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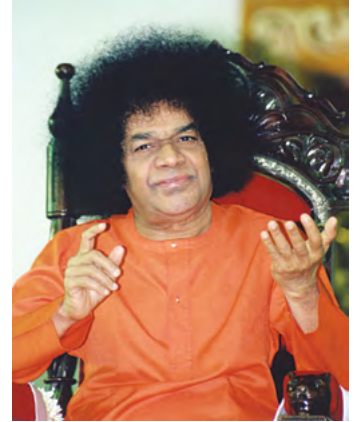
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*"You are deluded to think that you can get
happiness from worldly objects. There is no
happiness in this world. Everything is in
you. Everything is the reflection of your
inner being. You are the embodiment
of Brahman. Consider yourself as
Brahman. Always live in the constant
awareness, "I am Brahman, I am
Brahman." When you develop this
awareness, you will become Brahman."*



CONTENTS

- 2 **All are Embodiments of Brahman**
Bhagavan's Discourse: 30th July 1996
- 14 **Remember the Name of God at all Times**
From our Archives
- 17 **Sab Ko Bacha Diya**
Effulgence of Divine Glory
- 18 **Six Decades of Countless Blessings**
Yadalam N. Gangadhara Setty
- 23 **Unity of Faiths Through Unity of Hearts**
Father Dominic Emmanuel
- 28 **Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam**
A Report
- 30 **News from Sai Centres**

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AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
30TH JULY 1996

ALL ARE EMBODIMENTS OF BRAHMAN

*Stars are Brahman, the sun is Brahman,
The moon is Brahman, water is Brahman,
Heaven is Brahman, Vaikuntha is Brahman,
Mother is Brahman, father is Brahman,
All wealth is Brahman, Love is Brahman,
Living beings are Brahman, individual soul is Brahman,
Creator is Brahman, Protector is Brahman
Destroyer is Brahman, housewife is Brahman,
Karma is Brahman, Kayam (physical body) is Brahman,
Prakriti (Nature) is Brahman, Prana (life principle) is Brahman,
Everything is Brahman, this assembly is Brahman,
Sai who is declaring this truth is also Brahman.*

(Telugu Poem)

*A tree born out of soil is same as soil in its nature,
Similarly, the creation born out of Brahman is not different
from Brahman,
But it appears to be different to the naked eye,
This is the mystery of this world.*

(Telugu Poem)

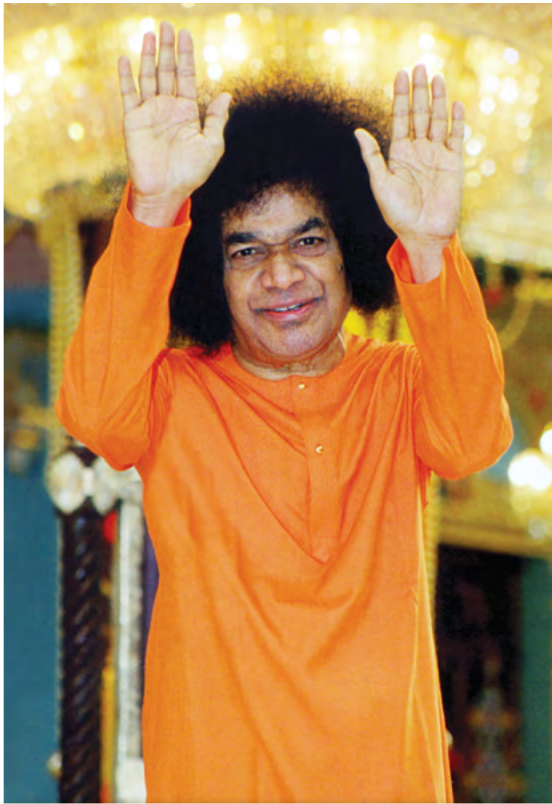
ALWAYS HAVE DIVINE FEELINGS

Embodiments of Brahman!

WHEN A SEED IS SOWN IN THE soil, it sprouts as a sapling and grows in due course into a big tree. In the tree, the branches, the sub-

branches, the flowers, the leaves and the fruits all appear as distinct from each other. Moreover, each of them has a specific purpose. But all of them are different forms of the soil from which they have originated.





The musical instrument Veena has a number of strings. Each string gives out a particular sound. Even if one string is not in Sruti (pitch), the music is not pleasing to the listeners. Strings are many, but Veena is one. Music will be pleasing to the ears only when all the strings join together in harmony. The nation is like Veena and different religions are like strings. It is only when there is unity and harmony between various religions can there be peace and harmony in the country.

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The branches, sub-branches, leaves, flowers and fruits, all are essentially different forms of the same soil.

Everything is the Manifestation of Brahman

Seeing a rope at a distance in darkness and suspecting it to be a snake, a man shouts in fear. Soon another person arrives and assures him that it is not a snake but a rope. The moment he knows the truth that it is only a rope and not a snake, his fear is gone. It was a rope before he saw it, it was a rope when he mistook it for a snake, and it was only a rope when he realised the truth. The rope symbolises Brahman, which due to his delusion man mistakes for Nature. He realises the truth when a Jnani (a person of true knowledge) comes and tells him that it is not Nature, but the manifestation of Brahman itself. All that we see in the visible world is nothing but Brahman. But people out of their ignorance think, "Where is Brahman and where are we! We are ordinary mortals whereas Brahman is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient." It is a mistake to say so. You are verily the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient Brahman. But because of worldly outlook created by delusion, you think you are a mere mortal. You aspire to see God thinking He is different from you. All that you see around you, all that you experience is Brahman. But still you want to see Brahman. *Pashyannapicha Na Pashyati*

Moodho (he is a fool who sees, yet does not recognise the reality). What a great delusion it is! But nobody believes this truth so easily.

There are endless waves in the ocean. Due to the movement of waves, foam is created. When you see, the ocean, the waves and the foam appear to be different from each other. But, in fact, all the three are one and the same. Both the ocean and the waves have the same attributes of coolness and wetness. Just as there is an intimate and inseparable relationship between the ocean and the waves, the same type of relationship exists between the Jivas (individual souls) and Brahman. From the infinite and unfathomable ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute), innumerable living beings emerge like waves. While Brahman is *Sathyam Jnanam Anantham* (embodiment of truth, wisdom and eternity), man is the embodiment of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

The Knower of Brahman Becomes Brahman

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

The colour of glasses that you wear determines the colour you see all around you. Similarly, when you fill your vision with love, the entire creation will appear divine to you. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as are the feelings, so is the result). In the visible world you find diversity, but in reality there is no diversity. Therefore, you should make efforts to know this divine principle of unity. Both Brahman and Maya are immanent in every individual.

Parvati and Parameswara are not different from each other. Parvati symbolises Sraddha (earnestness) and Easwara, Viswasa (faith). Every man is endowed with Sraddha and Viswasa. Similarly, Maya and Brahman are both present in every individual. In this way, every man is the embodiment of Ardhanareeswara (a composite form of Sakti and Siva). You must enquire what is Brahman and what is Maya? Man is the combination of Sat, Chit, Ananda, name and form. Sat, Chit, Ananda signify Brahman, whereas name and form signify Maya. This name and form are visible to the naked eye which is the cause of delusion.

The water of the ocean takes the form of waves due to the effect of wind. Without the help of wind, there can be no waves. Just as waves are formed in the ocean with the power of wind, the waves of individuals originate in the ocean of Satchidananda due to the effect of Maya. Wind is Maya, individuals are the waves and ocean is Satchidananda. Therefore, the individual that has originated from Satchidananda is also an embodiment of Satchidananda. When you recognise this truth, you become divine as stated in the Vedic dictum, *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* (the knower of Brahman becomes verily Brahman). Today you are carried away by the diversity of names and forms. You think of diversity and experience diversity. The principle of Satchidananda is enjoined with Maya. However, this Maya gradually disappears. The same power that separates waves from the ocean will again make them merge



with the ocean. Whatever emerges from the ocean is bound to merge with it. Only the name and form have birth and death, but Brahman has neither birth nor death. That is why Brahman signifies infinity. It has no end. Wherever you see, Brahman is present there. There is nothing in this world which is not Brahman. The entire cosmos is Brahman. Due to the limitations of your intellect and understanding, you are unable to understand this eternal and infinite principle. Just as you create a snake in the rope, likewise, you create diversity of beings in the unity of Brahman and thereby subject yourselves to misery.

