

## 17. Love Is God, Live In Love

This land of Bharat (India) is the motherland for great people, who acquired name and fame in different continents.

The land of Bharat is the battlefield wherefrom the warriors of foreign countries were driven out and freedom from foreign rule was acquired.

This land of Bharat has acquired great name and fame for erudite scholarship.

This land of Bharat is a divine land, which has produced great intellectuals in the fields of music, art, literature and various sciences.

Having been born in such a great land, oh boys and girls, the responsibility to protect and uphold the righteousness of this country is yours.

(Telugu poem)

**T**he fame and fortune of Bharat (India) is truly great. While several countries of the world had faced calamities of various kinds, Bharat has remained stable. It is a country richly endowed with a variety of wealth.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat.

Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance.

The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love toward one's mother.

Character is valued far higher than the very life itself.

People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating western culture. Alas!

*Bharatiyas* (Indians) are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.

(Telugu poem)

Throughout history, Bharat (India) has been preeminent in material and intellectual plenty. It was ruled by great kings and righteous rulers. Several women famed for their chastity were born in this country. Savithri could bring back her dead husband Sathyavantha to life by the power of her chastity. Can you find parallels to such noble and chaste women elsewhere in the world?

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women, like

Savithri, who brought her dead husband back to life;

Chandramati, who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth;

Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of the blazing fire unscathed; and

Damayanti, who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity.

This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all the nations of the world because of such women of chastity.

(Telugu poem)

### **Bharatiyas have forgotten their greatness and values**

Sadly, however, today, many persons born in this great land of Bharat are succumbing to and are tempted by trivial things. Their perception is bad, they listen to bad things, and even their behaviour is bad. What a great fall!

The *Bharatiyas* (Indians) today are like the elephant, which is unaware of its own strength. With a swish of its tail an elephant can knock a man off his feet and throw him yards away. Such a powerful elephant will meekly obey the commands of the mahout. It just acts according to the wishes of the mahout. Similarly, *Bharatiyas* today are surrendering to the dictates of outsiders and are becoming their slaves.

The way of life of *Bharatiyas* is conditioned by truth and righteousness, in accordance with the *vedic* injunctions, “Speak truth (*sathyam vada*) and follow righteousness (*dharmam chara*).” In fact, truth and righteousness are the very treasure of *Bharatiyas*. Unfortunately, today, *Bharatiyas* have forgotten these great values and, therefore, have become slaves in their own country. Their lifestyle itself has undergone a change where truth and righteousness have no place. Truly speaking, there is none in this world who can conquer Bharat. *Bharatiyas* are born with the great human values, namely, truth, righteousness, peace, and love.

Every individual has to enquire into their true nature, “Who am I?” The reply that comes from within is, “I am a human being.” Along with this reply, one has to assure oneself, “I am not an animal.” That is your true nature, but when you consider yourself to be a human being, you must display human qualities. What are they? First and foremost, truth (*sathyam*). From truth comes righteousness (*dharma*). It is said “There is no greater right conduct than adhering to truth (*Sathyaannasti paro dharmah*).” Truth and right conduct together bring peace (*santhi*) and love (*prema*).

Where there is love, there cannot be hatred and jealousy. Unfortunately, today people have lost the great quality of love. Even a dog loves its puppy. Even the birds love their offspring. But a human being does not love a fellow human being. Lack of unity among people is the root cause for the present state of affairs in Bharat. There is no unity in the family, in society, and in the country. Where there is unity, there will be purity, where there is purity, there Divinity shall be. What is required today is unity, purity, and Divinity.

Scientists today are inventing several things. A double-decker plane is being flown in the sky. However, along with the great advances made in science and technology, loss of the quality of human life is also on a large scale. This was not the case in earlier times. Several people used to live together under one roof, with peace and happiness. There was no fear complex at all. But, today, the fear complex is all pervading. Wherefrom did this fear come? It is due to lack of self-confidence. One has no faith in one’s inner self. It is said “The *Atmic* consciousness is not for the weak minded (*Naayamatma balaheenena labhyah*).”

People have developed faith in everything in this world, but not in their own self. Where there is self-confidence, there will be self-satisfaction; where there is self-satisfaction, there will be self-sacrifice; where there is self-sacrifice, there will be self-realisation.

It is common knowledge that where the foundation is strong, the walls will be safe; where the walls are safe, the roof will be secure. Only in such a house can one live safely. Today, the foundation itself is not strong. How then can the walls remain safe? Self-confidence is the foundation for a human being, self-satisfaction represents the walls, self-sacrifice is the roof, and self-realisation is life. Hence, there should be perfect coordination between these four.

Due to indiscriminate use of technology, the air, water, food — everything is polluted and poisoned all over the world. Fortunately, the country of Bharat is spared from this widespread pollution. We should not run after science and technology. Science without humanness is fraught with great danger to the very existence of humanity.

