

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The splendour of Dhyana and the journey towards it

Men have to be doing some karma or other from the moment of waking to the moment of sleeping; that is to say, from birth to death. They cannot sit quiet without doing karma. Whoever he may be, he has no means of avoiding this predicament! But each one has to understand clearly which kind of karma he has to be engaged in. There are only two types: 1. Sensory or binding karmas, or vishaya karmas. 2. Karmas that liberate, or shreyo karmas. Still, the karmas that bind, the vishaya karmas, have increased beyond control: and as a result, sorrow and confusion have increased. Through these no happiness and peace of mind can be gained. The shreyo karmas on the other hand yield progressive joy and auspiciousness with each single act. They give bliss to the soul, or Atmananda; and are not concerned with mere external joy! Though acts may be external, the attraction is all towards the internal. This is the right path, the true path.

Vishaya karma includes all activity in relation to exterior objects. It is usually resorted to with a desire for the result. This craving for the consequences leads one to the morass of 'I' and 'Mine' and the demon of lust and greed. If one follows this path, there will be sudden flares as when ghee is poured in the sacrificial fire! Assigning priority to sense objects or vishaya is the same as assigning importance 40 poison or visha! But while engaged in those activities and in those sense objects, if one has no interest in the result or consequence, then not only can one be victorious over the feelings of 'I' and 'Mine' and greed and lust, he can also be far away from all such traits. He will never be troubled by them. Shreyo Karma or liberating karma is so pure, faultless, unselfish and unswerving. Its characteristic is the importance given to the idea of nishkama karma, action without any thought of the fruits thereof, elaborated in the Gita. The practice of that discipline involves the development of Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema: Truth, Righteousness, Peace, and Love. While on this path, if one also takes up the discipline of the name of the Lord, where else can he acquire more joy and bliss? It will give the fullest satisfaction.

If every one treads this holy path, the Lord Himself will bestow on each all that is needed, all that is deserved and all that will give peace of mind. Offer everything to the Lord without any desire for the result; that indeed yields full joy; that is indeed the easiest. While it is very difficult to speak untruth and act against Dharma it is very easy to utter the truth and walk in the path of Dharma. To speak out the thing just as it is, is a very pleasant task; one need not spend a moment of thought upon it. To speak of what is not, one has to create the non-existent! That plunges one into fear and fantasy, in an atmosphere of restlessness and worry.

So, instead of the vishaya karma which offers all such trouble and all these complications, follow the Shreyo marga, the Atmananda marga which is true, eternal and holy.

The best means for this is Dhyana. Today, men with new fang led ideas argue how Dhyana is to be done and even why it should be done. But they do not know either

its taste or its purity. That is why there is so much criticism and cynical laughter. My present intention is to instruct such people. Therefore, I am telling this.

Every one in the world has the nature of behaving and acting in two different ways; one outside and another inside. This is known to all, though generally men do not show this out publicly. Just as people lose even the little joy that they have, worrying over the factions they may have in their family, they lose their internal peace when they are pursued by physical obstacles and trouble.

For an example to illustrate this, take the instance of a cart. It cannot move by itself, is it not? It can move only when two bullocks are yoked to it. And the cart can move safely only when those bullocks are trained in the task of drawing carts, and when they are used to the road through which they have to pass. Instead, if they are ignorant of the process of drawing carts, if they have not walked on the road taken, if they have never stepped out of their shed and if they have always moved only round and round the post to which they have been tied, in their own mire, the journey cannot proceed! And the cart too will come to grief!

Likewise, the Antahkarana cannot move of itself; it must be attached to the externally related bullocks Buddhi and Manas, the Intelligence and the Mind. Then only can it move forward, following the bullocks' tread. So, earlier than the journey, the bullocks—Buddhi and Manas—should be conversant with the road to the village which the Antahkarana is eager to reach. They must be trained to proceed in that direction. If this is done, the journey will be easy and safe. Instead of this, if the draught animals have no knowledge of the roads, Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, and if they have never once trodden that path, the cart, Antahkarana, itself might come to grief! Even if they are prodded to proceed they will only drag the cart to familiar post and the accustomed mire of Confusion, Injustice, Cruelty, Indiscipline and Falsehood! What then of the journey? And when is the arrival to be?

Therefore, Buddhi and Manas have to be taught the art of drawing the cart and moving steadily along the road. This has to be done by Japam and Dhyanam. Man is suffering despair and defeat on account of the waywardness and unsteadiness of the Antahkarana, which itself is the result of his inability to control and guide the bullocks of Buddhi and Manas, unused as they are to Dhyanam and Japam to the extent of even stepping along that path! At such a time, the conflicting desires infecting the mind of man have to be quenched and controlled. The mind has to be focussed in one direction. Man must walk determinedly, using all his effort towards and for the purpose of the aim and achievement he has set before himself. If this is done, no force can pull him back; he can attain the position which is his due.

When the wayward mind fleeing in all directions is plunged in the contemplation of the Name of the Lord, the effect will be like the concentration of the rays of the sun through a piece of magnifying glass. The scattered rays develop the power of a flame to burn and consume; so too when the waves of Buddhi and the feelings of Manas get one-pointedness through the converging lens of the Atma, they manifest as the Divine Splendour which can scorch evil and illumine Joy.

Every one is able to gain success in his profession or occupation only through concentration and one-pointedness in effort. Even the pettiest of tasks needs for its fulfillment the quality of concentration. The toughest problem yields before unswerving endeavour. Man is endowed with unlimited powers. Not a single man is without them! But the road is missed, since he is unaware of this truth. To gain the awareness of this power, he must join the company of the holy; he must strive in Sadhana; and he must practise Japam and Dhyanam. Of what avail is it even if you have each item of provision in plenty, when you do not know the method of cooking them into palatable food? Similarly, man has in himself all the provisions needed for his upkeep and progress, but he discards them lightly and leaves them unused, because he is ignorant of the process of benefiting by them. Man must seek to see and understand the Universal Shakti, the One without a Second, which is the Basis of all the multifarious manifestations of Name and Form in the world around him. The mind flies at a tangent all the time. Dhyanam is the process by which it is trained to acquire concentration.

As a result of meditation on the Paramatma, the mind will withdraw from sense-objects and the sensory world. Just at that time, Buddhi must assert its authority and command the Manas not to entertain any feeling except the thought of the Fundamental Basis. When its basic truth is known, the mind will not be deluded by the Evanescent, the Untrue, and the Unblissful; it will, on the other hand, welcome the blossoming of Joy, Happiness and Truth; it will not be affected by sorrow and grief. For Prakriti and Prana are indestructible, is it not? And so, everything which is the product of the mingling of these two has a new value inherent in it. Man's life also assumes a new splendour when he realises and visualises the Satchidananda through Manas and Buddhi, purified and transformed by means of Dhyanam. The taste of the fruit is evident when we see the whole of it eaten with no portion left behind. So too, when the taste of Dhyanam is once discovered, man will discard all doubt and discussion thereon, and engage himself fully in it. Therefore, begin Dhyanam, each one of you from today, even from this moment!

Dhyanam should be performed enthusiastically, with full faith and care, and strictly according to the disciplines laid down. If this is done, it will bestow not only all happiness and all victory but even the vision of the Lord. This is bound to the science of Vedanta and also to the science of Nature or Prakriti. These two are different only in one respect. The students of Prakriti are immersed in the objects of Life; the students of Vedanta are immersed in the basic truth of Life. And man is bound to both these! Prakriti is related to Vishaya: Vedanta is related to Swarupa. If man desires to transform his life, internal as well as external, into one of Splendour, Dhyanam is the best Sadhana that he can adopt.

The method of Dhyanam: The place should be a little elevated from the ground; that is an inch or two high. Place a mat of Durbha grass on it, spread a deerskin on the mat and have a thin white cloth laid on the skin. Upon this seat one should sit, adopting the Padmasana pose. The right foot must be above the left and the left foot above the right. The fingers of the hand must be in close touch with one another and the hands should be placed in front. The eyes must be either half-open or fully closed. Then by means of mental message, the neck, the shoulders, the hands, the chest, the teeth, the stomach, the fingers, the back, the thighs, the knees, the calves

and the feet should be relaxed. After this, one has to meditate on one's own favourite Name and Form, with Om added. When this is being done, there should be no mental wanderings; one must be stable and quiet. No thought of past events, no trace of anger or hatred and no memory of sorrow should be allowed to interfere. Even if they intrude, they should not be considered at all; to counteract them, one must entertain thoughts which will feed one's enthusiasm for Dhyanam. Of course, this may appear difficult, at first. The best time for Dhyanam is the quiet hours before dawn, between 3 and 5 a.m. One can awake, say, at 4 a.m. First of all, sleep has to be subdued. This is very necessary. In order to keep the hours unchanged, one may set the alarm clock for 4 a.m. and rise. Even then, if sleep continues to bother, its effect can be overcome by means of a bath in cold water. Not that it is essential to bathe, it is needed only when sleep gives much trouble.

If in this manner the Dhyanam path is rigorously followed, it is possible for one to win the Grace of the Lord very quickly.

New Year Blessings to All!

We arrived at Madras just now, at 12 noon. In all places, every thing was so wonderfully joyous. The happiness of all is my happiness. What else do I need than that? May all have greater and greater devotion, knowledge and renunciation, long life, health and happiness and may all deserve more and more the Grace of the Lord!

With mutual friendship and affection, be engaged in Bhajan, Puja, Meditation and the Study of the Glories of the Lord! Utilise the little time available in thoughts of the Lord, without wasting it in idle talk. Time, once lost, can never be reclaimed! The time that is yet to come cannot be claimed, as certainly yours! So, to transform each moment into joy, make this moment, while it is still with you, holy and pure. Give up all yesterdays and tomorrows and the days after; *do now, this very day*, the task that is worth while. This is My New Year Blessings to you all.

Madras
1-1-1959

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Silence

Have you ever enjoyed the pleasure of deep silence? By silence I mean, absolute stillness of the mind. Sastras say, "If one can completely stop the mind for a moment, he is saved for ever." What are the implications of this statement?

We all know what deep sleep is, sleep undisturbed by even a dream. Is it not enjoyable beyond measure? The clamour of the senses has ceased; the waves of the mind have subsided; there is not the slightest trace of the body-consciousness, either. Even if a cobra curls on the pillow, we are not aware of it! In fact, there is nobody to

experience the joy at the time of sleep! The mind and the senses are inoperative and joy alone remains.

If, at any time, during the wakeful state, the mind and the senses similarly cease to function, then too, Joy alone remains!

Seers say that this is our real Swarupa, our real nature. Our inherent nature is Bliss; but, the mind and the senses cover it up and hide it. Let them be silenced; we remain, as we really are.... as Pure Joy!

The practise of such deep silence, according to the Yoga Sastras, prolongs life. After deep silence, we find answers to our problems. Silence is a great storehouse of Energy and Peace. A few minutes of real silence keeps us, peaceful and cheerful, throughout the day. The easiest way to attain the state of silence is to sit in an undisturbed place and repeat the Mantra given by the Guru, or any one of the Names of the Lord, which we like most. It is best to sit in the same place and at the same time, every day. In a few months, peace will descend upon us. As we proceed, waves of Joy begin to envelop us. In a couple of years, (or, if we are fortunate, even earlier, in one of our sittings, unknowingly, the repetition stops and we are conscious only of Joy, and nothing else!

By Sadhana, the mind becomes subtler and subtler, till at last it subsides and is rendered inactive. After that, Joy alone remains!

We are that Joy! We are that Truth!

C. S. Ramaswami

I NEED THEE

Abide with me, O Lord! abide with me;
Fast falls the eventide, the darkness deepens round;
Swift to the close, ebbs on my little span of life;
Earthly joys grow stale and dim; the glory fades away;
Decay and Death do dance on all my deeds;
Abide with me, O Lord! Abide with me.

With Thee at hand, I fear no foe!
With Thee as Guide, I wade through blood and tears,
Blood has no dread; and, tears, no bitterness!
I need Thee, Lord, I seek refuge in Thee,
Abide with me, Baba! Abide with me!!

New Delhi

V. S. Bua

The Tribute of the Three Seas

The call of Kerala was sincere and insistent, and Baba responded! He accepted an invitation from His Excellency Sri B. Ramakrishna Rao, Governor of Kerala, to visit Trivandrum, the Capital City. Baba left Puttaparthi on the 14th Dec., and after a brief halt at Arkonam, and a short stay at Madras, He reached Bangalore on the 16th. There, the devotees whom Baba had asked to join Him on the Kerala tour had gathered, from Guntur and Hyderabad, from Madras and Mysore, from Nellore and Chittoor and from various other towns and villages. Doctors and Engineers, Lawyers and Professors, Poets and Pundits, Agriculturists and Businessmen, Merchants, Musicians and Journalists, the group formed an interesting cross-section of Bhaktas, drawn to Baba by His Prema and Jnana.

The long ‘car’avan proceeded on the 17th to Mysore City, where the party stayed at the Sathya Sai Vihar, and Baba granted Darshan to Bhaktas after Bhajan. On the 18th, the cars sped through the forest belt of South Mysore, down the Dimbam Ghat with the road stepping down 27 hair-pin bends (each bend presenting a new and refreshing panoramic picture of Bhavani Valley beneath), to reach Coimbatore. Here Baba was greeted by the devotees of the place, as well as those who had come all the way from Erode, Nilgiris and Trichinopoly to have His Darshan. From thence, the cars moved along the meandering roadway through Palghat to Shoranur, across the historic Bharatha River, into the thickly wooded Chalakudi area, until they were all ferried over the Periyar, to reach Alwaye, late at night. On the morning of the 19th, Baba journeyed from Alwaye to Trivandrum, a distance of over 150 miles. The winding road was lined on both sides all through, with green gardens and fields, busy homesteads and teeming shops. One could see an unbroken procession of bright children, boys and girls of all ages, hurrying to the schools in the morning hours and running homewards in glee, as the day drew to a close!

Baba reached the Raj Bhavan, Trivandrum, at 9 P.M. He was accorded a Vedic Welcome, by the Governor and the Members of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Reception Committee, with Poorna Kumbham and the chanting of Riks. On the 20th, in the morning as well as in the early afternoon, the Members of the Reception Committee, comprising high officers of the State as well as prominent non-officials, had the privilege of Interview with Baba and it was evident that every one of them was awarded a glimpse of Baba’s Omniscience and His indescribable Love and Grace.

That evening, a Public Reception had been arranged at the Sri Padam Palace. When Baba arrived at the Palace, He was warmly welcomed by the Governor, who presided over the Function. After a few words of Welcome from Sri Vaidyanathan, the Private Secretary to H. H. the Maharaja and an Introductory Speech from the Governor, Baba spoke for a few minutes in Tamil, about the spiritual greatness and traditions of Kerala and the long history of the Bhakti cult centred around Sri Padmanabha, the Deity in the temple of Trivandrum. He then spoke in Telugu, for over half an hour, His words being translated into Malayalam, by the Editor of ‘Sanathana Sarathi’. Baba spoke in appreciation of the natural beauty of Kerala and the industriousness and thirst for education of its inhabitants. He wanted that, along

with these, they should also learn the art of acquiring mental peace, which is the crying need of the day, every where. For this, He advised the control of the Mind. He compared the Mind to the needle of a phonograph, which evokes sorrow and joy and sadness and hilarity, from out of the markings, once it is placed in contact with the record. He admonished people against too much attachment to unsubstantial things. He said that the mind was like the wind that caused us pleasure or pain, by wafting towards us either fragrance or foulness; so, in order to gain equanimity, one has to subdue the Mind, He said. This can be done by meditating on the Lord, who resides in every heart, as Truth, Justice, Peace, or Love. Constant repetition of the Lord's name will bring up the waters of Prema, however deeply embedded in the heart they may be. He described His joy at seeing on the roads the previous day, thousands of children, marching to school and said that all of them were entitled to the twin gifts of Shanti and Viveka and the realisation of their heritage of Divinity. He exhorted the vast audience of about 6000 citizens to cultivate Self-confidence, and with Faith and Courage to move along the path of Self-realisation. Baba also recited a few Namavalis, which the entire audience enthusiastically sang in chorus.

The 21st, December was Vaikuntha Ekadasi Day, a day sacred to all Hindus, a day of fasting and prayer; and the citizens of Trivandrum were delighted when the Reception Committee announced that Baba will be accepting their Namaskarams, that day from 9-30 A.M.! It was indeed a moving spectacle, the long line of eager men, women and children, coming, in an ever lengthening queue, to where Baba was seated in the Thevaram Palace Mantapam and prostrating before Him, with a glint of gratefulness in their eyes and a smile of satisfaction, lighting up their faces! Baba gave Vibhuti, to almost all the ten thousand of them, with His own hands. It was clear that he was very pleased with the cleanliness and godliness, the orderliness and devotion, of those who offered Him their homage that day.

In the evening, Baba arrived at Kovalam Beach, seven miles away from the City, accompanied by the members of His entourage, as well as many devotees from Trivandrum. At a quiet spot on the seashore, far away from the noise and bustle of the Capital, Baba gave those around Him, the unique pleasure of hearing Him sing a number of songs. Everyone joined in the Bhajan that followed; during the Bhajan, Baba 'took' from the sands a beautiful image of Murali Krishna and a Gold ring with the Radha-Krishna motif embossed charmingly on it. Being Vaikuntha Ekadasi Day, Baba also 'took' Amrita, this time from His Hands! The Bhaktas who sat around Him could sense the captivating fragrance, long before the actual materialisation, and even as Baba was singing a song, He pointed His joint palms at a silver vessel and the ambrosial Amrita gurgled into it from His fingers! Baba then distributed the Nectar, Himself, to everyone present, including a few fortunate fisher folk from the hamlet nearby.

From Kovalam, Baba proceeded to Cape Comorin, the sacred spot which marks the southern-most tip of the Indian Peninsula. On the 22nd, in the morning He strolled on the seashore and held religious discussions with His devotees at the Bungalow where He stayed. Here too, a large number of people from the town had His Darshan, and received His blessings.

In the evening, when the sky was turned into a carnival of pink and purple by the rays of the setting sun, Baba again proceeded to the shore and played with the waves of the three seas that mingle there. Each wave seemed to be more eager than the rest to wash His lotus feet, and to offer Him its individual homage! Suddenly, as if aware of the yearning of the waves, Baba stood facing the seas and said, to those beside Him, “See! The ocean is inviting Me, with a garland in its Hand!” At that very moment, one could discern a beautiful wave forming itself a few yards ahead and soon, it swept majestically forward towards the group on the seashore. It rolled past the Bhagavan, and quickly receded. But, imagine the surprise and joy of everyone there. When, lo and behold! There was a bewitching pearl garland, round Baba’s Feet, swaying and swinging with the waters of the sea! One hundred and eight translucent pearls, the Tribute from Three Seas to the Avatar of the Lord! Oh! How entrancingly charming Baba looked, when, at the earnest entreaty of the devotees, He condescended to wear the Precious Garland!

The Bhaktas then sat around Baba on the seashore for Bhajan. Baba asked some one to relate the story of the Kanyakumari Temple and, when He related the incident of the pirates who carried away the diamond on the nose-ring of the Goddess, Baba immediately ‘took’ from the sand the huge big diamond and passed it round for everyone to see, saying, “It shall be returned as soon as you have all seen it!”

Thereafter, He invited each one to ask Him questions about spiritual matters and for over two hours, it was a feast for the soul! “How came this world to be created?” “How far can we regard the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as accurate accounts of the actions of the Lord?” “When the Lord, by a mere Sankalpa of His, can put down Adharma and establish Dharma, why should He take all the trouble of incarnating in human form?” “How is it that there is such a difference in the ways in which Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi and Yourself instruct the devotees?” “How are we to be convinced that the Sathya Sai of Puttaparthi is the same as the Shirdi Sai?”—questions like these were asked and answered. “Creation takes place when God-head assumes Maya. The epics have been able to relate but a small fraction of the glories of the Lord. Mere Sankalpa, though it may bring about the suppression of evil and the promotion of good, will rob the Jivi of its right of choice, its ‘limited freedom’ and so, the lord has to descend, guide and lead, diagnose and advise, all in the language of Man. People have not fully understood the glory of the Sai of Shirdi! Nor, can they fully understand the Sai of Puttaparthi! But, yet, they go about boldly comparing the two and making pronouncements of their childish judgements! The better course will be to realise Sai, silently and sincerely; that will end doubts and all controversy”, — such were the replies Baba vouchsafed to the questioners, in the twilight stillness of that historic seashore. Truly, an unforgettable momentous evening for everyone, fortunate enough to be present!

From the Cape, Baba returned to Raj Bhavan, Trivandrum on the 23rd Dec. a large number of citizens were waiting for Baba’s Darshan that day also, and Baba even visited the houses of a few devotees in the evening. On the 24th, Baba left for the Courtallam Falls and the party reached ‘Travancore House’, at 12 noon. Though this was the very first occasion on which Baba was physically present at Courtallam, He had given such an accurate description of the house and its garden including the

two Bougainville bushes in front of the bungalow, that the person who had heard Him describe it at Puttaparthi on the 10th Dec., actually jumped in joy, when he found the description correct, in every detail. That evening, Baba sat on the lawn of the garden and, as is His wont, invited questions from those around Him. In answer to these, the Bhaktas heard Him unravel many a knotty problem in Yoga and Philosophy and in practice of Japam and Dhyanam. Baba spoke of Jivaloka where everything is a conglomeration of good and bad; of Pranaloka where the desire to accept the good and reject the bad is prominent; the Atmaloka, where good and bad are both considered with indifference; and the Paramathmaloka, where neither good or bad exists, but are subsumed by Sat, Chit and Ananda. He gave very detailed instructions about the process of Dhyanam and Japam, on the lines of Premavahini article, vouchsafed by Him for this issue of Sanathana Sarathi. He explained the conditions and extent of the Anugraha of the Lord. He answered questions about the Upanishads and the Gita, about Karmamarga and Dharmamarga, about Advaita, Vasishta Advaita and Dvaita, about the inner meaning of the Radha-Krishna relationship. He said that Radha is the Prakriti Principle and Krishna the Purusha Principle and that they form the Basis of the Universe. He analysed the concept of 'Sarvam Brahmamaya' and gave the Bhaktas practical disciplines by which they can slowly bring it into their daily consciousness!

On Christmas Day, 25th December, Baba left Courtallam for the village of Surandai, 12 miles away, where some devotees were eagerly awaiting His arrival. They had decorated the road way furlongs ahead of the entrance; they had covered up an entire street with a pandal, filled with greenery; they had arranged to feed all who came to have a Darshan of Baba; they had even got an elephant ready to take Baba in procession into their village, with Nadaswaram, Bhajan and the chanting of Vedic Mantras! And, their prayers bore fruit! The elephant knelt and sat on the ground in front of Baba and, ever eager to grant the simple yearnings of His Bhaktas, Baba ascended the elephant and gave everyone the unique pleasure of witnessing the thrilling picture of Divine Radiance. It was a scene that left indelible imprint on the hearts of all. Baba spent the day at Surandai, making it a Special Festival for the small band of Christian chauffeurs, belonging to the party. In the evening, the Sastries and Pundits of Surandai were also blessed by Baba, for He gave them a chance of reciting the traditional style portions of the Vedas, in His Presence.

One point of interest to readers may be mentioned here. Baba had casually mentioned, at Mysore City itself on 17th December while asking a devotee to join the party, that he could see, if he came to the South, himself on an elephant! Who but He can look into the future and predict what, at the time, was absolutely outside the ambit of the consciousness of the Surandai devotees!

26th December saw Baba at Thiruneveli, in the house of a devotee. There was Bhajan at the place in the evening and Baba found some time also for a visit or two, to the residences of His Bhaktas. Leaving the town on the morning of 27th, the 'car'avan proceeded towards the Periyar Dam in Kerala, 165 miles away! On the way, some rest was taken by the party at a Park near Virudhunagar and at a Bungalow near Gudalur. The Head works of the Hydro-electric Project was reached long before evening. Sitting on the lakeside near Aranya Nivas, Baba discoursed to His devotees for some time, before descending the mountain road to spend the night

in the Electric Colony. The next morning Baba and the devotees cruised along the creeks and corners of the Periyar Lake in the area of the Wild Life Sanctuary, and went also to the actual Dam site. The party was able to see at close quarters a herd of about 40 wild elephants, another large herd of bison and some wild pigs, all within the space of 8 miles! The Superintending Engineer, Electricity and his staff were very happy, when Baba agreed to go round the Tunnel Head, the Surge Shaft, the Valve House, the Power House and other adjuncts of the huge Hydro-electric Works, under their charge. Returning to the colony, Baba vouchsafed Darshan to about 200 residents of the area.

Baba reached Madurai about 7 P.M. on the 28th and He was most enthusiastically welcomed by the very large number Bhaktas there. He spent the 29th Dec., in their midst and left for Vendasandur, on the 30th. There the devotees had another chance of witnessing the overflowing Love of Bhagavan, for He took them all to a neighbouring stream and discoursed there on the practical problems of spiritual endeavour. He also 'took' from the sands a quantity of sweet prasadam which He distributed to all present.

Leaving Vendasundur on the 31st Dec., Baba arrived, as He Himself has written in the New Year Message He sent to the Bhaktas at Puttaparthi (reproduced elsewhere), at Madras on the first day of the year 1959, at 12 noon.

Thus concluded Baba's Vijaya Yatra to the South, a fortnight packed with evidences of His mysterious Divine Power, Universal Love and Omniscient Wisdom.

N. Kasturi

Four Gunas

Inaugurating on 14th Dec., the Conference on Divine Life, held for one week by the Arkonam Branch of Divine Life Society, Baba spoke on the essential Divinity of every created being, which has only to be recognised to shine forth. The effulgence of that Divinity is proportionate to the Samskara and Sadhana of each. Therefore, every one has a claim to become a member of the Divine Life Society; not merely those who paid a subscription of four annas (!) (As in the rules of the Divine Society of Arkonam) but, even more important than that fee, all those who could contribute the four gunas (!), Sathyam, Dharmam, Shanti and Premam. There are two Margas, the Path of Preyas and the Path of Sreyas and Divine Life is the acceptance of the Shreyomarga in preference to the Preyomarga, the uplifting discipline, in preference to the pleasant looseness. Baba said that there are no beings outside the Life Divine and so, no one should be branded as Atheist and Nastika; all are pilgrims on the same journey, some agile and eager, some hesitant and slow. He appealed to elders present to set a good example to the young and strictly act according to the advice they themselves so freely give. Let the young learn more by their example than by their precept, He said.

Reader! Please note:

“Sanathana Sarathi” is a monthly, for the present, and the articles published in it are purely religio-philosophical. Contributions of articles especially from those who endeavour to put into practice what they speak and write on spirituality are readily welcome.

Anything that smacks of “public news or comments on public news”, personal attacks, rude phraseology, or even non-devotional sentiments can find no place, in here. The Editor enjoys in full the right, wherever he feel it necessary, either to curtail, or to supplement or even to withhold publication of the articles received. No unpublished article will be returned unless after special request.

No commercial advertisement will be published in this magazine.

As readers are aware, the Subscription Amount of Rupees – Three per year has to be sent to the Editor by M.O. If the M.O reaches the Editor, before 16th of any month, will receive the ‘Sanathana Sarathi’ of the subsequent month and eleven issues thereafter.

Permanent change of address should be intimated before the 10th of the month, mentioning also the subscribers number (found on the wrapper) and the Old Address.

Editor,

“SANATHANA SARATHI”

Prasanthi Nilayam
Puttaparthi

Baba’s Sayings

There is no use in giving Adhyatma Rasa to those who cry, “We are hungry; give us food”; give them food.

You learn the driving of a motorcar, only on one road; but after getting the license, you drive along all roads. So, too, you cultivate Bhakti through one Name and all names become sweet and easy for you.

Of the two, Japam and Dhyanam, that in which you develop more Shraddha, that is superior; concentrate on that.

With only four strings in his instrument, the violinist plays 400 ragas; similarly, Siva and Shakti, Jada and Chaitanya have produced all creation.

Children ought to be brought up, without developing meaningless fears; they should be trained in courage and self-confidence; cowardice makes them utter lies.

Sadhana is the answer you write in the examination; Sankalpa of the Lord is the mark you get; but, if you are an earnest student, the examiner may add some Grace marks and make you pass; that is the Anugraha.

There are neither Atheists, nor Nastikas; there are only quick-walkers and slow-walkers on the pilgrim road; all are destined to reach Home.

The upasana of Sundaram will lead you to the upasana of Sathyam and that will bring about Sivam or Mangalam.

(From Recent Discourses)

Good News for the Readers of Sanathana Sarathi! Sai Speak!!

Today marks the close of one year of the onward march of our Sarathi. May all bhaktas have on this auspicious day, the joy of the rain of Anugraha on their hearts. May they attain the feet of Sarveswara by imbibing the essence of the Teachings in the Sarathi. "Towards that end, let all collect the flowers mentioned below; earn them, by Sadhana; and Realise the Goal.

*Ahimsa prathamam pushpam, pushpamindriya nigrahah,
Sarva bhootha daya pushpam, kshama pushpam viseshathah,
Santhi pushpam, thapah pushpam, dhyana pushpam thathavacha
Sathyamashtavidham pushpam, SAYI preethikaram bhaveth.*

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

A Zemindar, though all the estate is his, and he can sit anywhere he wants, on all that vast extent of land, prefers to sit only where it is neat and clean and comfortable and pure; so, too, though all hearts belong to Him and He can take His seat anywhere, He prefers those hearts which are pure, which are free from the thorns of falsehood, insincerity and cruelty and which are filled with the perfume of Sathya, Dharma Shanti and Prema.

(From a Recent Discourse of Baba)

Dhyana Vahini

XII

Dhyanam of the Three Gunas, and their Result:

Sadhakas all over the world will naturally be engaged in Japam and Dhyanam; but first one has to be clear about the purpose of Japam and Dhyanam. Without this knowledge, people begin Japam and Dhyanam believing them to be related to the objective world, capable of satisfying worldly desires, and hoping to demonstrate their value by means of sensory gains! This is a grave error. Japam and Dhyanam are for acquiring one-pointed attention on the Lord for casting off sensory attachments and for attaining the joy derived from the basis of all sensory objects. The mind should not be wandering in all directions, indiscriminately, like the fly. The fly dwells in the sweet-meat shop and runs after the rubbish carts; the fly which has such a mind has to be taught to understand the sweetness of the first place and the impurity of the second place, so that it may not desert the sweet-meat shop and pursue the rubbish cart. When such teaching is imparted to the mind, it is called Dhyanam!

Look at the other type, the bee! It will have contact only with sweetness; it will approach only those flowers that possess nectar; it will not be attracted to other places; it will not proceed there at all. Similarly, one has to give up all inclinations towards the sensory attraction, towards the rubbish cart of the untrue and the impermanent; and as far as possible, one has to direct the mind to all holy things which yield sweetness and the joy associated with the Lord. For this, time is needed, of course. How long that time will be is dependent on the activities of thought, word and deed as well as on the motives that impel those actions.

The main things to be considered are not at what expense one has prayed to the Lord; nor the number of years one has been engaged in it; nor the rules and regulations one has followed; nor even the number of times one has prayed over; but with what mind one has prayed; with what degree of patience one has been awaiting the result; and with what single-mindedness one has prayed for Godly Bliss, regardless of worldly happiness and delay, with no lassitude, and with constant attention to oneself, one's meditation, and one's task. If one examines deeply how much he has succeeded in getting rid of all idea of self, he can himself gauge the progress he has made. Instead, if one is engaged in counting the rules, and adding up the time spent and the expense incurred, such Dhyanam can belong only to the objective world; it can never come into the subjective and spiritual fields.

Japam and Dhyanam should never be judged on mere external standards; they are to be judged by their inner effects. Their essence is their relationship to the Atma. The immortal experience of the Atma should never be mixed up with low activities of the temporal world. Such activities deserve to be avoided. If room is given for these and if one sways between impatience and sloth, and if one always worries oneself feeling, "Why has it not come yet? Why is it still far away" then it, all becomes simply Japam and Dhyanam done with intent to gain, with an eye on the fruit thereof.

The one single fruit of Japam-Dhyanam is this: the conversion of the out-faced into the in-faced; the turning inwards of one's eye, the inward eye seeing the Reality of Atmic Bliss. For this transformation, one has to be always active and hopeful, regardless of the time taken and the difficulties encountered. One should await the descent of the Lord's Grace. This patient waiting is itself part of the tapas of Dhyana. Sticking unflinchingly to the vow is the tapas.

There are three ways by which aspirants try to enter the path of Dhyana: the Satwic marga, the Rajasic marga and the Tamasic marga.

First, the Satwic path: This means that one considers Japam-Dhyanam as a duty and suffers any amount of trouble for its sake; one is fully convinced that all this is just an illusion; and so, one does only good under all conditions and at all times; one desires only the good of all; being always loving towards all; one spends time uninterruptedly in the remembrance and meditation of the Lord. He will not crave even for the fruit of the Japam and Dhyanam; he will leave it all to the Lord.

Next the Rajasic path: Here, one will be craving at every step for the fruit of one's act. If that fruit is not available, then gradually, laxity and disgust overpower the Sadhaka and the Japam and Dhyanam slowly dry up.

The Tamasic path: This is even worse. The Lord will come into the memory only in times of danger or acute suffering or when one is the victim of loss or pain. At such times, such people pray and vow that they will arrange this Puja, offer this particular food, or build this kind of temple to the Lord. They will be calculating the quantity of food they placed before the Lord, the tribute they offered at His feet, the number of prostrations they did and the number of times they

circumambulated the shrine, and ask for proportionate awards! For those who adopt this attitude in Dhyanam, the mind and intellect can never be pure.

Most people now follow only the Rajasic and Tamasic paths in Japam and Dhyanam. The very intention in doing Japam and Dhyanam is to purify the Manas and the Buddhi, the mind and the intellect. In order to achieve this, the best path is the first, the Satwic Dhyanam. When the Manes and the Buddhi become pure, they will shine with the splendour of the understanding of the Atma. He in whom this understanding shines fully is called a Rishi.

Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavathi: the knower of Atma becomes the Atma itself. The goal of life, that which makes life worthwhile, is the understanding of the Atma or, in other words, the basis of Jiva.

Really speaking, man's inner feelings will be evident from his physical body. The stance and the appearance of the body help us to discover these feelings. It is found that there is a close mutual relationship between the attitudes of the body and the attitudes of the mind. Take one example; with the loins girded, the sleeves of the shirt rolled and the palms rounded into fists, it is not possible to exhibit love or devotion. With bended knees, the eye half-closed and the hands raised up over the head with the palms joined, is it possible to show one's anger or hatred or cruelty? That is why the ancient Rishis used to tell the Sadhakas that it is necessary during prayer or Japam and Dhyanam to adopt the appropriate bodily pose. They saw that it is possible by this means to control the waywardness of the mind. Of course, for the expert Sadhaka, Dhyanam is easy in any pose; but for the novice, such physical means are essential. This bodily and mental training must be undergone only to be later discarded as but a means to attain the True and the Eternal Atma. Until this is realised, Sadhana has to be consistently practised.