All are the embodiments of Brahman. You should not belittle yourself, saying you are a mere human being based on the differences of names and forms. To see diversity in unity is a sign of ignorance. Not being able to understand the truth is also ignorance. Knowledge lies in the realisation of truth. Both knowledge and ignorance are not present in books. *Sarvam Jnanamayam* (everything in this world is permeated with knowledge). Every individual, every society is endowed with knowledge. This knowledge is the very form of God. That is the truth. That is why it is said, *Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma* (Brahman is the embodiment of truth, wisdom and eternity).

Maya does not Catch you, you Catch Maya

Air is all-pervasive, but you cannot see it with your eyes or catch it in your hands. However, you cannot deny its existence

When you focus a camera on Me and press the switch, you will get My picture in it. Your body is the camera, your mind is the lens, your feelings are the film and your Buddhi (intellect) is the switch. When you focus the lens of your mind towards God with all concentration and press the switch of Buddhi, God will manifest in you. Then your vision will become divine vision and you will become a divine being.



just because you cannot see it or hold it. Without air, we cannot survive. This air can be compared to Maya. You think Maya is harmful to you, but in fact, Maya does not harm anyone. People criticise Maya saying, it holds them tightly in its grip and troubles them. But how can Maya catch anyone? It has no hands and no legs. You have hands and legs. Therefore, you have caught Maya, but Maya has not caught you. Instead of catching Maya, you should catch Brahman. It is the wind of Maya that creates the waves of various beings in the ocean of Brahman. In fact, Maya is responsible for the entire creation.

Man is born and brought up in Maya but he is so foolish that he does not understand what is Maya. Life is Maya, worldly attachments are Maya, family is Maya and even death is Maya. Knowing fully well that life is full of Maya, man still



gets trapped in Maya. How strange it is!

(Telugu Poem)

Man's ignorance is the root cause for his getting trapped in Maya. What is the root cause of ignorance? The root cause of ignorance is actions performed with attachment. From this Karma (action) man gets Janma (birth) and Janma gives rise of Bhrama (delusion) which in turn leads to ignorance. Therefore, Karma is the basis for everything. As is your action, so is the result.

Oh man, is it possible to escape

the consequences of actions?

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

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

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

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

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

(Telugu Poem)

Good or bad depends on the way of your thinking. You are always filled with external and worldly thoughts and feelings. Right from the time you get up from bed, you spend all your time in worldly activities. It is wrong to think that it is natural for a human being to lead such a life. You should give up Pravritti (worldliness) and enter the path of Nivritti (spirituality). You perform various types of spiritual practices to attain Brahman. In fact, Brahman cannot be attained through such practices. Only

through enquiry can you understand the principle of Brahman. Use your sense of discrimination and enquire. Even enquiry is not a proper term in this context. You may enquire about something which is not present before you. Why should you enquire about something which is everywhere? Brahman is present in you, with you and around you. Why should you enquire about it? It is a sign of ignorance. All spiritual practices are performed only for mental satisfaction.

The mind is like a lotus flower. Madhukara (large black bee) enters the lotus and drinks its nectar. How does a lotus flower sustain itself? It draws its sustenance from 'Madhukara' only. How can you understand this? Divide this word Madhukara into two parts, Madhu and Kara. Madhu means water and Kara means rays of the sun. Sun rays from above and water from below provide sustenance to the lotus flower. Just as Bhramara (Madhukara) enters the lotus flower, Bhrama (delusion) enters the lotus of the mind. This delusion gives rise to desire. Desire is the cause of your happiness and sorrow. Do not pursue the cravings of your mind. When you follow the vagaries of your mind, you will be a victim of Maya.

*One who follows the vagaries of the
mind will become worse than an animal
and ruin himself. When you follow the
dictates of the intellect, you become
God on earth.* (Telugu Poem)

Therefore, do not follow the mind, follow the intellect. The mind is a combination of positive and negative thoughts. It



has no form. (Bhagavan showing His handkerchief) What is this? It is a cloth. It is not a cloth but a number of threads woven together. It is not a number of threads also but cotton. When you enquire on these lines using the process of negation, you will realise that the desire is nothing but an illusion.

Students!

You have to understand a subtle principle. You say, “*Na Dehamu, Na Manasu*” (my body, my mind). What does it mean? Here ‘Na’ means no. Therefore, *Na Dehamu, Na Manasu* means I am not the body, I am not the mind. Similarly, when you enquire deeply, you will realise, I am not the Buddhi (intellect), I am not the Indriyas (senses), I am none of these. Then who am I? I am I.

There are four Mahavakyas (profound statements) in the four Vedas: *Prajnanam Brahma* (Brahman is Supreme Consciousness), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman), *Tattwamasī* (That Thou Art), *Ayam Atma Brahma* (This Self is Brahman). Though these Mahavakyas convey the highest truth, they speak of duality. In fact, the entire Veda conveys only duality. Then where can you find Advaita (non-duality)? The purpose of the Vedas is to teach man what he is supposed to attain in this world, how can he attain happiness, what is the path he should follow, how a Brahmachari (celibate), a Grihasta (householder), a Vanaprastha (recluse) and a Sannyasi (renunciant) should conduct himself. This is all that the Vedas teach. Therefore, the

Vedas convey only duality. But Vedanta teaches non-dualism. The Upanishads constitute the Vedanta. The Upanishads do not support the statement, *Aham Brahmasmi* as the ultimate truth because it speaks of two entities, namely I and Brahman. When there are two entities, it becomes dualism and not non-dualism. God is all-pervasive, but man out of ignorance is unable to realise this truth and becomes a victim of many types of suffering.

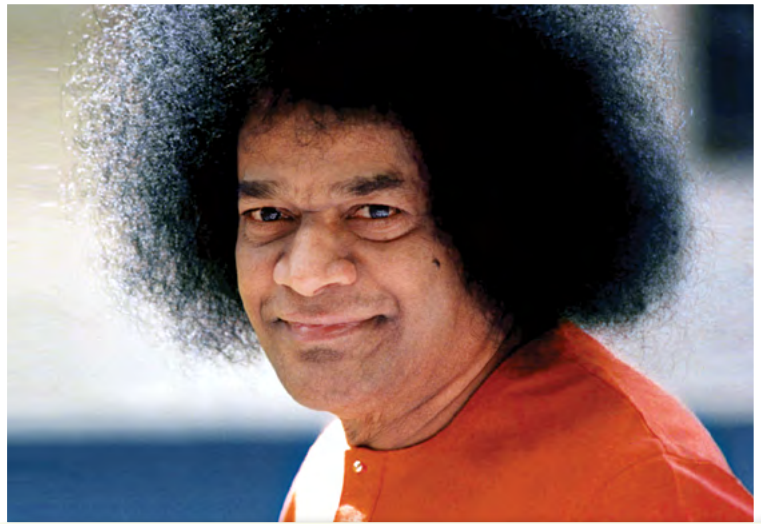
God alone is the True Guru

You say, today is Guru Purnima. But truly, this is not the correct name of this sacred festival. Some fake Gurus in order to receive some favours from their disciples may have given the name Guru Purnima to this festival. The real name of this festival is Vyasa Purnima because it is the birthday of Sage Vyasa. It is on this day that he classified the Vedas into four parts and gave them the names: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda. He is also the composer of eighteen Puranas. However, the name Vyasa Purnima was changed into Guru Purnima with the passage of time. Sage Vyasa was one of great knowledge. It is not possible for an ordinary human being with his limited life-span to study the infinite Vedas. Therefore, he separated Riks from the Vedas and called it Rig Veda. Riks are the Mantras which protect man when he chants them with steadfastness and devotion. *Manana Trana Sammilitam Iti Mantra*. It means contemplation on what is heard and



putting it into practice. He separated all the Yajus which are useful for the performance of Yajnas and Yagas and called it Yajur Veda. He put together all the Samas from the Vedas and called it Sama Veda as it is related to music and literature. Finally, he compiled all the Mantras relating to weaponry and health sciences and called it Atharvana Veda. As he did a great good to humanity by such classification of Vedas, he is considered Guru. You find many teachers in colleges, each of them teaching a particular subject like chemistry, mathematics, botany, etc. Likewise, in the field of spirituality, one who imparts spiritual teachings is considered a Guru.

