

Dear Devotees of Sathya Sai,

Sai Ram. As this year is now drawing to a close, we have time to reflect on the events of the past year.

Looking back, I feel the most blessed events were when Swami flew in a specially chartered flight to Pune and went from there to Hadshi, to visit the beautiful Mandir nestling amongst the hills. After a two-day stay, He journeyed to Mumbai where He was overwhelmed by the reception He received as He drove through the gates of the Dharmakshetra, escorted by over 100 bike riders wearing Seva Dal scarves.

It had been stated that, "Mumbaiites did not want to lose a moment in the precious three days, and wanting Him to visit every corner of the city..."

In the morning, He presided over a business convention entitled, "Ethics and the World of Finance," attended by many top industrialists and businessmen, including representatives of the major banks in the city.

His following days were busy as over 15,000 devotees gathered in Central Mumbai, for public darshan, as He was driven along the city's engineering marvel, the Bandra-Worli Sealink, over the Arabian Sea waters, before He reached the Maidan around midmorning. It is truly said that He came, He saw, He conquered, the hearts of the people of Mumbai, "leaving His footprints everywhere, in every heart." Ed.

God is just like a postman, who takes out of his bag letter after letter and hands each one at the appropriate address. Members in one house read their letter and burst out in joy. Another household suffers misery with what it receives. As for the postman, he is least concerned with the contents of the letters he delivers. His role is merely to transmit each letter to the correct addressee. God too does the same.

-BABA.

Baba Transcends Every Other God

by Adeline Teh.

This is the human form in which every Divine entity, every Divine principle, that is to say, all the names and forms ascribed by man to God are manifest... You are very fortunate that you have a chance to experience the bliss of the vision of the Sarva Devata Swarooma, now in this very life.
- BABA.

The great rishi Garga was a learned scholar of astronomy. He was also the holy priest to the Yadava dynasty, and was the author of a Sanskrit treatise called *Garga Samhitha*. At the commencement of that work, he described the qualities and nature of a "full and complete incarnation (poorna avathar)".

That incarnation of the Supreme, which encompasses within itself the Divine glory of all the gods, is the full and complete incarnation. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba satisfies this description in all respects.

Pedda Bottu, ardent devotee of both Shirdi Sai and Sathya Sai, wrote a book called 'Sri Sathya Sai Vratha Kalpam' which describes the procedure of ritualistic worship of Bhagavan. She kept the finished manuscript safely in her box. When she opened the book one day, she found that numerous modifications and alterations had been made in it, in red ink. They were all in the unmistakable hand of Bhagavan Himself. Wherever she had used the words, 'Sarva Devatha Swaroopa', while referring to Swami (meaning, the embodied form of all gods), they were altered to read, 'Sarva Devatha-atheetha Swaroopa' (meaning the form that transcends all gods).

Centuries ago, when the Telugu saint-composer Pothana was translating the epic *Sri Maha Bhagavatham*, from Sanskrit to Telegu, Lord Sri Rama Himself, it is said, contributed to his text. In the same way, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba amplified Pedda Bottu's text in His own hand. Thereby, He proclaimed to the world, in writing, that He transcends every god.

To cite His own words, *"This, My human form, embodies all dharmas (faiths) and divine powers (sakthis) of all gods. Never doubt this at all. For you install this Divine form of Mine on the throne of your heart, with unshakable faith, you will be able to have a glimpse of My pristine Universal Form. I will prove that every form, every attribute, which man cherishes and worships as pertaining only to God, belongs to the form of Sai only."*

Without the sanction of the Lord, man cannot achieve anything in the world. The Divine is the basis of everything. Man, however, is filled with conceit that he is the one who is doing everything. This pride is the cause of his ruin. It is the cause of his frustration and disappointment. Man today is basing his life and is hence forgetting God. This is a grievous mistake. You must place your faith in God, the Creator of the Universe, and then enjoy what nature provides. Faith in God is the primary requisite for man.
-BABA.

Swami Visited Mumbai

Our Beloved Sri Sathya Sai Baba, recently visited the State of Maharashtra, with a four-day stay in the village of Hadshi, located about 45 minutes drive from Lonavala.

Devotees of Swami from Pune, Mumbai and other neighbouring areas were truly blessed to receive Him. His last visit to Mumbai was in June 2000, and His stay would surely recharge the entire State of Maharashtra.

Swami stayed at the Sri Sathya Sai Pandurang Kshetra, situated in a remote village atop a hill, close to Pawana Lake, that nestles in beautiful, majestic surroundings.

No matter where you go, always know that I will be there, inside guiding your every step of the way. In the years to come you experience Me in many different

manifestations of My forms. You are my very own, dearer than dear to Me. I will protect you like the eyelids protect the eyes.
-BABA.

Swami stated during a Divine Discourse in November 4th, 2002, that there are no bad people in the world. This was a revelation to the many devotees present.

