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"Where there is unity, there is love.
When love manifests in you, the lotus of
your heart blooms. You develop the spirit
of detachment when your heart blooms
with love. If a person has not developed
detachment, it only means his heart has
not bloomed with love. Devoid of love, he
leads the life of an animal."

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Forthcoming Festivals at Prasanthi Nilayam



16th October - 22nd October ... Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna
14th November 6 p.m.

to 15th November 6 p.m.Global Akhanda Bhajan

18th NovemberRathotsavam

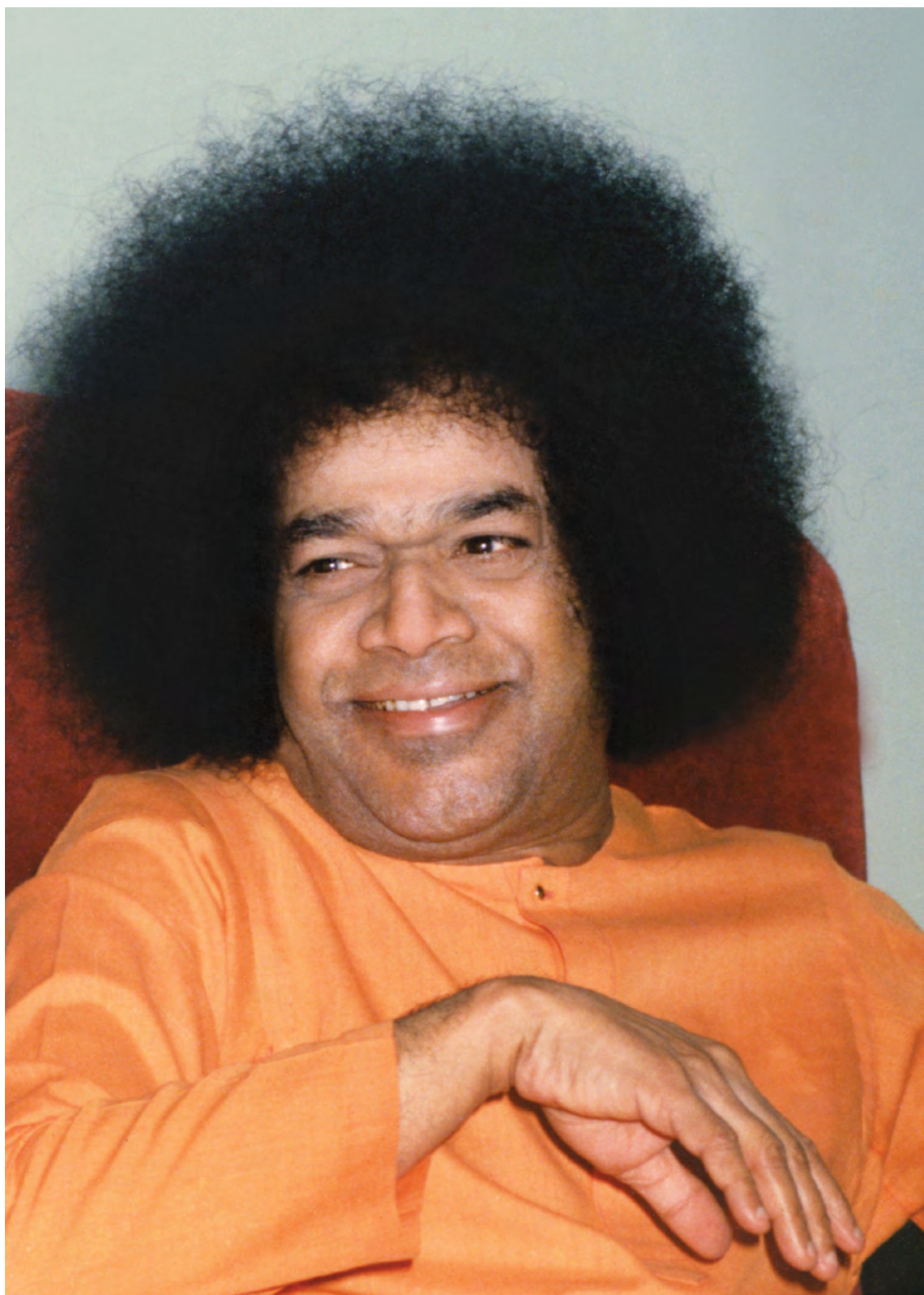
19th NovemberLadies Day

22nd November34th Convocation of

**Sri Sathya Sai Institute
of Higher Learning**

23rd November90th Birthday of
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

25th DecemberChristmas



AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:

10TH SEPTEMBER 1996

ATMA IS THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS OF EVERYTHING

This is the last of the series of daily Discourses which Bhagavan in His immense compassion gave from 16th June to 10th September 1996 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam. This series of 70 Discourses which were started from May 2008 issue of Sanathana Sarathi comes to an end with this Discourse.

The tongue moves in between the teeth without getting harmed. Likewise, it is good for man if he conducts himself with care and caution while leading his life in society. Never forget these words of wisdom.

(Telugu Poem)

FEARLESSNESS IS WHERE DETACHMENT IS



DI SANKARA TAUGHT THAT world is like a drama stage on which man plays his role, experiences pleasure and pain, and ultimately gives up his life.

Human life is as unstable as a drop of water on a lotus leaf. This body is a den of diseases and attachment. The entire world is riddled

with sorrow and misery. Therefore, oh foolish man, chant the name of Govinda.

(Telugu Poem)

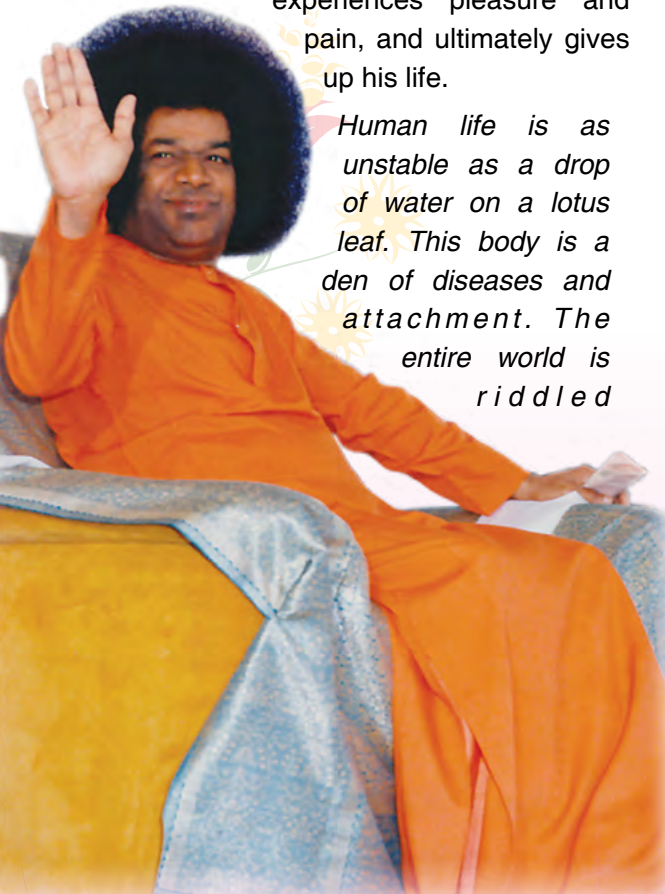
Man's life is filled with sorrow, disappointment and dejection. Every moment of man's life is filled with fear, uncertainty and doubts. There is nothing certain in life and there is fear everywhere. How can one be free from fear?

This life is full of fear. The world is like a Padmavyuha (lotus-shaped military formation) from which man is unable to find a way out. Are trials and tribulations the only companions of man who has no refuge? Are tears of sorrow the only reward for families which are already ruined?

(Telugu Song)

Take Refuge in the Atmic Principle

How can one get happiness in this human life which is filled with fear, doubt, agitation and ego? Even the happiness you get is associated with fear. Fearlessness is nowhere to be seen in life. Then how can man be free from



fear? Fearlessness is where detachment is. How can one develop detachment? It is possible only in the proximity of God. That is why Sankara taught "Oh man, in order to be free from fear and attain a state of fearlessness, take refuge in the principle of the Atma. It is only then can you understand the reality". Happiness, merit, profit and light are nothing but the absence of sorrow, sin, loss and darkness respectively. In fact, they are not separate from each other. The Atma is the fundamental basis and source of all these.

Here is a flower with a number of petals. These petals appear to be different from each other but all of them originate from the same source. Flower is one but petals are many. Similarly, innumerable waves originate from the infinite ocean. No wave appears to be identical with the other. Waves are many but their source of origin, that is the ocean, is one. You find in the waves the same wetness, coolness and salinity as you find in the ocean. Out of the waves emerges froth. Waves are the basis of froth and ocean is the basis of waves. The water in the ocean assumes the form of waves and the water in the waves manifests as froth. But, in fact, all the three are one. That is Advaita. Similarly, man is the combination of body, mind and the Atma. Mind is the basis of body and the Atma is the basis of mind. In fact, the Atma is the fundamental basis of everything. That is the principle of Advaita taught by Sankara. People who do not realise this truth take to the physical, ephemeral and worldly path, undergo many difficulties and hardships before they are able to realise the Atmic principle.

Siddhartha's Detachment

King Suddhodana was blessed with a son after a long wait. He named him

Bondage does not come from anywhere else; it comes from your own desires. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Life is a long journey. Reduce the luggage of your desires to experience happiness and comfort in this journey of life. As much you reduce your worldly desires, so much happiness will you experience. Discharge your duties earnestly, focusing your mind on the goal of life.

Siddhartha. One day a noble sage came to the palace of King Suddhodana. On seeing child Siddhartha, he made a prophetic statement, "Oh king! Your son will become a renunciant". On hearing his words, the king was gripped with fear. From that day onwards, he took care that Siddhartha would not go out of the palace so that he would not see the suffering, sickness and misery that are present in the world. He got him married at the age of 16 and provided all comforts and conveniences to him in the palace. However, one day, Siddhartha went out of the palace to see the outside world. As he was going in the chariot, he saw a decrepit old man walking with difficulty with the help of a stick. Siddhartha asked his charioteer, "What type of animal is this? It appears to be a rather strange animal". The charioteer replied, "Oh prince, he is also a human being like us. As the age advances, the body becomes weak and misshaped". Siddhartha was surprised, "He asked, will everyone come to this stage as the age advances"? "No one is an exception to this. It is the law of nature," replied the charioteer. After going some distance, Siddhartha came across a sick person coughing, gasping for breath and undergoing a lot of suffering.