What is the inner meaning of the term Guru? *Gukaro Andhakarasya Rukaro Thannivaranam* (one who dispels the darkness of ignorance is a Guru). Not only this, the term Guru has another meaning, *Gukaro Gunateeta, Rukaro Rupavarjita* (one who is attributeless and formless is the true Guru). It is only Brahman who is beyond attributes and forms. Therefore,



You may think, how you can attain the powers that Swami has. Follow Me. Certainly you will be endowed with such divine powers. In fact, all the powers are already present in you. But you do not realise it. All of you want bliss. If you follow Me, you will be always in a state of bliss. In fact, bliss is in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. You are the embodiment of bliss. Why should you search for bliss outside when it is already present in you?

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he is the only true Guru. Avatars do not give any Mantropadesha (initiation into a Mantra) to anyone. Where is the need for any Upadesha of a Mantra when you are in the Swadesha (established in the Self)? You yourself are Brahman. Where is the need for you to have a separate Mantropadesha? Only those who don't realise this truth give Mantropadesha. Such Gurus in turn receive Mantropadesha



from their own Gurus. In fact, a true Guru is one who has no other Guru. God alone is the real Guru.

*Gurur-Brahma Gurur-Vishnu
Gurur Devo Maheswara;
Guru Sakshat Param Brahma
Thasmai Sri Gurave Namaha.*

(Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara. Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman. So, salutations to the Guru.)

In this modern age, people are being taught that Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu and Guru is Siva. No, no. These modern Gurus are not Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. Then who is the Guru? Brahma himself is the Guru, Vishnu himself is the Guru and Siva himself is the Guru. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara represent the three qualities, namely, Rajasic, Sattwic and Tamasic (qualities of passion, serenity and sloth) respectively. In fact, the entire world is constituted by three Gunas. Every human being is endowed with these three qualities. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are present in everybody's heart in the form of these three Gunas. So far no one has seen Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara with his physical eyes. Who is your Guru? You yourself are your Guru. Your mind itself is your Guru. The moment you realise this truth, there will be no need for you to have any other Guru. Giving up such an easy path, people are wasting their lives by following wrong path due to their misunderstanding and doubts. The so-called Gurus of today give a Mantra to their disciples and ask them to worship the

Guru. I don't want to criticise anyone but the truth has to be revealed to you. They whisper a Mantra into the ears of their disciple and extend their hand before them for money as Guru Dakshina (offerings to the Guru). This is not proper for a Guru.

What is Guru Dakshina? Real Guru Dakshina is to know that you yourself are the Guru. You are the Guru, you are Brahma, you are the divine power, everything is in you. That is why from time to time I tell you the significance of Gayatri Mantra, *Om Bhur Bhuvah Suvah...* People think these three connote three different worlds, namely, Bhuloka, Bhuvarka and Suvarloka (earth, space and heaven). The reason for this wrong thinking is that today there are no great scholars capable of dispelling the doubts of people by giving their true meaning. *Bhu* refers to Bhuloka, material world. This represents materialisation. *Bhuvah* is the life-force which makes the material world vibrate. Therefore, it represents vibration. *Suvah* represents knowledge which the Vedic statement *Prajnanam Brahma* stands for. This is called radiation. Materialisation, vibration and radiation, all three are within us. They are not present elsewhere in some other world.

Follow Me

There is nothing else to do if you perform good actions and do good to others. What should be your attitude when you help others? You should have the feeling that the one who helps is Brahman and the one who receives the help is also



Brahman. That is why in Bharat people use the term Daridra Narayana Seva while feeding the poor. Lord Narayana has two forms, one is Daridra Narayana (poor) and the other is Lakshmi Narayana (rich). Lakshmi Narayana has no dearth of wealth. He has a lot of people to serve him. But Daridra Narayana has neither wealth nor people to help him. You should help and empower such people so that they also become Lakshmi Narayanas. That's why I always say, "Help Ever, Hurt Never," which is the essence of eighteen Puranas. Help everybody. Helping others amounts to helping yourself. Whatever you do to others will come back to you manifold. That is why the Vedas declare, *Sarva Jiva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God). What is the inner meaning of this? The inner meaning is that all are Brahman. One who offers salutation is Brahman and the one who receives is also Brahman.

Embodiments of Love!

Having taken a wrong path for a long time, your life is in turmoil due to many doubts and disbeliefs. You are unable to judge what is right and what is wrong. The reason is that you think you are Vyashti, a separate entity. But, in fact, you are not Vyashti (individual), but a part of Samashti (society). However, Samashti is a part of Srishti (creation) which is nothing but the manifestation of Parameshti (Creator). Hence, you yourself are Parameshti. Therefore, all are embodiments of God. No one is greater or lesser than the other. You

may think, how you can attain the powers that Swami has. Follow Me. Certainly you will be endowed with such divine powers. In fact, all the powers are already present in you. But you do not realise it. All of you want bliss. If you follow Me, you will be always in a state of bliss. In fact, bliss is in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. You are the embodiment of bliss. Why should you search for bliss outside when it is already present in you? You are deluded to think that you can get happiness from worldly objects. There is no happiness in this world. Everything is in you. Everything is the reflection of your inner being. You are the embodiment of Brahman. Consider yourself as Brahman. Always live in the constant awareness, "I am Brahman, I am Brahman." When you develop this awareness, you will become Brahman.

When you focus a camera on Me and press the switch, you will get My picture in it. Your body is the camera, your mind is the lens, your feelings are the film and your Buddhi (intellect) is the switch. When you focus the lens of your mind towards God with all concentration and press the switch of Buddhi, God will manifest in you. Then your vision will become divine vision and you will become a divine being. Swami always advises you, "My dear, do this, don't do that." What for? It is not for My sake; it is only to make you divine. It is only to teach you the truth of Brahman and to make your life ideal and divine. Everyone should become an ideal person. Just as



God is the eternal witness, you should also become the same. It is not possible for anyone to understand the divine mystery that is hidden behind the veil of Maya. You see only the effect, but the cause is hidden from your view. In order to understand the relationship between cause and effect, you should follow the path of devotion. Sanctify your life by developing devotion.

Embodiments of Love!

How happy will man be if the entire world is pure, sacred and full of divine feelings? You will not have hatred towards anyone. You will realise that criticising others amounts to criticising God. *Sarva Jiva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God). Consider God as your only Guru. In fact, He is Guror Guruh (the Guru of all Gurus). Why should you worry about anything when you have such a great Guru?

When you have the Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree) right in front of you, why do you desire for trivial things?

When you have the Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow) with you, where is the need to buy a cow? (Telugu Poem)

When Kalpavriksha and Kamadhenu are with you, why should you extend your hand before others and seek their help? All are the children of God. All are the aspects of God. All are the embodiments of God. Lord Krishna propounded the same truth in the Gita, *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

There is nothing in this world which is not Brahman. That is why the Bhagavadgita declared, *Sarvatah Panipadam...* (His hands and feet are everywhere). Scientists say, everything is made up of atoms; there is no place without atoms. Vedanta propounds the same truth when it says, *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). Just as atoms are everywhere, so also is Brahman all-pervasive.

Embodiments of Love!

There is no need to think about anything else. Always have divine feelings. There is nothing greater than this. You will have everything when you have divine feelings, and ultimately you will attain Divinity. All names and all forms belong to the same God. *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Naam* (one God has many names). There are many sweets like Mysore Pak, Gulab Jamun, Burfi, etc., but the same sugar is present in all which provides sweetness to them. People may have different tastes and the sweets may have different names, but there is no difference in the sweetness of sugar. It is only the delusion of the mind that creates differences, but there is no difference in Divinity. Man is the embodiment of God. The word Viswam has an important meaning associated with it. Viswam actually means that which has innumerable limbs and innumerable hands. That is why it is said, *Viswam Vishnu Swarupam* (the entire universe is the embodiment of Lord Vishnu). You should never give scope to differences.

The same Lord is Worshipped in Different Names and Forms

On this occasion of Guru Purnima, I want to tell you something very important. Because of differences, you are deluding yourself and becoming victims of ignorance. Here is a small example. You consider Vishnu as the one who wields Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma (conch, discus, mace and lotus). What is the inner meaning of this? There are eight attributes of Divinity: *Sabda Brahmayi, Charachamayai, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayai, Paratparamayi, Mayamayai and Sreemayi* (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, perfection, delusion and wealth). Here conch of Vishnu symbolises Sabda Brahmayai, Chakra signifies time, mace signifies strength and lotus stands for heart. Therefore, God is the master of time, sound, all the powers and the heart of all beings. This is the inner meaning of depicting Lord Vishnu as the one who carries Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma. Devotees out of their innocence take the literal meaning of these attributes without understanding their inner meaning.

