

Chapter 26 Devotion: The Vision of Love

1. What Is Devotion?

Devotion is a mystery of the heart. No amount of argument could persuade us to feel devotion toward the Lord, for it is a bond between the creator and the created which surpasses rational understanding. Perhaps it is in our nature to feel and express devotion. It may result from lifetimes of spiritual striving. Actually, devotion is comprised of many feelings, emotions, and thoughts. It includes gratitude, reverence, adoration, love, thanksgiving, even fear of sin, but ultimately all descriptions must fail. For, in truth, devotion is only understood when it is experienced.

The Lord is understood only by the bhakta (devotee); the bhakta is understood only by the Lord.

Sandeha Nivarini, p.58

2. The Path of Love

The spiritual path of devotion to God (bhakti yoga) is one of the three primary approaches to self-realization, which are outlined in Hindu thought. The other paths are the way of selfless action (karma yoga) and the way of wisdom (jnana yoga). On each path, the aspirant seeks to reduce ego and merge with the divine principle. If we aspire to God-realization, we enlarge our vision to include everything within ourselves. Bondage is ended when we realize there is nothing apart from ourselves; we are the universal absolute.

The bhakti devotee strives to realize God by reducing ego to nothing. When our ego disappears, only God is left. Devotion promotes humility and surrender to divine will. On the path of devotion, the Lord himself guides us to our goal.

The ego is most easily destroyed by bhakti (devotion); by dwelling on the magnificence of the Lord and by humility and service to others as children of the Lord.

Sathya Sai Speaks 1, p.60

第二十六章 虔诚：爱的彰显

1. 何谓虔诚？

虔诚是心中的一个秘密。任在多的争论也不能说服我们去感觉对主的虔诚，因为它是介于创造主与创造物之间的一个联结，而这联结驾凌理性了解之上。或许，虔诚是在我们内在本质之内以便我们去感觉和表达它。它或许产生自我们多生多世以来所致力灵性修习。其实，虔诚包含诸多感觉，情绪和念头。它包括感激，尊敬，崇拜，爱，感恩，甚至畏惧犯罪，但最终，一切的描述皆属枉然。因为，其实，虔诚只有在被体验时才被了解。

只有虔诚者（Bhakta）才了解主；只有主才了解虔诚者。

《解疑释惑之道》（Sandeha Nivarini）58面

2. 爱的道路

灵修的虔诚法门或虔诚之道（bhakti yoga信瑜伽）是自我证悟的三大主要法门之一，其概要已在印度教哲理中述及。其余两个法门分别是无私行动法门或业之道（karma yoga业瑜伽）和智慧法门或智慧之道（jnana yoga若那瑜伽或智瑜伽）。于每一个法门，求道者都寻求减少自我以融合于神圣的原则之中。如果我们渴望明心见性，我们就扩大我们的视力以包括一切于我们自己之内。当我们认识无物不在我们自己之内时，束缚就解除了；我们就成了宇宙绝对者（神）。

虔诚之信徒致力于把自我减到零以体认神。当自我消失时，只有神留下。虔诚促进谦虚以及对天意的降服。在虔诚之道上，主亲自引导我们抵达目标。

自我最易被虔诚所毁；被老念着主的宏伟以及被你的谦逊待人和你视他人为主之子女般的服务所毁。

《沙迪亚赛说》第1章60面

In this era of spiritual decline, devotion is said to be the safest and easiest path for most people to realize God. The devotee's loving surrender to God draws God to the devotee. The devotee is like a thirsty kitten crying for its mother; the mother responds to the kitten's entreaty to relieve its need. Similarly, the Lord responds to those who depend on him and selflessly love him.

The seeker of wisdom, the jnani, aspires to freedom through the exercise of intuitive wisdom. To merge with formless Oneness, this seeker relies on experiential cognition of divinity. The jnani surrenders reason to the direct perception of God-consciousness. In this age, the path of wisdom is difficult for most seekers. It is easy for the jnani to become caught up in his own scholarship or asceticism. The path requires rare clarity of mind from a seeker, particularly in the absence of qualified teachers.

The way of action, karma yoga, is based upon the aspirant's selfless service to others. The karma yogi serves the Lord in the forms of other people and creatures. This seeker exercises patience and equanimity to break down the walls of egoism. By concentrating on the needs of others, the karma yogi removes the barriers to liberation. The potential difficulty of this path is the aspirant's pride in his or her accomplishments in the field of service.

The major benefit of the devotional path in this age is that it avoids the pitfalls of pride. Our era is characterized by personal pride and self-aggrandizement. For this reason, the bhakti path is considered safest. When we fully surrender to the Lord, the Lord delivers us to our goal; there is no need for us to worry.

