



Swami Satyananda Saraswati

All of a sudden I have glimpses of events that will take place in the coming century. In the next century Yoga will be relegated to the background and the role of Bhakti will be foremost. Bhakti is faith and pure love. This will definitely happen, not as a belief, but as a science. Just as we have known about modern medicine through research, in the same way psychiatrists have conducted research on the mind and obtained knowledge of the mental waves. In that very manner, by conducting research on a devotee or bhakta of the calibre of Meera Bai, they will try to know what changes take place on the physical dimension in a person saturated with Bhakti.

What name will these changes occurring due to overwhelming Bhakti be given? What are the mental waves emitted by such a devotee of God? They will have to discover this. Meera Bai drank a cup of poison, yet nothing happened to her body. Why and how? Jesus Christ hung nailed on the cross for three days, yet he lived. How did he do that? He had a frail body, but his nature was that of

a bhakta, His body was nailed to the cross at many points, yet he lived.

Bhakti marga is the science of the next century. I see this. The product of science in this century was technology. In the coming century Bhakti will be the result of science. Scientists have conducted research on the principles of matter, technology and electronics and in doing so have given us some beautiful and miraculous things. In the next century scientists will turn their focus to Bhakti. They will conduct research on Bhakti in the same manner as they conducted it on matter, electronics and physics in this century.

In the next century faith, belief and bhakti will be the field of action and enquiry for science. The influence of Bhakti on the human mind, behaviour and nature, as well as on society or even on an entire race. This is absolutely clear. The scientists of the next century will have to labour very hard. Then you will not call the spiritual science just superstition or religious belief. Rather you will call it the "science of life".

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 Just as we have been successful in establishing contact with outer space due to the electronic media, in the same way we will have to work to discover the many facets of the human being which comprise man's complex mind, his extraordinary behaviour patterns and also the extraordinary principles that are inherent in his mind. Science too has not been able to tame the human mind, in fact no one has been able to discipline the human mind. Until and unless you yourself want to control your mind, it cannot be controlled. Once scientists begin to reflect on this, the spiritual science will be reborn.

A new revolution will emerge in the next century. This revolution will be of Bhakti and Dharma. If I am alive your children and grandchildren will all love me and ask you questions on Bhakti. "Papa, tell me what is Bhakti, do you know what it is? My teacher was saying that a scientist in America has discovered and declared that Bhakti is very essential as it influences the body and all matter, and he has also said that he has examined the waves emerging from the instruments, and after all his evaluations the facts and figures which he finds tell us that we should love God, just as we love someone who is dearest to us. Do you love God as much as you love Mama?" You will say, "What has happened to my child? I think he has flipped." Your child will retort, "No, my mind has not flipped — I am talking science."

God is the subject of the next century. In this century the subject of science was matter. While conducting research on matter, they discovered many things which are being rejected today. This is why it has become necessary for man and society to discuss God. Whether you are on the path of Jews, Christians, Muslims or Hindus, you will have to direct your mind to matters beyond this world. In this century God was such a subject that you could not discuss Him, but now you can. However, the subject of God should come forth in an organized manner, as a scientific principle. Ishwara should be presented as a subject matter dealt with by science.

In my life I have never talked about God, but now, apart from God there is no other subject I can talk on.

Find your relationship with God, try to understand this and try to love Him. You do not have to leave your work or lifestyle for this. No. When a boy falls in love with a girl does he stop eating, does he stop working? No. Love is a matter of awareness. The boy and girl have an awareness of each other at all

times. No matter what they do they are thinking of each other. They find bliss in that. They find communion in that.

A shopkeeper sells you things which cater to your immediate needs. But I am not a shopkeeper. I do not want to teach you that which you need just for today. I am telling you things that will be essential for your next generation, because the next generation will not be like you, they will not run after wealth. These little children and their children will ask what the definition of God is, just as it has been asked in Swetaswata Upanishad. What is the cause of this universe? Why was life created? How does it sustain itself? Where does God live? At whose command does He live? Who controls His pain and pleasure? What are the disciplines to follow? Who knows Brahman? They will ask these questions. This generation does not ask such questions. Their lives are controlled by kama and artha, not by dharma and moksha.

