

27. You and The Cosmos

How can Sai be pleased with you

If your thoughts are not good

If your words are not pleasing

If your actions are not right?

Good thoughts, sweet speech

And right conduct--these alone

Constitute true education.

To lead a purposeful and worthy life, you have to recognise the true meaning of the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect and know how to use them effectively.

All the troubles of mankind are due to the fact that ninety-nine percent of the people lead lives without understanding this truth. The body, the senses, the mind and the intellect are only instruments for the individuals and have no *Chaitanya* (consciousness) of their own. The body is inert. Beginning as a mere mass of flesh, it grows into a handsome boy, an attractive youth and becomes a decrepit old man in later years. Because of these changes in the body, man imagines that the body has consciousness and is not an inert mass. But it is not the body that is the cause of this growth and change. To cite an example, if you sweep your house everyday and throw the dust into a dustbin, in due course there will be a big dung heap. Can consciousness be attributed to the dung heap because of its growth over a period? Likewise the body grows on account of the food consumed by it. See what happens to the body when the food is denied for some days. It ceases to grow; in fact, it begins to deteriorate.

The five elements vary in their subtlety

The body is only a temporary rest house for the Spirit. *Vedanta* declares: "The body is a shrine for the eternal Spirit inhabiting it." It is necessary in this context to know what enables the body, the mind, the senses and the intellect to develop or to deteriorate. The whole Cosmos is made up of *Pancha Bhoothas* (five basic elements: Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth). Their subtle qualities are represented by sound, touch, form, taste and smell. All these have emerged from *Sath-chith-ananda* (Being Awareness-Bliss), the Primal Source.

Akasa (Space or ether) provides the initial impulse. It is comparable to an infinite container. The other four elements air, water, fire and earth--are contained in it. These elements vary in their subtlety. Water is subtler than earth and is more expansive and lighter than earth. Fire is subtler than water and air is subtler than fire and more pervasive. *Akasa* is subtler than air and is all-pervasive. Each of these elements is covered by a *Kosa* (sheath). The mind, the intellect, the will and the ego are enveloped by these sheaths.

Akasa (space or ether) is activated by what is called *Athi-gathi* (very high-speed motion or vibrations). These vibrations, by their movement, give rise to air. The movement of air results in fire or heat. It is a scientific fact that friction causes heat, as in the case of rubbing of the palms. To generate heat air is necessary. When the heat cools off, water is produced. Fluids solidify into earth. Hence, the starting point for the five elements is *Akasa* (space). These elements have come

into existence for sustaining the universe and demonstrating the omnipresence and omniscience of the Divine.

***Prana* functions between the mind and body**

In the human being, the *Antha Karana* (the inner psycho-somatic instrument) is made up of the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego. The ego is linked to the *Prana* (life principle). It is encased in the *Vijnanamaya Kosa* (the sheath of integrated awareness). The mind is linked to the *Chitta* (Will) and is encased in the *Manomaya Kosa* (the mental sheath). Thus between the individual soul and the *Prana* (vital principle), the mind functions. The life principle functions between the mind and the body. The *Buddhi* (intellect) functions above the level of the mind. The vital principle functions below the mind. Both the intellect and the *Prana* are surcharged with *Agni* (heat). It is their combined presence in the body that accounts for the heat in the body.

The mind should not be treated as something trivial. Man comprehends the world through the mind and hence its workings should be completely watched. Because the mind is located between the *Buddhi* (intellect) and the *Prana* (vital principle)---both of which are filled with the fire principle---it tends to melt. The presiding deity for the mind is the Moon. The Moon represents coolness and fluidity. Fluids like water have a tendency to flow down and find their level. Fire, on the contrary, has a tendency to go up. The mind, because of its watery nature, has the tendency to move downwards to get interested in petty things. Efforts have to be made to make the mind look upwards.

The primal source of the five elements and man

It should, however, be remembered, that the mind, the intellect, the will and the ego are made up of the five elements, which are all emanations from the Supreme--the *Sath-chith-ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). This is their Primal Source from which they have emanated like innumerable sparks from a fire. From this source they emerge as billions of atoms and assume countless forms. Man should realise that he has also come from the same Divine Source.

