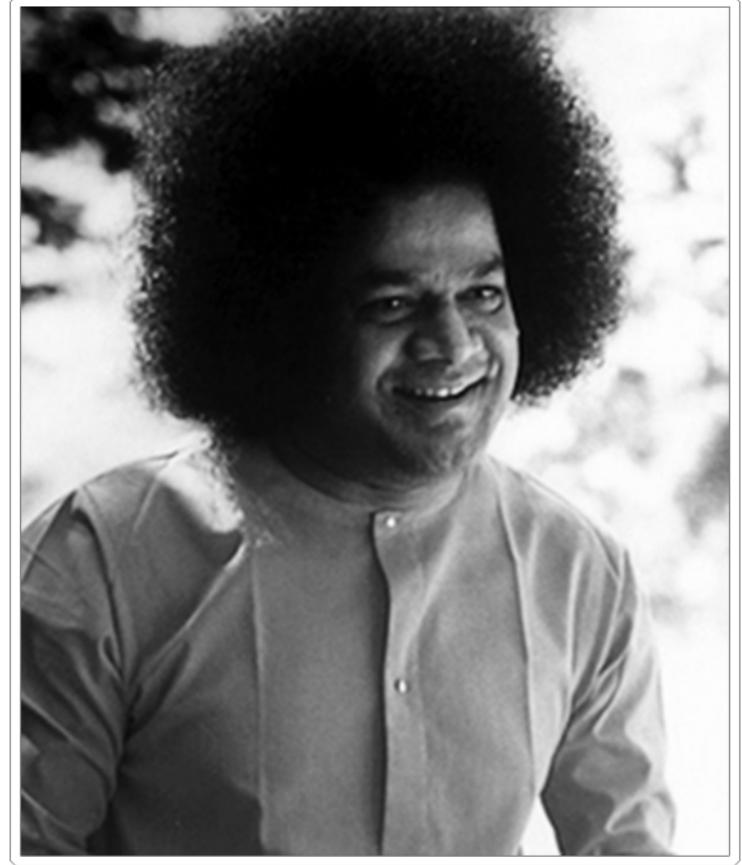


Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(December 2014)

1.12.2014

To pray to God with excessive adulation and request a favour stems from a tone of despondency. Describing Him as One who is beyond praise by Brahma and other gods, and narrating glories beyond description of how He helped devotees and then asking, “Oh Lord! You have talked to them and given them so much! Why don’t You come to my help?” appears to stem from jealousy. It is only when God is regarded as a friend and a companion that He is pleased the most. When you address Him as, “O my dearest friend! My beloved One! The darling of my heart,” you are giving Him the greatest joy. We use words of praise towards an unfamiliar person to show respect and regard as he/she is a stranger. But we welcome an old friend with easy familiarity and intimacy. Hence approach God as your loving friend, He will come to your aid and fulfill your needs. (Divine Discourse, Oct 9, 1989)

2.12.2014

People suffer because they have all kinds of unreasonable desires and they pine to fulfil them and they fail. They attach too much value to the objective world. It is only when attachment increases that you suffer pain and grief. If you look upon Nature and all created objects with the insight derived from the Inner Vision, then attachment will slide away, though effort will remain; you will also see everything much clearer and with a glow suffused with Divinity and splendour. Close your external eyes and open your inner eyes - What a grand picture of essential unity you get? Attachment to Nature has limits, but the attachment you develop to the Lord when your inner eye opens, has no limit. Enjoy that reality, not this false picture. (Divine Discourse, 2 Feb 1958)

of a human being. This rise from one scale to another has been acknowledged by science and spiritual experience. Now alas, they are born as human and die as human. It is a greater shame if they slide into a beast or a beastly ogre. Praise is due, only if they rise to the divine status. That is real fulfilment of one’s destiny. Therefore resolve today to avoid contact with vices, develop attachment to virtues, and transmute your heart into an altar for your beloved Lord. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, “The Bhagavatha”)

There is nothing greater than love in this world. Everything has a price. The price to be paid for enduring happiness is Divine Love. The primary wealth for man is Love. Everyone should seek to acquire this wealth. With this wealth anyone can enjoy enduring bliss. (Divine Discourse, 1 Jan 1998)

