

Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

My visit to Prashanti Nilayam can best be described in the opening lines of Charles Dickens' *A Tale Of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times".

The 'best of times' constituted my darshan on Sunday 23rd, watching the children's colourful display of dance and a short play, performed before our Beloved Swami. It was a very crowded event, with devotees coming from far and wide.

However, the 'worst of times' was about to begin, as while viewing the display, I was hit in my left eye by an insect or fly, which was very painful indeed. The use of an eye-wash did not ease the problem, as the following morning the area around the eye swelled to the size of a tennis ball. I was obliged to attend the Super Speciality Hospital, little realising that my first visit to this impressive edifice would be as a patient and not as a visitor.

I was taken quickly for examination and a two page report written-up, and prescription given. My days were now measured by eye drops and ointment, regularly applied by fellow devotee, Susan Lavin, a trained nurse. A temperature ensued and 'flu-like symptoms, that lasted for the duration of my visit and on up to this day at home!

Prashanti has changed quite a lot since my last visit only four years ago. New buildings, and still enormous crowds. It hasn't lost its magical aura though, and the hush when Swami begins His appearance.

I understand He will not be visiting Whitefield until next March. Not surprising, for our initial overnight

visit there, and our stay at Sai Towers, was quite a shock. The place had been hit by floods that raged through the streets churning up waves of terracotta mud. When it dried out it left in its wake 'waves' of dried mud making it extremely difficult for cars, motor-cycles and pedestrians alike, to negotiate.

However, that night it rained heavily and the scene, the following morning, just had to be imagined; ten inches of wet mud, making our taxi journey out of Whitefield most precarious.

I'm inclined to believe, Swami's 'stay away' till March, was to give the 'authorities' time to repair the damage, and re-surface the roads. His was compassion for the residents and visitors alike. *Ed.*

Lord Vinayaka - the Embodiment of Divine Love

Swami has given many discourses on the Lord Vinayaka, popularly known as Lord Ganesh.

On the 15th September 2007, Ganesh Chaturth was celebrated, and gives us the opportunity to learn more about this revered deity, Who embodies the qualities of pure love, for the removal of bad qualities, bad practices and bad thoughts in men, and inculcating good qualities, good conduct and good thoughts.

Sai Baba said, "*He always showers love only. When He was acting as a scribe to write the 'Mahabharata' to the dictation of Sage Vyasa, He displayed the same attitude of love. Since He was the embodiment of love, Vyasa selected Him particularly to undertake the duty of a scribe. Throughout the period of writing the 'Mahabharata', Vinayaka displayed*

this quality of pure love. That is why you do not find even a single mistake in the 'Mahabharata'. Since He was flawless, His word was also flawless. You do not find the bad qualities of anger, jealousy, envy or pride in Vinayaka. They are the qualities of a human being devoid of noble qualities."

The Vinayaka-principle has only one meaning, which is to everyone regardless of whether he is a believer or not. He is His own master, with no master above Him, and does not depend on anyone.

He is also called 'Ganapathi' which means He is the Lord of the Ganas - a class of Divine entities. This term also means that He is the master of the intellect and the power of discrimination in man. He possesses great intelligence and knowledge. Such knowledge issues forth from a pure and sacred mind.

Whenever a new task is undertaken, it is customary to perform Puja to Lord Vinayaka to invoke His blessing for the successful completion of the task. Even while starting a musical concert, the singers pray to Lord Vinayaka, with, "Oh! Lord Vinayaka! Please come to my help". It is only when you thus pray to Lord Vinayaka and seek His blessing, will all your tasks meet with success.

The mouse depicted at His feet, is His vehicle, as the mouse is considered as the embodiment of the sense of smell. *"The mouse is a symbol of the attachment to worldly tendencies. It is well known that if you catch a mouse, you place a strong-smelling edible inside the mouse-trap. The mouse also symbolises the darkness of night...the mouse can see well in the dark. As Vinayaka's*

vehicle, the mouse, signifies an object that leads man from darkness to light."

Swami has said, "You may not perform any rituals, but never give up worshipping Lord Vinayaka. Wisdom is His power. We should worship such a powerful Lord. No one can comprehend the true nature of Lord Vinayaka, fully."

Let the different faiths exist. Let them flourish. Let the Glory of God be sung in all languages, in a variety of tunes. Respect the difference between the faiths and recognise them as valid, as long as they do not extinguish the flame of unity.

- BABA.

Miracle at Onam Celebrations

Onam is a festival and holy time for the noble souls of Kerala. Scattered around the world, they share this time of celebration no matter where they may be. Many Sai devotees from Kerala are happy to come to Prasanthi and share the celebrations with Swami.

However, on this year's Onam, on the morning of August 27, a miracle took place on the veranda of Sai Kulwanth Hall, directly opposite the interview room.

As Swami appeared for darshan after an interview at 8.0 am, He moved slowly in His chair, amongst those seated on the veranda. At that moment an elderly devotee, aged 76, and an active office-bearer in the SSS Central Trust, Tamil Nadu, collapsed on the floor at Swami's feet.. Nobody knew what the problem was with G. K. Raman, the Managing Director of Sundaram Finance, but our sweet

Lord Sai knew. He asked for a tumbler of water to be brought and gave it to Raman's son to pour the water into his father's mouth. Doctors, who were called, tried to resuscitate him before his being removed to hospital, where he died and merged at the Lotus Feet of his Lord.

