

Puttaparthi is revered with gratitude by millions

To secure pearls, one has to go far out into the sea and dive deep; simply wading in the shallows and declaring that the pearls are a myth is a sign of foolishness. So too, the elders here wondered so long at all stories of My Mahimaas (miracle powers) and could not make use of the splendid chances that lay at their very door. They saw only the Light, but did not feel the warmth. That itself proves that though they were physically so near, they were very distant for all practical purposes. They could see the Splendour, the Glory, the Effulgence but they did not come near and share the Warmth of my Heart....

The villages surrounding this place have gainfully made use of the help given by Government and advanced in some ways; but here, you need not stretch your hands before Government; you have a Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree) ready to give you all that you want! You have the Lord, who protects and promotes all. The virtues of the people are the treasures of the State; the smarana (remembering) of the Name of the Lord is the root of all virtues.

The royal road to ensure joy and peace

Naaradha, who was afflicted with conceit that there was no other who had dedicated his very breath to the recital of the Name, was once humiliated to find that a ryot, who managed to repeat the Name three times(!) in the course of his over-whelming multitude of distressing preoccupations from cock-crow to dusk, was judged a greater devotee! Joy is your birthright; Peace is your inmost nature. The Lord is your staff and support. Do not discard It; do not be led away from the path of faith by stories invented by malice and circulated by spite. Take up the Name of God, any of his innumerable ones, any that appeals to you most and the Form appropriate to that Name and start repeating it from now on; that is the royal road to ensure Joy and Peace. That will train you in the feeling of brotherhood and remove enmity towards fellowmen. Many seeds are sown in the field by you; some are eaten away by ants; some are washed off by rains; some are picked by the birds; some are destroyed by pests; but some sprout strong and sturdy. This little school will grow into a sturdy High School, believe Me. You, on your part, must do everything to uphold the honour and reputation of this village.

SSS 2 11-23-60

Bhakthi must confer patience and fortitude

Enter upon that task of Saadhana from now on; that is the lesson you must learn here. Otherwise, yaathra (pilgrimage) leads only to the accumulation of paathra (vessel)--you buy vessels from wherever you go: from Raameshwaram, Thirupathi, Kaashi, Haridhwar, Madhura, Kumbhakonam. That is the merit you get from pilgrimage, a store-room full of vessels. You come from long distances, incur heavy expenses, suffer in the cold, in the open or lie in the shade of trees and wait for days expecting the longed for interview with Me; but in the end, you return and dissipate the shaanthi and the santhosha (peace and happiness) you derive from this place.

Bhakthi is something sweet, soothing, refreshing and restoring. It must confer patience and fortitude. The Bhaktha will not be perturbed if another gets the interview first or if another is given greater consideration. He is humble and bides his time: he knows that there is a higher power that knows more and that it is just and impartial. In the light of that knowledge, the Bhaktha will communicate his troubles and problems only to his Lord; he

will not humiliate himself by talking about them to all and sundry, for what can a man, who is as helpless as himself, do to relieve him? It is only those who have that implicit faith in God, who will deign to communicate only with the Lord and none else, who deserve Amritha (nectar of immortality).

Make Naamasmarana as part of yourself

The sthula dheha (gross body) should be ever immersed in Sathsanga; (holy company) the Suukshrna dheha (subtle body), that is, the thoughts and feelings, should be ever immersed in the contemplation of the Glory of the Lord. That is the sign of the bhaktha. He who shouts and swears and advertises his worries to everyone he meets and craves for sympathy, such a one can never be a bhaktha. Such men are miscalled bhakthas. They make earnest men lose faith in Godly ways; earnest men feel they are superior to these pseudo-devotees. And this is a fact. It is a great responsibility to tread the Godward path. There is no sliding back, no halfway stop, no tardy pace, no side lane on such a pilgrimage. It is always up and up, right to the crest of the mountain. Though your responsibility is greater, take it from Me, you are luckier than others. Do not deny with the tongue what you have relished in the heart; do not bear false witness to your own felt experience. Do not carp and talk cynically of the very thing you have revered and adored when the company into which you fall start regalling such raillery. It is said that the bhaktha can get the Lord everywhere easily but the Lord cannot get a bhaktha so easily. Yes, it is difficult to secure a bhaktha who has that unshaken faith, that attitude of complete self-surrender. Such an attitude can come only by Naamasmarana (remembering God's Name), constant, sincere and continuous, as continuous as the act of breathing and felt to be as essential for life. That is the japam, the thapas and the dhyaanam (silent recital of Lord's name, penance & meditation) for you all. Naamasmarana like this will immerse you ever in Amritha, not just a drop on your tongue.

Saadhana has to be followed from a tender age

Do you know how much I feel when I find that in spite of My arrival and Bodha and Upadhesam (teaching and spiritual instruction), you have not yet started this Saadhana? You simply praise Me and strew compliments; that I am the Treasure-house of Grace, the Ocean of Aanandha, etc. Take up the Name and dwell upon Its sweetness; imbibe It and roll It on your tongue, taste Its essence, contemplate on Its magnificence and make it a part of yourself and grow strong in spiritual joy. That is what pleases Me.

Do not wait until you are past middle age to practise this Saadhana; I know of some parents who drag away their sons who come to Me when still young; they tell them that they can take up religious practices in their old age. These parents do not know the extent of the loss. By some stroke of good luck, their children get the chance of knowing about the right path for shaanthy and santhosha (peace and contentment), but the parents are angry that the sons do not find pleasure in the articles that gave them pleasure! They feel there must be something wrong in the make-up of their sons; they tempt them to drink, to gamble, to exploit, to hate---to imitate them, in short--and take them along with them to perdition. But a straight plant means a straight tree; a bent plant can never grow into a straight tree. Rotten, over-ripe, worm-eaten fruits are not fit to be offered to God. Years of sin would have Warped the character of a person beyond repair. So the saadhana has to be followed from a tender age. SSS 1 12-28-60

Do everything with a spirit of dedication

Begin with the cultivation of *Prema*. I have found that the people of Karnaataka have great faith and devotion; they are simple in their habits and thoughts. Do not allow these to decline; cultivate them with care. The Chief Minister said that all are children of the Lord. It is better to say that all are actors in the drama designed by Him; dolls dancing and acting as He pulls the strings. The role you have might be that of an officer, a soldier, a ryot, a beggar or a clerk. Act well your part so that the drama might be a success. Do everything in a spirit of dedication, as if in each moment you act, speak and even feel in response to a command received. To get that mood of dedication, the *Bhakti Sūthras* (aphorisms on devotion) prescribe nine paths but the easiest and the most practicable is *Smarana*---a life lived in the constant remembrance of the Lord.

A bar of iron sinks in water; but beat it into a hollow vessel and it will float merrily and even carry some weight. So too, man's mind sinks easily in the sea of sense; beat it hollow, hammering it with the Name of the Lord. It will float safely, on a sea of troubles. Do not be like gramophone records singing some one else's song, ignorant of the genuine thrill of music. Sing from your own experience of the Glory and Grace of the Lord. If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of destiny can be overcome. There are certain drugs which come in bottles on which the manufacturer has given an ultimate date beyond which the drug loses its efficacy. Of course, the drug will be in the bottle, but would no longer be effective. Similarly, Lord's Grace can make it inoperative.

The *Guru* is one who shows you the Path for getting that Grace and to such a one this day is dedicated.

Guru Poornima Mysore: 27-7-1961

Prayer is a very forceful weapon, much more effective than any bomb. The word is an effective instrument: it can move mountains. In these critical times, every one of you should pray deeply and sincerely, for the peace and prosperity of Bhaaratma Maatha (Mother India).

Sathya Sai Baba

Raama-principle is the *Aathma*, source of all joy

The Name, Raama, was once indicated by Raama Himself (the son of Dhasharatha, hero of the Raamaayana, the incarnation of the Lord in the *Thretha yuga*) as a potent liberator. When Raama was passing through the forests, with Seetha and Lakshmana, the hermits who recognised Him as Divine gathered around Him with a prayer that they be initiated by Him and given some *manthra* (sacred formula) which they could repeat for spiritual uplift and victory. Raama replied that He was a prince in exile, wandering in the forests, and so He could not presume any authority to initiate hermits into spiritual path. He moved on along the jungle tracks. Watching Him walking fast, with Seetha immediately behind Him and Lakshmana following in the rear, an aged hermit exclaimed, "Friends! See! Raama is initiating us! He is awarding us the *manthra*! God is leading. Nature (His constant companion, His shadow) is following; the *jeevi* (individual), part of the Lord, the wave of the ocean, is in the rear; he can see the Lord only if the

deluding Nature is propitiated or by-passed. This is indeed a silent lesson in *saadhana* (spiritual discipline). *Ra* is God; *ma* is the individual, who has fallen behind. *Aa* is *Prakrithi* (Nature); Raama Raama is the *manthra* He is vouchsafing so graciously. Take it and save yourselves. For me, there is no other course," he said.

I am emphasising *Raama-Naama* (the name Raama) because the Raama principle is the *Aathma*. Raama means that which is pleasant and which pleases. Now, the *Aathma* is the

source of all joy; its nature is bliss. Moreover, as Thyaagaraaja discovered, Raama is the Name which worshippers of both Naaraayana (Vishnu) and Shiva can adopt. The syllable *Raa* is the key syllable of the *Naaraayana manthra (Om Namonaaraayanaaya)* and the syllable *ma* is the key syllable of the *Shiva manthra (Om Namasshivaaya)*.

God is the harmony of all the Names and Forms

The prejudices and factions among the worshippers of Naaraayana form of God and Shiva form are meaningless, because both represent the One ultimate Universal. They are distinguishable, it may be said, by the different Divine equipments. They are *shankha* (conch) and *chakra* (discus) in the case of Naaraayana and *damaru* (small drum) and *thrishuula* (three-pronged spear-trident) in the case of Shiva. But the conch and the drum both symbolise God's accessibility through audible praise and song; discus and trident symbolise God being the maker and master of time--

discus, representing the wheel of time, and the three prongs of the trident, the past, the present, and the future. Naaraayana is referred to as *Hari* and Shiva as *Hara*; both these Names are derived from the same root, *Har*, to destroy, to remove, to captivate, to attract and to harmonise-- functions which God has clothed Himself with.

Man's duty is to sanctify his days and nights with the unbroken *smarana* (recollection) of the Name. Recollect with joy, with yearning. If you do so. God is bound to appear before you in the form and with the name you have allotted Him, as most beautiful and most appropriate! God is all Names and all forms, the integration of all these in harmonious charm! Gods designated in different faiths, adored by different human communities, are all limbs of the One God that really is. Just as the body is the harmonious blending of the senses and the limbs, God is the harmony of all the forms and names that man gives Him!

Do not make distinction between different Names

Only those who are ignorant of the Glory of God will insist on one Name and one Form for his adoration and what is worse, condemn the use by others of other names and forms! Since you are all associated with Sathya Sai Organisations, I must warn you against such silly obduracy. Do not go about proclaiming that you are a sect distinct and separate from those who adore God in other forms and names. Thereby you are limiting the very God whom you are extolling. Do not proclaim in your enthusiasm, "We want only Sai; we are not concerned with the rest." You must convince yourselves that all forms are Sai's; all names are Sai's. There is no 'rest'; all are He.

You must have noticed that I do not speak about Sai in My discourses, nor do I sing of Sai during the *bhajan* with which I usually conclude My discourses. And you must have wondered why. Let me tell you the reason. I do not want the impression to gain ground that I desire this Name and this Form to be publicised. I have not come to set afoot a new cult, I do not want people to be misled on this point. I affirm that this Sai form is the form of all the various names that man uses for the adoration of the Divine. So, I am teaching that no distinction should be made between the names Raama, Krishna, Ishwara, Sai--for they are all My names.

When I know that I am the current that illumines all the various bulbs, I am indifferent to the bulbs, which you consider so important. When you pay attention to the bulbs, factions arise, sects are born. Sathya Sai Seva Samithis should not encourage discord and distinctions; they must adore the One, appearing as many, the basic Divine, which illumines all the bulbs.

CULTIVATE comradeship with the good, develop compassion for the distressed, foster the feeling of elation at the happy and prosperous, and deepen indifference towards the evil-minded--this is the ancient, well-trying prescription for a calm peaceful life. God will bless such men and award them Grace. The Name of God when uttered with sincere joy has great influence on the mind of man. It is like moonlight, for the waves of the inner Ocean in man. For, it is God echoing from within, the call of God from without! But, lo, the fascination exerted by science --which deals with the objective world, with things and events that can be measured, weighed or calculated by means of ascertainable categories of thought,--has led man into the dreary wastes, in search of Joy! Chandramouli Shaasthry was telling you now about the manthras, which when repeated in faith and with full knowledge of implications, can endow you with mysterious experiences of the Divine. That is to say, the mantra enables you to be in the proximity of the Divine that is drawn near by the potency of the formula when charged with your own mental current.

What is *mantra*? *Man* (*manana*: continued reflection on latent meanings), *thra* (*thraana*: the act of saving, of enabling one to cross over sorrow). What are the conditions under which the mind can charge the *mantra* with the required potency? The first and foremost one is onepointedness. Now, the mind is a very poor instrument, for, it is blunt. It runs after too many objects and objectives. The moment you persuade it to fix its attention on God, it wanders into the cinema hall, the bazaar, the Card Room of your Club, etc. It will seldom agree to dwell on the vast magnificence of the Divine; when you direct it to the Divine, it will behave as if you are inviting it to face the deluge or to counter the horrors of Hell!

Faith in Divinity is essential to dwell upon God

The faith in Divinity essential for any exercise to dwell upon Him, is absent. That faith can come only slowly, by association with the godly, by reading the lives and experiences of godly persons, and by gaining experience oneself. *Naama sankeerthan* (singing of God's Names) induces faith, very quickly. In the beginning, the name has to be recited, willy-nilly, as a routine. You can observe Me and My activities; note how I adhere to righteousness, moral order, truth and universal compassion. That is what I desire you to learn from Me. Many of you plead for a 'Message' from Me to take to the *Samithi* of which you are members. Well. My life is My message. You will be adhering to My message if you so live that your lives are evidence of the dispassionate quiet, the courage, the confidence, the eagerness to serve those who are in distress, that My life inspires you with.

God is immanent in the world. So, treat the world lovingly, as you will treat your Master.

Krishna served the Paandavas; He drove the Chariot of Arjuna. So, though He was not a King, He became much more, a King-Maker! Serve, whatever the obstacle, whatever the cynical ridicule you may attract. Such reactions are inevitable when one is engaged in doing good. Take My example. Praise and calumny have accompanied Me throughout the Ages. Opposition and obstacles only tend to highlight the good and strengthen resolve. Later, the taste will draw you into the habit; the recitation will yield unfailing joy. We speak of the Lotus of the Heart! Why? Because, the Lotus grows up in and from water and blooms in the sun. The heart too draws sustenance from *Bhakti* (Devotion) and blooms through *Jnaana* (Wisdom).

Most of the Names of the Divine have but two letters or syllables; the significance of the number, two, (Raama, Krishna, Hara, Hari, Datta, Shakthi, Kaali, etc.) is, that the first syllable represents Agni (Fire principle), which burns up accumulated demerit or sin, and the second, represents the Amritha principle, the Restorative, the Refreshing, the Reformation force. The two processes are necessary; removal of obstructions and construction of the

structure. Krishna, the Lord, was fostered by Yasodha, but, she did not know where He was born! He was loved and treated as if He were her own son; that is to say, her love was pure and unaffected by selfish considerations. The parable is to be understood thus: Born in the region of the navel, the Divine vitality was later preserved and developed on the tongue (in Gokula, by Nandha and Yasodha), by constant repetition of the Name. The Raama Principle is the Principle of Love, that descended from Heaven, as the gift of the Gods, as a result of the great sacrifice. Raama means Delight! Nothing delights more than one's own innate self, and so, Raama is *also known as Aathmaa-Raama*. How then could Bharatha accept to usurp the throne, of which Raama is the rightful heir? He and Shathrughna were at the Kekaya capital, when Raama was exiled, and Dhasharatha died heartbroken at the separation. News was sent to him, and when he entered the palace, unaware of the double tragedy that had cast its gloom over the city, he sensed some calamity. Vasishtha, the family preceptor, advised him to ascend the throne, for, the empire was suffering an interregnum!

Bharatha's example of love for Raama the Lord

Bharatha appealed that he be allowed to go to "the God of my Prayers, the Lord who receives the homage of my unceasing adoration." Vasishtha told him that it was his father's command, and his preceptor's counsel that he sit enthroned as Ruler. Bharatha replied that the request was proof of the extreme hatred that the parents, the people, the preceptor and everyone in Ayodhya had towards him, for, had they loved him, they would not have pressed him to do such a mean sin. Bharatha stood before Sage Vasishtha with folded palms; he prayed, "Is it just, is it fair, that you should burden me with the sovereignty over a kingdom, which slew my father, widowed my mothers, exiled my dearest brother whom I value more than my very breath, to the demon-ridden jungle, with his dearly beloved queen and which finally brought indelible disgrace on my mother? My empire is the realm which Raama rules over, namely, my heart, which is too small to contain His glory." Bharatha's name itself signifies that he is saturated with love of Raama.

(Bha--means Bhagavaan, the Lord Raama; ratha--means pleased by, happy over, attached to).

Education has hardened the human heart

Let the Love for the Lord grow in you, as it did in Bharatha. Let that sense of adoration, which discarded even a throne, flourish in you. Then, you can be of great use to your country, your culture, your society, your religion and your community. Or else, all this bother that you have undergone, to attend Sathsang, to listen to spiritual discourse, to meet spiritual masters, study spiritual texts, etc, will be a colossal exercise in futility. The system of education laying emphasis on literacy, skills, conformity and material progress has hardened the human heart into another weapon, in the stock of military hardware! His intellect has been blunted by constant iteration of lies; awe and reverence which fed the holy emotions in man have been condemned as out dated! Holy men, holy places and rivers are ridiculed. India which was for ages the playground of the Gods and the nursery of saints and the *Guru* of mankind has now become a beggar at the doors of the very people who clamour for Vedhaanthic Light!

Know the splendour of that light, and fly unto it, as high as your wings can lift you--the wings of Bhakthi and *Sbraddha* (Devotion and Steadfastness).

The below is from: <http://www.saiscotland.com/resource/nineforms/lordremember.pdf>
Smaranam

Remembering the Lord's Name

“The only hold that man has in this dreadful darkness is the Name of God. That is the raft which will take him across this stormy sea darkened by hate and fear, churned by anxiety and terror.”

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Smaranam or Namasmaranam is dwelling on the Lord in the mind, contemplating on His form, His beauty, His majesty, His divinity. It is the most effective method of cultivating love for God. Baba has said that the constant recital of the name of God from amongst any of the million names by which He

is identified by human imagination or intelligence is the best means of correcting and cleansing the mind of man. Swami says, “Soham or Sairam or any such name has to be constantly vibrating in one's system with every breath. The restoration of faith in the Name is one of the purposes I have imposed on Myself in this incarnation.”

Prahlada is the supreme example of a devotee who demonstrated the power of constant remembrance of the Name of the Lord, whatever the ordeals one had to face. He repeated ceaselessly the Name of the Lord without fear or anguish when he was tortured by the demons at the bidding of his father, Hiranyakasipu. He was neither afraid nor distressed. Prahlada was fully conscious that the body composed of the five elements was perishable, while the Indweller was eternal. Hence he did not care what happened to the body. All his thoughts were ever concentrated on God. Bhagawan says, “It must be recognised that chanting the Name of the Lord is highly sacred and efficacious. It serves to remove the impurities in a person. It promotes good and sacred thoughts. When the heart is filled with truth and love, only 'positive' thoughts will arise. There is no meaning in reciting the name of Rama or Krishna once in a year. How often do you take your meals for the sake of the body? Does not the mind require to be fed equally? Contemplation of God is the food for the mind.” A fashionable excuse by those who do not like this discipline is want of time. It does not need any special time or extra allotment of time. It can be done always, whether you are bathing, eating, walking or sitting.

“The Divine Name is highly potent. Even the wish-fulfilling celestial cow, Kaamadhenu, when it is tethered to the post, comes under control. Likewise, when the Supreme Lord, the Indweller in all hearts, is bound by the rope of devotion and tethered to the post of the tongue, He gets bound to the devotee. There are only two means by which the Lord can be bound or enjoyed, namely through the Name and through Love,” says Bhagawan Baba.

In Namasmaranam it is to be remembered that the recitation of the Name of God must not degenerate into mechanical routine. While chanting the Name, the meaning and mystery of that Name should be contemplated upon. Swami says, “Of the various types of Bhakti, Namasmarana Bhakti is the best. In this Kaliyuga, the Name is the Path of saving oneself. If every sadhaka will consider the Name of the Lord as the very breath of his life and, having complete faith in good deeds and good thoughts, if he will develop the spirit of service and equal love for all, then there can be no better path for Mukti (liberation). Instead of this, if one sits in some solitary nook and holds his breath, how can he master his innate qualities? How is he to know that he has mastered them?

Even if the attainment of Mukti is not directly realised as a consequence of taking up the Lord's Name, four fruits are clearly evident to those who have had the experience. They are (i) The company of the great (ii) Truth (iii) Contentment (iv) The control of the senses."

Swami says, "There is yet another special form of glorifying the Name of the Lord. This is Naamalikhitam- writing the Name of the Lord. Contemplating on the Name of the Lord mentally, uttering the Name by mouth and writing the Name by hand serve to perform Trikarana Suddhi (Purity of thought, word and deed)."

