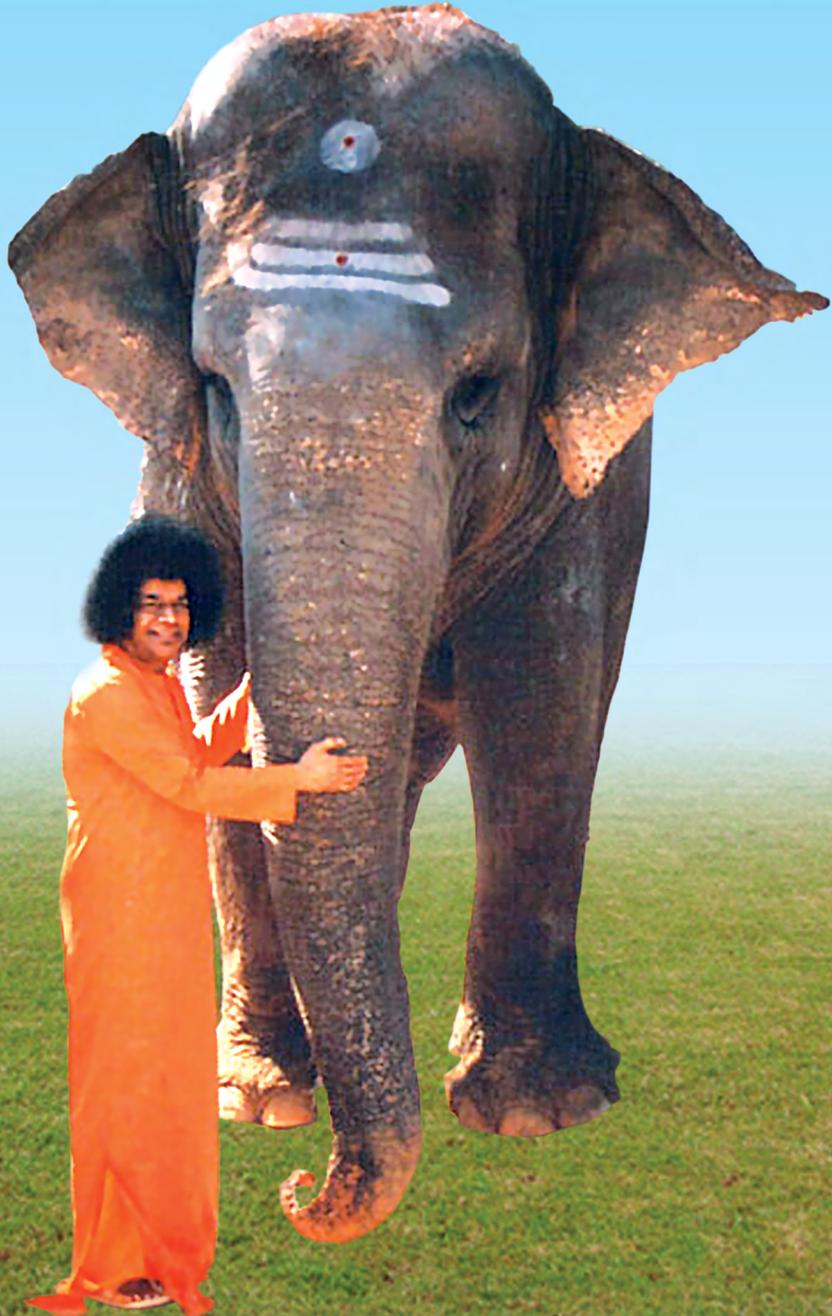




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Sanathana Sarathi

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SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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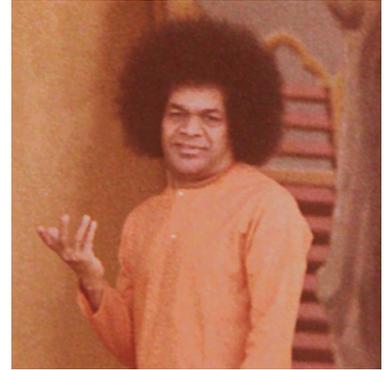
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"People offer worship to the paper
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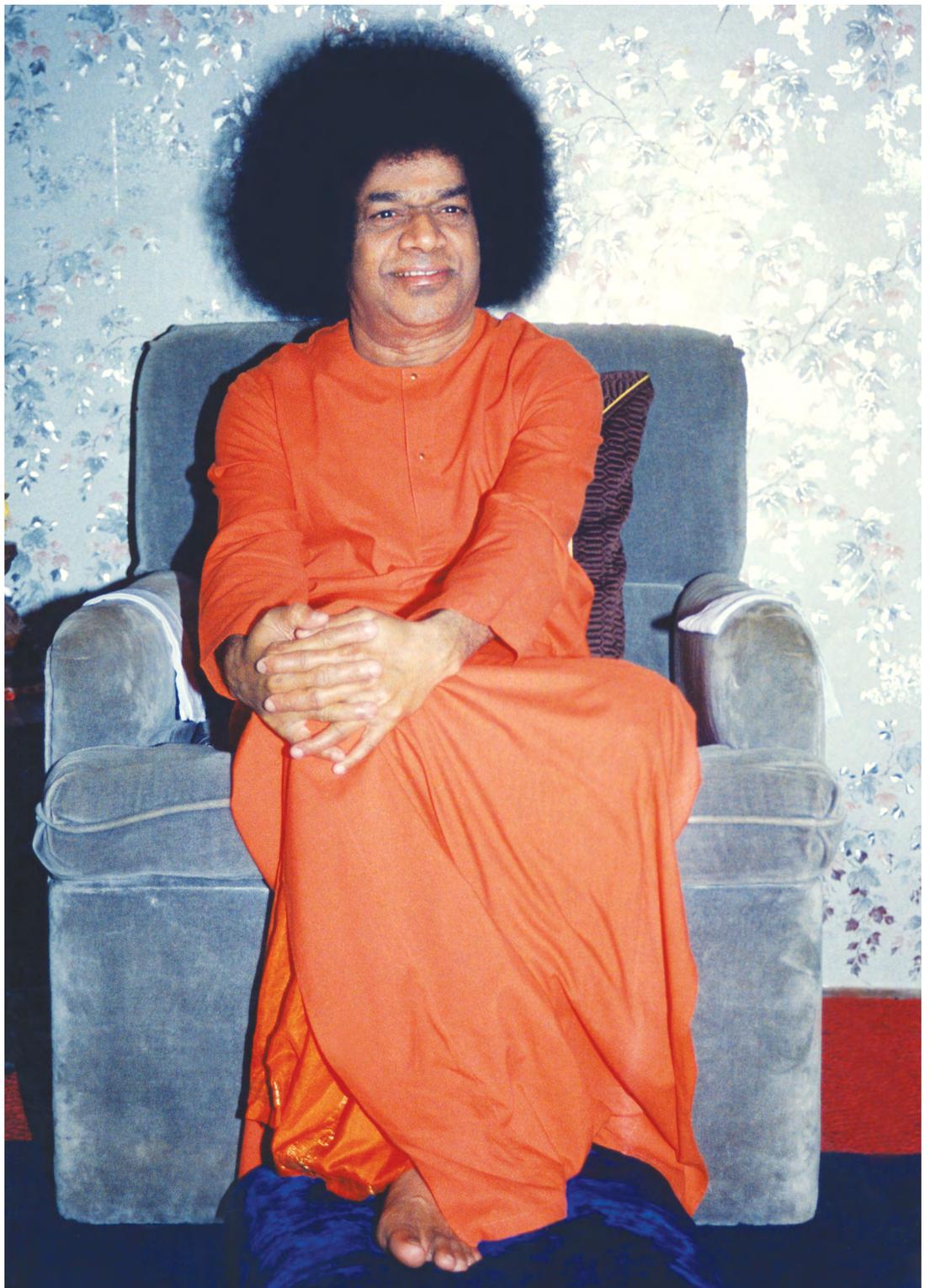
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AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
31ST AUGUST 1996

PURSUE THE PATH OF TRUTH AND WISDOM

Study of the Vedas and scriptures cannot pierce the veil of ignorance that covers the human mind. God is on one side of the veil while Jiva is on the other side. The cause is on one side and the effect is on the other.

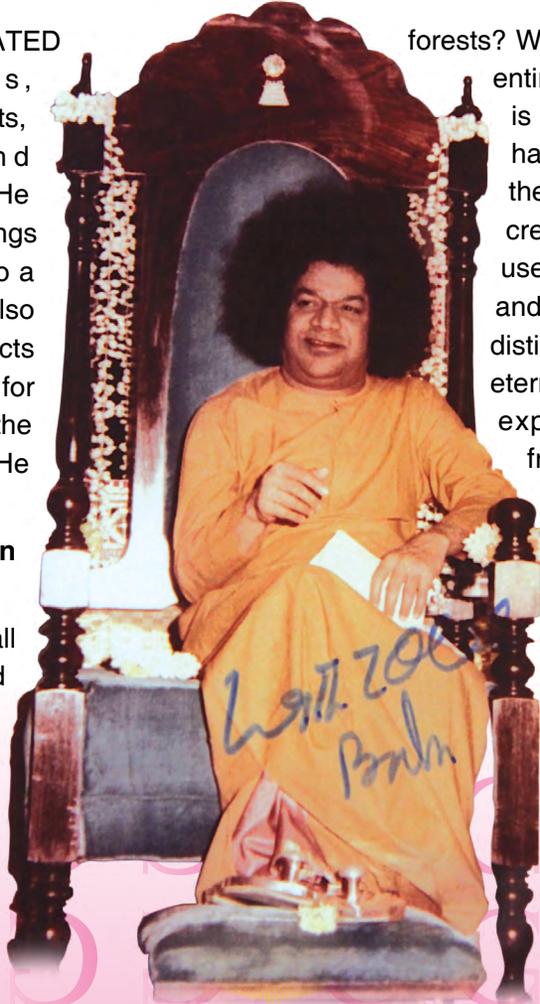
(Telugu Poem)

BODY ATTACHMENT IS THE CAUSE OF MAN'S SUFFERING

GOD CREATED mountains, rivers, forests, hills and hillocks. Similarly, He created all living beings right from a tiny ant to a huge elephant. He also created all the objects that are necessary for the functioning of the creation. However, He was not satisfied.

