

Some Quotes from Sathya Sai Baba on “Nature”

Regional Green Officers have been appointed to support these teachings

1. To acquire the grace of the Lord, man has to offer worship at the outset to *Prakruthi* (Nature). On the one hand you need human effort and on the other you have to acquire the grace of the Divine. *Prakruthi* (Nature) and *Paramaatma* (the Omni-Self) are like the negative and positive poles in electricity. However powerful the Lord may be (as the positive pole), there can be no creation without *Prakruthi* (representing the negative pole). The basis for creation is *Prakruthi*. For instance, however good the seeds you may have with you, without planting them in the ground you cannot reap the fruit. The role of Nature in the creative process is similar.

Adoration of Nature

Students! The progress of modern technology, by polluting the atmosphere with Carbon dioxide smoke, is causing a threat to life on earth. This smoke has already created a hole in the ozone ring above the earth which has been serving as a protecting cover against harmful radiation from the sun. If the ozone layer is destroyed, the effect of the sun's rays may be disastrous. All nations are now worried about this threat. All that needs to be done to avert this danger is to reduce the pollution of the atmosphere caused by automobiles and industrial effluents. The uncontrolled development of industries has to be checked. Development should be in the common interest, to promote the welfare of all. The Navarathri celebration is an occasion for revering Nature and considering how natural resources can be used properly in the best interests of mankind. Resources like water, air, power and minerals should be used properly and not misused or wasted. Economy in the use of every natural resource is vital. Pollution of the air has many evil consequences. The inner significance of observances like *Nagarasankirtan* and *bhajans* is to fill the atmosphere with sacred vibrations and holy thoughts.

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2. WHATEVER man seeks to achieve, he has to rely on Nature. Nature is not anyone's private property. It belongs to God. Without the grace of the Lord no one can enjoy the benefits of Nature. Not realising this truth, some people embark on the exploitation of Nature, out of arrogance and self-conceit. This is highly misconceived. Without the sanction of the Lord, man cannot achieve anything in the world. The Divine is the basis for everything. Man, however, is filled with the conceit that he is the one who is doing everything. This pride is the cause of his ruin. It is the cause of his frustration and disappointment. Man today is basing his life on reliance on Nature, forgetting God. This is a grievous mistake. You must place your faith in God, who is the prime supporter of Nature, and enjoy what Nature provides.

Faith in God is the primary requisite for man. Look at the modern attempts to understand God by concentrating on exploring the secrets of Nature. This is a wrong approach. The effort should be to realise that Nature has come from God. Only then God can be experienced. You have to turn your mind from the mundane to the Divine, from Nature to Nature's God. By getting immersed in evanescent and impermanent worldly concerns, people are polluting their lives. Admittedly the phenomenal world presented by Nature is true. The Spirit is also truth. Man's journey is not from untruth to Truth but from a lesser truth to a higher Truth. Truth is only one. That truth is God.

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3. THERE are three entities in the Universe, with which man has to deal: *Paramaathma*, *Prakrithi* and *Jeevaathma*---God, Nature and Man. Of course, God is to be worshipped by man, to be realised by man through Nature (*Prakrithi*). Nature is the name for all the various items that impress upon man, the glory and the splendour of God. It is called *maayaa* too. *Maayaa* is the vesture of God which hides as well as reveals His Beauty and Majesty. Man must learn to use Nature not for his comfort or entanglement to the utter forgetfulness of the God behind the joy he derives, but for the better understanding of the intelligence that guides the Universe. How does a tree grow or a flower bloom? How does man learn about the stars and space, except by the inspiration of the joy and the intelligence which He who resides within endows? Approach Nature in a humble, prayerful mood; then your future will be safe. Raavana coveted Seetha, who represents *Prakrithi* (Nature), and stealthily brought her over; but that selfishness and greed led him into the deepest fall. If only he had coveted the God behind Nature, Raama, he could have earned eternal joy.

