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Uphold Ethics and Morality Always

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Item Type	Article
Authors	Baba, Sathya Sai
Publisher	International Sai Organisation
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Download date	2026-07-05 19:21:41
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/196197

29 August 2009

Uphold Ethics and Morality Always

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Conference on Ethics and World of Finance

Prasanthi Nilayam

25 August 2009

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later, but the indweller has neither birth nor death. The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness. Truly speaking, the indweller, who is in the form of the Atma, is verily God Himself.

(Telugu poem)

The *Dehi* (Indweller) has no bondages. *Dehi* is also referred to as *Atma* or *Brahman*.

Embodiments of Love!

People worship God in several ways and develop faith in Him. However, God has no name or form. He is one and only one. Yet, people call Him by different names like Rama, Krishna, Allah, Jesus, etc. These are all their individual fancies, but God has no particular name. God is one. *Ekam Sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). The one God is referred to and worshipped by various names and forms. These forms ascribed to God are the result of one's imagination and as portrayed in some paintings. In fact, no one has ever visualised God. In whichever form one contemplates on God, He will manifest in that form. God is one, not two!

Every individual refers to themselves as 'I', 'I', 'I'. This 'I' refers to the individual ego, born out of attachment to the body. When this *deha bhava* is removed (crossed), one becomes the *dehi* (Indweller). You become God, verily. Divinity transcends name and form. Since time immemorial, people contemplated, worshipped, served, and longed for such a transcendental Divinity.

People have many desires in this material world. Emperor Dharmaraja had only one desire: playing the game of dice. He was very fond of this game. The *Kauravas* noticed this weakness of Dharmaraja. They contrived to trap him by making use of this weakness. Their maternal uncle Sakuni instigated and advised them, "You go and invite Dharmaraja for a game of dice."

Sakuni was an adept in this game, and he could easily defeat his opponents by foul means. Duryodhana and his brothers were on one side and Dharmaraja was on the other. The dice used in this game were manipulated to enable them to score a victory each time the game was played. As a result, Dharmaraja lost the game every time. He lost his empire, his brothers, himself, and even Droupadi. The *Kauravas* annexed his empire and took control over Dharmaraja's brothers and wife Droupadi. They dragged her to the royal court.

Droupadi then posed a question to the honourable members and elders in the assembly whether Dharmaraja pawned himself first and then lost her or vice-versa. If Dharmaraja pawned himself first and lost the game, he had no right to pawn Droupadi. Moreover, Droupadi was the wife of not only Dharmaraja but all the five brothers. Did they give their consent to pawn *Panchali* (the wife of five brothers) by Dharmaraja in this game of dice? No one in that august assembly dared to answer the subtle points raised by Droupadi. They did not open their mouths.

Dronacharya, in his youth one day, went to King Drupada to ask for the gift of a cow. Because the king refused to make the gift, Dronacharya in his anger left Panchala with his belongings and wife and child. As he was walking toward Hastinapura, he encountered the Pandava and Kaurava children playing in a field near a well. Coming near the children, who had surrounded the well, Dronacharya enquired, “My dear children, what is the matter? Why are you all standing around the well in this manner? What has happened?”

The children replied in one voice, “Swami, our ball fell into this well.”

Dronacharya then pacified them saying, “Do not worry, I will take the ball out.” So saying, He pulled an arrow and shot at the ball. The arrow stuck to the ball. Then he shot another arrow which stuck to the first arrow. In this manner, he released a number of arrows one after the other and finally with the help of the arrows made into a pole, he pulled out the ball and handed it over to the children. Seeing this wonderful feat of Dronacharya, they fell at his feet. They realised that they had at last found someone who was an expert in archery. They conveyed this news to Bhishma, who appointed Dronacharya as the teacher of both *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*.

Among the children, Arjuna particularly learnt the skills of archery fast and became an expert in a short time, winning the affection and admiration of Guru Dronacharya. In fact, he made his Guru proud and famous by his skills. This had made Aswatthama, the son of Dronacharya, jealous. From then onward, he bore a grudge against *Pandavas*, particularly Arjuna. During the *Mahabharata* war, he joined the *Kauravas* and fought against the *Pandavas*. One night, during the war, he stealthily entered the camp of the *Pandavas* and massacred the *Upapandavas* (young children of *Pandavas*) mercilessly under the cover of darkness. As he was about to escape, he was tracked down by Arjuna, who dragged him into the presence of Droupadi. Instead of becoming angry and cursing the evil doer and pronouncing punishment on him, she fell at the feet of Aswatthama, the son of her husband’s most revered Guru and said:

