

Bhagavata Vahini

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Dhritarashtra and Gandhari reached the forest, along with Vidura. Vidura searched for a site where they could practise austerities. He also advised them on the best means of seeking self-realisation. They spent the days in holy company and holy thoughts.

Meanwhile in Hastinapura, as soon as the sun rose, Dharmaraja woke up, finished his ablutions and performed the ritual worship of the "Household Fire." He gave away in charity the usual daily gifts to the needy. He then proceeded on foot towards the palace of Dhritarashtra, his paternal uncle, as was his wont, for he never began his daily round of duties without taking on his head the dust of his feet. The king and queen were not found in their chambers. So, he waited for some little time expecting them to return thereto, searching for them all around, even while he was waiting anxiously for their return. He noticed however that the beds were not slept upon, the pillows did not bear marks of use, the pieces of furniture were undisturbed. He doubted for a moment that the rooms might have been reset by someone after use, but, no. Some fear got hold of him that they must have left; so, he hurried towards the room of Vidura, to discover that he too had fled; his bed was unused.

The attendants reported that the sage did not return to his room from the king and queen or to whom he had gone. As soon as he heard this, Dharmaraja had a shock. He went back to the palace and searched every room with great care and his worst fears were confirmed. His hands and feet shivered in despair; his tongue became dry; words failed to emerge from his mouth. He fell on the floor, as if life had ebbed out. Recovering, he blabbered indistinctly. He called on Vidura, more than once, and the officers around him became afraid of his future. Everyone rushed to the presence, asking, "What happened?" sensing some calamity. They stood in a circle, awaiting orders from the master.

Just then, Sanjaya came there, all of a sudden. Dharmaraja rose and caught hold of both his hands and said, "My parents have gone; alas, I found their chambers empty. Why did they behave like this? Have they disclosed anything to you, tell me. If I know where they have gone, I could fall at their feet and crave pardon for all my failings. Tell me quick Sanjaya, where have they gone." He too had no knowledge of their whereabouts. He only knew that Vidura must be involved in the whole affair. He too shed tears and holding Dharmaraja's hands in his, he said in a voice that shook with emotion, "Lord and Master, believe me, I am speaking the truth. Of course, Dhritarashtra used to consult me and ask for my suggestions even in small matters; but, in this affair, he has acted without discussing with me or even informing me. I am struck with wonder at this act. Though I was near him, I did not in the least know about his journey. I cannot also guess why he should have done so. I never dreamt that he would deceive me thus. He showed me some respect and had some confidence in me. But he has played me false. I can only say that this is my bad luck." Sanjaya started weeping like a child.

Dharmaraja consoled him, saying that it was really the consequence of his own sins, and not Sanjaya's. "The extent of our bad luck can be gauged from this. Our father left us, even while we were children; this uncle brought us up from that tender age. We were revering him and tending him, as both father and uncle. I must have perpetrated some error out of ignorance; I am

incapable of doing so, consciously. Both uncle and aunt were broiling in the agony of the loss of their hundred sons. I was eager to offer them some little peace, and so, myself and my four brothers were wholeheartedly serving them so that they might not remember the anguish of their terrible loss. We took care that no little point was missed while serving them. There was no diminution of reverence or affection. Alas, that they should have left this place! What a tragedy, what a terrible blow!" lamented Dharmaraja.

"My uncle and aunt are both aged and weak; besides, they are blind. I cannot understand how they managed to leave this place. How they must be suffering now! Not even one attendant accompanied them. Of what benefit are these large numbers that I have? Groping along, they might have fallen into the Ganges, by now. O, how unlucky I am! I fostered them both like the apple of the eye and at last, I have allowed them to meet this tragic fate." Dharmaraja was beating his breast and expressing his deep distress.

The brothers heard the lamentation and they flew fast to the side of the weeping Dharmaraja. Kunti, the mother, also inquired anxiously the reason for the grief. She peeped into the chambers and not finding Gandhari or her brother-in-law, she asked Sanjaya what had happened to them. Sanjaya could not reply; he could only shed tears. "Where have they gone, in their aged and helpless condition? Tell me," she cried; but, no one could answer. Meanwhile Dharmaraja called the brothers to his side and made some gestures which they could not understand aright. Then, he mustered courage and rose from the ground. He managed to narrate to them the happenings since sunrise; he asked Bhima to send force in all directions to search for them and find them for they would not have gone far, since they were blind and could not travel fast; they must be groping their way.

Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva obeyed their brother's order and sent troops in all directions. They rummaged all the roads, lanes and by-lanes, peeped into wells, searched in all tanks and lakes, but could find no trace of the blind couple. Believing that they must have fallen into the Ganges, they got experts to scour the banks and even dive into the waters to discover their fate. All their efforts were in vain. So, the Pandava brothers were sunk in grief that they could not save the king and queen from that horrid fate.

Meanwhile, Dhritarashtra and Gandhari were joyfully contemplating on God, seated in prescribed postures with their mind rigorously under control. When they were thus lost in Divine Contemplation and immersed in that supreme joy, a huge forest fire swept along, consuming them too in its fierce onslaught.

Vidura had a great desire to cast off his body at the holy centre of Prabhasakshetra and so, he escaped the fire and filled with joy at the immense good fortune of the couple, he continued his pilgrimage and reached the place which he had chosen as the scene of his exit. There, he cast off his body which was composed of the five elements, and which, therefore, was material and momentary.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

If you are good, you will be saved; if you are bad you will sink. If another is good, he cannot save you; nor can another's badness cause you to sink. If you are bad and you join another who is bad, you sink further into predication if you are good and you join another good person, you rise quicker. When bad joins good or good joins bad, it is barren company.

BABA

THE Mission of Grace

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba left Prasanthi Nilayam on the 13th December, on a Mission of Grace towards Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Before leaving, He exhorted the residents of the Colony and other devotees who were staying on at the Nilayam to devote all energies towards the achievement of Spiritual progress, through self-control and self-knowledge, earned by Namajapa and Sankirtan. Baba stayed at Brindavan, Whitefield on the 14th. Hundreds of devotees from Bangalore and other towns of Mysore State were able to get darshan of Baba that day. Baba left for Madras on the morning of the 15th and after spending a few hours with the devotees there. He drove to Trichinopoly, in the heart of Tamilnad, where the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti had arranged a Three-Day Session of the All India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, on 16th, 17th and 18th December.

The Samiti had made elaborate arrangements to accommodate the huge gathering (about 20 thousands the first day, 50 thousands on the second day and more than 100 thousands the third day) on a 5-½ acre plot in Thillainagar. The vast gathering of eager citizens, filled with reverence and eager expectancy, was indeed an inspiring scene, filling despondent hearts with new hope and courage that India is pulsating with the strength giving Sanathana Dharma. Baba gave Darshan to the vast assembly many times during the day, during the Vedaparayanam and Bhajan sessions in the morning hours and the bhajan sessions and Music Recitals in the evening hours. He also granted interviews to a large no of people whom He chose from the gathering and conferred on them hope and courage and assurance of recovery and progress.

Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, President of the Vidwanmahasabha could not be present for the inauguration and Bhagavan, the Founder-President, Himself declared the Branch to be established with His Blessings. The President of Seva Samiti while praying Him to inaugurate it, said, "It is the good fortune of Trichy to receive Baba's Blessings, to share in this Avatarakaryam and do its little Kainkarayam in its humble way to promote Sathya Dharma Shanti and Prema, through this instrument that He has forged. May the Pundits and Scholars and Interpreters of the age-old Sastras and Puranas belonging to Tamil Nadu and this District be blessed by Bhagavan. May the Heart of everyone be touched by His Grace and His Glory."

Mahavidwan Sri Arumuganalvalar of Nagercoil, Superintendent of the Institute for Training Hindu Religious Teachers, Madras, spoke in Tamil on the role of the Guru. He explained with copious quotations from the Tamil Classics how the Guru blesses the disciple by Nayanadeeksha, Vachadeeksha and Sparsadeeksha and elaborated on the supreme Grace of Baba, as evidenced by His moving along the human lanes formed for furlongs in the Pandal before Him and, conferring on the thousands the Grace of Nayanadeeksha. The look will grant

illumination; the Touch will communicate revelation; the Word will sprout in the consciousness as supreme Truth; the Thought of Bhagavan will serve as an inspiration for the faltering Sadhaka, He said. In His Discourse, Baba elaborated on the unique attainments that man is capable of and the steps laid down in the Vedas and the Upanishads for man reaching out to the heights of spiritual success.

After having evolved so far, it is a tragedy if man slides into lower levels or even halts at the present state of Homosapiens only, without using this chance to cultivate His talents and rise to the next stage of divinity. Steady inquiry into the nature and functions of the material, inert and ever changing objects in the Universe as well as steady purification of the Intelligence by means of self-control and self-knowledge will raise man to the level of Divinity. It is to remind man of his heritage and his potentiality that Avatars come, He said. It is for this purpose that the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha has been formed, so that every Vidwan might know His role in this great task of moral uplift and might become fit enough and enthusiastic enough to undertake this role. In the Tamil country, the great Tamil Classics which enshrine the deep Truths discovered by Tamil saints and sages have once again to be handed over to the ordinary man and woman so that they may have contentment and joy while going about on their daily avocations.

On the 17th, Sri K. V. Jagannathan Spoke on the importance assigned to Vedic studies in Tamilnad, as described in the Aganaanooru and other ancient texts. He expressed profound gratitude to Bhagavan for rescuing Vedic studies from decline and for inaugurating the Branch of the Vidwanmahasabha at Trichy. Baba's Discourse in Telugu was ably translated into Tamil by professor Kamalapathy. Baba emphasised that the world is but the Garment of God and cannot therefore be dismissed as illusion and false. It has a relative value and an instrumental utility. If activities are pursued in the belief that He is all this, that the fruits of every activity are at His disposal, that every act is an act for worshipping Him, then, the world cannot be a snare. Baba said, "Whatever else may be devalued, man should not be; He is a reservoir of power, power by which the human can become the Divine." "Today we claim to have won Swarajya because the external masters have gone and we have become masters of our own destiny, in the political field. But, the internal masters, hate and lust, anger and malice, faction and greed, avarice and envy rule over us still. When we attain victory over them, we have Swarajya, self-mastery and then, no enemy can overpower us. That is the real independence," Baba declared. Till then, what we have won is just the rind, not the kernel, He said.

After the Vidwanmahasabha programme on the 17th, Baba proceeded to the village Budalur, 20 miles away, in order to inaugurate the "Sri Sathya Sai Vihar", newly constructed there. In spite of the visit being arranged at very short notice, the arrival of Bhagavan was acclaimed by thousands of villagers who came from all round Budalur, hurrying in their bullock carts to catch a glimpse of the Lord. Baba moved among the simple folk and when He noticed some sick people, He gave them the Vibhuti created on the spot by a wave of the Hand. The first person to get the precious drug was a dumb boy, the second was a deaf ryot, and the third, a tottering old farmer, who was none too good in health. The villagers were aghast at this unexpected mercy to these people, whom Baba Himself chose from among them, and blessed.

On the 18th, Baba proceeded to the Assembly early and after listening appreciatingly to the Vedic Recital, He Himself sang a number of Namavalis in order to inspire the vast gathering with the

sweetness of the Name of the Lord. That evening, the gathering had reached the mammoth figure of a lakh and Baba with supreme kindness, gave Darshan to every section of the crowd, walking along the passages that were opened before Him by the people, who were moved by reverence towards the Avatar that was coming towards them. At about 6 P.M., Baba left Trichinopoly for Pollachi, in the Coimbatore District.

When Baba reached Pollachi about 10 P.M., He was greeted with grateful homage by many hundreds of devotees whose eyes sparkled with unspeakable joy. On the 19th, at 9 A.M., thousands gathered at a Bhajan Sessions in one of the largest godown-sheds of the cotton mills of the place, and thousands struggled outside to get a glimpse of Bhagavan. Baba sang a few Namavalis and enabled them to listen to His Divine Voice and Message of Namasankeerthan, as the easiest and the quickest means of attaining the Lord. Baba left Pollachi at about 2 P.M, and motored along the mountain road towards the famous Parambikulam forests. The home of elephants (the birthplace of Sai Geetha, fortunate enough to be at the Prasanthi Nilayam). Passing through Anamalai, Vattaikaranpudur, and Topslip, villages where the people stood in rows along the road, to fill their eyes with delight at the Darshan of the Lord whom they adoring in their homes and hearts. Returning about dusk, Baba proceeded towards Palghat, in Kerala State.

Kerala has been long expecting Baba, for every village and town there is full of devotees, confirmed in faith by means of study and Sadhana, and aware of the Divine powers of Baba to cure, console, comfort and liberate. All the way from Cannanore and Tellicherry to Quilon and Trivandrum, all classes of people are full of Sayi-bhakti. People from all parts of Kerala thronged at Palghat, (Devi Vilas) to get the coveted Darsan on 20th and 21st December. Baba selected for special interview many sick persons, many old and infirm individuals, and even many students from the Colleges and High Schools. As the “Mathrubhoomi” (Calicut) described “Baba moved among the devotees with His benign smile and courage-inspiring Abhayamudra. He was heard speaking to the people in the Malyalam language, quitening their enthusiasm and consoling them.” At 7.30 P.M., on the 20th, Baba laid Foundation for the Bhajan Mandir at the Sathya Sai Nagar Colony, Olavakkot. Where ardent devotees had built a number of dwelling houses and created a model colony in an atmosphere of Prasanthi, from where the Malyalam Magazine Santhisudha, spreads the Message of Sanathana Sarathi to the four corners of Kerala. About 4000 persons were singing Bhajan songs there, when Baba arrived; Baba graciously gave them Darshan and blessed their high-souled venture. Then, He visited the village of Kongad, where He was received with great acclamation, by people.

On the 21st, Baba blessed the Foundation of the Sai Maharaj Paper and Pulp Mills, Chittoor; the Stone was Ceremonially blessed by Him at a special Function held at Devi Vilas Bungalow. Later, Baba left for Kollengode, where the members of the Royal Family were eagerly awaiting His arrival. Baba was received at the Palace with poornakumbha, Vedaparayana, and a Salute of Guns. Baba gave Darshan at the spacious Quadrangle of the Palace to about 5000 people, who were engaged in Bhajan. When Baba started on to speak to them, the cyclonic gale was blowing since morning brought a burst of heavy rain. Baba immediately quitened the vast assembly with the assurance, “Do not worry! These are not raindrops. They are drops of Ananda, Sudhabindu.” And the rain held off; yes, held off for full one hour, that is to say, until Baba taught them a few Namavalis and reached the Apartments arranged for Him in the Palace. Then, it poured so

heavily that the roads became a welter of slush! This miracle was noted and highly lightened in the newspapers of Kerala.

Baba blessed the children of the Chinmaya Nursery School and the members of the Chinmaya Satsang at Kollengode Palace and left the place at 4 P.M., for Trippunittura, a hundred miles away. This town is famous as the place where the Maharajas of Cochin resided and it has the temple of the Royal Family, where, as traditions say, Arjuna himself has installed the most captivating idol of Parthasarathi. Baba was invited there by a Christian devotee who was long anxious to have Him in His place and Baba blessed Him by fulfilling His prayer. From the porch on the first floor of His house, Baba gave Darshan to the thousands who had gathered and He sang a few Namavalis to allay their thirst to hear His Voice and to inspire them to the Sadhana of Namasankirtan. Later, He proceeded to lay the Foundation for the Sathya Sai Mandir that the Christian devotee is building on a site set apart by him. Baba was received at the site with Poornakumbham; a group of Vedic scholars recited Vedic Hymns. The vast gathering consisting of all castes and creeds sat in reverential silence when Baba went through the ceremonial of laying the Foundation Stone and when He moved among the ranks to confer Darshan on all.

From Trippunittura, Baba motored to Ernakulam where at the house of a devotee hundreds of people had gathered to fill their eyes with His Form. Judges of the Kerala High Court and other high officers were present there to receive Blessings and converse with Him. Spending about an hour in their company, Baba left for the coastal town of Alleppey, 36 miles away, reaching the place by about 10 P.M.

During the Bhajan Sessions in the morning and the evening on the 22nd and on the morning of the 23rd, Baba gave Darshan at 'Saraswati Vihar' to thousands; besides, He graciously selected many persons who needed His ministrations, children suffering from debilitating diseases, old men who could not undertake the Pilgrimage to Puttaparthi and others, and with His overwhelming love, He consoled and comforted them and put them on the road to cure and rehabilitation. The 23rd December was Vaikuntha Ekadasi, when as tradition records, the Gates of Heaven are opened for all and when the Nectar of Immortality was won by the Gods through Divine Grace. Devotees from many far-off places had trekked to Alleppey to get the precious Darshan of Bhagavan on the Auspicious Day. Baba created a charming idol of Murali Krishna and placing it in the shrine of His host arranged for Namasankirtan.

Leaving Alleppey at about 4 P.M., Baba reached Palghat (Devi Vilas) in the night delighting the devotees there, who received His Darshan most unexpectedly on the Festival Day. On the 24th, Baba motored to Ootacamund in the Nilgiris. The news of His arrival spread quickly in the town as well as the villages among the hills and devotees flocked to attend the Bhajan Sessions at Gita Bhavan where He stayed until the 28th December. On the evening of the 26th Baba motored to Masanigudi in the Abhayaranyam Forest and on the 27th, He graciously accompanied a party of devotees who were into the forest on Elephants to observe wild life at close quarters. They saw herds of bison and deer, roaming in their natural habitat.

Baba left Ootacamund by car for Madras on the 28th, reaching the City at 8 that night. On New Year Day, Baba gave Darshan to hundreds of eager devotees who were reverentially awaiting His Presence.

Thus, Baba in His Mission of Grace awakened the springs of spiritual exertion in thousands of individuals during the fortnight He toured Tamilnad and Kerala.

(Ed)

By fixing your mind on the pure, you can purify it; by fixing the mind on the strong, you can strengthen it. By fixing it on the Universal, you can rid it of all pettiness and littleness. The mind will gradually shed impurities, its weakness and its failings and foibles. This is the reason why Namasmara and Dhyana of the Name and Form of the Lord are considered so fruitful.

—Baba

The Voice of the Heart

There is no fear, while He is so near;
Yet, my eyes are full of tears! (of Joy.)
He is so near, but, sometimes, it ;seems
He casts no glance at me. .even this
Is a sign of Grace, a, Gesture of attention.
From today, I detach myself from any sense
Of frustration, in this life.
I bid good-bye, to sorrow and to brief.

His shimmering Robe is a new-blown Rose
In whose lap fresh springs abides.
It is the banner of Peace and Bliss.
O, there is Fragrance in the air
And the Colour of the world is changed.
Comrades, how can I describe Him to you
With what shall I compare?
The Moon? 'Tis dim before His Face!
In His Lotus Hand is the Healing Balm
For all the burns of Life.
They say 'tis wrong, 'tis hard,
To worship the Formless in the Form.
Why talk and twist the argument

I am already prey; in it, so deep.

How I wish I could delve the charm,
Look on and learn to fix it in the mind
In all the days that are left for me!
Alas! Life is too short; O Tahira,
Do you realise 'tis short?

Matru devo bhava
Pitru devo bhava
Acharya devo bhava

Revere your mother as God; revere your father as God; revere your teacher as God. These three commands form the keystones of Bharatiya culture.

BABA

Which his the Real? Ñ This or That?

The Beacon of the Spirit is the Light-house for the storm-tossed ships carrying humanity across the furious waves of the ocean of life. Instead of earning that light and saving himself from wreck, man is getting lost in travails, torrents of trouble worry and agony and vain voyages in search of attaining the absent treasure. Unless that light is present ever with man, unless efforts are made to have it shining clear in the heart, all the activities of life are shrouded in the darkness of ignorance. Man is wasting the great chance he has been awarded. One wonders whether he has to appreciate or discard the charms of Nature and the external World, whether to laugh or weep at their illusory attraction-3. Man prides himself on his capacity to know everything, but, he has failed to know this truth about Nature. Blind to the real characteristics of this world, man has become a pendulum between birth and death.

Of course, every one desires and devotes all his energies for securing Shanti and Santosha, Peace and Joy. But, they elude his grasp. He spins like a top, he is immersed in incessant effort; but what does he win? Nothing. For, what has to be sought after first, is "spiritual progress". Through that alone can peace and joy and happiness be won. Attached to the imperfect instrument called Reason, man fails to earn these ends. He forgets the special mission of man, the mission for which he has been specially endowed, and rotates in fruitless adventure. Devoid of the principle of Godhead, no activity can be worthwhile."

Brahmam, the Universal Absolute, is all this; it is the source, the substance, the sense; it is as cotton in the cloth, mud in the pot, wood in the chair, the basic substance. One must be established in the awareness of this fundamental Unity, not simply be carried away by the apparent multiplicity of Name and Form. The multiplicity is unreal. It is temporary, evanescent. Is man a bundle of the senses? Is He just the physical frame? Is He the mind? Or is He the consciousness, with all its levels? Where did all these come from? Where are they journeying to? How far can one decide the shape of one's journey? These are the questions to seek answers for. Now you run about asking everyone you meet, "Who are you" but you seldom stop to ask yourself, "Who am I?" You are drawn by the news of the World, not by news of your own inner world. Of what avail is all the knowledge about yourself is absent?

The truth is: man has emanated from the atmatattwa, the Brahmam; he has to rejoin It. As the waters of the sea evaporate and form clouds, to fall as rain and flow as streams and rivers, to

rejoin the sea, so, man too must reach the source, after all this peregrination! Now, man is unaware of the "From address" and of the "To address"! He knows only the address where He is. One can know the two addresses only by contact with the good and the godly. Attach yourself to the good and earn detachment; detachment will liberate you from illusions; that will make you steady in the faith in the Principle; that faith will liberate you. So, certain disciplines have-to be followed to realise the truth about oneself.

This is emphasised in Sanathana Dharma. But, due to political and cultural forces, Sanathana Dharma itself is being neglected. The goal of life should be the earning of Atmic faith. That alone confers great joy; that alone is true religion. People glibly say that religion too is a convention of man, fashioned for the moment. No, religion is much more useful than that, much more established. It is rooted in intelligence, individual discrimination. It insists on unity of all this in one basic principle, Brahman. It does not advocate or preach difference and manifoldness.

Godhead is described in the Vedas as Sahasra Seersha, thousand-headed. It does not mean that God has thousand heads. There are thousands present here before Me; the heads are thousands in number but the heart beat is the same in all. So too, God is activating all the heads, as the same electric current activates the fan, the stove, the bulb, the mike, the machine, the tube etc. the instrument is different, but, the power is the same. The individual is different but the indwelling force is the same.

The question may arise, why then all this distinction, this superiority and inferiority, when all are activated by the same Brahman? That is a question dealing with the outer, the exterior aspects of man. In the basic substance, there is no high or low; the difference is caused by difference of the instrument, Upadhi, the Container. The current is the same, but the wattage of the Bulb differs and causes the difference in light.

People say that the body is real, that it is permanent, that the senses give correct information, that the emotions are real. The mind has to be fixed on any object so that it can be seen or heard or become the target for any sense. The eye for example is the bulb in the torch (body); the switch is concentration; if the mind does not concentrate, the eye cannot see. No object has any particular taste; the malarial tongue feels all sweet things bitter. The Ajnana afflicted mind will feel objects to be pleasurable and permanent. The Ajnana has to be overcome by means of spiritual discipline. Sanathana Dharma teaches us the method; but, we have started ridiculing our own culture and extolling other systems and faiths.

Really speaking, there is no other system or faith. All religions, all faiths are but phases or facets of the same Universal Faith and Discipline. It is like the seven blind men who examined the elephant and described it to others. The man who held the tail in his hand saw it as a snake; the man who felt the leg said it was a pillar; the man who examined only the ear swore that the elephant was like a winnowing basket. This story has a deep inner meaning. The Atma is one, but each one sees a fraction and judges it differently. It is the integrated sum of each of these facets of reality.

India is the home of many facets of the Truth, the lovely garden which has many languages and many philosophies and faiths, all depicting the One Brahman, in many a brilliant colour. This garden was preserved safe, by the sea on three sides and rampant of the Himalayas on the fourth. If such a safely guarded land is being eaten into, the fault lies in us only. We are invading each other in unarmed campaigns and pointing the finger of scorn at others. We have to desist from the attacks we lead against others, moved by envy anger, pride and similar passions. The internal struggles we wage against each other in the name of our own home, village, district and state have to be stopped, with strong will and determination. When we are engaged with so many internal foes like greed anger and pride, how can we stand up against others? He who conquers a country can be called a Raja (King); but He who conquers His senses is truly Chakravarti, (Emperor).

We must strive for this victory. People boast that they know much, but, of what use is all that knowledge if they do not put into practice and win peace and contentment? Fundamentally, the inquiry that makes living worthwhile is, "Where from have I arrived? Whither am I going?" King Janaka used to gather many Rishis in His Palace and take delight in discussing with them about spiritual problems; He was a great adept at Sadhana and He attained the highest stage of Samadhi through Raja Yoga. One day, while in the midst of the court, with the Queen and the maids, even while He was conversing with them He fell asleep. He had a dream during that sleep. He dreamt that He was deprived of His kingdom, that He was roaming half-mad, hungry and deserted in the jungle, begging for food from whoever He met, that He came upon some men washing dishes and vessels after a feast which they had shared, that He ran towards them seeking crumbs, that they gave Him some little quantity of rice scraped from the vessels, that He was about to put it into His mouth when a big bird flew in and swooped it out of His grasp; so, He yelled in pain and grief and the Queen heard Him and woke Him up.

Of course, when He woke He knew that He was the King. He remembered that a second previously, He was a beggar. Which is real? This or that? He wondered. He questioned within himself, which is real, this or that? To everyone who enquired what the matter was, He put the same question, "Am I a King or a Beggar?" He wanted each one to tell Him which was real. The queen and others were frightened at this behaviour; they sent for ministers and with them came, Ashtavakra, the preceptor. He discovered the situation as soon as He saw the King; so, to the question that the King put Him, He answered, "Raja! This is unreal; that is unreal; you, who experienced this as well as that, you alone are real."

You too have spent this day in various activities and now you are listening to my words and feeling happy. How long is this real? Only until you go home, spread your beds and sleep. The waking stage is real until the sleeping stage; the sleeping stage is real, until the waking stage. But, both are unreal, because one cancels the other. So, why take life so seriously, so frantically? All efforts, all talk, all pleasures end with the graveyard. Every step takes man nearer to that, not farther. Then, why revel while living, believing these to be real and lasting?

You must have heard elders say some warning words: 'Practice two, give up two'. The two things to be given up are, all remembrance of (1) the evil that others do to you and (2) of the good that you do to others. The two to be practised are (1) belief that death is certain and inevitable and (2) that God exists and yields to prayer and purity. But, usually, men do not forget

the evil that others do or the good that is done by them; they forgot the fact of death and the fact of the existence of God. If you seek for profit in every act, of what use is it? Bank deposits, buildings, degrees, titles, and riches have all to be left behind. As soon as the last breath is drawn, the body becomes a thing of bad omen; it is moved out of the house one has built and loved.

Who, after all, is this I, which you love so much? Are you the body? You say, my stomach, my head, my foot; who then are you? You are the breath, the Swasm. So long as there is breath, you are Sivam; when that leaves, you become Shavam, or a corpse. So, treat the world as a two-day fair, treat life as a two-hour play, and treat the body as the two-second bubble. Develop love and devotion to the highest ideal, God.

The path is beset with hardships. They help, they do not hinder your forward steps. They serve as the shears that trim a growing bush, no one can escape these ups and downs while on the journey. Fix attention on the goal, that is the means to be happy and peaceful. Whatever the obstacle, God's Grace can transform it into help for you. Educate your mind to view hardships as helps. The mind it is that binds or liberates. What is the mind ultimately? It is a web of desires and wishes; this handkerchief here is, if you ask Me, only apparently, a handkerchief. Really speaking, it is just yarn; remove the yarn, all the yarns in the wrap and woof and what remains? Why multiply desires and get bound, by mind? Use it for liberation, instead.

Devotion implies faith in God. Without that faith, man lowers himself to the level of birds and beasts; He does not live up to the faculties that He is endowed with. A tiny bird that perches on a bough is not scared when the bough sways in the gale. Why? Because it relies not on the bough, but, on its wings. You on the other hand, rely on the grip you have on the branch of Samsara, or the world and its ramifications; you do not rely on the Atma or the God within, who buoys you up. That is the reason why any little shake in the bough frightens you. Have faith in your Divinity, in Divinity as such and nothing can harm you. That is the crucial skill you must develop. A man was crossing the Ganges in the boat; He asked the boatman if He had no watch and when He laughed at it, the man said, "No; need or no need, whether you know how to consult a watch or not, unless you own a watch, a quarter of your life is as good as having gone into the Ganges." Some time later, He asked the boatman whether He had a radio receiver and when He learnt that He did not possess one, He said that another quarter of His life can well be considered sunk in the Ganges. "You are not up-to-date at all; every one worth anything has a barber's box contrivance called transistor hanging round His neck at the end of a strap." A few minutes later, He asked, whether He read any newspapers and when the boatman apologised for His illiteracy and His lack of interest in news, the man squarely said that another quarter of His life can be pronounced to be liquidated in the waters of the Ganges! Just then, the overcast sky became dark and furious and forks of lightening threatened a thunder-storm and a heavy downpour of rain; it was now the turn of the boatman to ask question. He said, "Do you know swimming?" and when the man pleaded that He did not have the skill, the boatman replied, In that case, your whole life is as good as liquidated."

Learn the art of swimming across the sea of life, with its waves of success and failure. That is the real skill to acquire.

(Translated from the tape record: From Baba's Discourse)

The Path of Divine Love

I had the unique privilege and pleasure of witnessing and enjoying the musical play “Radha Bhakti” that Baba wrote and got enacted by the children studying at the Vedasastru Pathashala, during Dasara. He had composed the songs and He had himself trained the children to sing and act their roles. In the play, Baba has depicted the Path of Divine Love that is called in Hindu texts as Madhura Bhakti. This path developed to a great extent in Bengal and spread from thence to all provinces of India. It was extolled and elaborated and exemplified by Chaitanya, Chandidas, Vidyapati, Jayadeva and many other poet singers and saints. They shared the nectar with mankind and gained immortality for themselves.

Baba has declared in the tradition established by the exponents that, Radha is the symbol of Prakriti and Krishna for the Purusha. The Lord and Master is the Charmer-with-the-Flute, of whom it is said, “His music is sweet, His flute is sweet, His every thought word and act is sweet beyond compare.” Radha is ever looking for Him, seeking Him in her mind’s eye, for as Purusha He is the very breath, the very substance, the very sustenance of Radha, who is Prakriti, that is, the Manifested world. The Love that binds Prakriti to Purusha is thus eternal, enlightening, elevating, and elemental. It is the purest and the most powerful form of devotion or bhakti.

Poets and saints plunge into the pellucid waters of song when they taste that Love. The very contemplation of the Virtue, Beauty, and Glory of Krishna sends them into such ecstasy that every word that they use in painting His Splendour is resonant with supreme Ananda.

“Anandaambhudhi varadhanam prathi padam,” says Chaitanya. They see Krishna as the only Purusha; the rest are all Stri, feminine as Prakriti is.

To the aspirants adept in Madhura Bhakti, the world is transmuted into Brindavan, the Home of inexhaustible Peace and in expressible sweetness, into a magnificent Temple of the Lord. As Baba writes in the Drama, Radha Bhakti, “He is all Forms, He is in all places; no Name is alien to Him; no place is foreign to Him.” “In the Love of Krishna, all beings are enveloped in one supreme kinship. They see their Lord in setting Sun, in the rising Moon, in the refreshing breeze playing with the tendrils of a flower-laden creeper, in the streaks of lightening adorning the dark shimmering clouds, in everything grand, awe-inspiring, good, simple and sweet, why, in every atom of the Universe. Each flower that blooms is, for example, a lovely letter that the Lord has sent out of His infinite Love, to Ravindranath Tagore! When every molecule is inundated with His infinite Glory, the Bhakta finds no evil, no cruelty, no hatred, and no poison in this World. It is this that made Meera quaffs quietly and with a smile the cup of poison that the Rana sent to bring about her death. When the whole world is filled with Love, insults cannot cause a groan, falls do not make one falter, and burdens are gladly borne. Whether you win or lose, you are the Loved one and He the Lord; there is no reason to feel thankful or sad; He knows He gives, He takes. Chains that bind become garlands that gladden; burdens that overwhelm become bouquets that emanate joy.

Meera is the outstanding example of Madhura Bhakti. Many of the rest are males and so, they could not rise to the height of Love that she reached. Meera sang of the pangs of separation from the Master, as much as the thrill of communion with Him. She sang, "I shall be born as Krishna and you as Radha; then you will know the agony of the soul striving to reach you." She sang, "You cannot escape me, Lord, for, I shall be with you, whatever may happen. If you are a lake, I am the fish in its depths, if you are green hill, I am the peacock among the trees; if you are a tree, I am the bird taking shelter on its bough; if you are a pearl I am the string that goes through it; if you are the moon, I am the Chakora bird reveling in the cool comforting rays. If you are gold, I am, I am the glitter; if you are the Lord I am the attendant; I shall be where you are, inseparable, ever." Thus she widens and deepens Love into Universal Raiment. No other thought or idea can intrude into the mind. Meera sings of the Gopis who went along the streets of Mathura, with the curd pots on their head; they were so fully immersed in Krishna, that they could not cry out, "Curds" to sell their ware and bring out the customers from their houses; they knew only one Name, and they cried out that Name: "Giridhari! Giridhari!!"

Bhaktas of this path will not relish the Advaitic awareness of Godhead. They are filled with Ananda when they feel themselves instruments dear to the Lord. They long to sing the Name of the Lord, they extol the heart that is saturated with the sweetness of that name as Ananda-dhamam, the abode of Bliss. They know that the cool showers of His Praise can alone quench the agony of worldly toil and travail.

(Translation from Telugu) Chathurvedi Narasimha Sastry

NOTICE

Under the auspices, of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Madras, a conference of Presidents and Secretaries of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithis, Mandalis, Sanghams etc, will be held at Madras on 20th and 21st of April 1967 to enable the office-bearers from different centres in our country to meet and exchange views and coordinate the work. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba will be present during the deliberations and address the delegates.

Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha will also be held at Madras on 22nd, 23rd and 24th' of April when public meetings will be held in the evenings. Bhagavan will give His Divine Message on these days.

All Samithis, Mandalis, Sanghams etc. will please intimate directly to The Editor, "Sanathana Sarathi", Prasanthi Nilayam P. O. (Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh) immediately, the correct Name and address of their organisation, & the names of the President and Secretary. On receipt, of the above information further details will be intimated by the Madras Branch.

Editor

Announcement

It is the instruction of Bhagavan that Institutions and organisations in all countries, registered or unregistered, started and run by devotees under various names like, BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA SAMITIS, BHAKTA SANGHAS, BHAJAN MANDALIS, SATSANGS, STUDY CIRCLES, DHARMOTSAVA ORGANISATIONS, PRASANTHI VIDWANMAHASABHAS, etc., pay attention to this announcement.

Under the auspices of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samitis, Madras, a conference of the Presidents and Secretaries of such Institutions and Organisations will be held at Madras on the 20th and 21st April, 1967, in order to co-ordinate the work, frame uniform rules and formulate lines of activity. The deliberations will be held in the Gracious Presence of Bhagavan.

All such Institutions and Organisations are kindly requested to intimate immediately to the “Editor, SANATHANA SARATHI, Prasanthi Nilayam P.O. Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh” their names and addresses and also those of their Presidents and Secretaries. The Madras Samiti has kindly undertaken to provide these delegates boarding and lodging during the Conference.

On receipt of the above information, further details about the Conference will be intimated by the MADRAS SAMITI.

EDITOR

Bhagavata Vahini

9

Dharmaraja who was reeling in agony at the departure of his uncle and aunt—Dhritarashtra and Gandhari—had another bout of unbearable pain which was like a needle thrust underneath the nails. Wherever he turned, he began seeing bad omens in his kingdom. He noted in every act around him the taint of falsehood, cruelty and injustice. It met him at every step and confused his vision.

As a result, an inexplicable anguish possessed him, anew. His face became pale with apprehension. It was marked by constant agitation and anxiety. Seeing this and becoming agitated themselves, the brothers—Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva—approached their eldest and expressed their eagerness to delve into the reasons for his strange sadness. They stood before him with folded hands and inquired, "Lord and Master! Day by day we find your countenance rendered dimmer and dimmer; you seem sunk in unfathomable agony, sinking deeper and deeper with every passing hour. You have become too weak to stand firm. If any of us has caused you pain, please tell us; we shall guard ourselves against repetition, and we pray we may be pardoned. If all this is due to something else, you have only to tell us about it, we shall at the cost of our very lives set it right and restore your mind. When you have such heroes obedient as we are, to correct any one, however high and mighty, it is not proper for you to give vent to grief. Inform us the reason and command us what to do," they prayed.

Dharmaraja replied: "What can I tell you, dear brothers? I see ominous things all round. From the homes all ordinary citizens to the hermitages of the saints and sages wherever my eye falls, I see only inauspiciousness, ill fortune, and the negation of joy. I argued within myself that this was only the result of my warped imagination and I tried my best to muster up courage and confidence. I did not like to fall a prey to my fears. But, I could not succeed. Recollecting the scenes made my fear even more fearsome.

"To aggravate the sadness, I saw also some scenes that are contrary to established morals and Dharma. Not only did they come to my actual notice, the Courts of Justice in this kingdom have been receiving petitions and pleas regarding wrongs, injustices, iniquities and misdeeds, which make me grieve deeply.

"I saw some situations which were even worse. Last evening, when I was returning after a tour of the kingdom, I saw a mother cow refusing to nurse and feed her newborn calf! This is quite strange and contrary to nature. I saw some women wantonly loitering in the bazaar. I hoped that they would rush into their homes when they saw me; but, no. It did not happen so. They had no reverence for authority; they went on as if I was not in the picture; they continued to talk without restraint to the men folk. I saw all this with my own eyes. I simply proceeded further from that horrid place.

"Very near the Rajabhavan, when I was about to enter it, I perceived a Brahmin selling milk and curds! I saw people emerging out of their houses and closing the doors behind them! I found them fixing some iron lump to them, so that they may not be opened! (The reference is, evidently, to locks, which were strange things in Dharmaraja's kingdom for no one had any fear of thieves). My mind was very much concerned with all these tragic transformations.

"I tried to forget this state of affairs and so started doing the Evening Rituals, the sacred rite of offering oblations to the consecrated Fire and shall I tell you what happened? The fire could not be lit, however hard I tried! O, what a calamity it was! My fears that these events foreboded some great catastrophe are fed by other happenings too. They are confirming my premonitions every minute. I find myself too weak to overcome them. Perhaps the Kali era has begun or is about to begin, I believe.

"For, how else are we to explain such a fact as this: a wife has quarrelled with her husband and is arguing before the judge in court that she should be permitted to go to her parents, leaving him to himself. How am I to face such a plea in court that she should be permitted to dissolve the marriage and leave for her parents' home, deserting her husband? A petition from such a wife was admitted yesterday in the Court of Justice! How am I to ignore such abominations?

"Why go on recounting these occurrences? Yesterday, the horses in the royal stables started weeping, did you hear? They were shedding copious tears, the syces reported. Sahadeva tried to investigate the causes of their deep sorrow; but, he could not discover why and he was struck with wonder and consternation. These are indications of wholesale destruction, not of any minor danger, or small evil." Dharmaraja placed his chin on his upright arm and rested a while in deep thought.

Bhima did not give way to despair. He laughed a scornful-laugh and began: "The incidents and events you mention might have happened; I do not deny them. But, how can they bring disaster to us? Why should we give up all hope? All these abnormalities can be set right by administrative measures and their enforcement. It is really surprising that you are so worried about these small matters that can be corrected by us. Or, is it the imminent breaking out of another war that you fear? Perhaps you are anxious to avoid the ravages that the revival of war might bring about. That contingency is impossible. For, all our foes have been exterminated, with their kith and kin. Only we five are left, and we have to seek for friends and foes only among ourselves. Rivalry will not break out among us, even in our dreams. Then, what agitates you? I cannot understand why you are afflicted. People will laugh at you when you take these little things to heart and lose peace of mind." Bhima said this and, changing his mighty mace from the right hand to the left, he laughed a laugh which was half a jeer.

To this Dharmaraja replied: "I have the same discrimination and intelligence that you have, in these matters. Nor have I an iota of dread that enemies will overpower us. Have we not defeated the renowned warriors, Bhishma, Drona and the rest who could singly and with but one arrow destroys the three worlds? What can any foe do to us? And what can agitate us who were bearing even the direst calamities with fortitude? How can any difference arise between us now, who stood so firm in the days of distress?

Perhaps, you suspect that I am afraid of anything happening to me, personally. No, I shall never be agitated by anything that might happen to me, for, this body is a bubble upon the waters, it is a composite of the five elements waiting to be dissolved back into its components. The dissolution must happen some day; it is bound to fail, to fall, to fester, to be reduced to ash or mud. I do not pay heed to its fate.

My only worry is about one particular matter. I shall disclose it to you, without any attempt to conceal the seriousness. Listen. It is now more or less seven months since our brother Arjuna left for Dwaraka. Yet, we have not heard anything about the welfare and well-being of the Lord of Dwaraka. He has not sent any messenger or message regarding, at least, his reaching Dwaraka. Of course I am not worried in the least about Arjuna and his reaching or not reaching Dwaraka. I know that no foe can stand up against him. Moreover, if anything untoward had happened to him, certainly, Sri Krishna would have sent the information to us, of this there is no doubt. So, I am confident that there is no reason to be nervous about him.

Let me confess that it is about the Lord Himself that I am feeling worried; with every passing minute, anxiety is increasing. My heart is suffering unbearable agony. I am overwhelmed by the fear that He may leave this world, and resume His permanent abode. What greater reason can there be for sorrow?

"If this catastrophe has actually come about, I shall not continue to rule over this land, widowed by the disappearance of the Master. For us Pandavas, this Vaasudeva was all our five vital airs put together; when He departs, we are but corpses, devoid of vitality. If the Lord is upon the earth, such ominous signs dare not reveal themselves. Injustice and iniquity can have free play

only when He is absent; I have no doubt about this. My conscience is clear about it; something tells me that is the truth."

When Dharmaraja asserted thus, the brothers fell into the depth of grief. They lost all trace of courage. Bhima was the first who recovered sufficiently to speak! He mustered some courage, in spite of the wave of sadness that smothered him. He said, "For the reason that Arjuna has not returned or that we have not heard from him, you should not picture such a dire calamity and start imagining catastrophe. There must be some other reason for Arjuna's silence; or else, Krishna Himself might have neglected to inform us. Let us wait, seek further light; let us not yield to the fantasies that a nervous mind might weave. Let us not clothe them with the vesture of truth. I am encouraged to speak like this, for, one's nervousness is often capable of shaping such fears."

But, Dharmaraja was in no mood to accept this. He replied: "Whatever you say, however skillfully you argue, I feel that my interpretation is correct. Or else, how can such an idea arise in my mind? My left shoulder is registering a shiver, see! This is a sign confirming my fear that this has actually happened. You know it is a bad omen, if the left shoulder shivers for men and the right, for women. Now, this thing has taken place in my body, and it is a bad omen. Not merely the shoulder, my entire being—mind, body, intelligence—all are in a shiver. My eyes grow dim and I am fast losing vision. I see the world as an orphan having been deprived of its Guardian and Lord. I have lost the faculty of hearing. My legs are shaking helplessly. My limbs have been petrified. They have no life in them.

"What greater proof do you need to assert that the Lord has left? Believe me, dear brothers. Even if you do not, facts will not change. The earth is shaking under our feet. Do you not hear the eerie noises emanating from the agonised heart of the earth? Tanks and lakes are shaken into waves. The sky, air, fire, water and the earth are all moaning their fate, for they have lost their Master.

"How many more evidences do you need to get convinced? News came some days back of showers of blood that rained in some parts of our kingdom."

Hearing these words, streams of tears coursed down the cheeks of Nakula and Sahadeva, even as they stood before their brother. Their hearts were struck with pain; they could not stand, for their legs failed them.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

He Traverses the World

Like a plant waiting longingly for the first rains or a desert flower looking forward to the coolness of moonlit nights, devotees throughout the world looking forward to receiving Babaji's words of Grace in the monthly issues of Sanathana Sarathi.

Normally one does not reveal to other than close devotees of Bhagavan experiences, held so precious. In this publication we enjoy glimpses of His Grace and sharing our own becomes a blessed thing. To be given such privilege is a joyful wonder.

Just knowing that we are watched over every minute, every moment, and with the ceaseless Sound of the Aum booming deep within reminding us to "Have no fear, for I am Near," takes from life anxiety and worry and leaves us to do His Work as His True Instrument.

During the Sivaratri Festival in 1966, the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba bestowed many blessings upon this devotee. He not only found Him employment in a wondrous way but also appeared before Him during Dhyana. I had hardly closed the eyes. He came through the entrance door and stood, saying, "I have just been to Africa" and so saying He joyfully and with flowing hair Sat on the rug. One knew in an instant that it was Babaji; in a few moments, which seemed like an age, He was away.

Then on another Blessed occasion He showed His Great Grace for, on November 30th, 1966, during the blissful depths of Dhyana this devotee found himself looking into the bright sunshine at Puttaparthi. Standing close and at first only showing His colourful robe, one knew that instant of Babaji's Presence. He moved His hand as if to take something from the fold of His robe. Then bending low and with a Happy and Joyful smile He held in that precious Hand an envelope which He shook vigorously at my eye level. He knew that in a sitting position He would have to bend low for me to see what was happening. From His action it was deduced that the Bhagavan had taken care of some important and that the envelope which appeared to contain something bulky like a Rudraksha symbolised His Good Deed. With the deepening yearning to visit His Grace at Prasanthi Nilayam this instant transportation remedied the wish in a flash.

It was just a few days later, that a visitor from California received these words from Sai Baba. "California?" "Charles Penn!" Both were answered in the affirmative, for the devotee, too, had miraculously arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam through His Grace.

And now with the Sivaratri Festival, 1967 here once again, one wonders just how many devotees are being whisked from around the world to enter into the Festivities or how many will be having the Darsan of Babaji in their own Pooja room.

**Charles Penn,
Los Angeles California**

His Grace

Puttaparthi..... Prasanthi Nilayam..... Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba I had heard about them; I had read about them. I had not seen them. I never knew I could see them, so soon so suddenly.

I had read “Sathyam Sivam Sundaram” and some odd numbers of the Sanathana Sarathi; also, the volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks.” I never expected that I could come to the Presence, so soon.

The publications of the Prasanthi Nilayam were given to me by a dear kinsman; it was His love and consideration that made it easy for me my wife and my children to go to Puttaparthi and return, without any difficulty.

At Puttaparthi, the ten days of Navaratri are festival days and I reached the place the evening previous to the inaugural day. As soon as I entered the environs of the Nilayam, I recalled the lines of Dr. D. V. Gundappa, in His poem, Manku Thimma, which mean, “Can one gauge the expanse and the sublimity of the Himalayas from a picture printed in a book? Can the awe and reverence that the sea arouses be experienced by reading descriptions? There were thousands around the Nilayam and they were engaged in their several tasks. But, there was no sound emerging from the gathering; no shouting; no call. Men murmured to one another as leaves whisper among the branches above. It was a unique experience.

The devotees had occupied whatever space was available, in the open sheds, on the verandahs of the houses, under the trees, on God-given land beneath the God-granted sky.

Late in the evening, Bhajan started in the Prayer Hall. There was a huge gathering of people in front of the Nilayam waiting for the appearance of Baba on the porch above, to grant them Darshan. I felt that if I enter the Hall and sit in the front rows, I would be able to get a nearer view of Baba. So, I got in and secured a place in the fifth row from the front. The Hall was filled with the sublime Om; the Bhajan was begun. Baba did not come and occupy the Chair set on the pedestal. I repeated within myself the prayer contained in the Krishna Stotra of Mahaprabhu Chaitanya, “Jagannathaswami! Nayanapatagamee, Bhavathu me” (O! Lord of Jagannath, enter the path of my sight.) I repeated it many times. Suddenly, Baba came in and sat on the Chair.

When night advanced, we spread our beds under a tree and laid ourselves to sleep. There were many other families all around us, trying to sleep like ourselves. Slumber overcame me. A few raindrops fell on my face! I had heard people say that when festivals are celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam, rains hold back from these environs, because of Baba’s Glory. Yet, when two or three more drops fell on my face, I rolled my bed, woke my wife and children, and moved about frantically in search of shelter. I could get a verandah where I could resettle myself and my people. A little later, I blamed myself for the haste, for, there was no rain at all. I remembered the words of admonition with which Jesus reprimanded the disciples who were not steadfast, “O ye men of little faith!”

The stars were shining all over the firmament Mosquitoes took toll on the verandah where we were. So, I migrated once again to my old tree and unrolled the beds. Slumber overcame me quick; but, in a few moments, a shower, more profuse than before, sprinkled drops on my face. I sat up and called on my people to wake and move. My wife said, “What kind of foolish game is

this! There are thousands like us all over the place; they are not worried at all; Baba will guard us; keep Faith in Him and go to sleep.” “Well, let us get wet when the rain pours,” I said and drew rug over my head. I could not sleep; the rain too could not pour.

Early dawn, I heard the Omkar recitation from the Nilayam; it came on rolling like the waves of the sea. In the morning, Baba hoisted the Prasanthi Flag on the Nilayam. Thousands of men and women, old and young and children too gathered before the Nilayam, but, there was no rush; rushing or pushing; silence prevailed everywhere, a silence that was sublime and full of reverence. One could have a good view of Baba and of the ceremony, wherever one stood or sat. The arrangements left nothing to be desired.

Baba began His Discourse with a poem, which declared that only those who have practised detachment can understand Him. He said that the Navaratri was dedicated to the worship of Shakti, the Shakti that is expressed through the three Gunas, that is functioning as Durga Lakshmi and Saraswati. He went on to describe the Five Elements that have come together to create and sustain the world and He advised that those Five Elements that have to be used with great care and circumspection. You should not waste any of these; conserve them. Conserve also their chief characteristics, by exercising great moderation in noise, in the pursuit of external form, etc. He said that this life is but a bridge from tamas to Jyoti and so, no attempt should be made to build a house thereon! Pointing to a decorative piece in front of the porch on the ground, He declared that nothing in the Nilayam is devoid of significance, and inner meaning. He explained it as a symbol of Sadhana, the aspirant avoiding the snare of Kama and Krodha, cultivating Prema and establishing himself in Yoga and realising the Ultimate, and the Absolute. He chided those who are happy because we have attained Swarajya, Political independence, for, without Swarajya, the mastery over the senses and the vagaries of the Mind Swarajya can prove a dangerous trap! The Discourse was full of Parables stories and apt and pleasing metaphors and similes, which could be grasped by all. Every one listened eagerly to catch every syllable; no one knew how long it took.

Then Baba went up, on to the terrace and hoisted the Flag. He showered handfuls of petals on the vast assembly beneath. Within minutes, the Grihapravesam Ceremony was announced, to take place soon. About 25 residential quarters were waiting to be “opened” by Baba that morning, built to the south of the Prasanthi Nilayam. My kinsman had secured the privilege of having one built and so, He was waiting at the door of one of these, the very first, with me and my people around Him.

The auspicious moment neared and Baba came along, preceded by the party of musicians playing on the Nadaswaram, and accompanied by the students of the Veda Pathashala, reciting the Vedas. Baba came to us and, He entered the door, cutting with a pair of scissors the ribbon tied across it. He sent us in, with the words “No time now; I have to be in all these houses before Rahukalam intervenes; I shall come to you on my way back.” When He pushed us gently in, He placed His Hand upon my shoulder. At that instant, I realised what was meant by “refreshing coolness,” when the word is applied to the inner consciousness.

Baba got in and out of those 25 houses, accepting the worship that was offered in each and finally, He came back to us, as He had so graciously promised. He sat on a Chair that we had

placed there; then, saying in my heart of hearts, “Angeekritha naraakaaram, aasraye bhuvanaasarayam” (I take refuge in the refuge of worlds that has accepted this human form), my hands placed a garland round His Neck; my head sunk low to His Feet. His abhayahastha stroked my head when I rose.

Someone placed a photograph in His Hands praying for autographed Blessings. He said, “Later, later” and took it with Him. I took my daughter’s book from her clasp and gave it to Him, with my pen, which I uncovered, fixing the cap at the back. Baba turned over a few pages and seeking out a picture in the book of Himself with the right hand on the Abhaya pose, He wrote upon it, “With Blessings....Baba” and loosening the cap from where I had fixed it putting it on other end and tightening the cap by a few turns, He handed the two to me. His hand touched mine. Joy bubbled within me. “Kim alabhyam, Bhagavathi, Prasanne Sreenikethane,” I said to myself.

Baba moved into the Nilayam and all was quite; no; my heart was repeating that sweet line, “Angee kritha naraakaaram, aasraye bhuvanaasarayam”. It was the last of four, from a sloka composed by Leelasuka, the great devotee of Krishna; I had read it in the “Krishna Karnaamritham.” I was in that house, enveloped in that inner joy for some time. Then, I rose and went towards the Nilayam.

There, my attention was caught by something I had noticed in the morning, when Baba was giving His Discourse. There on the porch where He stood were a golden Image of Krishna on the right and a Golden Image of Bhagavan Buddha on His left. They were still there. Krishna, Sathya Sai, Buddha, different eras, different territories, but, the same teaching, the same Message.

Leaving Prasanthi Nilayam with the prayer, “May I come again soon, may I come again soon,” I journeyed back to Bangalore the same day, recollecting the thrill and the joy that we got through His Grace.

Prof G. P. Rajarathnam

The Vedas...Their Authority

The Vedas are the source of Sanathana Dharma; all subsequent scriptural texts like the Puranas derive their authority from the fact that they are in consonance with its teachings. If they are not in such consonance, then, they are not authentic. The Vedas were not composed or written by any one person(s), as the Ramayana or Mahabharata was. They do not depend for their authority on the scholarship or experience of a human author. They have no such measuring rods by which we evaluate other texts. Like breath, they just emanated from the face of God.

Some people argue that the Vedas too must have a personal author and that they could not have been mere impersonal manifestations. They point out to some names like “Kathakam,” meaning, “of Katha,” implying that there was a person called Kathaka who composed the particular

portion of the Vedas. But, these names that occur refer only to those who mastered these parts and specialised in them, rather than composed them ab initio. Like the works of Kalidasa or like the epics, the Vedas do not mention the names of the authors in the beginning or at the conclusion of the texts.

Again, in the epics and similar writings, the story, the style, the meaning—these are the very life-blood of the text; words can be changed or modified, in order to make the meaning clearer. The sound of the words used is not so significant and meaningful. In the Vedas the sound, the intonation, the raising and lowering and lengthening of the voice during recitation, the emphasis and the absence of emphasis are all fundamental. That is the reason why the intoning of the Vedas has to be studied from the Guru, by the ear, direct; and the recitation of the Vedas strictly according to the original practice is so rigorously adhered to, even today. Though printed books are available, they cannot teach the correct pronunciation of these sacred formulas and Riks.

There are some who talk cynically and speak of Vedas as “the contrivance invented by Brahmins for earning livelihood!” Western critics first mooted this point. But, if one examines the regulations and rules that the Vedas prescribe for the daily life of the Brahmin one would understand that the Vedas are full of the most rigorous bonds with which the Brahmin (if he was the author) bound himself for individual liberation and for human happiness. Like the eldest brother who takes up the arduous responsibilities of managing the parental heritage for the benefit of His younger brothers, the Brahmin is the guardian and the preserver of the Vedas, which ensure Peace and Happiness for all. He is not the author, but He is the custodian. The regulated life that He has limited himself to is very difficult for others. Not that they have no ambition to lead the free life, and eat the food that He has forbidden unto himself. It has been so forbidden because the restriction conduces to a Satwic life, of prayer and penance.

Others cast another type of doubt on this authenticity and this Divinity of the Vedas. They say, “According to the scriptures, everything is destroyed in the final Deluge, Pralaya.” Then the Vedas too must be destroyed with the rest. How then can you declare that the Vedas are without beginning and without an end, that they are eternal? The Sutrabyasa gives this question and provides the answer too. It says that certain Jnanis who have realised the reality are born again through the Grace of the Lord in the era after the Flood. They remember the Vedas, as a person who wakes from sleep remembers all that He has learnt and experienced and they re-establish the Vedas among men. Not only the Vedas, all creation is started anew on the same principle of sleep and wakefulness. The seeds of awareness sprout again and grow into the same activities and the same qualities. The same Shakti that ends the world reawakens it and carries it on. If that Shakti is supposed to end, then, the Universe must arise and manifest through nothing.

