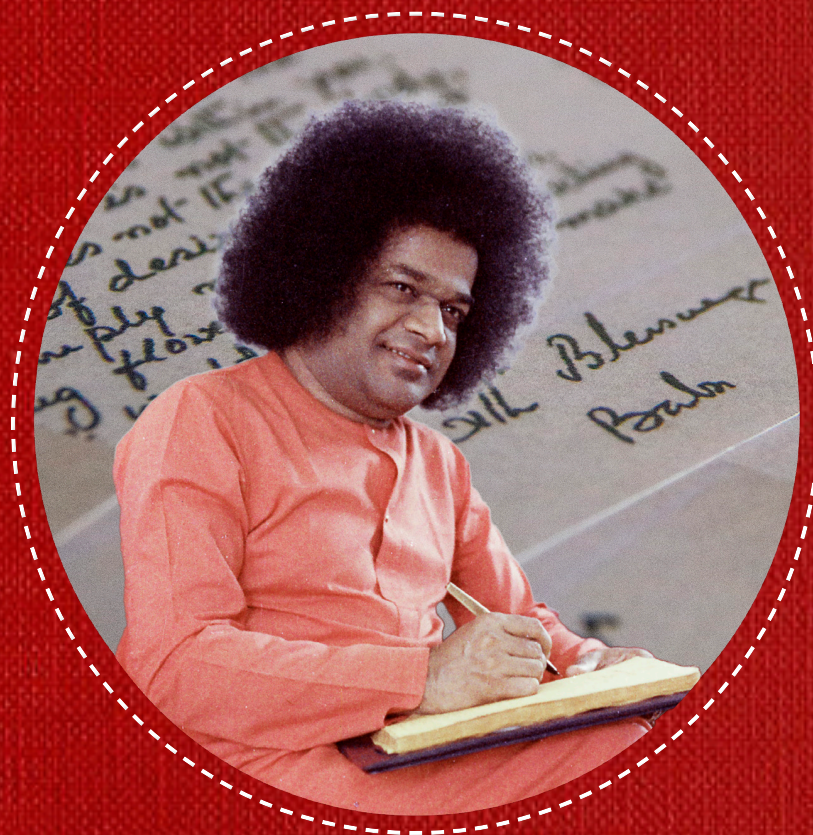


The Avatar's Nine Gems

Letters for you and me



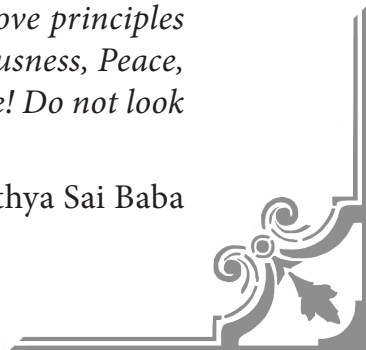
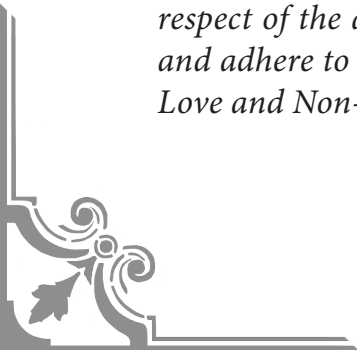
SAI SARATHI 2021



THE TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

(For members of the Sri Sathya Sai International Organisation)

1. Love and serve your country. Do not be critical of others' countries.
2. Honor all religions for each is a pathway to God.
3. Love all people without distinction; know that humanity is a single community.
4. Keep home and surroundings clean.
5. Help people to become self-reliant. Provide food and shelter, love and care, for the sick and the aged.
6. Be examples of honesty. Do not participate in any corruption such as bribery.
7. Do not develop jealousy, hatred, or envy on any account.
8. Develop self-reliance; become your own servant before proceeding to serve others.
9. Adore God, abhor sin.
10. Observe your country's laws and be an exemplary citizen.



“All members of SAI BABA Centres should be an example to others in respect of the above. All members should abide by the above principles and adhere to the 5 basic human values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence. Your first principle should be Love! Do not look for faults in others!”

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

*The Avatar's
Nine Gems
Letters for you and me*

SAI SARATHI

November 2021

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Hong Kong



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TO OUR BELOVED BHAGAWAN
You make us the best we can be



Organisation MESSAGE

“Never give up the organisation. Regard it as the breath of your life. This is real penance. Having this firm resolve, become exemplary leaders. This is My sole desire. Swami’s love will accompany you everywhere.”

Om Sai Ram

A decade has passed since 24 April 2011 when our Beloved Bhagawan, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, shed His physical Form. The Avatar came to teach and transform all creation by His Love. As perfect as His birth was, so was His withdrawal. He gifted us the unique opportunity to earnestly take up the responsibility of demonstrating that our lives are His message and that His Mission is our mission.

We serve Him as office bearers, as *sevadal*, or as devotees only because He chose us. He said: *“Only those whom I have called can serve Me.”* To be called to serve in His organization is the rarest of all blessings! It is our destiny! *“I have prepared you for this work over many incarnations. I have drawn you to Me.”*

Bringing us into His fold, He loves us intimately. He taught us that to love Him is to obey Him, and to dedicate ourselves to His Avatarhood so that we may proceed speedily towards our Self-realisation.

This tenth anniversary calls for introspection and self-assessment. What have we done in this time to be closer to Him? Have we imbibed His Love? How successfully have we spread His teachings to everyone we have come across by our own example? His teachings are eternally alive and will continue to be if we live them.

Every *guru* has His way of teaching and Bhagawan’s way is inimitable. For every ‘Sai Ram’ that we utter, Swami tests our faith, whether we can see Him in everyone and everything. This is His way of ensuring we always focus on Him as a single thought, as incessant meditation. Every task we perform, be it vacuuming the carpet or cleaning the washrooms, is to cleanse the mind of egoism and pride to make this single thought possible.

Every miracle of His that we experience in our own lives or hear about is a means to strengthen our faith that He is the higher force in our life. By allowing Him to work through us, we draw upon and become that higher force.

When we read the Bhagavad Gita or the Ramayana we experience love for Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, whom we have never seen. We feel Their Love when we dive into the teachings. Fortunately, we don’t have to wait another five thousand years to feel Swami’s Love, He has left us a treasure trove of His teachings.

He also left us with another treasure – more than 4,000 handwritten letters penned between 1948 to 1970. These gems He wrote to students, teachers, devotees, etc. The distinctive style, the tenderness of His sweet words, the teachings and the loving blessings He signed off with should melt our hearts and create a yearning to give up our mundane desires.

Every letter has a message for each of us individually, scripted by our very own Inner Motivator who knows everything about us. His letters reveal our Atmic reality.

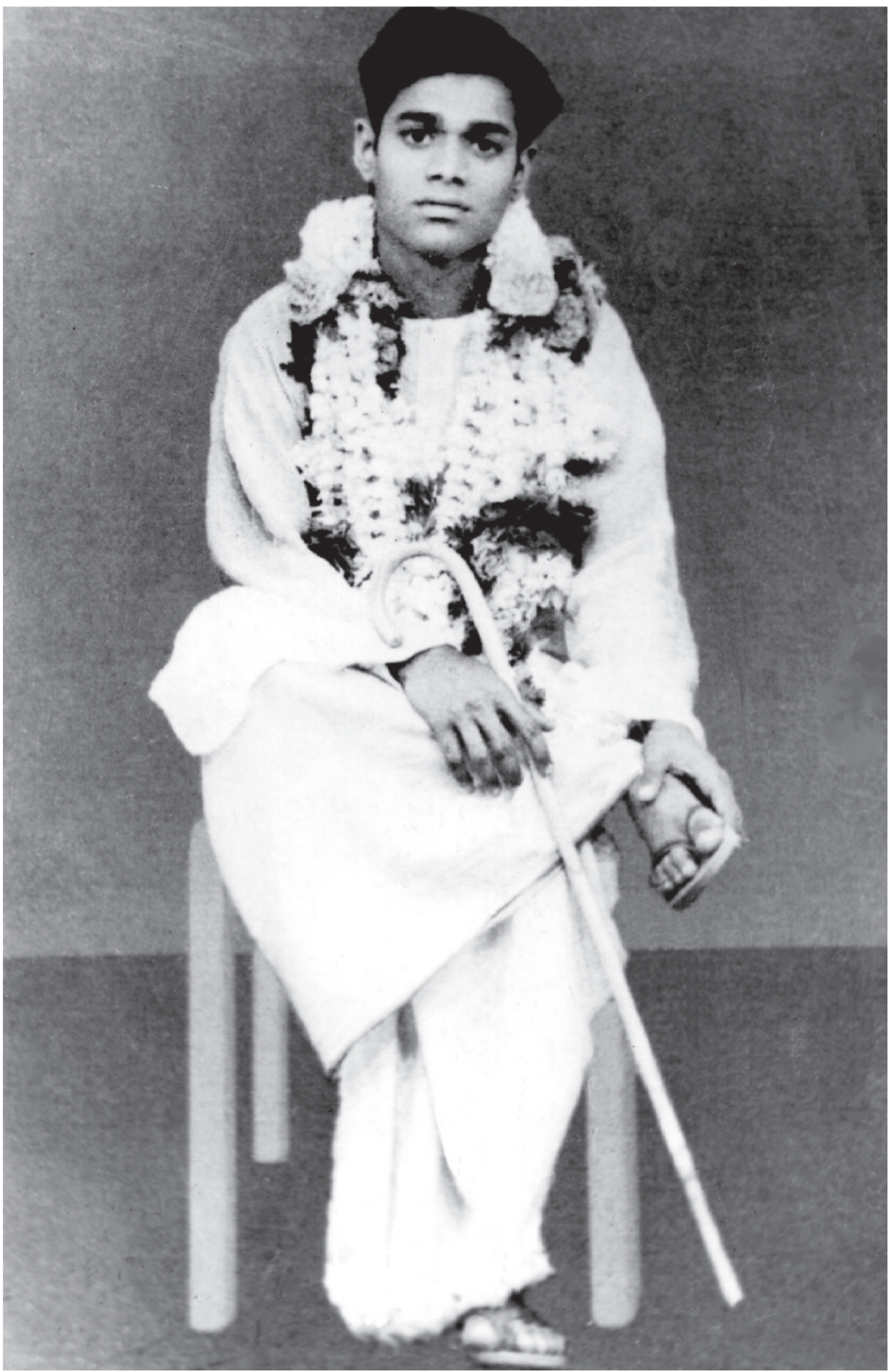
In this annual publication, Sai Sarathi, 2021, we contemplate upon some of the gems He left for us and we reply to them. His boundless love for His devotees is returned with the unassuming innocence that young children have for their parents.

Let us re-dedicate our lives at His Lotus Feet, to keep His teachings alive by living them ourselves and by spreading them to all we know.

Jai Sai Ram
Naina Shamdasani
National Council President

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DIVINE Discourse

Devotion IN ACTION

Even though it is said that in the Kali Age even mere reciting the name of the Lord is enough for realising God, without active service the Divine Namasmara alone is not enough. Everyone should combine *Namasmara* with dedicated service to the Divine in one form or another.

Hanuman is the supreme exemplar of devotion based on service. The Supreme, who is the embodiment of *Ashtaiswarya* (the eight forms of Divine wealth), permeates the cosmos through eight potencies. This vast universe of animate and inanimate objects is called *Viswam*. *Viswam* is the epithet applied to the Divine who enters into every part of the cosmos.

“*Viswam Vishnu Swaroopam*” (the cosmos is the manifestation of Vishnu). Vishnu means the One who pervades everything. Vishnu is the Cause, *Viswam* (the cosmos) is the effect. The universe is manifestation of the Creator and the creation. It is because the Lord is manifest in the Creator-creation relationship that we are able to recognise the Divine.

Different forms of manifestations of Divine

In the cosmos, the first manifestation of the Divine is as water. Man cannot live without water. Water is present everywhere, though in some places it will be visible on the surface and below the ground in others. The Divine is protecting all living beings in the form of water. Water is known by another name as *Jivanam* (Life). God is making His presence manifest in the world in the form of water.

The second manifestation is *Agni* (fire). It is on account of fire that everything is illumined and can be perceived. The same fire is present in man as the *jataragni* (digestive fire). It is this fire that enables the conversion of the food one consumes into blood, flesh, bone and other things (seven basic constituents) and sustains the body. Without these seven primary constituents life cannot exist for a

moment. For all of them, God in the form of fire is the basis.

The third manifestation is the Earth. All living beings flourish on the Earth. Birth and death go on the earth. The phenomena of birth, growth and death testify to the manifestation of God in the form of the Earth. Man secures all the things needed for living from the Earth. Hence, the Earth must be regarded as a manifestation of God. As God cannot be experienced in any specific form, He must be recognised in manifestations like the Earth.

The fourth manifestation is air. Every moment we are engaged in breathing air. We are sustained by the oxygen in the air. Man inhales and exhales air 21,600 times a day in 24 hours. While inhaling, the sound “*So*” is produced. In exhaling, the sound “*Ham*” is produced. Together, they make up the term “*So-ham*”, meaning “*He is I*”, proclaiming the inherent divinity of man. God is to be recognised in the process of inhaling and exhaling.

That being so, what is the need to go in quest of God elsewhere? When the Divine is within us and present in the form of the *pancha bhutas* (five basic elements), men strive to search for God everywhere else.

The cosmos is riddled with sound vibrations

When the Lord is present everywhere, within and outside you, why go in search of Him anywhere? In this context, the question arises: “Is it true that devotees are going in search of God or is God searching for devotees?” In my view, it is God who is searching for devotees.

Akasa (space) is the fifth manifestation. The distinctive quality of *Akasa* is *sabda* (sound). The cosmos is filled with sound vibrations. Sound is the means of cognising most things in the world.

The entire cosmos is permeated by sound waves. Creation itself has originated from sound. When man inhales air, it is this sound that emanates from him in the form of *So-Ham – Ham-So*.

Where is this *Akasa*? People imagine it is somewhere high up. Only the clouds are above. Wherever you have sound vibrations, you have *Akasa* (space). When I speak, it is *Akasa*. When you strike this table, you can experience *Akasa*. *Akasa* is present in the clapping of hands during the *bhajan*. *Akasa* is present in the process of breathing. It is because of *Akasa* that living is possible.

The Sun, the Earth and the Moon

The sixth is the Sun. All living beings are able to survive because of the Sun. Birds, beasts, trees and crops all thrive on the energy got from the Sun. The world will cease to exist without the Sun. Human intelligence is a reflection of the effulgence of the Sun. The enquiring nature of the intellect is derived from the Sun. Without the power of discrimination man will be a moron.

The Moon comes seventh. The moon principle confers tranquillity on man. The mind is reflection of the moon. Man's primary goal is to secure peace of mind. The Earth came from the Sun and Moon from the Earth. The Sun, the Earth and the Moon are forms of the same substance. These three find their expressions in man in the form of mind, intellect and *vijnana* (consciousness).

The eighth element is the authority of the *Veda* (*Veda-pramanam*). The *Veda* proclaim the eternal Truth. There is the saying: *"There is no greater Dharma than Truth. God, who is embodiment of Truth, though eternal and formless, manifests Himself in the eight forms in the cosmos. When the Divine is recognised in these forms, man will realise his true nature."*

It is naive to try to search for God in any particular place. Man is himself the cause of all his sorrows and difficulties because, forgetting his inherent divinity, he regards the body as real and pursues mundane and physical pleasures. Man forgets that it is the Spirit that activates all his senses.

When a fan turns or a bulb burns, it is the current that makes them work. When a car is driven, the engine revolves and the horn works because of the

current from the battery. Likewise, for the car of the human body, the eyes are the lights, speech is the horn and all sense organs function because of the current from the *Atma* (the Spirit).

The *Atma* is the unified form of three constituents: Mind, Intellect and *Samskara* (sacred actions). If anyone is asked, "What is the mind?" the answer comes: "It doesn't matter." When one is asked, "What is matter?" the reply is "Don't mind." If people are not concerned to know what is mind and what is matter, what is it that concerns them in this world? Without understanding mind and matter, how can one enquire into anything?

Mind is the cause of bondage

In the life of man, the mind, which is continually engaged in thought, is most important. All sorrows arise because of the failure to understand the workings of the mind. The mind is constantly engaged in thinking. This important function of the mind must be properly understood. The mind is not a mere physical entity. It is not the body but an expression of the enquiring quality of the *Atma* (Spirit).

Hence, it is that the mind is regarded as the cause of bondage or liberation for man. If the mind is turned towards God, it becomes the means of liberation. When it is turned towards the things of the world, it becomes the means of bondage. The Godward mind results in detachment. The world-directed mind leads to attachment. Hence, turning the mind towards God must be man's primary aim.

The powers of the mind are indescribable. The speed of thought is greater than that of anything in the world, faster than light or wind. Though endowed with this immense power, it is a pity man considers himself a weakling. There is no connection between the mind and the heart. The heart is doubtless a vital physical organ in the body. It is the supplier of blood to every part of the body. But the mind manifests the *Atmashakti* (power of the Spirit).

Difference between *Medha-Shakti* and *Buddhi*

The second constituent is *Buddhi* (intellect). *Buddhi* is generally regarded as the *Medha-shakti* (power of intelligence). This is not correct. It is really the discriminating power of the *Atma*. There is a vital



difference between *Medha-shakti* (intelligence) and *Buddhi* (the discriminating power). Intelligence exists as a physical entity in man. It is the centre of the nervous system, a kind of control-room for man. But *Buddhi* represents a superior power derived from the Spirit. It is not related to the physical body or to the physical phenomenal world. By its relationship to the *Atma*, it has divine attributes.

The third constituent is *Samskara*. This term is usually defined as “way of life.” But it is much more than that. It represents righteous conduct, based on reason and tradition, embodying the mores of the society. Without righteous conduct, man’s life is utterly worthless. Righteous conduct must be based on an enquiry into what is transient and what is of enduring value in human existence.

The mind and the *Buddhi* have to be utilised for determining what is spiritual and what is non-spiritual. It is only when knowledge of the eternal verities is obtained by such enquiry that one’s conduct can be reflected in *Samskara* (righteous behaviour), which is the divinisation of life. We witness today many attempts at reform of society – political, economic, social, etc. But all these are of no avail, because they are ignoring the essential factor of transforming the mind of man.

Many people complain that their troubles have not ended and God has shown no compassion towards them. They would do well to learn a lesson from an episode in the Ramayana. After Vibhishana had become friendly with Hanuman, he once asked the latter, “Hanuman! Although you are a monkey, you have been the recipient of the Lord’s grace. Although I have been ceaselessly engaged in the contemplation of Rama, how is it I have not secured His grace?”

Hanuman replied: “Vibhishana! It is true that you are ceaselessly chanting the name of Rama. But to what extent are you engaged in the service of Rama? By merely contemplating on the name of Rama you cannot get Rama’s grace. When your brother Ravana brought away Sitadevi, what is the help you rendered to her? Did you do anything to relieve even partially Rama’s distress?”

Practice should follow the precepts

Devotees should realise that by merely uttering “Rama! Rama!” you cannot ensure the Lord’s grace. To what extent are you carrying out the

injunctions of Rama, Krishna or Baba? How far are you practising the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita? Without practising the precepts, no amount of repetition of the name of the Lord is of any use. It is merely like playing a gramophone record.

The Lord’s name must get implanted in your heart. Today, on account of the special prerogative of the *Kali* Age, people think that it is enough to recite the Lord’s name alone for achieving the goal of life. But this is mistake. Can you have the current merely by having the negative wire? Only when the negative and positive lines are combined will the current flow. Devotion must find expression in dedicated service to the Lord.

Chant God’s Name and perform sacred acts

Embodiments of love! When you recite the Name of the Lord with love, when you carry out with your limbs the injunctions of the Lord and look upon the world as a manifestation of the Divine, you are bound to receive the grace of the Lord. Have this firm conviction.

Do not labour under the misconception that the mere chanting of God’s Name alone is necessary and adequate. Along with it you have to take part in sacred activities. You must not mind whatever obstacles you may encounter. This is the lesson which Hanuman conveyed when he overcame each of the obstacles he met with when he set out on the search for Sita. Hanuman stands out as a supreme example of dedicated and determined service to the Divine.

Devote everyday at least five minutes for reciting the Lord’s Name and a few minutes for rendering some kind of service to the needy and the forlorn. Include in your daily prayers a prayer for the welfare of all people in the world. Do not be engrossed in your own well-being and salvation.

Try to lead a life free from ill-will and harm to others. Regard this as a type of spiritual discipline and redeem your lives.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 23 / Ch. 2





Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

PRASANTHI NILAYAM P.O.
ANANTAPUR DT. (A.P.)
PHONE NO. 30

Message

You as body, mind or soul are a dream,
but what you really are is existence, knowledge,
Bliss. You are the GOD of this universe. You are
creating the whole universe and drawing it in.
To gain the infinite universal individuality, the
miserable little prison individuality must go.
Bhakti is no crying or any negative condition.
It is seeing of all in all we see.

It is the heart that reaches the goal. Follow the heart.
A pure heart seeks beyond the intellect. It gets
inspired.

Whatever we do reacts upon us. If we do good,
we shall have happiness and if evil, unhappiness.
Within you is the real happiness, within you is the
mighty ocean of nectar divine. Seek it within you,
feel it; feel it; it is here, the self. It is not the body,
the mind, the intellect, the brain. It is not the desire or
the desiring. It is not the object of desire. Above all
these, you are. All these are simply manifestations.
You appear as the smiling flower, as the twinkling
stars. What is there in the world which can make
you desire anything?

With Blessings
Baba

WITHIN YOU IS THE *Real Happiness*

My Dearest of the Dear Swami!

The heartbeat of my heart, the life of my life! My very own Swami!

I want to separate You from myself today and place You on the throne of my altar so that I may write to You as I used to do earlier when I came to know You as the manifested GOD, whose image I was supposed to place at my altar to revere and worship as part of my daily routine. God was thought to be high up, only to be reached by the very few after long and intense *sadhana*.

Swami, when I read Your letter I noted Your words, “*You as body, mind and soul are a dream, but what you really are is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss. You are the God of this Universe.*” You asked us to follow the heart and told us that “*A pure heart seeks beyond intellect...*” Honestly, at the time it all came as a big jolt to me, totally beyond the beliefs I had had for many years and understanding!

How can I be GOD?

How can I go beyond the intellect when everything, all our learning and understanding, is based on the mind and intellect?

I didn't really understand it at all. To be honest with You, Swami, I failed to pay careful attention to it. I sang *bhajans* and joined *seva* activities, as those are what I had been thought was *Bhakti*, or devotion for God, who was to be prayed to and worshipped if we want His *Darshan*.

You told us, “*It is the heart that reaches the goal. Follow the heart. A pure heart seeks beyond the intellect. It gets inspired.*” I reflected on this. I read more of your teachings. I came across Your saying that the voice of God can be heard only in the

depth of silence. I tried to practise it. I felt good and peaceful. I continued my practice of silent sitting.

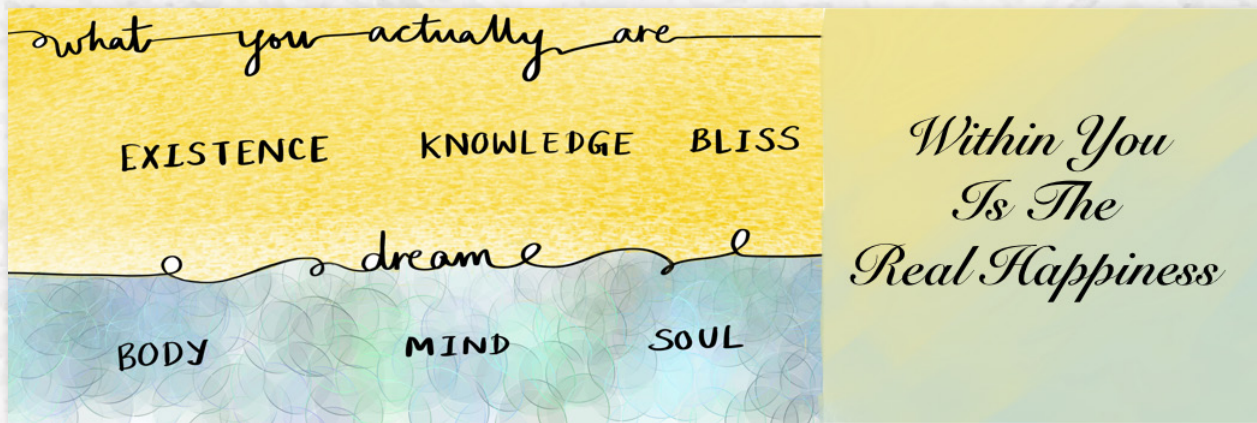
Observing silence, speaking less and only when necessary, helped me in many ways. I learnt to manage my emotions better. My concentration improved and I learnt to focus more on Your teachings, since a lot of personal energy was saved by the silence.

I also felt more calm and peaceful. That helped me to manage all situations and challenges better. My intuition got better and sharper. Many times the answers and solutions to my many questions and challenging situations came from within me.

Slowly, but surely, I was getting closer to You. I could feel Your Love. I knew that You were guiding me from within. What a joyous experience it has been!! With each passing year I experience and feel that my inner voice is Your voice. You are residing within me. I just need to be focused to experience You and feel You.

Dear Swami, I must confess to You that even though I know that in any given situation, the way shown by my inner-self, my inner-voice, is the right one, still my mind, my intellect, tries to use worldly reasoning and I fall into a trap. And You know what? Every time I make the decision based on my reasoning, as opposed to my intuition, I regret it. Why do I repeat this mistake, Swami?

When I know my inner-voice is Your voice and guidance, why do I ignore it as if I didn't hear it? Is it my ego that comes in my way? Is it my ego that tries to keep me away from You? Please help me to win this battle, Swami. Please help me.



