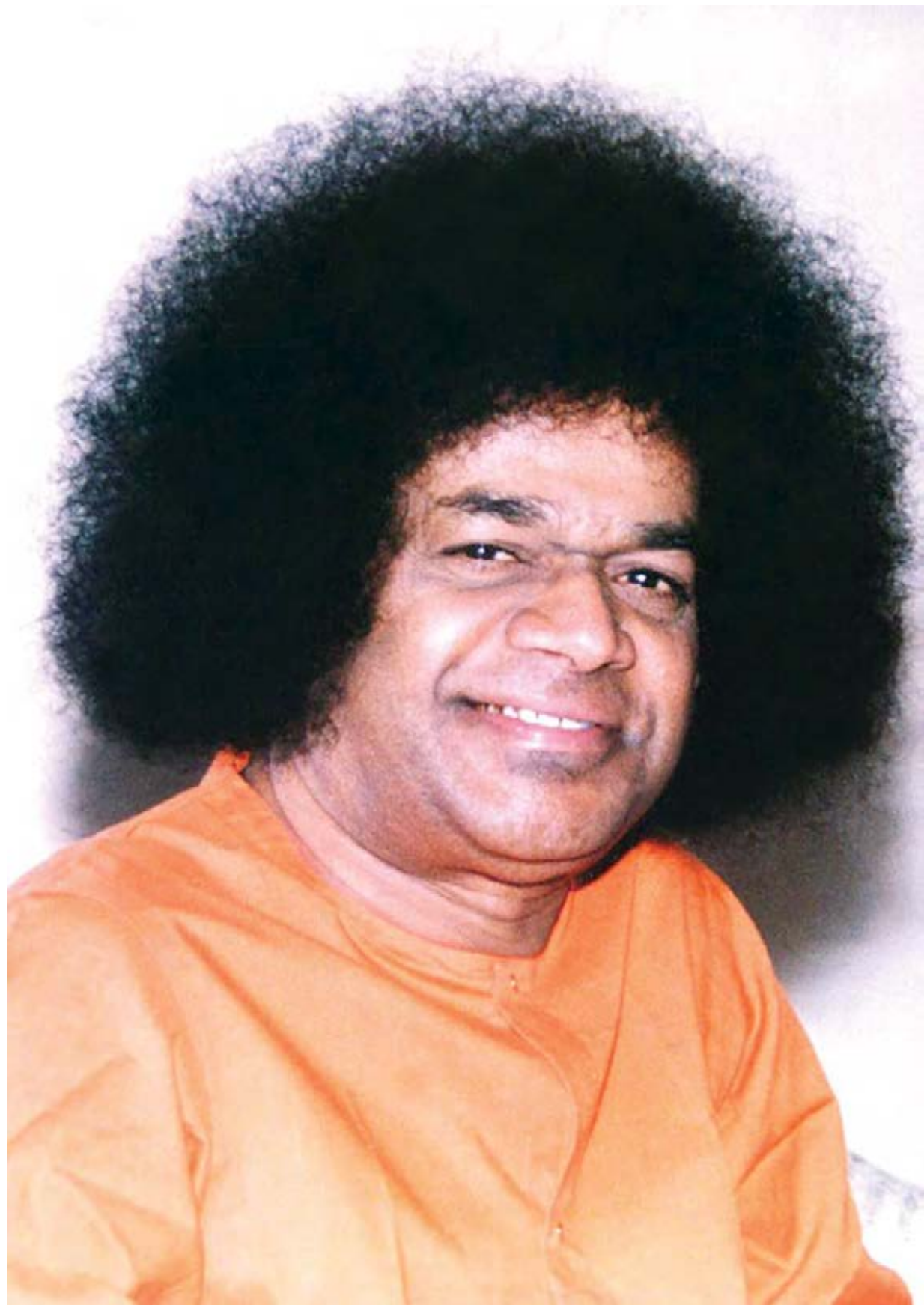




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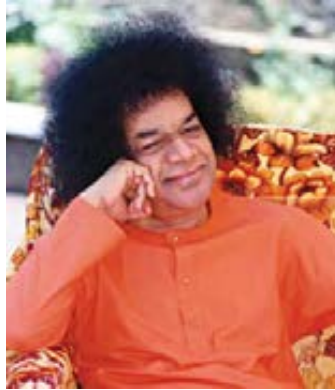
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Editor **G.L. ANAND**
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*"The body is made up of five elements.
It is negative in nature. It is temporary
like a water bubble. You do not know
when it is there and when it is not!
Body is like a water bubble and mind
is like a mad monkey. What is the use
of following the body and the mind?
Do not follow the body, do not follow the
mind, follow the conscience. The path of
conscience is the straight path to truth."*

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Forthcoming Festivals / Functions at Prasanthi Nilayam

6th AprilUgadi
14th AprilSri Rama Navami and Sita Rama Kalyanam
14th AprilTamil New Year Day
15th AprilVishu
24th AprilSri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsava

EQUANIMITY IS TRUE FREEDOM

*The tongue can earn for one the grace of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth);
It can also win friends and relatives;
The same tongue puts one in bondage
And can even lead to sure death.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

GIVE PRIORITY TO GOD IN ALL ENDEAVOURS

Embodiments of Love!

EVERYONE STRUGGLES hard to attain higher position in life in this mundane world. However, to acquire all types of wealth and happiness, purity of speech is most essential. We make friends and have relatives only by the merit of speech. Speech is also root cause of all bondages of man. Therefore, man should see to it that his speech is truthful, sweet and does not cause irritation. The Bhagavadgita also says: *Anudvegakaram Vakyam Sathyam Priya-hitham Cha Yat* (one should speak only truthful, pleasing and well-intentioned words, which are beneficial to others).

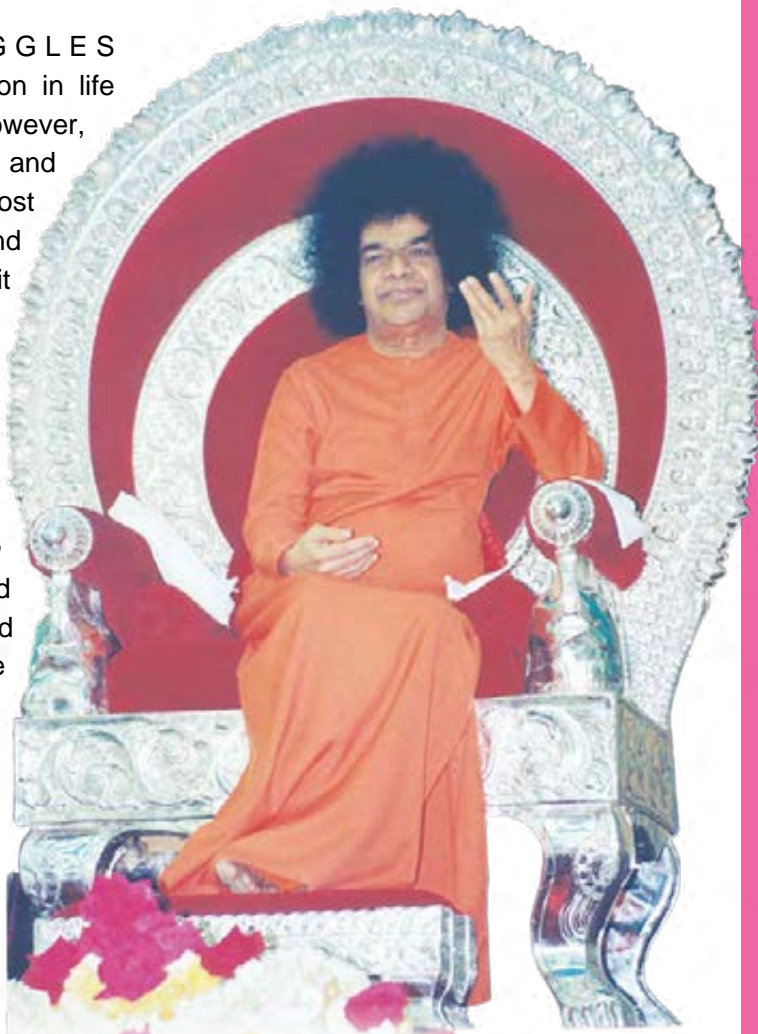
Man today wants limitless freedom. What exactly is freedom?

The end of wisdom is freedom.

The end of culture is perfection.

The end of knowledge is love.

The end of education is character.



Practice is better than Study

Man's humanness is on the decline because he is losing all these four qualities day by day. It is better to read books than to remain ignorant, but to understand what one studies is more important than mere reading. Much better than understanding is assimilation. But the highest is to put into practice what is assimilated. Countless events are taking place all over the world at any moment of time. Lakhs of books are stocked in libraries. Suppose you ask a question to the library, does it reply? There are so many books in the library, but what is the use? So is the case today with man's head, which is turned into a huge library, wherein innumerable subjects are stockpiled. But what is the use of all this information?

What is Freedom?

Freedom is of three types: Swechchha, Parechchha and Anechchha. What is Swechchha? It is individual will. But one should accept victory and defeat, success and failure with equal-mindedness. Aspiring success and detesting failure does not constitute Swechchha. Real freedom lies in considering happiness and sorrow equally. The same truth is propounded in the Bhagavadgita: *Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau* (one should remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). Suppose you have invited a friend to your house. Can you allow only his face, and ask his feet to get out? Humanness lies in equality of both. Welcome both good and bad, success and failure, fame and disrepute with equanimity. This is the right way of experiencing Swechchha.

The second is Parechchha. Parechchha lies in taking up an activity induced by

Wherever you go, your shadow follows you. What is the relation between you and the shadow? Is the shadow related to your head, hands or legs? No. The shadow lies underneath your feet. Maya is like the shadow. It lies at the feet. When you hold on to God's feet firmly, the Maya ends. Therefore, take refuge at the feet of God.

others. When you succeed, you claim it as your achievement. But when it results in failure, you blame the person who induced you. This is what is called Parechchha. You should use your own discrimination rather than submit to others' inducement. Once you commit yourself to any action after proper discrimination, you should not bother about failure or success.

