

2010

Sathya Sai Service Organisation

Republic of Ireland, Zone 9, Region 91

SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER
JUL-AUG 2010

Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

The Annual Satsang has come and gone, with a feeling of achievement by all those who attended.

This year the Satsang was accompanied by the Pre-World Conference, in preparation for the Conference that takes place in Prasanthi. Our Chairman, Jagan, will be present at it and it is proposed to have a group travelling to P.N. for this, and anyone wishing to join them, should please contact Jagan at 085 7782971. He proposes to travel on 5th August and will be returning on the 31st.

Susan Lavin has graciously accepted the position of Treasurer and we wish her every success in her new role. This now leaves Rosemary Marron free to pursue her busy interests in EHV and Educare. She recently attended a conference in Delhi where she was invited to speak on these subjects. *Ed.*

The Avatar is an enigmatic, yet delightful blend of individual consciousness and the Divine Consciousness. The Avatar behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship with Him, but rises to His super-human heights so that mankind can aspire to reach those heights. - BABA.

The Vegetarian Issue

In the December 1994 issue of 'Sanathana Sarathi', Swami made an important statement, on the subject of vegetarianism.

"I have been stressing the vital importance of people giving up this habit of eating non-vegetarian food even from My boyhood days. Meat eating fosters animal qualities in man making him descend to the demonic level; it is a heart-rending sight to see cows being slaughtered to serve as food for man. The cow has been worshipped as mother in Bharat since ancient times... Cow-slaughter is repugnant to the culture of this country. The provision of drinking water to the people and putting an end to the killing of animals for food are two prime needs for the country to regain its pristine glory.

"Violence in any form is evil and to kill innocent animals is tantamount to blatant savagery. I bless the Prime Minister (of India) and expect him to get two things accomplished during his tenure."

I recall when I announced to friends at my host's dinner table, that I decided to cease eating meat, I was subjected to strong arguments against taking that course of action, as, they suggested, man needed the meat's vitamin B12 to sustain himself. I countered this point of view by suggesting that most vegetables and fruits contained this vitamin already, anyway. But, alas, this fell on deaf ears.

I believe the best way of 'giving-up' meat eating, and wean off the red meats, is to gradually do so by going on to the whiter meats, then eventually, off these also. It is best to do it gradually as there is always the danger that one might slip back into the old ways.

When one has finally ceased meat intake, it is time to follow this up with 'giving-up' liquor and smoking. Ed.

You will be liberated as soon as you renounce your attachment and desire.

Sutra Vahini - Aphorism 1

Why a Sai Organisation?

(Sourced: "Pathways To God")

The question is sometimes asked: 'What is the need of a Sai Baba organisation?' "Many spiritual and service groups already dot the map of human endeavour. If transpersonal growth is largely a personal matter, why create an organisation?

"The structure created by Sathya Sai Baba is unique. It is a forum where aspirants learn spiritual values. It is a training ground where members practice service to others. It is a temple of devotion and an instrument for transformation of society. The primary objective of the Sai organisation, however, is to aid seekers in their quest for God by helping them to recognise the divinity in all.

There are thousands of organisations already working with such aims, but what is the special need for an organisation bearing My name? You must realise Me in all, and serve all in a spirit of worshipful dedication.

Sathya Sai Speaks 6, pp. 323-324

"Members of the Sai Baba centres are encouraged to awaken to universal divinity. When all people and objects are seen as reflections of God, peace and brotherhood will shine on Earth. Fear and conflict result from the illusion of separateness. That illusion is produced when the divine vision is reflected on an impure heart.

The organisation must help people to realise the unity behind all this apparent multiplicity, which is only a superimposition by the human mind on the One that is all this. Sathya Sai Speaks 10, p.45

"To realise divinity in others, we must uncover the light within ourselves. We must believe that the divine spark which motivates us also resides in others. The Sai organisation seeks to purify the individual's heart and mind. Service, study and devotional singing all contribute to accomplishing this result. In the company of like-minded aspirants, the member is encouraged to progress on the path. The organisation's objective is the transformation of the individual. If enough individuals are transformed, then perhaps the problems of society will diminish also.

I must say plainly that ninety out of a hundred among you have not clearly visualised the purpose for which I have allowed you to form these organisations... It is to build upon the earth the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men on strong foundations. This must be clearly grasped by all of you. You are not engaged in social service through these organisations; you are engaged in your own service. All the items of work are aimed at expanding your

heart and purifying it. Sathya Sai Speaks 6, p.321

“In the Sai Baba centres, it is important for us to understand the effects of our actions on others. There is an important difference between satsang and socialising. We have need for good company, but we must not allow our association to become mundane banter. Newcomers should be warmly welcomed, but members must avoid diluting the milk of satsang with the water of wordly affairs. We must maintain a spiritual focus in our discussion or we should be silent.

