



Sanathana Sarathi



JULY 2008

Sanathana Sarathi

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SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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*"Lead your life, chanting within you
constantly the Name of God who
is the embodiment of peace and love.
When all individuals develop peace
in them, then the entire country will
become good and peaceful. Those
who aspire for the welfare of the
country should live always in love."*



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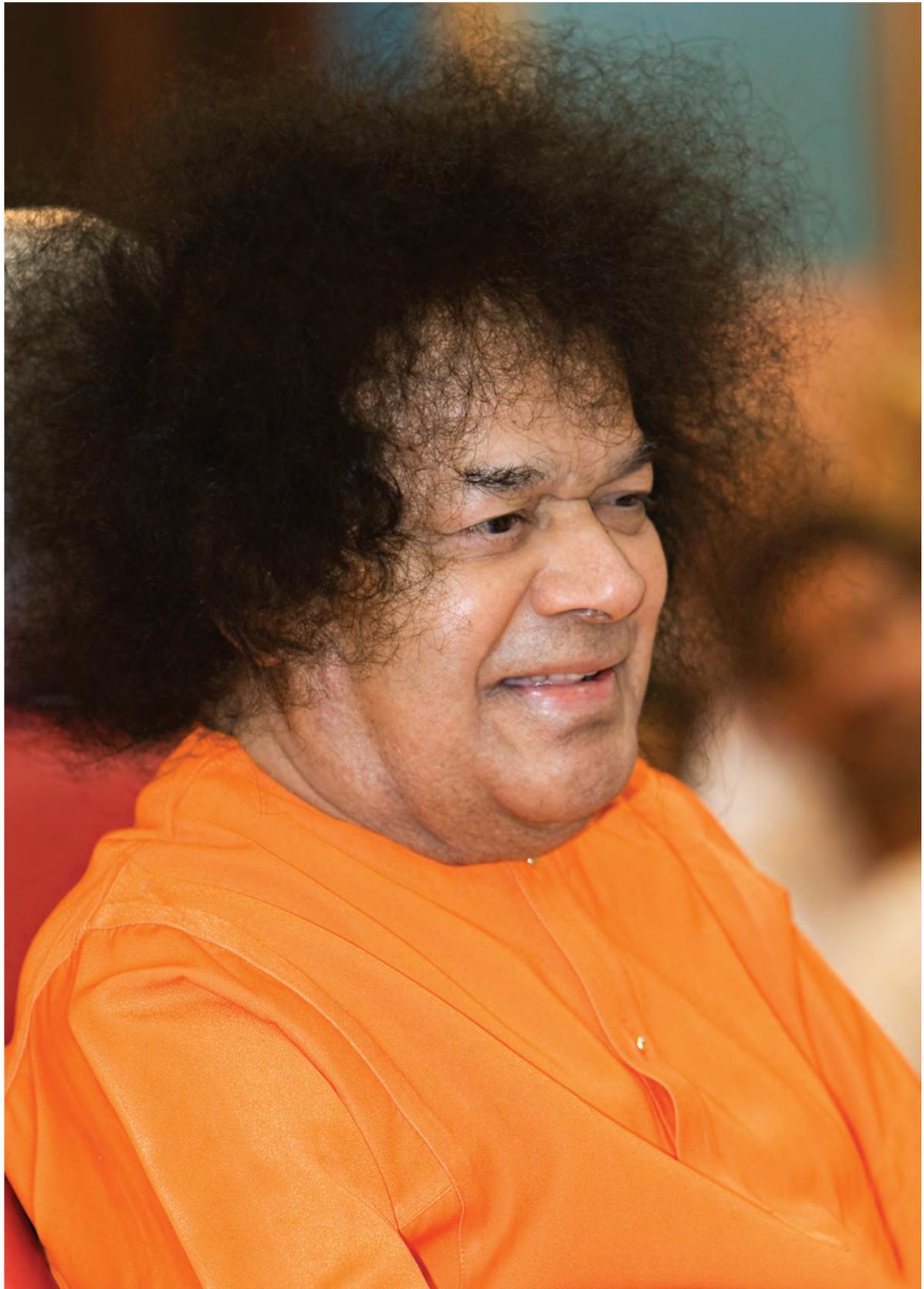
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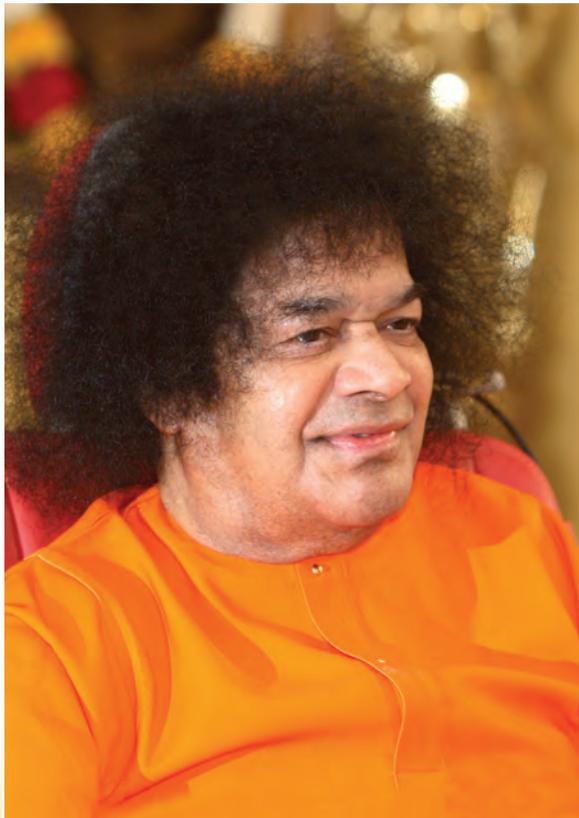
NAMASMARANA IS THE HIGHEST SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL, THE Bharatiyas have been performing various spiritual practices like Yajnas, Japa, Tapa, Dhyana, etc., to attain God. It has been their faith that one could attain God by undertaking such spiritual practices. But nobody knows about the Sankalpa (Will) of God who is omnipresent.