What I teach may not be relevant to the average man but it will be remembered after twenty years. Then there will be remembrance of Bhakti Yoga and Dharma. Politicians cannot help religion in any real or creative way. Only two kinds of people can help Dharma in a creative way. One is a sannyasi and the other a scientist or rishi-muni.

No businessman, no politician can propagate Dharma or Bhakti. Only saints and scientists or rishis can help to give importance to Bhakti and Dharma. *They alone can see beyond matter and dissect it to its smallest principle.*

The science you read, whether it is predictive astrology, or mathematical astrology, up to a certain point the information or knowledge you obtain about an individual is intellectual. But after some time that same knowledge which you are searching for becomes inner knowledge. As long as you follow procedures as an intellectual you move ahead by functioning within a set of rules. Then there comes a point where without any effort you receive inner illumination. *In the light of this inner illumination a new set of disciplines appear before you.*

Many people who have experienced this divine illumination will have to prepare the preliminary field for these enquiries and discussions on God and Bhakti. I think this will be the first step. There have not been many people in this century who have inspired others to follow the Divine life. There have been many preachers of Dharma and they have

The Bhakti Age by Swami Satyananda Saraswati preached a lot about the Divine life and God, but their preaching did not have that *ability to inspire*. It is not enough to preach. As long as the preachings do not penetrate into the area of my feelings and emotions, nor do I use them for my daily work, until then preaching to others will not bear fruit, it will not give them real inspiration.

In the next century the people who will point to this direction of life will be of scientific temperament. This is the work of scientists. They alone have to do this work. People should be trained, not just in the field of education, but in other areas of life as well.

At one end a God realized saint and at the other end a scientist, both will have to join hands to do this work. The next century is the age of Bhakti. This century was that of industry and technology. The industrial revolution of this century was a gift from the scientists and the Bhakti revolution of the next century will also be their gift. You are all blind believers.

A time will come soon when without redefining the meaning of Bhakti and making it a part of his life, man will not become free from his difficulties. This is the only way to be free from your afflictions. Because a backache is not the only affliction which man faces. His mind is saturated with countless afflictions. In man's awareness and unconscious mind there are many unsolved knots and puzzles, and if you set out to find different solutions to this then your whole life will be spent solving the riddles of your mind.

The solution for all your riddles and puzzles is Bhakti. As such you should make efforts to attain Bhakti as and when it is possible. Sing kirtans and bhajans, associate with sadhus and saints, read the lives of great saints. Try to draw their inspiration into your life. *Do not turn Bhakti into a religious sect or religious order.* Try, it will take time. This is not the subject of entertainment for buddhi. It is very hard to obtain Bhakti. The mind, intellect, logic and its affiliates have very hard external coverings, tough nuts to crack. So a bhakta should not become involved in logical discussions.

Sri Aurobindo had said, "Reason was the helper, now it is an obstacle". If you can supersede this buddhi then you can overstep the rest. Bhakti has been defined in the Narada Bhakti Sutras as undistilled love for God. It is the form of immortality. By attaining Bhakti man becomes perfect, complete, content and immortal. He also becomes free from desires, he does not sorrow, nor

does he have aversions, nor does he take pleasure from any object, nor is he mentally agitated or restless. By knowing Bhakti, man becomes intoxicated, he attains peace and experiences bliss in his own self.

What is the meaning of Bhakti. To love God is Bhakti. How do you love God? Just as you love your mother, brother or after marriage your man. No, it is not the love which you have for your relatives. Bhakti has three relationships, that of father and son, that of affection, and that of love between a man and woman, as in the case of Radha and Krishna.

Bhakti is not just a philosophy. Nor is it a religion.

Bhakti is a science which can transform the very roots of man. Bhakti transforms his thinking pattern and his basic tendencies. Bhakti is the inner relationship you have with God. Just as you relate to your father, mother or wife, in the same way you have a relationship with God. Bhakti is the basis of that relationship and you should find out your own relationship with Him. What does He mean to you? In which form of His do you believe?

I have been talking about God for quite some time. But it's easier for me to think about God rather than speak about Him, because *it is not possible to describe God. He can only be experienced.* Yet at times it feels nice to hear about Him. By doing so you receive inspiration, hope, assistance and strength to meet the afflictions of life with courage. But your thoughts and actions towards God become fruitful only when you establish a relationship with Him.