Baba has declared, "I have no one Name to which alone I respond. I answer when addressed by any Name. All Names are Mine. Or rather, you are the ones who name Me. The Name 'Sita Ram' sufficed in the Tritayuga. The Name 'Radhey Shyam' sufficed in the Dwaparayuga. In this Kaliyuga, I tell you, all Names have full capability."

Praising or chanting the Name of God is a special form of prayer. In many religions, the excellence of chanting the Name(s) of God lies in the mystic syllables, which invoke God's purity and sovereign power. It focuses the mind on the Ultimate Reality and calls forth its mystical elevating influence. Almost every religion in the world recommends that we meditate upon the Word of God. St. John wrote in his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." While the Word, or teachings of God, have enormous power to transform and uplift our lives, just as important are the actual Names of God, which are sometimes praised aloud or quietly meditated upon. Vedic scriptures inform us that His Holy Names are invested with the Lord's full spiritual potencies. God and his Name are the same. The Stoic philosopher Maximus noted, "There is One supreme God who is, as it were, the God and mighty father of all. It is Him, whom we worship under many Names." Modern Jewish theologian Martin Buber also agreed that, "All God's Names are hallowed."

The Bible is replete with similar statements. In the Old Testament it is said, "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." The Psalms contain countless references to the Name of God: "All nations whom Thou has made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord: and shall glorify Thy Name." Christ, when teaching his disciples how to pray, glorified the Lord's Holy Name: "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name." And in his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul wrote, "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."

Among the followers of Islam, the Names of God (Allah) are held sacred and meditated upon. According to tradition, there are ninety-nine Names of Allah, called "The Beautiful Names". They are found inscribed on monuments such as the Taj Mahal and on the walls of mosques. These Names are chanted on an Islamic rosary (Tasbih), which consists of three sets of thirty-three beads. Worshippers repeat the Names to help them concentrate their minds upon Allah. The Sikhs place special emphasis on the Name of God. Indeed the Sikhs call God Nama- "The Name." Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, prayed, "In the ambrosial hours of the morn I meditate on the grace of the true Name," and says that he was instructed by the Lord in a vision to "Go and repeat My Name, and cause others to do likewise."

Rosaries are widely used in Buddhism; large ones by monks, smaller ones by the laity. The large ones have 108 beads, the two halves representing the fifty-four stages of becoming a bodhisattva (enlightened one). The large bead in the middle stands for Buddha. The Buddhist teachings reveal that by chanting the Name of Buddha, the worshipper becomes liberated from the cycle of reincarnation and joins the Buddha in the Pure Land, or spiritual world. Swami says, "Namasmaramam is the best means. Only, you do not really believe that

it can cure you or save you, that is the tragedy. People believe in the efficacy of only costly, brightly packed, widely published drugs; the simple easily available remedy which is in everybody's backyard is ignored as useless. Namasmaranam leads to illumination. Its sacred vibrations remove the dross that defiles the mind."

Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation, UK July 2005

BHAGAVAN BABA

ON NAMASMARANA



BHAGAVAN BABA ON NAMASMARANA

**God has a million Names.
Select any Name of His, any
Name that appeals to you,
select any Form of His; every
day when you awaken to the
call of the brightening east,
recite the Name, meditate on
the Form; have the Name and
Form as your companion,
guide and guardian throughout
the toils of the waking hours;
when you retire for the night
offer grateful homage to God in
that Form with that Name, for
being with you, by you, beside
you, before you, behind you, all
day long. If you stick to this
discipline, you cannot falter or
fail.**

Baba

AUM SRI SAIRAM

SAMARPANAM

This compilation of quotations on *Namasmarana* is lovingly dedicated at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, our beloved Swami. Similar to offering a garland to God, made out of the very flowers which were provided by Him, this compilation is indeed made up of quotations from the Divine Discourses given by Swami Himself.

The selections are from the *Sathya Sai Speaks* series and the *Vahini* series. The page numbers referenced correspond to the American edition of the books. Chapter numbers and titles are also provided for easy reference. All the Sanskrit words have been *italicized*.

We are indeed grateful to Swami for having showered His infinite Grace on us to complete this work. We humbly pray to our beloved Swami to forgive us for any omissions or mistakes we may have committed in the process of compiling this work. We pray for His continued Blessings to make this compilation useful, for the fellow members of the Sai family in their daily spiritual *Sadhana*.

Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

November 23, 1994
Jenine Colamussi
P. K. Prabhakar
P. V. Swaminathan

FOREWORD

It is a privilege to write a foreword to a book of this kind which is the outcome of the dedicated labors of three devotees of Bhagavan.

From the moment Bhagavan Baba embarked on His *Avataric* Mission, he has laid stress on the supreme importance of *Namasmarana* in the spiritual unfoldment of a devotee, especially in the *Kali Yuga*.

The three compilers of this well produced volume have gone through all the eleven volumes of **Sathya Sai Speaks** (the American Edition) and the four **Vahinis - Prashanti, Geeta, Dhyana** and **Prema Vahini** - and picked out of them Bhagavan's pronouncements on *Namasmarana* - the greatness of chanting the Name of the Lord as a spiritual *sadhana*. The selection has been done with such punctilious care that all the different facets of this vital spiritual exercise as expounded by Bhagavan have been brought out for the edification and instruction of devotees.

Bhagavan is such a supremely consummate artist that he can offer a myriad variations on the same thing without reducing it to a cliché or making it repetitive. Not only is the message *Namasmarana* conveyed in varied roles and contexts, but the importance of chanting the Lord's name is brought home to the reader through a variety of illustrations drawn from our immortal epics as well as from the incidents of daily life.

The book should serve as a perennial source of inspiration to everyone engaged in the discovery of the Divine as the source of all bliss and the culmination of human existence. I recommend it to all aspirants as an invaluable addition to Sai literature.

24 October 1996
V. K. Narasimhan
Prashanti Nilayam

NAMASMARANA

EFFICACY OF NAMASMARANA

Words have tremendous power. They can arouse emotions and they can also calm them. They direct or infuriate, they reveal or confuse. They are potent forces that bring up great reserves of strength and wisdom. The tongue should be used for pronouncing the Name of the Lord. It should not be used to hiss like a serpent or growl or roar with intention to strike terror. This is not the purpose for which the tongue is granted to man. Dwell on the Name and its sweetness will saturate your tongue and improve your taste. Speech is so powerful that it indicates one's character, reveals one's personality, educates others and communicates experience and information. So be vigilant about words. Slip while walking, the injury can be repaired; but slip while talking, the injury is irreparable.

The present age is described in the scriptures as very conducive to Liberation, for, while in past ages, rigorous penance was prescribed as the means, the present *Kali* Age requires only *Namasmarana* to win Liberation. When the Name of the Lord is remembered with all the glory that is associated with it, a great flood of happiness wells up within the mind. The Lord is full of Bliss and in fact He is Bliss itself. All this Bliss is to be tasted through the Name. Vyaasa himself knew this, for, when some sages once went to him to find out which *Yoga* is most conducive to success in man's efforts for Liberation, Vyaasa anticipated their question and repeated to himself aloud, "How fortunate are those destined to be born in the *Kaliyuga*! It is so easy to win the grace of the Lord by *Namasmarana* in the *Kali* Age".

The Name of the God, if recited with love and faith, has the power to bring upon the eager aspirant the grace of God. The Name has the over-mastering power of even leaping over the ocean. It can award unimagined strength and courage. When questioned whether it was *Raamanaama* that strengthened Hanuman to cross the ocean, Rama replied that since His body was called Rama (the Name that combines the *Beeja aksharas* of both Shiva and Vishnu) He Himself was able to conquer Ravana and his hordes. The name has so much efficacy. By repeating the Name, the Lord and His attributes can be easily identified. The tongue must be sanctified by the repetition of the Name. It has also to be used for sweet expressions which will spread contentment and joy. Remember the God, in whom you move, the God who makes you move, the God who is all this vast universe, every little atom and every huge star. Select some Name and Form for this all pervasive immanent God and keep it in your tongue and before your mental eye. That is what is called *Japa Sabita Dhyanam*, recitation of the Name cum meditation. When you select one Name and one Form for *Smarana*, do not talk ill of other Names and Forms. Behave like the woman of a joint family. She respects and serves

the elders of the family, such as the father-in-law and his brothers and her own brother-in-law but her heart is dedicated to her husband, whom she loves and reveres in a special manner. If you carp at the faith of others your devotion too is fake. If you are sincere, you will appreciate the sincerity of others too. The Lord has thousands of Names. There is no Name that is not His. Krishna, Srinivasa, Sai Baba - all Names are of the same entity.

Every farmer knows that good seeds must be sown for getting a rich harvest. If seeds are bad, his efforts are fruitless. Sow the seeds called Name of God in the well prepared field of the heart. Feed it with the manure of faith. Have discipline as the fence to keep out stray cattle. Without a fence guarding the crop, farming will be like shooting without a bullet, all sounds and no game. Prayer must come from the depths of feeling. The Lord looks for *bhaava* (inner feeling) and not *baahya* (outward appearance). With feeling, you can make that Divine heart bloom with joy. The *Karma Kanda* and *Upasana Kanda* of the *Vedas* insist on the worship of God and devotion to Him. They sing His glory and instruct man how to meditate on His splendor. They say only One exists, but the same is known and described in many different ways by the wise.

As a first detachment, enter from now, into the discipline of *Namasmarana*. A fashionable excuse that is structured out by those who do not like this discipline is want of time. It does not need any special time or extra allotment of time. It can be done always, whether you are bathing, eating, walking or sitting. All the hours now spent in gossip, in watching sports or films or in hollow conversation, can be best used for silent contemplation of the Name and the Form and splendor of the Lord. Learn this lesson from Prashanti Nilayam and return better equipped to your places. If you fail to learn this, then you have only wasted money and time by coming and staying at the Nilayam.

The *Gunas* have to be transcended one after the other - *Thamas* being transmuted to *Rajas*, *Rajas* into *Satwa* and *Satwa* being overcome at last into the stage of attributelessness. The *Gunas* bind men and leave 'Impressions'. *Thamas* is like the worms that creep and crawl in offal. *Rajas* is like the fly that sits on foul things as well as fair. *Satwa* is like the bee that visits fragrant flowers. But all these three are drawn towards objects and should be free from any trace of attachment. Now, hearts are infested with flies and worms, and so, the pesticide of *Namasmarana* has to be used for disinfecting the place and making it fit for spiritual progress.

All schools must have the faith that their learning will never injure them or destroy them, but it will sustain all through, provided they follow them strictly and gladly, sincerely and in fear of God. The faith in God will also be instilled by *Namasmarana*, the remembering of the Glory of God and His Infinite mercy and power.

"Lead me from darkness to light (*Thamasoma Jyotirgamaya*)" is the prayer. Egoism is darkness and surrender is light. There is an easy way to illumine the inner consciousness and the outer behavior, with the light of God. Place the illumining flame of the name of the Lord on the tongue which is the door step and then the light will drive out the darkness from both inside and outside. Have it ever burning clear and bright. You will soon reach remarkable heights and enjoy happiness, the like of which you can seldom get by sticking to the senses.

Spend the silent hours in meditation and *Namasmarana* in your own homes and deepen faith. I do not heed to *Bhajans* which like gramophone records produce songs and *Namavalis* without any feeling or yearning while singing. Hours of shouting do not count. A moment of concentrated prayer from the heart is enough to melt and move God. The name will remove the evil of maya that now hides the *Shakti* (Universal Power) from the *vyakthi* (individual being).

Maya can be recognized and driven out only when the mind is purified by love and avoidance of envy and hatred born of egoism. No act done without love can be commended. There are so many who come to Prashanthi Nilayam, thousands in fact, coming year after year, participating in the *Bhajans*, listening to discourses and lectures, but staying exactly where they were when they first arrived! Name without feeling seldom reaches the mark. The name of the Lord must be recited with full feeling of awe and wonder, humility and reverence.

You need not have any doubt as to how a small name such as Rama, Krishna or Sai, can take you across the sea of *Samsara*. Vast oceans have been crossed on tiny rafts. The raft need not be as big as the ocean. Dark jungles have been crossed with the help of a tiny lamp. The lamp need not be as big as the jungle. The recitation of the Name is like the operation of boring, in order to tap underground water. It is as the chisel stroke that will release the image of God imprisoned in the hard marble. Once you break the encasement, the Lord will appear.

You are judged by *Sadhana* and not by the number of temples you have visited or the quantity and cost of the offerings you have made in those shrines. Do not count the number of times you have repeated the Name. The Lord will respond only when you call Him from the depths of your feelings. He will be deaf even if you call Him a million times automatically and artificially, with the tongue and not with the heart.

Do not calculate the length of the time you have spent in repeating the Lord's Name and exult. Calculate rather the length of time you have wasted away from that contact and repent. Have that Name ever on your tongue and in your thoughts and you can brave any calamity. Remember how Sita braved the taunts, insults and tortures of the ogresses in Lanka. What was it that gave her the mental stamina? It was *Raamanaama* and nothing else! Of what avail is the Name of the Lord on the tongue if the heart within is impure? Injustice and discontent are spreading every where due to this one fault of man i.e. saying one thing and doing quite the opposite. The tongue and hand go in different directions. Man has to set himself right and correct his food, his recreation and method of spending leisure as well as his habits of thought.

Dharma purifies the mind and leads you on to God and creates a test for the Name and Form of God. When you love the Name and Form of Krishna, you will naturally respect and obey the command of Krishna given in Bhagavad Gita. Have the Name on the tongue and the Form in the eye - the demon called "unending desire" will fly away from your mind, leaving joy and contentment therein. This kind of remembrance of the indwelling God will promote Love for all beings in your heart and you will see only the good in others. You will strive only to do good to others.

The Name of the Lord is the rifle which guards you against the beasts of prey in the jungle of life. The rifle makes a loud noise when the bullet is ejected fast. So too, along with sound of the Name, eject the bullet of feeling too, so that the target is hit. Nowadays people laugh at the idea of *Namasmarana* and *Namasamkeertana* (singing the Name of the Lord). They ask, 'What is in a Name? It is just an assortment of sound'. But when they enter your hearts, you feel content, you feel encouraged, is it not? So have faith in the Name and repeat it whenever you can.

Ref: Garland of 108 precious gems p115-121

There is a widely prevalent habit now of judging others and labeling them as *Bhakthas* or *Nasthikas*. What do you know, what can you know of the inner working of another's mind? There was once a queen who was a great devotee of Rama; she felt so sad that her husband, the Raja, never even uttered the name of Rama and had no *Bhakthi*. She had vowed that the first occasion on which she got evidence of his *Bhakthi* or at least respect for *Raamanaama*, she would conduct *Puja* in all the temples and feed the poor on a lavish scale. Then, one night, while fast asleep, the Raja uttered the name of Rama thrice, plaintively and prayerfully. She heard the *Namasmarana* and happy at the discovery of her husband's devotion to Rama, she ordered general rejoicing throughout the kingdom and the feeding of the poor. The Raja did not know the reason for the celebration for he was only told that it was an order of the Rani, which the officers carried out. Similarly, a husband may not be aware of the excellence of a wife's spiritual attainments. There is the case of a couple who were proceeding through a thick jungle on pilgrimage to an inaccessible shrine. The husband saw on the footpath a precious stone, shining brilliantly when the sun's rays fell upon it from between the leaves. He hastily threw some sand over it with a movement of his foot so that his wife may not be tempted to pick it up and become a slave to the tinsel. The wife saw the gesture and chided the husband for still retaining in his mind a distinction between sand and diamond. For her, both were the same.

The Raja who spoke in his sleep the sacred name of Rama felt very sorry, according to the story, that he let *Raamanaama* out of his mouth, for he believed that no one should know of his 'love' for Rama. There are many who will not shout about their *Guru* or their favorite *Nama* and *Rupa* but whether you declare them to others or not, keep them ever in your consciousness. *Raamanaama* or any other name must be as constant as breathing. For this, practice is essential. A person once told Dr. Johnson, the famous English thinker, that he could seldom get time to recite the Name of God, what with the hundreds of things he had to do from morning till nightfall and even far into the night. Dr. Johnson replied with another question. He asked how millions of people found space to live upon the face of the earth, which is two thirds water and the rest is too full of mountains, deserts, forests, icy regions, river-beds, marshes and similar impossible areas. The questioner said that man somehow struggled to find living space. So too, said Dr. Johnson, man must somehow find a few minutes a day for prayer to the Lord.

Ref: SSS Vol I Ch 2 [Maanasa Bhajare] p18-19

Prakrithi or Nature is a very ancient entity; it is *Purathana*. The *Jivi* too is *Purathana*, having had many previous entries and exits. But now it has come in with a new dress; it is *Nuthana*, come like a pilgrim to a holy place for going the rounds. The *Jivi* must have a guide who will show the sacred spots and help fulfill the pilgrimage. That guide is the Lord Himself: the

Guide-books are the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Sastras*. The essence of the scriptures lies in this one rule: "Repeat the name of the Lord, keeping His Glory always before the mind."
Ref: SSS Vol I Ch 9 [Examine, Experience] p58-59

My suggestion to you today is this: just as you attend to the needs of the body, feeding it three times a day in order to keep it in good running trim, so too, spend some time regularly every day to keep your inner consciousness also in good trim. Spend one hour in the morning, another at night and a third in the early hours of dawn, the *Brahmamuhurtha* as it is called, for *Japam* and meditation on the Lord. You will find great peace descending on you and great new sources of strength welling up within you as you progress in this *Sadhana*. After some time, the mind will dwell on the Name wherever you are and whatever you are engaged in; and then, peace and joy will be your inseparable companions.
Ref: SSS Vol I Ch 9 [Examine, Experience] p61

The world is suffering today from too much knowledge; virtue has not increased in proportion to the advance of knowledge. That is the root cause of the misery in human society. Of the two tires of the vehicle that man is riding, the tire of the *Brahmam* wheel is flat; it has to be filled by pumping the Lord's Name into it. You cannot go far on a flat tire.
Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 9 [Start a Sath Sangha] p45

This day is a day when mankind pays homage to the greatest of spiritual doctors, Vyaasa. Vyaasa is the greatest of such doctors; for he put together the *Vedas* and composed the *Puranas* and the Mahabharatha and gave humanity the Bhagavatha. He is the primal *Guru* for all who walk in the path of God. He planted the seed of theism and nurtured it, through *Srutbi Sastra* and the Mahabharatha. He gave the world the Githa and the *Brahma Sutras*, the idea of the immanent Creation. He belonged to about 3800 B.C.; he was the grand-son of the sage Vasishtha, the son of Parasara and the father of that celebrated gem among Rishis, Suka. His life-story is a series of miracles, a divine saga. He came from Vasudeva, announced the *Leela* of Vasudeva to all and finally, got merged in Vasudeva. He established the era of *Namaparayana* and made all aware of the sweetness of the name of the Lord, which evokes His Form and His Grace. Vyaasa first revealed to man the secret of making the *Manas* as clear and as full of cool rays as the moon on a full night; that is why this *Pournima* is associated with him and with all *Gurus*. Today, every *Asthika* must refuse to be content with a feast and a lecture. He should try to plant today the *Namabeeja* in his well-prepared heart, devoid of the thorns of egoism; and water it with *Prema*, fence the sprout with *Sraddha*, feed it with the fertilizer, *Smarana*; and from the grown-up tree of the *manthra*, pluck the fruit of *Ananda* and relish the sweetness.
Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 14 [Be grateful to the doctors] p65-66

A bar of iron sinks in water; but beat it into a hollow vessel and it will float merrily and even carry some weight. So too, man's mind sinks easily in the sea of sense; beat it hollow, hammering it with the Name of the Lord. It will float, safely, on a sea of troubles. Do not be like gramophone records singing someone else's song, ignorant of the genuine thrill of music. Sing from your own experience of the glory and Grace of the Lord.
Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 14 [Be Grateful to the Doctors] p67

The Lord too condescends to grant you the chance to develop faith. Why did Krishna raise the Govardhana Hill and keep it aloft? It was to announce His Truth and His Nature, to instill faith and to implant courage. It is just a sign, as is each one of My Acts. There is no task which I cannot accomplish, remember; no weight I cannot lift. You have faith in Rama and Krishna because of the books which describe a part of their achievements and the experience of the *Sadbakas* who attempted to delve into their mastery. You have not demanded direct proofs of divinity from either Rama or Krishna, have you? Have faith first and then you will get proof enough. Take up the discipline of the recital of the Name.
Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 19 [Vision of the Purusha] p96

I find you reading and appreciating the *Prema* of the *Rishis* and the *Gopis* and the *Vanaras* of past ages; but you ignore your present responsibility. For example, examine, each one of you, how far have you profited by coming to Puttapparthi now or so often in previous years? How far have you shown *Prema* to others, the *Prema* that you find to be My All. *Namasmarana*, I have told you often, is the best exercise to acquire *Prema* towards God and all that is great. But have you tried that recipe? Has it become as essential for you as the very breath? That is the test of your sincerity and of the success of your pilgrimage to Puttapparthi this Dasara.
Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 21 [Adhara and Adheya] p108

There was a great saint in Kerala some 500 years ago, Bilvamangala by name. He would call on Krishna and Krishna would appear. Such was his *Bhakti* and his *Sadhana*. One man who suffered from chronic stomach-ache heard about this and he pestered Bilvamangala to find out from Krishna whether it would end or not. Bilvamangala agreed and when Krishna appeared next, he asked him the question. Krishna replied, "When the rolling stops, it will cease". The unfortunate man interpreted it to mean "when he stopped rolling in pain" and he got desperate, because he had perforce to roll in the agony of that ache. So he left Kerala and wanted to go to some holy place to meet some holier person who would procure for him a more satisfying answer. Bilvamangala told him that he had to suffer this trouble due to his *Praarabdha*; that is, the result of his activities in previous births. He took rolling to mean, "rolling from birth to birth."

