

**SUMMER SHOWERS IN
BRINDAVAN
1978**

Discourses of

BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

**During the summer course held for
College students at Whitefield.
Bangalore, India**

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1. Opening Address

In this sacred country Bharath, the quality of forbearance has been the greatest of our traditions. Adherence to truth has been one other important ideal. What can be sweeter than the widely accepted custom in this country according to which, we respect the loving aspect of the mother. Further, our honour is more valuable to us than even our life. We are prepared to give up our lives to protect our honour. Alas! we are forgetting these ideals today and accepting in their place, foreign ideals. We have forgotten our own culture. What else can I tell the citizens of this country? Like an elephant which does not know its own strength, the citizens of this country do not know their strength.

Good ideas, good conduct, and adherence to truth should result from our education. That which promotes these aspects is indeed true education. Only those who acquire these qualities can be called truly educated people.

Educators, authorities of education, patrons of education, students and teachers:

Today, in our country, spiritual values have disappeared, *dharma* has declined, adherence to truth is not found anywhere, demoniac features like cruelty, unkindness, lack of truth and egoism have spread everywhere. At one time, this country was known all over the world for *Dharmic* conduct. Like the parents who feel sorry when they look at the improper educational attainments of their children, the motherland of India feels very sad when she looks at us, who have lost faith in our spiritual traditions. In order to pacify this motherland of ours, it is the duty of the young students to do service to the

community and learn the right things which education is expected to teach them. The country does not merely consist of dust and land. It consists of people who live in it. Students should recognise that setting right the country means setting right the people and putting them on the proper path. The first natural outcome of education should be the ability to do some service to the country and re-establish the spiritual values in the country. We should thus show that we have a leadership of the world in this aspect.

The value of an individual depends on his culture. One's culture is a very sacred aspect and has been inherited from our ancestors. We cannot interpret or understand culture superficially. It has a very deep meaning. It is the first duty of every individual to give up bad conduct in his daily life and improve his daily habits. The deservedness by which you will be entitled to become useful citizens of the country should be acquired while you are students. In the entire life of a human being, the most important period is the period of being a student. A student is like the root for the tree of his life. Recognising such truth, you should lead the life of a student happily and learn good lessons from it.

Today, the government has got neither the ability nor the right to correct people. The sacredness by which the people can correct themselves is not present in them. People have also lost their capacity to correct the government. When we look at it from the spiritual angle, we do not see, either in the rulers or in the ruled, the capacity by which they can set themselves right. The reason for this is that people have not corrected their lives, when they were young, in a manner in which their life could become useful when they grow older. It was due to their inability to recognise what kind of conduct would have made them useful when they grow older. In that context, the students

must now realise that they should introduce the necessary correctives in their lives, even while they are young, so that their life can become useful when they grow older. Students should have in their hands the future of this country. Wherever they gather, they should see that there is calm and peace and that the community respects them. The place where students gather should become a symbol of peace and happiness. This is the right symptom of good education. The main reason by which students of today have lost their *dharmic* traditions is their contact with western civilisation. They are not seeing things with their own eyes. They are not experiencing things with their own mind and heart. They are borrowing the eyes of others and they are borrowing the thoughts of others. They are making their life imitative and artificial. Students: it is very necessary for you to recognise that youths are like the roots of the tree of life. The manure and the water which we have to give must be given to the roots and not to the branches or leaves. We always, no doubt, keep in mind peace and happiness — which are like branches and leaves — and forget that we have to give importance to *dharmic* conduct which is like the roots. In that context, we should realise that manure and water in the form of morality and *dharmic* conduct should be accepted and practised when one is a student. Unfortunately, the pure, tender and good hearts of the students are being agitated, polluted and ruined by political leaders for their own selfish purposes. They are thus ruining the entire future life of young students. The life of a student is very valuable. The entire future of a country depends on the good conduct of its students.

We should realise that all the leaders of today were at one time students. If you want to become leaders at a later age, the sacredness that will make you good leaders must be cultivated at this young age. Politics is good in its own way, but it is not good for young students. After you finish your student

career, you can decide for yourself what is good for you. If you enter politics while you are a student, you will not be able to do well in either of the fields. This is neither right nor good for your conduct. In the political sphere, it is not as if there are no petty feelings like jealousy, ego or anger which drive you to a bad or a wrong path. The political sphere is such that it promotes differences between people. It is not bringing about unity among the people. Lust is like a demon, jealousy is like a madman and ego is dreadful. These have become a part of our daily life, and so we are not able to make much good out of our lives. Man is losing the human qualities inherent in him, because he is filled with ego. He does not understand his true form. He is also not making an attempt to understand his fellow human beings. This ego is such a bad quality that it has ruined even gods and angels and not only human beings. When this ego enters the minds of students, the very fundamental aspect of education disappears from them. Education gives you humility, and humility leads you to deservedness which in turn will give you wealth. Wealth should enable you to take the *dharmic* path. Therefore, students should first learn to be humble and conduct themselves with humility. Today, although the students learn very little, they feel very proud. Because of this, they are losing the broad hearts that they should have. Education is not intended to simply amass wealth. It is intended to reveal the true and sacred nature of life. Not only this, the respect that students can command and the honour which they have in the society will depend on the qualities which they exhibit. What is most important to man is his character. When the students can promote character in themselves, they will be able to do good to the country. I am also hoping and asking the education minister, who is present here, to see that in all spheres—the worldly sphere, the *dharmic* sphere and the moral sphere—that good things are taught and that the tender minds of the students are protected. The students today take a lot of

trouble to acquire a degree but they use that degree for eking out a livelihood. Are they spending even a small fraction of their time for promoting good qualities in themselves? Do not be proud of your meagre education and think education is intended only to get you a degree. It is intended to enable you to do service without ego and help your country and your people to prosper. We are converting the sacredness of education into the form of a begging bowl. It is very necessary to inculcate a sense of values in the students and train them to smilingly and willingly sacrifice for the prosperity of the country. So long as we depend on the attractions of the world, we cannot escape the predicament in which we are today. When we are prepared to sacrifice fully, our prosperity will grow. We must become warriors who are prepared to do active work. The country cannot prosper by having a number of lazy people. Without wasting our time and life, we should be able to take to the path of spiritual enquiry and promote the sacredness of this great country of Bharath. After spending thousands of rupees and giving a lot of trouble to our parents to get a degree, we are then turning this degree into a begging bowl, and we go from office to office for a job. We should become people who can stand on their own legs and resources. It is the first duty of the students to learn to value hard work. We must show our gratitude to our parents and then develop the determination to serve the community. The happiness and safety of the country should be your first aim. You must recognise that the true meaning of education is to give satisfaction to your parents and to your country. This will bring prosperity to the country.

I am happy that the Governor and the Education Minister are here to participate in the opening ceremony of our Summer Course on Indian Culture and Spirituality. I am hoping that you will be able to draw inspiration and learn good ideals from the course and put them into practice. Today we

see that wherever students gather there is agitation and unrest. This is because they are not able to understand the true meaning of education. It is not right to join as students in a college and to run after sensory pleasures with that excuse. They join the college for education, but are they getting true education? The students join with one objective and attain a different objective. If the students have a problem, they have the right to go and meet the authorities and discuss. But you do not have the right to cause harm and damage to others.

From tomorrow, you will listen to elders speaking about the unity of all religions and the sacredness of Indian culture. I hope that you will carry great ideals from here and put them into practice. You should strive to bring back the glory to this sacred country that it had enjoyed in the past.

2. God Comes In Human Form To Help Men Change Themselves For The Better

A great deal of information and knowledge are contained in the books. Our heads are, however, filled with dust. Education is being used only for eking out a livelihood. Oh children of Bharath, listen to this truth.

Students:

In our sacred traditions, we have many important and significant stories which are full of meaning. It is our misfortune that the students in this country are not able to see this significance. *Bhagavad Gita* means that it is the song of God. Devotees of God have also been called *Bhagavathas*. Vyasa has divided the story of *Bhagavatha* into twelve parts. Each part is called a *Skanda*. This is a sacred story which has been given to men in order to liberate them from bondage. This story of *Bhagavatha* has been taught by Vyasa to Suka who in turn gave it to the people. Maharishi Suka was the son of Maharishi Vyasa. Suka learnt the *Vedas* thoroughly from his father Vyasa. The *Vedas* and *Vedangas* have been divided into four parts called *Samhitas*. While describing the sacred stories of the contemporaries of Suka, Vyasa was also writing the story of *Bhagavatha*. The Kauravas and Pandavas were living at the same time and the battle between the Kauravas and Pandavas and the moral contained therein were written by him as the *Mahabharatha*. *Mahabharatha* was also described as the fifth *Veda*. He realised that it is difficult for ordinary and unlearned people to understand God. To facilitate realisation of God, by such ordinary people, he also wrote another text called *Brahma Sutra*. He has also established the truth that bliss can

come only in the thought of God and not by any other process. He established that bliss and happiness are simply embodiments of God and that they cannot be found elsewhere. Bliss and happiness can be given only by God, and he who thus secures them is called a devotee. The close relationship that exists between a devotee and God has been described in *Bhagavatha*. It is not an easy matter to understand this. In the context of the difficulty in understanding the *Brahma Sutras*, he also produced the eighteen *Puranas* explaining the nature of divinity. He was feeling sorry that in spite of his best efforts in promoting divinity, there was no easy manner in which the sorrow of the people could be removed. He spent a lot of time in trying to find out ways and means of making ordinary and illiterate people happy. While Vyasa was contemplating on such issues, Narada approached Vyasa and said that the only method by which man can attain happiness is by describing and singing the glory of God. From that day, Vyasa started describing the *leelas* of the Lord.

Year after year, we experience some kind of heat, cold and rain. Because of these seasonal changes, certain changes occur in our ideas and even in our health. It is also known to us that with changing seasons, we listen to cuckoos singing, we see the mangoes ripening and so on. Every year, the seasons come back at about the same time and give us the same kind of experience. Taking this cycle into consideration, the Maharishis tried to explain to us about the *Yugas*. The season that has gone by returns to us twelve months later; the day that has gone by returns to us eight days later and so on. These are common experiences. If today is a Friday, after another week we again get a Friday. If this is the month of May, again after twelve months we get the month of May.

Taking this into account, the Maharishis divided time into four *Yugas* called *Kritha Yuga*, *Dwapara Yuga*, *Thretha Yuga*, and the *Kali Yuga*. These will keep coming back again and again. In these, the word *Kritha* indicates four times, and the word *Thretha* indicates three times. The *Dwapara* signifies two times, and *Kali* gives us an authoritative unit of measurement. According to them, 4,32,000 years is the basic unit and represents the number of years in a *Kali Yuga*. Two times this or 8,64,000 years represents the *Dwapara Yuga*. Three times this basic number of 12,96,000 years is the measure of *Thretha Yuga*. Four times this measure, namely, 17,28,000 years refers to *Kritha Yuga*. By adding all these, we get 43,20,000 years and this refers to a *Maha Yuga*. After a *Maha Yuga*, the *Kritha Yuga* will start again. In this manner and by assigning such measures, they interpreted time.

From time to time, in these *Yugas*, God was appearing as an *Avatar* for the purpose of showing divinity that is contained in human beings, and for setting an exemplary life as an example. It has been said that God takes a human form so that he is accessible to human beings and gives them happiness. The birds and animals are experiencing the limitations which have been laid out for them. A human birth is the most sacred one among the 84 *lakhs* of different *jivas* in this creation. To attain such a sacred birth is a great fortune indeed. Man has a special distinctiveness. We have to see and understand the difference between birds and animals, on the one hand, and man on the other hand. Animals are born with cruelty as a nature and they also spend their lives with cruelty. We may give a lot of training to the animal, but it is impossible to bring about a lasting change in its habits. It may conduct itself according to the training during the period of the training, but it will not give up its cruelty. Man is not like that. Even though he may be born with cruelty, he can get rid of it by an attempt or *Sad-*

hana. It becomes clear that what does not and cannot take refinement is an animal and what can take refinement is man. To facilitate such refinement and transformation in human beings, God takes birth in human form from time to time. This refinement can be brought about by different methods at different periods of time. In *Kritha Yuga*, the method was *Dhyana*. In the *Thretha Yuga*, the method was *Yagna*, in *Dwapara Yuga*, it was *Archana* and in the *Kali Yuga*, prominence is given to *Namasmarana*. These are the royal paths available to human beings for changing themselves. In the *Kritha Yuga*, the Maharishis, through *thapas*, used to attain *moksha* or vision of the Lord. The Maharishis who enjoyed such divine experience used to mix with the people so that their divine experience can be conveyed to the people who lived at that time.

In the *Thretha Yuga*, God appeared as a human being in the form of Rama; and by using his own family as an example, he tried to set up an ideal *dharmic* conduct characteristic of that age. At that time, it was also established that Rama was the embodiment of Love and Lakshmana was the embodiment of compassion and that it was the confluence of *Dharma* and compassion that makes a good human being. This is true *dharma*. We are believing that rituals constitute *dharma*. It is not our daily practices or rituals that constitute true *dharma*. It is the compassion that is generated in a pure heart that constitutes the base of true *dharma*. This is also the most important basic quality of a human being. One must make an attempt to follow the dictates of one's own conscience. By such conduct and example, Ramachandra corrected the entire humanity. By the time *Dwapara Yuga* came, God in the human form of Krishna set an ideal example of love for the people. This aspect of Krishna attracted all people. These were such that people lost themselves in the happiness and bliss generated by the *Avatar* of Krishna. Krishna was looking after, with tender af-

fection, the needs of the people at that time. The great truth that is contained in the *Avatar* of Krishna has been communicated to us in the *Bhagavatha*. This *Avatar* of Krishna showed that we should never forget God whether we are in sorrow or pleasure, pain or joy, poverty or affluence. Droupadi, who lost all her sons and who was in great difficulties, showed great forbearance and affection when speaking with Aswathama. The *Bhagavatha* teaches us that it is not right for a devotee to think of God only at times of difficulties and completely forget him at times of happiness. In fact, all *Avatars* convey a very significant lesson, and you must make an attempt to understand the inner meaning that is conveyed to us in such lessons.

3. Bhagavatha Is A Sacred Text Which Can Cater To The Needs Of Everyone

What we say does not exist, exists. What we say exists, does not exist. In truth, there is only one thing that exists at all times; and that is God—the omnipresent God. Without God, there is nothing in this Universe.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Srimad *Bhagavatha* can be described as a mansion of twelve floors or *skandas*, and Narada has given a name for each of these *skandas*. Although all the *skandas* are equally important, there is one which may be regarded as the most important and which constitutes the basic for all other *skandas*. That has been called the *Vasudeva Upasana*. The other eleven *skandas* are based on this *Vasudeva Upasana* which is like the foundation. This word *Vasudeva* means God and it also represents the *Deva* who is resident in every *Jiva*. This *Deva* resides not only in every *Jiva* but is also the basis for all creation. An individual in whom all thoughts, words and deeds are fully synchronised can truly be described as a *Bhagavatha*. All actions of a *Jiva* must be directed towards *Vasudeva*. It is impossible for us to seek directly the unmanifested form of God. Since you have a body, with a form and a name, it is very difficult for you to recognise the unmanifested form of God. So long as you have attachments in the world, it becomes possible for you to comprehend the Lord only through a name and a form. In this context, *Bhagavatha* has also taught us that *Vasudeva Upasana* means the comprehension of the Lord with the help of a name and a form. It is thus necessary for us to do

things, see things and hear things only in the context of *Vasu-deva*. It is the divine aspect alone that we will really find in all places. That individual who has understood the aspect of *Atma* deserves to do this *Sadhana*. Following the tradition of the *Vedas*, it has become common for us to recognise the importance of time and to worship time as a sacred entity. In this aspect of time, we divide a year into twelve months and to sanctify these twelve months, God's name is also spelt out in twelve letters as "*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasu-devaya.*" Here, we see that the God of time has twelve letters. It is in this context that Vyasa had composed the *Bhagavatha* in twelve *skandas*.

The *Kali Yuga* is a measure of time. It constitutes a measure for measuring the *Kritha Yuga*, the *Dwapara Yuga* and the *Thretha Yuga*. There are certain rules prescribed for the use of this measure of time. The measure in time for *Kali Yuga* is four *lakhs* thirty-two thousand years (4,32,000 years). The *Dwapara Yuga* is two times this unit or 8,64,000 years. The *Thretha Yuga* is three times or 12,96,000 years. The *Kritha Yuga* is four times or 17,28,000 years. The period which consists of all these four *Yugas* together is described as the *Maha Yuga*. The *Maha Yuga*, therefore, has 43,20,000 years. The difference between the duration of a *Kali Yuga* and that of a *Maha Yuga* is the addition of an extra zero to the former at the end. Just as the days, months and seasons repeat again and again, the *Yugas* also repeat again and again periodically. During the confluence of these *Yugas* and at the time of transition from one to another, various components of creation like mountains, rivers, habitations, etc., undergo major changes. The aspects of *dharma* also change when the *Yuga* changes. As a result of these changes several good things might change into evil.

In this context, four categories of people were recognised. They are Thapasvi, Maharishi, *Brahma*-rishi and Rajarishi; and each one, depending on his background and capability, was following a certain code of *dharma*. For the story of *Bhagavatha*, a *rishi* by the name of Sami is the chief architect. By his attainments, he was a Brahmarishi. He had a son by the name Sringi who was a Thapasvi. Brahmarishi Sami knew all about *Brahman* and was living in a state of equanimity and equal-mindedness. He used to take pain and pleasure, sorrow and joy, blame and praise with the same attitude and was unmoved by events. He was meeting them with the same detachment. He had several disciples and along with them, he was immersed in the study of the Philosophy of *Adwaitha*. He was living in a state of total surrender to God and was enjoying the bliss of divinity. His son Sringi was also a great individual, but he could be called only a Thapasvi. He did not have the ability to discriminate between things. Although he was a person with great strength, he did not acquire the right to give a curse. On one occasion, he lost his equanimity due to anger and cursed king Parikshith, himself a great Rajarishi. Here, we find two types of faults. A fault, committed with full knowledge, will cause a great deal of harm to the world. On the other hand, a fault committed accidentally and without full knowledge will cause harm to the individual only but not to the world. Parikshith was a great king who was in a state of total devotion and surrender to God. Parikshith committed a mistake unknowingly and so the consequence was to affect only him and would not bother others. His mistake was committed unknowingly and without a bad motive. At this act of Parikshith's, Sringi lost control over himself and gave a curse to Parikshith. This curse, coming as it did under such circumstances, caused a great deal of harm to the entire kingdom.

Be that as it may, the origin of *Bhagavatha*, the meaning of *Bhagavatha* and its objectives are clearly laid out in the first *skanda* itself. This great text of *Bhagavatha* commenced with Narada, and Vyasa contributed a great deal to it. Suka brought about the culmination. During the interval of time between the commencement by Narada and culmination by Suka, several stories got attached to *Bhagavatha* and they constitute the contents of the succeeding eleven *skandas*.

The conversation between Droupadi and Aswathama constitutes an important event in the *Bhagavatha*. The sacred story of the surrender to Uttara, the divine praise of Krishna by Kunthi, the advice which Bhishma gives to Dharmaraja in the form of *shanthiparva* and finally the teaching which Krishna gives to Arjuna in the form of *Bhagavad Gita* are all great events of the *Bhagavatha*. The *Uddhava Gita*, the story of Prahlada, the story of Kuchela and several other episodes relating to great devotees constitute the essence of the *Bhagavatha*. In reality, the text of the *Bhagavatha* is extremely sweet. Human beings who have experienced the sweetness of *Bhagavatha* will not have rebirth. It is because of this, that Pothana said that even the very act of his writing the *Bhagavatha* in Telugu is the result of the great good that he had done in his previous life.

Pothana felt that he had the great good fortune of describing the *leelas* of Lord Narayana himself, who had come in human form. In the *Bhagavatha*, the aspects of *bhakthi*, or devotion, and surrender to God are the most important ones which we should recognise. In both these, the aspect of *prema* is fully exemplified. *Prema* signifies the sweet thoughts that are generated in one's own mind. The *Bhagavatha* is also like milk, a sacred extract that has been taken out of all the *Vedas*. In this context, we should realise that there are many great

people who attained salvation from the story of the *Bhagavatha*. The *Bhagavatha* should not be regarded as a text which depicts only the story of the *gopikas*. There are only a few individuals who are capable of recognising the sacred aspect of the *prema* that is contained in the *Bhagavatha* and can indeed become intoxicated and elevated by such thoughts.

Thinking of the name of Krishna, one can lose one's consciousness. Thinking of *Brahma*, one can become identical with *Brahma*. So also, by constantly thinking of Krishna, one can become identical with the Lord. It is not easy to describe the exact nature of the *Bhagavatha*. It can cater to the average person, to the seeker of truth and also to the highest intellectual. *Bhagavatha* has the ability to cater to everyone. A mango tree can give you only mangoes, a lime tree can give you only lemons but *Bhagavatha* can give everything to all its seekers, depending on the latter's desires and yearnings. There is a small example for this.

There was a wealthy businessman who went abroad. He had four wives and he wrote letters to each of them asking what they wanted him to bring when he returned home. In reply, the eldest wrote that she would be very happy if he returned home safely and in good health. The second wife replied that she would like to have some medicines that would help her get over her illness. The third wife was always interested in reading some spiritual texts, and she wrote that she would like to have spiritual texts belonging to the foreign country. The fourth wife had very mundane qualities, and she asked the husband to bring back some saris and jewels of the latest fashion. All the letters reached the husband and he brought all the items needed and gave medicines to the second wife, spiritual texts to the third wife, saris and jewels to the fourth wife and himself sat in the residence of the first wife.

This made the other wives very jealous. The wealthy individual explained that as the eldest wife only wanted him, he went to her and as the others had material requests, he gave them various items as per their requests.

In a similar manner, we may imagine that *Paramatma* has four wives by the names—Arthi, Artharthi, Jijnasi and Jnani. The Lord satisfies the requirements of each of the first three, and He, Him-self, sits in the heart of the *Jnani*. *Paramatma* will only give you the fruit of your work and not the work itself. Depending on your *karma* and your deservedness and your prayers, God gives you the fruit of your action. In many ways, *Bhagavatha* teaches us lessons of great importance. On one occasion, even Kuchela was doubting Krishna. He thought that although Krishna was his childhood friend, as later he became a very rich and powerful King, Krishna may not even recognise him. Kuchela was very agitated. However, Kuchela's wife never had such doubt, and she encouraged him to go and see Krishna, who has a very broad mind, and would not forget his friends. God is such that He will give value to one's own mind and purity of character. He will not give any value to external appearances. After passing through such doubts and several tribulations, Kuchela entered Krishna's mansion. Krishna welcomed him heartily and honoured him.

Even without being asked, Krishna gave a lot of material wealth and a lot of grace to Kuchela. The moment God's grace spreads, one will even forget his own desires. After this, Kuchela returned to his own home and to his great surprise, found his poor home transformed into a big mansion. He explained to his wife how Krishna looked after him and said, "He received me as if He was longing to meet me, and He showed such kindness that He appeared as kindness and compassion personified. He accepted a small quantity of parched rice from

poor Kuchela and gave us this large mansion.” If you give the Lord even a small quantity, He returns it back several fold. If you are willing to take at least one step forward, God will take ten steps towards you to receive you. Only when you direct your vision towards God, can He direct His vision towards you. If you are looking in some other direction, what is the use even if God looks at you? There is a small example for this. When you are right in front of me, you can look into my eyes and I can look into your eyes. If you are far away and are looking in a different direction, how can I look at you and how can you look at me?

Krishna was one who always directed His vision towards His devotees, and the *Bhagavatha* is the story of Krishna. This *Bhagavatha* describes how Krishna gave supreme bliss to different *gopikas* by appearing before each of them in a form which each liked most. He thus demonstrated that the diversity of forms is indeed the unity of God. Thus *Bhagavatha* tells us about the oneness which we should see in this diversity. The story is full of love and will give you the contents in a manner in which you can assimilate the same. It is my hope that you can understand and absorb at least a part of what you listen to.

4. Vyasa And Narada Are Like Man And God

If a person's desires are all fulfilled, his devotion to God strengthens. If his desires are not fulfilled, his devotion weakens and he even neglects God altogether.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Vyasa wrote the sacred *Bhagavatha* which is often referred to as the fifth *Veda*. Vyasa was a great individual who could overcome all human weaknesses like anger, greed and lust; and so, he could write, this great text. Today you will learn some facts about Vyasa. He was given to yogic practice in life, and one day he was sitting on the banks of a river and was in a very depressed mood. He was thinking about time which was fleeting away and was feeling that his life span was melting away like a block of ice without any worthwhile achievement. He was trying to understand how he should lead his life. Although he had studied and understood all the *Vedas* and *Puranas*, he was worried that his writings and teachings were not giving peace and happiness to the people in the world. He realised that all his knowledge should have been used to give peace and prosperity to the world, and he felt unhappy that it was not being utilised for this purpose. At that moment, Narada entered the scene. Narada was the son of Saraswathi, and Vyasa was sitting on the banks of river Saraswathi and thinking of these problems. Saraswathi signifies the form of the latent unspoken word. This Saraswathi is like the traditional river which is believed to be flowing in an unmanifested form. Narada as an individual was representing Saraswathi. There is an inseparable connection between the manifested and the unmanifested aspect of Saraswathi. Ordinarily,

in the mind of a human being, thought processes are generated and he then speaks out. The words that we hear are the manifested words representing the unmanifested Saraswathi. The stream of thoughts, that arise in his mind are given the shape and form of the spoken word. *Bhagavatha* has been proclaiming the inseparable connection between the manifested and the unmanifested forms. The two aspects, namely the manifested and unmanifested are closely related like the object and its image. Narada taught Vyasa that all the texts and scriptures which do not contain a praise of the *leelas* of the Lord are hollow and have no life in them. They will not attract people at all. Acquaintance with all the books and the scholarship that one might possess are meant for attracting the world, but they will not be able to attract and purify your own mind. If what one writes can give him purity of thought and liberation from worldly attachments, that can be regarded as a proper text. Sweetness is a natural quality of sugar; but if we just have a knowledge of this fact, we will not know that sugar is indeed sweet. This experience relates only to the palate, and your tongue alone can identify the sweetness of sugar. The sweetness of sugar is not known to sugar itself. It is only when there is an individual who, through his palate, has experienced the sweetness of sugar, can the sweetness of sugar be realised. As in the analogy, the *ananda* or bliss associated with God will be known only to the individual who seeks such *ananda* and bliss. It is the devotee who seeks and enjoys the experience of *ananda* and not God. Narada told Vyasa that he had only written about such happiness, but he had not experienced it. Narada then told Vyasa that from that day he would have the capacity to sing the glory of God and advised that Vyasa should do this and derive bliss and joy.

Singing of a *bhajan* is usually associated with singing with a rhythm. In reality, if we can give a form to what is con-

tained in *Sama Veda*, that itself can be described as *bhajan*. All types of tunes have their origin in *Sama Veda*. Narada also told Vyasa that if such a sacred song is sung with proper feeling and devotion, then the significance of the song will also be clear. The sacredness of divine nature that is present in each individual can be experienced in the form of a song. There is a small example for this. When two individuals are talking with each other, one individual enters the other in the form of sound. This concept of an individual entering another in the form of sound is not clearly understood today. When you are face to face with God and think of His name and glory, the form of God will enter you. It is in this context that the *Sastras* and *Puranas* advise you to spend all your time in the thought of God and in singing His glory. We are, therefore, told that God is present in all living things, and that all living things in their turn are present in the divine. If several people gather and sing the glory of God in a congregation, then *prajnana*, or knowledge of God, will come to everyone in the gathering. The sacred work of Vyasa was such that it demonstrated the unity amidst all the diversity in creation. Narada used the word *ambhoja* in the present context and that means a thing that is born in water. Not only man, but all living things are born from water. All trees and everything else is born from water. Even if we have a small seed, it can sprout only if it is in contact with water. If there is no water, even this seed will perish. In this context, Narada said that the human body must be regarded as a lotus. All texts and writings in relation to God will consist of a lotus implying that such a text is a lotus coming out of a lake. The state of our mind is compared to a lake that contains two swans represented by the aspects of *Soham*. This sound of *Soham* proclaims "I am That" and demonstrates the oneness of all creation. The swan always symbolises purity in our tradition; and when we compare this aspect to that of *Soham*, we wish to bring out the purity in all creation. This implies that in the *ma-*

nasarovar or the mind of man, which is like a lake, the identity between man and God should be promoted. Because of such sacred teachings from Narada, there was a divine feeling in Vyasa which enabled him to write the sacred text of *Bhagavatha*. Because Narada removed all the doubts from the mind of Vyasa, Narada was taken as *guru* and that day has since been referred to as *Guru Pournima*. As the role of the *guru* is to remove ignorance from the dark minds, it is also referred to as the coming of *Pournima* or brightness. The *Vedas* have compared the mind to the moon and the eye to the sun. What we see directly and readily is the moon or the reflection of our own mind. With the help of a *guru*, the mind can be cleansed and the spots and blemishes removed, and so this day is to be referred to as *Guru Pournima*.

We generally use the word heart to signify the physical heart and the life force that is responsible for all action, but this is not so. The heart should not be interpreted as something which is localised at one spot in the body. The totality of the life force in a human being is to be referred to as the heart. If we talk of America, does it mean that my heart has travelled as far as America? In total reality, the life force in you can be compared to the heart. This has been called *maha prajnana* and has been demonstrated to us as the form of *Brahma*. In one of the *maha vakyas* “*prajnanam Brahma,*” *prajnana* has in fact been identified with *Brahma*. Narada took the position of a *guru* and used Vyasa to explain the function of a *guru* and in this context, this day is also referred to as *Vyasa Pournima*.

Today there is also another event of exceptional significance. From the authority we can get from the *Vedas*, we believe that *buddhi* is superior to all other sensory organs. Compared to *buddhi*, the *Atma* is in a higher position. *Buddhi*

and *Atma* are so close to each other that *buddhi* gets its illumination from the *Atma*. The mind is in a higher position than the sensory organs. *Buddhi* is in a higher position than the mind. The effulgence of *Atma* falls directly on the *Buddhi*; and therefore, if we follow the dictates of our *Buddhi*, we can control our sensory organs. In this context, this day is also described as *Buddha Jayanti*. Thus *Guru Pournima*, *Buddha Jayanti*, and *Vyasa Pournima* are like the confluence of the three sacred rivers. It is in this context that in the *Purusha Sukta*, it has been said that we must bring these three aspects together and offer it to Lord Shiva. Because of these sacred teachings of Narada, Vyasa undertook a pledge that from that day, he would write the story of Krishna and his divine *leelas*. He was occasionally asking Krishna, "Are you not satisfied with the excellent scholarship that I have achieved and the manner in which I am praising you?" Vyasa asked such questions because he was still proud of his scholarship and his achievements. The arrogance of his intellectual achievement was responsible for this ego. The ego that has its origin in anything else can be removed; but if the ego is acquired because of one's scholarship, it cannot be easily removed. Education and scholarship should enable you to get rid of your ego; but if the same education and scholarship generate the ego in you, how can this be removed? The ego that one gets by thinking that he is a very learned person is the biggest obstacle in the way of his getting divine enlightenment. However, this has a welcome aspect because only when such obstacles arise can man attempt to remove his faults. Out of happiness, we will never get happiness. It is only out of troubles that we get happiness. Even if you want to make good ornaments from gold, you will have to put it into fire and subject it to a high temperature. In a similar manner, God creates several difficulties for people and subjects them to many tests before letting them realise His sacred and divine aspects. This is particularly so with people who suffer from an

intellectual ego. We have to note here that Vyasa wrote the *Bhagavatha* and all the *Puranas*, but he never put any of the things about which he wrote into practice. He attained great efficiency in communicating his ideas to others, but he did not attempt to put them into practice. Vyasa, who recognised this fault in himself, prayed thus to Krishna, “Can we find out your divine nature, Oh Krishna? You are smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest. How can we describe your greatness?” He further wrote, “It is said that you reside in the hearts of all the 84 *lakhs* of *jivas* in creation without being separated from them.” Here, we should notice that while he pronounces his knowledge about some aspects of God, he also expresses his doubts in other aspects. At this stage, Narada told Vyasa that there should never be a doubt in one’s mind about any aspect of the divine. It is not without reason that I have spent so much time telling you about Vyasa today. It is only when you have confidence in the speaker, will you have confidence in what he says. Only when you understand the thinking on the part of those who wrote the *Bhagavatha* and on the part of those who figure in the text of the *Bhagavatha* can you understand the sacred text itself. It is in this context that I have given you the full life story of Vyasa and of Narada. Vyasa and Narada are like man and God. Vyasa is asking the questions and Narada is answering them. If we understand this relationship between Vyasa and Narada, we can appreciate the inner meaning of the *Bhagavatha*. Tomorrow we shall hear about the life story of Narada and from then on, we shall learn about the *leelas* of Krishna.

5. Narada Was An Immortal Spirit

Iron, when it comes in contact with dust, will gather rust. When it comes in contact with fire, it will get rid of rust. Thus, company with others will result in different consequences which depend on the type of company. This word of Sai is a statement of truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas,

The moving and non-moving contents of creation are of four different categories described as *Para*, *Pasyanti*, *Madhyama* and *Vaikari*. If we carefully look at the detailed meaning of these types, we find that the first three are unmanifested and are present in a latent form. The fourth aspect which relates to birth, death and the changing features of life and living things in creation, relates to only a quarter of the contents of creation. The other three parts are connected with immortality. While those features connected with immortality really occupy three parts of the total, yet we give a great deal of importance to whatever relates to our daily life. It is in this context that our ancient *rishis* have taught us that “*Viswam Vishnuhu.*” This implies that the entire creation is only a manifestation of Vishnu. Narada was an individual who fully realised this lesson. Narada was the son of a servant woman who was working in a house where the *Vedas* were being continuously recited. In order to celebrate a certain function, the householder of the house, where Narada’s mother was working, invited a large number of *rishis*. The occasion was the celebration of the four sacred months during the rainy season; and during this period, all actions and thoughts were to be sacred. During those four months, while the celebrations were going on, Narada was given the task of attending to the needs of the guests in that house. At that time, Narada was six years old. Sitting with the *rishis*, he was concentrating with a single-minded devotion on

the *Vedas* that were being recited. He was accepting the orders of the *rishis* without any question and putting them into practice. He used to eat the food that was left by them in their plates, accepting it as *prasad*. Once in a way, the mother used to look at him and feel sorry for him and the manner in which he was gathering his food every day. After the four-months celebrations were completed, the *rishis* were preparing to depart for their own homes. Narada was not willing to stay behind and desired to go with them. However, as Narada was still very young and was looked after affectionately by his mother, they did not think it right to take him along with them but instead they taught him various sacred aspects of the Lord. They taught him a twelve-lettered *mantra* namely, “*Om namo bhagavate vasudevaya, om namo bhagavate pradyumnaya, om namo bhagavate aniruddhaya, om namo bhagavate sankarshanaaya*” which the six-year-old Narada was reciting with concentration. They also taught him that the entire creation was indeed transient and was only an image, in that it was the projection of Lord Vishnu. They also advised him that desires are bondages. Just as wanting to get something is a desire, wanting to get rid of something is also a desire. The ego relating to the concept of “I” is as much an ego as feeling the absence of “I.” Where there is a feeling of “I,” God cannot exist and where God is present, a feeling of “I” cannot be talked of. These two are mutually contradictory and exclusive words. They taught Narada that he should not allow any confusing thoughts to arise in him but that he should develop the thought only of divinity and nothing else. From that day, Narada was concentrating on the thought of God and deriving happiness. While he was carrying on his life in this manner, one day when his mother went to a cowshed in the twilight early morning hours, she was bitten by a dark cobra and she died instantly. Narada was present and saw with his own eyes the struggle that his mother had to go through at the time of her death. This

was the first test for Narada. He looked upon the event as one of the *leelas* of the Lord and did not feel dejected at the death of his mother. He pretended as if he was happy. The owner of the house came and asked him why he was happy. To this Narada said, "All these days my mother was constantly thinking and worrying about me, and I am happy that this has now come to an end and that there would no longer be this attachment." He was thus happy because the mother will no longer have the problem of worrying about him, and she will no longer suffer because of this attachment. If the mother was alive, she would be concerned and agitated about Narada. Narada was happy that this link was broken.

The very next day, Narada left for a long northern sojourn and was travelling through thick and fearsome forests. He was constantly hearing the roar of wild animals, and at that time he was only seven years old. At all times and at all places, he was chanting the name of Hari. He was not giving any thought to his food or his rest. He was only asking himself when the day, on which he could have the vision of the Lord, would come. His body was growing weak. His skin was growing rough and tough. His voice became weak; and in that condition, he heard some kind of a heavenly voice address him the question, "For what purpose are you struggling like this? Are you wanting to see me?" It further went on to say, "Those who want to have a vision of me must give up all desires. The desire to have my vision may be a sacred desire, but to travel in such places for securing my vision is a desire that should not be there. Further, you are struggling with the desire that you should have the Lord's vision. So long as you have this ego of "I," you will not have the vision of the Lord. There is the sacred saying that the whole world is the abode of Vishnu. You are forgetting this truth. You do not have to travel long distances to have the divine vision. You have not yet completely

cleansed your mind.” Narada quickly understood that he was taking a path which was the wrong one and felt that he should take the correct path. Although he was quite young, his knowledge at that time was quite profound. God will never look at things like age, scholarship, richness or sex or community. He will only recognise the agitation of and the depth of yearning in the mind. In our epics, the stories of several great people have been told, and those stories amply bear out this truth. To what reputed family did Valmiki belong? In what well-known village was Narada born? What was the wealth that Kuchela had? What was the age of Dhruva? What was the age of Sabari? What was the discriminating power that Vidura had? What was the knowledge that Hanuman had? When we look at these instances, we will come to the conclusion that age, wealth, sex, reputation and strength are not the determining features for securing the grace of the Lord.

After listening to the divine voice, Narada went and sat under a tree. *Soham*, which is giving out and taking in of the breath, is an aspect of God. Although Narada had no complete knowledge of the *Vedas*, he regarded the taking in of breath as the aspect of *Sama Veda* and the giving out of breath as that of *Rig Veda*. In this manner, while he was practising what was prescribed in the *Vedas*, he came to the end of his life. The breathing stopped and he joined the eternal. Narada then acquired a new life form. Our *Puranas* tell us that Narada uses a *tambura* and moves about in the universe singing the glory of the Lord. This is only symbolic; and we should regard Narada as taking the spinal column as representing his *veena*, the nerves or the *nadis* as strings of this *veena* and the breathing in and breathing out of the *Harinama Smarana*, and the new form of Narada is pictured as continuously uttering the names of Govinda and Narayana and moving all over the space. Narada does not signify an ordinary human form. We should regard

the continuous breathing in and breathing out of our life system as the celestial form of Narada. The word *Nara* means water and it connotes *Prajnana*. As the entire water of a river goes and merges in the sea, all the rays of *prajnana*, that emanate from Narada, go and merge in the ultimate form of *Brahman*. *Prajnana* comes from *Brahman* and since these rays merge into *Brahman*, it has been said “*Prajnanam Brahma*” in the *Maha Vakya*. Narada was establishing the truth that this aspect of *Brahman* should always be present in our spinal column in the form of *Omkara*. This is the natural sound and is not something that you get by producing an artificial sound.

We should regard Narada as one who is eternal and present at all times, producing celestial music. In each *Kalpa*, a *Yuga* called the *Dwapara Yuga* comes again and again. The other three *Yugas*, *Thretha Yuga*, *Kritha Yuga* and *Kali Yuga* also come again and again in a cyclic manner. We should not regard *Bhagavatha* as something that happened in the *Dwapara Yuga* which has just gone by. Vyasa should not be interpreted as just one individual who existed in one *Dwapara Yuga*. Any individual who can explain in detail the significance of the *Bhagavatha* should indeed be regarded as a Vyasa; and in every *Kalpa*, at the end of the *Dwapara Yuga* there will be a Vyasa. The story of *Bhagavatha* must be regarded as having happened in the very first *Kalpa* and in the first *Dwapara Yuga*. This has been taught by *Brahma* to Narada and then by Narada to Vyasa. In that manner, in each *Kalpa* and in each *Dwapara Yuga*, the incidents have been coordinated and preached. It is not right to think that *Bhagavatha* is something that happened in a particular *Yuga* about five thousand years ago. Similarly Krishna is not someone who was existing in the *Dwapara Yuga* that has just gone by. In the *Maha Yuga*, *Thretha Yuga* and in all other *Yugas* too, the aspects of Krishna existed. Indeed, that individual who can sat-

isfy your yearning pertaining to the divine can be called Krishna. Such a view of Krishna leads us to the concept which will remove the darkness in our minds and brings enlightenment. The word Krishna can be elaborated by saying, *Krushitee iti Krishnaha*. He will plough the field of our heart and sow good seeds in the form of good thoughts. You can also think of an aspect of Krishna as the one which gives you happiness. Thus, *karshatee iti Krishnaha*, *krushitee iti Krishnaha*, *kushatee iti Krishnaha* are three different aspects of Krishna. These are three different forms of *Sath*, *Chith*, and *Ananda* and these are present in all the *Yugas*. Because of our approach being generally very narrow, we are thinking in a narrow manner that Krishna is an individual and that he was the son of Devaki and Vasudeva. Similarly, it is not necessary to think that Rama belongs to the *Thretha Yuga* alone and that he is the son of Dasaratha and Kausalya. Our *Puranas* have taught us that what gives us Rama or attraction and bliss is the aspect of Rama. We should not think that the *Avatar* of Rama or of Krishna are confined to the *Dwapara Yuga* or the *Thretha Yuga*. They come always in all the *Yugas* and help humanity. After this *Kali Yuga*, there will be another *Maha Yuga*; and the *Dwapara Yuga* and *Thretha Yuga* will repeat themselves, and the aspects of Rama and Krishna will come again. This is the manner in which events and situations will come in a cyclical form. If we have Tuesday which comes to us today, the same Tuesday will again come on the eighth day from now. It is not right to think that that is a different or a new Tuesday. The same Tuesday is coming again. What we call the rainy season now, will come again after a year. It is not an entirely different season. The same season is coming again. When we talk today as the time of Vasanta, it will come again after some time, and all these aspects repeat themselves after some time.

