

Desire peace, not wealth

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Embodiments of Love!

The speakers who spoke earlier told excellent things. After hearing them, I don't think there is anything further to be told.

There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry.

There are no greater gods than parents.

There is no greater *dharma* than compassion.

There is no greater gain than the company of the good.

There is no enemy greater than anger.

There is no wealth greater than good reputation.

Bad reputation is death itself.

There is no ornament more beautiful than the chanting of God's Name.

(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

We are born out of and dependent upon *anna* (food). We cannot live for a moment without food. From where does this food come? It emanates from Lord Shankara, whose nature is infinite, who is unique, and whom neither the words can describe nor the mind can comprehend. All the objects that we see in this world are the creation of God. All that is visible —in the past, present and future— is God's creation. Mother Parvati is the only individual who realised this truth. Before she married Shankara, all the *Devatas* (celestial beings) approached her and questioned her,

Oh! Gowri!

You are very young and Sambashiva is old;

He rides a bull and is constantly on the move;

He is adorned with snakes;

How did you court Him?

Don't you know all this?

He has no house of His own and sleeps in the burial ground.

(Telugu poem)

They confronted Parvati with these discouraging arguments and tried to dissuade her from marrying Lord Shiva.

Parvati replied, “You are all seeing the outward appearance of Lord Shiva and are deluded to think that it is His real form. You are not able to realise His true nature, which is *abhouthika* (beyond the physical form), *aloukika* (other than worldly), and *saswatha* (eternal). You are concerned only about the beauty of the physical body and the wealth and prosperity in the worldly sense. Your vision is limited to the body, mind, and intellect. Hence, you are able to see only the physical aspects of Lord Shiva. You are not able to visualise His subtle nature immanent in Him, namely, Divinity.

“He is neither the body, nor the mind. He is *Lingakara* (His form resembles that of a *Linga*). However, that *Linga* is not visible to anyone. It is located in His *kantha* (throat). I am the only one who has seen His true form. That is why I want to marry Him. You are able to see only the physical form, that too to a certain extent. But God is not limited to this form. He is *Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan* (subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the

vastest). When you are able to visualise that cosmic form, you will not at all think about the physical form. You will not be concerned with His age. Lord Shiva, whom I am going to marry, is not the one begging for alms; in fact, He gives alms to all!"

Exactly at that moment, Lord Shiva manifested before her. He appeared as very beautiful and young. In fact, more youthful than Gowri. Lord Shiva and Parvati are a perfect match to each other. The *Devatas* were dumb-founded.

Thus, people are deluded to think something, but what ultimately happens is altogether different. Not all people can realise the inner Truth.

Worldly people aspire for physical beauty and happiness. But a truthful nature is essential to recognise the embodiments of Truth. No one can describe the nature of Divinity as this and that.

Is it possible to limit the One to a temple who pervades the entire cosmos?

How can one hold a lamp to the One who shines with the brilliance of a billion suns?

How can one attribute a form to the One whom even Brahma, the Creator, cannot comprehend?

How can one give a name to the One who is present in all beings?

How can one offer food to the One who has the entire cosmos in His belly?

(Telugu poem)

God's form is the subtlest. It is verily a minute form. "That is this." (Swami created a Linga by a wave of His hand and held it out for all to see.) This (the Linga created by Bhagawan) resembles exactly that Linga (the one being worshipped by the chief priest daily).

The general mass of people are like crows. Blinded by ignorance, they see only the external form. No one can lay down a rule that only such and such material is to be offered to

God. Several English-educated and "modern" people today comment, "What is this! When several poor people are starving for food, you are throwing so much paddy and ghee into the fire and wasting it! Instead, you can feed some poor people with that material. Is it not true?"

Our chief priest can explain to such people the rationale behind this ritual thus: "Sirs! Today a farmer sows five bags of paddy in a field. When they sprout, he transplants them in the entire field and waters them. Can anyone say that he is throwing valuable paddy into mud and water? Ultimately, he reaps a harvest of fifty bags. Similarly, the rituals being performed by the *ritwiks* (priests) confer great benefit on humanity; they are never a waste. Whatever is offered to God today is like this *paddy* and *ghee*; they all confer great benefit to humanity at a later date. Just as a bag of *paddy* sown in a field multiplies itself into fifty bags, similarly all the materials that are offered to Agnihotra (the fire-god) multiply themselves several times."

There is only one thing that is to be offered to God by us. There are several desires, nestled in our heart. All these desires have to be offered to God. Whatever is offered to God with no desire for the fruit thereof will confer great benefit at a later date. Unable to realise this truth, people in general give importance to the external and worldly matters. They formulate their opinions on the basis of what they see outwardly. Whatever is offered to God, comes back to us a thousandfold.