It was understood Mr. Raman slept little the previous night and appeared tired the following morning. When it was suggested that he stay and rest, he replied, "I must have Swami's darshan. Then I will go. Swami will come at 8.30, 'till then I will sit."

It was during bhajans that Swami was 'informed' that Mr. Raman had passed away as the Vedas was being chanted.

Such a passing in Prasanthi Nilayam, is rare, but this time it was 'Heaven sent' for a blessed soul.

Once, during a visit to Brindavan (White Field) along with Dr. Sandweiss Elsie Cowan excitedly knocked at his room very early one morning, saying, "I am feeling very close to Walter this morning." When walter had cast off his mortal coil at Tustin, California, Baba had telegraphed to Elsie, "Walter arrived here in good shape." Elsie told Sandweiss, "I feel that Swami and Walter have paid me a special visit. I have been wide awake since six o'clock and full of energy."

When both of them reached Prashanti Nilayam that evening, Baba called them in along with a few others and, in the midst of the conversation, He suddenly said to Elsie, "*Walter and I paid you a visit this morning.*"

"Yes, Yes!" said Elsie, "At six o'clock. I felt so filled."

"No, five minutes to six!" He corrected her.

(Sathya Sai Speaks, Pt. IV, pg. 86-87.)

Recent Miracle in Karnataka

Sai devotee, Ms. Kamala, having worked late into the evening, decided to returned home by a short-cut, that took he through a small ally that she never walked before. She felt safe with the knowledge of having Swami's Hiranyagrabha Lingam photo with her. Little did she realise that the ally had a dead end.

Walking quickly, she saw two men following her -she started running and was chased, until she ended up facing a blank wall.

Clutching her purse with the photo inside, the purse slipped from her hands, and the photo of Swami, with the Lingam, fell out on to the ground. The two men took one look at her and then to the photo and ran. However, they were cornered by a few people and held 'till the police arrived.

Ms. Kamala was asked to go to the police station to make a statement. On arrival, she was asked to "show the photo of the man in the orange robe" that she carried in her purse. The police officer asked who He was and Ms. Kamala replied, "He is my God and everything," and that He lived so far away. She was informed that the two people who attacked her told them that they saw, "the same man with an orange robe standing next to her."

This is yet another example of Swami's Divine Grace, that protects everyone at all times.

The Lord has come in human form to move among men, so that He can be listened to, contacted, loved, revered and obeyed. He has to speak the language of men and behave like human beings do. Otherwise He will be either neglected and negated or feared and avoided.

-BABA.

How Baba Materialises And Brings Forth Lingas From His Mouth.

During the festival of Maha Shivaratri, the festival dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva, Baba usually performs the sacred miracle of Lingodbhavam, the emergence of the Linga (an ellipsoid object symbolising divinity) from Him. Howard Murphet, who had the privilege of witnessing the event from close quarters, gives a detailed account of this awe-inspiring miracle in his book, "Sai Baba: Man of Miracles" thus:

I have been told that every year, one or more Shivalingams have materialised in Baba's body at this sacred period of Shivaratri. He ejects the Lingams through His mouth for all to observe. They are always hard, being made of crystal-clear or coloured stone, and sometimes of metals like gold or silver.

At six o'clock Sai Baba, accompanied by a small group of disciples, came onto the Shanti Vedita and soon after that the speeches began. It was about eight-thirty, powerful electric lights illuminating the group on the platform, when Sai Baba rose to His feet. First He sang a sacred song in His sweet celestial voice that touches the heart. Then He began His

discourse speaking, as He always does on such public occasions, in the Telugu tongue.

On the platform Mr. Kasturi was busy making notes of the address which would be published later in both Telegu and English. Sai Baba's eloquence had been flowing in a steady stream for some half-hour when suddenly His voice broke. He tried again but only a husky squeak came. Bhajan leaders among the devotees, knowing what was happening, immediately gave voice to a well-known bhajan and then the great crowd joined in. Baba sat down and drank from a flask of water. several times He tried to sing, but it was impossible. Now He began to show signs of real pain. He twisted and turned, placed His hand on His chest, buried His head in His hands, plucked at His hair. Then He sipped some more water and tried to smile reassuringly at the crowd.

Some men around me were weeping unashamedly and I myself felt a flow of tenderness towards the being suffering there before us. I could not grasp the full significance of the event that caused the agony, nor perhaps could most of the crowd watching, but to understand a thing with the mind is one matter and to feel its meaning in the bones and blood is another. Inwardly I felt I was sitting at the very heart of something profoundly significant to mankind.

So, instead of blurring my eyes with the tears of sympathy, I kept them fixed on Baba's mouth; my whole attention was glued to that point so that I would not miss the exit of the Lingam.

After about twenty minutes, I was rewarded. I saw a flash of green light

shoot from His mouth and with it an object, which He caught in His hands cupped below. Immediately, He held the object high between His thumb and forefinger so that all could see it.