30.12.2014

The nature of human beings is Love (prema). You cannot survive even for a moment, when deprived of Love. It is the very breath of your life. When the six vices, to which you were attached for so long, disappear, Love will be the only occupant of your heart; but Love has to find an object, a loved one. It cannot be alone. Direct your heart full of love towards the dark-blue Divine Child, the charming Lord, who is the Embodiment of Love, Purity, Service, Sacrifice and Selflessness. Then there will be no scope for any other attachment to grow. Let this love for the Lord, step-by-step become deeper, purer and more self-denying; until at last, there is no other need for thought and the individual is merged in the Universal. When Vaasudeva, the Lord, enters the heart of man, demons have no longer a place therein. Darkness and light do not co-exist; Light removes every inch of darkness. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

31.12.2014

It is creditable if a human behaves as a human being. It is laudable if they behave as God, that they really are! But to behave as a demon or as a beast is despicable indeed! For, people were long born a mineral, died a mineral; then they promoted themselves to be born as a tree and died as a tree. Subsequently they got promoted as an animal, and finally rose to the status

3.12.2014

Enter upon that task of Sadhana from now on; that is the lesson you must learn here. Otherwise yatra (pilgrimage) leads only to the accumulation of patra (objects and souvenirs). Devotion is something sweet, soothing, refreshing and restoring. It must confer patience and fortitude. The devotee will not be perturbed if another is blessed with more grace. The devotee is humble and bides one's time, knowing that there is a higher power that knows more and that it is just and impartial. In the light of that knowledge, the devotees will communicate their troubles and problems only to their Lord; they will not humiliate themselves by talking about them to all and sundry, for what can a man, who is as helpless as another, do to relieve them? 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 Amrita (nectar of immortality). (Divine Discourse, 29 Dec, 1960)

4.12.2014

Mere reading of spiritual texts is not enough. You may master all the commentaries and you may be able to argue and discuss with great scholars about these texts; but without attempting to practise what they teach, it is a waste of time. I never approve of book-learning; practice is what I evaluate. When you come out of the examination hall you know whether you will pass or not, is it not? For you can yourself judge whether you have answered well or not. So too in sadhana (spiritual effort) or in conduct or in practice, each of you can judge and ascertain the success or failure that is in store. The moon is reflected in a pot, provided it has water; so too the Lord can be clearly seen in your heart, provided you have the water of Love (Prema).

When you don't see the Lord reflected in your heart, do not say that there is no Lord; it only means that there is no Love within you. (Divine Discourse, 2 Feb, 1958)

5.12.2014

The conflict between persons who accept God and deny Him, those who declare that God is to be found in this or that place and those who affirm that He can be found nowhere, is never ending; it has been continuing throughout the ages. Remember that it is unnecessary to awaken a person already awake and it is easy to awaken a person who is asleep. You cannot awaken, however much you try, a person not wanting to awaken! Those who do not know, can be taught by means of simple illustrations what they do not know. But those afflicted with half-knowledge and proud of that acquisition are beyond any further education. Your two eyes give a picture of a vast expanse of space, but they cannot see your whole body! For that, you need two mirrors – one in front of you and one behind. So too, to know your reality, you need the mirrors of Self-confidence (Atma-vishwas) and Divine Grace. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov, 1976)

6.12.2014

To discriminate between good and bad, one must resort to scriptures. The Vedas emerged from the Divine Himself and were 'heard' by sages attuned to the voice of the Divine, who in turn, taught them to their disciples. This process of imparting the Vedas and the wisdom enshrined in them has continued through many generations of Gurus and disciples until now. The Upanishads, the Brahma Sutra and the Bhagavad Gita contain the very essence of the Vedas. Hence these are designated as 'three fundamental texts (Prasthanaya)' of the science of

odours of sense-pursuits, keenness to listen to the glories of God is a valuable disinfectant, besides being in itself so full of sweet fragrance. Listening will effectively cleanse your heart. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

28.12.2014

A cleansed and pure heart is the most appropriate altar or tabernacle for the Lord. In that fragrant bower, the Lord will establish Himself. When the Lord establishes Himself, at that very moment, another incident too will happen. The group of six vices that had infested the place will quit instantly, without any farewell or fanfare. When these vices quit, the wicked retinue of evil tendencies and vulgar attitudes which live on them will break camp and disappear without leaving even their addresses! Then one will shine in one's native splendour of Truth and Love (Sathya and Prema). That person will endeavour without hindrance to realize the Self, and finally succeed in merging with the Universal and Eternal. Liberated from the tangle of ignorance or maya, the mind will fade away. The long-hidden secret will be revealed. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