“It is also important for us to know when we are providing good company for another, or the other is having a negative influence on us. Much introspection is required for us to be vigilant in the situation. We must know our own strengths and weaknesses very well. Even the highly evolved seeker is subject to the negative influence of bad company.

For the siddha (the accomplished seeker) too, one who has reached success, satsang is valuable, for it is like keeping a pot of water inside a tank of water: there will not be any loss by evaporation. If the yogi lives among worldly men, the chances of his yoga evaporating into bhoga (bad habits) are very great.

“Good company is important for the advanced aspirant, but it is even more important for the newcomer. When we are caught in the grips of worldly desire, we can only be reformed by good company. Without strong spiritual guidance and support, we may not even realise our plight.

Join satsang, the company of the godly. Just as the tame elephants surround the wild tusker and rope him and bind him hand and foot and immobilise him before taming him, the spiritually minded will bring the doubter around.”

Sathya Sai Speaks 2, p.187

God expects you to use your given talents, skills and strength first before seeking divine help. -BABA.

SAI EXPERIENCES

FOR WEBSITE REQUESTED

Old friends Jim & Yvonne Northrop, who now live in France, have requested material for publication on their web-sites.

They would appreciate articles on your experiences relating to Swami or your visit to Prasanthi Nilayam. They would love to hear from you. Look into their site

<sathyasaimemories.wordpress.com
>

If you identify yourself with the world and think, “I am so and so”. you will remain separate from God. On the other hand, if you realise that all experiences emanate from your mind. and that you are God, you will become God. -BABA.

Thought For The Day

“People have three chief instruments for uplifting themselves; intelligence, mind and senses. When the mind gets enslaved by the senses, you will get entangled and bound. When the same mind is regulated by the intellect, you can become aware of your own Reality. The potency of your mind can be promoted by good practices like meditation, repetition of Lord’s Name, devotional singing and worship. The mental power thus gained from spiritual practices should be turned away from wrong paths. Your mind must be released from the hold of the senses and directed by the principle of intelligence. Then, spiritual progress will be rapid.

Everything that you have is by God’s Grace. - BABA.

Smile, Be Beautiful

Few realise the power of a smile. It’s remarkable how the stretch of a few muscles on the face can do wonders not only for one who gives the smile but, also, for one who receives it.

N. Osborne’s comments on smiling are worthy of remembering, “A smile costs nothing but gives so much. It enriches those who receive, without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it, and none is so poor that he can be made rich by it. A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business and is the countersign of friendship. It

brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it is nature’s best antidote for trouble. Yet it can’t be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that is of no value until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has none to give.

Not for nothing did Swami Vivekananda say, “By being pleasant always and smiling, it takes you nearer to God, nearer than any prayer. A clouded face on the other hand, not only takes us away from God but makes us carriers of the melancholy virus.”

So Swami Vivekananda advised, “If you have a clouded face, do not go out that day, shut yourself up in a room. What right have you to carry this disease out into the world?”

The only way to keep this disease away is to smile. This keeps us healthy and makes us beautiful. No one has ever seen a smiling face that was not beautiful.

-Author and Source Unknown.

Swami says,

It is your duty to ask God. Words must be said, and the words must correspond to the thought. The thought must be put into a true word. It is true that the divinity knows all, but He requires that the true word is said. The mother may know that to maintain life the child requires food, but milk is given when the child asks for it.

Who Is A True Vegetarian?

"...it is significant to note that those who live on vegetarian food are less prone to diseases, whereas non-vegetarians are subject to more diseases. Why? Because animal food is incompatible with the needs of the human body." -BABA (1990)

The true vegetarian, according to 91 year old Rev. Dada J. P. Vaswani, is a man of self-discipline. He said, "So many there be who do not eat flesh but, alas! they easily succumb to the flesh. They cannot resist the temptations of the flesh. They are soft: they have not put out the fire of passion. The true vegetarian is unswayed by passion, unruffled by anger, unmoved by greed of gold.

"His heart is a flowing river of compassion and love. The basis of true compassion is a feeling of unity, of oneness with all creatures that have the breath of life.

"Living in such a world, the true vegetarian becomes a worshipper, a man of prayer. He sees cruelty all around him. How many hearts can be touched? How many lives can he save? And so he turns to Him Who is the One Saviour of all. The true vegetarian prays alike for the killer and the killed: and he prays that he may become an instrument of God's love in this world of agony and pain.

"The true vegetarian is a man of indomitable faith. He believes profoundly that life is entirely a gift of God. In periods of crisis, in times of famine and flood, his mind wavers not! He prefers starvation to eating fish or flesh. On his sick-bed he is not lured into eating impure food."

It is written;

"As is the food, so is the mind;

As is the mind, so are the thoughts;

As are the thoughts, so is the conduct;

As is the conduct, so is the health."

Swami said in 21 Nov. 1999, **"In order to have sacred thoughts, give up the vices like consumption of non-vegetarian food, smoking and drinking intoxicants."**

Food for thought, indeed.

