

## 11. God's response

DEAR students! The sandalwood tree without any feeling of bitterness, imparts its fragrance even to the axe that fells it. Divinity responds in the same manner. Some persons, blinded by their ignorance, arrogance and folly, may say all sorts of things about God. They may even imagine thereby that they have assailed God. But God remains totally unaffected. Even to such bad and evil-minded persons, He offers His blessings and benediction.

Good and bad are obverse and reverse of every object. The citizens of Ayodhya had great love and devotion for Sri Rama. However, despite all their entreaties, appealing to him to stay in Ayodhya, Rama decided to leave for the forest. When Rama did not respond to their appeals, all their love and devotion turned into bitterness and resentment. "We used to think that Rama's heart was sweet as nectar. We felt that this heart was soft as butter. We could never bring ourselves to think that he would be so hard-hearted." Such were the bitter feelings of the citizens of Ayodhya. This was the reverse of what they had felt about Rama earlier.

### **Good and bad exist in every object**

Every object carries with it good and bad, gain and loss, the praiseworthy and unworthy and similar pairs of opposites. Separation and association are both causes of sorrow for the devout. Separation from good persons causes sorrow. Association with bad people is distressing to them. The most important *sadhana* for man is to seek the company of the good and eschew association with the evil-minded.

Men today seek the fruits of good deeds without engaging themselves in good actions. They wish to avoid the consequences of sinful actions while indulging in such actions. If you want to avoid the results of bad deeds, you should avoid such actions. If you desire the fruits of meritorious deeds, you must do meritorious acts.

Man should develop the qualities of love and forbearance. Love grows by giving and forgiving. Selfishness grows by getting and forgetting. Students! You should realise even at this tender age the infinite preciousness of life. There are innumerable things which you have to learn in life. You must make good use of every minute of your time. See that your hearts remain pure and unsullied.

Lord Dakshinamurthy conveyed His message through silence. He seldom resorted to speech. By mere sight He could impart the profoundest truths about the universe and the Divine. On one occasion, in the course of his travels, He reached the shore of the ocean. He was delighted to listen to the *Omkara* vibrations coming from the ocean. The ocean represents the *Sabda Brahmam* (primal divine sound). It symbolises the grandeur and majesty of the Divine.

Dakshinamurthy drew a lesson from the endless waves reaching the shore from the ocean. He noticed that as soon as some rubbish fell on the ocean, it threw it out on the shore by a series of waves without retaining it even for a brief moment. Dakshinamurthy questioned the ocean: "How selfish you are! You are boundless and fathomless. Can't you make some room for this poor stuff?. It is highly selfish on your part not to tolerate this poor thing despite your vastness." The ocean gave a fitting answer: "Lord! There is nothing unknown to you. If today I allow this piece of dirt to remain with me, ere long I will be filled with flotsam and jetsam and my entire form will be changed. Hence from the very beginning I have to cast off anything that is dirty and polluting. Only then I can remain pure."

### **Stand up for truth**

Likewise every person should keep out even the smallest bad thought the moment it seeks to enter the mind. To treat it as small and inconsiderable would mean allowing such things to enter the mind and in due course fill it entirely. In the process, the entire nature of the person is changed. His human essence is undermined. Hence every effort must be made to keep out all bad thoughts and feelings and promote human qualities as much as possible.

Through very small effort great things can be accomplished. A huge serpent can be destroyed by a large number of small ants. Do not consider yourself small. Seek to acquire the strength and determination to carry out your duties. In the world, difficulties crop up from time to time. Jealousy towards one's betters is quite common. Crows have animus against the cuckoo. Cranes jeer at swans. But neither the cuckoo nor the swan is worried. The world has many such envious beings. Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed by such experiences. You have to confront them boldly and stand up for truth.

*Discourse to the students at Prashaanthi Mandir on 18.6.1989 as Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.*

*Young people do not realise the value of health and strength they enjoy during their years of youth. They should learn to lead purposeful, unselfish lives even while they have the benefits of youth and health, instead of dissipating all their energies and talents in the pursuit of sensuous objects and evil desires.*

*BABA*