29.12.2014

Everyone should treat whatever happens to them as gifts from God. Pleasure and pain should be treated alike as Divine gifts. There is a unique joy in this process. In daily life we tend to treat defeat, loss or grief as calamities. But nothing occurs in the world without a cause. Hunger is the cause for eating. Thirst is the cause for drinking. Difficulties are the cause of sorrow. If you would like to enjoy enduring happiness, you must discover the source of such happiness. That source is love (prema).

26.12.2014

Embodiments of Divine Love! Adhere sincerely to your faith and traditions. Wherever you may be, do not give room for religious or any kind of differences. When we examine the root cause for differences or conflicts, you will find that the real reason is selfish minds, wearing the garb of religion or any other cause, and inciting conflicts amongst the people. If you desire to secure genuine peace in the world, you must hold morality (neethi) as superior to your community (jaathi). Cherish good feelings as more important than religious beliefs. Mutual regard (mamatha), equal mindedness (samatha) and forbearance (Kshamatha) are the basic qualities necessary for every human being. Only the person with these three qualities can be regarded as a true man. Hence all of you must cultivate these three sacred qualities assiduously. Using these qualities, give up all kinds of differences. Then love will develop in you. When love grows, you will have a direct vision of God. (Divine Discourse, 25th Dec 1990)

27.12.2014

Listening to expositions by a speaker who has had the thrill of genuine experience is a blessing. The speaker's face will blossom with joy, their eyes will shed tears of exhilaration at the very contemplation of the Lord's glory. Listeners will easily catch that inspiration and experience the joy themselves as tears stream down their eyes. When an infant smiles, everyone around the infant also smiles in unison. So too the words of those who are saturated with devotion to God will saturate the hearts of the listeners too. Through that process of listening, a dirt-laden heart will be transformed into a clean and illumined heart which shines with genuine light and love. To the foul

spirituality. Acquisition of higher knowledge alone can fulfil the main purpose of human life; it makes one aware that one is not the inert non-sentient body but an embodiment of being-awareness-bliss. When this truth dawns and is experienced, you are freed from the fog of ignorance and are liberated, in this very life. (Sutra Vahini, 'Stream of Aphorisms of Brahman')

7.12.2014

Yaga (ritualistic sacrificial prayers) is prescribed by the Karma Kanda (the parts that expound on actions or Karma as a spiritual path) of the Vedas. It is for sanctifying time and fulfilling the goal of human birth. The practice of renunciation and dedication through the rite of the yaga promotes worldly happiness as well as spiritual progress. It fosters charity and social cohesion. The ritual sacrifices pleases the deities presiding over the forces of Nature and so brings down rain, which helps growing crops, and increases food for man and beast. Activity that is divorced from spiritual goals, and devoid of reverence and humility, leads to conceit and authoritarianism. It makes one arrogant and cruel; but the sages of India laid down that all activity has to be done as a yaga, as offerings for the glory of God, in an atmosphere of thankfulness and awe, of humility and holiness. The goal of all activity was idealised as the happiness and peace of all living beings. (Divine Discourse, Oct 3, 1970)

8.12.2014

The Kaivalya Upanishad declares: "Not by means of works, not by means of human power, not by means of wealth, but by renunciation alone can immortality be attained." The 'works' referred to are rituals like sacrifices, vows, charities, donations, pilgrimages, etc. Through such activities, one cannot achieve

liberation; that is to say, one cannot get rid of the veil of ignorance. 'Human power' means acquisition of positions of authority, of skill and intelligence which can manipulate people and things, of fame and supremacy, of personal charm, of health and happiness, or of a large family with many children - these cannot confer liberation. The works mentioned above and the acquisition referred to can succeed only when one has 'wealth'. But the Upanishad announces that spiritual wisdom is not related to riches. So liberation cannot be earned by means of wealth. Renunciation alone can confer immortality. (Sutra Vahini, 'Stream of Aphorisms of Brahman')