God is the Indweller of the Heart of Man

Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe). God has innumerable mouths, ears, eyes, hands and feet. Wherever you see, God



There is love in everyone of you. But you do not make proper use of it. Rather, you put your love to misuse. How far can a person go if he walks on his head instead of his feet? God has given you feet for walking. Similarly, God has given you tongue to speak truth. Speaking untruth is like walking on your head. How long can you go like this? God has given you head to make proper use of it and think: "What is good and what is bad? What is truth and what is untruth?" While saying or doing anything, first think whether what you are saying is true or untrue, and what you are doing is right or wrong. After due consideration, take only to the path of truth.

is present there. Such a Cosmic Being cannot be attained merely by undertaking spiritual practices by man. Nobody can say that God is this or that. Then, what is the nature of God? He is most subtle and universally present. To whomsoever you salute or ridicule, it reaches God. Ordinary mortals cannot understand such a subtle divine principle because of their own weakness. They seek satisfaction in earthly and worldly pleasures and have no yearning for ethical and spiritual attainments. All of them, from the most ordinary to the highly evolved individuals, undertake all types of rituals like Yajnas and Yagas merely for their satisfaction. But God can be attained only by ethical and spiritual endeavours. Desire to amass more and more money is increasing in all fields, more particularly in politics today. But this is sheer ignorance. So long as man is in the grip of this ignorance, he cannot understand the principle of divinity. As long as your heart is filled with the feelings of pride of 'I' and attachment of 'mine', you cannot realise God. Therefore, what is the first and foremost requirement to know God?

Many people offer worship and perform Yajnas to have the direct vision of God. But this is not possible for anyone by such means. Then, how can it be possible? All the objects in the entire creation are bound to perish one day or the other. The mountains can sink in water and rivers can dry up. Human body is also perishable. Nothing in this creation is permanent. Only God is eternal, immortal, infinite and imperceptible. How is it possible for anyone to understand such a Cosmic Being? Some people imagine that they had the vision of God in meditation or in Yajna fire. But this is merely their illusion; such a vision is not everlasting. But where does God dwell? He dwells in the heart



It is by the power of His Name that Rama crossed the ocean and reached Lanka. Hence, we should cross the ocean of our difficulties and troubles by using the power of the Divine Name. Only Name is enough to root out all our anxieties, troubles, sorrows, miseries, worries and maladies. Lust, anger, jealousy, envy, hypocrisy are the qualities of the demons who lived in Lanka. Do not give room to these demonic qualities in your heart. If you allow the demon of anger to abide in you, this itself is enough to turn everything bad in your life. No work of an angry man becomes fruitful. Anger distances even your relatives and friends from you. Therefore, do not allow anger to come near you.



of all in the form of Atmic principle. He has to be attained only by the principle of the Self. It is not proper to attribute various names and forms to Him.

Divine Name has Infinite Power

When Rama reached the seashore to go to Lanka and bring Sita back after killing Ravana, many people felt that it was an impossible task because they thought Ravana was very wicked, fierce and powerful. Moreover, there was a long sea to be crossed which was not possible to do. Rama suggested that a bridge over the sea might be built. Hanuman, Jambavan and other monkeys asserted that the bridge could be constructed in no time. Agreeing to their suggestion, Rama commanded them to start constructing the bridge. The monkeys then brought big



boulders and parts of mountains from various places and started putting them into the sea, but they all sank in sea water. How could the bridge be made in this way? It could not be made unless the rocks and boulders settled at one place. So, what could be done to build the bridge? Perceiving the difficult situation, Lakshmana said to Rama, "Dear elder brother! Everything in this world is perishable and bound to sink. But there is one thing that does not perish or sink. And that is Your Name. Your Name is everlasting, ever true and ever abiding. It is indestructible. The bridge should be constructed on the foundation of Your Name." Rama commended Lakshmana by patting his back and said, "Lakshmana! You have suggested the correct method." Hearing this, Hanuman said to Rama, "Swami! I can do this work."

