

Upanishad Vahini
12
Brahmanubhava Upanishad
(Essence of all Upanishads)
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Sruthis declare "Ekam eva Adwithiyam Brahma" (Brahmam is One Only, without a second). That is to say, there is nothing besides Brahmam. Under all conditions, at all times, everywhere, Brahmam alone *is*. In the beginning, there was just Sat and nothing else, says the Chhandogya. The Mandukya names it as Santham, Sivam, Advaitam. Only the evolved or the manifested can appear as two. That which is seen is different, one from the other and all from the seer. Moreover, the seen is the product of the seer's likes and dislikes, his imagination and feelings, his impulses and tendencies. When the lamp is brought in, the "snake" disappears and the rope alone remains and is understood as such. When the world is examined in the light of Brahma Jnana, the 'illusory picture which attracted and repelled, the picture of Duality' disappears.

It is the "Two" that causes fear. If one is oneself the listener, the seer, the doer, the enjoyer, how can fear arise? Consider your condition when asleep. The external world is then absent; you are alone with yourself. The state is "One, without a second". Contemplation of that One and worship of that One leading to the realisation of Secondlessness gives you that experience. Like the other, He is Immanent; like the vital air, He is the Chit, the secret of all consciousness, activity, and movement.

Sat, Chit, Ananda, Paripurna, Nitya—Brahmam is described by these five attributes. Through an understanding of these, Brahmam can be grasped. Sat is unaffected by Time; Chit illumines and reveals itself as well as all else; Ananda creates the utmost desirability; Paripurna knows no defect or diminution or decline, or defeat. Nityam is that which is unaffected by the limitations of space, time and objectivisation.

In the light of this Brahmajnana, the World is a Mirage, temporary, unreal, negated by knowledge. The World is but another name for 'things seen, heard, etc.' But 'You,' the Jivi, the seer are 'Sat Chit Ananda Brahmam'—remember. Get fixed in that assurance; meditate on the Om which is its best Symbol. Become aware from this moment that you are the Atma. When the fog of ignorance vanishes, the Atma in each will shine in its native splendour. Then, you know that you were pursuing a mirage in the desert sands, that you were taking as 'real,' objects that had a beginning and therefore had an end.

The mind becomes bound with attachment when it dwells upon an object, or desires it or dislikes it. To get free from such bondage, the mind should be trained not to dwell on any object or desire it or dislike it. It is the mind that binds and unbinds. If dominated by Rajas, it easily falls into bondage; if Satwa predominates, it can achieve freedom.

He, who feels one with the gross body, pursues feverishly the pleasure derivable through the senses. Desire is the consequence of identification with the physical frame. Give that

up and you are given up by desire. Joy and grief are like right and wrong, to be transcended. Affection and hatred are of the nature of the internal instruments of man. They do not belong to the "Liver" who lives with them, the Jivi or to the Atma, the essential reality of the Jivi.

The Atma is ever pure, ever free from attachment, for there is no second to get attached to. The Mundakopanishad (III-i) mantra says: Two birds, ever together; with significant and subtle wings, are perched on a tree. (The tree is the body and the twin birds are Jivatma and Paramatma). One bird is engaged in tasting the fruits, (The Jivatma experiences joy and grief from the deeds it engages itself in). The other just watches. (The Paramatma is subtler than the subtlest and is just a Witness).

How can this gross physical frame of plasma and pus be the pure, the self-luminous, the ever witnessing Atma? This is built up by food; this is ever in a flux; it was not, before birth nor is after death! It is perishable any moment. It can live on without a limb or two but the moment the vital air stops its flow, it starts to decompose. So, the body should not be taken as the chief or as the Be-all and the End-all.

The Yoga you should practise is: watch the agitation in the mind as a witness, free yourself from resolutions and even decisions, for and against. Have your mind and its journeys always under control. Yoga is the parallel progress of the Jivatma, every step in tune with the Paramatma. The goal is the merger of both' then, all grief ends. He who steadily takes up yoga with faith and who is prodded on by unswerving renunciation (non-attachment) can certainly win victory.

Chit in Sat-Chit-Ananda means Vijnana, the Super-knowledge that confers perfect equanimity and purity, in fact, the Atmajnana which can be experienced by one and all. In common parlance Vijnana is used to indicate the sciences but really it means the Higher Wisdom. In that Swa-rupa, "Self-form", there is no room for "impressions from Karma" nor for wishes that prompt Karma. Wishes vitiate the mind. Wishes lead to action, action leaves a scar, a Vasana on the Mind. Be alone with yourself and, then the mind can be negated. It is for this reason that Yogis retire into caves.

The Vasanas or impressions fall into two Categories. "Subha" or Beneficent and "Asubha" or Maleficent. Beneficent Vasanas help liberation. Japa, Dhyana, Good Works, Charity, Justice, Unselfish Service, Fortitude, Compassion—these are all beneficent. The maleficent tendencies of Anger, Cruelty, Greed, Lust, Egoism have to be uprooted with the help of the beneficent; and finally, as the thorn with which the thorn in the foot is removed, is also thrown away, the Vasanas that were used to overcome the Vasanas that hurt are also to be discarded. The Subha-vasanas are the products of attachment and produce further attachment which may persist through many births. The Jivan-mukta too has to conquer the Subha-vasanas. For him, they should be like a burnt rope that cannot bind. In fact the entire group—sensual craving, desire, greed—gets burnt, the moment the Atman is visualised. He will not be inclined towards anyone or anything; nor will he be attached. Where the sun sets, there he lays himself down for rest. He moves among men, unknown and unrecognised, seeking no recognition, why even avoiding it.

When the seer and the seen are both the same, the joy is described as that of the fourth stage, the Turiya stage. Beyond this, the Atman is certain to be reached. By dwelling constantly on the Atma and its reality, the attachment to the world will fall off. The Sadhana must be without break. The genuine Sadhaka must, with all his resources, redirect the mind from the affairs of the world and the objects that entice the senses, and concentrate on the austere purpose of knowing Brahman.

Tamasic resolutions spell grief, Satwic resolutions promote Dharma and help sustain society and individual; the Rajasic ones plunge you into the worldly flood. Give up these three and then you become entitled to the honour of Brahma-jnana.

Brahman is of immeasurable depth; how can it be measured and comprehended by this petty mind? It is Aprameya, beyond all possibility of being described by categories; it is Aparichhinna, without limit; it is Avyapadesya, beyond denotation; to grasp It through the senses is an impossible task.

"The Brahman, which the Vedanta declares can be spoken of as only 'Not-this, not-this' is I-Myself; My reality is the Brahman in the cavity of my heart; I am that Brahman which Sadhakas strive to know and succeed in reaching. Brahman is that which remains after subtracting the body, the mind, the vital airs, the brain etc. This knowledge is reached by the discipline of negation. Just as by this method of elimination, you arrive at the conclusion, "So, this is Devadatta", by this principle of "Jagrata-jagrata", the truth, "Tatta twam asi" "That thou art" is established. When the veil hiding the Jivi is removed, the Jivi is revealed as Paramatma or Parabrahman. The Jivatma is of the essence of Paramatma.

"I" refers to this Reality, the Sat-Chit-Ananda it is only ignorance that can use it to indicate the body! This ignorance and this wrong identification are the causes of continuous chapters of grief and joy. So, use the word "I" with discrimination to mean only your Brahmic reality; that will win Atmajnana for you.

For experiencing the Atma as your Reality, control of the senses, removal of physical attachment and truth are essential. The Brahman is the Brihaspathi prompting the Buddhi, the Manas of the manas, the Ear of the ear, the Eye of the eye, the Illuminer of All the Self-Luminant One. His splendour is the light from which everything else emanates. He is the Basic support and Sustenance. In the Mind, He is wisdom; the Manas and the Buddhi do envelop the senses. Without Him, the Manas and the Buddhi are helpless to function; they emerge from Him and merge in Him like grass that is born from the earth and becomes part of it. Iron placed in fire becomes red and turns black again when cooled: so too, Buddhi becomes resplendent with Jnana by dwelling on Parabrahma who is Jnanaswarupa.

God is encased everywhere as the child in the womb. Some declare that they will believe only in a God that can be seen or demonstrated. This is the usual argument of the worldly minded. But it is not easy to see, with gross physical eyes, the Paramatma which is

Subtler than the Subtlest. You must first get command over a powerful microscope, fit for the purpose. Either the Janana Chakshu or the Prema Chakshu is wanted, the Eye of Wisdom, the Eye of Love; only with these can you see God. Can you show others what the thing called "pain" is or "sweetness"? The eye cannot see an abstract thing like love, pity, mercy, virtue, faith; it is beyond its capacity.

But by words, actions and behaviour, we infer that a person has Love in his heart. So too it is possible to judge whether a person is a Brahma-vid, how deep he is established in his own Reality, whether by fits and starts or steadily and securely. Divine Wisdom, Divine Treasure, Harmony with Nature, through these He can be identified and discovered. Therefore, endearour by all means to earn either the Jnanachakshu or the Premachakshu.

Just as sugar in cane-juice, or sweetness in sugar, the Paramatma is ever Immanent in creation; He is the inner core of all Beings. He is everywhere, always in everything, He has no form; Atma is "A-thanu" "without body". It is the in-dweller, the Purusha. Only by throwing off the attachment to the body, and purifying the Mind and the Buddhi, can you merge in your Truth and earn the eternal Bliss, highest Prasanthi, the purest Wisdom. Thus only can man earn liberation from the bondage of birth and death.

"Deha", the word which means the body, is derived from the root "dah" meaning "burn". It implies that which has to be burnt. But, the Jnani has three bodies, the gross, the subtle and the causal. What is it then that is burnt? The fuels, Adibhoutika, Adidaivika and Adhyatmika, called the Thaapathraya or the Hridaya-Kaashta can burn and consume the three bodies quicker and more completely than fire. However informed a person may be, if he identifies himself with the body, he must be pronounced foolish. On the other hand, a person who is fixed in the faith that he is Sat-Chit-Ananda will be transformed into Divinity Itself. Do not identify the Jivi with the gross body of flesh and bone or even with the subtle and causal. The Atma must be identified with the Paramatma alone. Then only can permanent Bliss emerge. Joy and Grief, good and bad belong to the realm of the Mind, not to you. You are not the doer or the enjoyer of the fruits of the deeds. You are ever-free.

Virtue is Dharma; Vice is Adharma. These are products of the Mind, strings that bind the heart. When Man experiences this higher Truth, he becomes free from both, and achieves the vision of Reality. As the silk worm gets entangled and imprisoned in the cocoon that it spins around itself, so Man too spins a cocoon of wishes around himself and suffers.

The Atma is ever dis-entangled. It is "A-samsari" "Not-bound by flux". Its nature is purity, wholeness, joy, wisdom; where Ego is, there bondage persists. Where there is no "I", there freedom holds sway. The "I" is the real shackle.

There are three obstacles in the path of the seeker after Atmajnana; obstacles of the past, the present and the future. These must be overcome. The Jivan-mukta is not worried over these. He has gone beyond the triple distinction of the seer, the seen and the sight; he has known that the distinction is artificial, a product of the mind. Once you have conquered the Triple illusion of Triputi, you will experience Brahman in all things at all times.

Swarna Vrishti

This Bharatadesa is the Gurukulasthanam of Sathya Dharma Shanti and Prema; it has always striven after Nirmanatmaka works, not Nirmoolatmaka, that is to say, constructive activities, not destructive. But, the twin delusion of egoism and exhibitionism has caused the decline of these ideals and as brought about the present distress. Mere outward pomp is attracting people, even the so-called leaders and guides and guardians. People have forgotten the practical ways of experiencing the virtues Sathya Dharma Shanti and Prema, and the Ananda that flows from such conduct. They ask how these can confer happiness and peace of mind. Sathya is the current, flowing through the wire, Shanti; and when the bulb Dharma is connected with it, the illumination of Prema brightens the individual and society. This is the Sadhana pursued in this land, the systematic diving for pearls in the deep sea, not the search for shells on the shore; not the seeking of sensual pleasures, or temporary joy, but, the attempt to secure lasting joy and spiritual bliss. You must maintain the honour of your motherland; pay the debt you owe to the culture that has fostered you. Earn the distinction that is your due, the title that you have come to acquire, viz., Amrita-putra, the Inheritor of Immortality. Other titles you can get, by devious means also; but, for this one, you have to open the inward eye and spend your time in constant dwelling with the Lord. * *

You have allowed self-confidence to slip out of your minds; that is the greatest single cause of the present panic. So long as you adhere to Sathya Dharma Shanti Prema and Ahimsa, be sure you can never suffer defeat; believe in Providence and have the Lord as your guide; pray to Him to inspire your every movement. Then, like Krishna who won victory for the Pandavas, in spite of inferior numerical strength, the Lord will bring you victory too. Repent for the worldly pomp in which you are indulging now, the factions and fraternal quarrels in which you are revelling now, and pray! Then, you will find a great new source of energy and power from which you can draw, whatever quantity you need. * *

Today the Oriental Dummy Horse Institute is celebrating, what it calls, its Silver Jubilee; now, that it is 25 years since it was started. I do not measure things by the number of years, but, I care for the good it has done, the ideals it holds before itself, the actual quantity of work it has done, etc. I want that all Fine Arts must be so directed that they elevate the morals of man, and keep him on the spiritual path of humility wisdom and renunciation. By all means, have items depicting the Glories of the Lord, and the thrill of Devotion. But, do not degrade the Art, to the cravings of the market place; avoid items which cater to the carnal appetites.

(15-12-63. Sivajinagar, Bangalore.)

Bhakti should not be a uniform, that you put on when you go the temple or perform a Puja, to be taken off when that 'duty' is over. It is not like the police constable's dress

which he gets out of, when he comes home! It is an attitude, a bent of mind, an ever-present outlook, or rather, in-look. It must be nischala nirmala and ni-swartha, fixed pure and selfless. It must be the basic ingredient of every act or thought. It must illumine glorify and sanctify every moment of life. Like breathing, which does not stop, when are ill or sad or healthy and glad, the repetition of the Name of the Lord along with the contemplation of the Beauty and Grandeur of His Form must be non-stop, without intermission. You will find that the joy you derive by this Sadhana is far, far above the joy you get, from any other source. Contemplating on the Lord, you too develop Sat-chit-ananda; that is to say, you are at all times, unshaken, unchanged; you are aware of everything and every incident; you are full of Love to all and, all are full of Love to you thus making all happy. * *

Do not think that Bhakti is superior or Jnana is superior or that Karma is the highest. Each has its own place and value. Bhakti is the Ganga, Jnana is Saraswati and Karma is the Yamuna. Or, to put it another way, you may take it that Karma is like the usual Railway Train: you will have to change at junctions etc and reach the destination. It takes you there, in spite of everything. Bhakti is like the 'through' coach; even when the train is changed, you need not bother; you have only to stick to your seat, without getting panicky jumping into trains that come along. The trains themselves will come and pull your coach along. The Jnana Marga is, however like the 'through train'; even if you change or shift from one coach to another there is no harm. The entire train goes right up to the destination. * *

Do not be like the parrot, which learnt to repeat the name of Rama, quick and clear. It used to utter that name at all times, accost every one, that came into the house with that call. Every one praised it for its skill; they thought it was a very devoted bird. But, one day, when the door of the cage was left open, a cat entered it and when it strangled the bird, the poor thing forgot all about Rama and could only shriek desperately, as frightened birds do. Rama must be the inspiration for the dark moments of your life, the solace and strength during the very last moment of your life. In order to meet the enemy on the battle line, you drill and drill and practise with arms from now on; the training lasts for years. Should you not have some training to meet Death, who may pounce on you any moment from anywhere? * *

During one single day, why every twenty four hours, you change colour so often, like the chameleon! You have Yogam in the morning. Bhogam in the evening and Rogam, at night! Outside, for the rest of the world, you put on a show but, inside, judging from the sensual pleasures you seek, you are sick with Rogam. Yogam is Chitta, vritti Nirodham, the Regulation of the Activities and Agitations of the Mind that is to say, the Dedication of all Mental Impulses Incentives and Intentions to the Lord. You have lost Peace in the Mind. If you have to win it back, search for it in the Mind itself. You have to search for the thing you have lost, at the place where you lost it. Some people seek to get in the Race Course what they have lost while playing cards! This is not such a search this you have to get in and through the Mind itself. What you have lost in the Antarmukha you cannot regain in the Bahirmukha. * *

Every living being has to journey Godward but, the journey is now in another direction! With a ticket for Bombay Station, you are now proceeding Madraswards. And, every minute, you are getting farther and farther. The Body is the ticket, Viveka and Vairagya are luggage and instead of going Godwards, you have got into the object-world. Train which takes you further and further into the darkness. Get warned in time and remember the time lost, the goal forgotten. You have the splendour in you, full and un-dimmed; but, you have covered it up with the dark shade of egoism and ignorance. Remove the shade, and you shine forth as I, Myself.

(Malleswaram: 16-12-63)

The New Year

On New Year Day, 1964, Baba Discoursed at the Prasanthi Nilayam in the evening. He said: “Evidently, you are welcoming the New Year and happy that I am talking to you this day. But, just ponder for a moment what exactly is *new*, today. The year is just an artificial method of calculating time; it is composed of twelve months, each of which is new, the day it starts. The month is just a name for a group of days, the day being new when the sun dawns! And the day? It is twenty-four hours in all; every hour is new and has to be welcomed as such! Why, every minute, every second is new! You can examine your achievements, revise your course of life, plan out your future—this second, if light dawns on you, if wisdom gets the upper hand. You need not wait for the New Year Day! Do not waste a single moment; spend it for your own advancement, to take you nearer the goal of realisation. Consider, you can recover your lost health, your lost property, even your lost reputation! But, can you ever by any effort get back the time you have lost? So, use every single moment to cleanse and purify your mind, so that the effulgence of your Atma is not hidden.

Do not celebrate such a holiday as a day of picnic and of feasting. Rather, celebrate it as a holy day, when you get a little farther away from the world that deludes and a little nearer to God, who is the Truth. Contemplate today on the ways and means of acquiring lasting peace of mind, and of winning equanimity and poise, amidst the turmoils of fortune. There are some who argue that if every one assured of food, clothing and housing, he will be happy. This is sheer ignorance of human nature. Ask those who have all these in ample measure whether they are happy. You will find that they all yearn for mental peace! To emphasise material things first, is to put the cart before the horse. Put the training of the mind, the Sadhana for Shanti, Prema, Sathyam and Dharma, first. They are more essential than food and housing. The spiritual potentiality, the Divinity that is inherent in the body that is the justification for this body and all the care you bestow on its upkeep. Use the body to realise the Lord who is the basis of all existence. The body is the Kshetra. Well then, know the Kshetrajna, He who is the master of the Temple, the Lord installed therein.

Let this be your Resolution; Become aware of the Divine consciousness in the body and direct it towards the fulfillment of your destiny, viz, merging with God. The Lord has taken up human form, *your* form. “When He has come for Dharmasthapana, resolve at least to *walk* in the path of Dharma.”

Prasanthi Nilayam News

During a stay of 4 days at Bangalore Baba addressed gathering at the Shivajinagar Stadium on the 15th Dec. The Mayor presided. Another vast gathering was addressed at the Malleswaram Stadium on the 16th Dec. Baba reached Madras on the 18th. On Thursday, the 19th, he installed the pictures of Shirdi Sai Baba, and Himself at the prayer Hall of the Sathya Sai Nivas, perambur, Madras. On the 21st, He was welcomed by H. E. Bishnuram Medhi, Governor of the Madras at the Raja Bhavan where a select gathering listened to His Discourse on spiritual Sadhana. On the 23rd the grounds of the Perambur Stadium were packed with thousands anxious to have His Darshan and listen to His Discourse. The Mayor of Madras presided. On the 27th Dec. Baba returned to the Nilayam.

On New Year Day, Baba gave a Discourse at the Prasanthi Nilayam.

Members of the bar association, Nandyal and Deputations from Tenali and Manglore arrived in the first week of January and prayed Baba to visit their places,

Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, M. P., Ex Governor, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, stayed at the Nilayam for 3 days and left for Hyderabad.

The Post-Master General, Andhra Circle was at the Prasanthi Nilayam on 3rd Jan in connection with arrangements for the Opening of a Telegraph Office.

Sri C. K. Patel of Mbale, Uganda, Member of the Sri Sathya Sai Mandali, Kampala, East Africa Stayed at the Nilayam for 3 days.

Mr. Killman, an Industrial Magnate from U. S. A, who came with Sri Gogineni Venkateswara Rao had a long discussion with Baba on 7th Jan., on the Principal of Religion and practical Sadhana.

For Your Immediate Attention

From February 1964 we are publishing full English and Telugu editions of the magazine, separately.

Inform us immediately (not later than 25th January) which edition (English or Telugu) we shall send you from February onwards. Quote also your subscriber number (found on the Address wrapper)

Editor

Upanayana Mahotsava

On the 7th February, '64, Baba is arranging the celebration of the Upanayanam of 150 boys. Upanayanam for so many at the same time in one place is an unprecedented festival. It will certainly be a rare feast for the eye. Fortunate indeed are the boys who are being blessed. This is really a happy augury for the revival of the Vedas, which is part of the Avatar's mission. Families from Kerala, Mysore, Bombay, Madras, Andhra and Calcutta are arriving to avail themselves of this rare chance.

(We regret we could not give more pages for this number, on account of the publication of English and Telugu Editions and the installation of a New Press)

Baba's Programme

Baba will be on tour till the end of February, 64. He returns to Prasanthi Nilayam, about the first week of March.

If you really need to know

Who is Baba, do you ask? I cannot answer straightaway!

But, if you really need to know,

Prey, follow well these directions :-

Ask the Maltese boy He saved from Hiroshima's atom fume

Ask the thousands who saw His Footprint in Dixit Puja Room

Ask the hundreds who see His Smile in ancestral Saligram, in Durgigudi Home

Hearken to the thrill when songs are sung by Kampala's cultured throats, in the East of Africa

Listen to the Bhajan tunes sweetening Hong Kong air and Casablanca's, too;

Accost the Garud Bird that saw and sat and bowed its head when Arati was waved for Him on
holy Srisailam Hill

Ask the waves that swell and sway round Bharat-mata's Feet- They put a pearly garland round
the neck!

Ask the snows of Himalaya, they were trodden by His Feet

Ask sands of all the streams whereon He sat, the sands He changed to silvered conch or golden
Ram or book or Bhasma too

Ask the seekers He has led, the Sadhus whom He taught,

Ask the hearts He filled with Hope, the eyes He filled with lustre

The hands He freed from greed, the feet that learnt from faint the Godward path;

Count the backs He has made erect, the tongues He has rendered sweet,

Measure the tears of joy and gratitude that pour from eyes of steel, when they see Him eye to
eye

Ask the scholars He dismayed, the Pundits He has dwarfed

Ask the Sadhakas He has guided blessed and saved. . .

Ask, listen, count and measure. . . 'tis a duty you owe to your own self;

And then, please note you only get

A fractional, too fractional

Picture of the Fact... the Fact that He

Is God that has come in Human Form.

Tharak

Gita Vahini

1

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

To understand the meaning of the Gita, a reverential approach is necessary. You must take up its study, in the attitude of submission and expectancy. For, the Gita is, the “milk” of the Upanishads, “drawn” by the cowherd Krishna with the help of Arjuna, “the calf”, for the “dull-witted” to drink and draw sustenance from. There are some who argue that the Gita as a sacred poem was a creation, later than the Mahabharata of which it is a part; but, whatever maybe said of the composition of the Gita there is no doubt that the principles and the teachings of the Gita, are ancient, nay, even dateless. In the first three slokas of the fourth chapter, reference is made to the Lord instructing the Gita to Surya first and later to Manu, and to the fact that from Manu it reached Ikshvaku and thence to others in succession!. So, the Gita is beyond the category of time and it cannot be assigned to a particular point of time, past or present. The Gita is a text for spiritual practitioners, for it emphasises Sadhana, and spiritual attitudes, more than anything else. Every chapter lays down means and methods of reaching the goal of peace and harmony. Now, Sadhana is the product of keen and steady yearning for progress. "The aspirant must aspire, not despair. He must persevere, not clamour for quick success.

The Gita is as a boat, to take man across from the self imposed state of bondage to the freedom which is his nature. He is taken from darkness to light; from lusterless-ness to splendour. The Gita ordains for man disciplines and duties which are free from the taints of Vasanas (tendencies and impulses) that tie him to the relentless wheel of Birth and Death. Really, man has come into this Karma-kshetra or Field of Activity only to engage himself in Activity, not, in order to earn the fruit of such activity. That is the teaching of the Gita, its fundamental lesson. The Gita is the quintessence of the meaning of all the Vedas. Yajnas and Yagas, the outward-directed activities are mentioned in the preliminary portions of the Vedas; activities of the mind like the Upasanas which are directed inward are mentioned later; and, Jnana Yoga too is expounded in them.

Whoever the individual and however scholarly, he does not escape delusion and so, he is subjected to grief which acts as a brake upon activity. Arjuna, the great hero, capable of great renunciation, and of great wisdom, is deluded by the needs of war and his grief handicaps his activity too. He confuses the body and the Atma starts identifying the two. He imposes on the Atma (ever untouched by the characteristics of the moving changing world) the unreal and ephemeral nature of the world and takes this delusion as true. He believes that his delusion is true. He believes that his duties as laid down by that false identification are his Atmadharma! This is the tragedy not of Arjuna alone but of all humanity. Therefore the Gita is of universal and eternal value. To study the Gita is to learn the art of swimming across the sea of Delusion.

The Gita is the very Voice of Lord Krishna. The fact that it has provided consolation and liberation to millions of men is evidence of its Divine Origin. No lesser Person could have given it that authenticity. The way it begins and the way it ends the give the clue to the subject which it expounds. The very first Sloka starts with the words, "Dharma kshetre Kurukshetre...", the word Dharma being the leading word of all. The last Sloka of the final Eighteenth Chapter speaks of "Yathra Yogeswarah Krishno," and this word, " Yogeswarah " sums up the Dharma that is taught. Thus it is clear that the objective of the teaching in the Gita is just this: "Remember Dharma; practise Dharma". How significant is this word! All the Sastras are

engaged in demarcating and defining the nature and subtle characteristic, of Dharma. The Gita incorporates all this study and analysis. It is a text book of Dharma, in all its aspects. It discusses all the principles underlying Dharma.

Arjuna is the Jivi; the Individual. The Body is the Chariot and the Teacher in the Chariot is Krishna the Lord. The Charioteer is the Lord, the inspirer of the Intelligence, the Brahman which prompts. It in answer to man's prayer contained in the Gayatri "Dhiyoyonah prachodayath... Awaken my Discrimination, O Lord and guide me". The Kauravas represent the demoniac nature; the Pandavas represent the Divine. They are Asad; these are Sad; in their gunas one is evil, the other is good. And, there has ever been a struggle between the two. In this conflict between opposing forces, Krishna (the Self, the Atma) is ever on the side of Dharma, the Reality which sustains, not the Delusion which undermines.

If you seek to have the Lord on your side, as your guide, equip yourself, therefore, with the Divine Nature, the Daivi Sampath, the qualities of Dharma. For the Lord is, where Dharma is. Of course, this does not mean that the Lord is not omnipresent. . .!

Butter is omnipresent in the milk, though it can be made manifest in one location in the milk, only by a process of curdling and churning. So too, the Lord can be made manifest in one location by the process of Dharma-sadhana. "Yatho dharmasthatho jayah": "Where there is Dharma, there Victory is achieved."

Arjuna was engrossed with the physical aspect and so, it was necessary to bless him with the Knowledge of the Real, the Atmic aspect. All the complex of Sadhana is directed to the clarification of the atma and the fixing of attention on That. The Teaching of Krishna is just this; in fact, this is the sum and substance of it all.

Krishna answered many a doubt that had entangled Arjuna, but, which he did not express. "O Arjuna! You are grieving because these kings and princes are *related* to you are about to meet death at *your* hands. You talk glibly of Dharma. But, remember, the wise do not grieve either for the living or the dead. Shall I tell you why? Well, you are feeling sorry for the body, which alone decays on death. Did you grieve when the body underwent changes, hitherto? The child disappeared in the boy, the boy disappeared in the youth, the youth became lost in the middle aged man, the middle-aged man was lost in the tired old man and the old man is lost in death. You never wept for the changes that affected the body so far; why then weep for this one change? Have you, today, the body you had when you were a boy? Where is that frame, with which you tied up Dhrishtadyumna then? You still remember that boyish exploit; but the body that achieved it, is gone! So too, whatever changes your body may suffer, the Atma, the Splendour of true wisdom, remains ever immortal. Being established unshakably in this knowledge is the sign of the Wise, the Jnani". Thus Said Krishna.

"You may ask whether one would not feel grieved when the bones with which one had mixed and lived together for many years, go out of sight. But for how many have you to lament, in case it is proper so to grieve! Have you thought of that? Joy and grief are as day and night. They have to be put up with; both have to be gone through. If you refuse, they won't stop happening; if you desire, they won't start happening! They are both related to the physical, the material—the body;

they do not affect the spirit, the Soul. The moment you escape from there two, that moment you are liberated, you have Moksha. The First Discourse which teaches these truths is named Arjuna Vishada Yoga, the Despondency of Arjuna. That is the very Foundation of the Edifice which is the Bhagavad-Gita. When the foundation is strong, the edifice too is lasting. The Edifice of the Gita built on that Foundation, 5000 years ago, is even today unshaken and unshakeable. From this, one can guess how strong is the foundation on which it rests, and how wise the Person who laid it.

You refer to it as "despondency"! But, that 'despondency' was very beneficial; it was no ordinary want of courage. For it tested his sincerity and steadfastness; it induced him to take unquestioning refuge in the Lord. That is why it is dignified by the name, Yoga. The Gita which begins with the Vishada Yoga ends with the Sanyasa Yoga; Vishada is the Foundation and Sanyasa, the Super structure. Vishada is the seed and Sanyasa, the Fruit of the Tree.

The question may be raised: how could Arjuna be classed as of pure nature, which alone deserves the Wisdom imparted in the Gita.

The word Arjuna means pure, unsullied, white... He is named very appropriately and he lived up to the name that he bore. That is how he secured the Immediate Presence of Lord Krishna and His Grace, that is how he became the Instrument for the Distribution of the Nectar of the Gita to the World.

Krishna uses the word, Yoga, many times in the Gita; the state of the individual (or jivi) during Yoga or Sam Yoga too is described; but, yet, a doubt may arise in the minds of those who have read the Gita that there is no agreement between the word as used ordinarily and as used by Krishna. Krishna has extolled Vairagya or Detachment, in some places. At other places He has declared that the highest freedom *can* be earned by the worship of the Lord. Various methods of attaining the supreme state of spiritual Bliss through the path of Devotion or Bhakti are also elaborated.

In the Eighth Discourse, there is an account of , Raja Yoga but it is not right to say that the Gita is a text that teaches Raja Yoga. Complete surrender to Lord Krishna, freedom from the threefold shackles which bind one with the external world of Objects, the observance of good deeds and virtuous disciplines, these are the principal truths underlined in the Gita, The Lord holds these forth as the best fortes of training and the deepest secrets of inner progress.

People of this country believe that the Gita is a Gospel acceptable to mankind. But the real meaning of the Gita is not grasped by all. Reputed scholars and writers gifted with rare intelligence, have failed to unravel the mystery of its message.

On one side, commentators point out the principle of perfect balance amidst all the change, or the achievement of freedom, which according to them, is emphasised in the Gita, more than anything else. On the other side, scholars compare the Gita with philosophical texts of the West with which they are familiar and start teaching the young minds in that strain! Of course, full renunciation is highly esteemable. But, only a very small number can practise it. If a certain spiritual teaching has to gain universal acceptance, it must have such disciplines as are

mentioned in the Vedas and Sastras, disciplines that can be practised and experienced by every one in their daily lives and activities.

The highest Dharma is for each one to follow his Swa-dharma boldly. As regards this problem, there is a conflict between religion and morals. "Gahana karmano gathi" "It is difficult, fraught with danger" says the Lord, so far as the moral disciplines are concerned. Which act is legitimate, which not, which act is sanctioned by moray, which not, persons have struggled and are struggling to decide these things. But, Krishna has mentioned the type of acts which are worthy, in the Slokas

Manmanaa bhava madbhaktho mad yaajee maam namaskuru
Maamevaishyasi sathyam the prathijaane priyo si me
Sarva dharmaan parithyajya maamekam saranam vraja
Aham thwa sarva paapebhyo mokshayishyami maa suchah.

"Fix thy thought on Me; be devoted to Me; worship Me; do homage to Me; thou shalt reach Myself. The Truth do I declare to thee; for, thou art dear to Me. This is My teaching, My grace." This is the path to come near Me. "Give up all Dharmas; surrender to Me; do not grieve; I shall liberate you from the consequences of all your acts."

Ah! Note the meaning and significance of these two stanzas. Is not this Surrender, enough to save you and to liberate you from the round of coming to, staying in, and leaving from, this world? Thanmana—that is, seeing Him in every Being, being aware of Him every moment of existence, being immersed in the Ananda of this awareness; Thadbhaktha—that is, merged in the relationship caused by profound devotion and love to Him; Thad-yaji—all acts, big and small, dedicated to the Lord, Krishna, (wish, will attitude, activity, fruits, consequence) everything from beginning to end, the renunciation of all attachment to the self and the performance of acts which are beneficial and true, in a spirit of non-attachment.

Of course, it is hard to effect full surrender. However, if man makes but the slightest effort towards it, the Lord Himself will confer the courage to pursue the effort to the end and confidence in final success. He will walk with him and help him as a friend; He will lead him as a Guide; He will guard him from evil and temptation; He will be his staff and support. He has said, "Swalpamapyasya Dharmasva thravathe mahatho bhayath". This course of action, if followed by man even to a small extent, will save him from terrifying fear. To follow Dharma is itself a source of joy; it is also the path, least beset with difficulty. That is the Teaching of the Lord.

"Maamevaishyasi" "you will come near Me, you will be approaching Me"; that is to say, he will understand My Mystery, he will enter into Me, he will achieve My nature. In these terms, Saadrisya (Divine Nature) Saalokya (Existence in God) Sayujya (Unity in God), are indicated. When one has attained the state of realising the Divinity in every Being, when every instrument of knowledge brings the Experience of that Divinity, when It alone is seen, heard, tasted, smelt and touched, man becomes undoubtedly a part of the Body of God and lives in Him and with Him. When this duty to your own progress is carried out to a little extent, you will get a new strength; you will thrill to a new and pure joy; you will taste the fullness of Bliss; you will be refreshed by a new holiness.

This Dharma is not laid down or recommended for the extra-ordinary among men. It is within the reach of all who have the hunger for God, who have the discrimination to discover that there is something basic behind all this change-in fact of all mankind. Even the most heinous sinner can quickly cleanse his heart and become pure by surrendering to the Lord sincerely and with anguished repentance.

Therefore, the Lord's Command is that each should pursue the Swadharma laid down for him; each person should plan his life according to the spiritual foundations of his country's culture; he should give up the objective vision and listen to the Voice of God. Those born in Bharat should deserve that privilege by listening to the Leader of Bharat-Gopala-and manifest the Divinity latent in them in every word they utter, every letter they write, every wish they entertain, every thought they frame in their minds, and every act they do even for gross things like food or health or shelter. Then only can this Indian nation demonstrate to the world the excellence of the Sanathana Dharma which has been its special contribution to humanity, and ensure peace of Mind for all mankind. Acts in line with that Sanathana Dharma alone can confer the strength of spirit which can encounter all crises.

The sacred Gita grants that boon, by indicating the way.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Prasnottara Vahini

1

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

- Q. Why is this 'human body said to be composed of the Five elements, the Panchabhuthas?
- A. Since it is a product of the Five Elements.
- Q. What exactly are the Five Elements?
- A. Akasa, Vayu, Agni, Jala and Prithvi, which are usually referred to as ether, air, fire, water and earth.
- Q. From where did these originate?
- A. Each subsequent element originated from the previous one.
- Q. Which is the cause of the first and therefore of all the five?
- A. Brahman, the unmodified, the fixed, the Basis.
- Q. What is the relationship between these Five Elements and this human body?
- A. From Brahman originated Yathna and Mahath (Effort and Cosmos); from these was born Akasa, from Akasa was born Vayu; from Vayu, Agni; from Agni, Jalam; and from Jalam, Prithvi. The human body is the result of the combination of all these five.
- Q. In what form do these elements persist in the body?
- A. Each element has again become five-fold and has gone into the composition of the body.
- Q. The first—Akasa, what are the five which it has become?
- A. The cogniser (Jnaatha), manas, buddhi, ahamkaram, panchakam.
- Q. Speaking as "in the body" how are these indicated?
- A. They are recognised as the "inner senses".

- Q. Now, what are the five forms of the next element Vayu?
- A. Samaana, Vynana, Udaana, Praana, and Apaana.
- Q. And, in the body, what are they called?
- A. The Pancha Praanas, the five vital airs.
- P. And Agni?...the Fire element?
- A. That element became the sensory organs; the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue, the nose.
- Q. And how are they demarcated?
- A. As Jnanendriyas, the organs of knowledge.
- Q. Tell me, what are the Jalapatichakas, the five which the water-element became.
- A. Sabda, Sparsa, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha...Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell.
- Q. Have they too any special name?
- A. They are known as Pancha Thanmaathraas...the Five Subtlenesses.
- Q. The Earth-element remains out of the Five. How does it appear in the body?
- A. The vocal organs, hands, legs, genitals and the excretory organs.
- Q. And they are known as...
- A. As Karmendriyas...the organs of action.
- Q. Instead of considering this human body, constituted in this manner by the elements as a single unit, the Vedantins say, there are many units in it! Is that true?
- A. There are not “many”, but three. Some say, there are four!
- Q. Oh! What are they? What are they called? The third and the fourth?
- A. Sthula-deha (the gross body), Sukshma deha (the subtle body) and Kaarana deha (the causal body). Some aver that there is a fourth called, Maha Kaarana deha (the Super-causal Body) also.
- Q. What exactly is meant by Sthula deha, the gross body?
- A. It means the body constituted of the 25 elemental principles mentioned by me already.
- Q. What then is the Sukshma body?
- A. The 5 Jnanendriyas, the 5 Than-Maathras, the 5 Praanas, the Manas and the Buddhi—these 17 categories combine to constitute the subtle body.
- Q. Is this called Sukshma deha only or has it any other appellation too?
- A. Why should it not have? It has. It is known also as Thaijasa.
- Q. And is it marked off as belonging to any state or Avastha?
- A. Yes it is.
- Q. And what is the name of that?
- A. The ‘Dream State.
- Q. Do you mean to say that the Gross Body has no state assigned to it?
- A. Of course, it has.
- Q. Tell me the name of that state.
- A. That is the wakeful state, the Jaagrath.
- Q. What is the Causal, the Kaarana deha?
- A. There, the Chittam or Consciousness is in association with the Knower, the Knowing Principle, the Jnaatha.
- Q. What is it known as?
- A. The Praajna.
- Q. And the state?
- A. The state is Sushupthi, Deep Sleep.
- Q. Tell me also, what they mean by the Super-Causal Body, the fourth.

- A. The Pure Consciousness unmixed with any Tattwa or elemental principle, the Witness Eternal, the Self-Luminous. They refer to it as the Maha Kaarana Deha.
- Q. Has it a name, like the rest?
- A. It is known as Hiranyagarbha.
- Q. And the state?
- A. It is stateless, it is beyond all states of consciousness and so it is described as A-kshara Purusha.
- Q. Coming back to this Gross Body, what are the specific products attributable to the Five Elements that have united to form it?
- A. Of the Earth, bone, skin, flesh, veins, and hair.
- Q. Of water, Jala?
- A. Blood, urine, saliva, phlegm, and brain.
- Q. From Fire?
- A. Hunger, thirst, sleep, sloth, and comradeship.
- Q. The element Vayu produces...?
- A. Activity, movement, speed, shame, and fear.
- Q. The element Akasa in the body must be responsible similarly for some consequences.
- A. Yes; for lust, anger, greed, pride and envy.
- Q. Man has many travails, is it not? Do these consequences of his composition have anything to do with his travails?
- A. You seem to have some doubts. The reason for all his agony is this group of gross qualities. The travails, too, are not many though they may appear so. They are only of four types.

(To be continued)

Those who do Japam, Dhyanam and Puja have a great responsibility. For if they do not stand up to joy and grief, people will lose faith in Japam, Dhyanam and Puja.

—BABA

Golden Era of Vedic Revival

Only those who walk on the Godward Path deserve to be called alive. That is why, those who have been given the Brahmopadesam through the Gayatri which calls on the Indwelling Glory of the Universe to awaken the intelligence are called Dwija.

Baba has to come for the re-illumination of the Dharmic Path, and so, He wants the nominally Twice-born to be really so. Hence, He arranged the UPANAYANAM (the ceremony of initiation into the mystery of self-realisation) to about 300 boys, a number unprecedented in history. The Rishis Must have been filled with joy on the 7th Feb., when they witnessed this glorious sign of the advent of the VEDAPURUSHA on earth.

After Vighneshwara Puja and Punyaha-vachana in the Prayer Hall the boys, clad in Yellow, proceeded in Single file to the Upanayana Mantapa and sat in parallel lines with their fathers, and Baba moving incessantly, blessing by His Presence, each sacrament as it was scrupulously

gone though. In the evening, Baba gave into the hands of the newly initiated boys, clothes for the parents and reminding them of the Vedic injunction, "MATRU DEVO BHAVA, PITRU DEVO BHAVA;" bade them fall at the feet of their parents. It was a moving and inspiring scene which filled the hearts of all with joy and hope. The festival truly ushered in, the SATHYA SAI ERA of Vedic Revival

Prasanthi Nilayam News

On Jan 15, a party of Bhaktas from Anakapalle, Vizag Dt., waited on Baba with a Prayer that He should inaugurate the Sathya Sai Mandir there.

On Jan. 17th, Mrs. Ruth Wilson, of Vienna. Austria arrived at the Nilayam and during her stay of four days, she discussed with Baba various problems of Sadhana as well as the essentials of Sanathana Dharma, which raise it to the level of a Religion, for all Humanity. On Jan. 18th, T R Ganesan from Tokyo, Japan who has inspired a number of Japanese to hearken to the Message of Baba arrived and sought guidance for wider and better service.

A deputation from Koduvayoor, Palghat represented to Baba that they desire to publish a Malayalam version of the Sanathana Sarathi and Baba graciously blessed the venture.

On Jan. 18, Sri A Madhusudana Rao, the District Judge of Anantapur, and Sri, Gopala Aiyangar the Superintending Engineer, had a long discussion with Baba on the practical aspects of religion its the basis of daily life.

On Jan. 22, the owners of the bungalows of Sathya Sainagar, an Extension of Madurai City, waited on Baba with a prayer that He lay the Foundation for the Temole of Sri Sathya Sai Baba proposes to be constructed therein.

On Feb. 1st, Baba reached the Thirumalai Hills and stayed there that night, leaving at noon on the 2nd Feb. granting darshan to hundreds of devotees who had gathered there.

On the 2nd. Feb. Baba intended along with General Srinagesh, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, the Brahmopadeshm Muhurtham of the son of Dr B Ramakrishna Rao, Ex-Governor Kerala and U P

On 2nd Feb, Baba reached Trichinopoly and ceremonially entered the new House built by Sri A K C Natrajan, the Clarionet Everest.

On 3rd Feb. the Trichinopoly Municipal Council offered Baba a Welcome Address, which was read and presented by its Chairman, Sri Lourdeswami Pillai. Later, Baba met and had a long conversation with the Councilors as a Group.

Sri Seerkazhi Govindrajan, and Thiruvengadu Subramaniam, Srimathi K. B. Sundarambal and Murugadas gave music performances before Him.

Baba blessed and conversed with Sri Ariakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar, the doyen of Karnatic musicians Mr. & Mrs. K A Thangavelu the Film Comedians and Sri T M Narayanaswamy Pillai, Former Vice Chancellor of the Annamalai University.

On 5th Feb, Baba returned to Prasanthi Nilayam.

On 7th, Upanayanam for about 300 boys was celebrated in His Presence and under His Auspices.

On the 11th the Prasanthi Nilayam Telegraph Office was inaugurated, and the new Sathya Sai Power Press was started by Baba.

Mahasivaratri

The gathering of Bhaktas on Mahasivaratri Day was unprecedented and Baba showered His Grace on them all during Abhishekam and Bhajan at noon sprinkling the Holy Theertham with His own Hand. In the evening Baba gave a discourse and at about 8-50 P. M., while twenty thousand persons were immersed in the Divine Delight of Nagarsankirtan, one unique Oval Lingam symbolising the Brahmanda, with all its complex components reduced to the harmony of Beauty and Truth, materialised itself and emerged out of Baba's Divine Mouth. On the 12th, after Baba's Inspiring Discourse, the dear little students of the Vedasastra Patasala enacted before an enthralled audience of 20,000 the Telugu Musical Play 'Markandeya', written by Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself. Later Smt. K. B Sundrambal of Madras, the celebrated devotee of Muruga, sang for about two hours, flooding the atmosphere with bhakti. Brahmasri Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastry, Kuppa Bairaga Sastry and Prabhakara Umamaheswara Pandit spoke during the meetings and Brahmasri Kutumba Rao gave a Kathakalakshepam on 'Parvathi Kalyanam' on the 13th February.

Baba's Programme

Baba will be away from Prasanthi Nilayam from April 1st till about the first week of May.

A Glimpse of God

The stars awoke in their beds of cloud;
They rubbed their eyes and peered adown
The news, it spread along the firmament.
The pallid moon in her silver throne—she heard
She rose...and, all the sky was bright. The flocks
Of floss that roamed about, flew far in fright.
There!...There!...they said and thrilled with joy.
Their eyes were filed with happy tears.
They felt a waft of perfume soft, the same they had,
When Krishna sat on Yamuna's moonlit sands
The same they all had breathed when Rama sailed
On Sarayu waters, with His Consort and His Court.

Where?... Where?... the angels crowded round
All faces bent beyond the peaks of Sin, .
Between the jungled hills, the bouldered banks,
Along the curves and arcs by Godavari carved on earth
Ah...there He is, encircled by faith, adored, admired,
There... on the silvery sand, the Lord! "Let us sing His Praise!"
'Tis Baba, who is there! O, what great luck!
He has sailed with His Load of Joy, to bless these barren banks
Scattering smiles, and showering gems of Grace
For two full days along the path of sacred swells!
He Speaks...! the words are full of seeds for souls
He sings...! the music sprouts into faith and hope
He plays awhile with His Fingers in the sands
And, lo, there emanate whate'er He wills
This Vision of God... He grants, to all the chosen souls!
The stars stared lone. . . though He arose and left;
The boats sailed on, with fluttering flags
And exhilarated hearts, that had
A glimpse of God; the moon relapsed, so sad and pale;
A pathos darkened all the sky, the some had changed.

But when He landed on the shore
And the car sped on to Bhadrachalam—
All hills did thrill delighted.
The earth did heave in Joy, for He was Moving on!

Gita-Vahini

2

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

It is fair to name the first chapter as "Arjuna Gita" rather than Krishna Gita. Overcome by sorrow and delusion, Arjuna turns away from war and keeps aside his weapons; he is dejected in his chariot halted between the two opposing forces; he turns this way and that, puzzled and perturbed; he surveys the faces of his kith and kin; he is overcome by pity; the famous bow slips down from his grasp, he is too weak to stand or sit; his mind wanders into the dictates of the Purva Mimamsa school of thought. He swears, he will not engage in fighting. When Sanjaya reported this to the blind King, Dhritarashtra, he was overjoyed, for his heart rose at the thought Vision; so, he felt happy that his dream had come true, without much bother.

But Sanjaya who had that Divine Vision felt within himself. "Foolish King! What is this insane joy Which is affecting him? When the Lord is Himself on the side of the Pandavas, how can this King's wicked plan succeed?" Then, he pictured to himself the ghastly consequences of Arjuna jumping into the fray. But he saw Arjuna with tear-drops falling on his cheeks. There were whirlpools in his eyes.

Even the Lord could not bear the sight; He could not remain silent. He felt the pulse heat of Arjuna and diagnosed the malady. He knew in a trice that the malady of Moha or the delusion caused by false evaluation was not skin deep, but had penetrated the three bodies, the Gross, the Subtle and the Causal. The pity that enveloped Arjuna was not genuine, He saw. For, genuine pity will be endowed with Daivi Sampath, Divine elevating impulses and motives; it will not discard the orders of the Lord. It was really sheer egoism, under the veil of pity. So, the Lord decided to cure him; of that weakness. "Kripayaa vishtam," the Gita says: Arjuna was helplessly overwhelmed by pity and, that had to be cured.

Just its a spirit entering a person has to be exorcised Arjuna has to be freed from fear and cowardice. For he who has the Lord by his side need entertain no fear. What can any bhooth do to one who is the Lord of all the Five Bhuthas? "Vaidyo Narayano Harih." The Lord is the supreme Doctor. Narayana Himself took up the role of Doctor for Arjuna.

How lucky was Arjuna! Even from the depths of grief, Joy will swell. Until the 11th sloka of the 2nd chapter, it is the story of the despondency of Arjuna, the after-effects of the ghost possessing him. That is why the first step in the cure is the exposition of Sankhya yoga, the Path of Knowledge, Jnana.

The Amrithopadesa of Krishna begins from this 11th sloka; in fact, the Bhagavad-Gita starts from this point. Up to this point it is the description of Arjuna's delusion born out of ignorance and consequent dullness of intellect. Krishna does not take any part in this episode; He is acting the role of witness. He allows the despondency to deepen and darken. When at last, Arjuna threw down his bow and refused to fight, when he confessed that he had lost all sense of

right and wrong, when he prayed that Krishna should teach him the Way that will solve his problems best, then, Krishna came forward and said:

"Arjuna! How could this miserable shade of cowardice overtake you now, when you have been clear and bright, all along? This is quite un-becoming to the hero you are. The word Arjuna means, he of the pure unblemished character. Why then this untimely grief? Battle is imminent. The thick clouds of war have gathered around and are thundering aloft. The foes in front are awaiting the moment when they could jump into the fray. They have heaped countless injustices and cruelties on you so far. They have got ready to swallow the land that must come to you as of right. You have so far borne all the agony they have poured over you, without stirring even an iota away from truth. You have fulfilled all the conditions they imposed and you have passed through the years prescribed for your exile. In spite of all this, there were futile attempts to effect a compromise and avoid the clash of arms. We have yielded as much as we could. Now, war is the only method by which the eyes of the evil-minded Duryodhana can be opened to his own iniquities.