On the road to Kasi which he took, he came to a free feeding place run by a pious lady, Kururamma by name. When she saw his agony, she spoke to him kindly. He told her that he had decided to drown himself in the Ganga for he was told there was no escaping the consequences of past sins. Kururamma called him a fool. She gave him the holy *manthra*, *Gopijana-vallabhaaya-namaha*, and asked him to repeat it. She said that the Name would cure him completely. The poor man uttered it when the attack occurred next and he was surprised to find that the pain had gone! Yes, gone; even though he pounded his stomach, it did not return. He finished his pilgrimage to Kasi and returned to Kerala and fell at the feet of Bilvamangala, who inquired about his ache; the ache with which he had to live, for it was earned in past lives. When he was told that it had disappeared, he called on Krishna and asked what He had meant by "rolling". Bilvamangala thought it to mean rolling from one birth to another and acquiring good and evil; the sick man took it to mean 'rolling in pain' when the ache came on. But Krishna had meant rolling in this objective world, this *Prakrithi* and its changing phenomena. When the man lived in the name of God and had no other thought, the rolling had ceased; the Name and the chain of destiny cannot exist together. *Praarabdha* will melt away like fog before the sun when *Namasmarana* is done. This

was a revelation even to Bilvamangala.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 23 [Destiny is no iron cage] p115-116

For the bird in mid-ocean flying over the dark deep blue waters, the only resting place is the mast of a ship that sails across. In the same way, the Lord is the only refuge for man who is swept by storms over a restless sea. However far the bird may fly, it knows where it can rest; that knowledge gives it confidence. It has the picture of that mast steady in its mind; its form is fixed in the eye.

The Name of the Lord is the mast for you; remember it ever. Associate it with the Form and have that. Form fixed in the mind's eye. It is a lamp shedding light in the recesses of your heart. Have the Name on the tongue and it will drive away the inner darkness as well as the outer. Peace within, brotherliness without - that is the sign of a person engaged in *Namajapam*.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 30 [Near and Far] p155-156

The Name of the Lord has vast potentiality. Let me tell you an incident about this. Once Jnanadev and Namdev together walked across a forest tract, and both were afflicted with unbearable thirst. They discovered a well, but they found no rope or vessel with which they could draw the precious liquid within reach. It was a deep well with no steps and the water was far beneath. Jnanadev, who had attained *Brahmajnana*, identified himself with a bird that flew down the well and drank its fill. His thirst was quenched that way. Namadev called upon the Lord by name; the Lord answered; the water in the well rose; yes, rose, until he could reach it with his hands and slake his thirst.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 30 [Near and Far] p156

You consider the world as very near, as around you and behind you; but when you have to point out the Lord, you show Him far away from you, up and above, or at a vast distance. This is a mistake. The Lord is near; the world is far. You are believing that it is the other way as you are afraid of the truth and you like to deceive yourself. There was an Army Captain who once went with the Minister and the King in a small ferry-boat across a flooded river. He was very frightened to be in the boat and began to shake nervously. So the Minister just threw him into the flooded river. At once, he cried out for a place in the boat! He knew then the comfort of the boat, the value of the boat - the value of the *Aadhaara* in fact. The Lord is the *Aadhaara*, the basis, the support; the world is the *Aadheya*, the supported, the super imposed. The basis is in oneself, the nearest entity, the closest companion, the very breath and life of the individual. How then can you point to the distance when you are asked about the Lord? His name, the Name that appeals to you, is shaped by the intimateness of feeling and its depth in so far as you are concerned.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 30 [Near and Far] p156-157

Follow the rules of *Dharma*, which these seers describe; they are not seers, they are the representatives of the *Vedas*; yes, there are four in all. The *Sastras* are the authority for the *Dharma*, and the *karma* based on *Dharma*. It is only when you are blessed with the Grace of the Lord, which is earned by *Dharma*, that you can have *Santhi*. A fish can have *Santhi* only when it has water above and below and on all sides; so too, you must have Grace all around you. There is no short cut to this Grace; *Namasmarana* is the safest route. Do not believe

others who prescribe shorter routes; they may talk of *Praanayaama* and *Hatha Yoga*. Be warned; they are fraught with danger. Do not lend ear to such, or read and believe the books on physical *Yoga* and start practising the exercises. I know of many cases of madness and other dislocations happening by practice from the printed page.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] p164

Namasmarana is the best means. Only, you do not really believe that it can cure you or save you, that is the tragedy. People believe in the efficacy of only costly, brightly packed, widely published drugs; the simple easily available remedy which is in everybody's backyard is ignored as useless.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] p164-165

Really, if only you have this faith in the Name, you need not struggle to secure the chance to detail to Me your desires and wants. I will fulfill them, even without your telling Me. Why? Did Ramadas take his seat in the *verandab* like you and await his chance for an interview? The Lord carried to his very door the things that would fulfill his innermost wish! *Korika* or desires can never be destroyed by fulfillment; the desire multiplies like a weed; one seed sprouts and produces a tree, which in its turn scatters a thousand seeds which grow into a forest of trees with millions of seeds growing again into a thicker jungle.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] p165

The only *hai* (comfort in Telugu) is in Sai. The name of the Lord is the Narasimha incarnation to the *Rakshasas* of the *Kali* Age. Have the Name bright and clear on your tongue, in your mind; and the Form symbolized by it before your eye and mental vision—nothing can harm you. Train children from their infancy to repeat and rely on the Name. Let them imbibe it with the mother's milk. Train them yourselves; practicing it and demonstrating before them the *Santhi* that you win by it. Do not step back; move forward. Do not hesitate or doubt. Do not deny the joy that you have derived, the courage that you have felt. If you so doubt, your only income will be suffering.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] p165

Every letter is a *Beeja Akshara*; so I do not whisper secretly any *manthra* in your ear. I am giving it in every word I speak. Listen to me. When you wake up, feel that you are entering the stage to play the role assigned to you by the Lord; pray that you may act it well and earn His approbation. At night, when you retire to sleep, feel that you are entering the green room after the scene, but with the dress of your role on; for perhaps the role is not yet over and you have not been permitted to take the dress off. Perhaps, you have to make another entrance in the morning. Do not worry about that. Place yourself fully at His disposal; He knows. He has written the play and He knows how it will end and how it will go on. Yours is but to act and retire.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] 165-166

You have no time for reciting the Name of the Lord or meditating on His Form, which is within you! Alas! You have time for the club, for a game of cards, for the film show, for wayside chats, for all kinds of trivialities but no time for a little quiet, for a simple item like worship. It is a false excuse this, the want of time. No. Face the truth and proceed towards the Truth. When you tread the path of *Dharma*, imperceptibly, you will be drawn towards the

Truth, gently and steadily.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 31 [The Broken Bow] p168

What is the exertion which the Lord approves? Only spiritual toil and spiritual exertion can entitle you to the sacred share: only *Dhyana* and *Namasmarana*, steeped in the thrill of devotion!

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 32 [Inner Progress] p175

Have patience and wait prayerfully. Prayer can bring about the impossible. Recite the Glory of the Lord and repeat in the cavern of your heart His Name. That will bring success.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 32 [Inner Progress] p181

Winning the Grace of the Lord is as easy as melting butter; that is why the heart of the Lord is compared to butter. It is as soft as butter, they say. A little warmth is enough to melt it; a little warm affection shown to a suffering companion, a little warmth while pronouncing His Name, turning it over on the tongue, so to say. The Name is the spring of all the *Chaithanya* that you get by *Namasmarana*; it is the life-giving Nectar; it is the fountain of Primal energy. Recite the Name and the Named will be before you; picture the Named and the Name will leap to your lips. They are the reverse and the obverse of the same coin, the Name and the Form. There are some who vow to write *Raamanaama* or some other Name a million times, but very often it is just a matter of the fingers and the pen. The mind of the writer is the spoon which does not taste the honey which it doles out. The mind should not wander from the Name; it should dwell on the sweetness which the Name connotes; it should ruminate on the beauty of the Form which it recalls, the perfume which it spreads. The conduct and behavior of the writer should be such as befits a servant of God. Others should be inspired by them and their faith should get freshened by their experience of the writer.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 33 [Proceed Beyond Thriputi] p183-184

Well, I shall tell you some hard words. You very often condemn the mind as a monkey but take it from Me, it is far worse. The monkey leaps from one branch to another; but the mind leaps from the heights of the Himalayas to the depths of the sea, from today to tens of thousands of years ago. Tame it by the process of *Namasmarana*. Make it, as Ramadas did, into a Bhadrachala, a stable steady mountain. That is the task I assign to you. Make your heart an Ayodhya by means of *Raamanaama*; Ayodhya means a city that can never be captured by force. That is your real nature, Ayodhya, Bhadrachala. Forget this and you are lost. Install Rama in your heart and then no outer force can harm you.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 33 [Proceed Beyond Thriputi] p184-185

That is why I have come physically to this place to tell you to carry on this *Namasmarana*. Just as the times have changed and conditions of living have changed, the rigors of *Sadhana* have also to be modified. Doing severe *Thapas* was a great and rare achievement in those days; now, repeating the Name of the Lord is becoming as difficult a *Thapas*. Hence, it is said that *Smarana* is enough; *Smarana* that can be done along with all other activities of living. It is the inner purity that matters, not the outer movement of the lips. *Smarana* being an inner activity helps that inner transformation.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 35 [The Prison Walls] p194 -195

You need not give your word to Me now; but try to put into practice at least a few of the good things that appeal to you and that are helpful in giving you peace and contentment. To evoke the Divine in you, there is no better method than *Namasmarana*.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 35 [The Prison Walls] p195

Today, you have heard discourses on the excellence of the Divine Name, on the indispensability of *Bhakti* and on the omnipotence of Divine Grace. In so far as all these three are concerned, whatever a person may say or expound, it is one's own experience that matters, not scholarship or skill. The Divine Name, when uttered by a dedicated soul like Prahlada brought out the Lord from wherever he sought Him!

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 49 [Onto Victory] p252

The Divine Name saves and liberates! It is armor against the onslaughts of pride and self-pity. When *Japam* is started by you in a systematic manner, fixing your inner eye on the Form, which illustrates the Name, you will meet with many obstacles, disquieting thoughts and enticements. They should be ignored, by-passed, treated lightly. Strengthen your habits, stick to your discipline, improve your inner administration; mix more in the company of the good and the Godly. The unruly bull has to be roped and tamed, its nose bored and ringed, it has to be yoked and trained to drag heavy loads and become the docile servant of its master.

Ref: SSS Vol II Ch 49 [Onto Victory] p252

Gandikota Subrahmanya Sastry read and offered what he called a *Navarathna Haram*, a garland of nine poetic gems; but, though I do not accept garlands, I certainly accept the devotion that gives fragrance to the garland. He said that the *Vedas* are for the glorification of the Gods, "*Devaanam stbuthyartham*;" that in the *Kali Yuga*, one is asked to rely more on *Namasmarana* for liberation. Why is it considered enough for the people of this Age? For, other *Sadbanas* are fraught with difficulties. They need rigorous discipline and much preliminary effort. Again, there is another advantage in *Namasmarana*: as soon as the Name is uttered, the owner of the Name comes into view. When you think of the Form the Name may not always accompany; you may not be able to identify. There may be more than one Name and you may be confused. But, take the Name, and the Form automatically appears before the mental eye.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 4 [Sivam, not Savam] p14

The Name is enough to give you all the results of every type of *Sadhana*. This is accepted by all the *Sastras* and all the *Sadhakas* who have left accounts of their struggle and success. Moreover, the Name is capable of being recited and meditated upon by all, equally. Of course, the Name is a limitation of the Universal; it identifies the un-identifiable, through one of its aspects. Take the *Upadhi* as a means of saving yourself; take it as a boat that will take you across the sea of birth and death.

When you repeat the Name, all the sweetness of the Form and its associated Glory must come to memory and just as your mouth waters when you remember some sweet dish you relish, your mind must "water" when you contemplate it. Choose the Name that captivates your heart. Why run after riches when all the pleasure and satisfaction that riches can offer and even a hundredfold, can be got by dwelling on the Name? The Lord has said that where

His Name is sung, "*thatbra thishtaami*," there I sit; He establishes Himself there! He will not move from the place. So, the tongue is enough to win Him, the tongue that speaks the language of the pure mind.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 4 [Sivam, not Savam] p15

The Lord is a *Kalpavriksha*; you have to approach Him and develop attachment to Him. You must win His Grace and be ever near Him, keeping back all the forces that drag you away from Him. Even if you commit some technical faults in singing about Him or in worshipping Him, it does not matter.

Bhakthi makes every error excusable. Nectar, though poured into a brass cup, will not lose its savor or taste. Poison, even if it is poured into a cup of gold set with gems, will not lose its death-dealing property.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 4 [Sivam, not Savam] p15-16

Let your mind ever dwell on Krishna of such stature. Sanctify every word and deed by filling it with *Prema* for Krishna or whatever Name and Form you give to the Lord you love. The gold of which an anklet was made, can become the gold for a crown on the head of a temple image; only it has to be melted in the crucible and beaten into shape. The waters of the river might be dirty, but, the *Bhaktha* who sips it with a *Manthra* or a *Stothra* on his lips, transmutes it into a sacred *Theertha*. The body becomes healthy by exercise and work; the mind becomes healthy by *Upasana* and *Namasmarana*, by regular, well-planned discipline, joyfully accepted and joyfully carried out.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 10 [Vishaya, the Visha] p49

I was asked by your Principal to plant a *Champaka* tree in the garden of this College and I did it gladly; but, the thing which will give me greater pleasure is to plant the sapling of prayer in your hearts. A prayerful life will not yield to the fury of passion; it will be a source of strength and co-operation. Decline in the discipline of *Namasmarana* has been the cause of the decline of this country. A single house-hold now has ten factions and parties; those who cannot reform their own homes have started reforming the country and advising co-operation and harmonious living to others.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 13 [Be Maharanis!] p66

Remember the glorious destiny of this village. Prepare yourselves for that great role. Immerse yourselves in the *Sathsanga* that is available here in such ample measure. Form a group and have *Bhajana* Sessions every week in some place; keep the Name of the Lord always on your lips, and you will find that all thoughts of envy and hatred will disappear from your hearts. If only you evince some genuine interest in your own real uplift, I am ready to stand by you and crown your efforts with success.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 17 [The Day they got the Light] p81

Bhakthi is not like lime pickle, to be used only when you have fever; it is man's daily sustenance, the vitamin he must needs have for physical and mental health. The contemplation of God is the main rice dish; the rest are side dishes, appetizers, fillers. Take the tablets, the *Namasmaran* tablets, and all the experiences of your daily life, the good and the bad, will be digested nicely. You don't eat paddy, do you? You have the sense to remove

the husk and then, boil the rice, before you eat it. So also, why do you take in, nature as it is? Remove the allurements it has, to the senses, make it just an expression of the Divine Will and then assimilate it.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 26 [Sahaja and A-sahaja] p117

You forget your nature in the complex tangle of artificiality; you miss the "*sahaja*" when you are caught in the net of the "*asahaja*". The "*sahaja*" is *Prema, Santhi, Sathya, Ananda*. The artificial is hate, falsehood, war, grief and greed. You must discover the spring of your own truth; you cannot play truant for long; after many a birth, even if their number is a hundred, you have to reach the source from where you strayed. Your mind is steady when it is engaged in other activities; but, when it is focused on God, it begins to waver. It does not like to stop its vagaries, which it will have to do, once God enters your heart. Tame it by *Namasmarana*. That is the message which I have come to announce. Have the *Namam* on your tongue, the *Rupa* in your eye, the glory in your heart - then thunderbolts will pass you quietly by.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 26 [Sahaja and A-sahaja] p118

Do *Namasmarana* in some set manner, with full faith and pure heart. When the country is endangered, it is as bad as when the body is endangered. The Name will give you courage to save the Mother. If all of you strengthen your moral qualities, and develop faith in God and *Sanathana Dharma*, calamity can never visit this land. Let all *Astbikas* proclaim the value of meditation on God. I shall bless that endeavor; I know that will save you and save the country. That is why I am blessing you on this note of Joy.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 26 [Sahaja and A-sahaja] p118

I live upon the *Ananda* that you derive when you sing the Name and glorify the Form of the Lord. That is my Food, My daily sustenance. So, I have no need to talk to you; it is sufficient if I sit here and draw in the *Ananda* that you feel when you do *Bhajana*.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 27 [Project Site - Puja Site] p119

I shall give you one prescription which will give you the peace and contentment which you seek: It is *Namasmarana*. Install on the tongue, any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in any part of the world, among any community of devotees. Repeat the Name for some time at least every day as part of your duty to yourself, a discipline which will yield good results, a habit which you should cultivate as a compensation for the hard toil that you do with your body from sunrise to sunset.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 27 [Project Site - Puja Site] p121

It is all a matter of the company you fall into. Be careful when you choose your friends. Form small *Sathsangs* and meet regularly for *Bhajana* and mutual consultations about spiritual matters. Read some fine spiritual classic, like the Bhagavad-githa. Fill your eyes with the beauty of His Form, your ears with the story of His *Leelas*, hearts with the sweetness of His Glory; inspire yourselves by seeing Him everywhere. Think of His Immanence in every hill and dale, every man and beast, every tree, bird and insect. You will be really thrilled by the Joy of that Vision. That will make your work as light as *Puja* and as satisfying.

The *Vanaras* while building the bridge across the Ocean, carried huge boulders on their heads, repeating *Raamanaama* all the while and that made the rocks weigh less; it is even said

that they wrote the name on the stones and that made them float! Each time they hauled or lifted a stone, they sang *Raamanaama* in unison and so they were a happy lot, doing *Puja*, not work which is unpleasant. Rama's Grace helped all to overcome obstacles. Take the name and make your work light; that is My Advice to you.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 27 [Project Site - Puja Site] p124

For all this, the prime need is Faith. Faith in yourself! You can move mountains in the social level, if you conquer your mind in the individual level. Curb your powers and make them run along useful channels; that will result in Joy for you and others. To get that faith, know your Truth. To know that, attach yourself to the larger Self, of which you are a part, by constant *Namasmarana*.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 28 [The turn of the Key] p129

Turn the key in the lock to the right, it opens: turn the same key to the left, it is locked. So too, turn your mind towards the objective world, it is locked, caught, entangled. Turn it to the right, away from the objects of the senses, the lock is loosened, you are free, deliverance is at hand. How to turn right? Well, begin with *Namasmarana*, as the first step. All journeys start with the first step. That will itself take you through the second and the third to the very goat.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 33 [The House of the Lord] p153

Want of steady faith is what drives people to drugs and books. There is a story about Radha and her faith in Krishna. The elders in Brindavan who revelled in scandalizing Krishna - successors have been born for them even now - set an ordeal for Radha to test her virtue. She was given a mud pot with a hundred holes and asked to bring water in that pot, from the Yamuna to her house! She was so full of the Krishna- consciousness that she never knew the condition of the pot. She immersed it in the river, repeating the name of Krishna as usual with every intake of the breath and every exhalation. Every time the name Krishna was uttered, a hole was covered, so that by the time the pot was full, it was whole! That was the measure of her faith. Faith can affect even inanimate objects.

Ref: SSS Vol III Ch 47 [His Residential Address] p224

Bharatha can call himself a *Ramabhaktha*. He lived with *Raamanaama* in every breath; he was with Rama in the forest and on the battlefield; he suffered as much as Rama; he was as much an anchorite as his brother; so, he too became *Shyama* (dark skinned) like Rama.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 3 [Ask for Me] p22

Kabir was weaving a *pitambara* for the Lord, for his Rama. He had to work the loom alone by hand. He recited Rama Rama Rama Rama and went on weaving ceaselessly. The cloth had become twenty yards long, but Kabir did not stop; his *thapas* continued unabated; the *pitambara* was becoming longer and longer. The *Ananda* of the craft, devoted to his Lord, was enough food and drink for his sustenance. When he gave it to the temple priest for clothing the idol of Rama, the *pitambara* was just the size, just the length and breadth, not a finger breadth more! Such men are the main springs of the joy that spiritual persons fill themselves with in India.

The *griha* must resound to the name of Govinda; otherwise, it is just a *guba*; a cave, where wild animals dwell. The body needs a house, but, the body is itself a house; in that house too the Name of Govinda must be heard. Or else, it is a *ghata*, a mud pot, not a man's body.

Repeat the *Raamanaama*, whether you have faith or not; that will itself induce faith; that will itself create the evidence on which faith can be built.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 6 [Griha or Guha?] p36

The Grace of God descends upon the eager *sadbaka* who listens attentively to the story of that Grace. The Name of God if recited with love and faith has that power. Once the mother of Agasthya boasted that her son drank all the waters of the ocean; but mother of Hanuman who was there, said, "Why go to that extent? My son leaped over it in a trice". But, there was the mother of Rama with them. She said, "Your son leaped over the ocean, uttering my son's name; without it, he was helpless". The name has that overmastering power. It can award unheard of unimagined strength and courage. The other two women disputed the fact that it was *Raamanaama* that strengthened Hanuman for enterprise. So, Kausalya asked Rama Himself. He said, "Why it was because this Body was called Rama the name that combines the *Beejaksbaras* of both Shiva and Vishnu that I Myself was able to conquer Ravana and his hordes!".