God Created Man in His own Image

Having created all this, He wondered who is there in this creation who would derive happiness by seeing the majestic mountains, beautiful rivers and enchanting



forests? What is the worth of the entire creation if there is no one to derive happiness from it? It was then that He decided to create man who could use his power of intellect and discrimination to distinguish between the eternal and ephemeral and experience happiness from the objects of His creation. Only man has the capacity to derive happiness from the creation and share his happiness with others. Without human beings, the entire creation has no value. Therefore, He Willed *Ekoham Bahusyam* (the

One willed to become many) and created man in His own image investing him with Vijnana (secular knowledge), Sujnana (spiritual knowledge) and Prajnana (constant integrated awareness) and the power of discrimination to enjoy His creation. When man had the vision of the Creator, he declared to the world, *Vedhametam Purusham Mahantam Adityavarnam Tamasa Parastat* (I have visualised the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond Tamas – the darkness of ignorance).

Initially, man thought he could have the vision of God by the study of the Vedas and scriptures. He undertook various spiritual practices like Japa, Tapa, Dhyana and Archana (chanting, penance, meditation and worship) to have the vision of God. But he was neither able to have the vision of God nor could he hear or experience Him. He was disappointed when all his spiritual practices did not yield any result. Why could he not experience bliss by performing all these spiritual practices? In spite of doing penance, studying the Vedas and scriptures, he was unable to get rid of body attachment which haunted him like an evil spirit. Then he started enquiring about the nature of the body and the reason for his body attachment. He investigated into the truth in many ways. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that his body was just a conglomeration of inert matter and was merely an instrument, and there was some Divine Power that made it function. It is that Divine Power which

makes man move, perform various tasks and experience happiness. He further enquired where that Divine Power was and wherefrom it came. He was continuously engaged in this thought wherever he went and whatever he did.

Divine Power Gives Value to Human Body

Once the Greek philosopher Socrates was walking on a footpath lost in his enquiry of truth. At the same time, there was another retired officer who was coming from the opposite direction. Neither Socrates saw him nor did the officer see Socrates. Both of them were lost in their own thoughts. As neither of them saw the other person coming, they collided with each other. At that moment, the retired officer angrily asked Socrates, "Who are you?" Socrates at once folded his hands in reverence and said, "Sir, that is precisely what I have been thinking about. Kindly tell me who I am." When a person is sincere in his enquiry, God will provide him with the opportunity to know the truth. Socrates was happy that without going to any master or Guru, the spiritual urge in him was awakened by the retired officer with the question, "Who are you?" He thought it was a very important question and started repeating, "Who am I?" The retired officer thought Socrates to be a madcap and went his way without giving any reply to him.

Thinking in this manner, when Socrates was going in the bazaar, he saw a hunter carrying a dead rabbit in his hand, which he had killed. A meat eater asked him the price



of the dead rabbit. The hunter quoted its price. The person paid the amount quoted by the hunter and took the dead rabbit with him. Seeing this, Socrates thought, "A dead rabbit has a price, but there is nobody who would pay anything and buy a dead body of a human being. Nobody will even ask, what is the price of this body." An animal like rabbit has some value after its death but not a human being. One may be an emperor or a Peethadhipati (head of a Mutt) but after his death, nobody will be prepared to keep his body even for some time.

At that time, there was a heavy rain while a dead body was being carried to cremation ground. Some people requested a shopkeeper on the way, "Sir, kindly permit us to keep the dead body in the verandah of your shop for some time." But the shopkeeper vehemently denied permission, saying, "No, no. Take it away." He did not even bother to enquire whether it was the body of an emperor, a wealthy person or a Peethadhipati.

Along the same road, a devotee was going to a temple and asked the same shopkeeper, "Sir, if I leave my sandals near the temple, they may be stolen away or taken away by dogs. Kindly allow me to keep my sandals in the verandah of your shop." The shopkeeper readily agreed to the request and said, "Come inside and leave them here. If you leave them in the verandah, someone may take them away." Socrates witnessed all this. Here was the dead body of a wealthy person who had many servants to attend to him when he

You plant a sapling of good quality mango tree. After some time, it gives unripe mangoes. So long as the mangoes are not ripe, they taste only sour. Only when they become ripe, do they become sweet and tasty. Likewise, when you attain the ripe stage in your Sadhana, you develop Atmabhava (Atmic feeling). Till you attain such state of blessedness, continue to discharge your duties without forgetting your goal.

was alive. There were so many restrictions to be observed to get an audience with him. But now his body was not permitted to be kept even in the verandah of a shop. The skin of dead animals can be used to make chappals, whereas human body is absolutely useless once life ebbs away from it.

Socrates thought this body is inert and is made up of flesh, blood and bones. It produces foul smelling urine and faecal matter. What is so special in this body that man gets attracted and attached to it? Every moment it gives only foul smell and not fragrance. Then why is it that man develops attachment to this body? There is some hidden power in it which is the cause of man getting attracted to this otherwise worthless body which is nothing but a bag of leather. Ultimately, he realised, there was some Divine Power in the body which governed it. He resolved to enquire and know this truth.



Know Truth through Self-enquiry

In a similar way, Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, also wanted to enquire into the truth of human life. What is the most important aspect of human life? What is it that makes the body function? What is the principle of oneness that is the undercurrent of everything? He started thinking: "What a beautiful creation! Who is this Brahman who has created it? What is His form?" Soon his thinking grew so intense that it became verily impossible for him to bear it. So, he went to his father Varuna. After prostrating at his feet, he asked, "Father, who is Brahman? What is His form?" Varuna could tell his son all about Brahman. But he thought everyone should make efforts to understand the principle of Brahman through self-experience. Not only that, when a father assumes the role of a Guru, he should not remove the doubts of his disciple himself. This will dampen the spirit of self-effort in the disciple. Therefore, Varuna told his son, "It is not possible to say, Brahman is this or that. It cannot be explained in words. You yourself have to enquire and know the truth. There is some unseen power that governs the body. The body has value so long as that unseen power is present in it. The presence of the divine power makes it Sivam (auspicious) and its absence makes it Savam (corpse). What is the difference between Sivam and Savam? You have to perform penance to realise this truth." Saying this, he blessed his son and sent him away.

As per the command of his father, Bhrigu went to a forest and started doing

penance after selecting a suitable place in it. He became engrossed in self-enquiry. One day, he thought in this manner: "All sentient beings in this world depend only on food. Food is necessary for every being. This body is nurtured by food. Therefore, food is Brahman." Concluding thus, he went to his father and said, "Father, I have come to know what is Brahman. Food is Brahman." Varuna said calmly, "No, no, dear son! Do some more contemplation. Perform some more penance." After doing penance for some more time, one day Bhrigu resolved thus: "Nourished by food, this body attains growth. For this growth, energy is required to digest food. What is that? That is the energy of Prana (life-breath). Therefore, Prana is Brahman." Coming to this conclusion, he went again to his father and said, "Father! I know, Prana is Brahman." Varuna said, "Of course, man is endowed with Prana. But what is the use? If the mind has no will to eat food, can he eat it if it is served to him in a plate? Therefore, Prana alone cannot sustain man. No, no, son! Do penance and contemplation for some more time." A doctor makes a man unconscious by administering anaesthesia to him before performing an operation on his belly. Though man has Prana, he does not know what the doctor is doing to his belly during the course of the operation. In this way, Prana can be made blind or defunct.

After performing penance for some more time, one day Bhrigu thought in this manner: "No doubt, food is necessary and Prana energy is important. However, it is



thought that impels one to eat food. But thought is born in the mind. Hence, the mind is Brahman.” Bhrgu went to his father and said, “Father! Now I understand that the mind is Brahman.” His father called him near and said, “Man is endowed with mind. But what is the use if it lacks the power of thinking? Such a man may eat charcoal, cow dung and dust. A man needs power of discrimination. A mad man has also mind. But he does not know what to say to whom or where to go. Hence, the mind is not really Brahman. No, no. Contemplate more and do penance more.”

Without any demur whatsoever, Bhrgu started performing penance once again. After some time, he thought: “What purpose can the mere thoughts of the mind serve? It is the power of discrimination that imparts purpose to the thoughts.” Resolving thus, he went again to his father and said, “Father, I know Vijnana is Brahman.” Varuna said to his son, “There are so many scholars endowed with Vijnana, Sujnana and Prajnana. But what is the benefit society gets from them? In fact, there is Ajnana (ignorance) which overshadows their Prajnana.” Bhrgu once again told his son to do more contemplation and Tapas, and sent him back with his blessings.

After contemplating and performing penance for some more time, one day Bhrgu thought in this way: “Food is the source of nourishment and Prana gives energy. The mind generates desires. Buddhi (intellect) gives Viveka (wisdom). There must be some result of all this. What is that? This must be found.” Thinking thus,

he started performing penance once again. One day, he had a unique experience. He felt that he was immersed in an ocean of bliss and continuously remained in that blissful state.

Varuna came in search of his son and found him in a certain part of the forest in the state of Samadhi (superconscious state). He knew that he was experiencing pure and eternal bliss. Anandam Brahma (Bliss is Brahman). Thinking that his son needed nothing else, he went his way.