So the Vedas too are the eternal. They are revelations made to man through the Grace of the Lord.

Br. K. Suryanarayana Sastry

Bhakti (or intense Love for the Lord and for all beings because He resides in them) is the Royal road to God. It is the inner unseen spring of all the urges, which take man to God. BABA

The Cleansed Heart

Gain, gain; that seems to be the refrain of life in every activity of man. When a heap of grain is measured, the counting begins not with ONE but with the utterance of the word, Labha (Gain) instead! The wise hold that thence is another gain which is far more desirable attaining the Presence of God, merging in the Supreme Bliss that God is, liberating oneself from the pursuit of the highest pleasure, Divine Bliss.

Become akin to God, His kith and kin. Do not aspire to be a wage earner in the God's household. Do not demand wages calculated and bargained for. The work done for wages will not be as sincere and as joyful as that done through Love, reverence. The brothers and the sons do not demand wages at so much per day, as their right. They are looked after nicely and well by the Master of the Household; everything is found for them, whether they demand, or no.

*Ananyaaaschinthayantho maam,
Ye Janaah paryupaasathe
Theshaam nithyaabhiyukthaanam
Yogakshemam vahaamyaham*

This assurance is given by the Lord in the Gita. Whoever has no thought other than of Me, whoever always dwells in reverence to Me, with such I always reside and for such I provide the wherewithal here and hereafter. Reading this assurance, many ask the question: "Well, we are doing this Puja and that; let us see what He does for us in return." But, they pay no attention to the conditions laid down for the conferment of Grace.

In Telugu, too, there is a poem that advises people to give up kinsmen who do not come to your rescue, horses that throw you off the saddle and God's that do not confer boons when worshipped. But this act of discarding is allowed in the poem to sumatis only that is to people with "Good discrimination." Of course such people know the ways of worship as mentioned in the Gita verse quoted above and so, the boons they deserve will be granted to them, unasked. The Grace of God is immeasurable; He is Love, all of Him. Contemplate on Him as Love, recite His Name as the Embodiment of Love, revere Him as Love.

This is the easiest path to God. Some feel despair that to them God is far distant, because they have no resource to visit Holy Places and prostrate before the famous shrines sanctified by saints and sages, no time or talent to master the Vedas. This is quite wrong, for God does not measure out Grace in proportion to these external achievements. He is moved by quantity. To appease your hunger, the grain in all the granaries of the world is not needed; a handful is enough. To slake your thirst, you do not crave for all the waters of all the rivers; a glass full suffices. Similarly, one little act of surrender is enough to win His Grace forever. Years of asceticism or study or Sadhana are not called for. "You and nothing else," fix this in the mind and live in that conviction. That will transmute all your acts into worship, invaluable Puja.

Arjuna was sentenced to engage himself in warfare against His elders and kinsman, by the Lord. His heroic lineage and Kshatriya blood urged Him forward to fight; His fear of sin and

retribution urged him to desist. “Am I to rule over the kingdom after winning it by destroying those whom I revere and hold dear”? He asked himself. Then, the Lord instructed him, right in the middle of the opposing armies. In the second chapter of the Gita, He told him of Sharanagati, the doctrine of surrender. Arjuna heard it and said, “Lord, I have no will of my own; I surrender to you.” Thereafter, the battle was transmuted into a Yajna where Adharma was offered in the sacrificial Fire.

When an act is done in a spirit of surrender to the Lord, it becomes a Yajna; when it is done in the spirit of egoism, it ends in a battle. Daksha, the emperor, performed the Yajna; but, in His pride, He neglected the Lord and His Sakthi. So, the Yajna was upset by a fight. When there was no egoism tainting in the battle, it became sublimated into a Yajna. That is the alchemy, which Sharanagati can accomplish.

First the self-assurance that you are “*Daasoham*” (I am His Instrument); then, through the winning of His Grace, the conscious that you are “*Sivoham*” (I am Siva) or “*Soham*” (I am That) will become your unshakable experience.

To grasp this grand truth of the immanence of Godhead (*Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagat*), the first path is Bhakti. For gradually through Bhakti, when it is intensified, one sees in all, the form of God that He reveres.

It is difficult to understand the Advaitic conception that “My reality and the Reality of the Universal are the same.” “I am That”; this can be realised only through the sharp Intellect and clear discrimination. This cannot be established in consciousness, by external argument or efforts. One has to be an adept in Dhyana and Vichara. Once the illness of a rich Lord was diagnosed by a stranger monk as a defect in the eye and He was advised to cast His eyes on a single colour only. The Lord collected all the paint He could get all the painters of the region and daubed everything green walls, roofs, fences, roads, tree stumps. When the monk returned after some months, He was surprised at the strange appearance of the town. He asked the Lord the reason for this and He was told that it was in accordance with His own prescription! The monk chided Him for taking all that trouble and spending all that money, for, He could have gained the same end by putting on a pair of green glasses! When the vision is clarified into Brahmatattvam, then, all will be seen as the One Basic Brahman. No amount of external asceticism or attire can instill that conviction.

The basic Brahmic unity makes everyone equal; this equality can be realised only at that high level of experience. Until then, all talk of treating all, as equal to one another is more self-deceit. Why, even such a simple thing as the advice to speak the truth leads to complications, which can be resolved only by compromise. The Gita advises you to speak, “*Anidwegakaram vaakyam, sathyam, priyahitam*” (Words that will not provoke or enrage, words that are true, that are pleasant and beneficial.) There is a story in connection with the Pandavas and the short-tempered sage, Durvasa. When at the conclusion of the battle of Kurukshetra, Ashwatthama returned from pilgrimage and learnt that the Pandavas had won, He swore that He would exterminate the victor’s single handed and set out to discover them. Sri Krishna desired to save them from the mighty man’s mortal ire; He approached Durvasa and requested Him to keep the brothers in His custody in some hiding place. Durvasa agreed, but on one condition; if Ashwatthama asks Him

where they are, He would not utter a lie! Krishna agreed, but, He told Him you could speak the truth, but speak it in an angry tone, that is enough. So the five brothers hid themselves in a cave over which the sage (who had destroyed many by the terrible imprecations with which He reacted whenever He was provoked into anger) sat in silent Meditation.

Ashwatthama saw Durvasa and with nervous steps and palpitating heart, he ventured to disturb His meditation. He asked him hesitating with fear, whether the Pandavas were anywhere near Him. Durvasa was silent for some time. Then in a burst of thunder and lightening, He shouted, “Where do you think they are? They are here!” His tone was full of disgust and resentment at being interrupted and His face indicated that an imprecation was on the tip of His tongue. Ashwatthama dared not stand there any longer. He interpreted the statement “They are here” to mean only, “Well, what are you looking for here? If they are here, what dare you do about it?” and left. By watching mere external appearance, you cannot judge the reality.

Sudama too was in the same predicament. When his wife directed Him to proceed to Dwaraka and Pray to His boyhood chum Sri Krishna for material help in running the family, He was nervous about the success of his mission, for, He fixed His attention on the externals, namely, the fort, palace, bodyguards and all the paraphernalia of kings. He compared them with His own dress, appearance and the low value of the offering that He was taking to Him. The Lord cares for the purity of the motive behind the act, not for the pomp and the show.

Real Bhakti is also a matter of the inner consciousness, not of the outer behaviour. There are people who complain that their devotion to the Lord is limited and shaped by the worldly bonds that bind them. It is not the world that binds them; it is they who bind themselves to the world! People trap monkeys by placing big pots with small mouths in the gardens and putting some groundnuts inside them. They then wait nearby. The monkeys come and put their hands inside the pots and fill their fists with the nuts. Now, they find that the hands full of nuts cannot be taken out of the pot, for the mouth is too small for the fists. In this helpless condition, they can be caught easily. They fall a prey to the trappers. If only they drop the nuts, they could escape from the burden of the pot and get free. But the attachment to the nuts spelt disaster to them. So too, man gets attached to sense-objects which He is loath to give up and so, He gets entangled in the world forgetting the purpose for which He has come. This is the supreme ignorance. You must try to make the best use of the time allotted to you.

You do not try to find out what you were before birth, after birth, and after death. The potter digs up clay to make His pots; that creates a pit but, before His house, the clay has become a heap. And after the process on the wheel, they become pots, which become clay again, when they break and disintegrate. Clay persists in the pit, the heap and the pots. The pots are short-lived and so, they represent the Jivas, the individuals. Clay is the Brahmic substance, which underlies all creation. Know this and get established in the Absolute.

From a Discourse by Baba

SRI SATHYA SAI SATHSANGH SAMACHAR

CALICUT: (KERALA): JANUARY 8:

Akhanda Bhajana, by members of the Sathya Sai Seva Sathsangh at the Kerala School of Commerce Hall.

KAMPALA: (EAST AFRICA): JANUARY 10:

Arrival at Prasanthi Nilayam of Dr. Patel, President of the Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali, Kampala, Uganada.

GANGALAKURRU: (EAST GODAVARI, A.P.): JANUARY 12:

Inaugural Function of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha. Br. Kolluri - Somasekhara Sastry and others spoke on Vedic Culture.

PRASANTHI NILAYAM: JANUARY 12:

Bhikku Yassa arrived back at the Nilayam after his pilgrimage to Buddhist Holy Places in North India.

MANGALORE: (MYSORE STATE): JANUARY 15:

Akhanda Bhajana, for 24 Hours, by Sathya Sai Bhaktha Vrinda.

PACIFIC PALISADES: (CALIFORNIA, U.S.A): JANUARY 18:

The members of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba group were addressed by Jaclyn-Garon, on the “Wonder and joy” of Prasanthi Nilayam which she had Visited recently.

VIJAYAWADA: (KRISHNA DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH): JANUARY 22:

Establishment of the Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi.

VIJAYAPURA: (BANGALORE DISTRICT, MYSORE STATE): JANUARY 22:

The First Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Sathsangha, at the Town Hall; Chairman:Sri T.Siddalingaiah, Former Minister, Govt of Mysore; Speakers: Dr. V.K.Gokak, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Bangalore, and Sri N.Kasturi.

GREECE: JANUARY 23:

Constantine Letnis, a Sadhaka from Greece arrived at the Nilayam for a Short stay.

BUDALUR: (TANJORE DISTRICT, MADRAS): JANUARY 26:

Inauguration of Bhajan at the Sri Sathya Sai Vihar: Chairman: Sri. V. Santhanam, Managing Editor, Dinamani. Speakers: Sri Govindarajan, M.A, M.Litt; Govt Arts College, Kumbhakonam.

SALEM: (MADRAS STATE): JANUARY 26:

**Inauguration of Sri Sathya Sai Baba Bala Bhajana Mandali:
President. Sri.**

S. Mruthyunjayan, B.Sc., M. Dorairajan, Editor, Prasanthi, Madras.

ULSOOR: (BANGALORE, MYSORE STATE): JANUARY 26:

Third Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sai Sanathana Sabha: Akhanda Bhajana.

MUVVATTUPUZHA: (KERALA STATE): JANUARY 26:

Members of Sri Sathya Sai Samaj arranged a day long programme of Puja And had Discourses and had Akhanda Bhajan for 12 hours.

DHARMAPURI: (MADRAS STATE): JANUARY 28:

Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Bhaktha Sangham.
Chairman: Sri P. Kulandaivalu, B.A, B.L., District Munsiff,
Dharmapuri.

HONG KONG: JANUARY 29:

Julie Taylor, Associate Editor, 'Hong Kong Standard' and George Reid, Yoga Sadhakas from Hong Kong arrived at the Nilayam.

GUINDY: (MADRAS CITY): FEBRUARY 3:

19th Anniversary Celebrations of the Installation of (the Idol of) Sri Sai – Baba by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at the Sathya Sai Mandali.
Discourse by Sri. K. Balakrishna Joshi, Head Master, Hindu Theological High School, Madras, under the auspices of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, Madras.

(Prompt and detailed information regarding such event will be most thankfully received by the Editor.)

PRASANTHI NILAYAM NEWS

MAHASIVARATRI

Mahasivaratri will be celebrated at the Prasanthi Nilayam on Thursday, March 9, 1967. (Magha Krishna Chaturdasi).

UPANAYANAM

The Upanayanam celebration, usually held a few days earlier than Mahasivaratri, will not take place this year, for the reason that there is no good Muhurtam available at that time.

BABA'S PROGRAMME

Those desirous of knowing whether Baba is present at Prasanthi Nilayam can get information by means of Reply Card or by Reply Prepaid Telegram addressed to the Editor, Sanathana Sarathi, Prasanthi Nilayam Telegraph Office, Penukonda Taluk. There is a Public Call Office at Prasanthi Nilayam. P.O. (Telephone No. 30, Penukonda via Hindupur Exchange.)

Bhagavata Vahini

10

Bhima managed to muster up some courage. He said, "Brother! Grant me leave and I shall proceed to Dwaraka in an instant and return quick bringing full information of all that has happened to remove your fear." Even while Bhima was praying on bended knees for permission, the sunset and the lamps started emitting feeble light from every place.

Meanwhile, a guard from the main entrance rushed in, announcing that Arjuna had come and that he was approaching the Royal apartment. Every one rose as if they had suddenly come to life; they hurried forward to meet Arjuna, thirsty for news from Dwaraka. Arjuna came in, depressed and despondent, devoid of any song of joy; without looking the brothers in the face, he rolled over the feet of Dharmaraja.

Dharmaraja noticed the signs which confirmed his fear and became eager to inquire further. He asked about the welfare of friends and kinsmen at Dwaraka. Arjuna could not raise or turn his head. The brothers saw the feet of Dharmaraja streaming with the tears shed by him and were shocked into immobility. Dharmaraja lost all hold on his mind. He tried to lift Arjuna and shaking him by the shoulders, he shouted in agony into his ear, "Brother! What has happened? What has happened? What has happened to the Yadavas? Tell us about that. Our hearts are about to burst. Save us from this terrible anguish."

But, Arjuna did not reply. He could not rise or even spell out words. Dharmaraja, however, continued raining questions on him, inquiring about the welfare of the Yadavas and others, mentioning them by name and asking about each one separately. Arjuna did not react even to this desperate fusillade. He showed no response. He did not raise his face to look on to his brother's.

"You need not tell us the rest; but, this you must tell us; what has Vaasudeva directed you to tell us, what is his Message to us; tell us that" Dharmaraja appealed. Arjuna could not bear it any longer. The grief that he had held back so long gushed out in full flood. "We have Vaasudeva no more. O, we are orphaned. We could not keep Him, we have no more luck," he said and fell down the floor, sobbing.

Sahadeva grasped the situation and its possibilities and he closed all doors that led into the Hall; he engaged himself in attempting to soothe the distress.

"Alas, that we lived to hear this, what a fate! O, Destiny, how could you treat the world so cruelly?" the brothers lamented together. "Lord, why have you deserted the Pandavas thus? Why this breach of trust? We have survived to hear this news; this is the result of the accumulation of sin during many generations," they asked and asserted. Each one was submerged in his own grief, in his own despair. The Hall was filled with gloomy silence.

It was Dharmaraja who braved it first. Wiping the tears that filled his eyes, he questioned Arjuna in pathetic tones, "Have you news of the condition of the Parents, and of Nanda and Yasoda and of the other Yadavas? Tell us about them. They must be broken with the grief of separation from

the Lord. When we too have been reduced to this helpless depth, what can we say of them? They must be sunk in unfathomable despair. How can they keep body and breath together? Why refer to individuals? The entire City of Dwaraka must have sunk in the sea of inconsolable grief."

Dharmaraja was sobbing with sorrow as he pictured to himself those scenes. Seeing him in this condition, Arjuna said, "Brother! The people of Dwaraka are far luckier than us. We are the least fortunate. We are the only hardened beings that have withstood the shock of the news of the departure of Vaasudeva from this world. The rest left the world even before news came of His departure."

At this Dharmaraja exclaimed, "Hari, Hari, O God! What is it you said now? What is this catastrophe? I do not understand anything.... Did the sea rise and engulf Dwaraka? Or, did any wild barbarian horde invade and overwhelm the City and slaughter the population? Arjuna, tell us what happened. Put an end to our frightful surmises, which raise up awful pictures." Dharmaraja held the hand of Arjuna and turned his face up in an attempt to make him answer his queries.

Arjuna said, "No, no sea got furious and swallowed Dwaraka; no ruler led his army against that City. Wickedness and vileness grew madly wild among the Yadavas themselves and excited their strife and hate to such an extent that they slaughtered one another with their own weapons." Dharmaraja asked him, "Arjuna, there must be some overpowering Force that urged the Yadava clan, young and old, to sacrifice themselves in this holocaust. No effect can happen without a cause, isn't it?" and, waited to listen to the details of what had actually led to the slaughter.

Arjuna paused a little to overcome the grief surging within him and then, he began his account of the events. The other three brothers drew near and heard the tragic tale. "I learnt that day that not even the tiniest event can happen unless willed by Vaasudeva. I got fully convinced of this. He is the Sutradhari, the holder of the strings that move the puppets and make them act their roles; but, He seats Himself among the spectators and pretends He is unaware of the plot or story or cast. The characters cannot deviate a dot from His directions; His Will guides and determines every single movement and gesture. The varying emotions and events on the stage by which the drama unrolls itself affect the hearts of those who witness the play but, they do not cause a ruffle in the heart of the Sutradhari.

"He decides what this person should say or that person should do and He prompts in them the appropriate words and deeds. And, the consequence of the Karma performed and inherited by each individual from previous lives also adds its quota to this destiny. The Yadavas who are our own kith and kin were spiritual personages, full of devotion to God as you all know well. Perhaps, some day, some sage had cast a curse on them; or else some day some dire sin was committed by them... For, how else can we explain this sudden upset in their history, this unexpected tragedy?

"They performed a magnificent Sacrifice (Yajna) at prabhasakshetra; for seven full days, the Yajna was celebrated in unprecedented pomp and style; the Valedictory Offering in the Sacred Fire was poured in true Vedic grandeur in the Presence of Lord Krishna Himself the participants and priests performed later the ceremonial bath in Holy Waters; the Brahmins then received their

share of the Yajna Offering and distributed it to the Yadavas also; everything went off in an atmosphere of perfect calm, contentment, and joy.

Towards noon, Brahmins were served with food; afterwards, the Yadavas seated themselves in long lines to partake of the feast. During the Feast, as ill luck would have it, some of the Yadavas filled themselves with drink and lost self-control so much that they mistook their own kinsmen for foes. They started quarrels which raged into a fight of severe fierceness. It must have been in the plan of God, for however unruly and vile a man might be, he would not slaughter with his own hands his own children and his parents. O the horror of it! In the general melee that ensued, son killed father, father killed son, brother slew brother, son-in-law killed father-in-law, father-in-law killed son-in-law, in one insane orgy of blind hate, until there was no one alive!" Arjuna could not speak further; he leant against the wall; he held his head, bursting with pain and grief, between his pressing palms.

Dharmaraja heard this account with anguish and amazement. He placed his hands on Arjuna's back, and said; "What is this that you are saying? It is an unbelievable story. Since your tongue will never speak untruth I am forced to put faith in its correctness; or, else, how can we ever imagine such a sudden transformation of character and such a lightning massacre? I have never seen or heard anywhere else such intensity of mutual friendship as marked the Yadava clan. Besides they do not deviate in the least from the path marked out for them by Krishna. They will not deflect from it on the most frantically furious occasions. That such people should, in the very presence of Krishna, regardless of all canons of good behaviour, beat one another to death is strange indeed; such a turn of events comes only when the end of the world is near.

"Well, Arjuna! Could not Krishna stop the fight and advise them to desist? Did He attempt to bring about some compromise between the factions and send them back to their places? Krishna is the greatest adept in the arts of war and peace, is it not? That He did not try to stop this tragedy makes me wonder more at this awful tale of destruction."

Dharmaraja was lost in sorrow; he sat with his head resting on his clenched fist, the hand placed on the knee, his eyes were full of tears which they rolled continuously down his cheeks. Arjuna tried to speak some words of consolation "Maharaja! You are aware of the Glory and the Grace of Krishna, but, yet, you ask questions and entertain doubts, whether He did this or that; what can I say in reply? The fate of the Yadavas is the same as the fate of our own clan. Weren't we and Kauravas brothers? We had kinsmen who were well-wishers on both sides and we had this same Shyamasundar in our midst, but, yet, we had to go through the Kurukshetra battle. Can we not see that this war would not have happened, had He willed it so? The forty lakhs of warriors who died on the field of battle would not have been lost then, isn't it? Did we ever wish to rule over this land after slaughtering them all? Nothing can ever happen without His express command. No one can cross His Will or act against His command.

"This world is the stage on which each one acts the role He has allotted him, on which each one struts about for the time given by Him and each one has to obey His instructions without fail or falter. We may think in pride that we have done this or that by ourselves, but the truth is, everything happens as He wills."

When Arjuna concluded, Dharmaraja thought aloud. "Arjuna! Many motives dragged us into the Mahabharata War. We tried our best through diplomacy and peaceful means to regain our kingdom, our status and what was legitimately our due. We bore patiently many insults and discomfitures. We had to wander in the jungle as exiles. Through Divine Grace, we escaped many a plot laid to kill us. They tried arson and poison on us. They heaped public ignominy on our Queen. They broke our hearts by systematic ill-treatment.

"Still, there are but three reasons for the final fight everywhere: wealth, dominion and woman. But take the instance of the Yadavas. They had no such reason to fall out among themselves in mortal combat. It appears as if Destiny was the only overpowering reason for this cataclysm.

"The Yadavas were rolling in plenty. They had no lack of grain or gold. And their wives? They were models of virtue, faithful and devoted. They never deviated from the wishes or commands of their husbands. They could not bring insult or discomfiture to their lords from any quarter. How then could faction and internecine strife raise their heads so suddenly among them?"

Arjuna replied: "My dear brother! We see the outer circumstances, the processes which result in the final event and in our ignorance we judge that this set of causes produced these effects. We guess the nature of emotions and feelings from what we gauge from events. But circumstances, events, emotions and feelings are all simply 'instruments' in His Hands, serving His Will and His Purpose. When the moment comes, He uses them for His Plan, and brings about the fight He has willed. He is the embodiment of Kala or Time; He comes as the Master of Time and, through some denouement of the plot, He finishes the drama. That which brought about Birth brings about Death, too. He finds reason for both, in the same degree. Do we seek to know why there was a birth? Then, why seek to know why Death occurs? It occurred; that is enough. Reason finding is a superfluous occupation.

"He causes beings to create beings and He causes beings to end beings. Bodies get born, bodies die; nothing more serious happens at birth or death. This has been taught us often by Vaasudeva. Why then should we doubt or deviate from the steady courage He has sought to give us?

"You might say that it is not just that He who caused us to be born should be the person who kills us. Between birth and death, man too has some capacity to earn punya and papa, merit and demerit, and this has some influence on the course of events. Within these limits, the Lord plays the game of football with birth and death, and life.

"Birth and Death are two high cliffs between which the River of Life flows. The Force of Atmic Faith (Atmashakti) is the bridge that spans the chasm and for those who have developed that Force and Faith, floods are of no concern. With Atmashakti as their safe support, they can reach the other bank, braving all dangers. O, King! All this is but a grand puppet-show by that Master-Director The Yadavas today, like the Kauravas yesterday, had no individuality of their own; there is no use blaming either.

Can this material body, composed of the five elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—move or act without His Prompting? No. It is His Amusement, to cause one to be born through another and to cause one to die through another. Else, how can you explain the fact of the snake laying

eggs and warming them to bring out the young and then, eat the very children thus born? Even among them, it eats up only those whose term is ended, so to say, not every one of the snakelings. The fish that live in waters get caught in nets when their term ends; why, the small fish get eaten by the big ones and they, in their turn, get swallowed by even bigger ones. This is His Law. The snake eats the frog, the peacock eats the snake; this is His Game. Who can probe into the reasons for this? The Truth is: 'Every single event is the decision of this Balagopala.'

“We cannot sense the mystery of His Play. We have failed to understand it. There is no profit in worrying over that failure, now. With that deluding Human Form, He moved with us, mixed with us, dined with us, behaved as if He was our kinsman and well-wisher, our friend and guide, and saved us from many a calamity that threatened to overwhelm us. He showered His Divine Mercy on us and solved for us the toughest problems that defied solution, in remarkably simple ways. During all this time that He was near and dear to us, we were carried away by pride that we had His Grace; we did not try to fill ourselves with that Supreme Joy, to dive deep into the Flood of His Grace. We sought from Him mere external victory and temporal benefits; we ignored the vast Treasure with which we could have filled our hearts. We never contemplated on His Real Reality.

“He guarded us as if we five were the Five Vital Airs (Panchaprana) for Him. He came forward to help us and lead us in every undertaking, however small; and He fulfilled it for us. Brother! What shall I say? We might be born many times over, but we can never get again such a Friend and Kinsman. I have received from Him love much more intense than that of a mother, a love which no mother can confer.

“On many an occasion He bore the burdens of the Pandavas as His own and to relieve us of the bother, He used to plan measures within minutes and carry them on to final success. It is due to the gift of His Grace that we Pandavas have survived in this world to this day.

“Why repeat a thousand things separately? Every drop of blood coursing through these veins is but a drop from the shower of His Grace. Every muscle is but a lump of His Love; every bone and cartilage is but a piece of His mercy. Unable to understand this secret, we strutted about, boasting 'I achieved this', and 'accomplished that'. Now, it has become clear to us that without Him we are but bags of skin.

Of course, the fate of all men is the same. They forget that the All-ruling All-knowing Almighty plays with them as puppets; they assume that they are the actual doers and enjoyers; like me they are plunged in ignorance of the basic truth. When we who are far-famed heroes and warriors are in this sad plight, what can we say of ordinary folk who have no chance of awakening into this Jnana?

“For this, the sad experience I had on my way is the direct proof.” Thus said Arjuna and fell back, leaning against the chair that was behind him; for he could not bear the separation from his life-long Support and Guide, Krishna.

(To be continued)

Tukaram used to say, "save me, o lord, from 'good men as well as bad. For, the good cause grief when they go from me; the bad men cause grief when they come to me." be always in the company of god- that causes no grief.

Baba

Our Only Hope

India has always been a country of contradictions but the contradictions of today are the most glaring in our history. We swear by socialism, but it looks as though we are witnessing the emergence of 'an anti-social society', in which every kind of iniquity is perpetrated with impunity. This unfortunate land has always had a vast population of the poorest people on earth. It also boasted of some of the richest men under the sun. At the dawn of independence we took a pledge that we shall wipe out this grinding poverty, but in two decades what has actually happened is that the rich have become richer and the poor poorer. All the laws are violated and those who sin against society are none the worse for it and, indeed, cock a snook at the powers that be. Our moralist pose before the world at large has become ridiculous and the attitude of 'holier than thou' is the worst hypocrisy imaginable. We have added 'cowdolatry' to our innumerable creeds, but animal and human life in this sub-continent has become the plaything of cruelty.

These features are there, but the greatest of all contradictions is, that along with this wide-spread moral decline, a proliferation of faith seems to be taking place among the simple and uncultivated; people. One hopes that it is the silver lining in the cloud and that it arises from the last lingering sparks of the spiritual tradition that has been bequeathed to us by the generations that have gone before. It may be the outcome of the everlasting need of the human soul for a firm foundation for life and thought. In spite of all that the rationalists and the dialectical materialists say, the fact remains that mankind in the course of its long journey through life on this planet has derived sustenance from the contemplation of the spiritual reality that, lies at the heart of things. We find evidence of this life sustaining devotion in the relics of the past and the ruins of civilizations as far removed as the Assyrian and the Mayan.

In an ably argued thesis the German thinker Eduard Meyer has contended that philosophy and religion are not the same thing and that they are, in a sense, antithetical. The one arises from doubt and disbelief and is primarily an intellectual exercise emanating from above and coming down as far as it can penetrate. Religion, on the other hand has its origin in the faith of the common mass of humanity. It grows upward from the very foundations of life and may or may not reach the pinnacles of the intellect. It springs from the conviction that life has a deeper meaning and significance, however much they may be hidden from us, and involves an acceptance, without reservation, of the truth and validity of supernatural powers and miraculous happenings. For the vast majority of mankind this faith is the only refuge from the torments of existence.

This thought has occurred to me again and again as I see and hear about the great concourse of common people who are drawn towards Baba wherever He goes. They do not expect material benefits from Him, nor do they submit petitions. They come to see Baba and their seeing has the quality of fulfillment. We, the educated and the emancipated delude ourselves with the thought that the intellect is the only significant characteristic of our species and that it alone holds the key to its future. We do not learn by disillusionment; we cling to the idea that there is an intellectual solution to the problem of the life, the ordinary, unsophisticated man knows better. He yearns for Grace and seeks it. He sees life in its totality, almost by instinct, and His faith leads Him to the real source of solace in this vale of tears.

*Tam eva saranam gaccha
Sarvabhavena bharatha
Tatprasadat param santim
Sthanam prapsyati sasvatham*

(Flee unto Him for refuge with all thy being o Bharat. By His Grace shalt thou obtain supreme peace and Eternal abode)

I see this message spreading far and near and the fact that many a humble life has received it in the true spirit of devotion and is dedicating itself to the endeavour to be worthy of the Grace is our only hope in the Indian situation today. Life here looks like a lotus-flower at night. It is down cast with the burden of dew and the petals are closed in suffering. It droops with pain and privation and waits in agony for the dawn. Will the dawn ever come?... Let us not despair. The crimson rays have broken the veil of night; very soon it will be day. This is the hope Puttaparthi holds out to us. It radiates from Baba's countenance and blessed is He who can grasp it with all His being.

K. Bhaskaran Nair, M.Sc., D.Sc., F.Z.S.I

Sri Sathya Sai—The Siva

This is the tenth Birthday of the "Sanathana Sarathi ", in the form of the Eternal Word, the Nitya, the Vibhu, of the Sanathana Sarathi, who is eternal. He has no beginning, no end; but, for the Love he bears us, He has taken human form, or else, He was out of sight and therefore, out of mind.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita, "Avyakta hi gatirdukkham dehavadbhiravapyate," "For those who are manifest in the form of a body, it is difficult to understand and realise that which is Unmanifest." Taking upon Himself all suffering that the body is prone to, He, the Formless, has taken Form to come to this earth, to His beloved India, the land acclaimed as the "Guru" of the world in the spiritual field.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba dins into our ears in each of His Discourses that we must awaken to our great heritage and be aware of our privileges. He advises us not to run after material success but, discriminate between what is ephemeral and what is everlasting. He warns us against identifying the false "I", the body, with the true "I", the soul.

Bhagavan is Truth-Beauty-Bliss Incarnate. He is Bliss, Sivam. Baba is Siva, the Ever-auspicious, for He is all Love. Who among His devotees—big or small, high or low—has not experienced the very special Love, the very special consideration He shows to each? His essence is Love and Power is His attribute. Therefore His Love is greater than His Power, Shakti. On Mahasivaratri Day, out of His great Love for all His devotees, He manifests His Power and demonstrates the most glorious of all Miracles, the Creation of the Linga.

"Eating, sleeping, fear and mating are common to both men and animals," says the Subhashita. How then, are men different from animals? Is it in the faculty of reason they have? But, reason disappears in the twilight of instinct: when a dog runs away on seeing a stick, we do not know exactly whether the animal was instinctively afraid or whether he reasoned that the stick would presently fall on him. The real distinguishing mark of a human being is his "sense of wonder."

Man alone is capable of being "struck with awe and wonder." The spectacle of the tropical "dawn" the intense force of lightning and thunder the torrential rains of the equatorial belt struck the Vedic singer with this feeling and he went into raptures and sang aloud in praise of Ushas Indra and Varuna. He could not contain himself. But today, our senses are benumbed with the glamour of materialism; which infects the objective world. We have become too dull to look behind the beauties of nature to the Source of all Beauty and Harmony. Nothing seems to be capable of shaking us from this stupor.

Bhagavan has come to shake us from this stupor, to awaken in us the sense of awe and wonder. While thousands look on, He creates on Mahasivaratri Day, the Linga, the Symbol of Creation. The "Form" of the "Formless," emanating from the "Formless" with "Form," awakens us to this awe and wonder. What a grand spectacle it is! How much grander is its spiritual significance! As Baba says, He manifests His Mahimas to express the Love He bears to mankind and to demonstrate His Grace and to make them realise who He is. The lesson of the Mahasivaratri Miracle is something Divine, something profound, which evades description.

Mahasivaratri the Night of Siva is supposed to be the darkest Night of the year. The Moon and the Mind have a great affinity, as Baba shows Quoting Shruti, "*Chandramaa manaso jaatah*," "Out of the Moon, the Mind was born." Therefore, Baba explains that the Night of Siva must be the Night when the mind affects us least and Siva affects us most. Those who have no faith in Shruti might argue that the mind and the moon have nothing to do with each other; but even they have learnt to use the word, "lunatic," for one whose madness waxes and wanes with the moon! The cosmic forces are too subtle for our gross intelligence to comprehend. The Vedic singer scientists have investigated and experimented in their "Inner Laboratory" and have put forward the results of their experiments for the benefit of posterity. All that we have to do is to believe in them and forge ahead. If we have no faith, we have to start the experiments all over again. Yet, we, Bharatiyas today do neither. We are too engrossed in petty squabbles.

When children fight amongst themselves over an insignificant toy, the mother shows them a “sweetie” and distracts their attention; she does not take the trouble of ending the fight, by trying to judge to whom the toy belongs. That is what Sathya Sai Mata is doing today for our fortunate country. Differences, disputes, and quarrels permeate this age of political, linguistic and other “ideologies.” Those who do not get the opportunity of being selfish in the field of politics indulge in narrow selfishness in the fields of their personal existence. But, Sai Mata is ever vigilant, patient, and persistent. For, She wants to hold our hands and lead us on to the Light. We behave like mentally deficient children; yet She does not forsake us. With Love-full persistence, everyday, on every occasion, Bhagavan reminds us that we are human beings much higher than animals. He asks to awaken from slumber, and realise that the gross world outside is to be given a place lower than the “Inner.” In His Divine way, He wraps the pill of spiritual training in tasty words, so that it may be palatable to minds immersed in the mundane.

Mahasivaratri reminds us that the mind has to be reduced to its minimum, by Sadhana. After all, what is this “mind”? It is our own creation, woven out of the warp and woof of desires. The cherished ideal is “to be” and not “to become.” It is to strive for “desirelessness,” not to get the fulfillment of the materialistic desires. If we find the effort strenuous, all we have to do is simply to keep faith and cry for our Sai Ram and pray to Him, “*Asato ma Sat gamaya; Tamso ma jyotir gamaya; Mrtyor Ma amritam gamaya.*” (Lead me, Oh Lord, from the plausible on to truth, from darkness on to light, from death on to immortality). A moment will surely come, when His Grace will descend on us and will grant us the cherished state of desirelessness and the Peace, which is everlasting.

In this tremendous process of aiding us to transform the petty mind into the Realised Soul Bhagavan never spares Himself; He never denies us anything. He is concerned with the material well-being of many thousands, for, He knows that they will be attracted later to the Divine that dwells in their own “self”. As Sai Baba used to say at Shirdi, He draws His children towards Him by promising them sugar, so that they may then swallow a dose of spirituality.

On the great day of Maha-Siva-Ratri when Baba moves about in Prasanthi Nilayam in the morning to unfurl the Flag of Prasanthi, thence to the Auditorium for the vibhuti-Abhisheka, and the evening, for Upanyasa and Bhajan to the Santhi Vedica, we find Him as Prema-Swarupa, Sai-Shiva, moving amongst us.

The atmosphere is resounding with “AUM” as it were; it is laden with thoughts of Sai, the Siva, the Ever-auspicious, the Ever-Blissful. The atmosphere is still; it is permeated with the eager but silent hope of the devotees that their loving Father and powerful Mother will surely and unfailingly guide them along the difficult path of Spirituality. Awake, Arise, to this good Fortune that has come our way! For, the Ganges Herself has flowed to the place where the lazy one is sitting!

He has come to move amongst us, to talk to us, but, we are apt to forget His true nature, even as we have forgotten our own. We are apt to look upon Him as just one of us, for our human minds have the narrow outlook. On Sivaratri and such other days, He reminds us that He is not what we imagine him to be. He is the Hero, the Lord, the Goal, the Ideal. He is the Star, to which we have to hitch our wagon.

Whereas the Mogul Emperor Shahjahan thought of Kashmir as Heaven, the spiritual atmosphere of Puttaparthi on Mahasivaratri Day and the glory of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba fill the present writer's heart with the feeling that if there is a Heaven on Earth, "IT IS THIS! IT IS THIS! IT IS THIS T"

—Dr. Damayanthi, M A., LL. B., Ph. D.

Life without devotion to god, reverence to elders, and love towards all beings is like a body without breath. There is no joy, as deep and satisfying as can be given by these; there is no goal higher than this for man. This is the very reason, the only justification, for being born as a man.

Baba

Baba in the Marble Home

(Kothnaghatta is a village, two miles from Sravana Belagola in the Hassan District of Mysore, where the famous monolithic statue of Gommateswara has been attracting pilgrims since more than a thousand years. In the Siva temple of this village, the marble idol is now revealing clearly for all to see, the two Forms of Sathya Sai Baba and Shirdi Sai Baba! This poem is based on actual facts which can be verified by any one. Thousands have gone to the village and seen the Phenomenon for themselves and returned full of faith in the Mahima of Baba.)

Two teen-agers from Kothnaghatta
They heard of Baba; they could not stay!
They begged the fare, they borrowed the rest—
They could not rest till they started forth;
They moved by foot, by bus, by train---and then again,
By cart and bus and foot, full quarter thousand miles.
They reached, they saw, they drank their fill of joy!
Baba gave them hope and cheer, courage to brave and bear.

But, He asked them not to come again!
He told them He will always be in their own village
Watching them, and blessing them and all other teenage progeny.

Two teenagers from Kothanghatta
They were sad to leave but leave they must;
They reached again their village home.
They loved to sing the Bhajan songs in Puttaparthi style;
They had some friends and they too came
With drum and drone and jingle-bells
To the Siva Temple Hall
They sang and surged

They nearly danced with joy.

The village woke from slumber, sloth, and doubt;
The women wondered at the songs and hummed the tunes;
The men? They sat on fringe of faith and watched the boys;
They did not wait there long; they marked the time and sang!

The marble Linga, Narmada-born, brought with loving care
Installed, by priests for penitent hearts and praying soup;
Heard the songs of the teenage two--It did!
Heard the heartbeat of village folk--It did!
'Twas strange, twas straight, steady, true--It felt!

It felt a thrill, a breath within, a spark,
A flame, a fire, a glory great--and, hark
The village saw the change!

O What a change!
Baba had come into the Marble Home,
The Linga, Narmada Born
And Shirdi Sai, too was there
For all to see, adore, admire!
Baba with the halo hair, the smile of Grace,
A garland round His neck,
The silken gown, the Love, the Mercy and the Strength.
And Sai too, with kerchief round the head,
Black beard, squatting firm
In Dwarakamayi style.

'Tis over a year since transformation came
You can see them both in that marble home
Side by side, with smile and grace,
Clear and fine, conferring Bliss,
They dominate the scene, they light the Hall
They are the lungs of that village frame
They are the breath of every word they talk.

Every night is Sivaratri there, for Sai the Linga lives.
Every day is a Holy day, for the Living God is witnessed there!

O Come to Kothnaghatta, and worship there,
Saiswara in Kasiswara
This Sivasakthi and the Sakthi Form, embedded for our sake
To cast away the doubt from heart, and humble pride;
For us to know and need, to see and strive, to thrill and thrive.
And thank those teen-agers two, who brought the Baba Form

Into the Marble Dome,
Into His Marble Home.

Baba's Form is seen in many a ring-set stone
For, He has blessed the wearer so.
He is clear and smiling in many a linga stone
That's worshipped by devout men,
For He has blessed them so.

But, this that teenagers won, in village temple: shrine
Is grander far, than all these acts of grace!
For, you and I, our sons grandsons
Can see Him evermore, with Shirdi Form
In holy Kothnaghatta Siva's Shrine

—N. K.

Sri Sathya Sai: His Nature and Glory

This is the truth I have known through my, own experience. I am announcing these experiences hoping that this account will help those who, like me, are eager to fathom the meaning of the Sai Mystery.

Baba accosts me, who is past seventy, as if I am a little child; He fondles me lovingly; He caresses me affectionately and appreciatively as 'My nugget of gold' etc; He grants me what I wish for and keeping me close to Him, He converses; amusingly with me; He advises me so endearingly that my life's burden is lightened.

At first, I was amazed at this strange behaviour. With the passing of time, I learnt through experience, that Baba treated me so because He is the Father of all Beings (Jagat-pita) and that His Grace revealed all of us to Him, however old we may be, as 'little children'. To love those who wry devoted to Him is His very nature. That Love is unconditioned, it is limitless. Sai is the inexhaustible reservoir of Love.

On the very first occasion when I had His Darshan, Baba related to me the story of my life, events that had happened to me in the distant past, incidents from my family life and the various ups and downs I had encountered during the years, as elaborately and as clearly as only a close witness could describe. I realised then that Baba's knowledge was comprehensive and that He was capable of knowing the entire past.

Once, I visited Brindavan (Whitefield) with my friend Sri Sanjeeva Setty in order to be in His Presence for a few days. We spent about six days there, days of supreme bliss, imbibing His Love and Grace. Like Sri Krishna in Brindavan, Baba shone in His Divine Glory, expressing Ananda through every word and deed and inspiring with Divine Thrill the devotees around Him.

At last, sunrise one day, we approached Him for permission to leave. He cast His cool merciful glance on us both; He spoke to us soft and sweet; He granted us Prasadam and blessed us. Then, pointing to me, He said “Sanjeeva Setty! Take this fruit with you, with great care, lest it gets damaged on the way.” I guessed He had referred to me as a ‘ripe fruit’ since I was far too old in age. I looked at my friend’s face and we both struggled to cover up our smiles. Then, we fell at His Feet and took leave of Him and left.

Scarce two stations had been passed by our train when I felt a fever within me. It shot up pretty quick and became so severe that I lost consciousness. When we had to change trains, porter had to be engaged to lift me and carry me over to the new platforms and trains. I did not regain consciousness even during the transit. The entire night was spent thus. Early next day, by about sunrise the fever subsided a little. I was able to sit up and look around. I became aware of where I was and how.

We stayed at Tirupati for two days. Sri Setty took me to a Doctor and got some medicine for me. On recovering a little, we left for Nellore and reached the place without more trouble.

Setty told me “Sastri, did you notice this? ‘This person will suffer from fever on the way; look after Him carefully’. That was the instruction given by Baba to me. We could grasp it at the meaning of His words. It is only experience that can reveal the meaning of His words.”

It struck me as true, I told you Sri Setty so, in so many words. But yet, a trace of doubt entered my mind that instant that it might, perhaps, be mere coincidence. I argued within my self that the doubt was the consequence of ignorance. The more I tried to shake it off, the deeper the doubt struck root. People who doubt discover only reasons to confirm their doubt; that is their nature.

When next I went to the Presence of Baba, I related to Him the entire story and told Him that I interpreted His reference to me as ‘ripe fruit’ as based on my ripe old age. Baba smiled at me and said, “If you are ripe, on account of age, is Setty an unripe fruit? Is He not a year older in age than you? How then can your interpretation be correct? I gave you that warning only because I knew that you will suffer from fever during the journey. Both of you failed to understand at that time the meaning implicit in My instruction. I hope you have understood it now, after this experience.”

That statement opened my eyes; I was ashamed that I ever entertained the belief that it was a coincidence; I cleared my mind of all the wavering it had given room to.

I knew that Baba knew the future as clearly and as fully as He knew the Past.

Sai's Love is condition-less, Limitless. His Nature is Prema, Love. His Glory can be known best only through one's own experience of His Grace.

—Deepala Pichayya Sastri

Like a confirmed criminal who leaves the jail only to return to it soon, man too develops an unhealthy attachment to the world and does not seek to win liberation. But, once the fact of being in

bondage and the shame of it are felt, man will make every effort to escape the misery and the grief of imprisonment.

Baba

Baba's Heart is Music

Baba's tongue is as sweet as Kokil's;
His heart is full of melody that thrills
And melts even rocks and mountains.
Who knows His sweet throat and all that it contains!

I am always melting before music;
I know that alone can cure the heart that is sick;
I am Baba-sick, I can't be alone
Without hearing Him speak with His sweet tone.

When can I see and hear my Baba Great
I think and feel it is already very late.
Baba, draw me to Thee by Thy siren song,
How can I live, shut up here? O!! How long!!

(Late Dr. K. Vaidyanathan) M. A., Ph. D.

The Dawn of a Golden Age

The descent of the Divinity.....—Cosmic consciousness functioning within the biological limitations of man-Gods in human form—these are the Avatars and Saviours of Mankind who strode and ennobled this hallowed land of ours from time to time. Mighty Bharat who for thousands of years stood as a Gulliver in Lilliputian world shedding luster and light, wisdom and knowledge, the imprint of whose divine personality caressed and sweetened every facet of human existence blessed by the Avatars and inspired by her Rishis, Bharat has always been the Land of Dharma and Sastras, Her immortal Rishis—the Great Master Minds, not only discovered the divinity in themselves but divined the hand of God in the creation all around. They revelled in the ecstasies of the Universe—the Sunrise and Sunset, the mighty mountains and the unfathomed seas and oceans, the winding river, and the murmuring rivulets, the undulating hills and downy dales were all masterpieces of the Great Artist. They danced with the music of the stars laughed with joy at the twinkling lights from firmament. They unravelled the mysteries of earthly existence and by achieving the purpose of life lived to eternity with the realised Self. While treat and powerful empires and civilizations cruet pled and faded away, led by the hand of divine Avatars and immortal, Rishis under the canopy of Her spiritual effulgence, Bharat still lives with her head high—a giant among nations.

Time played its pastime—the inexorable wheel of fortune turned. The sweet and aromatic breeze of a great culture was wafted away by the tempests that raged from across the frontiers. For a thousand years the soul of Bharat lingered and languished in the dismal dungeons of slavery. Bharat along with the rest of the world sunk into an age of callous materialism, bereft of all higher values. And then the vital moment struck. The Atom Bomb—a shock therapy administered by Providence, shook to its foundations this blind and blasphemous materialism with its monstrous pursuits of mere animalism and the world became ripe for God's divine intervention. The moment for the Avatar had come.

Prasanthi Nilayam in holy Puttaparthi is now a sacred centre for Pilgrimage where all Nations of the world converge, where the Lord; manifested in the form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is in residence. Bhagavan Baba's mighty impact on humanity is manifold.

It is once universal and yet intimate and personal. Reveling in His Leelas which we in our awe and wonder dub as Mahimas, He has brought solace and succour to millions, united divided families, cured the incurable, given sight to the blind, wiped off the tears of both the afflicted and the affluent and transmuted into Gold the dirt and dross of human hearts by the Alchemy of His Universal mind, and proving the efficacy of prayer inspired men to as courageous non-chalance against odds and adversity and an unbending faith on God. Bhagavan is often on the move, heeding the incessant prayers of the distracted Loka, almost soaked through with suffering and sorrow. Recently Kerala too had her share of good fortune.

On the 19th of December 1966 Bhagavan Baba graced Palghat with His Divine Presence and gave blessings to about a hundred thousands. Often the milling crowds exceeded the wildest imagination; such is the intense urge of Jivatmas to get near the Paramatma. Long before His arrival in Palghat, evidences of His mahima were in abundance, including many in the residence of the writer where Bhagavan in His infinite Mercy and Kindness graciously consented to stay. To us, initiated into Brahma Vidya-Siddha Vidya-Hamsa Gayatri-by a great Yogi and Master Mind—H. H. Swami Sivananda Paramahansa, the founder of the Siddha samaj in Badagara, fixing of one's eye in the occult centre the Third Eye of Siva—and regulation within, of the Life Breath—Prana Vayu—alone vouchsafed for one's quick evolution to achieve the purpose of life. Pictures and portraits, idols and Vighras and all ritualism had absolutely no meaning and significance. When Bhagavan's portraits became vibrant and “pulsated with life” offering to us Vibhuti and Nectar—a new meaning and significance dawned on us and it became clear that the finale and culmination of our path itself envisaged the transformation of animate and inanimate into one divine entity.

Bhagavan Baba has come to expose the Magic of Maya and reverse the processes of an extrovert adventurism and turn man inwards and discover himself and gain perfection. He has come to re-establish Sanathana Dharma and put Bharat back on Her high pedestal in all her glory. Bhagavan is an Avatar come to save mankind. Lo! And behold the Dawn-Exquisite and exhilarating after a long and dreary Night. Already the golden beams of a springtime Sun are playing upon the Horizons to light up an otherwise lurid landscape, the Dawn that has kicked behind a bestial and dark era to usher in a Golden Age. Bhagavan Himself is the Dawn—the dispeller of all darkness in whose eternal Sunshine all Bhaktas can bask and see Grace.

Bhrigunadi—famous in Hindu predictive Astrology declares from Pattancherry in Kerala that Kalki Avatar (Aswamukhan) is already amidst us. Who else can it be other than Bhagavan Baba Himself! May Bhagavan’s blessings and Grace be on us all.

—Captain T. Balakrishna Menon

Are We Ananda Swaroopa?

Baba generally addresses the vast gatherings that throng to hear Him, “Prema Swaroopulara! Ananda-swaroopulara!” is this true of us? Are we Prema-swaroopa? That is to say, are we embodiments of Love? Are we Anandaswaroopa? Are we embodiments of Bliss? Or, are these words of Baba incorrect or exaggerated or mere flattery or used to encourage us to listen to Him? No; those thrice-sacred Lips can never utter anything except Truth.

To appreciate the aptness of these appellations, one must grasp the meaning of the verse from Kothopanishad, which reads: “*Asariram sarireshu, Anavastheswhvavasthitham.*” Sarira means that which falls asunder, declines, decays (*Seeryathe-Sariram*), that is, the body, which is also called Deha, meaning that which is burnt (*dahyathe-dehah*); in this body, He is the one without the body, unaffected by it; in this physical frame which has avasthas, or stages, He is the One who has no states or stages of growth or decline or decay. Baba reminds us that we are not the bodies, which we carry about with us, by calling us in the manner quoted above. *Athyama sariro amritah*, says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. That is, the Atma in the body is imperishable. It has no body, it is not embodied, and it is free. This is the teaching of the Sastras. So, Baba’s way of addressing us is designed to deepen our faith in our own reality. It is a formula summarising our inherent Truth.

Or again, we can say confidently, that Baba addresses thus those who foolishly identify themselves with the body. We appear to ourselves as many, we take each other as different but, He sees us as the basic One, as Himself, in manifest multiplicity and so, He sees us as one undivided unit of Love and Bliss. What other name can arise on His tongue than what He see in us? There is another fact also to be noted. He sees us as embodiments of Love, Bliss etc., not because of His Divine Grace but, because it is the very Reality of every one of us. Of course, we do not know it ourselves. But, that does not make it untrue. We are free but feel bound; we are Love, but we hate and fight ignoring our true nature. We are Bliss, but, we grieve and cry. We do not know that there is no prison around us. We pine because we imagine ourselves in goal. This Ajnana makes us weave the strand of birth and death, which strangles us. We forget our reality and forge shackles for our destiny. How does this forgetfulness enter us? What caused this dire defect? The Atma, which is the core of our being, knows no loss of awareness, no forgetting. It is the mind, with its creation, the ego, and its expression, the sense of “mine” which sets the senses in pursuit of pleasure, that envelop the glory of Jnana and fogs it with Ajnana. Attaching oneself to the mind and its vagaries is the path of Preya, the pleasing; detaching oneself from the whim of the mind is the path of Shreya, the progressing.

In the Sathyayani Upanishad it is declared, “*Mana eva maushyaanam kaaranam bandha mokshayoh; Bandhaaya vishayaasaktham, mukthair nirvishayam smrtham*” “The mind is the agency to achieve bondage or liberation; pursuit of objects is bondage, withdrawal from objects is liberation.”

“*Athassarvam chiththagocharam*” (Mandala Brahmanopanishad); Jagat or Universe is cognized by the mind, it is the creation of the mind. How did it arise from the mind? The answer is given in the Thraaisikhi Brahmanopanishad thus: “When liquids are churned, froth is created. So too, when the mind is agitated and churned, the world appears in all its many sided variety.” Arresting these agitations and stilling the churning is what is called Yoga or Chitta-vritti-nirodha, by Patanjali. The weakness of the mind, its fundamental limitation consists in just this: it cannot but agitate. It can never be still. This is the Ajnana the assumption that this universe is real, the assumption that we are our minds. This Ajnana hides from us our true nature, which is Premaswaroopa. If it were not in us, we would have become aware of our real swaroopa on hearing Baba address us “Premaswaroopulara” or “Ananadaswaroopulara.”

Baba explained to the thousands who had gathered at the Shanmughananda Hall in Bombay the nature of the mind, holding up before them the handkerchief He had. He said that the mind was a piece of cloth that was woven with the warp and woof of the yarn of Vasanas, desire, attachment, and wish. Remove the yarns one by one and the cloth will disappear. So, master desire, abolish it and there will no more be a mind to bother you, He said.

The mind has to be eliminated; it has to be destroyed, to possess unending Love, inexhaustible Ananda, to escape birth and death, to be liberated from Samsara.

SAHASRAANKURA SAAKHAATHMAA
PHALA – PALLAVA SAALINAH
ASYA SAMSAARA VRIKSHASYA
MANOMOOLAM IDAM STHITAM

The mind is the root of this tree of Samsara which has a thousand births as its branches and flowers and fruits.

SAMKALPA EVA THAN MANYE
SAMKALPOPASAMENA THATH
SOSHAYAA YATHAA SOSHAM
ETHI SAMSAARA PAADAPAH

Resolutions desires attachments wishes-these are the substance of the mind; when these are curbed the tree of Samsara dries up and dies, deprived of sustenance.

Therefore, we have to seek knowledge of the means of curbing and canceling the desires that warp the mind towards bondage. In fact, the mind is the maya, the delusion, that befoes us with duality, like I and You, This and That, Jiva and Deva, Seer and Seen, etc. it hides the basic Brahman which is the only reality. It is the cause for the identification of the body with the self. The mind in various shapes as buddhi chitta ahamkara emanates anger lust greed hate pride and

other emotions and feelings and passions and produces the harvest of unrest and pain in the world. The mind has to be kept engaged in the contemplation of the basic Parabrahmam, the pure, the free, the eternal, the absolute; then, it cannot be engaged with the world; it will not cognise the world. It will get liberated from the body, which is now weighing it down. Finally, it will get established in the awareness that “All is Brahman” *“Sarvam Khalvidam Brahman.”*

The mind is cancelled and cut off in deep sleep, Sushupti. Then, the question may arise why should we seek to cancel it by this process of contemplation on Brahman?

The mind has five stages: Moodha, Kshiptha, Vikshiptha, Ekagra, and Niruddha. Niruddha means, “Cancelled,” but, before that stage is reached, the stage of Ekagra, Single-pointed has to be reached. Sleep is the consequence of the difficulty that the mind tires and enters the darkness of Ajnana. Just as the seeds embedded in the soil sprout into plants and trees, the desires and wishes that are embedded in the Ajnana during sleep sprout again as soon as wakefulness sets in. The showers of thought and feeling feed the plants; and man goes with a begging bowl called “greed” to gather fleeting pleasures, giving up the treasure of eternal happiness.

Instead, if He only holds the bowl of greed for the acquisition of devotion to God, if only He feeds the mind on the showers of Brahma contemplation, or the sunshine of the moral code prescribed for His stage of life and status, if only He proceeds on the holy pilgrimage to the Feet of Sathya Sai Dattatreya, He can discover soon that He is Anandaswaroopa and Premaswaroopa.

So long as you feel and act on the belief that you are lean or fat, tall or short, glad or grieving owning feet and hands you are bound by the sense of possession or deprivation. It will be difficult to conquer the mind. The mind can be conquered only by the awareness that all is Brahman, that there is no second entity. *“Sarvam Brahmethi Samkalpaath, sudridhaanmuchyathe manah.”* “All is Brahman; that Brahman is the Atma; I am Atmaswaroopa and so I am Brahman; there is nothing other than I.” When you recognise this, the mind would have disappeared.