It is at the feet of your father Dronacharya
that my husbands learnt all that they know.
Being the son of Dronacharya, is it proper to kill my innocent children?
How could you have the heart to kill them,
who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep,
were not having any enmity against you, and
were not contemplating any harm to you?
(Telugu poem)

When Droupadi was thus pleading with Aswatthama, Bhima could not bear to see this. Exploding with anger, he roared:

This Droupadi is a stupid woman,
for she pleads for the freedom of this wretch.
She feels no anger against this murderer of her sons.
This assassin is not a Brahmin; do not release him, kill him.
If you do not do that, I will myself kill him with my powerful fist.
(Telugu poem)

Aswatthama was trembling with fear and felt helpless. Consumed with rage, Arjuna was about to attack Aswatthama. Droupadi then raised both her hands and pleaded with Arjuna thus:

Oh, Phalgun! It is not righteous to kill a person
who is afraid or has lost courage,
who is asleep or intoxicated,
who seeks refuge or is a female.
You should not kill Aswatthama, for he is the son of your preceptor.

(Telugu poem)

Droupadi then fell at his feet and reasoned with him: “Arjuna, will my sons be revived by killing Aswatthama? His mother would experience the same kind of sorrow that I am now undergoing. Having studied the *Vedas* and *Sastras*, how is it that you are not able to maintain your tranquillity?” Thus, Droupadi pleaded with Arjuna to forgive Aswatthama for his heinous act.

Arjuna retorted, “You are preventing me from keeping up my vow.”

Droupadi replied, “Tonsuring his head and removing the crown jewel from his head is equivalent to killing him.” Arjuna then agreed to her pleadings, and as a token of punishment shaved Aswatthama’s head, took his crown jewel, and set him free. “There is no use brooding over the past. Past is past; forget the past,” is the advice given by Droupadi to Arjuna. On the advice of Droupadi, Arjuna suppressed his emotion.

Just now, an economist who participated in the conference mentioned the theme “Ethics and Finance”. Arjuna followed the ethics and saved the life of Aswatthama, forgetting the loss of the *Upapandavas*.

To save the life of a fellow human being is far superior to accumulating wealth. Several such incidents of nobility are to be found in the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata*. There are many such noble women like Droupadi. She was broad-minded and of noble character. It is only because of such women that the country of Bharat has achieved great progress from age to age and attained the pre-eminent position of today.

Unfortunately, the *Bharatiyas* (Indians) have forgotten their glorious past. They are now like a mighty elephant who is unaware of its innate strength. In the supremely holy land of Bharat, tolerance is the towering quality of our character. What is the real beauty in a human being? It is not the beauty of the physical body. It is the quality of tolerance that confers real beauty on an individual. Our culture of Bharat has given utmost importance to the quality of tolerance. This has been our tradition since ages.

One has to therefore uphold one’s rich tradition of purity and tolerance. A true *Bharatiya* is one who protects these two qualities. He is not a human who lacks morality. *Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows*. Hence, one has to protect one’s morality. That is the real quality of a *Bharatiya*. Only the one who is endowed with a noble character is eligible to be called a *Bharatiya*.

Just as an elephant is not aware of its innate strength and meekly submits itself to the commands of the mahout, the *Bharatiyas* of today forget their innate strength and purity and are imitating the western culture. Though they are endowed with great strength and have mastered the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the scriptures, they are aping the western culture forgetting their own greatness. It does not behoove of the people of such a great nation. You have to realise the greatness of your culture and follow your conscience.

Unfortunately, people today do not follow their conscience. It is not out of ignorance but innocence.

If you continue to imitate western culture, your own strength will gradually diminish. Therefore, do not imitate others. Observe restraint. For example, the lion attacks an animal only when it is hungry. It does not go about killing every animal that it comes across. Thus, even a wild beast like the lion has the capacity to restrain itself. Hence, it is necessary for every human being to observe restraint and certain limits. Limitless ego, anger, and desire will only lead you astray.

You have to divert your mind from such a situation and follow the noble path so that you do not cause harm to others nor do you suffer in the process. Do not utilise your strength and power indiscriminately. You see the modern children enjoying unrestrained freedom. Freedom no doubt is good and permissible but should be within a limit. Then only does it acquire value. Trying to amass wealth and being over-smart will only lead you to danger.

You must have seen in newspapers how America indulged in colossal wastage of its money and resources in waging wars against Iran, Iraq, and other nations. What could America gain from this? Today the American economy has slowed down and there is recession in the country. It is all due to their improper usage of resources.

Take for example, Lord Easwara. He is mighty and all-powerful. Yet, He uses His all-pervading power only to the extent necessary. He does not use His power indiscriminately. One must emulate His example and make proper use of one's strength and resources only to the extent necessary.

