



SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING
(Deemed to be University)



PRASANTHI
Vidwan Mahasabha

2017





Dedicated with Love to our Beloved
Revered Founder Chancellor

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



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Vidyagiri, Prasanthi Nilayam – 515134, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, India

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First Edition: **April 2018**

Content, Editing & Desktop Publishing by:
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
www.sssihl.edu.in

Printed at:
Vagartha, NR Colony, Bangalore – 560019
+91 80 22427677 | vagartha@yahoo.com



PRASANTHI VIDWAN MAHASABHA

24-30 September 2017 | Prasanthi Nilayam



Preface

Dasara or Navaratri is a ten day festival, usually falling in the month of October, and is celebrated all over India in the worship of the Divine as the Mother principle. Bhagawan Baba has explained that the festival of Dasara is a celebration of the triumph of good over evil, signifying the vanquishing of the 'six demons' of lust, anger, attachment, greed, pride and jealousy within us.

Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna

Since the early sixties, the festival of Dasara in Prasanthi Nilayam has been closely associated with the 'Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna'. This yagnam is a week-long worship conducted in the Divine Presence at the Poornachandra Auditorium each year for the welfare of the whole world. The Yagnam commences on the fourth day of Dasara and

concludes with the 'Poornahuti' – the final oblation that is offered on Vijayadashami, the tenth day.

The most important component of the Yagnam is the Rudra Yagam where the oblations are made in the Yagna Kunda to Lord Shiva while chanting hymns from the Sri Rudram. In addition to this, other rituals like Surya Namaskara, Sahasralinga Archana, Srimad Bhagavatha Parayana, Ramayana Parayana and the Devi Mahatmyam are simultaneously performed.

The students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning take active part in the Yagnam by chanting the vedas, reading the scriptures and performing other parts of the worship along with the learned pundits.



Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha

The evening programmes during the seven days of the Yagnam are held at Sai Kulwant Hall, under the auspices of the 'Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha', where many speakers — primarily students and functionaries of Bhagawan's institutions — address the gathering on topics concerning spirituality and philosophy, Bhagawan's teachings and experiences of devotees.

This book is a compilation of all the talks delivered during the Prasanthi

Vidwan Mahasabha in 2017, that took place from 24 to 30 September 2017. Relevant transcripts of excerpts from Bhagawan Baba's Divine Discourses on each day are also included.

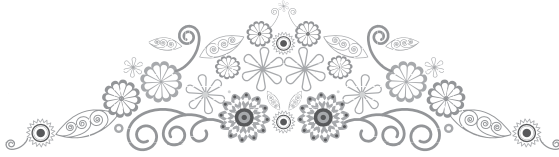




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Bhagawan Baba on Dasara

On several other occasions of the Dasara festival celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam, Bhagawan Baba has given Discourses, clarifying the purpose and importance of the festival, and highlighting the inner meaning of the celebration and of the worship of the Divine Mother. Following are some excerpts from these Discourses.

Purpose of Dasara

Festivals like Dasara are designed to make man aware of his divinity, to endow him with purity, to become aware of its holiness, and to imprint on his heart the wisdom won by sages after years of yearning. The sages who have decided on these festivals have a high purpose. They want us to imbibe the inner meaning and use each day as a step in *sadhana*, as a reminder of the journey, which each person has to undertake alone to the Feet of the Lord. Dasara is the festival that celebrates the victory of the forces of the good over the foes that resist the progress of man towards light. The forces of good (Devas) are combating with the forces of evil (Asuras) in every living being and if only they rely on Mahashakti, the great Divine Force that fosters and fends the Universe, they can easily win and reach goal. Festivals like Dasara at Prasanthi Nilayam bring together *sadhakas* from all the continents, irrespective of religion, caste, creed, and colour. They are motivated by the same urge, to involve themselves more and more in attempts to realise their innate divinity. They have met here to enjoy the supreme delight in the holy presence of the Lord and to recognise the unity of all in the Divine atmic splendour. It is to give *ananda* (bliss) to the *bhaktas* (devotees) that I arrange this festival. I have no other wish. Do not muddy the pellucid waters of your faith by the slightest trace of doubt.

Importance of Dasara

During the Dasara festival, the three Goddesses — Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati — are worshipped according to certain traditional practices. The



tenth day of the festival is celebrated as the victory. The celebration has its roots deep in the ancient history of Bharat. In the Dwapara Yuga, when the Pandavas had to spend one year incognito, they hid their weapons (on the advice of Krishna) in a Jammi tree which is thick in foliage and whose branches are filled with latent fire. Vijayadasami was the day on which they retrieved their weapons from the tree and used them to win victory over the Kauravas. In the Treta Yuga, Sri Rama's coronation, after his victorious return to Ayodhya from Lanka, was also performed on Vijayadasami day.

Inner Meaning of Dasara

The term 'Devi' represents the Divine power that has taken a *rajasic* form to suppress the forces of evil and protect the *satvic* qualities. When the forces of injustice, immorality and untruth have grown to monstrous proportions and are indulging in a death-dance, when selfishness and self-interest are rampant, when men have lost all sense of kindness and compassion; the Atmic principle, assuming the form of Shakti, and taking on the *rajasic* quality, seeks to destroy the evil elements. This is the inner meaning of the Dasara festival.

Inner Meaning of Devi Worship on Dasara

When the Divine Goddess is in a dreadful rage to destroy the wicked elements, she assumes a fearful form. To pacify the dreaded Goddess, Her feminine children offer worship to her with red *kumkum* (sacred red powder). The Goddess, seeing the blood-red *kumkum* at her feet, feels assured that the wicked have been vanquished and assumes her benign form. The inner meaning of the worship of 'Devi' with red *kumkum* is that thereby the Goddess is appeased. During the ten days of Dasara, the demons (*rakshasas*) in the form of wicked qualities have been routed. *Rakshasas* do not mean demonic beings. The bad qualities in men are the demons. Arrogance is a demon. Bad thoughts are demons.





Origins of the Veda Purusha Yagna

Sri Ruchir Desai

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It was in the year 1962, while speaking at the inauguration of the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna, that Swami made a declaration: My task is Dharma Samsthapana, Veda Rakshana and Vidwat Poshana.

He has been doing this through various activities all through His life. We witnessed one such activity when we saw the vedam chanting by the children of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School. If any of us have doubts about Veda Samrakshana, we should be put to rest when we see that He has indeed sown the seeds of not merely protecting the Vedas but also propagating the Vedas. Going ahead, we must try to understand the import of the Vedas and try to lead our lives in a way that the vedic teaching expect us to.

Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna and Prasanthi Vidwan Maha Sabha have indeed been two very important pillars for Bhagawan to achieve His task. The Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna is performed keeping in mind the highest traditions of Karma Kanda. While the Yagna has various dimensions to it, resulting in old deities being worshipped and propitiated, the central part of the Yagna is Sri Rudram, the regular chanting of Namakam and Chamakam.

The Veda Purusha Yagna is Karma Kanda at its best. It follows all the aspects of Vedic worship. So much so, that the learned pundits who had come here 56 years ago when the first Yagna took place, and who were renowned and steeped in Vedic tradition, didn't know much about Swami. They had come here because some young Baba had invited priests for carrying on a Yagna. When they were here and started laying down their requirements of what the Yagna should have, to their utter surprise they found that Swami was engaging in a detailed discussion with them. When they asked Swami as to what kind of Yagna he wants, He drew the Yagna Kunda and the entire layout of the Yagna and the pundits were shocked to see that this followed



everything — down to the last detail — that was prescribed in the Vedic lore.

If we say that the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna is following the ritualistic traditions at their best and at its deepest, how is it that the Yagna is also called a Jnana Yagna? The ultimate purpose of the Yagna is welfare of mankind, as Swami puts it. Yagna is a means for humans to connect to the Divine. Yagna is a means for man to propitiate the different aspects of God, and this is where the Namakam comes handy. The Namakam deals in detail with different aspects of Lord Shiva. It describes the various characteristics, various names and various features of the almighty.

The other side of the coin is Chamakam. Chamakam is the verse where the devotee seems to be asking the Lord, I want this, I want that. It seems to be the verse where human desires come out. Swami teaches us that we need those desires to come out, not to satisfy those desires but to overcome those desires. Through the repeated chanting of the Namakam eleven times, the aspirant becomes so immersed in the different aspects, forms and descriptions of the Lord, that with each iteration of the Chamakam, he overcomes his desires. He rises higher than what he is desiring. Ultimately, he offers all his desires and all his bad qualities into the sacrificial fire because he learns to sacrifice. Out of this sacrifice, he gets immortality. That is how this Yagna becomes a Jnana Yagna.

This Yagna teaches us that we have to learn to sacrifice as the scriptures say that sacrifice is the only way to immortality. We are so lucky that the presiding deity, the Veda Purusha is Swami Himself. In doing this, Swami reestablished a tradition which was set by Lord Shiva Himself. Lord Shiva performed the first Rudra Yagna. The Puranas tell us that when Lord Shiva, with the help of Lord Vishnu, finally vanquished Bhasmasura, he performed the Thandava Nrutya.

If we expect our Lord to smile or dance in our hearts, we must remember that all of us have a small bit of Bhasamsura within us. This is the Bhasmasura who destroys all our good thoughts and good deeds. This is the demon



Bhasmasura who vitiates the atmosphere around us vitiating our thinking and dealings with others. It is this Bhasmasura who we need to vanquish. At the end of the Thandava Nrutya, Shiva didn't stop. He was not pleased with vanquishing Bhasmasura. He did that only for the welfare of the mankind and he continued further. He performed the very first Rudra Yagna. At the end of the Yagna, He said that he is doing this Yagna for the welfare of mankind. Millennia later, Bhagawan Baba reestablished the same tradition when He started the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna. As the Veda Purusha, He sat and accepted the Yagna. Isn't Yagna central to the Avatar Himself?