The third is Anechchha. What you attain by Divine dispensation or grace is Anechchha. It is neither due to your own effort nor is it induced by others. You should always be prepared to accept whatever comes by Divine grace. It is not always possible to get results the way you wish. People get elated when their desires are fulfilled and dejected when not fulfilled. Man should condition his mind so as to maintain equanimity towards divergent results. There is only oneness, and no division in humanness. Here is an example. The Veda says, *Chandrama Manaso Jataha Chaksho Suryo Ajayata* (the moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Supreme Being). Mind is associated with the moon, eyes are associated with the

sun, and senses are related to Indra. Indra does not exist in a separate world. He who controls his Indriyas (senses) is Indra. You should become the master of the mind and senses. There is another aspect which is beyond the realm of mind and senses, that is Rudra.

What is Meant by Rudra?

Rudra is the principle of bliss that conjoins Antahkarana (inner psyche) with senses and mind. Rudra is a combination of five senses of action, five senses of perception and the mind. This eleventh principle, that is mind,

flame appears as ten different flames. Now cover the pot with a thick cloth, and you will not see any flame. You may think that there is no flame, but this is a mistake. You are not recognising the light of the Atma that is ever present in your own body. The Param Jyoti (the Supreme Divine Flame) is forgotten, as a result of which man is confronted by troubles and tribulations. It is invisible to you despite its blazing presence because you have covered it with the thick cloth of Tamo Guna (quality of sloth). When the cloth is removed, you will find ten flames. And when the pot of Rajo Guna (quality of passion) is



The Pandavas meticulously observed this principle in their life. They kept Krishna first in all their endeavours. They were the embodiments of Sathya and Dharma (truth and righteousness). They considered God first, world next and themselves last. This was the reason they achieved success after success. The Kauravas gave importance to themselves first, world next and God last. That is why they reaped defeat after defeat.

is known as Ekadasa Rudra. The Vedas, the Sastras (scriptures) and the Puranas (mythological texts) propound many ideals of life. However, their core principle is unity or oneness in the apparent diversity. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). This unified principle, that is the Atma, is present all over our body from top to toe. Here is a small example. Suppose you cover a lighted candle with a pot having ten holes. Because of these ten holes, the same single

broken, what remains is the same single flame, which is omnipresent.

Man has to transcend the Gunas to realise his true self. When you come to a hilly place like Kodaikanal, you wear a coat, under which you have a shirt, under which there is a vest. When you wish to look at your chest, you have to remove the coat first, next the shirt and then the vest. The coat here stands for Tamo Guna, the shirt for Rajo Guna and the vest for Sattwa Guna

(serene quality). You cannot realise your Self until these three qualities are rid off.

When someone asks you who you are, you say you are a doctor. But it is your profession, not your name. When asked again, you say that you are an Indian, a Japanese or a Russian. These too are indicative of your country, not you. You are not the country. Similarly, when you say, "this is my mind, this is my body and this is my handkerchief", you are neither the body nor the mind nor the handkerchief. Then who are you? When you go on analysing Neti, Neti (not this, not this), you will realise that body, mind, senses, etc., are nothing but products of delusion. You are separate from all these.

You say in Telugu 'Na Dehamu' (my body). 'Na' means not, Dehamu means body. This phrase itself indicates that you are not the body. This I, my, mine is nothing but Maya. So, the correct order of preference should be God first, world next and I last. This is the essence of the culture of Bharat. The Christians say Jehovah, the Muslims say Allahu Akbar which means God is great. The Christians talk about Joy. What does the word Joy mean? It means Jesus first, Others next and You last.

The Pandavas meticulously observed this principle in their life. They kept Krishna first in all their endeavours. They were the embodiments of Sathya and Dharma (truth and righteousness). They considered God first, world next and themselves last. This was the reason they achieved success after success. The Kauravas gave importance to themselves first, world next and God last. That is why they reaped defeat after defeat. It is a constant struggle between Dharma and Adharma, between Sathya

and Asathya. What is the symbolism of war between Rama and Ravana? Rama stands for truth and Ravana symbolises untruth or falsehood. Rama stands for Dharma and Ravana stands for Adharma.

Maya is Lost when you Hold on to God's Feet

Wherever you go, your shadow follows you. What is the relation between you and the shadow? Is the shadow related to your head, hands or legs? No. The shadow lies underneath your feet. Maya is like the shadow. It lies at the feet. When you hold on to God's feet firmly, the Maya ends. Therefore, take refuge at the feet of God.

One day, Krishna sneaked into the house of a Gopika, stole milk and butter, spilled it on His feet and floor and ran away. When the Gopikas came and found what Krishna had done, they decided to search and catch hold of Him. They noticed Krishna's footprints on the wet floor. They were led to Krishna by these footprints. So, to find God, where should you begin? You should seek His feet first. Take refuge in God, keep Him first in all endeavours and make your life worthwhile.

The body is made up of five elements. It is negative in nature. It is temporary like a water bubble. You do not know when it is there and when it is not! Body is like a water bubble and mind is like a mad monkey. What is the use of following the body and the mind? Do not follow the body, do not follow the mind, follow the conscience. The path of conscience is the straight path to truth. But man today follows the body and the mind and wastes his life.

(To be continued in the next issue)

– **Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 8th May 1997.**

INSTALL RAMA PRINCIPLE IN YOUR HEART

"There is no place in the world where God does not exist. You may not be able to see, but the whole universe is permeated with Divinity. All that you see, say and do is nothing but God's Will. None can describe the Divine principle. Today you are celebrating Sri Rama's birthday. No benefit accrues from celebrating the birthdays of noble personalities unless you put their teachings into practice," said Bhagavan in His Sri Rama Navami Discourse on 12th April 2000 in Brindavan, Bengaluru.

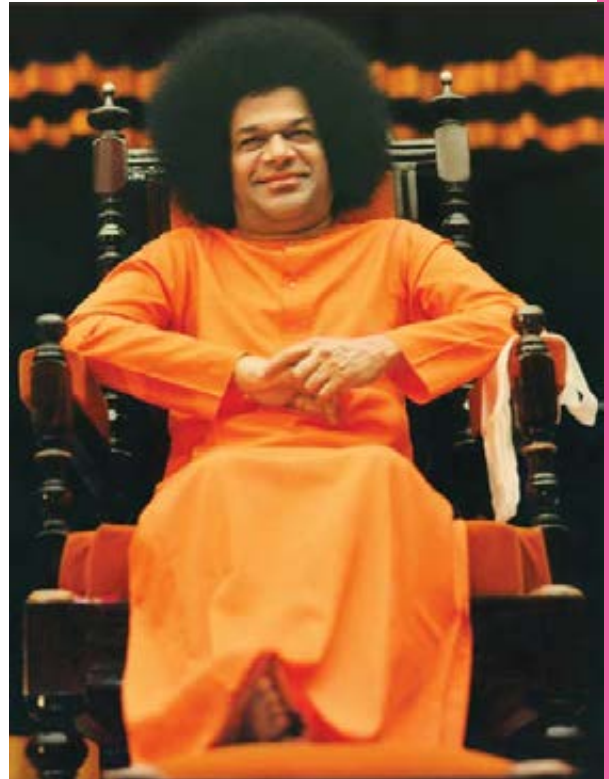
ATTAIN RAMA THROUGH SACRIFICE

Embodiments of Love!

THERE IS NONE IN THIS SACRED land of Bharat who is not aware of the epic Ramayana. The Ramayana sets ideals for the individual, the family and the society at large. Since ancient times, thousands have heard the story of Rama. But not many have tried to put His teachings into practice. Man by birth is a human being but he is not making any effort to understand humanness. He is achieving progress in various fields but his mind is not getting transformed. What is the use of man's existence if the mind does not undergo transformation? He is changing his dresses, not his mind. He would do well if he changes his mind instead of changing his dresses. All the spiritual practices like meditation, penance will prove futile if there is no transformation of the mind. *Mano Moolam Idam Jagat* (mind is the basis of the entire world). Man is not making any effort to understand what is most important on the path of spirituality.

Three Debts of Man

Man is born with three types of debts – debt to God, debt to sages and debt to



parents. God is present in each and every cell of human body in the form of 'Angirasa' (Divinity that is present in each part of the body as essence) and it is He who protects and sustains human life. Man is therefore deeply indebted to God who vibrates in

every limb of his body in the form of Divine energy. The only way man can clear his debt to God is by undertaking sacred actions and by working for the welfare of fellow human beings. That is why the path of service has been prescribed for man to clear his debt to God. Man should serve not with the feeling that he is doing favour to others, but with the understanding that he is repaying his debt to God. Every little act of service reduces a certain amount of your debt to God. You should not crave for positions of authority. You should realise that body has been given to you to serve others. A true servant is a true leader. You should sanctify your life by taking to the path of service and returning your debt to God.

The second debt that man has to repay is the debt to saints and sages. The ancient sages and seers knew the past, present and future of man. They knew the secrets of Dharma. They, therefore, prescribed various codes of conduct and spiritual paths for man so that he may find fulfilment in this life and hereafter. Man can repay his debt to the sages by following and practising their teachings in letter and spirit.

The third debt is the debt to one's parents. Parents take great pains in fostering and educating their children. Mother is the first teacher of man. The Vedas proclaim, *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere the mother and father as God). In order to repay the debt to one's parents, one has to find a way so as not to be born again.

When man emerges from the womb of his mother, one does not find any garland around his neck. There are no jewels made of pearls nor are there glittering gold ornaments. There are no necklaces studded with precious stones like emeralds and diamonds. But there is one garland around his neck. Brahma

strings together the consequences of his past deeds into a heavy garland and puts it around his neck at the time of his birth. (Telugu Poem)

Once you are born with this garland of Karma (action), you should lead your life in such a way that you are not born again. Man is born to repay these three types of debts, not for accumulating wealth and wasting his life in worldly enjoyments. People in the modern age claim themselves to be devotees of God, but their actions betray their claims.