Dear Father, with Your blessing, I have learnt now what it means when You tell us, “*Within you is the real happiness, within you is the mighty ocean of nectar Divine. Seek it within you. Feel it, feel it, it is here, the self...*” Whenever I sit in silence thinking only of You, I feel so content, so fulfilled, so happy and peaceful! I never get this feeling anywhere else! I don’t need anything or anyone. I don’t need a reason to be happy. I am happy within myself.

My dear Lord, when I came to You many years ago, I prayed, sang *bhajan*, went for *seva* and taught in Bal Vikas, but all these activities were just part of my other activities, nothing more. I spoke about, taught and practiced Your Ceiling on Desires programme. It helped me curb my desires to a great extent. But the desire to serve You was still there.

It was still a DESIRE to be fulfilled. While speaking about and practicing ceiling on desires, I observed that no desires, even when fulfilled, actually gave the real, permanent happiness, the inner joy, since it was based on external objects, things outside of me. The happiness lasted only till the joy from the object lasted. It was short-lived and temporary.

It was through self-reflection, by silent contemplation, and over and above all, only by Your grace, Swami, that I have come to realize that having gained You there is nothing else to be gained. No desire to be fulfilled.

Whatever is needed is always given by You without even asking for it. I have learnt to accept whatever comes my way, that whatever happens around and to me is Your will. Whatever comes from You is always good for me and I have learnt to feel happiness within. I am fulfilled, content and happy!!

My Dearest One, I wanted to write to You today as my God, to pray to You intensely to help me to retain this feeling, this joy within me forever. I want to keep You in my heart and never let You go. This feeling of love, peace, joy and bliss that I feel having You with me, let it be a permanent one. Please stay with me forever and let this little me, my ego-self, become totally absorbed, merged and melt away in You.

Dear Father, please bless me so that I can see You within and without, anywhere and everywhere, in all beings, not only sometimes but all the time, always. I want to be with You always, always ... forever my Lord!!

I in You and You in me!

Your loving daughter,
Kalpana L. Bhojwani



Bal Vikas children reply to Swami on 9 Gems

Sai Ram!

In my life, I feel that I am constantly worrying about completing assignments as well as studying for upcoming tests/assignments, which prevents me from always being happy.

The spiritual activity that brings me closest to God is either meditation or sitting in a temple quietly. When I do either of these I feel God is really close to me and I realise that God is in me. I feel God talking to me, asking me about my day. I can ask Him anything, such as to reduce the summer heat outside before I leave the house. Maybe not in full view, but God gets me going and leads me forward.

Sometimes desires are not meant to be fulfilled, as they are not the best for us. When God is with me, I feel calm and relaxed, and I feel like not leaving the Sai Baba Centre. I believe that God is always with me and helps me with any struggles I have, whether it be a problem with studies or anything else.

Sometimes, He reads my mind before I can even ask for help and this is why I believe God is always with me.

Keshav Daryanani

Dear Sri Sathya Sai Baba,

When I was a young child, I was taken to various temples and other places of worship, where God was said to be a singular person watching over me. However, upon realizing that God is an ideal to be looked up to, I returned to the thoughts I had when I was a young child – that there is no real 'God'. It's solely treating others equitably with dignity and respect, as 'God' is in every one of us.

Your letter reiterates what my family has believed, to "tread the path of righteousness... not a hair of [my] body will ever be injured." But can doing something that is supposed to be morally correct hurt us in the long run? For example, if we had a choose to save either a loved one or a group of children, the right thing would be to save the children, as they have their full life ahead of them and we would be saving more people. Knowing this is the righteous thing to do, we would still be hurt for not being able to save our own loved one.

To reassure ourselves that exhilaration and satisfaction do not lay outside us, we remind ourselves that the pleasures we experience now, for which we are grateful, from cosmetic and material objects, only cause transient happiness and that the only way to achieve fulfilment is, as You said, "rising above desires".

Neil

Prasanthinilayam

16-12-73

My Dear! Have you got any
spiritual hunger?
Spiritual hunger is the
ultimate meaning of every
activity in life. The dissatis-
faction and the restlessness
that remain even after obtain-
ing all the necessities of life
show that everyone conscious-
ly or unconsciously, does
suffer from spiritual hunger
and it is not appeased until
the spirit within is realised.
Without this divine discontent
there is no real progress.
World peace is possible when
all the people of the world wake
up to the facts governing
universal life and when
there is a heart to heart
feeling of goodness, love and
oneness among the inhabitants
of the world. With Blessings
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Spiritual HUNGER



Pranam to Sai, My Loving *Hrudaya Nivasi*

I am ever grateful for Your constant reassurance,
“I am always with you, in you, above you, around you.”
I know You are always with me, yet why do I miss You so?
I sense You are near me, yet why do I crave to see You?
I feel Your love, yet why do I yearn for You?

Most of all, why do I separate myself from You? I speak and act from the ‘I/me’ perspective, with an intermittent ‘You’ (and then only in my prayers when I seek something from You). Seldom do I act from ‘We’, and almost never do I give You credit or act from the perspective of ‘HE’: He did, He said, He is. Yet, You lovingly proclaimed:

“You and I are One; You are with Sai, Sai is with you. Never think that you and I are different. The letter ‘I’ stands for Oneness.”

I seem to have withdrawn from that oneness with You! This barrier of separation that I have unknowingly erected is inconsistent with my love and faith in You, Bhagawan. You are my *Hrudaya Nivasi*, but my thoughts and actions are not in sync! There is an emptiness and restlessness that I cannot explain.

Why do I vacillate between “You’re near; You’re not; You’re with me, You’re not?” Help me to stop swinging like a pendulum, between the awareness of You and forgetfulness of You, Bhagawan. You ask:

“My Dear! Have you got any spiritual hunger?”

I honestly do not know if the feeling of separation, incompleteness or restlessness are the initial pangs of what You call spiritual hunger. I do know,

though, that I am unsettled, stirred up, and have a strong sense that there is more to my life. Yes, I am seeking for that more.

I am attracted to the pursuit of a better me, that is for sure. I feel a gap between who I am and who I want to become. You refer to a “*universal life*” of heartfelt goodness and love for all beings in the world, this is what I want.

I yearn for more of You and Your presence in me. I have many nagging questions. If spiritual aspiration equals spiritual hunger, then Yes, Bhagawan, I am hungry! Swami, satiate this spiritual hunger and ease my tousled thoughts. You explained:

“Spiritual Hunger is the extreme urge to know the reality or true nature of oneself. The urgency felt within accelerates man’s search within himself.”

My Amigo, Mr. Ego

If I pause to validate what is causing this sense of separation from You, my true nature, I have to credit my amigo, Mr. Ego! This is one nut that I struggle to crack! If I could bring this fellow on his knees or even bend his head down a little bit, I could bridge this separation between You and I. It is entirely my fault, I must admit, because my amigo, Mr. Ego, is my own creation.



Spiritual contemplation can take any form of sadhana, like prayers, worship, namasmaranam, etc. Among all the sadhana, the simplest, most lasting, most satisfying and the most meaningful is meditation.

It is difficult for a creator to let go of his own creation, but there are no two ways about this anymore. Mr. Ego has to be reined in, especially because You say:

“The ego has to be fully curbed. Egoism will be destroyed if you tell yourself, ‘It is He, not I.’”

Thank you for my new *mantra*, Swami: “It is You, not I.” We really should stop taking credit for every miniscule incident just to glorify our own self! The key is not to attach too much importance to ‘my’ thoughts, ‘my’ emotions, ‘my’ ideas, and all the other boasts that we consider as ‘me’, so that we do not ever forget that You, Bhagawan, are the charioteer of our lives! You cautioned:

“Ego is what prevents you from getting closeto God. It is that ego: ‘I’ have to do this, ‘I’ have to get this. See that ‘I’ am only the instrument of the Lord.”

Our priority from the outset should be to develop an inner relationship with You, Swami, for You are my very Self. Putting my thoughts in a letter to You, Bhagawan, is slowly revealing my own flaws!

I have conveniently put Your teachings away and You’re reminding me to go back to them! You encouraged:

“..... The faith that not even a blade of grass can shiver in the wind without His being aware of it, and thus having caused it, has to be implanted in the mind.”

You are hinting that faith is sneaking out! It’s time to cultivate stronger faith in You and lead the mind to thrive on that faith. What better way to do this than to offer the mind a rejuvenating cup of morning tea!

‘Morning Tea’ – Sips of nothingness

The most divine nourishment to appease spiritual hunger and to nurture that inner relationship with You is spiritual contemplation.

Spiritual contemplation can take any form of *sadhana*, like prayers, worship, *namasmaranam*, etc. Among all the *sadhana*, the simplest, most lasting, most satisfying and the most meaningful is meditation.

Just spending a few minutes every day in stillness, in silence with eyes closed, can restrain our senses, quieten the mind, and remind the intellect that there is an unchanging reality underlying everything in the world and even our own personality. Spiritual contemplation is an effort to come into touch with that Reality – You, my *Hrudaya Nivasi*.

When we stop identifying with our thoughts and other mental qualities and drop into that Reality of the Self, we will experience the universal “I am”. Not I am this or I am that, simply I am.

Your recommended ‘So Hum’ meditation effectively brings us to that state. I understand

meditation is being alone in silence, with the mind turned inwards and absorbed in one's own Self, letting one's awareness go to the place where peace and joy are eternal. You urged:

“Spend a few minutes every morning and evening in the silence of your own shrine or home.”

No time is too short or too long to meditate and train the mind to dwell on You. It suffices that we make the time for You whenever we can! It is that special time when we detach from the hustle and bustle of our 'busy' day and be alone with You.

A great mystic once rightly said this is the 'Journey from alone to the Alone'. If we wish to climb over the wall of separation and live in Oneness with You, then meditation is a must! It is even more important than the first cup of morning tea! You enlightened us:

“What is meant by meditation? To think of God at all times and under all circumstances is true meditation.”

The All-Day Jnana 'Buffet'

Just as eating only once in a lifetime and then being done with it cannot sustain us, our spiritual hunger too needs to be fed again and again, until the hunger is gone and we can sustain ourselves. When one desires a delicacy, every effort is put into sourcing its origin, availability, contents, etc. It is then paid for, obtained and finally tasted to relish a much-awaited experience!

Swami, I know now that You have been doing just that! You stirred a yearning for our greater awareness of You. You created this hunger, this dissatisfaction with the 'grub' the world serves, knowing full well that You have prepared a sumptuous *Jnana* buffet to appease that hunger.

I bow to Your infinite Grace for the ultimate *Jnana* spread before me, to partake of when I'm hungry and even when I'm not! This is one buffet that I can tuck into as often as I wish and not be called greedy or over-indulging! It's a buffet that will not create sloth, but sublimity.

Where there was once little interest in reading sacred texts, you invited me to feast on texts like

Bhaja Govindam, Tattwa Bodha, Jnana Vahini, Upanishad Vahini, Atma Bodha and more! *Sadhana* such as Akhanda Gayatri chanting, meditation, and 960,000 Prayers to my Sai Within exposed me to a whole new palate, offering me a rich taste of what the past Masters have been offering. I gained a whole new appreciation of the mastery of the Masters.

The thread that runs through all the spiritual texts in my *Jnana* buffet is knowledge of that changeless, ultimate Reality – the Self. Only when the fire of spiritual hunger is lit will we engage in enquiry and Self-awareness. We turn our thoughts inward and dwell solely on: Who I am, who I am not, what I want and what am I doing to get that. From what we are now we begin to envision what we have the power to Be. You promised:

“When the darkness of ignorance caused by Ahamkara (the ego-feeling) is dispelled by the light of Divine knowledge, the effulgence of the Divine is experienced.”

Anytime is Bhakti 'snack time'

Here's a recipe for a highly nutritious and spiritually balanced snack – the *Bhakti* snack. Make a sandwich. Start with the bottom layer, on which the other layers rest. This first layer is 'surrender', the essential ingredients of which are faith and devotion. Spread lots of love on this layer. Now top it with a layer of carbs, *nishkama karma* (selfless action). Initially, this layer may be thin but as you progress this layer will fill-out with more desireless actions.

Next, add a layer of protein – the real strength builder – wisdom gained from *Jnana* 'buffet'. Garnish with as many other ingredients as one likes: *yoga*, *namasmaranam*, *bhajan*, meditation, *japa*, etc. All these will add more flavour.

Finally, top it up with a big hand-full of equanimity, cultured from detachment. With absolute surrender at the bottom and equanimity at the top, one has the most sumptuous *Bhakti* snack ready for daily consumption, anytime, anywhere! It will always satiate our spiritual hunger.

Food for Thought

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa once said, “*One who has spiritual hunger is called mumukshu and the state mumukshutva denotes an urge for attaining Atma Jnana.*”

Every spiritual journey begins with the undercurrent of *mumushutva*, a desire to change, to become better, to transcend one’s limitation, mature in life and evolve spiritually. The desire comes from within, from dissatisfaction with the material world, and it is the ultimate motivation for *sadhana*.

Without *mumushutva*, there would be no interest, or attraction to *sadhana*, spiritual study, *yoga*, meditation or even a desire to be free from self-imposed beliefs that arise from our ignorance.

The yearning for the Divine, one’s own Reality, exists in every human being. Initially, it may be a seed but it can germinate into an irresistible yearning for oneness with You. You revealed:

“The dissatisfaction and the restlessness that remains even after obtaining all the necessities of life show that everyone consciously or unconsciously does suffer from spiritual hunger.”

When we are spiritually hungry, You fill us up, Bhagawan. You appease that hunger with that which will provide Self-satisfaction. And that propels us closer to You. How can there be separation between You and I?

At Your Divine Lotus Feet,
Naina Shamdasani



When the *darkness of ignorance*
caused by **Ahamkara** (the ego-feeling)
is dispelled by the *light of Divine knowledge*,
the effulgence of the *Divine is experienced*.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Bal Vikas children reply to Swami on 9 Gems

Dear Baba,

Since young, we have always tried to find the source of true happiness, some may have found it and some may not. Some may think having all your desires fulfilled is true happiness, but it is not.

I have always tried to find something that would make me happy but I haven't found true happiness yet. I know real happiness is something that will last forever and not only for some time. We can only find this inside ourselves and not outside. Throughout our whole life, the search has always been going on.

Before I knew what could give me true happiness, I did not think I will be able to obtain it. I now know what real happiness is, but it may be different for everyone. The complete control of our mind and emotions is a great feat, but it is very hard to achieve. Doing that is the secret of happiness. It feels funny that what I have been searching for all this time is actually within me.

Happiness is only real when you are able to completely control your mind in difficult situations. Going to a party or out with friends will only give temporary happiness. That is not the truth, it is only going to last for a while. But if we go to a temple and bring the peace into our hearts, when we leave the temple we will carry the feeling for a longer time. That is what gives humans true happiness.

Understanding what true happiness is will help us get unstuck with our misconceptions of temporary happiness.

Rahul

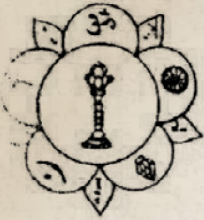
Dear Sathya Sai Baba,

The underlying issue that I have is the balance between following my heart versus my mind's logic. A while back, I had to apply for a secondary school. According to my academic results, I could logically have applied to top schools that fit my academic level, but I decided to follow my heart and go to the school where I wanted to go, since I would feel less pressure and I would be much happier there. Now, I am so grateful I decided to follow my heart since I am so happy where I am right now.

I realise that following our heart will make us much happier rather than simply following the intellect. I feel that to nurture the feeling that within us is the real happiness, like an ocean of divine love, I should continue to follow my heart over my head, but without harming anyone and myself.

Following logic might seem right but I won't be as happy as following my heart and doing what I love.

Suprim



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

PRASANATHI NILAYAM P.O.
ANANTPUR DT. (A.P.)
PHONE NO : 30.

30-8-75

After long searches here and there, in temples and in churches, in earth and in heavens, at last you come back. Completing the circle from where you started, to your own soul and find that He, for whom you have been seeking all over the world, for whom you have been weeping and praying in churches and temples, on whom you were looking as the mystery of all mysteries shrouded in the clouds in nearest of the near, is your own self. The reality of your life, body and soul. That is your own nature. Assert it, manifest it.

It is Truth and Truth alone, that is one's real friend. relative. Abide by. Truth tread the path of righteousness and not an hair of your body will ever be injured.

Meditation is nothing else but rising above desires. Renunciation is the power of battling against evil forces and holding the mind in check.

With Love and Patience
Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Truth ALONE IS ONE'S Real FRIEND AND RELATIVE

To my Dear Beloved Bhagawan,
Sri Sathya Sai Baba,

I offer my humble and loving *pranam* at Your Divine Lotus Feet, dearest Bhagawan.

No matter our age, we are always surrounded by friends, some of whom can be hugely important in our lives. Some friends are from our childhood, just because our families have always been friends, some we might have grown up, laughing and crying together in school, there are the ones we meet while working, or some we might have just met once or connected to on social media.

Regardless of when we met them, they all influenced us in some way. All our “friends” entered and left our lives, bringing both happy and unhappy moments, hopefully making us stronger. But, were they our real friends? As much as I would like to say ‘yes’ to this question, I believe each one of us knows deep down that this might not be necessarily true. Therefore, I am hoping that each one of us, with Your Grace, can better understand who our real friend is.

Personally, I have always struggled trusting friends as best friends, as I am scared of becoming too attached and dependent on them when they leave. Time and time, I have wondered about the ideal qualities of a real friend. You, my beloved Sri Sathya Sai Baba, have beautifully highlighted who is a real friend, “*When the lake is full of water, you have all the frogs. But when the water dries up, there’s not one left.*” You say the world is like that. This reveals that friends might be around simply for social, material, financial or business gains, and they may not always remain friends. We cannot always give and not receive back, this is not supposed to be friendship, a friendship is two-ways.

A friendship is not merely for greeting each other or liking each other’s posts on social media, Bhagawan You have always said, “*Everyone goes on saying, ‘Hello, hello, hello’ with hollowness inside.*” We have so many acquaintances that we constantly say “Hello” to, people who live near us or are from the same community, but are they our real friends? In fact, we often just want somebody to engage with us and truly care about our feelings, or share about their own situation.

True friends are those that go out their way to help us in every way and share with us everything. And if things are not according to our expectation, then we should forgive, accept and not argue, but be sensitive to the needs of others around us.

You have constantly asked, “*Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are.*” When someone’s age, behaviour and thoughts are not conducive to one’s moral and spiritual development, one should not develop friendship with such a person. Sage Adi Shankara in the Bhaja Govindam declared “*Satsangatve nissangatvam*”, which means good company leads to detachment, detachment frees one from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind, and steadiness of mind confers liberation.

Hence, we are taught that one should resolve to be in good company, speak good words, see good things and become a good person. These qualities of a real friend might seem clear, yet it is not easy to find a real friend. We can have friends that have all these qualities now, but we don’t know how long the friendship will last, and they might change too.

As You have lovingly said, “*This type of friendship is not present anywhere in this world today. Who is a real friend in this world? God is the only friend.*”

The mother, the father, the brother, the sister, the husband or the wife, all have a trace of selfishness when they love. God alone loves you without even an iota of selfishness and self-interest. He does not expect anything in return and such friendship is unconditional. He doesn't take anything from anyone. He only gives and gives, and never takes. Eventually the only true friend of man is God."

This is the example that You, our beloved Sathya Sai Baba, taught me by demonstrating these qualities throughout Your lifetime. You are indeed an exemplary blueprint of a real friend. All other friends are merely acquaintances, according to the parameters laid down by You for all of us.

Often in life, we hope to have friends who are well placed, powerful, rich and secure to make us feel good and so we can constantly seek happiness through friendship. But, as You have said, *"If you consider God himself to be your friend, imagine how much more secure and proud you can feel? God is always waiting so that you will call Him as your best friend, and He'll reach out to you. And, in fact, the best relationship to have with God is friendship – to relate to God in a very soulful manner, as if He's someone our own – instead of placing Him on an exalted pedestal."*

I am blessed to be from a family that has always spoken to me of God as a friend, somebody who can protect me from my fears, who discusses my choices before I make any decisions, and is always loving and forgiving if things are not according to plans. And though God can be in any form, You, Sathya Sai Baba was the one introduced to me. When I forgot about You due to personal circumstances, You never forgot about me, and in contrary, You increased my faith by explaining that all religions teach the same message.

Born in a city where a church, mosque and temple were located right across each other, every Christmas it was a tradition for my parents to take me to each of these places to show utmost gratitude to God for the beautiful year I had been blessed with. This is how I began to understand Your beautiful message that *"All faiths are interrelated and mutually indebted to each other for the principles they teach, and the disciplines they recommended."*

The Vedic Religion was the first in time; Buddhism, which appeared about 2,500 years ago, was its son; Christianity, which was influenced much by the Orient, was its grandson. And Islam, which has the Prophets of Christianity as its base was like the great-grandson".

Jews recommend fidelity to the law; Christians, the cultivation of charity. Confucians and Daoists, for their part, teach to live in accordance with The Way. And Muslims seek submission to God and His word. With all my engagements in the Sathya Sai Centre locally and organisation internationally, You have illustrated to me that *"There is only one caste - the caste of Humanity. There is only one religion - the religion of Love. There is only one language - the language of the Heart. There is only one God - He is Omnipresent. There is only one law - the law of Dharma."*

I realise that all religious leaders and holy books have only one message. Even with a contrasting approach between absolutism and relativism, their underlying goal is to understand that God is the true epitome of compassion, guidance, forgiveness and selflessness, which exactly defines qualities of a true friend.

Therefore, I have realised that there is only one real friend, God, no matter the Form, and our friendship goal is for us to see the divinity within ourselves and who we are. Being blessed to be exposed to all these spiritual learnings, I have come to believe that we can all take different pathways to reach God, but going on more than one path means we risk stretching ourselves too thin.

We then complicate our lives by confusing the mind. It is just like millennials who like to multitask but never focus on just a single task; though it seems like we are getting much done, in fact this might not be true. Therefore, You recommend us to constantly focus on just one *Guru* to reach liberation sooner.

There are four paths to realization in the Bhagavad Gita including *Karma Yoga* or the Path of Action (*Karma-mārga*), *Bhakthi Yoga* or the Path of Devotion (*Bhakthi-mārga*) to *Ishvar* (God), *Jnana Yoga* or the Path of Knowledge (*Jñāna-mārga*) and *Raja Yoga* or the Path of Meditation (*Dhyāna-*

mārga). A balance between these paths is necessary for us to overcome the six enemies borne of the mind, which are *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *mada* (arrogance), *moha* (delusion), and *matsarya* (jealousy); which prevent man from getting closer to the truth and attaining *moksha*.

The only constant truth is that God is the only Truth, the only Reality that is not an illusion of our own creation. We are indeed very ignorant of our true purpose and, thus, we constantly depend on false pretences to achieve materialistic gains, one lie leads to many more lies. Therefore, knowing that God is the only Truth that will protect us as our real friend is what matters – *Sarvada Sarvakalesu Sarvatra Daiva Cintanam* (think of God at all times and at all places).

As You are omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient, we hope for You to constantly be our real friend full of compassion, guidance, forgiveness and selflessness and we will live our lives as Your message. Being the Divine Embodiment of Love, You help, support and protect us with expectation and in return You, our beloved Bhagawan, only want our love. And this is how I hope our friendship will continue to be strengthened every moment of our lives.

In Your Loving Service,
Amrita Sanju Daryanani



“Ekam sat viprah bahuda vadanti”
Truth is only one but comprehended in many ways.

“Ekam sat mitraa bahuda vadanti!”
There is only one truth and only one friend -
God, who is the true friend of all.

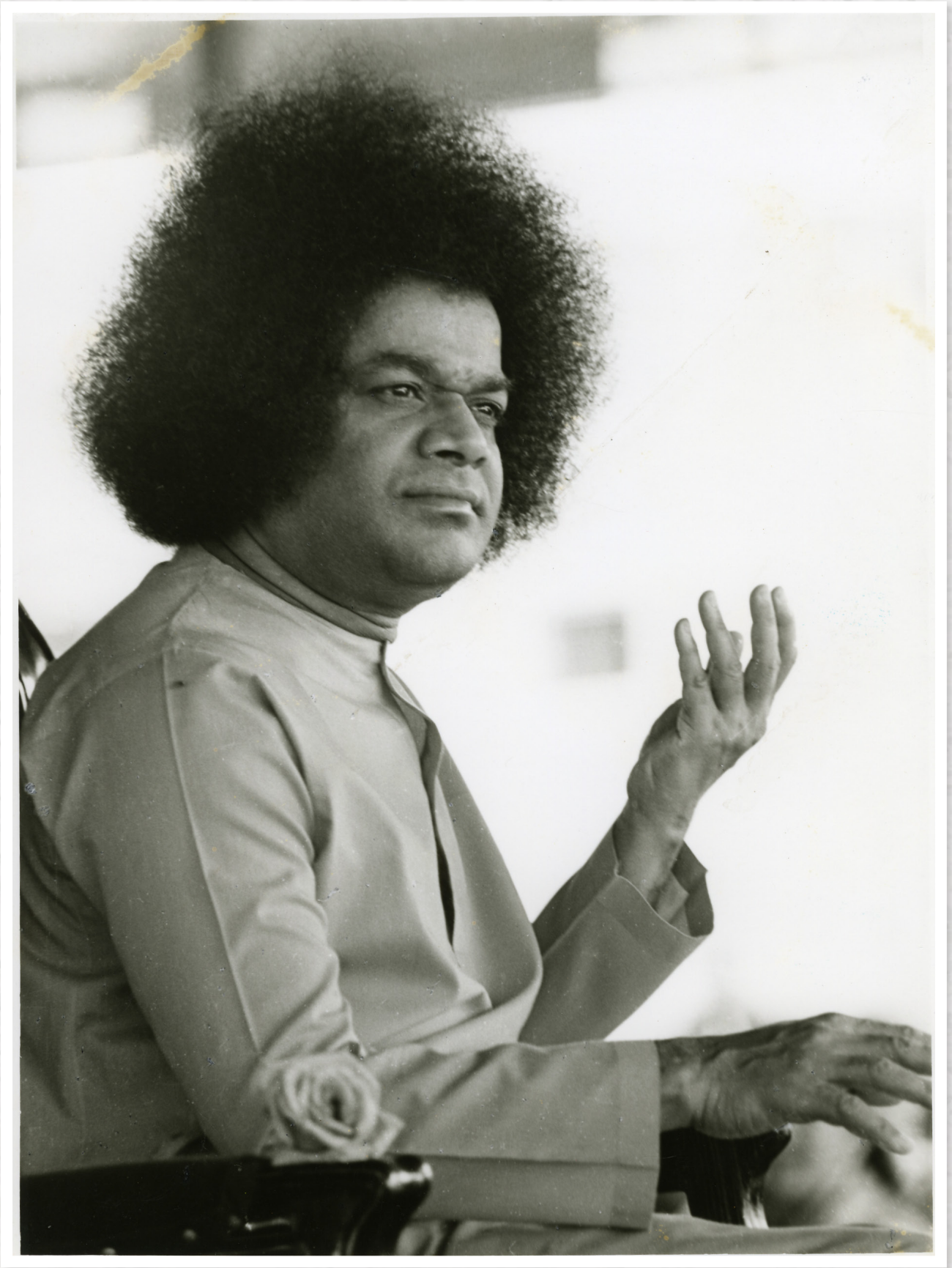
The worldly friends cannot be called as true friends. Friends today may become enemies tomorrow, but God will never ever become one's enemy.