"For Me, all are good. There are no bad people. Those who develop negative feelings without enquiring into the good and bad of things in this objective world, will only spoil their own life. So far as I am concerned, I love everybody. All are equally dear to Me. Some people may have some doubts. But, they must be made to see reason with a proper explanation and counselling. As far as possible, you should not give room for doubts, for so long as the doubts persist you will not have peace of mind. Cultivate love. When your heart is filled with love, everything is love only. There will be no scope for hatred at all. Where there is no hatred, there will be no anger. When there is no anger, there will be no scope for violence."

You are My instruments from whom My Love will radiate. The moment you let your ego descend on you, My work with you will cease. When you overcome this negative attitude, you will again be My source. As each one of you performs your work silently, I will embrace you to My heart. You will feel My presence within you. You will realise that you are Me and I

am Thee. Beloved devotees, be about My work. Your breath will then carry the scent of the Blossoms of Heaven. Your form will be that of the Angels. Your Joy will then be My Joy. - BABA.

'Illusion'

God and I in space alone and nobody else in view.

"And where are the people, O Lord!" I said, "The earth below and the sky o'erhead and the dead whom once I knew?"

"That was a dream," God smiled and said, "A dream that seemed to be true.

There were no people, living or dead,

There was no earth and no sky o'erhead,

There was only Myself and you."

"Why do I feel no fear," I asked,

"Meeting You here in this way,

For I have sinned I know full well,

And there is heaven and there is hell,

And is this the judgment day?"

"Nay, those were dreams," the great God said, "Dreams that have ceased to be.

There are no such things as fear or sin,

There is no you -you have never been-

There is nothing at all but Me."

Edna Wheeler Wilcox.

My acts are the foundations on which I am building my work, the task for which I have come. All the

miraculous acts which you observe are to be interpreted so. The foundation for a dam requires a variety of materials. Without these it will not last and hold back the waters. An incarnation of the Lord has to be used in various ways by man for his uplift.
-BABA

The mind of man is as a blank sheet of white paper when he is born. As soon as thinking, feeling and acting start, then the process of tarnishing the mind also starts.
- BABA

Questions & Answers

Q: Why are some people born more beautiful, or more intelligent, than others are? Why does not God give everyone equal beauty, abilities and talents?

Swami: It is not God's partiality or fault. It is the human being who is responsible. His actions, thoughts and words are responsible for all good and bad. It is the mind that creates the differences. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. It is the way you look at things that matters. There is a vast ocean of talents and qualities. All human beings have vessels to fill. Some people, through their actions, are able to fill the vessels to the brim; some fill only half; others can fill only a quarter, or less. You even judge these days, as in Miss India, Miss World. But, that is all physical beauty, which is transient. What is

important is the beauty of the Atma (Self).

Q: How are good and bad actions carried into the next birth?

Swami: Breath carries the actions, for the breath stops when a person dies. The body is still there after death and we call it a corpse and burn it as useless. So, the body cannot carry anything with it, just as a flower carries its fragrance. It is a breeze that wafts the scent of the flower and makes its fragrance reach you. Similarly, imagine a municipal lorry, the breeze carries the bad odour to you again! In the same manner, good and bad actions are carried by the breath and surround you in the next birth like an invisible garland. The pattern of your life is then governed by what the garland has, good and bad scent.

That is why man must understand that everything he does has a reaction, a reverberation and a reflection. It is he who writes his own destiny by his actions. It is essential for man to live a good life with good thoughts and good actions. Only through such a life can he realise the divinity in him. The concept "I am Brahma = God" is also incorrect, since it indicates duality. "I and God" become separate. The statement ought to be "I am I".

Q: When we have troubles and are in difficulties and we pray to God, why does He not take them away?

Swami: Troubles and difficulties are part and parcel of human life. They are the results of your karmas. There is no point in praying to God to wipe away all such troubles and

difficulties. The right type of prayer would be to ask God for courage and strength to bear all the difficulties, problems and tragedy with equanimity.

Q: Does a gift (Swami's) act as a protective talisman?

Swami: Yes! They are also like My visiting cards and send Me instant flashes when the person is in danger or in need of My help. Sometimes, there gifts are made of specific reason: for the sake of a devotee's health or I may give someone a gem stone so that the rays from it may constantly influence him or her to follow the right path. I want to tell you that whatever Swami does has a purpose. He never does anything without reason.

Q: Is it necessary to perform pujas (ritual worship) and ceremonies?

Swami: Everything depends on the individual concerned. Whatever he and she does has to be done with faith and sincere devotion. God cannot be fooled with mere ritual.

Q: What about ceremonies and rites for the dead? Is it wrong not to perform them?

Swami: This again depends on one's mental attitude. After a person leaves the body, the soul takes birth and takes on a new body somewhere else. You must know this. Up to now you must have had so many lives, you must have been a mother and a daughter so very many times.

