

4. LET UNITY BE THE UNDERCURRENT EVERYWHERE

Date: 02 March 2003
(morning)

Occasion:
Mahasivarathri

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

None there is who is all knowing
Nought are there of heads empty
Some there are who are of something aware
Alone is He, the omniscient
Sambasiva.

Embodiments of Love!

The message of holy Sivarathri is to spread the ideal and sanctity of this most auspicious day to one and all. The principle of unity is slowly declining among the people of the world. There is strife and discord between even two brothers of the same small family.

In the divine family of Lord Siva, there are only four members, namely, Lord Easwara, his consort Parvati, and the two sons, Subramanya and Vinayaka. This is an ideal family. There is no difference of opinion whatsoever either between husband and wife or the two brothers. There is perfect accord and harmony in their family. Mother Parvati and Lord Parameswara wanted to set an example to the whole world in the matter of a most harmonious, perfect and loving relationship between a wife and husband and between brothers.

A family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among the family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the lives of the family members. Therefore, every family should strive for achieving unity and harmonious relationship among its members. Every family should strive to emulate the example of Lord Siva's family. Today, even if there are only two sons in a family, there is no harmony between them. Similar is the case of husband and wife. This is not the position in respect of Lord Siva's family. The vehicles they ride, the circumstances in which they function, the wealth they possess --in fact, in every aspect, the members of this divine family set an example to the whole world.

For example, Lord Siva's vehicle is Nandi, the bull. Mother Parvati's vehicle is the Lion. The younger son, Subramanya's vehicle is the peacock, whereas the elder son Vinayaka's is the tiny mouse. They move about the whole world on such strange vehicles, which are antagonistic in nature, they but still lead a perfect and harmonious family life.

You do not find such harmony in present day-families. Suppose the younger brother's wife wears some new ornaments; the elder brother's wife becomes jealous. Similarly, in several situations in day-to-day life, you will find internal bickerings in the family instead of peace and unity. Normally, a lion and a bull are not good friends. The lion looks at the bull as a prey and the bull fears the lion. But, in the case of Lord Siva's vehicle, i.e. the Bull, and Mother Parvati's vehicle, the Lion, there is perfect harmony and absence of fear.

When do we have fear or anxiety? Only when there is some fault in us. When there are no faults of any kind in anybody, there is no scope for fear at all! Today, man is exposed to fear and anxiety even in small matters, since he is suffering from faults. These faults are responsible for fear, anxiety, restlessness, hatred, and anger. Hence, if we are to live in peace and harmony, we must strive to remove the faults in us.

In fact, there is no sorrow in man. He is Anandaswarupa, the embodiment of divine bliss. In spite of that, if he suffers from sorrow, it is because of his own evil traits. Sorrow has not suddenly descended on him from somewhere. The sorrow is the reaction, reflection, and resound of the evil qualities in him. If someone is ridiculing you, take it that it is not the other person but your own evil feelings being returned to you in the shape of ridicule.

Lord Siva has no special ornaments on His body. All his ornaments are the serpents that He wears round his neck, the matted locks, the crescent moon, the cool water of the Ganga and the vibhuti (holy ash) that he smears all over His body. This Divine form of Lord Siva is beautifully portrayed thus:

Lo! Behold The Lord of the icy peak
Crowned with crescent moon,
Glistening matted locks,
Bedrenched by heaven descending Ganga
Flaming eye in the forehead,
Venomous potion - poison - Halahala Purpling the beauteous
neck
Live bracelets of wriggling Serpents and
a belt of Cobra holding up the Elephant hide, his sole
garment.
Pearly ash smearing the chest

A blinding white Spot of vermilion on the Forehead beside the
searing eye Ruddy lips smeared by Fresh chewed betel,
Diamond studded earrings Of purest gold, dancing like
Stars twinkling in the sky,
Vision negating form
The fair person of the Lord Radiating Effulgence Divine.
(Telugu Poem)

Lord Siva has donned this divine form in order to teach a renunciant outlook to the world, including his consort, Parvati. His another habit is to beg for alms.

The opulent form essaying
Total detachment, begging bowl
In hand, seeking alms
For a frugal meal
At the heavenly abode, Kailasa.