Siddhartha asked, “What is this? Why is he suffering so much”? The charioteer replied, “Oh prince, this man is sick. This body is a den of diseases. Nobody can say when and how a person will be afflicted with a disease”. This caused disturbance in the mind of Siddhartha. After going further, he found a dead body being carried by four people. He asked the charioteer, “What is this? What are they carrying”? “They are carrying a dead body,” replied the charioteer. “What do you mean by dead body?” asked Siddhartha. The charioteer said, “It is a body without life. When there is life principle in the body, it is Sivam (auspicious) and when life principle leaves the body, it becomes Savam (corpse)”. Siddhartha asked him,

of detachment at his wife Yashodhara and son Rahula who were in deep sleep. He concluded that the world is full of sorrow and fear. Realising that everything was ephemeral and unreal, he developed intense feeling of renunciation. All of you come across many sick persons, old people and dead bodies, but you do not develop the sense of detachment like Siddhartha. It is only by the grace of God that one develops such an intense feeling of detachment.

Qualities of a True Renunciant

Here is a small story. Once a prince went to a forest for hunting. After roaming in the forest for a long time, he felt very tired and thirsty. He came across an Ashram and

*Here is a lock and here is the key.
Turn the key towards right, the
lock opens. Turn it towards left, it
closes. Your heart is the lock and
mind is the key. You turn the mind
towards God, you get liberation.
You turn it towards the world, you
get bondage. That is why it is said,
Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam
Bandhamokshayo (mind is the cause
of bondage and liberation of man).*



“Does everyone die one day”? “No one can escape death,” said the charioteer. After hearing all this, Siddhartha returned to the palace.

All that he saw deeply affected his mind. After returning home, he could neither eat anything nor could he sleep. He cast a look

went inside in search of water. The sage residing in the Ashram asked him, “Who are you? Where have you come from”? The prince replied, “My name is Jitendriya and I have come from the Jitendriya kingdom. Please give me some water to quench my thirst”. The sage offered him a seat and gave him water to drink. The sage thought,



"There are people in this world whose name is Dharmaraja, but they conduct themselves in a most unrighteous way. He comes from Jitendriya kingdom and his name is also Jitendriya (one who has conquered his senses). Does he conduct himself in accordance with his name? Let me find out".

The sage asked the prince to hand over his royal clothes to him and wear an ascetic's dress himself. He took the prince's clothes, sprinkled some red liquid on them and set out for the kingdom of Jitendriya. At the palace gate, the sentry greeted the sage with reverence and asked him the object of his visit. The sage told him that the prince had been killed by a wild animal in the forest and that he had brought the prince's clothes. He asked him to convey this message to the king. The gatekeeper smiled and asked: "Who is free from death? Everyone that is born is bound to die. Birth and death go together". There is a practice in the railways to stamp on every railway wagon the date on which it has to be returned to the workshop for repair and repainting. Likewise, everybody has a return date, though it is not visible.

After hearing the sentry's words, the sage went in to meet the king himself. He told the king that his son had died and pretended like crying. While the Sannyasi was wailing, the king was having a laugh. The king said to him: "You are wearing ochre robe. But your words are unbecoming of a renunciant. Why do you cry? This is no matter for grief or worry. At dusk hundreds of birds return to a tree for rest. The next morning they fly away. What is the relationship between the different birds? Likewise, on the tree of my family, birds like wife and children rest for a while and depart. No one can tell when

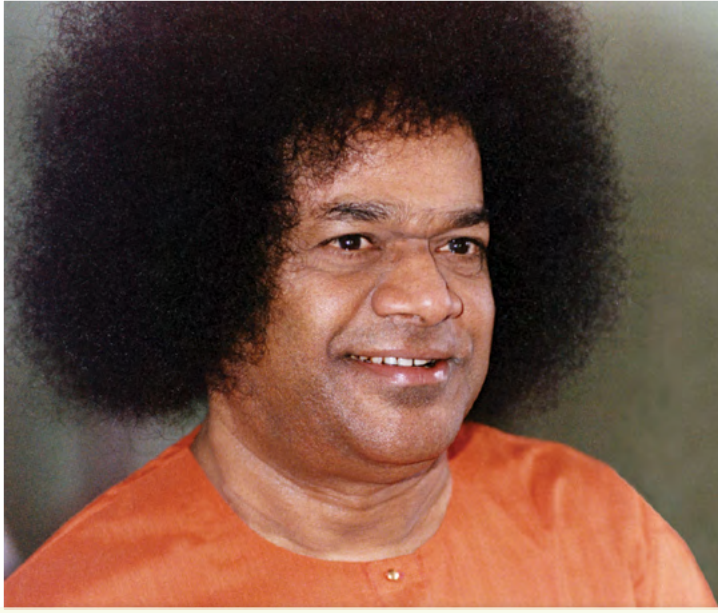
and where any of them will leave. There is no cause for grief over their departure. It is a law of nature". The sage then went to the queen, thinking that as a mother she would grieve over the death of her son. He told her: "Mother! Your son is dead. Here are his clothes". She too laughed. "Oh Sadhu! You are one who has renounced everything in the world. How can you entertain any concern for the ephemeral? Life is like a choultry where wayfarers stay for a while and then pass on. Each has his own time of departure. There is no need to grieve when anyone leaves the world".

Then the sage went to the prince's wife to find out whether she at least reacted differently. He broke the news about the death of her husband. She remarked: "When it rains, leaves and branches fall away from a tree. When there is a flood, two pieces of wood come together for a while and separate again. In this ocean of life, I am one such piece; the prince was another. We came together and we have gone apart. Why be surprised or lament over this? For all these, the cause is either attachment or possessiveness. The events themselves are not to be blamed. They are bound to happen. Why worry about them"?

The sage realised that what the prince had said about the kingdom was all true. Yet, he wanted to test the prince himself. He returned to the hermitage and exclaimed before the prince: "Oh prince! Your kingdom has been overrun by invaders and your father and mother have been made prisoners. You must leave immediately to recover the kingdom and release your parents. Get ready for war".

The prince replied: "All that has happened is according to the Will of God. I did not bring





I am not asking all of you to become renunciants. Do your duty and keep your focus on God. Realise that there is one fundamental basis for everything. Once you recognise this truth, you will develop detachment automatically. It is not possible to develop a sense of detachment by force. As you develop love for God more and more, detachment will go on increasing in you. The secret lies in turning your mind towards God.

true renunciants. How many householders are leading lives free from worldly attachments”!

A Human Being should Manifest Human Qualities

I would relate another story to show that whatever role one has to play in life, one should be true to it. Once an actor came to the court of a king in the costume of Sankara declaring forcefully the unreality of all human relationships and the impermanence of worldly possessions. He quoted the verses of Sankara:

*Mata Nasti, Pita Nasti,
Nasti Bandhu Sahodara,
Artham Nasti,
Griham Nasti,
Thasmath Jagrata
Jagrata.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

(The relationships like mother, father, brothers, sisters and friends are not real. House and wealth are also illusory. Hence, beware!

that kingdom with me when I was born. Can I take it with me when I die? Why should I wage war to recover it? It is not my kingdom. My kingdom is the kingdom of the Atma. I am striving to realise it. That is the kingdom of heaven. That is what I seek to secure. It cannot be got by waging war. It has to be won through love alone. I have no interest in other kingdoms”.

Then, the Sannyasi prostrated before the prince and confessed: “We don ochre robes, but we have none of the qualities of

beware!)

*Janma Dukham Jara Dukham,
Jaya Dukham Punah Punah,
Antya Kale Maha Dukham,
Thasmat Jagratha Jagratha.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

(Birth is a misery, old age is a misery, family is a misery, and death is a terrible misery. So, beware! beware!)

The actor gave a powerful exposition of Advaita, Atmic principle and unity of mankind



for one hour. Pleased with his performance, the king directed his minister to present the actor with a plate of gold coins. But the actor firmly refused to accept the present, saying that it would be unworthy of him to receive it in his role as Sankara. He said, "I have adopted the form of a Sannyasi (renunciant) and am donning ochre robes. It is not the quality of a renunciant to receive gold coins as present. I have not come here to receive any reward. In fact, you are dishonouring me by offering reward". Saying this, the actor left the palace. The next day, the same actor appeared in the role of a beautiful dancer and performed an excellent dance before the king. The king was so much impressed with the dance that he directed the minister to present a plate of gold coins to the dancer. This time, the dancer declined to accept what was offered as he considered it too small a reward for his performance. The minister, who realised that the dancer was the same person who had come as Sankara the previous day, then asked the actor what was the reason for his refusal to accept the plate of gold coins the previous day and to ask for more this day. The actor explained that he declined the previous offer in keeping with his role as a renunciant. But, in the role of a dancer he was free to ask for more as it was natural for dancers to make as much money as they could.

You are born as a human being. Therefore, you should conduct yourself befitting your stature as a human being. This is the teaching of Sankara. Your conduct should be in accordance with the role you are playing. Oh man! You are human in form. Therefore, your conduct and behaviour should manifest human qualities. Otherwise, you are a disgrace to humanness itself. It is said: *The proper study of mankind*

is man. What is mankind? What does it signify? It signifies the unity of thoughts, words and deeds. This is called Trikarana Suddhi in Vedantic parlance. Where there is unity, there is love. When love manifests in you, the lotus of your heart blooms. You develop the spirit of detachment when your heart blooms with love. If a person has not developed detachment, it only means his heart has not bloomed with love. Devoid of love, he leads the life of an animal. The same was taught by child Prahlada to his father Hiranyakasipu when he said, "Oh father! You have acquired all types of knowledge and you have studied the scriptures and Vedanta. But you have not understood the essence of all this". Even wild beasts have some kindness and compassion, but Hiranyakasipu subjected his son to all types of ordeals without a trace of compassion. In fact, he was worse than an animal. One who derives pleasure in torturing others is verily an animal. Therefore, be good and do good. Then you will have everything good in your life. If you want your life to be good, develop good qualities.

Sankara toured the length and breadth of the country, taught the principle of Advaita, instilled courage in people to relieve them of their sufferings and inculcated human values in them. Sankara's immortal verse "Bhaja Govindam" gives the essence of his teachings. When Sankara recited first 12 Slokas of this poem, each of his disciples contributed a stanza of his own to impart the knowledge of Advaita to man. In those days, the principle of Advaita was firmly established in Bharat. But due to the influence of modern age, people are not putting it into practice in their daily life today.



Reduce the Luggage of your Desires

Embodiments of Love!