To accomplish this, we must have the blessings of Baba. Is that enough? No, for, as Baba has often said, there is always the flow of the electric current along the wire. That is to say, His Blessings are always there. Only, we have to fix the bulb, namely, do the Sadhana to illuminate the heart and drive out the Ajnana.

Let us endeavour through Sadhana to make our lives, every moment of it, a Mahasivaratri, in the Presence of Him who manifests the Linga. Let the Sadhana be along the lines laid down by Baba Himself. Let us win His Grace. He will prompt us to fix the bulb and win illumination. Let us become aware of our being Anandaswaroopa and Premaswaroopa.

Principal Chidanand Nagarkar

In Our Inmost Heart

To write about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is like trying to make an attempt in describing the infinite, unfathomable ocean of Godhead.

Who dares to reveal the mysteries hidden beyond the grasp and comprehension of human mind
Those who know about the beauty of the glorious Divinity stand spellbound in awe and wonder.
Their lips remain closed by a magic power.

Words still will be expressions of a dual' existence only, whereas that which IS is beyond all forms and qualities.

Likewise Baba IS THAT though apparently in a bodily frame for the sake of those devotees who want to love the Lord in form and cherish an intimate relationship with His magnificent Presence. For the lovers, Baba is to them like Krishna towards Radha, Mira, the gopis, Arjuna, Yogis, saints and sages, attracting with His magnetic power their sole attention and being—and enclosing in His cosmic heart all manifestations of the universe.

The Bliss, devotees experience in His nearness is not to be compared to the joy derived from worldly pleasures.

He is close to those whose heart is pure, whose nature is saturated with Love, faith and a humble but fiery aspiration for the highest attainment of God-consciousness.

To the afflicted and downcast, Baba is Siva who in His compassion and mercy drinks the poison of any sin and bestows refreshing delight in the waters of the all-purifying Ganga.

As Rama, Baba is bringing back again the stumbling feet on the path of righteousness and light.

His fatherly care and motherly affection know no end.

He is there always comforting us, lifting us up from the bonds of human limitations, cutting asunder the shackles of birth and death and making us realize who we really are.

Thus, Baba, in His glorious appearance, can never be understood by the petty limited intellect.

Whether conscious or unaware of it, He is never far from us, for being THAT HE dwells in our inmost heart. He is all Gods in the ONE all-pervading, omniscient, omnipotent Divine Consciousness.

This ocean of infinite light is in its own self-sufficiency. His arms are only stretched open to receive back the innumerable streams of life which He Himself has made for the utter game of creation, preservation and destruction and for the glorification of His mighty Self.

Hence there are no words adequate enough to describe Baba, His Being and Reality. He Himself has stated that none will ever know or understand Him.

Yet there is a comforting; glow of hope in those hearts whose burning aspiration and love for the Lord will never cease to grow in measures unlimited. For them the day will dawn and the gates to the sanctuary will open. All struggles and pangs of separation will come to an end and they will behold and merge into the Light of all Lights, the Spleandour of all Splendour, the Beauty of all Beauty. Then there will be only HE, SWAMI, SAT-CHIT-ANANDA, THAT.

—Gabriella Steyer

A Drop From the Divine Nectar of Baba's Teaching

Man is somehow managing to survive and live; but, unlike the animals and other living beings, man is not limited to the senses and the mere, reaction in his experience, of the outer objective world. Among animals, the reaction between the individual and the outer world is latent and inactive, but, in man, it is very patent and potent, exceeding even the responses which are caused at the time. Not merely the senses but consciousness and its levels react to the outer world; this consciousness is called Chitta and this is the unique excellence in man.

The chitta that is just struggling to express itself in animals is in full bloom in man. It has reached complete development at all levels. That is what makes man, kin with the world, and places the burden of the world on him.

What exactly is this chitta? How does it operate? Chitta is that which urges man forward to discover the meaning of life and living, making him restless when he confines himself to receiving experiences and being content with them. It leads man on to a goal, leads all beings towards more and more integrated endeavour towards progress; it gives man a peep into the inner mystery of every thing in nature and affects his outlook and attitude towards nature and creation; it prompts man to discover relationships and reasons for the happenings in nature; it is a part of the Chaitanya of the Atma, a reflection of its splendour.

The Chit awakes in man the knowledge of the one fundamental reality behind the multifarious experiences he receives from nature, and he is able thereby to mould and master the forces of nature. So, the Prakriti-shakti evolves in accordance with the Chit-shakti. Man is but an instrument in this process. The world is therefore one unit, deep down, in fundamentals. Man feels it so and seeks to bring it into his mind's fold.

The chit acts in two ways and can be cognised so:- Wish and its fulfillment: the process attachment; and wish and its renunciation: the process of detachment. The Anuraktas and the Viraktas are the two groups thus effected. Does the chit encourage wish and endeavour to fulfill them or does it control and stop wishes?

Man has to ponder over the meaning of life, the why and wherefore of it. Is life mere sensual satisfaction? Or, is life a mere mental or intellectual exercise in thinking and feeling? Man gets

glimpses in his consciousness that life is not merely these but something far more meaningful, but, he does not pursue the streak of light and he allows himself to wallow in the darkness.

Man should use the chit to curb his outward-bound senses and then, the world will take upon itself a new glory and a new grandeur; it will be transformed into Chinmaya; for, you are taken into the very source and spring of the world. You become suffused with the mystery of the world. What you really are is what every other thing really is. You cannot patronise the world and evince a new sympathy, nor can you give it up in disgust—for, you and the world are inseparable; you and the world are the same. There is no attachment or detachment; no renunciation or affection. 'I' is the initial stage of consciousness; its culmination is "the Universe"; the identification of the I with the Universe. And, life is but the unfoldment of this expansion.

The method by which this identification and this liberation is won is described in the Bhagavad-Gita. That final stage is there glorified as sat-chit-ananda, as the Paramapada of Vishnu, or Brahman. The three paths, first declared in the Vedas, namely, Karma Bhakti and Jnana are dealt with, each in six chapters in that very order. Karma is a valuable means for Jnana-attainment, but, it is, not immediately necessary; so, karma is kept apart from Jnana. Bhakti is to a certain extent associated with Karma and so, it is placed in the middle. Gita describes the means of liberation by analysing the individual and proving that he is apart from the body, the indriyas, the manas, the chitta, the ahamkara and the buddhi; it then clarifies the real nature of the Jivi and of the objective world, that is to say of Tatt and Twam. In the final message contained in 18, 66, viz., "Sarva dharmaan parithyajya, etc.," The Lord has indicated that Karmajnanayogas are mere sections of Bhakti and that the culmination of 'Bhakti' lies in Sharanagati or surrender to the Lord.

We have dwelt so long on this subject, because, in the advice that Bhagavan Sathya Sai. Baba always grants devotees who come to Him, "Do not neglect or ignore your religious rites and spiritual duties; be always concentrating your attention on the Name of the Lord", a vast fund of spiritual truth is hidden. He does not enter into academic discussions on the comparative usefulness of Karma Bhakti and Jnana. He prescribes, for the transmutation of the chit into an instrument of liberation. He teaches us, in compliance with the Vedas, the Sastras and the scriptures; He harmonises the past with the present, the demands of this outer world and of the inner world of emotions and ego, the urges of attachment and liberation. He puts the advice in a beautiful pearl of wisdom backed by His Divine Authority. The Sanathana is transformed into the Adhunanathana (New); the Adhunanathana is sublimated into the Sanathana. The adherents of both are amazed and attracted, by the omniscience of Bhagavan Baba. And, this is but a drop from the Divine Nectar of Baba's Teaching.

—Rathnakaram Seshama Raju

The Joy of Meeting

He came, my world to fill

Thoughts Divine, they linger still;
HIS face, HIS eyes, HIS hair,
HIS look that lays my personality bare!

HE taught more than I ever knew;
HE transformed a soul anew;
Good thoughts, good words, good deeds,
More concentration HE says is the need.

The grass is greener, the sky more blue,
When one sees with the thoughts of You;
We have met in ages past,
YOU have known me from births last.

Kind, Loving, ALL Understanding—
My Atma cries for revealing
The Treasure within;
With YOUR DIVINE GRACE, I pray to win.

—Dr. K. M. Mistry
B. D. S. (BOM) M. S. (ILLINOIS)

The Words of God

Sons of Immortality! Awake arise. Listen intently to the Words of God echoing and re-echoing, as thunder from the clouds!

From the beginning of Time, these words are echoing and re-echoing, without intermission, Five thousand years ago, the Words rang clear like a clarion call, as the Bhagavad-Gita!

Today, from the Sanathana Sarathi, the Call is again ringing, awakening and warning people who are sunk in sorrow and pain for having lost their way in the darkness of ignorance.

What do those words that one can hear from Prasanthi Nilayam say? Listen:

*"Samoham sarvobhutheshu; na me dweshyosthi na priyah
Ye Majanthe thu maam bhakthyaa mayi the theshu chaapyaham"*

"I am equally present in all beings. I have none dear to me; nor have I any one not dear to Me. Those who worship Me with Love are in Me and, I am in them"

You ask what the meaning and significance of these precious words are, is it? Well. The Lord Himself has taken Human Form at Puttaparthi and He is moving among us declaring the ancient

words of His, in clearer terms to solve the problems of, today, in simpler terms to enter the hearts and move the intelligences of today. Listen!

"O, ye embodiments of the Divine Atma! I am the One that proclaims Itself as "I". "I" in the hearts of all beings, that shines as the Atma in all. Since all the visible and invisible beings are creations of My fancy, all are Mine, all are perpetually bound to Me. So, I look upon all with equal regard and I shine in all in equal measure. The same current illumines all bulbs, is it not?

I have none dear to me; I have no one not dear to Me. Why? This Creation is guided by Me, established by Me through My Nature. This Universe becomes cognised only because it is manifested by Me who is the only Truth and the only: Reality, just as the snake is cognised only because it is manifested through the basic truth of the rope. The rope alone is real; so too, I alone am real. Brahman alone is true; the Jagat is untrue, it is a temporary impression on the mind, that is befogged by ignorance.

Of course, the Jagat is true so far as activities are concerned, it has value for Vyavahara. It is limited by the law of cause and effect. It has value and validity so far as man is in this world and of it. The world manifested through My Will and so, I, the Purushottama am the Progenitor or Pita and Prakriti is the matrix or Mata. My Nature is of two forms, the Para and the Apra; The Para is the Jiva and the Apra is the Jada; when these two join, the Charachary Nature, inert and active beings, like stones plants animals men appear. So, all creation is my progeny. And all are equal in My Eyes. There is no one superior or inferior. There is no one dear or not dear.

But, people describe Me as "partial to Bhaktas", bhakta pakshapati, more attached to devotees etc. This only reveals their lack of understanding. It is not a fault of Mine. Do you question how? Listen to My statement with care and without envy and be content.

Whoever takes Me as his only support and places on Me only all his burdens, whoever surrenders his individuality to Me, whoever is not worried with whatever is dealt out to him by Me, whether good fortune or bad but is eager to engage himself unconcerned with other matters, in My service only, for through that alone is he able to get the highest bliss always—such persons are "in Me"; and in such persons, "I am". That is to say, there is no distinction discoverable between Me and they. We are identical. This is the stage known as "Ekam Sath", the Advaita attainment. You may ask why you are made to weep in distress caught in the coils of Samsara, of death and birth and disease and desire, unaware of this Truth and unaware of the fact that all this is but My play? Your distress is your own creation; it is due to your own error; it is the consequence of your own acts.

You may ask, why? I am the cause of both Ajnana and Jnana. I am also the cause of your existence. At the very beginning of creation, all of you were of equal intelligence skill and discrimination. But, some among you chose Jnana and attained liberation. Others fell into Ajnana and lost the holy tendencies natural to you. To gain sensory pleasures you entangled yourselves in activities that brought about further lives, through birth and death, and that plunged you into the sea of Samsara. With the increasing weight of desires pressing on him, man gives up the duties enjoined on him by the Sastras, he chooses pleasurable acts in preference to meritorious ones and 'step by step' he falls into the mire in which he is struggling today.

It is not too late. Even now, you can recover the lost ground. If only you observe strictly the instructions I have given, understanding their value either after reading them or listening to them, if only 1 you do all acts without caring for the fruits thereof dedicating them all to Me, I shall bear all your burdens; I shall pardon any mistake on your part that may happen in spite of yourself; I shall free you from all worry and pain; I vow I shall take you to the highest stage of eternal Ananda. I am assuring you of this; you need not have any doubt about this. Arise! Awake!! Come!!! Partake fully of the Nectar of the Supreme Wisdom! Attain the fruit of Human Existence!

Brothers in the Universal Atma! Do you listen to the Divine Call? Resolve to accept the obligations of your status as Man. Achieve the inexhaustible Peace.

Doopati Thirumalacharyulu

Adoration

It was a difficult task given to me to write down 'whatever I feel when doing Dhyana on my Guru'. Dhyanam and Japam reverberate throughout my mind and whole being, at all hours of the day and night, in which I am having various experiences of Babaji; there is hardly anything now in my life that is not connected with Him, how trivial it may appear to be. Those experiences are my ever-widening realizations which are so entirely my own; they speak the language of my soul which is far beyond the meaning of words. Whatever has thus become of my writing on the subject is more or less a generalization of my inner feelings and experiences.

I regret that it took me rather long to get it ready, as it took me some time to get the right inspiration; every time I wrote something down, I tore up the next morning. I prayed to Babaji for help but as at first nothing was forth coming, I realized that I had to do it on my very own. I persisted in my efforts and inspiration did come, perhaps at the right time and with the right purpose, just as I feel that every incident is being ordered or swayed according to Babaji's Will.

Salutations to the Gracious Goddess Saraswati,
Lady of the Veena! May She bestow
Upon me the power of words that I may
Compose my feelings during Dhyana
On my blessed Guru, Bhagavan
Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Salutations to Him!
Salutations to Her!

In the silent hours of meditation, while continuously reciting my holy Mantram to prepare the way for concentration and turning the mind inward, I am entering the inmost recesses of the inner world. There, shining in the Light of my inner self, I experience the Vision, as the Embodiment of my Mantram merging in the Form that Thou art, Babaji, whose nature is transmitted to me through lofty and ever loftier realisations, until my soul itself becomes That which is Thyself in me.

I bow down to touch Thy Lotus Feet and yield myself completely to Thy Will, to become the instrument of Thy Will. To follow Thee, my Guru is my Dharma.

*Jai Gurudev!
Jai Babaji Omkara!
Bhagavan Babaji Omkara!*

While feeling Thy Divine Effulgence surrounding me, I cry out to thee: “Thou hast raised me up from darkness by Thy Grace. Thou hast taken me as I was—a mere nothingness—and hast made me a devotee who is conscious of infinite strength within.” I weep of remorse and ardently yearn for ever and ever more strength to free myself from undivine influences, from sense delusions and ignorance and to burn out all old Samskaras which now and then still rush up.

I lay my mind, will, emotions, my whole personality, at Thy Feet to be offered and purified in the flames of my devotion to thee that I may be filled with Thy Prema. Thy Santhi and with the splendour of Thy story.

Deeper and deeper do I pass into the solitude of meditation while Thou guidest me through the storms of the surface, through the waves of strife and doubt, into the Presence of Reality. Here, in my own inner Realm, I experience the ‘Prasanthi Nilayam’ in which the self unfolds, as the Lotus of the Heart and the mind becomes the flame of Jnana. From the known Self I proceed to the Unknown.

In the deepest folds of Silence, I listen to Thy Voice that speaks words of Realisation in answer to the questions or in advising me on the problems, which are stirring my mind. As the Voice becomes still, it seems as if my soul arises into the Great Light of Thine.

I then pray for Thy Grace to lit the way for all my Sisters and Brothers the world over and that I may try to help them through That within me, which I have in common with them, The Divine Spirit, the Guru within.

And even after the hours of meditation, during all hours of the day and night, I feel Thee as a living Presence within and about me.

OM, Thy very Self am I, ever and ever. Thine is the Strength Infinite. Thou art indeed Brahman!

*Adoration to the Guru as Guru!
Adoration to the Guru as God!
Hari Om Tat Sat!*

*Tat Twam Asi!
Aham Brahmasmi!*

Anne Balabrege

Veda is Siva; Siva is Veda

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is declaring every moment that the only means of attaining equanimity and peace of mind is the observance of the disciplines enjoined in the Vedas and Sastras; therefore, He is fostering the study of the Vedas and promoting the spread of the Vedic disciplines and principles of life among the masses through the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, which He has established for the purpose. Moreover, during the festivals at Prasanthi Nilayam which attract thousands to His Presence, He arranges discourses by learned Pundits on the fundamentals of Indian culture and Sanathana Dharma, and Himself illumines the hearts of all by His Divine Expositions. He instills faith in the ancient Dharma by creating the appropriate Divine idols for worship during these holy days. We are eagerly looking forward to the Mahasivaratri and the great event of the Manifestation of the Linga in Him and through Him and to the unique chance of immersing ourselves in meditation on Siva and worship of Siva on that sacred day, in the very Presence of Bhagavan Himself.

It will be therefore appropriate if some attempt is made to analyse the Nature of Siva as described in the Vedas and Smritis. The Veda is Siva; Siva is the Veda. Veda is without beginning and end and Siva too is the same. Veda is the source of all other sacred texts; it has no source, except God. Siva is the source of everything, but, He has no origin. He is the base of Brahma Vishnu and Maheshwara, but He has nothing on which He is based. He is the base of Maya which has manifested as all this multifarious name and form. But, He needs no base. Siva is not limited by the Gunas or by the need to be embodied in Upadhis. He is the Mahadeva, the Supreme God, for this reason. As the sky is without any support, so Siva too is His own prop. It is said that Siva remembered the Veda and announced it to Brahma; so, He is named Rudra. The Vedas are recognised in the Shruti as another Form of Siva Himself. Like breath which emanates effortlessly, the Vedas emanated from Siva, without His being even aware of it. It was taken to memory by the gods and by the sages and seers:

*Vedo naadi ssivasthasya
Vyanjayakah paramaarthathah
Abhivyakthim apekshyeva
Pranethethyuchyathe sivah*

Siva, it is said, expressed the Vedas so that they may be spread and made more and more manifest.

Siva is unique that He is denoted by the Linga; we have no reference anywhere to Brahmalinga or Vishnulinga, in ordinary parlance. This is because Siva is Chit-rupa and Swa-prakasha Consciousness-form and Self-illuminated. He can be known only by some indicator, as smoke

indicates fire. In Him all merge and so, the Linga which means, "that in which everything loses its name and form" is the best indicator of Siva. He is the Linga, as the mantra, "*Sivaaya namah, Sivalingaya Nomah*" testifies.

As a matter of fact, the Vedas emerged from Him so that they may pervade and purify. Hence the mantra found in the Vedas: *Namo hiranya baahave, hiranya varnaaya, pasupathaye*. It describes Siva as having arms and limbs of golden splendour, and He who is the master and originator of the golden treasure, which is unreachable by the poor in spirit, namely, the sacred Veda syllables. The Shruti also describes Siva as "He who created Brahma and then gave Him the Vedas in order to initiate His duties": *Yo Brahmaanam vidadhaathi poorvam, yo vas vedaamscha prahinothi thasmai*. The appellation, Rudra, means just this, He who gave the Vedas to Brahma.

Siva and Sivalinga are identical. "*Sivaaya namah, Sivalingaaya namah*", it is said. Linga means a symbol, a cue, something that reminds another, or from which the other can be inferred, like smoke for fire. It also means that into which all things merge. All things emerge from Him and merge in Him. For such, the Linga is the most meaningful symbol. For Brahma and Vishnu, the two other in the Trinity, there are other forms but the Linga is specially Siva's summary. Sat-chit-ananda, self-luminosity, universal base and goal, these are best expressed as the Linga, just as the Om is the best expression of Godhead in sound. For the worshipper who in the primary stages requires a Form and something Concrete, the Linga, serves the purpose best, for, it is easy to transcend It and rise into the conception of the Formless.

That is the reason why Baba too depicts Siva on Sivaratri Day in the Linga Form. As the tree whose trunk is fed is healthy in branch and bough, contemplation on Siva and worship of Siva grants the Grace of all Divine Forces.

From the Telugu Article by: Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry

This land is Karmabhumi; every one born in this Karmabhumi has to be in constant contemplation of the Ultimate Reality of which he is but a facet; for this task to be successful, he must engage himself in Karma that is pure and free from violence; then, only can the Reality be reflected in his heart.
—BABA

"Light in darkness"

The idea of starting a Meditation Crusade for "Light in Darkness" was born on the dark day of 22nd November, 1963, when President Kennedy was shot in Dallas, Texas. I happened to be there at that time and was supposed to be introduced to him, in order to present to him my books on Yoga and to suggest that Asanas and deep breathing exercises would enrich his 'physical fitness' program and make it most effective.

At the shocking news of his assassination, i remained in my hotel room pondering as to what could be done in order to prevent the commission of all kinds of crimes which have become a daily occurrence in most of the big cities in the United States. It seemed to me that we all must make an additional individual effort to make our immediate surrounding a happier and friendlier place to live in. It then occurred to me to start a crusade by conducting meditations on the Light in one's own heart, realizing that it is a part of the Eternal Divine Light and begin to act, think and live in a different manner, starting from small daily matters, like finding a kind word and a smile for everyone, from human to animal. And, every evening, after meditation, ask oneself, "What did i do today to make the Light a little brighter and the darkness a little less dark?" This, i hope, might bring an illuminating and practical message to the fear ridden, mentally disturbed, and spiritually forlorn world of today.

To carry out this plan, i decided to dedicate to it the rest of my life and to give up teaching Yoga, which i had been doing for the past 28 years, ever since i had to leave India for Shanghai, where i opened the first Yoga school, according to the wish of my teacher Sri Krishnamacharya. I had been living for 12 years in Bombay, where i got married to a foreign diplomat. And, i am a Russian born American citizen with an Indian name, registered even in my passport. The only trouble was that i did not know how to go about starting the crusade. Conducting meditations at our Yoga Centre in Tecate on the border between California and Mexico and speaking to various people about my idea did not get me too far, in spite of every one's sympathetic feeling towards it.

Finally i decided to start the crusade in my spiritual motherland, in India, especially after Clara Schuff, a clairvoyant in Los Angeles told me that i shall be going to India shortly and will make there a first step towards something that would be my life's mission, for which i was born into this world. She added that i shall meet there "an unusual Swami of a very high order who will play a prominent part in my life and help me to carry a spiritual message to the world."

Two months later, i was in India, where, on March 4, 1966, i presented to the Prime Minister the Perpetual Flame which we carried all the way from Tecate. This gave me an opportunity to conduct meditations on Light, to hundreds and hundreds of people, both in Delhi and Bombay, from where i was going to Saigon, with a detour, in order to see my old friends the Yuvarani of Mysore and Dr. Sivakamu in Adyar near Madras. It was there that i first heard of Sai Baba from an Australian writer, Howard Murphet and his wife, Iris, who were very surprised that i had not known anything about the Sai Baba of Shirdi and His Avatar, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. They immediately showed me His photos and a ring with an image of the late Shirdi Sai Baba, produced by the present Sai Baba and told me many a story about His incredible and miraculous powers to which they were witnesses. However my programme in Saigon made it impossible for me to stay on and i left for Vietnam.

Shortly before my departure from there, my host, the Indian Consul General, suggested that i open a Centre in India for which he offered his palace in Kathiawar (He is the Thakore Saheb of Kotda Sanghani). I seized this idea of returning to India—to look at his palace was only a pretext. So, i advised our Director, Mr. Candia, who was accompanying me, to return to Tecate, which he gladly accepted.

From Calcutta, i immediately headed for Madras, instead of Kathiawar, as the desire to see Sai Baba became very intense. On the way to Puttaparthi, we met another car from the same Company returning from Prasanthi Nilayam with Dr. Sen, Vice-Chancellor of the Jadavpur University. We greeted each other and upon learning that this was my first visit to Baba, Dr. Sen said, "You may never want to leave from the place, once you get there." "But, you are doing so," i answered, "i shall have to do the same."

A charming Swiss school teacher, Gabriella Steyer, gently took me under her wing. My plane was departing the next day and so, i had to leave pretty soon. Baba was gracious enough to grant me an interview. To describe everything that happened during that hour would make a story in itself and i may relate it at some other time. It will suffice to tell that what i saw and heard made an indelible impression upon me—it was more than kindness more than goodness, more than grace. It was something i could not even name. "Call me whenever you need me," He said, at parting. "I shall be with you."

Happy to have come to see Him, i left for Bangalore the next morning, feeling fresh and rested. But, soon, i was seized by a feeling of great longing and i remembered Dr Sen's phrase, "You may never want to leave the place once you get there". This nostalgia dulled my senses. i didn't care to speak to the driver, to distribute sweets to the children or to feed the monkeys, dogs and bullocks. In fact, i didn't care for anything—all i wanted was to be back in the Nilayam and to listen to the powerful chant of OM coming from hundreds of throats and to the beauty of the Sanskrit 'Suprabhatham.' Back in my room in the Bangalore Palace, i automatically closed the suitcases forgetting to pack the rest of my belongings—something that has never happened to me in all my travels anywhere in the world. In Bombay, four other places were offered to me for establishing our centres, but i was still in Puttaparthi in my thoughts. The day before my departure, i wrote a letter to Sri Sathya Sai Baba saying how glad i was to have returned from Saigon to meet Him but that i felt miserable now, which is foreign to my nature. I had asked Him to help me to get over this feeling. The same afternoon, standing on a busy street corner with Enakshi Bhavnani, a friend of olden days, and waiting for a taxi, i suddenly felt a stream of brilliant light pouring on me and giving me a tremendous sense of joy and happiness which was filling my entire being. "Thank you, Baba," i whispered in gratitude.

Carrying this radiant light within me, i left for Hong Kong to conduct meditations and address meetings, before i returned to Los Angeles and Tecate.

And, now that i am out to begin the CRUSADE FOR LIGHT IN DARKNESS in April, to San Diego, California, with the co-operation of its Mayor, Council of Churches and Civic Leaders, i had to come to Puttaparthi to get Blessings of Sri Bhagavan, without whose help i did not want to undertake this mission of awakening the Light in the Hearts of people so that it may shine there now and for ever;

From the unreal, to the Real, from darkness to Light, from death to Immortality.

OM SHANTI, SHANTI, SHANTI

Indra Devi

The Worship of Images

People in India have been attaining their hearts' desires by means of image-worship as mentioned and prescribed in the Shrutis Smirtis and Puranas. The Siva and Vishnu and other temples all over the country, many of which have vast revenues derived from the throngs of pilgrims are evidence of their abiding faith and of the value of such worship to the individual.

Some may object that the inert idol can never represent the Living God and that to believe that God exists in the idol is mere superstition. If God is present everywhere, He must be present in the image also, particularly when He is invoked and specially witnessed and visualised by the ardent mind. Hiranyakasipu felt that there was no God, but, his son Prahlada knew that He is everywhere; so, when the father cried out, "Can you show me your God in this Pillar?" The son replied, "He is there, as He is everywhere. He will show Himself" and He did. When He is in the pillar of the palace hall, can He not be in the idol that is revered and adored?

Again, some may ask, "If the mantra can induce the Divine Force to enter into the image, why can it not become alive? "Since no change is evident after the mantra is repeated, there is no cause to worship the idol. The mantra that "INVITES" God is so framed that in each Divine Manifestation is created a sense of "MINE", just as a king feels that a photo of His is His.

Another point to be noted is this: fire is always associated with some object, like coal or fuel, or other combustible. When asked to bring fire, it is brought in these forms. So also, it is with Godhead. It has to be associated with some object which conveys the Divinity to us. Burning coal is fire; the image is 'God'.

Arjuna when He could not overcome in combat the hunter who was no other than Siva hastened to mould a Linga out of mud and worship it with flowers. As soon as He rose with renewed vigour to encounter Him again, He found on the Hunter's head the flowers He had placed on the earthen Linga. This shows that the idol is the most realistic and real representation of Godhead. There is another incident in the Puranas which is even more instructive. When Siva came disguised as a mendicant in the courtyard of Himavan, He returned from his daily rites on the Ganga, where He had taken ceremonial bath preliminary to Vishnu worship, on its bank. When He saw the mendicant, Himavan recognised on Him the flowers He had placed reverentially on the image of Vishnu and the mendicant next instant appeared before His astonished eyes as Vishnu Himself!

Theses instances explain the ultimate relationship between the image or idol and the God that is felt as immanent in It.

From the Telugu Article by Varanasi Subrahmanya Sastri

Ten minutes in the early hours of the morning and ten minutes before finally retiring for sleep at night must be spent by every one in silent meditation, on the Form of God most dear and in the

repetition, of the Name appropriate to the Form. This will gradually extend, in time space and intensity, until one's entire life gets transformed into one continuous prayer and Puja.

Baba

Mahasivaratri and Siva

The Universe is but a play enacted to God. A precious stone shines in multicolored brilliance without any effort or expenditure of energy, similarly, without any preconceived plan, God manifests as all this. To take on a body a foster the good and the loyal is but a phase of this playful mood of His. His expressions are twofold; (1) the formless eternal pure Consciousness which can be cognised from the Guru and the Sastras and (2) the Formful with form, He evinces Himself in two ways: the first is this Universe and the second, the regulating Form through which He directs and guides the Universe.

The Universe is His Embodiment, because the snake that is seen through ignorance on the rope is “REAL” so long as the ignorance persists but is negated when Jnana reveals the basic rope. Jnana reveals that what is taken to be the Universe is only the Pure Consciousness Principle of Brahman. In the Rudradhyaya of the Taittiriya Samhita, (2nd to 8th ANUVAKAS), the fact that the manifested Universe is Siva, nothing more, nothing less is clearly defined. Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma and other axioms appearing in the Vedas are all further dicta on the same theme.

The second Formful embodiment is the Avatar, as Siva and other Godly Forms. He appears in these forms in order to chasten the wicked and encourage the good, and to provide facility for the devoted to earn mental peace through worship. The Siva-Form is paramount among these, because even while fostering the good and the devoted, He is pure consciousness and with Brahman—Bliss, since He is of the Satwic Guna, pre-eminently. Other God-forms have an inkling of subtle Rajas and Tamas and so, in the task of maintaining the Universe, they are merged to the apparent detriment of their fundamental Reality. This is the reason why Siva alone has the Linga as the Concrete Symbol, besides the usual Conventional Form with weapons, accoutrement, multiplicity of arms and equipment for the sake of the Mission. The Linga reveals the Fullness and the Illimitability of Siva. Siva grants visions of Himself as the Linga or as having Karacharana etc.

Once upon a time, long long ago, the Gods, Brahma and Narayana as the story goes, were extremely jealous of each other and argued loud that each was superior to the other. They had come to the stage of a trial of arms, when between them, a brilliant Linga of Light appeared! They were stunned by the splendour and they decided among themselves that He among them is superior to the other, who is able first to see the beginning below or the end above of that magnificent Linga. Brahma rode on His Hamsa and flew above; He could not see the crown of the Linga however high He rose. Vishnu took the form of Varaha and dug into the nether regions but could not delve into the base of that Linga. When they returned to earth, a Voice from the Linga asked them whether they had succeeded in their quest. Brahma uttered a lie and declared He had seen the crown! Narayana was about to concede victory to Him, when the Voice

intercepted Him and Siva manifested Himself from the Linga, with the full Divine Equipped From described as “Hiranyabaahave, hiranya varnaaya, hiranya roopaaya” in the scriptures. He punished Brahma for the audacity and the falsehood. He authorised the Vishnu to correct wrong and promote right. The Linga that manifested on this occasion is known as Jyotirlinga and altogether 12 such have appeared according to tradition.

Two dates are important in this grand awe-inspiring play of the Gods: (1) Ardra star—date in Margasirish. When the Beginningless and Endless Linga of Splendour appeared before the two competing Divine Forces and (2) Magha, dark half. 14, Chaturdasi, usually known as Mahasivaratri, when from that Linga, Siva emerged with all the Divine Qualities and Glories, to bless and chastise.

Mahasivaratri is sacred because on that day, Siva first assumed His mind-conquering beautiful form emerging so from Symbolic Linga; Siva gave this Vision to the two great Divinities whom He directs. So, worship of Siva on such a day is considered to be of supreme importance.

To have the chance to worship Him at Puttaparthi and witness the emergence of the Linga from Sri Sathya Sai Baba is indeed a unique Blessing.

**From the Telugu Article by
Ghandikota Subramanya Sastri**

Our Sarathi

The Lord has come, to hold the reins
O yield to Him the horses ten;
He showers Grace, He is the Goal,
He knows the road, He is the Road
He was in us, we knew Him not,
We broke away and swaggered much
We fell in many a ditch!
The Lord has come with loving gifts;
He has come to cure us fully pure;
He has come to lead, if we but yield
Our hearts and heads to Him.
He is the ancient charioteer
Installed in both cell and saint.
You only tell Him "As you like"—
He tames the steeds; He brightens sight;
He cleanses mind and sharpens thought.
He steers us straight into His Abode.
O yield to Him and Peace ensure,
He's full of Love and Mercy too

This Baba in our heart
This Sarathi who has come to hold, the reins.
O yield to Him the horses ten.

—N. K.

Contributions for this Number

Dr. K.Bhaskaran Nair: Director of Colligate Education, Kerela State; famous writer in Malyalam on Science; widely travelled in Europe and America.

Dr.Dmayanthi: Professor of Sanskrit in Jabalpur Nagpur University; scholar in Marathi & Sanskrit; was awarded Ph.D. by the Delhi University for her Thesis on Manudharmasastra.

N. Kasturi: (Editor).

Deepala Pichayya Sastry: Celebrated author in Telugu; Member of Andhra Sahithya Academi; authority on Sanskrit and Telugu Grammer.

Dr.K. Vaidyanathan: Professor of History, prolific writer of pellucid English Poetry; Founder of Namaparayana Sangha, Madras.

Captain. T. Balakrishna Menon: Sadhak and scholar of Palghat, Kerala.

Chidanand Nagarkar: Principal of the Music College Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan Bombay.

Gabriella Stryer: Educationist, Switzerland.

Ratnakaram Seshama Raju: Scholar in Telugu: Teacher, Dharmavaram Higher Secondary School; elder “brother” of Baba.

Dr. K.M. Mistry: Orthodontist, Bombay.

Doopati Tirumalacharya: Scholar in Telugu and Sanskrit: Venkatagiri Asthanam.

Anne Balabrege: Sadhak and Scholar, The Hague, Holland.

Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry: Professor, Gowthami Vidya Pitha, Rajahmundry: known as “Saangavadartha Saamrat”; Member, Central Commite Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha.

Indra Devi: Popular Teacher of Yoga in the United States; has counselled thousands of students including many public figures and celebrities; has taught her methods in China and India: Yoga Centre, Rancho El Cuchuma, Tecate, Baja California, Mexico.

Ghandikota Subramanya Sastry: Celebrated Scholar of Vijayanagaram Asthanam. Authority no the interpretation of the Vedas and Sastras. member central Committee, Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha.

Sri Sathya Sai Samachar

Razole: (E. Godavari Dt) Jan. 28:
Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha.

Trichur: (Kerala) Jan. 29:
First Anniversary of Sri Sathya Sai Sathsangam: Puja Homa Bhajan Kirthana
Etc. Publication of Souvenir.

Perambur: (Madras) Jan. 29:
Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha. Discourse by Prof: S. Seetharamier.

Vile Parle: (Bombay) Feb. 12:
Inauguration of Sri Sathya Sai Study Centre, by Smt. Leela Purandare.

Gangalakurru: (E. Godavari Dt) Feb. 12:
Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Sri Komperla Subbaraya Sastri and Rani Narasimha Sastri spoke.

Ernakulam: (Kerala) Feb. 12:
Laksharchana with Sathya Sai Sahasranama: Madhava Pharmacy Hall.

Malleswaram: (Bangalore) Feb. 12:
Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Sri. D. Renukacharya, B.A.M.(Hons) spoke.

Chokkadi: (S Kanara Dt) Feb. 15:
Akhand Bhajan by the Sathya Sai Bhakta Mandali.

Prasanthi Nilayam: Feb. 15:
Arrival at the Nilayam for a short stay, of Indra Devi, Celebrated Yoga Teacher
From Tecate, Baja, California.
Feb.16: Arrival at the Nilayam of the Maharani of Jind, Punjab

Gobbichettypalayam: (Coimbatore Dt) Feb. 19:
Third Anniversary Celebration of the Sathya Sai Bhaktha Vrinda.

Chengipatti: (Tanjore Dt)
Inauguration of the Sathya Sai Seva Mandali at the Mahathma Gandhi Memorial
Tuberculosis Hospital.

Prasanthi Nilayam: Feb. 21, 22:

Talks by Indra Devi: Discourses by Baba on 'Dhyana'

Quilandy: (Kerala) Feb. 26:

Arrival of 50 members of the Sathya Sai Bhajan Mandali of Quilandy at the Nilayam.

Azhikkode: (Kerala) Feb. 27:

68 members of the Sathya Sai Bhajan Mandali arrived at the Nilayam

Prasanthi Nilayam: Feb. 28:

Arrival at the Nilayam of Hon'ble Sri. B. D. Jatti, Minister, Mysore.

Cut the I feeling clean across and let your ego die on the cross, to endow on you eternity. Offer all bitterness in the sacred fire and emerge grand great and godly. Be like the star which never wavers from the crescent but is fixed in steady faith. Remember the wheel of Cause and Consequence, of Deed and Destiny and the Wheel of Dharma that rights them all. Listen to the primeval Pranava resounding in your heart as well as in the heart of the Universe. All faiths are facets of the One Truth which is spelt as Love, as Purity, as Sacrifice and as Charity. All are tributes to its Glory.

(COVER PAGE)

Bhagavata Vahini

11

Dharmaraja, who was lost in contemplation, recapitulating the advice, the help, the grace, the love, the sympathy, that they had earned from Lord Krishna, suddenly raised his head and asked "Arjuna! What did you say? What calamity overtook you on the way? Tell us in full, dear brother," slowly lifting the chin of Arjuna while asking so. Arjuna looked his brother in the face and said, "Brother, all my skill and attainments have departed with Lord Krishna. I am now without any powers, incapable of any achievement, weaker than the weakest, indeed lifeless.

Brother, listen. This most unlucky fellow did not have the chance to be with the Lord Vaasudeva when He left for His Abode, even though he was in Dwaraka at that time. I had not earned enough merit to get that chance! I could not have the Darshan of our Divine Father before He left. Later, the charioteer of the Lord, Daruka, gave me the message He had given for me when He departed in that message. He had written thus with His own Hand."

Saying thus, he took out from the folds of his dress the letter which he considered more precious even than life, for it was from Krishna and written by His own Hand. He gave it into the hands of Dharmaraja, who received it reverentially with alacrity and anxiety. He pressed it on his eyes, which were full of tears, He tried to decipher the writing through the curtain of tears, but with no success.

It began, "Arjuna! This is my command; carry it out without demur, to the full. Execute this task with courage and earnestness." After this express injunction, Krishna had elaborated on the task in the following words: "I have accomplished the mission on which I had come. I shall no longer be in this world, with body. I am departing. Seven days from today, Dwaraka will sink into the sea; the sea will swallow everything except the house I had occupied. Therefore, you have to take to Indraprastha City the queens and other women who survive, along with the children and babies and the old and decrepit. I am leaving, placing all responsibility for the women and other Yadava survivors in your hands. Care for them as you care for your own life; arrange for them at Indraprastha and protect them from danger." The postscript said, "Thus writes Gopala on leaving for His Home."

Dharmaraja finished reading the message. He noticed that Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva were shedding copious tears and squatting like rocks oblivious to everything else. Arjuna said, "Brother! I had no desire to live for a moment more without the Lord in our midst and so I resolved to drown myself in the sea that was to swallow Dwaraka; I decided to split my own head with this bow and die. But this command forced me to desist; the order from Him who ordains the Universe tied me to this earth. I had no time to plan out any line of action; everything had to be done quick.

"So, I got the last rites done for the dead, according to the Sastras; then in great anxiety lest the sea swallow Dwaraka before the women, children and old people were evacuated; I hurried them to come out and started for Indraprastha, as commanded by Krishna. We left Dwaraka with no mind to leave it. We managed to reach the borders of Panchanada (Punjab) with hearts heavy on

account of the absence of Krishna, but I was urged forward by the need to obey the Divine Injunction, and to carry, according to that injunction, the burden of those people.

"The sun was setting one day; we dared not cross at that late hour a flooded river that impeded our progress. I decided to encamp on the bank of that river for the night. We collected the jewels and valuables of all the women and kept them in a secure place; the queens alighted from the palanquins and the maids scattered themselves for rest. I approached the river for the evening rites dragging myself along with the sadness of separation from Krishna. Meanwhile, pitch darkness pervaded the place and soon we heard wild barbarian war cries from the surrounding darkness. I peered into the night and found a horde of forest-dwelling nomads rushing upon us with sticks, spears and daggers. They laid hands on the jewels and valuables; they started dragging away the women and binding them hand and foot.

"I shouted at them and threatened them with dire consequences. 'Why do you fall like moths into fire,' I asked them. 'Why be like fish that meet death craving for the angler's worm?' I told them. 'Do not meet death in this vain attempt to collect loot,' I warned them. 'I imagine you do not know who I am. Have you not heard of the redoubtable bowman, Pandu's son Arjuna, who overwhelmed and defeated the three world-conquerors, Drona, Bhishma and Karna? I shall now dispatch the whole lot of you to the Kingdom of Death, with a twang of this bow, my incomparable Gandiva. Flee before you meet destruction, or else, feed with your lives this hungry bow," I announced.

"Nevertheless, they went about their nefarious task undismayed; their cruel attack did not abate; they fell upon our camp and dared attack even me. I held myself in readiness and fitted divine arrows to efface them all. But alas, a terrible thing happened; I cannot explain how or why! Of the sacred formulae which fill the missile with potency, I could not recall a single one! I forgot the processes of invocation and revocation. I was helpless.

"Before my very eyes, the robber bands dragged away the queens, the maids and others. They were screaming in agony, calling on me by name 'Arjuna! Arjuna! Save us; rescue us; do you not hear us? Why are you deaf to our cries? Are you giving us over to these brigands? Had we known that this would be our fate we would have died in the sea like our dear city, Dwaraka.' I heard it all, in terrible agony; I saw it all. They were screaming and fleeing in all directions, women, children and the aged and the infirm. Like a lion whose teeth have been plucked out and whose claws have been sheared, I could not harm those ruffians. I could not string my bow. I attacked them with the arrows in my clasp. Very soon, even the stock of arrows was exhausted. My heart was burning with anger and shame. I became disgusted with my own pusillanimity. I felt as if I was dead. All my efforts were in vain. The greatly blessed inexhaustible receptacle of arrows had failed me, after Vaasudeva had left.

"My might and skill had gone with Krishna when He went from here. Or else, how could this misfortune occur of my being a helpless witness of this kidnapping of women and children entrusted to my care? I was tortured on one side by the separation from Krishna and, on the other, by the agony of not carrying out His orders. Like a strong wind that fans the fire, this calamity added fuel to the anguish of my heart. And the queens—those who were living in golden palaces in the height of luxury! When I contemplate their fate in the hands of those fierce

savages, my heart is reduced to ashes. O Lord! O Krishna! Is it for this that you rescued us from danger in the past—to inflict on us this drastic punishment?"

Arjuna wept aloud and beat his head against the wall in despair, so that the room was filled with grief; every one shivered in despair. The hardest rock would have melted in sympathy. From Bhima's eyes, streams of hot tears flowed. Dharmaraja was overpowered with fear when he saw him weeping so. He went near him and spoke lovingly and tenderly to him in order to console him. Bhima came to himself after some time; he fell at Dharmaraja's feet and said, "Brother! I do not like to live any more. Give me leave. I shall go into the forest and immolate myself with the name of Krishna on my lips and reach home. This world, without Krishna, is hell to me." He wiped the hot tears with the cloth in his hand.

Sahadeva who was silent so long approached Bhima and said, "Calm yourself; do not get excited. Remember the reply Krishna gave Dhritarashtra that day in the open assembly when He proceeded thither to negotiate peace between us?"

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sai Linga

The Sathya Sai Avatar has happened and Sathya Sai is blessing thousands; and millions with the Darshan of His Leelas and Mahimas and with the Shravanam of His Divine, Heart-transforming Discourses, in order to restore to a skeptic, cynical, 'scientific' world, faith in the one Super-Soul, Supreme Power, of which each individual is but a tiny wave. The Mahasivaratri is, as Baba Himself announced while hoisting the Prasanthi Flag on the morning of that day (9.3.1967) a sacred day specially holy for spiritual aspirants. "The Ganga is indeed holy from the source to the sea but some spots on its banks like Hardwar, Prayag, Varanasi have been endowed with extra sacredness by the establishment of temples and the installation of idols and the confluence of the seen with unseen forces. So, too, Mahasivaratri is rendered specially sacred on account of Lingodbhava, the emergence of the Linga from the Living Siva." Prior to the hoisting of the Prasanthi flag, Baba called upon the thousands assembled for His Darshan to live up to the glorious ideals of Sanathana Dharma. Bharat mata is wedded to Dharma but Dharma is now Wedding the West and the 'raucous faction of co-wives' is vitiating the atmosphere of peace, He said. The Sastras are repositories of the wisdom of the Sages; they enumerate the regulations which will control the vagaries of the senses, the mind and even the intelligence of man and guide him along to his own Real Self where alone he can get the eternal spring of joy. "Sai is in all; Lingam is in all. Only, you have to realise it", He assured. In Angam (body), there is Jangam (the moving world); in Jangam, there is Sangam (Attachment); through Sangam and the consequent pain and grief, one realises the Lingam, the nearest representation of the Eternal, Formless, Nameless Entity", He said.

At 11 A.M., during the Bhajan sessions Baba had Abhishekam performed for Shirdi Sai Baba, during which the mammoth gathering was privileged to witness the miracles of the creation of an idol of Ganesa and the unending stream of Vibhuti. At 6 P.M., Baba gave Darshan to the

immense gathering from the Santhi Vedika, Where a meeting was held, and short discourses were given by Dr. M. P. Pai of the Kasturba Medical College, Mysore State and Sri Subbaramaiya, Editor 'Ata Patalu' of Hyderabad. Brahmasri Doopati Thirumalacharyulu of Venkatagiri dedicated to Bhagavan his Telugu translation and commentary on the famous Sivamahimna Stotra; Sri Raghunath Patro of Berhampore placed in His Hands the Oriya book 'Sathya Sai Charithamrutha' written by him; Sri P. Appukutta Menon, M.A., L.T., of Palghat dedicated the Malayalam book "Sayi Mitayi" containing the stories on spiritual truths which Baba has given in His Discourses; the Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Bombay placed in His Hands the book "Divine Heritage of Prasanthi Nilayam" prepared by Opal Macrae of New York and published by them. Sri Alike Narayana Bhat placed in His Hands the Kannada book "Sathya Sai Darshanam". In His Discourse, Baba declared that lust and greed are the root causes of suffering in the world and they can be conquered only by the recognition of the Divine Spark which resides in every individual. Man alone has the capacity and the chance to manifest himself as Divine, He said. Elaborate preparations are made months ahead for the celebration of a marriage; purchase of saris, clothes and jewels; printing and distribution of invitation letters; booking of halls and houses, of musicians and pipers; fixing up of caterers etc. All this endeavour, effort and expenditure are for the one primary purpose of giving the bride to the bridegroom. Without that, all else becomes empty and vain. So too without the essential ceremony of giving up the individual Soul to the Universal Soul, the Jivatma to the Paramatma, the Particular to the Universal, all the gyrations and pyrotechnics of worldly life have no meaning and significance. The Kshetra must be known, the Dehi must be cognised. Baba condemned the irreverence and irresponsibility that are undermining culture in all countries. While singing Namavalis after His Discourse, illustrating His statement that there is nothing so sweet and so stilling as the Name of the Lord, the Hour of Emergence came and all could sense the Divine Tension in the Atmosphere of breath-taking expectation. Thirty thousand hearts pounded quicker and thirty thousand throats called on Siva more intensely, as they watched Baba on the Santhi Vedika, until the Viswalinga (a deep pink oval Lingam with the orbits of all the planets luminously clear inside it) and a smaller Jyotirlinga emerged from the Siva Shakti Swarupa, that is Baba is human Form. Baba held out the Lingams for all to see and they were kept on the Vedika during the nightlong Bhajan, with which the devotees celebrated Sivaratri.

On the 10th March, at 7-30 A.M., the nightlong Bhajan ended and Mahamangalarati was performed, amidst the acclamations of thousands. Baba, in His Discourse, reminded the people that each one of them is basically a hero who had no reason to fear or doubt or feel weak and powerless. Each one can draw upon the Sivam within, by constant recollection of the Name and uninterrupted contemplation of the Form. "Make your lives an Akhanda Sivaratri, He said.

In the evening, Brahmasri Chandramouli Sastri, President of the Bhagavata Bhakta Samaj of the Krishna-Guntur Districts gave a discourse on 'Krishna'; Baba, in His Discourse elaborated on the same theme and introduced the Telugu musical play, "Radha Bhakti" which was later enacted with inspiring devotion by the little students of the Sathya Sai Vedasastra Pathashala.

On the evening of the 11th too, Bhaktas had the pleasure of listening to valuable speeches. That evening Sri K. R. K. Bhat of Madurai and Dr. G. V. L. N. Murthy of Jamshedpur spoke on their experiences of Baba's Prema and Karuna. Bhagavan, in His discourse, wanted that each Bhakta must demonstrate through his behavior, speech and actions that he has understood the great

purpose for which he is born, viz., to cultivate the Divinity within him. "Endeavour by every means, through every moment, to see good, hear good, speak good, think good and do good", He advised. "That endeavour will make you Divine", He blessed.

Since Baba had, to leave for Bombay on the 15th, He was engaged on 12th, 13th and 14th March in. healing and attending on the sick the infirm and the disabled among those who had gathered for the festival. The others too, of course, had an ample measure of His grace and the precious gift of the Vision of the Atma within them, which Baba grants to all who come under His Care.

“The Laws of Karma”

Karma is the action principle of the Universe; every cause has its effect, every action has its reaction. The Law of Karma is an all Comprehensive Law embracing all action in all the planes of existence. Karmic Law maintains Law and Order in the Universe and the, whole Creation is bound by its inexorable impact. The Law of Karma is based on the principle of Causation and there is Science behind all Phenomena. Because of this inherent Order, understanding is possible and there is moaning in our Search for Truth. There is no chance in the Cosmic Order but man has yet to grasp higher Laws and Suprasensory Phenomena.

The Law of Karma operates in the energy mediums of Ichcha-shakti, Jnana-shakti and Kriya-shakti. The different energies are meant for different functions of volition, cognition and action, the motive, thought and action. Our motive is an emotional act, our thought is a mental act and our action is a physical act and all involve a definite quantum of respective energy. All our motive, thought and action are concrete phenomena and can be measured quantitatively in terms of their energy expense.

The Physical laws are simple, their causation follows a Sequence in straight line and their effect is immediate and obvious. The physical laws can be discerned through experimental verification and accepted for general understanding. The Nature of operation in the psychic and spiritual planes are highly abstract, subtle and complex to grasp. The psychic and spiritual laws transcend time, space and limitations of the physical plane. Their causal relation does not follow a sequence. In higher planes, hundreds of causes in association produce a cumulative effect, some time somewhere. The subtler the plane, the more intense and concentrated is the energy form and greater is its power, wisdom and joy. We can have more enduring and elevating peace and joy in the higher realms of thought, beauty and spirit. The different forms of energy are inter-convertible from one form to another, and from one plane to another.

Man established in higher plane can exercise his will power and manipulate the energy and phenomena of the lower planes. Understanding higher laws and techniques to evoke higher centres, man can acquire extra-ordinary powers 'Siddhis'. Man can tap psychic and spiritual energies and faculties potential within him to his immense advantage. The Law of Karma embraces past, present and future linked in one continuous causal chain. The Law of Karma balances the opposing forces either through smooth integration or through strife if necessary.

All action in tune with Dharma contributes for universal balance and harmony and for the good of the whole. All action in adharma causes chaos, conflict and suffering, disturbs universal balance and affects the total life. We reap what we sow. All our motive, thought and action sows psychological seeds in the subconscious form of impressions. These psychic records are the eternal witness to all our motivations, for nothing escapes this automatic imprint of the psyche. When the acts are oft repeated these impressions get stronger and become our habits and tendencies, traits of character and conduct.

Through good and bad Karma we build our credits and debits in the Book of Life and totals renew from life to life. We are partly free and partly determined, for, we are the products of our past vasanas and Samskaras, embedded in our "Swabhava". We are free to build, a new future and by righteous action, we can give a benevolent turn to life and exhaust the past impact. We are not helpless tools in the hands of any external agency and our lives are not fatalistic, for, we can tune to the law of life.

Man is endowed with rational and discriminating faculty and has free choice to make or mar himself. Man is endowed with the voice of conscience for Right action, but the noise of ego eclipses the silent voice of the Heart. Man shall have blow after blow on the anvil of life, till he realises his folly and tunes to Dharma. Man is free to violate the moral law and free to suffer and he alone is responsible for the consequences of his action. The suffering is a blessing in disguise, it is a moral exercise, and has the rich reward of understanding through experience. Man can free himself from the bondage of Karma through right understanding and right action in tune with Dharma.

Every motive, thought and action has direct bearing on our life as law of Karma operates in all the three planes. If motive is pure, the Karma does not affect the soul, for, motive is important in determining the effect of Karma. We get measured reaction for the wrong action in the physical and social plane but it does not affect the inner Being. If motive is evil and although not executed in action, the Karma binds the soul, for intention is bad. All our good and bad Karma accumulate in our psychic centre, "Chitta", our personality centre, and we build our load of Karma.

Through sincere, intense prayer and repentance for the wrongs done, we can cleanse the dark impressions of the sub-conscious. By intense and sincere prayer we generate spiritual vibrations that can clear the impressions by giving vent to them. Thus we can lessen the burden and lighten the load of Karma and purify our psychic centre. All action in tune with Dharma in the spirit of yajna dedicated to the cosmic cause does not bind. All action without egoistic motivations, without desiring the fruits thereof, does not bind. All action in total surrender in sublimation of the Ego, as an instrument of the supreme, does not bind.

We are all effective partners in the collective Karma and are collectively responsible for social evils and it affects every one. Man is a part of the collective life and stands in the same relation as a cell in our body and has to be in tune with cosmic life. It is the duty of every one, not only to be positively Dharmic in personal life, but equally resist adharma wherever found. The karmic impact on life are of three kinds; prarabdha, sanchita and agami in continuous mould. 'Prarabdha' is our past impact already taken effect and awaiting clearance in time and 'we'

cannot alter its course. 'Sanchita' is our past impact on our present just taking shape and exercising self-restraint we can overcome its adverse effect. 'Agami' is what we build for our future through present action and this is entirely in our hands and we can be free from it. Body is only the vehicle of the soul and at the time of death, the soul leaves the body along with the psychic centre tagged on to it.

The jiva carries the psychic bundle, the karmic load, from life to life in the spiritual journey, till the realisation of the 'True self'. The karmic operation binds only the narrow self, through egoistic motivations, and on self-realisation, the karmic centre dissolves itself. Even in a 'Jivan Mukta', the prarabdha continues to work till it exhausts, and finally the soul is liberated from the body.

JIJNASU

Surrender and Survive

Blessed indeed are those who endeavour to realise God, even in the midst of manifold difficulties and obstacles which surround them in this world. Many people do not even believe in the existence of God. And even out of those who recognise His existence, a large majority do not aspire to attain Him, since their intellect is clouded by the thick veil of ignorance, which is the chief characteristic of the Tamas element. Some attempt it, but do not pursue it and a rare few attain the goal. One perchance in thousands of men strives for perfection and one perchance, among the blessed ones striving thus, knows Him in reality.

Notwithstanding all this, every individual in this world has a natural craving for God. For, everyone longs for unalloyed, perfect and ever lasting happiness. Thus the various individual souls are continuously approaching God, the home of ever-lasting bliss through various paths and with their faces turned in different directions. And so long as it does not reach its destination, the Godward march will never cease. For, they know that if not to day, the goal must be reached anyhow, some day or other.