Until the goal of Dhyanam is achieved, the well-established discipline of Asanas has to be followed. The curriculum has to be adhered to till then. After the attainment of the goal, that is after the Manes and the Buddhi have been conquered and brought under control, one can be immersed in Dhyanam wherever one finds oneself: on the bed, in the chair, on a rock or in a cart.

Once you learn to ride a motorcycle, you can ride on any road end under all conditions. But when you are just learning to ride, for your own safety and for the safety of those around you, you have to select an open maidan; you have to follow certain principles of balance; this is essential. So too, those who engage themselves in Dhayana-Sadhana have to follow a certain course of training. No change can be made in this. So, the Rajasic and the Tamasic forms can never be considered as Dhyanam. If the Sadhaka becomes fully Satwic, it is best.

To describe anything in words is difficult; it might even cause boredom. But to demonstrate it by deeds is easier and more pleasant. To make men understand by doing Dhyana is better than by talking about it! My writing on it and your reading it will not make it easy. Through Dhyana, people reach the Divine experience of realising the Atma within themselves. Through Dhyana Sadhakas are able to cast off the sheaths of ignorance, layer after layer. They withdraw their sense Perceptions from contact with objective experiences. The process which aims at this holy consummation alone deserves to be called Dhyana. For this, man must be equipped with good habits, disciplines and high ideals. He must be full of renunciation towards worldly things and

their attractions. Whatever the situation, one should conduct oneself with enthusiasm and joy. Whatever is done must be dedicated not for eking out one's livelihood, but for earning Atmananda. One should train oneself to adopt a good Asanas or sitting pose, to avoid tension of the body and to ease the mind from weight and pressure of the body. This is what deserves to be called Satwic Dhyana Sadhana. Discipline is very necessary for this.

The troubles and tribulations that come in the wake of an attempt to destroy the undesirable activities of the mind will disappear through the strict course and rules described already. What remains is only putting them into actual practice by the Sadhaka. Even the most powerful drug cannot effect a cure when it is brought to the bed-side of the patient. The sufferer has to take it in, little by little, as per schedule with all the attendant care and try to assimilate it in the system. The healing principle of the drug must pervade the entire body; the body must be suffused with the drug. Similarly, the Siddhantas and the Vedanta have no power to destroy individual faults and weakness. If full results are wanted, then man must give up all false and low feelings and act according to the true teachings of the Vedanta and the Siddhantas. If he does, he will attain the fruit. The secret of success in Dhyana lies in the purity of the inner life of the Sadhaka. The success is proportionate to the importance the Sadhaka gives to Right Conduct or Sanmarga. Every one has the right to achieve this high degree of success. I do not say this in just a quiet tone; I declare this loud enough for all the quarters to hear. Knowing this, Meditate and Advance! Do Dhyana and progress! Realise the Atma!

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Love Embodiment

Love is the seed of life;
Life is the seed of light;
Light is the seed of joy;
Joy is the seed of Truth;
Truth is the seed of Love;
Baba is the Love-Embodiment.

K. Vaidyanathan

Sandeha Nivarini

IX

Swami: O, you have come I Well. What is the news?

Bhakta: What other news have we except yours? I heard that Your Kerala tour was most pleasant and wonderful. I am sad I was not destined to join.

Swami: Why are you sad for it'? Listen to the account and be happy, that is all. Have the confidence and the hope that when next such an opportunity presents itself, you may be able to join. Do not be brooding over the past.

Bhakta: What is the use of confidence and hope when one is not destined? Hope will only cause greater disappointment.

Swami: Has destiny a shape and a personality so that you can recognise it even before it shows itself? You should not hang on its favour, talking all the time of Destiny, Destiny...How can that destiny itself fructify without your will and wish, taking practical form, as action'? Whatever be the destiny, it is essential to continue acting. Karma has to be done, even to attain one's destiny.

Bhakta: If one is destined, everything will come of itself, isn't it?

Swami: That is a big mistake. If you sit quiet with the fruit in your hand, hoping that its juice will reach the mouth, how can you take it? It is sheer stupidity to complain that destiny denied you the juice, without squeezing and swallowing the fruit. Destiny gave the fruit into your hand; karma alone can make you enjoy it. Karma is the Duty; Destiny the Result. Result cannot emerge without action.

Bhakta: So, Swami, we should not sit with folded hands, placing all burdens on Destiny, isn't it?

Swami: Listen. You should never under-estimate your powers; engage yourselves in action commensurate with that power. For the rest, talk of Destiny to your heart's content. It is wrong to desist from the appropriate karma, placing reliance on Destiny. If you do so, even Destiny will slip out of your hands. Whoever he be, he must engage himself in Karma.

Bhakta: Yes, yes. Swami. In the Gita also Arjuna is told, "Even I do Karma; the Universe cannot go on if I desist from Karma. And so, if you withdraw from it, how can you realise the result?" I believe now that Karma is Purusha-lakshana, the hall-mark of men.

Swami: And of women too. it is Prakriti-lakshana. All beings, men or women, trees or animals, worms, insects, all have to do karma; everything in the Universe is bound by this law. There is no escaping this obligation. Karma is the characteristic of Prakriti. Do not refer to it as Purusha-lakshana. Paramatma is the one and only Purusha. Prakriti is all Shakti, Feminine. You are all not Purushas, remember.

Bhakta: But Swami, there is that distinction in Nature; how is it correct to say that all are Feminine?

Swami: You may imagine it to be so, guided by your natural reason, but the reality is not that. All this is just secular experience; temporal, temporary. They are not the basic truth. This is simply play-acting; mere Impersonation. In some plays, men take the role of women. Sometimes women enact the role of men in plays. Are they, therefore, men? In the drama, Prakriti, all the

actors are feminine, though there may be men roles too. The genuine Purusha is only one, that is Siva, the Atma. The Atma is immanent in every one, but for this reason alone, all cannot be deemed masculine. The Prakriti theatre is like a girls' school where all the roles of the play are taken up by girls. Shakti, which is feminine, puts on all these parts. But do not take the drama as real, my dear fellow.

Bhakta: Swami, even after hearing all this, the nature of the world remains an enigma to me. When one side is seen, it strikes me as Real; when the other side is presented, it strikes me as unreal. Nothing is definite.

Swami: That is exactly the nature of Mithya. It means that the world is neither Sathya nor Asathya, it is real as well as unreal. You are born in Mithya, you are enmeshed in it, and so you cannot distinguish this from that, the Sathya from the Asathya.

Bhakta: Then setting aside this discussion of Mithya, tell me something. Swami, about that Sathya, that Purusha, whoever He is.

Swami: The Purusha has neither birth nor death, he undergoes no change. He is Chithswarupa, Jnanaswarupa. Dharma or codes of social conduct are not of His nature; so, he is not Dharmaswarupa. The Jnana which is his nature does not change, is not corrected or supplemented from time to time; it is eternal wisdom. Light is its nature and so it does not admit of a dot of darkness. The sun does not have effulgence added to it from the world it illumines; it will emit splendour whether there are worlds or no. The Purusha is self-luminous. He is always the object of knowledge; he cognises all vrittis or mutations of the chitta or consciousness; he is modificationless, aparinaami, un-evolved. The Chitta is parinaami, it changes and evolves. The Purusha is sentience itself; he is not affected by apprehension or non-apprehension. No vyapara or activity can affect Him. Even when unmanifested, effulgence is his nature.

The seed in the soil grows into a tree, the tree is the manifested form of the seed. This change from seed to tree and tree to seed shows that the Shakti in the seed has vyapara. This is parinaama. But the Purusha is unchanging unaffected; He is the See-er. He is completely apart from Prakriti. No deed can diminish His glory, nor exhaust His Personality.

Bhakta: Then which is Prakriti? Who is Purusha?

Swami : The principle behind the Seen is Prakriti; the principle behind the See-er is Purusha. Amoolam, moolam, it is said; the root cause has no root! Causeless both Prakriti and Purusha have no beginning.

Bhakta: Then this Samsara too should be beginning less, isn't it Swami? It resulted from the union of the two.

Swami: That union is the result of delusion; prompted by delusion, it produces delusion again. That is the law of the seed and the tree.

Bhakta: Union means what, Swami? What is the condition?

Swami: The reflection of the Purusha in the Gunas, which evolve from Prakriti, that is union. Listen, just an example. The Sun is not water, neither is water, Sun. Still, by their juxtaposition, reflection is produced. The image has the characteristic neither of the Sun nor of water nor can it be said that it is devoid of these. When the water is agitated, the image too gets agitated. The image also shines a little. Again, the magnet is distinct from the iron, but when the two are brought near, the magnet affects the iron and makes it similar to itself. This is the relationship called Samyoga, or union.

Bhakta: Of these, which is the real Purusha and which is the active Purusha, tell me.

Swami: Did I not speak of the Sun and the image? The Image-Purusha is the doer, the enjoyer, the experiencer. The original, the Bimba is unaffected. He is the Non-doer, the Non-experiencer. The Image-Purusha is known therefore, as the Vyavaharikapurusha or the Grihitha, the Acceptor. The Bimba is the True, the Eternal, the Real, the Atmaswarupa. The Grihitha is the knower and by that act of knowing, he has undergone modification.

Bhakta: Right, Swami. Wonderful. How many books one should have conned in order to know all this! And, even then, to grasp the meaning is so hard. I have now known that Purusha is not in the world, that all this is merely a drama, Paramatma being the One Purusha. To attain Him, everything in Prakriti is striving; this is probably what is spoken of as Siva-Shakti. Fine, Fine.

Swami: You are right. It is also referred to as Jiva Brahma Union. Every one must strive for this Union. The Jiva cannot exist alone; Moksha-sadhana has to be done, willy-nilly, by every living thing. Without it, there can be no Peace.

Bhakta: What does Moksha mean exactly, Swami? And what is Mukti?

Swami: Both mean the same. That which is burdened with the Manas is the Jivi; when the Manas and the Nama and Rupa which it spins from out of its substance, are destroyed, then the Jivi attains moksha. Then it becomes one with Brahman; that is Moksha. When the Ganga or the Godavari reach the sea, their separate names, forms, tastes and limits all disappear and they acquire the name, form, taste and limit of the sea itself.

Until the Jivas attain the end of the Mind, they bear the Nama, Rupa and the Ruchi of Delusion, Myness and I-ness; when the Jivi nears the sea, these characteristics begin to disappear slowly; when the Gunas as well as the mutations of the mind are destroyed, then one can say that union has been accomplished with Brahman. How can the Ganga which has merged with the ocean be sweet? If it is said that one has merged in Brahman, he should not have the three Gunas, nor any taste of Manas. Such full union is known as Sayujyamukti.

Bhakta: O, how grand, Swami. Bless every one to attain that union; then the world will really be happy.

Swami: What? For Me to bless so would be to go against the freedom you are endowed with. Take up the Sadhana prescribed for winning that blessing; gain the blessing by effort, that is the way. It is not something that is given away. You do not pray to the Sun to make the rays fall on you, do you? Shining is His Nature; He is doing it always. Remove the obstacles between you and the sun and the rays are on you. So too, keeping the obstacles of Delusion, My-ness and I-ness between you and the rays of Grace, what is the use of complaining that they do not fall on you? What can the rays do?

Bhakta: That is as good as saying that we must remove all traces of I-ness and My-ness from our minds.

Swami: Why do you say, “As good as saying?” I am saying it emphatically, over and over again. If you seek the rays of Grace, try and remove the obstacles. Remember, even if you do not strive for it now, you will feel the urge some time later; you cannot escape that urge. It has to happen some day, this shuffling off the coils of Delusion. Why postpone the day of joy, the day of liberation? Strive for this from this very day, nay, this very minute. You may leave now, my boy. But come again. I must tell you one more thing. Do not go to extremes; be steady; be patient.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

A Fateful Hour of My Life

One night while bhajan was going on as usual in the prayer hall at Prasanthi Nilayam. I happened to sit near the throne of the Lord. But He was not present at the moment, in the form we know.

A great light dawned upon my mind. What sublime happiness and peace, of the nature of bliss, I enjoyed while it lasted! It lasted only for one hour, if I well remember. Because of the new, sudden and unexpected nature of the impact, I could not endure the elevated state of mind I was in, longer. Undoubtedly it was the experience of the highest spiritual order. But it was so overwhelming that I was afraid of losing all sense of the world in which I live and to which I was deeply attached. It was this fear of losing what, in fact, I do not possess but still imagine that I possess, of losing what I do not enjoy in this illusive and deceptive world of sense perception, that caused me to take a false and unhappy step at that critical juncture of my life. What a shame! I do confess now that instead of, availing myself of the great opportunity to grasp what is real, I prayed to the Lord, at that fateful hour, to relieve me of His Grace! The reason for this fall is the existence in me of unfulfilled earthly desires and aspirations. This clearly shows how, in the absence of self-renunciation, I was not fit for the spiritual elevation I enjoyed.

After some time Swami came to one of the rooms of the Prasanthi Nilayam colony where I stayed and told me about the conversation that took place between Ravana and his wife regarding Sita when she was kept in Ashoka Vatika. Ravana’s wife knowing that her husband can metamorphose himself at will into the form of any person, asked him why he was hesitating, in this respect, to adopt the easy method of assuming the form of Rama and make Sita fall into his trap. Ravana told her in reply, that to assume the form of Rama was to get rid of gunas, or

character traits that were the cause for his present immoderate behaviour! In the absence of these gunas the desire for Sita ceases to exist.

Since then, I was in distress. Fate is sterner than what I thought at first. When I complained of my distress, one day, Baba said that if the sugarcane is not to go dry and its sugar contents are to last for some time, its juice must be extracted in time, after proper crushing and then boiled until it is made into jaggery or sugar.

HE, like a goldsmith, tests our metal and throws it back into the red hot coals of spiritual fire, when not up to the mark, fans into flames, until he sifts the pure from the dross.

Challa Appa Rao

The Seventh Day of March

7th March, 1959 will be celebrated everywhere as Sivaratri. dedicated specially to the worship of Siva and all the Holy Places will be thronged by devotees from far and near, who are eager to spend the day in prayer and the night in vigil! But, Sivaratri at Puttaparthi has a unique attraction, for the Sivaswarupa Bhagavan is here and here on Sivaratri night, devotees can witness the miracle of Siva's Glory, the Lingodbhava itself.

He Called Me!

From the Telugu article on "Three Dreams" in this issue, readers can realise how Baba uses the media of the dreams that his devotees see, to give them Darshan, to help them with the timely suggestions and advice, to cure them of physical and mental illnesses, to apply Vibhuti or other curative materials, to teach them hymns and songs which they have to sing later at the Prasanthi Nilayam, and how Baba Himself remembers these dreams that His devotees 'see', and reminds the 'dreamer' later about the 'dreams' He has granted and enacted! This is something beyond the ken of psychologists and is possible only in the case of an Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent Avatar. It is suggested in that article that the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad attempts to give the nearest possible explanation of this type of Divine Manifestation.

In this article, we are publishing a letter we received, wherein is revealed another facet of the Lord's leela, mysterious, divine, inexplicable from our plane, Baba has His own miraculous methods of communication with those whom He wants to call towards Him.

'I have been waiting long' says Sri P. S. Menon, "to write this letter; an opportunity has now presented itself! Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba took me under His care, in very mysterious circumstances. On Thursday, 27th Feb., I went to a friend of mine and I found he was engaged in Bhajan. I sat through the bhajan, and when later, he explained to me that the photograph on the wall was of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and related to me some examples illustrating His Glory, I

expressed a desire to have a darsan of Baba. On Friday, 7th March, scarce nine days later, just as I entered " my office, at 9 A.M. the telephone bell rang. It appeared as if someone had been awaiting to get an inkling of my stepping into the room to speak to me. My entry and the call synchronised to that extent!

An unfamiliar Voice asked me whether I was P. S. Menon. I said. "Yes" and asked for the name of the caller. The Voice said, "Puttaparthi" and directed me to come to Osborne House, Thousand Lights before 5 P. M., or if it is later than 7 P. M., to an address, which It dictated, at Pithapurnagar! I was so puzzled and nervous, at the word, Puttaparthi, and at the commanding But gracious style of the message that I forgot to ask the date on which I was to go to those places! I had, however, sufficient courage to ask the Voice again, "Please tell me your name. You say "Puttaparthi, only." But, for this, the reply I got was this : "Are you not P. S. Menon? Did you not express a desire to see *me*?"..... Then the fact dawned on me that the Voice was of Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba Himself! ! Imagine my joy and exhilaration ! Imagine, also, my sorrow, when the telephone was put down at the other end and I was left alone, in my room, with that Voice resounding in my heart.

He Called Me! He commanded me to come. But on what day?.... I ran up to Thousand Lights, to Osborne House; but, I found that Bhagavan was actually at Bangalore. He was not in Madras! I had no doubt He had spoken to me. We had talked to each other in Tamil and his speech sounded slightly non-Tamilian.

Inquiries at the Telephone Exchange revealed which were still more puzzling! The operator at the Exchange was adamant that she had not connected my phone to anyone, since dawn that day, not at all for a Trunk Call from Bangalore or anywhere! At 5 P. M., the same day, a telephone call was made from Osborne House, at my instance to the Kumara Raja who was attending some function which Baba was inaugurating at Bangalore. The reply was that Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba had not used a telephone at all that day, much less a trunk call! Besides, no one at Bangalore, with the exception of the All-knowing Bhagavan had any idea of my existence, not to speak of my telephone and its number! To every one in the Sai Bhakta Circle, I was unknown.

Baba had, evidently, used my telephone as a vehicle for his Asareeri Message! Mysterious indeed are His ways."

Indeed, we whose categories of thought are limited by Maya and the consequent confusion and conceit cannot grasp the miracle of His Grace, and the many-sidedness of His Glory.

Kasturi

Vijnana

All religious books—not only ours, but of other religions too—emphatically, say that true knowledge is the firm conviction that all beings' are manifestations of the Divine Lord and every jiva is an Amsa of his. Sri Sai Baba has said that divinity is in every one of us. The mere

recognition of such a divinity equally in its and in every other jiva, big or small, is not enough. Our daily life should be based on this grand truth; that is supreme knowledge (Vijnana). Only then can we understand why Baba again and again emphasises the cardinal principles of our conduct as Ahimsa, Sathya and Prema. The opposites of these, himsa, falsehood, hatred and anger, all these negate the fundamental truth, which is the divinity of all beings. When any such act is done, we forget the divine presence in the other being. They ultimately lead to the increase of "Aham" and "mama" bhavas and isolate the jiva from divinity. This isolation is called Maya, that is living in seclusion, suffering bondage and misery.

A. K. Rao

Shivaratri

Thamaso ma Jyothirgamaya!
From Darkness lead me unto Light!
Every post, a ghost; every rope, a snake;
Every leaf, a thief; delusion, all around.
Thamaso ma Jyothirgamaya!
The darkness overwhelms;
I am hopeless, helpless, blind;
My own tread invokes a dread;
Thamaso ma Jyothirgamaya!
Guide me, Baba, give me Light!

“You need no guide; you need not go;
Wipe out the ma, the tamas goes;
Where, then, is gamaya? Where the goal?
You are Jyoti, You are Siva,
There is no Ratri, if you keep awake
And be Your Real Self,
Santham, Sivam, Sundaram”.

—N. Kasturi

Pancha Linga

On
Sivaratri
This year during
The discourse that
Baba was giving,
The formation of
Lingas in His
Physical Body
Could be sensed
By the vast assembly of devotees; they took
Material shape, concretised and emanated, at
9 P.M. to the great joy of thousand who
witnessed it, as 5 Sphatika and Silver
Lingas. Baba blessed
The devotees
With the
Vision of this
Aspect of His Divinity.
Summaries of His discourses
On the Sivaratri Day and on the next day
Will appear in next month's journal. (Editor)

Editorial

Devotees of Sri Sathya Sai Baba felt that spreading His Gospel would contribute to human progress and so, we craved Baba's permission and Blessings to start a Magazine. But, Baba did not agree. Some months later, we prayed again; we repeated our prayers and did not give up hope. At last, He indicated assent, provided it did not descend into verbal pedantry or arid controversy.

This is the story of the birth of this Magazine.

Next, we desired to publish the experiences of devotees and their attitude towards Baba; here too, Baba's reaction was the same. After the initial unwillingness, He yielded to the pressure of many of us and agreed.

This is the history of one year in the life of this magazine.

Some persons, we know have murmured that the latter type of contributions smack of 'publicity' and 'praise to attract attention'. But every article dealing with the experience of the devotees passes through the hands of Sri Sai Baba and even the tiniest chaff of untruth is winnowed out in the process. As regards the attitudes of Worship and

Surrender, of Bhakti and Prapatti the writers are themselves naturally responsible for what they reveal.

But yet we would earnestly request readers to ponder over this question. Why is this magazine not publicity stuff? Why is it not advertisement? May we suggest the answer: Creations is the Lord's Attribute, not His Bill-Board. Sri Sathya Sai Baba has as his unique attribute a Mystery, a Power and an Understanding that cannot be exhausted by description. That is the characteristic of the Principle of which He is the Embodiment. The Pearl garland offered by the sea, the diamond from the nose-screw of Kanyakumari, the Amritha that flowed from His Hands on Vaikunta Ekadasi Day..... who can explain this Mystery and this Power? To mention these is surely not to 'praise'; or seek 'publicity'! Simply because Truth is stranger than fiction, who dare shoulder the responsibility to suppress it?

Lectures on Religion

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba will be presiding over the Lectures on Religion, arranged at Venkatagiri Town on 11th, 12th and 13th April, 1959.

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The goal of Dhyana

For man, living is either pleasant or unpleasant, depending upon his basic attitude towards life. See how the same object becomes pleasant once and unpleasant on another occasion! The thing welcomed with great fondness at one time becomes hateful at another time and there is not the desire even to see it. For this state, the condition of the mind at those times is the cause. It is, therefore, necessary to train the mind to be always pleasant. The waters of a river leap from mountains, fall into valleys and rush through gorges; besides, tributaries join at various stages and the water becomes turbid and unclean. So too, in the flood of human life, speed and power increase and decrease. These ups and downs might happen any moment during life. No one can escape these; they may come at the beginning of life or at the end, or perhaps in the middle. So, what man has to firmly convince himself is that life is necessarily full of ups and downs; and that far from being afraid and worried over these, he should welcome them as adding to his experience. He should not only feel like this, but he should be happy and glad whatever happens to him. Then, all troubles, whatever their nature, will pass away lightly and quickly. For this, the temper of the mind is essential.

Every minute, from inside and outside, promptings and temptations arise and accumulate in man. He cannot attend to all these at the same time. So he fixes his attention on the

most important among them only. This is called concentration, avadhana. Concentration is needed to grasp any subject well. Purposefully directing the attention on a subject and fixing it there is ekaagratha or one-pointedness. This is also a condition of the mind. Concentration and one-pointedness help to focus effort on any selected task.

Concentration is essential for all. It is the foundation of all successful endeavour. It is needed not only for Dhyana, but even for worldly affairs and ordinary living. Whatever be the task one is engaged in, if one does it with concentration, one will develop both self-confidence and self-respect; for they are the result of the attitude of one's own mind. The mind may lean on either the bad or the good. Concentrated attention must be employed to keep the mind attached only to good promptings. Success or failure in the good task depends upon one-pointedness.

One-pointedness will increase power and skill; it cannot be won without conquering the worldly cravings that distract the mind. This one-pointedness, this conquest of the mind, is acquired by the exercise of Dhyana.

There are two types of men: one set accusing themselves as sinners and another flattering themselves as great. Both types of men are being worried by their own mental aberrations! What they both need is mental satisfaction and this can be got by Dhyana; for through Dhyana, understanding will increase and wisdom will grow.

From this, a person should develop interest in Dhyana and a taste for Dhyana. That is to say, a yearning which admits of no other step and which will not tolerate any obstacle. Of course, one may yearn to hear music and derive joy therefrom; or see the bodies of near relatives who have died and derive sorrow therefrom! Yearning may thus have pleasant or even unpleasant consequences! Yearning must have the strength to inspire endeavour; in fact, yearning is but dormant endeavour; endeavour is yearning in action. When yearning is weak, endeavour declines; when one is strong the other too is active. Dhyana gives concentration and success in all tasks.

It is through Dhyana alone that great personages and Rishis have controlled their mental activities and directed them towards the satwic path and established themselves at all times in the contemplation of the Lord and finally succeeded in achieving union with the Godhead. First, the yearning; then the selection of the goal; then the concentration and through the discipline, the conquest of the mind...

Man must give up the craving for material control and the attachment to sense-objects. He must discard the false fears, the absurd desires, the sorrows, the worries and the artificial pleasures that now fill his mind. That is to say, he must discriminate and train himself to realise that everything is as illusory as the ghost in the well! Every one needs this self-education. The pathetic condition of every man is due to its absence. Dhyana is the remedy for this state of mind.

It is possible through Dhyana to bring into memory the Paradise that is one's empire, discarding as a dream and a delusion the transitory creations of the mind. By engaging oneself to Dhyana, systematically and calmly Dhyana can be made effective and tranquil. Thus, the road towards the highest experience is laid. A new understanding dawns, clear and unruffled. When the heights of Dhyana are reached, this understanding becomes so strong that one's lower nature is destroyed and burnt to ashes! Then, only 'You' remains. The entire Creation is a delusion of your mind! One alone IS, Sathyam, the Lord, Satchidananda, Paramatma, Sivoham—the ONE.

The Sathya, the Truth, is so subtle and so soothing. Once that is reached, there is no meditation, no meditator; no Dhyana, no Dhyatha; all merge into one. That is the fixed, illumined experience. Exulting within himself that is Pure Knowledge, the Jnani will be aware only of Atmanubhava, Atmic Bliss. That is the Goal, the fruit of Immortality. Attaining the transcendent experience, the Yogi finishes his Dhyana and moves among men resplendent with divinity! In him, the Vedas find fulfillment. He is transformed into a pure being. Dhyana and Dhyana alone has the capacity to make a person transcend the vicissitudes of time and make him ever the same equanimous individual, as if he is another Creator himself.

Once the Jivi is on the way to the goal, he will derive contentment from himself and discover within himself the source of bliss. The cravings and ambitions, the delusions and falsehoods and the animal needs and antics which were worrying the Jivi till then, all vanish. Since the Atma pervades all equally and steadily, the Jivi also loses the 'I-ness' and gets immersed in its inherent Divine status. Such a person is the real Mahatma; he is the Jivanmukta. Fullness is Ananda; Ananda is Shanti. Those who do not give up the Vichara Marga or Path of Discrimination, receive the Grace of the Lord; and they also realise this Atma. They will always be seeking the eternal Truth that lies behind the dreamlike illusions of this world.

Control the Jnanendriyas which run helter-skelter; the origins of the disease will be destroyed. Let the mind keep watch over its gymnastics; dam up the mad flood of thoughts and plans and schemes; then there will be no worries and anxieties in the mind. To diminish the wanderings of your thoughts, repeat the name of the Lord; that will keep out your sorrows and troubles. Without the effacement of the mind Jnana cannot dawn. The full man is he who has succeeded in this. The Sadhaka must first learn the secret of the 'inward sight', the 'vision directed inwards'; and take his attention away from the exterior.

You have heard so far little about the inner world; but Divine Life is nothing but this method of 'inward living'. Just as the baby, after learning to watch and understand, tries to toddle here and there at home, so also the Sadhaka learns to toddle in the inner world and understand it. A healthy baby in the cradle waves its arms and legs in glee, watching the lamp on the wall and lisps in joy; the Sadhaka also healthy in body, mind and soul, lying in the cradle of life, watches the Inner world and claps his hands ceaselessly in great glee at that inner joy.

Besides, every thought, every word, every deed has to proceed from the full consciousness of knowledge. Direct your intelligence not to wander about but to dwell constantly in the inner world! This is the inward vision; Dhyana is the most important instrument needed for this.

Into the Inner Realm, the Sadhaka can enter through the gate of Self-examination That gate accords welcome for every Sadhaka endowed with humility and devotion into the highest and holiest status possible in Life.

Sandeha Nivarini

Swami: Well! You look so full of joy today!

Bhakta: You have yourself said that man is the embodiment of joy, isn't it?

Swami: Then you must always be in this mood; do you remain so?

Bhakta: I am trying as far as possible.

Swami: Why can say 'trying'? Does not sorrow flee the instant Reality is known?

Bhakta: But what is the Reality, Swami?

Swami: All that 'is' is unreal! The efforts you undertake, the words you utter, are all unreal; when you know this, the Reality will be evident. Remove all the unreal ideas, opinions, acts and the Truth that is hidden can be seen. Piling up all this on top, if you ask, what is Reality. how can it be seen?

Bhakta: How is it possible to take all that is done, spoken, seen, felt, listened to, as unreal?

Swami: First, understand who is experiencing all these. You refer to the body as 'I', '1', isn't it? That is unreal. When the experiencing 'I' is itself unreal, how can the experiences be real? All have the same Atma. The person who experienced is not 'you', the person who listened is not 'you'. You only witnessed all this.

Bhakta: You said, Swami, that in everything there is Atma; is there Atma in a dead man?

Swami: Oh! a good question indeed! Is it more to solve your doubt or the doubt of a dead person?

Bhakta: Mine.

Swami: Well it is only when you have awakened from deep sleep or Sushupti that you are aware there is an 'I', isn't it? In the same manner, there is the Atma in the corpse also.

Bhakta: Then how can it be called dead, how can death happen, when there is Atma?

Swami: if you discriminate properly, there is no dying and no living. A moving body is called living and a still one dead. In dreams any number of living bodies and corpses are seen. On waking they do not exist. Similarly, this world, both moving and still, is non-existent. Death means the fading out of the 'I' consciousness. Re-birth happens when 'I' consciousness comes again. This is what is called birth and death, my boy! Ahamkara is born, Ahamkara dies, that is all.

Bhakta: So, I exist always, is it?

Swami: Of course, you do! When the 'I' consciousness is there, you exist. When it is not there also you exist. You are only the base for the awareness; you are not the awareness.

Bhakta: But they say, 'attained liberation', 'attained Mukti', etc. What is that?

Swami: Understanding the root of death and birth, one must destroy completely the awareness of the separate 'I'; that condition is 'Mukti'.

Bhakta: So, when I die, I and You are One, isn't it?

Swami: Who said 'No'? That feeling of One, when you are firmly established in it, there is nothing separate at all.

Bhakta: Until then, in order to identify the real 'I' in the unreal 'I', they say that the support of a Guru is wanted; how far is that true, Swami?

Swami: It is only when you have so many 'I's that you need some one's support, is it not? When all is One, why seek another? Still, until that Aham or that 'I' fades out, this speaking 'I' and this listening 'You' have to be there. When that I is gone, whom to speak to? Who listens? All are one The reflection of Atma, conditioned by Chit is Easwara: Easwara conditioned by the Antahkarana is the Jiva, is it not?

Bhakta: But what exactly is this Chidaabhaasa?

Swami: Chidaabhasa means the 'I' awareness conditioned by the Chit; that One became Three, the Three became Five, the Five became Many. The 'I' awareness (Satwa) became Three on account of contact with Rajas and Tamas; In those Three the five Bhutas or elements arose; and through those Five, the Manifold happened. It is this that

causes the illusion that the 'I' is the body Speaking in terms of Aakasa, there are three: Chidaakaasam, Chittaakaasam and Bhutaakaasam.

Bhakta: What is Chidaakaasam?

Swami: That is the Atma.

Bhakta: Chittaakaasam?

Swami: Its deflection. That is to say, Chittam. When that changes into Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkaram, it is called Antahkaranam, a word which means the internal senses, the inner Indriyas. Chidaabhaasam having the Antahkaranam is the Jiva.

Bhakta: And, Bhutaakaasam?

Swami: Chidaakaasam conditioned by Chiththaakaasam. When it sees the elemental Aakaasam, (the Bhoothaakaasam). It is Mano-aakaasam; when it sees the object; the Vastu, it is Chinmaya. That is why, my dear fellow, it is said, "the Manas alone is for Man the cause for both bondage and liberation." The Mind manufactures any amount of delusion.

Bhakta: How can that delusion disappear, Swami?

Swami: When you gasp its secret through inquiry, the many merge in five, the three in one, and the I exists as I. You get headache, you apply ointment; it disappears you are as you were. the delusion that 'I am the body is similar to this. It will disappear, if you apply the ointment of Vichara or Inquiry.

Bhakta: Can every one adopt this path of Inquiry?

Swami: No, my boy. It is only for those whose Chitta has become ripe.

Bhakta: Then what should we do to reach that ripe stage?

Swami: Now we have come to the place from which we started! Have you not got things like Japam, Dhyanam, Puja and Pranayama for this? Steadily, through these, you became ripe and become capable of understanding the 'I' by Inquiry into Reality. For such men, the Atma is not something different from themselves or your self. All is Atman!

Bhakta: But, Swami, You mentioned only Japam, Dhyanam, Bhajan etc. Some advanced persons adopt Mounam, the Vow of Silence. Of what use is it? What exactly is Mounam?

Swami: The illumination of the soul is Mounam! How can there be Mounam without the Atma being illuminated? Without that, merely keeping the mouth shut is not

Silence. Some adopt the Vow of Silence, but communicate, writing on paper or slate ; or they point successively to the letters of the alphabet or a chart. All this is pseudo-Mounam! It is only another way of talking without interruption! There is no need to *attain* Silence. Silence is ever with you. What you have to do is only to remove all things that disturb it!

Bhakta: But many persons do not open their mouth to speak. You mean that this is useless?

Swami: Who said so? If you do not use the tongue, if you are silent in order to keep out the external obstacles to Sadhana, you certainly can develop your thoughts, you can desist from disturbing others, you can escape criticism and worry from others, you will get concentration, your brain will be saved from unnecessary burdens and it can improve much. With such a brain, you carry on Smarana of the Lord's name better. All these advantages you will realise when you do Sadhana.

Bhakta: Then, for the full Jnani all this is unnecessary?

Swami: There is no full Jnani in the world! He is in no need of the world itself; then, why does he need all this?

Bhakta: If that is so, who are those people called Jnanis?

Swami: The silent men I spoke about just now. Jnani is a term applied by courtesy; a full Jnani is nonexistent in the world. The Jnani must know 'All as one'! Your Jnanis are all either experts in Logic, or experts in the knowledge of the world; they have not known the Reality.

Bhakta: Who are the real Jnanis?

Swami: He who knows the Atma as Atma will know himself, as milk added to milk, oil to oil, or water to water. When the physical body dies, they likewise merge in the Atma. But some may have some traits still persisting. They continue to have some resolutions and desires.

Until these are exhausted, they will wander in the world, with body. Such men are called also 'Bits of Divinity born as Men, Daivaamsasambhutas.' This is also as per the Lord's will.

Bhakta: Why should this difference arise, Swami?