I am not asking all of you to become renunciants. Do your duty and keep your focus on God. Realise that there is one fundamental basis for everything. Once you recognise this truth, you will develop detachment automatically. It is not possible to develop a sense of detachment by force. As you develop love for God more and more, detachment will go on increasing in you. The secret lies in turning your mind towards God. Here is a lock and here is the key. Turn the key towards right, the lock opens. Turn it towards left, it closes. Your heart is the lock and mind is the key. You turn the mind towards God, you get liberation. You turn it towards the world, you get bondage. That is why it is said, *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man).

You may doubt how you would develop attachment when you turn your mind towards the world. Here is an example. Now you have two legs. But after you finish your

education and get a job, your parents will get you married to a girl. Your parents may arrange your marriage or you yourself may marry a girl. Whatever may be the case, after marriage, you will have four legs. As you beget children, you will go on adding to the number of legs. As the number of legs increases, your movement will be hampered. That is bondage. This bondage does not come from anywhere else; it comes from your own desires. *Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure*. Life is a long journey. Reduce the luggage of your desires to experience happiness and comfort in this journey of life. As much you reduce your worldly desires, so much happiness will you experience. Discharge your duties earnestly, focusing your mind on the goal of life.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam...*”)

– From Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 10th September 1996.

Swami had resolved from the beginning on the provision of three vital things for the people – medical care, education and water. I feel that these three should be provided to the people free. Today a heavy price has to be paid for medical care and for education. Even water has to be bought. A heavy capitation fee has to be paid for getting admission even in a primary school. Illness is incidental to human life. Doctors should be prepared to make any sacrifice to relieve the sick. Money should not be the primary consideration.

- Baba



GURU PURNIMA AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

A HUGE GATHERING OF DEVOTEES from all parts of the world converged at Prasanthi Nilayam to offer their grateful tributes to their Sadguru Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the holy occasion of Guru Purnima which was celebrated on 31st July 2015. The venue of the function was Sai Kulwant Hall which bore a festive look with attractive decorations of various kinds. There were exquisite floral decorations on the Samadhi of Bhagavan, on the right side of which a beautiful golden chair was placed for Him.

Vedic chants by students at 8.00 a.m. heralded the morning programme in Sai Kulwant Hall. Percussion band of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning thereafter played a couple of devotional notes starting appropriately with Bhagavan's first Bhajan "Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam". Enchanting musical numbers by Nadaswaram team followed this which started their presentation with "Sri Guru Parthivasa" (Sadguru who resides in Puttaparthi). The band music was followed by vocal devotional music offering "Guru Vandana" (worship of Guru)

by the students of the Institute. Beginning their presentation with "Namami Param Sadgurum Sai Natham" (I offer salutations to Sadguru Sainath), the students poured out their hearts in devotion to their Beloved Sadguru in devotional songs which included "Namo Sathya Sai Baba" (salutations to Sai Baba), "Sai Namasmaranam ... Sai Rupa Dhyanam" (chanting the Name of Sai and meditating on His Form), "Guru Brahma Neeve Param Jyoti Neeve" (You are the Supreme Lord, You are the Supreme Light), concluding their devotional offering with the Qawali "Tere Durbar Mein Hum Aaye Hain" (we have come to Your abode).

Two speakers addressed the gathering after this very moving musical offering of the students. The first speaker was Sri Nimish Pandya, Vice President, All India Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, who emphasised the need of following the path of unconditional love as exemplified by Bhagavan in His life. This only could provide the solution to all the problems of the world, he said. The second speaker was Sri George

continued on page 13...



Spiritual Path is the Path of Goodness

Leonardo Gutter

I will be always happy, because I realise that when I am not happy it is because I am afraid or I worry for something; I forget God's omnipresence, His Divine protection and guidance; I forget that He is with me all the time, in front, around, behind and specially in my heart. If I am not happy, it simply means that I have forgotten Him.

ON THE HOLY DAY OF GURU Purnima, we say in our heart: Thank You, my dear Lord, I love You. He may respond to us: How do I know that you really love Me? Prove it! The best proof of our love is that we put into practice His Divine teachings in our lives. This is real surrender.

Spirituality is Love and Goodness

Spirituality is not the rituals, the Bhajans we sing, the time we spend in meditation or even the acts of service we render to our fellowmen in need. Real spirituality, Swami says, is to get rid of our bad qualities and fill ourselves with good qualities. Spirituality is a way of living, is a way of being, is a state of being!

Swami teaches us that Love is the source, Love is the path and Love is the goal. But how can we live this Love? All starts with the first step. Swami gives His Divine recipe: We must consider the faults of others as insignificant; we must consider

our own faults very big, and change them; and the most important, we must remember always the omnipresence of God.

The real spiritual path is very easy, just remember God all the time. Have faith and confidence in Him. We must not try to get Siddhis or any special spiritual powers. The spiritual path is the path of goodness. We should just be good human beings, then more good, then even more good, then we must be like Mother Teresa of Kolkata, and then more and more good, till one day we will be Swami.

Guru Dakshina

I would like to share with you a practical way to advance in our path of goodness. We celebrate Guru Purnima expressing our gratitude to our Guru and Master, seeking His Divine guidance, protection and love. In India, I think, there is a tradition that when you go to see your Guru, you offer a Dakshina (offering) to Him.

I invite all my brothers and sisters to offer a special Dakshina on this holy occasion to



our Beloved and Supreme Guru, Bhagavan Baba.

Let's place at His Divine Lotus Feet three "coins", each coin in reality is a promise.

The first promise will be that from today onwards I will not be angry any more, because I realise that whatever happens in my life is what was supposed to happen for my good, either I am paying for some Karma or it is a lesson for my advancement. So, no more anger in my mind or heart.

The second promise is that from today onwards I will not criticise any human being, neither by word, thought or feeling, because I realise that we are all one, brothers and sisters, the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God, and my criticism hurts the other person. And if I criticise anyone,

I am not following the Divine command of "Help Ever, Hurt Never".

The third promise is that from today onwards I will be always happy, because I realise that when I am not happy it is because I am afraid or I worry for something; I forget God's omnipresence, His Divine protection and guidance; I forget that He is with me all the time, in front, around, behind and specially in my heart. If I am not happy, it simply means that I have forgotten Him. If we are afraid, it is because we have no confidence and faith in the Lord. I pray that each one of us becomes better expression of His Divine Love, I pray to our Beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba that He will help us to become beacons of this new era, the Sai Age of Love.

– The author, Sri Leonardo Gutter, is a Member of Prasanthi Council.

...continued from page 11

Bebedelis, who exhorted one and all to love God with all their heart and soul to transform love into devotion. Interspersing his speech with Sanskrit and Telugu verses, the talented speaker enraptured the audience by his eloquent presentation of Bhagavan's teachings. The morning programme concluded with the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, in which Bhagavan cautioned the devotees not to waste time. Considering time as God, work hard, face difficulties with patience and attain the goal of life, said Bhagavan. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram" which the devotees followed in chorus with deep devotion. Arati at 11.00 a.m. marked the conclusion of the morning programme.

Devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall had a sumptuous feast of devotional music when legendary playback singer and long-time devotee of Bhagavan, Suresh Wadkar

offered his musical tribute to His Sadguru Bhagavan Baba on the afternoon of 31st August 2015. Beginning his presentation with a Marathi song "Omkar Swarupa Sadguru Samartha" (Supreme Guru is in the form of Om), the talented singer followed it up with a song which he sang in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan on the occasion of His 70th Birthday "Aur Is Dil Mein Kya Rakha Hai Tera Hi Pyar Chhupa Rakha Hai" (I have treasured Your love in the recesses of my heart). Other devotional numbers included popular songs "Tu Pyaar Ka Sagar Hai" (You are the ocean of love), "Itni Shakti Hamen Dena Baba" (Give us the power of mind). The singer and the artistes who provided musical support to him were honoured at the conclusion of the concert. A brief session of Bhajans followed this which concluded with Bhagavan's Bhajan "Vahe Guru Vahe Guru". The function came to an end with Arati at 6.45 p.m.

CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

ASHADI EKADASI

MORE THAN 1,500 DEVOTEES including Bal Vikas children came from the States of Maharashtra and Goa to celebrate the sacred festival of Ashadi Ekadasi at Prasanthi Nilayam. Music and cultural programmes organised on this occasion by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of the two States on 26th and 27th July 2015 created an aura of piety and gaiety.

The first programme held on the morning of 26th July 2015 was a music concert by a noted singer Priyal Sathe who surcharged the entire milieu with devotional fervour by melodious rendition of devotional songs, which included a Mira Bhajan, "Payoji Mein Ne Ram Ratan Dhana Payo" (I have found the jewel of Rama's Name), a Kirtan "Vitthal Vitthal Jai Hari Vitthal" (hail Lord Vitthal) and a Bhajan "Vitthala Narayana". The singer was felicitated at the conclusion of the concert.

The second programme presented on the afternoon of 26th July 2015 by the Bal Vikas children and youth of Mumbai was a dance ballet "WhatsApp". Deploing the modern trend of man's total dependence on gadgets like laptop, smart phone, smart watch and the like, the drama depicted that human body was the best gadget and the most accurate instrument. It therefore exhorted man to use the most dependable chip of the soul and log on to apps like love, truth, faith, prayer and Bhajans, using the password of Soham to lead a happy,



The dance ballet "WhatsApp" depicted how man had become a slave of gadgets.

peaceful and blissful life. Embellished with thematic songs and thrilling dances of the children, this well-directed and well-presented dance ballet prompted modern man to develop connectivity with the Atma to attain the goal of life.

The first item of the programme on the morning of Ashadi Ekadasi, 27th July 2015, was the traditional Dindi procession



Traditional Dindi procession.

and dance of Varkaris who danced merrily chanting the Divine Name of Lord Vitthal with deep devotion. This was followed by a classical devotional music concert by a famous singer Sri Swaradhish Bharat



Balvalli. Beginning his concert with the Bhajan “Sai Baba Sakala Bhuvana Ke Data” (Sai, the sustainer of the universe), the singer enthralled the devotees for nearly one hour with devotional songs and Marathi Abhangs. As Bhajans continued after this, the singer was felicitated and Prasadam was distributed. The programme which began with Veda chanting at 8.00 a.m. came to a close with Arati at 9.45 a.m.