However, the youth of a man that has gone by and the water that has flown down a river cannot come back again. It

is, therefore, important that we make an effort to make use of our youth in the proper way. You should make good use of the opportunity that has come your way. Narada is the form of *Sath, Chith* and *Ananda*; and by thinking of the sacred aspects of *Bhagavatha*, as told by Narada, we can get peace of mind. The three aspects of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are merged together in this sacred *Bhagavatha*, and we must make an effort to understand this. Whatever Narada has said or done, he had done for the good of the world. We generally think that Narada is one who simply creates trouble. This is not correct. Whatever Narada had done, it was for helping the human beings. In this way, he has been teaching people that so long as there is ego, one cannot think of approaching God. There are several sacred incidents in *Bhagavatha* and the most important one is Droupadi's equal-mindedness. There are other aspects too, like Kunthi's adoration of the Lord, Bhishma's sacred teaching, etc., and we will discuss such sacred aspects from tomorrow

6. God Is Not Happy Unless He Gives You Some Occasional Sorrow

One who is building a wall will keep going higher and higher. One who is digging a well will keep going deeper and deeper.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

In the context of divinity, man is continually agitated. He makes several different attempts to recognise the *Atma* and tries to locate nobler and higher ideas. Sometimes, forgetting this sacred aspect of the *Atma*, he spends a lot of time in the pursuit of matters relating to external objects. The former requires inner vision and the latter requires external vision. The sacredness of *Bhagavatha* consists in harmonising one's inner vision with his external vision and making him see the unity of these two aspects. Because of their wealth and physical strength, the Kauravas were blind to the might of Krishna. Jarasandha was very proud of the fact that he was born in a sect higher than the Yadava sect in which Krishna was born; and being blinded with such ideas, he could not recognise the greatness of Krishna. The pundits, having lost their wisdom in their scholarship and because of the unreal ideas they created in their own minds, were not able to recognise Krishna's divine personality. The pride that comes from their birth, the ego which comes from their wealth and the arrogance which comes from their education also rendered several other people incapable of recognising the greatness of Krishna. God's actions can be described as *leelas*. No one can determine the nature of such *leelas*. It is also not possible to understand them. Only after the event has taken place, can one realise its significance. Because such *leelas* are generally covered by *Maya*, man is not

able to recognise the divinity that is responsible for them. Because of this *maya* alone, man again is not able to recognise the divine connection between man and man. All attachment arises because of *maya*. If there is no *maya*, the progress of mankind itself will come to a standstill. In any respect, *maya* is not bad. In fact, *maya* is a very helpful thing to the individual who understands the different aspects of *maya*. For one who does not understand the same, it can bring about great harm. In fact, *maya* is very necessary for man and can be made the royal path in the search for God. For an individual who does not understand the aspect of *maya*, it will be a very difficult path. Take the example of a cat. When it catches hold of its kitten, it does so to take it to a place of safety. On the other hand, when the same cat catches hold of a rat, it is for the purpose of killing the rat. For those people who do not understand the aspect of divinity, *maya* is like a cat catching the rat. For those who understand God, *maya* will be a great help like the cat which takes hold of the kitten. This *maya* is in fact a tool of God and therefore God is sometimes described as one who wears *maya* as His cloak. This *maya* is basically responsible for maintenance, dissolution and creation. At such times and such places, depending on the circumstances, the behaviour of *maya* will change. *Maya* is something similar to an electric current. We can use this current for running a fan or lighting a bulb. It can be used for running several machines and useful devices. Because the electric current is so useful, if you catch hold of it to show your gratitude, you will be killed immediately. Thus, current does good and also does harm. In this world, we cannot find a place where there is no *maya*. Buddha said that all this world is really transient and that there is nothing of permanent value in it. In that context, we should realise that all that we see around us is in reality the *leela* of the Lord. Whatever we may do, we must also regard it as a *leela* of the Lord and experience the truth in this way.

The Pandavas lost their kingdom and wealth and were wandering in the forest, but they were always thinking of Krishna, and Krishna showered his grace on such Pandavas. Although they lost the power of wealth and position, they had the strength of faith in the Lord and so they received the grace of the Lord. *Bhagavatha* has been teaching us that it is most essential for human beings to have the strength that comes from *dharma* and faith in God. The battle was over and Krishna who was responsible for the victory was returning to Hastinapura along with the Pandavas. After some time, Krishna was planning to return to Dwaraka. When Kunthi heard of this intention of Krishna, she came running to him. She held both the hands of Krishna, and addressed him by saying, “You are the protector of the weak and those who are in trouble. You have taken care of my children and given me great good fortune. You have given us your help at a time when we needed it most. I was under the illusion that the most important thing was love and attachment. I have now realised that this is in fact the most poisonous quality. It has been my fortune to enjoy your love. There is nothing greater than your love. When I was young, I uttered the *manthra* taught to me by Durvasa and had a son born to me through the Sun God. Fearing the criticism which is likely to come from the society, I discarded my young son Karna. From that day, I have been suffering because of the loss of my son. After having married King Pandu, I was travelling in the forest along with my husband. By the kindness and grace of some gods, I bore three sons—Dharmaraja, Bheema and Arjuna. To my sister Madri, there were two sons—Nakula and Sahadeva. However, Madri ended her life along with our husband. I was worried that if I also die along with my husband, there will be no one to take care of these young children; and with this kind of attachment, I was looking after the children. By the grace of the *rishis*, I

came to Hasthinapura and from that day onwards, the cruel Kauravas were giving us all kinds of trouble and they even attempted to kill my children by setting fire to the house in which they lived. They tried to humiliate Droupadi, the good-hearted daughter-in-law of mine. On all these occasions, from that day to this day, you have been looking after my children and guiding them and consoling them. You are like a brother, father, mother, relation and God to my children. I will not be deluded and deceived by your five-foot-long human form. You are truly God and there is no doubt whatsoever. You are the source of my pleasure and comfort. Pleasure is always an interval between two pains; and in-between all my troubles, you have been a great source of comfort. You have taken care of all of us for all this time, and I cannot live without you even for a moment. How can I now agree to your going away to Dwaraka. I pray that you should stay for a little longer and teach the inexperienced Dharmaraja, the art of ruling over a kingdom.” We should notice here that she addresses Krishna as *Madhava*. *Ma* means Lakshmi and it also means *Maya*. The word *Dhava* means master. In this sense, Krishna is the master of Nature, Lakshmi and *maya*. God is an independent entity in all aspects. Several people say that God should be like this and conduct himself in a particular manner, but this is not possible. For one who is above *gunas*, how can there be any particular qualities? For one who is formless, how can there be any limitations of form? God may take any form and may have any *gunas*, and he may perform any action that he likes for the benefit of the world. This will be determined as a reaction to the actions of the devotees; and depending on the prayers of the devotees, God will take a particular form. Suppose we build a house in a small place. The house has been constructed in the allotted place and there is no external place available. Although there is no place available outside, there is enough place for the owner to move about within his own house. In a

similar manner, the universe is the mansion of the Lord; and he moves about freely in all places. This is the reason why, when a door that cannot be opened is asked to be opened, we see a smile in Krishna's face. When the entire universe is His mansion, what is the fun in searching for the main door of this mansion. When the Lord himself is always behind me, where am I to search for the main door and where am I to look for the Lord? Play on the strings of the Lord's name and concentrate on the Lord in Kailasa. That is the main door to the mansion of the Lord. Our heart filled with *ananda* is really the Kailasa and the Lord has all the right to move about in our heart. Kunthi recognised that God dwells in her heart. Before this realisation, she was under the illusion that attachment and moha were important human qualities. She also recognised the truth that for one who realises the greatness of the Lord and relies on him, there is no danger of any kind. God is not happy unless he gives you some occasional sorrow. Even the mother will not be happy unless the child cries heartily. Even while kissing the child, the mother twists the cheek of the child and then kisses him. In the same manner, God also causes several troubles and tests and then will please you. It is because of this, Kunthi said to Krishna, "It is your nature to play on the *veena* happily when your devotees are in discomfort and crying!" God makes you cry only to give you extreme happiness after that. We will be able to eat more food, if we are hungry, and are able to digest well. If the food we take is not digested, how can we eat more food? In this manner, at first God gives troubles, sorrow and pain and then after your digesting these, he gives happiness and bliss. In this context, we must realise that it is not possible to easily understand the divine actions of the Lord. Only those who can experience them will be able to enjoy them, and others can never understand this. Because of some external troubles, we think God is a very unkind person. This is not so. Actually God is preparing you to receive eternal hap-

piness. Material pleasures are momentary and transient. Because Kunthi recognised this basic truth, she could not bear separation from Krishna.

A small instance will enable us to recognise the intensity of Kunthi's love towards Krishna. After Krishna's Nirvana, Arjuna was returning to Hasthinapura in a very dejected manner and even as he was walking back, he witnessed a large number of bad omens. As soon as Arjuna reached the palace, he gave the news of the Nirvana of Krishna; and all the Pandavas were grief stricken. Although Arjuna was a very strong person, he could not even draw his bow after the Nirvana of Krishna. Then Arjuna realised that all his strength by which he won the battle of Mahabharatha and by which he burnt down the *Khanda Vana* was in reality the strength acquired by his proximity to Krishna. He realised that he had no intrinsic strength of his own. Arjuna was also wondering how he could convey the sad news to the old blind mother. As they entered the mansion, Kunthi was informed that Arjuna was coming. Because of her old age, it was natural that she could not see or hear properly. As soon as she realised that Arjuna was coming, she thought that Arjuna was bringing news of Krishna. She began to shower a number of questions on Arjuna and wanted to ask many questions about Krishna. Arjuna was greatly worried as to how he could convey the news to Kunthi. Unable to give a reply to her questions, Arjuna cried out and said that Krishna was no longer alive. As soon as she heard of this sad news, she left her life as if she was going in search of Krishna. She could not live for even one moment without Krishna. Pandavas also had great affection for Krishna and they were no ordinary people. The Pandavas were like the five *pranas* for Krishna and Krishna was the mainstay of Pandavas. On one occasion, Dhritharashtra told Krishna that he should not show any extra partiality to the Pandavas because to him, the Pandavas and the

Kauravas were equally important. To this Krishna replied without fear or favour and said, "There is no comparison whatsoever between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. I will now tell you the kind of connection I have with the Pandavas. Dharmaraja is like the head in the body; Arjuna is like the shoulders of the body; Bheema is like the stomach of the body and Nakula and Sahadeva are like the two legs; and in such a body, I am the heart and the moving force. Without a body, the heart cannot exist and without a heart, the body cannot exist. Such is the inseparable connection between me and the Pandavas." Krishna who had given such a reply was treating the Pandavas with great affection and, in turn, the Pandavas were treating Krishna as their life-moving force. In fact, at all times, in pain and pleasure, in joy and sorrow, in ease and difficult times, they were always thinking of Krishna and leading their lives. That is why, when the Pandavas were told of the Nirvana of Krishna, they were greatly agitated and disturbed. The kind of detachment they developed towards the world after this incident cannot be found in any other household. Dharmaraja took the head of the departed mother on to his lap. He addressed one of his brothers and asked him to make arrangements for the last rites of the mother. He asked another brother to make arrangements for the coronation of Parikshith, and he asked yet another brother to make arrangements for their departure to the forest for leading a secluded life. On one side, he was making arrangements for the last rites of his mother; and on another side, he was arranging for the coronation; and on another side, he was preparing to lead a detached and secluded life. Such a combination of events is very unusual and singular. It is the love which the Pandavas had towards Krishna that is responsible for this. *Bhagavatha* has been teaching the people of the world this sacred devotion of the Pandavas. Krishna was a great individual who had an intense and affectionate feeling towards the Pandavas. Therefore, you should make an attempt

to understand the sacred acts of Krishna in the true perspective. The Krishna that we see depicted in the cinemas and dramas of today is not the true Krishna. In fact, he is sometimes depicted like a modern college student with many unsacred ideas and doing several irresponsible acts. Truly, the aspect of Krishna is very sacred and his actions are full of divine love. These sacred actions of Krishna, which are seen at many places in *Bhagavatha*, must be well and properly understood by all of you.

7. There Is No Blemish In God; We See Our Own Faults Reflected In Him

Oh! Students of today, if you indulge in harsh words and bad deeds, the results will come back on you. This word of Sai shows you the true path.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

The clouds gather in the sky and they disperse because of the breeze. So also, problems of the world gather and separate out if the conditions are favourable. It is not easily possible for any one to forecast the result of a particular action. It is also not possible for anyone to say what shape things will take as time passes. Everything, in a way, depends on time. Time is a form of God. In that context, we should try and do all our work in such a way that it will be of benefit to us in appropriate time. After the battle of Mahabharatha was over and when Dharmaraja got the privilege of ruling over Bharath, Krishna noticed that Dharmaraja always had a serious countenance. At that time, Krishna asked Dharmaraja why he was so sorry and dejected when he attained victory in the battle and became the unquestioned king. Then Dharmaraja replied, "Oh, Krishna! For the benefit of one individual, it is a great sin to kill so many others. In that context, to have killed and destroyed *gurus*, brothers, cousins and friends is a great sin committed by me. Even if I suffer hell for millions of years, my sin will not be atoned. I have been responsible for the death of so many people. What is the happiness that I can enjoy by giving pain and trouble to so many others? Only an individual who gives happiness to others and enjoys happiness himself can be a sacred individual. One who gives pain to others and enjoys hap-

piness is indeed a great sinner.” When Dharmaraja replied thus, Krishna laughed and said, “Oh, Dharma-*raja*, you talk like an ignorant man. It is the *Dharma* of a king to destroy evil and give prosperity to the people in the kingdom. It is your responsibility to keep your kingdom safe and happy. The prosperity of your people is in your hands. While fulfilling such a task, there is always a justification in punishing those who go against you.” Dharmaraja knew all the *Sastras* and the *Vedas* and Krishna was surprised to find that, in spite of his learning, Dharmaraja permitted himself to lapse into a mood of distress. He advised Dharmaraja that to get over his sorrow, he should perform the *Aswamedha Yaga*. Dharmaraja was surprised and asked Krishna, “If you wash mud with water, will not the water also become muddy? If you wash a pot, which is used to store liquor; by using liquor, will the unsacredness of the pot disappear? In order to get rid of the sorrow that I have got by committing sin, should I perform *Yaga* in which I have to again kill? I am not interested in the kingdom nor am I interested in performing the *yaga*. In fact, I do not even want this body, give me permission to leave this body.” Krishna realised that Dharmaraja was in a state of total frustration, and he told Arjuna that they should both go and see Bhishma who is in the last stages of his life. Krishna called all the other Pandavas and along with Droupadi, they went to see Bhishma.

As soon as he saw the Pandavas and Krishna, Bhishma was overjoyed. Bhishma summoned the Pandavas close to him and was expressing his happiness. Addressing Dharmaraja, he said, “How fortunate are we that the almighty Lord has taken human form and is moving amongst us.” The Pandavas were sometimes under the illusion that Krishna was only a relative of theirs, and in the context of such a relationship, Krishna, though he was God, was regarded as an ordinary human being. We frequently suffer from such an illusion. It is not possible for anyone to easily understand the *leelas* of God. God’s ac-

tions cannot be comprehended and easily described. This is beyond human thought and mind. Truly, when divinity appears in human form, we think that he is like an ordinary human being and assess him in comparison with an ordinary human being. Bhishma was very pleased that he had the unique fortune of having Krishna's presence at that time. He said, "Truly, the words of God always represent truth and, whatever he does is an act of *dharma*. His words constitute truth and his actions constitute *dharma*. There is nothing in this world which he wants or which he has to do. All actions of his are undertaken for the good of the people. Our duty is to do what he asks us to do without question. We have no right or the capacity to question or enquire into the actions of the Lord. Can anyone decide or lay down principles as to how small children should conduct themselves or play? Small children have no selfishness and ego. They can smile, play or cry just as they like. In the same manner, *Paramatma* who is above *gunas* is like a small baby. No one has the right or authority to decide or lay down as to how he should conduct himself. Whatever he does, it is for our good. In the eyes of God, there are no differences between one and another. In this context, he neither gets angry nor pleased. The Pandavas did not fight the battle, nor did they plan the battle. Victory cannot be ascribed to them. Krishna is the one who made them fight and achieve victory. It is very difficult to understand his *leelas*. At least from now on, realise this truth, overcome your sorrow, be happy and realise your part and your duty." Arjuna also was telling Krishna that it is better to beg for food and live than to achieve victory by killing all those who are near and dear. Krishna, in a prophetic manner addressing Arjuna said, "What is ordained by fate is inescapable. Justice will be done, victory will go to the righteous ones. Truth will survive. Selfishness will be destroyed. This is the *dharma* of all times. Know now that a father, who had a hundred sons, has not got even one son left to do the last rites for

this dead body.” Here we see that Krishna had a master plan in which he has all our lives under control. He looks after all of us and has control over the past, present and future. In that context, Krishna told Arjuna that what is ordained had to be done. There is no escape. At that time, Bhishma was advising Dharmaraja as to how and in what manner a king should look after his people, how he should be a good king and so on. He was also telling him how he should conduct himself according to the *Varnasrama Dharma* and through what steps man should realise divinity. When Krishna was preaching such sacred things, several experienced *rishis* also came to listen to him. While such sacred teachings were being given by Bhishma in a peaceful manner, Droupadi laughed loudly. This was very unbecoming of her, and the Pandavas felt hurt and ashamed and also angry to a certain extent. All other *rishis* felt very surprised, but no one understood why she laughed. Krishna was the only person who knew the reason for this. The Pandavas angrily stared at her. Bhishma called Droupadi in a loving manner and addressing Dharmaraja he said, “Droupadi would never laugh without reason. She has a very sacred heart. She will never do anything disrespectful when talking to elders. She always conducts herself with great humility. Let her explain why she laughed loudly.” He called Droupadi and told her that if she explained why she laughed, her husbands will be satisfied. Addressing Bhishma, she said, “It is necessary for you to teach *dharma* to those who have moved away from the path of *dharma*. The advice you have just been giving is very necessary for people who have taken the wrong path and who suffer from ego and pride. All this preaching is not necessary for my husbands who have been leading righteous, sincere and honest lives, showing respect to elders. Why is it that you did not preach these things to the Kauravas when they humiliated me and behaved in an unjust manner?” Bhishma then responded by saying, “Droupadi has asked a valid question.

Having lived with the cruel and wicked Kauravas and having eaten their food, all my blood was contaminated. All the *dharma* principles were buried deep under such blood. When your husband shot me with an arrow, all the bad blood had flown out and the *dharma* principles are now coming up.” The meaning and moral of this story is that the kind of food we take will determine the kind of thoughts and the kind of blood that will form in us. Even people who are basically good will have bad thoughts if they eat unsacred food. That is why we say that the kind of food that we take will determine the kind of thoughts that we get, and the kind of thoughts we get will determine our conduct. While Bhishma was preaching the need for sacred conduct, *uttarayana* had set in. Bhishma was waiting for nearly fifty-six days for this sacred time. He looked at the divine and compassionate face of Krishna. Bhishma’s eyes met those of Krishna. He was addressing him and saying, “Oh, God in human form, who lives in Dwaraka, you have the capacity to grant birth to people, sustain them and bring about their end; you have assumed various *Avatars* to take care of your devotees.” Saying thus, Bhishma gave up his life. By this praise and description from Bhishma, once again the Pandavas realised that Krishna was indeed divine. Even earlier, they realised his divine nature, but being under the influence of *maya*, sometimes they used to regard him as their brother-in-law rather than as a divine person. This *maya* makes people do various things, both good and bad. Truly, if the Pandavas were not subjected to such *maya*, they would not have been able to experience Krishna for such a long time. If they readily recognised Krishna as God, they would not have done all that they had actually done because of ignorance. Divinity always brings about unions and separation. Man’s actions are influenced by attachment. Here, attachment should be interpreted as desire to have something. For this, the basis is generally a worldly desire. For such desires, the sensory organs are important. How-

ever much is your experience, you will want to have more and more. Whatever the extent of experience it may be, you are not satisfied. Here, in order to get detachment, the only process is one of sacrifice. This is something that is closely connected with good company. This good company has got certain ancillaries like good ideas, good habits, etc. To recognise human nature, the proper path is to move on from a state of attachment to a state of *vairagya* and from there to a state of love. You should have attachment towards the Lord and detachment towards the world. The reason for this is that the entire world is just transient. Whether it is in sorrow or pleasure, joy or pain, we should be able to think of God with an equal mind. Such a quality should be developed by us. Bhishma was an individual who knew very well the sanctity of such an equal-mindedness.

On one occasion, during the war, one of Bhishma's arrows hit Arjuna and the blood that was flowing out of Arjuna's body was dripping on Krishna. The entire body of Krishna was drenched in blood. When Arjuna saw this, he was under the illusion that Krishna was really suffering. As a result of his love towards Krishna, Arjuna became somewhat weak and dejected. Krishna, immediately realised this and said, "Arjuna! Why are you so weak? Will you carry on the fight or shall I carry on the fight?" Saying this, Krishna jumped out of the chariot. He announced that he would kill Bhishma and got down from the chariot. Then Bhishma said, "When you leap and jump out from the chariot, the gold and diamond rings on your ears are shining brilliantly. The radiance is beautiful and fills the whole space." Bhishma prayed that the same Krishna who came to kill him should save him. Such was the equanimity and equal-mindedness of Bhishma. We should see here also that when Krishna was coming to kill him, Bhishma did not pray to Rama or Shiva to save him. He prayed to Krishna him-

self. His faith was so firm that he believed that Krishna was the one who would save or kill. No one else had the capacity to do this. When this situation came, there was a great transformation in Arjuna. The reason for this is that at the beginning, Krishna said that he would not fight in the war but would only be a charioteer. Arjuna was worried that if Krishna now participated in the battle, his word would lose its value. Arjuna then immediately resumed fighting, so that he would not be the cause of dishonour to Krishna. As soon as Krishna saw this, he agreed and said that he pretended as if he was going to fight so that he can get back Arjuna into the fight. Whatever the Lord does, he does it with a purpose. He never does anything to deceive others or put up a show. We generally do not try and recognise our own faults, and we make an effort to find fault even with God. However much you may try, you can never find fault with or a blemish in God. His heart is clean and his ideas are sacred. As we see our own image in a mirror, we see our own faults in God. We should realise that God is like a clean and pure mirror. Whatever you see in the mirror, all those are your faults and not those of God. For the protection of people in the world, God takes a human form from time to time. Bhishma recognised the truth that Krishna was God, and as a result of that recognition, he was showing up the Pandavas as ideal human beings for the rest of the world. Bhishma *Stotras*, the praise of the Lord by Bhishma, have been giving strength to the Pandavas.

Krishna had always been telling people that divinity exists in everyone and that the omnipresent divinity is the same in all creation. He, in that manner, taught them to give up jealousy, ego and such qualities. Jealousy and ego are demoniac qualities that come in the way of man's spiritual progress. Only when we can eliminate jealousy and ego can we call ourselves true human beings. There is no objection to desiring and

asking for what you want, but you should not feel jealous of what others have. By teaching the *gopis* and *gopalas* in this manner, he was showing them the divine path. Krishna's sacred *leelas* are infinitely deep and not understandable. Unless you learn the significance of these teachings and put them into practice, all this description of Krishna's qualities would be a waste. Krishna used to look upon all the creation with an equal mind. Here, you might get a doubt as to how he undertook to kill and exterminate forty *lakhs* of the Kauravas army, if indeed he looked upon all creation with an equal mind.

There is an example for this. If there is a cancerous growth in your body, you will find a large number of germs and bacteria in the wound. This is a condition, as a result of which, the entire body may deteriorate and become cancerous. At that time, a doctor will decide to cut away or amputate that part of the body that has become cancerous. Under those conditions, what is important is that the person should be operated upon and the doctor will decide the course of action. He will not worry about the *lakhs* of germs that are present in the cancerous growth. The alternatives are: is it good to perform the operation and save the patient or is it good to cancel the operation thinking that thereby, he will save millions of germs? Since these germs are going to cause more trouble to many other people by infection, it is necessary to kill them. This same *dharma* was followed by Krishna. This is to say that the world had a boil of cancer in the Kauravas. As a result of the action of the Kauravas, the world came to a situation where there was *adhharma* and unjustness, and the world itself would have been destroyed. At that time, Krishna realised that the disease had crossed all limits and he got ready for the operation. Here he accepted the Pandavas as the compounders and he performed the operation in the form of a war. In this operation, the forty *lakhs* of germs in the form of Kauravas and their

supporters were killed. This act is for the prosperity and the good of the world. This was not done for a selfish interest. Krishna said in the very beginning that the Kauravas were born to bring disrepute and harm to a royal family. To this situation, Suta's son Karna added fuel. On top of this, there is the further aggravation caused by the wicked Sakuni. This forest fire has spread all over and now there is no solution other than an avalanche of arrows. The kind of fire is such that it is going to destroy the entire forest. A fire that has spread everywhere cannot be extinguished with a small quantity of water. There must now be a downpour of arrows for the sake of peace and the good of the world. Whatever God does, he does it for our own good. It is necessary for us to recognise and accept that all actions of God are indeed for our good only.

8. God's Creation Around Us Has A Great Deal To Teach Us

Gurus and Students:

If man has to attain salvation, he requires *Vidya* and *thapas*. *Vidya* is of two kinds. One is the *Vidya* relating to the external situation. The other is the *Vidya* relating to the internal situation. The first one enables you to eke out a living and the second enables you to reach your destination. We have to discuss and come to a conclusion as to what constitutes true *Vidya*. The kind of education that we are getting today in the schools and colleges cannot be called true *Vidya*. This will only lead you to occupy some kind of a position and lead your daily life without too much trouble. This may also be described as education that enables you to eke out your livelihood. It relates to the material world. From the sweeper upwards to the Prime Minister, they will all be working to eke out a livelihood. There may be a difference in position and status, but what all these people do will be related to the material world.

Brahma Vidya is something that will take man to his ultimate destination. In this world and in the spiritual world, in your life now, and after this life, what gives you happiness and bliss is the *Brahma Vidya*. What we call *Brahma Vidya* is superior to all other types of education. All types of education are like the rivers while the *Brahma Vidya* is like the ocean. All the rivers go and merge in the ocean, all types of education lead us to *Brahma Vidya*. What we call *Brahma Vidya* demonstrates the aspects of *Para Brahma*. This teaches you about *Para Brahma*. But, *thapas* takes you and merges you in *Para Brahma*. The ability of an individual to convey the meaning of *Atma* and *Para Brahma* to the seekers makes him a *guru*. A

guru really means a great person. When we talk of the greatness of the *guru*, we mean the capacity of the *guru* to experience the aspects of *Brahman* and teach them to others. So, when we talk of the position of the *guru*, it cannot mean what we generally talk of today. Here the “*gukara*” is something that is above *gunas* and “*rukara*” signifies something which is above a form. The *guru* must thus be able to experience creation without being affected by the form and the *gunas* in the creation. We should try, through *Sadhana*, to acquire the position of such a *guru*.

Thapas does not mean running away from a home and a family and living in a forest by eating leaves. This cannot be the true meaning of *thapas*. It also does not constitute *thapas* if you stand upside down like bats. One aspect of real *thapas* refers to our ability to bring your thought, word and action into harmony. You should be able to unify your work, mind and talk. *Thapas* gives you the ability by which you can do this. *Vidya*, which we have identified with *Brahma Vidya* and *thapas* will enable one to experience *Brahman*. To a *guru*, both these things should be like his two eyes. If we want to clean a cloth that has gathered dirt, we need clean water as well as soap. Similarly, if we want to get rid of the dirt that has gathered in our mind, we need *Brahma Vidya* as well as *thapas*. Generally, we think that an ordinary person cannot acquire *Brahma Vidya*. *Brahma Vidya* gives you the ability to control your mind and action and turn them toward God. It has been established that this creation is filled with *Easwara*. It is not a great sacrifice to give away one’s material possessions. It is truly great to be able to give up one’s self. *Bhagavatha* is sacred in teaching these aspects. The *guru* that comes in this story and the disciples that sit at the feet of such a *guru* are good examples; and if we can understand them, it will lead us to the right path. Krishna is the central figure for *Bhagavatha*.

Arjuna was also a principal character in this play. Arjuna is an ideal example of a disciple. Krishna is an ideal *guru*. Here, the best of human beings, Arjuna, is the disciple; and the greatest of Gods, Krishna, is the *Guru*. Arjuna holding the Gandiva is the disciple. Krishna the *Yogeswara* is the *guru*. It is not easy to find another parallel to such a confluence of a *guru* and a disciple. Bringing such a disciple and a *guru* together and teaching the sacredness of this confluence to the people of Bharath is the basis of *Gita*. *Guru* is a person, who can wake up a sleeping and ignorant devotee, by the alarm bell of *prajnana*. The *guru* keeps saying, "Awake, arise, wake up to the fact that you are not an ordinary human being but that you are divine." This is the work of a true *guru*. One who is called a *guru* should have himself had the experience of *Para Brahma*.

Once upon a time, one individual undertook a journey and on the way, he met a big river. Since the river was new to him, he did not know how wide or deep it was. While he was feeling that there was no one to help him, he found two people sitting under a nearby tree. When he asked them about the depth of the river, they said that it can be crossed easily and that it was not very deep. When he examined these people carefully, he found that one of them was lame and the other was blind. The blind man cannot see the river and the lame man cannot walk. He thought it is foolish to try and cross the river based on the assurances of the blind man or the lame man. This was very prudent behaviour on his part.

Today, we want to cross the river of our lives along with a heavy luggage in the form of a family. There are several *gurus* who, like the blind and the lame, neither understand the depth of the river nor the effort involved. This is the reason why there are several unsacred actions entering the conduct of the students. If, therefore, we can put the *gurus* in the proper

path, the students will not pursue the wrong path. It is in this context that the Sathya Sai Bala Vikas *gurus*, with their sacred hearts and their experience, should train the students carefully. There will no doubt be a good future for Bharath. The Bala Vikas *gurus* should take into their minds at least one or two good things and teach them to the children. It is said that for our life, there are twelve *gurus*. It is not as if these twelve *gurus* have twelve forms. The different aspects of teaching are to be identified with the twelve forms. To be born is a *guru*, to live on the earth is a *guru*, to be happy is a *guru*, to be strong is a *guru*. It is not right to have a *guru* only in the school or college. Even when we do business, there is something to learn. When we cultivate land, there is something to learn. In this way, everywhere there is something for us to learn; and in fact, the entire world is like a university. Not only this, all the creation around us is in the position of an important *guru*. Without any difference of caste or creed, the tree proclaims equality of every one. The mountains are teaching to us that we should not have so much attachment to and care of our body by showing how patiently they can stand in rain, sun and cold. The birds teach us to be unmindful of the changing days. The world is not permanent. The family is only an illusion. So says the man who is leaving the world after death. You have no right to keep on saying that this belongs to you or that belongs to you. The creation around you keeps on reminding you that nothing belongs to you. If you really want to understand nature, creation is the best school. The *guru* is Sripati himself. All that is contained in the creation—the mountains, the trees, the rivers—are teaching us constantly. The education that nature around us gives us is much more than the education given by a *guru* or a mother or a father. Therefore, if we can really understand the secret of the creation around us, our minds will not go after the attractions of the material world. There is nothing more wonderful or awe-striking than God's creation.

Students: if we want to produce a spoon or a cup, we make a mould and from that mould, we keep on producing more and more copies of the same piece. We try to duplicate everything. In God's creation there are millions of individuals, millions of insects, mountains and trees. Do we see any one piece of creation resembling identically any other piece? Even twins, born from one mother will be different in some way or the other. They will never be completely identical. There is no similarity between one piece and another. All these flowers are jasmine flowers, but there is no complete identity between one jasmine flower and another. Can there be anything more startling than this? How many lessons can this teach us? Who can create such things? This is great work of God. If we can make an attempt to understand this aspect of God, we can understand everything. A *guru* who can make us alive to this situation is very necessary today. Teachers, who understand the *Para Thathwa* or the aspect of God are very necessary. The *gurus* of Bala Vikas should make an attempt to teach the students with love, forbearance and with a sacred heart. The *guru* should not become a lazy person. If our own children are children born to us out of *kama*, the children who come to us as students must be treated as children of *prema*. We must treat them with more affection than what we show to our own children. We should not treat them differently. Our teachers must have an equal-mindedness and should not give place to any difference due to caste, religion and such other aspects. In the training camp that has just been held, you have learnt several new things. You should regard this as a great opportunity. We should regard inculcating the idea of service in the minds of the children of this country as a sacred task. I am hoping that the teachers will undertake to help the students and thus help to re-establish the ancient culture of this country. You must go on teaching the children from the beginning, the essence of our *Vedic* state-

ment, “*Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava.*” We should also teach the children that they should conduct themselves with humility when they meet their elders. We should teach them that whatever they eat, they should eat it after offering it to God. In the absence of such practice, the conduct of the children is taking a very distorted path. To some extent, the children are shaping themselves on the lines of the conduct of their mothers. In the ancient days, the ideas and thoughts of the women were very sacred. At the time when the women were in the family way, they used to listen to many sacred stories like the story of Prahlada, or of Markandeya, or Dhruva or Krishna. In these days, the situation is such that women in the family way see three cinemas a day. As a consequence, all the bad ideas contained in a cinema enter their mind and the children born are “Cinema Children” full of wrong ideas and emotions. It is very difficult to correct and reform such children. We will have to undergo a lot of trouble in this task, but it is necessary for the sake of our country and of our people. In this large world, each one of you is like a tiny screw or a bolt. We must make an attempt, without ego, to learn our responsibility and do our duty. We should not give room to any ego. When there is ego, you cannot be a good *guru*. I am hoping that you will be able to put the decisions taken by us into practice and teach good things to the children.

9. Whatever God Does, It Is Always For Our Own Good

Good education is only that which teaches us universal peace and enables us to shed narrow ideas and promotes the ability to live together in unity. What we see during the day, will disappear during a dream in the night. What we see during a dream will disappear during the day. Our experiences are so transient.

Pavitratma Swarupas: Students,

The bamboos in a thicket that grow densely in a forest may rub against each other and this will start a fire. The fire that is so generated will become bigger and bigger as a result of breeze. Gradually the fire will become a big forest fire destroying the entire forest. So also some human beings, as a result of their educational attainments, power, wealth and position develop a great deal of ego. Because of this ego, they will be giving a lot of trouble to good people and *sadhakas* around them. In order to protect such good people and re-establish *dharma*, God takes a human form from age to age. Such *Avatars* appear again and again and help human beings, by leading an exemplary life and demonstrating how to lead a good life. Such a human form of divinity in the *Dwapara Yuga*, is the form of Krishna. At the end of the battle of Mahabharatha, Krishna entrusted the kingdom to Dharmaraja who performed the obsequies of Bhishma. He saved the child in the womb of Uttara and after ensuring peace and prosperity everywhere, left for Dwaraka. Since Krishna was determined to return to Dwaraka, there was no alternative except to bid him farewell.

On the chariot, along with Krishna, were also travelling his disciples Uddhava and Satyaki. Behind the decorated chair on which Krishna was sitting, Arjuna was holding a diamond-studded umbrella giving shade to Krishna. While Krishna was thus travelling, he forbade Dharmaraja from giving any help. Nevertheless, Dharmaraja sent a large retinue to make arrangements on the way. While passing through each country, the king of that country welcomed Krishna and in due course, Krishna reached Dwaraka. The king of Suradesa was surprised by the strength of Krishna and gave a number of gifts to Krishna. The citizens of Dwaraka, as soon as they learnt that the battle of Mahabharatha was over, were expecting Krishna's return to Dwaraka. They were preparing to receive Krishna. Like a young child looks anxiously to get into the embrace of the mother, the citizens of Dwaraka, the young children of Dwaraka and the *gopikas* of Dwaraka were all looking forward to the return of Krishna. As the young calf which keeps on yearning for the mother cow as the day draws to a close, the people of Dwaraka were yearning for the return of Krishna. All the *gopikas*, unable to bear the separation from Krishna, had given up their food, had given up decorating themselves and were anxiously moving about looking for the return of Krishna. As a poor man who is hungry cries out for food, the *gopalas* were crying out for Krishna. When the citizens of Dwaraka were in this condition, Krishna approached Dwaraka and sounded his conch. As soon as this sound was heard, the earth shook, the mansions shook and all the people jumped in joy. In one moment the whole of Dwaraka was smiling. The chariots and horses were already in full preparation and they all went to receive Krishna. All the elders, Ugrasena, Akrura, Vasudeva and Balarama went to the city frontiers. They were waiting outside in order to welcome Krishna. The royal roads of Dwaraka were overflowing with people. The women were standing on the terraces of the mansions and shedding tears of

joy. On the roads and in the crowds, the victories of Krishna were being praised. As soon as he reached his mansion, he was welcomed with *Mangala Harati*. He was received with great joy.

The mothers were expectantly waiting for him. In addition to Devaki, Vasudeva had five other wives. Without giving any thought to Krishna's age or status, all the five mothers went and embraced him. At the time of the battle, Krishna was eighty-four years old, Devaki was looking after Krishna as if he was a small boy. We should see here that although Krishna was quite old, the motherly affection makes Devaki take Krishna close to her. She could not keep away from Krishna too long. Devaki asked him about the safety of Pandavas. The other mothers also came and embraced him. Although they were his stepmothers, they were all attracted by his friendliness and affection. Such love is Krishna and Krishna is such love. They are not two distinct things. This aspect of Krishna was very much enjoyed by the citizens of Dwaraka and the citizens of Hastinapura. Those who have been used to experiencing this kind of love will never want to have anything different. Will those who have tasted sweet dates want to eat tamarind in their place? All the *gopis* and *gopalas* who enjoyed Krishna's *prema* had no desire to enjoy any other type of *prema*.

After all the questions were answered, Krishna proceeded into the inner apartments to meet the *gopikas*. It is here that we have to carefully assess the actions of Krishna. He has the form of *ananda*. There is no scope for anything else in his form. Although he used to pretend that he was living in a family like an ordinary person, it was not so in reality. You might shape gold into different ornaments and give different names, but the basic thing is the same gold in all of them. Although

God might undertake different actions for the world, he is basically *Ananda Swarupa*. Whether it is in friendship or in attachment or relationship, the only quality that he demonstrated was *ananda* and nothing else. For those who experienced these situations, it may look as if it is in different forms but for Krishna there is no difference at all. With a view to give happiness to the devotees, he might conduct himself in different ways but he always had a feeling of grace in his mind. He recognised the ideals in women. If he appeared in the house of one *gopika* first and later in the house of another *gopika*, he knew that he will then be the cause of a certain amount of jealousy. In order to avoid this among the *gopikas*, he demonstrated that he can take different forms at the same moment. At the same time, a thousand and one hundred and eight *gopikas* were longing for the grace of Krishna in Dwaraka. Krishna simultaneously entered the houses of all the one thousand one hundred and eight *gopikas*. It is in this context that he taught them that all the forms that exist everywhere are forms of God. Here, there is an opportunity for us to see the difference between Radha and the other *gopikas*. Each one of them had the feeling that Krishna should belong to her and not to any other woman. This was a narrow outlook. They always conducted themselves with the feeling that Krishna belonged to them and to no one else. Radha is different. Her thought was not like that. Radha used to feel that Brindavan belongs to all and that Govinda belongs to all. Radha always proclaimed the feeling that Govinda was as much divine to her as to any other. She had an equal-minded approach. In this way, when Krishna entered all the houses at the same time, each *gopika* used to feel that Krishna first entered her house. They were all thus immersed in happiness. The *gopikas* were anxiously waiting for a long time for the vision of Krishna. During this time, they gave up food, they gave up proper dress, they gave up decorating their hair. In such a neglected state, Krishna could not recog-

nise them. They refused to wear jewels or use flowers because they felt that they should not do so when Krishna was not there. As soon as they saw Krishna, they shed tears. Here, the tears became decoration for their faces, and it showed the fact that there is no better decoration for one's face than tears of joy. It is their *gunas* that have been giving them their beauty. In Kannada there is a poem which says that the houses constitute the beauty of the village; the lotus constitutes the beauty of the lake. For the sky, the moon is the best decoration. Similarly, for a woman, good qualities are the best decoration. In this manner, for these *gopikas* their tears of joy became their decoration. Krishna saw the *gopikas* in this condition and his eyes were glowing with compassion. He started conversing with them. He asked one *gopika* if the deer that she was bringing up was coming up well. He asked another *gopika* if the peacock that she was bringing up was keeping well. In this manner, Krishna was asking about the welfare of various human beings and animals. They realised that his compassion spread equally to all living things. *Easwara* is present in all the living beings in God's creation. This was the truth spread by Krishna. Not only this, as soon as the *gopikas* saw Krishna, they forgot all their troubles; but Krishna was asking about the safety of the *gopikas*. The *Atma Swarupa* is one who is able to give you happiness under all conditions of both pain and pleasure. So, Krishna was giving happiness at all times. This aspect of his was described by calling him a *Nitya Brahmachari*. As all the rays come from the same sun, here all kindness seems to come from Krishna. All the *jivas* have come from one source, and they have to merge into the same one source. Krishna proclaimed that he is present in all the living creation. Without being able to understand these broad aspects of God, we sometimes inject our own narrow ideas and apprehensions when we picture God. God's aspect is such that it is ever ready to take you along the royal road on which you can

see him. Our life is like a taxicab and we try to go into bylanes with this taxi. In that context, our thought of going into bylanes and God's presence on the royal road do not go together. The thoughts that we get by looking at the cinemas and the thoughts that we get by looking at the books written about him are very different from the true nature of Krishna. All these thoughts are merely man's creation according to his own imagination. But God is always permanently present in one single concept. In action, he may demonstrate different and diverse aspects coming from the one single form. The important strength which God has is the strength of love. His life is full of *Ananda*. In this type of divine *ananda*, there is no room for any impurity coming in. "*Ekam Eva Adwaitiyam, Brahman.*" What exists is only one and that is *Brahman*. There is no parallel to this. Krishna has shown this path of truth and he has himself set an example. His *prema* is the destination for everyone. However, for the prosperity and good of the world, he may undertake some action which might appear as being different. He will never undertake any action unless it is intended for the good of the world. The *gopis* and the *gopalas* were among those who recognised this basic truth.