Now the monkeys started bringing the rocks and Hanuman told them to write the word 'Rama' on each boulder. The boulders with Name 'Rama' written on them did not sink in water but started drifting away. Then Hanuman told them that they should write the letter 'Ra' on one boulder and 'ma' on the other. The monkeys did as commanded and threw the two boulders together in the sea with devotion and steadfast faith. The waves of the ocean brought the two boulders together to make the word 'Rama'. In this way, the bridge was constructed. No rock did ever sink and such a long bridge was constructed in a short time. What was the foundation of the rocks and boulders? It was Rama's Name. Since all these bore the two letters 'Ra' and 'ma' which constituted the Name Rama, all of them floated on water. As soon as the bridge was constructed, Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman and the entire army crossed it and reached Lanka in no time.

Vibhishana also said, "Oh Rama! Everything can be achieved by the power of Your Name. Your Name of just two letters has enabled the monkeys to build such a long bridge." The war with Ravana resulted in his death and release of Sita from his prison. Thus, it is the Name of Rama that is most powerful and eternal. The form will sink at any time, at any place and under all conditions. But the Name will not sink and will save you wherever you are. In this way, Rama taught that the Name is ever true and eternal. None can ever damage or destroy it, nor can anyone take it away from you.

War with Ravana could be won on the basis of the power of Name. It is, therefore, enough if you chant Rama's Name. Then you will be victorious in all your endeavours. Like the Name of Rama, the Names of Krishna, Siva, Hari and Hara are also constituted by two letters. Make any Name of God as the basis of your life; then you can achieve everything. Name is eternal but form is ephemeral; the form has old age and death. Therefore, it is the Name that is most important. This is what Rama taught to mankind. Therefore, chant the Name of God constantly. Other spiritual practices like charity, Yajnas, worship, etc., are of little use if you do not chant the Divine Name. The Bharatiyas have been practising nine modes of worship of God: listening, singing, contemplating on Vishnu, serving His Lotus Feet, salutation, worship, servitude, friendship and self-surrender.

The last and highest step in these modes of worship of God is self-surrender. Surrender does not mean offering your body to God. Real surrender is the chanting of the Divine Name and making it the basis of your life. It is for the same reason that Guru Nanak, the first Guru of the Sikhs, started community singing. He told



his followers that they should seek fulfilment in life by chanting the Divine Name. Therefore, all Sikhs give highest priority to chanting the Divine Name in their life. In the Golden Temple at Amritsar, the holy place of the Sikhs, the Divine Name is chanted constantly. Therefore, consider the chanting of Name of God as the most important spiritual practice.

You may spend any amount of money in charity and in doing acts of service but these practices will give you only temporary mental satisfaction if not associated with the chanting of the Divine Name. You see that people give useless advertisements in newspapers with the desire to earn money. *Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.* Therefore, develop morality. This gives you the purity of mind. You do Laksharchana or Kotyarchana (reciting one lakh or one crore Names of God), and wait for the fruit of this spiritual practice. But this turns out to be a futile wait; you never get the expected fruit because you perform them as mere rituals. What you get is temporary satisfaction. There are many rich people who spend any amount of money in the performance of Yajnas and Yagas, but when a beggar comes to their door for alms, they withdraw their hand. This is not correct. God cannot be attained by money. It is God who has given you all your money. Then why do you give this back to Him? Utilise your money on your worldly and spiritual pursuits. Also use it to help poor people. But you can attain Me only through Namasmarana. Therefore, chant the Divine Name and attain the Divine. It is only by chanting the Divine Name that you can easily attain God. When Draupadi was being humiliated in the Kaurava court, she prayed to Krishna to protect her and called out His many names like Dwarakavasi, Brindavan Sanchari (dweller



Truth is eternal. It does not undergo any change in the three periods of time – past, present and future. Sathyannasti Paro Dharma (There is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Dharma originates from Sathya only. Where there is truth, there is Dharma. Where there is no truth, Dharma also does not abide there. When there is Sathya in your heart, you would be endowed with Dharma. When you have Sathya and Dharma, peace will descend on you and you will experience supreme peace. You say, you try to attain peace and pray for it. Where is peace available? Is it available in a shop or in a marketplace? No, no. It has to come to you from you only.



of Dwaraka, rambler of Brindavan). Krishna did not come. Afterwards she called Him out describing His attributes like Dayamaya, Kripamaya (embodiment of kindness, embodiment of compassion), etc., still Krishna did not come to her rescue. But when she addressed Him as Hridayavasi (dweller of heart), He manifested before her that very moment. Where does God live? He lives in your heart. Therefore, there is no use calling Him out with the feeling that He dwells somewhere outside.

