

THE REVELATION

You are engaged in discovering solutions to problems, arguments to overcome doubts and means to prevent new problems and fresh doubts from arising; such exercises, which all conferences relish, cannot help successful navigation across the sea of spiritual endeavour.

These are but frail contrivances, these discussions, resolutions, speeches, and regulations. The world is much too stormy and agitated to be quietened by these. This is the time for cool calm contemplation, not quick passionate speculation and hasty decision.

You need to contemplate once again on the eternal lessons laid down by the sages of India's past, lessons that have been neglected and cynically forgotten in recent years. The suggestions and solutions that come out of the discussions today are all good, so far as they go, but how can a person who cannot himself swim teach others the art? How can one whose granary is empty pour out in charity?

Acquire the wealth of devotion, fortitude, and peace before venturing to advise others how to acquire them. *Bharat* (India) has suffered slights and disregard as a result of a spate of teachers who have not cared to practise what they teach. I know you have the enthusiasm to carry My message among the people of this country and other countries. Let Me remind you that the best and the only successful way in which you can do it is to translate the message into your own lives. Your thoughts, words, and deeds must be satu-

rated with the message. Then they will spread effortlessly and efficiently, and the face of the world will be transformed.

***Namasmarana*, the Only Hope for Man in This Age**

The Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Secretaries of Sathya Sai Organisations from all over the world are here. You are officers of the Sai Army. How can you lead soldiers into the fray when you are not aware of the intricacies of warfare, when you are yourselves inefficient instruments?

You can attempt to lead others only after practising the disciplines to perfection. This is true of all fields of human activity. *Ananda* (bliss) and *prasanthi* (supreme peace) have to be acquired first by you and then can be communicated to others.

Teachers in schools have themselves to be examples of what they require the pupils to be. Men in authority who exhort others to follow the paths of love and co-operation have themselves to practise those virtues. The people are now not willing to be led; the leaders have no capacity to lead. Progress is the result of mutual trust between the leaders and the led.

The unrest that is rampant now in all sections of the people everywhere is due to the irresponsibility of parents, teachers, administrators and leaders, as well as of those who hunger to benefit from them.

Namasmarana is one of the basic disciplines to which this Conference is paying great attention.

The scriptures say that in this age of materialism it is the one hope for man. So you should not brush aside the Name as a piece of glass or as a pebble.

Man Is Using a Gem to Play Marbles on the Road

There was once a boy who picked up a precious gem, bright and round, and used it for playing marbles on the road with his comrades. A merchant dealing in precious stones chanced to pass along that road, and his discerning eye fell on the gem. He approached the boy, took him aside, and offered to pay him fifty rupees in exchange. If the boy could know the value of fifty rupees, he would have known the value of the gem! He went to his mother and told her that a stranger had tempted him with fifty rupees in return for the marble he played with. She was surprised that it was so costly, and she said, "Do not go out of the compound with it; play in the garden with your friend." When the value was revealed, limits were set.

The merchant had no sleep that night; he was planning to secure the gem from those simple folk so that he could sell it at huge profit to some millionaire or *Maharaja*. He discovered the house of the boy and he moved up and down that road hoping to see the boy. When he saw the boy play with it as if it was as cheap as a marble, his heart was wrung in agony. The boy threw it on the floor just at the moment his mother emerged from the inner apartments and it struck her foot and fell under a bush. He spoke to the boy, asking for the gem in exchange for a hundred rupees, and again for 500 rupees! The son ran into the house in tears, complaining about the stranger who will not let him alone. The mother came out into the garden and begged the merchant to go away.

The merchant grasped the chance; he told the mother that he was ready to give a thousand rupees on the spot, if the marble was placed in his hand! On hearing this, she forbade the child to play with it outside the house; he could play

only within the rooms. The merchant could not be shooed off like that; he appeared the next day in front of the house and held out 10,000 rupees as his offer for the marble. The mother refused to part with it but kept it now in an iron safe, under lock and key! When the merchant came the next day with 50,000 rupees, she took it to a bank and deposited it in their safety vaults.