This war was decided on after long deliberation, as you know. This is not a hasty resolution taken in a fit of anger. Responsible elders have gathered and weighed the pros and cons and come to the conclusion that resort to arms is inevitable. You and your brothers approved all this and appreciated the decision. You have been preparing for this battle, with enthusiasm, since then. In fact, you have been immersed in it, more than others. How wrong is it for you now to turn back?

This war has not pounced on you, in a trice. You have been collecting the wherewithal since long. Remember how you struggled and starved and lived on roots and fruits of the forest in order to win the Paasupatha asthra from Lord Siva, how you went as far as the Loka of the Lord of Gods, Indra, in order to win celestial arrows for this battle.

I thought that the moment of destiny for annihilation they deserved had come for the wicked Kaurava brood; but, now you have started this morning song! Why this ominous note? Which Sastra lays down this attitude? Think of your duty as a member of the kshatriya caste: to uphold Dharma, to protect Justice. But you are overpowered by this strange detachment which is pathetically out of place.

This cowardice brings shame on you and even on your far-famed forefathers. Fie on you! You have dragged down the Kshatriya race into disgrace. War is the royal road for your kind, the road which leads to heaven., How can you escape infamy, if you withdraw from the field, now? You have earned the title, Vijaya, by the prowess of your arm. Do not tarnish the reputation that you have won by a life-time of effort. Give up this weakening delusion.

Listen to me; remind yourself of what happened at Amaravathi. You discarded the approaches of the Divine Damsel, Urvashi. She wanted a son through your grace and you immediately replied, "Take *me* as your Son." That revealed you as an incomparable hero. The curse that she spelt on you in her discomfiture helped you at the court of the Virata King, to pass off as a eunuch, teaching Dance to the royal princesses, is it not. Where has that heroism gone, tell Me. How has this pusillanimity come over such a stalwart?

You came and disturbed Me in sleep wide your request for help in this battle from which you are now running away. Am I to help you thus? Have I to watch while you are fleeing? Pluck this delusion by the roots; reduce this fear into ashes. Become a hero again." Thus exhorted Krishna.

Krishna uses four words in this context: Kasmalam (Ignorance) Anaarya-jushtam (Character that is harmful to the Divine Nature in each) Aswargyam (Quality that destroys the Divine in Man) and A-keer-thikaram (Quality that causes the decline of Human wealth, that is lasting.)

These inspiring words that will make the blood of any true Kshatriya boil had a tremendous effect on Arjuna. The thick cloud of ignorance which had overwhelmed Arjuna began to melt little by little. The Tamas which had made him forget the truth got removed; the rajoguna returned and Arjuna found words to ask. "Katham?" That term reveals much meaning. It shows that the Gita expounds, not merely what has to be done, but, even how it has to be done. This has to be clearly understood.

Again, Arjuna asks Krishna, "O Madhusudana! Listen to my words: Those who are in the forefront of the battle line are all worthy of being worshipped by me. The great Bhishma took care of us when we lost our father and brought us up from childhood and shaped us into what we are. He is as a father to us, the Grand Old Man of our clan. And what shall I say of Drona? He loved me more than he loved his own son, Ashwatthama; I had all his love. He is the Guru who, Through that love, took me as his favourite disciple and made me into the bowman that I am. Do you want me now to use the skill he taught to overthrow him? Is it right for a son of Bharat to do such a thing? In battle, we have to kill our *enemies*. Is it not? Or, can we fight with fathers and teachers, who deserve reverence?

You say that Heaven can be won by battle. I cannot realise how Heaven can be got, through the death of these revered Gurus. If this idea spreads, few Gurus can survive! Whatever you might say, let me tell you: rather than earn happiness and power through these means, I feel it is better to live on alms collected from door to door. Food won through killing such men is mixed with their blood and I would prefer a meal got through beggary to that. Well, if I give up all qualms and fight, how can victory be counted upon? Expecting victory to come to us, how can I resolve to slaughter these elders and, lose both worlds? If by chance, they win, then beggary for us is inevitable, is it not? Even if we win, it is as bad as losing it, for of what gain is victory if the price we pay is the destruction of kith and kin? We gain but grief, inconsolable for the rest of life Krishna! I am at a loss to solve this problem. My intelligence has deserted me. My nature has undergone a vast change, I do not know why. I cannot distinguish between right and wrong, Dharma and A-Dharma.

My Kshatriya blood rises up in protest when you prod it so; it is pushing me forward into battle. Fear of becoming the murderer of these reverend elders is pulling me back. I am helpless. As you are guiding this chariot, guide me also and show me the way. Moreover I am no more concerned with worldly prosperity I crave for spiritual progress only, He said.

From that moment, Krishna became the Guru and Arjuna, the Disciple. Arjuna prayed for that status and got it. Until Arjuna accepted this attitude of a learner, his heart was filled with egoism and weakness. The hero had become a zero. He had taken a position, the very opposite of that taken up by Krishna. The reason for all this, if you carefully study the situation, is nothing but "egoism". Prama is the viewpoint of Krishna and Bhrama of Arjuna. He suffered from agony because of That. Then, he realised that egoism led only to further ignorance and confusion. He surrendered his judgement to the Lord and saved himself. He said he was but an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Recognising one's error is the first excellence of a good disciple; it is the beginning of wisdom. Only the foolish will feel they all and suffer from the dire evil of a swelled head.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Guidance and Grace

"Baba has come to teach the Path of Shanti, not only to the people of India, but, to the entire humanity," declared Sri Bezwada Gopala Reddy, Former Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Government of India who presided over the Silver Jubilee at Penukonda of the Celebrations of the Birthday of the famous Vijayanagara Emperor, Sri Krishna Devaraya, which Baba inaugurated, on 17th Feb. last. Sri Kallur Subbarao M. L. A. , the Founder of this Festival, welcomed Baba and said that He was the Avatar promised by the Lord Himself. In His Address to the vast gathering, Baba drew attention to the problems of the present and exhorted all to train themselves for service and spiritual progress. "Of what use is it to recapitulate the achievements of the past and to stand aghast at the monuments erected by the ancients? You must draw inspiration from them, not get dispirited. You have lost the sense of values which the ancients had built up. Then, poets sages and scholars commanded the homage of society; but, now society is mad after film stars and cricketers. The poets who have conic here four this Festival have, let Me tell them, a great responsibility to keep their vision high and pure, and not let their pen descend to triviality and vulgarity" Baba said.

On the 18th, Baba inaugurated at Venkatagiri Town, in the spacious quadrangle of Rajamahala, the First Sessions of the new epoch-making Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha of which He is the Founder-president. The citizens had arranged a magnificently decorated palanquin for Baba's procession to the Rajamahala. Referring to the attempts made by devotees from Rajahmundry to have the First Sessions at their place, since the idea of the Sabha was announced first there last year on Rama Navami Day, Baba said, "Grace is not got through desire, but, by destiny. It has to be won, as the royal family of Venkatagiri has won it, by generations of effort, for the survival of Sanathana Dharma."

Learned scholars addressed the thousands of citizens on all the 3 evenings and Baba concluded the meetings with His Divine Message. The emphasis in this Message was on the essential Divinity of Man and the urgent need for the realisation by him of this heritage. Baba had a long discussion with the Nellore District Committee of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha and He blessed the Programme of work chalked out by them for the propagation of Sanathana Dharma.

Baba left Venkatagiri on the evening of the 22nd and, after a short stay at Manikonda, He reached Rajahmundry in the early hours of the 24th. Famous scholar and pandits had addressed the Sessions of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha on the 22nd and 23rd at that town and it was noted that the vast gatherings were evincing keen interest in the discourses. Baba gave the Valedictory Discourse on the 24th, in which He made clear that Vedic Dharma was its own proof, for it was experience that proved its worth to the individual. "I was something basic, an unchanging set of values, fundamental, for Peace and Joy."

On the 25th, Baba addressed another vast gathering at the Hindu Samaj, Rajahmundry. He noted that the Institution had completed sixty years of existence and so, He called upon it to remember lasting values like Progress in devotion, renunciation and spiritual joy, ideals consistent with the dreams of the founders of the Samaj.

On the 26th morning Baba and a few devotee from Rajahmundry and other places embarked in motor boats and proceeded along the Godavari River towards Bhadrachalam. It was not a pilgrimage, for the Goal was ever present in the midst; it could never be called a picnic, for, the atmosphere was charged with Divine Impulses towards Bhajan, Japam Satsang and Sadvichar; it was a floating Prasanthi Nilayam, an image and a reminder of the Gurucharanam, engaged in Bhavasagarathanam. When the boats passed through the Papikondalu Gorge (Gorge through the Peaks of Sin—so called because the gorge has many whirlpools which drag boats down to death), the hills resounded with the echoes of Sai Bhajan; life in the bannered boats with Baba at the prow waving to the crowds lined on the banks, the boats moving along with their shadows beneath them, along the broad waters of the Godavari winding about in search of depth was an unforgettable experience. The party landed as it willed on some sand dune or other and gathered around Baba to imbibe His Grace, which flowed either as a discourse or as a song, or sometimes, a miracle converting the sand into precious things of beauty to elevate the aspiring heart. (See poem on opening page)

On the 28th, Baba was Welcomed by the Bhadrachalam Temple Executives. In His Reply, Baba Cited Gopanna as an Instrument used by the Lord for the propagation of Shraddha and Bhakti. He said that the Lord comes as Maya in order to reveal the forgotten truth that Man is essentially Divine in nature. Maya has ignored his core and he is miserable because he feels he is weak and helpless. He spoke of the things man must seek, when he goes on pilgrimage to holy places and the things he must avoid, in order to achieve uplift. Shravanam alone is becoming a fashion, a fad, an itch. It must be followed by Mananam, quiet contemplation of the meaning and significance of the wise words one has heard.

Baba reached Hyderabad on the night of the 29th February, and a target number of devotees anxious to meet Him and receive His Guidance and Grace, were rendered happy, during His few days' stay there.

Sanathana Dharma is built four-square and solid on four pillars: Vedamata, Bhoomata, Gomata and Deha-mata. The Vedas, the worship of the earth which gives sustenance, the cow which is the symbol of service and compassion, and one's own mother, who is worshipped as Divine- these are the eternal pillars of the Faith.

Prasnottara Vahini

2

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

- Q. What are the four Vasanas?
- A. The body, the mind, wealth and sex; though there are others, all are ultimately based on these.
- Q. Man in his pride struts about blindly; what is this egoism that prods him on? How many varieties of egoism are there?
- A. There are four types: vanity of clan, vanity of wealth, vanity of youth and vanity of scholarship. Though there are other types too, they can be grouped under these.
- Q. I have heard it said that the Lokas are all in the body of man! Some experienced persons and some men learned in the Sastras have said so; is that true? What are those Lokas? Where are they situated?
- A. Yes. They are: Bhu-loka in the feet, Bhuv-ar-loka in the genitals, Suvar-loka in the navel; Mahar-loka in the heart, Jana-loka in the throat, Tapo-loka in the brow centre and Sathya-loka on the crest of the head. These are called the Upper Lokas, they are all situated in the body of man. There are Lower Lokas, too.
- Q. What are the Lower Lokas? Where do they exist?
- A. Athalam in the soles of the feet, Vithalam on the nails, Suthalam in the heels, Thalaathalam in the hip, Rasaathalm in the knees, Mahaathalam in the thighs and Paathalam in the anus.
- Q. If all Lokas are in the body—the five elements, being the components—what has happened to the Saptha Samudras, the seven legendary seas? Are they too in the body or in the mind?
- A. When the body is the residence for all the Lokas, how can the seven seas alone have a separate existence? They too are ‘in’ the body. Lavana or Salt Sea (urine), Cane juice Sea (perspiration), Sura or Sea of Wine (senses), Sarpi or Sea of ghee (semen), Dadhi or Butter-milk Sea (mucus), the Sea of Milk (saliva), and the Sea of Pure Water (tears).
- Q. You spoke of several types of Agni or Fire; what are they? How are they named?
- A. They are called Panchagni, because they are five in all: Kaala-agni, the fire of time; Kshudha-agni, the fire of hunger; Seetha-agni, the cold fire; Kopa-agni, the fire of anger, and Jnana-agni, the fire of knowledge.
- Q. Where do These reside?
- A. In the feet, the navel, the stomach, the eye and the heart.
- Q. Besides these, there seem to be varieties of Naada or Sound, too. I have heard some talk of them.
- A. Yes, there are.
- Q. Are they too in the body? How many types are they? And their names?
- A. There are ten types; all in the gross body itself: Lalaghosha, Bherinaada. Chaneenaada, Mrudanganaada, Ghantanaada, Kalanaada, Kinkininaada, Venunaada, Bhramaranaada, and finally, Pranavanaada. These are the varieties of Sound.

- Q. If all creation is subsumed in this composite of the five elements, the body, what are Anda-anda, Pinda-anda and Brahma-anda?
- A. Anda-anda means all this creation, liable to evolution and involution; the movable and immovable Nature, as it is often called. Pinda-anda is the name for the Inner Principle of all this duality, the seer and the seen, the doer and the deed, etc. it is the Duality that produces birth after birth, according to the karma of the janma. Brahma-anda means the collection of Mahabhuthas or the Inner Forces of the Five Elements: Atma related to the Akasa, Jivatma connected with Vayu, Prathyagatma arising out of Agni, Chaitanya-Brahma associated with the Jala element and Paramatma, attached to the Dharani (Earth) element are all covered by that conception of Brahma-anda. It is this Force that makes the elements operate; beyond them is the Avyakta-Brahma, the Uncognisable Absolute.
- Q. Swami! I do not clearly understand this rather complex subject. Please explain it to me by means of some simple illustration.
- A. Well, Anda-anda is the black retina of the eye; Pinda-anda is the inner circle within it; Brahma-anda is the light that shines therein. The splendour of that Light is Brahma.
- Q. In this cosmos which is the human body, what is the best Dharma to follow? Which Ashram is most conducive for that Dharma? How many Ashrams are there in all?
- A. There are four Ashrams in all; if you know about them, you can yourselves decide which Ashram you are to fulfill, examining your own achievement, progress and aptitude. Brahmacharya, Grihasta, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa are the four Ashrams.
- Q. Different explanations are given by different persons for the word Brahmacharya and the stage it denotes. I wish to know from you the real significance of that stage.
- A. Very well. It is believed that air who have not become Grihastas are entitled to be called Brahmacharis. This is very wrong. Only those who keep their minds away from the delusions of the world, who are constantly engaged in the thought of God, who do not see or hear light or merely entertaining stuff, who pursue good taste, who do not yield to joy or grief, who keep their mind, intelligence and self-consciousness in good trim by unremitting contemplation of the Brahmatattwa—only such deserve the name, Brahmachari.

(To be continued)

The Refuge

O Bhagavan Baba, with what gracious Love, You as Adi Narayana, flew to the rescue of Gajendra hearing his cries of extreme distress and prayers of one-pointed devotion, when he was being pulled by the leg into the lake by the crafty crocodile! That kind of merciful Leela of yours is in daily demand in this vast lake of Karma, the world, where action and reaction both sullied by selfish motives is the order of the day, and hence forms the turbid waters of the lake, where Buddhi though strong by inherited nature allows itself to be seized and dragged by the wily wicked crocodile, (the mind) of lesser strength but, which being in its own element, the water, manages to drag the elephant to imminent death. How can Buddhi extricate itself except through Your Grace and intervention in the nick of time, by your Deu ex Machina Leela! You alone can do it and have done it so often whenever you were called by means of one-pointed devotion and 'You-alone-no-other-refuge' prayers. Once the mind is destroyed, by your Grace there will be a

resurrection of it as pure satwa when Buddhi takes up the command when, man is enabled to live the life of blessedness for himself as well as for others.

O Bhagavan. you have shown how to live this kind of pure Ateendriya life, while playing the role of the most perfect man on earth, Sri Ramchandra. Valmiki, while asking Narada for the life-story of such a Perfect man, uses sixteen epithets to signify the full perfection of his conception and Narada, not to minimise a jot uses sixty four epithets to qualify Sri Ramchandra's personality and characteristics. That is the story of complete perfection found in Bhagavan Sri Ramchandra. No wonder Valmiki or any other devotee is never satiated in drinking the nectar-like words and deeds of Sri Ramchandra.

To speak of a few incidents of Sri Ramchandra's avatar as depicted by Valmiki for our benefit: in the first place Sri Ramchandra had no doubts and waverings in the performance of his duty. For in pure Buddhi there can be no doubts and petty-mindedness, as darkness is unthinkable in the sun. When Kaikeyi talked about her boons to Dasaratha and demanded of Sri Ramchandra his exile for fourteen years, he did not even consider it necessary to consult the Kulaguru but straightaway agreed to do her bidding with unabated love and reverence to her as a mother. Kingdoms and his personal pleasures did not matter for him but Dharma and goodness alone counted. He said to Lakshmana in another context:

"It is for the purpose of holding brothers and for their comfort, that I even desire kingdom (6-97 II). Later on when Vasishtha enjoined on him to accede to Bharatha's request and return to Ayodhya canceling his exile, he could not see his way to do it, despite his reverence for him as the Kulaguru.

Love guided by Buddhi is never selfish, never commercial, and does not even depend on the object. It is purely subjective—it loves for love's own sake only. Thus when Lakshmana suspected Bharatha on the circumstantial evidence of his coming with a very huge army which he observed from the top of a tree and called on his brother to arm himself and said he himself from his position of Vantage on the top of the tree, would shoot and kill Bharatha, Sri Ramchandra spoke to him these words with characteristic tenderness:

“What for is the bow in this matter ...with Bharatha killed, while coming to me, what am I going to do with the kingdom tainted by that censure?” (3-27 II)

He even offered to ask Bharatha to give the kingdom to him (Lakshmana) if it was really for the sake of the kingdom that he was speaking thus; and said that Bharatha would certainly say "Yes" to his request. This quiet rebuke made Lakshmana retreat within himself touched to the quick.

To give another instance of pure love of Sri Ramchandra:

When the mighty Vanara army had crossed over to Lanka in the night and Sri Ramchandra, ascending the hill Suvela next morning stood there accompanied by the great Vanara leaders to have a view of Ravana's capital city Lanka, at which very time Ravana with his generals had assembled on the terrace of his palace for a similar purpose of viewing the vast Vanara army drawn out on all sides like a second ocean. Sugriva catching sight of Ravana was seized with

great wroth against him as the abductor of the wife of his beloved friend and benefactor, Sri Ramchandra and so leaping suddenly into the sky and making way straight at Ravana he kicked him on the head striking down his jewelled crown to the floor and there ensued a terrific duel between the two warrior kings, with all the leaders on both sides looking on spell-bound. Finally when Sugriva flew back covering himself with laurels of glory for having challenged and fought with the king of the Rakshasas in his own camp single-handed so valiantly, Sri Ramchandra embraced him and spoke to him these words of tender and steadfast love:

"Had any thing happened to you, O Valiant Prince, of what avail could have been Sita for me? or Bharatha? or Lakshmana? or Shatrughna or my own body?" He also added that in a moment he had resolved, in the event of that contingency, to kill Ravana with his son and hosts, to crown Vibhishana in Lanka, to put the kingdom of Ayodhya in the hand of Bharatha and to end his own body. (4, 5-41 VI)

No wonder Sugriva was bound to Sri Ramchandra by such close ties of love and devotion that he relinquished his kingdom in favour of Angada and followed Sri Ramchandra when Sri Ramchandra terminated his avatar.

O Bhagavan Baba, each Yuga appears to have its own distinctive features; and you appearing in each may have different missions to fulfill, but there is in them all a uniform characteristic of Vibhuti and extraordinary greatness. In the present Avatar you are graciously contacting thousands and relieving their distress and sufferings. For over a thousand years now, in this Yuga, there had not been a king for the miserable people to go to and seek shelter in such a large scale. You have become the refuge for thousands and thus the long felt need has been supplied by you mercifully. Though these thousands pouring into Puttaparthi may have different tales of sorrow to make known, there is running through them all, a single purpose, which is to win your Grace. For, without that Grace nothing would avail, and for winning that, self-reformation is a *per se* sinequa-non. And in your mercy you have instituted certain disciplines, a fore-taste of which is insisted on in the Nilayam. Maintenance of silence and diverting the mind God-ward are the two most important disciplines. For, all other things will naturally follow, as all other organs of knowledge follow the organ of speech. So O, Bhagavan make us but your tools which ply without any individuality of their own. May we dwell constantly on you and your greatness; may we see you in all, may we hear you in the speech of all and may we look upon all the vicissitudes of our lives as opportunities of testing our mettle.

P. Venkatarama Rao.

The Path of Devotion

The Hindu Samaj, Rajahmundry, was established as its present President announced now, in 1903! So this can be taken to be its Shashtiabdaparthi Shanti, the Celebration of the completion of its sixty years of existence in an atmosphere of Shanti. At 60, the senses have lost their wildness and overwhelming power; they are powerless to drag the individual down into ruin. That is the chance to steady oneself in the contemplation of God and start on a newer and

better career that confers lasting joy. This is true of institutions too, and I would suggest that the Samaj assumes the task which was once its inspiration: the revival of the values of Sanathana Dharma, the spread of Atmajnana among people of all ages. Without the blessing of Atmajnana, no one can attain the goal of this human life, viz., the stage of undisturbed Shanti, the stage of unblemished Ananda. The Bhakta is the most reliable witness of that Ananda.

Bhakti is not to be calculated on the basis of the temples one has helped to build, or the donations one is persuaded to give or the lakhs of times one has written the name, or the time and energy one spends in the worship of the Lord. These are not vital at all; they are not even secondary. Bhakti is Prema, true Love, unsullied by the desire for merit, or attachment to the Fruit, forgetful of consequence. It is the love of the star for the sky, the spring for the cliff along which it pours, the creeper for the tree, the river for the sea, the iron for the magnet, the soul for the over-Soul. It is of the same sweetness in comfort or in distress, in bad times as well as good. In fact, the bhakta is always in joy, whatever the external conditions be, favourable or unfavourable. He feels he is an instrument, who is not to be bothered by where, he is or what he does or what his acts result in. Bhakti is not like the pepper or salt, with which you savour the dishes to suit your taste. It is not like the pickles you place on the tongue to add a twang to the appetite. It is the best food, the full food, the best food. It is not an attitude or a style or uniform to be worn and set aside.

Yudhishtir, the eldest of the Pandavas, as Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri said now, had that Bhakti in full measure and so, he did not lose heart, when in exile or lose head, when he got his throne back. Others, like Duryodhana use Dharma as a convenient excuse to escape from the consequences of their evil deeds, and appeal to the conscience of their foes. When Duryodhana was forced to emerge from the lake where he had hidden and when he was surrounded by the Pandavas he quoted Dharma and argued that it was wrong for so many to fall upon a single man; but this same Duryodhana had surrounded, with a host of other evil minded men, the young Abhimanyu trapped in the Padmavyuha, the Lotus Labyrinth. They had killed him without any compunction! Dharma is not to be used as a means of justifying evil; it is the sole means of a good and happy life, just as Bhakti is the very breath for that life.

A real Guru can teach you the practical discipline which will guarantee the Dharmic life. There used to come to Dakshineswar a devotee who was unfortunately an opium addict. Many 'respectable' fellow devotees pleaded with Ramakrishna to reform him or remove him from the Presence. The man could not be corrected by advice or admonishment. So, one day, He called him towards him and asked him how much of opium he needed a day, the exact weight. He gave him a piece of slate pencil of the same weight and asked him to weigh his dose against it, every time. On one condition however: he was to write on a slate the letter Om, the Sacred Pranavamantra with, it before he deposited it along with the balance for use the next day. The pencil piece wore out slowly with every Om and the quantity of opium became less and less, until one day the desire itself disappeared. This is the sign of a true Teacher.

The Avatar comes down as the clouds come to receive the drooping crops, with their load of refreshing water. Once Akbar asked Birbal why in Hindu Religion there is the belief that the Lord Himself incarnates as Man to save humanity, why an Angel for example is not sent to carry His Message and revive declining Faith and Strength. Birbal took some time to answer the

question. He had with him a wax image of Akbar's little son, hidden away, while they were all sailing across the flooded Jumna. Then, suddenly, he shouted, "The Prince! the Prince!" and threw the model into the raging waters. Akbar who feared that his son would drown, jumped into the flood, without a second thought. Birbal apologised and said that he did so only to prove that when the love that the Lord bore towards man was so great, how could He wait to send some Angel or to how could He trust some one else to save Humanity? "He comes Himself." That is the explanation for Avatars. Now about the Immanence of the Lord. Of the 5 elements, The Earth is the heaviest because it has all the qualities, Sabda Sparsa Rupa Rasa and Gandha. Jala has four; it has no Gandha. Fire is lighter still, for it has but three, Sabda Sparsa and Rupa and Vayu is lighter still, for it possesses only two qualities: Sabda and Sparsa. And Akasa or Ether is immanent to a great extent for it has just Sabda, and nothing else. Maya which produces all these five has even greater pervasiveness and the Lord of Maya can certainly be conceived as All-pervasive.

Dwell upon these higher truths and contemplate on the Lord, who is Sarva-antaryami. What is the use of scholarship or the accumulation of knowledge if the secret of one's self eludes you if you do not know the art of being at peace with yourself and others? Man by his attachment to the senses is becoming worse than the beasts of the forest. They have at least gratitude for kindness shown, they do not bite the hand that feeds them. Look at the experience of the exiled slave with the lion in the amphitheatre.

You say that the Lord resides in every one; well, have the faith that whoever you may feed, it becomes an offering to God. You talk of all being equal; well, if you serve others to the best of your ability, if each one does so, that is the practical application of the theory of equality. You sleep soundly when the neighbour is in agony; that is wrong. You begin to weigh one Form of Godhead against the other and you prefer one to another, because this is score profitable, this confers more boons quicker: This will not deceive the Lord; He sees through all your tactics. He cares for the purification of character, the ennobling of desires or even their elimination, the transformation of the vision into Janandrishti so that the Creation reveals itself as Brahmamayam.

Of what use is the prattle that "Sarvam is Brahman" when your vision is always seeing variety? What is the use of finding fault with others and exulting in one's superiority, when with another voice you proclaim the principle of equality from housetops? All are the images of the self-same Para-brahman; so, one must be ever alert to feel that one-ness and to snare in another's joy and grief, The human body should not be despised, for it is a vehicle for the ever-present eternal Atma-chaitanya, the necessary instrument for the realisation of the Absolute Consciousness.

From Baba's Speech at the Hindu Samaj, Rajahmundry 25-3-64

Prasanthi Nilayam News

Feb 17: Inauguration by Baba of the Silver Jubilee of the Sri Krishnadevaraya Jayanthi, at Penukoda.

Feb 18,19,20: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha; Inaugural Sessions at Venkatagiri .. Baba presided on the three days.

24: Baba at the Valedictory Sessions of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha at Rajahmundry,

25: Baba's Discourse at the "Hindu Samaj" Rajahmundry

28: Baba's Discourse at Bhadrachalam.

March 3, 5: Discourses by Baba at Jusbag, Hyderabad.

7: Baba returned to Prasanthi Nilayam.

10, 11 Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha at Naidupet, with the Kumararaja of Venkatagiri as President.

13: Baba presided over the School Day of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Parishad High School Bukkapatnam and released the Anantapur District Teachers' Guild's monthly magazine, "Educator" with His blessings.

It is more useful for the student to search for his own faults with a view to remove them, than for him to seek his excellences so that he might exult over them. Students who do this can progress fast; He is not dragged behind by fear or anxiety; he can move on, with faith in the Lord on whom he has placed all his burdens. He gets a state of mental calm, which is the sign of the true aspirant. Arjuna arrived at that stage, and then, Krishna gave him... and, through him, to all mankind the teaching that confers immortality.

For whom was the Gita spoken? Just think of that, for one moment. Milk is not taken from the udder for the sake of the cow, for cows do not drink their own milk; Arjuna, the calf, has had his fill; Krishna is ever-content and He needs nothing, not to mention, milk! For whose sake was it that the Upanishads were milked by Krishna to get this Gita? Krishna says it is for the "Sudheejana", the persons who have "Su-dhee", Intelligence that is moderated by Goodness, Intelligence that is controlled by Virtue.

And what of the place where the Teaching was given? Between two opposing Armies! Therein lies the great significance of the place. On one side, the forces of Dharma, on the other, the forces of Adharma; on one side, the good, on the other, the bad; between these two pulls, the Individual, unable to decide which course to adopt, weeps in despair. And the Lord Speaks the Gita to all such and grants them light and courage. Do not think that the distress of Arjuna was just *his* affair, *his* problem and no more. It is a universal human problem.

For, Arjuna sought from Krishna, not Preyas ... the pleasing, worldly glory of power and status and wealth, but Shreyas, the lasting glory of full Joy. He said, "Preyas is available for human effort; it can be won by human activity or Karma. Why should I crave from You what I can win by my own endeavour? I am not so foolish as all that. Grant me the Shreyas that is beyond the reach of my effort. Shreyas is not the fruit of Karma, it is the fruit of Gracealone". Thus Arjuna rose to the height of Sharanagati, absolute Self-surrender, the state called Prapatti.

Much can be said of this "Sharanagati". Man surrenders his dignity and status to other men for various purposes in life: wealth fame possessions pomp power etc. But, it is rare that he gets the chance to surrender to the Lord, for sake of the Lord! How can he get the change, so long as he craves for the Aadheya and not the Aadhaara? He longs for the object but does not long for the base on which object rests. How long can a base-less object satisfy? He wants the gift, not the giver! ... the created not the Creator, things from the Hand, but not the Hand! That is like running after a non-existent thing. Can there be an object without a pre-existent Cause? NO; if there is One, it can only be the Un-caused God. It is therefore sheer ignorance to surrender your individuality for the sake of the transitory products of action, the caused rather than the Cause. Surrender rather to the Basis, the Cause and the Origin of All, the Sarveswara. That is genuine Sharanagati.

There are three types of Sharanagati in all: Tha-vaivaaham (I am Thine), Mamaiva-thwam (You are mine) and Thwamevaaham (Thou art I). The first affirms, I am Yours; the second asserts,

You are mine and the third, declares, You and I are One, the Same. Each is just a step in the rising series and the last is the highest step of all.

In the first stage, *Tham-eva-aham*, the Lord is fully Free and the Devotee is fully bound. It is like the cat and the kitten; the cat shifts the kitten about as it wills: the kitten just meows and accepts whatever happens. This attitude is very gentle and is within easy reach of all. In the second, *Mama-eva-twam*, the Devotee binds the Lord, who is to that extent un-free! Surdas is a good example of this attitude. "Krishna! You may escape from my hold, from the clasp of these arms; but you cannot escape from my heart, where I have placed you," challenged Surdas. The Lord just smiled and assented; for, "I am bound by My Devotees" He asserts. Without any loss of self-respect. The devotee can tie up the Lord with his *Prema*, by *Bhakti* that overwhelms and overpowers his egoism. When man is full of this type of *Bhakti*, the Lord will Himself bless him with everything he needs; His Grace will fulfill all his wants. Remind yourself here of the promise made by the Lord in the *Gita*: "*Yogakshemam vahaamya-ham*." "I carry the burden of his welfare."

Next, about the third stage: "*Thwamevaaham ithi thridhaa*"; this is the *Avibhakta-bhakti*, the inseparable Devotion. The devotee offers all to the Lord including himself, for, he feels at last that he cannot withhold himself. That completes his surrender. But, the *twamevaaham* feeling is the *Advaitic Sharanagati*, based on the realization that all this "*Idam*" is *Vaasudeva* and nothing less, nothing else. So long as the consciousness of the *Deha* or body persists, the *bhakta* is the servant and the Lord is Master. Then, so long as the individual feels that he is separate from other individuals, the *bhakta* is a part and the Lord is the Whole. When the *bhakta* progresses to the state when he gets beyond the limits of the body as well as of "*I*" and "*Mine*", then, there is no more distinction: *Bhakta* and *Bhagavan* are the same. In the *Ramayana*, *Hanumantha* achieved this third stage through *Bhakti*.

This wane subject is mentioned in the seventh sloka of the second chapter of the *Gita*. The word *Prapanna*, used there indicates that Arjuna has the qualification, the discipline of *Bhakti*. Moreover Arjuna had analysed his own faults and recognised them as such. Again, he had awakened from *Tamas*. Krishna appreciated this, the moment it happened. He said, "You are called *Gudaa-kesa*, for you are *Jitha-nidra*; *nidra* or sleep is the characteristic of *tamas*; well, how did this *tamas* overwhelm you now? It is just a temporary phase; hence, it has melted away so soon. It can never bind you fast."

If Arjuna has, by his efforts, won control over his senses and earned the name *Gudaakesa*; Krishna as *Hrishikesa*, is the Presiding Deity of all the senses! Now, both are in the same chariot, one as learner and the other as teacher!

What exactly is the cause of grief? It is the attachment to the body that produces grief as well as its immediate precursors: affection and hate. These two are the results of the intellect considering some things and conditions as beneficial and some other things and conditions as not. This is a delusion, this idea of beneficence and malfeasance. Naturally, you get attached to objects that are considered beneficial and you start hating the others. But, from the highest point of view, there is neither; the distinction is just meaningless. There is no two at all; how can there be good and

bad, then? To see two where there is only One, that is Maya, or Ignorance. The ignorance that plunged Arjuna into grief was of this nature... seeing many when there is only One.

Absence of the knowledge of the identity of Tatt twam (the word 'tattwa' used to mean principle enshrines this great philosophical doctrine) is the cause of all ignorance. If this truth is not learnt, man has to sink and swim in the ocean of grief. But, if it is learnt and if man lives in that consciousness, then, he can be free from grief. Many a prescription is recommended used publicised and repeated parrot like, by all kinds of quacks. But, they do not go to the root of the matter; they are like the balm applied to the eye to cure an ache in the stomach. The disease and the drug have no co-ordination! The ache must be spotted and diagnosed and the drug must be such as will remove it. Then alone will it be cured. Narayana is the only medical expert who can do so. And, He has diagnosed Arjuna's illness correctly and decided on the treatment too. The drug drew out the dirt from the inner consciousness. The wound that will not be healed by external application of balms has to be cured by internal remedies. So, Krishna prodded Arjuna with queries.

"Why do you weep like a coward? Is it because Bhishma Drona and the rest are to die? No; you weep because you feel they are "your men". It is egoism that makes you weep. People weep not for the dead but because they feel the dead are theirs. Have you not killed many who were not yours? You never shed any tear for them. Today you weep, since you are under the delusion that these whom you see before you now are somehow yours in a special way. When you sleep, you are unaffected by this feeling of "I" and "Mine"; so, you are unaware what happens to your body or the bodies of "your men", or to your possessions, items which you carefully remember while awake. Mine is the possessive case of I and so it comes in its trail. The fundamental ignorance, you fool, is the identification of yourself with something that is not you, viz., the body. Deha is An-aatma: you believe that it is the Atma. What a topsy-turvy piece of knowledge is this So, to cure this A-Jnana, I must administer the medicine of Jnana itself."

Thus, Krishna started giving him, in the very first instance, the most effective drug, Jnana. This is from the eleventh sloka of the second chapter. This is a key sloka for all students of the Gita. Krishna condemns outright two objections that were haunting Arjuna for long: the first—that the destruction of the body means the destruction of the Atma too; the second—that he is grieving for those he need not grieve for. "Prajnaa - vaadaam - scha - bhaashase: You talk like a wise man. You say this is Dharma and the other is Adharma, as if you know how to distinguish them," said Krishna.

Here attention has to be paid to one fact. Arjuna is suffering from two types of delusion: (1) Ordinary and (2) Out of the Ordinary. To confuse the body with oneself and pine for the body as if something has happened to you is the Ordinary Delusion. To discard one's own Dharma—in this case, the Dharma of a Kshatriya) as A-dharma is the delusion Out of the ordinary. Krishna destroys the first and removes the second. The first is dealt with from the 12th to the 30th sloka of the second chapter; Krishna has to tackle the second as a special problem and explain in 8 slokas the idea of Swa-dharma to Arjuna. These are collectively called Dharmashtakas. Swa-dharma does not bind and produce further birth; it can lead on to Liberation; it has to be done as Karmayoga without attachment to the fruit thereof. Towards the close of the second chapter,

there is also the description of the successful aspirant who has steadied himself in the purified Intellect the Sthithaprajna.

Krishna continued His Discourse: "Arjuna! Think for a while who you are and what you are proposing to do. You declare you know everything but yet you weep like a helpless woman. Your words proclaim that you are a Pundit, but, your acts reveal you are a simpleton. Hearing you one would infer you are a Jnani, but seeing you, he would find out you are an Ajnani! Your condition is disgusting, to say the least. Well, if we take you to be a Pundit, we cannot reconcile that view with your tears, for Pundits do not grieve over , life and death. If they grieve they are no longer Pundits. Pundits or scholars have the capacity to decide on what is fundamentally true. Those who know the secret of the physical and the mystery of the spiritual, such alone can be called Pundits. How then can they weep over either the embodied or the dis-embodied? They will not forego their mental calm, whatever stress or distress might occur.

The fully ignorant and the fully wise- both will have no grief over the living or the dead. Do you weep because the bodies of Bhishma and Drona would fall, or is it because the Atma of those two would be destroyed? For the bodies, do you say? Well. For how many have you to weep, in that case! Are tears any good? If they are, certainly, people would have kept the corpses of their dead and revived them by their weeping. No, it can never be. Immerse the body in vessels of Amrita; it cannot come back to life. Why then weep over the inevitable, the unavoidable?

You might say that you are weeping for the Atma the spiritual core. That reveals a greater foolishness. Death can never even approach the Atma. It is eternal self-evident, pure. So, it is evident that you have no Atma jnana at all.

Again, for the Kshatriya, fighting is Swadharma. Do your duty, regardless of other considerations. You ask, "Katham Bheeshmam aham samkhye"? But, you are killing them on the battlefield where they have come to get killed and to kill; you are not killing them in "grille" at home. Of course it is A-dharma to kill them in their homes, but, on the battlefield, how can it be so? I am sorry you have not got this much of Viveka.

'T is enough. Get up and get ready for the fray. Why slide to the ground under the weight of all this useless ego? The Lord is the Cause of all, not you. There is a Higher Power that moves everything. Know this and bend your will to it.

Bhishma, Drona and the rest have come, like true soldiers and Kshatriyas to engage in battle. They do not weep like you. Consider that. They will never grieve or withdraw. Arjuna! This is the testing time for you, remember! Let Me tell you this also. There was never a time when I was not. Why? There was never a time when even you and all these kings and princes were not. Tatt is the Paramatma, Twam is the Jivatma, and both were always the same are always the same, in many forms, and will be so for ever. Mud exists prior to the pot, in the pot and after the pot, too."

Arjuna was shocked into awareness and wakefulness by all this. He said, "May be you are God; may be you are indestructible. I weep not for you, but, for such as us, come yesterday, present today, off tomorrow. What happens to us? Please enlighten me."

One point has to be carefully noticed here Tatt, that is, the Godhead is Nityam, Eternal; every one accepts it. But, Twam, the individual too is Godhead! (Asi). It too is eternal, though, it cannot be grasped so easily or so quickly. So, Krishna elaborates this and says, "Arjuna! You too are as eternal as the Absolute. Seen apart from the limitations, the Individual is the Universal. Prior to the appearance of the jewel, there was just gold; during the existence of the jewel, there is just gold; and after the name-form of the jewel has gone, the gold persists. The Atma persists in the same way, body or no body.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Prasnottara Vahini

3

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Q. What exactly does Grihasta mean?

A. Being married and living with the wife and children do not constitute Grihasta Ashram as most people think. Without giving up the duties assigned to one's caste and status, the person has to treat all with equal consideration—kinsmen as well as others. He must be aware of the rights of the elders and the obligations of juniors: he has to be full of sympathy and willingness to help; he should treat with loving kindness all those who are dependent on him; he must grow wiser with each new experience of the world. He, should acquaint himself with the Sastras and be alert to do Dharma and avoid Adharma; he must foster and protect his wife and children with a sense of responsibility; he has to trample down the Eight Egoisms, the conceit that develops from family, wealth, character, personal beauty, youth, scholarship, native place and even accomplishments in austerity. Conscious of the four goals of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, with no pride in material possessions though he might have them in large measure; utilising a portion of the day in the service of others; with no designs against any other household; himself deserving the trust of his wife and having a trusted wife, each understanding the other and having full faith in the other; such are the ways in which the Grihasta manifests.

Q. What, then, does Vanaprastha mean?

A. At that stage, man feels that all dualities are untrue and baseless. He gives up all desires; drops all attachment to the world; dislikes living in crowded places; is anxious to achieve victory through Mantra-japa and so leads a life of austerity, eating only uncooked food, mostly fruits and leaves, in moderation; moves in the company of sages and maharshis; listens to their teachings and moves unfalteringly on the path realising the Lord. The Vanaprastha must get the approval of his wife when he moves out into solitude for the life of Sadhana and he must make sufficient provision for his children also. If however the wife is willing to accompany him, he has to take her in his spiritual journey. They must hence forward live as brother and sister and not as husband wife. Provided this new relationship is maintained, life in the home too can be transformed into Vanaprastha. On the other hand, if the old life is continued, life in the forest does not constitute

Vanaprastha. The Vanaprastha must not stay in the residence of married people. He must observe the vows prescribed for each season of the year. He has to brave the rain, the sun and the cold during the seasons. He must be vigilant against being drawn towards physical pleasures by fickleness of the mind. He must seek and find pleasure only in the contemplation of the Lord and in dwelling upon his Glory.

Q. What does Sanyasa mean?

A. Sanyasa is above and beyond all promptings of sensual or objective pleasure. The Sanyasi deals with the contemplation of the Lord as the very breath of his life, an essential necessity always and at all places for sheer existence itself; he derives joy only from this contemplation. He knows that wealth and kinship, affection and attachment are all momentary and liable to decline and end. He discards the external reminders of even caste-status and samskaras like Upanayanam; he wears the ochre robe of the mendicant; he does not live in populous places; he lives on whatever little food he gets; he does not decry the place where he does not get food; he does not eat twice in the same place or sleep two days in succession in the same place; he even conquers the temptation to sleep and eat; he cares little for the rigours of the seasons; he is ever joyful and happy in the company of the Lord whom he invokes by his Dhyana.

Q. Nowadays, there are many ochre-robed people moving about as Sanyasis. Are they all equipped with the disciplines mentioned by you now?

A. There is, of course, no paucity of people who are—so equipped. But it is not possible to say that all are like that.

Q. There are many who, though Sanyasis, establish Ashrams and get themselves established in worldly affairs and worldly possessions and struggle for worldly pomp and power. What is to be said of these?

A. For genuine Sanyasa and for detachment from all mental agitations, institutions like the Ashrams you mention are great handicaps. For those who should give up all purposeful effort, the effort for the upkeep and progress of the Ashram is an obstacle in the path. I need not tell you by what name such Sanyasis are to be called. I can only say they do not deserve the name, Sanyasi.

Q. Swami, how can the growth of the Ashrams, which help people like us to know the means of Liberation, be a bondage? And how can Ashrams get on without money? I hope it is not wrong to accept help, voluntarily offered.

A. My dear fellow! It is theft if the lock is broken and valuables are taken away, or if they are removed through an opening made in wall; it is theft, if by soft words in open daylight a person persuades you to part with your valuables. If a Sanyasi casts his eyes on wealth, whatever the motive, it is harmful for his spiritual progress. He should cast all such tasks on some trustworthy devotee and be an unconcerned witness only. His duty is to see that the persons who seek Ashraya (Succour) are assured of spiritual help, not to help the Ashram to rise and prosper. The flames of desire to make the Ashram grow will rise into the bonfire of self-seeking egoism and burn out all that is commendable in the Sanyasi, especially his Atma-ananda. The fire will destroy not merely the Sanyasi, but also those dependent on him for guidance. The feeling “I” and “Mine” are such destruction causing sparks. Man must attach himself to guides who are devoid of these. But once the Ashram becomes the prime factor, the so-called ‘guide’ has to attach himself to men! It should be the other way. He must not be dependent on the world; he must be free from all dependence. That is the mark of the Sanyasi.

(To be continued)

Tanmaya Bhakti

A little worm deposited by a wasp, an insect of the family of the bee, in its newly built mud-sheath by the side of a wall in Prasanthi Nilayam, began to ruminate in its inaudible chirp, chirp, chirp, which, when rendered into human speech, would run to something" like this: "Oh! what a happy change I find here from my old gutter world life! How grateful I am for my winged saviour who transported me from the ditch to this dome like paradise! No more wallowing in the mire of the ditches! I am here under the kind protection of Divine Kiranas, whereas I was quite miserable in the gutter world. Evidently the thick layers of gloom and misery surrounding me there, were too thick for these Kiranas to penetrate. Here I see nothing but the Deity of my worship, the winged angel. I hear nothing but his buzz. I feel nothing else than his sweet presence. There is nothing else in my thoughts. Oh! How bewitching the sight! How sweet the singing! Already I am winging and singing too! Oh joy, jo-y, J-o-o-o-y!"

The worm is lost in contemplation. Lo! it has become a full fledged wasp. It flies out of the sheath into the bee-world, buzzing and fluttering over flowers and bulbs. A Keeta transformed into a Bhramara! While this is possible and is taking place daily in the low invertebrate kingdom of worms and insects, surely man the culmination of Brahma's creation "created by God in His own image" as the Bible puts it, should do better. Man being an intellectual being should attain his salvation through intellectual means. He should work for a metam-psychosis of his inner kosas which should drop off one day, and he would then enter into Parmatma. Vishate tadanantaram, as the Gita sings.

For this process of attenuation and dropping of the inner Kosas, Bhagavan Baba is constantly emphasising two important things, firstly the practice of Jnana on a firm foundation of dispassion or vairagya towards worldly desires and secondly on the exclusive dwelling on Paramatma at all times.... He has said that without a deep sense of Vairagya it is difficult to practise Jnana and without Jnana constant contemplation of Paramatma is not possible. Because our Samskaras, solidified in the course of numerous births we have taken, have been fully saturated with worldly attachment and it is only with a strong attitude of dispassion, that these worldly objects are but the creations of the mind, can we turn our thoughts to Paramatma and reach the goal.

Sri Krishna Paramatma clearly enumerates some 22 characteristics of Jnana like Amanitwa. Adambhithwa and so on in Gita XII—slokas 7 to 11 and pointedly says that these are the qualities of Jnana and that all contrary to these are Ajnana. Bhagavan Baba in His holy Vahinis has described thoroughly the method of practising these jnana qualities.

As regards exclusive dwelling on Paramatma Bhagavan Baba exhorts in 'Jnana Vahini' the method known as Jnanabhyasa.

Tatchintanam tatkathanamanyonyam Tatprabodhanam

Etadekapatwam cha Jnanabhyasam Vidurbudhah

"Thoughts dedicated to Him alone, speech devoted to Him alone, conversation centering on Him alone this one-pointed existence is referred to by the wise as Jnanabhyasa."

Bhagavan Baba not only exhorts us to practise self-reform in His books, speeches, teachings, Darshans and in giving chances of Paadabhivandanas and face to face talks but also has laid down certain disciplinary rules for our guidance when we go to Prasanthi Nilayam. Maintenance of silence by restricting our speech to the minimum, putting down din and noise, prohibiting spitting, the use of footwear and fouling the air by smoking within the compound, are some of the Don'ts that provide excellent discipline in Pratyahara or the inhibition of the mind from its wandering to make it one pointed towards Paramatma. There are facilities for simple living and high thinking in the ideal way of homelessness (Aniketa state) and also in the hermitage like habitations. Half the battle for self-reform would be won by meticulously observing these rules.

These rules aim at making us devotional. Since our object in going to Prasanthi Nilayam is to win Bhagavan's Grace and obtain relief of our sufferings, we are bound to devote all the time for devotional practices. Worldly thoughts and activities like gossiping and engaging in worldly pastimes, jollities, and starting anew social formalities there also, are not only uncalled for but are positive hindrances to pure devotion. What is expected of us is whole hearted Ananya Bhakti and Tanmaya Bhakti. Engaging in worldly pursuits and trying yet to develop Bhakti is something like having a split personality, the one making inroads into the other. It will show that our allegiance to Bhagavan is not supreme but only partial. Why should we go to Prasanthi Nilayam when we are unable to part with our worldly preferments and partialities?

"When you go to Rome do as the Romans do" is sound advice. To question the rules and to disregard them is not sound sense. It undermines the purpose of our going there if we shirk these rules or take them light-heartedly or say that these rules and these teachings of Bhagavan Baba are meant only for adepts who are of a high order and who have finished thousands of births. How do we know whether we have not finished those thousands of births and what does it matter if we have finished them or not since our aim is to derive the best result from this Avatar, Bhagavan Baba, who has come luckily into our midst in our own times?

After all, these speculations about the efficacy of these rules are wholly groundless. These very people who might question the rules, entirely change when they fall sick and take to bed. They even get a reverential attitude and begin to practise Ramasmarana. We can reform our nature by a timely recognition of the efficacy of Bhagavan's rules and teachings and taking to them wholeheartedly and voluntarily. How aptly is Sri Krishna Paramatma represented as holding Jnanamudra in one hand and a whip in the other! It would be better and wiser if we take heed of the Jnanamudra and take to self-reform, rather than court the administration of the whip!

Let us saturate ourselves with the main teaching of Bhagavan Baba referred to above as Jnanabhyasa. With the grounding obtained from the various disciplines, we should derive sweetness for the one pointed pursuit of our object. Then all un-Atmic conceptions would cease. Sri Krishna Paramatma eulogises this state as Brahma-Karma-Samadhi in Ch. IV- 24.