Transcend the Gross Sheaths to Experience Bliss

Once Bhrgu experienced the ultimate bliss, he had no desire for anything else. In fact, all spiritual practices are meant to attain this state of bliss. What people experience today is only momentary happiness but not the eternal bliss which is described as Nityananda, Yogananda, Paramananda, Satchidananda and Atmananda. It is available only with God and none else. God created man so that he would enquire into the nature of five sheaths and ultimately reach Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). Man has to transcend the Annamaya Kosha (food sheath), Pranamaya Kosha (life sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mind sheath) and Vijnanamaya Kosha (wisdom sheath) step by step and ultimately reach Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). Pranamaya Kosha is subtler than Annamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha is subtler than Pranamaya Kosha, Vijnanamaya Kosha is subtler than Manomaya Kosha and Anandamaya Kosha is the subtlest of all Koshas and is



all-pervasive. But, unfortunately, man today has forgotten his innate blissful nature and is going in the reverse direction which means from the state of Anandamaya, he has come to Vijnanamaya, from Vijnanamaya to Manomaya, from Manomaya to Pranamaya and ultimately from Pranamaya he has reached Annamaya and has remained there. He gives utmost importance to his body. God created man so that he could attain the

have the vision of God, but not to know the nature of body. This body is like an instrument. But you focus all your attention on this instrument forgetting the indweller. How long do the physical pleasures last? Here is a small example. You go to the canteen when you are hungry. You pay six rupees and eat three Chapatis. You are happy and satisfied that your hunger is satiated. But how long will this happiness last? You will again feel hungry after two



You should consider this body as the temple of God. But why should you desire a temple without God in it? Always think that God is present in this temple of body and whatever you do is an offering to Him. It is only when you develop such sacred feelings will your body, mind, intellect, Chitta (consciousness), senses and Antahkarana (inner psyche) be sanctified. Therefore, transform your Dehabhimana (body attachment) into Daivabhimana (attachment to the Self).



highest state of Brahman. Contrary to the Will of God, man today has degenerated to the lowest state of existence.

Where is the need for education to know the nature of the body? Do you need a mirror to see the bracelet on your arm? You need to perform spiritual practices to

hours. How much 'oil' and 'petrol' does this machine of human body consume!

When you are using this body as merely a machine, why should you develop so much attachment to it? You should transcend body attachment.



Practise the Teachings Propounded in Sacred Texts

Human mind is very powerful and at the same time highly fickle. The great warrior Arjuna himself was unable to withstand the vagaries of the mind. He said to Lord Krishna, “*Chanchalam Hi Manah Krishna Pramathi Balavadrudham* (this mind is very unsteady, turbulent and powerful). Oh Krishna! How can I describe the power and fickleness of the mind! It does not keep quiet even for a moment. Even a monkey may have steadiness, but not the mind.” Mind is most powerful, dangerous and difficult to control. Such is the nature of the mind. It is due to the influence of the mind that man is undergoing difficulties, sorrow, trials and tribulations. It is the fickleness of mind that causes restlessness and makes the life of man chaotic and ultimately lands him in a mental asylum.

Students keep on studying any number of books, but they should also know the purpose of their studies. If someone presents you the Bhagavadgita, you reverentially receive it, keep it on your head and touch it to your heart. Everyday you start doing Parayana (ceremonial reading) of Bhagavadgita starting with the first Sloka (verse):

*Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre Samaveta
Yuyutsava,
Mamaka Pandavaschaiva Kimakurvata
Sanjaya.*

After doing Parayana, you keep the book on your altar with all respect and

place two flowers on it. But what is the use of all this ritualistic worship unless you put into practice the teachings of the Bhagavadgita? This is the sign of great ignorance of devotees, theists and educated people today. People offer worship to the paper and the words of the Bhagavadgita, but they do not drink the nectar of bliss which results from the practice of its teachings. Everyone must realise the truth that all the sacred texts like the Bible, the Quran, the Vedas and the Upanishads are meant for practice and not merely for doing Parayana. These days you find Sai Satcharitra in the hands of most of the devotees. They say they are doing Parayana everyday. There is no greater foolishness than this. Is this book meant for only doing Parayana? It is meant for practice. Put into practice what Shirdi Sai Baba has taught in this book.

Here is a small example. A person was suffering from severe cold and cough. When he approached a village doctor, he suggested to him to make a decoction of dry ginger, pepper and ginger and drink it. Then the patient started repeating to himself, “I should drink the decoction of dry ginger, pepper and ginger.” But he did not get any relief. How can he get any relief unless he prepares the decoction and drinks it? In the same manner, you are merely repeating what is contained in the sacred texts without putting them into practice. You will derive benefit only when you practise.



The Elements are under the Control of God

All the five elements are under the control of God. They obey the command of the Creator. But no one is realising this truth. When you realise this truth, you can get rid of all your troubles in a moment. You say, everything is in God's hands and pray to him to come to your rescue. But you doubt whether God really has any control over everything. There was only one doubting Thomas and betrayer of his preceptor in the Bible, but today everyone has become a doubting Thomas.

Once there was a severe hailstorm in Shirdi and hailstones started hitting people like stones. All the workers and villagers ran helter skelter out of fear. They took shelter in temples, choultries and wherever they could find place. Dwarakamai was a very small place. There too people gathered and occupied every inch of space wherever they could find place to stand. Everybody started praying, "Baba, kindly save us." Just as the Gopikas and Gopals of Dwapara Yuga prayed to Krishna to protect them from severe rain, the people of Shirdi prayed to Baba to come to their rescue. Baba said to them, "Achchha, Achchha, Dekhega, Dekhega" (okay, okay, I will see, I will see). Baba then hit a pillar and said, "Look here, enough of your terror, cool down. Already you have exhibited too much anger and all are fear-stricken and have come to know about your power. Once people have recognised your power, where is the need for you to continue this

further? You are crossing your limits, cool down." That very moment, the storm came to a halt.

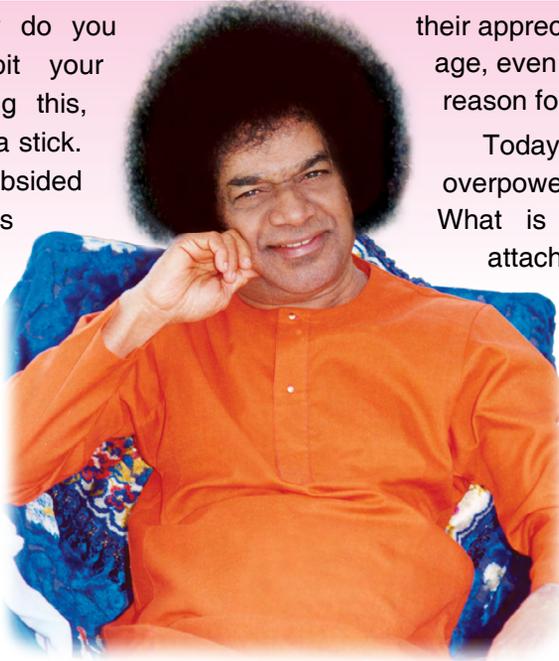
It is not for boasting that I am telling you this. You might have forgotten, but try to remember what happened here two days ago. When I was about to give My Discourse, there was a very heavy downpour with powerful wind. The rain and wind were so fierce that they started coming inside the hall. I started giving My Discourse and at once the rain stopped. There was not a drop of rain after that.

While Baba was in Shirdi, fire was always kept burning in the Dhuni in Dwarakamai. Devotees used to buy firewood from outside and offer it in the fire to keep it burning continuously. They wanted to have some satisfaction of offering wood in the sacred fire. They did not think of the pros and cons of their act. Once some foolish devotees came and offered a lot of wood in the fire without thinking to what height the flame would rise when they put so much of wood in it. Huge flames started rising after some time. Seeing this, Shyama came running and called out, "Baba, Baba." Baba asked, "What Shyama? What has happened?" "See Baba, God of fire has manifested before us," said Shyama. Baba replied, "The fire god has manifested, but who is interested in seeing him here?" Then he addressed the fire god and said, "Whom are you trying to show your prowess here? You are behaving like this because there is no one to teach you a lesson. You should show your prowess when and where



it is required. Why do you unnecessarily exhibit your power now?" Saying this, he hit the pillar with a stick. The raging flames subsided in a moment. What is the meaning of this? Nothing should happen without a cause. Is there any such foolish person who will go to the bank of the Ganga and call out everyone, saying, "Come, come, I will give you water." Who is he to give water when the river Ganga is flowing? Due to the influence of Kali Age, people sometimes act in a foolish manner without any proper reason. This type of behaviour is seen even in scholars.

Some people take Ganga water in their hands and offer it back to Ganga while chanting, Keshavaya Namah, Madhavaya Namah, Govindaya Namah and so on. Here in this practice, whose water you are offering to whom? Is it the property of your father or grandfather or uncle you are offering to someone? No, you offer Ganga water to Ganga itself. Today atheism is on the rise because such ritualistic practices are performed without understanding the reason behind them. You should understand the reason behind every act and be able to convince others and win



their appreciation. In this modern age, even a small child wants a reason for everything.

Today people are overpowered by ignorance. What is the reason? Body attachment is the main cause. He is a blessed one who can transform his body attachment into love for God. Only then will humanness have value. So long as you don't develop love for God, your life will not have the value

even of a dead rabbit.

Develop Attachment to the Self

There is a small story. Students should not take it otherwise. Great truths can be explained through such small stories. Narada roams in all the three worlds chanting the Name of the Lord, Govinda Damodara, Narayana. Once he went to Vaikuntha and offered his salutations to Lord Narayana. Lord Narayana told him to take a seat and asked him, "You roam the three worlds all the time. Have you come across anything bad in My creation?" Narada said, "Forgive me, oh Lord! There is so much bad in Your creation." Lord Narayana said, "What is it that you are talking, Narada? In spite of being the son of Brahma, you are talking without any sense of discrimination. There is nothing bad in



My creation.” Narada said, “Oh Lord! Every morning people excrete faecal matter. How bad it is!” Lord Narayana was surprised to hear this. He said, “Oh Narada, you are mistaken to think that it is something bad. May be, you are talking out of your mind. It is not bad, it is very good.” Then Narada said, “If Lord Narayana himself says like this, what am I to say? But, how can you say, it is not something bad but good?” Lord Narayana said, “Do not ask me about this. You ask the human excreta itself directly.” What could poor Narada do when Lord Narayana said this?