Dear students! The cosmos is the magnificent manifestation of the Divine. When you direct your vision on this vast creation you are filled with awe and wonder. True education consists in understanding the inner meaning of this creation. At first sight what we see are inert objects like mountains and hills. We cannot see any sign of *chaitanya* (consciousness) in these objects. The second category of objects are trees. There is consciousness in them, but they cannot move from place to place. They are stationary. The third category are living beings. Besides consciousness, these have the capacity of motion. Man belongs to the fourth category. He has not only fully developed consciousness, but has another extraordinary, marvellous quality. That is the supreme gift of *Sambhashan* (speech). Starting with the inert, we have the conscient, the mobile beings and the human species with the power of speech. If this progression in the creative process is tightly understood we can realize how important is the advent of man. ssspeaks/volume07/ss07-12.pdf

4. The entire Cosmos is under the control of the Divine. But the Divine is bound by truth. Truth is under the control of high-souled persons. These persons are the embodiments of the Divine in the world. The universe is infinite and marvellous. Unable to comprehend the nature of Creation, man is a prey to divisive forces. Creation proclaims the Will of the Divine. It is known as *Prakruthi* (Nature). Every man, who is a child of Nature, should have Divine nature. Man is born in the world to proclaim the Will of the Divine. Man is a part of Creation. He is bound by all the material objects in the world. His awareness is based on his perception of the world. Man has to order his life for the purpose of furthering the creative process.

Abuse of nature's resources by men

Unfortunately today, as a consequence of scientific and technological progress, humanness has declined and man considers the world as only intended for his enjoyment. As a result, the powers of Nature are being used in a manner which poses a great threat to the world. The world has not been created for mere enjoyment. Abusing the resources of Nature and forgetting his own basic human nature, man is going against the purpose of Creation. Many natural catastrophes are entirely due to man's behaviour. Earthquake, volcanic eruptions, wars, floods and famines and other calamities are the result of grave disorders in Nature. These disorders are traceable to man's conduct. Man has not recognised the integral relationship between humanity and

the world of Nature. In the human body, all organs like eyes, ears, mouth, etc., are integrally related to each other. Just as these organs are important for man, man is equally important for society as a limb of the social organism. Man is a part of the human community. Mankind is a part of nature. Nature is a limb of God. Man has not recognised these inter-relationships.

Man is a kind of stage-director of what goes on in Nature. Forgetting his responsibilities, man fights for rights. If a deep enquiry is made, it will be realised that man has no rights at all in this world. He has only duties and no rights. It is foolish to fight for fights without discharging one's duties. All the chaos and conflicts in the world are due to men forgetting their duties. If everyone discharges his duty, the world will be peaceful and prosperous. When the master performs his duties, the employees will work well. When the parents discharge their duties, the children will realise their responsibilities. When the children do their duties by the parents, the latter will be honoured. Likewise, when teachers discharge their duties, the students will conduct themselves well. When the students perform their duties well, the authorities will secure due respect. Today men are forgetting their obligations. The Cosmos is an integral organism of interrelated parts. When each one performs his duty, the benefits are available to all. Man is entitled only to perform his duties and not to the fruits thereof.

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5. Science has been enormously helpful and has achieved many wonders. But, simultaneously, it has done incalculable harm. Science as such is not to be blamed for this. It is the wrongful use of science that is responsible. Science discovered for man the secrets of nature and the cosmos. But what is the benefit we derive from knowing these secrets? Knowledge is one thing; its proper utilisation is a different thing. Of what avail is it to know the power of the atom if we have not learnt how to put it to good and beneficial use? The knowledge derived from science should be used for sacred and righteous purposes.

Man has lost respect for life

We need today a science that can promote love. Instead of Spirit of Love, we are witnessing today a "splitting of Love." The Spirit of Love is being broken up and destroyed. Thereby love is receding to the background. Imagine what should be the state of man in an age in which science and civilization have advanced to such a degree far beyond anything conceivable in an earlier era. Yet, in the so-called dark ages of man, without much knowledge, man led a purer and nobler life. Man today indulges in greater cruelty than wild animals. It would be an abuse of language to regard as human beings people who indulge in large scale killing of each other. Man has lost respect for life. Where, then, is our boasted progress? Man has explored the secrets of Nature and has even acquired control over the five elements. But he is not aware of his own true nature. Long time ago, in an earlier epoch, the young lad Prahlada told his father, "In a brief period you have been able to conquer all the worlds; but you have failed to master your senses and your mind." Likewise, today we are acquiring mastery over the external universe, but are unable to control our senses. It is only when we use science for control of the senses will we be able to bring Science and Spirituality together and integrate the two. Today love seems to be absent even between parents and children, between husband and wife. Science must seek to discover means of promoting love and turning mankind away from the path of self-interest.