Here is an example. Vaishnavites worship Lord Narayana and Saivites worship Lord Siva and chant Siva Panchakshari Mantra. Both of them go to Tirupati to have the Darshan of the Lord of seven hills. Vaishnavites worship him as Venkataramana and Saivites as Venkateswara. Only the names are

The water of the ocean takes the form of waves due to the effect of wind. Without the help of wind, there can be no waves. Just as waves are formed in the ocean with the power of wind, the waves of individuals originate in the ocean of Satchidananda due to the effect of Maya. Wind is Maya, individuals are the waves and ocean is Satchidananda. Therefore, the individual that has originated from Satchidananda is also an embodiment of Satchidananda.



different but the Lord whom they adore is the same. Ramana means one who pleases. This is a Vaishnavite name. The Saivite term Easwara means the master of all types of wealth. Out of their imagination, devotees attribute names such as Venkataramana or Venkateswara for their own satisfaction. Lord Easwara is described as Pashupati, meaning the master of all living beings. The equivalent term for Pashupati is Gopala according to Vaishnavism. Both Gopala and Pashupati are one and the same. As cows were dear to Lord Krishna, He is described as Gopala. Here both cows and Pashus symbolise all living beings. Siva is considered to be one who wields Damuru and Trishul which symbolise sound and time respectively. Just like the conch of Vishnu, the Damaru of Siva symbolise sound. In the same way,



the Trishul of Siva and Chakra of Vishnu symbolise that they are the masters of time. The unity of three periods of time, past, present and future, is symbolised by Trishul of Siva. In this manner, the same Lord is worshipped by different people in different names. You should not find fault with anyone in this regard.

Never Observe Differences between Religions

Respect all religions. Here is a small example. Students can understand this well. The musical instrument Veena has a number of strings. Each string gives out a particular sound. Even if one string is not in Sruti (pitch), the music is not pleasing to the listeners. Strings are many, but Veena is one. Music will be pleasing to the ears only when all the strings join together in harmony. The nation is like Veena and different religions are like strings. It is only when there is unity and harmony between various religions can there be peace and harmony in the country. You should develop faith in the principle of unity.

Shirdi Sai Baba used to ask for Dakshina of two rupees from devotees who came for his Darshan. Here two rupees symbolise faith and devotion. They are like two shoots of the same seed. It is only when the two shoots join together can the seed grow into a sapling. When the shoots are separated, the sapling cannot grow. Similarly, Sraddha (steadfast faith) and Bhakti (devotion) should join together like the two shoots of a seed. Only then can

you get the sapling of happiness. Never observe differences between religions.

Religions are many but goal is one.

Clothes are many but yarn is one.

Jewels are many but gold is one.

Cows are many but milk is one.

Beings are many but breath is one.

Castes are many but humanity is one.

Beings are many but Atma is one.

Flowers are many but worship is one.

(Telugu Poem)

You perform worship of idols with various types of flowers such as jasmine, rose and marigold. But is there any difference in worship? Worship is the same. All the differences are created by the Bhranti (delusion) of the mind. Therefore, give up Bhranti and develop Brahmatattwa (principle of Brahman). All are the embodiments of Brahman, all are the embodiments of God. Everyone has ultimately to merge with the Divine. Develop such broad-mindedness. Do not observe differences such as 'I am different, you are different and others are different.' People talk of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. What does this Brotherhood of Man mean when one brother fights with the other and goes to Supreme Court to settle property disputes? Today you don't find unity even among real brothers. Therefore, you should go beyond this state of Brotherhood of Man

continued on page 16...



From our Archives

REMEMBER THE NAME OF GOD AT ALL TIMES

*Love shines radiantly throughout the Cosmos;
The Cosmos is permeated by the Lord;
The Lord and the Cosmos are inextricably united.
This is the Truth declared by Sai.
Not visible in the phenomenal world,
The Atma that is immanent in it is the
Cosmic Consciousness.
That sustains the Cosmos like the string
Running through a necklace of gems.*

(Telugu Poem)

GOD DWELLS IN OUR HEARTS

Embodiments of Divine Love!

COMMON FOLK LOOK AT THE visible universe as it appears to them physically. This is a common experience. To view the universe as Divine calls for a supreme exercise in spirituality. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is Brahman); *Viswam Vishnu Swarupam* (the entire universe is the embodiment of Lord Vishnu); *Iswarassarvam* (the Lord is everything). On the basis of these Vedic pronouncements, the whole universe should be regarded as a manifestation of the Supreme Lord.

The Purpose of Life is to Realise the Atma

There are three levels of potentiality in man: the animal, the human and the divine. At the lowest level is the animal nature. The animal is always looking downward, towards the ground. This means that the animal nature tends to go after what is low and trivial. The human level is in the middle stage. From here man should strive to develop the upward vision. Only then will he be able to understand his divinity. Unfortunately, man today tends to develop the downward animal vision rather than the upward vision.





Men today are misusing all their knowledge, wealth, energies and talents for purely material ends and wasting their lives. Leading a worldly life is unavoidable. But in doing so, the spiritual goal should be borne in mind. The goal is spiritual; actions are worldly. It is only when actions are dedicated to spiritual ends, they become sanctified. Unfortunately, today even spiritual practices are tainted with mundane motives.



Failing to see the Reality that underlies the changing visible world and mistaking the unreal for the real, man is wasting his life. The human birth and body have been conferred on man to enable him to realise the Atma. But what has been offered for realising the Atma is being used for seeking Annam (food), forgetting God. As

a result, man, instead of advancing towards the goal, is distancing himself from it.

The scriptures have indicated the path that should be esteemed and pursued. The Sastras prescribe that those worthy of honour and even the unworthy should be respected. But the hallmark of the Kali Age is to honour the dishonourable and dishonour the honourable. There is no greatness in doing good to those who do you good. The superior being is one who returns good for evil. It may be asked whether doing good to the one who does you harm will not mean encouraging him to do more harm. That is not so. If you return harm for harm, how can you be called a good

man? You become one like the evil-doer. Only by returning good for evil can you elevate yourself to a higher state.

Fill your Mind with the Name of God

To attain the Lord in the shortest possible time, it is necessary to address



your appeal to the right place. Once Narada asked Lord Vishnu to tell him the name of the place to which he should address his appeal to find Him. The Lord said: "Wherever My devotees sing My glory, I am there." The Lord dwells in our hearts. They must be kept pure and holy. Then the heart becomes heaven itself, filled with joy. Heaven and hell are not elsewhere. When you are happy, that is heaven. When you are miserable, that is hell.

If you wish to experience bliss, fill your mind with thoughts of God. Where there is God, there is bliss. This divine bliss is described in many ways, but it is one and the same thing. Likewise, God is called by different names according to the context and the role played by Him. But it is the same Supreme Lord who is worshipped in different names. Today when you are celebrating the advent of the new year, you have to fill your minds with the Name of the Lord. There is no greater joy on earth than acting on the injunctions of the Lord.

...continued from page 13

and develop Ekatma Bhava (feeling of oneness). The same Atma is present in you, Me and everyone. Once you realise this, you will not observe any differences whatsoever. However, this is not so easy. But continuous and constant practice will help you realise this oneness. Walking, talking, reading, writing and eating, everything comes only by practice. Similarly, you can realise your true Self only by constant practice. When you follow the

All troubles arise when you act against the commands of the Lord.

Dedicate all your Actions to Spiritual Ends

Embodiments of Love!

Men today are misusing all their knowledge, wealth, energies and talents for purely material ends and wasting their lives. Leading a worldly life is unavoidable. But in doing so, the spiritual goal should be borne in mind. The goal is spiritual; actions are worldly. It is only when actions are dedicated to spiritual ends, they become sanctified. Unfortunately, today even spiritual practices are tainted with mundane motives.

Remember the Name of God at all times. In the Kali Age, God's Name is the only refuge. Without firm faith in the Lord's Name, all other studies and worship are of no avail. Yearn for the love of God.

– Excerpted from Ugadi Discourses of Bhagavan.

command of God, you will certainly attain Divinity. Accept and practise the precepts of sacred texts as the divine commands. Attain God's love. Then you will attain everything.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*")

– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall on 30th July 1996.



