

*Talk Given by Mrs. Kamaraju in Illinois*

*May 23, 2009*

*With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba,*

*Sai Ram to all of you!*

Here is a poem about the Divine Love of our Mother:

*Sanna Jaaji Puvukanna,  
The fragrance of the Jasmine flower,*

*Sampangi Latakanna,  
The scented smell of the Sampangi creeper,*

*Vennakanna Junnugadda Kanna,  
The softness of butter, the sweetness of cheese,*

*Nindu Vennela Kanna Nemali Kanuukanna,  
The full moon and the beautiful eye of the peacock,*

*Kanna Talli Manasu Sunnithambu.  
They are all but a fraction when compared to Mother's Divine Love.*

The fragrance of a jasmine flower, the scent of the *sampangi* creeper (an Indian flower), the beautiful eye of the peacock, the softness of butter, the sweetness of cheese are only a fraction of loveliness when compared to the Mother's Divine Love. That is the meaning of the poem above. This love is tender, sensitive, delicate and Divine.

***THE THREE STEPS TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND GOD***

How can we know God? How can we understand God? How can one have the real *darshan* (seeing a holy person and receiving his blessing) of God? To find the answer to these three questions are the main goals of everybody in their lifetime.

We can do this in three steps. The first is *sravanam* (listening to stories and scriptures about God's glory). We can go to scholars to listen to their discourses. They tell us of their spiritual experiences gained from *sadhana* (spiritual practice), and from their life spent with sages. *Sravanam* is the easiest path, where you listen to talks on *Advaita* (universal oneness) or such philosophical subjects.

The second is *mananam* (reflecting upon what was heard). You need to recapitulate and ruminate on what you heard to understand anything about God.

The third step is *nidhidhyasa* (meditating on *mananam* and experiencing God). *Nidhi* means 'treasure' or 'God'; *dhyasa* is 'concentration'. We should focus on God—everybody wants to have the treasure of God.

*Gnatum, drashtum, praveshtum* is another process to experience God. *Gnatum* means 'to know'; *drashtum* means 'to enquire'; *praveshtum* means 'enjoyment or experience'. The example for this was given by Swami Himself: we go to the market to buy a mango when we know (*gnatum*) it is mango season. We enquire (*drashtum*) if the mango is sweet and fit for eating. After this, we choose a sweet mango and bring it home. Then we cut it into pieces, and enjoy it—the real experience (*praveshtum*).

Swami also gives us this illustration of *sravanam, mananam, nidhidhyasa*. One of our friends tells us that Swami, the personification of Love, is in Puttaparthi. This is the first step, *sravanam*, listening and hearing about Swami. The next step, *mananam*, is when we go to Puttaparthi to see Swami, and we get to know about our surroundings in Prashanti Nilayam (Swami's *ashram*). We sit in the first line for *darshan* and Swami blesses us with *padanamaskar* (touching His Feet). The energy we get from that is the third step, *nidhidhyasa*.

### **THE MEANING OF MANANAM AND NIDHIDHYASA**

*Mananam* is 'recapitulation'. For instance, we go to lectures or talks. Many people attend lectures given by scholars; because the talk is prepared with reference to several books, it gives us the real truth. We remember this information when we go back to our houses. In other words, we recapitulate or recall to our memory the spiritual truths we heard. That is the second step—recapitulation or *mananam*.

Here is an example: sometimes we go for a weekend picnic. People in America also take their children to a picnic spot where there is natural scenery like mountains or lakes. They enjoy the scenery and feel very happy. Whenever people come back from such beautiful places and think again about their visit—that is recapitulation, *mananam*.

Again, many people go to the Himalayas to find happy, peaceful moments there; the place also makes us feel very comfortable and happy. If we can feel that same experience at home, that is *nidhidhyasa*, the treasure or God. So whenever we think about the places we visited in the past, that is recapitulation; and *nidhidhyasa* is when we experience the same feeling as we had then.

This recapitulation makes us happy. Why? It is because we were very comfortable, happy and peaceful in those surroundings. Peace is felt; but where is this peace? Is it inner or outer peace? We could perhaps experience peace when we are at home too, but the surroundings are noisy and the busy lifestyle does not bring us inner peace. But when we go to places with good surroundings like green fields and mountains, it is very quiet and peaceful. That is why we easily experience inner peace.