Never ask anything from anybody. Come to Me, I will give. -BABA.

Our Visits to Puttaparthi.

One's visit to Prashanthi Nilayam is intended to be a pilgrimage of change. It is a perfect opportunity for us to sit quietly and meditate on events in our lives that may need to be changed, or, indeed, improved. These visits are not intended to be comfortable vacations. Indeed, Swami touched on this very subject and has said the following:

"Don't think that by coming to Puttaparthi you are going to be very happy. You will, in fact, be very disturbed, but if you secure your victory here, you can go to any part of the world and nothing will ever disturb you."

He further said, on another occasion:

"If you don't get any inspiration by coming to Puttaparthi, don't come

here. Bhagavan is not limited to Puttaparthi. He is the Lord of the Universe. Wherever you get inspiration, go there."

What Swami is saying is that this journey is, in effect, an 'inward' journey, that costs relatively nothing. This should be a comfort to those who can ill-afford the expense, or are unwell to take the journey. Swami remains in our hearts!

God is one who protects always; He does not punish. People are not able to realise this truth. Unable to realise this truth, some people attribute unworthy emotions to God and accuse Him of making innocent people suffer. God loves every human being. He does not hate anyone. In fact, the terms like anger, hatred and violence, etc., do not exist at all in the Kingdom of God.

-Baba. 2005

Parable From The Divine

'The greatest sacrifice'

"Buddha used to keep with him always a rattle-drum. His disciples once asked him: "Master! Why are you always keeping this rattle-drum by your side?" Buddha replied: "I shall play on this drum the day a person who has made the greatest sacrifice approaches me." Everyone was eager to know who this person would be. Wishing to attain this distinction, a Maharaja loaded his elephants with considerable treasure and went to Buddha. He hoped to offer the treasure to Buddha and earn his praise.

On the way, an old woman greeted the Maharaja and pleaded: "I am hungry. Will you give me some food?" The Maharaja took out a pomegranate fruit from his palanquin and gave it to the old woman. The old woman came to Buddha with the fruit. By then, the Maharaja had also come to Buddha and was eagerly waiting to see when Buddha would sound the rattle-drum. For a long time Buddha did not use it. The Maharaja stayed on. The old woman approached Buddha staggering on her legs, and offered him the pomegranate fruit. Buddha took it immediately and sounded the little drum.

The Maharaja asked Buddha: "I offered so much wealth to you. You did not sound the drum. But you rattled it after receiving a small fruit. Is this a great sacrifice". Buddha replied: "Maharaja! In sacrifice, it is not quantity that counts. It is the quality of sacrifice that matters. It is natural for a Maharaja to offer gold. But what great sacrifice is made when a hungry old woman offers the pomegranate fruit to the Guru despite her hunger. She did not care even for her life and gave the fruit. What greater sacrifice can there be? It is not sacrifice to offer what is superfluous for you. True sacrifice means giving up that which is most dear to you, that which you value most."

-Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

So long as you limit God to a form, you cannot attain Him. -BABA.

“Journey With Sai”

*(Extracts from book by Karunamba
Ramamurthy)*

KR: How should we do Japa?

Swami: How do you sit for Japa?

KR: I sit in Padmasana.

Swami: Do not sit like that. Sit relaxed as you are sitting now. As you complain of leg pain, do not sit in Padmasana. But you should sit straight. Show Me how you sit.

(I showed Him the way I sit for Japa. Swami demonstrated sitting straight and said that the back should not bend.)

KR: Initially I sit straight. Later, without my knowledge, my back bends.

Swami: That is not your mistake. Sit straight in the beginning; the rest is left to Him. You should keep your thumb and middle finger in contact. Some people keep the thumb and the forefinger in contact. That is wrong. The job of the forefinger is to say, ‘that is wrong, this is wrong; I want that, I want this: see that, see this.’ So you should join the thumb and the middle finger.

KR: What should we do next?

Swami: Chant the name and think of His form.

KR: Swami, is it not possible to attain self-realisation in one’s lifetime?

Swami: It is possible. You can realise your soul by the grace of the Guru in just one second, one hour, one day, one month or a year.

KR: In that case, shouldn’t You grace those persons who are entirely dependent on You and seeking Your grace?

Swami: I will surely bless them. I am here only for that reason and for such aspirants. You still have responsibilities. As soon as you finish them, I will shower grace on you. If you desire it before finishing your duties, it will be an act of selfishness.

KR: Swami, aren’t there people who are doing their duties and sadhana at the same time?

Swami: Yes, but it is better to finish one’s duties first.

KR: Swami, why did You create this type of world?

Swami: To make human beings learn from their sufferings and enable them to experience and exercise their power of discrimination for their evolution.

KR: Swami, did You create this world as a pastime?

Swami: No. Never. God does not have even a moment of free time. He created the world with all its beauty to educate and uplift the human being.