What is required really is gratitude to one's parents, by remembering them on the day of their death. Though they may shed these bodies

in which they are your parents, you still owe them the debts of having given birth to you and of having given you their blood to give you your present form.

You can express this gratitude through the ceremonial shraddha rite, or by any other method, even by thinking of them with sincere and loving gratitude on the death anniversary. It is heartfelt feelings that is important.

Q: What is the principal cause of all troubles and sorrows?

Swami: Attachment and ego are the main causes. Jealousy is another factor.

Q: How can jealousy be conquered?

Swami: By having love for everyone, by thinking of others with love and wishing them well. More than all, by realising that jealousy is physically most harmful. It does damage your internal system and, later on, you will have to suffer the karma of the bad things caused by your jealousy.

Q: Why does God create bad traits and negative tendencies in humans?

Swami: These are results of man's own actions. God is only a witness to events. Human beings are themselves responsible for the good and the bad in them. Remember that the things you do not do, can never hurt you.

Q: But Swami says that there is nothing good or bad!

Swami: Yes! This is from God's point of view. For humans, this is a relative matter, since what is good for one

may be bad for another. What is good at one time may be bad in another season. Good and bad are thus two states. Take two fruits, phalam, which is good. Once they are eaten and digested, they become excreta, malam, and that is bad.

Q: Scientists say that something cannot be created out of nothing.

Swami: Yes, but what they think of as nothing is really anything. There is no nothingness in the Universe. The scientist makes such statements because, with his limited vision, he cannot see all things or know them.

Both science and spirituality begin as inquiry, a quest. Spirituality comes full circle, like the letter O, while science reaches the half circle stage, resembling a C. Science has a lot of catching up to do, for it has only discovered a fraction of the truth. It is like a small piece of cloth you can see protruding from a fist: you can only conjecture about the whole, its looks and size, for it is hidden and you cannot see it.

Q: But, science has made many advances, flights to the moon and other planets, for instance.

Swami: Yes. Whatever science has done for humanity is to be welcomed, but it is still a growing and advancing field. Scientists used to say that you couldn't split the atom and today that is no longer true. The scientist learns as he progresses.

Today's investigations become old tomorrow and lead to new investigations, which will become old the day after tomorrow. There is

no end to this, and so the truth lies in something that contains within it both the old and the new. God alone envelops the old and the new, and so the best way to advance is Godward.

In the case of a devotee who has pure thoughts and a pure heart, and who has surrendered to Me, then Swami takes full responsibility for that life and takes care of that devotee. But where a person has a big ego, relying on ego and desire and not on Bhagawan, then Swami keeps a distance and does not interfere.
- BABA.

Bhajan Singer's Mother is Resurrected From The Dead!

Mr. V. Kumar was a renowned Bhajan singer at the Prashanthi Mandir. He had done his studies at Prashanthi Nilayam itself, and later left for the U.S.A. on an assignment.

V. Kumar's mother was suffering from chronic illness. One day, just before Bhajans, a man came running from V. Kumar's household and informed him of his mother's demise. V. Kumar said, "Sir, I am scheduled to sing a Bhajan today in a few minutes. Please keep the body and I shall come as soon as the Bhajans are over."

The Bhajans started and Swami sat in His chair, and as soon as V. Kumar started his Bhajan, Baba got up and left. Already burdened by his mother's demise Ravi could not understand Baba's gesture and

broke down. He, however, continued singing in the broken voice.

Meanwhile, Swami went to V. Kumar's house where V. Kumar's mother's feet and hands were tied and placed in the centre of the household. Swami asked for the hands and legs of the dead body to be freed. He then asked for tulasi leaves, which were given to Him. Swami held them in His hand then put them into the mouth of V. Kumar's mother and thundered, "Get up!". As soon as Swami said so, the body stirred and V. Kumar's mother opened her eyes and got up.

The whole household started weeping in joy. V. Kumar's father caught hold of Swami's feet and cried like a child. V. Kumar's mother has died five times and each time Swami came and resurrected her - in many different ways. Swami once even appeared from a photograph, gave life and went back into the photograph.

V. Kumar's mother is still alive, waiting for the final merger in Bhagawan Baba!

Once you surrender yourself fully to the Lord and offer up everything that is to be done, as well as when it is to be done and how it is to be done, at the Lord's feet, He will take care of everything. To achieve this level of surrender there can be no trace of ego; there should be no sense of yourself remaining.

- BABA.

Mobile Medical Project

Swami blessed the three keys of the new vans that had been blessed by Bhagawan previously, on Nov. 1st.

The mobile vans were displayed at Dharmakshetra and Satya Deep, the following day.

The latest Tata Winger van and the Tata 407 model van, have the latest 'state of the art' ophthalmic and pathology equipments.