Put Rama's Teachings into Practice to Attain Him

There is no place in the world where God does not exist. You may not be able to see, but the whole universe is permeated with Divinity. All that you see, say and do is nothing but God's Will. None can describe the Divine principle. Today you are celebrating Sri Rama's birthday. No benefit accrues from celebrating the birthdays of noble personalities unless you put their teachings into practice. It is said, *Ramo Vighavan Dharma* (Rama is Dharma personified). His speech was suffused with truth and His conduct radiated peace. Can there be a greater ideal than this? All names and forms are His and He is the embodiment of truth, awareness and bliss.

The four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna are not ordinary mortals. Looking from the worldly point of view, Dasaratha was the king of Ayodhya. It is a mistake to think that Ayodhya is a city where Lord Rama was born. Rama is all-pervasive. What is Ayodhya? It is an impregnable place where enemies cannot enter, i.e., Hridaya (spiritual heart). Dasaratha signifies the chariot of the human body consisting of ten senses. He has three

wives, viz., Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra who represent Sattwic, Rajasic and Tamasic qualities respectively. These three wives had four children, viz., Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, Satrugna who represent the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana Veda respectively. True devotion and surrender lies in understanding the inner significance of the Ramayana.

In the story of the Ramayana, you must understand the principle of Sita. Before going to the forest, Rama distributed His wealth to the poor. Sita also followed Rama and distributed clothes and jewels. Thus, she attained Rama by leaving her worldly desires. However, in the forest she desired to have the golden deer, and as a result became distant from Him. Today's man likewise is bound by desire. When you give up desire, you can attain God. You can attain Rama only through sacrifice. From the Ramayana, you have to learn the lesson of sacrifice. You have to install the principle of Rama in your heart. Rama practised Sathya and Dharma all his life. You should firmly adhere to these principles in your life.

Hanuman's Supreme Devotion

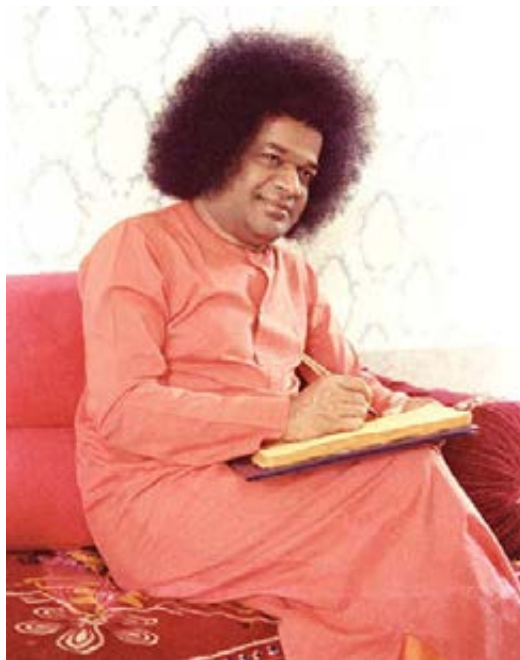
When Dasaratha distributed the sacred pudding which emerged from the Yajna to Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra, Sumitra's share was taken away by an eagle. It was left on a mountain, which Anjana Devi consumed. As a result, Hanuman was born to her. This is the reason for the intimate relationship that existed between Hanuman and the four brothers, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna. Very few are aware of it.

When Sita and Rama returned to Ayodhya, people's joy knew no bounds. At the time of His coronation, Rama distributed gifts to all those who had helped

Him in the war, except to Hanuman. On being questioned by Sita, Rama said that Hanuman did not care for any gift and that He had no worthy gift to be given to Hanuman. Then Sita took out her pearl necklace and presented it to Hanuman. He plucked each pearl, put it between his teeth, placed it near his ear and with a face indicating disappointment threw it away in disgust. Surprised at this behaviour of Hanuman, Sita said, "Hanuman, this is a precious pearl necklace given to me by my father, but you are throwing away the pearls without realising their value. You don't seem to have given up your monkey tricks". Then Hanuman replied, "O mother, I examined each pearl in order to see whether it had the sacred name of Rama in it. I could not find it in any pearl. Without the name of Rama, they are but stones and pebbles. So, I cast them on the ground. Even the hair of mine is filled with the name of Rama". Saying so, he plucked out a hair from his hand and put it near Sita's ear. She could hear Rama's name emanating from it. It can be said that but for Hanuman, Ramayana would not have existed. He is the embodiment of devotion and surrender.

Hanuman is present wherever Rama's name is chanted. Rama's name and form are not different. Hanuman experienced this unity. That is the principle of non-dualism. You call yourselves devotees of Rama and go through the sacred text of Ramayana repeatedly, but is there any transformation in your mind? Not at all. This is not true or real devotion, but only a show of devotion. Rama does not approve of pomp and show. He gives importance only to practice. Bliss can be attained only through practice. Try to understand the principle of Rama correctly.

– Excerpted from **Bhagavan's Rama Navami Discourse on 12th April 2000 in Brindavan, Bengaluru.**



BHAGAVAN WRITES FOR SANATHANA SARATHI

WHEN BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA STARTED SANATHANA SARATHI in February 1958, He also began writing an article for it every month from its very first issue and continued writing without any break up to October 1984. All these articles were written in perfect sequence as these were meant to be compiled in the form of books which were called Vahini series. To acquaint our readers how these articles were written by Bhagavan, we reproduce Bhagavan's handwritten articles along with their translation that formed the 16th and final book of Vahini series named "Leela Kaivalya Vahini" (Stream of Cosmic Consciousness Divine).

The article given in this issue forms the first part of the article which was published in July 1984 issue of Sanathana Sarathi. We have not been able to give the article which was published in June 1984 issue since we could not find this handwritten article. The subsequent issues of Sanathana Sarathi will also carry articles of "Leela Kaivalya Vahini" which expound the profound knowledge of the Vedas. Since Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself is the Veda Purusha and the Vedas have emerged from Him, there can be no greater authority to propound the eternal values and invaluable teachings of the Vedas than Him. The seekers who want to grasp the authoritative and true import of the spiritual truths contained in these most ancient scriptures should read and reread these articles.

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వీలాకైవల్య వాహిని

(సాయి సాధకుల సంభాషణ)

సాధకుడు : స్వామీ! వేదమునకు ఇంకను పేర్లేమైన నున్నవా?

సాయి : ఆ..... లేకేమి? ఇంకా ఎన్నియో పేర్లున్నవి. పృశ్ని అనియు, ప్రథమజా అనియు, ఇంకా ఆయా సందర్భములను పురస్కరించుకొని అనేక పేర్లున్నవి.

సాధకుడు : పృశ్ని అనగా ఏమి?

సాయి : పరమేశ్వరుడు పృశ్నిగర్భుడు. పృశ్ని అనగా పరిశుద్ధము, పవిత్రం, నిర్మలం అని అర్థములు. పరమేశ్వరుని బుద్ధి దోషరహితమని అర్థము.

ఋషులు మంత్రద్రష్టలై పరిశుద్ధాన్తఃకరణులై బ్రహ్మప్రేరితులై తదనుగ్రహపాత్రులై తపస్సమాధిలో మంత్రజాతమును దర్శించిరి. అట్టి మంత్రములను దర్శించిన మంత్రద్రష్టలుకూడా భగవంతుణ్ణి 'పృశ్నిగర్భుడ'ని వర్ణించిరి.

అయితే మంత్రద్రష్టలగు ఋషులు కర్మబద్ధులై మరల, మరల జన్మించువారు కారు. కల్పాదియందు మాత్రమే బ్రహ్మచే సృజింపబడుతారు. కాన వీరిని అజః అని కూడా శృతి చెప్పినది. వారు సహజముగనే పరిశుద్ధాన్తఃకరణులు. వారుకూడా పృశ్ని అని పిలువబడిరి. అట్టి పరిశుద్ధ స్వరూపులై తపము ఆచరించిరి. ఆ తపస్సమాధిలో స్వాయంభువమగు బ్రహ్మ వారికి అభివ్యక్తమాయెను. బ్రహ్మ సాక్షాత్కారమును బడసి బ్రహ్మయజ్ఞమును దర్శించిరి.

సాధకుడు : బ్రహ్మయజ్ఞ మనగా నేమి?

సాయి : బ్రహ్మయజ్ఞ మనగా స్వాధ్యాయం. లోక కళ్యాణార్థమై బ్రహ్మనుగ్రహమును పొంది అజులగు, అధికారులగు ఋషులు యజ్ఞములను సృజించిరి. మంత్రములను దర్శించినవారు, వేదచోదితమైన పరమార్థమును, ధర్మబ్రహ్మ స్వరూపమును దర్శించువారిని మాత్రమే ఋషులని వేదమే తెలిపినది. అట్టి వేదము అంగీకరించిన ఋషులు సృజించిన క్రతువులే యజ్ఞములు.

తపస్సుచే లభించిన దగుటచే బ్రహ్మత్వము 'తపోజా' అని కూడా దేవుని లక్షణాలను వర్ణించిరి. దీనినే దైవీవాక్, దేవవాణి అనిరి. తపోజా అనుటచే, అంతకు పూర్వము లేక, క్రొత్తగా పుట్టినది కాదు. అనాది సిద్ధమైన వేదవాణియే తపస్సు వలన అభివ్యక్తమైనది. స్వాయంభువమగు బ్రహ్మ. ఇది అనాది సిద్ధమైన వాక్కు అని స్పష్టము చేయుచున్నది.

స్వయంభూ, తపోజా - ఇత్యాది పదములను పురస్కరించుకొని దైవీవాక్ వేదమునందు అచటచట మంత్రకృత్, ఋషికృత్ ఇత్యాది పదములను అనుసరించుచు ఈ వాక్-మంత్ర - మంత్రకర్తృ రచితమై చెప్పబడినవి.

LEELA KAIVALYA VAHINI

Sai Speaks to Sadhaka

Sadhaka: Swami! You said the Veda is known by nine other names. Has it got more?