The grand finale of the Ashadi Ekadasi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam was a dance drama on the illustrious life of Janabai, which was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Kolhapur district of Maharashtra



A scene from the drama on the life of Janabai.

on 27th July 2015. The story of the drama, set in the background of the temple of Lord Vitthal in Pandharpur, depicted how Jani came and clung to the feet of Vitthal as a child, breathed all her life the Name of Vitthal who performed household chores for her, wrote verses sung by her and showered unbounded grace on her. Embellished with enchanting songs and dazzling dances of the children, this superbly enacted and directed drama kept the audience spellbound for nearly one hour. While Bhajans continued after this, the participants in the drama were felicitated. With this Ashadi Ekadasi

celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam came to a happy conclusion.

69TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Azadi Ki Talash Mein: A Drama:

Patriotic spirit came to the fore when students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning enacted a drama entitled “Azadi Ki Talash Mein” (in quest of freedom) in Sai Kulwant Hall on the occasion of 69th Independence Day of India, on 15th August 2015. The drama covered major events of



“Azadi Ki Talash Mein”, a drama by the students of SSSIHL on the freedom movement.

India's struggle for independence which included Meerut Mutiny, Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha, Azad Hind Fauj of Subhash Chandra Bose, projecting at the same the great sacrifices made by the heroes of Independence Movement like Sri Aurobindo, Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev. The drama concluded with Bhagavan Baba's vision of India's Independence, wherein He envisaged that Independence did not mean mere political freedom, but freedom of the soul from the bondage of Maya, which could make India the spiritual lighthouse of the world. Excellent acting of the students, good delivery of dialogues and prompt stage management portrayed poignant scenes of historical events, making the drama absorbing and inspiring.



PILGRIMAGE OF DEVOTEES FROM STATES OF INDIA

In the run up to 90th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, devotees from various States of India came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam and performed music and cultural programmes showing the rich cultural heritage of India.

Manipur: A group of devotees including Bal Vikas children from Manipur came to Prasanthi Nilayam on a pilgrimage and performed enchanting dances on 28th and 29th July 2015. The children donning colourful costumes and fancy headgear performed two beautiful dances on 28th July 2015 which depicted ritualistic celebrations at the shrines of ancient sylvan gods and the story of man's life at the beginning of human civilisation, respectively. Both the dances were performed with deep devotion, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and folklore of Manipur. The presentation of the children on 29th July 2015 also comprised two dances. The first dance entitled "Thongal Jagoi" showed the process of creation and evolution of the universe while the second portrayed in typical Manipuri style the celestial dance Raas Leela of Lord Krishna



Raas Leela in typical Manipuri style.

and the Gopikas, symbolising Jivatma's (individual soul's) union with Paramatma (Supreme Being).

Delhi-NCR: A group of Delhi-NCR devotees came on a two-day pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam and made musical offerings to Bhagavan on 5th and 6th August 2015. First, the ladies singers of Delhi-NCR made their musical presentation on 5th August 2015. Beginning their programme with a



Musical offering of Delhi-NCR devotees.

prayer song dedicated to Lord Ganesh "Siddhi Vinayak Jana Sukha Dayak" (Lord Ganesh, the bestower of auspiciousness and happiness to all), the singers suffused the entire milieu with devotional fervour with melodious songs which included "Aao Hum Sab Milkar Premka Deep Jalayen" (let's light the lamp of love together), "Tum Aasha Viswas Hamare" (You are our hope and refuge), and a Bhajan medley, concluding their presentation with a captivating Sufi number "Moula Mere Moula". The gents singers of Delhi-NCR made their musical offering on 6th August 2015. Beginning their programme with a song of gratitude "Dhanya Huye Hum Parthi Aaye" (we are fortunate to come to Puttaparthi), the singers followed it with a popular number "Surajki Garmi Se Jalte Huye Tanko" (Your refuge gives immense joy), a Shabad (Sikh devotional number) "Sat Naam Sat Naam" and a Bhajan medley. They concluded their presentation with a popular Qawali.

Tamil Nadu: About 2,500 devotees including Bal Vikas children came on a pilgrimage to



Prasanthi Nilayam from Erode district of Tamil Nadu and presented music and cultural programmes on 7th and 8th August 2015. The programme on 7th August 2015 began with a beautiful dance “Avatarana” (descent of God on earth) by the girls students of Sri Sathya Sai Matriculation Higher Secondary



Dance performance “Avatarana”.

School, Chittoor. Thereafter, Bal Vikas children of Erode district offered a bouquet of devotional songs to Bhagavan in Telugu, Sanskrit and Tamil which included “Janani Janani Jagat Karani (Divine Mother, the creator of the universe), “Saieesha Charitam Ananda Bharitam” (the blissful story of Sai), “Madhura Mohana Ghanashyama Sundara Sai” (Sai, the embodiment of celestial love and beauty). The entire presentation was so enrapturing that it virtually inundated each heart with deep devotion.

On 8th August 2015, the students of Jaycees Matric School, Erode presented a drama on the theme of human values in the Ramayana based on Bhagavan’s “Ramakatha Rasa Vahini”. Beginning their presentation with a beautiful dance “Divine Love”, the children enacted five episodes from the Ramayana corresponding to the five cardinal human values of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema taught by Bhagavan, and concluded their presentation with the teaching that man should practise these

values and realise his divinity.

Haryana and Chandigarh: A contingent of devotees including Bal Vikas children of Haryana and Chandigarh came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 10th to 12th August 2015 and presented music and cultural programmes on all the three days.

The first programme presented on 10th August 2015 was a drama entitled “Nachiketa” which portrayed the illustrious life story of Nachiketa who learnt profound truths about the secret of life and death and acquired Atma Jnana (knowledge of the Self) from Yama, the god of death, as propounded



A scene from the drama “Nachiketa”.

in Kathopanishad. Excellent acting of the Bal Vikas children and good direction revealed deep spiritual truths through the drama. The drama was preceded by a thrilling dance entitled “Hara Bhara Haryana” (prosperous Haryana) performed by the Bal Vikas children of Haryana and Chandigarh.

On 11th August 2015, Sai Youth of Haryana and Chandigarh presented a drama which depicted the present scenario of modern youth who have enormous amount of knowledge but little transformation. As the story of the drama unfolds, Sage Narada on the direction of Lord Vishnu comes on earth to guide the youth in the guise of a Swamiji and puts them on the path of devotion and



virtues. Through the simple story of modern youth who goes wayward in their obsession for money and are reformed in the end by the grace of Bhagavan Baba, the drama



The drama by Sai Youth of Haryana depicted that there was no refuge for man other than chanting the Divine Name.

projected the theme that in this age of Kali Yuga there was no refuge for man other than chanting the Divine Name of God. Good acting, excellent sets and talented direction made the drama interesting and engrossing.

The rich culture and popular folklore of Haryana came alive at Prasanthi Nilayam when devotees from Haryana and Chandigarh made a presentation entitled “Sri Rama Bhakta Hanuman Katha” on 12th August 2015. It portrayed the life story of Hanuman, the exemplary devotee of Lord Rama, in Haryanvi folklore and language by a talented narrator who followed his narration with melodious Haryanvi folk songs to the tune of indigenous musical instruments of Haryana and enacted the scenes described in the narration and songs, keeping the listeners mesmerised for over one hour. At the conclusion of the presentation, the narrator was honoured with a shawl and the artistes who provided musical support to him were felicitated. With this concluded the three-day pilgrimage of Haryana devotees

to Prasanthi Nilayam.

Odisha: More than 1,200 devotees came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from the State of Odisha and presented music and cultural programmes on 16th and 17th August 2015. There was a captivating Hindustani classical devotional music concert “Bhakti Pushpanjali” (bouquet of devotional songs) on 16th August 2015 which was performed by a renowned singer, Pandit Debendra Narayan Satpathy and party. Beginning his presentation with a classical composition dedicated to Lord Ganesh, the singer kept the audience spellbound for nearly one hour with Hindustani classical compositions, which included “Devadi Deva Sai Mahadeva” (Supreme Lord Sai), “Har Har Har Mahadeva Bhaja Mana” (oh mind, chant the Name of Siva), and brought his programme to a close with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin” (there is no peace and happiness without reciting God’s Name). At the conclusion of his concert, the singer was honoured with a shawl and the artistes who provided vocal and instrumental support to him were felicitated.

The programme on 17th August began with a scintillating dance “Dasavatar” (ten incarnations of the Lord) based on the



Dasavatar dance by students.

immortal poetic work “Geeta Govinda” of Jayadev, the famous ancient poet of Odisha. It was performed by students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Brahmapur who portrayed all the ten incarnations of the Lord through dance making appropriate formations by their superb performance.

What followed next was a dance based on the legendary story of the origin of Jagannath Temple of Odisha. Enacted by the Sai Youth of Odisha, the drama depicted how Lord Narayana Himself came in the dream of a tribal king Biswabagu and commanded him to build His temple with idols carved out of wood. Excellent acting of the youth, costumes and make-up and innovative backdrop of the scenes of Jagannath Temple on the screen made it an absorbing play.

West Bengal: A group of more than 450 youth came from West Bengal on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from 18th to 20th August 2015 and presented music and cultural programmes as part of Bhagavan’s 90th Birthday celebrations.

On 19th August 2015, they presented a drama entitled “Religion of God”. Through



A scene from the drama “Religion of God”.

the simple story of a youth, an earnest seeker of truth, the drama forcefully

conveyed the message of Bhagavan Baba that the fundamental basis of all religions is love, and without loving fellow human beings, man cannot love God. Excellent script, powerful dialogues and spirited acting of the youth made the drama an outstanding presentation.

On 20th August 2015, West Bengal Youth offered Chhau Dance, a folk art form of West Bengal. Performing wonderful feats of acrobatics and showcasing martial arts, the dancers in their colourful costumes and appropriate make-up presented a spellbinding dance to the tune of traditional folk music, and enacted



Annihilation of the demon Mahishasura.

the mythological story of annihilation of demon Mahishasura by goddess Durga in the form of Mahishasuramardini. While Bhajans continued after this, the dancers were felicitated and Prasadam was distributed.

Everyone should strive to acquire that knowledge by which he can get rid of greed, anger and material and spiritual poverty.

- Baba

SWAMI'S MIRACLES SHOW HIS INFINITE LOVE FOR HUMANITY

Dr. V. Mohan

Nothing is impossible for Swami who is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. Indeed, we should consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have been in Bhagavan's Divine Presence in our lifetime and to be under Swami's constant protection. Whatever little we have achieved in life is entirely due to Swami's endless grace.

