

ANIL KUMAR'S SATSANG: BABA'S CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS

SAI PEARLS OF WISDOM PART 15 (31 TOPICS)

FEBRUARY 12TH, 2003

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Sai Ram!

**With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan
And Greetings to all of you!**

VIDHAYAKA KARMA AND KARTHAVYA KARMA

Today's talk is a continuation of what Bhagavan said about *karma* or action. We covered part of this topic yesterday and we'll go over the remainder today. 'Karma' in English can be interpreted as 'action'. *Karma* also means 'consequences of action'. As already mentioned, *karma* relates to three periods of time: past, present and future. Today we will review the light that Swami shed on this subject of *karma*.

I asked, "Swami, people speak of 'vidhayaka karma' and 'kathavya karma'. What is the difference between these two?"

For your information, 'vidhayaka karma' is the prescribed obligations passed on to us from generation to generation and 'kathavya karma' is the duty we are expected to discharge.

I asked Swami, "What is the difference between *vidhayaka karma*, the obligations, and *kathavya karma*, the duties?"

Swami replied, "*Vidhayaka karma* or the obligations, which are passed on to us from generation to generation, are left to your option. You can even postpone them such as you do with rituals of worship. These are the things that are passed on to us by way of tradition. They are engrained in our culture. Every country has its own culture. This duty, this action based on the culture of the land, is called 'vidhayaka karma'. On the other hand, 'kathavya karma' is the duty which one necessarily has to perform."

A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE

Then Bhagavan gave a beautiful example to drive home this point: “Suppose you arranged a get-together at your home and you invited everybody. Unfortunately, the evening of the party, you came down with a very high temperature. Within an hour, people were due to arrive, and you had a temperature. What would you do? Immediately, you would pick up your telephone, call them and convey your apologies: “I’m so sorry. I’m down with a very high fever. Pardon me for this inconvenience. We’ll meet later.” Wouldn’t you say that? You would postpone your commitment, appointment or engagement, because there is the possibility to postpone it. When there is some choice, it is called *vidhayaka karma*.”

Regarding *karthavya karma*, the duty, Bhagavan gave another example: “Suppose an inspection was happening in your office. Again, on that day, you have a fever. All superior officers have come to check the records and you are down with a fever. What will you do? You can’t request of the officers, “Would you please come tomorrow?” No. You also can’t cancel it. What can you do? Immediately, you will go to your doctor and get an injection. You will see to it that you attend to your duty, because you cannot cancel it; you cannot postpone it.”

This is what Swami says about *karthavya karma*. It is what a person *must* do. It’s things that we have to attend to.

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS LIVES

Then I asked, “Swami?”

“Yes, what? Go on.”

“Swami, people say that one experiences the consequences from a previous life now. In the past, in a previous life, I did some actions and today I’m facing the consequences. What do You have to say about this?”

I did not know what mood Bhagavan was in. Immediately He turned to me and said, “You fellow, you do not know what you have eaten ten days ago. You don’t remember what you have eaten for lunch three days ago. How can you remember your actions from a previous life? Why do you worry about it? Forget about it! Take care of the present, that is enough.”

VRITTI DHARMA

I see. “Swami...”

“Ah, what? Is there still some doubt?”

“Yes, Swami, please.”

“Yes, what is it?”

“Swami, would You please explain to me ‘*Vritti Dharma*,’ or ‘professional duties’. Would You please say one or two points about this?”

Bhagavan said, “Professional duties are never constant. When you change your profession, your duties also change.”

As a lecturer, I have the duty to teach. Tomorrow I might start a business; I could not teach there. I would have to run the business. So professional duties change. ‘*Vritti*’ means profession and professions change. When your profession changes, naturally your duties also change. That’s what Bhagavan has said.

IT IS NOT A BALANCE SHEET!

“Swami, a small doubt.”

“What is it?”

“Bhagavan, please do not misunderstand. My question is this: If I do ten good actions and five bad actions, then should I be punished for only five, not ten, because ten minus five is five? Correct?” (*Laughter*)

Swami laughed and said, “It is not a balance sheet! (*Laughter*) There is no accounting as such. You will receive all the good for your good actions and you will receive all the bad for your wrong actions. There’s nothing like credits or debits. (*Laughter*) There’s nothing like that; there are no exceptions.”

“Oh Bhagavan, is that so? Would You please give one example?”

Bhagavan explained: “Suppose you have ten seeds from fruit-bearing trees and ten seeds from thorny bushes -- twenty seeds altogether. If you spread them on the ground, ten of the seeds will grow into fruit-bearing trees and the other ten will grow into thorny bushes. There’s no question of credit or debit, no question of clash. As is the seed, so is the tree. You should understand that life isn’t anything like accounts.”

NOTHING LIKE A ‘NO OBJECTION CERTIFICATE’

“Swami, I know. It is very painful to hear that I will have to suffer, but what can I do? It is very difficult to be *pakka* (good) all the time. I am a human being, what to do? Sometimes it happens. I have a small doubt.”

“What is it?”

“Swami, people say that if I offer a few coconuts in the temple or if I offer my hair to God in Tirupathi, then it seems I would be given a ‘No-Objection Certificate’ - NOC. (*Laughter*) It is said that I’d be given a clean slate. By offering ten coconuts, everything would be cleared. (*Laughter*) Swami, what do You say about that?”

He said, “From My point of view, these actions will only give you a narrow and low level of satisfaction. They cannot nullify or give you any sort of exemption. They cannot cancel the consequences of your actions.”