Before Swami's 85th Birthday, the Trust intended to put 108 such vans in a state of readiness, all over Maharashtra, so that not a single poor soul will be deprived of the free medical aid. Such is Swami's love!

"Swami gave me Nothing that I wanted, but He gave me Everything that I needed." - Anon.

A PRAYER TO LORD BUDDHA

Once a conference of scientists took place in Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bala Krishna. Prof. Haikawa, a Japanese scientist was among them. Dr. Bala Krishna invited him to his home, and there Dr. Haikawa saw for the first time a colour photograph of Swami, and he felt immediately drawn to it. In the temple-like house, this attractive photograph stood out in all its decorations. He thought that the picture might be of an honoured ancestor of the family. During their conversation, Dr. Bala Krishna described the Divinity of Bhagavan

Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and told him that Baba was God-incarnate.

It so happened that Swami was right there in Hyderabad at the time; and the two scientists went to have His darshan. Swami kindly invited both of them into the interview room. In the proximity of Swami, Prof. Haikawa experienced an intense awareness that he was in the presence of a divine personality. Swami gently smiled at him, waved his hand, produced a human heart and showed it to him. He was bewildered. Swami asked him what it was and the good doctor replied that it was a human heart.

"Do you know to whom did it belong?" asked Swami. He answered, "How do I know?" Bhagavan told him, *"This is your own heart, at the time of your birth!"*

Dr. Haikawa was stunned. Swami explained, *"This is indeed your own heart. Do not be surprised. As soon as you were born, your heart stopped beating. You were as good as dead. Your body turned blue. Your father was a man of faith and a very devout person. He placed your body at My feet and prayed to Me, 'Oh God! I earnestly prayed to you for a child. Is this the way you respond to my prayers? Of what use is this dead body to me?' I therefore mended your heart and restored you to life."*

As a matter of fact, the age of the Japanese scientist was more than Baba's. And it was to Lord Buddha that his father had prayed seeking revival of life in his dead son's body. The secret of that incident was known to no one except his parents. Dr. Haikawa realised that Lord

Buddha, who had lived many centuries ago, had now reincarnated in the form of Sai Bhagavan. During the conversation, Swami referred in lighter vein to Dr. Haikawa as 'Avakaya', which in Telugu means 'mango pickle'.

Each and everyone should try to understand what true devotion really means. Devotion means an all-absorbing love for God. When you develop and turn all your love towards God, everything that is necessary will be added unto you. You will develop the capacity to sacrifice yourself. You will expand in love. Love is the very life breath of a human being. Without love you cannot live. Love is a very sacred quality. All the love that you have is really for the sake of your higher self. Love is not for the sake of others but only for the higher self. But all too frequently, through delusion, this sacred love for the Atma, the one self, is diverted towards the body. Everywhere in the world we find this disease of identification with the body. - BABA.

How My Heart Was Humbled and Healed by Him

by P.V. Krishna Mohan.

When people ask me, "What is your qualification?" I always respond saying, I am a Sai student. I strongly believe that this is the only true qualification that I have.

Born in Hyderabad, I had never known of Sathya Sai Baba, until

1992. As a schoolboy I saw a cover story in a magazine and read about Swami's materialisation of Vibhuti.

It was during college days when I became alienated from God, (while) my parents were very pious and used to visit temples, I developed a distorted perception that questioned the very existence of God. "When there is so much suffering, how can there be a God?" I stopped praying, even thinking about God.

So here was I, a regular college-going youngster, studying engineering from Hyderabad, scokking at any form of association with anything godly. Immediately after engineering, I decided to pursue Masters in Business Administration, and applied to various institutes.

After taking a job in a factory I saw an advert. for the Sathya Sai University, for the MBA degree. Informing my father, he later learnt that the University was highly reputed for its academics and discipline. We were thrilled, and after submitting an application I was called for an interview and test at Prasanthi Nilayam, for the forecoming Sunday and Monday.

My first glimpse of "The Abode of Peace", I fell in love with the place. Next day I wrote the written test, and one of the questions was, "Which of the teachings of Sai Baba have influenced you?" However, I was totally unaware of any of Swami's messages, but then I remembered a sticker pasted in the room where we were put up the previous night, which said, "Start early. Drive slowly. Reach safely." I wrote that down not knowing what

Swami meant by that saying. Nevertheless, that was a lesson, the first teaching from the Lord. I qualified in the written test and in the Group Discussion.

In the interview, Prof. Sampath asked me, "The students here in Prasanthi Nilayam will be interacting with Swami on a regular basis, and Swami too interacts often with the students. So how will you take this?" The answer I gave still sends shivers down my spine, I blatantly told Prof. Sampath, "No, I have come here for my MBA studies and not for Swami!" This was how my journey to Swami began.