There is no greater power than human power. Some people question, “Where is God?” The answer is very

simple. Every human God, you are God, verily. The *Vedas* declare, “The moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Supreme Being (*Chandrama manaso jaathah; chaksho surya ajaayata*).” The real strength comes from our own inner self. This strength is unparalleled.

In spite of education and intelligence, a foolish person will not know their true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up their evil qualities.

(Telugu poem)

Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom.

What is the use of acquiring education that cannot lead you to immortality?

Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu poem)

### **The spiritual health of Bharat is unique**

Today’s education does not provide real knowledge that matures into wisdom. It just helps one to earn a livelihood. It promotes acquisition and misuse of wealth. With the money people acquire through various means, people send young boys to foreign countries for higher education. They spend lakhs of rupees for that purpose. By the time they return to their homeland, the children are spoiled totally.

Here is a small incident that had happened sometime ago. The Indian parents took their son to a temple before his departure to a foreign country for his studies and advised him, “Dear son, this deity is the mother to one and all. She is the Mother of the universe. Never forget the Mother. Constantly contemplate on Her, wherever you are”. They, in fact, extracted a promise from him to that effect.

The boy left for U.S.A. Once he set his foot in America, he totally forgot about the Mother, fully immersed in that new environment. After a lapse of three years, he returned to his native country, Bharat, fully accustomed to the American way of life. The parents took that boy to the same temple straight from the airport for a *darshan* of the divine Mother. As soon as he entered the temple, the boy, instead of offering his *namaskar* (a salutation to another with hands pressed together and pointing upward, meaning “I bow to your form”) to the deity, greeted Her in English, “How are you Madam?”

The parents scolded the boy for his impertinence and for not paying his obeisance to the divine Mother. They regretted very much that their son, brought up in a traditional family, did not even care to offer his *pranams* (similar to *namaskar*) to the divine Mother and all the lakhs of rupees spent on his foreign education had gone waste. They finally decided to advise all those parents who wished to send their children abroad for higher education against it.

It is indisputably true that higher studies abroad are resulting in people acquiring bad thoughts, habits, and behaviour. One need not be crazy about foreign education. The wealth of education and culture available in this country is not to be found in other countries. We must be proud of our birth in this great land of Bharat. It is a great privilege to be referred to as *Bharatiyas*. We must, therefore, develop self-confidence. We must develop interest in leading a moral, virtuous, and spiritual life.

Unfortunately, today there is no morality in people. How then can you lead a happy and peaceful life? The great spiritual wealth available in this country of Bharat is not to be found in any other country. People from several countries are inviting Me to visit their places, offering Me even special aircraft. But I am consistently turning

down their requests. I am always happy here in India. I don't need these planes and such other comforts. I want only devotion.

### **Visualise the same Atma Principle in all**

I did not come across anyone who hates Me, and till now I have no enemies at all. All people love Me, since I love one and all. However, people do not understand My love properly. Because of My universal love, even people from far-off lands come to Me. Why then should I go abroad? Some people misunderstand and misinterpret My love. Some even develop aversion toward Me on the ground that I did not oblige them by granting their requests on some occasions. In fact, will they progress in the spiritual path if I grant all their requests? No, not at all. On the other hand, they will get spoiled. That is why I wish to keep the boys and girls in proper limits right from their childhood.

You can observe that no one in our educational institutions ever hates Me in the least. All students gather round Me lovingly calling, "Swami! Swami!" When I come out after paying a visit to their campuses, they take leave of Me with tears in their eyes. Do you find the same situation prevalent in educational institutions elsewhere? Do the colleges and universities outside function as temples of learning? Even parents visiting their wards in those educational institutions are not treated with due respect.

Parents are sacred. The *Bharatiya* (Indian) culture exhorts, "Father is God; mother is God (*Matrudevobhava; Pitrudevobhava!*)" Every human being is an embodiment of God. In fact, the entire creation is God. Unable to realise this great truth, we say, "This person is my enemy, he ill-treated me," and develop hatred against him. As you think, so it will be (*Yad bhavam tad bhavati*). Love begets love and hatred begets hatred.

It is common to help those who help you, but it is only Sai who is gracious enough to help those that try to cause harm to Him, ignoring their own faults. You must love even those who harm you. That is real humanness. You must develop such a human quality. Whomever you come across, treat him as an embodiment of Divinity.

It is said, "God is in human form (*Daivam manusha rupena*)." You may observe the picture of any form of God, there God is portrayed in the human form. Rama, Krishna, or any other deity – all are in human forms only. You may relate to God in different forms and names; but all are embodiments of the divine Self.

The *Atma* Principle (*Thathwa*) is the same in all human beings, irrespective of names and forms. It is said, "One *Atma* resides as the indweller in all living beings (*Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma*)."