"Brahmarpanam, Brahmahavi, Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam Brahmaiva tena gantavyam Brahma-Karma -Samadhina" "The Arpana is Brahma, the Havis is Brahma, the Agni is Brahma, the offering is done by Brahma. The goal to be reached is Brahma, the process is Brahma-Karma-Samadhi".

When all the actions and objects appear as Brahma without any conception of separateness there will ensue automatically, focussing of the Prana and Manas culminating in Samadhi. But since in the waking state also this one-pointed view remains, the condition of Samadhi may be said to spread over the waking state also, thereby sublimating all activities as Samadhi. It is in such a state of Samadhi great Rishis worked and wrote and these works of theirs, being of the nature of Paramatma, or Prajnana. Have no extinction and death.

Let us bid good-bye to our erroneous ways, bodily and mental; and take to the practice of right attitude, right conduct and right character. May Bhagavan Baba guide us kindly in this work of self-reform and shower His Grace on us at all times.

P. Venkatarama Rao

When you point your forefinger at anything, the thumb, you should note, points towards you. The other three fingers keen apart. The fore finger is "The Objective World"; the thumb is "The Subjective world", the Exterior Look and the Inward Look; the other fingers are the; gunas. When the fore finger touches and is in contact with the thumb, it is the dawn of Wisdom, the Jnanamudra.

BABA

A New Year Resolution For You From Baba's Discourse: On Yugadi Day

To celebrate New Year Day in a spirit, of hilarity, playing cards or carrom or attending cinemas, or sheer feasting, is to waste precious time, time that has to be used for realising the purpose for which man has taken this birth. It is not the year that is new; every second is new and has to be welcomed as an opportunity for self-examination and self-improvement, which are the means for self-realisation. Go and sit alone on the bank of either the Ganga or the Godavari, Pinakini, Thungabhadra or Yamuna and watch the flowing waters. Ask the river why she is halting so fast, what is her destination, whither her journey. She will not stay even to listen, much less reply. The goal has to be reached, whatever the obstacle. But, if the river had answered, what would she have said, do you know? "I am running towards the sea—which is the place where from I came. Do not delay my pace by questionings. The rays of the sun lifted me from the sea, the clouds accumulated, we fell as rain, gathered into streams and here I am, a river, seeking rest in the bosom of the Mother, the Master, the Source and Sustenance." You too are like the river bound to travel along quick and fast, with no loitering on the road, towards your Source, the Brahmamathwam. But, you stand and stare and tarry, listening to every argument that induces you to halt; why, you stay on asking others needless questions about them and their problems as

if yours are not sufficient to worry you! This talkativeness is the bane of spiritual life, though you might say, this inquisitiveness gives zest to living. But the salt that is to be added must be just as small in quantity as will add to the taste, not as much as will spoil it. You will get into the habit of moderate speech, only if you seek the proper company of spiritual aspirants. Sat-sang is what you need. When mud joins the wind, it rises into the sky; if it befriends water it falls into a pit! If iron seeks the company of fire, it glows pure and bright; if it befriends the earth, it is powdered into rust! Join the company which will take the dross from you and make you pure and bright.

It is not this Panchangam that is to be read today; rather, you must get interested in the Panchangams; the Indriyas, the Senses, which have to be propitious, so that you might progress in spiritual pilgrimage. Teach the senses to seek a pure vision, a pure speech and the desire to listen to good things. Above all, guard your speech. It is the words that flow from your tongue that proclaim your innate character. Gentle speech is the armour that protects your self-respect. Speech makes the listener's heart bloom with joy or shrink in grief. Before you speak, beware of its consequences on you as well as on others. Watch for the circumstances and the temper of the listening group. Always make the words sweet and pleasant. Do not think that a vow of silence is what I recommend. The Lord, His Avatar, speaks soft and sweet; not that He has no authority or power to chastise, but, out of His Grace and Mercy. Then, why can't you practise softness and sweetness? If you throw a petal on a lake, it will scarce cause a ripple, but, if you throw a huge bit of rock, the depths will be stirred and the water rendered muddy. So too, a soft word makes things easy but a hard word moves men into anger and sudden retaliation. Try to earn a heart as soft as butter; a vision as cool as moonlight; a mind as sweet as honey; a tongue as illuminating and steady as a lamp.

I must blame the cynics and satirists who bring tears into the eyes of men; they use words as barbs intended to wound; they do not fill the air with innocent laughter. Recognise the Lord as the Indweller of all... and, without any effort, your words will become sweet. You will feel that He is everywhere, that it is a sacrilege to condemn any one or wound any one with harsh words.

This is My Command to you on this New Year Day; remember, My Command is more even than Myself. Be an example to others in this matter of minimum Speech, sweet speech, speech only when it is essential, only to those who are essential. This is the sure step to victory.

From Baba's discourse on Yugadi day at the Prasanthi Nilayam 15-3-64

My Task is This

(A letter from Baba)

(17 years ago, a devotee who was perturbed by adverse talk, wrote in his agitated condition, a letter to Baba for which He wrote the following reply.

Readers will find this letter, written when Baba was "just over twenty years of age" very revealing and very inspiring. Baba explains in it His Task and His Divinity)

Puttaparthi
25-5-47

To Bhaktas!

My dear Boy. I received your letter and I noted the flow of the current of Prema and the echo of Bhakti in every word.

It is impossible to see into the hearts of Jnanis and Yogis; nor is it possible to understand their ways. So, naturally, people talk about them, just as their fancy prompts them. No amount of fault-finding indulged in by these people can affect us, so long as we act truly and well, keep our purpose steadily in view and so long as we do not lose hold of the values dictated by Jnana. Don't you know that only those trees get stoned, which have fruit on their branches? The tree with no fruits is not noticed by passers-by.

Good and bad co-exist; they are companions for ever. That is in the very nature of the world.

And, why, let me ask, should these people be blamed? Poor fellows! What do they know? What *can* they know? They are caught by every gust of greed anger envy and hate. So, they become intolerant and have no control of mind or tongue; they indulge in loose talk and slander. Those that know will never talk like that. It is not wise to take such ignorance seriously.

Truth alone can win, believe Me. Un-truth must fail. It might appear to win for some little while, but, as soon as Truth appears on the scene, un-truth does flee.

It is not the nature of Mahatmas to exult when worshipped or droop when they are neglected or calumniated. No Gita has laid down rules and regulations for the behaviour of Mahatmas; but, Sathpravarthana and Sadbuddhi are the fundamental traits ...Beneficial Activity and Beneficial Thoughts. Provided these are there, whatever is done over and above this for the benefit of the Bhaktas and for their welfare according to their deserts, we can afford to be free.

I shall tell you this now: Listen!

My Task is this:- To confer on Man
Fullness of Joy, to Guard, to Guide!
My Vow is this:- To save each one
Who strays from off the virtuous Path!
My Love is this:- To end the pain
Of the Poor, fulfil their needs!
My crown is this:- To nourish all
Who seek Me, steady, keen!
My Need is this:- the Even Life
Discarding ups and downs as trash!

I'll ne'er forget those who come to Me
And be with Me; 'tis a certainty!
When thus I move and work and speak

Say, how My Name can tarnished be!

You should pay no heed to the talk you mention. The Mahatmas do not owe their greatness to others who recognise them as such; nor do they lose their greatness if some one fails to recognise them. Their stature is not heightened by praise or lowered by blame.

Of course there are some "Yogis" who suffer from blame and *they* have every reason to fear. I shall tell you who they are.

They quaff their fill, they swallow pills
Of opium, and chew the bhang—these 'noble' folk!
They drink, they eat their fill
Of low unwholesome food—these 'famous' men!

"Tis wrong to state 'tis false to say
That any thing dies, they never die,"
They swear while (!) cutting throats and eat
The living things they like—these 'teachers' grand!
They preach the lessons of love and peace
But hate and fight, all on the sly—these 'gurus' great!
They fret and fume and speak for long
On dry as dust philosophy!
This wondrous gang of Yogis false
They Surely dread a fall.

It is only such that have to be afraid. You must have read, in the lives of Mahatmas, how they were assailed by small men in even worse ways. It is all part of the scheme,: don't worry. How long can the poor dogs bark at the star? How can they produce any effect on the star? All this will continue just for a little time; our integrity is the means to victory.

I shall not slacken My Task, My Activity, My Determination. For Me, Reputation Fame Blame Calumny—all are equally insignificant. I am quite unconcerned with the whole lot. I speak and act, only to help the world and for the sake of the people. But, let Me tell you, I have no Name, no Place, no possession. By whatever name I am called, I respond! To whichever place I am called, I go and make My appearance. I have this as My very first, My vow, My self-imposed task.

I have not spoken of this to anyone so far; I am not a part of this world; I am far far away from it. But yet, I engage Myself in the uplift of its inhabitants. My Shakti, My Power, My Mystery can never be understood, whoever studies it, howsoever intensely and well.

You can yourself witness the glory that will be manifested hereafter. Bhaktas must learn patience and await events. Then, you will yourself realize the absurdity of your fears.

I wrote this reply to you, because I felt you will be sad, unless I wrote. Otherwise, I would not have replied at all, for it is not in Me to pay heed to such things.

Thus.....Your Baba.

Prasanthi Nilayam News

15th March:

“Yugadi” at the Prasanthi Nilayam. Panchanga Sravanam. ("Prasanthi Nilayam Panchangam" by Brahma Sri Kuppa Bairagi Sastry)
Baba's Discourse

18th March:

Dr. S. C. Ray, Professor, New York University Fulbright Scholar, had a long discussion with Baba on "Modern Trends in Hinduism", the subject of the Book he is deputed to write, and on other related topics.

28th March:

Baba left for Bangalore.

13th April:

9-30 A.M. Opening Ceremony of "Brindavan" (Whitefield) by Bhagavan Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

5 P.M. Inauguration of the Prasanthi Vidwanmaha Sabha in Mysore State at 'Brindavan';
Discourses

14th April to 15th April: 8 A.M. to 8 A.M. "Akhand Bhajan" in Baba's Holy Presence

15th April: 5 P.M. Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha: Discourses.

Though it is associated with the body, the Atma is un-affected by the Gunas and the Dharmas; that is to say, it has no qualities and characteristics. You are unaffected by the changes that the body undergoes when you grow from the infant to the boy, from the boy into the youth, from the youth to the middle-aged man and thence to the old man. You persist, in spite of all this. It is the same when the body is destroyed; the Atma persists. So, the hero will not pine for the change called death. Krishna said this with such emphasis that the chariot shook.

Arjuna was still doubt-ridden. "O Lord", he began, "You said that the bodily changes are like the stages of wakefulness dream and sleep. But, we do not forget our experiences when we awake from deep sleep. The experiences of previous births are, destroyed in memory by the incident called "death." He replied that it is not possible to bring to memory all experiences, but, it is possible to recall some. For the Atma persists, though the vehicle changes.

Arjuna then shifted to another point; a point which pesters many besides Arjuna. That is why, Krishna says, "Dheerasthatha na muhyathi"—"the Dheera is not deluded by this." He does not say, Arjuna should not be deluded. He intends to teach all wavering minds. Krishna solves every doubt as soon as it arises. He said, "Arjuna! While passing through the three stages, Buddhi somehow manages to keep some points in its hold. But, it too is destroyed when death comes to the body. At one stroke, all is forgotten. Memory is mainly the function of the intellect, not the Atma.

Now consider this: Take it that you are 25 years old. You cannot now tell exactly where you were on a definite day, ten years ago, can you? But, you existed that day, ten years ago. About that there is no doubt. You dare not deny your existence, then. The same is the case of the life before this which you lived, though you have no recollection how and where. The wise man is not deluded by such doubts, nor agitated by them. They are the Jnanis.

The Atma does not die; the body does not stay. Well, do you think that your grief at their possible death will make the Atma of your opponents happy? That is an insane thought. The Atma does not derive joy or grief, whatever happens or does not happen. Let the senses be in their place; there is no reason to fear. It is only when they start contacts with objects that the twin distractions, joy and grief, get produced. When, you hear some one defaming you, you feel anger and grief; but, no such agitation can take place if the words do not fall on your ears. The object-ward movement of the senses is the cause of grief and its twin, joy.

It is similar to heat and cold; when it is the cold season, you crave for warmth and in the hot season you crave for coolness. The sense-object contact is exactly like this. So long as the world is there, objective contact cannot be avoided; so long as the burden of previous births is there, the joy-grief complex cannot be avoided. Still, one can master the art, the discipline, the secret, of avoiding or bearing them without danger.

Of what use is it to wait till the waves are silenced before you wade into the sea for a bath? They will never cease. The wise man learns the trick of avoiding the blow of the onrushing wave and the drag of the receding wave. But, a sea bath is so essential. Some people avoid that very thing, because they are too idle to learn the art. Arjuna! Wear the armour of fortitude, of Titiksha, and the blows of good and bad fortune can never harm you.

Titiksha means equanimity in the face of opposites, putting up with duality. It is the privilege of the strong, the treasure of the brave. The weak will be as agitated as peacock feathers; they are ever restless with no fixity even for a moment. They sway like the pendulum, this side and that, once towards joy, the next moment towards grief.

Here some thought has to be spent on one point. Fortitude is different from patience, Titiksha is not the same as Sahana. Sahana is putting up with something, tolerating it, bearing it, because you have no other go; having the capacity to overcome it, but yet, disregarding it... that is the spiritual discipline. Patiently putting up with the external world of duality combined with inner equanimity and peace... that is the path to Liberation. Bearing all with discrimination—that is the type of Sahana that will yield good results.

(Viveka is the word used for such discrimination. It means the capacity to recognise what is called the “Aagamaapaayina” nature of the objective world, that is to say, the objects “come and go” and are not eternal. Titiksha will confirm this conviction.)

Generally, man seeks only happiness and joy under no stress will he desire misery and grief! He treats happiness and joy as his closest well-wishers and misery and grief as his direst enemies. This is a great mistake. When one is happy, the risk of worry is great; the fear of losing the happiness will haunt the man. Misery prompts inquiry, discrimination, self-examination, and fear of worse things that might happen. It awakens from sloth and conceit. Happiness makes one forget one's obligations to oneself as a human being. It drags man into egoism and the sins that egoism leads one to commit. Grief renders man alert and watchful.

So, misery is the real friend; happiness spends out the stock of merit and arouses the baser passions. So it is really an enemy. Really, misery is an eye opener; it promotes thought and the task of self-improvement. It also endows one with new and valuable experiences. Happiness draws a veil over the experiences that harden a person and make him tough. So, troubles and travails are to be treated as friends; at least, not as enemies. Only, it is best to regard both happiness and misery, as gifts of God. That is the easiest path for one's own liberation.

Not to know this is the Ignorance. A person so ignorant is blind; really, happiness and misery are like the blind man who must be accompanied ever by one who sees. When the blind man is welcomed, you have inevitably to welcome the man with the eyes also, for he is the constant comrade of the blind man. So too, happiness and misery are inseparable; you cannot choose one of them. Moreover, misery highlights the value of happiness. You feel happy, by contrast with misery. Thus said Krishna to Arjuna, to teach him the insignificance of duality.

Then Arjuna resumed: Madhava! What is the profit if your advice is followed and if the necessary Titiksha is cultivated?” Forbearance is perhaps the only result. There is no benefit,

isn't it? Krishna replied "O Son of Kunti! The hero is the steady person, who is not agitated to the slightest extent by the ups and downs caused by the roaring waves of the Sea of life; who does not lose the poise which has become part of his nature; who keeps to his schedule of spiritual discipline, whatever the attraction or distraction. The wise man is he, who is unaffected by the ever present dualism of the objective world. He is the person referred to as the "Dheera."

"Dhee" means "Buddhi"; it is the quality that makes a person a "Purusha" or perfect Man. It is not the dress or the growth of a moustache that marks out the "man". Manhood comes with the rejection of everything dual. To deserve the status, he ought to earn victory over the internal foes, rather than the external. His exploit is to conquer the twin enemies of joy and grief.

Well. You might have another doubt also. Your heart is a nest of doubts! You might still question, what is the gain of victory. The gain is Immortality, let Me assure you. Things of the world cannot confer that state of Bliss. All that they can give is relative, not Absolute Bliss. When you rise above joy and grief, bliss is absolute, independent, full. Arjuna! You are a Man among men. So, you have no need of this paltry victory over worldly enemies. You deserve the Bliss of Immortality." Thus saying, Krishna began telling him of the science of Atma and Anatma, the discipline by which one can discriminate between the two.

The Atma jnani is not bound by the results of Karma; it is only those who indulge in Karma without the awareness of the Atma, (their real Self, unaffected by what they do or feel or think,) that get bound. Like the person who has learnt swimming, the Jnani can safely wade into the sea of worldly activity. If you do not know swimming, but; yet enter the sea, the waters will swallow you up and death is sure.

This explains why Krishna taught Arjuna the key science of Atmajnana. The Atma does not kill, nor does it die. Those who believe that it kills or dies are unaware of its nature. The Atma of Arjuna does not kill; the Atma of Bhishma or Drona does not die, the Atma of Krishna does not prompt! These are just phases of the cause-consequence duality. The Atma cannot be the cause or consequence of any Karma; it is Nir-vikara, incapable of any change.

There are six forms of modulation or modification: Originating, existing, growing, altering, declining, getting destroyed. These are the Shad-vikaras. Originating or Janma is when it "was not" and later, "is". When it "is" and becomes "is not", it is called "maranam" or death. Janama happens to organic beings, not in-organic things. But, the Atma has no organs, it is Nir-avayava. The Atma is not born and so, how can it die? Whom does it kill? It is unborn, eternal.

Just as a person discards old clothes and wears new ones, the dehi (dweller in the body) discards one body and dons another. The body is to the individual what the clothes are to the body. If you understand the real nature of the Atma, then you would not give way to grief like this. All the weapons that you wield can harm but the material body, they cannot approach the modification-less Atma. Know this truth and renounce this despondency.

The foremost duty of a Kshatriya is to stand by the side of Dharma and destroy Adharma. Consider your good fortune! You have on this battlefield worthy foemen like Bhishma and others. This same Bhishma fought in the past with his own Guru the Brahmin, (who taught him

all the arts) the great Parasurama himself, in order primarily to carry out his Kshatriya obligation. And, now, you like a coward are afraid to take arms against such stalwarts of Kshatriya blood. A Kshatriya finds his duty fulfilled when he upholds the cause of Dharma, in spite of all odds. That is the path of upward progress.

Kshatham means “Dukham” “Sorrow”; and a Kshatriya is he who saves beings from sorrow. A chance like this to wage a war on behalf of Dharma against the forces of Adharma comes but rarely to man. You have been blessed as Kshatriya to partake in this Dharmayuddha. Just imagine how much merit you will acquire by the service to the world which you are set to do now. The war that is waged to establish Shanti and Soukhya, Peace and Plenty, in the world is referred to as Dharmayuddha, and this is just such a struggle where Justice is bound to win.

The Kauravas have desisted from no sin, no injustice, no vice. They insulted elders, deserted the virtuous, defamed the chaste, and wounded the self-respect of the good. Countless are their misdeeds. Now, the moment for retribution has come; they are about to answer for all their crimes. And, just at this hour, if you behave like a coward, you bring dishonour to your parents, your brothers and indeed to the entire Kshatriya caste.

You are imagining that it is a sin to engage in war. That is a great error. The sin, on the other hand, lies in avoiding the chance to destroy the wicked, in prolonging the agony of the virtuous. Give up your Dharma now... and, you run the risk of falling into perdition. Hold fast to it, and, you are untouched by sin. Be of fixed mind; don't give way to either one or the other among all the dualities of the world. From the 31st Sloka of this chapter, Krishna has spoken of this Swadharmanishtha, in eight slokas.

One should engage in activity, with a mind steady in the midst of fortune, good and bad. This was what Krishna advised in the 37th sloka. The 39th is a transitional sloka, for Krishna after speaking of “Esha thebhihithaa saamkhya” (I have described to you the Samkhya arguments), says that He will go on to teach him the Yogabuddhi or Buddhiyoga and asked him to listen with care.

When the desire to attain the fruit of action is renounced with full awareness of the intellect, then, it becomes what Krishna calls, “Buddhiyogam”. The intellect has to be purified and trained; otherwise, it is impossible to give up all attachment to the fruits of action and to continue doing things as either duty or dedication. Such a purified intellect is named “yogabuddhi”. Cultivate it and then, through it liberate yourself from the bondage of Karma. Really speaking, you, the true *you* are above and beyond Karma. You might say that you will desist from Karma rather than practise the difficult discipline of renouncing the fruits thereof. But, that is an impossible aspiration. No; it is inevitable; one has to do some karma or other. Not for a single moment can one free oneself from karma “nahi kaschith kshananmapi.” Says Krishna, in the 3rd Chapter of the Gita.

"Arjuna! Every Karya (Deed) or Karma (activity) has a beginning and an end. But, Nishkama Karma (Desire-less karma) has no such. That is the difference between the two. When Karma is done with a view to the gain therefrom, one has to suffer the loss, the pain, and even the punishment. But, Nishkama karma frees you from all these.

Desire the fruits of Karma; you get born again and again, caught up in that desire; you are liberated from the flux. The practice of this type of renunciation will not fail to end the state of bondage, its effect will continue even in the next birth and man can fulfill his destiny at least then. The main point is to stick to the goal. The goal is, Karma, not Karma-phala. Let me tell you that the desire for the fruit of one's acts is an indication of Rajoguna, which does not befit you. Perhaps you will prefer to remain inactive. Well, that is an indication of Tamoguna! It is even worse than Rajoguna. The Lord has laid down four commands: the first one a "do" and the other three "don'ts", the first insisting on the cultivation of strength the second, requiring the avoidance of weakness.

Of course, it is not Arjuna alone that gets such advice, the whole of mankind needs it. Arjuna is only the representative "Man". Students of the Gita must learn this lesson first, that it is primarily for every seeker.

Another point to be noted is this: Gita is addressed to Man, not to birds and beasts or to the gods or devatas. Man does acts prompted by the desire for the fruits thereof; if the act does not yield fruit he will not do the act at all. Profit, gain, reward, result—these man seeks. But, this rule does not apply to those who come to drink the nectar of the Lord's Message in the Gita. Not all do yearn for the nectar; and, if you do so, it is evident that you aspire for eternal joy, eternal liberation. Then, you must pay the price, the giving up the of the desire for the fruit of action, and dedicate all at the Feet of the Lord. That alone can give Shanti

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The one great advantage that Man has, over the lower animals, is the vast treasure of human experience he has inherited from his ancestors though language. This is the treasure called Sastra; if he ignores Sastra, he is doomed to drag out an animal existence.

BABA

" Yet I Continue to Work"

Whatever a great man does, the same is done by others as well. He sets up a standard, and it is followed by the world.

There is nothing in the three worlds, O Arjuna, for Me to achieve, nor is there anything to gain which I have not gained. Yet I continue to work.

Bhagavad-Gita, Chapter III , Verses, 21-22.

Explaining why He accompanies devotees to temples, Baba once explained that unless He Himself sets an example in this regard, He could not expect others to do like-wise. Example is better than precept!

We may say that only Avatars can afford set to up examples! If we analyse carefully, we find that most of our contemporary ills arise by not following the above precept and example. How little do we realise that we cannot have two sets of values. One for ourselves, another for our children, for friends, or parents, for subordinates, in short for everybody else! We tell lies to our children (Oh! he is too young to understand) and are surprised that they turn out to be liars, even towards us! We expect praise from others, but hardly give any; we expect to be forgiven, but are unprepared to forgive others. We go to office late, and leave early (especially if we are 'bosses') and yet take exception, if a "subordinate" does it. If we are discourteous to others, we should not be surprised if others are discourteous to us.

If we are in doubt, let us observe the way Baba lives, acts and speaks. He calls us "Premaswaroopulaara", He speaks in a sweet voice, even when he chides. When we get into the Interview Room, we do not meet a condescending Avatar; we meet the most considerate, courteous Being. He does not say "You are like this"; He says "Let us not be too strict with others; we are all like that"; He says "we" not "you". He never addresses us in the second person singular always in the second person plural—the traditional form of addressing respectfully.

Thus Baba is "setting up a standard" for us to follow, if we care to understand. There is nothing for Him in the three worlds to achieve, nor gain. Yet He continues to work!

M.V.N. MURTHY

Everywhere—His Hands and Feet

"Baba! Do you hear the Bhajan we do at home every day"?

"My dear fellow! Wherever My Name is, there My Form also is. I do listen to your Bhajan every day. I like it"

"But, why is it that I have not yet seen you there, listening, on any single day?"

"Ah! You cannot see Me with these eyes. Even Arjuna saw only through the special Jnana-netra that he was blessed with".

"How then, Baba, are we to realise that you are Sarvantaryami (the Inner motive Force of everything) and Sarva-vyapi (Immanent everywhere)?"

"You cannot realise it now. But, I shall prove to you that I am present everywhere."

"That is indeed my good fortune. Tell me, Swami!"

“Four months ago, when it was raining so terribly one evening, that no one dared move about and you were very sad and downcast that the person who was bringing flowers to offer to Me did not arrive as usual, who was it, can you tell me, that came to your door with those flowers? It was I Myself! Is this proof enough?”

It was pouring, pouring, as if the sky had sprung a leak. No living thing dared move out of doors. There was a terrible storm and the trees swayed in terror bhajan had to start at 7 P.M. at home, but, the flowers had not come. The person who brought it for us daily without fail was evidently caught in the rain and could not proceed. How could we start our daily Bhajan without decorating Baba's Picture to our heart's content? We waited... hoped... became anxious... sad ...desperate,... downcast. We prayed, we nearly shed tears. Then we saw a figure coming towards our door, along the swollen street, across the swirling pools. The flowers? Yes. The flower-seller had not disappointed us, after all. He had sent them through this frail looking smiling young man! We snatched the garlands from his hand and rushed in, for it was already late... Next day, when the regular man came, we inquired why he had sent a substitute and how he secured him. Poor fellow he did not know anything. He was apologising to us... Who then could that frail young man be? He did not stay even to take the price ...!

Now Baba had told us. Ah! What supreme Grace! The Lord brings flowers for His own Puja and enjoys the joy of His Bhaktas, when they decorate Him with them....

We fell at the Holy Feet and shed tears of gratitude and Joy.

Thus writes Sri. B. M. Rao, from Madras

Thus reads a letter from Mangalore:-

"I shall certainly come to your house."

"Mention the exact date, Swami! Why is it you do not give the date? You simply promise to come, some time or other. Since more than a year, we have been living on hope. We cannot bear this any longer. Everybody in Mangalore is earnest. They are asking me, when exactly you would bless the town."

"I shall be there in January, no, not in Mangalore, but, in your, house. Don't worry about the town".

”January means”?

“This coming January; about the middle of January.”

“Give me definite word, Baba, please."

"Here. Placing My hand on yours, I give you word. Believe it, Dikshit."

... .. M. S. Dikshit was very happy. He had the, unique fortune of sitting at the Feet of Shirdi Sai Baba as the nephew of the famous Kaka Saheb Dikshi and now, in the evening of his life, he has secured the tenderness and loving Grace of Sri Sathya Sai Baba to foster his spiritual progress and to look after him, like the Divine Mother. He returned from Prasanthi Nilayam, and waited for the middle of January to come quickly along.

It came at last... and was about to leave, when, Ah! one noon, when his wife opened the door of the shrine room, she found on the floor seven footsteps of Baba, marked out in soft sweet-scented Vibhuti—beautiful little footmarks, unmistakably those of the Lord she had planted in her heart. Left, right, they led along the floor, to the shrine where there were two, side by side!

So, Baba had come! Her joy brought others in and when they applied the precious Vibhuti to their foreheads, the foot-marks faded except one, the third, of the left foot, the Foot mark of Shakti. She prayed that it at least should be visible when Dikshit arrived from office, for, word had been sent to him, of Baba's signal grace. And, lo, it became clearer and clearer, the Vibhuti grew; yes, grew, accumulated, and the Foot mark could be seen by hundreds and thousands for days! It remains even to this day...! as thick as three quarters of an inch, symbolizing how, when His Feet are enshrined in the heart, Baba showers the Mercy of His Presence.

THE LOTUS FEET OF SRI SATHYA SAI

(Three Songs composed by Sri. M.S. Dikshit on Sri Sathya Sai Baba, translated from the Marathi Originals)

1

Golden Day has dawned today
I had a Glimpse of Sai Prabhu
My Lord stays at Shirdi, on the Godavari bank, for the sake of all who seek him with devotion;
My Lord stays at Parthi, on the Chitravati Bank, for the sake of all who seek him with devotion.
My Lord! My mind is engrossed in your Holy Feet
O Lord! Come O Guru, Save me, shower Your Grace on me.
Mother. Guru Sathya Sai! I offer You my Salutations.
My Purva Punya has stood me in good stead;
That is why I got this Darshan of Sai;
I am of very poor intellect, O Lord,
Give me Sumathi, Good Thoughts and Impulses, O Lord.
Give me your Lotus Feet as my Refuge.

2

Throughout the three worlds,
None equals our Bhagavan, our Sathya Sai Sadguru
He treats all the same, He makes them share His Love
He wants but our pure devotion, such is the Lord, Sathya Sai.
He is the source and spring of forgiveness and peace
Let us go to Prasanthi Nilayam!

And, pray to Him, to give us the Abhaya boon.
Humbly place our heads on His Lotus Feet
Without any desire, pestering our hearts
Let us sing His Praise, let its dance in ecstasy and sing
And He will share our joy, He will be entertained.

3

Come surrender with all your Love to the Lotus Feet of the Sadguru,
He resides on the banks of the Chitravati and bestows Shanti from Prasanthi Nilayam
He has taken the name, Sathya Sai; Come! we shall worship Him with Love.
He is Siva-Shakti, come to bless us, active, wakeful, kind,
He is Dattaguru, Thirumurthi.
The Lord Himself in human form, don't doubt it, Come!
He calls us near Him, Smiling, kind,
He asks, he talks, of our joy and grief
He blesses us with cheerful hearts full of supreme joy
His Glory is beyond human ken; sin and sorrow He destroys!
He guards and guides those who seek Him,
Come! We shall offer Him our homage, Pranams.

Prasnottara Vahini

4

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

- Q. They speak of Avadhutas also. Who are called so? What are their qualifications?
- A. Like the Vanaprasthas and the Sanyasis, they too have to be free from all attachment and hatred; they do not take any Interest in their surroundings; whether it is a forest or town, they are not worried in the least. They have no relation with others. They pay no heed to past, present or future. They move about on thorn and stone, silent, smiling to themselves, ever joyous, ever alert, seeking no comfort and no slicker, seeking no place to sleep or take food; for Ananda is their Ahara (food). There are Avadhutas even today in the Himalayas, in silent caves, immersed in their own inner Atma-ananda. Not all can see them. Only good luck can bring you to their presence.

But there are many who pretend to be Avadhutas and who go about with that name. The genuine ones would not seek men; nor appear in public. Even if they miss their way and come among men they just slip away silently test they draw attention to themselves. When you find an Avadhuta freely moving in company and mixing with human affairs, take him to be a Yamadhuta, a monster!

- Q. How long is one bound by the Deha-dharma, the obligations and duties related to the body?
- A. As long as the Jivatma is not cognised. When that is discovered and known, there is no more need.

- Q. How long is one aware of this Jivatma itself?
- A. Until the stream joins the sea. Till the stream of Jivi reaches the source from 'which it came, the Sea of Paramatma.
- Q. What is Moksha?
- A. Moksha is Liberation from all that binds. That is to say, the attainment of the ever existing, ever-stable, ever-pure Atma-tattwa; getting rid of the ever-changing, ever unreal, impure Deha-tattwa.
- Q. That attainment is not for all, is it, Swami?
- A. Why do you say so? Every one who equips himself can attain it; those who make the effort *are* attaining it. Every one who is ill is entitled to the medicine; you cannot say that only some among them are. Yet, if the drug is costly, only those who can afford it can benefit by it. The Lord's Grace is hard to get; you have to pay a heavy price. Pay the price, that is to say, earn it by Sadhana and the Grace of the Lord will save you from this Bhavaroga (the disease of worldliness).
- Q. Who are those that most need this Sadhana?
- A. All who yearn to be saved from the flood of "birth death" which is now sweeping them along.
- Q. Baba! What is the cause of man getting born?
- A. The impact of Karma.
- Q. How many varieties of Karma are there?
- A. Three! Bad, good and mixed; some add a fourth, the Karma of the Jnani which is neither good nor bad.
- Q. What is bad Karma?
- A. It is called Dush-karma. All acts done without the fear of God or of falling into sin; all acts done while under the influence of the six enemies, Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya; all acts that reveal the beast in man, that do not indicate that he is possessed of Viveka, Vichakshana and Vairagya; that are devoid of Daya, Dharma, Sathya, Shanti and Prema...these are Dush-karmas.
- Q. And the Sat-karmas?
- A. All acts done in the fear of God and of sin; all acts done with Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, and Prema; these are the Sat-karmas.
- Q. What are the Misra-karmas, the mixed ones?
- A. They are an interesting lot. Though the acts are good, though apparently they are prompted by fear of God and of sin, still, they reveal impulses that are quite the opposite. People start rest-houses and water-distributing, centres, for example, but they do not pay the servants regularly and well. Their aim is just to win some fame. They give to the poor as alms only useless clothes and worn coins. Whatever they do, their purpose is to get publicity.
- Q. You also spoke of Jnana-karma, Swami.
- A. Yes; Jnana-karma is the name used for all acts done to learn from sacred scriptures or elders or teachers the way to escape from the bondage to duality and to the falsity of the world and to develop faith in the values of Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, and Prema; all acts that lead to the merging of the individual in the Universal Absolute.
- Q. Swami, I have heard people use the word, Amanaska often. What does it mean?
- A. This entire creation, when it is realised as but Seen by the eternal See-er, the Witness, simply disappears, as fog before the Sun. That stage is known as Amanaska.

- Q. What happens to the knowledge?
A. Even that disappears!
Q. This Witness that you spoke of, where does it reside in the dream-Stage?
A. It is in the Jivi; it not only witnesses but it also weave creates everything it sees.
Q. And during deep sleep?
A. It is in the Full (the Modification-less) Reality.
Q. And, in the fourth stage, the stage beyond deep sleep, the Turiya?
A. It is merged, in the Iswara-Sthana, this changeless Entity?

(To be continued)

Brindavan Sanchari

Near enough to the great city, Bangalore, but yet far from its turmoil and noise, quietly nestling in the midst of a beautiful garden, screened by an array of green carpeted trees, full of fountains and bowers and greeneries, Brindavan with the Brindavansanchari Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, residing in it inspires all by its silent charm to take up the message of Sathya, dharma, Shanti and Prema which Baba expounds.

Baba performed the opening ceremony of this Spiritual Refuge on 18th April, a day endeared doubly auspicious by the beginning of the Solar Year, Krodhi and the Vasanta Navaratri, of which that was the very first day. He arrived in a procession on a flower bedecked car chariot from Kalyanpura accompanied by thousands of devotees from various parts of India and even from countries outside India, preceded by music and bhajan parties and the famous dummy horse dancers of the International Institute, established by Sri Sundaramurthy. At 9 A.M. exactly, Baba entered the building. It was resounding to the recitation of the Vedas by learned Pundits. He also unveiled charming figure of Krishna, erected by a local artist, in the bower facing the main door, thus giving those who may not have realised the supreme appropriateness of the name 'Brindavan,' an obvious reason to satisfy their curiosity.

In the evening, the Inaugural Session of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha in Karnataka was held in a spacious and charmingly decorated Pandal at Brindavan.

"I have come here, on this auspicious occasion just as you all have come from all parts of this country and even from beyond its frontiers, to receive the Blessings of Baba and I must say that I have neither the desire nor the authority to address this vast assembly of devotees, in the Holy Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This morning, He celebrated the opening of this beautiful and sublime Residence situated in the centre of this magnificent Garden. And, now, I have been commanded by Him to inaugurate the First Sessions in Karnataka of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha, which He has founded for the propagation of Dharma. I consider this as an evidence of His Grace" said the Hon'ble Finance Minister of Mysore, Sri B. D. Jatti.

"Wealth, power, position social status—all these are ephemeral. Ministerial status is, as you all know very temporary indeed. But, the permanent possession which man has to earn is mental peace and joy. Our forefathers considered these as essential to happiness and treated everything else as subordinate to this one supreme goal. They have handed down to us the result of their spiritual struggles and the experience of joy and peace that they won. These are all recorded in the Sastras for all to study and follow. They are all eminently practical and highly simple for sincere seekers. The Pundits whom Baba has gathered under His loving care as members of the Vidwan-mahasabha are efficient exponents of this valuable teaching and I am sure Karnataka will benefit very much by their exposition of the Vedas and Sastras. We are all very happy that Baba has taken Karnataka under His fostering care; in fact, His Mission is to take the whole of India—next, it will be I hope, my friend Sri Sawant's State of Maharashtra—and later, of the whole of humanity. For, the lessons in acquiring Sathya Dharma Shanti and Prema, which the Sabha is out to re-teach are essential for individuals all over the world as well as for all human communities, wherever they are in this fear-stricken, anxiety-ridden world" concluded Sri B. D. Jatti.

Hon'ble Sri P. K. Sawant, the Minister from Bombay speaking next, said, "I came to this place to hear and not to be heard! I came to learn, not to teach! But, since it is Baba's Command that I should speak to you, I have to obey. We in Maharashtra look to Shirdi for inspiration, and guidance, for solace and spiritual uplift. You have been fortunate to have with you the Avatar of the same Baba, so full of Prema, Karuna and Jnana. I have been praying to Him on behalf of myself and the millions of devotees there, to give us all Darshan at Shirdi itself and render the place sacrosanct by the touch of His Lotus Feet. He has I am glad to tell you agreed to come and bless the devotees that will gather there.

I am neither a Vidwan nor a Pandit and so, I cannot lay claim to your attention on that score. I am trying to become a devotee of Baba and struggling to deserve that name. I pray that I may succeed. Looking at the moral decline in the world today, the contrast between what the great religions teach and what their professed followers and protagonists actually do, an institution like the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha is very necessary at this juncture. All religions teach love, as the very first lesson in spiritual progress and social harmony. But, when you see the behaviour of the followers, not only in times of stress, but even in ordinary daily life, you find only hate. The Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha must certainly extend its activities; and I have no doubt, under Baba's Divine Guidance, it will come into Maharashtra and other States in India; it must spread over the whole world I am sure it will.

In religion, as in most matters, faith is essential. I came to Brindavan in a car. Before I got in, I did not examine the engine the brake and every individual nut and bolt of that vehicle. I had enough faith in the makers and the chauffeur to be free from worry. I go to my office, which is in a big building, but, before I enter, I do not examine the foundations or the walls or the roof. I have faith in the engineers who built it and who certified its soundness.

For my spiritual progress and for attaining courage consolation and strength, I leave scoured a Guru in Sri Sathya Sai Baba; I am glad He has accepted me. Faith alone can surmount obstacles and difficulties. There is nothing like 'blind' faith. Faith is just "faith". That is the path to get the best from the Sadguru we have got.

We must approach the Guru in an attitude of surrender, of full faith. There are some who prepare their own plans of action and approach the Guru for approving them and making them succeed; if through His Blessings, they succeed, they promise to pay some proportionate fee! That is a wrong attitude for both.

Let Baba's will prevail; we are but instruments in His Hands. Let us pray that we may have the faith and strength to follow His Instructions and His Guidance Let not people say, "These people believe but, they do not behave, as their Guru wants them to". Let us not, by any moment's action, bring His Glorious Name into disrepute. Nothing can tarnish that Splendour; but, we must be ever aware of that responsibility, for, we are taking His Name. I pray that I may have His blessings always and in all matters".

Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, M. P., Former Governor of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh said, "In this era of science and technology, India cannot afford to lag behind both; material comfort and contentment are the products of these. But, we cannot, at the same time, afford to neglect the precious moral and spiritual technology, which we have inherited from the Rishis and Yogis of our land. The lessons which the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Sastras teach for the attainment of peace and unity are invaluable for all mankind, especially at this juncture. Baba Himself in His inimitably sweet and simple style expounds these great teachings to millions all over the country. And, last year, He founded this Sabha to take the eternal Message to every village and town of this land, so that man may once again walk the path of Peace, Unity and Love.

Of course, there are some organisations doing similar work, but, the special excellence of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha is that here the Vedas and Sastras are interpreted and propagated in the authentic traditional manner, by scholars who do not modify or modulate their meaning to suit temporary needs. The Pundits present the teachings in their traditional form, for that is the form which will reveal their real worth and value.

Already, in the Andhra State sessions of this Sabha have been held in many towns and many have heard and imbibed spiritual guidance and inspiration. This day, from this sublime centre at Whitefield, the Clarion Call is sounded for Karnataka also to join the, new Era of Revival of Vedic Dharma!!

Brahmasri Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry of the Gowthami Vidya Peetha, Rajahmundry, then spoke on "Vasanta Rtu" as described in the Vedas. He said that the Vedas considered Kaala or Time as the Swarupa of God; and quoted Rks which spoke of the Samvatsara and its Avayavas: the Ayana, the Rtu the Maasa and the Divasa, and of Surya as the Creator. Sustainer and Destroyer of Life on earth. The Vasanta is described as the season when trees bloom and shine with new leaves; as Madhumasa, the season of plenty profuse charity and hospitality.

Brahmasri Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri of Pithapuram, famous as Baala Vyasa, then addressed the gathering. He expressed his unstinted admiration at the spontaneous homage being paid to Baba by lakhs of people wherever He presents Himself. "I have seen with these very eyes the surging flood of joy at Puttaparthi, Rajahmundry, Bhadrachalam, and now, at Whitefield." He spoke with respectful gratitude of the Dharmasthapana which Baba had determined to bring

about, as formerly in the Rama and Krishna Avatars. He then elaborated on certain points in the Ramayana, which critics misinterpreted as 'unrighteous' actions and gave convincing replies based on the Ramayana itself as well as on the accepted canons of interpretation.

Baba concluded the proceedings with His Divine Discourse: "You have all imprinted on Your hearts the joy of this day; each minute was a moment of bliss to you. We have heard the Pundits, who are the repositories of the sacred scriptures of Bharatavarsha and of the Ministers who are representatives of its people. These are the guardians of the people and their guides. Unless these two co-operate and work in unison, progress towards peace and contentment will suffer. People must not live either in ignorance or fear; they must get rid of both.

The Godward path is the only proper Path. Duryodhana had everything needed for victory; but, the Pandavas had, by their adherence to Dharma, secured the Lord on their side; and they won. The Lord made the Vanaras greater than Naras; He can arouse the Divinity in you and make Manava into Madhava. The right Royal Road for this process was laid down long ago through Divine Inspiration, in the Vedas, but, when the road was neglected and people missed their way, the Lord has to come again and lead mankind along the correct road" said Baba.

On the 14th, at 8 A. M. the Image of Shirdi Sai Baba was installed in the Pandal and when Baba lit the sacred lamp, the thousands who had assembled started the Akhanda bhajan which was to continue with unabated enthusiasm and fervour till 8 A. M., the next day, full twenty four hours of mental yearning and smarana, in which young and old, men and women, famous musicians like Chittoor Nagaiah and T. M. Soundararajan and common village folk, recited the Names of God in unison. On the 15th, at 8 A. M., the Bhajan was brought to a close, with Archana and Abhishekam to Sai Baba's image and Mahamangalarati.

The second day's session of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha was held on the 15th, with Hon'ble Sri S. R. Kanthi, Minister for Education in the Mysore State as the President. The meeting commenced with a few songs of Thyagaraja sung by Chittoor Nagaiah, who had himself acted the role in the famous film on that immortal composer and saint. Then, Brahmasri Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri spoke on the value of the sacred scriptures composed by Rishis for discovering what exactly is right and wrong, righteous or unrighteous; for, the Rishis have no prejudices or predilections, they are not moved by egoism and so they desire only the welfare of all. Their words will always be auspicious, for they are reservoirs of Tapas Jnanam and Yoga-shakti. Baba blessed the gathering with His Discourse that day too.

"The Pundits are, as you have heard, expounding the valuable lessons of the Vedas and Satras and they are very enthusiastic to offer you the fruits of their long years of study and teaching. The word Dharma is derived from Dhr, which means also, to wear. Bharath has Dharma as the very clothes she wears; you know that the Mahabharata war started because of the Vastrapaharana episode. Now, the Dharma which Bharathamatha has been wearing is sought to be removed by alien-minded persons and so, the Lord has to intervene. Dharamam chara... Walk in the path of Dharma. Examine now your conduct, your words, your feelings, your thoughts, your selves, and judge whether they increase the attachment to objects, or run after temporary pleasure or yield a mixture of grief and joy." Baba said that though He had no Karthavyam or obligations to do anything, He was organising, and building and travelling and meeting and

discoursing. For the Saidharma is to reveal to man his own genuinely real Divinity. Dr. Pinakapani, M. D., Professor, Medical College, Kurnool and Senior Physician of the Government Hospital gave a learned and pleasant musical performance, which was a very rare treat indeed. Later, the famous musician of Tamilnad, Sri T. M. Soundararajan sang for over two hours songs composed by himself on Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba as well as songs on Murugan, both of which items were enthusiastically appreciated by the vast gathering of devotees.

On the 16th April, the Telugu Vijnana Samithi, Bangalore had arranged a Function at Malleswaram, in the Holy Presence of Baba where the members of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha were honoured, and the Sabha itself welcomed. There was a gathering of about 10 to 15 thousand citizens. An Address of respectful Homage was presented to Baba the Founder—President by Sri P. S. Narayana of the Vijnana Samithi. Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, the Vice-president of the Prasanthi Vidwan-mahasabha spoke on the Aims and Ideals of the Mahasabha. Brahmasri Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry spoke on Surya as the eternal Witness and as the source of life, quoting profusely from the Vedas to illustrate the meaning of rituals connected with the Sun. Br. Varanasi Subrahmanya Sasry spoke on the claims of the Sastras to our attention and respect. He said that the Vedas and Sastras (1) remind us of the experiences which we have forgotten (2) give us the evidence which so one of the senses can give and (3) supply the experience of fearless seekers of the past ages. Brahmasri Vedantham Subbaiya, of Bangalore spoke of the Adwaithic perception of Sarvam Brahmanam, of the One and Only. Baba in His Discourse spoke of Dukhanivritti and Anandaprapthi as the twin aims of all human effort and pointed out that this effort can succeed only by strenuous moral and spiritual Sadhana."

Baba described the Sastras of ancient days as Books of rules and regulations which direct the passions and feelings of man along socially useful, individually beneficial and spiritually elevating lines. The Sastras are the Netras, the Eyes, of Humanity, He said. 'Every being is yearning to avoid grief and acquire joy, and spiritual sadhana is the only measure by which both can be achieved in a lasting manner. Since all are trying to reach the stage of perpetual unshakeable Shanti, all are Sadhakas; there are no non-believers, for all believe that it is possible to avoid grief and acquire joy. The Sastras are the text-books that teach how to win that stage. The world is the Ocean of Milk, which has to be churned in order to secure the Secret of Immortality, the Amrita. That is the Atmatattwa, the Core of Being, the thing that is mistaken for all this illusory multiplicity. In order to discover that core and to get established in it, you have to purify your mind and intellect by a study of the teachings of the Vedas the Upanishads and the Sastras and to practise Japam and Dhyanam" advised Baba.

On the 17th April, Baba spoke on the significant incidents in the life of Rama, at the Seshadripuram Ramanavami Celebrations Pandal, where a huge gathering had assembled to hear Him. Sri Dayananda Sagar Minister, Mysore Government gave expression to the grateful homage of all and Baba exhorted them to read and grasp the central teaching of the Ramayana, which was "Sathyam Vada; Dharmam Chara".

On the 18th there was a pleasant function at Brindavan when thousands of poor were fed sumptuously and a large number of them who were extremely indigent were given clothes also.

On the 22nd, Baba left for Madras, where the next day, He was present at the Shashtiabhipurthi Shanti (Sixtieth birthday Celebrations) of Chittoor Nagaiah, the film artiste who, by his depiction of Pothana and Thyagaraja has won a place in the hearts of all throbbing with love of God. In the evening Baba gave a discourse to the mammoth gathering of devotees, cinema artistes and fans, people connected with filmmaking, connoisseurs of music, and leaders of public life, in which He emphasised the practical nature of spiritual values and called upon all to acquire the secret of mental poise and peace by taking up Sadhana like Japam, Dhyanam and Namasmarana.

Prasanthi Nilayam News

24th April

Baba showered Blessings on Child Artistes at the Krishna Gana Sabha, Mambalam, Madras.

25th April

Visited the Sri Sathya Sai Nivas, Perambur and blessed the Bhaktas gathered there.

26th April

Visited the Sathya Sai Mandali Temple at Guindy; discourse at the bhajan Sessions.

27th April

Visited the Dattatreya Pediatric Centre, organised by Mr. and Mrs. V. Hanumantha Rao; opened the hostel for Disabled Boys.

28th April

Inaugurated at Alwarpet, Madras, the Bhagavata Sapthaham by Br. Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastry.

1st May

Baba arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam

4th May

Baba left for Bangalore (Brindavan)

14th May

Returned to Prasanthi Nilayam

16th May

Baba blessed the marriage of a Devotee and the Upanayanams of the sons of a number of Devotees at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Have an eye on the fruits of your actions and, you are liable to be affected by worry, anxiety and restlessness. “The question may arise if the fruits have to be given up, how can one manage to live? But, why this weakness of heart, this nervousness? He who has assured, ‘Yogakshemam vahamyaham’, will certainly look after that. He will give the wherewithal and the means. After all, you have to consider, “Is a happy life important or is liberation from the circle of life and death, more important? Happy living is for short duration; the joy of liberation is eternal, unshakeable. On this point many commentators have exercised their intelligence and written differently. Many have said that the giving up of Phala or fruit is advised because there is no right or authority for the doer to crave or desire for the fruit.

This is a great blunder. The Lord has said in the Gita, ‘refuse the fruit’ (maa phaleshu), that is to say: the deed yields results, but, the doer should not desire the result, or do it with the result in view. If Krishna's intention was to say that the doer has no right for the fruit, He would have said, ‘It is fruitless’ (na phaleshu, na meaning no) So, if you desist from Karma you will be transgressing the Lord's Command. That will be a serious mistake.