“Swami, I’m sorry to disturb You. In Hindu philosophy, there are priests. If I pay them some money, they will do an *abhishekam*.” You know *abhishekam* - sprinkling of holy water on a Shiva *lingam*. “If I pay them money, they will worship Gayathri Matha and do some *puja*. Swami, if I have religious rituals or *abhisheka* done by the priest, then will I be freed from all my sins?”

Swami said, “It will never happen. (*Laughter*) It will never happen!”

“Swami, what? Why?”

Bhagavan laughed and said, “Suppose your child, whom you love very much, fractures his leg. Can you wear the bandage on behalf of the child? Also, your son loves you very much, but can he eat on your behalf? No! For your hunger, *you* have to eat. For your thirst, *you* have to drink. For your child’s fracture, *he* must wear the bandage. There’s nothing like ‘delegation of powers’, where priests do rituals to give you a ‘No Objection Certificate.’ There’s nothing like that.”

A GREAT SAGE AND A DESERVING DISCIPLE

“Swami...”

“Yes?”

“In the *Bhagavatam* (scriptures), it is said there was a sage named Suka, who helped a king named Parikshit. Every day, Suka gave a discourse to King Parikshit and at the end, Parikshit attained liberation or *moksha*. Swami, can You say something about it?”

He said, "Suka was a great sage, a *Brahmajnani*, an all-knowing person, a selfless man of deep penance. He was able to have a deserving disciple like Parikshit, and thereby Parikshit attained liberation. You may go to a priest, but you are undeserving. You may go to a teacher. The teacher may be great, but you, as a disciple, may be undeserving. You may not deserve the Grace of a teacher. Therefore, that case was different: it was a combination of an ideal *guru* and an ideal disciple."

Then He gave an example from the *Ramayana*. I don't know how many of you have heard this story. It seems that because of her disobedience, a woman named Ahalya was cursed. In the forest, she was turned into stone and had to lie there on the ground. She was told that when Rama walked along the path and stepped on her stone form, the touch of His feet would bring her back to life.

Swami commented, "If there is a person like Ahalya and also one of the standard and capacity of Sri Rama, only then is it possible. However, this is not the case for everybody."

WHEREVER THERE IS A PROBLEM, THERE IS A SOLUTION

"Swami, it's all right. I don't want to trouble You. You are not going to give me any kind of exemption. (*Laughter*) You are not going to cut short the consequences of my wrong actions. You said there is no balance sheet and accounts. Further, You went on to say that I must face the consequences and that I have no alternative. I can only ask this question, Bhagavan."

Swami said, "What is it?"

"Is there any solution to this problem?"

"What is the problem?"

"That one has to face the consequences of one's own actions? We all commit so many mistakes in life. Nobody is foolproof. Can I not atone for my sins? Atonement is a way of getting rid of the sins. Swami, what is the solution?"

Bhagavan replied, "Wherever there is a problem, there is a solution." Slowly and compassionately, the Lord was descending down. (*Laughter*) Very good! "Wherever there is a problem, there is a solution. When diabetes is a problem, insulin is the solution. Some medicines, proper foods and daily exercise are the solution to diabetes or a sugar problem. Similarly, there will be a solution to your sins - a sort of regret, repentance and a promise that one will not repeat them again. Constant prayers may lead to a solution to the problem and help a person to atone for his sins."

IS KARMA AFFECTED BY THE SURROUNDING INFLUENCES?

"Swami, is action, *karma*, affected by the surrounding influences?" My point was to find an escape! (*Laughter*)

He said, "You must suffer, you must suffer!"

I wanted to say, "I don't want to suffer. I want to find some way that I don't have to suffer." It is similar to the way that we try to avoid income taxes -- we try to find so many methods to escape paying them. Perhaps I can justify my wrong actions by saying, "I'm affected by the surroundings. The surroundings made me do these bad things; otherwise, I'm a *pakka* saint. (*Laughter*) So curse the surroundings, not me."

Then Baba said, "No, no nothing doing! The times and the surroundings will not have any affect on your *karma* or the consequences of your actions."

Next, Baba said, "Why do you ask so many questions? (*Laughter*) Every fellow knows whether what he is doing is correct or wrong, whether it is sin or not. Every fellow knows it."

Bhagavan gave an example: "When a car stops, an indicator will indicate that the car has stopped."

Well, I have no car, so I don't know the mechanism of a car!

"Similarly, the mind will indicate when anyone commits any action, good or bad. A man will come to know whether it is a good action or bad action all by himself."

WILL A SIN AFFECT ONLY ME OR MY WHOLE FAMILY?

"Swami, another question."

"Hmm, what is that question?"

"Suppose that I commit a sin or make a mistake. Will it affect only me, or my whole family? For that matter, might it affect my whole lineage, my whole pedigree and future generations too?"

Bhagavan said, "No. One person will not be the cause for the decline and the fall of the whole lot of people belonging to that family. No."

"Is that so, Swami? May I ask another small question?"

"Yes."

"Was not Ravana responsible for the destruction of all the inhabitants of Lanka? Because of Ravana's actions, all his brothers and all his children - everybody died in the war. Is this not correct, Swami? You say now that one man cannot be responsible for all this. Please explain."

It's a question of trying to catch or bring out the Truth. Bhagavan is very clear about it. There's no question of mincing matters, however I might try to get out of this. But He will never allow us to get out of it. We are something like a trapped rat. It cannot get out of its trap.