KR: Swami, our request to You is to give a small place for us in Your heart and also at Puttaparthi.

Swami: Granted. Your names are registered.

Those that develop the eternal strength of endurance, will relieve the pitiful sufferers of this world with their power of spiritual healing. -BABA.

Questions On My Mind

From time to time, we all develop questions, for which we require answers.

For my part I needed the answers to two questions. I chose 'Heart2Heart' to obtain the answer to my first question, and I now share these with you.

The first question was, "From time-to-time I read items referring to Swami in dreams and the many wonderful things He does for the dreamer. Now, there are others who say that Swami stated that He does not appear in dreams, that, perhaps, it is the dreamer's wish, etc., that brings this about. Do you have the definitive answer to this question?"

Answer: "This is a genuine doubt but difficult to answer. Swami's ways are mysterious. Yes, He does appear in dreams and guide people, and we know of many people who have been blessed thus. However, there are dreams which are a result of our imagination. So, in dreams, there are those that are genuine and those that are 'confusion dreams', as Swami calls it. We should be able to distinguish these two."

My second question was relating to the issue of 'Consciousness' within animals and plant life. My question was: "Did Swami state that plant life has no Consciousness? So, this

suggests that plant life does not feel pain. Am I correct in assuming this?"

The following answer is from "Saidevotees Worldwide": **"What is the harm in killing an animal? Because, when you pick a fruit, you're also killing it. By picking the fruit, the plant becomes handicapped. Doesn't the plant suffer pain? So, this is pain and that is pain. So, what's the difference?"** (05.01.2003)

"Baba has said something about this. You must know by now that I tell you right away any of Baba's answers to questions already posed. Those questions where the answers are left to my imagination, I openly confess. There's no hypocrisy or duplicity here. I do not claim to be an intellectual, certainly not! I don't even want to be one. I can only repeat what our good Lord has said.

"So, what did He say about this? Plants don't have the same kind of emotions or feelings as animals do. Although Jagadish Chandra Bose, in his experiments with plant physiology, demonstrated that plants *do* have feelings and emotions - at least we can agree on this - they do *not* have as *many* feelings as animals do.

"Animals also have feelings and sentiments, although not as many as man. This means that consciousness will find its expression more and more in man as compared with the lower forms of Creation. Mineral matter also has consciousness, expressed at the lowest ebb. The plant world has consciousness at a higher level, the animal world at a superior level, and the human race at its maximum. So, it is all relative.

“Therefore, you cannot say, ‘What is the difference, after all, if I pick a flower or a fruit, or kill an animal?’ You cannot equate them like that. There is a wide gulf of difference because the level at which consciousness expresses itself differs in the course of evolution from low to high. That’s what I can tell you on this subject.”

These answers are not as clear-cut as I would have liked, none-the-less they give us all food for thought (pardon the pun!). And I thank them for their answers.

Know that the one that blames you, himself suffers from severe insecurity - accept it and look deep within, for in each blame lies a hidden praise. - BABA.

A DREAM FULFILLED

While trying to make a living to keep his family, a poor Scottish farmer heard a cry for help coming from a nearby swamp. Dropping his tools, the farmer ran to the bog, in time, to see a terrified boy screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

Next day, a fancy carriage pulled up at the farmer’s farm house and a well-dressed gentleman introduced himself as the father of the boy whom the farmer had saved.

“I want to thank you and repay you for saving my son’s life.”

“I can’t accept payment for what I did”, replied the farmer. At that

moment, the farmer’s son came to the door of the family’s hovel.

“Is this your son?” asked the gentleman.

“Yes,” came the farmer’s reply.

“I’ll make you a deal. Let me provide your son with a level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he’ll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of.”

The farmer’s son was indeed sent to the very best schools and in time graduated from St. Mary’s Hospital Medical School, in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin!

Years afterwards, the same nobleman’s son, who was saved from a swamp, was stricken with pneumonia. It was Penicillin that saved his life!

The name of the gentleman was Lord Randolph Churchill, whose son’s name was the famous Sir Winston Churchill!

This is an example of the law of Karma, the law of cause and effect. Help fulfill someone’s dream, and your dream shall be fulfilled - by the Lord!

Westerners have investigated the vibrations produced by this Mantra (Gayatri). They have found that when it is recited with the correct accent as laid down in the Vedas, the atmosphere becomes visibly illumined. - BABA.

A Filmmaker's Divine Experiences
(as narrated to B.P. Rao, March 2004
in Prasanthi Nilayam)

Peter Rae (65), a documentary filmmaker from Australia, has been a devotee of Swami for the past 30 years, and blessed with many mystic experiences of which he relates a few in his own words.

"During 1998, I underwent full medical checkup, which revealed that I was suffering from bowel cancer. I was admitted in a hospital in Melbourne where doctors conducted surgery. Though I had just returned from Puttaparthi, I did not call on Swami for help. After the surgery was over, I was placed in observation. Soon I was shifted back to my hospital bed where I awoke and realised that the operation was over.