IT GIVES ME IMMENSE JOY AND pleasure to write this piece about our Lord and Master, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Although I had seen Swami even when I was a child, it was only in 1992 that I got the calling to enter His fold as a devotee. This joyful turning point in my life came almost suddenly, during the first visit my late wife Dr. Rema and I made to Swami's Ashram at Whitefield near Bengaluru. Swami always says, "If you take one step towards Me, I shall take a hundred steps towards you". True enough, ever since that momentous day, our lives have never been the same, for we began to experience Swami and His miracles or Leelas as His devotees call them, almost on a daily basis. However, we soon came to realise that Swami's greatest miracle is how He transforms people with the power of His infinite Divine Love.

Cure through Prayer

As a practising medical doctor and a scientist, I have been amazed and privileged, to witness true medical miracles performed by Swami such as cancers which

were cured, or 'cancelled', as Swami so lovingly puts it. I have also been blessed to see seemingly incurable cases of multiple myeloma, multiple sclerosis, incurable skin conditions, hopeless cases of diabetic foot infections and numerous other illnesses completely cured by His grace – another manifestation of Swami's boundless love.

One patient I want to write about was a middle-aged man who had undergone an anal surgery at our diabetes hospital in Chennai and had very severe pain post operatively. On the first day, he had been given very powerful narcotic analgesics like Pethidine and Fortwin but still could not sleep because of the pain. The next night when I was doing my ward rounds, he held my hand and begged me to relieve him of his pain and help him get a good night's sleep. I did not know what to do as I had already given him the most powerful drugs the previous night and they did not seem to have any effect at all on him. I asked him to close his eyes and I prayed to Swami to relieve him of his pain, submitting to Him that this was now beyond me, and only Swami's divine intervention could help the patient. A few minutes after I left the room, the patient went into deep sleep even though no medicines were given to him. The nurse went to his room later to give him the same pain killers given the previous day, but as he was fast asleep, she did not give him any medicines. The patient slept till 7.30 a.m. the next day and I was amazed to hear



that he had not been given any medicines at all! He then asked me what I had done when I asked him to close his eyes the previous night. I confessed to him that I had prayed to Baba to relieve him of his pain. On hearing this, the patient said, "Doctor, Baba is God. How else could He relieve me instantly of my pain when even powerful narcotic drugs could not do so"?

Amputation Averted

The next episode I want to describe is about a patient with a very bad diabetic foot whom I had admitted at a private nursing home in Chennai many years ago. The infection was so severe and unremitting that after several days of treatment the surgeon and I decided that a below knee amputation was the only alternative. The patient who was a Sai devotee (which we came to know later) asked us for one day's time and said we could decide the next day. The next day when we went to see the patient, he was smiling and said that he would not need the amputation after all and asked us to remove the bandage and look at the wound. The surgeon and I were amazed to see that where there had been no signs of healing until the previous day, there was now evidence of granulation, a sign of healing. The wound had been pale and bloodless earlier but now there was some bleeding taking place. When we asked the patient how he knew that he would not need an amputation, he said that Bhagavan Baba had visited him the previous night in the hospital when everyone was asleep, sat on his bed, stroked his leg and told him that he would be okay and that he did not need an amputation! True to Baba's assurance, he rapidly recovered and within a few days the wound completely healed and he did not need an amputation!

Faith Earns Grace

Nothing is impossible for Swami who is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. Indeed, we should consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have been in Bhagavan's Divine Presence in our lifetime and to be under Swami's constant protection. Whatever little we have achieved in life is entirely due to Swami's endless grace.

Sceptics and non-believers often ask me, if there are so many miracles, why does not Baba cure everyone and why does He build hospitals for treating patients, even given that everything is done 100% free of cost. I do not have answers to such questions, but I do know one thing. To be a beneficiary of His grace, we must be worthy of it. Secondly, we should have full faith in Him. Swami has often said that only when our faith meets His grace, a miracle happens. Thirdly, those who believe in the Karma theory know that some of the suffering that we go through is the result of the Karma in previous lives and we have to go through some suffering in this life to wipe out the bad Karma. Finally, God's ways are mysterious and who are we, mere mortals, to question, let alone understand, the glory of the Lord, our Creator and Master of the universe? We can only do our duty and pray to the Lord to shower His grace on us.

Beacons of Hope

Talking of Swami's institutions, 'the temples of healing' that He has built at Puttaparthi and Whitefield are unparalleled anywhere in the world and offer advanced cardiac, neuro, orthopaedic, plastic, eye and other surgeries completely free of cost without even a rupee being charged. This

continued on page 23...



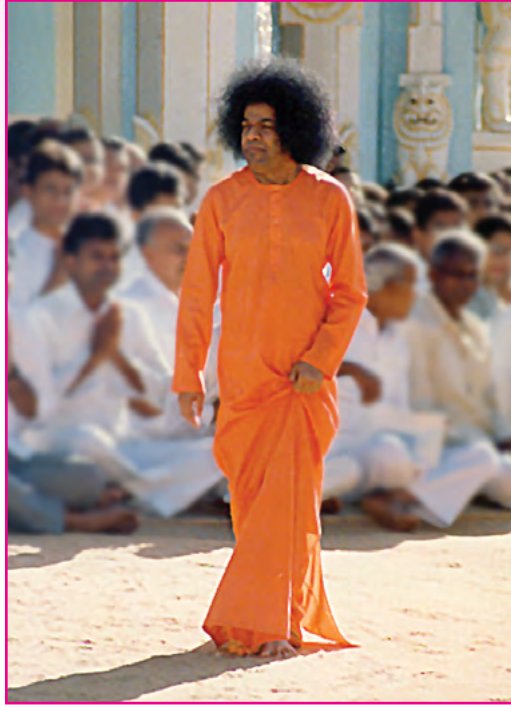
Effulgence of Divine Glory

MANIFESTATION OF SWAMI'S GRACE

IN NOVEMBER 1978, I went to Puttapparthi. The days I spent there were wonderfully peaceful. In fact, I never felt so peaceful and happy in my life. At the first Darshan, I felt spellbound and ecstatic at the same time. I could not stop gazing at Sai Baba as He glided along with grace and power. As He came close to our group, I felt transfixed. I was unable to open my mouth to answer His welcome question,

“Are you from Ghana”? Every Darshan brought new bliss. During the days I stayed in Puttapparthi, I felt full of bliss and found that I had a special energy that made me walk for long periods among teeming crowds.

One remarkable experience I had was when I saw Baba's complexion changing as He gave Darshan. I saw Him light coloured as a Caucasian, then blue and later black. I learnt later that others had also experienced this vision of Him and so I knew that my eyes therefore had not been 'deceiving' me. The bliss of being in His Presence, the ecstasy of hearing Him sing Bhajans and the great peace I felt within the walls of Prasanthi Nilayam remained with me for many days after leaving India.



In 1979, I was requested by my elder brother to travel 70 km to see his old father-in-law who was very ill. The clinical picture was almost like my mother's. He had apparently been incommunicable for about two or three days. Unlike my mother, he was hypertensive. Was it a stroke? On arrival there with my wife I decided not to send him to hospital and again we played a cassette with Baba singing Bhajans. After this, we sang Bhajans for about half an hour and did Namasmarana. When we finished, the old man opened his eyes and asked me when I arrived from Accra. We were able to talk to him for a few minutes and then decided it was best to leave him alone to rest. Within an hour of our arrival back in Accra, my elder brother telephoned to say that the old man was definitely much better, completely alert and had insisted and managed to walk to the bathroom. He recovered so well that he was able to visit his daughter in Accra some weeks later.

In 1980, two female devotees came in to help me to decorate the shrine in my house as my wife was on holiday in Jamaica with a

few friends just before Satsang. Suddenly, we were startled by the miraculous appearance of large heaps of Vibhuti on the head, shoulders and lap of the statue of Shirdi Sai Baba. Simultaneously, Vibhuti also fell on the photographs in the shrine. After the Satsang, we saw that a life-sized framed picture of Baba and other framed pictures had Amrit (ambrosia) exuding from the mouth of Baba and slowly trickling down behind the glass frame. This continued for about an hour and stopped. On the return of my wife from her holidays in Jamaica, another Satsang was organised in the house. Vibhuti again appeared the same way as it had done in her absence. During a ladies only Satsang in the house later in the same year, during Arati, Vibhuti fell from nowhere onto the chair put near the altar for Baba.

One Sunday, in the afternoon, my wife, who was with me in our sitting room went to the bedroom and rushed back immediately saying excitedly, "Swami is here". I asked, "Who, where"? She beckoned me to the bedroom and I found it perfumed with the strong agreeable smell of jasmine. Swami was indeed there. This remarkable pervading smell of jasmine has

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is not only a miracle in itself, but a sign of Swami's infinite and divine love for humanity. These hospitals along with the university and 'the temples of learning' have benefited thousands of people and will stand as edifices that will inspire millions of people for several generations to come. It is our duty as devotees, and as members of this great spiritual organisation, with which we have the privilege to be associated, to serve these institutions, so that they will continue to shine as beacons of hope and inspiration to the whole world.

been experienced on a few occasions since then. The most recent was during the Medical Camp whilst the All African Conference on Education in Human Values was taking place in Accra in 1986, in the consulting room at Koforidua and during the same week in the small bus that transported us to villages. As we neared our base where we were housed, the smell disappeared.

In 1986, we (two doctors and a nurse) went to Pokuasi village to render free medical treatment in Sri Sathya Sai Baba Charitable Clinic. As we neared the village, it began to rain heavily. The rain was so heavy that we could not leave the car without being drenched. After some minutes of waiting in the car, we decided that the rain should not keep us from the service. Our strategy was to rush into the building one after the other. The nurse got out first and the two doctors followed. To our utter amazement the rain suddenly stopped for us, only to resume heavily again as the third and last person entered the clinic. Baba's grace was abundantly manifested.

– Excerpted from the article of Professor Kofi Oduro in "Sathya Sai Baba: God Incarnate" by Victor Kanu.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Baba will always continue to guide and bless any noble activity that is undertaken in His Name. Most of us in the organisation have been personally taught by Bhagavan and it is now our duty to continue His work with renewed enthusiasm. Baba's Mission will never end, and will only intensify from here on. Let us pray to our Beloved Bhagavan to bless us all and to continue to shower His infinite Divine love on us, now and forever.

– Dr. V. Mohan is the Convener of the Board of Trustees, Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Tamil Nadu.

