

I

Divinity protects and safeguards man

*If you cannot achieve what you want, do not waver
or get depressed. He is a realised one who is
cheerful in the face of all adversities.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! Students—Boys and Girls!

“*Ekaamsena Sthitham Jagat* (the whole universe is based on one aspect of divinity).” Just as the sun’s rays do not exist in the absence of the sun, so also the world cannot exist without divinity, the primordial basis. Here on this table you find a flower, a cup, a mike, and a handkerchief. The word ‘is’ is used to connote the existence of all these items. Here the emphasis is on the word ‘is’. There is a picture, there is a pot and there is a person. The word is proves their existence.

This ‘is’ explains the principle of divinity in full. The *shakti* (power), *leelas* (divine play), and the effulgence of God are limitless. The five elements are responsible for the protec-

tion and sustenance of the world. The first element, the earth, is the basis for mountains and hills, rivers and oceans, villages and cities, and forests. You can very well imagine the immense power of the earth, which supports all these.

Power of the elements

The earth is endowed with infinite power. Scientists have discovered that the earth rotates. True. Logically speaking, the rivers, oceans, mountains, villages, and cities should also rotate when the earth, the basis, rotates. It is not so in reality. It is only the earth that rotates. The railway track is the basis for the train to move. If the track also starts moving, what would be the plight of the passengers? From this, it can be inferred that the track is the *adhara* (basis) and the train, the *adheya* (the object based on it). The table is the basis (*adhara*) for the mike –*adheya*– to rest upon. Make an effort to understand the relationship between the support (*adhara*) and the supported object (*adheya*). The earth, which is the repository of all powers (electrical, magnetic, etc.) forms the basis, sustains, and protects all the objects on it. There is no power that is not present in the earth. The earth is able to support all the beings on it because of its infinite power.

Seen or unseen, water, the second element, is present all over the earth. It is water that sustains the life principle of humanity. It supports life on earth and is responsible for the evolution of life.

The third element, *agni* (fire), is also all-pervasive. It is present in the form of *jataragni* in the human body. It is this *jataragni* that maintains the temperature of the human body at 98.4 degrees Fahrenheit. There is fire even in the ocean. That is termed as *badabagni*. There is fire even in trees. When two

branches rub against each other, fire is generated. Fire is immanent even in a stone. Fire emerges when two stones are struck against each other. Investigations on these lines will reveal that there is no place without fire.

Similarly, the fourth and fifth elements *vayu* (wind) and the *akasha* (ether) are also all-pervasive. The *akasha* is the basis for all. It is the origin of sound. In fact, all the other elements originated from *akasha*.

Therefore, we can conclude that the divine power, which is omnipresent and omnipotent, is present in all the five elements. When the five elements themselves are so powerful, how much greater the power of God should be! Though the five elements, which are essentially divine, are present in man, he is in quest of divine power, which he feels is present elsewhere. These powers are insignificant for God, who is aware of the past, present, and future. So, make an attempt to understand the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent nature of God.

Swami has no body attachment

The whole world is also a conglomeration of the five elements. The world cannot exist in the absence of even one of the elements. Whether you see them or not, the five elements are present everywhere. Here is a small example. Though air is invisible and intangible, it is everywhere. Similarly, divinity is invisible and intangible, yet is omnipresent. Without realising the divinity within him, man becomes egotistic and feels that all his accomplishments are due to his education, intelligence, and physical prowess. But, in reality, it is the divinity that protects and safeguards man at every step from womb to tomb. No one has the power to protect one's own self. It is only the

divine power and divine will that enables man to protect himself. Only divinity has free will, none else.

Whatever God says or does is for the welfare of humanity. God is selfless. There is no trace of selfishness in God. What is the benefit accruing to the sun by rising and setting? None at all. Sunrise and sunset are for the benefit of mankind. It enables man to discharge his duties during the day and rest during the night. Similarly, every act of God is for the benefit of mankind, not for His own.

As Narasimhamurthi pointed out, Kasturi once urged Me not to neglect this body in the process of saving a devotee. I replied, "This body has come for the sake of devotees and shall be utilised for doing anything and everything for their welfare." Body attachment is human and total detachment is divine. Attachment to the body is responsible for all suffering and misery. Since God does not have any body attachment He does not attach any importance to the suffering of His body. Once He assumes a body, many things are bound to happen to the body. Whatever happens is for the welfare of the whole world.

