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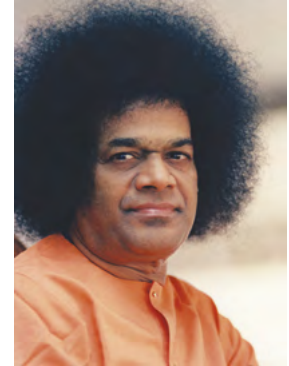
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*"Though God has no form, He assumes
all forms and considers all names as His.
Though Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram
appear to be different, they are in fact one
and the same. Truth is beauty. Where
there is no truth, how can there be beauty?
There can be no beauty in untruth;
there may be attraction but no beauty.
Therefore, that which is true is beautiful."*



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AMRITA DHARA

BHAGAVAN'S DISCOURSE:
6TH SEPTEMBER 1996: PART 2

HOLD ON TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS

GOD IS ONE, GOAL IS ONE

SANKARA, WHO CAME TO demonstrate the principle of Advaita to the entire world, considered himself a servant of God. Unfortunately, his father Sivaguru passed away when Sankara was three years old. Ten days prior to his demise, Sivaguru had a vision of divine effulgence which conveyed to him that he should perform the Upanayanam (sacred thread investiture ceremony) of Sankara. Obeying the directions of the divine light, Sivaguru performed the Upanayanam of Sankara at the age of three. After the Upanayanam, Sankara started reciting the Gayatri Mantra.

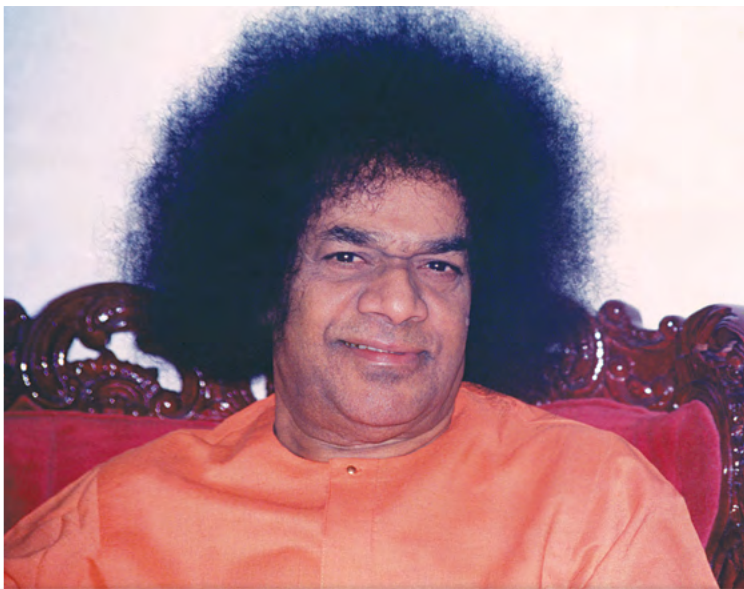
Sankara Taught the Principle of Advaita to the World

After the death of his father, Sankara's mother Aryamba took up the complete responsibility of his upbringing and admitted him to a Gurukul under the tutelage of a Guru (preceptor). Sankara was endowed with such a sharp intellect that before he attained his sixteenth year, he had mastered the four Vedas and six Sastras (six systems of philosophy). For ordinary mortals, it is not possible

to study the four Vedas and six Sastras even in fifty years. But Sankara was a special boy; in fact, he was super special. He could understand and assimilate the teachings of all the four Vedas and six Sastras. The Guru was wonderstruck at the intellectual acumen of his disciple. One day, his mother approached the Guru and expressed her intention to perform the marriage of her son. But Sankara said, he was not interested in marriage and that he wanted to take Sannyasa (renunciation). He said, "I wish to offer my body, mind and everything to God. In fact, nothing is mine, everything is given by God. Therefore, I want to offer myself to God". He was determined to become a Sannyasin (renunciant). Aryamba pleaded with him shedding tears that he should marry. It is but natural for a mother to wish her son to marry.

One day when his mother went to the river to fetch water, Sankara followed her, pleading, "Mother, give me permission to take Sannyasa". But she did not budge. As she was filling her pot in the river, Sankara jumped into the river, and after some time,





It is not possible to make ornaments without gold nor is it possible to make pots without clay. Likewise, there is only one fundamental principle for the entire creation. It is the same for people of all religions: Hindus, Christians, Mohammedans or Sikhs. Though the divine principle is one, people of different faiths call it by different names. God is one, goal is one.

crocodile of worldliness. Once you permitted me to become a renunciant giving up all worldly attachments, the crocodile of worldliness left me". Taking to Sannyasa does not mean merely to put on ochre robes; it is to change one's outlook towards life.

Sankara offered his salutations to his mother and left home at the age of sixteen. At that time, his mother extracted a promise from him that he would come to her at the time of her death and perform her last rites. There were no buses, cars or aeroplanes to travel from one place to another in those days. Sankara travelled on foot and visited all the pilgrimage centres in

he raised his hand and yelled, "Mother, I am being swallowed by a crocodile. At least now, permit me to embrace Sannyasa". The mother at once said, "My dear, if taking to Sannyasa saves your life, so it be! It is enough for me, if you are alive". At once, the crocodile released its grip on Sankara and he came out of water. He told his mother, "I was being swallowed by the

the country. During his travels, he met many Vedic scholars and defeated them in debates and taught them the principle of Advaita. He told them, "You see diversity on the basis of external names and forms. Though forms are different, heads are different, heart is one and the same. That is divinity". There may be many varieties of sugarcane, but the juice is the same in



all of them. Similarly, divinity is present in everyone in the form of divine essence. At that time, Mandana Misra was considered a great scholar. He also became a disciple of Sankara when he was defeated in the debate with him. Sankara travelled widely and convinced all great scholars about the principle of oneness.

All Religions Teach the Principle of Unity

There is only one entity and not two. *Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma* (God is one without a second). People are deluded by diversity of names and forms. They should hold on to the underlying principle of oneness. Nothing exists without this fundamental principle. It is not possible to make ornaments without gold nor is it possible to make pots without clay. Likewise, there is only one fundamental principle for the entire creation. It is the same for people of all religions: Hindus, Christians, Mohammedans or Sikhs. Though the divine principle is one, people of different faiths call it by different names. God is one, goal is one. This principle of oneness needs to be taught to students. It is not so easy to understand the principle of Advaita. That is why today I have told in a nutshell what it means.

What is religion? Religion is that which removes all differences. In fact, it demonstrates unity in diversity. Having established the principle of Advaita firmly in the hearts of people, Sankara left his body at a very early age of 32. What was the reason? The task for which he had

come had been accomplished. He told his disciples to preserve this principle in their hearts and propagate the same. He established four centres of Advaita – Jagannath Mutt, Sringeri Mutt, Dwaraka Mutt and Joshi Mutt and made his four eminent disciples in charge of these Mutts. By establishing these Mutts and promoting the sense of spiritual oneness among the people, Adi Sankara promoted harmony in the country. He strived to spread happiness everywhere by propagating the principle of Advaita and removing differences and unrest. None can dispute the principle of Advaita that Sankara propagated.

Later on, Ramanujacharya modified Advaita and called it Visishtadvaita. Just as juice is the same in all types of sugarcane, the divine essence is the same in all beings. This was the principle of Advaita taught by Sankara. But how long can one keep sugarcane juice? Sugarcane juice cannot remain as it is with the passage of time. But if the same sugarcane juice is converted into sugar, it becomes long lasting and can be added in any preparation. You may add it in wheat flour or rice flour or any flour for that matter; it gives sweetness. Anything that comes in contact with a sweet substance like sugar will acquire the property of sweetness. Sugar is permanent and can be used in anything. Therefore, instead of preserving the sugarcane juice as it is, it is better to convert it into sugar and use it. This is the principle of Visishtadvaita advocated by Ramanujacharya.

The third principle was Dvaita. This was advocated by Madhwacharya.



Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhwacharya are the exponents of three types of philosophy, Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita respectively. But all the three agreed on the fundamental principle of oneness. Sankaracharya called it sugarcane juice, Ramanujacharya called it sugar. Madhwacharya said, "If Divinity is like sugar, I don't want to become sugar; I want to be the one who enjoys the sweetness of sugar. If I also become sugar, how can I enjoy its taste"? Therefore, he prayed, "Oh Lord! You remain sugar always, but make me the one who enjoys Your sweetness". When can you become the one who enjoys the sweetness of divinity? It is possible only when you offer yourself to God completely. Till such time you may perform any type of Sadhana like Japa (chanting), Tapa (penance), Dhyana (meditation) and Yoga, you may study any number of sacred texts, you will not attain the deservedness to enjoy the sweetness of divinity. All these spiritual practices will give only temporary mental satisfaction. Since all these practices are performed with the help of the heart, offer your heart to God. This is what Madhwacharya taught:

Oh God, I offer the heart which You have given me. What else can I offer at Your Lotus Feet? I pray to You to accept it.

(Telugu Poem)

Man should Know his Humanness to Realise his Divinity

When you say, "Oh God, I offer my heart to You", God says, "Here I give you the experience of the sweetness of

divinity". *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as are the feelings, so is the result). God is changeless. He will respond to you in accordance with your feelings. What is the form of water? And what is the form of air? They have no form of their own. God is also like that. Out of His immense love for His devotee, God assumes the form of His devotee's choice. Air assumes the form of football, when it is filled in football and takes the form of a balloon when it is filled in a balloon. Similarly, water also assumes the form of the container or the tank in which it is put. Likewise, God assumes the form which you contemplate upon. God has no preference for this form or that form.

*Sarva Rupa Dharam Santham, Sarva Nama Dharam Sivam,
Satchidananda Rupam Advaitam,
Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

(All the names and forms are but the manifestations of the Supreme Being who is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute and non-dual. He is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty).

Though God has no form, He assumes all forms and considers all names as His. Though Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram appear to be different, they are in fact one and the same. Truth is beauty. Where there is no truth, how can there be beauty? There can be no beauty in untruth; there may be attraction but no beauty. Therefore,

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SRI SATHYA SAI ARADHANA MAHOTSAVA



DEEP DEVOTION AND SUBLIME solemnity marked the observance of Sri Sathya Sai Aradhana Mahotsava held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 24th April 2015. The venue of the programme was Sai Kulwant Hall, which was exquisitely bedecked with flowers, festoons and buntings. There were special floral decorations on the Samadhi of Bhagavan, on the right side of which a grand silver chair was placed for Bhagavan.

Devotional Music and Narayana Seva

The first item of the programme on the morning of 24th April 2015 was reverential offering of “Sai Pancharatnas” (five jewels of songs) dedicated to Bhagavan.

Bhagavan. Beginning with the composition “Pranamami Sayeesha” (I offer salutations to Lord Sai) at 8.20 a.m., the singers next sang “Sadaa Bhavayami Sri Sathya Sai” (I always meditate on Sai) and followed it with “Charana Sevanam Parama Pavanam” (serving the Lotus Feet is most sacred), “Kali Yuga Avatari Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai” (Sai, the Avatar of Kali Yuga) and “Sathya Sai Avatara Vaibhavam” (glory of Sathya Sai Avatar). Composed by Dr. R. Vasanthalakshmi of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music and set to music by Sri Raj Kumar Bharathi, the great grandson of the illustrious freedom fighter and Tamil poet Sri Subrahmanya Bharathi. The songs

were rendered by about 50 musicians, both ladies and gents.

This soul-elevating musical presentation was followed by an erudite talk by Sri V. Srinivasan, Trustee, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. Recalling



Soulful rendition of “Sai Pancharatnas”.

Presented by a group of eminent musicians and students of Bhagavan, the five songs had a spell-binding effect on the audience who were lost in the sweet memories of

Bhagavan’s unbounded compassion, which embodied love for all, the distinguished speaker exhorted one and all to cultivate this divine quality and hold on to the path of



Namasmarana and Seva to earn the grace of Bhagavan. He exhorted the devotees to develop unity and purity to attain divinity. Referring to Bhagavan's declaration that He would never leave Puttaparthi, the distinguished speaker said, it is Puttaparthi which is the divine abode of Bhagavan, and not any other.

Bhagavan's Divine Discourse was thereafter played on the public address system, in which Bhagavan narrated the story of His visit to Virupaksha temple in Hampi which revealed His Divinity. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram". Bhagavan's Discourse was followed by Bhajans. As the Bhajans continued, the singers who rendered "Sai Pancharatnas" were felicitated. Arati at 10.45 a.m. marked the conclusion of the morning programme.

After the conclusion of the programme in Sai Kulwant Hall, Narayana Seva was performed in Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium, wherein thousands of people were served food and offered clothes. Food was also served to all devotees in a

specially erected Pandal behind North-7 Block in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Instrumental Music Concert

Another musical offering was made to Bhagavan in the afternoon by Ms. Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi and her team of musicians. Beginning her concert at 5.20 p.m. with a prayer song to Lord Ganesh, the musician presented a sumptuous feast of classical Carnatic music on violin which included some famous compositions of Thyagaraja. A thrilling piece of fusion music followed



Narayana Seva in Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium.

next. The musician concluded her concert with the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin" which she sang in her melodious voice. A brief Bhajan session followed this concert. Meanwhile, the musician and her accompanying artistes were felicitated. Arati at 6.45 p.m. marked the conclusion of the programme.

From our Archives

PRAYERS OF MOTHERS SUSTAIN THE WORLD

The father, to teach the child the truth,

May chide, reprove or beat.

The mother may pinch the cheek

To make the child drink the milk.

Forget not at any time

These marks of paternal love.

Doing good deeds, one will never reap bad results;

Wickedness will never yield good fruits.

Will the neem seed produce mango fruits

Or the mango seed yield neem fruits?

(Telugu Poem)

INCULCATE NOBLE QUALITIES IN CHILDREN

Embodiments of Love!

THE EARTH IS ONE. BUT, IF you sow neem seeds, you will get only bitter fruits. If you plant sweet mango seeds, you will get sweet mangoes. The earth makes no difference between them. Only the differences in the seeds account for the differences among the fruits.

Parents should Lead a Virtuous Life

Likewise, the womb of a mother is like the womb of Mother Earth. The thought which prevails at the time of conception results in the kind of child that is born. If the parents desire to have virtuous, exemplary

and noble children, they have to observe righteous practices and lead a virtuous life.

Parents today get up from their beds quarrelling with each other. When the parents wake up hurling abuses at each other, the children wake up levelling blows at each other. As is the seed, so is the plant. Parents today should ponder over the sacred ideas cherished by parents in the olden days. Mothers of those days led a pure and pious life, cherishing sacred thoughts, fostering virtues and setting an example to the world. For all the bad ways followed by youth today, for all their wayward behaviour and bad conduct, the parents are to blame. If the



mothers are good, there will be no room for bad behaviour by the children. Although parents may appear innocuous, they are responsible for the misbehaviour of their children.

The Nation Needs Noble Mothers

Bharat has become a prey to numerous troubles because of the lack of exemplary mothers. What is it that the mothers ask for today? Not compassion, good character, integrity and such virtues. They want their children to get educated, secure a big job, marry a wealthy girl and lead a comfortable life. Is it this kind of animal existence that one should seek? "Earn a good name. Become an ideal son. Use your wealth in righteous ways. Develop compassion. Lead a just and moral life." This is what mothers should impress on their children.



Such high-minded mothers have become rare these days. Integrity and morality are going down day by day in the country.

The nation needs noble mothers who lead an exemplary life. They should manifest in their life the great culture of Bharat. Then, the culture will be transmitted to their progeny. Many great women in the past brought up such worthy children and enhanced the name and glory of Bharat. Today the children are being spoilt only by the parents. If the children are brought up on right lines from childhood, they will grow up to be exemplary men and women.

What the nation needs today is not material prosperity or high education. It needs men and women of character. People should develop faith in God, have concern for good name in society, cherish fear of sin and dedicate themselves to godly activities. Then the nation will enjoy peace and

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CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SRI RAMA NAVAMI

THE HOLY FESTIVAL OF Sri Rama Navami was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 28th March 2015. The first programme on this day was presented by the staff and students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music. Beginning their presentation titled "Rama Guna Gaanam" (singing the glory of Rama's Name) at 8.30 a.m. with



Devotional songs by the staff and students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music.

a sweet devotional song "Mohe Darsha Deejo Prabhu Ram" (grant me Your vision, oh Rama), the singers suffused the entire milieu with devotional fervour by their soulful rendition of devotional songs dedicated to Lord Rama, which included two famous compositions of Goswami Tulsidas and a couple of classical compositions. They brought their enrapturing presentation to a close with the Bhajan "Rama Kodanda Rama". Students thereafter led Bhajans which concluded with Arati at 9.40 a.m.

