

The fingers five

The Cosmos has only One Master, God, the All-comprehensive Supreme Consciousness, Chaithanya. It energises and operates the Cosmos, the Vishwa. It impels all the activities of Man. Man is but an instrument which the Chaithanya wields. God is not limited by time, space or circumstance. But, the physical body, the mind, the intellect the senses and their longings are moulded and modified by time, space and circumstance. Without believing in this fundamental fact man falsely imagines, "I am doing this," "I am planning this." It is the Supreme All Pervasive Consciousness that unfolds the skills, motivates the senses and operates the intellect.

All activities of man must result in cleansing his chittha---the levels of awareness. When these are done as offerings to God, they advance this cleansing process a great deal. The way man works, he shapes his own destiny. Work is sublimated into worship which fructifies into wisdom. The flower is Work (karma), the emerging fruit is Worship (bhakthi) and the ripe sweet fruit is Wisdom (jnana). It is one continuous and spontaneous process, this spiritual fulfilment of the saadhaka, the sevaka. They are like childhood, youth and old age, each imperceptibly growing into the succeeding stage.

While engaged as you are in karma, seva karma (service activity) as sadhana, you encounter many hurdles. But, that is the nature of the world in which you act. It is a world of dual characteristics---good and bad, joy and grief, progress and regress, light and shade. Do not pay heed to these; do what comes to you as a duty, as well as you can, with prayer to God. The rest is in His Hands. Mohammed preached monotheism and was driven out of Mecca. Jesus preached mercy and charity and he was charged with treason. Harischandra refused to give up his allegiance to Truth and was driven to such straits that he had to sell his wife and son as slaves. So, when you stick to the path of Truth and Righteousness, pain and poverty haunt you. But they are only clouds passing through the sky hiding for a little time the splendour of the sun.

Karma is sadhana, when it is done as seva. The seva attitude is most beneficial to the person rendering it as well as to others. Service is the best use to which the body can be put. In fact, you are not doing service to others. You are doing it always to yourselves, to the God in you, the God who is equally present in others.

Sai organisations should be an example for all

The seva dal has been established to instill in the minds of youth these sublime ideals. Every one of you cannot engage yourselves in all the projects of the seva dal. So, the activities or karmas have been demarcated into three categories and members are given the option to choose one or the other activity as their own contribution: (1) Those of you who have studied, up to some standards, can take up educational activities. (2) You can busy yourselves in activities relating to health education and enlivening life in slums and villages. (3) You can visit hospitals etc., and spread cheer among the patients.

We are holding some conference or the other every year during the Birthday week. The resolutions we arrive at after discussions here, should not be treasured in files, but must be put into daily practice. Organisations easily fall into mere publicity and fanfare. The Sathya Sai Seva Organisations should be an example and inspiration for all. Practice alone can deepen your faith and justify the appreciation and affection that the Sathya Sai Seva Organisations have earned.

Do not proclaim that you are rendering seva once a month or three times a year! That reveals laziness, want of enthusiasm and faith. Do you take food only once a month? Your hunger is not appeased even now when you have four meals a day! Your spiritual hunger can be quenched only by more frequent seva, at least for two or four hours a day. Each one of you waste more hours every day in gossip and scandal-mongering. Better than these barren pursuits, one can visit hospital wards or villages or sweep and clean bazaars or bus stations.

Seva will develop the quality of humility

These little acts of seva can confer on you great spiritual benefit. Firstly, it will destroy your egoism. Pride will transform friends into enemies; it will keep even kinsmen afar; it will defeat all good schemes. Seva will develop in you the quality of humility. Humility will enable you to work in happy unison with others.

We have in our organisation, State Presidents, District Presidents, State Convenors, etc., but these positions should not be used for enthroning oneself and exercising authority. They are allotted to people so that they can be examples, through their own lives, of seva sadhana. But some State Presidents are too proud to share in seva activities! Leaders must lead; they should not push you from behind. State Presidents must lead others, giving them instruction and inspiration. If they cannot or do not, they have no right to hold office.

Again, you must work together joyfully, as brothers and sisters. When any difference of opinion crops up between you, how can seva be done with uniform attention and enthusiasm? You have to reconcile such differences silently and with love, and place seva in the forefront of your activities. When seva calls, all must come together as one. There should be no politicking in seva. No trace of politics should pollute the seva you do. No idea of separateness should tarnish your thought. Do not talk harshly to any one; some people who are office-bearers in the organisation do indulge in strong unpleasant language.

Seva to man is the command of the Vedas

God is adored by you when you do puja as Mridhu madhura bhashine namak---"He who speaks soft and sweet" This is a meaningful characterisation of the Lord. Through soft and sweet speech, we can transform even demonic persons into decent individuals. From words, honey drips; words are fragrant flowers; words enshrine Vedic wisdom; words can build a heaven or hell. Words can plunge you into prison or release you into freedom.

When any Convenor or President promotes factions or differences among devotees, treat them as pests, as termites and remove them. Be vigilant that they do not enter the units of the Organisation.

All units must work as a single entity like the fingers on one's hand. The Seva Samithi is the thumb; the Mahila Vibhaag is the pointing finger; the seva dhal is the middle finger; the Balvikas is the ring finger and the little finger is the Bhajan Mandali. I find there is very little co-operation between the units now; it is mostly 'Operation' that is happening! Have high ideals of great sevaks like Hanuman before your mind's eye. Service to man is service to God. In the Purusha Suuktha of the Rig Veda, God is described as having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. That means all heads are His, all eyes are His, all feet are His. So, seva to man is the command of the Vedas.

Teach the illiterates in the villages how to read and write and broaden their vision. 'Visit the slums in the cities and instruct them how to avoid disease and maintain health. Welcome the slum dwellers into your group and work together with them to make the area clean and attractive. Once you take up seva, you will discover many ways of doing good.

First cultivate humility and compassion. Then, learn the knowledge and the skill needed for the particular seva project. Thus, you can make your life meaningful. By this means, you can add to the aanandha of the person who has given you the chance to render this seva to your fellowmen.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 21-11-1981