Swami: It arises out of each one's Sadhana and Sankalpa. Eat a mango and you belch its smell. How can you prevent it? The belch brings the perfume of the thing eaten.

Bhakta: Will such men too have limitations? Upadhis?

Swami: Without Upadhis, how can work get on? They too have it. But only in a subtle form, until they attain Transcorporeal Mukti, Videha Mukti.

Bhakta: What is that, Swami?

Swami: Their acts are like the line drawn on water, seen while the line is being drawn; absent as soon as it is finished. While being done, you notice it, in an instant it is not noticeable any more.

Bhakta: Swami, you said that a Jnani has Renunciation as his hallmark. How does this agree with that?

Swami: That is true! Renunciation is his hallmark. If out of the traits of previous birth he gets attached, he must know that it is only for the body and not for him. This attachment damages the bliss of Jivanmukti; Jnana is most important for Videhamukti.

Bhakta: Even if one has no Jnana, can one attain Mukti by mere Vairagyam.

Swami: What a foolish question! How can the fruit be sweet without ripening? Vairagyam cannot arise except from Jnana. There is no Moksha without Vairagyam. Be sure of that!

Bhakta: Then where does Bhakti come in?

Swami: We have come to the very beginning again! Earlier than Jnana it is in the form of Bhakti. Earlier than Bhakti it is in the form of Anurakti, affection. All these are one. Anurakti is the flower, Bhakti is the fruit; it is ripe as Jnanam; Vairagyam is the sweet juicy final stage. Without one, you cannot have the next. In order to tend the fruit until the juice and taste are developed, you must practise daily prayer etc., mentioned above. But, from the first, have in view the Oneness of all. Understand that there is no 'other.'

Bhakta: At least, to keep up appearances in the world one has sometime to say 'this is mine.' What is one to do then?

Swami: Of course, you may have to say so. But simply because you say so, what need is there for you to feel separateness between I and You? When you travel in a carriage, do you take the carriage as 'I'? Look at the Sun. He gets reflected in a small pot filled with water, in a broad river, in a mirror, or on a polished pot. For this reason does the Sun feel that all these things are 'He'? Does He get sad when the pot breaks, or the river gets dry? This is exactly like that. If you take 'I' to be the body, then it is all bother! If you don't take it so, you will shine like the Sun, independent of anything else. Besides, You will be immanent everywhere.

Bhakta: That is as much as to say each must first discover for himself who he is.

Swami: Exactly. Inquire into that first. Of course for those who are not competent, this will be too hard. So, those experienced in this line say that such men should not be told these things. If you tell 'You are Yourself Brahman,' 'You have attained Moksha, You are in that Stage', to those not competent, they will do no sadhana, they will act without any rule or order, and they will pay no regard to right and wrong. This must be revealed only by a Guru or by the command of the Lord! Those who have the thirst and the determination to undergo the discipline, of course, can ask about it! But it must be practised; there is no use simply hearing it and repeating, 'All is One'. That is meaningless.

Bhakta: Swami, Sankara has already said, "Viswamdarpana drsyamaanaganagaree thulyam hi anthargatham' etc. (the world, if you really penetrate into its Inner meaning, is like a city seen through a mirror). This vision that the Jagat is unreal; that it is all Maya...is this for common people or for Jnanis also?

Swami: The Jnani's eye sees all things as Brahman! The Ajnani or the person without Jnana cannot understand whatever is said! So, all Sastras are intended to benefit the middlings.

Bhakta: This means that all Sadhanas are included in the Vicharana Marga, the Path of Inquiry?

Swami: Yes. The teaching of the Vedanta is about 'Who am I'? And to make this inquiry, only those equipped with the Four Instruments are competent. The purpose of the four is to realise that the Atma is real and that all else is unreal; also, to discriminate between Atma and all else.

Bhakta: How is that to be realised, Swami?

Swami: By inquiring into the nature of the Atma First they do all varieties of Sadhana and finally enter upon this. While a child, they teach you A B C D, isn't it? Even M. A., and B. A. curricula consist of this A B C D and their permutations and combinations! But, to realise this fact one has to complete one's studies! The Sastras are based on Akshara; meaning both letter and the Imperishable. All margas are based on the Vichara Marga.

Bhakta: But there are some who attain Samadhi. Will they have all this enquiry etc. in Samadhi?

Swami: Wonderful fellow! How can there be enquiry in Samadhi? When you sleep soundly, do you have any thoughts about the world around you? This is also like that.

Bhakta: There will be no Manas in Samadhi, isn't it?

Swami: The Manas that persists in sleep will be there also.

Bhakta: They talk of a Turiya Stage, (a Beyond Stage) in Samadhi. What is that Swami?

Swami: Beyond the Waking, the Dreaming and the Deep sleep Stages.

Bhakta: Why is it that those stages are absent there? What are the characteristics of that stage?

Swami: Those three are the characteristics of I-ness. Ahamkara, time Person with Manas, who does all acts. That will not be present in the Turiya Stage. It would have disappeared long ago. For them, it is all the same, with eyes open or with eyes closed. It is all One.

Bhakta: Swami, without that Aham, how can they talk?

Swami: What was Aham in the beginning, when the Reality is grasped, is transformed as Swaroopa, the True Entity; this is referred to as the Destruction of the Mind, Mano-naasanam.

Bhakta: So, this Nirvikalpa Samadhi is all Naasanam?

Swami: Well, my boy, Samadhis are all Merging, Laya, not destruction. The Sadhaka stage is when you have both construction and destruction.

Bhakta: This subject is very interesting, Swami.

Swami: Don't sit quiet, merely appreciating it. Practise it in daily life. All right, you can take leave.

Bhakta: Very good Swami. Please bless me in that practice. I shall be back soon.

Sathya Sai Speaks

A lump of iron sinks in water; heat it and beat it into a hollow vessel, and Lo! It floats and it is even useful to take others across! So also, heat the heart in the fire of renunciation, beat it with the hammer of humility, and make it hollow without ahamkara, and it will not sink in the ocean of samsara; it may even help to guide some struggling brother-pilgrims across.

A bird may soar to all the quarters, but it has to come to rest on a perch, or a tree, however long it flies, however far it wanders, and however fascinated it is of the open limitless sky! So also, every man has some day to find refuge in God, however strongly he may deny Him, however enthusiastically he may get attached to the pleasures of material existence.

A fence is needed until the plant grows into a tree and the trunk is strong and straight and hard to withstand the storm and the branches tall and above reach. Then no goat or cattle can damage it. Why, goat and cattle can take shelter in the coolness of its shade and enjoy the benefits which in their foolishness they would well nigh have destroyed. If spiritual aspirants guard their early sadhana well, and are not deviated by scoffers and sinners, they can help those very calumniators to win peace and joy.

The significance of Radha is as deep as the ocean; the significance of Krishna is as deep as the sky, how then is the significance of Radha-Krishna to be explained to you? But, since you ask, I shall say that Radha is the Prakriti and Krishna is the Purusha. Radha is dhara, the earth, creation, prakriti.

People are more impressed by the things I take and give them than even by Me, the source of the things. For them, the gift is greater than the giver, the created more valuable than the Creator.

Sivaratri

Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya!
From darkness lead me unto light!
Every post, a ghost; every rope, a snake;
Every leaf, a thief; delusion, all around.

Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya!
The darkness overwhelms
I am hopeless helpless, blind;
My own tread invokes a dread;

Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya!
Guide me Baba give me light!
“You need no guide; you need not go;
Wipe out the ma, the Tamas goes;
Where then, is Gamaya? Where the goal?

You are jyoti, You are Siva,
‘There is no ratri, if you keep awake
And be your real self,
Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram.”

Kasturi

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Sri. B. V. RAJA REDDY

Editorial

In most of His recent discourses, Baba has been emphasising the great responsibility of the elders of all lands in giving a proper lead to the young. This is of course, but a part of His campaign on behalf of sincerity and truthfulness, since there is a deplorable lack of Co-ordination between our professions and our conduct. But, Baba is encouraging us also, by revealing that there is evident, a resurgence of spiritual forces everywhere. During the last decade or two, He says, in all the corners of this country there are numerous institutions and persons trying to preserve and spread the message of the Sanathana Sarathi to every hungry soul. In other countries also, there is, according to Baba, an increasing awareness of the superiority of the path of Yoga to that of Bhoga. Each one has to share in this resurgence, for his own sake and for his brother's sake, for; his brother is only himself under another name.

Baba has been advising and exhorting all to reduce talk and increase disciplined action to control greed, envy and anger, by means of Japam and Dhyanam. In fact latterly His 'Prema Vahini', readers would have noticed, has become a detailed exposition of the modus operandi of Dhyanam, as a Sadhana for Self-realisation. Since those who have grown up too long in a groove all their own, will find it difficult, to pull themselves out of its depths, the best that they can do, according to Baba's advice, is at least not to discourage young persons who might be willingly undergoing the rigours of this self-educating process. These young persons may not be parading degrees or the latest fashions, but, surely, they are equipping themselves with sterling character and the spirit of service, humility and charity, and the discipline vital for spiritual progress.

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sterling character, the characteristic of a Dhyani

The Dhyani considers the realisation of Atmic Bliss as important; but the promotion of the welfare of the world is also an equally important aim. For carrying out that aim, he must bring under control certain physical, verbal and mental tendencies. These are usually known as the ten-fold sins: the three physical, the four verbal, and the three mental. The physical tendencies are: injury to life, adulterous desire and theft. The verbal sins are false alarms, cruel speech, envious talk and lies. The mental attitudes are: greed, envy and the denial of God. The person intent on following Dhyana must take every care that these ten enemies do not approach him. They have to be eschewed completely. He needs tendencies that will help him to progress and not those that will drag him back.

He must speak and act only Shubham, for Shubham alone is Mangalam, and Mangalam alone is Sivam. This is what the Sastras also say. The Good is the Auspicious. The Auspicious is the spiritually helpful. If man is to merge in Shivam, the Shubham is his instrument. Through the Shubham or the Good, he can achieve this world and the other; he can promote his welfare as well as the welfare of others. Welfare is the fruit of

knowledge; illfare is the fruit of ignorance. Through welfare alone can peace, joy and progress be attained. The basic duty of man is the welfare of all beings! Promoting it, contributing to it, is his right task. Living out one's span of life in discharging this task is the ordained path.

The Buddhi in us is the witness of all things in this objective world. The latter limit and colour the former they affect it and mould it into Chaitanya, or Consciousness. Maya is only the Buddhi as warped and twisted by the impressions of everything. Therefore, the Chaitanya which is unaffected by Maya, upon which the world has failed to produce any impression, that Chaitanya is Easwara. The person who is striving to reach the stage of Easwara must, therefore, be unaffected by Maya unimpressed by the world. How to remain so unaffected? Through analysis, ratiocination, fearless inquiry, pure reason. To acquire this Viveka or analytical reason, the sharing in the task of promoting the welfare of every being in Nature is essential.

The Jagat, this passing show, is based on Maya. That is why it is branded 'false'. But do not conclude that a mere recognition of the falsity of the world or an awareness that one has certain shortcomings will lead man along the higher path and take him to the Highest Truth. If he has not got a good character full of sterling qualities, he can never achieve progress in the spiritual field. Progress depends on the worth and quality of the individual, as the harvest depends on the fertility of the field. Upon a worthy piece of land, sow the seeds of sterling qualities and irrigate with the waters of reason and analysis; the plentiful harvest will be ready in due time! On lands where the seedlings of good qualities are not planted and tended, useless weeds multiply; and where orderly gardens could have been formed, thorny bushes create a jungle of impenetrable confusion.

Even if a person through perversity or blind conceit, has so far not cultivated good qualities, he can at least make a try or carry on efforts to secure them! If this is not done, he cannot taste the excellence of life; his life is a waste; its worth is nil. The mind, by sheer force of these opposing forces, gets lost in false values and is unable to develop on the right lines. Such a mind, turned away from good, might cause indescribable evil. All progress won by the Sadhaka might be destroyed by such a mind in an unguarded moment like a spark falling, due to a second's negligence, on a keg of gun powder!

There are some who try to be quality-less; but they achieve only living death. Their pale faces reveal only lack of zest and interest. This is the result of unreasoned haste in spiritual discipline. Though becoming quality-less is ultimately needed, there should be no hurry to reach the goal; even though a person may have the ardour, it very often leads to dilemmas, which many solve by means of suicide! First, one must accumulate the wealth of character. Since they evince no interest in earning this qualification, many stalwart Sadhakas have lost their way and not regained it in spite of years of effort. Others have slipped into the morass through which they were wading!

Therefore, the path of achieving the absence of qualities' is strewn with dangers. One cannot exist without activity; so, one must of necessity act through 'good' qualities. One

must put down all desires and become free. The mind filled with good qualities will help in this process: for it will bear other's prosperity gladly. It will give up doing injury; it will seek opportunities to help, to heal and to foster. It will not only suffer, it will also pardon. It will not incline towards the false, it will be on the alert to speak the truth; it will remain unruffled by lust, greed, anger and conceit; it will be free from delusion; it will seek always the welfare of the world. From such a mind will flow an uninterrupted stream of Love.

When this mind matures and attains fruition, it easily becomes free of all qualities—placid, calm and pure. It easily merges in the One Atma without a second.

Unfortunately, though man has the unique chance of tasting the inner peace that such a mind can grant, he is a stranger to the joy and equanimity that is his birthright. Dhyana is the only island of refuge in the ocean of life for all beings tossed on the waves of desire, doubt, dread and despair.

The Vedantic truth must be present in the mind, even while the Vishaya world is being attended to!...Consider the condition of this world hundreds of thousands of years ago. At that time this globe was the scene of two things only. On one side was the fiery lava which poured forth from the volcanoes and crevices that scarred the surface of the earth. The flood of destruction descended on all sides and spread fear and death in the regions around, as if the end of everything had come. On another side, the scarcely noticeable molecules of living matter, the microscopic amoeba floated on the waters or clung to the crevices among the rocks keeping the spark of life safe and well protected. Of these two, one, boisterous and bright; the other, quiet and secluded; upon which would you have built your trust? At that time, surely no one would have believed that the future was with the amoeba or the animalcule. Who could have foreseen that these minute specks of life could hold out against the gigantic onslaught of molten lava and earth-shaking upheaval? Those specks of Chaitanya or Life-Consciousness won through nevertheless. Unheralded by fire and dust, by swooping gale or swallowing floods, the amoeba, in process of time, by the sheer force of the Life principle it embodied, blossomed into goodness and strength of character, into art and music, into song and dance, into scholarship and Sadhana and martyrdom, into sainthood and even Avatars of Godhead! In all these, the history of the world is found summarised.

In the confusion of overpowering events, we see men sometimes placing faith in loud and noisy men who are enslaved by their own passions. But this is a passing phase, it will not last. When things are placid, calm and unruffled, man can get himself merged in the atmosphere of Maya-less Chaitanya; that is the highest he can reach. The Shanti he tastes there is subtler than the subtlest. He must ascend to it through effort guided by reason, through Dhyana. When the enjoyment is full and complete, it is no other than the Status Divine, the coveted Goal of Life. Men do not generally strive for it, because they know nothing of its supreme attraction. Dhyana gives them the first inkling of that Bliss.

Therefore, every one must now strengthen the mind and make it aware of the happy moment of Bliss. Otherwise, there is a likelihood of the mind discarding all effort to

reach what it now dismisses as ‘empty’ and ‘useless’. But once it is convinced that the moment of attunement with Chaitanya is a moment of complete Power, then the effort will not be slackened. The Sadhaka can reach, without further interruption, the Atmic realisation.

With this as the ideal, carry on Dhyana and mental Japa, henceforward. The step immediately after Dhyana is Samadhi. Dhyana is the Seventh of the Eight-fold Yoga. Do not give up this Royal Road that leads you on to that sacred goal. Dhyana is the very basis of all Sadhana.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Special Care

A student pays special attention to the subjects in which he feels weak, so that, at the examination, he might get passing marks. So too, a Sadhaka must know his weak points and strive, with prayer and perseverance, to overcome them, so that he too might get passing marks.

Baba

Sandeha Nivarini

11

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Swami! I have one doubt; can I ask you?

Swami: Certainly. Why do you say? ‘Can I ask you’?

Bhakta: Some people describe Brahman as Asthi-Bhaati-Priyam; what does it mean? How are these related to Brahman?

Swami: Is that the doubt? Asthi means ‘that which is’; Bhaati means ‘that which shines’; Priyam means—of course, you know, don’t you?...pleasing? desirable, capable of satisfying. All that is priyam to you is Brahman!

Bhakta: I have understood it clearly, Swami. Now know what is meant by the ‘obstruction of the past’. What are ‘the obstructions of the present’?

Swami: Good, I shall tell you. The obstructions of the present are of four types: attachment to sense objects, cynical criticism, dullness of understanding, and absurd conceit. The first is the cause of attachment to objects that attract the senses. The second

makes men discover wrong meanings in the teachings of the Guru. The third causes confusion, because things explained by the Guru are not grasped at all. The last obstruction makes one feel that one is a great scholar, pundit, or ascetic, mistaking the body and the senses for the Atma.

Bhakta: And the 'obstructions of the future'?

Swami: Oh! They come always through sinful deeds. They come and obstruct unawares!

Bhakta: How are we to meet them, Swami?

Swami: It is not possible for all. The aspirant can to some extent be cognizant of the approaching wrong and its wiles, it creates a desire, which puts on the cloak of want. Then you must recognise it as an 'obstruction of the future'. It is difficult to be forewarned like this as the result of the effort of one single life. It may take many births to acquire this education.

Bhakta: Are there any who have so learnt it?

Swami: Why, there are. The scriptures speak of Bharatha and Vaasudeva; Bharatha required two or three births; Vaasudeva had to be born once.

Bhakta: That means these three obstructions cannot be overcome except after many lives. Can we not succeed without all that bother?

Swami: Why? The aspirant can, by reasoning out the nature of these three, escape from being worried by them. Otherwise, it may take many lives.

Bhakta: Swami, how to get over the 'obstruction of the present'?

Swami: There is a way for this also. Through Karma, the appropriate Karma! There is no obstruction that cannot be surmounted. Attachment to sense-objects can be removed by Sama, Dama, Uparathi, Titiksha, by developing, purity, self-control, withdrawal of desires and the ability to suffer. Dullness of understanding can be removed by listening again and again. Constant meditation on the things heard will abolish the habit of cynical criticism. All absurd conceit will vanish through the teachings one imbibes.

Bhakta: Swami, to master all this seems impossible for every one! To make it easy for all, tell me which is important?

Swami: My dear fellow, to know a thing Vijnana is necessary. Ajnana makes one ignorant, don't you know?

Bhakta: So many people say so many things about this Vijnana and this Ajnana. What is the basic thing about this Vijnana and this Ajnana. What is the basic thing behind both, tell me.

Swami: Now you have come again to the very first step. Ajnana is the mental attitude that has reference to the external Object and Vijnani is the mental attitude that has reference to the internal Subject. Ajnana is known also as Manas and Chittam. When the activity and attitude turn Inwards, they are called Buddhi and Antahkaranam.

Bhakta: Some say that the Jnani will have only two things, the desire to attain the other world and the burden of the past Karma: is that true?

Swami: Both the Jnani and the Ajnani will have desire, absence of desire for the other world, and the burden of past Karma, all in equal measure. Their experiences also will be in equal measure. Only, the Jnani will not have the consciousness that he is the doer; so, he will not be bound. The Ajnani is conscious that he is the doer and so he gets bound. This is the distinction. I have already told you, haven't I, that 'the mind' is the cause of bondage as well as of liberation? The mind is the cause of everything.

Bhakta: Mind mind, they keep on saying. What is it? What is its form?

Swami: "Cognition", "understanding" is its form. If you know the basis of that knowing, there will be no bondage at all!

Bhakta: What is the basis?

Swami: The basis is what you refer to as I. Seeking for the I, if you are in that I state, however many "understandings" come or do not come, you will remain unaffected.

Bhakta: Right. That is very good, Swami. Please make all this soak into our brains, so that we may realise the purpose of our lives...I shall take leave, Swami.

Swami: Do so. Depart gladly and return later. Take my blessings with you.

Significance of Sivaratri

There are many different stories about the origin of Sivaratri. One version is that it is the day on which Siva in His ecstasy danced His Tandava Dance. When He consumed the Hala-hala poison to save world from destruction, the heat was well-nigh unbearable and, it was curbed only by the waters of the Ganga pouring uninterruptedly on His matted locks and by the cool Moon perching permanently on His forehead. Then, Siva danced with all the Gods as His audience, most of them accompanying His steps with appropriate music. But, this is not the event of single day. Others say that Sivaratri celebrates the Birth of Siva, as if Siva has a day on which He is borne and a day on which

He dies! The story that a hunter sitting on a Bilva tree spat on a Lingam beneath, and the day being so holy, he got salvation etc. is not to the point at all.

The real purpose of Sivaratri however is this: The moon has 16 kalas or fractions and each day after the Full Moon, it is reduced by one kala, or one sixteenth. The Moon is presiding deity of Manas, or Mind and this reduction of the Moon is a symbol of the destruction that the Manas must undergo, in order that Man may save himself. On Chaturdasi night, there is only just a wee bit left and, if special effort is made by vigilant attention even that will disappear and the manas will be eliminated fully! So, on every 14th day of the dark half of the month, the aspirant is asked to carry on his spiritual discipline throughout the day and night. And, once a year, on Sivaratri day, a special spurt of activity to remove the dross called Mind is prescribed.

This being the significance of this day, it is foolish and even harmful to keep awake just for the sake of keeping awake and to spend the night playing cards or watching pictures, just to ward off sleep. The Sadhana one is engaged in must become automatic and ordered and natural; not forced, erratic and unpleasant.

On Sivaratri, one should reduce the Manas into nothing; it must be made laya. Lingam means that in which the Jagat attains laya, leeyathe, that to which the Jagat goes, gamyathe. The three gunas are represented by triangular base, and the aim and goal of creation, by the Lingam above. The world which is the result of the imposition of the three gunas on the attributeless Sivam has to be understood as wholly Sivam and nothing else.

The Hrudayam is called so because He is in the heart; hrudi (in the heart) ayam (He). You must know that Siva does not ride about on an animal called in human language, 'bull'; the bull represents Dharma, standing on the four legs of Sathya, Prema, Shanti and Ahimsa; the Three Eyes of Siva are the eyes which reveal to Him the past, the present and the future—Siva alone has all Three; the Elephant-skin which forms His cloak is only a symbol for the elemental bestial primitive traits which His Grace destroys and makes powerless and harmless; the four Faces represent Utsaha (Joyful Activity), Santham (Quietude), Roudram (Indignation) and Mangalam (Auspicious Grace). In this way, realising the inner significance of the various attributes of Siva and of His various appurtenances, one has to meditate on the Lord this day, so that one may be free from the last vestige of delusion.

Just as a child learns to toddle first in the home and after its steps have become firm, it can safely run about even outside the home in the streets, so the Jivi also must first master the inner Vidya, the control of the senses and the education of the emotions, so that it may move about fearlessly among the temptations of the world. That is why there is this insistence on sleeplessness, on vigilance. One cannot call oneself educated, unless one has mastered the science of self-control and destroyed the causes of delusion. Sivaratri is an auspicious day, since the smarana of the Lord helps to destroy illusion.

Do not feel that you do not care for that happiness and so, you need not be bothered by this vigilance! The nature of man abhors the dull dreary round of eating, drinking and sleeping. It seeks Shanti, inward content. Every one craves for it and it is available only in one shop, the shop of Contemplation of the Highest Self. However high a bird may soar, it must some time perch on a tree-top in peace and joy. So too a day will come when even the most haughty, the most willful even those who assert that there is no joy or peace in the contemplation of the Highest, will have to kneel and pray, “O God, grant me consolation, grant me peace.”

From Baba's Discourse

Karathalamalaka

To indicate that a thing is clear beyond the slightest shadow of doubt, it is described in Sanskrit as “Karathalamalaka”, like the berry in the palm which all can see and none can deny.

When Sri Sathya Sai Baba, at the tender age of fourteen was finally brought to Puttaparthi, after months of fruitless treatment by specialists in medicine and magic, Bhaktas flocked around Him and gained His Grace, every day, in ever increasing number. Baba was all the while declaring that He was Shirdi Sai Baba and no other; He was distributing to all the udi He got by a mere wave of His hands; He was inspiring, curing, consoling, strengthening and blessing every one, as He was doing in the previous Shirdi manifestation also. When a few doubters of the continuity and identity between the two Baba's approached Him one day, He lifted his palms and holding them up to their faces, said, “Look”. They looked and got Karathalamalaka proof! One palm was shining picture of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (!) and the other was shining picture of Shirdi Sai Baba (!) both equal in size and splendour!

This was eighteen years ago, at Puttaparthi, with Baba concretely in front of the questioners. Now, listen to Sri. C. H. of New Delhi, “It was exactly three months ago. I was returning on my cycle from my office in Old Delhi to my residence in New Delhi. I had been to Puttaparthi only once and I was so fascinated by Baba that I felt eager to visit the place again. But, I must say that I could not quite understand why a village boy from Andhra should called Himself ‘Baba’ and relate a peculiar story about Himself that He was ‘Shirdi Baba’ in His previous Birth. Strangely enough that day, while coming along that road, this doubt was distracting me. Suddenly, I was alerted by some one on cycle who pulled up along side of the road and accosted me thus: “Well have you finished office?” He was an old but hefty person dressed in white, with a kerchief round his head. I said “Yes,” automatically; he asked me “Then, can you come with me for a few minutes to that tomb over there; I wish to talk to you.” So, we directed our cycles to that ruined tomb, riding two abreast for a furlong or two. We got down and sat on the grass, with our backs against the wall.

It was the old man who began the conversation. “My friend, you have planned to go South is it not? Do not cancel it or postpone it,” he said. I was astounded. It nearly took my breath away. I thought I must tell him about my doubts, the absurdity of Shirdi Baba being born again etc. So, without further enquiry, I poured out my heart to that old man. He evidently relished my story, for his eyes gleamed and there was a merry laugh hovering around his lips. When I had finished, he stared me full in the face and holding both his palms spread in front of me, commanded, “Look.” I looked and (would you believe it?) one palm was a portrait of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and the other palm was a picture of Shirdi Sai Baba! When I had recovered from the exhilaration, he told me “Do not neglect this great opportunity, my boy.” We both rode back and the old man turned in the direction from which he had come (!) and even as I was looking at him and his cycle..... melted into thin air”.

The same Karathalamalaka proof, eighteen years later! Baba materialising Himself 1500 miles away, to direct the steps of a devotee who was hesitating at the crossroads! The continuity and the identity are as indisputable as the Berry in the Palm!

N. Kasturi

The Final Link

‘Sahasra seersha purushah
Sahasraksjhah sahasrapad!

The thousand-headed Lord
Thousand eyes, thousand feet!

Baba has a thousand heads
He carries your load and mine!

Baba has a thousand eyes
He sees into you and me!

Baba has a thousand feet
He comes to your door and mine!

The thousand-headed Sai
Thousands eyes, thousand feet!

Vedham etham purusham mahantham
Know Him as ‘He’; Aham remains!

Know ‘Him’ as ‘I’; own ‘I’ as ‘He’;
Ahm the final link is cut!

N. Kasturi

Sanathana Sarathi

A monthly magazine devoted to religion and Philosophy, for every one eager to progress along the Spiritual Path and engage in the practice of Spiritual Disciplines.

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Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

Tell me where inside the egg resides the chicken, and I can tell you where inside this Creation dwells the Lord. The chicken is everywhere, in the centre, the circumference and the radial space. There is no particle in the egg, that does not contain the chicken principle, that is different from the chicken principle, do you say? Know that the Lord too is as imminent in this World as the chicken in the egg.

A woman got worried that she had lost her necklace; she ran hither and thither, questioning all and sundry, peeping into every box and weeping at the sight of every one else's necklace. But, all the time it was adorning her neck! The truth can be known only when she feels her neck with her hand, or when she looks into a mirror. So too, the truth about the self can be known either through one's effort or through a guru; not, otherwise.

You desire an ornament and you go to a goldsmith and give him requisite quantity of gold. But, do you spend sleepless nights, pining for the heating and beating, the tugging and the pulling, the cutting and the carving to which the goldsmith is subjecting your gold? Surely not. Why then do you foolishly worry when the Lord, in order to make a lovely ornament out of your mind, heats it and melts it, cuts it carves it and removes the dross and makes it shine in splendour?

Some say Sivaratri is the Birthday of Siva! They do not know that Siva born on the day
He is worshipped and He dies on the day that worship is forgotten. The Bhakta it is
he who decides when Siva is to be born and when Siva is to be allowed to die.

I have heard one man say to another, “Here! Keep these ten rupees with you on my
behalf; I cannot trust myself; I may spend it away!” What can that person, who has
no faith in himself, benefit by coming to Me? How can a person with no faith in
himself develop faith in another? Faith in oneself is the lever with which alone one
can lift himself to a higher plane.

LOVE

Thou art the limitless Ocean;
Yet, can be contained in a pot,
If the pot is a pot of Love.
Thou art the deep blue Sky;
Yet, can be caught in a well,
If the well is a well of Love.
Thou art the majestic Mountain;
Yet, can be grasped in a palm,
If the palm is the palm of Love.
Thou art the King of Kings;
Yet, can be entertained in a hut,
If the hut is the home of Love.
Thou art Life, Light and Wisdom;
Yet, can be bound by man,
If the man is a man of Love.

(From a Tamil Song by Ramalingaswami)

Dhyana Vahini

The main road to Dhyana is the cultivation of the Soul

People are engaged in various forms of cultivation but the most important of these is the cultivation of spiritual experiences. All cultivation is based on spiritual cultivation. It is the King of Cultures. The King makes laws but he is above and beyond them. So too, all rules and laws, all distinctions of right and wrong, of sin and virtue, of joy and sorrow, affect only the Jivi, which attaches importance to the inexperienced Manas and Buddhi and not to the Atma. So, cultivation of the Atmic experience is essential for all, the Atmic experience which is pure, convincing and self-transcending. It is also easy, for the Atma is as the mother to all and hearkening to the Atma is like the son hearkening to the mother. Every one is competent to have that experience; in fact, it is everyone's right to have it. This is why the Atma Sadhana is being treated by me as so important. The Atma is also known as Brahma; so the learning of the Atma Vidya or Brahma Vidya is to be considered as the objective by every student.

Such students have to earn some primary qualifications. Then only do they deserve the status of studentship. They are Viveka, Vairagya and the Six-fold Wealth; that is to say, Discrimination, Renunciation and the six qualities that constitute a good character. Aspirants who have these three can hope to attain the Atma, with confidence and without much difficulty.

Paramatma has six chief characteristics; complete Jnana, complete Vairagya, fullest Beauty, the fullest Splendour power, undiminished Fame, and inexhaustible Fortune. His Nature is Sat (Full existence), Chit (Full knowledge) and Ananda (Full bliss). These are also related to Man through the Atma in him. So all humanity has a right to realise and enjoy these characteristics and this nature. It is its ordained duty. The travail of the world today is due to Man not performing this ordained duty.

The common man is acting in daily life quite contrary to the dictates of the Dharma of the Grihasta, or householder. He does not follow the path laid down by the Sastras and by the Manusmriti. He does not have an iota of truthfulness in him. Truth is the most holy virtue. So, leading a primitive type of life, he loses courage at the slightest upset and gives up the adventure of life. He develops a kind of pseudo-renunciation. If only he entered upon the house-holder's life with the attitude of performing one's duty, then he need not run away from it and seek caves and forests. Each one can realise the Lord through each one's assignment of duty, in each one's Dharmic life.

The contemplation of the Lord must proceed in union with the Dharmic life. This type of life has no need for status, scholarship or vanity. The latter only lead men astray. It is only through this life that the mind and the intellect can be controlled, the Atma Vidya cultivated, the Will sublimated.

A good character is essential for the realisation of the Atma; that is to say, all evil propensities have to be uprooted. Just as the army becomes dispirited and surrenders when the Commander falls, the army of evil qualities will surrender its arms as soon as Egoism or Ahamkara is destroyed. These are all natives of the realm of Anger. So if that region is devastated, the soldiers can never again raise their heads. What can the Commander Ahamkara achieve without a single soldier to march under his orders? So all

efforts must be directed to destroy the realm of anger so that no Commander can venture to let loose the hounds of war. Let each Sadhaka preserve the region of his mind in peace, by putting a stop to the rise of these soldiers and this Commander. Let each Sadhaka bask under the smile of the Ruler, the Atma, always.

The destruction of the modifications and agitations of the Mind is the condition precedent to getting audience with that Ruler. His Durbar Hall has eight doors through which one has to pass for the audience Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, and Samadhi. When the mind has been brought under control by these eight disciplines, the Will can easily be developed thereafter. The will is the Nature of the Lord it is also referred to as the Lord's Ordinance. The Lord, by mere willing, can do anything immediately and easily. But man cannot realise his will as soon as he entertains it. The Power of the Will is the deciding factor. In Man the Will is not so overpoweringly strong; when he achieves that Power, he gets something equal to the Power of the Lord. That is the meaning of Laya, Merger. Such Merger is made possible through Dhyana.

Of the eight doors mentioned above, Dhyana is the seventh and Samadhi is the eighth. Dhyana is the royal road to Samadhi.

Some people use 'will' and 'wish' as if there was no difference between the two. This is very wrong. The wish is related to the Vasanas, to traditions embedded in the Manas or Mind. The will is related to the fundamental characteristic of Atma. Wish means the craving to get something; will is the determination to acquire it. Both are based on the moral culture of the individual. Once the Atma is cultivated, the will and the wish can be sublimated accordingly. If the wish and the will are cultivated without the Atmic point of view, the faults and failings of the Mind will get mixed up with what is willed and wished for.

The lower step can be seen from a higher step, not the higher step from the lower. So, one should strive to go step by step, higher and higher; that is to say, from the culture of the Atma to the culture of the Will; and thence the culture of the Moral Conduct. Then the enjoyment of the Bliss of the Atma becomes quite easy and natural.

When the baby is unable to walk, the mother encourages it to toddle a few steps at a time at home and then it is allowed to go on the road. Instead, if it is put on the road first, how can it learn? Besides, what of the dangers of the road? So also, first the internal factors have to be strengthened; then the external factors like moral conduct etc., become easy. Morals without the basis of internal uplift will not be deep-seated. So the cultivation of the consciousness of the Atma is primary.

The aim of Sadhana is to remove the motive, the wish, the Vasana or attachment, the yearning for the fruit. Understanding this clearly, the Sadhaka must not give way to any dispiritedness, despondency or feeling of failure or doubt. He must be patient and bear things with fortitude. The Sadhaka must, therefore, develop within himself enthusiasm, faith, activity and joy: keeping constantly before him the Great Big Result of his effort, he must boldly discard all temptations. Since these latter are but short-lived and weak, they can be overcome with ease, with a little patience. If the Sadhaka is not vigilant and patient, all the success he has achieved will melt away in an unguarded moment.