A breath of profound joy passed through the crowd. It was a beautiful green Lingam, and certainly much bigger than any ordinary man could bring up through his throat. Sai Baba placed it on the top of a large torch so that the light shone through its glowing emerald-like translucency. Then leaving it there, He retired from the scene.

Mr. Kasturi, who had been present on the platform of the Shanti Vedika when it was produced, described it thus later, in print: "An emerald Lingam, three inches high and fixed on a pedestal five inches broad that had formed itself in Him (Baba), emerged from His mouth to the unspeakable joy and relief of the huge gathering."

The time will soon come when this hugh building, or even vaster ones, will be too small for the gathering of those who are called to this place. The sky itself will have to be the roof of the auditorium of the future. I will have to forego the car and even the aeroplane, when I move from place to place, for the crowds pressing around will be too hugh; I will have to move across the sky; yes, that too will happen, believe Me. -BABA.

A STORY WITH A LESSON

Perhaps you may have heard this story of a snake, as told by Swami.

A snake was causing fear to the people around and used to bite the passers-by. One day a sanyaasi

(monk), happened to pass along the path where the snake used to hide, and as usual the snake started hissing and advancing menacingly towards the sanyaasi. But the monk was unperturbed and advised the snake to restrain its anger and he asked it to avoid causing to the people around. Somehow, the snake absorbed the good sermon and from that day onward, it became very docile. Seeing its present temperament, the street urchins and others started pelting stones at the snake when it came out to search of food, but fearing the intruders, it remained inside its hold and became weak from hunger.

One day, the same sanyaasi was passing along the way and accosted the creature, but found that it was too weak even to move. The sanyaasi was saddened to see the snake's weakened state and asked why it had come to such a sad state.

"As per your advice I stopped harming others but people around did not allow me to come out even for my food. They beat me with stones and sticks. Hence, I am suffering from both hunger and bruises. The monk chided the snake, saying, "I told you not to harm or bite anybody, but I never told you not to hiss or frighten those who try to harm you."

A great lesson can be learnt from this beautiful story. We may be compassionate with others, but at the same time we should not allow others to cheat us.

Each gift prepares us afrest to receive yet another, for nothing is given without significance - it is to facititate us to go forward in our search for truth...

Is it possible for you to become good if you move in the company of bad people? Never!

You can become good when you join good company. You should earn a good name. Man is essentially good. -BABA.

Baba and His Miracles
by P. H. Masterjee

Miracles happen during (Shirdi) Baba's life-time and they continued to happen even after His Mahasamadhi. I fact Baba never did any miracles. It was one of the part of the Cosmic Flow. Those who joined the flow, experienced them. Those, who were only spectators, saw them with awe and doubt. "What is going to happen?", is a phrase that haunts everyone. Nothing is happening. It is our limited understanding because of our limited perception. It is there only when we need to join it, to be one with it. There should not be separate identification. When you do not understand your mind, you are not at its mercy; but when you understand your mind, you are not at its mercy; but when you understand, you are lost in the midst of it. It is the difference between being in bondage to thought or being liberated by it. The experience of understanding is wisdom; but trying to capture that understanding, to convey it in words, is knowledge. Spiritualism is to be in tune with the supreme spirit.

The journey to Spiritualism is very confusing at the beginning. It is even more complicated compared to the journey in the unknown space, the unknown starry-world. Baba always indicated that He was in tune with the Supreme flow and never confronted it. His approach was simple and direct.

He did not write volumes. He never preached as a priest. His life itself was a light-house that emitted light to all, who came to Him.

Mystic incidents happened around Baba. They spoke profoundly that Baba was in the perfect Cosmic flow. Meditation is complete friendship with the self, -no confrontation, no side tracking. The whole life of Baba was a perfect meditation, a continuous awareness. He watered the trees and the trees whispered to Him. He fed the hungry and the hungry were satisfied. He calmed the distressed. He got angry to set the things to tune, to merge with the Cosmic flow. His presence, His look, brought together all only to understand the supreme "self". He always insisted upon the "Witness State", and He was the Supreme Witness. He never confronted with any so-called Karmic Laws. In the present century this saint, Sai Baba, led the common man to real spiritual journey. He respected all faiths. He upheld valid wholesome customs. He proved efficiently that spiritual pursuit is not the monopoly of the few. Even today, what we term as miracles that take place in the common understanding, bring many devotees together to share the Cosmic feeling of oneness. Baba had all the qualities that are defined in the Bhagavadgeeta of a Purushottam, (*Lord of all*).

I feel Sai dharma is growing, growing widely to create a more spiritual shelter to all. It has no ritual barriers. It has no concrete walls of dogmas. It is like the 'air' which we breath every second to hold our bring. Let Sai truth prevail like sweet aroma all over.

Source: *Shri Sai Leela Magazine*,
June 1985.

Bring Me your heart and win My Heart. Not one of you is a stranger to Me. Bring your promises to Me and I shall give you My promise. But first, see that your promise is genuine and sincere, see that your heart is pure; that is enough. - BABA.