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6. Nature and Divinity

From this, the sages drew the inference that the beginning and the end are One, which is the Divine. They declared that this One is the *beejam* (seed) of the cosmos. No seed exists without husk. Because the grain is covered by husk its parts are not visible to us. For the cosmos, *Prakruthi* (nature) is the husk. The seed of divinity is within it (and enveloped by it). We cannot experience the seed of divinity within as long as it is covered by the husk of Nature. We have to endeavour to get at the truth about Nature. *The Upanishads* declared: "*Isaavaasyam idham sarvam*" (All this is permeated by the Divine). That means, there is only one thing that is imminent in the entire universe. If the truths declared by the *Upanishads* are to be understood, we have to seek the truth of everything in our daily lives. For instance, why has Nature come into being? Nature's role is to help man, the crowning achievement of the evolutionary process, to realise the Divinity immanent in creation. Mountains help man to build houses by using stone slabs, quarried from them. Trees provide the timber for constructing houses and also firewood for domestic use. Among animate beings, every creature, from an ant to an elephant, is of assistance to man in one way or another. Cows provide nourishing milk to man. Bullocks are useful for ploughing the fields and helping to grow food crops. All other creatures like birds, fish, sheep and others are serving man in different ways. Seen in this light it will be clear that all things in creation are helpful to man in leading his life. Even the sun and the moon are serving man. The sages regarded the Sun as an important deity and worshipped him through the Gayatri mantra.

Man's debt to Nature

Thus man is deriving innumerable debt from Nature, and enjoying the amenities provided by Nature in various ways. But what is the gratitude he is showing to Nature? What gratitude is he offering to the Divine? He is forgetting the Divine who is the provider of everything. That is the reason for his becoming a prey to various difficulties and calamities. While he is receiving countless gifts from Providence, he is offering nothing in return to Nature or God. This shows how unnatural and heartless is the behaviour of man. When we are enjoined to return good for evil, how unbecoming it is to fail even to return good for good? Man is not learning the great lessons Nature is teaching him. The foremost lesson is doing service with no expectation of return. People ask, "Where is God?" The answer is provided by Nature. Who is it that has created the five elements, the five life-breaths, the five sheaths, the five external sense organs and the five internal sense organs, which are all ceaselessly carrying on their functions according to their prescribed roles. The seasons in their regular cycle are teaching a good lesson to man. Therefore Nature is the demonstrable proof for the existence of God. Nature is not under any obligation to any man, it takes no orders from any man, it operates according to the will of the Divine.

Science is being used for destructive purposes

The artificial instruments produced by man function for a time and then become useless. Scientists today have launched many satellites in space. Sooner or later they cease to function and drop away. No one knows how, when and in what circumstances the planets in nature were created but they have been going round in space ceaselessly and unfailingly for billions of years. These planets have been created for the welfare of mankind and not for destructive purposes. God is the creator of the world for man's good. All the planets created by Him are serving mankind. Many of the missiles and

space instruments produced by scientists are for destructive purposes. Science is being used more for destruction than for construction. What is the reason for this? The Ego is the cause. The sense of egoism and conceit arising from it is the root cause of the destructive tendencies in man. Man today is placing more faith in his physical and mental strength than in the strength coming from faith in God. How long can it last? In a mere fit of sneezing, life may leave this body. What meaning is there in regarding it as permanent? Let no one be proud about his beauty, strength and youth. The ravages of old age are ahead and will overwhelm him. Even while you feel puffed up by your strength and energy as a youth, age creeps on you irrevocably. With the body bent, wrinkles on the face and bleared eyes, the old man becomes a butt of jokes for juveniles, who call him an old monkey. What is lasting in all this? Everything is subject to change and decay in this world. Whether it be physical objects or individuals, all are transient and impermanent. Nothing is lasting. Only your purity is permanent. Purity is the essential nature of man. But if man leads a polluted life, he is degrading himself.

Love does not seek any return

Man's purity is manifest when human relations are based on heart to heart and love to love. Love has a form of a triangle with three arms. *Prema* (divine love) does not seek any return. Where an individual offers love in expectation of a return, fear overtakes him. The one who loves with no expectation of any return is totally free from fear. Love knows only to give, not to receive. Such a love is free from fear. For true love, love is its own reward. Thus, love seeks no return, is free from fear and is its own reward. These are the basic features of true love. Love today is based on desire for a return benefit. It is filled with fear and anxiety. Thus love is motivated. When love is based on a desire for transient and perishable objects, life will be futile. Love must be its own reward.