The Name has much efficacy. By repeating the Name, the Lord and His attributes can be easily identified. The tongue must be sanctified by the repetition of the Name.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 9 [Sravanam and Smaranam] p50-51

In the *Kaliyuga*, the principle of *Prema* is not in evidence. It is smothered in jealousy, conceit, hatred, fear, falsehood and greed. That is why it is best referred to as the *Kalabayuga*, the Age of faction, marked by fights between mother and daughter, father and son, teacher and pupil, guru and guru, brother and brother. The recitation of the name of Krishna is the best method for cleansing the mind of all these evil impulses.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 11 [The Rain Cloud] p60-61

When hearts are infested with flies and worms, the Flit of *Namasmarana* has to be used for disinfecting the place.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 12 [The Sandalwood tree] p66

Thamaso maa Jyothirgamaya, is the prayer. Egoism is *Thamas*; *Saranagathi* is *Jyothi*. There is an easy way to illumine the inner consciousness and the outer behavior, with the light of God. Put the lamp of the Name of the Lord, the illumining flame, on the tongue! That is the door step; that light will drive out the darkness from both inside and outside. Have it ever burning, clear and bright. You will soon reach remarkable heights and enjoy happiness, the like of which you cannot get by sticking to the senses.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 14 [True remorse and false] p81

Plant the seed of the Name of the Lord, any one of His thousand Names that appeals to you, in the well prepared soil of your heart and let it sprout in the silence there; water it with Love, service to fellowmen; guard it against pests and cattle, the outward dragging emotions and passions, by putting up the fence of *Japam* and *Dhyanam*, then you will get the harvest

of *Anandam*.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 17 [Japa and Bhaja] p97-98

The present age is described in the *Sastras* as very conducive to liberation, for, while in the past ages, rigorous penance was prescribed as the means, the *Kali* age in which you are, requires only *Namasmarana* to win liberation! When the Name of the Lord is remembered with all the glory that is associated with It, a great flood of *Ananda* welis up within the mind. Vyaasa himself knew this; for, when some sages once went to him to find out which *Yuga* is most conducive to success in man's efforts for liberation, Vyaasa anticipated their question and repeated to himself aloud, "O how fortunate are those destined to be born in the *Kaliyuga*!". It is so easy in this *Kali* age to win the grace of the Lord.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 18 [Genuine kinsman] p106

The Name of the Lord is the rifle which guards you against beasts of prey in the jungle of life. The rifle makes a loud noise when the bullet is ejected fast. So too, along with the sound of the Name, eject the bullet of feeling too, so that the target is hit.

Nowadays, people laugh at the idea of *Namasmarana* and *Namasamkeerthana*. They ask, what is in a Name? It is just an assortment of sound. My words too are assortment of sound, but, when they enter your hearts, you feel content, you feel encouraged, is it not? Words have tremendous power; they can arouse emotions and they can calm them. They direct, they infuriate, they reveal, they confuse; they are potent forces that bring up great reserves of strength and wisdom. Therefore have faith in the Name and repeat it whenever you get the chance.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 32 [Are words mere sounds?] p184

God alone is eternal; man is a momentary flash, a tiny wavelet, that rises and falls. So, fill yourselves with vast thoughts, magnificent ideas, indefinable splendour, by reciting the Names of God, names that describe Him to your receptive consciousness. That is the main discipline for this age.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 33 [Iswara grants Aiswaryam] p194

'Doubt' is easy and faith is difficult. Dwell on the *Nama* and its sweetness will saturate your tongue and improve your taste. Do not count the number of times you have repeated it. For, whom are you going to impress with the number? The Lord will respond even if you call Him just once from the depths of feeling; He will be deaf, even if you call Him a million times automatically, artificially with the tongue, not with the heart. It is easy to amass figures. Numbers are easy to manipulate, but, Grace does not depend upon them at all. He asks for the heart, the full heart and nothing but the heart.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 36 [Diagnose your own disease] p204

Every farmer knows that good seeds must be sown for getting a rich harvest. If the seeds are bad, his efforts are fruitless. Sow the seeds called Name of God in the well prepared field of the heart; feed it with the manure of Faith; have discipline as the fence to keep out stray cattle. Without a fence guarding the crop, farming will be like shooting without a bullet: all sound and no game! Prayer must come from the depths of feeling; the Lord looks

for *bhaava* not *bahya*. With feeling, you can make that Divine Heart bloom in joy.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 37 [No Srama in Asrama] p209

The recitation of the Name is like the operation of boring to tap underground water; it is like the chisel stroke that will release the image of God imprisoned in the marble. Break the encasement and the Lord will appear. Break the pillar as Prahlad asked his father to do and the Lord who is ever there will manifest Himself. Churn and you bring the butter, latent in the milk, into view. That is the experience of every mother that every daughter learns; in the spiritual field, you learn that *Sadhana* from *Yogis*, who have gained and offered that *navaneetham* (butter) to Krishna.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 38 [Close the windows] p216

Namasmarana is the best detergent for the mind. *Smarana* is the *tharanopaya*, that is, the means of crossing the sea. The Name is the raft that will take you safely across. The Name will remove the veil of *maya*, that now hides the *Shakti* from the *vyakti*, the Universal from individual. When that veil fades out, man finds Himself before himself; he beholds the Universe that he is. Man has infinite power and infinite potentiality, for he is a wave of the ocean of Infinity. You can be aware of this, if you only dare reason a bit. The fruit won't drop if you mumble *mantras* under the mango tree; you will have to take a heavy stick and throw it at the bunch. Use the stick of intelligence and throw it at the problem of "you and the world"; that will yield fruit.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 39 [The Sun at your doorstep] p225

Do not calculate the length of time you have spent in the company of the Lord's Name and exult. Calculate rather the length of time you have wasted, away from contact and repent. Have that Name ever in your thoughts and you can brave any calamity. Remember how Seetha braved the taunts, insults and tortures of the ogresses in Lanka; what was it that gave her the mental stamina? It was *Raamanaam* and nothing else. *Kama* and *krodha* cannot co-exist with *Ramadhyana*.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 40 [Follow His Footprints] p235

There are some who, while meditating, strike at the mosquitoes that pester them! No, immerse yourselves in *Dhyanam* until you transcend all physical and mental urges and impulses. Valmiki was covered by the ant hill that grew over him, people discovered him by the sound of *Raamanaama* that emanated from that mound. Ignore the *deba* so that you may discover the *debi*, do not get engrossed in outer finery but delve deep and discover the inner splendor. What does *sadhana* of ignoring the *deba* imply? It means turning aside the temptations of the senses, the overcoming of the six enemies *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, *Moha*, *Mada* and *Matsarya* (desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and malice). Anger turns a man into a drunken brute. The other impulses are equally vicious. Seek only the salutary *karma*; eat only *sathmic* food, food that will not disturb the equanimity you earn through your *Sadhana*. Do not break the even tenor of your spiritual practice. Remember how Ramadas never gave up his *Namasadhana* in spite of jeers and jail.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 40 [Follow His Footprints] p236-237

A clean consciousness is as a lamp; pour into it the oil of Grace; place in it the wick of self control; keep in position the chimney of *Namasmarana*, so that gusts of joy and grief might

not scotch the flame. Light the lamp, with some *Mahavakya*, like *Aham Brahmasmi* or *Thatth Thvam asi*. Then, you will not only have Light; you will be a source of Light.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 45 [Siva in Sava] p265

Learn from here the value of silence, of *Namasmaran*, of *Bhajan*, of *Japa*, of *Dhyana*, of single minded remembrance of the Lord, of the association with spiritually kin. These will stand you in good stead, when distress assails you.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 46 [Deathless though Dead] p270

Dharma purifies the mind and leads you to God. It creates a taste for the Name and Form of God. When you love the Name and Form, you will naturally respect and obey the command of Krishna, His *Ajna*, which is found in the Bhagavad Githa. Have the Name on the tongue and Form in the eye and the demon called *aasa*, unending desire will fly from your mind, leaving joy and content therein. This kind of constant dwelling on the indwelling God will promote in you love for all beings. You will then see only good in others. You will strive only to do good to others.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 49 [Dharma and Dharmasala] p286-287

Start now, with the first step, *Namasmarana*, repeating the Name of the Lord, the Universal Indweller; that will lead you on to the further steps, until the goal is reached.

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 49 [Dharma and Dharmasala] p288

You may ask how we can find time for all this, when we have to toil every moment for feeding and clothing ourselves? But, you forget that the Lord will grant you these material things and even immortality, if only you place full reliance on Him. Whatever you do, have the Name, Rama or Krishna or Shiva or Hari on your tongue; no extra time or energy is needed for that. When you rise in the morning, rise with the Name on your tongue, slide into sleep with the Name on your tongue. You know a story of Narada, I believe. Vishnu once chided him and said, a farmer had greater devotion than Narada. The sage felt annoyed and wanted to verify it for himself. He went to that village and sought out the ryot and observed his life for some day. The man repeated the name of the Lord only thrice a day, once as he rose from sleep, a second time when he started taking his only meal of the day at noon and a third time when he laid himself down to sleep. Narada felt he was badly insulted by being pronounced inferior in devotion to this casual reciter of Names. He returned to Vishnu and presented his report and hoped that Vishnu would correct His estimate of the ryot's devotion. The Lord however asked him to undergo a test which at first appeared to be a mere whim. With five pots placed one over the other balanced on his head, He wanted Narada to walk around His residence. Narada had to comply; he walked warily, slowly, with his entire attention fixed on the five pots uneasily resting on his head and managed to come safe to the Sacred Presence with all pots intact! He was surprised when Vishnu asked him, "Now, tell Me, how many times did you remember My Name while walking around?". Narada had to confess that he had clean forgotten the Name and did not pronounce it at all. Then, Vishnu declared, "Do you realize now that the farmer, who is carrying the five pots of fortune and misfortune, right and wrong, and attention concentrated on nature and her vagaries, is really superior because he recites the Name at least thrice a day?".

Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 52 [The Three Day Fair] p298-299

The consequence of *karma* can be wiped out only through *karma*, as a thorn which can be removed only by means of another. Do good *karma* to assuage the pain of the bad *karma* which you have done and from which you suffer now. The best and the simplest *karma* is the repetition of the Name of the Lord; be ever engaged in it. It will keep out evil tendencies and wicked thoughts. It will help you radiate love all around you.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 54 [This Joy and That] p310

When you sing *Namavalis*, try to roll on your tongue the sweetness of the meaning also. On the basis of the material you can ascend to the spiritual; only, you must know that it is possible and develop the faith that removes all hesitation. When you sing of Radha, as you did just now, "*Raadha Maadhava Nanda Laala!*" do not imagine that Radha is a woman and Krishna, a man. You can become Radha, now, here, if only you know what Radha represents. She is the *Adhara* which is *Araadh* (worshipped) as *Dhaara* (an ever flowing stream); she is the very basis of the world, which is another name for God Himself. Have it as a *Dhaara*, flowing from your tongue, the Name of the Lord; avoid all lesser talk on the ocean of milk, the *Ksheerasagara* of the pure mind, plant the peak of *Mandara* (steady faith in the unity of creation), take the serpent, Grace of the Lord and use it as a rope to churn the ocean; churn it, through *Dhyana* and *Sadhana*; then, you are able to acquire the nectar (the essence of *Veda*, of spiritual knowledge) of spiritual experience.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 57 [Undernourishment and the Cure] p326

You know that first you have to plough the land, feed it with water; then sow the seed, pluck out the weeds, guard the crop by a fence from cattle and goats and wait patiently for harvest time. So also, the heart has to be ploughed by means of virtues, fed with the water of *Prema*, before the seeds of Divine Name are sown; later, the field has to be watched and weeds have to be destroyed; it is best to prevent the cattle of unsteadiness and doubt, by putting up the fence of discipline; then, the *Nama* will flower into *Dhyana* and the rich harvest of *Jnana* can be reaped. Now, you are allowing the precious fertile field to lie fallow; the field of heart is infested with thorns and weeds: it yields no joy to anyone.

Cultivate the heart and garner the grain of *Atma-ananda*. That *Ananda* is your heritage; it is yours for the asking. But, you do not know how or whom to ask. Ask grief to quit and *Ananda* is patent as the very basis of your "Isness", your *Sath* and *Chith*. It is very simple. Grief will disappear as soon as you discover its real origin for, it has arisen out of ignorance only.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 58 [The Rare Chance] p331-332

Discard anger, hate, envy and greed; do it by dwelling always on the Name that summarizes and signifies the Glory of God. Nurturing anger and hatred in the heart is like carrying a pot with many holes for bringing water.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 60 [Rope round the Neck] p341-342

The heart has the precious treasure of *Ananda*, but man does not know the key to open the lock; that key is *Namasmarana*, the repetition of the Name of the Lord, with a pure heart. Purify the heart with the four instruments: *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Santhi* and *Prema*. Always endeavor to do good to others, to think well of them and to speak well of others. This endeavor will wear away your egoism and attachment to things that cater to your pleasures.

Do not behave like birds and beasts, always engaged in earning a living or rearing a family. Struggle for higher things; use the higher talents with which you are endowed.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 64 [The uplift from village] p360

I ask you to fix your mind on any Name of the Lord, that brings up into your consciousness the Glory and the Grace of the Lord. Also, train your hands to do acts that serve the Lord that is shining in every being.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 67 [The Basic Hypocrisy] p382

Virtues or *Sadgunas* are like cows, yielding health giving milk. Vices are tigers that fall upon the cows and tear them to pieces. If you build a barricade of *Nama*, a fort with the Name of the Lord, the tiger cannot harm you or your virtues.
Ref: SSS Vol IV Ch 69 [The New Year of Faith] p392

The *Atma* can be grasped only by a sharpened intellect and a pure mind. How to purify the mind? By starving it of the bad food it runs after, namely objective pleasures and feeding it on the wholesome food, namely, thought of God. The intellect too will be sharp, if it is devoted to discrimination between transient and the eternal. Let your thoughts be concentrated on God, His Name and His Form; you will then find that you are always with the pure and permanent; you will then derive pure and permanent joy. That is the reason why I attach so much importance to *Namasmarana* as a *Sadhana*.
Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 2 [Travel Light] p9

Namasmarana saved Prahlada from the agony of torture. He was a *Rakshasa* boy, but somehow he learnt the sacred name and knew how sweet it was. He repeated it and imbibed its nectarine taste. Even when the enraged elephant rushed towards him, he did not cry out "Oh father or Oh mother" to persuade his physical parents to rescue him; he had no consciousness of their existence at all: he called on Narayana and no one else. Narayana is the source of strength for the weak and strong; He is the supreme power; so, elephants turned back from the boy, fire could not singe his hair; wind could not lift him; precipices could not fell him; poison could not affect him. The Name was his armor, his shield, his breath, his life. Anjaneya too demonstrates the might of the name. With the Name imprinted on his heart and rolling on his tongue, he leaped across the sea; temptations called him to halt; on the way, terrors pleaded with him to turn back; but the Name urged him on and carried him forward, through space, to distant Lanka where Sita was. He had no space in his mind for anything other than the Name of his master.

If your thoughts center around the body, you will have worries about pains and illnesses, real or imaginary; if they are centered on riches, you will be worried about profit and loss, tax and exemptions, investment and insolvency; if they roam around fame, then, you are bound to suffer from the ups and downs of scandal calumny and jealousy. So, let them center round the seat of power and love which deserve willing submission and let your whole being surrender to it. Then, you will be happy for ever. For the sages of *Vedic* culture, the *Rishis*, the Name of the Lord was the very breath; they lived on the sustenance which contemplation of the glory inherent in it provided. When the milk ocean of the *Vedas* was churned with intelligence as the rod and devotion as the rope, the butter of the three great classics - the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Srimad Bhagavatha emerged, for spreading the message of

the *Namasmarana* way for peace and joy. It is to revive this message and to restore faith in the Name that this *Avathara* has come into the world, in the *Kaliyuga*.

Namasmarana is an instrument to realize the Lord. Thyagaraja started the *Namajapa* of Sri Rama in his twentieth year; he recited it ninety six crores of times, and took twenty one years and fifteen days for the vow to be finished. As a result, he had the *darsana* of Sri Rama, "the letters of the Name taken shape", he says. The Name signifies the quality of the Lord, His *guna*, and so constant contemplation arouses the same *guna* in the reciter.

For *Namasmarana*, no expense is involved; no materials are needed; there is no special place and time to be provided. No qualification of scholarship or caste or sex has to be proved. When a bit of iron is rubbed to and fro on a slab of stone, heat is generated: only the rubbing has to be vigorous and continuous. When you do so at intervals and with poor pressure, the iron will not get hot. So too, in order to get sufficient heat to melt the soft heart of the Lord, rub the name Ram Ram Ram vigorously and unintermittently. Then, the Lord will shower His Grace.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 16 [Every Hair's End] p79-81

The Name is more efficacious than the contemplation of the Form. Droupadi did not send a chariot to bring Krishna to her rescue; she uttered the Name in her agony and Krishna responded and saved her from imminent dishonor. In the *Threthayuga*, when the Ramayana story was gone through, Nala and his monkeys were building a bridge over the sea to Lanka; the boulders on which they inscribed the sacred Name, Rama, floated on the waters, but, they found that the boulders floated away due to wind and wave. They did not form a continuous bridge, for the army to pass over. Some ingenious person gave a suggestion to write RA on one boulder and MA on another and they found that the two stuck hard together. The Name will serve as a float for you too; it will keep you attached to God and bring on you His Grace.

With the Name as the very breath of your life, you can engage in all life's activities, with no fear of a fall. Meera quaffed the cup of poison with the Name on her tongue and it turned into nectar. Why should you have fear or sorrow, with the Lord installed in the altars of your heart? Do you not know that He is there, guarding you and guiding you? He is in all beings, at all times. Endeavor to remember this fact whatever you may be doing, whoever you may be contacting, in whatever manner. You will succeed in this, provided you do not give up the recitation of His Name. The *griha* (Home) where the Name of the Lord is not heard is a *guba* (cave) and nothing more. As you enter it, as you leave it, while you are in it, perfume it, illumine it, purify it, with the Name. Light it as a lamp at dusk, welcome it at dawn, as you welcome the sun. That is the genuine *Deepavali*, the Festival of Lamps.

On this *Deepavali* day, resolve to light the lamp of *Namasmarana* and place it at your doorstep, the lips. Feed it with the oil of devotion; have steadiness as the wick. Let the lamp illumine every minute of your life. The splendor of the Name will drive away darkness from outside you as well as from inside you. You will spread joy and peace among all who come near you. Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 20 [The Lamp at the Door] p100-103

There was an emperor once who asked the sages who visited his palace, "Who is the best among men? Which moment of time is most blessed? Which act is most beneficial?". He

could not get a satisfactory answer for long. At last, his realm was invaded and he was defeated by rival forces and he had to flee into the jungle. There he fell into the clutches of a primitive tribe who selected him as a victim to their Goddess. While in this precarious condition, he was seen by an ascetic, who rescued him and took him to his quiet hermitage where he and his students tended him lovingly back to health and happiness. Then he discovered the answers to his questions: The best among men is he who has compassion: the most blessed time is the present, this very second and the best act is to relieve pain and grief. You decide to start *Namasmarana* "next Thursday", as if death has assured you in writing that he will not call on you till that date. Do not postpone what you can do today, now, this very moment.

Now that I referred to *Namasmarana*, I shall tell you another story. There was a merchant who was exhorted by his teacher to repeat the Name of the Lord; he pleaded he had no time to sit and repeat it; the shop took up all his time and energy. He had to go out a little away from the village for answering the calls of nature. He spent about half an hour for this. So, the *Guru* asked him to use this time for the daily *Smarana*. Hanuman, the great *Ramabhakta* was passing through the sky, when he saw the merchant attending to calls of nature and heard him repeat Ram Ram Ram white so engaged. Hanuman was incensed at his impertinence; he was desecrating the Name by pronouncing it while unclean. So, he gave him a hard blow on the cheek and continued his journey to Ayodhya.

When he reached the Divine Presence and looked at the splendor filled face of Rama, he noticed the swollen red print of a hand upon His cheek. Hanuman was shocked and His grief was too deep for words. Rama told him, "Hanuman! Do not ask Me the name of this person who dealt this blow. I always anticipate the moment of calamity for my *bhaktas* and I intercede in time to save them. That poor merchant, sitting outside the village, who was repeating My Name when you were coming here, could he withstand the terrible onslaught of your angry fist? The fellow would have collapsed on the spot. So, I intercepted the blow and received it on my own cheek, my dear Hanuman". *Bhaktarakshana* is one of His main tasks. *Yogakshemam Vahaamyaham* is no empty assurance; it is the vow of the Lord and He is *Sathyaswarupa*, Truth itself.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 43 [Of Him, to Him, by Him] p223-224

You feel the presence of God when silence reigns. In the excitement and confusion of the market place, you cannot hear His Footfall. He is *Sabdabrahma*, resounding when all is filled with silence. That is why I insist on silence, the practice of low speech and minimum sound. Talk low, talk little, talk in whispers, sweet and true. Examine each act of yours and see that you execute it with minimum noise. Loud noise is sacrilege on the sky, just as there are sacrilegious uses of earth and of water.