From our Archives

IDOL WORSHIP SHOULD LEAD TO SUBTLE SPIRITUAL ENTITY

PURSUE THE PATH OF MEDITATION AND PENANCE

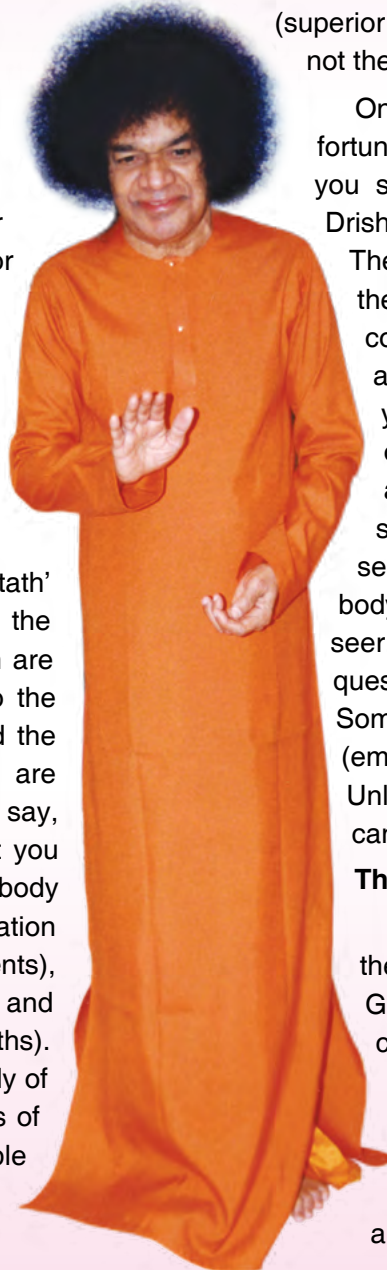
Embodiments of Love!



CHARITY IS THE ornament for hands. Truth is the ornament for speech. Hearing the scriptures is the ornament for ears. Where is the need for other ornaments?

Do not Identify yourself with the Body

There is no greater experience than the feeling that one is Atma – Aham Etath. Aham (I) is defined as Atma, the Self. The word 'Etath' means all that. It covers all the objects in the universe which are physical and subtle and also the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets. It signifies that you are not the physical body. You say, "my body" which implies that you are not the body. What is this body constituted of? It is a combination of Pancha Bhutas (five elements), Pancha Pranas (five vital airs), and Pancha Koshas (five sheaths). The entire universe is the body of the Supreme Lord. It consists of all the movable and immovable objects. In Vedantic parlance, it is deemed to be Jnana



(superior wisdom) when you say, "I am not the body".

One should be extremely fortunate to realise this. Whatever you see in the external world is Drishya (that which is seen). The sun, the moon, the stars, the five elements which are constituents of the universe are all Drishya. You are seeing your body too as you see other things. So, the body is also Drishya, that which is seen by you. Who is then the seer? The seer is Drashta. The body is the object and you are the seer. Without a seer, there is no question of anything being seen. Some people talk about Sunya (emptiness or nothingness). Unless this has been seen, how can they talk about Sunya?

The Message of Ganapati

Knowledge of the seer and the seen is the great message of Ganapati, whose advent we are celebrating today. 'Ga' means Buddhi (intelligence). 'Na' means Vijnana (wisdom). 'Pati' means master. So, Ganapati is the master of all knowledge, intelligence and

wisdom. There is also another significant meaning of the word, that he is the leader of all the Ganas who are celestial. He is also called Vinayaka, which term means that he is one who has no master above him. He is the supreme master. He is beyond the mindless state. One who has stilled the mind cannot have any master.

Without understanding this truth, we think of the physical form of Vinayaka with the elephant head and human body. Whenever people want to commence any undertaking or start learning music or the fine arts or any branch of knowledge, they first offer worship to Vinayaka. Vinayaka is also called Vighneshwara as He removes all obstacles coming in the way of devotees who pray to him sincerely. He is worshipped by students with books so that all that is contained in the books may get into their heads. Nowadays people are only after Dhanam (money). Whatever scholarship one may attain, whatever power and position one may enjoy, one cannot be happy without the peace of mind that is got by pure devotion. One may have immense physical strength, one may pursue the path of meditation and penance, one may acquire profound knowledge, but all these attainments will be of no avail unless one acquires knowledge of the eternal - *Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma* (Brahman is the embodiment of truth, wisdom and eternity).

Become a Master over yourself

The symbolic significance of Ganesha's elephant head has to be properly understood. The elephant has profound intelligence. For example, yesterday Sai Geeta, (Bhagavan's elephant) came running when it heard the sound of Swami's car approaching. Though many cars were following Swami's car, Sai Geeta could unmistakably identify Swami's car from an uncanny recognition of the

sound of the car. That is why it is termed Gaja Thelivi (elephant intelligence). One having a sharp brain is described as having the intelligence of an elephant. It has Medha Shakti (intelligence).

Moreover, the elephant has large ears and it can hear even minute sounds. Sravanam (hearing the glory of the Lord) is the first step in spiritual practice for which ears should be sharp. After hearing one has to ruminate and put into practice, which are termed as Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam. The elephant takes the Dushana and Bhushana (praise and blame) equally. When it hears something bad, it moves its body this way and that way and shakes off the unwanted things while it retains goods things quietly.

Only Vinayaka teaches the lessons that are essential for mankind. You should not stop with installing the idol and doing Puja for a few days. You should make efforts to become a Nayaka or Master over yourself.

Students!

Realise that you have a conscience that is your guide and consciousness which represents your divinity. Ganapati, who presides over the senses, should be your guide in acquiring mastery over the senses. There is an inner meaning in worshipping Ganapati for ten days. The idea is that each day should be dedicated to acquiring control over one of the Indriyas (sense organs).

Combine Spiritual Practices with Academic Studies

Students and devotees should realise that control of the senses is quite simple. What is necessary is not to encourage negative feelings when they arise, but to adopt positive attitude. For instance,

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Sai Spiritual Education Conference

THE SATHYA SAI INTERNATIONAL Organisation (SSIO) organised a Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) Conference at Prasanthi Nilayam from 1st to 3rd August 2015, in which over 500 delegates from about 50 countries came to participate. Senior leaders of the SSIO, SSE coordinators, SSE teachers and trainers, SSEHV educators, and Sathya Sai youth all came together in the spirit of giving and sharing of their expertise, experiences and best practices to further enhance the SSE programme. The SSE programme is centred on faith in God, devotion to Swami, and the manifestation of our innate Divinity through the five core values of Sathya (truth), Dharma (right action), Santhi (peace), Ahimsa (non-violence), and Prema (love).

The conference programme was enhanced by inspiring keynote speakers, engaging workshops, innovative networking fair and special interest groups, and an inspirational theme song uniting many languages spoken in the countries of the SSIO.

The First Day, 1st August 2015

At the outset, Sri S.S. Naganand, Trustee of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, addressed the delegates pointing out the importance of early spiritual education that lasts a lifetime. In his inaugural address, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of Prasanthi Council, emphasised Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's key

teachings on Ideal Sai Education. He also emphasised the importance of ideal student, ideal teacher and ideal parents. Dr. Pal Dhall, Chairman of the Education Committee, clearly set the objectives of the conference, urging delegates to lay a solid foundation and establish a launching pad for the next phase of SSE.

The afternoon programme of the first day featured a well-organised tapestry of workshops based on the conference focus areas. The participants divided into groups to hear about the best practices in areas such as curriculum development, SSE alumni, expanding beyond the Sai centre to the community, and SSE administration and governance.

The Second Day, 2nd August 2015

The morning of the second day began with the inspiring keynote address by Smt. Geetha Mohan Ram. Delegates were treated to a bouquet of delightful anecdotes describing her spiritual journey under the guidance of Bhagavan Himself from the tender age of five. She stressed on the



A section of participants in Sai Spiritual Education Conference, Poornachandra Auditorium.

foundation of faith in Baba and described Him as the ideal spiritual teacher in every way.

The afternoon session was dedicated to the SSE Networking Fair showcasing the breadth and depth of the SSE programme. The purpose of the fair was to give the delegates a forum to showcase, interact and share best practices, inspirational projects, and innovative ideas. Trustees of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Members of the Prasanthi Council and Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, leaders of the SSIO and conference delegates attended the fair. Over 40 stations represented each of the 11 zones of the SSIO and countries from around the world including Argentina, Australia, Germany, Guyana, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Middle East, Nepal, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Southern Europe, Thailand, U.K. and United States. The colourful and well-decorated stations presented special highlights, professional development for SSE Gurus, parent/teacher awareness and education initiatives, SSE for special needs children, activities and games to make SSE fun, and much more. There was also a special presentation on Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vahini programme by Sri Satyajit Salian.

The Final Day, 3rd August 2015

On the third and final day of the conference, Sri R.J. Rathnakar, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, gave an uplifting talk emphasising the spirit of oneness all devotees share with Bhagavan. He distributed special gifts as Prasadam from Swami to all the delegates.

Mrs. Berniece Mead, National Education Coordinator of the U.S.A., shared how

she was personally instructed by Swami to spread Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) in the U.S.A. Other speakers shared their personal experiences with Swami and emphasised the important role of parents, teachers, coordinators, educators, and the organisation in the development of a successful SSE programme. The morning programme concluded with Dr. Pal Dhall outlining the proposed resolutions from the conference and next steps to be taken.

The conference concluded in the evening of 3rd August with a valedictory function in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme commenced with a brief overview of the conference. Speaking first, Ms. Katinka van Lamsweerde, National Education Coordinator, The Netherlands reminded the delegates of the power and beauty of the spiritual tool called Sathya Sai Education. She identified the areas of focus and emphasised the importance of love, teacher's commitment, faith in Swami, and the need to connect with children. Mrs. Berniece Mead then spoke of her Divine experience and Bhagavan's constant guidance in sharing His teachings through the SSE programme.

Music and Cultural Programmes

In addition to the deliberations of the Conference held in Poornachandra Auditorium, many music and cultural programmes were organised by the Sathya Sai International Organisation in Sai Kulwant Hall.

The first presentation was made by the Sathya Sai Baba Choir of Malaysia on the eve of the conference, on 30th July 2015, which included many popular Bhajans, "Jai Govind Hare" (hail Krishna, the Protector of



all beings), “Baba Sai Baba”, “Yuga Yuga Ke Avatara” (the Avatar of Ages). Earlier, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman, Prasanthi Council, spoke about the service activities being conducted by the Sathya Sai International Organisation in different countries of the world. A video presentation of these activities followed this.

Two presentations were made by overseas devotees on 1st August 2015. The first presentation was a drama entitled



The drama “Bridges and Walls” underlined the importance of human values.