Sai: Ah! Can it be designated by only nine? It has many more names. For example, it is known as Prasna, also as Prathamaja. The names reveal the various facets of the Veda, the context and character of the teachings.

Sadhaka: Prasna? What does it mean?

Sai: The Parameswara (Almighty) is Prasnagarbha (He, who contains all clarity and wisdom). Prasna connotes purity, clarity, sanctity. So, the word indicates that the Almighty has the intelligence, devoid of taint of any kind. The Veda is the concretisation in words of that Wisdom. Rishis (sages), who possess purified consciousness and clarified intellect, win the grace of the all-pervasive Brahman (Cosmic Self). Brahman prompts them and blesses them to visualise the hymns and sacred formulae (Mantras). While adoring the Almighty, who became aware of the Truth, they, too, recognised and described Brahman as Prasnagarbha.

Rishis, who visualised the Mantras, were not bound by the consequent coils of Karma (works); they merge in Brahman and emerge from Brahman, when the cycle of manifestation starts again. So, they are hailed as Ajah (unborn). The Veda acclaims them thus. Their very nature is immaculate purity. Therefore, they, too, are called Prasna. They yearned so agonisingly for grace, that in the Samadhi (state of superconsciousness), Brahman manifested out of self-will and awarded them the vision of Brahma Yajna.

Sadhaka: What is Brahma Yajna?

Sai: Brahma Yajna is Swadhyaya, that is to say, intense study and observance of the Veda. The Rishis, who are “unborn” and therefore authorised by Brahman to transmit the Truth, formulated, according to the vision they earned, the Yajnas or sacrificial rites, designed to promote peace and prosperity in the world. The Vedas acknowledge as Rishis only those, who treasure in their hearts the awareness of Mantras, of the supreme truth, and of the meaning and significance of Brahman (the Cosmic Self) and Dharma (the Laws of Social Harmony and Individual Rights and Duties). The ritual sacrifices authorised and accepted by such Rishis are called Yajnas.

The yearning for Truth is Tapas or Asceticism. Since Brahman is won through Tapas, it is referred to as Tapoja (attained by Tapas) and the response from Brahman to the Tapas is described as the Deva-Vaak (Word of God), the Deva-Vani (Voice of God).

Tapoja literally means “born of Tapas”; but, this does not imply that the Brahman (Cosmic Self) was non-existent, until Tapas brought It forth! Brahman is ever-existent. It has no Beginning. Time does not affect it. “Born of Tapas” means that “It revealed Itself to the person, who underwent the Tapas”. It ever IS. It has willed to be so. It projected Itself as the Vaak, the Word. The Word is the Mantra of the Veda. So, the Almighty is described in the Veda as the Mantra-Krit (Designer of Mantra), the Rishi-Krit (Creator of Rishis), besides the names that occur at some place or other, like Swayam-bhu (self-emergent), Tapoja (born of Tapas), etc.

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE IN BHAGAVAN'S PRESENCE*

Kuppam Vijayamma

"To be engaged in Seva activities is a fulfilment in itself. Beyond this, no other spiritual practice is necessary. All the three aspects of concentration, contemplation and meditation are naturally involved in the concept of Seva. Just as a precious pearl is contained in an oyster shell, the tiny looking phrase 'Help Ever, Hurt Never' is pregnant with a great message. Just engage yourselves in Seva. I will assume the responsibility to save you."

DURING THE FESTIVALS, thousands of devotees had to be fed right in the presence of Swami.

It was a great ordeal to make the crowds sit in lines in the hall. Items such as tamarind rice, sweet rice, curd rice, chutney, etc., would be served on fresh banana leaves placed before each in the lines. Then Swami would Himself give Laddus to each one of them. I just cannot describe the scene outside the hall at that moment! The crowd of devotees was so huge and disorderly that it seemed extremely difficult to manage it.

Do not Underestimate the Value of Seva

During festivals, Swami would not take rest even for a second. He would supervise and participate in each and every programme

right from the morning till 10 in the night. And He would do all this with great relish and boundless joy. Looking at Him in this manner, our hearts would melt like butter. We, the army of monkeys, were always eagerly waiting to respond to His slightest command. Then why He should do it all Himself? This is what is known as mother's love. Swami would present us new scarves and badges before each festival. He would also admit new volunteers into service activities. He called



**Continued from previous issue. This is the third and final part of Smt. Vijayamma's article.*

it 'Volunteer Meeting'. This meeting, which lasted one and a half hours, was like a great feast to all of us.

"This seemingly simple word Seva has a great significance indeed. It requires no proof. Once there was a wealthy man who was a miser. Whenever anybody approached him for help, he would politely point to the house on the opposite side, with his forefinger, and say, "Go to the person residing in that house, because he is very charitable". In the course of time, when this man died, emissaries of Yama, the god of death, came and took him to heaven first. Angels of the place honoured his forefinger by putting a ring of jasmine flowers on it. He was surprised and sought to know the reason behind this queer act of theirs. They replied, "This was the finger which showed the right path to so many people. Do you remember"? While the emissaries were then taking him to hell, the miser lamented that he could have remained in heaven permanently had he rendered service wholeheartedly. Swami then reminded the volunteers, "This golden opportunity has come to you like a boon from heaven. You need not toil much. You need not spend a single rupee from your pocket. Even while thousands of people are waiting eagerly outside, I am bestowing this kind of special grace on you people. So, you must realise the necessity of serving with great care and love. You may not get the chance again and again". These words of Swami drenched our hearts with joy as well as repentance.

For us, Navaratri festival would be a festival of joy. The blissful and glorious Yajna on one side and the stream of Divine Discourses of the Lord on the other would get permanently enshrined in our hearts. It was a great fortune indeed. A devotee needs to

assimilate Swami's Will through the intellect, and immerse body and mind in the Yoga of Service. Just as the Lord exhorted, that is the only way to sanctify time. Otherwise, our entire existence turns out to be a burden to the earth, and a worthless phenomenon of gluttony, sinning the human life into misuse.

During one Discourse, Swami said, "You know what Lord Krishna told Dharmaraja: Yudhisthira! Please assign Me the task of collecting the leaves for disposal after people finished their meals, all through this Rajasuya Yajna period. Dharmaraja was stunned. He accepted with folded hands, taking it as His command. See! Do not underestimate the value of Seva. If this kind of opportunity is wasted, you may have to repent in vain in future. When God is standing right in front of you and motivating like this, just imagine with what an amount of dedication you should render Seva. Are you not immensely indebted to Him for this entire benediction"? Our repayment and redemption lies in rendering Seva selflessly, rather than indulging in verbal sophistry.

During a discussion, Swami said, "Some people say, 'Swami, we are very much interested in doing service; but we do not find time'. This is not the right attitude. When you pray wholeheartedly for an opportunity to serve, I shall 'create' the opportunity for your sake. This is the Truth! Truth! Truth! While you are on the way to the office, and when you happen to see someone wailing in agony on the road, you should rush and take him to the hospital. And you need not worry about reaching office in time or about the scolding of your boss. When you render sincere service, it shall be My duty to remove all obstacles and blames involved. One day, a devotee happened to render this kind of service and was delayed in reaching

office. But, you know, his boss reached office much later. When you leave all your problems to Me and engage yourselves in selfless service, it is My duty to bestow good results.

"In case, you assume arrogant attitude, 'I am the volunteer. You must obey', know that punishment will follow you like your own shadow. One day, a woman was fervently appealing to a volunteer to allow her to give a note of pleading to Swami, as she was in a dire situation. The volunteer looked at her furiously and mercilessly pushed her to sit down. After a while, Swami came out, directly walked towards the volunteer and removed her scarf, ignoring her penitent pleas. Even after knowing about Swami's omniscience, we find even ardent devotees are prone to adamant postures.

Devotees' Joy is My Food

"To be engaged in Seva activities is a fulfilment in itself. Beyond this, no other spiritual practice is necessary. All the three aspects of concentration, contemplation and meditation are naturally involved in the concept of Seva. Just as a precious pearl is contained in an oyster shell, the tiny looking phrase 'Help Ever, Hurt Never' is pregnant with a great message. Just engage yourselves in Seva. I will assume the responsibility to save you".

Year after year, along with the increasing crowds of devotees, the number of volunteers had also been increasing. One day, looking at us who were standing in front of Him, Swami said sweetly and lovingly, "How do you now feel about the might of your own shoulders? Of course, a lot of strength comes even without doing any kind of exercise". Sometimes, He

would call us on to the stage and bless us with Padanamaskar along with Vibhuti and plantain fruits. Indeed, He is the Divine Mother of the universe, the heart-throb of all devotees! He said, "Devotees' joy is My food". Swami works day and night tirelessly with the love of a thousand mothers for the sake of His devotees.

Swami said, "Every limb of your body gets sanctified when you engage yourselves in Seva. When Seva is really rendered wholeheartedly and with a pure mind, self-confidence gets fortified. This leads to self-satisfaction and with it strong feelings of self-sacrifice. That is Jivita Paramartham (ultimate fulfilment of life). See how you are able to realise God even without any struggle! You have two wings, Love and Seva, just as birds fly with the strength of two wings. Treading the path like birds, you must reach God, fast!! Engage yourselves in Seva, and God Himself will come in search of you. You need not crave for God". Hearing those words from Swami, our hearts were taken over by intoxicating bliss. Thus, in the name of Volunteers Meeting, the Lord bestowed on us many golden opportunities. The badges were always flashy with multiple colours and beautiful emblems. He insisted that these badges should always be worn on the left side of the chest saying, "Be sanctified by realising God in the temple of your heart. But beware! Once this precious diamond is slipped off, you will not get it again". Swami used to present badges with His own hands, along with the rare opportunity of Padanamaskar.

I will not Forsake you

One day, Swami called us in, looked at us intently and said. "I gave you a lot

of messages. You know how people are cramming outside. Many of them are new to the place. They are not familiar with our norms. Therefore, you must impress upon them with love and patience. I should not hear from you words such as 'Swami, they are not listening'. When you yourselves are not listening properly despite My instructions over the years, how do you expect them to understand within a couple of days? All these people are coming for the sake of My love, without bothering about odds and hardships. So, it is your duty to make them happy to the extent possible. I wish that they all remember you for long, for the humility, patience and care displayed by you. That is the only thing I seek from you". Those words had a mellowing effect on our hearts.