When man has a right for engaging in Karma, he has a right also for the fruit; no one can deny this or refuse his right. But, the doer can, out of his own free will and determination, refuse to be affected by the result, whether it is favourable or unfavourable. The Gita shows the way: Do and, deny the consequence. The desire for the result of your action is a sign of Rajoguna. The giving up of action since you cannot benefit by the fruit is a sign of Tamoguna. To engage oneself in Karma, to know that result will follow, and yet, not to be attached to the result or getting concerned with it—that is the sign of Satwaguna.

The Karmayogi who has learnt this secret of Karma combined with Phalatyaaga should have Sama-buddhi, more than Sangha-buddhi. For, the Sangha-buddhi draws him into attachments and entanglements. “This Karma is mine; its results are due to my endeavours. I am the person entitled to it”, such are the thoughts which bind the doer. Krishna advises that one should rise above this Sangha-buddhi. He declared that Samatwam is the genuine Yoga. (Samatwam yogamuchyathe)

In this second chapter, Krishna has made clear in a general way, four principal points: the Sharanagati principle, the Sankhya teaching, the Yoga attitude and the Sthithaprajna nature. We have noted the first three already. Now about the fourth:

Krishna taught Arjuna the nature and characteristics of the Sthithaprajna, when Arjuna questioned him Arjuna prayed “O Kesava!” and, when that appellation was used, Krishna smiled. For He knew then that Arjuna had understood His splendour. Do you ask how? Well; what does Kesava mean? It means, “He who is Brahma Vishnu Siva, the Thrimurthi.” Through Krishna's Grace, Arjuna lead reached that stage of realisation.

When Arjuna prayed that Kesava must tell him the true characteristics of a Sthithaprajna, He replied; “Partha! He will be free from all desire. He will be concentrated in the knowledge and awareness of the Atman only.”

Now, there are two processes in this: To give up all the promptings of desire in the mind is the negative process; to implant joy, ever-present joy therein is the positive aspect. The negative process is to remove all the seedlings of wrong and evil from the mind; the positive process is to grow in the field cleansed thus, the crop of attachment to God! The cultivation of the crop you need is positive; plucking of the weeds is the negative stage. The pleasures of the senses drawn from the objective world are weeds; desire is the worst weed; the crop needed is the attraction towards God. The mind is a bundle of wishes; and, unless these wishes are removed by their roots, there is no hope of destroying the mind, the mind which is a great obstacle in the path of spiritual progress. When wishes go, the mind too vanishes; when the yarn that comprises the cloth is taken out, one by one, what remains of the cloth? Nothing. There is no cloth left. The mind is made of the warp and woof of wishes. When all desires are destroyed, the mind has no further form. And when that happens, the Sthithaprajna is made. So, the first thing to be conquered is Kama, the demon of desire. For this it is unnecessary to wage a huge war. It is unnecessary also to use pleasing words to persuade the desire to disappear. Desires will not disappear for fear of the one or for favour of the other. Desires are objective; they belong to the category of the “seen.” With the conviction that ‘I am the see-er only, not the seen’ the Sthithaprajna releases himself from attachment. Thus he conquers desire. You must watch the mind, from outside it; you should not get involved in it. “That is the meaning of this discipline.

The faculty of the mind is as a very powerful current of electricity. It has to be watched from a distance and not contacted, or touched. Touch it; you are reduced to ashes. So too, contact and attachment gives the chance for the mind to ruin you. The farther you are from it, the better. By skilful methods, you have to make the best use of it for your own welfare.

The bliss which the Sthithaprajna is immersed in does not arise from external objects; he has no need of them, either. Ananda is there, in every one, as part of his very nature. Those with pure consciousness find the highest bliss in the realisation of their own reality the Atma. That joy is swa-sampaadyam (self-earned, so to say). It is known only to the individual; it is self-evident.

Since Arjuna had not known this, Krishna had to clarify it in simple terms, in the 56th, 57th and 58th slokas. Joy or grief can be met with in three forms Adhyatmika, Adibhoutika and Adidaivika. It is known that sins bring grief as a retribution and meritorious deeds bring joy as reward and so advice is given to avoid sins and perform meritorious deeds. But, the Sthithaprajna knows neither the pain of grief or the thrill of joy. He is not repulsed by one or attracted by the other. He will not retreat before pain or run forward for pleasure. Only those who are ignorant of the Atma will exult or droop, when stricken with joy or grief.

The Sthithaprajna will be ever engaged in Manana, or Contemplation and Ruminati on. He is called Muni. His intellect is steady, because the senses do not harry it. One point has to be understood here. Conquest of the senses is essential for the Sadhana; but, that is not all. So long as the objective world continues to attract the mind, so long, one cannot claim complete success. That is why, Krishna says, Arjuna! Establish mastery over the senses; then you have no more

fear, for they become snakes with the fangs removed. But there is still danger, from thoughts and impulses which draw you outwards. Desire has no limit; it can never be satiated. So, along with the mastery of the senses, one must establish mastery of the mind also. That is the sign of a Sthithaprajna. If this double mastery is absent, he is a Gatha-prajna, not a Sthithaprajna (a no-wisdom individual, and not a steady-wisdom individual). Where does the Gatha-prajna go? To perdition and nowhere else.

The upward path, the higher stage-that is where the Sthithaprajna goes. Of these two masteries, if the mind is subdued, that alone is enough; it is not so necessary to conquer the external senses. If the mind has no attachment with objects, the senses have nothing to cling on to they perish by inanition for Raga and Dwesha have nothing to feed on; love and hate are both starved out of existence. The bonds with the objective world are cut, though the senses may yet be affected by it. For him who has been blessed by an awareness of the Atma how can anything worldly bring grief or joy?

As the stars fade into invisibility when the sun rises, so too, when the Sun of Knowledge or Jnana rises Grief Agitation and Ignorance all vanish into the realms that are unseen.

Man has three chief instruments: the mind, the intellect, and the senses. It is when these three work in unison and agree with one another that the principle for which they are designed, either immersal in the flux or liberation in the knowledge of the basic Atma, is realised. Krishna anticipated that Arjuna will be puzzled to know what will happen when which operates with which. So, He himself provided the answer. "Arjuna" He said "when the mind co-operates with the senses, you enter into the flux called samsara; when it subordinates itself to the intellect, you attain the knowledge of the Atman. One path leads to Samsara-prapti; the other, to Atma-prapti. The intellect must resolve; the mind must carry out the resolution so made. That is the correct procedure." This was clearly explained by Krishna.

The Indriyas or senses have to be destroyed in all respects. That is the hallmark of a Sthithaprajna. So, during the time when all beings are experiencing Night, the Sthithaprajna would keep himself awake When all beings are awake, the Sthithaprajna would be asleep. That is to say, the literal meaning is that what is night for one is day for the other. But, that would make the senses absurd. It would mean, the Sthithaprajna is a person who sleeps during the day and keeps awake at night.

The inner meaning of this statement is very profound. Ordinary men are vigilant, in the affairs that concern the senses, that arise out of this world. Wakefulness for them is the care they bestow on worldly pursuits. But, the Sthithaprajna is unconcerned with these very things; he is, so to say, asleep. What does sleep mean? It means the mastery of the senses. And vigilance? It means yielding to the senses, and catering to them. Now, when ordinary men are pursuing the senses and their demands, the Sthithaprajna is asleep. This can also be put in other words: Forget the Atma-sthithi and you descend into Deha-sthithi, from the Atma consciousness-stage you fall into the Body-consciousness-stage.

This is what happens to the ordinary man; he sleeps in the Atma stage and wakes up into the Deha-sthithi. The Sthithaprajna's case is different. He sleeps in the Deha-consciousness and

wakes up in the awareness of the Atma. He will not awake, even by mistake, in the sensory world, the world where the ordinary man is most vigilant! This is the inner meaning. It is far distant from the literal meaning, which, if taken as true, would entitle all those who keep awake at nights, like thieves watchmen and others, to the name, Sthithaprajna! For, all these keep awake at nights and sleep during the day! Only those who have given up all traces of desire and become mere instruments can achieve Shanti. Krishna ends the description of the Sthithaprajna with an emphasis on Kamanna-tyaga, the giving up of Desire. This Sankhya Yoga is un-equalled and it can even be said to be the essence of the Gita.

To man, sorrowing on the battlefield of life bewildered by the attractions and distractions therein, not knowing where to turn and which road to take, Madhava taught the Sankhya Yoga. The other chapters are like commentaries on the teaching in this chapter. The 2nd chapter is based on the Sankhya-yoga, there is no doubt of that. "Arjuna! Prepare yourself for giving up the mind, for being merged in your own Self. Withdraw the mind from Shabda Sparsha Roopa Rasa Gandha categories, the Five Elements. Then, you become a Sthithaprajna," said Krishna. In this 11th chapter; He elaborated from the 11th to the 30th sloka on the Atma-tattwa in a simple manner, as easy to understand as eating a peeled plantain fruit.

Then, from the 39th to the 75th sloka, He taught the Dharma-Karma attitude that is so essential for attaining the Godhead, an attitude that is based on the Karma Yoga which itself is embodied in the Samatha-buddhi, already noted.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

At Thy Feet

Let me pray at Thy Feet
For, here are Love Bliss and Benevolence;

Let me learn at Thy Feet
For, here are Truth Knowledge and Prudence.

Let me ail at Thy Feet
For, here is the Great Physician;

Let me disappear at Thy Feet
For, here is the Omnipresent Magician.

Let me sing and dance at Thy Feet
For, this is the centre of every art;

Let me grieve and weep at Thy Feet
For, here resides the kindest Heart.

Let me rejoice at Thy Feet
For, here is the priceless Pleasure;

Let me beg at Thy Feet
For, here is the inexhaustible Treasure.

Let me work and struggle at Thy Feet
For, here my efforts are secure;

Let me play truant at Thy Feet
For, here's One who'll all endure.

Let me bathe my soul at Thy Feet
For here rumbles the Ocean of Sanctity;

Let me 'live' and 'rest' at thy Feet
For, here exist both Heaven and Eternity.

Donn Dungaji, Jabalpur

A Sharp knife Across My Tongue

On October 23, 1963, I developed a small ulcer on the underside of my tongue, at the tip, on the right half. It spread rapidly backwards causing severe pain, shooting terribly into the right ear and the right eye. The ulcer spread quickly to the gums round my teeth, both in the upper and the lower jaws on the right side. The inside of the cheek was also ulcerated. There were blisters on the right cheek, the outer side. Within 4 days, I was shouting on account of the un-bearable pain.

My condition became so serious that I had to be admitted in the Bala Ram Hospital on the 27th, as an emergent case. The doctors diagnosed it as a case of Herpes Zoster, involving the second and third division of the trieminal nerve. Medicines were administered orally and through intramuscular injections.

All the while, I was praying to Sathya Sai Baba, who had blessed me when He had come to Lucknow. He is My Lord, My Saviour.

On October 29th, I became so desperate with the excruciating agony that I prayed to Baba with great anguish about 9 P.M. either to relieve my pain or end the agony for ever.

At about 12 midnight, when I was in a half dazed condition, I suddenly felt that Baba came to my bedside and drew a sharp knife across my tongue. No body had come in, we had bolted all doors before retiring. But, still, I saw Him clearly and the knife was drawn. I felt a sudden relief from the pain. It had gone completely!

The doctors were surprised that the pain had vanished and the ulcer was well on the way to cure. Baba had responded to prayer; He had operated over my tongue! And...not a drop of blood!

He gave me relief and a fresh lease of life, to keep on praying to Him. Pray to Him ever, dear friends, for His Grace!

Dr. B. Sampat, Lucknow

Prasnottara Vahini

5

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

- Q. What is meant by the term, Paramartha?
- A. Parama Artha, that is to say, beyond and above this world limited by the body and the senses.
- Q. They talk also of parama-pada. How will that be?
- A. It will be devoid of Nama-Rupa or Name-Form and Kriya-Rupa or Deed-Form.
- Q. Swami! Is God transcending the Universe or immanent in the Universe?
- A. He fills the Universe and is also beyond it; so there is no place outside Him; all places are inside Him; all Names are His; no Name is alien to Him.
- Q. How is the Godhead who fills the Universe to be referred to?
- A. He can be called by various names: Paramapada: the Limitless Open, the Paramartha, the A-sarira (the Not-Body), the Paripoorna (the fullest Full), the A-vaangmanogocharam (the Un-graspable by word or thought). He has many names.
- Q. Is this Sath, this Entity, and ancient or new, Sanathana or Nutana?
- A. Of course, it is Sanathana, not Nutana.
- Q. Which is the ultimate Purushartha?
- A. Why, Moksha, of course.
- Q. When talking of Vidya, Swami, I have heard people mention Four Vidyas. What are they?
- A. Yes; they are Aanveekshaki, Thrayee, Vaartha, and Dandaneethi.
- Q. These names are all new to me. What exactly is Aanveekshaki?
- A. The Vidya by which one is able to discriminate between Atma and Anaatma.
- Q. And Thrayee...?
- A. The Vidya by which one can attain Swarga or Heaven through the appropriate rituals and Karma.
- Q. What does Vaartha teach?
- A. Agriculture and other productive efforts.
- Q. What does Dandaneethi mean?
- A. The rulers and guardians of society rule and guard, according to this Vidya; it is essential for earning and enjoying riches and crops.
- Q. Which of these plunge man into the cycle of births?
- A. All, except the first, the Aanveekshaki.

- Q. The mastery of the mind is held essential for spiritual victory. But to purge the mind of all-evil, what are the virtues which we have to cultivate?
- A. There are four chief virtues: Maitri, Karuna, Mudita and Upeksha.
- Q. I must trouble you Swami to explain these too.
- A. Comradeship and the company of the humble and the good; affection for the Name and Form of the Lord—these are included in Maitri; Karuna is the kindness one feels towards the afflicted.
- Q. What is the virtue-called Mudita?
- A. Mudita is the joy one feels when meeting people who are charitable, who serve others, who help those in distress, etc.
- Q. Upeksha?
- A. Non-involvement the feeling of unconcern at the wicked; neither loving them nor hating them.
- Q. Just like these four virtues, they also talk of four types of Bhakti; what are they, Swami?
- A. My dear man, all the multifarious types can be included under four categories; the Aartha, the Artharthi, the Jijnasu and the Jnani. The Artha is the person who is tormented by agony or distress.
- Q. What does Artharthi mean?
- A. Those who desire Artha or wealth or spiritual power and for that sake, worship God and pray to Him for that boon.
- Q. Jijnasu, you said. Who are they?
- A. Those who seek liberation steadily and strongly, and go in search of the Absolute.
- Q. And the Jnani?
- A. He who has escaped from the dual consciousness, the Dwandwa bhava; who has known his identity with the basic Truth of the Universe.
- Q. Tell us the names of some who have achieved fame through these types of Bhakti, Swami. Then it will become clearer to us.
- A. Oh, there are plenty of names. Among Aartha-bhaktas, I can tell you of Droupadi, Prahlada, Sakkubai; among the Artharththis, Dhruva, Arjuna and others; among the Jijnasus, Uddhava, Radha; among the Jnanis, Suka, Sanaka and others.
- Q. Even those, who proceed along the path of spiritual progress towards the goal of Moksha have, it seems, big obstacles, Swami.
- A. Yes, the past, the present and the future obstacles.
- Q. What are they? What is the obstacle from the past?
- A. Recollecting and remembering the past and getting affected by it.
- Q. And the obstacle from the present?
- A. That itself operates in four ways! Vishaya-aasakthi, attending more to the peculiarities of textual criticism than to the sense of the teaching), Prajnaamaandyam (dullness of the intellect which prevents one from grasping the words of the elders and of the wise), Kutarka (crookedness) and Viparyayaduraagraha (justifying one's own statement as correct, through an exaggerated conceit).

Upanayanam

Today is Sankara Jayanti, devoted to Sankara Who re-established Dharma. Sankara did not wage any war against the enemies of Dharma nor did he take the life of any of his opponents. He followed the path of Bodha, of teaching, of discussing with them and defeating them in argument and demonstrating their fallacies, so that the leaders of the community saw the light and led others into the light. That is the right means for Dharmasthapanam in the Kali Yuga, when Asuric qualities haunt entire population A-dharma has taken residence in every heart. Jananodaya through Vijnanabodha is the penance for the ills of the Age.

Sankara knew and experienced the great truth that the Jagat is Mithya and that Brahman alone is Sathya; but, the Sathya of Brahma has to be known in and through this Mithya jagat itself. Just as by plunging into water and struggling upon it, beating it with the hands and feet, and using many a stroke of the art of swimming, you are able to keep afloat and cross the expanse of water from one bank to the other, so too, with the mind itself; you have to cross the mind and make it ineffective, and harmless. He established institutions in this Mithya Jagat itself, to propagate the truth that it is Mithya and to teach the path of reaching the Brahma sathya Stage.

On such auspicious day, it is the duty of every one to seek ways and means to open the Lotus of the Heart to the rays of the sun of Knowledge. We had today the initiation of six boys into the spiritual path, by means of Brahmopadesam in the rite called Upanayanam. To receive that Upadesam on Sankara Jayanti is the reward of Merit acquired in many births.

This initiation and japam that it inaugurates and the rites that are recommended are all steps in the control of the mind. Shravana is the first stage of all spiritual effort and the chiefest. Parikshit was liberated through listening intently to the glories of the Lord. Janaka reached illumination through the discussions and debates that he held and the enlightenment he received from the discourses of Rishis like Yajnavalkya. Why, the Gita itself was imbibed through Sravanam by Arjuna, to whom it was addressed. It is said that there can be no Mahabharata without Karna; so too, for the Mahabharata that happens in the life of every one, deep down in the inner conflicts of each, the Karna (or ear) is indispensable! When a Guru was engaged in teaching a disciple, a stranger intervened and thinking that they were wasting time, he asked them to stop the mere talk. When the Guru sternly said, "Neck him out!" he got terribly enraged and lost all control over himself. Then, the Guru told him, "See! This is the effect of just listening to three words of mine. I did not touch you or rise up from my seat; nor did any one move an inch. It was merely talk; just, listening; Sravanam, in fact. But yet, it produced such drastic effect. That is the reason why we are engaged in this talk; it has such immense potentiality." All Upadesam is imbibed through Sravanam only.

The mind is like a snake; it can be rendered harmless by music: the music of the Pranava, the Om. Shabda or Nada or Sound is produced by every tiny incident, like the winking of the eye or when the eyelashes nicker. The Shabda produced when Brahma creates the world is Pranava and the Gayathri Mantra is but an elaboration from the Pranava.

The aim of all Sadhana is to realise Swa-swa-rupam—the Inner Reality. First, one must get established unshakably in Faith. Second, one must not be affected by success or failure. Third,

one must distinguish between Sathyam and A-sathyam, the permanent and the Im-permanent, the Unchanging and the Changing. Then, the revelation of the Swa-swarupam is rendered possible.

The prime need is Non-attachment. Get attached and you get stuck. There is no end to the stream of desires that follow one another in devastating succession. Of course, you may say, we desire only Peace of mind. Yes; but, how can you get it without the discipline that confers non-attachment? What you purchase is little; but, the discount you ask is huge. Peace of Mind is proportionate to the Sadhana you practise. Wish for the end of the 'wishing tendency'; wish that His Wish might prevail forever, in your case as well as in the case of all others. Egoism is the foe of Sharanagati; you are but the Image, the Reality is the Lord. Be convinced of that. Conquer the senses and you have established Swarajya and become Emperor over yourself! That is the victory you have to strive for.

You tend your bodies with elaborate care, giving it food regularly, morning, noon, afternoon and night. Tend your mind also, regularly and then, it will be of great help to you, in liberating you from the tangle of joy and grief. Take a daily breakfast of Dhyanam Japam and Namasmarana; have Puja Archana and Worship of the Ishtadevata as lunch; do a little Namalikhita or read a few pages of some sacred book about the Glory of God as afternoon tea; end up with a supper of meditation or Manana of what you have read or experienced during the day, before you go to bed. Without these, you are starving the spirit and feeding only the body. Pay more attention to the spirit and less to the body. Do not get immersed in the noise and confusion of, the external world. Desist from active partnership with the world's fantastic activities; then you can listen to the Pranava inside you, and cultivate your spirit in silence. That is why I place so much emphasis on silence and speech control. That is the first step in Sadhana; the rest follow this elementary discipline in Pranavopasana.

All those who take up this course of discipline have My Blessings. Through the A-nitya, the Nitya has to be seen and experienced; through the A-sathya alone, one has to see the Sathya and experience it. As a matter of fact, there is no A-sathya or A-nitya; all is Brahman. When once you have realised this, victory is won.

(From Baba's Discourse on Sankara Jayanti; 16-5-64)

The Gayatri Mantra

*Maha manthrasya cha~apyasya sthane sthane pade pade Goodho rahasya garbho~nantho-
padesa samucchayah*

"In this mahamantra, a large collection of sacred discipline and advice is inherent in every word, letter and stop." It is an ocean, with many a pearl in its bosom, awaiting Sadhakas to discover them and experience their value. Commentators have failed to exhaust its subtle significance for the spiritual aspirant. Many a Rishi has attempted the task and felt dissatisfied at his own effort and its fruit.

The Gayathri has three parts, each containing a distinct message: 1. Meditation on the, glory of Godhead 2. Establishment of the Godhead so conceived, in the Heart and 3. Prayer to God so established for awakening and purifying the Intellect.

Part 1: Om (Brahma) Rhooh (OF the nature of Pranaswarupa) Bhuvah (Destroying all Grief) Suvah (Granting all Joy) Tatt (That) Savithuh (Effulgent; resplendent) Varenym (Highest) Bhargah (Destroying sins) These are the attributes which if constantly meditated upon as belonging to Godhead will gradually transform the inner nature of the Sadhaka himself, according to the dictum, Yad Bhaavam thad bhavathi (You become that which you genuinely feel) Moreover, when the Brahmachari starts contemplating on these qualities, and picturing the Power that has these characteristics he will be reinforced silently by mysterious elements connected with the Higher Nature that lies dormant in him. There is no doubt this happens. It is part of the experience of Upasakas.

Part II: Devasya (That God) Dheemahi (Let us establish) Mere meditation on the Godhead is considered insufficient. All that, is for receiving him in the tabernacle of the heart and installing Him in the shrine made ready for Him, by the eviction of the Ego. Certainly, this great step will transform the arts and activities of the Sadhaka, and make him a Satwic individual.

Part III: Dhiyah (The intellect) yah (he) Nah (our) prachodayat (Let inspire, awaken, arouse) When the power of discrimination is set right, brightened and cleaned, the individual will himself discover the Way and the Truth. So, this is a prayer, which does not take away the freedom of the individual or the Glory of God.

There is another note-worthy point about the Gayathri. The Vedas are said to contain three kandas, the Jnanakanda, the Karmakanda and the Upasanakanda. Well. The Gayathri has all three, in essence. The meditation on the characteristics is Jnana; the installation is the Karma and the prayer for clearing the intellect of evil and wrong, is the Upasana.

No wonder the Gayathri is considered the greatest prayer ever devised by man.

Mysore H. V. Narayana Rao

The body is a house taken by you on rent. When your condition improves, you shift to a more comfortable house paying higher rent; when your condition deteriorates, you have to move into a house inferior to the one you now occupy. So, earn more spiritual wealth and try to move into a more comfortable `house' where you can lead a better life.

BABA

He, as the Other

It happened at Uravakonda, 24 years ago, when I was a teacher at the High School there.

The most distinguished student of the school, Sathyanarayana, already known as Sai Baba was absent; He had gone to Puttaparthi, the village where He was born. My fourth son, Ramarao was then five years of age. Uravakonda has few wells with drinkable water; my wife used to go far for it, to the "Bungalow Well." It used to take some bit of time for her to walk up to the well, draw water and fill the pots and return, especially, if the crowd was big. So, that day, she collected the children from neighbouring houses for Ramarao to play with and giving them a quantity of sugar in a cup, she asked them to play "Puja of Sai Baba" and eat the sugar, after offering it to Baba. She thus left for the well, all the while lamenting in her heart at the absence, in physical form of Sathyanarayana, the present Avatar of Sai.

The children started Bhajan and Puja. And wonder of wonders, they saw Sai Baba sitting on the wooden plank which Sathyanarayana had given their parents to be placed near the shrine. They repeated some Namavalis and did Puja to the Divine Visitor. They offered the cup of sugar and, would you believe it, Baba ate some of it. The boys ate the remainder. Then, Ramarao ran out of the house to bring his mother in, for he had heard her sigh for a Darshan of Shirdi Sai Baba.

The women from the well were about 20 yards away; the children ran forward, shouting the good news and asking them to hurry up. But, they found the plank empty. "Where has He gone?" they asked the children in the room. They answered, "He went into that picture; we saw Him do it." Of course, Baba had denied Darshan to us, who are immersed in objective pleasure seeking; but, He gave Darshan to those innocent little kids and ate what they offered!

We went to Puttaparthi and asked Baba about this incident. Baba's answer was: "Your wife felt forlorn that I was away here, far from her and you. So, I presented Myself before Ramarao and the children, in that Form, just to convince her (through the description of their experience from these innocent children) that I am there always.

But, why did He choose *that* Form, the form of Shirdi Sai Baba? The answer is, there is no "that" Form or "this" Form; both are the same.

Manchiraju Thammiraju

The Flames of Fire

One evening, when Krishna drove the chariot of Arjuna back into camp, Arjuna was so proud of his prowess that he refused to get down first, for he was the owner of the vehicle! Krishna entreated Arjuna to get down first; but, Arjuna was determined not to yield. At last, Krishna won and Arjuna stepped first from the chariot, with a sullen face. When Krishna landed on the ground, Arjuna was shocked to see the vehicle going up in flames. So that was why Krishna wanted him to descend first! The fiery energy of all the ignition-charged arrows was held back so long by the presence of the Lord. It was the Lord's Grace and the Lord's Mahima that had saved him! Arjuna was humbled to learn this. Realise that there is always a profound meaning for every action of the Lord.

BABA

Divyopadesam

Sathya Dharma Shanti prema—these comprise Sanathana Dharma. It confers Faith in the Atma, the real Self. Our culture is based on the two commands Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara. (Utter truth, practise Dharma) Our customs and modes, our language and dress, all the symbols of our culture bring out the task on which we are engaged: progress from humanity to Divinity.

In our efforts to know what our Dharma is, the Vedas are our supreme authority. They are the very Form of Godhead. God lays down Dharma and He alone can amend or Restore it, when it needs such. When the bridges along a road get damaged, the villagers nearabouts cannot repair them as they like; He who laid the road has to initiate the repairs. On the highway of Sanathana Dharma two bridges, Dharma and Karma, have broken down and the Nirakara has come down in Nirakara to improve the road and help traffic.

The Vedamata is Dharma Herself. You can select a wife, but, no one can choose a mother. First the mother, then the child; first Dharma, then Janma. As regards this question of Janma and Dharma, some people confuse the sense of “Guna karma vibhaagasah” in the Gita. If Jati is based on the Character as directed by the preponderance of one or other of the three Gunas, then, when the same individual, at different times of the day, while engaged in diverse activities, expresses different Gunas, what is to be his Jati? Are we to go on changing it to suit the various moods and modes? Or, if the same person engages in trade, teaching and agriculture depending on his circumstances, how are we to classify him? Whenever he exhibits one Guna, or does one activity, can we say, his Jati is based that moment on that Guna and that Karma, only to be changed soon after when they change? Since this is not possible, Jati is based on Janma or Birth.

Roads are varied; but, all reach the same destination. There are roads to suit all, on foot, by car or truck or omnibus, by rail, or by plane. The Vedas are the rupee coin, all in one lump. The Ramayana Mahabharata Bhagavata are each a rupee also, only they are small change adding up to a rupee. So, what does any one lose, if he has the one and not the other? Nothing at all. Make use of them and you will find that they are of equal value. If they are kept unused both are equally ineffective. And as for use, one stick out of the box of matches is enough to create fire; one sloka is enough if you put it into practice.

The whole country is the Dharmakshetra; the Gita begins with the word “Dharmakshetra” and ends with “Sarva Dharmaan parithyajya”! The mothers and children of this land must be devoted to Dharma above all. Since ancient times, they were so devoted that is the reason why Sanathana Dharma stood safe and sound defying the onslaughts of religious and spiritual revolutions and calamities. It is imprinted in the heart of every inhabitant of this land. When Rama set out for the forest, his mother gave him as his armour the following advice: "Son! Rama! May the Dharma which you are so heroically upholding be your Guardian and protector hereafter also." We want mothers who are so wise and children who are so steadfast in their devotion to Dharma.

Rama too never deviated from the path indicated by the mother. When, after the death of Ravana, Vibhishana's Coronation was arranged, he pleaded that Rama Himself must crown him in the City of Lanka; but Rama declared that his vow and his father's orders did not allow Him to enter a city, during the 14 years, for he had to live in the forest only, during that period. So, the function was attended only by Sugriva and others. Rama thus, demonstrated by his action how Dharma has to be scrupulously observed.

It was not Rama alone that did it; many a hero, many a Mahatma was born in this land. Vamadeva declared, "Soham; soham" as soon as he took birth. Prahlada uttered "Narayana", when he was born. Shivaji and others sacrificed their lives for the protection of the ancient culture of this country. Bharatmata is Aadhyatma-mata. Each one of you ought to support and protect the dignity and glory of that Mother. It is a pity that, taking birth in such an auspicious land; people are content with trash. A cow gets but a bundle of grass, even when the house is echoing to the revelry of a marriage feast. Crowds gather in the fish market; but, where diamonds are sold, only a handful can be found. Of what avail are multitudes who follow A-Dharma? A single individual sticking to Dharma is enough.

The swa-dharma of each is the best for him Though another's dharma might be superior and therefore more attractive, it would be harmful for him to adopt it; milk might be more costly and more nutritious than water, but, surely, fishes do not find it congenial at all. One has to examine the credentials too. What can a beggar do with a gift-elephant? You cannot declare all men equal by decree and prescribe the same duties and confer the same rights on all.

The highest goal of Sanathana Dharma is Moksha and that is achieved by the conquest of illusion, and the attainment of full joy, untarnished by grief. So, it can be said that every one is a candidate for Moksha. Joy wells up from within, it cannot be squeezed: out of external objects. Losing; it in the inner consciousness, and looking for it in external objects is doing what an old woman did once. She lost her needle in the dark in her room, but, searched for it under the streetlights, for the simple reason that there was light there.

So long as God is believed to be in temples and holy places only, man will feel Religion a burden and a handicap. But, once you plant Him in your heart, you feel light and you are stronger, with a spring in your gait! When the food-basket is carried on the shoulder, it feels heavy and makes you trudge slowly. But, put the food inside you and see the transformation. Though the total weight has not decreased, you feel lighter and somehow stronger. That is the result of taking things in; do likewise about the idea of God.

Nishkama Karma is the sentence inflicted on every individual. No one has a right over the fruit of his actions. This body is the prison into which the Jeevi has been sent; wherever the convict goes, two jailors Ahamkara and Mamakara (I and Mine) stand guard over him. Once he is released, they do not bother him at all. The authorities of the prison make him do various tasks for which he has no right to demand any payment. Nor can he refuse to do those tasks. He has to be confirmed in the Nishkama attitude. If the authorities are pleased with his conduct in prison they may release him sooner than the sentence permits. The prisoner might also be transferred

from jail to jail, according to reports for or against him in each. So, if the Lord's Grace is won by man he may grant reprieve or diminish the period of imprisonment or cancel the transfer, or order release from this present jail itself!

The mother coming from the well with one pot on her head, another on hip and a third in her hand hurries home in spite of all these, because she remembers the child in the cradle. If the child is forgotten, her gait gets slowed down and she takes a long time to arrive. Similarly, if God the Goal is forgotten, one wanders through many births and arrives late after many travails.

Shall I tell you what My food is? It is His Ananda which sustains Me. How do you earn that Ananda? By firmly believing in and practising the Sanathana Dharma, which I and these Pandits are placing before you. I bless you that you may all achieve that Ananda and dwell in it.

(From the Discourse of Baba, at the Inauguration of the Prasanthi Vidwan mahasabha at Venkatagiri)

If you talk of anything you do not know, it is a matter for ridicule. If you talk about anything you have not experienced, it is reprehensible, for you are cheating your listeners. If you learn the art of public speaking and talk enchantingly using all the skills and frills recommended in textbooks or borrowed from others, it is cheating, nevertheless. Be sincere; be simple; be honest. That is the best recipe for successful speaking.

BABA

The Sastras—their Authority

'Proof' means some method by which we know a thing exactly as it is, without distortion or diminution. We and the animals have the eye, nose, ear and such sense-organs to give us correct information about objects. The eye alone can give us an account of the form, the ear can make us cognise only the sound emanating from them, the nose is designed only to convey information about smell. Each is restricted to some one field of knowledge concerning the object. Each of these senses has to be fully efficient in order to equip us with an accurate picture.

Man has a tool, which the animals do not possess, namely, the Sastras. They tell him of things which the senses and, even the Buddhi, which co-ordinates and organises the information supplied by the senses, do not deal with. They teach him how to attain contentment and peace, here and hereafter. Man's progress is due to this extra instrument that he has. When the Sastras are neglected, man loses the key of contentment. To satisfy the inner craving for joy that will not fade man has to rely on the collected wisdom of the sages, which is called Sastras.

Man has no recollection of the foetal life which he himself underwent; the Sastras tell us of the travails suffered there, as well as previous to that period. If only man can recall the miseries of those years, the Sastras need not warn him of the cycle of birth and death into which he plunges

by his actions and thoughts. The Sastras are the repositories of wisdom which tell man of truths forgotten which are beyond the reach of the instruments of knowledge which he possesses. Hence they are invaluable helps in the march of Man to Godhood.

Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri, Pithapuram

Baba Responded to the Vow

I said, "I wont" wife said, 'You should'
I kept my vow, the pain remained—
The ghastly gastric ulcery pain!
The doctors said they must cut and stitch;
The Pundit knew, twas past birth sin;
"With thousand eight names, every Friday pray
Our Lalithaa Maa for full one year."
I did, as he said; but, Maa kept mum!
A yogi announced from a village shrine
He'll give the drug to heal all pain!
I said 'I wont'; wife said 'You should';
She won; I sped on cycle fast.

I fell in ditch and broke my thigh;
They carted me home that night.
The plaster was heavy, stiff and tight,
Hospital bed for half the year
The doctor said he must saw it away!
The pain, it pained me all along.

I was carted home, alive, complete
With that ghastly gastric pain.
One night, in dream I saw a crown of hair
Above a smiling face, a yellow gown.
The touch was soft, the look was kind,
He filled my mouth with ash,
I woke; the ash was there!

In a week I stood; another, I walked;
A month, I hiked. My Maa had not kept mum!
The pain had gone—without a word of thanks
To its host for years and years.
I walked today, along the country road
To the place where Baba dwells, the Lalitha- maa
Whose thousand eight names I know by heart.

Sathanore, 10-6-'64

Prasanthi Nilayam News

- May 16th: Srimati Damayanthi Dungaji, Professor of Sanskrit, Jabalpur University, placed in Baba's Hands her translation of 'Satyam Sivam Sundaram' into Marathi.
- May 16th: Sankara Jayanthi: Baba's Discourse.
- May 17th: Baba's Discourse.
- 18, 20,21,
24 and 28: Marriages at the Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Baba
- May 27: Miss. M. Verloop, a Sadhak from Holland arrived and during her 5 days' stay, had valuable discussions with Baba.
- May 28: Dr. A. S, Adke, Principal of the Karnataka Regional Engineering College, Surathkal, arrived to have Darsan
- May 31: Baba left for Bangalore
- June 2
and 12: Marriages at Brindavan in the Divine Presence of Baba

From the 56th sloka of the Second Chapter to the 72nd sloka, Krishna described the characteristics of the Sthithaprajna, and the excellence of that stage. Then, saying that. He Himself had established Jnanayoga for the Sankhyas, and Karma-yoga for the Yogis, as means of attaining Liberation, He spoke of the importance of Karma. Every one has to bow to the demands of Nature and engage himself in Karma; it is inevitable. Therefore, Krishna said, "Do the Kartavya-karmas, Karma that is your bounden duty. Being engaged in Karma is to be preferred to not being so engaged. If you desist from Karma, the task of living becomes difficult, nay, impossible."

"The Karmas that do not bind are those usually referred to as Yajna. All the rest are bondage-producing ones. Therefore, O Arjuna, give up all attachment and engage in acts, as if they are Yajnas, Sacrifices dedicated to the Lord." Krishna taught Arjuna the origins of Karma, the roots from where the urge to do Karma sprouts and grows; He taught them so clearly that Arjuna's heart was really moved and modified. "The Vedas emanated from God; Karmas emanated from the Vedas; from Karma originated Yajna, from Yajna, Rain; from Rain grew Food; from Food came all living beings. This is the cycle that has to be accepted and honoured."

"Consider this, O Arjuna, I have no need to do any Karma; no, not anywhere in the three worlds. I am under no compulsion. Still, I am ever engaged in Karma. Think of this. If I desist, the world will be no more. I will be the cause of that evil fate. Have steady faith in the Atma; then, dedicate all acts of yours to Me; with no desire for the fruit thereof, no egoism and no sense of possession or pride, engage in battle," said Krishna.

If the wheel of Creation is to move along smooth each one has to keep on doing Karma. Whoever he is, he cannot get round this obligation. Even he who has achieved the highest jnana has to observe this rule. Eating and drinking, intake and release of breath—these too are Karmas. Who can exist without these acts? You derive benefit from the world and from the community and so, some activity on your part is their due. In short, this Brahmanda, this Viswa is really speaking a huge workshop; every human being is just a limb in this huge organisation. The limb is allotted a task in accordance with its structure and it must find its fulfillment in doing that particular piece of work. Whatever work one has been allotted has to be done as an offering to God. There is no single thing in the Universe that does not engage itself in this great task of Karma. Plant and insect, stone and stump, wind and rain, heat and cold, if each of these does not work as per plan the world cannot subsist. The Sun and the Moon carry on their routine tasks strictly. Wind and Fire have to perform their duties without demur. If the earth and sky refuse to follow their allotted duties what is to happen to the world? So, there is no one who is Karma-less but yet with body! It is only when each performs his task without fail, and with care, that the wheel will move quick and smooth."

You may wonder why Jnanis should still do Karma; not only you, but, many may be worried at that statement. Well, people usually follow the ideal set by those in higher levels. Their acts form the basis of Dharma for all. If jnanis sit quiet, how are ordinary mortals to save themselves?

They have no one to guide them and so they lose themselves in the easy paths of sensory pleasure. The duty of the wise is to foster the right and to practise it before others, so that they too may be prompted to follow, drawn by the hope of becoming as contented and as joyful as they are. The wise have to do and get done, see and show, so that the rest might be persuaded to follow the example that is set by them.

"Arjuna! Pay attention to just one fact! How warm is your body now? It may be about 98 degrees; how and for what reasons did it happen? Because, the Sun bears many million times this heat at that distance, is it not? Now, if the sun feels that it will not put up with all that fire and becomes cool, what will happen to mankind, just imagine! Again, if I desist from Karma, this vast Viswa- Karma of working in and through this Universe, imagine what will be the fate of this Brahmanda! That is why I am engaged in Karma, remember. Not that I derive any profit thereby, or get any good, or any fruit."

"Almost every one in the world is bound by the rule of Karma. But, people are so immersed in Ignorance that they are unaware of their own moral or intellectual status, and of the secrets of successful action on the lines of Karma. Such can be saved only by being led and inspired by the example of the great. That is why the Jnani has to be engaged in activity and to remove sloth and delusion of ordinary men. So, all have to obey the rule of Karma, without any deviation."

"Does the Vimana or aerial vehicle stay on above, denouncing the earth below? Those who have earned the right to travel in it cannot fly up towards it and into it! Therefore, to take them in, it has to come down at the places where they gather by previous arrangement, and then soar high into the sky with them. So too, though the Jnani has no desire or urge to do Karma, he comes down into the region of Karma and helps those who would not have otherwise put their talents into proper use. Even great personages like Janaka performed Dharma-karmas with this view; Aswapathi too did likewise, to save the rest from sheer idleness or wickedness.

Then, in reply to another question of Arjuna Krishna said, "Kama is the root cause of all evil" and He elaborated on its nature cause and cure. "He who is bound by the Deha-atma-buddhi (the false awareness that he is just this body and nothing more) can never hope to conquer Karma; one must acquire the Brahmaatma-Buddhi (the true awareness that he is just Brahma, and nothing less) in order to be sure of victory. All acts must be performed in the spirit of dedication to the Lord. The Universe must be identified with the Form of Vishnu, the Universal Transcendent."

In this chapter, three important subjects have been clarified: 1. Every one has to do Karma and if this is not done, the world will come to nought. 2. The Karma of the great is the ideal that the rest have to keep in view. 3. Almost all in the world are bound by the obligation of Karma and the duty to follow their steps.

Krishna most lovingly made Arjuna imbibe these lessons. Not satisfied with this, Krishna told him that Jnana is the final goal and gain of Karma; Jnana is the treasure that is won by man's efforts to purify the mind, and to earn the Grace of God; Jnana not merely grants Ananda but is itself the at of Ananda. Thus, He initiated him into Jnanamarga, the path of Jnana. This subject is carried on till the fifth Chapter.

Jnanayoga shines as a precious jewel amidst the Teachings of Bhagavad-Gita-sastra. Krishna declared "Nahi Jnanena sadrisam pavithramiha vidyathe" (Nothing as holy as Jnana is known here)! Even later, in the 7th chapter, He has said, "Jnani thwathmaiva me matham" (I consider the Jnani as Myself.) Similarly, the excellence of Jnanayoga has been extolled in many other contexts also in the Gita.

That is why Jnanayoga is believed to be the most fruitful of all spiritual Sadhanas. All Sastras find their fulfillment in Jnana alone. Dhyanam is just the contemplation of the Jnanaswarupa, which is one's real nature. All are in you, you are in all. You have to get this conviction fixed in your consciousness, by means of analysis and discrimination and intellectual exploration. You have to isolate and dismiss from the consciousness all impressions of the senses, the mind, the intelligence, etc. These have nothing to do with the Atma, which you really are. The Atma is unaffected by any subject or object. Even if the senses, mind, intelligence etc. are inactive, that inactivity too will not affect the Atma! To know the Atma as such an entity, unaffected and unattached, is the secret of Jnana.

Every single act of yours must be carried out with this Jnana as its background, That awareness of the Atma will guide you in both the out-moving and in-drawing paths, the Pravritti marga and the Nivritti marga; it will not block action but fill it with purpose and meaning; it will build up faith and moral life, it will take man to the realm of deliverance along the road of Nishkama Karma, the renunciation of the *fruit* of action, and not of *action* itself.

So, for the achievement of Liberation, Jnana is the direct road. Therefore, it is declared that it is incomparably sacred. And, naturally, it follows that Ignorance is indubitably the most despicable. "See the Universal in the Particular; see the Particular in the Universal; that is the essence of Jnana", said Krishna. "All Kshetras know only one single Kshetrajna. And, who is that? The Atma, that is to say, you yourself, your own self! Know this and you become a Jnani. So realise that Atma is Param-atma; that is the Vijnana. Krishna, who is All-knowing, began to teach Arjuna this Yoga, in order to cast off all doubt from his mind.

"Arjuna! I taught this sacred Jnanayoga to Surya, then it was handed down from one generation to another till Manu and Ikshvaku and from them, Rajarshis came to learn it. With that it was lost in the world. That ever-existing Yoga had to be restored to the world, and so, I had to come, determined to carry out the task." Now, you will not fail to notice the discrepancy of the Yoga being described as ever existing and the statement that it was lost! Of course, the statement has some reason behind it; it is not made without thought. The indestructible is here spoken of as having been destroyed! It is called indestructible or Avyaya for two reasons 1. Its origin is the Veda, which is free from decline. 2. Its consequence is Moksha, which, too, is free from decline. About the Veda and Moksha, the characterisation of Avyaya is certainly very apt. This Yoga on account of the influence of Kala Karma and Karana, fell out of use and so was forgotten and neglected. That is to say, it disappeared, it was lost to view, it declined, it was destroyed. That is the implication of that statement; it does not mean anything more. Bringing it into life means, bringing it once again into current use, not creating it *ab initio*! "Lost to view" is the sense in which destruction is used in a general way. That is how you have to interpret it, for the Lord will never devise a thing that will suffer destruction.

The reference to Surya is also a subject that merits some consideration. The people of Bharat are above all intimately associated with the Sun-god. The heroes of Bharat, the Kshatriyas, are from the beginning attached to Surya; besides, even for ordinary men and women, Surya is so highly sacred that He has been raised the status of the Guru. The Sun has assumed that dignity. The moolapurusha of the Kshatriyas is Surya; the sacred scriptures and legends of India have not assigned a status of similar glory to any one else. It is a unique position that Surya occupies. Why, for the whole world, the Sun is the visible manifestation of the Lord. And, the Sun is the source of time. Surya is the father of Kala, as the Sastras declare. The Sun limits and regulates the number of years each one lives; the Sun diminishes every day a fraction of the allotted span. So the Sun is the arbiter, the maker of man's destiny. Whether one wills or not, every deed of his is performed under His Auspices and dedicated to Him. No one can avoid doing so.

Above all, consider the service the Sun does to this world. That is the daily experience of all; every one is witness for that. The Sun is the source of all life, plant and animal, upon this planet. Without His Rays, it will be a desolate waste. He draws up into the sky the water of the seas and lakes, and from the clouds formed by Him, He pours rain on the crops, He is ever the Dharmadevata, scattering His Rays equally on all.

Surya is the great Tyagi; unequalled for renunciation. He is the great Yogi; without a second's thought of His glory, or rest, He Performs His Duty without thought of reward. He is humble and steady in work. The service He does is something no one else can offer. The happiness He contributes is something no one else can create. But He has no pretensions to pride. He moves about unconcerned with the consequences of His energy.

Imagine the patience with which the Sun puts up with all that extreme heat, for the sake of the world and of humanity. It is He who keeps the human body warm and comfortable. This material body becomes, full of energy and intelligence on account of the Solar Energy that it imbibes. If the Sun is careless for a moment, the world will be consumed in flames. Instead He is fostering the world with great consideration. He feels it as His Nature, His Mission, His purpose, not as His Service.

It is only in the Karma that is your very nature that you can have fortitude; if it is just an assumed duty one will find it difficult to up with troubles and travails on the way. Assumed duties and karma are called A-sahajakarma, and Karma that is the expression of one's genuine self is Sahajakarma. Now Sahajakarma will sit light and A-sahajakarma will always be burden. A-sahajakarma will induce conceit, the feeling 'I am the doer;' so, it will result in exhaustion or elation, disgust or pride.

Think of this one point: when a man is well, no one will inquire about his health. But, if he is stricken with illness or sorrow, every one will inquire the reason, and bombard him with anxious queries. Why this anxiety? Man is fundamentally happy and healthy. His nature is joy; that is his Sahajaswabhava. So, when he is 'happy and healthy' no one is surprised or worried. But, grief and sorrow are strange to his make-up; they are the result of some delusion that overwhelmed his Nature. So people get worried and they set about finding out how he got so deluded. The Sun is teaching us that when one is himself, there will be no exhaustion or elation, no disgust or pride.

The task of Surya is not something imposed from outside and taken up under compulsion. That is why it is performed silently, systematically, and smoothly. He is also exhorting mankind to use the time He creates and allots, fully and fruitfully, not merely for living comfortably and safely, but, for living a moral and elevating life, worthy of the destiny that is man's due. Now you can realize why the Gita was first taught by the Lord to the Sun. He is the great Karmayogi, Nishkama Karma Yogi.

Krishna is now teaching this indestructible Gita-sastra to Arjuna, the representative of man at the crossroads; and He chose him for, he has the same excellence, is it not? Reflect on that for a moment. If Arjuna was not a vessel endowed with such virtues and splendour, Krishna would not have decided to use him as the recipient of the Gita. The Lord will not give anything to the undeserving. Arjuna had the qualities that were needed for receiving the teaching and so, he was chosen.

(To be continued)

Bhagavan

*Uthpaththim cha vinaasam cha
Boothanaam aagathim gathim
Veththi vidyaam avidyaam cha
Sa vaachyo Bhagavaan ithi*

*Aisvaryasya samagrasya
Veeryasya yasasah sriyah
Vairaagyasyaatha Mokshasya
Shannaam Bhaga ithi smrithah*

He who can create and destroy, who knows the past and the future, who can declare which is Delusion that person is Bhagavan. Bhagavan is He who possesses the six glories: Full mastery over everything, power, fame, glory, detachment and deliverance. Krishna had the quality of aiswarya in full measure. Even when he was a little boy, he called a fruit seller towards him and taking a few, He placed in the basket a few grains which turned it into a basket of gems! As regards veeryam; examples are plenty, Bakasura, Dhenukasura and a host of others who met death at the hands of the boy can stand witness to His prowess. His detachment can be inferred from the fact, that though his parents were in jail, He refused to be affected. About His Knowledge of the means of attaining Liberation the Gita removes all doubts. He ordered the Devatas to be born in the world in order to co-operate in the task of Dharmasthapana and to share in the joy thereof. He left this world, on the completion of His Self-imposed task; He created internal factions among the Yadavas and brought about the death of every one of them, so that the Devatas could resume their places in Heaven. The above two slokas regarding the qualities to be noted in manifestations of the Lord explain the Leelas and Mahimas of all Avatars of the Lord. Only those who have these can be correctly addressed as Bhagavan.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba is an Avatar, a Bhagavan, the Lord in human form. There is no doubt of that. The examples of His aishwarya which He offers to Pundits Artists and others during the Navaratri and other festivals that are arranged at the Prasanthi Nilayam are many and unique. In full view of thousands, He created from His palm a heap of gems for the Final Offering at Vedapurushayajna, two years ago. That is evidence enough of His aishwarya. After discussion of spiritual problems at a gathering of Pundits, He felt that He should give gifts to them and playing with His Fingers on the sand dunes whereon He sat, He produced them for the wondering group round Brahmasri Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri. And, what of the Jnanabodha He vouchsafes to those who attach themselves to Him, as well as to the people who gather to hear Him! The Jnana that leads to Liberation is His very personality. Prowess, Fame and Detachment, He has to an extraordinary degree.