Then Swami said, "Oh-ho, I see. No! All the brothers and the children of Ravana played their role in the wicked act of abducting Sita. His brother Vibhishana disagreed with him, and was he not saved? If Ravana was responsible for the destruction of the whole family, then Vibhishana would also have been destroyed. But Vibhishana was not destroyed. Why? He deferred and came out. Only the rest of the people were ruined, because they had their own role in those evil deeds."

WILL I BE FREE FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THESE SINS?

"Oh, Swami, You're always correct! Bhagavan, it is said that when seeds are fried or heated, when the outer husk or covering is removed, that the seed will not germinate. Is it true?"

"Yes! Paddy (rice in the husk) has the husk around it. When you sow it with the husk, it will grow into plants. But if you plant the rice without the husk, it will never grow."

I think you know that. (You have rice in Russia, but you don't eat rice, am I correct? (*Laughter*) You eat potatoes and you mix them with different vegetables, right? Oh, you can serve me when I come there! (*Laughter*) Yes, I'm praying for an opportunity to come there, but not for potatoes, of course. (*Laughter*) I will bring my own spicy, hot pickles with me, my own stuff.)

“Swami, please explain! Suppose all of my sins and the consequences of my evil deeds are burnt, will I not be free from the consequences of those sins?”

He said, “Oh, how are you going to burn them? (*Laughter*) Are you going to use a gas stove? No! You have to burn them in the fire of *jnana* or wisdom. So, you have to fry them. All your actions, the sins, must be burnt in the fire of wisdom. Then you don't have to face the consequences of your actions. That's the only way.”

KARMA, MARMA, DHARMA, BRAHMA

“Oh I see, Swami. So, can I go straight for wisdom, without action? Why action, and then wisdom? Why not go straight for wisdom?”

He said, “It's not possible. First, action or *karma* is necessary. This will give you the experience of the *karma*, the awareness of the *karma* in the form of *jnana* or wisdom.”

Finally, Swami mentioned these points, full of poetry and alliterations:

Karmaloni Marma.

Marma means 'secret'. *Karmaloni marma* means the 'secret of action' or 'the significance of action'. Am I clear? *Marmaloni Dharma* means the secret of *Dharma*, the code, the conduct, will take you to Brahma, the Divine.

These are the four words He used: *Karma* – action: One should know the *marma*, the secret of it, which happens to be the *Dharma*, the righteousness, which will help you to experience Brahma, the Divine Himself. *Karma, marma, Dharma*, and Brahma - see how beautiful it is!

I'M WRITING WHAT YOU'RE TELLING

Then music started. It was time for Bhagavan to go into the *bhajan* hall. The boys were adjusting their instruments for *bhajans*.

Swami got up and said, “Oh, I should go. I spent a lot of time with you. I discussed many, many points. Boys, could you hear Me? All of you, could you follow Me? I was speaking in a low voice.”

I should have kept quiet, but it's not in my nature to keep quiet. What did I do? (*Laughter*) I said, “Swami, I'm writing down everything that You're saying and I will explain it to everybody.”

“Oh-ho, when are you going to write? When are you going to make a fair copy? When are you going to edit and when are you going to tell those people? When people are hungry on Wednesday - right now, you want them to wait and invite them for dinner on Sunday! When they are hungry, you should serve the food. When they really want to know, you should tell them now. What is the fun of saying, 'I will tell you tomorrow.'” Everybody laughed and laughed. That ended the day's session.

THE WHOLE LOT OF BABA'S CONVERSATIONS

My friends, with that we have completed two episodes from the month of July 2001. As I said already, the months of all these happenings correlate to the Telugu edition of the *Sanathana Sarathi*, which published these articles. The Telugu-speaking people will be able to understand that they have already seen these stories there.

So you can understand better, all of these talks could not be published from A to Z (in the Telugu edition of the *Sanathana Sarathi*). They could not allot so many pages to me. As Bhagavan's discourses were there, along with many other writers' articles, they could not allot the whole magazine to me. So, at the most, they printed just three or four pages of material each edition. They were not able to cover all that was given. But those of you here have the advantage of getting the whole lot of conversations, without omission, without commission, without censorship - everything, right!

NOVEMBER 2001

Now let's move on to some of the points covered during the month of November 2001.

TIME FACTOR

In November 2001, one evening as usual after interviews, Bhagavan came out and talked with us. He stood in front of us and spent an hour and a half conversing with us. Really, we were extremely happy.

Immediately after that session, many people surrounded me. They asked, "Anil Kumar, would you please give us a print out? Would you give us the script? What did He say?"

Though doing this is a joyful thing, though it is a delightful thing, though it is a spiritual duty, time is a factor. I'm still working as a lecturer in the college and I have to prepare for my *Githa* classes. I also have to take care of the publication of my books and write articles for the *Sanathana Sarathi*. Besides that, I talk to different groups of foreigners from different countries, so time is a factor. If I were given the whole amount of time for this duty only, well, I would not need anything else in life. I could go on telling and sharing everything that Swami says.

When people ask me, "Can you give me the paper?" well, what shall I tell them?

"Sir, I have written only points. Unless I develop it into an essay, you won't be able to follow it."

That evening was almost a spiritual banquet, full of philosophy, depth and profundity. To the extent that I remember, I will try to share it with you.