Parvati, however, did not develop any aversion or disgust toward her husband, Lord Siva, on account of His strange attire or habits. She did not run away from Him saying, "How can I lead a family life with such a person?" She faithfully followed Him, submitting herself to His wishes and happiness. Both of them lived in peace and harmony.

Now about their sons. The vehicle of the younger son, Lord Subramanya, is the peacock, which is by nature an enemy of the serpents worn as ornaments by the father. The serpents begin hissing at the sight of a peacock. They hate each other. Similarly, the vehicle of the elder son, Lord Vinayaka, is the rat, which again is a natural prey of the serpent. They are bitter enemies. In spite of such divergent natures, all the members of the family of Lord Siva lived happily in perfect peace. Each member, while discharging their duty, provided happiness and joy to others.

Even in the form of Lord Siva Himself, there are apparent contradictions. He has Ganga on His head and the crescent moon in His matted locks. These are signs of coolness. In contrast to these, He has literally fire in the third eye in His forehead. Thus, there is cool water on His head and fire below on His forehead. These two are conflicting forces. Yet they maintained perfect harmony and set an example to the world. Thus, there was not even slightest difference of opinion or discordant note in the universal family of Lord Siva. It is a perfectly ideal family, which the entire world should emulate.

In sharp contrast to this situation, there is bitter hatred today between one person and another. Hatred is ruling all fields in the world. Even in the same family, there is discord between husband and wife, between

parents and children, and between brothers. Lord Siva and Mother Parvati by their own example are exhorting the entire world to shed hatred and enmity.

But who is listening to such teachings? Who is putting them in practice? People chant the name of God with great devotion but fail to emulate the example shown by God. What is the use of worshipping God when you do not follow His ideals? How can you obtain divine grace if you go against the teachings of God? On account of food and habits, several ill-feelings develop in man. But you should try to control them. You should not allow them to manifest as hatred toward others. You should never allow jealousy to grow in you. Today, every human being is afflicted with the disease of jealousy and hatred. In fact, the root cause of all evil qualities in man is jealousy. Jealousy leads to anger. Jealousy and hatred can destroy a human being totally.

Man can really enjoy great happiness if he gets rid of jealousy and hatred. In fact, man himself is an embodiment of bliss. It is his inherent nature. Sorrow is not his nature. Man is an embodiment of love, peace, and bliss. Why then is he afflicted with sorrow? It is because of flouting the divine commands. This is the reaction of going against the divine Will. The reaction, reflection, and resound of this calamity is the root cause for all the sorrows of a human being.

Here is a small example. You see a person approaching you and you think that he is your enemy. The moment this feeling of hatred develops in you, you start fighting with him. Instead, you try to greet him saying "Hello brother! How are you?" When you extend love to others, others also will extend you love. On the other hand, the moment you see a person, if you move away from him, he will do the same thing to you. As the action, so is the reaction. Therefore, we have to ensure that our actions are good.

In fact, there are no bad people in this world. All are good. You say that those who oppose you are all bad people. If you do not exhibit bad qualities, how can the other man behave badly? Your own bad qualities reflect in others. Hence, every person must cultivate good feelings and good behaviour. One should conduct himself in such a way that one does not go against the divine commands. Only then will one have peace and security in your life. You may participate in a number of bhajans, worship God in several forms, and observe ever so many religious vows --yet, if you do not cultivate sacred feelings in your heart, what is the use?

Man should cultivate the noble quality of a tender heart. Love and compassion should reflect in his heart. If there are no such feelings, he will become a demon, verily. That is why it is called hridaya. The etymology of the word is hri + daya = hridaya (storehouse of compassion). Among all the living beings, the human being is the only

one endowed with the quality of daya (compassion). That is why he is said to hav a hridaya. An ideal human being is the one having a compassionate heart.

Embodiments of Love!

You have such a sacred and compassionate heart. Why then you should drown yourself in sorrow? This is all because of the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner feelings. You will be going through a newspaper early in the morning. Wherever you see, you will find unrest, news items of someone killing another, hatred, jealousy, anger, etc. All this news leads you to a very unhappy and polluted atmosphere.