Effulgence of Divine Glory

SAB KO BACHA DIYA

IN DECEMBER 1990, FATE took me to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Originally, I had taken Baba's permission to visit my son and his family, especially to see the newborn baby. The quiet visit turned into a nerve war that was known to the outside world as the Gulf war. I was hardly a week there, when war was declared. Within hours, the beautiful city was changed into an area where fear of death stalked the roads as rumours of scud missiles spread. The precautions to be taken to minimise their effects were announced on the TV every hour. The first day of the war was unbearable. The announcement of an air attack, first for Riyadh, drove us in the sealed room of our house. The sirens hooted over our heads and the noise of approaching of planes filled the air with the sound of a million birds flapping their wild wings, shrieking as they flew.

Inside the dark room, I had clasped my five-year-old grandson, Sai Ahmed. Lights went off and in the pitched, hot darkness I could feel the nervous breathing of the child against my breast. There was also another sound. Someone was sobbing. It took me some time to realise that the baby had no gas mask. My daughter-in-law held the little one and wept, constantly praying to Baba. A rumbling was heard in the air of an aircraft. We waited, knowing the end to

be near. The noise grew louder, deafening. The very walls of the house seemed to echo it. A thunder crashed nearby. The house shook.

"Baba, take our souls to You" – was my last thought. But we did not die.

By degrees, the thunder and the rumbling subsided. Sai Ahmed now started sobbing. My son found a candle and after fumbling struck a light. It took us quite some time to comprehend that we were unhurt, alive.

Hours later, in the morning we came to know that the antimissile "Patriot" had destroyed the scud. The debris had fallen on an insurance office building, next to our house, gutting the edifice into a shell. "Had it fallen on our house?" was my thought. Chance? Or grace? Our lives were saved. Quietly, I thanked Baba. The uncaring minds of the media were busy in giving the details of the event and talking of the new era of war, strategies, the sensation and the trauma of it. Only a few heads were bent in gratitude.

When the war was over, I returned to Prasanthi Nilayam. In Darshan lines, the sight of familiar scenes and people filled me with a feeling of gratitude and well-being. In the centre of this peace floated

continued on page 22...



SIX DECADES OF COUNTLESS BLESSINGS

Yadalam N. Gangadhara Setty

THE ARRIVAL OF BHAGAVAN Sri Sathya Sai Baba into our lives can either be called a Divine plan or a reward for the noble lives and Satkarmas (good deeds) of my ancestors – my grandfather, Yadalam Subbaiah Setty and my respected father, Yadalam S. Nanjaiah Setty, who always led pure, selfless and exemplary lives. Bhagavan's love, grace and blessings over the last six decades on the family in countless ways have made us what we are today.

First Shower of Grace in 1944

It was in the year 1906 that my grandfather, for reasons of health, came to Bengaluru, from a place called Kandukuru in Andhra Pradesh and decided to settle down here on seeing its salubrious weather and promising business prospects. He was a very pious and religious man who believed in traditions and ancient culture. My father, who was then studying in the second form (today's 7th standard) at Vayalpad, Chittoor district, was called to join the family's textile trading business, even though he was hardly 14 years old. He showed his acumen in business in a short time and won the confidence of the business community. He was not content

and satisfied with buying and selling textile goods – he had a great desire and ambition to take up manufacturing. A small textile weaving factory was started in Subramanyapura in the year 1932.

In the year 1944, I joined the family business soon after my marriage when I was 22 years old. One day during that year, Sri Shyamanna who was one of

Swami once was to come to Malleshwaram for Darshan. Adequate arrangements were made for this meeting. At about the time Swami was to come, dark clouds appeared in the sky, signalling imminent rainfall. So, some of the organisers reported to Swami that the meeting may have to be postponed. Swami just looked at the sky and made some signs. Miraculously, the clouds moved away, thus signifying Swami's control over elements of Nature.



our electrical engineers and lived in the staff quarters, came and mentioned to me that Sai Baba of Puttaparthi had come to his house. I came to know later that Bhagavan's visit to Subramanyapura was in answer to the ardent prayers of Shyamanna's wife, who was a relative of the co-sister of Karanam Subbamma, a great devotee of Swami. On approaching Swami, who was just 18 years then, I was at once taken by His subtle holy presence and spiritual aura. I spontaneously requested Swami to visit and bless our factory. Bhagavan graciously consented and walked around the entire factory in His wooden sandals, which holy men wore those days. At my request, Bhagavan visited our family house at Basavanagudi, where my grandfather was suffering from sciatica pain. Bhagavan blessed all the members in our large joint family, including my father and two uncles. Thus, His shower of grace and blessings on the family started and continued without end. During the visit to our house, Swami granted interview to some people and told my wife Ramaratna, who was pregnant, that she would bear a son, saying "Suputrudu Janminchuthadu" (you will be blessed with a noble son), and surely my eldest son Ramkumar, was born to us who is now 67 years old.

Turning Point in Life

As years went by, on one occasion, while I was returning home from the factory with my father for lunch, driving up the Vani Vilas Road, someone stopped me near Vasavi Dharamsala, near the

clinic of Dr. R.S. Padmanabhan. He mentioned that Bhagavan was giving a Discourse in the hall. Since I was en route to home, I just continued without stopping at that premises. Strangely, that very night Bhagavan came in my dream with His image in a sun-like aura and told me that I would come to Him after 25 years.

I then got fully involved in business and many other organisations which led to a busy and hectic life. During this time, I was associated and drawn to some holy men being always interested in religious and spiritual subjects. I was active in Chinmaya Mission of Swami Chinmayananda, Anand Murthy of Anand Marg and Mahesh Yogi of Transcendental Meditation. I did not stick to any of them but enjoyed being in the company of holy people.

I used to attend Discourses given by Swami at various centres and visited Brindavan for Darshans. What made a strong impact on me was Swami's message of individual transformation and "Love All, Serve All." Swami has repeatedly said that one's love should not be limited to one's kith and kin. It should extend to whomsoever you come into contact with. When you start loving them, you try to share by taking an active interest in rendering service to those in need. Swami has mentioned several times in His Discourses that one may pray and worship any holy person, but remember that there is place for one only in the heart. So, we need to keep that in mind when progressing spiritually. This struck me so much that I never wavered.



In 1971, on Ugadi day, I went to Brindavan for Darshan with Dr. Padmanabhan, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan. Inexplicably, the Lord's Divine plan unfolded in next few moments while I was waiting for Darshan near the Mandir gate. Swami came out and instantly recognised me and even recalled His visit to the Subramanyapura factory premises and our family house, which had happened 25 years back. I was too spellbound to say anything. We were called in for interview – my wife Ramaratna, youngest son Subbaiah (who was then 10 years old) and myself. He spoke to us and cautioned me about the impending challenges to our business. This day, in fact, was the real beginning of our journey with Sai.

Divine Proximity

Life changed after this. Dr. Padmanabhan and Dr. M.B. Sunder Rau, State President of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, who were known to me closely as members of Rotary Club, were great devotees of Bhagavan. Soon I got opportunities to have close proximity to Bhagavan in many ways. I then received an invitation from Dr. S Bhagavantam, intimating me that I was appointed as a member of Sri Sathya Sai Trust of Karnataka that had been constituted. It was sometime afterwards, with Swami's blessings, Dr. Rau appointed me as the District President for Bengaluru. Since I held this responsibility, I had many opportunities to be called by Bhagavan for receiving advice and directions.

In 1978, I was part of the entourage of Bhagavan on His visit to Mangalore, Chikkodi, Alike (the birthplace of Sri Narayan Bhat) and Manipal. When Bhagavan visited Dharmakshetra, Mumbai, in 1978, I was also a part of the group. I got a call one evening from Col. Joga Rao, that I should join Bhagavan's visit to Nagarhole. Brigadier Mehta and Col. Joga Rao were the other members of the group. It was my first and closest tour with Bhagavan. It was a memorable experience. An interesting incident happened while we were in the guest house at Nagarhole. Bhagavan asked me to give Him my gold ring which He had materialised and given to me earlier. Holding it in His hand, Bhagavan changed the shape of the ring with diamonds many times and kept me guessing whether I would be given back the same diamond ring or not. All the time Bhagavan was smiling, seeing my confused and expectant face. Compassionate that He is, Bhagavan gave me back the same diamond ring and said jokingly that I was wondering if I would still get it back or the ring would disappear. I had a photo taken during that visit, which I framed and kept in my room as a sacred memory of the unforgettable visit.

In one of my earlier visits to Prasanthi Nilayam with my father, as we went round the Ashram, my father expressed, while looking at the buildings like Poornachandra Auditorium, that ordinary human beings could not have executed this, and it could only be the work of a Divine person. He had exemplary faith in Swami



and attended almost all the functions at Prasanthi Nilayam till his passing away in the year 1982. Before he passed, he advised all members in the family that they should never leave the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan.