This is the reason why we have certain disciplines at the Prashanthi Nilayam, which you are all expected to follow. Maintaining silence as a step in *Sadhana* which you learn here and practice wherever you go is the most patent of these rules. Then you are advised to spend time in meditation or *japam* or quiet pursuit of *Namasmarana*; for peace and joy are not to be found in external nature; they are treasures lying hidden in the inner realms of man; once they are located, man can never again be sad or agitated. With every inhalation, utter the name of God; with every exhalation, utter the name of God. Live in God, for Him, with

Him.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch [Economy and the Elements] p234-235

The *deba* has to be nourished so that man can reach the *Dehi*, the real Indweller. Bhisma taught from his bed of arrows that the body is to be fostered since it is an instrument for good deeds. Three fishes lived in a tank; one told the other two that the water was getting dry and they should be well advised to leave, ere it was too late. But, one said, it could save itself when the contingency arose; the third was caught by the fisherman, though the first migrated early enough and the second managed to break through the net. Yama is the fisherman; unless early notice is taken of the process of drying to which the tank of one's span of life is subject, one gets caught. Migrate into the sea of Grace, which will not dry; or learn the art of breaking through the net of death. It was *sathwaguna* that moved on to God; the *rajoguna* broke the net; the *thamoguna* got caught. Grow into the *sathwic* stage and save yourself. Discard sloth, denounce fanaticism and declare yourself a dedicated servant of the Lord. Then Grace will be showered on you.

Namasmarana is the process by which this dedicated attitude can be cultivated and confirmed. When confronted by calamity, you must attach yourself to this *Sadhana* even more firmly, instead of losing faith in it and getting slack. The drug should not be given up when it is most needed. The pity is, when the first disappointment faces you, you lose courage and confidence and give up Rama or Krishna or Sai Baba.

Another point about *Namasmarana*. There are some who ejaculate Rama or Sai Ram or Mahadeva when they are disgusted with some happening or when they are displeased or depressed, in a tone indicative of disgust or unwelcome surprise. They say it with a sigh or groan. This is wrong. The name of the Lord must always be pronounced with joy, thankfulness, exultation, awareness of the uniqueness and the splendor. Say it with love, say it with sincere yearning.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 46 [The Supreme Physician] p 237-238

God is *Antharyami*, and so, when He is sought in the outer world, He cannot be caught. Love Him with no other thought; feel that without Him nothing is worth anything; feel that He is all. Then you become His and He becomes yours. There is no kinship nearer than that. The *Namam* can light the spark of that love. When two branches of a tree grate on each other hard for some time, enough heat is generated to set the tree on fire. So too, when one Name and another rub together quick and hard, spark of *Jnana* ignites the mind. The flame of *Jnana* reduce to ashes the effects of all activities; they do not affect man any more.

The Name is sugar; you can make sugar dolls of any shape; call it by any name appropriate to the shape, cat or rabbit, eagle or elephant; the sweetness and the calorific value are the same. So too, when engaged in the *Sadhana* of *Namasmarana*, you can select *Om Shakthi*, *Om Narayana*, *Om Srinivasa*, *Om Paramatma*, *Om Sai Rama* - the curative value, the cleansing value, is the same; the sweetness on the tongue is the same. *Namasmarana* will make you stick to the thought of God. Now you are like a mouse caught inside a drum, a *Mridanga*. When the player beats on the right, the mouse runs to the left; when the left is beaten, it runs in terror to the right. So too, you run from *Paramatma* to *Prakrithi*, reluctant to stick to God and at the same time, retreating from the denials and disappointments of *Prakrithi*. You have come

from God; you are a spark of His Glory; you are a wave of that ocean of Bliss: you will get peace only when you again merge in Him.

Ref:SSS Vol V Ch 47 [Achieve Nil Balance] p242-244

The Narakasura in man can be destroyed by the constant dwelling of the mind on Krishna who killed him, as the Bhagavatha relates. The *Smarana* has to be constant. If you rub a bit of iron on a hot surface, it develops heat; continue to rub it vigorously; then it can be made red hot. If you do so with long intervals, the iron bit will become cold and all the effort up till then is a waste. The work has to be repeated again. There are some who set a limit of ten thousand or twenty thousand repetitions of the Name every day and when that number is reached, they are content; they resume the *Smarana* only when another day dawns. The mind, meanwhile, like a sheet of water from the top of which floating moss has been pushed aside with great care, resumes its cover of moss very soon. The task has to be repeated. *Smarana* must be the unseen spring of every activity of man, every minute of his waking life; then it will become the spring even during dream and will help the **I** during deep sleep to merge in the **He**, for ever. Like the mother whose attention and anxiety are centered on the baby in the cradle, whether she is near the well or in the cow shed, in the kitchen or in the temple, man too has to keep his mind at the Feet of God, where ever his body may be.

The state of constant remembrance can come only through long practice; it will not be acquired suddenly. With *Visweswara* in your heart, you can wander over the entire *Viswa*. A little practice will teach you to hold fast to the Feet of God, while roaming around in the world doing all duties and carrying all responsibilities as dedicated to Him.

Develop *Shakthi* (physical health and mental alertness) and *Yukthi* (cleverness in discovering the way to lasting Happiness); then you will have *Rakthi* (attachment), which if turned to God becomes *Bhakthi* (devotion) which promotes *Virakthi* (detachment from all that distracts the mind away from God) and leads to *Mukthi* (liberation).

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 55 [A Constable on each side] p275-277

The most effective method of cultivating *Prema* is to practice *Namasmarana*. Or, better still, spread your time in *Pranavopasana*, the repetition of Om. Om is the origin of creation; it is the source, the sustenance and the strength. It is the *Prana* of every being. Just as the air forced through the reeds of a harmonium produces the *sapthaswaras*, *Sa-re-ga-ma-pa-dha-ni*, so the one Om is at the root of all sounds in all the worlds. Know its significance and practice its repetition.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 56 [Pranava the Prana] p284-285

When you are depressed by what appears to be loss or calamity, engage yourselves in *Namasmarana*, the recitation and recollection of the Names of the Lord; that will give you consolation, courage and the true perspective. Remember the distress and calamity that saints underwent with enthusiastic welcome and be calm during every storm. People laughed at them and called them mad; but they knew that they were in the Grace Hospital of God, not the mental hospital of man. They had full faith in their destiny and so they had full faith in God; they laughed when calamities tried to cow their eagerness, for they knew their latent strength, the strength of the *Atma* within.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 61 [From every throat, His melody] p311

The taints of "I" and "Mine" have to be removed by rigorous *Sadhana*; chief among the disciplines being *Namasmarana*, because when you dwell on the names of the Lord, His Majesty, His Grace, His Potency, His Pervasiveness, these get fixed in the consciousness and one's own capacities and capabilities get eclipsed in the Divine. So, humility increases and surrender is possible, quite easily. This is the very purpose of human existence, to see God and merge in His Glory.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 64 [The Prop you need] p323

When you sing *Bhajans*, dwell also on the meanings of the songs and the message of each Name and Form of God. Rama - the name should evoke in you the *Dharma* He embodied and demonstrated. Radha - the name should evoke in you supramental super worldly Love she had as the greatest of Gopis; Shiva - the name should evoke the supreme sacrifice of the drinking of Halahala poison for the good of the world; the cool Grace heightened by the cascade of the Ganga and the moonlight from the crescent. Do not waste time purposelessly; let every moment be *Bhajana*. Know the purpose of *Bhajan* or *Namasmaran* and immerse yourself wholeheartedly in it; derive the maximum benefit from the years allotted to you.

Ref: SSS Vol V Ch 65 [The world, a training ground] p326

The drug *Ram Ram Ram* is to be swallowed and assimilated ad infinitum. Its curative essence will travel into every limb, every sense, every nerve and every drop of blood. Every particle of you will be transmuted into Ram. You must melt in the crucible and be poured into the Ram mold and become Ram. That is the fruition of *Jnana*. *Raamanaama* or any other Name if chanted and absorbed in the mind, will help control the vagaries of the senses which drag you away into the vanities.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 1 [Milk and water] p3-4

Shiva has the trident, three pronged spear, as His weapon; He is worshipped with the *bilva* leaf, which is tri-foliolate. The significance is that Shiva likes the three forms of worship namely *Bhakti*, *Jnana* and *Vairagya*; that is to say, Devotion, Discrimination and Detachment. You should not pray to God for secular advantages. You should pray only for Grace. That one pointed devotion can be got only by long practice of *Sadhana*, especially, the *Sadhana* of *Namasmarana*. Thank the Lord for giving you this life, this much intelligence, this much detachment; do *Namasmarana* with this gratefulness in the background of your mind.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 10 [Be a snake charmer] p60

The Name is redolent with Divine Glory; so when it is turned over in the mind it transmutes it into an instrument for liberation from delusion.

Take the Name, *Navanithachora* (Butter thief) that is used for Krishna. It does not mean a person who runs away with the butter that people have stored. It is not the stuff called butter that is got by churning curdled milk, that He stole. It is the butter of faith, won by the churning process called 'yearning', from the curdled milk called 'worldly experience'. He covets only this 'butter'.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 12 [Three in one row] p67

You must cultivate love towards every one, however distinct the character and capacity of each may be. Though the same blood flows through the entire body, the eye cannot smell, the ear cannot taste, the nose cannot see; do not over emphasize the distinctions and quarrel. Emphasize the basic brotherhood and love. As sugar that has dissolved in the cup of water is invisible, but, patent to the tongue in every drop, so too the Divine is invisible but immanent; capable of being experienced, in every individual, whether he is at the bottom or top. Do *Namasmarana*; taste the sweetness that is in the heart of every one; dwell on His Glory, His Compassion, which those Names summarize. Then, it will be easier for you to visualize Him in all, and to love Him in all, to adore Him in all.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 14 [Sweetness invisible] p76

The constant recital of the Name of God - any of the million Names by which He is identified by human imagination or intelligence - is the best means of correcting and cleansing the mind of man. That is why the poet sang "O tongue! You are the great connoisseur in tasting and appreciating desirable taste. I shall tell some thing that you will like most; it is true: it is the extremely advantageous information for you. Pronounce the nectarine words, the Names of God, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava and derive exquisite joy". By means of the Name, you can keep God ever near you. Prayer and *Puja* follow the recital of the Name, for, the Glory and Grace of God draws you to adore Him and to rely on Him for all your needs. In the beginning, the Adored and Adorer are distant and different; but as the *Sadhana* become more confirmed and consolidated they co-mingle and becomes more and more composite. For, the individual and the Universe are one; the wave is the sea. Merging fulfills. When merged, the ego is dissolved; all symbols and signs of the particular like name, form, caste, color, creed, nationality, church, sect and the rights and duties consequent thereon, will fade.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 30 [God ever near] p133-134

The Name of God, with all its halo of glory and majesty can cleanse the mind of passion and emotion and make it placid and pure. When the Name is repeated without concentration and without reverence, it cannot cleanse the mind. The vice and wickedness will remain. The *Rakshasa* heroes, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and others performed *Tapas* and drew the Lord to their presence; but though they got the desired boons from Him, they persisted in their vicious ways. God is the closest, the fondest, the most reliable companion. But man in his blindness, ignores Him and seeks the company of others. God is present every where at all times. He is the richest and most powerful guardian. Yet you ignore Him. The Name will bring Him nearer to you. Now, the Name is on the tongue, the world is in the mind and the owner of the Name is in the heart. The world and its attractions are distracting you, obliterating the answer the Lord gives, to the call of the Name.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 38 [Atom of majesty] p165

The Name of God has tremendous might. Let the mind dwell on that Name, whatever work your hands are engaged in. You will find that the thought of God will make work sweet and light. The ice peak of *karma* consequence accumulated by you, will be reduced by the avalanches and glaciers caused by the warming effect of *Namasmarana*. The sun melts the snow cap on the peak; but during hours of night, the snowfall restores the cap and makes up the loss of height. So too, *Namasmarana* melts the snow, but, unless virtue holds back and overcomes sin, the snow falls again in the darkness of vice and ignorance. Repentance and

prayer will certainly prevent further snowfall; the sun of God's Glory, shining through the *Smarana* will level the snow peak to the ground.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 41 [Horn and tusk] p181

Have God as your lamp, you can pass through life in safety. Have the Name of God on your tongue; He is bound to the Name as Form! Resolve this day to adopt this *Sadbana* of *Namasmarana*, the *Smarana* of the Name, Rama, for Rama means - He who is Bliss, He who confers Bliss - *Ramathe Ramayathe ithi Rama*. Read the *Adhyatmaramayana*, the *Ramayana* which emphasizes the spiritual significance of the epic.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 42 [The lost key] p183

It is to persuade you to engage yourself in *Namasmarana* that I am Myself concluding My discourses with a few *Namavalis* which I sing. I am thus initiating you into this most efficacious *Sadbana*. Strengthen yourself, purify yourself, educate yourself by this *Namasamkeertana*. Do it loudly and in company. Let those who join you listen and also imbibe the nectar of the Name.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 42 [The lost key] p186

The greatest formula that can liberate, cleanse and elevate the mind is *Raamanaama*, the Name of Rama. Rama is not to be identified with the hero of *Ramayana*, the divine offspring of Emperor Dasaratha. Vasishtha, the perceptor had chosen that Name, since it meant, He who pleases. While every one else pleases the self, nothing pleases the caged individualized self more than the free universal self. The Self is therefore referred to as *AtmaRama*, the Self that confers unending joy.

There is a story in the classics to illustrate the worth of the name Rama. Sage Prachetas once composed a text with verses, numbering hundred crores! The three worlds competed among themselves to take the entire text. God brought them together and persuaded them to accept a third each, that is to say, each world (Heaven, Earth and Underworld) received thirty three crores, thirty three lakhs, thirty three thousand and three hundred thirty three verses each. One verse remained undivided. It had thirty two syllables in all; so when it too was allotted among the three at the rate of ten syllables each, two syllables were left over! God decided that they be adored and revered by all three worlds equally - the syllables were 'Ra' and 'Ma', making up the priceless key to salvation: Rama.

Rama is the bee, that sucks the honey of devotion from the lotus of heart. The bee loosens the petals of the flower it sits upon; but Rama adds to its beauty and fragrance. He is like the sun, which draws the water to itself, by its rays and accumulating it as cloud, sends it back as rain to quench the thirst of earth. Rama, the mystic potent sound, is born in the navel and it rises up to the tongue and dances gladly thereon. The *Vedic* declaration *Thatb-thwam-asi* (That Thou Art) is enshrined in the word Rama: which consists of three sounds: 'Ra', 'aa' and 'ma'. Of these, *Ra* is the symbol of *That* (That, *Brahman*, God), *Ma* is the symbol of *Thwam* (Thou, *Jivi*, Individual) and *aa* that connects the two is the symbol of the identity of the two.

However, no particular Name can be raised to a status higher than the rest, for all Names are His and He answers to all.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 44 [Name, the never failing fountain] p196-198

The scriptures say that in this age of materialism, *Namasmarana* is the one hope for man. Tukaram sang of the *Namarathna* (the precious gem - the Name). So you should not brush aside the Name as a piece of glass or as a pebble. You are playing marbles with the Name of God, unaware of its value. Once you realize its worth, you will keep it in your heart of hearts as the most precious treasure. Know that the Name is the key to success in your search for consolation, confidence, courage, illumination and liberation.

An illustration can be given from the ancient texts. On one occasion, a competition was arranged among the Gods for selecting the leader of the *ganas* (troops of demi-gods who are the attendants of Shiva). Participants had to go round the world quick and come back to the Feet of Lord Shiva. The Gods started off on their own vehicles; the older son of Shiva also enthusiastically entered the competition. His vehicle was a mouse; hence his progress was slow. He had not proceeded too far, when sage Narada appeared before him and asked him, "Whither are you bound?". The sage drew forth from Shiva's son his desire to win the competition. Narada consoled him and advised him thus: "Rama - the Name - is the seed from which the gigantic tree called the universe has emanated. So, write the Name on the ground, go round it once and hurry back to Shiva, claiming the prize". He did so and returned to his Father. When asked how he returned so soon, he related the story of Narada and his advice. Shiva appreciated the validity of Narada's counsel and awarded the prize to the son, who was acclaimed as *Gana-pathi* (Master of the Ganas) and *Vinayaka* (Leader of all).

The Name undoubtedly brings in the Grace of God. Meerabai, the Queen of Rajasthan, gave up status and riches, fortune and family and dedicated herself to the adoration of the Lord, 'Giridhara Gopala'. Her husband brought a chalice of poison and she was ordered to drink it. She uttered the Name of Krishna while she drank it; it was transformed into nectar, by the Grace the Name evoked! *Keertan* is the word used for the recital or singing of the Name and Glory of God. *Samkeertan* means, reciting or singing well, or aloud and with joy or in ecstasy.

We can distinguish four different forms of *Nama-samkeertan* - *Bhaava Nama-samkeertan*, *Guna Nama-samkeertan*, *Leela Nama-samkeertan* and sheer *Nama-samkeertan*. *Bhava Nama-samkeertan* is the name given to recitals where the Name is sung with one or other emotion or mental attitude (*Bhava*) towards the Lord. It can be *Madhurabhava* (sweet emotion) as Radha was over-powered with. She saw, heard, tasted, sought and gained only that sweetness at all times and all places. Her adoration of God is the supreme example of *Madhura Bhava Nama-samkeertan*. Then we have the *Vatsalya-Bhava* (Mother-child feeling) *Nama-samkeertan*. Yasoda, the foster mother of Krishna can be taken as the ideal for this type of *Bhava*. *Anuraga-bhava* (lover-beloved feeling) *Nama-samkeertan* is exemplified best and in the purest form in the Gopis. Then there is the *Sakhya-bhava* (Comrade feeling) *Nama-samkeertan* - as found in Arjuna, who believed in Krishna as his most intimate friend and brother-in-law and confided in Him as a comrade. This too is an attitude that will attach you to Divinity and sublimate the lower impulses. *Dasya-bhava* (servant master attitude) *Nama-samkeertan* is another type. Serve the Lord, as His faithful unquestioning servant - this is the path of Hanuman in

Ramayana. He had no will or wish of his own. His prayer was to be a fit instrument for the purpose of the Master. The last attitude is *Santha-bhava* (unruffled unconcerned *Nama-samkeertan*) - praising the Lord, whatever may happen undeviated by ups and downs, bearing all the vagaries of the fortune as His play. In the Mahabharatha, you will find Bhishma saturated with this attitude.

Another method of *Nama-samkeertan* is, to remind oneself of the various exploits and sports, the various acts of Grace and Compassion, which the Lord has manifested in the world, while reciting His Name. This is called *Leela* (sport) *Nama-samkeertan*. Chaithanya and Thyagaraja realized the Lord through this path.

Others recollect more of the majesty, the glory, the might, the mystery, the magnificence, the munificence, the love with which God has clothed Himself, while reciting His Name. This attitude is spoken of as *Guna* (attributes, characteristics) *Nama-samkeertan*. Most of the saints gratefully honored in many lands are of this category.

Another category is denoted by seekers who attach value to the syllables and sound of the Name as such, irrespective of the meaning thereof. When the Name is pronounced, they say, it draws towards the aspirant, God and His Grace - whatever may be the *Bhava* or whether the *Leela* or *Guna* is associated with the *samkeertan* or not.

Man's duty is to sanctify his days and nights with the unbroken *Smarana* (recollection) of the Name. Recollect with joy, with yearning. If you do so, God is bound to appear before you in the Form and with the Name you have allotted Him, as most beautiful and most appropriate. God is all Names and all Forms, the integration of all these in harmonious charm! Gods designated in different faiths, adored by different human communities, are all limbs of the One God that really is. Just as the body is the harmonious blending of the senses and the limbs, God is the harmony of all the Forms and Names that man gives Him! Only those who are ignorant of the Glory of God will insist on one Name and one Form for His adoration and what is worse, condemn the use by others of other Names and Forms! Since you are all associated with Sai, I must warn you against such silly obduracy. Do not proclaim in your enthusiasm, "We want only Sai; we are not concerned with the rest". You must convince yourself that all Forms are Sai's; all names are Sai's. There is no 'rest'; all are He.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 45 [The Revelation] p200-207

In every home, a certain length of time must be fixed every day in the morning as well as evening for readings from spiritual books and *Namasmarana*. Parents and children must join in singing the glory of God. In fact, all one's time must be dedicated to God; as a first step, a few minutes may be devoted to the adoration of His Glory or the gauging of the depth of that Glory. Gradually, when the sweetness of the habit heartens you, you will devote more and more time and feel more and more content. The purpose of 'living' is to achieve 'living in God'; every one is entitled to that consecration and consummation.