God does not have the enmity at all with anyone.

God is one's dearest friend.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba





DIVINE Discourse

MANIFEST *Your Divinity*

The Lord of the cosmos permeates the entire universe.
Remaining invisible in the visible universe,
The cosmic consciousness illumines everything
Like the thread that runs through a necklace of gems.
All things happen, good and bad, according to the dictates of Time.
Time is the cause of joy and sorrow, gain and loss.
Realise that Time is the cause of all happenings in the world.
There is none who is not subject to the sway of Time.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Time moves fast like a whirlwind. Each one's life span is getting reduced every moment, like a melting block of ice. Time passes even before man realises his duties in life. The human body is not easily acquired. The end of man's life should not be to waste his precious human birth without realising its primary purpose.

It is the duty of every man to realise the purpose of life and utilise his time in the performance of his duties to sanctify his existence. Given the will, there is nothing that man cannot achieve in this world. But before embarking on any enterprise, man should recognise his abilities and endowments.

Today's man, who claims to know everything and engages in exploring space, is unable to experience bliss. If one acquires the ability to explore the stars or walk on the moon but is unable to understand his own true nature, and he misses his integral consciousness. This consciousness is not related to knowledge of the external world. It can be experienced only by turning one's vision inward.

Only when he has *samagrata bhavam* (integral awareness) will he have the right perception of a sage. Only such integral vision can confer bliss.

The greatest cause of bondage

When people speak about man's bondage, what is it that binds man? Man can liberate himself only when

he knows what it is that binds him. Are wife and children the bonds? No. Is it property? No. Are they sensual desires? No. The greatest cause of bondage is the failure to know himself. An individual who is not aware of his true self cannot escape from sorrow.

As long as sorrow is there, bliss cannot be experienced. What is the sorrow that envelops man? Sorrow envelops man in three ways and afflicts him in many ways. One source of sorrow is *Asat* (the unreal). The second cause is *Thamas* (the darkness of ignorance). The third cause is death. In this context Vedanta mentions three categories: *Prakruti* (nature), *Jivatma* (the individual soul) and *Parmamatma* (the Cosmic Spirit).

As long as man does not give up what he ought to renounce, he will not experience bliss. As long as he is not aware of what he ought to know he cannot get bliss. Bliss will elude man until he reaches the goal he should aim at.

Give up the fascination for the world

What is it that man should give up? What is it that he ought to know? What is his goal? What has to be given up is *Jagat-bhavam* (the fascination for the world). The reason is the world is not different from God. "*Eashavasyam idham jagat*" (God dwells in the Universe).

"*Viswam Vishnu-swaroopam.*" (The entire cosmos is the embodiment of the Supreme). Disregarding

this profound and sacred truth, man is becoming a prey to grief by his worldly attachments. The world should not be treated as merely physical but should be looked upon as a Divine manifestation. It is only when man is filled with godly thoughts that he will be rid of sorrow. Hence, what should be given up is worldliness. Then alone *Atmananda* (the bliss of the Spirit) can be got.

The second thing that has to be given up is *Jiva Bhava* (the feeling of separate individuality). Who is a *Jiva*? *Jiva* is God. “*The Jiva (the individual self) resides in the body. God dwells in the heart.*” They come together and engage in mutual sport.

There is a Director who directs the play of the puppets. Both good and bad are present in the puppets. The *Jivatma* (the individual self) and the Divine principle are not two distinct and separate entities. Out of ignorance, man forgets the basic reality and cherishes delusions which cause sorrow. It is like a man who is seized with fear when he mistakes a rope for a snake. When the truth is known the fear goes.

Likewise man, looking at the world, considers it a separate phenomenal entity – *Jiva Tatwa*. But in reality it is Divine. When the Divine nature of the cosmos is understood, man is free from the delusion of separateness.

The Divine Master illumines the entire cosmos and the cosmos shines in the Divine. God and the cosmos are inseparable friends. This is the prime dictum of Sai.

Human destiny is realisation of his Divinity

What is the destination that man should attain? It is the original home from where he came (*Swasthanam*). What is this original home? It is

the awareness of one’s own true self. It is for the realisation of this truth that the body has been given to man by the Divine.

Where can one search for one’s self? Can the search be made outside of you? No. Similarly, the search for God in the external is futile. “*His hands and feet are everywhere. His eyes, head and mouth are everywhere. He stands forth encompassing everything in the cosmos*” (stanza from the Bhagavad Gita). When the Divine is omnipresent, it is foolish for man to search for God in some place.

Hence, the destination for man is the realisation of his divinity (the original source). This realisation must

come through the Vedantic process of exclusion (“*Nethi, nethi*” “not this, not this”). “I am not the body. I am not the intellect. I am not the Will. I am not the *Anta Karana*, the inner instrument.” All these are only instruments. Man should realise: “I am the Master of all of them.” When by this process of elimination man realises his true Self, he is freed from sorrow.

Man’s most precious and sacred gift from God is *Buddhi* (intelligence). The intelligence that should be used for seeking the *Atma* (Spirit) is being used by man today to seek *Annam* (food). When you are given a mirror to recognise your face, if you

turn it in the reverse direction, how can you see your face?

Use the mirror of *Buddhi* to recognise your true self. That is known as *Sakshatkaram* – direct vision of one’s true Self. Unfortunately, man today seeks to know everything except his own true nature. He asks everyone: “Who are you?” but does not put the question, “Who am I?” One who does not know himself, what right has he to seek about others? Such an enquiry proceeds from ignorance. Without the awareness of his own true self, man can never attain bliss.

Human destiny ... is realisation of his Divinity

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It is the original home from where he came (*Swasthanam*).

What is this original home?

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God contains everything within Himself

It is to set men on the path of such self-enquiry that the celebration of the New Year is intended. God as the embodiment of Time is worshipped by the name *Samvatsara* (year). This name also means that God contains within Himself everything. God is also known by the name *Kalatmaka* (the Time Spirit). God incarnates on Earth for revealing to man his divine essence. Man has been endowed with intelligence (as *Dheemanta*) so that he may use it for discovering the Divine within him.

The name *Samvatsara* represents the cosmic manifestation of the Divine. The Divine displays four kinds of glorious potencies (*Vibhuti*) as the supreme Omni-Self. As such, He is called *Chaturatma*. This means He is the Self that embodies three potencies. The three are *Vasudeva*, *Sankarshana* and *Aniruddha*. When these three *Vibhuti* are understood, the fourth one, *Pradyumna*, becomes intelligible.

The meaning of the four potencies *Vasudeva* indicates that the entire cosmos is the Lord's dwelling place. It also means that He is the Supreme Master of the universe. This means that the Divine resides in all beings as the Indwelling Spirit. Moreover, He pervades the entire universe. The Upanishad describes Him as "*Narayana who is inside and outside and pervades everything.*"

Sankarshana refers to the Divine's capacity to attract and transform all beings. All beings, moreover, have emerged from Him. The name is also associated with His power to transfer any object from one place to another. The child that was in the womb of Devaki was transferred to the womb of Rohini (another wife of Vasudeva) and for this reason the child got the name Sankarshana (another name for Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna). The name *Sankarshana* also means one who attracts what is pure.

Aniruddha is one who is beyond the control of anyone. He can be swayed only by His grace and not by any other means. This term applies to one who is all-pervading, all-powerful and all knowing. *Pradyumna* refers to one who possesses *Aiswarya* (infinite wealth). He confers by His grace

all prosperity and happiness on those who adore, worship and love the Lord. *Aiswarya* includes not only material wealth, but every kind of wealth such as health, knowledge, intelligence and virtue.

Another name of the Divine is "*Bhagavan.*" The term "*Bhaga*" represents six attributes: Divine wealth, righteousness, power, fame, detachment and supreme wisdom. The Lord is called "*Bhagavan*" because He has these six attributes. Thus, every name of the Lord is related to specific attributes and not an expression of the devotee's feelings or fancies. Because of the Divine's myriad attributes, the sages hailed Him as "*Om Samvathsaraya Namah.*"

As the Creator of the universe and as the One from whom everything emerged, God is also called *Yugadi* (the Initiator of every *Yuga*, or Aeon). He is the One who willed to become the many.

The one *Atma* that has different names and forms

What is the unity that prevails in the multiplicity? All beings in the world have different names and forms as embodied beings. When the embodiment is taken away only the one *Atma* in all of them remains. The sense of separateness is a creation of the mind. When this feeling, born of ignorance goes, the Godliness in man will shine.

Every man has within him a *Kalpataru* (wish-fulfilling tree). But around it there is a wild growth of bushes. When you clear away the bushes, the tree can be seen. That tree is the Self within each one. This Self is covered by man's sensory desires. When the desires are removed, the Self is recognised. Although the Self is in man, no attempt is made to realise it.

How can a man who is involved in external pursuits realise his inner Reality? The right method has to be adopted to attain the desired objective. The first requisite for the purpose is faith. There must be an unshakeable faith in God. Man's beliefs today are liable to be blown away like dried leaves. Man should strive to experience the Divine with firm faith, through weal and woe.

Man is inherently Divine

Embodiments of Divine Love! Man who is the embodiment of the immortal Spirit identifies himself

with his body and falls prey to worldly desires. How can such a person be a true devotee of God, even if he calls himself a *Bhakta* (devotee)? Such a man is only a devotee of *Prakruti* (the phenomenal world of Nature). If you regard even *Prakruti* as Divine, it will be a good thing.

But even here, men separate the *Paramatma* (Divine) from *Prakruti* (Nature). As long as this sense of separation exists, all forms of *japa* and worship, performed even over many lives, are of no avail.

What is *Srishti* (creation)? *Srishti* is an expression of the Will of God. This is called *Prakruti*. Everyone who emanates from *Prakruti* should have divine qualities. That which has emerged from the Divine should have divine qualities and not the traits of an animal or a demon. A human being without the feeling of compassion or love is not human at all.

Every human being should manifest his inherent divinity. He should make himself a “messenger” of God. Instead, he behaves like a “miss-inger of God,” as one who has “missed” what he should know about himself.

When man realises his true nature and his role in life, he becomes one with God. This is described in *Vedanta* as the *Turiya-avasta* – the fourth state of consciousness in which the individual Spirit is one with the Universal. It is a transcendental state which is beyond the body and the mind – beyond the waking, dream and deep sleep states.

What do we understand by the term *Vyakti* (individual)? This term is applied to one who manifests the unmanifested Divine Power hidden within him. It is meaningless to apply it to anyone who does not manifest the Divine with him.

The Cosmic form of Divinity

Manifesting one’s inner divinity does not mean producing something new. Divinity is inherent in man. It is called *Swabhava* (one’s true nature) – the *Atmic* nature. It is the *Atma* that confers all powers on man. Those who bemoan their weakness are not aware of their inherent potential and are not putting it to right use.

The first feeling which one has to get rid of is the identification of his physical form with his real self. Those who ask, “Where is God?” do not realise

that all they see in the cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine. That is why the scriptures declare, “*Pashyannapi cha na pashyathi mudho*” (even while seeing, the foolish one does not see). Man is all the time seeing the universe around him and yet declares he has not seen God. What is the form of the Cosmos? Is it not Divine? You are seeing the Divine in the form of the physical universe.

In the Bhagavad Gita this cosmic form of the Lord is described as *Viswa Virata Rupa*. What is *Viswa*? It is the whole cosmos. The *Viswa Virata Rupa* is the collective form of everything in the universe. No attempt is made to understand the inner meaning of such expressions as *Viswa Virata Rupa*. The intellect is used to misinterpret words and create confusion. What is needed is understanding through the heart.

Even a highly evolved person like Arjuna confessed to Krishna that the mind is ever wavering and fickle. Are the intellectuals of today, with all their degrees, greater than Arjuna? Not at all. Above all degrees and intellectual attainments, one needs the grace of God. Krishna recognised Arjuna as His devotee. That is the supreme accomplishment.

The abode of the Lord is the heart

When you earn from the Lord the epithet of *Bhakta* (God’s devotee) you will be equal with Arjuna. God is not calling you His devotee. It is not enough if you style yourself a devotee of God. God should hail you as His devotee. It is only when your devotion is acknowledged by the Lord that you can call yourself a devotee.

If you have not received the acknowledgement, it may mean that you have given the wrong address in your devotion. The correct address of the Lord is *Hridayavasi* – the Indweller in the Heart. This means that you must continue with your devotion to God until your own conscience is satisfied. To achieve this satisfaction, you have to purify yourself constantly. This means that you have to get rid of your bad qualities, bad thoughts, and bad actions.

Body is an instrument for realisation of Dharma

Realise that the body has been given to you for the service of others. How is this service to be rendered? Through righteous and pure means. The body is an instrument for the realisation of

Dharma (Righteousness). This truth is allegorically conveyed by the example of the Pandavas in the Mahabharatha.

The Pandava brothers (Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva) and Draupadi representing *Prakruti* (Nature) followed Truth and Righteousness as represented by Dharmaraja (the eldest of the Pandavas) and sanctified their lives.

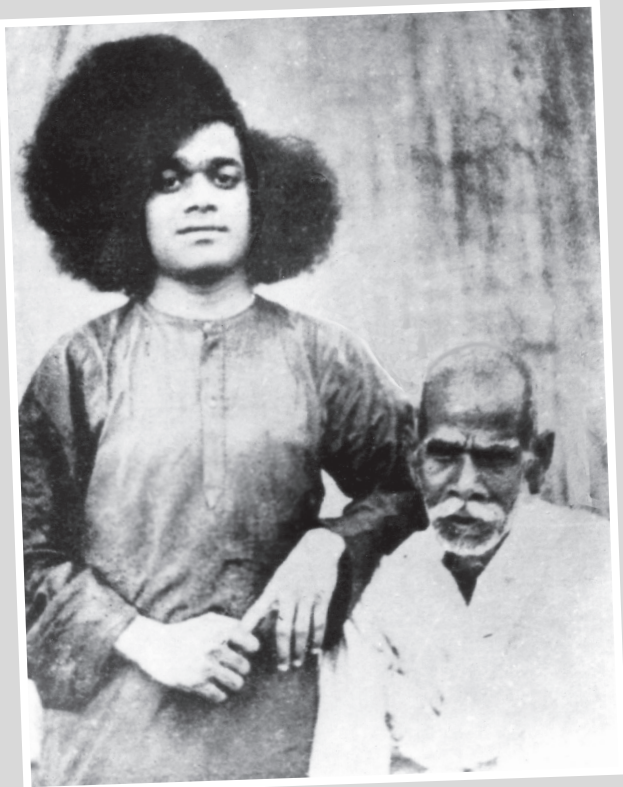
This applies to every human being. It is only when he adheres to Truth and Righteousness that he can realise the *Atma*. Worship of the Divine must stem from the heart. When devotion flows from the heart, the voice of the Divine can be experienced in silence – *Sabda Brahman* (sound of the Supreme Spirit).

This was the experience of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He observed perfect silence awaiting the voice of God at any moment. Can the Divine voice be heard in the cacophony of daily sounds?

No. Devotees must practice reticence. When speech is restrained, the voice of the Spirit within makes itself heard. That is subtler than the human breath. It is only through *Prapati*, or total surrender, that the Divine can be experienced. It is an experience that can be had every moment of your life.

You say, “Seeing is believing! I will believe in God only if I see Him.” But are all things seen or heard or touched or tasted as real as they seem? Is it the eye that sees? Your eye may be open and turned in one direction but if your mind is wandering elsewhere, you will not notice anything at all. You see things only through the illumination of the *Atma*. You love only because the *Atma* is Love. You know because the *Atma* is knowledge.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 25 / Ch. 2



with grandfather Shirdi Starie



Mother anointing head

To Huslop with Balaram

My Dear! you will find it deep within yourself. Think it many times. Ponder it. it tells you about your true nature, it gives you hope, it gives you new life, it points the way, it proves to you that GOD is within you and you are not man, man is GOD, it shows you that it is possible for you to realize GOD (Swamiji) but you and you alone must ponder this work deeply, you will find that you will begin to know what is meant by the statement: "The Self" cannot be explained, the mind knows of its existence, "The Self-GOD" is within man, you are that Self, all else is illusion of the mind's creation, the mind that creates, preserves, and destroys.

My Love! The great joy, the subtlety of the bliss, that you will feel as you come closer and closer to your Real Self; if you strive to find your self by using your mind, you will strive and strive in vain. Because the mind, cannot give you the truth; a lie cannot give you the truth; a lie can only entangle you in a web of deceit; but if you sensitize your self, awaken your true, fine, beautiful qualities

above you - nothing below you - nothing, to the right of you - or to the left of you - nothing; and dissolve your self into that nothingness. That would be the best way you could explain the realization of the Self. and yet that nothingness would not be the absence of something like the nothingness that nothingness is the fullness of everything, the power of the existence of that appears to be everything. -Brahm-

MAN *Is* God



My Dear Baba,

My Loving Sairams to You.

The extract below from one of Your letters published by the Sri Sathya Sai International Organisation in the *Nine Gems* series has inspired this article, which contains my personal ‘pondering’. In thinking about how to reply to You, I have found a lot of inspiration in reading some of Your words. I know these are not new to You, but they were very encouraging to me and so I have included some of them in this reply.

In Your letter, You said:

“You will find it deep within yourself. Think it many times, ponder it, it tells you about your true nature, it gives you hope, it gives you new life, it points the way, it proves to you that God is within you and you are not man, man is GOD.”

You have told us this so many times and in so many different ways, and it has come to ‘feel right’ to believe and accept that I am God, as are we all. I also want to believe it because I find more and more, as I get older, that external things, even the ‘spiritual’ things like going on pilgrimages to holy places or participating in rituals, no longer bring me what I am looking for.

I have found from Your words that it is probably natural to feel this sense of dissatisfaction with external things:

“The various acts of ritual worship, such as singing devotional songs and repeating the holy Name will seem very small once you recognize the principle of God dwelling in every heart... Until you have mastered the art of swimming, there is a need to use various floatation aids for support... Once you have learned to swim, these aids will no longer be necessary. In the same way, all the various types of rituals are necessary until you truly understand the meaning of the Gita.”

(Sai Baba Gita, Part V:
Find God in Your Own Heart)

“Instead of searching for God outside, try to recognize God immanent within you.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Ugadi Discourse,
March 21, 2004)

But I am finding increasingly that it is not enough for me just to accept and believe that I am God. Your words below from *Nine Gems* suggest that my attempts to explain and understand cognitively are not getting me there, because it is something that cannot be explained in the head; it is something that just has to be felt.

“If you strive to find yourself by using your mind, you will strive and strive in vain. Because the mind cannot give you the truth.”

(Nine Gems)

I don’t want to think about it or talk about it anymore, I want to experience, to FEEL what it is like to be God. You seem to support the idea that it is important to do this:

“All scholarship is of no avail if there is no realization in the heart.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.27, 1994)

As I am getting older and I have less time ahead of me in this human life than I have behind me, it is becoming urgent for me to achieve some “reconciliation of the outer and inner purpose” (Eckhart Tolle), to make sure I have done everything I need to in order to complete my mission for this life.

Because this is so pressing and important to me, I have turned to Your words in the hope that I will be able to glean some clues about what I need to do. Here I have traced the words that have stood out as particularly meaningful to me.

“The body is the sacred abode of the Atma.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 27, 1994)

I know that somewhere within in me is the God part that doesn't fear death, because it has been through it so many times before and knows what to expect; the part that knows how to be a spiritual being but wants to make the most of this short-lived gift of a human experience. But it is not so easy to know where to find this part of me and to let it out.

As a starting point, I read what You have said about what it is supposed to feel like to connect with this God within:

"That nothingness is the fullness of everything, the power of the existence of that appears to be everything... Above you – nothing. Below you – nothing, to the right of you or to the left of you – nothing; and dissolve yourself into that nothingness."

(Nine Gems)

If I am God, should I be able to perform miracles? Many people are attracted to God because of the miracles they experience, so it stands to reason that, if we are God, we too can perform miracles. I found it interesting to read what You say about them:

"Do not give importance to miracles. Do not exaggerate their significance. The greatness of My power does not reside in these miracles, it exists only in My love.... These miracles have an insignificant place in my totality."

(Sri Sathya Sai Bhagavatam, Part I)

So, while it may be possible for us to perform miracles, I understand You say it is neither necessary nor even desirable. On the other hand, we can be open to the many everyday miracles, the little things that happen all the time that we usually pass off as coincidences – the coincidences that Albert Einstein is said to have described as "the small miracles in which God wants to remain anonymous" – that can help us to recognise that we are God and to awaken the God within us.

These everyday happenings – experiences that You hint at in Your teachings – can help us to wake up to the miracle within us. You say that You only create objects "with the intent to protect and give joy" (personal conversation, cited in *Holy Man and the Psychiatrist*, November 23, 1968, Prasanthi Nilayam) – and what more can we do to protect and give joy than to project love.

As You remind us, "All the ostensible miracles are only droplets of that Ocean of Love" and that the real performance of miracles is to "recognize the Ocean and come to dip yourselves therein" (Sri Sathya Sai Bhagavatam, Part I).

Where is my inner God and how can I access it? In Your many teachings on this subject, You have given us some clues about where to look to find this elusive inner God.

"Where did they [ancient sages] experience God? They declared: "We have found Him beyond the darkness, beyond the mind and the senses, in our hearts."

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 27, 1994)

So I have made a start by diving into the inner silence of my heart, which is a safe and nurturing place to be and where I think it is most likely my inner God resides. This is certainly where You have told us to:

"When man turns his vision inward he can experience Eternal Bliss. The source of Bliss, the Spirit, is within himself."

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 27, 1994)

I have learned something about this from two primary school children in Your Sathya Sai Education in Human Values programme in China. One said, "Often in silence I will feel exultation." Another said, "I have deeply felt the happiness of my heart." Perhaps these two children have touched upon their own inner God.

Like them, I have had some glimpses that God is there within the deep silence of my own heart, but I still haven't succeeded in feeling how it is to be God. Luckily, Baba, You have given us more hints on how we can help ourselves towards this goal.

Having the right mindset – an easy but powerful first step is to create the right mindset.

"If you think you are God, God you are... As you think, so you become. Think God, be God."

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba, private conversation, Prasanthi Nilayam, 25.06.2002)

"Give up the delusion that the Divine is in some remote place. Have the faith, 'I am God'."

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 2, 1998)



Baba, we know from the strategies we have been given for Sathya Sai Education in Human Values that positive quotations or affirmations can have an extraordinarily powerful effect on our thoughts and actions. So, by creating the affirmation “I am God”, and repeating it constantly, we can do a lot to override the doubting inner voice that asks, “Who, me? How can I possibly be God?!”

Living the five Human Values is so important. You remind us constantly that Divinity resides within us as these five values: Truth, Right Action, Love, Peace and Non-Violence. You ask us to live them in our own daily lives as the way to change our own inner world and contact our inner Divinity.

“Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Love are the hallmarks of a purified heart where God is enshrined and manifest.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 33, 2000)

As we practise the values and they become an integral part of our thoughts, words, and actions all the time, our Divinity emerges and the manifestation of our values naturally becomes stronger. You have confirmed this often, for example when You said:

“Man must reveal the Divine qualities of love, humility, detachment, and contentment.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 7, 1967)

“The Divine aspect of your personality will encourage humility, truthfulness, love, fortitude, detachment and eagerness to serve.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 14, 1978-80)

And You have given us some practical ways to translate these tools into practice. I have learnt that these are not just tools for children and teachers, they are tools that are just as useful for any one of us to use. You have told us time and time again that we can practice well through:

- Inner self-discipline
- Inner peace
- Integration of thought, word, and deed
- Involvement in selfless service
- Inquiry and discrimination

I particularly love the Light Meditation You have given as another way to bring out our inner

Divinity. As You taught, this starts by using the Divine light to purify our thoughts, words, and actions, an important first step to overcome the obstacles within us – the ego-related thoughts and actions – that are surrounding and hiding our inner God.