The external form is like a package. Unless this packing is removed, the material that is packed inside will not be visible to us. Divinity in nature is covered by the *panchabhutas* (five elements). We are unable to visualise Divinity due to *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada*, and *matsarya* (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and jealousy). Remove this

package. Then, the beautiful and blissful form of God will manifest before you.

Do not give importance to the package. The external package may be very beautiful. However, unless you open this package you will not be able to see the object inside and its condition. Several people will be attracted by the external appearance of the package and get deceived. But, this is not the case with Divinity. The physical beauty and the senses will be visible only to the outward vision.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later,
But the indweller has neither birth nor death.
The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.
Truly speaking, the indweller, who is in the form of the *Atma*, is verily God Himself.
(Telugu poem)

The divine nature of that Lord of the Lords is thus packed in this physical body. Hence, do not feel contented with this external package. Divinity is immanent in you. You are God, verily! God is all-pervading. Hence, you are also all-pervading. Divinity is present in you as well as in all living beings. If you wish to have the vision of God, you must lead a pure, unwavering, and selfless life.

All the diversity that you see in this objective world is a waste! Hence, remove this diversity and develop unity. Where there is unity, there will be purity. Where there is purity, there Divinity will manifest. In fact, you are not one individual. There are three individuals in you (i) the one you think you are, (ii) the one others think you are, and (iii) the one you really are. You are an embodiment of the Divine *Atma*, verily. Not realising this truth, you are leading your life giving importance to the body, mind, and intellect. All these are bound to perish one day or the other. I will explain to you about this in detail, later. Sing the glory of the Divine name:

(Bhagawan then sang the song “*Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Yanaraada*” and asked the devotees to follow. Thereafter, He continued His discourse.)

The mantra “*Namashivaya*” contains five letters. It is a glorious and sacred mantra. It is *nirgunam*, *niranjanam*, *sanathanam*, *niketanam*, *nitya*, *shuddha*, *buddha*, *mukta*, *nirmala swarupinam* (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free, and embodiment of sacredness). You have to preserve such a sacred mantra securely in your heart.

People generally think that Brahma is the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva the destroyer. In fact, they are three rolled into One. If you wish to have a *paan*, you must procure three items: betel leaves, betel nut, and slaked lime (*chunnam*). Only when these three ingredients are chewed together does your mouth and lips will become red. From where did this red colour come? From betel leaves? From betel nuts? Or from lime? Not any one of them exclusively. Only when the three items are chewed together does the red colour appear.

Similarly, God is all the three —Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara— coming together. The unity of all three aspects is Divinity. Do not attribute diversity to God and spoil your mind. You will surely be able to experience the oneness of these three aspects of God.

Once, it appears that Parvati had proposed to Lord Easwara to build a house for themselves. She prayed to Him, “Oh! Lord! You go about places begging for alms. We have not been able to prepare homely food. We have no house to take shelter. How can I manage this family?”

Easwara then explained to her, “Parvati! Will it be all right if we build a house? The rats will occupy the house even before we move into it. Then, a cat has to be kept ready to kill the rats. The cat needs milk. For that purpose,

we have to purchase a cow. To purchase a cow, money is required. It is all a big botheration. You think it is so easy to build a house and maintain it. No, no! We should not aspire for such things. Once you liked Me and married Me, you should leave everything to Me. You should not wish for these paraphernalia.”

All the wealth like money, gold, houses, land, property, vehicles, etc., in this world is transitory and a waste. Alexander set out on a victory march. He conquered several countries in the world and finally set his foot in Bharat. He reached the river Sind. It is near Kashmir. He tried to cross that river. Exactly at that moment he suffered from a “heart attack”. The doctors examined him and declared that there were no chances of his recovering.

Then he called his ministers and other officials and told them, “I am not at all worried that I am dying. I am, in fact, happy. However, I have a small desire. After my death, please wrap my body in a white cloth, keeping my empty hands straight facing the sky, and take it in a procession through every street in my village. The people will, of course, enquire why were the hands of the king kept in such a position. Then, you explain to them that Alexander was a great conqueror. He had a big army and a number of friends and relatives. He accumulated great wealth by conquering several countries. Yet, at the time of death, he left his mortal coil with empty hands.”

Even King Harischandra, who strictly followed the path of truth, had to leave this world ultimately, leaving behind his vast kingdom and riches.

Emperor Nala, who reigned over a great empire, could not take with him anything when he passed away.

Did King Mandhata, who adorned the *Krita Yuga*, carry any wealth with him when he left the earth?

