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Sanathana Sarathi

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SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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*"You are the son of immortality. But
you consider yourself a mere mortal, feeble
and helpless. This is your weakness. You
are far superior to even gods of heaven.
The spring of divinity that emerges from
your heart is superior to even ambrosia.
Such is the sweetness, greatness and power
of your heart."*

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Forthcoming Festivals at Prasanthi Nilayam



7th October - 13th October Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna

9th November 6 p.m.

to 10th November 6 p.m. Global Akhanda Bhajan

18th November Rathotsavam

19th November Ladies Day

**22nd November 32nd Convocation of
Sri Sathya Sai Institute
of Higher Learning**

**23rd November 88th Birthday of
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

25th December Christmas



AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
19TH AUGUST 1996

EARN THE WEALTH OF DIVINE GRACE

Is it possible for anyone to say this is good and this is bad in this world? Everything is created by God Himself. Who can understand the mystery of God's creation?

(Telugu Poem)

DRINK THE NECTAR OF DIVINE LOVE AND BECOME IMMORTAL

Students!

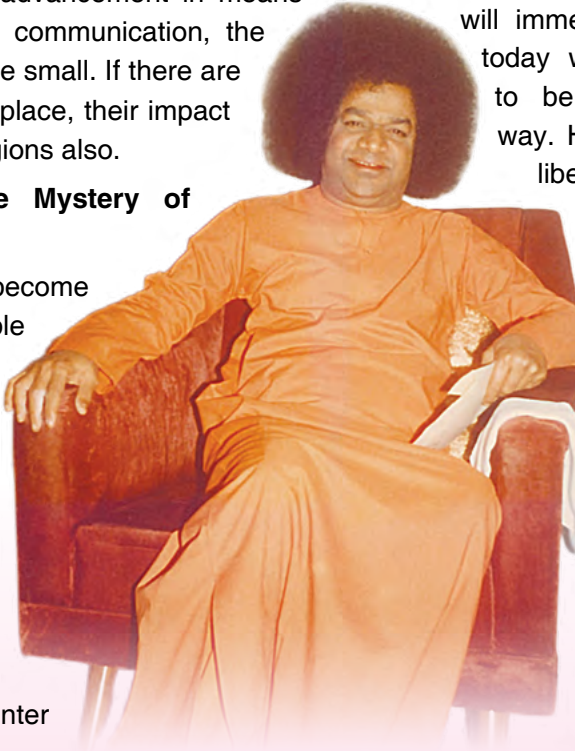
IN THIS AGE OF MODERN civilisation, many types of problems are on the rise day by day. Due to advancement in means of transport and communication, the world has become small. If there are problems in one place, their impact is felt in other regions also.

Understand the Mystery of the Mind

Life itself has become an insurmountable problem. What is the reason? The reason is that man today wants to follow easy path in life. He fails to understand the problems he has to encounter

in this easy path. The path may seem to be easy, but the problems that it presents are very difficult to overcome. Everybody wants to take a shortcut. If someone has a headache, he wants to take a pill that will immediately cure him. Man today wants all his problems to be solved in this easy way. He wants to attain even liberation in this easy way.

What exactly is the easy path? What is the meaning of solution of problems? What does shortcut mean? He does not understand the problems that he has to face by adopting such means. In this physical and mundane world, in this path of Pravritti (worldly), man is unable to understand



the meaning of even small words. Words may be small but their meaning may be profound. Here is a small example. We use the word Nityam to mean everyday. Though it is a small word used in day-to-day conversation, it has got a profound meaning. Nityam means that which is true, eternal and changeless in all the three periods of time. Likewise, every word is endowed with a deep inner meaning.

Man's thoughts and counter thoughts are also responsible for his problems. Human mind is very peculiar. It is also very significant and mighty. Its functioning itself is a great wonder. It has no form of its own. It does mono acting and plays dual role. At one moment, it gives happiness and at another it gives sorrow. There is no place in this world where the mind cannot go. You find its impact wherever you see. With the power of its thoughts, it is present everywhere. *Manomoolam Idam Jagat* (the world is the creation of the mind). The mind of man is responsible for all his happiness and sorrow, merit and sin. That is why Vedanta declared, *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man). Once you understand the mystery of the mind, you will be free from all troubles. You think you get happiness or sorrow because of others. No. You yourself are responsible for your happiness as well as sorrow. Your thoughts are responsible for this. It is the duty of man to understand that his own mind is responsible for all his joys and sorrows.

Can money remain in one place forever? No. It slips away like water under your feet. What is the real wealth? The real wealth is love, grace and blessings of God. Once you acquire this wealth, it will never leave you. Therefore, you should strive to acquire this wealth. You attained this noble opportunity of human birth as a result of merits earned in many previous lives. You should make proper use of this wealth which you have earned from many past lives. Not only that, you should try to increase this wealth more and more.

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Divinity is the Hallmark of Human Race

There are 84 lakh species in this world. These are of four types: Andaja, Pindaja, Swedaja and Udbijja. Those that are born out of eggs are called Andajas. Birds, ants, insects and reptiles belong to this category. There are 21 lakh such species. Those that are born out of mother's womb such as human beings and animals are called Pindaja. These also constitute 21 lakh species. Those that are born out of sweat are called Swedaja and those that are born out of earth are called Udbijja. They also constitute 21 lakh species each. Out of all these 84 lakh species, human being has the supreme position. That is why it is said: *Jantunam Nara Janma Durlabham* (of all



living beings, human birth is the rarest). Why is this human birth so difficult to attain? Why is the human birth accorded such a high position among all the living beings? Is it due to its form, intelligence, beauty, wealth or education? None of these. These things are not difficult to attain. They can be acquired through practice. Even a monkey can be trained to ride on a bicycle as you can see in circus. Even a wild beast like a tiger can be trained to sit on a chair with humility and obey the command of the ring master. Many such skills can be acquired through practice. Man is no exception to this. Then what is the quality that makes man so supreme? It is because only man has the capacity to realise his true Self, follow his true nature and experience bliss. Birds and animals can never realise their inherent divinity.

Ahara Nidra Bhaya Maithunani

Samanyametat Pasubir Naranam

Jnanam Naranam Adhikam Visesham

Jnanena Sunya Pasubhissamana.

(Food, sleep, fear and procreation are common to mankind and animals. Only man is endowed with wisdom. Man bereft of wisdom is equivalent to an animal.)

One who lacks wisdom and knowledge is no better than an animal. This is what distinguishes man from birds and animals. What is true knowledge? Is it physical knowledge, worldly knowledge, bookish knowledge or knowledge of scriptures? No, no. True knowledge is that which gives the experience of oneness. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (experience of non-dualism is wisdom). Man today acquires

many types of knowledge in the fields of music, literature, dance, painting, sculpture, physics, chemistry, botany, etc. But all these correspond to only worldly and secular knowledge. This knowledge cannot lead you to self-realisation. This corresponds to Pravritti (outward path). What you have to follow is Nivritti (inward path). On seeing your body, you identify yourself with the form. But you are not the body; you live in this body. You think you belong to human race on the basis of your form. What is the race of the skin? What is the race of blood? What is the race of bones and hair? What is the race of the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether, which constitute your body? They don't belong to any particular race. Then what is the hallmark of human race? Divinity is its hallmark. However, using the body as instrument, you should realise the indweller and propagate this truth to the world. Body is Kshetra (field) and Indweller is Kshetrajna (knower of field). You cannot identify yourself with the car just because you drive it. The car is different from the driver. Body is the car and the indweller is the driver. The indweller is verily God Himself. You should make efforts to realise this divine principle.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later but the indweller has neither birth nor death. The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness. Truly speaking, the indweller who is in the form of the Atma, is verily God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)



Nobody can Hide his Sins from God

In this modern age, people give utmost importance to the body ignoring the indweller. That is the reason for their sins, sufferings, troubles and turmoil. If you want to lead a peaceful and truthful life, you should make efforts to realise the principle of indweller. There is no other way to realise this except the path of love for God. This is the Upanishadic statement: *Srunvantu Viswe Amrutasya Putrah* (Oh the children of immortality! Listen). You are the son of immortality. But you consider yourself a mere mortal, feeble and helpless. This is your weakness. You are far superior to even gods of heaven. The spring of divinity that emerges from your heart is superior to even ambrosia. Such is the sweetness, greatness and power of your heart. But you are unable to realise this sacred divine power that is present in you.

You commit sins and mistakes, thinking that nobody knows what you are doing. What a great fool you are! Others may not be able to know, but can you conceal your sins and mistakes from God? Even if you hide yourself in a bathroom or cover yourself with a rug, you cannot hide anything from God. You may hide it from anybody but not from God. All your mistakes come back to you in the form of reaction, reflection and resound. But you forget the mistakes you commit and blame others for your troubles and sufferings. Nobody can escape from the consequences of his actions.