I was delighted to learn that I was selected and asked to report immediately to Brindavan campus for the Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality. I was allotted a room on the third floor and even before I could pick up my belongings, two boys came to carry my luggage upstairs. I was taken aback, I demurred and hesitated, but they gently persuaded, "No, sir. Come." They were actually my seniors!

That evening I had my first *darshan* of Bhagavan and I strongly believe - that day was my date of rebirth.

Lo! the doors of Trayee Brindavan opened and Bhagavan came out, and that evening He distributed diaries and pens for the Summer Course. That was a beautiful moment in my life.

Thoes two years of my life in P.N. campus were truly wonderful, and deep in my heart, I always felt this was the right place for me - where I

always wanted to be. Slowly yet surely, unbeknown to myself, I began to accept Swami.

On one occasion, I was one among the boys selected to accompany Bhagavan to Kodai Kanal. I was not well but I was encouraged to go. Every moment in Kodai Kanal was a precious moment. I never dreamt that I would be blessed with such a unique opportunity. But then I was not particularly well either through the entire trip.

Being unable to sleep there, I wrote a letter to Swami saying, "Swami, I am not well and I am unable to get sleep. My palpitations are increasing. Please help me."

That morning, when Swami came out of His room, I showed the letter to Him. Swami read the letter, tore it into pieces and put it in my pocket saying, "*You needlessly think a lot.*"

It was on another occasion, when I was seated near Swami, He asked how I was. "*How is your heart?*" He asked. I replied I was fine. He asked a guest, Dr. Alreja, to check my pulse, who took his watch and held my wrist, and replied "Swami, 88-87 undi, Swami". Then Swami checked my pulse saying, "*Ha! 86-87 undi. See, I don't have a watch but still I am correct.*" Then He continued, "*See, all animals like elephants and tortoise have a very low pulse rate, and they live very long. And people who have a high pulse rate, don't live long. But you are My student. You will live long.*"

Rubbing His hand on my chest, saying, "*Okay. Nothing will happen to*

you. You are My student." And He sent me away.

Next morning He materialised a beautiful heart-shaped ring. I never got my heart checked after that incident. Till date, I am perfectly hale and healthy. What gratitude can I express to Bhagavan, that Compassionate Resident in the hearts of all beings, who has not just cured me of an ailment of my physical heart, but also touched my spiritual heart that I can think of no other refuge than Him and Him alone.

I am the Atma that dwells in all living beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all things. All that you see in the cosmos, the moving and the stationary objects is a manifestation of the Atma.
- BABA.

THE SIMLA INCIDENT

Once, Swami went to Simla along with some of his devotees. Swami Karunyananda too was in the group. That trip saw an unbelievable event. It was evening when the party arrived at their lodgings in Simla. At about 6.30 p.m. as darkness approached, a two-year old boy died in a house in the town. The parents were grief-stricken. Seeing their agony, a friend advised them, "Sri Sathya Sai Baba is now in town. Take your son's body there, place it at His feet and beg for mercy."

The distraught parents wrapped the dead body in a piece of cloth and

took it to Baba. Heart-broken with grief, the mother laid the dead child at Baba's feet and wailed, "Swami, please bring him back to life, wake him up to life!" As the poor woman was crying, the ever-merciful Bhagavan cast a compassionate look at the dead boy. The boy suddenly came to life and began crying! The tears of grief and desperation of the parents turned to tears of joy. They washed the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sai, with their copious tears. The devotees too were overjoyed and immensely moved at this miraculous happening, and hailed the glory of Bhagavan with resounding cries of Jai Sai Ram! Jai Sai Ram!

God is neither distant nor distinct from you. - BABA.

A WONDERFUL INCIDENT

Mr. Forbes, who is the head of the world famous Harlem Globetrotters baseball team, was in P.N., and Swami granted their wish of performing for the Inauguration of the Indoor Stadium and for the Birthday Celebrations.

Swami called him for an interview and after speaking with him, gave Forbes some Prasadam, and then asked him how many children he had, Forbes replied, "Four, Swami". Then Swami said, "Five!". Forbes then remembered that one baby had died in miscarriage, a long time back. While he had forgotten, Swami did not! Baba remembered!

Swami gave him a ring and then told him to give it to his wife, telling him

that his wife had lost her ring the day before, and Swami was giving her another. Nobody except his wife knew that she had lost her ring, as she had not told anyone.

Swami is all-knowing!

The Faith of a Devotee

The late Kutumba Rao was an ardent devotee of Baba, who came to Parthi in the late 1940's to see who 'this wonder kid was'. After being impressed and convinced by Swami, he stayed on and did great service at various levels in the Trust. He passed away in 1989. However, in 1950, when Shri Kutumba Rao came to Parthi for Darshan enroute to Tirupathi, his intentions were to stay for three days and then go to Tirupathi for a couple of days more. During his stay at Parthi, attending a few sessions of Chitravathi bhajans, he forgot the time. He only realised the time when his money 'coffers' became empty. With full faith he prayed to Swami for the success of his remaining part of his tour. As a response to that he heard a message that Swami would be leaving for Brindavan by late evening, which meant that he lost the opportunity to talk to Swami, the next morning. The determined Kutumba Rao prayed and stayed. A few hours passed and Swami left for Brindavan. By now Kutumba was at a complete loss and was now penniless to go home or continue his journey.