A Thursday Sai Message

Mrs. Usha Ranganathan

I had the privilege of having 'darshan' of Lord Sainath in the Sai Temple ay New York, when we went to the U.S.A. in 1984. I came across an unforgettable incident on a Thursday evening.

An elderly white-haired Gujarat-born Sai Brother was next to me. After the worship, I noticed that this brother put a small slip of paper, but no money, in the 'Arathi' plate. Just then, a gust of wind from the open window blew the paper on to the floor. Bending over to retrieve it, I could not help but see these words printed in large letters: "I will pray one hour a day."

I became curious and as such requested him to explain the message he had put on the "Arathi" plate. What he told me is quite moving.

His wife had died following a long and very expensive illness and he was forced to sell his house to pay the medical bills. Now he lived with his married daughter. "I am too old to work and I have no money," he said, "but I can pray." Lord Sainath has assured, "If you spread your palms with devotion before Me, I am with you day and night."

"So, He is taking care of Me."

His story brought to my mind Sai Baba's assurance, "I always think of him who remembers Me," and reminds me once again that when we give sincerely what we have, no gift brought before Lord Sainath is too small or insignificant.

God's Grace cannot be had by one who is wavering from moment to moment and whose heart is not pure. The Lord judges the devotee by the purity of his heart and not by the kind of worship or *japa* he performs. Even if you do not practice worship or meditation, it is enough if you have cleansed your heart. The Divine will then enter it.

-BABA.

WE ARE HIS SAPLINGS

After a presentation, before Sathya Sai Baba, it was concluded with the analogy of the student being the seed and the education system being the soil where the seed would germinate. If protected by the fence of discipline and weeded of bad qualities, nourished with the fertiliser of secular knowledge and watered with love, the plant would become a tree providing shade to one and all. But for any garden, a gardener is a must.

The students expressed that they were all very fortunate to have Swami as their gardener. They then did something that surprised everyone, something that only the students could have thought of it. They took a sapling in a pot to Swami and said, "Swami, here we are your saplings. Nourish us with your Love."

Then Swami did something that surprised them also, something that only Swami could have thought of. He

put His hand into the soil. He mixed it as if pouring His love to nourish the sapling and said, “Yes, Yes.” He then posed for a group photo with all His children!

Ramchand Chugani.

Of course, when we dilate so enthusiastically upon the manifestations of the ‘WILL’, we should not fail to pay due homage to the personification of that ‘WILL’, Baba Himself. He is the Prashanti Nilayam, (Abode of Peace) wherever He is and wherever He is worshipped or remembered or called upon with Devotion. -BABA.

Swami -Ever Alert To Our Needs

After a Bal Vikas Teachers’ conference in Bombay, a few years ago, Swami asked the organisers of the meeting to invite the group of Bhajan singers from below the hill to join them also. While hurrying up the steep climb, many of the singers were short of breath and especially an elderly lady in the group was gasping. Baba made her sit down under the fan comfortably leaning against the wall. Then He ‘disappeared’ for a moment, only to return with a glass of water which He gave to the lady to drink.

That is how Swami demonstrates ‘Seva’ for His devotees to emulate!

When it comes to ‘Seva’ in villages, Swami’s urge to uplifting the villagers is almost insatiable. He exhorts, “*When the villages grow, the state grew and the nation on the whole prospers. The progress of the nation is based upon the progress of villages.*”

He asks the students and the youth in general to visit the villages, identify their problems and serve them with utmost sincerity. Baba has a word of

advice for the ‘Sevaks’ in rural areas: “*Of all the methods of ‘Seva’, service to the long neglected rural population is best. Dedicate your skills, your energies to the betterment of the brothers and sisters dwelling in the villages.*”

Swami identifies for His Workers, the areas deserving special attention in ‘Gama Seva’ (Village Service), when He says that they have ‘no medical and educational facilities, no drinking water, no sanitary arrangements, no food to eat. The workers have to ‘realise Divinity’ by providing these essential requirements to the villagers, for ‘Gama Seva is Rama Seva’ (Service to village is service to God).

Well, My life is My message. You will be adhering to My messages if you so live that your lives become evidences of dispassion, courage, confidence, revealing eagerness to serve those who are in distress. - BABA.

Salutations To Sathya Sai (from Sathya Sai Speaks)

“Once while Baba was motoring in the delta area in Andhra Pradesh, Swami noticed two very old women tottering forward with the help of sticks held in their shaky hands. His Divine pity flowed towards them. He asked the car to stop near them and when the car pulled up, he inquired where they were going to. They said, in quaking voices, ‘To see Sai Baba.’ Baba laughed and said, ‘I am Sai Baba, don’t you know?’ They thought it was just to ridicule them and they walked on. The others in the car got down and persuaded them to retrace the few steps they had taken and have a good look.

Baba created vibhuti for them, filled their hands with fruits, and told them to return home, now that they have seen Baba and got prasadam from Him.”

“During bhajans, when I am seated, you find Me gesticulating with My hands or fingers. Sometimes it appears as if I am writing in the air. People are curious to know why. At such times, I am communicating with people you cannot see. I am engaged in tasks that you cannot understand. I write replies to questions asked by someone far away, and help thousands of people in every part of the world.”

