

Chapter 8 Morality: Foundation for Progress

1. Religion Is Three-Fourths Character

Morality is the foundation for spiritual progress. It is the prerequisite for the journey, the first step. If we do not live a moral life, our pursuit of advanced practices is meaningless. Yet today many people desire quick character changes and miraculous results before developing even basic virtues. Righteousness and character are the essential qualifications for the journey.

Religion is three-fourths character. No person can claim to be religious if he merely observes the sacraments and rules, and fails to be upright and compassionate.

Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p.153

Virtuous character is the driving force of every dedicated aspirant. However knowledgeable, devoted, or active we may be, if we lack virtue we are destined to fail. Moral strength reflects our practice of universal values and endows us with a willingness to act on what we have learned. It demonstrates a personality that integrates the various facets of our discipline. Only a strongly integrated personality is capable of great achievement.

It is often declared that knowledge is power. No. No. Character is power. Nothing can be more powerful on Earth than character. Riches, scholarship, status, authority are all frail and flimsy before it.

Sathya Sai Speaks 11, p.235

Today many teachers present courses for “quick” spiritual development that do not address this essential first step. They prescribe breathing exercises, postures, or special meditations for new students without imposing any preliminary qualifications of virtuous character. But advanced practices cannot yield realization of our divine nature without adherence to basic standards of right conduct.

You may do the most rigorous japa (repetition of the name of the Lord) or submit yourself to the direst of austerities, but if you are not virtuous, all of it is sheer waste.

Sathya Sai Speaks 4, p. 218

第八章 道德：进步之基础

1. 宗教四分之三是品德

道德是灵性进步的基础。它是灵道上的先决条件，也是第一步。如果我们不过着一个有道德的生活，我们所追求的灵修就失去意义了。然而今天，很多人甚至在培育起基本的德行之前，就欲求快速的性格改变和奇迹般的结果。正义与品格是灵道上不可或缺的先决条件。

宗教的四分之三是品德。如果一个人仅遵守仪礼条规而不抱持正直慈悲，他不能自称为一个虔诚的求道者。

《沙迪亚赛说》第7章153面

美德是每一个志于道者的驱动力量。不论我们学问有多渊博，信仰有多虔诚或行动有多积极，如果我们缺乏美德，我们注定失败。道德力量反映我们对宇宙价值观的修养并授予我们以愿力去执行我们已学到的一切。它展示‘整合我们修行的各个切面’的一种个性。只有具备一种坚强的完整个性的人才能获得伟大的成就。

我们常说知识就是力量。不。不。美德才是力量。天地间最大的力量莫过于美德。富裕，学识，地位，威权，在美德之前都显得脆弱。

《沙迪亚赛说》第11章235面

今天，许多老师呈上灵性发展的‘快速’课程，却不包括这基本的第一步。他们给刚入学的学生们讲解呼吸法，坐姿，或特别的静坐，却没有加入道德的任何必备资格。然而，若不依附正确行为的基本标准，我们的神圣本质就难以从高级的修行中体现出来。

你可以严格执行持名 (*japa*) 的修习或恪守极其朴实的生活，但如果你行为不检点，一切免谈。

《沙迪亚赛说》第4章218面

It is impossible for aspirants to seek their advanced degrees without first learning the alphabet of virtue. Higher degrees may be obtained only after first learning the basics. Living a moral life is the essential first step in reducing egoism. If we do not conquer selfish desires, there is no hope for us to expand beyond the small perimeter of ourselves. The modern cults of body and personality cater to the lower self. This trend needs to be reversed. Consideration of and service to others is required on the spiritual path.

Morality, a virtuous character: these are the very foundations of progress, the very basic needs. They grow in the realm of the spirit. But today, the spirit is neglected. Physical and animal needs are catered to. They are accepted as the ends of living; all efforts are directed to these.

Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p. 336

2. What is Morality?

But what is morality? It is adherence to truth, love, goodness, duty, peace, and nonviolence – to God’s will as we understand it. These are the human values that are the core teachings of the world’s religions. Maintaining high moral standards demonstrates our recognition of the divinity in others and in ourselves. It shows our respect and consideration for others in thought and deed. Morality is more than simply obeying certain laws or social norms. It is the observance of these high qualities which makes us truly human and potentially self-realized.

Morality is the corollary to dharma (spiritual duty). Morality does not merely mean the observance of certain rules in the workaday world. Morality means adherence to the straight and sacred path of right conduct. Morality is the blossoming of good conduct.