DEHATMA, JIVATMA AND PARAMATMA

Bhagavan mentioned three words: first - *Dehatma*, second - *Jivatma* and third - *Paramatma*. *Dehatma*, *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* - the common factor in all three words is 'Atma.' *Atma* means consciousness, soul, spirit, Divinity, Brahman or awareness. You may call it any of these.

Baba went on to explain: "*Deha* (body) plus *Atma* (consciousness) is equal to *Dehatma*. This means that the body is functioning because of the *Atma*, the Spirit. Let us not think it is the body that is acting. Unless there is Divinity behind it, the hand cannot move on its own. It's impossible!"

I cannot talk unless there is Divinity. So, the body is operational, the body is functional, the body is effective because of the *Atma* or the Spirit. Am I clear? So body, *Deha*, plus *Atma* is equal to *Dehatma*.

Then Bhagavan mentioned the second word. *Jiva* (the individual) plus *Atma* (the soul) is *Jivatma*, the individual soul. Bhagavan explained clearly. Earlier in *Dehatma*, it was only the body. Now body plus mind, together with *Atma*, is *Jivatma*.

Am I clear? Body and mind together with *Atma* is *Jivatma*, the individual soul, whereas *Dehatma* is limited to the body plus the *Atma* only.

Now comes the third one, *Paramatma*. *Param* is the super, transcendental, supreme, over-pervading, all-pervasive, universal consciousness. Swami also said that *Paramatma*, the universal consciousness, could be viewed as an eternal witness to all that happens.

Swami gave one example: "Suppose one man has excruciating pain in the body. He is given an injection, which puts him into an unconscious state. This injection only makes it so that he does not feel the pain, yet his complaint is still there. This means that the individual soul is at rest. It is unconscious."

WHAT IS BHRAMA, ILLUSION?

"Swami, one doubt."

"What is it?"

"What is *bhrama*, illusion? What is *not* an illusion? Please tell me. Swami, shall I say that everything I see is an illusion? Shall I say everything I do is *maya*? What is it? If I want to have the same experience again and again, is it also *maya* or imagination or *bhrama*?"

Here comes Swami's answer: "Everything is *bhrama*, illusion, that's all. Repetitive or not repetitive, everything is illusion. Everything is your imagination. All your experiences are an illusion only. Nothing is an eternal Truth, no!"

WAKING, DREAMING AND DEEP-SLEEP STATES

"Swami, is that so? I have some experiences in the waking state. I have some experiences in my dreams, too. Shall I say they are also illusion, imagination?"

"Yes. Everything is imagination. The waking state in Sanskrit is called *jagrath*. The dreaming state is called *swapna*. Deep-sleep is called *sushupthi*. All the experiences in these three states of consciousness are an illusion, delusion and imagination. There is nothing true (real) about them."

"Swami, I don't understand what You mean. I want You to give me one example, so that I will be able to understand better."

Swami said, "All right. Suppose you are resting on your bed. Your wife and children are also fast asleep. You have a dream. In that dream, you went to your native place. In the dream, you also dreamt that all the members of your family were there. Actually, you were in Puttaparthi on your bed. Your wife and children were here, too. However, in your dream, all of you were in your native place."

"In the dream, you created yourself and all the members of your family. All of that experience was only the creation of your mind, within a dream. So it was an illusion. How could it be true? By the time you wake up, you'll understand that you are here on the bed in Puttaparthi. You may think of New York or Chicago and feel as if you visited that place, but the body remains in Prashanti Nilayam. So, all the experiences in either state are only illusory."

"Swami, in deep-sleep, *sushupthi*, is there a mind or not?"

Swami said, "Mind is there, but it is in a passive state. Since it is in a passive state, it does not create anything."

TURIYA OR TRANSCENDENTAL STATE

"Swami, I heard there is another state - a fourth state."

"Oh-ho, a fourth state?"

“Yes, Swami.”

“What is it?”

“The first state is the waking state, *jagrath*; the second state is the dreaming state, *swapna*; and the third state is deep-sleep, *sushupthi*. The fourth one is *turiya*, the transcendental state. *Turiya* is higher, yes! It is transcendental.”

Immediately, Baba said, “This *turiya*, transcendental state, is true. All the other states are imaginary; they are all illusory; they are delusive. But this *turiya* state is the ultimate and it is true. It is called the witness. This *turiya*, transcendental state, remains as a witness to all the other three states.”

“Swami, I don’t understand. I don’t understand. Nothing is getting into my head. Will you please give me one example?”

Bhagavan said, “You are there in the waking state. You are there in the dreaming state. You are there in the deep-sleep state. You remain in the fourth state also. You are common in all four states. Therefore, that is Truth. You are the Truth; you are the Truth!”

“Swami, You say that *turiya*, the ultimate state, is the witness. How can I know that?”

(*As an aside to the audience:*) I don’t know to what extent you are following this serious philosophy. Do you understand it? Please, tell me frankly. If you want, I can try to supplement it with my own knowledge. This philosophy is the fundamental crux of Sankara Vedanta. The Sankara Vedanta is based on *avasthathraya*, the three states of consciousness. It is very important. If you understand this, you can say that you have understood Sankara *Adwaita*, Sankara’s theory of non-dualism.

Let me spend a few minutes on this to be thorough. We have many people who have not been exposed to this school of philosophy. I’m not an expert in it. Only Bhagavan’s Grace and Bhagavan’s discourses help me to explain these things.