The programme in the afternoon comprised a talk "Lessons from the Ramayana for the Modern Man" and a Divine Discourse of Bhagavan. The talk was delivered by an M.B.A. student of the Institute, Sri Surya Bharat who highlighted certain subtle aspects of the Ramayana and emphasised its importance in the present-day world illustrating his observation with incidents from his life as a student under the guidance of Bhagavan. Divine Discourse followed this, in which Bhagavan observed that Rama's Name is the most powerful Mantra for man's redemption in Kali Yuga. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan "Rama Rama Rama Sita". Bhajans thereafter were led by students who sang Bhajans dedicated to Lord Rama which the devotees followed in chorus. Arati at 6.30 p.m. marked the conclusion of the programme.

TAMIL NEW YEAR AND VISHU

The twin festivals of Tamil New Year and Vishu (Kerala New Year) were celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam from 13th to 15th April 2015. A large number of devotees came from Tamil Nadu and Kerala to participate in these celebrations. Besides, about 600 youth came on a three-day Parthi Yatra (pilgrimage to Puttaparthi) from Kerala on this occasion.



The celebrations began on 13th April 2015 with a soulful musical presentation by noted Carnatic vocalist Sri Kavalam Sreekumar from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Commencing his presentation at 5.40 p.m. with a composition dedicated to Lord Ganesh, the singer suffused the entire milieu with devotional fervour by rendering a variety of compositions which included “Narayanam Bhaje” (chant the Name of Narayana), “Om Namah Sivaya” (salutations to Siva), a Purandaradasa composition “Jagadodhara” (redeemer of the world) and a Mira Bhajan “Manare Bhaja Tu Harike Charan” (Oh mind, contemplate on the Lotus Feet of Hari).



Bhajans led by Kerala singers.

Bhajans that followed this enrapturing presentation were also led by Kerala singers, both ladies and gents. Meanwhile, Sri Sreekumar was honoured with a shawl. The programme concluded at 7.00 p.m. with Arati.

Earlier, the session commenced with a felicitation function, wherein meritorious students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning who secured high ranks in All India examinations like GATE, NET, etc., were felicitated.

Tamil New Year celebrations held on 14th April 2015 began with an hour-long Bhajan led by Sundaram Bhajan Group of



Sundaram Bhajan Group singers leading Bhajans.

Chennai from 8.30 to 9.30 a.m., surcharging the entire milieu with devotional fervour. The programme in the afternoon began at 5.20 p.m. with an erudite talk on the topic “The Spirit of Seva” by Sri T.E. Aditya, an alumnus of SSSIHL. Referring to Seva (selfless service) as the highest Sadhana (spiritual practice), the speaker stated how Seva was dear to Bhagavan who exemplified it in His life.

The next item of the programme was a Carnatic music concert by Chinmaya Sisters, Uma and Radhika. Beginning their concert with a Thyagaraja composition, the singers enthralled the devotees for nearly one hour with melody and music, rendering a variety of compositions which included “Darshan Deejo Hey Gopal” (Oh Krishna, bless me with Your vision), “Sabka Malik Ek Hai” (God is the Master of all), “Sai Narayana”. The singers and their accompanying artistes were felicitated at the conclusion of the concert. The

programme came to a close with Arati at 7.00 p.m. after a brief session of Bhajans.

Traditional gaiety marked the celebration of Vishu at Prasanthi Nilayam on 15th April 2015. Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of the celebrations, was beautifully decorated on this occasion, and Vishukkani (a symbol of auspiciousness to be seen first on the morning of Vishu) was set up in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme in the morning comprised a musical offering by noted Carnatic vocalist, Sri T.S. Radhakrishnan. Beginning his concert at 8.20 a.m. with a popular Malayalam number describing the celestial beauty of Vishukkani, the singer next sang another popular Malayalam song dedicated to Lord of Guruvayur. What followed next was an array of songs which included “Deena Bandhu Sai Murare” (Sai, the refuge of the destitute), “Bhaja Narayan Naam” (recite the Name of Narayana), “Pibare Rama Rasam” (drink the nectar of Rama’s Name). Bhajans led by Kerala Bhajan group followed next. Meanwhile, the singer and the artistes who provided instrumental support to him were felicitated.

The evening programme began with an insightful talk by Justice T.B. Radhakrishnan of Kerala High Court who spoke on the topic “How to be with Swami”? Narrating

his personal experience of serving patients by going to their houses, the distinguished speaker asserted that it was only through Seva that one could always experience the omnipresence of Swami. A devotional music concert by famous playback singer, Sri Madhu Balakrishnan and his troupe followed next. Beginning his presentation with a prayer song to Lord Ganesh “Mahaganapathim Manasa Smarami” (I contemplate on Lord Ganesh), the singer followed it with “Mahadeva Siva Shambho” and a couple of Malayalam songs. His vocal accompanists, Sri Tumkur Subramanian and Sri Ajay Warriar thereafter sang a Tamil and Hindi devotional song each which marked the conclusion of the concert.

Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse followed this enrapturing concert. In His Discourse, Bhagavan said that worldly and material acquisitions were temporary and could give only temporary happiness. Man, Bhagavan added, could derive real happiness by following the righteous path and singing the glory of God. Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the Bhajan “Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin”. While Bhajans continued after this, Sri Madhu Balakrishnan and his accompanying artistes were felicitated. Arati at 7.30 p.m. marked the happy conclusion of the Vishu programme.

Selfless service alone will please Sai. Do not preach what you do not practise. Act according to what you say. Remember the significance of these directives and carry on your work in a spirit of dedication.

– Baba

I NEVER SPEAK THROUGH ANYBODY

MORAL DECLINE IS WORSE THAN MILITARY DECLINE

FOR THREE YEARS, THE people of Yelamanchili have been persuading Me to come to their village and give Darshan to the people of this area, and at last, their wish has been fulfilled.

I see about fifty thousand devotees gathered here. This chance to grant you joy has come this day; for, everything has its proper Kalam and Karanam (time and cause).

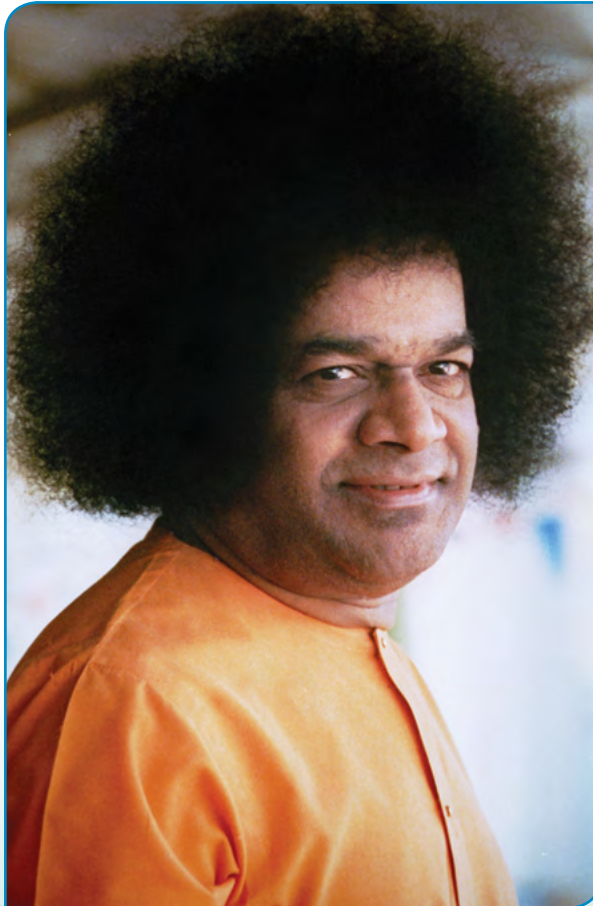
The same God who revealed, out of His grace, the Vedas, has to come again and again, whenever people seek to pitch their petty intelligence against the eternal intelligence. The petty intelligence is but the bond-

slave of the senses; it leads man astray, fascinated by the 'will-o'-the-wisp' of sensual pleasures. The Vedas, on the other hand, beckon him towards eternal, undiminishable joy. But man does not pay heed; he wanders in the dark, seeking in

the outside world what he has lost in the inner world of the spirit.