You Are Unaware of the Value of the Name of God

You are also playing marbles with the Name of God, unaware of its value. Once you realise its worth, you will keep it in your heart of hearts as the most precious treasure. Know that the Divine Name is the key to success in your search for consolation, confidence, courage, illumination and liberation.

Another illustration can be given from the ancient texts. On one occasion, a competition was arranged among the gods for the purpose of selecting the leader of the *ganas* (troops of demi-gods who are the attendants of Shiva). Participants had to go round the world quickly and come back to the Feet of Lord Shiva.

The gods started off on their own vehicles; the younger son of Shiva also enthusiastically entered the competition. He had an elephantine head but his vehicle was a mouse! Therefore, his progress was severely handicapped. He had not proceeded far when Narada appeared before him and asked him, "Whither are you bound?" The son was very much annoyed and he fell into a rage, for, what happened was a bad omen, doubly unpropitious for those going on a journey.

It is inauspicious if the first person you come across when you are on a journey is a lone Brahmin. Though the foremost among the Brahmins (he was the son of *Brahma* Himself), Narada was a bad omen! Again it is a bad omen if someone asks you, "Whither are you bound?" when you are going somewhere. Narada put him that very

question! Nevertheless, Narada was able to assuage his anger.

The Name from Which the Universe Has Emanated

Narada drew forth from Shiva's son the sadness of his predicament and his desire to win. Narada consoled him, exhorted him not to yield to despair, and advised him thus: "Rama – the Name – is the seed from which the gigantic tree called the universe has emanated. So, write the Name on the ground, go round it once, and hurry back to Shiva, claiming the prize." He did so and returned to his Father.

When asked how he returned so soon, he related the story of Narada and his advice. Shiva appreciated the validity of Narada's counsel; the prize was awarded to the son, who was acclaimed as *Ganapathi* (Master of the *ganas*) and *Vinayaka* (Leader of All).

The Name undoubtedly brings in the grace of God. Meerabai, the Queen of Rajasthan, gave up status and riches, fortune and family, and dedicated herself to the adoration of the Lord, *Giridhara Gopala*. Her husband brought a chalice of poison and she was ordered to drink it. She uttered the Name of Krishna while she drank it; it was transformed into nectar by the grace the Divine Name evoked!

Keertan is the word used for the recital or singing of the Name and Glory of God. *Sankeertan* means reciting or singing well or aloud and with joy or in ecstasy. We can distinguish four different forms of *Namasankeertan*. *Bhava* (mood-filled) *Namasankeertan*, *Guna* (divine quality-oriented) *Namasankeertan*, *Leela* (divine miracle-related) *Namasankeertan*, and sheer *Namasankeertan*; *Bhava Namasankeertan* is the name given to recitals where the Name is sung with one or the other *bhava* (emotion or mental attitude) towards the Lord.

Different Attitudes One Can Show towards God

It can be *Madhurabhava* (sweet emotion), just as Radha was over-powered with. She saw, heard, tasted, sought and gained only that sweetness at all times and all places. *Raso vai sah* (Divine sweetness is He). She made no distinction between Nature and Nature's God; it was all God, all Krishna. She felt, experienced, and knew that Krishna was ever present in the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep stages. She realised the truth of the *Bhagavad Gita* declaration of Krishna that His hands and feet, His eyes, face and head were everywhere. Her adoration of God is the supreme example of *Madhura Bhava Namasankeertan*.

Then we have the *Vathsalya-bhava* (parental feeling) *Namasankeertan*. Yashoda, the foster mother of Krishna, can be taken as the ideal for this type of *bhava*. Though she had a series of experiences of Krishna being Divine, she preferred to serve him as mother and to adore Him as her son.