Form is Perishable but Name is Eternal

It is possible for you to acquire any number of worldly and material things but you are not able to attain God who is within you. See God who is immanent in you. Look inside, don't look outside. Close your eyes and pray to God who dwells in





God has given you hands to serve mankind. Similarly, God has given you tongue to chant the Name of God. Do you know why has God given you feet? Not to roam around in all the countries of the world, but to go round the temple of God. That is how you should sanctify the organs of the body given to you by God. You say, you do Seva (service). But do you know the meaning of Seva? Is it to massage the feet of somebody with your hands? No, no. When you serve anyone, develop the feeling, 'I am serving Rama', 'I am serving Krishna', 'I am serving my deity'.

you. Then only will God manifest before you and grant you everything. It is only by chanting the Divine Name that you can receive God's grace and His direct vision. Nagar Sankirtan has been devised to spread Namasmarana (chanting of Divine Name) among people more and more. While chanting the Name of God in Nagar

Sankirtan, do not contemplate on the attributes of God. There is no use extolling the attributes of God any number of times. God is the embodiment of the Atma. The Atma is attributeless. The Names Krishna, Rama and Sai Baba are the names of the bodies of the Avatars. The Avatars were not born with these names. Names were given to them by others. It is the body that has birth, not the Atma. Death can come to the body at any time. When you ask God His name, He will reply, "Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman)." He will not say, "I am this or that form." Aham (I) has no particular form; it connotes the Atma. We give many names to the Atma and seek satisfaction in calling out these names. Not only that, we clamour so much for this temporary satisfaction. This satisfaction is not permanent; it is ephemeral and lasts only for a short time. It is only the Atma that is ever true, everlasting and eternal.

Rama incarnated thousands of years ago. But His Name lives even today. Even now when we are faced with any difficulty, we say, "Ayyo Rama!" It is the Name that is eternal and not the form. Therefore, contemplate on the Name of God, have His direct realisation, install Him in your heart and merge with Him. Many rivers like Cauveri, Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati flow in India. When there is an earthquake,

thousands of houses are destroyed. When the rivers are in flood, several villages are washed away and many lives are lost. Hence, forms are not permanent; forms are ephemeral and perishable. But formless Ganga and Yamuna are flowing within you in the form of Sohum – ‘So’ in the right nerve channel and ‘Hum’ in the left, both joining the central nerve channel Sushumna. By activating this subtle channel Sushumna, you should reach your spiritual heart. Many of you know, when people go to a temple, they close their eyes and offer their salutations to the idol of the deity installed there. Don’t you go there to have the Darshan of the deity? Then, why do you close your eyes on reaching there? You do not see the idol of the deity in the temple, while you keep chanting ‘Rama, Rama, Rama’ within you.

Perform all Actions to Please God

Similarly, when you go to Tirupati, you stand before the idol and chant ‘Venkateswara, Venkateswara, Venkateswara’. You pay a fee to enter the temple and have the Darshan of the deity. In spite of that, you close your eyes when you are in front of the idol. Develop this inner vision if you want to have the grace of God. Do you know why has God given you eyes? Not to see anything and everything, but to see the Lord of Kailasa. Why has God given you hands? Has God given you hands only to put food into your mouth? No, no. God has given you hands to serve mankind. Similarly, God has given you tongue to chant the Name of God. Do you know why has God given you feet? Not to roam around in all the countries of the world, but to go round the temple of God. That is how you should sanctify the organs of the body given to you by God. You say, you do Seva (service). But do you know the meaning of Seva? Is it



God cannot be attained by money. It is God who has given you all your money. Then why do you give this back to Him? Utilise your money on your worldly and spiritual pursuits. Also use it to help poor people. But you can attain Me only through Namasmarana. Therefore, chant the Divine Name and attain the Divine. It is only by chanting the Divine Name that you can easily attain God.



to massage the feet of somebody with your hands? No, no. When you serve anyone, develop the feeling: ‘I am serving Rama’, ‘I am serving Krishna’, ‘I am serving my deity’. Develop such feelings in your heart more and more. Whatever you eat, whatever you do, everything should be done with the feeling of offering it to God. Perform all tasks to please God. Whatever work you do, consider it as the work of God. When you develop this feeling with total dedication, then God will manifest before you.

Fill your mind with the Name of God. If you fill your mind with the Name of God, you will experience immense bliss. Bhajans have been devised to fill your mind with Divine Name. “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*” (There can be no happiness and peace without chanting the Name of God). It is enough if you adhere to Divine Name. Then you do not need to offer any other material like flowers, food, etc., to God. God does not need your flowers which will dry up in the evening if you offer in the morning. You offer food to God. You place it before the deity and eat it yourself! Why do you do this



drama of offering food to God? Instead, offer your love to God. This is the food of God. It is love that is most important. Love has no form. Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa are the gifts of God to man. Sathya has no form. The name Sathya has been given to this body but Sathya (truth) is formless. Truth is eternal. It does not undergo any change in the three periods of time – past, present and future. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (There is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Dharma originates from Sathya only. Where there is truth, there is Dharma. Where there is no truth, Dharma also does not abide there. When there is Sathya in your heart, you would be endowed with Dharma. When you have Sathya and Dharma, peace will descend on you and you will experience supreme peace. You say, you try to attain peace and pray for it. Where is peace available? Is it available in a shop or in a marketplace? No, no. It has to come to you from you only. It is, in fact, present in you. When you have peace, love will shine in you. The evil qualities of anger, hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy and ostentation cannot even come near a person who is endowed with love.