*Oh man, is it possible to escape
the consequences of actions?*

*Human beings are the waves
arising from the ocean of
Satchidananda. Therefore, you
are the embodiment of Sat, Chit,
Ananda. Sat means being, Chit
means awareness. The unity of
these two results in Ananda (bliss).*

*You desire for happiness. In fact,
Sat and Chit are present in you.*

*This is very well illustrated by
the name Baba. Baba has double
degree BA, BA. The first B stands
for being and A for awareness, the
second B stands for bliss and A
for Atma. Therefore, Baba is the
embodiment of Satchidananda.*



*You may study the scriptures and
worship your family deities,*

*You may go to a forest and perform
intense penance,*

*But it is impossible to escape the
consequences of your actions.*

*You will get only as much water as your
vessel can hold,*

*No matter whether you dip it in a small
lake or in a mighty ocean.*

(Telugu Song)

However, it is possible to escape from the consequences of your actions by God's grace. God's grace can reduce to ashes mountains of sin in a moment. You should make efforts to deserve such love and grace of God. When you develop this divine relationship with God, you can get



rid of any type of sins. This is Kali Yuga. In this age, what you do with one hand will come back to you in the other hand. You don't need to wait for another birth to get the result of what you do. The result is certain, but none can say how, in what form and in what situation it will come.

*You are bound to face the consequences
of your actions wherever you may be,
In a forest, in the sky, in a city or a
village, on the top of a mountain or in
the middle of deep sea.*

(Telugu Poem)

Use your Present Birth to Enhance your Merits

Nothing can help you to escape from the consequences of your actions except Divine grace and love. Therefore, you should make efforts to attain love and grace of God. This is what you have to acquire. Otherwise, you will be caught up in this endless cycle of birth and death. Money may come and go. Once the knowledge of divinity comes, it will never go. You have to understand three things: That which once comes does not go, that which does not come back once it goes, and that which neither comes nor goes. What is that which does not go once it comes? It is Jnana (wisdom). What comes and goes is not Jnana. Similarly, that which never comes back once it goes is Ajnana (ignorance). That which neither comes nor goes is Divinity. Once it enters your heart, it will stay there forever. Students must understand these three principles. It is not proper to have devotion to God for some

time and indifference later. That is not Bhakti (devotion) at all. It is only ignorance arising out of ego. Ego is that which comes and goes.

*A sinner does not care even for the
Lord of Kailasa when he has plenty
of wealth. He looks towards God only
when he loses all his wealth.*

(Telugu Poem)

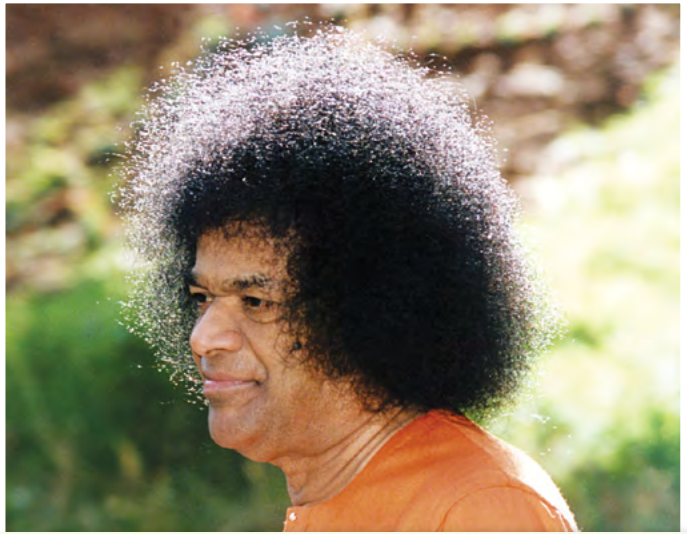
It is not money but virtue that is the real wealth. Money keeps changing hands. Suppose your father sends you five hundred rupees through money order. You are elated saying this five hundred rupee note is mine. Then this currency note laughs at you and says, "Oh madcap! I am not going to stay with you permanently. In the evening when you go to a shop, I will go to some other person. I have seen many such faces like yours and I am going to see many more."

Can money remain in one place forever? No. It slips away like water under your feet. What is the real wealth? The real wealth is love, grace and blessings of God. Once you acquire this wealth, it will never leave you. Therefore, you should strive to acquire this wealth. You attained this noble opportunity of human birth as a result of merits earned in many previous lives. You should make proper use of this wealth which you have earned from many past lives. Not only that, you should try to increase this wealth more and more. You may say, you have every right to spend five hundred rupees given to you by your father. But how long will they last? You will be left with nothing if you go on spending. Therefore, you should try



to add to the money given to you by your father. Vedanta declares, *Ksheene Punye Marthyalokam Vishanti* (once you exhaust your merits, you have to come back to the mortal world from heaven). Once your merit is exhausted, you lose your deservedness also.

Here is a small example. A person becomes an M.L.A. (Member of Legislative Assembly) and sits in the Assembly Hall when he wins the election. But for how long? Only for five years. Once the term is over, he has to come out of it; he cannot remain a Member of the Assembly. Therefore, before his term of five years gets over, he should make efforts to win the favour of people so that he gets re-elected. Similarly, you have got this sacred opportunity as a result of your past merits. In your present life also, you should develop sacred feelings so that you become more and more deserving of God's grace. Then the merits accrued in your present birth will get added to the merits of your past births, and ensure the safety and security of your future. Therefore, it is necessary for you to lead the present life in a sacred manner. You should strengthen and enhance the love and grace that you have already



You have to understand three things: That which once comes does not go, that which does not come back once it goes, and that which neither comes nor goes. What is that which does not go once it comes? It is Jnana (wisdom). What comes and goes is not Jnana. Similarly, that which never comes back once it goes is Ajnana (ignorance). That which neither comes nor goes is Divinity. Once it enters your heart, it will stay there for ever. Students must understand these three principles.



received. Only then can you maintain your deservedness forever.

Students!

You may acquire any number of degrees, undertake any type of jobs and amass any amount of wealth, but none of them is permanent. Having been blessed with human birth, your life will become worthwhile only when you earn a good



name. If you go on committing mistakes and repeating them, when will you correct yourself?

Once a thief committed a theft and stole a lot of money. He was awarded three years of imprisonment. After his term got over, the superintendent of jail said to him, "Tomorrow your jail term will come to an end and we will release you. Pack up all your belongings and get ready." Then the thief folded his hands and said, "Sir, let them be here only because I am coming back soon." What does it mean? It means that he would commit a theft again and come back to jail. How can such a person be redeemed? Once a person commits a mistake and goes to jail, he should see to it that he does not go back to jail again.

When you ask someone, why you take medicine, he will say, I take medicine to cure my disease. But this is not the proper answer. You take medicine so that you don't need to take them again. That is the correct answer. People say, they take medicine to cure their disease. The medicine may cure a particular disease, but later they may be afflicted with a new disease. Then they will have to take another type of medicine. Therefore, you should ensure that you will not fall sick again. What for is this human birth? Human birth is meant to ensure that you will not have rebirth. That is the correct answer. Why do you write examination? What is the point in writing the exam if you fail in it again and again? You write the exam so that you don't need to write it again. You should understand the real purpose of this life and act accordingly.

But students do not enquire about these matters deeply.

Drink the Nectar of Divine Love

Students!

Your life is, in fact, Paramarthika (absolutely real). But you are leading a Vyavaharika (empirical) life. The result is Pratibhasika (illusory). This can be illustrated with the example of ocean, waves and froth. Waves keep arising in the ocean one after the other. The saline taste that you find in the ocean is present in the waves also. The colour of the waves is also the same as that of the ocean. Similarly, froth is formed by waves. All the attributes of ocean are present in the waves and froth also. In the same way, the waves of Vyavaharika arise from the ocean of Paramarthika and the froth of Pratibhasika arises from the waves of Vyavaharika. Therefore, you should lead this Vyavaharika life with the feelings of Paramarthika.

Human beings are the waves arising from the ocean of Satchidananda. Therefore, you are the embodiment of Sat, Chit, Ananda. Sat means being, Chit means awareness. The unity of these two results in Ananda (bliss). You desire for happiness. In fact, Sat and Chit are present in you. This is very well illustrated by the name Baba. Baba has double degree BA, BA. The first B stands for being and A for awareness, the second B stands for bliss and A for Atma. Therefore, Baba is the embodiment of Satchidananda. In fact, every human being is endowed with these



three principles. You see some people dying before your eyes. You think, you may also meet the same fate one day or other. However, the fact is that your body may perish, but you have no death. The Atma is true and eternal. It has no birth and death. Being the embodiment of Atma, you should strive to become eternal. What does it mean? Does it mean that your body should remain forever? Your body may perish, but it should not be born again. One who drinks the nectar of divine love will have no rebirth. *Punar Janma Navidyate* (you will have no birth again). This is what you should aspire for. When you sow a grain of paddy in the soil, it will grow into a sapling. But if you remove the husk and sow it in the soil, it will not germinate. Body attachment is the husk. So long as you have the husk of body attachment, you will be born again and again. *Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam* (to be born again and again). This is what Adi Sankara said:

*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam,
Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe,
Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale,
Nahi Nahi Rakshathi Dukrun Karane.*

(Oh foolish man, chant the name of Govinda; the rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the end approaches.)