A person came and asked if he was Kutumba Rao. "Yes", replied Kutumba. The stranger said that

Swami asked him to deliver a package to him, placing it in his hands and left. Upon opening the parcel, Kutumba found a bundle of currency notes. The overjoyed devotee thanked the Omniscience Lord and pursued his journey. He never counted how much money was there in the package.

As the Lord sent it, it should be sufficient money to take care of his journey. When he started spending money to his delight he kept on getting money. He reached home and after spending some time with his family, he went inside his Pooja room to open the package to count the money, and to his surprise there was only a Rupee note left in it.

This note is still in the Pooja room of the family members of Shri Kutumba Rao. Such was the faith and such was the response of the Lord!

When a picture is printed on paper, the picture and the paper become one. Similarly, it is not possible for a true devotee to separate from God. Imprint the form of God in your heart, and with the body do service. God is in the heart. Have the head in the forest, the hands in the society. Keeping the head in the forest gives true Peace. To attain Peace, we should have faith in God.

-BABA.

To Each, a Different Treatment

A few years ago, Dr. Sitaramayy, one of the doctors in the hospital in P.N.,

was not keeping good health and was bed-ridden.

Swami went to his room to enquire about his health. He sat by his side, cut an apple and fed him with His own hands and left. Sri Kasturi was with Swami all the while, he thought, "How blessed is this doctor? Even illness has brought him so much good fortune! Swami, Himself walked into his room, enquired about him, cut a fruit with His own hands and fed him piece by piece. How much I wish I had fallen ill!"

Sometime later, Sri Kasturi too fell ill with pain in his backbone. He could hardly move. He hoped that Swami might visit him too. But Swami sent word asking him to come to His room immediately. Pain or no pain, there was no question of disregarding Swami's summons. So, Sri Kasturi made his way laboriously to Swami's presence. Swami gave him a bundle of New Year calendars and ordered him, "*Take these calendars and distribute them yourself, one for each room. Go.*"

Without a murmur, Sri Kasturi picked up the bundle, went to every room on every floor of every building in Prasanthi Nilayam, and completed the distribution according to Swami's instructions. Seeing his agony, some persons offered to do the work for him but he did not agree. They requested to be allowed, at least, to carry the heavy bundle for him but he declined. Sri Kasturi later said, "How do they know why I turned down their kindly offer?" This was Swami's treatment to the pain in the backbone of Sri Kasturi.

Every human being is a messenger of God. Man should not waste his life in merely eating, drinking and sleeping. Doing so is a blot on human nature itself. Every activity of man should reflect the divine message. Unfortunately this is not the case with man today. Some people claim that they have dedicated to the mission of God. But, in reality, it is not so. – BABA

Vibhuti Cancels Cancer

An advocate arrived at Prashanti Nilayam. He was a chronic smoker. Cancer afflicted his throat. Doctors advised surgery, along with radiation and chemotherapy. He desired to obtain Swami's permission before the commencement of the treatment. On arrival, the ever-merciful Bhagavan invited him into the interview room. Asking him to hold his palms together to form a bowl, He materialised and poured a large quantity of vibhuti into them and asked him to eat it all. It was dark in colour and tasted like bitter gourd. Swami affectionately cajoled and persuaded and helped him to finish it. After the interview, the man walked out and went into the canteen for a cup of coffee. As he ate it, his eyes fell on nearby pakodas (a savoury dish, crisply fried in oil). Unable to resist, he ate a plateful. Due to pain in his throat, he had not been able to eat properly for a long time, despite his keen desire and strong taste for food. But now, he noticed that he could eat comfortably and relish it. He was surprised. With his finger, he probed

inside his mouth at the cancer-affected spot. He felt no pain at all. He realised that the cancer had gone. He was overwhelmed. Tears flooded his eyes as he remembered Bhagavan's mercy. When on the next day Swami called him again into the interview room, he expressed his gratitude to Swami and fell at His feet. He told Swami that he was proficient in Sindhi, and begged to be permitted to translate and publish the Sindhi edition of *Sanathana Sarathi*. Swami replied, "It is only for that purpose that I have made you come to Puttaparthi." From then now, the blessed person has been translating and publishing *Sanathana Sarathi* in Sindhi.

**Whoever you are, you are Mine.
I will not give you up.
Wherever you are, you are near Me.
You cannot go beyond My reach
-BABA**

TRIBAL LEADER SURRENDERS TO HIM

Before its reconstitution, the region now called Arunachal Pradesh was formally a part of Assam. Most of its people are tribals. They were demanding a separate State for themselves, and were carrying on guerrilla warfare against the Government of Assam.