“Baba wrote a letter to a devotee who, due to desperate financial straits, had desired to flee the country and proceed to Malaysia, but later, planned to commit suicide when his ticket and travel documents were stolen at Madras:

‘Pattabhi, Dear Devotee. Swami is writing to you. See, He is blessing you. Dear child, but what madness is this? What a letter you have written and left at home! It is foolish to be hasty. Think over your affairs calmly. Slow deliberation always reveals the true and beneficial. Think of millions of people the world over who are in conditions far worse than yours. Remember always you have Me to guard you and guide you. How many of them have this fortune? Consider that. Are you the only victim of poverty and indebtedness? The step you are contemplating cannot give you rest or peace. It is not right. It is not manly to run away from the responsibility. Listen to Me! Go back to your place. Be bold and face the world with courage, for courage will set you free. It will conquer all

obstacles. Give up your foolish plan to escape.’

Baba convinced him and as a result, Mr. Pattabhi went back, recovered self confidence and made a success of himself.”

“One evening at Prashanti Nilayam, while talking about the kinship between man and other animals, and about the various theories of the origin of man, Baba said that the human animal is more related to the tree-dwelling ape than to the ground-dwelling varieties. He spoke of a tail-less, hair-less, tree-dwelling simian and, when the interested listener, who was a professor of anthropology could not quite grasp the type, He waved His hand, and (!) there was a tiny little model of the monkey He was referring to. The miniature, a gem of art and scientific accuracy, is now with him.”

“In 1951, the Raja of Venkatagiri was surprised to receive a letter from Bangalore Naga Ratnamma, a well-known female singer. The letter ran as follows: ‘My favourite deity, Sri Thygaraja, gave me ‘darshan’ in a dream and commanded me to go to Venkatagiri, in order to be blessed by God, who has come to this earth. My Lord told me that God has assumed the name of Sri Sathya Sai. I shall come to Venkatagiri as soon as I hear from you.’

It was the festival of Lord Krishna’s birthday, when she met Baba in answer to this command; Baba gave her the chance to sing for a full two hours in His presence. He also blessed her with an image of ‘Rama’, which He materialised for her; after the receipt of that image, she was in ecstatic unconsciousness for over 24 hours!”

The Mysterious Colour Film

Hollywood actress, Shirley Maclaine, during the course of a interview with CNN's Larry King, stated that her friend Richard Bock was in India and ran out of a colour film, produced only in Beverly Hills. He therefore stopped filming Swami, Who turns down most requests for filming.

Swami excused Himself from the Interview Room for a moment and came back with a stationery bag which said 'Beverly Hills Camera Shop'. Inside was a roll of colour film: the bag was stapled shut and had a receipt.

Weeks later when he returned to California, Bock went to that camera shop where the film and receipt was got, and the assistant told him that a man answering Swami's discription had come in and purchased the film but did not wait for change!

Along the lines already familiar to you, continue the worship of God of your choice; then you will find that you are coming nearer and nearer to Me; for all names are Mine. There is no need to change, for, you have seen Me and heard Me. - BABA.

Sai Krishna's Divine Leela

All the boy students had an unusual assembly with the cows from the Gokulam in Prasanthi Mandir, on the occasion of the 1982 Krishna Janmastami Celebrations.

Nobody knew that one student had his feet trampled on by a cow and was bleeding heavily. Before entering the Mandir, when the beautiful procession had stopped, the student ran to a tap

near the Ganesha Mandir and washed his feet, but he was in most severe pain.

After a few minutes, Swami came, watched the procession and went down the be near the cows. He stopped near the cow which the boy was holding, patted it, and gave the boy Vibhuti Prasadam. He also gave the boy Padanamaskar. He showered so much love on that boy, that everyone was surprised.

When Swami moved away the boy was in tears, then he noticed that the big wound on his leg, had miraculously disappeared!

Come with empty hands. Throw away all the things that you hold in the grasp of your hand; cast away the toys with which you have been playing the game of gaining and losing, gathering and scattering. Baba delights in giving. He does not relish being adored or admired because our praise does not add anything to His Glory, and criticism cannot minus it either, Therefore, He even advises us to be indifferent to praise and blame. He delights in filling empty hands with lasting sweetness; empty hearts with lasting joy; empty lives with salutary substance; the empty reeds with His melodious breath. -BABA.

Awakening the Spiritual Antenna

As Swami walked towards the interview room, He looked at someone on the rear portico and stopped. When we looked back we found a foreigner kneeling with a small bundle wrapped in white cloth in his hands, and he was dressed in a white *dhoti* and kurta and had flowing

hair and beard. I thought he was about forty years. He was looking at Swami with intense longing in his eyes. Swami walked up to him and opened the little bundle; there were some faded flowers. Swami asked him very lovingly, *“What is this?”*

“Baba, these are flowers from the shrine; the priest was very kind to give them to me when I requested.”

Tears of joy were streaming down his cheeks; he was stunned into ecstasy by that unexpected opportunity to speak to Swami.

“What do you do with these?” asked Swami.

