your temple. I have installed You in the altar of my heart." She banged her head against the temple door calling out to Krishna. She had the vision of Krishna and merged in Him. King Rana repented for having driven away Mira from the temple. He prayed to Krishna for forgiveness.

People these days do not enquire into the inner meaning of certain words they use. They are carried away by the worldly meanings and interpretations. You should take into consideration the feelings that emerge from your heart, which is true and eternal. This is how Mira experienced oneness with Krishna. If one wishes to tread the path of devotion, one should hold on to the principle of love firmly. Ordinary mortals do not have such firm determination, but a true devotee will never deviate from the path of love under any circumstances. No other path except love can take us to God. Develop love more and more. Wherever you are, love is your sole refuge.

Many devotees proclaim, "Oh God, I am in you, I am with you, and I am for you." They repeat these words like parrots but do not say them from the depths of their heart. Actually God is never separate from you. Pray to Him wholeheartedly with the conviction that He is always in you, with you, above you, below you, and around you. When you offer such a prayer to God, He will certainly redeem your life.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 38 (2005)

Embodiments of Love! The main aim of human life is to acquire the knowledge of the Self. This is the true *Purushartha* (goal of life). Human life will find fulfillment if this goal is attained.

The ability to distinguish between that which is permanent and that which is transitory, the ability to control the internal and external senses, yearning for liberation and the path of inquiry—all these four (the four auspicious qualities) depend on devotion. The word *bhakti* (devotion)—derived from the root word *bhaj* means pure, unsullied, and selfless love toward God.

In this world, no other virtue is greater than love. Love is truth, love is righteousness, and love is wealth. This world originated from love, is sustained by love, and ultimately merges in love. Every atom has its origin in love.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 32 (1999)



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