The Government made every effort to please them and win them over. It spent crores of rupees in their territory on development programmes, hospitals, roads, schools and other facilities. Still the tribals were not satisfied and

continued with their separatist demand. In this situation, one of the tribal leaders fell ill with an undiagnosed disease. The Government gave him plenty of medical assistance. It got medical tests carried out in reputable hospitals in Calcutta and New Delhi. Nothing helped. He was not able to eat anything at all. Whatever he used to eat, he would vomit it. His friends and relatives lost all hope. Sri Raja, Home Secretary in the state, had an idea that if the patient could be taken to the Divine presence of Bhagavan Sai Baba, it might help. Permission was sought from the Government of India. Ultimately, a group of 29 persons including the ailing tribal leader set out, in the name of all-India tour (Bharat Darshan), and reached Puttaparthi. As they seated themselves in the audience hall, Swami went to them directly and asked in Hindi, "*Where are you from?*" The secretary replied that they were from Assam. Swami said in English, "*Go inside.*"

So they all trooped into the interview room, walking no doubt, but almost like running in their delight and eagerness. After the public audience was over, Swami came into the interview room. He materialised vibhuthi, gave it to the tribal leader and directed him to eat it. He sat on His throne and enquired "*What brings you here?*" The secretary explained, "We have come for your darshan. This tribal leader is having some stomach trouble. No treatment has helped. Medical tests conducted in Calcutta and Delhi failed to identify the disease. He was unable to contain any solid food. As a result, tribal people of that region

have lost faith in our medical system and procedures and hospitals. This man is a prominent tribal leader. And only You can heal him."

Swami assured him, "*Don't worry, he will be fully cured.*" Then Swami began to talk to the tribal visitors in their own language. He talked of their village and their environment. He mentioned how villagers had thought of building a temple for the Sun God and the Moon God. As He talked, Swami materialised an intricately engaged circular copper plate, nine inches in diameter. On one side the Sun and on the other the Moon was carved. He drew their attention to the delicate craftsmanship of the plate and declared that the temple proposed to be built would become known as *Dono Polo* (meaning the Sun and the Moon in their tribal language). He directed the astonished tribals to install this copper plate (yanthra) in the temple and to worship it regularly. He said that worship of God is always beneficial. He blessed them with vibhuthi prasadam and the privilege of touching His Lotus Feet. The tribals took leave of Him with hearts overflowing with joy and happiness.

They then made their way to the canteen for refreshments. Their leader saw some white circular pieces of food and asked that they be served to him. The pieces are known as idli, a rice and blackgram preparation. His companions were afraid that this solid food might cause vomiting or terrible stomach-ache as usual. However, since Swami had granted him divine assurance, they hesitatingly allowed him to

consume idli. A plate of idli and the accompanying sauce was finished by him in seconds. Relishing it, he consumed another plateful. While his companions watched in unbelieving astonishment, this man, who had not tasted any solid food for several years, ate idli after idli, a good 32 of them! The group felt it was miraculous and enjoyed every bit of it. The leader told his friends, "This is no ordinary man. With a little vibhuthi, he has completely cured me within minutes, of a disease I had suffered for years and years. There is no doubt He is God-incarnate. He talked of the temple, *Dono Polo*, we are planning to build for our favourite deities and created the two images. Let us surrender to Him and strictly follow every word of what He said."

Bhagavan Sai's Divine vibhuthi healed the tribal leader in moments. When we hear about this magnificent episode and Bhagavan's love and benevolence so readily and profusely showered, we are moved to bow our heads in obeisance to Him.

I need nothing, however great or small, in this Universe. At no moment has desire affected Me for anything or activity. I am the person come to give not to receive. And what you can offer Me is just this: pure, unadulterated love. When you offer Me that, I derive Ananda.
– BABA

A Timely Sai Message

It was during the occasion of the Fifth World Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, on 20th October 1990, that Swami made the following inspiring declaration:

"Seva brings out all that is great in man. It broadens the heart and widens one's vision. It fills one with joy. It promotes unity. It proclaims the truth of the Spirit. It drives out all the evil qualities in a man. It must be regarded as a great spiritual discipline. You are born to serve, not to dominate. Everyone in the world is a servant and not a master. All relationships - between husband and wife, mother and child, the employer and employee are based on mutual service. The world is progressing because of such acts of service. If not for the principle of Seva, the world would come to a halt." Ref: "Sathya Sai Speaks", - Vol. XXIII, Chap. 31.