THREE SCENES IN A DRAMA

Suppose I play a role in a drama - one role in the first scene, another role in the second scene and yet another role in the third scene. I am the same man playing all three roles. Let’s say that the first role is the role of a woman. She is wearing a nice *sari* and all that. (*Laughter*)

(Off the record, one day it happened that Swami started distributing *sis* to the Anantapur girls. After He finished, one *sari* remained with Him. He said, “Anil Kumar, you want a *sari*?” (*Laughter*)

“Swami, I think not for this lifetime. (*Laughter*) Not for this lifetime.”

“Why? Why do you say that?”

Then I thought that I should take another channel. “Swami, if I wear that *sari*, I’m more than sure I’ll look more beautiful than most of the women here.” (*Laughter*) Oh! Everybody burst into laughter. Nobody would ever say that. Even if it were true, nobody would say that!) (*Laughter*)

In the first scene, I played the role of a woman. In the second scene, I played the role of a good man. In the third scene, I played the role of a villain, an idiot. Still, I am the same person throughout. As a woman, as a hero and as a villain, I am the same. While playing the role of the woman, I acted like a woman, in a nice way, walking style and all that. In the role of a hero, yes, I played that role also. Then in the role of the villain, I was ferocious. Through all of these roles, I remained what I am, right? The three roles are different, but I am the same.

Similarly, the waking state, dreaming state and deep-sleep state are like the three scenes in which I played different roles. But the 'I' in the fourth state is undisturbed, unperturbed and unaffected. It is independent. It remains the same and runs through the other three states.

The 'I' (Anil Kumar) is separate, but in the role of a woman, I have all that is necessary. Still, I am Anil Kumar and only playing the role of a woman, am I clear? In the second role, the 'I' (Anil Kumar) remains and plays the role of a hero. In the third role, I play the role of the villain. The 'I' continues from role to role. You couldn't get another Anil Kumar to play the role of a woman, could you? The 'I' continues from role to role and is only acting in all three scenes.

Similarly, the 'I' in the ultimate, fourth state, *turiya*, will be the basis for all the other three states. The 'I' runs through them all, but remains unaffected. Am I clear?

SANKARA ADWAITHA PHILOSOPHY

This is Sankara *Adwaitha* philosophy, the greatest thought in Vedanta. You won't find many that practice this school of philosophy. Even Hindus find it very difficult to follow. They find it easier to follow simple paths, such as mythology, fine! Then Sai devotees are busy with their experience of coming in a lorry and going to see Baba, very nice. This philosophy is not that simple. When a person goes deeper into philosophy, he should have some experience with it. He cannot simply go on and get along with only stories. Life is not full of stories; life is full of realities.

So Bhagavan said, "The current is there; yet, it takes a bulb to give light. The light does not affect the current. The fan is there, but it is the current that makes the fan revolve. The breeze does not affect the current. Just as the light or the breeze does not affect the current, the 'I' is not affected by the experiences of the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep-sleep state. The 'I' continues to be there as an eternal witness."

"Swami, thank you so much! How wonderfully You have explained this! An explanation using electricity, something which we use daily, is exactly suited to the context and we can follow the analogy. Thank You, Swami! No one is equal to You in explaining these subtleties of Vedanta in such a simple way, with suitable illustrations. You are unparalleled; You are unbeaten."

WHAT SHOULD I DO TO BE FREE FROM ILLUSION?

"Swami, one question: To be free from *bhrama*, illusion, what should I do? It is there anyway. You say that everything is illusion. How can I get free of it? How do I get rid of it? What *yoga* should I do?" *Yoga* is spiritual exercise. "What *yaga*?" *Yaga* is spiritual sacrifice. "What should I do - spiritual sacrifice or spiritual exercise? *Yaga* or *yoga*, which should I follow to be free from *bhrama* or illusion?"

Swami said, "See that, *ah-ha!*"

(You may wonder why I say "*ah-ha, oh-ho,*" and all that. (*Laughter*) I will explain. Don't mistake it. Even while translating, I sometimes do these things and get heavily reprimanded from Bhagavan: (*Laughter*)

"Hey, you're expected to translate! Why do you say, '*Ah-ha, oh-ho*?' (*Laughter*) Your business is only to translate."

"Swami, excuse me. I'm not a simple microphone or machine that translates. I'm not a simple tape recorder. I also appreciate Your talks. I also drink in the nectar of Your Divine message and I get lost. In so doing, I say, '*a-baa!*'" (*Laughter*)

“But you’re losing time! I’m very fast and you’re saying, ‘a-baa, ah-ha’, and what’s all this?”

“Ah, sorry, excuse me for it this time.”

So, I think that you will also pardon me for such reasonable, tolerable omissions and mistakes on my part.)

This is what He said: “No *yoga* is necessary; spiritual sacrifice is not necessary. No *yoga* is necessary; spiritual exercise is not necessary, no! If you have no *raga*, that is enough.”

‘*Raga*’ means attachment. So, *yoga* and *yaga* are useless. It is enough if you don’t have *raga*, attachment and possessiveness.

Then Swami gave an example of a father and son. Both of them were very, very great sages par-excellence - Sage Vyasa and his son, Suka. It seems the son Suka was walking very fast and the father, Sage Vyasa, was running behind him, pleading with him: “Oh son! Don’t go. Please stay with us. Oh son, don’t go! Stay with us.”