Sanathana Sarathi, Jan 1985, p.2

Morality, like dharma, is suited to our particular role in society. It is based on our age, sex, status, and function. There are no absolute laws of morality. The norms of morality vary from age to age and from culture to culture. Ernest

没有学会道德的基本原则，求道者不可能达到高深的境界。学会基本学识之后才能进入更高一级的阶段。过一个有道德的生活是减轻自私心态所不可或缺的第一个步骤。如果我们不克服自私的欲望，我们就没有希望扩张到我们自己的小框框之外。身体与个性的摩登崇拜迎合的是低下的自我。这种趋势必须被扭转过来。替他人着想与服务他人，在灵道上，是必需的。

道德，一个崇高的人格：这些都是进步的基础，基本的需求。它们在灵性领域内成长。但今天，灵性被忽略了。身体的和肉欲的需要受到迎合。它们被接受为生活的目的；一切努力都是为了它们。

《沙迪亚赛说》第7章336面

2. 道德是什么？

然而，道德是什么？它是遵循真理、爱、善、义务、平和、及非暴力——遵循神的旨意，如我们所了解的。这些都是人类价值，是世界宗教的核心教导。维持高度的道德标准展示我们对寓于他人与吾人之内的神性的认知。它展现我们在思想与行为上对他人的尊敬和顾虑。道德不止于遵守某些条规或社会准则。使我们成为真正的人和有潜能达致自我证悟的就是这些高尚德性的遵守。

道德是法（*dharma* 灵性义务）的必然结果。道德并不仅仅意谓遵守一般世界的某些条规而已。道德指的是严格遵循正直行为的康庄大道。道德是良好行为的花果。

《永恒战车御者》英文版1985年1月，第2面

道德，一如正义，是配合我们在社会上所扮演的特别角色的。它是我们的年龄，性别，地位和职务为基础的。道德没有绝对的法律规范。道德的规范因不同的年龄和文化而变化。海明威（Ernest

Hemingway observed in *Death in the Afternoon*: "...What is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after..."

There are no universal and absolute norms of morality. Ethical relativity is an inescapable social phenomenon. Morality depends on the time, the place, and the spirit of the age.

Summer Showers 1979, p.25

3. How Can We Become Virtuous?

In the beginning the lessons are plain: do not lie, do not cheat, do not steal, do no harm to others. The consequences of such misguided actions are quickly realized. Yet, despite the fact that suffering inevitably follows selfish action, some people take little precaution to avoid it. Although we may be burned repeatedly, some of us continue to reach into the fire.

The saddest part of the story is that man, though he sees and hears, suffers and falls, does not get quite convinced that sin is a dangerous experiment, that it unmistakably brings on its harvest of tears.

Sathya Sai Speaks 2, pp.160-161

When incorrect action is recognized as the source of pain, the battle is half won. The seeds of suffering can be pulled from the Earth before they sprout. With time, virtues rise to the fore. Serve others; love others as yourself; see divinity in all God's creatures. Through adherence to high moral standards, the grace of God may be won. Each step becomes easier and each good deed leads to another. When we follow the straight path of spiritual duty, God makes our load lighter and easier to bear. With each passing day our way becomes clearer. We learn that a virtuous character is our only lasting possession.

Be moral, be virtuous. Be sincere in thought, deed, and word. Be honest to yourself. Money comes and goes! But morality comes and grows! So man has to give up the yearning for money and yearn for more and more morality.

Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p.331

Hemingway) 在其著作《午后之死亡》有这样的感悟：“。。。事后你感到好的就是具有道德的，而感到不好的就是不具有道德的。。。”

世上没有共同的和绝对的道德基准。合乎道德的相对性是一个不可避免的社会现象。道德要看时间，地点和时代精神来决定。

《夏季浸濡》1979第25面

3. 如何能成为有德之士？

开始时训诫颇为简单易懂：不撒谎，不欺骗，不偷窃，不伤害他人。这种错误行为的后果很快地就会被体会到。纵使痛苦不可避免地紧随着自私行为而降临，然而，一些人还是不加以警戒而避免之。虽然我们一再地被火烧伤，我们有些人仍继续玩火。

最可悲的就是，人，即便他看到和听到，受苦和跌倒，可他还是不相信，罪恶是一项危险的试验而会正确无误地带来落泪的后果。

《沙迪亚赛说》第2章160-161面

如果认识不对的行为是痛苦的根源，这场战争已胜卷在握。痛苦的种子可以在发芽前从泥土中拔起。假以时日，道德即露头角。服务他人；爱人如己；在神所创造的万物中看到圣灵。通过对高道德的坚持，你可赢得神恩。每一步变得更加容易，每一个善行带来下一个善行。当我们追随灵性义务的康庄大道时，神便减轻我们的负荷，使我们易于承担。随着每一天的过去，我们的前路就变得越清晰。我们学到，美德是我们唯一的、永久的持有。

要有美德。要身口意一致且诚挚。要对自己真诚。钱来而有所求！然而，德至则有所长！是故，人必须放弃对钱的渴求而转求更多的美德。

《沙迪亚赛说》第7章331面

The drive to live virtuously is the essence of spirituality. It reflects our ability to distinguish the transitory from the real. Few people give much thought to the nearness of death, yet it may arrive at any moment. Death takes all our worldly possessions, however guarded and fostered they may have been. We are left only with our qualities of being. The value of our lives will be appraised not by the accumulation of our possessions, but by our discernment of spiritual reality – and our willingness to act on that vision.

Do not think that only those who worship a picture or image with pompous paraphernalia are devotees. Whoever walks straight along the moral path, whoever acts as he speaks and speaks as he has seen, whoever melts at another's woe and exults at another's joy... is a devotee, perhaps a greater devotee.