Spiritual Food Given by the Vedas

The scriptures lay down various stages of spiritual development, and the rigour of the discipline for each stage is tuned to the level reached by the aspirant. As a child is fed on breast milk for some months and then, on cow's milk, and later given bread and crisp bitable bits when the teeth



have grown – so too, man is given by the Vedas spiritual food suited to digestive development. In the early stages, the Jnana of the unity (which is misread as diversity) cannot be grasped. So, Bhakti or Upasana is recommended. Bhakti comes naturally for it is only the expansion of the love that is inherent in man. To get grounded in Bhakti, good activity, good company, good listening and good behaviour are essential.

The Essence of Vedic Teaching

But man today has become materialistic. We find that there is now no love among even real brothers and sisters. The high moral standard once ensured individual progress and social cohesion. Now, both are missing. The body – the tongue, the ear, the eye – are all being misused by man. Only wild beasts inflict terror; only cattle get frightened; man is neither and so he should not do either. Man is truly incapable of fear; he is the embodiment of love, he is the child of immortality, he is the temple of God. That is the essence of Vedic teaching as found in the Upanishads.

I do not accept from you flowers that fade, fruits that rot, coins that have no value beyond the national boundary. Give Me the lotus that blooms in your Manasa Sarovar – the clear pellucid waters of the lake of your inner consciousness; give Me the fruits of holiness and steady discipline. I am above all this worldly etiquette, which enjoins you to see elders with some fruit or flower in your hand. My world is the world of the spirit; there, values are different. If you are happy, with faith in God and fear of sin, that is enough service, enough Kainkaryam (offering) for Me.

Love has first to gladden the home. There is no love now between the elders and the youngsters in the home; children do not revere parents. This moral decline will certainly undermine unity and strength. Moral decline is worse than military decline; it will lead to greater disaster. If you always repeat the idea of “Naadhi, Nenu” (mine, I), how can you be useful to others?

I Ask for Purification of Hearts only

Since such things have happened in this region, I must tell you one thing more. There are many Swamis and Gurus who go round from place to place, with the avowed object of collecting money from their devotees. This is a heinous act, especially for Sannyasins (renunciates), to engage in. Many persons have also started using My name for the purpose of collecting money for various purposes or material. If such men come to you, send them back with the admonition that they are doing wrong. I ask for Bhakti, Sraddha, Sadhana (devotion, faith and spiritual discipline) – purification of hearts – that is all. Only beggars ask for money;



I will never associate Myself with the temporary, the tarnished, the tawdry and the mean. Then, there are some who proclaim that I am “coming upon someone” and speaking through him! They pretend to be My mouthpieces and communicate to others My advice and My suggestions, as if I have ‘authorised’ them or as if I am Myself telling so through them. Now hear this. I never speak through another; I never possess another or use another as a vehicle of expression. I come direct, I come straight, I come as I am, to confer peace and joy.

I do not accept from you flowers that fade, fruits that rot, coins that have no value beyond the national boundary. Give Me the lotus that blooms in your Manasa Sarovar – the clear pellucid waters of the

lake of your inner consciousness; give Me the fruits of holiness and steady discipline. I am above all this worldly etiquette, which enjoins you to see elders with some fruit or flower in your hand. My world is the world of the spirit; there, values are different. If you are happy, with faith in God and fear of sin, that is enough service, enough Kainkaryam (offering) for Me. It pleases Me. In the East Godavari District and hereabouts, persons who claim to be “possessed” by Me are appearing recently in large numbers, with their own gangs of brokers and agents. Order them out, wherever you come across them. Do not yield to their tactics and lower your own dignity as devotees of the Lord.

– **From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse at Yelamanchili, Visakhapatnam on 27th March 1965.**

...continued from page 5

that which is true is beautiful. When truth and beauty come together, goodness manifests. Truth, beauty and goodness are one and the same. The same truth was taught by Plato to his disciple Aristotle. He said, “My dear, I have studied all the scriptures and have realised that God is the embodiment of truth, goodness and beauty”. When man has these three attributes, he also becomes divine.

Man today does not understand what humanness is. He is unable to recognise the human values present within. Then how can he recognise his innate divinity? Lakhs of years have passed since the birth of human being. But so far humanness has not taken birth in him. The day man realises his true human nature, he will

visualise his own innate divinity. Unless he knows his humanness, how can he realise his divinity? How can one who cannot touch the roof reach the sky? Therefore, first of all, man should try to acquire human qualities. Then it will be easy for him to develop divine qualities. Students should understand how noble souls in those days realised divinity. When they follow the path shown by them, they will be able to develop noble feelings, selfless love and lead a peaceful life.

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

– **Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 6th September 1996.**



GURUPRASAD

BEFORE YOU DESIRE, YOU NEED TO DESERVE

3 1ST OF MAY 2012 is an indelible day of my life for it was on this day that I got an opportunity to study in Bhagavan's institution, after a long wait of eight years, beginning from the year 2003 when I tried to get admission in Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, but could not. I tried once again in 2005 without success. I felt sad and angry with Swami. But it was not any real anger; it was the feeling of being left out.



photo struck me. It said, "Even if you try to separate Me from you, I will not separate Myself from you". I then prayed to Swami that if this was true, He must provide me an opportunity to study in His college.

Time sped fast and I found myself working for a leading IT company and by this time, Swami assumed His cosmic form. I tried to get admission in this hallowed institution once again. But the same sad story repeated this time also. I was heartbroken and could not contain any more blows; I removed Swami's photo from my altar. One day, my mother got another photo of Swami and the saying below the

A few days later, I was reading a book on Swami. A saying of Swami in it lit a lamp in the dark chamber of my heart; it rang a bell. The saying was that without any effort, it is difficult to earn God's grace. After reading the same, I plunged into action and began to learn Veda chanting with all dedication. True to His word, Swami granted me a seat



in His institution. Thus, before we desire, we need to deserve and this deservedness can be conferred upon a person provided he puts in sincere effort. Only as events unfold do I realise that every act, every blessing of His has a deeper meaning and significance.

As a student of Swami, it was my great desire to be part of Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna that is held on the occasion of Dasara at Prasanthi Nilayam. There were times when I could not enter Poornachandra Auditorium when I came as a devotee because the hall would be full of devotees who yearned to catch a glimpse of Swami. I considered myself most fortunate when I was included in the Veda chanting group of boys who would be occupying the stage with several other students and learned Vedic scholars. Questions sprang in my mind, am I really eligible for this prestigious and momentous opportunity? Swami says when opportunity is available, grasp every chance to make the stay in this place fruitful. Thus, I happened to be part of this great Yajna and sat on the stage where Veda Purusha Bhagavan Himself used to sit. Words fail to

express the joy and happiness when I think of these events. Every desire I was longing to fulfil for years was getting fulfilled one after the other. I realise, if there is strong desire and it is good and pure, it will be fulfilled.

My stay in Sri Sathya Sai Senior Boys' Hostel as a student gave shape to my thoughts and character. I got to understand what love is only from this place. Here each one of the residents in the hostel takes care of the other. All live like brothers. There is always someone to take care of you when you are unwell. It is one big family where father and mother is Swami Himself, and every activity is centred around Him. Be it any festival or celebration, everything and every moment is cherished with one single thought of pleasing Him.

Before I conclude, I am reminded of a profound truth revealed by Swami. During one of His regular conversations with His students, Swami told a student that it was not because of their past good deeds that they were able to come here but it was simply because of His love and nothing else. I am eternally grateful to Swami for everything that He was, is and will be to me. All that I can do is to get a good name and make Him feel proud of me.

Should one recite a hundred verses comprising useless words, better is one single word of the Dhamma, by hearing which one is pacified.

Though one should conquer a million men in battlefield, yet he, indeed, is the noblest victor who has conquered himself.

– The Dhammapada
Verses: 102-103

MY JOURNEY TO SAI

Carole Alderman

IT IS SAID THAT WHEN GOD created the world, it began with a Big Bang. And that was, quite literally, how my relationship with Sai Baba began.