Anuraga-bhava (lover-beloved feeling) *Namasankeertan* is exemplified best and in the purest form in the *Gopis*. They installed the Lord in their hearts, rid themselves of all earthly attachments, and lived only in His contemplation, with all thoughts, deeds, and words dedicated to Him. Then there is the *Sakhya-bhava* (comrade-feeling) *Namasankeertan*, as found in Arjuna, who believed in Krishna as his most intimate friend and brother-in-law (for he married Krishna's sister), and confided in Him as a comrade. This too is an attitude that will attach you to Divinity and sublimate the lower impulses.

Dhasya-bhava (servant-master attitude) *Namasankeertan* is another type. Serve the Lord as His faithful unquestioning servant – this is the path of Hanuman in the *Ramayana*. He had no will or wish of his own. His prayer was to be a fit instrument for the purposes of the Master.

The Name Has the Capacity to Redeem, Cure, and Save

The last attitude is *Shantha-bhava* (attitude of unruffled equanimity) *Namasankeertan* – praising the Lord whatever may happen, unaffected by ups and downs, bearing all the vagaries of fortune as His play. In the *Mahabarata* you will find Bhishma saturated with this attitude; he adored Krishna, even when Krishna was advancing towards him to kill him.

Another method of *Namasankeertan* is to remind oneself of the various exploits and sports, and the various acts of grace and compassion, which the Lord has manifested in the world, while reciting His Name. This is called *leela* (divine play-oriented) *Namasankeertan*. Chaithanya and Thyagaraja realised the Lord through this path.

Others recollect more of the majesty, the glory, the might, the mystery, the magnificence, the munificence and the love with which God has clothed Himself, while reciting His Name. This attitude is spoken of as *Guna* (attributes, characteristics) *Namasankeertan*. Most of the saints gratefully honoured in many lands are of this category.

Another category is denoted by seekers who attach value to the syllables and sound of the Name as such, irrespective of the meaning thereof. When the Name is pronounced, they say it draws towards the aspirant God and His grace – whatever may be the *bhava* and whether the *leela* or *guna* is associated with the *sankeertan* or not. The Name has strength, a power, and a capacity to redeem, cure and save, alone and unaided.

The Rama Principle Is the Atma, Source of All Joy

The Name Rama was once indicated by Rama Himself (the son of Dasharatha, hero of the *Ramayana*, the incarnation of the Lord in the Thretha *Yuga*) as a potent liberator. When Rama was passing through the forests with Sita and Lakshmana, the hermits who recognised Him as

Divine gathered around Him with a prayer that they be initiated by Him and be given some *mantra* (sacred formula) that they could repeat for spiritual uplift and victory. Rama replied that He was a prince in exile wandering in the forests and so He could not presume any authority to initiate hermits into a spiritual path. He moved on along the jungle tracks.

Watching Him walking fast, with Sita immediately behind Him and Lakshmana following behind, an aged hermit exclaimed, "Friends! See! Rama is initiating us! He is awarding us the *mantra*! God is leading. Nature (His constant companion, His shadow) is following; the *jeevi* (individual), part of the Lord, the wave of the ocean, is in the rear; he can see the Lord only if the deluding Nature is propitiated or by-passed. This is indeed a silent lesson in *sadhana* (spiritual discipline). *Ra* is God; *ma* is the individual, who has fallen behind. *Aa* is *Prakrithi* (Nature); Rama, Rama is the *mantra* He is vouchsafing so graciously. Take it and save yourselves. For me, there is no other course."

I am emphasising *Rama-Nama* (the name Rama) because the Rama principle is the *Atma*. Rama means that which is pleasant and which pleases. Now, the *Atma* is the source of all joy; its nature is bliss. Moreover, as Thyagaraja discovered, Rama is the Name that worshippers of both Narayana (Vishnu) and Shiva can adopt. The syllable *Ra* is the key syllable of the *Narayana mantra* (*Om Namō Narayanaya*) and the syllable *ma* is the key syllable of the *Shiva mantra* (*Om Namashivaya*).