With Swami's grace, I have been blessed with six sons and three daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I consider it my good fortune that all of them have faith in Swami and are grateful to Him for what He has brought to their lives as well. Lord Sathya Sai – the divine protector has blessed and saved us in countless ways. With a prayer of gratitude, I wish to relate a few incidents.

Manifestations of Divinity

Swami's protective grace is evidenced in an incident, which occurred when I was driving near Mayo Hall, with my uncle and aunt in the car, returning from Brindavan after Darshan. I tried to overtake a vehicle in my lane but didn't see another car coming in the opposite direction towards us. In a state of panic I just closed my eyes and when I opened them, I saw that we had already passed without being hit by the vehicle.

In the early days, Swami used to give Darshan around 9 o'clock. Once I rushed to Brindavan from home as I was getting late. When I entered the gate of the Mandir, I observed Swami was giving Darshan to a group of devotees from Andhra Pradesh, right outside the Mandir. Seeing me, Swami expressed a little anger as I had arrived late. I had to explain that I got delayed since I started only after

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performing my Puja at home, to which Swami said, "Devudu Ikkada Leda?" (Is God not here?), thus revealing His Divinity.

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I am 90 years old now and have occasionally suffered from lower back pain. In August 2009, what started as a mild pain, soon led to severe pain in the legs and quickly resulted in almost total immobility. Initially, we consulted a number of orthopaedic surgeons, but it did not yield much relief. Fortunately, at the most critical juncture a correct diagnosis was made, which necessitated an immediate neurosurgery. Words fail to convey the extraordinary grace and blessings of Bhagavan at this critical time. I was admitted to Apollo Hospital, Bengaluru and underwent a six-hour-long spinal surgery by a team of specialists. The doctors were totally surprised and clearly attributed it to a miracle and the blessings

of Swami. Especially when seen from the point of view of my age, there is no doubt that Bhagavan has blessed me with a new lease of life. Words cannot fully convey the gratitude for the love and concern Bhagavan bestowed on me during this entire crisis, from the moment of surgery to the long period of recovery through so many ways and from so many people.

We can never fully count the blessings each of the members of our family received on occasions when needed. It is our constant prayer that we earnestly and sincerely attempt to follow the path ordained by our compassionate Bhagavan.

(The author is the Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Karnataka.)

...continued from page 17

an Orange Robe. I had to fight back my tears as I quietly thanked Baba for saving our lives. "You're alive," He smiled reading my thoughts.

"Thank you Baba for saving us," I managed to say. "Sab Ko Bacha Diya" (all were saved), said Baba.

His words were enigmatic. But thinking over them much later, I could comprehend a little of the divine concern for life in general. I realised that on that eventful night, thousands in Riyadh must be praying for safety and their prayers were answered.

"I am indeed close: I listen
To the prayer of every supplicant
When he calls on Me." (II: 186)

Such is the wisdom of unbounded love. Is it not believed that all supplications go to Him for decisions?

The event also taught me that good thoughts helped to overcome any situation. How absurd it is to think that circumstances victimise us. What are circumstances but yardsticks of our own mind? The positive mind swims through them as crossing the troubled waters; consider them as tests of the spirit. The Quran puts it in a different language:

"And if anyone puts his trust in Allah – Sufficient is Allah for him." (LXV: 3)

– Excerpted from "Sai Baba and the Muslim Mind" by Prof. Zeba Bashiruddin.



Unity of Faiths Through Unity of Hearts

Father Dominic Emmanuel

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN MY presentation with Dr. Amartya Sen's book "The Argumentative Indian" which I have gone through at least twice. The basic point of the book is that Indian culture has always encouraged various points of views, has given birth to some of the greatest religions of the world, and has not only welcomed some of the great religions into this land like Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism and others, but has let them prosper here.

India is the Shining Example of Unity in Diversity

He then quotes how the then Prime Minister of Britain, Winston Churchill had predicted that an independent India would not at all survive as one nation because there were several nations within this one country on the basis of languages, cultures, religion and so on. Not only now Amartya Sen proves how Churchill has been proved wrong as before, but many foreigners are amazed at the diversity, heterodoxy, that is how Amartya Sen would like to use the word, that this country exhibits to all the visitors. That is the wonder India is and whoever, whether from outside or from within the country, wants to break this unity

of India will never succeed now or in future. India and Indians have been born into unity of India and with all its other shortcomings and problems of poverty, backwardness and illiteracy, it will always stand as a shining example of unity in diversity for the rest of the world.

All are the Children of one God

I am told that this place celebrates the festivals of all the religions, and this is illustrated profusely all over this place starting from the Chaitanya Jyoti museum that I visited this morning. The chair that is

All people of different faiths come and have unity of heart through one basic principle of love. It is love that unites us. It is service that helps us to express our love towards our brothers and sisters because otherwise love will remain an abstract word, an abstract notion. We don't want it to be placed in a book gilded with gold and silver. We want love to be expressed by our own brawn, by our own strength, by our own muscles and by whatever we have.



placed here, I can see from my side sitting here. There is a silver strip from the side of the chair which has the symbols of all the major religions. And it cannot escape anybody's notice who comes with an open mind and an open heart that Swami spoke about unity in diversity and said that each religion needed to be respected. I quote Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He says, "Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all languages and variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as valid so far as they do not extinguish the flame of unity." Unity is the catchword. He says further, "Religion is of immense help in fostering the integral development of the human personality."

It underlines unity in diversity. These are His words. "True religion is the attainment of purity of mind and heart. Every religion has its precepts and principles. Embodiments of Divine, having come here, there is only one thing which is vital for all of you to recognise and understand. Forgetting all differences of race, religion, caste, creed, disregarding considerations of class and community, you must feel that all of you are children of one God." These are the words of Swami. And as His name is Sathya, His first principle among the five principles of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa that He propagated is truth. And interestingly I find in the Bible, Jesus speaking about he being the truth. And in the gospel of St. John: Chapter 8, Jesus tells his disciples, "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free."

Wonderful words: "The truth will make you free." I am amazed that while Sri Sathya Sai Baba carried that name, Jesus in a way personified truth. You know very well that Mahatma Gandhi experimented with truth and finally came up with his book "My Experiments with Truth." And he said, "God is Truth and Truth is God." So, we find very wonderfully, beautifully how all these points of truth are reflected from Christianity to Sathya Sai Baba or Christianity to Mahatma Gandhi or I am sure in many other religions.

God's Love is Limitless

After truth, we come to a major point that Swami emphasised. It is "Love All, Serve All." Actually, if you just walk through this campus, what you read is "Love All, Serve All." So simple, so beautiful, and yet so profound! Love all. And that actually encapsulates everything. I have a beautiful chapter that I will quickly read to you from the letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians: Chapter 13. He says, "If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophesy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give out all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." And what are the qualities of love? Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it does not dishonour others as



Swami says, "Help Ever, Hurt Never." It is not self-seeking; it is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always helps, always perseveres. Love never fails. I think you will find the reflection of that, the resonance of that in what Swami always said. In Christianity, we believe that the source of all love is God. And unless we know God's love and generosity in our lives first, we will not be able to love and serve others. God's love is manifested in Jesus Christ who by the sacrifice he makes of himself on the cross is the highest sign of self-giving, self-sacrificing in love. St. Paul says, it is easy to die for a friend or one who is your near one, but to die for us when we are still sinners, that is the greatest love. I have seen in one of the sub-titles of the Bible, "The Greatest Love Story Ever Told." The Bible gives the story of God's love right from the moment of creation to dissolution. That is love.

Love is the most Fundamental Value

I do not know how much time I have, but I would like to quickly tell you what Jesus tells us about God's love for us. He gives us the beautiful parable of the prodigal son. Many of us may be familiar with the parable of the prodigal son. A man had two sons. The younger son comes to the father and says, give me the share of my property. And the father being generous gives him the share of his property. This younger son goes to all kinds of bad ways, gambles and spends all the money he has in evil doing.

Then when he has finished everything, he has no way to go, he starts working as a servant in a farm. Then he realises, says, no, no, my father back home has got much more to give me than what I am doing here. So, he goes back to his father.