My husband and I used to travel to the Italian or French Riviera for our holidays, and in 1983 we decided to rent a cottage in the Dordogne region of France. It was beautiful weather when we left England and crossed the Channel but, unusually for the time of year, it rained as soon as we set foot in France. So, we stayed in the cottage reading. For the first time ever, Bob had borrowed a book from the public library for me and it was Howard Murphet's "Sai Baba: Man of Miracles" which he described as 'a little light reading' for me. I was immediately captivated. The teachings explained clearly the meaning of the Brahma Sutras with which I struggled at the philosophy school we attended. But I assumed that, like all the great teachers, He was dead.

Unharmed in Car Accident

After three weeks in France, we arrived back in the U.K. On a bend on a busy motorway just a few miles from our home, the car went into a skid, then started to zigzag and we were about to hit the high concrete wall. "Now we are going to die," I thought, "but this will be interesting as I will find out if reincarnation is true". A fear crossed my mind of being badly injured and maimed as my daughter, Debbie, had been a few years before. Then words from the book "Sai Baba: Man of Miracles"

came into my head: "By whatever name you call on Me, I will be with you".

"Sai Baba, I'm a Christian," I said and took the brace position as we headed for the concrete barrier, and prayed, "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon me". We then hit the wall and spun across the three-lane motorway and back again. The car came to rest on the 'hard shoulder' beside the road.

In one interview, Swami allowed me to gaze into His eyes which He had never done in the Darshan lines, indicating to me that it was only His Will that prevailed and not what I wanted. I could not believe that I was actually being allowed to gaze into His eyes. It was like basking in eternity – blissful and peaceful – everything was there! Bob, who is logical and rational, and not prone to emotional language, said that looking into Swami's eyes really was like experiencing the "love of a thousand mothers".



"Are you all right, darling?" asked Bob.

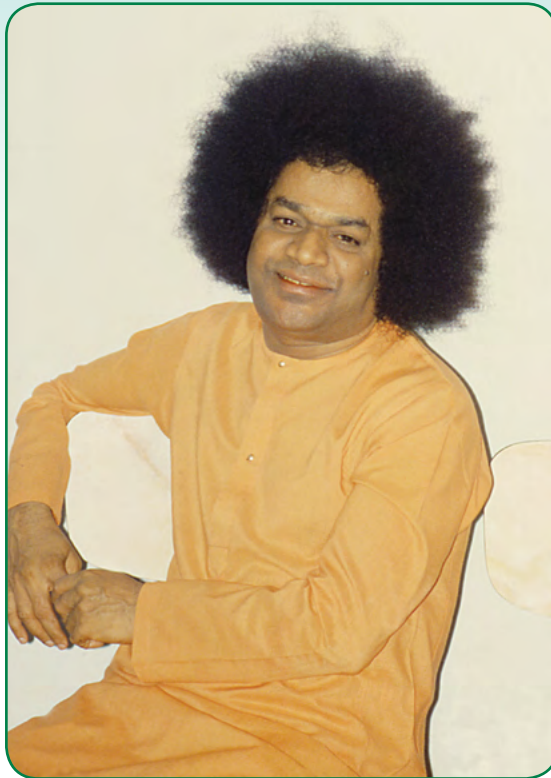
"Yes." I said.

I felt happy and totally unharmed. It was as if we had just been on the bumper cars in a fun-fair. Bob had a tiny scratch on his ankle, but the car was badly damaged. None of the windows had broken and our seats and doors were perfect, but the front and rear of the car were completely crushed and it was a 'write-off'. The road had been busy a moment before. Strangely, it had cleared during our accident. We both felt a great feeling of calm. It felt as if I had been held in the palm of God's hand.

A few moments later, a police car pulled up to check what had happened and, after explaining that they very rarely took this road, rang the car breakdown services on our behalf. Within an hour, I was back home telling my daughter, Debbie, and her friend, Ann, all about Sai Baba and His teachings!

In Sai Fold

Various coincidences then occurred – two days later Ann rang to say that her



driving instructor had a picture of "that man" (Sai Baba) in his car, and the instructor turned out to be one of Bob's work colleagues. I rang him and learned of a Sai Baba shop in Swiss Cottage which was a part of London I never visited; then Debbie asked me to meet her for coffee at, you have guessed it, Swiss Cottage.

Upon reaching the shop, the owner was standing outside and said to me, "What are you looking for"?

"Sai Baba," I replied.

In the next hour or two, he told me all about the changes brought about by Sai Baba to all his family. He then gave me the telephone number of Victor Kanu who sometimes took groups to see Sai Baba. I wanted to go to India that very day, but Bob said that if I could wait for six months then he would accompany me the following Easter.

At Easter 1984, Bob, Debbie and myself duly set off for Puttaparthi, but ended up in the hill station of Ootacamund where Sai Baba had gone to open a new temple

at a small Ashram. We got the last room available in a small hotel, which we shared with a German lady named Tardis.

As I sat waiting for Swami's Darshan with just two hundred or so other devotees, a Western lady came in and after some shuffling about of the lines, she ended up sitting next to me. It turned out that she had previously attended the same philosophy school as myself, and her husband was the tutor of a lady I had met the night before travelling. "You have come to the right place," she assured me to my great relief.

On the Path to Liberation

The energy emanating from Sai Baba when He came out was amazing. There was no doubt that He was an Avatar. "Wow! That's what Christ must have been like!", I thought. He glanced at my daughter, Debbie, who was suffering from brain damage and disinhibited behaviour due to a motor accident. She was very aggressive and had six or more violent tantrums a day. After Swami's glance at her, she behaved like an angel for the next three or four days. What a relief for us!

Later, at His Ashram at Whitefield near Bengaluru, when glancing at me, His eyes flashed with white light as if He had photographed my inner soul. It was quite a shock. Likewise, Bob described the sockets of Swami's eyes becoming suddenly as white as a furnace. Our stay was very difficult for Bob as, quite apart from the physical illness, the noise and squalor blew apart his romantic notions of India. However, and in great contrast to

Bob's prior disdain for European culture and Christianity, he now experienced a great attraction towards the personality and teachings of Jesus Christ. He ended up attending church every Sunday upon our return to the U.K. and remarked how 'grounded' he now felt in Europe, which greatly pleased me. Swami had swept away Bob's false notions of spirituality and set him on the true path to liberation. Ridding oneself of the ego, or false self, is a long and often painful process.

As Part of Bhagavan's Divine Mission

Back in the U.K., I quickly got involved in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) by helping Victor Kanu who had introduced the programme in the school where he was then teaching. Victor had visited the international mining company in the City of London where I was working some years beforehand, when he had been High Commissioner for Sierra Leone and Ghana. Victor and his wife Genoveva then went to Zambia to start a Sathya Sai School. Five years later in 1995, I ended up leading SSEHV in the U.K. as no one else was willing to do so, and was appointed U.K. National Convener.

I am not a professionally trained teacher, merely an 'intuitive' teacher, and I agreed to cover the post only until a better, more qualified, candidate could be found. That Easter at a meeting, it was agreed that I would compile fifteen Lesson Plans – one for each of the five values for each of the three age groups – by November, as a birthday gift for Sai Baba. In the



following weeks, I found that absolutely none of the material I was sent by the team would be useful for a Western or international audience and, indeed, I could not even complete one single Lesson Plan. I felt completely helpless and prayed desperately to Swami for help.

Help did come, and in many guises. People would ring me about something, but would turn out to know a story, or an activity, which I could use for a Lesson Plan which I was trying to complete at the time. By October 1995, the target of fifteen Lesson Plans was reached and, indeed, by Swami's grace was far surpassed as a book was completed with fifty Lesson Plans. I needed to take it to Swami and I was feeling an urgent need to see Him again.

But my mother was dying. She was seriously ill in hospital and the family were visiting to say goodbye to her. The Consultant said she could die any day. I prayed to Swami, "Swami, I am going to come to see You. But if I fly to Bombay (Mumbai) and ring home and my mother has died, will there be time to fly to Bangalore (Bengaluru) and drive

to Puttaparthi for just one Darshan before I fly home again"?

When I arrived at the hospital, the Consultant asked to see me. He said that my mother had made a sudden and inexplicable recovery, and would be discharged shortly and could stay with my sister while I was away. Mum had recovered so much that she was able to walk upstairs to her bedroom after having been bedridden for months. She lived another four years.

It is never easy to be granted an interview with Sai Baba, but as I waited to present this first book to Him, I began to wonder whether the work done over the previous eight months might be no good, and thought, "If You don't want this book,

Swami, then I don't want it either. So, I'll burn it".