“Since the light illumines all the senses every day so deeply and systematically, a time will soon come when you can no more relish dark and evil sights, yearn for dark and sinister tales, crave for base, harmful, deadening toxic food and drink... or frame evil designs against anyone at any time.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 10, 1979)

The Light Meditation concludes by visualising the Divine light surrounding us, “I am in the light”; filling us, “The light is in me”; and finally becoming a part of us, “I am the light” – I felt full of hope when I heard Your explanation that this is the moment that sparks the flame that illuminates the God within. This is Your unique gift to our *sadhana*.

You are also reminding constantly us to open our hearts to give and receive love:

“Love is God and God is Love.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 36, 2003)

I understand from this that You are saying it is important to live Love:

“When the human heart melts at the suffering of others and expands as a result of that sympathy, believe that God is present there.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Vahini, Ch. 10,
The Yogis)

Of all the strategies I am trying to apply, and the experiences I am striving to have, I have at least had a brief glimpse of what it is like to feel Divine Love. I’m sure You remember this moment as clearly as I do! On my first visit to Puttaparthi, I had written a letter to You asking for an experience of Love, and as You walked away after taking my letter You looked back over Your shoulder and I experienced a tremendous blow to my solar plexus!

For the next few hours I was immersed in this bolt of Divine Love, and I know that one of the challenges You set for me that day was to be able

NOTHINGNESS =
FULLNESS OF
EVERYTHING!



*With love,
Man Is God*

to re-create this state and stay in it permanently. I haven't achieved it yet, but I am still trying.

It became clear from this brief experience that feeling love the way God does means loving ourselves too, since we too are God! Sometimes it is difficult to love others, much less ourselves, but it can be useful to keep in mind what You say love is: acceptance, recognising the beauty in ourselves and others, developing a sense of brotherliness, compassion, forbearance and tolerance, forgiveness, giving selflessly and service, trusting and respecting.

We need to learn to Just Be! Sometimes I wonder if I am actually trying too hard – that, deep down, I do know what to do because I am a spiritual being. And it seems You have confirmed this hunch when You said:

"It is only when man becomes truly human, that he can experience the Divine."

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba, cited in Radio Sai E-Magazine, January 15, 2004)

I recall a time when I was feeling guilt at not doing enough to enhance my spiritual growth. I said to You, in my mind, "I seem to be spending a lot of my time just sitting around and not **doing** anything worthwhile." Within a few days, as is often the case when I ask You a question, Your response came in the form of an email – in this case an extract from a discourse in which You said, "*Remember you are human beings, not human doings.*" That was a very valuable reminder.

On the subject of 'being' versus 'doing', I also read Your advice that we do not need so much 'doing' in our quest to recognize ourselves as God:

"There is no need to search for the Divine elsewhere. There is no need to go to a forest and lead an austere life to experience the Divine Who is within each one."

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 27, 1994)

So it seems that You are saying we can reduce our 'doing' and just concentrate on simply 'being':

"Man's vision, which is now turned outward towards the phenomenal Universe should be turned inwards towards the Indwelling Spirit. One should manifest the Divine Consciousness inherent in him. He should submit himself to that Consciousness."

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 21, 1988)

I have also found it helpful to follow Your advice about the importance of being in Nature:

"... Nature's role is to help man, the crowning achievement of the evolutionary process, to realise the Divinity"

(Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, 1988)

For me, being in Nature is increasingly important. Whether it is the agelessness and silence of towering cliffs, the power of the sea, the depths of a forest, or the strength of mountains, it is here that I am able to feel a little bit more in touch with the God in me and to feel that, perhaps, I really am a part of the God in everything. I am very grateful that You have given me so many opportunities to experience this.

You have always told us to see the Divine in others, that once we are able to see the Divine in ourselves, it should become easier for us to recognise it in others.

“They should see the Divine in everyone and feel that when they speak ill of others, they are demeaning themselves.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba,
2nd World Conference, 1975)

At present, as You well know, I am still not very good at this, especially in everyday encounters with people whose behaviour disappoints, irritates or angers me – in traffic, in supermarket queues, or in the media. I have to hope that as I get better at seeing the Divine in myself it will become natural to see it in others as well.

We need to assert our Godhead! Your words ring in my head, that we are not human beings having a spiritual experience but, since we are Divine, we are spiritual beings having a human experience. This suggests that we are not here to worry about how to be spiritual – we already know that – but that we are here to learn how to live human life to the fullest, being the best and most fulfilled humans we can be.

As Your words quoted in this article show, there is no doubt that we ARE spiritual beings, we are in fact God. While we are here in human form, we need to learn how to allow the God within us to enjoy this divine gift of being human. That requires we “Assert your Godhead... You are the Whole, the Infinite, the All.”

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba, private correspondence,
24.4.1974, cited in Nine Gems)

And so, Baba, my pondering about my journey to asserting my own Godhead continues. All I can say is, ‘Thank You’ for Your infinite patience in guiding me continuously on this journey.

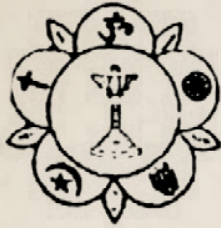
With Love,

Margaret Taplin



On one occasion, Abu Ben Adam was returning home, when he found that there was some light coming from the window of his bedroom. When he looked through that window, he saw that an angel was sitting in his bedroom and was using a golden pen for writing in a book. Gently, Abu Ben Adam entered the room and asked, “Mother, what are you doing?” He got the reply, “I am an angel, I am a messenger of God. I am writing a list of names of who have shown affection to God.” Abu Ben Adam asked if his name was there in that list. She said, “No, it is not here.” Abu Ben Adam told himself, “I am not loved by God. Have I not been devoted to God? What is my limitation?” He just left it at that and went to his room. The next day he went out of his house to meet some people. When he returned, he found the same light again shining out of his window. He again asked, “Mother, what is it that you are writing today?” The angel replied, “Today I am making a list of people who are loved by God.” He asked, “Does that list contain my name?” The angel replied, “In the whole list, I find only your name.” He again asked the question “For what reason does God love me?” This angel, who is the messenger of God, replied, “You believe that service to the people is service to the Lord. You are finding God in the people and you have identified people with God; so, God loves you because you feel that God is omnipresent.”

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Summer Showers 1977



Bhagawan

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

TRINEAVAN
WHITEFIELD
PHONE NO. 33

Dear Rajagopal! Accept my salutations and love

All are happy days to a man of true knowledge. Happiness is an internal conscious experience which comes as the effect of the extinction of a mental or physical desire. The lesser the desires, the greater is the happiness. So, that perfect happiness consists in the destruction or satisfaction of all desires in the Absolute being. Greatness is really independent and does not depend upon externals. It is the sense of perfection or the consciousness of the achievement of the highest end of life that is called greatness. Fame among many people is not called greatness in its strictest sense. The answer is more a question of definition, and the definition depends on the view-point, culture and experience of each man.

Goodness is not false or impossible, but is the one factor which gives real value of life. Life without goodness is not real life, but only a scene of the destructive dance of the evil forces which shall drown the individual in grief. Goodness is the way to true happiness. In the ultimate analysis there is no separate entity as goodness is obtained only in the relative plane, where duality is transcended, no question of pairs of opposites arises. Raja, God is always with you. Be happy

— Baba —

Raja: I am sending little prasad (vibhuti)
for your health. Your health is not good.

Be healthy and happy

With Love

Prish.

LIFE WITHOUT GOODNESS IS *Not Real Life*

Om Sri Sai Ram

Our Dearest Swami,

Loving *Pranam* at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Mother Sai.

Your love of a thousand mothers has been the greatest blessing. Your love has pointed to the pathway to becoming a true devotee. You have always spoken of the need to be a good person, rather than a great person as commonly understood. In Your letter, You redefine greatness – You elevate it to perfection of the human experience. Your blessing emphasizes the importance of purity, contentment, and bliss.

You told us we can find perfect happiness by reducing our worldly desires and seeking instead the spiritual wisdom to become aware of the *Atma* within, our true Self. You reveal our true identity, who we really are – “*Aham Brahmasmi*” (I am Brahman, I am God!). How much more do we really need to know? You remind us that all worldly relationships are artificial, transient attachments.

Gracious Guru, You clearly state that “*Goodness is better than greatness.*” From childhood we were conditioned to become great, so that we could wield the powers of wealth, of name and fame. You turn all our teachings upside down, or should I say, inside out. You tell us that “*Goodness is the way to happiness.*”

But even then, You caution us that goodness can be obtained only in the relative plane and that “*where duality is transcended, no question of pair of opposites arises.*” This requires a total remake of our learning, of ourselves!

Our virtues are the most effective means of purifying the inner consciousness, for they prompt us to discover the best way is live a life of selfless service (*seva*). We owe a lot to society and only by

seva can we purify ourselves. Please teach, please guide us.

In order to become worthy of the title of ‘devotee’, You lovingly taught us the importance of living righteously. *Dharma* is the difference between Rama who was good and Ravana who was great. Our virtues give us the wisdom and inner-strength to be victorious in life. By practicing right conduct, we discover the values of peace, love and truth.

You declared: “Love All, Serve All.” We should develop more and more LOVE, this is the essence of Your teachings. But today there is hatred and anger everywhere. Wherever one looks, there is rampant desire, enmity, and fear. Please light the lamp of love within each one of us in all the *loka* (all the worlds). Inspire us from Your residence within us, then fear and illusion can be removed and one can have the vision of the Self. Otherwise we are bound to suffer.

Your letter reminds me that only when we give up our petty desires and attachments then the small world of ‘I, me, and mine’ will surrender itself to Your universal love, by which means we can overcome the limited confines of the body-mind complex and merge into the vast Consciousness of Infinite Love. It is where perfect happiness is realised.

You allow us to realise that our desires only multiply when we succumb to them, that they promise much but deliver little. They feed the demons of jealousy, greed, lust, egotism, etc. that lurk in a deluded mind. They are the cause of our bondage, so that we live in regret of the past and fear of the future ... we seem not to know how to live in the present, Your omnipresence.

Why didn’t anyone else ever teach us this? Instead, it seems our school education only entangled us in the miseries of a chaotic world. You are the



true Teacher, our true Benefactor. It is a blessing of a hundred lifetimes to know You and to be Your devotee.

We carry so much from our past, including our past lives. Our *vasana* imprison us in the consequences of our past actions, they condition our present response to everything. Yet, we need not be so bound. With Your love and instruction, we can conquer all that binds us – You are the only true friend, our Guru and Guide. You seek us more than we, in our ignorance, seek You. It is a blessing of a hundred lifetimes to know You and to be Your devotee.

Bless us that we may always remember Your sacred words, so that we overcome the power of the mind to obscure our reason and intelligence. May I quote Your own words, for my sake? “*Desires when fulfilled only lead to further desires, when unfulfilled will lead to future births on Earth. So the only method by which the delusion of desire can be destroyed is to dedicate all activities to God and engage in them in a spirit of worship, leaving the consequences to Him and ceasing to attach yourself to them.*”

The non-attachment to worldly desires and possessions is *Vairagya*, renunciation or sacrifice. “*Na Karmana na Prajaya Dhanena Tyage Naike Amritatva Maanushahu*” (Not by action, not by progeny, not by wealth; but by sacrifice alone can man attain immortality). Sacrifice, sacrifice! Why did the world not teach us this, instead it taught us the very opposite! It is a blessing of a hundred lifetimes to know You and to be Your devotee.

In Your mercy, to save us from our ignorance, You introduced us to the Ceiling on Desires programme, by which we can slowly and surely curb our desires, and finally destroy them. You understand us more than we realise ... You never told us to totally extinguish our desires, but to eradicate them and eventually destroy them in becoming one with You.

When there is goodness in the heart, it blossoms into a beautiful character. We achieve inner calmness, a condition in which our discriminative faculties awaken, revealing from within right from wrong. We need no longer look outside for answers, they reside within us.

You, Our Mother Sai, our *Veda Mata*, have gifted us with this precious Gayatri Mantra. Let us praise

You, meditate upon You, and pray that You bless us with a strengthened intellect and carry us across the ocean of *samsara* and deliver us to Your Kingdom. You are *Akhanda Para Brahman*, the Indivisible Supreme Absolute.

We pray that you free us from the consequences of our limited wisdom. We are safer in Your hands, misled by ours. Our journey with You will lead us to our ultimate destination, Self-realisation. We walk not behind You or in front of You, but alongside You. We know we must do our *sadhana*, purify ourselves and meditate until the ‘I’ is extinguished into You. We pray for Your grace.

You are always telling us to “*Be happy*”. It is sad that all human beings are searching for peace and happiness and yet most do not even begin to understand what You are alluding to. “*Happiness is union with God*”. It is the natural state of our true being, it is already within us, we just need to understand that joy and bliss comes with the extinction of mental and physical desires and not the foolish multiplication of our desires in the material world.

Merging into Your Love is ‘Liberation’. It is where we know our real selves, that we are *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Your letter explains how life should be lived. It reveals where we can find happiness. You illuminate where we should be looking, so we know where not to look, in the mundane material world that promises so much yet can never deliver, because true happiness cannot exist in the temporary creation of our minds.

We seek Your love and continued guidance to make the supreme connection to our inner soul, our God-consciousness. Help us forget the internet, so that we may tune into the ‘inner-net’.

Swami, I will reason, I will use my *viveka* (discrimination) and *vairagya* (renunciation), I will act on your teachings to be a good person. But please be the Master of my reason, will and activity. I pray You will always watch over us and keep us in your Divine care. Take us to where “duality is transcended”.

Lovingly, at Your Divine Lotus Feet,

Kavita Lachu Chablani
Kobe, Japan



Chanting CHALLENGE



The senior members the Sathya Sai Centre asked me to think about a sadhana during the Covid-19 restrictions. While praying at my altar I turned to Swami and the words “*Chanting Challenge*” came. The Young Adults came up with a 9-month and 9-day chanting challenge for Bhagawan’s 96th Birthday, called *960,000 Prayers to My Sai Within*. This sadhana commenced on Valentine’s Day as an offering of love from the 50 devotees who participated.

Each participant chose one prayer from a list of 9: *Vakratunda Mahakaya, Maha Mrityunjaya, Asathoma Sad Gamaya, Twameva Mata Cha Pita Twameva, Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu, Gurur Bhrama Gurur Vishnu, Poornamidah Poornamidam, Sai Gayatri and Gayatri Mantra*. They chanted it 108 times daily.

There were monthly group chanting sessions on Zoom. Guest speakers were invited to these sessions to speak to the participants about the importance and deeper meaning of each prayer.

With Swami’s Grace and our sincere commitment, the goal of 960,000 prayers was reached within 6.5 months. Yet, we decided to continue until Birthday and beyond.

A number of devotees told me of transformations after joining this beautiful *sadhana*, as it became ingrained in their daily life as a means to connect directly to Swami. These reflections are shared through out the pages of this Sai Sarathi

Hari Chainani



DATE 24.7.71

My dear Hislop! I received your letter
I am very happy. How is your health? and practice
Hislop! The secret of perfect health lies in keeping the
mind always cheerful, never worried, never
hurried, never borne down by any fear, thought ~~anxiety~~
or anxiety.

have all your attachments severed from every
object and concentrate yourself on one thing. The
one fact; one truth, your divinity, immediately
on the spot you gain realisation

nothing is done in a day, religion can not be
swallowed in the form of a pill. it requires hard
and constant practice. The mind can be conquered
only by slow and steady practice.

Hislop! moderation in temper is virtue

moderation in principle is a vice. impurity is a mere
superimposition under which the real nature of
man has been hidden.

my dear! you are the embodiment of God. fill yourselves
with the thought of your almightiness, your majesty and
your glory. open the gates of wisdom. Enter the abode
bliss. Rest in peace forever

lop. How is your Mrs. Give my Blessings to her and all
family. I am always with you with you
Love Baba

THE SECRET OF *Perfect Health*



My Dearest and Beloved Mother Sai,

Thank You, Swami, for all that You have given us, including what we may not even know You have given. There are still times we find ourselves wondering why certain things happen and why sometimes we suffer so much mental anguish, only for us to later realize that these events are Your *leela* (divine sport) to teach us the futility of our 'hurry, worry and curry', that we should learn to live in Your love.

We thank You for revealing to us time and time again that Your Divine *Sankalpa* (Will) and Your Hands are at work in our lives. You are truly "*Sai Sakala Samsaya Haraya*" (Sai who destroys all doubts).

Swami, we have faith that You are Divine, that You are *Prema Swaroopa* (Embodiment of Love), *Atma Swaroopa* (Embodiment of Consciousness), and *Ananda Swaroopa* (Embodiment of Bliss). You are these and much more, beyond what we can even fathom. In Your unconditional love for us, piercing the veil of our ignorance You address us as *Prema Swaroopa*. How fortunate it is that You reveal to us our real selves that we cannot see.

How, Swami, can we experience this creation and in turn see all beings as *Prema Swaroopa* when we do not even understand the thought that we are *Om Tat Sat*, the Supreme Reality! We pray to You for illumination to remove the darkness in our minds and intellects; we pray you purify our hearts so that we shake off the grip of the inner enemies. It is only with Your Grace that we have any chance to understand the Truth that sustains Your creation. We take solace from the fact that You are "*Sai Sujnana Margadarsakaya*" (Sai who shows the path of attaining right knowledge).

With all our worldly attachments, how do we keep our "*mind always cheerful, never worried, never hurried, never borne down by any fear, thought or anxiety*"? Yes, we do allow our minds to be unproductively stressed but is it not a mother's duty to worry about her children? Perhaps, that is our ego's sense of doership and ownership broadcasting itself when we lack faith in Your omnipresence. In truth, these children are not really ours, they are Yours.

When will we learn to dedicate every duty to You, trusting Your love for us and learning not to be obsessed by the outcome? You have given us the solution in Your letter: to fill every thought with our "*almightiness*". Yes, we should have Self-confidence, borne not of the apparent might of this body and mind but of Your presence in our lives. You tell us to chant "*I am God, I am not different from God*." We await the moment that we too, like the Buddha, have an 'Aha' moment, when Self-realization dawns within and we stand tall on our "*majesty*" and "*glory*".

Struggles come and go like passing clouds. Some days we may feel You are with us and other days we feel alone. And then, in a moment free from anguish we are able to experience Your presence, we realize that it is actually not possible for You to desert us. You are our closest companion, You are the reason we breathe, think, act. Without You, we are dust!

Leaving aside that You cannot leave Your worldly abode in our hearts, why would You even want to leave us, for Your love for us is Your love for Yourself, when You see us You only see Yourself.

We find that in our deluded and undisciplined minds there is a fine line between recognizing our

majesty and glory and, ultimately, our divinity, and, on the other hand, avoiding the clutches of our ego. How do we walk on the knife's edge, it is so easy to fall over!

There are instances when we feel You are working through us and that we are not separate but one in You. At such times, we may experience a glimpse of our divinity. But then, just as quickly, our attention snaps and we are tested by something as simple as a compliment that inflates our ego and in that very instant separates us from You. How quickly our bubble of divinity pops in that split-second! Swami, how do we overcome this unpredictability? Yes, I know it is each spiritual aspirant's duty to recognize this flaw and work hard to overcome it, that to this extent our destinies are in our own hands.

In Your mercy, You show Your omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence even when we don't deserve it ... that is why we fall in love with You again and again. In Your infinite compassion, You love us in spite of all else. As our best friend, You remind us that we are children of God and what we must do: as the world challenges us, we must follow the Master, face the devil, fight to the end and finish the game. There is no purpose proclaiming our love for You if we do not obey You.

We may not always know where we are or where we are going but we know You will always guide and walk with us to our destination. For You have descended in Your human form to help us ascend. We look forward to "rise" to the occasion presented by our devotion to You in this birth, You are our Guru and God. May we make You proud of us.

Kunti prayed to Lord Krishna for difficulties so she could think of Him constantly. We are often afraid to make such a prayer. Who asks for hardships or difficulties? Only a true spiritual aspirant! When faced with difficulties, the tendency far too often is to fall into a dark hole and think of ourselves as nothing. At these times, and indeed always, You lovingly remind us that we are *Amritasya Putra*, children of immortality!

Swami, it is only with Your blessings of a hundred births that we are with You now, may we always remain one with You. We know that it is up to us

whether or not we stay close to You – You are "*Sai Saranagatha Thranaya*" (Sai, the Saviour of those who surrender) and we just need to offer our lives to You, to love You, to surrender to You ... to merge into You.

So, we wish and pray that You teach us how. Please don't allow our monkey minds to cause us to swing madly from one branch of the tree of sensual gratification to another. It is easy to jump away, but where will we go? Where can we go? At the right time, when we are finally ready to listen, You shake us to the core and bring us back from the precipice. That is when our spiritual education begins, when we celebrate our actual birthday and realise that You, Swami, are our final destination!

By looking at You, watching You, observing You, diving deep into Your love, we can understand our true Self. It is that simple, although we have many-a-times confronted the difficulty of experiencing our own divinity. Where do we start? In Your letter You give us the solution, to have all our "*attachments reversed from every object and concentrate .. on one thing, the one fact*", our "*divinity*". Our Constant Integrated Awareness, realizing that we are one with the universe and You, our Lord.

You beautifully sing, "*Love is My form, truth is My breath, bliss is My food*". May we enthusiastically listen to Your melodious words and intently transform ourselves. This we will achieve when we exemplify in our daily lives the message that Love is our form, Truth is our breath and Bliss is our food.

Living in a developed country, the practice of moderation is far too often non-existent. "*Moderation in principle*", what You call a vice, is far more appealing to most. Everything seems to be super-sized, whether it be our food, our car, our house ... or our desires and our egos. If we cannot find moderation in our materialistic world, how can we experience calm during the sacred time of our prayers and meditation, when we seek to enter our spiritual world?

More desires simply bring more worries and with that comes more sorrow. Essentially all we seek is happiness, and, therefore, You have labelled man "*Ananda Pipasi*" (desirer of bliss). But it is time we

“Open the gates of wisdom” and look for happiness where there is illumination and not in the darkness where it can never be found.

You declared during Your Krishna Avatar, “*Anityam asukham lokam imam prapya bhajasva maam*” (since the world is temporary and full of misery, contemplate on Me constantly). That is ultimately the simplest starting point, contemplating on You constantly.

Divine love alone is true and changeless. A compass always points North; we pray that our love is always directed towards You. Then we will understand the supreme message of unity, “*You and I are one.*” There is no second entity, “*I am God, I am God, I*

am no different from God”. I know You separated Yourself from Yourself to love Yourself.

My dearest Swami, thank You for always being in us and with us, but it is up to us to realize Us. You reassure us, “*Mee Kanta Inta Venta Janta Vunta*” (in your eyes, in your home, I will be there with you), and You also remind us that You are in us. We pray to remain in Sai consciousness forever.

Your loving daughter,
Anuradha Venkateswaran
Atlanta, USA



Chanting Challenge *Reflections*

I started chanting the Sai Gayatri from the first week and have continued with the same mantra. Although in the beginning I chanted 108 times robotically, I continued because I wanted to thank Bhagwan for everything that He has done for me. I normally chanted in the park and after a few weeks I noticed that little sparrows would come by to sit there and listen – I felt quite drawn to them. I then realized the power of the mantra. It helped to calm me down. Eventually I noticed the robotic chanting started coming from the heart and I enjoyed it. I found myself connecting more to Bhagawan.

I want to express gratitude to Swami and the Sathya Sai Centre of Hong Kong for making me realize that true chanting does come from the heart and that Baba is very close to us, we only need to call Him and He will be there to help.

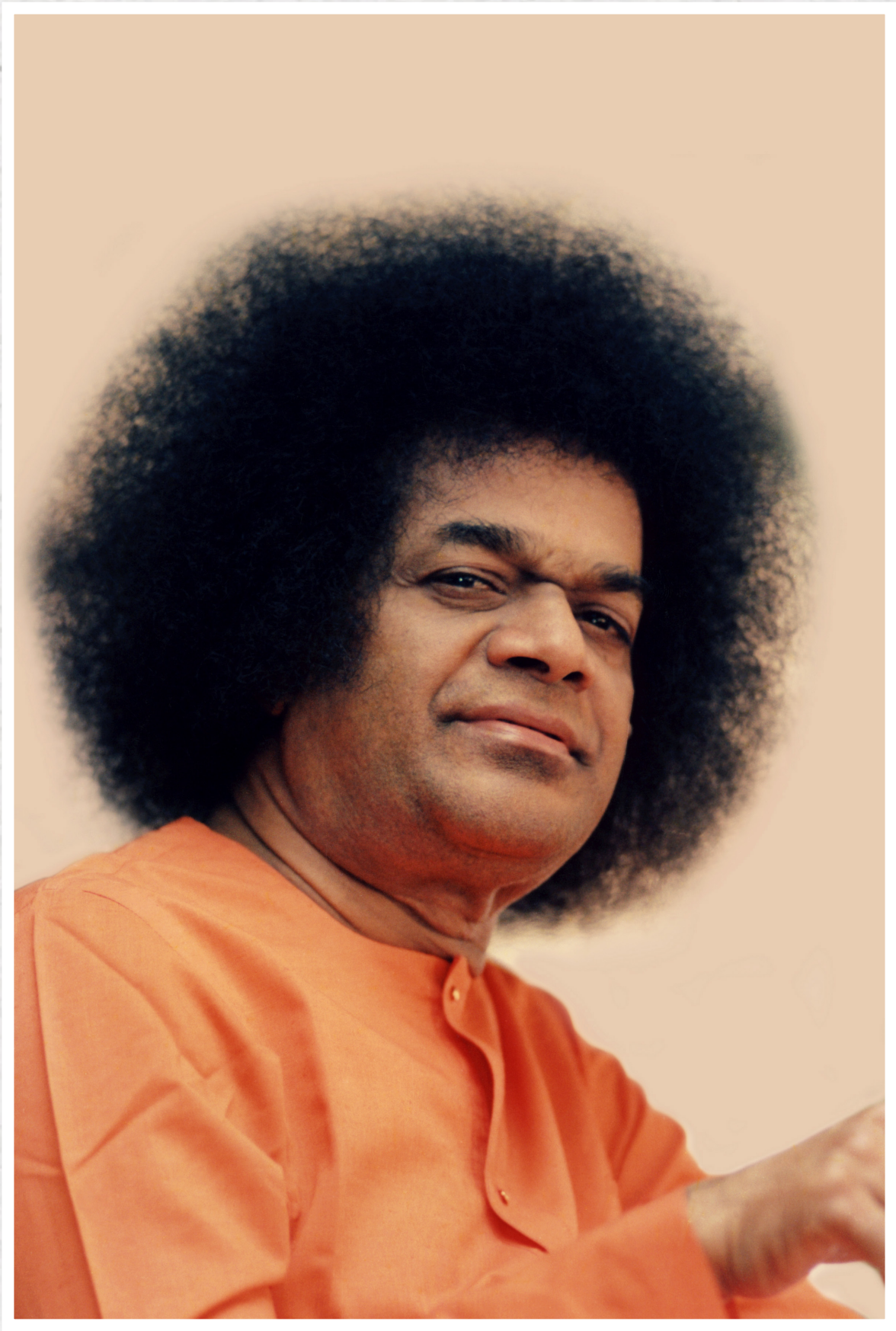
- Sushi Peswani

I am thankful to Swami for giving me the opportunity to join this “Chanting Challenge”. It wasn’t a challenge though, instead it was my dedication to Swami. I chanted “Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu” every day without fail. This prayer is close to my heart as I believe that if all the worlds are happy, so are we: when we pray for the world, we pray for ourselves; and when our surroundings are happy, we too are happy. This prayer slowly changed the way I think and regularly chanting it has made me a calmer person. Now, whenever something difficult comes my way and I get confused, I chant this magical mantra and it comforts me and gives me peace.