Oh dim-witted one! Oh doubting Thomas! You are unable to understand the reality. Chant the Name of the Lord. Drink the ambrosia of love, experience bliss and share it with others. This is the main goal of human life. What is the point in amassing

wealth, building mansions, doing this and that? Ultimately, you have to leave this world empty-handed. You cannot take with you even a fistful of dust. There would have been ration even on dust if it was possible for man to take it with him. After your death, your body will not be kept in the house built by you only. Such is the fate of this body. However, with the help of this body, you have to achieve the goal of this life. Body is mortal, Atma is immortal. Therefore, you should lead an immortal life. What is immortal life? Immortal life is that which is recipient of God's love. You can achieve anything if you have God's love.

Along with secular education and worldly knowledge, students should develop discrimination and try to understand the principle of the Atma. *Adhyatma Vidya Vidyanam* (spiritual education is true education). All types of worldly education is like small rivers which ultimately have to merge in the ocean of spiritual knowledge. *Nadinam Sagaro Gathi* (the ocean is the goal of the rivers). A river cannot have any other destination. However, the river has to flow within the two banks. If there are no banks for the river, none can say how many houses and villages will be destroyed by it. Human life is also like a deep and fast flowing river. What is to be done if this river has to merge in the ocean without causing any harm to anyone? You should make it flow within the two banks of faith. *Samsayatma Vinasyati* (one with doubts will perish), *Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam* (one with steadfast faith attains wisdom). You should be free from doubts. Do not



give scope to doubts and become doubting Thomases. When you have steadfast faith and are devoid of doubts, the river of your life will directly flow towards the ocean of divine grace and merge in it.

Be Cautious every Moment of your Life

Today people are doing a number of Sadhanas like Japa, Dhyana and listening to spiritual talks. But the river of their life is not flowing towards the ocean of divine grace. What is the reason? The reason is that they do all spiritual practices with worldly feelings. All their chanting is mechanical like that of a tape recorder or a gramophone record. You may hear from the gramophone record a sad song. But does the gramophone cry when it is played? Likewise, all the Sadhanas of man today have become artificial and mechanical.

None can predict what is going to happen the next moment. Therefore, one has to be cautious every moment of his life. *Thasmath Jagrata Jagrataha* (beware, beware). The Vice Chancellor in his speech spoke about Adi Sankara. He was born in a small village by name Kaladi. Even when he became the Peethathipathi (head of the Mutt), Sankara never had any trace of ego, attachment or jealousy. But such evil qualities can overpower any person any moment. Therefore, he introduced a system in the Mutt. He appointed two watchmen and instructed them to keep moving from one end to the other in front of the Mutt with a stick in their hand. He

You commit sins and mistakes, thinking that nobody knows what you are doing. What a great fool you are! Others may not be able to know, but can you conceal your sins and mistakes from God? Even if you hide yourself in a bathroom or cover yourself with a rug, you cannot hide anything from God. You may hide it from anybody but not from God. All your mistakes come back to you in the form of reaction, reflection and resound. But you forget the mistakes you commit and blame others for your troubles and sufferings.



told them to criss-cross each other once in every two minutes, saying, *Thasmath Jagrata Jagrataha* (be cautious, be cautious). When the third Sankaracharya became the head of the Mutt, one day he thought to himself, "Aha, I have got so much land and so many people are worshipping me." When he was overcome with this sense of pride and ego, at that very moment, he heard the guards saying, *Thasmath Jagrata Jagrata*. At once, he cautioned himself, "Do not give room to ego, beware." You should also be cautious every moment of your life against the evils of ego and pride. You should firmly tie the Divine Form with the rope of His Name to the pole of your tongue. Then God will be with you always.



Divine Names of Govinda, Damodara and Madhava are sweet and nectarine. Who is Madhava? Ma stands for Maya, goddess Lakshmi and mother earth. Dhava means master. Therefore, Madhava means the husband of goddess Lakshmi and master of Maya and mother earth. Such is the profound inner meaning of the word Madhava. When you hold on to Him firmly, you can achieve victory over the entire world.

Oh tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred. Speak the truth in the most pleasing manner. Chant the Divine Names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly. This is your foremost duty. (Sanskrit Verse)

The tongue is so selfless that when you place something very sweet and delicious on it, it at once sends it to the stomach with a view to give its essence to all the limbs of the body. But on the other hand, when you place something bitter on the tongue, it at once spits it out. Not only that, the tongue is endowed with a great sense of forbearance.

Forbearance is truth, forbearance is righteousness, forbearance is the teaching of the Vedas, forbearance is non-violence, forbearance is sacrifice, forbearance confers happiness and heavenly bliss. In fact, it is everything in all the worlds. (Telugu Poem)

Develop Intimate and Inseparable Relationship with God

The tongue is endowed with great forbearance. How? The soft tongue is

enclosed between thirty-two sharp teeth which can cut it if it does not move with care. You should also conduct yourself like the tongue when you are surrounded by wicked people. This was the example set by Vibhishana when he led his life amidst wicked Rakshasas. As the tongue is endowed with the quality of forbearance, it is never put to danger. The teeth will fall off in due course but the tongue will be there always. Not only that, the tongue always maintains its dignity and honour. It does not move from one room to the other room like cats and rats. In times of happiness and danger and under all circumstances, it always remains in its place and does not come out of it. You yourself can observe, whatever may be the words we utter, the tongue does not come out of the mouth. It always remains in its house and maintains its honour. That is why it is extolled as *Jihve Rasagne Madhurapriyatvam...* "Oh tongue! Listen carefully, you are the knower of taste. You can talk so sweetly and softly. You are so very great. The virtues that you possess are not found in anyone else."

You should also win the Nobel Prize of divine love and grace by emulating the example of the tongue. Develop intimate and inseparable relationship with God. In fact, you should become one with Him without giving scope to duality. When you experience unity in diversity, your life will become meaningful. This is the principle of Advaita propounded by Adi Sankara. Do not give scope to dualism. A man

continued on page 21...



CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

PILGRIMAGE OF ODISHA DEVOTEES

MORE THAN 1,500 DEVOTEES came from Odisha on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 26th to 28th August 2013 and presented a variety of programmes as part of their pilgrimage. Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Odisha also set up a very educative and informative exhibition “Prajna Pradarshini” (exhibition on eternal wisdom) in the Exhibition Hall from 26th to 28th August 2013. Presenting a fine blend of service and spirituality, the exhibition gave the elevating message of



Exhibition set up by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Odisha.

the Vedas which could help man to attain higher consciousness and lead him to the realisation of Prajnana (eternal wisdom). The exhibition also featured a special section for children, illustrating how to learn from Nature, plants, birds and animals.

One of the most elevating programmes presented on this occasion was collective chanting of Sri Rudram by 121 ladies of Odisha from 10 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on 27th August 2013 in a beautiful Pandal, spreading spiritual vibrations in the entire milieu.

On the afternoon of 27th August 2013, a very enchanting cultural programme was presented in Sai Kulwant Hall which comprised two items. The first item of the programme was a thrilling dance entitled “Garuda Vahana” performed by Bal Vikas students of Mayurbhaj district of Odisha. Based on the mythological theme of Garuda’s adventurous journey to netherworld in search of Amrita (nectar) and fight with gods including Lord Indra, the dance was presented in the tribal martial art form of Chhau Dance which originally belonged to the tribals of north-eastern Odisha, but has now become



Chhau Dance by Bal Vikas students of Odisha.



famous as a classical dance. The second item of the programme was recitation of “Jagannath Ashtakam” a Sanskrit verse of eight stanzas composed by Adi Sankara in praise of Lord Jagannath. The Odisha singers, both ladies and gents, sang with great devotion this famous verse to the accompaniment of scintillating music. Soulful devotional songs and Bhajans that followed this presentation surcharged the entire milieu with sacred vibrations. At the conclusion of the programme, all the participants were felicitated and gifts were offered to them. After distribution of Prasadam to the entire assembly of devotees, the programme came to a close with Arati at 6.30 p.m.