Students' Safety Pleases Swami

Students, both boys and girls, are very good. Students participate in various activities, be it academic or sports, only with a desire to please and satisfy Swami. I am very well aware of this fact. No doubt, students strive to please Swami and make Him happy. But, they do not enquire what actually pleases and satisfies Him and makes Him happy. Will Swami be pleased if you display your valour by jumping through a ring of fire or for that matter from a lorry moving at a high speed? Will it satisfy Swami if you display your courage by doing dare-devil

stunts on motor bikes like jumping over 10-20 people lying on the ground? I am pleased when you are safe and sound and the audience are pleased and happy with your performance. He is the blessed one who conducts himself in a manner in which neither he is hurt nor others. You should be safe and secure and at the same time desist from activities, which cause apprehensions in others. This is what I want. I am pleased with *nidarsana* and not with *pradarsana* (exhibitionism). Even a small action done with a heart full of love pleases Me.

What happened on the Sports Meet day?

While returning from Bangalore (in the month of December), I instructed the Warden not to bring the boys for the Sports Meet. They attributed various reasons to this word of Mine. There may be many reasons (*karana*) but what I am interested in is the action (*karya*). After coming over here, I told the Vice Chancellor that I do not object to boys participating in various sports and games such as badminton, tennis, volleyball, etc. At the same time, I cautioned him to ensure that no harm is caused either to the participants or to the audience during the course of the programme scheduled for 11 January.

Students are tender hearted, full of noble feelings and love for Swami. They planned various programmes with a view to please Me. I was very well aware of the impending danger. But, students were not receptive to My words. I felt there was no point in advising them in such a situation. Only when they face the consequences of disobeying My command will they realise the value of My words. Till this moment nobody is aware of what exactly happened on the morning of January 11. They said that the Sports Meet was a grand success. I am also happy when you are successful. Students performed extremely

well. Each contributed to the success of this event based on his capacities and capabilities

How Swami protected the students

That morning, as I entered the stadium, I spotted two lorries. Immediately, I could visualise the danger lurking in the corner. I saw the lorries with huge scaffolding placed over them. The boys planned to perform a few acrobatic feats on them. I knew that one of the rods was not fitted properly and was about to give in. If the were to happen, the boys would suffer a major head and spinal injury. I willed the boys should be saved and decided to take it upon Myself.

Prior to this, one boy had suffered a spinal injury and had been admitted to the Manipal Hospital in Bangalore. Without any delay, I arranged for an ambulance to shift the boy to the hospital in Bangalore and gave 10,000 rupees to defray the immediate expenditure. I also ensured that our doctor accompanied him. Parents shed tears of gratitude when they came to know of the love showered by Swami on their son.

The doctor said that the boy would not be able to sit or lie down as his spinal column was badly damaged. I told him, "Don' t entertain any misgivings. Do as I say." Miraculously, by the time the boy reached the hospital, he could sit. He could sit on the bed in the hospital. He regained sensation in all his limbs, which were numb till then. No danger whatsoever. He was protected because of My infinite mercy and boundless grace. I willed that such an untoward incident should not recur. Once the spinal column is fractured, it is impossible to set it right. All students should be safe and secure. I have repeatedly declared that students are My property. I consider student welfare as My welfare and their happiness as My happiness. I

never think of My happiness and My comfort. My one concern is that the students should not be disappointed or put to any inconvenience.

A day before the Sports Meet, I had instructed four boys to surround the chariot and keep a vigil. They are also full of love and devotion for Swami. But I noticed that none of them was present at that spot. Nobody is to be blamed. No one does this deliberately. Swami is the very life-breath of the students. I asked for the chariot to be stopped. A senior devotee was driving the chariot with all sincerity, love and devotion. He stopped the vehicle in accordance with My command. Just when I was about to speak to the Vice-Chancellor, he accidentally lifted his foot from the clutch. That resulted in a jerk and I fell down in the chariot. As a result, I suffered injuries on my head, hand, and spinal column. What the boys had to face, I took it upon Myself.