Sathya Sai Speaks 2, pp.22-23

We do not require another person to show us right conduct. Right conduct is a function of our conscience, the voice within. The pursuit of a moral life is an unfolding journey, which takes us toward the God within. It is the heart of spiritual practice, which carries us from the most basic lessons on the path to realization of formless divinity. That search is our true reason for living. We fulfill our duty when we value virtue rather than material possessions.

Moral and spiritual values have to be honored as much as, if not more than, economic and material values. Life must be a harmonious blend of these values with emphasis on moral strength.

Sathya Sai Speaks 8, p.179

The integrity of a nation depends on the character of its citizens. A nation without moral standards follows the road of decline. If a nation is to make enduring contributions to the world, it must be founded on eternal values. A society, like an individual, earns God's grace based on its adherence to virtue.

The honor of a nation depends upon the morality of that nation. A nation without morality will be doomed.

Summer Showers 1972, p.218

促使据德而生活的内在力量就是灵性的精髓。它反映吾人之能力以明辨虚幻与真实，短暂与永恒。很少人考虑到大限的逼近，然而，大限随时都会到来。死亡带走我们拥有的一切，不论我们如何尽力去捍卫它们。我们保留的仅是我们‘存有’之素质。生命的价值不是以拥有物的多寡来评估而是以我们对灵性本真的识别力，及我们依据那形象而行动的意志力，来评估。

不要认为只有那些以华丽的设备去膜拜一张照片或一座神像的人才是信徒。不论何人，只要他沿循正道迈进，只要他行其所言，言其所见，只要他怜悯他人的哀伤和乐见他人的喜悦，他就是一个信徒，或甚至一个更伟大的信徒。

《沙迪亚赛说》第2章22-23面

我们无需另一人给我们展示正确的行为。正确行为是我们良知，内在之声，的一个操作。追求一个合乎道德的生活是一个开敞的路程，引领我们步向内在的神。把我们从最基本的课业带到无相圣灵的认知的就是灵修的心。那探索就是我们生活的真正理由。如果我们重视的是美德而不是物质，我们的义务就得到究竟。

美德与灵性的价值必须受到重视，即使不多于也不应该少于经济与物质的价值。生命必须借重于美德的力量而成为这些价值的一个和谐的融合。

《沙迪亚赛说》第8章179面

一个国家的健全与否胥视其国民的人格而定。不具道德标准的国家，其前路崎岖。如果一个国家要对世界作出持久的贡献，它就必须以永恒的价值观作为基础。一个社会，一如个人，以其基于美德的依附而赢得神恩。

一个国家的荣耀全靠其美德。无德之国，注定没落。

《夏季浸濡》1972年218面

4. Love: The Basis of Morality

The means to cultivate moral strength is selfless love. When we recognize that the same divinity resides in others as resides in ourselves, we refrain from selfish action. By expanding our vision to encompass all within the atma, we are unable to hurt others. Love is the basis for the preservation and growth of society.

Morality has to be grown in the heart by feeding it with love; then only can we have justice, security, law, and order. If love declines among the people, nations will weaken and mankind will perish.

Sathya Sai Speaks 8, pp.80-81

Questions for Study Circle

1. What is morality?
2. Who determines what is moral?
3. Are there certain specific rules of morality?
4. Does morality vary by culture or country?
5. How do we know when we have done something wrong?
6. Why do so many people dislike the word “morality”?
7. Is Sai Baba’s definition of morality the same as the meaning commonly used?
8. Can we progress spiritually without advancing morally?

References for Further Study

1. Gita Vahini, pp. 217-225 (The 20 virtues essential for jnana).
2. Gita Vahini, p.298
3. Sathya Sai Speaks 5, p.336 (Morality should be taught in conjunction with other subjects, not separately).
4. Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p. 404 (One evil deed will lead to another).
5. Summer Showers 1973, p. 164 (Even devotion is not protection from illusion if one does not have morality).
6. Summer Showers 1979, p. 24 (The respect commanded by a community depends on its moral strength).

4. 爱：道德的根基

培育道德力量的方法是无私的爱。当我们认知同样的神性寓于他人之内也寓于我们之内，我们就会抑制自私自利的行为。借扩大我们的视野去包容一切于阿特玛（atma）之内，我们就不能伤害他人。爱是维系和助长社会的根基。

道德必须凭借爱的滋养而在内心成长；然后我们才能拥有公义，安全，法规，和秩序。如果爱式微于世人之间，国将衰败而人类将毁灭。

《沙迪亚赛说》第8章80-81面

学习圈的问题：

1. 道德是什么？
2. 谁决定什么是道德？
3. 道德有某些特别的条规吗？
4. 道德因文化或国家的不同而有所不同吗？
5. 我们怎么知道自己做错了？
6. 为什么那么多人不喜欢‘道德’这字眼？
7. 赛峇峇给道德所下的定义与一般所用的意思是否一样？
8. 不与道德并进，我们能得到灵性的进展吗？