Most of you would have heard the story of Sage Bharadwaja, but it merits a mention again. Sage Bharadwaja realized the depths of the Vedas, the true purport of the Vedas and wanted to achieve mastery over them. He studied the Vedas for a hundred long years but realized at the end that he had not mastered much. He prayed to Indra and was granted an extension. Another hundred years passed and he needed another extension and was granted. At the end of third hundred years, he hadn't mastered much of it and prayed to Indra once again. Then Indra told him that it is difficult to master the Vedas. Indra showed him three mountain peaks and said that Vedas are like these three peaks. Indra said, "What you have mastered in three hundred years is like three handfuls from these three mountains. Instead of trying to master the Vedas, I will teach you a Yagna. Perform this Yagna and you will get the true merit."

Indra explained the procedure of this Yagna and the sage did all the preparations for the Yagna. He wanted Shakti to preside over the Yagna and bless it. With this objective in mind, Sage Bhardwaj goes to Kailasha. He finds the Divine couple in a celestial dance, and waited there in the icy peaks of Kailasha for almost a week. On the eighth day, Shakti sees him, smiles and nods at him but continues the dance. The sage misunderstood that Shakti has not approved his invitation and dejectedly decides to go back. As he turns to go back, a paralytic stroke strikes him. His left side was frozen and paralyzed due to standing there for eight long days. When Shiva and Shakti see this, they immediately come to his aid.



Shiva takes water from his kamandalu, sprinkles it on the left side of Bharadwaja's body and revives him. They assure him that they will come for the Yagna and bless him. The Yagna finally happens with all its glory and splendour. Bharadwaja completes the Yagna and Shiva and Shakti are pleased with his efforts and at the end of the Yagna, they bless him further. They said, "We will be born in your lineage three times, first as the Avatar of Shiva, second as Shiva and Shakti and third as Shakti." Shiva Avatar was Shirdi Baba, Shiva Shakti Avatar is Sathya Sai Baba and finally Shakti will be the third Avatar as Prema Sai.

Shiva says, "As some sort of compensation for the stroke you suffered for making you wait for eight long days in Kailasha, when we are born as Shiva and Shakti Avatar, Shakti will be paralyzed for eight days and at the end of eight days, I would sprinkle water on Shakti and revive her."

That was what the world saw culminating during Gurupoornima in the year 1963. In July of that year, Bhagawan took on the paralytic stroke suffered by a devotee and He refused to divulge any more details of that paralytic stroke as to whose sickness he has taken on. He said that the only refuge of someone who has no one is God Himself and that is the reason He has taken on this sickness. On Gurupoornima day, he finally decided to give Darshan and was brought down from his premises into the Bhajan Hall here. He asked for the mike to be placed before him. He chose to address the audience. Before that, he asked for water and taking that water, he sprinkled this water onto his own left hand and left leg and in a jiffy, all traces of that paralysis which seemed to have afflicted the left side of Bhagawan's body were gone. There was the normal Bhagawan who was able to communicate freely and narrate this entire story to His devotees.

Here was a promise made in the Treta Yuga which bore fruition in the Kali Yuga. Here was Bhagawan demonstrating to all of us that He was the same Shiva Shakti swarupa who had taken Avatar for the welfare of mankind. This is the result that the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna seeks to achieve-welfare of mankind. After all, Bhagawan lived His entire life for the sake of



humanity. He lived His life and gave up His life living for others. He did that with His own example. Even when His body was afflicted, even when He was moving around in wheelchair granting Darshan, He would never think of His pain, He would always be concerned about the welfare of His devotees.

I remember one such occasion when He was going around in the chair and there was this elderly devotee who had come from the US for Darshan. I was sitting a few feet away. Bhagawan came in the chair and had not come in the morning for Darshan. When looking at Bhagawan, we could make out that His face and legs were swollen. He must have been going through a lot of physical pain. This devotee was coming to Swami from the 1960s and Swami knew the entire family very well. This devotee had a letter in His hand and was waiting for a glance or look of recognition from Bhagawan. When Swami saw Him, there was a smile on His face and He directed the chair to be taken towards this devotee. As the chair approached the devotee, Swami asked him, “How is your mother?” We learnt later that she was not well and she was bedridden for quite some time. This gentleman wanted to give the letter and take namaskar but Swami was always enquiring about his mother.

Finally, when He took namaskar, He noticed that Swami’s feet — which would normally be covered by His robe — were swollen. Those tender feet which had been the refuge of so many at different parts of the globe now had their own share of problems because the body had to undergo what it had to undergo. Here was a body which was not undergoing suffering but this body was teaching us how we need to face life. Here was a body which led its entire life right from birth to Samadhi as an example for others. It was not a body which was going through a karma but was teaching us how to face our karma. When this devotee placed his hands on Swami’s feet and saw them swollen, he said, “Swami, are you not well?” Swami smiled back and His answer was, “You didn’t tell me how your mother is?” Swami didn’t answer his question. Being from a devotee family for fifty years, he took the liberty of asking Swami about his health. Swami smiled and replied, “I don’t think about this pain, pain is physical, suffering is mental. The body might have pain but I don’t have any pain. When I turn my attention to other’s pain,



I forget my pain.” This was not Swami talking about his body, it was Swami talking to us about how to handle our karma and pain. When we think about the problems of others, our own problems will vanish.

This was the Swami who lived His entire life for the welfare of mankind. This is what exactly what the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna seeks to do. As Swami says, this is the Yagna for the welfare of mankind. When these offerings go up, they purify the air and clouds and we can see them in the form of rain. During the inauguration of this Yagna He said, “Not only this Yagna, all life is a Yagna. Every human being is performing a Yagna, every human being sacrifices. The mother and father sacrifice for the children. The friend sacrifices for a friend, the individual for the group, the rich sacrifice for the poor and the weak sacrifice for the strong. All these sacrifices are borne out of fear, greed or out of a desire for some result.” Swami said, “We must learn to sacrifice not because it is our duty, but we must learn to sacrifice consciously without expectation of anything in return. If we learn to sacrifice in this way, egoism will disappear and the river will merge into the ocean.”

The Yagna teaches us to sacrifice. Sacrifice is the essence of life, let us ensure that we sacrifice to redeem ourselves. Let us learn to sacrifice so that His life doesn't go in vain. He lived so that we know ourselves and He lived to lift us and join Him where He is.





Divine Message



The primary duty of man is to let his love flow towards the Supreme Divinity. It is extremely useful and beneficial to realize that man is not born to lead a selfish life entirely for himself, but to serve society with the awareness that society is Divinity itself.

Man has to forget himself totally and dedicate himself to the service of society. He should give up all narrow mindedness and offer himself totally in the service of society and nation. Otherwise what is the use of being born as a human being on this earth? What greater message can the Guru give you than this Truth?

Embodiments of Love!

Today, humanity is mistaking that life has been given in order to live totally for selfishness. Thus, it gives up the noble quality of human beings, of service to others.

What has to express itself in human life is the Divine nature of human beings. Creation is only an expression of the will of God.

That is why, it has been given the name *Prakriti*. Every being which has come from this nature and creation should essentially possess the Divine quality (Divine nature).

Man is the very embodiment of this idea manifesting itself as an expression of Divine nature in Divine humanity. Consciousness as found in nature, is not without purpose.

When consciousness is associated with ego, it becomes crooked; when it is associated with Atma, it becomes Divine. In that case, to whom should we offer this consciousness gifted by nature? Certainly not to selfishness or self-interest. It is for dedication to the Divine, *Eshwara*.





As man has developed selfish desires in excess and beyond limits, he has lost his human and Divine nature. He is becoming an animal, a brute and a demon. That is the very reason why, at every step, man is going on the unrighteous path. Every desire is devoid of the future welfare and future progress. Every desire is becoming greed.

Ideas which bring about human welfare are totally absent. Love has lost its presence in the vision of man. Truth is totally disappearing from the words of man. Spirituality is becoming a mere pompous show. Evil qualities like anger and excessive desire are having a free rein. Consciousness is reaching a low level in man. The type of relationship that must exist between men is becoming highly artificial. If truth has to be spoken, one has to say that humanity has disappeared.

Under these circumstances, what is it that man has to achieve? If man has to enjoy peace, happiness and bliss, what is it that he should acquire? This is what has to be looked into and an answer has to be found.

Today, what we have to acquire and achieve is love for God. A number of scriptures and great scholars have declared that God descends on earth in order to remove all evil ones, confer prosperity and happiness on the good and save Dharma. This is not correct. Actually, this is contrary to the existing fact. God descends in order to preach and propagate Love. In order to make people learn how to Love. In order to explain to people what Love truly means. Only when we can acquire such love, all our sorrows will disappear. All the sins will also disappear. Fear vanishes and will become far away from us. Therefore, in the very first instance, we have to cultivate love for God. Where there is love of God, fear of sin will automatically follow like its shadow.

When you have both these things accomplished, then there is morality in society. The most important duty of man is to foster all these three. Love of God, Fear of Sin, Morality in society.





If you want to acquire them, what is the path/way? They mention *Sadhana*. What do you mean by *Sadhana*? *Sadhana* refers to making our goal (of reaching God) closer by our accomplishment. If we desire to get something, we have to take necessary steps/actions in order to reach it. We should also understand the unique features of the object that we desire and try to get faith in it. If you do not have love, you cannot have faith on that. A combination of love and faith will manifest itself as devotion. Through devotion, we can take steps to reach it.

Love is devotion. The faith with which we approach this is *jnana*, wisdom. The actions which are undertaken to experience these things constitute karma. Real worship is a combination of devotion, action and wisdom.





The Greatest Mystery of the Universe

Sri K M Ganesh

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Navaratri is a very auspicious time of the year when we worship the Divine Mother as Durga, who destroys the greatest of difficulties. Durga Durgati Nashini. We also worship goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity and goddess Saraswati, the goddess of learning and knowledge. Swami says that mere worship is not enough. At the time of Dasara, we should offer our *dasha indriyas*, i.e. the five karmendriyas and five jnanendriyas - the five organs of action, the two hands, two feet and the tongue and the five organs of cognition or perception - the eyes, ears, nose, skin and the tongue for taste. When we dedicate this to the Divine, then it is called true worship. Most of us don't want to come out of our comfort zone and do any sacrifice. If there is no urgency to sacrifice, then what should we do?