One has to cultivate such noble feelings right from childhood. You may think it is a difficult task. No, there is nothing easier than this feeling of equality. Suppose a person whom you consider as an enemy is approaching you; you offer your respects to him and ask, "Hello, How are you brother?" Immediately the other man will respond saying "How are you brother?" He will not get angry. Why? Since you called him brother, he will also treat you in the same way. It is in your language that either love and faith or enmity and distrust in the other person is displayed.

You must rise to a level where you will be able to visualise the same *Atma* Principle in all. Then you will truly become "embodiment of the divine Self (*Divyatma Swarupa*)." You must consider "I am an embodiment of the divine Self. All these different forms of human beings are only my reflections. I am able to see myself in these bodies, which are like mirrors." Only when you are able to reach that stage will you enjoy real peace. You will not experience peace by merely doing repetition of the Lord's name, penance, yoga, or sacrificial rites and rituals.

People crave peace and undertake several spiritual practices for that purpose, but they don't find peace anywhere. Wherever you look, there are only pieces in the outside world. But once they direct their vision inward, they will be able to find peace there. The peace within is manifesting outside. Only such a person with inner vision can be called a human being in the real sense. Animals have no such inner vision and discriminatory intellect. They therefore display cruelty. You are not an animal. You are a human being. Hence, lead a life befitting that of a human being. You say that you are a human being, but you live the life of a cruel animal. How then can you be called a human being?

### **Cultivate love, give up hatred**

Live like a real human being. Get rid of animal qualities like desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride, hatred, and envy. Do not hate anybody. I have no anger against anyone till date. That is why all people love Me. I have only one quality: love toward all. Hence, even if I go to a forest, people will follow Me there. It is only My love that draws all people to Me. Yet, some people develop antipathy toward Me. It is not My fault, but their own imagination. People wonder how Swami is so divinely peaceful and is able to interact with so many people day in and day out. In fact, peace is natural to Me. I always smile and put up a serene countenance. I can never put on a castor oil face. I am always happy and smiling. I exhort you also to be so. When you all are happy, I am happy. Your happiness is My happiness.

What could be the reason for millions of people loving Me? What brought you here in such large numbers? Did I send any invitation to you all? It is only your love that brought you here. Can invitations draw crowds? Even when there is no invitation, people rush toward Me if they come to know that I am passing through a particular place. What could be the reason for this? Only love. Love is God; live in love. That is what you have to learn and cultivate. Love is the foremost quality that you should cultivate. Take a pledge accordingly on this sacred day.

### **Become embodiments of divine love**

Very soon, the entire world will be united. In fact, after 28 years the world itself will become "Bharat". Everyone will call themselves a *Bharatiya* (one imbued with godliness – *Bhagavat ratas*). No one will refer to themselves as belonging to this state or that state, this region or that region. You may go to any country, but you refer to yourself as belonging to the country of Bharat. For example, there may be Karnataka State, Tamil Nadu State, etc., but they are all parts of a larger country called Bharat. Without the country, the states cannot exist. You are all *Bharatiyas* first and last. Hence, you say that you came from Bharat. The different states might have been created certain linguistic or geographical considerations, but they are all parts of one country: Bharat.

We all belong to only one party: the party of love. Love, love, and only love. Keeping love as your guiding force and go to any country, and people will respect you, consider you as their own brothers and sisters, and extend all necessary help to you.

Love is selflessness. A human being should never have selfishness. However, people of their own accord develop evil qualities like selfishness, hatred, anger, etc. These traits are cultivated by human beings themselves; they are not God-given. God has bestowed only one noble quality on all human beings, that is love. Love is eternal. Physical strength, courage or valour can never be a match to the power of love.

When Sita was kept in confinement in Lanka under the guard of demons, it was her love for Rama that gave

her courage and confidence to boldly face all difficult situations. She constantly contemplated on the divine name of Rama during the period. Finally, Rama's love saved her. During that ten-month period, none could touch her. If only you cultivate such divine love, it will confer everything on you. You all should become the embodiments of love. Pray constantly, "May all the beings of all the worlds be happy (*Samasta lokah sukhino bhavantu*)." That is the only prayer you have to do. Then, all people in all countries will be happy and peaceful.

I am loving you all. I have no enemies. No one hates Me. Sometimes I do speak harshly in a raised voice, but that is only outwardly. I do not bear ill will toward anyone. Hence, if you follow the ideal set by Swami and love all, your life will be sanctified. Your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends will feel happy.

27th Convocation, Sri Sathya Sai University, Prasanthi Nilayam, 2008-11-22

**W**hoever loves and serves all, that person the Lord loves and honours ... You must start with the first step, the cleansing of the mind and cultivation of virtue. Even if you do not start with that step, at least do not laugh at those who do, and discourage them. Do at least this much!

**T**hen, do not depend upon others for doing your work, like attending to your personal wants. Do them yourself; that is real freedom. Again, never accept anything 'free' from others; pay it back, in service or work. That will make you self-respecting individuals.

**R**eceiving a favour means getting bound to the giver. Grow with self-respect and dignity. That is the best service you can do to yourself.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**