Sadhakas, Yogis and Sanyasis have to climb a ladder, the steps of which are Savitharka, Nirvitharka, Savichara, Nirvichara, Sammatha; etc, that is to say, Argumentation. No-argumentation, Analysis, Non-analysis, Agreement, etc., The Knowledge of the world is not real knowledge. It is relative knowledge; the knowledge of the non-real. The knowledge of the eternal Absolute is the Real know ledge. That is acquired by Dhyana. The fire of Dhyana and Yoga wilt reduce to ashes the sapless activities of the Manas. Immediately thereafter, the Jnana of the Real will flash; it will shine with undiminished effulgence; its Light will never go out. For those established in this Real Jnana, there is no past, there is no futures all ages are to them in the present, in the actual moment of experience. Just as soap is necessary to make this external body clean, to clean the interior Manas, Japa, Dhyana, Smarana, etc., are needed. As food and drink are needed to keep the body strong, the Contemplation of the Lord, the meditation on the Atma, are needed to give strength to the Manas. Without this food and drink, the Manas will be tottering this way and that. So long as the waves are agitating the top, the bottom cannot be seen. When the waves of desire agitate on the waters of the Manas, how can one see the Atma, which is at its base? The tottering causes the waves. So feed the mind with the contemplation of the Lord. Clean it with the meditation of the Atma. Dhyana and Sadhana alone can clean the depths of the mind and give it strength. Without purity and strength, the Atma recedes into the distance. And Peace flees from Man. Ashanti establishes itself firmly.

Premavadin

The citizens of Venkatagiri as well as devotees and spiritual aspirants from Gudur, Nellore and Madras and Chittoor who had gathered at the Quadrangle of the Rajah's Palace on the evening of the 12th and 13th of April had the rare opportunity of listening to valuable discourses from eminent scholars and Sadhakas and Yogis, besides the invaluable advice which fell from the lips Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who presided over the Adhyatmic Lectures.

On the 12th, Dr. K. Vaidyanathan, M.A., Ph.D., Founder President of the Namaparayana Sabha, Madras, spoke on the value of Namaparayana as a spiritual discipline. Then Yogi Sri Suddhananda Bharathiar, the celebrated Tamil Poet, Scholar and the Great exponent of Yoga, spoke on "The Heart of Saints." Addressing Bhagavan as "Divine Master" and "Master of Masters," he said that he had come in contact with almost all the great Mahatmas of the recent past, including Shirdi Sai Baba, Meher Baba, Aurobindo and others; he had observed silence for 25 years; he had practised Yoga for 50 years and as a result all this he had met Sri Sathya Sai Baba. "He is an Avatar Purusha, the dearest soul I have seen," he declared. "He gave me Vibhuti taken by a mere wave of His Hand; He embraced me and I felt a vibration of immense spiritual significance; then, He 'materialised' a lingam and gave it to me; I felt that this too had a meaning, for, years ago, I had argued with a couple of Europeans in a Chinese train on the symbolism of the Lingam and convinced them that it represented Vidya Tattwa, Prakriti Tattwa and Siva-tattwa. Then, He casually said that the lingam can be kept in a small case which was in the shelf in the same room and, when it was discovered and brought, lo, the two looked as if they were made for each other. I have realised that He is not merely a Miracle; living with Him is Samadhi. If He is Krishna, I would like to be

His Arjuna; if He is Christ, I would like to be His Paul; if He is Buddha, I would like to be His Ananda.”

Yogi Suddhananda then spoke of Shirdi Sai Baba whom he met in 1915. “During the Lucknow Congress, Balagangadhara Tilak and Madan Mohan Malaviya had a discussion on Swarajya and how the Political Swarajya has to be backed and buttressed by the Spiritual Swarajya. Some one said this could be done only by spiritual men of high stature. Then, Tilak told Malaviya that he knew only of two people, who could be relied on for this, Shirdi Baba and Aurobindo. While returning from Lucknow, we went Shirdi along with Tilak and Karandikar. Baba was sitting in a simple mosque-like structure. A few incense-sticks were burning before him. There was a small lamp, in a corner. A fire was also burning bright, because a big log was pushed into the fireplace. “Avo Bhai,” he said and welcomed us and signed to us to sit. He then said, “Why do you worry? This is not a matter that can be solved by worry.” Questioned were asked about the means to achieve the freedom of the country and Baba said, “Easwara Shakti is enough; What can bandook do? Material force is nothing before spiritual force.”

Then, Suddhananda Bharathiar said, “Now, Baba has come again, to propagate the same teaching over the whole world. He is the Sanathana Sarathi, the same Krishna, who led the hesitant soul to victory”.

Continuing his speech, he said, “In a world vitiated by nuclear radiations, the saint brings an atmosphere of psychic love and divine fragrance. The Frankenstein of radioactive weapons shall destroy its Bhasmasuras one day, along with the innocent world. But, spiritual radiance of a perfect saint shall transform the world into a Heaven of Peace.” Speaking of the characteristics of saints, the Yogi said, “The Saint is God’s Universal Personality; He lives, moves and has his being in the Divine. Like a ship of peace in the ocean of existence, he lives in the active world; yet, out of it. His silent presence in the physical body is enough; that itself is a spiritual service, like the presence of a lamp in the hall or, like having fragrant flowers or incense amidst us. The real Saint needs no advertisement or newspaper blazoning. Like the Sun and Moon, he shines by his own inner purity and divinity.” He then spoke of the Vedic Saints, who “gave us a dynamic Yoga, which quickens the evolution of Man.” He defined Yoga as “a psychic science which teaches how to act in the world, with love for all and with the knowledge of the One in all.” He said that all Saints are Yogins and that all of them insist on purity of food, of thought, word and deed, with psychic love and compassion towards all and selfless service.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba, speaking in conclusion, said that the spiritual Sadhana is every one’s duty and right and so, every has a right to be told what the Saints have discovered about the disciplines needed for God-realisation. But, the people could not content themselves merely by repeating the glories of the Saints, for nothing gives such joy as experience can give. Science may call the fundamental basic immanent thing as Energy or Electron, but the Jnanis call it Shakti, the One Universal Motive Force. To experience the One, the little I that creates the illusion of Many has to be destroyed. When I goes, anger, jealousy and all other individual weaknesses and social ills disappear. Anasuya that is a person without asuya or envy, can play with the Trinity as if they are one’s children! That is the moral of the story of the birth of Dattatreya. More

than anything else, the spiritual aspirant must cultivate courage and confidence and hope and enthusiasm, Baba said.

The next day, 13th April, Vidwan Varanasi Subramanya Sastri, a scholar of great repute in Andhra Pradesh, was the principal speaker. He spoke of the two schools of contemporary thought, the Sastravadins and the Buddhivadins, and explained how the first school took the Sastras as pramana and conceded a secondary place to reason while the second school quoted the Sastras, whenever they agreed with their views, not realising that the Sastras are an integrated whole, representing an integrated culture and mode of life.

Baba, concluding the day's proceedings, said, that He was concerned more with the Premavadins, for, ultimately Sastras as well as Reason agreed in proving that all learning and all reasoning must end in men loving one another more and more. For, this, the mind has to be educated, controlled sublimated and its wavering directed to the Oneness of all Creation. To know and feel that all living things are kin and that all Creation is Brahma is the highest fulfillment of Sadhana.

The vast assemblage that attended the Adhyatmic Lectures on the two days were delighted at the opportunity of receiving the Message of Baba, the Message of Love, of Sathya, Dharma and Shanti, besides the analysis of some of their own spiritual problems from the Pundits and Professors and Poets who had come to Venkatagiri.

Hail!

(Poem read by Yogi Suddhananda Bharathiar at Venkatagiri on 12-4-1959)

Hail, pure Almighty grace
Eternal Guiding Light!
Give us strength and resource
To serve Thee, day and night.

Lead us from dark despair
To happy renaissance;
Lead us from vital snare
To freedom's effulgence.

Like day and night in time
Like scent and hue in flower,
Like couplets in sweet rhyme,
We live in thee forever!

Give us rebirth in Thee,
O soul-embodied Truth!
Like branches in a tree
Let nations live on earth.

Let Thy Grace keep us fit
To do Thy will alone,
Let all our days be knit
In Thy Love, Unique One.

Firmly, through thick and thin
Full of faith in success
We follow Thee, Captain!
Lead us to lasting Bliss.

In perfect Purity
In perfect Liberty
In perfect Unity
We find Divinity.

Let all be One in Thee
Equal children of Grace;
And, let the human hearts see
One God, One World, One Race.

Sri Jodi Adipalli Somappa

“Then, suddenly from among the crowd, an old man emerged. He shouted in a loud commanding voice, ‘Give the child to me;’ there were two women and one man with him, who also pleaded, ‘Give the child to him, lady! He is famous as a curer of children’s diseases. He has saved many children from death.’ And, so, losing all fear, my wife handed over the child to him.”

This is from a letter written by S. R. V on 28th November 1958. The incident happened on 25th November 1958. The ‘old man’ was no other than Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself; the two women and the man who accompanied him were also creations of His Grace and Power, whom He had with Him, while He appeared in disguise in His Mission of Mercy! The child is the lovely little baby that Baba is seen holding, in the picture that forms the front-piece of this number of Sanathana Sarathi. Let us now look a little closer at this strange story, this Leela of Bhagavan

A devotee, S. R. V. from Bangalore had come to Puttaparthi, with his wife and child, for the Birthday Festivities of the Bhagavan, on 23rd November 1958 and he left the Prasanthi Nilayam on the 25th at 12.45 P.M. taking leave of Baba, and receiving from His hands, the Vibhuti which He gets by a mere wave of the Hand, as well as a few oranges.

At 5-30 P.M. that evening, when some devotees gathered round Him at the Prasanthi Nilayam, Baba told them a dramatic tale of ‘death’ and ‘rebirth!’ He said that S. R. V.’s child, Geetha Sudha, called Sudha, for short, had died on the way to Bangalore at 2-45 P.M., but, He had left His body at Puttaparthi and hurried to the place and manifested Himself as an old man and saved the child. His narration was full of details

and very clear and devotees who keep diaries of their experiences have recorded every word of it. He said that the child was sleeping on the back seat; that a scratching sound was heard by the mother; that when she turned she was shocked to find the baby stiff and blue and practically lifeless; that the moving car was stopped; that the time was 2-45 P.M.; that the place was between Palasamudram and Bagepalli; that a huge crowd of villagers gathered on account of the wailing; that every one was advising all kinds of remedies and cures; that a bus proceeding to Hindupur came on the scene, was stopped and added to the confusion; that as soon as the bus moved off, He appeared as an old man and demanded that the child be given over to Him, saying that He heard about the tragedy and had come running to the place; that He asked the party for a little Vibhuti, because He was sure they had it; that, keeping the child on His lap, He showed it His real form, upon which the baby, as usual on all occasions when He took the child up in His hands, cried; that He pretended to go through some curative rituals and handed the baby to the overjoyed parents; that S. R. V. thanked Him profusely for His service; that he offered to pay Him a rupee, which He refused to accept; that he pressed upon Him an Orange out of the five or six that He Himself had given him at noon while leaving Him at Puttaparthi, and that after invoking upon that fruit the calamity that had pursued the baby, He threw it away before reaching the Nilayam!

On the 28th November, a long letter written by S. R. V detailing the entire incident was received at Puttaparthi and it was given over by Baba to be read by those who had heard Him describing the miracle, three days earlier, within a few hours of the ‘death’ and ‘re-birth.’ What a surprise it was to read in the letter that the child was sleeping on the back seat (!) there was heard a scratching sound (!) that the body was stiff, that the child was breathless, that the villagers ran in from all directions, that there were suggestions galore, that the Hindupur bus was stopped at the scene (!) and then, the para quoted above! “Then, suddenly from among the crowd, an old man emerged

The letter continued, “The old man placed the child on His lap and she began to cry (!) He also heated a copper wire and applied it to the brow. We thanked him much for saving the child to accept at least and I asked him a rupee as a reward (!) But, in spite of our best efforts he refused to accept it. I then gave him an orange from among the ones which Baba had given us while leaving. He asked us to leave for Bangalore without worry and do Arati to our Ishtadevata, Venkataramanaswami as soon as we reached home. I asked him his name and he gave it as Jodi Adipalli Somappa.”

S. R. V. concluded his letter thus, “I am now certain that the Old Man was no other than Baba Himself. I also suspect that the three villagers who asked us very forcibly to give Sudha into His Hands were also ad hoc creations of His Leela. My inference is that Baba must have gone on a ‘trance’ about 2-30 or 2-45 P.M. on the 25th.”

We, who had heard Baba relate the whole thrilling story on the 25th evening itself, have no doubt in our minds that Jodi Adipalli Somappa is no other than Baba Himself, Baba manifesting Himself 48 miles away to save the child!

Om Jodi Adipalli Somappaya Namah. . . Mysterious are the ways of the Lord. Words are of no avail, if one desires to describe Him. The mind is too feeble and instrument to measure His Glory. . . . aprapya manasa saha!

The Avatar

Prof. N. K. Bhagawath, Editor of the “Dharmachakra”, a monthly magazine (Marathi-Hindi-English), from Bombay wrote a short Note in the March 1959 issue of the journal about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and translated some relevant portions from the articles published in the Sanathana Sarathi, to illustrate the teachings of Baba. In the April issue, he published a picture of Baba, as the front piece, as well as an article on Baba from the Editor, Sanathana Sarathi.

Writing about Sri Sathya Sai Baba as the Avatar Shirdi Baba, Prof. Bhagawath says that it is not unlikely that Shirdi Sai Baba is born again, to complete the work which He inaugurated while in His previous body. “Baba showed miracles, then; cured illnesses and gave mental peace to thousands of afflicted people; guided hundreds of seekers to the path of Self-realisation; Bhaktas were blessed by His Grace; very often such ardent souls met together in Satsang and benefited each other by such contact; many great Pundits and administrators and Sadhakas became His disciples; He promoted cordiality and brotherhood among the Muslims and the Hindus and among the various classes of Hindus themselves; He spread the basic Truths and ideals of conduct of a Universal Religion of Love and Service, based on the Highest Knowledge. But, all this was done as and when the occasion rose and not in systematic purposeful manner, so that it is difficult to envisage His Message and His Teaching in a compact concise, coherent shape. So, it is very probable that He has come again to continue the work and complete it.”

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has said often when He was asked about the reason for Shirdi Baba being born again, “The foundation was laid then; I have come to erect the superstructure.” Those who have been regularly going through the articles which Bhagavan has been writing in this Magazine and the accounts of the discourses which He gives at various places, as well as the Letters He writes to aspirants and devotees and the short, sweet, meaningful parables with which He illustrates the points He wishes to emphasise, must be feeling that what Prof. Bhagawath surmises as the purpose of this Avatar is being fulfilled before our very eyes.

“Pity and Sympathy”

The book “Beware of Pity” by the Austrian writer, Stephen Sveig attracted me very much. Though it is described as a novel, it is really a long and interesting essay, analysing the emotion of pity.

The author indicates that ‘pity’ is of two kinds. The first variety is superficial and momentary. It rises and sets, of a sudden. It is just a softening, at the sight of another’s grief. Though it puts on the external habiliments of an emotion, it is really a means of escape from the other person and his sorrow. It is a selfish mechanism of defence which

serves to insulate us against being over-powered by that sorrow. Beggars, as a class, earn their livelihood by capitalising on this failing of mankind. With wet eye lashes, one sadly exclaims, “Oh! The pity of it!” heaves a deep sigh of relief that it has not fallen to one’s lot yet to share such misery and throws to the beggar the smallest coin one has at the moment. With that, the feeling ends. It has its root in fear, in lack of self-confidence, and in the absence of spiritual strength. Such pity is barren; it is even harmful. It does not give anything; nor does it gain anything.

But, luckily, pity has another aspect, too. It is creative, constructive, and fruitful. That is the really worthwhile aspect. Its effect is lasting; it reveals man’s inner nature. It does not endeavour to withdraw from the onslaught as the Dutch used to do, cutting the dykes and letting in the waves of the sea. It advances courageously into the fray, right into the other person’s grief. It does not hesitate to wade in that sorrow, for how else can you rescue a drowning man? It diminishes the grief of the sufferer by sharing it with him.

Both these aspects are illustrated in this book. There is the hero who sympathises with an afflicted girl but deserts her for a career of glory when he finds out that she reciprocates his sympathy, with love, leaving her to death by suicide. There is the doctor who marries a woman whom he could not cure of blindness and who spends the rest of his life, sharing the travails of her affliction. Looked at from utilitarian rational points of view, the hero seems an admirable person and the doctor, a fool. But, utilitarian and rational values are but a small part of the vast and variegated pattern of human values. The faith of a Yogi, for example, in the value of the disciplines which he undergoes and of the ideal he sets before himself might not be appreciated by reason, at all but it is genuine, in spite of that.

It is only when we look from the supra-rational, the spiritual level that we can discern the worth of pity. Judged from that point of view, the hero who won glory, won only tinsel; the doctor who failed miserably succeeded grandly.

DR. K. Bhaskaran Nair

Attention Please!

The journey to Badrinath and Amarnath which Sri Sathya Sai Baba proposed to undertake with his devotees has been postponed; Kashmir devotees have informed that on account of heavy snowfall, this year’s season at Amarnath begins later than usual, on July 14th and hence, it has been found necessary to postpone the journey. Information about the date will be published, a month in advance, in the Sanathana Sarathi.

Sanathana Sarathi

A monthly magazine devoted to religion and Philosophy, for every one eager to progress along the Spiritual Path and engage in the practice of Spiritual Disciplines.

Short Articles in English or Telegu based on authentic individual experience are welcome.

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Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

You take up the dictionary to find out the meaning of a certain word but as you turn over the pages in order to spot it, other words attract your attention and you are tempted to discover their meaning, too. So also, you might come to me with some purpose immediately in view, but, you feel that you can use me to solve deeper problems and assuage deeper pains, and to secure greater spiritual peace.

The Guru from whom you have taken initiation is like Rice, the chief dish, which supplies all the nutrition and satisfies hunger. Other great men, saints, sages and teachers you may meet are like the side-dishes, the appetisers and the pickles, that help you to eat more of rice; they increase your faith and sharpen your sense of discipline.

Have you not seen the man who comes to your door singing the name of God? He has a Thambura in his left hand, and a pair of wooden jingles in his right He sings the song of the Lord, to the tune of the Thambura and the time of the Jingles. Know that you too should so live in the constant praise of the Lord; only, do not forget that the Samsara Thambura and the Kriya Tala of the jingles are subordinate to the song, are only to make the song more pleasant; all three have to be harmoniously blended into the worship of the Lord.

The waves carrying music are always everywhere, wandering over the earth. But, you do not hear them; you cannot enjoy them, because you have not fitted up the receiver, you have not tuned in! Tune in! Devise a receiver out of your heart; and the Lord's Grace, which is present every where will sweeten your existence, and give you Joy, if you tune in.

When you take your car out on a long trip through unfamiliar terrain, you always have a Road Map, spread out on your lap. The Sastras are just Road Maps. They help you to journey through unfamiliar grounds, pointing out to you the good roads and the bad, the turnings you have to avoid, the dangerous bridges over which you have to proceed slow etc.

LOVE

Thou art the limitless ocean;
Yet can be contained in a pot,
If the pot is a pot of love.
Thou art the deep blue sky;
Yet, can be caught in a well,
If the well is a well of love.
Thou art the Majestic Mountain;
Yet, can be grasped in a palm,
If the Palm is the palm of love.
Thou art the king of kings;
Yet can be entertained in a hut,
If the hut is the home of love.
Thou art life, light and wisdom;
Yet can be bound by man,
If the man is a man of love.

(From a Tamil song by Ramalingaswamy)

Editorial

The principal of the University College, a Doctor of Science, wrote to us, some time ago, “The times are indeed overwhelmingly agitated by currents and cross currents. Not only the West and the East, but, we ourselves seem to have to come to the brink of darkness and confusion. The reason, so far as I can judge, lies not so much in food prices or increasing population, or lack of foreign exchange, or nationalisation, or anything else; it is to be traced to the un-Indian emotions, feelings and attitudes of the men and women of our country. All this is due to the multiplication of selfishness and, in this brave unselfish land, of fear. The worship of wealth and of material comfort and of the standard of life as distinct from the method of life, has never before been so slavish as now. The world itself is at the parting of ways. The blind confidence that the world had placed in the unending pursuit of scientific progress has suffered a setback. The slogan, “Industrialise or Perish” is fast yielding place to the fact, “Industrialise and Perish”! When poverty ends, other fears obsess the human mind; hatred will find some excuse for the killing of nations. The accumulation of wants and the unloosening of desires do not seem to ensure peace to men. The only cure for this tragedy is, as you will not doubt agree, the cultivation of inner content, of spiritual joy, of contact with nature, of simple living and quite contemplation and of self-control and Yoga.”

This is the lesson of History in all ages and all countries. Readers will note that Baba has often said that an Avatar was called for now, because at no time was Man so intelligent and yet so foolish; so imbued with the sense of community but yet, so tribal; so rich but yet so poor; and so equipped with food but, so obsessed with want of it. He has said that this pitiable plight has come to Man, because He has forgotten the means of Joy. In the very first number of Sanathana Sarathi, Baba wrote, “This day” marks the inauguration of “a Campaign against Falsehood, Injustice, Viciousness and Evil—the Minions of the Spirit of Selfishness.” “When the drums of Victory resound, Humanity would have achieved Happiness and Peace.” Let us, each one of us, take up arms in the Campaign and fight against our own weaknesses valiantly, for victory.

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The ‘seen’ is transitory; this is seen through Dhyana

The seen is Transitory; this is seen through Dhyana. When people wander helter-skelter, not knowing the road, in a strange land; and when some one comes to direct them along the right path, it is not just that he is laughed at and dishonoured; it brings about only ruin and confusion! But today it has become the habit of man to curdle the Prema, these embodiments of Love into Poison through their ignorance of the role of helpfulness which these guides have come to play. Love and Destruction arise from the same native spot. Note this! The same sea which yielded gems, the moon, nectar and the Goddess of Wealth, brought forth the world destroying Halahala poison, too. Under these conditions

man must, like Sri Narayana, accept the good and the auspicious; otherwise, he cannot have nectar and Lakshmi. The heroic and the adventurous, like Siva, can have the Poison as their need. This Sea of Life or Samsara, turbulent with the waves of joy and misery, can be crossed only by those who have an unflinching desire for Bliss; the rest will be submerged.

The capacity to overcome the gunas of Prakriti is no inherent in any one; it comes to one with the Grace of the Lord. And that Grace is to be won by Japa and Dhyana. This must first be clearly understood: it is impossible for every one to control the tendencies of Prakriti the power is possessed only by those who have Prakriti in their grip and whose commands Prakriti does obey. Prakriti is the basis of everything in the Universe. It is the basis of Creation and Existence. All this is Prakriti men or women, beasts or birds, trees or plants. In fact, all that can be seen is inseparable from Prakriti. In this endless Prakriti, the active element, the purusha, is the Lord. The truth has to be experienced, in order that it might not slip away from consciousness; and the discipline needed for this is also Japa and Dhyana. This Prakriti is like an ocean; even if it is agitated a little, crores of living beings will be destroyed. When the sea becomes slightly ruffled, ships break like hollow reeds; at no time can you cross this sea by your own effort alone. The Lord's Grace is essential; so pray for that Raft; and when you secure it, you can reach the shore in a trice.

Everything in this world is ephemeral, transitory: it is here today but it may not be here tomorrow. So, if you desire to crave for something, seek the Lord, who has no decline. Instead, if you crave for progeny, wealth and all comforts, you will suffer untold misery when you are called upon to leave everything and depart. At that moment, you would lament. 'Oh, did I love so deep that I may weep so loud?' In this transitory life, joy and pain are also perforce transitory. So, to get immersed in this search for the evanescent arid to forget the Supreme and the Everlasting is, indeed, humiliating to man. Ignoring Madhava who is free from Maya and spending time in things immersed in Maya is fruitless; sorrow alone is the final gain. There is nothing here fit to be worshipped as Eternal. Whomsoever you love, that love has to come to an end, the self-same Lord gives, and takes He gives and takes as and when He wishes. Everything is His: so how foolish it is to lament when things belonging to Him are taken back by Him? The wise man will, therefore not pine over any one or feel undue attachment to anything. Let all the pining and all the attachment be for the Lord; He alone is eternal; He is the source of all Joy. For the rest, love a thing as a thing, not more. Love Man as Man, not more. If you love them more, it is a sign that you have been deceived about their real nature. You can behave only for a short time as if the house you have rented out is your own. For, as soon as the period is over, it passes on to another.

If you think on these lines, you will know that the wife, the children, the possessions, the relatives, are not yours for long; they are yours for a short time only. So, why waste away worrying over these impermanent things? A millionaire can eat only one bellyful, not more. Man has to come to this world, like the traveller taking refuge at nightfall in a caravanserai; when dawn breaks, he departs! He goes towards his goal, from caravanserai to caravanserai, stage by stage. It is good to think of life in this light.

Animals with many legs have to creep along the ground; man has only two legs and so he can freely move about. The larger the number of legs the greater the bondage, the tighter the restriction. Now, suppose he marries. Then he has four legs, he has become a quadruped; later, when he gets sons, daughters, sons-in-law and grand-children, he is transformed into a regular centipede, capable of moving only by crawling along the ground! He cannot stand erect; he loses the freedom of movement; he has to creep slowly along the mire of material objects; he has no time or inclination to secure the Lord's Grace.

The attachments of the world are short lived. People have been born many times before and have lived out their lives; loving and getting immersed in love, and attaching themselves to others. But does any one now know where all that has gone? Does he worry about any one of those he loved then? Does he remember them at least, now and then? No. The same love and attachment were there then also; but with the passage of time it has been forgotten. So too, when one departs from this world the love one had for others and the joy, pain and happiness one had through that love, will be forgotten. Like the playgrounds of children, the senses of action of Man will also be changing, from here to there, and from there to somewhere else! Fixing their minds on the insecure, changing love, how tragic it is that people forget the cultivation of the disciplines that will give them the permanent Bliss of the Lord!

Man is everywhere plunged in worry, all the twenty-four hours. Is it right to increase his burden? Who can be so cruel as to torture instead of lessening the suffering of a dying man? Already the sea is rough; dare we blow a typhoon over it? Learn, therefore, to spread a smile on the faces of the desperate. Keep smiling yourself and make others smile. Why make a sad world sadder by your desperate counsel, your lamentation, and your suffering? Adopt Japa and Dhyana to assuage your own grief; overcome your own sorrow; and plunge in the cool waves of the sea of the Grace of the Lord.

Why should the travellers wrangle through the night over useless things, instead of getting ready to leave the caravanseraï at dawn, and starting out on the next stage of their pilgrimage? By wrangling, they lose sleep and deprive themselves of rest; they will not have the energy to continue the journey. So do not worry over-much about things of the world. Worry ends in meaningless hurry and waste of time. That time is better used in meditating on God.

All living beings are actors on this stage. They take their exit when the curtain is rung down or when their part is over. On that stage, one may play the part of a thief; another may be cast as a king; a third may be a clown and another a beggar. For all these characters in the play, there is ONE who gives the cue! Here, some points have to be understood clearly. The prompter will not come upon the stage and give the cue, in full view of all. If He does so, the drama will lose interest. Therefore, standing behind a screen at the back of the stage, He gives the cue to all the actors, irrespective of the role, be it dialogue, speech or song, just when each is in most need of help. In the same way, the Lord is behind the screen on the stage of Prakriti, giving the cue to all the actors for their various parts. So every actor must be conscious of His Presence behind the Maya

screen; he must be anxious to catch the faintest suggestion He might give, keeping a corner of the eye always to Him and having the ear pitched to catch His voice. Instead of this, if a person forgets the plot and the story (that is to say, the work for which one has come and the duties that appertain thereto), and neglects to watch the Presence behind the screen and simply stands dumb on the stage, the audience will laugh at his folly and charge him with spoiling the show.

For these reasons, every actor who has to play the role of man on the world-stage must first learn the lines well and then, remembering the Lord behind the screen, await His orders. The attention must be on both, the lines one has learnt for the role and the directions one may get from the stage manager. Dhyana alone gives one this concentration and this awareness.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sandeha Nivarini

XII

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Swami, at Venkatagiri, during the ‘Adhyatmika Sabha’, You said some things which I could not clearly understand: can I ask about them now?

Swami: I am happy when anyone asks me about things which he has not understood. Of course, you have every right.

Bhakta: You said Sthula-rupa and Sukshma-rupa, the gross form and the subtle form, isn’t it? These two, are they the characteristics of the Manas only? Or are they related to everything?

Swami: They are characteristic of everything; in fact, all the names and forms found in the gross exist also in the subtle stage! Why, the gross is there, only to make you understand the subtle!

Bhakta: Well then, Swami, we see the gross firmament, the Sthula-aakasa has it a subtle aakasa also?

Swami: My dear boy, all this exists in that subtle aakasa. The subtle aakasa is as imperceptible and as all-pervading as the gross aakasa.

Bhakta: What is its name, Swami?

Swami: It is known as the Sukshma Hridayaakasa, the subtle firmament of the heart.

Bhakta: How can that be all-pervading?

Swami: Nothing else possesses the extent, the area, the breadth that this Hridayaakasa has. See how many scenes, how many feelings, how many conjectures are immersed and imbedded in it!

Bhakta: Then, have we a Sun also in that subtle sky?

Swami: Of course! Who said, no? Without that, how can there be all this splendour, all this light and wisdom and brightness?

Bhakta: What is its name, Swami?

Swami: When the heart is the aakasa, the Sun, naturally, is the Buddhi or the Intellect that Illuminates that sky. The effulgence of the Buddhi is as bright as the rays of the Sun. So, the subtle Sun is Buddhi.

Bhakta: Then it is possible that the Moon also in subtle form is in the aakasa of the heart.

Swami: Why do you ask about all these, one by one? Did I not tell you at the beginning itself? Every gross name and form has its corresponding subtle form and name. The Moon in its subtle form is Prema, with its cool rays pleasing to the heart. Love is the subtle form of the Moon.

Bhakta: Excuse me, Swami; the Pandavas and the Kauravas waged a war, isn't it? How are they supposed to have waged the 'subtle' war, these 'subtle' Pandavas and their opposite numbers, the 'subtle' Kauravas?

Swami: Why do you say, "supposed to have waged"? They are waging it even today in the subtle form! In this war, the Evil qualities are the Kauravas; the Good qualities, Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, and Ahimsa, are the five Pandava brothers. The evil qualities are many and so the Kauravas too are a horde. Each one under his own Hridayaakasa, on his own Chidbhumi is waging this struggle, every moment.

Bhakta: Swami, they say the Pandavas are children of the King, Pandu and the Kauravas are the offspring of the King, Dhritarashtra. In the 'subtle' form, how are we to recognise them?

Swami: Both are disputants for the kingship of the self-same Heart; they are in everyone as Ajnani and Sujnani, the Unwise Personality and the Wise Personality. The unwise blind ruler is Dhritarashtra; the wise Pandu is the father of all good qualities. Have you understood?

Bhakta: But then, Swami, excuse me; in that war there were millions of soldiers and chariots, and the subjects; who are they in this 'subtle' conflict?

Swami: Of course, they are all there, in man. The million feelings and thoughts and impressions are the soldiers and subjects. The ten Indriyas are the regiments; the five senses are the chariots. In every one's heart there is this perpetual war being fought between Good and Evil, between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Is that clear?

Bhakta: Well, who is Lord Krishna in the subtle war; He who was then neutral in that struggle for power?

Swami: Don't you know? He is the Witness, known as Atma. He is Sarathi of the Chariot of the Jiva.

Bhakta: Another question. All these people had Hastinapura as their capital then. In man, which is the Hastinapura?

Swami: The basis for all these subtle manifestations, these men, chariots, Pandavas and Kauravas is, as you know, this Asthinapura, the City of Bones, this Body. This skeleton is Asthinapura! Both have nine Gates. There, both the Kauravas and the Pandavas were born; they played and were trained there; they grew up together there. So also, in this same Asthinapura all the qualities, good and bad, are born and do grow; they develop and subside, they watch and hate each other, all in the same Body. Are not the warring rulers in this body also Ajnani and Sujnani, the Unwise Personality and the Wise Personality?

Bhakta: Yes, Swami. There is an intimate connection between the Mahabharata war and the qualities and conduct of man. Really, the relationship is there, without doubt. What a fine comparison! As you said this type of warfare is taking place in everyone, even now. Well Swami, when will this war end?

Swami: When will this war end, you ask? When both 'bad qualities' and good qualities fade out and man becomes quality-less; then alone can man have Shanti.

Bhakta: At the time, this battlefield, this Asthinapura, the City of Bones will not exist, is it?

Swami: When there is a battle, there must be a battlefield. When you have no battle, why bother about a field.

Bhakta: Can we not avoid the battle altogether?

Swami: Why not? Kings develop the spirit of war because they have confidence in their subjects. The subjects encourage the rulers to unleash the hounds of war. Delusions are the subjects, who push the Individual into the battle. When there is a paucity of such subjects, war too will not be waged. So divest yourself of such subjects as delusions, illusions, feelings of 'I' and 'Mine' and then, you can be at peace, enjoying undisturbed Shanti, my boy!... You can go now! Wait! Let me tell you one thing: entertaining doubts

of all kinds is also a delusion, Vyamoha! Strive to be free from even this trait! Well, go and come some time later.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

To The Beloved

Following Thy flute Call
I ran to Thee love-mad;
O Beloved of All,
My love is not a fad.
I wish to walk with Thee
Arm in arm, O Lover!
My heart aspires to be
Thy Sanctum forever.
I wish to make all space
Thy omnipresent home;
Where I should live in peace
Breathing Thy song's perfume.
I wish to eat the fruits
Of wisdom from Thy Wood.
I wish to cut the knots
Of hunger subdued.
My life is Thy embrace
Thy smile, my vernal day.
Without Times's weary race
I feel eternal May.

Possessing Thee,
Possessed by Thee,
Thus ever free!
Like wind, sky and sea!

—Yogi Sudhananda Bharathi

Extreme Distress

Case Report from the Sathya Sai Hospital

X, aged about 30, male, whereabouts not known was brought in a very exhausted condition, struggling and gasping, by a party of villagers, on 24-4-59, at 1-30 P.M. He was in great distress, beating his legs and hands, grabbing his shirt over his chest and writhing in pain. The situation caused great alarm. Auscultation did not reveal any

murmur, over the mitral and bicuspid valves. The pulse was full and it bounded with rapidity. The breathing was sound. The mouth could not be examined, since the patient was fretting and rolling violently, but, the abdomen was soft and no pain could be elicited.