God Is the Harmony of All the Names and Forms

The prejudices and factions among the worshippers of Narayana form of God and Shiva form are meaningless because both represent the One ultimate Universal. They are distinguishable, it may be said, by the different Divine equipment.

They are *shanka* (conch) and *chakra* (discus) in the case of Narayana and *damaru* (small drum)

and *thrishula* (three-pronged spear-trident) in the case of Shiva. But the conch and the drum both symbolise God's accessibility through audible praise and song; the discus and trident symbolise God's being the maker and master of time – discus representing the wheel of time and the three prongs of the trident represent the past, the present, and the future.

Narayana is referred to as *Hari* and Shiva as *Hara*. Both these Names are derived from the same root, *Har*, which means to destroy, to remove, to captivate, to attract and to harmonise – functions that God has clothed Himself with.

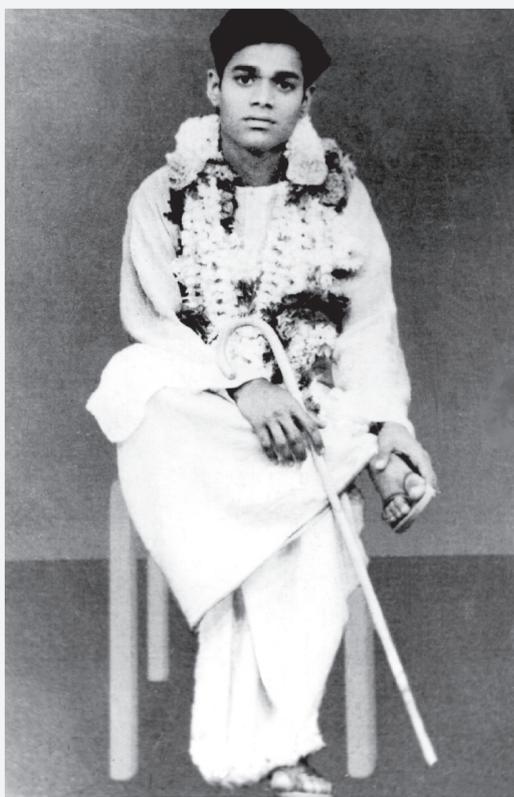
Man's duty is to sanctify his days and nights with the unbroken *smarana* (recollection) of the Name. Recollect with joy, with yearning. If you do so, God is bound to appear before you in the form and with the name you have allotted Him as most beautiful and most appropriate!

God is all names and all forms, the integration of all these in harmonious charm! Gods designated in different faiths and adored by different human communities are all limbs of the One God that really is. Just as the body is the harmonious blending of the senses and the limbs, God is the harmony of all the forms and names that man gives Him!

Do Not Make Distinction between Different Names

Only those who are ignorant of the glory of God will insist on one name and one form for His adoration and, what is worse, condemn the use by others of other names and forms! Since you are

all associated with Sathya Sai Organisations, I must warn you against such silly obduracy. Do not go about proclaiming that you are a sect distinct and separate from those who adore God in other forms and names. Thereby, you are limiting the very God whom you are extolling.



Do not proclaim in your enthusiasm, "We want only Sai; we are not concerned with the rest." You must convince yourselves that all forms are Sai's; all names are Sai's. There is no "rest"; all are He.

You must have noticed that I do not speak about Sai in My discourses, nor do I sing of Sai during the *bhajan* with which I usually conclude My discourses. And you must have wondered why. Let me tell you the reason.

I do not want the impression to gain ground that I desire this name and this form to be publicised. I have not come to set afoot a new cult; I do not want people to be misled on this point.

I affirm that this Sai form is the form of all the various names that man uses for the adoration of the Divine. So, I am teaching that no distinction should be made between the names Rama, Krishna, Ishwara and Sai – for they are all My names.