So why not now? Kabir said that if you want to worship God, do it today and that too do it now. Because "SAMPRAPTHE SANNIHITHE KALE NAHI NAHI RAKSHATHI DUKKRUN KARANE". When death comes near, no one can help.

In this Kaliyuga, the best possible sadhana is only "NAMASMARANA". It is the most beneficial. Kuchela won the grace of the Lord through the same method. Fill the Name with your love. Whenever you repeat it, saturate it with devotion. That is the easiest path for all and will surely bring success. This Namasmarana must be sincere, continuous, and constant, so that it may be embedded in the mind and heart, even when the end nears.

In these attempts one's own experience is the best guarantee of truth. One should not be held by what others speak of their experience, nothing can be genuine as one's own.

But in these attempts one should not get puffed with pride and joy, when one succeeds. One must examine himself now and then. For if your thought of God is constant, He may be seen even in your dreams.

Appiah Dikshith, the great holy scholar, philosopher and writer had a doubt once. He wanted to test his stability in his devotion to God. He argued within himself, that during sanity, everyone acts good and they think of God and sing in ecstasy. Suppose some one gets mad or insane; will his devotion be constant then too? Hence he wanted to experiment on this issue. He collected all his disciples and told them about this. He informed them that he was going to administer himself with a herb and get insanity and at the same time he suggested to them, the anti-dote also for curing the insanity. He directed them to note down whatever he uttered when he was out of his mind. , The disciples did as directed and it was found out that during his insanity he composed the best devotional song known as "ATMARPANA STUTI" otherwise called "UNMATTA STUTI" also called "UNMATTA PANCH SATI." It may be seen from this that if your thought and devotion to God are sincere and constant you will remember Him at all times, irrespective of the circumstances.

Our subsequent births are also dependent on our way of present life. Hence if we want to survive let us surrender unto HIM unconditionally during the present life itself and that too immediately.

In the beginning of the GITA, we see that Arjuna is very confident of his prowess as a warrior. He is impatient to see the warriors who were ranged against him. He therefore asks the Lord to place his chariot between the two armies. But the Lord wants him to cast off his ego. So instead of placing the chariot in front of Karna and Duryodhana, he purposely stations it before revered elders like Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. Now we see the first change in Arjuna. He is deluded by his ego. He refuses to fight. The Lord was not satisfied. He wanted Arjuna to surrender unconditionally and Arjuna does so, saying "I am Thy disciple. Instruct me, who has taken refuge in Thee. Then the compassionate Lord starts imparting the GITA. For, the soil of the mind of Arjuna has been properly tilled for plantation. The enlightened Arjuna finally declares to the Lord "Destroyed is my delusion and I have gained my memory through Thy grace. I am firm now. My doubts are gone. I will do Thy word." This is the result of Sharanagati.

Self-surrender does not mean inactivity. In the act of self-surrender it is the Self, and with it, the mind, the ego, the intellect and the body are surrendered to Lord. This being done, the aspirant distinctly begins to feel that it is the Lord who is functioning through his body, mind and speech. Prior to this, he believed that it was he himself who did everything whereas now he feels that it is the Lord doing everything, on His behalf. The consciousness that he is the doer merges in the cosmic consciousness. For the mind and intellect have been surrendered to the Lord and they cease to function independently at this stage. The DIVINE Will is his will now, the DIVINE thought is his thought now and similarly the DIVINE activity is his activity now.

Bhagavan Sri Baba Says, "Do not call yourself the children of sin. There is no worse sin than that. You are Amirtaputra. You have the Lord presiding in your heart. He is the Antaryamin of everything in creation. How then can you be the child of sin? Take refuge in the depths of your mind in silence and in loneliness."

If the Lord has no ideation, notation and conation, the devotee too must have none of these. For the inner sense (Antahkarana) consisting of the mind and intellect which is needed for these has become the Lord's property.

Let us therefore be confident that we will be liberated. Let us not pine over the chunks of time we have already wasted. Let us seize the present moment that has come within our grasp; Bhagavan says "Come out one step forward, I shall take ten steps towards you. Shed just one tear, I shall wipe hundreds from your eyes. I bless only thus." Hence why hesitate? Let us surrender unto Him and survive.

—K. V. Ramachandran

Ananda Vahini

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba reached Bombay on the 16th March, responding to the earnest prayers of the Seva Samiti and the Bombay Branch of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, as well as the thousands of devotees in that City. He had with Him the students of the Sathya Sai Vedasastra Patasala, who saw on the upward journey, under His Guidance, the famous ruins of the Vijayanagara Empire at Hampi with the great temple of Virupaksha, the sublime artistic idols of Ganesa Narasimha etc. As Hon'ble Sri P. K. Savant said, while congratulating these boys on their successful staging of the musical plays, Radha-Bhakti and Sakku Bai written by Bhagavan Himself, "they carried the Message of Baba into lakhs of devoted hearts through the medium of song, dance and drama; they won the admiration of the public of Bombay by their humility and courage, their discipline and devotion."

On a special stage at the Cosmopolitan Club Grounds, King's Circle, they staged the two plays on the 19th and the 21st respectively. On the 21st, His Excellency Sri P. V. Cherian, Governor of Maharashtra presided over the function and distributed medals to three boys who had played the roles of Radha, Krishna and Rukmini. The Governor said, "I congratulate these little boys who acted their roles so creditably, and I give them all, my best wishes. I hope they will follow the teachings of Bhagavan and become emissaries of the great culture of this land." The dramas taught the lesson of Sharanagati and of the Immanence of God in simple sweet words and songs; so, the citizens prayed for a repetition of the play, "Radha-Bhakti" at the Vallabhai Patel Stadium, on the 24th, after the Discourse of Baba, under the auspices of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha. The boys excelled themselves that day and, in spite of the handicap of an extensive stage without curtains and an alarmingly mammoth gathering of spectators, they produced an excellent impression and won all-round appreciation.

The Bombay Sathya Sai Seva Samiti gave all the participants mementoes and prizes and they presented a big Silver Cup for the Institution of which they were students. The students were taken round the Harbour, the Aquarium, the Zoo, the Aarey Milk Colony etc; they recited Vedic Hymns at the Mahalakshmi Temple and the Babulnath Temple, which they visited. On their way back, they visited Pandharapur and bathed in the Chandrabhaga River. At the Panduranga Temple, they recited Vedic Hymns and sang bhajans and were shown the Mangalasutra which

Bhagavan had created and presented for Goddess Rukmabai. Altogether, it was a grand tour of victory for the boys who are fostered by Baba at the Prasanthi Nilayam.

Bhagavan took residence at Modi Bungalow, at the end of the Express Highway, Andheri; its grounds and gardens and even the express highway which led to its gate were fully packed with men and women who yearned for Darshan, for hours both in the morning and evening. Baba came among them frequently and showered Grace, selecting the sick for special blessings and distributing tokens of His Karuna to every one, specially the old, the infirm, and the disabled. Bhajan sessions were held on two days at Kings Circle and on other days, at Modi Bungalow, in the mornings. Speaking at the Kings Circle gathering of about 30,000 eager listeners, on the 19th, Baba said, "The Lord" who is Premabhaskara, and Premaswarupa can be attained only by means of Prema." He spoke of the spiritual discipline that will encourage and develop the tiny plant of Prema already present in the human heart. He advised people to seek silence, solitude and concentration. "Just as fire and water in conjunction result in steam, which is able to haul heavy wagons, Karma and Upasana together produce Jnana, which hauls you with all the weight of Prarabdha safe towards Realisation of the Lord within", Baba said. Referring to the play that the boys were enacting that evening, He said that the fine arts must be devoted to the promotion of Bhakti Jnana and Faith in the Higher Power that guides and guards the Universe and all beings in it. They should not be degraded into means of sensual vulgarity or cheap sensationalism."

On the 23rd, the Sathya Sai Seva Samiti had arranged a Public Meeting at the Vallabhai Patel Stadium, under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Sri P. K. Savant, Minister for agriculture, Maharashtra. About 50,000 citizens with a fairly large proportion of students had assembled to listen to the Message of Baba. The three First Year Science Students from Bombay Colleges who had won the three prizes offered for the best essay on the "Place of Truth in Life" were present on the dais. Sri. N. Kasturi, one of the judges for the Essay Competition spoke of the high quality of the large number of entries received and exhorted the students to live up to the expectations of the country, its past culture and present hopes. Bhagavan gave away the prizes to the winners and blessed them. In His Discourse, which was translated into Hindi by Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, formerly Governor of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, Baba expressed satisfaction at the efforts of the Seva Samiti to promote the practice and study of Indian culture among the students. He blessed their attempts to start study circles in hostels and colleges, and to inculcate sound ideals of social service based on the awareness of the One Reality behind the manifold appearances. Analysing the experiences of the waking dreaming and deep sleep stages, Baba demonstrated how the I persisted through all the stages and showed itself as the reality, sharing that quality with the I of all beings, the individual I's being but waves of the One Universal, which is the Ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

On the 24th, the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, Bombay had arranged a Public Meeting at the Stadium and the gathering was of the order. 100,000, or more. Hon'ble Sri Page, Chairman, Maharashtra Legislative Council, was the President. He acknowledged with gratitude the Grad; of Baba who was blessing the Sadhakas of Maharashtra to develop Vairagya and Shraddha in spiritual discipline. Baba emphasised that the human life has to be used for God-realisation and should not be demeaned into lower achievements. He explained how the senses have to be sublimated for higher purposes, through Yama and Niyama, Commenting on the word Sathya composed of three words, Sa Tha and Ya, He said that Ya stood for Yama, Niyama (the rules

and regulations for controlling and mastering the senses, the emotions impulses and mental cravings), Tha stands for Tapas (the anguish of the mind, the yearning of the whole being for overcoming all limitations and reaching the beyond, the boundless) and Sa, the Sakshatkara of Sarveswara which is the consummation. Speaking of that stage, He mentioned one entity that wont go if it comes (Jnana), another that wont come if it goes (maya) and a third that wont either come or go! (Brahmam, which we are, whether we know of it or not).

Referring to the drama on Radha-Bhakti that was to be enacted later, Baba said that the popular view of that Bhakti was very wrong, since it was something beyond the ken of popular imagination and experience. Sri P. K. Savant said that the drama was another medium through which Baba was carrying on His Task of Dharmasthapana.

On the 25th and 26th, Baba gave Darshan to many groups of eager devotees, like industrialists, officers of Government, princes and erstwhile rulers. On the 27th, He left by plane for Jamnagar, in Saurashtra, to fulfill a promise to the devotees there and to inaugurate the Om Sri Sathya Sai Vihar, constructed and donated by Dr. Rana. 20,000 eyes scanned the skies that evening for the plane that carried Baba to the city of Jamnagar and when it touched ground, there was great acclamation and joy. Baba was greeted by a distinguished gathering of civil and military officers and He was welcomed at the Amar Vilas Palace by Her Highness Rajmata. He performed the Opening Ceremony of the building which is to be the headquarters of the Seva Samiti of the place and then moved into the extensive pandal to grant Darshan to the thousands waiting there. All the roads leading to the place brought swelling floods of men and women into the area for hours on end. Baba graciously moved along the ranks of devotees, seeking out the distressed and the diseased and when He created Vibhuti for them and blessed them, they cheered Baba through sheer joy and gratitude.

Baba then, exhorted them all to attend to the needs of the spirit, just as they were attending to the needs of the body. He conferred bliss on the vast gathering by singing a few Namavalis and encouraging them to sing in chorus. At Amar Vilas too, Baba came out of His Room onto the lawn until midnight in order to give Darshan to the large numbers of Bhaktas. Baba gave audience to the Jamnagar Seva Samiti during which He laid down the programme of work which the members have to carry out and assured them of His Karuna.

Baba left Jamnagar by car for Bhavnagar, before dawn, on the 28th. At about 7-30 A.M., He reached Rajkot, where a few thousand devotees had assembled at the Western Railway Auditorium and were engaged in Bhajan. Baba alighted and gave them Darshan; He noticed some ailing children and others and immediately He created Vibhuti and blessed them with that panacea. He came on the dais and sang a few Namavalis, giving the gathering a glimpse of the sweetness of His Voice and of the Name of the Lord. Learning from the local papers like Jai Hind and Phul Chhab that the Lord was passing along the road by car to Bhavnagar, eager groups of devotees waited long at Babra, Chavand, Dhasa, Limda, Songadh sad Sihor along the route and they were rewarded, for Baba slowed down and stopped the car and gave them the coveted Darshan and blessed them with the Abhayastha. Bhavnagar was reached at 11 A.M. The city roads were punctuated with welcome arches and banners of greetings Thousands scattered flowers and cheered when they saw Baba; school children ran along cheering and singing. Baba stayed at Takeshwer, in the Bungalow of Sri Abdulla Noor Mahomed, whose spacious garden and the

plots of land around accommodated the enormous gathering that collected there. Baba came among the vast multitudes often to slake their thirst for His Darshan; At 5 P.M., when the Public Meeting was started as announced by the Organisers, Baba could scarcely move forward among the packed audience and the volunteers had a hard time to curb the enthusiastic yearning of the people. Baba spoke to them on the discipline that can subjugate the vagaries of the mind and the senses. At 8 P.M., Bhagavan proceeded to the Extension near the Ramadas Mandir, where He laid the Foundation for the Sai Mandir of Bhavnagar City.

On the 29th, Baba left Bhavnagar by the morning plane to Bombay. As the "Sourashtra Samachar" for 29th March wrote in banner headlines, Baba "showered His Premamrita on the land and the land was flooded with joy."

About 300 men and women volunteers who served at the Modi Bungalow and the Stadium had the good fortune of being blessed by Baba with a special discourse on the evening of the 29th. Baba told them that they must consider seva to be as valuable a sadhana as puja or dhyana. A Sai volunteer is always and everywhere a willing sevak, when help is needed by the distressed disabled or diseased. Baba then suggested to the Bombay Seva Samiti the formation from among the volunteers of a Sathya Sai Seva Dal, for the City.

On the 30th, Baba motored to Navasari, 174 miles by road, and reached the place by noon. For days together all roads led to Navasari and thousands had gathered there for the Darshan of Baba, by rail and bus, by cart and foot. The devotion and eagerness of the people were immeasurably inspiring. The organisers had erected a pandal to seat 50,000 people, but, the gathering overflowed into the roads and lanes, parks and plots all over the area. Baba moved along the furlongs—long corridors, lighting the lamp of joy on all faces. When the surging enthusiasm of the mammoth gathering grew, Baba stood on the dais and gave darshan to the hungry populace. When He left, one could sense a pang of grief sweeping over the anguished hearts. Baba had proceeded twenty miles when an Akhanda bhajan gathering of Sathya Sai Devotees drew His Gracious attention at Ubel. The atmosphere was fragrant with the holy songs and every one was immerse in the nectar of Bhajan. Baba moved among the people, sat on the dais for about half an hour, Himself sang a few Namavalis and resumed His journey, blessing the devotees, who continued their bhajan with increased vigour. Baba was welcomed at other towns too, like Chikhli, Vav and Ankleswar, before He reached Baroda, where He took residence at the new bungalow of Dr. C. G. Patel of Kampala (East Africa) which He formally opened by His Gracious Entry. The members of the Baroda Seva Samiti as well as of the Sathya Sai Study Circles of Jambsar and other towns had assembled to give Baba a prayerful welcome. On the 31st, Baba gave Darshan to about 2,000 persons who had gathered to take advantage of His Presence, granted special prasad to many invalids and sick children and left for Bombay. On the way, He espied at Vagaldhara, the Sarvajanika Vidyalaya run by the Kalavani Mandal; He visited its Hostel for poor students and appreciating their ideal of spiritual training, He gave the 60 boarders new clothes, fruits, and photographs. He advised them to apply the methods of agriculture which they were specialising in, to the cultivation of the heart. Baba is Sanchari-kalpataru, showering Grace and Gifts on all who are ready to receive them.

When Baba left Bombay on the afternoon of the 2nd April, there was no dry eye on the faces of the thousands who had gathered at the Modi Bungalow. They prayed to Him to come again soon.

Baba proceeded straight to the M.E.S. College Auditorium, Poona, where about 20,000 people awaited Him, for Darshan. He moved among the gathering for some time before ascending the dais. The Poona Seva Samiti presented a Welcome Address to which Baba replied with an inspiring discourse. On the 3rd inst, Bhajan was held in His Presence at the Riverside Bungalow of Mr. Banatwala. He granted interviews to a number of high officers of the Armed Forces. He counselled the members of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Poona; He sat with the Headmasters of many High Schools of the City and discussed with them methods of moral education in the present set-up. In the evening, Baba was at the Andhra Association, Poona. He blessed the vast gathering and gave a Discourse exhorting them to spiritual Sadhana and self-realisation.

Baba left Poona on 4th inst, reaching Hyderabad via Sholapur. After a busy two days stay in the Capital City during which He gave impetus to the workers and devotees, Baba reached Prasanthi Nilayam on the evening of the 7th. As Baba declared at the meeting on the Yugadi Day (10-4-67) the tour of Maharashtra and Saurashtra was 'unprecedented' in spiritual delight. Millions were blessed, and directed on to the Path.

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

- 2-3-67: Colombo (Ceylon) Publication of Book by Dr. R. K. Pillai on Baba's Life and Teachings.
- 19-3-67: Shimoga (Mysore) Inauguration of the Karnataka Sathya Sai Federation of Bhakta Mandalis.
- 30-3-67: Retang Colony: (Orissa) Inauguration of Sathya Sai Satsang Samithi.
- 16-3-67: Baba in Maharashtra and Gujarat States
to
- 7-4-67: See Article, "ANANDAVAHINI".
- 2-4-67: Hong-kong: Yoga Institute: Talk by Indra Devi, of Tecate, California, on "The Glory of Prasanthi Nilayam".
- 2-4-67: Tellicherry: (Kerala): Sathya Sai Bhajan Sangham: 3rd Anniversary: President: Dr. K. Bhaskaran Nair, M.A., Ph. D. Principal.
- 7-4-67: Machavaram: (East Godavari Dt.) Inauguration of Weeklong Continuous Recitation of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Namam.
- 10-4-67: Prasanthi Nilayam: Yugadi Day: Divine Discourse, by Baba.

Baba's Programme

Readers are informed that Baba will be away from Prasanthi Nilayam during the months of May and June, '67. He will be at Madras during the latter half of April '67.

Bhagavata Vahini

12

Bhima said, "When Krishna was questioned in the court of Dhritarashtra, by Duryodhana, Dussasana and others as to why He should intercede in the family disputes of the Kauravas and Pandavas and favour one section more than another as if the Pandavas were nearer kin to Him than the Kauravas, what did the Lord reply? Remind yourselves of that reply now Picture that scene before your eyes: pacing up and down, like a lion cub, He roared, 'What did you say? Are the Kauravas as near to Me as the Pandavas? No, they can never be on the same level. Listen, I shall tell you of the kinship that binds Me to the Pandavas: For this Body of Mine, Dharmaraja is as the Head; Arjuna is as the Shoulder and Arms; Bhima is as the Trunk; Nakula and Sahadeva are as the two Feet. For the Body constituted like this, Krishna is the Heart. The limbs act on the strength of the Heart; without it, they are lifeless.'

"What does that declaration mean to us? "It means, we Pandavas will be lifeless since the Heart has gone out of action. We are to meet dissolution. The Lord who is Time Incarnate is striving to merge us into Himself. We have to be ready to answer His call.

"This is proof enough that the Kali Age has come. The Day Krishna left this world, that day the doors of Dwapara have been closed and the gates of Kali opened. Or else, can these evil forces and wicked minds roam about unchecked? Can this Arjuna who never forgets the ritual formulae for each Divine arrow sent from his bow, even when the battle is raging most ferociously and fast, can he ever forget them in the direst crisis of the barbarian attack on that convoy of women and children? It is certainly the Time-spirit of the Kali Age that has caused this dire calamity."

Nakula too joined at this stage. He said, "Brothers! The eastern sky reveals approaching Dawn Let us inform the queens and our revered mother of these developments; let us decide without delay the next step we have to take. The body will not be dissolved immediately the breath leaves, isn't it? Of course, life has gone out of us the moment Krishna left, the limbs will be warm a little while. We too have to reach the Presence of Krishna today or tomorrow. Let us not waste time in grief and anguish. Let us rather think of the path we have to tread next and prepare for that journey." Every one agreed with this suggestion, so full of wise detachment.

There was some anxiety about how the news would affect Draupadi, Subhadra and the aged Mother; but they ignored that anxiety and decided to communicate the news. For, when the Lord Himself has left, why should any one be anxious about what might happen to any one else? The brothers resolved that the eldest among them, Dharmaraja, should go to the Mother; that was the proper course they thought.

Joy consumes time more quickly, not so grief. When men are in joy, time passes fast; when they are in grief, it moves slow. Grief is heavy like a mountain range; it is as the Final Flood. Though the capital city of Dharmaraja was Indraprastha, the ancestral throne was still at Hastinapura, because that place had lost its other glories when the Mahabharata Battle carried away the princes of the Royal Line and all senior scions. Therefore, Dharmaraja was spending some months at Indraprastha and the remaining part of the year at Hastinapura. Unaware of this, Arjuna went to Indraprastha and finding that Dharmaraja was not there, he left those few women

of Dwaraka whom he could retrieve from the barbarian hordes there and reached Hastinapura alone. There was with him one solitary Yadava, a great grandson of Krishna, "Vraja" by name the only survivor among the male population of Dwaraka. Poor Vraja, had no mind to show his face to others; he was so ashamed of himself for having survived; he was so miserable at the death of all the rest that he hid himself in a dark room and sulked all the time, gloomy and alone.

The Queen Mother, Kunti Devi, learnt from a maid within a short time that Arjuna had arrived. Kunti Devi then kept vigil the entire night expecting that Arjuna would rush to her and tell her some news from Dwaraka; she kept the lamps burning; she refused to go to sleep; she rose in joy that Arjuna had come, whenever the slightest noise of footsteps reached her ears, uttering the words; "O Son! I am glad you came. What is the news?" When no answer came, she called her maid by name to the room and interjected, "What is the meaning of this? You told me, didn't you, that Arjuna had arrived from Dwaraka? Why has he not come to me yet? You must have been mistaken; you must have seen some one else arriving and taken him to be Arjuna. If he had come, surely, he would have been here immediately." Thus Kunti spent a sleepless night between expectation and disappointment.

Day dawned; every one was getting busy with his own assignment. Meanwhile, her mind had undergone many questionings: What was the reason for Arjuna's not coming to her? Had he really returned? Was he kept away by some urgent political problem which had to be discussed among the brothers until the small hours of the night? Or is he so tired by travel that he resolved to see his mother early next day, instead of the same night? Or has some crisis developed in Dwaraka for which Krishna directed him to consult Dharmaraja urgently and bring him his reaction and solution? Has he forgotten his duty to his mother in the confusion of these crises? Of course, he will come when the day has dawned, she finally consoled herself.

So, she rose even when darkness still enveloped the earth; she bathed and put on new clothes and got ready to receive her son. Just then, another doubt arose in her mind and agitated her. Every night, all her sons would invariably come to her presence, one behind the other and fall at her feet, craving permission to go to bed, seeking her blessings. But she wondered why not even one had turned up that night. This made her anxiety worse. She sent maids to the apartments of Draupadi and Subhadra; and found that none of the brothers had even partaken of dinner! Kunti sank deeper into anxiety.

When her mind was thus torn with anguish an old female attendant came in and informed her that Dharmaraja, accompanied by Arjuna, was on the way to her apartments. Kunti was agitated by fear at what they might tell her, joy that she was meeting Arjuna after a long absence, and eagerness to hear the news of the Yadavas. It made an amalgam of expectancy. She was quaking because she was unable to contain this anxiety.

Dharmaraja came in and fell at her feet; he stood silent. Arjuna could not raise himself from her feet, for a long time. It was Kunti who spoke to him, words of consolation. "Poor fellow! How did you manage to be away from me for such a long time?" She caressed him lovingly, but even before she spoke words of blessing or questioned about his health and welfare, she asked, "Arjuna! I heard you arrived last night; is it true? Why did you not come to me during the night? How can a mother who knows that her son has returned from a long absence, sleep in peace

without seeing him? Well, I am glad you have come at least now, with the break of dawn. Tell me the news. Are your father-in-law, mother-in-law and grandfather quite well? My brother, Vasudeva, is very old now; how is he? Is he moving about? Or is he bed-ridden as I am? Is he being nursed as I am, dependent for everything on others?" She was holding the hands of Arjuna and her eyes were fixed on his face. Suddenly she asked, "What is this I see, my son? How did you grow so dark? Why have your eyes bloated and reddened like this?"

"I understand! Dwaraka is far away and the long jungle journey has told upon you. The dust and the sun have affected you; the exhaustion of the road is written on your face. Let it go. Tell me what my Shyamasundar, my Krishna has asked you to tell me. When is He coming here? Or, has He no desire to see me? Did He say anything? Of course, He is Vaasudeva, He can see all from wherever He is. When am I to see Him again? Will this ripe fruit be on the tree, until He comes?"

She asked questions many times and answered them herself many times. She provided no opening for either Arjuna or Dharmaraja to say what they wanted. From Arjuna's eyes tears flowed without hindrance. Kunti observed this strange phenomenon. She drew Arjuna closer to herself and had his head on her shoulder. "Son, Arjuna, What has happened? Tell me. I have never seen tears in your eyes. Did Gopala find fault with you and send you away, because you are unfit to be with Him? Did any such terrible calamity happen to you?" She was overwhelmed with grief but she was trying her best to console her son.

Just then, Dharmaraja hid his own face with both hands and groaned amidst sobs, "Mother! You speak of our Vaasudeva still? It is ten days since He left us. He has gone back to His own abode. All the Yadavas have died " Even as he was speaking thus, Kunti opened her eyes wide, asking, "What? My Gopala...my Nandanandana...the Treasure of my heart...heart...has He widowed the earth? O Krishna...Krishna..." and, as if going to seek Him, that very moment, she passed away.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

If the Jiva is ever Jiva and the Siva is ever Siva, of what use is Sadhana, the constant exercise to keep the senses and the mind under the control of the discriminating intellect? They are both the same and this has to be realised to get the fullest joy. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, spoke of his Father in Heaven, but, he realised ultimately that "I and my Father are ONE."

BABA

The Glory of His Glance

One glance fathoms the measureless deep;
Another awakens the pilgrim soul from sleep.
One glance kindles the undying Flame;
Another liberates the imprisoned splendour.

One glance flashes from pinnacles unscaled;
Another illumines the caverns unknown.
One glance proclaims man's Divinity;
Another confirms God's humanity.
One glance quenches thirst unsated;
Another evokes quest unabated.
One glance drenches in showers of Love's Elixir;
Another scorches with seraphic fire, the sheath of error.
One glance draws like a magnet ineffable;
Another glows like a lone star amid the gloom, impenetrable.
One glance dazzles ...O my Sun of Wisdom!
Another enchants, ...O my Moon of Delight!
—C. N. Sastry

From Death's Cold Hold

Whatever science sets its seal upon is believed as truth and the rest is discarded as false, by the educated; that is the situation today. When a man of science cannot explain or accept any happening as possible, it is dismissed as either superstition or as impossible. But, in medical science (with which I am at present concerned) there is even today a large region which has remained inexplicable. Why some diseases are caused, how they have to be treated, by what means can they be prevented—these are yet not placed beyond conjecture by scientists spending millions of dollars and years of research. , Therefore, one is compelled to admit that there is a higher power, all-knowing all-accomplishing all merciful, without change and free from blemish a power that is beyond human understanding: That Higher Power is God. It is beyond the capacity of Science to explain It.

If this is branded superstition, he who brands it so is ignorant of facts, is unaware of the experience. "An ant cannot bite except under direction of Siva", it is said. All movements and happenings in the Universe are prompted by that Almighty Force. The span of human life is no exception. For, have we not read in the Puranas of people who got a new lease of life through Grace? It was my good fortune to witness through the Grace of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba the emergence of a patient from the cold hold of death. Last March, from the 9th of the month, during the Sivaratri Festival, I was privileged to serve in the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital under the direction of Baba. The day after Sivaratri, on the 10th, a "serious case" was brought and, admitted into the hospital. His name is, C. Chaganlal; Proprietor, Damodar Envelope Factory, Madras, a devotee of Baba. He was suffering since some years from cirrhosis of the liver. His age is 58. He is also afflicted with diabetes. He had fallen unconscious on the 10th, and was brought in a stretcher to the hospital.

On examination, I found that another complication had intervened on the cirrhosis of the liver from which he was suffering. He had developed hepatic coma, a condition which is fatal in almost all such cases. In hepatic coma; the liver, the kidneys and other organs do not work

effectively. So Chaganlal had contracted urine secretion, also. His pulse was beating dangerously fast. He was a long-standing sufferer from high blood pressure. His respiration indicated that he might collapse any moment. He was unconscious in deep coma. The only "treatment" we could give was the administration of two litres of intravenous glucose.

When Bhagavan was informed that the patient was in a very critical condition, He smiled and said, "You treat him as best you can; nothing will happen to the patient."

The best we could do at the time and place was the IV. Glucose and we did it. But, that was no treatment at all; we knew it. The only other treatment we knew was to sit beside the bed and watch him, praying to Sathya Sai Bhagavan to save him. We found that his condition was becoming worse and worse. Still, Bhagavan's words, His assurance that 'nothing will happen to the patient' gave us some courage and confidence. We administered him just one specific: the Vibhuti (Ash) that He created by a wave of the hand and gave us to be given to Him.

At about 2 A.M. on the 11th, I noticed some improvement: the respiration rate improved and became less fast. The patient slowly opened his eyes before sunrise; it appeared that he was slowly recovering from coma. He passed urine. He started swallowing a little the water that was given. At 8 A.M. on the 12th, respiration became normal and we heard the patient repeat unto himself in low tones, "Sai Ram, Sai Ram." At about noon, he started becoming aware of the need to pass urine. By evening, he began recognising those around him. Very soon, his talk too became normal.

On the morning of the 13th, he sat on the chair placed in the verandah of the ward. That evening, he came down the Hospital Hill and was able to stand with the group of devotees waiting for a chance to have the Darshan of Bhagavan. Chaganlal was born again. He had a new lease of life awarded to him.

Chaganlal's case is a miracle in medical science. Even when the latest drugs which are not easily procurable are administered, it is seldom that a patient comes out, alive from hepatic coma. So, the recovery of Chaganlal, so dramatic so sudden and so complete is certainly due to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Grace, represented by the Vibhuti He created and gave.

To question the veracity of His Leelas and to try to explain the miracles He works serve but to expose our ignorance. As Baba advises us, let us understand ourselves first. Then, we can approach one step nearer to Him. If we perform the duties cast on us, if we rid ourselves of lust anger greed attachment conceit and hate, and if we surrender to the Lord completely, thinking only of Him always at all places under all conditions and circumstances, we secure for ever the Guardian Grace of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

—Kommareddi Bhaskara Rao, M. B. B. S., Eluru

The Sun

The experience of His Grace makes *me* see Babaji as the Sun, unendingly pouring forth Light and Warmth, through each of its myriad rays into all living beings ALIKE, whether they be good or bad, glad or grieving, pervading every one, sooner or later. How much of the ever radiating Ray may reach the innermost heart depends on the inner purification and development; it flows into the self to the measure of its ardour and aspiration in Sadhana; it gradually removes the darkness that hides the Divine Essence, so that the Light may illuminate, the Warmth may benefit the whole being, thus liberating the Divine qualities.

Babaji's Grace also affects the soul like Indian Devotional Music. One has to listen to it, with the mind silenced and the heart wide open. Then, the inner strings are attuned to the enchanting melody or hymn; the sound then reverberates throughout the whole being, lifts it up into higher spheres of peace and Joy. It inspires ever more devotion and transmits purity and holiness.

As Babaji says, "Attach yourself to Me and the current will flow through you and get things done for your good."

Anne Balebrege
The Hague

Dharma Samsthapana (The All-India Conference)

While inaugurating with His Blessings, the First All-India Conference at Madras of institutions and organisations which bear His Name and try to spread His Message, Baba said, "Of all the Kotis, Dhanushkoti is the most sacred", sang Thyagaraja, meaning that Dhanushkoti where people take the holy bath in the sea is more auspicious, since all the rivers bring their offerings of sacred waters to the sea. Similarly, this Conference is more meaningful and precious, since it is the repository and reservoir of the Bhakti and the Shraddha, brought by each of you from so many regions all over the world."

At 9 p. m. on 19th April, Bhagavan visited "Abbotsbury," to bless the 500 delegates who had brought the offerings of Bhakti and Shraddha. Additional delegates, the Presidents and Secretaries of each organistaion, were coming in numbers even on the 20th and by the 21st, the Auditorium had at least a 1000 from all the States of India, and many countries overseas.

On the morning of the 20th, the sun rose to witness a new golden chapter in the Sathya Sai Era. The Conference began under the Chairmanship of Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, formerly Governor of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, in the gracious presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The gathering was thrilled with joy when at the commencement of the proceedings, Vedasamraat Kameshwara Ghanapati, the Principal of the Sathya Sai Veda Sastra Pathashala recited a few hymns from the Vedas. The! President of the " Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Madras", under whose auspices the Conference was being held, extended a hearty welcome to all. "Bhagavan has brought us all together, under the fostering care of is Divine Grace," he said. Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, then called upon one selected representative from each state to speak

briefly about the activities of the samitis there, so that other states can benefit from the knowledge of any special activity or new line of approach.

Sri Indulal Shah from Maharashtra spoke of the "Pictorial Exhibition" on Baba's Message which had toured more than 100 towns and villages all over India, of the Essay Competitions among college students, of the classes for teaching Telugu, and of the training classes held for those who are eager to learn Bhajan, Music. Justice V. Balakrishna Eradi from Kerala spoke of the enthusiasm with which about 260 representatives from about 80 institutions in Kerala came together in a fraternal endeavour to form a "Federation of Sathya Sai Organisations," in order to intensify, diversify, and co-ordinate their activities. Sri H. M. Sivaram from Mysore described how Kerala had inspired the formation of a Federation of Sathya Sai Institutions in that State. He spoke of a new type of festival, called Prasanthi Dharmotsava held for 3 days with a programme of Puja and parayana in the mornings and discourses on Bhagavan's teachings in the evenings. He said that 5 such Utsavas were successfully celebrated in five different towns in Mysore State. He also mentioned a School for Defective Children run by a devotee with Baba's Blessings at Mysore. Sri V K. Rao, I.C.S. from Andhra Pradesh summarized the activities in that State, "in order to develop among the people interested in our ancient culture, which is one of the chief aims of Bhagavan's Mission". He mentioned how the gatherings drew instruction and inspiration from the tape-records of Bhagavan's Discourses. Dr. E. V. Sastry from Hong Kong described the activities of Sathya Sai Devotees in Japan and of the "Sathya Sai Spiritual Centre" at Hong Kong. He appealed for Baba's Blessings on the millions of Chinese who were thirsting for God and for spiritual solace, in spite of all handicaps heaped upon them. Sri. S. V. Khera from W. Bengal detailed the work done by Bhajan Mandalis at Calcutta, Kharagpur, Chittaranjan, Dum Dum etc. and spoke of the re-enforcement of faith derived from the manifestations of Baba's Omnipresence. Sri. Nataraja Iyer from Madras said that the Bhajans in the homes and hamlets of Tamilnad were held in the immediate presence of Baba, since in a thousand different places, He was showering Vibhuti and other prasada materials from His Pictures, kept for worship. His enthusiasm and joy thrilled the heart of every one present.

Dr. D. J. Gadhia from Gujarat commented on the spread of the Sathya Sai Study Circle Movement in Gujarat and in East Africa, among the Gujaratis there as well as others. "There were 30 such groups in East Africa itself. In England, the City of Liverpool had a Study Circle with over 60 Britishers as members, studying and discussing the writings and speeches of Baba," he said. Dr. Nallainathan from Ceylon explained how "the great ideals of Bhagavan so necessary, for individual and national peace" were being disseminated by means of newspaper articles and contributions for magazines, besides bhajan books and booklets. Hon'ble Sri P. K. Savant, Minister for Agriculture, Maharashtra Government, and the President of the Maharashtra Branch of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha spoke of group discussions on fundamental philosophical problems, in the light of Bhagavan's Teachings, held by the members. He expressed the keen desire of the people of Maharashtra as well as of all Sai devotees that Bhagavan should visit "Shirdi, the place He had selected as the Centre of His Mission while in the previous body." Sri Tildeman Johanessen from Norway spoke of the miraculous way in which he was drawn by Baba towards Him, from Shirdi, where he had gone. "People have lost faith in God and morality and spiritual discipline; that is why Baba has come. We are all blessed, for we have been chosen by His Grace to spread His Message and re-create the world," he said. Sri C. Rama Rao, from Orissa and Sri C. B. Rao from Madhya Pradesh also addressed the delegates and spoke on the

activities of Bhajan Groups and Samithis in those areas. The Chairman then spoke in brief of the work of the groups in Germany, France, Holland and The United States, since their representatives could not be present.

Dr. Ramakrishna Rao said that there were thousands of smaller groups in the country, which could not be contacted in time. "The spread of the ideals of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema is very necessary at this critical moment in the history of the world. When Bhagavan is among us, with His Divine Message and Divine Grace, the impact of His Personality has caused many organisations to germinate and grow spontaneously, in a huge but haphazard manner all over the world. Bhagavan has now resolved to bring order and uniformity and substance into every one of these and that is the reason why, this essentially business conference, has been called together," he said.

5 Sub-committees were then constituted, with one representative on each, from every State, to consider and report their recommendations on (I) the constitution of the Sathya Seva Samithi, (II) Its scope and objective, (III) Collection and management of funds, (IV) Publications, and (V) The Sathya Sai Seva Dal.

The Chairman then prayed to Bhagavan, the Inner Motivator and Illuminator of every Heart, to bless the conference. Baba said, "The spread of Message is possible only by those who practise it themselves. Practice is enough; that is publicity which is really worthwhile. Rules and regulations are meant to canalise energy and demarcate the boundaries of activity. Mere enthusiasm and eagerness are not enough; they have to be expressed with restraint and wisdom. Keep in mind always the twin inspiration, of the Father-hood of God and the Brother-hood of Man".

In the evening at 4-30 p.m., Bhagavan graciously gathered around Him the Presidents and; Secretaries from, each state separately and encouraged them to open their hearts before Him, so that he might erase their doubts and misapprehensions. It was a thrilling experience, for Bhagavan revealed His Innate Sweetness and Love in His Conversation with each Group At 7-30 p.m., when the Conference met with Dr. Ramakrishna Rao in the chair, Sri Indulal Shah, Sri hinge, Sri L. C. Java Sri P. Appukkutta Menon, and Sri Bhagavan Raju, the Convenors of the 5 Sub-committees appointed in the morning presented their reports and explained the significance of the main recommendations included in them.

Sri Indulal Shah said that the formulation of a Constitution for an All India Central Body and even, of a State-wise Co-ordinating Body can well wait, until the Sathya Sai Samithis, now existing in various cities and town and district headquarters and which may be formed as a result of the inspiration and information gained from this Conference, have reorganised themselves and established their status and demonstrated their usefulness. The need now was to regularise and standardise the "Seva Samithis", he said. The sub-committee laid down the qualifications for members as well as guide lines for activities, besides some rules and regulations for registering the Samithis. Sri Pinga read out his Sub-committee's proposals on the scope and objects of the Seva Samithis. They were mostly about the organisation of Bhajan groups and study circles, the formation and training of Seva Dals, the arrangement of Exhibitions and film shows, the opening of classes for teaching Telugu and Bhajan Music etc. Sri L. C. Java; reported that his Committee

was against any public appeal for donations and monetary contributions; it proposed that all expenses must be met by the spontaneous cooperative effort of the members themselves, without seeking help from others. The Publications Sub-committee pleaded for the appointment by Baba, of a Central Committee for approving all manuscripts on Baba's Life and Teachings before being taken up for publication. The Sathya Sai Seva Dal Sub-committee's Report was presented by Sri Bhagavan Raju. The members had prepared a scheme for the selection and training of a Dal in each City by the Samithi from young people who were both Sadhakas and Sevaks.

Hon. Sri Page, Chairman, Legislative Council, Maharashtra, in his address to the conference, slid that its main task was "to reconcile the freedom of the individual so necessary for spiritual development and the regulation and order so necessary for the individual's activity in society".

He spoke of the place of the great institution of Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, which Baba had designed in His Task of Dharmasthapana and said, "it must work as a centre for the discussion of philosophical problems arising out of the study of the scriptures, which trouble the Sadhakas and aspirants".

After dinner, the delegates were delighted to hear, in the Presence of Bhagavan, the soul stirring devotional songs on Bhagavan composed and sung by the author, the renowned musician of Tamilnad, Sri T. M. Soundararajan.

On 21st day of April Bhagavan arrived early at Abbotsbury, for He had promised to confer the boon of "private interviews" with the groups of representatives from some regions whom He could not meet the previous evening, for want of time. He also conferred with the members of the Maharashtra Branch of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, in order to define the precise functions of that organisation, in the new set-up. Hon'ble Sri P. K. Savant, Sri Maroo, Sri Sangam, Sri Page, Chairman, Legislative Council, Bombay, all took part in the discussion.

At the Conference Sessions which then began under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ramakrishna Rao, general discussion was continued on the reports of the sub-committees. Sri Indulal Shah explained that the main points for consideration were the Statement of objects, the Qualifications for membership, the Method for collection of funds, and the problem of Associate Members-so far as the Report on Seva Samithis was concerned. Hon'ble Sri Page made an impassioned appeal praying that the objects be defined more elaborately, so that the distinctive role of the Samithi may be made more plain. The Conference accepted his suggestion and cheered the proposal that the objects be mentioned as, "to promote Bharatiya Samskriti, and Vedantic knowledge, to inculcate spirit of single-minded devotion to God and the spirit of service to humanity in order that perfect peace and happiness may be ensured for all, irrespective of caste and creed." The universality and the essential validity of Baba's Mission were thus made patent.

The evening session commenced at 4-30 p.m. Dr. Ramakrishna Rao congratulated the delegates on the orderliness, enthusiasm and sincerity which marked the deliberations. He declared that the Conference had approved the basic principles of the Seva samitis, of the Publication policies, of the Collection of Funds, and of the Seva Dal. What remained was the incorporation of these in appropriate language in the Constitution that will be drawn up and placed before Bhagavan for His blessings and later distributed to every member and delegate. He allotted this task to Sri

Indulal Shah, the President of the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Bombay. He hoped that the decisions will be followed in letter and spirit by all who are in charge of the various institutions. He then prayed to Baba to bless the Assembly with His Divine Discourse.

Bhagavan assured the delegates that the convening of the Conference was not due to any failing on the part of any organisation or institution; it was prompted by a recognition that it was time for a fresh spurt of activity and a more orderly march towards the goal. India which was once the Guru of all Humanity had to re-equip herself for that eternal role, by Indians resolving to live the ancient ideals of purity, simplicity, sincerity, charity and truth. Mahavishnu is Viswaswarupa; the world is the body of God, and, India is the Eye of that Body, and the Light of the Vedas and the Sastras based on them is the Eye of that Body, and the Light of the Eye. Ignorance of this glorious heritage has caused misery and weakness; India has to cure *herself* first, before administering the cure to others. The Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha and the Sathya Sai Samithis, Sanghams, Mandalis—whatever be the name—have to create the atmosphere of "Prasanthi Nilayam" in the hearts; homes and Committees of humanity, through the study and practice of Sanathana Dharma, which lays down the basic principles, of Bharatiya Samskriti. The search and the attainment of Truth, is the one single over-all aim of that culture and when the Truth is known, it transforms Life and grants Peace and Blessedness.

Bhagavan said, "The President and Secretary of an organisation of the Sai fold should not aim at publicity or propaganda, nor try to earn name or fame, or win office or authority, power or influence. He must seek only opportunities to serve. You must serve others because it is your nature to serve, because you would have no peace of mind so long as a single living being is suffering pain. You must publicise the value of Sanathana. Dharma not by books and pamphlets, not by lectures and leaflets, but, by living it yourselves and demonstrating its excellence by your own goodness, virtue, fortitude and detachment.

Bhagavan then laid down certain fundamental rules for all who take His Name for organising institutions, (I) Every such organisation should give up all trace of rivalry and competition with other Sathya Sai organisations, as well as with other religious and Dharmic organisations of the place. There should be no trace of the spirit of exclusion or superiority. 'The organisation should be redolent with the fragrance of Nishkamakarma, work without despondency or pride; cooperate with all who are good and self-less. Let this be the distinctive mark of Sathya Sai Institutions. (II) While doing service, serve others as you would like them to serve you. Do not behave towards others as you would not like them to behave towards you. Constantly seek your own faults with the intention to remove them; seek to find the excellences of others with a view to emulate them. Be fine examples for the precepts that you distribute to others.

(III) I have approved the lower age limit of 30 for members of the Seva Samithis, not because younger persons have not got the experience, education, resources or spiritual equipment, but, only because they will be more useful in the Sathya Sai Seva Dals, that are to be formed. No one should feel that he has been neglected. If your name is on My List, that is ample compensation. Try to have the name enlisted there, by your Sadhana and Service. (IV) Officers of Government and Members of Legislatures have to take the Oath of Loyalty to the Constitution; similarly, I want every worker, President and Secretary of these organisations to take a solemn oath, not once in a way, but, every day. Rise up with the oath that you will fill every act of yours during

the day with love, devotion and detachment and pray to the Lord for the intelligence and vigilance necessary for this. In the evening, before retiring for the night, analyse the day's activity and seek to discover the faults and wrongs that might have crept into it due to egoism, anger, malice or greed and pray for strength to overcome them.

(V) Do not cultivate fanaticism in religion and decry other Names and Forms of the Lord. Variety is a tribute to human personality, and the development of that personality. Sai devotees should avoid all feelings of separateness on the bases of language, place of nativity, stage of culture, education or religious belief. Any thing that keeps you away from another aspirant or another pilgrim diminishes and endangers your own progress! It was suggested that the Samithis should celebrate four festivals in the year, viz., Navaratri, Sivaratri, My Birthday and Guru Poornima. But, I would ask you to celebrate Holy Days associated with All Incarnations, all Sages and even all Faiths. (VI) I do not encourage or appreciate the collection of funds for the construction of mandirs or temples. Why allow old temples to go into ruin and build new ones for the old Gods in new forms? For me, your Hrudaya Kendiram is enough; that is the only Mandiram I seek and relish. Do not make any public appeal for funds, but, when funds are needed, share the burden among yourselves, to the extent of your resources. Avoid pomp and extravagance. Try to be simple and sincere. That is how you can please Me.

(VII) I would like you to carry the Message of, Sanathana Dharma, which is Universal and appealing to the inmost urges of Man towards God and Goodness, to the students of your areas. They are the roots of this nation and if they turn away from the springs of its culture, the tree will rot and yield no fruit. (VIII) Encourage the study of Sanskrit and of the ancient scriptures in all languages, with the help of the members of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha in your State, for, they are the repositories of the precious heritage of India, which will revive you, as well as the world, thirsting for peace, and lasting happiness. (IX) Above all, promote Namasankirtan among the people and practise it yourself sincerely. For when the Name is on the tongue, and the Form of which it is an integral part is in the eye, no evil can enter, no fear can haunt, no malice can manifest the mind of man. Sing the glory of God, revealed through His many manifestations.

Bhagavan said, "From tomorrow, get rid of all rivalries and prejudices among yourselves and become one coordinated courageous united band of workers dedicated to the service of humanity." He expressed His Ananda at the magnificent way in which the Madras Samithi had arranged the Conference and looked after the convenience and comforts of the vast number of delegates from all parts of the country and all regions of the world. "They have set a fine example for others to follow", He said.

The Chairman granted permission to a few delegates to acknowledge with gratitude the service of the Samithi. The Maharani of Jind spoke of the warm hospitality and the wonderful organisation of the Madras Samiti. She expressed her adoration for the compassion and glory of Bhagavan and said, "We are privileged to be His Crusaders and we are proud of this role; we are prepared to undergo any trial or test while fulfilling this life-mission". She thanked Dr. Ramakrishna Rao for the efficient manner in which he conducted the deliberations and for the translation into English of Baba's Discourses which he did for the sake of those who could not follow Telugu. Sri K. K. Unni from Kerala offered the thanks of the delegates from that State to the organisers.

Dr. Gadhia said that the Presence of Bhagavan who was Mata, Pita, Guru and Deva, filled them with Inspiration which they will carry to their home towns and villages, Dr. E. V. Sastri of Hong Kong declared that the discussions became-sweet, and the dishes became tasty because of Baba moving among the delegates in the Hall and the Dining Room. He said that Madras had set a standard which it was impossible to beat. No one can do better, he said.

Sri V. K. Rao I C S. from Hyderabad conveyed his deep gratitude at the excellent arrangements for the conference, in this spacious luxurious building set amidst sylvan surroundings in the centre of green lawns. "Inspired by sincere brotherliness born out of intense devotion the Samithi showered cheerfulness and, courtesy on us. There was hardly any want they did not anticipate and fulfill without delay" he said. Sri M. Narayana Bhat from Mysore said that Baba had opened a new chapter in the Sai Era by holding this Conference. He exhorted all to take a pledge that each of the them would do his best to strength the citadel of service in h is own place.

Major Rayauingar, the President of the Madras Seva Samithi respectfully received the encomia on behalf of his co-workers but, he said the success was more due to the forbearance and large heartedness of the delegates themselves and to the Grace of Bhagavan which was showered on the Samithi, ever since the idea of the conference was first mooted by Him. He craved permission from Baba for holding the next annual session at Madras itself, so that the many defects and deficiencies in arrangement which the members of the Samithi had discovered too late could be remedied by them and amends made". But, Baba supported the claim of Bombay City for that privilege, and the delegates accepted the invitation extended by Sri Ratanlal, on behalf of the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Bombay.

After dinner, the delegates were treated t o a great music performance by the famous Madras Brothers, B. V. Raman and B. V. Lakshman, who sang the songs they had composed on Bhagavan Himself.

On the 22nd, Baba came to Abbotsbury at 9 a.m. and sat for a group photograph with all the delegates and the Chairman of the Conference, Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao. Then, out of the overflowing prema of His Divine Heart, He called around Him the delegates who had come from each State and sat separately with each group, for a photograph which each of them will cherish for life as a memento and an inspiration. Baba gave interviews to a large number of the delegates and granted other marks of His Grace. The delegates who stayed on for the three-day Session of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha at Madras were given special seats. Baba blessed every one with a chance for Namaskaram and receiving Prasadam from Him.

This was a unique Conference, for it was willed by the Lord who filled every moment of it with Love and Grace. Every one connected with it was so connected, because of the Lord's will. So, every word was spoken in humility: every movement was saturated with devotion. Therefore, its success is historic, its memory is green and golden in the heart.

The Kindly Light

The Three-day Sessions of the All-India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha held at Madras under the auspices of the Madras Branch of the Sabha in the immediate Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba (who founded it for the restoration of the universal principles embedded in Sanathana Dharma) on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th of April was an unforgettable experience to those who had the good fortune to attend it. Most of the delegates to the All India Conference of the Presidents and Secretaries of Sathya Sai Institutions stayed on, so that they might listen to the valuable discourses. On all the three days, tens of thousands of people filled the vast space before the elegantly decorated dais and listened with eagerness to the exposition of spiritual problems by eminent speakers and to the Divine Discourses of Baba.

On the 22nd, the Inaugural Day, Swami Ranganathanandaji of the Ramakrishna Math, one of the foremost exponents of Vedanta in India today, was the President; he spoke on the Message of the Upanishads in English and explained how the genuine experiences of seekers after Reality, be they kings or peasants, men or women, old or young, were collected and codified in the Upanishads in the Vedantic philosophy of unity. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, the famous teacher of philosophy who has won international reputation then addressed the gathering in Tamil on the Atmajnana which is enshrined in the Upanishads. Bhagavan in His Discourse, explained that the Vedanta is the only sure guide in the search for Truth. Man should know his reality, that his Truth is Divine and he must strive to act up to that status. A sage taking a dip in the Ganga saw a scorpion being carried away by the flood; he took it on his palm and saved it by placing it on firm ground on the bank; but in the process, he was stung more than once by the ungrateful scorpion. The sage bore it all gladly, for, he said, "it is teaching me, not to forsake one's real nature under any circumstance! That is why I saved that fellow creature". He assured that one can reach the goal of self-realisation, if one sincerely establishes himself in the Divine for at least 30 days.

On the 23rd, Dr. V. K. Gokak, Vice-Chancellor, University of Bangalore, a thinker and a famous poet and writer in Kannada and English, presided. He addressed the gathering as, "Fellow Pilgrims of the Spirit! " and spoke of the parting of the ways that confronts man at the present time—one, calling man to assert his will, to conquer nature and the other, whispering to him to retire into himself and discover his inner reality. He said, "Whether man should enmesh himself in the politics of time or engross himself in the philosophy of eternity—that is the problem. The Indian tradition has always been, not the acquisition of information but the attainment of transformation." He spoke of Baba as a world redeemer, an eternal saviour, whose mercy beckons every son of earth to God. Dr. P. K. Sundaram of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, a popular exponent in Tamil of the spiritual heritage of our land, then spoke in Tamil on the identity of Jiva and Brahman, with copious illustrations from Sanskrit and Tamil sources. Bhagavan discoursed on the springs of Ananda, Santhi and Prema in the very heart of man. The ananda santhi and prema that he seeks and finds in the outer world are but reflections, echoes, images of these, in his own heart, He said. There is nothing in the external Prakriti which is not in the inner consciousness of man, He declared. He said that children are supremely happy, because they have no Vishaya Vasana and no Kama-krodha. Once these enter their growing minds, they begin to suffer. They teach man to be free from sensual greed if he

must have unshakeable joy. "That is why the sages say that we must learn to become children once again," Baba said.

On the 24th. Dr, S. Bhagavantham, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Ministry, Government of India, presided: He said that it is wrong to ascribe want of faith in God to scientists as a tribe. He quoted the instance of Oppenheimer who, when asked about his reaction at the successful explosion of the first experimental atom bomb and the brilliance of the flash that it produced repeated to the press correspondents around him, the sloka in the Bhagavad-Gita where Arjuna describes the Viswarupadarsana as "Divi Soorya sahasrasya..." Scientists, when they are free from inhibitions, do pray to the Supreme; every time they have added a little to what they know, they have recognised that there is much more that they still do not know. Dr. Bhagavantham described his contacts with Baba and bow on his very first visit, He put some sand in his hand which became a copy of the Bhagavad-Gita. On another occasion, He performed an operation, with surgical appliances He had created. "These miraculous occurrences, I saw and experienced myself," he said: "Bhagavan transcends the laws of science", he declared. "Bhagavan is your nearest kith and kin. Turn to Him for the Eternal Message, which alone can save you", he appealed.

Sri. V. Santhanam, the Managing Editor of the Tamil Daily, "Dinamani" then spoke in Tamil on the Way of Life marked out by Bhagavan in His Discourses and writings, quoting profusely the parables and stories Baba uses as illustrations.

In His concluding discourse, Baba assured that the stone can become the image of God, if it submits, itself to the strokes of the chisel held by' an artist; that a 'pasu' can become the 'Pasupati' by Samskara and Sadhana. The teachings of the sages who struggled for realisation of the Self and its merging with Brahman are the most precious treasures which we have inherited. That treasure can save us from the consequences of hatred, malice, greed and envy, from which we are suffering today, He said. He described how anger and envy turn men into bestial types of cruelty and violence and quoted the example of Duryodhana who lost everything as a consequence of his deep-rooted hate.

"The language in which the great teachings of the sages is clothed is difficult and inaccessible, at the present time. So, the precious treasure is lying unused. This is a great loss to humanity. The gems have now to be rediscovered and distributed to the people. This is the mission of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha. When these valuable disciplines and principles are grasped with faith, man can control the senses and conquer the mind and attain everlasting Ananda, destroying for ever his sorrow and grief."

The Madras Sessions of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha inspired the thousands, who attended it from all parts of India and from Ceylon Hong Kong London etc., with a deep yearning for the Path of Self-realisation, through the cleansing of the mind and the purification of the heart. It was a grand success; those who attended were indeed fortunate.