A Glimpse of Swami's Divinity

Many men and women were seated in the gallery, but I took care that none noticed My injuries. I pretended as though nothing had happened. The Vice Chancellor was worried, thinking that Swami was unable to get up. I knew that any further delay would cause anxiety in the minds of devotees. So, I immediately got up, forgetting the pain, and started blessing the devotees waving My hands. The pain was very severe, and the cut on My hand was so deep as though it was pierced with a knife. Actually the sleeve of the robe covering My hand should have been torn before I got the injury. But the cloth was not torn at all. This incident gives you a glimpse of the infinite power of Divinity.

I found Myself in an awkward situation. I had to walk up to the dais without My injuries being noticed. So I willed that no one should notice My injuries, lest they should become anxious. I walked up to the dais and took My seat. But in the meanwhile the *dhoti* below the robe was drenched in blood. Concerned that the devotees may get to know of this, I walked into the bathroom discreetly. The available towels were insufficient to wipe the oozing blood. I did not want to leave the bloodstained towels in the bathroom, lest someone should notice them. Though there was excruciating pain, I washed the towels Myself with soap, squeezed them and put them up for drying. Under no circumstances do I reveal My suffering, pain, and fatigue.

Some boys were curious to know why I went to the bathroom repeatedly. I replied, "Why are you concerned? It is My job." Usually, I go to the bathroom only twice a day, morning and evening. Since it was bleeding profusely, I had to go to the bathroom five or six times in that short duration.

In the meantime, two students came and prayed that the flag may be hoisted. When I got down from the chair, the sensation was such that it seemed as though I was subjected to electric shock. I smiled at My own Divine *leela*. I could not stand firmly on the ground. I thought I should not be deluded by the attachment to the body and walked forward smilingly to hoist the flag. Then I lighted the lamp. I found Myself in an embarrassing situation. I could not sit in any posture comfortably. When I exhort all devotees to give up body attachment, I should set an example Myself in this regard. Saying this to Myself, I conducted Myself accordingly.

The Primary School children performed extremely well and desired to have a photograph with Me. Acceding to their

prayers I walked up to them to be photographed, as I did not want to disappoint them. Subsequently, I had to walk up to the playground five more times to be photographed with the remaining students. In this manner, I detached Myself from the body. My body was numb. There was no sensation whatsoever. My head was reeling. I resolved to make them happy no matter what happened to the body. I decided to keep this to Myself. Concerned that the bloodstains may be visible while returning to the dais from the playground, I ascended the steps leading directly to My seat. Is it possible for a human being to conceal such a major injury from the public gaze for a long time being amidst such a huge gathering? No. I was seated on the chair for five long hours.

Comprehend the nature of divinity

I am relating all this so that students and devotees may comprehend the nature of divinity. Anyone in My predicament would not have been in a position to sit in the chair even for a second. It would have been impossible even to put a step forward. It was as though the electric shock was piercing My body. It is the electric current that gives shock, but when I am the current Myself, where is the question of Myself being subjected to shock? With that feeling, I sat through the whole proceedings and returned to the *mandir*.

The Central Trust members followed Me, but they were not aware of what had happened to Me. I asked them to have their food. The senior devotee who drove the chariot apologised for what had happened. I told him, “Why do you worry about the past? Past is past. I am happy. Do not worry about Me.” All of them had their lunch. After the lunch, it started bleeding again. Students and band boys were waiting outside for photographs.

Again I went into the bathroom to wipe the blood. Noting this Indulal Shah cried out, “Swami, what is this?” I told him lovingly, “Indulal Shah, whatever had to happen to the body has happened.” Saying so, I showed him My injury. All of them cried out in agony. They noticed blood all over the body. I told them that I would not reveal anything in future if they expressed their sorrow like this. No one knew about it until I reached the *mandir*.

Whatever is bound to happen will happen

Likewise, I take upon Myself the untold suffering of students and devotees at various points of time in order to protect them. No one is responsible for this mishap. You may find fault with one individual or the other, but no one is to be blamed for this. Whatever had to happen happened. That’s all.

Whatever is bound to happen will happen

You are bound to experience the pain and pleasure that you are destined to even if you hide yourself in a dense forest. When the time comes, your body is bound to perish, in spite of utmost precautions.

[Telugu Proverb]

Even mighty emperors and kings who had taken all precautionary measures had to give up their body at the appointed hour. Whatever is bound to happen will happen. One should not resist this unduly.