When you get up from bed after a sound sleep in the night, you must have a peaceful mind. Only then there will be no scope for unrest in your life. Right from the early morning you must lead a life of peace and happiness. You may have sorrows and difficulties; but they are only passing clouds, which come and go. They should not really bother you. It is only when you take them to heart and cling to them that you suffer. If you ignore them, they will not bother you.

You get a postal cover addressed to you. Normally, there will be a 'from' address and a 'to' address on any postal cover. Without these addresses, the cover will go to the dead-letter office. Man should, therefore, see both the addresses, i.e. from and to. You must first enquire into yourself "where do I come from?". In pursuance of this enquiry, you must discover and assure yourself that your source is God. Since you come from God, you will have noble feelings. Your 'from' address is God and your 'to' address is human nature. If you remember these two, your life will go on smoothly. Since your origin or 'from' address is Divinity, you should always obey the divine command. Among all the living beings in the creation, only the human being has been given this privilege. In fact, this is the ideal set before him by God. Further, it is only in the Bharatadesa that such noble ideas are imparted from generation to generation. In spite of all these ideals set before us, we are unable to live in peace, since we are not following them.

You may follow any one or all the nine forms of devotion like sravanam (listening), kirtanam (singing), vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), padasevanam (serving His lotus feet), vandanam (salutation), archanam (worship), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender). More than following any or all the nine forms of devotion, it is the inner feeling or motive behind the forms of bhakti (devotion) that is important. Your inner feeling must always be pure.

Of all the nine forms of devotion, sneha (friendship) is the most important. It is only when you cultivate this feeling of friendship with God that you can reach the last stage of Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). For this purpose, you must have a pure heart, which in turn is based on love and devotion. You must have pure and selfless love toward one and all.

Such love is not a one-way traffic. Today, we are prepared to receive love from all people, we but are hesitant to share our love with others. It should be a give and take policy. Love begets Love. You must also be prepared to receive love from others. Love is a gift of God. In fact, you must rise to such a level that whatever is given by God, you must be prepared to receive wholeheartedly. At times, God also gives you a bitter pill like the doctor. This is for your own good.

Suppose you have an ulcer in your stomach. The surgeon opens your stomach with a knife and removes the ulcer. Since he cut your stomach with a knife, do you charge him with hatred toward you? No, no. It is only in your interest that he has performed the operation. Similarly, at times, God also will put you to some difficulties. Even that is only in your interest; for your good only. Both happiness and sorrow are God's gifts. They are His divine grace. Nobody can comprehend His divine leelas.

You must always live in unity. Whatever activity you undertake, unity should be the undercurrent. All people should live in peace and harmony. The previous morning, you sang some bhajans. How melodious and devotional they were! How joyous they were! It was only because all of you sang the bhajans in one voice. Particularly, the three boys, Prasanth, Kavi Kumar's son, and Ravi Kumar, sang the bhajans in perfect sruthi (tune), laya (modulation) and thala (rhythm). The boy who played the flute gave them a good support. They gave so much joy to the audience. Where can you get such joy and happiness? Where can you see such unity?

Nowadays, wherever you go, you will hear a lot of noise and sound in the name of Sivarathri. You will not find anywhere in the world this type of divine atmosphere surcharged with devotion. Every activity undertaken in Prasanthi Nilayam is divine and in perfect peace and harmony. Everything is surcharged with love and devotion. God is love and love is God. God has to be attained only through love. Hence, all of you should become Premaswarupas (embodiments of divine love). You should live in perfect harmony wherever you are. Never give room for hatred. Even if you come across an opponent, greet him with love. He will automatically respond with love, since the whole world is filled with reaction, reflection and resound. Suppose there is unrest in you mind. It is not because of external factors. Your own deficiencies and faults are being reflected in the form of unrest.

If you wish to attain happiness, live in happiness. The universal family of Lord Siva, Mother Parvati, Subramanya, and Vinayaka are the perfect example for this principle. Cultivate their example. Worship them. But a caution: you may worship a picture as God, but not God as a picture. Therefore, you worship the Easwara family by following their example.