Even Lord Rama, who built the bridge across the ocean, is not to be seen on the earth today.

Many kings have ruled over the earth,
But none of them could carry even a fistful of
dust with them.

Oh noble ones!

Do you think you can carry the riches on your
head when you leave the world?

(Telugu poem)

No one can take even a paisa along at the time of his death. Not even a handful of earth. Man considers himself to be great and rich. Recently, a person bought an acre of land in Hyderabad paying rupees 40 crores. While returning from the Registrar's office after registering the land, he suddenly collapsed. Of what use it is accumulating crores worth of wealth?

What is important to a human being is his *guna* (noble qualities), not *dhana* (money). *Daivabala* (the strength that comes from God) is most important for us. If you develop divine feelings, everything will be added unto you. No doubt, money is important for, we have to eat food with the money we earn. However, excess of wealth is bad. It may even lead to losing one's life sometimes. One must have enough money to sustain our family.

You must also help the society to a certain extent. You are living in the society. Without society, you cease to exist. Hence, show your gratitude to the society. First “self” and then “help”. Humanness can survive only if these two exist. Do not be “selfish”. It is said that a fish is better than selfish. You must lead a happy life doing selfless service to the society.

I am always happy and blissful. I do not know what sorrow is, what difficulty is, what pain is.

Once, the President of India visited Prasanthi Nilayam. He asked Me during an interview, “Swami! Do you also have desires?”

I told him, “I have only one desire. I must be what I am. I should not depend on others. I

must give happiness to everybody. It is only when everyone is happy, that I am happy.”

What more do I need? Everyone approaches Me with a request, “Swami! I want peace.” But where is peace? It is verily in our inner self. All that exists outside is only “pieces”. We don't need it. Peace has to be manifested from our own inner self.

It is only when we spend our lives based on this principle that our lives will be sanctified. Whatever sadhanas (spiritual practices) we may undertake, whatever texts we may read, or whatever high academic degrees we may acquire, all that has to be left in this world when the end comes. People do not take even one of these appendages along with them in their journey to the other world.

Hence, I wish that all of you should lead a peaceful life. It is My wish that you should develop a desire for peace. Of what use it is to have wealth if you don't develop a charitable disposition?

The boy who spoke just now comes from a great family. His grandfather's name is Margabandhu. His father is a bank manager. It is three years since he joined our college, leaving the college in Delhi where he was studying earlier. Since then, he is doing a Ph.D. on the teachings of Swami. He never associates with anyone. He will always be alone. He obeys Swami's commands implicitly and performs whatever work is entrusted to him. He gives very good lectures on philosophy. He is studying Sankara's life and philosophy. Everything about Sankara's *advaita* (non-duality) philosophy is at his fingertips. There are several such boys in our institution. He came to Puttaparthi only for undertaking such tapas (penance). The second speaker today is also our student. All these boys are very great.

You have Vedanarayana here. His name itself is Vedanarayana. Last year, he received the best teacher award from the President of India. While presenting the award to him, the

President asked him, “Where do you go, after receiving this award?”

Vedanarayana replied, “I am going back to Puttaparthi. I don't go anywhere else.”

The President then advised him, “Dear Son! You are a very good boy. Please stay there itself.” The President is a Muslim. Yet, he has great devotion toward Swami. Several such high dignitaries visit Puttaparthi and bless our children.

Every year, about five hundred students join our educational institutions. We do not advertise our academic achievements in newspapers. But all our students get first class only. Two boys from our Alike institution secured first ranks in the Medical and Engineering entrance test. I gave them scholarships. When they go for higher education to America, I will take up the responsibility of educating them in those institutions. I told those boys, “Not only here, you should come out in first ranks in America also.”

All our children are like gold, not impure gold, but pure and unalloyed gold! They are prepared to undertake any work that is entrusted to them. These boys go to the villages every year for one month to undertake service. They take rice and other provisions along with them and cook there and serve all the villagers. They serve food to every individual in every family, irrespective of the number of members in the family.

The villagers affectionately greet these boys, “Dear children! Did our Swami send you here!” The villagers feel very happy with the service rendered by our students. On the day our boys visit the village, the villagers keep their houses clean and decorate them with floral designs. They receive Swami's *prasadam* with great devotion and reverence and partake of it, happily. It is once again time to send our boys to the villages to distribute Swami's *prasadam*.

Our boys are adepts not only in education but in sports and games, dance and music as well. There is no work that our boys cannot undertake. Wherever they go, whether in the villages or towns, our boys are very careful to keep up their character. Our boys and girls treat character as their very life-breath.