Radha exhibited the totality of the stream of love or *Prakruthi* has taken the form of Radha. If Radha was attached to Krishna and Krishna was attached to Radha, it simply means that *Paramatma* and *Prakruthi* were attached to each other. This is a silver tumbler. It is not possible for us to remove the silver from the tumbler. Because, the silver and the tumbler have joined together, we call it a silver tumbler. In the same manner, it is not possible to separate Radha and Krishna from each other. Because *Prakruthi* and *Paramatma* are identical with each other, it is one single entity. Without *Prakruthi* or creation, there is no Krishna, without Krishna, we will not be able to see creation. We cannot have a cloth without the thread

and the thread without the cloth. The oneness of the cloth and the thread exemplifies the aspect of Radha and Krishna. I have told you many times that Radha does not simply mean the form of a woman. It is something far more important. The language develops as a confluence of several letters. The letters come together to form a word. In the word, Radha we have the letters R-A-D-H-A. When we commence with A we get *Adhar*; when we commence with D we get *Dhara* and in reverse direction it reads *Aradh*. Thus, the word Radha means, one who constantly chants the name of the Lord. Everyone who does the *aradhana* can be described as Radha. The word does not relate to a feminine gender indicating the name of a woman at all. Krishna's aspect demonstrates that there is no such difference at all in the presence of divinity. In this manner, Krishna has been spreading the concept of pure love. Only when we can exterminate jealousy, will we be able to develop pure love. There is no objection to desiring what you want, but it is wrong to develop jealousy at what others have. In this manner, Krishna was showing the divine path to the *gopis* and *gopals*. All of Krishna's actions are essentially divine. Unless we understand this, we will not be able to know the true aspect of Krishna. He was looking at living creation with the same attitude. Here, you may get some doubts as to why such a person caused the killing of nearly forty *lakhs* of Kauravas. There is one simple explanation for this. In a human body, if there is a cancerous growth and in this growth there will be millions of disease-carrying germs. Because of these germs, there is a possibility of the entire body being infected and becoming cancerous. At that time, a doctor will decide to amputate that part of the body which has become cancerous. The doctor will not worry about his having to exterminate millions of germs. His primary concern is to perform the operation and save the patient. Is it good to perform the operation and save the patient or is it good to think that by performing the operation, he will be

killing millions of germs and therefore give up the operation? Since the germs may cause harm to many other people, the doctor will decide to kill all the germs. I have already mentioned earlier that the same *dharma* was implemented by Krishna.

At that time, there was a cancerous growth in the form of Kauravas. As a result of the actions of the Kauravas, there was a lot of *adharm*a and injustice. The world itself was being destroyed. The situation was such that the cancerous growth, in the form of Kauravas, was going to damage the entire body of the world. Krishna recognised that this disease had crossed all limits. He then got ready to perform the operation. He used the five Pandavas as compounders and performed the operation in the form of the battle of Mahabharatha. In this operation, the forty *lakhs* of germs were exterminated. This act was for the prosperity and good of the world and not for a selfish end. In the very beginning, Krishna said, “These people are born to bring blame and blemish to a good royal family. Their wickedness is growing like a forest fire and friendship with Karna, the son of Suta is helping it spread further. The wind, in the form of Sakuni, was giving this forest fire more support. That fire of wickedness has spread everywhere. If peace of the world is to be established, it cannot be unless there is an avalanche of arrows. This forest fire is very severe and to stop such fire, we cannot use a small quantity of water, we have to use a heavy downpour in the form of arrows.” Krishna did what he did, for the good of the world.

Whatever God does, it is always for our own good. All his actions are intended for our good. It is necessary for us to recognise this truth and conduct ourselves accordingly.

10. Anger Destroys One's Wealth And Prosperity

In the human body, which by itself has no value, is located securely the sacred and priceless jewel of Atma. This word of Sai is a statement of truth.

The human body is made up of five material elements and it has to fall sometime or other. The *Atma* that resides in the body, unlike the body, is permanent and sacred. This sacred aspect of *Atma* has neither birth nor death, nor attachment. If we think deeply and well, we will realise that God, in the form of *Atma*, is residing in every human body.

Prema Swarupas:

Any person who has an attachment to this human body cannot easily understand the unmanifested God. The human form of one's own body will always be wanting to perceive God in a manifested form, preferably resembling his own. We generally get the opportunity to recognise the unmanifested aspect of God only through a manifested form. *Bhagavatha* gives you the sacred opportunity by which you can understand the unmanifested God. The purpose of *Bhagavatha* is to teach us the sanctity of the inner *Atma*. In order that we may have some vision of the inner *Atma*, *Bhagavatha* has been teaching us *Upasanas* in the form of three steps. These are *Vishnu Upasana*, *Vasudeva Upasana* and *Narayana Upasana*. The first one—*Vishnu Upasana*—recognises God in all people who have a form and a name. This aspect has been described to us as the “*Swarupa of virat*” in *Bhagavad Gita*. It has been referred to as the “*Viswarupa Darshana*” or the manifestation of God in the form of creation. The meaning of this was also

taught by Bhishma to Dharmaraja when the former was lying on the bed of arrows. The *Bhagavatha* demonstrates that the entire creation is in fact an aspect of Vishnu. *Bhagavatha* tells us that Vishnu is present in all forms of creation, at all times and in all places. We may say that this path is an easy path to follow for ordinary human beings. Since God is present in all living forms, it enables us to regard every human being as some form of God.

The second step is the *Upasana* of *Vasudeva*. In this, we have to experience God, not only in all human beings, but in all our actions and work. Here, we should make an attempt to recognise the aspect of God in all our actions connected with all things which have a name and a form. This is not such an easy path, because human beings are filled with qualities like lust, anger, jealousy and hatred and they also have attachments. These qualities are such that they will not enable one to think of God. When we see an individual doing bad things, not only will we regard that individual as a bad individual but there is also a chance of bad ideas coming into ourselves. Under those circumstances, it becomes very difficult to accept such an individual and the act that he performs as sacred or divine. In order that we may not give room to such unsacred situations, we will have to develop the aspect of divinity in us. Just as a human being coiled up by a python struggles to get his hands and legs free, so also a human being caught up in qualities like anger, lust, greed and hatred has to struggle to think of God and recognise divinity in all that he sees. Thus the *Vasudeva Upasana* is a difficult matter to follow.

The third step is the *Narayana Upasana*. This step not only enables you to experience divinity in the action as well as the form of individuals, but will also enable you to see the oneness of all creation. This will lead you to get the experience

of *Atma*. It will enable you to establish the unity that is present in all creation, through the recognition of the aspect of *Atma*. This will enable you to accept that there is no difference between different forms of divinity. There are three great individuals in *Bhagavatha*, who symbolise these three types of *Upasana*.

King Parikshith, a Rajarishi, symbolises the first kind of *Upasana*. Sringi a great *Thapasvi* belongs to the second category of *Upasana*. Sami, the famous Brahmarishi represents the third type of *Upasana*. The totality of the experience of Sami, Sringi and Parikshith is the essence of *Bhagavatha*. These three types are truly the forms of the three *gunas*—*Sathwa*, *Raja* and *Thamas gunas*. *Bhagavatha* is a text that has harmonised these three aspects and demonstrated the oneness of divinity. Having received the protection of Krishna even while he was in the mother's womb, Parikshith was a very learned person and was governing his kingdom very wisely. It is natural that we get a doubt as to how such a good and noble king could lose control over himself in a fit of anger and place a dead snake over the shoulders of Sami. However great a man may be; however great a devotee he may be, he will lose control over himself when he gets angry. Anger is the greatest enemy of man. In a fit of anger, Parikshith put a dead snake round the shoulders of Sami, but this cannot be treated as a wanton act of arrogance or carelessness. It was a genuine mistake committed in a weak moment. When Parikshith found that the *rishi* Sami and the other *rishis* did not care to receive him and attend to him, he was very agitated; and while returning from there, he picked up a dead snake and put it round the shoulder of Sami. This enraged Sringi, son of Sami, who saw this a little later and as he saw King Parikshith leaving the *ashram*, he cursed him saying, "Within seven days, Parikshith will be killed by a snake bite." Here, we should recognise that what

happened was a passing state of Parikshith's anger, and there is no cruelty or evil intention in his action. However, when Sringeri saw this, he became very angry and in his anger, he cursed the king. The king was not aware of this curse. Here we must carefully examine the reason for Sringeri's curse and understand how *Dharma* really works in such situations. If a righteous and benevolent king commits a mistake unintentionally, the consequences will affect only the king and not the people. In the king, who was a Rajarishi, there is a little of *rajas* left and hence he was angry in a weak moment. Sringeri brought about a lot of confusion, because as a result of his curse, the people will also suffer and remain unprotected. Thus the consequences of the king's fault were also affecting the people. In fact, Sringeri had no right to curse. Here we notice that a person like Sringeri, who has no right to curse, gave a curse. Indeed, this is the subtle aspect of *Dharma*. The fact that a good and noble king lost his temper and insulted a Brahmarishi and the fact that a *rishi* gave a curse though he did not have the right to do so are symbolic of the decline of the accepted norms of *Dharma*. Indeed, at this time was the advent of the *Kali Yuga*. Here we see that as a result of *Kali*, certain blemishes are coming into *Vasudeva Upasana* and *Vishnu Upasana*.

When Sami came out of his deep meditation, he quickly realised all that had happened; and he took steps to reprimand his son. He said, "The king is a very noble and kind man and he takes good care of all of us. Just because in a weak moment, he did something rash, you should not have cursed. By this act of yours, you have lost all the good that you have accumulated because of your *thapas*. Have you undertaken to do all your *thapas* only to misuse it in this manner? In this context, it appears natural for the king to occasionally lose his temper in this manner, but a *thapasvi* like you should not have lost balance and given the curse. Our kingdom will now be

without a leader, it will be like a night without a moon.” After reprimanding his son in this manner, he thought it best to send word to king Parikshith and let him know the nature of the curse. He also undertook to tell king Parikshith about the evil consequences of anger. “One’s wealth and prosperity will be destroyed by anger. It will destroy whatever honour and reputation that one has. It will separate him from his own people. By pride and anger, everything will be destroyed and one who has anger will not be able to achieve anything. He will be humiliated. He will always be committing sin and everyone will admonish him. Anger will promote sin.” Having told Parikshith about the evil consequences of anger, as conveyed by Sami, the messenger further told the king as from Sami, “It is quite natural that you lost your control at a weak moment, but it was necessary for you to attempt to overcome your anger and behave in a responsible manner. Instead of overlooking your mistake and controlling himself, a sacred *thapasvi* like my son cursed you that you will die by a snake bite within seven days. During these seven days, think of the Lord always and promote the goodness in you.” As soon as Parikshith heard these words from Sami, his own mind was completely transformed and he conveyed his respectful *pranams* to Sami, the Brahmarishi, and said, “This is not a curse to me, it is a great gift. I cannot escape the consequences of my *karma* and what I had done. I am grateful to you for making me realise this.” From that day, Parikshith was thinking of God by giving up the responsibility of his government to his ministers. As soon as this news of the curse was known, several *rishis* and others came to see Parikshith. They were praying to God that king Parikshith who had a noble and sacred heart could be spared from the curse and that he should live long. But, the curse of the *thapasvi* could not be atoned and Parikshith was making preparations for the end. The great Brahmarishi Sami, who had considerable equanimity, was also praying for the well-being

of Parikshith. Although Sami, for external purposes, had connections with the world; yet in his mind, there was no attachment at all. He merged completely with the *Atma*. There is no difference between such a Brahmarishi and divinity.

On one occasion, after the battle, Dharmaraja went to Krishna's mansion to tell him about his despondency and despair. At that time, Krishna told Dharmaraja all the details about the future of Parikshith. He told him how Parikshith would acquire a great name and fame and how he would achieve far greater glory than all his predecessors. He also told him how, because of a curse from a saint, Parikshith would lose his life by a snake bite. While talking thus to Dharmaraja, Krishna suddenly lapsed into a brief silence and Dharmaraja was totally confused. After a few minutes, Dharmaraja asked why Krishna thus became silent in the middle of the narration. Krishna said that he had to go and respond to the call of Bhishma who was lying on his bed of arrows. Those who have a sacred heart will be able to get the Lord's grace by praying sincerely. There is no difference between a sacred mind and God. A prayer from a sacred person will go straight to the Lord. Such people are embodiments of wisdom and they are forms of *Adwaita*. They had enjoyed the oneness with divinity. They firmly believed that there is only one truth in the world and that there is no parallel truth. Such people are always in a state of great ecstasy and are really like children. That is why, it is said that the state of a child, of a person who is in great ecstasy, and of a mad man are alike. Because of the consequences of excitement of one's senses, man sometimes forgets his true nature. Truly man seeks only *ananda*. He is also intrinsically a selfless person, but by the pressure of his sensory organs, he gets attached to material desires and he forgets God. For the benefit of such people and with great love and affection, the aspect of Krishna is being taught by *Bhagavatha*.

Prema Swarupas:

We should make an attempt to realise that all the names and forms that we see in this world are only reflections of God. We should also recognise that all creation is a part of God. We should not be led away by the differences in names and forms and forget the essential unity amongst all these. On one occasion, Narada began to doubt the sincerity of the *gopikas* and he asked Krishna, “The *gopikas* are not well educated, they do not know the *Sastras* or *Vedas* and they even appear uncivilised, how do they appreciate the aspect of God? Only people who have risen above the stature of *Gunas* can understand divinity. How can others who are immersed in mundane qualities and thoughts understand God?” Then Krishna said, “The nature of *gopikas* is very sacred. Even if their mothers-in-law are scolding them and their husbands are sharpening their knives to punish them, they will not open their mouths; and they will not be afraid. In the minds of the *gopikas*, Krishna’s image is printed like a print on a paper. As it is not possible to separate Krishna from the heart of the *gopikas*, what is the use of all the education? Can anyone escape the consequences of fate? If bad ideas enter one’s mind, there is no hope for him.” You cannot please the Lord by your education or by reciting the *Vedas*. He can be attracted only by sacred *prema*. The scholarship that you acquire is only for the head; and if you do not put it into practice, of what use is your scholarship? There is plenty of learning in the books, but all the hearts are full of dust. There is nothing that we can get from the books. You have to read these books only for eking out a livelihood and filling your belly. Only pure *prema* will enable you to understand the Lord. That is why our scriptures have taught us that you cannot get immortality by your wealth or by your education, and that you can get it only by your good qualities and sacrifice. By sacrifice, you can attain immortality; but if you are immersed in

“*Bhoga*” you will only get “*Roga*.” Students, you should understand the true meaning of sacrifice. This is why Thyagaraja said that we should knowingly utter the name of the Lord. If we do not let out the air that we breath in, our lungs will get spoilt. If we do not let out the food that we take in, our body will get diseased. Even if our blood does not constantly flow from place to place, there will be a boil on the hand. You should understand the good that will come out of sacrifice. We should use our education only for good activities.

Every moment is passing into a new moment whether we use it well or not. If time does not move on, days will not change, life span will not reduce and there will be no change. Because time is moving on, our life is changing. If we are swimming, we must make an attempt to push back the water that is in front of us. If we do not push back the water, we cannot move forward at all. We must sacrifice in all spheres of life—moral, spiritual, ethical and political. *Divya Atma Swarupas*: our pains and pleasures are like passing clouds and they are momentary. We should not fill our life with such transient pleasures. When Parikshith realised that his life was going to end in seven days, he was always thinking of the Lord. Because he had such a sacred heart, Suka the great *rishi* came to see him. If our mind is pure, sacred *Paramatma* will likewise himself come to see us. It is very necessary to make your heart pure and sacred to achieve anything good.

11. Love Lives By Giving And Forgiving

If one always thinks of blame and blemish, his mind will become impure and restless. If one always thinks of good qualities, his mind will become peaceful and rested. If one's thoughts are always full of God, he will become one with God. This is the word of Sai which describes the truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Man's mind will take a form determined by his thoughts. One's mental condition depends on his thoughts and his circumstances. It is in this context that it has been said that the result of any action by you will depend on your state of mind. Many people in this world will want to get the divine vision of the Lord. In the process, they will become devotees of the sacred *Bhagavatha*. It is not possible to attain this state, just by wanting to do so. It is easy to wish for, but very difficult to experience that kind of bliss. It is easier to prescribe and preach than to put into practice. It is better to show even one thing in practice rather than simply speak about a hundred different things. In this mansion of bliss and happiness lives Krishna in Dwaraka. To experience this divine bliss and happiness, many devotees actually go to Dwaraka. *Gopikas* and *gopalas* are such devotees. All people cannot get easy entrance into this mansion of bliss. There are four entrances to this mansion. For each of these four entrances, there is one watchman. There are three stories to this mansion called Ananda Bhavana. These three stories are *Sathyam*, *Shivam* and *Sundaram*. The four main entrances are being watched by four watchmen in the form of *Sama* (control), *Vichara* (enquiry), *Santrupthi*

(contentment) and *Vairagya* (detachment). Unless we satisfy these guards, we cannot enter the mansion, or alternatively we should be closely related or connected with Krishna himself, the divine resident inside the mansion. We can enter the mansion, if we have the right to do so. If one does not belong to one or the other of these two categories, one cannot enter the mansion. *Sama* is one who is guarding one of the entrances. This word means control of inner sensory organs. On many occasions, we hear the words *Sama* and *Dama*. The word *Dama* means control of external organs. *Sama* means control of inner organs. Here, we can understand the word *Sama* as signifying control of sensory organs. For one who can control his inner senses, the external organs do not give any trouble at all and these external organs easily come under control. For one who is not able to control the inner senses, the outer organs also cause a lot of trouble. If one gets the strong feeling that he should not see anything external to him, he will not see anything even if his eyes are open. If one is determined not to eat anything, he will not eat the food however attractive it may be. It is the inner senses that provoke the external organs. Thus controlling the inner senses is a difficult matter; but if we are able to do this, we can easily control the external organs. For one who is born as a human being, whether he works in the worldly sphere or spiritual sphere, the control of the organs is very essential. This discipline will give all of us a lot of happiness. In many instances, the government generally takes important steps. When the prices go up, it will take steps to control the prices. There is a speed limit for the buses in which we travel. The trains also travel with a restriction on their speed. Thus, even in our daily life, various kinds of disciplinary measures are necessary. In this context, if our organs too are not kept under control, we will encounter great difficulty. We have to recognise that these *sadhanas*, intended to keep our desires under check, are intended for our safety and are not just

foolish measures. It is true that it is a difficult matter to control our sensory organs. Thus, in this process of *sadhana*, we should not waste our time in the wrong direction. Like the *gopis* and the *gopalas*, if we are able to direct our vision towards the Lord and perform all our actions with love and to the Lord, then we can achieve happiness. The path of self-control is thus not an easy one. However, if we can take the path of *prema*, we can acquire control and enter the mansion of God.

The second entrance is guarded by *vichara* or enquiry. This has been explained in the *Bhagavad Gita* as the capacity to differentiate good from bad, and the aspect of the *Atma* from *anatma*. Even in a small matter like eating a banana, unless we are able to discriminate between what can be eaten and what should be discarded, we cannot enjoy the fruit. The ability to separate the good from the bad is essential to man. Even if we want to cook food from rice, we must first separate out the stones from the rice. If we want to use vegetables for preparing food, we have to see that the bad portion of the vegetable is identified and discarded. In a similar manner we should first distinguish between the permanent and the transient things. When you say that “this is my body” it is clear that you are different from your body. Therefore, it becomes quite clear that you are indeed *Atma* and not merely the body. You must distinguish truth from untruth. At any moment, the body is likely to drop down and die. To regard such a transient body as a permanent truth is not correct. There is an example about which I told you many times. This is a silver tumbler. If I do not like it, I can go to a silversmith and have it converted into a silver plate. After using it for some days, if I do not like it, I can again get it changed into a cup. Thus the tumbler has been changed into a plate; and the plate has been changed into a cup; but in all these, the silver is the common factor. The form

may have changed but the base is always the same silver. The basic unchanging aspect of *Atma* is the same in all the different forms. *Bhagavad Gita* has been describing this as the real knowledge. *Kshetra* is the body, or the residence, and *Kshetrajna* refers to the divine aspect which lives in the body. Here we should understand the difference between the residence and the person who resides in the residence. We will first understand the usage of these words. The word *Kshetra* consists of the two letters 'Kshe' and 'tra.' While in *Kshetrajna* there are three letters 'Kshe,' 'tra' and 'jna.' In the word *Kshetrajna* the extra letter is 'jna.' Because of this extra letter 'jna,' it refers to one who has *jnana* or who is wise. When such *jnana* resides in the *Kshetra* it is referred to as *Kshetrajna*. So the body by itself has no wisdom, but the God who lives in the body has all the wisdom and makes the body perform all actions. The individual who recognises the identity of God and the one who is resident in the body will be able to enter the mansion of God.

As you learn to control your organs, wisdom will dawn on you; and this wisdom will enable you to understand the aspect of the *Atma* as distinct from *anatma*; and you can enter the mansion. As your discriminating power arising out of this wisdom grows and you realise the divinity of the *Atma*, you will automatically get self-satisfaction or contentment, and you can enter the mansion. But is man having self-satisfaction or contentment today? No, he is never satisfied. He always asks for something more. There is a small example for this. An individual who is very hungry will pray for a small quantity of food. If by some good luck, he gets a small quantity of food, he will then aspire for some clothes; and if he has both these, he will want to have a home. Once he gets a house, he will want to get married and after that he will want a job. When he gets a child, he will want a promotion in his job. Is there any limit to man's

desires? For a man who originally did not have anything to eat, this is indeed too much to ask for and such desire is only leading one to ask more and gather more worry. On one occasion, Sankaracharya was asked, Who was a poor man and who was a rich man? He said, "He who is a satisfied person is a rich man, and he who has many desires is a poor man." To be satisfied with what you have is to seek entry to God's mansion through the third entrance. Whether we meet with sorrow or with happiness we should be satisfied and regard it as God's gift in our own interest and develop a spirit of satisfaction and equal-mindedness.

The fourth entrance to this mansion is guarded by *Vairagya* or detachment. Once a person is fully satisfied, he will naturally get *Vairagya*. This detachment should not be something that you get when you do not possess anything. When a person has all the comforts and all the wealth and in the full understanding of their transient nature, if he gives up these material acquisitions, then it can be termed as detachment. Physically, leaving one's home and family and going away to a forest cannot be called *Vairagya*. To be able to curb your needs and limit them and to be satisfied with them is real *Vairagya*. For example, if you have a bag full of rice in your house and you want to feed yourselves for a month with that rice, how do you know that you are going to live for a month. If you get a child today, you start saving in order to send him to America for higher education after another twenty years. What is the meaning of this? How do you know what will happen in the next moment? You should therefore aspire to enjoy only that which is yours at the moment. Do not yearn for and run after more and more things. You can remain in the family but do not have the family in you. Describing this aspect, Ramakrishna Paramahansa said, "You may put a boat in the water, but you should not put water in your boat." You should live in the world but do not accumulate things for the future

and get yourself worried. True *Vairagya* refers to doing your duty at a particular time and to think of what is relevant at that time. This was also described by the poet Vemana, by saying, “Talk about what is happening at this moment and do not talk about the future and hurt others.” If we cultivate this aspect, you will develop true *Vairagya*. Do not make the distinction by saying that this belongs to you and that belongs to God. In reality, everything belongs to God and you should develop such a feeling. If we want to enter the mansion of Krishna and experience his divinity, you must travel along one of these paths. If you can acquire *Sama* or self-control, you can easily develop the aspect of enquiry or discrimination. Through this, you can develop the aspect of satisfaction and even without your knowledge or making an effort, you will get *Vairagya* or detachment. If you cannot develop the aspect of *Sama*, you should at least make an attempt to think that the entire creation is filled with *prema* or divine love. The *gopis* and *gopalas* have experienced this love. On one occasion, Narada thought that the *gopikas* were very unsophisticated and so he attempted to teach them some *Vedanta*; and with this objective, he entered Brindavan. The *gopikas* were immersed in the thought of Krishna and at all times they were only talking of Krishna. All their actions were full of thoughts of Krishna. Narada went to the *gopikas* and said, “You are not at all learned in the features of divinity, I will teach you the royal and sacred path to reach the divine; come and listen.” The *gopikas* looked at Narada and asked him to say whatever he had to say quickly so that they do not waste too much time. Narada said that *Vedanta* cannot be taught so easily and asked them to listen patiently. Then the *gopikas* said that they neither have the time nor the patience to listen to him and said that they were always only interested in the thought of Krishna. They therefore considered listening to the *Vedanta* as a waste of time. There are many people who preach *Vedanta* but cannot put it into practice.

They asked Narada if he was putting his teachings of *Vedanta* into practice. They said that they do not want *Vedanta* that is not put into practice. The *gopalas* had the pure aspect of *prema* in them.

Krishna reached Dwaraka and on the first two days told them about the details of the battle of Mahabharatha. He summoned all the *gopis* and *gopalas* and others. They all assembled anxiously and were waiting to listen to Krishna who addressed them and said, “All these days, I have been away from Dwaraka because of the battle of Mahabharatha, have you had any difficulties and problems and have you experienced any sorrow? Are you and members of your families doing well? Are your prayers going on without hindrance?” He was thus making enquiries about their problems and comforts. All the *rishis*, citizens and others said that they had no problems and that everything was going on well except for one aspect. Krishna was divine and he could read the minds of the people. He laughed and asked them what their problem was? They said that their big problem was the absence of Krishna and that they were unable to bear the separation from Krishna. They prayed that Krishna should not go out of Dwaraka again. He assured them that he would not go out from Dwaraka; and from then on, for a period of thirty-six years, he did not move out of Dwaraka. Krishna is the divine Lord who yields to the prayers of the devotees. The Lord has no blemish at all in him. He is like a mirror and he simply reflects your own thoughts. If you think that God is not talking to you, it is simply your fault. If you think God is not associated with you, it is your fault. You should behave in such a way that God can stay in you and with you. God has neither likes nor dislikes. He is merely a witnessing consciousness. All these are the distortions and contortions of your own mind. The best that you can do is to offer a pure heart to the Lord. Through the path of *prema*, you can

make the Lord come to you. You should transform yourself in such a manner and make your heart a field of love. If there is no love in your heart, God cannot reside there. If Krishna has to stay in your heart, you must make your heart completely pure and fill it with love of God. Then the Lord can play his *Murali* in your heart. If your heart is clogged up with dirt, the Lord cannot play a *Murali*. From the tree of Love you will get fruits of love and not sour fruits. If you can cultivate the tree of love, you can get the sacred divinity easily. The path of love is the only path to God. Love is God, Live in Love, all is right. Let others live in Love, Love lives by giving and forgiving, self lives by getting and forgetting. Love is selflessness, and self is lovelessness. Love is everything. This should be your approach to the Lord. This aspect of Love is the most important one for today's youth. The absence of such love is responsible for bad qualities like anger, lust, jealousy, etc. It is essential that you should promote love in your hearts. Your life should be full of love and you should imbibe the sacred culture of Bharath and promote a peaceful atmosphere in your country.

12. All Our Sorrow Is Our Own Creation

A knowledge of Atma will be available only to those who have very pure minds. Even a saint cannot acquire this. This word of Sai is a statement of the path of truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas!

In this world, man gets happiness out of a thing of beauty. When we look at a beautiful flower, happiness is generated in us. When we look at a beautiful bird or a nice house, we feel happy. We have to carefully consider whether such happiness is permanent or transient. A nice rose flower makes us feel very happy; but by the evening, the rose will fade away; and by the next morning the petals will fall and then it does not generate as much happiness. In the same way, every object of beauty can only generate temporary happiness in us. We have to understand carefully where one can find permanent and lasting happiness. This can only be found in the aspect of *Atma* and in the thought of God. We can get permanent happiness only from things that are permanent. Out of things that are transient, we can never get happiness which is permanent. It is only after experiencing such permanent happiness will we get true bliss. We cannot go on searching for such a bliss at all places. If we do this, it will be like going to a fish market in search of diamonds. We can find only fish in a fish market and not diamonds. Since this world is temporary and all life in it is uncertain, we cannot find permanent happiness in this world.

One student went to an astrologer and asked him about his future. The astrologer said that the line of education in the

boy's hand was quite big and strong. The student felt very exhilarated and lost himself in that happiness. After some time, the astrologer said that the student will acquire a very high reputation in his life. The student was even more happy at this. The astrologer later said that he would earn a lot of money and become very rich. After some time, the astrologer said that everything was fine but that he would have a very short span of life. The student was very worried because there was no meaning in having everything but only a short life span. We may have a lot of wealth, a lot of influence and power; but if we do not have the awareness of *Atma* close to us, it is as good as having a short span of life. The *gopikas* recognised this need for getting permanent happiness. We must also recognise that we can get permanent happiness only from permanent things.

The *gopikas* undertook to perform a special *Katyayani Vratam*, on a particular Monday in the Month of *Kartika*. We should recognise the significance of performing this sacred *Vrata*. They said, "We are not aspiring for an impermanent and illusory form. We are aspiring for attaining sacred Krishna who is the embodiment of permanent unchanging truth. Just because he is in a physical form, we will not be deceived into believing that he is impermanent. Just like the clothes that we are now wearing, God has decided to take that particular human form in this *Yuga*. The *Yugas* may change but our God will not change." The *gopikas* clearly recognised the divinity in Krishna. Depending on the age of the individual, he is described as being in his childhood, youth, adolescence, or old age. However, for Krishna it is always childhood or youth. This was beyond all human comprehension. He is immortal, and he is always full of peace, and in this way he represents eternal beauty. Although he used to be dark in complexion, his appearance was very attractive. The divinity that was present in him was responsible for this. This is not so in all human be-

ings. It is a distinctive divine quality. The *gopikas* realised that they can find true beauty in this aspect only, and so they undertook to perform this sacred *Vrata*. They wanted to get him as their *Natha* or husband. By passage of time, men by their way and nature, have forgotten the true meanings of words and accepted false meanings. We generally think that the word husband (or *Natha*) means one in the position of a husband to a wife. But, in actual fact a husband in this context means one who takes care of the person. Their feeling was that Krishna alone can bear the burden of taking care of all of them, and hence they desired him as their husband. The sixteen thousand and one hundred and eight *gopikas* treated Krishna in this manner. To think of all these *gopikas* as the wives of Krishna is not correct. For God, who is present in all living beings, who is the husband and who is the wife? All such bodily relationships cannot be ascribed to God. *Gopikas* are pure divine reflections of the *Atma*. They were people who surrendered themselves to Krishna. Sixteen thousand and one hundred eight *gopikas* were living in Dwaraka with such a feeling. Here, we should enquire whether their happiness has arisen from worldly feelings or from the permanent aspect of Krishna. In their concept, there cannot be anything in this world that is beautiful unless it is permanent and associated with the divine. They were experiencing both these aspects only in Krishna. If there is no oil in a lamp with a wick, there will not be any light. If there is no current inside the bulb, there will be no light. When there is a *pralaya* or a doom, even the sun and moon will be lost. The one *jyothi* that will never be extinguished is the *Atma Jyothi*. They believed Krishna to be the *Atma Jyothi* and through such complete faith, they prayed to Krishna.

As a result of our attachment to the body and its organs, we go on praising the beauty in the world. There was one dis-

ciple of Ramanuja. His wife had very beautiful eyes. He was constantly protecting her beautiful eyes and even when she was going to fetch water from the river, he was accompanying her with an umbrella in order to protect her eyes. This strange behaviour of the disciple was noticed by Ramanuja and he asked the disciple why he was behaving in that way. This man replied very quietly and shyly, that because his wife's eyes were very beautiful, he was protecting those eyes from the rays of the sun. Then Ramanuja asked if he were to see eyes which were more beautiful than his wife's eyes, whether he would protect those eyes with the same care. The disciple assured that he would. After Ramanuja completed his meditation, he and his disciples went to the temple of Sri Ranga. When Ramanuja started describing the eyes of the Lord, the eyes of the Lord shone beautifully and appeared exquisite and bright. The disciple saw those beautiful eyes and from that day he was enjoying their beauty. In the same manner, the *gopikas* after experiencing all the beauty in different names and forms, started experiencing the divine beauty of Krishna. Ever since then, they did not seek anything else. As things were going on like this in the year 3102 B.C. between the dates 17-18 February; at midnight Krishna gave up his mortal body. Before that, in the year 3138 B.C., Krishna crowned Dharmaraja. Between these two periods and for a total duration of 36 years Krishna enabled the *gopikas* to experience the divinity in Krishna. This was the good fortune of many other people in Dwaraka also. In our sacred texts, it has been described that the *gopikas* were very sorry and worried after the *nirvana* of Krishna, but this is not correct. It is true that the Pandavas felt Krishna's loss, but the *gopikas* considered Krishna to be eternal and immortal and never felt his absence.

Before the battle of Mahabharatha, there were several bad omens. One year before the departure of the Pandavas to

the forest, Abhimanyu was born. Together with this one year, the twelve years in the forest and the additional year during which they lived incognito, makes up fourteen years. Thus, at the time of the Mahabharatha war, Abhimanyu was fifteen years old and was playing like a child in front of Dharmaraja. When Dharmaraja was challenged to the battle, he felt somewhat hesitant because Arjuna was not with him. Then, Abhimanyu asked Dharmaraja what the problem was. Dharmaraja explained to him that a great person like Bhishma challenged him to battle. When Dharmaraja was thus worried, Abhimanyu immediately said that it is not right for them to withdraw from the battle and insisted that he will go into the fight. I am narrating this incident to you to show you how really great and courageous were those who were born in the Pandava family. Dharma-rajah said that as Arjuna was not there, Abhimanya should get his mother's approval before going to battle. Even here, Dharmaraja was showing that it is very necessary to ask for and accept the instructions of the parents. Abhimanyu went to his mother and asked for permission to go to battle. His mother addressing him said, "May blessings of the great Lord be showered on you, and may He enable you to maintain the noble family traditions. May you, by the grace of the Lord, bring victory and glory to the family." In some texts on the subject, a view has been expressed that Abhimanyu's mother felt that he was too young and was not too happy about his going to battle. This is not correct. Indeed, she was overjoyed to find the courageous son wanting to go to battle.

When Abhimanya was sixteen, Parikshith was born as a son. He was born after Abhimanyu's death. He was also about to die in the womb of the mother but was saved by Krishna. Thus, he earned the grace of Krishna even when he was in the womb of his mother. Thus Parikshith became the most important character in *Bhagavatha*. Hence, the curse of

the elders was treated as a blessing. This was because Parikshith was always thinking of Krishna whose image was imprinted in his mind. Pandavas were also great devotees who sacrificed everything they had in the thought of Krishna. Pandavas recognised not only the great strength of Krishna but also the divine aspect of Krishna. *Gopikas* were a different kind. They had complete faith in the divine aspect of Krishna and they had unwavering faith in Krishna. Theirs was a sacred, pure and selfless devotion. The *gopis* and *gopalas* are ideal examples for those living in the *Kali Yuga*. We think that the *rasa krida*—or the play of Krishna and *gopikas*—was some kind of a game involving human enjoyment, but this is not so. Indeed this is symbolic of the sacred confluence between the *jivatma* (represented by the *gopikas*) and the *Paramatma* (represented by Krishna). They had converted their hearts into Brindavan and their thoughts into sacred streams. They were formless in the aspect of divinity. One gets attached to his sensory organs if one has attachment to his body. There was no illusion in them relating to their body. The reason for this is that in their previous births in *Kritha Yuga*, they were actually *rishis*. In the *Kritha Yuga*, when they were *Rishis*, they were able to get only the *darshan* of the Lord. In the *Thretha Yuga*, they became monkeys of Rama *Avatar*. In the *Kritha Yuga*, they thus had the *darshan* only of the Lord, and in the *Thretha Yuga* they had a chance to have *Sambhashana* or conversation with him. Thereafter they prayed to God to let them have a chance to get *Sparsana*, or the touch of the Lord, as well. In order that this may be achieved, the same *rishis* of *Kritha Yuga* became monkeys in the *Thretha Yuga* and *gopikas* in the *Dwapara Yuga*.

They are also the three forms of *gunas*—*rajas*, *thamas* and *Sathwa*. Those who have the *thamo guna* will only get *Darshan* while those with *rajasik* qualities will get *sambha-*

shana or conversation. Those who have *sathwik* qualities will also have *sparsana* or touch. I will give you one small example to show the divine aspect which one can get by *sparsana* or contact with the Lord. Charcoal is dark and signifies ignorance in the form of darkness. Fire throws light or brightness and signifies knowledge. So long as the fire and the charcoal are separated from each other, the charcoal can only look at the fire but cannot get any of its brightness. However, when the charcoal is put into the fire and brought into contact, it will also become bright and will become a part of fire. Therefore, when one comes into contact with the divine form, the ignorance in his body will be removed. If we also do a little fanning, the charcoal will become fire faster and *sadhana* constitutes such a fanning. By *sadhana*, even an ignorant person can become a wise person. Realising this truth, the *gopikas* were near to Krishna and they were also dear to him. All the actions of the *gopikas* were intended to attain immortality but were not performed with any selfish motive. All the events that we read in the *Bhagavatha* must be regarded as actions performed by the *gopikas* with a pure and sacred heart. They regarded themselves as part of the Lord. They experienced the unity in all creation. We should not take these actions in a superficial manner. Their desires were completely burnt out in the thought of the divine.

If we want to experience that state of bliss, we have to reach that high state of devotion. It is said that all that is visible to our eyes does not exist in truth and will disappear in due course. That which is bound to disappear cannot give us happiness. When we acquire the worldly things, we get momentary happiness and when we are separated from them, we also get sorrow. When money and wealth come to us, we feel happy, but when they go from us, we feel unhappy. All these things are such that they bring us happiness when they come

but bring us sorrow when they go. By association, we get happiness and by dissociation we get sorrow. We should attempt to seek only the divine aspect of love because it has neither association nor dissociation. This kind of divine love has no reason. This is the natural form of divinity in man. This is, indeed, man's real wealth. One is very fortunate to get a human birth; but because we are filling such a human life with various material desires, we are filling our life with sorrow. If we have no desires, we cannot get sorrow at all; and there can be no one more happy than one who has no desires. All this sorrow is our own creation. Worry has no form at all. It is simply your own creation. The form of worry is nothing. Our own desires are responsible for our sorrow. You should keep illusory troubles at a distance and lead a happy life.

13. Pain And Pleasure Always Go Together

The tree that is born out of dust will ultimately turn into dust. The creation that is born out of Brahman will ultimately turn into Brahman. They only appear to be different, but they are not. This word of Sai tells you the path of truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

The seed that we put into dust will grow into a big tree and the big tree puts out several branches, flowers, fruits, etc. We should recognise that these branches, flowers and fruits are all coming out of dust only. However, the form of the tree and the parts of the tree will all disappear in due course, sometime or other, but the dust from which these parts have all come will remain permanently. That is the basis. In the same manner, what has come from *Brahman*, in the form of *Prajnana*, exhibits itself in so many ways. In every organ of the human being, the aspect of *Brahman* is present. However, in due course, the body will get aged, will die and disappear. This type of creation tells us that everywhere we can see and recognise the *Prajnana* aspect of *Brahman*. The *gopikas* understood that all this was indeed *mithya* or unreal. *Gopikas* were not like ordinary women. They had practised several types of *sadhana*, and they had this aspect of *Brahman* showing in them with effulgence. They were born as if they had come only to understand this aspect. The *gopikas* were ideal individuals who had been *rishis* in their previous births. They knew that if they fully understood *Brahman*, they would become identical with *Brahman*. They were establishing their unity with divinity. This has also been described by them as *madhyama*. What we cannot

see in the beginning, what we cannot see in the end, but what we can see only in the interval may be described as *madhyama*. All that we see in creation now did not exist before God brought it into existence. We would not see this world, after the catastrophe comes in. It is only in the intermediate time that we see the world as if it consists of passing clouds.

Every human being will understand this truth if he takes such a path of reasoning. We should ask if we existed before the body was born and if we would exist after the body dies. It is only in the interval between birth and death, that the human body exists. What we have said applies to all that we see in creation, including the hills, trees, animals and so on. These will all get merged with eternity in due course of time. The entire creation which is the result of our own imagination will merge with time. All matter that we see around us is subject to decadence with time. For us to recognise the divinity in human beings, each individual should recognise his nature and true form. Before you are born, who are your parents, friends, relatives and enemies? To whom does this wealth, gardens, homes and fields belong? Wherefrom have we come and where are we going? Where will we go after the body dies? Wherefrom has this body come? We do not know the address from which we have come and the address to which we go. We will be thrown into a wastepaper basket. We should realise that we have come from *Brahman* and that we will ultimately go to *Brahman*. Truly, we should make an attempt to understand the extent of ignorance in human beings. Today, it is as if we are giving up trees and flowers that give sweetness and are running after bushy shrubs in a forest. We are giving up the original object, and are running after imitations. Without enjoying the sweetness that is contained in the grapes on a grapevine, we are going after the thorns like a camel in a bush. We are becoming animals, because of such behaviour. We should make

an attempt to recognise the divinity that is contained in all human beings and reconcile this aspect with our past and future.

The *gopikas* established that the divinity of God is omnipresent. Since they were having a human form, they were wanting to enjoy and go near a divine personality in human form. When Krishna went to Madhura, the condition of the *gopikas* was such that it could not be described in ordinary words. Although they were aware of the truth that Krishna was omnipresent, because of the illusion and *maya*, they were still feeling sad that Krishna was not present in human form. On one occasion when the *gopikas* were talking amongst themselves about Krishna, a big dark-complexioned bee came amidst them and as their thoughts were only about Krishna, they felt that Krishna had come amidst them. Another *gopika* started comparing the complexion of the bee with that of Krishna. Yet another *gopika* started comparing the qualities of Krishna with the qualities of that bee. Another *gopika* decided that as Krishna was dark in complexion, the bee was in fact Krishna himself. One characteristic of the bee is that it goes to a flower and sucks away the sweet honey that is contained in the flower, without paying any attention to the flower itself. They felt that Krishna was also like that in the sense that he entered their hearts and sucked out the sweetness therein, and left them without any consideration for them. They came to the conclusion that Krishna has now come in the form of the bee in order to test them. Another *gopika* said that the bee was not a natural one because the bee had unusually coloured feelers on its mouth. They felt that if the bee was young, it should have a black colour for its feelers, while if it was old, they should be grey in colour, but this had a red colour. Another *gopika* commented that in Madhura, when Krishna was playing with a *gopika* who was wearing red kum kum, the kum kum then possibly fell on Krishna which got stuck to the bee when it

touched Krishna. Thus, they concluded that the bee has, indeed, come from Krishna. With this, all possible doubts in their minds were cleared; and they came to the definite conclusion that the bee was indeed from Krishna. The *gopikas* who were separated from Krishna felt jealous when they saw this bee. However, very quickly they thought that it was wrong to feel jealous of one who was close to the Lord, and they changed their views. They felt that the only way they could win the Lord's grace was to show love and *prema*. One *gopika* then cried out "Oh! Bee, why don't you go back and tell Krishna that he should kindly look at us at least once." Another *gopika* said, "Can you not tell Krishna to put his brightness inside my dark heart for a little while?" Another *gopika* said that her life was like a dried tree and requested the bee to convey to Krishna her prayer that he should bring back some life into it. Radha came and said, "Tell Krishna to come and see my shattered life and repair it and then wear it as a garland." The *gopikas* were giving such messages to the bee to be taken back to Krishna. The inner meaning of this is that whatever the *gopikas* saw was only in connection with Krishna. They felt that their hearts were not pure, their lives were not sacred, and they were praying to Krishna that he should make their hearts pure and take them to their destination, which is their right. It is only natural that we should want to get back to where we came from. In this created illusory universe, pain and pleasure, loss and gain, always go together. While our husbands are angry and while our mothers-in-law punish us in many ways, yet our thoughts are always with Krishna. We feel sorry for nothing other than separation from Krishna. They were demonstrating the truth that this world is a combination of pain and pleasure. Although the mother-in-law was giving them a lot of trouble, the thought and the *darshan* of Krishna would make them forget everything.