SRI KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI FESTIVAL

The sacred festival of Sri Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam with great piety and solemnity on 28th August 2013. The programme in the morning began at 8.20 a.m. with auspicious musical notes by the percussion band troupe of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Thereafter, Institute students made a soulful musical presentation which included Stotras like Madhurashtakam and Krishnashtakam and devotional songs dedicated to Lord Krishna and Bhagavan Baba. Bhajans that followed this presentation were also dedicated to Lord Krishna. Meanwhile, the procession of exquisitely decorated cows with calves, fawn, peacocks, etc, entered Sai Kulwant



Worship of cows on Sri Krishna Janmashtami.

Hall led by Nadaswaram and Veda chanting troupes of Institute students. The cows were then fed with fruits and Arati was offered to them as part of traditional worship performed on this sacred day. After a brief session of devotional songs and Bhajans, the programme concluded with Arati at 9.45 a.m.

The programme in the afternoon started with an introductory speech by Sri K.M. Ganesh who explained the significance of celebrating Sri Krishna Janmashtami and stated that the true devotee of the Lord was one who put His message into practice in his life.

In the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan that followed this introductory speech, Bhagavan dwelt on the importance of unity, purity and divinity and observed that Indian culture gave this message to the world. This sacred land, Bhagavan said, is the land of spirituality which has been promoting peace, prosperity and welfare of all without any differences of caste, race and religion. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan “Hari



Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin.” This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

PILGRIMAGE OF VISAKHAPATNAM DEVOTEES

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Visakhapatnam organised a pilgrimage of Visakhapatnam devotees to Prasanthi Nilayam from 31st August to 2nd September 2013 and presented music and cultural programmes on 31st August and 1st September 2013. The first item of the programme on 31st August 2013 was a thrilling Kuchipudi dance by a child prodigy Nemani Sai Gargi. Performing with graceful footwork, the dancer conveyed the theme of the dance with remarkable body language and communicative gestures. The second item of this programme was a devotional music offering of Visakhapatnam singers, both ladies and gents, entitled “Sri Sathya Sai Sangeeta Sudha (nectarine Sai music). The singers paid their rich musical tributes to Bhagavan with a brilliant rendition of devotional songs which enthralled the devotees for nearly one hour. At the conclusion of the programme, all the artistes were felicitated. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.45 p.m. after a brief session of Bhajans.

On 1st September 2013, Sai Youth and Bal Vikas children along with beneficiaries of a social welfare project of Sai Organisation of Visakhapatnam presented a drama based on a real-life



A scene from the drama by Sai Youth, Bal Vikas children and devotees of Visakhapatnam.

incident, depicting how a perennial spring of water came out in a water scarcity hit tribal village by the grace of Bhagavan, thus meeting the long-felt need of drinking water of the villagers. Interspersed with beautiful dances and melodious songs, the drama effectively highlighted the Divine Glory of Bhagavan. This was followed by Bhajans which concluded with the Bhajan “Hara Siva Sankara” sung by Bhagavan. Meanwhile, the participants in the drama were felicitated. The programme concluded with Arati at 6.20 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

SAI SANNIDHI PROGRAMME

Sai Sannidhi, the alumni forum of students of Bhagavan employed in various Sathya Sai institutions, made a presentation in Sai Kulwant Hall on 8th September 2013 to express their gratitude to Bhagavan for His boundless love and grace. The programme began at 5.00 p.m. with a brief speech of Dr. N. Siva Kumar, Associate Professor, Brindavan Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Narrating his personal experiences of Bhagavan’s guidance at every step of his



life, the speaker highlighted how Bhagavan took care of each student and guided him on the right path. A Discourse of Bhagavan followed this speech. In His Discourse, Bhagavan urged the devotees to realise the omnipresence of God and adhere to the path of truth. Truth, He said, is God and therefore man should live in truth, speak truth and experience truth. Soulful rendition of devotional songs interspersed with narration of experiences of the students followed next. Beginning their presentation with an English song "Every Moment of My Life Please Be with me," the singers poured out their heart in gratitude to Bhagavan, bringing their presentation to a close with the evergreen Qawali "Sai Bina Raha Na Jaye" (I cannot live without Sai). There was a brief session of Bhajans after this which concluded with the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" sung by Bhagavan. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.45 p.m.

GANESH CHATURTHI FESTIVAL

The sacred festival of Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam with great devotion and enthusiasm. The celebrations began on the morning of 9th September with a musical offering of the students of the Institute which comprised Stotras and devotional songs dedicated to Lord Ganesh, viz., "Vandeham Gana Nayakam" (salutations to the leader of Ganas), "Maha Ganapataye Namah" (salutations to Lord Ganesh), Vighna Vinashaka Mangala Dayaka (remover of

obstacles and bestower of auspiciousness), etc. The evening programme began with an introductory speech of Sri Sai Giridhar, Doctoral Research Scholar, Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute. Reminiscing his experiences of Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan, the speaker emphasised the importance of understanding the inner meaning of celebrating festivals and earning the grace of the Lord by contemplating on Him. In the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan that followed this, Bhagavan underlined the significance of worshipping Ganesh who is the master of intelligence and spiritual knowledge and bestower of health and prosperity. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin," which the devotees in the hall followed in chorus with great devotion.

On 10th September 2013, a noted singer Sri Jayakumar made a musical presentation "Sai Pushpanjali" (bouquet of devotional songs) as part of Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations. Beginning his programme with the famous prayer to Lord Ganesh "Suklambaradharam Vishnum," the singer next rendered "Sai Saranam Sathya Sai Saranam" (I take refuge in Sai), "Ambe Charan Kamal Hain Tere" (I bow at the Lotus Feet of the Divine Mother), "Namoh Sathya Sai Baba, Namoh Sathya Sai" (salutations to Sai) and brought his presentation to a close with the Kirtan "Sai Ram Jai Jai Ram." At the conclusion of the programme, the singer was felicitated.



The immersion ceremony of Ganesh idols was held on 11th September 2013. As chanting of Vedic hymns by students in Sai Kulwant Hall began at 4.00 p.m., a dazzling variety of Ganesh idols in beautifully decorated vehicles started arriving in Sai Kulwant Hall led by Veda chanting and Bhajan singing groups of students and Ashram staff. After stationing their vehicles in the hall in orderly rows, they circumambulated the Mandir while chanting Vedic Mantras and singing Bhajans. The idols lined up in rows in Sai Kulwant Hall presented a grand spectacle



Ganesh idols lined up in Sai Kulwant Hall before being taken for immersion.

with various attractive designs which included Ganesh on a lighted swing, Ganesh on a giant eagle, Ganesh with an aesthetically painted Nataraja in the background and many other beautiful shapes and designs. Colourful and vibrant dances by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School and Higher Secondary School followed this. The Mandir priest then offered Arati to all the idols, signalling the retreat of the idols for immersion. The groups of students thereafter brought their vehicles in front of the Samadhi of

Bhagavan one by one, offered salutations to Bhagavan and led their vehicles out of the hall after receiving Bhagavan's blessings. This was followed by Bhajans which came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m., marking the happy conclusion of Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam.

ONAM FESTIVAL

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Kerala organised a three-day programme to celebrate Onam at Prasanthi Nilayam from 14th to 16th September 2013. A large number of devotees came from Kerala to participate in the celebrations marked by gaiety and piety. They also included about 400 beneficiaries of Sai Organisation's Rehabilitation Programme which provides post-operative care to the patients operated in Super Speciality Hospitals at Prasanthigram and Whitefield (Bengaluru). On all the three days, the devotees of Kerala performed regular morning Veda chanting and led Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall.

The programme on 14th September 2013 began at 5.00 p.m. with an introductory speech of the State President of Kerala, Prof. E. Mukundan who reminisced the old sweet memories of Onam celebrations in yesteryears in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Thereafter, three speakers including a beneficiary spoke about Sri Sathya Sai Rehabilitation Programme which had so far provided post-operative care to more than 3,000 patients of Kerala after their heart surgery in Sri Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospitals. A



devotional music programme by a noted singer and a former Bal Vikas student Sri Sathyanarayanan Nair and party followed next. Beginning with a devotional song dedicated to Lord Ganesh, Sri Nair and his three sisters presented devotional songs and Bhajans which included “Mujhe Darsha Dikhao Bhagavan” (give me Your Darshan, Bhagavan), “Sai Baba Bolo, Sai Baba Bolo” (chant the Name of Sai Baba), “Mera Jivan Tere Havale” (my life is dedicated to You), etc. At the conclusion of the programme, the singers and their accompanying artistes were felicitated. After a brief session of Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam, the programme came to a close with Arati at 6.30 p.m.