“Baba, I will take them to my country and preserve them for worship.”

“Where do you come from?”

“Baba, I come from Greece.”

“I will call you for interview tomorrow. How many persons are there with you?”

“I am alone, Baba.” His face beamed with pure joy as he fell at the lotus feet.

Swami was all love and grace when He said, *“Very happy...very happy,”* and patted His dear devotee’s head. He continued, *“Come tomorrow morning for interview.”*

“Thank You...thank You, Baba!” said the Greek with folded palms.

As Swami walked back to the interview room, He told me with a joyous smile adorning His lovely face, *“Arrange to bring that ‘far-near’ here tomorrow morning,”* and showed him to me; by ‘far-near’, He meant that ‘foreigner’.

As Swami entered the interview room and closed the door, I walked up to the gentleman from Greece. He was still in a state of ecstatic shock; he continued to kneel with flowers in

hand and tears flowing down from his closed eyes. I was touched...and so was my good friend who had followed me. As that sage-like Greek came out of his blissful reverie...he exclaimed, “Oh, wonderful vibrations! Wonderful vibrations!” I explained to him to come and meet the volunteer in charge of seating in portico next morning so that he would be permitted to sit in the place where those called for interview would sit. I also introduced him to that volunteer.

After the “far-near” moved out of the portico, my friend, who was also a witness to what had happened there, came to me and asked, “How is it that we do not feel those vibrations?” I replied, “Our spiritual antenna have gone to sleep; we have to reawaken them!” and then showed him an interesting page from a beautiful book of paintings, which was with me. That painting showed two sparrows sitting on the branch of a tree, one had opened its mouth wide as if declaring something loudly and the other bird was telling its companion, “We may be fools, but why should we declare it to the world?” and we had a hearty laugh at ourselves. Did not someone call us ‘fortunate fools’? B.N. Narasimha Murthy, B.E., B.A.

Cultivate a nearness with Me in the heart and it will be rewarded. Then you too will acquire a fraction of that supreme love. This is a great chance. Be confident that you will all be liberated. Know that you are saved. Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life will be happy for all and full of joy, and that the golden age will recur. Let Me assure you that this Divine Body has not come in vain. It will succeed

in averting the crisis that has come upon humanity. -BABA, '68.

A Gift Of Vibhuti

“The thing that blew my mind was what happened,” Richard Bock related to an interviewer in Sep. 1979, “when Indra Devi asked Baba if she could have some more of the ‘Healing Ash’, because she had given away all of her first supply to people. He said ‘Yes’ and as I was watching he moved His hand in a circle and then held up both hands, as if to receive something. Then an urn, about four inches high, appeared in mid-air and popped into His Hands. I saw this and said, ‘That’s not sleight of hand, that’s not up His sleeve, that’s something else.’ He took off the top and spilled all the ash into a piece of paper. Then He poured again, and another urnful of ash poured out, so that in total, He had poured out double the amount of ash that the urn could possibly hold. Next, He put half of it back in the urn and distributed to the people nearby. What was left He put in a little handkerchief bag and gave it to Indra Devi. He touched it and said, ‘Now this will be inexhaustible supply and you won’t run out of it,’ Well, she had it for ten years now and it is still flowing. And she has given it to thousands of people. After that experience with Baba, whether or not God exists is no longer a question in my mind.”

Multiple Forms of Divinity

Dr. S.H. Sandweiss, M.D., related the following experience, arising from a conversation with a driver.

“How were you attached to Sai Baba?”

The driver replied that it really was something quite unusual. “My wife was a devotee of Sai Baba and not me. I believe in God in the form of Rama, Krishna and in the ancient texts of Hinduism. But not that God would come again in human form in this modern age. Then one evening while I was in bed, I looked towards the wall, and there stood Sai Baba. I shook my head, yet no, He was in the flesh!...I looked upward and there He was again in front of my eyes.

“I first thought that He had made a mistake and was actually visiting my wife. Then I turned away again to look at another wall...and there He stood again! I looked upwards and there He was on the ceiling.

“The next day I had a strong feeling that He would come again. I was worried and did not want to see Him alone. I waited that evening ‘till my wife was ready to go to bed, and I followed her. I hadn’t told her of the incident, nor of my relief that she was with me now. Just before entering our bedroom, she quickly turned into our devotional room while I continued into the bedroom...and here He was again!

“As I looked at Sai Baba, I was absolutely amazed to see Him turn into the form of Lord Rama, then into the form of Krishna and finally into Ganesha, the elephant-headed God Who removes obstacles. He then turned into two other forms of Divinity. I was overwhelmed by the experience...I immediately knew that He was Divinity. When I went to sleep He came into my dream, and has come many times in dreams, showering love and giving me personal instructions on every aspect

of my life. He is my constant companion. He is God incarnate.”

When obstacles come, meet them with courage. They harden you and make you tough. Suffering and misery are inevitable acts of the Divine. God does not want these calamities, but man invites them by way of retribution for his evil deeds. This is the corrective punishment by nature, which induces man to give up the wrong path. All this is part of the grand design in which the negatives serve to glorify the positives. Thus, death glorifies immortality; ignorance glorifies wisdom; misery glorifies bliss; night glorifies dawn. -BABA.

