

No one Can Escape The Consequences Of Their Actions Sathya Sai Baba

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Sai Baba gave this discourse during the *Athi Rudra Maha Yagna*, a great rite (*maha yagna*) performed over 11 days (9-19 August 2006) for world peace and prosperity. *Athi* means ultimate and *Rudra* is a name for Siva, so this *athi-rudra* is the highest form of worship of Siva.

During the rite, 132 priests chant and perform oblations around 11 fire-pits. The chanting consists mainly of many repetitions of *namakas* (because each verse ends in *namah*, meaning "name") and *chamakas* (because each verse ends in *cha me*, meaning "and to me [may this be granted]") from the *Vedas*. The *namakas* praise Rudra and describe His attributes; the *chamakas* ask for blessings.

For a detailed report, visit media.radiosai.org/journals/Vol_04/01SEP06/CoverStory_Army.htm

Karma is responsible for birth, existence, and death.

It holds sway over all stages of life as the very deity of human existence.

It is responsible for joy and sorrow.

(Telugu poem)

What is *karma*? It is the action that we perform. It is the cause of our birth, our life on earth, and our ultimate death. Our very existence depends upon *karma*. There can be no human life without *karma*.

Spiritual practices like rituals and sacrifices (*yajnas* and *yagas*) are also forms of *karma*. The welfare and well-being of the world depend upon these spiritual practices. The very basis of the world is *karma*. Therefore, everyone must necessarily perform action (*karma*).

You should strive to attain God realisation by doing your duty. As the action, so is the result. No one can escape from the consequences of their actions. *Karma* does not mean merely the actions that we perform with the limbs of our body; even the process of breathing constitutes *karma*. Eating, drinking, walking, sitting—all are various types of action that man performs. So it is not possible to know the consequences of our actions.

We should enquire about the nature of *karma* before performing. Being a human being, we should ask whether the actions that we perform

are befitting a human being or not. If you perform action without proper enquiry, you will not have the desired results.

Embodiments of Love!

Karma is verily God. God is not separate from you. God is present in subtle form in every action. God exists in the form of *karma* in everything right from microcosm to macrocosm. Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest (*Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan*). One must necessarily perform action and should offer all actions to God. Do all actions to please God (*Sarva karma bhagavad preetyartham*). Do like this, and you will not be bound by the consequences of your actions.

God is the indweller of all beings (*Easwara sarva bhutanam*). He is present in all beings, be it a human being, a snake, or a scorpion. He performs actions appropriate to the vesture He takes upon Himself.

Develop clear thinking and don't spoil your mind by unnecessarily thinking about something that you do not know. People today venture into fields about which they have very little knowledge, which is why they face so many troubles. Therefore, men and women should undertake actions appropriate for them.

In childhood, one develops absorbing interest in play and enjoys the company of one's play-mates.

In youth and middle age, one is engrossed in cultivating worldly relations and earning money.

In old age, one repents for not having this and that. In this way, one wastes this precious human birth.

(Telugu poem)

Right from birth to death, lead your life befitting your human birth. Divinity is immanent in every human being. One passes through the various stages of childhood, youth, and householder and ultimately grows old. With the advancement of age, one does not think of God and repents about what one has not got in life. What is the use of worrying at this stage? We should have proper thinking from the very beginning.

The youth leader Vinay Kumar prayed to Me to tell him what the youth should do. So, I told him that youth should always remain young and energetic. When youth misuse the power of the senses, they lose their energy and start growing old. They should always remain young and never grow old with the advancement of age. We should preserve our energy.

Look at My body. I am 81 years old. Can anybody say that I am 81 years old? My body is free from all diseases. Some time back, My leg was fractured when one boy fell on Me accidentally. That is why I am walking like this. I walk very freely inside My residence, but the doctor advised Me to take the support of one or two boys when I move among the devotees. On the advice of doctors, I am taking the support of one boy while walking. Since it is My nature to satisfy everybody, I follow this advice for the satisfaction of doctors.

All the same, I keep on telling the boys, "Don't hold Me, don't hold Me." But you may not know that there is a subtle meaning behind whatever I do. Nobody can know the reality of My nature. I have never suffered any ailment whatsoever in My life, be it fever, cold, or headache. I have always been healthy. I am not only healthy but wealthy also (loud applause). Nothing escapes My attention.

I noticed a couple of young priests (*ritwiks*) talking to each other during the performance of

the ritual. I am hearing all that you speak. But for Me, both good and bad are the same. I do not find anything bad in this world; everything is good. Similar is the case with right and wrong. Something may appear to be right at the present moment, but, on enquiry, it may turn out to be wrong.

Pleasure is an interval between two pains. We may eat very good and delicious items today, but how long that will remain good? The very next day, it may turn into a different matter. Difference of time determines what is good and what is bad. Therefore, understand everything clearly and act carefully in life.