Talks by two distinguished speakers and a drama comprised the Onam programme on 15th September 2013. The first speaker was Dr. K.S. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Kerala Public Service Commission. Elucidating on the spiritual significance of Onam celebrations, the erudite speaker observed that true spirituality was that which made people responsible to the social needs and took care of the needy and the underprivileged. In his talk marked by pun and humour, the second speaker, Dr. K.B.S. Rajan, Member (Judicial), Central Administrative Tribunal, lamented at the lack of values in modern society and underlined the importance of universal language of the heart which could develop love, bring about unity and eradicate differences. These scholarly talks were followed by

a drama on the theme of the importance of Satsang (good company). The drama depicted how Satsang of Sage Vasishtha transformed Sage Viswamitra and crowned him with the coveted title of Brahmarishi. Presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidyapeeth, Srisailam, Kozhikode, the drama earned the appreciation of all by its sublime theme, excellent music and dances of the children. Appropriately, the drama concluded with Bhagavan’s Bhajan “Hare Rama Hare Rama” which depicted the glory of Satsang. Bhajans followed the drama. Meanwhile, clothes and gifts were presented to the students who participated in the drama.

The festive spirit of Onam came alive on the morning of 16th September 2013 when Kerala devotees chanted Vedic



Bhajans by Kerala devotees.

hymns, led Bhajans and a popular singer Sri T.S. Radhakrishnan along with his son and daughter sang devotional songs with sublime feelings. After the felicitation of the artistes, the programme came to a close with Arati at 9.30 a.m. The evening programme began at 4.50 p.m. with an excellent instrumental music presentation



by Sri Viju S. Anand and party. Beginning their programme with a prayer to Lord Ganesh “Maha Ganapatim,” the musicians made a scintillating presentation, playing many popular Bhajans. Presentation of awards to winners of essay writing competition 2013 followed this. Over 20,000 students from nearly 750 educational institutions of Kerala took part in this essay writing competition. The final presentation of the Onam evening was a beautiful dance drama “Mahabali” performed by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Aluva. The drama showcased the legend of Onam through the story of Emperor Mahabali, whose ego was curbed by Lord



A scene from the drama “Mahabali.”

Vishnu who came in the form of Vamana and demanded three steps of land from Mahabali in charity. Mahabali's ego was deflated as he could not meet this demand of the Lord because the Lord measured the earth and sky in two giant steps. Then Mahabali completely surrendered to the Lord and earned His grace. Excellent portrayal of the famous story of Mahabali, good costumes, good music and fine

sets made the drama an impressive presentation. Bhagavan's Discourse followed this, in which He underlined the value of devotion and surrender on the path of spirituality as exemplified by Emperor Mahabali. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin.” Clothes and gifts were then presented to the cast of the drama and the singer and his accompanying artistes.

Devotional Music by Prasanthi Nilayam Students

An excellent devotional music presentation was made by the students of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute along with the students and staff of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music on 19th September 2013. Beginning their programme with a Mira Bhajan, the students next rendered with aplomb immortal compositions of legendary composers like Thyagaraja, Bhadrachalam Ramdas, Ghantasala, etc., and concluded their programme with a thrilling dance and song dedicated to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The presentation made an endeavour to capture the spirit of devotion of great devotees who immortalised Bharatiya culture by their devotional music and poetry. This programme was the culmination of the Bhagavata Saptaha (weeklong devotional programme) held earlier in the College Auditorium of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus.



From our Archives

MAKE GOD THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR LIFE

THE VEDAS SEEK TO PROMOTE GOOD THOUGHTS

Embodiments of Love!

WHATEVER OTHER BELIEFS you may cherish, have firm faith in God. It is unfortunate that a vast majority of mankind leads mundane lives forgetting God. Make God the foundation of your life. Carry on your normal duties. Duty is God. Work is Worship. Spiritualise all your actions and treat whatever happens as actions for your good. Learn to experience perennial bliss by seeking union with God. Never forget God. Do not go after the things of the world. Have no fear of death. When your life is rooted in these three maxims, you will realise the Atma.

Awareness is Pure Consciousness

Indian sages from ancient times have given the highest place of honour and esteem to the word Atma. The Atma also connotes consciousness or awareness. This awareness finds expression in the term Aham (I). When this Aham identifies itself with a bodily form, it becomes Ahamkara (ego). This ego is not the natural state of Aham. It is by relating itself to a particular form that it becomes

Ahamkara. It is, in fact, pure and unsullied consciousness.

It is the mind that comes in the way of the proper understanding of Aham. Just as the clouds that arise out of the vapours produced by the sun may hide the sun for a time, the mind veils the Aham by its thoughts and desires, though the mind arises from the Atma. The role of the mind in relation to the Atmic principle has to be properly understood. It operates as an obstacle to the awareness of the Atma.

Whether anyone knows this or not, the Vedas pervade everything. In the Yajna, Lord Narayana Himself appears as the embodiment of the Vedas. Yajna is the manifestation of Narayana. Yajna means Thyaga (sacrifice). Sacrifice really means giving up all bad thoughts, egoism, evil qualities, impure desires and wrong actions. Only then can the vision of the Divine be experienced.

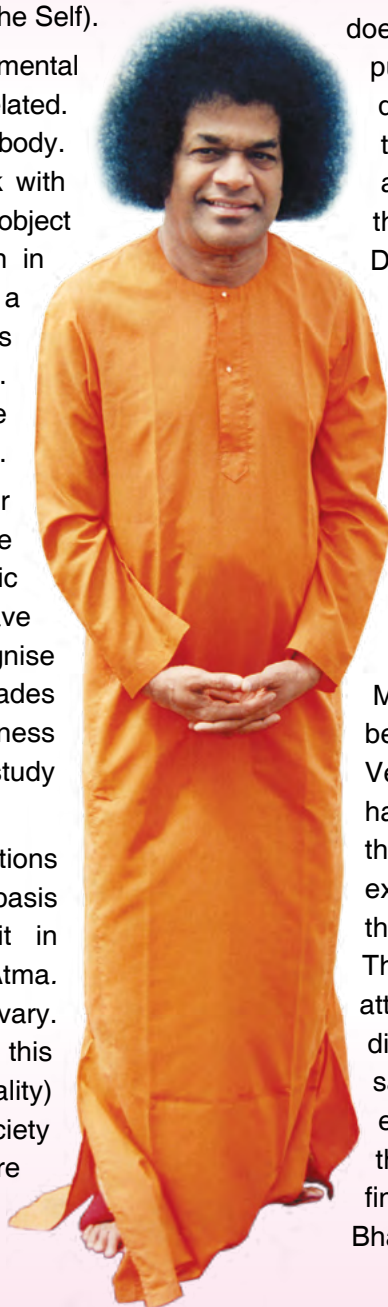


The term 'I' (Nenu in Telugu) has its origin in the Atma. The I is the form of Aham. Terms like Aham, God, Awareness and Atma are all synonymous. When the Aham is rightly understood, one becomes an Atma Jnani (knower of the Self).

There is a fundamental principle to which the 'I' is related. The 'I' has no basis in the body. It has to recognise its link with its primary source. Every object in the world has its origin in a primary source. There is a primordial source, which is responsible for all creation. Very few care to enquire into the nature of this source.

Those who aspire for pure bliss should strive to acquire the Atmic experience. When you have the Atmic vision, you recognise the One that pervades everything. This awareness cannot come through the study of scriptures.

The Sai Organisations should function on the basis that the indwelling Spirit in everyone is the same Atma. Names and forms may vary. Everyone should develop this sense of oneness (non-duality) and render service to society in a spirit of humility. There should be no spirit of condescension.



Fill your Heart with the Nectar of the Vedas

Sri Krishna declared in the Gita that the Lord descends as Avatar to punish the wicked and protect the good. It does not mean that the Avatar's purpose is to destroy evil-doers. Evil refers to bad thoughts. These thoughts are in everyone. It is these that have to be destroyed. Dharma is Divinity itself. The Vedas seek to promote good thoughts, eliminate ideas of evil and help mankind to lead good life. Hence, they have to be cherished and fostered.

If the injunctions given in the Vedas and Sastras are followed by mankind, they will be freed from affliction. Most of our troubles have arisen because we have forgotten the Vedas. The earth has always had the power of attraction. But the scientist Newton carried out experiments and discovered the earth's gravitational pull. The earth had the power of attraction before Newton's discovery. Likewise, the Vedic sages had carried out spiritual explorations on the basis of the Vedas. Because their findings were made known in Bharat, it cannot be said that

the Vedas are not to be found anywhere else. The Vedas encompass the whole world and are immanent everywhere. The Bharatiyas cannot deny the truth about gravitation merely because a foreigner like Newton discovered it. Similarly, others outside India cannot deny the validity of the Vedas because the Bharatiyas discovered their truth.

In the Sai Educational Institutions, students from the primary classes to the Ph.D. level study the Vedas. Students are being given the encouragement they deserve. It is because students in most of the other educational institutions are going astray that the nation is plunged in confusion and chaos. People tend to speak in one way and act differently. It is this dichotomy that has resulted in the public disregard for the Vedas. If those in responsible positions do not live up to their words, how can the people have faith in them?