On one occasion, Bhagiratha tried to bring Ganges to the earth. Addressing Bhagiratha, she asked if he was trying to take the Ganges and get it polluted by contact with people who committed a lot of sin. Ganges felt that if many sinners, who do not know what kindness is and who suffer from ego and selfishness, come into contact with her, she will also become unsacred. Then Bhagiratha said, “Oh! Ganges, there are as many sacred and devoted people as there are sinners; and by your contact with them, their sin will be removed.” We should note here that several tributaries—some of them pure and sacred, and others not so pure and sacred—flow into the Ganges, but the purity of the Ganges is not altered. These aspects of good and bad generate from our own ideas and do not come from somewhere outside. This truth was demonstrated by the *gopikas*. They came to the conclusion that the separation that they suffer from and the sorrow they were having were only theirs and not of Krishna. When the young babies begin to cry, they take their own toe and suck it and feel happy that they are getting some juice. They do not realise that what they are enjoying is coming from within themselves. In the same manner, a dog bites a hard and dry bone and gets its gums injured. As the gums get injured, blood comes out, but the dog feels very happy sucking its own blood. The truth is that the blood has come from the dog itself and not from outside. In the same manner, the good and the bad in us come from within us and not from anywhere outside or from someone else. Because the *gopikas* had such equal-mindedness, their behaviour was exemplary. They had experienced *Brahman*. However when we read the *Bhagavatha* or the stories of the *gopikas*, we wrongly feel that they are ordinary women. They were devotees who had equal-mindedness. They had a sacred heart. They had no attachments at all. They had no ego in them. They were practising *dharma* in daily life, and their life was an ideal for others. Today, we are trying to live like the *gopikas* and *gopalas*.

Such things can only be experienced but not described. Our life is full of desires. On the day when the desires disappear, we will have a sacred heart. Jealousy and ego occupy a very important position. So long as we are filled with jealousy and ego, we cannot understand the sacred aspects of Krishna.

Today, you must develop such single-minded devotion that you think of God as the only one reality. We should not make an attempt to get the grace of God for purely selfish reasons. We must make an attempt to recognise divinity in all and God's omnipresence. Our life must be dedicated to recognise divinity in everyone and to earn the grace of the Lord.

Prema Swarupas:

Everything that is present in this world must disappear some day or the other. It is not right for us to make so much effort for the sake of this body, which is going to perish some day or the other. If we continue in this manner, it will be a blemish on human nature. Were there not several kings who ruled kingdoms on this earth and who were proud of their possessions? Where are they today? Did not Savitri, who could save her husband and get victory over *Yama*, live in this glorious land of Bharath? Did not Chandramati, who could extinguish a forest fire by her inner strength, live in this sacred land of Bharath? Did not Sita, daughter of the earth who could enter fire without any fear, live in this motherland of yours? Indeed Bharath has given birth to such great *Pavitratmas* and sacred people, but do they exist today? Harischandra was a great King who adhered to truth under all conditions. Does he exist today? King Nala ruled all the world at one time. Does he exist today? Sri Rama built a bridge over the ocean itself. Does he exist today? Thus, every human body will disappear with the passage of time. While the body lasts and lives, we must make an attempt to live a sacred life and earn the grace of the Lord. The

ideas, thoughts and actions of the *gopikas* were all dedicated to Krishna. On the other hand, the devotees of today say that they would surrender to Krishna, but what they do is to simply fulfil their desires. Such ideas will never give us the correct results that we want. You young people should set an example of ideal devotion and faith to other citizens of your country. It is very necessary to lead a pure and selfless life. You should have no ego. You will be able to acquire the grace of the Lord, only if you have sacred thoughts.

Dharmic principles form the basis of man's conduct. We are born as human beings. We are living like human beings, and yet we are behaving like animals. Our conduct and actions are worse than the conduct of animals. The place where students assemble should be a place of peace and security, but today the place where students gather becomes a fearful and insecure place. You should make an attempt to get rid of this blemish. For all these things, control of one's sensory organs is important. To enable one to control one's sensory organs, the *Bhagavatha* has taught several methods. For the past thirteen days, you have been listening to the story of *Bhagavatha*. Every item in this sacred text has been intended as an ideal example for humanity. This story has been completely filled with Love. What comes out of the totality of Love is also full of love. That which comes out of fullness and completeness must also be full and complete. From an infinite and full source, if you remove a full thing, the remainder would still be a full thing. This is what is meant by saying, "That is a full thing, this is a full thing; and if you remove a full thing from a full thing, what remains is a full thing." All of us have come from the immortal source and we are immortal. What is not immortal is the destructible body. The aspect of love, which is the embodiment of God, has been described by saying, "*Raso Vaisaha*." It has come from *Rasa* and what comes from *Rasa*

must always be strong. Simply because, we promote selfishness and weakness, it sometimes appears as weak. We are taking our sacred lives and putting them along unsacred paths. No one else is responsible for this. Each one is responsible for himself. If each one wants to correct himself, he must enter a sacred path. I am hoping that by listening to such sacred things, the students will remove the impurities that are contained in them and become strong and healthy.

14. Man Always Becomes Good Or Bad By The Company He Keeps

Western education had a tremendous influence on our conduct and culture. Our people have become decadent. All our traditions have dried up completely. People have changed their dress and other habits. They are not happy to speak to their own mothers and wives. They think that it is wrong to respect the code of conduct of their elders. This has become a fearful situation. What shall I say about the condition of Bharath? Her citizens, like the elephant which does not know its own strength, do not know the strength of their culture.

Man's life is a bed full of bugs. It is a hot bed of all diseases that flourish in the world. To feel happy and to see happiness in one's life, one has to travel a long way. Students, Boys and Girls, our sacred country Bharath, is a beautiful country full of so many languages, traditions and excellent culture. The number and variety of languages and religions that flourish in Bharath is not to be found in any other country. In order to introduce changes and reform this great country, ancient saints and *rishis* have given us the sacred *Vedas*, *Ithihasas* and *Puranas*. The true background of this country and its culture are reflected in the stories of *Bhagavatha* and *Mahabharatha*. We have been listening to the story of *Bhagavatha* for the last fourteen days. In fact, we must realise that this is the story of our great culture. Vemana said that salt and camphor look alike but they taste so differently. Brass and Gold look alike when we look at them; but when we let them fall down, the sound they produce is very different. In the same manner, when the aspect of divinity takes a human form, we

find the actions of such a form and ordinary human beings are superficially the same. Yasoda, the mother, put Krishna to sleep, and while singing a lullaby, she was immersed in that ecstasy. She tried to put Krishna to sleep for a long time; but in spite of all her attempts, he would not sleep. She was wondering why Krishna was unable to sleep, and she was even praying to the Goddess of sleep to come to her help. All actions which are selfless and sacred can be regarded as *leelas* of the Lord. After some time, she found that Krishna was sleeping; but in fact, he was pretending to be asleep. She told the servants to remain quiet. She addressed Krishna and said, “You have the entire world encompassed in you and how can anyone build a mansion for you? You shine with the effulgence of a million suns and how can anyone show any light to you? How is it possible for us to know you when you yourself contain all the creation within you? However, Yasoda was the mother, and even if Krishna was *Paramatma*, the mother’s affection will still show up. No one can understand the effects of *maya*. Foolish human beings are born in *maya*, they grow up in *maya*, and they cannot understand the aspect of *maya*. All the lives are simply the result of *maya*, the birth and death are a result of *maya*. All attachments are results of *maya* and life is full of *maya*. One can wake up, in a moment, a person who is asleep; and one who is awake need not be woken up; but how can any one wake up one who is pretending to be asleep. In a similar manner, Yasoda was addressing Krishna and saying, “How can anyone wake you up, if you are pretending to be asleep. You must stop your pretence.” The *Devas* and *Devatas* were looking at this conversation and were telling themselves that Yasoda was the most fortunate person because she was able to play with the Lord.

On another occasion, when Krishna was just getting in the middle of his sleep, she came and sang a lullaby: “I have

made the four *Vedas* as the four corners of your cradle, and I have made the nine precious stones decorate your cradle. The King of cobras is guarding you, in your cradle. This is the cradle of *Om*, and in it I have made a bed for you in the form of *Thath thwam asi*. You symbolise all the seven worlds and they are united in you. In such a cradle, you should sleep soundly.” The mother knew very well that Krishna was God almighty, and yet she was often steeped in such *maya*. Gradually, Krishna was growing up in the house of Nanda, and he had learnt to move about the house and play. The mother was, at all times, attached to him and was looking after him. On one occasion, when some *gopikas* came to his mother to enquire about his welfare, Krishna went to a mirror and was pretending to feed butter to his own image in the mirror, as if he was very innocent. The mother was greatly surprised to see how innocent Krishna was. All actions of Krishna appeared as if they were being performed by a very young innocent person, but yet they caused a great deal of surprise. Krishna used to come and ask his mother why his hair was not growing as nicely as his brother’s hair. In order to satisfy him, his mother always used to tell him that his hair would also grow nicely, if he drank a lot of milk and ate plenty of butter. After some days, he came to his mother again and asked why his hair was not growing, although he was drinking plenty of milk and eating butter. The mother gave a somewhat harsh reply to this and said, “Your brother is drinking well-boiled milk and eating butter only if he is given, but he does not steal them. You are always impatient and you snatch away the milk as soon as I milk the cows, and even before the butter is ready, you cry for butter. Your brother is very patient and quiet while you are not!” She thus admonished Krishna. From that day, Krishna determined not to ask his mother for milk, and he used to go to the neighbouring houses and ask for milk. Because he did many unusual things like killing Rakshasi Puthana, he en-

deared himself to all the people in the village, and they all used to love him. He used to be freely welcomed in any house that he went to, and from that day, the thefts also increased. The *gopikas* used to complain to Yasoda. On one day, Yasoda caught Krishna and admonished him by saying, “You do not eat what is given to you but you go to the houses of the other *gopikas* and steal butter and milk. You are a small boy and yet your entire mouth is smelling of butter and the whole village has been complaining about you.” In this manner, the *gopikas* were always complaining about Krishna. We must understand the inner meaning of the actions of Krishna. The word *Nava Neeta* means a pure heart. Pure butter here is compared to a pure heart. *Ksheera Sagara* means ocean of milk, and the *Sam-sara* is sometimes described as an ocean. Here we should interpret Krishna’s actions by saying that he steals the pure and clean hearts of people who are steeped in the ocean of *Sam-sara*. In this manner, Krishna’s actions have a deep inner meaning. On one occasion, he came crying to his mother like an ordinary child. When the mother asked why he was crying, he replied that he was unhappy because his brother Balarama was always quarrelling, and not playing properly with him. There was some kind of disagreement between Krishna and Balarama. While playing, Balarama would always ask him if he was truly the son of Yasoda, and he used to humiliate him in the presence of other children by saying that he was actually purchased by Yasoda from some other mother and that he was not truly the son of Yasoda. This used to hurt Krishna and he would always assert that he was the son of Nanda and Yasoda. Balarama would then retort and ask why Krishna was dark if he was truly the son of Nanda and Yasoda, who were of fair complexion. He used to argue that if Krishna was really the son of Nanda and Yasoda, he should also be fair. Krishna used to bring such arguments before Mother Yasoda and start crying. At this, Yasoda was deeply moved and she told Krishna

that Balarama was always jealous and hence keeps on cooking up such stories. She asserted that she was, indeed, the mother and he was the son. Here, we must notice that she did not say Krishna was her son or that she was his mother. Here, Balarama was in doubt. Friends were taking the information from here and Yasoda was accepting the authority of affection. We should see that the essential evidence based on truth coming from *dharma* or the *Vedas* has not been used. Each one has been using his own *Pramana* as the case may be. However, the main authority should be based on *Pratyaksha Pramana* involving the experience of all the senses. Krishna demonstrated to the world that only *Pratyaksha Pramana* was reliable and important.

Man always becomes good or bad by the company he keeps. If, therefore, we get into sacred company, we will also acquire sacred qualities. There is a small example for this. If we look at a snake at any place, we regard it as harmful and we try to kill it. But if the same snake is in the company of *Easwara*, we begin to worship it and respect it because of the company it keeps. The *Upanishads* have taught us that both good and bad qualities really come out of the company that we keep. If we find a rat in some corner, we immediately try to trap it and kill it. But if the same rat is seen as the *Vahana* of Vinayaka (Ganesha), we make obeisance to it. We do so because of the company it keeps. Bad qualities are also like this. If we take a big pot full of milk and add even a few drops of liquor to it, the milk itself will become bad. In similar manner, fire, which is regarded as a sacred entity, gets hammered when it is in contact with a lump of iron. Thus, by bad company we get several troubles and sorrows, and by good company we get good results. If we take a piece of iron and throw it in the dust, it will get rusted and will lose all its value. However, if the same iron is put in fire, it loses its impurities and acquires a

bright shining colour. In this way, man changes because of the company that he keeps. If dust comes in contact with wind, it will go high up although it has no wings to fly. The same dust goes down to the lowest depths when it comes into contact with water. It has no legs to go down or wings to go up. Thus the company we keep determines whether we go up or down. As we know, good company results in a calm and peaceful life. That is why elders tell us that we should keep good company. Although Balarama and Krishna have both aspects of divinity in them, one follows the path of *Jnana* while the other follows the path of *Bhakthi* or devotion. Between Balarama and Krishna both paths are demonstrated to the world. That is why there is sometimes so much contradiction in their actions. The *Jnana Marga* relates to one's wisdom while the *Bhakthi Marga* is related to one's heart.

On one occasion, Krishna wanted to give Subhadra in marriage to Arjuna but Balarama did not agree to this. The actions of Krishna are such that he shows the harmony between one's thought, word and deed. It has been said that the proper study of mankind is man, and Krishna always establishes such a harmony. He has always been addressing Arjuna as his brother-in-law, and he felt that he should not go on calling Arjuna his brother-in-law without actually making him his brother-in-law by a marriage alliance. In that context, if you simply come on a platform and address everyone as brothers and sisters, it will be a very shallow statement and will not reflect the truth. Only when you really regard one and all as brothers and sisters should you address them as such. The feeling of anxiety that you will have when your own brothers and sisters are in trouble must be reflected when anyone gets into trouble. If an unrelated person looks at your sister with some bad intentions, it will cause you a great deal of pain and unhappiness. You should feel hurt in the same manner, when

these other brothers and sisters are humiliated or insulted. Therefore, the words we utter with our mouth must also be put into practice and we should experience the same in our thoughts. The students today should strive to promote such harmony between their thought, word and deed. The *leelas* of Krishna were such that he was putting his thoughts into practice. Krishna never had any impure ideas in him. He never had any worldly thoughts in him. He had no blemish in him at all. He always had pure thoughts. Krishna is an ideal example and we should end up by becoming one with him.

15. God's Grace Can Burn Away Mountains Of Sins

As the ointment on the eyelid does not touch the eyeball: As the grease in the food does not touch the tongue: As the Lotus does not touch the mud out of which it comes: Atma, does not touch anything that surrounds it.

Prema Swarupas!

Atma is not made out of another material as the pot is made out of mud. As curd is a transformed produce of milk, *Atma* is not a transformation of anything else. *Atma* is above all organs. It does not have its origin in any of the organs. It is only with the help of *Buddhi*, which is free from *rajasic* and *thamasic gunas* that we can realise the *Atma*. The bliss of *Atma* can be experienced only through *Buddhi*. For one who has started on a journey to reach a particular village, the journey will come to an end only when the destination is reached. In the same manner, for an individual who is searching for *Atma*, the search will come to an end the moment he experiences *Atma*. For *Atma*, there is no connection with any kind of work. Sometimes, between the moon and us, clouds come and cause some obstruction. In order that these obstructing clouds may be blown away, it is necessary to have some breeze. In the same manner, between *buddhi* and *Atma*, which can be compared to the moon, some clouds come in the form of bad ideas or *gunas* and in order that we may blow them away, some *karma* or action is required. By following these actions, we can realise the aspect of the *Atma* with the help of *buddhi*.

There are two kinds of *samskara* or reform. One is based on the *gunas* and the other is based on *dosha*. The *gunas* are like giving water to a fruit-bearing tree. The second is like removing the bad qualities and is comparable to removing dust from the surface of a mirror. Looking at ourselves only after cleaning the mirror, is the special feature in the second type of reform. When there is dust on the mirror, we cannot see ourselves clearly in the mirror. Removing of the impurity is the work that is required. Giving water and manure to a fruit tree in order to get the fruit may be referred to as the *Upasana Khanda*. To regard the daily work that we do as being related to God is the aspect of *Karma Khanda*. The act of giving sacred love and *prema* to God and thereby seek him has been referred to as the *Upasana Khanda*. The process of removing the impurities from our mind and thereby seeing *Atma* with the help of *Upasana Khanda* and *Karma Khanda* is a very essential process. This creates a form for the *Atma* and gives us bliss of realisation. Such a form appears with a distinctive beauty and character. This divine beauty has no particular form and yet can attract everyone.

The *gopikas* experienced this beauty of the form and suffered when they were separated from it. In its company, they were thus in a state of great bliss. The *gopikas* demonstrated how ordinary people can take this path and enjoy the bliss related to the experience of the *Atma*. Pothana, the Telugu poet, has described this aspect of the *Avatar*. He described Krishna's face as being comparable to the moon and his eyes as being comparable to fish. His shoulders were compared to the snakes. His waist was compared to that of a lion and his feet were described as being similar to the lotus. When Krishna was thus being described, the snake, the fish, the moon, the lion and the lotus felt somewhat embarrassed. The moon wondered if there could be any comparison between him and the

effulgent face of Krishna and was ashamed by the comparison. He ran away and hid himself in the sky. The fish told themselves that there could be no comparison between them and the star-like eyes of Krishna, and with this feeling they went and hid themselves deep under water. Krishna's shoulders were soft and broad and the snakes wondered how such shoulders could be compared to them. Blushing, they went into hiding in the ant hills. The lion too thought that there could be no comparison between its waist and the beautiful waist of Krishna; and being thus embarrassed, the lion went away to live, in hiding in a forest. The lotus flowers also felt that there could be no comparison between them and the nice, soft feet of the Lord, and with such a feeling, they went under water. The same thing was described by Vyasa in a slightly different way. He said, "Two lotus flowers and two elephants were standing and playing. Between these two elephants, there was a big lion sitting. On this lion, was a big tank and in the midst of this tank, there was a big mountain. On this mountain, there was a moon; and in the moon, two fish were playing with each other. Round the moon were dark bees constantly humming around." This description of Krishna by Vyasa is similar to the one given earlier; and in this, the two feet have been described as two lotus flowers and the two hips have been described as two elephants. On these two elephants stands the lion-like waist, and on the waist there is a stomach, which can be compared to the tank, and on the tank is the mountain in the form of the chest. The moon, which is the face, is above the chest; and the bright shining eyes are the two fish playing with each other in this face. The dark curly hair is compared to the bees humming round the face. The poet looks at the hair as if the dark-complexioned bees were coming to take the honey that is contained in the smile on the Godly face. The *gopikas* looked at this beautiful form and realised that this cannot be ordinary beauty. They came to the conclusion that it can only be beauty

associated with divine bliss. However much you may search, you will not find in their actions or thoughts anything related to the aspect of *gunas* or attachments. In Krishna, who is *Paramatma*, such qualities are not to be found at all. *Paramatma* who is above the *gunas*, sometimes comes down to the level of the people with *gunas* so that he may teach them certain things.

I will give another example for this in a manner which is easily understood by all the young students. One may be a highly educated person. Yet, at the time of initiating his son into education, he will write the alphabets with his own hand for the sake of his son. At that time, we need not wonder why such a highly educated person is writing down the alphabets. In order to teach a young boy who does not know them, he has to come down to that level and do so. In a similar manner, the all-knowing and all-powerful *Paramatma* sometimes takes a human form in order to teach various aspects to the ignorant human beings. But it is not an easy thing to reach the divine Lord. For a human being, there is a deep and significant meaning here. Even for cultivating the love of an ordinary human being, you will find that you will come across several difficulties and troubles. Thus, there is no surprise, if to acquire the love of God, you meet with many difficulties and obstructions. Because of this, the *gopikas* said that they were finding a lot of trouble in the process of acquiring the love of God. The same thing has been described by Vyasa by saying that if you want the love of God; you must give up love for other things. When you give up your love for other things, it is easy to acquire the love of God and you will not find any trouble at all. When you are bound down by several other forms of love, you will meet with a lot of difficulties if you want to acquire the love of God. This process has been described as surrender. When some insects look at a bright light, they are attracted by

the brightness and even lose their lives. The deer, which are attracted by music, come close and get trapped. The bees, attracted by the honey inside a lotus, get trapped. In a similar manner, when you want the love of the Lord, you should be fully prepared to completely surrender yourself to the Lord. You should have no attachment to your body or pay any attention to your own honour or respect. You should completely detach yourselves from all these. Only then, can you get close to the Lord. Your mind should fully concentrate on the Lord. Until we rise to this high level of surrender, we should participate in divine and sacred activities like *bhajan* or *dhyana* and develop the aspect of *prema*. When you are in a state of bliss, and when your love of God fructifies and bears fruit, then his grace will be on you. The *gopikas*, underwent several troubles, passed through several births, in order to get close to the Lord and earn his grace.

We should understand to some extent the amount of agitation which the *gopikas* went through when Akrura came to take away Krishna. Akrura made Balarama and Krishna sit on a chariot and was taking them away to Kamsa. The *gopikas* felt that the name Akrura was not appropriate to him and that he was, contrary to what his name indicates, really cruel. They were wondering how he could take away their Lord causing them so much trouble.

Because of the sorrow of this separation, the *gopikas* went and caught hold of the horses and tried to prevent the wheels of the chariot from moving. Looking at the sorrowing *gopikas*, Krishna somehow wanted to please them, and he pretended to tell the charioteer that the chariot be taken back. At this, the *gopikas* were very happy and all the *gopikas* came behind the chariot. Taking advantage of this situation, Krishna softly signaled to Akrura to quickly go forward. The *gopikas*

were struggling hard and uttering loud cries, saying, “Oh! Krishna, please stay back. You are described as the protector of devotees and as the protector of the weak. You are leaving us and going away. Is this the result of all your good qualities and virtues? In spite of what others have said about us and what troubles we went through, we never stopped praying to you. Are you not merciful to us? We have surrendered to you.” With such feelings, the *gopikas* were crying and would not return to Gokulam. They were remaining without food and sleep; and in this condition, a saint came up to them and said, “You are not able to understand the real strength of love or *prema*. This is always accompanied by many troubles and sorrows. If we want to enjoy the sweetness of the juice that is contained in a fruit, we will have to remove the cover, which is bitter, and remove the seeds which are inside and which are not edible. Only then can we enjoy the real juice.” This implies that it is only when we can give up the bodily relationships that we can earn the grace of the Lord. The moral of this lesson is that those who want the love of the Lord should have to completely give up all other types of love. If we really want to get the love of the Lord, the bad thoughts that are present in us must be pushed away. You are reading a number of books and listening to a number of discourses, but you are not paying attention to the change that should be brought about in your own heart and behaviour. We are not aiming at bringing about the change that should come in either the elders who are teaching us or in the students who are listening to the discourses. One can preach a million ideals, but what is the use if any of them are not put into practice. You are listening to the stories of Krishna and the devotion of the *gopikas* but you should examine what change this has brought about in you. the *Bhagavatha* is a text which enables us to realise the connection between the individual aspect of divinity in human beings. It is only when we make an attempt to put into practice some small fraction of what we

listen to, will we be able to claim that our *sadhana* has been purposeful.

It is not as if there were no *gopikas* who had bodily attachments. Even such *gopikas* put the path of divinity at a high level and always adopted a sacred path. It was the normal practice that Krishna visited all the homes in Gokulam. He could assume any number of forms. There was, however, no scope for any misinterpretation because, at that time, Krishna was about seven years old. On the other hand, the *gopikas* were about thirty years old. The *gopikas* had no attachment to Krishna even as a brother or as a son. They regarded him as a divine incarnation. Because of this, and because Krishna had no bad thoughts at all, he used to freely enter the houses of the *gopikas*. On one occasion, Krishna went to the house of one *gopika* rather late and by that time the husband had already gone to sleep. However, as Krishna had no hesitation at all, he banged hard on the door. Only those who want to do things in a stealthy manner do things with fear, but Krishna had no such fear and so he knocked loudly on the door. The *gopikas* used to have small peep holes on the doors and their husbands or mothers-in-law would not know of these peep holes. There is an inner meaning to this, which I will give later. When Krishna was knocking at the door in that manner, that particular *gopika* had some amount of attachment to worldly matters and she replied, "Oh Krishna! Please wait for a little while. My husband has not yet slept, and I will open the door shortly." The *gopikas* knew very well that their surrender to the Lord should be done in a very quick manner and without any fuss. The devotees of today will go to the extent of even challenging God and will pass a vote of no confidence if their difficulties are not removed.

In some of the cinemas that we see, and the books that we read, Krishna is projected as having always uttered untruth to the *gopikas* and deceiving them, thereby making them subservient to his desires. In many ways, they picture Krishna as an ordinary thief without any morals. In the *Bhagavatha*, the connection between the *gopikas* and Krishna was pictured as a sacred connection between their hearts. There was no further scope for misinterpretation. They had fully merged in each other, and there was no feeling whatsoever relating to their body; and in such a case how can there be any distortion? It is the easiest way to reach God by developing the aspect of Love. In order to get rid of bad thoughts from our minds, we must make a special effort by spending some time every day in the thought of God. Out of the twenty-four hours of each day, we are wasting almost twenty-three hours and fifty-nine minutes. You should try and spend at least a few minutes everyday in the thought of God. Cotton, bales as big as a mountain, will be completely burnt out if you put a small lighted match on to them. We may have committed sins as big as mountains; but if even one small ray of the grace of the Lord falls on you, all your sins will be burnt away. Spend your life in the thought of the Lord and in the service of the Lord.

16. Radha Is An Inseparable Part Of Krishna Even As White Colour Is An Inseparable Part Of Milk

If one knows the aspects of Atma, one can enjoy bliss. If one does not know the same, he will suffer: knowledge of Brahman leads one to merge into Brahman. This word of Sai is a statement of truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Brahman alone is the truth. This is an aspect of *Atma*. Man thinks that he is an entity different from *Brahman* and gets involved in all sorts of troubles relating to his family. The life force that we see manifested in all the *jivas* is no other than *Brahman*. *Brahman* is permanent. *Brahman* is indescribable. *Brahman* is infinite. *Brahman* has the same attitude to all things around us. That it is permanent may be further expanded by stating that it has neither a beginning nor an end. Whatever is born will die, but whatever is never born has no death either. This is the first characteristic feature of *Brahman*. The second characteristic relates to the fact that it is indescribable. It is not possible for any human being to determine what it is and describe it. The third feature relates to its being infinite. All kinds of strength are present in *Brahman* to an infinite extent. Human nature, which is incapable of describing even one kind of strength, obviously cannot describe an innumerable number of types of strength. How can man, who cannot climb to the rooftop of his own house, climb to reach the heavens? How can man, who is unable to understand himself, a very limited aspect of God's creation, understand the boundless qualities of *Brahman*?

In spite of this situation, we do find occasionally that some persons feel proud of the little knowledge they have or of the trivial worldly successes they may have attained, proclaiming that God's qualities are such and such, and that God is like so and so. All the education which these persons have received deals only with the material aspects of the world. Except their ego, what other attainment of theirs gives them the right to speak about spiritual matters which do not come under the purview of their meagre knowledge? In fact, they have not the competence to speak about their own speciality. How can an individual, who has not the proficiency to expound matters which come within the sphere of what he is supposed to have learnt, speak about divinity and its sacred aspects, which relate to higher knowledge? In fact, no human being on this earth has the ability to determine and describe the nature of divinity. In fact, all the learning which a human being can acquire will be limited to any one chosen aspect of God's creation. In the context of his inability to master the same, how can he understand the innumerable aspects and manifestations of God?

One of the most striking features of *Brahman* is the ability by which, without having to take a form and without having to use a base for its manifestation, it can, even in a formless state, manifest the variety of its powers and capacities. One other feature that we should note relates to the fact that in *Brahman's* manifestations, there is nothing which we can describe as a blemish. Whatever is said, whatever is seen or done, whatever is thought of or propagated, it is all for the prosperity and the good of the people in the world. No word or action is intended for God's own good. Anything that even remotely smacks of selfishness cannot be noticed in God's thought, word or action. Whatever is uttered in the aspect of *Brahman* is truth. Whatever is done in the aspect of *Brahman* is *Dharma*. Where people accept narrow ideas and where peo-

ple conduct themselves unjustly or incorrectly, God remains only a witness to all that and has no part to play in such situations.

It is the quality of a bright lamp to shed light. In the light thus shed, many persons may be reading texts which they wish to understand. They may also perform several good deeds. They may also perform thefts in the light shed by the lamp. They may use the light as a help to themselves in doing many bad things. But, there is no great reputation which the lamp itself gains by the many scholars who benefit by reading books in the light shed by the lamp, nor is there any disrespect which the lamp acquires because of the false accounts written by people using the light or because of the thefts committed by the people under the light shed by the lamp. Whatever bad or good is done, it is not done by the lamp. In the same manner, God does not gather any praise or blemish by the good or bad done by the individuals in this world. He is only a witness to all that goes on.

The last of *Brahman's* qualities, which we should enumerate here, consists of the fact that in the entire creation, there can be found nothing which is either of the same status or parallel to *Brahman*. *Brahman* is unequalled and unique. To *Brahman*, *Brahman* is the only parallel. There is no other parallel in the entire world. Such a sacred aspect of *Brahman*, in order to do good to humanity, occasionally by its own *sankalpa*, takes a particular form and manifests itself in that form.

One of such *sankalpas* of *Brahman* is “*Ekoham Bahusyam*.” “The one and only one I am, shall be seen as if it is in many forms.” Only when we add a little curd to milk that milk gets converted into curd. The curd that we had added has also earlier come from the milk itself. We should recognise

here that the connection between milk and curd is an inextricable one. In the same manner, the capacities that are present in *Brahman* merely manifest themselves as different forms in the creation. In fact, these manifested forms are inextricably related to the unmanifested form of *Brahman*. This means that what is projected as manifested creation is only an image of *Brahman*. Creation thus manifests itself as work or *Karma*. For this, *Brahman* is the subject, object and the substance. It is the confluence of the subject, object and the act of creation that constitutes the path for man's attainment of divinity. So that creation, which originated from *Paramatma*, may go back to merge into the very source, we should accept action in the world as our duty. Action on the part of all human beings should be such that it will enable them to reach the object of creation and ultimately merge into it, "*Thath Thwam Asi*": *Thath* is *Paramatma*, *thwam* is *Prakruthi* and *asi* is devotion. The object of devotion is to bring together *Prakruthi* and *Paramatma*. However, unfortunately we do not find the aspects of *Brahman* in the created human beings around us who are the results of the *sankalpa* on the part of *Brahman*. Thus, all this creation which is a projection of *Brahman*, should be filled with the aspects of *Brahman*.

Creation, or the projection of *Brahman*, has been called *Dhara*. This *Dhara*, in order that it may ultimately merge into the creator, adopts several paths; the path of work, the path of wisdom and the path of surrender. Since all the burden of creation is being borne by *Paramatma*, the former has been called "*Bharya*" and the latter has been called "*Bharta*." The Lord who bears all the burden is called "*Bharta*" or one who bears the weight. It is the confluence of *Paramatma*, the *Purusha*; and the creation or the "*Bharya*" has been called devotion or the path of surrender. *Prakruthi* has not the strength by which to bear its own burden. In this context, the features of

Prakruthi have been given the name “*Abala*” or “one without strength.” In common parlance, this word connotes a woman. An individual who is weak and who has no strength is called “*Abala*” or a woman. Every *jiva* or every individual who is part of the created world, is in this sense a weakling or a woman. Hunger, anger, jealousy and ego are all common to men and women. Sorrow as well as pleasure are experienced in the same manner by men and women. The difference is only in name and form, but all other qualities are the same in men and women. If, therefore, we look at people from the point of view of qualities, and ignore names and forms, all are women on the earth.

On a stage, in a particular drama, several actors may put on several parts, but these parts played by the actors are not real. They are intended only for the purpose of the stage and the drama. In a girls’ college, on a stage in a drama, several parts such as a boy, an old man, a king and a queen are all put on, but in truth, all the actors are only girls. In the story, the part of a husband and the part of a wife are both played by girls. Thus, in fact, the man and the woman so appear only for the purposes of the stage; but both are women. In the same manner, the whole world is one stage and all the people are actors. They are all putting on one part or another and are acting on the stage. The only *Purusha* is God. Everyone else is a weakling or *Abala*, or a woman. This is the reason why individuals in this world are always suffering and are afflicted by one kind of sorrow or another.

In order to demonstrate to the people, the aspects which have just been described and to bring human beings into confluence with God, their creator; Krishna, who is *Paramatma*, himself, came in a human form. *Dhara*, the *Prakruthi* took the form of Radha, a position symbolising all creation. Thus, we

should regard Radha as the messenger of *Prakruthi* symbolising all that is typical in creation. She has been demonstrating many types of ideals as examples for people for the purpose of reaching the divine Lord in the form of Krishna. In all this, we should make an effort to recognise the close relationship that exists between the efforts of Radha and the responses of Krishna.

Very close to Gokulam, there used to be a place by name Vrishabhapura. Radha was living in Vrishabhapura and knew from the very beginning her being an embodiment of *Prakruthi* and her connection with *Paramatma*. Since the entire creation was only a projection of *Paramatma*, in the context of Radha signifying creation and Krishna signifying *Paramatma*, the Creator; the relationship between Radha and Krishna was one like the relationship between an object and its image. Radha, in the bodily aspect, was nine years older than Krishna. She was also a cousin sister of Nanda and thus was closely connected with Nanda. Ever since Krishna reached the home of Nanda and Yasoda, Radha's ideas began to take shape in the direction of wanting to move closer and closer to Krishna. At all times, Radha was thinking of Krishna and uttering the name of Krishna. Her daily routine was filled with work connected with Krishna. Krishna was a seven-year-old boy at that time. Every day, as soon as he got up from bed, Krishna used to take milk from his mother, walk to Vrishabhapura, and come back. The mother did not know anything about this. If the mother asked him where he went, he used to tell her that he went in search of the cows. Here, if we get a doubt whether Krishna had spoken untruth, we should remember that Krishna never spoke untruth in all his life.

To some persons amongst us, as a result of the impurities in our own minds, of the ill-conceived thoughts in us, it

may appear to be untruth but whatever Krishna spoke was always truth. When he said that he had gone in search of the cow, it was the truth. We regard the earth, according to our *Vedas*, as the cow since it yields all that man needs for his sustenance. We address them as mother earth, mother cow, mother *Veda*, and so on. In this respect, all human beings are the dear children of these three mothers. Therefore, to regard Radha, who symbolises creation, as a cow, is no untruth. In this manner, ever since Krishna was born, the thought of Radha was imprinted on his mind.

While things were going on like this, one day Radha intended to enter Brindavan to pick up some dried pieces of cow dung. She was making some attempts to enter the city and Krishna recognised that Radha was making such attempts. Since Nanda was the head of the place, a watchman was guarding the entrances at the behest of Nanda. Krishna instructed the watchman to state that only men are permitted to enter Brindavan and women are strictly prohibited from coming in. Thus, when Radha was trying to enter Brindavan on one day with her basket for collecting dried pieces of cow dung, the watchman said that no woman can enter Brindavan. Radha was utterly confused on hearing this. Smilingly, Radha asked, "Can you stay in Brindavan? If you can enter Brindavan, I can also enter." The watchman replied, "I am a man, you are a woman." Radha replied, "You are making a big mistake. In this world, Krishna is the only *Purusha*. All others are women. If you can enter, I can also enter."

In this manner, she argued with great strength and questioned the watchman by asking, "How can you call yourself a man, simply because you are wearing robes and dress appropriate to a man?" She forced her entry into Brindavan. Krishna, who was coming behind, noticed this and said that

since Radha forced her entry contrary to the orders of Krishna, and since she was a woman, she will have to pay a tax by way of penalty for disobeying his orders. Radha replied, "Oh Lord! The heart you have given me is my only property. I can return it to you by way of tax. I have neither wealth nor possessions to pay tax in any other manner. I shall gladly surrender my only belonging, namely my heart, to you." Krishna replied "Golden Radha, Brindavan has come into existence to immortalise the kind of divine relationship that exists between me as *Paramatma* and you as *Prakruthi*. Posterity will know that Krishna was always enshrined in the heart of Radha. This commitment made by me will always convey the meaning of the relationship that existed between Radha and Krishna. Where there is *Prakruthi*, there will be *Paramatma*. Where there is *Paramatma*, there will be creation. *Paramatma* and *Prakruthi* are like the object and the image. Wherever we may go, the combination and the confluence of the two aspects of Radha and Krishna will be what people can see in this world."

Students:

To regard Radha of the *Bhagavatha* as an ordinary woman, to regard Krishna as an ordinary human being, a man, and to regard the relationship between them as no more than between a man and a woman, as people generally understand, is very wrong and quite contrary to what the author of the sacred text of the *Bhagavatha* intended to convey. This relationship is the sacred relationship that exists between God and His creation. It is as inseparable as the white colour of milk is inseparable from the milk itself. The colour of the milk is white. It is not possible for us to remove the white colour from milk. If we turn milk into curds, the curd is also white. If we churn the curd and get buttermilk out of it, the buttermilk is also white. If from that buttermilk, we separate the butter, it is also white. Thus, do what you may, it is not possible to separate the

white colour of milk from the milk itself. Radha is part and parcel of Krishna even as much as white colour is part and parcel of milk. The kind of association between Radha and Krishna has no parallel in the world and cannot occur in any other instance. Today, only when we understand this and put into practice, at least to some extent, the lessons we can draw from the relationship between Radha and Krishna, will we be in a position to promote the aspects of Krishna, in their divine form, throughout the world. On the contrary, we should not regard Radha as one individual and Krishna as another individual and promote this thought based on a difference between them. This oneness of Radha and Krishna has been referred to in the bible as “Kingdom of God.” This aspect of oneness of *Prakruthi* and *Paramatma* has been referred to, in several religions, by using different words. However, to enable common people to understand the significance of Radha, our ancients have created a form and a name. But whoever, continually and at all times thinks of Krishna, is a Radha. This is an aspect and not a name. For this sacred and divine aspect of Radha, we have been ascribing several distorted meanings. Radha is no other than a faithful image of Krishna, the object. We should undertake such action as will lead us to Krishna. The Creator is Krishna. The creation is the *Prakruthi*. Action is needed to be able to cultivate divine love. As a result of the love of Krishna, we should be able to reach Him. Today, we have understood the meaning and significance of the love of Radha for Krishna. We should now be prepared to interpret all her actions against the background of such divine love.

17. At The Time Of One's Death, It Is The Body That Is Discarded

Foolish people always have their thoughts in attachment to things around them. A narrow mind can never understand what liberation or detachment means.

A person with a broad mind will never undertake to do anything bad. A human being with an animal mind will always think only of bad acts.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

If one wants to understand the aspect of divinity or to teach this aspect to others, he must have a clean mind. Any person who has not cleansed his mind will not be able to teach the aspect of divinity to others nor will he be able to understand it. You may ask if all the people who are preaching have clean minds. The reason for human beings having degraded to such depths is that people who do not have clean minds preach to others. In a dark and unclean room, scorpions, snakes and other insects can come in. If the room is clean and well lighted, there is no chance for such bad insects to come. In the same manner, in an individual who has a good and clean mind, there is no chance for qualities like lust, ego, jealousy and anger to enter or flourish. When we can compare ourselves with a standard that we may set, and accept it as a measure, we will realise how many bad qualities we have. If ignorance has to go, man must get the knowledge of *Atma*. Even if milk and soap are used to clean charcoal, it is not going to turn white. On the other hand, the milk and soap might turn black. We may ask a question, is there any chance of the charcoal becoming white and bright? It is not as if there is no chance at all of turning the

charcoal bright and white. The charcoal, when in contact with fire, will appear bright. Here we can notice the blemish that comes out of bad company, even to good people. In the same manner, if good people with good qualities like peace of mind and equanimity come into contact with bad people with bad ideas, not only can they not change the bad people, but they may also become bad and acquire bad qualities. Once your mind is not sacred enough, whatever effort you put in, it may become very difficult for you to take a good path. Truly, if man, from moment to moment, continuously goes on recognising the sacredness which is present in human nature, it will be possible for him to recognise the divinity that is present in him. As a result of good work the *gopikas* had done in their earlier lives, and as a result of the love and grace of God they had earned, they could develop such a sacred attitude. The place where they were born was a small village called Gokulam. At that time there were no comforts at all. In those days, things were such that life was very difficult. There was neither a college nor even an elementary school, and the *gopikas* were totally illiterate. Although they were not literate, they had very good knowledge about the aspects of *Atma*. Today's education is such that it all relates to the external world. It only enables you to eke out your livelihood but it does not teach you the sacred aspects of *Atma*. Fortunately, such learning and education as we have today did not exist in those days. If we examine whether the learning of today is at least enabling us to have good conduct, we will easily see the answer is no. Their life was totally along the path of truth. They pursued divinity through the path of love. Purity was the aim of their life. To understand *Atma* was the destination of their life. Such were the qualities of the *gopikas*.

For a student of today, is there any chance of acquiring at least one of these sacred qualities? The main feature of to-

day's education seems to be to acquire degrees which merely become a head load. Having acquired these degrees, you simply become a burden to the society. Does one have to undergo this education just to eke out a living? Are not the birds and animals finding ways and means to feed themselves? If we have education, it should enable us to get rid of the cycle of birth and death and enable us to understand our destination. After having acquired all types of education, a foolish person does not know who he is, and has also not given up the mean qualities that he has in him. By acquiring all this education, we only become argumentative, but not wise. By getting education, we should learn such things by which we will escape death and repeated births. The *gopikas* had that kind of good education that relieved them of this cycle of death and birth. It might appear from their conduct that they had some worldly desire, but this is not true. They were only interested in the spiritual aspects; and whatever actions they had actually indulged in, were only *leelas*. The coming together of *gopikas* and Krishna became exemplary to the world and represented the coming together of *Prakruthi* and *Purusha*. Whatever has been said or done by them appears as of a low level because of our own low thoughts, but actually, whatever they had done or said was of great significance. Students: If we stand by the side of the ocean, it will appear as if it is very big and unending, and we cannot see its boundaries. If we can go high up in a place or a suitable contrivance and look at the ocean, it will appear as if it is one big lake. In the same manner, if we elevate ourselves and see things in the proper perspective, then we will understand the true meaning of these events. However, our life is taking a peculiar turn. A life that is full of bad ideas and bad actions appears to be a false drama. In fact, all our life appears to be a false and pretentious drama. The life of the *gopikas* was indeed exemplary. In none of their actions, can one detect untruth, unjustness or unfairness. They led perfect

lives. The coming together of Krishna and the *gopikas* is regarded as one of bodily attachment because of the cinemas and dramas that we see today. The confluence of the *gopikas* and Krishna is truly divine. All actions of Krishna are truly to be treated as ideal examples. Whatever he did was intended to destroy and remove the little attachment they had to their body and life. The aspect of love in Krishna got imprinted in their minds and they got immersed in that ecstasy.