“Bridges and Walls” which depicted the sad scenario of modern man entangled in numerous difficulties due to lack of moral, ethical and spiritual values. Presented skilfully by the members of Sri Sathya Sai Education of Malaysia, this drama underlined the importance of human values in the life of man through which there could be unity and harmony in society. The myth of ego, arrogance and ignorance melt away when one brings the light of Sai within, breaking walls, building bridges, conveyed the drama. What followed next was a devotional choir by U.S.A. group. The hymns rendered by the singers included “Boundless Love Boundless Love”, “Let’s Adore the Ever Living God”, “Sing for Joy in the Lord Oh Righteous One” and “Sing Hallelujah to the Lord”.

Based on Bhagavan’s favourite maxim “Daiva Preeti, Papa Bheeti, Sangha Neeti”, the dance drama “Sai Mahima: The Miracle of Love” presented by SSE children of U.K. on 2nd August 2015 depicted various life stories of ideal persons to illustrate this theme. These included the stories of Saint Thyagaraja, James Macdonald, Sri Krishna, Abou Ben Adhem. The drama concluded with the message of unity of all religions. Embellished with many dances of children, it ended with a Bhajan medley.

The first item of the programme on 3rd August 2015 was a summary presentation of the proceedings of the three-day Sai Spiritual Education Conference held in Poornachandra Auditorium from 1st to 3rd August 2015. This was followed by a “Sarva Dharma Choir” by the devotees of Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Latvia. Beginning with a prayer song dedicated to Lord Ganesh



Sarva Dharma Choir presentation.

“Om Gan Ganapataye Namah”, the singers next sang Sarva Dharma Prayer “Om Tatsat Sri Narayana Tu” and followed it with the song describing man’s real nature “Sivoham Sivoham” (I am Siva, I am Siva). Thereafter, the singers sang devotional songs in English and various other languages and brought their presentation to a close with the peace song “Om Santhi Om”.



THE AVATAR OF LOVE

MY JOURNEY THROUGH SRI Sathya Sai Bal Vikas began in the year 2007 when my grandmother, who is an ardent devotee of Baba, introduced me to Bal Vikas class held in my locality. Initially, I was not that serious about this class but later on I started developing emotional attachment and boundless longing for these spiritual sessions. We regularly practised Bhajan singing and also learnt prayers and Stotras (verses) in the Bal Vikas class. I can appreciate the difference in my lifestyle before and after joining this spiritual class.

One very surprising and disturbing incidence in my childhood was that I used to have frightening dreams, and I was afraid of those horrible nights. But ever since I started reciting one of the Slokas taught by my Guru "Karacharana Kritam Vaak..." before going to bed, those scary dreams have never come.

One more incident which strengthened my belief in Baba's omnipresence was a mysterious cracking with a big sound of coconut offered to Baba. It happened during Arati at the end of Bhajan session held at our house. All the devotees were so happy as Baba was with us, accepting our prayers.

For the past 3-4 years, I wanted to get a National Level Certificate in swimming but failed to qualify in selection trials due to my slow timing. This year I prayed to Baba to help me to qualify. And by Baba's grace I got selected as a Number One Goalkeeper in Manipur Water Polo Team to play in Kolkata in "National Aquatic Championships – 2014".

In another instance, Bhagavan Baba cured my fever. I was suffering from high fever and my parents who both are doctors treated me for 2-3 days without any improvement. Everybody at home was anxious. My grandmother then applied some Vibhuti on my forehead and gave me



some to eat and then I went to sleep. With the miracle of Baba's Vibhuti, next morning I was absolutely alright and went to school.

I am also fond of playing violin. Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas programme has given me the opportunities to present my violin performances on stage. I really believe in Swami's saying "If you take one step towards Me I will take hundred steps towards you".

Bhagavan came on earth as Avatar of Love in order to correct mankind and to establish total peace in the world by rectifying the vision of human mind through "Love" which is the first and foremost among the five human values and is inherent in all the living beings as God's gift.

– Medha Chirom



Valuable Maxims

Read the following maxims of Bhagavan and find these words in the given word-maze:

Best, enough, reinforce, efforts, grace, world, tree, different, countries, flowers, happiness, fruit, juice.

1. When you have done your best and that is not found enough, then call on Me. I am ever ready to reinforce your efforts with My grace.

2. The whole world is one single tree. Different countries are its branches. God is its root, human beings are its flowers, happiness is the fruit and self-realisation, the sacred juice therein.

3. For the ocean, the waves are the ornament; for the sky, the moon is the ornament and for man virtues are the ornament.

4. A life without character is as barren as a temple without a lamp, a coin that is counterfeit and a kite with snapped string.

S	A	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	F	I	G
C	H	A	P	P	I	N	E	S	S	H	F
A	N	X	I	B	E	S	T	O	U	D	R
A	C	N	E	V	N	G	E	R	S	T	U
D	O	R	E	F	O	R	C	E	P	E	I
E	U	R	G	E	U	A	N	F	T	R	T
P	N	O	T	H	G	C	O	F	L	W	Y
R	T	A	T	P	H	E	W	O	R	L	D
E	R	I	E	C	E	A	T	R	E	E	O
D	I	F	F	E	R	E	N	T	N	D	T
S	E	J	U	I	C	E	E	R	S	N	E
S	S	E	D	V	E	R	B	E	T	H	I

Swami's Tips to Students



Every student should observe three principles of equality, unity and co-operation. Education is not confined to reading, writing and listening. Degrees do not constitute true marks of learning. Without wisdom and spiritual knowledge, can there be real education? Education is not for earning a living but for leading good life. All education which imparts worldly knowledge and develops intellectual acumen without promoting character is utterly worthless. True education should promote morality, character and spirituality. Science and technology

are undoubtedly necessary for comfortable living. But there is an unseen power which underlies the physical world. Today students should acquire both physical knowledge for earning a living and spiritual knowledge for understanding that which sustains life. The two together help to make humanness blossom. It is morality that imparts value to human life.



ALUMNI FORUM

DR. SHAILESH SRIVASTAV

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH LOVE

WAY BACK IN 1982, AS A STUDENT of the first year Pre-University College (P.U.C.) it was my first day inside Swami's residence, Trayee Brindavan. I had of course by then known that Swami is God and had seen Him being worshipped in photos. I had just been to Prasanthi Nilayam and seen Him coming for Darshan and even tried to give a letter to Him.

In Close Proximity of Swami

Now here I was seated right in front of single sofa, almost touching it, where Swami was coming to sit. This was inside His residence along with so many other new students. A few minutes later, Swami came and sat on the sofa right in front of me! All I know is that the next one hour or so I was continuously shedding tears without even looking up. Swami must have seen that, but He gracefully avoided asking me anything even as He asked many of the students where they had come from, and the session concluded. Something within me had changed and I knew not what, but I was never the same again!

Swami is Omniscient God

A few days later, standing on the threshold of His residence at Brindavan, Swami asked us, "Who all want to come to Parthi for the winter vacation before Dasara"? Almost all lifted their hands in the affirmative! We soon came to Parthi and I

sat in the Prasanthi Mandir portico for the first time. Swami happened to come near me and I got up and asked, "Swami, mother has come – interview". He promptly replied, "Put garland"! and made me sit down. The next day, He came near me on His own and suddenly asked, "Where is father? You asked about interview yesterday"! I was taken aback and said, "Swami, not father, mother has come"! And He said without much ado, as though He had not known, "Okay, call her"!

The same innocent Swami suddenly became the all-knowing God inside the interview room. That was the first revelation, when after spending time with many of us in the outer room, He called both of us to the inner room for a personal interview. He just spent two to three minutes with us and stood all the time. We did not even have the time to react as He Himself spoke about our family, which revealed to us that He was indeed omniscient God. This was the very first time that any of us got the interview and we being from north India, there was no way that He could have known so many things about our family. His description was absolutely perfect and spontaneous! Just before we came out, He looked at me and said, "You also sometimes not good. Be good"! So saying, He gave a loving pat on my cheek. I was overwhelmed by His love and also realised how kind He was for in spite of His omniscience He had not spoken anything about the many mistakes I had

committed! He had indeed captured my heart and I resolved to please Him!

Loving Lord Responds to our Prayer

One and a half years had passed since I joined the eleventh class and I had not gone back to Delhi. The second winter vacation had come and Swami was in Parthi. Students at Brindavan were asked to go home for the vacation. I along with another classmate from Delhi decided that we would first take Swami's blessings and permission. Both of us took the train to Dharmavaram, reached there by 2.00 a.m. and finally reached Parthi early next morning by 6.00 a.m. Even as we entered the Ashram, a senior teacher met us and cautioned us. He told us that Swami had specifically sent word that no Brindavan student should be allowed to come to Parthi. He told us that we should quietly go back after having Darshan from inside the East Prasanthi room window.

We had no choice and had to be content with the Darshan from a distance. We prayed that Swami should not be displeased as we just wanted His blessings. As the Darshan ended, we found the same senior teacher coming fast towards us. He surprised us again by telling that Swami suddenly called him for an interview and told him, "Two students have come from Brindavan and are going to Delhi. Give them this Vibhuti and tell them to sit in front and have Darshan"! Our joy knew no bounds as we realised how loving the omniscient Lord is. We could sit right in front of the Bhajan Hall and have His Darshan! Yes, indeed there may be surprising twists and turns but the Loving Lord does respond to our prayers. In fact, He gives us more than what we ask for!

The Alarm that Did not Ring

It was towards the end of my second year P.U.C. that the Brindavan students



had organised a science exhibition in the Kalyana Mandapam next to Swami's residence. Swami came that day with the Governor of Karnataka, Sri Govind Narayan. We had made two exhibits, one named 'smiling horror' which had a real human skull from the Biology lab with blinking LED lights in place of the eyes and another 'Future House' in which we had made three alarms, a burglar alarm at the entrance, a rain alarm and a fire alarm. Everything was working fine and since this was the last exhibit just before the exit, Swami came to it in the end. The then Warden who was also walking with Swami drew Swami's attention to the two exhibits and explained. Swami peeped into the 'smiling horror' box and looked at me and gave a most beautiful smile. I was happy. The Warden then told Swami about the alarms and told Swami to put His hand into the front door of the house for the burglar alarm to ring. Swami innocently did so but nothing happened. The Warden frowned at me; so, I checked and saw that everything was fine. The Warden put his hand and the alarm rang. He was happy and asked Swami to test it Himself. Swami again put His hand and to our horror there was no sound of the alarm. The Warden



repeated the check again and the alarm rang promptly. Slightly embarrassed, he looked at Swami. Swami repeated the act and the alarm remained silent again. Our foolish intellects had failed to understand the point which Swami Himself told with a chuckle "I am not a thief"! Almost spontaneously the Governor's wife added, "Swami is only a Chitta Chora (stealer of hearts)", and Swami smiled!