This young man, the son, Sage Suka, turned back and looked at the father, Sage Vyasa. He told him, “Look here, from the point of this body, you are the father and I am your son. But from the point of *Atma*, the consciousness, we have no relationship. The same *Atma* that is in you is in me also. There’s no relationship in terms of, in realms of *Atma* and consciousness.”

“Oh Swami, what a very good example!”

THE PANCHANGAM ALMANAC

Further, Baba said some words about the *Panchangam* Almanac. I don’t know how many of you have heard of this. Just to let you know, Hindus have some superstitious ideas. I’m not criticising them. Their traditional way of life includes some superstition. There is something that we call *Panchangam*. It is an almanac that tells the auspiciousness of every day. It also tells the timings when you should do or not do certain things.

I’m not attracted to that branch of science, but my wife has some knowledge of it. Every day she refers to the *Panchangam*. Well, I don’t disturb her and she doesn’t rub her views on me. We’re living in a democratic way. (*Laughter*) Somehow, thirty-nine years of bondage or togetherness have passed. We’ll have a few more years. That’s all, no problem.

Bhagavan said, “This *Panchangam*, the almanac, will never make you free from delusion. No, no, no!”

After all, *Panchangam* deals with planets, planetary conjunctions and planetary positions. I think Westerners know this as Mars, Jupiter and Venus, etc., the English names. Of course, with due apologies to those who have true faith in it, please excuse me.

Swami said the planets mentioned in the *Panchangam*, this almanac, are like walls. Walls separate - they separate one room from another room. Similarly, like walls, the planets divide and separate. Just as walls allow you to distinguish one room as the dining hall and another room as the kitchen, the planets also divide. Once you remove the walls, the whole thing will be one. Similarly, your illusion is responsible for this multiplicity, plurality or diversity.

(I’m using many words, not with the idea of exhibiting my language skills, but with the hope that I will reach you with one word or another. That’s my struggle. This is what I always say on Sundays, too. My constant struggle is to reach you. The

points should touch your heart. To accomplish that, I don't mind using any number of words.)

So, the point is that it is illusion which is responsible for this diversity, complexity and multiplicity.

CAN I DISCHARGE MY DUTIES WITHOUT ATTACHMENT?

"Swami, one question."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Swami, You said that I should not have *ragam*, attachment. Without attachment, can I discharge my duties? Can a mother take care of the baby without attachment? In the classroom, can a teacher teach without attachment to the students? Can a businessman run the business without attachment? Please tell me, Swami."

Immediately came a reply, something like an arrow shot from the bow, *thuk!* (*Laughter*) What did He say?

"Look here! Do anything as your duty, but not with attachment. It is your duty, that's all. Do not have attachment. Do your duties without attachment. That will be fine. That is the prescribed thing."

Then Bhagavan said, "Without *raga*, attachment, if you do it as your *Dharma*, duty, it will become *yoga*, spiritual exercise."

What a beautiful statement it is, my friends! One may be a housewife, professor, doctor or an engineer. If we do these duties without attachment, then those duties become *yoga* or spiritual exercise. Our good Lord, what a beautiful message it is! He doesn't want us to run away from here, go into the forest, turn the body upside down and call it *yoga* class. (*Laughter*) Hey! It's not that, no, no, no!

WHO IS THE DETACHED ONE?

"Swami, I want to know who is a *viragi*. *Raga* is attachment and *viraga* is detachment. Who is *viragi*, the detached one?"

Baba said, "Are you not seeing *viragi* right in front of you?" He is totally detached. "Are you not seeing the detached One in front of you?"

"Yes!"

"Anil Kumar, do you know what happened to the mother of this body during the summer classes of 1972?"

"What happened?"

So that year, college students from all over India assembled to attend the summer classes. Suddenly one day, in the midst of the summer classes, Easwaramma, the mother of Baba, died. Everybody expected the classes for that day would be cancelled and that day would be a holiday. They expected to spend the whole day in meditation, thinking of the departed soul. Baba said, "Nothing doing!" All classes went on as per the schedule. That's all. Why?

"They all came to Me to ask Me to cancel the classes. I said, 'Nothing doing.' She's the mother of this Body, that's all. I'm not the Body. I'm not attached to this Body! How can I be attached to My mother who gave Me this Body? So why do you ask Me to tell you who is a *viragi*? Don't you see Me here?"

IS IT ALSO AN ILLUSION?

"Swami, Sri Ramachandra cried and cried because of separation from Sita." You know the story from the *Ramayana*.

“Was that also illusion? I want to know. Was it also illusion?”

Baba said, “Yes, it was also illusion.”

“Then why did He cry, Swami?”

“No, no! He cried, but He only pretended to have cried. He did not actually cry.”

What can I say to this? I can't go meet with Rama now and check the facts with Him. (*Laughter*) As Swami Himself is Rama, when He is saying this, who am I to question?

“Swami, please, Hari Om Tat Sat! I don't follow. Please explain.”

Baba said, “Sita, being abducted by Ravana, was...”

How should I explain this? Ravana abducted another woman. That woman was similar to Sita, but she was an impersonation or a *Maya* Sita. The real Sita was in the fire. The one Ravana took was the *Maya* Sita, the Sita of illusion. That's all. At the end of the *Ramayana*, Rama recovered the real Sita from the fire. Therefore, the so-called crying was only a pretension; even Rama's tears were an illusion. That's what Bhagavan said.

“Then, Swami, is the *Mahabharata* also an illusion? *Ramayana* is an illusion, goodbye! (*Laughter*) Is the *Mahabharata* also an illusion?”