You will have to find out for yourself what your relation is with God, because this is entirely your own personal affair. My relationship with God cannot be yours, because my association with Him is purely personal, and yours too should be personal. So, in the life of a Bhakta it is important to know what God means to you and what you mean to Him. How are you related to one another? It takes time to discover your relationship with God. It is not necessary to discover it in one attempt. You will have to ponder deeply on it, and once you have ascertained this relationship you may consider that your journey is almost over. Now you become very near and dear to Him. In the Srimad Bhagavata it is said, "Just as every morsel of food carries with it satisfaction, fulfillment and freedom from hunger, and these three qualities merge into one another, in the same way, singing praises of God in complete

The Bhakti Age by Swami Satyananda Saraswati surrender to Him brings about three things, the awareness of love, the awareness of the form of God and vairagya.”

Every householder should sit down each morning to attain the blessings of God. In this regard you should make a definite rule which you should follow each day. At least twice a day you should establish a connection with God. Morning and evening. In the morning bathe and sit down nicely to connect with Him. Sometimes you may be sick, so you can't bathe. It does not matter. At that time disassociate yourself from your husband, wife, mother, father, your nation, your leaders. You should stand alone and naked in front of God. One has to shed everything before God for these few moments and then for the rest of the day continue with your daily work.

Sing praises of God. Surrender to Him. Hear stories of his deeds. Chant His name, worship Him and think deeply about Him. This is your first duty. The Lord himself has said in the Srimad Bhagavata, “Those who wish to attain Divine love for me should have faith in the immortal stories about me, they should always sing about my qualities and deeds and chant my name. They should have belief in my worship and invoke me by chanting stotras.”

First of all direct your energies in the right direction. *Your energy which is flowing towards the material world, snatch some of it from there.* You think about the world twenty-four hours of the day. Slowly turn your mind from there towards God. Start with half an hour and gradually increase it to two, three, four, six, eight and then twenty four hours of thinking about God. This is what I do now. And what do you do? You think about worldly matters all the twenty-four hours of the day and perhaps out of fear you may wave a few incense sticks in front of God, or you go to church, or on Friday you do Narnaz, or on Monday you offer water to the Shiva lingam in case God gets angry with you.

This is why the grace of God does not descend on us. For twenty-four hours your awareness is surrendered to the world and only a few moments do you offer to God, that too out of fear, to protect yourself from His wrath. And even if you do worship Him it is only for your own benefit, for your own salvation. To chant God's name for your own salvation is not the way to worship God.

Give foremost importance to God. First of all HIM and then YOU — not vice versa. The main cause of

man's sorrow is because he has misguided priorities. To attain God is not of foremost importance for man, to live spiritual life is not of importance to him nor is the Divine life. He only turns his attention to the Divine life and is attached to it because there he experiences relief from the stress he faces. He finds freedom from his worries and anxiety, he gets peace, security and contentment. But he does not give it first and foremost importance. Think about it.

What do you give prime importance to in your life? The fulfillment of your desires, greed and attachments, your worries -- are they not the most important factor of your life?

In reality we are all related to God alone and none else. My closest association is with God, not with my mother or father, nor with my brother. I am not anybody's son, nor anyone's father, nor a brother to anyone. I am simply the servant of God. I am the slave of God. This is the only truth of life.

Bhakti marga is by far the best path to follow amidst all other paths. Especially for those people who wish to have a glimpse of God, who wish to realize the form of Truth. But one thing is certain, there is something which stands as an obstacle between me and God. Whether it is the body, or the mind, or the emotions, something does stand in the way. I have heard and I do believe that God is closer to me than my own life force or prana. He is closer to me than even my breath. He is closer to me than my thoughts. If that is so then why is it that I cannot see Him? What I mean to say is, why am I not able to see and recognize the Truth? This is because I am blind, there is a cloth tied over my eyes which prevents me from seeing and recognizing the Truth. Now we have to find a method to establish a connection with Him.