Almost ten years later when I became a teacher at Prasanthi Nilayam, we arranged a

similar exhibition and the same episode was repeated. Swami did not make any comment this time but a more profound message became clear. For non-believers it is, 'Remember, He can enter in without any notice', for devotees, 'He is ever inside, why fear!' and finally for all, "the 'alarm' will ring only if He leaves"!

– Dr. Shailesh Srivastav is a faculty member of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

...continued from page 25

Buddha confronted the anger of a demon with his love and transformed him.

Many students today are subject to depression and are confused. The reason for this is their weakness owing to lack of self-confidence. When there is total faith in God, there will be no room for depression.

Students! There is need for observing festivals like Vinayaka Chaturthi for external satisfaction, but what is more important is to realise the inner significance of Vinayaka worship which is likely to have lasting effect. The worship of inanimate idols should lead to contemplation on the subtle spiritual entity represented by the idol. This is the process by which realisation of the Atma takes place.

The Lord of Learning

Vinayaka is the Lord of all Vidya (learning). Does learning mean bookish scholarship? No. Everything pertaining to the cosmos is included in the term Vidya (learning). Walking, talking, laughing, sitting, eating, strolling, thinking, every kind of activity is related to learning. Vinayaka is the master of every kind of learning. Today learning is identified with acquisition of information. But apart from knowledge of the physical world, we have many other kinds of knowledge relating to chemistry;

the fine arts and other skills. Vinayaka is the master of every kind of knowledge. Learning is related to Buddhi (intellect). It is not mere scholarship. Familiarity with books is not knowledge. One's entire life is a continuous process of learning. Any process of enquiry is related to learning. But basically our enquiry should be concerned with finding out what is transient and what is permanent. This is true knowledge.

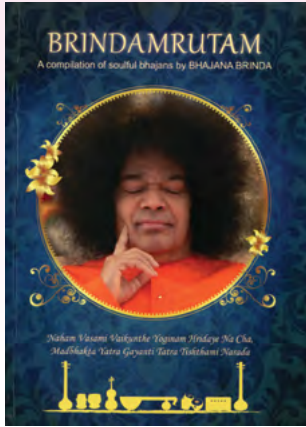
Students worship Vinayaka with zeal. However, Vinayaka is not the one who merely comes to the aid of those who read books. He helps everyone at every step in life's journey. He is readily accessible. Vinayaka is thus worshipped by all beings and is Lord over all beings. He does not belong to one country or one nation or one period of time. He is related to all places and all times. There are some mythological stories relating to Vinayaka. The significance of these stories is that they turn people's minds Godward.

If a deep enquiry is made, it will be realised that there is only one God and He is present in all. Vinayaka is not separate from us. The indwelling principle in our hearts is the Divine Atmic Principle.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Ganesh Chaturthi Discourses.



Brindamrutam: A Compilation of Bhajans



BRINDAMRUTAM

Brindavan Bhajan Group

Sri Sathya Sai Publications
Society, Sudama House,
Chickpet, Bengaluru.

₹ 250.00

BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA has declared that Namasmaraṇa is the easiest and most potent means of liberation of man in Kali Yuga. Even as a child, young Sathya organised a Pandhari Bhajan Group and moved about in the streets of Puttaparthi singing Bhajans. This was His first indication of the importance He attached to Namasmaraṇa. He later reaffirmed this profound truth when He sang His first Bhajan “Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam” in the garden of a devotee in Uravakonda after leaving school and home at the young age of 14 years on 20th October 1940 and declaring His Avatarhood. Later in 1946 when He started residing in Patha (old) Mandir, He made Bhajan singing a regular activity. He composed Bhajans, sang Bhajans and taught them to others,

meticulously observing rhythm and pitch of every Bhajan. In 1950, Bhagavan shifted to the New Mandir named Prasanthi Nilayam and organised Bhajan sessions both in the morning and evening. Later with the setting up of educational institutions, the students became perfect Bhajan singers. With the passage of time, Bhajan singing became a worldwide movement and it is now a regular activity in almost all the 12,000 Sai Centres in India and nearly 2,000 Bhajans centres in about 120 countries of the world.

The book “Brindamrutam” brought out by Bhajana Brinda, a group of devotees of Brindavan, Whitefield (Bengaluru) is a comprehensive compilation of about 2,000 Bhajans which are commonly sung in Sai Centres in India and abroad. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba not only blessed this book, He gave the name of the book as “Brindamrutam” and the name of the organising group “Bhajana Brinda” in His own handwriting.

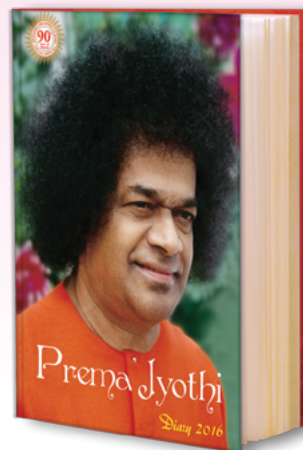
It is actually a handbook of Bhajans, both old and new, and gives the Bhajans along with their meaning, Raga, Tala and Sruti (tune, beat and pitch). This not only makes it a valuable book for new learners but it gives confidence to Bhajan singers to sing Bhajans with perfection. The Bhajans included in the book are given in alphabetical order. Moreover, they are classified as Ganesh Bhajans, etc., for easy location.

The book has many useful annexures, viz., Bal Vikas Bhajans, Nagar Sankirtan Bhajans and slow / classical Bhajans. There is another useful classification in the end which gives various Ragas on which the Bhajans are based. Glossary of Telugu and Hindi words used in the Bhajans helps the devotees to understand the meaning of the Bhajans.

With all these useful features, the book is no doubt a great asset for Bhajan learners as well as Bhajan singers.

PREMA JYOTHI – DIARY 2016

We are pleased to inform that the much awaited Diary 2016 "Prema Jyothi" is available for sale. It contains in a nutshell Bhagavan's divine life and mission, and His humanitarian activities. Specifications of the diary are: 14.7 x 20.6 cms; shrink wrapped, multi-coloured wrapper with gold foiling, artwork, spot lamination and knurling, with curved binding and page marker. It has 422 pages of which 30 pages contain beautiful multi-coloured pictures of Bhagavan, Mandir, Poornachandra Auditorium and Maha Samadhi apart from 8 pages of multi-coloured text, all in 130 gsm art paper; it has over 300 divine sayings of Bhagavan.



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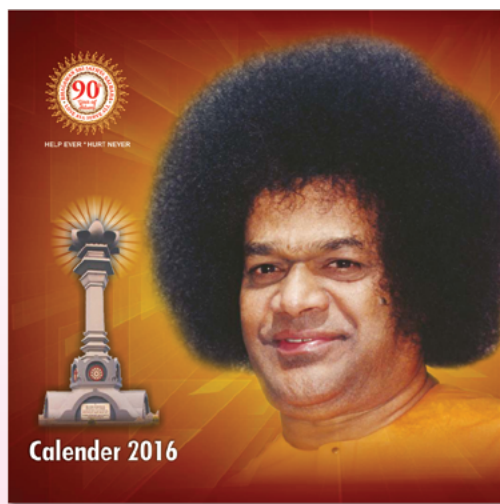
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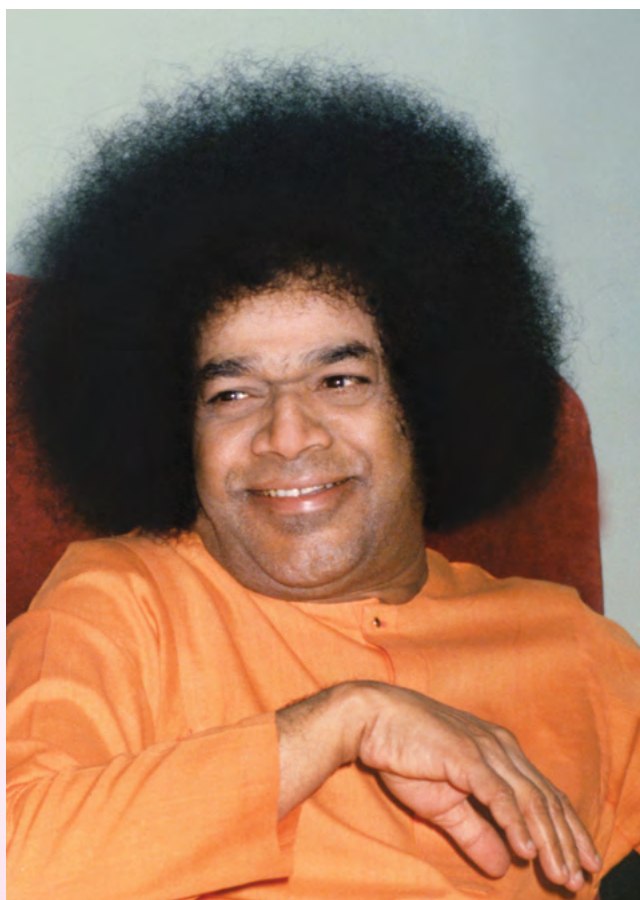
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About SSSSTPD

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, educational software etc 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 Bhagawan Baba's monthly spiritual journal - Sanathana Sarathi - in English and Telugu languages. Since 2011, e-versions of the magazine are also released simultaneously and are available in PDF and EPUB formats on www.sanathanasarathi.org.
- 3) Maintaining a reporting channel, which covers all the major activities taking place in Prasanthi Nilayam, and publishing an e-newsletter 'Sai Spiritual Showers' - for free distribution.
- 4) Organising and conducting seminars and conferences on spirituality, religion, education, and human values.
- 5) Providing library and Reading room for visiting devotees, with a very large collection of various spiritual and religious books.

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(In English)

1. Sai Sathya Sakha
2. Summer Showers In Brindavan, 1972
3. Satyopanisad I
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5. Gurudev
6. Namasmarana
7. Bhakthi And Health
8. Life Is Love, Enjoy It!
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Internalise Spiritual Practices

People today tend to ignore the Divinity within them, but hanker after many external objects. There is no need to go in search of the Divine. Men must develop firm faith in the Divinity within them. All that is needed is to turn the vision inward to experience the Divine within. People engage themselves in many outward spiritual practices. These must be internalised. All scholarship is of no avail if there is no realisation in the heart. The scholar may expound the texts, but may lack the internal experience. One who has mastered the Vedas may be able to explain the words, but may not recognise the Veda Purusha, the Supreme Person hailed by the Vedas.

– Baba

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