These results only added to the mystery of the calamity, that had happened to X. Baba was not in Puttaparthi physically, but, the doctors know that He answers their prayers. So, prayers were offered and then, a glucose injection was given. All of a sudden, the patient became quiet and calm; he asked for water and drank some quantity. Within half an hour, he was able to walk about and in an hour, he was quite normal. The only explanation he could give was that he had fasted for two days and to relieve his extreme thirst, he had drunk the water of the river, when he entered the village. Evidently, it was a case of the esophagus and the gullet getting dangerously dry. Thanks to the timely intervention of Baba's Grace, the man escaped from the jaws of death.

Dr. V. Brahman

Victims of Avidya

Some people say that what Swami does, is magic! I agree with them. Swami Himself says that God is a Magician and I know that Swami is God. The Lord created this world, with His Maya Shakti, the Supernatural Art of Divine Magic. So long as we remain ignorant of the underlying principle, we take this Maya-created world as a Reality. We are all under the spell of Avidya-maya. The reason is inherent in the very nature of birth. Is not the world full of people who can cognise the Lord's Glory, only through His Mahathmya? We allow ourselves to be carried away by the floodwaters of Maya, until Destiny leads us ashore, stretching its Providential hand.

O, my dear honest doubters! Bhaktas know how Swami creates what He wishes by a wave of the Hand, that is, by His Sankalpam. The things He creates thus are transitory, in the sense that the world is transitory! They are permanent in the sense that the world is permanent! The materialisation of Swami's Sankalpam can be called a miracle; for, a miracle is anything that passes our comprehension. The actual emergence of the article into view is beyond our powers of mental construction to understand. Saints like Sri Ramakrishna have objected against Sadhakas performing such miracles, because they feared that these would ruin the development of the Sadhaka, who aspires for spiritual elevation and the liberation of Soul. They should not waste the priceless spiritual powers they have acquired after great effort, just to satisfy their vanity. But, that is not the case with Swami, who is Paramatma incarnate. He loses nothing by His miracles; we gain much by being attracted to His Lotus Feet; they have the force to draw Nara to Narayana.

What a grand puppet show is this! What a wide stage! What a huge audience! We are all at once both actors and spectators. The play is the play of Birth and Death; it is non-stop; it gives no rest; it continues even in sleep, until the entrance into the jaws of Death. Our existence on the stage is dependent on the pulls and pushes of the stage-manager, the magician who manipulates the thin invisible threads. Are we aware of that magician?

One day, when the morning was fine, I saw millions of minute white insects on a black stone, each no bigger than the head of the tiniest ant! They were jumping as high as a foot and falling down on the stone! What was the reason for all this activity? What was the motive force? On what did they live? Why did they exist at all? It is all beyond us. What is the secret of that Chaitanya? Do you not find the magical hand of God in all this?

Again, some people, the victims of Avidya, say that ‘all sorts’ of people go to Prasanthi Nilayam and our Swami gives them asylum! If they are referred to as ‘all sorts’, because they have failed to observe the moral standards of human conduct, it may be said that these standards differ from age to age and place to place. They pertain only to the body and the master of the body is Yama, not Siva. O, pious ones! Why cannot you sympathise with those who, in their distress, go to my Lord? They cannot get solace elsewhere. Do you become pious by thus hating others? Surely, your attitude towards these ‘all sorts’ is not one of Love.

Whether I am pious or not, it is my life’s purpose to lead ‘all sorts’ of people, to Parthi for they are in need of my Lord’s Grace. As advised in the ‘Sanathana Sarathi’, instead of searching for faults in others, let us look into our own and correct them, setting a good example and making ourselves lovable. As Swami says, the greatest need for His Presence is where Hell or Dukha is, not where Heaven or Ananda is. We find both good and bad in creation, and as Creator, there is none more competent than Swami, to sort out, according to who is who and what is what. Let us therefore leave it to Him.

Some other victims of Avidya say that Swami’s predictions sometimes fail. But, really, does He predict? Where is the need for Him to look into the future and predict? The Trikalas, the Trilokas, the Trigunas all form only a small portion of the Lord, in His primordial appearance as Moolavirat. He determines the future. He seems to fail us only when we fail to understand His Divine nature. Much depends on our mode of approach. In matters of religion, nothing happens without faith. All that Swami has told me has come true in my own life. Have faith in Swami; then there remains no problem un-solved, not a doubt to be dispelled, not a question to be answered.

At no time has God been free from criticism. We have not yet forgotten the remark made against Swami during the days of Rama-avatar, by a washerman. Under the influence of Avidya, he questioned the chastity of Sita, the ideal of womanhood. During Krishna-avatar too, Swami was subjected to criticism. No wonder, as Swami says, ‘for, stones are thrown by every one who passes by on a tree laden with fruit, not on a barren tree!’

It all depends on one’s angle of vision. Sri Krishna once demonstrated this by means of a test. When Dharmaraja, the embodiment of Dharma and Duryodhana, the embodiment of Adharma were both before Him, once He asked both of them to bring to Him their ‘opposites!’ But, though the opposite of each was there in front, and each knew that Krishna wanted him to point out the other, Duryodhana, through Dweshabhava, would not agree that Dharmaraja was his opposite; nor could Dharmaraja point out Duryodhana, for he was so full of Premabhava!

Let people say what they like about Swami. I am not worried. Nothing on the face of the earth can shake my faith in Him. It defies Death and will survive Death. My knowledge of Swami is His Gift, for, He is the source of Divine Grace. Swami is Nityam; Swami is Sathyam.

Challa Appa Rao

Kurmavatar

In the issues of March, April and May, we had on the wrapper the picture of Matsyavatar the first of the ten incarnations of the Lord. This issue has the picture Kurmavatar, the second Avatar, Vishnu as Tortoise, bearing the burden of the World on His back. As Jayadeva sings,

*Kshithirathi vipulathare thava thistathi prishthe
Dharani dharana kina chakra garisthe
Kesava Dhritha Kachchaparoopa
Jaya Jagadeesa Hare!*

Guess!

The Lord one day, some thirty years ago,
Said, "I shall be born again
As man to save mankind!!"
"Which is the lucky Mathura?" the Devas asked;
The Lord said,.....Guess!
It is, of course, in Bharat Desh;
A village, this time; Not a town;
Not all are cowherds; I must have a change!
There is a river by its side—
A new one, not the ones I sanctified so far;
Broad sand-beds on which I love to sit
And gather people to sing and pray;
There is a ring of mountains all around
Changing hue, from brown to blue;
The sky is decked with whiffs of cloud
The seven hued arch and toranas of birds;
Thick green carpets on the ground
Of paddy and of sugar-cane
And wheat and ragi fields;
And cattle coming home at dusk

Tinkling tiny bells
Heavy with food for kids;
And flocks of sheep that bleat at night
At foxes prying hungrily;
Eagles circling endlessly
Far above the reach of human eye;
Both man and beast in honest toil
Living strong and simple lives;
Twin bullocks trotting up and down
Baling water from the wells
To the tune of Telugu songs.....”
At this, the Gods gave out the name
Of worthy Puttaparthi!-----
The Lord said, “Yes”,

N. Kasturi

Sanathana Sarathi

A monthly magazine devoted to religion and Philosophy, for every one eager to progress along the Spiritual Path and engage in the practice of Spiritual Disciplines.

Short Articles in English or Telegu based on authentic individual experience are welcome.

The Editor has the right to amend, curtail, delete, or supplement articles selected for publication.

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Karuna-Kaveri

The lovely land of Coorg, famous since the days of the Puranas as the home of Sandalwood, is packed with hills and dales, green with the thick shade of tall stately trees, with coffee sheltering underneath them and festoons of pepper vines clinging round the trunks. The cool breeze wafts towards you the perfume of miles and miles of flowers. Indeed, Coorg is a gem-studded necklace of Bharat-mata, In this land of beauty, the Kaveri takes birth and its tributaries, the Hemavati and the Lakshmanathirtha, are also born there. The people are industrious and hardy. Their handiness has made the Coorgs famous as soldiers. Coorgs have risen by their merit and courage to the highest positions in the Army of India. Besides, as a crowing glory, the Coorgs have also great zest for spiritual progress. They are simple, honest and sincere and full of the Satwic qualities. With such offerings in hand Coorg was longing for a chance to welcome Sri Sathya Sai Baba into her Homes.

Invited by the devotees, Baba left Puttaparthi on 21st May, and after a day's halt at Bangalore, He started at dawn on the 22nd and reached Mercara at 1 P. M. Thousands of people were awaiting Baba's arrival, since the early hours of the day, with the traditional kombu, kottu and other musical instruments of Coorg. For Baba's stay, a huge bungalow called, 'Shanti Niketan' had been got ready, and its precincts and spacious compound were decorated and colourfully illuminated. In the evening, the people came in groups to have the Darshan of Balsa and to join in the Bhajan.

Next day, groups of devotees thronged the bungalow for hours in order to receive Darshan. The Bhakti and Shraddha of the people were something which only eyewitnesses would believe! In the evening, a Public Meeting was convened at Shanti Niketan and nearly five thousand people gathered, from Mercara and the surrounding areas. About two thousand of them were women. After Bhajan for about half an hour, Baba addressed the assembly. He spoke in Telugu and His words were translated into Kannada by Sri N. Kasturi Editor, Sanathana Sarathi. Baba spoke in high appreciation of the natural beauty of Coorg, enhanced by the toil and skill of the Coorgs; He said that the weather too was fine, but, He liked the devotion and sincerity of the people more than all these. He then dilated on the responsibilities of the elders in the training of the children and the duties of the children towards parents and elders. He wanted the children to show respect to the parents and consider the sacrifices they are making and the hopes they are nursing, and also the physical and mental ties that bind them; and He called upon them to win the parents over by love, affection, and even self-sacrifice. He said that in the present atmosphere, love and mutual tolerance and respect were very essential, not simply in the words that one utters, but, in the actual day to day conduct of all. He stressed the need to strengthen the traditional values of Hinduism. He gave the prescription of Namajapa as the simplest and most efficacious of all spiritual cures. His speech was listened to with rapt attention, for it touched all hearts.

On the 24th, Baba blessed devotees with visits to their houses and estates. General Cariapa and Baba discussed at "Roshanara", the General's Residence where a Reception was given to Baba, ways and means of strengthening among the Youth the spiritual

foundations of India, at the present time. On the 25th, Baba proceeded to Santicoppa to the estates of some Bhaktas. In the evening, He visited Glenmore Estate. At 6 P.M., that day, the citizens of Mercara had to bid a most unwilling farewell to Baba with repeated prayers to come to Coorg again. Baba halted for the night at Sathya Sai Mandir, Mysore and reached Bangalore, on the 26th May.

Last year, we had called our account of His visit to the Godavari Districts as ‘Prema Godavari’; it will not be an exaggeration at all if we call this note on His visit to Coorg—“Karuna Kaveri”!

N. KASTURI

This Web of Song

Like the spider, I draw my thread of Love
From within and weave this web of song,
Not to catch the unwary, but, to invite
Those that are longing to see Him,
Who is our Father Mother Brother and Friend.
He is within my heart, in the Chamber of Love
And Devotion! He is ever singing the Song
Eternal, and I weave out of my thread of Love
A web to invite all souls who hear His Song,
And when once they come near me, they'll see
Their Master sitting alone, smiling, to save them from the World's ills.

K. Vaidyanathan

Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

However busy a man is, whatever may be the number of his engagements, observe him, he does not miss his breakfast, lunch or dinner. So, too, man must take care not to miss his spiritual sustenance; he should have a fixed time for prayer and meditation.

When two trees grow side by side, they can have no contact or relationship or intimacy or affection. Be therefore a creeper, by the side of God; give up the ambition to grow as a tree. Be a creeper and wind yourselves round the Lord in devotion and love.

Observe what happens on a village tank when the Sun rises above the horizon. The lotus, awakened by the warmth of the rays, opens its petals to welcome the Lord! So,

too when the Sun of Spiritual Wisdom rises, the Lotus of the heart begins to bloom. But, not all hearts can bloom; the tender buds have to wait yet a while; so, too, not all aspirants are blessed; some have to achieve yet more success in Sadhana and Dhyana.

How did the word Man come to mean what it means today? Man is he who has the Man—as under control; the possessor but the master of Man—as is Man.

He who knows many languages can carry on conversation in any one of them but, while talking in one language only, he does not forget the others, though he does not use even a single word of the other languages. So, too, I know language of this birth. When the need arises, I speak the other languages too; that is to say, I refer to the other births also.

Two men plunged into the waters of the Godavari; one worshipped it as a Holy River and the other laughed and called it simply so much H₂O! The first secured outer cleanliness as well as inner cleanliness; but, the second got only one benefit, the outer one. It all depends on the spirit in which the duty is done.

Editorial

Nyagrodho-bahupad-vatha, says the Amarakosa, about the Banyan tree. This tree which spreads out its branches on all sides, each branch supported by a row of pillar-like roots drawing sustenance from the earth is deathless and eternal. So, Vishnu is addressed as Nyagrodha and He is said to sleep on a Vatapathra, when Pralaya overpowers the world. The Lord as Dakshinamurthy is said to prefer the shade of the Vatavriksha for teaching His Disciples. The Banyan tree is a fine symbol of the timeless universal Sanathana Dharma. No wonder that we have many holy Banyan trees being worshipped in India. There is one at Prayag and at Gaya, there is the famous Akshaya Vata.

A Banyan tree destined to become a great centre of Tapas and Sadhana and worship was planted by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Baba at the Tapovanam, Prasanthi Nilayam on 29th June, at 9.00 A.M.

Some months ago, while talking to devotees on the Chitravati sands about Sadhana and Sadhakas and why they usually select trees in forests and Himalayan valleys, Baba spoke of certain Chakras, Sasanas, and other such occult objects with mystic Shakti, which are placed under some trees; He said that these help concentration and promote spiritual advancement. Even as He was speaking thus, He “materialised” from the sands a wonderful copper plate with mystic markings and squares containing letters of many known and unknown alphabets! He said that He would deposit it at the foot of a Banyan tree which he would plant in the Tapovanam area, on the top of the hill. He also declared that Yogis, who reach a certain stage in their sadhana, will come to know of the presence of this unique help at Puttaparthi and that they will be automatically drawn to the Tapovanam in the coming years.

On the 29th June, the Sasana was taken up the hill to the accompaniment of music, and Bhagavan duly deposited it in the place, where the Vatavriksha sapling was planted by Him, immediately thereafter.

Inexplicable are the Leelas of the Lord! His Grace and His Mercy know no bounds!

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Whatever might be the tangle in which men are caught, if they get immersed in the Lord’s Name, it will make them free; besides, by this means, they can realise without fail the Name and Form through which they constantly remember the Lord. There is no iota of doubt in this. The Sadhanas of Yoga, Pranayama or Tapas are beset with pitfalls at every step and they are full of dangers, too. But in the Sadhana of Japa or Dhyana or Smarana there is no likelihood of a fall or of any other danger. In the former type of Sadhana. the practices differ according to the caste or religion. In the Namasadhana, there

is not even a trace of such distinction. Hindus Muslims and Christians may differ on many points, but they are all one in the glorification of the Name of the Godhead. All of them take but the Name of the One Lord, though the language through which the Name is expressed is different. Each one recites, repeats and remembers the Name as formed on his own tongue. Each one turns with his fingers the rosary appropriate to his religion. But for every one there is nothing so fruitful, so universal, or so holy among Spiritual disciplines as these: Japam, Dhyanam and Smarana.

The Lord and His Name are both One but the sweetness of the Name is seldom found in the Form. When the name of the flower, 'Rose', is remembered; its fragrance, its tender petals, its deep colour, these spring to memory; its thorns and the trouble one has undergone to get the flower are all forgotten. Instead, if its origin and previous story are considered; and if the plant, its leaves and branches are taken into account, the flower which is the most Important, the beautiful and the most attractive is likely to be forgotten and only 'the plant' is discussed. See this from another angle. As soon as the name 'mango' is mentioned, one is reminded of an incomparable sweetness. Instead, if an actual mango is held in the hand, the doubt first arises in the mind whether it is sweet or sour; then we are engaged in distinguishing the skin, the fibre, the juice, the nut, the rind, the seed etc. When the name alone is repeated, these things do not come to mind. Only the sweetness is brought to the memory. Such is the difference between the Lord and the Lord's Name! There is the pure essence of sweetness in the Name. In the case of the Form, there is the chance of dread mixed with respect; and sometimes, even attributes causing fear show themselves. Again, note another reason why the Name of the Lord is to be craved for, even more than the Form. It is by means of the riches of the Name that the article, 'the Rupa of the Lord' is to be earned. Riches are needed to secure any article in the world. With riches, articles are acquired; so it follows that the riches are superior to the articles got by means of them, are they not? With riches, one can get any article any time. So too, if the riches called Nama are steadily accumulated the Lord can be realised through the path of Dhyana, easily and without difficulty.

Another special thing about Namasmarana is this: It is possible to acquire various occult powers or Siddhis through Yoga and Tapas. So there is every likelihood of the Lord being forgotten when these powers come. Blinded by this pride, a person might even let go the basic victory won by his Sadhanas. This is not the case with Nama, Japa and Dhyana; no such dangers beset those paths. These three make Prema grow in man more and more. Through Prema, Shanti is achieved. Once Shanti or Peace of Mind is achieved, all other conditions are attained automatically. Through Yoga and Tapas, extra-ordinary Power; through Smarana, Japa and Dhyana, extra-ordinary Prema—this is the difference between the two.

However, one should be careful not to discuss these paths with all and sundry. Because, for each one his path will appear as the best. If the person consulted is treading the other path, he will decry the practice of Japa and Dhyana, and treat these with scant respect. He will look down upon them, as if they are very elementary, and as if the Sadhakas are but beginners in school. As a result, one will start doubting the efficacy of one's chosen path; One will get concern where he had joy before, disgust where he had Prema before.

Therefore, reflect within yourself which among these two is sweeter. Or you can approach those who have tasted the nectar of that Nama and ask for the details of their experiences. Do not argue about these things with everyone whom you come across. The time spent in these haphazard disputations is best used for the cultivation of joy through the repeated bringing of the Nama to memory and the meditation on the Form or the Rupa of the Lord. Mere weighing of the pros and cons, like, which is greater among the two, will end with the quick loss of all the success gained after great efforts through Sadhana. Until you become an expert, bring the Nama constantly to memory and repeat it firm and unruffled, either alone or in the company of Bhaktas.

Then nothing can ruffle you. Look at the fish! In early stages, it breeds its newly hatched young ones in a quiet shallow spot; then it pushes them into the wide open sea, rough and rude with its monstrous denizens! They can then survive there, courageously, and grow without fear. If the young ones were bred in the open sea from the earliest stage, they would certainly be swallowed up even by minor fishes! So, Nama, Japa and Dhyana have to be practised with a great deal of care, according to a planned routine, and without any discussion with others.

Nowadays, many aspirants are discarding Nama and taking up Yoga and Pranayama. These are fraught with many dangers. To follow them correctly is difficult; even if correctly followed, to preserve and protect the fruits achieved is even more difficult. If a person gropes in the water while spreading the net on the bank, can he find fish in the net? To give up Namasmarana and faith in that path and to sit in Yoga and Tapas is as foolish as hoping to catch fish by this means. If the Nama is taken as the refuge and support, it can be realised tomorrow, if not today. If the name of a thing is known, the thing itself can easily be acquired. But if the name is not known, even if the thing is right in front, it cannot be recognised. Therefore, repeat the Name without intermission and without faltering. By means of Name, Prema is developed; through Prema, Dhyana of the Lord can be practised. If Prema is deeply rooted in you, the Lord who is composed of Prema becomes your own. However many the paths for the realisation of the Lord, there is none so easy as this.

Note this. When there is a peculiar disease prevalent in a particular country, the drug that can cure it is also found in that very country more so than anywhere else. Though available after vigorous search in other lands, it will not be so good, or as plentiful. Similarly, this specific drug is available now, in this Kaliyuga! It is now in this Yuga that the ghastly evils of injustice, immorality and falsehood infect the world. That is the reason why the Sastras have been proclaiming again and again, with greater and greater emphasis, that in this Kali age there is no means of salvation other than the Nama! Of the four Yugas, the Kali Yuga is the best on account of this. Nama, Japa and Dhyana strain out the evil in mankind. Human nature is guarded and protected by these three. Hence, the fruits of Dhyana are greater than those secured with great difficulty through Yoga, Yajna or Pranayama.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Without Thy Grace

Without Thy Grace can a man be Man
And win the goal he longs to reach?

A pundit decked in titles (he may be)
Able to foil all his foes;

A poet spinning lines (he may be)
Most musical to the ear;

A lone recluse in a cave (he may be)
Able to starve a year;

A pious simple soul (he may be)
Counting fast his beads;

A wondrous twisting Yogi (he may be)
Breathing right and left;

An aged stooping stump (he may be)
Dipped in every ghat;

A bearded painted priest (he may be)
Bedecked from top to toe;

An ascetic living on air (he may be)
Wandering, without care;

A pilgrim come to Parthi (he may be)
Singing Thy glory there;

Without Thy Grace, can man be Man,
And reach the Goal he needs must reach?

Sandeha Nivarini

13

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Swami, last time you spoke of the Mahabharata war; in the same manner, does the Ramayana also happen in every one's heart?

Swami: Undoubtedly! It does take place systematically and in the same sequence.

Bhakta: Then, in what form does Rama come in this?

Swami: The Atma is Rama. He has come, in the character of Jivi, wearing the dress called body.

Bhakta: Then, being a Sankalpasiddha, whose Will prevails, and being Omnipotent, who is all powerful, why does He suffer so much?

Swami: It is all play: His Leela, Sport. What can be Joy for Him? And what can be Suffering for Him? He is Anandaswaroopa, who knows neither. By His Will He can produce everything. He has enacted the Ramayana on the stage of the theatre of the World, with Himself taking a role and showing each Quality or Guna as a separate Form. Such a Ramayana is taking place, in every heart. The Rama in the Heart, the Atmarama, is observing everything, as Witness.

Bhakta: But the inert material Jada, the Jivi, how does it enter into this Ramayana?

Swami: This Jada accepts the Active Chaitanya, viz., the Knowledge of Brahman. Chaitanya is born with the name of Sita. The Jada-Chaitanya become One. This is referred to as Sitarama. So long as the Jada and the Chaitanya are One, there is no trouble and no suffering. It is the separation of one of these two that gives rise to all the bother.

Bhakta: How is that, Swami?

Swami: Sita, who is Brahmajnana, goes away from the Atma which is in the form of the Jiva; hence, falling into the Darkness of the Jungle is inevitable. Rama has acted in this way to show us this; if Sita or Brahmajnana is allowed to be lost, one cannot escape wandering about in the Jungle of Darkness.

Bhakta: If that is so, what is the reason, Swami for this Lakshmana to be always with Sita? In our life what does he stand for?

Swami: One should not be alone in the dark jungle of life; one should have the Manas, ever by one's side. It is for this that Lakshmana is kept near, always.

Bhakta: In the Ramayana, Vali and Sugriva are described. Who are they?

Swami: When wandering in the dark jungle one gets Despair when one should get Discrimination. They have vengeful hatred of each other. Vali who is Despair has to be destroyed; then only can success come. Despair is Vali; Discrimination is Sugriva.

Bhakta: Hanuman, who appears between these two, who is he?

Swami: He who is of great help in the conquest of Despair, viz. Courage! That is Hanuman, He is Courage. Associated with Courage, it is possible to cross the Ocean of Illusion; that is why Rama built the Sethu or Bridge with the help of Hanuman.

Bhakta: After crossing the Ocean of Illusion, what is to be planned?

Swami: Don't you know what Rama did after crossing over the Bridge? Conquering Moha or Illusion, He slew Rajoguna and Tamoguna in the form of Ravana and Kumbhakarna. The remaining brother, the last, the Satwaguna, viz, Vibhishana was crowned King. The three gunas have been Illustrated in the characters and careers of the three brothers, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana.

Bhakta: After this, what has to be achieved?

Swami: Has to be achieved, do you say? Next, is the attainment of Anubhavajnana or Sita; the Jnana reached after experience, Jnana reached in actual life. When both Jada and Chaitanya unite again, that is the Pattabhisheka, the Coronation; that is to say Jivanmukti, Salvation for the Jiva. Therefore, the fundamental teaching of the Ramayana is this: "The Jiva, Manas, Jnana, Despair, Discrimination, Courage, Delusion, Rajas, Tamas, Satwa; these demonstrate themselves each in a different Form; it is to be learnt how and in what ways each of these can be either acquired or subdued". All this is done by the Atma, who has come in the form and with the name of Rama, by His acting, behaving, directing and guiding. So, the Ramayana has not ended long ago. So long as in each one's life there is a struggle for achievement through these paths, and persons attain the Anubhavajnana in the end and Satwaguna is crowned at last, until then the Ramayana will continue to take place in the heart of Man. On one side the Mahabharata war, on the other side the Ramayana, and on another the Bhagavata; thus is life led perpetually. These are the Sukshma forms of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata do you understand?

Bhakta: That means, in the Ramayana of actual life, Atma is Rama, Manas is Lakshmana, Brahmajnana is Sita ; and when that Sita is lost, Rama falls into the forest of existence; there, in that forest, there are Despair and Discrimination; if we associate ourselves with Hanuman or Courage, we can go across the sea of delusion, with the army of zest, strength and steadfastness represented by Jambavan, Angada and other Vanaras; as soon as we cross it, we can destroy the Rajasic quality and the Tamasic quality symbolised by Ravana and Kumbhakarna; the Satwic quality or Vibhishana can then be crowned; Anubhavajnana or Seetha is then attained. This union of Jada and Chaitanya, that is, of Sita and Rama is the Ananda, Jivanmukti, Salvation for the Soul. Ah! What a splendid Ramayana! The Ramayana accomplished as the Son of Dasaratha is being enacted now as the Subtle Ramayana, through Gunas and Indriyas, qualities and senses in each individual, so to say.

Swami: There is no 'so to say' in this. It is happening as the subtle Ramayana!

Bhakta: You said, Swami, that each Guna and each Indriya adopts in Ramayana a separate form. It causes some surprise to imagine that the Senses also put on some Form! In these, the gross and the subtle Ramayanas, in what form do the Senses appear? Please tell me this.

Swami: Whatever may be the Guna or quality how can it express itself, without the help of the senses? Gunas are bred in the senses. The Senses of Action are five; the Senses of Knowledge are five. These ten, with the help of the Manas, create attachment, isn't it? Otherwise, there can be no merging at all. "Born in Maya, bred in Maya, Man's mission is to master "Maya", it is said. So too, born in the Senses, bred in the Senses the Jada Chaithanya has to master the Senses. That is their basic duty, don't you know? Do you know where Rama, the Jivi, was born? Whose son is He? Dasaratha has that name because he symbolises the Dasendriyas, or the ten Senses. Whichever Guna or Rupa we consider, it cannot be unrelated to the Ten Senses, the Senses of Action and of Knowledge, the Karmendriyas and the Jnanendriyas, in the form of Dasaratha, we have the Ten.

Bhakta: Four sons were born of Dasaratha. Of what were they the forms, Swami?

Swami: From the Ten Senses, not only four, but any number of Gunas and Roopas can originate. But only the chiefest, the four, symbolising the four faces of the Lord, originated by His Will. They are born as Rama, Lakshmana. Bharatha and Shatrughna. They are Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema in the subtle form. These are the Four Faces of the Lord.

Bhakta: Who among these, Swami, is Sathya? Who represent Dharma, Shanti and Prema?

Swami: Can't you discover? Rama is Sathya. "The status and the honour should go to him who has the right, not to me," said Bharatha when he was offered the crown, and so he is Dharma. Placing complete faith on the Atma, that is, Rama, believing that there is no Ananda sweeter than its uninterrupted company, Lakshmana followed Rama and so he is Prema. Having no individual separate ambition of his own, treading the paths followed by these three, Shatrughna was calm and unperturbed and so he is Shanti. Is that clear?

Bhakta: Yes, Swami, but these four were born of three mothers; who are those mothers?

Swami: As I said just now, 'born in Maya, bred in Maya, one has to transcend this Maya'; so also, one is born from Gunas, one is brought up with Gunas; finally, one has to transcend the Gunas. The three mothers represent three Gunas! Among them, Kausalya is Satwaguna, Kaikeyi is Rajoguna, and Sumitra, Tamoguna; they play those roles, in the epic. Dasaratha in the form of Dasendriyas is associated with these Gunas and so he is Indriya-guna-swaroopa. It is because man cannot easily grasp the truth through the senses and the gunas only that the Lord taught him through the Ramayana, the Lord teaching us

even to this day. The Lord performed that day the gross Ramayana; and today He is performing the Sukshma-ramayana on the stage of the heart of Man.

Baba's Programme

- July 9th : Akhanda bhajan, at Bangalore, Inauguration.
- July 10th : Akhanda bhajan, at Bangalore, Upadesam.
- July 11th : The Sixteenth Thyagarajaswami Festival Celebrations, at Tirupathi: Inauguration H. E. Sri B. Ramakrishna Rao, the Governor of presides.
- July 12-18th : Madras.
- July 20th : Guru Poornima at Sri Sathya Mandir, Mysore City.

Akhanda Bhajan

Under Baba's instructions, all devotees do daily Bhajan in their homes and in many places, they gather once every week, preferably on Thursdays, at the house of some one devotee by rotation and conduct special Bhajan. The devotees at Bangalore have been following this practice for many years now. They also select one Thursday in the year for what is known as Akhanda Bhajan, that is to say, uninterrupted Bhajan for twenty hours. Baba has blessed these devotees every year, for the last sixteen years, by His Presence during the Akhanda Bhajan. There have been occasions during this Bhajan when He has given the Bhaktas opportunities to witness His Divine Miracles, like in 1944, when by pronouncing the word, "Akshayam" in front of the vessels in the kitchen He enabled the organisers to feed sumptuously a gathering of thousands with food prepared for hundreds!

Baba Himself lights the Lamp, which marks the Inauguration of the Bhajan; Abhishekam is done for the image of Shirdi Sai Baba; a "silver image" of Shirdi Sai Baba, an exact replica of the one at Prasanthi Nilayam, which Baba materialised by a mere wave of His Hand twelve years ago, is also worshipped. Twenty-four hours after the Inauguration, the Mahamangalarathi is performed, when too, Baba gives every one His Darshan and Blessings. He is also present at the place of Bhajan, most of the time, to vouchsafe Darshan to all. On the second day, in the evening, Baba usually addresses a meeting of all the devotees and inspires and instructs them in spiritual endeavour.

This year's Akhanda bhajan was held on 9-10 July, at the Vasavi Dharmasala Hall at Basavangudi, Bangalore. Thousands attended it and every one was inspired by the atmosphere of prayer and purification. On the 10th, Baba spoke for more than hour on the fundamentals of spiritual discipline and the need to dwell perpetually in the fear of transgressing the moral laws which control and guide the wayward mind, and in the thought of God.

The Atman

The Vedanta holds that looking out into the starry heavens of outer space or into the misty past or future of time to locate the centre of being of the universe is a fruitless undertaking. It also appears as a thoroughly meaningless venture in the light of a science which dares to weld space and time into a unity and which views the universe and everything in it as events or configuration of that space-time. To Vedanta, the centre of experience is the centre of the universe-physical as well as non-physical, and this supreme centre is the real Self in man, the Atman, the unchanging basis of an ever changing universe composed of both nature and personality, above cause and therefore above time, the seer of the space-time events, in the abyss of whose silence the distinction between the space-time and its perceiver, the objects and the subject, the non-selves and the self is transcended in the final truth of perfect non-duality.

(From Swami Ranganathananda)

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Short Articles in English or Telegu based on authentic individual experience are welcome.

Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

When a person is shown round a house, there is no need to tell him specifically, 'This is the kitchen' for, the blackened walls and the flavour of condiments, will reveal that to him. There should be no need to tell him, "This is the Puja Room," for, the spotless cleanliness of the walls, the calmness in the air and the perfume of pure thoughts

charged with devotion should reveal that to him. Therefore, have a fixed room or place in the house to do your regular Puja and Meditation.

Take a hurricane lantern; the flame within has three things to pass through: the soot inside the chimney, is Tamoguna; the dust outside is Rajoguna; and, the transparent glass is Satwaguna. All these three, surround the illumination of the flame in the centre. So too, the Jivatma has to transcend the three Gunas, in order to shine in its pristine Effulgence.

“You Are World to Me”

When people fete or people beat, I firmly cling to Thee;
The world may praise or pour disgrace;
You are the World to me.

Live happily in comfort, they suspect you are bad;
Live sadly in poverty, they whisper you are mad.

Give up all ambition, they sneer you are a fool;
Give up your conceit, they swear you are a tool.

Control your speech, they prate you are dumb;
Control your movement, they laugh you are numb.

Spend all wealth in service, they scorn, it is a stunt;
Spend your in breath in advice, they clamour you are blunt.

Ask all to be kind, they spurn you as needy;
Ask all to be humble, they dub you as seedy.

Speak gently to all, they declare you are weak;
Speak plainly to all, they condemn your ‘cheek’!

The world may praise or pour disgrace;
You are the world to me.
When people fete or people beat, I firmly cling to Thee!

From a Kannada Vachana of Chennabasavana (circa. 1150 A.D.)

Editorial

An old student of mine is a Railway employee, now, moving about in trains on inspection work. I had not seen him for many years after he passed out of College. Suddenly, at a Bus stop, he accosted me and came near me. He asked me whether he could come to Puttaparthi with me, the next time I proceeded to that place. I was surprised he should ask me that question, for at College, he had a reputation for only ragging and rough play in the football field.

He told me that he had come to know of Puttaparthi, under very interesting circumstances. It is best I relate it in the form of a connected story.

A devotee's daughter was given in marriage to a railway clerk; but, the girl was not quite happy. The clerk had fallen into bad company and developed illicit relationship with another. Consequently, the wife was treated very cruelly and nearly starved. The devotee brought the son-in-law and the daughter to Baba, and, the son-in-law left Puttaparthi and Baba's Presence in a cross and grumbling mood. He denied ill-treating his wife and laid all kinds of charges against the poor girl.

The party left one morning and traveled by train. At night, being a railway employee, he asked permission to sleep in a First Class compartment, since the entire coach was running empty. My student gave him that permission, and, so he has to remain anonymous!

About early dawn the train pulled up at a wayside station. As soon as the train stopped, out jumped the railway clerk howling in pain and crying out Ayyo, Ayyo Ledu, Ledu!

What could it be? My student, it seems, wondered. A big crowd gathered. The station staff ran in from all directions. The policeman took out notebooks and pencils.

The clerk moaned and wept aloud. He was beaten on both cheeks while he was sleeping in the First Class compartment, which was empty. He had red finger marks on both cheeks; when these were touched, he smarted with pain. He had seen Sathya Sai Baba inside the compartment, and it was Baba who had beaten him so. He said that he deserved the blows and wanted to be left alone. He would not go into that compartment again.