And, His Knowledge! It is immeasurable. Once with the little knowledge I have collected, I quoted in His Presence the sloka, "Mukunda charanaishinaam darsanaamtho bhaved bandhah" meaning, 'For Those who desire to get a vision of the Feet of Mukunda, the end of this cycle of Birth and Death is also granted. Baba interrupted with the question." "What? Is that bandha a fact?" And, He elaborated on the Mithya-ness of the world and all objective and subjective experiences, in the style of the great commentaries on Adhyasa composed by Sankara and others! His Wisdom is indescribable. He has the same grace, the kindness towards all. One day, during a discourse, He declared that all beings love Him; then, raising the question of those who do not, He said that it cannot be denied that those people love themselves; and He is their inner-Self! So, though they appear to be hating Him and talking against Him, they are actually loving Him, He announced. This is genuine Advaita tattwa, observed in practice, by the great Master.

The past, present and future are to Him, one continuous stream of Time. He collected from wherever they were, many articles used by Him in the previous birth, when He was, as He declares, Sai Baba, at Shirdi. I had a wonderful experience of this when I was the recipient of His Grace as the Officiating Priest at the Rudrayaga, He commanded us to perform at the Prasanthi Nilayam. I went to Him for a double-faced vessel, an item needed for the yaga. It is called karki, in the Scriptures. Baba gave me such a vessel, with the astounding information, "This vessel I used to have with Me when I was at Shirdi." It was a vessel with two faces!

He comes to the rescue of the Bhaktas spontaneously. Once during the Bhajan, Nageswara Rao of Eluru had a sudden attack of paralysis and he lost consciousness. Then, Baba sent him some Vibhuti; he recovered in a short time. He is a Kalpataru for the devotees; why, He bore Himself the paralytic stroke and heart attacks which one of the devotees was destined to suffer from and after 8 days of the illness, He shook off the dire illness, in a trice, before thousands of Bhaktas last Guru Poornima Day. Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba is therefore indisputably the Lord himself in Human form Ananthavaram

Kuppa Bairagi Sastri

- Q. What is the nature of the obstacle from the future?
A. The future creates obstacles since you anticipate troubles and worry about them even before they come.
- Q. I have heard people speak of four types of beings; but I am not quite clear what they are.
A. Andaja, Swedaja, Udbijja and Jarayuja.
- Q. What do these words mean?
A. Andaja means egg-born; Swedaja, sweat-born; Udbijja earth-born and Jarayuja, mammals. Birds are good examples of the first group; lice etc. of the second; ants, plants and trees of the third; and men, cattle etc. of the fourth.
- Q. Well, Swami! Among these who are theists and who adore God, are there special types?
A. Of course! There are four types among them too.
- Q. Their names?
A. Dwijas, Munis, Alfabudhdhis and Vidithatmas: the Twice-born, the Ascetics, the Dull-witted, and the Knowers of the Atma.
- Q. Why are they called so? What is the special feature of each type?
A. The twice-born recognise God as in the Fire they revere; and with the conviction they worship Him.
- Q. The Munis?
A. They recognise God in their hearts.
- Q. What about the Dull-witted?
A. They require images, pictures or some other visible representation of His Beauty and Glory. They worship such.
- Q. And the knowers of the Atma?
A. They recognise God as immanent in the Universe and see only Him wherever they turn.
- Q. May I ask who among these are the greatest?
A. Each is great in the stage he may have reached; but naturally, those who can experience the Lord everywhere at all times are the greatest.
- Q. Swami! What are the traits of character that we have to avoid, that is to say, which are the obstacles in the path of one who seeks Liberation from the cycle of Birth and Death?
A. The six, the Ari-shadvarga: Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha; Mada and Matsarya; these are to be avoided.
- Q. What exactly is Kama?
A. Desire for riches, property, honour, status, fame, children; why list the lot? Attachment to all things of this sensory world, this false, temporary, impure world.
- Q. Krodha?
A. Yearning to harm others and cause ruin to them.
- Q. And Lobha?
A. Determination that no one else should partake of even a small fraction of what one has earned or what one has; also, that even in times of distress, one's possessions should not be diminished by use.
- Q. What is the meaning of Moha?
A. The delusion that some people are nearer to one than others and the desire to please them more than others, leading to exertions for earning and accumulating for their sake.
- Q. Mada?

- A. Mada means the swagger that develops when one feels that he has either scholarship or strength or riches or fame, more than others. Even when one has not got these, Mada makes men move about without reverence for elders and consideration for others' feelings and craving only for one's own comfort and security. Mada is extreme egoism.
- Q. The last that you mentioned is Matsarya. What does that mean, Swami?
- A. When others are as happy as yourself, Matsarya makes one miserable; one cannot tolerate it.
- Q. There are certain other traits too called Dambha and Darpa. What do they indicate?
- A. Dambha prompts people to do Yaga and Yajna, to give away vast sums in charity, in order to win the applause of the world. Darpa is the pride that haunts man when he is rich and happy.

The Oil Lamp

We have no reason to feel small as some people do, when they at what they call, the prosperity of the West! Our heritage is wisdom, which we all can share and benefit by. Our Philosophy is not a set of abstract principles spun out of the intellect, unrelated to living. It is an experiment of Truth; it is the winning of an integrated personality, it is synthesis and harmony, within and without.

Our civilization is not built upon the shaky foundation of slavery and exploitation. The yogas laid down for the uplift by our spiritual pathfinders are the common property of all seekers; the road as well as the goal do not inflict pain on any living thing. The founders of this culture were not generals or buccaneers for rulers and humble sages, who lived in grass huts and tubers and fruits. They lived in harmony with plants and trees, birds and animals; they yearned to do good to all beings! Their hearts were free from lust and greed; from envy and hate; they treated gold and dust as of equal worth. They discovered the very basis of mental peace, whatever the turmoils of the external world and the temptations in the inner. Their search was about how to live, not how to think how to kill or accumulate. This is an excellent attitude to life; and very useful. So, it has survived to this day.

Life for us is not a meaningless festival or fair, or a bloody struggle with our like for survival and success, or a game without rules or umpire, or a madman's dream. It is a purposeful pilgrimage, a rigorous school, an opportunity for transcending the inheritance of the beast in us, and transmuting ourselves into happy harmless useful beings.

We do not suffer inside an iron cage of laws and statutes; we only train ourselves by self-imposed and reasonable regulations and restrictions. We feel that virtue is the best ornament and the mastery of the senses the highest victory. The aim is not pleasure, but, peace; not high life, but, harmony. Even death is a consummation, a casting off of old clothes, rather than a calamity. Be simple, be sincere, be saved—that is the exhortation.

*Thaa ingudee sneha kritha pradeepa
Maastheerna medhyajina talpa manthah*

*Thasyai saparyaanupadam dinaanthe
Nivaasa hethorutajam vitheruh*

This is how Kalidasa describes hospitality offered to Sita, by the Sage Valmiki. “After offering her refreshments, they arranged for her a grass hut, with a deerskin for bed, and an oil lamp for giving light.”

That Ingudee Kntha sneha Pradeepam, that oil lamp, is the symbol of our culture—cool, comforting quiet, simple, sincere, giving a dim religious light, spiritual rather than material illumination. They taught us by example that we can be happy round that lamp and practise the disciplines that can make all equally happy too. Snuffing, out that lamp and flooding the land with electric glare cannot remove the darkness that whelms the world and the fear that envelopes the mind of man. Millions of our countrymen, who have not been drawn into the whirlpool of civilisation with its rush and crush, its fun and frolic, its fury and fight are still having that oil lamp in their homes or what is more important, in their heart. They may be unaware of the Upanishads or the Yogas, but they are contented, sincere a corner of their hearts is illumined by that steady flame. They have to learn many ideas about better living, but, once they put out that lamp, they wont be the same again. They will be like plants uprooted from the soil, where they grew. "Industrialise or perish" is the slogan to day, but, it may well be “Industrialise italies perish."

Knowledge is power—this is a dangerous doctrine; Knowledge is Peace—that is the doctrine of the Indian sage, of the Indian people. All knowledge that does not lead to Peace is a burden, an explosive cargo. "Sathya Dharma Shanti Prema—cultivate these and you have realised your Life-Purpose" say the sages.

Sathyameva jayathe naanrthaam—this is what the Mundakopanishad declares, and the Flag of Free India proclaims. Truth alone prevails, not Falsehood. Every one in this country should know what the Upanishad meant when it declared so, how to attain the Truth, how to establish ourselves in that Truth. That truth can be discovered only by the oil lamp of the sages. Be humble, then you may rise to the heights; be simple so that you may save yourselves from entanglements which cause grief, or even Short-lived joy.

Dr. K Bhaskaran Nair

1.

The Hills Of Puttaparthi

Grey, rugged, stately, they stand, timeless, and serene:
The morning sun turns them into a slate-blue wall,
And in the soft rays of the setting sun, they glow
With fast-changing tints of a ravishing rainbow.
They tell of old feuds, of man's love and hate,
Of the unbroken drama of his passion and grief.
Perhaps in some dark caves amidst their rocky slopes,

Above the gurgling waters of the meandering streams,
Lived the Seers who had seen God face to face,
And taught to weary mankind the Peace of the spirit.
They still stand, the grey, rugged, stately hills
Serene, above the valley of green fields and tiny hamlets;
And in the Valley itself, a new Miracle is on;
The Divine Formless in a human Form has arisen,
Teaching the ancient wisdom to seekers far and near.
Unwearied, compassionate, His clarion-call He sounds:
Awake and listen! For a new Voice in accents clear,
Reverberates through these grey, rugged and stately hills.

2.

He Speaks

He speaks and His words caress the spirit
Like the soft petals of a new-blossomed flower;
He smiles and the ripples of that smile spread
Unto the far reaches of the afflicted heart.
The veiled mystery of birth and death,
The soul's perplexity and the spirit's caverned gloom
Are driven away with magic wave of His hand
Raised to cheer to bless and to sustain
Lonely pilgrim life's rugged and thorny way.

H. sunder Rao

Ved Vyasa

July 24th is Vyasa Poornima, the day which is also known as Guru Poornima, and celebrated by all Sadhakas as specially dedicated to the worship of the Guru, the Master-Teacher. Vyasa is known by a number of other names too: Adi-Guru, Aadi-Muni, Bhagavan Badarayana, etc. His real name is Krishna, and since he was born on an island, or Dwipa, he is also referred to as Krishna-Dwaipayana. This Full Moon has been ear-marked for grateful remembrance of the first Guru, Vyasa.

Vyasa comes of a great lineage of spiritual heroes. His great-grandfather was the famous Vasishta; his grand father was Sakhta, the pure-hearted; he was the son of Parasara, a saint of great repute and his son was the unsullied sage, Suka.

Even as an infant, Vyasa went into the forest and started austerities. Sankaracharya extols him as one who was in touch with all the Gods. "Vyaasaadayoh devaadibhih prathyaksham Vyavaharanthidithi smaryathe." He could know the past, the present and the future. So, he could well picture in his mind the pitiable condition of man in this Kali age: a short span of life, poor intelligence; drooping spirits; unsteady habits; aspiration for self-mastery being opposed by the overwhelming influence of sensory pleasures. Therefore, he collated the One Veda into four

Samhithas, the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana and taught them as so arranged to his disciples, so that they could spread the various branches of Vedic lore among the people. His very name, Vyasa, means, he who arranges, who collates. “Vivyaasa Vedaah yasmaath sa, thasmaath Vyaasa ithi smrthah”. He is claimed as the highest among those who know the Veda, as the veritable Sun to the lotus of the Veda.

After thus helping the world to benefit from the Divine intuitions of the Pure-souled sages and yogis which the Veda contains, Vyasa composed the “Brahma Sutra”, a valuable commentary and synthesis of the Great Mahavakyas, like Tatt-tvam-asi which are the precious gems of Vedic literature, as also of the principles of Vedanta-darshana.

He also wrote the Great Epic, revealing the victory of Dharma over the forces of Adharma, the Mahabharata, otherwise known as the Panchama Veda—the Fifth Veda! The author of the Kannada Mahabharata, Naaranappa Kavi extols Vyasa as “Nikhila, yathi Pathi, divija vandithadeva Vedavyasagururaja,” the Master of all sages, the God to whom all the gods bow, the King of Gurus, Vedavyasa. The Mahabharata, apart from being the story unfolding the Glory of Krishna, is an encyclopedia of Indian culture, containing accounts and estimates of the various paths of spiritual striving, the Sankhya, the Nyaya, the Yoga, the Pasupatha, the Pancharathra; it also describes the Varnashramadharma, and the various sciences of Dandaneethi, Rajaneethi, Vaartha, etc.

Vyasa has helped the world of Humanity by recording and preserving the simple and charming poetry the teaching imparted by Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield and thus giving us all the Immortal Bhagavad-Gita!

The Vedanta Darshana has three authoritative texts which base form its basic structure:- the Upanishads, the Brahmasutra and the Bhagavad-Gita. Of these, Vyasa is the author of one and the cause of the other two. Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva established the Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita systems of philosophy respectively, by means of the commentaries which they wrote for these three standard works.

Besides these, Vyasa is also credited with the authorship of the 18 Puranas, giving dynastic lists and mythological legends about the glories of Gods, making evident that the One God, known by various names and pictured as having various forms, is the Creator Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe.

In spite of all this magnificent work for the sake of granting humanity the blessings of the Higher Life and the incessant contemplation of the glories of God, Vyasa had no peace of mind or inner Joy. “Nathushyath hrdayam thathah”, it is said. The sage Narada came to him and accosted him, to know why he was so sad. “You are wise, you determined the sections of the Vedas, you comprehend the meaning of the Vedic Mantras, you have conquered the Six Enemies which ruin man’s spiritual progress, you have established what exactly is meant by the principle of Brahman, you are a great Yogi; you are humble and of pure conduct; why then are you downcast and depressed?” asked Narada. He prescribed as the remedy, the composition of a great new work, about the Leelas and Mahimas and Upadesha of Vasudeva. Thus was the

Sreemadbhagavatha born! That great work has transformed many a reader into a gentle simple useful sincere aspirant and sadhaka; it has revealed the Lord of lakhs of men and women.

No wonder, Vyasa is revered with grateful worship by us. But, we should not forget the Lord is the latent force in every Guru. He is the Sadguru, the Prompter, the Bestower of Vidyashakti and Gurushakti on every person who is called to lead others along the road to God. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba demonstrated before thousands of bhaktas, last Guru Poornima Day, that He was Siva-Shakti and He declared that His Reality was *that* and no less. He proved that He is the Bhaktavatsala whom we adore, for, that day, He cast away the paralytic stroke and the heart attacks He had taken upon Himself, in order to save a devotee from the calamity! He is our Sadguru; it is our greatest good fortune that it is so. Baba has said on another Guru Poornima Day, that the relationship between Him and ourselves is not the Guru-Shishya relationship. It is much more than that! He is the Father, Mother, Guru and God. Let us deserve His Grace more and more; that is the prayer we lay at His Feet.

From The Discourses

Man was not born from dust; he did not originate in slime. He was born in Amrita, he is Amritaputra. But, yet, he is deluded into believing that he is the ever-changing, short-lived body; he ignores the embodied and recognizes only the body. Hence, his grief. Whenever he apparently is, whatever he outward is, he is fundamentally Eternal, Blissful, Intelligent; Sat Chit and Anandam. When the limitless Maha-akasa is enclosed in a pot it is referred to as Ghata-akasa; it does not become, therefore, different or separate; nor, can it be called a part or limb thereof. It is the same, within limits. When the limit is transcended, it is all Maha-akasa. So, get rid of the delusion that you are small, mean, grief-stricken or limited. You are Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent. This is the Message that Sathya Sai has come to carry into every heart. **B A B A**

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Tell a man that his shadow lies inside a well; he will deny it. Then, ask him to go and verify it himself. When he peeps into the well, the shadow is there! Who ever peeps, his shadow is there. So long as you keep away from the well, your shadow too will not fall inside it. The shadow is Maya; you are the truth; the well is Prakriti. Take the Prakriti as real, Maya will affect you. Keep away from it, the Maya will not affect you. This is the way to overcome Maya.

* *

Siva set out to destroy the Asuras who overcame the Three Cities, the three Sariras of Man, the Sthula, the Sukshma and the Karana. Vishnu was His charioteer, the Earth was the Chariot, and the Sun and Moon the wheels. Siva had one look at these: charioteer who was immersed in Yoganidra, the earth which was stable, the sun and moon which revolved in different orbits—and, Siva laughed at the team he had to use. That moment, the Asuras were destroyed, says the poet. For, Ananda is the most effective instrument against the evil forces; they are helpless before the spirit of joy.

* * *

The Samsari is the slave of the world the sadhaka is the bondman of God. My task is to re-form you all. I will not stop, until that is done. Even if you give up, I shall not. Krishna with help of Arjuna, his compounder operated on the wound called the Kauravas which had formed itself on the body of the world, and destroyed the 44 lakhs of worms which bred in it. But now, there is no operation and removal of bad flesh. Whether they come here or not, they are all Mine. Even after you come, if you do not diligently discriminate and find out My Truth, your life is a waste. But, without purity of character and knowledge of the Sastras, it would be a difficult task. Of what use are years spent in My neighbourhood? You have to follow my teachings and practise what you hear. Arjuna appreciated Krishna, the Purushottama, since he was himself a Narottama. Else how can all comprehend it? Nowadays, the Guru is in a difficult position. He should not ask for credentials or qualifications. He should not curb the sensory pleasures of the disciple, who must have Kaivalya in his lap, even while he is listening to the transistor radio slung on his shoulder. If that does not happen, then, the disciple will resign and go! To avoid this contingency and the consequent loss of prestige and money; the Guru flatters the disciple and suffers humiliation. All the falsehood, the deception you do to others pursue you; it wont attach itself to others.

* * * * *

Dedicate all your acts to Krishna; now, you are, dedicating it to your body, your sons and daughters your wife. When something good happens. You boast that it is the result of your efforts; when something bad occurs you attribute it to the anger of the Gods. A Sanyasi had planted and fostered a lovely garden. One day, when some stray cows entered the garden, he ran after them to with a big stick and beat them so severely that one cow died. A big crowd collected and began to threaten him with an equally severe beating. But, he said, “The cow died because its span of life had ended or, how could it die just at the moment? Who is the killer, who is the killed? How can any one kill or live without His express will?” The crowd dispersed and he was safe. A few weeks later, the Lord came into the garden as an old man. The Sanyasi welcomed him and took him round the various plots, showing the various trees plants and creepers he had collected and grown. His talk was all about how he did this and how he did that. The old man turned to him and asked, “how is it that you take credit for all this, but, do not admit responsibility for killing the cow? You can’t divide honours like that, to your own advantage.”

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You must say, “Soham” “Sivoham”, not Papoham. Papoham is a sign of weakness. It means that you are sinful, born in sin and living in sin. There are no sinners in the world. They may deny God and declare, “There is no God”. But, even that statement first says “is” and then “no”. Nastika also contains the word asti, meaning “is”. There is no one who has not the spark of love in him, the current of love flowing through his heart. That love is the Divine in him. He cannot deny that love; the love is the guarantee of divinity. The only love that will not provoke anger and envy is the love of God.

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You must have a ladder that can reach the height you want to climb up to. The steps must lead you up to the top. Step by step, you must ascend. The Sastras, the Vedanta these are just the very first steps.

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The beyond must be achieved through the within. Prasanthi must be won from amidst the Ashanti. Have you not heard the sloka, Saanthaakaaram bhujagasayanam? Though He is reclining on a snake, He is calm and collected. The snake is Samsara, the poisonous master, He is calm and undismayed. Be the master of the sensory world, don't allow it to master you and you too can be Shantakaram.

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Prasanthi Nilayam News

- June 27th. Baba arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam.
- July 5th. A Party of Devotees arrived from the Nilgiris, to take the Blessings of Baba before leaving on pilgrimage to Shirdi, Kasi, Badri and other holy places.
- July 8th. Mrs Helda Charlton of Pasadena, California, U.S.A. now on a visit to India to practise spiritual Sadhana, arrived at the Nilayam for a few days' stay to receive the Blessings of Baba for success in her Search.
- July 11th. Lt. Col. Sadhu arrived at the Nilayam for the Darshan of Baba.

"When harm affects the Dharma which has been laid down, I incarnate as the Narakara, from the state of Nirakara, in order to revive it and protect it and save the Good from fear of danger" said Krishna. Now, this statement might cause some misgivings. You may ask: Will not common people; then, conclude that Dharma is something liable to decline and decay? Will they not condemn Dharma as not Nitya and Sathya?

Well. You will grasp the importance of the task of protecting Dharma only when you consider its origin and purpose. God created this Jagat on His own initiative and He ordained various codes for its upkeep and smooth running. There were correct rule of conduct for every being. These form the Dharma.

Dharma is derived from, the root, Dhr, meaning 'wear'; Dharma is that which is worn. Desa, the Deha of Lord, is protected by the Dharma it wears; it also gives it beauty and joy; it is the pitambara, the holy apparel of Bharat. It guards honour and dignity; protects it from chill and lends charm to life. Dharma preserves the honour of this land. As clothes maintain the dignity of the person who wears them, so, Dharma is the measure of the dignity of a people.

Not only this country, every single thing in the world, has its own special Dharma or uniqueness or duty to perform, and nature to manifest. Each has its distinctive Clothes! Dharma rules the group and the Individual. Take the five elements the components of Prapancha. Of these, water has movement and coldness as its Dharma; combustion and light are the Dharma of Fire. Each of the five has its unique Dharma. Humanity for man animality for animals these guard them from decline. How can fire be fire, if it has no power for combustion and light? It must manifest its Dharma to be itself. When it loses that, it becomes a lifeless bit of charcoal.

Similarly, man too has some natural characteristics that are his very life-breath. They are so called, Shaktis or abilities. They can be identified as 'men' only so long as these abilities are found in them. If they are lost, they are no longer men. To preserve and foster such qualities and abilities, certain modes of behaviour, lines of thought are laid down. Dharma will not decline if these Aacharas and vicharas are kept up. Dharma is not imported from somewhere outside you, nor can it be removed from you. It is your own genuine nature, your uniqueness. It is the thing which makes a man out of an animal. How to observe Dharma? By being 'yourself'. If a thing breaks loose and behaves as the whim dictates, then it is doing a-dharma.

This is Sahajadharma of man was overpowered in course of time; for, those who supported it, encouraged it and derived joy from it, declined. So, in common parlance, it was said to have been 'destroyed.' But, it is something that cannot be destroyed. It is only like the weeds and grass overpowering the crop that is planted and grown. So, the establishment of Dharma is only the weeding out of the field. Now in this Iron Age or Kaliyuga, Dharma has become a mere matter of words. Dharma is not just the magic word. This must be clearly understood. What has to be spoken is Truth; what has to be acted is Dharma.

"Sathyam Vada", "Dharmam Chara"—has been the clarion call of the Upanishads, the representatives of Indian culture. The essence of these glorious teachings has been forgotten today, it has been turned upside down, in fact. Dharmam vada, is the order of the day! This is the first step in the decline of Dharma which is the descent from deed to word, the belief that a thing is done when it is only uttered! This is A-dharma, in fact.

But, that which is not practised cannot possess strength. The crocodile's strength depends upon its being in water; the strength of Dharma depends upon its being practised. It becomes weak, when it is taken out of "practice" and thrown on the sands of words. Sathya is a matter of speech, it gets strength when it is practised in speech; it is difficult to practise it in action "Strength" has two meanings here: Animal strength and Dharmic strength. Bhima had just animal strength, but, he had Dharma by his side, in the person of his elder brother, Dharmaja. So long as Dharmaja was by his side, Bhima's strength became Dharmic, and ceased to be mere animal strength. The Pandavas were saved by their adherence to Dharmic Strength! But for that, they would have suffered defeat even in the very beginning. The Pandavas, without Dharmaja, whatever the force of their other resources would have been an easy match for their opponents remember. Just ponder over that. How were the Kauravas destroyed, in spite of their vastly superior resources? They did not have the Dharmic strength. All that they could rely on was sheer animal strength. The day when Dharmaja and Bhima. Those who had Dharmic strength, moved into the forest, A-dharma Penetrated into the land of the Kauravas.

So, Dharma that has been exiled into the forest has to be restored to the villages and towns, in order to establish plenty prosperity and peace to the world. From the reign of A-dharma, the world has to enter the era of the rule of Dharma. Special effort is called for, when you cultivate a crop; no effort is necessary, when weeds and wild grass are grown. Now, the valuable crop of Sahajadharma has to be cultivated, with all care and attention. When Dharma is practised more and more, A-dharma will decline by itself. No special exertion is needed for putting it out of action. Therefore, Dharmasthapana means in this present context, the growth of the practice of Dharma.

What does it mean when people say, "The sun has set"? Only, "It is not visible for us." So too simply because Dharma is not evident, you cannot say it has gone out of existence. How can it go out of existence? If it goes, it cannot be Truth or Dharma. Dharma since it is associated with Truth is indestructible. To make the Dharma that has become hidden resplendent and visible once again, that is real Dharmasthapana. What Krishna is doing now is exactly that.

Using Arjuna as an instrument, He is bringing to light the codes of conduct and modes of thought which are laid down as Dharma from the very beginning and once again enforcing their practice. This is referred to as Dharmodddharana. He is reviving something that is completely lost. This is not work that can be carried out by ordinary men. So, the Universal Basis, the Universal Lord has Himself to assume the Task. He alone is Sarvasaktha. He is teaching the world, through Arjuna.

If Arjuna was an individual like others, he could not be the recipient and transmitter of this great teaching. So, you must infer that Arjuna was really a great man. He is a hero who has defeated not merely the outer foes, but even the inner ones. Weak hearts cannot grasp the Gita, and put it

into practice. It is with full knowledge and purpose that Krishna selected Arjuna as the medium and showered on him His grace.

Once, while Krishna was conversing intimately with Arjuna, He made this statement: (Note the overpowering Grace that Krishna showed!) “Arjuna You are My closest Bhakta; not merely that, you are My dearest Friend. I have no friend so dear as you are. That is the reason why I taught you this supreme, secret Teaching.”

Reflect on the inner meaning of this. Many in the world are only self-styled Bhaktas. The Lord has not accepted them as such. To get the title from the Lord is great good fortune and that is the highest certificate. The Bhakta must melt the heart of the Lord and get from Him the acknowledgement of Bhakti. If the title is taken by oneself, it gives paltry satisfaction, not genuine joy—alpatripti, not Atmatripti. Arjuna was the only person who got the Title from the Lord Himself. So, you can understand how pure hearted, how deserving was Arjuna. You might say a hundred things about yourself; you might advance this claim and that; but, you must show the acknowledgement from the Lord. Without that, all your talk is empty boast; Bhakti must be proved by implicit obedience. But, that alone is not sufficient. That is why Krishna uses the word, Mitra, (Friend) also. The friend has no fear; that makes him a more perfect recipient.

Now, we shall resume the trend, and go back to the Gita. When Arjuna listened to Krishna's words, he developed a head-load of doubts. He became agitated thereby; not only he, but, all men nowadays, are worried by doubts. Moreover, in the rather complex spiritual field and the field of knowledge concerning Godhead, there are two interpretations possible: the outer meaning and the inner. Ordinary men accept the outer and those who have some experience of the Lord, seek to know the Inner. Without these the confusion will be greater.

As the saying goes. "like the mole in the eye the stone in the shoe, the thorn in the foot, the faction in the home", is this doubt in the brain. When such doubts assail Arjuna, who is the representative Man, it means they are Humanity's own doubts. They can be solved only by Madhava, who is beyond and above Humanity. That is why Krishna is ready by the side to remove the doubt and plant joy in the heart.

Now, what exactly is the doubt? Krishna was born quite recently at the end of the Dwapara-yuga; Surya and Manu are persons of the past. How then could these too meet Krishna? It can't be physical relationship, for many generations separate Krishna from the other two. Krishna is Arjuna's contemporary. How did Krishna teach this Yoga to Surya? To sit quiet listening to unbelievable stories is itself a sign of poverty of intellect. Every moment, Arjuna's uneasiness increased. This was observed by Krishna who is everywhere and in everything. He said, “What is the cause of the uneasiness that I notice in you? Tell Me” and prodded him with a smile.

Arjuna was glad that he got a chance. “Madhava! I do not at all understand your words. They confuse me so much that I am losing a little of the faith that I have in you. But, I pray, excuse me for asking, please solve my doubts. I cannot stand it any more.” Thus Arjuna pleaded with folded hands.

Gopala was glad and He asked him what the doubt was. Arjuna then said, “You said that this Yoga was taught to Surya and to Manu; of what distant past are these two? And to which age do you belong? Did you teach them, while in this body? That is unbelievable. For, this body is only four or five years older than mine. You are not more aged than that. When did you teach them, without my being aware of it? And, the Sun! He is greater than you many times greater. He is there from the very beginning, from a past which is beyond our imagination. I cannot believe it, no, not even the most intelligent person will accept it. Let it be! You may say, “This is not the body, this is not the Yuga; it was while I was in another Body and during another Yuga.” That makes it sound more strange. For, how can any one remember what happened in any previous birth? If you say that it is possible to have the memory, then it must apply to me also, is it not? The Sastras declare that only a few Divine beings keep such things in memory, that ordinary mortals cannot hold them in remembrance. Well; I may accept that you are Divine. But I have also to accept that Surya, the Sun is also Divine. How can two persons equal in Divine Status teach and learn from each other? When you teach and he learns, he becomes your disciple, is it not? You must then be taken to be superior to Surya. Let us take it to be so. I accept that you are the Lord, God Himself. That creates further difficulties for me. For, why should God be Himself bound by birth and death and activity? When you assume the five foot human form, is it not a limitation on the Limitless? From that infinite limitless Universal why should God incarnate as the limited particular? Howsoever I argue within myself, I cannot solve this doubt. Your words are appropriate for you only: they do not convey any meaning to me. My head is confused; give me some guidance, some convincing reply” prayed Arjuna

Krishna laughed within Himself, recognising that the appropriate moment has come. He said, “Arjuna! What exactly do people mean when they say, the Sun has risen and the Sun has set? It is so far as their vision is concerned; that is all, is it not? The Sun does not rise, it does not set. I am also like that not born, nor do I die. Men of ordinary intellect consider that I am born many times and that I do many deeds during each birth. Whenever there is the need for the uplift of the World, I become manifest assuming a name and a Form, that is all; so, I am conscious of all My Appearances, all my manifestations. I am almighty I am Sarvajna. Not only I even you know everything. But your jnanashakti is overwhelmed by ajnana. I am jnana itself and so, I know everything. When the sun is seen in a mirror, he does not loose either his status or his glory. He is unaffected; his glory is undiminished. So also I am reflected in Prakriti; and, that does not diminish any of My glory or status. I remain as Almighty and Sarvajna as ever. I am unborn, immortal. Humans are born as a result of the merit and demerit of previous births. I do not know whether you think that this holds true for avatars also. No No. Yours is karmajanma; Mine is Leelajanma. Prayers and good persons are the cause of My janma. Not only that; the misdeeds of the wicked are also the cause!

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Ishta Devata

The infinite variety of the universe is only an indication of the Supreme Being's numberless manifestations. We cannot pin God down to a fixed form. That is why He is called Nirakara, a

Being without Form. Each person, therefore, conceives of The Supreme in a uniquely personal way. It does not mean that there is a multiplicity of gods. Ekam sat; vipra bahudha vadanti. In the Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna that in whatever form men worship Him, He always responds to the worship. The particular form of the Supreme which appeals to an individual is his ishtadevata. The worshipper clings to that form and no other form will appeal to him. To Hanuman, Rama was the only God. Even when Rama was referred to by his numerous other names, Hanuman refused to recognize these names. Rama was the centre of his being, his sole refuge and his only God. This wholehearted devotion to that one particular form constitutes the essence of bhakti; hence Hanuman is regarded as the ideal Bhakta.

BABA

Prasnottara Vahini

7

- Q. What is the meaning of Eershya?
- A. The desire that others should get the grief, the misery and the worry, which one is suffering from.
- Q. So, it is different from Asuya?
- A. Yes. Asuya means thinking always of doing evil to others; the preparedness to put up with any trouble in order to satisfy this desire to harm others. All these are called Inner Foes. So long as man is caught in this net of delusion spread by these Foes, the yearning for liberation will not dawn in his mind.
- Q. How then can this delusion disappear?
- A. Why, Viveka and Vijnana will make it disappear.
- Q. For the Jivi reflected in the Buddhi and the Kootastha...have they any superimposition, one upon the other?
- A. Though there may be no superimposition for all appearances, the superimposition exists.
- Q. How is that?
- A. The Kootastha is unattached, unmoved, unaffected, and ever free. Still due to the superimposition, it appears differently. This is the result of their co-existence.
- Q. Some elders say that "Tatt and Twam" are the same, identical; how is that? What is its meaning? Please enlighten me.
- A. Take the pot, the house and a picture. They are distinct, is it not? They are not identical. But the Akasa that is in all of these is the same. When the Upadhi or Condition or Limitation is removed, the Akasa in the pot (ghata), house (mata) and picture (pita) all merge with the Akasa that is unconditioned, unlimited. Light too is like this. The light inside and the light outside merge.
- Q. Well, Swami. You have said that the human being in this body composed of the five elements has to realise the Atma encased in the Panchakosa. What is Panchakosa, exactly?
- A. Kosa means a sheath, in case, a cover. A sword is put into a scabbard. Money is kept in a treasury or kosa. You must realise that the thing kept in this five-fold case, is the real 'I'. To see one's own truth one has to remove the five cases, the Panchakosa.
- Q. Which are these five, Swami?

- A. They are called the Annamaya, the Pranamaya, the Manomaya, the Vijnanamaya and the Anandamaya kosas.
- Q. What does Annamaya mean?
- A. This body grew in the womb of the mother with the help of the Anna or Food taken by the mother. Besides, even after birth, it has grown and is being sustained by food alone. After death, it becomes part of the Earth which produces Food. So, it is called Annamaya.
- Q. Of what importance is this Annamaya kosa?
- A. It is the sthula deha, the gross body, which suffers grief and exults in joy.
- Q. Is that the only name it has? Or has it any other name?
- A. It has. It is called “Bhogaayathanam”.
- Q. The Pranamaya kosa; what does that mean?
- A. The sphere of the five senses, the five Pranas; they form this cover.
- Q. Swami! It seems there are not only Pranas; there are Upa-pranas also?
- A. There are. They are called: Naga, Kurma, Gridhra, Devadatta and Dhananjaya.
- Q. What is the action of each of these?
- A. Naga causes belching; Kurma causes blinking of the eyelids; Gridhra is responsible for sneezing; Devadatta causes the yawn; Dhananjaya fills the body and causes it to grow fat. Even after death, these affect the body and cause changes in the corpse.
- Q. What does Manomaya kosa mean?
- A. The sphere of the five Jnanendriyas, plus the mind, of which they have become the instruments. It is inside the Pranamaya kosa.
- Q. You say often mind, mind; please explain what that mind is.
- A. That which makes you feel you are the body and feel all things related to the body as “Mine”; that which runs out through the senses to the objects, in order to experience the pleasure there from. It is thus rendered very unsteady; always flitting from one object to another.

(To be continued)
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

I'm Going Out, To See God

I am going out to see God, my Lord,
At Prasanthi Nilayam, the Holy Sod;
I'm going out to see my only Father
Who is more than a hundred Mother.

I'm going out to see my wealth
At Prasanthi Nilayam, the Holy Earth;
I'm going out to see my Place of Bliss
Where I can my Lord's Feet gladly kiss.

I'm going to see the Heaven on Earth
Where all is joy, peace and mirth;
I'm going out to see the Love of my Heart

At Prasanthi Nilayam, my soul's resort.

Gitacharya

Baba, Thou art Gitacharya;
Baba, Thou art the Lokacharya
Baba, we get all our rare lessons
From Thee—and, they are Truth's Essence.

Baba, let men realise themselves
As the essence of Divinity and ourselves
Feel we as different from Thee in essence,
And so all our troubles start from that sense.

As part of Thee, O Baba, let us boldly declare
Our Divinity and joyfully ever share
Thy glory and fortune, in perfect equality...
This is the truth in the Gitacharya's quality.

K. Vaidyanathan

A man being dragged to court by the police pleaded with friends to come to his rescue but one refused to move out of his house, another offered to accompany only up to the court-hall but a third promised to be with him through thick and thin. When man dies, his wealth refuses to move out of his house, his relatives go up to the cremation ground but the reputation he has earned goes with him even beyond that.

BABA

TAK.... TAK.... TAK

"Aaspathreelu, doctorlu, mandulu... emi akkara ledu" Hospitals, doctors medicines... no need for any of them. "Oka naadu, nenu, tak tak tak! anni sar Chesthanu." One day, tak, tak, tak. Like that, I shall set right everything,"

Baba told me thus, snapping his fingers to produce the sound, tak... tak... tak, when He spoke. I was overwhelmed with joy and thankfulness; for, just imagine what He was promising to set right. My wife was suffering since three years from acute osteomalacia, with pathological fractures of the pelvic bones. The doctors were sure about that; many experts had examined the patient with great care. They had told me that prolonged stay in bed and persistent treatment might be able to give some relief. They told me it was due to the absorption of the osseous substance of the bones, which causes, as in my wife's case, softening and rarefaction, followed by spontaneous fracture. She was emaciated and exhausted, the pelvic bones were affected much,

becoming triradiated and weak. The spine was paining badly and the doctors said, she will be bed-ridden for years and her limbs will become shortened and useless. Opiates and drugs to dull the pain were the only medicines that could be given, besides various costly experimental palliatives.

What a terrible life for a poor middle class family with five children and the breadwinner holding a Government job, requiring frequent long journeys! I was hit very hard by this calamity. No one held out the slightest hope. Baba was my only refuge, some good friend said. I came to Puttaparthi. I was called in by Baba and this was what He said! Now, you know why was so full of joy and thankfulness.

Well; I returned home to Besagarahalli, in Mandya District. Three months passed and there was no improvement in her physical condition; in fact, she became worse; my faith in Baba began wavering. My home was a cell of pain and grief. Without regular food and sleep, racked by pain and worry, my wife became a shadow of her former self. Baba's words were her only solace. She and I held on to them, in spite of all the whisperings of despair.

I awoke one morning rather early, because I had to leave for a distant village on Government work. I was surprised to find a lamp burning in the kitchen. When I asked, "Who is there?" it was my wife who replied. Yes; she had lit the fire and... would you believe it? She was preparing coffee for me!!

She said, she had a dream; or, was it a dream? Baba had come to her bedside and ordered her to get up, come down from the cot and do Namaskaram to Him! And, she had obeyed! While she was at His Feet, Baba with many a consoling word, patted gently on the diseased joints... she could hear the sound the bones made inside her... Tak, Tak, Tak! She had become quite right. "Anni sari chesthanu", He had said. He had kept His Word! When she looked up, after a while, with tears of gratitude in her eyes, the Lord had disappeared. To the great amazement of all of us, and the doctors who had shaken their heads whenever her recovery was mentioned, she has started from that very day her daily routine of work, as if nothing at all had happened to her.

The bone specialist who had studied the X-ray photographs of my wife was informed of this miraculous overnight cure. He declared, "During my five years stay abroad, I could not see a single case of osteomalacia cured, among the several which I treated. It is beyond the ken of a human physician. God has blessed you!" Nothing is impossible for Baba. What He says happens.

N. S. Raghavan

Guru Pournami

Thousands of devotees from all parts of India assembled at the Prasanthi Nilayam for the Guru Pournami, on 24th July last. Baba conferred upon every one the fortune of a Pada-namaskaram and gave each one Vibhuti with His Hand, at 7 A. M. Bhajan was held at 11 A.M. In the evening, there was a gathering of Bhaktas which was addressed by Sri. H. Sunder Rao, Retired Principal,

M. G. M. College, Udipi. Sri. V. Ramachandra Rao, Editor, Pradeepa, Dharwar and Lellapalli Venkatarama Sastry of Tenali. Afterwards Baba gave a most illuminating discourse.

Sri. Sunder Rao speaking in English described how the conflict between good and evil has today assumed infinitely more complex forms than at the time of the Mahabharata War and, so, to help the forces of Dharma to win, the Avatar has come again, in the Form of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sri. Ramachandra Rao, speaking in Kannada, asked every one to open the doors of his mind so that the Grace of Baba, waiting like sunlight outside, might enter and illuminate. Brahmasri Venkatarama Sastry spoke in Telugu on Bhakti and its various forms.

Baba began His Discourse with an impromptu Telugu poem. "You may have high lineage; vast wealth; deep scholarship; but, these will not help you to know even a fraction of My Tattwa." He said that just as the Full Moon is cool, refreshing and illumining the world so, the mind of man has to become sweet cool and refreshing and equally beneficent to all. Vyasa was the First Teacher and the Master Teacher, for all classes of men, Dwijas, the Common Man, the Ascetics, householders, philosophers... in fact, all the various types and temperaments of man. He wrote the 18 Puranas; these contain the drug which will cure the dread disease of worldly grief, and also prescribe the restrictions one has to observe to maintain the cure: Ashtaadasa Puraaneshu Vyasasya Vachanadwayam: (In the 18 puranas, what Vyasa has said can be summarised in two statements) Paropakarah punyaya paapaaya para peedanam (Service of others, doing good to them is merit and injuring them and doing harm to them, is demerit.) Paropakaram is the drug; avoiding parapeedanam is the restriction. With a mind purified by this attitude, if the aspirant calls upon the Lord longingly and lovingly, He cannot remain deaf; He must answer the call. Though the Kaliyuga is first and foremost, the Kalahayuga, still, it has this one great facility. Namasankirtan does bring you nearer to God now. Man is a mixture of the Manava Danava and the Daiva natures. By Daya he sublimates the Danava nature and becomes a Manava; by Dharma he must elevate himself into a Daiva personality and when he is established in Damam or Self-control as a Daiva, he rises to the position of Madhavatwa itself.

To develop Daya Dharma and Damam, Smarana is the only means. The Smarana must be continuous it must be unsullied by any motive, unaffected by the ups and downs of life. When this stage is reached, man is ever in bliss.

Being Guru Pournima Day, I am reminded of a lady at Shirdi, an old devotee called Radhabai Deshmukh, who was worshipping Me in My previous Sariram. She wanted initiation into a Mantra and fasted for three full days, in order to persuade Me to do it. Syam came running and announced she was very exhausted. She was brought to Dwarakamayi. Baba asked her what she wanted and wanted her to explain what she meant by Guru. She repeated the sloka, "Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheshwarah, Gurusaakshaath Parabrahma Thasmai Sree Gurave Namah". Then, Baba asked her, "If the Guru is all that, what other Mantra do you expect him to give? Why should he give you the name of any other Form of God? Then he told her," This is the Guru-sthanam as well as Devasthanam for you. My Name is enough for you. Go." Some people may ask: "If we are immersed in Namasmarana, what is to happen to our lives and to those who are dependent on us?" But I tell them, "They are not dependent on you; when you depend on the Lord, they too are His responsibility. Why should you carry your luggage on your head, once you have boarded the train? Sit down in comfort. The train will take you, along with

the luggage." If you get immersed in Namasmarana, the Lord will provide not Annam, but Amritam.

You too have secured the Presence not merely of the Guru but of God. You are in Bhagavat-sannidhyam, not just Sat-sangam. How lucky you are! Make the best use of this golden chance."

Sathya Sai Phone

Inaugurating the Public Telephone Call Office at the Prasanthi Nilayam sub Post Office and the Extension of the Phone to the Nilayam itself, Baba said: "I do not need this instrument to listen to the prayers and the cry of anguished hearts. The devotees who are here and who come here requested the Department for this convenience and they had provided it. The officers of the Department have not taken this to be an official assignment only; they did their work with Bhakti and Shraddha, and so, through Sri Balasubrahmanyam, the Division Engineer Sri M L Rao and others had to meet unexpected difficulties on account of the recent heavy rainstorms which damaged existing lines and delayed the execution of new works, it is indeed an achievement, which Balasubrahmanyam attributes to Swami's Blessings, that every thing was finished spick and span, in time, and contact with Sri. Kanjilal, the P & T Board Member now at New Delhi was established exactly when I came and sat on the Simhasana! I wanted it to be done, so that I could inaugurate the Service, by talking to that steadfast devotee in the Capital of India, from the Prayer Hall itself. The engineers were greatly worried and had given up hope of setting this up in time. They tried all possible routes to New Delhi; the depression in the Bay and the dislocation it caused acted as a big handicap. But now, the Engineers are happy.

Devotees will not to be satisfied by mere Sambhashan with Baba; they would pine for Darshan and Sparshan also. But, even Sambhashan with Me by this means is a piece of good luck, certainly. When Nara calls out to Narayana from the depths of his heart, and when hearting that call, Narayana lifts the phone and listens, it is indeed very good luck. But, this material phone is not needed for that spiritual call.

So far as My phone is concerned the wire of Bhakti should be firm and straight; the storm of sense cravings and the floods of Kama and Krodha should not be allowed to topple down posts or fell trees across them; one must check the line often to see whether there are any obstructions that prevent prayers from being heard by the Lord.

Listening is an important Sadhana in the spiritual field. Listening to the stories of the Glory of the Lord is as good as listening to the word of God Himself. These was once a celebrated robber who taught his son the secrets of his profession, in order that he may emulate his exploits, and even throw them into the shade. He gave him good training in the theory and practice of robbery. One piece of advice that he gave a warning in fact, was, 'never go near a place where the Bhagavata is being read or expounded.' The son too kept strictly to the advice given and respected the warning. One night, however, while proceeding to the house he had selected, he espied the police and so had to through a side alley. There, a few glass pieces cut into the soles of his feet and he sat down leaning on a wall to pull them off. From inside the house, he could hear

some one reading the Bhagavatham aloud! During he few minutes he had to sit there, he could hear only a little but that little told him that God did not have eyes, ears, limbs etc.

A few months later, the police entered their village; one among them had dressed himself up as Goddess Kali and the others pretended to be Her attendants; the Goddess yelled and commanded all the thieves to surrender the propertied they had stolen. Many were deceived into believing the Kali as genuine and they placed the articles they had stolen, at Her Feet. But, the robber's son who had listened to a bit of Bhagavatham caught the Kali by the hand and dragged him into his house. He said, "You cannot be God; for, God has no eyes ears or limbs; I have learnt if from Bhagavatham itself." The police were thus foiled.

This incident set the robber's son thinking ... the wee bit of Bhagavatham I heard on the sly could save me from Police, the entire Bhagavatham will certainly save me form all anxiety and fear. So, he started the study of the Bhagavatham and he was saved by thereby.

Shravanam has that much of influence and power. So, be careful to use only sweet words, sincere words, few words. That itself is fruitful Sadhana. Among the Bhaktas, there are four kinds: the Aarthas, who desire Sukha and Santosha. Of course, it is not wrong to desire these. It is better to approach God for these than other men, who are as much dependent on God as you yourself! The artharthis are also in the same predicament and it is good they pray to God rather than man for wealth and comfort. The other two, the Jijnasus and the Jnanis are aware of the value of Sadhana as such for Liberation, whoever among these call, I shall answer. That is My Dharma, My Sathyam.

[From Baba's Discourse on 29-7-64]

(The Public Call office at the Prasanthi Nilayam Sub Post Office is now in active service; persons can avail themselves of this convenience. Book Trunk Call to Penukonda 30... Penukonda (Anantapur Dist) – 30 to get the P C O quickly (Editor)

The Great Bhakta

"When the Mahabharata War was on, Dharmaraja the eldest of the Pandavas, was in the habit of going to Krishna's tent every morning to receive His Blessings for the day's activities. One day, he was surprised to find Krishna immersed in Dhyanam! He waited long to get the coveted Namaskaram, and when he rose up, he asked Krishna who or what was the fixing His Mind on Bhishma who was lying on the battle field on a bed of arrows!" This incident was revealed by Baba, during His Discourse on the occasion of the last Guru Pournima.

Baba has often pointed out that Bhishma's Pitrubhakti is even grander than Rama's for, Bhishma voluntarily accepted a far greater sacrifice, a life-long sacrifice, affecting even the life beyond death, to satisfy a craving of his father, which was not after all as worthy as the vows which Dasaratha had made to Kaikeyi.

Bhishma's Krishna Bhakti is unparalleled. When during the Rajasuya Yaga, Krishna was offered Agrapuja by the Pandavas, Sisupala objected and started pouring abuse without end on Krishna. Dharmaraja asked Bhishma to describe the Divinity of Krishna to the assembly, as expiation for listening to his insane ravings. Bhishma explained that Krishna was the Mahashakti that pervades the whole Universe come in Human Form. He has to be offered Agrapuja, because He is the Goal of all Yagas. He is Yajnapurusha Himself! (Readers will remember Baba's Announcement during the Vedapurusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna that He is not the Person who performs the Yajna, but He is the Person who accepts the Yajna!)

Later, after the 12 year period of exile and the one year of enforced residence unknown to the world, in the court of the Viraat King were over, the Pandavas claimed their half of the kingdom from the Kaurava cousins. Krishna acted as the ambassador of the Pandavas to the court of Duryodhana; there, the wicked Duryodhana attempted to bind Him to a pillar, in spite of the loud protests of Bhishma, who once again described in moving terms the Glory of Krishna.

When the war had to be waged at last, Bhishma was the first choice of Duryodhana to lead his forces into battle. Bhishma vowed to inflict such terrible loss that Krishna would be compelled to take up arms against him, in spite of his undertaking that he would not wield arms! His Bhakti was so strong that he desired to meet Krishna in battle too. And, to fulfill this prayer of His Bhakta, Krishna broke His Vow and actually jumped from His charioteer's seat with the Sudarsanachakra in His hand, to humble the strength of Bhishma.