When I know that I am the current that illumines all the various bulbs, I am indifferent to the bulbs that you consider so important. When you pay attention to the bulbs, factions arise and sects are born. Sathya Sai *Seva Samithis* should not encourage discord and distinctions; they must

adore the One, appearing as many, the basic Divine, which illumines all the bulbs.

Be Conscious of God's Presence as the Motivator

I have not the slightest intention of utilising the *Seva Samithis* (Service Organisations) for propagating My Name or canvassing homage for My Name. No! I am content only when spiritual endeavours and disciplines to elevate and purify man are progressing everywhere. It is only through these that My universal reality will be revealed. So, do not limit Me to the boundaries of any one name and form. Your aim should be to see the self-same God in all the forms that are worshipped, to picture Him in all the names, nay, to be conscious of His presence as the inner motivator of every living being, in every particle of matter.

Do not fall into the error of considering some to be men worthy of reverence and some unworthy. Sai is in everyone, so all deserve your reverence and service. Propagate this truth; that is the function I assign to the *Seva Samithis*.

You can observe Me and My activities. Note how I adhere to righteousness, moral order, truth and universal compassion. That is what I desire you to learn from Me. Many of you plead for a message from Me to take to the *Samithi* of which you are members. Well, My life is My message. You will be adhering to My message if you live so that your lives are evidence of the dispassionate quiet, the courage, the confidence and the eagerness to serve those who are in distress that My life inspires you with.

God is immanent in the world. So, treat the world lovingly as you will treat your Master. Krishna served the Pandavas and He drove the chariot of Arjuna. So, though He was not a King, He became much more: a King-Maker! Serve, whatever the obstacle and whatever the cynical ridicule you may attract. Such reactions are inevitable when

one is engaged in doing good. Take My example. Praise and calumny have accompanied Me throughout the ages. Opposition and obstacles only tend to highlight the good and strengthen resolve.

Do Not Exaggerate the Significance of Miracles

The torture that Prahlada's father inflicted on him to turn his mind away from God helped to bring out his unflinching devotion. The wickedness of Ravana served to reveal the might of Rama's bow. Traducers like Sishupala, Dantavakra, Ravana, and Kamsa are inevitable accessories of every incarnation. This Sai Rama, too, has that age-old accompaniment. Now too, their brood is evident. On one side, adoration and homage are piling high into a peak; on the other, abjuration and slander are also peak high. Standing between them, I bless them both with lifted hands for I am not elated by one or depressed by the other. For the traducers will be rewarded with the crown they deserve; I will be crowned with My own glory.

Of what avail is it if you simply worship My Name and form without attempting to cultivate the *samathwa* (equal love for all) that I have, My *santhi* (unruffled equanimity), My *prema* (love), My *sahana* (patience and fortitude) and My *ananda* (ever-blissful nature)?

You elaborate in your lectures the unique powers of Sai, the incidents that are described as "miracles" in books written on Me by some persons. But, I request you not to attach importance to these. Do not exaggerate their significance; the most significant and important power is, let Me tell you, My *prema* (love). I may turn the sky into earth, or earth into sky, but that is not the sign of Divine might. It is the *prema* and the *sahana* that is effective universally; ever-present, that is the unique sign.

A Unique World Conference Held for the First Time

When you attempt to cultivate and propagate this love and this fortitude, trouble and travail will dog your steps. You must welcome them, for without them the best in you cannot be drawn out. If gold was as plentiful as dust, or diamonds as easily available as pebbles, no one would care for them. They are won after enormous exertion and expense and, therefore, they are eagerly sought after.

Since those who have devotion are gathered here and people of all nations have come, I cannot but tell you one fact. World conferences dedicated to religion or spiritual problems have, no doubt, been held before, as have conferences of followers of particular faiths. But these have been held only after the demise of the founders and Divine inspirers. This is the very first time that a world conference is being held of devoted persons while the incarnation is present before everyone, with the body assumed for the purpose bearing the Name that is chosen for It by Itself.