Swami has told us many times - *Jantunaam, nara janma durlabham* - getting a human birth is a rarest of fortunes. There is one beautiful incident from Bhagawan's life which reinforces this statement. Once Swami came to Kasturi garu, a great devotee and biographer of Swami, and said, "Do you want to know the greatest mystery of the Universe?" Swami said that He will tell him this on the following day. Kasturi garu was thrilled that the Lord Himself is going to reveal the greatest mystery of the Universe first hand to him. There was never a day when Swami would not talk to Kasturi garu. That day, Kasturi garu came and sat in front of the interview room door eagerly awaiting Swami's Darshan. Swami came but didn't even look at him. He took several groups for interviews but was not calling Kasturi garu for an interview.

Finally, Swami went into the Bhajan Hall, took Mangala Arati and retired. Kasturi garu was puzzled as Bhagawan was supposed to reveal the greatest mystery of the Universe. He thought that Swami might reveal it to him in the evening. Swami came and it was an action replay of what happened in the morning. Swami gave more group interviews than usual that day, came



for Bhajans, took Mangala Arati and retired for the day. Kasturi garu was crestfallen. It was a time for introspection, followed by effort to transform ourselves. He thought to himself, “Did I become egoistic that Swami is going to reveal to me something very special?” Such questions started disturbing Kasturi garu. He used to sleep in the portico of the Mandir and that day he slept with tears in his eyes that the Lord of the Universe had promised him that He will reveal the greatest mystery of the Universe and he lost the chance because of his ego. This came out of his introspection and he slept that night.

At around 10 o'clock that night, someone taps him and wakes him up. He sees Swami standing in front of him. Swami says, “Don't you want to know the greatest mystery of the Universe?” “Yes Swami, I want to know,” Kasturi garu replied, with tears in his eyes. Swami took him to His room which was pitch dark. There were only two voices and Swami asked him as to what he is seeing. Kasturi garu said that he is not able to see anything. Swami held his hand and asked him, “What do you see now?” As the words were uttered, the room was filled with light and Kasturi garu saw beings of different shapes and sizes all bowing down to Him. It was an unearthly sight which he was witnessing. Swami said, “Do you know who they are?” Kasturi garu was too overwhelmed by that experience. Swami said, “Each one of them are masters of one Universe each and have come to me to take my guidance. They only seek My Love and only want to hold My hand. The greatest mystery and secret of the Universe is that I am holding your hand.”

Kasturi garu says that holding his hand was symbolic of holding the hand of humanity. To be born as a human being when the cause of all causes, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba chooses to take a human form and to be His contemporary, is the rarest of rare blessings. It is not just taking a human form. Adi Shankaracharya says that the three rare things are – Manushyatwam, Mumukshatwam and Mahapurusha Samsrayaha, i.e. Human birth, and taking birth when the Mahapurusha is walking on the earth; but when the middle one, i.e. desire for liberation is not there, one is losing the greatest of opportunities that you are blessed with. Hence, the reason we sacrifice is



because we are lacking this Mumukshatwam.

Next question comes: How to get this intense pining for the Lord? Some people may confess like Duryodhana - *Janami Dharmasya na cha me pravrutti, Janami Adharmasya na cha me nivrutti*- I very well know what Dharma is, but I am not having the inclination to do what is right; I know what is Adharma but I am not able to stop myself from doing what I am not supposed to do. This unfortunately is the dilemma of the Kali Yuga. Everybody in the Kali Yuga knows what is right and what is wrong but this is the dilemma that one faces. There are many genuine seekers who also ask as to how to develop this *mumuksatwa*. For this Swami has given the path of *sadhana*. Foremost on this path is *namasmarana*, i.e. chanting the name of the Lord.

Once when Swami was talking about the efficacy of chanting the Gayatri mantra, He said, "Human effort is like the cycle. You may be the best cyclist in the world, you may be the fastest cyclist; but a cycle can never beat a train. The train in this analogy of Swami was the *asuric* (demonic) tendencies in man. If you have to beat the train, you have to sit in a vehicle which can go faster than the train. You have to sit in a car or an airplane, which can travel faster than the train."

Many times, devotees complain that after years of *sadhana*, they are being troubled by their old habits. We have to invoke the divine energy of the airplane. Only when we invoke this divine energy, we can overpower the negative energies. There is always a belief in many rational people - *Apna baath Jagannath* - self-effort is all that matters. But self-effort is not enough without Divine Grace. Both have to be there for success.

In Durga Saptashati, we see that mother kills Mahishasura. Yesterday, the speaker mentioned about having a Bhasmasura in each one of us. Bhasmasura is the feeling of ungratefulness which is there in each one of us. When Lord Shiva blessed Bhasmasura with a boon that anyone on whom he lays his hand will become *bhasma*, he runs to try it on Shiva himself. What ungratefulness! If someone hurts a person who has helped him, it is a Bhasmasura quality.



Mahishasura is a demon who is half buffalo and half rakshasa. When Mother attacks him, he changes his form to a elephant, lion, buffalo etc. Mind is like this. It is very difficult to overpower the mind, it keeps changing.

How to tackle an enemy which changes its form every moment? It is beyond the human capacity and that is where you have to look for Divine Intervention and pray to Mother. All of us are facing some *asura* or the other inside us. At the time of Treta Yuga, Rama and Ravana were there. That time, the two forces were separated geographically, Rama was in Ayodhya and Ravana was in Lanka. At the time of Dwapara, the bad and the good were at the same place - Hastinapura. But in Kali Yuga, both the good and the bad forces are within us, hence we have to invoke Divine Energy to conquer the demonic forces. This is a very important lesson: we have to invoke the Divine to conquer negativity.

God created this Universe and it is only He who can take us out of this bondage. Some people genuinely and critically question that if there is no maya, where is the question of coming out of maya. Swami very beautifully answers this in one of the incidents. Swami came to elders and was speaking to them in the portico. He gave a few tasks to a senior devotee. The next day, Swami came and asked whether the tasks have been completed. Being a senior devotee, he had the freedom of taking some liberties with Swami. Out of the chores entrusted to him, he had not done one particular job. When Swami asked about that particular job, this devotee gave a blank expression and said that he forgot. Swami became a little serious and said, "Thousands of people are waiting for my one word, I come to you and am telling you to do this, how can you forget?" This devotee replies, "Old age Swami, that is why I am forgetting." Swami said, "Don't give me those excuses, apologize." The devotee replied, "Swami, not a blade of grass moves without your will, the fact that I forgot is also your will Swami." People around were laughing but Swami was still serious. The devotee continued, "Swami, it was because of your *yogamaya* that I forgot." Then Swami declared, "I am not Maya Swaroop, I am Jyoti Swaroop." He took two steps ahead and came back and said, "Don't blame the sun for the shadow because the shadow is not due



to the sun but the object which is blocking the sunlight and that object is your mind.”

For those people who are trying to find fault in God’s creation, this analogy is very powerful and gives the right perspective that the creator and the creation is flawless. All that has to be rectified is our mind.

The mind has got several layers which are akin to Mahishasura. Mahishasura is half buffalo and half demon. Buffalo is symbolic of extreme *tamas* or laziness. Rakshasa is the symbol of extreme *rajas*. There is nothing wrong in *rajas* or *tamas*. According to Swami, morning 4 AM to 8 AM and evening 4 PM to 8 PM are the sattvic times. 8 AM to 4 PM is *rajasic* period where we do our physical and mental activities. 8 PM to 4 AM is the *tamasic* period.

The excess of one guna is a problem. How to deal with these gunas? We get beautiful insights from the life of Lord Hanuman. When Rama sent Hanuman to find Mother Sita and he took that leap over the ocean, the first obstacle which came was the Mainik parvat. Mainik parvat tells Hanuman, “When Indra was cutting the wings of all mountains, the Wind God protected me by hiding me underwater. As gratitude, I want to offer some service. You must be tired flying all the way, why don’t you take some rest on me?” This Mainik parvat is the symbol of a sattvic obstacle. Hanuman reply was, “I am right now in Rama karya, I can’t stop.” Mainika’s intention was good. In day-to-day life, we also encounter that when we are doing some work, some people try to help. This results in our work getting delayed. They don’t mean anything wrong and have no ill feeling towards us. Hanuman touches Mainik and continues flying, we should also follow Hanuman in such situations.

When he flies further, he meets Surasa. Surasa is a *rajasic* obstacle. There are people who want to destroy you but they don’t come directly to destroy you. She says that Hanuman has to get inside her mouth to go further. We know that getting into her mouth means we will never come out. But Hanuman uses his tact. He increases his size and she also starts increasing the size of



her mouth. Then Hanuman quickly became small, entered her mouth and came out. Hence when you encounter *rajasic* obstacle, you have to use *yukti* or tact. But for Krishna's tactfulness, the Pandavas would have never ever won against the Kauravas.

The next obstacle he faces is Simhika. She had a boon that if she captures a shadow, the bird will come down and she can eat the prey. She caught the shadow of Hanuman. Hanuman didn't wait or negotiate, he just gave a punch, because with *tamasic* obstacles, which are generally within us, we should not negotiate. If you get up in the morning and want to sleep for five more minutes, you fall prey to *tamasic* obstacles. There is not tactfulness with laziness or *tamas*. Hanuman just gave a punch and continued.

When he reached Lanka, he met Lankini which is the embodiment of ego. Ego also deserves the same treatment, no negotiation, and no discussion or tactfulness.

He finally reaches Mother Sita and gives the message of Lord Rama. In the entire journey of Hanuman, we understand how to deal with these gunas. Without understanding of the gunas with just textual understanding, we will not know how to operate in this world. When Rama sent Hanuman on this mission, he had three obstacles. When the father sends his son, he puts obstacles to show his prowess to the world. When he came back after visiting Mother Sita, he had a direct flight, there were no stopovers. After the work given by Rama was over, Hanuman tells Sita that he is feeling hungry and wanted something to eat. We have our Sai Baba, the Divine Father and Mother as our God.

There is one more factor which we have to understand, in the case of gunas. If we are predominantly *rajas* or *tamas*, what is the hope of coming out of this? If we are programmed like that, how to change ourselves? Here comes faith. Faith is more powerful than all of nature.