January is the first month of the New Year. If you experience happiness in the beginning, you will be happy throughout. *Start early, drive slowly and reach safely.* The year Pramaadi (Telugu New Year) is fast approaching. There will be dangers

in all fields. This is an indication of the forthcoming dangers. No one needs to worry about My welfare. I can do anything and everything. Here is a small example.

How Krishna protected Arjuna in the war

During the Mahabharata war, Krishna was the charioteer of Arjuna. Bhishma was shooting arrows at Arjuna. Krishna diverted these and all other arrows aimed at Arjuna toward Himself, protecting Arjuna in the process. As a result, every arrow wounded Krishna and He was bleeding profusely. Since Krishna was the charioteer, He had to receive instructions from Arjuna regarding the direction in which the chariot should move. In those days, there were no indicators like left and right as we have today. Therefore, Arjuna had to press the region beside the right eye of Krishna with his iron shoe to indicate that the chariot should move to the right. Similarly, he had to press the region beside the left eye to indicate to Krishna to turn the chariot to the left. Consequently, Krishna's face was also bleeding.

The whole body of Krishna was drenched in blood. No one observed this, since it was wartime and all were busy in discharging their duties and also due to the fact that Krishna was seated at a place much lower than that of Arjuna. Therefore, only Arjuna could be seen and not Krishna.

Krishna protected Arjuna as promised by Him earlier. When Arjuna and Duryodhana approached Krishna for help before the war, Duryodhana opted for Krishna's seven-lakh strong army, whereas Arjuna preferred Krishna to the army. Then Krishna assured him, "Arjuna, you don't need to fear. The army is comparable to the compartment of a train, whereas I am the engine." Compartments can move only when the en-

gine pulls them. So, do not worry, the engine is with you, Arjuna.” Arjuna also responded saying “Krishna, it is enough if you are with me.” Therefore, all the dangers that were to befall Arjuna were taken by Krishna upon Himself. Many such incidents of God protecting His devotees have taken place in the past.

Follow the divine command, be safe and secure

So, whatever happened on that day was entirely due to My Will. Neither the students nor anyone else are responsible for this. Every day, the students used to enquire as to why I was walking so slowly. I told them, “I don’ t have enough place to run, if only it was there I am ready even to run.” I was conversing with them with a smile on My face. I am narrating this episode only to affirm the fact that I go to any extent to protect My devotees who obey My commands

When I returned to the *mandir*, I called those four boys. They noticed My injuries and were crestfallen. I chided them for not obeying My command. I asked them, “Why were you not present there at that time as commanded by Me? If only you had obeyed My command, this incident would not have occurred.” I told them not to feel sorry about it.

All those things that were destined to happen during the course of this year have already happened. So, follow the divine command, be safe and secure, and earn a good name for the institution and make your parents happy.

Free food for seva dal

Tomorrow marks the commencement of holy *Uttarayana*. It is for this auspicious moment that Bhishma waited for fifty-six long days lying on a bed of arrows to give up his mortal

coil. Tomorrow, the sun begins its northward journey, which is most auspicious. In olden days, people used to sing songs describing the arrival of *Sankranti*:

The sun appeared cool and serene,
 The day started getting shorter,
 The cold wind blew fiercely,
 The fields were filled with golden harvest.
 The farmers rejoiced in singing at night
 With the moon shining bright.
 The buds of flowers blossomed
 Like garlands of pearls
 On the banks of rivers;
 Chillies were looking red,
 Farmers were bringing home
 The newly harvested grain,
 Hailing the advent of
 The joyous festival of *Sankranti*.

Telugu Poem

Whatever I will has to happen and none can come in My way. I would like to mention one more point. Last year, on the 19th of November, all the ladies gathered to celebrate Ladies Day. They said, "Swami, we are wearing the saris gifted by You and experiencing the bliss of Your divine presence. What can we do in return to express our gratitude to You? Please give us a chance to serve You." I replied, "You don't need to do anything. Be always happy. That is enough." But some of them pleaded that they be given a chance to provide food to the

seva dal, who are coming in large numbers from various parts of the country to render service in Prasanthi Nilayam.

I assured them that I had already willed it and that it would materialise in a short time. I have willed that the *seva dal* should be provided good food entirely free of cost for all the 365 days of the year. Every day we have about 3000 *seva dals* here. They will have very good food. I have already made arrangements for this. I have got the sheds put up. All the necessary items like gas cylinders, utensils, plates, spoons, rice, dals, etc., have already been procured. None is aware of this. Sathya Sai is a silent worker. From tomorrow onward food will be served to *seva dal* free of cost forever.