Never Tell a Lie

Love has no form of its own. Whatever you desire, you start loving it. Have love and give love to all. Do not hate anyone. Where jealousy and hatred are not there, conflicts cannot exist there. The students sing the song: *Sathya Dharmamu, Santhi, Premalato Nee Nithya Jivana Yatra Saginchu* (perform the journey of your life with truth, righteousness, peace and love as your companions). Therefore, first and foremost, you should develop truth. You should speak truth under all circumstances. Do not tell a lie to escape from

blame. You can escape from blame temporarily by telling a lie, but your heart will be devoid of peace forever. When you do not have truth, how can you get righteousness? Therefore first of all, protect truth. Truth is God. There are no two truths; truth is only one. God is truth. Therefore, always protect truth. Whatever you do, tell it truthfully. If you give room to evil qualities like anger, hypocrisy, jealousy, etc., then you are bound to ruin yourself. When your heart is bereft of truth, you cannot do anything good. When you truthfully tell someone, “I have bought this article for three rupees and will give you for five rupees,” you earn a profit of two rupees. But if you demand ten rupees for the same article by telling a lie just to earn more profit, you will be inviting many more untruths to abide in you. This is the main reason why man today has become the victim of so many miseries. Do not tell lies. Do not burden yourself with the load of sins by telling lies. Do not tell lies to earn more profit. You will have to undergo so much suffering due to this. Lead your life with love. To whomsoever you address, speak to him with love. When you thus lead your life with love, you will attain everything.

Embodiments of Love!

There is love in everyone of you. But you do not make proper use of it. Rather, you put your love to misuse. How far can a person go if he walks on his head instead of his feet? God has given you feet for walking. Similarly, God has given you tongue to speak truth. Speaking untruth is like walking on your head. How long can you go like this? God has given you head to make proper use of it and think: “What is good and what is bad? What is truth and what is untruth?” While saying or doing anything, first think whether what you are



saying is true or untrue, and what you are doing is right or wrong. After due consideration, take only to the path of truth. Conduct yourself in accordance with God's command. Speak only that which is truthful. Truth is the other Name of God. Constantly chant the Name of God. There is no use spending money aimlessly on rituals and worship. Instead, give food to the hungry and clothes to the needy. Do as much as you can. But never do anything by forsaking the Name of God. If you give alms to a beggar, chant the Name of Rama while giving alms. Chant silently in your mind; there is no need to chant loudly. Mind is the foundation of your life. *Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man). Whatever your mind may forget, it should not forget the Name of God.

Give up all Demonic Qualities

It is by the power of His Name that Rama crossed the ocean and reached Lanka. Hence, we should cross the ocean of our difficulties and troubles by using the power of the Divine Name. Only Name is enough to root out all our anxieties, troubles, sorrows, miseries, worries and maladies. Lust, anger, jealousy, envy, hypocrisy are the qualities of the demons who lived in Lanka. Do not give room to these demonic qualities in your heart. If you allow the demon of anger to abide in you, this itself is enough to turn everything bad in your life. No work of an angry man becomes fruitful. Anger distances even your relatives and friends from you. Therefore, do not allow anger to come near you. Lead your life, chanting within you constantly the Name of God who is the embodiment of peace and love. When all individuals develop peace in them, then the entire country will become good and peaceful. Those who



Make any Name of God as the basis of your life; then you can achieve everything. Name is eternal but form is ephemeral; the form has old age and death. Therefore, it is the Name that is most important. This is what Rama taught to mankind. Therefore, chant the Name of God constantly. Other spiritual practices like charity, Yajnas, worship, etc., are of little use if you do not chant the Divine Name.



aspire for the welfare of the country should live always in love. Lead your life without causing any harm to anybody. We sing this prayer after the conclusion of Bhajans: *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (may all the people of the world be happy!). Remember God with love. The entire world will be good by the power of love. Devotees should never do away with love. Even if others criticise, abuse and beat you, you should lead your life with love. Live in love. *Love lives by giving and forgiving, self lives by getting and forgetting (loud applause)*. Fill your life with love. Even if someone beats you, do not abuse him. Think that it is God only who has punished you like this. Everything happens according to what God Wills. It is God who gives you troubles and joys; it is He who protects you and punishes you in many ways. Everything is God. Therefore, offer everything to Him. Whatever you get in your life, consider it as the gift of God. Do all actions to please God. When you think like this, then you will attain great blessedness. One who could make boulders to float on water, can



Continued on page 218 ...