- Lavina Daswani

The “Chanting Challenge” for Bhagawan’s Birthday has been a blessing that I’m truly grateful for. It has become my daily morning ritual, my growing rock, and a boulder of strength and calmness. Thank you Swami for giving me this opportunity to partake in this beautiful sadhana.

- Gautam Daswani



DIVINE Discourse

Limit Not THE ALL PERVADING Brahman WITH NAMES AND FORMS

Is it possible to build a temple for the One who pervades the entire *Brahmanda* (cosmos)?

Can anyone give a name to the One who is present in all beings?

Is it possible to give a bath to the One who is present in all rivers?

Can anyone offer food to the One who has the entire *Brahmanda* in His stomach?

Man, out of his ignorance, is unable to know this truth. He is under the delusion that he is *Naswara* (impermanent). In fact, he is not *Naswara*, but *Easwara* Himself for the entire world.

(Telugu poem)

Prapancha is the name we have given to the apparent world. It is constituted by the *panchabhutas* (five elements), namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether. ‘*Pra*’ means to manifest, to blossom. Hence, *prapancha* means the manifestation of not only the five elements, but also the five life principles, namely, *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana* and *samana*. They form the basis for the entire world.

The principle of *Brahmatatwa* is present in all the five elements as the undercurrent. It is eternal and immortal. The term *Brahma* refers to the divine principle which pervades the *panchabhutas*, *panchakoshas*, and *pancha pranas*. But man out of ignorance attributes a particular form to *Brahma* and offers his prayers. Names and forms are transient. *Brahmatatwa*, which is the basis of all names and forms, is the only permanent entity.

Out of our ignorance and limited understanding we confine such a cosmic principle of *Brahman* to a tiny form and worship it. We should worship the cosmic form of the divine. *Brahmanda* (cosmos) is the very form of God. *Brahman* pervades the *anda*, *pinda* and *Brahmanda*. *Anda* is the combination of *padartha* (matter) and *prana* (life principle). *Pinda* is that which is born out of the mother’s womb. Ultimately, they become one with the *Brahmanda*.

Embodiments Of Love, See God In All

Love is the basis for *Brahmanda*. Without *prema* (love), there is neither *prakriti* (nature) nor *prapancha* (world). The world is sustained by the principle of love which is uniformly present in the five elements. You may worship Divinity in a number of ways, but all your worship will prove futile if you forget the principle of love.

The five elements are responsible for the sustenance of human life and the world at large. Everything will come to a standstill even if any one of the five elements is missing. We hear the sound with our ears; we see the world with our eyes. In this manner, we are able to experience the world through the five senses. They prove the existence of the world.

Man has forgotten the divine principle of love and is striving to attain *ananda* (bliss) through mean and worldly pursuits. It is said, “*Jantunam nara janma durlabham*” (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest). In fact, human being is essentially divine.

Dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* are prescribed as the four goals of human life. But, man today has given up *dharma* and *moksha*. He is running after *artha* and *kama* (wealth and desire). God has

created this world. Your wife, children, friends and foes are all created by God.

It is not enough if you maintain good relationship with your wife, children, and friends, you must be able to see God in all. That is your primary duty. Your wife, children, friends and even foes are all the very embodiments of *Brahman*. Even God had to fight the enemies sometimes. However, in spite of their animosity towards God, they ultimately merged in Him owing to His grace. In this world, there is no place where God does not exist. He is present everywhere.

*“Sarvatah panipadam tat sarvathokshi siromukham,
sarvatah sruthimalloke sarvamavruthya tishthati”*

(with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and
ears pervading everything,
He permeates the entire universe).

The people around you may not be able to see what you do, but He is watching you. Others may not hear what you speak, but He is listening to you. He is the eternal witness. Unfortunately, you are unable to realise this truth. Some people argue, “How can you say that God is present everywhere when we do not actually see Him? How is it possible for Him to hear our prayers?”

In fact, sound is the very form of God. There is no place where there is no sound. He can hear everything since sound is His own form. Light pervades the entire world. God can see everything in this world as the very light is His vision. Hence, never be under the mistaken notion that God does not know what is happening.

Do not doubt or deny His existence just because He is not visible to the naked eye. How does *sankalpa* (will) originate? Will it originate in your *hridaya* (heart)? It happens as per the Will of God. There may be ups and downs from the worldly point of view, but divine principle always remains steady.

The *loka* (world) and *Lokesha* (God) are inseparable. The creation and the Creator are one. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between the two. *Atma* is the name given to the principle of divinity. It has no specific form. It pervades the entire world in the form of *sankalpa* (will). It is a grave error to attribute a particular name and form to the

atma. It is essential that we understand the oneness of *atma* and experience the same. Everything is divine. “*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*” (verily, all this is *Brahman*).

As you are unable to comprehend the divine principle in totality, you confine God to a specific name and form such as Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, etc., and worship Him. A potter makes the idols of Rama, Krishna, etc. However, it is only the clay that takes the forms of various deities. The same clay is moulded into various forms.

As you are unable to understand the principle of unity, you are deluded by the apparent diversity.

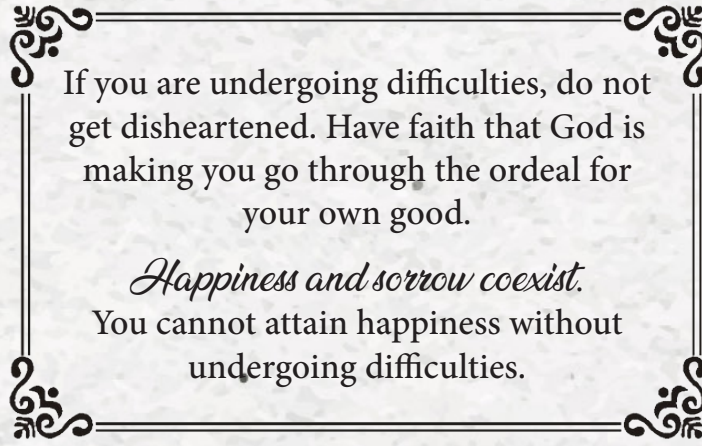
Embodiments Of Love! Consider The World As The Very Form Of God

No one can describe God as having this form or that form. He permeates the entire universe. Without name there can be no form, and vice versa. The principle of divinity is represented by a name and a form. Every object and every being in this *prapancha* (world) is the manifestation of Divine Love. Hence, do not see the world merely from the physical point of view. Consider the world as the very form of God and the manifestation of divine love.

Because of your limited understanding, you confine such an all pervading Divine Principle to a name and a form. “*Yad bhavam tad bhavati*” (as is the feeling, so is the result). God responds according to your feelings towards Him. If you have *purna bhakti* (unwavering devotion) and love God with all your heart, He will confer on you *purna ananda* (supreme bliss).

God transcends the dualities of birth and death, happiness and sorrow. You may think that even God has pain and suffering. But, from God’s point of view, pain does not exist at all! It is an aspect of divinity. Bliss also is an aspect of Divinity. God is beyond pleasure and pain, merit and sin. Happiness and sorrow are of your own making. Pleasure is an interval between two pains.

Do not consider God as a separate entity. Unfortunately, people are unable to understand the principle of Divinity and, hence, indulge in all types of imaginations. God is one. The *Veda* declares,



“*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti*” (Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names).

However, when the situation demands, divine incarnations appear on earth and play a role in the cosmic drama. When Droupadi was humiliated by Duryodhana and Dussasana in the royal court, Bhima was seething with anger. He wanted to crush them to pulp. But, even under such circumstances, God did not kill them.

It is most essential you understand that everything happens as per His Will. Whatever happens is for your own good. With such firm conviction, you should accept pleasure and pain, good and bad with equanimity. It may be difficult for you to bear misfortunes. You should pray to God to grant you the necessary strength to bear them. You may have difficulties today, but tomorrow it will be different. Difficulties are like passing clouds. They will certainly give way to happiness.

Man always strives for happiness. How can he attain it? True happiness lies in union with God. In fact, God is beyond happiness and sorrow. Whatever you may do, He says, “*Tathastu*” (so shall it be). He showers His blessings on you saying, “Let it be for your own good.” You will be free from sorrow once you understand the *Bhagavad Tatwa* (nature of divinity).

If you are undergoing difficulties, do not get disheartened. Have faith that God is making you go through the ordeal for your own good. Happiness and sorrow coexist. You cannot attain happiness without undergoing difficulties.

Embodiments Of Love! Be Attracted Only Towards God And None Else

Do not attribute multiplicity to divinity. Consider everyone as the embodiment of divinity. Install such sacred feeling firmly in your heart. Treat even the person who hates you as your own. Having attained human birth, you should be able to withstand pain and suffering with courage and fortitude. Be convinced that they are good for you.

All that God has created is good. In God’s creation, everything is good and sacred. There is nothing which will cause sorrow and misery. In fact, misery arises out of man’s delusion. The delusion is because of his identification with the form. What is the meaning of the term *Manava*? ‘Ma’ means *Maya*, ‘na’ means without and ‘Va’ means *Varthinchuta* (to conduct oneself). Therefore, *Manava* is one who conducts himself without *maya*. If you fall a victim to *maya*, you will never be able to understand *marmamu* (reality). In fact, *maya* is man’s own making. It arises out of his imagination.

However much one may try, it is not possible to know God in totality. Once mother Kunti said to Krishna, “Oh, Krishna! Though You are verily God, sometimes we are deluded to think that You are also a human being like us.”

Saint Thyagaraja too echoed the same feelings in the following verse:

“*Good and bad lie in your mind; they are not outside. Hence, correct your feelings in the first instance. Get rid of all animal qualities so that humanness can blossom in you. If you notice even*”

a trace of hatred in yourself, drive it away at once. Having attained human birth, it is shameful on your part to have evil qualities like hatred.

“Do not fall a prey to infatuation. You should be attracted only towards God and none else. You love your son because you consider him to be your reflection. In fact, the one who loves you, the one who hates you, the one who criticises you, all are your own reflections. At one time, one may be angry and later the anger may give way to love.

“People are carried away by the vagaries of the mind. Being deluded by the names and forms, they are unable to know the transient nature of the world. Truly speaking, you have neither friends nor enemies. It is only your love or hatred that is reflected from outside. God does not give you happiness or sorrow; they are of your own making. They originate from you.”

• Embodiments Of Love! Never Deny God

God is present everywhere in the form of five elements. Everyone is endowed with five elements and everyone is an embodiment of love. All are one. There is no second entity. Wherever you see, there are five elements. You do not find a sixth element anywhere.

The principle of love present in you represents *Easwarathwa* and *Brahma tatwa*. It is merely *bhrama* (delusion) to think that *Brahma* is separate from you. Everything is *Brahman*. Everything is the manifestation of *atma* and *ananda*. That is why God is extolled as “*nithyanandam, paramasukhadam kevalam jnanamurtim*” (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute).

Even the *karma* (action) that you perform is the manifestation of *Brahman*. When you perform your action with such divine feelings, they will yield good results. Never criticise God. Never deny Him. Everything is the manifestation of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Maheswara*. All are divine. There is nothing other than divinity in this world. The principle of divinity present in a grain of sand and in a big laddu is one and the same.

Once you realise this truth, you become *Brahman* verily. You do not need to search for *Brahma*

elsewhere. You are *Brahman*, you are *Vishnu*, you are *Siva*, you are the very embodiment of the divine Trinity. It is only your feeling that assumes the form of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Maheswara*.

You are subjected to unrest and suffering because of your dualistic feeling. You perceive unity as diversity, instead of visualising unity in diversity. Number one is the basis for all other numbers. Likewise, names and forms vary but all are essentially one. There is no second person. Other than divinity, there is no second entity in this world.

Many spiritual aspirants and yogis have made concerted efforts to understand the principle of divinity. They ultimately realised “*Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*” (Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). As you have not understood this Truth, you are deluded by the apparent duality. You should understand the spiritual mathematics in order to know that Divinity is one.

It is most essential that you understand this principle of oneness and conduct yourself accordingly. When you understand this oneness, you will experience divinity. You will realise that the individual is not different from God. When you put a zero after the numeral 1 it becomes 10; put one more zero it will become 100. In this manner if you go on adding zeros, the value also increases to 1000, 10,000, and so on and so forth. Zeros gain value only when they are positioned next to the numeral one.

‘I’, ‘my wife’, ‘my children’, ‘my property’, etc., all are like zeros. They will have value only when they are associated with God, who is like numeral one. The entire world is like a zero. It has emerged from the Hero, God. It is because of your delusion that you mistake zero for Hero. So long as you are immersed in delusion you will never be able to realise divinity. Delusion gives rise to doubts that will rob you of your bliss. They will poison your mind and put you to danger. Hence, never entertain doubts with regard to Divinity. Strengthen your faith in God.

A car can run smoothly only when there is air in all its four tyres. Even if one tyre is punctured, it may lead to accident. The human body is like a car. Mind is the steering wheel. *Dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* are its four tyres. They should be filled with

the air of faith. Even if one of the tyres is punctured, your life will be put to danger. Your mind should be steady and under control. Only then can you reach the goal of life, i.e. *moksha* (liberation).

Embodiments Of Love! Keep Your Mind Under Control

The entire world is pervaded by the five elements. You should maintain perfect balance and harmony among them. When you are riding a cycle, if you do not maintain proper balance, you will fall down. Likewise, you can lead the life of a true human being only when you have proper balance of mind. If you lack proper balance of mind, your humanness will be ruined.

Understand that you are born as a human being, not as an insect or a worm. Neither are you an animal, nor a bird nor a beast. You should understand the meaning of the term *manava*. 'Ma' means not and 'nava' means new. You are not here for the first time. You are not new to this earth. You have gone through a number of births before attaining this human birth.

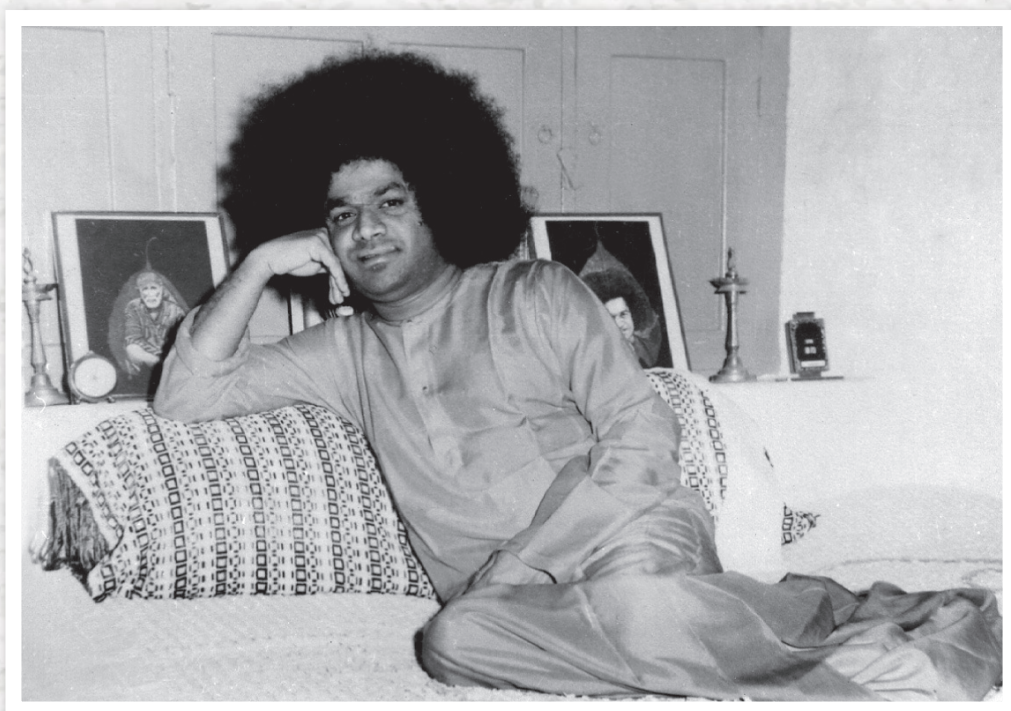
Give up all your old and mean qualities and start your life afresh. Human life is highly sacred and mysterious. Only God can unravel its mystery.

Visweswara (the Lord of the universe) permeates the entire *viswa* (universe). He transcends all description. He is present in you in the form of *atma*. There is only one path for the realisation of *atma*. Give up the feeling of 'mine'. You say 'this is mine and that is mine'. Once you get rid of such worldly attachment, you will develop purity, steadiness and selflessness.

You will be free from suffering, worries and anxiety. Ultimately, you will attain *moksha* (liberation). Having attained *manavatwa* (humanness), you should make efforts to rise to the level of *Madhavatwa* (divinity). That is your goal. What is the use if you remain in *manavatwa* forever? You should develop *sanmathi* (pure mind) to rise to the level of divine. Unity confers purity which will in turn lead to divinity. Hence, all of you must stand united.

You belong to the human race. You belong to one family. Hence, you must conduct yourself like brothers and sisters. Absence of such spirit of unity will diminish purity and take you away from divinity.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 39 / Ch. 3





Sri Sathya Sai Baba

PRASANTHI NILAYAM P.O.

ANANTPUR DT. (A.P.)

PHONE NO: 30.

My Dear's! The time will come when the whole of this dream will vanish. To everyone of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream, when we shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. In this struggle through what we call environments, there will come a time when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the soul. It is only a question of time, and time is nothing in the infinite. It is a drop in the ocean. We can afford to wait and be calm.

With Paluney's

(Bala)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba



THE WHOLE UNIVERSE *is a Mere Dream*

My Beloved Bhagawan,

My heartfelt thanks for Your letter.

How does one comprehend the weight of Your words when everything we have been taught since a young age – by our parents, teachers and mentors – has caused us to think that this universe is ‘real’ and our lives in it are our most significant ‘reality’. We were taught to believe with deep conviction that we are our body-mind identity, and that the death of this body is our death.

How did we fall to such depths of ignorance when over the ages You sent emissaries and even came Yourself to remind us of our divine heritage? How have we remained in this state of delusion when several major religions have been established in the last thousands of years, each proclaiming that they propagate Your Truth? Absent our yearning and single-minded devotion, we have not tried to understand better.

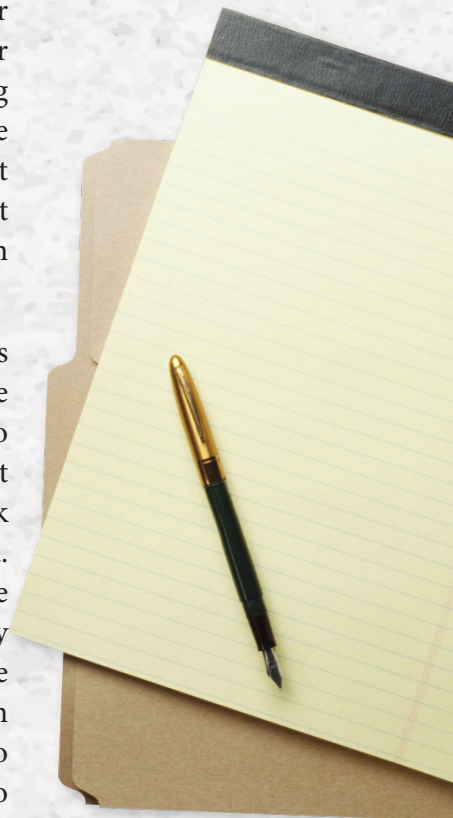
We have long thought that we are the masters of our own destiny. We have given so much importance to acquiring relationships and things to make our lives more joyful and secure – family, money, name and fame, to list a few. Yet, we have witnessed how joy and security cannot be secured in this way. Why did we not realise this is all an illusion, that these trappings for the householder require spiritual wisdom and detachment so as not to be the very cause of our bondage? We needed to learn sacrifice and renunciation.

However much we seek happiness in this world, it eludes us. It should have been clear to us a long time ago that the pleasures of the world are only transient and do not grant inner peace. Alas, we are like the drunkard who always seeks his next drink to maintain his senselessness.

We can be clever and analytical but we have used these faculties destructively. We are destroying our communities with violence of all kinds and poverty, the Earth and all life by the greenhouse gases and pollution that we are recklessly causing, and even our own humanity as we lose the ability to love and be compassionate. We have not nurtured the pure heart and sharpened intellect necessary to perceive the Truth, even when You revealed it to us.

We are trapped by our *karma* and our *vasana*. I am beginning to understand that the world in which we live is nothing more than a creation of our minds – a reflection, reaction and resound of all our experiences and distortions of the past. Our unsteady minds, not anchored to the Truth, have caused us to drift aimlessly in this ocean of *samsara* (the continuous cycle of birth and death), leaving us unaware how to chart our way back to You. Why Bhagawan is Your *Maya* so merciless? Or is it that our yearning has not been intense enough? We cannot change the past, but please teach us to live in Your omnipresence.

We can see the distress and disruptions in the world around us; to save ourselves we must change course to seek Your Lotus Feet instead. When will we realise that You are our only refuge? You provide Your love and wisdom to all so that those who avail themselves of it so



that they may navigate their way home. You are at the helm, waiting patiently for all to yearn for Your love.

You told us: “*Your heart is the lock and your mind is the key. When you turn the key to the left, it locks. But if you turn it right, it unlocks ... Hence, your mind is the cause of your liberation and bondage.*”

It is Your grace that creates the yearning for Your Lotus Feet. I pray You bless all so that we purify our hearts and minds and open ourselves to Your illumination and love. That the ignorance of many births is banished in the effulgence of ten million suns, in the flame of divinity that You placed within us, in our soul (*atma*).

I pray that we have the wisdom to use the opportunity of this lifetime to realise Your eternal Truth. That we live life dedicated to Your omnipresence, we have faith in Your omniscience and we surrender to Your omnipotence. That is the only real purpose of our lives. We have come from You, we live in You, and we shall return to You. We should have this Self-confidence.

You are the resident of our hearts, our eternal companion. You are our true reality. You tell us to recite, “*I am God, I am not different from God.*” But our ego limits us to this body-mind identity, it separates us from Your creation, and it denies us the joy of letting go. You offer us diamonds when You speak of “Die mind”, so that we might transcend the limitations imposed on us by our egos. You set us free when You tell us to “Love All, Serve All”.

You offer us the opportunity to nurture our *bhakti* (devotion to You), to perform *karma* (actions) well by serving others so that we may learn *akarma* (divine actions that do not bind), and by Your discourses and Vahini books You gift to us *Atma jnana* (knowledge of the soul). The purpose for these activities is so that we surrender ourselves to You, allowing our *sadhana* to purify us to earn Your Grace. Ultimately, our sense of separation merges into You.

You gifted us the five universal human values, *Sathya* (Truth), *Dharma* (Righteousness), *Santhi* (Peace), *Prema* (Love) and *Ahimsa* (Non-violence). You made the ancient wisdom easier for us to

understand. Your love is for all, even those who deny You, and so You gave the five human values that all can embrace to pursue excellence and unity of thought, word and deed. You tell us these values are the essence of our being.

You teach us, “*God is Love, live in Love.*” It is difficult to live in love without selfishness. Yet, as we face the consequences of our past actions and endure the suffering, You apply the balm to quell our pain, as we offer *namasmaranam* (to chant Your name) and recite the Gayatri mantra. When we look back at our suffering, we realise that You were always there, carrying us so that we suffered less, strengthening us so that next time we would know how not to suffer.

You exhort us to live simply, reducing our desires and ultimately desiring You only. You gave us Ceiling on Desires. How simple You have made it. We must just practise.

Your Jyoti Meditation not only lights the lamp of love within us, it spreads from us to all those whom we come across. It is Your love and wisdom pouring through us.