Bhakti is the through-carriage. Though it may be detached from one train and connected to another, if you get into it, you need not worry; so long as you stick to your place, it is bound to take you to your destination.

Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.134

处此灵性衰微时代，对大多数的人来说，虔诚被认为是体认神的一种最稳当和最容易的法门。信徒们忠实的降服于神，把神拉近给他们。信徒就像一只口渴的小猫，哭叫着母亲；母亲回应小猫的恳求以满足其需要。同样，主回应那些依靠祂并无私地爱祂的人。

有志于求取智慧者，jnani（求智者），渴望透过凭直觉而获得的智慧（或识）的运作去获得超脱。为融合于无相的一，这探寻者依赖经验而得到的圣灵认知。求智者抛弃推理而诉诸对神意识的直接认知。在这时代，对多数的求道者而言，智慧法门（智瑜伽）是不容易的。求智者易于沉醉在他自己的学问或苦行中。智瑜伽这条路要求探寻者怀持特别澄清和明确的心念，尤其在良师的缺席下。

行为法门（karma yoga业瑜伽）乃根基于渴求者对他人的无私服务。业瑜伽修行者服务主于众人 and 众生的形相之中。这求道者运用其耐心与平静去拉倒利己主义的围墙。业瑜伽修行者以专注于他人的需要去解除阻挠超脱的重重障碍。这法门潜在的困难在于求道者基于他在服务领域所获得的成就而感到的骄傲。

在这时代，虔诚法门（信瑜伽）主要的好处是，它避免求道者掉入骄傲的陷阱。我们的时代是以个人的骄傲和自大为表现特征。基于此原因，虔诚法门被认为是最稳当的了。当我们完全降服于主时，主就把我们送到我们的目标；我们大可放心。

虔诚是直达车。即便它被接到另一个车头，如果你坐上车厢，你就无须担心；只要不离开座位，它绝对把你送到目的地。

《沙迪亚赛说》第3章134面

3. Requisites for Success

Success in devotion does not require adherence to any particular creed or religion. The devotee should act only with love toward all. That love reaches God, by whatever name one calls him. If we perform our spiritual duty, God's grace naturally flows to us. When devotion manifests in action and virtuous character, we may be sure that it is genuine. It is not enough if we preach virtue, but do not practice the messages of love and truth.

The devotion of an individual is open to suspicion if he has love for God but does not pay heed to God's word. Desire for God but neglect of his injunctions cannot be the true characteristic of devotion.

Summer Showers 1979, p.42

Fervent devotion to the Lord is a good first step, but its effect is limited if it is not tempered with discipline and duty. Our love for the Lord is important, but it is more important for him to love us. We draw God's love to ourselves by performing our duties well and living within the bounds of right conduct.

Imbibe the ideals of duty, devotion, and discipline. Devotion must be tested in the crucible of discipline. It must be directed along the lines of duty.

Sathya Sai Speaks 9, p.220

If we restrict our worship to the church or temple one day a week, we will realize only limited success. Devotion is a full-time pursuit. It requires commitment to achieving the goal of realization, of seeing divinity at all times and in all places. Self-transformation requires constant practice. It must be steady in the face of all obstacles.

When grief overtakes you, you run to God...When joy is restored you throw him overboard...Bhakti is not a temporary salve. It is the unbroken contemplation of God without any other interposing thought or feeling.

Gita Vahini, p.223

3. 成功的先决条件

就虔诚而言，其成功不是非要求固守某种特别的信条或宗教不可。信徒只要秉持对众人的爱去行动就得了。那爱会达到神那里，不论你以什么名号呼唤祂。如果我们执行我们的灵性义务，神恩自然流向我们。当虔诚彰显在行为 and 美德之中时，我们可以肯定那是真诚的。仅只口授美德尚嫌不足，必须加以实行爱与真的要旨。

如果一个人爱神但又忽视神的指示，他的虔诚是受到大家的置疑的。渴望神却又忽视其指令，绝不是虔诚的真正特性。

《夏季浸濡1979》42面

对主的热烈虔诚是好的第一步，但如果它不受到纪律与义务的调和，其成效就受到限制。我们的爱主是重要的，但祂的爱我们更重要。凭借克尽义务，据德生活，我们把神的爱拉到我们身上。

要摄取义务，虔诚和纪律的理想。虔诚必须受到严酷的考验。它必须遵循义务的路线加以指导。

《沙迪亚赛说》第9章220面

如果我们限制自己于一周一天在教堂或寺庙的膜拜，我们只会体现极其有限的成就。虔诚是一个全职的工作。它需要献身以达到证悟的目标，达到时时在在都看到圣灵的境界。自我改造需要不断的修习。在所有障碍之前，务必稳定前进。