On the 9th day of the battle, the Pandava Brothers approached Krishna and communicated to Him their anxiety about the result of the fight. Bhishma was undefeatable! Krishna suggested that they know from Bhishma how he could be defeated! Of course, Bhishma was Krishna bhakta and he was glad to play his part in the Dharmasthapana for which Krishna had come. So he revealed that if the eunuch Shikhandi was brought to fight with him, he will have to desist from the fight and that would be a good chance to overpower him! "I am an instrument in His Hands," he said.

On the tenth day, when Shikhandi was brought to the frontline of fight against Bhishma, he laid down his bow and received the arrows of Arjuna gladly on his chest. He got prepared a bed of arrows so that he may not fall on the ground. And there he lay, for Uttarayana day, with Krishna before his eyes, and installed in his heart. With the stotra of Krishna on his tongue, he left the world. To remember Krishna and Bhishma together on Krishna-janmashtami is itself an auspicious act.

Prasanthi Nilayam News

- July 24: Guru Pournima Baba's Discourse; Celebration of Guru Pournima at a number of places, all over India with Akhanda Bhajan and Special Puja, Discourses on Baba and His Grace.
- July 29: Inauguration of Telephone Service at Prasanthi Nilayam: Discourse by Baba. speeches by Sri T V Balasubrahmanyam, D L T Hyderabad and N Kasturi, M.A., B.L.

August 3: Baba left for Brindavan, Whitefield.

August 7: Baba left for Madras

August 13
to 19: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Meetings organised by the Madras Branch. Inauguration of the Session on the 13th August, by Hon'ble Sri M Bhaktavathsalam, Chief Minister, Madras. Baba's Divyopadesam, everyday. Discourses by Pundits.

Om Sri Sathya Sai Ram
DASARA CELEBRATIONS
Veda Purusha Sapthaha Yajna
Mahothsava
Prasanthi Nilayam
6-10-64 to 15-10-64

From Aswija I to X, (Dasami,) Dasara will be celebrated at the Prasanthi Nilayam, with the Special Features of the Veda Purusha Sapthaha Yajna and the Prasanthi Vidwath Sammelana. The Yajna will include the worship of Sri Rajarajeswari and the three aspects of Mahakali Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswathi, besides Swasthi, Pranavakirthana, Gopuja, Homa Ekadasarudrabhisheka, Vedaparayana, and the Reading of the Ramayana, Bhagavata and Devibhagavata. All are invited to attend these Functions and benefit by listening to the Message of Baba and the Discourses of the Scholars, and earn the Blessings of Baba, imbibing the discipline of the Nilayam and the spiritual atmosphere of the Place.

4-10-64

Eighth Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital. Hon'ble Sri Dr. Lakshminarasiah Garu, Minister for Panchayath Raj, Andhra Pradesh, presides.

5-10-64. 3 P.M. Annadanam

Every day from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M.: Spiritual Discourses from 8 P.M. Music and other items of Spiritual interest like Harikatha, Burrakatha, etc.

[Details of the Day's Programme will be announced at the Prasanthi Nilayam.]

Members of the Prasanthi Nilayam

Gita Vahini

8

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

"The Avatar Purushas have no merit or demerit accumulated in former births, for which like ordinary mortals, they have to suffer in this birth. Theirs is a Leela, a birth taken on, in short. The goodness of the good and the wickedness of the bad provide the reasons for the Avatar of the Lord. For example take the Avatar of Narasimha. The merit of Prahlada and the wickedness of Hiranyakasipu combined to cause it. As a result of the coming of the Lord, good will be happy and the bad will suffer. The Avatar, however, has no joy or grief, when it is enveloped in the body it has assumed. The Avatar is not constituted of the five elements; it is Chinmaya not Mrinmaya, spiritual not material; it can never be disturbed by egoism or the sense of "mine" and "thine"; it is untouched by the delusion born of ignorance. Though men may mistake an Avatar as just human that does not change the nature of the embodiment; It has come for a task and it is bound to accomplish it.

I shall tell you what that task is. It is protecting the Sadhus, punishing the wicked, and supporting Dharma. By Sadhus, I do not mean the monks and ascetics who are indicated generally by that

word. It means Sadhu-guna, goodness uprightness virtue, and these can be possessed by animals and even insects. Really speaking, the promotion of Satwa guna is the best means of fostering Sadhus. The Avatar is the embodiment of this sacred guna and so, It fosters it, wherever it is found; but, since Sanyasins are striving to earn it, they are supposed to be specially blessed by the attention of the Lord. But, they are not the only Sadhus. All those who follow Sadachara, who have Sad-seela, who adhere to Sathya, who yearn for the Sannidhi of Sarveswara, who observe Sad-Dharma, who consider Sarva-jana as Samaana... all of them are Sadhus! Such characteristics are found among the animals and birds even. In the Ramayana, Jatayu was saved, as a result of this guna that he had. That is the reason why the elephant was blessed, and the monkeys were given a chance to serve and be blessed with His Grace. The same reason prompted the Lord to bless the squirrel. A Sadhu is not made by a string of beads an ochre robe, and a stick in the hand. The clothes one wears and the language one has on the tongue do not decide who is a Sadhu and who is not; it is the Guna that settles it. All animals have the potentiality to be good; so, fostering goodness in all, is the best means of ensuring the welfare of the World. Next, the punishment of the wicked. Those who transgress the limits set for each type or genus of animals, those who indulge in A-krama, A-nyaya and An-achara, and who roam about caught in the coils of Aham-kara have to be punished; those who have allowed Rajoguna and Tamoguna to predominate and Satwa guna to be extinguished in them and who have thus lost all trace of Daya, Dharma and Danam have to be punished.

Thirdly, Krishna informed Arjuna, the fostering of Dharma is also His work. The word Sadhu has another meaning, important in this context. A Sadhu is he who does not deviate from his duty, whatever the temptation and whatever the danger. The wicked revel in creating trouble for such men and indulging in acts contrary to the injunctions of the Sastras. What then is the establishment of Dharma? It is acting strictly according to the Dharma laid down in the Sastras; spreading among people the glory and the splendour of a life lived in Dharma; stabilising reverence towards the Vedas and the Sastras, towards God, Avatars, and Paramapurushas and the Sadhana that leads to liberation and a blessedness beyond this life. It is called Dharma-samsthapana, Dharma- rakshana or Dharmoddharana. Whatever I do, it is all for this high purpose; there is nothing for My own advancement. Those who know this secret can escape birth and death,” said Krishna.

To feel that the Lord is away, afar, separate from you—that is called Paroksha jnana. To feel that the Lord who is immanent in the Universe is in you also as the Atman—that is A-paroksha jnana. If all activity is moved by the dedicatory spirit, the Chitta of man will be rendered pure. Only those who have pure consciousness can recognise the Divine Nature of the Lord's Janma and Karma, said Krishna. All cannot so recognise them as Divine. Yet, no one should avoid contact with the Lord come in human form. Try your best and utilise every chance. There should not be any lapse on your part.

This is emphasised in the tenth sloka of this Chapter, where the signs of the Adhikari, the deserving candidate, are given. “Arjuna! Not all can understand the Divyatwam of my Janma and Karma. Only those who are free from attachment hatred fear and anger, those who are immersed in the Name and Form of the Lord, who know of no other support than Me, who are sanctified by the knowledge of the Atman: only these can grasp it. Those who seek Me undeviatingly,

possessing Sathya Dharma and Prema, will reach Me. This is absolutely true, take it from Me. Give up any doubt you may have on this score."

"Men render the inner consciousness impure by ceaselessly dwelling on the objective world, through ignorance. They take delight in mere Shabda, Rasa, Rupa etc. When they dwell on objective pleasure they are tempted to secure the objects that give the pleasure; when they are foiled in the attempt, they get restless, hateful and afraid. Fear robs man of all his mental resources. It creates anger that cannot be easily pacified. Thus, desire anger and fear are aroused one after the other and these three have to be removed so that the Lord may be attained. Arjuna, revolve in your mind these facts and then, act. Become reasonable. Have faith in My words."

Arjuna heard all this and asked, "Nandakumara! Why can You not make this sacred and high stage available for all persons? You have announced Yourself as Premaswarupa and Dayamaya. Why then all this partiality? I must declare it as favouritism, for you endow this stage only on Jnanis and deny it to the Ajnanis. I would even say that the Ajnani, the ignorant person who has no discrimination, the person who swings like the pendulum of the clock from one thing to another, merits your Grace more. The Jnani knows everything, he is aware that the Jagath is Vishnumayam; why then should it be made clear further to him? They have no more need of Grace or anything else."

Krishna replied, "Your query is very important no doubt. Men are usually overwhelmed by such doubt. You represent humanity and so, your doubt is humanity's doubt. By clearing your doubt, I can announce My Message to humanity. Listen. Those who seek Me are of four types. One is always worn out by ills that affect the body; he is the Aartha. Another is worried by the struggle for prosperity, power, self, property, posterity etc. He is the Artha-arthi. A third yearns for the realisation of the Atman, reads the scriptures and sacred texts, moves ever in the company of spiritual sadhakas, acts along the lines laid down by the sages as Sad-achara, and is always motivated by the eagerness to reach the sannidhi of the Lord. He is the Jijnasu. The fourth is the jnani. He is immersed in the Brahmatattvam.

The first, the Aartha, worships Me only when he is in difficulties and suffers from grief or pain. When he prays to Me, I hear it and I satisfy him only in relation to that particular difficulty, that particular grief or pain. So too, when the Artha-arthi prays for riches or position or power or high status, I listen and award him only the particular thing he craves for. The Jijnasu is blessed with chances to do Nishkama-karma, with a proper Guru as guide, with an intellect that is sharp enough to discriminate between Atma and Anatma, and thus helped on to achieve the Goal. I bless him so that he is saved from distractions and helped to concentrate on the single aim of Liberation. I am like the Kalpavriksha, mind you. My task is to give each what he asks for. I have no prejudices, and no favouritism. Not even the shadow of cruelty can touch Me. No fault can be imputed to Me. The rays of the sun fall equally upon all that are directly in front; but, if something is behind something else, inside a closed room for instance, how can He illumine? Cultivate the higher yearnings and you receive the higher stages. The fault lies in the aspirant and his aspirations, not, in the attitude of the Lord. Arjuna! Man gives up revering and seeking Me, who is his very Self. He is not anxious to reach Me; on the other hand, he pursues lesser attainments, that are temporary, untrue, transitory. I shall tell you the reason for this strange and stupid behaviour. Karmopasana gives quick results; man seeks only what is available here and

now, in a concrete form, capable of being grasped by his senses. Man, generally, finds Reality too difficult to attain; so he is carried away by the attraction of flimsy pleasures, away from the eternal full joy derivable by transcending the senses.

The achievement of Jnana is the inner victory; it is won after long and arduous struggle. Men do not generally have the patience needed; moreover, they attach much greater importance to the gross body, the Sthula Sarira itself. The body can be happy only with objects that cater to the senses and so, men do not even for a moment seek Jnana, which will send them to other paths where the senses are unwanted. They yearn for Karmasiddhi, not Jnanasiddhi. Those who are caught by urges of the intellect are fewer than those who are caught by the senses and their urges. The sensual minded are drawn by the obvious, the patent the perceptible and the physical. The few who are spiritually minded yearn for the imperceptible invisible Bliss of merging with the Universal Absolute. Theirs is the correct path. Karmopasana is the incorrect path. My task is to make clear to all the value of Dharma—karmas which have to be adopted after due discrimination and their adoption and practice, within proper limits.

“But, Arjuna, there is a method of reviving Dharma, the task for which I have come. That is Chatur-varnyam, the organisation of the Four Varnas based on the Karma and the Guna of the People. The Varna system is essential for the functioning of the Created universe. Its significance is not easy to grasp. Some mislead themselves into the belief that it causes unrest and divides men from one another. If the problem is reasoned out, then, the real truth will become clear. To conclude that the Varna system is not beneficial shows only ignorance of the subject. Unreasoned judgement creates confusion. I have established this organisation in order to promote the welfare of the world, i.e., Lokakshema. The Varnas help man to engage himself in acts that he finds congenial and to fulfill himself. Without it, man cannot earn happiness for a moment. For man's activity, Varna is the very breath. Those endowed with the Satwa guna, who have understood the Brahmatattvam, who foster spiritual moral and progressive living among men, who help others to earn the Bliss of visualising the Reality of their Nature, are the Brahmins. Those who stand by and guard the sound political system, law and justice, as well as the welfare and prosperity of the country, and the moral order followed by the people, and who keep under control the wicked and the immoral, and come to the rescue of the weak and the distressed—these are the Kshatriyas. Those who store and supply within proper limits to the people at large the wherewithal for happy physical living are Vaisyas. Those who lay the foundation for human welfare by service activities, and who provide the strength and sinews for the above three Varnas are Sutras. I have laid down these Four Varnas in this manner. If these Varnas carry out their assigned duties, humanity will attain all-round progress. As a result of this system a division of labour is brought about; the individual leads a happy harmonious social life, without any grief or fear. This Varna system is an example of the Grace that the Lord has bestowed on Bharat.

The people of Bharat are indeed blessed, since they look upon every act as but the execution of His Order and as leading to His Grace. This point has to be reflected upon for some time. It is an important issue. The Divine Command is now in great danger of being set at naught. If the rulers change the face of this Varna system, the world will not have the welfare they strive for. Many people argue and teach that Bharat came to this sorry condition, only because of this Varna system. They consider this as correct; but, these intelligent folk have to sit quiet for some little

time and ponder over the question: Has the country survived with at least this much of happiness as a result of this system? Or, has it come to this sorry condition because the system has weakened? Then on the basis of their deliberate conclusion, they can advise the discarding of the Varnas. In that case, all have to agree with them. When people find fault with the Varna organisation, without such inquiry and impartial investigation, it is something that cannot be tolerated.

Of course, it is a fact that the system has left the proper path and taken to moving in wrong directions; this has been noted by many great men. But, that cannot be sufficient reason to throw it overboard. For the reason that the leg is doing the work of the hand, and that the head is performing the function of the feet, it is not advisable to cut off hands and feet. Attempts have to be made to set things right rather than destroying the very system itself.

The Varna system is not the cause of all this confusion and unrest. The fault lies more in the haphazard manner in which it was fostered and developed. It became a plaything in the hands of all types of people; so, it lost its original symmetry and harmony. This system is essential, not merely for Bharat, but, even for the whole world. In countries, outside India, this system is not absent. The name may be different there, that is all; the working is the same. There also there are four classes—the Shikshak Varga, the Rakshaka Varga, the Vanigvarga and the Sramika Varga. But, in Bharat, the Varnas are decided by birth; in other parts of the world, they are decided by Karma, the work each is engaged in. That is the distinction between them and these people.

Now, among the Brahmins who have been honoured by being established in the very first cadre, many can be found who have left off the sacred path and strayed into mean ways. So too, in the fourth Varna, the Sudras, many can be found who are moved by holy ideals, high spiritual aspirations, and who are striving to attain purity of mind as a means of realisation. Just because these things are possible it is not proper to conclude that the Varna organisation of human society is useless.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

A Day At Prasanthi Nilayam

Prasanthi Nilayam at Puttaparthi is the vital centre of Baba's spiritual mission. It is His headquarters, the place sanctified by His presence during a large part of the year. He has recently established another centre for the work, at Whitefield (near Bangalore) and named it Brindavan. But those who seek His Grace guidance or constant darshan are mostly asked to come to Puttaparthi which as He has often remarked, will soon become another Tirupati or Mathura, a spiritual Lighthouse for humanity. Puttaparthi itself is a small village, typical of the Rayalaseema countryside, unimpressive and rather backward in many respects. But the valley in which the village is situated, is one of the loveliest in the neighbourhood, surrounded by hills, green, purple, blue and grey, while the river Chitravati skirts the village on the eastern side. The scenery is enchanting with green fields of maize, rice and sugarcane, and the serried range, of rugged hills gives one an irresistible sense of timelessness.

Prasanthi Nilayam is the name given to Baba's home, situated on fairly extensive grounds. It is a beautiful two-storeyed building, and on the ground—floor is the magnificent Prayer-Hall. Many devotees have spoken of an almost overpowering sense of peace that has filled them when they were in the Hall. On the walls are hung pictures of Baba, of His previous manifestation as the Baba of Shirdi and of many other saints and sources of enlightenment. On the platform at one end are oil paintings of the two Babas, and in the centre, between the two pictures is a lovely figure of Lord Krishna playing on the Flute.

It is dawn, and cool and fresh is the air. A few stars twinkle in the grey sky and the pale crescent-moon glimmers like “a caste-mark on the brow of heaven.” The stillness of the dawn is broken by the ringing of the bells in the Hall. A few electric torches, like glowworms in a dark night, move towards the Hall. The Omkara, the Pranava, the perennial symbol of the spirit the essence of the Supreme, is chanted, many voices mingling in a solemn incantation. The ancient scriptures regard the sacred syllable as the very breath of the Divine Being. “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God”. Sound or nada is Brahma. It indicates not only the first stirring of life, the primeval sound that preluded creation, but also the ever-flowing music or harmony of the Spirit which sustains the universe. How often has Baba spoken of the sacredness of the Omkara! As the strains of the Omkara fade away, like the soft fall of a symphony, we almost feel as if there is a renewal of freshness in the atmosphere. The Omkara fills one with peace and prepares us to face the stresses and worries of the day.

A few devotees sit in the Hall in deep meditation. It is the hour of silence and of peace when the mind in its “dewy freshness” is peculiarly responsive to the call of the Divine. As the sun rises and the twilight brightens into morning, we listen to the solemn strains of the Vedic mantras and stotras. The glory of the Lord, present in human form right in our midst, is chanted. The devotees sit in silence “breathless in adoration” as the Holy Name is chanted. The eye rests on the serene countenance of the beloved Saint of Shirdi whose silver figure is placed below the platform decorated with a fresh garland of white jasmines. And from the Shirdi Baba the eye travels to the magnificent pictures of the two Babas one with a face of infinite compassion and the other beaming with Grace, with His hand raised in a gesture of “abhaya” assuring His protection to everyone who calls on Him in love and humility.

It is eight in the morning. Streams of people converge on the Prayer Hall. It is the morning bhajan hour. Many stand outside the Hall, looking up eagerly for Baba's darshan, with folded hands, as He appears on the upper verandah, clad in his silken robe, His face lighted up by a faint smile or serene with compassion, and His protecting hand raised to bless. The Omkara starts again in the Hall. The bhajan starts, the mingled voices of men and women raised in praise of the Lord in His infinite manifestations as the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, as Rama, Krishna, Siva or Shakti, the Compassionate Mother of the universe.

For an hour the Prayer-Hall reverberates with these songs, hundreds clapping their hands in rhythm with eyes often filled with tears in an ecstasy of devotion, the only way, according to Baba, to realize the Supreme. The potency of the Divine Name, uttered with feeling, with the heart cleansed of all attachment is great; and Baba is never tired of impressing this on the minds of the devotees. During this hour, an hour of incommunicable joy, the mind and hearts of the devotees are engaged in the contemplation of the Great Power, “a power that makes for righteousness”, the Eternal Preserver of Dharma. The arati and the sacred benediction Santhih Santhih Santhihi, mark the close of bhajan. Devotees have darshan of Baba in the Prayer Hall for a few minutes or longer as He sits on the “throne” listening to the bhajans. And when He is present, everyone tries to do his or her best, for Baba Himself is a keen lover of music and is happy when everyone takes part in the bhajan. Often He Himself leads a song and his sweet, ringing voice resounds in the Hall with a peculiar power to inspire and uplift the gathering.

Who are these men and women sitting patiently, with eyes riveted on the door of the Interview Room? They are those who have travelled hundreds of miles to have not only darshan of Baba, but to speak to Him, seek His blessings and guidance in their troubles, anxieties and problems. They know that at Puttaparthi they can find the Peace that can soothe their troubled hearts and tortured minds. They have come from far and near, rich and poor, ignorant and sophisticated, practical men of business and simple village-folk, men and women with stricken minds and sick bodies. They seek Baba's healing touch, His never-failing benediction, His words of wisdom and love. Is He not the bhaktavatsala the friend of the bhaktas, the Eternal Protector and Guide who has assured mankind through the ages that He is always there when they call Him in their dire need? Paritranaya sadhunam... No voice raised in prayer is ever in vain. Those who have trusted in Baba have experienced the fullness of His divine abhaya. They know He never abandons them in their hour of peril.

In silence the crowd waits... watching, alert... Has Baba come down for the “interviews?” Yes, the whisper goes round. A few tense moments of expectation... and there He is! The door is ajar, and the beloved Face is glimpsed by the watching men and women. In a moment, the watchful eyes of the Bhagavan scan the crowd. With a characteristic gesture of His right hand, He beckons a group of devotees to the Korika room, ten, fifteen or twenty. They walk towards the sacred room, some in unconcealed awe... others in tense eagerness... They enter and the door is shut.

The “interview”... what else is it but an intimate communion with the Divine? If only people will understand—they have the rarest of all human privileges, of seeing Bhagavan face to face and conversing with Him! Baba pats them on the back... a word of comfort, of cheer... a smile of infinite charm at times, as He recognises an old devotee. He takes each person or a family group to the niche at the bottom of the stairs, as others stand in silence awaiting their turn. A few minutes, five ten or fifteen, even longer. When the seeker is in the Great Presence, all his noted armour of ego is stripped, the mind, heart and soul filled with Divine Grace. The soft, sweet

words that soothe, a gentle rebuke, a little joke and always the abundant outpouring of divine compassion, as He guides the faltering steps along the right path, or renews the devotee's faith in God, and in his own inner resources. Baba never wants His devotees to depend always on external props. We are the children of Eternity, in whom the spark of the Divine always resides. To fan this into a bright, beautiful flame is the ultimate aim of all spiritual Sadhana. Nothing is too trivial to Baba, from petty domestic bickerings to the up-hill path of Self-realisation, from granting a wish to bestowing self-knowledge. Infinite are the problems that vex the devotees. In His presence, all fear, doubt, misgiving, all evil seem to vanish. The anguished heart is fortified by hope, the corroding doubt is solved, the conflict and uncertainty cease. The healing touch restores, purifies, renews. It is a baptism of awareness for those who enter the Presence with devotion, love and trust.

The "interview" is over. The group stands relaxed, refreshed and restored... yet in hushed awe of the Great Miracle they have just witnessed. Did they ever dream of such an experience? Baba approaches. A simple wave of His right hand... and lo! Vibhuti appears on the divine palm. He gives some of it to a person to swallow, and always applies a little of it to the devotee's forehead. Sometimes, other things are "materialised" a photograph, a locket, a ring or a pendant, anything. Nothing is beyond His sankalpa. A gentle hint that the interview is over, for there are others waiting. The devotees, their eyes wet with deep emotion... some sobbing, but all overwhelmed by their unique experience prostrate at the divine feet and touch the silken-soft feet of the Lord... a mere touch of which is supreme benediction. The door opens. The group emerges from the room. Is it a rebirth or reawakening? The mediaeval Catholic saints spoke of a spiritual "rebirth" when the individual lost himself in God-awareness. To a few at least it is so, but to all it is an unforgettable experience, a theme for constant recapitulation and questioning. "He read my mind like a book" "Oh! How perturbed I was that He would know this!" "He can look into the future. He is Omniscient." He is also Omni-present and Omni-potent. "God is not a Being" said a saint, "He is an Atmosphere." No nook or corner of the universe is without Him. This is not a mere fancy or an unverified theory to Baba's devotees. Isavasyamidam Sarvam.

The interviews take place both in the morning and evening. Often they continue, when the crowd is large, during the bhajan sessions. How tireless is Baba in His compassion! The soft notes of the vina are heard in the Hall before the evening bhajan. People assemble in the Hall for quiet meditation. Soon it is time for the evening bhajan, and after the bhajan, for Baba's darshan as He appears on the balcony. Sometimes He comes down and speaks to a few who have come a long way, or walks with a few workers to the Dormitories where devotees reside or the Canteen or the Hospital, instructing, guiding, encouraging the workers. His visits to the hospital are always eagerly looked to by the patients. He speaks tenderly to them, gives detailed instructions to the doctor and the nurses, even prescribing the treatment. A touch of His hand is often enough to restore courage in a sick patient. Baba's favourite saying is, "Treat the Mind and the Soul and the Body will take care of itself." The Divine Healer knows what is the best for those who are ill both in body and mind.

The evening bhajan is over. Baba gives His usual darshan to hundreds of devotees standing below with folded hands and bowed heads. So the busy day ends with Baba finally retiring to His rooms. At 9 p.m, the lights are put out. Darkness deepens the silence of Prasanthi Nilayam; but watching ceaselessly over the place, over everyone in the compound, is Baba ever wakeful, ever alert, ever watchful, radiating His love over the silent grounds. Only the solitary Gurkha watchman is seen going on his nightly rounds. The hours of the night march steadily towards another dawn when the stillness is once again broken by the solemn accents of the Pranava in the Prayer Hall of Prasanthi Nilayam the abode of Peace.

H. SUNDER RAO

When a bus moves along the road, the cloud of dust it raises is behind it. If it stops, then, the cloud will envelop the bus itself. Similarly, when you move along the road of the four Purusharthas (Dharma-Artha Kama-moksha) the cloud of Prarabdha dust will be behind, it will not harm you though it will be following you always. It is only when you stop moving (along the prescribed path) that Prarabdha can overwhelm your career. And, if you keep on moving, a stage will be reached when the road is so good that there is no bother of dust at all.

BABA

Prasnottara Vahini

8

- Q. Swami! How is man to realise that he is separate from, beyond and above the Annamaya-kosa?
- A. The body is not evident before birth or after death. It is seen only during the intervening period of time. The body has a beginning and an end, growth and decay. Such things are 'products', 'effects;' and effects are conditioned. So, the body too is a limited, conditioned thing. The wise man tells himself, "I exist always: I am not material; I have no cause and effect, I am separate from this gross body. So, I cannot be this Annamaya-kosa. I am the knower of the Annamaya-kosa; I am the witness." When this knowledge is well established, he knows the truth. He must realise that he is beyond the Annamaya sheath.
- Q. How is one to realise that he is beyond the Pranamaya-kosa?
- A. At night, when the individual is asleep, the Pranas, or vital airs are moving; but one does not know what is happening in him or around him. He does not fight if enemies come during his sleep. He is inert and inactive like a log. But "My nature is not this inertness. I am the ever conscious witness. I am separate from all the sheaths," thus he must discriminate, reflect and know.
- Q. We commit many sins and do many meritorious deeds with this body and this mind, Swami! They bring about grief or joy; now, this "I" of which you are speaking, is it the doer, consumer of the grief or joy?
- A. Not for a moment. He who does is the doer; doing is a modification Doing is producing a modification, is it not? So, the person appears as if he is modifying. But the "I" is

modification-less. 'He is the fixed, so he is not affected at all. Doer-ism is the quality of the Antahkarana. So, the "I" takes on the appearance of the doer and the gainer of the fruits of the deed.

- Q. If so, how can we know about the entry into this world and the exit from this world into another?
- A. It is the Antahkarana, the Lingadeha, that moves from this world to another, from one birth to another, according to the accumulated merit. It is the limited Lingadeha that has the entries and exits. You, who are like the sky, omnipresent and unaffected, have no arrival into this world or departure to another. You are not of that nature.
- Q. Then what is the means of gaining Moksha?
- A. Vijnana is the means.
- Q. Some great men say that Yoga is the means. Is that true?
- A. That is also true. There can be two roads to a place, isn't it?
- Q. Which is the better road?
- A. Both are good and important. Both take you to the same goal; only, you cannot travel on both at the same time. People can choose the road which suits their inner promptings and do the sadhanas of that path. Both release the sadhakas from bondage.
- Q. Swami! Is Jnana acquired by Yoga or is Yoga acquired by Jnana?
- A. Yoga gives Jnana; that Jnana confers Moksha easily. This is the correct position.
- Q. What is the effect of Yoga? How does it benefit?
- A. Yoga is like fire; that is why the word "Yogagni" is used. It burns all sins away; so the Antahkarana is rendered pure. When that happens, Jnana is born there. The splendour of that Jnana dispels the darkness of ignorance and delusion; that is Liberation.
- Q. Has Yoga got so much potentiality?
- A. Why ask if it has...it has. However learned a person is, however great his detachment, however deep his wisdom, unless he conquers his senses, he cannot qualify for Moksha. Without Yoga, all these cannot rid themselves of sin. Unless they clear themselves of sin, their Antahkarana does not become pure. Without a pure Antahkarana, Jnana cannot be acquired; and without Jnana, there can be no Moksha. So, Yoga is the very foundation.
- Q. This is rather hard to follow. Swami! Give me some illustration to make it simpler, even for the unlearned.
- A. When a storm is blowing, can any one light a lamp? So too, when the sensual desires are blowing strong, the Jnana-lamp cannot burn; it will go out soon, even if it is lit.
- Q. What are the gains from Yoga?
- A. It destroys all impulses and urges towards the sensual world. It puts down the mind and its agitations.

(To be continued)

Two Letters

Sri, Ramanatharao of the Sirpur Kagaz-nagar heard of Baba only last month, at Shimoga, where he had gone on a visit to his sister soon after retiring from the Paper Factory. From the accounts

given by her, he felt a keen desire to go to Puttaparthi, but, his health was against it; so, as he wrote in his letter he was very much pained. On August 8th, he finished his Sandhya-vandanam and his Gayatri-japam and was reciting his mantram, the Upadesh he had got from Swami Ramadas, "Om Sriram Jayaram Jayajaya Ram." While he was lost in the joy of that recitation, Baba appeared clearly before; he rose and shouting, "Baba," "Baba," he fell at His feet. He asked Him (every one could see him addressing Baba but, no one else could see Baba)" Baba I have written 54 lakhs 21 thousand Likhita Japam of this Mantra; bless me so that I could complete a crore." (What a pious holy prayer, that!) Baba replied that he had already completed a crore of Ramnam and there was no more need to worry. "You can do Puja to the Books as soon as you return home" Baba said. Then, in a flash, Baba disappeared and Ramanatharao saw the effulgent Vision of Ramapattabhisheka. He sang in his ecstasy the slokas describing the Scene and he prostrated on the floor. Then, that vision gave place to that of his Guru Swami Ramadas Himself! Lastly came Baba Himself, the Benefactor who had vouchsafed to the saintly Sadhaka all these visions, He fell at His Feet again and asked Him for Prasadam, and lo, all present saw a packet of Vibhuti fall into his palms (from the Divine Hand of Baba, which was so plainly visible to him.) Baba assures all, that Sadhana sincerely done will never go to waste; it is bound to yield fruit. He gave Ramanatharao the fruit of his Sadhana... the Vision of his Guru, his Ishthadevata and of Himself, who is Sarvadevata Swarupa.

Yes. Baba is the Repository of all the Devata Swarupas. How else can we explain the experience of Vamadevan on the frontiers of India? He was moving along the border, all alone, with just a pistol by his side when he was pounced upon by 8 men from the other side, who tried to blindfold him and drag him across the line. He had with him a photograph of Baba, given by Him when he was last at Puttaparthi. He knew that Baba would save him, for Baba had told him, when the photograph was given, that he should keep it always with him. Well. He remembered it now. (It is very difficult to remember such things in a crisis). He showed it to his attackers. "They all prostrated before It and turned back, leaving me alone," Vamadevan writes! "Prostrated!" Who knows what vision Baba vouchsafed to those vile men, so that their hearts were touched by reverence so sudden and so great? He is Sarvadevata Swarupa...He knows!

[Ed]

Sapthaha

The Dharmic way of living is the very basis of democracy and so, I welcome into Tamilnad the activities of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha which is an instrument in the Divine Hands of Baba for the revival of Dharma in this land and in the world—thus spoke Hon'ble Sri M Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister of Madras, while inaugurating the Sapthaha of the Sabha at Madras on 13th August last. Hon'ble Justice Sadasivam, Sri Nandadulal Brahmachari of the Gaudiya Math, the Raja of Ramnad, Dewan Bahadur K S Ramaswami Sastri, Sri K. Balasubrahmaniam Iyer, Sri M S Sarangapani, the Commissioner for Religious Endowments, Sri Manickavelu Naicker the Speaker of the Madras Legislative Council—who presided each day, all joined in the Welcome and mentioned with joy that the tens of thousands of citizens who attended every day were evidence of the value of the Sabha and its programme of popularising the essence of the Vedas and Sastras. Dr B Ramakrishna Rao, M. P., former Governor of Kerala and U.P., who is the President of the Sabha explained the ideals of the Sabha and how it brings

the age-old Wisdom to the doors of the common man for his moral uplift and personal salvation, as well as for the welfare of society and the world. The Raja Saheb of Venkatagiri, also spoke of the decline in reverence and moral fear and wanted that the teaching of Sanathana Dharma should be more strictly adhered to.

Pundits belonging to the Kendra Samithi of the Vidwanmahasabha, as well as others from Andhra Pradesh, besides the Pundits from Madras like Agnihotram Ramanuja, Thathachariar, the Adigal of Saiva Matam, Balasubrahmanya Sastry of the Mylapore Sanskrit College and scholars like Jonnalagadda Sathyanarayanamurthy, D. Ramaswami Iyengar, and K V Jagannathan, and also Kaviyogi Suddhananda Bharathi addressed the vast gatherings each day on the various aspects of the Vedas, the Sastras and of the Ramayana the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata.

Baba in the Discourses which he gave every day re-emphasised the need, in the modern world, of a stable dharmic foundation for our lives. He diagnosed the present-day spiritual malady as being the product of three destructive forces which have almost subjugated mankind... ahamkara (egoism) ajnana (ignorance) and adharma (unrighteousness). Man's ceaseless quest for wealth comfort and pleasure had reached the limit, with new discoveries in the field of science and technology. Man's ambition to conquer other worlds in space, even before he had understood the full nature of his own earthly home and his own inner destiny was leading him into great danger, Baba said. The external pomp of life allured him more than the central reality of his own self. Knowledge of the illusory phenomena was mistaken for truth while the Supreme Reality remained unknown. No knowledge, Baba said, which refuses to acknowledge the existence of God can be safe. Such godless vidya bred only ignorance and disharmony. Hence, the modern world is filled with asuya and dwesha (envy and hatred) and there was no shanti (peace) anywhere.

The themes of Baba's discourses were many and varied. One day it was the true nature of Bhakti, which Baba said had no meaning without the accompaniment of vinaya. Another day the emphasis was on Karma-sanyasa, action done with detachment. He pointed out the dangers of excessive action, action without limit. Illustrating one evening the nature of Faith, He spoke of God's limitless benevolence to man, and said that genuine faith can get anything one desires. Baba has an amazing way of interpreting the legends of the past in terms of modern idiom. So these discourses went on, from day to day, and Baba's divine message of Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema was revealed to thousands every day in a new light and a fresh vitality.

Prasanthi Nilayam News

August: 13 to 19	Sapthaha of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha at Madras.
August: 21.	Baba opened the V.V.S. Hall at the Yoga Samaj, Adyar, Madras.
August: 31	Baba returned to Prasanthi Nilayam.
September: 6	Sanskrit Examination "Parichaya" for the students of the Sri Sathya Sai Vedasastra Patasala. Perambur Meeting of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha. Swami Dayananda Saraswathi of the Chinmaya Mission spoke on ' Bhakti and Prasanthi '
Sep: 6, 7, 8:	Rajahmundry Session of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha.

Sep: 9

Vinayaka Puja by Students of the Vedasastra Pathashala. Discourse by
Baba at the Nilayam.

Though purity of mind is the primary thing, for the protection of society and the individual in the realm of the Divine, Varna organisation too is very important. It can never be blown off by ridicule criticism or condemnation. For, the welfare of the world is essential for all; go, the rulers and the scholars must give up all feelings of anger and hatred and calmly delve into the pros and cons and bring the organisation into some good order. That is the thing to do. It is not just that wise men and intelligent scholars should support the meaningless criticisms of the envious and the ignorant. Those who deny caste are themselves forming a caste; those who deny religion are themselves forming a new religion. But still when it comes to this matter, even those who know much become prejudiced and talk as if they are as ignorant as the rest. That is the wonder!

Every object has certain limits; if it exceeds or breaks through, it gets destroyed. What is the test of its identity? The co-ordination between its nature and its form. If it has the form but not the nature, then it is unreal, false. So too, if each class has no special limits, how can it be identified as a class? It will be neither this, nor that; an amorphous mass, a confused group. This is a Divinely decided organisation; so, it was fostered and continued by the great sages saints and elders, for many generations. But in this iron age of Kali, the brainiest of the lot dismiss it as useless junk. Without deep inquiry, without using one's powers of discrimination, if people examine this organisation from the external, the individual standpoint, how can they arrive at right conclusions? Its sanctity and value will be revealed if you have the 'inner sight' and the 'universal outlook' and the 'inquiring spirit'. Just as the butter inherent in milk is made patent by the process of churning, so too the specific value of the Four Varnas will become manifest through the process of discriminating enquiry. The prejudices will perish; the reality will be revealed.

The four varnas are like the limbs of the same body. They have evolved out of the same Divine Body—the Brahmins from the face, the Kshatriyas from the hands, the Vaisyas from the thighs and the Sudras from the feet. Of course, these expressions have a deeper inner meaning. Those who teach like the Guru the principles of Jnana are the Voice; they are the Brahmins. The strong armed bear the burden of the Earth they are the kshatriyas. The social edifice is upheld, as on pillars, by the Vaisyas and so, they are figuratively described as emanating from the thighs of the Divine Person. Like the feet that are useful in going about on all kinds of activities, the Sudras are ever engaged in the basic tasks of society. The peace and happiness of society will suffer even if a single Varna is slack in its task. And, all varnas are worthwhile and valuable, as all limbs are important. There is no higher or lower. Hatred and rivalry in society are as harmful as the stoppage of work by all the limbs in anger against the stomach!

A sugar doll is sweet all over. Break off its head and eat it, it is sweet. Break off a leg and eat it; it is as sweet as the head. Then, how can the Varnas which are the limbs of the self-same Divinity be pronounced higher or lower? Limbs are different, but, the very same red blood flows and animates all. There is no special variety for the hand or leg or face. The system of Varnas is ordained by the Vedas and so there can be no injustice in it; it is not an artifice invented by man.

So, those who try to create differences and hatred by their inconsiderate remarks about it are only exhibiting their ignorance.

It looks as if those who argue that the abolition of the Varna system will bring about human welfare, are the only ones anxious to promote human welfare! They probably believe that those who consider the system to be beneficial are really eager to promote the downfall of the human society! Of course, both are delusions. But, this much is true: Those who support the Varnas are really more interested in the promotion of human welfare. The others think that if Varna goes, they will be saving the country. That is a deluded belief. If only the virtues and faults are analysed carefully and without prejudice there will be an end to the uninformed campaign of hatred and enmity. Then there will be a magic change in the attitude of people towards the Varna system.

If hatred increases that will not be beneficial to any one. To pursue the ideal of "All are equal" is like running after the lake in the mirage to slake one's thirst. It will only breed discontent. The rulers must now assemble and consult the representatives of the people, namely, the pundits and the experienced elders and discuss the value of this ancient system of social organization. That will be very useful. Instead, if they just decide on the basis of external forms and features that there is some poison in this and run into panic, that will only reveal their ignorance. The rulers as well as the pundits both have the happiness of the people at heart; why, this Varna system originated with that end in view. It has led to comments because its proper utilisation was not always in accordance with the counsels of the wise; it was not practised on the continued Counsels of the wise.

Take one small example; Foreign: people have manufactured bombs that can wipe out lakhs of people at one stroke. Though they know this is ruinous, the rulers are themselves encouraging it by all means. Still, though the scientists who helped the manufacture are very learned, the rulers must approve the use, when it comes to actually dropping them anywhere. If they are used as the whim takes them, ruin will fall on all. When chaos threatens, they are to be used, only for Self-defence; the purpose is not the destruction of the world but the protection of the values of one's own country and culture. So also, the Varna system is to be treated as armament to protect the country and culture. The rules and regulations, the restrictions and recommendations are all, to defend the people from ruin. They are disciplines which have to be honoured in the way they are laid down and followed strictly and correctly. To deal with them as the whim dictates, without regard to the directing bunds, the limits and boundaries, is to invite the anarchy of today.

Therefore, the elders, the rulers, the great pundits, and the leaders of the community who have wide experience, guarded and fostered this Organisation and preserved it until now; think of this for a while and the truth will flash on you—whether it is beneficial or not. If it was ruinous to society, do you mean to say, they were all foolish, or was it because they did not have the present type of reading or, were they just brainless?

No, no. Their intelligence, scholarship, spiritual eminence, their deep spirit of inquiry, and their impartial unprejudiced approach to social problems can be found only among one in a hundred today. The supreme ascetics who dedicated all their intellectual and moral strength for the welfare of the world, which task was as the very breath of their life, yogis and spiritual warriors,

the maharishis who sought to confer true contentment to the human community... these were the framers of the social organisation, which the 'moderns' condemn. They were not like the reformers today, who yearn for welfare in a profusion of words but who undermine the very thing they profess to yearn for, by the actions of their hands! This clever trick was unknown to the ancient sages. The modern ideas and plans are all hollow and insincere. The present plans are all castles in the air. They cater to the conceit of the planners and do not carry meaning to others. The castles start falling down in one place even while construction work is proceeding in another place!

As the body is for the Jivi, the world is for the Lord. Whatever happens in any part of the body affects the Jivi; so too, all that affects any part of the world moves the Lord; He becomes cognisant of it and He reacts to it. Just as you are interested in all the limbs of the body being in perfect trim, the Lord too is interested in seeing that every country and every part of the World is happy and contented. Can He, will He, harm any country which is primarily part of Himself? In matters relating to the Lord, all have equal rights; all are equal.

Yet, one limb cannot carry out the duties of another; each must do the task allotted to it. So too, each Varna must carry out its allotted share of the activities of society, and contribute its best to the welfare of the country. As the body has stages, society has the Varnas. If all start trading, who will be the buyers? If all are engaged in fighting who is to provide the wherewithal for their upkeep and maintenance, the food and the armour and the equipment? So, each one has to do his share of the social activity and ensure peace harmony and happiness. That is the wise course, the best organisation of society. Now, instead of attending to essential tasks, people are engaged in internecine struggle fearing that the Varnas are great obstacles to progress. How can people who are unable to keep their body under control keep the country within limits? After all, it is best to be concerned about the welfare of the country. Consider that the fostering of the Varna system, which has been fostered so long by the ancients, is the most beneficial thing that has to be done.

The Lord has not shown any partiality while organising the Varnas, believe Me. He has no such trait at all. Some persons ask, why should the Lord have such differences? No, He has no sense of inferior or superior. He is sweet all over, as a lump of sugar. All differences and distinctions are the property of Jivis, who do not know the Atmic reality; they are the illusions of the jivis who falsely identify themselves with the non-Atma.

Consider this example: A mother has four children; but, she does, not pay the other three as much attention and care as she gives to the child in the cradle. Even if the child does not call out for it, she is ever attentive to its needs and is vigilant to give it food etc at particular intervals. The other three have to come and worry her for food and things to play with. Looking at this only, you cannot pronounce her a bad mother or a partial mother, pouring all her love on her last born child. The mother adjusts her activities to the capacity and ability of the child. So too, though the entire world is His, though all are His children, he has fixed upon each a part of the responsibility of the work of society, according to the capacity and ability. To ascribe faults to such self-less sincere simple ever-blissful Providence is like attributing darkness to the Sun! Darkness and the rays of the Sun cannot exist together; how then can the Sun be the home of darkness? People who carp so at the Sun do not know the Sign at all. It is sheer folly, complete ignorance.

Really from the Adhyatmic point of these Varnas can be characterised in another way: Those who are established in the contemplation of Brahman are Brahmins; those who oppose untruth are Kshatriyas; those who systematically discriminate the true from the false, are the Vaishyas; those who are ever active and follow truth in everyday life are the Sudras. The happiness of Humanity can be amply realised only when these Varnas function in this way.

Now, we shall revert to the subject: Krishna addressed Arjuna, "The four Varnas have been created by Me on the basis of Guna and Karma. Though I am the doer so far as they are concerned, I am still a non-doer! Pay attention to the fundamental principle and then you will realise that Karma which is basically jada, or consciousnessless and material, cannot affect the Atma, which is chaitanya or suffused with consciousness. The Atma is inherently devoid of attachment. It has no awareness of agency or of its own needs or nature, or of its possessions. It has no I or "mine," for these are the marks of Ajnana. Only those afflicted with Ajnana will suffer from the ego or sense of "mine." Though it may appear to ordinary eyes that I am the 'doer,' I am truly a non-doer!

Not only this. Karma does not cease to affect the doer as soon as it is finished. In fact, it is never "finished." Karma yields fruits; fruits of Karma breed desire for them; that results in impulses for further Karma; the impulses bring about further births. Thus, Karma leads to the cycle of births and deaths it is a terrible whirlpool, making you revolve round and round and finally dragging you down into the depths.

Arjuna, listen well to another point also. Karma as such, has no capacity to bind; it is the conceit 'I am the doer' that brings about the attachment and the bond; it is the desire to earn the fruit that produces the bondage. For example: The zero gets value only with the association of a digit. Karma is zero; agency or the feeling of "doer," is associated with the Karma; then it breeds bonds. So, Arjuna, give up the sense of "I" and the Karma that you do will never harm you. Karma done without any desire for the fruits thereof will not produce impulses; that is to say, there will be no impulse for birth even. The aspirants of past ages performed Karmas with this high ideal in view. They never felt that they were the "doers" or "enjoyers of the fruits" of any act. The Lord did, the Lord gave the fruit, the Lord enjoyed the fruit... that was their conviction. This world has only a relative value; it has no absolute existence; that was their faith.

Arjuna! You too should cultivate that faith, and earn that conviction. Do so; your mind will become clarified and pure. Know well the distinction between that Karma, Vikarma and Akarma. I shall tell you the main points of difference, now. Listen. Many aspirants get confused when they try to be clear about this. Not all can grasp the distinction. They take it that Swadharma is Karma and that all karma done, not as Dharma, but with a view to earn atma-jnana are Vi-karmas! Now whatever the karma, if it is done in the darkness and confusion of Ajnana, however hard you may have exercised your abilities during the activity, its result can only be worry, grief and travail. It can never be equanimity, balance or calm. Man has to win Karma in Akarma and Akarma through Karma... that is the hall mark, of the wise. Usually, karma is classified as three Karma, Vikarma and Akarma. But, Vikarma is part of Karma; it is covered by the term, Karma; and so is no need to posit a special classification called there Vikarma.

Akarma means action-lessness according to some. But, to explain it in simpler language, understand that the activities of the limbs, the senses intelligence the feelings, the emotions and mind are all Karmas. Now, Akarma means, among other things, non-activity too. That is to say, it is the attribute of the Atma. So Akarma means Atma-sthithi, the characteristic of the atma. When you travel in a bus or train or boat, the illusion is created that the tree and hills on either side travel along, and the person feels that he is stationary! The movement of the chariot imposes on hill and tree the quality of movement; so too, the person unaware of the principles enunciated in the Sastras deludes himself into the belief that the Atma is doing all the activities of the senses and the body. Which then is the genuine Akarma... activity-less-ness? The experience of the Atman is the perfect activity-lessness; that is your real nature. It will not do if you simply desist from external acts. You should realise the Atmic fundamental, not merely renounce Karma, for it is impossible to be completely activityless. You cannot live or survive without engaging in Karma. It is impossible.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Sastras give facsimiles of what the genuine is, just like the printed reproductions of new issues of currency notes, which are published for the information and guidance of the public. You cannot cut out that bit of paper and use it to buy things. You can only use it as a standard and say that if the note used is different, it is counterfeit. So also, the Sastras lay down the standards; what is un-sastraic is counterfeit conduct.

BABA

Murali

The Seven Nerves in the system of the Seven Dhathus
That is the Jiva-Atma bond... the Wheel;
That is the Brahmananda Chariot
To feel that bond is the Ananda path;
The chariot is still, it does not move.
Feel that you are the Jiva—you move;
The mover is the Idea that you are the Atma
There is Charioteer...It...Non-feeling.,
Feel the Non-feeling... that is the Ananda... the Brahma
The Ananda-Brahma is this Jiva-ideation
The Brahma filled with Ananda is the Atma...
Jiva is the cause-effect; Atma is the effect cause
Brahma is the Viswa-effect; that thirst for Effect
Is the Krishna Paramatma... His nature is Ananda—thirst
The Karma discipline marks the era the Dharma
The Dharma era is the discipline of Karma.
Stricken with that desire, he is stricken with fatigue
Rotating round the mill, the game of round and round
Along the ring of truth, light and sound.

Know it... that is the victory in the game.
The fruit... that is the strength.
This is the comradeship of Jiva and Brahma
This the song of the Sapthaswara.
The shower of Bliss,... this is the MURALI

[Significance of the Drawing on the cover page of our September Issue]
Poet-Artist: V. Bhaskar

Who is a Sai-bhakta?

[A Letter From Baba To A Bhakta]

Moksha is the final goal of man; that is why he is endowed with Vijnana, the special capacity to analyse and synthesise experience. The Upanishads declare “Jnanadevathu Kaivalyam”.
(Kaivalyam-through Jnana only)

For those who yearn to be saved, Sainamam is the Sanjeevini, the potent drug. Those who have the Name ever on their tongues must be vigilant so that egoism and the sense of possession (Aham-Karam and Mama-Karam) so not rob them of the fruits of Sadhana. really, man is Jnanaswarupa. Only, since the beginning of Time, man has deluded himself into believing that the World is true and eternal. He is himself basically Divine; but, through the influence of the fundamental Delusion, he deceives himself into the belief that he is the doer, the sufferer, the beneficiary, the enjoyer etc. so, he is born again and again as a result of this attachment and is subjected to the buffetings of duality. He is drifting about in the sea of Samsara.

Sathya-anveshana, the search for Truth ought to be the Nitya Kritya of Sai bhaktas, their daily activity. Prema ought to become their Swa-bhava, their very Nature. Bhava-shuddhi is more important for them than Bahya-adambara, external finery. Be convinced that the Viswa is the Visweswaraswarupa itself; look upon every object as suffused with Divinity, as Divine Itself. For, that is the truth.