Obedying the command of the Lord, Narada approached human excreta. When he was ten feet away from it, it said, “Oh Narada! Don’t come near me, be away.” Narada was astonished to hear this. He said, “In fact, it is I who should say this to you to keep away from me. But how is it that you are saying this to me?” Then the faecal matter replied, “Narada, last night I was in the form of sacred curd, milk, rice and sweet pudding. I was good enough to be offered as Naivedyam (food offering) to God. But today I have come to this state because of my association with a human being once. Then what would be my fate if I come in contact with a human being again?”

Lord Narayana then explained to Narada, “What you perceive as bad in this creation is only the reaction, reflection and resound of what man does. In fact, God has not created anything bad.” Everything

depends on your association. *Tell me your company I shall tell you what you are.* You become the type of person with whom you associate yourself with. If you keep mango or gongura pickle in a jar, it will remain good for more than a year. But if you put the same pickle in this ‘jar’ of human body, it will get spoilt by evening. Not only that. You would have seen the flour mill. If you put wheat in it, wheat flour will come out of it. If you put rice, rice flour will come out of it. If you put pulses, pulses flour will come out of it. But if you put a sweet laddu in a human body, what comes out of it is foul-smelling excreta. Therefore, you should treat this human body with a sense of detachment. Human body is inferior to even a flour mill and a jar.

Such being the case, why should you give importance to human body? It is because the Atma pervades this body from top to toe. *Deho Devalaya Proktho Jivo Deva Sanathana* (the body is a temple and the indweller is God). You should consider this body as the temple of God. But why should you desire a temple without God in it? Always think that God is present in this temple of body and whatever you do is an offering to Him. It is only when you develop such sacred feelings will your body, mind, intellect, Chitta (consciousness), senses and Antahkarana (inner psyche) be sanctified. Therefore, transform your Dehabhimana (body attachment) into Daivabhimana (attachment to the Self).

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ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER VISITS PRASANTHI NILAYAM

THE CHIEF MINISTER OF Andhra Pradesh, Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu visited Prasanthi Nilayam and offered his salutations at the Samadhi of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on 24th July 2014. The Chief Minister came to Sri Sathya Sai Airport from Hyderabad by a private aircraft at around 10.30 a.m. and straightaway drove to Prasanthi Nilayam. He was accompanied by Sri Palle Raghunatha Reddy, Minister for Information, Public Relations and Information Technology and Communications, Smt. Paritala Sunitha, Minister for Price Monitoring, Consumer Affairs, Food and Civil Supplies, and Members of Parliament and Members

of Andhra Pradesh Assembly from Anantapur district. On his arrival at Sai Kulwant Hall, the Trustees of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri V. Srinivasan, Sri K. Chakravarthi, Sri T.K.K. Bhagavat and Sri R.J. Rathnakar and Secretary of the Trust, Sri Prasada Rao welcomed him and escorted him to the Samadhi of Bhagavan where he placed a garland and offered salutations to Bhagavan. Soon after this, the Chief Minister came to Bhajan Mandir where he spent some time experiencing its sacred ambience. Later, he had an hour-long meeting with the Trustees of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust in Shanti Bhavan. Soon after this, he left Prasanthi Nilayam for his other engagements.



The Chief Minister, Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu offering his salutations at Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Samadhi.

REVERENTIAL HOMAGE TO BHAGAVAN ON GURU PURNIMA

A MAMMOTH CONCOURSE OF devotees came to Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world to offer their homage to their Sadguru, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the holy festival of Guru Purnima. Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of the celebrations was aesthetically decorated for the festive occasion. A variety of programmes conducted during the course of the celebrations included meetings and conferences of Indian and International Sai Organisations, talks by distinguished speakers, service activities for the underprivileged sections of society, music and cultural programmes by Indian and overseas devotees.

SATHYA SAI IDEAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

On the eve of the sacred festival of Guru Purnima, a landmark conference on Sathya Sai Ideal Education was organised by the Sathya Sai International Organisation at Prasanthi Nilayam from 6th to 8th July 2014, in which 284 teachers and educators from about 50 overseas countries came to participate. Representatives from 28 Institutes of Sathya Sai Education and 40 Sathya Sai Schools worldwide spent three days, discussing Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on Educare and the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values programme.



A section of participants in Sathya Sai Ideal Education Conference.

The vast number of areas covered within the conference, talks and workshops explored a variety of best practices for delivering Sathya Sai Education, including training programmes, quality assurance, accreditation, school and community partnerships, ideal parenting, and many other topics.

Delegates agreed that whether they were in South Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, China, United States, Canada, Fiji or Australia, all were focused on the same goal of promoting education based on the five human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence. They were united in their objective of promoting world peace and prosperity through love and the practice of the human values. Furthermore, the delegates affirmed that this vision of a better world could be most effectively achieved by working cooperatively to share innovative ideas and transferable



resources that could be adapted to their local cultures and conditions.

After the conclusion of the deliberations of the conference in Poornachandra Auditorium, two speakers presented the summary of its proceedings and highlighted its main points in their talks in Sai Kulwant Hall on the evening of 8th July 2014. The first speaker was Dr. (Ms.) Margaret Taplin of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Hong Kong who spoke about the impact of Sathya Sai Schools and Institutes of Sathya Sai Education on society and at government level in various countries of the world. She also showcased the spread of the message of Educare given by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. In particular, she narrated in detail the positive response to this message in China involving 58 schools and over 700 teachers. The second speaker was Dr. Manuel Alberto Morales of Sathya Sai Institute of Education, Mexico who emphasised the bright prospects of Sathya Sai Education in bringing about transformation in societies around the world, especially in children. The learned speaker further said that practice of human values was the key to develop understanding in the entire humanity for building a new and authentic society.

ALL INDIA SAMITHI CONVENERS CONFERENCE

More than 2,000 Samithi Conveners of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi came from all parts of India to participate in the All India Conference of Samithi Conveners held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 11th July 2014.

The deliberations of the conference held in Poornachandra Auditorium began at 10.25 a.m. on 11th July 2014 with lighting of sacred lamp amidst Vedic chants. At the outset, Sri B.V. Ramana Rao, Editor, "Sanathana Sarathi" (Telugu) and All India Seva Dal Coordinator extended hearty welcome to guests and Samithi Conveners and observed that the present generation was extremely fortunate as it had the rare opportunity to be contemporaries of the Avatar of Kali Yuga, who showed the path of love and service to mankind by His own example.

Addressing the participants in Hindi, Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, exhorted the Samithi Conveners to absorb the spiritual vibrations of this sacred place and work for their own transformation by serving their fellow beings before attempting to transform others. Bhagavan, he said, has always assured the devotees that He would always be with them. He further emphasised that doing the work of Bhagavan was worshipping Him. After this, Sri Nimish Pandya, All India Vice President delivered his talk. Stressing the need for



*Participants in the All India Samithi
Conveners Conference.*

further development and expansion of Sai activities, viz., Bal Vikas, Bhajans, study circle and Nagar Sankirtan at Samithi level, he observed that only personal Sadhana could make a person successful Samithi Convener. The evening session of the conference was conducted in Sai Kulwant Hall, where Bhagavan's robes were presented to Samithi Conveners as a token of Bhagavan's blessings and grace which the Samithi conveners received with great reverence.

Next morning, four Samithi Conveners addressed the gathering of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first speaker was Sri Sunil Dahal from Pakyong Samithi, Sikkim. Expressing his heartfelt gratitude to Bhagavan for His special token of love in the form of a robe, he said, this was the most auspicious moment of his life. The second speaker, Sri Manish Sharma from Shimla, Himachal Pradesh observed that Sai Organisation was the path which could raise a human to divine level by serving mankind. The next speaker was Sri Sainath from Panaji, Goa who stressed the need for self-transformation so that we could show that our life is Swami's Message. The last speaker was Dr. Sanjiv from Ernakulam, Kerala who referred to Bhagavan's Mission which He started at the age of 14 years, and which envisaged that man should realise that he is divine and should experience his divinity.

Service Activities of Sri Sathya Sai Easwaramma Women's Welfare Trust

A special programme was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Easwaramma Women's

Welfare Trust on the eve of Guru Purnima, on 11th July 2014, in which keys for toilets constructed by the Trust were handed over to 300 beneficiaries assembled in Sai Kulwant Hall. The Trust has so far constructed more than 1,000 toilets in



Beneficiaries in Sai Kulwant Hall.

villages around Puttaparthi for needy families free of cost under its Sanitation and Hygiene Project. Speaking on this occasion, the Managing Trustee of the Trust, Smt. Chethana Raju outlined the service activities being performed by the Trust in the areas of medicare, health and hygiene and economic uplift of villagers in Puttaparthi and adjoining villages. It was heartening to note that some of the beneficiaries expressed their feelings of gratitude to Bhagavan for the benefits being provided to them by Sri Sathya Sai Easwaramma Women's Welfare Trust. This was followed by a brief session of Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme which began at 8.30 a.m. came to a close with Arati at 9.40 a.m.

GURU PURNIMA FUNCTION

The programme on the holy day of Guru Purnima started at 8.30 a.m. on 12th July 2014 in Sai Kulwant Hall which was



glittering with decorations of various types. Bouquets and garlands of colourful fresh flowers adorned Bhagavan's Samadhi where a beautiful silver chair with umbrella was placed for Bhagavan.