Showers of Divine Grace

Two days later, on 2nd November 1995, I was graciously granted an interview and permitted to show the book to Sai Baba, who looked through it page by page. After many questions and comments on the symbolism of the fruit used, and teasing and jokes, I received His

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assurance that He was 'very happy', and His blessings.

He asked if I was going to promote EHV in the U.K. "That is my intention, Swami," I replied. Then I thought, "But that's going to be difficult. I will need Your help". Before the thought had even fully formed in my mind, Sai Baba waved His hand in a circular movement and produced a necklace of 101 golden beads which He put over my head and around my neck saying, "Never take it off".

I was stunned. "What, Swami?" I murmured.

"Never take it off," He repeated emphatically.

In another interview on 18th January 1999 with my husband, Swami materialised a diamond and ruby peacock broach for me. Taking us into the inner room, He then materialised a green diamond ring for

Bob and slipped it onto his finger, saying, "Look – perfect fit". He then performed a ceremony with a hand placed on each of our heads, blessing us. It was beautiful and ended with the words, "... a long and peaceful life".

In one interview, Swami allowed me to gaze into His eyes which He had never done in the Darshan lines, indicating to me that it was only His Will that prevailed and not what I wanted. I could not believe that I was actually being allowed to gaze into His eyes. It was like basking in eternity – blissful and peaceful – everything was there! Bob, who is logical and rational, and not prone to emotional language, said that looking into Swami's eyes really was like experiencing the "love of a thousand mothers".

– The author is former SSEHV National Convener of U.K. and has authored a number of books on SSEHV.

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security. Every mother should be regarded as an embodiment of the divine. Then every son will enjoy peace and prosperity.

Today we are celebrating Easwaramma Day to propagate the glory of motherhood. The world is sustained by the prayers of mothers. A woman's prayer is more powerful than a thousand prayers of men because women are pure and tender-hearted. Never cause sorrow to your mother. Never hurt her feelings. Then

God will help you in all your endeavours. One calls one's country motherland and not fatherland. Thus, mother is given an exalted position in the world. Consider your country as your own mother and work for its progress. Under any circumstances, do not cause any harm to your mother and motherland. This is the significance and main teaching of today's celebration.

– Excerpted from Bhagavan's Easwaramma Day Discourses.



Effulgence of Divine Glory

DIVINE INTERVENTION

THERE ARE MANY INSTANCES in my practice where extremely difficult situations were overcome by some inexplicable supernatural intervention. I attribute this to Baba. To me, God is Baba and Baba is God. It is all Baba's Leela.

This was the case of an obese woman in her late forties. She came to the hospital with severely swollen hands and forearms with gangrenous areas on both sides. She was a severe diabetic with poor control of her blood sugar and poor general hygiene. At times, we thought that she might end up losing both her hands. I was on call. My first reaction was, "Baba, why me"? In this litigious society, the last thing I wanted was a case where the patient had the real potential of losing both hands. However, I had sympathy for this woman as she begged me to do my best. I consulted with several of my colleagues who expressed the opinion that this woman would most likely lose her hands. I started to pray to Baba and explained all the risks to the patient and her husband. They seemed to have understood the dangers of this advanced disease.

I first controlled her blood sugar with careful titration of insulin. Then I took her to surgery. I prayed to Baba for His guidance in recognising the dead tissue versus the viable one so that I might remove only what was dead. Under general anaesthesia, I removed all the dead tissue from her hands and forearms. Then I incised all fascial compartments and left all wounds open to drain freely. In subsequent discussions at clinical conferences, other doctors expressed that they would have removed more tissue, which would have eventually led to amputations. During the weeks that followed, I prayed constantly to Baba for her healing. In about three months, with special care and some skin grafting, she managed to keep both of her hands. Some stiffness of the fingers developed, but she learned to live with it. This was Baba's miracle. I would not have had the courage to do such conservative treatment, risking profound sepsis and further complications, if it was not for my deep faith in Baba and the power of prayer.

– Excerpted from "The Miracle of Prayer" by Dr. Purnendu Dutta in the book "Inspired Medicine" compiled and edited by Judy Warner.

RELIGION IS NOTHING BUT LOVE

Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne

Buddha said, abstain from all evil, cultivate good, purify your mind. That is the teaching Bhagavan also is giving us. At this time, let us join together and spread this message everywhere.

OUR MOST BELOVED BHAGAVAN Sri Sathya Sai Baba, dear leaders of religions, elders, brothers, sisters and students! This is a great moment in my life. In July 1982, I came here and sat at the feet of Bhagavan Baba, and I still remember the advice He gave me. He emphasised both science and spirituality, and that is a great inspiration to my work. Everyday I am with hundreds of people who are Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims. With all of them, we are able to work together with a great spirit of love and brotherhood. Today I am asked to speak a few words on "Buddhism and Love".

Buddhism Teaches Loving Kindness towards All

Actually, the more you study religions in depth, it is nothing but love. Buddhism teaches that one should love and protect all beings just as a mother loves and protects her one and only child even at the risk of her life. In other words, we are asked to love all living beings. This loving kindness towards humans, towards animals and

Nature ignites within us a divine force which is shown and demonstrated by great spiritual beings like Bhagavan Baba. We are at a unique opportunity in this world today under the guidance that He is giving, showing very clearly to the world that religion is nothing but love. If love can manifest in every human heart, what will happen? Then all of us as individuals

Learn to get the joy of living. That is Mudita. When you get the joy of living by doing good things, some people will blame you, some people will praise you. Accept both praise and blame, loss and gain with equanimity so that with these four characteristics: Metta, Karuna, Mudita and Upekkha (loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity) while you are still human, you can rise up to the divine level; try to go higher and higher to that level of highest spirituality.

would look at the rest of humanity, look at the rest of the living world with great loving kindness. This loving kindness, what is called Metta or Maitri, should be translated into action. You see so many people are hungry, so many are poor, so many are powerless. You see a lot of suffering everywhere. Most of you are young people; go in search of those who are suffering and try to remove the causes that lead to suffering. If people have no water to drink, they suffer. If we go and give our labour, our scientific knowledge and whatever we have and try to provide water for those who don't have water, that is compassionate action. So, in every sphere of life whether it is something to do with mental, physical, emotional or otherwise, we always can translate love into action.

Love alone is not enough. We can sit down, we can meditate, hours and hours, extending loving kindness. It is important because our entire psycho sphere is filled with hatred, organised hatred, organised ignorance and organised selfishness. The result is in the world today most of the resources are spent for evil and not for good. Therefore, as human beings, if we can create a spiritual force and get linked to the Divine Being we have in our presence, then, we can have a psycho sphere in the world which is not filled with ignorance, hatred and that kind of evil. We can build a psycho sphere where qualities like selflessness, love, forgiveness, beneficence prevail, and that is the kind of world we need today. We have no time to

lose. Lord Buddha repeatedly said, "May all beings be well and happy!" Hatred never ceases by hatred; hatred can only be ceased by love, by forgiveness. Today's world has many religions. Unfortunately, when religions lack spirituality, they ask for a lot of trouble. Everywhere in the world we have a lot of problems because religions have deviated from their original path. What our great Universal Teacher Bhagavan Baba is trying to do is to bring back that lost spirituality to all religions so that religions don't have to fight with one another. Please remember this, there can be one Buddha for thousands of years, there can be one Bhagavan Baba for thousands of years. But we are the people who have to make them live.

I met Bhagavan in 1982; I spent over one and a half hours. Like a loving father He explained my weaknesses to me, and even without my telling Him, He gave me guidance. After that I came twice, but I was not called for an interview. I was at a distance till I was called to come here by the Chairman of the International Committee. But everyday whatever good I did, I always passed the merit to Him. All of us have an obligation. We should have that divinity in our heart, never allow any evil, any hatred, any selfishness to come in our way. We should believe that we can build a new world; we can put an end to violence, we can put an end to greed that is dominating the world and destroying our environment. Young people must take the leadership.



Develop Equanimity of Mind

Buddha said, abstain from all evil, cultivate good, purify your mind. That is the teaching Bhagavan also is giving us. At this time, let us join together and spread this message everywhere.