Once a person fell from a cliff and in the nick of the moment, he was able



to catch a branch and was hanging on it all night. It was pitch dark and he didn't know where he was. He cried out for help. In desperation he called out, "God if you are there, please save me." There was an *akashvani* from the sky, "Leave the branch." He was not convinced to what God was saying and started searching for someone else. He kept on hanging the whole night and the next day, the headlines in newspapers read - A man froze to death, two feet above the ground.

Faith is to believe in something which you can't see. The gift of it is you start seeing what you believe. That is how you have to be positive. For that matter, ignorance is a blessing because without ignorance, what was the chance that we will exercise our faith.

But the ultimate benefit is in doing a series of sacrifices. Swami says that life is a continuous stream of action or karma. Life is like a seesaw, sometimes we are happy and sometimes we are sad. One part of the seesaw that doesn't move is the central part. The more we do these sacrifices, the more we tend to go to the centre and the more we achieve equanimity. The more we indulge in the worldly pleasures, the more we are drifted away from the centre and the size of the seesaw increases. Every time we indulge in worldly pleasures, we feel that the oscillation of the life is greater. As Krishna describes in the Bhagavad Gita - The one who is the same in heat or cold, pain or pleasure, he alone is fit for immortality.

With prayers to Bhagawan that he gives us the *sadbuddhi*, *shakti*, *vairagya* and all the good virtues, so that we can become more and more near and dear to Him.





Divine Message



Today, man is developing duality. Duality can never free you from sorrow and misery. It will only multiply sorrow and misery. It will distance you from bliss and joy. Therefore, we should make efforts in order to reach that state of *Advaita* (Oneness). That unity, unifying factor, is love alone. The path, the means, the instrument to attain love is love alone. As we go on developing love more and more, our joy also grows more and more. Today we are making our love narrower. We are setting limits to love - only for myself and my people. You go beyond yourself and your family, right up till the end of humanity. Love everyone as the embodiment of God. It is only love which is found in everyone, in different measures.

The same thing has been expressed as: it remains the smallest of the smallest and the largest of the largest. It remains as smaller than the smallest objects. It remains bigger than the biggest in the mightiest of objects. It also remains as the witness to all the things that are taking place in the big and small as well. That is *Atma* which is also *Brahman* (the Supreme Divinity). The *Upanishads* have declared that nature functions naturally - automatically and spontaneously. There is no need (and it is not possible either) for anyone to improve on it or destroy it.

This is the nature of *Prakruti*. Nature in a way is the very aspect of the *Atma*, immortality itself, and is thus changeless. To bring out this Divine aspect in Nature and make it manifest, all things have been endowed with certain *gunas* (qualities) Those three are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. If you want these three qualities to manifest in nature, there is need for some forms. Those forms are *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Maheshwara*. *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Maheshwara* are not simply those bodily forms. They are only the embodiment of attributes.

The concepts of *Brahma*, *Eshwara* and *Vishnu* are the sacred expression of these three qualities. Scriptures which declare that *Brahma* has four faces, a specific form and undertakes creation are not correct in that sense. These three forms are a description of the qualities that we embody.





There are five natural powers - the five elements. The earth, water, fire, air and space (sky). If you want to understand the process of creation, the order is reversed. It starts from sky, then air, fire, water and earth. Nature can be understood in two different ways based on the process of creation and based on our own experience. If you apply the same principle for the order of Brahma, Vishnu Eashwara, it gets reversed when viewed in relation to creation. What is meant by Eshwara?

Easwaras sarvabhootaanaam briddese Arjuna thishtathi - Gita declares that Eshwara resides in every heart.

He is the one who lights every heart. The power and principle of Eshwara is residing in everyone's heart. The Vedas call this Eshwara in the heart as the Atma.

From this heart has come the mind. This mind may be compared to the principle of Vishnu. Vishnu refers to an all-pervasive entity. Mind is all pervasive - found everywhere in the world. Mind has been given the name Vishnu. People believe that Brahma has taken birth from the navel of Vishnu. The 'word' has taken birth from thought (mind) and thus, the faculty of speech is described by Brahma. This Brahma has been described as the very embodiment of sound - sound in all its forms, manifestations and descriptions. So, what is meant by Eshwara, Vishnu and Brahma? Eshwara is heart. Vishnu is mind. Brahma is word.

If you bring all these together - combine them - that is the Atma. When you say that Brahma is Guru, Vishnu is Guru, Maheshwara is Guru, this is how you have to understand it. This sloka, which has a profound and sacred inner significance, has been given a distorted meaning, elevating the role of the ordinary teacher, fragmenting the Divine and missing the basic truth of oneness expressed in it. What do you mean by this sloka? It only means that the 'word' is Brahma and should be considered as Guru. The Mind is Vishnu





and should also be considered as Guru. Heart, as Eshwara, must also be considered as one's Guru.

In fact, the *Parabrahma Swaroompa*, which is the combination of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara is represented by the unity of speech, mind and heart. This should be revered as Guru. What do you mean by the principle of the Guru? It is the power of dispelling darkness. So long as you have got these three qualities, you cannot be free from darkness. Only when you transcend these three natural qualities, you become Guru. If you learn to combine the three qualities and experience that Unity, that is the true teaching of Guru.

We should understand that God resides in everyone - that is the unifying factor. When you give up this unity and develop diversity, then you tend to become sorrowful and miserable. It is on account of the varied functioning of the three *gunas* that the process of creation, growth and dissolution takes place. For the entire creation, these three qualities are the very foundation, the very basis and the very life breath. Nature blossoms and gets transformed by the changes in these three *gunas*. The entire universe is a combination of these three qualities in different proportions.





Divine Message



The Vedas have expounded all these three qualities (sattva, rajas and tamas) in different ways. The entire creation is a combination of these three qualities alone. These three qualities have also been described and associated with three colours. In the world today, there is a mistaken notion that Sattva Guna represents Vishnu. Sattva Guna is not truly Vishnu. Sattva Guna is the Eshwara principle. This transcends all illusion. This is always in a state of yogic sleep, enjoying bliss all the while.

Pure Sattva is the principle of Eshwara. It is this principle of Eshwara that makes every human heart blossom and shine. For Sattva Guna, white colour is associated. Rajo Guna is associated with different kinds of desires, consequently excitement. Rajo Guna is truly Vishnu and not Brahma as commonly misunderstood. Vishnu is associated with the conch, disc, mace and lotus. The Vishnu principle refers to the one which is embellished by decorations. That is the reason why Vishnu has been given the name Vishwambara. Vishwambara means one who protects...the One who takes care of the Universe. Who is the one who takes care of the kingdom? The ruler. The ruler (protector) is having the name - Raja. Thus, he is associated with Rajo Guna. Vishnu is associated with Rajo Guna which is depicted by red colour. Brahma is always associated with Tamo Guna. Tamo Guna is associated with foolishness. Not merely that, it is also full of darkness. It is full of 'I and 'Mine'. Creation takes place only when there are those feelings of ego and attachment.

If there is no 'I and 'mine' creation does not take place at all. It is this ego and attachment that are qualities of Tamo Guna. For this Tamo Guna, black is the indicative colour. White, black and red are therefore the most important colours.

All colours are merged in these three. In the world, people are created 'white', 'red' or 'black' (not skin colour but qualities). All the variety we find is the combinations of the three are in different proportions. There is only one way of bringing about unity in this kind of diversity with reference to qualities





(colours).

On the basis of enquiries and experience, sages have expounded different paths to achieve this.

There are five paths: *Satyavati*, *Angavati*, *Anyavati*, *Nidanavati* and *Swarupatmakam*.

Satyavati is a particular type of Sadhana? What is this Sadhana then?

This path discovers the truth that - just as butter is present in every drop of milk subtly, so also Divinity is present in every living being and in the entire creation. The Satyavati Sadhana path shows that Divinity is found in every heart, Divinity is all pervasive, Divinity is the one that brings about unity among all. We should not practice any differences between person to person because God is residing in every heart and is all pervasive. The inner significance and correct meaning of Satyavati path is to recognize the basic truth that God is the resident of every heart and conduct oneself in tune with this conviction.

Next one is Angavati Sadhana. There are five elements - sky, air, fire, water and earth. In all these, God's aspects are found. In the Akasa, it is in the form of sound - the primordial Omkara. The basis and the foundation for the sound is Akasa. This sound of Pranava has emanated from the sky. The next is air. Air has the power of life in it. In air, God is living as the form of *Prana*. It is common experience that whenever a person is finding it difficult to breathe, he is made to lie down and is fanned in order to provide some air circulation for him to breathe. In air, God is living as the life-energy power (*Prana*). In fire, God lives as the principle of awakening. Wherever you come across fire, even if it is small, you become alert. You become alert and cautious the moment you come near fire. God is present in fire in the form of this Awareness.

In water, God lives as *Prajna* (Constant Integrated Awareness). That is the meaning of the statement, *Prajnanam Brahma*. This *Prajna* (constant integrated awareness) arises out of water. When a person swoons or becomes unconsciousness, water is put on the face of the person in order that he





regains conscious awareness. The fifth is nature or Prithvi in which God is present as Chaitanya (Consciousness).

The power of Prajnana (constant integrated awareness)

The power of Jagruth (awakening)

The power of Chetana (consciousness)

The power of Shabda (sound)

The power of Jiva or Prana (life-force)

In all these five elements, these are the aspects of God present.

Those people who believe and worship the five elements as parts (Anga) of God, are described as sadhakas following the Angavati path.

The third one is Anyavati path. People who follow this Anyavathi path, take a few insignia in a particular form of God (eg. Vishnu or Shiva). Most people identify Shiva, for example, as the one who has three eyes and who has the trident. When you think of Rama, you invariably associate him with the bow. To think of Krishna is invariably associated with the flute and the peacock feather. Anyavathi path is one which identifies God with some special physical features and worships.

Then, Nidhanavati. The fourth one is Nidhanavati, which is generally followed by most people even today. This Nidhanavati path is based upon the nine types of devotion - Sravanam (Listening), Kirtanam (Singing), Vishnusmaranam (Contemplation), Paadasevanam (Serving), Vandanam (Salutation), Archanam (Offering), Daasyam (Servitude), Sneham (friendship) and Atmanivedanam (Surrender).