The message of this holy Sivarathri is to live in unity and harmony with everyone. Particularly, the brothers in a family should never fight; they must be united, like the Pandavas. Only by their unity could the Pandavas obtain the divine grace of Lord Krishna. Anything can be achieved with unity. Take for example, the five fingers in the hand. It is only when the five fingers join together that we can accomplish any task. The Kauravas were one hundred in number, but they were not united for a good cause. Ultimately, what fate had befallen them? Similarly, Vali and Sugriva in the *Ramayana*. They were in fact brothers. Due to some differences, they developed hatred against one another. In the end, Vali met his end in the hands of Rama.

The ultimate goal of this Sivarathri is to develop unity among humanity, whatever be the obstacles, whatever be the difficulties and whatever be the provocations. You should never make use of harsh words while speaking to others. Always speak sweetly and softly, with a loving heart.

Dear students and devotees!

You have all assembled here with a pure heart on this auspicious day of Mahasivarathri. Wherever you are, you must always have a pure heart. When the heart is pure and sacred, you can undertake sacred activities. When the vessel is pure, the contents in the vessel can also be pure. Even if the vessel is made of gold, if there is poison in the vessel, the contents get poisoned. On the contrary, even if the vessel is made of earth, the gold that is kept in the vessel will remain pure. It is not the vessel, but the material that is important. We must always keep our heart as pure gold and fill it with sweet love.

You are students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. You are growing under the loving care of Swami. Swami does not expect anything from you. Education in the Sathya Sai Institute is totally free. Whatever your requirements, I am providing them free of cost. Did you come across anywhere in the world such educational institutions? Today, you will find people booking seats in educational institutions even before the child is born. They pay a lump sum amount to the school in advance for reservation of seats in the 1st standard. It is only in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning that you will not find such advance bookings. There is no advance for anything in Prasanthi Nilayam. Wherever you go, you must live up to the ideals of your education. Whatever you have learned here, share it with all.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is My only property. In fact, it should be the same with you as well. I do not seek anything from anybody. You live in love. Share your love with everybody. Only when you lead a life filled with love your life will become pure and sacred. In fact, every activity undertaken in Prasanthi Nilayam will be pure and peaceful.

Thousands of people have gathered here on the holy occasion of Mahasivarathri. Did you here any noise? No. Not even one child cries. No one sneezes or coughs. Such a calm, serene, peaceful, and divine atmosphere is pervading this hall. If you are not able to get peace in such a divine atmosphere, where else you can?

Never speak harshly to anybody. Several people today pose themselves as devotees but take to evil ways. This is not a mark of devotion. In fact, such behaviour goes against the concept of devotion. A dissonance between thought, word, and deed is the characteristic of an evil-minded person. That is why it is said, "Manasyanyath, vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath durathmanam (those whose thought, word, and deed are at variance are wicked)." You should not join the company of such people. On the other hand you should join the company of real devotees who live up to the principle of "Manasyekam, vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam (those who maintain perfect accord between thought, word, and deed are great)."

The most important characteristic of a devotee is good behaviour. If he does not possess this characteristic, he is not a devotee at all, he is a great sinner. You are students of this great institution. Wherever you go, you must be recognised by your good behaviour. There are several past students of this Institute, living in foreign countries like America, Japan, Germany, etc. They are still recognised in those countries as students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. They bring credit to the Institution.

You need not give anything to Sai. Lead a life of character and good behaviour. That is the only thing I want. That is the only thing that gives me joy. Not only the students, the devotees must also ensure good behaviour. They must feel that they are the members of the universal family of Lord Siva. Mother Parvati constitutes the body, whereas Lord Siva represents the heart. When the body and heart join together as a dwelling, human nature resides there. This is called Prakriti. The human body represents Pravritti, whereas the Atma residing in the body represents Nivritti. The unity of this Pravritti and Nivritti is human nature. Having been born in such a sacred human nature, people are forgetting their innate divinity.

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Lastly, I wish to advise you that you should never give scope for ego to dominate your actions. Wherever there is ego, there lies danger. Therefore, shed your ego and cultivate pure and selfless love toward one and all. There is nothing in this world that cannot be achieved with love. I conclude My discourse with the blessing that the divine vibrations of today's namasankirtanam spread to the whole world and grant good qualities, good practices, and good behaviour to all people.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with the bhajan "Prema Muditha Manase Kaho".

**Date: 02 March 2003 (morning), Occasion: Mahasivarathri,
Place: Prasanthi Nilayam**