There is a small example to show this when Krishna went to visit a *gopika*. Recognising that the *gopika* was not at home, he broke the pot of milk that was hanging from the roof and spilt the milk all over the place. He also put his feet in the milk and went out of the house leaving footprints on the ground. The *gopika* came back and found the footprints of Krishna. She followed the footprints of Krishna and found where he was. Then Krishna said “If you desire to reach me, you must follow my footprints and this is the only way in which you can reach me.” Thus Krishna was showing the method or path by which the devotees can reach him. Krishna was one who showed the path of truth. On another occasion, the *gopikas* tried to go close to Krishna and they tried to find some excuse to do so. They joined together and came to Mother Yasoda with a long list of complaints. When Yasoda asked them for the cause of their visit, they all said, “Krishna came up to the terrace at midnight and tied up the hair of one *gopika* with that of another.” The inner meaning of this has to be carefully understood. The *gopikas* said that Krishna came at midnight. Here midnight means neither day nor night. The *gopikas* are in a state of half-knowledge. That is, they are neither divine nor human. To such *gopikas*, Krishna came and tied up their ignorance. On another occasion, the *gopikas* tried to make Krishna speak untruth. They complained that when the cowherd women were carrying pots of milk and curd, Krishna

came and pierced holes in those pots. They accosted mother Yasoda by saying, “Ask your son if he had not done this.” Here, also, we must understand the significance when Krishna explained by saying, “Perhaps God came and pierced the pots—I do not know.” He is indirectly saying that the one who had pierced the pots was indeed himself. Another complaint they made was, “When we were all bathing in the river, he gathered all our saris and went and sat on the top of a tree and would not come down even if we called him.” To this Krishna said, “When they were bathing, there was a big whirlwind which gathered all these saris and put them on the tree.” Here, the whirlwind has to be identified as a form of God. The basic elements of creation are earth, fire, water, air and sky; and air is one form of the divine. In truth, the *gopikas* had a very sacred heart and were always immersed in the thoughts of Krishna. Even while they were carrying pots of curd, milk or butter, they totally forgot themselves in their ecstasy, and they used to say, “Govinda, *Madhava* and Damodara.” On one occasion, Krishna stole butter. He was not available to his mother that day. Yasoda knew very well that if Krishna saw the big stick, he would not come and so she held the stick with one hand behind her back and held butter in the other hand and tried to attract Krishna by showing him the butter. Here, we must notice that Yasoda realised that Krishna will come only if he sees a pure *Chitta* or mind as exemplified by butter in this analogy. God is one who is attracted only by pure minds. The meaning of saying that he took away all the clothes is that he took away all your bodily attachments. The clothes are a cover to the body and, in reality, the body is an attachment or a cover for the *Atma* that is residing inside the same. The body is, therefore, only a dress for this life. When we say that one is dead, we mean that the body is dead and discarded. This act of Krishna’s is thus to be interpreted as saying that so long as you have attachment to your body, you cannot find the real aspect

of *Atma*. We should not be under an illusion about the importance of the body.

In the aspect of *Purusha*, there are two kinds—the individual *Purusha* and the group *Purusha*. If there is one individual, he is called *Purusha* but when there is a group of individuals, it should be described as *Prajnanam Brahma*. As an example to illustrate this, if there is one tree, we call it a tree; but if there are a large number of trees, we call the combination a forest. If there is only one tree, we do not call it a forest. In the same manner, if God is present in one human form, he is called divinity or an *Avatar*; and if he is present in the totality, he is referred to as Creation. The individual is born because of God’s wanting to be so born. On the other hand, the nameless, formless aspect of God is referred to as *Purushottama*. We should see here that if the formless aspect of *Purushottama* takes a human form, we call him *Purusha*. Having taken the form of a human being, the *Purushottama* sets an example to other living things and establishes the oneness of all creation. We should also recognise the truth that the aspect of the *Atma* can be realised only if you have a clean mind.

On another occasion, the *gopikas* went to Yasoda and told her that the kind of mischief that Krishna was doing was indescribable, and so they asked her to call him in their presence and take steps to see that he never entered their houses again. They complained by saying, “Krishna is creating trouble between husbands and wives. He comes in the night and bangs the doors; and if we open the doors, our husbands get angry; and if we do not open the doors, Krishna gets angry; and we are put to constant trouble because of such situations. It is not possible to describe all our troubles to you. A situation has arisen where we have to either forget Krishna or abandon our husbands.” Faced with these allegations, Krishna replied,

“Mother, you are a very innocent lady and so you are believing all these stories. I will give you a simple answer and you judge for yourself the truth of these stories. I have been sleeping silently in your bed, how can I go out in the nights without disturbing you? Now you can yourself see the truth.” Yasoda felt that all the complaints were false and she sent away all the *gopikas*. The meaning of this is that in order to set right the husbands of the *gopikas*, he had played all this drama. There is one small fact that we have to notice here. Krishna was actually a seven-year-old boy at that time while the *gopikas* were all much older. Under these conditions, there cannot be any chance for misunderstanding by the husbands. Such misunderstandings are simply because of the bad qualities and bad ideas which men have. Even if a wife is playing and spending too much time with their own small son, the selfish husband does not like it and attempts to stop it. This can be recognised as unsacred behaviour of men. If he gets selfish ideas and doubts, even if a mother played with her own son, will he not get doubts when she plays with other children? It is the bad quality of men to doubt everything that comes in the way of their own selfish interests. Krishna said that he was undertaking all these tasks only to purify the husbands and create a pure mind in them. The *gopikas* had very sacred minds and to doubt them is a great sin; and Krishna was a seven-year-old-boy and to have any misunderstandings about his actions with regard to the *gopikas* is an even greater sin. There is no room whatsoever for any bad interpretation here. Because the husbands didn’t fully recognise the aspect of divinity, they were having all kinds of doubts. The *gopikas* who were subjected to this kind of unnecessary blame and blemish were being protected by Krishna. In this way, Krishna propagated the aspects of an *Avathar*. We should not try to understand and interpret all actions of divinity at a human level. It is our primary duty to do such things that will make it possible for us to receive his grace. If only we can

earn his grace, everything will be sweet, in life. The Lord is full of sweetness—his vision is sweet, his speech is sweet, his actions are sweet and he himself is only an embodiment of sweetness. In a vessel filled with sweet sugar cane juice, if we put a large number of holes, we will get sweet juice only through all the holes, and it is not possible to get anything sour or bitter. In that context, *Paramatma* is full of sacred bliss and in his creation it is not possible to get anything different. We will make an effort to learn more about the devotion of the *gopikas* and the sacred aspects of Krishna in the days to follow.

18. Concentration During Meditation Can Lead You To The Lord's Vision

Belief and faith are like two eyes. If one has not got them, he will be counted as blind. Does God not exist, simply because you cannot see him? God may not exist so far as that person is concerned. But, does he not exist for us who can see him?

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Amongst the most important things which man has to acquire and experience, the first one is the grace of God. By such grace, he can acquire valuable wisdom. By acquiring such wisdom, he is also able to lead his life in a very peaceful manner. Every living individual must make an effort to recognise the performance of the divinity that he experiences. There is also a need for him to recognise the correct aspects of God. In the initial stages, it is impossible for man to pray and know the unmanifested form of God. Therefore, it is very necessary for man to begin with a form as the basis and worship. With the help of such prayers, he should go on to acquire divine strength and with such strength, he should move on to the next stage. We should make an attempt to recognise the existence of God, not only in a name, but also in the context of *sabda* or sound. We keep saying *Bhagavan*, *Bhagavan* repeatedly. It is necessary for us to understand the meaning of this word *Bhagavan*. We have been taught by our scriptures that the main significance of the word *Bhagavan* comes from the aspect of *Paramatma*. What is contained in *Brahman* and *Paramatma* is contained in this word *Bhagavan*. One meaning of the word

Bhagavan is that he is filled with all kinds of prosperity. Further, it also describes one who can and should be worshipped.

There are two other meanings for this letter “*bha*”. The two meanings are *sambharta* and *bharta*. The word “*sambharta*” means that through it, we should try and understand the origin of creation. The word “*bharta*” means that he is bearing the burden of creation and so, is called *bharta*. The letter “*ga*” refers to the fact that he is responsible for the beginning, maintenance and dissolution of creation. Hence, the letter “*ga*” comes in. There is a third meaning for the letter “*bha*.” It signifies brilliance or illumination. The letter “*ga*” in the context means the spread of this brightness or illumination. The word “*vanta*,” means that he has the capacity and ability to do such a thing. Thus the full meaning of “*Bhagavanta*” is that it refers to an aspect by which God has the capacity to spread his brightness or illumination. The sacred word *Bhagavan* has a lot of inner and significant meaning, but unfortunately we are forgetting this and using the word only as an honour or title. For us to understand this sacred meaning and the sacred aspect of divinity, an amount of introspection on our part is necessary. Then only, can we understand the nature of our mind. Mind has the characteristic feature of thinking continuously and repeatedly, over and over again.

Our mind is such that it is always thinking about things coming together and separating from each other. This is a natural quality of the mind. Without bringing thoughts together and the dissolution of such thoughts, the mind cannot exist at all. When these thoughts come in quick succession, the mind sometimes takes the wrong path. In such situations, the mind becomes very confused and unsteady. If man wants to overcome this confusion, some amount of mental rest is necessary for the mind. If man wants peace of mind, he must give rest to

his mind. Such occasional rest is necessary, not only for human beings, but also for animals, birds and even lifeless machines. If one does not get such rest, it becomes very difficult for life to exist and for man to live. If man can get this kind of rest, it will give some peace and happiness.

Mind has the quality by which it can run faster than the wind. If we want to stop a fast moving train or a car, we use a gadget called a brake. In the same manner, if we want to stop a mind that is moving freely and in an uncontrolled manner, we must use a brake in the form of concentration or *dhyana*. If man has no control over his mind, he will become a demon. If he has no control over his mind, he will become an animal. In this context, control over man's mind and sense organs are very necessary. To obtain such controls, there are three states that may work as obstacles. The first one is a state of nothingness. The second one is a state of diverse thinking. The third one, which can help, is the state of concentration. By its very nature, the mind has these three different aspects.

If we want to read a sacred text, then sleep may overtake us. On the other hand, if we want to go and participate in a sacred gathering, the mind will not permit it and even if the body goes, the Goddess of sleep, will bother you there also. This may be described as a state of nothingness. If we are reconciled to this and want to go to sleep and take rest, all kinds of disturbing ideas and thoughts keep agitating your mind and these will pull your mind into the street. This has been described as a state of diverse thinking. The more important state is the state of concentration. Only when man takes to this state and concentrates on things and forgets the other two aspects, can he be happy. It is enough, if man can learn how to live like a man. He need not become a *Madhava* and rise to the level of divinity. The aspect of concentration is particularly important for students.

Lack of ability to concentrate is responsible for so many diseases in the world. Such a disease is very rampant among the students. In the Bombay University, when a doctor examined the students, he found 89% of the students suffering from one disease or the other. In the state of Bengal, 98% of the students are sick. If we look at the students, they look nice and appear as if they are swans, but their health is rapidly deteriorating. For external appearances, the students look quite healthy but, in fact, they are not at all healthy. In many ways, they let their minds go astray and day after day, they are ruining their health. This is the reason why the quality of *thamoguna* and thinking of diverse things at one time is becoming more and more common amongst them. Today, concentration on one chosen aspect is very necessary for the students. In order to show the value of concentration to the world, the *gopikas* may be cited as excellent examples. Whatever work they did, and wherever they went, their mind was fully concentrated on Krishna. They were never allowing their minds to run in different directions. They always had full control over their minds. Today, our mind is not under our control, our organs are not under our control, our likes and dislikes are not under our control, our hunger is not under our control. As is often the case, your body is in the presence of the Lord in the temple, but your mind is thinking of the shoes that have been left outside. Thus, we concentrate on things that are of no value to all. Today, people sit in meditation, but after they sit for a very short while, the mosquitoes start bothering them and their mind turns on the mosquitoes. Alternatively, it may be an ant that moves on the back that attracts your mind. Our actions are changing accordingly. The room in which we wish to meditate is located next to the kitchen. If in the kitchen, the wife is cooking some vegetables, your mind concentrates on the vegetables and you ask yourself whether the vegetables are

frying well. We are sitting in meditation only for external appearances, but our thoughts go in various directions and are attracted by trivial things. If we do not understand the manner of acquiring *Vidya* or *avidya*, we cannot do anything well. Just as *avidya* will give lack of peace, sometimes even *Vidya*, if not understood properly, will give lack of peace. There is an example for this. If there is a knife, it can be used for cutting vegetables or doing good things and also for harming and troubling others. Although the knife is one and the same, our thoughts determine whether it is used for good or bad. In the same manner, when we use our education along the right path, it becomes a friend and it gives good results. The same education will become our enemy when we put it to improper use. In that context, the students should realise how they can use their education in the right path. As it has been said: "Slow and steady wins the race." The students should make an attempt to undertake their work in a slow and steady manner.

Thus, there are many things that we can learn from the *gopikas*. The different paths they had adopted, the words they had used, and the work they did should all be learnt by us. We should learn the quality of forbearance that they had. We should also recognise the kind of sisterly relationship that existed between them. Truly, when so many *gopikas* were trying to reach Krishna, there are bound to be differences and quarrels amongst them. There was no place for jealousy in their minds. Absence of jealousy was their characteristic feature. Today, there is a lot of jealousy even with regard to a very small matter. If a student gets a first class or a first rank, the other students feel jealous. They do not work hard and get a rank but they feel jealous when others get it. This is why in the eighth chapter of *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna cautioned Arjuna saying, "Do not become a jealous person." If one always wants to find blemish in others, one starts with the quality of jeal-

ousy. The disease gradually spreads and you will try to find fault with your own *Guru* and even with God. The quality of jealousy, once it begins, will neither have a limit nor a direction. It will flow in all directions in an uncontrolled manner. In the *gopikas*, there was no feeling of jealousy at all. If one *gopika* was suffering from separation from Krishna, all the other *gopikas* would go and console her. They used to tell her that they were all sharing her concern and separation and they thus consoled her. Even while thus consoling, they were uttering the name of Govinda, Damodara, Madhava and so on. In this manner, they were always thinking of Lord Krishna. How can any ordinary human being acquire such qualities of equal-mindedness, forbearance and absence of jealousy? The *gopikas* were such that they had done a great deal of good in their earlier lives. If we look at their capacity for concentration, it was indeed exemplary. They would never think of anything else. Even if they had seen very fearful things, they maintained perfect equanimity. It was difficult to find people, in the Gokulam, who did not blame the *gopikas*. Generally, men talk very lightly about women. There are very few men who recognise the sacredness contained in women.

On one day, a new daughter-in-law had come to Gokulam. Her name was Suguna. As soon as they saw her, all the *gopikas* were telling her how lucky she was to have come to Gokulam as a daughter-in-law as that gave her an opportunity to be close to the Lord and sing his glory. They used to tell her about Krishna whenever they met at the water tank or in the market place. In Gokulam, there was an ancient practice. Such a practice continues even now in some villages. In the veranda of a wealthy person, a lamp would be lighted every evening and all the villagers would come and light their lamps from that lamp. Nanda was not only a wealthy person, but also God Himself was born in his house in the form of Krishna. The

people of the village believed that if they lighted the lamp in that house, they will all get a share of Nanda's good fortune. Suguna, the new daughter-in-law took the wick from her house and went to Nanda's house to light the lamp. From the afternoon, she was anxiously waiting for the time to come when she could go and see the place where Krishna lived. In her mind, there were only sacred thoughts. In Suguna, such divine thoughts were unwavering. She reached Nanda's house with such thoughts. She went into the veranda and tried to light her lamp. She was looking at the interior of the house in the hope that she would see Krishna. In fact all her thoughts were focused on Krishna. When she was immersed in such thoughts, the flame spread to her hand but she knew nothing of it. She instantly saw Krishna's form in the lamp. She forgot all about herself when she was looking at Krishna's form. She became ecstatic and lost himself. Yasoda, the mother, saw this from inside and quickly dragged Suguna's hand from the flames and scolded her by saying that she should not forget herself in that manner. Although she was being scolded, Suguna's attention was directed only towards the lamp and Krishna's form. Although Yasoda was dragging Suguna away, she was going towards the lamp. Yasoda realised this situation and understood that Krishna was granting his divine vision to Suguna. She quickly came to the market place and asked several *gopikas* to come and see Suguna having Krishna's *darshan*. All the *gopikas* came running and saw this scene. For a moment, they forgot their own selves and sang ecstatically, "To our Suguna, Krishna has given his *darshan* and she lost herself in watching his form. She even burnt her own hand." Suguna's concentration was the cause for this *darshan* of the Lord. Whatever we concentrate on, it should get imprinted on our mind. The *gopikas* were experiencing such situations because of their concentration. The *gopikas* used to sleep outside the houses looking after their children; but whenever they heard the divine flute,

they used to forget everything and run in the direction of the sound. They were confident of their actions, they had the courage that whatever they did was sacred and so they did not care for what others might say. Because they had tremendous self-confidence, they were able to concentrate and think of God. We are always afraid of what the world would say and also afraid of the diversity of our own thoughts. When we do good things, there is no reason why we should be afraid of the world. Your thoughts are yours and your happiness should be yours. Many people go to a temple and put on *vibhuthi*, but they rub it off as soon as they come out, thinking that their friends will laugh at them. Why should they go to the temple when they have no courage to do it? Why is it that you are afraid to say that you have gone to a temple and that you have your own faith? Why can you not say that you have your faith and that you are not a slave to someone else's ideas? There is a great deal for us to learn from the actions of the *gopikas*. Their courage and self-confidence are indeed exemplary. It is also necessary for us to have a certain amount of self-confidence. For sorrow or for pleasure, for defeat or for victory, we should develop the courage to meet them with equanimity.

If an individual acquires some level of prosperity, so long as he lives, he keeps on feeling that the land belongs to him. After he dies, his son inherits the same land. The son feels that the land is his. If the son gets into economic difficulties and sells it away, the person who purchases it says that the land belongs to him. Here, the father claimed the land as his own; the son also claimed the land as his own, and the purchaser also claims the land as his. To whom does this land really belong? The land, looking at all this, feels that it does not belong to anyone. Individuals come and go and no one can acquire the land. The *gopikas* always felt that their thoughts were their own and that they would not follow the dictates of

others' thoughts. When we talk of women, we have the feeling that they are weak people, but this is not so. They are the embodiments of *Sakthi*. In *Bhagavad Gita* it is said that God resides in women with seven different types of strength while in a man he resides only with three such aspects. Thus, in women, divinity exists to a great extent. There is a small example for this—you should not misunderstand or misinterpret this example. For the entire country of Bharath there is a commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and under his control, there will be millions of soldiers. When the General walks in, all the soldiers will literally shiver. This General, who can be the cause of fear to so many people, when he comes home, he himself shivers in the presence of his wife. There is so much strength in a woman and the world is able to go on, because of this strength. A woman is like a field, while man is just like a seed. If we do not have a field, the seed cannot sprout. For all life on earth, woman is responsible. Great people, great saints and even great *Avatars* have come into this world because of the help given by a woman functioning as a mother. Thus, the strength of a woman is really very sacred. The *gopikas* were such that they provided lustre to the very womanhood. Whether in the matter of patience or forbearance or friendship, they showed exemplary conduct. It is wrong to regard this sacred path adopted by the *gopikas* as something trivial. This sacred devotion shown by the *gopikas* and by Radha should remain ideal examples for all time. The *Yugas* may have gone and the life styles may have changed, but the ideals of the *gopikas* and the *leelas* of Krishna have stood the test of time and they are always fresh. All these actions of *gopikas* were representative of the actions of the *jiva* with respect to *Brahman*. The inner significance of this is to say that our mind is the Brindavan and our ideas are the *gopikas*. The *Jiva* is Radha and *Atma* is Krishna. Thus, in the Brindavan of our heart, the *jiva* in the form of Radha, along with the ideas in the form of

gopikas are performing *leelas* with *Atma*. Do not be under the impression that Brindavan was somewhere and the *leelas* of Krishna were performed there. Regard your heart as Brindavan and yourself as Radha and surrender yourself to Krishna, the Lord. Your thoughts must be like the thoughts of the *gopikas*. Unsacred and impure ideas should not enter your minds. If the students shape themselves in this manner, they will be able to revive the ancient glory of this great country.

19. Education Should Promote Humility In The Educated Person

If you can eliminate one's mean desires, that will become true yoga: Giving up one's property, wife and children and going to the forest cannot become yoga. This word of Sai indicates the right path.

Prema Swarupas:

While we are steeped in illusion and darkness, man's duty is to try and come out of it and have the vision of the divine. Man is entitled to acquire *sath*, *chith* and *ananda*. Such a human being who has a right to enjoy *sath*, *chith* and *ananda* thinks that he is an ordinary person who has no right for such bliss. Man is not simply material. Matter should be subservient to man, but man cannot be subservient to matter. Man should not become part of the work around him as if he is a prisoner. By giving up mean desires and leading a sacred path, man can understand divinity. This is the proper thing for him to do. For all that goes on around us, there must be one who is the subject. All the elemental substances in the world are doing their work by the *sankalpa* of this basic cause. We have no task other than to love *Paramatma*, the very basis of all that we see around us. He is the only one whom we should truly love. The *gopals* and *gopikas* have been teaching us this lesson.

The culture of Bharath has taught the entire humanity that it is their duty to travel from untruth to truth and not from truth to untruth. It is in this context that the *Upanishads* have taught us that we should search for truth. Because man is living in the illusion of creation, he should not just think that this is all untruth, and avoid life. Just as the water bubble comes out

of the water itself, survives on the water, and ultimately gets merged in water, which is its source, so also the human nature which comes out of *Atma*, survives because of *Atma* and should ultimately merge in *Atma*. The illusions, that man suffers from, are created by man himself. They are not natural to man. Man thinks that he lives in illusion. When I hold a fragrant flower in my hand, it gives fragrance not only to myself but also to those who are in the neighbourhood. In the same manner, if I hold something in my hand which has a bad smell, that bad smell is given not only to me who holds it, but to all those who are around me. Here, we should notice that whether it is good or bad, it is only a reflection of our own mind. This is why it has been said that, “man’s mind alone is responsible for his bondage as well as for his freedom.” If we drop a stone on the surface of water, the stone will sink to the bottom as if the water has opened up for the stone. Further, as a result of the stone falling on the surface of water, there will be several waves generated. These waves will gradually spread and travel to the very shores of the lake. In the same manner, if we drop a thought in our mind, the good or bad ideas generated will spread all over our body. The thought that generates these waves in the tank of our mind may reach our hand and make it do some bad work. They may reach our eyes and make the eye see bad things. They may reach our legs and take the legs to a bad place. Depending on the nature of the thoughts, we will undertake either good or bad actions. Thus, our thoughts will lead us either to do good things or bad things. Therefore, you should attempt to accumulate good ideas and good thoughts. The individual who can make his mind free from bad thoughts will always be a liberated person. Whatever work such a person does and wherever he may go, divinity will always be with him and will see to it that he is successful. He is not interested in the fruits of the work that he undertakes. Such a person will have no thought whatsoever on the fruits of his work. He will

always think that it is his duty to do only good work. His thoughts will always be such that he will only undertake good and sacred work.

The *gopalas* and *gopikas* showed how one can introduce the aspect of divinity in all their daily activities. The *gopalas* have been seeing Krishna ever since their childhood and they could realise that he always performed things far beyond the capacity of ordinary human beings. They were worshipping him in that context. Although in their minds, they had a clear notion that Krishna was divine, but because of their bodily relationship they were sometimes thinking that Krishna was their friend and one among them. In this way, Krishna was playing with *gopalas* and *gopikas* and giving them pleasure. On one occasion, he asked Yasoda for permission to go with the other *gopalas* and with the cows when they go for grazing. The mother said that he was still a young child and that he was brought up very tenderly and she tried to dissuade him from going. He then became very stubborn and said that he would not eat his food. Recognising Krishna's adamant nature, she agreed to accept Krishna's request. However, she said that because the forest was full of snakes, thorns and scorpions, she would have special shoes prepared for Krishna in two days and that Krishna could then go.

To this, Krishna did not agree; and he said that after all, the cows and the young calves were going to the same forest without any protection on their legs and so he said that he would also go without shoes. Yasoda replied that they were cattle while Krishna was a young boy and insisted that Krishna should wear shoes. Here, Krishna had a nice opportunity to teach a good lesson. He said that it was not right to think that whatever moves on two legs is human and what moves on four legs is an animal. He started explaining the origin of the word

Pasu and that whoever has external vision only should be treated as an animal while whoever has his vision directed inward is a true human being. Whether it is an animal or human being, in form, if he has only external vision, then it is as good as being an animal. Many people are like crows. They only want to understand what is seen externally. They do not want to know what internal vision is. They are always wanting to enjoy worldly comforts, but very few are making an effort to get inner peace and consequently lead a blissful life. Krishna differed from his mother and said that these cows are better than most human beings who were behaving like animals. The animals are full of love. They have no selfishness in them and they always lead a life full of sacrifice. The milk that was really intended for the young calves is being given to the human beings for providing them with energy and nourishment. Human beings use grass and hay to feed the cattle and in return the cattle are giving sacred milk for their use. The cattle are accepting something that is useless and returning valuable milk. In contrast, human beings accept and consume good things and, in return, do bad things. We should examine carefully who really is the animal here.

If you give a small amount of food, once in a while to the animal, it will always be very attached and grateful to you. Man does not show this gratitude even if he receives something very valuable. Arguing like this, Krishna said that he must go with the cows. Realising that Krishna cannot be made to change his mind, Yasoda agreed to his going; and early next morning, she packed some rice and curds along with some pickles and gave it to Krishna as food. Krishna and the cowherd boys went into the grazing grounds and were playing and singing happily. The cows were also happily following the *gopikas* and the *gopalas*. The calves went with the cows like a child who wants to follow its mother. In this happy mood, they

did not realise where they were going. They lost their way and wandered deep into the forest. In order to feed themselves, they all stopped at the bank of a river and opened their food packets. In order to demonstrate the oneness of all the *gopals*, Krishna got all the packets opened and mixed up all the food that was contained in the packets. He made the food into as many parts as there were people. Equal portions were handed over to each of the *gopals*. They all ate the food that was apportioned with the divine hand, with great relish. We say that by the vision of the Lord, you will get rid of your sin; by talking to the Lord, you will achieve liberation and salvation. Here the *gopals* were not only able to get the vision of the Lord, but also talk to him and touch him. After eating their food, they began to play hide and seek. In this game, all the *gopals* were getting caught but Krishna was not caught at all. It is quite easy to get at each individual thief but very difficult to get at the chief of the group. Many times, you would have heard the description of the Lord as one who is a big thief of the hearts of his devotees. Such a big thief can be caught only by one who has pure and sacred love. As the *gopals* were thus playing with Krishna, even the Gods themselves were watching the game. Who can get such a fortunate experience of being able to play with the Lord. They played and played until they got tired. The *gopals* thought that Yasoda might get upset if Krishna was also tired. One of the *gopals* spread a towel and Krishna rested his head on the lap of that *gopala*. The other *gopals* were all becoming jealous. They went near Krishna and requested that each day thereafter, he should rest on the lap of each of the other cowherds. Another *gopala* came and said that equal-mindedness should not just consist of distributing food equally. He asked that even this pleasure must be given equally to all of them. In this manner, the normal time by which they used to return home had passed. The *gopals* had digested all the food they had taken. They were feeling very

hungry, and they all gathered round Krishna and told him that they were hungry. For one moment, Krishna closed his eyes and said that at a short distance away, the *Brahmins* were performing a *Yagna* and asked one of the older *gopals* to go there and fetch some food. The *gopala*, accompanied by others, went running to that place, and asked for food. The *rithwiks* were very annoyed and asked these people to go away. They refused to give them food under the pretext that they had not yet completed their offering to the Lord. They chased away the *gopals* saying that they cannot give them any food until the ceremonial offering to the Lord was made. They came running back to Krishna and told him everything and asked for guidance as to what they should do. Krishna laughed loudly and sent them again to that place. He said that the women—who knew better about the pangs of hunger—were cooking in the kitchen and they would certainly help if approached directly. The *gopals* were habituated to implicitly accept and obey the orders of Krishna. They always enjoyed doing so. The *gopals* quickly ran into the kitchen and approached the women directly.

The women in the kitchen were told by the *gopals* that Krishna had sent them to seek food. The mention of Krishna's name melted their hearts and they wanted to know more about where Krishna was and what *leelas* he was indulging in. On being told that Krishna was in a nearby place, they quickly gathered some food and went to meet Krishna. The *rithwiks* finished the rituals and as it was time to make the ceremonial offering of *prasad* to the Lord, they went into the kitchen to bring the food, but they could not find any food. They could not find even the women folk in the kitchen. When they went in search of the women, they found Krishna sitting under a tree and enjoying the food that was being given to him by the women. It is said that while women are devoted, men are only

wise. There is an inner meaning for this statement. This is why women get the right to enter the mansion where *Paramatma* lives. The men who parade their wisdom can enter and reach only up to the feet of the Lord when he is sitting on his throne. They cannot go further. Here, we should note that in order that the strength of simple and unsophisticated devotion as against the strength of wisdom may be shown to the world, Krishna had created this situation. Whenever we want to enter any sacred gathering or a temple, a woman always takes the lead. If we look at any instance in the *Bhagavatha* or *Mahabharatha*, we see that it is the woman who puts the man on the path of spirituality. The hearts of our women are traditionally very tender. That is why, in the *Bhagavad Gita* it has been said that we should not let a woman shed tears of sorrow. In a house, where the woman is made so sad that she sheds tears of sorrow, there will never be prosperity. This has been stated in the *Vedas* and the *Vedas* have placed the aspect of motherhood on a very high pedestal. When one gets hurt, one cries out "Amma" and not "Appa." Even our country is referred to as motherland. We say "Mathru Devo Bhava," "Pithru Devo Bhava" and not the other way. The mother comes first. We say Sita Rama and not Rama Sita. Similarly we say Parvathi Parameswara and not Parameswara Parvathi. In this manner, all the sacred texts like *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Vedas* have always given a high place to a woman. That is why, in a woman, *Paramatma* is found with seven types of strength and with sixteen different *kalas*. Because of this divine content in a woman, she can take the path of spirituality with ease. In order to show to the world this exemplary behaviour of women, the *gopikas* were given a prominent place. Truly, for a human being, there is no property more valuable than devotion and faith. Whatever education you may have and whatever material wealth you may have, all that will be a waste, if you do not have the Lord's grace.

Foolish people pursue impermanent and transient things of the world and forget the divine aspects. All education that you get today seems to be useful only for feeding yourselves and for eking out a livelihood. Man is only making an attempt to fill his stomach. People are living like animals without paying attention to the need for any moral conduct. For the sake of material wealth, they are prepared to sell their honour and reputation.

Students!

Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. What is the use of acquiring wealth and money. This will not help you at all. Students! you should not live like animals, like dogs and foxes. You should live a sacred life. The quality of good and correct education should be to respect elders and to be respected by your friends. Education should promote humility. Out of humility you will get deservedness and from deservedness, you will get wealth that you should use for propagating *dharma*. Out of your education, you should acquire good qualities. If education does not make you lead a good and *dharmic* life, such an educated person is worse than an animal. If you have wealth and if you use it well by helping others, then you will be a good person. Even if they are physically very strong people, they will not become complete human beings unless they are good people. They may be all the time reading *Vedas* and doing *japa*, but that will not take them to the level of true devotees. It is the sacred feeling of oneness alone that can bring people together. A human being who has no faith or belief is worse than an animal. What do we live for? What have we come here for and what do we seek? Are not the animals also eating and sleeping? Why do we acquire university degrees? Is it just for the sake of eating and sleeping? Do not be under the proud feeling that education is only for ac-

quiring degrees. Do not acquire degrees just for the sake of becoming a slave. True education is meant for giving peace to the country. Through your education, you should serve the community and make the people around you happy. If we want to do good to the society and to the people around you, it is most important that we have a sacred and devoted mind.

Pavitratma Swarupas,

Boys and girls, for the past twenty days you have been listening to the sacred text of *Bhagavatha*. I am hoping that you will be able to put into practice at least some of the things that you have learnt here and bring glory to your country

20. Non-believers Have No Direct Experience Of Divinity Nor Have They Read About It In Books

The words uttered by elders are like curd and rice. You should accept them in that spirit. If one does not do so, great harm will come to him. This word of Sai is a statement of truth.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Creation is infinite. Creation has no origin. In this infinite and boundless universe, divinity is all pervading and is therefore extraordinarily interesting. In order to know what *Purushottama* is and what his manifestations are, man has been making several attempts. Since ancient times, such investigations have been going on; and a ceaseless quest is being pursued. Some amongst them have gone through several types of *sadhana* and as a result, have succeeded in securing a vision of the *Paramatma*. Some people had to stop this quest midway, but they came to the conclusion that there was a superior power, and they suspected the existence of the divine. Although such people did not secure a direct vision of the Lord, they strengthened their belief in the existence of the Lord. There is another group of people who keep on saying, without any search or experience, that God does not exist. They habitually deny the existence of God. These three categories have been entering into arguments from time immemorial and this continues even today. Even now, we come across people who have had direct divine experience, people who had only indirect divine experience and people who have not had any experience at all. Those who have had such an experience are being described as believers, those who have had indirect experience

as *asthikas* and those who have had no experience at all as *nasthikas*, or disbelievers. However, by the pressure of *Kali*, there has come into existence a fourth category of people also. This category of people think of the Lord when they have troubles and problems and are in sorrow; but once their troubles and sorrows are overcome, they forget the Lord and even deny his existence. This category should be described as believing non-believers. One can tolerate even a non-believer but not the believing non-believer.

Those who have had direct experience of God rely on their own direct evidence of the existence of God. People who accept authority of the evidence coming from *Vedas*, *Ithihasas* and *Puranas* are described as people who accept the *Sabda Pramana*. Those who do no *sadhana* and who have no experience are the *nasthikas*. They rely for their authority on mere guess work.

The first category of people describe God as being present in the smallest thing in the world as well as in the biggest thing. It is their concept that God is present everywhere and is all-powerful. The second category believe that God comes in human form whenever there is difficulty, injustice and man's bad deeds have become too many. They believe that God responds to the needs of the people. However, then as well as now, there can be no direct proof of God's existence and no one can prove his existence or the absence of God either. If we base ourselves on the experience of the first category of people, we can have some basis on which to accept the existence of God. It is their concept that God is present as the tiniest of the tiny things and as the biggest of the big things. One may ask how we can see the tiniest of tiny particles and the biggest of big things. Air which constantly moves around us is present at all times but are we able to see the particles of air? In that

context, how can we see the tiniest among the tiny? We are not able to see even the small particles that we call atoms. How then can we see the particles smaller than that? Now let us ask if we can see God as the largest amongst the large things. The sun is much bigger than the earth and is many millions of miles away. Even if we travel at 500 miles per hour, we will still take more than 200 years to reach the sun. Also, there are millions of such suns. Everything that is at such a great distance appears as small as a tiny star. These stars are like our sun and, in some cases, even larger. They appear as if they are close to each other. The distance between one star and another star is again very large. If we take as much time as 200 years to one sun, how much time will we take to reach all the stars. Thus, we are unable to see either the tiny aspect or the large aspect of the creation itself. How then can we see God?

In this world, there are three distinct types. These correspond to *thamo guna*, *rajo guna* and *sathwa guna*. It has been said in the *Vedas* that if you want to recognise and understand the aspect of *Paramatma*, you have to cross the dark boundaries. Although the reality is only one, many people who have had direct experience thereof, have described it in several different ways. The *Vedas* say that the truth is one but people describe it differently. In our own home, the same individual is being described as father by the son, husband by the wife, son by the mother, father-in-law by the daughter-in-law and grandfather by the grandson. Because of different bodily relationships, the same individual is described by different names. In the same manner, wise people, *yogis* and persons who had experience have described God in different ways. God has no particular name or form. The *Vedas* have described God as one with a thousand heads, a thousand hands and a thousand legs. If we want to get an idea of such a God, each individual will describe him in conformity with his concept and his ideas. So

far as men are concerned, they wish to recognise God in human form. Unfortunately, with the development of science, people have come to say that we cannot consider any living person as God, and that God can exist only as a non-living entity. A body with life in it is *Shivam* and a body without life in it is *Savam*. Is it not foolish to regard a corpse or a dead body as *Shivam*? The situation today is in such a wrong mess. Godhood takes a human form with the specific task of instilling faith into and showing the path of truth to humanity.

The *Vedas* have taught us that in all this confusion, there is some peace and in that peace there is a divine light and that is God. The same thing can be expressed by saying that in *thamo guna*, there is *rajo guna* and in *rajo guna*, there is the *sathwa guna* and in the *sathwa guna*, we see God. In this manner of looking at things, true *sathwa guna* generates from *thamo guna* itself. There is one example for this. On a good mango tree, there are a number of unripe mangoes. The quality of the mango is no doubt good; but if you try to eat it when it is unripe, it will be sour. After some time, even an insect will appear within the fruit. When the mango comes to ripe stage, there will be in the fruit a certain sweetness and sourness together. When it is completely ripe, it will fully develop sweetness. Thus, although it is a good quality mango, it will taste sour in its early stages, and, in that stage, you should not discard it saying that it is sour. We should protect the same thing until it fructifies into good fruit. In the same manner, the *thamo guna* can be compared to an unripe youthful stage. In due course, it will grow and become ripe. This stage is of the *rajo guna*. It is because of this that in the stage of youth, one will find a lot of wavering. Out of such wavering, you will develop superior knowledge and wisdom. In adolescence, wavering nature and wisdom coexist. When one ripens into old age, the same qualities will ripen into *sathwik gunas*. It is not enough if

you simply attain advancing age. Along with age, good ideas, good thoughts and good feelings must also arrive. Only then, will life develop sweetness. Therefore, we should make certain efforts to promote the *sathwik* qualities even in the stage of *thamo guna*. This *sathwik* state has been referred to as *Sathya*. The first step is “*Sathyam vada*,” or speak truth. In order to reach this stage, you must undertake to perform *dharma* or “*dharmam chara*.” But today, this process has been reversed. We are only speaking of *dharma* instead of practising it, and we are preaching truth instead of speaking truth. In all the platform speeches, we utter words like *prema*, *dharma*, *sathya*, etc., like parrots; but in practice, it is *sathya* that is discarded first.

People are afraid of telling the truth. One is afraid even to know the truth about himself. If someone else points out an untruth, we make an attempt to cover up the untruth. In these circumstances, how do you speak the truth? Since we are not able to do this, we say, “*Sathyam vadha*,” i.e., kill the truth or destroy the truth. Students: truth is the most basic aspect. It is even more fundamental than the atom. The word “truth” is the basis of even the atom. We cannot see the atom, which is very small. We cannot see the universe, which is very big. But we can certainly see the truth. Truth is the foundation for everything. It is said, “*Sathyam Nasthi Paro Dharmaha*.” There is no *dharma* other than the truth. Direct your life’s journey on the sacred path towards *Parameswara*. In this journey, truth must be your vehicle. Then, you will be able to see that truth itself is God. When we talk of non-believers or believing non-believers, they follow their path only because of their ignorance. Their path is highly individualistic and has no authority. One’s own experience is the best authority in aspects relating to God. For one who has tasted a sweet, you can explain how a sweet tastes; but for one who asks you to describe the form of

sweetness, how can you do so? Your experience should arise from direct knowledge and that is the best authority. Under no circumstances can evidence from guess work or hearsay become more important than direct experience. Students must recognise this clearly.

In the word *Nastika*, there are two parts, *Na* and *astika*. Here the negative “*Na*” comes first and negates the aspect of “*asti*” or existence of the divine. In this word itself, we can see the existence of God. There is one more example. We can say that a particular form is not here, only if the form exists somewhere. If we say that this flower is not a rose, obviously a flower called a rose with a certain fragrance and form must exist somewhere. It is only because of the existence somewhere of a rose, that we can say that this flower is not a rose. Similarly, if we say this is not God, it means that there is a God somewhere and you are saying that this is not God. This is only a jugglery of words. The non-believers will say, “There is no God.” The believers will say, “God is now here.” According to the non-believer, “God is no where.” If you put “W” close to here it becomes “God is no where” and if you take “W” further away and put it close to “no,” it becomes “God is now here.”

We should never depend upon an authority which is totally based upon an individual fancy. For the citizens of Bharath, the *Vedas* have been the authority. For Christians, the Bible has been their authority while the Muslims accept the Koran as their authority. Thus, each religious group has a sacred text which is their authority. Among the citizens of Bharath, there are two groups called Saivites and Lingayats. The *Lingapurana* describes Shiva as one who has a Bull for His vehicle. The *Vishnupurana* says that Garuda is the vehicle for Ranga. While these groups quarrel like this, the Christians

say that God is like a bright shining star. Thus, each one takes the authority available to him, but amidst all this, we should see that God is indeed nothing other than basic truth. Wherever we may go, the one and only one truth takes different forms.

The *gopikas* and *gopalas* developed such faith in the omnipresence of God, and they believed that God existed everywhere and in all places. When they went to drink water from a pond, they found Krishna there. When people, out of jealousy, gave them poisoned milk, they found Krishna even there and they thought of him. If Krishna is not present in our heart, we cannot see him at all even though he is really present where we look for him. But if he is installed in our heart, then we can see him everywhere. If we wear coloured glasses, the entire world will appear coloured. If you keep blocks of salt in your mouth and eat some sugar, can you get the sweet taste? If you then say that sugar is salty, where does the fault lie? It lies in you and in the salt that is in your mouth but not in the sugar. If you are suffering from high fever and eat some sweet, you will naturally find that it is bitter. The bitterness comes from the fever that you have within you and does not belong to the sweet.