Baba said, “Yes, it is also an illusion.”

That was the day of illusion, that's all. (*Laughter*) There's no question - full stop. It's also an illusion.

Baba gave this instance: In those days, it was customary for the bride to select her husband. Many men would come and she would choose one. Am I clear? That was called ‘*swayamvara*’ or ‘self-selection’. It was the selection of the bridegroom by the bride. This is not the same as the arranged marriages in India, where the parents do the selecting for the children. It was not like that. In those days, the bride was free to select.

How did she do it? Not by a photograph and all that. There had to be a test. In the *Ramayana*, the test was for the man to lift the *Siva Dhannus* (the Bow of Siva). In the *Mahabharata*, there was one fish in the pond. All the princes looked at its reflection. While viewing the fish from the top, they were to hit it down - something like that. (Draupadi gave a condition for her marriage: She would only wed the prince who could pierce the eye of the rotating wooden fish, while looking at its reflection.)

So unless one is a victor, a winner, he's not eligible to marry her, the poor chap! The bride would be holding a garland in her hand, watching to see which fellow would be successful. (*Laughter*) Soon after she realised that fellow, ah, come on! She'd go and garland him.

Now Baba said, “Arjuna came in the guise of a poor Brahmin (when he sought to wed Draupadi by winning the fish test). He did not come as a prince, no. He came in the guise of a poor Brahmin. Draupadi didn't know that he was really the son of a king.”

“Therefore, whatever Krishna did, it was not illusion. He was only a director. His actions just appear illusory from our point of view. Whatever Krishna did was *Dharma* only and never contrary to the *Dharma* of that age. Our illusion may make us mistake Him, that's all.”

WAS KRISHNA PARTIAL TO THE PANDAVAS?

Then I thought that there's no point in still arguing. I said, “Swami, I can't expect more than this from You. Who else will You support other than Krishna? You

being Krishna, naturally You will support Him! I can understand. So, You are the Truth, and we are the illusion." I also said, "Swami, Krishna was partial to the Pandavas."

If you read the *Mahabharata*, you will know that He was very partial. He did all sorts of politics to see them win the war. (*Laughter*) The modern youth won't accept this view, but our parents and grandparents will. Our children will say directly, "Please stop it. Why would Krishna do that? God cannot be partial; at least He shouldn't be."

So I asked, "Swami, Krishna was partial to the Pandavas. Was it justifiable for God to be like that? Please answer."

Swami said, "Hey, you seem to be a fool!"

"Of course, I know. I may not *seem* to be one - I am. (*Laughter*) Why all this?"

Baba said, "He may have *looked* partial; but in Truth, in reality, Krishna was never partial."

He continued, "Before the war commenced, Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, came forward and touched the feet of Bhishma. He said, 'Oh Grandfather, all these years you have taken care of us. You have brought us up. We are very grateful to you, Grandfather. Pardon me for this war. I have to fight in this war. I'm touching your feet and asking for your permission.' Do you know what Bhishma said? 'Dharmaraja, where there is *Dharma*, there is going to be success. I bless you.'"

"Then Dharmaraja went to his teacher, Drona. He touched his feet. 'Oh Sir, you taught us all this archery. I'm going to fight now. I want your blessings and permission.' Drona replied, 'Look here, my dear son: Where there is *Dharma*, there is Krishna. Where there is Krishna, there is success. Don't worry. You'll be successful. Go with my blessings.'"

"Why do you say that Krishna was partial to them? Drona blessed them. Bhishma blessed them. They always followed the path of *Dharma*. Therefore, in the end, they won the battle."

Bhagavan continued further, "All the Kauravas died in the battle. Krishna went to Gandhari, the mother of the Kauravas, to console her. Gandhari, the mother of the Kauravas, started blaming Krishna: 'Oh Lord, are You happy now? You were very partial to the Pandavas. You are responsible for the death of my sons. Are You happy? What kind of God are You?' She kept speaking like that. After all, she was their mother."

"Then Krishna responded: 'Oh Gandhari, why do you cry? In fact, your husband Dhritarashtra was not eligible to be the king of this kingdom because he was born blind. You know that a blind man cannot be king. Though he has had no right, he has served as king for this long. Then you followed his footsteps. Because your husband was born blind, you blinded your own eyes by tying a cloth over them. As a result, you have not seen your own children. You did not bless your own children; so how can you expect them to be blessed by outsiders? Children who did not receive the blessings from their mother, how do you expect them to receive the blessings of God? You are mistaken.'"

When Bhagavan narrated this instance from the *Mahabharata*, everyone was very much touched.

Baba gave another example. It is a short story. It seems that a blind fellow had a child. This blind man's wife had to go to work.

Before going to work, the wife told her blind husband, "Look here, I'm going. If the child cries, please feed the child the milk."

The blind fellow said, "What does milk look like?"

The wife said, "Don't you know? Milk is white."

"Oh, I see. What do you mean by white?" Because he was a blind fellow, he asked, "What is white?"

The wife said, "Like a crane."

"OK, but what is a crane?"

The woman started acting like this. (*Anil Kumar demonstrates by flapping his arms*) (*Laughter*) The fellow was blind. With her hands bent, in the form of a crane, she started giving these instructions to her blind husband.

So it was like this. The blind king, Dhritharashtra, knew the Truth, but he did not follow the Truth. It is something like a person who has drowned, and thereafter cannot speak. Because Dhritharashtra was totally drowned in the water of attachment, he could not speak.