As long as you do not connect this microphone with the electricity this will not be accomplished, in this way, if I do not establish a connection with God in some way or the other then how can I continue my life? To renounce one's wishes and desires may cause some difficulties, but it will fulfil your resolve of self surrender to God, and it will also fulfil the mandate of God. Arpan or offering of the self may cause difficulty to your body but it does not matter because you will derive bliss from this. To follow the mandate of God brings bliss. Here you have to offer at every step — the body, the mind, the emotions and lastly the refined awareness or atma.

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To offer the atma one has to even renounce the very idea of liberation, or the desire to attain nearness to God, to attain God's grace, to have association with God. I do not want to attain anything, not even God. You are my Master. I accept that. I am happy to know that you are my Master, Therefore, I can think about you all day and thus attain proximity to you in the course of time. But today, even if I do not get a glimpse of you, it does not matter. Instead of coming to me yourself, send your sevak Hanuman to direct me and tell me what to do. I will do what he says. You do not need to instruct me directly. You can send your messenger. This self of mine does not belong to me. It is yours. When I offer myself to you, the question of desire for spiritual life or liberation does not arise.

God has given me everything, and what I did not get, perhaps I did not need. Then why should I forcefully ask in space, then it can be heard. Sound vibrations are continuously taking place in eternal time, then they manifest in the duration of time and space. Kirtan is something which is loved by everyone throughout the world. Australians sing kirtan and it is very nice and full of life. Little children get together and sing the name of God. When God's name is repeated by many people together it is known as kirtan.

Kirtan is the main sadhana of Kali Yuga. There are different sadhanas for every Yuga — yajna, tapasya, yoga, renunciation etc. In this Kali Yuga these forms of sadhana are not found, because the mind is easily distracted. If man practises renunciation and austerity, tyaga and tapa, he falls sick. Yajna take a long time to conduct so how will you work or run your business if you follow the path of yajna? In this age the main sadhana is singing God's name repeatedly.

In the Kali Yuga, God's name alone is the basis. This Yuga is very complicated and confused. Full of stress and anxiety. It is therefore difficult to perform many sadhanas. For physical health it is all right to practise asana, pranayama, neti, dhauti, but to realize God and live in Divine life all sadhanas have become unnecessary because they are too difficult. There is only one sadhana left for us and that is singing the name of God continuously.

Nam Sankirtan is singing the name of God. This is the Yoga or Dharma of the 21st century. People throughout the world, irrespective of their nationality, culture, colour, religion or creed, will enjoy the bliss of kirtan. People will gather in the hundreds and thousands according to family or

social order to sing kirtan. By taking the Lord's name physical, mental and social ailments are taken care of. Why are we afflicted with unhappiness in this century? Because in this century *enjoyment and sensory pleasures* have been given more importance. Throughout the world politics and materialism, materialistic desires and pleasures have been given importance. If you have a desire to buy a cycle, motorcycle or car then you are continuously obsessed by that thought. This is not the way to individual peace or world peace.

You cannot establish world peace by conducting international conferences. If every individual and every family attains peace then only can world peace be established. If every individual lights one lamp, the whole world can be illuminated.

In the next century every individual, the entire society and all scientists will take an interest in music. The scientists who are conducting research on nuclear matter through the medium of scientific methods will begin to research Bhakti and, despite your not wanting it, your children will sing kirtan.

The times are changing. The climate is changing. The climate for materialism is coming to an end and the climate conducive to Bhakti is returning. After winter, summer comes and you discard your woollens. After summer, winter returns and you once again put on your warm clothes. In the same way the climate in which materialism flourished is now over. People are tired of it. The attraction and attachment of people towards materialistic culture is broken. They have become disillusioned, devoid of hope and confused.

In the future you will prefer to lead a simple, spontaneous, peaceful life. What are we getting from the modern urban life? We are surrounded by poor hutments and dirty habitats. People live in one room or small flats, in front of which dirty drains flow. The mud houses in the villages, and the simple meal is far better than those living conditions. There is cleanliness, there is peace, the nights are quiet. The problem of noise pollution, social pollution, air pollution are all absent.

Can you tell me what the culture of today has to offer you? Dirt, filth, crowds, doubt towards one another, broken families, worry and anxiety. Even the person who has always stood first gets nervous when he has to give an ability test or interview, Worry, anxiety and lack of confidence have become the culture of today and in the course of time they assume the form of mental diseases.

