

Book Review

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Title	Sai Baba's Mahvakya on Leadership
Author	Retd. Lieut. Gen. Dr. M.L. Chibber
Publisher	Shri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust
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No. of Pages	194
Price	Rs. 38.00

In recent times, there seems to be a great deal of ambiguity about the true significance of the term "leadership". It has become quite a popular practice in India and abroad to talk about leadership qualities by various management gurus, authors and modern day thinkers. They are hired by different management groups, educational institutions and corporate houses to speak eloquent on the subject. But somewhere in this deafening noise and mad rush for learning some "quick fix" and "made easy" recipes for leadership, the very basic truth about leadership that emanates from nowhere else but from human values, i.e. looking beyond the self and self sacrifice, has been lost.

In such a scenario the book entitled *Sai Baba's Mahvakya on Leadership* (____) aims at drawing a complete picture of Leadership. Its main objective is to thoroughly cleanse one's body, mind and soul and prepare them for effective leadership.

At the beginning of this book the author explains the prime objective for his writing this book:

"This book is being written to introduce the youth - the leaders of tomorrow - to some of the fundamental truths about leadership. Also; to its practical side. And, above all, to convey to them that it is a capability which can be acquired and improved upon by anyone, who is prepared to make an effort to transform his character for the better. Also, to convey that wisdom and virtue are within the reach of everyone. The fact that it can be successfully done has been proved by determined individuals over and over again. Experience tells us that, if we develop will-power to persist, we can be the masters of our own destiny."

Parents and teachers have a special role, as discussed in Chapter IX, in this great adventure to groom effective leaders of tomorrow. Teachers more than parents, because a teacher, during his working life, influences generations of children.

This book has nine chapters in all and every chapter has a certain component of "Leadership" thoroughly defined and explained in a very lucid manner. Almost every chapter is full of diagrams, flow-charts, tables and above all anecdotes. One gets totally immersed while reading the book. In the 5th chapter titled as "To be: Universal Inner structure of Good Leaders: Knowledge of Job and self" the author has provided the readers with check-list for leadership qualities and self

appraisal exercises on the basis of which any reader can check his basic qualities for leadership and improve upon his weak points.

In the second chapter titled as "Leadership Defined; process and Functions of Leadership" the author narrates a story from 1971 war for Liberation of Bangladesh, to show how leadership is quality of setting examples by doing and by action and not just by uttering lofty words only.

Besides, anecdotes the book also gives some glimpses from the lives of great men and has a lot of quotable and inspiring quotations. While reading the book one also gets the impression of establishing some divine communion between the narrator and one's own soul. Although evolution is continuous process and it has not stopped with the coming of man on the earth, yet one can positively argue that reading this book can accelerate the evolutionary process within mankind to reach the summit of leadership.

The author of this book Retd. Lieut. Gen. Dr. M.L. Chibber has been a very illustrious soldier of the Indian army. While he was examining, whether the forces allocated to him could achieve better results, he found that the senior commanders and staff officers also felt that most of them have potential to reach greater heights and achieve much greater goals, but didn't know "how". This led to his taking up the research work on "How to improve leadership".

In 1990, the Chancellor of the Sai University approved that the holistic and practical model that had emerged from his research for over a decade may be converted into a book for the youth to guide them on the path of true leadership as a result of which it could see the light of day. At a time when humanity has been badly bruised by the monster of terrorism and various types of mental and physical violence and in addition to this the mother Earth is being continuously exploited through insensible use of science and above all the very purpose of having been born as human encapsulated in the proclamation - "*sarv jantoonâm nar janm durlabham*" (Of all God's creations, to be born human is the highest)- seems to have been lost, then in such a scenario undoubtedly this is a must read book for students, teachers and parents alike, as it can guide them on the path of knowledge freeing them from all the known and unknown shackles of ignorance and transform them into more focussed leaders and ultimately help them carve out a better destiny for India and the world.