HOW TO PRACTISE TRUTH?

Then I said, "Swami, how nicely You are speaking about Truth! Nobody can speak the Truth like You, because You are Sathya Sai. Sathya is Truth. Swami, how do we practise this Truth? I want to know. Truth is great. You have explained it wonderfully. But how do we practise Truth?"

Baba said, "Very simple."

"Oh, I see! How, Swami?"

"Just as two plus two equals four, so also Truth is simple and definite. There's no confusion; there is no ambiguity. You can follow it straightaway."

DRAWING AND PULLING TOWARDS YOU

In the meantime, Swami concentrated His looks on the devotees. Then He looked back at us and said, "See! Seventy-one devotees from Russia are here. Watch them from here. They are all sitting there with full concentration, thinking only of Swami. You watch them! Boys, you do not know. There are numbers of devotees in Russia today. Most of them have Baba's photos in their offices and in their houses."

Then I said, "Swami, just as You did as Shirdi Sai, tying a thread to the feet of a parrot, You are driving, drawing and pulling towards You. From all over the world, You have pulled all of Your devotees to Your Lotus Feet."

Swami's teachings that day seemed to be full of philosophy. They were very deep and full of seriousness.

THREE BOYS FROM MEXICO

Then Swami started revolving in His chair. As you know, Swami usually sits in a revolving chair. Suddenly He called three foreigners (young men) to come close. They came jumping! It was very interesting to watch them make their way towards Baba. They came from a long distance, full of devotion to Swami.

When Swami calls any foreigner, I feel like taking video photos of him, as every fellow is so full of happiness, like a thousand-candle bulb. Wow! (*Laughter*) These boys were jumping like that, really! It's not easy. It is so nice to watch. When Swami calls them for an interview, usually I sit there - you've seen me. These people go in and they are so happy. *Hmm. (Laughter) Hmm. So happy, ah!*

So, Swami called the boys. They were jumping like lambs almost. Swami asked them, "Where do you come from?" Of course, He already knew.

They said, "Mexico, Swami."

"Uh-hmm, Mexico. Oh, I see. What are you doing in Mexico?"

Swami asked one boy specifically, "What are you doing, boy?"

"Ah, electronic engineer."

"Hmm. Boy, what are you doing?"

"Running a business, Swami."

"Ah, business! And you, boy?"

"I'm a professor at the University of Mexico."

"Oh, I see! I see. What do you want? Come on, ask Me, I'll give it to you!"

You must have already understood that though I called them 'boys,' they were really grown-ups. After all, no one wants to be called an 'elderly gentleman'. We are all 'children', particularly in front of Swami.

They said, "Swami, we want You! We want You!" They said this in one voice, in unison.

Then Swami said, "When are you going? When are you going back to Mexico?"

"Umm, April 25th, Swami."

"Why are you here? Why have you come here?"

One of the fellows from Mexico said, "Swami, we wanted to spend our vacation with Swami. We wanted to spend our holidays with Swami, so we have come."

Then Swami said, "All right, you go and sit." Before they left, He said, "I'll call you tomorrow. Be ready, be ready! I'll call you."

When Swami said, "I'll call you. Be ready", I should tell you that the chaps did not walk. They started *floating!* (*Laughter*) Just to watch them was an education. Yes, I was very happy.

Then Swami looked at us and said, "See those foreigners? How happy they are! Look at their faces - always smiling. See? These foreigners spend their time most usefully here in Prasanthi Nilayam. Oh boys, you know that after *bhajans* they all go sit in a circle and they discuss Sai's message. They also practise *bhajans* and they meditate. They spend their time very usefully. You should know these things."

INDIVIDUAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

In the meantime, Swami looked to the side and called one boy, "Come here boy. What are you studying?"

"Swami, PhD."

"Hmm. Doctorate?"

"Yes, Swami."

"I see. What is your subject?"

"Value-based society, Swami."

"Oh-ho! Value-based?"

Immediately, I took a chance, "Swami, one doubt."

In fact, He was talking to the student, but I interrupted because that fellow might not ask. Swami might leave and we might not have another chance to know certain facts. If He doesn't like it, the most He will say is, "Hey, shut up! Sit down. Time's up!" That's all. It doesn't matter; if we get some information, it's worth it.

"Swami, I have one doubt."

He said, "Yes, what is it?"

“What are individual values, what are social values and what are spiritual values? Individual values, social values and spiritual values, are they complimentary or are they contradictory? I want to know.”

Baba said, “Those which do not change, which remain permanent over the ages, the values of the past, present and future, are the fundamental values. They are the spiritual values. The values that change from time to time, which depend upon the norm, the customs and the practises of the society are the social values. The individual conduct, the individual behaviour practised by each person for the progress and advancement of the individual, and also as a contribution to society for its welfare, are the individual values.”

“Swami, it’s very interesting!”

“You know,” Bhagavan said, “Clouds come and vanish, but the sky remains. There may be a pot and a lid, but both are made of the same clay. Similarly, spiritual values establish the undercurrent of continuity, the unity in diversity in society. Spirituality and spiritual values will never lead to diversity. They will never lead to plurality. Unity is the theme and the aim of spiritual values.”

In the meantime, the music started and Bhagavan got up from the chair. Holding His orange robe with one hand, He gave a beautiful smile and started walking slowly, gently and majestically towards the *bhajan* hall.

Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram!

**Om Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu
Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu
Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu**

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti

Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ji Ki