...continued from page 11

with a dual mind is half blind. Better to be totally blind than half blind. If you are half blind, you become like a crow. It has a very long beak which obstructs its vision. Because of this, its right eye cannot see what is on the left and left eye cannot see what is on the right. Hence, it cannot look straight and keeps moving its neck this side and that side. Fickleness is the quality of a crow. You should not give scope to such qualities of birds and animals.

Every human being must revere the Vedas. They are the very foundation of life. Every act of daily life has its roots in the Vedas. Whether anyone knows this or not, the Vedas pervade everything. In the Yajna, Lord Narayana Himself appears as the embodiment of the Vedas. Yajna is the manifestation of Narayana. Yajna means Thyaga (sacrifice). Sacrifice really means giving up all bad thoughts, egoism, evil qualities, impure desires and wrong actions. Only then can the vision of the Divine be experienced. In an empty mind, you can put anything. But how do you empty a mind that is filled with all kinds of rubbish? And without emptying it, how can you find place for pure thoughts? Your hearts are filled with all kinds of feelings. How can you fill them with the nectar of the Vedas? Everyone must regard it as his foremost duty to work for the revival of the Vedas and live the Vedic way of life.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Dasara Discourses.

Keep reminding yourself, "I am man, not an animal, not a bird." Develop firm faith in your divine nature. Then you will be free from fickleness and all other animal qualities.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Madhura Madhura Murali Ghanashyama...*")

– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th August 1996.



DIFFERENT RELIGIONS EXPRESS THE SAME TRUTH

Tehseen Z. Dhall

My most amazing realisation is that Beloved Swami has cared deeply for all of us in different ways, depending on our individual level of consciousness and our specific spiritual needs. But in all His devotees, He has lovingly ignited and enhanced spiritual growth. This thought leaves me awe-struck. What an incredible Spiritual Master we all have!

I HAVE DEEPLY REFLECTED ON Baba's wonderful and protective influence in my life over many years. He was and still is a stable and steady anchor in a busy and unpredictable world. He was and is a beacon of Divine light and love and a constant source of inspiration and inner strength. His coming into my life changed my entire direction, gave me new meaning and purpose and expanded my horizons in every area. He enhanced my thinking beyond the limitations of religion and upbringing.

In Swami's Fold

I was brought up in a moderate, somewhat limited but uncomplicated manner in Islamic culture. As a child, Islam meant to me a culture of discipline in daily life including regular prayers, fasting, self-restraint in speech and conduct. As a young girl, I was expected to be modest, speak softly and not take part in drama or

any other extra-curricular activities in the school. Music or dance was a definite "No!" When I lost my father at sixteen, my mother took over the management of our family business in publishing. This was most uncharacteristic of a Muslim woman at that time; she managed a workforce of men. She was progressive and encouraged me to go to the university. After I completed my Masters in Pakistan, she happily allowed me to go for further education to the U.K.

As I was brought up in an open family environment without any prejudice, I had no hesitation in interacting with other students in the U.K. Over the years, I became bold enough to marry my husband Pal, a Hindu from Kenya. In our marriage, we managed the various challenges which life threw at us but religion was never an issue between us, although it was for our relatives and acquaintances.



Despite living in U.K. for seven years and despite the benefit of postgraduate education from Pakistan and the U.K., I remained totally ignorant of my spiritual nature. We migrated to Australia in 1975. The friends we had in Australia were professional colleagues and they were not on spiritual path. It was in 1987 that Baba came to our rescue in an amazing way when we were not really coping well with overwhelming challenges in life.

Pal had gone to London to attend a scientific conference. On his return journey, he was to stop in Pakistan for 3-4 days to be with my family. As it happened, an Englishman sitting next to him in the aircraft told him about Sai Baba and His miracles. An account of his encounter has been published in Sai Sparshan (page 289, 2005). Coming as he was from a scientific background, Pal disbelieved all the miracles he was told. However, he started telling me what he had heard about Sai Baba as soon as he sat in the car on the way home from the airport. I became very excited and my immediate reaction was "I must go and see Him." His response to my enthusiasm was somewhat scathing. He said, "You and your whole family are very gullible." Apparently, he had had similar enthusiastic responses from my brothers in Pakistan when he repeated stories of miracles he had heard in the aircraft. He expressed surprise that with my training as a scientist I could so readily believe in a second-hand account of miracles. However, his comments did not detract me from getting wrapped up in Baba more and

more. In fact, I could not get Baba out of my mind.

It is important to mention that the day Pal was returning home, I had a surprising dream. Before this day, I would often find myself in my dreams lost and unable to find my way and wake up frustrated. That morning, I had a dream in which I reached my destination without a telephone, street address, or any sign post. My destination was a room up a flight of stairs. On waking up, I felt elated that I was not lost but reached my destination. Perhaps this was symbolic of the enormous impact that was to unfold in the next few weeks.

Not coincidences but Sai incidences started to gain momentum in my life especially after a dream in which Baba invited me to come to Him. I left for Prasanthi Nilayam within a few weeks of first hearing about Him. Miraculously, my brother Arshad and sister-in-law Shagufta from Pakistan joined me in Prasanthi Nilayam. It was impossible for Pakistanis to visit India on account of political tensions and renewed hostilities between the two countries at that time. Apparently, the diplomat in the Indian High Commission in Islamabad gave unimaginable assistance to make their visit to Baba possible.

Who am I?

In those early days, Baba was teaching me at many levels through interviews in Prasanthi, through dreams at home, through the stream of His Divine Discourses and through many books of amazing Sai experiences of other devotees. One of the



most cogent teachings at the time was how Baba playfully demonstrated to me “Who am I?” In the very first interview, He asked me, “What is your name?” I replied, “Baba! Tehseen.” He seemed not to pronounce my name correctly. I corrected Him and repeated my name twice but He would not pronounce it correctly. The third time, I corrected Him with mild frustration and said, “No Baba! It is not that. It is Teh---seen.” This time He did not repeat my name but just smiled. Then He asked the name of a lady sitting next to me, and a couple of other people including my brother Arshad. He seemed to have no problems in pronouncing their names correctly. I was very unhappy, thinking, “What kind of God is He who cannot even pronounce my name correctly! He should be telling me: You are Tehseen; you have come from Australia, etc., etc.”

Coming back to the lesson in that interview, He explained, “If I call out the name of a person, that person’s hand will go up. The name has been given to the body by your parents. You are not one but three, the one you think you are (body), the one others think you are (mind) and the one you really are (Atma).” Baba touched on many spiritual concepts which were alien to us as Muslims. He produced Vibhuti for ladies and created a Japamala, a pendant and a ring for Australians with a wave of His hand and that blew our minds. The interview lasted almost 75 minutes. It was packed with jokes, laughter and fun interactions.

Baba continued with His teaching on “Who am I?” in the next two interviews.

Reflecting on how I came to Baba and my 26 years since then makes me feel very blessed and deeply grateful for His Divine Grace. The first 18 months had been literally out of this world. He brought divine magic into my life. The days were full of little heart-warming experiences; Nature constantly showed me her magical moments and in my dreams I would have multiple visits from Baba. It was a period of total divine intoxication.

At the same time, I started to read His teachings very enthusiastically. In the second interview, He asked me very lovingly, “What is your name?” I said, “Tehseen.” He nodded gently and did not repeat it. At the end of the third interview, He opened the door for us to go out. As I was going out, He asked, with a twinkle in His eyes, “And what is your name?” Before I could answer, He said, “Go!” Like a Sufi Master, He made me discover myself through enquiry and experiences that I am not the body. That’s how my beloved ever so beautiful Lord taught me with so much patience and love that Tehseen is the name given to this body. And through another dream, He showed me my True Reality. In that dream, I saw a tiny dot arise from my chest travel upwards and come out from the crown of my head and merge in the vastness of space. This gave



me a feeling of expansiveness, awe and immense joy. I woke up saying, "I am one with the universe!"

I have Come for the Whole of Humanity

In the same gentle manner, my Divine Master broadened my horizons from a narrow focus on Islam to universality, step by step through many interviews. In one of the interviews, He explained that all the religions have founders. They are man-made, they are political. He said, "Religions are many but God is one." He further said, "Different religions are expressions of one Truth. We say he is Hindu, he is Muslim, but in reality all are one."

In another interview, a gentleman said to Baba, "You have taken birth in India, You have come for Hindus." Baba's demeanour immediately changed and He answered sternly, "Who says that I have come for Hindus? I have come for the whole of humanity!"