On top of these boons that You gifted us for our the unfoldment of our innate divinity, You gave us the Sri Sathya Sai International Organisation, so that all Your children can come together as brothers and sisters, to study together, pray together and serve together – that we may learn to put love into action.

We are so grateful You allow us to serve You – You planned it over thousands for births. You challenge us, testing our faith, whilst at the same time You hack away at the roots of the six inner enemies within us.

In Your mercy, You shower Your love on us and reveal to us that Your Divine Hands control all. We pray You always remind us to surrender, to live in Your resolution of our worries. We pray You grant us equanimity, so that we accept whatever You give, knowing that it is for our own good.

You are the Master of Time. In our impatience we fret, but You laugh as Your timing is perfect. You teach us patience and acceptance.

When we look back with deep gratitude for all that You did for us, we realise You were transforming



us, unmaking us and remaking us according to Your Master plan for us. All the while, You grant us everything we need to live with honour and dignity in this material world.

You unequivocally declare that this dream will vanish, it is our destiny to achieve eternal life. You assure us that beyond our false 'reality' is "*the power of the Soul.*" You promise us supreme bliss when You assure us that "*the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings.*" Who would not want to realise his oneness with You? Will You not walk alongside us

on this passage beyond our surroundings to *Sat-Chit-Ananda*?

Only You, our Guru and God, can save us. I pray You bless us so that we do not come again – ultimately, our Self-realisation is the very reason why You came to us as our Bhagawan.

My Loving Pranam to You,
Ashok K. Sakhrani



Chanting Challenge *Reflections*

The "Chanting Challenge" initiated by the Young Adults has become an integral part of my life. It is my very own commitment to our dear Swami, which I offer with love. Chanting Vedic mantra is one of the most essential parts of spirituality. Regular chanting has helped quiet and calm my mind. I have learnt that prayer should emanate from the heart – that it is my duty to pray but the result is up to the Grace of God. Chanting these prayers has brought more peace into my life and I feel my day is incomplete until I start chanting. I feel very grateful to Swami for giving me this opportunity to become closer to Him, which is my ultimate goal in life.

- Asha Mahtani

When the Young Adults started this challenge, my first thought was "Will I be able to sit for 1 hour in one place and focus my mind?" I took up the challenge anyway and prayed to Swami. The message I got from Him was, "Put yourself in My hands and I will take care of you." That was my assurance. I started the challenge in February. Since then, I have found some changes in my life. I can stay disciplined, sitting with my back straight and hands in the mudra position.

Additionally, I can keep my mind single-pointed, which keeps me calm and peaceful throughout the day. I have learnt to take my time and not chant the prayer mechanically. By this sadhana, I have certainly gotten closer to my beloved Lord Sai. I promise to continue chanting with devotion, dedication, and determination even after Baba's Birthday.

- Nisha Sakhrani



5. 4. 88
camp "Porindavan"

Dear Rajagopal! Accept my love and Blessing. How are you? don't worry about your health? GOD is always with you, in you, around you, Be always happy, Bend the body, mend the senses, and the mind this is the process of attaining immortality. where there is faith there is devotion where there is devotion there is purity where there is purity there is GOD where there is GOD there is Bliss.

GOD is with you. you are GOD. why worry?
Raja! I am sending prasadam with your wife. She is very worried about your health she is very good woman!

With Blessings
Baba



Designed by Vecteezy

GOD IS *Always* WITH YOU

Om Sri Sai Ram

Loving *Pranam* at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Sai Maa.

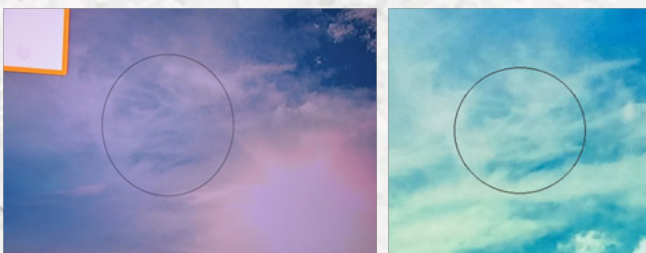
Our beloved Bhagawan,

Growing up, many times I heard my parents and elders say “*God is Always with You*” but I did not then appreciate the real meaning and profoundness of this statement. It sounded sincere but I only experienced the truth of the statement when I started to invite You into my life.

Due to my professional commitments, I asked for a *seva* that was “convenient”, and You made me a Bal Vikas teacher, sending the children to my home. No *seva* could have been more convenient! The *seva* was a true gift as I realized I had to first imbibe the lessons I was teaching and reduce my own ego, by behaving with humility and sincerity. O’ Bhagawan, I realize this was how You “*bent my body*”.

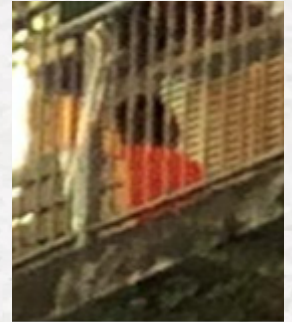
You say one must “*mend the senses*”. You drew me towards Your discourses to focus my attention on the fact that the senses that seek pleasure can lead the mind astray, away from Your Love. You led my mind to Your Lotus Feet by bringing to me the experiences of devotees who had had close proximity to You. There I came upon Your assurance: “*I’m always with you, around you, below you, above you, and beside you.*”

One day, I mustered the courage to ask You how come You did not come into my life more evidently? Lo and behold, after 30 minutes, You appeared on my home TV screen, confirming You were with me in Hong Kong. A year later, You reassured me that You were with me at work by appearing on a work TV screen in New York!



One can see two slightly different images but You, Swami, were the One in both! This finally “*ended my mind*”, quietening my mind after my search for You revealed You are always with me.

You regularly assure me of Your gracious presence during our *seva* to the homeless in Hong Kong. The recent blessing was on Christmas Day, 2020 (I offer a copy of the photo). I am ever grateful for Your assurances and Your love of a thousand mothers, O Sai Maa!



My dear Swami, I am reminded of what You often said, “*If you take one step towards Me I will take a hundred towards you.*” At first, I found this statement to be very confusing. I thought, “Here I am, ready to take any number of steps to be with You and You are ready to take a hundred steps for my one step?”

You explain in the letter, “*Where there is faith, there is devotion.*” Now, I firmly believe that through the constant practice of longing for You I have developed faith and devotion towards You. I realize that Your assurances were the hundreds of steps You have taken towards me... Thank you, Swami!

I reflected upon what I can do to take steps towards You until I actually experience You always with me. I realized my mind vacillates, but You lovingly explained that the mind is like the leaves on the branches of a tree, they themselves cannot and do not move and it is only when the breeze comes do they flutter. Likewise, only when the breeze of desires come does the mind vacillate between faith and doubt, between devotion and mistrust. No desire, no vacillation!

The only way to end the vacillation of the mind is to develop a pure mind. As You lovingly say in Your letter, “*Where there is purity there is GOD, and where there is GOD there is Bliss.*”

In actual fact, my mind vacillates, experiencing GOD intermittently, just as a glimpse of the Sun on

an overcast day. Our mind, in pursuit of happiness, is preoccupied with enquiring into mundane phenomena in the external world. All my actions today, including the knowledge I acquire and the wealth I earn, are related to the *pravritti marga* (path of externals).

The six vices of *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *moha* (infatuation), *lobha* (greed), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (jealousy) are related to *pravritti marga*. These vices cause constant changes in me. My body is associated with these qualities and it is also subject to change.

By practicing detachment to thoughts I am able to overcome the vices that affect me the most. There were two levels of practicing detachment.

The first and foremost is the direct level of practicing detachment from thoughts, since they are the source of everything we experience. If we are not attached to thoughts, they will not manifest as situations, actions, feelings and experiences that foster the illusion of the false-self and its world.

The second level is practicing detachment to what our thoughts create. Thoughts are the cause and the situations they create are the effect, the symptom level. Practicing detachment at the thought level is much easier than later when the effect has become manifest.

Becoming detached from heart-closing thoughts is essential if our hearts are to be open to Love. One can practice at the symptom level, but to truly eliminate an attachment one needs to be non-attached to the thoughts that cause the attachment. For example, when we are dealing with difficult people, if we can try to detach from the thoughts that are judgmental of that person, our heart can open up to show empathy for that and the circumstances he is in, thus allowing us to develop love for the person.

Being an open-hearted witness to such thoughts and being unconditional with others will only lead to peace. This practice has helped me to reduce my discriminatory thoughts and judgment towards people and events in the external world and surrender more to Your play and become Your instrument.

It requires constant *sadhana* to take steps towards You, I do so by putting my *seva* as my priority in life, whether it is serving the *narayana* who sleep on the

streets, teaching Bal Vikas children, or interacting with Young Adults in study circles.

The other major obstacle other than thought in realizing GOD is the ego. Both thought (feeling of enjoyer-ship) and ego (feeling of doer-ship) can be overcome by selfless service. The foremost experience that comes to me when serving is humility – how lucky I am to have the opportunity to serve.

This is followed by gratitude to Swami and gratefulness towards the recipient for giving me the opportunity to bring the best out of me. Service done in a pure, selfless manner becomes *yoga*, leading to union with God. You tell us that when we realise “*Service to man is service to God*” we experience the ultimate truth that “*God pervades everything*”. SAIRAM!

I have learnt to have unwavering faith and devotion. I needed to overcome desires one by one to reach the goal of completely purifying my mind, leaving no speck of desire. At all times, I trust what You said, “*You do my work and I will do your work*.”

O Sai Maa, the key to my spiritual progress was to make You my role model, to make You the centre piece of my life, and to be surrounded by You in every aspect of my life. This has helped me slowly build my faith in You, surrender to You and realize that “*You are always with me, in me, around me*.” I continue to work towards the realization that “I am GOD” by constantly purifying my mind.

This realization that You are always with me was the biggest manifestation and learning for me, it fortified Your words, “*I’m always with you, around you, below you, above you, and beside you*.” Ever since then, my faith in You grew in abundance and I firmly believe You are just a thought away. It is on me to have You in my thoughts!

I have started to realize that what I thought happened outside in my life was only a reflection of my own inner being, and the entire world is a projection of my mind. Contemplation helped me feel Your presence, be more happy... it was reassuring in many ways.

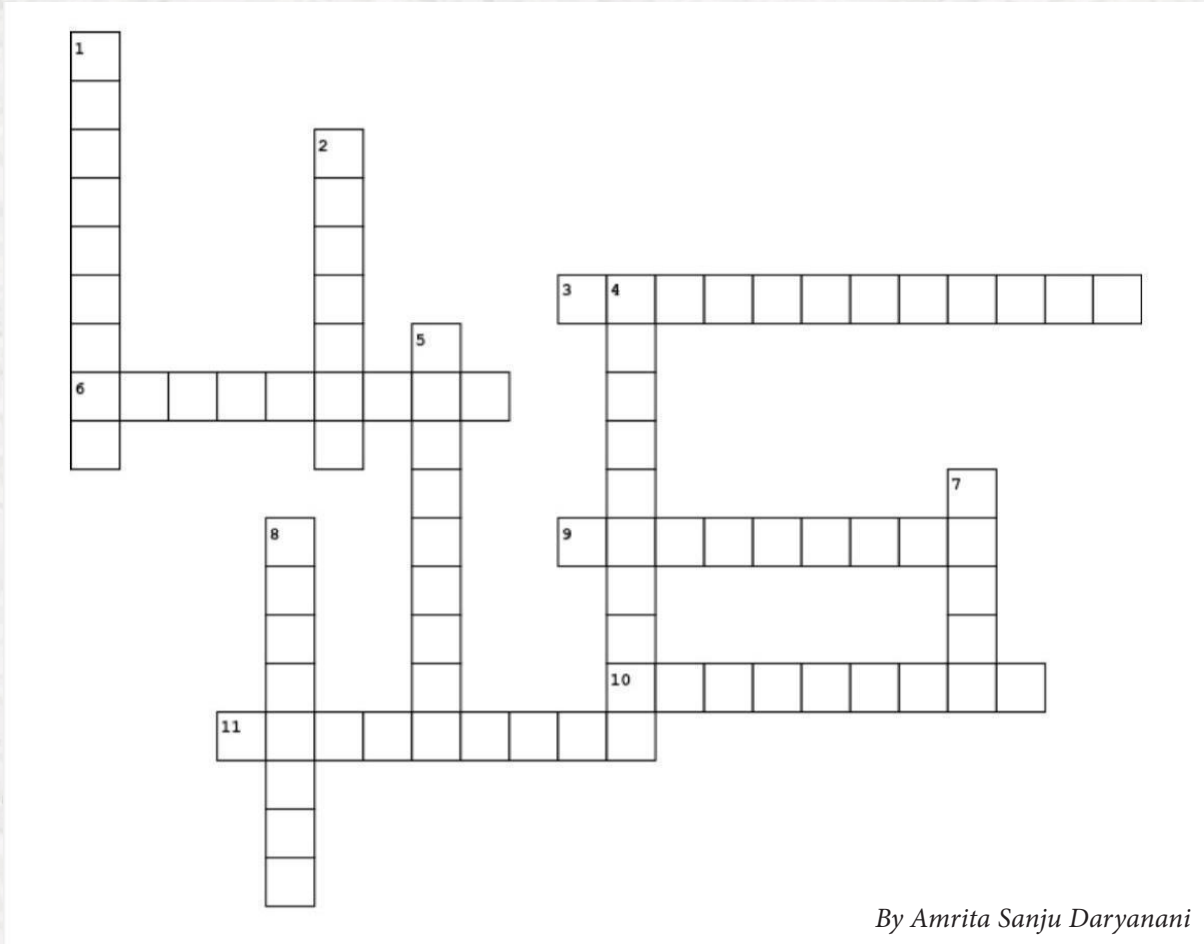
With Love,

Venkat Boppana



Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Loving Crosswords

Fill in the crossword puzzle with words missing from Sri Sathya Sai Baba's quotes. Match the number of the quote to the boxes placed across or down the grid. If filled out correctly, the words will fit neatly into the puzzle.



By Amrita Sanju Daryanani

Across

3. Love is _____, Self is lovelessness.
6. The end of education is _____
9. Be Simple, Be Sweet and Be _____
10. Good company is important, it helps to _____ good qualities.
11. _____ that is not put into practice is like food that is not digested

Down

1. Life is a _____ - offer it
2. Being a good example is the best form of _____
4. Every _____ is a lesson, every loss is a gain.
5. All things are _____ seen through the eyes of love.
7. There is only one language, language of the _____
8. All is divine, all is God, and unity is _____

Answers on page 56

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



PHONE NO. 30
PRASANTHI NILAYAM P.O., ANANTPUR DISTRICT, (A.P.) PINCODE 515134

To

Sri Sathya Sai Hostel, Brindavanam

My Beloved Teachers and Boys! Accept my Love and Blessings:

In this world of change we meet with various vicissitudes of life, both pleasant and unpleasant we are afflicted with diseases both mental and physical. The body is stricken with diseases and the mind filled with worries. In this state of our unhappiness, turmoil and misery, there is only one way and that is to take refuge in SAI.

SAI alone can remove these difficulties and diseases and bring us health, peace and prosperity.

He who has got SAI's Name on his lips is a jivan-Mukta, because continuous remembrance of SAI eliminates the ego-sense and grants him the realization of his immortal changeless Self. Name is a link between the devotee and SAI. It brings the devotee face to face with SAI and enables him to attain the knowledge of his oneness with Him (SAI).

With Love

Your SAI, Your own SAI
(SriSathya-Sai)

TAKE *Refuge in Sai*



Dearest Swami,

My *koti, koti pranam* to You, my beloved Sai.

Your gracious call to us to “*Take refuge in Sai*” provides us with a much yearned for North Star. It is an affirmation of Your Eternal Love and Divine *Sankalpa* (Will). How blessed we are that taking refuge is Sai promises to carry us beyond our difficulties and bring bliss to us!

Swami, please grant us the *jnana* (spiritual wisdom) and *shakti* (divine power) that comes from immersion in the potency of this Divine *mantra*, “*Take refuge in Sai!*”

As I reflect on Your letter, I am reminded of Your many discourses on devotees’ obedience to the *Guru*. This discipline helped me to accept the lockdown and unnatural behaviour changes necessitated by this Covid-19 pandemic.

When I embraced the mandates of our government, the response came from the inner obedience and awareness You nurtured over many years, and Your constant exhortation to follow the law of the land.

I realise my *Dharma* (the internal moral/spiritual compass) is embedded in Sathya Sai teachings of self-sacrifice and surrender for one’s own well-being.

After You left the physical body, the instruction to “*Take refuge in Sai*” is the *Upadesh* (divine guidance) given to all *Bhakta* (devotees), in whom the Formless Sai resides. The awakening is coming, strengthening my personal moral/spiritual compass that Truth, Love, Peace, Non-violence and Righteousness are collectively the Formless Sai winning governance over my heart.

As the *Avatar*, You frequently reminded us that Your ‘Birthday’ is not limited to the biological birth date (23rd November), it is instead the day that we

are born to Your divine presence in us.

Swami, You instructed us in Your Shirdi and Sathya Sai Avatar on the Nine Forms of Devotion: *Shravanam* (listening to the Lord’s leela), *Kirtanam* (singing the glories of the Lord’s Name), *Smaranam* (remembering the Lord’s Name), *Padasevanam* (serving the Lotus Feet of the Lord), *Archanam* (worship of the Lord), *Vandanam* (salutation of the Lord), *Dasyam* (serving the Lord), *Sakhyam* (friendship to the Lord) and *Atmanivedanam* (surrender to the Lord). By our love and devotion, we seek refuge in Your Love.

You sent us exemplars such as Hanuman who demonstrated true friendship when taking refuge in Lord Rama. Mother Meera guided us to take refuge by seeking the beautiful Form of Lord Krishna in everything and in every place.

Our journey of faith to You began when ‘we’ said ‘Yes’ to You, and offered ourselves to You, without concern for comfort or discomfort. Surrendering unto Your Divine Hands is an assurance of safety, particularly in the storms of life. Although the face of adversity appears to be unbearable, I always take comfort in Your divine words, ‘*I will never give up on you.*’

Allow me to tender my heart-felt gratitude for teaching my family and me how to surrender to You, and for revealing the power of *Smaranam* to invoke Sai’s protection. I still visualise the Divine smile as I recount the incident when You came to the rescue of the dog.

Some 20 years ago, on a road with heavy traffic, I was taking the children to school. We spotted a lost dog trying to cross the busy lanes – it had a narrow escape from being run over before it ran to the centre isle of the road. We could see that it didn’t stand a chance with the heavy traffic whizzing by in either direction, it seemed almost

certain that Lord Yama was lurking by the side of the road. Immediately, the children and I chanted OM continuously, pleading to You with great gusto. To the children's utter delight, the dog remained in the centre isle as though it was being held down by Your Hands of protection. To our absolute joy, the traffic eased and the dog was guided to safety.

In this one incident, the children learnt their pleas are heard by Swami ... it was the foundation of their faith, their individual springboard to taking refuge in Sai. As a family, this experience of the power of *Namasmaramam* continues to be our assurance that our Sai is always there.

For most of us, the word 'refuge' suggests moments of crisis, and our tendency is to take refuge in Sai during trying moments. However, taking refuge is really immersing ourselves in Your sublime beauty through the Nine Forms of Devotion, so that we constantly live in Truth, taking in the beauty of Your creation, and the silkiness of Your Love. It is learning to manifest Truth in our speech, Love in our actions, and Non-violence in our thoughts.

The call to each is to be the hero that the world needs! This is actually a call to many, even those who do not to cite Your exhortation to "*Love All, Serve All*". Recently, the United Nations Secretary General said, "I am here to sound the alarm. The world must wake up. We are on the edge of an abyss — and moving in the wrong direction." (September 2021)

The clarion call to *Wake Up!* requires us to be heroic instruments who provide solace and relief through action, and not be passive bystanders as the world plunges into the abyss. The pressing need of the hour is placing our heads at Your Lotus Feet and our hands in society.

Our Mother Earth, the *Prakriti* Form of Sai, is pleading with us to be *Dharmic* heroes to serve all creation. Taking refuge provides a panoramic 360 degree view, to see where our service is required, where we can become instruments of Your Love. My pledge is to boldly take my heroic step of love and righteousness and non-violence. The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step, are we ready to take our first step as heroes of light?

Most are familiar with Swami's chair in our homes and Sri Sathya Sai Centres, the traditional symbol that assures us of Swami's ever presence amongst us. "*Atma in you; take rest and refuge in That and meditate on That without interruption.*" (Prasanthi Vahini, Ch 13). Swami, the daily practice for many of us, including me, is to connect with You through Your chair. In quiet moments seeking reassurance and comfort, we strengthen our resolve to become Swami's Hanuman or Meera.

Similarly, we expand our connection by consciously making all spaces 'sacred-landscapes', not just our altars. Through our daily chats with Sai, and calling on Your Name, we consciously infuse all landscapes with sacred vibrations.

Swami, thank You for making it so simple, reassuring us that You will be there during our daily chats. You only require purity of our hearts, which is all that we can offer. It is beneficial to make this practice a routine, while we settle down to our morning tea.

You speak to everyone! The daily prayer of my five-year-old granddaughter goes as follows: "Thank you Swami for the food, thank you Swami for everything!" Thereafter, she chuckles and rubs her palms and chants "Swami, rub-a-dub dub, thanks for the grub!" During my online values class with her on Sundays, she greets me with "Peace be with you Aaya! (grandmother)". She is a seedling, watered by taking refuge in You. She is developing her spiritual compass through her thoughts/chants with You. With Your Grace, may she ever create the habit of speaking with the vocabulary of peace.

Without a doubt, anyone can attain the Lord and seek refuge if one engages in *sadhana* and the bliss of experiencing You in everything and every place.

Swami, deep appreciation for Your guidance and wisdom that is showered on The Sathya Sai Preschool's children, parents and staff who come from Pacifica, Māori, European and ethnic minority cultures. Just as the rivers merge in the sea, the preschool learning community is a melting pot of cultures that embrace diversity and walk in UNITY.

As a member of the Board of Governors, it is my Sai mandate to be like the ONE expansive ocean, and the agency of "*understanding before adjustment*,"

implementing culturally inclusive communication and responses. Advocating and intervening with peace.

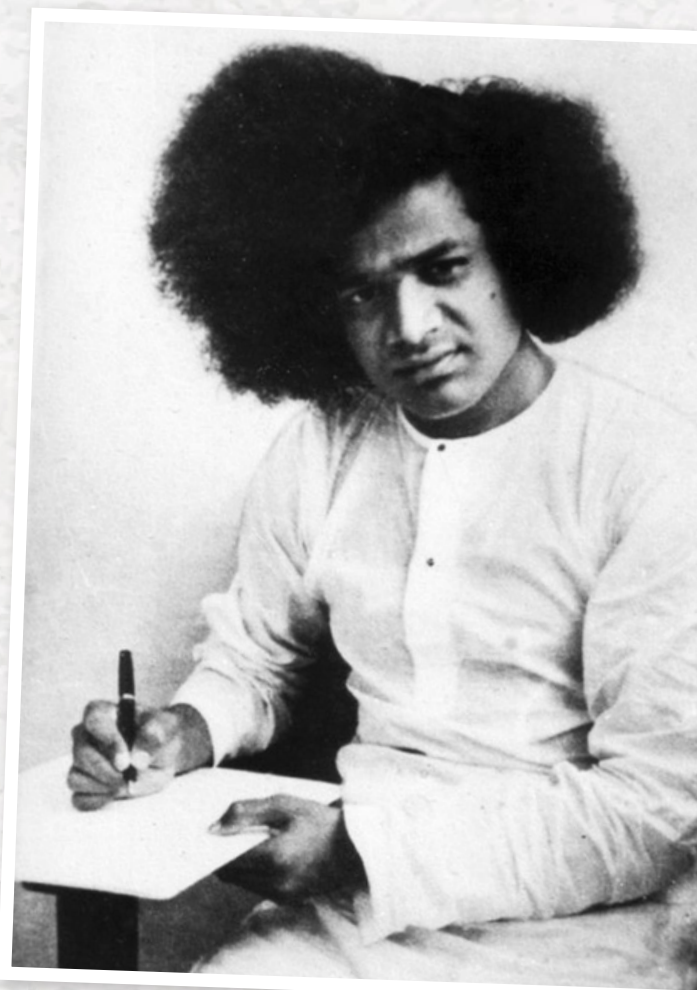
Taking refuge in Sai compels Board members to think, act, and embed unity in every nook and cranny of the school, and in every learning tool, creating a loving learning environment of 'peace-scapes'.

Swami has assured us that the path of peace, *dharma*, truth, and love lead to the ocean of Divine Grace. One of the staff members called the preschool a place of hope, as he was touched by the principles of equity and inclusiveness, which are vital components of the Sathya Sai founding principles for the preschool. At a community meeting, he was overjoyed when he narrated his experiences of being given utmost respect from children, parents, and management, as he considered himself "being just the gardener".

As we take refuge in You, Swami, we reflect on Your vocabulary of love and we delete negative thoughts and words that can cause high fevers of worldly affliction. You always reminded us: "*Just as the thermometer indicates the heat of the body, your talk, conduct and behaviour indicate your mental equipment. Hence, the need to develop attitudes untinged by the passion of emotions like hate or pride.*" (Divine Discourse, Prasanthi Nilayam, 12.10.1969) To assist in my journey as Swami's beacon of light, it is necessary to consistently hoist the peace flag in my heart and in the soil of the preschool and workplace.

I close remembering Your instructions: Follow the Master that is your conscience; Face the Devil that is your adversities; Fight to the End, fight with *dharma*; and Finish the Game with the flame of wisdom. May Swami's Lotus Feet be ever installed in the petals of our hearts. I take refuge in my dear Sai!