But can we only get this peace by being at those places? No, no . . . not so. We can experience the same inner peace at home, by thinking about the natural scenery and how we felt in those surroundings. That is, we meditate and experience which is *nidhidhyasa*, the last step.

### *THE PERSONALITY WILL CHANGE*

*Nidhidhyasa* will bring out the inner talent and the totally integrated personality of a person. This is the actual purpose of education. Education and spirituality are not different; they are one and the same. A man who has reached *nidhidhyasa* will feel one with all creation. He sees Divinity in all people; he believes that all people belong to him. This is how the personality will change.

Sometimes we think too much about the past and bad situations; many people have bad memories and unhappy thoughts. But when we think of the happy moments, we feel very happy and friendly, and our mood is completely different. This is because the glands in the body are producing all the enzymes in a perfect manner. When we think about the bad or unhappy things, the secretions will not be in proper balance, and so we have different behaviour. We feel very restless, mentally stressed out, and imbalanced.

We become a totally new person after attending philosophical lectures about great sages, and listening to spiritual discourses. By recapitulating on what we hear, our personality changes. We become friendly towards others, and our love and compassion for fellow beings increases. So these three steps—*sravanam*, *mananam*, *nidhidhyasa*—help us to know God and become a better person.

### *ALL-KNOWING, CARING SWAMI*

Once we went from Guntur to Parthi by bus for Baba's Birthday celebrations. Suddenly the bus we were travelling in collided with another bus, and the glass window in the front of the bus was broken. This incident happened in the night, while all the people in the bus were sleeping.

Usually I sit near the window with my husband at my side. That day I sat at the window seat for some time and then changed to a seat away from the side window. So now my husband had the window seat and I had the centre aisle seat. Suddenly we heard a noise and we all woke up. People were shocked when they saw all the glass inside the bus, and somebody was screaming. I thought "What has happened?" Strangely, I had had a vision of the bus going down and down ten minutes before the accident.

After some time, we all reached Parthi in another bus. The first sentence that Swami said to my husband when we reached Parthi was "*Neeku tagalalsina debbalu nee bharyaku Tagilayi*" which means, "Whatever suffering you were due to receive has been taken on by your wife."

Two days before this incident I had prayed to Swami, "Swami, my husband cannot take any suffering. I can take on myself whatever suffering is due; I do not wish any suffering to be given to my husband." And this is exactly what Swami told my husband in Parthi.

This seems to be the reason why I changed my place to be on the other side of my husband, protecting him from the flying glass of the broken front window. Those on the window side, like my husband, were further away from the glass, while those with centre seats were closer.

Swami took so much care of me. He said that although I had had a minor injury, the eye nerve was still affected. He asked my husband daily about my health and showed a lot of compassion. He also arranged for some doctors to do a check up and they freely gave their service. After that, Swami sent me a bottle of eye drops that I used for six months. Swami really knows everything. Superficially, the injury looked small, but it had impacted deeply . . . but He saved me!

## *LESSONS ABOUT CHARITY*

Another time there was a teacher in Puttaparthi whom I used to consult whenever I had any doubts. She was an experienced *balvikas* (spiritual education for children) teacher who loved children very much. She would tell me all that I wanted to know, and guide me too. In the beginning, when we had just come to Puttaparthi and I had a question, I would first run to her.

She was a great lady who cooked and served food to everyone who came to her house. One day she told me this, “Please don’t give reheated or spoiled food to anybody. If you want to give anything, it should be fresh and in good condition.” She went on to say that she never gave rotten food to birds and animals.

In one of Swami’s discourses, He said, “A man wanted to donate 2,000 rupees. After one hour, he changed his mind and thought that he would give only 1,000 rupees. After a few minutes, he thought just 500 rupees would be enough. He kept cutting back on the money. After a while, he decided that there was no need to donate any money.” So this tells us that if we wish to do any service, we should do it immediately.

This is another message told by Swami that I learned from the teacher. Here is a story about four brothers: Tamra Keerthi, Swarna Keerthi, Rajatha Keerthi and Nithya Keerthi. They were noble and kind-hearted, and always did a lot of charity. They competed with each other in doing good deeds.

Tamra Keerthi, the youngest brother, donated milk from the cows from 6 AM to 4 PM daily. After that, he fed lunch to the people, who then rested before leaving.

One day, Sage Narada appeared before the brothers who asked him, “Who is the greatest among us?”

Narada replied, “I have to test you before I can give you the answer.” He then ate his lunch and rested.