I remember one of the interviews where the group was small. There were some dignitaries alongside us in the interview room. Baba was talking about racial tensions and disharmony amongst people. Suddenly, He turned to me and said, "Tell them about your marriage." I was totally unprepared for this question. Because the previous discussion was on religious tensions, I said, "Baba we are all one." He asked me again "Tell them!" and I gave the same answer. Third time He said firmly, "Tell them!" I was taken aback and blurted out quickly, "I am a Muslim and my

husband is a Hindu." He looked at them and said, "Good marriage!," and gave me a heart-warming smile. I must admit, at that time I did wonder who Baba was trying to shock. I always heard Baba say that one should marry within one's own religion and traditions. Perhaps in our case, He made an exception and validated our marriage, to which there had been so much opposition over the years. His approval of our mixed marriage makes me deeply happy. Various interactions and experiences with Baba on the matter of religion made me deeply aware how religion can be an instrument both of uniting humanity and also increasing separation.

Incredible Spiritual Master

Reflecting on how I came to Baba and my 26 years since then makes me feel very blessed and deeply grateful for His Divine Grace. The first 18 months had been literally out of this world. He brought divine magic into my life. The days were full of little heart-warming experiences; Nature constantly showed me her magical moments and in my dreams I would have multiple visits from Baba. It was a period of total divine intoxication. I felt I was not walking on earth but was living at an exalted plane. I could genuinely say that I was having romance with the Divine. I made frequent trips to Prasanthi to see my Beloved Swami. Every time I would go to Prasanthi, He would grant me an interview

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Justice K. Sreedharan

BHAGAVAN BABA IS WITH US FOREVER

IN 1995, WE FIXED THE MARRIAGE of our son Dr. Madhu Sreedharan with the blessings of Bhagavan. Then the first invitation card was to be given to Bhagavan and Mangal Sutra was to be blessed by Him. With Mangal Sutra and invitation card in my hand, I took my seat in the verandah in front of the interview room in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam.

Bhagavan came near me, spoke a few words about the marriage arrangements and blessed the Mangal Sutra. He then went into the interview room and was about to close the door when I realised that I had not given the invitation card to Bhagavan. Tears started rolling down my cheeks at this mistake. Seeing this, Bhagavan came to me and virtually snatched away the invitation card from my hand. Bhagavan made us feel His Presence many times at the marriage. Garlands placed on His photos increased in length two to four times and all arrangements connected with the ceremony went off in perfect order.

I Want your Pure Heart

In 1998, I retired from the post of Chief Justice of Gujarat. Though we planned to settle down at Kollam in Kerala, I requested Bhagavan to give us accommodation in the

Ashram. Within an hour of the interview, Sri Chiranjeevi Rao sent word that I should meet him. When I met him, he told me that on Bhagavan's orders house no. S4/A3 was allotted to me and I could occupy the same. At the time of evening Darshan, I offered a cheque to Bhagavan as the value of the flat. Bhagavan refused to accept the cheque, stating, "I will not take any money from you, but I want your pure heart."

Omnipotent Saviour

In May 1995, I suffered a heart attack. Simultaneously, Bhagavan told this to Sri Jayaprakash of Whitefield, Bengaluru. When I was permitted to travel, we went to Puttaparthi to seek the blessings of Bhagavan. Bhagavan called us for interview and told us that He would get me operated by Dr. Venugopal. At that time, my

It was revealed that I had only two blocks in the heart, one of more than 80% and the other over 50%. As there were only two blocks, angioplasty was performed by my son and two stents were planted. That saved me from open heart surgery. Thus, Bhagavan gave me a new lease of life without surgical procedure. Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi has not in any manner affected the efficacy of the boons granted by Him. He is with us forever.



wife silently prayed for avoiding operation and hospitalisation. I was subjected to angiogram at the Super Speciality Hospital, Puttaparthi. Then Swami directed me to ignore the heart problem and that He would take care of it. After this, I remained free from any problem connected with heart whatsoever till the year 2013 with the blessings of Bhagavan. In January 2013, however, I felt some discomfort while walking on hilly terrain. Then our son Dr. Madhu prescribed some tablets and asked me to avoid climbing hills. According to him, since the heart problem was an old one, more blocks would have formed, blocking the flow of blood, and so open heart operation could alone solve the problem. But we had no inclination to go in for an open heart surgery.

Later, when once I started walking a hilly terrain again, it caused discomfort in the heart. I was then taken to hospital immediately. On reaching the hospital, I was admitted to the cath lab and angiogram was taken. Then it was revealed that I had only two blocks in the heart, one of more

...continued from page 25

and this continued for many years. My heart seemed to overflow with love.

While reviewing my experiences in writing this article, I realise that I can go on writing because His Divine Grace is beyond measure and touches every aspect of my life. At the same time, I am conscious that He has given awe-inspiring experiences and profound learning to many spiritual giants amongst His devotees. My most amazing realisation is that Beloved Swami

than 80% and the other over 50%. As there were only two blocks, angioplasty was performed by my son and two stents were planted. That saved me from open heart surgery. Thus, Bhagavan gave me a new lease of life without surgical procedure. Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi has not in any manner affected the efficacy of the boons granted by Him. He is with us forever. This establishes that the silent prayer of my wife granted by Bhagavan for saving me from open heart surgery still holds good and is eternal.

Bhagavan wants us to be good to others. His commands "Love All, Serve All," "Help Ever, Hurt Never," are to be followed by us without any reservation. If we try to comply with His teachings, He will continue to shower His blessings on us. We should not be doubting Thomas. When we develop complete faith in Bhagavan, He will protect us at all times.

– **The author, Justice K. Sreedharan, is former Chief Justice of Gujarat and Lokayukta of Kerala.**

has cared deeply for all of us in different ways, depending on our individual level of consciousness and our specific spiritual needs. But in all His devotees, He has lovingly ignited and enhanced spiritual growth. This thought leaves me awe-struck. What an incredible Spiritual Master we all have!

– **The author is working with her husband Dr. Pal Dhall as Assistant Director in the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Sydney, Australia.**

Forgiveness is a Great Virtue

ONCE A GENTLE-NATURED and kind-hearted renunciant set off from one village to another nearby village on foot. Some mischievous and stupid boys followed the renunciant



Some mischievous boys followed the renunciant and made fun of him.

all the way. Calling him an idle beggar, and a stealer of ochre clothes, the boys continued laughing at him loudly and made fun of him.

Hearing all this ridicule silently, the renunciant reached near the other village and sat down under a tree outside the village. Seeing the renunciant sitting silently, the mischievous boys continued their tirade against him. When they got tired after some time, they became silent. Then the renunciant said to them, "My dear boys! Why have you stopped abusing me? Recollect the rest of the abuses that you



On hearing the kind words of the renunciant, the mischievous boys felt ashamed at their misbehaviour.

want to shower on me and give them to me before I enter this village. You cannot insult me in this way when I enter the village." The boys asked the renunciant, "What is this order of yours? What will you do if we abuse you inside the village also?" The renunciant said to the boys, "I will not do anything to you. But the people of this village have great love for me. When you enter the streets of the village abusing me in this manner, they will pounce upon you and beat you. It makes me sad to think of this. That is why I told this to you for your good. Not only that, I don't lose anything as much as you abuse me." Hearing the kind words of the renunciant, the miscreants repented at their mischief and went away with their heads bent in shame.



NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

KENYA

CATARACT SURGERIES WERE performed free of cost for a total of 111 patients residing in remote areas of Kenya. The event was organised by the Sathya Sai International Organisation and the surgeries were performed by the



Three vision screening camps were organised in remote areas of Kenya.

Lions Eye and Blood Centre, which has the required medical personnel and suitable equipment to help the rural population. A very first Sai Vision Screening Camp was held at Dzitsoni Primary School in Kilifi County, Coast Province, on 9th June 2013. Twelve Sathya Sai volunteers and seven staff of the Lions Eye and Blood Centre travelled from Mombasa to Dzitsoni to organise the event. About 233 people were screened, with 47 patients identified for cataract surgeries. A second Sai Vision Screening Camp was held at Kakuyuni Primary School, Malindi County, Coast

Province, on 23rd June. Early in the morning, three Sathya Sai volunteers and seven staff of the Lions Eye and Blood Centre travelled to Kakuyuni, about 110 km from Mombasa. Nearly 160 patients were screened, and 25 patients were further identified for cataract surgeries. A third Sai Vision Screening Camp was held on 7th July, at a school in Kaloleni, approximately 57 km from Mombasa. Three physicians, assisted by clinical officers, set up two classrooms to facilitate the initial vision testing and consultation process. A total of 194 patients were screened, of which 39 were referred for cataract surgery. Transportation to the screening camps was provided for some of the patients.

SWITZERLAND

On 23rd June 2013, the Sathya Sai International Organisation of Switzerland organised the first Human Values Walk in the history of Switzerland, along the shores of the beautiful Lake Geneva. About one hundred people participated in this event, which was made possible by the efforts of 25 Sathya Sai volunteers, including youth. Five stations dedicated to the Human Values were constructed along the walk route, namely: Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence. Each participant was given a Human Values passport at the beginning and a gift at the end of the walk. The authorities in Geneva issued the permit for



the event free of charge, which is rarely given. The local municipality even supplied tables and chairs and donated gifts for the participants.