I must tell you this fact because ninety-nine persons out of a hundred among you do not know My Reality. You have come here drawn by diverse needs: a taste for spiritual matters, eagerness to develop the institutions to which you are attached, admiration or affection, love or reverence, or a spurt of enthusiasm to join others and share with others your own exultation.

Don't Allow Doubt to Distract You from My Divinity

In truth, you cannot understand the nature of My Reality, either today or even after a thousand years of steady austerity or ardent inquiry, even if all mankind joins in that effort. But, in a short time you will become cognisant of the bliss showered by the Divine Principle, which has taken upon itself this sacred body and this sacred name.

Your good fortune that will provide you this chance is greater than what was available for anchorites, monks, sages, saints and even personalities embodying facets of Divine glory!

Since I move about with you, eat like you, and talk with you, you are deluded into believing that this is but an instance of common humanity. Be warned against this mistake. I am also deluding you by My singing with you, talking with you, and engaging Myself in activities with you. But, any moment My Divinity may be revealed to you and so you have to be ready, prepared for the moment. Since Divinity is enveloped by humanness you must endeavour to overcome the *maya* (delusion) that hides it from your eyes.

This is a human form in which every Divine entity, every Divine Principle, that is to say, all the names and forms ascribed by man to God, are manifest – “*Sarvadevataswaroopalanu dharin-china manavakaram ee akaram.*” Do not allow doubt to distract you; if you only install steady faith in My Divinity in the altar of your heart, you can win a vision of My Reality.

Instead, if you swing like the pendulum of a clock, one moment devotion, another moment disbelief, you can never succeed in comprehending the truth and win that bliss. You are very fortunate that you have a chance to experience the bliss of the vision of the *sarvadaivatwa swarupam* (the form, which is all forms of all Gods) now, in this life itself.

Let Me draw your attention to another fact. On previous occasions when God incarnated on earth, the bliss of recognising Him in the incarnation was vouchsafed only after the physical embodiment had left the world, in spite of the abundance of clear evidence of His grace. And the loyalty and devotion they commanded from men arose through fear and awe of their superhuman powers and skills, or at their imperial and penal authority.

But, ponder for a moment on this Sathya Sai Manifestation. In this age of rampant materialism, aggressive disbelief, and irreverence, what is it that brings to It the adoration of millions from all over the world? You will be convinced that the basic reason for this is the fact that this is the Supra-worldly Divinity in human form.

Revival of Vedic Dharma is Sai Sankalpa

Again, how fortunate you are that you can witness all the countries of the world paying homage to *Bharat*; you can hear adoration to Sathya Sai's Name reverberating throughout the world, even while this body is existing – not at some future date, but when it is with you, before you. And again, you can witness very soon the restoration of *Sanathana Dharma* to its genuine and natural status, the *Dharma* laid down in the *Vedas* for the good of all the peoples of the world.

The revival of *Vedic Dharma* is the *Sai Sankalpa* (the resolve that Sai has) is not only drawing

people towards Me, it is also attracting them by the manifestation of My *shakthi* (power), and *saamarthya* (capability). This is not a *bhrama tatwam* (phenomenon of delusion). This *tatwam* (phenomenon) will sustain truth, it will uproot untruth, and in that victory make all of you exult in ecstasy. This is the *Sai Sankalpam*.

So utilise the chance of association with Me as much as possible, and endeavour as quickly and as best as you can to follow the directions that I have been giving. Obeying My instructions is enough; for it will benefit you more than the most rigorous asceticism. Practise *Sathya* (truth), *Dharma* (righteousness), *Santhi* (peace), and *Prema* (love), which are dear to Me. Resolve to keep those ideals before you, ever in all your thoughts, words, and deeds. That can confer on you the *summum bonum* of mergence in the Supreme Substance of Divinity.

**Divine Discourse at the World Conference of
Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations
on May 17, 1968**