CELEBRATIONS AT BRINDAVAN AND PRASANTHI NILAYAM

IN RESPONSE TO THE PRAYERS OF thousands of devotees of Karnataka, Bhagavan paid two visits to Brindavan, Whitefield (Bangalore) during this summer – from 26th April to 2nd May 2008 and 21st May to 8th June 2008. During His stay at Brindavan, Bhagavan showered His love on the yearning devotees and blessed them with three Discourses – on 1st May, 24th May and 31st May 2008. Besides, some cultural and music programmes were held at Brindavan in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan during this period.

Commemorating an Historic Divine Declaration

More than 60 years ago, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba made an historic declaration in the form of a letter written by Him on 25th May 1947 to His elder brother which explained the main objectives for which He had incarnated on earth in human form. Referring to this letter as one of the most important mission statements of Bhagavan, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai University, gave a very revealing and illuminating talk in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall on 25th May 2008. The learned speaker dwelt at length on the humanitarian projects of Bhagavan and His divine movement of morally and spiritually uplifting man and spiritualising society which bear witness to the accomplishment of the tasks stated by Bhagavan in that historic letter. Bhagavan, he added, has in fact fulfilled every word He had stated in that letter.

Devotional Music by the Brindavan Bhajan Group, Bangalore

Brindavan Bhajan Group, Bangalore presented a soul-stirring programme of devotional music in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall on Sunday, 1st June 2008. The programme started at 5.05 p.m. soon after the arrival of Bhagavan in the Hall and came to a conclusion at 5.55 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan. The entire presentation from the beginning to the end consisting of nine devotional songs was a feast for the soul. Rendered in mellifluous voice of the singers and set to thrilling music, the songs in many Indian languages and dedicated to Bhagavan and various gods and goddesses delighted one and all by their overall quality and wide variety. At the end of the programme, the huge gathering of devotees expressed their delight by a loud applause and Bhagavan showered His blessings on the singers.

Nachiketa: A Drama

On 2nd June 2008, the children of Sai Darshan Mandir, Indira Nagar (Bangalore) and members of Sai Samithi of Indira Nagar presented the drama entitled “Nachiketa” in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam, Brindavan in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The Governor of Karnataka, Sri Rameshwar Thakur, who had come to offer his salutations to Bhagavan, also witnessed this beautiful drama. The drama commenced at 6.15 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan in the Kalyana Mandapam. Based on the story of Nachiketa given in the Kathopanishad, the drama unfolded the





Nachiketa's deep yearning for truth formed the main theme of the drama "Nachiketa" performed by the children of Sai Darshan Mandir, Indira Nagar in Sai Krishan Kalyana Mandapam on 2nd June 2008.

deep mysteries of birth and death and dwelt at length on the nature of the Self through various episodes of the story and an elevating dialogue between Yama (God of death) and Nachiketa whose yearning for truth formed the main theme of the drama. The drama mainly reflected the teachings of Bhagavan regarding duties of parents, respect for the environment and consequences of good and bad deeds. Masterly direction, excellent sets and costumes and superb acting of the children made the drama an outstanding presentation. The handling of such a subtle theme, that too through the acting of children coming from disadvantaged sections of society, earned the appreciation of one and all. Bhagavan showered His blessings on the children and posed for group photos with them at the conclusion of the drama. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.55 p.m.

Bhagavan Visits Super Speciality Hospital

On 7th June 2008, Bhagavan paid a visit to Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield, Bangalore and inaugurated the recently-built "Sai Veda Venkatarama Health

and Fitness Centre" located in the residential area of the hospital. Built in three wings, the building of the Fitness Centre contains a fully-equipped gymnasium, indoor games including table tennis, and badminton court. Adjacent to the building are tennis court and a crèche for the children of residents. On His arrival at the Fitness Centre from Brindavan at 10.45 a.m., Bhagavan was offered traditional welcome with Poornakumbham amidst Veda chanting. After inaugurating the building, Bhagavan surveyed the entire area and blessed the organisers who helped in the construction of the Fitness Centre.

Bhagavan then entered the hospital and arrived at the dome area of the hospital where He hosted lunch for all the hospital staff. After lunch, Bhagavan addressed the doctors and advised them to speak to the patients with love. Stressing the need for awareness of spiritual dimension of human personality, Bhagavan reiterated that physical body, senses, intellect and mind get their energy from the soul. He counselled the staff to maintain good health in order to serve the patients well. After blessing the hospital staff and patients, Bhagavan received Arati at 1.00 p.m. and returned to Brindavan.

Narayana Seva at Brindavan

On the eve of His return to Prasanthi Nilayam on 8th June 2008, Bhagavan performed Narayana Seva at Brindavan on 6th June 2008. On the morning of 6th June, Bhajans started in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall at 9.30 a.m. While Bhajans continued in the Hall, Bhagavan went straight to the place outside the Hall where thousands of needy people had been lined up in an orderly manner by the Brindavan Seva Dal for Narayana Seva.