Guru Vandana

The first item of the programme was a dedicated and soulful offering of devotional songs and Stotras entitled "Guru Vandana" which the students of Bhagavan offered at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan with their hearts full of love and gratitude. Beginning their musical tribute to their Sadguru Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba with a Sanskrit verse "Akhandamandalakaram" from "Guru Gita", the students next rendered a couple of Carnatic music compositions and traditional songs and the Stotra "Sainath Ashtakam" dedicated to Bhagavan. After this musical tribute to Bhagavan by His students, four Samithi Conveners made short speeches.

Divine Discourse

In His Divine Discourse on this occasion, Bhagavan observed that man today had forgotten his innate divinity due to the evils of greed, lust and anger and had therefore degenerated to the level of an animal. What the world needed was men of sacrifice which could help society and serve mankind, said Bhagavan. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram". After a brief session of Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam, the morning programme concluded with Arati at 10.30 a.m.

Illuminating Talks

The evening programme began at 4.30 p.m. with regular Vedic chants by the students followed by two illuminating talks. The first talk was delivered by Sri George Bebedelis, National Coordinator for Greece of International Sathya Sai Organisation who gave an overview of the service activities being performed by Sai Organisation in various overseas countries. Defining the name SAI as Service, Adoration, Illumination and BABA as Being, Awareness, Bliss and Atma, the learned speaker observed that by adopting the mode of Service, Adoration and Illumination, one could finally attain supreme bliss, which was the goal of human birth. Singing the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin", Sri George reminded the audience that group devotional singing was the royal road to attain God.

The second speaker was Sri Narayan Sar, Vice President of Odisha State, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of India. Offering his homage to Bhagavan Baba, Sri Sar remarked that contemporaries of this Sadguru were most fortunate since they had God as their Guru. Outlining the service activities being performed in the various States of India, Sri Sar observed that devotees of Bhagavan should see Bhagavan in fellow beings who were underprivileged and serve them with love and reverence. Referring to the new initiatives undertaken by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of India, the learned speaker described the service activities being taken up by the States of India in the



areas of providing employment to village youth, removal of malnutrition of rural children and disaster management training to youth.

Enrapturing Saxophone Recital

The last item of the programme was a scintillating instrumental music recital by renowned saxophone exponent, Kadri Gopalnath. Offering his respectful tributes to Bhagavan, the talented artiste enthralled the mammoth gathering of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall with Bhajans and devotional songs which included “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin”, “Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai”, “Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam”, “Krishna Nee Begane Baro” and “Brahmamokkate”. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. Meanwhile, Kadri Gopalnath and the musicians who provided support to him were felicitated. Bhajans ended with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin” in the golden voice of Bhagavan. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.45 p.m.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME BY INDONESIAN DEVOTEES

As part of Guru Purnima celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam, devotees from Indonesia presented a beautiful cultural programme on 13th July 2014. The first item of the programme was a scintillating Balinese song which was presented by ladies singers and musicians, enrapturing one and all with its melody and sweetness. This was followed by a dance drama



A Balinese song presented by ladies singers and musicians from Indonesia.

“Krishna” by Bal Vikas children of Indonesia which depicted the birth and Divine sport of child Krishna. Embellished with sweet songs and thrilling dances of children, the drama was an impressive presentation in Balinese style. At the conclusion of this programme, the participants were felicitated. Bhajans followed this which concluded with the Bhajan “Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram” sung by Bhagavan. The programme which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

DEVOTIONAL MUSIC BY DEVOTEES OF RUSSIA AND RUSSIAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

The grand finale of Guru Purnima celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam was a soul-stirring devotional music programme presented by devotees of Russia and Russian-speaking countries on 14th July 2014. Beginning their presentation at 5.00 p.m., these talented singers and musicians surcharged the entire milieu with spiritual vibrations by their spirited singing of devotional songs in Russian which



portrayed the Divine Glory of Bhagavan and described the beauty and grandeur of the land of Russia. After Russian songs, the singers sang three Hindi Bhajans, viz., “Guru Baba Guru Baba”, “Mana Mohana Nandalala” and “Sankara Siva Sankara Siva Sankara Shambho”, which demonstrated their talent in mastering the tune, rhythm and pronunciation of Hindi Bhajans. At the conclusion of this programme, the singers and musicians were felicitated. This was followed by Bhajans by students which concluded with



Devotional music by devotees of Russia and Russian-speaking countries.

the Bhajan “Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma” in Bhagavan’s golden voice. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

... continued from page 11

This is the real Sadhana. Without developing Atmabhimana, there is no point in doing any other Sadhana. People say, we are doing Bhajans. Till you attain the state of Atmabhimana, all such spiritual practices are essential.

You plant a sapling of good quality mango tree. After some time, it gives unripe mangoes. So long as the mangoes are not ripe, they taste sour. Only when they become ripe do they become sweet and tasty. Likewise, when you attain the ripe stage in your Sadhana, you develop Atmabhava (Atmic feeling). Till you attain such state of blessedness, continue to

discharge your duties without forgetting your goal. Always remind yourself that you have to reach this goal. Gradually, detach yourself from the body and develop attachment to the Self. Only then can you experience eternal bliss. Pursue this path of truth and wisdom and immerse yourself in divine bliss.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “Sathyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma...”)

– From Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 31st August 1996.

Evolution is nothing but the progressive unfolding of Spirit out of the density of material consciousness and the gradual self-revelation of God out of this apparent animal being.

- Sri Aurobindo

From our Archives

LOVE IS SWEETER THAN NECTAR

*Love is God; the cosmos is permeated with love.
Assuming the love form, to save His beloved ones,
Showering the nectarine stream of love,
Krishna came as the embodiment of love for those yearning for Him.
Everything is born out of pure love;
All joy is derived from unalloyed love;
So are truth, sacrifice, peace and forbearance.
If love is lacking, there can be no contentment.
This is the path of Sai and the word of truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

THE POWER OF LOVE IS BOUNDLESS

Embodiments of Divine Love!

A NURAGA (AFFECTION) AND Prema (love) are mutually dependent and inseparable. When the mind is turned towards things of the world, it is called Anuraga (attachment) and if it is turned towards God, it is called Prema (love). Love is the fruit of love. Love is comparable only with love. Love can offer only love itself. Love cannot be described by poetry. It cannot be proved by the mind or the spoken word. Hence, the Vedas declare that it transcends the mind and speech. Love is priceless and indescribably precious. Its sweetness is unexcelled. The scriptures have described Amrita (nectar) as indescribably sweet. But love is far sweeter than nectar.

Love can be Got only through Love

Love is a precious diamond which can be got only in the realm of love and nowhere else. The kingdom of love is located in the heart, in a heart filled with love.

The greater a man's love for God, the greater the bliss which he experiences. When love declines in man, his joy also declines equally. The lover of God sees God everywhere. Hence, man's heart must be filled with the love of God.



Love can be experienced only in a mind overflowing with love and a heart filled with love. The precious diamond of love cannot be got through Japa or meditation, through prescribed rituals or various sacred acts. These can only give mental satisfaction.

The greater a man's love for God, the greater the bliss which he experiences. When love declines in man, his joy also declines equally. The lover of God sees God everywhere. Hence, man's heart must be filled with the love of God.

Love cannot bear separation from the beloved. Today is the day when we celebrate the advent in human form of the Lord who came down to the earth to instil love in human beings. The nature of divine love can be understood only when the Divine in human form teaches as man to man the nature of this love.

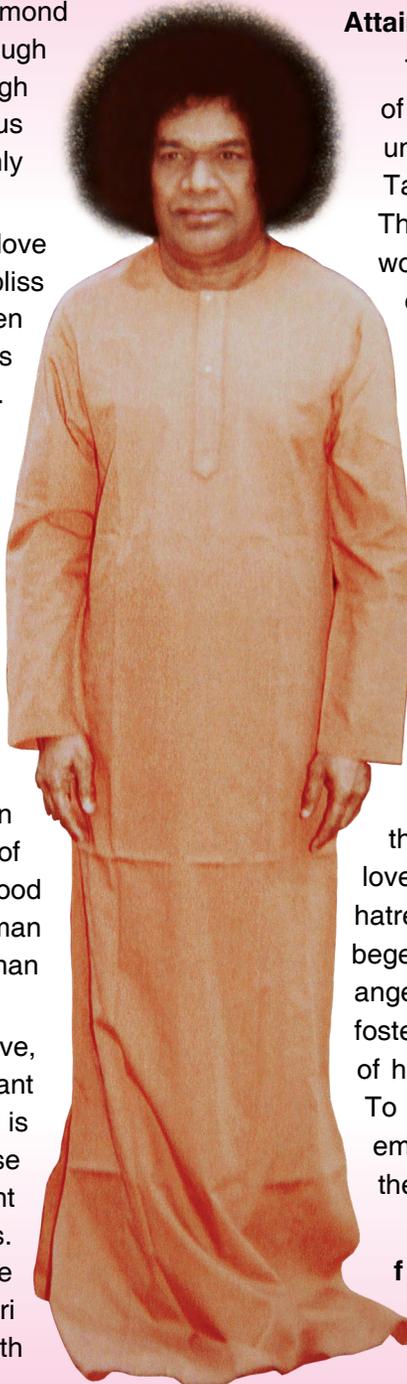
For those immersed in love, everything appears vibrant with life. The power of love is boundless. The love-impulse is manifested in different persons in different ways. Supreme devotees like the Gopikas considered Sri Krishna as the very breath

of their life and worshipped Him. "You are everything for us," they declared.