Baba 're-charged' the Badrinath Shrine

It was in June 1958 when Swami suggested a visit to Badrinath temple, and four others to “charge the exhausted spiritual batteries of the temples”.

Swami selected the devotees that would accompany Him to Badri and reminded them of the rare privilege that they had won.

“You have the good fortune of proceeding with the Manifested Form to the Unmanifested Form whereas usually people pray to the Unmanifested Form, immanent in the idol, to manifest itself before their eyes, so that they might win the fruit of their Sadhana,” He declared.

In a trice, Swami created a Golden Lotus, a thousand petalled one, and everybody wondered why the Lotus appeared; but, before our wonder could find expression in a gasp, Kasturi stated later, Swami created a Lingam in the palm of His hand,

evidently the same that Sankaracharya originally had planted in the stone cavity over which the Narayana Idol was placed inside the Badri Shrine. He placed it in the centre of the Lotus and both the Lotus and Idol placed on a silver plate.

“Now we shall consecrate this Lingam again,” Swami said as He directed bhajans to be done in praise of Narayana.

Kasturi later wrote, “The process of recharging, which over two hundred witnessed, was most exhilarating. He showed the Lingam to everyone, pointing out to all the translucence of the material and the form of the Eye, that was mysteriously incorporated inside it! He called it the Nethralingam from Kailash. He even drew the attention of the attending devotee, to the Eye that could be clearly seen inside it, the black shining retina on the white background and the tapering end with the lids both upper and lower. When Swami turned the Lingam to the right or left, the Eye seemed to roll in the same direction.

“Has everyone seen it?” He asked. *“IF you haven't, come here. For it has to go back to where Sankaracharya placed it,”* He announced.

While the bhajans echoed through the temple, Swami rose with the silver pot in His hand, a pot that had come into His palm when He willed it. He said the pot contained holy water from the Gangotri, the spring in which the Ganga is born. He released His finger from under the pot and, lo! a hole was formed there to allow stream to fall on the Lingam as ‘Abhishekha’ (ceremonial bath of the idol).

Next Swami materialised for Puja 108 Bilva Leaves (considered sacred for worship of Lord Shiva) made of gold; they fell in a “scintillating shower from His Divine Hand on to the silver plate beneath! Again, the Hand waved and this time a shower of ‘Thumme’ flowers, with the dew still upon them, tiny bits of fragrant fluff, plucked with care from a hundred little tropical plants!

Swami declared, “*Now the Lingam will return,*” and the Netralingam was sent back into the secret niche, where it was installed by Sankaracharya 1,200 years ago. Then it suddenly disappeared!

It had been charged with immense potency and the Temple consecrated anew by the Manifested form Himself.

A Divine Healing

A five year old girl had a hole in the heart, and one day Swami was giving darshan to the devotees in Prashanti Nilayam. As He walked amidst them, I saw a small girl, scarcely five years old, trying to give a letter to Swami. I saw Swami taking it, crumpling it and throwing it down as if it was waste paper. This strange act of His made me wonder maybe Swami saw the letter as waste paper, or did this mean that their prayers were answered?

The doctors in Madras and Hyderabad confirmed the presence of a hole in her heart. When they came to Super Speciality Hospital at Puttaparthi, the same result awaited them. The doctors confirmed a hole in the heart and fixed a date for the operation.

This was the scene people witnessed in the darshan line; the mother saw Swami crumple the letter and took it

as a rejection. Mother’s heart bled for her child, as no hope.

On the day of the operation, the child was wheeled into the operation theatre, for final tests. The doctors could not believe what they found. They checked and checked again, and found no trace of a hold in the heart. The child was perfectly healthy!

A JEWEL REWARD

A devotee had come from Madras bringing with her a jewel in the shape of OM, which she had got made, and held it up before Swami for being blessed by His Divine touch. Baba looked at it and laughing, joked about the OM being more like a curved monkey’s tail! Evidently He did not like the artist’s handiwork. He asked the devotee whether He could correct the OM or whether she preferred a new jewel, with His own portrait incorporated on it. She chose the new jewel, naturally.

Keeping the OM jewel in His closed fist, He blew on it and when He opened his palm, we found to our astonishment that the OM had disappeared and in its place there had come into being an exquisitely designed gold locket, with a large portrait of Baba in natural colours encircled by diamonds and with a pendant of lovely pearls.

“*This is a reward for twenty-three years of un-remitting prayer,*” Baba said, while placing the jewel in her hand.

(Sathya Sai Speaks, Part 2)

“I Will Be With You!”

Dr. V.K. Gokak, an ardent devotee of Baba, was once asked to go to the USA and some other countries in

response to an invitation from the organisational units there, to speak to the devotees.

When he was about to leave, he came to prostrate before Swami and seek His blessings. Baba promptly blessed with the words: *“I will be with you”*.

Dr. Gokak proceeded happily. However, throughout the journeys he was amazed to see that the adjacent seat to his was invariably vacant. At first he thought it was pure chance but when it occurred regularly he began to ponder and recall Swami’s words, *“I will be with you.”* Sai’s words never wasteful, they are ever meaningful and always true.