MALAYSIA

Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsava was observed in Malaysia with spiritual, educational, service and cultural programmes as well as mutual sharing of Sai experiences. The Sathya Sai Baba Centres and Bhajan units of Desa Mentari, Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Sri Muda, Seputeh, Bangsar and Langkawi organised public programmes in Veda chanting and Bhajans. They also distributed dry rations, delicious hot meals, toiletries, mattresses, pillows and essentials to the homeless, a home for the elderly, other shelters for the needy and to students at the Myanmar school. In addition, members of Sri Muda Centre donated a five-door refrigerator and repaired electrical wiring, toilets and leaking water pipes at a home for seniors. In Langkawi, Sathya Sai devotees visited an orphanage where children were served home-made lunches, and, for the Langkawi Hospital, gifts were given to 115 patients and 64 units of blood were collected and donated. In the North, Sathya Sai devotees of the Penang Centre visited the "Lighthouse," a shelter for the poor and the infirm, where they lovingly served tea and, later, dinner to 80 inmates.

GREECE

On Sunday, 19th May 2013, Sathya Sai devotees organised a spring festival

in Agia Barbara, Aegaleo. The Chronic Ailment Clinic of West Attica was beautifully decorated with flowers, and patients were brought in and lovingly served fruit juice and a meal. Lively entertainment, with music and dancing, touched the hearts of all.

In May 2013, a youth team from the Sai Centre supplied 30 bags of dry food to a primary school in Athens for the children of 15 needy families. Each bag contained bread, milk, oil, sugar, tomato juice, rice, lentils, beans, spaghetti and biscuits.

On Saturday, 1st June 2013, Sathya Sai devotees distributed 35 bags of food to needy families in Perama, Piraeus. On the same day, a paediatrician together with an assistant visited 17 families and examined 18 children, of whom 10 were vaccinated. Instructions were given to the parents on the proper management of their children's health. Many prescriptions were filled, and necessary medicines were given according to the patients' needs. On Saturday, 8th June, 7 adult and 4 youth Sathya Sai devotees visited the Children's Recuperation and Rehabilitation Centre in Voula, Attiki, and played basketball and volleyball with the children.

An academic year-end celebration took place at the Centre for Sathya Sai Education in Human Values in Athens on Saturday, 15th June 2013. Sixty guests attended the programme, which included an exhibition on the five Human Values, the educational methodology, and handicrafts and photos of students. A presentation



on the Sathya Sai Schools and Institutes around the world was followed by a stage play offered by young students.

ITALY

More than 150 people, including 31 disabled persons, 12 educators and children with disabilities, attended a spring festival on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th May 2013, at the Mother Sai House



Spring festival for disabled children at the Mother Sai House, Italy.

in Divignano, Italy. Sathya Sai volunteers organised arts and crafts workshops on Saturday afternoon, and after dinner the guests were entertained by the musical group "Officina dei Ricordi" of Asti. On Sunday morning, the guests were escorted by Sathya Sai volunteers to Lake Maggiore for an enjoyable excursion.

CANADA

On 15th June 2013, about 500 Sathya Sai devotees in the Greater Toronto area held a unique consecration ceremony for the Sathya Sai School at its new premises at 451 Ellesmere Road, Scarborough. Construction is planned to begin shortly, and the school will move



Consecration ceremony of the Sathya Sai School, Toronto, Canada.

to its new location by September 2014. The consecration ceremony brought together religious leaders from Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity as well as local, regional and national elected government officials. Following the welcome speech by Dr. Thayananthan Thayaparan, Chairman, Sathya Sai International Organisation, Canada, the multifaith representatives spoke about the teachings of their sacred scriptures and offered prayers from their respective religions. City Councillor, Raymond Cho presented the Principal of the Sathya Sai School with a certificate on behalf of the Toronto City Council and Ward 42, Scarborough-Rouge River, commemorating the consecration ceremony and spoke about the excellent and ongoing cooperation between the Sai Organisation of Canada, the City of Toronto and the community.

FIJI

Twenty-five Sathya Sai volunteers organised a Sai Medicare camp on Saturday, 27th April 2013, at the Nakaikogo Dharma School, Koronivia, Nausori, Fiji.



One dermatologist, two dentists, three ophthalmologists, two gynaecologists and five general physicians, assisted by eight paramedical staff and two nurses, provided medical care to over 300 patients. Sixty pairs of prescription eye glasses were distributed to the needy. Six pharmacists filled 285 prescriptions at this camp. In addition, 17 people participated in a three-hour-long Sathya Sai Education in Human Values workshop, held concurrently at the same premises. Lunch was served to the participants and to the community. Five hundred informational flyers were distributed to the attendees, along with certificates of appreciation to all the volunteers.

Six Sai Medicare camps were held from 5th to 10th May 2013, at various educational facilities in Fiji. Sathya Sai volunteers hailed from various countries: 60 from New Zealand, one from Australia,



More than 3,000 patients were served in medical camps in Fiji in six days.

and 12 from Fiji, along with six to eight medical professionals, and lovingly served a total of 3,080 needy patients

during the six-day period. The Ministry of Health, Government of Fiji, assisted with the arrangements and also provided the services of two dentists along with dental equipment at each location.

U. S. A.

On Saturday, 23rd June 2013, the Sathya Sai International Organisation of Southern California in coordination with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, organised a first annual Bonita-National City Community Free Health Screening Day in Bonita, California. About 300 Sathya Sai volunteers, 30 medical professionals covering nine specialities, "Friends in Sight" volunteers from the Lions Club and dental students and dental



Free health screening day in Bonita, California, U.S.A.

assistants from local schools, provided loving services. A total of 210 needy patients received medical care including 118 primary care, 116 dental, and 160 for vision services. Laboratory services provided at the camp included 57 blood tests and 5 peak pulmonary flow tests. One hundred twenty-nine patients with abnormal results were referred to clinics for follow-up medical work. A total of 102



ladies received gynaecological exams, bone density tests, mammograms and Pap smear testing. Vision services included complete eye examinations, and 144 patients received free prescription eye glasses. In addition to health screening services, the camp provided families and individuals with hygiene kits and bags of food containing jars of peanut butter and jelly, rice, beans and other dry food items.

– **Sathya Sai International Organisation**

B H A R A T

Haryana and Chandigarh: A State-level Inter College Declamation Contest was organised on 14th Sept. 2013 at N.G. Mall, Yamuna Nagar to create awareness in students about their social responsibilities, environmental care and importance of values in life. The programme started with lighting of sacred lamp by Dr. Janak Raj Sharma, State Coordinator. Sri Ashok Yadav, Director General HAFED, Government of Haryana presided over the function and gave away the prizes to the winners. The winners were: Kamal Boparai: G.I.M.T., Kurukshetra, Gaurav Rana: S.K.I.E.T., Kurukshetra, Shurbhi Rajpal: D.A.V. College for Girls, Yamuna Nagar.

In his presidential remarks, Sri Ashok Yadav exhorted the youth to imbibe in their life what they had spoken. He further stressed the need for character building.

Jammu and Kashmir: Two medical camps were held in village Sangrampur and Harsh Tokerian in Jammu district on

7th July and 4th August 2013 respectively. In these camps, specialists in general medicine, orthopaedics, gynaecology and dental care treated more than 300 patients and gave free medicines.

Rajasthan: A State-level Bhajan Workshop was held at Sri Sathya Sai College for Women, Jaipur on Sunday, 25th August 2013. A total of 160 delegates attended this programme, which was inaugurated by All India Vice President, Sri Nimish Pandya and State President of Rajasthan,



State-level Bhajan Workshop in Rajasthan.

Dr. J.S. Shaktawat. The main subject of the programme was “Sai Naam Kirtan Kali Yuga Sadhana” which was dwelt upon by Sri Rajeev Mishra of Rajasthan. Sri Manish Sharma spoke on the topic of electronic media, SaiNet and digital archives, and Sri Dhanraj Gupta gave his insight on “Spiritual Awareness – Nine-point Code of Conduct.” The delegates also deliberated on the various programmes, presentations, discussions done during the Bhajan Workshop held at Brindavan on 22nd and 23rd June 2013.

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A Ganesha idol in Sai Kulwant Hall.



A drama by students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidyapeeth, Srisailam.



Collective chanting of Sri Rudram by 121 ladies of Odisha.

All should Help Each Other

Human body is the most wondrous machine in the world. It has a bewildering multiplicity of limbs, organs, veins, nerves and cells which cooperate to maintain it under varied conditions. If anyone of these rebels and refuses to rescue another, the body is bound to suffer. So, too, a society, a community or a nation can be safe, secure and happy only when the individuals comprising it are mutually helpful and bound together in skilful and sincere service.

— Baba

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