The next thing I noticed was that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was standing at my bedside. At that time, I was not dreaming, but was wide-awake. I slowly lifted my hands in reverence. Swami, smiling at me, bent over very close to me. Thus He gave me the opportunity to put my arms around Him. I could feel the soothing soft touch of His hair on my face. A soft sweet fragrance enveloped me. As His ear was near my mouth, I whispered: 'Swami! Please! You hug me! This is a serious business!'

Baba put His arms around me. Instantaneously I was filled with bliss. Tears rolled down from my eyes. Then He vanished. My arms, which till then were hugging Swami,

were holding air (empty space). He had gone! Ever since, I have felt like a thirty year old young man. Cancer has not bothered me again.

Once I was conducting the shooting of a film in Nepal. I was put up in a friend's house and as a parting gift before returning to Puttaparthi, my friend gave me a small empty vibhuti container. That night I kept the gift in front of Baba's photograph. Next morning, while packing away my things. I was much surprised to find my 'empty' vibhuti container overflowing with vibhuti!

Once Swami called me for an interview along with some others at Puttaparthi. We all went and sat in the interview room. Swami came and said, '*Any questions?*'

There was a few minutes silence. Then, suddenly, we began to hear the squeaks of several types of birds in the room. We were all surprised and began to look in all directions, but could not find any bird in the room. Swami smiling said, "*Not only you, but several other beings like birds will always be making requests and representations to Swami. You have now just heard a few of them.*"

If you eat food without first offering it to God, you will be affected by all impurities and defects present in it. On the contrary, if you offer the food to the Lord before eating, it becomes Prasad - a gift from God, and consequently all the impurities in the food are thereby eliminated. - BABA.

Visits To The Lotus Feet

I have been frequently impressed by those devotees who regularly visit Swami in Prasanthi Nilayam, and to receive His dharshan. However, it is not always convenient or financially possible, for many people, to make these trips to the Lotus Feet. Indeed some are physically unable.

At Shivarathri in 1979, Swami made the following comforting discourse, with this in mind.

“Most of you will surely boast that you have been visiting Puttaparthi since twenty years or that you have made the place your permanent residence; but, unless you follow the lessons I have been saying all the years, that boast is nothing but empty and hollow. If you develop love for all beings, in the faith that God resides in all, you may be anywhere else, but your prayers would reach Me and My Grace will reach you.

“While in My previous body, I told Nanashab that I am in ants, insects and animals, besides all men. When a dog ate all offerings intended for Baba, it was declared to have reached Baba, for he had eaten it in that form. ‘Nana says, he is giving Me food, but when I go in the form of a dog, he drives Me off.’ Follow what I say wherever you are in the world, if you do then I am near you always, I am there always where My words are followed.”

Distance is never an obstacle when relating to our Lord Sathya Sai Baba.

Nature can be modified by nurture; even dogs can cease to relish meat when they are trained

to relish only vegetarian food. - BABA.

Swami's Torn Robe

-a great revelation

Sri Subramaniam Chettiar, the founder President of Sri Sai Padhuga Trust, Madurai, with a small group called on the late Karunyananda, who was living in the first floor flat, of South Prashanthi. They were amazed to find Karunyananda stitching by hand, a torn patch on the Robe of Swami!

(It is generally said, in some media outlets, that Swami is getting billions of dollars as donations and out of these funds Sai Baba is living a very luxurious life.)

Karunyananda replied, when asked why he was stitching the Robe, that Swami had to wear this robe the next day while coming out for darshan. Also asked why Swami cannot wear another Robe, his answer amazed everyone, “Yes, Swami is not having another good Robe to wear!”

Chettiar was amazed by the answer. With such a large Trust being handled, it was maintained that ‘there was no spare Robe for Swami.’

Karunyananda went on to explain that Swami does not use any Trust funds for His own personal care, such as clothing or for food. If somebody gives Him a Robe, He will wear it. If somebody brings food for Him, Swami partakes of it. But never, never does Swami use a public fund for His own convenience!

So, what does Swami do with excess amount of Robes? He blesses them and distributes these to various Sai Centres across the globe!

There isn't an iota of selfishness, or selfish desires in Swami!

Details of this article came from Sri 'Mumbai' Srinivasan.

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The following comment is from M. Palaniswamy, 'saidevotees_worldnet'.

"Yes. Swami distributes the excess Robes, not only to various Sai Centres, but also to girl students of Anantapur Campus. My two daughters, who studied in Anantapur Campus, and her friends also got one Robe each which they are preserving as treasures. While distributing them, Swami asked them to stitch blouses from them and wear!!"

Start the day with Gayatri, and continue it with increasing fervour. Do it cheerfully with evident relish for your own sake and for the sake of the human community. -BABA.

Reciting the Gayatri Mantra?