Believe me, I am striving to usher peace not only in my country but in the entire world. I am working on it very hard, silently from a few hundred people up to five hundred thousand people. We get together like this, spend just one and a half hours. During that period, we try to look at our mind and body. What is my body? It is nothing but certain elements coming together. Hardness, liquidity, heat, coldness, expandability, contractibility, these elements make our body. The body has these organs, eyes, ears and all that, including the mind. All the time we are connected to the outside world by these senses. And from the outside world, when we get various messages, what do we do? We get attached. That means, we want to have it. We get completely alienated in our mind. We want to hate others, reject them. We can avoid these two and try to have a state of equanimity in our mind. That is why Buddha said, "Love all. Do compassionate service to all". That is Karuna. Learn to get the joy of living. That is Mudita. When you get the joy of living by doing good things, some people will blame you, some people will praise you. Accept both praise and blame, loss and gain with equanimity so that with these four characteristics: Metta, Karuna, Mudita and Upekkha (loving kindness, compassion,

*Loving kindness towards humans,
towards animals and Nature
ignites within us a divine force
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sympathetic joy and equanimity) while you are still human, you can rise up to the divine level; try to go higher and higher to that level of highest spirituality. So, Lord Buddha's teachings were on these lines. Some individuals with vested interests are dividing people by caste, race, religion, nationality or language. But that is exactly what is happening to all religions. Instead of bringing people together, we are dividing people. Therefore, in the sacred Divine Presence of Bhagavan, let us all resolve that by purification of our minds and hearts, by serving everybody irrespective of who that person is, not only humans but other living beings, the environment, let us build a new society where Dharma rules and not armaments or army generals.

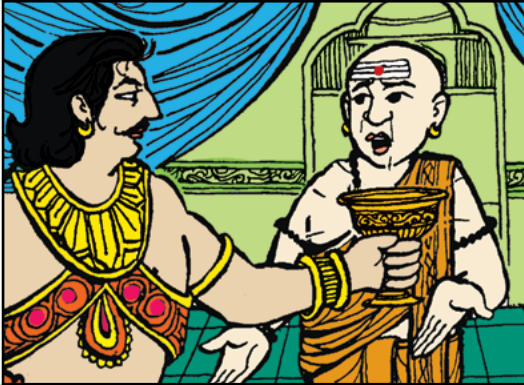
– From the talk of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, Founder of Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka and former President of World Parliament of Religions, at the Inter-faith Conference held at Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd July 2005.



Every Moment is Sacred

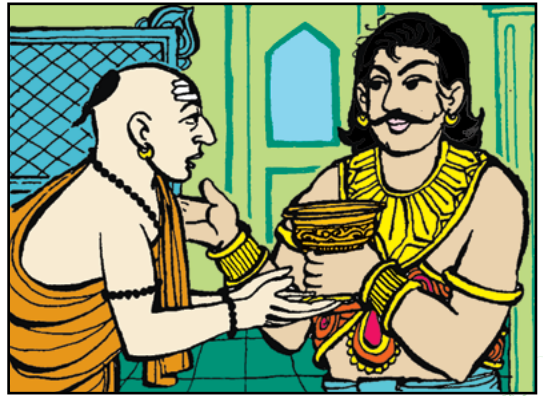
HEARING THE REPUTATION of Karna as a person of great charity, a poor Brahmin once went to his palace. At that time, Karna was applying oil to his hair with his right hand from a gold cup held in his left hand. Seeing the gold cup in the hand of Karna,

with left hand. Kindly give the cup with your right hand". Requesting the Brahmin to accept it, Karna handed over the cup to him at once, thinking, "Who knows my mind may change in the duration of transferring the cup from my left to right hand"!



The Brahmin requested Karna to give him the gold cup with his right hand.

the Brahmin requested him to give it to him in charity. Karna immediately extended his left hand towards the Brahmin to give him the gold cup. Thereupon, the Brahmin said to Karna, "Oh king! Charity is not performed



Offering the gold cup to the Brahmin immediately with his left hand, Karna felt that there should not be even the slightest delay in performing a good deed.

Every moment is sacred for performing a good deed. A good thought may change into a bad one by delay in putting it into practice.

Man is Divine, take it from Me; he is really here on a holy mission for a Divine purpose. To consider him as mean or weak or sinful is a great mistake. This is itself a great sin. Man must earn his birthright, namely Santhi. Asanthi is for him an unnatural state. His real nature is Santhi.

— Baba

NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

FROM 26TH-28TH SEPTEMBER 2014, the SSIO of the Dominican Republic organised an innovative National Sai Retreat on the theme, "Living Swami's Spiritual Legacy". About 115 SSIO members attended the retreat at a site called the "White House". Inspiring talks about Bhagavan's teachings were given, and many devotees shared about their experiences with Swami, bringing tears to the eyes of the audience. Sri Medrano, a devotee from La Vega, had suffered from deafness for many years. During an exposition about control of senses, he felt frustrated because he could not hear the talk, although he longed to hear it. Suddenly, he felt a "pop" in his head, and immediately afterwards, he could hear perfectly. He was happy to hear the speaker, and the audience was moved by this display of Bhagavan's grace.

GREECE

Bhagavan's Birthday was celebrated by about 100 people at the Sai Prema Centre in the City of Markopoulo. A newly published book, the Greek translation of Sathyam Sivam Sundaram, Vol. 2, with a map showing sites visited by Bhagavan between 1962 and 1968, was unveiled. The morning programme opened with a short video titled "The Message of the

Lord", followed by devotional singing. Two large birthday cakes displaying the message, "Love All Serve All", were offered to Bhagavan. After the programme, large quantities of food were packed and distributed to needy families. SSIO members also donated blood at the local hospital, the next day.

Seven SSIO volunteers from Athens visited Mother Teresa's Mission as part of Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations. Dry food was donated to the Mission, and bags containing chocolate biscuits, candy and



Devotees serving children at Mother Teresa Mission.

balloons were distributed to children aged 1-10. The children's mothers received personal hygiene kits, nightgowns, costume jewellery, plates, clothes and toys for the children. The volunteers also entertained the participants with music and singing.



THE NETHERLANDS

In 2014, a number of service projects were undertaken throughout the Netherlands on the occasion of Avatar Declaration Day. On 20th October 2014, Sai volunteers conducted an educational activity in Amsterdam-West to teach



Children's drama about healthy eating.

children about eating right, and distributed healthy food as part of the "Children: Our Future" initiative. Ten children, who meet for SSEHV lessons each Monday in a community centre, imbibed the importance of healthy food through a drama in which they acted as magicians creating good food. The drama concluded with a human-values song sung jointly by the children and their mothers, on stage.

The Sathya Sai Centre of Arnhem initiated another educational project with two teachers and 64 children at a primary school, where week-long lessons were given on cleanliness under the theme, "Eco-Rhythm". The teachers stressed that outer cleanliness is important, but ultimately the foundation for all cleanliness is inner cleanliness. At the end of the week,

on Avatar Declaration Day, the children and Sathya Sai volunteers picked up litter from the city streets. The local government provided garbage bags and removed the collected waste. The children constructed little musical instruments from the waste material, prior to disposal, and presented poetry, songs and instrumental music performances at the school.

U. S. A.

Sathya Sai Centres of the Mid-Atlantic Region, U.S.A. observed Bhagavan's 89th Birthday by conducting at least one service activity everyday during November 2014. Over 60 different projects were organised by more than 200 Sathya Sai volunteers, for the benefit of several thousand needy people throughout the region. Service activities included serving food at soup kitchens, churches, parks and street corners; conducting grocery, food, clothing, and book drives; cleaning beaches; visiting nursing homes; distributing school supplies, hygiene kits, winter kits, wheelchairs and tote bags; mailing cards with uplifting messages to US service men and women overseas; conducting computer training sessions; and organising blood drives.

Sathya Sai Centres across the South-Central Region, U.S.A., undertook a variety of service projects in honour of Bhagavan's Birthday. Volunteers from Houston served hot meals to more than 75 needy people at a Salvation Army location and to about 150 transient residents at two local homeless shelters. They coordinated a "Winter Jacket Drive" to secure outer garments for

the poor. Some 600 Sathya Sai devotees in Houston attended a Birthday celebration for Bhagavan. The Consul General of India, Sri Harish Parvathaneni, as well as the founder and president of a homeless shelter in Houston where Sathya Sai volunteers conduct service projects, served as the two featured speakers.