Do not waste your thoughts, for it makes your mind unsteady and wavering. (Showing His handkerchief) What is this? This is a cloth. No, this is not a cloth but a bundle of threads. Not even threads, it is just cotton. Without cotton, there can be no threads, and without threads there can be no cloth. Likewise, the mind is nothing but a bundle of thoughts. Therefore, put a check on your thoughts. Even the wealth you acquire and the food you eat must be within a certain limit. *Food is God, do not waste it.*

Help others, never hurt them. "*Help Ever, Hurt Never.*" These are some of the guidelines for a purposeful living that you must follow. He is a blessed one who conducts himself in such a way that he does not hurt others nor does get hurt in the process. You have to learn these skills, which are not available in the textbooks. Watch your thoughts and see that they do not go astray. Each time a thought arises in your mind, analyse it. "Is it good or bad?" If you feel it is bad, do not allow it to persist. Just let it pass. If it is a good thought, put it into practice so that you and others also will be benefited.

In the conference held yesterday and today, certain guidelines for the efficient functioning of the banks in the country have been deliberated upon. Whatever actions you perform must be in a spirit of self-improvement. Do not be under the impression that you are serving the organisation; rather you are serving yourself by your sincere efforts. Do not at all give room for ego and pride.

By depositing your savings in the bank, it is not the bank but you who will benefit, for it will come back to you only. In the same way, you will benefit by the good you do to others. You are doing it for your own good life.

To earn a good name in society, cultivate three principles: *Daiva preeti*, *papa bheeti*, and *sangha neeti* (love for God, fear of sin, and morality in society). If you foster morality in society, people will gather around you treating you as a good person. First and foremost, develop love for God. The next is fear of sin. It is only when you cultivate this quality that you will become a person of character. When you have a noble character, the entire society will love you. None will hate you. Maintain good character and love all. Love is everywhere and God is everywhere. Hence, love all. The more you love others, the more your reputation will go up in the society.

If you commit a mistake or indulge in an evil deed, others will try to imitate you. Hence, *be good, do good, and see good. This is the way to God.* Only when you conduct yourself in such a manner will you earn a good name in society.

You cannot learn these things from a textbook. It is not textual information. It relates to the purity of heart. You should develop such sacredness. Unfortunately, there are only secrets but no

sacredness anywhere. This is not good. If you smoke a cigarette, your friend too will come to you and say, "Hello, you are a good boy. Give me also one cigarette."

As is your company, so will be your behaviour. "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are." If your company is bad, you become a bad person. If you are good, others will follow your example and become good.

Today, you find that several companies have closed their operations. What could be the reason for this? If one company is following foul methods, other companies will also follow suit. It is a common thing that bad habits spread quickly and easily. You have therefore to be cautious and strive for good things to happen. Do not be hasty to imitate bad things. *"Haste makes waste, waste makes worry, therefore, do not be in a hurry."*

Dear children, you are all very young. Start doing good work right from this age. Set an example to others. Do service to society. It is society that protects you.

Even before you start doing social service, there are four persons whom you should revere and respect: mother, father, preceptor, and God in that order. First and foremost, the mother is very important. Make her happy. If your mother is happy, your entire life will be happy. If you make her unhappy, you will suffer. Hence, keep her happy and contented at all times. The happiness of the mother is your happiness.

She will protect you always. The mother gave birth to you and brought you up. She may reprimand you and even beat you when she is angry with you. But her anger is only momentary. Do not feel for it. The temporary anger will not last long. Realise the fact that anger, ego, jealousy, etc., are all temporary phases. Even lust is momentary. These are all temporary and hence they come and go. They are not permanent. But one principle, *Atma Tattwa*, is everlasting.

Develop love for one and all. Love, Love, Love! *"Love All and Serve All."* *Love is your only property that lasts forever.* There is nothing greater than love, and you don't need anything greater too.

Plunge into service with a feeling, Service is God; Service is my Life. Service should not be undertaken with an expectation of remuneration. *Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows.* Do not be elated when you get money or depressed when you lose money. The difference between money and morality is: money comes and goes whereas morality comes and grows.

Dear children, today is a very happy day. Pray that occasions like this should reoccur wherever you may be.

*God is your sole refuge wherever you may be,
In a forest, in the sky, in a city or a village, on the top of a mountain
or in the middle of a deep sea.*
(Telugu poem)

God is always with you, above you, behind you. He will always protect you. Develop this firm faith in your heart. God's grace is not transitory. He will always be with you. You are all good children, I know. Conduct yourself as good children always.

(Bhagawan concluded His discourse with two *bhajans*, "*Hari bhajan bina sukha santhi nahin ...*" and "*Subrahmanyam, Subrahmanyam ...*".)