Bhagavan showered His love on all of them by going into their rows and blessed the distribution of



food and clothes to them. After this, Bhagavan came inside Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall and blessed the devotees who were participating in Bhajans. The Bhajans concluded at 10.30 a.m. Then Arati was offered to Bhagavan and Prasadam blessed by Bhagavan was distributed to all the devotees in the Hall.

A Lively Bhangra Dance

The folk art of Punjab came alive at Prasanthi Nilayam when the students of Sri Sathya Sai University spiritedly performed Bhangra dance in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan on 15th June 2008. The programme started at 5.00 p.m. with the procession of Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs, accompanied by Nagar Sankirtan. The students then portrayed the scene of a Sikh Gurudwara to depict two cardinal values of Sikh religion, viz., Nama Sankirtan and Langar (chanting of the Divine Name and sharing of food without any distinction of caste, creed, etc.), comparing them with Bhajan singing and Narayana Seva being promoted by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. What followed this was a lively Bhangra dance which the students performed with vigour and vitality to the accompaniment of folk songs set to thrilling music. Their performance earned the appreciation of the spectators who responded with a loud applause at the conclusion of the programme at 5.20 p.m. In the end, Bhagavan blessed the students and posed for group photos with them. Prasadam blessed by Bhagavan was then distributed to the entire assembly of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall.

A programme of Talks on the Ramayana

A programme of talks entitled "Srimad Ramayana Sudha Pravachana Saptaha" on the inner significance of the Ramayana was inaugurated by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on 22nd June 2008 in Sai Kulwant Hall,

Prasanthi Nilayam. The inaugural ceremony was preceded by a grand procession of the idols of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman in a palanquin which started from Yajur Mandir at 4.30 p.m. It was led by a Nadaswaram troupe



The idols of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman being ceremoniously brought to Sai Kulwant Hall in a procession on 22nd June 2008, the inaugural day of the programme of talks on the Ramayana.

and followed by Veda chanting priests carrying Poornakumbham. The idols were then placed on an altar on the dais where the chief priest and other priests performed their worship.

The programme of talks on the Ramayana began at 4.40 p.m. with the lighting of the sacred lamp by Bhagavan. The speaker of the day was Sri N. Srikanta Rao of Bangalore who gave a very scholarly introduction of the seven-day programme and highlighted the importance of the Ramayana for modern man and society. The learned speaker also described in detail the significance of Balakanda (first chapter devoted to the childhood of Lord Rama) of the Ramayana. This programme of talks on the Ramayana continued up to 27th June 2008 and culminated in Pattabhisheka Mahotsava (coronation ceremony) of Lord Rama on 28th June 2008. (See detailed report in the next issue.)



RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE OF BHARAT

In His immense compassion, Bhagavan gave daily Discourses for nearly two months in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam starting from 16th June 1996. These Discourses cover a vast variety of spiritual topics of practical utility for modern man and highlight the rich cultural heritage of Bharat which is rooted in the Vedas. As the readers themselves will see, this is a rich treasure of soul-elevating spiritual knowledge which can enrich, illumine and transform mankind. This issue carries Bhagavan's second Discourse given on 17th June 1996. Sanathana Sarathi will publish these Discourses from time to time which are appropriately named Amrita Dhara (ambrosial stream).

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A foolish person is respected only in his house and a village headman is respected only in his village. Similarly, a king is respected in his kingdom only. But a learned man is respected everywhere.

(Sanskrit Sloka)

HOWSOEVER FOOLISH A person may be, he will be respected in his house. Parents will love their child even if he is foolish. What is the reason? Parents are bound by the bond of love and they cannot give up their feelings of attachment for the child. A village headman may commit any number of foolish acts, still the villagers will give him respect. What is the reason? The reason is that he holds the authority in his hands. Since people give respect to authority, they also give respect to the person who possesses it. In this Kali Yuga, people give respect to wealth and power, and

not to virtues and character. Whatever type of person a king may be, his subjects will have to give him respect. The reason is that he wields power. It is only the learned man who is respected everywhere.

Profundity of Indian Culture

What sort of knowledge earns respect? *Jnananam Jnanamuttamam* (the noblest knowledge among the types of knowledge). It is Atma Vidya (the knowledge of the Self). Atma Vidya is respected everywhere without any limitations of place, time and circumstances. This is the knowledge of the Brahman which has its origin in the Vedas. It is this knowledge

of the Vedas that the Vedic scholar Griffith¹ taught in many ways and declared, “Veda is the first word spoken by man.” Similarly, the Sanskrit scholar Max Muller of Germany held the Vedas in high esteem. He translated the Vedas into English and imparted the sublime knowledge of the Vedas and Indian culture to the students of Oxford University and to the candidates of Indian Civil Service (ICS) in England. His book, “India – What Can it Teach us?”² describes the profound teachings of the Vedas and pristine glory of Indian culture. What does India teach to the world? It teaches, *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness), *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava* (revere your mother and father as God). He said, “These are the four main pillars of the edifice of the Indian culture.”