当伤心事突袭你时，你跑向神…当恢复喜悦时，你把祂抛开…虔诚（*Bhakti*）不是暂时的慰藉。它是不中断的对神的深思，不具任何其他涉入的思想或感觉。

《梵歌之川》（*Gita Vahini*）223面

4. How to Start

To arrive at the destination of universal love, we must embark on the path of individual love. No single relationship to the Lord is suitable for all devotees, but all can love God in their own way. One person may assume the attitude of a child toward its parent. Another may see God as a companion or close friend. Any positive type of relationship or attitude enables us to draw closer to God. All forms of devotion are accepted by the Lord when expressed with love.

There are different modes of devotion: that which foolishly weeps for me when I am not physically present; that which surrenders with wild abandon; and that which is steady and strong, ever attached to my will. I accept all these forms of devotion. The choice between one or the other is not yours, for it is I who rule your feelings, modifying them. If you try to go where I do not will, I will stop you; you can do nothing apart from my will. Be assured of that: this is the highest devotion.

Sanathana Sarathi, Aug. 1974, p.185

Devotion begins with selfish love, but with time and practice, it develops into universal love. When we no longer seek return for love given, we can love all beings as expressions of God's omnipresence, for God resides in all beings. When we discovered God within ourselves, we also find God in all creatures and all things. As our hearts open to God's love, we become love, and we see the world through the "glasses" of love. Devotion may bud with the adoration of a picture or image in a temple, but it blossoms in the vision of love without limit. That vision confers faith and strength, which speeds us to our goal.

There is only one royal road for the spiritual journey – love, love for all beings as manifestations of the same divinity that is the very core of oneself. This faith alone can ensure the constant presence of God within you and endow you with all the joy and courage you need to fulfill the pilgrimage to God.

Sanathana Sarathi, June 83, p.159

4. 如何开始

为了达到大爱（宇宙之爱）的目的地，我们必须步上小爱（个人之爱）的道路。没有一个独特的与主的关系适用于所有信徒，但大家都能以自己的方式去爱神。有人或以孩子对父母的态度去对待神。有人或视神为同伴或密友。任何正面类属的关系或态度都能使我们更加接近神。神接受所有的虔诚方式，只要是用爱去表达的。

虔诚有多种不同的表达方式：当我的肉身不在时，为我而愚蠢哭泣的；做出荒唐舍离之降服的；稳定、刚强，总是依据我的旨意的。我接受所有这些虔诚方式。在两者之间选择其一的权利不在于你，因为是我控制你的感觉，修正你的感觉。如果你想到我不要你去的地方，我会阻止你；没有我的意愿，你什么也做不了。要确认：这是最高的虔诚。

《永恒的战车御者》1974年8月，185面

虔诚始于无私的爱，但假以时日和勤于修习，它发展成为宇宙大爱。当我们不再寻求付出的爱的回报时，我们就能以神之无所不在的表达来爱众生，因为神寓于众生。当我们发现神寓于我们之内时，我们也发现神寓于所有生命体与万物之内。当我们为神的爱敞开我们的心，我们就变成爱，而我们就通过爱的‘镜片’去看世界。虔诚或以膜拜寺庙里的一张图片或偶像发芽，但在爱的显现下，它却没有有限地开花结果。那显现赐予信心和力量，从而加速我们抵达目标。

在灵性旅程上，只有一条康庄大道——爱；爱众生，一如他们就是那在一个人的核心之中的圣灵的彰显。只有这信心才能保证神在你之内不断出现，并赐予你所需的喜悦与勇气以便实现你的朝圣之旅。

《永恒的战车御者》1983年6月，159面

Devotion is cultivated by slow and steady effort. It must grow strong and certain to support character. A quick rush forward will not help us if we only fall back again when our resolve is tested. Progress must be protected by discrimination, which knows its own strength.

When the tender plant of devotion begins to grow, it must be protected. When a young tree is growing, various animals will eat it and may kill it. For this reason, a fence is placed around the young tree to protect it. When the tree is grown, it needs no protection. The same animals who would have first destroyed it, now seek and find shade and shelter beneath its branches. When devotion has grown strong and intense, it will burn all sins.

Conversations, p.69

5. Perseverance – The Guarantee of Accomplishment

Devotion requires our fortitude and tenacity. Through hardships, we build strength. We may feel devotion when life is happy, but maintaining devotion through difficult circumstances is the true test. Hurdles appear in dealing with family and friends. Overcoming our own inertia is also difficult. But true devotion is like tempered steel: it is strengthened and purified by the fire of adversity. When we acquire spiritual strength, we can encourage others.