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So in the next century it is only necessary to sing
the name of God.

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Now it will not be possible for anyone to conduct
yajnas or perform other kinds of sadhana as in the
past. Even sadhus and mahatmas are now unable to
conduct yajnas. After all, sadhus and mahatmas are
evolutes of the same society in which you live.
They do not descend from heaven. It is your
progeny that becomes a sadhu or mahatma. So the
stuff which you bring forth into the world is bound
to have the same qualities as you. This you must
understand. Even these sadhus and mahatmas will
not be able to undertake tapasya. After a day's fast
they say that the stomach is full of gas and acidity.
Just a small headache and the doctor is rushed in.
Now the old stuff is finished.

The future generations of the next century will be
the Bhakti Yoga generation. Not Raja Yoga, nor
even Gyana Yoga, the next generation will be that
of Bhakti Yoga. In this age man has developed his
emotions to a great extent. His emotions are not
blunt, nor are they blocked.

It is possible that they are a bit distorted, but
whatever they may be you are able to express them
freely. The flows of these expressed emotions are to
be turned towards God.

The same emotions of hostility which you direct
towards your enemy, or passion which you direct
towards a woman, or greed which you have towards
wealth, when that very same emotion is directed
towards God it is called Bhakti Bhavana or the
emotion of Bhakti Bhava.

Bhakti does not have any other ingredient. Bhakti
uses the same ingredient which is used for the
emotion of aversion. When you have an aversion
for anyone you remember him twenty four hours a
day. He remains in your mind even when you are
eating or sleeping, he does not go out of your mind.
In the same way you should remember God all the
time when you develop Bhakti Bhava.

But this does not happen, all other forms of emotion
overtake you but Bhakti or remembrance of God
does not. This is why Ravana must have thought
that the Bhakti of Shabari, Hanuman or Sugriva for
Rama was not possible for him. So instead he
practised the Bhakti of enmity. Develop enmity
with Bhagwan Rama, abduct Sita and he will surely
come to liberate me. For Ravana the Bhakti of
enmity was very natural. But this is not easy for
everyone.

There are two kinds of Bhakti in the world which
are difficult to attain, that of God as your enemy
and God as your lover, just as the love Radha and
Krishna had for each other, or Meera Bai had for
Krishna. Meera believed that God was her husband.
She married a man to oblige her society but she
herself accepted only Krishna as her husband. This
Madhurya Bhakti (sweet devotion) cannot be
attained by all, only a chosen few can attain this
Bhakti. *Dasya Bhakti* is easy for all to attain. *Dasya*
means a servant, He is my Master and I am His
servant. He should tell me what I should do. I will
only do what He commands me to do. I am in His
hands, a slave of His commands. *Dasya Bhakti* is
very simple and also possible to attain. If this too is
not possible there is another type of Bhakti known
as *Atma nivedan Bhakti* which is an expression of
the following sentiment: "There is none as wicked
and crooked as me. I am the useless son of my
father. To dupe you I sing 'Jay Jagdish Hare' every
day. Out of fear I garland you with flowers. I think
that if I do not worship you, you will punish me by
turning me into a widow, or childless. So out of fear
I do go to the temple for worship. See what a
useless son I am. But whatever I am I belong to
you, I am yours. A son may cease to be a good son,
but a mother can never cease to be a good mother."

This is also a type of Bhakti which may suit you. If
you like it, practise it. I am fit for nothing. I heard
about you from sadhus and mahatmas. They sing a
lot of praises about you. Your name is sung in the
Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita, Guru Granth Sahib,
Bible and Koran. I believe this but I feel greater
attraction towards my son than to you. My mind is
drawn more to my husband than to you. The
glamour and glitter of worldly life attracts me more
than you do. My mind is drawn more to enjoyment,
to defeating others, to winning over an enemy,
rather than to you. Whenever I sit down to worship
you, my body may be seated here, but my mind
wanders everywhere incessantly. I want my mind to
become one-pointed and concentrated but it never
does. I am referring to all of you. *That is how it is
with all of you — is it not?*

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna says, ' Krishna, this
mind is very restless and its nature is oscillating. It
is very stubborn and also strong. This is why to
bring this mind within control is as difficult as
trying to control the wind.'