"Etch a good name for yourselves. I shall be with you, along with you, at your house and in your eyes. I shall not forsake you, and you should not forsake Me. Mingle with love." We were convinced this was going to be the last meeting for us. All of us fell at His feet and cried like children. Pouring out love of a thousand mothers, Swami granted Padanamaskar to all of us along with Vibhuti. Finally, He raised both His hands towards us as a gesture of Abhayam (assurance of protection).

Once in the year 1946, Swami was sitting on the sand bed of Chitravathi along with a group of devotees, during which He made an impromptu declaration, "Great buildings and structures are going to be built in the Nilayam in the near future. You are going to witness it all". He then drew some drawings on the sand and showed us, saying, "This will be East Prasanthi, this is West Prasanthi and this is South Prasanthi. Many foreigners

"This golden opportunity has come to you like a boon from heaven. You need not toil much. You need not spend a single rupee from your pocket. Even while thousands of people are waiting eagerly outside, I am bestowing this kind of special grace on you people. So, you must realise the necessity of serving with great care and love. You may not get the chance again and again."

are also going to come and reside". But we took Swami's words lightly, because we felt that people would not be attracted by the hot and harsh atmosphere of the land, let alone foreigners. As if sensing our thoughts, Swami said, "I declare, I will do and I shall get it done. Now I have declared it to you. Soon I will procure bricks, limestone, etc., for the buildings. I will first do it all Myself, and then get it done by you". Sai's word is the word of Truth. We could not estimate the value of His words at that time. But actually we are now able to see and enjoy.

Let us all participate in Seva activities wholeheartedly, make the Lord happy through our selfless service and attain fulfilment in life. There is no use of wailing after the hands are burned (due to negligence in the present). Before time and opportunity slip away, let us get redemption by putting Swami's directions into practice.

– **Smt. Kuppam Vijayamma is the author of the famous book "Anyatha Saranam Nasti" and many other books on Bhagavan Baba.**

Effulgence of Divine Glory

COMMUNICATING DIVINITY

Richard Bock

*M*ODERN TECHNOLOGY HAS made it possible for the voice and likeness of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to be spread over the face of the earth through films, photos and tape cassettes. For those outside of India and, indeed, many within India as well, the first memory of contact with Bhagavan has been a photo or film. This was my experience also.

Because we live in the mundane world, however, it sometimes takes us a while to understand that while this may be our first contact with Him, it is not His first contact with us, that technology, no matter how advanced, is but incidental to the ability of the Lord to reach His devotees.

In early 1968, after some years of practising meditation and reading philosophy, I began to seriously ask to be shown who my true Guru was. A few weeks later, Ravi Shankar, the renowned musician who recorded for my company, World Pacific Records, and was and is a very close friend, mentioned the name Sathya Sai Baba to me. Shortly afterwards, Mataji Indra Devi played a tape recording of Baba singing Bhajans and showed me a film she had brought from India. I was fascinated by the sound of Baba's voice and asked if she thought it would be possible for me to get permission to make a recording of Baba in India. A few weeks later, I saw another friend



named Ivan Markov, a Hatha Yoga teacher, who asked me to read a manuscript he had just finished. It was a biography of Baba, the first written in the West, but never published.

At that time, only a handful of people in the United States even knew of Baba, and books and photos of Him were unknown there. So, it seemed extraordinary that within such a short time after asking the question, I had heard His name, listened to His voice, seen Him on film, and read His life story.

Now I was eager to see Baba in person. Having received permission to bring my recording equipment, I flew to India in mid-November of 1968 to record Bhagavan's Bhajans at the Birthday celebrations. During a brief stopover in Tokyo, casually, and without any indication of its future role in my life, I bought a Super-8 movie camera and a few rolls of film.

I arrived at the Ashram and soon was standing at the edge of the crowd waiting for Baba's Darshan. Baba appeared on the verandah of the Mandir. A path of flowers had been carefully laid for Him to walk from this Mandir to the auditorium and devotees were crowding on either side of it. Baba looked in my direction and motioned for me to come out of the crowd with my camera. Following His direction, I soon found myself preceding Him along the flower strewn path, walking backwards and filming as He walked through the crowd. Prof. Kasturi was holding aloft the ceremonial umbrella, and Baba's mother followed just behind. My field vision, circumscribed by the camera's viewfinder, was filled with the enlarged image of Baba's smiling face as He turned from side to side acknowledging the crowds who strained towards Him with outstretched hands.

Earlier that day, I had set up recording equipment on the auditorium stage where Baba was to speak. When He arrived, He took a garland of flowers and wrapped it around one of my microphones, as if to reassure me that I had His permission and everything would be okay. After speaking, Baba sang Bhajans for almost forty-five minutes. That tape became the first long playing record of His Bhajans released in India and the West. It seems now as if Baba was saying...I will give you what you want,

you want a movie, you want a record... I will give them to you provided you accept what I really have to give you... the key to liberation itself.

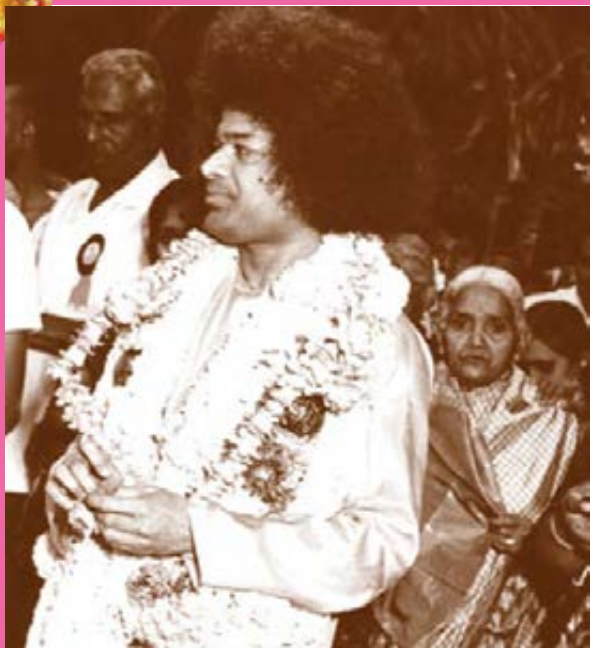
In retrospect, I can see how those moments with Baba signalled a turning



Prof. Kasturi holding the ceremonial umbrella for Bhagavan.

point for me, the beginning of the process of acquiring faith and developing the discrimination which has led me to follow Baba's beckoning hand out of the chaotic world of corporate business which at that point had already caused me to suffer one heart attack.

Actually, it was immediately after the heart attack that I made the journey to Him. By the time I got to the Ashram, I was feeling



Mother Easwaramma with Bhagavan.

fine. I could not believe that I had ever been sick. I had my interview with Baba and He materialised some Vibhuti for me, opened my shirt and put it on my chest. I had not told Him anything, but the next thing He said was that my heart was not damaged. (I had the attack in September and I was in India in November.) “Good heart, don’t worry. Why fear when I am here?” Then He materialised a ring and said, “Wear this, I will always be with you”. It had a likeness of Baba in it. That gave me a connection with Him and it started to change my life. It was so natural that I did not even have time to be shocked about it. I had heard that He did this. In fact, it was one of the things that kind of concerned me. Before going to the Ashram, I told Indra Devi, “Everything but the miracles, I can accept”. Those miracles bothered me because I had read in Ramakrishna that you have to beware of the Siddhi powers; they will lead you astray. So, I was afraid that showing off this power was somehow egotistical and not on the highest



Richard Bock and Janet with Bhagavan in Dharmakshetra, Mumbai.

level of expression. Therefore, I had doubts as to His motives in doing it. But when I got closer and began to experience it, I realised that it was so natural to Him, and the reason behind it so sound, that I realised He was coming from a different space. He was not becoming something; He was that already. And so there was nothing that could spoil Him.

Baba is here to try to evolve people out of the insanity they have created for themselves, into the Light. For anybody who comes into His orbit, who is willing to meet Him half way, He is going to do everything He can to help, because that is His Mission, that is why He is here. With a Westerner, it usually takes something to blow his mind to get out of the material world that he is trapped in, and out of his idea that everything can be figured out scientifically. So, Baba creates

something out of time, breaking what looks like scientific natural laws and creates a so-called miracle. That is very hard for someone steeped in the intellectual world to handle. They have to confront it and question it. And the only answer is, God. And most of the time, people who are intellectual cannot get to God because it does not work for them.

It is the simple-minded person, the person who has faith and love that can embrace God without having to understand God. But it is the intellectual who has to understand God before he can embrace Him. And the understanding of God is impossible! There are millions of people out there trying to figure out and going bonkers, because they can't. And an act of suspension of time is going to stop people and make them pause and think.

The thing that blew my mind was not the creation of the ring. It was what happened when Indra Devi asked Him if she could have some more of the healing ash, the Vibhuti, because she had given all of her first supply out to people. He said, "Yes" and, as I am watching, moves His hand in a circle and then holds both hands up as if to receive something. Then this urn about four inches high appears in mid-air and plops into His hands. I see this and I say, "That is not sleight of hand, that is not up His sleeve, that is something else"! And then He takes the top off and, on a piece of paper, spills out all of the ash. Then He pours again and another full quantity of ash pours out so that in total He poured out about double the amount the urn could hold. Next, He puts half of it back in the urn and distributes some of the remainder to people nearby. What's left, He puts in a little handkerchief bag that He gives to Indra. He touches it and says,

"Now this will be an inexhaustible supply, so you won't run out". Well! She has had it for ten years now and it is still flowing. And she has given it to thousands of people. So, that was a miracle for me, much more so than the ring. Because I had been flirting with the concept of God and had studied religion; but I had had no experience of God. After that experience with Baba, whether or not God exists, is no longer a question in my mind.