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

April 16:	Prasanthi Nilayam: Baba left for Madras
20-21:	Madras: All India Conference
20:	Cuttack: (Orissa): Inauguration: Sri Sathya Sai Bhajan Samajam
22-23-24:	Madras: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha
27:	Ootacamund: (Nilgiris Dt.): Inauguration by Baba of the Sri Sathya Sai Mandir
29:	Peddapuram: (East Godavari Dt.): Sri Sathya Sai Bhakta Samajam: Speech: Sri Challa Appa Rao
May 7:	Poona: (Maharashtra): Anniversary Celebrations of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi
10-12:	Nandur: (Guntur Dt): Akhanda Bhajan: "Om Sai Natha Jai; Sri Sathya Sai Jai"

Bhagavata Vahini

13

Kunti Devi took the road that Shyamasundar had taken. What was left was the lifeless body. Arjuna wept aloud, "Brother! What shall I say? We have lost our mother." Dharmaraja who was standing by was shaken hard by the shock; he stepped towards the body and finding the face blanched, stood petrified.

The maids outside the door heard the words of Arjuna and they peeped into the room. Kunti Devi's body was lying on the floor; Arjuna had her head on his lap; he was intently looking at her face with tearful eyes. The maids of the palace transmitted the news from one to another; they entered and realised that the Dowager Queen had left them, without possibility of return. They wept aloud at the heartbreaking calamity.

Meanwhile, news, reached the Queens in the inner apartments. Within seconds, the sad tidings spread all over Hastinapura. The Queens were overcome with grief; they tottered in, beating their breasts in anguish. Endless stream of sorrow, the denizens of the Palace flowed into the apartment. Bhima, Nakula, Sahadeva and the Ministers were overpowered with grief.

The air was filled with indescribable agony. Nobody could believe that Kunti Devi, who, a few minutes ago, was so eagerly awaiting her son Arjuna, to hear the news he brings from Dwaraka, could have passed away so soon. Those who came and saw stood mute and motionless. The wailing of the maids, the groans of the queens, and the grief of the sons melted the rockiest heart.

Dharmaraja consoled every one and instilled some courage. He told them not to give way to grief. He did not shed tears; he was moving about bravely, directing every one and infusing strength of mind. This made every one wonder at his self-control. The Ministers approached him and said, "O King, your unruffled nature fills us with admiration. You revered your mother and treated her as the very breath of your life. How is it that your heart has taken her death so callously?" Dharmaraja smiled at their anxiety. "Ministers! I am filled with envy, when I think of her death. She is indeed most fortunate. The world dropped from her life as soon as she heard the news of Krishna moving on to his Heavenly Home. She left immediately for that Home, for, she could not bear the pang of separation from Him," said Dharmaraja.

"We are most unfortunate. We were so near Him; we derived so much of Ananda from Him; we heard of His Departure; but, yet, we are alive! Had we really the devotion that we claimed, we should have dropped the body like her when we heard of that loss. Fie on us! We are but burdens on the earth. All our years are a waste."

When the citizens and others came to know that Kunti Devi had died as soon as she heard the news of Krishna's departure from the world, they wept even louder; for, the grief at losing Krishna was far greater than the grief at the loss of the Dowager Queen. Many behaved as if they had grown suddenly insane; many beat their heads on the walls of their houses; they felt miserable and forlorn.

It was as if petrol was poured on a fire. In the flood of unbearable anguish, born out of the double loss, Dharmaraja was the only calm soul. He consoled the queens; he spoke softly and assuringly to each; he told them that there was no meaning in lamenting the loss of the mother or the departure of the Lord. Each of them had their course according to a predetermined plan. "It only remains for us now to fulfil our destiny through appropriate steps," he said.

Dharmaraja called Arjuna near him and said, "Arjuna! Dear brother! Let us not delay any further. The Funeral rites of mother must be begun immediately; we must have Parikshit crowned Emperor; we must leave Hastinapura this night itself; every moment appears an age to me." Dharmaraja was filled with extreme detachment. But, Arjuna was filled with even more renunciation. He lifted the mother's head from his lap and placed it on the floor. He ordered Nakula and Sahadeva to make preparation for the Coronation of Parikshit. He gave instructions to others, Ministers, officers etc., on the arrangements that had to be made, in view of the decision of the King and the Princes. He was very busy, indeed. Bhima busied himself with the arrangements for the funeral of the mother.

The Ministers, citizens, priests, Gurus, were full of wonder, admiration and sadness at the strange developments and incidents in the Palace. They were sunk in grief and despair, but they had to keep it all to themselves. They were also affected by a strong wave of detachment. Struck with wonder, they exclaimed, "Ah, His paternal uncle and aunt left the Palace all of a sudden; the news of Krishna's departure fell like a thunderbolt on the head already distracted by this calamity; then quite soon, the mother passed away; ere the corpse is removed from where she fell, Dharmaraja is preparing for the Coronation! And, the Emperor is planning to give up everything—power, riches status, and authority—and to move into the forest with all his brothers! Only these Pandavas can have such steady courage and renunciation. No one else is capable of this boldness."

Within minutes, the funeral rites were gone through; the Brahmins were called in; Dharmaraja decided to have the Coronation Ceremony in quite a simple style. The subordinate rulers and tributary kings were not to be invited nor could invitation be given to citizens and kinsmen at Indraprastha.

Of course, a Coronation in the Bharatha Dynasty, seating a ruler on the sacred Lion throne of that Line, was usually a grand affair. The date would be fixed months ahead, the auspicious moment chosen with meticulous care; and elaborate preparations on a magnificent scale would follow. But, now, in a matter of minutes, everything was got ready with whatever material was available and whoever was near at hand. Parikshit was given a ceremonial bath, the crown jewels were put on him, and he was brought to the Throne by the Brahmins and the Ministers. He was placed on the throne and, while Dharmaraja was placing the diamond-studded diadem on his head with his own hands, every one in the Hall wept in distress. The Imperial Authority that had to be assumed to the joyous acclamation of the people was imposed on the boy to the accompaniment of groans and sobs.

Parikshit, the newly crowned Emperor, was weeping; why, even Dharmaraja, the man who crowned him, could not stop his tears, in spite of his best efforts. The hearts of all the spectators were torn by agonising sorrow. Who can stem the force of Destiny? Fate executes every act, at

the time and place, and in the manner it has to be so executed. Man is nothing before It; he is helpless.

Parikshit was a well-bred virtuous boy; he watched the sadness that pervaded every face; he noted the incidents and happenings in the Palace; he had sat on the Throne, since he felt he should not transgress the command of his elders; but, suddenly, he fell at Dharmaraja's feet and pleaded pathetically, "My Lord! Whatever your wish, I shall honour and obey. But, please do not desert me and leave me alone." He did not give up his hold on the feet; he continued weeping and praying. All who saw the tragic scene wept; even the hardest could not but weep. It was terrible, fraught with dire distress.

The boy fell at the Feet of his grandfather, Arjuna and cried piteously. "Grandpa! How can you move out of here with peace in your hearts, after placing this heavy burden of empire on my head? I am a child who knows nothing. I am very foolish; I am ignorant; I have no qualifications; I am incompetent. It is not just; it is not proper for you to lay on my head this empire which has been in the care of a long line of heroes, statesmen, warriors and wise men and remove yourselves to the forest. Let some one else bear this responsibility; take me also with you to the forest, he pleaded.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Lead into Gold

[Address Given at a Public Meeting in Madras]

It is indeed a great privilege and joy to be given this opportunity of speaking a few words to you in the presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

But what can I say to you, his followers—many of you bhaktas of long standing who know his works and words, much better than I do? Well, perhaps you may find some interest in hearing how skeptic of the Western World, had the good fortune to meet him, what he means to me, and what I think is his significance to the world.

The mass of men in the West—and unfortunately, I'm afraid, a growing number in India too—are materialists who do not believe in the remote possibility of what we call 'miracles'. The main cause of this state of mind is, I believe, the spurt ahead that physical science has taken over the last century. Having, learned a good deal, men think they know the lot. Anything that appears to contradict the set of fundamental laws they have formulated is not acceptable. It cannot exist! There must be some mistake, some poor observation, some fraud, some trickery!

A cautious approach is no doubt necessary to the progress of science. But how easily it can degenerate into prejudice, cynicism, a closed mind!

This attitude is more prevalent in those countries most affected by what is called 'scientific progress'. But of course not all in the West are so conditioned. Many for example in the Roman Catholic religion—and some outside it—believe in the well-tested and authenticated healing miracles at Lourdes; France. Moreover there are, and always have been, those seers, prophets, poets who discern the Divine beneath the surface of mundane things. To the self-satisfied cynics, to the blind materialists, Francis Thompson, the English poet says:

*"The angels keep their ancient places;
Move but a stone and start a wing.
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.*

I hope that I myself was not a cynic when I came to India. I know that I was a skeptic, but not an incurable one. I had read, of course, of the great miracle-workers and teachers of India's past. I hoped that some might still exist today. I hoped-yet hardly dared to hope-that I might even meet one. For underneath, like all men, I longed for the 'many-splendoured thing'.

But I must say that my approach has always been the cautious, scientific one. Like St. Thomas—whose bones, they say, lie buried here in Madras—I needed to see and to touch for myself in order to believe.

It was here in this city-through a strange network of circumstances which I can only say was the Grace of Sai Baba—that I met Sai Baba. Later I went to his Ashram, 'Prasanthi Nilayam'. The map shows this as being in Andhra Pradesh, but to me it's a place 'half-way between heaven and earth'.

As Christ was kind to Thomas, Baba was kind to me. On many occasions I saw and touched miraculous, incredible things, so that now I know beyond any doubt that in the presence of Sai Baba these things do happen.

This is not the time to tell you about my specific experiences. You all have your own joy-making, love-evoking collection of miraculous experiences with Baba. Or if you haven't, you shall with faith. But since Baba granted me the permission, and great privilege, of writing a book on him, I have talked to many devotees and heard their wonderful stories. These are all a part of the supreme story of Sai Baba in this Incarnation.

Well, having established to the satisfaction of my critical self that miracles do take place, what then? What does it mean? I am not one of these people who say—as I have heard people in this city say—"Miracles, so what?" As if they could perform one themselves any morning before breakfast!

Surely these happenings demonstrate, as no words can, the reality of the non-physical worlds. "Actions speak louder than words", is one of our clichés. The Word is powerful—but in the 'word made flesh'—we see its power dramatically. Then it becomes a strong buttress for our tottering faith.

There are, we know, various levels of magic, and all of them—high or low—prove the existence of occult laws, of the reality of worlds within worlds. But the high magic—the Divine Immaculate Science—of a great Master goes further than this.

By its copious and constant flow, by its selfless, ego-less purity, by the love and benevolence that motivate it, we know that it comes from the high Divine level; it is a concrete proof of the spiritual plane and of spiritual law. In a sense it is God talking to us—talking not in tongues, but in deeds.

But in the quarter-century record of breathtaking Sai miracles—those gracious gifts from some mysterious dimension, the conquest of Space and Time to bring help to devotees in distress at great distances, the healing of bodies, and, perhaps more important still, the healing of souls, the giving of the strength necessary to face karmic suffering, and to grow in spiritual stature as a result of that suffering..... But in all these, we must not lose sight of the greatest miracle of all. This is the miracle of his prema—his Divine Love. The really miraculous thing about this, it seems to me, is that while UNIVERSAL, going out to all men, it is at the same time INDIVIDUAL. You feel it beamed directly and blissfully on you. As one of his bhaktas put it, "Every person thinks that Baba loves him most".

Yes, this pure love—universal yet individualized—is the central miracle from which all the others come, as by-products. The main end-product of this stream of prema is to raise us to a knowledge of our true spiritual Selves—to a realization of our one-ness with all life, and with the Author of all life.

How few there have been through whom has flowed this miraculous river of pure, ego-less love, with its attendant whirls and eddies of the lesser miracles! How lucky, how blessed we are to have known such a one on earth, and to be with him still!

And when time must take us away from the Beloved Form which is the great focus of this Light, shall we be desolate? We should not be, if we have understood him aright. He himself has said that our Guru must be found within our hearts. Experiencing the outer Guru, trying to raise our own jives to the level of his purity and love and truth, must lead us to hear his echo within the core of our hearts. And thus we are helped to realise the ever-abiding inner Guru, that is God. Then we shall never be desolate.

Many have tried to solve the mystery of the great miracle-workers. Eliphas Levi, writing of those who acquired the high magic, says—"To command Nature we must be above Nature by resistance to her attractions". Arthur Osborne says in 'The Mountain Path' that when powers appear in a person at an early age, it's probably because that person attained such a state of purity in his last incarnation, that power flows through him unimpeded in this. But it seems to me that the truth may go even deeper. There is, for instance, the profound Indian metaphysics of Avatars to be explored and understood. Even so, could we ever really understand?

Sai Baba himself tells us that we cannot solve his mystery. Better than trying, he suggests, is to just dive into him. Better than the mental gymnastics, that get us nowhere, is a dive into the refreshing lake of Divine Love. Through Bhakti we will come to Jnana.

I find myself that trying to write a book about him is like attempting to put the universe into a small room; doing an article on him is like squeezing a mountain into a jam-jar. Enclosing him in this short talk is like putting the ocean into an inkbottle.

I can only say in conclusion and in summary that, like many before me—but unlike Caesar—'I came, I saw, and I was conquered.' I saw purity and high spiritual power; I saw prema, sathya—all those things towards which man strives through many lifetimes. Seeing all this, who would not be a devotee?

And, of course, for the spiritual gifts he gives, it is quite impossible to thank him in words. Words are such feeble things! Nor is there anything he wants from us except, in his own graphic phrases "the unsullied blossoms of pure hearts, and the fruit offerings of good deeds". In another place he says: "Come to me with empty hands—I shall fill them with gifts and grace. If your hands are full, what am I to fill them with."

Our empty hands must be outward signs and symbols of an inner purity and submission. Hearts and minds must be emptied of dross in order to receive the gift of Grace—the Supreme Love that transmutes the lead of earthly natures into the gold of the Divine spiritual Man.

Howard Murphet

Arjuna—The Candidate

The Bhagavad-Gita, renowned the world over as the most universal and valuable of all the practical religious texts of the world, was taught by Sri Krishna to Arjuna, because Arjuna had all the excellences required by the Sastras to receive the teaching regarding the Ultimate Truth of the Universe and of the individual. The Sastras lay down 4 essential requisites; in the candidate for the Highest Wisdom:

Nithyanithya vasthu viveka

(Discrimination of the eternal and the fleeting)

Ihamuthra Phalabhoga Viraga

(Renunciation of the fruits of this world and the next)

The precious six: Sama, Dama, Uparathi, Thithiksha, Samadhana
and

Sraddha, Mumukshuthwa

(Yearning for Liberation)

The very first chapter of the Gita: describing the reactions of Arjuna when he saw the armies of the Kauravas ranged before him clearly shows that Arjuna had the discrimination to distinguish between the lasting and the not so lasting. His choice for Krishna, who had refused to take up arms and wield any weapon, in preference to the Yadava legions shows this. He had studied the Vedas and the Sastras and derived full benefit therefrom.

Arjuna says, "I desire no victory, neither kingdom nor pleasure. Of what avail is the kingdom for us, or enjoyments or even life? (1, 31) This is renunciation of happiness in this world, an utter disregard for the fruits of his legitimate activity here, in this world. Again, in 1, 35 Arjuna says that he does not desire to slay, even for the sake of the sovereignty of the Three Worlds what to say of the mere Earth. This shows that he does not care for even Heaven, the phalabhoga in the upper regions. The Sastras say, "*Dwaavimoupurushou loke, Sooryamandala bhedinou, Parivraadyogayukthascha, rane cha abhimukho hathah*". Two persons break through the ring of Solar Glory: the recluse who was mastered Yoga and the hero who dies fighting on the battlefield. Arjuna knows that victory is not the supreme goal; he discards preyas in favour of shreyas, good fortune in favour of Moksha. So, he has the Vairagya qualification, too.

Now about the six virtues, *Sama* etc. His statement, *Narake niyatham vaasah*, destroyers of the family sink down into hell, shows that he was aware of the Atman as separate from the body. His question, *Kim na rajyena?* Of, what avail is the kingdom? Proves his *Sama*. His question, *kim bhogaih?* reveals *Dama*. "*Yadyapyethe na pasyanthi...*", he says, meaning, 'They do not realise the guilt, for their minds are powered; by avarice', thus demonstrating that he had no *lobha* or greed. His declaration, *Than me kshematharam bhaveth*, "If Dhritarashtra's sons, weapons in hand, should in battle slay me weaponless and unresisting, that were happier for me", reveals his *Titiksha*.

In the second chapter, he gives clear proof of his *mumukshuthwa*. *Sreyo bhokthum bhaikshyam*, I shall live on alms, is what he says. He has realised in a flash the evanescence of worldly joy and grief and he is on the threshold of sanyasa; he has entered upon *Dharmajijnasa*, the discussion and study of *Dharma*, what exactly it is, how it has to be practised etc. And he is confused. He approaches Krishna as a Sishya, a disciple, a pupil. No wonder, Krishna had in him a worthy pupil whom he could teach the great lesson of Liberation.

—Based on Article by Br. Bulusu Appanna Sastry

Our Nearest Kith And Kin

It is a rare privilege for any one to be invited, in whatever capacity it may be, to sit on the same platform as Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. It is a rarer privilege to be asked to preside over such a function as this. During the many years of my association with Bhagavan, He did put me often in situations more difficult than this. There is no rose without a thorn; there is no privilege without attendant difficulties. I feel that the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha is putting me to trial on this occasion but I welcome it.

I have never spoken before Bhagavan of the few things that I would have liked to speak about. This is an occasion and to decide on what to speak about is a particular difficulty for a person of my background. You have been told during the past two days that the tribe of scientists is a peculiar one, that they have their vision extended outwards only, that they forget the essence of

life which is embedded in the spiritual make up of the man, that they generally add to the misery of mankind rather than help to alleviate it and so on.

Moreover, it has been made out that in general, the scientists are either atheists or near-atheists and that they do not find a place in such gatherings. Let me tell you that not all scientists are like that. At least, I am not one of them and I can assure you that in me, you will find a scientist who is not quite an atheist. That I stand before you today in the presence of Bhagavan is a proof thereof.

One need not learn science to turn away from God. Others too, both learned and unlearned, have turned away from God. Many who have learnt subjects other than science have become atheists. Of course, the scientist asks inconvenient questions and so is charged with conceit. I shall try to remove this impression. The discipline of science does not take any one away from God. Years ago, in one of my early confrontations with Bhagavan, He spoke of the scientists, as belonging to a lost tribe and made fun of their behaviour. "You, in particular, do you have any respect for our ancient texts?" He asked and hurt my pride. I have some family traditions of Sanskrit learning and orthodox Sanathana Dharma behind me and so, I tried to establish my bona fides, as well as that of my tribe. I related an incident in regard to Oppenheimer, who had succeeded in exploding the first atom bomb, some 25 years ago. There was great doubt at that time whether it would really explode and many press representatives surrounded him on that historic occasion. It did explode. Though that first bomb was a small thing compared to those made possible since then; it was a terrible and awe-inspiring event. The pressmen asked Oppenheimer what his reactions were and he replied that he was reminded of the sloka in the Bhagavad-Gita by which Arjuna described the Viswarupa of the Lord as:

*Divi Surya Sahasrasya
Bhaved yugapad uththithaa
Yadi bhaah sadrsee saa syaad
Bhaasasthasya mahaathmanaa*

That is the only way I can describe the magnificent brightness I have seen now", he said. I told Bhagavan that the truly learned are aware of the wisdom of our ancient texts and of the teachings of the Upanishads. We were then sitting on the sands of the Chitravati River and it was a full moon day. Bhagavan asked me, "Do you like to have a copy of the Bhagavad-Gita?" and took some sand into His hand. The sand instantly turned into a text of the Gita and He put it into my hands! I was Curious to know in which press it was printed and later, I turned over the leaves to discover it; but, needless to say, the name of the press was not to be found. I was a fairly lost person at that time, for, all this was in utter denunciation of the laws of physics for which I stood and I still stand. Subsequently too, He has, to my dismay, been breaking one law of physics after another, laws which I learnt as being inviolable. Having learnt the laws of physics in my youth and having taught others for many years thereafter about the inviolability of such laws—at least so far as any known human situation is concerned—and having put them into practice with such a belief in them, I naturally found myself in a dilemma which needs to be resolved. On one other such occasion, He performed a surgical operation with instruments created by Him; I was an eyewitness and my young son was standing by my side. "Have you got a good bandage cloth?" He enquired after the operation, though He had created a knife and a needle a few minutes

earlier. But, before we could reply, He created the bandage cloth too. I still have it with me. What has science to do with this or to say about this? Prof. Gokak said yesterday that Bhagavan defies the laws of physics and chemistry. I would prefer to say that He transcends the laws of physics and chemistry. He is a Phenomenon; He is Transcendental; He is Divine; He is an Incarnation. I accepted that as His role, for this is the right way and the only way to get out of the dilemma I referred to a little while ago and in which I was placed.

Still, I continued asking questions. In a remote village, I was once invited to speak about Him. I quoted then the sloka in the Bhagavata where Yasoda, confronted by facts and events which were unbelievable, wondered whether what she saw was a dream or a fantasy or an illusion. If that great Mother, I said, was in such desperate confusion, no wonder that a person like me was troubled and forced to feel completely lost.

Today, I do not ask silly questions, nor do I seek to discover what laws He is breaking or how. I speak only of what happens and can happen under known laws. When Bhagavan transcends a law, that fact becomes a new law. He is a law unto Himself.

Bhagavan related yesterday the story of an individual whose true nature was discovered in a strange manner by a housewife. She fed him full and when he was sleeping, she put a hot pad on his sole. Then he shrieked, O Allah, and so when he was off his guard, free from inhibitions, his being a Muslim was revealed; he spoke the Truth. There is no doubt that everyone expresses and reveals his intrinsic character when there are no inhibitions. In moments of distress, when you are in real trouble, when you are off your guard, don't you unhesitatingly cry, "O God, can't you save me?" Every one in this country, in real times of test, prays to God and asks of Him "Why don't you come to me, abide with me, save me, rescue me?"

Scientists are no exception to this. In their laboratories, they may swear by reason; but they know that every time they have added a little to what we know, we have known of the existence of many other things, the true nature of which we do not know. In this process, we become aware of further large areas, to understand which, we have to struggle more. Thus, while adding to knowledge, we add more to our ignorance too. What we know is becoming a smaller and smaller fraction of what we do not know. Just now, a quarter of a million miles away, a manmade instrument is digging into the Moon a trench 18 inches long and 9 inches deep. Scientists have done many such wonderful things and added to their knowledge but they are aware that knowledge is not the same as wisdom. Wisdom has to be got from Bhagavan and the like of Him who come amidst us from time to time for this express purpose.

So far as religion is concerned, I often narrate the story of a black marketeer who stood before the Idol in a temple and said during his prayer, "If during this week, I can make a profit of 2 lakhs of rupees through your Grace, I shall certainly give You one lakh as my offering: Perhaps, you do not trust me when I say so. I am afraid you don't. Then, You can deduct Your share and give me only one lakh profit. I am amenable to this arrangement also." Bhagavan has come to warn us of insincerities. Those of us who have lost our moorings in the teachings of the Vedas, Upanishads and the Gita have to introspect a little and draw upon Bhagavan's teachings and learn lessons to correct our path. Due to the half-learning we have acquired, the force of exigencies

and of bad company and short-sightedness, there are many defects in us and they can be remedied by an observance of the regulations Bhagavan prescribes.

We can borrow many things from the West; technology, materials, equipment, instruments, books and even food. But we cannot borrow character, culture or tradition. The latter are to be derived from our own heritage, our own selves and our own disciplined effort. I must refer to one point before I close it was said that it is a heartening sight to see tens of thousands of people gathering to hear these lectures and discourses on spiritual subjects. I do not believe that it is so heartening as all that. I would like to know how many in this audience would have attended and how many of them would have listened as quietly as they did in the past two days if these were just discourses on spiritual subjects and if Bhagavan is not present on the dais. I would like to find out if it is not Baba's Personality that has really touched your hearts and shaken the very roots of your beliefs. That is an experience worth going through and I think that is the reason you are all here in such large numbers. Let us shed tears of joy that we are living contemporaneously with Him.

Science has taught me to be honest. Let me tell you that the bane of modern life is empty talk. Mere talking does not lead to action nor does the talk enable you to become godly. Becoming good and godly is a very difficult process; it needs hard discipline. It will take a very long time I am speaking not pessimistically, but, realistically. Bhagavan is our nearest kith and kin; turn to Him for the Eternal Message. That alone can save us.

S. Bhagavantham
Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha,
Madras April 24, 1967

Constant Presence

(In the February, 1967 issue of Sanathana Sarathi this devotee told us of his 'wonder'-filled experience of being 'taken' from his puja room in Los Angeles, California, on November 30, 1966, to enjoy the Darshan of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Prasanthi Nilayam. This event happened while he was meditating on the Lord.)

At that time Sai Baba held out in His Hand an envelope which He vigorously waved back and forth. A few days after this miraculous event another devotee from Los Angeles arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam to be greeted with "California? Charles Penn." Upon leaving a week or so later Sai Baba handed the devotee a letter with the parting words "For Charles Penn, with My love."

Sharing with you the contents of that letter is now a great pleasure. The letter dated December 9, 1966, read in part

"I am very happy that everyone (at Pacific Palisades, Calif.) is sincerely striving to achieve spiritual progress. I know how earnest you all are; that earnestness will certainly be rewarded.

"Know that I am always with you, prompting you and guiding you. I know also that you are aware of this. Live always in that CONSTANT PRESENCE. *Love* and *Truth* are the two wings that take an individual forward. They will inspire you to serve all righteously and lovingly, just as you would serve the Lord. This is the highest form of *Practical Spirituality*.

"Be writing to me, about yourself and friends. I have been getting letters from most of them. My blessings are ever with them.

With Blessings - SAI BABA"

Those who live in the CONSTANT PRESENCE know that this way of Life relieves you of all of those things that deter you from being consciously aware of everything within and around you. Living knowing that you and He are ONE *smoothes out your life*. All desire, for desire's sake, ceases; egoistic thoughts fail to rise in the mind. Desires for food, material things, comforts for the body evaporate faster than the mind can manifest them. The intellect is no more at the command of the whimsical mind. The mind at last learns to know that its true function is to work at His command, as His Instrument.

Being in that CONSTANT PRESENCE is not difficult. Just *know* that you and He are ONE. Every smile is His smile, every tear is His tear, every pain is His pain. Nothing you do or say, or see, or feel; or taste, or smell, is experienced for you, for all are His. You have nothing to give Him, you already are His. You have always been His. He brought you here, and you know not from where; He will take you away and you know not to where.

Your Meditations are His and the Peace and Bliss and Love are His. All are ONE; there is no division. You do not have to go to Him, for you are already there.

The load you believe that you are carrying on your shoulders is on His shoulders. You have no worries, for all are His. Live in that CONSTANT PRESENCE always. Feel the Lord within yourself every moment. See Sai Baba in all, feel His deep Love, His never ending Compassion, His great warmth, His Friendship and His Hand in yours. Let Sai Baba become the way of life for you. Depend upon no one else.

Just KNOW and experience the quiet yet enormous strength of Him within, listen to the Powerful AUM ringing constantly within, KNOW and then your whole life will be beautiful, wonderful and meaningful.

The Path to the Prasanthi Nilayam within your own breast is one strewn with garlands of petals from His garden. Some tread the Path slowly, others at a different pace. This is His way of leading you to Him. When you arrive, you will find that He walked there with you, nay, you will REALIZE that you went there as ONE ...not even hand in hand, not even together, for how can that which cannot be divided be anything other than ONE.

Charles Penn
Los Angeles, California

One in All

From time immemorial, scripture and the experience of saints and seekers have agreed in declaring that there is One supreme Indweller in all beings, and only One. All efforts to distinguish between the devotee, the object of devotion and the means of devotion have concluded, at this point only. Prahlada, the greatest devotee of that supreme Godhead has declared in the Bhagavata, "Why doubt and discuss whether He is here or there? Seek Him anywhere and you can see Him there itself." He is near and far, before, behind, beside and inside everything in the known and unknown worlds. People dare describe Him as thus and thus; that reveals only their faculty to guess; no description can exhaust Him or delineate Him, in full. Such description is based on their experience of the transitory outer world and will surely be affected when direct realisation is won of the Highest Bliss.

It is beyond the reach of human intelligence or imagination to realise the Full and the Eternal; in proportion to the development of the faculty, man seeks to picture the Vast Magnificence and locate it in Ayodhya or Dwaraka or some such spot and give It a Name and a Form, so that he can approach It and adore It. He might even revere It as Full, but, how can a fraction be Full? How can a facet be the entire Diamond?

Consider each fraction as of value, as valid; do not deride it as incomplete. It is impossible to experience the Complete and communicate the experience. Fractions too are facts. They share the splendour and glory; they are sustained by the same spring. When the Full is seen as a part, the Fullness does not suffer diminution. Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, Siva—these are Names and Forms of the many faceted One; when you pay attention to one facet, the rest are not neglected or negated. When the devotee dives into the flood of Bliss that the one Name-Form confers, he is diving into the same Ocean of Bliss that the Full is. The waters of the Ocean are not separated by lines drawn on them to demarcate this God's region or that God's. Plunge anywhere; you are plunging into the self-same Bliss.

All this variety is the play of Name and Form; without the multiplicity of names to distinguish one from the rest and the vast phantasmagoria of form to identify and cognise, knowledge of the many is impossible; then, all will be seen and felt and experienced as One, which it really is. To remind man of this fundamental Unity, so that he may not get lost in the conflicts and complexities of manifoldness, the One assumes Name-Form and comes as Avatar among men. Then man is drawn towards the Avatar by means of Grace and Prema, and led into the path that will give him the vision of the Full, the One. The One can best be defined as Prema, Love; for, all Nature is immersed in Love, all beings are bound by Love, all are drawn by Love. Love is in all, Love is of all. Love is all.

As affection, sympathy, attachment, fraternity, loyalty, reverence, adoration, patriotism, Love expresses itself in many directions. Advaita proclaims that this One is inseparable and unique; Dvaita emphasises the excellence of Its Names and Forms; Visishtadvaita speaks of the Names and Forms as integral parts of the one. All reveal Its Glory.

Adoration, Puja, is the way of approach, to reach the One and submerge oneself in Its Glory. Adoration arises when awareness of the glory is effected; then, it is a continuous process, called Sadhana. In the beginning, the Adored and the, Adorer are different and distant, but, later, they commingle and come to be more and more composite. For, the Individual and the Universal are ultimately One. The wave must yearn only for losing itself in the sea, it should not have any lesser wish, any other aim. Merging gives full content. The ego will be dissolved; all signs and symbols of particularism like name, form, caste, colour, creed, nationality, church, sect and the rights and duties attendant thereon, will fade.

For such liberated individuals who have merged their ego, the only task that will adhere will be the uplift of humanity, the welfare of the world. Their state of Bliss will react on the world beneficially, without any conscious effort on their part. They have been rendered Amrthaswaroopas and so, they are embodiments of the sweetest Ananda. Endeavour to reach that Goal and do that Seva, to the world.

—Baba's Message to Divyajeevana Sangha

Salutations

Power of all Powers! Oh, fill and flood my being;
O Sun Eternal, overwhelm me in Thy Light.
Vision itself need ask no eyes for seeing,
And boundless Life no wings to mount the height.

I am Thy Light, by mortal lamp enshrouded,
The Bliss, beyond all shifting joys and pains;
Above their glooms and gleams is Peace unclouded.

Shatter the lamp; the Light, the Light remains.

Father of Spirits, Love forever burning!
Burn Thou all forms that hold my life from Thee;
Lost in my selfhood, to Thyself returning,
Find Thou Thine own, and my Eternity.

(Hymn to Shiva, as Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva)

Anne Balabrege

Shivaratri, 1967

Baba's Sayings

Rebuked by his wife

For not shedding even a tear
Over the death of their only child,
The man explained
“I dreamed last night
That I was blessed with seven sons.
They, all vanished when I awoke.

Who shall I weep for?
The seven that are vapour
Or the one, that is dust?

The `seven' are a dream
And the `one' a daydream."

Who am I?
The Identity that persists
In dream and in waking.

—V. K. Gokak

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

- 8-5-67: Surat: (Gujarat): Sathya Sai Study Circle: Bhajan festival.
8-5-67: Calicut (Kerala): Baba visited houses of devotees.
9, 10-5-67: Rajahmundry: (E. Godavari Dt) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions
10-5-67: Anamalai (Madras): Inauguration of High School Building, by Baba: Baba's Discourse at the Public Meeting.
11-5-67: Pollachi (Madras): Bhajan Sessions and Discourse by Baba.
12-5-67: Villupuram (S. Arcot, Dt) Sathya Sai Seva Mandal: Inauguration.
14-5-67: Vijayawada (Krishna Dt) Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Sankarajayanthi Celebrations
21-5-67: Prasanthi Nilayam: Arrival of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
23-5-67: Prasanthi Nilayam: Vyasa Poornima Festival: Baba's Discourse
Kharagpur: (Bengal): Sathya Sai Sanathana Samithi: Sahasranamarchana
30-5-67: Prasanthi Nilayam: Baba left for Whitefield (Brindavan)
4-6-67: Trichinopoly: (Madras) Sathya Sai Sathsangam: Third Anniversary, Celebrations: Sri. M. Shyam Das, District & Sessions Judge presided.
5-6-67: Horsley Hills: (Chittoor Dt): Baba-arrived at the Hills from Brindavan.
14-6-67: Mangalore: (Mysore): Sathya Sai Mandir: Fifth Anniversary Festival.

Bhagavata Vahini

14

It was a pitiable sight. Parikshit, the little boy with the crown on his head, plaintively approached his grandfather and others, and holding their feet fast, he prayed that he too might accompany them to the forests; he would gladly eat roots and fruits, engage himself in sacred ceremonials, and be happy. "Please entrust the kingdom to some virtuous minister and allow me to come with you so that might serve you and make my life worth while," he appealed. Those around him in the hall were moved to tears by his agony at being left behind. Rocks would have melted in sympathy, had they listened to his anguish.

Dharmaraja managed heroically to suppress his emotions; he lifted the boy and placed him on his lap; he poured consolation and courage into his ear. "Dear child! Don't become so weak-minded. You are a child born in the dynasty of Bharatha; can a sheep be born in a dynasty of lions? Your father, mother and grandfathers are full of courage, bold champions of truth who made their names famous in the world. So, it is not fit that you should weep thus. Hence forward, these Brahmins are your grandfathers, your parents. Take their advice and rule this land accordingly. Live up to the grandeur and glory of your name. Stop grieving over us."

But, the boy was lovingly adamant, in spite of all the persuasive advice of the elders. He lamented, "Grandpa! I am too young to convince you with my pleading. I know it. But, listen; I lost my father even before I was born. You brought me up with the care and affection that my father would have showered upon me, had he lived. And now, when I love to sing and play and roam about with my companions, you hoist on my head this great empire. Can this be right? Is it justice? Instead of leaving me alone steeped in sorrow, you could leave after severing my head with your sword. Alas! What harm have I done to you that you should punish me thus? Could you not have scorched me in my mother's womb, on the day my father died? Was my lifeless body resuscitated in order that you may inflict this assignment on me?" Parikshit continued to condemn himself for his fate, in this strain, for long.

Arjuna could not stand it any longer. He covered the boy's mouth with his palm; he caressed the child with sweet affection; he pressed his lips on his head. "Child! It is a disgrace to the Kshatriya clan that you should behave like a coward. We too lost our father; we too grew up under the fostering care of ascetics and monks; at last, we were able to win the affection of our uncle and, after overcoming many a formidable handicap, we established our sovereignty over this kingdom. He who guarded us, guided us and directed our steps throughout will certainly be your guardian and guide. Don't lose heart; follow the advice which these Brahmins and Ministers will render, for some years. Later, you will be able to solve the problems of empire yourself," he said.

Parikshit could not be assuaged. He said, "Grandpa! Are you now discarding the throne and the kingdom and placing them on my head? Well, be with me for some years more, teach me the art of government and the principles, and then, you can leave. I was happy and free, romping and roaming with no trace of care, for I was confident I had grandfather to guard me, though I had lost my father. Now, if you too desert me, what will be my fate? You were the centre of all my hopes, the support on which I relied. And, you are plunging me suddenly into despair and

deserting me." He wept aloud, rending the hearts of all who saw and heard. He rolled on the ground, holding the feet of the elders.

Arjuna lifted him up with both hands and embraced him. He kept him on his shoulders and fondled him. He wiped the strings of pearly tears that rolled down his cheeks. He could not arrest his own tears while doing so. Turning to the Brahmins standing around gazing at all this, Arjuna asked them why they were only silent witnesses, not attempting to console the boy.

They were really too full of grief themselves to think of assuaging Parikshit. They said, "The sharp words this child is lisping are wounding us like arrows; his anguish is petrifying us. What can we tell him? How can we console him? What can instill courage into him now?" and they too were overcome with grief.

Kripacharya, the teacher of the family, succeeded at last in suppressing his grief; he wiped off the tears from his own eyes with the ends of his garment; he spoke to Arjuna thus: "What do you want us to tell this boy? We do not feel like saying anything. We are struck dumb. You are this day renouncing the empire which you gained after a victory for which rivers of blood flowed, for which millions laid down their lives, for which you strove for years. You have not ruled over it for a thousand years, no, not even for a couple of centuries, or even for seventy years. Who can say what lies in the womb of time? Of course, the actions of the great will have some inner purpose. Pardon us; you are our overlords; you know best." Kripacharya stood with head bent, for he was heavy with grief.

Dharmaraja came forward a few steps and addressed the Acharya. "Every act of mine was according to the command of Krishna, as you know. I dedicated all my activity to Him. I played my role as He dictated. I did not desire or retain any individuality. All my duties and obligations have faded out with the departure of the Lord. Of what use is the survival of Dharmaraja alone, now? I cannot continue on this land even for a minute, since Kali has come to sway. It is your duty now to guard this boy, guide and train him so that he may be secure on the throne. Preserve the adherence to Dharma; continue the dynastic traditions; maintain the honour and fair name of the line. Love him and foster him as your own son." Thus saying, he placed the hands of Parikshit in the hands of Kripacharya. All those who were there, including Dharmaraja and the Acharya were in tears that moment.

In a few minutes, Vajra was called in; he was informed that from that very day, the Emperor of Bharat was Parikshit; so, Vajra paid homage to him as befits the suzerain of the continent. The Ministers and the Brahmins too honoured him as their ruler with due ceremony. Afterwards Dharmaraja held the hands of Parikshit and placing on them the hand of Vajra, he announced, "This is Vajra, the Lord of the Yadavas; I now install him as the King of Mathura and of the Surasena State." He placed on Vajra's head a diamond-studded golden crown. "Be brothers both of you, staunch allies in peace and war, inseparable in friendship" he exhorted then; He called Vajra aside and advised him to treat Parikshit as his own paternal uncle; he advised Parikshit to revere Vajra as he would revere Aniruddha himself, he told both of them that they ought to ensure the continuance of Dharma unimpaired, and to consider the welfare of their subjects as the very breath of their life.

Then, the Pandava Brothers showered auspicious rice grains on the heads of both Vajra and Parikshit. The Brahmin priests recited appropriate mantras. Trumpets blared and drums were beaten. With tears in their eyes, Vajra and Parikshit prostrated before Dharmaraja and the rest. The Pandava brothers could not look the two dear darlings in the face; they were so overcome with detachment. They just held them in one quick embrace and spoke just one word of loving farewell, before they filed out into the beyond, with nothing on except the clothes they wore.

At this, the kith and kin, the citizens, the queens and others in the zenana, the courtiers and the maids, all raised pathetic wails. The Citizens fell across the path of the ruler and tried to hold fast to his feet. They prayed piteously that he should stay. They appealed to them to take them also with them. Some brushed aside objections and ran along with the rogsal party. The Pandavas, however never turned back; they never spoke a word. Their ears were closed to treaties. Their minds were fixed on Krishna; for the rest, they moved straight on, like men blinded by a fanatic resolve, heeding none, observing none.

Draupadi, with her maids, came running behind them calling on her lords one by one separately by name. Parikshit too pursued them along the streets, but he was caught and carried away by the Ministers who tried to pacify him, though they were themselves greatly affected. But the Pandavas walked unconcerned, neither asking those who followed, to stop, nor permitting those who desired to join to come along. Hundreds of men and women had to stop when they were too tired and they mournfully returned to the capital. Others who were hardier kept on. The women of the zenana, unused to sun and winds, were exhausted quickly and they fell fainting on the road. Maids lamenting the terrible events brought relief to them; some ventured even into the forest, but, had to return soon, after encountering the horrors of the wilderness. When dust storms rose, many citizens placed the dust reverentially on their foreheads, taking it to be the dust of the feet of Dharmaraja. Thus, passing through bush and briar, the brothers soon got out of sight. What then could the people do? They returned to Hastinapura heavy with unbearable grief.

The Pandavas stuck to the vow of Mahaprasthanam. That vow required that they should not eat or drink anything on the way, they should not rest, they must proceed straight on, in the northern direction, until they dropped dead. This is the vow they observed, so severe and grim.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The World is not an empty dream. It has a purpose. It is a play, with a plot. It helps you to see God. Discover Him in order majesty and beauty; see Him in love renunciation virtue and faith.

—Baba

On One and All

Thou Sairam, 'tis Thy charm
To bestow calm, on one and all.

Oh! Thou Holiness 'tis Thy greatness
To bestow goodness, on one and all.
Oh! Thou Almighty, 'tis Thy magnanimity
To bestow serenity on one and all.
Oh! Thou Brahma, 'tis Thy Dharma
To bestow Prema, on one and all.
—Labadaya

The True Divinity

Worldly joys are many, too many for one to count
And luck may go on swelling your life, up to the mount.
But, have you experienced ever the Joy that He can bring
With just a glance that spells out Peace
Compelling bells of Bliss to ring?

His Presence is Love, so pure, eternal
A Flame that burns straight and through
The hearts of each and all
Who to His Love are true.

So, let us look straight into His Eyes
And let the Radiance cleanse our hearts,
If burdened hard with earthly pain
We'd surely start our life anew.

So, let us proclaim in thankfulness:
Thy magnificence enchanted me
Thy glory has enriched me,
Thy Prema is my highest Joy—
Not like these trite terrestrial joys—
But, mine for all eternity.
For, Thou art Sathya Sai, the TRUE DIVINITY.
—Khushmun

Know Thyself

Know Thyself. Self Knowledge is the beginning of Wisdom, knowing which all else is known. Man is a Microcosm; a cell in the Universal life—constituted on the same pattern and on the same principles. Man is potentially Divine and has all the powers, faculties and potentialities for the Supreme State of Life.

Man is a Trinity of Individual soul, particularised Prakriti and Atman, set in integral unity. Prakriti manifests in three planes—spiritual, psychic and physical manned by Ichcha Shakti, Jnana Shakti, and Kriya Shakti. They are meant for different functions of volition, cognition and action—motive, thought and action. The individual soul in interaction with prakriti imbibes the three qualitative tendencies, Satwic, Rajasic and Tamasic. Every individual is a complex of these three Gunas, in different permutations and combinations, according to His Swabhava. In every individual any one quality dominates over the other two according to inherent nature.

The soul carries its psychic bundle with all its past vasanas and samskaras in a complex of gunas. Man's swabhava propels through His life urges and responds to various external Stimuli. None can escape the impact of 'Karmic Mathematics', but man can acquire new values, act righteously and increase His Satwic content.

The soul manifests in three layers of consciousness, waking conscious, subconscious and unconscious. They are the three states of Jagrat, Swapna, and Sushupti tuned to Viswa, Tejas, and Prajna respectively. It is superficial 'I' in the waking—conscious, identifying with the body, and its physical and vital urges. It is subtle 'Ego' in the subconscious, identifying with the mind, and its egoistic and rajasic urges. It is the 'Creative spirit' in the unconscious, identifying with the spirit and its aesthetic and spiritual aspirations. The soul functions with three faculties, Analytical Synthetic, and Intuitive in the three planes.

The soul functions with senses, psychic centre and spiritual centre as respective instruments of perception. Our senses carry only a limited capacity of our faculty centre, specialised, channelised and set on a limited range. The full capacities of senses remain dormant at the faculty centre and can be evoked by Yogic disciplines. The senses are meant to gather data of the particulars and negotiate with the objective, social environment. Our synthetic faculty correlates sensory data, draws inferences, and formulates ideas and concepts. The analytical and synthetic faculty together constitutes our objective mind, and is meant to study the objective life around us.

Our psychic centre is the seat of 'Extra Sensory Perceptions', a receiving and a transmitting Station for all thought forces. Evoking this centre through Yogic disciplines, we can tap mental energy and grip psychic powers and faculties. Our intuitive faculty in the unconscious is the source of truth and is in link with the cosmic consciousness. Here is our inner voice of conscience, the true guide, an intuitive flash from the unconscious. Our spiritual centre is the seat of 'Supra-sensory Perceptions', set on a universal range for cosmic comprehension.

Our senses like a microscope, is set on a limited range, for detailed analytical study of the particulars, in the gross physical plane. Our intuition like a Telescope is set on a Universal range, for a total and comprehensive vision of the cosmic manifestation. Here is our spiritual vision, the 'Yogic Prajna', with which one can have the whole view of the cosmos, 'VISWARUPA DARSHAN'.

—Jijnasu

The Noose got Loose

Poor Arvi's life was an ordeal from dawn to dawn. She was only about 20 years old, but, her husband and his mother gave her enough torment to make her lose all zest in life. She had no children alive, though four were born; so, there was no reason why she should live longer. Besides she was blamed by her mother-in-law for the death of all the four babies, and she was talked about as a woman with a curse on her. They were mazdoors in a coffee estate in Coorg, living in a cluster of huts. The husband beat her frequently, for, her babies had involved him in debts he could not repay. On the 27th April, the tragic plight of Arvi reached its climax. Mother and son both fell foul of her and she' got the severest beating since marriage.

Next morning, when the husband and his mother had left for the shandy, she was happy to find herself alone; for, she resolved to put an end to her life. At about 9 A.M. she tied one end of a thick rope to the rafter and the other end to her neck. But, the noose round her neck was loosened suddenly. She fastened it again and put it round her neck to give a final jerk. But this time, the knot on the rafter at the top got loosened and she fell with a flop on the floor, with her neck bleeding profusely. When she fell, she saw a brilliant flash and the vision of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 'in yellow dress' standing before her, with a benign smile. She recognised him clearly and bowed at His Feet reverently, for, she had seen a big picture of Baba during Bhajans at the bungalow of the owner of the estate where she lived. Just at that moment, a neighbour arrived at the door; she saw the bleeding neck and so, had to be told the entire story of the suicide that failed.

The owner of the estate was not informed about this; for, she was certain he would take a serious view of the happenings and he might even send the family out of the area.

But, on the 29th, April, the mistress of the House had a dream in which Baba appeared. He told her that as a result of His intercession at the right moment, poor Arvi was saved from death.

When enquiries were made, the mazdoors revealed the entire miracle and every one in the estate came to know that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is Sarvantaryami and Karunasagara.

Now, Arvi is being looked after lovingly by both husband and mother-in-law, for, was she not lucky to get a vision of the Lord, the Lord whom the Master of their Estate worships with so much faith? They believe she will not die, for she was rescued from death by God Himself.

N. C. Madapa, Coorg

Celestial Feet

The celestial feet tread on mundane soil.... O Lord! You have placed your lotus feet on the threshold of the world. You have come, at last. The Universe of unending lust has emerged at last from dense darkness. My house, too, has become resplendent at your visitance.

The mortal world has been panting for eternity, for immortality. Ah, Earth has halted in ecstasy in her starlit path. The History of the Eternal Emancipation of mankind can now be written, in golden letters.

I have unfettered all bonds of love and affection; I am standing on the bank of the river of life, waiting for the dazzle of your arrival, peering into the vast expanse of space, and the limitless ocean of time, to welcome your splendour.

He has come. See, the holy waters of the Vedas are being sprinkled on the feet of the Lord. I shall shower at the gateway through which He comes my auspicious hymns. Listen, the Veena and the Mrudanga play. The Eight quarters resound with the paen of His name. The golden morning has dawned on the horizon of my life.

Lord! A new world is shaping at every footstep of Yours! The buds of Unity and Love between the Jiva and Siva are blooming, wakening at the rays of Your Glory. Your pure blue Form is rising above, beyond the boundaries of Time, conferring on all who look up, the boon of compassion.

O Lord, my bashful tongue is dumb at your Darshan. Give it voice, O Lord. Let it pour at your feet life-long yearnings. I long to say: "O Lord! You have endeared me so long; why turn aside this day? You have held me by the hand; why hesitate to lift me from the ditch? You have offered me Bhakti, your daughter! Why do you NOW probe into my character? You have lit the lamp in my heart; why does darkness still persist?"

O Lord! You are the Master of Riches; but, am I poor and destitute? No, for I am yours. The Lord of the Three Worlds is my Kith and Kin. Kubera is your treasurer and the treasure is my heritage.

Let the aroused Kundalini grant me the joy of Unity with you, for ever; let the Truth be flashed into me, through Shaktipath; be the Divine Power within me and wake me from stupor."

Chakor Ajgaonkar, M. A. Bundra, Bombay
From Original in Marathi

Nirvikalpa Samadhi

I was in Madras on the 12th December, 1965. On the morning of the 13th, I had His Darshan and Bhagavan graciously anointed my forehead with the Vibhuti. I did not realise then that in a gathering of over 1000 devotees, I was the first to be blessed.

That same night, I attended His public lecture, where 20,000 sat in perfect silence. I was seated only a few yards from the platform. Bhagavan was showing me the crown of His head, a few times. What was it for? I saw on the top of the thick cluster of hair on His head, a flickering golden Light. It was the Kundalini Shakti, raised over the Brahma-randra, a sight I was pining to see, all my life.

I wanted confirmation of my conjecture. Bhagavan, knowing my yearning, asked Major Rayanagar to invite me also for the dinner on the 14th at his place. Bhagavan was there for over three hours and I got an opportunity to ask Him about that Golden Flame. He assured me that it was no illusion of mine! He had only fulfilled my desire.

He warned me that it is not the goal of life, which is still higher. There is a great distance yet, for a Yogi to cover, before he attains the Goal. He said, "Unfortunately all Sastras and saints described that the rousing of the Kundalini to Sahasrara Chakra as Nirvikalpa Samadhi." He told me that it is not correct, even as He said as recorded in the Srimadbhagavatam, that the Yajnas of the Vedas do not take man to the ultimate Goal of Life.

Baba has told us in His Lectures (Vol. 1) that man cannot ordinarily live for more than 21 days, after such an experience, because food also appears as God and is in reality God, to him. It is impossible for such a one to eat and drink. Therefore, the body perishes.

Bhagavan insists that the Yogic experience of One-ness in the Turiya (and Turiyathitha) plane is not enough. The Jnani who has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi must literally see and feel God everywhere and in all things in the physical plane also, all the time. To such a one, the planes are not watertight compartments.

A prominent disciple of a famous woman saint of India once told me that she was always in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. When I had the chance to get her Darshan, I was not advanced enough to ask her whether she was in Nirvikalpa Samadhi even during sleep. I know a Guru in Ceylon who could have this Yogic experience at will, but, he did not go beyond the plane of Anandamayakosa, during sleep; at least, that was the impression he gave me.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and Shirdi Sai Baba are the only instances of the highest stage; they have made it clear to us that they never sleep.

May Bhagavan continue to Bless us and keep us fit to receive Him.

—Dr. T. Nallainathan, Colombo

Vedavyasa

Vyasa fulfilled the great task of communicating to Nara the Narayana-tattwa. He gave the key to the mystery of God to man. This is possible only for one who was born charged by God so to do; that is why, Vyasa is called, Vyaso Narayano Harih, Vyasa is Narayana Himself, He is Hari. He described the Glory of the Lord by means of the Bhagavata, the Mahabharata and the Puranas. Incidentally He elaborated also on the mystery of Divine Incarnations. As the receiver enables us to catch the melody in the air, Vyasa enables us to catch the splendour of God, which is immanent everywhere.

Vyasa is called the Adiguru, for, He is the first and foremost among the Teachers in India and of mankind. He is called Lokaguru, in honour of this role. Each mission requires a prime mover: you may have the lamp, oil, and wick but, some one must light it; you may have the flowers and the thread, but, some person talented in that line must string them into a garland or form them into a bouquet; you may have both gold and the desire for jewels, but, a smith with the skill must shape it into the coveted ornament; you may have the training and the yearning, but, some Guru must provide the answer to the questions that torment you; and illumine you.

Life is a long garland of blossoms, fair and faded, fragrant and futile. They are, so to say, the goods and bads of life. Man recognises only the blossoms, happy over some, unhappy over most; he does not see the string on which they are bound together, the Brahma-sutra, the lasting fadeless Brahma principle that gives stability to the short-lived flowers. Just as sparrows during a storm fly towards a warm shelter, Man too must take shelter in the Divine Principle to escape from the storms of life. He will be welcomed by the Divine, only when, as Jesus said, he becomes a child. Allow the children to come to me, he said. Children have no strong wishes to run after; they have no overpowering passion of hate or greed; so they are embodiments of Peace. When they grow older, egoism, pride, envy, malice, hatred anger begin to enslave them and they are overcome by anxiety and fear. So, one must recapture the years of childhood, to be in Prasanthi. Sadhana can accomplish this seemingly impossible transformation. Of course, the snake inside will not die, if you rain blows on the mound under which it lives. You will have to forego sleep and rest and food—that is to say, be content with what you get and follow the discipline prescribed. Then only can you know yourself, and know that you and the Universe are one. This is the Narayana-tattwam that is in man; it is that tattwam, that reality—principle that urges you to discover it through the guide-lines laid down by Vyasa and others who came after him.

The deadly cobra (sensual desire) that lies coiled in the mound (mind) is now being enraged and made to hiss with spread hood by man's activities; he does not know the charmer's art, by which he can play with it and make it a docile plaything. You must have seen the charmer playing upon a pipe the tune that subdues the cobra; sing the Names of God, sing about His Glory and the cobra of sensual greed will become harmless. That is why the Bhagavata lays emphasis on Bhakti, on Keerthana, on Namasmara. If you become a Daksha (intelligent person) by means of Anapeksha (desirelessness), then you can merge in the Sivatatwam, unlike the Daksha of Dakshayajna who had apeksha (craving for the fruits) and so, lost the Sivatatwam he had become akin to. Prema which is the essence of Bhakti is built on Anapeksha; if there is apeksha, it becomes bargaining and not Love unsullied by gross considerations. You may become a

master of all the texts Vyasa composed, the Mahabharata the Bhagavata and the 18 Puranas, the Brahmasutras etc, but, if you have no Prema welling up in your heart, you cannot hope to contact the Premswarupa, the Lord. Just as radio waves carry the sound of the programmes everywhere through the ether, even the voices of hatred envy malice scandal and faction foul the space around the world, as much as voices of love compassion sympathy appreciation and admiration fill it with harmony. It is the duty of everyone to keep the atmosphere clean and healthy, by means of good thoughts and good words. A person who does not possess this elementary equipment for liberation is like a wheel without a hub, whey without butter, the night-sky without the moon, or a grihini without the sindura mark.

To confer on Man this Jnana, God in His Infinite Mercy comes down as man; or else, man will degrade himself to the level of beasts. Unless he learns to surrender his ego with full satisfaction, in complete sincerity, with no reservations, to the Lord, he cannot realise Him, though He is resident in his own heart. The anguish that fills the penitent seeker will move the Lord to manifest Himself. In the ecstasy of that moment, man will experience: I am Thou; Thou art I. It is not a remarkable achievement to earn two meals a day and have a roof over the head. The wheels revolve till the end of time. But, the real victory on which one can be congratulated is the victory over the six demons that have encamped in the mind of man, Lust Anger Greed Attachment Pride and Malice. When you do good deeds, keep good company, immerse your minds in good thoughts, these demons cannot survive in you.

Vyasa grouped the Vedas into four. The Flower of the Vedic Tree is Vedanta and its Fruit is Ananda-phala. To recognise that fruit, to crave for its taste and to discover the means of winning it, the mind has to be trained and disciplined. The mind is an extrovert instrument; when it flees into the mesh of the outer world, do not accompany it, let it go alone. Watch it struggling and suffering. Do not attach yourselves to it. Then, it will surely come back, chastened and cleansed. This Sadhana will certainly control the mind and make it an instrument, not for bondage, but, for liberation.