Attain Krishna through Love

The supreme message of the life of Krishna is the uniqueness of the Prema Tattwa (love principle). This message is all that the world needs. Krishna is the embodiment of love. This love can be understood only through love. This love is strong, brilliant and unbreakable like diamond. It is extremely precious. If you want to secure divine love, your love (for God) must be equally strong. You can cut diamond only with diamond. If there is any defect in your love, it should be removed only through love. Love begets love. Hatred can only beget hatred, not love. Jealousy begets jealousy. Anger breeds anger. Therefore, if you want to foster love, you have to get rid of hatred, jealousy and anger. To attain Krishna, the very embodiment of love, love is the only way.

– E x c e r p t e d
from Bhagavan's Sri
Krishna Janmashtami
Discourses.



AN EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY

At the ripe old age of 100 years, Smt. Phyllis Krystal, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan and the author of many famous books like “Sai Baba – the Ultimate Experience”, “Reconnecting the Love Energy” and “Cutting the Ties that Bind”, is still actively spreading the teachings of Bhagavan. In this interview by Ms. Kanan Divecha, she describes the method of detaching from people, things, places, possessions, desires, etc., which bind man and of reconnecting with High Consciousness which leads him to freedom.

*H*OW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE your journey with Baba in your life?

An extraordinary journey! My husband had to travel a lot; he was an international lawyer and I went with him. All that happened at that time was, a book just fell down on my lap, so to speak, about Baba, when we were about to go to India. We did not know about Him at that time; it was the first time ever I had even seen His picture. This was in 1973.

When we went back [to India] in January, and when we met Him for the first time, He was giving me an interview, a farewell interview in those days not to very many people. I was dying to ask Him a question, but I was extremely shy. Finally, I made myself ask Him – “We’ve come to see You; now what do we do here on? Do we come back again?” I’ll never forget His answer. He said, “You do not have to be attached or come back to see Me, this little Body,”

and He pointed to Himself. Then, the next sentence – “You must find my counterpart in your heart.” I have been doing this work [Cutting the Ties that Bind] since the 1950s and I didn’t even know that He was in the world. But I knew what He meant because of the High Consciousness [Hi C] and then with a very big smile, He said, “You will come back to be re-energised.” So, that was the beginning of knowing that Baba didn’t want us to be attached to His Form.

I was very blessed, and I have tried to explain it to others, because everyone is so devastated that there is no Form any longer, that He is now much more available everywhere. He used to say, “I am a prisoner in my Ashram; I can’t go anywhere alone. I always have people around.” Now He is everywhere. We don’t have to think of Him as a Body. We can think of Him right inside ourselves and in everybody else. So, it’s a wonderful experience to be making inner contact.

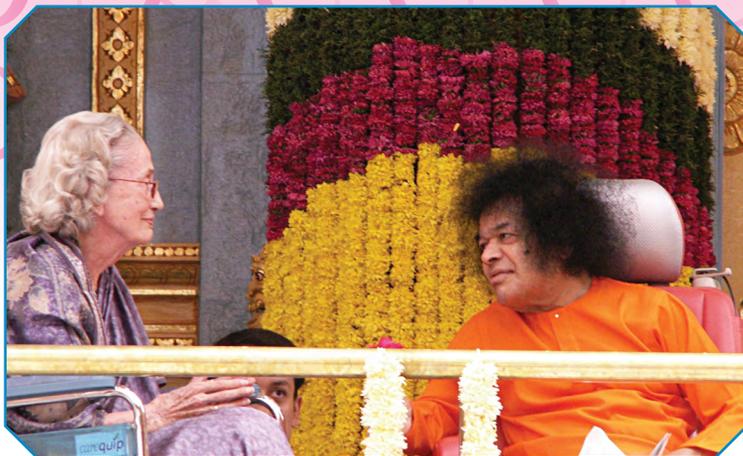


When you saw Him at the Ashram, did you feel a sense of fulfilment, joy, emptiness of mind? Were you speechless, overwhelmed?

Those few things you mentioned were very true. He literally can seem to wash out your mind, that you are almost hardly there. And He does render you speechless. You can only say what He wants you to say or ask Him what He wants you to ask. It was a revelation for me to see my husband, who was a lawyer, speechless [laughs]. It was extraordinary! Baba wanted us to get away from our rigid ideas and really open up. Of course, the one thing I noticed about Him very acutely was this astonishing Love that I'd never had in my life. It was so fulfilling and so overwhelming; it brought me to tears.

Your three magical words – Surrender, Trust, Accept – are like a Mantra for me and if one can follow this, one can confidently sail through life, through all the rumbles and tumbles. How did you envision this Mantra? Did you have any trouble with your monkey mind embracing this practice?

No...for the simple reason that when my friend Virginia and I started, all we really had was a question – is there something more to life than the life we are living? We were both wives, we were both mothers, we were both perfectly happy with our roles,



Smt. Phyllis Krystal with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

we were both educated, though at that time it was not trendy for wives to be working. Even though we were both perfectly happy, we felt there was something missing, that we must do something more.

We each had an experience of waking up one morning with an answer to a question or suddenly having a hunch, and we found that it was working! So, we thought there must be some part of our mind that had these answers and we got them occasionally, sometimes in dreams, sometimes on waking up, sometimes when we were peeling potatoes. We figured that if this was possible and these answers were so helpful, wouldn't it be wonderful if we had access to that resource more often? So, we arranged to work in a kind of a programme where we would meet half way, since we lived quite far away from one another. We would go to this place every two weeks and we would just sit quietly. In those days, there were no mechanical devices to record anything.



Virginia would take notes and I would withdraw my attention from the world and try to make contact to get messages. We would reverse the roles the next time. That's how it all first started.

The first thing we were told in these sessions was to make a triangle between us. That's how the triangle happened. You see if we were to do everything on our own, we would be using another energy to direct us. When we were working together by setting up a triangle, we would be using alternating current and that would not only be safer, but would also be much more practical.

So, we'd set up a triangle every time we worked and we'd imagine a golden light connecting us to our feet and then up my spine and up Virginia's spine and then out the top of our heads and then we'd connect to our Higher Consciousness and that's how we got all the messages. That's where the whole Method [Cutting the Ties that Bind] came from.

So many people whom I don't know have read the book; they seem to feel that they know me... It makes me happy to know that using the work has changed their life; that is an absolute gift. I marvel because I was the shyest person you could find on the planet. I never spoke if I could avoid it because I was brought up not to be seen or heard; and if I did speak, I was always punished because I was speaking out of line or being impertinent. Living in England was extremely strict in those days. So, it's been a revelation. It specifically changed my life. I never dreamed I would

He did everything He could to encourage me. He knew I had no ego, none at all. My mother had just told me that I was useless, I was stupid... and so He had a clean slate that He could work on... and so I think that's why He chose me. Not because I was particularly special or that I could write books or give seminars; I couldn't possibly, and I can't now. It is entirely due to Him. My whole life I owe to Him.

be doing what I have been doing the last few decades...I thank Him every single day [laughs].

How did you come about with this affirmation? It's a nutshell formula, which magically pushes the spiritual envelope further each day.

Absolutely. It centres you; it really does, if practised with dedication and focus, and it connects you to your Higher Consciousness because you are talking to your Higher Consciousness or to your Baba Self.

Because it takes you straight to the point where Baba says that you are not the body, you are not the mind, you are the Atma. And it is through the Atma that Baba breathes through us, thinks through us, feels through us, speaks through us, acts through us and loves all through us.



You are then really becoming more and more His instrument and He is the Doer. We stop doing; we stop planning because He says, "Abandon your plans, even the best ones, and love My uncertainty." That was hard for me particularly the 'love My uncertainty' part.

In an interview, Baba said, "Why are you worried?" I said, "Because I have to give this first seminar in my country, in Northern England, and I am scared to death with the thought of talking to so many people." First He smiled, then He said, "When you get to the seminar, look at the group and concentrate on one and know that one plus one plus one, equals One. All are One, and I will help you." All the people at the seminar were therapists, all professionals. So, I sat there and said, 'Baba you promised.' To my surprise, out came the words, though I did not know what I was going to say. That was the first time He took over; I was really anxious at the time. This went on for two days and when I was finished, I couldn't believe it. I was sure it had happened this one time, and I was sure it would not happen again. Then the next time I was asked, I went and the same thing happened, and it's been happening ever since.

Because you surrendered to Him completely, you believed you were not the doer.

Oh, I was not the doer; I know I could never write a book, I could never do a seminar. Ask any of my old friends. They can't believe that this is the Phyllis that they

used to know, who scarcely ever spoke. That Phyllis was always shy and always at the back of the room. In the recent interviews, Baba used to reach over and say, "Smt. Krystal, come to the front." The first time I was terrified! I couldn't. So, He came around to me, put His Hand on the little part of my back and just gently pushed me in the front of the room.

At another time, in Whitefield, He used to invite us to come back in the evenings to His house where He had lecturers, or He would give talks, or the boys would sing. One time, they had taken all the pictures down to renovate the verandah in His then residence at Whitefield. It is very different now. So, that evening they were going to put back the furniture and then put the pictures on the walls again. We were the only ones there and I was the only woman. What was I going to do? I just stood there. He came, took my hand, took me to the front of the room, made a big, big circle, smiled at me and said, "Ladies section." [laughs] He did everything He could to encourage me. He knew I had no ego, none at all. My mother had just told me that I was useless, I was stupid... and so He had a clean slate that He could work on... and so I think that's why He chose me. Not because I was particularly special or that I could write books or give seminars; I couldn't possibly, and I can't now. It is entirely due to Him. My whole life I owe to Him.

Which is the one most important aspect on this path that you found difficult? How did you overcome this block / hurdle?



Being able to talk. I never, never, never dreamed...and I can't speak a word, and I can't write a word unless it's from Him. I am not the doer at all. He has to do it; otherwise nothing gets done.