In the Mahabharata war, Duryodhana and Dussasana and other Kaurava brothers fought against the Pandavas due to hatred for them, but they could not defeat the Pandavas because Krishna was on their side. Since the Kauravas were unable to meet the challenge of the Pandavas, they found Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, all alone one day and devised an army formation in the shape of a lotus (the *Padmavyuha*). Then they challenged Abhimanyu to enter it.

Abhimanyu was a young boy then. His father, Arjuna, was not there; only Dharmaraja was present at that time. He sought Dharmaraja's permission of to enter the *Padmavyuha*. Dharmaraja told him that it was not an easy task for him.

Then Abhimanyu went to his mother, Subhadra and sought her permission and blessings. She tried to dissuade him saying, "Dear son, it is a difficult formation devised by Dronacharya himself. Moreover, your wife is pregnant now. We do not know whether the time is favourable to us or not. Your father Arjuna and uncle Krishna are also not here to give you necessary guidance and support. So give up the idea of going to the battlefield."

Abhimanyu was upset on hearing his mother's words and said to her, "Being the son of Arjuna, I have to accept the challenge of the enemy. Otherwise, my father's name would be in disrepute. Even if I lose my life, I will fight in the battlefield." He was very firm in his resolve and quite confident of coming out of the *Padmavyuha* successful.

Then he told his mother, "I am going to attack the Kauravas like a tiger ready to pounce upon the horde of elephants. Bless me to come out victorious in this fight by shooting the divine arrows on

the enemy. Instead of blessing me, is it proper on your part to prevent me from going to the battle?"

Listening to the words of her brave son, at last she gave her consent.

May the same kind of protection cover you as
That which Mother Gowri conferred on her son
Kumara when he went out for battle against
Tarakasura,
The blessing conferred by Kausalya on Rama
when he was going to the forest to safeguard
the Yajna of Viswamitra!
May such great and auspicious blessing and, the
greatest of all, the protection of Sri Rama be
with you and protect you!

(Telugu poem)

With these blessings, she sent him to the battlefield. He offered his salutations to his mother and entered the battlefield. He penetrated into the *Padmavyuha*.

While his father, Arjuna, was talking about the *Padmavyuha* to Subhadra, Abhimanyu heard it, being in his mother's womb. When Arjuna was half way through the narration, Krishna appeared on the scene and cautioned Arjuna that his son in the mother's womb was listening to all this. Krishna advised him to stop the narration forthwith. In this way, Abhimanyu could know how to enter the *Padmavyuha* but did not know how to come out of it. As a result, he was trapped in the *Padmavyuha* by the Kauravas and killed.

The lesson to be learnt from this episode is that one should never ignore the advice of one's parents and elders. One should listen to the advice of the parents carefully, contemplate on it, assimilate it, and put it into practice. That is why the *Vedas* declare, Revere your mother and father as God (*Matru devo bhava, pitru devo bhava*). Whatever be the circumstances, wherever you may be, always obey the command of the parents.

When Arjuna returned, he was full of anxiety not to find Abhimanyu, who always ran to the door to receive him whenever he returned home. When Arjuna came to know that Abhimanyu died in the battlefield, he became very sad. Then Krishna asked him not to lose heart, saying, "Whatever was destined to happen has happened."

He also told Arjuna that the Kauravas, who conspired against the Pandavas even in the past,

had again resorted to foul-play and killed Abhimanyu. In this moment of great anguish, Arjuna spoke to Krishna in very strong terms that He had not told him about the death of his son earlier and thus had betrayed him. As was His nature, Krishna heard all this, smiling all the time.

At the time of Abhimanyu's death, his wife Uttara was in the family way. When the child was still in Uttara's womb, Aswatthama attacked the child with Brahma's weapon of infallible destruction (*Brahmastra*). As a result, Uttara gave birth to a still-born child, and the Pandavas were grief-stricken. They blamed Krishna for all their misery because Abhimanyu was killed in the battlefield, Droupadi's sons were slain by Aswatthama, and Uttara's son was still-born. Thus, there was none to continue the lineage.

Krishna tried to pacify them and advised them to be calm and composed. He asked Droupadi to bring the still-born child before Him. She brought the child in a plate. Krishna saw the child and said, "Look at his eyes, look at his nose, look at his face, he exactly resembles his father Abhimanyu."

When Krishna was describing the child like this, the Pandavas grew very angry. They felt that He was describing the dead child without bothering about their pitiable condition.

Krishna held the child in His hand and patted on its back and stomach. Immediately, the child started crying, to the sheer joy of the Pandavas. Krishna named the child Parikshit because He brought the child to life after putting the Pandavas to a *pariksha* (test).

Without a test, nobody can pass an examination and go to a higher class. That is why God subjects His devotees to tests. Never consider it as a test; rather, have a taste for such tests. All the tests given by God will be of good taste.

When Parikshit became the king of the Pandava empire, Krishna protected him in several ways. What I am narrating now has never happened anywhere else, in any country, at any time.

After Krishna left for His divine abode, a grief-stricken Arjuna returned from Dwaraka. Mother Kunthi, being unaware of the happenings in Dwaraka, asked of Arjuna about Krishna's well-being.