And the story in the gospel as Jesus tells us is that his father whose property he had taken and gone away is waiting for his return everyday. Every evening, he stares out into the open, thinking that his son will return. The son does return after many, many years unrecognisable because he has been spending and splurging his money on all bad things. What does the father do? The son comes and asks for forgiveness from father, "Father, forgive me for I have done all these wrongs." The father does not even listen to his pleadings; he does not bother at all. The father is happy that his son has come back. He orders a big festival for his son's return and says, "Let us celebrate. My son who was lost has come back." This is a long parable, but I will cut it short and say, Jesus says, "This is how our Father loves us unconditionally." God loves us unconditionally wherever we are; whatever we have been, we are acceptable to God.

Let me take a slight digression. This morning while we were visiting Chaitanya Jyoti museum, the director of the museum said, "Swami was like Jesus Christ, never questioned anybody. Any sinner came from anywhere, He never condemned anybody. Everybody was accepted in His embrace." How beautiful! This morning, I



heard it here. And it is like Jesus Christ, what a compliment! What a wonderful thing to become that great soul that He was! And Jesus told us, if you want people to be transformed, forget about their past, forget about their sins, accept them as they are. I have so many stories from the New Testament about forgiveness. When people asked Jesus, how many times shall I forgive? Seven times? Jesus says, no, not seven times, seventy times seven.

And, I will quote, what Swami said, "Love lives by giving and forgiving, self lives by getting and forgetting. Love can never entertain the idea of revenge for it sees all others as oneself. When the teeth hurt the tongue, do you seek vengeance against the wrong-doers? No. For they both belong to you and are integral parts of your body. So too when someone insults you or inflicts pain, allow your wisdom to guide you. Selfless love is the source of happiness, peace, sacrifice, endurance and all the higher values of life. There is no security and safety without Prema (love), the absolute unalloyed form of love. Love is the most fundamental moral value." Quote again from Swami, "Never give up love. Love should not be rationed based on caste, creed, economic status or intellectual attainment of the recipient. It should flow fully and freely regardless of consequence, for it is one's nature to love, to seek out the dry dreary waste that love can water and make fertile. Love saturates all activities with joy and peace. Love enables the least and the lowest. Love your Self for the God that it embodies. Love others for the sake

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it does not dishonour others as Swami says, "Help Ever, Hurt Never." It is not self-seeking; it is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always helps, always perseveres. Love never fails. I think you will find the reflection of that, the resonance of that in what Swami always said.

of God enshrined in them and who speaks and acts through them. Love is God. God is Love. Where there is love, there God is certainly evident." This is so wonderful that sometimes I feel honestly that I am reading a commentary on the Bible when I read Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Service to Man is Service to God

I mentioned that I would talk about the three of the five principles of Sri Sathya Sai Baba: truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. I have picked up truth, love and service. Seva (service) is of course to be performed with Prema (love). Here hundreds of volunteers are serving us, who have come from all over the country. The words they use always are: "I have committed myself to Seva." Seva of Swami, but what Seva? Seva of Swami does not mean decorating the



mausoleum of Swami. Seva is expressed in that hospital which we visited today, the Super Speciality Hospital, and all the other programmes of service that the Sathya Sai Organisation conducts throughout India as well as abroad.

What it basically means for us Christians is that you will be judged by how you have served the hungry, the poor, the naked, the sick, the prisoner, the stranger. I can see that very clearly reflected here all around as I walk and as I see with my own eyes. That is unity of hearts. That is unity in faiths.

Unity of Heart through the Principle of Love

So, I am going back to what I started with. I am not arguing about unity of faiths because Baba Himself had said, we should respect all differences. Each religion has its own precepts. So, we are not desiring or talking about the uniformity of all faiths. Baba does not want it. I don't think that is desired by anybody. All people of different faiths come and have unity of heart through one basic principle of love. It is love that

unites us. It is service that helps us to express our love towards our brothers and sisters because otherwise love will remain an abstract word, an abstract notion. We don't want it to be placed in a book gilded with gold and silver. We want love to be expressed by our own brawn, by our own strength, by our own muscles and by whatever we have.

Swami means that we love and become one in heart, mind and soul. May the divine spirit which abides in all of us descend upon us to inspire us not just to listen to the nice words that the great men in our great scriptures and great women have spoken and written, but let those words be imprinted on our hearts, on our minds, on our souls so that we would be able to translate that love into action through service.

(From the speech of Father Dominic Emmanuel in the symposium held on 2nd July 2012 at Prasanthi Nilayam on the theme of "Unity of Faiths." Father Emmanuel is the Director, Delhi Catholic Archdiocese.)

Students should strive to awaken in the people a recognition of their inherent divinity, the loss of which accounts for the degradation of humanity today. Students should develop social consciousness. It is not enough to acquire academic knowledge and technical skills, which are all that present-day education is concerned with. If there is no love for God, fear of sin and practice of social ethics, how can there be peace in the world?

– Baba

CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

PILGRIMAGE OF ADILABAD DISTRICT DEVOTEES

TO PAY THEIR HOMAGE to Bhagavan, devotees of Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh came to Prasanthi Nilayam on their 7th Parthi Yatra (pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam) and presented cultural and devotional music programmes on 23rd and 24th February 2013. A beautiful drama "Bhakti Pravaham" (stream of devotion) was staged on 23rd February 2013, which depicted the significance of devotion for man's evolution. The second programme comprising a devotional music concert entitled "Sri Sai Gana Sudha" (nectar of songs dedicated to Sai) was presented on 24th February 2013 by two visually challenged singers, Sri Roshan Rajan and Sri Ritvik Rajan. Beginning their presentation with a prayer song to Lord Ganesh, the talented singers kept the audience spellbound for more than one hour with soul-stirring songs and concluded their concert with an evergreen Qawali "Sai Bina Raha Na Jaye" (we cannot live without Sai). At the conclusion of these programmes, the participants were felicitated.

SRI RUDRA VIJAYAM A DANCE

On the eve of Sivarathri, Prasanthi Dance Group of students made an

excellent dance presentation "Sri Rudra Vijayam" (victory of Rudra) on 9th March 2013. The dance depicted the marriage of Sati with Siva, Sati ending her life at the insult of Siva by her father Daksha Prajapati and dance of Siva as Rudra at the death of Sati. Excellent rendition of Siva Stotras, good commentary, impressive dance performance and appropriate costumes and make-up brought the ancient story alive. The programme which started at 5.00 p.m. came to a close at 6.00 p.m. with Arati after a brief session of Bhajans.

SIVARATHRI CELEBRATIONS

Deep devotional fervour marked the celebration of Sivarathri at Prasanthi Nilayam on 10th March 2013. The venue of the celebrations was Sai Kulwant Hall which was aesthetically decorated for the sacred occasion.

The programme began on the Sivarathri morning at 8.00 a.m. with Rudram chanting which was followed by Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam music by the Institute students. After this, Stotras and devotional songs propitiating Lord Siva were presented by the students. The sacred chants which began with rendition of "Bilvashtakam" Stotra concluded with a thrilling instrumental piece. The morning programme came to a close with Arati at

9.45 a.m. after Bhajan and distribution of Prasadam.

The afternoon programme began with the performance of Abhishekam of the Sayeeswara Linga which was mounted on a high platform in front of Bhagavan's Samadhi to enable the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall to witness the sacred rituals of Puja and Abhishekam of the Linga



Abhishekam of Sayeeswara Linga preceded Sivarathri Bhajan.

with convenience. The proceedings of the Abhishekam started at 4.15 p.m. with performance of Maha Ganapati Puja (worship of Lord Ganesh) by the Chief Priest. Thereafter, Abhishekam of the Linga was done with water of sacred rivers, milk, curd, ghee, honey, sugar, etc., amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras by the priests. The Abhishekam was followed by chanting of Sri Sathya Sai Sahasra Namavali (recitation of 1,008 Names of Sai) with offering of flowers at the Linga. The Linga was then decorated with flowers and various offerings were made at it. The ceremony concluded with Arati of the Linga amidst Veda chanting and sacred musical notes. The entire proceedings were also projected on giant screens in the hall for

the benefit of devotees. The Abhishekam of the Linga was done with the object of universal peace and global harmony.

Video screening of Bhagavan's Discourse followed this. In His Discourse, Bhagavan emphasised that man should correct his own mistakes and ignore the mistakes of others because looking at the faults of others was the worst sin. Man, Bhagavan said, should sing the glory of God and sanctify his time. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" which marked the beginning of the Sivarathri Akhanda Bhajan for 12 hours. Nightlong vigil and Bhajan which started with this Bhajan of Bhagavan at 6.00 p.m. continued till 6.00 a.m. on 11th March 2013, saturating the entire milieu with sacred vibrations. A large number of devotees took part in Bhajans which were led by various groups of students and devotees throughout the



Devotees participating in Sivarathri Bhajan.