Do not have aversion for yourself. Throw out all the
blocks you have within you in relation to your life.

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After that, when your mind is purified then say,
“My God, I am yours however I may be. Whether I
am a fraud, or foolish, or debauched, or useless, a
robber, thief or sinner, whatever I may be — I am
yours.” *So practise Bhakti according to your level.*

If your level is that of the 3rd class but you enrol for
matriculation, you are sure to fail. Therefore,
practise the sadhana suited for your level. In the
morning sit down and offer all your weaknesses to
God. If you do not know how to speak to God write
it down in your diary. Later tear up the diary.

You should open yourself before God. It is not
necessary for you to pretend because you should
know who you are. Your mind is impure, your
thoughts are polluted, your dreams are
contaminated, your speech is harsh. You talk about
God, you read and write about Him, you can even
contemplate on Him, but do you ever pray to Him?

Just the body remains here but the mind wanders
everywhere. This is your personality and your level.

This is your level and you want to enrol in the
university. You will continue to fail every year.

First of all understand what is real Bhakti, what is
real love. When you love a beautiful girl, just as
they do in the cinema, undoubtedly that is not real
love, but you forget everything around you
including your immediate surroundings, you even
forget what your parents will think. You do not
even think what will happen if the girl gets
pregnant. No, you forget everything. But do you
forget everything in this manner when you worship
God? No.

When you cannot forget yourself even for half a
minute when you sing His name, then that means
that you should change your sadhana.

The next century belongs to Bhakti Yoga. Not just
for you, but even for the scientists who conduct
research. Those who conduct research on scientific
principles will now conduct research on Bhakti.
What is the effect of Bhakti on man's behaviour,
what is its effect on the supreme consciousness of
man.

Research will be done on this. Now they conduct
research on matter, soon they will research the
emotions of man. Because the emotions of man are
far more powerful and meaningful. Just as the
feeling of deep aggression arises in your mind, or
the intense emotion of desire, enmity or aversion
arises in your mind, in the very same way the deep

emotion of true love for God arises within. Not just
for God, but for all humanity, because God has no
form.

Yet all are His forms. You can say that God is with
form, or formless too. *God has no form despite
which you can see Him in any form you wish to.*
God has no form but every form is His form,
because He is present in every thing. He is the all-
pervading Truth. In this universe there is no place
or object or thing in which God is not present.

*Therefore, whatever is permeated by divinity, has
good vibrations, which inspires good thoughts and
feelings in us,* which can build a good society, and
develop good relations between us — that is the
highest Bhakti. God should not be limited or
restricted to temples, churches and mosques. In
stead He should be present in your life in the form
of an endless and limitless power.

God has to be seen in two forms. Immanent and
transcendent. He is above and apart from all things.
He is beyond time space and object. He is present in
all forms of life. We have to accept both these
concepts about God, not just the concept of His
transcendental form.

God is an experience, the highest experience. He is
beyond name and form, beyond all limitations,
beyond all things animate and inanimate, but yet
God has another form which is all pervading and
the inner soul of all beings. He is present in diverse
forms from the most subtle to the most gross. He
manifests in many forms. He pervades many forms.
Yet He is complete in himself.

There is a mantra in Swetaswatara Upanishad:
“Ishwara who is only one, hidden in all forms of
life, pervading all forms of life, the inner soul of
each being. Established in each jiva He controls
their karma. Independent of the three gunas of
Prakriti He exists as sakshi and pure
consciousness.”

He reveals Himself in different forms within each
being, from the most ordinary to the most talented.
God is present within that man who needs my help.
*He is also present within that animal who needs my
protection.* Thus it is important to enlighten oneself
about all the concepts related to Bhakti so that
society can re-establish itself. Then you will be able
to enjoy life.

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 Today the same people who are conducting research on the science of life, science of matter, electronics etc. are later going to conduct research on Bhakti. In the next century all the scientific machinery is going to be utilized for Bhakti, because the greatest problem mankind is going to face in the future is how to manage the human being. Today you cannot even manage your son, then how can you handle the masses. But when you want to handle mankind you will have to discover a way to do that. In the history of the human race whenever anarchy has spread, whenever political injustice and adharma have increased, then Bhakti has been revived. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says, "O Arjuna, whenever Dharma suffers and Adharma increases then I create my form and manifest myself."