Arjuna wept inconsolably saying, “Mother, Krishna is no more.”

The moment Arjuna said that Krishna had shed His mortal coil, Kunthi collapsed and breathed her last. The Pandavas were immersed in sorrow. They thought, “Krishna was our very life-breath. He had been our source of strength and courage. What is the use of our life without Krishna?”

They decided to coronate Parikshit and go to the Himalayas. Dharmaraja instructed Arjuna to make arrangements for the cremation of their mother’s body. At the same time, he gave instructions for the arrangements for the coronation of young Parikshit. Thereafter, he told Nakula and Sahadeva to make preparations for their final journey (*mahaprasthanā*) to the Himalayas.

After the cremation of their mother and coronation of young Parikshit, the Pandavas began their march to the Himalayas, proceeding one behind the other. Dharmaraja, led the march. Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva followed him in that order. Droupadi walked behind all.

Everyone has to face the consequences of their actions, whoever they may be.

No one can know what lies ahead for them in future.

But this much is sure: Everybody has to reap the consequences of their actions.

(Telugu song)

During their final journey, Droupadi, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva shed their mortal coils one after the other. Dharmaraja continued his march all alone.

Dharmaraja had never uttered a lie in his life. However, during the Mahabharatha war, he did say something to that effect that caused the death of Dronacharya. When an elephant by name “Aswatthama” was killed in the battlefield, Dharmaraja declared, “Aswatthama elephant is killed (*Aswatthama hathah kunjarah*).” He deliberately lowered his tone while uttering the word “elephant”. Since Dronacharya could not hear the word “elephant”, he thought his son Aswatthama was killed. He became utterly dejected and consequently gave up his life.

Dharmaraja had to spend some time in hell as a result of uttering this “lie”. People may wonder, how is it that even Dharmaraja, the very embody-

ment of *dharma*, had to pay a visit to hell. The fact remains that however great and noble one may be, one cannot escape from the consequences of one’s actions.

When Dharmaraja entered hell, Droupadi and the other four brothers were already present there. The five Pandavas were like five life-breaths. They were the embodiments of *dharma*. That is why their mere presence in hell alleviated the suffering of all those who were undergoing punishment for their sins. They fell at Dharmaraja’s feet and pleaded with him to stay there for some more time.

Dharmaraja replied, “My dear ones! I am not allowed to stay here any longer. I am being sent away by the Lord of hell from here.”

Thereafter, the five Pandava brothers and Droupadi left for their heavenly abode.

In this manner, even the Pandavas, who were the very embodiments of righteousness and morality and who had acquired great merit, could not escape from the consequences of their *karma*.

Droupadi was a great woman of chastity (*pathivrata*). Even she had to face the consequences of her *karma*.

Once there was a debate as to who was the greatest woman of chastity. People expressed various opinions. It was Lord Krishna who gave the final verdict saying,

She dutifully obeyed the command of her husbands.

She would never say to any one of them that she had no time to serve him.

She was satisfied with whatever she got in life.

She was the supreme example of chastity and none could match her in this respect.

(Telugu poem)

In this Kali age, women find it hard to obey the commands of their husbands. Imagine the case of Droupadi. She had to obey the command of not one but five husbands. She was never complaining. She always had time to serve each of them.

These days, we find women whose demands are much more than what the husbands can really afford. When the husband is drawing a salary of one hundred rupees per month, his wife demands a sari worth two hundred rupees!

But Droupadi was not like that. She was always satisfied with whatever she had. That is why she earned a reputation as the greatest woman of chastity (*pathivrata*).

The Pandava brothers were fully aware of her nobility and chastity. They always took her views into consideration and acted accordingly. That is why their name and fame remained firmly etched in the annals of history.

A person is respected even for small acts of nobility. However, while performing any action, there is always a possibility of mistakes creeping in. Whatever may be the mistake committed, one cannot escape from its consequences. Hence, always speak truth, follow righteousness, and lead a life suffused with love. This is the foremost duty of a human being.

Consider the five human values of truth, righteousness, peace, compassion and love as the five life-breaths (*pancha pranas*). One bereft of these five values is verily a living corpse. Never speak untruth, even in a lighter vein.

Never make fun of others. It is the worst of sins to criticise others. Hence, however wicked a man may be, never criticise him. Love all. Love is God. God is love. Love is your very life.

(As per Bhagawan's instructions, the students sang the song "Love is My form, truth is My breath, bliss is My food" Then Bhagawan continued His discourse.)

Develop love. Wherever you may be, be it in the forest or the sky, be it in the city or the village, be it on the mountain top or the middle of the deep sea, love is your sole refuge. Love even your enemy. If you happen to see him, do not turn your face away from him. Instead, greet him with love saying, "Hello brother! How are you?"

Suffuse your life with love. Develop courage and conviction. Only then can humanness (*manavathwa*) gets transformed into Divinity (*Divyathwa*). Propagate this principle of love to one and all. This is My principal message for you today.