Vairagyam (detachment) Bhakti (devotion and surrender) and Jnanam (realisation of the Reality) to which they lead—these three are represented by the Trisula in Siva's Hands. Develop Jnanam through the stages of Vairagyam and Bhakti, then, you can yourself be identified as Siva-swarupam. The mind has to be melted out of shape in the Fire of Jnana (Jnanagni dagdha karmaanam), in order to manifest Siva tattwa. That was what Ramakrishna accomplished at Dakshineswar. He transformed himself into a brilliant gem by intensive process of Sadhana. Raidas became immortal, for, he used to ply his awl while stitching chappals, repeating at every stitch, the name of the Lord, Krishna. Muscular power, mechanical power, political power, military power, scientific power—all are futile when weighed with the power of Grace. Do not ask for futile gifts. Ask that Grace any give you what He knows you most need. Leave the nature of the gift to Him; it may be good fortune or bad; it may be pain or joy; it may be dishonour or defeat. Leave it to Him; He knows best. Dedicate yourself to Him. That is the meaning of the Lord's injunction in the Gita: Maamekam saranam vraja. Surrendering to His Will is the only duty you need accomplish the only task you have to carry out. If you do that, He assures you that no harm shall approach you. Maa sucha, do not grieve, He says.

This does not mean that God is anxious that mankind should fall at His Feet; man should cleanse his mind; he must worship the Grand and the Glorious, the Supreme and the Universal; he must merge his will with the Divine Will, which is what is meant by surrender. That Universal Grandeur is Narayana; Vyasa revealed the Narayana-tattvam in all its Glory through his Bhagavata and so the world must be ever grateful to him.

Choose, not Kama but Rama, the Atmarama; meditate on that and draw bliss therefrom. Or, practise Dhyanam according to a fixed timetable, until you overcome the need to remember the timetable, until you are not even conscious that you are engaged in dhyanam. Or, recite the Gayatri or some such significant mantra with attention to its meaning and value. Or, dwell on the Name, with all its attendant aura of glory. The sound of the syllables has a curative restorative property. That is why the formulae have been laid down by the sages.

Or, you can dedicate your talents and acquisitions to the service of man, of man as the visible embodiment of God. Whenever you are serving another and relieving his distress, remember it is your own distress that you are relieving. A cow was caught in a bog and it was floundering helplessly. A throng of idlers was watching its struggles with great relish. A Sanyasin passing along the road saw the unfortunate animal; he removed his shirt. He threw away his head cover; he jumped into the slush, and lifted the cow on to the bank, in spite of its kicks and frantic movements. The throng laughed at his bravado and weightlifting prowess and some one asked him, "Why could you not go your way, unconcerned?"

The sanyasin replied, "The picture of that cow's agony cut into my heart; I could not go one step further. I had to get rid of the pain in my heart. This was the cure for that pain. I did it to save myself, not so much to save the cow." You serve yourself; you harm yourself, when you gloat on the harm you have inflicted on another. There is no ANOTHER! Only those who have reached that stage of spiritual progress have a right to advise on service.

You believe that God guards the good from harm and inflicts grief on the bad; that is not correct. The goodness of the good guards them; the badness of the bad injures them. God is the Witness.

The heart of man must be transformed into a cool soft pleasing instrument, as cool and soft and pleasing as moonlight; that is why the Full Moon Day is set aside for offering gratitude to Vyasa, who communicated to man the key of this process, the process of controlling the vagaries of the mind by devotion, dedication, and concentration on the magnificence of the All-pervasive All-knowing God.

If you have attachment to sense-objects (Raga) you can never be free from disease (Roga). Tyaga (renunciation, detachment) alone can ensure true bhoga (joy, bliss). This does not mean that you can flee from the world; you can never do that. The world will always be with you. While in this A-santhi (world of turmoil and agitation) you must win Pra-santhi (the highest type of equanimity.) To help you in this process, and to make you aware of the distance you have traversed, tests may be held by the Lord; you must welcome them, as chances to demonstrate your accomplishments and to win credit and appreciation. Do not develop contrary reactions. Students should ask for tests, so that they can estimate the heights they have scaled; they should not protest or run away.

On the foundation of Faith, erect the four pillars of Sathya Dharma Santhi and Prema and upon them, raise the Mansion of your earthly Life. That is the richest property you can earn here.

From Baba's Discourse on 23 May 1967

His Guidance

It is my conviction that Baba's all-pervading Omniscience influences every deed and thought mine. My surrender to Baba is total and complete. Baba 'has revealed to us that 'He is an Avatar come to re-establish Sanathana Dharma and rescue mankind. An Avatar has a Karma; the Human Form is assumed to help humans; He appears when the world is in danger and when mankind is facing a crisis. Avatar can be compared to a deep-sea diver, who loads himself with leaden weights so that he may sink down into the depths.

Faith and belief get confirmed with feeling and experiencing. The mahimas which are natural to Him are a continuous process, which when experienced instill faith about His Divinity; they are staggering and incredible only to those who are tied down to the senses and the lame logic of reason.

Faith in an all-seeing God elevates the soul, purifies the emotions, keeps up the dignity of the soul, and lends lustre and value to life. There is no wisdom in speculating on the modus operandi of God moving among us as Baba at present. Kant, the great philosopher, has written, "There is a limit where the intellect fails and breaks down; this limit is, where the questions relating to God and immortality arise." Baba has Himself assured us, "Do not try to measure Me; you will only fail."

His elucidations interpretations and introspections of our Sastras, Vedas and Scriptures are very original and urge one to delve into the depths of devotion and to practise the Sanathana way of life.

He gives us the message of Atman, which Lord Krishna gave to Arjuna. It is the tonic message of the ancient seers. The Atman is birthless and deathless; all things flow and melt, but the Atman is eternal.

He is the saviour of the poor in spirit, the healer of broken hearts and bleeding wounds. Those who have visited Prasanthi Nilayam have observed the abundance of succour and strength that He showers on myriads of distressed. We know that every movement of His has both Grace and significance. His looks shower Prema. His smile is captivating, His gestures are delicate and charming. His very Presence creates an atmosphere of awe and reverence. The wave of His Viand creates everything that He has set His mind on, faster than the flow of thought. This is the Leela which He has come to inspire us with; this is the Treasure we have at our doorstep.

He has come for all mankind. A picture of His' Giving Darshan to lakhs of people at Bombay appeared recently in the famous West German Newspaper, the "Stuttgarter Zeitung." Let us pledge ourselves to follow Bhagavan, who is leading us so lovingly, to the goal of Self-realisation. Let us keep the flag of Prasanthi flying on our hearts.

Essenkay, Madurai

Good Deeds

Vyasa has declared the essence of the fourteen voluminous Puranas can be expressed in one sentence: There is nothing meritorious as the help rendered to others; there is nothing so degrading as the harm you inflict on others. A man once sent his son to the market to bring him some fruits and he gave him ten rupees for purchasing them. The boy got the fruits from the dealer and he was bringing them along to his house. On the way, he heard the heart-rending cries of a famished hungry beggar, "Give me some thing to eat." He placed all the fruits in the hands of the beggar and came home empty handed. When the father asked him where the fruits were, he replied, "They are invisible fruits I have secured for you. The fruits one can see are eaten today and lost; but, the fruits I have got for you are eternally fresh and sustaining."

When a queen noticed gray hairs on the king's head, she told him that Death had sent him his first warning, that His visit is approaching. The subjects came to know the concern of the queen; they retired into the jungle and by extreme asceticism, they won Divine Grace and persuaded God to grant the king, a 100 years of life. When the queen knew this, she started on her journey to the forest. The king asked her whether she wanted her life too to be extended. But, she answered, "O, no. I shall win Grace and pray for the extension of life to the subjects, for, of what use is long life unless your days are made happy with such loving loyal subjects." That was the measure of her love for the subjects. No wonder the kingdom was happy under such a king, and queen.

—BABA

SRI SATHYA SAI SATHSANG SAMACHAR

JUNE 8: KOTTAYAM (KERALA) Sathya Sai Sathsangham: inauguration.

JUNE 9-16: VEMALAMADA (KRISHNA DT) Sathya Sai Namasankeerthanasamajam: Githa Discourses by Sri surendranath Banerji.

JUNE 10-11: RAJAHMUNDY (E.GODAVARI DT) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourses By Jammalamadaka Madhavaraya Sarma.

JUNE 11: ARASIKERE (HASSAN DT) Sathya Sai Bhaktha Mandali, Laksharchana: Lectures

JUNE 14: BANGALORE (MYSORE STATE) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse by

Prof. G.P.M Rajarathnam, M.A.

JUNE 15: **COLOMBO** (CEYLONE) Sri Bhagawan Sathya Sai Manthram: Public Meeting: President Dr. T.Nallainathan. Discourse by SriC.Balasingam. Secretary, Ministry of Health.

JUNE 16: **BRINDAVAN** (BANGALORE DT) Baba returned from Horsely Hills.

JUNE 22: **CAWNPORE** (U.P) Sri Sathya Sai Sathsangham: Akhanda Bhajana.

: **GANGALAKURRU** (E.GODAVARI DT) Sri Sathya Sai Bhaktha Mandali; Discourses by Pundits.

JUNE 24-26: **KOTHAPETA** (E.GODAVARI DT) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourses by Pundits.

JUNE 25: **WHITEFIELD** (BANGALORE DT) Inauguration of Joy Ice Cream Factory: Bhajan in the divine Presence of Baba.

JUNE 27: **KOLAR** (MYSORE STATE) Inauguration by Baba of Dr.Modi's Eye Operation Camp.

JUNE 30: **MADRAS** Baba at Madras.

JULY 1: **BRINDAVAN** Baba returned to Brindavan.

JULY 2: **ERNAKULAM** (KERALA) Sri Sathya Sai Samajam: Speech by Major P.MS.Menon.

JULY 3: **PRASANTHI NILAYAM** Arrival of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba from Brindavan

JULY 10-11: **AMALAPURAM** (E.GODAVARI DT) Sri Sathya Sai Samajam: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions: Discourses by Pundits.

Bhagavata Vahini

15

The Pandavas were journeying along with their eyes fixed straight ahead, awaiting the moment when their bodies would collapse out of sheer exhaustion and death finish their earthly career. Their hearts were filled with emotions centering around Krishna, His play and pranks, His Grace and Glory; they had no room for any other emotion or thought. Droupadi their queen, dragged herself along for a considerable distance, but, she became too weak to continue; her lords did not turn back, even when she appealed; she realised, highly intelligent and devoted that she was, that they were engaged in a stringent uncompromising vow; she decided that the bond that tagged her to them so long had loosened and she had to meet her end. She fainted and fell; she breathed her last, with her mind fixed on Krishna.

The Pandavas, too, walked on in staunch discipline and met their separate ends, at the times and places in which each had to shed his body. The body became dust, but the soul merged in Krishna. They attained immortality, losing themselves in the immortal essence of Krishna.

From the throne of Imperial Bharat, Parikshit ruled his dominion adhering to the principles of justice and morality, lovingly fostering his subjects and guarding them from harm with parental care and affection. Whatever may be the task he set his hands upon, Parikshit did not move one step without calling to mind Krishna and his grandfathers and praying to them to crown him with success. He prayed to them morning and evening to direct him along the correct path of virtue. He felt as if he was the heart of his people and as if they were his body.

Throughout his empire, the very wind was reluctant to displace any article, for fear of being implicated in theft. There was not the slightest fear of thieves. Nor was there any trace of injustice, immorality or ill will. The kingdom gained great fame thereby. At the slightest sign of any such evil, Parikshit overcame it by means of terrific punishment and instituted preventive steps which decidedly scotched it. Since Dharma was thus fostered with love and reverence, even Nature was kind; rains came in time, crops grew high and rich; granaries were filled; people were contented, happy and unafraid.

When Parikshit was on the throne, ruling over the empire with great care, the Ministers and the spiritual Masters who were the guides of the dynasty conferred among themselves and resolved that they must approach the King with a proposal that he should enter the Grihasta stage, by taking on a partner by marriage; they submitted their prayer likewise. When they found him agreeable, they asked his maternal uncle, Uttara of the Viraat Royal Family, for the hand of his daughter. The Brahmins they sent to Viraat returned with the happy news that he was happy over the proposal. The priests fixed an auspicious day and hour and the marriage of Parikshit and Iravati, daughter of Uttara, was celebrated with pomp and splendour.

Queen Iravathi was a great Sadhvimani (Gem among virtuous women). She was endowed with a tenacious love for truth; she was devoted to her husband. Whenever she heard that any one in the empire was in distress, she was pained much, as if she herself had the calamity. She mixed with the women of the capital, and acquainted herself with their aspirations and achievements. She provided them with encouragement and consolation. She fostered the growth of virtue among

them, by teaching and example; she established institutions to promote and protect good character. She allowed women of all grades to approach her, for she had no false pride. She treated every one with reverence; she was an angel of fortitude and charity. Every one praised her as Goddess Annapurnaa (the Bestower of Food) Herself in human form.

During the reign of this King and his queen, men and women lived in peace and plenty, untroubled by want. Parikshit too arranged for the performance of many Vedic sacrifices and rituals, for the prosperity of mankind. He arranged the worship in temples and homes of God in His manifold Names. By these and other means, faith in God and love of man were implanted in the hearts of his subjects. He promoted measures to ensure peace and harmony among the sages and saints who were living as recluses in forest hermitages; he guarded them in their silent retreats from man and beast. He exhorted them to probe into themselves and discover the laws of self-control. He supervised personally the steps taken to ensure their safety and security.

Thus, Parikshit and Iravati ruled over their empire like Easwara and Parvati who rule over the Universe with parental love and care. Shortly, news that the queen was in the family way spread among the women and was confirmed. The subjects prayed to God, at home and in public places of worship, that He should bless the Queen with a son who will be endowed with all virtues and strength of character, who will be a staunch and unflinching adherent of Dharma and who will live the full span of years. In those ages, subjects loved the king so intensely that they renounced their own joys to please him, the king too loved them and guarded them as the apple of his eye.

Parikshit saw and heard the enthusiasm of the subjects at the auspicious prospect of the advent of a child to continue the dynasty. He shed tears of joy when he realised how deeply his people were attached to him. He felt that the affection was the contribution of his grandfather and the gift of Lord Krishna's Grace.

Parikshit did not deviate from his resolve to serve the best interests of his people; he gave up his own likes and dislikes for this great task. He looked upon his subjects as his own children. The bond that brought the king and people together in such close and loving relationship was indeed of a high holy order. Therefore, his people used to say that they would prefer his kingdom to heaven itself.

Meanwhile, on an auspicious day, the son was born and the whole land was filled with inexpressible joy. Sages, scholars and statesmen sent blessings and good wishes to the King. They declared that new light had dawned on the state. Astrologers consulted their books and calculating fortunes of the child from then, they announced that he would enhance the glory of the dynasty, bring added reputation to his father's name, and win the esteem and love of his people.

Parikshit invited the family Preceptor to the Palace and consulted also the Brahmin priests, in order to fix a day for the Naming Ceremony of the child. Accordingly, during an elaborately arranged festival rite, the child was named Janamejaya. The Brahmins who were present were given costly gifts, on the suggestion of Kripacharya, the doyen among the Brahmin advisers of the King. Cows with golden ornaments on horns and hooves were given away in large numbers. All were fed sumptuously for days on end. When Dharmaraja set out upon his final journey he

had entrusted the little boy on the throne to Kripacharya and as a true trustee Kripa was advising the boy-king and training him in statecraft. As he grew up, this dependence became more fruitful; the King seldom strayed from his advice; he sought it always and followed it with reverential faith. Hence, the sages and recluses of the kingdom prayed for his health and long life and extolled the people's happiness and the ruler's solicitude for their welfare.

Parikshit was the overlord of the kings of the earth, for, he had the blessings of the great, the counsel of the wise and the grace of God. After his long campaign of conquest, he encamped on the bank of the Ganges and celebrated as a mark of his victory, three Horse Sacrifices with all the prescribed rituals. His fame spread not only over the length and breadth of India but even far beyond its borders. He was acclaimed by every tongue as the Great Jewel of the Bharatha Royal Family. There was no state that had not bent under his yoke; there was no ruler who set his command at naught. He had no need to march at the head of his army to subdue any people or ruler. All were only too willing to pay him homage. He was master of all lands and all people.

The spirit of wickedness and vice known as Kali had already come in, with the end of the Krishna Era; so, it was raising its poisonous hood, off and on; but, Parikshit was vigilant. He adopted measures to counteract its stratagems and machinations. He sought to discover the footprints of his grandfathers throughout his realm, in the reforms they introduced and the institutions they established; he reminded his people whenever occasion arose, of their nobility and aspirations; he told them of Krishna, His Grace and Mercy. He shed tears of joy and gratitude whenever he related to them these stories. He was sincerely pining for the chance he had lost, to have the Pandavas and Krishna by his side.

He knew that Kali had entered his kingdom and was endeavouring to fix its hold on the minds of men. When he became cognisant of its activities, he investigated into the conditions favourable for its spread and with the active cooperation of his Teachers and the elders, he enacted special laws to counteract the tendencies Kali aroused. When the elders advised him that such precautions need be taken only when wickedness emerges as crimes, Parikshit did not support that opinion. He was for greater alertness. He wanted to give the lead to his people. "Yatha raja, thatha praja" (As the ruler, so the ruled) is the proverb, he said. He declared that Kali or wickedness can have sway only through the incompetence of the ruler, the loss of self-reliance among the people, the decline in the earning of Grace. These three are the factors that promote the plans of Kali. Without them, man cannot fall a prey to his wiles. Aware of this, Parikshit went round his kingdom and sought, day and night, to drive Kali out of his haunts. That is to say, he attempted to give no room to injustice, force, evil character, untruth and violence; his preventive plans were effective. He had so much peace in his kingdom that he could successfully campaign even into the far off Bhadraswa Kethamala, Uttarakuru and Kimpurusha regions.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Roots into the Deep

God is Premaswarupa; God is in every being; so, the fruit of every life is full of the sweetness of that Prema. Like the bitter skin of the fruit which is sweet which casts the cover of ignorance over the precious juice within, so too the bitter skin of envy egoism hate malice greed lust and pomp does not allow the sweetness to be patent to all. Every being is entitled to partake of that Prema, irrespective of nationality, colour, creed or status in society When God and God's Prema are activating every atom, who dare say, 'Stand out' to any one? Isavasyamidam sarvam...All this is God, is Prema.

The lights that Vyasa lit to reveal this great reality have become dim; no one is pouring oil into the lamp; all are interested in pursuing false ideals and fleeting pleasures. Vyasa taught Dharma in the Mahabharata, Bhakti in the Bhagavata, and Santhi and Prema in the 18 Puranas; he taught the knowledge of "knowledge and knower and the known" in the Brahmasutra. He emphasised that harming others is the seed of sin and serving others the seed of merit. That is the lesson of Prema, pure and simple. The person who has delved into his depths and discovered his inner reality is the embodiment of Santhi.

Prema is the Amritarasa which fills the Upanishads. When man realises the inefficiency of the senses, the mind and the intellect, to grapple with the Reality and know the inner core of his truth, then, he discovers he is the Atma which is Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema. Or, He realises that there is God who is the basis of all this superstructure, who has designed and contrived all this and he surrenders his ego to Him. "Let Your will prevail," he proclaims and resigns himself fully to His plan. That moment is a supreme moment of joy, Ananda. Troubles, miseries, handicaps, grieves and pains that were hitherto causes of distress suddenly take on a new and magnificent role: they are "His handwork, His gifts, His Grace." They are no longer unwelcome; they are as welcome as the successes, the pleasures, the happinesses are. Both are His Will. When you go to a new place, you seek out a friend and hand over to him all the money you have for safe keeping; but, if you start suspecting him later, you will have no peace. Have faith in him; you are free; you have no worry. So too, give all your earnings to God; have faith in Him and be unconcerned for ever. Sarva dharmaan parithyajya, (giving up all your earnings through various codes and regulations) maam ekam saranam vraja (give everything to Me and have full faith in Me.)

If the matchstick is soaked in water, how can it ignite when struck? If the mind is soaked in vishaya, how can it be ignited into spiritual endeavour? The Prema with which you are endowed must be directed towards God; then only can it expand, grow, deepen, fertilise all your actions, benefit all those around you. If it is confined to the world, it will be sucked up soon, by the sands of envy greed and malice. Without that expansive Prema which is Divine, man is worse than a pashu, he is a Danava. The pashu or cow yields milk, when its dead calf is stuffed and taken near its udder. That is the measure of its vatsalya, child-love!

The light of Prema is absent in the heart; and, so, bats and nocturnal birds infest it and foul it. The bats are the evil qualities of hate and malice and greed. The Mahabharata epic which Vyasa collected and composed teach quite emphatically and clearly the evanescence of wealth, authority, power, physical prowess and all that is considered desirable by man on earth. What did

Duryodhana and Karna lack? Still, they fell and were eaten by dogs and jackals on the battlefield on which they had staked their all.

It is to develop this Prema and use it for liberation that the four ideals have been placed before man—ideals which he is to strive for consistently, each one being sublimated and subordinated to the next—Dharma Artha Kama Moksha... Artha or material happiness to be won by Dharma, Moksha to be held as the only desirable Kama or goal. Now, these ideals are being repeated ad nauseum but no attempt is made to act. That is why human life everywhere has degenerated into a farce, a tragedy. It is like a wheel without a hub, milk without butter; ineffective, waste.

Prema too is of three kinds, depending on the guna that predominates in the individual. Tamasic Prema confines itself to "me" and "mine", it does not flow beyond that little circle. The Rajasic Prema flows only towards those in power, or have wealth, or to those who will give it a spectacular effect. Satwic prema, on the other hand, always flows towards the good, the pure, the detached, towards awe and wonder, towards God. Pundalika was tending his parents when God appeared before him as Narayana. He was revering them as the God in them. So, he asked Narayana to wait a little, He threw a brick towards Him to serve as a footstool on which He could stand, until he was ready to worship Him. If you do not revere the parents, how can you draw from your heart enough reverence to worship the Father who dwells in Heaven.

Prema is the spring that feeds the roots of all the virtues. You must have seen paddy fields where the crop is drying, though the ground is wet and there is a thin sheet of water still under the plants. You must have seen also big trees, standing upon hard dry ground, but, decked with a rich crown of green foliage. Have you paused to find out the reason for this contrast? The roots of the paddy plant do not go deep; the roots of the trees go down unto the very springs of underground water which are perennial.

So too when each of your acts, the words that you utter, the thoughts that shape your desires and emotions—when all these draw sustenance from the roots that go deep into the inner springs of Love, then you will be happy and fresh, you can give shelter and shade to many a weary mortal. Japam and Tapas and Puja and Vratams, all train and subdue the senses. They cleanse the mind so that God can be reflected therein. Just as the sugar that your eyes can see and your hands can put into water becomes so dissolved in it that neither eye nor hands can cognise it again, the senses and intelligence cannot cognise the immanent God; chitta-shuddhi alone can recognise God, just as the tongue alone can recognise the sugar that has dissolved in the water.

The Gopikas had that chitta-shuddhi, though inferior minds full of gross desires have fouled the clear springs of their Prema with their ignorant comments. Narada too thought that the illiterate milkmaids could not have the highest form of devotion; but, when he offered to teach them, he found them so immersed in God-consciousness that they had no sense of time or space or causation. They had no thought other than those of Krishna, no words unrelated to His Glory, no act unconnected with His Seva. They had surrendered their all to the Lord who ruled them from within themselves.

It has become a fashion for the educated to ask, "Where is God?" "What is His task?" and not wait for answers. They can well believe that there must be some one who launches and regulates

the highly complicated rockets that move around the earth and other artificial things in space; but, they cannot believe that there must be some intelligence behind all this manifold galaxy of stars and planets revolving for aeons and along millions of light years of space.

Believe in that supreme Paramatma and engage yourselves in the practice of living. You will then find that you can manage to detach yourselves from the world, though you are in it. You will be like the lotus which grows in water but which floats on it and does not allow it to wet it, like the tongue which is unaffected by grease though it may eat ghee and oily articles. The chitta should not be contaminated by contact with the sensory objects, that is the means of Sadhana.

From Baba's Discourse on Guru Poornima Day

Properties?

Once I was much worried over my family properties. Baba appeared in my dream and said, "Properties, are not proper ties". I woke up from slumber. Yet the words are resounding in my ears. "Properties are not proper ties!" I brood over it often. I was convinced when He told me so, that I should not worry about them. My mind became peaceful. The advice He gave me is unforgettable. It had a wondrous effect on me. I want to share it, with the devotees everywhere.

—A. S. B.

Parthi Prema Bank

You have heard of banks, of India's State Bank
Where coins jingle and fresh notes rustle?
And, of late, the Eye Bank, and the Blood Bank?
This and that—the din and bustle!

I came and saw the unique Prema Bank
And stayed forever, to pray.
Its treasury is full of the gold of Love
And brilliant heaps of Grace and Cheer!

You can deposit good words and deeds
Good thoughts in its savings scheme.
Loans and cheques and overdrafts—
The Bank presents a unique theme!

Truth and Duty, Peace and Prema
These are the cashiers working here,

You can draw the cheques of Bliss
In your favour—no limit there!

Minimum deposit, maximum withdraw;
And yet, the treasury is full to the brim;
Thousands come and benefits enjoy
Bonuses, wages—ever trim!

I came and saw the Prema Bank
And stayed at Parthi to pray
Its treasury is full of golden love
And brilliant vaults of Grace and Cheer!

—D. Doongaji Bombay

Taller and Taller

In the March issue of Sanathana Sarathi in my article, 'Light in Darkness' I have promised to describe my first meeting with Sri Sathya Sai Baba, for which I came back to India all the way from Saigon, where I was already on my return journey to California.

I had never heard of Him before although I still was in Bombay during the first 3 days of his visit there. In retrospection, I am glad things happened the way they did, as otherwise I would not have gone to Puttaparthi to see Him if I had met Him at Bombay. I had first heard of Him only when I stopped off at Adyar, Madras, from Howard Murphet. When, after returning from Saigon to India, I was finally on my way to Puttaparthi, I kept asking myself, why am I going to see, Him. I was, after all, not in need of any help or in search for a guru; but the Inner Voice calling me there was so strong that I could not disobey it.

It was a hot April afternoon when I arrived in Prasanthi Nilayam. I was given a room where Gabriella Steyer, a Swiss schoolteacher sweetly took care of me. She had spent a year and a half there. Listening to her experience during her stay there was like listening to a fantastic fairy-tale. She had witnessed many miraculous cures. She had seen Him multiply food, take from the air any object he wished to give to his devotees and even produce Amrita by squeezing his hand and giving it to drink to about 500 people without refilling the vessel. Gabriella was not tired to go on with her stories, and I was not tired to listen to them. Finally she suggested that we go to sit outside the Mandir doorsteps. Then Baba appeared in the doorway. Except for the bright orange colour of His robe and the thick crop of His hair standing like a black halo round His head, He did not at all resemble the photographs of Him I had seen. His tiny, slim figure and finely cut features were exactly the opposite of the way He looks in photographs.

"May be, He will see you tomorrow morning before you leave," whispered Gabriella. A few minutes later, Sri Sathya Sai Baba appeared on the upper balcony and looked down. Our eyes met. Suddenly my heart began beating violently. I was called in for the interview. As I stood up I felt I was growing taller and taller. If Gabriella and other girls had not supported me, I would

have fallen down upon entering the interview room, as I did not any longer feel the floor under my feet. Some one switched on the fan, but I was not feeling hot or faint.

"I don't know why I have come here," were my first words. "I was already in Saigon on my way home but the pull was so strong that I had to come and see you." I also told Him about our Yoga Centre in Tecate and showed Him some pictures. "You must come there, Swamiji," I said. He took my hand in His and tapped it three times, stating, "I say three times-I shall come. I will keep my promise." I told Him that I was guided here by Swami Vivekananda, who, so I was told by two clairvoyants, is my protector and guardian on the other side. At the end of our interview He asked me what I wanted. "Jyoti," I answered, "since I want to start a crusade for 'Light in Darkness.'" He made movements with His hand in the air and handed me a bright little image of Himself. And, although I had been told by the Murphets about His way of taking things from the air, yet seeing it happen with my own eyes did something to me. I kept looking at the little medallion with wonder, when He took it back saying, "Wait, I'll give you some Vibhuti too." A light movement of His fingertips and the ashes poured over the little image like a snowfall. Overwhelmed, I had to joke it off in order not to break into tears. "Don't make it disappear now," I said "No, no, if I gave it to you....." "I am only joking". And we both laughed.

"Call me whenever, you need me and my Grace. I shall be with you," were His parting words.

**Indra Devi,
Mexico**

A man engaged to tend a herd of cows speaks of his cow having strayed away, his cow falling into a crevice, his cow doing this or that—all the while being aware that the cows are not his; he is not attached to them, as he is to his own cattle in his own shed. He is prepared any moment to give up the job and agree to attend to another herd belonging to some one else. So too, man must look upon his earthly possessions, as if they are only in his temporary management and custody.

Baba

The Vision—on the Heights

In the deepest deep,
And on the sublime heights,
Thou dost appear
And we see Thy hand
Guiding us in this wide world.

Bless us, O Baba,
To dive into the deepest deep,
To mount up the sublime heights,
To pray to thee
And meditate on thee
And serve thee in every way.

Who is it,
Whom we see,
In the deepest deep
And on the sublime heights?
It is He, the glorious—
The magnificent He.
Is He the Brahma who gives birth to everything?
Is He the Vishnu who gives it growth?
Is He the Siva, the Sivakara, who transmutes everything?

He is the all in all,
The Trinity in one,
Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Shower of Grace

"There was never a more memorable occasion than this in the annals of this College", said Principal P. N. Damodaran, addressing the huge gathering of students and members of the Staff of the Engineering College, Anantapur on Saturday, 30th July last. Prof. V. K. Gokak, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bangalore the renowned poet and thinker, was the President. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was to inaugurate with His Divine Blessings the activities of the Student's Union. This made the day worthy of being recorded in letters of gold in the history of the College, he declared. The President of the Students Union, Sri. M. Ramesh paid homage to Baba and welcomed Him with reverential greetings.

Prof. Gokak in his address dwelt on the need to cultivate the inner voice in silence and by meditation, to harmonise spirit and matter which are both divine, to integrate heaven and earth and to discover the perennial and purifying springs of intuition that are latent in man. Reason indulges in drawing distinctions and promoting divisions but intuition is instrumental in fostering unity and harmony. Every individual has to be chastened into a militant warrior against the enemies of the spirit, combating under the leadership of the Krishna within. Prof Gokak said that in Baba they had a Sarathi, who can lead them to success in this total realisation of personality.

Bhagavan in His Discourse inspired the youth of the land to acquire its undisputed right of becoming masters of their own inner power and glory. "He deplored that education today has degenerated into a system of training for a living and not for life. It teaches only skills; it does not concern itself with the vast potentialities inherent in the consciousness, the springs of sympathy and service and of brotherhood and reverence, the eagerness: to delve into the depths of one's own reality. He spoke of the heritage of India—the emphasis on, truth and virtue, the insistence on revering one's parents teachers and elders, the value placed on service and hospitality. He said that man is becoming, under the influence of the mass hysteria of today, hard in heart, wooden in intelligence, and mechanical in mind. Man is falling into the error of

accepting all that is seen as true and all that is not seen as false. But, the eyes are very inefficient instruments of knowledge; all senses are directed by the mind which itself is a bundle of desires and dislikes. We see, only what we seek to see. The senses have to be supplemented and corrected by an inner mentor, the Satwic consciousness, which has no prejudice, no sense of duality. Through the type of education which we have learnt from the West, man may get some comfort as well as a high standard of living; but he is not assured of peace or unalloyed joy or contentment, nor is he directed along the path where he may acquire these. It is only in India that the sages, centuries ago, have discovered the disciplines which will lead man to that bliss. And it is the right of every student in every nook and corner of this ancient land to be trained in that discipline, so that he may encounter calmly and with heroic courage the stress and the distress of life among men and of life with one's own inner adversaries. That no attempt is made to hand over to the children of this land this precious heritage is the fault of the rulers; it has led to discontent and maladjustment; it has led to the weakness and fear which haunt men when confronted with unusual situations. Bliss can come only through the spirit and its development. Questioning the existence of Providence, of an ultimate truth, of the continuance of the individual after death—this has become a fashion among the educated youth. But, the reality of each one can be deduced by a few minutes' introspection. There is something behind all bodily experiences, mental agitations and intellectual reasoning. That something is a reflection of the Paramatma Tattwa." Baba expressed His satisfaction at the enthusiasm and discipline of the students; He recalled the enthusiasm of the Engineering College students at Kakinada when He visited the place, while Principal Damodaran was there. He commended them on their Student's Union and blessed them, so that they may cultivate their inner faculties with profit.

In the evening, at the High School for Girls, Baba inaugurated the Andhra Saraswatha Sangha. Later, at the same place, a gathering of about 40,000 eager listeners shared the joy of His Darshan and His Discourse, when He inaugurated the Three Day Sessions of the All India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, under the auspices of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Anantapur. Prof V. K. Gokak presided over the function. Prof. Gokak in his speech expressed his great pleasure that the Sabha is being inaugurated in the Divine Presence of Baba. "More than any speech that presents arguments to the reason in an attempt to convince and justify, man is moved by the universal appeal of the spirit that is common in all men", he said He conceived a progressive spiritual development from the awareness of the soul to the merging with the world soul and the oversoul which is the transcendental reality. He described Baba as "the person who is Himself soul, oversoul, and the supreme consciousness." "It is such a Person alone who can lead humanity in its onward march" he said. Then Bhagavan inaugurated the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions with His Blessings and Divine Discourse.

Baba told the mammoth gathering that Bhakti is the easiest and the most direct path to God, but, Bhakti is an over-present attitude, not an occasional ritual. He described Paramatma as the screen which provides the basis for all the multifarious pictures that are projected on it, without being affected in the least by them. Without that screen, this is impossible. To realise the original basis *on* which all this is built, *out of which* all this is built, one must have a pure unsullied consciousness For this, one has to follow this Dharmamarga, the code of conduct and behaviour conforming to the status one claims in society, and one has won. Each man has to discover his status and his code, and stick to them, so that his self can blossom fully. The same blood stream flows through all the veins in all parts of the body; but, yet, the hand cannot hear nor the eye

smell. Each has its own function, its own Dharma. So too each man must know his Dharma and follow it." Baba advised.

On the 31st July, Sri Srinivasan, I.P.S., the D.I.G. of Police presided over the Mahasabha. He spoke of the three pre-requisites for self-realisation which have been laid down by the Sastras: manushyathwam, mumukshuthwam and mahapurusha-samsraya: (birth as a human being, craving for liberation, and association with a great Sage). He exhorted every one to make the best use of the Sai Era. Mentioning that the day was sacred as Ashadha Kritika dedicated to the worship of God as Shanmukha, he explained the significance of that form and pointed out the universality of that form. Br. Sri. Kalachaveedu Srinivasacharlu spoke on the path of spiritual discipline laid down in the Upanishads.

"Liberation or Moksha is liberation from attachment to anything less than the Universal, anything other than the Ultimate or God," said Baba, addressing the vast concourse of more than 50,000. "Adweshtaa sarva bhoothanaam—without bearing malice or hatred to any being, man must live out his life on earth; for, in every one, there is the same God dwelling in the recesses of the heart. It would be sacrilege, having malice or hatred to God Himself. The spark of divinity that lies hidden in this corporeal sheath has to be fanned by Sadhana and made to illumine the dark corners of the consciousness and the senses. When Bhava-shuddhi is achieved, the Inner Light will brighten the vision of Man," Baba assured the people.

On the first day of August, Baba visited the Sai Baba National Higher Secondary School and inaugurated the Andhra Saraswata Sangha. "Students must resolve to grow in virtue and humility, in truthfulness and the spirit of service," Baba advised. He described the glory of Bharatiya culture and Sanathana Dharma and told the students never to belittle them or neglect them. He asked them to learn about them and strive to live up to the ideals which they held forth. The four wheels of a car cannot move forward by being: pushed along the ground; it will be a hard job, to move the car so. But, all the four wheels can be manipulated easily by handling the one wheel inside the car. So too, the inner wheel of mind has to be handled with care and concentration, so that the journey may be smooth. That inner wheel is spiritual discipline, Atma-sadhana. The very first step in this Sadhana is concentration. Dronacharya who had around him one day the Pandava and the Kaurava children, who were all learning the art of Dhanurvedya (handling the bow and shooting the arrow at a target), asked all his pupils to shoot a bird perched on the branch of a tree. But, when they had drawn the string, he asked every one what exactly he saw up above. One boy said he saw the tree, another the sky and the cloud, another saw the branch, a third saw a flower, another boy saw a fruit, but Arjuna saw only the eye of the bird, and nothing else. This concentration on the target and the target only made Arjuna the greatest bowman of all time. "You too must learn this concentration and attend only to your studies with all your energy", Baba said. Baba blessed the committee for the success of their efforts to improve the school and to impart a fuller and more meaningful education to the pupils.

The Collector of Anantapur District, Sri V. Narayana Rao, I. A. S. presided over the Valedictory Gathering of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha on 1-8-67 in the evening. Br. Sri Balaviswanatha Sarma gave a short talk on Bhakti. Bhagavan in His Discourse emphasised the head for deeds in preference to words. He quoted the instances of Thyagaraju, Potharaju and Goparaju who, by their complete surrender to God, were able to overcome all obstacles and attain the goal of elf-

realisation. He said that there was no atheist who denied God; man is moved by love for his own self, and that love is a spark of the great all-comprehensive Love which is God. Even an atheist speaks of "my eye", "my mind", "my idea", as if he is different from his body, his senses, his mind, his intellect, as if he knew that his reality was the self—which is but a part of the Supreme self or God. Those who love themselves must gradually realise that others are theirs, they themselves.

Baba blessed the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti of Anantapur and exhorted them to spread among the people, especially the younger generation, the great principles of Sanathana Dharma, and awaken the spiritual consciousness of the people. His stay in the city of Anantapur enabled many earnest aspirants to have His Darshan and the good fortune of listening to His Discourses, as members of gatherings addressed or of the small groups with which He conversed. Baba has awakened the city of Anantapur into an active consciousness of the path to self-realisation. The shower of His Grace has fertilised many a parched heart and slaked the thirst of many a yearning soul.

The Prasanthi Nilayam Township

On 10-10-66, the Notification constituting the area of the Prasanthi Nilayam which was within the jurisdiction of the Puttaparthi Gram Panchayat into a township called the "Prasanthi Nilayam Township" was published by the Government of Andhra Pradesh; on February, 15, 1967, the Governor, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act, constituted a Township Committee for the same, with five elected members and two members nominated by the Government. On the fifth day of August, 1967, the five members elected without contest by the voters of the five wards, namely, Sri N. Kasturi, M. A. B. L., Sri. Y. Narayanaiah B.Sc., Sri. J. Suryaprakasa Rao, Dr. B. Sitharamiah and Sm. M. Subbarama, M.A.L.L.B. elected, at a meeting presided over by Sri Ratnam, I. A. S., Sub Collector Penukonda, Sri N. Kasturi as the Chairman of the Committee. The two members nominated by the Government are: Sri B. V. Raja Reddy, B. A. (Hops) and Dr. N. Jayalakshmi, M. B. B. S. The Chairman and members were congratulated by Sri Ratnam I. A. S. who promised to give his advice and guidance for the benefit of the very first Township in Andhra Pradesh, started at a place made historic by the advent of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The members then proceeded to the Prayer Hall where they offered their reverential homage to Baba. Hundreds of Bhaktas and most of the District Officers and officers of the Panchayat Raj Department and the Community Development Blocks were present to convey their congratulations. The gathering of Bhaktas was presided over by Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, former Governor of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh. He reminded the gathering that Puttaparthi had become a place of international importance, with the continuous stream of pilgrims coming here from all the continents for Darshan of Baba and for receiving alleviation of sorrow and spiritual enlightenment from Him. The Government has recognised its significance and distinctive glory and so has awarded it this new status, he said. Margaret Haulor, an American Sadhaka and Social worker then addressed the Bhaktas, indicating the main outlines of an educational institution which she intends to run in the Township; she said that she felt that India and more especially

Prasanthi Nilayam was her home and that in Baba she discovered the Universal Master, who is integrating all religions into one Universal Message for the liberation of man from bondage to grief and fear. In His Discourse, Baba emphasised that the attitude of the Bhakta should be to consider all activity to be the Seva of the Lord and to accept everything as given by Him for his education. He instanced the case of Sabari, who had no other thought than Rama. She had heard that Rama was coming through the forest. So, she spent every moment anticipating the day and the route, removing thorns, cutting off overhanging boughs, cleaving a passage through the thick undergrowth, lest Rama might choose that route and get vexed at the obstacles. Rama filled every moment of her life. So too, all who claim to be Bhaktas must saturate their minds in devotion which must sweeten all hardships and lighten all burdens. Speaking about the establishment of the Township and the inauguration of the Committee, Baba said:

So far as Prasanthi Nilayam was concerned, there can never be any question of its feeling apart from any one place. Brindavan is everywhere, Govinda is everyone's, as the saying goes. The Township is intended, so far as its residents are concerned, to be a training ground for the intensive improvement of the area, an example and an inspiration for the villages around. I am asking the Chairman and the members to enter upon their task in humility and in a spirit of supreme service. The idea of constituting this place into a Township arose in the minds of persons with beneficial motives and so, it received the wholehearted support of every one from members of Panchayat Samitis to the Honorable Minister for Panchayat Raj. The members have to demonstrate how, while conforming to the rules and regulations laid down by the Government which after all has but the welfare of the people in view, the amenities of this place can be improved for the benefit of the residents and the thousands who gather here from all parts of the world.

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

July 16: **Bangalore:** Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse on Sri Krishna Karnamritha.

July 17: **Kumbakonam:** (Tamilnadu): Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: First Anniversary: President: Principal T. Murugaiyan, M.A.

July 21: **Baroda:** (Gujarat) Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi Inauguration.

July 21: **Prasanthi Nilayam:** Guru Poornima: Speeches: Howard Murphet and Dr. D. Doongaji, M.A., Ph.D. Discourse by Baba.

July 24: **Prasanthi Nilayam:** Speeches: Dr. Judith Tiberg and Prof. V. K Gokak. Discourse by Baba.

July 27: **Dharmapuri:** (Tamil Nadu): Sathya Sai Bhajan Mandali: 6th Anniversary.

July 30: **Koppam:** (Kerala) Laksharchana: Discourse On Baba's Teachings.

July 30-31 & August 1: **Anantapur**: Baba at Anantapur City.

Aug 1. **Jaffna**: (Ceylon): Mahasabha: Speeches on Baba's life and Message.

Aug 5. **Prasanthi Nilayam**: Township Committee: Inauguration.

Aug 6. **Trichinopoly**: (Tamil Nadu): Completion Ceremony of Koti Archana (Ten million Flower offerings) at the 'Feet of Baba'. 108th Bhajan Sessions.

Aug 6. **Colombo**: (Ceylon): Sri Sathya Sai Manram: Anniversary celebrations.

Aug 6-7: **Kothapeta**: (E. Godavari Dt.) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions.

Aug 8: **Indore**: (Madhya Pradesh): Satya Sai Seva Samithi: Inauguration.

Aug 13: **Madras**: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Anniversary celebrations.

Aug 13: **Amalapuram**: (E. Godavari Dt): Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse By Pundits.

Aug 15: **Ernakulam**: (Kerala) Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Inaugurations.

Bhagavata Vahini

16

Whenever Maharaja Parikshit toured any region, the rulers and kings of that area welcomed him enthusiastically, with appropriate honours, military and civil. They declared that they were ever ready to render him loyal service, whatever the nature of service that he required them to do. Parikshit replied that he had no need of their services and that he expected from them only the promotion of the happiness and prosperity of the people entrusted to their care. He advised them to devote special attention to the protection of Brahmins and women, guarding them against harm. He exhorted them to foster the worship of God throughout their dominions. Those were the only requests he made to those who were his tributary kings.

In some important regions of his empire, the people entertained him with folk songs, depicting the fame and prowess of his ancestors; they sang of the excellences and exploits of the Pandava brothers. The songs extolled the mercy and grace which Lord Krishna showered on the Pandavas and the devotion and faith with which the Pandavas revered Lord Krishna at all times. They also enacted folk-plays, taking on the roles of Pandavas and Kauravas, with Krishna in their midst, unravelling the story that He had planned with these instruments.

When Parikshit heard these songs and saw these plays tears rolled down his cheeks, in spite of his efforts to control his emotions. The minstrels and story-tellers, the actors and stage-men—all discovered that their Emperor was fascinated by plays and songs having these themes only; so they gave up other fields in their search for material and concentrated their attention on the dynastic history of Parikshit and the overpowering Grace with which Krishna saved it at every turn. The Emperor listened reverentially and sat through with great devotion; his gratefulness was shown in other ways too. He was supremely happy; he confirmed from his ministers and elders that the tales were completely true; at this, his faith and devotion multiplied and he sought these chances more often and enjoyed them even more. He treated the performers and musicians with intense affection and honoured them with lavish prizes.

When news spread that Parikshit delighted in hearing songs about his forefathers and Krishna, those who had personal experience of these gathered around him, wherever he went. They were themselves eager to see a ruler, who was so full of devotion. One day, while returning from Mathura, an old Brahmin was among those who stood on the side of the road, to catch the imperial eye. The Maharaja did not fail to notice him. He approached him and enquired lovingly about his welfare. The Brahmin said, "Maharaja! Years ago, when your grandfather Dharmaraja performed the horse-sacrifice, in the Divine Presence of Krishna, I officiated as a Ritwiks, as the chief priest, to conduct the rites. On that occasion Krishna approached me and enquired lovingly about my welfare, with as much affection as you are now showing me. Your words bring those words to my memory." The rest of the Brahmin's words were smothered by his sobs and tears. At this Parikshit exclaimed, "O, how fortunate you are! To be spoken to by the Lord in the Yajñashala!" He took off the cloth he had on his shoulders and placing it folded on the floor, he pleaded with the old man to sit upon it comfortably and tell him more about his experiences at the Yajñashala and other places, with the Lord.

Saying feebly, "My heart is torn to pieces because it cannot endure the grief at the error I committed that day," the old man wept. The Maharaja enquired, "Master! What is the error? If it can be revealed to me, I would like to know." He held both the hands of the old man, clasping them together and prayed to him to disclose it to him.

The Brahmin replied: "That day, all of us, who were initiated into the holy order of priests for the Yajna, put on the sacred clothes gifted to us and entered the sanctified enclosure. Then, Lord Krishna sitting on a golden plank-seat, in front of a golden plate, poured water from a golden vessel on—no, I cannot tell further—I do not get words." The old man wept and sobbed and could not proceed with his narrative.

The sudden stoppage of the story just when it had reached a critical point only heightened the curiosity of the Emperor. He prayed. "What happened Master? Tell me please." The Brahmin took courage to comply "O King, what shall I say? We Ritwiks were asked to place our feet on that gold plate and the lord washed the feet of each one of us He dried the feet later, with the cloth on His shoulder; He sprinkled the water from our feet on His Head. Since I was the Chief among them, He was consulting me about all the details of the rites. Lastly, on the day of the Valedictory Offering in the sacrificial Fire, He granted us a Vision of Himself, with Shankha, Chakra and Gada in His Divine Hands, and that Vision liberated us all from bondage forever. Now that the Merciful Lord is away from us, I feel that seeing you is like tasting a few drops of refreshing water by a poor fellow, dying of thirst in the raging sun of the desert.

The Brahmin concluded his account and holding the hands of Parikshit, he placed on the king's head a few grains of sanctified rice, which he had with him tied in a knot at the corner of his dhoti. Parikshit acknowledged the blessing and exclaimed, "Master! I am indeed fortunate. Though I could not see Lord Krishna in person, I have today the good luck of meeting the feet that He revered," and so saying, he fell at the old Brahmin's feet. He called the ministers to his side and instructed them to place the Brahmin in a palanquin and take him to his home. He also gave him large quantities of valuable gifts and treasure.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Krishna

Today, the Birthday of Krishna is being celebrated all over India. The Birth of Krishna took place in Mathura so many years ago; we know about it only from legends, stories, images, songs and books. None of us has experienced in life the presence of Sri Krishna. Although he still lives in the heart of every Hindu, the distance of ages makes much difference. Even in India, the sophisticated and the educated class, when you tell about Sri Krishna, will be quiet when you relate many stories of Krishna's life, like His being at many places at the same time. They will not accept that it can take place now. They will believe what has happened in the distant past; but, they will scorn at what is happening now. The things they accept happened so long ago that

no one can actually prove them. We know that those things happen here and now. To me, personally, and to many of you, Sri Krishna was born on the 23rd November 1926, at Puttaparthi. Sathya Sai is the Krishna we have and know. What we have seen with our own eyes, we cannot but believe and proclaim. The impossible is becoming possible, in this twentieth century, by this Krishna.

Listen to this passage from a book: "He is the Lord Omnipotent; the Lord of all beings, the controller of all; yet, He permits Himself to be controlled by those who love Him. Not by penance; nor by austerities, nor by study is he to be attained; but, those who love Him, with whole-souled devotion find Him easily, for, they are His; Chosen—they who have pure love in their hearts: Infinite though He is, He may be realised through Love."

When I tread this little paragraph, I thought, just as many of you now thought, that it was about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. But, it is about Krishna. We need not change any expression in this paragraph when we try to describe Bhagavan. The greatness and glory of both are identical.

In his previous appearance, Baba came to Shirdi, no one knew from where. He never announced his place of birth or even his name. But, Bhagavan, in this birth, has selected this holy place Puttaparthi where he was born as His place of residence. Sri Krishna moved from Mathura to Brindavan and then to Dwaraka. But, Baba has chosen this place itself, when any city in India, Bangalore Hyderabad Bombay or any place in America or any other country will place all they have at His Feet if He bestows His Grace on it. I shall be personally happy if Prasanthi Nilayam can be in America or rather, I should have said; if America can be made a Prasanthi Nilayam by Bhagavan's Blessings.

Indra Devi of Tecate, Mexico
(Speech at Prasanthi Nilayam) 28/8/67

The Mystery of Incarnation

This day, Krishna-Janmashtami, is a sacred day, when devotees dwell upon the majesty and glory of their Lord and taste the sweetness of His Name when it fills the hearts. The avatar as Krishna was a full avatar, with all the sixteen Kalas or majesties. In the Rama avatar, one Kala was still with the contemporary Parasurama, and three Kalas were represented by the three brothers who supplemented His Career. Other Incarnations of Divinity were for ad hoc purposes the destruction of just one evil person; but, the Rama and Krishna avatars were the first with the general purpose and mission of restoring Dharma and encouraging virtuous living, besides punishing the vicious and teaching the world that vice will not succeed.

Man is an amalgam of Divinity Humanity and Animality. If he displays no element of Divinity, then, he is a deplorable case; he becomes much more deplorable if he has only animality. He must strive to develop the Divinity that forms now just one part of his. Contemplation on the

excellences of the Rama or the Krishna avatar is one method of cultivating the Divine qualities in man.

Before every incarnation in the world, two collaborators with the Mayashakti, that is, the Avatar, namely Mayashakti and Yogashakti arrive and play their part. Balarama the elder brother was the Yogashakti. Maya was the elder sister, who while liberating herself from the clutches of Kamsa warned him of his fate and pointed out that Krishna who will be born will be the person who will kill him. She inflamed him all the more and thrust him deeper into perdition, so that his end might be more terrible.

In this Kali age, it is not possible to kill or destroy the wicked, for, wickedness is so all-pervasive. We have to reform and reconstruct the wicked individuals with sympathy and love. When a tree is attacked by white ants, it is not proper to hew it down with an axe. The ants must be removed and the tree saved. If you pour sand round the trunk roots, the ants will not infest the tree. So too, pour the sands of Bhakti round the roots of the wicked mind and the termites called vices will not attack you. That is why this Avatar is teaching the path of Bhakti.

The chief plank in the Sadhana of Bhakti is Namasmarana; the constant remembrance of the Name of the Lord. Some people think that this Sadhana is not sufficiently profound or esoteric. They feel that the great prize of Atmananda cannot be won by this simple popular means. But, it will bring about Bhakti Jnana and Vairagya gradually, and reward man with the prize of self-realisation. Of this, there is no doubt.

The Name is redolent with Divinity, even though it may indicate mere human acts, like stealing butter. For, it is not the ordinary butter that is churned out of milk that he stole, it is the butter of Faith churned by Yearning out of the experiences of the World that the Lord covets and gathers. Every word of Krishna has a deep inner meaning. When Yasoda chided Him for thievery, he replied, "But, they like me do it; they are sorry if I do not; they churn it for me."

He himself used to create occasions for announcing His advent. One day, He came to Yasoda with a complaint against His brother for having called Him dark! When the mother said, "Yes, it is true," He replied, "But, that is because: I have absorbed the evils of those who adore Me." Of all the adventures and wonders that Krishna exhibited while a boy, the subjugation of the poisonous many-hooded cobra called Kalinga is the most significant and revealing. The serpent was flooding the atmosphere with poisonous fumes; everyone dreaded to approach the deep portion of the river Yamuna where it lay. But, the Boy jumped into the depths, brought the serpent up above the waters, and leaped upon its line of hoods and danced. The pressure of those tender soles was hard enough to force the poison from out of the fangs of the mighty cobra; it was made into a harmless supplicant and let go. This is a great lesson for man, for, the Kalinga episode is not like the leelas of Krishna in earlier days. Of course, he had been lifted away by a storm-demon, hit by a calf-demon, felled by a cart-demon, pecked at by a stork-demon, but, such accidents can easily be set aside by skeptics as common place and natural. But, even the toughest die-hard skeptic must stand aghast at this unique leela. It has great lessons for each man. For, in the Manasarovara of every man there is a poisonous serpent, lying coiled, ready to strike. It infests the air and destroys all who contact it. The Sadhana of Smarana, dwelling on the majesty of the Lord, brings the serpent up, for, it cannot live in peace when holy thoughts are about.

Then, allow the Divine in you to get full control over the mind or manasarovara; let the Divine in you trample on the hissing hoods and tame the vicious thing; let it vomit all the venom and become Satwic and sweet. That is the lesson it conveys.

Krishna was demonstrating bit-by-bit His Mystery of Incarnation by signs and miracles. Yasoda was in the habit of singing lullabies to Him in the cradle and telling Him stories, to induce Him to sleep. One day, she related the Ramayana Story—how Dasaratha had four sons how Rama grew and was about to be crowned, how he had to go as an exile to the forest, how the golden deer appeared before His Queen, Sita, how He went after it to secure it for her and how Ravana who was waiting to capture her alone, surprised her in the hermitage and carried her away to his island capital. As she said this, the baby in the cradle cried out, "Lakshmana, where is My arrow? Give it to Me." The Mother wondered why the child had become so impatient and why it had cried out so; many elders and saints knew the significance and bowed before the Divine Mother and Baby.

Many obstacles come in the path of Faith; but, one must nourish it with firm steadfastness. For, life is being eaten up fast day-by-day. There is no time to hesitate and argue. There are nine paths in the field of Bhakti, Shravanam Kirtanam Dasyam Sakhyam etc and any one of them if pursued single-minded will award the fruit. Every one of them will remove the delusion that by I is meant the body. Uddhava asked Krishna the question, "Who is the biggest fool?" And the reply was, "He, who thinks he is the body, the man afflicted with Deha-bhranti." This identification is the result of a fundamental ignorance, Ajnana, which can be removed by Shraddha and Bhakti.

When Chaitanya was a little boy, just learning to walk on all fours, his mother Sachidevi, had a guest in her house, an old orthodox Brahmin who asked for provisions to cook his own meal and to prepare the initial offering for his God. She supplied them gladly and it was pretty late in the day, when he got ready with the cooked offering for his God. Just when he sat for the worship, Chaitanya toddled along and dipped his fingers in the dish, making it 'unfit' for God, in the view of the Brahmin; so, he had to cook again, after a bath. This time too the child made it unclean and a third time too it repeated the mischief. This enraged the mother so much that she gave the child a thrashing. Then, Chaitanya asked her, as Krishna used to ask Yasoda, "How can I desist? He is calling on Me to partake of it; but, when I move towards it to take it, he gets angry and is disappointed." Thus did he reveal that he is an incarnation of the Divine.