Because of many obstacles and troubles that came to Prahlada and because of the punishments that were given him, it was possible for the rest of the world to know how great Prahlada's devotion was.

Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, p.26

We should welcome troubles as tests to prove our devotion. Tests provide an opportunity to remove karmic obstacles that hold us back. Even the finest gold must be melted and hammered to give it shape; so also the rough diamond only gains in value when it is cut and polished. True devotion remains constant and full in the face of adversity.

虔诚的培育有赖按部就班和坚定不移的努力。它必须成长得坚强和确定去支撑性格。急促往前冲是无济于事的，如果我们的决心一受到考验就再次倒退。前进必须受到了解其本身力量的鉴识力的保护。

当虔诚的幼树开始成长时，它必须受到保护。幼树在长大时，各种动物都会来侵害，以之充饥而导致死亡。有鉴于此，围栏必须加在幼树四周以保护之。当树长大之后，它就不需要受到保护。原先会侵害它的同样的动物现在却在它底下纳凉。当虔诚变得刚毅坚强时，它就会烧毁所有罪孽。

《会谈》69面

5. 毅力 -- 成就的保证

虔诚要求的是坚忍不拔，不屈不挠的精神。透过苦难，我们建立起力量。在生活幸福时，我们或可感觉到虔诚，但维系虔诚于逆境才是一个真正的考验。应付家人与亲友时，障碍或会出现。要克服我们自己的惰性也委实不易。但真正的虔诚就像是回火钢；经过了烈火的锻炼它变得坚硬和精纯。得了灵性力量后，我们就能鼓舞他人。

由于诸多苦难加于钵罗赫拉德 (Prahlada)，也由于他承受了诸多惩罚，世人才了解他虔诚的伟大。

《蓝山的夏季玫瑰》26面

我们应该乐于接受苦难并视之为证明我们虔诚之考验。考验提供我们一个机会去解除使我们停滞不前的业障。即便是最纯的金也必须被熔化和锤打以便得到所要的形状；同样，粗糙的钻石只有在切割和磨光之后才有价值。真正的虔诚在苦难下仍保持不变和完整。

God is ignored in sunshine; he is wanted only when there is night. Devotion must persist and flourish, unaffected by time, place, or circumstance.

Sathya Sai Speaks 9, p.121

6. God, One Without Second

The Lord guides and protects us when we surrender to his will. He bestows his grace to save us from harm. To win grace, however, we must immerse ourselves in God and strive to do his will.

It is God's word that if you have devotion to God, he will look after all your future. He will look after all the welfare that is due to you.

Summer Showers 1972, p.105

To earn God's full-time protection requires full-time devotion. Many seekers spend little time in prayer, meditation, or service, but they expect God's grace to flow always in their direction. To earn that protection requires constancy of effort.

In an office, if you work full time, you get full pay. If you work part-time, you get half pay. Today, we show only part-time devotion and we want full-time reward for this part-time devotion. How can we get this?

Summer Showers 1973, p.179

Devotion to God must be single-minded for it to be effective. The magnifying glass can ignite a fire because it concentrates the sun's rays at a single point. Concentrated devotion burns away all obstacles to liberation, even in this lifetime.

Concentration on God with a fragmented mind is an exercise in futility. Single-minded devotion is the easiest path to salvation. In fact, the ananyabhakta (one-pointed devotee) becomes a jivanmukta (one liberated during life.)

Summer Showers 1979, p.151

在明丽的阳光下，神常被遗忘；只有在阴森的黑夜里，祂才被念及。虔诚持续和兴旺，不受时间，空间或环境的影响。

《沙迪亚赛说》第9章121面

6. 独一无二的神

如果我们降服于主的旨意，主就指引和保护我们。祂赐予圣恩以免我们受到伤害。要赢得圣恩，我们就得把我们自己浸泡于神之中并致力于执行其旨意。

神答应，如果你对神虔诚，祂会照顾你的未来。祂会照顾你应得的福利。

《夏季浸濡1972》105面

要赢得神的全日时间的护佑，你必须付出全日时间的虔诚。很多求道者花很少时间去祈祷，坐禅或服务，但他们期望圣恩常常流向他们。要不懈地努力，你才赢得那护佑。

在办公室内，如果你做全日时间的工作，你就获得全日的工资。如果你做部分时间的工作，你得到部分工资。今天，我们仅只展现部分时间的虔诚而我们却奢望全时间的报酬。我们怎能得到呢？