I had no idea I was going to write books. I wrote my first one because He insisted that I write on the Method. "Oh, I am not a writer," I told Him. He said, "Oh yes, I'll help you. Bring the manuscript back to Me when you've finished it." I always write by hand. So, I took the sheets of paper on which I had written. He looked at them and said, "Crow's feet." [laughs] Nobody can read my writing. When I took the manuscript to Him, I had no idea that He wanted it published. Then He said, "Now it has to be published...it has to be sent to as many people in the world as possible." Then He would frequently say, "You are writing another book." And I would say, 'Oh no.'

In one interview, my husband and I were there with several other people. He looked around, got sight of me and He said, "Oh Smt. Krystal, you are writing another book." I heard my poor husband groan as if saying, "Oh no, not another one." And I said, "No, Swami, I am not ready to write another book." And Baba said, "Oh yes... what's the title?" I had no idea.

Now that Baba is not in His Form, how can we connect to Him?

Let me explain it by narrating what once happened at Whitefield. One time, the first time He had a broken hip, my daughter and I were at the Whitefield Ashram. We had just arrived and He was looking simply

He does render you speechless. You can only say what He wants you to say or ask Him what He wants you to ask. It was a revelation for me to see my husband, who was a lawyer, speechless. It was extraordinary! Baba wanted us to get away from our rigid ideas and really open up. Of course, the one thing I noticed about Him very acutely was this astonishing Love that I'd never had in my life. It was so fulfilling and so overwhelming; it brought me to tears.

awful. He was limping. He asked to know when we'd arrived...we never saw Him again. He was whisked off to the hospital. A woman, with whom we had a casual 'Sai Ram' kind of a relationship, came to speak to me. She was a politician. She said to me, "I hear that you sometimes are able to help people, to answer their questions. I would like you, if you don't mind, to give me a session." She wanted me to ask Baba, since she wasn't getting an opportunity to do so herself, if He approved of her still being a politician. She said, "I want to be sure I'm in the right job." I said, "I'm so sorry, I don't usually ask these kind of questions. But I'm perfectly willing to see what comes through."

So, in the session with my daughter, this lady and me, I withdrew. I'm never



unconscious; so I didn't go into a trance. I just withdrew my attention and got attached with Swami and asked Him what He had to share with us. I was in Sai Kulwant Hall. It had been completely emptied and locked. His chair was not there. But, in my first withdrawing my attention, I was back in the hall even though we were doing this in my apartment there. And to my utter surprise, Swami's chair was still there. He was sitting in it. But it was not like Swami; it was His Light Body. All I saw was a very small Swami. And then, like a butterfly all around Him, this incredible light with all kinds of flashy jewel-like light...and I was absolutely astonished. I could hardly talk, and then He said, "I am showing you My Light Body. This is who I really am. You think that this little, orange-robed Body is who I am. Not at all." And then He explained, He could project Himself from this Light Body into this orange One and go to London, Singapore or Timbuktu or wherever. And that was His ability. He said, "You also have this Light Body, but you don't know that this is your real Self. This is My real Self. As you will be willing to visualise this and meditate on this, you will be making more contact with your own Light Body." And then He went on to give me some instructions. He never answered the lady's question; He only showed me that this was who He was. That's who I was too. Of course, I shared it with my daughter and the woman. That was a revelation.

Then, I was giving a seminar in a big centre, not too far from Frankfurt in Germany. They were all Baba devotees. There was a boutique; they were selling Japa Malas [prayer beads], pictures of Baba and books. I saw at the end of the room a stand with greeting cards. I went to it and to my utter, utter surprise, I saw a card with exactly the same Light Body, not with Baba but with Jesus! It was painted by a theosophist. This was how He gave me a verification of what I had been receiving.

What is the one message you would like to give the world today?

[A long pause...and then slowly...] When we first met Baba, for several years, I was receiving poems and I wasn't writing them. One of the poems – which was Baba speaking to us – is my favourite one. I will tell you just the first verse: 'I love you all, every single one, for deep within I see, there lay beneath the layers your true identity.' And then the second verse could be repeated with 'true divinity'. That's the way Baba always looks at us. In an interview one day, He said, "You are all walking temples." We didn't know what He meant. Then He said the real resident was all Light and that the body was the temple in which we lived. So, I think that would be my message – that we are not just this body; we are Light.

Thoughts influence the vision, which, in its turn, affects the mind. Thoughts assume good and bad forms. Good thoughts, good speech and good actions make a man truly human.

- Baba

CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

ASHADI EKADASI

A LARGE NUMBER OF DEVOTEES including Bal Vikas children came from Maharashtra and Goa to celebrate the holy festival of Ashadi Ekadasi in the sacred precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam. As part of these celebrations, they presented soul-stirring music and cultural programmes on 8th and 9th July 2014.

Maharashtra Gatha

The first programme in this regard was "Maharashtra Gatha" (the story of Maharashtra), a musical drama, which



The drama "Maharashtra Gatha" portrayed the rich cultural heritage of Maharashtra.

was presented by Bal Vikas children and youth of Maharashtra and Goa on 8th July 2014. Beginning their programme at 5.00 p.m., the children showcased the glorious heritage and cultural richness of Maharashtra through festivals like Ganesh Puja, Mangalagauri Puja and Ashadi

Ekadasi, and highlighted the glorious events of the lives of its saints, reformers and patriots like Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Dr. Anandibai Joshi, Chhatrapati Shivaji, Gadge Maharaj and Baba Amte. They concluded their well-scripted presentation with a beautiful group song which portrayed the glory of the sacred land of Maharashtra. This was followed by Bhajans which were also led by Bal Vikas children of Maharashtra and Goa. Meanwhile, clothes and mementoes were presented to the students who participated in the drama. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.45 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

Yanna Bharate, Thanna Bharata: A Dance Ballet

The first item of the programme on the sacred day of Ashadi Ekadasi was the traditional Dindi procession and dance of Varkaris. Marked by great spiritual and religious fervour, the procession entered Sai Kulwant Hall at 8.20 a.m. and soon the



Traditional Dindi procession and dance of Varkaris.

entire hall reverberated with sacred chants “Jai Jai Rama Krishna Hari” and “Jai Jai Vitthala”. The next item of the programme was a dance ballet “Yanna Bharate, Thanna Bharata” (what is not there in Bharat cannot be found anywhere else) which was presented by Bal Vikas children and youth of Maharashtra and Goa. While the Telugu verses in Bhagavan’s voice depicted the glory and rich heritage of Bharat, the Bal Vikas children in their colourful costumes performed scintillating dances in accordance with the theme of each verse, highlighting the greatness of this land of sacredness, penance, Vedic knowledge and interfaith unity. At the conclusion of this grand and innovative presentation, the participants in the programme were felicitated, and clothes and mementoes were presented to them. The morning programme came to a close with Arati at 10.00 a.m.

An Offering of Devotional Songs

The programme in the evening comprised a variety of devotional songs by six talented singers from Mumbai who kept the audience spellbound with their masterly rendition of devotional songs for nearly an hour and a half. Some of the numbers sung by these young artistes included a prayer song to Lord Ganesh, a Mira Bhajan, popular Marathi Abhang of Sant Namdev “Hey O’ Vitthale Bhaktajana Vatsale” and evergreen Sufi song “Dama Dam Mast Kalandar”. The singers who sang these thrilling songs were: Sri Sanket Modi and Sri Nishad Mishra, both alumni of

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, and four ladies singers, Ms. Swarna Tiwari, Ms. Deepali Sathe, Ms. Kirti Killedar and Ms. Ruhi Kuddyady. At the end of their presentation, the singers and their accompanying musicians were felicitated. After a brief session of Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam, the programme came to a close with Arati at 6.45 p.m.

This grand celebration of Ashadi Ekadasi concluded with an enrapturing Sitar recital by noted Sitar artiste Pandit Prabir Bhattacharya who enthralled the devotees with Hindustani classical music for over an hour in the evening on 10th July 2014. The artiste along with musicians who provided musical support to him on Tabla and Sitar was felicitated at the end of the programme.

SAI RETREAT OF DEVOTEES FROM GULF AND MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES

Sathya Sai International Organisation, Zone 94 organised a Sai Retreat at Prasanthi Nilayam from 15th to 21st July 2014, in which more than 250 devotees



Devotees from Gulf and Middle East countries presenting their devotional music programme.

from Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Turkey came to participate. On 19th July 2014, a group of these devotees offered a garland of group songs entitled “Premamrita Dhara” (stream of nectarine love) at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan. Commencing their presentation with a prayer song “Jai Ganesh ... Jai Ganesh” dedicated to Lord Ganesh, the singers saturated the entire milieu with devotional fervour by their masterly rendition of devotional songs for nearly 30 minutes and brought their programme to a close with the song “Kaise Batayen Hum Kitney Dhanya...” (how deeply grateful we are to Bhagavan) expressing their deep gratitude to Bhagavan for the opportunity to be in His Divine Presence. At the conclusion of the programme, the singers and musicians were felicitated. This was followed by Bhajans which concluded with the video screening of the Bhajan “Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram” sung by Bhagavan. The programme which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close with Arati at 6.15 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

CONFERENCE ON ADVANCES IN ARTHROSCOPY

A three-day conference on advances in Arthroscopy and Sports Medicine was organised by the Department of Orthopaedics, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Prasanthigram from 15th to 17th July 2014. Attended by

about 150 eminent orthopaedic surgeons from India and abroad, the conference focused on management of sports and related injuries of upper and lower limbs and on inculcation of the principles of Sai Ideal Healthcare. The highlight of the conference was a live surgical demonstration and a workshop on knee and shoulder arthroscopy.