The situation today is such that people who are sitting on the bank of a river are preaching to you about the depth of the river. They have not experienced the river. In another example, it is like people giving you a lecture about good food, without actually tasting the food. Basing ourselves on the words of the blind and lame people, are we justified in attempting to cross the river? The blind man has not seen the river; the lame man has not crossed the river. The non-believers are like the lame and the blind. They have no direct experience of divinity nor have they read about it in books. They start with lack of belief as a faith and they come together

to promote this aspect. Students should recognise this truth and conduct themselves in a manner which is right. Put your faith along the path of *dharma*, accept the injunctions of the elders and give happiness and joy to the elders and to yourselves. If you accept such conduct, your life can become an example to others.

21. By Talking Too Much, We Make The Tongue Commit Four Sins

The first thing a human being has to do is to give up his bad qualities. By giving up his animal qualities, he comes closer to Pasupati. This word of Sai shows you the path of truth.

Yoga is equal-mindedness. It is the best among different kinds of work. *Pavitratma Swarupas*: In this world, man cannot experience sacredness without an equal-minded approach. It is this equal-mindedness that is the proper *sadhana* which can give man complete happiness. So long as man does not try to put into practice his equal-mindedness, his life will be in a confused state. In equal-mindedness, there are five types. The first one can be referred to as equal-mindedness relating to the world. The second is equal-mindedness of a common type. The third is equal-mindedness toward work. The fourth is equal-mindedness toward devotion and the fifth is equal-mindedness related to wisdom. Our ability, by which we can control our sensory organs, is the basis for equal-mindedness. In the daily world, just as we have hot and cold, we will also have pain and pleasure. If man can accept pain and pleasure with the same attitude, he will be able to lead a happy life. Under certain conditions, cold will give happiness and in certain other circumstances, heat will give pleasure. We see here that both heat and cold can give us happiness. Here we should note that, although the time is different and the path is different, the aspect of pleasure is common. In cold winter, warmth gives us happiness. In a hot season, cold will give us comfort. It appears that hot and cold are opposites of each other. It is not so. Each one has only an opposite character of the other. If there is no cold, we will not give such value to

heat. If we do not know what heat is, we will not give so much value to cold. In the same manner, unless there is pain, we do not enjoy pleasure. Here, sorrow takes the form of a step to happiness. It is necessary for us to recognise the truth that happiness is contained in sorrow and sorrow is contained in happiness. It will be possible for us to have an equal attitude to both when we recognise this truth. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. It is only when pain is interspersed with pleasure that we give any value to the pleasure. It is therefore necessary for us to receive pain and pleasure with an equal mind. Such equal-mindedness is referred to as equal-mindedness relating to the world. When we can develop such equal-mindedness in worldly matters, we will be able to withstand the troubles that come to us.

Then comes the equal-mindedness relating to society. Praise and blame, loss and gain, victory and defeat are not to be regarded as opposites of each other. They follow each other. We will take praise and blame. We should go into this matter and examine the same in some detail. Both blame and praise establish man's steadiness. They appear as if they are contradictory to each other, but, in fact, they are not. That which takes you to a respectable position will also bring you down. As you are being praised, blame will also grow alongside. When we go on digging a well, a heap of mud will also grow alongside. The deeper we go into the well, the higher will the accumulated mound be. The well will be described as a deep hole while the mound will be described as a heap of mud. We think that the hole, which corresponds to deep well, is blame while the heap corresponds to praise. But when we put the heap of mud into the well, it gets closed. In this context, the mud from the well and the mud in the heap are the same. Once we realise that this is, in fact, so, we will not be afraid of criticism or blame. We will develop an equal-minded attitude for

praise and blame. If there is no mound, we cannot close the well. We should recognise the important connection which established that, as the mound grows higher and higher, the well goes deeper and deeper. Some people will look at the depth of the well while others look at the height of the mound. The correct attitude will be to look at both with the same mind. Only when man can look at both these with the same attitude, will he be able to progress along the sacred path.

We will now take losses and gains. If on the one hand, we feel happy at having secured gains, we will also have to take the trouble of protecting these gains. The same amount of sorrow that we will have before securing the gains will be there after securing the gains as well. When we feel happy that we have made a profit, we will also feel sorry that the income tax people will take away a good deal of the profit. If we can develop the attitude that earning Rs. 25 only is the same as earning Rs. 100 and paying a tax of Rs. 75, we can lead a happy life. If we can develop the attitude that we neither want the gain nor the loss, we will then be able to lead a peaceful life. In the same manner, certain attitudes connected with the society, like pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, etc., will always come together. Our first task should be to recognise our duty. We should not keep thinking whether it will lead to victory or failure. It is man's duty to make an attempt; the success or failure of the attempt should be left to God. If we develop this attitude, we will not be troubled by success or failures. You are all students; you want to succeed in your examinations. You should recognise that the *sadhana* or the effort is more important than the success. More than developing the thought that you should succeed, it is important to put in your effort. You are developing the desire to secure a pass, but you are not putting in the effort that is required to pass. If you put in the right effort, you need not worry about the result. If you

put in the required effort, there can be no doubt about your success. If by some bad luck, you do not secure the pass, you need not feel sorry for it, because you have put in the effort. You must develop this stability and equal-mindedness by which you neither feel elated nor depressed. If you can have this equal attitude towards matters relating to society, either the good or the bad will not unduly worry you.

Next is the aspect of equal-mindedness relating to work. In this world, consequences like success and failure for the work you do are natural. This creation consists of coming together and separating of things. Whatever is born is destined also to die. But, today human beings want to find a reason for death; but they are not wanting to know the reason for birth. We always ask why and how one has died, but we do not ask why one is born. As we do not know the cause of one's death, we also do not know the cause of one's birth. For superficial purposes, we think that one has died because of an accident or of sickness. This is not so. For death, birth alone is responsible. If we recognise that birth is the reason for death, we will not feel sorry for death. We should, therefore, not worry about the results of the work that we undertake. We should recognise work as natural for a human being.

The next one is the equal-mindedness relating to devotion. For one who recognises that God is the basis of success or failure, gains or losses, there will be no difference between these aspects at all. In this, we should recognise the equal attitude of God himself. Once we recognise the truth that God is omnipresent and is present in everyone, then there will be no difference between one and the other. By developing such ideas, we will be able to develop equal-mindedness through devotion.

There is the equal-mindedness relating to wisdom. We should recognise that God is present everywhere and that the recognition of the oneness of God is the basis of all religion. When what really exists is only One, there is no room for any difference in attitudes. The same life force that is present in an elephant is also present in a dog or in a cow. Since this life force present in all *jivas* is one and the same, we observe that everything is an aspect of the divine. So long as you have the feeling of ownership or so long as you keep saying, "Mine, Mine, Mine," you will not have a chance to observe things other than yours. So long as you have this attitude you will be never able to understand what is not yours. On the day when you give up the idea of some things being yours, you will really understand this aspect of equanimity. You must reduce your attachment to things. Because through the body, some attachments come up, we talk of relationship. The bad qualities that are present in us are responsible for this. So long as jealousy and ego are uppermost in your mind, God will be at a distance from you. When you are able to get rid of these qualities, God will come close to you. To think that one has not gone closer to God, is only a symptom of his own ignorance. The same item can give you happiness at one time and sorrow at other times. For such changes, hatred, ego and jealousy are responsible.

On one occasion, the *gopikas* looked at the *Murali* that was in Krishna's hand and they developed some jealousy. They thought that not one of them got an opportunity to become as close to Krishna as the *Murali*, although they were playing and living with Krishna right from their childhood. Such an opportunity did not come to the *gopikas*, although they were very devoted and were all the while thinking of Krishna. They were whispering among themselves why a mere stick of a *murali* should have such a golden opportunity. To

this, one *gopika* said that this piece of stick was such that it had captured Krishna's heart and was thereby having control over Krishna. Another *gopika* said that the stick was having itself pressed by the divine hands. Another *gopika* said that the *Murali* has the greatest fortune because the divine Lord was putting his mouth on the *Murali* and they both take a common breath. Another *gopika* said that the *Murali* has become very proud because it has an opportunity to sleep on the same bed on which Krishna sleeps. In this manner, while the *gopikas* were exhibiting their jealousy while talking about the *Murali*, Radha overheard the conversation and said that they should not promote such jealousy. She said that the *Murali* was giving happiness and bliss to many people. This great good fortune has come the way of *Murali*, because it has done so much good to others. The music that emanates from the *Murali* has gladdened so many hearts. Not only this, she asked them to look carefully at the *Murali*, you will see that, like us, it does not have too many desires. It is completely hollow and has no pulp in it at all. This is the reason why Krishna has accepted the *Murali* and plays with it. If we want to get so close to Krishna, we also must become hollow like the *Murali*, and we should not have any desires or thoughts. When the *gopikas* realised this, they felt sorry that they undertook to criticise the *Murali* which gave them so much happiness. They understood that they were not able to get close to the Lord because of their bad qualities. So long as such evil qualities like jealousy and ego exist in us, we cannot get close to the Lord. The *gopikas* prayed to the Lord by saying, "Oh Krishna, sing a song, speak with your beautiful voice to the hearts' content of your devotees. Extract the quintessence of the *Nada Brahma*, and put it into your *murali*, mix it and transform it into a song. Sing a song! Oh, Krishna and please your devotees. Oh, *Murali*, what a fortunate being you are, being so close to the Lord." The *gopikas* who heard Radha, felt very repentant and addressed

the *Murali* in a very apologetic manner. They were, thereafter, training their minds to go close to the heights of surrender to which the *Murali* had already reached.

They were telling themselves, “Oh, mind, go to the place where the Ganga and Yamuna come into confluence.” In our concept, Ganga and Yamuna meet at Prayag; but according to the *gopikas*, this represents the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna which are only symbolic names for the nerves *ida* and *pingala*. The place of their confluence is the central forehead. The centre of the forehead where Ganga and Yamuna (*Ida* and *Pingala*) mix is sacred, pure and calm. The *gopikas* have decided that this place of confluence is also the place of *Sushumna Nadi* where one can get peace. The *gopikas* sent all their thoughts to this place, and they were concentrating on Krishna. So long as this idea of difference or duality existed, the *gopikas* suffered. From the day they experienced an attitude of equal-mindedness, the *gopikas* were happy and lived a sacred life. We should also promote such equal-mindedness and not give place to mean thoughts. Such thoughts come to young students, particularly in the context of Swami not talking to them. There is nothing wrong in developing *prema* and love and desire that Swami should come to you and see you, but it is not right to develop jealousy when Swami showers grace on others. You should make an attempt to enjoy the bliss even when it has come to others. You must enjoy a state of mind by which you do not hate others. We must try not to cause hurt or blame to others. This way, you can develop a sacred mind. When you develop such a sacred mind, God’s grace will be showered on you. At that time, there will be no difference between different people at all. In your young age, taking the *gopikas* as ideal examples, you must promote the attitude of equal-mindedness.

Talking too much hurts one's mind and destroys one's memory. The first thing that you have to do is to reduce too much talk. Tell yourselves, "Oh, Tongue! you know good taste and you are a sacred organ of the human body. You should always utter good words like Govinda, Damodara and Madhava." The eye commits only one sin, that is bad vision. The ear commits only one sin, that is listening to bad things. However, the tongue commits four sins. It speaks untruth, blames others, carries tales about others and talks too much. The tongue thus commits four sins. In order to guard ourselves from the tongue committing these sins, we must make a determination to talk less. This is most important for the students. The energy that is present in you will diminish if you talk too much. It will also bring you disrepute. By talking too much, our friends will call us a bore when we approach them. Talking too much will weaken your nerves also. When your nerves become weak, you become a nervous wreck; and your tongue will also not be under control. It is because of this that our ancestors gave so much importance to silence. They observed silence over long periods of time. If the same tongue is used to talk about the Lord, it will also remain steady. However, that is the right thing to do; and if you use your tongue to talk about the Lord, it will also become sacred. To illustrate this, I will give an example. If you have a radio receiver and use it constantly, you consume 10 or 20 units of power. In that context, if the radio in us keeps on talking ever since we are born, imagine how much power is spent. We see, that to the extent we minimise our talking, we promote the intelligence that is present in us. I am hoping that by following such a path, you will be able to take your life along the sacred path.

22. The Noblest Quality Of Womanhood Is Compassion

Nowadays, the desires in us are on the excessive side. Anger increases such desires further. People who harbour desires and anger will only come to grief. What greater truth can I convey to you, good people, who are gathered here.

The place was the banks of river Yamuna. The atmosphere was peaceful and beautiful. One could hear the singing of the *murali* in the cool air. Radha entered the sand dunes with a pot in her hand. Having placed the pot on the ground, she began listening to the enchanting soft music of the *murali* and she stood stiff as a stick shedding tears of sorrow. After some time, she heard someone calling, “Radha, Radha.” Instantly she opened her eyes and looked all around. It was a place where there were no other human beings. She then sat down and told herself that there may be places where there are no human beings, but there can be no place where Krishna was not present. She decided that the call was from Krishna. She proclaimed, “What I could play; I have played, what I could sing; I have sung. From time immemorial, I undertook to play different parts, I had participated in different acts and now it is enough. I wore clothes that may be described as anger and desire. I also wore jewels that may be described as attachments and *moha*. I wore anklets that may be described as greed. I heard about the blame and blemish that came because of this. My mind also supported my actions and provided the background music to my drama. What may be described as company of some bad people sometimes, provided the rhythm and the beat. Attachment and ego have been keeping time. With so

many ancillaries, my drama has come to an end. For some time I was performing my drama on water and at other times, I performed the same on the earth. These attachments and human foibles have been responsible for my inability to put my whole life at the lotus feet of my Lord. Like a parrot which runs to a cotton fruit thinking it to be a mango fruit and gets disappointed, I looked at these worldly desires and attractions, mistaking them for something good and wasted my life in disappointment. Krishna! It is enough, this drama of mine should now come to an end. I am requesting you to take my life and merge me in you. In earlier times, I used to take the name *Dhara*. Now, I am called Radha.” This creation has three attributes. One is its feminine nature. In the word *Stree*, there are three letters *Sa*, *Ta* and *Ra*. *Sa* signifies *sathwik guna* and *Ta* signifies *thamasik guna*. The third letter *Ra* is the symbol of *rajasik guna*. For a *stree*, the letter *Sa* is the first letter and the *sathwik guna* is thus the most essential. Forbearance, humility, and obedience are the three essential qualities that go with this *guna*. The next important one is the *thamo guna*. Fear, humbleness and shyness are qualities which are associated with this *guna*. Contrary to this, we see that where the *sathwik* and *thamasik gunas* should be present, features like courage, independence and the desire to take decisions freely are appearing. These features are to be found in some women and are becoming more pronounced in the *Kali Yuga*. In fact the *Kali Yuga* was just beginning at that time. She said that when the qualities of courage, freedom and independence of action are beginning to be seen in women, she would not like to continue living. Whereas for men, there is only one home, a woman has two homes. It is the duty of women to bring reputation to the house in which they are born and to hold high the honour of the homes into which they go. But the reputations of both the houses are being brought down to some extent because of independence of action among women. Krishna: it is unusual to

refer to a woman as ‘*abala*’ or a weak person. This should not be interpreted by saying that she is always subservient to a man. It should not mean that she is supreme only in the kitchen. The reputation of the entire home and even a whole nation depends on the women. However, in the background of the culture of Bharath, women have a specified place in certain rituals and in the giving away of some ceremonial gifts and it is in this background that they are referred to as being ‘*abala*.’ When Harischandara was giving away the kingdom, Chandramati had a role to play. While giving away gifts, the wife also should be a party to it. Otherwise, it will not be a good gift. She is therefore given a prominent place and described as Ardhangi. We will take another instance. When Ramachandra wanted to perform the *Aswamedha Yaga*, he could not do so, because Sita was not with him. They had to create a golden idol of Sita to satisfy the requirement of her presence. In that manner, whenever a *Yagna* is performed, according to tradition, the wife must also be sitting along with the husband and then only the ritual will be completed. In that context, the husband and wife are referred to as Somadeva and Somadevi respectively. Because of a situation, where such rituals cannot be undertaken by a woman alone, she has been referred to as an “*abala*”. One cannot interpret this word by saying that a woman is weak in regard to mental or physical stamina.

Here, in the aspect of womanhood, one must observe and draw attention to a great quality which may be described as compassion. The next quality that we must note is their ability to sacrifice. The makeup of a woman is such that she will give protection in spite of many faults. She can also be compared to an educational institution where she will teach patiently like a good teacher, even if the recipient is not willing to learn. She may also be described as a happy home where she is arranging everything without thinking of any discomfort for

herself. We can also think of a woman as a person of sufficient spiritual strength by which she can make Aja, Hara, Hari or God himself play like a child before her. She can also be described as one full of sacrifice and compassion. The home of the wife is the school where the husbands can learn everything. Radha said that this sacred form of womanhood was taking a very distorted route these days. She further said: "Krishna! to be near you is my greatest ambition." In this prayerful manner, holding the pot in her hand, she was rolling in ecstasy in the sand dunes.

As Radha was like this, Krishna himself was in Brindavan waiting anxiously for Radha's return. While thinking about and recollecting Radha's actions, he was recapitulating all that he had learnt from Radha. Whatever form one's ideas and thoughts take, God will respond accordingly. Since Radha had Krishna in her thoughts at all times, Krishna was also thinking of her. Just as by having continuous knowledge of the *Brahman*, one can hope to become identical with *Brahman*, so also by constantly thinking of Krishna, Radha wanted to merge in Krishna. If you keep on repeating the word Radha continuously, it becomes Dhara and similarly if you keep on saying Radha Krishna continuously it becomes Krishna-Radha.

Therefore, Radha may be transformed into Krishna and Krishna may be transformed into Radha. The nature of God is such that the thoughts with which we think of him and the ideas that we ascribe to him will determine the kind of response that he would give. God is like a clean, clear mirror. The actions that you perform will be reflected in that mirror. Radha said "Krishna! will anyone want to see the image, if the original itself is available to him? Will the beauty of an object be fully reflected in its image? Out of milk which has been broken, can we get curds?" While Radha was thinking of

Krishna in this manner, Krishna's divinity also came out in a bright and effulgent form. When this took a separate form, it left Krishna and began moving forward. In order to get back His brightness, Krishna was physically following the effulgence. Gradually, this effulgence came and merged in Radha. In the context of this *Jyothi* coming and merging in Radha, she was also described as Ahladini—a name that signifies *Ananda*. Since this bliss came out of Krishna and merged in Radha, Krishna had to come to Radha for receiving back his effulgence. God's bliss can be understood only by the devotees. God is simply a witness. His bliss and His happiness are merely for the devotees. He gives the gift or the fruit of your work, but he does not make you undertake the work. This experience of happiness is that of the devotee and not of God. If one wants to experience divine bliss, one has to clean one's own mind and like Radha, one has to print God's image in his mind. For man to recognise the glory of divinity and to realise the divinity contained in all living things, he has also got to purify his own mind and clean it. The love that is contained in man and in God are closely linked with each other in an inextricable manner. When the aspect of love in you is made to join divine love, it will become the sweetest kind of devotion to God.

While talking of devotion and faith, we should know that there are six different kinds described as *Santha Bhakthi*, *Sakhya Bhakthi*, *Dasya Bhakthi*, *Vatsalya Bhakthi*, *Anuraga Bhakthi* and *Madhura Bhakthi*. Of all these, the best is the *Madhura Bhakthi* or *Bhakthi* contained with sweetness. In all these six steps, *Madhura Bhakthi* can be regarded as the highest and the final step.

It is not possible to find a higher or better form. One can only experience the sweetness of this *Bhakthi*. It cannot be

described easily. Just as the ghee is the end product of transformation of milk, so also *Madhura Bhakthi* is the ultimate form of *Bhakthi*. This may be explained by the following example. By using a little curd as additive, you can convert milk into curd or buttermilk. If this is churned, you can get butter. This butter can be heated to form ghee. This ghee cannot be transformed into anything better. In the same manner, we can change *Santha Bhakthi* into *Dasya Bhakthi* and gradually move on to *Madhura Bhakthi* but this cannot be transformed any further. An individual who undertakes to reach a village will complete his journey as soon as he reaches the village. In the same manner, a devotee or a *sadhaka* will complete his journey as soon as, and only when, he reaches his destination. This is the form of *Poorna Prema* or the totality of love. Anything that comes out of this is also a total thing, and all that remains is also a total thing. That is full and complete. Out of that, will come something that is also full and complete. What will remain will still be full and complete. This fruit of fullness is present in the life of every individual. On the tree of every life, there is the fruit of *Madhura Bhakthi*. If you want to enjoy that fruit, you should remove the cover. The cover is in the form of attachment. Moreover, there will be several seeds in the fruit. These seeds, which are our thoughts and desires, must also be removed. Only then, can you get the sweet pulp. This sweet pulp has been referred to as *vairagya*. *Vairagya* does not mean giving up your wife and children and running away to a forest. The removal of the bad qualities in you is the true meaning of *vairagya*. If you really want to get rid of the bad qualities in you, you must make an effort. Radha's dress was her anger and desire. The word dress here refers to bodily illusions. She said that she had given up these illusions. She was wearing anklets of attachment. The sound that comes from the anklets is like a blemish. This implies that from attachment, we only get blame and blemish. She also said that she was wearing a garland

made of sensory organs. This signifies that she had given up the desires coming from sensory organs. She said that because of this, she had transformed herself into Radha and made herself like a ready-made juice. That is, the seed and pulp, the cover and such useless things have all separated out of their own accord. The reason for this is God's sacred love. Having obtained the sacred love of God, she is not concerned with the love to other persons. She prayed that her movements should merge in Krishna. You will listen to the aspect of her merger in the following days.

23. The Creator And His Act Of Creation Go On Forever

The tongue moves with great agility between the sharp teeth without being hurt. Man also should conduct himself with the same agility in this world. This word of Sai is a statement of truth.

What is seen by your eyes, what moves your mind, what awakens your body and what shapes your entire life is the creation around you. Gopala is well versed in tending the cows and looking after the cows. He can give amply. He can play and make you sing. He can move and move others. He can protect you and make you happy. This is the aspect of *gopala*. The word “*Govu*” is a Telugu word meaning the cow, and it means several other things as well. It means earth, sensory organs, heaven, speech, etc. For one aspect of cow, the aspect of mother earth is comparable. Our traditions and the *Puranas* tell us that earth has taken the form of the cow. Gopala recognised the position of Radha, who was determined to end her life on the sand dunes, and came to see her. For both *Paramatma* and His creation, there is neither a beginning nor an end. The act of creation and the creator are permanent and they go on forever. Conditions may change, times may change but divinity will never change—creator and act of creation are permanent. One aspect of the *Paramatma* is to look after the cows, protect them and ultimately have them merge in him. However, we should see the significant inner meaning of the “cows” here. Reference to mother earth is the same as a reference to the cow. Reference to the “cows” is the same as reference to sensory organs.

“Oh, Krishna! These cows are mischievous and naughty. I am waiting to hand them over to you. Today, if you agree to let my cows go and merge with you, I will be very happy.” Radha prayed to Krishna that he take her cows under his protection and give her relief. The cow has the bad habit of destroying even the best harvest of the field, in the form of *Vedas*. “In my offering this cow to you, there may be a doubt as to how you will feed this cow. I will give the feed for the cow also. I am hoping that by association with you, the bad qualities in the cow will be removed.”

We should examine and understand the inner meaning of what Radha meant when making this request. When she talks of her cows, she means her senses which have been troubling her in many ways. There is neither a chosen place nor a chosen time for such trouble. These sensory organs do not submit themselves to the effects of changing times or of changing environment. She was troubled greatly by her sensory organs. She prays “Krishna, you are Gopala and you have created these sensory organs. You alone have the mastery over these organs. That is why in *Bhagavad Gita* you have been given the name Gudakesa. The word Gudakesa means one who stands in the position of the head of the organs. The letter “Go” also means *indriyas* or organs. By requesting Krishna to look after the organs, she was surrendering to Krishna her ability to use the organs independently. She said that her ego and attachment will form good food for the cows, by which she means her sensory organs. This food will be eaten with great relish by the cows, as if it were green grass. It has always been known that the organs survive and are fed by ego and attachment. If we find that man is letting his sensory organs function without any control, his ego and attachment are responsible for this. Here we see that Radha who is in the form of *Dhara* is in the state of giving up her ego and attachment completely. In

this drama which was being played, Krishna was using Radha as an instrument to tell the people of the entire earth about this aspect of the organs. The entire creation is merely an image of Radha. Although we may notice some defects in the image because of distortions, the object itself will never have distortions, and it will try to attain perfection. In order to teach wisdom to the people at large, Krishna took Arjuna as an instrument. Just as Arjuna was an instrument in that case, Radha was a suitable instrument in this case. Through Radha, he was teaching people about the sacred aspects of devotion. It is very wrong for us to think that Radha is an ordinary woman and that Krishna is an ordinary man and whatever has been demonstrated to us to be the ordinary human connection between man and woman. Krishna used to address Arjuna as Partha. The word Partha means son of mother earth, and anyone who is a son of mother earth can be addressed by this name. *Bhagavad Gita* is not a gift that was given only to Partha or Arjuna. The contents of *Bhagavad Gita* are intended for all living beings. This will create a connection between all human beings. In the same manner, Krishna took Radha as an instrument to teach people about various aspects of devotion. In that context, when you can surrender your actions and thoughts to Krishna, you will have reached the stage of Radha. The word Radha does not, therefore, refer only to a woman. We should understand that anyone who surrenders himself to Krishna will become Radha. Krishna taught us in the *Gita* that he will protect all people, who belong to all religions, if they seek him. Radha teaches us that not only should you fill your head with knowledge and wisdom, but you should fill your heart also with intense love. She teaches us that it is better to fill your heart also with love rather than your head with knowledge. Radha is telling us that we should find diversity in divinity, which is really universal. Radha is telling us that we should surrender our sensory organs to Krishna. Otherwise, they will take you

along the wrong path. Radha is telling us that we should not believe in the transient and impermanent world. We should fix our attention on the permanent aspect of the Lord. She has been telling us that we should not believe in the world, should not fear death and should not forget God. Radha is one who has given these three main injunctions. Radha is telling us that we should, at all times, and in all the *gunas*, enjoy the bliss of the Lord. Radha is telling us that we should get rid of jealousy, particularly when we see others prosper. Radha was one who cleared the suspicions of the other *gopikas* and made them give up jealousy.

Divya Atma Swarupas:

You should make an attempt to promote the divinity that is present in you and bring it up and enjoy that bliss. You should make an attempt to elevate yourself and should not allow yourself to slip down. One can also prove that one's own experience with regard to the *Atma* is the most important. You have been told that the most important thing is God, and the material aspects come only next. But in reality, this is not quite so. God is the most important and next comes the aspect of "I," and then comes the third and last stage, namely the world. But today this has become topsy-turvy. The most important thing is the material aspect, and God is treated as the least important. The divinity in us will get exalted only in certain conditions. It is important to realise how this divine aspect in Radha was trying to reach out to others and proclaim Krishna to them. You have been listening to these sacred things day after day, and I hope that you will be able to turn over in your mind, what you have listened to, and attempt to put, at least, some of them into daily practice.

24. Krishna Was An Infinite Ocean: Gopikas Were Small Tributaries Merging In The Ocean

Happiness is generated where there is total love. Truth, sacrifice and peace will be associated with such a place. There is no safety for anyone without love. This word of Sai shows you the path of love.

Gopala left *gopis* and the Gokula and reached Madhura. The whole of Gokula was suffering from the pangs of separation. The *gopikas* who had experienced the taste of divine company did not want to have any other experience. The *gopikas* were anxiously waiting for the return of Gopala. Every day, the *gopikas* were looking at the path along which Gopala might return. They were waiting to have his vision. Madhava, who knew the minds of the *gopikas*, sent his friend Uddhava to console them. Nobody knew when Uddhava reached Gokula. As the day was dawning, they found a huge chariot in front of Nanda's palace. The *gopikas* were overjoyed because they thought that their Lord knew of their sorrow and came to console them. In a moment, the news of the arrival of the chariot spread throughout Gokula. Unable to control their happiness, the *gopikas* came in groups to Nanda's house. As soon as they came there, they realised that Krishna had not come, but sent a messenger to console them. Sinking in disappointment, they fell on the ground. At that time, Uddhava came out and wanted to give them news of Krishna. Since the *gopikas* had totally surrendered themselves to Krishna, they were not in the habit of looking at or talking to a stranger. Their minds did not agree to a direct conversation with Uddhava. They took a bee as an intermediary and they talked to Uddhava through the bee. The word *Bhramara* is a Sanskrit word for bee and this episode is known as *Bhramara Gita*. Uddhava tried to explain to the

gopikas that Krishna is God himself and that he has no qualities and that he is omnipresent. He advised them that since Krishna was omnipresent, there was no need for them to feel sorry that he was away. He told them that they should accept Krishna's presence everywhere. In fact, from the very beginning, the *gopikas* were used to worshipping the pure, clean *sathwik* form of Krishna. Having been used to worshipping a form, they could not readily agree to think of Krishna as a formless divine aspect. Addressing Uddhava through the bee, they said "Oh, Bhramara! He may be a great *Yogeswara* to the *Yogis*, but to us, he is Nanda Kisora and we want him in the form in which we know him. We do not want him in the form of a *Yogeswara*. Will it be possible to get rid of all the darkness in the world by simply bringing a message about some brilliant light? Will the poverty of a poor man disappear merely by his listening to the might of wealth? Will a hungry man's hunger be relieved only by hearing a description of the food? Will the disease of a sick man be cured if you describe the greatness of various medicines to him?" They would not talk directly to Uddhava. They were only addressing the bee. Continuing they said, "Oh, bee, by simply bringing in messages, is our sorrow going to be diminished? By looking at you and hearing your message, can we get the sweet form of Krishna? By listening to your message, our sorrow is not going to be reduced. In order that we may have the vision of the Lord, we have been spending each moment as a *Yuga*. By the pangs of separation, our hearts have become heavy and we have become weak. Under these circumstances, your message will not satisfy us." From their childhood, the *gopikas* had played with Krishna and had experienced his divinity. They will never be satisfied with a message, and they can never accept the suggestion to think of Krishna as a formless entity. So, they said, "Oh, Bee, keep your message to yourself. We need Gopala, but not the message. Do what you may, bring Gopala

to us and show him to us. We heard that you are a friend of Gopala. We also heard that Krishna will readily accept a friend's advice. Please go back to Madhura and make efforts to bring Krishna to Gokula. Reduce our suffering and help us." Another *gopika* took up the conversation and said, "We have only one mind, and even that mind has gone with Gopala. We do not have another mind to listen to you and appreciate that aspect of formless divinity that you are preaching. If we had more minds than one, we would have gladly listened to you, but now it is not possible for us to listen at all. Since we have no other mind, there is no chance of our listening to your preaching. So, please return to Madhura." To this, Uddhava said, "*Gopikas*, do not be in a hurry. At least, listen to the message that God has sent, read the note that I have brought and send a reply." The *gopikas* then said, "Gokulam is a small village, there are no big schools here. We are illiterate and cannot read the note. We do not have the ability of reading Krishna's message. We are not the type who will be satisfied with a message or a letter. For one who is used to enjoying what is immortal, a letter does not mean anything." Clearly and categorically, they said that the letter is of no use to them. Another *gopika* said, "By the suffering of separation, our bodies have become hot and unbearable and it is possible that because of this heat, the letter may get burnt. Alternatively, the letter may get drenched by the tears of sorrow from our eyes. In either case, it will not be possible for us to read the letter sent by Krishna." When he heard these sacred thoughts of the *gopikas*, several ideas were sprouting in the mind of Uddhava. He was a great scholar, but he did not realise the intensity of the suffering of the *gopikas*. Within himself, he tried to understand each and every word uttered by the *gopikas* and gave it a sacred *Vedic* meaning.

The *gopikas* said that they had only one mind in this statement; Uddhava recognised that there is a high level of concentration on the object. He recognised that *gopikas* had all their minds fixed on one object. In understanding that the only mind of the *gopikas* was fixed on Krishna, he realised in it, the aspect of total surrender and became very happy. The mind of human beings has three states—state of nothingness, state of thinking of diverse things and state of concentration. It is very difficult to attain the state of concentration. It will come only after a lot of effort. Amongst the people who could reach the state of concentration, the *gopikas* were at the highest level. All the ideas of *gopikas* had no relation whatsoever with things concerning the world. Their attention was directed towards *Atma* only. Since the *gopikas* were habituated to worship a form, they had secured this easily. Uddhava recognised the ideas that were in the *gopikas*' minds and could understand their suffering. They said, "Oh, Bee! Our mind is able to picture all the mischievous things that Krishna did. Although in the superficial form, Krishna and we are different, yet, we are identical so far as our ideas are concerned. You may teach us many kinds of worship involving the formless aspect. It will not appeal to us. It is easy to preach—anyone can do so—but it is difficult to put it into practice. We have been waiting for Krishna's return." Such talk melted Uddhava's heart. He found that the physical strength of the *gopikas* was gradually sinking because they were not eating food or paying attention to their bodies. While the *gopikas* were sending messages through Uddhava, Radha was preparing to merge her life with Krishna. Radha reached the Kunjana Vana. At a lonely place, with a sacred idea of imprinting Krishna's picture in her mind, she said, "All these days, I had the form of Krishna in the lake of my mind. I have been protecting it with tears of love. In course of time, this lake began to get drier and drier. Then, I kept the form in my eyes and nurtured it with my tears. Even these tears

are now becoming scarce. In what other manner can I protect the lotus of Krishna? The time is fleeting away, and I may have to leave this body soon. A situation has come when the *Jyothi* of my life has to merge in the divine.” When she was thus thinking of Krishna with great intensity of feeling, Krishna came. She had only one last wish. She expressed this wish by saying that she wanted to hear the Lord sing on his *Murali*. While listening to the *Murali*, she gave up her life. Later, Krishna explained the inner significance of this to the Pandavas. From that day, Krishna gave up his *Murali* which was with him always, during his younger days. Krishna stopped playing on the *Murali* from the day when Radha ended her life. It is necessary for us to recognise the close connection that exists between Radha and the *Murali*. The human body in its bodily aspect has nine holes. The *Murali* also has nine holes. Radha was like a *Murali* and she had no place in her for any worldly ideas. Radha was above all worldly ideas. Such a Radha came out of the *Murali*, and she again went and merged in the *Murali*. Here *Murali* means the body. The breathing in and breathing out represents God’s *Sankalpa*. This is also termed “*Soham*” in the form of *Hamsa Gayatri*. It also gives us the ideal “I am that, I am that.” The same idea has also been described in “*Thath Thwam Asi*” or “That Art Thou.” While everyone is identical with the divine, Radha is establishing this great truth in her form. The following is a small example for this.

In a hillock, there is a rock. A sculptor goes to the rock and attempts to chisel out a figure. When he chisels a figure out of the rock, small bits of the rock fall out. It is only the sacred figure that has been carved out that will be put in the temple. Other pieces of rock will remain near the hillock. The other pieces of rock may keep saying, “We are a part of the beautiful figure that has been carved out.” This is the meaning

of “*Thath Thwam Asi.*” This means that the small pieces of rock and the beautiful idol have come from the same source. Only the sculptor gave a beautiful form to the idol and it is worshipped as being divine. The only difference between the small pieces of rock and the idol is in the form and the name.

In the same manner, although all the *Jivas* are identical with the divine, the aspect of Radha is like the beautiful chiselled form, whereas, the *gopikas* are like the small pieces of rock. Here we should recognise the great truth that the *Easwara* present in all the *Jivas* is one and the same. Just as many *jyothis* come out of one *paramjyothi*, many *jivas* come from the divine aspect. We can get a good example for this from the tradition that we follow during Deepavali. We take one single candle and with that we light a number of *jyothis*. If we do not have the candle, we cannot light so many *jyothis*. Several *jyothis* come from the same *jyothi*. In the same manner, since all *jivas* have originated from one *Brahma jyothi*, our *Sadhana* should aim at taking back the *jivas* to the *Brahma Jyothi*. However, we are forgetting the original *Brahma Jyothi* and giving importance to the secondary *jivana jyothi*. The *gopikas* recognised their origin. After having surrendered themselves to one aspect, they would not worship any other aspect. In this manner, they developed the highest form of concentration. Today, people have several minds, several offerings, several paths, several ideas and thoughts. We are living in diversity and have become distant from oneness. We remember God when we are in difficulty and once our troubles are over, we think only of the world. Shaping our lives in that manner, yet we call ourselves devotees of God. Truly, if we compare ourselves with the *gopikas* and *gopalas*, we will not find a single instance of comparison. Till the very end of their lives, they relied on the name and form of Krishna. Everyday, we are also offering ourselves, but to what? to children, to wealth and to enjoyment. In that context, we should describe our devotion as

part-time devotion. From such devotion it will not be possible to get any kind of bliss. Students, you have two ears and you can listen to two things. You have two eyes and you can use them to see two things, but you have only one tongue and you should utter only one word and use it to describe only one form. This is the real symbol of the path of truth.

If we follow this path, we can make our life an ideal example for others. Whatever be the difficulties through which they had to pass, the *gopikas* exhibited only one mind and only one objective. They took a vow that even if they live for a million years, they will not touch anyone else's feet. They said, they would wait for Krishna till eternity with their eyes looking to him. We will surrender all we have if necessary, but we will never accept any other path. By showing such determination, the *gopikas* were showing an ideal path for humanity to follow. Truly, if we look at *Bhagavatha* and interpret what is contained therein superficially, we will misunderstand it greatly. The *gopikas* were very blessed people. They led exemplary lives and were so born because of great spiritual attainments. To take such sacred individuals and compare them to ordinary human beings will be very wrong. This is the reason why even sage Suka, who had sacrificed everything, and who would not be subservient to anything, praised the devotion of the *gopikas* very much. Parikshith asked Suka if there was a possibility of the *gopikas* attaining salvation if they go along the path which they were following. He asked how the *gopikas*, who attached importance to body consciousness and worshipped a form, get salvation. To this, Suka replied, "If you completely and unwaveringly believe that Krishna is God, you will then accept a form. He is of infinite number of forms and is like an infinite ocean. You may compare *gopikas* to small tributaries or canals. They may have some aspects of attachment. But, once this small tributary gets into the ocean, will the ocean be pol-

luted or will the tributary be purified? In this context, we should cite two good examples. If in ten litres of milk, we mix ten drops of water, the result will be milk and not water. If in ten litres of water, we mix ten drops of milk, the result will be water and even the few drops of milk will lose their value. Whatever is in a large quantity will convert the smaller quantity into having its characteristics. In the same manner, God is like the infinite ocean. He is the *Ksheera Sagara*. In this way, if we take our lives with all the impurities in it and merge them in the sacred ocean, the drop will get the quality of the ocean. If the individual goes and merges himself into the infinite divine, he will also become divine. This is why it has been said, “*Brahma vid Brahmaiva bhavati.*” So, do not pay attention to the ideas and thoughts of man, but pay attention to his desire of going and merging with the divine. Those of you who make an effort to spend at least a part of your time with the thought of the divine, will surely take the sacred path. If you spend all your life in earning money and thinking of your family and your relations, what kind of help will you get from such thoughts after your death? You must make an attempt to get a peaceful death. You cannot escape death. So long as you live, if you spend your time in the pursuit of material objects, when will you think of God? That is why Suka advised Parikshith to spend the last days of his life in listening to *Bhagavatha*. The whole of *Bhagavatha* consists of methods of making man’s life sacred. For the past twenty-five days, you have been listening to the sacred *Bhagavatha*. All this will be useful if you practice at least one or two of these aspects. Students, boys and girls, you must promote the aspect of divine love. You should not promote narrow worldly type of love. You should make an effort to promote the divine total love that emanates from the depths of your heart. You should not promote love which is individual. You should get rid of narrow ideas and promote God’s love. Do not let this sacred opportunity that has come

your way slip out of your hands. You must make every effort to make good use of this opportunity.

25. Service To Man Must Be Regarded As Service To God

To set right those who have taken the wrong path and to protect the good people, Sai will be born again and again. He will be born without any pangs of birth. What other truth can I convey to you, the good people who have assembled here.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

The sacred story of Prahlada is very illuminating. The *gopals* have a pure, *sathwik* and clean mind. The *gopikas* have been used to worship a form, that is Krishna. On the other hand, Prahlada was an equally sacred person, but he was worshipping the formless aspect of God. *Bhagavatha* is a confluence of both these features—an aspect of God that has no form and no qualities, and another aspect of God which has a form and some qualities. The worship of the formless aspect of God and of God with a form constitute the essence of *Bhagavatha* and may be compared with the two eyes of a person. It is necessary for us to recognise these two aspects of God. If we ask which of the two feet is more important for us to walk, we will see that both feet are equally important. It is only when we have both feet that we can walk comfortably. Walking is meant for reaching the destination.