You are the Truth; do not lose faith; do not belittle yourselves. You are divine - however often you slide from humanity to animality or even lower. When you recite the Name of God, remembering His Majesty, His Compassion, His Glory, His Splendor, His Presence -

Love will grow within you, its roots will go deeper and deeper, its branches will spread wider and wider, giving cool shelter to friend and foe, to fellow national and foreigner. God has a million Names. Select any Name of His, any Name that appeals to you, select any Form of His; every day when you awaken to the call of the brightening east, recite the Name, meditate on the Form; have the Name and Form as your companion, guide and guardian throughout the toils of the waking hours; when you retire for the night offer grateful homage to God in that Form with that Name, for being with you, by you, beside you, before you, behind you, all day long. If you stick to this discipline, you cannot falter or fail.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 48 [The message I bring] p226-228

In the Hindu philosophy, *maya* is compared to an enchantress, a wily woman who entices away your intelligence by her dance, a *Nartaki*. This *Nartaki* can be immobilized by *Kirtan* (singing the glory of God, with full faith in Grace). Note that *Kirtan* is but *Nartaki* transposed; wisdom is ignorance overcome. *Kirtan* will keep the vision clear and direct it on the sublime and the supreme.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 49 [The way of the wise] p233

Sing aloud the glory of God and charge the atmosphere with Divine adoration; the clouds will pour the sanctity through rain on the fields; the crops will feed on it and sanctify, fortify the food; the food will induce Divine urges in man. This is the chain of progress. This is the reason why I insist on group singing of the Names of the Lord.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 50 [Light the lamps of love] p238-239

The incarnation of Krishna was in order to propagate the sacred *Dharma*, which will lead man to the holiness he has to attain and teach the manner and content of the efforts he had to put forth. Krishna, the Divine principle, is born in the navel of every one and has to be transported to the tongue and fostered there, as was done by Yasoda, with maternal care and love. That is the secret of salvation by *Namasmarana*.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 55 [Become the Lord's flute] p268

I appreciate two things most in you: (1) Silence. It is only in the depth of that silence that the voice of God can be heard. Speak as low as possible; as little as possible, as sweet as possible. Do not whisper to each other, for, that is done only when some one is being traduced behind his back. Do not talk loud, away from My hearing; for there is no such 'away'. (2) *Namasmarana*. Engage yourselves in repeating the Name of the Lord whatever other business you may be doing. Let the Name be the permanent background for all your activities.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 56 [The creeper and the tree] p277-278

The Name of God is the most effective tonic; it will keep off all illness. Do not indulge in *Namasmarana* as a pastime or a fashion or a passing phase, or as the unpleasant part of an imposed time table or as a bitter quota to be fulfilled each day. Think of it as a *Sadhana*, to be seriously taken up for the purpose of reducing your attachments to fleeing objects, purifying and strengthening you and liberating you from the cycle of birth and death. It looks a frail cure for such a fearful malady; but it is a panacea, nevertheless. Rise every day with the thought of God; go back to bed with the thought of His Glory as enshrined in His Name.
Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 57 [Die into a new day] p280-281

If your circumstances do not allow you to take part in the *Samkeerthana*, stay at home and sing the songs alone, in the silent cave of your heart. Do not do so, according to a fixed measure, so many times or so many songs at a sitting. The heart does not calculate in numbers; it confers content, which is immeasurable. That content can arise only through faith.

Ref: SSS Vol VI Ch 63 [Inspiration not imitation] p309

When the Name is pronounced by the tongue and the image is adored by the mind, these should not degenerate into mechanical routine; the meaning of the Name and the content of the Form must, at the same time, inspire and illumine the consciousness. Escape the routine; involve yourselves in the attitude of worship deeply and sincerely. That is the way to earn peace and content, for which all human activity ought to be dedicated and directed.

Life is a pilgrimage, where man drags his feet along the rough and thorny road. With the Name of God on his lips, he will have no thirst; with the Form of God in his heart, he will feel no exhaustion. The company of the holy will inspire to travel in hope and faith. The assurance that God is within call, that He is ever near, nor is He long in coming, will lend strength to his limbs and courage to his eye.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 1 [The true tablet] p2-3

Have the Name of God on your tongue, in your breath, ever. That will evoke His Form, as the inner core of every thing, thought or turn of events. That will provide you with His company, contact with His unfailing energy and Bliss. That is the *Satsanga* (good association) that gives you maximum benefit. Converse with God who is in you; derive courage and consolation from Him. He is the *Guru* most interested in your progress.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 3 [Chiththa Suddhi Yoga] p11-12

The tongue is the post; *Bhajan* of the Name of God is the rope; with that rope, you can bring God Almighty near you and tie Him up, so that His Grace becomes yours. Yes. You can. God is so kind that He will yield to your prayers and get bound. You have only to call on Him, to be by your side, with you, leading you and guiding you.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 12 [The tell-tale tongue] p52

Regular prayers twice a day will give strength and courage, which can withstand illness. The Grace of God will confer mental peace and so, good sleep and rest for the mind. Feel that you are a hundred percent dependent on God; He will look after you and save you from harm and injury. When you go to bed, offer thankful homage to Him for guiding and guarding you throughout the day.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 22 [Seaworthy boat] p111

The Name of God when uttered with sincere joy has a great influence on the mind of man. It is like moonlight for the waves of the inner ocean in man. For, it is God, echoing from within, the Call of God from without! Most of the Names of the Divine have but two letters or syllables; the significance of the number, two (Rama, Krishna, Hara, Hari, Datta, Sakthi, *Kali* etc.) is, that, the first syllable represents *Agni* (Fire principle), which burns up accumulated demerit or sin, and the second, represents the *Amritha* principle, the restorative, the refreshing the reformation force. The two processes are necessary; removal of

obstructions and construction of the structure.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 25 [Exercise in futility] p128-129

The nine steps in the pilgrimage of man towards God along the path of dedication and surrender are: (1) Developing a desire to listen to the glory and grandeur of the handiwork of God and of the various awe inspiring manifestations of Divinity. This is the starting point. (2) Singing oneself about the Lord, in praise of His magnificence and manifold exploits. (3) Dwelling on the Lord in the mind, reveling in the contemplation of His beauty, Majesty and Compassion. (4) Entering upon the worship of the Lord, by concentrating on honoring the feet or foot prints. (5) This develops into a total propitiation of the Lord and systematic ritualistic worship, in which the aspirant gets inner satisfaction and inspiration. (6) The aspirant begins to see the favorite Form of God, which he likes to worship, in all beings and all objects, where ever he turns to and so he develops an attitude of *Vandana* or reverence towards nature and all life. (7) Established in this bent of mind, he becomes the devoted servant of all, with no sense of superiority or inferiority. (8) This takes the seeker so near the Lord that he feels himself to be the confidant and comrade, the companion and friend, the sharer of God's power and pity, of God's triumphs and achievements, His *Sakha*. (9) This is the prelude to the final step of total surrender or *Atma-nivedanam*, yielding fully to the Will of the Lord.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 40 [The very breath] p206

Man is subject to sorrow from birth to death. These sorrows arise as a result of three reasons: *Adhyatmic* (spiritual), *Ahidaivik*(deific) and *Ahimbhouthik* (material). The material object that one craves for are all *bhouthik* and so, the sorrows that sprout out of them are defined as *Ahimbhouthik*. The senses are the instruments of cognition; one sees an object through the eyes; yes, but, not through the material eye, but, with the eye operated by the deity that presides over it, namely sun. Each sense and limb, nerve and cell, joint and gland of the human body has a deity that activates it and is resident therein. If these deities are hostile or displeased the body suffers and sorrow ensues. This is *Ahidaivik*. Then we have the Self - the witness of both inertia and activity, joy and sorrow. When you ignore the existence of the Witness, you invite sorrow. That is *Adhyatmic*.

When any *mantra* is concluded, the reciter usually repeats, as you must have noticed, *Om Shanti Shanti Shantih* - three *Shantis*! Why three? Why Om? Om is the designation of the universal *Brahman*. Constant repetition of Om and intense meditation on its meaning are recommended for aspirants who seek cognition of the indwelling Divine. *Shanti* means peace and peace is invoked thrice, in order to allay the three sources of sorrow.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 45 [Beside, behind, before] p242-243

Keep the Name of the Lord always radiant on your tongue and mind. That will keep the antics of the mind under control. When the lamp is kept burning, darkness dare not spread its fumes around you. It is said in the Gita that when the word for *Brahman*, namely Om, is spelt by the dying with the last breath, he attains *Brahman*. But you can spell it then, only when you have been dwelling upon Om all through the years of life. Mere utterance of Om at the point of departure will not save; the final Om must be the flower blossoming on the creeper of life, that has twined itself on God all one's life.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 48 [The ripe fruit] p267

Om is the sum of all the teachings in the *Vedas* about Godhead and of all the systems of adoring the Godhead; *Om lthi Ekaksharam Brahma* - Om, that one syllable is *Brahman!* Om is a composite of three sounds A (aa) arising from the region of the navel, U (oo) flowing through throat and tongue and m (mm) ending up at the closed lip. It has to be pronounced rising in a crescendo as slowly as possible and as slowly coming down, until after the m there will be the echo of the silence reverberating in the cavity of the heart. Do not take it in two stages, arguing that your breath will not hold so long. Persevere, until you are able to do the upward sweep, the downward curve and the silent sequel. These represent the waking, dreaming and sleeping and the fourth, beyond the three stages. It represents also the flower of one's individuality growing into a fruit and filling itself with sweet juice out of its own inner essence and then the final release from the tree.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 48 [The ripe fruit] p269-270

Adoration of God has to be through one Name and one Form; but that should not limit your loyalty to that particular province only. The dominion of God is horizonless; it envelops space and even beyond it. So, do not allow the needs of worship or *puja* to put blinkers on your eye. Do not hate other names or other forms of the same Supra-Cosmic Magnificence, the *Purushottama*. For, hate breeds fear, hate is the seedbed of anxiety, scandal and falsehood. It drains your mind of peace. You may have light without oil, fire without smoke, breeze without a bearer fanning you - but unless you are at peace with yourselves and with those around you, your pulse will be quick and your blood will be racing in rage and rancor. Love alone can alleviate anxiety and allay fear.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 49 [Objective, not object] p272

Do not proclaim that this Name of God is superior or more efficacious than the other. To assert that Rama is superior or that Shiva is superior or even that Sai Baba is the *Avathar* that is the fullest of all - all this only reveals that you have not understood what Divinity is. Rama is a Name that combines the **ra** of Narayana and the **ma** of Namasivaya, the *manthras* of the Vaishnavas and that of Saivites. So, Rama means, the quality of Shiva and Vishnu. Or Rama has the **ra** of Hara (Shiva) and the **ma** of Uma (the *Sakthi* aspect of Shiva); so Rama is the Name of Shivasakthi! How can faction arise when each name is so resonant with the lesson of unity of all Names?

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 59 [The commentary on the message] p342

There are some questions raised by some of you on the Name to be used in *Japa*, whether *Raamanaama* or the five lettered *NamaShivaya* or the eight lettered *Om Namō Narayana* or some other Name. The scriptures have given a good answer for this: God is one without a second. You can adore Him according to your own fancy and pleasure. He does not change. He is not changed, when the Names you adore Him by, are changed or the Forms you picture Him by, are changed. We have many kinds of sweets - many Names and Forms. But sugar is the one substance that makes each one sweet. You may prefer one sweet thing over another; you are welcome to prefer it, but do not condemn or prevent others' preferences. The effectiveness lies not in the *manthra* or in the Name and Form it is centered upon. It lies in the heart, in the yearning, in the thirst. God will assume the form and answer to the Name for which you thirst! This is the measure of His Grace. The Supreme Mother of the Universe will come down from Her Sovereign Throne to fondle, caress and console Her child, provided the yearning comes spontaneously from a full heart, a pure heart. She will

not investigate the correctness or otherwise of the pronunciation of the *manthra* or the perfection of the picture formed in the mind of the Divine ideal yearned for. It is the feeling in the heart that is the crucial test - not the length of time devoted or the amount of money spent.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 63 [Questions answered] p376-377

Man has an inborn thirst for God, an in-built yearning for the *Ananda* of the highest order which will never fail or falter. It is only by drinking God that the thirst can be quenched; not by substitutions or palliatives. The Chataka bird of legends is not distracted by the darkening sky, the reverberating thunder, the blinding lightning and the mad destructive rain. It flies up with open beak to receive into itself the first few virgin drops between earth and sky; that is its thirst, its yearning, its destiny.

When raindrops are soiled, they become undrinkable; that is the conviction of the Chataka. So too, the pure yearning for love, for service, for expansion, for expression, for fulfillment, is soiled by contact with selfish ends, with greed and envy, malice and hatred, lust and pride. It is best that this yearning is treasured and cultivated alone and in silence, until it is strong enough to meet failure or success, with composure. *Namasmarana*, within the silence and solitude of your own heart, is very beneficial for this purpose. *Namasmarana* can be elaborated into *Nagarasankeertana*. When a group of good men and women move from one end of a street to the other singing aloud Names of God, each Name redolent with fragrance and resonant with Love, it clears the air and renders it pure for all to breathe. It also calls people living in the houses on both sides to begin their daily round of duties, with the sweet Name of God in their ears and the charming Form of God in their hearts.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 64 [Truth of truth] p387-388

Have love towards all. Do not allow the weeds of pride and envy to hamper the harvest of peace. Do not monopolize the time in *Bhajans* by singing one song for six or ten minutes, repeating the same line often. Repeat each line only twice and no more. Have only two speeds; one slow and the other fast. In this way, you can have in the hour of *Bhajan*, more songs on more Forms, more tunes and more variety, giving more people the chance. When a *namavali* extols Shiva, the next one will have to be on Krishna, the next on Rama and so on. Let the atmosphere of *Bhajan* be free from competitive conceit and fanaticism. That is my advice.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 70 [Link by link] p438-439

Bhajan is one of the processes by which you can train the mind to expand into eternal values. Teach the mind to revel in the glory and majesty of God; wean it away from pretty horizons of pleasure. *Bhajan* induces in you a desire for experiencing the Truth, to glimpse the beauty that is God, to taste the Bliss that is the Self. It encourages man to dive into himself and be genuinely his real self. Once that search is desire, the path is easy. One has only to be reminded that he is divine. For, the malady is it is being thrust out of recognition. Exercises like *Bhajan* elevate the mind and exhort the individual to seek and find the source of eternal joy that lies within him.

Ref: SSS Vol VII Ch 80 [Life-long bhajan] p497-498

The qualities of detachment and love will grow in you, when you stick to one discipline: *Namasmarana!* Have the Name on your tongue and in the thought, all your waking hours. See every one as the Person whose Name you adore; hear all tales told by people around you as tales of His Glory, His *Leela!* Love will remove selfishness and expand your consciousness, through sympathy and compassion.

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 3 [Yaga is Thyaga] p14-15

It is the search for the unreal that is the root of all fear, the sorrow, the sickness of humanity. Learn, while you can, the key which will open the door of escape. Have all around you the curtain of *Namajapam* (the vibrant vigilant repetition of the Name of God and recapitulation of His Glory); then unhealthy yearnings for self-aggrandizement (the malarial mosquitoes) will not pester and poison you. *Namajapam* will not allow you to ignore the essential hollowness of worldly affairs and the essential absurdity of getting too involved in; you behave as if you are the designer of your destiny; you are only a wave, formed on the breast of the ocean by storm and surge.

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 4 [Be and Be Blessed] pi 8

Bhajan must spread good will, love, ecstasy; it must cleanse the polluted atmosphere; it must invite all to share in the joy and peace. The *Nagarasankirtan* must be inspiring, radiating devotion and love. The *Ananda*, I derive from *Bhajan*, I do not get from anything else. That is the reason why I am emphasizing these points. Be sincere, feel in your hearts what you are singing by your voice. The emotion will express itself through the *raga* and *tala* it chooses. You need not worry about the *raga* being appropriate or the *tala* being accurate. When Rama is prompting you to sing, the *raga* and *tala* can never be wrong. Rama is the pen, Rama is the thought, Rama is the word, Rama is the style, Rama is the composition. How then can error creep in?

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 9 [Sathatham Yoginah] p58-59

You perform worship with 1008 names, a rite called *Sabasranamarchana*. You keep an idol or picture before you and offer one flower at a time at the Feet of that symbol of God, repeating the names, one at a time. The one symbol of the One God is only One, though He can be reached by a thousand routes, a thousand names. Though you are acknowledging only One in all these rites, proclaiming the One *Advaitic* Divine, your sense and your intellect and your mind with its pack of desires, insist on running after the many. This is *maya* that casts its enchantment on weak and ignorant men.

All the 1008 names of thousand faced deity connote only the One God that plays in those 1000 roles. The One appears as if it is enshrined in the 1000 bodies. This is the truth you have to realize and cherish as the most precious gift in life.

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 24 [The Yajna: What it teaches] p142

Of the twenty four hours that are available to you each day let me advise you to devote a small fraction to meditation or prayers or reading the scriptures or listening to discourses on the *leelas* of the Lord. Think of God and the gratitude you owe Him for the human life He has gifted you and the various material, moral and intellectual talents He has endowed you with; do this before you commence any task or piece of work. You will certainly experience

great benefit and you will have peace, joy and success in your endeavors through Divine Grace.

Do not get disheartened if you do not progress in meditation. Utter the Name of the Lord, dwelling on the Glory and the Grace; that is equally effective. No one particular Name is necessary; all Names denote only the One.

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 35 [Valour of the Spirit] p191

Man is basically Love, Peace, Joy and Truth. He is the embodiment of all these, that is to say, of Divinity. He ought to behave in accordance with his basic traits; but he, overlays upon them the false traits of **I** and **mine** and tarnishes his own personality. How to get rid of this tarnish is the problem of religion, everywhere. *Bhajan* and *Namasmarana* are fine cleansing processes. Only, the mind must dwell on the sweetness of each name and become sweet as a consequence. They must be done as a regular discipline with the awareness that they will yield good results. They should not degenerate into mere mechanical routine items of a crowded schedule.

Ref: SSS Vol VIII Ch 43 [Know the Knower] p224-225

Consider the meaning of the name Sai Baba. **Sa** means 'Divine'; **ai** or **ayi** means 'mother' and **Baba** means 'father'. The Name indicates the Divine Mother and Father (Saamba-Shiva). Your physical parents exhibit Love with a dose of selfishness; but this **Sai Mother and Father** showers affection or reprimands, only for leading you towards victory in the struggle for self realization.

Do not crave from me material objects; but crave for Me and you would be rewarded. Not that you should not receive whatever objects I give as sign of Grace out of fullness of Love. I shall tell you why I give these rings, talismans, rosaries etc. It is to sign the bond between Me and those to whom they are given. When calamity befalls them, the article comes to Me in a flash and returns in a flash taking from Me the remedial Grace of protection. That Grace is available to all who call on Me in any Name or Form, not merely to those who wear these gifts. Love is the bond that wins Grace.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 16 [Who is Sai?] p91

Poison is called visha in Sanskrit. It is the characteristic of snakes. *Vishaya*, which means sensory objects, poison the mind of man with lust, anger, greed, craving, pride and hate. The snake's poison is the cause why it is destroyed where ever it is seen. Man's slavery to *vishaya* is the cause of his downfall. But the situation is not without some hope. The serpent can be tamed and its poison fangs removed, when music from the *nagaswaram* pipe is played and when it is fascinated by that sweet melody. The poison that *vishaya* exerts on human mind can also be eliminated and countermanded, when man is fascinated by the sweet melodies of *Namasmarana* - that is to say, by the repetitive chanting of the meaningful Names of the Lord.

When *Namasmarana* withdraws the mind from the sensory tangles it acquires a new balance, a blissful equanimity called *Samachiththa*. In philosophical sense this word *Samachiththa* means, a consciousness established in the Absolute *Brahman* and as a consequence above and

beyond the storms and stillness of the world's duality.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 30 [Diamonds in the dust] p157-158

God is beyond Name and Form; He is all Names and all Forms and yet, incomprehensible and mysterious. How then can God be apprehended by means of *Dhyana* on Name-Form? This is a legitimate question. It can be answered by a simile. Water drowns man; water also helps him swim. It draws in and it buoys up. Only, man has to learn the process by which he can keep afloat. In the same way, Name and Form which appear to be limitations and handicaps can serve as instruments and helps to transcend Name-Form and realize God.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 33 [The mind stuff] p174-175

Bhajans have to be sung and offered to God in an attitude of utter humility; they are not to be taken as exercises in an exhibition of talents and as competitions for mastery of musical skill. They have to please the Lord, not your fans. With each *Bhajan* song, the mind must be rendered purer, freer from passion and stronger in faith. *Bhajans* where you quarrel and compete and revel in putting down others and raising yourselves, might give you satisfaction; but let me announce here, they do not please Me at all. I am pleased only when Love is the key note, when the feeling of Unity prevails, when melody comes from a cleansed God loving heart.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 33 [The mind stuff] p177-178

The purpose of loud, congregational prayers (such as *Bhajans* conducted by Sathya Sai Samithis), is different from the silent individual prayers. It is a joint concerted and mutually helpful effort of *Sadhana* to overcome the six internal foes of man - lust, anger, greed, attachment, conceit and hatred. These nocturnal birds infest the tree of life and foul the heart where they build their nests. When we sing aloud the Glory of God, the heart is illumined and they cannot bear the light. Besides, the voice that rises from many throats frightens them and they fly away.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 41 [The middle path] p210

God cannot be identified with one Name and one Form. He is all Names and all Forms. All Names are His; all Forms are His. Your Names too are His, you are His Forms. You appear as separate individual bodies because the eye that sees them seeks only bodies, the outer encasement. When you clarify and sanctify your vision and look at them through the *Atmic* eye, (the eye that penetrates behind the physical), then you will see others as waves on the ocean of the Absolute, as the "thousand heads, the thousand eyes, thousand feet" of the Supreme Sovereign person or *Purusha* sung in *Rig Veda*. Strive to win that Vision and to saturate yourself with that Bliss.