In his welcome address, the Director of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Dr. Choudhary Voleti said that the philosophy with which SSSIHMS, Prasanthigram was started was that of free healthcare. Addressing the delegates, Sri K. Chakravarthi, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust pointed out that when no one else emulated this model, Bhagavan set up another super speciality hospital at Whitefield. He hoped that the delegates would go back with a sense of optimism. Speaking on this occasion, Sri R.J. Rathnakar, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust drew from his long association with Bhagavan and said that in 1991 the location where the hospital is currently standing was nothing but a barren land and yet Bhagavan converted it into a citadel of healthcare. He pointed out that it was our duty to spread the concept widely.

During the three days of the conference, the delegates had the opportunity of being a part of a rich academic and spiritual experience. Many senior delegates appreciated the rich content of the conference and found it an enlightening experience.



FROM HUMANITY TO DIVINITY THROUGH BAL VIKAS

I HAVE COME FROM KOTA, Rajasthan and the topic of my speech is “From Bal Vikas to Loka Vikas”. The first thing that we understand by attending Bal Vikas class is that Bal Vikas is not theoretical or bookish knowledge. It is practical knowledge which directs our life towards the path of human values. Sometimes, I think what would have been my fate had I not joined Bal Vikas. Perhaps it would have been like that of a frog who is confined to a well.

As a student of Bal Vikas for nine years, my greatest experience is that I have learnt the values like discipline, compassion and love. The Bal Vikas Gurus impart the teachings of these values by their own example since they themselves practise them in their life before teaching them to students. In this way, Bal Vikas students receive practical knowledge of values, and not merely theoretical one. As Bhagavan Baba says, the students should not merely strive to get good marks; they should take care that they do not get bad remarks. Hence, I have made efforts during these nine years not only to get good marks in academic studies, but I have also tried not to get negative remarks by putting

the values taught in Bal Vikas class into practice in my life.

It is significant to note that in whatever field and at whatever place Bal Vikas alumni are working, they are earning the appreciation of others for their qualities of self-sacrifice, self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-awareness. On observing their virtues, every mother desires that her child also should be a Bal Vikas student. When every child becomes a Bal Vikas student, that certainly would lead to Loka Vikas (welfare of the world).

A sculptor imparts life to an inert stone by carving out a beautiful idol from it and a potter shapes clay into beautiful pots. In the same way, Bal Vikas started by the Divine Teacher, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba transforms a human being into a divine being. Let us all pray to omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent Bhagavan: *Samasta Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the beings of all the worlds be happy!)

– **From the speech of Mansi Jain, Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Kota, Rajasthan, who spoke on 4th January 2014 in the National Convention of Bal Vikas Alumni and Group 3 students held at Prasanthi Nilayam.**



Swami's Tips to Students

Regardless of what anyone may say, combine spiritual pursuits with your academic studies. You cannot run the cart of life on a single wheel. It is too hazardous. No bird can fly with a single wing. It can fly freely when it can use both the wings. Likewise, man needs mundane knowledge for carrying on worldly affairs and Brahma Vidya (spiritual knowledge) for his spiritual welfare. Acquire knowledge of the physical sciences; that is necessary. At the same time, seek spiritual wisdom also. You have to conduct your life based on both these kinds of knowledge.

Valuable Maxims

Here are three valuable maxims given by Bhagavan. Remember these and search the following words in the given word maze:

Character, education, commerce, morality, principles, culture, unity, religion, love, science, humanity, dangerous, sacrifice, wisdom.

1. Education without character, commerce without morality, politics without principles, science without humanity, religion without love, culture without unity, administration without justice, knowledge without application and patriotism without sacrifice are not only useless but positively dangerous.

2. The end of education is character, the end of culture is perfection, the end of knowledge is love, the end of wisdom is freedom.

3. Perfect freedom is absolute desirelessness.

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Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam, which has been dedicated for the last 34 years in moulding the students with all-round development and academic excellence, has been identified by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India as:

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3. A total of 20 teachers from Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam received "Personalised Certificates of Appreciation" from Smt. Smriti Irani, Minister, Human Resource Development, Government of India, for their excellence in service.

– Principal

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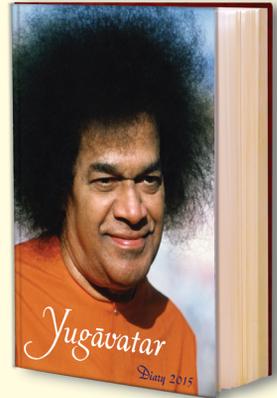
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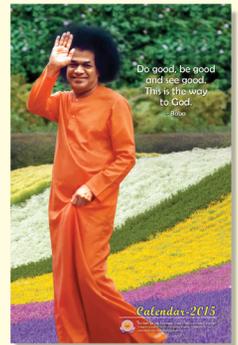
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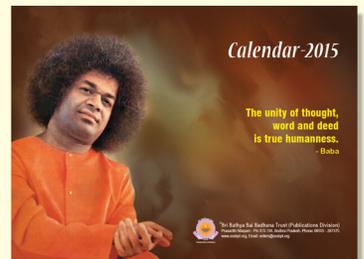
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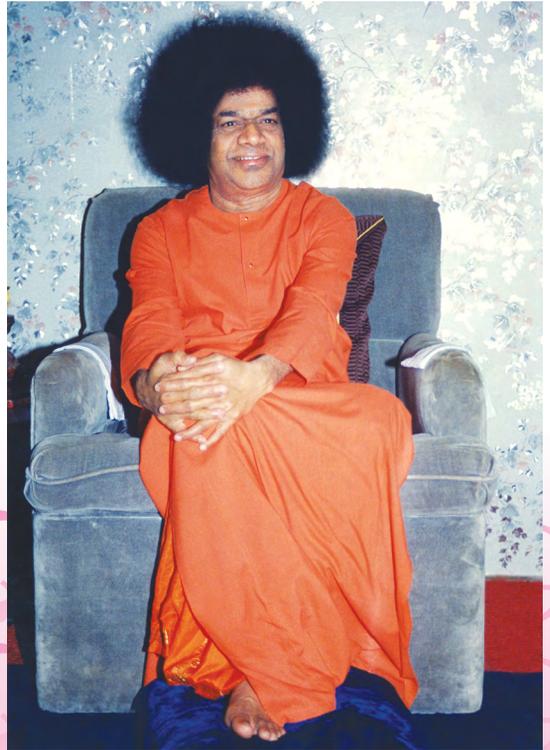
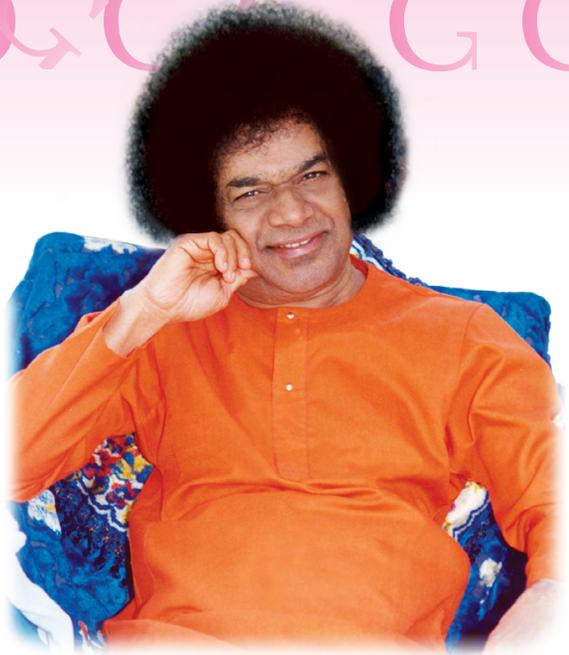
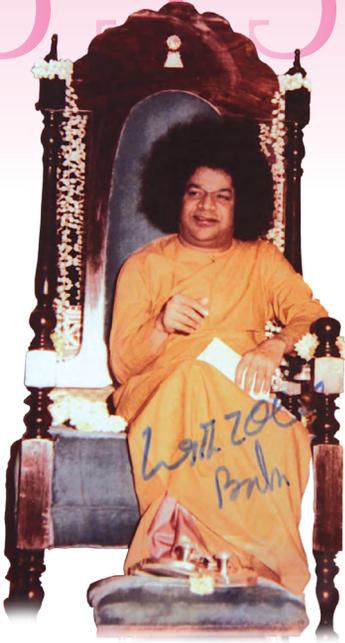


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On 1st January, 2009, Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust (SSSST) commenced operations with four divisions; the Bhakta Sahayak divisions (one in Prasanthi Nilayam, Puttapparthi and another in Brindavan, Bangalore), the Publications division, and the Media division.

The Publications Division (SSSSTPD) caters to:

1) The publication and distribution of spiritual, religious, and educational Sai Literature and the production and distribution of audio and visual multimedia, photographs, calendars, and diaries, educational software etc for the benefit of visiting pilgrims and devotees all over the world. All the literature and publications are based on the teachings, philosophy, message, and values of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

2) The publication and distribution of Bhagawan Baba's monthly spiritual journal - Sanathana Sarathi - in English and Telugu languages. Since 2011, e-versions of the magazine are also released simultaneously and are available in PDF and EPUB formats on www.sanathanasarathi.org.

3) Maintaining a reporting channel, which covers all the major activities taking place in Prasanthi Nilayam, and publishing an e-newsletter 'Sai Spiritual Showers' - for free distribution.

4) Organising and conducting seminars

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5) Providing library and Reading room for visiting devotees, with a very large collection of various spiritual and religious books.

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Ashadi Ekadasi cultural programme by Bal Vikas children and youth.



The dance ballet "Yanna Bharate Thanna Bharata" depicted the glory of Bharat.



A scene from the drama "Krishna".

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Divinise Yourself

Man has all the divine potencies for realising the Self. His consciousness can comprehend the cosmos, even as a mirror can reflect the firmament. The heart is a mirror in which one can see the entire universe. Realise from this moment that you are the embodiment of the Divine. Transcend the feeling of smallness. As you think, so you become. Therefore, divinise yourself by constant reminder of your inherent divinity.

– Baba

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