In the twelve years since that visit, Baba has allowed me many opportunities to be with Him and to film and record His activities and to be an instrument in sharing the results with other devotees. I believe it is because of my involvement with the technology and mechanics of spreading His message that Baba has allowed me to see how truly incidental they are.

Baba has repeatedly said that His Mission is to foster devotees. He needs no one to aid in this task as His omnipresent omniscience is at the core of each particle within the universe. We may count ourselves blessed if He allows us to spend our time in work associated with His Mission as part of the Sadhana of our own spiritual growth.

It is a practice in the world to attach names and credits to the results of efforts of individuals, as though they were the creators, rather than the Lord working through them. The fallacy of this practice is never more apparent than when we complete a project knowing that the inspiration, the energy and the results are all His. The only thing to do then is to pray that the instrument has not distorted the melody and message He wishes to convey.

– Excerpted from the article of Richard Bock in "Golden Age 1980".

SATHYA SAI

THE DOCTOR SUPREME

Pidatala Gopi Krishna

IT WAS THE YEAR 1981. I WAS 18 years old and had just joined the undergraduate programme in Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar near Nainital. My eldest brother, who was 25 years old then, was working in Calcutta (Kolkata) as a Marketing Executive for General Electric Corporation (GEC) in the eastern region of the country. He was married with the Divine blessings of Swami on 7th August 1981. Just after a month or so after his marriage, he suddenly fell ill.

On 20th September 1981, we received a phone call from the GEC office in Kolkata saying that my brother was not well and he would contact us directly. The story was that the Managing Director of GEC was visiting the Kolkata office in September 1981 and my brother Krishna was assigned to go to the airport and receive him. Unfortunately, my brother fell ill when he went to the airport. His left hand started swelling up and it became extremely painful. My brother called his Manager from the airport, reported his condition and made a decision to fly home to Hyderabad immediately. The Marketing Manager understood the situation and sent a replacement urgently to the airport. My brother called my parents from Kolkata airport informing his condition and managed



to get onto the Kolkata-Chennai flight that was leaving 30 minutes later.

Upon receiving this information from my brother from the airport, my father, Sri P. Sitapati being a senior IAS officer, sensed an emergency and quickly moved into action. He requested the doctors in the prestigious Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences to be available. My brother was immediately rushed to the hospital from the Begumpet airport. He was admitted under the care of Senior Cardiologist Dr. P. S. Rao and his assistant Dr. Rajagopal Raju, presently Chairman, Care Hospitals Foundation, Hyderabad. Upon looking at the swollen hands and face, the doctors asked my brother as to how long was he suffering from such swelling? My brother mentioned that it was off and on for a month and that the present extreme swelling was over a few days ... The doctors told my father that quite a number of investigations needed

to be done which would take at least two days and upon verifying the reports, they would discuss, diagnose and then initiate the treatment. They suspected a very rare disease of the heart.

Swami Creates a Locket for my Ailing Brother

Not knowing what to do, how to do ... totally lost, my father Sri P. Sitapati, who later on served as the Chief Public Relations Officer at the Ashram in Prasanthi Nilayam, quickly decided to rush to the divine abode of Sathya Sai for help and succour. I remember that my father and me got into a car at 8.00 a.m. and drove straight to the divine abode, Prasanthi Nilayam. We reached the main gate at the Gopuram at around 4.00 p.m. A staff member of the Sathya Sai Institute was waiting at the gate and enquired whether Sri Sitapati was there in the car. Upon confirming, he informed us that Swami had instructed my father be brought directly to the Mandir and that Swami was waiting to see him. My father rushed to the Mandir.

Promptly at 4.30 p.m., Swami in His indomitable divine form, walked out of His room in His Divine grandeur and seeing my father seated in the verandah, with a smile that is beyond the best on earth ...walked towards him and said in Telugu, "*Emi Sitaram, Kodukuki health Bagaleda*"? which means, "What Sitaram? (He used to call my father Sitaram) your son's health is not good"? ... My father ...responded, trembling ... "*Naa Koduku Kadu Swami, Mee Koduku, Meere Chusukovali ...Kodalini Dheerga Sumangali Bhava Ani Aaseervadinchi Naru ...Anta Mee Daya Inka*" which means, "Swami, he is not my son ... he is Yours! You have to take care of him...You blessed my daughter-in-law with long and happy married life and it is now all your grace". Swami, in response,

smiled and said, "*Chusta ...Chusta*" (I will see, I will see ...) and walked away to give Darshan to devotees.

Upon His return to the verandah, Swami directed my father to go into the interview room... I was not called in. Now, the happier side of the story. In the interview room, even before my father could detail Swami as to what happened to my brother, Swami started narrating the entire sequence of events till date, till that moment as to what the doctors were thinking about my brother's case. He told my father that my brother, on frequent travel as a Marketing Executive, had picked up an infection because of eating in different places. The doctors were still to confirm the disease but Swami at that very moment declared that the disease was called bacterial endocarditis, a rare disease, and that the heart was infected with almost 80% of bacteria and he surely was in a serious condition. The all-pervading and all-knowing Sai is the eternal Brahman. What more succour do you need at that moment? My father was at complete ease with that thought that the Lord knew the problem and he was sure that the Lord also knew the cure!

Looking at the face of my father, Swami smiled and said, "*Emi Bhayapadutunnavu?*" (are you afraid?) My father responded, saying, "Swami, You performed his marriage in August and upon marriage ... You blessed my daughter-in-law with long and happy married life ...and it is hardly a few months since they are married ...what is the future of the girl? What will people say? They will say that I knew of my son's health problem, yet performed his marriage risking the future of the girl! Moreover, people would also say even after Your blessing her profusely, this has happened"...

Swami smiled and said, "Yes, I blessed her with long life and so will it be! Why fear when I am here"! Saying this, Swami created a locket made in copper gold in colour, in which one can see the picture of Sita Rama Pattabhishekam (coronation of Mother Sita and Lord Rama) and gave it to my father. He asked my father to go back to Hyderabad and tie this locket around the neck of my brother in such a way that the locket rests on his chest. He also said, "He will be all right in six weeks" and that He shall see him again in Puttaparthi once he is fine. On this

with this treatment. He further said that the doctors would be in a dilemma as to what should be a combination of the injection with penicillin and Swami, the divine supreme doctor, said, "It should be Garamycin". With these divine blessings, Swami gestured my father to go out of the room, saying "Get back to Hyderabad immediately".

With the high tide of love and grace hitting my father from the Divine Supreme Master, my father was completely relaxed and with this lovely feeling of "Why fear when He is there", we drove back to Hyderabad.

The third part of the story – the happiest part. The next day morning, without delay, we went to the hospital where my brother was at that time under examination of Dr. Rajagopal Raju and his team. My elder sister, Dr. Jyothi, who is a General Physician, then working with Mahavir Hospital, was also present in the ward. Serious discussions that were happening amongst the doctors which concluded my father being informed that the disease was called bacterial endocarditis and the heart was badly infected. They concluded their discussions informing my father and others in the room that the treatment would be for about six weeks with daily 6 injections of crystalline penicillin (every four hours). Each injection would be of about 1,40,000 unit's strength. The doctor said that these injections would be very very painful and proper care should be taken while being administered to the patient, as he may react violently and sharply due to pain. At this moment, they also talked about adding another injection to the crystalline penicillin injection and my father involuntarily prompted, why don't we think of garamycin! The doctors looked surprised and Dr. Raju smiled and said, "Yes, we should add garamycin, as



The locket materialised by Swami.

locket, after two days, formed three letters TSS which in words – Tara Sathya Sai in a mystical way ... which means The Star of Heaven is Sri Sathya Sai!

Divine Cure of a Rare Heart Disease

With this divine declaration, Swami also went on to say that my brother as a part of treatment, for the next six weeks, would be given crystalline penicillin injections. He said the doctors have just decided to go ahead

it is a broad spectrum antibiotic, which does well when combined with crystalline penicillin". It was decided that constant monitoring would be needed for the patient. Surprisingly, neither the doctor nor anyone present asked my father as to how he knew about garamycin ...they thought that being an IAS officer, he would have read about the ailment somewhere and suggested it ...little did they know that the Supreme Doctor called Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai was reviewing the case directly! The truth of the matter was that my brother was allergic to penicillin too! On Vijaya Dasami day that year, in a conversation, Swami told me personally that He was taking the injections and not my brother ...and again declared, why fear when I am here!!!

Soon after the doctors left, our family sat around the bed of my brother and my father detailed to my brother as to what Swami had said. It was then time to take the first shot of crystalline penicillin injection and the nurse Shanti (God bless her wherever she is), another epitome of pure love and service in this story, readied the injection for administration. At this point, my father pulled out the locket of Sita Rama Pattabhisekham given by Swami and tied it around the neck of my brother with the locket resting on his heart. As this was done, my brother's body started shaking and he was crying out saying, "*Shock Kotutondi*" in Telugu... which means that he was feeling that he received an electric shock. As a strong and younger brother in the room, I used my strength on him and tried to pin him down on to the bed with the nurse's support. At the very moment, as this was being done, to the pleasant surprise of my doctor sister and father, they could clearly see sparks emanating from the locket given by Swami across the chest of my brother! After a few

seconds, my brother calmed down and the injection was administered.

What happened next is as per His Story which is a part of History of Sri Sathya Sai. What was fascinating was that when the lights were switched off in his room at night at around 9.00 p.m., my sister-in-law could see light emanating from the locket every night at the same time for six weeks and spreading across the body!

We all knew, and I am sure the readers now must have realised the divine drama of Swami! The treatment of injections was a part of the divine show ... In reality, the treatment must have been completed – the moment the locket was placed around the neck of my brother or the moment Swami said, "Why fear when I am here"... The initial sparks and subsequent light everyday would have totally destroyed the bacteria in the heart. Such is the love of the loving Avatar – Lord of the Universe ... Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba... Yes... we may be born with a destiny which is predetermined... But, when the Lord wills, destiny is rewritten and the case of my brother is a standing example of divine love towards His devotees.

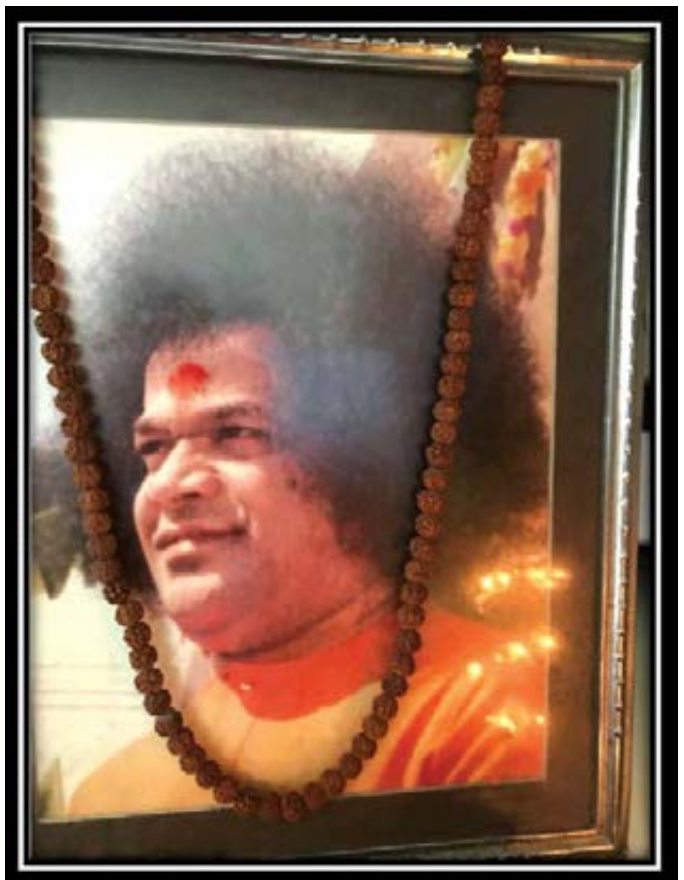
Soon after the treatment of six weeks, my brother was hale and hearty with only an issue of low blood pressure. The urge to have the physical Darshan of Swami was so strong in him that despite the advice of the doctors not to travel for at least a few months, he went to Prasanthi Nilayam to offer his gratitude to Swami. ...He was seated near the arch where a Ganesha idol existed earlier. Swami, while giving Darshan, walked towards him and said, "Eppudi Vastivi (when did you come?) My brother fell at the Divine Lotus Feet of Swami with tears of utmost gratitude.

A Photo for my Sister-in-law

Blessing him profusely, He moved onto the verandah and told my father that He had seen my brother Krishna out there ... his heart problem was cancelled now – be happy! With these words, the family was called in for an interview. In the interview room, the family offered their loving gratitude to the Lord of the Universe. Blessing my sister-in-law, Smt. Sridevi Pidatala again, Swami offered her His photo asking her whether she was willing to keep it with her! She jumped in joy! She said, “Yes, Swami! I am blessed”! He did not give it immediately... He kept speaking to the family... But my sister-in-law caught hold of Swami's Feet, pleading and pestering Him to give the promised photo to her! She kept praying to Him and reminding Him that He has to give the photo.

Swami finally said, He would send it! On the third day, after the interview with Swami – a person knocked at the door of the room in which we were staying in the Ashram and asked who Sridevi was. And lo and behold! the photo was delivered with a message – Here is the photo that Swami promised Smt. Sridevi ... The direction of Bhagavan was, “Ask her to take the photo and leave Puttaparthi this evening. She has been constantly praying to Swami for it”.

Swami blessed my brother and advised him to accept the new job, which would arrive and join on 23rd November ... To my brother's pleasant surprise, the job was at the World Bank. He joined his new assignment



The photo given by Swami to my sister-in-law.

on 23rd November as Swami had ordained. He is presently serving the World Bank at Washington DC as a Coordinator for the South-to-South Leadership Partnership Programme, covering the continents of Africa and Asia and helping the underprivileged in the health and education sector. This is Divinity and the Lord is our Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba!

Samasta Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu (May all the worlds be happy!)

– The author is currently a Member of the National Team looking after Programmes and Projects in the office of All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation.

The Guru of Gurus

DISCIPLE ONCE OFFERED some fruits to his Guru. The Guru told him to cut the fruits into pieces

and distribute them to all. But the problem arose as to whom to offer the fruits first. The Guru then said to the disciple, "My dear! Whosoever is dearest to you, offer the fruits to him first". Immediately, that disciple put a few pieces of the fruits into his mouth.



The disciple put a few pieces of the fruits into his mouth when the Guru asked him to offer the fruits first to the one dearest to him.

The other disciples vehemently criticised that disciple considering that he had disrespected his Guru by not offering the fruits to him first. But the Guru said, "My dear disciples! What he has done is right. His conduct shows his self-confidence and his dedication to his true Self. Who is God? God is none other than the Self that is within you. The Self is the Guru of all Gurus". This was the teaching which the Guru imparted to his disciples.

SRI SATHYA SAI HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

**Prasanthi Nilayam 515134, Anantapur District,
Andhra Pradesh (Affiliated to CBSE-New Delhi)**

Applications are invited for **Postgraduate Teachers (PGT) (Male)** for the subjects **"Economics, Mathematics and English"** with relevant details and photograph.

Minimum Qualification required:

1. Postgraduate in Economics with minimum II class, from a recognised University with B.Ed.
2. Postgraduate in Mathematics with minimum II class, from a recognised University with B.Ed.
3. Postgraduate in English with minimum II class, from a recognised University with B.Ed.

The selected candidates will be paid as per Andhra Pradesh State Board recommendations.

The application should reach the school office on or before 25th April 2019 either by Post or E-mail with relevant details and photograph.

Superannuated persons of the age between 58 and 60 years can also apply.

- Principal

CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

PILGRIMAGE OF ADILABAD DEVOTEES

MORE THAN 3,000 DEVOTEES came from the combined district of Adilabad, Telangana State on a three-day pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam and presented music and cultural programmes on 23rd and 24th February 2019. On 23rd February 2019, Bal Vikas



An excellent presentation by the Bal Vikas children of Adilabad.

children of this district presented a beautiful programme comprising Veda chanting, devotional songs, short speeches, Gita Slokas and dances which formed an uplifting spiritual package. On 24th February



The drama "Vibhishana Sharanagati" brought the Ramayana story alive.

2019, Sai Youth presented a drama entitled "Vibhishana Sharanagati" (surrender of Vibhishana). Based on the immortal epic, the Ramayana, the drama beautifully depicted how Vibhishana, the brother of the demon king Ravana, attained the grace of Lord Rama by his total surrender even to the extent of sacrificing his son for the cause of Rama's victory over Ravana. Excellent acting of the cast, powerful dialogues, good make-up and costumes and appropriate multimedia support made the drama lively and impressive.

PILGRIMAGE OF CUDDALORE DEVOTEES

A group of devotees came from Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam and basked in the divine ambience of this abode of supreme peace



A devotional music presentation by the Bal Vikas children of Cuddalore district.

for two days on 2nd and 3rd March 2019. On 2nd March 2019, Bal Vikas children of this district presented a devotional music programme comprising choicest Prasanthi Mandir songs, some of which were "Madhura Mohana Ghanashyama

Sundara Sai" (Beloved Sai who is most beautiful), "Tu Pyar Ka Sagar Hai" (You are the ocean of love), "Hum Ko Tum Se Pyar Kitna" (how much we love You), to mention a few. Regular Veda chanting and Bhajans were also conducted by the devotees of this district during their stay.

SIVARATHRI FESTIVAL

The sacred festival of Sivarathri was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 4th March 2019, in which a large number of devotees came to participate.

Ksheer Sagar Manthan: A Dance Ballet

On the eve of Sivarathri, 3rd March 2019, the students of Bhagavan's institutions presented a dance programme which began at 5.00 p.m. with a vibrant dance to the tune of the song "Hey Siva Sankara Nataraja" by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School followed by a dance to the tune of the song "Bho Shambho Siva Shambho Swayambho" (Lord Siva who is self-born) by the Prasanthi Dance Group. What followed next was a scintillating dance ballet entitled "Ksheer Sagar Manthan" (churning of the ocean of milk) portraying the mythological

(Amrit) and several other wonderful objects. The culmination of the dance was the consumption of the deadly poison Halahala by Lord Siva who saved the universe from annihilation by drinking the poison. The dance was a pictorial portrayal of the mythological story which enraptured the viewers.

Sivarathri Akhanda Bhajan

Sivarathri programme began on the morning of 4th March 2019 with auspicious notes of Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam by the Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam troupes of students. This auspicious instrumental music presentation was followed by a soulful rendition of Stotras and devotional songs presented by the students of Bhagavan's educational institutions which included the Stotras, Bilvastotram and Lingashtakam, and devotional songs "Siva Siva Siva Siva Annarada" (why don't you chant the name of Siva), "Shambho Mahadeva Deva" and "Jai Jai Baba Tava Sharanam". Bhajans dedicated to Lord Siva followed this, and the morning programme concluded with Arati.

The programme in the evening began at 4.20 p.m. when the sacred Sayeeswara Linga was brought out from the Bhajan



Dance ballet on the mythological story of the churning of the ocean of milk.

story of churning of the celestial ocean by gods and demons which produced deadly poison (Halahala) as well as ambrosia



Abhishekam of Sayeeswara Linga.

Mandir in a grand procession amidst Veda chanting and sacred musical notes of Nadaswaram and Panchavadyam. The worship of the Linga was started by the priests after it was set up on a decorated platform in the performing area of Sai Kulwant

which indwells all. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin".

Sivarathri Bhajan commenced with this Bhajan of Bhagavan at 6.00 p.m. As the Bhajan continued led by Bhagavan's



Nightlong vigil and Sivarathri Bhajan in Sai Kulwant Hall.

Hall. The worship of the Linga was followed by its ceremonial Abhishekam with 18 items such as milk, curd, honey, sugar, turmeric, Vibhuti, Rudraksha, fruits, dry fruits, flowers, etc., amidst chanting of Sri Rudram by the priests. After the Abhishekam, the Linga was decorated and floral offerings were made on it with recitation of Sri Sathya Sai Ashtottara Shata Namavali (108 Names of Sri Sathya Sai). The ceremony concluded with offer of Arati to the Linga.

Bhagavan's Divine Discourse followed next which was relayed on the public address system. Underlining the significance of idol worship, Bhagavan said that the idols direct man towards God. Linga, Bhagavan said, represented the Divine Principle

students, the sacred Abhishekam water was sprinkled on the devotees by priests and students in the entire length and breadth of Sai Kulwant Hall. Sivarathri Akhanda Bhajan continued during the whole night as groups of students, Ashram and hospital staff and devotees from India and overseas countries led the Bhajan which was followed by a large number of devotees with great devotion. The nightlong Bhajan concluded at 6.00 a.m. on 5th March 2019 with the Bhajan, "Sivaya Parameswaraya, Chandrasekharaya Namah Om" in the golden voice of Bhagavan. After the conclusion of the Bhajan, Prasadam of tamarind rice and sweet rice was served to all the devotees.

NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

KAZAKHSTAN

*D*URING THE EARLY PART OF January 2019, more than 30 Sathya Sai Young Adults from four cities gathered near Almaty for the ninth Sai Youth Conference of Kazakhstan. The theme of the conference was "Love is the Basis of Everything". This year, the Youth Conference coincided with the celebration of Orthodox Christmas. Two short films, showcasing the international volunteer camp in Kazakhstan, were screened. Senior members of the organisation addressed the young adults about the importance of team work. Two interesting games, "The Catastrophe in the Desert" and "Design Bureau", were organised to drive home the importance of team work. The young adults presented a hilarious and entertaining



Sai Olympics, Sai Youth Conference, Kazakhstan.

concert, which included songs in Kazakh and Russian languages. The Youth Conference concluded with five sporting competitions as part of Sai Olympics.

ISRAEL

The Lasova Restaurant, a refined concept of a soup kitchen near the Central Bus Depot of Tel Aviv, serves nearly 300 underprivileged people everyday, including refugees, the homeless and the elderly.



Serving the needy, Israel.

Established by the Lasova Organisation in 1990, the restaurant is fully dependent on the goodwill of kind-hearted volunteers. On 1st February 2019, volunteers from the SSIO of Israel, including young adults, had an opportunity to serve at the restaurant. They tidied up the restaurant, prepared and served the food, and washed the utensils afterwards. During the service, the volunteers felt happy, recollecting the beautiful teaching of Sathya Sai Baba that Service to Man is Service to God. The Lasova Organisation thanked the SSIO volunteers for their commitment, cooperation, joyful attitude and positive energy. The uplifting experience inspired the volunteers to resolve to do more for the underprivileged in Tel Aviv.

PHILIPPINES

San Manuel is a small town with limited medical facilities, located 200 km north of Manila, in the province of Pangasinan. For the last ten years, SSIO volunteers, including young adults, have travelled to San Manuel every month to provide medical, dental and



Medical camp in Philippines.

vision care to the needy. On 20th January 2019, a team of ten volunteers, including two physicians, one ophthalmologist and four dentists, served 346 people. Medical, dental, and ophthalmological services were rendered with love and care, and patients were given dental care instructions and tooth brushes. Additionally, school children received stationery to use in schools and at home.

INDONESIA

On a cold and rainy day on 30th December 2018, a team of 28 SSIO young adult volunteers in Jakarta organised a mobile soup kitchen and served food to about 100 needy people in several areas around Jakarta. On the day of the event, the volunteers gathered in the local Sathya Sai Centre and prepared packages



Mobile soup kitchen, Indonesia.

containing two sachets of Auton and Eucalyptus oil, which were distributed along with the food. Due to the cold weather, the volunteers served hot tea and bowls of warm vegetarian soup called Soto. At night, they visited several locations around central Jakarta, serving the homeless, who were happy to receive the warm food and tea and expressed their gratitude for the loving interactions with the volunteers. The young adults were not only thankful for the opportunity to serve, but also learnt practical leadership skills in organising the project.

FIJI

Lautoka is the second largest city of Fiji on the island of Viti Levu, the largest island in Fiji. Lying in the heart of the sugarcane-growing region, it is known as the Sugar City. The Golden Age Home, located about five km from the central business district of Lautoka, is managed by the Social Welfare Department of the Fiji Government. The home serves 22 elderly residents who have been abandoned by their families. On 13th January 2019, SSIO young adult volunteers, Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) children and a member from the Sathya Sai Centre of Drasa, visited the home to serve

the residents. Responding to input given by the staff, the volunteers distributed much-needed groceries and supplies, and lovingly conversed with the seniors.

CANADA

Redwood Shelter provides refuge for women and children fleeing domestic violence in Toronto. Over the last five years, SSIO volunteers from the Malvern Sathya Sai Centre in Toronto and residents of the shelter have established a loving bond that originated from hands-on service activities and one-to-one interactions. On 25th January 2019, 13 families from the Sathya Sai Centre served dinner and dessert to the shelter residents. They provided wellness bags to women and loot bags to children, prepared by young adults. Some volunteers cooked dishes while others played board games with the residents. This particular visit was special as it was the first time that the young adults had collectively volunteered to lead a segment of this project.

– Sathya Sai International Organisation

BHARAT

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana: Sri Sathya Sai Sports and Cultural Meet was conducted from 1st to 3rd February 2019 by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation and Sri Sathya Sai State Trust, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State on a grand scale at the sprawling grounds of Sri Sathya Sai Spiritual City, Guntur. Over 1,000 students from Sri Sathya Sai schools participated in this first ever Sri Sathya Sai Sports and Cultural Meet.

The three-day event filled the air with fun and gaiety as highly talented Sai students showcased their talent in sports, games and cultural programmes.



Sports and Cultural Meet of Sri Sathya Sai Schools, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Sri R.J. Rathnakar, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust inaugurated the event in the august presence of Sri L.V. Subrahmanyam, Special Chief Secretary, Department of Sports and Youth Advancement, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Addressing the students and the huge gathering, Sri Rathnakar said, “This event which was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation will be written in golden letters in the annals of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation. By observing the discipline and talent of the students, we are reminded of Bhagavan’s message in which He said that a healthy body led to a healthy mind and a healthy mind led to healthy thoughts”.

Speaking on the occasion, Sri L.V. Subrahmanyam advised the students to play to the best of their ability. He reminded the participants that Swami was so gracious to give so much time to students. “He spoke on every topic which is required for our lifetime. What is only required is we must understand that and most importantly follow whatever He has said”, underlined Sri Subrahmanyam.

In his valedictory address, Sri Nimish Pandya, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation said that each and every member in Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institution was an ambassador

in Bhagavan's global mission of imparting and spreading human values education to children all over the world. "Sports help in achieving self-confidence to excel in life," Sri Nimish Pandya added.

Sri H.J. Dora, Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Trust, A.P. and T.S., Smt. Kamala Pandya, Ms. Neeta Khanna and Sri S. Koteswara Rao also spoke on this occasion and highlighted the importance of sportsmanship in life. They lauded the efforts of Sri Sathya Sai students in following the strict discipline as per the divine ideology of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The dignitaries presented medals to winners and certificates and trophies to all teams. Many Seva Dal volunteers and office bearers were presented mementoes on this occasion.

Kerala: To celebrate Swami Vivekananda's Birthday as National Youth Day, Thiruvananthapuram Sai Youth took a great initiative "Youth for Love and Service" by conducting a prayer at Swami Vivekananda Park, Kowdiar, Thiruvananthapuram on 12th January 2019. At 7 a.m., Youth Bike Rally was inaugurated by Smt. Aishwarya Prashant Dongre, Assistant Superintendent of Police. The rally commenced from the

park and ended at Palayam Square with an overall participation of more than 200 Sai Youth.

Rajasthan: A new Sri Sathya Sai Rural Vocational Training Centre (SSS RVTC) was set up at Nayapura village in Sawaimadhopur district which is one of the backward districts of Rajasthan. This SSS RVTC at Nayapura village will provide free vocational training to 10 trainees in the trade of Motor Winding for three months. The inauguration ceremony was held on Sunday, 3rd March 2019. For this programme, Sri K.M. Rao, All India Coordinator, SSS RVTC specially visited Rajasthan and inaugurated the centre. The villagers enthusiastically participated in the



A new vocational training centre in Rajasthan.

inauguration ceremony of SSS RVTC. First of all, Laksharchana was performed by the villagers. Thereafter, Bal Vikas children and youth sang soulful Bhajans for about half an hour. Bhajans were followed by a drama presentation by Bal Vikas children. After this, all the guests addressed the assembled gathering.

On this occasion, free uniforms were presented to all the trainees who were enrolled for the first batch of SSS RVTC, Nayapura. After completion of three months training, the trained participants would be provided free Tool Kit and Course Completion Certificate by the Sai Organisation.



Youth Rally on National Youth Day, Thiruvananthapuram.

About Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division (SSSSTPD)

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

The Publications Division (SSSSTPD) caters to:


- 1) The publication and distribution of spiritual, religious, and educational Sai Literature and the production and distribution of audio and visual multimedia, photographs, calendars, and diaries for the benefit of visiting pilgrims and devotees all over the world. All the literature and publications are based on the teachings, philosophy, message, and values of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
- 2) The publication and distribution of Bhagavan Baba's monthly spiritual journal - Sanathana Sarathi - in English and Telugu languages. Since 2011, e-version of the magazine is also released simultaneously and is available in the popular Interactive PDF format on www.sanathanasarathi.org.
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Dance presentation by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School.



A dance number by Prasanthi Dance Group.



Devotional music programme by Bal Vikas children of Cuddalore district.

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Conduct yourselves in the Divine Manner

Only those who are immersed in the Divine are dear to Me and are My dear friends. If you want to be dear friends of Swami, conduct yourself in the Divine manner. In such a case, you do not need to come here; I will come to you wherever you are.

– Baba

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