Baba advises us to recite it three, nine or eleven times before meals. For Gayatri recitation there is no limit but, traditionally, it is repeated 108 times. Unfortunately, the pleasure of contemplating the mighty and majesty of the mantra is overshadowed by the effort required to keep track of the count. But

nevertheless, the more one chants the mantra, the greater the benefit. Swami said, *"Solar energy has to be drawn down to reinforce the inner vision of man, the soul latent in mankind. When the soul force is strengthened, the intellect, the senses and moral emotions are activated and guided along fruitful lines. Can darkness confuse the brain or hide the truth when the sun shines? Therefore, rely on the Gayatri to draw down effulgence from the sun, so that it may impart illumination to your intellect."* "Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA"

Every single moment of mind is a miracle. -BABA.

Mind Control

Controlling the mind is, perhaps, the most difficult exercise for any human. It can be an instrument of enslavement or release from bondage.

Swami has touched on this in the past and it is worth quoting His remarks here.

"It is an amalgam of the passionate and ignorant attitude, and can be easily polluted. It relishes in hiding the real nature of things and casting on them the forms and values that it desires. Understand the first characteristic of the mind: it runs helplessly after the senses. Whichever sense the mind follows, it is to invite disaster. When a pot of water becomes empty, we need not infer that it has leaked away through ten holes - one hole is enough to empty it!"

So too, even if one sense is not under control, you will be thrown into bondage. So, every sense has to be mastered."

The mind can be like a serpent standing back observing our thoughts and actions, awaiting the opportunity to influence our actions and not always for the purest of purposes.

So, as Swami says, **"Watch the mind!"**

Never give up the Gayatri, you may give up or ignore any other mantra, but you should recite the Gayatri at least a few times each day. It will protect you... - BABA.

Swami's Gifts Are Never Lost!

A devotee, travelling from Hyderabad from Puttaparthi, discovered her luggage has been stolen at night, and she reported this to the railway police. However, two days later she was called to identify her belongings, for the thief had been apprehended and the luggage recovered. To her surprise she discovered that the only item missing was the rosary Swami had materialised and given to her! She sent a message to Swami by wire, and He replied that the rosary had come to His possession, because it could never be stolen!

Who can describe her joy at getting the same rosary a second time from Swami's Hands!

Another incident is worth relating.

"It was twelve years ago," stated C.N. Padma, "One evening Baba took all those who were at the old temple to the sands of the river. After the chanting He called me, and while consoling me about my personal problems, He materialised a rosary and handed it to me. He had already given me one, and I kept it at home in a silver box. When He gave me another, I was alarmed that my situation may have worsened, since He felt I needed additional protection. So I asked Him, 'Why, Baba. Why a second rosary for me?'

"He replied, *'This is the one I gave you last! You left it at home in that silver box; it was stolen yesterday. Here, keep it safe!'*

"It was true. When I went home, I found the house broken into and the silver box gone."

When you pray for a thing from God, you run the risk of condemning Him, if for some reasons the prayer is not answered the way you want it to be, or as quickly as you want it. This contingency arises because you feel that God is an outsider, staying in some Heaven or holy spot, far away from you. God is in you, God is in every word of yours, every deed and every thought. Speak, do and think as befits Him. Do the duty that He has allotted to you to the best of your ability and to the satisfaction of your conscience. That is the most rewarding Puja. -BABA.

The Gold Medal Award

Swami's materialisations are renowned, and give great delight to those who witness them.

On one occasion He materialised a medal for an accomplished violinist whose recital was just concluding, and Swami showed the medal to those around Him. Even as they were admiring its size, beauty and shine, Swami said, "*Oh, the name has to be inscribed,*" and He closed His palm. Opening it immediately He showed the medal to all. They were amazed at the miracle. The inscription, "Presented by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, to Vidwan T. Chowdian," was deeply engraved thereon in English, complete with the day and the date. Showing the medal to us, Baba said, "*See how quick are My workmen!*"

People have three chief instruments for uplifting themselves: intelligence, mind and senses. When the mind gets enslaved by the senses, you will get entangled and bound. When the same mind is regulated by the intellect, you can become aware of your own Reality. The potency of your mind can be promoted by good practices like meditation, repetition of the Lord's Name, devotional singing and worship. The mental power thus gained from spiritual practices should be turned away from wrong paths. Your mind must be released from the hold of the senses and directed by principle of intelligence. Then, spiritual progress will be rapid. - BABA.

Offer Of Marriage

On the occasion when Swami Vivekananda went to the USA, a lady asked him to marry her. The Swami asked the lady why she had asked him such a question, and she replied that she was fascinated by his intellect. She wanted a child of such an intellect, so she asked the Swami whether he could marry her and give her a child like him. He said to her, that since she was attracted only by his intellect, there was no problem.

