

### 3. Become ideal citizens

IN ALL countries of the world there are good and bad men, scholars and illiterates, the affluent and the destitute. The one thing that is common to all of them is their inner *essence--Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). All the scriptures have described the Divine as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Every object, every being and every individual in the phenomenal world have these triune attributes. But, in the inert objects only the first *two--Sat* and *Chit* (Being and Awareness)--can be recognised and not bliss. Only in animate beings can this quality be found manifest. This bliss however, is of a transient nature.

There are two categories of bliss in the world' *Sadhana-Janya Ananda* (Acquired bliss) and *Swatas-siddha Ananda* (Self-generating bliss). Acquired bliss is associated with sensory objects. It arises and vanishes from time to time. It does not endure. For instance, when hunger is appeased, there is happiness for the moment. But it ceases after a time. This applies to all objects in the world. What is experienced when they are enjoyed is evanescent. This type of joy has been described as acquired or derived happiness. As it is got and lost by human effort, it is not true bliss.

Man, however, seeks lasting *Ananda* (bliss). He is in fact filled with bliss and is the embodiment of bliss. Bliss constitutes his very nature and being. It exists *sui generis* in him. Why, then, does he not experience it? This is because, even though he is the embodiment of bliss, unaware of his true nature he is obsessed with the external world and fails to experience the bliss within him. He imagines that the source of joy lies in Nature (the phenomenal world). This is wrong.

#### **Experience the bliss within**

The bliss that is all-pervasive in the cosmos is also within man. But, as in the case of butter that is present in every drop of milk but which can be seen only after the milk is curdled and the buttermilk is churned, this inner bliss can be experienced only after the right effort is made. The mind is filled with various kinds of joy. It is only when the appropriate enquiry is made and one's true nature is ascertained that the Divine *Sat-Chit-Ananda* inherent in one will be manifest.

Man today is conscious only of the *Annamaya* (physical) and *Pranamaya* (vital) principles relating to his existence. He has not developed even up to the stage of realising the significance of the mind. The body represents *Annamaya*. Activity and motion of the body are to the *Pranamaya*. The third element is *Manomaya* (the mental). The fourth is *Vijnanamaya* (Constant Integrated Awareness). Beyond this awareness is *Ananda* (the state of supreme bliss). In the great journey of life, man has passed, only two stations. He has not tried to go beyond them to the mental and other stages. It is only after passing the *Vijnanamaya* stage that man can experience *Ananda* (pure bliss). But because man goes after the impermanent pleasures of the phenomenal world, he is unable to experience the enduring bliss that is inherent in him.

#### **Exercise discrimination objectively**

The *Upanishads* have declared that immortality can be experienced only through *Thyaga* (renunciation or sacrifice). This renunciation does not mean giving up hearth and home, kith and kin. It means giving up the transient and impermanent things of the world. This calls for discrimination between what is permanent and what is perishable. This kind of discrimination is absent: among people today. Students, for instance, discriminate between what is convenient and what is unpleasant and choose the former. This element: of self-interest should go.

Discrimination should be exercised objectively to determine what is permanent and what is transient, what is good and what is bad. Only then can man discover the *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (reality of the Bliss) that is within him. The failure to realise this arises from defective vision. The fault does not lie in the manifest universe.

Students should recognise the value of good health. Mere age does not make a person young. The great Mahabharata warrior, Bhishma, fought on the battlefield when he was 116 years. Students should realise that good health alone confers lifelong happiness. Maintenance of physical fitness calls for mental discipline also. You have to control your desires. Even insects like ants-observe limits to their acquisitions. Only man exhibits unlimited greed. And because of this he sacrifices real happiness. There is no harm in aspiring for a good job or a position of honour and fame. But many ordeals have to be overcome to achieve them. One should not succumb to difficulties. One must develop the fortitude to face all challenges by strengthening one's faith in God. Be fearless. God is with you. Proceed on life's journey with courage.