With Loving Sairams,
Mogi Nayagar



Answers to Loving Crosswords

1. Sacrifice
2. Service
3. Selflessness
4. Experience
5. Beautiful
6. Character
7. Heart
8. Divinity
9. SIncere
10. Cultivate
11. Knowledge

CHINESE Section

致力於一體性、純淨性和神性

智力、學問、博學、
逞口舌之利，
戰鬥中擊敗對手，
遼闊的國土，
豐厚的牲畜、金銀施舍，
數清天上繁星的視力，
列舉一切生物，
臻致神秘的八重力量，
甚至登上月球——

凡此種種，對於能幹的人來說，都是輕而易舉的。

但是，要抑制身體及其部位的沖動，
要把感官轉向內，
為實現這願景
並降伏雜念至心靈純淨，實在難乎其難。

(泰盧固詩)

花言巧語能贏得別人，甚至財富女神的青睞，
甜言蜜語能贏得家人和朋友的歡心，
唯獨舌頭會令你的人生陷入無窮的糾結中，
惡毒的舌頭要付出猝死的代價。

(梵文詩句)

各位愛的化身！人類被賜予說話這種神聖的能力，卻沒有好好善用。其他生命體都沒有人類強大的智力和尋求內在和平的能力。在這個世界上所有物體都有五個面向，那就是：存在 (sath)、覺知 (chith)、至福 (ananda)、形象 (rupa) 以及名號 (nama)。存在、覺知與至福是人的三大核心屬性。這三大屬性是真實且永恆的，而形象與名號只是暫時的。誤認名號和形象是永恆的錯誤知見使得人浪費自己的寶貴生命。

在這個世界上，有兩類知識分子。第一類是眼光完全朝向物質世界的科學家，他們心中只有物質和世俗的目標和收獲。他們著迷於一棵大樹外表無數的分枝和枝桠，卻對於找到其“根”毫無興趣。而吠檀多智者（精通吠檀多哲學的人）是第二類知識分子。他們並不著迷於大樹表面的形象，反而對找到大樹的“根”有無比的興趣。把目光轉向外在的世俗之人只會浪費時間澆灌“樹枝”，而吠檀多智者則澆灌樹根，從而享受大樹結出的果實。

有一次，惡魔們與諸神聯手攪拌乳海，以求尋得神聖甘露。他們用曼荼羅大山 (Mandara mountain) 作為攪海的杵。不過，他們起先必須忍受浮出的致命毒藥。看到被攪出的是毒藥而不是甘露，惡魔們感到沮喪並打算停止攪拌。但諸神堅持不懈地繼續攪拌。他們不斷的努力獲得了豐厚的回報；陸續攪出了財富女神 (Lakshmi Devi)、神聖白象 (Iravatha)、許願母牛 (Kamadhenu)、許願樹 (Kalpataru)，以及最終的神聖甘露 (divine ambrosia)。同理，人要絞盡腦汁去明了自己的真實身分。他不應該因為一開始的障礙而停下腳步或者感到沮喪。

存在—覺知—至福 (Sath-Chith-Ananda) 是人的本性。然而人遺忘了自己的本性並浪費時間追求轉瞬即逝的歡愉。人無法了解自己與生俱來的本性：存在—覺知—至福的價值。一旦人了解其價值並體驗之，他便可以達到任何崇高的境界。事實上，人真的成為了神。當人真的明了自己與生俱來的天性時，他可以完成任何艱巨的任務。人的潛能在其他地方找不到。

人被賦予存在—覺知—至福的三種屬性。但因為人被妄念所蒙蔽，誤以為名相是真實的，而忘記了自己與生俱來的存在—覺知—至福的特質。首先人必須認知自己與生俱來的神性，然而人並沒有朝著這個方向努力。他已成為感官的奴隸，並且浪費時間在瑣事上。因此，人首要的職責是正確地了解自己的本性，然後付諸實踐。

人的本性的價值和重要性是無法衡量的。唯有實踐人類價值，才能使人生獲得救贖。人是神性的火花，這就是為什麼主基士那在《薄伽梵歌》中說：“寓於萬物內的永恆的阿特瑪（自性）是我的一部份（Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhutah Sanatana）”。事實上，內在聲音（antarvani）每一天不斷地提醒人自身的神聖本性。然而人從未努力傾聽自己的內在聲音。他渴望短暫的物質，而遺忘了自己的神聖本性，最終使自己遠離生命的終極目標。名和相是短暫的，如同夢幻泡影。人受到名相的妄念所蒙蔽，因此遺忘自己最珍貴的神性本質。人被賜予無限的神聖力量。一塊被燒紅的鐵片比火本身更有用處。人的身體可以比喻為一塊鐵片，而內在神性則是火。人要明了這一真理，並妥善地運用他的身體。

各位愛的化身！新年伊始，人們總是滿懷希望和夢想。事實上，你應該把每一刻都視為新年的開始。缺乏永恆的美德，名和相是沒有價值的。人們因為各種身體上和心靈上的疾病而受苦。醫生可以醫治身體上的病痛，而阿特瑪（自性）的感受（Atma bhava 萬物都是同一個阿特瑪的化身）則是所有心靈疾病的唯一良藥。你要努力了解阿特瑪的原則。阿特瑪是梵（Brahman）的同義詞，它不過是遍佈所有人當中的神性意識（Chaitanya）。人有名有相，但神性意識沒有特定形相。存在於人體內的神性意識被稱為良知，而存在於萬有當中的則被稱為神性意識。當一個人了解萬有中的一體性時，他的良知便轉化為神性意識。雖然被賦予如此神聖的能力，人卻被世俗的萬象所迷惑。他重視那轉瞬即逝的新年元旦，其實，人應該看重那不變的“時間”，並通過妥善地運用時間去聖化它。

在這世上，唯有真理和良善將永遠與我們同在。它們的價值無法估量。所以我們要努力培養真理和良善。我們不應該熱衷於追逐名聲。例如，我們不要認為是我們提供泰盧固河的水給欽奈。水不是一個地方可以給另一個地方的物品，水是大自然給所有人的贈禮。

每個人都可以獲得自己所應得的水量。只有當人的行動在時間上、行為上、原因上和職責上（kala, karma, karana, and kartavya）都和諧一致時，才會產生預期的結果。因此，一個人要真誠地努力並等待最佳時機。當行動產生結果時，他要根據時機和情況妥善運用。

男孩們（峇峇過去的學生）做了許多很棒的事。他們前往各個村莊，利用服務活動和峇讚帶給當地的人們

歡樂。他們應該以充滿愛的精神進行這些活動。沒有什麼比愛更偉大。你應該讓你的生命充滿無私的愛。

各位愛的化身！只是執行服務活動和峇讚是不夠的。你要放下‘你在為別人服務’的感受。這是非常重要的。當你在服務別人時其實你是在服務你自己。你要把萬物視為自己。事實上其他人並不是別人，而是神的眾多形象。因此，為人服務就是為神服務。所有的服務活動都應該加強你這樣的感受。你要以無私的愛投入服務的領域，這樣才是真正的服務。其他並非無私的服務是世俗且暫時的。

學生們！如果你認為你是在為別人服務的話，你的認知是錯誤的。要放下這種感受。唯有如此，你所做的服務才是在嚴格意義上的真正服務。服務不僅僅是幫助他人，愛神的最佳途徑就是愛萬物，事萬物。你的服務行動必須充滿愛。如果缺乏愛的正向動力，你提供的所有的服務本質上都是負面的。

人體像燈泡，而愛是燈泡的主要開關。只有按下了開關，人體才能綻放光彩和快樂給大家。你正在關閉開關並嘗試享受快樂，這是不可能的。Hrid + 慈悲（daya）= 心（Hridaya）。你的心要充滿慈悲，你的所有行動要充滿愛。沒有任何力量強過愛。

我們古代的聖哲和先知曾經和野生動物長居茂密的森林中。他們不攜帶任何武器，然而他們卻毫無恐懼地來去自如。他們的勇氣的來源是什麼？他們只持一個利器—愛，保護他們免受野生動物的侵害。古印度的文化是神聖的、彌足珍貴、美好且充滿至福。然而你們卻沒有努力去了解古印度文化的偉大之處，反而輕視這個神聖的文化。你們因階級和文化的差異而被迷惑。其實，只有一個階級，人類的階級。發自心中的愛是真正的宗教。全人類是個大家庭，所有人都是兄弟姊妹，而世界就像一棟大房子。當你建立起這種寬大的胸懷時，你所體會的那份愉悅是無可言喻的。因此，要盡力在所有人中看見神性。

神的創造是最精彩和玄妙的。天空中有無數星辰。就算光的速度每秒數萬哩，有些星星的光芒尚未抵達地球。如此一來，你就可以清楚想象每顆星辰和地球之間的距離。如果萬物尚且如此浩瀚無限且無法言喻，那造物主該是何等的偉大和超能啊！

在三界中，主的故事是最奇妙和神聖的。

它們像鐮刀一樣，割斷塵世束縛的藤蔓。

（泰盧固詩）

有關神的故事無法以言語形容。人依據自己的估計來想象和描述祂。實際上，神是超越一切定義的。

在這個世界上有各種經驗（pramanas）：直接經驗（pratyaksha pramana）、推論的經驗（anumana pramana）、二元性的經驗（dvaita pramana）、

非二元性的經驗 (advaita pramana)。由於神超越所有這些經驗，祂被稱為無可計量或無可定義者 (Aprameya)。神以其神聖之能寓居於每個人心中。

神的美好和偉大無法以言語形容。祂被頌讚為“讚揚那位擁有黃金子宮者” (Hiranyagarbhaya Namah)。“Hiranya”意思是黃金。它存在於祂的心中。就如同食物的精華會滋養全身，同樣地，黃金遍佈祂的全身。因此，祂是最美好的。祂是萬物最根本的源頭。

所有的事都按祂的旨意發生。由於祂是萬物的造物主，祂被稱為‘Prajapati’。由於祂是最有智慧者，祂被稱為‘Dakshinamurthii’。如此一來，神擁有無盡的名號。人根據自己有限的理解而將神描繪為特定的名號和形象，並依此來景仰膜拜祂：神是超越各種屬性、純真、最終極的寓所、永恆、純潔、開悟的、解脫的以及神聖的化身 (Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, and Nirmala Swarupinam)。當這樣一個神聖的原則存在於他自己的心中時，人怎麼可能覺得自己渺小、軟弱？你應該放下這種自卑感。沒有比人更偉大的存有。其實，神遍佈全人類當中。然而，不幸的是，你認為人的生命是微不足道的。你會成為你所想的。這種 (認為自己) 不重要的想法是你心胸狹小的結果。

當你看見山丘間有裊裊白煙升起，就代表附近有火。當你直接看到火，那就稱為直接經驗 (pratyaksha pramana)。當你只看到白煙而看不到火焰，你假設在濃煙后方有火。但這只是一種可能性，這就稱為推論經驗 (anumana pramana)。有時可能出現像煙一樣的霧，所以山丘上可能並沒有火。因此，推論經驗會產生疑慮。

愛是人對神的唯一直接經驗 (pratyaksha pramana)。當有人詢問神在那裡，最直接的回答是神是愛，而愛是神。同樣地，真理是神；沒有什麼比真理更偉大。沒有比真理更高的神。真理無所不在。國家或許不同，但真理是唯一的。在這世界上並沒有美國真理、日本真理、德國真理等等。只有心胸狹窄的人才會作出這樣的區別。

我們並非心胸狹窄且心懷惡意之人。我們是無限的化身。人要一直提醒自己，自己是真理的化身、愛的化身、至福的化身等等。人擁有靈性觀念和追尋靈性的無限能力，然而人是否明了自己的真實本性？

以盤子裡的一把海沙為例。科學家以沙子的顏色和重量判定沙子是來自哪個國家。然而哲學家就不完全是這樣想，他們認為沙子是神的創造物，以及神所創造的幻象 (maya)。所以，聖哲和科學家的認知差距十分巨大。科學像一個半圓，從一個點開始，然後結束於另一個點。但是靈性開始和終結在同一個點，它是一個圓形，這就是神。這就是為什麼有人說：

Poornamadah poornamidam poornat
poornamudachyate
Poornasya poornamadaya poornameva
avashishyate.

(那是圓滿，這是圓滿。
從圓滿中取出圓滿后，剩下的還是圓滿)。

這樣的神，也就是圓滿的化身，寓於每一個人心中。然而，不幸的是，人並未努力去了解內在的神性。是誰在他熟睡時看顧他的身體？身體如何在人不知情的狀況下完美地運作？沒有人知道。萬物的創造、守護和維持——一切都是由神掌舵。這樣的神性能力存在於每個人當中。儘管如此，人卻時常在遭遇困難時沮喪；在歡樂時興高采烈。但這不是人的生命目的。他真正的目的是始終保持一個完美的平和心態，而不是讓情緒在悲傷和喜悅的兩極間擺蕩。快樂在兩個悲傷之間。因此，我們不必去追求快樂，因為它就在我們之內。事實上，你本身就是至福的化身。

各位愛的化身！永遠保持快樂和愉悅，因為你與生俱來的天性就是至福。你不用向外求快樂。至福發自阿特曼。無論你什麼時候想要它，你就可以得到它。快樂就是回歸於神，因此要永遠與神同行。一旦你有神陪伴，快樂便如同倒影一般永遠相隨。

今日，人們追求快樂，而在這個過程中成為快樂的奴隸。這是不對的。事實上，快樂應該成為你的奴僕，因為你正是神聖阿特瑪的化身。無論你是否相信，我永遠充滿至福。你也可以體驗到這種至福的狀態。你不應該四處尋求快樂。反而要讓快樂跟隨著你，無論你到何方。

哈努曼是《羅摩衍那》中的偉大英雄。他勇敢、強大無敵。他具有良好的品格與平和的素質。他總是快樂開朗，一直念誦著羅摩的名號。你也應該培養這種高貴的品質。首先最重要的是，你要成為真正意義上的人。你要培養對萬物仁慈的態度。唯有如此你才有資格被視為人。

各位愛的化身！你們正在接受高等的世俗教育。你們正在閱讀幾本巨著。你們追求更大的權力。但這些都是轉瞬即逝的。因此，要將你的想法一直固定在那讓你的心充滿至福的神聖力量上。這神聖力量是無限的。你對神想得越多，至福就倍增得越多。當這股無限的神聖能力在你的內心，你為什麼還會遭遇到困難呢？

今日，我們的校友齊聚一堂。他們在印度不同地區甚至在國外從事各種服務活動，他們從這些服務活動當中獲得極大的喜樂。

在我看來，他們應該在他們所在的地區，量力而為的報效社會。邀請其他人和他們一起服務既沒有好處也

沒有必要，因為這樣一來容易讓服務活動淪為商業交易。他們應該盡可能在各自的村莊中提供服務活動並且為居民帶來快樂。

在偏鄉地區，各種服務具有十分廣闊的發揮空間。幾十年前，有人邀請我搬到如邁索爾 (Mysore) 這樣的大城市，並聲稱要為我提供一座大宮殿。但是，就我而言，我不需要宮殿。我必須留在這個小村莊裡，我不會嫌棄我的故鄉。只有在這樣的地方，艱巨的任務需要去完成。所以，我拒絕搬離布達峇地 (Puttaparthi)，雖然當時它還是一個沒有現代設施的偏遠村落。

那個時候，如果有人要去布達峇地，就不得不在佩努孔達 (Penukonda) 的火車站下車，然後坐牛車到這裡。那時的交通工具就是如此這般而已。不過現在，人們可以乘坐飛機輕鬆抵達布達峇地。那個時候，人們不得不乘公車去阿南塔普爾 (Anantapur) 尋求醫療服務。現在，具有先進設備的專科醫院就在我們家門口。於是，現在布達峇地這個村落裡已具備了所有現代化的便利設施。

因此，沒有比村落更好的居住環境。一個國家最有價值的資產便是村落。沒有什麼比妥善地服務村民更為偉大的服務了。為村落服務，如同為神服務 (Grama seva is Rama seva)。

在城鎮進行服務沒有什麼滿足感。都市的人冷漠且自我中心。即使有小偷闖入鄰居家，他們也不太在意。反之，在村莊裡即使有一點小騷動，村民便會聚集。這種團結和友愛仍然存在於村莊中。哪裡有一體性，哪裡就有神；哪裡有神，哪裡就有至福。因此，為你所在的村莊的發展而真誠地努力。你們每一個人都該為自己的村莊的發展盡一份力。

你的活動不該應循政治活動的軌道。藉由招集各種人馬，服務行動將會變成一項政治活動。我對此不滿意。無論你在哪裡，都可以聚集唱峇讚。但不要有任何分離的想法，大家要團結一致。

無論你在哪裡，抱持著團結和一體性的精神進行服務活動。不要發出異議。印度一直以來都是和平的國家，而且所有印度人都團結一致如同一個大家庭。然而現在印度是什麼情況？在過去，每當有人造訪一個村落，所有的村民都會聚集在他身旁，友愛地向他問好。現在，那種愛和一體性的精神已經完全喪失了。無論你去哪，你都會發現分歧和緊張，即便是在雞毛蒜皮的小事上。尤其是獨立之後，幾乎每個地方都發生暴動和騷亂。人類生命的聖潔似乎完全淪喪，人類的生命失去價值。人命賤若螻蛄，慘無人道。這不是人類所應具備的特質。

我們要把內在神聖能力轉化為為社會服務的技能。當知識被轉變為技能，你就能在生命找到平衡。在這

種寧靜和平的狀態下，你就能培養洞察力。當你懷著洞察力和神聖能力去進行服務活動時，這將會替社會帶來更多好處和成果。

國內的每一個村莊都必須在各方面得到發展。你們分別來自海得拉巴、馬德拉斯、美國等地方，匯聚在一起參加這項服務活動。真的需要所有這些嗎？這裡並不是一個市集，讓來自不同地區的人們聚集在一起出售他們的商品。

無論你住在哪裡，服務你所在之地使其能夠發展得更好。在某些地方的人甚至會去其他地方，協助當地的發展。然而這種混合來自各地的人進行的服務活動，會使得服務的目的被混淆，進而造成困惑，並玷污良好的感受。不要讓你的困惑有發揮的余地，也不要讓不必要的區別心污染你的心念。

你應該總是懷著純潔的心進行服務活動。一體性帶來純正性，而純正性又導致神性。因此，要謹記一體性、純正性和神性不可分割的關聯，並努力達成以上的特質。你們或許以犧牲奉獻的精神齊聚並共同進行服務，但是如果來自不同區域的人這樣的聚集去參與 Grama Seva (針對村落貧民進行的無私服務)，對村莊本身而言會帶來不好的結果。每一個參與服務的人心裡都懷著不同的感受，而彼此混雜在一起會受到污染。然後這個村落就會淪為商務場所。

靈性不是一種商業活動，而是一座神聖的寓所。靈性與一體性相關。只有在萬物中看見一體性才能帶給你快樂。我希望你們都能培育這一體性原則。也唯有如此，你所做的服務才會有價值和聖潔。不要以各種區別心去玷污神聖的服務活動。舉個例子，黃金儲藏在金礦當中。當你將礦石挖出並予以精煉，它變成 24K 純金。這塊黃金就會很有價值。然而，如果你將其他金屬，例如銅加到黃金當中，它的價值就下滑了。不僅如此，黃金的光澤也減損了。如果你加入更多其他金屬，它便完全失去價值。我們的心像是一座黃金廟宇，它是 Hiranyagarbha (黃金子宮，創造宇宙的源頭)。我們絕不能玷污這 Hiranyagarbha，要使它永遠明亮閃耀。

各位愛的化身！與每個人分享愛。要永遠保持一體性和純正性。現在，你們可以按照之前的安排開始音樂綜藝節目。

(薄伽梵於2003年1月1日於百善地尼樂園賽古魯禮堂的新年講道。

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NEPALI Section

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मेरो प्यारो ! केँ तिमीलाई कुनै आध्यात्मिक भोग लागेको छ ?

आध्यात्मिक भोक जिवनमा हरेक गतिविधिको परम अर्थ हो । असन्तुष्टि र बेचैनी जीवनको सबै आवश्यकताहरुलाई प्राप्त गरीसके पछि पनि बाँकी रहन्छ । त्यसकारण चेतनामा वा अन्जानमा सबै आध्यात्मिक भोकबाट पिडित छन् र यसको मूल्याडकन तबसम्म गर्न सकिन्न जब सम्म मनभित्रबाट यसको एहसास हुदैन । बिना ईश्वरीय असन्तुष्टि कुनै वास्तविक प्रगती छैन । विश्व शान्ति सम्भव छ जब संसारका सबै मानिसहरु सार्वभौमिक जीवनको संचालन गर्ने तथ्यहरुको लागी उठ्छन् र जब संसारको मानिसहरु बिच हृदय देखि हृदयसम्म सत्कर्म, प्रेम र एकताको भावना हुन्छ ।

आशिर्वादसँग

श्री सत्य साई बाबा

प्र) पहिलो पटक तिमीले बुझ्यौ कि तिम्रो जीवनमा बेचैनी र असन्तुष्टि आध्यात्मिक भोकबाट हो । तिमीले त्यो आध्यात्मिक भोक कसरी सन्तुष्ट पार्ने प्रयास गर्नु ?

प्र) कसरी ईश्वरीय असन्तुष्टिले तिमीलाई हृदय देखि हृदय सम्म सत्कर्म, प्रेम र एकताको भावनालाई लगाउनको लागि प्रेरित गरेको छ ?

प्यारो नन्जनदैय ! मेरो आशिर्वाद स्वीकार गर ।

वेदान्त दर्शन फैलाउने सबै भन्दा राम्रो तरीका यसैमा बाँच । त्यहाँ कुनै अन्य शाही सडक छैन । भगवानको स्वामित्वमा बस । सबै ठीक छ । अरुलाईपनी भगवानको स्वामित्वमा बाँच्न देऊ । सबै राम्रो हुनेछ । यो सत्यमा विश्वास गर तिमीले मुक्ति पाउनेछौ । सबै भन्दा तल्लो किरा साथसाथै उच्चतम मानवमा एउटै ईश्वरीय प्रकृति विद्यमान हुन्छ । किरा सबैभन्दा तल्लो रूप हो जसमा दैवत्वको माया द्वारा धेरै छाँया परेको छ । त्यो (मानव) उच्चतम रूप हो जसमा कम से कम छाँया परेको छ । सबै कुराको पछाडी एउटै दैवत्व विद्यमान छ । यसबाट नैतिकताको आधार आउँछ । तिमी भित्र दैवत्वलाई दृढ गर । बिल्कुल विस्मरणमा उड्दै सानो बुलबुला फुट्छ उसले आफैमा सम्पूर्ण महासागर पाउँछ । तिमी सम्पूर्ण, अनन्त, सबै छौ । तिमी नै दैवत्व हो । पवित्रको पवित्र संसार कुनै संसार होइन । तिमी सम्पूर्णमा सम्पूर्ण छौ । सर्वोच्च शक्ति जुन कुनै शब्दले वर्णन गर्न सक्दैन, मनले वा कसैले पनि । तिमी शुद्ध छौ 'म' । त्यो तिमी हो । स्वर्ग तिमी भित्र छ । इन्द्रियको वस्तुमा सुख नखोज । महसुस गर कि खुशी तिमी भित्रै छ ।

आशिर्वाद सँग

श्री सत्य साई बाबा

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प्र. जब तिमीले संसारको राज्यमा चारैतिर हेर्छौ, आध्यात्मिक अभ्यास के हो सबै भन्दा धेरै तिमीलाई "सबै ठीक छ" र "सबै ठीक हुनेछ" भन्ने सत्य जन्म मद्दत गर्दछ ।

प्र. तिमीले कसरी महसुस गर्न सक्छौ कि तिमी एउटा छुट्टै आत्मा हो, कुनै शंका बिना जान्न सक्छौ कि "तिमी सम्पूर्ण छौ, अनन्त छौ, सबैशुद्ध हुँ म" ?

प्रिय हिस्लाँप आशिर्वाद सँग

मेरो प्रिय ! तिमीले आफ्नो भित्र यस गहिराईलाई पाउनेछौ । यो धेरै पटक मनन् गर, यसले तिम्रो साँचो प्रकृतिको बारेमा बताउँछ, यसले तिमीलाई आशा दिन्छ, यसले तिमीलाई नयाँ जीवन दिन्छ, यसले बाटो देखाउँछ, यसले तिमीलाई प्रमाणित गर्दछ, कि भगवान तिमी भित्रै हुनुहुन्छ, र तिमी मानव होइनौ, मानव नै भगवान हो । यसले तिमीलाई देखाउँदछ, कि सम्भव छ कि तिमीले भगवानलाई (स्वामी) साकार गर्न सक्छौ तर तिमी र तिमीले मात्र यस कामलाई गहिरो गरी सोच्नु पर्दछ, तिमीले पाउछौ कि तिमीले जान्न शुरु गर्नेछौ कि यस कथनको अर्थ के हो “आत्मा” को व्याख्या गर्न सकिदैन, दिमागलाई यसको अस्तित्वको बारेमा थाहा छ, “स्व-भगवान” मानिस भित्रै छ, तिमी त्यो हो अरु सबै मनको सृष्टिको भ्रम हो, मनले बनाउँछ, संरक्षित गर्दछ, र नष्ट गर्दछ । मेरो माया ! महान आनन्द, आनन्दको सुक्ष्मता, तिमीले महसुस गर्नेछौ जब तिमी आफ्नो वास्तविक आत्मको नजिक अझै नजिक आउँछौ, यदि तिमीले आफ्नो दिमागको उपभोग गरेर आफैलाई खोज्नको लागि प्रयास गर्छौ र व्यर्थमा प्रयास गर्छौ । किन भने मनले, तिमीलाई सत्य दिन सक्दैन भुटले तिमीलाई सत्य दिन सक्दैन । भुटले मात्र तिमीलाई धोकाको जालमा फसाउन सक्छ, तर यदि तिमीले आफूलाई संवेदनशील बनाउँछौ, आफ्नो सत्य, राम्रो, सुन्दर गुणहरूलाई जगाऊ ।

तिम्रो माथि-केही छैन, तिम्रो तल-केही छैन, तिम्रो दायाँ वा तिम्रो बाँया - केही छैन, र आफैलाई शून्यतामा बिलाउ त्यो सबै भन्दा राम्रो तरिका हो कि तिमीले आत्मा बोधको व्याख्या गर्न सक्छौ र अहिले सम्मको शून्यता शून्यता जस्तै केहीको अभाव हुनेछैन । त्यो शून्यता सबै चीजको पूर्णता हो, यसको अस्तित्वको शक्ति सबै चीज जस्तो देखिन्छ ।

- बाबा

प्र. तिमी कसरी “गहिरो मनन्” गर्छौ कि “भगवान तिमी भित्रै हुनुहुन्छ र तिमी मानव होइनौ र मानव नै भगवान हो” ?