The fifth one is *Swarupatmaka Jnanam*. The Bhagavad Gita has expounded and explained this particular path. It says that every head and limb of every being belongs to God - meaning every being is Divine. Under this, one considers all the feet as His, all hands as His, all heads as His and all eyes are His. Everything is Divine. The sum and substance of this is - every human being must be considered as the very embodiment of God. All are the very embodiments of Divinity. We should recognize the fact that all humanity has





originated from Divinity only and therefore recognize every human being as Divine.

Embodiments of Divine Love!

Those who cannot recognize even humanity in humans, how can they see the Divine there? In the first instance, we must make an effort to recognize the humanity in man. Then only we will be able to recognize the Divinity in us. This is true education.





Faith in His Divinity

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I pray that all of us get this realization that it is He who experiences, it is He who gives the experience, He who speaks and it is He who listens in the many forms gathered here. Let me begin with a Chinna Katha which Swami used to narrate. There was an old businessman who had the habit of going for a Gita Parayanam every week. He continued this habit very religiously for 15 to 20 years. One day, he had a very important business assignment and he realized that he has to miss the parayanam. He read in the scriptures that even if you aren't able to, if your son does it, you get the merit of it. He calls his young son and asks him to attend this satsang on his behalf.

The son agrees and as he is about to start, the old businessman takes his car and dashes to the Satsang Hall, even before his son could reach there or even before the start of the satsang. He calls his master aside and says, "Master, you know I have this very important assignment today because of which I will be breaking this continual attendance of Gita Satsang. I just came to tell you that in my place, my son is attending the satsang. Please, just for today, can you avoid speaking about Vairagya, because, you know, my son is very young." The master laughs and says, "Foolish fellow, for twenty years you have been attending this satsang and look at what has happened to you, this is your state! What do you expect to happen to this young man in one session?"

This is our predicament. We get into doing the rigmarole of doing the same thing again and again...we start with a Divine purpose but forget the purpose as we go about the task. We get involved in a mechanical way. This is not what it should be. Whatever we do, we must remind ourselves of the purpose of doing that activity. Whatever activity we start will have a sacred purpose but it loses its sacredness during the course of the activity.

Today is the sacred Mahasaptami day of the Devi Navaratri.



*Ya Devi Sarva Bhootashu Vidya roopena samstitha
Namastasye Namastasye Namastasye Namaha*

Today in many parts of India, Mother Goddess Saraswati is worshipped. Students in those parts put their books and instruments in front of the Goddess hoping that her benediction will fall upon them. Swami has reminded us again and again- *sa vidya ya vimuktaye* - education is that which liberates or grants your freedom. It is very difficult to understand because we don't know what this freedom or liberation means. Vidyarthi is one, according to Swami, who wants to attain that state of freedom. How many of us qualify to be Vidyarthi; forget becoming teachers? Swami reminds us that the ultimate purpose of life is to attain that complete freedom. Coming back to our mundane world, we won't understand what that purpose means.

Swami gives a beautiful Chinna Katha of a thief in the garb of a great saint. He sat in a Durga temple always maintaining *mounam* as that was the best he could do. As he sat there maintaining *mounam*, people came and started offering cash and kind, much to his satisfaction. As he sat there, Mother Durga decides to expose him to himself. When God decides to expose us to ourselves, it takes some effort to accept it. She speaks from behind the idol as this man was sitting in silence. She says, "O young man, I am mighty pleased with you, come let me merge you in Me." That was it, this man got up and ran for his life because he didn't know what that means. We used words like merger, liberation; at least I still don't know what that means. This thief didn't want to merge his life with the Divine, he had a beautiful life to live. If God comes and poses the same question to me...to come and merge with Him and start a new story, a new beginning, I don't know what that means. I speak mere hollow words. This thief was scared of liberation as he didn't know what it means to merge with Durga Devi there, that too appearing so terrible in Her form.

We who have lived with the living Divinity - Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba - for us it is not so difficult to feel that living always in the Divine presence possibly will make us happy. We are so fortunate that Bhagawan took this



Avatar in this age to remind mankind of the great good fortune. Swami says in one discourse that God incarnates to instill love for God in man so that when Devi speaks from the idol, man will not run for his life. He will say: Yes, I am ready.

We can narrate countless experiences where devotees have felt this love and compassion so that they can understand that happiness is union with God. What a state it would be if we had all our desires fulfilled! What if every desire arising in our mind, now or in future...all the craving for wealth, power and what not...if all the happiness of all these events put together can give a billion times more than that? The Vedas say that 10^{18} times the happiness of one manushya is Brahmananda. If something can give me that happiness and that peace of mind isn't it going to be really peaceful?

We needed a Divine form like Bhagawan Baba to make us experience that little bit of divinity, even though we had read all these things in the scriptures. Way back in 1982, during the 12th class winter vacation, I was going home for the first time. One of my classmates and I decided that we will go to Puttaparthi, take Swami's blessings and only then proceed to our so-called home towns. We took the night train to Dharmavaram. 2.30 AM we were in Dharmavaram. We slept in the platform. Early morning at 5 AM we took a bus and reached and right there, as we entered the portals of Prasanthi Nilayam at 6 AM in the morning, we happened to meet a very senior teacher from the Brindavan campus. He said, "What is it, why are you both here? Yesterday Swami had sent word that no Brindavan boy should come to Prasanthi Nilayam before going for vacation. They should directly go to home. The warden has forgotten to tell you, now everybody will be taken to task." He continued, "I suggest you one thing, go to East Prasanthi, go inside and from the window have Darshan and then go back as soon as you can."

We were dejected and we were freshers and didn't understand what exactly can happen. We hid behind the windows and had His Darshan. Sai Kulwant Hall was not there that time. In the very next instant, we realized that this senior teacher was rushing towards East Prasanthi. He was beckoning us



and we came down. He then said, “Something very interesting happened. Swami called me for an interview and told me that two boys have come from Brindavan and there are going to Delhi today, give them this Vibhuti prasadam and tell them to sit for Darshan in the evening. That is Swami’s love and concern. As we experience his human concerns, it slowly starts developing what the scriptures call love for God. It starts with liking, loving is a high word which we misuse. We feel like being in His company.

Once I was sitting beside Swami in the interview and another boy was sitting in front of Him. Swami started scolding this boy in such a way that I thought that it was the end for this boy. When Swami was so furious, I saw that this boy was shaken. He started sobbing and a tear drop came out. Can you believe it because Swami’s reaction suddenly changed? Swami stopped the scolding immediately and the next moment he forgot the entire thing. Is that all it takes to please God? Can one sincere tear drop can make God come down from that formidable state to a loving state? It is for us to think because loving God comes to us naturally...living with Swami. Swami's life is a testimony to His message.

How many of us are aware of everything other than what Swami did physically, like how He suffered for others, how He led his life? How many of us know about His concern for others? For over forty years, Swami lived in a small room in the Prasanthi Mandir. All the glitter that we see in Prasanthi Nilayam, didn’t come about just like that. Swami was absolutely against it. He never allowed anyone to give a single naya paisa to Him, except for those devotees who asked Swami to accept these things or they would give up their lives. We should thank such devotees.

Just to please them, one by one, He allowed people to build these edifices even though He remained detached, living as a recluse. He lived like a prisoner in His house. I can’t do it even today. The boys who lived upstairs with Swami used to tell us that Swami would get up 4.30 in the morning and have a bath with a torch light in His hand. If He would switch on the bathroom light, people will be aware that He was awake and they would start hovering



around and start searching and waiting for one glimpse if He comes out. He didn't want to trouble others out of His concern for others. He troubled Himself with a torch light to avoid trouble to His devotees. How many of us know that Swami used to cut the nails of His toes so deep that it used to hurt him? Sometimes they would bleed but what was His concern- He knew that many devotees would stretch out their hands in haste and try to touch His lotus feet and He didn't want to hurt them. That was the love and concern that Bhagawan had for mankind.

He lived a life of suffering and forbearance in His childhood due to His love for mankind. Let us come back to present, because if I start talking about how Swami suffered for the mankind, books will not be enough. Each one of us will have different tales to tell as on this.

Just last year, one of our alumni of the Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School did very well in medicine and got a chance to go to Harvard Medical School, Boston, USA for his internship. He was returning from Boston and booked a Metro taxi to the Boston Logan airport in the afternoon. The taxi driver happened to be a tall, dark American. As he got down at the airport and opened his wallet to give him the \$60, this American sees Bhagawan's photo in his wallet and says, "Who is that man?" This boy got scared because some of these people are known to be unruly sometimes. The alumnus felt some kind of eagerness in the driver's voice and said, "He is our spiritual guru, and in India, we worship Him as God."

The moment he said that this man started crying. Thousands of miles away in America this man said, "He is God for me as well." He continued, "I am surviving only because of Him. Every month He comes and gives me the money for my survival. If I get a future birth, I want to earn enough money to get an Indian passport so that I will come and see Him." The boy had not told Him about 2011.

That is Swami! We do not know in how many nations and how many ways Swami is operating and helping people. I know of a person who was in



contact with someone in Brazil. That person tells my acquaintance that Sai Baba appeared in her home town in Brazil. At first, she thought that it was a ghost and after a conversation with this man she realized that it was Sai Baba. Sai Baba tells her, “Move to the Congo in Africa and serve this tribe and I will also come there, visit and help you.” This couple have shifted to Congo and they say that Baba is visiting them and help serving this absolutely downtrodden tribe. That is the love and concern of Sai Baba for mankind.

What is it that prevents us from following Him? Swami once told me, “Boys like Me, but they don’t love Me. Loving is different from liking, if you love, you must follow. I love my pet cat and dog but I don’t follow it. If we love the Lord, we have to follow His message. His life is His message. Look at what He did for mankind. We will be surprised and every man in every profession will get his message. If something stops us, it is our lack of faith. We don’t have the faith that He is all powerful and that He will come to our rescue. We don’t have the faith that He knows every inch of us. We don’t have the faith that He loves us and He will save us.