Try to remember when Kabir, Surdas, Meera, Tulsidas and Nanak appeared on this earth. Once again the age of Bhakti is near, because it has become necessary. In the first half of the next century, not just these children but all your children will take an interest in kirtan. Today they are not prepared to listen to you, no matter what you say. Tomorrow you may ask them not to take an interest in these things. Even then they will not listen to you. Because when the weather changes, the cold, heat and rain all appear. In this you can do nothing.

The wind is about to change and I knew this a long time ago. I thought that people wanted to learn Yoga so I should teach it, but to sing the name of God is necessary for both young and old. It is not necessary to manifest Bhakti, it is already completely established inside you. People ask how to practise Bhakti, how to increase Bhakti. But it is not at all like that. Bhakti in its full form is present within each one of us. But it is turned towards worldly affairs and not towards God. It is directed towards attachment and material love, enmity, jealousy and desire. This is called bhavana. It is the same bhavana which a child feels towards his mother, or a husband towards his wife, or between two friends. Bhavana is a type of energy, a type of flow. It is a wave within us. It is this very same bhavana whose path has to be changed.

We know the story of Tulsidas. On a stormy and rainy night he crossed the turbulent river with the help of a corpse that was floating there to meet his wife. But the words of his wife when he met her changed his whole life. Bhakti was already present in him, but on hearing the strong words of his wife

the waves of emotion within him which were mis directed towards a woman flowed towards God. His wife gave him a jolt and his path changed.

To learn Bhakti you do not need to go to school or read books, you just have to change your direction, your path. You may direct the same emotion of yours which is travelling on the path of enmity, destruction, death, anger and lust towards God. That is known as Bhakti.

Bhakti has nothing to do with worship. You may do pooja as that has its own importance. But that is not Bhakti. Bhakti is the name of an emotion, it has nothing to do with rituals. People perform rituals, but it is not certain that they do it with Bhakti. Priests worship in the temples but do they really have Bhakti? The mother cooks food for her son and husband, but she does not repeat their names all the time. However, somewhere in her mind the thought of her son and husband is always present. That is called spontaneous awareness.

This is not a religious act just as you perform in mandirs and mosques, although that too is necessary. I am not criticizing that. That too is necessary, but that is a religious act. That is a physical action which may be necessary for different reasons, but that is not the limit of Bhakti.

A mother has intense feeling for her child, a lover has intense love for his beloved, one enemy has intense hatred for the other. You hate your enemy so much that you remember him day and night, eating and sleeping you remain obsessed by him. This same intensity of feeling is also present in Bhakti .

When the intensity of Bhakti rises, then it assumes the form of *Para Bhakti or transcendental love.* *Para Bhakti and Gyana are the same.* What type of intensity should you have in your emotions? This is not the insipid love of your heart, it is intense love. In other words, apart from this intense love nothing else exists in your mind.

This emotion towards God is the highest when you do not at all manifest your ego before Him. You do not say that you are such a good man who loves Him, who can do anything for Him. In Bhakti marga *there is no room for ego.* Success in Madhurya Bhava of Bhakti can only be attained by the *grace of God.* There are not many examples of this type of Bhakti, because the chances of slipping

The Bhakti Age by Swami Satyananda Saraswati or even falling while practising Madhurya Bhakti are great.

Many sadhus and mahatmas practised Madhurya Bhakti at Vrindavan, but somewhere along the way they slipped and lost out. If the idea of a woman comes to the mind it is natural that passion too will arise. Leave aside Meera Bai and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. How many others have there been of that calibre. The path of Madhurya Bhakti is only for a chosen few. Those who are *innocent*, pure, devoid of fraud and the idea of sin, it is only for them.

Meera Bai was from the royal family. It never occurred to her how a mere statue could be her husband. If I give you a statue today and tell you it is your husband, will you believe me? But Meera Bai did believe that. The queen of Chittor, Meera Bai believed that a statue was her husband. Only one whose heart is pure and innocent like a child can do this.