Endowed with the human form and gifted with sense organs, the mind and the will, man nevertheless is failing to remember the source from which he came. What is the cause for the body? The root cause is ignorance. Ignorance robs man of the power of discrimination. Lacking this capacity, man tends to inflate his *Ahamkara* (ego). Egoism breeds hatred, which is the cause of attachment and desires. All *karmas* (actions) are born of attachment and desires. Hence, the primary cause of birth in a human body is one's *Karma*.

The Cosmic delusion

What is the ignorance that afflicts man? It is the false vision which makes one mistake the unreal for the real and the real for the unreal. An episode in the *Mahabharata* illustrates how this happens. Recognising the supreme virtuousness of Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, Maya, the architect of the Asuras, offered to build a unique mansion for him in his capital at the time of the *Rajasooya Yajna* performed by Dharmaraja. This mansion, the Maya Sabha had one remarkable feature. In it where there was no water, a pond would appear to exist. Where there was a pool, there would be no appearance of water. Where there was a door, no door would seem to exist and a door would be present in an apparently blank wall. It was unique in producing delusions of this kind. Duryodhana, Dussasana and other Kauravas came to see this mansion. Imagining that there was water in one place they lifted their clothes only to find there was no

water at all. At another place they drenched themselves because they stridently walked into a pool not seeing the water in it.

What is the inner meaning of this story of the Maya Sabha? The cosmos itself is one vast Maya Sabha (a mansion of delusion). Attachment and hatred are represented by Duryodhana and Dussasana. Dussasana means one who is the violator of the rule of law. Duryodhana is one who misuses his strength and abilities. In every man, there are these traits of Duryodhana and Dussasana. In life everyone has to adhere to certain regulations. In the Sathya Sai Institute, for instance, there are regulations relating to conduct of students in the hostel and elsewhere. It is only when these regulations are observed strictly that they can call themselves *Vidhyarthi* (seekers of knowledge). When students misuse their talents and skill, they become weak and go astray.

Misuse of senses will lead to grief

How does this misuse take place? The eyes are misused by looking at undesirable objects. The tongue is misused by indulging in evil talk. The ears, the heart and the hand are all misused in different ways. Misuse occurs whenever a divinely endowed capacity or talent is used for wrongful purposes. It is misdirection of energy. If students indulge in such misuse, they turn into Duryodhanas and Dussasanas and come to grief like them. Hence, no one should misuse any of the powers with which he is endowed. It amounts to an affront to the Divine which is the source of all powers.

Everyone thinks that it is his sense organs; his eyes, ears, etc.--that enable him to experience and comprehend the world. How true is this? In the dream state none of the senses is functioning. And yet, one has the experience of seeing, talking, hearing, walking and doing other actions. What is the eye that sees in the dream? What is the tongue that talks? In the dream state the mind does all the functions of the sense organs, which are dormant at that time. When you feel in a dream that you are walking through a forest, it is not your legs that are walking. It is the mind which does the walking. It is the mind which assumes all the functions of the senses. The entire world is the projection of the mind. When the mind is properly directed, all the senses will be under control. When you water the roots of a tree, all the branches and leaves will get the benefit.

Cause of man's mental aberrations

The mind is subject to fancies and aberrations. In poor light you mistake a rope for a snake and are filled with fear. When light is brought, you find there is no snake. The appearance and disappearance of fear are entirely the result of mental aberrations. The rope alone was there all the time. The idea of the snake was superimposed on it by the fancies of the mind.

The Brahman cannot be experienced unless one gets rid of the delusions of the mind. How is one to get rid of the delusions? By developing faith in the omnipresence of the Divine. This faith can grow when one realises that every object in the world needs a basis for its existence and support. The Divine is the basis and the support for the entire cosmos.

The Vedas are the authority for accepting the Divine as the source of everything in creation. If one can accept the authority of the ordinary almanac for recognising a particular date in the calendar, why should one refuse to accept the authority of the *Vedas* with regard to the nature of the *Atma* (Self) and the Brahman (Supreme Omni-self)? There is authority in the *Vedas* for everything that we experience in daily life. The *Vedas* have recognised the uniqueness of human

birth and proclaimed the existence of God. It is illogical for man to accept on the authority of the scriptures his uniqueness as a human being and at the same time deny the existence of God.