There was a boy who was doing a job and wanted to come to Prasanthi Nilayam to have Baba’s Darshan. He knew that his boss would not permit him. One day he decides that come what may, I will go for Swami’s Darshan at the cost of his job. When he goes back, lo and behold, the boss fires him and his job is gone. His job was gone but his faith was still alive. In three days’ time, he got a new job which paid him three times more. That is Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Even if we give up a little bit for Him, He will give us back multifold.

He has told us (thumping on the discourse table):

Namakka chedinavaru ee lokamulo unnaru kani nammi chedinavaru ee lokamulo leru leru leru.

There may be many who have suffered to due lack of faith but those who have suffered with faith are none, none, none.



That is the voice of the Supreme Lord of the Universe. Yet we lack faith - we are not ready to make that jump when He says. We are not ready to jump when He says come, and I will let you merge in Me.

Last year, one day, I happened to miss coming for Bhajans (having the sacred duty of being a Bhajan coordinator) due to some work. I went and did Bhajan in my room and I felt peaceful and happy. I thought to myself, "Swami why not do Bhajans here, whenever I am late. After all, these are not those times when we can see you sitting on the chair." This thought crossed my mind and I just brushed it aside. That night, I got a call from someone that I was not able to pick up. I saw it in the morning and called him back. I didn't know who he was but we had met once, about six months ago. He said, "Sir, Swami came in my dream yesterday." Now, this happened just the day after I got the thought of doing Bhajans at the hostel. This example is evidence of how the sequence of events are planned by Bhagawan Himself. He wanted to give me a message and message for all mankind. The boy continued, "Swami told me: Tell Shailesh that I am still sitting for Bhajans in the hall. Don't ever imagine that because this chair is empty and you can't see the form and don't imagine that this is just a Samadhi."

Samadhi is a very funny word for Bhagawan because the Shuka Nadi says: Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was and is at all times in a state of Nirvikalpa samadhi. Ramakrishna Paramahansa says in his gospel - When I went to Nirvikalpa Samadhi, time and space disappeared. This was the state where Swami was at all times. Can I call this Mahasamadhi. At best, we have chosen to call it Sai Sannidhi. It is just a reminder of our proximity to the Lord.

In 2014, one of our alumnus and his sister from Mumbai come to Prasanthi Nilayam and as his sister goes to this so-called Samadhi to take blessings, somebody from behind pats her and says, "There is Vibhuti on your shoulder." This sister covered it up with a *chunni* and walked out. As she was walking out, she realized that she had a gold chain with a Ganesha locket on her neck which was full of Vibhuti. That is what the Sannidhi can do to somebody. It does different things to different people. Let us not for a moment feel that

this Sai Baba is elsewhere. For those who are self-realized, He is everywhere, for those who don't believe Him, He is nowhere, and for us devotees there is a dilemma - Is He in the Samadhi or on the chair?

If we can have that faith and love that Swami will take us across this ocean of life, we will become true Vidyarthis. The meaning of Vidya will be satisfied and the purpose of this grand University will be served if at least some of its students reach that stage of oneness with the Divine Lord. All we need is the love and faith.

All I want is your love my child
All I want is your faith
All I want is your Love in God
No matter what's your faith

So says Baba Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Baba my Lord.
Why fear when I am here!





Divine Message



Education can make every person compassionate and kind. Prayer is not aspiring and begging. Prayer is an index of the experience of Atmic bliss. It is a symbol of experiencing the Divine. It is experiencing the infinity. It is getting drenched and drowned in Divine delight. It is no use of praying without a heart. God is prepared to accept a heart without words but not words without a heart. He is called *Hrudayesha*. Only when we have faith that God is the indweller of everyone's heart, we will be able to conduct ourselves well. Whomsoever you criticize, you are criticizing God. Whomsoever you love, you are loving God. Develop therefore, the principle of love in you. We should never allow this demonic jealousy to enter us. Man's heart which gives room for jealousy will make him give up all wisdom and take to the wrong path. There is one more thing. For this disease, no medicine will work, no doctor can cure It can never be cured by any time of treatment. That is *Ahamkara* (ego).

As long as man has ego and jealousy in him, it is impossible for him to allow divinity to blossom in any way. Once these two take possession of man, he forgets humanity in him. He can never recognize the demonic nature. We should consider the body as a temple. In this temple of the body, in the sanctum of the heart, there resides divinity. Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara, in the form of the *Gunas* reside in the heart. It is a sign of ignorance to think that Brahma, Vishnu and Eshwara are in their own worlds. If the Gods also have their own external places to reside, then what is the difference between them and humans? If there is that kind of difference between Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara (in the place where they reside), in what way can they be different from human beings. All these three Gods are residing in the human heart in the form of sattva, rajo and tamo qualities.

This temple of the physical body is not a static one. It is a moving temple. It is in this context we should recognize that God is always with us, inside us, above us, below us and around us. We are the very embodiments of God. Only when we go thus far, we can recognize the full divinity in us





and we will enjoy the bliss of divinity in ourselves. We can also recognize fullness in us. Without making such progress, if we remain where we are, entertaining doubts endlessly, how can we make any progress at all. We will remain doubting Thomases. We should recognize the truth that we are God. We should conduct ourselves so that every action proves that faith.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma!

We are doing various sadhanas. It is time to practice. Enough of all sadhana. We should practice now. We should prove the unity of thought word and deed. Then only can you become a proper man - by the proper study of mankind. If you cannot unify your word, thought and deed and (instead) make them go in three directions, you are a bad person. It is with reference to (the unity of) our heart, our head and hands we should prove ourselves as an ideal.

Today, all our spirituality is becoming a big show. We are delivering very big speeches. We are undertaking service. We are also doing bhajans. And many more sadhanas are undertaken. Without bringing about unity of thought, word and deed, what is the use of doing any number of things, anywhere? We should experience the unity of sattva, rajas and tamo gunas. Then only we will be full of bliss. Then only we can get the vision of Atma. Atma cannot be found in a separate place. Atma is not one which moves from one place to another place. We should not consider that God comes from one place to another to give *Darshan*. When God is all pervasive, where is the need for Him to travel?

Divine power is one which does not have either 'coming' or 'going'. When we practice things properly, we become entitled to experience bliss. There is need for unity. The entire bliss lies in unity. Unity is joy, enthusiasm and courage (because there are people backing you). Unity brings about welfare. Any stupendous and herculean task can be accomplished. With unity, we can achieve any task (however difficult). We see even small ants, and by coming together, we can kill a big snake also. If there is unity among humanity, is there any work that cannot be accomplished? When can we get that unity? Only when we purify our hearts, we can achieve that kind of unity. Only





when we purify our hearts can divinity get reflected there.

Unity leads to purity; Purity leads to divinity. Instead of that, we only get divided basing things on community differences - (he is mine and he is not mine), how can we have prosperity and joy? Only when we have these three, will the nation be prosperous and all will have welfare. Give up this narrow mindedness. Develop love towards all people. It is not crooked love (lust and attachment). There should not be any enmity and hatred. We should develop this kind of love, free from enmity and wickedness. Only then will our lives become sanctified, divine and we enjoy unity and bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

In the name of Guru Poornima, we should not get bound by wrong understanding of Guru as some person. There is only one Guru - God. Who is that? Yourself!

That Guru, in the form of Divinity, is residing in you. But you are searching for the Guru in the outside world. Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara are the qualities embedded in you. These qualities can destroy you or lift you to an elevated state. If your behaviour and conduct are okay, it becomes the Vishnu principle and provides protection. Sin does not exist in a separate land by itself. It is associated to the type of action performed. God does not dwell in a different country or nation. God is associated with the type of action you perform. Sin or divinity are associated with the type of action that you perform. Good action is associated with divinity; bad with sin. We should believe this in fullness.

For my good or bad, it is my conduct that is responsible. For my downfall or my uplift, it is only my behaviour which is responsible. You have to assure yourself and correct yourself that you should always have good qualities so that your life is happy. If you want to free yourself from misery and sorrow and have a happy life, your conduct and behaviour must be good.





Divine Message



If you were to examine the stomach, it is only a basket containing dirty excreta and urine. If you take the body, it is only a dump of useless and bad, odorous things. But, this very body is strangely the house and the home for the Atma. Do not forget this word of Sai.

Embodiments of love!

Every human being is aspiring to have joy and delight - not sorrow or sadness. Man has been making ceaseless efforts day and night, in order to have this unbroken joy. But he has not been able to attain the joy which he aspires for.

What is the reason? The reason for this state of affairs is that he is deluding himself that he is this physical body and his sense organs. In order to satisfy the physical body and sense organs, he makes ceaseless efforts to get objects which can give him satisfaction and joy. But the joy which he is searching for is not available in the external world. The joy is not found in objects of the senses also. The joy which he looking for is not found either in the objects or in the people. If he is making efforts in this wrong direction of finding joy where there is no joy at all, how can he succeed in his efforts? Keeping this in view, it has been declared, "Oh man! You cannot get the joy which you are aspiring for either in the objects or individuals or matters which you have."

That joy which you are ceaselessly searching for and yearning, is you yourself. Your very form is that joy. The vedas have declared that it is utter ignorance to search for such joy in the external world though you are the very embodiment of that joy, delight and bliss. All the sense objects, the entire world, all the forms are all transitory. Whatever you are seeing external to you as objects, they are constantly undergoing change. It is foolish to expect to find permanent joy in objects, people and matters which constantly go on changing. The vedas have also cautioned us that we can find such permanent joy only in the Atma which is permanent and based on Truth. Searching for joy in external world can only give temporary joy - not permanent joy. Man must be ready to look for such joy within himself. Only then can he can experience the true joy he





is looking for.

The infant has all confidence of the mother and enjoys all her protection and bliss. It sleeps in the arms of the mother. The child would not like to leave the mother even for a moment. He firmly believes that he has all the joy only with the mother. As he grows in age, he thinks that there is joy in the toys of play and goes ahead in that way. He forgets the arms of the access to the mother very soon. He firmly believes that it is only the toys which can confer on him joy. As days roll by and he grows in age, things change for him. He enters into the field of education and learning. Once he comes in contact with books for studying, he gives up the toys with which he played. He considers study books as very important. He firmly believes that it is education which can give him joy in life. In order to get such joy, he gets immersed in the study of books. He also believes that such study will confer on him future joy. As days roll by, his desires multiply. He gives up books. He aspires to get married.