There are 700 girl students in the Anantapur campus. They are also coming out in first class. They also go to the villages to do grama seva. They demolish the old and dilapidated houses and build new houses in the villages. The girls by themselves build *pucca* houses with stones and cement. They are doing a lot of service to the poor.

When the villagers were asked about the quality of their work (whether they were leaking), we were informed, “No Swami! Your girls did a wonderful job. Our houses are very safe. Even the engineers are happy with their work. They did it all free of cost.”

Our boys are also doing great service in the villages. Thus, our students from all the three campuses of Prasanthi Nilayam, Bangalore, and Anantapur are visiting the villages and helping the villagers.

Our boys and girls did not come here merely for education. My sincere advice to any student seeking admission in our Institutions is, “Please do not come here only for education and acquiring academic degrees.” You can certainly pursue your education. But the foremost requirement is seva (selfless service). For what purpose did God give you the human body? Only for serving others.

Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagawad Gita*, *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). All are verily the *amsa* (part) of the same Divinity. Hence, you should serve all. “Service is God, serve all.”

Our students are earning a good name only because they put into practice such teachings of Swami. Wherever they go, people show great love and affection toward the students of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions. The moment they see these boys and girls clad in white dress, they shower great praise on them saying, “These boys and girls belong to Sathya Sai, they are all very good.” The dress our students wear is of white colour as also their hearts. They are pure and sacred.

You are witnessing every day how these boys are bringing Me into this Kulwant Hall and taking Me back to My residence! These two boys completed their MBA degree. The third boy is studying MBBS. Adikesavulu gave him a seat in the Vaidehi Medical College. He is admitting several such boys. If you want to have a seat in the Medical College anywhere else, huge amount of donation is to be paid. Besides, there is the monthly fee of rupees two to three thousand.

But he did not collect even a paisa from us. He (Adikesavulu) admitted several of our boys in his Institution. He is a great *thyagi* (man of sacrifice). He lives near the Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital in Bangalore. We have built three hospitals in Bangalore itself. There are instruments worth crores of rupees in each of these hospitals. If anyone is to get a heart operation done in any of the Super Speciality Hospitals outside, lakhs of rupees have to be spent. That being the position, several people are coming to our hospitals and getting heart operations done free of cost.

I have resolved to provide education, medicine, and life-sustaining drinking water to the people free of cost. We are supplying drinking water to the upland areas in the East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh by laying pipes up to the hilltop. There is adequate amount of water flowing in these two districts. But the people living in the upland villages were not getting drinking water. Even after so many years, they were suffering for

want of drinking water. Hence, we have taken up a project at a cost of 80 crores to supply drinking water to these people by laying pipes. They expressed their gratitude to Swami saying, "It is years since we drank sweet drinking water. Today, we are able to drink pure and sweet water once again. We are very happy and grateful to You, Swami!"

Not only that. We have also provided drinking water to all the people in Chennai city, irrespective of their social strata. The citizens of Chennai came in 50 buses to Puttaparthi to express their gratitude to Swami for this munificence. They conveyed their feelings, saying, "How do we express our gratitude to you, Swami! Words fail us."

I told them, "You need not say thanks to Me. I gave drinking water to My own people." You may not know it, since you are all here. It has been published in the newspapers the day before yesterday that water has been supplied to the Chennai city from the Poondi reservoir. It is only yesterday that water reached Chennai at the right time.

The people of Mahboobnagar and Medak districts approached Me and represented, "Swami! We have no pure water." I responded immediately and arranged for the supply of drinking water from the Krishna river to the people of these two districts.

Thus, we have taken up a number of service projects for the benefit of people living in the villages of all areas, not only in our country, but all the countries in the world. Our motto is, "Love All; Serve All!"

You should also emulate our example. This is what I teach to our children. If you come to know that someone is suffering, whether they happen to be your friend or otherwise, you must serve them. If necessary, apply for leave that day to the college and help them. I should not praise My boys, but they are doing more than what I instructed them to do. They are helping others, even sacrificing their own self.

We are producing such ideal students with a spirit of sacrifice and service. That is why they are progressing in every field in the country as well as abroad.

There are 1200 small children in the Primary School. They are still in the age group when normally they should be attached to their parents. But, once they join in our school, they forget their parents and develop to a stage where they cannot live without us. The parents come here and see for themselves the change that has taken place in their children. They are surprised and also feel happy, "Aha! What a great change has taken place in our children!" In fact, we are showing great love toward the children, more than their own parents.

Thus, I can go on speaking about our children. Don't consider them as ordinary human beings. They are very great. They deserve to be the leaders of our country when they grow up. I only wish that our children should be ideal children. Then only will I be happy.