Mainavati, the mother of Gopichand was happy when her son became a monk; she prayed that he may succeed in the achievement of sarvasanga-parityaga, the giving up of all attachment. Of what benefit is the accumulation of progeny like the 100 sons that Dhritarashtra had? A son like Suka is far more praiseworthy. One day, when Gopichand was sleeping in the house, with his associate, Bharthrhari, she asked another person to sleep on the same mat; but, Gopichand got enraged; he said, it was his place and nobody could share it. Bharthrhari who was also subjected to the same test, got up in silence and moved off. So, She told her son that he had not yet learnt to rule over himself.

A Sarvasanga-parityagi should have no affection or attachment. There was an ascetic who was going along a Himalayan ridge, in the eastern direction, but, when the strong wind blew his hair on his face and blocked his vision, he turned west and walked equally calmly, without any

resentment. Giving up is the cure for the evils of acquisition, just as cold air is craved for in summer and the fireplace is sought in winter.

The removal of attachment, which is a delusion is the first step taught in the Gita. Arjuna's vishada is due to his vishaya-vasana, attachment to the objective world. In the Treta Yuga, Vasishtha attempted to remove it by his teachings in the Yoga-Vasishtha; in the Dwapara Yuga, Krishna removed it in Arjuna by means of His Bhagavad-Gita. Mere praise and puja are worthless, when you deal with these texts; accept them as guides; follow at least one of their teachings. There was a Brahmin boy who went to foreign lands in pursuit of higher education, who fell a prey to the temptations of society there. His father had admonished him and prayed to him with folded hands when he left the shores of India not to give up the habits of food and thought which marked the special nature of Indian culture, but, temptation was too strong for him. One day, when he received a letter from India and when he found it was from his aged father he shed tears of joy and pressed it on his eyelids and placed it on his head, all in great veneration. His friend saw all this; he said, "Of what use is all this veneration, when you are systematically disobeying your father's commands?"

People utter "Krishna, Krishna", but, never give up Trishna, or Thirst after worldly goods. In each Yuga, you have the Avatar; now, when Mahashakti and Mayashakti and Yogashakti have all come together in human form, your effort should be to draw near and follow the path prescribed for sharing in the Divine Inheritance.

From Baba's Discourse: 28-7-67

Our Offering

The Bhagavad-Gita (IX, 26) says, 'Offer Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, a drop of water; that is enough.' But, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba does not ask even these things He says that there is no use in offering God leaves that fade, flowers that crumple, fruits that rot and water that becomes foul. Give Me your heart, pure and full of devotion, He says. He calls those whom He has chosen to Him and teaches them this great lesson—Offer unto God the pure heart filled with devotion. If you think that you have come here, to Prasanthi Nilayam, to have Hi-, Darshan you are mistaken; He has chosen you and brought you here. God wants you to come here and so you have come.

If we must find out what exactly we have to offer to Bhagavan, we can know it well by examining the career of Mhalasapathi, who served Baba in His previous body at Shirdi. He was an ignorant villager, with no pretensions to wealth or learning. He was the first to welcome Sai Baba when he reached Shirdi with the marriage party of Chand Patil. The carts of the party were loosened in the open space before Khandoba's Temple, and one by one, the members of the party got down from the carts. When Baba got down, Mhalasapathi saw him; he said Ya Sai, (Welcome, O Sai). Thenceforth he was known as Sai Baba; Baba adopted that name.

He was sleeping with Baba at Dwarakamayi until the Mahasamadhi. He was such a great devotee of Baba that Baba called him by that very rare appellation, Bhakta—Bhagat! This Dasya Bhava is the attitude we should have towards Bhagavan; that is the best. He loves us beyond description by words; one glance from His eye is enough to make us happy forever; we who are less than the dust of His Feet, He deigns to call near Him and to use for His purpose and Mission, Mhalasapathi was very poor; Baba often used to ask him, "There are many rich people coming here; I shall tell them to give you money, so that you can be rid of this trouble", but, every time, Mhalasapathi refused to take anything. He wanted only Baba's Grace and the chance to serve Baba. Leave everything to Bhagavan, He knows best, He will give us what we deserve and what His Grace can win for us.

Four years after Baba left, Mhalasapathi passed away on one Ekadasi Day, with the words Sai, Sai on his lips, supremely peaceful and happy. That is the life we should emulate; that is the Bhava we must cultivate. May Bhagavan endow us with the discrimination to elect this path and stick to it, through, to the very Goal.

From Speech by K. P. Mukunda Prabhu: Prasanthi Nilayam 28/8/67

Be humble, so that you can escape the fury of the passions and the emotions. A tree that holds its head high is torn down by the raging floods; but, a reed bends low when the flood swirls around it and so it survives the fury of the waters. Man must learn to be egoless and humble.

Baba

Man's Search

Great Avatar, Lord, Master,
We strive to reach the goal,
To reach beyond the portals
To where the Part is Whole—
Beyond all thought, all feeling,
Beyond the stars and sun,
Beyond the cosmic zero,
To where all things are one.

How many books of wisdom,
How many teachers speak,
To bring us husks of learning,
But never the Heart we seek—
The Heart where slow Decaying
Through endless time and pain
No longer rules our being;
For we are Gods again.

Man's mind tho' racked and reeling
Still sees itself as All,
And we are tethered to it,
Chained in its prison wall:
Blind prisoners gross and greedy,
And savage in the fight;
And all around is darkness:
How can we know there's light?

We know because we have sensed it—
A radiance rich and rare,
A flash between the moments,
'Tween molecules of air.
Sunlight along the seashore,
Sunbeams the wet waves kiss,
Pale into half-lit shadows
Before that beam of Bliss.

Alone we cannot reach it
That Home-light beckoning still,
A glint of golden fingers,
Above the darkest hill.
But we shall drink Amrita,
And eat the Moksha fruit
When every sound goes silent
To the pipings of Thy Flute.
—Howard Murphet

The Hills did Thrill

Horsley Hills in Chittoor District provide a summer resort with a salubrious climate, for, they take-us to an elevation of 4000 feet above sea level; they are also easily accessible, being on the highroad between Kadiri and Madanapalle.

At the request of the devotees in the Madanapalle and Voyalpad Taluks in Chittoor District, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba spent ten days on these hills, between the 5th and 15th June—days which were filled with experiences that will never be wiped from their memory. Hundreds from the villages and towns around travelled by car and bus to the quiet Bungalow where Baba stayed and received from His Hand the Divine Prasad which they craved for.

They had the rare privilege of joining in the Bhajan Sessions, which Baba held every day, and they could hear Baba Himself teaching inspiring Namavalis to the earnest participants. Baba was kind enough to address the staff and students of the School at the Hills, at the request of the

Educational Officer, of the Tirupati Tirumalai Devasthanams who have established it under their auspices.

Devotees who were with Baba had the unique opportunity of learning from Him during the long discussions He had with them, solutions for all their spiritual problems and the steps they had to take in Spiritual Sadhana. Howard Murphet of the Theosophical Society, and Mrs. Murphet were among the group and they had many opportunities of witnessing Bhagavan's Divine Powers, His Grace and His Omniscience. The poem from Howard Murphet's pen that we are publishing on another page of this Number has emanated from the heart of the poet, a heart filled with thanksgiving for all the awe reverence and wisdom that were provided by Baba during those days of intimate association—gifts that supplemented the experiences of previous months and that were continued later, at Prasanthi Nilayam itself.

There were other; too at Horsley Hills from all the States of India, who used the opportunity for the elucidation and solution of the manifold problems, in spiritual practice, that were harassing them.

Bhagavan moved in the company of the devotees among the hills and dales of this delightful place, and during these hours, He gave them glimpses of His Omnipotence and Omnipresence. Plucking a jasmine flower from a creeper, He breathed on it and made it into a diamond, of exceeding brilliance. Picking up a piece of granite, He gave it to a member of the party, but, it was not the stone that he received, it was the stone turned sugar-candy! Those among the group of devotees who had not received from His Hand the Amrita on Vaikuntha Ekadasi Day in previous years had the satisfaction of getting it from His Hand at Horsley Hills, when He materialised a silver vessel full of the precious nectar and gave each one the coveted sign of Grace. This incident must be the basis for the lines in the poem of Murphet:

But, we shall drink Amrita
And eat the Moksha fruit

for the Amrita is but a reminder of man and his inner reality, his ever-present destiny. The fruit that Baba creates and gives to us for eating is just a reminder of the Moksha fruit which the Tree of Life should yield to every man and bird and beast.

Another day, He created Japamalas, for those who deserved that Gift; others got other sacred articles, created by that Divine Hand, which will be treasured as inspirations and instructions.

While exhorting the devotees seated around Him one day to

Reach beyond the portals
To where the Part is whole
Beyond all thought, all feeling,
Beyond the stars and sun,
Beyond the cosmic zero
To where all things are One

Bhagavan created a picture of the Commie, Purusha, the Personified Universe, the Viraat Swarupa, and, the person to whom it was given as well as others were overwhelmed with joy, when they found in the picture, (given, as the frontispiece of this number) representations of Bhagavan in His Present Incarnated Form as Sathya Sai Baba and also, in His Previous Form, as the Sai Baba of Shirdi.

The fortnight on the Hills provided precious chances for thousands of people, from high government officers to the simple farmers and woodcutters to receive His Blessings and to listen to His voice—the voice that teaches so lovingly, that wards so endearingly, that thrills so sweetly. When He left for the Plains, even the forest trees were sad for, He has come for all beings that breathe, the vital airs He has prescribed for life.

R. N. R.

The Overwhelming Grace

The twentieth of August was a historic day for the city of Mandya, headquarters of the district of the same name, in the state of Mysore. The District is famous for its hard working farmer population, who, with the waters of Cauvery River brought to their fields by the Visweswaraya Canal from the Krishnarajasagara Dam, raise a variety of crops. It is also famous for the great temple of Sri Ranganatha at Sri Rangapattana, (an island fortress on the Cauvery, the ancient seat of Tipu Sultan) and of Cheluva Narayana at Thirunarayanapuram, (associated with the great founder of Visishtadvaita, Sri Ramanuja of the eleventh century, A.D.).

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba accepted the invitation of the President and members of the Mandya Municipality and reached the outskirts of City about 12-30 P.M. The roads leading to the place were packed since morning with eager pilgrims from hundreds of villages and Baba, with His overwhelming Grace, stood upon His Car in order that the thousands who sought His Darshan may not be disappointed! The President and members of the Municipality had arranged a Reception for Bhagavan in traditional Hindu style, with Poorna Kumbha and Vedaghosha. They had also made elaborate arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the several hundreds who had come from far-off places like Mangalore Bangalore Coimbatore Dharmapuri Salem Mysore and Nilgiris.

In the evening at 4 P.M., the mammoth gathering of more than a hundred thousand people had the unique chance of Darshan of Bhagavan. They were assembled in the vast Stadium of the City and the roads and open spaces around it; Baba went along the paths between the long quiet lanes of squatting persons, and blessed them all with his near Presence. Then, He ascended the Rostrum which commanded the entire area, filled with yearning faces. A hundred thousand throats shouted jai in grateful exultation.

Hon'ble Sri K. V. Shankare Gowda, the Minister for Education, in Mysore State, who presided, said, "Man cannot hope to secure peace through the attainment of physical comfort or economic prosperity. It can be acquired only by spiritual equanimity. Today we have lost the art of Spiritual Sadhana and so, every nation is on the brink of moral disaster. I welcome this over-

powering enthusiasm that my fellow-countrymen are evincing to have the Darshan of Bhagavan and to listen to His Divine Message, for it augurs well for the future of this nation."

Prof. Vinayaka Krishna Gokak, Vice Chancellor, Bangalore University, who had accompanied Baba to Mandya was pressed to speak a few words and he said, "This is a moment of crisis in the life of every individual, every state and even the entire world. The individual is in need of a Guide who can help him tide over the storms and floods of conflicting pulls and fears; the state needs a Sovereign who is above all prejudice and partisanship, who can shape a future, where all can grow into the heaven of peace and love; the world needs a Force that will promote understanding and brotherhood, rather than passion and faction. For such direction and such instruction, we must rely on some Majestic Divine Personality—in fact, on Bhagavan, whom we have come to see and hear; let us pray for the wisdom to realise His Message and the courage to practise it in our daily lives".

Bhagavan, in His Discourse, dwelt on the grandeur of Sanathana Dharma and of Bharatiya Samskriti. The thinkers of this land reached the heights of Advaita; the heroes of this land conquered the realms of the spirit and achieved independence from the tyranny of the senses. The arts of music, sculpture, architecture, painting poetry and drama were developed to the highest extent, by being subordinated to the demands of the Divine Urge in Man.

Bharat has done immense good to the world by laying down the disciplines of Sadhana by which man can realise his destiny, namely, merging in the Ocean of Bliss from which he has been exiled by his own ignorance.

Bhagavan pointed out that tolerance and fortitude were the chief qualities recommended for, cultivation by the genius of Indian culture. Truth, was the ideal held forth, in the ancient texts. The idea of the Mother and of her sacrifice and unquestioning Love was praised as the goal for woman. Honour was considered as more essential than even Life. But, on account of the attractions of modern western life, these values are being ignored, to the detriment of this nation and its glory. The present atmosphere of faction and fear, of falsehood and cruelty, is due to the neglect of the basic ideals of Sanathana Dharma, He said.

Look at the nations that have attained a high standard of living and that have established mastery over nature. They are coveting Nature, as Ravana coveted Sita. Nature is the vesture of God; it is His Maya, the manifestation of His mighty mystery. But, instead of acquiring the Grace of God, many leaders of thought and action are directly acquiring, by god-less efforts, Nature. That is the reason why humility and love, brotherliness and tolerance are absent in their dealings and the world is dragged on to the brink of catastrophe, Baba announced.

He advised the people of this ancient land to practise some steps in Sadhana as a preliminary to the realisation of the goal of human birth. He said that Namasmara was the easiest and the most efficacious of such steps.

The vast gathering was moved into immense enthusiasm by the events of that memorable day, which will remain long in the memory of each one and which will revolutionise the attitudes and beliefs of a large number of those who attended.

How I Know There is God

The foundation stone of religion is belief in the Existence of God. This is not a blind belief, but rather a conviction which has been reached through the use of our intellect. In denying His Existence, religion will vanish.

We have studied something about science. We know how delicate a thin the radio is. Could all these parts of the radio assemble themselves? Immediately one will say 'No'. Now look at the Universe and the sky with its galaxy of innumerable stars, moving with tremendous speed, and perfect accuracy. Could all these happen just by chance? Just as we cannot take the radio for granted—we know that some intelligent person has assembled it—in the same way one cannot think of the Universe and all its wonders without admitting the existence of some intelligence, Infinitely Wise. This Supreme Intelligence, we call God.

Now whether we realise it or not, we are surrounded by laws. Nature, functioning in its clock-wise manner and the systematic movement of the solar system, which follows physical laws, go to prove that there is some Supreme Commander. These laws are so regular and accurate that astronomers can tell before centuries when an eclipse will take place. There are also moral laws. We are free to choose anything between good and evil. But we realise that there is something which tells us at the appropriate time, this is right or that is wrong. In short, we are conscious of something guiding our moral actions. This Moral Law is Universal.

But who has made this law which bars men from doing evil? It is not man himself. If it were So, man would change the law every day according to his will. Hence who has put these moral laws into the Hearts of men? Who has made the physical laws which govern the Universe? The answer is that there is a Supreme Law Giver who has the authority over the Hearts of men and over all Creation. This Supreme Law Giver is God.

I shall mention only one of my experiences. Once I attended a mass prayer. The prayer was so heart-touching that God showed His Presence therein by the formation of the symbol OM (symbol of God) on one of His portraits. Since then my Faith in God has strengthened.

May God give us the strength, wisdom and power to understand Him in His true Form:

Thou art my mother and father Thou art,
Thou art my brother and friend
Thou art, Thou art my learning and wealth
Thou art, Thou art my all, O' God of Gods!

S. Krishna Kumar Age 12. yrs 8 months

(One of the three Prize winning Essays in the Essay Competition for High Schools to Poona District arranged by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Poona)

Sri Sathya Sai Sathsang Samachar

- August 13: **Mettur Dam** (Madras State) Fifth Anniversary Celebrations of Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali; **Amalapuram** (E. Godavari Dt) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: discourse by Pundits; **Bangalore**: Prof: G. P. Rajarathnam, Speech on Pampa's Duthavakya; **Alandur** (Madras) Bhajan, Feeding of the poor, by Sathya Sai Seva Samithi.
- 15: **Ulsoor** (Mysore) Sathya Sai Sanathana Samaj: Akhanda Bhajan; **Cochin** (Kerala) Laksharchana; Discourse by Tilak Maharaj.
- 20: **Calicut** (Kerala) Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse by Sahithyasiromani K.M.Kutti Krishna Marar.
- 24: **Secunderabad** (Andhra Pradesh): Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali: Discourse by Deepala Pichayya Sastry; **Paramakudi** (Ramnad Dt) 24-30th Laksharchana Celebrations, Sathya Sai Bhaktha Samajam Bhajan and Speech by Sri.D.Ramabhadram, B.A, B.L.; **Berhampur** (Orissa): First Anniversary Celebrations, Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali: President Sri.Biswanath Das, Former Governeo of Uttar Pradesh.
- 27: (Sri Krishnajanmashtami Celebrations: some selected events); **Bombay**: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Branch: Hon. Sri. P. K. Savant spoke on Sathya Sai Baba on the Githa; **Trichur** (Kerala) Bhajan, Speeches, Astapadi Ganam; **Mettupalayam** (Nilgiris): Children's Fete, Procession with Cows and children's Bhajan parties; **Chokkadi** (Mysore State): Harikatha on Krishna; **Pandavapura** Procession of Baba as Sai Krishna; **Nellore** (Andhra Pradesh): Laksharchana, Burrakatha; **Prasanthi Nilayam**; Speech by Sri Devi Prasad Sukla, I.A.S. (Retd) Discourse by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
- 28: **Ratlam** (Madhya Pradesh) Sathya Sai Seva Samithi:Ekadasarudrabhishekam; **Challapalli** (Krishna Dt) Laksharchana: Discourse by Pundits; **Karwar** (Mysore) Seva Samithi Lectures in Marathi and English; **Trichinopoly** (Madras): Inauguration of Sathya Sai Study Circle; **Najibabad** (Uttar Pradesh) Sri Sathya Sai Jana Prvahini: Seminar on Dharma and National Progress; **Prasanthi Nilayam**: Speeches by Indra Devi, Founder, Yoga, Tecate, Mexico and Sri. K. P. Mukunda Prabhu, B.A.; **Mangalore** (Mysore State): Divine Discourse by Baba; **Colomba** (Ceylon): Bhajan Speeches.
- 29: **Telinipura** (W. Bengal) Inauguration of Sathya Sai Puja Samithi.
- 31: **Salem** (Madras State) First Meeting of Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Speech by Swami Nandananda, Sri Ramakrishna Mission.

- Sep: 1-2: **Eranakulam** (Kerala) Discourses by Br. Anjam Madhavan Nambudiri, on Namasmarana.
- 2: **Srirangam** (Madras State): Second Anniversary Celebrations of Sathya Sai Seva Samithi; **Tanjore** (Madras State): Seva Samithi, Bhajana, Speeches; **Hyderabad**: Baba at Hyderabad.
- 3: **Secunderabad**: Inauguration of Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Inauguration of Sathya Sai Library: by Sri V.K.Rao, I.C.S.
- 4: **Bangalore**: Baba leaves Hyderabad, for Bangalore, Baba arrives at Prasanthi Nilayam on 6th.
- 5: **Poona** (Maharashtra): Announcement of the Results of the High School Student's Essay Competition, by the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi Poona. I.T.J.Joseph, St.Joseph's Boy's School:II. Kumari Lalitha gurani, Mount Caramel High School and III. Krishna kumar (Kendriya Vidyalaya).
- 10: **Gangalakurru**: (E.Godavari Dt): Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse by Br. Vemparla Suryanarayana Sastry.
- 13: **Surat**: (Gujarat): Annual Celebrations of Sathya Sai Vibhuti.
- 14: **Coimbatore** (Madras State): Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: First Annual Celebrations: President Sri. M. Shamdass, District Judge, Trichinopoly: Speakers: N. Kasturi, Prof. Kamalpathi.
- 15: **Palghat** (Kerala): Special Onam Bhajan at Sathya Sai Nagar, Palghat: Discourses.

Dasara Festival

Dasara will be celebrated at the Prasanthi Nilayam, in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba from 4th to 13th of October, 1967. The programme includes Vedasapthaha Yajna from 7-10-67, Special Sessions of the Akhila Bharata Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, the Parayana of Scriptures, Homa, Ekadasarudrabhisheka, Vedic Recitation etc. Every day there will be Adhyatmic Discourses between 4 and 7 and from 8 P. M. items of spiritual entertainment like Harikatha, Drama, Music and Burrakatha will be arranged. This is a chance for all seekers and aspirants to benefit by the disciplined atmosphere of the Nilayam, the Darsan of Bhagavan and the Discourses of Bhagavan and the Pundits and to progress further towards the goal of Self-realisation.

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Since Prasanthi Nilayam is full of all kinds of construction work, painting, whitewashing, erection of sheds etc, Baba will not be granting Personal interviews during September '67; they will be resumed only after the Dasara Festival, in October.

Bhagavata Vahini

17

Emperor Parikshit journeyed in state over the entire Indian continent, acquainting himself with the administrative excellence of the rule of his grandfathers, with the unique relationship which they had established between themselves and Lord Krishna who had then come down on earth as Man, listening to the experiences of many a saint and scholar who lived in those halcyon days, and reflecting on those cheering memories, as he travelled along. Often he was overcome with remorse at the thought that he was not alive during those days when the grandparents were in such heavenly bliss.

While thus immersed in the joy of recollecting the annals of his forefathers and the glory of those bygone days with Krishna, Vyasa, the great sage, appeared before him quite unexpectedly; he welcomed him with great honour and offered him an elevated seat. The sage praised the rule of Parikshit and said that he was reminded of the reign of the Pandavas. The young King listened reverentially to his talk. After sometime, Vyasa said, "Son, I must be going now," But, Parikshit said, "It is like placing a dish of delicacies before a starving man and just when he is about to stretch his hand towards it, dragging it away from his grasp. Your accounts of the adventures of my grandfathers and of the splendour of Sri Krishna are like the most precious gems spread out before me; but, you cause the most painful disappointment to me by refusing to let me have them. Your leaving me just now makes me feel desperately sorry."

He pleaded with the sage to stay a little longer. "Tell me on what mission you have come. Be with me for some more time and assuage the hunger that is gnawing me. I missed the great good fortune that my grandparents had to spend their lives with the Lord Himself. I shall save myself from decline, at least by listening to their exploits and their devotion which drew upon them His Grace." Seeing the King who prayed in great earnestness and humility, Vyasa said, "Son, Do not feel that you are in any way inferior or less endowed with good fortune. I declare that no one else had such good fortune as you earned. For, you drew upon yourself the Grace of the Lord, the moment you were born. The Lord, Vaasudeva, gave you the breath of life; He raised you in His arms and played with you, while you were yet a baby. You too stuck to Him so close that you scarce kept aloof. Your youngest grandfather, Sahadeva, had to pluck you by force from Krishna and hand you over to the women in the inner halls. You were named ceremonially by Vaasudeva Himself. What a memorable scene it was! You showed us that you were a wonderful child; you followed with your eyes the Lord wherever He moved, whichever side He turned. You were intent on 'pariksha' (finding out) where He was, as no one else was in that hall that day. Krishna hid Himself very cleverly behind pillars and tried various means of diverting your attention away from Him; but, you proved too clever even for Him! Your eyes were searching for Him alone; they saw only Him and His splendid Form. All of us who were then present were wonderstruck at your devotion and concentration. It appeared as if you were examining each face and trying to find out whether it was Krishna's; your face fell when you saw it was not; it blossomed when your eyes saw Him and Him only. Scholars and simple folks, ryots and rajahs, realised that you were a remarkable child. That is the reason why, when your grandfather Dharmaraja prayed to Him to give you an appropriate name, He named you after your strange behaviour, Parikshit (he who examines, he who tries to find out).

“When the Lord announced this name to Dharmaraja, in the hearing of that vast gathering of courtiers and scholars and sages, they all applauded saying, 'Very apt, excellent, fine'. Being so richly favoured by fortune, it is not meet that you should condemn yourself as unlucky. You were fondled by the Lord; He played with you and watched your gambols; He gave you your name. How few earn this fortune! Do not consider these just common gifts of Grace.”

Tears of joy welled from the eyes of Parikshit at these words. He had a question rising up from his throat, but, Vyasa saw him swallowing it and so, he patted him on the shoulder and encouraged him to ask it, "Son, it looks as if you desire to put some query to me. Ask without hesitation, do not quail " Taking courage from this prompting, Parikshit said, "Worthy master! Man cannot know the value of either joy or grief, unless he is aware of them. The joyful contacts of which you spoke now were awarded me when I was scarcely aware of the bliss inherent in them. Real joy can be tasted only when one is conscious of its value. If a child is given a billion-rupee diamond, it will only deal with it as a lump of glass. The happiness of being with the Lord, which you say I had in my childhood, is as ineffective as the joy experienced in past births. I did not know then what precious moments they were. Had I known it, were I capable of knowing it, I could have treasured that joy forever. Now it is all mere inference. I have no ocular proof of the Grace of the Lord which I received then; so, I depend now on auricular proof only. So, please tell me of the greatness and glory of Krishna; let my ears drink the nectar of those stories.”

Vyasa was moved by his entreaty; he agreed. "Son, do you consider His leelas to be just one or two? How can I relate to you His leelas which are beyond one's capacity to enumerate. So, ask about what He did in connection with some particular person, or during some particular incident or situation; I shall gladly tell you all the details." Parikshit was elated at this; he begged him with folded hands, "Master! Tell me how this great attachment between my grandparents and Lord Krishna was born.”

Vyasa burst into laughter. "Son, your earnestness surprises me much. For, only such earnest individuals can get Jnana; I am delighted that you have this deep yearning. So, I shall tell you what you have asked for. Listen!" Saying this, Vyasa made himself comfortable in his seat; Parikshit too, got ready to hear, with a heart that was blossoming with joy and ears that widened in the eagerness to listen.

"Son! King Dhrupada grew anxious to give his only daughter in marriage to a suitable groom, but could not succeed in securing one, in spite of the most diligent search. So, he announced a Swayamvara (festival for choice of Bridegroom) and, kings of great might and majesty assembled in his capital, along with scholars endowed with charming personality, all eager to wed the princess whose beauty was unexcelled in the three worlds. They were all proud of their wealth and valour for they felt they could win her by those attainments

“In that assembly hall, the king had fixed a contrivance on a pillar. It was a wheel revolving fast, a wheel that was reflected in a sheet of water, below the pillar on which it turned. The wheel had a 'fish' tied on it: the competitors for the hand of the princess were asked, one by one, to come forward and, drawing the bow looking at the reflection, shoot at the fish-target up above. Dhrupada announced his intention to give away his daughter in marriage to whosoever hit the

target, so prepared. The city was full of princes and kings who had arrived to try their hands at this unique festival of bowman ship.

“News of this festival reached the ears of your grandparents who had then assumed the role of Brahmins, to mislead the wily Kauravas. They felt at first that they should not come out in the open on that occasion; but, Arjuna, your grandfather, was able to persuade his brothers to attend the festival of valour, for, as he said, no Kshatriya should stay away when bowmen compete for a worthy prize.

Thus it happened that the five brothers sat among the assembly, in the garb of Brahmins, like a group of lions, casting a halo of heroism around; all eyes were drawn towards the place where they sat; people commented on their presence, many in admiration, some in derision; some praised them as champions, some laughed at them as prize fighters or guards. The whispers aroused by them spread all round.

“Lord Krishna had come for that Festival. His eyes were fixed on Arjuna all the time; this was noticed by his brother, Balarama, who spoke something to his brother. At last, the Swayamvara contest began; one by one, the candidates proceeded to the image seen in the water and aimed the arrow at the 'fish' rotating above. They failed and returned pale with humiliation. They walked back to their seats, heavy with disappointment and shame, and sat sunk in sorrow.

“Krishna had no intention to rise and have a try at the target, for, He sat quiet in His own place. If He had that intention, He could have quite easily hit the 'fish' and won. But, who can gauge the depths of His mind?

Just then, Arjuna rose and proceeded towards the 'contrivance', casting a lightning flash of brilliance over the assembly by the heroic aura of his personality. Droupadi, the princess, lifted her head and watched him in admiration. Her mind merged in that flash of light. In an instant, Arjuna's arrow split the 'fish'; he won. The applause of the gathering rose to the skies. The princess came forward and wedded him, placing a garland of flowers around his neck and holding his hand.

“When Arjuna emerged from the Hall holding the hand of the bride, the horde of defeated kings and princes yelled that the rules of the contest were broken, since a Brahmin who had no right to compete in bowman-ship was allowed to participate and declared the winner. They fell on your grandfather, in an angry clump. But, Bhima pulled out a huge tree by its roots and whirled it at the crowd of foiled kings.

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Soar Like a Lark

We totter and grope in the dark

In the mire of ignorance; we flounder,
Instead of soaring like a lark!

Come, arise, awake, falter not,
For, He is here; why fear? He is so near!

Tune up the heart; cleanse the mind;
Brush the cobwebs away.
The Grace, ever-present, doth flow—
O, take it in, my thirsty friend.
We can hear the Flute of the Lord;

Why care for lesser joys?
Let the Lotus bloom;
Dance, O, Dance to the music of His Name.
The Name so fragrant, sweet and pure;
From millions of tongues It echoes soft,
From millions of hearts its pulse-beats rise.

O; the Glory and the Ecstasy
His Name can bring!!

—Dr. Keki M. Mistry,
B. D. S. M. S.F.C.D
Bombay

The Formula

I was an incessant questioner, since childhood I used to pester my parents and relatives with all kinds of queries. Cross-examination was my forte, even at the age of five or six. "Why should I eat? Why should I get hungry? How can food stop hungers?" I used to bother everyone with perpetual questioning. My parents used to pray and worship God; I asked, "Why should we do that?" I do not remember what reply they gave to satisfy me; I only know that even when they replied, my questions continued.

Fifty years have passed; and, now I feel I have come to the state in which my parents were when I troubled them so. I now feel that I must encourage our children to ask such questions, so that we can share with them some of the experiences we have had about such things!

When I was in College, a great sage had come there and after his discourse, I met him in private and asked him, sincerely and out of a desire to know, certain questions. I shall tell you the answers he gave that day.

I told him that God seemed to be a principle designed to keep society in trim, a product of human imagination which helps many to preserve their contentment. He said that every man is his own maker, that he is a product of his own acts and thoughts, that man must liberate himself from the consequences of his own acts. To release him from this unseen but strong chain, God has to give him what he needs as drug.

A millionaire's child may weep for a piece of chocolate; he can start a chocolate factory for him or purchase half a dozen; but, the father does not give him even one piece for, the baby has fever and he should not be given indigestible stuff. Moreover, when you get a certain degree of the highest source of Grace, you are not tempted to ask for worldly goods or personal comforts; you would rather ask for something you feel much more needed to allay the spiritual thirst that torments you.

I asked him to show me God, in the scientific satisfactory way. He said that there is a science here, too. H_2O is water, H_1 is not; HO_2 is not; There is a formula for God, also; know it and just as when 2 quantities of hydrogen and one quantity of oxygen are put into a tube and an electric current passes through it, water is produced, so too God is realised when certain rules are followed strictly and in conform any with formulae which have been discovered, by the experience of honest earnest men.

Tell me that formula, I asked him. He said, I have to sit quietly and meditate on God and His Glory, or keep the mind free from physical or worldly thoughts and emotions. I told him that there would be some hitch, somewhere; he could say that I did not meditate properly if I challenge him why I had no result. He said, "Yes, certainly. But, I will not say, you had no devotion or bhakti. That is not so essential, when you start this discipline. You can do it as an experiment to verify what I tell you."

"The only thing you have to do is to make the mind a vacuum, chinthanless. The first effect of your mind being directed to God is that it will not be doing or planning sin or evil. Thought of God will filter out all wickedness and all evil. Just as all the salt will be lost when water evaporates and is condensed back, so too all vice will vanish in the rarefied atmosphere of the mind that refuses to entangle itself with the world."

"O, this is all psychological method and thought, which you are telling me," I said. He asked me, "Why do you criticise the result, even before you enter upon the experiment which I am recommending?" He said, "The God who resides in you will listen to your prayer, will lend you courage and wisdom."

"Even I do not know what will happen, when that inner Grace gets alerted and busy," he said. "Leave it to Him to do what He likes only allow Him all the scope, He take." I knew when I heard Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Madras that this step is best; Baba advised the gathering to realise that God is realisable and that the path was easy through Love, through good company and meditation on the name of the Lord. I heard from Dr. Bhagavantham that the science of God-realisation is beyond the categories of what we call science; I got a glimpse of Bhagavan's Glory from the moving account that that great scientist gave of his experience of Baba.

So, I accepted to come and spend some time with you this evening, because this Satsang will keep the mind free from low thoughts and filter out vice and sin, hatred and pride. I am thankful to the organisers for this chance

M. Syamdas B.A., B.L.

From Speech at District Gudge Trichinopoly Coimbatore

Do You See Him?

It is surely Babaji's wish that we should all feel the ties across the Ocean, for each moment He is building the bridges for international Santhi. This Santhi He has given to me and I am giving Him my Ananda. I am in His Constant Presence every moment, now. He is here; you can feel His divine touch, you can feel His divine voice, you wrap yourself in His divine Bliss, you can sense His divine love.

Prasanthi Nilayam is here; it has no walls it has no earthly foundation, for, it is as Babaji keeps reminding us, right within our own breast.

How many times has the Lord given us this body to discover its true purpose? I wonder how many times He is prepared to go through the process of providing us the mortal body. But, He answers, "As many times as is necessary, until you know you are immortal."

When I was a boy in North Perth, Western Australia, I used to play with the other children the game called Hide and Seek. This game Babaji still plays with me. He hides and I seek. I seek Him everywhere. As a child, I often could not find the other boys; but, I can assure you now, that I find Him every time EVERYWHERE.

He is right now in the eyes of the person reading this letter of mine. DO YOU SEE HIM?

Charles Penn, Los Angeles

The Mind Principle

Man must rise beyond the animal and master his monkey mind. This is the chiefest item in Sadhana. This technique was elaborated in the ancient Vedic texts and practised by the sages; neglect of the study and practice of the Upanishads and the Gita has resulted in the crisis we suffer today.

So, attempts should be made to revive our ancient culture, which was so practical, so applicable to our everyday problems and so beneficial. Now, there are many details about the mind that

have to be remembered and many misconceptions that have to be ignored. What exactly are we doing with our minds? In how many different ways are we harmed by the activities of the mind? How does the mind itself get modified and transformed? One has to study these and free oneself from the sovereignty of the mind. One should endeavour, on the other hand, to establish one's sovereignty over the mind. Then alone is this life worthwhile. Else, it is a colossal waste.

Grasp this maya and in an instant, the postulate of mind is seen as illusion. You can know the 'I' principle. When this 'I' is not cognised, how can you answer the query, "Who are you?" You are not the name or label fixed on your material body—Yellappa Ramappa Mallappa or Lakshmanappa. You are not the bodies which your parents named so. Your genuine name is different. You declare, "This is my leg, my head, my stomach;" but who is this 'I' that possesses these? Discover who this 'I' is; understand that the 'I' is not the body. When this is realised as a true fact, it follows that 'I' is not the sense, nor the mind. So, the 'I' is the resident of this body, whose residence gives all these their validity and value. That is to say, 'I' is the breath.

So long as breath resides, there is no death. So long as there is current flowing, the bulb illumines. When the current does not flow there is no light. You attach importance to the coming and going of the light in the bulb; you do not observe that the current is ever flowing. The connection is broken, that is all. The body is a bulb; when the current flows through it, the parts inside it are activated and function effectively. The breath is the current; the breath is 'I'. The Vedas rely on three categories: Direct, Indirect Inferential; but, there is a fourth also: Shabda, the Sound, the authenticity of the Sound. The breath is inhaled retained and exhaled as the sound: Soham Soham Soham. This means, 'I am Brahman, I am Brahman'. So, you are not a Jiva or a Deha, you are Brahman, the Universal Eternal Unchanging. The illusion you are now hugging that you, with this reality of Brahman as your core and substance, are only this particular body bearing this particular name—this is what is referred to as Maya. That is the effect of the mind. The mind has no special individuality; it has no innate inherent capability. All its powers of mischief are activated and multiplied by man himself. It is agitated by the winds of delusion that blow on it.

Now, here is a piece of cloth, though it is just an assortment of yarn. Some yarns are in this direction and some are in the other direction, and so the cloth was created. If we pull out the yarns one by one, there will remain nothing of the cloth. So too, the desires of man are the warp and the woof that has woven this new thing called 'mind.' Remove desire; the mind disappears and is no more.

From a Discourse of Baba

To the Students

"There are two different categories of education. One is Instinctive and Normal and the other is exalted or Spiritual. The first category of education serves our natural and normal materialistic needs like food, culture etc. while the other helps us to reach the Almighty.

Education is like the roots of a tree. The tree draws its subsistence from its healthy roots and spreads into branches which bear flowers and ultimately fruits. Likewise, our life draws

sustenance from education and spreads in several activities which bears flowers of good habits (Sadachar) which in turn rise to higher cultural evolution and pave the way to HIM.

Our scriptures have put parents and teachers in the category of Gods whom we revere. Why Parents to whom we owe our culture have obliged us tremendously. Our own existence and culture would have been badly jeopardised if our parents and teachers had not taken enough care for our upbringing. They have both helped us in our exaltation. It is our bounden duty to revere our parents because they have given us this birth and good breeding. If you desire that your children too should honour you as you honour your parents, you should set a good example to them by honouring your parents.

REAP AS YOU SOW. Fallow land requires clearing of bushes and then repeated tilling. It becomes ready after good watering for sowing. If you sow good seeds, you are sure to get excellent crop which will bear good flowers and fruit. In the same way, one's heart requires clearing of bad thoughts and doubts. It should be repeatedly tilled by deep thinking and self-realisation Use love and sympathy as water for the roots. If you sow the seeds of Bhakti you are sure to get flowers of sadvichar which will ultimately give the fruits of Param-ananda which is the goal of all human beings.

**(Notes Of Baba's Speech At -Wagdhara High School, Gujarat) by Dr. C. M. Lavingia,
Medical Officer.**

Devi Mahatmyam

Devi or the Divine Shakti or the Active Principle of Divinity, active in manifold ways, is worshipped all over India, during the Navaratri Festival, as Lakshmi, Saraswati, Durga, Annapoorna, Tripurasundari, etc. She is praised in the Devimahatmyam as "Nissessa-deva-gana-sakthi-samootha-moorthy", the embodiment of the might and majesty of all groups of Gods. The Trinity, Brahma Vishnu and Siva, got enraged when the gods recited their woes as a result of the atrocity of Mahishasura, and, their rage (the rajas rage, of Brahma, the satwic rage of Vishnu and the tamasic rage of Siva) emerged as a terrific pillar of light. The majesty of the other gods too sent forth light; soon there was a huge mountain of Light before them. The Light became a form and the form shaped itself into a Goddess of surpassing splendour. So, She is extolled as, "Samastha-devaanaam-thejo-rasi-samudbhavam". She who arose from the Divine Nature of the entire group of Gods. She who was the latent activity, and energy of the Gods manifested Herself in that Form.

In order to destroy the forces of evil, Gods equipped Devi with weapons, which each one shaped out of the prowess they possessed. Siva duplicated a trident, Vishnu drew a discus from His own discus. Varuna, the God of waters gave a conch, Agni gave a spear, the Wind-God gave arrows Indra gave the thunderbolt and Yama, the rod of death. Similarly, all the gods, including the Ocean the Himalayas and other expressions of the magnificence of Divinity gave jewels and ornaments to Devi and felt honoured when She accepted them. The statement, "Aham vibhoothyaa bahubhih "I have innumerable excellences" became true, for the manifestation of

Devi had all the might, miracle and mystery of every form of Divinity, known and unknown. Hence Devi is "Sarvadevamayi" "Sarva devaanaam jaatha". To worship Her is to worship all Gods, the very spring of Divinity in the heart of the Universe.

Grateful Homage **TO THE MEMORY OF** Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao

He has left us; we can no more see him in the flesh. His example and the remembrance we have of his life and work are our treasures hereafter. The world of spiritual endeavour has lost a great son. It will be difficult to have again such a remarkable embodiment of excellences in many fields, religious moral spiritual literary philosophical and even political.

Dr. Ramakrishna Rao was an adept in the Sadhana of reconciliation and of discovering simple and satisfying solution; to problems that defied the intelligence and tact of others. As the leader of the national straggle in Telingana, as the Chief Minister of Hyderabad State, and later as the Governor of the States of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, two states that were brimful of knotty administrative problems, he showed remarkable understanding and sympathy.

As a member of Rajya Sabha, as the head of the Bharat Sevak Samaj in Andhra, he did valuable service, in recent years. His last assignment was the Chairmanship of the Committee to report on the Teaching of Sanskrit in the schools of Andhra a task he took upon himself with great enthusiasm, for he was an ardent student of the ancient culture of India and was very eager to preserve its principles, in the social and political lives of our people.

He was very devoted to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The poems in Telugu which he composed on Baba and which we have published in this magazine reveal the depth and sincerity of that devotion. He felt that he was but an instrument in Baba's hands. Those who had the pleasure of meeting him at the Prasanthi Nilayam and elsewhere, will ever remember his fervent attachment to the teachings of Baba and his anxiety that more and more should come to know and benefit by His Advent. They must also have been inspired by his humility, his sweet temper, his faith, his spirit of service, and enthusiasm. He was the master of many languages; he was the author of many books that are gems of literature.

No wonder, therefore, that Baba named him as the President of the All-India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, the institution He has founded for carrying the message of Sanathana Dharma to every village and town in this spacious land and even to lands across the seas. Under his able guidance, branches of this great organisation were established in Andhra, Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat. His speeches as President of the Mahasabha at the Prasanthi Nilayam, Hyderabad, Madras, Bangalore and Bombay revealed his scholarship his universal outlook, his devotion and his love of, the motherland and its culture. His Hindi renderings of Baba's Telugu Discourses were masterpieces of instantaneous translation and lakhs of people offered him their gratitude for enabling them to imbibe the nectar of the Divine Message. As the President of the First All India Conference of Sathya Sai Samithis and Samajas held in, Madras, he contributed greatly to the spirit of cordiality and constructive devotion which

emerged as a result of the deliberations, among the representatives numbering about a 1000, who had come from all the States of India and from overseas.

Dr. Ramakrishna Rao was also responsible, in a large measure, for the inauguration of the Prasanthi Nilayam Township, and we all rejoiced when he came over to Prasanthi Nilayam on August 5th to preside over the Celebrations. That was however last function he attended at the Nilayam He declared that day that Prasanthi Nilayam being the Centre of International Spiritual Revival and Reconstruction, had to receive a unique status, distinct from other units of administration.

Words cannot express the devotion he had towards Baba or the loving Grace that Baba showered on him. When he was stricken and in bed, Ramakrishna Rao found solace and strength in the name, Sairam, which he constantly revolved in his mind. His faith and devotion drew Baba to Hyderabad. During the first week of September, Baba was at the bedside of Ramakrishna Rao, conferring on him the inestimable boons of Darsan Sparsan and Sambhashana. He was thrilled at this signal act of Grace. He shed tears of joy and gratitude. "I have got what I desired most; I was torn by grief that I may not be able to see Baba again; Baba knew how I yearned for His Darsan and He has fulfilled my desire, I have no more desires", he said. During the two days when Baba was at his side, he was elated and content. "How fortunate I am", he used to say. "Baba came all this distance to bless me; really, how lucky I am." It is this supreme contentment and joy during the last phase of life that man should yearn for. Baba blessed Ramakrishna Rao with that well-earned gift.

On the 14th, September, after midnight a few minutes before the moment of departure Ramakrishna Rao called the members of his family around him and said, "Baba will guard you and guide you; be assured of that; do not lose heart. My work is done. I do not need any more medicines. Do not give me any drug. The medicine of the Name of God is enough for me".

Then he uttered in sincere deliberation, raising his folded palms over his head, the liberating mantra Sriman Narayana Charanou Saranam Prapadye" (I take refuge in the Feet of Lord Narayana" and, attained lasting peace.

We express our grateful homage to this gem among the devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Ramakrishna Rao, as a physical entity, with that name and form, is no longer with us; but, we are certain, he is with us at the Prasanthi Nilayam as a subtle source of inspiration and strength. May his life be a lamp on the road, for all pilgrims to God; may his example lead us further towards the Goal of Prasanthi.

EDITOR

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

SEPTEMBER 10: POONA: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samitee: Inauguration of Telugu Classes. LOS ANGELES: East West Cultural Centre. Lecture on Sri Sathya Sai Baba, by Charles Penn: Exhibition of

Films on Navaratri and Sivaratri in Prasanthi Nilayam.

SEPTEMBER 15: PALTHAT (Kerala): Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Speech: N. Kasturi, M.A.M.,B.L.

SEPTEMBER 16: ERNAKULAM: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Speech on Baba By N. Kasturi.

SEPTEMBER 17: TRICHUR (Kerala) Speech: Baba's Mission by N. Kasturi. METTUPALAYAM (Nilgris). Sri Sathya Sai Bhajana Samajam: Speeches on Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by Sri. Chinthamani, B.A., L.T., Sri. Appukutta Menon, M.A., L.T. and Sri, N. Kasturi

SEPTEMBER 23: VILLIYANUR (Tamil Nadu). Sri Sathya Sai Samajam: 2nd Anniversary Celebrations: President: Lieutenant Governor of Pondicherry, Sri. Seelam.

SEPTEMBER 24: LALGUDI: (Trichinopoly Dt): Sri Sathya Sai Samajam: 1st Anniversary Celebrations. SALEM (Tamil Nadu): Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Discourse by Br. Sri. Anantharama Dikshith HYDERABAD: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha: Bhajan Special Programme.

OCTOBER 1: HYDERABAD: Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Essay Competitions For High School Students on Prema Vahini, the book written by Baba.

Inauguration of Dasara Festival at Prasanthi Nilayam: Flag Hoisting, by Baba; Hospital Day: 11th Anniversary Celebrations of Sathya Sai Hospital President Dr. P. Ramachandrudu, D.M & H.O Anantapur.

OCTOBER 5: The Feeding of the Poor; Distribution of Clothes to the Disabled And the defectives. President: Sri, Arora, I.A.S. Collector, Anantapur. Mrs. Arora distributed the clothes.

7-13: Vedapurusha Sapthaha Yajna and All India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha Sessions.

(Details of the Dasara programme will appear in the November issue).

Editor

NOTE

The Dasara Festival was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam from 4th October to 13th October; thousands of devotees attend the festival, from the very inauguration Day. The Vedapurusha Sapthaha Yajna was started on the 7th and the All India Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha began at Annual Sessions that evening. The evening gathering were addressed by learned Pundits and Bhagavan blessed all with His Divine Discourse. Harikatha, Dramas, Music, Recitals, and the famous Kathakali Dance play of Kerala were arranged during the Festival. The printing of the magazine was unavoidably slowed during the Festival; we are sorry we have to give less number of pages. The issue for November will make up for these and we shall give their details of the Dasara Festival as well as Pictures.

Editor

Bhagavata Vahini

18

“Observing the fight between the disappointed groups of suitors and the Pandava brothers, Krishna and Balarama were smiling within themselves in appreciation of the successful feat of Arjuna. Your grandfathers had no knowledge who they were; they had not seen them any time previously.

“But when the Pandavas reached their residence, the humble home of a potter, with the newly won bride, the daughter of Dhrupada, and when Dharmaraja, the eldest brother, was describing with great exultation the events of the day, Balarama and Krishna, dressed in yellow silk and magnificent to behold, entered that lowly cottage. They fell at the feet of aged Kunti, mother of your grandfathers. 'Auntie! We are your nephews', they said. 'We are the children of Nanda and Yasoda', they introduced themselves. Then, they touched the feet of Dharmaraja, prostrating themselves before him. Krishna approached Arjuna and drew him aside, with a sweet simple expression of affection. 'I know you; but you do not know me, I am seeing you now for the very first time. I am the son of Vasudeva; my name is Sri Krishna. I am older than you are; still, when you achieved that victory in the Royal Palace, I recognised that you are the Pandava brothers and so, I understood that you had escaped from the palace of lac wherein you were when it was set on fire. From the moment my eyes fell on you at the gathering of suitors there, I somehow felt that you are Arjuna; I told my brother so. This is my brother, Balarama. I was very happy that I recognised you and my brother too shared the joy. At last, I am able to meet you. The bride is the embodiment of virtue and intelligence.'

“Speaking thus, Krishna called Arjuna to a distance and whispered in his ear, 'Cousin! It is not advisable that you come out in the open, so soon. Stay on, in disguise, for short periods, in one place or other, for some more time.' Then, He took leave of His aunt and others and left along with His elder brother Balarama.

“From that day, the affection between Krishna and Arjuna grew more and more intense; it grew into a huge tree and yielded fruits rich with sweetness, which they shared; in that sweetness, their minds merged and became one. Mark! The first time your grandfather met Lord Sri Krishna, He was at the Wedding Hall of Draupadi, the Kalyana Mantapa. The significance of this lies in the fact that they too were bound throughout the years in bonds of love and affection of unfailing friendship. To consummate that friendship, Krishna taught him the Highest Wisdom. 'Did you note how chummy that Consummate Trickster was with your grandfather?' With that question, Vyasa rose and collected his things in an attempt to depart.

Observing this, Parikshit pleaded piteously, wiping the tears of joy that filled his eyes, "Master! You have made the Lord stand clear before me, with your description of His leela and His Grace. Please tell me more of the many occasions on which the Lord showered His Mercy on my grandfathers, how He moved close with them and rescued them from calamity; sleep is deserting my eyes and prompting me to listen to the stories of God. Make this night holy by relating to me the glory of the Lord. That alone can give me satisfaction. Let me spend the night in His thoughts...Your silence is causing me great agony."

Vyasa saw the steadfastness and devotion of Parikshit and changed his decision. He said, "Son! Were the mighty miracles of Krishna one or two in number, I could have described them to you. If one had a billion tongues, and the whole of eternity before him, description of His Majesty can never be exhausted. All the Gods bowed before Him with folded hands. Sometimes He would raise His Bhaktas to the skies; very soon He will drag them down into the depths. He treated the world as a puppet-show. He was always radiant with His smile. He never knew anxiety, disappointment or distress. He behaved sometimes like a common man, sometimes as an innocent child, at other times as a near kinsman, or as an intimate friend, or as a masterful monarch. Sometimes He behaved as a playful cowherd boy. He had the capacity and cleverness to play all roles with unique distinction. He loved your grandfather Arjuna, with special fervour. He used to take him with Him, whatever the occasion or place. Why, Arjuna could move about freely even in the inner apartments of the residence of the Lord. The Lord used to play with your grandfather in the waters of the Yamuna, diving at one place and rising at a distant spot to surprise him, calling on him to do like-wise if he could, competing with him in various games, games which defy description and identification. All of a sudden, He would take Arjuna to a solitary place and converse with him there on some mysteries. He used often to discard the smooth silken bed and sleep with His head on Arjuna's lap, instead.

“Your grandfather too, reciprocated that love to the full. Though sometimes they were found angry against each other, talking as if they were enraged, they made up very soon and resumed friendly conversation quickly. My dear son, it can be said that they were Nara and Narayana like the body and the breath; there was no Arjuna without Krishna and no Krishna without Arjuna. There was no secret which your grandfather did not share with Krishna or which Krishna did not share with your grandfather, which particular episode in their relationship am I to tell you now? Ask me any one which you would like to hear and I shall gladly relate it to you.”

When Vyasa yielded thus to his importunity, Parikshit who was all attention replied in a voice choked with emotion, "Master! I do not see clearly the reason why my grandfather destroyed the Khandavavana (the Khandava Forest) by means of a conflagration. Tell me how Lord Krishna helped him in the exploit. Make me happy by relating to me this episode.” Parikshit fell at the sage's feet and prayed that this may be described to him. Vyasa complimented him and said, "Right, you have made a request which does credit to you. I shall comply."

He continued, “Once, when Krishna and Arjuna were resting happily on the sands of Yamuna, oblivious of the world and its tangles, an aged Brahmin approached them and said, 'Son! I am Starving. Give me a little food to appease my hunger Otherwise I cannot keep myself alive.' At these words, they were suddenly made aware of a strange presence. Though outwardly he appeared natural, there was a divine effulgence around him which marked him out as some one apart. Meanwhile, Krishna came forward and accosted him. 'Great Brahmin! You do not appear merely human. You will not be satisfied with ordinary food, I can surmise. Ask me the food that you desire for; I shall certainly give you that'. Arjuna stood at a distance watching this conversation with amazement. For, he heard Krishna, who allayed the hunger of all beings in all the worlds, asking this lean hungry Brahmin, what food will satisfy him! Krishna was enquiring so quietly and with so much consideration that Arjuna was filled with curiosity and surprise.

The Brahmin suddenly burst into laughter and said, 'Lord! Do you not recognise me? There is nothing in this world—nay—in all the fourteen worlds that is beyond your ken. I am Prana, one vital principle; in your Creation I am Agni the Fire-Principle. I regret to inform you that even I have fallen ill. To cure my indigestion, I feel I must consume the arboreal juice of the Khandava Forest. That forest must be burnt in flames. That alone can appease my hunger and restore my appetite.'

At this, Krishna asked him, 'Well, consume it; why did you come to Me for this? This is indeed amazing; you have power to reduce the universe into ash! Why do you crave another's help?' When Krishna asked him thus, pretending ignorance, Agni answered, 'Lord! You know everything. Does not the great serpent, Takshaka live in this Khandavavana, with his kith and kin, his attendants and associates? Indra, the god of Rain, is his close friend; so, He has undertaken the responsibility of guarding that forest against fire and other calamities. He has given his word of honour that he will save the forest and thus, save Takshaka. So; as soon as I start eating up the forest, Indra will send his minions and soak the place with rain. I will be so scotched into inaction that I cannot eat any more. So, I am taking refuge in You.'

Krishna laughed at his fears; He said, "If so, we shall help you out. Tell us what we should do and we are ready." Agni was delighted. He exclaimed, 'I am indeed blessed; I am saved. You can, if you only decide to keep back the rain that Indra showers by covering the forest with a roof of arrows that will allow me to consume the Vana undisturbed.' Krishna assured him that his request would be fulfilled. Your grand father addressed Agni thus; You can burn up the Vana, without hesitation. My arms have enough strength to oppose and overwhelm not one Indra but even ten millions of them. But, I have not got with me the arrows necessary for this operation and the chariot that can carry all that weight. If these are supplied, I shall carry out your task, with the gracious permission of Krishna.'

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Diadem Dark, Divine

The Crown of Glory,
The matted monarch curl,
The mighty multi-millioned strand,
This ever static eternal emblem of this God;
This Sign of Him, who dances
On the cold snow of congealed hearts;
This Charm of Him, who drives the herd,
Bordered gold with sunset dust;
The hair that sprinkles Grace, like April rain;
This triumphal arch of majesty
For this solar super orb;
The hair that is softest for the sight

(So heavy it looks you often doubt
Can this little frame carry all this weight?)
This foil for the fairest face on earth,
This umbra for the ultimate universal Light,
Umbrella that shades stricken hearts,
This flag, this mark, this hairy heraldry,
That my Lord has chosen as the unique sign
For his mystery and His mastery;
This splendour, supreme, supernal,
This spiralled sublimity,
This awe-inspiring headgear grand,
This heavenly halo,
This coiled composite care free coiffure;
He twists and turns around, around
The wisps of wayward hair;
He rolls it on His rollicking finger fast
(He cannot but; His joy, it overleaps)
In cascades and in curves;
The hair of the Lord is a mile an inch-
This bushy beneficent bliss,
This jungle of jangled joy;
It is thick as the thirsts that torment the mind
For, He has to bear them all.
“Bring all your griefs, your loss and pain-
This mass of hair shall bear them all,” He says.
“This is a ‘for-rest’ for your rest.”
Each hair can bear a nation’s woe;
The cluster can carry the Universe, or even worse.
If you but peer into the curls
You can see the silver crescent, casting opal glow
Amidst the tangled silk;
The hair hallucinates and hold the eye
In sinuous snaky bonds;
The Ganga gleams in shimmering waves
Midst those cavernous depths;
The peacock plume, you can discern,
Fluttering proud, in Jumna breeze.
The locks, the mats, the convolutes,
That humble man has pictured on the head of God
The serpent crested jewel that He adorns
The Divine Head designed by Him, for His own joy-
Are all upon this wondrous bunch
Of sable sovereignty.
And O, the charm that dawns,
The glory that it helps reveal,
The healing shade it casts,

The hope of harvest
This cluster of rain heavy clouds does bring
To parched breasts of grief!
This Night of Rest, Repose,
For tired eyes and hands and hearts;
The crown of hair;
(The tamas)
Above this face of Grace,
(The satwic splendour)
The crimson gown,
(The Rajas charm)
O, may this picture of the Diadem Divine
Be ever ever imprint
On the cleanliness of our hearts.