Ref: SSS Vol IX Ch 41 [The middle path] p212-213

Sravanam (hearing the Glory of the Lord), *Keertanam* (singing the Glory oneself), *Vishnosmaranam* (allowing the mind to dwell on that Glory), *Padasevanam* (adoring the feet of the Lord), *Vandanam* (experiencing gratitude and joy at His Grace), *Dasyam* (feeling oneself as His instrument), *Sakhyam* (awareness of His being one's constant and closest companion) and *Atmanivedanam* (dedicating one's full being to Him) - these are the nine steps in the path of devotion.

Listen, O people! Revel in this iron *Kaliyuga*, for there is none other so propitious for liberation that the mere remembrance of the name of the Lord and adoring Him thus are enough to win His grace and set you free.

You must probe into the real significance of the *Samkeertan* that you are engaged in. *Keertan* is "singing aloud the Glory of God". *Samkeertan* is the process of singing which originates in the heart, not from the lips or tongue. It is the expression of the joyous thrill that wells up from the heart when the Glory of God is remembered. It is the spontaneous manifestation of inner ecstasy. No attention is paid to the blame or praise that others may give. It does not seek the admiration or the appreciation of the listeners. It is sung for one's own joy, one's own satisfaction, one's own delight. *Keertan* of this supreme type alone deserves the name *Samkeertan*.

Singing with intense yearning for God and enjoying the experience of adoring Him helps to purify the atmosphere. The vibrations resulting from singing the glory of God can cleanse the atmosphere and render it pure, calm and ennobling. It is with this purpose in view that this program of global *Samkeertan* was designed.

When you have fallen into this deep well of worldly misery, shout with all your might, with all your heart, that you may be saved by God. When the prayer comes shrieking through the heart, help is assured.

The Names are many or even countless: it is so in all languages. By whatever means God is adored, the path of devotion is the easiest and the most effective, for it is a spiritual discipline of the heart and results in love and service to all as fellow pilgrims to the same divine goal. Each name is indicative only of one aspect of divinity. It denotes a single part of the supreme Personality. The eye, the nose, the mouth, the hand or the fingers may be denoted by distinct words, but they all belong to the same individual. So, too, one must remember that every Name is but a facet, a part, a ray of the Supreme. The spiritual discipline consists in recognizing and becoming aware of the One that supports and sustains the many. That is the precious gem of wisdom that one must secure and treasure.

Those who rely on reason alone or on the limited laws of science argue that the repetition of the Name, which is, after all, sound, cannot cleanse or correct the mind of man. But the Name is not just 'sound'. You are sitting quietly there, listening, but if someone merely says, "scorpion" you get frightened. Or when someone says, "the juice of a lemon", your mouth starts watering. You may be sitting before a plateful of delicacies, but if some one speaks of something dirty or disgusting, you are apt to refuse the food. The mere sound creates so much reaction. When words referring to worldly situations have such a transforming effect on the mind of man, words conveying spiritual and elevated meaning will certainly help in cleansing and correcting the mind of man. When we fill the air with harshness, we become harsh in nature. When we fill the atmosphere with hatred, we, too have perforce to breathe the air and are hated in turn. When we saturate the air with sounds full of reverence, humility, love, courage, self-confidence and tolerance, we benefit from those qualities ourselves. The heart is the film and mind is the lens; turn the lens towards the world and worldly pictures will fall on the heart. Turn it towards God and it will transmit pictures of the Divine.

Once upon a time, Namadeva (noted for his mastery of the path of devotion and dedication through constant recital of the Name) and Jnanadeva (noted for his mastery of the path of wisdom) were journeying through a thick jungle. They were both afflicted with thirst but could not find water anywhere. At last they came upon a ruined well with a little water far down its depth, but they had no means to go down the steep sides. So Jnanadeva used his power and transformed himself into a bird. The bird flew down and drank its fill, only to change itself into Jnanadeva again! Namadeva relied upon the power of Name. He sat on the edge of the well and called 'Narayana' in great anguish. God responded to his prayer. The water rose up to where he sat and he could gather it in his palms and quench his thirst. He had no need to embody himself anew and disembody himself again for the satisfaction of a physical thirst. When God is invoked by prayer that emanates from the heart, let it be but once, He responds immediately.

Kamadhenu the wish fulfilling heavenly cow, can be drawn and tied to a post by means of a rope. God, too, can be drawn towards you by the rope (the Name) and tied to the post (the tongue). Then His Name will be dancing upon the tongue for ever, conferring the sweetness of His Majesty. The Name has to be sung for your own delight, to quench your own thirst, to appease your own hunger. No one eats to appease another's hunger. So do not care for what others feel about your meditation or devotional singing. Do not seek approval, appreciation or admiration of others, or refrain from your form of worship because others dislike it or ridicule it. Be self reliant, self confident.

Life is a song, sing it. That is what Krishna taught through His life. Arjuna heard that song on the battlefield. Krishna sang the Gita for Arjuna to listen. You too must pass your days in song. Let your whole life be a spiritual song. Believe that God is everywhere at all times, and derive strength, comfort and joy by singing His Glory in His presence. Let the melody and harmony surge up from your hearts and let all take delight in the love that you express through that song.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 14 [Global Bhajan] p84-94

In this busy age of fear and anxiety, the remembrance of God and the repetition of His Name is the one means of liberation that is accessible to all. Devotional singing is more important than eating. Prayer is more desirable than pining for meals. Man has the noble goal of self illumination, of lighting the lamp of love inside him and sharing the light of that lamp with all around him. Desire and anger are the two enemies that will not allow him to keep that flame burning bright. Devotional singing is a good disciplinary process by which these two can be kept away.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 16 [Unbroken Bliss] p99-100

The *Gayathri* is the universal prayer enshrined in the *Vedas*. It is addressed to the Immanent and Transcendent Divine which has been given the name '*Savitha*', meaning 'that from which all this is born'. The *Gayathri* may be considered as having three parts - (i) praise, (ii) meditation and (iii) prayer. First the Divine is praised, then It is meditated upon in reverence and finally an appeal is made to the Divine to awaken and strengthen the intellect, the discriminating faculty of man.

The *Gayathri* is considered as the essence of the *Vedas*. *Veda* means knowledge and this prayer fosters and sharpens the knowledge-yielding faculty. As a matter of fact, the four core declarations enshrined in the four *Vedas* are implied in this *Gayathri mantra*.

The *Gayathri* is usually repeated at dawn, noon and dusk. But since God is beyond time, you need not be bound by the three points of time to recite the prayer. It can be repeated always and every where; one must only ensure that the mind is pure. I would advise young people to recite the *Gayathri* when you take your bath. Make it a point to repeat it when you bathe as well as before every meal, when you wake from sleep and when you go to bed. And also repeat '*shanthi*' thrice at the end, for that repetition will give peace to three entities in you - body, mind and soul.

Never give up the *Gayathri*; you may give up or ignore any other *mantra*, but you should recite the *Gayathri* at least a few times a day. It will protect you from harm where ever you are - traveling, working or at home. *Gayathri* is the mother, the force that animates all life. So do not neglect it.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 24 [The Universal Prayer] p151-153

The Lord told Narada that he can find Him installed where ever His glory is sung by His devotees. Does it mean that He is installed in the thousands of places where devotional songs are sung? No. The precondition is "sung by devotees". The devotees sing to please God, to acclaim His Majesty: they do not crave for exhibition, appreciation or fame nor have they any envy or pride in their hearts. Tansen was a celebrated singer attached to the court of Emperor Akbar. One day while Akbar was engaged in prayer, he heard a wandering beggar sing a song which touched his heart immensely. Akbar called Tansen and asked him why he could not touch his heart so. "You have all the gifts and are the most talented singer, yet that servant moved me as never before. Why?". Tansen said, "Oh King, while I sing, I look upon your face to discover whether you are pleased or not. The servant sings always looking at the face of God before Him and he is happy only when God is pleased". Devotional songs must be sung from the heart and should not just emanate from the lips.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 28 [Ring in the new] p177-178

You must realize that devotional singing, reflection on the name of God and offerings at the lotus feet are not for pleasing or propitiating God, but for our own spiritual progress. God does not shower grace on people because they sing His praises. Nor does He come down upon them because they do not like Him. Recitation of the Divine attributes only enables us to dwell on elevating ideals and approximate ourselves more and more to the Divinity that is our nature. We become what we contemplate. By constant thought an ideal gets imprinted on our heart. When we fix our thoughts on the evil that others do, our mind gets polluted by the evil. When, on the contrary, we fix our mind in the virtues or well being of others, our mind is cleansed of wrong and entertains only good thoughts. No evil thought can penetrate the mind of a person wholly given to love and compassion. Immerse your mind in good thoughts and the world will be good; soak it in bad thoughts and the world will be bad for you. So, recollect only good; do, think, and plan only good; speak and act only good. As a result, you will approximate God, the source of all good.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 32 [God, the source of good] p200-201

Om is the primeval sound, the sound caused by the vibrations of creation through the emergent will of the Attributeless. It is a composite of the sounds of 'A', 'U' and 'M'. 'A' emanates from the gullet, 'U' from the tongue lying in the interior of the mouth and 'M' from the lips. But when Om is uttered, the sound emanates from the region of the navel.

Om must be recited slowly and with deliberation. The sound must be like an aircraft, first approaching from a distance to the spot where you are and then flying away again into distance. It should start softly at first, but gradually become louder and louder and then slowly relapse into silence, this silence after the experience being as significant as the *Pranava*. 'U' is the zenith reached by the sound in its adoration. 'A' is the initial nadir and 'M' the final.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 33 [New version of Gurus] p211-212

Believe that *Sobam* merging into Om is the SAI principle. 'S' stands for **Sai**, 'A' for **and**, and 'I' for the **spiritual aspirant** himself. Thus, SAI, in fact, symbolizes the *Vedic* dictum: *Thatth Twam Asi* (Thou art that). In the first stage the spiritual aspirant says, "**I am in Sai**"; in the second stage, "**Sai is in me**" and in third and final stage, "**Sai and I are one**", the duality between the two having been shed. When truth strikes the individual like a streak of lightning in the midst of dark clouds, it confers bliss. In that moment of illumination, Om is revealed in all its grandeur. By practicing the teachings of Krishna, one gains that illumination, the radiant light of wisdom, Om.

Krishna's flute is the expression, the elucidation of the four *Vedas* and Om is their essence. 'A', 'U', 'M' and the dot (signifying the reverberation of the sound in the depth of the heart) are symbolic of the four *Vedas*. Om is also symbolic of the Rama principle. The four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Satrugna represent the four *Vedas*: (*Rig*) concerned with prayers, (*Yajur*) concerned with ceremonies and rituals, (*Sama*) concerned with control of mind and senses and (*Atharva*) concerned with secret formula for preserving health and security. When man neglects the Divine aspect of his nature and fails to pursue the spiritual discipline that ensures the awareness of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent Om, he falls prey to the impulses and instincts dominated by the ego and develops faith in material gains.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 39 [Music of the spirit] p252-253

Formal worship, at regular hours, with the recitation of hymns and songs is the very first step in the spiritual pilgrimage. Many seekers have undoubtedly achieved an awareness of God by years of asceticism in jungle caves. But, starting early with the formal worship and continuing with scrupulous care, the rites of offering flowers while repeating God's name, singing His Glory and adoring Him as a living presence are more fruitful and satisfying. Meerabai, Sakkubai, Surdas, Kabirdas, Sankaracharya and many other saints and realized souls have proved in their lives that the time, attention and energy spent in these religious practices is well spent. By such worship only were they able to visualize the Divine in the specific form which they used as the instrument. The entire English literature is made up of combinations of the 26 alphabets. Formal worship, repeating Lord's Name, ritual worship and worship of the Presence are the letters of the spiritual alphabet. The collection of the various items necessary for worship (lamps, camphor, flowers, plates, cups, a bell and the book) needs hours of concentration on the Divine. The offering at the Lotus Feet itself may

take another hour or two of concentrated and purificatory attention and the performer rises up after the recitations and meditations a stronger and steadier pilgrim on the path.

The Omnipresent is not absent from the icon or the picture. We do not reduce God and shut Him up in a stone image; we affirm and realize that He is in the icon also. We raise the image to the dimensions of the Absolute; we expand the picture far beyond its frame and through the processes of spiritual discipline become aware that the picture can be a tool for the mind to escape its limitations.

Ref: SSS Vol X Ch 47 [Color on canvas] p301-302

Rama is a Name sweeter than all the sweet things in nature, imbibed when alone or together. It can never cloy on the tongue or mind. It has mysterious potentialities to elevate man. So, one must endeavor to keep the mind ever dwelling on it. The story of Rama - the Ramayana - is but another version of the *Vedas*. In fact, it is said that the *Vedas* incarnated as the Ramayana, in order to help in the destruction of evil and the revival of righteous living, tasks which the Lord took upon Himself during His career as Rama. Rama and His three brothers are, from one point of view, the four *Vedas* in human form. The *Yajur Veda* lays down the rights and duties of man, the *Dharma* which ensures peace and prosperity for him, both here and hereafter. So, it is represented by Rama Himself. *Rig Veda* enshrines *mantras* or potent formulae. It elucidates them and elaborates their meanings. These *mantras* have the *mantra* 'Rama' as their crown. And brother Lakshmana who repeated it, recited it and relied on it, is indeed the embodiment of *Rig Veda*. *Sama Veda* contains songs in praise of creation and creator and through adoration sublimated into song, the Lord yields Grace. Bharatha whose every thought, word and deed was an act of thanksgiving dedicated to Rama was the *Sama Veda* itself. Then we have the *Atharva Veda* which is a collection of medical and ritual details, of charms and protective amulets to overcome internal and external foes. Satrugna, whose very name means 'the destroyer of foes' is therefore appropriately the *avatar* of the *Atharva Veda*.

Rama came in order to lay down the norms of life and His life has to be observed and followed by mankind. He is the ideal Man, with qualities and virtues which every man can earn to elevate himself. Mere worship, empty adoration is not what the *Avathar* expects. Rama underwent trouble, disappointment and distress like any other man, in order to show that joy is but an interval between two grieves, that grief is but a challenge, a test, a lesson. He held forth an ideal relationship between son and father, husband and wife, brother and brother, friend and friend, ally and enemy and even man and beast. The Ramayana also teaches that as a consequence of the individual's accumulated *karma* consequence, children of the same mother may have opposite characters and careers.

From another point of view, Rama and his brothers can be understood as models of the four primal goals of man, the *Purusarthas*. Of these, Rama was *Dharma* (righteousness); Lakshmana was *Artha* (prosperity); Bharatha was *Kama* (fulfillment of desires) and Satrugna was *Moksha* (liberation). Dasaratha (ten chariot leader) is man, having five sense organs of perception and five senses of action, ruling over Ayodhya, the city that is impregnable (the Heart wherein God resides). These four goals have to be reduced to two pairs - *Dharma Artha* and *Kama Moksha*. Man must struggle to attain prosperity only through righteous ways. The prosperity should be used to achieve and maintain *Dharma*. This is the

reason why Lakshmana followed the footsteps of Rama. The second pair of *Purushartha* is *Kama* and *Moksha*; the only desire worth entertaining and pursuing is the desire for Liberation. Bharata had it and Satrugna shared it.

Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 4 [The four brothers] p17-19

Remember the Names of the Lord, indicating His Glory, His Mercy, His Love. Then, all egoistic feelings will flee from you. Life is a game of football. You are the ball and you are bound to be thrown and kicked about, this side and that. How long have you to bear this treatment? Until the air the ball is filled with air; deflate it, no one will kick it again. The air that inflates it is the ego. When ego is out, Bliss comes in.

Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 5 [Teaching in ancient India] p25

The symbol of the full is OM, the *Pranava*. The *Vedas* announce, "The One indestructible sound OM is *Brahma*, the Universal Absolute". The moving and unmoving every where are only paraphrasing OM, elaborating its nature, illustrating its potentialities. The past that has gone, the present that is here and the approaching future are all also OM. The *Pranava* is the Name (*Naama*) and the *Paramatma* is the Named (*Naami*). The two are not separate. But this awareness of the immanence of the Universal can come to man only when the **I** consciousness is forgotten; when the **I** disappears, we become fit to know the **non-I**.

In order to delve deep into the principle represented by the *Pranava* (OM), four steps have been demarcated in *Sadhana*. Wakefulness, dream, deep sleep and the "fourth" are the steps. They are known as *Jagrath*, *Svapna*, *Sushupti* and *Thuriya* in the *Sastra*. *Jagrath* means "being awake", "exterior alertness" or "outward vision". The consciousness is gross, while in this stage and in dreams the impressions that impinge on the consciousness are reflections and images of the Truth. In the *Sushupti* or deep sleep stage, the individual is not conscious at all; he is just a witness, who later acknowledges (after waking up) that he slept well. The consciousness is not aware itself. It is pure unaffected *Prajna* or Awareness. It is pure *Brahma* Consciousness. The last stage is *Thuriya*. It is the stage when the consciousness is fully aware of itself. It cannot be identified as such by any means! We can try to delineate it a little, by saying that it is the silence that prevails after one OM and before another OM follows it.

These four stages of *Pranava* are associated with deities Vishnu, Brahma, Rudra and Paramatma. Vishnu means that which is omnipresent. The scriptures teach man to sanctify the waking hours - *Jaagrath* stage - for they belong to Vishnu and are charged with the Vishnu principle. In dreams, we see diverse objects and persons, strange worlds of sky scrapers and castles. Brahma is the deity that creates. So, the dream state is the Brahma phase of consciousness. In the deep sleep stage, the deep experience gained during the waking hours or gone through in dreams do not impinge on man. They have all been extinguished. Rudra, the deity into whom the cosmos ultimately merges is therefore associated with the *Sushupti* phase. Next, we have the *Thuriya* or the Fourth stage. When the salt doll is dropped in the sea, it reaches the bottom floor and is dissolved. The same happens to the seeker of the *Atma*. He is dissolved. He becomes One with that which he sought to know. He cannot return and describe the experience.

"The **A** of OM is the *Viswa*; the **U** is *Thejas*; the **M** is *Prajna*" - this is another interpretation in the scriptures. *Viswa* is the waking, *Thejas* is the dream and *Prajna* is the deep sleep stage. The *Pranava Sadhana* (The spiritual meditation on OM) is therefore very important for seekers. The *Vedas* prescribe the repetition of the *Pranava* while studying the holy texts, reciting the Name of the Divine, carrying out daily duties and offering gifts.

The *Pranava* is the essence of all sustenance, the embodiment of *Rasa*. Of all creation, moving and unmoving the Earth is the *Rasa*; of the Earth, water is the *Rasa*; of the water, Physic (*Oshadhi*) is the *Rasa*; of the physic, the human person is the *Rasa*; of the human person the word is the *Rasa*; of the word, *Rk* is the *Rasa*; of the *Rk*, *Saama* is the *Rasa*; of the *Saama* (*Veda*) OM is the *Rasa*. These eight *Rasas*, the Earth, water, psychic, person, word, *rk*, *saama* and OM led to the ninth, *Ananda* (Bliss). These are the *Navarasas*, the Nine Essences, the Nine sustainers. *Ananda* is the goal which man is seeking, the aim of human life.

Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 16 [The cleansing process] p84-87

This *Kali Yuga* is praised in the scriptures as incomparably conducive to the salvation of man, for he can now attain the highest through the mere thought of God and remembering His Name. So, of all the *Yugas*, this *Yuga* is described as the most holy, the most beneficent. *Dhyana* was prescribed as the means of liberation for men in the *Krithayuga*, *Thapas* as the means during the *Threthayuga* and *Archana* (ritual worship) for the *Dwaparayuga*. But for the people of this *Yuga*, the simple remedy prescribed is just *Namasmarana*, the constant awareness of the Name.

Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 28 [Faith in the goal] p162

When I speak, you hear the speech via the microphone through the loudspeakers. You listen to the instrument, the loudspeaker, but I am the speaker. So, too, when your tongue utters the words, it is the *Atma* that prompts and shapes the words. The owner sits in the car and travels. The car, your body, has four wheels on the ground (*Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*). They are filled with air. Faith is the air which makes your travel smooth. It has to be uniform in all the four wheels. The steering wheel inside the car directs the outer wheels. The wheel is the mind. The food and drink you take is the petrol for the car and its horn is the tongue. You are journeying along the road of likes and dislikes (*Samsara*) in this car. Recognize that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him and be free from fear, anxiety and agitation. Surrender to Him. His Grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles. Faith and surrender are the manifestations of *Bhakthi*. They can ensure peace and joy for you.

Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 28 [Faith in the goal] p164-165

The present age, often condemned as *Kali Yuga*, is in fact, the age in which one can attain Liberation most easily. This is revealed in every scriptural text. The reason according to them, is that one can be liberated now by the *Sadhana* of *Namasamkeerthana*, singing the glory of the Lord and listening to the Name being sung. Among the nine steps of devotion, listening to the Name being sung (*Sravanam*) and *Keerthanam* (singing the Name) are mentioned as the best. *Keerthanam* is singing the Names which denote the glory of the Lord and *Samkeerthanam* means "singing the Names continuously, aloud, without interruption and

without hesitation". Whereas *Keerthana* can be by one individual and can promote one's own spiritual progress, *Samkeerthanam* is by a group of people. It can help the process of liberation not only for the members of the group, but it will also be beneficial to those who listen and even to those beyond the circle of listeners; the whole world can benefit by the vibrations.