प्र. जब तिमी “परम सुख आनन्दको सुक्ष्मता” को झलक देख्छौ तिमी “आफ्नो वास्तविक आत्माको नजिक अझै नजिक” आउदै हुनेछौ ?

लामो खोजी पछि यहाँ र त्यहाँ मन्दिरहरू र चर्चहरूमा पृथ्वीमा र स्वर्गमा अन्तमा तिमी फर्केर आउँछौ जहाँबाट तिमीले शुरु गर्नु त्यो चक्र पुरा गर, तिम्रो तिमै आफ्नै आत्माको लागि र पाउँछौ कि उहाँ जसको लागि तिमी सारा संसारमा खोजिरहेको छौ जसको लागि तिमी रोडरहेको छौ र चर्च तथा मन्दिरहरूमा प्रार्थना गर्दै छौ, जसमा तिमीले सबै रहस्यहरूको रहस्यको रूपमा दख्दै थियौ, बादलहरूमा घेरीएको नजिकको पनि नजिकमा तिम्रो आफ्नै आत्मा, तिम्रो जीवन, शरीर र आत्माको वास्तविकता हो । त्यो तिम्रो आफ्नो स्वभाव हो । यसलाई दृढता देउ यसलाई प्रकट गर । यो सत्य र एकलो सत्य हो । त्यो कसैको असल साथी र आफन्त हो । सत्य को पालना गर धर्मको मार्गमा हिड् र तिम्रो शरीरको एउटा कपाल पनि कहिल्यै घाइते हुने छैन ।

ध्यान अरु केही होइन तर इच्छाहरू भन्दा माथि उठ्नु हो । त्याग दुष्ट शक्तिहरूसँग लड्न र दिमागलाई नियन्त्रणमा राख्ने शक्ति हो ।

प्रेम र आशिर्वाद सँग

श्री सत्य साई बाबा

प्र. तिमी कसरी आफ्नो फर्किने परिक्रमाको वर्णन गर्छौ । जहाँदेखि तिमीले आफ्नो मुल ईश्वर स्वभावलाई महशुस गर्न शुरु गर्नु ।

प्र. तिमीले कसरी खुशी र पूर्तिको स्रोतहरू आफ्नो बाहिर छ भन्ने विश्वास गर्ने क्षणलाई निष्फल पाउँछौ ?

श्री सत्य साई छात्रावास,
वृन्दावन

मेरो प्यारा शिक्षकहरु र केटाहरु ! मेरो प्रेम र आशीर्वाद स्वीकार गर । परिवर्तनको संसारमा हामी जीवनको विभिन्न विकृति सँग मिल्छौं, दुबै प्रिय र अप्रिय । हामी दुबै मानसिक र शारिरीक रोगहरुबाट पिडित छौं । शरीर रोगहरु सँग पिडित छ र मन चिन्ताहरूसँग भरिएको छ । हाम्रो दुःख, अशान्ति र दुःखको यो राज्यमा एक मात्र बाटो छ र त्यो साईमा शरण लिनु हो । साई एकलै यी कठिनाईहरु र रोगहरुलाई हटाउन सक्छ र हामीलाई स्वास्थ्य, शान्ति र समृद्धि ल्याउन हुन्छ । जसले आफ्नो ओठमा साईको नाम पाएको छ उसको जीवन मुक्त छ, किनकि साईको निरंतर स्मरणले अहंकारको भावनालाई समाप्त गर्दछ र उसलाई उसको अमर परिवर्तनशील आत्म-बोध प्रदान गर्दछ । नाम भक्त र साईको बीच एउटा माध्यम हो । यसले भक्तलाई साई सँग आमने-सामने ल्याउँछ र उसलाई उसको साथ आफ्नो (साई) एकत्वको ज्ञान प्राप्त गर्न सक्षम बनाउँछ ।

प्रेमसँग

तिम्रो साई तिम्रो आफ्नै साई
(श्री सत्य साई)

प्र. तिम्रीलाई यो याद राख्नाले के फरक पार्छ कि साई नै सबै दुख, अशान्ति र जीवनमा कष्टको लागि शरण स्थान हुनुहुन्छ ?

प्र. कस्ता आध्यात्मिक अभ्यासहरुले तिम्रीलाई तिम्रो अहंकार - भावनालाई कम गर्न र तिम्रो अमर, अपरिवर्तनीय आत्म महशुस गर्न मद्दत गरेको छ ?

जीवन - मुक्त ; आत्म - एहसास

प्यारो राजागोपाल ! मेरो आशीर्वाद र प्रेम स्वीकार गर ।

साँचो ज्ञान भएको मानिसको लागि सबै खुशीका दिन हो । खुशी एउटा आन्तरिक सचेत अनुभव हो जुन एउटा मानसिक वा शारिरीक इच्छाको विलुप्त प्रभावको रूपमा आउँछ । चाहना जति कम, खुशी त्यती नै ठूलो । त्यसैले, त्यो पूर्ण खुशी विनाश वा निरपेक्ष अस्तित्वमा सबै इच्छाको सन्तुष्टिमा हुन्छ ।

महानता साँच्चै स्वतन्त्र छ र बाह्यमा निर्भर गर्दैन । यो पूर्णताको भावना हो वा जीवनको उच्चतम अन्तको उपलब्धिको चेतना हो त्यसलाई महानता भनिन्छ । धेरै मानिसहरुको बीच प्रसिद्धिलाई सही मामलामा महानता भनिदैन । परिभाषाको प्रश्न भन्दा उत्तर धेरै छ, र परिभाषा हेराइ, संस्कृति र प्रत्येक मानवको अनुभवमा निर्भर गर्दछ । सत्कर्म भुठो वा असम्भव होइन, तर एउटा कारक हो । जसले जीवनको वास्तविक मूल्य दिन्छ । सत्कर्म विनाको जीवन वास्तविक जिवन होइन, तर दुष्ट सेनाहरुको विनाशकारी नृत्यको एकमात्र भावना जसले व्यक्तिलाई शोकमा डुबाउँछ । सत्कर्म साँचो खुसीको बाटो हो । अन्तिम विश्लेषणमा सत्कर्मको रूपमा कुनै अर्को अस्तित्व छैन । यो मात्र सापेक्ष विमानमा प्राप्त हुन्छ, जहाँ द्वैतको अतिक्रमण भएको छ, विपरित जाडीको कुनै प्रश्न छैन । राजा, भगवान सधैं तिमिसँगै हुनुहुन्छ, तिम्री भित्रै । खुसी रहनु ।

- बाबा

राजा ! म तिम्रो स्वास्थ्यको लागि सानो प्रसाद (विभूति) पठाउँदैछु । तिम्रो स्वास्थ्य राम्रो छैन । स्वस्थ र खुसी रहनु ।



SPIRITUAL, MAHILA, BAL VIKAS, SEVA, YOUNG ADULTS *and more*

OUR WING REPORTS

This year, 2021, has been all about adapting and working with Covid-19 related regulations. Swami's Wings bravely faced the challenges and exceeded expectations, seeing His presence in all that we embark on. Volunteers diligently embraced technology to take Swami's teachings and programmes forward.

DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Thursday Weekly Bhajans resumed in the Sathya Sai Centre from April 2021 as restrictions on religious gatherings eased. For those devotees wishing to enjoy the *bhajan* from the comfort of their homes (or workplace), our IT team did an exemplary job live-streaming.

Mahilas take responsibility for the weekly *bhajan* sessions if the monthly Ladies Day (19th of the month) falls on a Thursday.

The Young Adults meet twice a month on Sunday afternoons for *bhajan* practice in preparation of monthly *bhajan* sessions led by them on the first Sunday of every month.

Diwali Bhajans were offered in the morning and evening to usher in the Hindu New Year.

Akhand Bhajans were held on Saturday, 13 November for 6 hours and Sunday, 14 November

for 12 hours. The Mahilas, Bal Vikas children, Young Adults as well as guests from the local Hindu Mandir, Chinmaya Mission, Sadhu Vaswani Centre and the Sudanshu Group joined in. In addition, the devotees from Tung Chung came to the Sathya Sai Centre TST to join in.

FESTIVALS

As in the previous year, the pandemic could not deter the celebration of auspicious festivals with reverence and zest. Festivals celebrated were Maha Shivaratri, Aradhana Mahotsavam, Guru Poornima, Krishna Janmashtami and Avatar Declaration Day.

Maha Shivaratri could not be celebrated in the Sathya Sai Centre due to the stringent social distancing measures but we celebrated this auspicious festival with an informative online talk on the significance of the rituals by Purohit Hanish Daryanani, which was followed by Rudram Abhishekam and Bhagawan's Divine Discourse.

Aradhana Mahotsavam was commemorated on 24 April. In the four weeks leading to this auspicious day, a weekly sadhana was taken up to express our love and gratitude for Bhagawan's grace, guidance, and blessings. On the day itself, Sai Padam Namavali and *bhajan* were offered in the Sathya Sai Centre.

Two sessions were held in the Sathya Sai Centre to accommodate maximum devotees.

Guru Poornima was celebrated on 24 July in the Sathya Sai Centre, again over two sessions. Once again, the Mahila started the session with the Guru Strotam.

Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated in the Sathya Sai Centre on 29 August with the usual prayerful pomp and splendor that we offer our Sai Nandalala.

Avatar Declaration Day is a day to remember, reflect and assimilate the teachings of Bhagawan. It was commemorated with *bhajan* and an online *satsang* with Brother Aravind Balasubramanya from Bangalore, titled “Why write letters to God every day?”

VIRTUAL STUDY & SATSANG

Sadhana for Aradhana Mahotsavam: In the four weeks leading to this auspicious day, a weekly *sadhana* was undertaken by devotees from 1 to 30 April. The *sadhana* were:

- Week 1 – To chant the 5-letter mantra daily 108 times – GOD IS
- Week 2 – To recite daily the Five Affirmations
- Week 3 – To recite daily *Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu* 21 times or 108 times
- Week 4 – To read and contemplate on the Sutra Vahini

Nine Gems. In the nine days leading to the auspicious Guru Poornima Day, one ‘gem’ was circulated by Whatsapp each day to devotees. The ‘gem’ is a handwritten letter from Swami to devotees. The ‘gems’ were prepared by the SSSIO Scriptural Studies Committee for devotees’ personal contemplation and was greatly appreciated by all.

Faith & Surrender Study Guide. For 16 days beginning on 4 October, a study guide on Faith & Surrender that was also prepared by the SSSIO Scriptural Studies Committee was circulated for personal reading and contemplation.

Satsang with Brother Aravind Balasubramanya. This year we took the unique opportunity of observing this day with an interactive *satsang* on 24 October with Brother Aravind Balasubramanya via Zoom.

He spoke on ‘Why Write to God Every day?’ In his energetic and joyful style, Brother Aravind spoke on the importance of this means of communication with Swami. To initiate and encourage this new *sadhana* of writing letters, a notebook, and a pen were distributed to start the practice pronto!

Ladies’ Day satsang with Sister Anuradha Venkateswaran. On 18 November, the Mahila Wing held *bhajan* followed by a Zoom *satsang* with Sister Anuradha from Atlanta, USA. Her topic was ‘The good you do comes back to you ... from God’. It was an enlightening sharing on the unique opportunity of doing Swami’s work.

STUDY CLASSES

These are conducted regularly to understand and discuss Swami’s teachings, and other scriptures.

The *Mahila* continue to hold classes virtually and the Young Adults hold their individual study classes face to face at the Sathya Sai Centre, occasionally resorting to Zoom.

The *Mahila* meet every Tuesday and have completed Bhagvatha Vahini and Bhaja Govindam. They have now taken up the study of the Sutra Vahini and Atma Bodha under the guidance of Sister Shanta Lalwani and Sister Dakshu Mansukhani (in Pune).

In addition, Sister Sangeeta Shankar conducted a recitation tutorial on the 14 verses of the Guru Stotram, teaching the meaning, significance and correct recitation of this beautiful prayer. The *Mahila* humbly lead the Guru Stotram on festivals.

Young Adults enthusiastically meet on Friday evenings for study sessions on various topics to bring spiritual learning. This year, the YAs have started a Book Club on ‘Sai Baba Gita’, facilitated by Brother Venkat Boppana.

Some of the other thought-provoking topics discussed in their study classes are ‘Five Hidden Messages from the Ramayana’, ‘Krishna Leelas’, ‘The Real Point of Our Seva’, ‘Our Values in Nature’, ‘What is Spirituality?’ ‘Developing Purpose’ and a discussion on the Faith and Surrender study guides.

Our sincere thanks to the facilitators Sis Kamni Bharwani, Bro Venkat Boppana, Bro Ashok K. Sakhrani and Sis Anju Daswani.

The Young Adults also held quiz nights on “The Divine Life and Message of Sri Sathya Sai Baba” to learn more of His Divine teachings, and they invited all devotees to participate. The activities have included ‘Fun Games Night – Watch Your Words’ and ‘Fun Group Quiz Night – Sai to the Rescue’.

BAL VIKAS WING

Our Bal Vikas comprises of 23 dedicated gurus who tirelessly volunteer their time for the spiritual education of approximately 160 children.

Not deterred by social-distancing restrictions, our Bal Vikas classes were conducted on Zoom with almost all students diligently attending their classes. With Swami’s Grace, face-to-face classes were resumed in September, 2021.

Between February and April 2021, BV children were taught the meaning and correct rendition of the Guru Stotram by a Bal Vikas guru, Sis. Sangeetha. As part of their offering on Aradhana Mahotsavam Day (24 April), the gurus chanted the Guru Stotram, while the students chanted “*Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu.*”

One of the most exciting days in the BV calendar is Eswaramma Day. BV students celebrated singing bhajan, a special message, and fun games. BV students presented Mothers’ Day cards to their mothers, bringing many tears of joy. Delicious cupcakes and juices were distributed to the students as *prasadam*.

On 20 November, our Bal Vikas students participated in a unique and exciting, in-house game event entitled the ‘Unity in Faith Amazing Race’, what an exciting day for all participants.

SEVA WING

We have had to comply with social distancing rules and so our *seva* to homes and shelters have been suspended.

In spite of this, our regular breakfast and dinner *seva* for the homeless have continued. We conscientiously offer dinner and breakfast seven times monthly. Delicious, hot meals suitable for our Chinese or South Asian homeless and under-privileged *narayana* are served together with daily necessities.

The *Narayan Seva* we initiated in Happy Valley as a result of the temporary suspension of the local Gurudwara *langar* now continues almost daily. Volunteers from ‘Team Sai’ visit the South Asian and European *narayana* almost daily on their chosen day offering delicious, healthy home-cooked meals and a drink.

During Diwali, Indian sweets, savories, a banana, a bottle of water together with a slice of hot, freshly baked pizza was offered to the 14 *narayana* living in a tunnel. This offering was welcomed with a great deal of emotion and gratitude by the *narayana* and our volunteers.

Mahila continue to participate in the monthly dinner Street Sleepers *seva* on Kowloon side by cooking scrumptious hot meals in their homes and helping with the packing of the dry packets. Home-cooked lunch is also served weekly on Wednesdays to the refugees.

The Mahila also participate in making *prasadam* that is offered in the Sri Sathya Sai Centre on various festivals.

Bal Vikas children accompanied by 2 gurus undertook a *seva* to clean a beach on Lamma Island on 3 July. They spent their public holiday cleaning the beach and the pathway from the ferry pier at Sok Kwu Wan to the beach and all the way to Yung Shue Wan. On the end of their tiring morning, the participants shared a mouthwatering lunch to re-energize themselves after their *seva* to Swami.

Young Adult Service Activities: As part of their spiritual growth, the YA actively participate in the regular Street Sleeper breakfast and dinner *seva* organized by the Seva Wing. In addition, the YA have organized their own various service activities:

- Street Sleeper Seva

The Young Adults organised a dinner *seva* on Saturday, 28 August. Hot meals were prepared at home and distributed to 100 street sleepers in Sham Shui Po, along with a dry pack consisting of a biscuit, a Vitasoy and a fruit.

- Mid-Autumn Festival Seva

On 22 September, to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival, they distributed clothes and snacks to around 200 street sleepers in Yau Ma Tei and Sham Shui Po area. Bhagawan said

“*Bhikshanamdeharakshartham, vasthram sheera nivarnam*”.

- Nature Clean-up *Seva*

The YA took charge of arranging Hike and Nature Clean-up on 19 May at Lamma Island and a beach clean-up *seva* on 1 July at Dragons Back. Beach clean-up affects more than what we see from the shore. Maintaining a healthy beach means maintaining a healthy ocean. The purpose of this *seva* is to take responsibility for our planet's well-being.

SADHANA, CHANTING, SSSIO PARTICIPATION AND MORE

Surrender a Desire at His Lotus Feet: A *sadhana* that began in 2020 continues to this day. On the 23rd of every month, devotees are invited to give up a small desire or indulgence and offer it as their personal sacrifice at the Lotus Feet.

960,000 Prayers Closer to My Sai Within: Our Young Adults initiated a special 9-month, 9-day prayer *sadhana* “Chanting Challenge” for Swami's 96th Birthday, entitled 960,000 Prayers Closer to My Sai Within. Devotees were invited to choose a prayer and chant 108 times daily, starting from 14 February.

The goal was to complete 960,000 chants by Swami's 96th Birthday in November. We are humbled that with everyone's collective efforts this goal was achieved before the Birthday, but the chanting continued.

A final collective chanting session was held on Sunday, 21 November. A *japmala* together with Bhagawan's quote was distributed as *prasadam*.

More from the Mahila: On 19 September, the Mahila had an evening of fun and games titled ‘A game we play, with Sai we Stay’. Every game carried Sai's message in it. There was also some *bhajan* singing, followed by a sumptuous high-tea with Swami and the 35 ladies who attended the programme.

PARTICIPATION IN SSSIO ACTIVITIES

Over the years Hong Kong has actively participated in the many spiritual activities organized by SSSIO.

This year, we took part in:

Akhanda Gayatri chanting. On 25 April, 20 June, 21 August and 17 October. The final session for this year will be held in December.

Bhajan by our talented Hong Kong devotees were recorded and submitted for the Maha Shivaratri online programme, as well as for Worldwide Akhand Bhajans.

Buddha Poornima celebrations. We co-hosted and contributed to the design, video footage, and photos. Our BV children participated in the *prasad* offering and participated as MCs.

Guru Poornima celebrations. Testimonials were submitted by our Hong Kong devotees on the theme ‘Experiencing Divinity: The Nine Forms of Devotion’ and videos by Young Adults on gratitude were webcasted globally.

Aarti videos for various online programmes were produced and submitted.

Beyond Borders: Two bright Bal Vikas children participated in a Virtual Global Panel Discussion via Zoom. The discussion was on how children can connect to Swami and SSE, and what it's like to grow up in Swami's fold in each country of the world. It was truly an enlightening experience for all!

May Bhagawan continue to guide us to be His instruments.

Jai Sai Ram

Compiled by Ashok Kripalani

On behalf of:

Spiritual Co-ordinator: Sis. Anju Daswani

Mahila Co-ordinator: Sis. Nisha Sakhrani

Bal Vikas Co-ordinator: Sis. Anjali Advani

Young Adults Co-ordinator: Sis. Milan Budhrani

Seva Wing Co-ordinator: Bro. Ashok Kripalani



TSUEN WAN CENTRE

The Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan also saw their fair of challenges during the year, but with Swami's Grace every effort was made to embrace these.

From January to March the Sathya Sai Centre was forced to remain closed due to social-distancing regulations. When it did open on 4 April, renovation and maintenance work had to be undertaken and that lasted until May. Nevertheless, *bhajan* were offered as usual every Sunday on Zoom. The Sathya Sai Centre finally opened on 23 May offering live *bhajan* singing and other activities every Sunday.

All festivals, namely Aradhana Mahotsavam, Guru Purnima, Krishna Janmashtami, Avatar Declaration Day, Global Akhanda Bhajans, Ladies' Day and Swami's Birthday were celebrated with love and devotion. The Centre anticipates celebrating Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

The Centre's Young Adults have been quite active too. They participate in the Cage Home *narayana seva*, alternating between Sham Shui Po and Nam Cheong areas. On the last Sunday of every month they conduct the entire *bhajan* session in the Centre.

On the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month the Ladies' Section hold their study classes on Zoom, which is led by Sis. Kanta Rai.

The Narayans Seva Team offers *narayana seva* on the last Sunday of each month. More than

121 vegetarian meals along with a bag of basic necessities consisting of a bottle of water, banana, tissue packet, cup noodles and a sandwich are offered to the homeless in the Sham Shui Po and Jordan areas.

Additionally, in April our *Narayan Seva* Team reached out to the homeless in Yuen Long and between April and August we served the underprivileged and homeless in Yuen Long and Tsuen Wan districts.

Our Bal Vikas classes are conducted by a team of dedicated gurus every Sunday morning, eager children are divided into the Senior and Junior classes. To inculcate the spirit of *seva* in these young hearts, the children are encouraged to clean the Sathya Sai Centre on the 2nd Sunday each month. The Bal Vikas conduct the *bhajan* session on this day.

All in all it has been a full year, and in the midst of everything each one of us have felt the presence of Swami in our lives, leading us, guiding us, and making sure we continue carrying out His mission of love and service.

May His love and light help us face life's challenges and turn them into Sweet Divine Nectar!

Jai Sai Ram,

Rita Gurung

President

THE INSTITUTE OF SATHYA SAI EDUCATION, HONG KONG

Due to the pandemic-related lockdowns, with travel restrictions and schools closed for much of the time, it has been difficult to continue our SSEHV projects in the past year. Nevertheless, like many SSEHV programmes around the world, we have been able to turn to online delivery of teacher training. In Mainland China, 33 postgraduate Education students from four universities in four provinces received certificates for completing a one-year online SSEHV training programme, and 20 students received certificates for having completed two or three years. They have completed monthly tasks online to develop their understanding and practice of the human values and teaching approaches, and submitted assignments each month to reflect on what they had learned. These students are the teacher educators and educational leaders of the future, so it is valuable for them to participate in in-depth SSEHV training. They have also maintained a social media chat group with the teachers who have completed our SSEHV training programmes over the past 20 years, answering their questions, encouraging their discussion, and sharing new ideas with them.

Sai Ram

Dr. Margaret Taplin

Senior Education Officer



Serving home cooked meals to homeless



Bal Vikas ... beach clean-up on Lamma Island



Young Adults ... in action





THE NINE-POINT CODE OF CONDUCT

As laid down by the Charter of
Sri Sathya Sai World Organisation

That in order to remember continuously Bhagawan's teachings and in order to put them into practise and to be a worthy instrument of our Divin Master, every member must undergo *SADHANA*, a spiritual discipline which should be merged with day-to-day life so as to make *SADHANA* a part of his or her wordly life, and ever member shall make his or her "Family as a Unit" for such *SADHANA*.

Thust with a view to quality to be a true member of the Organisation, the following guidelines shall be followed.

1. Daily meditation and prayer.
2. Devotional singing/prayer with family members once per week.
3. Participation in Sai Spiritual Education by children of the family.
4. Participation in community service and other programmes of the Organisation.
5. Regular attendance at devotional meetings conducted by the Organisation.
6. Regular study of Sai literature.
7. Use of soft, loving speech with everyone.
8. Avoidance of talking ill of others, especially in their absence.
9. Practice of the principles of "Ceiling on Desires", consciously and continuously striving to eliminate the tendency to waste time, money, food, and energy and utilising any savings thereby generated for the service of mankind.

Let us strive to be Bhagawan's worthy followers through spiritual discipline and earn His Grace to attain perfection and enlightenment.

Jai Sai Ram

“Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all languages, in a variety of times that should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as vaild as far as they do not extinguish the flame of Unity.”

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

“Listen to the primeval Pranava resounding in your hearts as well as in the heart of the Universe.”



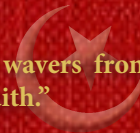
“Remember the Wheel of Cause and Consequence of Deed and destiny and the Wheel of Dharma that rights them all.”



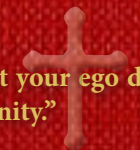
“Offer all bitterness in the sacred Fire and emergy grand, great and godly.”



“Be like the Star which never wavers from the Crescent but is fixed in steady faith.”



“Cut the “I” clean across and let your ego die on the Cross, to endow on you Eternity.”



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Sri Sathya Sai International
Organisation, Hong Kong
Burlington House, Block A-1,
10th Floor, 92-94 Nathan Road,
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Mail:
Telephone:
Email:
Website:

T.S.T. P.O. Box 95017, Kowloon, HK
2367 4240 (During Bhajan Hours)
saiorghk@netvigator.com
www.saibaba.org.hk