Volunteers from the Sathya Sai Centre of Austin hosted a fun-filled event for 35 mental health patients at the Austin

a speaker from the U.S. Air Force and a drama presented by Young Adults and other devotees.

MEXICO

Members of a Sathya Sai Centre in one of the most dilapidated areas of Mexico City conduct several service projects to help the needy. In 2002, they built a Sathya Sai Medical Clinic for medical consultations and distributing medicines. In February 2013, the volunteers started a school in the same building. Currently, 110 children aged 6-15 attend Saturday lessons on SSEHV and receive tutoring for school. The staff includes a principal and four teachers, assisted by Sathya Sai



Food service on the occasion of Bhagavan's Birthday.

State Hospital on 21st November 2014 on the occasion of Bhagavan's Birthday. The volunteers lovingly served food and distributed gifts. On 22nd November 2014, SSIO members served 400 indigent people breakfast at the Caritas facility in downtown Austin. On the same day SSE children, accompanied by adults, visited a home for the elderly, where they talked with the seniors, served delicacies and distributed blankets and socks. On 23rd November, the Sathya Sai Centre of Austin celebrated Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday through a devotional programme including



Medical clinic in Mexico City.

volunteers. The volunteers prepare lunch for the children, clean the classrooms, bathrooms and yard, and maintain order when the children arrive and leave.

At the medical clinic, a doctor and nurse work daily and a psychologist serves on weekends, attending to 6,000 patients annually. The volunteers related a touching story of a teenage drug addict who was able to quit drugs, with the help of the clinic, and began taking care of his sick



mother. In August 2014, all the fixtures, furniture, and computers were stolen from this location. Sathya Sai devotees rallied together to make the necessary restitution and repairs, resulting in an upgraded facility with new equipment, improved security, and newly painted areas.

KAZAKHSTAN

About 300 teachers and educational personnel from higher and public educational institutions attended a seminar titled “Universal Values: Universal Approach,” in Almaty from 28th to 31st



SSEHV Seminar in Kazakhstan.

October 2014. The SSIO organised the seminar at the invitation of the Bobek Centre, which is administered by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The European ISSE, represented by Ms. Marianne Meyer, Director; Ms. Petra von Kalinowski, Deputy Director; and Ms. Anita Friedrich, Secretary, gave lectures and workshops on SSEHV. The teachers and teacher trainers responded with interest and enthusiasm, and committed to sharing

Bhagavan's message of the importance of practising human values, with children and other educators.

RUSSIA AND SIX ADJOINING COUNTRIES

On 23rd November 2014, more than 1,000 people celebrated Bhagavan's Birthday at various locations in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. Inspirational talks, presentations, videos, devotional singing, and concerts were organised by Sathya Sai volunteers, SSE children, and teachers. Mementos on Bhagavan's life and works, as well as calendars, were distributed. Sathya Sai volunteers visited children's rehabilitation centres, homes for the disabled, orphanages, and homeless shelters to offer food to those in need.

Public meetings are organised twice a year in Zone 8 countries to provide information about Bhagavan's life and teachings, and about SSIO activities. On 8th and 9th November 2014, 330 newcomers to the SSIO and 300 SSIO members from 44 cities attended public meetings in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. The programmes included presentations on Bhagavan's teachings and His works, unity of religions, and SSIO activities in the areas of devotion, education and community service. The public had an opportunity to learn about the mission of the SSIO and received video discs with Bhagavan's quotations and photographs.



B H A R A T

Haryana and Chandigarh: As part of Bhagavan's 90th Birthday celebrations and golden jubilee of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, a Nutrition Centre has been set up at Panchkula, a Vocational Training Centre has been started at Kunjpura (Karnal district) and a Disaster Management Training Centre has been established at Kurukshetra.

To reach out to the general public for awareness about Bhagavan, His teachings and His service projects for humanity, the State organised Sri Sathya Sai Swaranjali (music concerts) at public places for the general masses in every district. This activity was organised with the active participation of Sai Youth which include former Bal Vikas students and former Sai Students. During the presentations, they also related the loving incidents and experiences of Swami's love and His deep concern for humanity by giving examples of water projects, hospitals and educational institutions. The concerts have so far been performed in Karnal, Rohtak and Ambala districts wherein people from all walks of life attended in large numbers.

In continuation of the said celebrations, Srimad Bhagavata Katha (narration of the story of the Bhagavatam) was organised at Panchkula from 7th April to 13th April 2015. Sri Ritu Raj Maharaj, head of Sri



Participants in the Srimad Bhagavata Katha at Panchkula.

Maa Pitambra Dhaam of Indore, related the story for seven days with great devotion.

He also shared his personal experiences with Swami when he conducted Srimad Bhagavata Katha at Prasanthi Nilayam in the year 2010. The function concluded with distribution of clothes to the needy. Food was served to more than 800 devotees on the concluding day.

Punjab: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Punjab organised an All India State Coordinators Meet at Sai Saraswati Vidya Mandir High School, Patiala on 28th and 29th March 2015, which was attended by about 50 participants. Sri Satyajit, National Coordinator of Vidya Vahini Project, presided over the meet and delivered talks on various aspects of this project.

On this occasion, a disaster management training programme was held under the guidance of Sri S. Thyagarajan, in which live demonstration of techniques of disaster management was provided to the participants.



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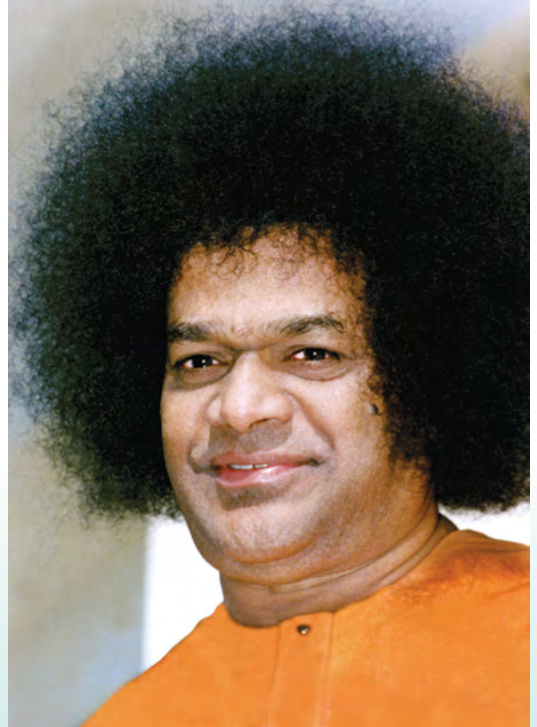
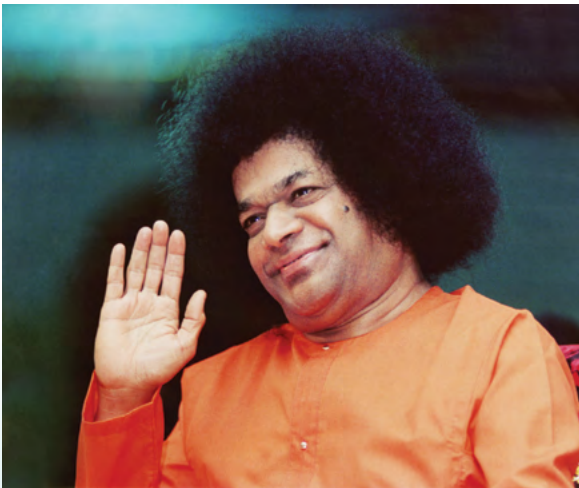
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About SSSSTPD

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.

Other Books By SSSSTPD (In English)

1. Sai Sathya Sakha
2. Summer Showers In Brindavan, 1972
3. Satyopanisad I
4. Satyopanisad II
5. Gurudev
6. Namasmara
7. Bhakthi And Health
8. Life Is Love, Enjoy It!
9. Life Is A Challenge, Meet It!
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12. Body And Mind
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I Come Direct to Confer Peace and Joy

I will never associate Myself with the temporary, the tarnished, the tawdry and the mean. Then, there are some who proclaim that I am “coming upon someone” and speaking through him! They pretend to be My mouthpieces and communicate to others My advice and My suggestions, as if I have ‘authorised’ them or as if I am Myself telling so through them. Now hear this. I never speak through another; I never possess another or use another as a vehicle of expression. I come direct, I come straight, I come as I am, to confer peace and joy.

– *Baba*

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