This is a pillow. The outer cover of this pillow is cloth and what is inside is cotton. One who worships the visible form will argue that the cotton is more important. The basis for this is that without cotton, we cannot have cloth. When we examine the inseparable connection between those two aspects, we will come to the conclusion that the cloth has a certain usage and the cotton has another type of usage. Cotton is some-

thing that is used to produce the cloth but cannot replace the cloth. So, for everyone who is in a human form, it is essential to have a form as an aspect of God, at least as a first step. It is not right for us to begin the search for God by thinking of the contents of the container, forgetting the container. This is a silver tumbler. We do not see, in this, the silver being different from the tumbler. Someone has given me the silver, and I have got a tumbler made out of the silver. If the individual asks for his silver back, it is not possible for me to say that he could take the silver and let me retain the tumbler. It is not possible, at all, to separate the silver from the tumbler. In this manner, as the silver and the tumbler are inextricably connected with each other, God with a form and God without a form are connected with each other. If we just bring a piece of silver and want to pour water into it, we cannot do so. If we take the silver and give it the shape of a tumbler, then only can we use it to contain water. Here, the form of the container can be compared to the form of God. Taking this form as the basis, we can gradually proceed to realise the nature of the contents of that container. But remember that if we want to sell the tumbler, we will not get any value for the tumbler. The value is really that of the silver that is used in making the tumbler. Therefore, when the experience of the *Atma* flows in a mortal form, only when the aspect of *Para Brahman* is mixed with this, will it get a value. The purpose of *sadhana* is to enable us to worship the divinity that is omnipresent and help us to see the divinity that is in us. What we should learn today is the path that will enable us to see the divinity that is present in every one. Prahlada was one who loves Hari and Hiranya Kashyapa was one who hated Hari. At all times, there was a difference of opinion between the father and the son. As Prahlada grew older, the father tried his best to teach his son what he considered as the correct type of education. For an individual filled with ego, jealousy and arrogance, the world around him is the most im-

portant thing. Since Hiranya Kashyapa was of this type, he used to preach that there was no God, and that he himself was God and that there was nothing worthwhile beyond his kingdom. Prahlada was very much against such teachings. He was feeling sorry that the people in the world were worshipping *Siri* (wealth) instead of Hari. He felt that without the presence of Hari, all the wealth was indeed useless. He began to preach that Hari was the base and the wealth that one gets is only incidental. Prahlada used to think that if only man can learn how to reconcile Hari with *Siri*, he can then become very blessed indeed. As he was immersed in such thought and actions, his father did not like the spiritual path on which his son was going. Therefore, he got hold of two spiritually strong teachers by name Chanda and Amarka and instructed them to see that Prahlada was put on a different path. Hiranya Kashyapa was always worshipping wealth; and Prahlada was always worshipping Hari; and between these two extremes, the mother Lilavati was suffering very much. Here, we should carefully understand the difference between human beings, demons and divine persons. When we talk of God, we should not think of him as residing at some distant place; in fact he resides in each one of you. When you think of sin, you should realise that it is not external to you and it depends on the actions that you undertake. Therefore, when we talk of demons, human beings or *Devas*, it is not as if they are resident at some far off place. As has been told in the *Gita*, this division is really based on the *Gunas* or actions and the classification of the person is determined by his qualities. In keeping with this, Hiranya Kashyapa represents the demons, Lilavati represents the humans and Prahlada represents the divine ones. Thus, in one family, the father, mother and son represent demonic, human and divine qualities. In this manner, Prahlada's actions, which originate from divinity, were being promoted day after day. Since Prahlada had the fortune of being close to Narada, the coming to-

gether of these two divine personalities brought a great deal of *ananda* to Pahlada. The two teachers, Chanda and Amarka tried to teach Pahlada that Hiranya Kashyapa was God and that his kingdom was heaven. They were also telling him that there was no one greater than his father. However, Pahlada never agreed with this kind of preaching. On the other hand, he would defy the teachers and tell them that this was not the kind of teaching that they should be imparting to young and pure minds such as his. After some time, Hiranya Kashyapa brought Pahlada and made him sit on his lap and asked him what he learnt from his *Gurus*. To this, Pahlada replied that the *Gurus* had taught him all that there was to learn about the important aspects of life. He went on to say that “*Om Namō Narayana*” represents the essence of all learning. As soon as he heard this, Hiranya Kashyapa felt that he was being stung by millions of scorpions. He could not bear this situation at all and called the *gurus* and instructed them to use whatever methods of punishment they would like, but to see that Pahlada’s attention was diverted from the path chosen by him to a different one. He tried many methods to change Pahlada. He tried to beg him, punish him, cajole him and threaten him, but all these were of no avail at all. Pahlada would not lend himself to any of these methods. He had only one ambition and all these methods did not deter him from his chosen sacred path. To a person who is in divine *samadhi*, the worldly punishments will not mean anything. On Pahlada who was immersed in the aspects of Narayana, the punishments had no effect at all. The teachers, Chanda and Amarka came to Hiranya Kashyapa and told him that all the demons were punishing Pahlada, but this had no effect on him at all and that he was always in bliss uttering the name of Narayana. He would not suffer or cry in spite of all the punishments. They got snakes to bite him, elephants to trample on him and beat him mercilessly; but all these were of no avail. Pahlada was not moved at all. These were not things

which a father should mete out to a son. Hiranya Kashyapa put the son to indescribable pain and torture, just because the boy was always thinking of the Lord. In return for all this, Prahlada was teaching the father various aspects of truth and God. He said, "A human being who is attracted by transient pleasures will be mistaking charcoal for a precious stone."

In the same manner in the *Upanishads*, in order to test Nachiketa, King Yama asks him a number of questions. He asks, "Dear Son! You are in the prime of youth and without experiencing the pleasures of youth, why do you want to enter the spiritual world?" To this, Nachiketa replies, "These pleasures are very transient. They are like passing clouds and are like visions which one gets in a dream." He was saying that he was interested only in the permanent aspects of life. Prahlada, Nachiketa and several other young devotees have demonstrated that youth is no obstruction to experiencing the sacred aspects of divinity. Prahlada has taught the world about the kind of persons that should be regarded as good teachers. He said, "The prayers that are offered to Kamalaksha are the only true prayers. The eyes are valuable only if they are used to see divinity. The head that bows to Seshasayee is the only head that counts. All other heads are as good as not being present. That education which teaches us about the Lord is the only true education. The teacher who teaches us about the secrets of divinity is the only true teacher. A father who encourages the son to go and reach Hari is the only real father." Nowadays, there are many fathers like Hiranya Kashyapa. If the children want to attend divine discourses or sacred bhajans, the father discourages them and says that they should take to such a path only when they grow old and retire from active service. Some fathers even advise their children that they should do such things only as a last resort. Because such fathers have become very large in number, the children are taking to a wrong path.

In this context, Prahlada has also said, “How can you think of God when the messengers of the God of death are dragging you, and your own relatives are pushing your body nearly dead, out of the house and crying over the impending death? Is it possible to utter the name of Hari, at that time, if you do not do so when you are in good health?” He continues, “Oh! Foolish person, when the phlegm chokes your throat and when your relatives are surrounding you and crying over your impending death, is it possible to think of God?” It is in this context that it is said that such prayers and thoughts should start at an early stage of your life. You should start early, drive slowly and reach safely. If you start early on such a path, there is a possibility of your blossoming into a good person. If a plant is good when it is tiny, it will develop into a good and straight tree; but if the plant becomes crooked even when it is tiny, the entire tree will be crooked. In the early age, you must see that your life takes a straight path. This age of yours is, therefore, the most important one. So saying, you should not give up your family, job and life and go and live in a forest. This is not the right kind of sacrifice. You should have “hands in the society and heads in the forest.” But today it is exactly the opposite. Many people have their hands in the forest and their heads in the society. By following such a path, we are losing even the little divinity that is present in us. Whatever service we do, we should regard it as being done in the thought of God. A few minutes ago, one of the speakers told you that service to man must be regarded as service to God. Abu Ben Adam earned the love of God. He was dedicated to the service of man. We may say that we have a great deal of love towards God, but who is the one who can measure your love towards God. In fact, God must be pleased with your love and say that you have a great deal of love for Him. In such a case, God will have love towards you.

What is the point of your talking about your love like a frog in the well? Your love must be such that God will be pleased with it and say that in return, you deserve his grace. You should get back an acknowledgement from God that he has received your love, sent in the form of a registered letter. Whether your love is of a superior type or not, the answer must come from the Lord. Prahlada was one who had received the reply from the Lord in many ways. He used to feel that God was present everywhere. He felt that his *sadhana* was always directed towards the Lord. For him, work was transformed into worship. On one occasion, after becoming very angry that Prahlada was not changing his ways, Hiranya Kashyapa sent for his son and asked where the God to whom he was praying was residing. To this Prahlada replied that God was present everywhere, wherever he is looked for. Then Hiranya Kashyapa asked if God was indeed residing in the pillar in front of them. Prahlada said that God was resident at all places including the pillar. He also said that the aspect of God was so widespread that there was no place even to put a needle. The father then asked if he would see God if the pillar was broken, and he went and broke the pillar. We should here understand why the Lord had given his vision to Hiranya Kashyapa who was always arguing that God does not exist. We should also understand the difference between Prahlada and Hiranya Kashyapa. If one has to be born as man, there must be some *karma* behind it. Even if a tree has to be born, there must be a seed planted. Similarly for the birth of a human being, there must be some cause, *karma* in the form of a seed.

In a similar manner, we may ask if God is to come in human form, should there be some *karma* behind it. In the case of man, he is born as a result of his *karma*. Man is not born as a result of others' *karma*. He is born as a result of his own *karma*. The tree that comes is dependent on the seed. You can-

not get a mango tree, if you plant a lemon seed. However, for the birth of God in human form, there are two causes. The bad deeds of bad people and the good deeds of good people are jointly responsible for the birth of the Lord. Here, as a result of the bad that Hiranya Kashyapa had done and the good that Prahlada had done, the Nara Simha *Avathar* had come. Prahlada proclaimed the truth that God is present everywhere; and in order to establish that truth, God came in human form. In the earlier times, Hiranya Kashyapa believed that God does not exist. and with this belief, he searched for God and he did not find God. On the other hand, Prahlada found him even in a pillar. If you say that God exists, he exists. For one who says that God does not exist, He does not exist. For one who says that God exists and does not exist, He exists and does not exist. These are only your feelings. No and Yes are not for Sai for whom it is always Yes, Yes, Yes. To reconcile these two, a certain amount of *sadhana* is necessary.

We now take the incident of a group of people who said that God does not exist. One *sanyasi* comes and says that God exists. The moment they saw the yellow robe, the others became angry and surrounded him and asked him if God really exists. He asked, "What is it that exists, if God does not exist? If you can show proof that God does not exist, I will show proof that God exists." The *sanyasi*, thinking that he must teach them a good lesson, said that he would show them God if they can bring him a glass of milk. Thinking that he can, indeed, show them God, they rushed and brought him a glass of milk. As soon as they heard of this news, the entire village gathered together. In the centre of the group, the *sanyasi* was stirring the milk and carefully looking inside. He explained that he was looking for butter. They asked how he could see butter in a glass of milk. The *sanyasi* then said that just as one cannot see butter in milk, directly, one cannot see God directly.

To see butter in milk, you have to heat the milk, make it into curd and then churn the curd. You will then get butter. The people gathered there agreed that, although butter cannot be seen, it was present in the milk and will come out after some effort. The *sanyasi* then said that in a similar manner, God was present in all creation but would become visible only after some effort. Like butter is present in milk, God is present everywhere. As we have to adopt a particular path to get butter out of milk, we shall have to adopt a path called *Sadhana* to get to experience divinity and have a vision of the Lord. Prahlada followed such a path and made the people around him follow such a path to secure the vision of the Lord.

Here we may get a doubt why the Lord had to take this special form to get rid of Hiranya Kashyapa. In fact, Hiranya Kashyapa was a great man who did a lot of *sadhana* to attain the grace of God; but in course of time, he had also developed a lot of ego and forgot the all-powerful God. When he was performing *thapas*, he asked a boon from God according to which he would not die of old age, or in the forest, or in a house; that he should not be killed by man or animal; that he would not die in a home or outside a home. As God was pleased with his *thapas*, he agreed to this boon; but in due course, he had to kill Hiranya Kashyapa because of the very bad qualities that he had developed. In order to keep up the promise that he gave and yet kill him, he had to take such an unusual form that was neither human nor animal. He took Hiranya Kashyapa on his thighs so that he was neither on the ground nor in the sky. He destroyed Hiranya Kashyapa by his nails, which neither had life nor were without life. God can give boons; but when sin exceeds all limits, he will undertake to punish. Thinking that we have the grace of God, we should not exceed limits of sin. The belief or non-belief regarding the existence of God is only a creation of your mind, and it has nothing to do with God.

Today, when people are forgetting the sacred aspect of divinity and when in its place they are promoting sin and the belief in the non-existence of God, it is necessary for students to strengthen their faith in God. In the text of *Bhagavatha*, the story of Prahlada and the description of the devotion of the *gopikas* are indeed inspiring and sacred. These stories are such that they will easily enter your mind. Prahlada has been showing what should be the food that you should eat for this sacred type of *sadhana*. One of the main reasons why demoniac qualities are being shown by human beings today is the type of food that people are eating. I have told you several times that the type of food that you take will determine the type of thoughts that you get in your head, and this will determine the type of *sadhana* that you do. Whether in the field of science or in the field of spirituality, you cannot but agree that the food that you eat determines the type of behaviour that you have. The gross type of food that we eat is excreted out. The subtle content of the food is converted into blood. Even more subtle content of food changes into our mind. To a large extent, our ideas are determined by the kind of food that we eat and this shapes our conduct. Food and conduct have become the main reasons for our good and bad actions. If we really want to come to this stage of divine comprehension, we should accustom ourselves to the appropriate *sadhana*.

Amongst all things that are born, to be born as a human being is the most sacred and most difficult thing and we must make an effort to achieve the divine objective. Prahlada was always immersed in the divine *Namasmarana* and, in this age, this is the only thing that will enable us to attain divine bliss.

26. Good Health Is Our Greatest Wealth

Till you cross the river, a boat is necessary. So also, till you reach the divine destination, you need the human body as your vehicle. Be healthy, do not eat impure or unclean food and impair your health.

Students,

Even after having attained the sacred human birth, it is very unfortunate if you are not able to put your life on the right path. The *gopikas* were pure and sacred-minded and were used to worshipping God with a name and form. Prahlada was also pure and sacred-minded, and he was used to worshipping the formless God. Both were ideal examples for these two paths. People who want to develop themselves along the path of the *Atma* must have good health and, for this purpose, the control of food is essential. By eating clean food, we can get a clean mind and through a clean mind, we can get a clear idea of the goal. Through such a clean concept of the *Atma*, we will be able to get rid of the illusion of *maya*. Through this method, the knot that is present in our heart will open up, and this is the basis for getting a divine vision. We should not think that the importance that is being given to the aspect of food is unnecessary. For all types of *Yoga*—*Pranayama*, *Niyama*, *Pratyahara*, *Samadhi*, etc.—correct type of food is the most important basis. You may have some doubt as to why we should give so much importance to a minor matter like the intake of food when there are so many other important things. Without having purity of mind, we cannot achieve even a small thing. By the unclean food that we take in, we expose our body to unnecessary ills. In creation, there are 84 *lakhs* of different kinds of

jivas. Amongst those 84 *lakhs* of living things, man alone cooks his food and eats it. All the other types of living beings take their food in the natural uncooked form. By taking to natural food, these *jivas* promote their longevity. Because man cooks his food before he eats, the life force that is contained in the food is partly destroyed. There is an example for this. When we take some seeds and put them in the ground along with manure, we get good trees. But if the same seeds are boiled or cooked and then planted in the earth, we will not get any plants at all. This means that by frying or cooking, the *sathwik* life force that is present in the seeds is destroyed. By eating such food, man makes himself liable to several types of diseases. Because man eats such cooked food, he also becomes distant from *sadhana*. It is because of this that in ancient times, *rishis* and devotees of God were eating only uncooked food in its natural form. This is the reason why *Bhagavad Gita* in its 17th and 18th chapters has described *sathwik* food as that which has been offered to God. We use the word *sathwik* food to convey different meanings in different parts of the world. We generally think that fruits, milk, vegetables, etc., without too much salt or pepper constitute *sathwik* food. To think so is natural, but with this feeling, we should not eat too much of this kind of food. We should eat only a limited quantity of even *sathwik* food. Alcoholic drinks and meat eating promote *rajo guna*. *Bhagavad Gita* has been teaching us that we should eat only *sathwik* food and that too, in a limited measure. There is a vast amount of air around us and just because there is air, are we consuming too much of this air? We take it to the extent to which it is necessary for us. Simply because sacred Ganges is available to us in plenty, we do not go and consume too much of its water. We take water only in a limited quantity when we need it. In that manner, human beings have been consuming what is required for them; but when it comes to the question of food, why is it that we eat too much and in exces-

sive quantities? If we eat more than what we need, we will have trouble digesting our food. In order that we may digest too much food, we will have to spend two or three hours in a wasteful manner. Further, it would also imply that we are depriving someone else of the food that he might need more than us. In this manner, we will be committing two wrongs. Be that as it may, such eating will promote ill health. Limited consumption of food will promote a clean and pure mind.

We now come to food that has already been offered to God. Neither matter nor food is created by man. The entire creation is the property of the Lord, and to eat this food, without offering it to the Lord would amount to ingratitude. In the 15th chapter of *Gita* this has been expressed by saying that food must be offered to the Lord before one eats it. It is said that God in the form of Vysvanara is present in you and is consuming the food. If the food that you are eating is offered to God in the first instance, it becomes *prasad* and all the blemish that may be contained in the food will be removed. So, we say that limited food and *sathwik* food which is already offered to God will enable us to have a clean mind. For our bondage and for our liberation, our mind alone is responsible; and if we promote a clean mind, we will have no problems. Every small task that we may undertake depends on our mind. If we have to reach a destination, we have to reach through our mind.

When we take our food, we are taking it through our tongue; but we have five different sense organs. In spite of this, we think that we are consuming food only through the palate. Many people wonder why they are getting bad thoughts, although they are consuming only pure and *sathwik* food. There is something here to which you have to give a great deal of thought. *Sabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha* are the five senses in us. Whatever we take in can enter our

body by way of any of the sensory organs, namely, ear, skin, eye, tongue or nose. In a superficial manner, we think we are taking the food only through the palate, and we are not giving any thought to the kind of food that we are taking through the other organs. When we say that we should accept only *sathwik* food, it refers to food that we accept through all the organs. Our eyes must accept only vision that is sacred and *sathwik*. We should use our eyes to see only the sacred creation of the Lord. Just because we have eyes, we should not use them to see everything without any control. Sometimes when we look at certain things, the organs within us may become uncontrollable. This is why, the *sadhakas* have laid down that men and women should not look at each other too much, as it will promote *rajo guna*. We should use our eyes only to look at sacred things. It is because of this that the *gopikas* were not willing to discuss too much with Uddhava. They used a bee as an intermediary while speaking with Uddhava. They were worried that their mind might get distorted if they looked and talked with Uddhava. So, they adopted this procedure.

The next is the process of listening or the food that we take through our ears. We should not indulge in blaming others, criticising others and listening to unnecessary things. All this constitutes unsacred food. We should also not listen to things intended to ridicule others. We should be prepared to listen only to sacred thoughts of the Lord. We should not be prepared to listen to the blame heaped on others.

Then comes the process of smell, the food we take in through the nose. You should take only sacred smell which is associated with divine aspects. Good smell does not mean scent or perfume. Good smell connotes sacred smell associated with the divine. Thus, through all the organs, we should try to take in only sacred and pure things. Next one is the sense of

touch. Our ancients have prescribed that contact should be only with divine aspects. When we sit down for *dhyana*, we use a small plank and sit on that so that there is no contact with the earth. It is not possible for us to realise what happens by contact that exists between us and the earth. Those who do not recognise this truth, ridicule these habits.

There is an example for this. This is a flower, and it drops down, if I let it go. What is responsible for its falling? It comes down because the earth has the power to attract. We can see the flower that has been left in the air. We can see the earth, but we are not able to see the attraction that pulls down the flower. Just because we are not able to see this power, it is folly for us to argue that the earth has no power to attract. In the same manner, there are several types of attractive powers in the aspect of the divine. The creation that we see around us has the strength of sound, strength of movement, strength of being permanent and prosperous, the strength of *maya* and many other different types of strength. This is why it is said that, when you are in *dhyana*, your body should not be in contact with anyone else. There are also other meanings for this. Wherever there is dirt and unclean atmosphere, there would be bad and filthy bacteria, while in a clean place where the atmosphere is good and clean, there will be clean bacteria. When we touch an unclean body, there is a possibility of the disease causing germs flowing into us. Further, that unclean and unsacred body may communicate a part of the uncleanness to us. One body and another are like magnets in this case. This is the reason why individuals who take the path of *sadhana*, should keep away from unclean surroundings and objects. It is in this context that our ancients have advised that we should go and touch the feet of sacred and elderly people so that the sacredness that is contained in their body is transmitted to us. Simi-

larly, if you touch an unsacred body, the impurity or unsacredness can also enter into you.

It is only when you restrict the intake through all your organs to sacred things that you will really be taking only *sathwik* food. If you take *sathwik* food through your mouth in the form of fruits and milk and use your eyes to see all bad things, there is no use of such a partial restriction. It is because of this that the *gopikas* of those days were promoting the aspect of *sathsanga*. Everyday, they used to gather in a *sathsanga*, or a congregation of good people, and spend time talking about Krishna. This is why it has been said that out of *sathsanga*, you will have good qualities, and out of that, you will get detachment and out of detachment, you will get a steady and unwavering mind. This kind of *sathwic* food through all the organs will be helpful to a large extent.

While Chanda and Amarka were causing a lot of hardship to Prahlada and uttering harsh words, he was determined to keep away from the harsh words. Prahlada always uttered the sacred, “*Om Namō Narayana*” so loudly that he would not hear anything else. When he was alone, Prahlada used to look at the exquisite beauty that is contained in God’s creation, but when his father or *Gurus* came, he used to close his eyes. Even when his father spoke to him, he used to close his eyes because he was worried that if he looked at his father, bad ideas would get into him. The meaning of a sacred saying like, “*Yad bhaavan thad bhavathi*” is that the thoughts will determine the action—and of “*Brahma vid Brahmaiva bhavati*” is that if you have divine ideas, you will merge with *Brahman*. These are, therefore, very important. After Hiranya Kashyapa was killed, Lord Nara Simha was preparing to leave and Prahlada started shivering. Lord Nara Simha asked if Prahlada was trembling because of the fearful and strange appearance of God. To this

question, Prahlada said that he was certainly not afraid of looking at the beautiful face of God and listening to the beautiful voice of God. He said that there was no chance whatsoever of his being afraid because of God's presence. Prahlada said that he was worried that the Lord would leave after giving him a sacred vision and that he would be left back alone on earth. Prahlada said that he cannot live in the world—even for a moment—without the Lord and that this was causing him a great deal of worry.

Recognising the great sacredness that is contained in God's vision, His touch and His speech, we should decide to accept through all the five organs, only sacred food. Here, many people may have a doubt as to what is sacred and *sath-wik* food. I will explain this aspect. Some people think that it is good to eat a banana or a coconut. Neither coconut nor banana are bad in any way. Our ancients considered the coconut as a sacred food. Gradually, when we look at the coconut, it reminds us of our head. It also has two eyes and one mouth. It also has a patch of hair. Some people think that it is a form of Shiva because it has three eyes. In fact, in certain festivals, a coconut is decorated and people perform *puja* to it. What is the reason for our giving so much importance to a coconut? It is useful to examine this, even in a worldly sense. Doctors have examined this fruit and come to the conclusion that it has very valuable constituents. It is believed that this fruit has nearly 57% of fat, 15% of powdery material, another 15% of watery substance, seven or eight percent of solid matter. The remaining eight percent is pulp. The *rishis* believed this to be a very sacred fruit. An unripe coconut is also a sacred fruit. Whatever we may eat, provided it does not contain too much salt, chili or acid; and if we eat in the right proportions, it may be described as *sathwic*. The ideal proportion is two parts of solid food, one part of liquid and one part of air. This kind of food will help us

a great deal in our *sadhana* and we will have good health. It is in this context that it has been said that health is our true wealth. A healthy body will have a healthy mind. However, today man is not accepting any of these good principles and he is subjecting himself to a lot of disease and harm.

An individual who wants to attain self-realisation and secure the vision of the Lord, should first give up bad listening, bad vision and bad food. From that day, he will have moved closer to his objectives. So, you must strive to remove the blemish in you. A sinner may change but a sin will never change. These bad qualities are causing you a lot of harm. You must strive to bring a change in the society around you. Youth like you have the capacity and energy to achieve many great things. You must perform *sadhana* to promote your spiritual and mental wealth. You must also try and control the bad actions that are emanating in the society. You must first rectify yourself and then try to rectify the society around you. Many of our scriptures have taught us that good type of food is essential. Just to relieve your hunger or fill the basket of your stomach, you should not eat whatever you see and wherever your feet drag you. Even if it is some trouble, you must search for good and clean food. But young people of today do not have such patience. We need not go so far. If the coffee to which you are habituated is delayed even by a few minutes, you get very irritated and excited. You should make an attempt to get rid of such weakness. If you cannot control your actions when you are young, you cannot do so when you grow old. While one is young and strong, he must try to control the organs. This is the right path which you must adopt. Your actions must be undertaken in the thought of God. I hope that you will be able to take such a sacred path and lead a good life.

27. Religious Scriptures Have Not Been Written For Making Money

God is your friend, closer than even your own mother and father. He exists in you in the form of Atma. What I am conveying to you is the simple truth. What greater truth can I convey?

In the spiritual field, this country has acquired a great reputation. Although several changes are coming about in the moral and political areas in the country, the spiritual field has always been moving forward. It is not possible for anyone to stop this progress. To the extent to which we are making spiritual progress, some people think that to that extent, we are becoming more and more blind in what they regard as the modern aspects. Truly in this modern age, people are living in such a manner that they do not understand what human nature is. They are under the illusion that this body, which is full of dirt, impurity and filth, is the real human being. They believe that, if they have some little education by which they can earn a livelihood, get a roof to live under and some clothes to wear, they have all that is required. If man is identified only with the human body, then, perhaps, the food, clothes, and a house would be sufficient; but man is not just that. He has a divine aspect that is living within him. America has acquired the reputation of being the wealthiest country in the world, and there is no lack of prosperity or money for the people in that country. There is no limit for man's bodily pleasures in that country. On an average, there is one motor car for every five citizens in that country. If we pile up the number of available cars, we may even reach the moon itself. On the American

roads, even if you stand for a whole day, you may not see even one person walking on the road. Even in such a materially prosperous country, one in every five commits suicide. What is the reason for this state of affairs, in spite of such wealth? Obviously, there is every opportunity to enjoy worldly comfort, but there is no chance of enjoying divine bliss.

Truly, man is not just the body, he is the one who lives within the body. There is a close connection between the one who lives within the human body and the human being. You can get true bliss from the sacred aspect that resides within the body, but you cannot get any bliss from the material body. So long as the baby plays with the toys, it gets some happiness for a short period; but the moment the child sees the mother, it will throw away all toys and rush to the mother because it will then get permanent happiness. Wealth and possession of material assets may give transient happiness, but long-standing bliss will come only from the divine. It is because of this that many people from affluent countries come and participate in movements like Hare Ram and Hare Krishna, for the sake of getting some peace. Peace and bliss come from within you and not from outside. Man does not live only by food. He lives by the experience of *Atma*. Modernised people, who cannot recognise this truth, are under the illusion that the material world is important. The body is made up of the five material elements, and it is inevitable that the body will fall one day or the other. The one who lives within the body is eternal. The divinity in the body has neither birth nor death. What resides in the body in the form of *Atma* is God. The life force that is present in you is present in all living things. The *Upanishads* have established the truth that this living force is the same as God. The whole world is one and is made up of *Brahman* and there is no second parallel to *Brahman*. This world is impermanent and it causes trouble. In this world, which is untrue, impermanent

and transient, how can we get bliss? A bird, perched on a branch that keeps on moving, will also keep on moving. An individual catching hold of a piece of wood in an ocean will keep moving, although he holds on to the wood, because the waves keep the wood moving. In this world, which is intrinsically changing all the time, how can we remain unchanging when we form a part of this world?

There is no use of our getting attached to this transient body, which is like dust. You should get attached to God. God is like our own life breath. We have been given life, only to reach such an omnipresent God. Prahlada has shown that any son who does not attempt to get the grace of God is not a worthy son at all. If with all the fullness which your hands are capable of, you do not worship Shiva; if with the fullness of your mouth, you do not praise Hari; if there is no compassion and love of truth in you, what is the purpose of being born, except to cause birth pangs to one's mother? One must give a shape to one's life in such a way that one earns the grace of God. We should follow a sacred path. Having been born, we should do all that is necessary to see that we are not born again. When we meet our death, we should so meet it that we do not meet it a second time. This is, indeed, the secret of man's life. But today, in man's life, to the extent to which the knowledge of science has grown, to that extent, the strength of man has become less. As science has progressed, the sense that is present in human beings has become less and less. What you call Science can give you material pleasure but it cannot give you any bliss of *Atma*. Spirituality leads you to the aspect of completeness. Every human being must realise this completeness or the total knowledge contained in spirituality. The word man or *Manava* has three letters, *Ma*, *Na* and *Va* in it. Here *Ma* signifies ignorance or lack of knowledge, *Na* means getting rid of such darkness or ignorance and *Va* implies your conduct. Thus, the

word *Manava* means that you should conduct yourself in a manner by which you will eliminate total darkness and ignorance. But today, there is no justification for the use of this word because people are not conducting themselves in that manner. This is why even our appearance is completely changed. Man is wasting his life as if it is a cinema life. We are conducting ourselves in a manner by which we do not even recognise the very basis of human nature. Sacred texts: Bible, Quoran, *Bhagavatha*, etc., have been showing us the way to follow a sacred path. All religions teach only good. One should conduct oneself, knowing what is good. If one's mind and attitude are good, what is it that is bad in any religion? Young people should not promote difference relating to religion or to community. In order that young people may recognise the oneness of all religions, Prahlada was teaching his companions about many sacred things.

We are the embodiments of truth and truth is our nature. Peace is the basis of all forms in this world. *Shivam*, or prosperity, is also that which is most sought after by all forms in this world. Thus *Sathyam*, *Shivam* and *Sundaram* form the foundation for the world, and these three are inseparably connected with each other. Just as one and the same item can be given different names, the divine *Atma* has been taking different names and forms. Names may be different but contents cannot be different. The water present here may be described as "*Neeru*" by the Telugu-speaking people, "*Tanni*" by the Tamil-speaking people. "*Vari*" by the Sanskrit-speaking people and "*Pani*" by the Hindi-speaking people. All these words: water, *neeru*, *tanni*, *vari* and *pani* are different names for water, but the water that is contained is one and the same. In the same manner, there is only one divine God. The truth, which is only One, has been described by different people using different words.

I will give an example so that you can understand it easily. Different sweets exist with different names like Mysorepak, Gulabjam, Palakova, Laddu, etc. However, in all these things, the essential constituent is sugar; and if there is no sugar, the sweet will have no name or form. In the same manner, divinity is present in everyone; and this has been demonstrated by the *gopikas*.

There used to be one king who was well versed in all aspects of administration including moral, political and academic. He was always able to speak the truth and also make his people speak the truth. He believed that truth is the basis for all types of *dharma*. He established the fact that all *dharma* is based on truth. On one occasion, there was a test for him and for his firm determination. When he was sitting on his throne and conducting the business of the state, a very well-dressed and beautiful woman came in and said that her name was Dhanalakshmi. The king asked why she had come there. She said that she wanted to go away and came seeking permission of the king. She was permitted to go, and the king did not show any sorrow or unhappiness. After some time, another beautiful woman came and stood there and said that her name was Righteousness. She said that there was no use of Righteousness remaining in the mansion after wealth had left and so she also wanted to go away. She was also allowed to go. After some time, a beautiful young man came and described himself as Good Conduct. He said that without wealth and righteousness, there was no place for good conduct and so he wanted to seek permission to leave the palace. The king agreed to his leaving the palace as well. After some time another person came and said that his name was Keerti or Reputation. He said that where there was no money, Righteousness, Good Conduct, there cannot be room for reputation and so he also sought permission to leave. The king agreed to this also. After some time,

another beautiful person came and stood there and said that his name was Truth. He also asked for permission to leave, but then the king caught hold of his feet and begged him not to leave. He said that he could live without wealth, righteousness, good conduct or even reputation but not without truth. He, therefore, begged that truth should stay on. He said that truth was the very essence of his life. In this way, when the king requested truth to stay on, he agreed to stay on. When truth thus decided to stay on in the king's mansion, Wealth, Good Conduct, Righteousness and Reputation also decided that they had no value without truth, and they all came back to the palace.

Students:

We should try and acquire a life, which is full of love and truth. We should promote in ourselves, love that is selfless. Life is a very transient one. In the short time that we have, we must earn good reputation. Calling yourselves students, you should not behave in a manner that is not worthy of the students. Young students are such that they have to make a long journey. Students who have to take such a long journey, should develop characteristics like love, forbearance and sacredness. Students; in this body of ours which is the tree of life, there are several branches. leaves and fruits, etc. To our tree of life, our own relations are like branches and leaves, and our own ideas are like the flowers. Our belief and faith constitute the roots for this tree and our bliss is the fruit in this tree. The character that you have is like the juice in this fruit. If the fruits do not exist on the tree, it will become similar to firewood. Therefore, for the tree of our life, there should be the fruit in the form of good character, and there should be roots in the form of our faith and belief. The thoughts and attitudes of the *gopikas* were such that they were always using them to think of the sacred and divine form of Krishna. On the other hand, Prahlada established the formless aspect of God. Texts and scriptures of all religions

preach only such sacred things. The religious texts have not been written for the sake of making money. They are not like cheap useless books that we can get in the market today. In order to communicate to the people their personal experience about divinity, the great *rishis* had written these texts. What has been taught in the *Vedic*, Christian, Muslim, Zoroastrian or any other religion, simply refers to the royal road to reach God. However, students are not inclined to read such books. They say that they do not have any time to do so. They have the time to read useless time-wasting books like cheap novels, which destroy human character. It is the first and primary duty of all students to spend as much time as possible listening to sacred aspects. When the students can acquire and promote such sacred qualities, there will be no doubt whatsoever that we will be able to establish the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. To establish these truths, many kings and rulers sacrificed their lives. If one has no peace of mind, the whole life will become a living death, even if you have all the wealth. One may have millions of rupees, but if his health is not good, what is the use of all his wealth? When an individual in a high position is afflicted with cancer, will his position save him from the dreadful disease? It is only when you can earn the grace and love of God, that you will be happy. Thyagaraja sang and said that if he had the grace of Lord Rama, he would have all the strength in the world. We should, therefore, do such good work to enable us to acquire the love of God. If man can spend at least a part of his life in this sacred task, there will be no doubt whatsoever that he can demonstrate to others, this royal path to happiness.

28. Good Health Is Man's Greatest Wealth

This body has been given to you so that you may be a humble devotee and serve God. Do not get ill and become dependent on a doctor. This is the word of Sai which shows you the correct path.

Students!

From time immemorial, many *rishis* have spent all their time in this country thinking of God. Questions like: Does God exist? How can we see God? Can we reach God? are not new. They have been with us right from the beginning of creation. Answers to these questions were sought to be found by many people making different attempts. They had sought answers to these questions with all the strength of *thapas* built up with unrelenting efforts. They had also tried to find answers to these questions by seeking the grace of God. The few people who found partial answers tried to spread the answers to the others in the world. They addressed the people through the *Vedas* and said that they had been able to get a glimpse of the strength of the great *Paramapurusha* who is beyond the darkness of ignorance. They described him as the effulgent shining entity. God cannot be perceived or understood by looking for him only in the external world. Although God is omnipresent, he reveals himself in the form of *prajnana* or knowledge within a person. The *Veda* has been proclaiming that the eternal God is present inside the material body which is made of matter and which is destructible. Diamonds do not drop from heaven, nor can they be got as a fruit from a tree. Such precious stones will be found only in the earth. In the same manner, the precious jewel of divinity will manifest itself in the human body, which is made

up of matter. Man's ultimate objective is to search for this basic divine aspect that is present in all living beings. Today, being unable to recognise the sacred divinity that is residing in us, we are wasting our lives like a person who uses sandalwood as firewood not knowing its worth. Truly, this divine aspect, which is present in the human body, will project itself only occasionally. Sun's brilliance is present at all places but by using this brilliance falling on a wall, we will not be able to see ourselves as in a mirror. So also, sun's rays falling on trees or mud will not enable us to see ourselves. Sun's rays fall everywhere; yet we cannot use them to look at ourselves. However, when the sun's brilliance falls on a mirror, we can use it to see our own face. In the same manner, while God is omnipresent and can be found everywhere, we can see him clearly only when we look at him with a clean mind. A pure and clean heart is the weapon with which you can remove ego. The sacred aspect of God is such that with its help, we can also remove jealousy. Using these sacred thoughts of God, the *gopikas* could remove their jealousy and ego. Whatever the *gopikas* did in their lives, they did it by surrendering their mind, thoughts and senses to Krishna and, thereby, they led a very sacred life. Whatever they did with their bodies, they thought that it was work done for, and on behalf of, Krishna. Whatever words they uttered with their tongue, they regarded them as being the *leela* of Krishna. Whatever work they did with their hands, they regarded that as service to Krishna. Their words were always about Krishna. Their smile was always a smile about eternity. In this manner, at all times, they enjoyed bliss and surrendered themselves to the thought of the Lord. Their births may have changed, times may have changed, yet they regarded themselves as being close to Krishna, their ultimate objective. They felt that Krishna was present in all forms, human as well as animal and living as well as non-living. They used to say, "What is it that we can surrender to you? There is

nothing that we can offer you. Everything is in you and you are in everything. When the entire universe is contained in you, can we serve you any sweets? When you are present in all the waters of the world, how can we give you a bath with water? You have the brightness of a million suns and how can we use a candle to show you. When the great saints like Ajahara could not comprehend you, how can we reach you? We are able to understand the nature of the earth only, in your name—Gopala. How can anyone describe your *leelas*?" In this manner, they described the glory of Krishna and they spent all their lives in such thoughts. Not only this, they addressed Krishna and said, "Oh! Krishna! If you become a flower, we will become a bee and go round you; if you become a tree, we will become creepers and wind round you; if you become a mountain, we will become mountain streams and go round you. If you become the big blue sky, we will be small shining stars in that sky. If you become the ocean, we will become small rivulets and flow into you. We cannot bear separation from you at any time. We pray that we may be given the fortune to be with you at all times. Whatever form you take, we will also take the appropriate forms so that we may be with you." This implies that between the *gopikas* and Krishna, there is an inseparable connection. Krishna is not distinct from his devotees. Krishna's form depends on the ideas and thoughts of the devotees. The Lord will take a form that is determined by the ideas and thoughts of the devotees. In order that we may experience the sacredness of this divine aspect, a clean mind and a pure form are necessary. Our life should be put on the path of truth so that we may reach divinity, which is truth itself.

Today the situation in the world is such that it is taking the wrong path in many ways. It is not giving the appropriate environment for the young people. In that context, in order to provide a good atmosphere, the culture and traditions of

Bharath have to be taught to them. Students, in the world it is not as if there are no individuals who are well versed in sacred texts like *Bhagavatha*, *Ramayana*, etc. But whatever they may have learnt and whatever their scholarship be, if they cannot put into practice at least a fraction of what they have learnt, they will simply be wasting their time. All the scholarship will be useless if it is not accompanied by practice. This can be described in another manner. "If a donkey carries a fragrant material on its back, will it become an elephant? We may have the strength to teach others because we have learnt many books. However, whatever you learn will become utterly useless if it cannot be put into practice. This has been explained by saying that if the thought, word, and action are the same, that individual will be described as a *Mahatma*. This is also described by saying that a proper study of mankind is man. We have no right to call ourselves human beings if there is no human nature in us. The divine aspect does not exist in a foreign land or in any outside space. It exists within us and in us. Students must realise that for people who have unrelenting ambition to seek something which they cannot get, the spiritual path offers a beacon light. By following such a sacred path of truth, Harischandra has carved for himself a name among the sacred devoted people. His story tells us how, for the sake of adhering to truth, he even sold away his wife and child and finally even himself. It is very rare to see such a family in the present age of *Kali*. When the husband has all kinds of difficulties and several troubles, his wife was not only helping him to face the situation, but was also encouraging him. The husband and wife should conduct themselves as an object and an image. Under some conditions and at some time or other, every man is bound to face some difficulties. Every individual will always have some problems. But, in the context of such a situation, each one should help the other. Such patience and forbearance are very important for men. On one occasion, the wife

Chandramati touches the feet of Harischandra and asks him why he was so troubled. Then Harischandra said that he was troubled because he could not repay the debt that he owed to Viswamithra and that he had no money with him. At one time, Harischandra was a great King and possessed a great deal of wealth. At that time, the wife, in order to help the husband, said, "As a result of bad times, all the wealth that we had, has been lost; whatever wealth is left is only in the form of my support to you and your support to me. So, please sell me to someone who can pay for me and redeem your debt." We will not see such wives today. They will say that they are not responsible for the debts incurred by their husbands and will immediately threaten to go back to their mothers' home. Surrendering your mind to the husband and leading a sacred life, you should attempt to establish divinity in your heart. The *gopikas* have shown such exemplary conduct in their life. Unfortunately, in the *Bhagavatha* that we read and the *Bhagavatha* that is depicted to us in the pictures, the *gopikas* are known as unsacred people with unacceptable behaviour. The *gopikas* showed that their conduct was exemplary even to the *Devas*. Simply because the *gopikas* were born in the families of cowherds, we are thinking poorly about them. They are really great Maharishis reborn as *gopikas*. Their life is dedicated to God and you should also realise that they have been born with a purpose.

It has become common, these days, to think that women's ideas are catastrophic and harmful. The *gopikas* have no semblance to the women of these days. Their conduct was such that while fulfilling their daily duties, they always thought of God and surrendered themselves to God. They were looking at their husbands and children as if they, also, were in the form of Krishna. While giving food to their husbands, they used to imagine that they were offering food to the Lord. While giving

bath to their children, they used to think that they were performing *Abhisheka* to Krishna. This was the elevating feeling they had in them. While cutting vegetables for cooking, they used to think that they were cutting their bad thoughts out of their minds, and that ego, jealousy and anger were being removed with a knife. While boiling their vegetables, they used to think that Krishna's love was being used as water for boiling the vegetables. Whatever small task they undertook, they did it with a feeling that the work was dedicated to Krishna. As I have told you once, "If all the women go and seek employment, who will do the work at home? If the husband and wife both go to an office, where are the mothers to look after the children? If the women go to school to teach other children, who will teach their own children? If the women go about with books in their hand, who is going to look after the work in the kitchen? While you may meet the financial troubles to some extent, several new troubles will come up. The happiness that may come by getting a job will be nothing compared to the unhappiness that will accompany this."

Today, everyone wants employment. If you are able to get "*Yoga*" you can easily get a job. The word "*Udyoga*" comes from *Yoga*. What is *Yoga*? This is to fulfil your task in the correct manner. Since people, who do not have the right kind of ability are holding jobs, the situation of the country is so deplorable. We do not see people who recognise their duty. We only see the exhibitionism that goes with their positions and authority. In the very first instance, we should promote our ability and strength. We should first acquire the strength to get right our homes, our villages, and the community around us. It is, therefore, necessary for the students to read the sacred texts and follow, as examples, the lives of great and exemplary men. The strength of those days was the strength of *dharma* and righteousness. Today strength is the strength of wealth, money

and position. Wealth and money are like passing clouds and can disappear at any moment. The position or authority that we have today may drop at any moment. On the other hand, the strength arising from *dharma* and the strength arising from God are permanently fixed. We should therefore develop complete faith and know what is permanent. In the earlier days, all the Vanaras made an attempt to cross the ocean in order to search for Sita. In their attempt to cross a big ocean, they did not lose their courage and ability. Because they attempted to undertake the task with divine strength and with the constant chanting of the name of the Lord, they could successfully make a bridge across even the ocean in a very short time. In which engineering colleges did these monkeys get their degrees? The only degree they had was the grace of Rama. If, in a short while, they could complete a bridge over a deep ocean, can we compare our education to the knowledge they had? All the engineers of today come and prepare a five-year plan or a ten-year plan and the bridge collapses even before it is formally opened. Without spending a single paisa, with faith in God and with divine strength, those monkeys could undertake such a task. Because we depend on material assistance, our entire life has become very artificial. Our life today is such that we cannot move an inch without money. In the earlier days, it was *dharma* which had the upper hand while now, money has the upper hand. Students, I am hoping that you will take this country, by working in a purposeful and fruitful manner, to its ancient pristine glory.