Naama Samkeerthanam can grant full happiness to all people, in all places and at all times. There can be nothing greater or more gratifying. The Names Rama, Hari, Hara, Sai, Baba, Krishna - having each two syllables are all derived from the word *Prema*, which is the essence and core of the *Atma*. The word *Naama* has great significance numerologically. *Na* is equal to 0, *A* is equal to 2 and *ma* is equal to 5, the total being 7, indicating that *Naamasamkeerthanam* needs for success seven elements - *Sruti, Laya, Raga, Tala, Bhava, Prema, Sambitha*. Seven connotes the 7 *swaras*, the 7 *rishis*, the 7 week days known as the sacred *sapthaha*. *Samkeerthanam* must be done with emphasis on tone, tune and timing, attitude and attachment and the attainment of highest good. It is not singing for singing's sake. The melody must emerge from the heart, from genuine love, which is so ardent that it is *thapasitself*. *Samkeerthanam* from such *sadbakas* will certainly liberate the individual and transform the community and the world. Even if you are unable to do *Dhyaana* or *Japa*, engage yourselves in singing the Name of God, without fear and with faith.
Ref: SSS Vol XI Ch 43 [Singing the Name] p245-249

The *Gayathri manthra* has in it the validity of the *Vedas*. It contains the essence of *Vedic* teachings. Each of the four *Vedas* has a core axiom (*Mahaa Vaakya*) enclosed in it: *Thath Thwam Asi* (That thou art), *Prajnanam Brahma* (Consciousness is *Brahma*), *Ayam Aathma Brahma* (This self is *Brahma*) and *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am *Brahman*). When all these are synthesized, the *Gayathri* emerges.

Gayathri is all Gods in One. The *Gaayathri* divinises the five elements; it represents the presiding deities of all five. *Gaayathri* is worshipped as a Five Faced Goddess - *Om*, being the first, *Bhoorbhuvah*, the second, *Thath Savithur Vareniam*, the third, *Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi*, the fourth and *Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayaath*, the fifth face.

Through meditation on *Gayathri*, one can become aware of the inner motivating principle of the five elements, the five vital airs in the human body and the five sheaths which encase the *Atma*. Just as there are three basic energies that govern man - the physical (*Adhibhouthik*), the meta-physical (*Adhidaiwik*) and the psychical (*Aadhyatmic*) - *Gayathri* has three facets: *Gaayathri*, *Savithri* and *Saraswathi*. *Gayathri* fosters the metaphysical, *Savithri*, the physical and *Saraswathi*, the psychical. These three *karanas* or instruments have to be cleansed and sublimated so that man can realize the goal of life. Through the recital of *Gayathri manthra* and meditation thereon, this great task can be achieved.
Ref: SSS Vol XV Ch 11 [The Gayathri] p59-60

The Lord can be prayed to by means of *Keerthana, Japa, Dhyana* or *Bhajan*. In every one of these, the chief item is the Divine Name. That is why Krishna spoke in the Geetha of *Japayajna*. When *Japa* is done, it is better to recite aloud and make it *Bhajana*. This will inspire the gathering. If *Bhajana* is sung in a sweet voice, people will be drawn towards the Lord. Gradually, it will develop into the Love for God and His Grace will follow in due

course.

Prashanti Vahini p17

The *Ananda* that transcends all *Ananda* can be achieved, if a single *Sadhana*, the constant remembrance of the Lord's Name is practiced and if, as a consequence, *Santhi* is attained. By this, the evil tendencies of the lower nature can also be conquered. Know that *Paramatma* is the goal of man; direct all attention on that goal; control the mind that wanders away from it, this is the essence of the teaching of all *Sastras*. Practice this one discipline and you have practiced all the *Sastras*.

Prashanti Vahini p34

If there is anything sweeter than all things sweet, more auspicious than all auspicious things, holier than all holy objects, verily, it is the Name of the Lord..... or the Lord Himself. Give up the company of the worldly minded, the association with those infected with *asuric* qualities. Keep away from every type of wrong doing. Seek always the company of the wise, the good. Take refuge in Narayana; He, the pure One, is the perfect embodiment of *Santhi*, of happiness and of *Jnana*. He, the Sri Hari, is seated within every one. He stays constantly in the place where devotees honor His Name, sincerely and with single mindedness. Therefore, first, you have to practice intense *Bhakthi* towards the Lord. Then, you can certainly attain real and permanent Happiness and Wisdom.

Prashanti Vahini p72

Practice at all times and under all conditions the remembrance, with love and devotion, of the Name of the Lord. That Name is a thunderbolt which will pulverize mountains of sin. It is the unfailing cure for the dread disease of sheer worldliness. Surely that Name will endow you with *Shanti*!

Prashanti Vahini p73

The Name of Hari is as the effulgence of the rising Sun, which scatters the darkness of delusion; It is as luminous, as universal, as sacred. Do not misuse that sacred Name even for a second. Do not let pass even a second, without bringing that Name to mind. Remember, the sweetness of that Name when repeated by Prahlada overpowered the hearts of the *asuras* who heard him; the children of the *asuras* repeated the Name along with Prahlada and led by him, they began to sing and dance with joy arming themselves with axes to defend their leader.

The Name of the Lord that can transform the *asuric* character and purify it into nectar, is verily, the heaven of *Santhi* for all, for the world. To repeat that Name without break, to love that Form and that Name with intensity, that is what deserves to be called *Bhakthi*.

Prashanti Vahini p74

There are two parts in every single substance in the Universe: Name and *Rupa*. Take away these two and there is no *Prapancha* or Universe any more. The Form is no *Prapancha* or Universe any more. The Form is conceived and controlled by the Name. The *Rupa* is dependent on the Name; so if you reason out which is more lasting, you will find that the Name is *Nithyam* and *Rupam* is *Anithyam*. Consider the case of persons who have done various good works, achieved meritorious deeds, constructed hospitals or schools or temples

or places of worship; now, even when their Form is absent from the world for men to see, their Names with all the associated fame are even present in human memory, is it not? The *Rupam* lasts but for a brief time; but the *Namam* continues.

Names are countless and so are the *Rupams*. But there is one matter which you have to take into consideration here, a matter which is within the daily experience of all: *Aksharas* or letters. In Telugu there are 52 letters; in English, there are just 26. Even if you pile up the entire literary output in Telugu or in English and the piles rise mountain high it is all composed of either 52 Telugu letters or the 26 English ones, not a single letter more.

Similarly, in the human body there are six nerve centers, all in the form of the lotus flower. All the six lotus forms have one letter or sound attached to each petal. Like the reeds in a harmonium, when the petals are moved, each one emanates a distinct sound. The force that moves them is the *Anaathadhwani*, the Primeval sound, the Undistinguished Indistinguishable sound, emanating without effort, irrespective of conscious Will. That is the *Pranava*. As beads in the string, all letters and the sounds they represent are strung on the *Pranava*. That is the meaning of the statement that He is the "*Pranava* of the *Vedas*". Krishna's teaching is that you should merge your mind in the *Pranava*, which is the Universal Bliss.

Geeta Vahini p96-97

Sreyokarma or liberating *karma* is so pure, faultless, unselfish and unswerving. Its characteristic is the importance given to the idea of *nishkama karma*, action without any thought of the fruits thereof, elaborated in the Githa. The practice of that discipline involves the development of *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Santhi* and *Prema*: Truth, Justice, Peace and Love. White on this path, if one also takes up the discipline of the name of the Lord, where else can he acquire more joy and bliss? It will give the fullest satisfaction.

Dhyana Vahini p2

When the wayward mind fleeing towards all angles is plunged in the contemplation of the Name of the Lord, the effect will be like the concentration of the rays of the sun through a piece of magnifying glass, the scattered rays develop the power of a flame to burn and consume.

Dhyana Vahini p5

To diminish the wanderings of your thoughts, repeat the name of the Lord; that will keep out your sorrows and troubles.

Dhyana Vahini p18

Whatever might be the tangle in which men are caught, if they get immersed in the Lord's Name, it will make them free; besides, by this means, they can realize without fail the Name and Form through which they constantly remember the Lord. There is no iota of doubt in this. The *Sadhanas* of *Yoga*, *Pranayama* or *Tapas* are beset with pitfalls at every step and they are full of dangers, too. But in the *Sadhana* of *Japa* or *Dhyana* or *Smarana* there is no likelihood of a fall or of any other danger. In the former type of *Sadhana*, the practices differ according to the caste or religion. In the *Namasadhana*, there is not even a trace of such distinction. Hindus, Muslims and Christians may differ on many points, but they are all one

in the glorification of the Name of the Godhead. All of them take but the Name of the One Lord, though the language through which the Name is expressed is different. Each one recites, repeats and remembers the Name as formed on his own tongue. Each one turns with his fingers the rosary appropriate to his religion. But for every one there is nothing so fruitful, so universal, or so holy among spiritual disciplines as these: *Japam*,

Dhyanam and *Smarana*.

Dhyana Vahini p35

The Lord and His Name are both One but the sweetness of the Name is seldom found in the Form. When the name of the flower, "Rose", is remembered, its fragrance, its tender petals, its deep color, these spring to memory; its thorns and the trouble one has undergone to get the flower are all forgotten. Instead, if its origin and previous story are considered and if the plant, its leaves and branches are taken into account, the flower which is the most important, the beautiful and the most attractive is likely to be forgotten and only "the plant" is discussed. See this from another angle. As soon the name "mango" is mentioned, one is reminded of an incomparable sweetness. Instead, if an actual mango is held in the hand, the doubt first arises in the mind whether it is sweet or sour; then we are engaged in distinguishing the skin, the fiber, the juice, the nut, the rind, the seed etc. When the name alone is repeated, these things do not come to mind. Only the sweetness is brought to the memory. Such is the difference between the Lord and the Lord's Name! There is the pure essence of sweetness in the Name. In the case of the Form, there is the chance of dread mixed with respect; and sometimes, even attributes causing fear showing themselves. Again, note another reason why the Name of the Lord is to be craved for, even more than the Form. It is by means of the riches of the Name that the article, "the *Rupa* of the Lord" is to be earned. Riches are needed to secure any article in the world. With riches, articles are acquired; so it follows that the riches are superior to the articles got by means of them, is it not? With riches, one can get any article, any time. So too, if the riches called *Nama* are steadily accumulated, the Lord can be realized through the path of *Dhyana*, easily and without difficulty.

Dhyana Vahini p35-37

Another special thing about *Namasmarana* is this: It is possible to acquire various occult powers or *Siddhis* through *Yoga* and *Tapas*. So there is every likelihood of the Lord being forgotten when these powers come. Blinded by this pride, a person might even let go the basic victory won by his *Sadhana*s. This is not the case with *Nama*, *Japa* and *Dhyana*; no such dangers beset those paths. These three make *Prema* grow in man more and more.

Through *Prema*, *Santhi* is achieved. Once *Santhi* or Peace of Mind is achieved, all other conditions are attained automatically. Through *Yoga* and *Tapas*, extra-ordinary Power; through *Smarana*, *Japa* and *Dhyana*, extra-ordinary *Prema* - this is the difference between the two.

Dhyana Vahini p37

Or you can approach those who have tasted the nectar of that *Nama* and ask for the details of their experiences. Do not argue about these things with everyone whom you come across. The time spent in these haphazard disputations is best used for the cultivation of joy through the repeated bringing of the *Nama* to memory and the meditation on the Form or the *Rupa* of the Lord. Mere weighing of the pros and cons, like which is greater among the

two, will only end with the quick loss of all the success gained after great efforts through *Sadhana*. Until you become an expert, bring the *Nama* constantly to memory and repeat it firm and unruffled, either alone or in the company of *Bhaktas*. Then nothing can waver you. Look at the fish! In early stages, it breeds its newly hatched young ones in a quiet shallow spot; then it pushes them into the wide open sea, rough and rude with its monstrous denizens! They can then survive there, courageously, and grow without fear. If the young ones were bred in the open sea from the earliest stage, they would certainly be swallowed up even by minor fishes! So, *Nama*, *Japa* and *Dhyana* have to be practiced with a great deal of care, according to a planned routine, and without any discussion with others.

Dhyana Vahini p37-38

If a person gropes in the water while spreading the net on the bank, can he find fish in the net? To give up *Namasmarana* and faith in the path and to sit in *Yoga* and *Tapas* is as foolish as hoping to catch fish by this means. If the *Nama* is taken as the refuge and support, He can be realized tomorrow, if not today.

If the name of thing is known, the thing itself can easily be acquired. But if the name is not known, even if the thing is right in front, it cannot be recognized. Therefore, repeat the Name without intermission and without faltering. By means of *Nama*, *Prema* is developed; through *Prema*, *Dhyana* of the Lord can be practiced. If *Prema* is deeply rooted in you, the Lord who is composed of *Prema* becomes your own. However many the paths for the realization of the Lord, there is none as easy as this.

Dhyana Vahini p38-39

Note this. When there is a peculiar disease prevalent in a particular country, the drug that can cure it is also found in that very country, more so than anywhere else. Though available after vigorous search in other lands, it will not be so good, or as plentiful. Similarly, this specific drug is available now, in this *Kaliyuga*! It is now in this *Yuga* that the ghastly evils of injustice, immorality and falsehood infect the world. That is the reason why the *Sastras* have been proclaiming again and again, with greater and greater emphasis, that in this *Kali* age there is no means of salvation other than the *Nama*! Of the four *Yugas*, the *Kaliyuga* is the best on account of this. *Nama*, *Japa* and *Dhyana* strain out the evil in mankind.

Dhyana Vahini p39

When you are engaged in *Japam* and *Dhyanam* other thoughts might enter into at first; but you should not worry about this. There is no great danger on account of them. When you begin *Namasmarana*, sit down with enthusiasm. If you enter upon any task with firm determination, no impurity can affect you. Your concern is only to see that you are fully pure when you start the *Japam* etc. Do not worry about formalities for this. Select the *Namam* that you like and the Form of that Name. That *Namam* is itself the *Manthram*. That *Manthram* is ever pure, ever active, everything. But do not change the *Namam* and the *Rupam* to suit the fancy and have one thing one day and another the next. Whatever the Name and the Form that first gave you contentment, hold fast to them without swerving. They will get implanted in the heart, without fail. Afterwards everything will happen through His Grace. If the worker is ordered to dig the earth his work is to go on digging. The gardener alone knows how much of that earth is to be put. So too, the order is to 'Do *Namasmarana*!' Provided you

continue to do that work, He will direct, Himself, where and how that has to be utilized.
Dhyana Vahini p40-41

The value of *Nama* and *Rupa* consists in the training that they give to *Manas*. What need is there to train a horse that has already been trained? It is the untrained horse that is 'broken' through many devices. Similarly, it is to tame the unruly mind that we have prayer, *Bhajana*, *Japa* and *Smarana*. In the initial stages the horse runs in many directions; the trainer should not worry. He should hold fast to the reins. The mind too runs naturally in many directions when you begin *Namasmarana* and *Japam*, but you must not yield to despair anxiety or indecision. Hold fast to the reins, the *Namam*! Within a short time your speech and your thoughts will come under your own grip. Only do not allow anything to come near you that might make you forget the Name of the Lord. The profit of that *Namam*, you will yourself realize in due course.

Dhyana Vahini p41

Do not crave for the fruit the moment the sapling is planted! Do not pluck and chew the leaves and the twigs in the hope of inferring therefrom the taste of the fruit! If you do so, you cannot enjoy the sweetness of the fruit; besides the plant itself will not survive. Similarly your task is simply to cultivate the sapling called *Namam*. Do not, while doing so, doubt and examine whether it has the glory ascribed to it. The sapling will without fail, grow into a tree and it will give you the fruit you hope to eat. So the purpose of *Ekagratha* or Concentration is to make you stick to the *Namam*, without altering it and to keep its *Rupa* always in sight. The net of '*Namasmarana*' should have no torn holes; that is to say, it must take place always, with no intermission. If there is any gap, the fruit that falls into the net might escape through it! Perform *Dhyanam* until your mind comes firmly under your control. That is the primary task.

Dhyana Vahini p42

Do not care for the vagaries of the mind. Carry on *Smarana* and *Dhyanam* of the *Nama* and *Rupam* you like best, in the manner you are accustomed to; in this way, you will acquire *Ekagratha*; you will realize your heart's desire. Do not entertain in your mind the idea of purity or impurity while doing this *Sadhana* of *Dhyanam*. There is nothing impure in the world. When the Lord is immanent everywhere in everything, how can anything be impure? Even if something appears to the ulterior eyes as impure, the moment it contacts the Name of the Lord, it becomes purified.

Dhyana Vahini p43

No thought of purity or impurity will bother you if you have full faith in and Love for the Name of the Lord. On the other hand, if you feel some compulsion and some discontent, all kinds of possible and impossible obstacles will present themselves. Therefore, give up all such feelings; strengthen the faith in the unshakable Holiness of the *Nama* and its appropriate Form. Firmly believe that everything is made holy by His Name.

Dhyana Vahini p43-44

To direct without interruption that *Prema* on to the *Nama* and the *Rupa* of the Lord; that is real *Dhyanam*. Do not mistake the temporary abode as your eternal dwelling place!

Dhyana Vahini p44

The Name is essential for *Dhyanam*, for that alone can ensure quick success.
Dhyana Vahini p70

Giving up all other desires and ever content, dwelt on His name and *Rupam* only, to the exclusion of everything else.
Dhyana Vahini p75

The sweetness of nectar of the Lord's name is the charm of life: The internal joy derived from the Name is akin to the external joy of the outer life.
Prema Vahini p9

This human birth is very difficult to attain. It cannot be got for a song. The body is as a caravanserai; the mind is its watchman; the *Jivi* is the pilgrim. And so, no one of these has any kinship with the others. The pilgrim is bound to Salvation City, *Mokshapuri*. For a trouble-free journey, there is nothing so reliable as *Namasmarana*, the remembrance of the name of the Lord. Once the sweetness of that name has been experienced, the person will not have exhaustion, unrest or sloth. He will fulfill his pilgrimage of *Sadhana* joyfully, enthusiastically and with deep conviction. Still, for achieving this *Sadhana*, *Sadbhava* or Righteousness is very important. Without fear of sin, righteousness cannot originate; love of God, too, cannot develop. This fear produces *Bhakti* which results in the worship of the Lord.
Prema Vahini p45

Whatever *Sadhana* a person may or may not have, he must practice uninterrupted *Namasmarana*. Then only can he master the natural attributes of greed, anger etc. All the *Sastras* teach but this one lesson: since the Lord is the universal goal and this journey of life has Him as the destination, keep Him constantly in view and subdue the mind which makes you wander from the path. All the good qualities automatically gather around the person who practices control of speech and the constant contemplation of the Lord.
Prema Vahini p62

Bhaktas should consider the body as the field, good deeds as seeds and cultivate the Name of the Lord, with the help of the Heart as the ryot, in order to get the harvest, the Lord Himself. How can one get the crop without the cultivation? Like cream in milk, like fire in fuel, the Lord is in everything, more or less. Have full faith in this. As the milk, so the cream; as the fuel, so the fire; so also, as the *Sadhana*, so the *Sakshatkara*, isn't it? Even if the attainment of *Mukthi* is not directly realized as a consequence of taking up the Lord's name, four fruits are clearly evident to those who have had the experience. They are (1) The company of the great (2) Truth (3) Contentment (4) The control of the senses. Through whichever of these gates one may enter, whether he be a householder or recluse, or a member of any other class, he can reach the Lord without fail. This is certain. Men crave for worldly happiness. Analyzed properly, this itself is the disease and sufferings are but the drugs we take. In the midst of these worldly pleasures, one rarely entertains the desire for attaining the Lord.
Prema Vahini p66-67

Of the various types of *Bhakti*, *Namasmarana Bhakti* is the best. In the *Kaliyuga*, the Name is the Path for saving oneself. Jayadeva, Gouranga, Thyagayya, Thukaram, Kabir, Ramdas, all

these great *Bhakthas* attained the Lord through just this one *Nama*. Why speak of thousand things? Even Prahlada and Dhruva were able to enjoy the *Darsan*, *Sparsan* and *Sambhashana* of the Lord through *Nama* only, isn't it? Therefore, if every *Sadhaka* will consider the name of the Lord as the very breath of his life and, have complete faith in good deeds and good thoughts, if he will develop the spirit of service and equal Love for all, then there can be no better Path for *Mukthi*.

Prema Vahini p68

Now, even in matters relating to the realization of God, one has to be careful. Whatever inconveniences one may encounter, one must try to carry on one's *Sadhana*, without any break or modification in the disciplines. One should not be changing the Name that one has loved and cherished and selected for *Smarana*. Concentration is impossible if the Name is changed once every few days. The mind will not attain one-pointedness. All *Sadhana* has this one- pointedness as its ultimate aim; so avoiding constant adoption and rejection of Names and Forms of the Lord, one single Name must be used throughout for *Japam* and *Dhyanam*. And, one has also to get the strong conviction that all the Lord's Names and all the Lord's Forms are but the Name and the Form which one is repeating in *Japam* and meditating on during *Dhyanam*. That Name and that Form must not give any slightest feeling of dislike or disaffection. Taking all worldly losses, sufferings and worries as merely temporal and transitory and realizing that all this *Japam* and *Dhyanam* is only to overcome such grief, the *Sadhaka* should keep the two things separate, without mixing up that with this, and this with that. He must understand that the loss, suffering and worry are external, belonging to this world, and that *Japam* and *Dhyanam* are internal, belonging to the realm of the love for the Lord. This is what is called *Pathivratha Bhakthi*, or Chaste Devotion; the other variety, where the *Sadhaka* selects one Name and one Form and after sometime discards them for another Name and Form, is called *Vyabhichara Bhakthi*, or Unchaste Bhakthi.