9.12.2014

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 burning, darkness will not spread its fumes around you. When the word for Brahman (Supreme Universal Reality), Om, is spelt with the last breath by the one dying, they attain the Divine. To make that final utterance of Om, just as the flower blossoms on the creeper of life, you need to dwell upon Om all through the years of your current life. The Geeta advocates the process of continuous meditation in a neat little formula: mam anusmara yuddhya cha! - "Keep Me in your memory and fight!" The cue here for you is to fight the battle of life, have God in your consciousness as your Charioteer at all times. This is not merely a direction for Arjuna; it is a prescription for all humanity. (Divine Discourse, June 9, 1970)

10.12.2014

God assumes many forms and enacts many activities. The name Bhagavatha is given to the descriptions of the

happy when others are happy and sad when others are sad. Let Me call upon you today, to give up, in honour of this holy occasion, two evils from your mind: self praise and talking scandal! Give them up! Instead adopt one habit: the habit of loving service to the distressed. If you spend all your time and energy in worldly comfort and sensual delight, you are disgracing this human existence. Do not spend your life in just enjoying food; eat as much as is necessary for living. Maintain your body as temple where God resides. Keep it clean, fresh and fragrant by developing compassion and love; Let holy thoughts, words and deeds emerge from you. Do not demean it by using it for low, trivial and unholy tasks. Wherever you are, make this resolution today! (Divine Discourse, Dec 25, 1976)

25.12.2014

Two thousand years ago, when narrow pride and thick ignorance defiled mankind, Jesus came as the Embodiment of Love and Compassion and lived among people, holding forth the highest ideals of life. You must pay attention to the lessons He elaborated in the various stages of His life. His first declaration was, "I am the messenger of God". Yes, each individual has to accept that role and live as examples of divine love and charity. Jesus knew that God wills all. So even when He was on the cross, though He suffered agony, He bore no ill-will towards anyone and in fact exhorted those with Him to treat all as instruments of His Will. "All are one; be alike to everyone" - Practise this attitude in your daily lives. Moon can be seen only through the moonlight. So too God, who is love, can be seen and realised only through love. Love is God, Live in Love. This is the Message I give you. (Divine Discourse, Dec 24, 1980)

and qualities, and no list of such can describe Him fully. For Him, all beings are equal. The difference between man, beast, bird, worm, insect, and even a god is but a difference of the 'vessel' (upadhi). The one single God activates every vessel and gives rise to manifold consequences. God appreciates the consciousness of unity as the basic motive of acts. He doesn't appreciate the activity itself being one without variety; activity must be suited to the various needs. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

23.12.2014

People believe that Divine incarnations happen only for the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the righteous. But these represent only one aspect of the task. The granting of peace and joy, of a sense of fulfillment to seekers who have striven long—this too is His task. The Avatar, or form incarnate, is only the concretization of the yearning of the seekers. It is the solidified sweetness of the devotion of godly aspirants. The Formless assumes the form for the sake of these aspirants and seekers. They are the prime cause. The cow secretes milk for the sustenance of the calf. That is the chief beneficiary. But, as we see, others also benefit from that milk. So too, though the devotees are the prime cause and their joy and sustenance the prime purpose of an incarnation, other incidental benefits also accrue, such as fostering dharma, suppression of evil, and reforming, correcting or destroying the wicked. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

24.12.2014

Jesus sacrificed His life and poured out His blood to instill Love and Compassion in the heart of man, so that you are

experiences of those who have realised Him in those forms and of those who have been blessed by His grace and chosen as His instruments. The great epic called Bhagavatha is a panacea that cures physical, mental and spiritual illnesses. By Bhagavatha we also mean those with attachment to God, those who seek the companionship of God. Being in the midst of such Bhagavathas fosters one's own devotion. Unless you have a taste for God-ward thoughts, you will not derive joy therefrom. To create that taste, the Bhagavatha tells stories to the earnest inquirer that relate to incarnations. Then one develops the yearning to experience the thrill of God, through all the levels of consciousness. One who has this intense yearning can alone be a true Bhagavatha. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, 'The Bhagavatha')

11.12.2014

"Maam anusmara - With Me in memory ever," said Lord Krishna! In your daily life, do not distinguish one task as bhajan, another as bhojan (eating), and the third as pujan (worship of God) - all acts are offering to the Divine. The food you partake is given by Him and digested by Him, so that it yields strength to do His work. Each moment is worthwhile, for He gives it, He uses it, He fills it, He fashions it, and He fulfils it. When He is fully suffused in your every breath, you can achieve the sovereign task of merging in Him. You have that might within you; The Divine cannot be gained by the weak. The remembrance can become permanently established only when you are free from the shackles of spite and envy. Be An-asuya - without the trace of pride or envy, malice or hate, egoism or conceit. The Lord permanently resides in the heart kept assiduously clean. (Divine Discourse, Jun 9, 1970)