In the evening, the brothers and the sage went for a stroll. The cows were coming back home and kicked up dust in passing. The youngest brother commented, “All this dust is from my cows.”

Hearing this, Sage Narada said, “The purpose of charity is lost when you attach a ‘my’ concept.”

So when we claim that it is “my” charity, there is no longer a spiritual purpose—it is ego.

The other brother, Rajatha Keerthi, used to take a chariot with a variety of things on it to give to people. They could pick what they liked from this chariot. This went on for a while. A person showed up one evening and asked for the horse that pulled the chariot.

Rajata Keerthi gave him the horse. But this was the fourth horse he had given away and he now started to worry about the loss of all these horses. He would have to pull the chariot himself because there were no more horses left! So this type of charity turned out to be useless.

The next brother, Swarna Keerthi, had a beautiful chariot that everybody desired and asked for. Sage Narada also asked for the same chariot. Swarna Keerthi replied that he would donate the chariot to Narada in two years' time.

But whenever we feel like giving anything, we should donate it right away—we should never postpone it.

The older brother, Nithya Keerthi, never gave any thoughts about time, the object, and its value, and so on, while donating. Thus Narada declared that Nithya Keerthi was the greatest of the four brothers.

### *SERVICE TO MAN IS SERVICE TO GOD*

Another incident is when Swami appeared in my vision and showed me the *kalasam*, (holy vessel). This is usually a narrow-necked pot on which Hindu gods are installed during *puja* (ritual worship). This particular *kalasam* that Swami showed me was used for *Mangala Gauri pooja* (the worship of *Gouri*, the wife of Lord Shiva). It had many *mangalasuthras* (sacred necklaces used in Hindu marriages) tied around its neck. When Swami gave me this vision, I could not understand its meaning.

Then after a few days, a friend of mine suggested that we should perform mass marriages. I did not want to participate in that project, as I thought it was not an easy job to do; but she was very adamant about it. Then I realised the meaning of the dream, and somehow I accepted.

Swami had arranged everything so that we could do all these marriages. We used to go to the villages and cook lunch for the people. The MRO (Village Officer) wholly co-operated with us, bringing the lists of the couples and so on. In all these events, Swami made sure that everything went smoothly. He sent a team of people to cook and another team to make the arrangements. For all these *grama sevas* (service to villagers), we followed the same procedure. This is why we were able to perform 108 marriages in Puttaparthi, Hindupur, and in the neighbouring villages.

Every evening after a function or *grama seva* was over, we would go to *darshan*. We could see the smile in Swami's eyes. He was so happy that we could understand and do something for society. And whatever service Swami gave us, we successfully finished it. So that is how Swami blessed us.

Swami always prompts me through the inner voice to go and do something. Last year He gave this project to me. And this year He told me through the inner voice to come to *darshan* at 4 o' clock. I thought something was surely up, so I was there promptly at 4 o' clock. A group was present distributing tricycles and sewing machines. Swami wanted me to see this service activity. Usually I go very late to *darshan* and this is why Swami reminded me to go at that time. Swami communicates to us through some person or object or happening. This is my personal experience.

You can also participate in service. There are many groups in Parthi that distribute sewing machines, bicycles, iron boxes, and so forth. These days any activity that a person can afford financially can be undertaken at Parthi. If you come as a group, you can easily do this *seva*. You can buy whatever you wish to donate at Anantapur, where transportation is available.

Because of Swami's grace, we have been granted this birth, and we should use it in a proper way. We should serve society in whatever way possible within our limits. Swami always says that you can serve the Lord by serving people. Or you can help your friends who are poor and needy . . . even saying a few good words and showing appreciation of the work they do is service.

Service is very important. When you serve man, you serve God, and Swami really likes it:

*Manava Sevae Madhava Seva.*

*Service to Man is service to God.*

Swami also always says:

*Help ever, hurt never.*

*WE CAN LEARN MANY THINGS FROM NATURE*

We can see unselfish service by observing Nature.

*Phalanti Vrukshaha,  
Duhanti Gaavaha,  
Vahanti Nadyaha.*

*Trees give fruits,  
Cows give milk,  
Rivers gives water.*

We use all of these things, yet the products generated by the river, cow, or trees are of no use to them. They use nothing of their own for selfish purposes. That is how, even in Nature, we can observe and learn so many things.

By Swami's grace, I got this opportunity to talk to you today.

*Thank you very much!*

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