Travel concessions for seva dal

Then I summoned the members of the Central Trust and asked them what work they were doing. What is the use of occupying high positions if you do not discharge your duties sincerely? People from all walks of life and from different strata of society are coming to serve as *seva dal* every year. I may give them food free of cost, but who will bear their travel expenses? The railway fare is increasing day by day. In olden days, just 20 rupees were enough to reach Madras from here, but these days even 200 rupees are insufficient. I commanded them to approach the railway authorities for travel concession for the *seva dal*. I talk sweetly but at the same time I am stern when it comes to the question of discharging one's duty. I told them either you do this work or resign.

The Central Trust members have negotiated with the railway authorities and got the travel concessions sanctioned for *seva dal*. Due to the effect of *Kali Age*, people have become selfish. This selfishness makes them lazy. So, they plunge into

action only when told strictly. The railway authorities were very happy. They thanked Me saying, “Swami, it is our good fortune that we got an opportunity to serve Your devotees.”

Not only this. In order to ensure that the *seva dal* and devotees reach Prasanthi Nilayam without any inconvenience, the Central Government has sanctioned 50 crore rupees for the construction of a railway station near the petrol pump. We will have trains connecting Penukonda, Dharmavaram, and Puttaparthi. The other day, the officials of the railway department had a meeting in Delhi and arrived at this decision. Everybody should be able to reach Prasanthi Nilayam comfortably for Swami’s 75th birthday. One may board a train in Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Hyderabad, etc. to reach Prasanthi Nilayam.

Unprecedented marvels!

Once upon a time, this Puttaparthi was a small hamlet, with a population of barely 100 people. In such a small village as this, who would expect a university, an airport, a super specialty hospital, and a railway station to come up in such a short period of time? All these things are happening during the lifetime of the *Avatar*, which is unprecedented in the history of mankind. During the time of no other *Avatar* were such stupendous tasks achieved in such a short period of time. Many more wonderful things are going to happen. Today you are able to see Me from close quarters. But after some time, you may have to see Me from a distance of a few miles.

So, make the best use of the divine proximity of Sai. Once you lose this precious chance to serve the Lotus Feet, you will never regain it. Sai confers devotion, power, and ultimately liberation on you. Never get misguided by the words of others. Keep this in mind and redeem yourself.

I had taken upon Myself this suffering only for your sake, and in response to your prayers I have decided to cure Myself now for your sake. Do not give room for any anxiety. Now Swami is 100% perfect, perfect, perfect.

Follow Swami's command, earn a good name, secure good marks, and set an ideal to the rest of the world. That is what I want. In addition to more facilities for the volunteers, we are making efforts to provide adequate accommodation for the devotees by constructing 100 more sheds. To provide accommodation to the foreigners, a suitable piece of land of 150 acres has been acquired on the hillock. On the 75th birthday, who knows where one would be placed? But, if you have Swami's grace, you belong to Swami, wherever you may be. Swami is always with you. Never entertain the feeling that Swami will be away from you. Have firm faith in Swami.

Spirituality is the sole remedy

Students! In future, you can conduct your programmes without hindrance. In the coming year, you can organise the Sports Meet in ways more grand than this. I will not put any brake on your activities. But in certain aspects, you must follow My commands. It is for your good and not Mine. Be safe and secure and lead an ideal spiritual life.

Today we find restlessness, anxiety and worry prevalent everywhere. Spirituality is the only solution to all these ills of society. Due to lack of spirituality, man is a victim of depression and disease. Diseases are the products of the mind, not the body. Lack of peace of mind results in depression, which in turn leads to disease. Develop physical strength, have faith in God, experience bliss and share it with your fellow beings.

Whatever may happen, never give up spirituality. It is only devotion to God that protects Bharath, nothing else. Distance yourself from animal qualities and develop human qualities and be one with the divine. How can you understand divinity when you are not able to understand the importance of human values? First practice human values, then divinity manifests itself. Take to the path of spirituality, and go to the four corners of the country propagating spiritual ideals and strive for the welfare of the world at large.

Be always happy ... from tomorrow.

14 January 1999

Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam