



# Sanathana Sarathi

SEPTEMBER 2012



# Sanathana Sarathi

Devoted to the Moral and Spiritual Uplift of Humanity through

SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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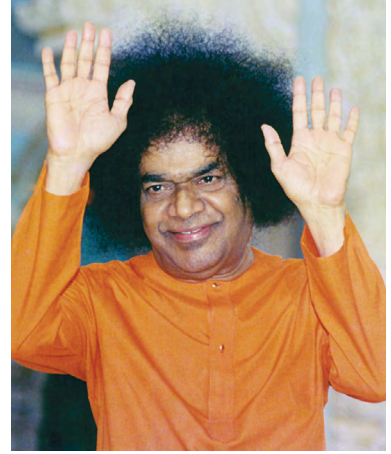
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*"Respect and serve your parents,  
teachers and elders. Attend to their needs  
whenever it is necessary. On the other  
hand, if you disobey elders and do not pay  
heed to your parents, whatever may be the  
Sadhana you do, it is of no use. It is  
not Sadhana at all. God does not accept  
such Sadhana. God is not pleased if you  
worship Him and at the same time harm  
other living beings."*



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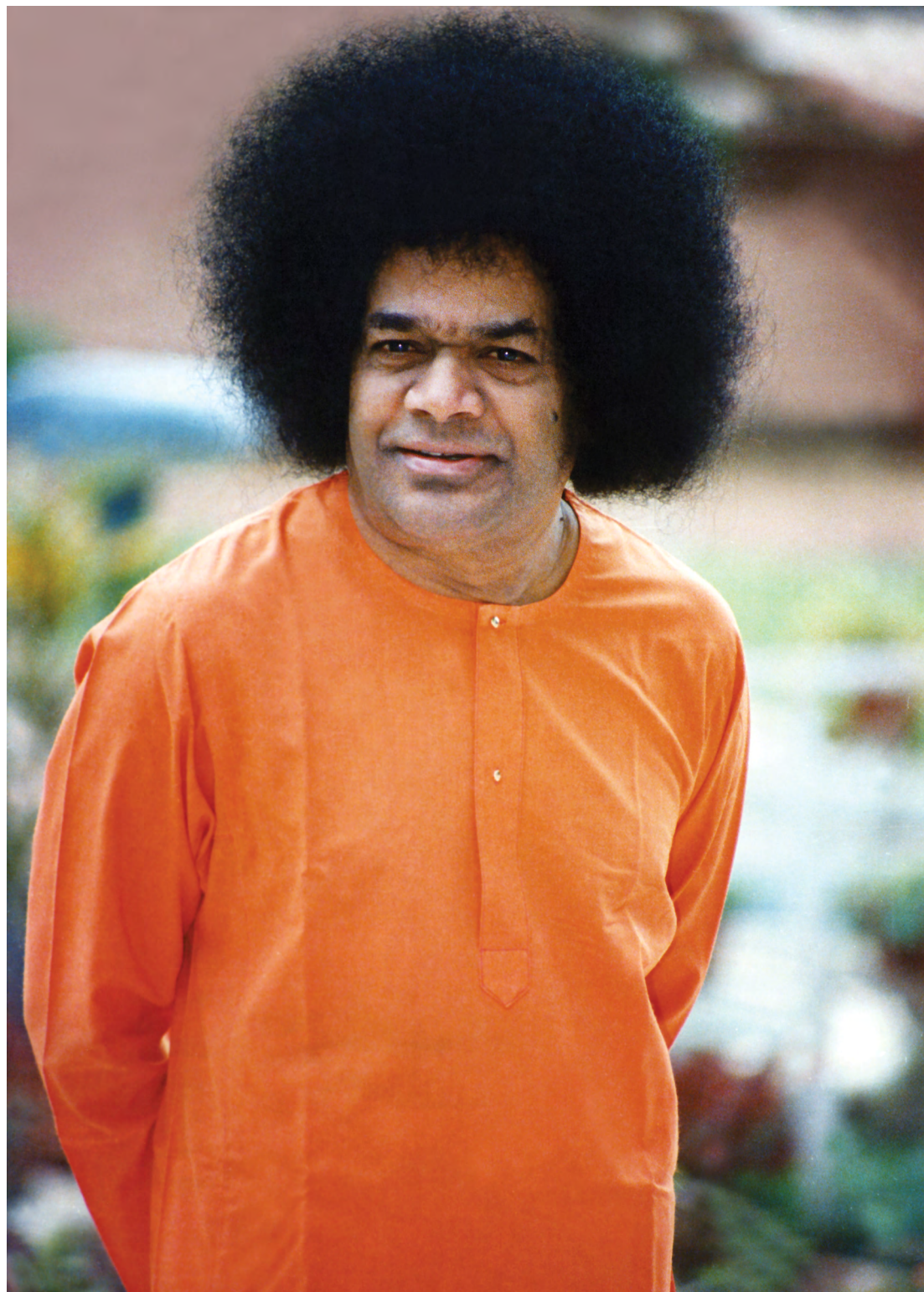
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AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:  
23RD JULY 1996

# EDUCATION SHOULD FOSTER VIRTUES IN STUDENTS

*When iron keeps lying in dust, it gets rusted. But when the same iron is put in fire, it gets rid of its rust. Similar is the effect of company in this world.*

(Telugu Poem)

*Rain water gets absorbed in sand. But it becomes sweet when it falls on clay. Similarly, devotion shines in a person depending on his deservedness.*

(Telugu Poem)

## FILL YOUR HEART WITH LOVE FOR GOD

### Embodiments of Love!

**M**AN IS VERY SACRED BY nature, but due to the effect of good or bad company, he becomes good or bad. When a piece of iron is buried in dust, it gathers rust. But the same iron, when it is put in fire, it gets rid of its rust and becomes bright and soft. Similarly, dust rises up in the sky with wind but with water, it goes down into a pit.

### Good Company Leads to Sacredness and Divinity

The dust has no wings to fly up in the sky nor does it have feet to step down into a pit. It is only due to the effect of its company that it rises in the sky or falls into the pit. Whatever bad or good occurs to you is only due to the influence of good or bad company. That is why Adi Sankara said:

*Satsangatwe Nissangatwam,  
Nissangatwe Nirmohatwam,  
Nirmohatwe Nischalatattwam,  
Nischalatattwe Jivanmukti.*

(Sanskrit Sloka)

(Good company leads to detachment; detachment makes one free from delusion; freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind; steadiness of mind confers liberation.)

When you join good company, you attain sacredness and divinity. On the other hand, when you associate yourself with bad company, you develop bad thoughts, bad intentions and bad behaviour which impel you to undertake bad actions. Therefore, it is very necessary for man to develop his humanness by joining good company. Man can even rise to the level of divine if he associates with good company. On

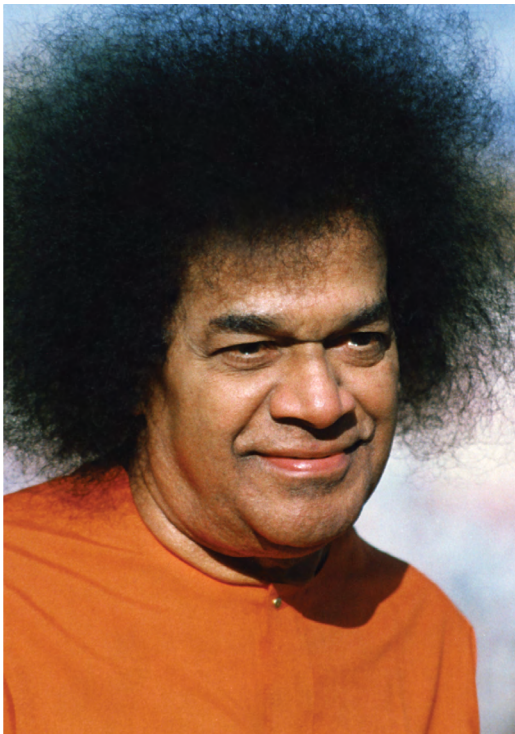
the other hand, he can degenerate to the level of an animal if he joins bad company. Divinity is superior to humanness and animality is inferior to it. Humanness is in between these two. Therefore, you should make efforts to take humanness to higher level of divinity rather than degenerate to lower level of animality. It is difficult to rise to a higher level but very easy to go down to a lower level. In fact, no special efforts are needed for downfall.

Nothing can be attained without hard work. Whatever hard work you may have to put in, you must try to rise to higher

condition because of his association with bad company. His evil thoughts are responsible for all his misery. Therefore, right from tender age man should try to develop pure and sacred thoughts. But, unfortunately, students are wasting their precious years of youth by entertaining bad thoughts and bad intentions, and by indulging in evil actions.

### **Choose your Friends Wisely**

As has already been said, iron gets rusted in the company of dust and as a result, it loses its strength. But its strength is restored when it is put in fire. First of



*If man cannot rise to the level of divine, he should at least live like a human being. This is what the students should learn today. There are many types of people in the world. Do not bother about them whether they are good or bad. You preserve your goodness. If there is a small defect in you, you should think it as very big. Moreover, do not magnify the small defects of others. First of all, get rid of all defects in you and develop virtues. Only then will humanness blossom in you.*



level. *Kashte Phali* (hard work yields rich rewards). Man today is in a miserable

all, you have to remove the dust from your mind. What is the dust? The dust is nothing but bad feelings that arise in man





from bad company. It is only because of bad company that you get bad thoughts. Therefore, it is said, *Tell me your company I shall tell you what you are.* Take time and enquire but seek only the company of good people. When you are in a good position, everybody would come to you, calling you a good boy. But when you suffer downfall, everybody will run away from you without even saying goodbye. This is not true friendship. What is true friendship? A true friend is one who follows you like a shadow even in times of difficulties and sufferings. When the tank is full of water, you will find thousands of frogs in it. But when the tank gets dried up, you will not find even a single frog there. Similarly, when you have a good position and high status, all will follow you. But that is not real friendship. He is a true friend who is your constant companion in the dualities of life like profit and loss, pleasure and pain.

You should always take time and enquire to decide who your true friend is. It is a mistake to make friendship with every Tom, Dick and Harry who greets you saying, hello, hello. You should look into his habits, behaviour, discipline and the company he associates with before making friendship with anyone. If you find that he is associating with bad company, you should not even look at his face. If he says, hello, hello to you, you should say, goodbye, goodbye to him. Friendship with such people can put even your life into danger. Due to the influence of modern education, students today make friendship with all sorts of people. This cannot be

***Fill your heart with sacred feelings and feelings of gratitude towards your parents. On the other hand, if you deceive your parents and betray them by taking to evil path, there can be no sinner worse than you. If you do so, all your education is meaningless. If your education does not foster virtues in you, it is better you go begging from street to street instead of acquiring such useless education. First of all, you have to cultivate virtues.***



called true friendship. They will desert you any moment. Such friendship should be limited to exchange of greetings like hello, hello, how are you, how are you, goodbye, goodbye.

Not merely this, character is most important for a student. One bereft of character is verily a living corpse. You should not make friendship with characterless persons. One who lacks individual character will not have social character. Then, how can such a person have national character? Therefore, first of all, man should develop individual character. It means students should develop steady vision and unwavering mind. Do not even look at the face of those whose mind is unsteady like the pendulum of a clock. They are very bad boys. Never make friendship with them. Otherwise, you will also become a bad boy. Make friendship with only good people.



## True Education Brings about Refinement

How can you make your heart sacred? When you join good company, your heart becomes pure and sacred just as iron becomes bright and soft in the company of fire. When the iron is put in fire, it gets rid of its dust and rust and becomes very soft so that you can mould it to the shape you want. Similarly, when you join good company, you can mould your personality to face any ordeals in life. This is called the process of Samskara (refinement) that everyone must undergo. What is Samskara? To get rid of bad qualities and develop virtues is Samskara.

There are many things in this world which are found in their natural state. We eat rice, pulses and many other food items. However, we don't eat them in their raw form. Rice is harvested in the form of paddy. To get rice, we have to separate paddy from grass and remove its husk. The rice is to be put on fire and cooked. Only then it becomes fit for our consumption. Similarly, whether it is gold or silver or diamond, we cannot use them in their natural state because they are mixed with dust and other metals. They have to be subjected to various processes of purification before they become pure metals. Only then can we make ornaments out of them. Take, for example, this cloth. It was cotton in its natural state which had seeds and various other impurities. Seeds have to be separated from cotton. Cotton has to be made into threads which in turn are to be woven into cloth. In this

manner, cotton has to undergo various types of refinement to ultimately take the form of cloth. In this way, everything has to undergo the process of refinement.

Today all your education is limited to bookish knowledge. Along with this education, Samskara is also essential. This type of education without refinement is no education at all.

*In spite of his education and intelligence, a mean-minded person will not give up his evil qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom.* (Telugu Poem)

Modern education merely endows students with the power of vain argumentation. This is not the aim of education. Many students think education is meant only to earn a livelihood. Education is not something which you acquire merely to fill your belly. Agriculture is for filling the belly and education is for acquiring wisdom. But modern education is leading man on the evil path. Man's life has two determinants: one is Jivanopadhi (means of livelihood) and the other is Jivitaparamavadhi (ultimate goal). Along with the means of livelihood, one should think of the goal of life also. We may live a number of years, but ultimately we have to die. This is not the purpose of human birth. The purpose of human birth is to lead an ideal life and set an example for others to lead their life in an ideal way. Every human being should try to lead an ideal life. Ideals do not die with the death of a person. Ideals never perish; they are eternal. Every generation will emulate these ideals. It is



therefore necessary that man should lead an ideal life. But man today does not know what an ideal life is. Students should set high ideals to society.

Once you get a degree, you become egoistic thinking that you have become highly educated. If one acquires the evil qualities of ego, ostentation and jealousy, he is of no use to the world. Such a person will not have respect in society also. A foolish person may be respected in his own house, a village head may be respected in his village and a king in his kingdom. But the cultured man will be respected in the entire world. Man should therefore acquire refinement and culture. Students should make efforts to safeguard Indian culture. Similarly, people of other nations should protect the culture of their nation. This is the real purpose of education.

First of all, you should maintain proper relationship with everyone and should not hate anyone. You should choose proper persons as your friends. It is better not to have friends at all instead of having a foolish person as your friend. Choose a good person as your friend. Who is a good person? *Manasyekam Vachasyekam, Karmanyekam Mahatmanam* (those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in perfect harmony are noble ones). Only choose such a person as your friend who has *Trikarana Suddhi* (unity of thought, word and deed). *Manasyanyath Vachasyanyath, Karmanyanyath Duratmanam* (those who lack harmony of these are wicked). If a person thinks something, says something else and acts in a totally different way, do

not allow him to come near you. *The proper study of mankind is man*. A true human being is one whose thoughts, words and deeds are in harmony with each other. You should become such an ideal human being.

Your mind is the repository of many thoughts. But you are not able to know the thoughts of others. Even a dog can know the thoughts of man, but man does not know the thoughts of his fellow men. Here is a small example. Suppose a dog is lying in a pit at a distance of five metres from you. If you go that side without bothering about it, it will also not take any notice of you. It will not even get up. However, when you take a small stone in your hand with the intention of hitting it, it will run away the moment it sees you. It means it can read your thoughts. A dog is able to know the thoughts of man but man is not able to know the thoughts of man. The word dog has three letters – DOG. If you reverse the order of letters, it becomes GOD. The letters are the same but their order is different. Man should become God and not dog. This is the foremost quality that man should cultivate by Sadhana. What is meant by Sadhana? It is not limited to Japa, Tapa (chanting, penance), etc.

*Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious.* (Sanskrit Verse)

You should serve the pious. Respect and serve your parents, teachers and elders. Attend to their needs whenever



it is necessary. On the other hand, if you disobey elders and do not pay heed to your parents, whatever may be the Sadhana you do, it is of no use. It is not Sadhana at all. God does not accept such Sadhana. God is not pleased if you worship Him and at the same time harm other living beings. First of all, love all. It amounts to loving God. *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). You should recognise this truth and give respect to all.

### **Students should not Develop Unnecessary Connections**

No doubt, all are equal in society but you should observe certain rules for your own good. *Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina* (without discipline, there can be no well-

being). If you come across a person of bad character, you should not have anything to do with him. However, offer your salutations to all because *Sarva Jiva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God). Similarly, you should also recognise that *Sarva Jiva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God).

Students should not develop unnecessary contacts with all sorts of people. As you are a student, behave like a student. Boys should not develop unnecessary connections with girls. Those who develop such evil connections are worse than dogs. Such students even

*When you join good company, you attain sacredness and divinity. On the other hand, when you associate yourself with bad company, you develop bad thoughts, bad intentions and bad behaviour which impel you to undertake bad actions. Therefore, it is very necessary for man to develop his humanness by joining good company. Man can even rise to the level of divine if he associates with good company. On the other hand, he can degenerate to the level of an animal if he joins bad company.*



deceive their parents. In fact, the life of such a person is useless.

*If one does not worship the Lord wholeheartedly,*

*If one does not sing His glory till his mouth aches,*

*If one lacks truth and compassion in his heart,*

*He is a curse on the womb of his mother.*

(Telugu Poem)

Why should such a person be born at all? Is his birth meant only to cause pain to the womb of his mother?

Your education should foster virtues in you. That is the real meaning of education. There is enough knowledge in books, but what is the use if the head is full of dust and dirt? What is the use of all your education when there is no purity in your head? Can you call this education at all? No. no. First of all, get rid of the dirt from your head. That means, you should get rid of bad thoughts.

*One can fill an empty head with anything, but is it possible to put something in the head which is already full? How can it be filled with sacred feelings unless it is emptied in the first instance?*

(Telugu Poem)

This tumbler is full of water. How can you put milk in it when it is already full? The only way is to throw away the water from the tumbler and fill it with milk. However, if you pour milk into the tumbler full of water, both water and milk will be wasted. Fill your heart with sacred feelings and feelings of gratitude towards your parents. On the other hand, if you deceive your parents and betray them by taking to evil path, there

can be no sinner worse than you. If you do so, all your education is meaningless. If your education does not foster virtues in you, it is better you go begging from street to street instead of acquiring such useless education. First of all, you have to cultivate virtues.

*Man without character, education without a goal and human race without morality are worthless. The life of an individual bereft of peace is no better than a night without moon. Listen! Oh valiant sons of Bharat!*

(Telugu Poem)

Therefore, students should become paragons of virtues. Their education should foster virtues in them.

### **Build the Mansion of Life on Strong Foundation**

Students are the future leaders and emancipators of a nation. The nation will come to grief if its youth are not on the right path. If there is a curve in the sapling, the tree also will be curved. Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa (celibate stage, householder stage, recluse stage, renunciant stage) are the four stages of human life. Student life is the stage of Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is the foundation of the mansion of life, on which the three storeys of Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa are built. Therefore, it is necessary to make the foundation of Brahmacharya strong, on which the other three storeys stand. If the foundation is not strong, all the storeys built on it will collapse. The period of youth is most important and sacred. It is, in fact, the golden age. Don't turn this golden age into

dust. Therefore, students should imbibe virtues. Their vision, hearing, speech and actions, all should be sacred. First of all, fill your heart with love for God. Your heart is like a tank and the senses are like taps. When you fill the tank of your heart with love, it will be the sweet water of love that will flow through the taps of senses. As are the feelings in your heart, so are the actions. When your heart is full of love, all your actions will be suffused with love. If you throw a stone into a well, it will create ripples in the entire well. Likewise, when you throw a stone of a good or bad thought in the lake of your mind, its effect will spread to all the limbs of your body. When a bad thought enters your mind, your eyes will see evil, your hands will do evil, your speech will become evil, your ears will hear evil and your feet will walk to only evil places. The effect of thoughts will spread in the entire body right from top to toe.

### **Do not Waste Precious Human Birth**

Heart is most important. When the heart is not pure, life becomes meaningless. But today students are interested only in art, not in heart. Art is outside, heart is inside. Art is mundane, heart is divine. Art is related to Pravritti (outward path), heart is related to Nivritti (inward path). The principle of Nivritti is most sacred and pure. This is described in Vedanta as *Nirgunam*, *Niranjanam*, *Sanathana Niketanam*, *Nitya*, *Suddha*, *Buddha*, *Mukta*, *Nirmala Swarupinam* (It is attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Purity of heart is essential. *Chittasya Suddhaye*

*Karmah* (good deeds give mental purity). All your actions are meant for the purification of heart. Thiruthonda Alwar of Tamil Nadu also said, "Oh Lord, I worship You with the purity of my heart. It is not easy to obtain human birth. I have acquired this human life as a result of merits earned by me in many past lives. Let this opportunity not slip away from my hand." The same was said by Mira also, "Oh Giridhari, I have dived deep into the ocean and acquired this pearl of human life with great difficulty. Let this pearl of human life not slip away from my hand and fall back into the ocean. If I lose this pearl, I will be nowhere." You have earned this human life with the merits of many past lives. Therefore, you should take care that you do not go on the evil path.

Man should live and die like a human being and not like an animal. This is what you are supposed to do. If man cannot rise to the level of divine, he should at least live like a human being. This is what the students should learn today. There are many types of people in the world. Do not bother about them whether they are good or bad. You preserve your goodness. If there is a small defect in you, you should think it as very big. Moreover, do not magnify the small defects of others. First of all, get rid of all defects in you and develop virtues. Only then will humanness blossom in you.

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

**– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 23rd July 1996.**





# CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

## SRI KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI FESTIVITIES

**D**EVOTION AND PIETY marked the celebration of Sri Krishna Janmashtami at Prasanthi Nilayam. Devotional music and cultural programmes were held to celebrate it on 10th August 2012. Sai Kulwant Hall was aesthetically decorated for this important function.

### Devotional Music Programme by Students

The programme on the morning of 10th August 2012 began at 8.00 a.m. with Veda chanting. This was followed by a soul-stirring devotional music programme by Prasanthi Nilayam students. Beginning their presentation with Madhurashtakam (eight stanzas describing the sweetness and lovely attributes of Lord Krishna), the students kept the audience spellbound for nearly half an hour with devotional compositions which included, "Ghana Ghana Sundara, Karuna Rasa Mandira" (Oh the blue-complexioned Lord of ethereal beauty, the embodiment of compassion), "Mohana Murali Nooduchunokapari" (Oh Krishna! Play a song on Your enchanting flute), "Manasa Sancharare" (Oh mind! Undertake your pilgrimage in the Brahman). They brought their rendition to a close with the Hindi song, "Aao Chalen Hum Sai Ki

Ore" (Let us march towards Sai to sanctify our lives).

Meanwhile, the procession of beautifully decorated cows along with calves from Gokulam entered Sai Kulwant Hall. They were led by Nadaswaram group



*Gokulam cows in Sai Kulwant Hall on Sri Krishna Janmashtami.*

of musicians and Veda chanting group of students, and were accompanied by batches of students dressed as Gopalas. Besides the cows and calves, some rabbits, fawns, peacocks, etc., formed part of the procession. All of them were fed before offer of Mangala Arati.

Befittingly, the morning programme concluded with an audio clip of Bhagavan's Discourse. Dwelling on the single-minded devotion of Radha and the Gopikas, Bhagavan observed that women symbolised devotion while men symbolised knowledge. Knowledge could take one to God, but devotion reached the very heart of God, said Bhagavan. Referring to the Leela of Lord Krishna to transport residents

of Repalle to Dwaraka, Bhagavan said that God can do anything. Man, He said, should have no doubt; he should have complete faith in God. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, "Govinda Krishna Jai" which the entire gathering in the hall followed in chorus with deep devotion. After a brief session of Bhajans, the morning programme came to a close with Arati at 10.00 a.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

### **Sai Krishnaya Charanam Namoh: A Musical Dance Drama**

As part of their pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 10th to 12th August 2012, the devotees of Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh presented a musical dance drama, "Sai Krishnaya Charanam Namoh" (salutations at the Lotus Feet of Lord Sai Krishna) on the auspicious day of Sri Krishna Janmashtami, 10th August 2012. Based on the similarities of the divine lives of Lord Krishna and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the drama highlighted the glory of both the Avatars. Interspersed with thrilling dances of

children, the drama depicted a number of stories of miraculous rescue of devotees in life-threatening situations by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Colourful costumes, good make-up, melodious lyrics, sweet music and excellent dances by children added to the beauty of the drama. The drama which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close at 6.00 p.m. At the conclusion of the drama, clothes were presented to the cast. After a brief session of Bhajans, the programme came to a close with Arati at 6.15 p.m. after distribution of Prasadam to all.

### **Sri Sathya Sai Sangeeta Sudha: A Devotional Music Presentation**

The devotees of Visakhapatnam district presented a devotional music programme entitled, "Sri Sathya Sai Sangeeta Sudha" on 11th August 2012. Commencing their soulful presentation after Veda chanting at 5.00 p.m., the singers, both ladies and gents, poured out their hearts in group songs dedicated to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, enthraling the audience with their melodious compositions in Telugu

for nearly one hour. At the conclusion of their presentation, clothes were presented to them. This was followed by Bhajans. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.



*Children from Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh presenting a dance.*

### **BHARATIYA SAMSKRUTI ATMA SAMSKRUTI: A PATRIOTIC DRAMA**

On the 66th Independence Day of India, the 2nd year

postgraduate students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented the drama, “Bharatiya Samskruti Atma Samskruti” in Sai Kulwant Hall on 15th August 2012. As denoted by its title, the theme of the drama was that freedom of the soul was the real freedom. Commencing the drama with the famous poem of Bhagavan, “Khanda Khandantara...” (Bharat is the motherland of many noble souls who earned great name and fame in all the continents of the world) on the



*A scene from the drama, depicting an episode from India's freedom struggle.*

greatness of Indian culture, the students captured the spirit of the freedom movement of India and its rich cultural heritage by enacting selected episodes from the freedom struggle of India and its glorious culture represented by illustrious personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. The drama which began at about 5.00 p.m. concluded with a joyous dance of the students at 6.20 p.m. This was followed by Bhajans and distribution of Prasadam. The programme came to a close with Arati at 6.30 p.m.

## PILGRIMAGE OF BAL VIKAS CHILDREN OF TAMIL NADU

A group of 1,008 Bal Vikas children along with Gurus and parents came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from Erode district of Tamil Nadu for two days, 18th and 19th August 2012. On 18th



*Bal Vikas children of Tamil Nadu leading Bhajans.*

August 2012, Bhajan singers from these Bal Vikas children led Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall which the devotees in the hall followed in chorus with great devotion. The presentation of soul-elevating Bhajans enraptured one and all and created an aura of sacredness and piety in the entire milieu. The programme which began at 5.15 p.m. after Veda chanting came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

## COMMEMORATING BHAGAVAN'S VISIT TO RADIO SAI GLOBAL HARMONY STUDIO

On the 10th anniversary of Bhagavan's visit to the studio of Radio Sai Global



Harmony, its staff presented an absorbing programme in Sai Kulwant Hall on 19th August 2012 to express their gratitude to Bhagavan and commemorate this important event in the journey of its phenomenal growth under the divine guidance of Bhagavan. The programme began at 5.00 p.m. with the introductory speech of Smt. Karuna Munshi who gave details of the growth of Radio Sai Global Harmony, identifying important milestones in its journey towards excellence. This was followed by narration of some staff members' inspiring incidents of interactions with Bhagavan interspersed with melodious

by their dedicated work. The second speaker was Sri S.S. Naganand, Member Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Media Foundation. Referring to Radio Sai Global Harmony as divine institution, Sri Naganand observed that it inspired millions of people all over the world. He exhorted one and all to remember Bhagavan always to attain His grace. This was followed by two devotional songs. Thereafter, there was a brief Bhajan session which concluded with the Bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" in the golden voice of Bhagavan. The programme came to a close with Arati at 7.00 p.m.



*Bhagavan's visit to the studio of Radio Sai Global Harmony commemorated.*

songs dedicated to Bhagavan. Talks by two distinguished speakers followed this. The first speaker was Dr. G. Venkataraman who has been at the helm of affairs of Radio Sai Global Harmony right from its inception. Expressing deep gratitude to Bhagavan for His guidance and inspiration, Dr. Venkataraman described how Bhagavan graciously inaugurated the broadcasting programme of Radio Sai Global Harmony ten years ago and how the dedicated Radio Sai Team made it a grand success

### ID UL FITR FESTIVAL

The sacred festival of Id Ul Fitr was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 20th August 2012. Postgraduate students of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a



*The Institute students making a presentation on Id Ul Fitr in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

very interesting and educative programme in Sai Kulwant Hall on this occasion. Beginning their presentation at 5.00 p.m., the students explained the meaning and

*continued on page 300...*

From our Archives

# GANESH IS THE EMBODIMENT OF INTELLIGENCE AND PURITY

GANESH IS A DEITY OF IMMENSE POTENCY

*Embodiments of Divine Love!*



RAKRITI (PHENOMENAL world) is what is directly apparent to man and which deludes him. It is an aggregation of objects. In its natural state, every object is mutable. Such impermanent objects are incapable of giving enduring Ananda (bliss). The object which gives you pleasure is transient. The individual who experiences that pleasure is also impermanent. How can an impermanent being derive lasting bliss from a perishable object? It is, therefore, necessary at the outset to forget the impermanent so that one may be qualified to experience the eternal and unchanging Reality.

## Have Unwavering Faith in God

Faith in God should never waver. In no circumstance should anyone go against the injunctions of the Divine. Whatever worship one may offer, however intensely one may meditate, if one transgresses the commands of the Lord, these devotional practices become futile. The reason is that the Divine has no selfish objective or aim. It is out of narrow, selfish motives that people

act against the sacred commands of the Lord. Even small acts of transgression may in due course assume dangerous proportions.

How did Vinayaka acquire Siddhi (supreme powers)? His parents held a contest for their two sons – Ganesh and Subrahmanya. They said, they would offer their grace in the form of a fruit to whoever came first in circumambulating the universe. The younger son Subrahmanya set out immediately on his peacock to go round the universe. On seeing Subrahmanya approaching his parents, almost at the end of his trip, Vinayaka, who

*Vighneswara is the deity presiding over intelligence. He endows devotees with purity of intellect and power of discrimination between right and wrong and between permanent and transient. Mundane pleasures are momentary and fleeting. Your aim must be to seek that spiritual bliss which is enduring and unchanging and which transcends the pleasures of the earth and heaven.*

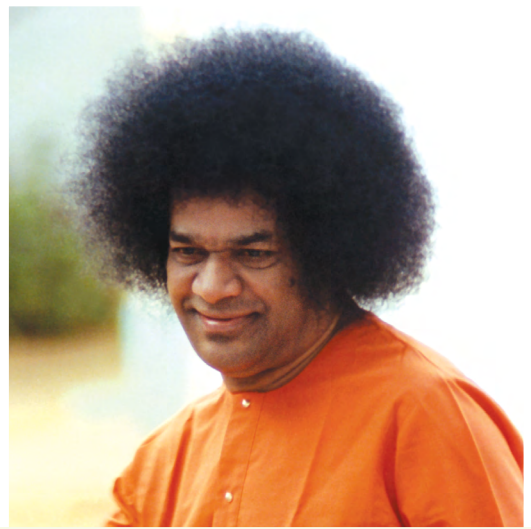


had been quietly sitting all the while, got up and went round the parents and sat down. Parvati observed that Subrahmanya, who had taken so much trouble to go round the universe, should be declared the winner. Parameswara asked Vighneswara what was the inner significance of his going round the parents. Ganesh replied, "The entire universe is permeated by both of you. The entire creation is a manifestation of the Siva-Sakti form. It is an act of delusion to attempt to go round this phenomenal universe. To go round both of you is the true circumambulation of cosmos." Then Parvati exclaimed, "Yours is the fruit." Easwara was so much impressed with the supreme intelligence of Vinayaka that he told him, "All those who wish to worship me will offer their worship first to you."

Such was the grace showered on Vinayaka. What is the reason? The reason is Ganesh's faith in the Lord and His omnipresence. The right path for all people is to develop faith in God and lead godly lives.

### **Ganesh: the Embodiment of all Knowledge**

Vighneswara is also regarded as one endowed with Gaja Telivi (intelligence of an elephant). The elephant is noted for its supreme intelligence. It is also known for its absolute loyalty to its master. It is ready to sacrifice its life itself for the sake of its master. The direct proof of this is Sai Geeta (Bhagavan's elephant). Ordinarily, hundreds of cars will be passing on the road. Sai Geeta will take no notice of them. But when Swami's car happens to pass that way, it will instinctively notice it. It will rush to the road



*In its natural state, every object is mutable. Such impermanent objects are incapable of giving enduring Ananda (bliss). The object which gives you pleasure is transient. The individual who experiences that pleasure is also impermanent. How can an impermanent being derive lasting bliss from a perishable object? It is, therefore, necessary at the outset to forget the impermanent so that one may be qualified to experience the eternal and unchanging Reality.*



raising its familiar cry. What love for Swami! It will be no exaggeration if faith is equated with the elephant.

Vighneswara is the deity presiding over intelligence. He endows devotees





with purity of intellect and power of discrimination between right and wrong and between permanent and transient. Mundane pleasures are momentary and fleeting. Your aim must be to seek that spiritual bliss which is enduring and unchanging and which transcends the pleasures of the earth and heaven. Keeping this ultimate aim in view, one should do one's duties in this world and lead a life of righteousness.

Once Vyasa embarked upon writing the Mahabharata. Because of the immensity of the task of writing down millions of verses, Vyasa sought the help of Brihaspati, the preceptor of the Devas, for a suitable scribe. Brihaspati told Vyasa that none but Vinayaka could carry out the work. Vyasa appealed to Vinayaka for help. Vyasa stipulated that everything that was written should be understood by the scribe. Ganesh, in turn, laid down a condition that Vyasa should not pause in dictating the verses so that the stylus with which he would be inscribing the verses on the palm leaves should have no rest. Vinayaka could write down the entire Mahabharata because he was the embodiment of all

knowledge. Vyasa could accomplish his prodigious task with Ganesh's help.

There is special significance in placing Vighneswara in the forefront before embarking on any undertaking. In a forest, when an elephant moves through the jungle, it clears the way for others to follow. Likewise, by invoking Ganesh, the path is cleared for our undertakings. The elephant's foot is so large that when it moves, it can stamp out the footprints of any other animal. Here, again, the symbolic meaning is that all obstacles in the way will be removed when Ganesh is accorded the place of honour. The journey of life is made smoother and happier by the grace of Ganesh.

On Vinayaka Chaturthi day, students place books in front of the Ganesh idol and offer worship. They pray to the deity to illumine their minds. Ganesh is known as *Buddhi Pradayaka*, one who grants intelligence. No one should regard Ganesh as uncouth because of his elephant head and his immense belly. Vinayaka is a deity who encompasses the universe within himself. He is a deity of infinite potency.

– **From Bhagavan's Ganesh Chaturthi Discourses.**

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*...continued from page 297*

significance of Ramadan, Namaz and other sacred practices of Islam through dialogues along with recitation of verses from the Quran. Interspersing of melodious songs related to the theme of

the presentation added to the value of the performance. This was followed by a brief session of Bhajans. The programme which started at 5.00 p.m. came to a close with Arati at 6.00 p.m.

## Interview

# HOLISTIC HEALTHCARE

*Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning interviews Dr. Ramanathan Iyer, Head of the Department of Cardiology, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences on the subject of body-mind relationship and holistic approach to health.*



AI RAM LISTENERS, WE have the pleasure of having with us Dr. Ramanathan Iyer. He has been with us before and many of you might have heard our conversation with him on his experiences as a doctor, especially serving in Swami's hospital. Today I have called him to discuss the body-mind relationship especially in relation to health so that he can tell us what we should do and what we should not do about our body, and how we should deal with our mind in controlling and disciplining the body. Dr. Iyer, I think I have given a fairly long introduction. So, let me turn over the microphone to you so that you can make your opening statement.

Thank you very much, sir. At the outset, I offer my most reverential Pranams at the Lotus Feet of my Beloved Master, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sai Ram to all the listeners of Radio Sai Global Harmony. It is a very thought-provoking subject.

I would wish to draw my attention intuitively, if all of us look back, at some point of time we had that element of mental control over the body. Unfortunately, the environment, the circumstances trained us

in such a way that we forgot conveniently the influence of mind over body.

You say once we had control of mind over body. Can you explain that because that is not very clear to me. When was this? When did it happen? How did we lose this control?

***When the internalisation occurs, then whatever you are seeing, you will see in a very broad perspective.***

***The so-called ills of modern society are all due to externalisation. If irrespective of our caste, colour, creed, nationality, geographical boundaries, we use the technique of internalisation, regardless of who we are or what we are, we cannot count the blessings we have got.***

The Vedas are our ancient scriptures; they have been propounding it from time immemorial. Unfortunately, the way modern science took up, it thought by dissecting each organ it will come to a revelation. I am myself a practitioner of modern science, I am not against it. What I say, they could succeed to a large extent in almost all organ systems except the brain. Till today, can anybody in the world give me one comprehensive definition of what is mind? Next, genesis of thought: You may write reams and reams of paper, but can you reduce thought to just a series of electro-biochemical events? If it were so, you could actually modulate thought.

*You said the Vedic seers understood the profound connection between the mind and the body and their interrelationship, etc. Am I right in assuming that some of this knowledge was formally encoded in what we call Ayurveda? May I request you to give an introduction on Ayurveda because many people may not know what it is all about?*

The name Ayurveda itself tells what it is. Ayur as you know in Sanskrit is life or longevity. So, it is the Veda of longevity. They never talked of Oushadhi Sastra (medical system) or Bhaishaja Vijnan (science of medicine). One arm of that was a system of medicine which had a very holistic approach. The doctor of Ayurveda was called a Vaidya. As a person walked in, from that moment onwards the diagnostic process started. The way he comes and sits and presents his complaints, that is analysed. And it does not end with the

modern kind of questions: "What is your problem?" "Sir, I have a stomachache." "What else?" "I have passed two loose stools." "Okay, lie down." Check the pulse, blood pressure, temperature and antibiotics for three days. It ends with that. At some point of time in the history of Ayurveda, they had an excellent mastery over interpreting the peripheral pulse.

*What do you mean by peripheral pulse?*

The radial pulse, what we modern people use it for calculating only the heart rate.

*That is what you feel near the wrist?*

Yes, wrist pulse. They had a full-fledged advanced science exclusively based on pulse analysis.

*And from that they could infer quite a lot.*

Quite a lot in the sense that they had knowledge of disturbance of the so-called three humors in the body. What they called Vata-Pitta-Kapha (wind-bile-phlegm). If you see in today's biochemical parlance, the whole body you see as a whole. One of these elements predominates in one of the systems. And they thought that most of the diseases arose from an imbalance from one of these humors.

The modern system of medicine as it has evolved today has its wonderful advantages. I am not at all denying it. What I say is, it is too analytic; it is not holistic.

First, our ancients could associate themselves very closely with Nature. Secondly, they knew how to put all the





faculties, the Indriyas (senses) to effective use. This is what the ancient man did. Today with our advanced progress, we have become so much artificial, we are ourselves not aware of the treasures which we are carrying.

Well, let me make this point very clear, most of my professional brethren are under the impression that it is the pill they write is doing the magic. From my own intuitive observations and inferences which I have drawn, it is not the reality. What I say is whether you pop a pill, take the Bhasmas (ashes of metals) of Ayurveda or the sugar-coated pills of homoeopathy or whatever other systems of medicine you have, any system of medicine just facilitates the body to recover. If a patient gets an infection, can the doctor claim that he gave the correct and apt antibiotic, that is why he got cured? What the doctor fails to understand is that the antibiotic was only an aid to the person's own immune system.

You may have seen, those were the days of family doctors. I have seen my own grandfather, who was one of those generation doctors. For any health related complaint in the family, the first person to be approached was the family physician. That was the patient-physician relationship. That kind of relationship; it was more thicker than family bond, but it has ceased to exist today.

*Am I to understand that more important than antibiotics, which merely assist the system already built into the body by God, the human element is important?*

***Suppose, ten patients have coronary artery disease affecting the heart. For the ten of them, you can have ten different approaches. There may be three in them who are definite candidates for getting improvement in surgery. Another couple of them, we can do angioplasty, we can put a balloon like thing, put a scaffolding of steel or some other metal. There will be another five, who if we sit through, properly understand them, they can be perfectly managed well with medicines.***

Yes. If you permit me I will quote a small event that happened in the verandah. On one Sunday noon Bhagavan came out, I am talking of those days – around 1995-96. He used to enjoy teasing the doctors. He will collect six or seven around Him in the verandah and He will start off. I was a witness and was sitting a couple of inches from His Lotus Feet. Periodically, He was giving me a glance and He started off on diet. And He started telling, “Hey, you doctors tell proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. See this body eats only one Ragi Roti and takes one glass of plain water. No milk, no tea, no bournvita,



no horlicks, and I am able to do much more physical work than what you people do. You do less than half of what I am doing.” That’s how the thing started.

It so happened that some patient had approached a doctor and apparently the patient was suffering from some form of terminal illness. And the concerned doctor told in a matter of fact way to the patient and to the relatives. They in turn came crying and that’s how Bhagavan came there. Bhagavan made one statement which even today rings in my ears every time I see somebody with a terminal illness. Bhagavan said, “You are all highly educated doctors, next only to God. You know that this man with his present condition cannot live for another two hours. In spite of having that knowledge, you should tell the patient that you have examined him and he need not worry because you have given him some medicine and everything will be fine. Don’t be surprised that he lives for another two months. But if you tell him, the condition is very bad, it is a hopeless case, and the expression on your face changes, the patient will not survive for more than two hours. In the next 15-20 minutes, the patient would have already departed.” You can see Bhagavan’s emotive face, one of the best actors in the world, I would say.

*That faith seems to be a very, very important factor.*

That is why I say prayers and all those things help. Something similar is already happening in a different way in Bhagavan’s hospitals here and in Whitefield. When everyday we have Bhajans, it produces

soothing kind of vibrations among the patients. There is no force on the patients and the relatives too join; they come voluntarily.

*This Bhajan you should explain for the benefit of listeners.*

Just congregational singing.

*You don’t do it in the wards, do you?*

We have Bhajans in the wards. All the patients in the ward, a couple of nurses if they are free, and one or two Seva Dal members who are posted also join. It is a regular affair; it is my twelfth year, every evening when I enter the ward I hear Bhajans going on. So much so that I have got addicted to it. People may laugh at me when I state this being a medical man, but I tell you it has such a profound influence on the recovery of the patients. This is irrespective of whatever the religion the patient professes.

If you kindly permit me, I will take a few minutes on the practice of Sandhya Vandana (daily prayer) which was handed over to us from generation to generation, but today it has become a cursory ritual.

*I know it, but many people don’t know there is such a ritual. I know it because my mother used to say, if you don’t do it, no food!*

You see how beautifully it was devised. It was primarily an offering of obeisance to sun god at dawn, at noon when the sun is at its zenith and at dusk. Sun is life, no sun, no life. Science has said, if the sun decides to be off, the whole world will be wiped out. Our ancients understood



that and gave esoteric meaning to it. The final existence of life on this earth is sun. That is what Sandhya Vandana enjoined. Every day you are saying some Mantra where you pray to sun god to illumine your intellect. Unfortunately, today nobody tells you the meaning of Sandhya Vandana Mantras. When you reach the last Sloka of Sandhya Vandana, it teaches non-dualism or Advaita with a very, very simple example. *Akashat Patitam Toyam Sagaram Pratigachhati* (ocean is the final destination of water falling from the sky). This is a fact everybody knows. Unfortunately, today people are ignorant of such a rich treasure.

*What you are saying in short is Sandhya Vandana is a good mental discipline. Also on account of Pranayama, it is a good breathing exercise, body-mind control encoded in the form of prayer.*

You must have seen the Vata Vriksha, the famous tree Bhagavan planted way back on a Guru Purnima. It is near the museum. There is a placard: Meditation is watching the breath. I read it one day and I have been pondering over it since then. We do Pranayama which involves inhalation, retention and exhalation. When you are doing that, finally you get control over the autonomic nervous system. If you gain control over autonomic nervous system, 99% of diseases cease to exist.

*Now I want to change the subject and ask you a question about what is sometimes referred to as psychosomatic disease. What is that?*

Psyche, as the modern science understands, is very roughly the mind. Somatic affecting the body system, the body structure. We are again coming back to the body-mind relationship. Today just a handful of diseases are categorised as psychosomatic, wherein you might have seen some persons who are jittery, nervous, who are always on their toes and even small upsets can throw them off their balance. Such people, they say, get hypertension, hyper acidity, gastric ulcer, heart attack, etc. Then they say, it is basically a psychosomatic problem. Give him tranquiliser drugs so that he will calm down.

The frame of mind has a profound influence on the immune system. If you say, Yoga, Pranayama, Sandhya Vandana or other Mantras and Bhajans, they are all indirectly influencing the mind; they tone our immune system.

*Since you have brought up the spiritual angle after our fairly long conversation, let me end on the same note. This afternoon I was listening to a radio programme broadcast from America. It was very interesting, it was about a 50-plus lady who at the age of seventeen became paralysed. She was diving, the water was shallow, she had an injury which affected her nervous system and rendered her quadriplegic or something like that. All the four limbs she could not move, but became something like a celebrity after a couple of years of vegetable like existence and depression. She was talking about how the transformation came to her. She said,*





*"I suddenly discovered God. I had nothing, I found that I could borrow from God as much as I wanted. He was within me." She was all the time talking about faith in God, she was in raptures. She said, "Look, there are at least six people who help me with my body functions, and I feel too exhausted. Then I tell myself, God, I can't be like this. They have done so much for me. Give me a bit of Your smile. I want to smile at them." She says, that gives me energy and then it went on like that.*

*She does radio broadcast and all that. She has founded a big society to help disabled people and so on. She has been a member of a committee that has passed a new Act in the Congress for giving help to the disabled. But one question the interviewer asked, "Do you blame God for what happened to you? Do you think you have been cursed?" She said, "No. I think God has given me my life by giving me this disability." What way? "Look, my life has become purposeful. I am now able to help so many people. If I hadn't gone through this, my life would have been useless. I don't think it is a suffering. I thank God for this." I was just astonished. All our Vedantic wisdom was encoded into this woman who is not from our culture. But her heart is in the right place.*

*Exactly. The question is of realisation. Who will say losing my limbs completely is a blessing from God?*

*And that is what Swami says in Gita Vahini, "Welcome misery. Misery is a friend because it will help you to discover*

***We have Bhajans in the wards. All the patients in the ward, a couple of nurses if they are free, and one or two Seva Dal members who are posted also join. It is a regular affair; it is my twelfth year, every evening when I enter the ward I hear Bhajans going on. So much so that I have got addicted to it. People may laugh at me when I state this being a medical man, but I tell you it has such a profound influence on the recovery of the patients.***

*God." That is precisely what has happened to this lady.*

*For this lady, it was her own self-realisation.*

*She realised that God is in her because she is all the time drawing strength from within. It is not from somebody else. Suddenly, the Gita became alive for me when I heard this.*

*If you see, the emphasis in the Gita is always on internalisation rather than externalisation. Today's pursuit is all externalisation. When the internalisation*

## *Effulgence of Divine Glory*

# THE CRUCIFIX



THE EVENING BEFORE THE Sivarathri Day of 1973, we were told to be ready in the early morning for a trip; and that when the cars were loaded and ready we would know the destination. Swami had decided that only a handful of people would be with Him when the Lingam became manifest.

Our destination was the Bandipur Game Sanctuary in Bandipur forest, several hours away in Karnataka State. We arrived at the forest rest house in the early afternoon. The next morning, we returned to our cars, and, guided by the forest people, took various winding roads hoping to come upon one of the forest's wild elephant herds. As we moved through the trees and the open areas, in our minds we were hoping for a replay of the dramatic and fascinating encounter between Baba and a wild elephant herd which had taken place some years before when Swami and some devotees had made a holiday expedition to the Game Sanctuary. This time, however, the elephants remained in their secret places and not even one was seen. But the drive through the hills had another and more important objective. Swami intended to find a correct site where we could gather at dusk for the sacred event of the Lingam birth. It was on this great and most mysterious occasion unknown and beyond imagination to the



*The crucifix created by Bhagavan.*

world at large, that the crucifix came into being.

As we crossed a bridge above a sandy, dry riverbed, Baba indicated that this would be the place. He said we would all return here just at dusk, and this we did. The cars halted at the side of the road, and we started to climb down the bank to the sandy river bottom. I was beside Baba. As we passed a bush, Swami broke off two twigs, placed them together and asked me, "What is this, Hislop?"

## Total Surrender Wins God's Grace

HERE IS NO ONE IN TAMIL Nadu who is not acquainted with the name of Nandanar. He was a great devotee of Lord Siva. He performed his daily duties while constantly chanting the Lord's Name and doing Sankirtan of the Divine Name. He had a great desire to have Darshan of the idol of the Lord to his heart's content in the temple of Lord Siva. He belonged to a low caste. But according to the prevailing traditions in those days, people of low caste were prohibited from entering the temples and Harijans (people of low caste) were treated as untouchables.

Nandanar was employed with a farmer, who came to know about Nandanar's devotion to Lord Siva as he saw him constantly chanting the Name of Lord Siva and performing Kirtan of the Divine Name. He was amazed how Nandanar had developed so much devotion. One day, he called Nandanar and chided him, saying, "Oh foolish fellow! Where is the need for persons like you and me to worship the Lord, chant His Name and sing songs in His praise? It is all the business of people of higher castes. It is enough if we lead our life by doing hard work and raising good crop." Nandanar then said, "Oh master! All are human beings and all are the children of God. The castes were created only to

maintain the society and organise its work. God loves everyone equally."

When Nandanar came to know that annual festival of the temple of Lord Nataraja in Chidambaram was near, his desire to have the Darshan of the Lord became all the more strong. When



*The farmer chided Nandanar for his desire to go on a pilgrimage when so much work was pending.*

Nandanar expressed this desire to his employer, he said to him, "Oh madcap! Do you know how much work is pending for you? Paddy crop in ten acres of land has to be reaped; it has to be packed in bags and taken to the house. The festival is to begin after two days. Do the prescribed work and go wherever you like."

On hearing this, Nandanar was beset with worry and thought, "What is all this! How long will it take me to reap ten acres of



paddy crop? When will I put the harvested paddy in bags and when will I take the bags to the house of the owner? Then when will I be able to go to Chidambaram? Nobody can finish this work even in ten days!” Drowned as he was in this worry, Nandanar remained without food the whole day and did not have even a wink of sleep at night. He passed the night in prayer to Lord Siva, “Oh Lord! Now you are my only refuge. At any cost I have to set out on my journey to Chidambaram tomorrow. Somehow, you have to make it possible.”

Easwara is Bhavapriya (lover of feelings). His heart melted at the devout prayer of Nandanar. One hundred persons came from somewhere, reaped the harvest, put the paddy in bags and took them to the house of the farmer. By morning, the entire work had been finished. But Nandanar was not aware who were the people who performed this task. He had never seen them before. He was surprised when he saw this and thought, “Who has done all this? Wherefrom did so many people come? What made them help me?” Expressing gratitude to the Lord, he said, “Oh God! It is all Your Leela. It is only You who came in so many forms.” Overjoyed at this Leela of God, Nandanar leapt and danced and sang in merriment.

When the farmer saw in the morning that all the work had been completed, he was very happy. Patting Nandanar’s back, he praised him and said, “My dear! Now you can go to Chidambaram for the Darshan of Lord Nataraja.”

Nandanar walked all the way with great difficulty, somehow reached Chidambaram



*The farmer was happy when he saw that all the work had been completed in one day. He permitted Nandanar to go to Chidambaram.*

and fell unconscious in front of the temple of Nataraja. Regaining a little consciousness, he prayed with total surrender, “Oh Lord! I have come here from such a long distance. Yet I am not able to have your Darshan. This body is ephemeral like a water bubble. I do not know when the life will ebb out of the body. I have come to you depending only on your support. I leave everything to your will.”

That night, Lord Nataraja appeared in the dream of the chief priest of the temple and commanded him, “My dear! A great devotee of mine is lying unconscious at the door of the temple. Lift him up with respect and offer him food and bring him to me.”

As next day was the annual festival of the temple, thousands of devotees thronged the temple. The priest saw Nandanar lying unconscious near the door of the temple as revealed to him by the Lord in the dream. He lifted him up, offered him food and took him to the sanctum sanctorum. Nandanar opened his eyes



and saw Lord Nataraja. On seeing his dear devotee, a beautiful smile flashed on the face of the Lord. Nandanar merged in the smile of the Lord.

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*...continued from page 306*

occurs, then whatever you are seeing, you will see in a very broad perspective. The so-called ills of modern society are all due to externalisation. If irrespective of our caste, colour, creed, nationality, geographical boundaries, we use the technique of internalisation, regardless of who we are or what we are, we cannot count the blessings we have got.

*Absolutely, we don't realise our blessings. We only count what we have not got.*

*Incidentally, this lady has learnt to paint using her teeth holding her brush. She has exhibited her work in so many exhibitions*

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*...continued from page 307*

"Well, Swami, it is a cross," I answered. Baba then closed His fingers over the twigs and directed three somewhat slow breaths into His fist, between thumb and forefinger. Then He opened His hand to reveal a Christ figure crucified on a cross, and He gave it to me.

He said, "This shows Christ as he really was at the time he left his body, not as artists have imagined him or as historians have told about him. His stomach is pulled in and his ribs are all showing. He had no food for eight days."

God does not want your worship. He wants your total surrender. He does not consider your high caste. What He desires is your devotion and earnestness. God is subservient to His devotees.

*in New York and Washington. And her courage is phenomenal.*

In recent years, Stephen Hawking has set a great ideal.

*That is remarkable. Before that Helen Keller.*

Excellent! That courage or whatever you call, the inner thing. The basic thing is they could internalise, which most of us are unable to do.

*Well. Thank you, doctor, on behalf of myself, Radio Sai and all our numerous listeners all over the world. Jai Sai Ram.*

Thank you very much. Jai Sai Ram.

**Courtesy: Radio Sai Global Harmony**

I looked at the crucifix, but found no words. Then Baba continued, "The cross is wood from the actual cross on which Christ was crucified. To find some of the wood after 2,000 years took a little time! The image is of Christ after he died. It is a dead face."

I noticed something odd and asked, "Swami, what is that hole at the top of the cross?" Baba replied that the cross had been originally hung from a standard.

**— Excerpted from "My Baba and I"  
by Dr. John S. Hislop.**

# NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

## SOUTH AFRICA

OVER 5,000 DEVOTEES FROM more than 120 Sathya Sai Centres and groups across the country observed the Maha Samadhi Day of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by organising Bhajans, talks on Bhagavan's life and His teachings, videos of Bhagavan and short plays by the SSE children. In some regions, devotees met for several days prior to Maha Samadhi Day to intensify spiritual practices and contemplate on Bhagavan's teachings. Numerous service projects like serving food to the needy and medical camps were organised.

On 22nd April 2012, about 300 people attended a special tribute function at the Wits Medical School Auditorium in the Gauteng region (close to Johannesburg). The programme included devotional songs, a drama by the youth and SSEHV students and talks by devotees and members of other faiths. On 29th April, in the city of Durban, about 350 people including religious and community leaders attended a programme based on Unity of Faiths. A display of His Work (Bhagavan's humanitarian projects) along with books on His teachings was set up at the entrance of the venue. A national newspaper featured a two-page supplement on Bhagavan's life and His message. On 24th April, a local community radio station dedicated a few hours to broadcast Bhagavan's life and His teachings.



*Bhajans, talks and cultural programmes formed part of Maha Samadhi Day observances of Bhagavan.*

Since March 2012, Sathya Sai volunteers have been rendering heartwarming service to assist needy children at the Sathya Sai School in Lenasia by providing them with basic necessities. Volunteers undertook maintenance work at the school and painted all the classroom walls. Most of the 195 children attending the school come from extremely needy settlements where some of the homes have very few basic facilities. Sathya Sai volunteers repaired six such homes by mending leaking roofs and improving the insulation. On 21st April 2012, a special Grama Seva project was organised as a part of Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi observance. Each child at the school received a grocery hamper consisting of rice, sugar, maize meal and other items. A study desk, a chair, solar lamp and scarf/gloves were also lovingly distributed. Hot meals for the children and their families were served. In a skills







*Items of basic necessities for needy families in Lenasia.*

training programme, parents of the children were given sewing lessons. About 600 people including devotees of other faiths participated in the Grama Seva with love and unity.

## SRI LANKA

Devotional, service and other activities including Sarva Dharma Sai Shanthi Walks and Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programmes (SSSVIP) were organised in all regions of Sri Lanka as part of Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi Day observances. On 24th April, Narayana Seva (serving food) and a 12-hour Akhanda Bhajan (continuous devotional singing) were also conducted. In the Western and Southern Regions, over 400 people participated in a six-kilometre

Shanthi Walk undertaken on the streets of Colombo, the capital city of Sri Lanka. The walk began with Veda chanting. Singing of Bhajans and chanting of Gayatri Mantra continued throughout the walk. In the Northern Region, devotees including SSE children, SSE teachers and trainees from the vocational institute in Nvalay took part in a seven-kilometre Shanthi Walk. The North Central Region organised a Shanthi Walk in Mullaitivu district. Most of the participants had experienced much hardship for more than three decades due to war-like conditions that had prevailed in the country. However, with the end of the war, they all participated in the Peace Walk and expressed their gratitude and love for Bhagavan. In the Eastern Region, about 1,000 devotees participated in a three-kilometre Shanthi Walk organised in the districts of Batticaloa, Kalmunai and Akkaraipattu. Participants in all regions



*Peace Walks were organised as part of Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi Day observances.*

carried placards depicting Bhagavan's teachings on love and peace and sang Bhajans throughout the walk.

### U. S. A.

Many service activities and devotional programmes were organised in the U.S.A. on the occasion of the first anniversary of Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi.

In Cleveland, Ohio, devotees collected and donated non-perishable food items to a local food bank, prepared and served food at two local shelters for about 310 people, and organised a devotional programme that included silent meditation and Bhajans. In Columbus, Ohio, Sathya Sai volunteers donated school supplies for about 300 needy children of a few selected communities in the Central American country of Honduras. About 250 devotees from Sathya Sai Centres in and around Chicago, Illinois area participated in a devotional programme that included multifaith prayers, devotional singing and a video of one of Bhagavan's Discourses. Sathya Sai volunteers took part in a Des Plaines River cleanup project in River Forest, Illinois, by picking up recyclable trash. The village of River Forest, Illinois, greatly appreciated the participation of the Sathya Sai volunteers in this river cleanup project.

About 30 devotees from the Central San Jose Centre in San Jose, California, took part in a devotional programme and Sathya Sai youth planted 18 trees at a park in San Jose. Elsewhere in California, devotees from the San Diego and San

Diego North County Centres served food to about 100 people and donated clothing as well as pet food. The Sathya Sai Centres of Lakewood, Mission Viejo and Tustin prepared food and served 850 needy people in 10 shelters in the area, and 75 carry-bags of food were also prepared for children at various shelters. The Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Tustin provided more than 2,000 kg of non-perishable food items and 100 fast food restaurant gift cards to 108 needy families. Devotees from the Karuna Centre in Corona donated about 550 kg of food items to a food bank, and the Sathya Sai Centres of Arcadia and Glendale organised a Grama Seva project, in which 108 families received non-perishable food items and hygiene kits. Devotees from the Sathya Sai Centre in Chatsworth donated 100 hygiene kits to the needy, and devotees from the Torrance Sai Centre cleaned an area of the beach by picking up trash. They also served food to the needy and distributed clothes and shoes. Devotees from South



*Sai devotees of Arcadia and Glendale organised a Grama Seva project, in which 108 families received non-perishable food items and hygiene kits.*

Bay-Torrance served a hot dinner at a facility where the homeless assemble to receive food and hot lunches to homeless people who live on the streets in the South Bay area.

Devotees from the Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Mesa, Arizona coordinated the distribution of approximately 423 insecticide-treated mosquito nets (Sainets) to the people of a small village (Iganga) in Uganda, East Africa. These nets will help in preventing malaria. In local service, about 300 pre-packed lunch kits were distributed to homeless people at a nearby soup kitchen, and used prescription/reading glasses were donated to a local organisation for distribution to the needy.

Devotees from the Sathya Sai Centre of Boulder, Colorado sang uplifting songs for the residents of a home for the elderly. Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Denver, Colorado organised a series of eight Bhajan sessions, distributed sandwiches to the needy at two homeless shelters and donated "Love All - Serve All" bags containing non-perishable food items to homeless people. Special devotional programmes on Maha Samadhi Day included Rudram chanting, Bhajans, and a video presentation on Bhagavan.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Albuquerque, New Mexico donated a large supply of diapers, gloves and "wet wipes" for a daycare centre. The devotees also prepared 150 sandwiches for distribution to homeless people at various mental health facilities and health services locations.



*The Mayor of Houston released a formal proclamation declaring 24th April as Universal Love and Unity Day.*

The Mayor of Houston released a formal proclamation from the City of Houston, declaring 24th April as Universal Love and Unity Day to commemorate the anniversary of Bhagavan leaving His physical body. In Houston, Texas, the North Houston Sathya Sai Centre distributed food to the needy, and the Sathya Sai Baba Centre of South Houston, Texas prepared food for the people at two shelters. Devotees from Longview, Texas donated non-perishable food items to a local food bank. Food was prepared and served at a local shelter for the needy. Devotees from the Sathya Sai Centre of Austin expanded their ongoing tutoring service project to help 3rd to 5th grade children prepare for their final examinations by initiating tutoring sessions in February 2012 at two additional elementary schools. They also planted 50 rose bushes at the Austin State Hospital and performed landscaping of the front yard at the East Austin Hospice.

On 28th April 2012, a public concert titled "Love the Love" featuring Ms. Dana



Gillespie was organised at the Unity of Houston Church as a loving tribute to Bhagavan and was attended by more than 900 people.

In Louisville, Kentucky, Sathya Sai volunteers are assisting with reconstruction efforts for victims of a recent tornado in Henryville, Indiana.

Sathya Sai volunteers from the Sathya Sai Centre in Overland Park, Kansas donated three months' worth of emergency supplies for homeless people at a shelter. They also prepared and served dinner for 100 women and children at a homeless shelter.

### NEPAL

Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi Day was observed with devotional programmes and various service activities. Service projects were undertaken at Sri Sathya Sai Orphanage, Sri Sathya Sai Water Project and Sri Sathya Sai Health Centre. The day was marked by initiation of a Colour Doppler Ultrasound Machine in Sri Sathya Sai Health Centre. On 24th April 2012, about 300 people attended the Maha



*Participants in the meeting held in Kathmandu to observe Bhagavan's Maha Samadhi Day.*

Samadhi celebrations in Kathmandu. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court presided over the function. In his keynote address, the Chief Justice referred to Bhagavan as Master of the Universe and advised everyone to practise His teaching, "Love All, Serve All." He also stated that at a time when the world was torn apart with religious and cultural conflicts, Bhagavan's injunction of "Help Ever, Hurt Never" was a clarion call for all humanity.

### BAHRAIN

On 6th May 2012, about 750 people attended Easwaramma Day celebrations organised by 22 SSE teachers and 25 Sathya Sai volunteers at the Bahrain Indian School, Jashanmal Auditorium. Sri Abraham John, Chairman of the Indian School Executive Committee, was the Chief Guest. The SSE children presented a cultural programme on the theme, "Love, the Universal Religion" highlighting the unity of faiths, the concept of the Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. The programme showcased festivals representing Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. The spiritual significance of these festivals was wonderfully brought out through skits, dances and dramas.

### THAILAND

Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Thailand held a devotional programme on 9th June 2012, with about 425 people attending. The Indian Ambassador of Thailand was the Chief Guest. The programme began with the National Anthem and Veda

chanting. It was followed by dances by SSE, SSEHV and Sathya Sai School children. The SSE children enacted a drama entitled "The Story of I." About 65 children participated in this programme. The programme concluded with Mangala Arati and distribution of Prasadam.

– **Sri Sathya Sai International Organisations**

## B H A R A T

**Haryana and Chandigarh:** A Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality was conducted from 9th to 12th June 2012 at Hansi, Hisar district, in which 55 boys and 35 girls from Hisar, Hansi, Rohtak, Bahadurgarh and Kurukshetra participated. Majority of the participants were from rural areas. They started the day with Suprabhatam everyday followed by yoga from 5.00 a.m. to 6.30 a.m. In all, 14 faculty members, drawn from all over the State and Sri Tribhuvan Sachdeva from Madhya Pradesh delivered 22 lectures on subjects, such as, Indian Culture and Spirituality,



*Participants attending a lecture by a faculty member in the Summer Course.*

Positive Thinking, Gita for Youth, Time Management, Unity of Faiths, etc. In the evening, summaries of the lectures, delivered during the day, were presented by the students. This was followed by screening of films on Bhagavan Baba and His work. Before valedictory function, the participants were encouraged to give their impressions about the course. Most of them expressed that what they learnt there was never known to them. Some of them expressed that their total outlook about life had changed after learning the real purpose of human life as enunciated by our Rishis and forefathers.

**Tamil Nadu:** A Sai Spiritual Awareness Programme was held for the units of Villupuram district at Solai Mahal, Villupuram on 5th August 2012, wherein more than 1,000 persons, both devotees and non-devotees participated.

Besides the inaugural address by the Chief Guest, Sri K.J. Ramesh, illuminating talks were given by a galaxy of learned speakers. The topics covered included: Where are we Going?, Swami, the Kalpa Vriksha, My Mission is Swami's Mission, Filling the Day with Spirituality, My Sai is Within Myself and Personal Sadhana. The day's proceedings concluded with a session of Guided Jyoti Meditation.

The highlight and uniqueness of the programme was the spiritual fervour with which 120 Muslim devotees (out of which 116 were women) from Elavanaasur Bhajan Mandali, participated in the programme on their own free will, even though it was the



*A large number of Muslim devotees also participated in the Sai Spiritual Awareness Programme organised at Solai Mahal, Villupuram.*

month of Ramzan and they were observing fast. They requested that they be allowed to perform special prayers at 1.00 p.m. at the altar of our Beloved Bhagavan. With all piety befitting the occasion, they recited their prayers at the altar with the conviction that Swami is none but Allah Himself. After their prayers, one could discern from their moist eyes the absolute reverence and surrender with which they wholeheartedly offered their Namaz at the altar.

**West Bengal:** A medical camp was organised by Jateswar Samithi of Jalpaiguri district on 23rd October 2011 at

Jateswar Girls' High School, in which seven doctors / technical experts from relevant fields and 42 Seva Dal volunteers from the Samithi participated. Around 350 patients who came from the nearby villages were provided medical consultation along with necessary medicines. Simultaneously, the villagers were served midday meals as part of the Narayana Seva activity together with the medical camp. A helping hand was also extended by the villagers who were enthused with the caring gesture of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation.

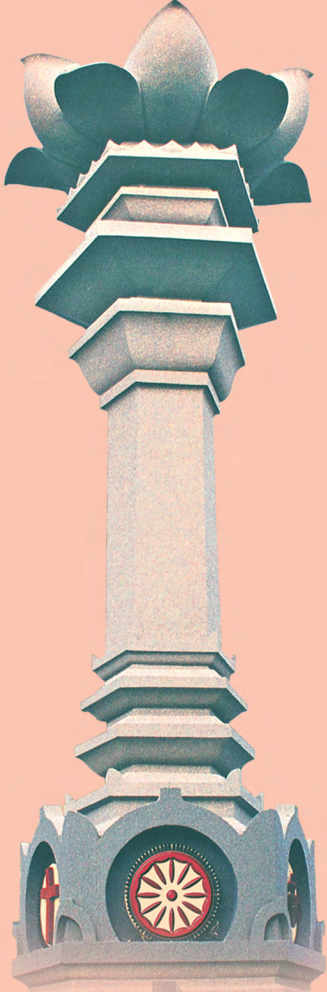
Sai devotees donated 209 units of blood to Kurseong Sub Divisional Hospital. 38 cataract surgeries were facilitated at the same hospital. As part of SSSVIP, three stretchers and six blood pressure measuring machines were distributed to adopted villages. The Gurubathan and Amblok Samithi facilitated the distribution of 7,000 mosquito nets by Health Department. Besides this, Mamring Samithi also helped in detecting 100 anemia cases by Health Department of the Government of West Bengal.

With the Divine Blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Varu and with the approval of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, it is proposed to conduct **Sri Maha Sahasra Kalashabhishekam and Samoohika Upanayanam Brahmopadesha Mahotsavam** (Sacred Thread Ceremony) on **Wednesday, 26th and Thursday, 27th September 2012 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh, India.**

#### Programme

26-09-2012	Morning – Sri Maha Sahasra Kalashabhishekam Evening – Talks on Importance of Upanayanam
27-09-2012	Morning – Samoohika Upanayanam Evening – Music Concert

Organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Karnataka. For further details, please contact [saisubm2012@gmail.com](mailto:saisubm2012@gmail.com)



## *Use Senses to Serve Others*

The senses should be regarded as instruments for rendering service to others. The foolish idea of indulgence in sensual pleasures should be given up. Only animals are content to derive all satisfaction from the senses alone. Hence, every man should firmly declare, "I am a man and not an animal." Only when he has this double conviction will man cease to be an animal and assert his humanness. Unfortunately, today men claim to be human, but are engaged in animal activities.

*– Baba*

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