Once he gets his wife, he considers his wife as everything and forgets all else. Once he enters into family life, financial difficulties chase him. In order to solve these financial problems, he seeks a job and tries to get some joy. Then the problems increase at home. After he gets a child or two, he will not get a proportionate promotion in the office. There will be a mismatch between his income and expenditure. Increasing expenditure but constant income. In order to increase his income to match expenditure, he undertakes to work overtime and extra. Even as he struggles like this, old age comes and overtakes him. Once he gets old, even his own wife and children don't care for him. His own children transgress and disobey his words. He becomes dependent. Then he becomes a slave to a number of difficulties and problems.

“Oh God! I thought of getting joy and abandoned my mother's arms. I also gave up all my toys which I thought gave me joy. Gradually, whatever I thought was a source of joy, I gave up all that. All those things which I deluded myself as the source of joy, became sources of sorrow.”





Under those circumstance, as he has nothing else, he goes, as the last resort, to the Lord and prays to Him. Man can get true and permanent joy only in divinity. All other types of joy are temporary and transient. It is necessary to recognize for us, that a man can get real joy which he aspires only when he takes to spiritual life.





The Mother Divine

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The word mother in itself brings multiple images into our minds. The soft and tender hands that push food into our reluctant mouths when we were infants, the soft *pallu* which was our defense against the entire world, the warm embrace which magically wiped all our heartaches, truly the word mother is magical. They say that the love of the Divine Mother is a thousand times that of the physical mother. But how does one imagine the faceless presence, the armless embrace? How does one understand a love so big? It is not difficult because Swami has shown us the Divine love. So, it is apt that when we are worshipping the Mother Divine, we ruminate such moments of Divine Love of our Lord Sai.

They saw that the love of a physical mother is essential for the development of the child. Research proves this, then what to say of the Divine Mother. Without Her Love, is any development even remotely possible! Hence the Love of the Divine Mother becomes a setting where virtue grows. It is because of Her tolerance, Her forbearance, Her endless and bountiful love for us that spills in nature from Her that we find sustenance, growth and development.

Swami was often asked - Why should education be given free to the students, why should medical care be given free, after all we live in a world where there is little occasion for such acts. They are not valued if they are given free. That's what our mind tells us. But Swami would insist - they are my children, how can I charge my own children? When this love is given to the students or the patients with the richness of Bhagawan's Love, it acts like a catalyst and creates certain actions and emotions which we term as virtue.

Take a simple situation. When students pass out of our institutions, when patients return to their place after being cured, they carry in their hearts a very warm love: the love they received from the Divine Master. So, they



come again and again. They don't call their institution an alma mater but all the Love of my Mother. So, they come again and again through various vicissitudes of life. Because this is not a relationship which is based on barter or transaction and it is not even an exchange of values, it is a one way love from God to His children.

If you look from the point of view of people like us who get the bountiful opportunity to work in such institutions, how does that benefit us? They say teaching, medicine and seva are noble. This nobility becomes a reality to us because we serve in that ambience of love which He created. As a teacher, if I chastise my student accompanied by His love and my love, they will listen. If the doctor has to decide on the line of treatment, he doesn't have to check on the patient's medical insurance or whether the patient can afford this treatment. The treatment can be given because it is in the setting of His love. Therefore, all of us can practice virtue only because our Divine Mother gives us the setting in which we can learn these virtues.

The other quality of the Divine Mother is that she sanctifies. Sri Aurobindo says - If the Divine cosmic consciousness has to descend into the human heart, we need to surrender to the Divine Mother. She is the one who prepares the cave of the heart for such high frequency of Divine vibrations. She is the one who purifies our impulses and cleanses us so that we are made ready for the Divine power.

The Divine Mother is also called Shakti. She is the energy which courses into our body. She is the Will behind our will power, she is the thought in the mind. Everything in this creation is permeated by Her, say the scriptures. To amplify this point, I want to share a story which my mother wrote to me very recently and it forms a case analysis to understand this principle. There is a surgeon who is extremely successful in his profession and has amassed a lot of wealth. He had a very rich house and multiple cars and in general lived a life of plenty. It so happened that his friend invited him to attend a wedding in an interior village. Our surgeon agreed to attend it. His wife and daughter took one of their swanky cars, it was fuelled and serviced and made that long drive to the village.



The wedding went on well and everybody enjoyed it. While they were returning, the gracious host packed a lot of food and stowed it into the car. As the car was returning, they took some advice from the people and got on a road which they couldn't recognize. As they drove between fields and arid land, it was dark and suddenly the car stopped. The surgeon got down, opened the bonnet, and peered in. He was a good surgeon but not a good mechanic. He couldn't fix it. He then went and sat in the car wondering what to do next and whom to call. It was dark and save the moonlight, there was nothing to light up the place. Around him, he could see arid land with thorny bushes. Suddenly he spied a person walking towards them from the opposite direction. He namelessly felt a twinge of fear in his heart. He wondered that when you are stranded and see another human being, you should feel happy, but why did he feel this fear.

Obeying that impulse, he centrally locked all the doors and drew up the windows. The villager came and knocked on the glass and peered through that and tried to speak something. They didn't answer and he walked away and the surgeon felt a sense of relief. Then he chided himself as this was a very abnormal type of behaviour. His thought was cut abruptly and his intuition proved right when he heard a loud crash. He turned to see an axe coming down into the glass where his wife was sitting in the back seat. He saw that this villager was actually demolishing the glass. He put inside his hand and demanded to be given all the jewellery his wife was wearing. The lady peeled up all the jewellery and handed it over to the villager. The hands of the villager were shivering. It didn't end here, he went to the other side, smashed the other window where the daughter was sitting and demanded the same from her. She also wordlessly gave the jewellery she was wearing.

While this was going on, the surgeon thought that since has a black belt (in martial arts), he can easily tackle this person, then why is he not acting. So thinking, he opened the door of the car and stepped out. The moment he stepped out, the villager got more panicky and started shouting at him, "If you move I will harm you, give me your wallet, watch and everything you have." Suddenly a calm descended on the surgeon. This is inexplicable but when we are in such moments, calm descends on us. When the calm descended, his



train medical eye was able to observe that this man was famished. His hands were shivering, he looked as if he hadn't had food for days together.

Compassion welled out of his heart, "Babu, when did you last eat?" When the villager heard this voice, he fumbled and briskly answered, "Three days ago." The surgeon looked at his daughter and asked her to give the food which at the back of the car to this villager. She pulled out the casserole, served all the food on a plate and handed it over to this villager. This man did not yet believe (the compassion) and kept his axe close to him. He ravenously ate that food without thinking of how he looked. The surgeon and his wife stared compassionately at the villager. Suddenly the villager fell at the feet of the surgeon and gave a wrenching cry of pain and said, "I am not a thief sir, I am not a thief, I am just a farmer. By giving food to a farmer who grows food, you have saved me from a great sin."

Then he explained that three years of drought had reduced him to this penury and not just him, so many villagers had the same plight. He said that they have lost faith in the Lord and that is why we have been reduced to this. So saying, the farmer put all the jewellery back on the lap of the lady. The surgeon again picked it up from there and gave it to the farmer and said, "This wealth or the loss of it will not make much of a difference to me, please take it." So saying, he gave this wealth back to the farmer.

If you look deeply into this story, the surgeon emotions were first fear then confidence in his own Self and from there it was calmness. From calmness came compassion. All these impulses were in the same person. That is the work of the Divine Mother. She pushes us from our survival instinct to much higher emotions and we can feel those higher emotions only when we feel loved and accepted. That is why the Divine Mother constantly loves us and accepts us whatever we are.

Yet another quality of the Divine Mother, we choose to call it synthesis. The Divine Mother, as we have seen in Swami, makes even very natural things very beautiful. He literally supernaturalises the natural. I will give a small



example. One day when Swami was looking at a painting that my sister made, he started explaining the stages in which the painting or drawing has to be learnt. He said, "First you must look at the picture and draw. After you finish drawing from the picture, attempt to draw from life. After sometime that image will get embossed in your heart, you don't have to look at anything to draw. Then you can draw without looking at anything as it comes from within." Then He added, "The seer and the seen become one." With Swami, in every task, He will show us the latent divinity. This is what Divine Mother does. She shows us how Divinity or Shivatatwa or Atman is involved in everything.

Swami used to tell us about amazing mothers like Jijabai or Putlibai and if Gandhiji and Shivaji became the people they were, it was only because of the good thoughts which was sowed in their hearts by their mothers. The giving of the physical mother can change the life of a child then what does the giving of a Divine Mother do?

There is another aspect of the Divine Mother. She humanizes Divinity so that humanity can slowly recover Divinity. We tend to think that we suffer and go through all this; Swami is God, nothing happens to Him. He is perfect, He is beyond emotions. So somewhere we dismiss it. We believe only we suffer and go through all this and that is why, in pain, call out different names to our God. We believe that He cannot feel our pain as keenly we feel it. This creates a distance in our minds from our God. There is one experience which is very close to my heart because it revealed to me how much God waits for human beings. I would like to share it with all of you.

This happened in this very same place in 2011. I was supposed to give a talk here and for some reason I felt that if Swami wouldn't look at me or accept me, I won't be able to take it. This was the distance which I created in my mind and was fearing to come near Him. A good friend of mine said, "Why are you so obsessed with your love for God, isn't He our mother, wouldn't He feel as much as you feel as much as you feel, wouldn't He be waiting." Somehow that struck a chord with me. I came here to speak at this podium



and as is the practice, I went to Swami to offer Him a rose. When He took that rose from my fingers, He looked deeply into my eyes and I will never forget that sight of brimming compassion. I didn't just feel that acceptance, I almost drowned in that acceptance. I came back to the podium and the speech was done.

Swami was on a wheelchair in those days, and He picked up a Vibhuti packet in His right hand to give me. I was not able to see that and after the talk, I should have gone to Him and touched His feet but somehow, some hesitation prevented me. When I went back to my seat after the talk, my colleagues said, "Why didn't you go to Swami, He had picked up a Vibhuti packet to give you and you didn't even go near Him." I really felt ashamed of myself at that minute.