### **The royal road for every one**

Before completing your education and entering the vast stage of life, you have to learn certain basic things. First among them is control of the mind. Only then will senses be under control. Cultivate the feeling that the Divine is present in everyone and therefore you should not harm anyone. Love ever: Hurt never. This is the royal road for everyone.

Students! Fill your minds with noble thoughts. Develop the convictions that you are the embodiments of the Divine: *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. The air around you is neither visible nor can be grasped. And yet, can you deny its presence? Can you survive for a moment without it? Likewise, the one who denies the existence of God is denying his very own existence. The Divine is omnipresent. Because you do not acquire the capacity to experience it, you are caught up in various troubles. You have to discover the unity that subsumes the diversity in the cosmos.

What is this unity? It is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. *Sat* is Being, 'that which exists. *Chit* is Awareness, the quality that enables cognition. If a thing did not exist it cannot be cognised. If it cannot be cognised, it cannot be experienced or enjoyed. It is only when a thing is cognised or enjoyed that bliss is experienced.

### **Relation between existence and experience**

Here is the cosmos. How do you know about its existence? You can see the things in it, hear the sounds, have impressions in the mind about them and be moved in your hearts by them. How can you deny their existence?

You have to understand the relation between existence and experience. For instance, you feel hungry. You take food and the hunger is appeased. If food did not exist in the world, hunger would be out of place. If hunger did not exist food would be unnecessary. In this context it may be asked, which comes first: hunger or food? We may consider that hunger comes first. This is not correct. Food came into existence first, then hunger was caused. Man is able to protect his body because of the existence of food and hunger. It is said: food is for the protection of the body. Hence, you should regard food as necessary for living and not live for the sake of food. Education should be for leading a good life and not merely for earning a living. Birds and beasts are able to live without any education. Man has a higher destiny than mere living.

There is an episode in the great Indian epic Ramayana in which Sri Rama reveals the truth about Himself and His mission in answer to sage Vasishtha. When Rama was staying in Chitrakoota,

Bharata and Satrugna, with all the royal paraphernalia, went to see Him and appeal to Him to return to Ayodhya as He alone, as the eldest son and the pre-eminent amongst them, was competent to rule the kingdom. Bharata declared that Rama alone was fit to rule and not himself. In reply to Bharata's entreaties, Rama said: "Dear brother! The plighted word is most sacred. It is our very life. In the Ikshvaaku race, there has not been a single scion, who has gone back on his pledged word. Born in this great dynasty and being the eldest son I cannot brook the infamy of proving false to my pledge. I will joyfully give up My life rather than go back on My word."

### **Rama's adherence to Truth**

The sage Jabali who was present there, was eager to persuade Rama to return to the kingdom even by using specious arguments and appearing as an atheist. He told Rama: "Ramachandra! You appear to me to be stubborn and irrational. Is there any meaning in your trying to act up to the words of an old king who was the victim of the viles of Kaikeyi? How can you say Dasaratha was a good man? He parted with the son for the sake of the wife. This is highly improper. Dasaratha is gone. Why do you wish to adhere to words of one who is no more?" Rama replied to the sage: "The body is perishable and may go at any time. But the promised word remains. Truth has no form. It is eternal and omnipresent. It stands unchanged in the past, the present and the future. I cannot be a party to the destruction of that Truth," declared Rama.

Jabali returned to the argument again. He said: "Is it foolish to let go of the bird in the hand in the hope of getting two in the bush? You are concerned about the promises made by a dead man. Your concern must be to protect the truth of the living."

### **The preceptor comes after the parents**

Realising the difficulty of carrying on the argument with Rama in this way, sage Vasishtha intervened with the object of somehow inducing Rama to return to the kingdom. He said: "Ramachandra! There are three teachers for men--the mother, the father and the preceptor. You left for the forest on the words of your step-mother. I am your preceptor. Your preceptor is eminent because he practises what he teaches. You must: heed the words of the preceptor." To this Rama replied: "You have been the preceptor not only for my father, but for my ancestors and hence worthy of all honour and reverence. But the mother who bore me and nourished me and the father who reared me and made a man of me, take precedence over the preceptor, who comes later. If the mother had not given me my body and the father had not protected me, how could the preceptor figure in my life? Only after the mother and father have shaped the son can the preceptor illumine his mind with knowledge. Though the preceptor should be revered, the parents come first."