12.12.2014

Sorrow affects you because you feel you deserved joy and did not acquire it; but there is one impartial distributor of joy and sorrow, who gives you what you need, rather than what you desire. You may need the tonic of tragedy to set you on the road to recovery. The Compassionate One, the eternal all-knowing God, He knows best. Welcome the tragedy and fight your way through, with the armour of the remembrance of the Divine. As all rivers hurry towards the sea, let all your imaginings wend their way to God. The play is His; the role is His gift; the lines are written by Him; He decides the dress and decoration, the gesture and the tone, the entrance and the exit. You have to act well your part and when the curtain falls receive His approbation. By your efficiency and enthusiasm earn the right to play higher and higher roles - that is the meaning and purpose of life. (Divine Discourse, Jun 9, 1970)

13.12.2014

People have forgotten their real nature and believe that they are the body, the senses, etc. When these (instruments) crave for objective pleasures, people ignorantly convince themselves that this pleasure is wanted by them! Under this mistaken notion, they seek to fulfill the cravings. They delude themselves that they can secure bliss (ananda) by catering to the body and senses. However they are rewarded with disillusionment, defeat and disaster, and reap pleasure and pain. Though the objective world appears real, one must be aware that it is deluding us. As a result, one has to give up the yearning for deriving pleasure from the objects that appear and attract, both here and hereafter. The false knowledge (a-jnana) can be destroyed only when one knows the Atma (the Divine Self)

Over time, the company of the worldly who chatter about the senses or sense-objects will no longer attract; the company that exults in the Love of Lord becomes sweeter and then you begin to genuinely experience the Divine. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

21.12.2014

Exulting in praising the Lord is the hallmark of the real good. Avoid being in the company of people who revel in sensory talks. Choose to spend your time in the company of the Divine and be engaged in the Lord's activities. Only those who act in accordance to the above are God's own (Bhagavathas). Reading and enjoying the stories of the glory of Krishna (Lord) in a sacred hall, temple, shrine, or hermitage of a saint, or being in the company of the virtuous and the good — that is a source of great inspiration and joy. You can approach pious people, serve them, and listen to their exposition of the glories of God. Taste for such wholesome literature is the result of accumulated merit and effort. Listening will be enough in the beginning; later, the stories will arouse interest in the nature and characteristics of God, and the aspirant will seek and find for oneself the path to realisation. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

22.12.2014

There is no compulsive rule that incarnations should occur only on the earth and in human form. Any place and any form can be chosen by the fully free. Whichever place and form promote the purpose of fulfilling the yearning of the devotee, that place and form are chosen by the will of God. God is above and beyond the limits of time and space. He is beyond all characteristics

19.12.2014

Generally people get drawn to sense objects, for they are victims of instincts. And instincts come along with the body and aren't derived by any training. The infant seeks milk from the mother, no training is needed for this. However for the infant to walk and talk, some training is necessary, because these actions are not automatic but are socially prompted, by example and by imitation of others. Training is essential even for the proper pursuit of sense pleasure, for it is the wild and untrained search for such pleasure that promotes anger, hatred, envy, malice, and conceit. To train the senses along salutary lines and to hold them under control, certain good disciplines like repetition of the name, meditation, fasts, worship at dawn and dusk, etc. are essential. When one is asked to do such spiritual acts, one has no inner prompting at all. Still, one shouldn't give up in despair. No one has a taste for such practices from the very beginning, but constant practice creates the zest. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, "The Bhagavatha")

20.12.2014

The infant doesn't know the taste of milk. But by taking it daily, it develops a deep attachment for it, such that when milk is to be given up and rice substituted, it starts to protest. But the mother doesn't despair; she persuades the child to take small quantities of cooked rice daily, and slowly, the child starts liking rice and gives up milk. Milk though once its natural food, is replaced by rice through practice to such an extent that if rice is not available for a day, the child feels miserable. So too though sense pleasures are 'natural' at first, by means of practice and listening to the wise, slowly the joy derived from listening and recapitulating the glories of the Lord is grasped.