I will never force you to take up a particular name or form of the Lord as your Ishtam (wish). The Lord has a million names and a million forms, and He wants that faith and attachment should be evoked in you by any one of them, as you recite the names or contemplate the forms. That is why they have a string of 1008 names for use to worship; the devotee might be drawn closer to the Lord while any one name is being repeated, however distracted or inattentive he might be during the rest of list. He bows to your will, He carries your burden, provided you trust Him with it. – BABA

**Address by
Prof. Samuel Sandweiss, M.D.**

At the 28th Annual Convocation, the chief guest, Dr. S. Sandweiss, addressed the assembled members of the governing body and faculty of the Sri Sathya Sai University. "Today I am addressing graduating students of this very special university", he said, "and I would also like to include all devotees of God, because in our hearts we are all Swami's students."

In his address, he said that Swami presented his wife, Sharon, with an impressive ring that had a number of different angles. From one angle it showed 'Om', from another 'Allah', then another, 'I am I', and yet another, 'El' the name of God in the Jewish religion. Swami was teaching different names but one God, and that by serving we see our unity in diversity.

Dr Sandweiss went on to say that he and his wife Sharon, went to St. Petersburg to speak at the Russian National Sai Conference about 18 months ago, and he mentioned the 'ring' story and showed pictures on a large screen. Muslims in the audience were deeply moved and cheered. "They were happy to see that Swami had recognised them by materialising their holiest word. We were so happy to play a part in bringing happiness." He went on to say that Prof. Jafar Malaev from Dagestan had the widest smile of all at the conference... He was a Muslim and Chancellor of a large university with enrollment of 30,000 students. He was impressed by Swami's love and educational programmes. "How can I bring your teaching to my

university?" He asked Swami, and Swami replied, "*You are the educator - find out for yourself*". There is a major lesson for us here! We must integrate the teachings through the power of practice, it is up to us. Jafar said, "We must rise above anger, violence, and revenge, if we are to survive. Problems such as in the Middle East, between Palestinians and Israelis must be solved by love." then taking my hand in his, and looking deeply into my eyes, he said, "We must stop fighting and learn to love each other - Sandweiss, I love you!" I was sincerely touched and responded, "And Jafar, I love you." "Swami's ring had brought us together. Jafar is Muslim and I am Jewish. I pray that this love granted by Sai, enters into the age-old conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, Muslim and Jew, into all frictions and factions, heals our hearts and brings peace. Is it possible? Only through Swami's love - and we are His messengers. We gain confidence in the possibility of pure love bringing world peace, by looking at how this love has already manifested!"

Dr Sandweiss went on to speak of Dr Jack Hislop, who was the first President of the Sathya Sai Council of the United States, but gave talks about Swami all over the world. "When he was approaching death and becoming frail, he was invited to speak in Japan. Because he was so weak, he wrote to Swami asking if he should go. Swami sent one word back, "*Go!*" It appeared that Swami was asking for total surrender - to fully release everything into Him and accept that He is the doer!

"Although Hislop could hardly stand, he obeyed our Master - and remarkably spoke 35 times in ten days!"

"Hislop returned home feeble and faint. One morning I called - he said that he had fallen in the night and was too weak to rise - so he lay for hours on the floor. I was alarmed and immediately took him to the hospital. We found out that he had cancer and would soon die. Dr Hislop had no fear of death - Swami was his staff and support. When asked what he had learned from his long spiritual life and what was giving him strength now, without hesitation he said, 'I have practiced many paths - meditation, service, detachment, but of all paths, the most lasting and what I'm holding on to now is devotion! All other paths - meditation, service - have dropped away. What remains is devotion. I see Swami - and I know that He is in me - and I in him!'"

"My wife once asked Swami if He would save the world, He said, '*Half save, half seva.*' "Seva - pure love in action".

The message of the Avataar must be born, must become alive, must grow in you, your heart - that is the birthday you have to celebrate. Celebrate the Avathaar's birthday in your own village. You need not travel long distances to where I physically am. Plant the seeds of love in your hearts, let them grow into trees of service and shower the sweet fruits of Anandha. Share the Anandha with all. That is the

proper way to celebrate the Birthday. – BABA

"Selfless service is a more exalted means of attaining spiritual progress than other means such as meditation, bhajan and yoga. This is so because when we undertake meditation, Japa (repetition of the name of God) or yoga, we do so exclusively for our own benefit and not for the good of others. These are aimed at fulfilling one's individual desires and securing happiness for oneself. However, what we should aspire for is the attainment of the good of others without any desire for personal gain."

"One should not feel proud about the position one occupies. The strength derived from wealth or position is unreliable. Morality and purity of mind alone can confer real strength. To develop these qualities, one has to take up selfless service. The spirit of service eradicates egoism and selfishness. In the process, not only is your life sublimated, but the nation also gains through the example of a dedicated servant of the public." – BABA

Seva is the very essence of Bhakthi (devotion), the very breath of a Bhakthi, his very nature. It springs from conviction and experience that all beings are God's children, that all bodies are altars where God is installed, that He resides in all places. – BABA