No, wonder my student who had witnessed the incident of the clerk's painful cry wanted to come to Puttaparthi. He had the unique privilege of knowing how the Sai Pita, the Sai as Father protects and corrects His children "Parithranaya Sadhunam....."

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

For every item of work, one-pointedness is very important. It is not correct to say that the qualities and attainments needed for temporal progress and spiritual progress are different from each other. The spiritual is only the purification of the temporal. Success or failure in both depends on concentration or Ekagratha. This too is but Sadhana or spiritual discipline. There are two paths along which this Sadhana may proceed. (1) No-pointedness and (2) Many-pointedness. No-pointedness is the stage of Sleep; it is also called Tamoguna. Many-pointedness is the result of Rajoguna, turning the vision of the opened eye on creation and its sights. Avoiding both these, without falling into these two extremes, if the eye is neither closed as in sleep nor opened wide as in the fully awakened stage, but half-opened arid directed to the point of the nose, the Satwaguna will become one's nature and concentration of the mind can also be acquired easily.

Of course, this does not mean that mere fixing the sight on the tip of the nose is enough. Fix it there in the beginning and then turn the vision on to the Name and Form you have in mind; that is Dhyanam.

When you are engaged in Japam and Dhyanam other thoughts might enter into you at first; but you should not worry about this. There is no great danger on account of them. When you begin Namasmarana, sit down with enthusiasm. If you enter upon any task with firm determination, no impurity can affect you. Your concern is only to see that you are fully pure when you start the Japam etc. Do not worry about formalities for this. Select the Namam that you like and the Form of that Name. That Namam is itself the Mantram. That Mantram is ever pure, ever active, everything. But do not change the Namam and the Roopam to suit the fancy and have one thing one day and another the next. Whatever the Name and Form that first gave you contentment, hold fast to them without swerving. They will get implanted in the heart, without fail. Afterwards, everything will happen through His Grace. If the worker is ordered to dig the earth, his work is simply to go on digging. The gardener alone knows how much of that earth is to be put under which plant and how that earth is to be so put. So too, the order is 'Do Namasmarana'! Provided you continue to do that work, He will direct, Himself, and how that has to be utilised.

The value of Nama and Rupa consists in the training that they give to the Manas. What need is there to train a horse that has already been trained? It is the untrained horse that is 'broken' through many devices. Similarly, it is to tame the unruly mind that we have prayer, bhajan, japa and smarana. In the initial stages, the horse runs in many directions; the trainer should not worry. He should hold fast to the reins. The mind, too, naturally runs in different directions when you begin Namasmarana and Japam, but you must not yield to despair, anxiety or indecision. Hold fast to the reins, the Namam! Within a short time, your speech and your thoughts will come under your own grip. Only, do not allow anything to come near you that might make you forget the name of the Lord. The profit of that Namam, you will yourself realise in due course.

Do not crave for the fruit the moment the sapling is planted! Do not pluck and chew the leaves and the twigs in the hope of inferring therefrom the taste of the fruit! If you do so, you cannot enjoy the sweetness of the fruit; besides, the plant itself will not survive.

Similarly, your task is simply to cultivate the sapling called Namam. Do not while doing so, doubt and examine whether it has the glory ascribed to it. That sapling will, without fail, grow into a tree and it will give you the fruit you hope to eat. You can achieve it. The Namam is capable of yielding that fruit. So the purpose of Ekagratha or Concentration is to make you stick to the Namam, without altering it and to keep its Rupa always in sight. The net of 'Namasmarana' should have no torn holes; that is to say, it must take place always with no Intermission. If there is any gap, the fruit that falls into the net might escape through it! Perform Dhyanam until your mind comes firmly under your control. This is the primary task.

Let the mind run wherever it likes; only, be careful you do not follow it, seeking to discover where it is going! It will then wander about for some time as the fancy takes it and soon, getting tired and exhausted, it will come back to you in the end! It is like a little child, that knows nothing. Since the mother is following it and calling it back, it gets courage and confidence to run forward in any direction; but if the mother does not run behind the child and retraces her steps quietly, the child too, of its own accord, will run back to the mother!

Do not care for the vagaries of the mind. Carry on Smarana and Dhyanam of the Nama and Rupam you like best, in the manner you are accustomed to: in this way you will acquire Ekagratha; you will realise your heart's desire. Do not entertain in your mind the idea of purity or impurity while doing this Sadhana of Dhyanam. There is nothing impure in the world. When the Lord is immanent everywhere in everything, how can anything be impure? Even if something appears to the ulterior eyes as impure, the moment it contacts the name of the Lord, It becomes purified.

Note this one point! If a person discovers a treasure while answering the call of nature, will he hesitate to take it because he is impure at the time? Purity and impurity are the result of the mental reactions of the particular moment. When one is giving money to some one, one talks of the auspicious time and the purity of the hour. But when one gets a chance of taking money, every moment is auspicious! The mind is the reason for both attitudes.

Similarly, no thought of purity or impurity will bother you if you have full Faith in and Love for the Name of the Lord. On the other hand, if you feel some compulsion and some discontent, all kinds of possible and impossible obstacles will present themselves. Therefore, give up all such feelings; strengthen the faith in the unshakable Holiness of Nama and its appropriate Form. Firmly believe that everything is made holy by His Name.

Cultivate prema for the Lord. It has infinite potentiality. An iron chain can be broken with ease, but not the chain of Prema that binds you to the Lord. The cruelest of animals

too is overpowered by Love. This is the Maya of the Lord! If only the floodwaters of this Prema are directed, not to the lakes and shoals on the sides of the river, but to the Ocean of the Lord's Grace, what a holy task it will be! Then the Jivi realises the purpose of life. This is the highest Moksha. To direct without interruption that Prema on to the Name and the Rupa of the Lord: that is real Dhyanam. Do not mistake this temporary abode as your eternal dwelling place! Nor should you lose heart at evanescent troubles and short-lived tragedies. Immerse yourselves in the effort to attain the Eternal Lord. Everything in this World is subject to decay; it not today, tomorrow at least, it is bound to disintegrate, is it not?

It is not right to reject the Lord, who is eternally related to you, and be misled by this world with which one is related for just two days! As already written, "the relatives come up to the outer gate or may be, up to the burial ground; but your Real Relative is the Lord, beware!" He will never give you up. Considering the number of births you have come through, you have had countless mothers and fathers, wives and husbands, sons and daughters, friends and enemies; but are they subsisting today? Do those relatives remember the relationship? You are no one to them; they are nobodies to you. But you and they both have the Lord in common as the unchanging Relative; He watches over you from birth to birth. What greater tragedy can there be than forgetting such a Lord! With the senses weakened and powerless and refusing to function; with the parents, the wife and children, the relations, all crowding on one side, and the Messengers of Death compelling you to pack up for the journey without delay on the other...who knows when this call comes and how? Before that moment comes, be ready with the thought of God.

Sandeha Nivarini

XIV

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Swami, the inner meaning of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana which You explained is really very interesting. If only one probes deeply, what else is there in them? That kind of Mahabharata and Ramayana is taking place in every heart, through the action and interaction of manas, chittam and buddhi. You said that the Bhagavatham is also occurring in the same manner. If you will kindly explain how that is happening, we can, after knowing its inner meaning also, start following the 'Subtle' Ramayana and Mahabharata and Bhagavatham, all three. So please tell me about the Bhagavatham.

Swami: Well, the Bhagavatham is not like the other two; it has no qualities and no Form! It deals with the Atma which is beyond and behind the qualities or gunas, senses or Indriyas, the manas and the chittam it deals with the powers and prowess of the Atma; and its apparent activities or leelas. The Bhagavatham contains the stories of the Incarnations of that which is the Witness of Everything.

Bhakta: What are the forms which that Witness assumed? Why did He assume those Forms?

Swami: Really speaking, He is all Forms, Sarvaswaroopee. There is no limit to the number or nature of His Forms. Still, if something must be said in conformity with what has happened, Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara, Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Vamana, Narasimha, Rama, and Krishna, these are Its incarnations. In order to transect the Creation, the Preservation and the Destruction of the World, and to punish the wicked and protect the good, He assumes Himself the form He designs as best at the time and for the purpose He has set before Himself. When that purpose is realised, He is as before, the Witness, the Atmaroopa.

Bhakta: Rama and Krishna also punished the wicked and protected the good, isn't it, Swami? Then, how do you say that in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, there is the Gunaswaroopa, while in the Bhagavatham there is no Gunaswaroopa?

Swami: You see, Gunas have a beginning and an end; the Atma has neither. Rama and Krishna too have no qualities, essentially. They have demonstrated how, being above Gunas, it is possible to keep all Gunas under control. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata stories have an end, isn't it? In that sense, the Bhagavatham has no end. It speaks of the Lord who has no beginning or end. It tells of the forms which the Lord wore in the context of the age, the time and the object. The other two on the hand, teach the correct policies to be followed in this false, evanescent world and urge men to follow Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema. Do you understand?

Bhakta: Then, the Bhagavatham is of no practical use to us, so to say!

Swami: What! It is the Bhagavatham that is of most use to the Sadhakas. It alone explains the real secret of the Lord, His real Glory and His real Path! The Ramayana and the Mahabharata endeavour to some extent to uplift the common man, the ordinary man, by moral teaching and example. They show how man can deserve the Lord's grace. But those who seek to know the nature of the Atma and of Paramatma should study, more than anything else, the Bhagavatham.

Bhakta: Swami, what is the relation between Bhagavata, Bhagavata and the Bhakta?

Swami: The relationship between the Maharaja, the Yuvaraja and the Kumararaja! Bhagavanta or the Lord is the Maharaja, of course; the Bhagavata is second in rank because it has come from the Lord as a derivative, with the status of Yuvaraja; the Kumararaja is dependent on both these and so is the Bhakta. The status of Kumararaja is not an ordinary one, he merits the position of the Maharaja. The rest are inferior to these three. Those who do not rise up to the status of Bhakta or Kumararaja have no access to the Court of Maharaja.

Bhakta: Then, Swami, the Yogis, the Jnanis, the Ascetics, do these not deserve that position?

Swami: Whoever he may be, without Bhakti and the love of the Higher Truth, how can any one become a Yogi, or a Jnani or an Ascetic? They too have Bhakti in an equal measure. Take Laddu, Jilebi, Mysore Pak and number of other sweets; in each of them, as the common cause of sweetness, there must be the one article, sugar, isn't it? How else can they be made? So also, in these three paths, the sweetness of the Lord's Name or Bhakti is an ingredient. Without it, the very names of these objects become absurd!

Bhakta: Another point, Swami I Can one approach the presence of the Lord, only if he has faith in the Lord and only if with that faith he performs Japa, Dhyana, Bhajan and Puja? That is to say, is it not possible to attain that position through the path of Truth, the path of Dharma, the path of Prema, the path of Service to others?

Swami: Well, how can the qualities you mention originate without the fear of sin and the fear of God? Are these paths and the qualifications needed for them, ordinary and common? No. They are the doors to the Inner Apartment of the Lord. Those that follow those Paths can easily reach the precincts of the Lord. Yet, there is a difference between relatives and friends! Those who develop only these qualities are friends; but those who practise them, along with devotion to the Name and Form, become Relatives, that is the difference. The meditation on the Name and the Rupa helps to strengthen the Gunas also. Without that foundation, the Gunas cannot be strong and firm and pure. The Lord's Name and the Lord's Rupa remove the dross from the qualities of man.

Bhakta: But the Bhakta and the man with good qualities, both attain the same place, isn't it, Swami?

Swami: Certainly. The merely good man becomes a candidate who deserves the place; the good man who has Bhakti has a title to the place, he cannot be passed over.

Bhakta: Swami, there are many people who are active, doing various things under the slogan, "The Service of man is the Service of God"; do their deeds entitle them to the place?

Swami: Why do you ask so? Certainly; for those that do service with that attitude. But it is very hard to get that real feeling. Considering others as men, simply saying that 'serving them is to serve God', is not sincerity. The mind will then run in two channels. Grasp the glory of Madhava fully; understand that Madhava is in every Manava; believe that service to Manava or Man is serving Madhava only; then your actions will certainly entitle you to the place. What greater qualification is needed than that? Instead, if 'service' is done for name and honour and fame, and if there is a craving in the mind for the fruits of one's actions, then the statement, "Service to man is service to God" has no meaning, nor will one get the result expected.

Bhakta: It is very interesting, Swami! Speaking about the Bhagavatham evoked many holy ideas and morals today. So if one delves into it, what invaluable Truths will emanate! I am indeed blessed, this day.

Swami: Have you understood it all? Bhagavatham is the story of the beginning-less, the ending-less Atma. It is in both forms, subtle and gross. It is subtler than the subtlest; grosser than the grossest. It has no limit or measure. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are Itihasas, historical epics. The Bhagavatham is different; it is the description of the Atma; it instructs In the Path of Bhakti. It can never end, nor has it ever a “Finis”. This is the significance of the Bhagavatham.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Artist and the Art

At the conclusion of the Akhanda Bhajan at Bangalore, on the 10th July, Baba spoke to the devotees of the discipline of Namasmarana. He said that just as for some diseases, drugs have to be used both externally and internally, Smarana, meditation on the Name of the Lord is the internal medicine, while Kirtanam or Singing aloud the Glories of the Lord is the external medicine. He spoke of the different types of Bhakti as exemplified in the lives of Bhishma, Anjaneya, Sabari, Arjuna, Yasoda, Radha, Gouranga, Meera and Ramakrishna; and analysed the various attitudes adopted by each, for conquering the waywardness of the mind and attuning it to the Godhead.

On the 11th July, Baba spoke on Thyagaraja, inaugurating the Sixteenth Thyagaraja Festival at Tirupati. He took up the same theme and dwelt at length on the role of Bhakti and the significance of the Name. Referring to the usual remark made on such occasions by speakers that, “This day is red-letter day,” Baba defined the characteristics of such a day and said that only those days on which one sang of the Lord or served his children deserved to be called so.

Devaki gave birth to Krishna but, the child was brought up by Yasoda who got all the delight of His Childish Leelas. So too, Thyagaraja sang in Telugu but his Kritis are practised and sung with enthusiasm by Tamil devotees and Sadhakas. So, Baba wanted the people of Telugu country also to take equal interest in the Kritis, for, He said, Thyagaraja sang out of the fullness of his Heart, regardless of name and fame. He was Valmiki himself, come again, in the South of India, to spread the message of the Ramayana through song. Thyagaraja was a great sage and Bhakta, and so, his songs are marked by the rare excellence of sincerity and genuine poetry. The Raga suited to the idea, the time and the context, the words suited to the tala, the Raga and the Tala both suited to the merging of the singer in the emotional current of the Kirti,—this is the special genius of Thyagaraja. He always had both individual uplift and the welfare of all humanity in mind, and, that is why, Rama blessed him and acted as even his bodyguard! Baba said that it was the duty of all elders, people in authority, and trustees of temples

etc., to foster and nourish the seedlings of Bhakti, so that the new generation may have contentment, joy and peace. Thyagaraja had the experience of the constant presence of the Lord, in him as well as outside him, so that he was ever at peace and ever joyful.

Baba said that prayer and Contrition are the two disciplines by which the mind has to be cleaned; Thyagaraja is an example of how this could be achieved. As the bee in search of honey clings to the flower, as the creeper twines round the tree, as the rill seeks the river, as the river runs towards the sea, he yearned for Rama, and so his songs are the blossoms of Bhakti and therefore, immortal. Every man seeks rest, but since the dust of sense cravings accumulates, and produces rust, which may even burst the machine he has to test it and keep it in perfect trim, so that his rest will not be disturbed. The science of spiritual progress and the control of the mind has been developed and practised in this country for thousands of years and that is why Indian culture has stood the shock of ages and survived a series of typhoons that would have uprooted trees with even a little less hold of the earth.

Baba condemned the vulgarisation of music due to the influence of films and commended the efforts of the Festival Committee to popularise the classical singer-saints and to instill in the minds of the people the true spirit of Bhakti.

Baba drove up to Tirumalai, the same night and took residence in the Ruia buildings, on top of the Hill. On the 12th, in the morning, He went as far as the Papanasanam Falls, along the newly constructed road. Devotees who had come to Tirupati and Tirumalai to have the Darshan of Baba and attended the Festival inaugurated by Him had the unique pleasure of doing Bhajan in His Presence at the Ruia Building that day. About 3.30 P.M., Baba granted His devotees the inexpressible joy of filling their eyes with the picture of Himself and Lord Venkateswara, face to face, the Concretised and the Consecrated, the Artist and the Art, the Divya Shakti and the Sahajashakti, together! As dusk fell, Baba drove down the Hill and, after spending some time with the Organisers of the Thyagaraja Festival Celebrations, He left to Madras.

At Madras, on the 16th, Baba released the book, 'Premavahini', published by the Sanathana Sarathi Office, at the Shanti Kutir, Royapuram. Returning to Bangalore on the 18th, Baba left for Mysore and halted at Mandya on the way for about an hour to give Darshan to the devotees there. 20th July was Guru Poornima and Vyasa Poornima, a day sacred to all spiritual Sadhakas, on which they re-dedicate themselves at His Feet, and seek His Grace. The Sathya Sai Mandir, in the Mysore city resounded to the music of Bhajan that day, and Baba was worshipped by the Bhaktas, with prayer and japam. In the evening, in the Immediate and Holy Presence of Baba, the Editor of this Journal, by command of Bhagavan, unveiled an oil painting of Shirdi Sai Baba. The portrait will be kept in the prayer-hall of the Mandir. There was Uyyalothasavam in the evening and Baba granted Darshan, to a large number of Devotees.

On the 21st July, Baba returned to Bangalore, where He spent about a fortnight, before reaching Puttaparthi on 7th August.

Sanathana Sarathi

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Short Articles in English or Telegu based on authentic individual experience are welcome.

Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

What is sin? Weakness, the feeling that you are a sinner, that you are therefore lost beyond redemption, the despair that overwhelms, these are the things called sin avoid these. What is Punya? Courage, buoyancy, hope, the feeling that you are an Amritaputra, Immortal, blessed by the Lord, strong enough with the Lord’s Grace to overcome everything that overwhelms, these are the things called Punya. Accumulate these.

The rat falls into the trap, because it is enamoured more of the strong-smelling cheap eatable, that is, the bait inside the trap than of the finer, costlier, healthier ghee and sugar, that lies in plenty outside the trap, in the same room! Do not, like the stupid rat, lose all sense of values and run into the deadly trap, seeking the cheap fascination of petty tinsels. Develop Viveka and Vairagya.

For the cultivation of your farms in summer, do you not store the water of rains, in reservoirs and tanks? So too, for the attainment of Lord’s Feet when the body falls off, store the thought of the Lord by the contemplation of the Name and Form of the Lord, when you are young and strong.

Invitation for Navaratri celebrations

The Navaratri Festival will be celebrated at the Prasanthi Nilayam from Saturday, 3rd October, 59 to Sunday, 11th October, 59. The programme includes, daily Pooja, Bhajan, Abhisheka, and Parayana as well as Discourses on Religion and Music. All

devotees are cordially invited to attend the Festival and receive the Blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

PROGRAMME

October,59

- Friday,2nd 5P.M. Celebration of the Third Anniversary of Sri Sathya Sai Hospital
President: Dr.K.Vaidyanathan M.A. Ph.D Madras.
- Saturday,3rd 8A.M. Prasantha Pathakotsavam.
Prayer: Vidwans B.V.Raman & B.V.Lakshman, Madras.
6.P.M Nadaswaram: Nadaswara Raja Vidwan Sri Tiruvengadu T.P Subramaniam.
- Sunday,4th 6.P.M Children's Fete.
- Monday,5th 4.P.M. Social work by Devotees.
6.P.M Kavi Sammelanam.
- Tuesday,6th,4.30P.M Discourse by Brahmasri Sathvadhani Velury Sivarama Sastry.
9.P.M Brindhavan Bhajan by Gavai Sri Singh of the Punjab.
- Wednesday,7th6.P.M. Discourse by Yogi Shuddhananda Bharathi.
- Thrusday,8th4.30PM Discourse by Brahmasri Tharka Vyakarana Vedantha Kesari
Varanasi Subramanya Sastri.
7PM.to10PM "Maharathi Karna": Musical Discourse by Burrakatha-kala-Samrat
Andhrarangasimha, Sri Nidadavolu Achutharamaiah.
- Friday,9th 6PM Annastradanam to the Poor: Distribution of clothes by
Her Excellency Srimathi AnanthaLakshmi Ramakrishna Rao,
Trivandrum, Kerela.
- Saturday,10th 6PM His Excellency Dr.B.Ramakrishna Rao, Governor of Kerala lays
the Foundation Stone of the Auditorium
8PM Dance Recital: "Gowri Sankar" "Radha-Krishna":
Baby Sai Leela and Baby Revathi.
- Sunday,11th12noon Mahabhishekam.
6PM Clarionet Recital: by Clarionet Everest, Clarionet Isai-jnana-jyothi
Clarionet Isaivallal Vidwan SriA.K.C. Natarajan, Trichy.

Do You Not Hear It All

The Cock does crow his doodle gong
And startles all the feathered throng!
They shake their slumbering wings
And, all in chorus, chanting
The golden East, salute!.....
With yazh on drum or flute
Or, veena, so long mute,
The music students sit up in bed and raise
Sweet melody, to win their Guru's praise!
The temple conches blow;
Only you are slow!
Hark! The sound of beels, how loud it sweels!
Your comrades knock and call;
Do you not hear it all?
They sing a song of the Splendour of the Lord!
They sing a song of the Mercy of the Lord!
They sing a song of the Gifts of the Lord!
The Lord, they sing, is the Ocean of Love;
When everything still, or on the move
Is dead and dust
Or ash or rust
He is, the One and Only Lord!
Awake, dear friend, the cock does crow,
The conches blow,
Do you not hear the bells,
The song that tells
Of the Glory of the Lord?

*From the Tamil, Thiruvempavai by **Saint Manikkavasagar** (circa 900 A.D)*

EDITORIAL

“I did not come Here, for want of work There! I came because Good people, Yogis and Siddhas, Sages and Saints prayed that I should come! The Lord always incarnates, in answer to Prayer.”

Thus spoke Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, on Gokulashtami Day, at the Prasanthi Nilayam. He was present at the Prayer Hall when the Chapter on Krishna-jananam from the Srimad Bhagvatham was read. Later, speaking about the Secret and Significance of all Avatars, He made the above Declaration! “A blind man finds both day and night equally dark; so too, whether I am Here or There, it makes no difference; I do the same work,” Baba said!

“Every individual has three Gunas in his make-up, Satwa, Rajas and Tamas. Satwaguna recognises truth as truth and false as false; Rajoguna doubts both truth and falsehood and loses itself in anger and despair; Tamoguna sees truth as untruth and the false as true! When Rajas and Tamas predominate, truth is overpowered, justice is perverted and violence holds sway. So, good men, truth-loving, peace-loving souls cry out in anguish for the Lord, to intervene and incarnate. The Lord too takes form choosing the form most suited for the purpose He has in view. He assumes the human form, so that men might understand Him and His Message, serve Him and receive His Grace, confide in Him and communicate with Him and move with Him, without hesitation, or fear.

The Lord is endowed with Mahashakti when He incarnates; He also sends Mayashakti and Yogashakti to further His purpose. It is in and through these two Shaktis that the Lord fulfils the twin Mission of the re-establishment of the Dharma and the defeat of the forces of Adharma. When white ants infest a tree the ants have to be removed and the tree saved; there is no meaning in destroying the tree, as a remedy. When bad qualities infest mankind, the qualities have to be removed by Sadhana, like Namasmarana, Dhyana and Japam; there is no meaning in destroying Man himself. In former Avatars, one particular individual or group was responsible for the decline of Dharma and so Dharma could be saved by destroying that person or persons. But, now, the raksha character is infesting universally and so a revolution in character and attitude and behaviour and in mutual relationship and in discipline is essential. People have to be shown the road they have missed. They have to follow certain disciplines and cherish certain goals. Sakshatkara or the realisation that everything in the Universe is a Manifestation of the Lord is the right of everyone, without any distinction of race or creed or class or caste. Man has to be led to this goal, step by step. The Lord's Grace is dependent on and proportionate to the Sadhana of the Aspirant. The men of this generation are indeed lucky that they have opportunity of contact with the Avatar of the Lord and the chance to receive from Him direct, the guidance needed for realising the ultimate Goal of Life.”

Dhyana Vahini

20

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Man has three stages of spiritual development: first the hazy uncertain stage; then, the active stage of striving; and last, the highest stage. These are the stages of Tamas, Rajas and Satwa. When growing out of the first stage into the second, if man does not improve step by step then it must be recognised as unnatural.

The period from childhood to adolescence need not be taken seriously into account. One need not worry much about it. With the dawn of adolescence, man enters upon the first hazy uncertain stage and engages in many fruitless activities. Later, he attains ripeness and strength. This is the stage between the uncertain and the certain. It is when he has reached this intermediate stage that he must yearn for the fulfillment, possible in the final stage.

In the rules for Tapas also this law is observed. At first, Puja is associated with Shakti; the subsequent stage of worship is connected with Siva. That is to say, the period when man is under the care of the Mother is over; the period when paternal care, the protection of the Renovator and Guardian of the Universe, Siva, is reached. When the stage of Paternal care is come one should not soil the body and mind, as during the period of Maternal care.

In the intermediate stage (that is to say at that particular age), man will have certain natural propensities and tendencies that are not desirable and which have to be eschewed. These are: conceit, mischievousness, obstinacy, inquisitiveness, lust, greed, shame, fear, vengefulness, disgust etc. So long as one has these, one cannot surrender oneself to Siva. These have to be uprooted completely; or at least, there should be a systematic endeavour to get rid of them. Such aspirants will have to be swimming against the current or practising what is called “Vyathireka pravaaha gath!” Proceeding against the current is the means to reach the Source; floating with the current means getting farther and farther from it and losing sight of the Goal.

Of course, swimming up the river is a bit hard; but every stroke takes you nearer the Goal and not farther. For overcoming the strain, one must have the raft called Dhyanam. Through Dhyanam, the weakness of the physical frame can be overcome, the wayward speed of the mind can be controlled and the progress towards the Seat Of Grace made easy; one can attain the Primordial Force, the Adimurti. Instead, if one cares more for the ease of the journey and floats along the current, he would be travelling away from Grace; turning his back on it. The Adimurti will gradually become distant and disappear. Such men will get lost in increasing misery. And for what profit?

The evil tendencies mentioned above are the causes for this tragedy. If only they had been overcome, the Source could have been certainly reached. Without the striving for that, all activities will end in failure. Moreover, the world loves only good men, endowed with good qualities; it keeps bad men at a distance. Exterior charm attracts the animal;

internal charm, resulting from character, pleases the Lord. Do not be tempted by the low tastes of the world and the cheap regard that people bestow. Strive for the holy Grace and Love of the Lord. The affection that men shower is inconstant; for it depends on their likes and dislikes. But the Love that the Lord bears to you depends on your good qualities alone. It can also give you permanent joy. Those who are enamoured of the external will tumble into disappointment and sorrow every now and then. Beauty consists in character, not in anything else. There is nothing more charming than that.

The good should never even discuss the evil that others do; for that will contaminate them. The stories of Dhruva and Prahlada will, if listened to, grant merit and show the Path; the stories of Savitri and Anasuya will destroy the roots of evil and strengthen character. How does this happen? What is the explanation? They are all holy; their careers are blameless; therefore, to discuss them and their lives is worth while, and beneficial. That is the explanation. Some critics of 'good men' justify their carpings by saying that they are trying to correct them still further and making them even better! No, they are really provoking the good men to evil and drawing that evil upon themselves. They are themselves becoming evil men.

Never think about the badness or evil of others. If you can manage it, keep always trying to turn them into good ways and giving them good advice. One should cultivate the peace of mind, the charitableness and the eagerness to promote the welfare of all necessary for the attitude. These can come only through Japam and Dhyanam. The wealth derived from Japam and Dhyanam is Sadguna. Good Qualities. They clean the exterior, they purify and enable the inner tendencies also.

Waves originate in the upper layers of the sea. They are caused by the wind; and so the wind can be said to have that power. So too, the mind of the intelligent man is full of thoughts and opinions. When the proper atmosphere is present, these spring up and roll in from all directions. In the same manner, the Lord is manifest in the picture or image which one worships; but is this due to any special excellence of the picture or image? No. The picture, the photo, the image, these are and remain as picture, photo and image. The fact is that on account of the intensity of the devotion of the Bhakta, the Lord cannot desist from manifesting Himself for him. For that reason, He assumes Form; the Form that Blesses, in stone, wood or paper that the Bhakta contemplates and meditates upon and worships. He materialised from a pillar for the sake of Prahlada! For Markandeya, He issued from a Linga! In order to fulfill the yearning of the Bhakta, Han, the Immanent Basic Being of the Universe, will come, in any Form, in anything, at any place.

But you have to pray to the Lord, with one-pointed concentration. This type of single-mindedness comes out of Satwaguna only; and that again is the product of Dhyanam. Therefore, you must cultivate good qualities and in order that these may develop, you should desire the company of the good, Satsang. Your real companions from whom you derive the maximum good are those who talk and discourse about the Lord, about truth, about the Seva of others and about Prema that considers all as equal. Association with such is certainly association with Sadhus, for these are the real Sadhus.

Those who never speak of the Lord, or those who are not even aware of Him; who are busy multiplying and strengthening the bonds of Samsara; who preach and practise falsehood, injustice and oppression and who advise you to stray from the path of Dharma; treat these, not as your friends, but as people to be avoided at all cost. Theirs is the company of wicked men, the Dussanga. Associating with such leads to the commissions of wrongs against your will, the utterance of words which should not be uttered, the doing of deeds that should not be done; and consequently, treading the downward road to ruin.

Men who have neither the fear of sin nor the fear of God are capable of venturing into any wickedness; that is no cause for surprise. So, seek the company of those possessed of these two fears; this is the true Satsang. The company of persons who have not even an iota of these two is the Dussanga which you should dread. The Sadhaka must always yearn for Satsang. In that company, there is no chance for the growth of greed or for Icchashakti to attain anything. Whether easily available or not, seek and join only Satsang. Seek and realise permanent satisfaction and contentment. Do not distract yourself, pursuing temporary satisfaction.

It is profitless for a true Sadhaka to associate with men who spend their time in worldly affairs. If you do not secure friends of the type I mentioned, be solitary, without associates; you do not lose anything thereby. Never even think of the company of the wicked. Do not get entangled in their wiles; if possible, when you get the chance, advise them about the right, but do not yield to their words. In fact, you must not entertain even the desire to be in the place where they are present. If you cultivate these characteristics, then both Japam and Dhyanam will become easy for you and they will yield quick results.

Sandeha Nivarini

15

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: You must remove a big load from my head, Swami. However much I try to forget it, in whichever direction I turn, I suffer from it; I am hearing only that! Then how can I dismiss it from my mind? Finding it impossible, I am praying to You. Please do not mistake my intention; kindly give a direct answer, because if you do so, the weight will be lifted from the heads of all people like me and enthusiasm will increase for Sadhana. Otherwise, I am worried, we may lose even the little faith that we have in the Lord and I am afraid we may turn atheists Your answer will be of immense help, not only to me but to all Bhaktas everywhere. Therefore, I pray to You to wipe off my doubts without hesitation and tell me the real truth, in very clear terms.

Swami: What is it? Tell me. What is the cause of so much headache?

Bhakta: Swami, You have told us that man has Four Ashrams: Brahmacharyam, Garhasthyam, Vanaprastham; and Sanyasam; and that those who reach the last state are indeed blessed, for they attain Realisation. Now, please tell us what exactly is that Sanyasam?

Swami: So this has caused you all the worry! Is it? My dear fellow, the wearing of the gerua cloth, the shaving of the head, these do not make a Sanyasi. He is a person who has given up all desires. He must be fully immersed, in desire, design and deed, fully in the One God-head and in the discipline to attain Him. Whoever is so immersed is a Sanyasi. Instead, if they retain all kinds of desires, if they engage themselves in every activity to realise their desires, then they are Sanyasis, as the saying goes; that is to say, counterfeits, do you understand?

Bhakta: But Swami, now we get sanyasis very cheap for a rupee, or for a paisa, or even for a cigarette! Among these, whom should we approach, whom should we accept?

Swami: Why are you concerned with all this? You are concerned with your advancement, your progress. You must crave for a person to point out to you the right path for your Sadhana. Or, if that is not possible, you approach and accept your Self; that is enough to give you what you require. Depend upon yourself and your doubts will be destroyed.

Bhakta: In that case, Swami, what about the statement, “Guru-less Vidya is Sight-less Vidya?” It is essential to rely on some great person, is it not? To show the way, I mean.

Swami: Great men have not vanished from the face of the earth, my child! Do not think that all are of the type you mention. There are many great men even now; otherwise, how could the world have daylight, as the saying goes?

Bhakta: Great men may exist among Grahastas, Vanaprasthas or Brahmacharins, Swami! I haven’t much experience with such; but still, I have seen among them people with big name and fame. However, I can say this: it is very difficult to discover really holy men among Sanyasis. It is impossible to find a single Sanyasi without some desire or other. When Sanyasis have so much desire, what is wrong if householders have them? To whichever place we go. the one demand is, “Money, Money, Money!”

Swami: Really speaking, Sanyasis should have no desire, as you said. Lust and greed are their dreadful enemies. They should have no contact with them. They can accept only whatever little food is given, whenever it is offered, that is all. They can have no desire for more. That is the vow, the rule. They have nothing to do with money.

Bhakta: Well, Swami, excuse me. Sanyasis are perpetually in need of money! No householder worries so much as they, for money! They exploit and extract from the disciples their hard-earned cash. Those who do not give are condemned. Is all this right, Swami? Is this just? Are these people Gurus?

Swami: No wise person will say that these things are just. How can I say it is right? Why, can you not ask such Sanyasis once, “Sirs, why do you need cash? Is it not wrong for you to have this craving for the fame that comes through money?”

Bhakta: Oh, I have asked them, Swami.

Swami: What did they say?

Bhakta: Some said, they wanted money for their expenses; others said, they wanted to develop their Ashram further. Many such reasons were given. For those who have learnt to argue, reason giving is not very hard. It is only when it comes to believing, that we have to choose and discriminate, isn't it?

Swami: The Guru must engage himself in the progress of the disciples who come to him for guidance, and not the Ashram; the Ashritha is more important than the Ashram. The excitement, the anxiety about the Ashram, becomes itself a huge Shramam or burden. It is on account of this that people lose even the little faith and devotion that they have and are transformed into atheists. Such Gurus, instead of giving up all ties, have yoked themselves tighter; they are beasts of burden, rather. My dear fellow, listen to Me, do not cast your looks upon the Guru who inflicts pressure on a disciple to extract money. Keep as far away as possible from such persons; do not lose Faith by contact with them. Preserve it and develop it, all by yourself.