principle. When the false knowledge disappears, the sorrow produced by one's involvement in the ups and downs of the world of change (samsara) also gets destroyed. (Sutra Vahini, 'Stream of Aphorisms of Brahman')

14.12.2014

Do not get too much attached to the world, and too involved in its tangles. Keep your emotions always within check. The waves agitate only the upper layers of the sea; down below it is calm. So too, when you sink into your depths, you must be free from the agitation of the waves. Know that most things are of no lasting value and can therefore be brushed aside; hold fast to the solid substance alone. Use your discrimination to discover and distinguish lumber from treasure. The Pranava japa (recitation of Om and contemplation of its significance) will help to calm the roaring waves. Gita affirms that when the word 'Om' (Supreme Universal Reality) is spelt by the dying with their last breath, they attain the Divine. To be able to spell it then, dwell upon its sweetness and significance throughout your life, from today. Then the final Om that emerges from your lips will be an offering that merges in Him! (Divine Discourse, 9 June, 1970)

15.12.2014

You dread that it is very difficult, nay, impossible, to realize God. It is very simple; its very simplicity makes you feel that there must be some hidden trap. You do not appreciate simple things and habits. For example, there is nothing so simple as speaking the truth; yet how many stick to Truth! If you venture into untruth, you have to invent new stories all along the line and keep in memory all the stories and all the persons to whom

you have related them. Every student has a watch on his wrist. And, you look at the watch at least a hundred times a day. Well, learn from the watch a great lesson. When you watch the watch, remember the five letters of the word, WATCH; each is giving you a fine lesson for life: W tells you ‘Watch your Words’; A warns you ‘Watch your Action’; T indicates ‘Watch your Thoughts’; C advises ‘Watch your Character’; and H declares ‘Watch your Heart.’ When you are consulting your watch, imbibe this lesson that the watch is imparting. (Divine Discourse, 13 May, 1970)

16.12.2014

Om is the sum and essence of all the teachings in scriptures about Divinity; “Om ithi ekaaksharam Brahma” states the Vedas, meaning, the one syllable Om, is Brahman, the Divine! Om is a composite of three sounds A (aa), U (oo) and M (mm). It has to be pronounced rising in a crescendo as slowly as possible, and as gradually coming down, until there remains only the echo of the silence reverberating in the cavity of your heart. Do not take it in two stages, arguing that your breath will not hold so long. Persevere until you are able to be stirred by the upward sweep and 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 your individuality maturing into a fruit and filling you with sweet juice from your own inner essence, and thereafter the final release. (Divine Discourse, Jun 09, 1970)

17.12.2014

You must know that there is no end to the incarnations in which God indulges. He has come down on countless

occasions. Sometimes He comes with a part of His glory, sometimes with a fuller equipment of splendour, sometimes for a particular task, sometimes to transform an entire era of time or a complete continent of space. God is like the electric current that flows through various contrivances and expresses itself in many different activities. The wise see only the one uniform current; the ignorant feel that they are all distinct. The Holy Bhagavatha elaborates His Story that transforms humanity. The subject matter of the Bhagavatha is the drama enacted by the Avatar and the devotees who are drawn toward Him. Listening to it promotes the realisation of God. Many sages have testified to its efficacy and extolled the Bhagavatha, which they helped preserve for posterity. (Bhagavatha Vahini, Ch 1, “The Bhagavatha”)

18.12.2014

The quintessence of the scriptural texts is this: Realise that the awareness of Divine or Brahman cannot be won by the accumulation of wealth nor by giving away the riches. Nor can it be achieved by reading texts, rising to power, acquiring degrees and diplomas, or performing scriptural sacrifices and rituals. The body is an anthill, with the mind inside as a deep cavity. The mind has hidden in it the serpent named ignorance or nescience (a-jnana). The serpent cannot be killed by resorting to satisfaction-oriented works (kamya karma). Spiritual wisdom (jnana) is the only weapon that can kill it. To achieve spiritual wisdom, you must have ‘Steady Faith’. Shraddhavan labhathe jnanam, states the scriptures. Meaning, that person alone, who has steady and unwavering faith, can certainly secure wisdom. (Sutra Vahini, “Stream of Aphorisms of Brahman”)