《夏季浸濡1973》179面

对神的虔诚必须全心全意，始可见效。放大镜能点燃火苗，因为它把阳光聚焦于一点。专一的虔诚烧毁达致超脱的一切障碍，纵使是今世。

以一个不完整的心念去专注于神是一个无用的运作。专一的虔诚是得救的最简易的途径。其实，专一的虔诚（*Ananyabhakta*）造就一个超脱的生命（*Jivanmukta*）。

《夏季浸濡1979》151面

The culmination of full-time devotion is seeing God in all things. Then all events and beings are seen in a divine light. Nothing is separate from God, for when we are filled with God, we see only God. Then we know beyond doubt that we have reached the summit of practice. We experience joy and peace beyond measure.

Bhakti is the state of mind in which one has no separate existence apart from God. His very breath is God; his every act is by God, for God; his thoughts are of God; his words are uttered by God, about God. For like the fish which can only live in water, man can only live in God – in peace and happiness.

Sathya Sai Speaks 6, p.119

Questions for Study Circle:

1. What is devotion?
2. Who is a devotee of the Lord?
3. Is emotion part of devotion?
4. Does devotion make a person impractical?
5. If we are God, then to whom do we express devotion?
6. Is realization possible without devotion?
7. How is devotion cultivated?
8. How do we know if we have real devotion?
9. Is it possible to gauge another's devotion?
10. What are the benefits of devotion?
11. What is the goal of devotion?

References for Further Study

1. Gita Vahini, pp.197-204.
2. Gita Vahini, p.198 (It is more important for the Lord to love you than for you to love the Lord).
3. Prasanthi Vahini, p.18 (The path of devotion is most conducive to success).
4. Prasanthi Vahini, p.19 (Some saints' descriptions of bhakti).
5. Prema Vahini, p.21 (How to cultivate devotion).
6. Prema Vahini, p.22 (Image worship).

全时间虔诚的最高峰就是看到神于万物之中。于是，我们就能看到一切事物和生命体都在神圣之光中。无物与神分开，因为当我们内在注满神时，我们只看到神了。然后毋庸置疑，我们知道，我们已抵达修行的顶峰。这时我们所体验到的喜悦与平和是无可限量的。

虔诚是心念的状态，在此，一个人只有跟神同在，没有分开的存在。他的呼吸是神；他的每一个行动是神所促使的；他的思想属于神；他的话是神说的，是有关神的。如只能生活在水里的鱼一样，人只能生活在神之中——在平和与幸福之中。

《沙迪亚赛说》第6章119面

学习圈的问题：

1. 虔诚是什么？
2. 谁是主的信徒？
3. 情绪是虔诚的一部分吗？
4. 虔诚使人不切实际吗？
5. 若我们是神，那么我们该向谁表达我们的虔诚？
6. 不假虔诚能得道吗？
7. 如何培养虔诚？
8. 我们如何知道自己有真正的虔诚？
9. 有可能测量他人的虔诚吗？
10. 虔诚的利益是什么？
11. 虔诚的目的是什么？

7. Sathya Sai Speaks 1, p.50 (Stages of devotion).
8. Sathya Sai Speaks 2, p.137 (A devotee is one rooted in faith).
9. Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.199 (The real basis for devotion).
10. Sathya Sai Speaks 4, p.85 (The difficulty of devotion).
11. Sathya Sai Speaks 6, pp.140-142 (The king who had a vision of Radha and Krishna).
12. Sathya Sai Speaks 10, p.72 (The devotee and the jnani).
13. Sathya Sai Speaks 10, p.175 (Types of devotion).
14. Sathya Sai Speaks 11, pp.238-244, 246-249 (Types of devotion).
15. Summer Showers 1972, p.258 (In the Kali Yuga, devotion is the only means to attain liberation).
16. Summer Showers 1974, p.106 (God is as close to you as you are close to him).
17. Summer Showers 1977, p.165 (Without devotion, you can achieve nothing).
18. Summer Showers 1978, pp.149-150 (Madhura bhakti).
19. Summer Showers 1978, pp.194-197 (Pushti, maryada and pravaha bhakti).
20. Summer Showers 1979, p.151 (Single-minded devotion).
21. Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, p.99 (Education and service are of limited value without devotion).
22. Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, pp.106-114.

You are all caskets of Divine Love; share it, spread it, express that love in acts of service, words of sympathy and acts of compassion.

- Baba

你们都是装满了神圣的爱的宝库，要与人分享它，散播它，以服务、同情的话和慈悲之举来表达那爱。

- 峇峇