Bhakta: We go to such people eager to learn the higher things of life and to know the path for the attainment of the Lord; we seek and search for them, for we do not know which snake lives in which hole; but we find these cobra sanyasis and are shocked! The anxious desire that they exhibit for the Ashram, is not that also wrong, Swami? If they want to serve the public like that, they can as well be just ordinary people and retain their original names and go about collecting funds and spending them, isn't it? Calling themselves Sanyasis, and wearing that dress, getting Upadesam, taking upon themselves numerous vows at the time of initiation into monk-hood, declaring that they have destroyed all desire. If later they follow the path of accumulation, is it not spoiling the very sacredness?

Swami: That individual may be spoiled, that is all, my dear fellow; the sacredness of Sanyasa can never be diminished! Do not run away with that idea. Of course, there are such men in the world today. But please do not include them in the list of Sanyasis or Swamis. They have no relationship with these two categories. They only do harm to their disciples by retaining those designations. Do not even spend a single thought on them.

Bhakta: All right, Swami. But there are some who have built Ashrams and who are established as Gurus: for them, this desire for money etc. is wrong, is it not?

Swami: Why do you ask? Have these people any special adornment like horns on the head? Really speaking, these people have to be even more careful. For they train

many disciples and so, they must make a special effort to see that the trainees acquire the right attitudes and get fully immersed in the contemplation of the Lord. Otherwise, much injury will be caused. If the Guru pays attention to the spiritual progress and inward joy' of the disciples, the disciples themselves will struggle for the development of the Ashram. No one need exert any pressure. Instead, forgetting their progress, if he clamours for so much of money from this disciple and so much from this devotee for the development of "his" Ashram, he will lose the Ashram itself! The disciple will lose devotion and the Guru will lose his institution!

Bhakta: Besides all this, Swami, if anyone points out to them that it is wrong, they get wild and threaten severe punishments. Is that right, Swami?

Swami: This is an additional wrong. How can it be right? It is not correct for any Guru to weaken the heart of any disciple; he must please it and satisfy it. People who frighten and extract are not teachers, but cheaters. They are not shepherds, but sheep.

Bhakta: Then what do you advise us to do? How are we to deal with these people? Please tell us.

Swami: My dear child, give up all talk of people who have lost their way. Speak of your reaching the path. Give up all contact with such persons and cultivate contact with such persons and cultivate contacts with places where there is neither lust nor greed nor any other desire. Seek for the Guru who looks on all with equal Prema. The real Guru must have certain qualities. Note this. If those qualities are present, go there and be happy. If you do not get such a place, meditate on God within yourself. Do Dhyanam and Bhajan. That is enough; you need not search for another place at all. Whenever you have leisure, read good devotional books. Even from those books, take what you need and discard the rest. Be careful; do not get entangled in all kinds of nets and traps.

Bhakta: What are the qualities of those Great Men, Swami?

Swami: They will not have the craving for wealth; nor the ambition to develop their Ashrams; they will neither love those who praise them nor hate those who blame them. They will not prevent their disciples from approaching them; they will not prohibit any one from approaching them; they will look upon all with 'equal Love. They will not relish the defamation of others; they will not be vengeful against those who point out to them their own mistakes and wrongs. They will always spread Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema; they will ever yearn for the joy, welfare and progress of the devotees. Seek such persons. They are the true Gurus. Do not even cast a glance at those who are afflicted with anger, anxiety, hatred, envy etc., or those worrying about name and fame and honour and status, however pompous their personality, however resounding their reputation.

Bhakta: All right, Swami. It is all very good. But, just one little doubt. These big Gurus, highly learned, giving long lectures for hours together, how is it that they do not realise all this? Cannot these big men see their faults themselves and set them right?

Swami: Well, even an ounce of experience is useful! But, a ton of learning may prove useless. Many people lecture in Colleges, and pour forth hour after hour, things they have learnt by rote. Can one become great by merely the length or grandeur of his lectures? That is like vomitting the swallowed meal. You must see how much of what is spoken is practised; those who give advice must follow it themselves. If you cannot avoid doing a thing, do not ask others to avoid it. So, however learned a person may be, unless he has experience and practice, it will be simply a nine days wonder, and after that he will be neither here nor there. Of course, the qualities I mentioned are to be noted, not merely in the Gurus, but in all. So give up this talk about others being bad or wrong; develop your faith and devotion; strengthen your discipline for meditation on the Lord; engage yourself in beneficial deeds; speak only what will bring good; worship the Lord; keep Him ever in the memory; do Japam and Dhyanam. If you are immersed in these, you will not worry at all about the right and wrong of others.

Like A Child

Like a child I run to Thee
With singing inner smile;
I clap Thy mystery
Like Poet his dreamy thrill.

Decked in simplicity,
Clothed in dedication,
I embrace Thy beauty
With psychic intuition.

I know no tricks of art
Nor learned bookish words;
I know Thou art my heart
And You know all its needs.

I come breaking the bonds
Of mental laws and codes,
I feel Thy love responds
To my passionate Odes.

Wiped are my tears
At the thought of Thy Grace,
Driven are my fears
At the sight of Thy face.

I know not good and bad
I know not what is sin,

What my soul has and had;
I know ALL MINE IS THINE.

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharathi

The Calamity That Was Averted

It was 5 A.M., on 6-6-59. Sri X, aged 70, could not get up from bed; he felt a reeling sensation; the room was turning round and round. The heart was galloping; the pulse was full and fast; the arterial system was in a sclerotic condition; blood pressure was 145 systolic, 65 diastolic, and pulse pressure, 80. The abdomen of X, (who was obese and short) was distended and a gurgling sound could be heard. Auscultation and percussion of the respiratory system revealed nothing, except hurried breathing. The patient could not turn right or left, and he felt greater pain when turning left; if he did not turn, the symptoms were aggravated.

Clearly, a case of impending unconsciousness, with the rupture of a small artery in the brain, followed by convulsions and, if the patient is lucky and holds out, paralysis!

But, Baba intervened with His Mercy! He came to the bedside and, taking “Vibhuti” by a mere wave of His Amrutha Hastha, He rubbed it with His Own Hand on the left temple and sprinkled the rest on the chest and body. Baba said he would be relieved of the suffering, by evening. By evening, the suffering ceased; the calamity was averted; the giddiness stopped. X could sit up in two days; he resumed his usual routine in four days. No one who saw him later could believe that he was so near death’s door.

Dr. V. Brahman

UMA! UMA!! UMA!!!

Thrice do I bow to Thee, Uma!

**UMA! UMA!! UMA!!!
AUM! AUM!! AUM!!!**

To You, the Life, the Breath, Chetana, and the Intellect;
The Perfect and the Imperfect, Hunger and the Shade;
The Sleep where all the senses coiled lie;
The Shakti, microcosmic, macrocosmic!
To You, the Patience and the Modesty,
The Steadiness and the Sturdiness,
The Splendour and the Glory, wherever these are found;
To You the Conduct, Courage and the Rage.

Memory, Morals, Mercy, Mirage,
The Genus, Name and Form,
The Mother in every mother, the Anger in the fang,
The Clamour of the claw, the Symmetry of the Law;
The Struggle behind the lisp, of Right with Wrong;
The Snake, the Rope; the Spinal Stream,
The Wave, the Sea, the Deed, the Dream!
Thrice do I bow to Thee, Uma!

UMA! UMA!! UMA!!!
AUM! AUM!! AUM!!!

(Based on Devi Mahathmyam; Chapter 6)

Dasara

Every one knows that Dasara is a festival sacred for the worship of the Godhead. This is also known as Navaratri; there are two such, one in the month of Chaitra, called Vasantanavaratri, and the other, in the month of Aswija, called Sarad-navaratri. From the first of the Sukla paksha to the Dasami, known as Vijayadashami. The Sarannavaratri is especially dedicated to the worship of Devi, that is, the World protecting Force, immanent in the Lord. Devi is the inseparable half of the Ardhanariswara, the Dweller on the Breast of Vishnu, the Queen of the Speech of Brahma, or as the Devi Mahathmya describes Her, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

Daivashakti is the basic cause of the protection of all that is moveable and immoveable in creation. This guardianship is of three types and so, the maternal spirit is referred to in three ways, as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Durga is the embodiment of the Arogyashakti, Saraswati of Jnanashakti, and Lakshmi of Prabhutwa, or authority and lordship. The Navaratri Puja is of value because all these are essential for every one. Since each Shakti is conceived under the categories of the Three Gunas, each has three nights associated with it, making Nine in all, and on the Dasami following, all three Shaktis are worshiped together, in order to demonstrate that all are basically One. Dasara itself indicates this, for, the syllable Da, stands for Durga, Sa for Saradha, and Ra for Rama, or Lakshmi.

Wealth and happiness are dependent on the merit accumulated in previous births; this is called the Grace of Lakshmi. Since it is so based, there is bound to be differences between man and man; and, it is natural that all this causes a great deal of anger and pride, mental disquiet and blind actions and wickedness. This drags men down to negation of God and a life of falsehood and injustice. Jnanashakti takes men from this Ashanti to Prasanthi; to attain it, we require Arogya or Health and so, the presiding Deities or Physical Health, of Jnana and of Bhagya, viz., Durga, Saraswati and Lakshmi

are worshipped. These Shaktis are important for man; they are inherent in the Godhead; and, so, it is also known as Shaktipuja.

In past ages, the Daityas and Danavas, full of Tamoguna and Rajoguna, celebrated in religious lore as Mahishasura, Sumbha, Nisumbha, Dhumraksha, Madhu, Kaitabha, Rakthaksha, Rakthajihva etc., spread wickedness everywhere, caused the decline of Sathya and Dharma and encouraged the reviling of God. They even aspired to the rank of Devatas and strove to pull them down from heaven. Then, Indra, the Lord of Devathas prayed for advice to Brihaspathi the Preceptor and he said, “These Rakshasas have grown mighty through the force of Maya and so, the only way to overcome them is by a combination of Dama, Sama and Rama, which is the antidote to the Tamoguna and the Rajoguna of these wicked men.” Then, the Devas with Indra and Brihaspathi approached the Lord and prayed to Him; by His mere Sankalpa, He moulded His Shaktis into a Female Form and, She was equipped with various weapons. The Devas praised Her Terrible Form and, She destroyed the enemies and re-established, Sathya, Dharma, Shanti and Prema.

From that day, the Navaratri Festival especially Durgashtami, Mahanavami, Saraswati Puja and Vijayadashami celebrated during the Nine days have become auspicious for all. The glory of this occasion is explained in the Devi Mahathmya very well.

Navaratri at the Prasanthi Nilayam is a festival of immense significance. For, here we have the Avatar of the Lord, come for the resuscitation of Sathya Dharma Shanti and Prema. He is making every one aware of His Omnipotence and Omnipresence in order to remould them into Sadhakas and show them the path of Self-realisation and He is vouchsafing to them the Blessings of Durga, Saraswati and Lakshmi, that is to say, Arogya, Jnana and Prabhutwa. His Glance of Grace will grant Dama; His Discourses during the Festival will grant Sama; worshipping Him will grant Sarvajanaprema; thus, Dasara at Puttapparthi will be thrice beneficial; it will contribute to better living here, and certain Release hereafter.

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Sathya Sai Baba Speaks

When you are an infant, the mother takes you on her lap and feeds you while fondling you; when you grow a little older, she serves food on a plate and coaxes you to eat it by yourself; when you become a young person, she asks you to go into the kitchen and serve on your plate whatever you require and finish the meal, all by yourself. All this remember; is not due to any feeling of partiality between one child and another; she loves all equally. So too, the Lord seems, to the ignorant, to be partial; but, He loves all in equal measure.

Four patients approach a doctor; he prescribes salts to one; bicarb to another; the third gets an ointment; the fourth is sent to the surgical ward, for an operation. Does this mean that the doctor is unkind to the fourth? Does this mean that he is partial to the third? No, it only means that he is a good doctor who knows his business... Accept whatever the Lord prescribes for you; He knows His Business!

Two wires bring electricity and when they come together, Light is produced; Nara and Narayana are the two wires, the Sadhana and the Sankalpa. Both are essential for Illumination.

Editorial

“There are two paths which every man must walk along, the Dharma Marga relating to the body and the activities related to it and physical world and the Brahma Marga, relating to the soul and the disciplines related to its illumination and its realisation.” Thus spoke Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, on 2nd October, on the occasion of the Third Anniversary of the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital. He said that man must grasp God with the right hand and the world with the left. But later, after a life of Sadhana, the left hand will lose its hold on the world. “That is why it is called Left,” He said! But, the right must never be allowed to lose its grip on the Lord, for, as He said, “It is right in sticking to the Lord, through thick and thin!”

Baba has been emphasising the need to do one’s duty whatever it is, with faith and discipline, and not to discard Karma, unless and until it drops off automatically. As a matter of fact, He advises some activity for all, not only to utilise the time well, but also to purify the mind and to destroy the Ahankara. He advised every one to do such work as will not harm either others or oneself, which will not pain others nor give pain to oneself.

Baba spoke in detail about courage, faith, confidence and the joy of life as more valuable and effective than any known drug. This is what the latest school of medicine, the psychosomatic, prides itself on discovering!

Of course, no Guru or Guide or Mahatma at the present time can give man greater courage, and confidence than Baba Himself, for as every one who has had the experience can describe, Baba by His Sankalpa can create protect and destroy. Besides, He is ever present everywhere and His Karuna is all comprehensive. So, when He takes on the burden or assures His Grace, we have no right to fall ill at all, for we get the profoundest peace and strength. We have only to engage ourselves in the Sadhana that Baba prescribes. Baba advised the Bhaktas, that day, to practise the constant remembrance of the name of the Lord. He said that the Name contained all the Vitamins from A to Z, and so, it clarifies and purifies the thought stream, removing the six fold parasites of Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Mada and Matsarya and the virus of Vasana. Namasmara is, according to Baba who is the Lord Vaidyanatha, the most effective drug to cure of Bhavaroga.

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Jivanmuktas, the realised souls, are as the lighthouses that point out the way to ships caught in blinding darkness in mid-ocean. The spiritual lighthouses show the way to those who struggle helplessly in the thick night of ignorance.

All are born out of the womb of the One Lord. Just as many varieties of fish and crabs and aquatic creatures move about inside a big tank, multitudes of human beings move about in the sea called the Lord. This is indeed a very awesome scene. Some are undeveloped, some underdeveloped; they swim around, greedy and selfish. In the midst

of this crowd of ignorant beings, there are a few highly developed souls, Jnanis and Yogis. Since these latter are mixed up with the ignorant crowd, it becomes difficult to distinguish the Wise from the others. A microscope is necessary to identify the red corpuscles in the blood; similarly, we need a special microscope to find out who are the Jnanis; that microscope is no other than Dhyanam.

It is really a source of amazement, this creation and the wonder with which it is filled. But considering present conditions, there are very few who watch for Light and who are guided by the Light. So, instead of following this person and that, and taking devious roads and getting lost, it is best to place full faith in the Lord Himself and rely on Him as the only Mother. Father, Guru and Guide. Then you will never lose the right path. He will never direct you to the wrong path. To have that firm faith and that experience one must take to Dhyana; that is the one and only means. It is enough if the Name and Form of the Lord are meditated upon with Prema and with Faith; and you can choose the Name and the Form which you like most.

For this spiritual discipline, you must cultivate the quality of being always joyful; with smile on the face; this will give you good distinction. People will also like you more. And so, the Lord too will have joy on seeing you. Therefore, observe Dhyanam with innocence, purity and humility. Then you can attain without fail, whatever you strive for. Do not lose your temper in any situation; do not lose courage in any contingency. Respect every one, whatever his status. Then the quality of universal Prema will develop in you. As a result, Dhyanam will progress without disturbance.

For the cure of illness without resort to drug, Dhyanam is the only remedy. Even the capacity to discriminate and analyse will increase and by means of that, illness, however serious, can be overcome.

In every word uttered by man, there are two kinds of senses; the obvious and the innate, the native and the qualitative. The Upanishads take up the second, and elaborate, clarify and make the Brahman known. One important thing that is to be remembered is that it is possible and desirable to utilise the full power of words, through softness and sweetness. If one is anxious to see God in every object, the sweetness of the word will be of immense help. Sir, Master, Lord, in these words lie the secret of much affection and regard; through these and such words, how happy you can make others and how light your minds will become, by the practice of softness of expression! When Dhyanam is carried on in that happy atmosphere, how quickly can concentration be attained!

Instead, if you use in conversation words that blame others and despise them, you become the target for blame in your turn and your mind gets agitated by the effect of both; so the object of Dhyanam is not realised because the atmosphere turns impure. Therefore, if you really wish to be happy through Dhyanam, you must, as a preliminary to the process, be engaged either in joyful conversation or in happy thoughts or memories. Sweet and soft conversation helps Dhyanam a great deal. Man must cultivate such a character, for character outlasts the body. Virtues are the strength and the glory of Man. Character is Power. So train it and use it to attain the visualisation of the Lord,

Sakshatkara; hold fast to the Goal. You must have contentment, whatever the gain or loss, or state. This is essential. Contentment grants happiness and increases it. For the contented mind, life is an endless festival. The mind worried by desire will have no rest. With desire troubling you, concentration is impossible. Desire is the fire in your frame; it reduces you to ashes. Contentment is the effective drug to destroy it. Just as a bath in the cool waters of a stream refreshes a traveller exhausted and perspiring in the burning heat of day, the man suffering from the scorching fire of greed will be refreshed by the pellucid waters of Contentment.

One should have the desire only for the path of Realisation. One should not dedicate one's life for the mean desires of the world. Dedicate all to the Lord; that is genuine contentment. That is the result of the acquisition, of peace of mind, joy and discrimination; of Shanti, Santosha and Vicharana. Sakshatkara is also possible then.

To acquire these, Smarana and Dhyanam are the only means. They alone can give that power. Nowhere else can you get them, nowhere else will you get them. More than all, if you possess Santosha, the other two will be added to you. Nothing is more profitable to man than contentment. It is a treasure richer than the three worlds. The contented person can experience indescribable Divine glory. He is more joyful than the owner of Kamadhenu and Kalpataru. He can immerse himself within himself and discover bliss therein. Do not strive for physical joy, discarding the more permanent joy of inner calm and contentment.

Do not get attached to this evanescent body; utilise the body as an implement. Consider yourself as separate from this destructible body, created out of the conjunction of the five Elements. Know yourself as the indestructible Atma. As the house in which you dwell is separate from you, so is the body, which surrounds you for a little time, also separate. The body is the root cause of all this grief, all this calamity and all this slavery. Understand this well: make the body obey your will; never bow down to it and follow its whims. Be prepared to cast it away; resolve to control it and keep it under strict control. You have to deal carefully with the body; you have to train it with great attention.

Though all that was said above related to the Atma, some activities have to be undertaken by everyone. How to use the body as an implement, as a boat for example, to cross the stream of life? Until the other bank is reached, or in other words, until the Ultimate Truth is attained, you must take care to see that it is not damaged or broken or leaky. Let not the boat fall to pieces; be on the lookout for the signs. That is to say, moderate food of good Satwic quality at the correct time and disciplined physical activities for the body should not be given up. Such activity directed to the spiritual becomes the discipline needed for real Sadhana. This is what is referred to as Dhyanam, Smarana, Puja and Bhajan. When the discipline is practised, as well as later, you must be joyful and not gloomy. This should not be forgotten; never get tired or timid. If however the Sadhaka gets tired, then he can eat at the end of the day's Dhyanam, a few groundnut kernels or almond seeds soaked well in water. These will cool the body and endow it with strength.

Thus, every man must develop the virtue of contentment, through Dhyana-Sadhana. Contentment is a Satwic quality; it will not transform you into an idler; no, not at all! It will, on the other hand, permit the mind to travel towards the Lord; it will grant peace, it will also hinder inessential activities which have profit for oneself as the aim. The contented man will be fully Satwic: he will lead an inner life, in communion with the Atma, He can do any work, without rest and without complaint. The waves of the mind, which sway in many directions, get a single aim. The Rishis, Bikshus and Yogis of the past realised the goal of life by means of the peace that come to them through Contentment. It gives all Sadhakas the enthusiasm and the vigour necessary for treading the path that leads to Sakshatkara. Contented, the Sadhaka can ignore the dangers and difficulties of that path. He treats as poison all the impermanent things of this life; he discards them as trash. Through Contentment, Discrimination, and Renunciation the spirit of inquiry develops. The story of Meera is an example of this. Understand well the stories of Radha, Jayadeva and Gauranga. They will teach you the Truth.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

There was once a foolish householder who would not repair his leaky house either during the rainy season, because it was raining or during the other months, because there was no urgent need! Do not follow his example. Repair yourself as soon as you come to know your defects.

Sandeha Nivarini

16

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Swami, you explained the relationship of the Guru and the Sishya. Looking at present conditions he who reveals the reality is not liked at all. Many of the Gurus, Swamis and Sadhus are, as you said, behaving wrongly and in many ways ruining their very name. Besides they are acting contrary to the vows of Sanyasa and the Dharma relating to the Lord. Such people may not appreciate your statements. They may even develop animosity, for your laying bare their defects. Or, what is worse, they may try to justify their conduct and invent stories and arguments to make their actions appear correct. Your remarks apply only to the wrongdoers; they do not refer to those who are engaged in good activities. So, really good Sadhus and those interested in upholding the ideas will be happy that You have spoken thus. But regardless of what people might say, please Swami, help Sadhakas to progress and reveal to us the glory of the Lord.

Swami: Well, what does it matter to Me how people talk? How can falsehood be supported, fearing comment? As the burden so the bearer, says the proverb. Only fakes will resent and comment adversely. The genuine Gurus will rejoice. Only a thief will feel

his shoulder, when some one announces the theft of a gourd (as the saying goes) because he is afraid, whether at the time, lie has the stolen gourd actually on his shoulders! Those who do not steal gourds will not feel their shoulders. Those who are genuine will have no fear or anger. The others can learn a lesson if they develop a sense of shame and resolve to mend their ways, at least, hereafter. For deeds done in Ignorance, repentance is the way to make amends and to earn pardon. Not to repeat the same deed is the sign of the morally strong.

Bhakta: Swami, I have a few doubts concerning the subject of Dhyana which You are now writing about: can I ask You?

Swami: Of course, you can ask and have your doubts removed. It is good for you and it gives Me joy.

Bhakta: Some people practise Dhyana, but they are unable to know whether the Dhyana has progressed or not! What do You say about that?

Swami: Progress in Dhyana means the attainment of Ekagratha, Concentration. Each one can judge for himself without doubt, how far he has been able to succeed in Concentration, can't he?

Bhakta: Some say that they see all sorts of things during Dhyana; some hear all types of sounds. Do these indicate progress?

Swami: They are delusions. They handicap progress. They implant conceit and disperse Concentration. The distraction of sights and sounds is no sign of Dhyanam.

Bhakta: Then what is to be done when such are seen?

Swami: Don't allow the mind to wander on to them; never lose sight of the Divine Form which you have pictured for yourself. Be convinced that these are but obstacles designed to scatter your attention away from the Divine Form. If you permit these sights and sounds to creep in, the Original Form will be dimmed, your Ahamkara will increase and you will lose your way.

Bhakta: But, Swami, some people do say that these things are signs of progress in Dhyana!

Swami: That only means that they themselves are not practising Dhyana properly! Besides, not knowing what Dhyana is, they delude their disciples also by talking like this, to please them. That is the only profit earned.

Bhakta: Well, does it mean then that, by means of Dhyana, we cannot see the Lord?

Swami: Why not? Certainly, it is possible. If you fix your attention on the sublimely beautiful Form of the Lord and concentrate on That alone, you will receive His Grace in that Form Itself in various ways. While doing so, many a disturbance might intervene. You should not be deluded; be on your guard, never forget the auspicious Form. Picture to yourself that all Creation is immersed in it.

Bhakta: But really, can we not know at anytime what stage we have reached in Dhyana?

Swami: You can identify the progress or decline of Dhyana only when you know this is stage number so and so, this stage is such and such etc., isn't it? The Dhyana-rupa is Beginningless and End-less and so its Fruition also cannot be declared, complete and finished.

Bhakta: Then, do You say that Dhyana is endless?

Swami: What is generally called the End is the end of the I and the merging of all in the One Form. Dhyana has no end.

Bhakta: How are we to understand its stages?

Swami: You can have an idea of the stage If you examine daily how you are able to concentrate, how far you have subdued the wandering nature of the mind, and how deeply you taste the Divine Form; that is all. The stage reached cannot be cognised. What you receive and at what time, depends on His Grace. The Sadhaka's mission is to practise Dhyana, without deviating from the path. The rest is all His Grace. It does not depend upon the number of days or the length of time. Some may require many births; others may realise the goal in a few days even. It depends on each one's Shraddha, Bhakti and Sadhana. It cannot be calculated and reasoned out.

Bhakta: That means, we should not worry about our Sadhana, its progress, its stage, possible decline etc.

Swami: Exactly. Worry about the discipline needed for the Sadhana, but not about its fruition. The reality, the realisation of the reality, these have no steps or limits. Do not yield to all sorts of delusions or desires for this stage and that. Stick to the goal and the journey. Never give up the discipline of the Sadhana. Do not change the time of Dhyana. With one aim and unchanging attitude, strive to attain it. That will vouchsafe the Fruit. That will bless you with the Bliss. Do not be led away by what others speak about their imaginary experiences. For you, nothing can be as genuine as your own experience. Therefore, first attempt to gain undeviating Concentration, Ekagratha; let that be your one aim.

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Attention Please

During Navaratri, on 8-10-59, a Post Office was newly opened at the Prasanthi Nilayam Colony itself. Please therefore address all communications to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Bhaktas, and Sanathana Sarathi Office, hereafter as “Prasanthi Nilayam, P.O., via Bukkapatnam, Anantapur Dt.” So that letters etc. may reach without delay.

Editor

Birthday Blessings

Listen, O embodiments of Ananda! Accept these Blessings on the occasion of the Birthday. Be happy, full of health, and joy and peace; equipped with Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya and endowed with Divine Grace, realise the Atman. Do not, out of undue attachment, crave for the short-lived, the deluding desires of the world; yearn for the genuine, the ever-lasting, the Eternal Wealth, and attain Bliss.

Remember, the minute that has fled is no longer yours; the minute that is approaching cannot be counted as yours. The minute that is with you, this alone, is truly yours. Make the best use of it for it may be the last. Be prepared every instant for entering the presence of the Lord. Pollute not the precious gifts of God: the time He has allotted you, the mind He has placed in you, and the activity of the senses He has provided you. Do not pray for something mean and mortal. Seek the Eternal. For, if that is gained, all things shall be added unto you.

Begin now, this very moment, to voice forth your call to God and pray.

I do not need any riches; for, why should I?
A carefree mind is enough, O Father,
That is a Million for me!

I shall not yearn for Fortune; for, why should I?
A smile-lit face is enough, O Father,
That is a Million for me!

I shall not pine and want: for, why should I?
A glance from Thy Eye is enough, O Father,
That is a Million for me!

I shall not crave for Wealth; for, why should I?
The joy of being Thine is enough, O Father,
That is a Million for me!

Enough for me these things I have,
Whatever Thou hast gifted now;

Why think of getting more?
I'll have them when Thou wishest;

Enough for me Thy un-diminishing Grace
Which falls on all whom Thou hast blessed,

With the words: "This one is Mine"

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Dhyana Vahini

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The fulfillment of the life of man consists in the realisation of the Atma; that is to say, Atma-sakshatkara. To get this realisation, one should be entirely free from Vasanas or impulses. Moksha or Liberation is, in the true sense of the term, liberation from the bondage of these Vasanas. These tendencies are of two types, beneficent, and maleficent. The beneficent tendencies are saturated with holiness; the maleficent tendencies feed the mind and make it more and more uncontrollable and unsteady; they spread and strengthen the desire for objective pleasure.

If the Shubha Vasana or beneficent impulses are encouraged and cultivated, they will not go on multiplying indefinitely and binding the mind; they become fried seeds, which will not sprout. If you stick to the Shubha Vasanas, you can easily acquire Bramajnana. These Vasanas are characterised by such activities as the association with Mahatmas, reverence for the great, conversation with them, following their advice, charity, fortitude, love, patience, truth, courage, continence, etc. These are the pure impulses. The impure tendencies (Vasanas) lead one to such vices as the craving to see things that cater to the lower desires (like cinema pictures); to eat dishes that are full of Rajas (like fish, flesh, etc.); to drink intoxicants that ruin one's personality; they develop anger, delusion, greed, conceit, deceit, hatred, envy etc. Such impure tendencies are of three types; Worldly Vasanas, Scholarly or Intellectual Vasanas and Physical or Bodily Vasanas. The physical impulses make man desire a beautiful physique, a strong sturdy build, a glossy skin that will never be disfigured by wrinkles and round hard muscles. The scholarly Vasanas prompt man to crave for being known as an unrivalled expert and for the defeat of every competitor in the field. And lastly, the Worldly Vasanas, the craving for glory, for power, personal authority and pomp. All such desires can be grouped under this head. All these are impulses. These bind you to the wheel of Samsara and tie you down to this Earth. The giant tree called mind has two seeds, Vasana and Prana. The seed becomes the tree, the tree yields the seed. The Prana moves because of the Vasanas. The Vasanas operate because of the Prana.

Of these, even if a single one is destroyed, the other too is destroyed. So, if the mind has to be free from their influence, Ignorance or Ajnana, has to be transformed first. That Ajnana does not exist alone; it has an offspring: Ahamkara, selfishness. That Asura, again, has two children, Raga and Vasana; that is to say, Passion and Craving. Passion and Craving are closely interrelated. As the passion, so the desire. They are sisters. Raga means attachment or attraction. Through Raga, man gets the feelings of my and mine; those feelings provoke desires; desires breed worry. Therefore, to remove Ahamkara these two, Raga and Vasana, have to be annihilated. That means Ajnana has to go; for by that means alone can Ahamkara be killed. How to destroy Ajnana and develop Sujnana? That is the question! The answer is: through Dhyanam. The conquest of Ajnana, Ahamkara. Raga and Vasana brings about Moksha or Liberation for the Jivi.

He who is a slave to impulses and tendencies is devoid of Jnana. He is, in truth, a weakling. But let me assure him, he need not be alarmed. As soon as Vasanas are uprooted, he can earn back the Divine nature that he has lost by neglect. The Vasanas invade the realm of the heart; they cause endless trouble. They remind you of pleasures, agitating the memory of past experiences, and you start craving for them again. The cravings make the senses and their leader, the Manas, to engage themselves in brisk activities; there is no escape for them from this. So man attempts to collect the things he craves for and to enjoy them. All this takes place in the twinkling of an eye, so to say. The Vasanas operate so subtly and so powerfully. Just as the seed contains within itself the trunk, the branches, the twigs, the leaves, the flowers and the fruits; so too, in the Vasana, all this lies dormant. The Vasanas are the cause of all, the objective happiness of man. If they are absent, the mind is pellucid and pure. If they are present all purity is ruined; they are obstacles in the path of Truth, of Atma and of immortality. A mind free from Vasana is transmuted and is no longer Mind.

Nature or Prakriti is the world of Vasanas. The Mind is attracted towards Nature and the external objects of the world by means of this tendency for attachment and it starts contemplating on the objects and dwelling on the qualities, all on account of these Vasanas. If one has no Vasana his mind will not be affected at all by the objective world. The Manas is like a piece of cloth; it takes on any colour with which it is dyed. Satwic Vasanas will make it white, Rajasic Vasanas will change it into red; while Tamasic Vasanas will give it a black colour. The mind is shaped by the type of Vasanas with which it is filled. Man has to undertake Dhyanam and Dharana in order to destroy these Vasanas. The mind is but a bundle of Vasanas.

Some aspirants say to themselves that in spite of many years of steady practice, they have yet to acquire success in Dhyanam and Dharana. The reason need not be specially pointed out. It is just this: they have not been able to uproot the Vasanas! Therefore, such practitioners must strive to conquer innate tendencies. They must fortify themselves with greater faith, and act.

If the Sadhaka is disturbed now and then by impure Vasanas, he must overcome them by his will power and his spiritual exercises. The Jivanmukta has burnt out his Vasanas, but the Grihastha or householder is cultivating them. There is no profit in simply controlling them; a cobra becomes harmless only when its fangs are plucked out; similarly, their roots must be burnt. Then only man can attain the Brahman.

Of course, even pure desires are a bond. But they are not hindrances, however many they may be. A thorn is removed by another thorn and both are thrown out afterwards, is it not? So also, when impure Vasanas are overcome through the influence of pure Vasanas, one has to outgrow both. This means that even the purest of Vasanas, the craving for Moksha or Liberation, has to disappear in time. Only then can You become That. A shackle is a shackle, whether it be of iron or gold. One has to be free from both. That is to say, one should attain a stage when neither good nor bad will attract or repel.

Any one aiming at the realisation of God should practise the diminishing of impulses, the curbing of the mind and the understanding of the fundamental principle. Not one of these is enough for Moksha. In the Jivanmukta impulses persist, but as fried seeds only. They will not cause further births. See, the subtle body is the Ajnani, the seat of Ignorance. It is saturated with impulses and traditions and experiences. The Atma is free from all these. It is ever pure. It belongs to neither sex, has no mind, no senses, no form. Not only that; it has no Prana, even! It cannot be said to be alive or dead. How can contemplation on such an Atma be anything other than pure? How can light and darkness coexist? How can purity and impurity co-exist?

Of all the workshops in the world, the workshop of the body is the most wonderful, because it is the tabernacle of the Lord. In such a factory, the impulses are sublimated into vows, the impurities are weeded out, beneficent desires are shaped and good imaginings are brought about. The main aim is the uprooting of impulse, though this is a difficult task.

Mountains can be swept away sooner than these deep-rooted Vasanas. But with will-power and zest, supported by faith, they can be overcome in a short time. Only, do not give up your determination and faith whatever the loss, hardship or obstacle. Remember, the Vasanas overpower you and keep you down as their slave. Opium and Brandy enslave you and hold you in their full grip only for some time: but Vasanas grip you for a whole lifetime! The entire meaning and purpose of Dhyanam is to attain freedom from these mighty and manifold Vasanas.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sandeha Nivarini

17

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bhakta: Dhyanam means vision of the Form of the Lord, isn't it, Swami? When such a Form is actually seen, they say it is not real and genuine! What do they mean by this?

Swami: Seeing the Form of the Lord is the goal of Dhyanam. To achieve that, is the aim. But before that goal is reached, there are some obstacles in the way. These are to be guarded against.

Bhakta: What kind of obstacles are they? How are we to guard ourselves?

Swami: You have boarded a train to reach a village. You have heard that the particular village has a station. Many a station of the same type come during the journey and the train halts at each of them. But just because the train halts, you do not get down at

any of them with your luggage, do you? If you get down, you will not be reaching the place where you have to go, is it not? It is no good, alighting at intermediate stations; for you miss your goal and suffer many hardships, not to speak of delay. The wiser course is to note even before starting on the journey, the names of the intermediate stations etc., by approaching some persons who have travelled on the same route before.