On the same tour he was about to address a large gathering in one of the large cities of the USA. He he was an experienced orator, but on this occasion, as the audience waited, nothing came out for a minute or two. Dr. Gokak could not believe such a situation he was in for the first time in his life. Suddenly He remembered Swami and mentally prayed to Him. To his great surprise he saw Swami sitting in the front row, smiling! Then there was a torrential flow of words from the Professor, providing a treat to the audience. But then, didn’t Swami say, *“I will be with you.”*

On the same lecture tour, speaking at another Centre to a vast gathering of seekers and sceptics, he narrated how Swami had taken the paralytic strokes and heart attacks that would have been fatal for His devotees, upon Himself and was miserably afflicted. He described how the students sitting below the parapet wall slowly dragged, inch by inch, Baba’s feet to the edge of the balcony not allowing the devotees to see the pathetic sight

of His body’s affliction in such a graphic manner, that it not only compelled the audience to shed tears but also soothed an invalid old lady who got to her feet instantly. Such is the Glory of the Omnipresent Lord Who has come to wipe the tears of millions.

“Never Attribute Names and Forms to the Divine Lord”

“If you attribute various names and forms to God, you will not be able to realise the Truth.” Swami stated this His Vinayaka Chathruthi discourse in 1987. *“Names and forms are subject to change. Who was Rama? He was the son of Dasartha. Who was Krishna? He was the son of Yashoda. You will then remember only their physical relationships. When you worship God without attributing any particular name and form, then any physical relationship does not arise. There will be no differences whatsoever.”*

“You might ask as to Who is the mother of God? He is the mother of all. Everywhere we find differences because we attribute various names and forms and physical relationships to God. You should get rid of such relationships. The entire world is permeated by God. God is the Indweller of all beings. When you contemplate on these twin principles, only then can one visualise unity in humanity. There will be intimate relationship between man and man. When you think of Divinity, you will not have any differences or difficulties.”

“Difficulties come and go like passing clouds. You don’t need to worry about them. Keep your vision fixed on the sun. Sometimes, clouds

cover the sun. Then you don't need to be worried about it. Have patience. When the clouds move away, the sun will be visible again. In the same manner, the clouds of worldly delusions come in the way of seeing the Divine Lord. In such situations never ever let your mind waver. Have patience. The 'clouds' will recede and the 'sun' will reappear."

*Swami's Vinayaka Chathruthi
Discourse, in 1987.*

Swami On Miracles:

"It is wrong to call them miracles or chamatkara. Or to say that chamatkara are done to earn namaskars! It is only evidence, not exhibition. It is just like a play, sport - my natural behaviour. It is a sign which helps to turn into faith, devotion, inquiry and realisation of their own Atma. As the intention or will arises in the mind, the thing is made. It is ready when I want it. The moment it is willed the thing comes to hand or happens where I will it to happen."

Letter From The Chairman

Sai Ram.

The Youth Persevere. The International Youth Coordinator has informed me that the young adults are continuing the 'Sadhana Programme' with energy and enthusiasm. Likewise, they are conducting study circles on the Divine Discourses so graciously given by our Beloved Swami during the World Youth Conference.

The Youth and the Sai Organisation fulfill the Conference Resolutions.

Swami says; "Say what you will do and do what you have said." Let us

fulfill the Resolutions of the World Youth Conference:

1/ We will convene the first meeting of the Sai Youth Committee of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation in Prasanthi Nilayam during the Birthday Celebrations in November 2007 and discuss how the Youth will work closer and become an integral part of all aspects of the International Sai Organisation.

2/ The Youth will speak at meetings at all levels including Sai Centre, National and International levels regarding their experience with Swami and the Youth Conference.

3/ We are conducting study circles on Swami's Youth Conference Divine Discourses. These study circles should be done in all Sai Centres and in all meetings of Sai Youth Groups.

4/ The Youth will continue their Sadhana Program which we have adopted for all devotees. They will engage in these spiritual practices wholeheartedly remembering at all times that it is our faith, purity, and love that infuse these practices with spiritual potency.

The Sai Organisation and The Youth Are Accountable. Let us, the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, the International Sai Organisation, and the Sai Youth, who are part of these Organisations, demonstrate to our Lord, Bhagavan Baba, that we take our faith in His Almightyness, our devotion to His Divinity and our spiritual endeavours very seriously. I have requested that Vijay Desai, Chairman of the Publications and Media Committee, finish, publish, make available to all, and place on internet the book containing Swami's Divine Discourses, the talks given by

the elders and the talks given by the Sai Youth at the Conference. I have also requested that he send to you a format for reporting all events associated with the Conference in general and the resolutions in particular, collection of which will comprise a beautiful album.

This is a grand occasion for the Zonal Youth Representatives and the Zonal Chairmen, Central Coordinators and the Deputies to work together harmoniously and effectively, so that we present to Swami this album depicting our love and gratitude to Him.

Lovingly, in Sai Service,
Michael Goldstein,

Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai World
Foundation.

For Centre & Group Meetings
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