The story doesn't end there. Four days later, I was sitting for Darshan for blessings and Swami came for Darshan. Again, when He saw me, He picked up the Vibhuti packet to give it to me. When He came near me, He dropped it and somebody near me, not realizing that it was for me, scooped and picked it up. The wheelchair moved ahead, Swami stopped it, went back, struggled and picked the Vibhuti packet and put it in my hands. The movement of Love was so palpable. When the Divine Mother wants to give at any cost, she gives. When I felt that Love, I felt humbled, I felt so small. Gratitude is truly the only emotion that we can give our Divine Mother.

Today, on behalf of this groping humanity, I would like to make a prayer to the Divine Mother:

Mother! It is in the setting of only your Love that even virtue can be born in us. It is only through your Divine touch, that the sanctification of our lower impulses into higher impulses can happen and it is only through your Love that we can ever dream to reach the Divinity within us. So, keep us close to you, come what may, however impossible we are as children, please never forsake us.





Divine Message



The Vedas have cautioned man that if you want to get such joy, you have to be very careful. God is one who cannot be described. He cannot be comprehended by any method. It is not possible to measure Him by any kind of proof. In order to recognize such an incomprehensible and immeasurable God, many types of proofs are used. By what measure can we prove God who transcends the word of mouth and the mind itself.

There are three types of *pramanas* (proofs).

One is direct experience or perceptible proof. Man today is aspiring to have this. He is deluded and aspiring to have direct perception for everything. In order to get direct experience, he is making innumerable efforts. He is not able to believe anything which is not amenable to direct perception. This is the first step for ignorance. Direct experience has a number of traps.

One small example. When our eye is perfectly healthy, it can identify colours correctly - red as red, black as black. If the man, on the basis of this experience says, when I see a black thing I call it a black thing alone - that is *Pratyaksha Pramana*.

After sometime, if you get jaundice, everything looks yellow and no other colour is seen. Can you believe the eye's direct experience? All experiences based upon the sense organs are changing and not trustworthy. A number of scholars want to have this kind of direct experience. At night, when he looks at milk, it is in the form of milk. When you add curd to it, it becomes curd in the morning. Milk has become curd - this is direct experience. This is a physical and worldly experience. This is not applicable to the spiritual world and spirituality.

The reason is that all the sense organs — which are the instruments of direct experience — undergo change. Therefore, it is not possible to understand and comprehend transcendental truth through the sense organs. The second one is proof by inference (*Anumaana Pramana*). When you look at a distant hill, you see smoke there. Smoke is an indication of fire. On account of smoke,





we believe that there must be fire. But you don't see fire from the distance. It may be fire or it might just be vapour. But you can see something like smoke there. This is based on inference when you see something like smoke and infer that there must be fire. Through a shadow, you feel that some person is coming. When you see some shadow moving, you can only say some person is coming. Therefore, you cannot say which specific person is coming by seeing the shadow. Can any person say, by just looking at the shadow, which particular person is coming? You can infer some person is coming but cannot be specific. That is the problem with *Anumaana Pramana*.

The third one is based on sound (*Sabda Pramaana*).

The *Sabda Pramaana* is like this. Some people who visit Prasanthi Nilayam, enjoy the beautiful environment, look at the Mandir and have experiences. They go back home and describe what they say.

The person who knows and explains to one who does not know through words, is proof based on sound. That is Veda. Veda is an example for *Sabda Pramaana*. Therefore, it is necessary for all those people who do not know - who are ignorant - to have faith in the Vedas and conduct themselves accordingly. If one wants to have direct experience, one would not be able to have it through the Vedas. Some people have considered that direct experience alone is the real experience and real proof. This *sabda pramaana* is beyond doubt.

There are two types of proofs in this as well. One is *vaidika pramaana* and the other is *loukika pramaana*.

Loukika pramaana (mundane testimony) cannot explain anything about God. It is only the *vaidika pramaana* (vedic testimony) which can attempt to describe God. This particular testimony is found in the Shastras. It is *aloukika*. The Sastra is that which conveys to the ear what is not audible otherwise. It brings back to the memory what has been forgotten. Shastra is that which reminds a person about things he has forgotten.

These very Shastra *Pramaanas* have been considered as *Dharma Pramaanas* (Dharmic testimony) also.





This Dharma or code of conduct is also of different types. For conduct relating to race, to the nation, to the lineage/caste, to the sect and the one related to situations of danger.

There are these five types of Dharma. All these dharmas or codes have been teaching kindness to beings; compassion to beings. They firmly believe that kindness and compassion to beings is the most important. Kindness to living beings is equal to loving God. A person who does not have kindness to beings does not have love for God. A person who does not have love for God does not have fear of sin. A person who does not have fear of sin and love for God, does not have morality in society. A synonym for Dharma (righteousness) is Neeti (morality). Morality refers to good conduct, good behaviour. Good conduct in keeping with the requirements of the nation, time and also to that particular community is morality. He has to subject himself to the codes of the society too. The Vedas have declared that one should not perform things which are harmful to society. Man is born in society, grows in society, lives there and ultimately dies in society.

Therefore, the Vedas have declared that it is essential man should follow the code appropriate to society. True morality should be in accordance to the needs of the nation, time, caste and society. In this morality, there are individual morality and national morality (character). This morality can also be considered as character. The Vedas have also declared that man should cultivate individual character and national character. It has also taught how man has to conduct himself (in day-to-day living and life) in order to develop these two.

The Vedas, which have such broad application and utility for the entire humanity, are wrongly understood these days as if they are applicable only to Brahmins and for a few rituals. They have shown and declared a number of ways as to develop humanity in human beings. Therefore, we have to make an effort to understand what real humanity means.





Divine Message



All the scriptures have taught that man has to develop humanity by following the path of Yama and Niyama. If we can accomplish just Yama, the single one, we would have conquered the other Yama - God of death. What do you mean by Yama? Yama consists of five elements - Ahimsa (non-violence), Sathya (truth), Asteya (non-covetousness), Brahmacharya (celibacy) and Aparigraha (non-possessiveness).

These five are the five life-breaths. If a man does not have these five things important things, he does not have humanity. The most important human values are these five. Even among them, Ahimsa is the first.

What is meant by Ahimsa? It is usually understood that one should not hurt or harm another. It is not merely bodily hurt. One should not hurt even by his spoken words. Not merely by speech. Even by thoughts one should not hurt others. True non-violence is the non-violence in thought, word and deed. It has taught that one should not hurt another person either by thought, either by word or by one's action. One should have purity of all these three instruments, then only one can practice Ahimsa. We should never give room for thoughts which are likely to hurt or harm others. We should never utter a word which is likely to hurt others. We should never do any action which is likely to hurt others. This is the correct meaning of total Ahimsa - non-violence.

The next is Sathyam. It is not uttering things seen as you have seen, heard as heard or thought as thought. This is true only in a temporary sense. Real truth transcends all three times - past, present and future. One has to observe certain rules and regulations while practicing truth. Even when you are speaking the truth, you should not speak truth that is harsh. You should also not speak truth which is not liked; which is not dear. You should not also tell truth which is not liked by the others. You should speak truth which is peaceful and not disturbing. We should also learn how to speak truth. There also must be truth based on the purity of the three instruments.





The third is Asteyam. We should not take away or steal things or matters related to others under any circumstances. Even the thought of stealing should not arise in our minds. We should never utter to any person that he should steal. One should not try to steal others things by either thought, word or deed. That is also a human value.

Next one is Brahmacharya (Celibacy). One should not consider that he is observing celibacy if he is not married. Whatever one thinks, talks or does, everything must be filled with Brahman. All these must be done for the pleasure and glory of the Lord - as an offering to Him. In thought, word and deed, living in Brahman is real Brahmacharya. Whatever work you do, offer it to the Lord. Don't give up work. All actions, thoughts and words must be associated with the feeling of Brahman. Living and moving in the feeling of Brahman is Brahmacharya.

Next is Aparigraha. Accepting favours from others is bad. We should never accept anything from anyone either as a gift or a prize. The Vedas have prescribed certain rules with respect to this. From mother, father, husband (spouse), master and preceptor and God, you can accept anything. There is nothing wrong in this. This is your duty. It is their responsibility. But we should not accept anything from anyone other than these five. Otherwise, we get indebted to them. It is difficult to settle that debt with others. This is a very important law in the law of Karma.

For every action, there is a reaction and result. When it comes to action, this world is like a mirror. Whatever you do in this world, you get the fruits (reflection) thereof. Standing before a mirror, if you offer obeisance, the reflection also offers back an obeisance. If you were to chastise the mirror image, you get scolded back. Nature is like a mirror. In this world, which can be compared to a mirror, whatever you do is returned to you. Therefore, all our actions must be free of defects. They must be in accordance with righteousness. They must be in accordance with human values. Therefore, whatever you accept from anyone, you become indebted to them. This debtor





has to be born as a dog or cat or donkey in the family of the creditor. If someone offers eatables at home, they may be accepted. For things other than that, like accepting money or objects, you should avoid. You may accept anything from your parents.

Similarly, between husband and wife, they can give and take. When the preceptor confers as an act of Grace, it can be accepted. When it comes to God, there is no limits. You can accept anything from God. When He gives you a scolding or beating, that is also good. Whatever God gives us is for our own good - that must be our firm belief.

When you say human values, these are the ones. Just as the human body has five life breaths, this Yama has these five qualities. The most important values of Yama are Ahimsa (non-violence), Sathya (truth), Asteya (non-covetousness), Brahmacharya (celibacy) and Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) - for everyone. If we can observe these five values in our lives, our lives become full and complete.

In order to develop humanity on these lines, the Vedas have shown a number of ways. Even among the different paths shown by the Vedas, there are three. Those three paths are the path of action, the path of devotion and the path of knowledge. Whichever path you take out of these three, you are sure to reach the goal. The most important one among all these things is the name of the Lord.

Thinking of the name of the Lord
Serving society
Offering all actions to the Lord

The Vedas have said that maintaining humanity and following the human values is the most important thing.





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