How misconceptions and doubts can arise may be seen from a scientific example. When you hold the mirror before you, your image is reflected by the mirror. But the image is not in the mirror. The reflection is seen because of the mercury-coated surface at the back of the mirror. You imagine also that it is a true reflection of yourself. This is not true. In the image, your right eye appears as your left eye and the left eye as the right eye. Hence, the image is not the true reflection of yourself.

Nature is the vast mirror of the Divinity

Likewise, Nature is a vast mirror. You regard as real the varied objects you see in Nature. But they are all different forms of the Divine. "The One willed to become Many." This is the truth recognised by all religions. But man forgets this truth and leads a life divorced from faith in the Divine.

Students! You may yourself enquire into the basis of this creation. To start with, you try to find out what causes dreams. Some may say, "thoughts" are the cause. Some others may attribute dreams to the kind of food that is consumed. Neither of these is correct. The fact is, it is the sleep that is the cause of dreams. So to the question, "What is the cause of creation?" The answer is: *Ajnana* (ignorance). For example: during the summer, the land gets heated up and is completely barren. As soon as there is a rainfall, things begin to sprout and the land looks green. Wherefrom did the sprouts come? Before sprouting the seeds remained in the earth and when the rains came, they began to sprout. If there had been no seeds earlier, the sprouting would not have occurred.

Results of actions are inescapable

Likewise, *Karma* (past deeds) is the seed for human birth. Your present life is a reaction, resound and reflection of your past actions. Therefore, you are advised to, "Be good, see good and do good." When you perform any action you do not think about the long-term consequences. You are preoccupied with the concerns of the moment. But when the final results come you are frightened. Whether results are pleasant or unpleasant they are inescapable. If sugar is dissolved in water, even if you think it is poison, it will only do you good. But if poison is put into water and you drink it, thinking that it is sugarcane juice, it will be fatal. If you regard something bad as good and act on it, the results are bound to be bad. The results are based on your actions and not on your fancies.

It is his conduct that is most important for every person. Conduct is determined by the state of the mind. Instead of giving way to promptings of the senses, every action should be done as a sacred offering to the Divine. You should be indifferent to censure or praise. Such equanimity can come only from faith in God. Lacking this faith and filled with the conceit that he is the doer of everything, man gets immersed in sorrow and trouble. The one who boasts about his achievements should recognise equally that he is the author of his misfortunes. He cannot claim to be the doer and at the same time deny responsibility for the consequences of his actions.

Do your duty leaving the results to God

Hence, in all your actions whether good or bad, do your duty, leaving the results to God. The flowers that you may offer in your *puja* may not please Sai. It is what you offer from the lotus of your heart that will please Sai. Consider everything in Nature as gifts of God. And when you

offer anything, have the sacred feeling that you are offering God what he has given to you. When you feel and act in this way, your life will be filled with peace and joy.

Have the firm conviction that the cosmos and God are not different. Look upon creation as the manifestation of the Divine and make proper use of your opportunities to experience the Divine.

In your studies, try to combine spiritual discipline with academic pursuits. Only then will you find fulfilment in education. Every one of you should become an ideal person. You must develop the habit of examining yourself and correcting yourself. Self-correction and self-punishment are as important as Self-realisation.

Your senses, like the eyes, the ears, the tongue, are God-given gifts. They should be used only for sacred purposes and should not be misused. There is only one royal road to realising God. It is the path of Divine love. You have come from the Divine and your destiny is the merger with the Divine. Entertain only sacred thoughts and engage yourselves only in sacred deeds. Thereby you will be sanctifying your lives.

Discourse at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute Students' Hostel, Vidhyagiri, 2 Oct 1988

Sai has come in order to achieve the Supreme task of uniting as one family all mankind, through the bond of brotherhood; of affirming and illumining the Atmic reality of each being in order to reveal the Divine, which is the basis on which the entire Cosmos rests; and of instructing all to recognise the common Divine heritage that binds man to man, so that man can rid himself of the animal and rise to the Divinity which is his goal. I am the embodiment of Love; Love is My instrument. Those who have recognised My Love and experienced that Love can assert that they have glimpsed My reality, for the path of Love is the royal road that leads mankind to Me.

Sathya Sai Baba