At this stage Jabali came forward and uttered the *mantras*: "*Maathru deco bhava! Pitru deco bhava! Acharya deco bhava!*" (Regard the mother as God, the father as God and the preceptor as God). At that moment three deities appeared on the scene. Rama observed that the God who is present in all three is one and the same God and revealed His identity as the Divine in the human form. It was then that Vasishtha declared: "*Ramo Vighrahavaan Dharmah*" (Rama is the very embodiment of Righteousness). "Oh Rama! You are *Dharma* itself that has taken human form. We have no words to argue with you." Jabali declared: "*Pumsaam mohanaroopaaya*" (the most alluring among men are You, Oh Rama). "You are the supreme upholder of Righteousness."

### **Earn Divine grace by developing good character**

During your studies you have to learn how to lead a life of righteousness. You pursue your studies with diligence and devote your nights and days to acquire knowledge. But what efforts are you making to earn Divine love and grace? You feel sad about Swami not looking at you or talking to you but you do not try to find out why you are feeling this way. Are you enquiring into the purpose of education? Do you recognise the need for Self-realisation and control of the senses? Education should be for developing concentration of the mind and not collection of facts. Along with studies develop good character. Your conduct will determine your destiny. Have a wide-ranging mind. Narada was a master of 64 sciences.

You have to make a distinction between knowledge and wisdom. When Valmiki was asked by Lava and Kusa why he described Ravana as *murkha* (a senseless man), although he was the master of all the *Vedas* and *Sastras*, while describing Rama as a high-souled person, he said: "Ravana was a well-versed scholar, but did not practise what he knew. Rama was a *Jnani* (a wise one) who lived up to what he had learnt. By controlling His senses, Rama led a life of truth and righteousness." Education that is used only for selfish ends is no education at all. Education should be used for promoting the welfare of others. Ravana sought only his own pleasure. Rama dedicated His life for the welfare of all.

### **"Students are My life-breath"**

Dear students! You are doubtless on your best behaviour while you are here. Students are my lifebreath. You are My wealth. For your sake I am devoting all My time and energies so that you may sublimate your lives. Apart from setting you on the right path I have no other interest of my own. I want you to become ideal citizens of Bharat. You are not realising the magnitude of My love for you. There may be no connection between the studies you pursue here and the kinds of problems you may have to face in the outside world. The MBA students are taught "Communication." When you go out into the world communication acquires profound meaning. You have to deal with different kinds of people, workers, managers and the public. You have to know how to understand them and how to convey to them your ideas. Engage yourselves in your duties with faith in God. One of our MBA boys got a job in a Birla concern. Within two months he was able to earn a good name among the workers and the employees. This pleased Me immensely. It is enough for Me if you earn the approbation and regard of others.

Students going out from the Sathya Sai Institute should earn a good name for themselves and the Institute. Already many employers have come forward to absorb our MBA students. If you live up to Swami's teachings you will be able to lead exemplary lives. Having spent many years in Prashanthi Nilayam and imbibed the atmosphere and spirit of this sacred place, you must carry this atmosphere wherever your life may take you. Remember always that Swami is in you and you are in Swami wherever you may be.

*Discourse to the students of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute, in the Prashanthi Mandir on 12-2-1989.*

*It is inescapable destiny of every one to fulfill himself. Every living being has to attain fullness in the end.*

*Each one is at present at a particular stage of this march, as a result of the activities engaged in during previous lives and the feelings he entertained in the past. The future is being built at present by the activities engaged in now and the feelings that urge and shape them. That is to say, what we do, feel or think about, at present--these are the basic reasons for the good fortune or bad fortune which is in store.*

*BABA*