N. Kasturi

[Read in the Divine Presence: 10-10-67]

All Pervading Ananda

*Hrdaakaase Sadaa bhaantham
Saantham Aananda roopinam
Jnaana bhaanun aham vande
Sadgruru Sathya Saayinam*

[I bow to Sri Sathya Sai, the Sadguru, the Sun of Inner Illumination, who fills the firmament of my Heart with His Light, who is the embodiment of peace And Joy.]

Salutations to brother and sister devotees;

The ultimate goal of the cycle of birth and death in which each being is entangled, with its Ups and downs of pleasure and pain, defeat and victory is RELEASE. The Vedas instruct man in the arduous process of attaining it. They lay down the disciplines of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, when man loses faith in his goal and these paths, He loses Himself in the wilderness of the senses. It is to save man from disaster and re-direct Him along the path of dedicated work, of total surrender to the Higher Will and of Becoming aware of ones identity with all, that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has Come among us.

Bhagavan is engaging himself in multifarious ways to instill hope faith and courage, to Elevate and ennoble man from the bestial to the beatific level. The Dasara festival at Prasanthi Nilayam with its variegated programme of spiritual content is a Divine Symphony of Adoration which surcharges the tens of thousands who share its ten-day-joy with an inexplicable agony for the Universal and the Eternal.

The year, Prompted by their own inner groups towards the light, thousands journeyed to Prasanthi Nilayam by plane and car, rail and bus, so that on the Inauguration Day, Quadrangle with the Mystic Symbol of Yogic Sadhana in the central ring was one Brilliant concourse of devoted hearts.

Nature too had done her best filling the Chitravati with clear cool water, freshening every leaf and flower, decking the fields and pastures with a carpet of luscious green.

Bhagavan granted Darshan to the gathering at 8:30 when trumpets and pipes drums and bells sounded a swell of ecstasy.

Bhagavan acknowledged the homage of the thousands who were before Him and of the millions who had gathered in far away places at the same time of the day to celebrate the Inauguration of Dasara at the Prasanthi Nilayam. Sri. N. Kasturi and Sri Madhusudana Rao of Bhattiprolu were awarded the chance of voicing that homage. Sir Madhusudana Rao, a learned Pandit also elaborated on the meaning of the Seven-syllabled mystic formula, “Namassathyasaayeesam” (I surrender to Lord Sathya Sai), pointing out that it was the invocatory of the Universal Mother, for whom the Dasara Festival is dedicated. That Mother is a source of power, Wealth, Wisdom as Mahakali Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati, He said.

Bhagavan thrilled the thousands by declaring, in a sweet little poem which He sang at the beginning of His Discourse, the tasks which He has set upon himself: the fostering of good men and godly men, the correction of wayward feet straying into sin, the cleansing the hearts from the taint of hate, the unravelling of the inner meaning of the scriptures. Bhagavan said that man is a motley of the animal human and divine natures; He should so regulate himself that He escapes the drag of the animal and uses the human equipment as a ladder to climb into Divinity. This can be done through systematic efforts. When the ferocious tiger is tamed to squat quietly on a little box in the circus ring, cannot the mind of man which has the human and the divine as additional components succeed in training the beast, He asked. Today, the atmosphere everywhere is fouled by the noises of greed and hate. It can be purified only by good thoughts loving words and the recital of the Name of God. Then He explained the significance of the Prasanthi symbol on the flag and hoisted it, amidst a copious shower of flowers, on the Prasanthi Nilayam.

That evening, the Sathya Sai General hospital celebrated its Eleventh Anniversary Festival, under the chairmanship of Dr. P. R. Ramachandrudu. The Chairman appreciated the all round progress of the hospital and they devoted service of the doctors both male and female and the cures effected of malignant cases that defied experts in India and abroad. He quoted two such cures effected by Bhagavan’s Grace within his own experience. Bhagavan in his Discourse emphasised the intimate relation between the mind and the body and dilated on the value of Namasmarana as a mean of keeping the mind clean and healthy. Disease of the mind is increasing today in all countries, because man is allowing it to run wildly in pursuit of carnal pleasures and competitive adventures. Worry anxiety these are the chief causes of illness. “I do not worry, I have no reason to be anxious, I do not anticipate trouble: so, I am, as you see, never ill, except when I take on the illness which any Bhakta cannot withstand’, Baba declared. “I give all what they ask from me. Those who ask for Vibhuti from my hand get that, as the specific.

Those who crave for injections and tablets, get them from this Hospital. They feel they will be cured by them; So, I grant them what they desire,” Baba said.

On the 5th October, the second day of Dasara a picturesque ceremony of the Dedication of books on Baba in five languages by the compilers and publishers: ‘Sathya Sai Vachanamritha, (Telugu) by Br. Deepala Pichayya Sastry; ‘Sathya Sai Katha Sudha’ (Telugu) by S. V. Rama Sarma; 108 Ratnagali (Malayalam) dedicated by Mohan Chedren, on behalf of the publisher: Sathyam Sivam Sundaram (Gujarati) dedicated by Dr. Keki Mistry on behalf of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti; Bombay; Sathya Sai Lavani (Kannada) dedicated by author Sri K R K Bhat; and Sathya Sai Speaks (Vol. 5) (English) dedicated by Sri Ratan Lal M. L. C., Bombay.

On the 6th October, thousand of poor people were sumptuously fed, sweets being served on every ones leaf by Bhagavan himself. Later, the crippled, the blind, the old and the decrepit among them were given new festival clothes, the distribution being inaugurated by Mrs. Arora the wife of the District Collector, Anantapur.

The fourth day of Dasara was an eventful day, full of blissful memories. The Vedapurusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna, which as Br. Gandikota Subramania Sastri explained, is a unique combination of auspicious rites and recitals was inaugurated that morning by the Vedapurusha Himself; has not Baba declared that He is one who confers the boons which the rites are designed to win?

The ritwiks and reciters of Veda, the Brahama, the Sarvadahyaksha, the persons to read the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, and the Devibhagavata, the archak for the Sahasralingapuja, the vedic scholar to offer Suryanamaskara with the appropriate mantras all had assembled in the prayer hall, with the bright young lads from the Sathya Sai Veda Sastra Pathashala. Bhagavan gave each of themes the Silken Ceremonial clothes and blessed them for the success of the sacred task, which they had set before themselves.

Shortly after, Bhagavan proceeded to the Yajnashtala, with Nadaswaram lending melody to the fragrant air, with the praise of God sung by Vedic sages rising to the skies from a hundred throats; Sai Geeta led the way, along the magnificent floral pavements. Pundits like the Rishis of yore moved in a shining throng. Baba was resplendent under a gold embroidered silk umbrella. Everyone had a glimpse vision of Sri Krishna as He entered the Rajasuya Yajnashtala. Ask anyone who was present to describe it to you; I am sure His description will soon flounder in tears of joy.

During the Saptaha, Bhagavan was every day giving the vast gathering Darshan at the Yajnashtala, in the mornings and at noon, while Bhajan was being conducted. In the evening, the Annual sessions of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha were held, when, besides learned discourses from Pandits. Bhagavan filled all hearts with spiritual inspiration by His Divine Discourses.

On the Inaugural Day of the Sabha, Sri Jatavallabha Purushotama Rao M.A.M. spoke on the essential doctrines of the Hindu faith. Sir N Kasturi paid a feeling tribute to the services of the late. Dr. B Ramakrishna Rao who was the President of the Sabha since its very inception by

Bhagavan. He spoke of the depth of his scholarship, suavity of His manners, sweetness of His temperature and of the unswerving faith He had in Bhagavan.

Bhagavan in His Discourse pointed out that Sanathana Dharma sought to sanctify and sublimate every word, deed and thought of the individual so that He as well as the society to which He has got attached, attain progress, morally and spiritually.

The man whose hunger has been appeased should not thank the giver of food; the giver should according to this code, thank the hungry for coming to His door and giving Him the precious chance to serve and sacrifice! Studying the ancient texts and writings of the sages is a debt you owe an act of gratitude for the asceticism and struggle they underwent to win those treasures of Wisdom. Thus, Sanathana Dharma, according to Bhagavan, is for self-realisation, to abridge the unruly mind into a supplicant at the feet of the Lord.

On the 8th evening Br Kolluri Somasekhaar Sastri, Member, Central Committee of the Sabha spoke on the discipline laid down in the Sastras for the elimination of mind, which is the source of all the urges in man. He declared that by overwhelming Kama and Kala, Jiva can become Siva. Bhagavan elaborated on the same theme and exhorted everyone to turn the mind away from the tawdry trivialities of the sensory world to the sweet sustaining eternities of the spiritual world. On the 9th, it was the turn of Br. Sishta Chandramouli Sastry, President, Sanathana Bhagavata Bhaktas Samajam, Guntur, to address the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha sessions. He spoke of the great spiritual potency of Bhakti, as revealed in the beatific experiences of the Gopis of Brindavan. Bhagavan stressed on the necessity of practice for the attainment of spiritual progress. “Can light emerge when the word ‘Lamp’ is spelt out several times?” He asked. “Can the recital of the way a drug heals bring about health? Can menu cards allay hunger? Can the jiggle of coins keep off the wolf from the door?” He questioned. He said that the moment we venture out on the spiritual journey, we will discover that detachment yields a higher dividend of joy than attachment. Upeksha yields a bigger harvest of joy than apeksha.

Bhagavan said, “Much was said about the control of the mind or even the elimination of the mind. But, a watch stops when you do not wind it. So too, do not feed your mind on desires, hopes, and wishes. It will then be powerless and cannot harm you. The watch itself is a reminder for you to watch, for what does it say? W for “watch your word”, A for “watch your act”, for “watch your thought”, C for “watch your character” and H for “watch your heart”. When you practice this all round vigilance, you are bound to succeed.

On the 10th, it was the good fortune of a few poets:

Dr. Damayanthi Doongaji (Marathi poem), Begum Sayeed (urdu) N. Kasturi (English) Deepala Pichayya Sastri (Telugu) S. V. Ramasarma (Telugu) and Ratnakaram Seshanmaraju (Telugu): to recite before the gathering, in the Divine Presence of Baba, the poems they were inspired to inscribe and to offer them at His Lotus feet. Bhagavan spoke to offer them at His Lotus feet. Bhagavan spoke that day on the role of the elevation of the impulses of man. The craze for novelty, for saying something, which will arouse the passions and enrage or enfeeble man is very much in evidence today. The poet should not fan the flames of fear or anxiety. He must confer courage, faith, earnestness, joy. The Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata give these

and so they have survived fresh fragrant through thousands of years and fertilised millions of hearts.

On the 11th, Br Pidaparthi Krishnamurthy Sastri addressed the gathering on the efficacy of the Name, the sound symbol of God. The Bhagavata, He said, describes the fourteen worlds as the physical body of God so, descriptions of all or characteristics are but glorification of Godhead. Baba in His Discourse, clarified the concept of Dharma as ‘the way of life that is most appropriate and beneficial, according to the Sastras to the status in the sub-human, human or super human order which each one claims as His.’ Life devoid of Dharma is a tree with no fruits with any sweetness. On the 12th, Indulal H Shah, President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Bombay spoke to the gathering on the Functions and Duties of the Seva Samitis and of the organisation of Seva Dals. Br. Gandikota Subrahmanya Sastry delivered a learned discourse on the essentials of Hinduism. The word Hindu denotes one who hates the low, the mean and the unfair in character and conduct; it also means the land between Him (meaning the Himalayas) and Du (meaning Kanyakumari). He told the thousands:

The Kurushetra Yajna gave the word the invaluable phala of the Gita; this Vedapursha Yajna on the banks of the Chitravati has made us Arjunas, receive from this Krishna, these invaluable Discourses which contain the essence of the teaching of all the scriptures. Luckily for the devotees, the Discourses of the Pandits and of Bhagavan continued for 3 more days.

On the 13th, the Valedictory Day of the Yajna, the Day of Victory (Vijayadashami) when the Forces of Evil were finally overpowered by the Grace of the Supreme, Bhagavan entered the Yajanashala in procession, to the accompaniment of Vedic chanting and Festival music, appearing to all eyes as Sri Narayana himself with a Golden Vastram round His shoulders and, two enchanting flower garlands on his Breast. When He moved slowly along the human aisles in the Auditorium that day, He awakened in each heart pictures of the scenes in the Bhagavata and the Mahabharata where, as Krishna, He comforted consoled and counselled thousands in the past. The auspicious articles and gems needed for the final offering of the Yajna were created by Baba by a wave of the Hand and amidst the prayers of the entire assemblage, the Poornahuthi was consummated. Baba then gave every one the chance to witness He ceremonial Abhisheka of the Shirdi Form and the creation by His Divine will of the Stream of Vibhuti for the same purpose. After this, Baba sprinkled the consecrated water of the Yajna Kumbha on all and thus gave them the double thrill of the Divine touch and Ritualistic sanctity,

On the 14th October, Baba graciously assented to the prayers of His Devotees and sat on the floral swing they had prepared with meticulous artistry. During this Jhoola Festival, Sri Nidadavole Achutharamiah and party gave a Musical Recital in the Burrakatha style of the immortal story of Abhimanyu.

Dasara is the festival of all the fine arts that sublimate the emotions. So every night people had an hour-long programme of music and drama. The child artistes of the Vasanth Sangita Niketan, Bombay gave a number of recitals; Radha Jayalakshmi, the famous Madras vocal musicians gave a recital another day; Sri M L Vasanthakumrai, the popular Vocalist from Madara gave a grand music performance one night; the Kathakali Troupe of Kerla Mandapam, Ernakulam that had just returned from a very successful world tour which took them as far as Montreal in Canada

gave two dance performances, depicting the puranic tales of Sudama and of Arjuna winning the Pashupata weapon from Siva; the two little Salem Sisters captivated all by Bhagavan Himself. The play was entitled “Krishna Leela”; it depicted the role of Brinda among the Gopis; it also revealed the devotion of the Rishipatnis who shared the sacrificial feast with Krishna and cowherd boys; it also pictured the wondrous episode of the raising of the Govardhana peak.

Dasara 1967 was thus a Festival of the Arts, a Seminar on spiritual Discipline, and a Feast of Bliss for the Soul. All days at Prasanthi Nilayam are these, of course, but, the Ten Days of Dasara always leave a greater impression on the mind.

Editor

Dharmakshetra

Baba left on 30th October, on a historic tour full of significance for the task on which He has come, for the task on which He has come, for Bombay, via Hyderabad. On 31st Oct and the first day of November, the devotees at Hyderabad had the good fortune to have Baba amidst them. On the sacred Deepavali Day, they organised a Bhajan Sessions in which people from the twin cities participated. Later, Br. Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastri spoke on the importance of Deepavali. Bhagavan blessed the gathering with a Discourse on the inner meaning of the destruction of Narakasura, which the festival taught to celebrate. Narakasura is the personification of all the tendencies and urges which drag men down into Rajas and Tamas, for Naraka means Hell. He said that the Light which is lit to usher in the Dawn of Heaven after death of Narakasura is the light of wisdom which dispels the darkness of Ajnana, On the 2nd November Baba motored from Hyderabad via Sholapur and Pune and reached Bombay, about midnight.

The third day of November was a great day, in the history of Bombay City. Bhagavan had accepted the prayers of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Bombay for the establishment in that city of a centre for the spread of His messages and for a central Prayer Hall besides a place of residence of Bhagavan. The Samiti secured a plot of land near Andheri, 20,000 sq. yards in extent and prepared a plan for building thereon what Bhagavan has very meaningfully named “Dharmakshetra”, from where will radiate the invigorating rays of Sanathana Dharma to revitalise mankind and restore to Him the long lost consciousness of Divinity latent in Him.

On the 3rd November, He created a silver plate with the Nine Planetary signs carved on it, to be placed in the trench where the Bhoomi Puja was done in His immediate Presence; the Foundation Stone which proclaimed the Universal Aspect of Dharma, as expressed in the various religion of mankind, was unveiled by Him, About 30,000 devotees of Bombay as well hundreds of devotees from Gujarat and other states had gathered at the site, where a spacious pandal with charming floral decoration was erected to accommodate them. Under a canopy of green and yellow, the thousands were engaged in Bhajan seated on a multicoloured floral carpet. Indulal H Shah, the Chairman who read the report of the Samiti was confident of completing the building in time for the World Conference of Sathya Sai Organisations proposed to be held under the auspices of the Samiti about May, 1968 Hon’ble Sri. P. M. K. Savant, Minister for Agriculture, Government of Maharashtra, and President of Maharashtra Branch of the Akhila Bharat

Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha founded by Bhagavan for the popular exposition of the invaluable teachings of ancient scriptures presided over the Gathering. He offered Baba the Homage of Grateful Welcome and expressed the hope that Dharmakshethra will be a Prasanthi Nilayam, extending its subtle and strengthening influence over Maharashtra and the neighbouring States. Bhagavan, in His Discourse, referred to the heart men being the real Dharmakshetra is the real name of the heart which is the very spring and fountain of Dharma.

Bhagavan, then, met the devotees who won the privilege of setting up Kutirs at the Dharmakshetra and spoke to them on the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna. Ksha means that which declines through 'Paapa (un-meritorious deeds, thoughts and words) and tra means that which progresses as a result of Punya (meritorious deeds, thoughts and words) this means the body; the person who resides in the body and motivates it is the Kshetrajna. The Kshetra must be recognised as the Dharmakshetra so that the Kshetrajna may shine therein, Baba said.

That evening, Bhagavan inaugurated the Sathya Sai Seva Dal, an organisation of spiritually oriented volunteers, who are dedicated to the assuaging of pain and grief, irrespective of caste creed colour or nationality.

When the nation is in peril, the army rushes forward to save it from the invaders; it is confident because it has been well trained in the use of weapons and it has kept itself absolutely fit for any emergency. So, too, when Dharma is in peril, Sadhakas must become Sevakas and instill faith hope and courage in the wavering hearts of mankind, and restore confidence in spiritual values by translating their experience of the unity of all beings into acts of sympathy and love. "You must be motivated by love towards all beings, for the same Divinity activates everything from the worm to the most distant star, Baba declared.

On the 4th Baba addressed the Members of the Committees and other workers belonging to the Ten Units into which the Seva Samiti has grouped its centres of activity in Bombay. "Time is eternal, but, life is short; the universe is very wide, but one's sphere of activity is small. But yet within this little time and limited space, one has to use His talents for viveka vairagya and vichakshana to save himself from the dreadful consequences of a limited and distorted vision. This can be done by Namasmarana, saturating one's heart with the sweetness and peace that emanate from contemplation of the Glory that the Smarana evokes," Baba said. He exhorted them all to develop equanimity and fortitude, in order to become fit for serving others; steady practice of spiritual sadhana is needed for this, He advised.

On the 5th, Baba met the Members of the Maharashtra Branch of Akhila Bharat Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha at the residence of the Hon'ble Sri P. K. Savant. Special Bhajan was also held there in His Divine Presence. On the 4th 5th and 6th inst., Baba proceeded in the mornings to the Spacious Pandal at the Dharmakshetra site and gave Darshan to the thousands who had assembled for Bhajan. His Grace was won by a large number of people, especially, the old and the infirm, whom He selected from the serried ranks of devotees for special interview and Darshan at either the site itself or at His Residence in Santa Cruz.

On the 6th, Baba addressed the distinguished gathering of invites, chosen by the Seva Samiti, from among people's representatives principles and Headmasters, public servants, doctors and

lawyers, heads of social service organisations etc. On behalf of the gathering, Sri Indulal Shah prayed to Baba to give a Message that will confer greater confidence and courage to persons who are fast being lost in the morass of frustration, on account of an increasing lack of confidence in themselves as well as in the very possibility of progress. Baba in His Discourse emphasised the uniqueness of the human career, which has been won after many births in lower species and spoke of the prize that can be won through the proper use of one's unique skill and attainments. Careful and systematic inquiry will reveal that all beings are kin, that all are bulbs illumined by the same Divine Current and that it is wrong and foolish to hate or even ignore another, for all are but limbs of the same corpus, which is God. People get frustrated when they see their plans for improving the standard of other people's lives fail; but, the reason for the failure may either be a bad diagnosis of the state of the health of the others or wrong prescription for its cure. Moreover, one must be surcharged with love, if one yearns to serve another. Again, efforts to serve must spring from one's own agony at the suffering one sees around; the service you do is to your own self, to get rid of the anguish you experience when you see a man in distress or when you know of the grief that torments another. Do not worry about the satisfaction you are able to confer on the person who receives your help; help Him, as much as you can, as efficiently as you can; but be conscious of the fact that you are really helping yourself to attain mental peace and spiritual progress. Use the chance to realise the God within Him and within every being. Baba spoke of Bombay being the stomach of India, for, on its correct and adequate health depended the cultural health of the entire nation; the Himalayas constitute the head, the Kanyakumari, the Feet; Puttaparthi which has the Prasanthi Nilayam is the Heart. Therefore, He appealed to the members of the Gathering to seek and know ancient wisdom, which is the surest road for happiness and contentment.

On the 7th, Baba met the members of the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samiti, Bombay and in His Discourse told them of the basic Spiritual Discipline that can assure success in their task of reviving, among the people, the taste of Sadhana and Seva. That evening, Baba left Pune where devotees were yearning for Darshan since months. They held a Bhajan session in His presence and received His Blessings. Baba left Poona on the 8th, in the forenoon, and motoring via Satara, Belgaum and Dharwar, Hubli, Harihar, and Tumkur, reached Brindavan, Whitefield on the 9th. He left on the 10th for Madras and Venkatagiri Town and after granting Darshan to the devotees there, Baba returned to Prasanthi Nilayam on the 14th November.

Devotees all over the world are looking forward to the completion of Dharmakshetra inaugurated under such auspicious circumstances by Bhagavan Himself, for, it will be a "thing of beauty and joy for ever" besides being an inspiration and an example.

[Ed.]

The Day of Adoration

You shall adore Me, not on this date, but on the day when you realise you are the eternal Atma and derive unbound Bliss thereby," said Baba, when He hoisted the Prasanthi Flag on the Nilayam, at 8 A.M. on the 23rd November. Sri Tidemand-Johannessen of Oslo, Norway who offered the homage of the thousands who gathered, prayed that He may transform each one into instruments for His Mission of Dharmic Revival. Later, flowers were offered and ceremonial anointing was done to Baba by His mother, elder brother and some devotees including Mr. and Mrs. Bob Raymer from California. Baba Himself then distributed the precious gift of Grace (Prasadam Sweets) to more than 20,000 devotees. At night, Baba gave Darshan in the flower-bedecked Jhoola; Clarinet Everest, A. K. C. Natarajan gave a Recital; the students of the Vedasastra Pathashala enacted one act plays in Hindi (Ravidas) and English (based on the Lives of Buddha and Christ). A dummy horse show was also given by the famous artistes, Sundaramurthy and party of Bangalore on 23rd and 24th.

On the 24th, 25th and 26th, there were gatherings of devotees when Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourses; Vidwan Parthasarathi Iyengar of Tirupati, Dr. Modi, the noted Eye Surgeon, Sri. V. K. Rao, I. C. S., First Member, Board of Revenue, Andhra Pradesh, Prof A. V. Suryanarayana and Sri K. R. K. Bhat were among those who addressed the assembly. On 26th. Sri Indulal Shah gave an account of the World Conference of Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, which will be held at Dharmakshetra, in the First Week of May, 1968.

This gave the devotees an idea of the spreading glory of Bhagavan's Message, which assuages the spiritual hunger of humanity, for peace and permanent joy. Baba said that the World was His Body, each country being but a limb; the Vedanta was the panacea for the world's ills and since it dealt with the Universal Absolute, without name or form it will appeal to all, irrespective of colour and creed.

Bhagavata Vahini

19

“Agnideva, the God of Fire, was gladdened at this; He granted Arjuna the two boons: an inexhaustible arrow sheath from which he could draw out a continuous supply of arrows and a chariot with the Maruti Flag. Besides, He created the Agneyastra, the Weapon of Fire, and placing it in the Hands of Krishna, took leave of them both.

“Son, Parikshit! Krishna, you must remember, accepted that weapon only to satisfy the God of Fire; He has no need of such weapons. There is no weapon more effective than His Will; it can, in the fraction of a second, trans. form the earth into sky and the sky into the earth. He acts the human role when He moves among people and so, men frame their own guesses without understanding the inner significance of His acts. That is but the consequence of the delusion that veils the vision of man.

“After taking leave of Krishna in this manner, Agnideva started consuming the Khandava Forest. Just then, exactly as anticipated, Indra sent His attendants on the mission of saving the Forest

from destruction. Their efforts failed to rescue it. They returned to their Master and reported their discomfiture. So, Indra Himself with His stalwart followers rushed to the scene to save the Khandava-vana, and fell upon your grandfather, Arjuna.

“Arjuna received Him with a shower of arrows from his famous Gandiva bow. Indra, too, fought with all His might. Within minutes, the followers of Indra turned back, unable to withstand the rain of arrows which assailed them from all sides. Indra realised that the person who inflicted the defeat was His own son, Arjuna; He was overcome with shame at this. He regretted that He could not defeat His own progeny, and returned sad and chastened.

“Meanwhile, the God of Fire consumed the Forest merrily and with hearty appetite, swallowing everything with His thousand red tongues and raising a huge conflagration. Only ash was left behind. Seeing this, the birds and beasts of the forest tried in vain to escape from the holocaust, but they could not; they were caught by the flames and roasted alive. Krishna was going round the Forest in His chariot to prevent any denizen from running out into the open for safety, especially the animals and the snakes. He discovered the snake Takshaka, a great friend of Indra, in the act of escaping from the fire. Krishna called Arjuna near Him to point this out to him; that gave Takshaka the chance to wriggle out and speed towards Kurukshetra.

But, Agni pursued the snake; He sought the help of the Wind-God to catch up with his fleeing speed. So, Takshaka sought refuge with Maya, the architect of the Devas and the Danavas; he and Maya were moving fast towards Kurukshetra. Krishna noticed this and He pursued them. Just then, Maya surrendered to Arjuna and sought his protection for himself and his protégé, Takshaka. Arjuna granted his wish and so, Maya, out of a sense of gratefulness, fell at his feet and said, 'O son of Pandu, I will never forget this kindness. Whatever is in my power, I shall gladly do for you. You have only to indicate your desire.'

Your grandfather reflected for a while and replied, 'Maya! If you yearn to satisfy me, I demand but one thing: Build a Sabha (Assembly Hall) for my brother to hold court, the like of which is not to be found on earth. It must be so grand that no Deva or Danava or Gandharva can ever hope to build such a one for himself. It must fill all who see it with amazement. I have no desire, other than this.' Krishna too added a suggestion. 'In that hall of wonder, you must establish a Throne of Wonder for Dharmaraja to be seated; then only will the Hall be fully magnificent.'

“Did you note, Parikshit, how much Krishna loved your grandfather? Do you need any more convincing proof than this to know that He is ever mindful of the welfare of His devotees? The wicked Duryodhana was overcome with envy, at the sight of that amazing Hall. Duryodhana and Dussasana and their companions were puzzled and discomfited into humiliation, when they were led to believe that there was water where there was none and that there were doors in places where there were no doors! They fell in so many places and knocked their heads against so many walls that they nurtured unquenchable hatred against the Pandavas. The Kauravas plotted incessantly to destroy the Pandavas; but, since the Pandavas had the Grace of Krishna in a large measure, they were able to overcome them as if they were mere child's play and to enjoy varied manifestations of His Mercy. The Kauravas developed violent hatred against Krishna too, for they knew that the son of Yasoda was the bestower of Fortune on the Pandavas. But, what can

any one do to the very Lord of all Creation? To cultivate hatred against Him is a sign of their ignorance that is all.”

When Vyasa was thus relating the story of Takshaka, Parikshit was listening with rapt attention; when he finished, Parikshit queried in wonder, "What was the reason which provoked the wicked Kaurava to ill-treat and insult my grandmother, Draupadi? How did grandfathers bear the insults they heaped on their spouse? How did it happen that they were mere onlookers, unable to retaliate or punish, in spite of their prowess and undoubted manliness, when their spouse was dishonoured publicly, in the royal court? I find it beyond me to understand how these incidents came about. Tell me the real facts, and enlighten me. You can clear my doubts, I am sure."

Parikshit prayed with tearful eyes and with such humility that Vyasa said, "Son! The Pandavas are staunch adherents of the moral law; they never deviated from the given word. They observed the rule that the defeated party has no right to challenge the victors; your grandfather and his younger brother recognised the moral superiority of Dharmaraja, their elder brother and suppressed themselves. Or else, they would have felled the foul Kauravas to wallow in their own blood and cast their corpses to be mangled by dogs and vultures.

“In spite of this, however, your granduncle, Bhima was straining to fall upon those vicious men like a lion chained to a tree; he was laughing cynically at the weak attachment that Dharmaraja had towards Dharma. But, what could he do? He was rendered harmless, by the will of his eldest brother. So, he had to behave like an ineffective person.”

When Vyasa said thus, Parikshit asked him the reason why the grandfathers were so enslaved; Vyasa smiled and replied, "Son! I shall tell you that also. Your granduncle, Dharmaraja celebrated in unprecedented grandeur the Rajasuya-yajna in the Assembly hall that Maya built for him. The Kauravas were invited for the Yajna and as I said, they were struck with amazement at the magnificence and wonder; they were also filled with envy and a spirit of vengeance, as if they were insulted by the affluence and powers of the Pandavas. They held counsel with wicked elements and sought some means by which they could undermine their fortune. At last they struck on a plan.

“That was the Gambling Contest through the royal game of dice. They behaved as if they were filled with fraternal love and as if they were motivated by the utmost affection. Their words were poisoned drops of honey, stabs steeped in butter. They persuaded their blind old father to send Dharmaraja a communication which ran thus: 'Son! You are all brothers. Come and be together in one place and make merry over a game a dice.' On receipt of this invitation, your granduncle who had no inkling of the wiles that the Kauravas are capable of, who had a guileless mind himself, accepted it and played the games they proposed, unaware of the stratagems they had planned. He was then tempted to stake his brothers and finally, even his queen, Draupadi. He did not realise that the game was full of foul movements and conspiratorial tricks. He never imagined that his cousins will land him in abject misery. So, under the rules of the gambling game, Draupadi became the property of the victors. They too, in order to wreak vengeance and cool their overwhelming passion of hatred, designed to dishonour the Queen of the Pandavas in full sight of the entire Assembly of Courtiers. Foul brains can hatch only foul plans.

At these words, Parikshit began shedding tears; he asked Vyasa in a voice interrupted by sighs, "How did that blind Dhritarashtra, himself an Emperor, suffer this degrading behaviour towards another woman and a queen to happen? Of course, he had no eyes to see; but, he had certainly ears to hear. Had he plugged his ears so that her wailings could not reach his understanding? Or, had they too become blind? The Sastras teach that no woman can be injured or insulted; she has to be given help and succour; and, these rulers who ought to be exemplars to their subjects in morality and justice have the audacity to break the Sastras with impunity. How can such vicious persons be Emperors? Are they not the meanest of mortals? Only the worst sinners will contrive to insult and dishonour another's wife a helpless woman. I feel that this land has been torn into bits, only because such abominable persons were raised to power; at last these disasters brought about total destruction. God is not blind, is it not?"

(To be continued)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Malady of Egoism

Egoism that satanic thing which lurks within us like an ever-present shadow of evil is what prevents us from realising the unity of God and His Creation. Egoism makes us think that, as individual bodies and minds, we are the doers (of action) givers and receivers. It separates each of us, one from another and from God. It cultivates pride, conceit and the possessive instincts and fans the flames of greed, selfishness and envy. God is then forgotten as the giver and receiver, as the very substratum on which all Creation is supported. When no effort is made to destroy, or at least curb, this devil of egoism, God as such is forgotten even by the aspirant reciting his rosary, by the worshipper in his shrine room, temple, mosque or church.

Egoism is satanic for yet another reason. Its potentiality for mischief is tremendous, because it can assume most subtle forms when its outer manifestations have been recognised or "treated". It dives deep and then infests the mind again with yet more tenuous forms of pride and selfishness. At an opportune moment these erupt again into almost insane behaviour or extraordinary conceit. If you pull out the nut-grass weed only by its upper leaves it retain, all its powers of future growth in its roots which go deep down. It can be eliminated only when you uproot the entire plant with all its roots. So also with the ego. But, alas, it is easier said than done. The destruction of the ego is indeed most difficult. It is the greatest stumbling block to spiritual progress for the aspirant at all stages of his endeavour. The "higher" he thinks himself to have gone the greater is the danger of his fall—the harder also is the fall.

Egoism, again, manifests as the last stand made by the mind in its struggle to assert itself when the aspirant is endeavouring to transcend it during meditation. It madly tries to prevent the severance of the last links of attachment that the aspirant may yet have for the sensory world.

It injects fear and doubt in his mind. And, it often wins this battle.

God resides in the heart of each being because He is Love or Prema UNLIMITED. Where He resides, nothing else can exist. How can it? But, we do not know this in our ignorance. We keep shut the gates of this huge reservoir and then complain of the tiny trickle which flows into the canal built to take a mighty flow. We are saddened at the strife, hatreds and frustration which beset the world. If only we knew how to tap the infinite reservoir of Mercy and Love...!

When the mind is purified, and is made receptive it can cognise God in one form or another. Otherwise, it can become a place of residence for the very devil himself. Are we not sickened or horrified, ever so often, with news of cruelties and indignities committed by individuals, groups, communities and governments alike? History is replete with examples of man's inhumanity to man, apart from his unrelenting inhumanity to the dumb creatures that also share this world with him. All such evils arise out of hatred and indifference—which is ignorance—and not out of Love; they arise out of darkness, not out of Light.

How then can happiness be achieved on—earth in spite of the strides made by science—when the bats of darkness infest the minds of men with the foulness of egoism? By driving these bats away. By "Namasmarana"; that is, by the earnest repetition of the Lord's Name—any Name, which pleases most, or is most dearest—can these creatures be scared away, never to return. Such is the message of hope and redemption given to us all by the Avatar of this age, by the Incarnation of the Lord Himself. He is today in our midst. Some say Sai Ram or Sai Krishna; others revere Him as Sai Nath. Some say only "Baba". He is all these, and much more.

Let us then approach Him and take the medicines He is prescribing for our ills. Let us approach Him in all sincerity and humility. Let us not make a show of religiosity or spirituality, or take to any of the Godward paths in ignorance and then complain of "neglect" at His Hands. Let us not allow the weeds of egoism to smother our devotion, lest we be evilly tempted to say that Baba has deceived us, or not given a thing as "promised", or not done what we, in our ignorance, expected Him to do! He never deceives hurts or neglects! It is the creatures of the night within that do all these things to us; it is they who flit around in the darkness of our ignorance, befouling and deceiving. It is our insatiable desire, inflamed by uncontrolled imagination, that causes so much misery and grief. It is we—as so many embodiments of the ego—who harm ourselves and others.

But, open the floodgates of the heart to Him, and you will be overwhelmed by the flood of His Love, His Prema. It is Infinite and as continuous as the light that shines from the sun, equally upon all. It is only this shroud of egoism that cuts us off from the ever-present Light. Love for the Lord can only mean love for all of His Creation; and; conversely, love experienced for all is itself a Divine manifestation.

Divine Love or Prema can manifest only through the Grace of the Lord. Let us then win that Grace, while the opportunity exists. Let us pray to Him that the satanic ego may never rise within us, and if it does, may we have the knowledge determination and strength to uproot it forthwith. May the Lord Himself do so, if we are too weak for the corrective action ourselves, and willingly accept His remedy with thankfulness. Let this be our prayer, so that His Prema may fill our entire being.

The Lord is Here

When thou art happy, little one,
Then Sai is thy companion gay
Laughing with glee, roaring with mirth,
Willing to join in thy innocent fun—
When thou art happy, little one.

When thou art perplexed, dear child,
Sai then assumes the role of thy teacher
Dispelling shadows, bringing light
Showing thee the right path, like a guide—
When thou art perplexed, dear child!

When thou art unhappy, my friend,
Sai is thy tender loving mother
Nursing thy wounds, thy grief to end,
Ready and willing Her love to spend—
When thou art unhappy, my friend!

When thou dost stoop to wrong, rash youth,
Remember thy father Sai is at hand
To advise admonish and help thee find
The ways of virtue, with the lamp of truth—
When thou dost stoop to wrong, rash youth!

This Sai as a mother gives thee love and care
As a friend, He is willing thy joys to share
As a teacher, He helps thee in thy search for truth
As a father, He swerves thee from ways uncouth.

What cause now, for sorrow and grief?
What cause for thee to wail and cry?
What room for tears when our Lord inhere?
Just surrender thyself to Sathya Sai.

—S. Udyavar

Another Oversea Lesson

It was during the Dasara Festival that Baba kept sending wave upon wave of Bliss to me. It came at all times, until one knew that only He could be creating such moments filled with nectar.

His teachings, of late, have been emphasising the great need for becoming aware that each moment unfolds according to His Plan, and not according to Man's Plan. It is when man tries to out-guess Him that he feels saddened, whenever the moment is not just what he had pictured it out to be. Learning to know that each moment is unique is filled with its own incense, is sprinkled with a different distinct Vibhuti, is, He taught me, true progress. "Will you ever expect," He asked me, "the same butterfly to nestle upon the same blossom at the same time each day?" "Of course not," He said. "Nor would you expect every one's reactions to be exactly the same each time they meet talk and discuss their personal experiences." Thus Baba spoke to me and I pondered, during Dhyana, upon this great wisdom.

"But, Babaji," I asked, "while each moment unfolds according to your plan, are not all lives very similar? Cannot one, therefore, expect that each will open similarly?"

"Yes. Charles!" He said. "All lives have a sameness. Conception, birth, growth, decline, and death are experienced by all. But, is your life the same since you have known of Me? Is it what it used to be before the Revelation? As you are now aware that all is illusion—even your body, even the scenes you see day after day, why, even the days themselves, even the conception of Time, including your life-span—let Me unfold the Lotus Flower more clearly to you, Charles!

Life is a Vahini. High above the Himalayas, you see the white clouds and higher still is the clear blue sky, the vast depths of My Universe extend and beyond even that is the path to the Creator.

For one drop of snow upon the mountaintop, the Creator actuates all His forces, far beyond mortal vision. With those drops of soft snow, He reveals Himself, in another of His lordly Forms. So, the snows cloak His mantle; the placid pools of His Prema are formed in the crevices of His Mountain Form; when the crest of the lakes rises beyond the rock's edge, He pours Himself over the side and falls against the hard sides of the Mountain. The stream begins far below, flowing first over more hard rocks, then rushing against jagged edges ever downward, until the stream becomes a river. Then, the river widens, the surface becomes calm; even the soft silt far below remains unruffled, as the passage of the Lordly One continues. And so, when the Ganga finally reaches the Sea, the mergence is peaceful. For, the first part of the Ocean Crossing has been successful.

"Now Charles, what becomes of the Ganga when it tosses itself into the Sea? With His great power, He lifts the pure water up—and, leaves behind the bitterness. Thus, the seas remain filled with salt; yet, through them, have not the sweet snow drops risen to the Mountain Top? There is Life. Life is given by the Lord; nay, it is One with Him and so, how can it be given? It is a part of the Lord. Each such part of the Divine, that is, each Life is dashed against the rocks and stones, until it roars out in thunderous pain, until it realises the folly of running over the bed of jagged experiences. Then when Reality is discovered, it passes into tranquility and, then, when

the last particle of bitterness is shed He reaches down—and, scoops you up to His own Bosom, from whence, in Truth, you have never left.

You ask, why does the Lord arrange such a Vahini? Why, with His Great Power, does He not create a Heaven rid of this great pain? Charles! You have experienced during Dhyanam such high Bliss, that you have had to turn away from it. You are He; therefore, your experience too is His. When the sweet waters rise in vapor form, they experience such great Bliss; finally, they return to the Sea to earn more of His Glory.

"Knowing this, you need never be concerned with the final outcome of this round in Time. If you want to endure great hardship, then that is your desire. If you have earned the place in His Plan to stay risen, high above the great Himalayas beyond the vast Universe, and even further along His Path, that, too is *your* choice.

"Each year, My Birthday is celebrated in grand style. Thousands come to have My Darshan, the Darshan I once brought you to enjoy, around this world on My Wings. But, do not think that it is My Birthday that is celebrated. No. I am a part of each of you; I pour Myself from the great Beyond; after another year, year of onward movement, you merge in the estuary of My Vahini, My Ganga. As the Birthdays pass along, you wait your turn to rise, through the sea, into the Ocean of Sweetness. When I pour My nectar from the bottomless cup, I am scooping each of you up to My Bosom, nay, not to My Bosom, for each of you are a part of Me. So, at the height of the Birthday Festival, all devotees who have reached My Sea rise as One. The Ananda you feel then is the result of leaving behind all the bitterness and being bathed in My Light.

"My teachings have taught you to look upon life as an endless stream, a stream without sunrise or sunset, a stream that can join My Vahini whenever it wishes, a stream that can be narrow or broad, shallow or deep, smooth or turbulent. It is whatever you want to make it. You can select a smooth bed or a rough one. You can prance or glide. You can rant and rage or chant and rejoice. It is all of your own making.

But, Charles! Every one is Me; it is not they who suffer from intolerances, from mass carnage, from deep wounds. No. These are My pains, which are but the shade of Illusion, compared with the moments of Bliss. It is only when man believes that he creates, that he feels his own destructiveness. For each pain that you endure for Me, I shall hold you to My Bosom for a thousand years."

And so, Babaji ended another of his Lessons. I thank Sanathana Sarathi for letting me share His Prem with its readers. Always at His Lotus Feet with Om and Prem.

Charles Penn
Los Angeles, USA.

Journey into Grace

In those countless moments of affliction
You craved those balmy hands of love
Straight out of thy pictured image
And wiped my heart's
Unending tears

And now in the sanctuary
Of my tears
Is born
A new life
A new meaning.

At thy bidding
I rushed to thy sacred feet
And you poured out
Thy love-soaked message.

From then on
Time stands still
And I behold nothing
But thy Golden-hued frame
And thy grace-laden eyes

O merciful Bhagavan!
Grant that no other thought
Seizes my mind except thy presence
Grant that nothing else
My tongue utters
But thy praise.

—Sathia Kandavanam.
Kokuvil, Ceylon 25-11-67

Seva as Sadhana

The Vedanta declares that the mind (Manas) leads man, either into the cage of bondage or into the vast open spaces of liberation. If it involves itself in sensual pursuits, it drags man down into the sub-human level; if it engages itself in seeking the higher truths, the deeper realities, the more lasting joys, then, it enables man to rise to the level of the Divine. Science deals with matter,

jada, things, as distinct from the living, the conscious, the chit, having chaitanya. Those are the province of Religion, of spiritual sadhana, and yoga applied to mind control. This is the age of scientific advancement, when equal attention is not being paid to spiritual advancement, or religious progress.

The jiva is but the reflection of Deva; man is but the reflection of God. Humanity is very proximate to Divinity; but, man seldom recognises this nearness. He allows his mind to lower him into the animal level, from which he struggled up through many births. A diamond may appear as a piece of glass; but, only those who do not know its value will use it as a paper-weight and keep it on the table in the office room. Wise men will keep it inside an iron safe, under lock and key. Man is a diamond, not a piece of glass; he has to shine brilliantly, after going through the process of "cutting" or samskara.

Samskara transforms man into God; manava into Madhava. We have a watch on our wrist, which costs Rs 500 or 600 or even 1000. The steel out of which the entire watch was made may cost only four annas: but, the samskara it underwent, by means of human skill and intelligence raised its value and usefulness. Man too can transform himself into a priceless instrument for God-realisation through the proper use of his mind and intelligence. By the forceful alchemy of the mind, he can attain Jnana and see the Truth that satisfies and illumines.

We feel that the people of our country will be happy, if we only provide them with food, clothing and housing. We feel that they are suffering, because they have not got these things in an adequate measure. That is an illusion, for, contentment and happiness are attributes of the mind. The mind must be trained to achieve peace and acquire joy. Without such a mind man is helpless even under the most affluent circumstances. A person may be strong, and charming; but, when he has lost his eyesight, he loses joy. There are many countries on the very peak of material civilization and are very proud about the heights which they have reached. But, have they acquired mental peace? Have they got rid of fear or hate, greed or pride?

Of course, there must be a certain degree of comfort for man, physical and mental. But, gaining the things that give comfort should not be the aim of living; once that path is selected, wants multiply and satisfaction becomes a will o' the wisp. The capacity to distinguish between right and wrong will be dulled; egoism will become sharp and strong. Thirst will increase with each quaff; hunger will gnaw more and more with each morsel of the food of material possessions. That is their real nature.

Ask yourselves the basic question: Is there something that can be called Sukha? Can it be attained by the accumulation of material things? No. Sukha, happiness, can be got and retained only through Atmajnana, the knowledge of the Self through the Atma which is the source and spring of Ananda. We delude ourselves when we argue that happiness can be derived from things outside ourselves.

Life as man is the chance given to every one to achieve one glorious end, namely, realising the Atma and its Universality. He queries every one about his name and whereabouts; but, does not know an iota of his own identity. Who are you, really? You are not the body or the senses or the intellect or the mind, for you speak as if you own them and are different from them, when you

say, my- body, my senses, my intellect, my mind. He who is the master of all these is the 'I', the 'I' that makes every one else also; feel similarly. With every breath, man inhales the consciousness that the Universal eternal Principle that pervades and persists in the entire Creation. That is why he is repeating silently, Soham, with the inhalation and the exhalation, Soham. During deep sleep, two ideas, (the very duality) disappear. The idea of "that" and the idea of "this" go; leaving only the sense of 'I'; sa and ham fade out leaving only Om, in the sounds soham. That is the seed sound, the Pranava, which is the Pran. Merge in that Om, the Primal Universal Sound and you lose your separateness and your misery, and pain.

That is the ultimate stage of man, his Anta, Vedanta. The final stage of man, his Vedanta, his jnana. Man starts as a Brahmachari, a student of the Brahmic, the Atmic path; he enters the Grihasta stage, the stage of apprenticeship in the joys and pleasures of the world; then he promotes himself into the Vanaprastha stage, of detachment and discrimination; that leads him on to the Sanyasa stage, of intense spiritual exercise. This ends in the consummation of Samyoga, or, merging in the Absolute, like the river merging in the sea, losing in the process, its taste, its form and its name. He who knows Brahma becomes Brahma; the river that enters the sea becomes the sea.

You are all engaged in Seva of one type or other and I know that you are frustrated with the result; you are not happy at the service you do nor are the recipients happy when they receive the help. But, try to develop Prema, or unselfish Love, based on Sathya Dharma and Santhi; try to fill every act of service with that Prema, try to see every act of service that you receive with the eye of Prema; then, there will be no frustration. The person who serves is the person served; you serve yourself when you serve another. You serve another because his suffering causes you anguish and by relieving it, you want to save yourself from that anguish. Unless you have that anguish, your service will be hollow and insincere.

Frustration is caused also by wrong diagnosis of the causes of suffering. A patient may be beating his head, for he is having excruciating pain in the stomach; his pain will not be diminished, if you apply some ointment on the head, imagining that his trouble is centred on the head which he was seen beating. Delay does not matter; discover the real root of the trouble and then apply the remedy. The real remedy for all troubles is a proper sense of values—first things first. Married couples think they will be happy, when they get a child; but, that is but the beginning of a series of worries. They worry about his health, his habits, his schooling, his friends, his mate, his marriage, his prospects—and so on, in an endless chain. The mind multiplies the roots of worry, anxiety, and grief.

We say 'peace of mind'; but, unless the mind is eliminated, there can be no peace. The mind is but a pattern of desires, warp and woof of wishes, resolutions, plans, ambitions, attempts, attachments. A young man of twenty with his two feet walks about free, wherever he likes. He marries and becomes a quadruped; his walk is rendered slow; it is circumscribed. He gets a child and he becomes six-legged. The more the legs the slower the movement, the nearer the ground the greater the attachment to things earthy.

You can develop detachment by dwelling on the great heritage of man; then, you will not engage yourself in low deeds and thoughts. Man is called; in the Indian texts, manu-ja, he who is born of

Manu, the great exponent of Dharma-sastra. So, Dharma is his heritage; he has no right to deny Dharma or act contrary to it. Contemplate on that Dharma, on Sathya and Prema which are the foundations of that Dharma, and then, all your acts will be in consonance with real Bharatiya culture. See your self in all and in yourself. That alone entities you to be a sevak, to serve.

This expansive Prema was cultivated in our country, under the leadership of its sages and seers; so, many sadhakas were able to succeed in seeing God's viraat swarupa everywhere. For some years now, this Prema has become abridged and narrowed by egoism and greed, we have become so hard hearted that we are not affected at the sight of suffering and want. People have learnt the wrong attitude of separating themselves from others; so, this land of Annapoorna has to go about from door to door, in foreign capitals, asking for food for the people.

Try to offer people your Prema; they will respond with lasting gratitude. Give them clothes, houses—they are apt to lose them. Give them education; they may or may not use it for their good. But, give them Prema; they will imbibe it gratefully and fill their hearts with it and be happy as never before. You can grow in Prema, by building the mansion of your life on the four pillars of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata the Bhagavata and the Bhagavad-Gita. If you are not able to read these great books and assimilate them, do not worry. Book are only guide posts, with road signs. They do not indicate the ups and downs met while traversing the roads indicated. That can be known only by actual experience. If you are not able to understand the big texts, I would advise you to simply contemplate on the wonder and beauty of God's handiwork, from the tiny worm to the most distant star, from the circulation of blood in one's own body to the movement of planets and solar systems. Meditate on the God who fills the Universe and transcends it; then, that glory will fill you and you can never more be small-minded or mean. Your acts and words will echo the glory of God. Seva that comes from such experience will certainly bear fruit.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Bombay: 6-11-67

Namasmarana—the Panacea

Diamond cuts diamond. Thorn removes thorn. Karma cures Karma. Karma, derided as causing the dualities of grief—joy, pain-pleasure, birth—death, also brings about liberation from the chain of duality. Karma causes both bondage and liberation. The sun rises; that act unfolds the petals of the lotus flower, but, folds the petals of the kumuda flower! The sun sets; that act makes the good men hurry home to the company of their family, but, it makes bad men hurry out of their dens to the places where they revel and rob. The palm falls on the mridanga; the sound is pleasant to the ear. It falls on an empty tin; the sound grates the ear. Karma ruins; Karma saves.

What is the nature of the Karma that saves? Holding fast to Sivam, as the boy Markandeya did. By this, you can foil death and earn eternal joy. What is the nature of the Karma that ruins? Holding fast to Savam. By this, you earn endless toil in slime and sorrow. What is Savam? It is

the delusion that you are the 'body'; what is Sivam? It is the consciousness that you are the In-dweller, the Inner Motivator, the Antaryamin.

How can you hold fast to Sivam? By fixing your mind on the Name of the Lord, the In-dweller. By the repetition of the Name, with the alert awareness of the Glory It summarises. The Name is the container of immeasurable potency. The Word has much power; in fact, even common words denoting things do possess some potency. For example, when the word denoting something very sour to the taste is pronounced within hearing, you find that your tongue waters. When the word denoting some thing that is awfully disgusting is pronounced within your hearing, you are afflicted with nausea. When such is the effect of the pronunciation of common words, what can we say of the tremendous transformation that takes place when the sweet sustaining Name of the Ever-present Indweller is pronounced! It purifies, it cleanses; it elevates; it spreads its fragrance in the atmosphere; it inspires.

The Name must, however, flow in the mind in an uninterrupted stream. Namasmarana is a yoga; that is to say it is a means of chitta vritti nirodha, of calming the agitations of the mind, subduing the waves of emotions and feelings. The Nama (Name) must always be associated while intent on the smarana (remembering, recalling), with the Nami (the Named One). It is not a mere sound; it is a significance, the symbol of a From, of a Fact: All the obligatory as well as optional acts pertaining to the process of 'living' can be gone through, with the Name-awareness as the inspiring back-ground. The mind must be merged in the Godhead; it must be transmuted into the essence of Godhead. When the branch of a tree rubs against another, heat is generated and in the depths of a forest fires are started when this heat grows strong. Rub a stone over another; heat is generated. But, the process must be without break; breaks only decrease the heat. So, the repetition of the Name in the mind must be without break. Then the fire of Jnana or Realisation of the Reality will burn out all weakness and delusion.

Indulal Shah spoke to you now of the World Conference of Sathya Sai Organisations to be held at Bombay, 1968. Such organisations have been established and are working in many countries in order to spread Light and Hope among all peoples. For me, all countries are equally dear; the Universe is the Body of God. Ideas like 'my country, are all for limited minds, intellects that are bound within boundaries.

There are thousands of institutions that profess to spread Bharatiya culture and preserve and publicise it; they are mostly engaged in campaigns for collection of funds. In the Sathya Sai Organisations, money is not the criterion. I need only your hearts, for My Residence and Happiness. I do not like other temples or altars. Purify the heart, by Namasmarana; I shall come, and dwell therein.

From Discourse by Baba 26-11-67

Sri Sathya Sai Satsang Samachar

Nov. 12: Madras: Baba at Madras.

- Nov. 13: Venkatagiri Town: Baba inaugurated the Student programme of The Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Discourse at a Meeting of High School Students.
- Nov. 14: Los Angeles: (USA) Film Show: Sivaratri at Prasanthi Nilayam
- Nov. 15: Pacific Palisades: (California): The Teachings of Baba: Speech By Indra Devi
- Nov. 16: Santa Barbara: (USA): The Message of Baba: Speech by Indra Devi
- Nov. 17: Santa Barbara: Address by Indra Devi to University Students
- Nov. 19: Trichinopoly: (Madras): Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Anniversary Celebrations President: Sri Syamada, Dt Judge; speech. Prof: Radhakrishnan, M.A.
- Nov. 23: Prasanthi Nilayam: Celebrations of the 42nd Birthday of Bhagavan. Bombay: Inauguration in three High Schools of the City of "Sathya Sai Bala Vihar," Moral Instruction Classes.
- Nov. 24,25,26: Prasanthi Nilayam: Discourses by Pundits: Baba's Divine Discourses.
- Dec. 6: Brindavan (Whitefield): Baba arrived at Brindavan
- Dec. 12: Triplicane (Madras): Sri Sathya Sai Bhajan Mandali: Second Anniversary Celebrations: Major P. V. Rayaningar; Speeches: D. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M. A. M., Ph. D; M. Dorairajan.
- Dec. 15: Hubli (Mysore State): Sathya Sai Seva Samithi: Speeches on Baba: Sri. V. N. Acharya, N. Kasturi.
- Dec. 16,17: Davangere (Chitaldrug Dt): Second Prasanthi Dharmothsava Celebrations Speeches; H. M. Sivaram, C. J. Muckannappa, V. N. Acharya and others; President: N. Kasturi. Laksharchana, Sathyanarayanapuja.

NOTE

Some persons misuse the Name of Baba, and announce that Baba is in communion with them, giving them Messages for Bhaktas, answers to the questions of Bhaktas, and granting interviews with Bhaktas, their object being to earn money or fame. The agents and advertisers of such persons use children and elderly persons for their trade and proclaim their authenticity. Such trickery is now very prevalent in Tamilnad and in Mysore State.

Baba has no need to use human media for communicating with Bhaktas. He had declared often that He does not 'posses' anyone, and that all such incidents have to be explained either as hysteria, or as the manifestations of spirits, or as sheer fakes, by cranks and crooks. No real devotee of Baba will be taken in by such devices; it is the duty of devotees to stop all such trickery by wise counsel and firm denial.

[ED.]