"My dear lady," he said, "I understand your desire. Marrying and bringing a child into this world and understanding whether it is intelligent or not, takes a very long time. Moreover it is not guaranteed. Instead, to fulfill your desire immediately, I can suggest a guaranteed way. Take me as your child. You are my mother. Now your desire of having a child of my intellect is fulfilled.

The lady was speechless

One Paragraph That Explains Life!

Arthur Ashe, the legendary Wimbledon player was dying of AIDS, which he got due to infected blood he received during a heart surgery in 1983.

From the world over, he received letters from his fans, one of which conveyed: "Why does God have to select you for such a bad disease?"

To this Arthur Ashe replied; "The world over, 50 million children start playing tennis, 5 million learn to play tennis, 500,000 learn professional tennis, 50,000 come to the circuit, 5000 reach the grand slam, 50 reach

Wimbledon, 4 to semi-final, 2 to the finals...when I was holding a cup I never asked God 'Why me?'. And today in pain I should not be asking God "Why me?"

*"Happiness keeps you sweet,
Trials keep you Strong,
Sorrow keeps you Human,
Failure keeps you humble and
Success
keeps you glowing,
But only Faith & Attitude keeps you
going..."*

"The only difference between Dreams and Achievements is hard work.

Mistakes are painful when they happen. But years later, a collection of mistakes called Experiences leads us to success."

Zarin Bharucha, "Sanathana Dharma"

God is not poor and hence, people created by Him cannot also be poor. It is man who makes beggars out of his fellowmen and ill-treats them. Such low and mean practices should be given up. Some people think that Lord Venkateswara is in need of money. They think He would do their work and fulfil their desires for the sake of money. In this manner, they bring Him down to the level of a beggar. It is a grave mistake.

God is not a beggar. You should consider Him as your father and

mother. Cultivate love for God and your fellowmen. Never consider someone a beggar and ill-treat him.

Extend help to those who are in distress. Develop love for God and fear of sin. Just because someone approaches you for help, do not consider him weak and inferior. Do not humiliate him. Treat everybody as your brothers and sisters. Never consider anybody a beggar. It is a great mistake to think that you are the giver and someone else is the beneficiary.
-BABA.

Respect Ladies!

The following article recalls an incident in the 'Interview Room' where a devotee, with his wife, were seated at the feet of Swami, massaging His feet.

"My wife told Swami that she had a question to ask. This impertinence from my wife in the Divine Presence flared me up. I shouted at her, reprimanding her for asking Swami such a question.

"Now, it was Swami's turn to get angry with me. His words, *"She is only asking Me. Why are you raising your voice, that too in My presence? I will deal with her and respond to her. You just keep quiet."*

"Swami was speaking with us in Tamil. There were devotees from Croatia, Australia, and Thailand. Then suddenly Swami switched over to English, and sent out a clear message for all of us assembled in the Interview Room.

“Listen. Never raise your voice against women, and use harsh words, hurting their mind. Note, that in any home, where there is no respect to women, there would not be peace and prosperity. You may gain lots of wealth, but there will not be any peace in such homes. You may have compromised peace, but the home will be afflicted with poverty. For both such instance, the men are to be squarely blamed.

“Those who worship Sai should maintain silence in their homes as much as possible. Silence is ‘SAILENCE’. This silence builds up positive energy in the house, which we call Divine Vibrations.”

In a lighter wane, Swami joked,

“If at all, if you wish to quarrel on any issues, please go out of the home to a secluded place like a garden, to fight it out. By the time you would have moved, your temper would have calmed down, and you will be in a position to express “sorry” to each other. You may be in a position to go back to home in a happier note.”

“Swami is teaching us in His unique method...”

Do not stuff your head with trivialities that fill the columns of periodicals, or the absurd details of the personal lives of popular movie stars. Do not get excited by such external events. Keep your head high over the flood waters and do not be carried away like stalks of straw. -BABA.

‘Journey With Sai’ - Extract from book by Karunamba Ramamurthy.

(An interview with Swami that turned into an Inner View:)

Devotee: Swami, can we nullify the karma of our bad deeds by the merit we gain out of good deeds?

Swami: No. However well you mix the seeds of a thorny plant and a fruit bearing plant and sow them, the seeds of the thorny plant will turn into a thorny plant only, and the seed for the fruit bearing plant will turn into a fruit bearing plant only. This is nature’s law.

Devotee: What is the solution?

Swami: Yes, there is a solution. The Income Tax Dept. levies tax based on your income. If you invest money in approved instruments, they reduce the tax. Similarly, if you do good deeds, some amount of tax is reduced. If you sincerely perform Bhajans, tax is reduced further. If you go for Nagarasamkirtan, some more tax is reduced. If you perform Nama Japa, tax is further reduced. If you do ilkhitajapa, tax reduces and Dhyana reduces tax further. Even after all the deductions, tax is not zero. Balance amount has to be paid, as there is no other way.

Devotee: If that is the case, why should we have Your Darshan? What do we gain from it?