You have to show your gratitude to God

Love is eternal. You are the embodiment of Love. You are the embodiment of Peace. You are the embodiment of Truth. You are the embodiment of God. It is only when this supreme truth is realised, and our life is based on it, that our love can make our life meaningful and enable us to comprehend the world. Your studies, your conduct, your actions, all that you see, hear and think- -all these should be regarded as offerings to the Divine. This is the true meaning of *Saranagathi* (taking refuge in the Divine). All that is seen, heard or experienced should be considered as intimations of the Divine. Have firm faith in the reality of God's existence. You have to show your gratitude to God for the benefits showered on you. Consider, for instance, how the Divine has filled the atmosphere with life-giving oxygen to enable you to live. The biggest fan made by man can provide breeze only for a small area. But the winds caused by Nature can blow over the whole world. Who is the cause of this wind? There are three kinds of lamps in this Mandir. They illumine a small space. But the Sun created by God illumines the whole world. We pump water with the help of pump sets. Can all the water pumped by these sets equal a fraction of the water got from a heavy downpour of rain which can inundate the Ganga? Who is it that is providing this air, this water and this illumination? We are enjoying all these, but we show no gratitude to the provider of these benefits. We render thanks to those who render trifling acts of service. But what thanks are we expressing to God who is providing such essential life-sustaining amenities for meaningful human existence? Can this be a virtue in a human being? Is it a sign of a right education? Is it the mark of a scholar? No. You must show your gratitude with humility and sincerity to whoever has done you any good.

You must shed your narrow outlook

Education that does not promote gratitude is worthless. It is the parents who give you education. The *guru* is the educator. The Divine has given you the capacity to get educated. Hence, the mother, father and the *guru* are to be revered as God, as enjoined in the *Vedas*. You must show your gratitude to your parents, offer due respect to the teacher, and base your life on faith in God. You may feel proud that you are getting on in life by your own abilities and intelligence. This is utterly foolish. You must cultivate a wide appreciation of Nature. You must shed your narrow outlook. Realise for instance, how small is the eye. But it is able to see the whole universe. Even your eye is teaching you a lesson. "What a fool are you? In spite of my minuscule smallness, I am able to see the whole universe with my wide vision. But your mind has a very narrow outlook." You must try to broaden your heart and enlarge your mind. You must dedicate your *chittha* (will) to the Divine.

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7. Nature and life

Nature is a preacher; life is a teacher. When this truth is recognised, life becomes meaningful and purposeful. Everyone should strive to unfold the divinity within him and illumine his life. Poring over a few books, one may secure a high rank in university examinations by one's diligence and industry. But this is not the consummation of education. Knowledge is not to be derived from books alone. Nature is to be accepted as a better instructor. By its forbearance, adherence to its genuineness, unselfish bounty, patience and serenity Nature is continually proclaiming its inherent and real role of preacher of spiritual truths. Consider, for instance, a tree. It puts up with heat and rain, summer and winter and all the harm inflicted on it. It offers shade and distributes fruits to whoever approaches it. It has no feelings of hatred or vengeance towards those who cause injuries. It seeks no return from those who benefit from it. Everyone should learn this lesson in selfless, patient service from the tree. Consider, next, the bird. The lesson it teaches is self-reliance. A bird perched on the leafy twig of a tree is not affected by the wild swaying of the twig or the storm which might blow it off because it relies not on the twig or tree but on its own wings for its safety. It knows it can always fly and save itself. The bird is always happy and carefree, sporting as it pleases. Birds are not concerned about acquiring things for the morrow. They are content to make the best of the present, living on whatever they can get for the day. They do not worry about the careers of their children or the state of their bank accounts. They have no anxiety about the upkeep of houses or properties. Now, look at what man has made of himself. Sitting on the branch of the life tree, he is worried about every little tremor in life; he is consumed by it, and loses his peace of mind.

Need for removal of defect in the vision

Man's ignorance of the Reality stems from his incorrect understanding of the world. This ignorance cannot be dispelled by *yajnas*, *yagas* or *japa* or even long bouts of *dhyana*. Only when he discovers his indwelling Divinity and realises the true nature of his self can he rid himself of this ignorance. The individual who regards God as separate from Nature will declare that Nature is *unreal-- mithya*. But, when he recognises that God is immanent in Nature, it becomes real to him. What is needed, therefore, is the removal of the defect in *drishti* (the vision).

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