Again, be engaged in acts that endow every moment of your life with holiness and the fragrance of sanctity. That is the true worship of “He who is Time Itself”, the Kala-swarupa.

It is not through their words or their songs that persons are judged as Sai Bhaktas! *Deeds* must be good and correct; that makes the Sai Bhakta. That gives joy to Sai. I like the purity of the feelings and emotions. Pravartana or Practice must be Pavitra, Pure. Do right and speak right... not... do wrong and *speak* of right conduct! If you do not act the advice you give others, you are insulting the name of Sai, that you have taken.

Give up show, finery, and exhibitionism. Let your eye be as soft and cool as moonlight, heart as soft as butter, words as sweet as honey. These should be the real characteristics of the Sai-

bhakta. Sai's Reality is Samarthaprema; Sai-drishti is Samanjasa Prema. Those who are saturated with these two types of Prema are the true Sai-bhaktas.

Instead, if you cavil at others, if you hold forth your own pride, and if you struggle to gather riches, you become exiles from the Lord, and stray away from the spiritual path. The Lord does not care for objects; he cares for the subjective wealth of Prema. Sai-bhaktas must have full conviction of this.

Remember, the best way to promote your own peace and the peace of the World is to live in truth and Prema, through every act of your life. That will be Ramarajya indeed.

You must have the vision appropriate to the Universal love characteristic of true Bhakti. Have the Prema-maya-netra; then, the World will be for you, truly Brahma-maya.

Serve Sai—not with Vratas, Processions, Puja, or Ritual Abhisheka and the paraphernalia of mantras but, with Sad-Karma, Sad-achara, and Sad-vakya, good deeds, good conduct, good words. Serve Sai thus: Sai loves these most; that is the Truth of Sai.

With blessings
Baba

Prasanottra Vahini

9

- Q. You have been saying that Jnana is essential; well, what exactly is the function of Jnana?
- A. Jnana makes you realise the Atma-swarupa, that is to say, your own Reality.
- Q. And Yoga? If a person has no Yoga, what happens?
- A. He is like a lame man.
- Q. And, if a person has no Jnana?
- A. He is like a blind man.
- Q. They say that Yoga destroys all blemishes, removes all faults. How does that happen?
- A. Can rice become eatable unless it is boiled over a fire? By Yoga and other disciplines, the Chitta becomes soft. It is called Tapas, heat; it becomes Tapta, hot. Moreover, Yoga and Jnana are like oil and flame. The oil is Yoga and Jnana is the illumining flame of the lamp.
- Q. Swami! Pardon me for asking this. There are so many teaching Vedanta, now; have they all realised truth, experienced this Reality?
- A. How can this be said? You can yourselves judge them. See if they have purity of heart, purity of thought, purity of mind, knowledge of the Inherent and immanent Paramatma; only such have the right to teach Vedanta, for they atone can experience the Vedanta.
- Q. The teaching by those who have no such qualities, will it benefit to a certain extent at least?
- A. Fine descriptions of the various delicacies and tasty dishes will not satisfy the hungry man. The Vedanta which stops with words is like that. It has to be experienced in order to satisfy. Again, listening without eagerness to learn, is also ineffective. Unless the teacher

- has detachment from sense-objects, his teaching is but parrot talk. Those who come to listen, without desire to learn and benefit, are only engaged in showy demonstrations.
- Q. Baba! You say that purity of heart, purity of mind and knowledge of the in-immanent and transcendent Paramatma are essential. Then, of what use is Sadhana done through the body, composed of the Five Elements? Is it not enough if one acquires the Jnana of Swa-swarupa?
- A. Wonderful fellow! Simply because the rudder is essential, can you take it that the boat is unnecessary? How can you cross the river with the rudder alone? Believe that the Lord has conferred upon you the body as a boat to cross the sea of Samsara, and Chitta as the main thing in it. That is the first step in Vedanta. Swa-swarupa-jnana is the rudder really. But, that alone is not sufficient; physical habits and disciplines have also to be attended to. To attain the ethereal eternal stage, the disciplined body is important.
- Q. Another doubt afflicts me, Swami. Talking of physical disciplines, may I know whether Brahmailidya makes any distinction between male and female?
- A. Well, my boy! This boat has no such distinction. Brahmailidya and Chithashuddhi do not depend on sex at all. All who are ill have the right to the drug that cures, is it not? So too, all who have the illness of *bhava* (birth and death) have the right to Brahmailidya, the specific that will cure it. It may be that not all can afford to have access to that wonder drug; but you cannot argue that some have no right to it.
- Q. Why, Swami, some Vedanta scholars themselves say that women have no authority to learn or practise Brahmailidya! The boats are not of the same nature, It seems.
- A. My child! As I said, both have equal right to the specific. But both have to follow a regimen in order that the drug might act upon the system. Brahma-bhavana or the contemplation of the essential basis of oneself, is the drug; along with it the regimen of Jnana and Vairagya has to be rigorously followed. Women may not be able to observe this disciplinary regimen as rigorously as men, since they are weaker. Perhaps, the reason for those people denying women the right to this drug is this weakness. But all, whether men or women, who can observe the restrictions and regulations, have an equal right to benefit by the drug, of Brahmailidya. That is my verdict.

(To be continued)

The Ever-Watchful

Ceaseless in Thy compassion, alert, ever-watchful,
 Thou know'st no rest, nor a moment of weariness;
 Awake, Thou watch'st the lowliest and the highest;
 The stars in their courses lighting the dark night-sky
 The sunrise with its rose-tinted flakes amongst the hills
 The soft glimmer of the slow-vanishing sun
 Gliding majestically below the rim of the grey sea;
 The sap rising in the plant from the soil below,
 The mystery of a seed bursting into gorgeous blooms,

Life's unvanquished course through birth, decay and death.

The sunshine and laughter of childhood and youth,
The darkening horizon that old age views with dismay,
And all the bafflements of our earthly life.
Nothing escapes Thee... the whisper of the wind
Or roar of thunder, the glad laughter or sob of sadness
The hushed voice and all the silent pulsations
Of the world's heart, and the mute stirrings
Of myriad creatures invisible to the eye
And Thou art awake, watching, ever-watchful;
And ceaseless in Thy compassion, Thou guid'st
And we know not that Thou art awake while we are asleep.

H. Sunder Rao
Brindavan, Whitefield
June 15, 1964

From Baba's Discourses

Today is the "Samapti" of this Sapthaha, the final day, as you take word to mean! But, that word has a deeper meaning, which people miss. Sama means 'Brhamam' and Apti means Prapti or Attaining. So, Samaphi means the attainment of Brahman; in fact, that is the real goal, the end of all this struggle, is it not? Your meaning refers to the conclusions of a period of time; how can limited time be identified with the Timeless?

During these seven days, this place knew only Adhyatmic functions, Adhyatmic descriptions, discussions, discourses. That is the real food for the hunger of Man for Sukha and Santosha. Desire is deadly detachment is vital.

Take the case of headmaster under orders of transfer; he gladly hands over all the furniture of the school, which he had so carefully tended and preserved to his successor and leaves without any qualms; for, he knows they belong, not to him, but, to the Government. Care for things, but, do not get attached to them. Things are not true, they are not lasting.

The bad dancer blames the drummer, they say! So too, some people blame the Vedanta System for the ills they suffer from. But, Vedanta is designed to develop, not to destroy. Do not analyse and learn about the external world, that will lead you into doubt and indecision. Search in your own inner consciousness and the Truth will flash on you. God and Nature are both beginningless. You cannot discover when they came; Nature too is there, from the very beginning. You can know when it ends though you may not be able to know when it began. The Yatharthas will be sanctified when it merges in the Paramarthas. Then there will be no two... god and Nature. Only one will exist: Sarvam Brahmayam.

Ajnana, the root cause of darkness, can be destroyed only by Vijnana, the Vidya by which you know yourself. You must develop detachment from yourself. If you go on accumulating junk in a room, it will be rendered dark. Why collect all kinds of things and obstruct free movement? Have only as little as is needed for comfortable living. Do not care for display. Pomp, greed, conceit, pride, misuse of wealth— all these increase worry and take away one's peace of mind. There is no need to launch an offensive against worry and disquiet! For, your real nature is peace, calm, equanimity, Prasanthi. The rest are all delusions, which will disappear as soon as you assert yourself. Be engaged in activities that give joy to others; give up activities that feed your egoism and give you selfish joy. Paropakara should be the Parama -lakshyam. Service to others should be the shining goal. The master of the house while formally entering the newly constructed dwelling house, sees to it that the first thing to enter the house is a cow; that cow is the symbol of the honour and service that you have to render to others. Paropakara is a valuable Sadhana; it will gradually undermine attachment to sensory objects; it will wipe off the impulses of the mind and destroy finally all traces of the mind itself.

* * *

“You are the Avatar of Sai Baba; your name itself is Sai Baba. Then, why do you not tell us about Sai Baba and His Glory?” writes a devotee to Me; he is so pained at this. This is pure ignorance of Truth. The Lord is immanent everywhere; he is endowed with all Forms. He has all the Names, all Characteristics that all attribute to Him.

Some people are engaged in propaganda for Rama or Krishna or Sai Baba. All are same, everywhere, at all times. Who is Sai? Who is Rama? Who is Krishna? Who is Siva? Those who know realise All as One. They appear different due to the differences in the receptacles, the dress, the limitations. Sarvam Brahmanam. Those who say that Sai Baba is superior and that the others are not so great are really showing superior foolishness. There is no such distinction; there is no such superiority.

Some persons are building new Mandirams in My Name; this I do not appreciate in the least. I never call upon devotees to start new Mandirams. When the existing Mandirams are fast falling into ruin, why build new ones? And, they go about with donation registers for this purpose, these Bhaktas! They call themselves spiritually bent and devoted; but, it is through such people that atheism grows in the land. Do not give even a naya paisa to any such plan. Do Bhajan, be engaged in Puja, that is enough; so these gladly, in your own houses. Install Me, establish Me firmly, in the Mandiram of your heart. That is enough. That is what will give you maximum Joy and Peace. That is what will give Me maximum Joy. [Madras 19 – 8 – 64]

Dharma

Dharma is the name given to the group of activities that are approved by the Veda and by the scriptures composed by sages to interpret the Vedic teachings to ordinary men. “Chodana lakshanartho dharmah.” The purpose of this prescription of right conduct is to maintain the

peace and stability of the world. “Dharathi viswam jagadithi dharmah”. That is why it is said, that “Dharma foster those who foster It”: Dharmo rakshathi rakshithah.

Dharma is the only method by which men can be induced to live in love and harmony. The Vedas declare thus: Brahma after creating the world thought of the best means of ensuring its welfare and prosperity; so, in order to promote intelligence and wisdom, He created the Brahmins; then, in order to ensure that their advice and teachings are practised, He created strong rulers; then, in order to provide the world with the necessities and comfort wherever needed and whenever needed, He created the Vaisyas; then, not satisfied with all this, He created the Sudras in order to fulfill the various services that are necessary to uphold the welfare of humanity. The Sruthi uses the word. ‘pooshanam,’ he who brings up, fosters, promotes, while referring to the Sudra. The Four Varnas are thus Four Capacities, Abilities, Four Accomplishments.

Brahma it appears, was not fully satisfied with all this; some problems still remained. What if the people behaved as the whim carried them, without regard to the admonitions of the Kshatriyas? Or, what if the Kshatriyas themselves broke loose? So He determined to establish a Ruler stronger than all the rulers, kshathrasya kshathram called Dharma. “Thadethath kshathrasya kshthram, ysaddharmah; thasmaad dharmath param naasthi”.

It is this Dharma that makes many lakhs of armed men obey unquestioningly the orders of their rulers, giving up even their lives to please them. Dharma warns them to obey and they do likewise. Why, Dharma is the Universal Controller of Human Conduct. It prevents bloodshed and terror and directs human activities along peaceful and harmonious channels. It is Sarva-jagadaadhaara.

Where such Dharma is honoured and practiced, there resides victory wealth and peace. Dharma should not be given up, the scriptures say, whatever the temptation: greed, fear, hatred, hunger, calamity. For, these are temporary phases, but Dharma confers eternal benefit.

Of course, Dharma has many facets: Varnadharmas, Asramadharma, Stridharma etc. there are also General Dharma and Special Dharma. General or Samanya Dharmas are: Ahimsa, A-stheya, Daya, Danam, Sathyam, Soucham, Daivabhakti, Kshama, Shraddha. Etc. if there is conflict between what is laid down in one stage or state and another, the individual is advised to prefer what the good and the wise would approve.

The essence of Dharma, its real nature, has been summarised by sages thus: Sishtaah yathamsanthi sa Dharmah: yathagarhanthe so a-dharmatah. “That which good men approve and commend is Dharma; that which they condemn is A-dharma.” And who are the good? Those who are not affected by sensory pleasures, or physical greed, those who have delved into the ancient scriptures, who are endowed with the 8 virtues: kindness, patience, non-envy, purity, attachment to good deeds, piety, liberality, contentment.

Those who cannot follow the dictates of the Karmakanda and satisfy the demands of Dharma, as well as those who can afford them, have a Dharma of the highest order, that is, the glorification of the Lord. the Vedas themselves enjoin this; they say “Aasyajaanantho naama chidvivaththana”; “Of His endless number of names, contemplate ceaselessly on one or other.”

In the Mahabharata, Yudhishtir asks Bhishma “which is the highest Dharma?” and Bhishma replies, “The praise and worship of the Lord”. This Namajapam is considered valuable and efficient, because it needs no third person as mediator, no material accessories; there are no limitations of time and space; there are no limitations imposed on age or sex or caste or social status or wealth or poverty.

That in this Kaliyuga, some reduction of Dharmic conduct will take place, is mentioned in the scriptures themselves. “Aaskando ayaanaam”; in the Kaliyuga, all Dharma declines considerably. But, Dharma has only declined, it has not disappeared. The tree of Dharma has to be fostered according to the methods mentioned in the scriptures.

Sri Krishna has assured in the Gita that at such crises, He will come in an embodied Form to restore Dharma. He has carried out the assurance, in the past and He is doing it even now. As a matter of fact, in the Devibhagavatam. It is said, that Avatars are countless. The Bhagavata also says, “Just as the canals bring the life-giving water from the reservoir to make the earth green with crops and to keep all living beings healthy and happy, the Rishis and Munis, Sages, derive inspiration from the reservoir of Satwa which is God, and by their example and precept they guard and promote the world’s welfare.

And what exactly is Dharmasthapana? It is the establishment of the Vedamarga itself, by teaching and practice. It is laid down in the Sutha Samhitha that the Brahmin should make special efforts to foster the Vedic way of life, for, that will ensure stability and happiness. Why, it is laid down that the Vedic way of life, for, that will ensure stability and happiness. Why, it is laid down that the Vedic Vidwan who endeavors to promote the Vedic way of life, however weak he might otherwise be, is thereby saved.

Even in the texts on political science, the same exhortation is made. The great administrator and theorist, Chanakya says:

Vyavasthitha ariya maryaadah
Kritha varnashrama sthithah
Thrayyaahi rakshitho desah
Praseedathi; na seedathi.

“The land that does not step beyond the limits set down by the sages, that follows the Varnashrama dharma, that is guarded by persons who know the Veda... that land will be happy and prosperous.”

Therefore, it is the duty of every one of us to recognise our share and exercise ourselves, in the effort being now made by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for Dharmasthapana. Our share is to learn, to teach and to practice the principles of Dharma, and to earn happiness here and liberation hereafter. May all humanity attain the Goal.

Ghandikota Subrahmanya Sastri

Each and every conscious being has a Dharma of its own. Man's Dharma is to realise his own Reality. The word Manava reminds him of this: Maa (ignorance) na (without) va (action). He who acts without ignorance or Ajnana, i.e., He who is Jnani is a Man.

Baba

The Sastras give facsimiles of what the genuine is, just like the printed reproductions of new issues of currency notes, which are published for the information and guidance of the public. You cannot cut out that bit of paper and use it to buy things. You can only use it as a standard and say that if the note used is different, it is counterfeit. So also, the Sastras lay down the standards; what is un-Sastric is counterfeit conduct.

Baba

Kodanda

The ten headed Ravan below...
The Dasagunaswarupam... (Thaapam, Kopam, Kamam,
Moham, Dambham, Bhayam, Kuykthi, Swartham,)
The well of daily pain
The Rakshasa Rupam.

The Form... is dual, Sita-Rama! Stri-Purusha;
Satwa-Thathwa; Jivarupam-Atmatejam;
Jiva-Atma—Paramatma; Prathibimba-Bimba;
The Motivating Bindu... makes Purusha-Sakthi One
Through the Eight fold revolving Wheel
The Gunas Six and Sath, Prakriti,

Until the arrow from the Kodanda sent from questioning Guna group
Straight at the Pranava, the Brahman Base
Reaches the target, the Ravana is slain.

When slain, 'I' and 'You' are One;
This is that! The Kamarupam melts away;
Sri Murthy and Sri Hari merge is Swayam Shakti.
Maya is won, Ramaswarupam is Premaswarupam!
Premaswarupam loses Swarupam; it is Sayi Tejam,
Come today as Sathya Nithaswarupam.

The Primal Energy

Devi, who is worshipped in every home during the Navaratri of the Sharad season of Sharannavaratri is called Sharada. Saratha kale puraa yasmaan, navamyaam bodhithaa suraih, Saaradaa saa samaakhyaathaa peete loke cha naamathah. She is the Shakti that energises the Universe, that has energised the Primal source of All into the very act of Unfoldment. She is praised in the Devi Bhagavatham in manifold forms, because Her Forms and Manifestation are manifold.

She is Sree in the houses of the Sukrithis, those who do good deeds and earn merit; for their sake, she transforms herself into wealth so that they may be rid of physical unrest and discontent. She becomes Lakshmi for them.

She is A-sree in the houses of the sin-full, the wicked; for their sake, she transforms Herself into Misery and Worry, so that they may be warned in time and directed to the moral path, the spiritual Sadhana and meritorious activities.

She is Intelligence in the heart of the Vidwans, the learned, and the scholarly; for their sake, she has become the active principle behind the Jnana that grants Heaven, as well as what is more lasting and valuable, Liberation itself.

She is Shraddha, in the minds of the Sat, that is, the good, for their sake, She has become steadfastness, the unshakeable Faith that urges them on to brave the buffetings of the world. She confers the fortitude necessary to stick to right and the true.

She is Awe in the hearts of the nobles, the fear that makes them desist, to resist the temptations that floor weaker vessels. She warns them in time, through the Voice within, of the dangers ahead, the consequences of evil in word thought and deed.

The Devibhagavatam enjoins us to bow down to this Primal Glory and pray that She may save the world, by all these means.

Yaa Sreeh swayam sukrithinaam bhavaneshvalakshmeem
Paapaathmanaam, Krithadhiyaam hridayeshu buddhih
Sraddha Sathaaam, kulajanaprabhavasya lajjaa
Thaam thwaam nathaah smah, paripaalaya Devi viswam

Wisdom and Courage

Before hoisting the Prasanthi Flag on the Prasanthi Nilayam on the First Day of Navaratri, Baba this year called upon all the sons and daughters of this Land of Spiritual Glory to remind themselves of the traditions of the past. He said “India has to take up the leadership of the World, because she has the secret of human liberation from fear and hatred. The children of this land were heroes of the spiritual realm. They were noted for the Shanti that is won by the realisation of the Reality. Vamadeva who from birth to death was ever in the consciousness of “Brahmaivasmi”; Prahlada who lived in the ceaseless contemplation and recitation of the Name of the Lord; Sukadeva who was unaware of anything else except His Identity with the Lord; Sankaracharya who became the Jagadguru by His contributions in the fields of both Bhakti and Jnana; and a large number of others make the history of this land resplendent with spiritual glory. It is a pity that such a land has now fallen into sloth and ignorance characteristic of Tamoguna giving up the duty of self-realisation.

And, there was no lack of courage also, for, courage is the mark of the wise man, Bharatha played with lion and tiger cubs while still a child; it is his name that this country bears! Remember Arjuna who could wield the bow with both hands; then, there was Shivaji who did heroic acts to serve his Guru and many others who have written their names in gold on the pages of history.

These are matters of which Bharatamata can be proud. But, today the land of Karna Sibi and Harischandra has become as distressed as any other land, as confused and as anxious. This is the result of the loss of faith in the Lord, and is one’s own Reality, the Atma. This Ashanti must be removed and people must earn and enjoy Nityananda. You can have Prema towards the Motherland, only if you have Prema towards the mother that bore you and brought you up. Gratitude is the prime need for all spiritual effort; without it, man is just an animal or even worse. If you cannot love and serve the seen, how can you love and serve the unseen?

The spiritual sadhana is not something done for a few hours every day; it must be your way of living itself. Your words must become sweet and simple, devoid of harshness and full of sympathy and love. Your deeds must be devoid of pain to others and prompting people towards higher and higher realms of spirituality. Your thoughts must be of the Lord and His Glory. Practice these attitudes from today. That is the Flag that you have to hoist in your minds, when the Prasanthi Flag is hoisted by Me on this Nilayam.”

Prasanthi

Dr. M. N. Lakshminarasiah, the Hon’ble Minister for Panchayat Raj Andhra Pradesh, Presided over the 8th Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital, on 7th inst, as a part of the Programme for the Navaratri Festival. Hon’ble Sri P K Sawant Minister, Maharashtra State spoke on the occasion. He said; “This is a unique institution, situated in the midst of inspiring scenery, in a fine and beautiful building, manned by dedicated doctors and guided by the great Super-Surgeon and Physician, Baba Himself. It is a symbol and a model of the ideal, which Baba wants us all to emulate—service to the poor the suffering and the distressed. The best course is, of course, to maintain health by having abiding faith in the Sadguru following His teachings for

mental and physical welfare and developing the will to fight disease, if it comes. Baba is creating in us all, that confidence and that faith.” Dr. Lakshminarasiah said, “It is indeed very heartening to find Baba maintaining a Hospital here in order to provide medical care to the villagers and to the lakhs of devotees who come here from all parts of the India. I am struck by the silence and quietness of this place and I am really envious of you all, who are able to get the happiness of calm contemplation, away from the turmoil of political life and the struggle to maintain a standard of living. Real happiness is a matter of the mind and the spirit, not a matter of the accumulation of the trinkets of civilisation. Our Sanathana Dharma has taught humility and reverence and detachment. These give mental peace and consequently ensure even physical health.”

Baba spoke of outer and inner cleanliness and said that inner cleanliness can be assured only by Abhyasa and Vairagya. He said that if each one will establish himself in the conviction that he is the Atma unaffected by illness grief loss or calamity, there will be no problems of ‘disease’ at all. Every one will be at ease.

The Vedapurusha Sapthaha Mahotsavam was inaugurated by Baba at 9 A.M. on the 9th inst at the special platform of the gaily-decorated Auditorium. A procession led by Nadaswaram music and the finely caparisoned Baby Elephant, Sai Geetha, consisting of the pupils of the Sathya Sai Vedasastra Pathashala dressed in red and yellow, reciting the Vedic Mantra and the Ritwiks and Pundits dressed in coloured silk appropriate to the role of each group in the Yajna, with Purnakumbha and other auspicious articles held before Baba in the Centre proceeded from the Nilayam to the Yajnamantapam. The chanting of the Vedas, the inauguration of Puja and of the Sahasralingarchana and the Parayanas of Ramayana Bhagavata Devibhagavata and Sapthasathi announced the Inauguration.

In the evening, when the First Anniversary of the Vidwanmahasabha was celebrated, Sri Jonnalagadda Sathyanarayanamurthy spoke on Bhakti and Brahmasri Narayanabhatla Krishnamurthy Sastry read and expounded the Bhagavatham. Baba spoke of Bhakti leading to Jnana, the Jnana that the Paramatma is the same as the Jivatma, which landed itself in trouble only because it felt separate. He said that when one sought the answer to the questions, “Where did I come from? Why am I here? Whither am I going?” he came to know that there is no coming, no staying, and no going! The Atma is unaffected by space and time, It is attributes and eternal and can be known only by experience.”

Prasanthi Nilayam News

September 28: Arrival of, General Rana Shamsher Jung of Nepal, to have Darsan of Baba

September 29: Arrival of Sri Kanjilal, Member, P&T Board, New Delhi, to have Darsan of Baba

October 1: Arrival of Baby Elephant, “Sai Geetha”, at the Prasanthi Nilayam

October 4th: Arrival of Hon’ble Sri P. K. Swant Minister for Agriculture, Maharashtra State, for a short stay at the Prasanthi Nilayam, and Darshan of Baba.

- October 6th: Beginning of the Dasara Festival. Pathakothsavam; Feeding of the poor
- October 8th: Anniversary celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital: Dr. M N Lakshminarasiah, Minister for Panchayat Raj and Planning, Andhra Pradesh presided. Hon'ble Sri P K Sawant addressed the meeting. Baba's Discourse.
- October 9th: Inauguration of the Vedapurusha Sapthaha Yajnam at 9 A.M. First anniversary Celebrations of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha at 4 P. M. Speeches by Sri Jonnalagadda Sathyanarayanamurthy and Brahmasri Narayanabhatla Krishna Murthy Sastri Discourse by Baba.
- October 10-15: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourses
- October 15: Vijayadasami; Poornahuthi.

Baba's Programme

Baba will be leaving Prasanthi Nilayam at the beginning of December, 1964, for Kurnool Hyderabad and Venkatagiri, where Sessions of the Prasanthi Vidvanmahasabha, are being held in His Gracious Presence. He will be returning to Prasanthi Nilayam, in January, 65

Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Prasanthi Nilayam

23-11-64 The Birtnaay will be celebrated from the Pranava Recitation at Brahmanuhurtham (4. A.M.) to the Uyyalaothsavam at 10 P.M., in an uninterrupted stream of Holy festivity.

24 November: Inauguration of the Thri Raathra Deeksha of the Sri Sanathana Bhagavatha Bhaktha Samajam, of the Krishna-Guntur Mandala On 24, 25 and 26th November, the Programme includes (8 A.M. to 11 A.M.) Ekadasa Rudrabhishekam, Parayana of the Srimad Ramayana, and Srimad Bhagavatham, Navagraha Puja, Suryanamskaram, Vedaparayana, Gopuja etc and (4 P.M. to 10 P.M.) Discourses by learned Pandits, Harikatha Kalakshepams, Tharanga Ashtapadi Kalakshepams etc.

Bhagavan will be blessing us with His Divine Discourse every day.

May you all get the joy of sharing in this Sacred Celebration and realising the goals of life, through Baba's Blessing.

Kaaryadarsi, Prasanthi Nilayam

Gita Vahini

10

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

"Dhananjaya! Only he is entitled to be called a Pundit, who has seen clearly the distinction between Karma and A-karma. If he has only stuffed into his head the matter contained in books, he is not a pundit for he cannot be called a scholar. The Pundit must have the intellect which grants the vision of the Truth... samyag-darshana. When that vision is gained, all Karma becomes ineffective and harmless. The fire of Jnana has the power to consume and burn away.

But some people say that the Jnani must perforce suffer the consequences of Prarabdha karma; he cannot escape from it. This is a conclusion that other persons draw; not, an experience of the Jnani himself. To those who watch him, he might appear to be reaping the fruit of past Karma, but, he is absolutely unaffected. Whoever is dependent on objects for happiness, or pursues sensory pleasures, whoever is motivated by impulses and desires, is bound by Karma. But, those

free from these cannot be affected by the temptations of sound touch form taste smell and other attractions of the senses. Such is the true Sanyasin. He is unmoved: The Jnani is supremely happy by himself, without the need to be dependent on other things. He finds Karma in A-karma and A-karma in Karma. He may be engaged in Karma but he is not affected in the least by it. He has no eye on the fruit of action.

You may ask how he is able to do that. Well. Listen: He is ever content. The contented man is free, he does not depend upon others; he is unaffected by the feeling of agency. He is content with whatever happens to him, well or ill, for he is convinced that the Lord's Will must prevail. His mind is unshaken and steady; he is ever jubilant in the thrill of peace. Want of contentment is the sign of the Ajnani. Those who give up the Purusharthas, and walk the path of sloth, how can they be said to be happy, whatever happens? Contentment is the treasure that is won by the Jnani; it cannot be won by the A-jnani who piles one wish on another, and builds one plan after another. Over and above this, he pines perpetually and worries himself and sets his heart ablaze with greed.

The Jnani is not mastered by the dualities of Joy and Grief, Victory and Defeat, Gain and Loss. He is Dwanda-atheetha. He scorns hatred and never allows it to affect him. Now, the Swarupa and the Swabhava of the Atma guarantee that It is un-affected. It is A-sanga. It is un-influenced by anything that is not Atma. It has neither birth nor death, hunger or thirst, grief or delusion. Hunger and thirst are qualities of the Prana; birth and death are characteristics of the body; grief and delusion are affections of the mind. So, Arjuna, do not assign any status for these; know yourself as the Atma; give up all dell[ion and become unattached. Be like the lotus; leaf, in the marsh of Samsara; do not get smeared with the mud around you. That is the sign of the A-sanga, in it but yet outside it. Be like the lotus leaf, not like the porous blotting paper that gets saturated with whatever it comes in contact with. Do Abhisheka to the Atma-linga, with the pure waters of your own pure Chitta-vritti.

When the chitta moves one side and the indriyas move towards another, the person becomes doubly lost. So, keep attachment afar. When that is done, whatever you do becomes a sacrifice, a Yajna. Whatever you speak becomes a holy mantra; wherever you place your foot, the place is rendered holy.

Arjuna! I shall tell you something about Yajna also. Listen calmly controlling all agitations of the mind. People talk of Dravya yajna, Tapoyajna, Yogayajna etc. All holy achievements possible with the expenditure of riches have three states which affect them charity, enjoyment and decline. Riches decline either by enjoyment or by charity. Now, if a pit is dug in one place. the earth that is excavated becomes a mound by its side. There is no pit without a mound; when riches accumulate in one place, there must be corresponding charity too. The proper utilisation of one's riches is Dravyayajna, done in conformity with the Sastras. What is meant by proper utilisation? The gift of cows, of lands, of one's skill are included under Dravyayajna. Again, when all physical activities, mental activities and speech are utilised for Sadhana then, it becomes Tapoyajna. It is not Tapas if you have to lie down due to hunger arising from missing a meal. Doing all Karmas but yet remaining unbound by Karma-that is YogaYoga is the Sadhana by which the Mind is fixed on the Lord.

And, Swadhyaya Yajna? It means studying with humility and reverence the sacred scriptures that lead you to liberation, or Moksha. This study is the means to repay the debt due to the Rishis. It adds merit and destroys de-merit or Paapa. The next is Jnanayajna. By this is meant not the visible, perceptible Jnana but the Jnana of the invisible, the imperceptible, (the parokshajnana, not the Aparokshajnana) which can be acquired by Sadhana. Listen to the Sastras that are related to this Jnana and study them and ponder over the teachings in your mind, weighing the pros and cons this is called Jnanayajna. Jnana means also the eagerness to realise the Atma tattwa through inquiry with elders and those who have spiritual experience. You have the responsibility of carrying out all duties laid down.

Arjuna! This sacred Jnana is not within the reach of all; and, you may ask Me about the means whereby this can be acquired. Listen. Those anxious to get it have to go to realised souls and win their grace and studying well their moods and manners, they must await a good chance to ask them for the help. When doubts arise, he should await a favourable chance and approach them calmly and courageously; he should then get his doubt solved. Studying bundles of books or delivering hours-long discourses or wearing the ochre are not the signs of the genuine Jnani. Jnana cannot be secured by these methods. Jnana can be won only by and through elders, who have experienced the Absolute. You have to serve them and win their love. How can doubts be ended by the study of Sastras and of books? Sastras tend to confuse the mind even more.

Books can at best inform; they cannot demonstrate by direct action. Only the realised can convince by direct demonstration. So they have to be sought after and served reverentially for some time. Then only can this precious Jnana be won. No amount of sea water can slake one's thirst; it will also spoil one's tongue. So too, no amount of Sastraic study can solve one's doubts.

Besides, you have to pay attention to the attitude of the aspirant for Jnana. He must have not only Bhakti and Shraddha but his should also be simple and pure. He should not grow impatient and irritate the teacher. Haste can only ruin chances of success. Whatever the Guru tells should be practised and experienced in daily life. You should not sample out every single item of advice that you hear or learn, changing the Sadhana as the fancy takes hold of you, even from a desire to become a Jnani quick. Doing thus, you will only end as a complete A-Jnani. Why, it will sometimes be preferable to remain an A-jnani; but, what happens to such people is—they tend to escape both fates and end up in madness. Therefore, one has to be very careful in this matter.

As soon as you have neared the Guru, you must endeavour to please him and win his favour through obeying his orders and serving him carefully. You should have no other thought than his welfare and happiness. Give up all else and win his Grace; then, Jnana is yours. Instead, if you are disobedient and critical through egoism and want of faith you cannot be blessed by the vision of the Truth; you will only be plunged in gloom.

As the mother cow takes the calf near when it sees it, so the Guru will draw the Shishya to his presence and give him the milk of his Grace. The Shishya ought to be of sterling character; then, just as a polished piece of iron will be attracted by the magnet, he will receive the, immediate attention of the Teacher.

The qualification of the Guru can also be inquired into by the Shishya; in fact, he ought to. For, he needs a Teacher, not any one of the various other types so named. Listen, Arjuna! I shall describe the characteristics which a Guru should possess. He must have not merely book-knowledge, but, also the wisdom derived through direct experience. He must be established in the reality, that is, in Brahmanishtha. Mere Sastrajnana is incompetent to grant Mukti; it can at best help in gaining Bhukti. Why, there are some who by sheer Anubhavajnana have won Mukti, without a grain of Sastrajnana. But, such persons cannot save disciples who are pestered by doubt; they cannot understand their difficulties and sympathise with them. So, only those who have it are entitled to give Upadesh of Jnana.

There are lakhs and lakhs of persons who are Gurus for the name's sake. All those in gerua are 'Gurus;' even those who smoke ganja are 'Gurus,' all those who indulge in discourses are 'Gurus;' all who write books are 'Gurus!' By wandering over the country and learning to argue, no one can deserve the name, Guru. He should possess all powers and through his direct experience, he must uplift the disciple, and put him on the track of the Sadhana prescribed by the Sastras. Of what use is sheer argumentative skill? Whatever is said and done by him must have the sanction of the Sastras. Mere vomiting of things imbibed from books in long speeches which move the listeners in one wave of excitement to another does not make a Guru. Such may be heroes in lecturing; but, they are zeros in Sadhana and in the mastery of the spiritual field which is needed for the position of Guru. They can be schoolmasters, but, they cannot confer Bhakti or point out the way for Liberation. These 'Gurus' attain only that stage and the Sishyas who resort to them get just that. They have as much value as the book which contains all the matter that they pour forth. Many unwary Sadhakas are attracted by the magic of words and the verbal gymnastics of such showy 'Gurus' and they lose both worlds in their ignorance. They may be called Pundits; they may give lectures; but, just because of this, they do not become entitled to grant the boon of Jnana. That can be done only by Avatars, Devamsa-sambhutas, and Tattwavidas who have realised the Absolute. (the Lord come in human form, persons who represent Divine Attributes and Glory, and Jnanis who have attained the summum bonum of spiritual Sadhana and tasted the Supreme Bliss.) It is no use claiming a fraction of this or that experience. The experience must be of the Full and itself full. Those who know only a fraction will take you up to a certain point and leave you there, in the middle region, like Trishanku, who hung between heaven and earth.

The Guru must study only the virtues and qualities of the aspirant who seeks his guidance; he must not be moved or prejudiced by his wealth, status, or position. He must be able to judge the aspirant's heart and his real nature. Such Gurus are certainly the best. The guru must act as the alarm-clock to the disciples who are caught in the sleep of A-Jnana. If the Guru is a miser and the disciple is a sloth, woe be to both.

Thus Krishna taught Arjuna very clearly the qualifications of both the Guru and the Shishya, their conduct, scholarship, virtues and weaknesses, faith and activities, and characteristics. These valuable gems of advice were addressed not only to Arjuna, but, to the whole world. All who seek to become either Gurus or Shishyas must pay attention to these precious words. The nature of the Gurus and Shishyas of today are in keeping with the low standards of today. Guru in ancient times could be found only with great difficulty; thousands of eager seekers searched in the forests for them, for they were so rare and so precious. Now, Gurus are available at every

street corner by the dozen but, true Shishyas are declining in number. Both are deteriorating fast, and are becoming as the other, suited to each other's level. The Gurus have been reduced to the necessity of feeding and fostering Shishyas; not that it is wrong, when the Shishyas are worthy; but the Gurus are afraid of the Shishyas deserting them And, so they have to cater to their tastes and fancies The Shishyas claim to be Guruputras, to be Ashramavasis, Sadhakas etc., but, their lives are untouched by Ashram atmosphere, Sadhana or Sadhu qualities. They have not even elementary gratitude to the Guru. They mouth slogans like Krishna-arpanam, but, their acts reveal only Deha-arpanam!

Besides, the Shishyas lay down some new conditions. Their desire for recreation, easy living, and Comfort has to be honoured by the Guru. The Guru must ensure the happiness of the Shishya without inflicting any physical trouble, insisting on any Sadhana, aspiring expenditure of even a nayapaisa and causing any loss or worry. Moksha must fall like a fruit into their lap. The Guru should not recommend any rigorous discipline or rule of life. The Guru must respect the wishes of the Shishya. If he goes against it, the Guru is immediately given up and condemned.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Just as a thorn in the foot is removed with the help of another thorn, Karma must be got rid of; by means of Karma alone. Sankaracharya declared that the world is an illusion but yet he revived Temples, wrote and taught, discoursed and discussed, and re-established Dharma in the world.

BABA

At The Centre Of Om

I am the One in the eight Directions
I am the Master of the eight Powers
I am the bestower of the eight Boons
I am the Truth; This is My Truth...
This is the Proclamation of Om!

The Form is the eight-fold Image
That is the Halo. the Ornament,
That is the arena of Joy, the eight-waved Space
That is the Truth in Form, the Form in Truth,
That is This, the Sathya Sai
This is That, the Sai Sathyam.

This is Thy Truth, Thou art the Truth;
Homage to Thee, Sri Sathya Sai
Homage to the Ananda Dayi!

Save me, save me, O Gurudeva!
Save me, save me, O Sathya Deva!
Om Namo Sri Sathya Sai!

[Cover Page Design: Poet, Artist]
V. Bhaskar

Prasnottara Vahini

10

- Q. You were talking of strict regimen; men too should follow this, is it not?
- A. Of course! They too are flesh and blood, bone and marrow; they too are afflicted with illness. Each and every person who is afflicted with birth and death and suffering from this cycle is in need of this medicine. And whoever helps himself to this treatment has to follow the regimen too. Man or woman, whoever neglects the regimen, cannot get rid of the illness. Men cannot afford to say that they are free from it; they have to stick to it closely and observe it strictly. Even if they have had Brahmopadesam (initiation into the spiritual path of Brahma-realisation), if they are devoid of virtues like Sama and Dama they cannot save themselves, whether they are men or women.
- Q. But then, Swami, why do many scholars learned in the Sastras declare that women have no right for acquiring Brahmavidya? What is the reason?
- A. There is no reason at all in declaring that women are not entitled to Brahmavidya. Vishnumurthy taught Bhudevi the glory of the Gita; Parameswara taught Parvati the Brahmataattwa through the Guru-Gita. That is what the Guru-Gita means when it says, "Parvathi Uvaacha". What do these words mean? Besides, Easwara initiated Parvati into Yogasastra and Mantrasastra, The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad mentions that Yajnavalkya taught Maitreyi this very same Brahmavidya. This is a well known fact. Now, you can yourself judge and draw your own conclusion whether women are entitled to Brahmavidya or not.
- Q. There are some others, Swami, who declare that women are not entitled to Brahmacharya and Sanyasa. Is it true? Do the Vedas prohibit it?
- A. The Vedas have two sections: Karmakanda and Jnanakanda. The Karmakanda is for beginners, for the undeveloped; and the Jnanakanda is for the more advanced, the developed intelligences. There is no reference to men or women in connection with these. The beginners are worldly; how can they understand the immortal message of the Jnanakanda about the Atma? In the Brihadaranyaka we have mention of Gargi and Maitreyi who shine in the spiritual splendour of Brahmacharya and Sanyasa. In the Mahabharatha also, we have Shubha Yogini and other women who are ideal women, full of virtue.
- Q. Can women win Brahmajnana, even while leading the householder's life?
- A. Why not? Madaalasa and others were able to get Brahmajnana while in the Grihasta stage of life, the householder status. You must have heard of these from the Yogavasishta and the Puranas, how they attained the height of auspiciousness, Brahmajnana itself. Then

again, do not the Upanishads declare that Kaathyayini, Sarangi, Sulabha, Viswaveda and others were adepts in Brahmajnana?

- Q. Swami, are there any women who have, attained Brahmajnana while in the Grihastha stage? And who attained it while in the Sanyasa stage? Or any who realised it while in the Vaanaprastha Stage? Are there women who got it in the Brahmacharya stage of life?
- A. Do not think that there are no women who have realised Brahmajnana while in any one of these stages. Choodaala attained it while a Grihastha; Sulabhayogini won it while a Sanyasini; Maitreyi attained it while in the Vanaprastha stage of life; and Gargi got it in the Brahmacharya stage. There were other great women of Bharat who have achieved this height. Why, there are even today many who are of this great category. I simply mentioned some four names because you came up with that question now; so do not in the least lose enthusiasm. There is no need for loss of heart.

(To be continued)

Ascetics sages and rishis attain the Brahma-dhama through rigorous self-control and discipline; but, we O Lord, though caught in the coils of Karma, shall surely overcome the darkness of Ajnana through the Smarana and Kiratana of Your doings, utterances gaits, smiles glances, jokes and acts, with which You fill this 'human' drama as enacted by this Avatar on the world.

Uddhava: Bhagavata XI 7-48-49

Baba's Dasara Discourses

Baba's Dasara Discourses this year undoubtedly struck a new note, revealing a new temper and unfolding to the listeners fresh horizons of awareness. There was, first of all, a wonderful touch of personal communication in all His speeches so that they ceased to be formal "discourses" and became intimate heart-to-heart talks. Secondly, there was a sense of urgency in His words that awed and thrilled many that sat listening to Him... packed audiences consisting of thousands of men and women from different parts of the country, of different levels of understanding and culture, but all united in the indissoluble bond of a common devotion. It was a thrilling experience that we enjoyed for over ten days, each day bringing with it a vision of a new spiritual landscape, serene, beautiful, full of peace and of many variegated but soft colours, soothing to the heart tranquillising the spirit and up-lifting the mind.

Dharma

The nature and function of dharma was almost a constant theme of these discourses. While the many learned pandits dealt with the conventional contours of the subject, quoting extensively from the Vedas and the dharma-sastras, Baba opened out a new panorama of meaning and significance, illumining His thesis by apt stories and illustrations. Baba laid continuous stress on the uniqueness of our ancient culture, and said that Indian culture was firmly rooted in dharma. The word, He said, meant a great deal more than mere "righteousness." It stood for a whole range of dualities covering every aspect and sphere of human existence. Dharma, He said,

is a protective and sustaining power, constituting the ultimate "measuring-rod" or standard for all that we think, speak and do.

Baba drew a clear distinction between "niti" and "dharma" saying that niti is worldly wisdom, regulating our relationships and actions on the worldly plane, and liable to constant modification and even alteration to suit the changing circumstances of life. In political matters, rajya-niti is a product of expediency whose sole aim is survival in a world of ambitions rivalries and struggle for domination. It does not mean that niti should always be divorced from dharma. When it is inspired by Truth, it ceases to be expediency or opportunism and becomes a universal law of life. Dharma is universal; it does not change with the changing times; it stands solid and secure, an eternal beacon of light to those who falter and doubt on their arduous pilgrimage through life.

Dharma is a divine law, deriving its potency and validity from God Himself. Our sastras make it clear that dharma is at the very root of creation. It pervades the universe like an atmosphere giving meaning and value to life itself. A world without dharma cannot survive. Baba referred to the Ramayana as a magnificent thesis on the sanctity of dharma. The whole creation is a Pattern shaped by God to fulfill Himself and establish dharma.

Ramarajya is really dharma-rajya. Every character in the story is an instrument in the hands of God to fulfill the divine mission of His avatar. Even Kaikeyi is an instrument in the hands of God. Rama's mission was to destroy danavatwa and re-establish manavatwa in the world. A struggle was inevitable. The stage had to be prepared for the conflict. Each event in the Ramayana is a link in a long chain of cause and effect, action and reaction. The Divine Plan has to work itself out. Ravana and the Rakshasas also had to play their part in this divine play. One of the most beautiful things in the Ramayana is the total dedication to dharma that the main characters display. No sacrifice was considered to be too great for upholding dharma which ennobled all relationships raising them above the level of mere personal attachment. Moha or attachment is burnt out in this sacrifice. Personal sorrow or anguish does not count in the task of preserving certain values of life. Such a sublime conception of dharma is unparalleled in the traditions and literature of the world. Baba sounded a clarion-call to the people to adhere to dharma irrespective of consequences.

It was a stirring moment when He called on every one to remember the moving story of Sri Rama where even Paramatma subjects Himself to the eternal Law of Dharma. Rama is the embodiment of this Dharma, eternally valid, unshakably strong, and a perennial source of rill that is noblest in life. One remarkable point made by Baba, was that when a person is fully aware of his own dharma he needs no external compulsion to tread the right path. Goodness beauty and truth come to him spontaneously, even as fragrance is an inherent quality of a flower, not something imposed from outside. Such individuals who instinctively do what is right are the real leaders of men.

Bhakti

Bhakti was another favourite theme of Baba's speeches, He called it Rakshana Shakti, the supreme protective power in life. Avoiding all learned definitions of the word, Baba defined Bhakti as nothing but supreme prema or love. Going into the various aspects of Bhakti, He said it is the essence of all the sadgunas which ennoble and glorify man. These sadgunas give men their

essential manavatwa. But of all these sad gunas, faith in God is the most important. You cannot love a person when you have no "faith" in him. The person you love must mean something in your life. This is vishvasa, a recognition of the value and worth of the other individual. On the foundation of faith, you build love. This love is not mere vyamoha, which is, after all, a selfish attitude. Vyamoha is possession. It breeds selfishness, jealousy and ultimately dwesha which is the opposite of love. Such attachment is temporary. A Bhakta's love is deep, unassailable and eternal. It does not change, whatever might be the difficulties or obstacles.

Radha's prema for Krishna was of this exalted type. Even in the absence of the Lord, Radha still treasured the divine swarupa (form) in her heart and she never felt the anguish of separation. That is why her love is regarded as the purest type of bhakti. This purity is a distinguishing quality of a true Bhakta. There is another quality which is inseparable from bhakti. It is humility or the dasya attitude. The best example of this is Hanuman. He was the humblest of the humble in the presence of Rama. To him, Rama was everything, his most precious possession. No service of the Lord was too small for Hanuman. He lived for Rama without whom his life had no meaning.

Again, bhakti is an end in itself, not a means to achieve or get something you desire. It should be nishkama bhakti, pure and unsullied by any selfish seeking. The thrill and joy which Meerabai got when she contemplated the beautiful vision of Giridhari, the inner peace that Tyagaraja got when he recited the name of Sri Rama, the ecstasy which Chaitanya enjoyed when he prayed to Lord Krishna, the supreme contentment that Samarth Ramadas achieved when he worshipped Rama with all the strength of his being—can any price be assigned to these experiences? It is an urge that springs from the very depths of one's being like water that gushes out of a perennial spring. It is man's innermost longing to be with God from whom, for a time, he is separated because of Karma-bandhana. Bhakti is like the yearning of a traveller who has lost his way for his true home. Bhakti establishes personal communion with God. Of all the yogas, Bhakti-yoga is the easiest to achieve Moksha for there is no power stronger than love to make God your captive.

Purity of Bhava

In a ringing voice, Baba declared: Remember that this present Avatar was assumed with the sole object of giving ananda to the bhaktas, Sai yearns for the love of a true bhakta even more intensely than the bhakta longs for Sai's love. Sai Baba is a veritable Kalpavriksha to His true devotees. He wants only nischala-prema, not adambara and ahamkara (pomp and pride). He is always in the devotee's heart, hridaya-nivasi, and when one is aware of this constant presence, all of you will be exalted and become worthy of My love and grace. God does not need the lip-service that comes from a hollow heart. The true naivedya to God is the devotee's heart, pure, generous, noble in every way. Fruits, flowers, and other offerings mean nothing to Me. Offer to me the pure naivedya of Love. When you do this, you will lose all sense of separateness from Me. Distance and time are nothing when heart speaks to heart. Pure bhava is what God needs, for He is a bhava-priya and not bahya-priya. Wealth, cleverness, pomp and show are tremendous obstacles in the bhakti-marga. "

Jnana

Baba did not miss the opportunity, during His talks, to refer to what He aptly called the modern tragedy of the Intellect. He elaborated lucidly the characteristics of a true Jnani. Cultivation of the mind is necessary and useful up to a point, But the mind can be one of the worst of tyrants, more ruthless and destructive than any rakshasa of our legends. In fact, Ravana's tragedy was the tragedy of a soaring intellect, divorced from all moral scruples, all dharma. To be an intellectual giant is really a great disaster, for the intellect, when unrestrained by morality or sadgunas and faith in God, can be terribly dangerous. It analyses scrutinizes, examines everything, tearing apart the wonderful integrity of truth. Of course, alochana-shakti is very useful. It has given us an insight into the nature of the world, in all its material aspects. But without viveka, the intellect can only indulge in analysis and criticism (vimarsha). Today, we are witnessing the calamitous results of man's over-developed intellect. We have probed into the secrets of the universe, soared to dizzy heights of technological development, left nothing unanalysed. But is there any peace in the world? We are beset by anxieties. We have lost atma-vishvasa. If we have no love in our hearts how can we love others? We ridicule everything that is good, beautiful and true. It is a mark of cleverness to feel superior to everybody else, to belittle our cultural heritage and act and behave as if we are aliens in our own land. But peace cannot come to us when we have no peace in our hearts. Accumulation of knowledge has warped our spirits. We have turned away from para-tattwa, which is the only source of true jnana, the wisdom that can save us and illumine our lives.