Bhakta: Every one appears as if he is a seasoned traveller on the route! How are we to distinguish between those who pretend and those who know?

Swami: Of course, this has to be pondered over. Each one might have travelled by a route of his own. Some might tell you the details of the route, the stations etc., with the aid of maps only. If that is so, you should not follow their directions on that basis. Consider wherefrom they started and wherefrom you are starting; consider the route they traversed and the route you have to take. Moreover, it is impossible to consult those who have travelled as far as the goal, for they will not come back; they won't be available for consultation, at the stage where you are. Therefore, you need not take the trouble to search and secure persons who can tell you their own experience of the route. It is best to take the help and the advice given by the veterans, in the Gita, the Sastras, the Vedas and the Upanishads; rely on the words of the Lord and follow the Upadesha of the Avatar Purushas. Besides, there are countless great men who can guide you, as far as they themselves have traveled, and not beyond. For, how can they tell you things they have themselves not experienced?

Bhakta: Well then; how can we get the opportunity to reach that path and attain that goal?

Swami: If they are destined for it, it won't be difficult at all. The chance will come seeking them; you must have heard the saying. "The man who went in search of a creeper, tripped over it on the way." You need not doubt this will happen.

Bhakta: Swami, some people say that if we do not get some visions and sounds and lights during Dhyanam, we can take it that our Dhyanam has not progressed! Do You say that they are wrong?

Swami: It is the image of their own idea. Perhaps they do Dhyanam in order to get such sights and sounds! Therefore, they experience them. They are things by which each one of them is deluded; they do not analyse the truth underlying the visions! Really speaking, they should not seek these impermanent delusions.

Bhakta: Then what are we to seek, Swami?

Swami: Seek and desire the Principle of everything: that which, if known, everything is known; that which, if seen all is seen and understood; do not seek for the drops, in your attempt to know the flood. When you have attained the Ocean (the basis of all the drops), you will not have delusion of the drop.

Bhakta: Some Sadhakas picture to themselves during Dhyanam, the Guru; is that correct?

Swami: The Guru shows the path; he teaches what is beneficial. So, he has to be shown respect and gratitude, of course. But the Guru should not be taken to be all powerful and all-inclusive. Of course, the Lord is in every one, as the Atma; give each one the status that is his due and not more.

Bhakta: But some great men declare that the Guru is both father and mother; that he is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, all in one.

Swami: Based on the Atma, that is correct. But such Gurus are rare. You can speak of him as father, mother, God etc., on account of love and regard, that is all. How can he be so in fact? As loving as the mother, as protective as the father, you can say. But then, what do you say of those who gave you this body and brought you up, even before you got the Guru? First and most important, be grateful to the mother and the father; serve them; make them happy; respect them. Respect the Guru as the person who shows you the path, who looks after your progress and is interested in your welfare. Worship the Lord as the witness of everything everywhere, as the master of Creation, Preservation and Dissolution, and as the All-Powerful One. Remember, you can consider only the Lord as the Universal Form and as the Universal Friend and Protector. All others have to be treated for just their individual status: the mother as mother, the father as father, the Guru as Guru; in truth, these cannot be one. Ponder over this. If you seek Atma-sakshatkara, you have to install in your Dhyanam the Form of the Lord (the Universal Atma) which you like most, and not the picture of your Guru. It is not proper. The Lord is of a status higher than the Guru, is it not? Of course, have his words as the foundation and try to attain the Origin of all things; that will give the fruition of all efforts.

You are asked to treat the pebble as a gem, the gem as a pebble! Of course, through compulsion and bound by order, people may obey and accept but can that feeling be genuine? It is no sign of Dhyanam to have one idea outside and another inside. Unless this conflict is resolved and there is the same idea outside as well as inside, there will not be any stability in Dhyanam; nor will there be any success.

Bhakta: Very good, Swami. Without knowing matters fully, many a Sadhaka is wasting years in what he calls Dhyanam. They observe no law or limit. For all such, Your advice shows the Reality. It will establish them in the Eternal. Today I am indeed blessed, Swami.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The King of Kings
“Behind all rulers is the King of Kings

Behind all teachers is the One Teacher.”

The divine trumpets sound. We hear the thrilling music; in the distance, we see the Divine Avatar. On His Face is the Light that never was on sea or land. The radiance of His countenance and the authoritative, yet tender tones of His Voice reveal that the country of His origin is beyond the bounds of earthly geography.

He comes, not to upset the structure of society, but to touch every individual human heart. He remodels our sense of values. By Him, every valley shall be exalted; every hill shall be made low. The crooked shall be straightened and the rough places made plain. In this sense, He is a revolutionist; for He revolutionises the mind, changing it from cowardice to courage, from vulgarity to beauty, from slavery to independence, from selfishness to unselfishness.

This Master Teacher teaches a lesson of just three words, but it takes a lifetime to learn it: “God is Love.” The Power dimly discernible behind appearances, the Power that holds the stars in their places, that controls the ebb and flow of the tides, that keeps running the mechanism of the Universe, that power is Love. This Master is Prema Avatar; Prema is the core of thought, the philosophical principle. Hence, one who follows the Master is in contact with the motive energy of the Universe, the Supreme Law, the Eternal Love and Truth.

The evolutionists tell us that it has taken millions and millions of years to change the animal into man. Love can do it in an instant! The conversion of Jean Val Jean, the animal man by the Prema of the Bishop is an example of this transforming power. Love can change a coward into a hero; it can change a despondent woman into a being full of zest. The Divine Prince of Parthi has started out on His Spiritual Campaign, with Love as His weapon.

Morality, respectability, scrupulous accuracy are excellent qualities in the world of business. But they are millions of miles short of what is meant by Love. No husband asks for a receipt when he hands over money to his wife; no physician sends a bill to his son. So too, in the Kingdom of God one touch of Love makes the whole world kin; we are all one family. That is why from all the quarters, monarchs, generals, artists men and women from all sections have embraced the Lotus Feet of this Master, the King of Kings.

“Hatred, Jealousy, Resentment, these are poisons and they must be obliterated from the heart,” says our Master. As a matter of fact, the command to love our enemies is eminently practical. It is essential for our health and well being, that we eliminate this poison of hate. It murders the soul. It destroys all good impulses. Resentment or even indifference may destroy the soul more than which there is nothing more valuable. So, the Master leads His forces along the path of Prema. His has been a continuous triumph over evil, and the lasting establishment of Peace.

From the Himalayan Peaks to the Kanyakumari Seashore, our Beloved Master’s Prema Vahini has surged across the Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna, Pennar,

Swarnamukhti, Kaveri, Bhavani, Poorna, Thamraparni flooding the land with the message of Love. The victories of Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon and Hitler are as fallen dust; the Atom and Hydrogen bombs are but means of releasing the energy in matter! As Sarvantaryami, the master makes the lasting conquest. He is the Causative Energy Himself and before Him, even the mightiest of weapons loses its power. He is omnipotent and omnipresent. He manifested Himself even from a pillar for Dushtasikshana and Sishtarakshana.

And so, the King of Kings is on the March. Let us avail ourselves of this opportunity. This Supreme Architect has taken up the Sarathyam, the Charioteer-ship to teach each one of His children the right mode of life, each in its own special way, so as to evolve its destiny along lines of progressive assent, until the purpose of its existence is achieved.

May he bless us all with His Love. Let us all worship Him with the flowers of virtue and adore Him with the garland of Prema.

Dr. S. Lakshmi

You may wonder why a train is scheduled to arrive at a certain hour and another to start at some other hour. You wonder because you do not know that the timetable is inter-connected; the arrival and departure timings all follow a plan and have a purpose. So too, in all other spheres, God has a plan and a purpose and, not knowing it, you wonder why this thing happened and that did not.

Baba

A Garland of Poems Offered in Respectful Homage

Dayaasaagaran
(Tamil)
by B. V. Raman

*Manjuthavizh Kailayangiri vazh, Mahaadevona?
Pancha-paandavar doothano? Padumanaabano?
Thanjamenru saranadaintha than-bhakthargalin
Chanchalam theerthu kaarkkum Sree Sathya Sai?*

(Is He Mahadeva, of the snow-clad Kailasagiri? Is he the Ambassador of the Five Pandavas? Is He Padmanabha? Who is this Sri Sathya Sai, who removes the chanchala of all Bhaktas who take refuge in Him?)

*Mannavan mangayai thedi, thennagar Ilangai naada
Annavaan thall-paninda alaikadal-aran, innamum
Aththaana kaana agamgizhndu adi-panindaan
Muththaal aana maalai kondu!*

(When the Prince seeking His Consort came to the Southern Lanka Coast, the Sea Lord fell at His Feet. Seeing the Master again, the Sea Lord was so joyful that he fell at His Feet, with his offering of a Garland of Pearls.)

*Aakkale ara neriyayi aarralurra appiraman
Ookkamundan ulaganaiththum thorruvikka, neekkalillaathu
Epporulum evvidathathum eppozhudum eduththarulinaan
Ip-pemmaan, karam asaiththey!*

(That Brahma is ceaselessly engaged in the task of Creation, for he has to make all the Lokas. This Brahma by a mere wave of the Hand creates all things, at all times and at all places.)

*Paar-kkadaludiththa amudaththai parivudan surarkku pagirnda
Kaarkum kadavul Thirumaale, karunai koorndu, paarkkumavar
Viyappa, vilambinaan Vinnamudam! Kovalaththil;
Payakkap-pomo, Parththivaasan apaara sakthi?*

(The same Vishnu, who graciously distributed the Amrita got by churning the Ocean of Milk, served Celestial Nectar to the wonder of all who saw, at Kovalam! O, the Immeasurable Shakti of Parthivasa!)

*Sundiranaam, Suthanthiranaam, Chanthirachoodan, chudalai
vaazh
Andhakaari Anga-mengumaninda veebhoothiyai
Manthira-neerayi, mani-oushadamayi, maandar-uyya
Thandaruluvaan id-dayaasaagaran!*

(The beautiful, the free, the moon-crested, the burial-ground dweller, the destroyer of Andhaka, wears over all His Body the Vibhuti; this Ocean of Mercy blesses us with that Vibhuti, to be used as magic drug, as the master medicine.)

*Than-nuyirkk-uyiraayi thanayanaip-peni k-kaarkum
Annai-kku inai undo, avaniyil? Mannu-pugazh
Mannar-kono, than-nudal thurandu thaa sendru thavirppaan
Annavaan adiyaar-padum idar!*

(Who is there in the world comparable to the Mother who guards the child, as the breath of her breath? But, this world famous Lord, O, what does He do? He discards His Body, and hastens to the side of His devotees to prevent any mishap!)

*Paandavan ther-oatti, par-pala leelai kaati,
Gaandeeban thelira Geethai boadiththa kamalakkannan
Meendum maanavaar-uyya Sanaathana Saarathiyayi
Poondanan Ip-pemmaan ip-punitha pani!*

(Driving the chariot of the Pandava, manifesting various leelas, the Lotus-eyed Krishna taught the Gita to awaken the wearer of the Gandiva bow; this our Lord has again taken up that holy task for mankind as the Sanathana Sarathi!)

*Moanamyi naalvar-kku muththirai-yaal marai-nutpa
Jnanaththai boadiththa sadgurunaathan, maanavarai
Illaraththile-iruththi, nallaraththai nilai-naatti
Sollil arulinaan jnaana ch-chudar!*

(The Sadguru, who by silence instructed the Four by mere Mudra, the Jnana, which is the essence of Dharma, now blesses all mankind with His Words, conveying the Light of Jnana, keeping all in their Ashrama but yet up-holding true Dharma.)

*Aadi-antha milaa anu-anda-mengulavaum
Joathiye! Jnaana ch-chudare! Poarri Mediniyil
Naadamaayi Vedamaayi pancha bhoothamaayi thoandriya Sayi
Naathane! Por-paathane! Poarri, poarri.*

(O Light that illumines the beginning-less, end-less Atom and Universe, O Flame of Wisdom, bless me. O, Sayinatha who has manifested in the world as Nada, as Veda as the Five Elements, O, Beautiful-footed, Bless me!)

Laali To Our Lovely

Laali to our Lovely!
 Laali, O how Jolly!
They are singing lullaby;
 And do you sleep, my baby?
Is not work Thy hobby
 Like a humming honeybee?
How can you sleep, my baby,
 When all are crying for Thee?
How can you run away
 When our souls are at play?
Your eyes meet us everywhere:
 You play with souls far and near;
To our bosoms, we hold you dear
 O Universal Sire!
Nectar flows from Thy fingertips;
 Vedas flow from Thy rosy lips,
Gifts flow from Thy gracious hands!
 Lovers seek Thee from all lands!
You have no time for dinner!
 Behold, you run to save a sinner!

O sweet serene Winner,
 You draw us inner and inner!
We follow Thy charming flute
 We obey Thy conch and fight
To remove gloom and be Thy Light.
 How can you be out of sight?
Swing O swing, as we sing!
 Swing us too to Raasa ring!
Let Thy playful acts fulfill
 This existence in Thy WILL!

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati
(Composed before the Jhula, at 8 PM on 12-10-59)

The Blessing of the Palm

By N. **Kasturi**

(We are all familiar with the Abhaya Hastha of Baba, the Mark of His Grace and Blessing. These are a few lines on the Meaning and significance of that Hastha, the Re-assuring Palm.)

“Don’t groan, don’t weep,” consoles the Palm,
“Your wounds I shall heal, I have the balm.
It is a stab, by scandal scored?
Or by the cruel arrow of a bitter word?
It is a wound from your own hand
When your passions rioted in a band?
Or, does it bleed blindly and drain away your life
Beyond the doctor’s needle, surgeon’s knife!
Is a fall from a dizzy height
When you did climb beyond your might!
Or, did your step just slip, when you lost the track
And strayed alone, in darkness black?
If you are deaf, do not sadly moan;
My tone is a tonic, for the aural zone.
Though dumb, you can, with zest and zeal,
To Me, your unspoken thoughts reveal.
Is your vision blurred? By scanning books?
You can see *Me* wherever you cast your looks!”

“Don’t yield, don’t yield,” exhorts the Palm
“Refrain from dreams and deeds that inflict harm.
When oily words of wily men do your Will entice

Remember My Palm; it is repelled in a trice.
When failure's grin confronts and victory's cheer ensnares
Remember My Palm; it melts away the cares.
When on your tongue is born a lie,
Remember the Palm; it commands the lie to die.
When under the whips of ridicule, your Sadhana does falter,
Remember My Palms; the blow becomes much softer."

"Be free, be free," proclaims the Palm,
"From bondage to sense and name and form.
Once I have opened My Palm and granted
The Darshan so holy, by Mantras chanted
The 'rope' is seen in place of 'snake'!
Your 'prison warders' no more awake!
You are not born to be slave
Of fanatic, fake, or fool or knave!
You feel this urge, to be free and full,
In every tingling nerve and cell.
You'll never more touch what crumbles in rust
You are rid of tinsel, trivial 'must'!!
Your ear will turn away from words of hate;
Your eye won't relish painful sight.
Your voice won't grate; no, not a grain of gruff!
Your tongue won't melt at salacious stuff;
No greed for fame, nor dread of blame;
Bouquets, brickbats, both are same!

"Be mine, be mine" invites the Palm,
Take shelter in Me; I'll keep you warm.
I have come to guide the weary, the wild,
Prodigal, profligate; pomp and pride.
If you stand in need, I'll walk to you
If you walk a few steps, I'll run to you;
If you run, I'll clasp; if you clasp, I am thine.
And, once I am thine, forever you are Mine
But, I may heat you and beat you; pray do not whine!
I must shape you and wear you, as jewel fine!"

"Be calm, be calm," declares the Palm,
To every one caught in stress and storm.
"I'll leap to your side, I am here, I am near,
Don't shiver, don't flee in panicky fear,
Look the horror in the face, keep the faith in My Grace.
Its might can, even your Karma, efface.
I told him the Law, when Arjuna became sad,
"He who sows Good will never reap the harvest Bad."

It is eternal Rule. I say it again,
“Do good; you’ll be Mine; that’s the Gain.”

“Be bold, be bold,” commands the Palm,
“Don’t crawl and cringe like a slimy worm!
Who says you are a sinner, born in lust
Destined for decay, death and dust?
Dive deeper into your innermost spring!
You are the Birthless, Deathless Thing!
Time dare not wrinkle Ageless Youth;
Space dare not limit your Boundless Truth!
Your name is but a breath, brooding round the ‘I’;
Your form, a misty mirage, glimmering in the eye!
Stand straight; don’t stoop; and do not fear
And fabricate masks for public wear.
Tell one and all, ‘I have the Blessings of His Palm,
My Guru, Guide and God is Sathya Sai Ram!’”

BABA and I

Baba is the Moon, bright and beautiful;
I am the star, twinkling and tearful.

Baba is the Meru, sheer and beautiful;
I am a dust under foot, weak and uneventful.

Baba is the Kalpa Tree, bountiful and beautiful;
I am a creeper twining it, tender and delightful.

Baba is the Ganga, broad and beautiful;
I am a stream joining it, sweet and plentiful.

Baba is the Brindavan Garden, gay and beautiful;
I am a blade of grass in it, soft and humble.

Baba is an Ocean of Milk, white and beautiful;
I am a fish in it, playful and graceful.

Baba is the King of Kings, majestic and beautiful;
I am a page under Him, obedient and cheerful.

Baba is God, loving, merciful and beautiful;
I am His footstool, soft and colorful.

Baba is One, than whom no one is greater;

I am one, than whom no one is smaller.

Dr. K. Vaidyanathan
(Read at the Kavi Sammelan 5-10-59)

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Short Articles in English or Telegu based on authentic individual experience are welcome.

The Glory That is Baba

I was once bad, sad and mad
Running foolishly after this or that fad;
But now, after meeting Thee O Baba!
I am changed by Thy touch stone O Baba!

My joy knows no bounds O Baba!
Why should I think of past O Baba?
Here and now I revel in heaven, O Baba!
Not the fabled, but the real one, O Baba!

Wherever Thou art and whatever Thou Doest
We can have Thy love and compassion best;
And all our lives are bound to brighten
While our joys strengthen, and sorrows lighten.

Thou art the center and soul of the universe;
Thou art the means and the goal of ours,
And we have seen the supreme here and now
And wherefore should we seek another, above?

—K. Vaidyanathan

Editorial

A few days after Vijayadashami, Baba took all the devotees at Prasanthi Nilayam to the riverbed of the Chitravati. After Bhajan Baba spoke on the practice of Sadhana and its necessity; Dr. S. Bhagavantham, Director of the Indian Institute of Sciences, who was present, informed that many among even Western Scientists were influenced by the teachings of the Gita, especially its message about the renunciation of the fruits of action. He said that the book, “The Thousands Suns” about Atomic Explosions was so named, because the author was reminded of the Viswarupa Darshan in the Gita, which is described as, “Divi Surya Sahasrasya” etc. While Dr. Bhagavantham was talking of the influence of the Gita on Science, Baba ‘materialised’ from the sands on which He was sitting, a copy of the Bhagavad-Gita, which He handed over with His Blessings to the Director!

Later, Baba noticed Sri Kota Reddi from Damaramadugu, who was sitting opposite Him, wearing a badge with a photo on it. He asked him to pass the badge on to Him. Holding it in His Hand, Baba explained (!) that the picture was of Kusuma-Haranath, who had given a great fillip to the Namasankirtan movement in North India, that Haranath was considered an incarnation of Gowranga that Kusuma Bai was his consort etc. He then suddenly ‘materialised’ from the sands, a charming idol of the couple, an exact prototype of the figures on the badge, except for a three-coiled serpent on which they stood and the hood over their heads! On the forehead of Kusuma, could be seen a fresh Kumkum dot! Baba gave the idol to Sri Kota Reddy and asked him to offer it Puja, at his own home.

We must, every one of us, grasp the inner significance of these and similar miraculous Leelas. The Sathya Sai Avatar has come not to destroy but to fulfill. He takes everyone by the hand from wherever they are at present, and strengthening faith, vouchsafing courage and patience and guiding the Sadhana, He leads them on to the realisation of the goal. He has come, not to establish a new Religion but, to feed the roots of all religions. That is the reason why that evening He gave the Gita to Dr. Bhagavantham, and the Kusuma Haranath image to Kota Reddi; that is the reason why He gave a Rosary with the image of Christ to a missionary at Kodaikanal, and a picture of Ramakrishna Paramahansa of a devotee of that God intoxicated Saint at Bangalore.

Baba has said that one can realise the Lord, whatever Name or Form one adopts for Meditation and Japam. As a matter of fact, the Lord will be forced, He says, to adopt that very Form and Name in order to bless the devotee. Such is the power of Devotion. We have the unmistakable testimony of the devotees of Baba, Himself for He has assumed the Name and Form of Ganesa, Panduranga, Padmanabha, Sri Rama, Sri Shirdi Sai, Sri Krishna and Sri Venkateshwara in order to bless His devotees who worshiped Him, under those Names and Forms!

Prema Vahini

The destruction of Malina Vasana is the best sign of Dhyana

Those guided by impulses and instinct wander about the world like drunkards, devoid of discrimination between right and wrong, true and false. The overpowering influence of these animal impulses makes them forget the dire consequences of yielding to them. They have no shame or fear, but they simply revel in the search for worldly pleasures and in the accumulation of comforts and in the sheer enjoyment of luxuries. For those plunged in these impulses, the intellect is a useless, functionless possession. By constant pursuit of sensory pleasures, the Vasanas become hardened and they strike deeper and stronger roots.

That is why the advice has been given in the Gita, to give up the fruit of one's actions. The Vasanas become stronger because the fruits are always kept in mind whenever actions are performed. This makes men proud and conceited and they always try to thrust their pride in the faces of others. The Vasanas enslave them and under their influence they stoop even to the lowest type of wrongdoing, for getting rich and earning the money needed to satisfy them. They start worshipping Mammon as their God. Of course, riches are essential; but surplus riches, riches that give worry, anxiety and pain are not desirable at all. One should not seek to acquire riches to that extent.

Besides, men strive to earn the praise of others and avoid being blamed by others. This too is to be classed as a malina or impure Vasana.

The world is a nest of crows; some caw in praise; some caw in derision. But men should be above the reach of praise and blame. Make light of praise; treat it as something spat out by others. Then only can you be free and enjoy real happiness. And about blame. See how the world has not allowed even Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, Siva and Baba to escape from its tendency to blame! They talk ill even of the gods, imputing to those perfect beings evil motives and actions!

From such foul-minded persons as these, can any consideration be expected towards mere 'man'? Any excuse is enough for them. The white man bates the black; the black hates the white. The Saivite scandalises the Vaishnavite and the Vaishnavite spreads stories about the Saivite. Just as every one loves his own religion, his own native place and himself, he loves his own methods of worship and forms and ceremonies. This love takes the form of praise on one's own creed and blame of the other's faith. Though all this is related to one's relationship with God, such impulses are and must be classed under malina or impure Vasanas.

Such mean attitudes, saturated with ignorance, have to be removed by Japam and Dhyanam which fill the heart with broad and universal Atmajnana; and then the limited impulses vanish; they are transformed and transmuted into holy impulses or Vasanas. It is indeed a wonder why man fails to put forth all efforts to remove the malina Vasanas, for by following their path he gets pain, sorrow and agony! The deluding effect of these instincts and impulses makes him believe and feel that he is on the correct path towards

the goal of happiness. That is why he is reluctant to give them up, that explains why he is holding on to them so fast. If he reads some good Adhyatmic books, the brain could be brightened. One could at least grasp the essence of the Sastras, for the number of Sastras is countless; time is too short to study all of them, and the obstacles in the path of understanding them are also too many. Of what use is it to pore over silly books, or jaw breaking Sastras, or learn about modes of devotion that are not put into action? It is all wasteful effort. Spending all the time in study, apart from practice, also deserves to be condemned as a malina Vasana.

Listen! Bharadwaja studied the Vedas for three successive lives. When born a fourth time, he started reading again! So Indra came to him and taught him the Brahnavidya and confided to him the secret of Liberation. Then Bharadwaja put an end to his reading and his study and entered upon hard, concentrated Dhyanam. He realised the Atma. Therefore, study is a purposeless exercise if the essence is not imbibed and practised. The greed to read about all kinds of subjects and topics is itself not a very healthy impulse. Once upon a time, Durvasa, the saint, reached the presence of Siva with a cartload of religious books. Narada then compared him to the proverbial donkey; for too much attachment to books is itself a Durvasana, or undesirable habit. "Though one carries the burden of a multitude of books concerning all branches or knowledge; and though he might have read all of them, the teaching contained in them cannot be grasped at all without actual practical experience. Mere pride in learning is itself a malina Vasana, the Vasana of greed." When Durvasa heard such words of advice he was enlightened; he immediately threw all bundles into the sea and plunged into deep meditation, or Dhyanam. See how the sages feel that Dhyanam is all important for attaining full knowledge!

It is impossible to know the truth of the Atma either through the study of manifold Sastras, or by the acquisition of scholarship, or by the sharpening of the intellect, or by the pursuit of dialectical discussion. It cannot be realised by these means. Svethakethu, the son of Uddalaka, was a great pundit. One day the father called the son towards him and asked, "Svethakethu, have you understood the Sastra by understanding which all Sastras can be understood?" The son replied that he did not know of such a Sastra and had not learnt it. Then Uddalaka taught him the unequalled Sastra of Brahma Vidya, which grants one the knowledge of the truth of the Atma.

Hence, man should first grasp clearly the habits and mannerisms of his mind and its tendencies and attitudes. Then only can he control it and gain mastery over it and purify and develop his Memory, Will and Imagination.

Waywardness is the natural characteristic of the mind. It is like the wind. That is why Arjuna described it to Krishna thus:

Chanchalam hi manah Krishna
Pramaathi balavath dridham
Thasyaaham nigrham manye
Vaayoriva sudushkaram.

That is to say, “O, Krishna, the mind is very wayward; it moves very fast; it is very powerful; it is very difficult to bring it under control.” Then Krishna replied, “Arjuna, no doubt what you said is correct. But by uninterrupted attention and discipline and by the practice of renunciation, it is possible to control it.” Hence, practise Dhyanam, as a first step.

Impulses and desires have to be suppressed in order to get mastery over the mind. Desires excite the mind and make it rush towards the senses, as a dog runs behind its master. The Jiva, poor thing, falls into the meshes of Maya produced by the illusion-creating senses and the pleasure-pursuing mind! To escape all this agony, one should have recourse to Dhyanam, freed from the clutches of desires and slavery to the senses. Do Japam and Dhyanam. Then you can cultivate and develop along proper lines your Will, Memory and Imagination too. Without Dhyanam, it is not possible to control and master the mind. All other methods are as useless, as is the attempt to bind a wide elephant in rut by means of a thin and tiny thread! Dhyanam is essential to immerse the Mind in the Atma.

Therefore, first, free yourself from the bondage to Desires. Some students and householders reserve a few wants and desires for their private satisfaction while giving up the rest. Even those householders who are engaged in concentration, Dharana and the like, find it difficult to give up certain desires. They retain these for their secret satisfaction. So their energies get spent and they achieve little progress in the Sadhana they are engaged in. These aspirants slide down the ladder which they climb so laboriously. To gain control over such unsteadiness, Dhyanam is of great help. It is not enough if one sense is conquered; all should be mastered, from all sides. Of course, this is a very hard task; you might feel like giving up the entire struggle. But never lose heart. Be patient and persevering; final success will be yours. Only, you should not, like some Sadhakas, stray away from the path of discipline as soon as you feel you are not succeeding as much as you hoped. That is not the road to victory. Persevere; be patient; and earn victory in the end.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

If you take up your residence on the high third floor, you can reside even in a jungle infested by wild animals and poisonous snakes. So, endeavour to live safely and peacefully in the third floor of Satwaguna, above the ground floor Tamas, and the second floor, Rajas.

Baba

“Don’t Shoot!”

On 29th June, 1957, the Tapovanam was inaugurated at the Prasanthi Nilayam Colony. Addressing the gathering that day, Swami Satchidananda of Rishikesh said, “I do not know how others estimate Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba; so far as I am concerned I am convinced that He is All-knowing, All-powerful and All-pervasive, the Inner Atma of All.”

He then narrated an experience of his, which convinced him of Baba’s Omnipotence. He said, “One day I was in Baba’s room, at Kodaikanal. The time was early afternoon. Baba was sitting, leaning on His bed. Suddenly, He shouted, “Don’t shoot!” and “left the body.” It is better to call it a trans-corporeal journey. His body became tense and straight. It was in that condition for over an hour. As soon as He re-entered the body, He looked at us and wanted an express telegram to be sent immediately to an address at Bhopal. “Don’t worry. The revolver is with Me. Baba.” that was the message He dictated, together with the address. Then, I raised an objection to the wording of the message, for I was afraid the Telegraph Department might not transmit the wire, since there was an Arms Act which regulated these things. I told Him my fear, but, He was insistent that a telegram must go and quickly too.

He agreed that some words could be changed, provided of course the recipient could make out the meaning. So, after some discussion, we changed “revolver” into “instrument” and with His approval, the telegram was hastened over the wires.

What was the mysterious tragedy that caused all this? We were waiting for the moment when Baba would be pleased to tell us. But, in spite of our anxious questionings and prayers, Baba put us off for over full two days.

On the third day, He showed us a letter which had arrived from Bhopal and, when we read it, it became clear to us that Baba was Omniscient and Omnipotent, Sarvajna and Sarvasaktha.

The person who had written the letter had served in the Second World War and was holding high office, at the time. On account of the re-organisation of States his status was affected adversely and he was reduced to the ignominy of having to take orders from a junior who had served under him, for many years. He took this much to heart. He suffered unbearable agony. There was no one to console him; his family was away. The revolver was, at the time, his only friend, or, so it seemed. So, deciding on the easiest way to end his troubles, he fired his revolver once, for trial. The second shot was to be against himself but, how could it happen when Baba commands “Don’t shoot!” from Kodaikanal, 1500 miles away?

Within the hundredth of a second, there was a loud bang at the door! And, his old college friend, his wife and a chaprasi with a huge big box topped by a sizeable hold-all, appeared in the verandah! He heard also the long forgotten gusto-full “Hallo, Hallo,” of that chummy college mate of his. Within an instant, he ran into the bedroom and placing the revolver on the bed threw a sheet over it. He then went to the front door and opened

it..... and lo, there stood the three individuals, created by Baba's Will, ready to play the role He had allotted them in this life saving drama!

The friend barged into the room, whacked the back of the officer, introduced his wife, asked the chaprasi to deposit his burden, and reeled off in his characteristic hail-fellow-well-met style, various incidents of their old college days and told him of his subsequent career. The wonder is that Baba selected for the occasion the most cordial of all his old friends and His creation played the part so convincingly, reproducing all the mannerisms of that friend's gestures speech and movements! And, there were two others, in the supporting cast! The friend was just the medicine needed for removing the melancholy. All idea of escaping reality through the door of death vanished. The officer joined heartily in the talk and even laughed a few times, at the jokes of the visitor. The wife too joined in, occasionally and inquired lovingly of the officer's wife. When the friend discovered that the officer was alone, eating food brought from a hotel, he turned up his nose and said that he was averse to that type of food. So, he proposed to move and squat on another friend in the same town, a common friend living in another extension. In spite of protests, the friend rose and, thus, after 45 minutes of the most consummate play-acting, the three creation of Baba's Will descended the steps and trudged along the pathway towards the main gate of the bungalow.

Snatching the chance, the officer went into the bedroom to place the ominous revolver out of sight. But, lo, it was not on the bed, under the sheet. It was nowhere in that room nor even in the house!

Who could have removed so cunningly! How could it have disappeared? This set a new problem to his mind. He went to that house in the extension and found that his friend had not gone there at all. He came back to his own house, greatly confused in mind. Throwing himself into a sofa he recapitulated the amazing happenings of that fateful day. Ah! Another bang at the door! It was the telegraph boy. A telegram from Kodaikanal!..... from Baba! "Don't worry. The instrument is with Me. Baba." His Guide and Guru and God whom he had forgotten in his agony had not forgotten him!"

Swami Satchidananda said, that Parakayapravesam, or 'the entering into a body' was hailed as a great Miracle in the Puranas and lives of Saints; but, here is a Miracle that only the Lord can work, the Bahukayasristhi, the 'creation' of three bodies and the enactment through the instrumentality of a three-quarter-hour-long drama, authentic to the minutest detail, the Suthradhari being Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba Himself, and the stage, fifteen hundred miles away from where He was Physically Present!

N. Kasturi

I will not accept from you these garlands of flowers, and these fruits, for they are not your very own. I shall accept your Hridayapushpa, the flower of your heart, fragrant and pure, and your Karmaphala, the fruit of your activities, noble and true.

Baba

His Healing Touch

Four years ago, my only son (now 10 years of age) had a severe scald, when he slipped into boiling sugar cane juice, his right forearm being badly affected. He could not bear the pain and he was crying piteously. Soon, his voice began to falter and fail. He shouted that he was dying. The plight of the unhappy parents can hardly be described. A thousand thoughts rushed through my mind... of Draupadi, of Gajendra, of our beloved Baba's Grace. I and my wife began Bhajan in all earnestness. My wife shuddering with sorrow moaned, 'Baba, Baba' and could not sing the Namavalis. I consoled her, asked her not to give up hope and we started Bhajan again.

Soon to our most pleasant surprise, the boy said that somebody was stroking and caressing the arm and that he was feeling better. He asked for Baba's Vibhuti took it in his palm with a smile and swallowed it; he wanted that the Bhajan should continue! Strange to say within five minutes the boy was free from pain. His mother cried, 'Baba, Baba', with mingled feelings of Joy and Thankfulness, overpowered by this single act of Baba's Grace. Then, I left for my Dispensary, to attend upon the patients waiting for me. When I returned home at noon, my son was playing with the other children as usual! In about four days, the scald marks disappeared!

When next we went to Puttaparthi, Baba held up the right forearm of my son (to confirm that it was His Healing touch that saved the boy that day) and smiled at us, to assure us that He is ever at the side of all who call on Him!

Dr. B. M. Muniswamy Rao
Bangalore.

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The Garden of my Heart

I've laid out a garden in my heart
Removing all nettles, rocks and bushes
Such as Anger, Desire and Pride upstart
To grow the rarest flowers fresh from blemishes.

I water the plants with my pellucid tears;
I tend the sacred plants with utmost care.
They produce blossoms that last for years
As they are of the heavenly beauty rare.

They are plucked for the special worship of Baba;
They are of various kinds and colours loved of Baba;
They are the white sweet-smelling 'Ahimsa',
The pale soft-perfum'd 'Indriya-nigraha'.

'Sarva Bhutha Daya' is another variety;
'Kshama' is the red and glorious variety.
'Shanti' is the flower, yellow in colour;
'Tapah' is the flower, violet in colour.

'Dhyana' is the flower, orange in hue;
'Sathyam' is the flower, green in hue;
All these eight varieties never fade
As they are of Immortality made!

K. Vaidyanathan