When a small child breaks his doll, he cries, but you don't. You tell him, "Don't cry, I'll get you another." You say this because you are not sad. But the child experiences sorrow, because for him the doll is real. In the same way, the person whose heart is that of a child, in whose mind there is no trace of injury — Madhurya Bhakti is for them. Do not adopt this Bhakti and nor should you ever ask about it.

Now there is only one way left to attain God. No renunciation, no austerity, no vows, no yoga, just the remembrance of God's name and faith and belief in God.

In the coming century this subject will be discussed. The twentieth century was one of political culture. Politicians were foremost in all fronts. But the new generation will not have trust in politicians.

Political culture is a superficial culture. It will never protect man nor will it find a solution to his problems. It will never allow an end to war. In our century two major world wars were fought and maybe we are heading for another.

In the next century scientists will change their field of vision. Till now they have researched matter and developed its techniques, but now in the next century they will research the field of emotions, thoughts, sensitive feelings and surrender. They will do research on Yoga and Bhakti. But this research will attain a new direction. This has already begun. It is happening in many countries.

What is Bhakti? What effect does it have on the electric and magnetic waves in man's mind? How does Bhakti influence the enzymes? What degeneration or improvement takes place in the cardiovascular system through Bhakti.

Scientists are beginning to research these subjects. Until now they have only striven to perfect the knowledge of matter. But now it is they who will establish the importance of the human mind and emotions over matter. In this century we have lost many things but in the next century we will not lose anything. If the next century loses then destruction is certain because man has become very powerful. Today he has the power to destroy himself. He has technological knowledge of powerful weapons.

In the next century the number of saints and mahatmas will increase. Wherever there is excessive enjoyment, people have become tired of it. The twentieth century has given us the philosophy of enjoyment. The philosophy of enjoyment is present in literature, in music, in drama. But there is no spirituality. Swami Vivekananda, Paramahansa Ramakrishna, Swami Ramatirtha have kept spirituality alive by giving it a few drops of Coramine. But the next century is definitely that of Bhakti. Scientists have changed their mind. They say that the world is misusing all their efforts in the field of science for their own destruction.

Yes, enjoyment is necessary but not saturation of enjoyment. Saturation of bhoga leads to indifference. Man's interest in it ends. The era of bhoga is going, the era of technology is going and after this the era of Bhakti will begin.

Now scientists will make enquiries into Bhakti, because Bhakti has an effect which will influence the personal relationships of man and thus, in the course of time, cultures and civilizations as well.

It is the inner values of a civilization that are responsible for its prosperity or downfall. In this, the twentieth century, the inner values of our own culture have been destroyed. This century belonged to politicians and materialism.

It was not the century where spiritual seekers, spiritual culture, spiritual civilization flourished. Over a hundred years have passed before we realized that they have not given us anything. Nothing at all. Poverty has not been eradicated; instead it is certainly on the increase. Therefore, in the coming century, the importance of politicians and materialism will wane. Scientists who focus on

The Bhakti Age by Swami Satyananda Saraswati matter alone will also lose their importance. People will get more and more inspiration to adopt the path of Bhakti. Scientists too will help to bring about this awareness and belief in Bhakti. They are already aware that the experiments carried out by them are being misused for the wrong end. Their research is being used for the destruction of mankind.

At one point an idea often comes to me that the path is only one. There is no other path. So every path is a stepping stone to Bhakti. Karma Yoga is a stepping stone so too is Raja Yoga and Gyana Yoga. Bhakti Yoga is the path and God is the destination. I am a traveller and you too are a traveller. This alone is the truth. If there is any philosophy other than this then it is irrelevant and unreasonable. We have all been born with the same destiny.

Man is an experiment and the result of this experiment is the experience of God. Many people have had this experience, but many more will have this experience later. I clearly see that there are great changes taking place in different parts of the world, especially in the western hemisphere.

For the society as well as for the family Bhakti marga is a beautiful way. For the entire human civilization this is the path of life. What I mean to say is that parents and children should sit together in the evening during sandhya or dusk, take a harmonium, sitar or guitar and sing together with love, "Sriman Narayan, Narayan, Narayan". This is a happy family. Then read a good book on the life of great saints. This will give birth to an inner happiness, excessive love, contentment and the grace of God.

Auspicious greetings to you for the New Millennium

Swami Satyananda Saraswati