The true jnani never thinks that he knows everything. He is ever a seeker, with his goal fixed on Paramatma. There is a knowledge which transcends earthly things, the knowledge of the Supreme Reality. To strive to know this Reality is the only thing that matters. All other knowledge which makes life more comfortable, or enables us to enjoy Aihika sukha, worldly pleasures, is really useless. Earthly comforts and pleasures are temporary. The body with all its cravings and weaknesses must die one day. What remains eternal is the atma... the indestructible element which gives to life its sole meaning and purpose. The true jnani is also a bhakta. To him the love of God compensates for all the difficulties and deficiencies of the earthly life. His whole life is dedicated to God. It is His will that is supreme to him. This is the atma vidya which our scriptures speak of. The Upanishads constantly harp on the need to know the "Self". The Gita speaks of the indestructibility of this "Self" or Atma. Nainam chindanti sastrani, nainam dahati pavakah... The knowledge of this Atma is more important than a mere collection of facts and bits of worldly knowledge, which, with all its wonderful achievements, has not succeeded in averting death or disease.

Why then do we make so much of this knowledge? By all means have knowledge, even scientific and technological knowledge. Without it life cannot move forward. Even that knowledge is part of Truth, a particle of that supreme Wisdom which is God. But let us not stop with that. There are things beyond the farthest reach of your mind, which cannot be experimented on in our laboratories. The knowledge of God, the joy of experiencing His love, the miracle of spiritual transformation, all these are beyond our physical perception. To attain these should be our goal, our constant endeavour. Only then men will attain not only manavatva but also Madhavatva, realisation of the Supreme.

Code of Conduct

Almost in every discourse, Baba referred to the simple duties and responsibilities of men. From the sublime heights where He made his listeners dwell for a moment, Baba frequently came down to the ordinary arena of daily conduct. He harped on sadgunas, qualities which should be cultivated by all of us in order that we might create around us an atmosphere of harmony, peace, and fellowship. Baba said that it was the particular responsibility of those who called themselves devotees to adhere to these qualities. Much bitterness and unhappiness are caused by an angry word and even by a gesture of discourtesy. Baba exhorted all devotees to cultivate mutual affection and respect. A gentle word a little smile, a simple act of helpfulness or generosity will go a long way in making our lives happy. Gossip and slander are two of our worst enemies. Anger is another major durguna. The conquest of anger is essential if we have to advance along the spiritual path. Anger destroys harmony and peace, and leaves a trail of bitterness. We usually speak of six durgunas and call them our "six enemies".

It is truly said that happiness is goodness. An unhappy mind breeds evil. It is a fertile soil for jealousy, malice, and desire for revenge. When we speak ill of another, we injure ourselves more than we injure the victim. What is called manavatwa is nothing but a sense of kinship with our fellowmen. Kinship is not mere "identity", but a sense of being one with others, Baba particularly referred to the code of conduct and behaviour which devotees should carry out at the Prasanthi Nilayam, which is really an abode of Peace.

The High Privilege

Throughout these discourses, Baba was eager to help the devotees to know themselves. He did not mince words when He referred to the prevalent doshas (defects) of many who call themselves devotees. He condemned all pose and pretension and exhorted the devotees to come to Him with a pure heart, full of love and devotion. He reminded them of their high privilege in being at Puttaparthi, in the presence of the Lord Himself and asked them to realise how fortunate they were. Sai, He said was the embodiment of Audarya (generosity) vatsalya (love) and abahya (assurance). Here, there is no cause to feel depressed. Those who come in distrust, disbelief, to criticise and find fault are only wasting their time, energy and money. Make your stay useful, happy, and deserve Sai's Grace and Love. To, Sai Baba all are the same—the rich and the poor, the ignorant and the wise. When you are here, your thoughts and words must be pure, and you should carry that purity wherever you are. God watches over you all and He is pleased only when man is genuine, sincere and not when he adopts adambara and ahamkara. Baba then said; "Do not be misled by those who call themselves Sai Bhaktas and build mandirs and conduct mass prayers. This is nothing but exploitation. Sai is pleased with only the purest type of prema He is with you even when you take His name or think of him. My relationship with true bhaktas is not of this birth. It is janmantar, it is has been there from generation to generation. I am here to help you all to realise your high divine destiny, to lead you to the highest bliss—Ananda. I bless you all."

All Names and All Forms

"All the rains from all the skies reach ultimately the sea; all the adoration offered to all the Gods in all the climes and in all languages reach ultimately Kesava" declares Scripture. The devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba know from personal experience that the Japa of any of the many Names or Dhyana on any of the many Forms of the Lord are cognised and rewarded by Baba Himself. Baba Himself has announced times without number that He can be adored by any Name and as having any Form that appeals to the mind of the Sadhaka. "There is no Name that is not Mine; there is no Form alien to Me," He has said.

On Gurupoornima Day, 1963, He proclaimed that He was Siva-Shakti. He has conferred upon many fortunate sadhakas the Vision of Himself as Lord Ganapati as Sri Rama as Srinivasa and Murals Krishna. For, His Mission is to fulfill the yearning of the true devotees That is the purpose of His Advent.

He has said, "The Sadhana that you do will never be barren; it will certainly yield fruit one day." Thus, the Brahmin bhakta from Sathanur who performed 108 Lalitha Sahasranama Pujas to overcome some illness which was ascribed to the evil inherited from previous births was granted a vision of himself by Baba, who then put into his mouth the Divine Vibhuti which cured him completely. His Sadhana was rewarded by Baba. So too, the Sirpur devotee, Sri Ramanandaraao who had spend years in the japam of Ramanam was accorded by Baba the vision of his own Guru and thereafter, of Sri Rama and Himself. Both these people had never known of Baba before the Vision they were vouchsafed? Swami Abhedananda who was yearning for many years for Peace was granted a Vision by Baba of his own Guru, Ramana Maharshi and immediately thereafter of himself as Baba, the Saviour. He too had not seen Baba before that experience.

Baba is showering Vibhuti from the pictures that devotees worship reverently in their shrine rooms. In Bombay, Mangalore, Shimoga, Puttur, Varaguneri Gugaluru, Kalladakkurichi, Bangalore and other places, Baba is thus blessing His devotees. In one place, the image of Shirdi Sai Baba is covered by showers of self-created Vibhuti; in another, Vibhuti spontaneously appears on the picture of Pranava; in fact, He clearly declares by this that He is all Forms and all Names, and even the Formless and the Nameless. Srinivasa, Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Siva, Ganapati—from all pictures Baba's Grace produces the Vibhuti to the wonder of all. Large quantities are collected every day and still the Vibhuti is showered.

The devotees keep in the Puja room the pictures of their Gurus too and Baba demonstrates that He is the inspiration behind all spiritual teaching just as He is the strength behind all spiritual effort, by creating Vibhuti even upon these pictures.

Whoever sees this miraculous manifestation must be convinced that Baba is "Sarva-devatha-swarupa." Even while at Shirdi, Baba had declared "I am Fakir Bua," "I am Bandra Maulana," "I am Akkalko Maharaj," "I am Mahalakshmi" "I am He who is in Pandharipur," "I am the Person who taught Uddhava as mentioned in the XI Skanda of the Bhagavata," "What does it matter if you visualise this Sai or Lakshminarayana in your Dhyana? Both are same." "I am Ganapati. Mother, the offerings you placed before Ganapati reached Me," "I am Dattatreya; I heard the prayers that came out of your heart at Ganigapur!"

At Shirdi as well as now at Prasanthi Nilayam, He is the same Sarvadevataswarupa Sai. Proceed along the path of Sadhana; and this fact will become so clear that conviction must be established

The Giridhari

O! The Cowherd Boy of Brindavan!
He sang, He danced, He was everywhere;
He frolicked and frisked; He tended the sick;
He talked to the sages; He taught even seers;
He raced: he romped with a bevy of boys;
He broke into hearts through the door of Love
He played on a Flute that drew in the World!
He saved, He succoured, set humps aright;
For a morsel of food, he gave ages of Gold.
He forced the gods their bounds to keep;
He granted visions of Himself, as All.
There was no other talk on the tongues of men
Who saw Him once; nought else was sweet.
There was no other thought in the minds of men
No space was there for lesser lure.
He fed each cow; no fang or claw could harm.
Why fear when He was near?
When darkness deepened and the eye lids drooped
He brought each faithful cow to the cosy warmth
Of His own caress!.....
Pray pardon all these past tense verbs!
He *is* present! He *has* come! Baba *is* here!
Come one, come all-and revel in His Grace!
He talks, He teaches, He fosters, He fends,
Come one, Come all-and join His Herd!!

Prasanthi Nilayam News

October: 17 & 18;	Discourses at Prasanthi Nilayam by Pundits and by Baba
October: 29	Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha Meeting at Perambur, Madras
November 3:	Dipavali
„ 4:	Prof. Gulati of the Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa, New Delhi arrived to have Darshan of Baba
6:	Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha Sessions at Kurukonda, Gudur Tk, Nellore Dt.
„ 7:	Medical College Students from East Africa. Fiji and Kashmir arrived at the Nilayam for the Darshan of Baba

How can such coddled comfort-loving persons attain Moksha? If a Guru is not able to secure such disciples, why should he deplore his failure? What is the extent of his loss? It is strange that there are Gurus who lament when they are not able to attract such disciples towards them! Opium eaters, ganja smokers, are alas! unfit to be Gurus. They are cheats. How can those who spend their energies in securing wherewithal for their food be Gurus? How can those who seek to fulfill their sensual fancies be Disciples? These are Dhanagurus, those are Mada disciples! To consider such, as Gurus and Sishyas is to drag those holy names into the dust of disgrace.

Who then is the genuine Guru? It is he who teaches the path of destroying Moha or Delusion. And who is the genuine Sishya or Disciple? it is he who seeks to control and conquer the outward fleeing mind. The Gurus of today vomit every day from the platforms what they stuffed into their heads the previous day under the midnight lamp. Their performance is only like regurgitating the food once swallowed, and nothing more. They talk like parrots; so correctly do they reproduce what they have learnt by rote. Even children know that greed and anger have to be mastered; but in these people, greed and anger, envy and hatred, lust and pride pop up their devilish heads through every little word that they utter, every little deed they do. If those who claim to be Gurus do not themselves master these propensities, how can the unfortunate disciples who resort to them for guidance, be successful?

Well. Provided the Guru is supremely self-sacrificing, saturated with self-less Sarva-jana-samaana sympathy, seeking to sustain Sathya, his soul suffused with strength-giving thoughts, striving to secure sorrow-less lives for all, leading a sweet and simple life, satisfied only by the chance to show others san-marga and Sat-guna—then, only a few disciples will gather around him. They will impose upon him faults that sully him and cast doubt upon his integrity and genuineness! That is the evil fate of the victims of such doubt. The Guru is as serene as ever; he suffers no loss. The loss is all for the Sishyas, who let go the great chance.

Of one thing, be certain. So long as the delusion that one is the body, is not cast aside, God cannot be realised, however far one may wander, whatever the number of Gurus one might select and serve. Stick to that delusion and all the Dhyana, all the Japam, all the waters of all the Holy Tirthams that you bathe in, cannot win success for you! All that effort is as useless as trying to bale out water with a vessel ridden with leaks.

Householders who carry out their duties are any day preferable to such Sadhus; they follow their Ashram-dharma and they tread the correct path in unceasing remembrance of the Lord and so, these householders realise the Goal. Well. If the nature of the Gurus and Shishyas of today is to be considered, volumes can be written; but, that will be using precious time for unessential discussion. So, we shall revert to our main topic. For, even to dwell on the sacred Guru-shishya bond of Krishna-Arjuna in the same breath with the relationship of the present day "Gurus" and "Sishyas" will be a sacrilege. They are unique, incomparable, the supreme pair, unapproachable by any other. They have to be taken as the ideal by all aspirants and teachers. Arjuna bowed in humility and carried out sincerely the precepts of the Guru. Krishna fostered what was really

beneficial to Arjuna; he paid full consideration to what will really promote the reputation, the Atma-ananda and the Dharma of Arjuna; He tended him and fended him, as the very breath of His Life. That was the type of Guru the Lord was for him. Krishna is Paramatma Arjuna is Jiva-atma Krishna is Purushottama; Arjuna is narottama. That is the reason why they are the ideal Guru-Shishya. Others are Guru-Shishya only in name. Self-willed Sishyas and power-drunk Gurus are simply wasting their lives in vain pursuits. Krishna is an ocean of Prema; He watched over Arjuna as one watches over the eye on the face or the heart in the body. He taught holiness and transformed into holiness; He loved and was loved beyond compare. That makes the Guru a Genuine Guru. And Arjuna? He too is no ordinary being. His Tyaga is unapproachable. What ever the crisis, he stuck to Krishna's command and Krishna's word; he wore the comradeship with the Lord as the armour that will save him from all harm, as the very body in which he dwelt, as something which he must foster, strengthen and guard; though a mighty force he was ready to efface it when necessary. This is how Guru and shishya should be bound together. The Lord who is the embodiment of Prema realized the sincerity of the Disciple and estimated His attainments and then detailed to him the benefits and glory of atma-jnana. "Kauntheya", He said, "By means of Jnana, you can see in yourself and in Me all beings; then, duality and the consequent delusion will disappear, as darkness disperses before the rising sun.

Arjuna, I know well you, past and the background of your birth. Yours is no ordinary birth; you are born with Divine, Daivi accomplishments and heritage. I alone am aware of it, no one else. Since you are unaware of it you are now condemning yourselves as a sinner who kills kith and kin, teachers and elders! Even if you have sinned, are not sinners saved? Repentance is enough to transmute you into sanctity.

The word graciously accepts contrition and pours His blessings. The Ratnakara who was engaged in acts of sin until the moment when wisdom dawned became a saint through repentance, and became the sage, Valmiki is it not? His story is proof of the value of contrition. You may ask, is it enough if one is free from the effects of sin? Should not the effects of Punya, be also given Up? Why, One has freedom to give up merits of Punya, though one, may not have equal freedom to give up the demerit of Papa. The roaring forest fire reduces to ashes everything in its way; so too, the mighty conflagration of jnana will consume and destroy all papa and all punya.

To acquire this sacred spiritual Jnana, one thing is essential: Shraddha, steady faith in the Sastras and the Teachers, and in the acquisition of Jnana. Without earnestness born of faith, no task, however tiny, can be accomplished by man. Therefore, you can yourselves see how essential it is for accomplishing the life-giving task of earning Jnana. Shraddha is not something slight and common. It is the incomparable treasure-chest of Sama, Dama, Uparathi Titiksha and Samadhana, each one a coveted possession of the Sadhaka.

Well; you may be under the impression that this alone is enough to get Jnana. No, no; this is only the first step. You must have been yearning to imbibe the teachings I am imparting. This is very necessary. Along with these too, you must be vigilant; do not yield to sloth. Again, you may now and then fall into company that is not congenial or encouraging. To escape the evil influence of such company and to strengthen your mind to avoid it altogether, mastery over the senses is required."

Do not admit doubt into you. Want of faith or steadiness is not as destructive as doubt. In its operation and consequence, it is like the tubercular bacilli to the Sadhaka. It is born in A-jnana and it penetrates into the cavity of the heart of man to breed there. It is the parent of all disaster.

Therefore, destroy this demon with the sword of Self-knowledge or Atma-jnana. Arise, Arjuna! Engage in activity as if duty bound, have full faith in My Words do as I bid, with no thought of the fruit therefrom. Be a practitioner of Nish-kama-karma. By that renunciation, you will get established in Jnana and win Liberation from all change, from Birth and Death.

Give up the idea that you are the doer and that you are the beneficiary. How can you do this? By the attitude of dedication, dedicating both deed and fruit to the Lord. Then, no sin can affect you, for you are not the doer and the deed must perforce be holy. Like oil on tongue, Collyrium on the eye, lotus leaf on water, the deed is *with* you, but not *of* you. Whatever you do or hear or see, you remain "unaffected, devoid of deeds, innocent of listening or seeing. The joy derived from the external world opens the gateways of grief; it is fleeting; but you are eternal, the very source of Bliss, above and beyond all this, the Atma swarupa itself. That is your genuine nature. You are unrelated to these activities that are called deeds and these consequences which you now mistake as real. You are not the doer; you are just the Witness, the See-er! All Sour perplexity has arisen from the delusion that you are the doer, from your ego and the sense of "mine". Know the Brahman; take up all tasks but renounce the consequences; giving up the fruit of activity is far superior to the giving up of activity itself. Karmayoga is far superior to Karma-sanyasa, remember.

Well. Superior to both these, is Dhyana-yoga. I shall tell you why. The Dhyana Yoga needs the support of Karmayoga and so, the Karmayoga was first taught to you. Those who renounce the fruits while actively engaged in Karma are very dear to Me, they are the true Sanyasins, the real Renouncers. I never bestow affection on those who give up the ritual Fire and desist from all activity except eating, sleeping and craving for sensory pleasures and behave like Kumbha-karna's kinsmen, idling and wasting their time. I am unapproachably far from idlers. He who has not renounced the pursuit of wishes can never become a Yogi, however busy he may be in Sadhana. Only he who is careful not to get entangled in the senses and who is unattached to the consequences of his deeds can become a Sarva-sanga-parithyagi.

Dhyana-yoga too is possible only on the basis of this Nish-karma-karma, if the mind is not under control and amenable to one's orders, it can become one's greatest foe. So, live in solitude so that you can master the senses. A horse without reins, a bull unused to the yoke and a Sadhaka whose senses are not mastered are all like a river without water. Such Sadhana is a waste. So, arise, Arjuna! Practise Dhyana-yoga. Resolve to master the senses through this Yoga and follow it steadily, systematically, regularly, at a stated time and in a stated place, without changing the time and place as the whim takes you. A regular system is essential for this Yoga. Observe it strictly. Do not alter the system, as fancy dictates; that will bring about dire consequences. For those who eat too much and get exhausted with the task of assimilating it, for those who eat less and suffer from the exhaustion caused by want of sustenance, for those who sleep too much or too little, for those who indulge in Dhyana according to 'convenience', (that is to say, those who do it for long hours one day because they have no other work, and do just token Dhyana the next

day, because they have lots of work), for those who give free rein to the six inner enemies (Kama Krodha and the rest) for those who do not give joy to the parents, and specially the mother—more than all these, for those who entertain doubt and want of faith in the Lord, or, in the Guru whom they have chosen and installed in their hearts—Dhyana will yield no fruit at all.

The mind of the adept in Yoga should be like the steady upright unshaken flame of the lamp, kept in a wind-less window-sill. Whenever the slightest sign of unsteadiness occurs, you should endeavour to curb the mind, and not allow it to wander as the whirr takes it. Develop the consciousness that you are in all and the feeling of oneness that all is in you. Then, you can take up and succeed in all the Yogas. Then you are free from all distinctions like 'I' and 'others', or as 'Atma and Paramatma'. The joy and grief of others will then become equally yours. You can never harm others; then all will be loved and adored in the awareness that they are Sarveswara. Lord Krishna declared that those who have attained this vision are really the supremest Yogis

Meanwhile, Arjuna the disciple is beset by doubt and he asks for elucidation and explanation, so that he may get convinced. "Krishna! All that you have been telling me is very pleasant to the ear and I can well imagine that it must be a source of Ananda to those who attain success. But, it is all so difficult, beyond the reach of all. The Yoga wherein everything has to be realised as equal (Samatvam) is fraught with obstacles even for the fully equipped Sadhaka; what then am I to say of people like me who are common aspirants? Is it ever possible for us? Krishna! Is the mind so easily controllable? Alas! Even an elephant cannot drag as it does; it is the nursery of waywardness; the fickleness of the mind has become proverbial. Its mulishness and obstinacy are also very powerful, it is a terrible shrew. It can never be caught; it will never halt at one place. It is like capturing the wind in the palm of the hand, or bundling up water—the attempt to catch the mind and tame it. How can any one enter upon Yoga with such a mind? One seems as hard as the other, the twin tasks of controlling the mind and practising the Yoga. Krishna, you are advising an impossible task, beyond the capacity of any one.

The Lord broke into a smile, on hearing these words. "Arjuna! You have observed the mind and known its nature very well. But, it is not an impossible task; the mind can be mastered, however difficult the Like might be. By systematic practice (Abhyasa) and by relentless Inquiry (Vichara) and the observance of detachment (Vairagya)—the mind *can* be mastered. There is no task that cannot be accomplished by steady practice. Place faith in the Lord and practise, with full certainty that you have the power and the Grace—and all tasks become easy.

Therefore, whoever enters upon this Sadhana with determination will attain the supreme Goal, devoid of the slightest blemish and available only for souls, transmuted through several births. Remember, the person who has achieved Yoga is superior to the person who is the master of ritual Karma; so, strive, O Arjuna, to become a Yogi, to attain that high and holy status. This is not all you have to do. There is a status, higher than even this. Whoever fixes his entire consciousness in Me, whoever earnestly meditates on Me, to the exclusion of everything else, he is superior to all, he is a Maha-yogi.

Dhyana yoga and Juana yoga both are inner disciplines; they are based on Shraddha and Bhakti. Without these two, they are both unattainable; such pursuit is vain. A Sadhaka, deprived of them, is as a wooden doll, lifeless, unaware of his goal or powers.

The basic requisite is deep-rooted Prema towards the Lord. How can you get this? By getting to know the glory, the splendour, the nature and characteristics of the Lord, His Swabhava and Swarupa. That is why I am now instructing you about these. I am imparting to you fully the wisdom of the Sastras supplemented by the wisdom of inner experience. Know that there is nothing further for you to know. Of the thousands of aspirants, there are few who strive to acquire this Juana. And, of these, only some one single individual, achieves success. All who start do not reach the Goal.

Arjuna! Note that there is nothing higher than Me, in the World. All are strung in Me, like flowers on a string. The Five Elements, Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkaram... these eight varieties of Prakriti have produced the Sthula-Sukshma Prapancha, the Gross and the Subtle in Creation. This is called A-para Prakriti; There is another Prakriti distinct from this. That is known as Paraprakriti. It is neither Sthula nor Sukshma; it is Chaitanya, indwelling in the Jivi. The Jagat itself is its aspiration.

The Lord first created the gross world and then, as Jiva, He entered it and rendered it Chit, by His Chaitanya. This is declared clearly in the Vedas. You must consider the A-para prakriti to be the Swabhava of Parameswara and the Para-prakriti to be His Swarupa. Dwell, on the meaning of these, Swabhava and Swarupa, and grasp it well. The Gross is bound by the dictates of Chaitanya, which is Sarva- swatantra. full master, ever free.

'Jivi' means, that which assumes Prana; the Jivi holds on to Prana, through his skill and intelligence He is the Antaryamin, who has penetrated into every thing and who sustains everything. So, the Para-prakriti is just Paramatma itself. All that becomes manifest with the same Chaitanya have to be taken as One.

Jada-Chaitanya are the two essentials for the entire Creation. They are the same as Prakriti-Purusha. The Chaitanya shakti, when it entertains the idea of Bhoga, expresses the World out of its own Swakarma. The Jada assumes the form of the Deha. Both these are My Nature, take it from Me. The Easwara, who causes Creation Preservation and Dissolution through these, is I Myself, remember. There is no substance other than Me; there is no Reality other than Me. I am the Primal Cause, the Primal Substance. "I am One; let Me become Many": thus I Myself resolved upon this expansion into manifoldness, called Srishti. That resolution affected and motivated the Maya-shakti and so the Mahath-tattwa got produced. That was the first step in the evolution of Prakriti.

If a seed is planted in the earth and if it is watered, in a day or two it will drink in the moisture and swell in size. The sprouting has not yet taken place but, the first change in this. The Mahath-tattwam is a happening of this type. Next, in accordance with the will of the Lord, a sprout arises. That is called, Mahad-ahamkaram. From it, five leaves break forth, the subtle principles of the Five Elements. The entire Jagat is the combined product of these eight: Prakriti-shakti, Mahath-tattwam, Ahamkaram, and the Five Elements or Panchabhuthas.

(To be continued)

I was a Dreamer

O Baba, from infancy, I was a dreamer;
O Baba, I dreamt of heaven and its streamer;
Of temples, mosques, and churches—
Was always engaged in searches!

I search'd for the lost harmony;
I search'd for the soul's symphony;
I search'd for God in human form
I search'd for the God who would transform.

Baba is God; and, so, I was glad;
There is no need for me to be sad;
Let me be caught in His Grip—
Let me rise in joy and never slip!

O Baba, I see God in Thee;
And, so, I am fearless and free,
And I have so many plans
To benefit and advance all clans!

I pray to Thee to shower Thy Grace
On me and mine, that I may face
The world of illusion and glimpse the truth
And become as fresh and bold as youth 1

Wilt Thou not raise me by Thy Hand
And make me the head of a band
Of true and sincere devotees of God
And mould them to love Thee and laud
—K. Vaidyanathan

Worlds are born and die; ages add up their years and ripen and decay; days come and go; time fleets. Those who are born die and are born again. But, man is caught in conjectures and doubts and arguments. He is bound by relationships that are un-real and attachments that are shadowy. You must learn to be witnesses, spectators of the game of life. The spectators of a cricket match enjoy every good stroke and even every bad stroke; every good catch and even every missed ball. For they are witnesses, come to enjoy the game, not to see that one team wins over the other. So

also, you can get Ananda from both victory and failure, if you adopt the attitude of Witness, the Drashta. If you get attached to this Flux of joy and grief you cannot get real Ananda.

BABA

Prasnottra Vahini

11

- Q. When we have so many examples of women who have attained Brahmajnana, how is it that so many argue against it? Why do they impose limitations on women?
- A. It is sheer absurdity to deny women the right to earn Brahmajnana. But in worldly matters, it is necessary that some limitations are respected by them. They are laid down only in the interests of Dharma and for Loka-kalyana. For the sake of the upkeep of morals and for social health in the world, women have to be bound by them. They are too weak to maintain certain standards of life and discipline; they have some natural handicaps; that is the reason for these limitations.

This does not mean any fundamental inferiority. Why, even Pundits and men learned in the Sastras acquire their Jnana through the reverential homage they pay to the Feminine Deity, Saraswati. The patron Deity of Vidya, as well as of Wealth and Jnana are all three feminine. They are Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati. Even in customary correspondence, when women are addressed, they are referred to as, “To...who is equal to Lakshmi” etc. You always speak of Mata-Pita, Gowri-Sankara, Lakshmi-Narayana, Sita-Rama, Radha-Krishna etc. The feminine name comes first and then the masculine. From this itself you can gather how much reverence is paid to women here.

- Q. The distinction between man and woman—do you condemn it as Mithya-jnana or do you value it as Atma-jnana?
- A. My dear fellow! The Atma has no such distinction; it is eternally conscious, pure, self-effulgent. So, it can only be Mithya-jnana; it can never be Atma-jnana. It is a distinction based on the Upadhi, the mask, the Limitation. The Atma is neither masculine, feminine nor neuter; it is the form that limits and deludes and that wears the names.
- Q. Swami! Of the four Ashrams, the Brahmacharya, the Grihastha, the Vanaprastha and the Sanyasa, which is basically important?
- A. As all living things are dependent on the Pranavayu (life-giving breath), so are all Ashrams dependent on the Grihastha. It is he who provides food and drink to the rest and fosters them. He promotes the study of the Vedas; he guards the scriptures. So, the Grihastha-ashram is the most important. In the Shrutis, the Narada Parivrajak-opanishad and in the Manu-dharmasastra, it is declared that a Grihastha who strictly adheres to his Ashram-dharma is worthy of the greatest respect.
- Q. But Swami, some people say that the Sanyasi is superior to the Grihastha; how far is this correct?
- A. Whatever be the Ashram, if the person follows the Dharma laid down for that stage and carries it out in practice and steadfastly yearns for Liberation, he can get, it; there is no doubt. To win Atma-jnana, one need not prefer this Ashram to that; all are capable of

securing it. There is no superior or inferior. It is only conduct and character that can be labelled as superior and inferior.

- Q. Swami! They say that the Grihasta-ashram binds while Brahmacharya and Sanyasa liberate. How did that opinion arise?
- A. I will not agree with that. Why, he who earns money by lawful means, he who honours his guests, who serves and pleases his fellowmen, attains liberation along with those learned in the Sastras and those who are well established in the fundamental philosophy of the Spirit. No one can cross the ocean of birth and death because he is a Sanyasi or Brahmachari. High ancestry, attainments in asceticism, the status of a monk, profound scholarship nothing will help, by itself. There must also be the faithful and steady pursuit of Swadharma, the study of the scriptures, like the Veda or the Bhagavad-Gita, and a disciplined spiritual life of Japam and Dhyanam.
- Q. Swami! What virtues should persons in each of these four Ashrams cultivate in order that they may be saved?
- A. There are ten virtues which together comprise the basic Dharma of the aspirants: Daya, A-stheya, Dhee, Vidya, Sathya, Indriya-nigraha, Soucha, Kshama, Dhriti and A-krodha; these ten all persons must cultivate, whatever their Ashram may be. They are enough to save you, wherever you are. And if one has not acquired them, his life is a waste, whatever be his Ashram. The daily routine of his life is the essential thing and it should reflect these ten qualities. It is this very thing that Lord Krishna told Arjuna, in reply to his question. Don't you know what Krishna said?

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Nirakara as Narakara

The Birthday of Baba was celebrated in the Divine Presence at the Prasanthi Nilayam, on the 23rd November. Thousands started the Day with Pranava Japam at 4-30 A. M. and the Recital of Suprabhatham. Baba gave them all His Darshan even at that early hour. At 8 A. M , amidst the ringing of bells, the music of drum and pipe, the recitation of the Vedas and the singing of songs, Baba appeared at the Portico, near the lovely image of Murali Krishna and He was garlanded on behalf of the Bhaktas, at the Nilayam as well as all the far flung corners of the World. Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao laid at His Feet the homage of the Bhaktas with a short and significant speech. "The beginningless and endless Divine Substance has appeared in the Narakara and we are celebrating the Birthday for ourselves, more than for anything else" He said. Baba addressed the gathering, announcing Himself as "A-natha natha, Sri-natha and Loka-natha, as well as Sachidananda murthi." "For your birth, the Dushkarma or Satkarma that you have done in the past is the cause, but for the Birth of an Avatar, the Dushkarma of some and the Satkarma of others are the cause. The Dushkarma of Hiranyakasipu and the Satkarma of Prahlada caused the appearance of the Narasimha Avatar."

A ryot before he sows a field has to remove the thorny plants and the stones from it; and, after ploughing it well, he waters it and then he plants the seeds in the soil; later, he has to fence the

field around so that goats and cattle may not invade and eat off the crop. So too, man has to remove egoism from the field of his heart, soak it with the waters of Prema, plough it with Sathya, and sow the seeds of the Divine Name. And, when the sprouts appear and the plants grow green and tall, he must protect the crop with the fence of discipline, to save it from the depredation of Kama Krodha Lobha Mada Matsarya and the like. Then he can reap the harvest of Anandam. Be like an intelligent ryot when you cultivate the heart in order to derive profit therefrom.

At 10 A. M., Baba proceeded to the Auditorium gaily decorated with festoons, pictures flags and flowers accompanied by Pandits and Scholars and devotees from all parts of the country. The procession was led by Sai Geetha, the Elephant which was caparisoned magnificently for the occasion. Seated on the Silver Chair. Baba was the recipient of the devoted homage of tens of thousands of Bhaktas who came to Him in single file and offered Him flower garlands. Baba graciously accepted the garland of every man woman and child and blessed every one with a smile or a kind word or earnest enquiry, pouring joy into every heart. No one was disappointed, out of that vast gathering, for Baba was in the Chair accepting the Offerings from 10 A.M. to (would you believe it?) 7-30 P M! In spite of this long (and for humans, exacting) sessions, Baba returned at 4-30 P. M. for the Uyyalothsavam and seated on the Uyyala (Jhoola) He discoursed most thrillingly on the subject of "Divine Grace". Baba in His Discourse keenly awaited by the vast concourse, spoke on Grace and the Sadhana required to win it. The renovation of a house involves two operations removing the dust and dirt and then, painting and white washing. So too, the blemishes have to be removed from the character and virtues have to be cultivated. Then, the attitude of surrender to His Will is essential Arjuna had that Sharanagati in full measure and so he was blessed. There is no use surrendering half and half, some by you and some by Me "Grace will certainly make even Prarabdha ineffective, as the dated drug which loses its power after a certain date. The drug will be there intact in the bottle, but, its efficacy is gone. He is known as Hari, He who destroys, Hara. God does not exist for those who deny Him; He exists for those who posit His existence. Hiranyakasipu declared that He was nowhere and He was nowhere for him; Prahlada said He was everywhere and so, He was everywhere for him."

On the 24th inst, Baba inaugurated the Thirirathra Deeksha of the Sanathana Bhagavata Bhakta Samajam. On all the days there was a programme of Prabhataseva, Gopuja and Vedaparayana in the early hours of the day, followed by Suryanamaskara Kalasapuja and the worship of Sri Rama. The first day was devoted to Parvati Kalyana, the second to Sitakalyana and the third to Rukmini-kalyana, which were all celebrated with correct ritual by learned Pundits. Baba blessed the participants with His Gracious Presence and He personally saw to it that the items were gone through in strict conformity with Sastraic ritual. On the 24th morning, Br. Muthuri Kutumba Rao Bhagavathar gave a Harikatha Performance on "Parvati Kalyanam". In the evening, there was Tharanganrithya-kalakshepam by Sri Nagaraja Subbarao of Koniki, Bapatla. On the 25th, at 9 A.M. Brahmasri Kandula Subbarao Bhagavathar performed a Kathakalakshepam, "Naradagarvapaharanam" and afterwards, Br Pothukuchi Venkatachalapathi Bhagavathar followed with a Katha on "Sitakalyanam". The musical exposition of these episodes were highly appreciated by the thousands present.

In the evening, at 4 P.M., the Meeting commenced with the musical recital of the Adhyathmaramayanam by Br. Jonnalgadda Sivasankara Sastry. Later, Br. Sishta Chandramouli

Sastry, the President of the Samajam spoke on Upasana, especially of the Hanumadmanthram. Then, Baba blessed the gathering with His Divine Discourse. "Man considers that adversity is bad and prosperity is good; but, adversity is the real friend and teacher. It is adversity that brings out the latent divinity of man. It hardens man and instills renunciation and the spirit of detachment. One should not yield to despair or even dispiritedness, when faced with difficulties, Baba said. Speaking next of what Sri Chandramouli Sastry said about the 108 beads of the Japamala, Baba elucidated the significance of the number. "Why has it to be just 108, and not 110. Or 50 or 120 or any other figure"? He asked. Then, answering the question Himself, Baba said that man breathes 10,800 times during the 12 hour day, at the rate of 900 per hour. Each breath must be an utterance of the declaration by the Self of its Reality, viz., Soham. As a reminder of this duty to oneself, the number 108 is prescribed, instead of 108,00. Moreover, 9 is the number indicating Brahman as 8 is the symbol of Maya; the multiples of 9 always add up to 9; the multiples of 8 add up to figures that go on decreasing, like Maya. Nine times the number of Suns, that is, 12, gives the figure 108 and so "it is beneficial to have Japam 108 times at one stretch" Baba declared.

Then, the gathering was entertained and instructed by a thrilling "Tharanga" performance by the duet. Br. Ryali Pichayya and Br. Chitta Suryanarayana afterwards, there was a Film Show of the pictures taken during the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions at Madras and the Dasara Festival, at Prasanthi Nilayam.

On the 26th, the morning programme commenced with a very touching Kathakalakshepam on Bhakta Ramadas by Br. Neduri Viswanatha Bhagavathar of Avanigadda. He was followed by Br. Lanka Venkatasubbayya Bhagavathar who performed a Katha on "Sati Sulochana" and by Br. Karerla Subrahmanyamgaru who gave a musical exposition of the Rukminikalyanam episode from the Bhagavatham. In the evening at 4 P.M., Br. Kundirathi Venkatanarasadasugaru discoursed on 'Bhakti'. Br. Sishta Chandramouli Sastry who is a staunch Hanumadupasaka gave certain incidents revealing the Divine Nature of Hanuman. Then Baba gave His Divine Discourse, to the immense pleasure of one and all.

"There are two varieties of suffering for man some which can be allayed with the help of others and some which must be alleviated by one's own struggle and success. The essence of spiritual discipline is Prema which emanates from Bhoothadaya, the attitude of mercy, charity, love, non-violence towards all beings. This must be evinced as sweet and moderate speech and as the felt consciousness of the Unity of all in Godhead. He who sees the many as just many is unfit for the spiritual adventure. You must see the many as One." Baba advised. "The swabhava may be different; but, the Swarupa is the same", He said. "Japam or Dhyanam must be accompanied by sincere feeling and yearning, depth of Bhava. It is like the drawing of the string of the bow; the more you do it, the greater the speed of the arrow, the longer it goes and the more certain you are of its reaching the target," Baba declared.

"Really speaking there is only one entity, God; man is of the same Essence. Because there is a layer of mercury or something dark behind the glass, it reflects and the image of man is seen in the mirror; if the attachment to Prakrithi or the objective world is not there, then, no image is produced and there is just the Bimba and no Prathibimba at all. Seeing the image moving agitatedly, you feel that the original is also moving and agitated. Seeing many images in many

lakes and pots and tanks, you feel that there as many sun and moons, while really there is only one Sun and one Moon. It is caused by the delusion of many in the fact of One” said Baba. Baba also exhorted every one to follow the Code of Discipline laid down at the Prasanthi Nilayam so that each could advance step by step and rid himself of egoism and attachment.

The members of the Samajam, reluctant to leave the Presence of Baba, stayed on for the 27th November also. So, the vast gathering of Bhaktas had another day full of Divine Glory and Spiritual Teachings. Br. Kuppa Veeraraghavayya Bhagavathar gave a muscial discourse in the morning on “Hanumadsandesam” and afterwards Br. Nedur Viswanatha Bhagavathar performed a Kathakalashepam on the great Maharashtra saint, Santh Sakku Bai. There were still many Bhagavathars left among the members that the Samajam could provide for the instruction and delection of the tens of thousands attracted by the presence of Baba to the Prasanthi Nilayam who sat silently and earnestly throughout the morning and evening sessions, for their one aim was to drink deep the immortal teachings the songs and discourses and the kathas conveyed. The Bhagavathars too felt the Divinity of the Presence and forgot themselves in the Joy and the Reverence they were immersed in. On the 27th in the evening, Br. Thirpuraribhatla Sriramamurthygaru wove his musical discourse on Thyagaraja around the Saint’s great compositions which he sang with feeling; then, Br. Pathuri Madhusudhana Sastry garu of Bhattiprolu, who is a great Sanskrit scholar and poet as well, gave a Kathakalalshepam on the famous Saint of Pandharpur, Namdev. The President of the Samajam spoke a few words carving permission to leave and expressing the sincere gratitude of all for the fortune of having their sessions, their 163rd, in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Baba mentioned that the enthusiasm and sincerity of the members of the Samajam have to be emulated by the younger generation. He said, that many of the Bhagavathars were aged men, past sixty, and they proved the truth of the dictum, “Old is Gold.” Mere book knowledge will not confer this vital spark of adventure, Baba said,” It comes from the awareness of the Divinity that is inherent in man. Whoever inquires into the basic problems of who and whence and whither must arrive at the answer that the Jivi has come into this illusory Prakriti through Maya, and when that Maya stands revealed as one's own creation the Jivi no longer is separate from the Paramatma which it always was. The wave knows it is just the temporary agitation of the sea. Give up the idea of separateness and individuality; It is the Universal, the Poorna."

Baba wanted all to be aware of their great inheritance and ancestry. Sanathana Dharma is the life-breath of humanity, the courage and consolation of all drooping hearts, the very backbone of spiritual endeavour, the Manna that will confer Immortality on every individual, whatever his colour creed status or condition. He exhorted all to cultivate discrimination and detachment and take up some systematic discipline to educate the senses and the intellect along moral lines. When the Hindu worships a stone or an image, he is not reducing God into a stone, he is recognising the Divine essence of which the stone, is just a receptacle or repository. View the whole world as His Leela and yourself as a puppet in His Hands—that is the means to get full Sharanagati and secure Shanti" said Baba.

There are three types of men, those who are frank materialists and have no sense of what is beyond this “prakriti”. They live for pleasure, to get the utmost out of the things that God has created, and think that pleasure is the chief end of life. There is another class of men who are

slightly better. They are aware of God; yet are not willing to dedicate themselves solely to His service. They flit from the material to the spiritual and are always in doubt. Their convictions are nebulous. Then there is the third type of man who is solely dedicated to God. He is the “uttama” type. He does not flinch before trouble or sorrow and regards everything as God's dispensation. Do not think that this type of man is of the passive, ascetic type, lost wholly in tapas or meditation. It was Lord Krishna's main task in the Gita to reconcile renunciation with Action or Karma. Karma is essential to evolution. Even God has His Karma—not His but that of mankind, to rectify and to fulfill. But the true jnani is one who does karma without any desire for the “fruit” of his actions. The Gita calls this “Nishkama Karma”, that is, action done in a spirit of detachment. Such action is pure; it does not leave behind an unending trail of effects which bind the actor in strong servitude to Karma. This bondage can be broken only when karma is accompanied by renunciation. This is a difficult combination; but it is the essence of Dharma. This detachment can come only when we believe that whatever we do is for the sake of God. This is what is called surrender or “Sharanagati.”

"Many of you think that I am often indifferent to your problems and difficulties. How can Sai be indifferent to his devotees' needs? Understand the reason why I am not easily affected; it is because I know your Past, Present and Future. I know the perspective; I am aware of the background of each individual's life. My apparent indifference or lack of prema may sometimes baffle you. But remember that deep in my heart there is a constant watchfulness. Sai, both in the previous birth and in the present avatar, is the Protector of all devotees. Sai is present, whenever his sincere devotees need Him. All that I want is Prema and paschatapa. No one, however small or obscure is outside Sai's infinite care and infinite love. Make Me your captive by your Love. That is all I want. Not pride, pomp, wealth or power, but a heart that is pure and overflows with love for all; for he who loves others and is compassionate and considerate towards others, comes closest to Me."

While accepting the floral homage from the thousands who touched His Feet this year, Baba gave each one with His own Hand a Laddu, Symbolic of His Sweet sustaining Grace! The Birthday Festival was itself a Sweet Sustaining Gift to every aspirant, which the participants will cherish in their hearts for many years!

Baba gave Prasada with His own hands and the privilege of Namaskaram, to every one of the tens of thousands of Bhaktas on two days, after the 27th; He was busy granting interviews to the sick, the aged and the distressed as well as others until the hour of His leaving for Kurnool, on the first stage of His long tour of Andhra Pradesh and Madras, on the afternoon of the 3rd day of December.

Verily, Baba is Prema Incarnate, Karuna Incarnate, Jnana Incarnate!

Sudarshanam

This Formless assumed Form as a point
With no length and no breadth and no dimension—

The Bindu!
The Bindu emanated a Voice; It said, 'I am the Truth'
“The Truth—am I”; the Unspoken Truth was spoken thus
“The Darshan of that Nidarshan is Sudarshan.”
That is the revelation of Your Ananda, O Sathya Sai!
The Darshan of your Aadarsha, Your Task, Your Mission

Is Sudarshan for each and all.
When I am lost in You
And You and I are One
That is the achievement of the Aadarsha,
The achievement of Su-darshana.
O Sathya Sai, bless Me with Your Darshanam
That is the real Sudarshanam.

(Cover page design)
V. Bhaskar
Artist-Poet

Sathya Sai Su-darshanam

Ten days of ceaseless shower, the shower of Baba's Blessings on the Bhaktas who had gathered for the Birthday Festival.... and, Baba left on the evening of 3rd Dec. for Dronachalam and thence to Kurnool. On the outskirts of Anantapur, and at Pamidi, Bommireddipalem, Ulindikonda and many other places on the way, Baba's Car was greeted by waiting crowds and Baba blessed them all with His Sweet words of encouragement.

At 8 A.M. on the 4th Dec. Baba opened at Kurnool the Srinivasa Cloth Market, a unique cooperative undertaking by 38 Piece-goods merchants who pooled their resources of about 9 lakhs of rupees and constructed the shops, which were allotted to each of them, after the Ceremony, by the Divine Hand of Baba Himself.

The Piece-goods Merchants Association prayed in the Address they presented Baba on the occasion, to bless the members so that they too might contribute their Shakti Bhakti Shraddha and Buddhi for the great task of Dharmarakshana which, as the Avatar of the Lord, Baba has undertaken. Dr. M N Lakshminarasiah, the Minister for Panchayath Raj, Andhra Pradesh who presided over the inaugural Function congratulated the Members on the name that they had selected for the Market and on the good fortune they had in securing Bhagavan Baba to open it. He said that this laid on them the responsibility, of carrying on their business on Dharmic lines. Sri Alapati Venkataramiah, the Minister for Municipal Administration and Religious Endowments who opened the Association Hall in the Market then addressed the mammoth gathering. He expressed his joy at the success of this great venture in mutual faith and work. He said that Baba has started on the task of upholding and reviving the Sanathana Dharma of this

land and its immortal message of Prema and Bhakti Shraddha and Spiritual Sadhana, and said that He is bound to succeed because His Sankalpa is so strong.

Baba said that some may wonder how He happened to open a 'Market' but, "life itself is a big market, with its giving and taking and bargaining for profit" and "even religion and your relationship with the Lord is mostly shop keeping, for you bargain with the Lord and offer Him so much on condition that He gives you so much more in return." But, Baba said what should be offered is Bhakti and what should be taken in return is Mukti. At 6 P.M. Baba gave Darsan at the same place to nearly 15 to 20 thousand people many of whom had come from far distant villages. In his Discourse he called upon all to cultivate Faith in God and to transmute that Faith into the service of others, for those others are really the receptacles of the same Divine Essence. At 11 P. M., Baba presided over the 11th Anniversary Celebration of the Nataka Kala Parishath of Kurnool, when the Parishath honoured Kavichakora Chandrodaya Sri Pyde Lakshmiah, the celebrated Dramatist and Poet, and former Commissioner for Religious Endowments and put on boards his famous play, Hemareddy Mallamma or Srisailamahathmyam, Sri Lakshmiah said that the Presence of Baba to encourage him was indeed the happiest event of his life; he prayed that Baba might confer on him a similar blessing when the drama on Sai Baba which he had written at His suggestion and under His inspiration is enacted. Baba in His Discourse directed writers and actors to keep the stage as a great moral and educative force and not to lower standards.

Baba reached Hyderabad on the evening of 5th December. The Hyderabad City Branch of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha had made elaborate and excellent arrangements for the Inauguration of the Sabha in the Capital of Andhra Pradesh, on the 7th Dec. Many learned Vidwans who were members of the Sabha, and of its Kendra Parishad, arrived at Jusbag, where Baba was staying, on the 6th; they had the benefit of receiving His Blessings; as well as His guidance for the popular exposition of Vedic Teachings and the Sastraic codes of conduct and morality.

His Excellency Sri Pattom Thanu Pillai, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh inaugurated the Sabha, in the superbly decorated Auditorium at Jusbag, which was filled with thousands of citizens from Hyderabad and the towns and villages around. He appreciated the efforts made, with the blessings of Baba, for the spread among the people of the valuable strength-giving teachings of the scriptures and said that he had always felt the necessity of imparting spiritual instruction to the common man in simple easily understandable language. Each individual must examine his own activities in the light of spiritual ideals; if this is done by each, the community and the nation will also certainly benefit. The Governor declared that there can be no conflict between scientifically arrived truth and spiritually sensed truth and that science can only confirm the truth experienced through the cultivation of the spiritual powers of man. He expressed his satisfaction at the large number of eminent Pundits who had become members of this organisation.

Hon'ble Sri Kasu Brahmananda Reddy who presided over the Function said that the real implication of the word 'secular' in the expression "secular state" was, that the state will not have any particular affiliation to any one religion; it does not mean that the state has no interest in religion or religious matters.

Dr. B Ramakrishnarao, the President of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha gave a brief description of its Aims and Objects and of the District and City Committees through which it tries to carry the Message of the Vedas and Sastras to the people in the towns and villages by means of the enthusiastic co-operation of the Pundits who have gladly taken up this mission under the benign guidance of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, come to re-establish Dharma among men.

Baba, the Founder President of the Sabha then elaborated on the need for the Dharmic way of life and pointed out that "Dharmo rakshathi rahshithah", Dharma saves those who save, it. All who have the interests of the individual, the community the nation and humanity at heart, should live the Dharmic life and, in his own life, to demonstrate the joy and peace that one can get through that Dharma.

On the 8th as, well as the 9th, learned Pundits gave discourses on the Bhagavata, the Bhagavad-Gita the Ramayana and the Dharmasastras. Baba gave each day His Inspiring Discourses, elaborating the points made by the Pandits and generally emphasising the practical aspects of the disciplines that are essential for individual harmony and social happiness.

On the 10th, Baba left for Venkatagiri Town where the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, Nellore District Branch had arranged a Three day Sessions of Discourses by scholars well versed in the Vedas and Sastras and, here too Baba blessed the thousands who had gathered from far and near. He called upon them to live up to the glorious ideals emphasised in Sanathana Dharma.

Thus, every day, Baba's Advent is feeding the roots of Dharma and bringing humanity nearer to its Goal of merging in the Ocean of Infinite Bliss.

Why He Came

Man, the senile child, he felt he could happy be
If he sat on a scooter, on rubber slept,
Ate out of cans, drank from out a cask
With a fan and filament light;
And speed along, overtaking sound
And shot through space, spitting at the stars.
Man planned to happy he
By drawing lines on maps to limit love
And sympathy, and charity.
He scoffed at Virtue... 'Cowards' cloak";
He laughed at Love—"The weaklings' plea";
He scorned at God—"The addicts' drug"
He tortured his brother, for, his skin was strange
He gassed his brother, for his kneel was strange!
He lied, he hated,..."He" could bear it no more!
The Lord has come, true to the Word He gave,
To warn, to lead, to teach.

To guard, to guide, to heal and save.
—Tarak