29. God Is Like A Kalpa Tharu Which Can Fill All Your Wants

One may have learnt the quintessence of all Vedas; he may have learnt the Vedanta and Vedangas. He may be living in kingly mansions; he may have won great victories in the battle-field and may also have conquered the Goddess of wealth. All this will be useless if he has no devotion to God. He will be a much better person if he has devotion to God, than even the king of the land. What other truth can I convey to you?

Like the Kalpa Tharu, the tree that fulfils all your desires, there is a God who can fulfil all your desires. It is much better to reach the lotus feet of this God, than commit sin and go to hell which is unbearable.

Pavitratma Swarupas:

Devotion to God is the only path for salvation. For the sorrows of birth and of death which accompany you in this world, God's name is the only solution. We can describe devotion as the promotion of a sacred mind, in a selfless manner, in the thought of God. The path of devotion will take you, along with your mind, body and action, towards God. As the river flows into the ocean, the river of your life should flow into the ocean of God. Human nature should have this as the sacred objective. Truly, having attained human birth, if we are unable to take ourselves towards God, it is useless attaining this birth. Although there are several paths of devotion, the Vedas have told us that there are three main ones amongst them. The first one is described as the path of *Pushti Bhakthi*. The

second one is described as the path of *Maryada Bhakthi*. The third one is the path of *Pravaha Bhakthi*.

Pushti Bhakthi can be explained by saying that it enables you to directly attain the grace of God without the help of the normal *Purusharthas*. By accumulating the good that you have done in all your lives, you have been able to acquire devotion of God. Such a path is the path of *Pushti Bhakthi*. One can also describe it as one of total surrender to God. Such a person will always regard all that he does, as being done for God and by his grace. Prahlada and Radha are the best examples of this category of devotion. They have shown what *Pushti Bhakthi* should be. They had such devotion from their very birth, and they did not require the help of elders nor did they have to do any *sadhana*. They earned the grace of the Lord and enjoyed great bliss. Amongst women, Radha, and amongst the men, Prahlada, are shining examples; and their lives have the specific purpose of being noble examples to all other human beings. Prahlada never left the name of God—whether in a state of difficulties and sorrow or in a state of comfort and pleasure, he was always thinking of God. This devotion of Prahlada and Radha may also be described as the path generally taken by a cat. The mother cat will take the kitten to a place of safety. The kittens will always look for the mother cat to come and take them to another safe place. By themselves, they will not move from their place at all. They will not make any attempt to do anything on their own. The mother cat will take care of all their wants and requirements. All the comforts for the kitten will be provided by the mother cat. In the same manner, Prahlada felt that God will take care of all his safety, and he totally surrendered himself to God. Radha was also like this. She was always looking for the grace of Krishna. So long as you have attachments, you will never understand what really belongs to you. Only when all attach-

ments are given up, you will realise this truth. Prahlada and Radha were devotees who have learnt this great truth and had exterminated the ego in them. Bliss was their true form.

Devya Atma Swarupas:

In the totality of this cosmic power, an individual is a very small part. When man wants to love himself, he cannot avoid loving others. Only when he can love others is he entitled to love himself. In that context, even if you forget what is good for others, you will have to recognise the nature of divinity. Love of divinity will gradually take a form in which you will love yourself. This kind of devotion, which is pure love of God, must be practised by every individual. Such individuals have been described as individuals with *Pushti Bhakthi*.

The second category has been named *Maryada Bhakthi*. Individuals who are well versed in *Vedas* and who go to the elders and by getting their grace, achieve the path of devotion, may be described as people who have *Maryada Bhakthi*. They practice the *Purusharthas*, namely *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* and thereby understand the aspect of love of divinity. The four *Purusharthas* are divided into two parts for daily practice. They put *dharma* and *artha* together and *kama* and *moksha* together. They believe that *artha* or wealth must be acquired in a *dharmic* manner. They also recognised that wealth is necessary for *dharma*. They realised that one should seek *moksha* or liberation. This category of devotees believed that all creation is like a dream and is unreal. Such people have been earning the grace of the Lord by their own effort and have been described as individuals with *Maryada Bhakthi*.

The third category is *Pravaha Bhakthi*. In a stream, when water moves away from one place, more water comes to that place. There is always a state of motion. These people do

not have any devotion or faith. They are devoid of devotion and will always seek the pleasures of the world. This aspect has also been aptly described by Sankara in the following words. "To be born again and die again and take repeated births for the purpose of repeatedly dying, even animals have this kind of life cycle." We must first recognise that it is useless to be continually taking birth in this endless cycle of births and deaths. There used to be a very notorious thief. This thief had served his sentence in the jail and was informed that he would be released the next day. He was asked to pack up his belongings and be ready. To this the thief said that it is better he leave his belongings in the jail itself as he was anyway going to come back very shortly.

Although he had spent so much time in the jail, he did not realise that he should not come back into the prison. He was always committing wrong and coming back to the same place. This is the characteristic feature of *Pravaha Bhakthi*. Truly, your life would be a waste, if there is no devotion in it. This category of *Pravaha Bhakthi* is like the thief. It is like committing theft again and again and repeatedly going back to the prison. Man takes birth, wastes his life in useless things and takes birth again and repeats the same cycle. Truly, in Bharath because of different religions, our attitudes are also becoming very confusing. All the religions have been teaching only good things. No religion teaches us to speak untruth, or be unkind, or to disrespect our parents. The religions may be different with regard to the particular aspects of God about which we really do not know, but in regard to what we know or how we should conduct ourselves, all religions have been teaching the same thing. All religions have been telling the same thing, in relation to worldly conduct. All religions have agreed that it is good to be able to sing the glory of God. This kind of sacred bliss is the quality of the *Atma*. All the noble qualities like

speaking truth, loving others, etc., are generated from the *Atma* as the source. It has become the fashion in this age of *Kali* to give up what comes from the sacred *Atma*. We accept and do things that are forbidden by *Atma*. What has been forbidden by the *Sastras* is being accepted. In fact, this has become normal with people. Some others, in this modern age have been arguing, that there is nothing like religion. If man has no religion, he will become one without a mind. Students should recognise that everyone with a mind should have a religion. All the leaders who want to propagate that there is no religion end up creating a new religion. They do not recognise the truth that even to say that there is no religion is creating a new religion in itself. What we may call religion is something that comes from within. Religion is not a bundle of rituals by which we forbid people from doing this or that. Only when we can recognise this basic truth, it will be possible for us to lead good lives. There are many people who are following the wrong path. It is wrong to follow and imitate someone who is an ordinary human being. Today students must realise this. This aspect of imitation is a sign of weakness. There is a small example for this.

There is a seed and it is blossoming out. You water it everyday and protect it. Gradually it becomes a tiny plant. The seed takes the form of a plant with the help of water and manure. However, when the seed becomes a plant, it does not imitate the water or the soil or the manure. It will not change its natural form; it will grow into a tree. So also, while we may join several people and work with them, we should not change our natural behaviour. You can make an attempt to absorb the good qualities. The sacred path is that in which you will not change your own nature, but you will accept all the good that is found in others. When we face a problem, we should carefully examine and see how we can solve the problem.

Happiness or bliss is our nature. Because we give up this path, we run into all kinds of difficulties. There is an example for this. If the child in a cradle plays happily, the mother will not be surprised. In the thought that the child is playing happily, the mother will go and attend to other things. If the child, however, is unhappy or crying, the mother will rush to the child to see if there is an ant or an insect in the cradle. This shows that being happy is the natural feature and being sorry or unhappy is unnatural. It is natural for everything that is born to die. For such a natural thing as death, we are feeling sorry. For unnatural conduct on our part, we feel happy. There is a small example for this. If there is a small puncture in a cycle tyre or car tyre, all the air that is present will go out. This is natural. But, in a man's body, there are at least ten big punctures and air is constantly going out and coming in. How natural is this situation. Our body is all the time being reborn. Taking such a transient life, we are building castles in the air and thinking that they are permanent. In this process, we are forgetting the permanent and sacred aspect of the *Atma*. Wealth and fame are necessary but these are all ancillaries; they do not constitute the base. When divinity is present in you, these will be useful ancillaries. The confluence of all these makes up man's nature. For these ancillaries, the aspect of the *Atma* is like the central heart. It is often said that there cannot be a village without a temple and a human body without a heart. Our body, along with all the accessories, should be regarded as a village; and a heart filled with spirituality is to be regarded as the temple in that village. We should recognise the truth that these two are inextricably connected with each other. So also, we should have health and material possessions, and having had them, we should know how to make good use of them. We should accept some discipline and limitation. Too much of anything and unlimited conduct is not good. We need

food, but we should take it in limits. We need water, but we should take it in limits. If we transgress these disciplinary limitations, it will cause a disease. In our body also, there is a 98.4° temperature. If what should be 98.4° becomes 99°, we say that fever has started. Even if there is a little more heat than required, it means that a disease has started. In the same manner, wealth, anger, temper and all qualities should be within limits. We must put these qualities along a useful path. Today, you call yourselves students. What is the use if we cannot be of service to others. We must make an attempt to acquire the obedience and humility that go with education and put them into practice. Having acquired knowledge and wisdom, if we take a wrong path, what is the use of our education. Today, people are not having *Pushti Bhakthi*, or *Maryada Bhakthi* or *Pravaha Bhakthi*. They are showing *Lakshmi Bhakthi* or devotion to wealth. There is a small story.

On one occasion, Lakshmi and Narayana were conversing with each other. Usually women have too many doubts and hesitations. This is their weakness. When this weakness enters them, some amount of ego and anger also comes to them. Because of this ego and anger, an amount of jealousy will start. Lakshmi was in this situation. Here, you should not think that Lakshmi also has these weaknesses. In order to teach the people and set an example, such stories are created. Lakshmi, in fact, has shown an ideal example of womanhood. Potana, the Telugu poet described an occasion when Lakshmi and Narayana were playing the game of chess in which there are pawns, horses and elephants. By the use of her horses, Lakshmi trapped an elephant. At the same time, King elephant Gajendra was seeking Narayana's help. Immediately, Narayana shouted that he would come and rescue Gajendra. To this, Lakshmi said that he cannot do so. She was thinking of the game of chess and the trapped elephant. As this was going on,

Narayana got up and left the place. Here, the poet beautifully described the conduct and humility of Lakshmi. Lakshmi was in great confusion. She wanted to ask her husband where he was going. She took a step forward and a step backward in hesitation. She did not want to disturb her husband. In that confusion, her hair got dishevelled. Truly, the women of those days had great devotion and respect for their husbands and behaved with great humility.

Here, talking about the situation in the world, Lakshmi told Narayana that there were more people in the world who were devotees of Lakshmi. Narayana said that this was not true and that the devotees who showed more faith in Lakshmi were only behaving superficially. Actually, people who sought true bliss were indeed devoted to Narayana. Lakshmi did not agree with this and said that she would take a bet on this issue. Both of them started on a tour to find the truth. Narayana took the role of a great pundit. He had a very convincing way of preaching and left an indelible impression on the minds of the people. He went into the world, teaching *Vedas* and *Sastras*. Lakshmi also took the form of a *Yogini* and went to the same places to which Narayana went. She adopted a novel procedure. If anyone invited the *Yogini* to his house, she used to insist on some procedures. She said that she would not eat from plates belonging to others. She insisted on carrying her own plates made of gold and she made it a practice to leave these golden plates in the household after eating her meal. In this manner, because she was leaving these golden plates, the people who invited her became very large in number. In fact, she did not have any leisure or respite because of the growing number of invitations. She wanted to make good use of her popularity. She also insisted that she would go to a particular village, only if the villagers turned away the scholar who was visiting their village. As the propaganda intensified in this

manner, Narayana was not welcomed in any village. In fact, there was no one who would even give him a meal. In this way, Lakshmi's popularity increased day after day. After this drama went on for some time, Lakshmi and Narayana met and Lakshmi asked Narayana if he would accept that her devotees were indeed more in number. This is indeed the situation in this *Kali Yuga*. The devotees of Lakshmi are becoming many in number. Devotees going after *Siri* are becoming many but devotees going after Hari are reducing.

People show their devotion only for exhibitionism, but in fact, they have no devotion at all. When Swami is here, everyone is quiet and disciplined. When Swami goes out, there is neither silence nor discipline. Our discipline should be connected with our whole life and not with one place and one time. Whatever place you may go to and whatever the situation may be, you must maintain discipline. This kind of faith is true faith. Just as our breath always keeps going in and out, so also our discipline should become our breath and be with us wherever we go and whatever we do. Many people come and talk about God as if it is for exhibition. In reality, so long as your heart is not clean, God will have no place in your heart. Devotees should not feel jealous when they look at others who are better off or hate others because they are better off. You cannot call yourself a devotee if you simply do *puja* or *japa*. We should prepare our heart in such a manner that we can earn the grace of Lord. We should know that love is not a one-way traffic. You must learn that your entire life must be surrendered to God. What exists is only One. Truth is One. If there are two things, it cannot be truth. Young students must learn to pray to God at least twice a day while doing the duty that is entrusted to them. If we desire to drink sweet water and if we put salt instead of sugar, how can the water taste sweet? Thinking that salt and sugar have the same colour, if we put salt, we will not

get the sweetness. We should learn to control the bad qualities. In every human being, divinity is present to some extent. We should learn to bring out this devotion.

In this tumbler, there is water and at the bottom of the water there is sugar. If we drink the water from the surface, it will be tasteless. If we stir it nicely and then drink it, the water will taste sweet. There was sugar even earlier, but when we stirred the sugar, it spread everywhere and gave us the sweetness. So also in the tumbler of our heart, there is the sweet sugar in the form of divinity. Because we do not recognise this divinity, we experience only the superficial worldly pleasures. But if we use our '*Buddhi*' as a spoon and stir the sugar, with the help of *sadhana*, then there will be sweetness everywhere. Therefore, if you perform *sadhana*, materially and spiritually, you will taste sweetness. But we do not do this. When we talk of God, we talk nicely and say nice things; but we go on deceiving people in actual life. Even if others do not know your deceit, does not God know your true nature? Thus external show is not important. Whatever you want to do, you must do it from the depths of your heart. From ancient times, such external devotion in the form of ritual was promoted; and we are unable to show the real strength of inner devotion. *Bhakthi* does not consist of having a photo for worship and giving it *Arati* everyday or shouting Baba, Baba. True *Bhakthi* means that there must be a transformation in your behaviour. God is within you, around you and in you. He is omnipresent. Recognising this truth, you must arrive at the result that you and God are one. This is the truth that you must realise. Performing such *Sadhana*, and recognising this truth, students should undertake to spread the spiritual glory of our country. Only if you achieve this objective and bring about a transformation in yourself, will your stay here, for the last one month, be useful and purposeful. You should enjoy bliss and also be able to

transfer such bliss to others with whom you come into contact. You should try and develop into people with *Pushti Bhakthi* or *Maryada Bhakthi*. You should not have *Pravaha Bhakthi*.

It is not as if you do not know the situation in the world as of now. Wherever you go, qualities like untruth, unkindness, hatred and jealousy are becoming prominent. At such a time, students like you, armed with weapons of kindness, forbearance, love and patience, must enter society and bring about a social transformation. You should give happiness to your parents. In the traditions of our country, it is said that you should give happiness to your father and your mother. Only when you are able to do this, will you have achieved something. It is only when you can put such ideals into practice, will you have learnt something. Students, boys and girls, you should do all your work with the thought of God in your mind. I bless you that you get this strength.

30. History And Culture Of One's Motherland Are Like One's Father And Mother

If you cannot see God because of your ignorance, as you cannot see the stars in the daytime because of light, do not say that God does not exist. What other truth can I convey to you. Good people always see only good. They do not find a fault at all. They keep on praising all that they see. There is another category of people who describe a fault as a fault and good as good. The third category of people always find only faults and they never see good anywhere. A fourth category of people see even good acts as bad acts and they blame all the people around them. The first three categories can be tolerated. The fourth category are so bad that even demons are better than them.

Students, boys and girls,

It is not easy for man to live his life satisfactorily in this world. When a student is in a school, there will be a new lesson each day, and a new class each year. It will not happen that he will sit in the same class in all the years and learn the same lesson at all the times. In the same manner, every *sadhaka* on the spiritual path should introspect and find out if his *sadhana* is correct and improving day after day. If not, he should change his ideas and attitudes and improve himself. A *sadhaka* should not always remain on a dual path. As the first step, we should move on from a dual path to one that we call qualified non-dualism. This is the duty of every *sadhaka*. To worship God with flowers and to offer incense to him is only the first step in *sadhana*. A *sadhaka* who has good qualities and sacred mind, will always grow in his spiritual stature as he moves

along the spiritual path. It is the duty of every *sadhaka* to keep on improving from his first step. A *sadhaka* should not spend all his life in doing worldly *puja* to God and remain a beginner.

He should strive to improve his mental attitude. That is why in *Bhagavad Gita*, *Ahimsa* has been described as the first flower. The control of sensory organs has been described as the second flower of offering. The third flower is described as compassion. Forbearance is described as the next offering to be made. Peace, *thapas*, *dhyana* and truth are the other flowers which follow. The *Gita* has taught us that one should worship God through the eight flowers and one should merge in God through such a blissful experience. In order to worship God, man spends a lot of time in gathering flowers which will only fade away in a short while. After a time, these transient ordinary flowers will become useless and stale. How are we going to get true bliss by using such transient flowers to worship God? Not only this, these ordinary flowers are available in God's creation. They have not been created by man for the benefit of man. They have been created by God and what is the speciality, if you take and offer such flowers of God. The tree that has given you the flower will get the benefit by such offering. What is the gain that will come to you by such offering? On the other hand, you should offer the fruits of your *sadhana*, the fruits that will come from your own *sadhana*, the fruits which will come from your own life, to God. These fruits are good conduct, truth, good habits, love, etc. These fruits must be grown by the effort of your *sadhana*. You should offer such fruits to God. If such fruits, grown by you by your *sadhana*, are offered to God, the benefit will come to you. In the preliminary stages such *pujas* with flowers plucked from a tree are necessary. To adopt this procedure for all our life is not the right type of *sadhana*. It will be like sitting in the same class in a school for all your life. As our life span is becoming shorter

and shorter, day after day, we should, through our *sadhana*, reach a higher step on our spiritual ladder. The essence of good qualities, good ideas and love should be offered to God as fruits grown by your own *sadhana*. The world itself will be benefited by an individual who has good conduct. If fire starts on one tree in a forest, that fire will not stop after burning that particular tree. It will spread and burn out the entire forest. In the same manner, if there is one individual who has bad qualities, he will spoil the entire community in addition to ruining himself. On the other hand, if there is a tree that is full of good flowers, it will fill the entire area with good flavour and will spread its fragrance. In the same manner, if there is an individual with a high code of conduct, he will not only improve himself but will also improve the entire society around him through his good conduct. In this context, for our attaining a high and respectable position or a low and despicable position, our qualities alone are responsible. Our good and our bad are contained in our qualities. For all these things, the factor that is responsible is one's selfishness. So long as this selfishness is present, man cannot experience any kind of happiness. The quality of selfishness is of a demoniac nature. It does not take into consideration the happiness or the well-being of others. Students, boys and girls, you must get rid of this selfishness. You should attempt to promote in yourself an attitude of selflessness and divine love. If you want to get rid of selfishness, you should promote qualities like, *sath*, *chith* and *ananda*. These qualities of *sath*, *chith* and *ananda* are not to be acquired from outside. They are naturally present in us. The quality of truth is present in us. But, on some occasions, as a result of bad qualities, we cover this truth. If truth is not present in us, how does it come out on certain occasions. Truth is present within ourselves in a latent and effulgent form. *Chith* represents awareness. We use this awareness on several occasions to distinguish good from bad. If this awareness is not present, we

will not be able to enquire into anything at all. Thus, this quality of *chith* is also present in us in a latent form. *Ananda* or bliss is also present in us. This is evident from the fact that we sometimes feel happy. The sun and the moon are brightly shining at all times but when there is a thick layer of clouds, we will not be able to see the sun or the moon. In the same manner, in the sky of our heart, divine qualities like *sath*, *chith* and *ananda* are always present, but when bad qualities like selfishness and ego are present, they act like the clouds and hide the good qualities. We should promote divine qualities like *sath*, *chith* and *ananda*. The human body is not an ordinary thing. It is like the temple of God. This body is also like a chariot for God. This chariot cannot be empty. In the chariot, the one who has the form of the *Atma* is the God. It is in this context that we say that God, who is ancient, because he is eternal, is living in this new human body. In this sacred and divine temple, the human body, the effulgent *Atma* is living. Like every river flows to join the sea, the human life must also flow to join its ultimate destination, the ocean of divinity.

There is an example for this. The sun's rays fall on an ocean and convert the water into vapour. If we directly take ocean water, it will taste salty. But, when the ocean water is converted into vapour, because of sun's rays, and if this vapour turns into clouds and rain, this rain water will taste very sweet. Here we should ask how and wherefrom does the rain water get its sweet taste while the water from the ocean tastes saltish? The water of the oceans can be compared to knowledge obtained from books while the water from rains can be compared to knowledge obtained from experience. When the sun's rays fall on ocean water, it gets converted into the clouds which may be compared with truth. From these clouds, which we have called truth, will come the rain drops in the form of love. The drops of love gather together and form a river of

bliss. The river of bliss, which is made up of drops of love, will go and merge in the ocean again. There is no other alternative for this water. That is why it is said that all rivers must merge in the ocean. The water that has fallen on the earth has ultimately to merge with the ocean. But, today man has forgotten his final destination. He is running after illusions. Today, human beings are not able to recognise where they have come from and where they are going to. If we take an envelope, we must write the "from address" or the "to address." If both are not written, the envelope will simply go to the wastepaper basket. In this context, we should understand wherefrom the envelope of our life has come or where it is going to. Life, which is not aware of either the "from" address or the "to" address, is merely a waste of time. Out of the time which man spends in the thought of his relations, friends and others, out of the time which man spends in the thought of acquiring wealth and fame, if he spends even a fraction in the thought of God, he will not have to face the hell. The doors of heaven will open for such a person. It is not right for us to spend all our time in evil thoughts about others. It is always better to think of God rather than about others. Thus, the three divine qualities of *Sath*, *Chith*, and *Ananda* must be promoted. We should examine the manner in which we can promote these qualities. We must become people with good qualities. Through good conduct, such sacred ideas will begin to sprout in us. So long as we keep our attachment to the created world around us, we cannot get such good qualities. The eyes see bad things, the ears hear wrong things, the words are such that they criticise others. So long as we have such faulty vision and faulty talk, we can never develop good conduct. On the other hand, if our sensory organs are surrendered to God, we may get good conduct through the grace of God. While it is not an easy thing to acquire, yet by effort, man can achieve these qualities. Whether we receive praise or blame, gain or loss, sorrow or

pleasure, we will have to struggle to get the grace of God by our good conduct.

In this manner, the *gopikas* surrendered all their life to Krishna. On one occasion, Radha said that there was nothing else for her in her life. She said, “Although I have not even a shelter in the world, I am bearing this life for your sake. I cannot live, if I am separated from you even for one moment. You are like the eyeballs in my eyes. You are always like a baby in my thoughts. I cannot have any life without you.” When the *gopikas* thus regard Krishna as a child, is there any chance of their devotion taking an unsacred form. Truly, if we want to understand the sacred contents of *Bhagavatha*, we will be able to do so only through devotion. If we take our distorted vision and use it to understand *Bhagavatha*, it will also appear distorted. As your thoughts are, so is the result. The result will be based on the thoughts which an individual has. Radha described Krishna as the eyeball in her eye. Here also, there is a meaning which you should recognise. When you are standing in front of me and I am standing in front of you, it is natural that I see my image in your eye and you see your image in my eye. On the other hand, if we are not looking at each other, then you cannot see your image in my eye and I cannot see my image in your eye. This statement of Radha, therefore, means that the *gopikas* and Krishna are inseparably situated close to each other. Krishna is present in their heart as if he has been printed on the paper of their heart. Their thoughts are externally fixed on the name and form of Krishna. All their work is dedicated to Krishna. His worship and devotion to him have become firm in their minds. That is why the *gopikas* were capable of such sacrifice and self-surrender. They were experiencing Krishna with all their mind. On the other hand, our devotion today is distorted and our view of Radha’s devotion is also distorted. We may dress like Radha and talk like Radha,

but you cannot get a heart like that of Radha. Even if we do not put on any of these external forms to imitate Radha, if you can have the heart of Radha, then Krishna will reside in your heart. Our entire life, unfortunately, depends on exhibitionism; and we seem to derive pleasure from such conduct. Students, it is great ignorance to give up the bird in your hand and go after the bird in the bush. God does not exist in some separate place outside you. When you make an attempt to turn your vision and thoughts inward, you will see divinity within yourself. Although we may accept external actions as the first step, we should make progress to a higher step. On the other hand, if we always remain on the first step, when are we going to rise higher. It is only when we recognise the need to go higher, can our life become purposeful. The ideas that are contained in us are moving away like the cold wind or the clouds. Like a flower which blossoms in the morning and fades away in the evening, our life will fade away due to old age. We are forgetting our duty. Having got such a sacred opportunity, it is unfortunate that we are frittering away our life in the pursuit of useless things. We have been learning for the past one month about the sacredness of *Bhagavatha*. We must learn to surrender all our actions to God, and only then can we say that we have learnt something. Gradually, the attachment to external body connections should become less and less. We should reach a stage when we can accept the Krishna aspect as being present in every one. I have said many times that you are really not one person but three persons: the one you think you are, the one others think you are and the one you really are. If you spend all your time in the aspect of what you think you are, namely your body, how will you ever think of God? We should gradually turn the external manifestation of devotion to true inner devotion. Here, *ahimsa* has been mentioned as the first flower in this worship. We generally think that *ahimsa* means

not causing harm to some living being. *Ahimsa* is not just this. Even bad vision, or bad hearing or bad talk is also *ahimsa*.

Ahimsa really means that you should not cause harm to anyone through your vision, hearing or talking. Buddha also said “*Ahimsa Paramo dharma*.” On the basis of what Buddha said, Gandhi adopted this path. He interpreted *ahimsa* as that which does not cause any harm to any living object. After some time, he realised that *himsa* is done even if any harm is done either by vision, or by hearing, or even by talking. On one occasion, the cow which he was looking after had a serious disease. Several doctors looked at the cow and decided that the cow would not live much longer. When Gandhi realised this, he suggested that an injection be given to end the life of the cow. This was because he thought that even looking at the suffering of the cow is *himsa* for those who look at the suffering. We should interpret *ahimsa* as not causing any harm or *himsa* to any individual by any means. In this manner, young students, both boys and girls should be prepared to enter into society and do the right kind of service. In the very first instance, you must try and understand the sacred nature of your country. As soon as one is born, one recognises his father and mother. So also, we should regard the *dharma* or righteousness and sacredness of our country. We should regard the history and culture of our country as our father and mother. Students of today do not know about the history of our country, and they know much less about her culture. This means that the students of today are in the unfortunate position of not being able to recognise their own parents. Truly, one’s motherland is more important than ever the parents who gave birth to you. Students should recognise that the body is only a reflection of the country. The society is in a very degraded state. The sacredness of our culture is becoming tarnished. Students should come forward to revitalise the sacredness of the country.

31. Brahman Is Ananda: Anando Brahman

This motherland of ours has given birth to a number of great people who have spread her name and fame all over the continents and the world. We have established our independence after driving away the outside rulers and earned a great reputation for her learning and scholarship. This country of ours has also been known for its fine arts, scriptures, culture and traditions. Since you have been born in this great country, the responsibility for maintaining her glorious traditions is on your shoulders, boys and girls.

I will give you the quintessence of all Vedanta in one sentence. ‘The Atma that is present in all living beings is one—and the only one—and that is no other than you.’

That was the early morning time. The environment was such that the mind was put at ease, because of the cool breeze. The rising sun gave the entire sky a golden colour. In this very peaceful atmosphere, a thought was generated in the mind of Bhrigu. In this sacred atmosphere, the mind of Bhrigu was indeed constantly generating sacred thoughts. Who is *Brahma*? Who discovered this aspect of *Brahma*? What constitutes *Brahma*? Who is responsible for all this creation? In this manner, from moment to moment, Bhrigu was troubled with ideas and filled with the desire to learn the answers to such questions. Bhrigu made the firm determination to get at the answers. Unable to contain himself any longer, he went to his father to seek an answer. His father Varuna was an all-knowing person. He prayed to his father to give him the

knowledge that he was seeking. Varuna did not have any objection to give answers to such questions, but in those days, the environment was such that the answers to such questions were to be sought by the students themselves. If a *guru* clears the doubts of the disciple as soon as they arise, then the disciple will lose all capacity to seek and search for answers. Every individual must be given some independence to seek answers to such questions and satisfy his curiosity. In this manner, Varuna wanted to give such an opportunity to Bhrigu. He gave him only a brief outline and said, “*Brahma* is one in whom all creation started and in whom all creation will merge. He is also the one who sustains all Creation.” Having received these indications, Bhrigu went back to the forest and after a great deal of thought came to the conclusion “*Annam Brahma.*” He thought that man is born out of food, man lives on food and food sustains man. Ultimately, man dies because of what he eats, and so he came to the conclusion that ‘food is a form of *Brahma*’ and returned home. He came home and asked his father if what he has learnt was the truth or whether it was merely a reflection of his ignorance. The father said that he had not yet recognised the true significance of *Brahman* and suggested that he go back to the forest to seek further answers. He went back to the forest and contemplated for some time. He began to wonder if man can live by food alone. If there is no life in man, can the body enjoy the food that is kept before him. He therefore concluded that life is more important and concluded that “*Pranam Brahman.*” He made several attempts to reach this conclusion and came again to his father. Again his father said that the answer was not correct and suggested that he should make further enquiry. Here we may wonder if it is right for the father to keep on sending his son back to the forest without giving him the correct answer. A true seeker of truth should be prepared to undergo any amount of trouble to get at the truth. The teachers of those days believed that each person—be he

their son or some one else—should undergo all the trouble necessary to learn the truth. The *gurus* of those days were such that they recognised this aspect. Bhrigu went back to the forest and in many ways was making attempts to learn the truth of *Brahman*. He asked himself if food and life were available, would man be happy and contented. Would it be right to conclude that man is born only for food and sleep. He came to the conclusion that in order to understand life, one's mind is most important. If mind was not present, we can never understand human nature. If there is no mind, one cannot understand the connection that should exist between man and man. Mind, alone, is responsible for bondage and liberation of a human being. He thus came to the conclusion that mind is the form of *Brahman*. He returned to his father and reported to him his conclusion. Again the father said that he should go back to the forest and seek the truth. Bhrigu did so and thought that if man has not got the ability to distinguish right from wrong, his life will become useless even if he has food, wealth and mind. One should be able to distinguish the permanent from the impermanent. Sometimes we also accept this and say, in common parlance, that if a man has no *Buddhi*, he is useless. In this context, Bhrigu came to the conclusion that *Buddhi* is *Brahman*. This was referred to by him as "*Vignanam Brahma*." When he came back to his father and reported this conclusion, the father was still not happy and suggested further enquiry. Bhrigu went back to the forest again. A true *jijnasu* will have such intense desire to seek an answer to his questions. Without such concentration, one cannot achieve true satisfaction. Today, our concentration is on transient and impermanent things. The *Maharishis* and students of the earlier days had immense concentration on their objective. This is the true destination of man. This is the secret of man and should be the final destination of man. After having acquired human birth, he should make an attempt to understand divinity. Bhrigu continued his enquiry

and came to the conclusion that however learned a man may be, unless he has bliss and happiness, his life is useless. The purpose of life is *ananda* and life comes from *ananda*. As a water bubble is born in water, grows in water and merges in water, man has to be born in *ananda* and sustain himself by *ananda* and finally merge in *ananda*. Bhrigu came to the conclusion that this *ananda* was *Brahma*. He was filled with such *ananda* and this began to grow. He did not come back to the father. After a few days, the father himself came to see him. Bhrigu was fully immersed in bliss and, for such a person, there is no father, or mother or relatives. The father recognised this state of bliss and blessed his son.

Fathers and sons of those days were such that they were after truth. Nowadays, if the children ask any questions about the aspect of *Brahma*, the parents will curb such curiosity by saying that they should not waste their time. They are told to think of such things only after getting old. Today, many people who are preaching the aspect of *Brahman* will go nowhere because they are subservient to the worldly desires. There a small story here. Nanak was propagating sacred ideas of God and even the Muslims were attracted by his teachings. It appeared as if the teachings of Nanak were acceptable to all religions. He was one who was clearly indicating the path that one should adopt. After some time, some religious leaders started worrying that all the Muslims may take to Nanak's religion. They carried complaints to King Akbar and created tales about Nanak which would influence the King against Nanak. They wanted Akbar to punish Nanak. Akbar however had a very steady mind and a great respect for all religions. Even though the religious leaders complained about Nanak, he did not believe them. Akbar decided that he should talk to Nanak directly and assess the situation. He sent for Nanak, but Nanak would not come to meet kings who rule over the material world. He

said that he would go only to devotees. He said that he is a free person moving in God's Kingdom and would not come to meet Akbar. Such a reply further excited the religious leaders. They were planning and inquiring further to trouble Nanak. However, Akbar sent word to Nanak, again telling him that the next day there would be prayers in honour of God at the mosque and requested that Nanak attend the prayers. He also sent a palanquin to carry Nanak. However, Nanak thought it very arrogant to go to God's abode in a palanquin and walked to the mosque. Much before others came there, he unobtrusively sat in a corner. The religious leaders began to recite prayers; and as soon as this started, Nanak laughed very loudly. All those assembled there felt very angry. Nanak was laughing so loudly that people were not even able to hear the prayers. After some time, Akbar began to pray and Nanak laughed even more loudly. All others who were assembled there felt angry that he was humiliating even Akbar. After that, Akbar went and asked Nanak softly why he had laughed, when the prayers were being recited. Nanak said, "Although the priest was reciting prayers, his thoughts were in his home where the child was having fever. The priest's mind was directed towards his home. If the mind says one thing and he does something else, he cannot be a religious leader. This is not helpful at all." Akbar went and asked the priest if, in truth, his mind was thinking of his son when he was saying the prayers. The priest confirmed that as the child was suffering from high fever, he was thinking of his son even while reciting the prayers. Akbar then asked Nanak why his laughter continued even when he started to pray. Nanak then said, "Surely you know why I laughed. Before you came here, several horses were sent to you by the king of Panchala, and you have a great liking towards horses. Although you were praying here, your thoughts were on the horses. Is this not true?" After Nanak gave this answer about his laughter, Akbar helped Nanak spread his religion and gave

him all support. In the prayers, that we undertake, we go on striking at the mosquitoes soon after we start the prayer. Because religious leaders like Nanak of earlier days had the power to concentrate, they were called *Mahatmas*. Their thought, word and deed were totally united. Today, it has become difficult for man to even live as man. Because of the advances in science, man is learning to fly like a bird in the sky, swim like a fish under water, but, unfortunately, he has not learnt to live like a man on earth. If we cannot live like a man on earth, what is it that we achieve by living like a bird in the air? That is why we say, "How many are born as human beings? How many become human beings after being born? How many of them, having been born as human beings, have given up the right conduct? If a human being gets to be described as such, just because of his birth, then who is the monkey?" One does not become a human being by birth. One should show that he is a human being by his conduct and behaviour.

The body may be that of a human being; but in him, there is no right conduct at all. We should, therefore, shape ourselves as human beings. There is an example for this. There is a microphone here. If there is no current in this microphone, it is useless. In the same manner, in the body of a human being, only when there is a current in the form of divinity, will it have any distinctive feature. The body is like a negative aspect. The divinity in the body is the positive. It is only when the negative and the positive come together, there will be some good. Today, the negative is in good shape, but the positive is totally missing. In such a body, how can we expect to promote the righteous conduct. It is easy to understand why righteousness has disappeared. If there is a head with bad thoughts, if there are ears which are willing to listen to bad things, if you want to pry into others' activities, how can justice and truth even remain with you. If we want to live like human beings, we

should, if necessary, with the help of elders, take at least one or two good aspects of life and put them into daily practice. Students, in the sacred history of our motherland, there have been many sacred texts like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*. Ninety percent of the students have no idea of these sacred books. If you are children of Bharath and if you do not know the sacredness of Bharath, how can you call yourselves citizens of Bharath? Truly, you should recognise the glory and sacredness of your motherland. If you do not do so, your life is as good as living death. I hope that at least from today, you will recognise this sacred truth and that you will be prepared to serve the society through the Sai organisations. You should recognise that the Sai organisations represent the essence of all religions. There is no use having stayed here for one month if you do not put what you have learnt here into practice.

32. Control Of Senses Is Most Important For Young Students

The form of pure love is Brahman: Brahman is full of divine love. If love is joined with love, it becomes discipline. If one is full of love, one is entitled to become unique in his own way.

This great motherland of ours has earned reputation going far beyond our boundaries. This great country has defeated western rulers and acquired freedom. This country has been known for its art and culture. It is known for her traditions and Sastras. People who are born in this land have the responsibility of maintaining the traditions and dharmic reputation. Young students, this responsibility is on you.

Without Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Shanthi whatever education you may have, the value of that education is zero. Without Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Shanthi whatever gifts you may give, their value is zero. Without Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Shanthi whatever positions of authority you may occupy, the result is zero, For the mansion of Sanatana Dharma, Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Shanthi constitute the four pillars of foundation. What other truth can I convey to you good people, who have assembled here.

Dear Students, boys and girls, teachers, people in positions of authority in the field of education:

Today, many problems are confronting us, and there are very few amongst our leaders who can help us clear the confusion. Every aspect and every sphere of life is full of problems. Even education is not able to help in the solution of

these problems. The ideal which education is demonstrating has taken a crooked form.

The creative ability that should exist in the field of education has broken to pieces. Man is performing his journey along a path where he is not able to recognise the true aspect of human nature. Today, the entire field of education appears to be covered with a rough blanket. While eating our food out of such a rough blanket, it is foolish of us to think that our food should not contain any bits and pieces of cotton or fibre. If we think so, it will be an illusory belief on our part. The human nature of today is such that we are not able to see any spirit of sacrifice or adherence to truth in it. In these circumstances, the students should enter into the spheres of worldly matters, ethical and spiritual, and set themselves as ideal examples. In fact, these summer classes are arranged with that objective and hope. Truly, the essence of the right type of education is that it should give you the ability to stand on your own legs. Good education is to enable you to get rid of servitude in all aspects. The very object of correct education should be to enable you to have a vision of your divine self. When man loses his ability to sacrifice and his ability to conduct himself in a selfless manner, the education he receives will become utterly useless. So long as we depend only on economic prosperity, this will be our fate. What cannot be achieved through work, what cannot be achieved through wealth, can be achieved through sacrifice. The immortality that you wish, and the divinity that you wish to reach, can be achieved through sacrifice.

In Bharath, hard work is the main *Yagna*. We need a large number of people who are willing to do hard work. The determination to shed laziness and take to hard work and accept divinity should sprout in all of you. The culture of Bharath and the traditions of our country should evoke a spirit of faith

and belief in us; and, thereby, we should recognise the sacredness of our own self. The field of politics, or material prosperity or even education cannot offer a short cut for us. Man's broad mind, sacred views and hard work are very necessary and constitute the only path to take us to our destination. We must push away ego. We must accept sacredness. We must recognise the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. Only when we can take such a path, this sacred country of Bharath will prosper and march into glory. Students have to make a long journey in their life. Students should take courage, should take the divine path and become broadminded with good and helpful ideas. They should become heroes and remove injustice, unkindness, and untruth from the society. Students should not become cowards. They should push away their weaknesses and take a leap forward with faith in God and help society. If we can light one bright lamp in one house, the entire street will be lighted. In a similar manner, if each student has in his heart a bright light, there will then be no doubt whatsoever that the whole community will be led from darkness to light. Today, either for the weaknesses or for the faulty ideas in the minds of students, they are not responsible. Because in the tender minds and soft hearts of these students, outsiders make politics enter and the students get so excited. Students should decide for themselves what path they would like to take and what destination they would like to reach. They should guide their own conduct in consonance with that decision. They should regard service to community as their main objective. Discipline and adherence to sacred work must be promoted by students. Discipline is the most important path for the students. They should respect their parents and their motherland. For one month, in this peaceful place, you have listened to sacred ideas given to you by learned and pure-minded elders. What you have learnt here and what you have experienced here and the bliss that you have enjoyed here should be recapitulated by

you in all your life. Truly, if you have any problems, you should make an attempt to solve them peacefully. You should not convert every problem into a violent situation. By having individual ideas and selfish interests, you should not bring blemish to the whole country. The peace of the world should be in your mind. There may be some problems in the case of individuals. This is natural for students. Control of their senses is most important. In fact, this is the basic difference between a man and an animal. Only if man can control his senses, can he be better than an animal. One should not let his mind go uncontrolled. One should control and train the mind in such a way that it will be subservient to him. For the process, an amount of *Yoga* is necessary. Students like you should promote a healthy and sacred mind. Only if you are able to do this, will our country be able to move along a prosperous path. If you go along the wrong path, the motherland will suffer a thousand times more than what your parents suffer, if you do not progress in your education. Every student should shape himself as an ideal example. I have told you many times that a damaged car which comes for repair and replacement of various parts like nuts, bolts, screws, etc., should, after repair, be in a good condition when it is sent back home. In a similar manner, you have all come here with the need for repair. You have come here a month ago as a damaged car. You have been repaired in this workshop and your old and mean ideas have been replaced. When you go back to your homes, you should try to move the car of your life with clean ideas and good conduct. You should no longer have evil vision, faulty words or bad thoughts. You should do good work and set yourself as an example to others. If after going home, you still conduct yourself with the same old bad habits, what is the benefit of coming to the summer classes? You will also be setting a bad example to your friends. You will have lost all goodwill. Your time, effort and physical strength will have been wasted and become unsa-

cred. Students, what you have learnt, acquired and seen here during the past one month should be put into practice for the rest of your life. Many things which you should know and which you should accept in practice for your daily life have been taught to you in the last month. You should not think that the summer classes have come to an end. The education that you have to get is a continuous and life long one. Do not have the thought that from tomorrow we are bidding you farewell. This place always welcomes sacred ideas and sacred thoughts. If you have imprinted in your heart, the experiences that you have had here, the good that you have acquired here will always be with you. Spiritual aspects are well above worldly affairs. Wherever you go, the experience that you have had here will come to you in good stead and help you whenever you need them. Many elders have told you about ideals, and you should attempt to put them into practice. I am hoping that you will do so, and I bless you that you may be able to do so.