Sivarathri night. The auspicious Sivarathri Bhajan came to a happy conclusion with the video screening of two Bhajans of Bhagavan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho" and "Subrahmanyam Subrahmanyam." Sivarathri celebrations came to a close with Arati and distribution of Prasadam.



NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

AUSTRALIA

BHAGAVAN'S 87TH BIRTHDAY (23rd November 2012) was celebrated by Sathya Sai devotees across the nation. Over 3,200 devotees undertook many devotional programmes and service activities, including a national blood drive entitled "Liquid Love 2012," from 23rd October



Devotees participating in Bhagavan's 87th Birthday celebrations in Australia.

to 9th December 2012. More than 500 devotees participated in the Liquid Love programme, and 300 units of whole blood and a number of units of plasma were donated. Distribution of non-perishable food items to the needy and homeless and holding of various devotional and cultural programmes marked the celebration of Bhagavan's Birthday in Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra.

NEW ZEALAND

Devotees from many parts of the country, including the Sai Organisation's Northern

and Central Regions and the Hamilton City Sathya Sai Centre, celebrated Bhagavan's 87th Birthday by presenting various devotional programmes, exhibitions on Educare, talks on Bhagavan's love and His works, melodious devotional songs and service activities. In the Northern Region, about 900 people attended a programme entitled "AROH: LIVE IN LOVE," and more than 100 units of blood were donated by Sathya Sai devotees. At celebrations held in the Central Region, an Anglican Church minister shared his personal experiences with Bhagavan Baba. Food was offered to Buddhist Monks at a monastery and to the elderly and homeless under the Meals on Wheels programme.

JAPAN

In celebration of Bhagavan's 87th Birthday, about 150 Sathya Sai devotees from Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe and Nara



Bhagavan's 87th Birthday celebrations in Japan.

jointly organised programmes of service and devotion over several days. On 18th November 2012, food was served to about 200 homeless people in Kobe. On the morning of 23rd November, a programme included prayers, Omkaram, Suprabhatam, Sathya Sai Ashtottaram and Bhajans, followed by devotees offering heartfelt prayers to Bhagavan for His blessings for world peace. The evening cultural programme, entitled "The Source to Happiness," consisted of two plays on the attainment of happiness in life and concluded with the reading of a message that a group of Japanese devotees had received from Bhagavan during an interview.

URUGUAY

On 23rd November 2012, about 70 people from the Sathya Sai Centre of Montevideo celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday. The programme included chanting of the Sai Gayatri Mantra and a guided light meditation for world peace. The celebrations concluded with screening of two videos on Bhagavan, followed by devotional songs. As part of the celebrations, food was served to about 40 homeless people.

NEPAL

Nepalese devotees celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday for five days in all 195 Sathya Sai Centres of the country, displaying their love and gratitude to Bhagavan by undertaking devotional and service activities. On 19th November,

Ladies' Day, Sathya Sai devotees visited the elderly at their homes and also cleaned several community temples. Sathya Sai Youth undertook service programmes of blood donation, tree planting and sweeping and cleaning of roads and public places. On Education Day, Sathya Sai devotees offered scholarships, distributed clothes and stationery to needy school children and undertook service activities at local schools. On Service Day, devotees visited an orphanage, served food to the needy and distributed clothes, food baskets and blankets. On 23rd November, 150 Sathya Sai youth from all parts of the country distributed 300 blankets to the homeless. On the final day of the celebrations, Sathya Sai devotees from all Centres across the country undertook street processions led by Veda chanting, and Bhajan singing groups followed by a beautifully decorated palanquin with a large picture of Bhagavan.

PHILIPPINES

Sathya Sai devotees lovingly celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday over a period of three weeks with devotional and service programmes. On 4th November 2012, a national project called the "Sai Self-Help Initiative" was inaugurated. The project included a livelihood programme, with the distribution of 720 kilograms of fabric remnants to 36 individuals living in the outskirts of Manila, for producing income-generating goods such as doormats, potholders and other household items. On 11th November, volunteers distributed a month's supply of milk products and





Distribution of fabrics for producing income-generating goods in Philippines.

served a fresh-cooked lunch to 45 abandoned and malnourished children at the Missionaries of Charity near Manila. On 18th November, hot meals were served to 108 elderly people and 45 children, and 108 bath towels were distributed to elders. On Bhagavan's Birthday, grocery bags containing rice, beans, sugar, noodles, milk powder and laundry soap were distributed to 108 needy families in the outskirts of Manila. On 24th November, devotees distributed 108 grocery bags and bath towels to needy families at the Sathya Sai School in Pililla. The three-weeklong celebrations concluded with a medical and dental camp at the Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) campus in San Pedro Laguna, near Manila. Paediatric and dental services, along with free medicines, were provided to over 300 adults and children.

– **Sathya Sai International Organisation**

BHARAT

Bihar and Jharkhand: Sanathana Sarathi golden jubilee exhibition "Journey with Sai" was held at Jamshedpur from 26th to 28th February 2013. Dedicated Seva Dal

members of the Sai Organisation of Bihar and Jharkhand brought it from Allahabad where it had been set up in Maha Kumbh fair. The exhibition was set up in Tulsi Bhawan Hall located in the heart of the city of Jamshedpur, and was inaugurated



"Journey with Sai" exhibition at Jamshedpur.

on 26th February 2013 at 6.00 p.m. by Sri Sudhir Mahato, former Deputy Chief Minister of Jharkhand amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras and blowing of conches by the Bal Vikas children of Jamshedpur Samithi.

The exhibition received tremendous response from the general public of Jamshedpur, who came in large numbers throughout the day, on all days, till the closing of the exhibition at 9.00 p.m. on 28th February 2013. The visitors came from all sections of society and from different religions.

Karnataka: Karnataka Sai Organisation's monthly programme, "One with Sai" was held in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan, Bengaluru where more than 5,000 people came to participate.



Distinguished Bhajan singer, Sri Anup Jalota presented devotional songs in his inimitable style and kept the audience spellbound for about three hours. The artiste also related his moving experiences with Bhagavan.

Maharashtra: The Mobile Medicare Project in Maharashtra and Goa, under which 36 vans are serving lakhs of people, took a new initiative recently to get a few essential drugs manufactured under the banner of Sri Sathya Sai Medicare. The product will bear the Sarva Dharma Logo of Sai, and each brand name will be prefixed with SAI. Each batch will be produced on made-to-order basis exclusively for Sri Sathya Sai Medicare Centre, and strict quality tests will be undertaken for each batch.

Odisha: The 37th State Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Odisha was held from 18th to 20th January 2013 in Bhubaneswar, wherein more than 2,500 delegates from all over the State came to participate. Addressing the delegates, Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations touched upon the organisation's future perspectives and programmes including the 90th Birthday of Bhagavan which coincides with the golden jubilee celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation in 2015. Thereafter, Sri Nimish Pandya, All India Vice President spoke to the delegates and lauded the State Organisation for having arranged such a nice programme, providing a platform to all the members of the organisation to collectively participate and chalk out the future course of action. The State President of Odisha then addressed

the gathering and termed the year 2013 to be observed as the Year of Right Conduct in continuation to the Year of Harmony observed last year. The working sessions of the conference were held at different venues with different topics carefully chosen and drafted, covering the entire spectrum of activities. Many cultural and music programmes were also organised during the course of the conference.

Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand: Sanathana Sarathi golden jubilee exhibition "Journey with Sai" was put up by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand in the Maha Kumbh fair held in the holy city of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh from 25th January to 17th February 2013. The exhibition was inaugurated on 25th January 2013 by Sri Ashok Singhal of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and an ardent devotee of Swami.

The exhibition depicting the life and teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, His visits to various places of the country and His projects in the field of education, health, drinking water, etc., greatly impressed thousands of people who came from all parts of the world on the sacred occasion of Maha Kumbh fair. Bhagavan Baba's message of "Love All, Serve All" and "Help Ever, Hurt Never" were prominently displayed in the exhibition with the aim of spreading Bhagavan Baba's message to the masses during the holy occasion of Maha Kumbh. Besides the exhibition, an altar with Swami's picture was put up, where Suprabhatam, Laksharchana, Bhajans and Veda chanting were performed by devotees who visited the exhibition from all over the State.



Sri Rudra Vijayam.



Bhakti Pravaham.



Sivarahtri Bhajan.

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– Baba



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