Swami: A few years back, a military officer shot his wife to death. A case was registered against him. All courts, including the Supreme Court, passed a death sentence on him. The officer appealed to the President. The ruling of the President was, “He has fought courageously for India, and has protected the country in the past. Such a person deserves some consideration. He is, therefore,

exonerated from the death sentence, but given a life sentence.” Swami’s Darshan and Grace works in that manner. (*Avatar can always grant special grace, like clemency.*)

Super Speciality Hospitals

It was by Swami’s will, that brought about the first Super Speciality Hospital, with the laying of the foundation stone on 22nd November 1990, and it was at its completion exactly one year later, that this exquisite hospital would be inaugurated.

Breathtaking in its design, by the eminent architect, Dr. Keith Critchlow, Director of the Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture in London, the fine details were the thought-forms of Swami, as He guided Critchlow by pointing out the Vasthu (the Hindu science of architecture), planetary and astrological aspects that needed to be considered. Critchlow was astonished at the depth and extent of Swami’s technical knowledge.

It is written that, “he returned to London and set about drawing up a design according to Swami’s instructions. He was not successful. On the advice of a friend...he surrendered himself totally to Baba’s mercy; he prayed earnestly to Baba; then he started the work afresh. He took a long piece of drawing paper, (and) from one end to the other, in one single effort, he drew a sketch of the hospital! He added one ward at each end, extending to either side and bending towards the middle, as though two loving hands were extended and then closed around the

object of that love, just as directed by Swami.”

Critchlow’s team of architects took over at this point, working seventeen hours a day, for three months, completed all the designs and plans. Then they were passed over to the construction company in India, that were designated by Swami.

Even at this point, Critchlow had his own doubts. “Even in a very technically advanced country like the USA, a super speciality hospital of this kind cannot be constructed in less than seven years! How then can Swami build this hospital in six months?” he wondered.

Swami took Col. Joga Rao along to see how it was progressing, who asked Swami, “Swami, even if we put thousands of workers on this job and make them work day and night, can we complete the project by 22nd November? What about funds?” Swami interrupted, “*Do not create waves of doubt and indecision. Swami’s Will is bound to be fulfilled.*”

Swami then summoned the Indian engineer, Brig. Bose, and instructed him, “*Get two thousand workers through Messrs Larsen & amp; Toubro, put them on the job and complete it on time.*”

This was done, with two thousand workers employed day and night without intermission, and by 15th Oct. 1991, more than a month ahead of the proclaimed day of inaugurated, the building was completed and handed over to the medical experts for equipping!

Isaac Tigrett donated items of medical equipment, while the

Government of India waived duties and taxes, and transported them to Puttaparthi by air. The American Sai Foundation donated money for up-to-date equipment for carrying out blood tests, that could perform 20 different kinds of blood tests in respect of 600 patients per hour and hand down the results for study and analysis by doctors. Its computer could store results for up to ten million patients and download info on demand!

Swami's Will was met on the great day of 22nd November 1991, and four open-heart surgeries were performed! Everything completed as Swami predicted exactly twelve months previously. Experts all over the world were astonished!

November 2000 was another day for celebration, when another Super Speciality Hospital was completed in Bangalore, and Sathya Sai Baba stated: *"Sai institutions are eternal. They will serve the poor forever."*

One can only be in awe of the Will that Sathya Sai Baba has at His disposal. He once declared, *"My Will is bound to be fulfilled. Even if the fourteen worlds join together to oppose Me, they cannot prevent whatever I Will to do. Nobody has the capacity to comprehend My Divine power. None of the Gods, from Lord Brahma downwards, can comprehend it. Even a ten millionth part thereof is much beyond comprehension of the brainiest man!"*

Potency of Prasadam

A couple brought their little daughter, sick with heart trouble, to Puttaparthi. Doctors at the Super Speciality Hospital found two or three holes in her heart. As the case

was considered an emergency, they decided to perform open-heart surgery the very next morning. She was immediately admitted. The distraught father decided to inform Baba about the crisis early next morning and obtain His blessings. So he went and sat in the audience hall. The ever-merciful Baba was moving among the devotees. A boy, whose birthday happened to be on that day, brought toffees and offered them to Swami. Baba accepted them and threw handfuls of the toffees among the seated devotees. One piece landed in the lap of the broken-hearted father of the heart patient. He was overjoyed and accepted it as Swami's holy prasadam. He took it to his daughter and made her eat it. A little while later, the patient was moved in for operation. The doctors took last minute X-rays and, to their consternation, found no trace of anything wrong with her heart. They decided that she needed no operation and discharged her.

Is it possible for anybody to describe Swami's immeasurable love and mercy in words?

To protect the poor, provide succour to them by giving food, shelter and water and thereby make them happy is My duty. Whenever a hungry person stood in front of our house, I used to provide food to him even foregoing My share of food. For those who were in need of clothes, I used to give away My own clothes. Thus, I have been helping every needy person since. -BABA.