All the codes of conduct that originated from the Vedas are also a part of the Bharatiya culture. Greatly influenced as he was by the greatness of the Indian culture, Wilson³ described its pristine glory. He translated into English Vishnu Purana written by Sage Parasara and other Sanskrit scriptures. During the course of his translations, he came across many prophecies described in them including

the prophecies about Sai Avatar in Kali Yuga which stated that His name would be Truth (Sathya); He would be the biggest magnet and would attract the whole world. Many similar prophecies are mentioned in the Nadi books written by Indian Rishis. Another great Sanskrit scholar William Jones⁴ translated emperor Manu’s “Manusmriti” into English, under the title “The Laws of Manu”. Bharatiya culture attracts the entire world by its teachings pertaining to various fields of knowledge. It is said, what is not there in Bharat cannot be found anywhere else. Bounty that is there in this country cannot be found elsewhere. Everything is there in Bharat. Unfortunately, the Bharatiyas themselves today are ignoring the principles of such a great culture.

Your Thoughts Make your Destiny

Whatever fortune and misfortune that you experience depends upon the type of thoughts you have. Yesterday, I talked about Adrishta. “A-drishta” means that which cannot be seen by the eyes. It also means destiny or fortune, both good and bad. When we sow a thought, we reap a Karma (action). When we sow a Karma, we reap a tendency. When we sow a tendency, we reap character. When we sow character, we reap destiny. Therefore, destiny

1 Prof. Ralph T.H. Griffith (1826-1906), a great Sanskrit scholar, who became the Principal of Benares College. He translated the Vedas, the Ramayana and works of Kalidasa into English.

2 “India – What Can it Teach us?” is a compilation of seven Cambridge lectures delivered by Prof. Max Muller in 1882 to the candidates for Indian Civil Service. These lectures were brought out in book form in 1883. Prof. Max Muller (1823-1900) was a great Sanskrit scholar at Oxford University where he worked as Professor of Comparative Philology for many years. He translated Rig Veda and exposed the West to the Aryan culture and other ancient cultures of the East through a set of 50-volume series of scriptures entitled “Sacred Books of the East.” which were translated into English and brought out under his direction.

3 Prof. H. Hayman Wilson (1786-1860), Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University. He was a great orientalist who stayed in India from 1808-1832 in the service of East India Company. His best known works are English translations of Vishnu Purana and Rig Veda.

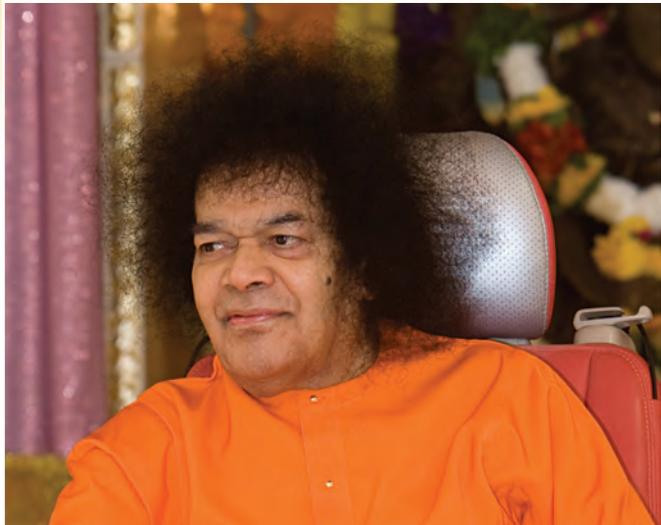
4 Sir William Jones (1746-1794) translated “Manusmriti” into English under the title “The Laws of Manu” to acquaint the West with the “richness and splendour of Hindu religion.” He was the founder and first President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He became judge of Supreme Court at Calcutta (Kolkata) in 1783.

depends upon character, character depends upon tendency, tendency depends upon action and action depends upon thoughts. Hence, good thoughts are the fundamental basis of our good fortune. What is the cause of misfortune? When we sow a bad thought, we reap a bad Karma. When we sow a bad Karma, we reap a bad tendency. When we sow a bad tendency, we reap bad character. When we sow bad character, we reap misfortune. Hence, both good fortune and misfortune depend upon our thoughts only. Therefore, we should always have noble thoughts.

Here we have said that a foolish man is respected only in his house. But who is a foolish person? One who knows what is good, and is also made aware of it by many people but neglects what is good and takes to the wrong path is a foolish person. In spite of being told what is good repeatedly, he does not leave his bad qualities even a bit. He doggedly sticks to his evil nature. He knows what Sathya is and what Dharma is. Still he does not follow them. Duryodhana and Dussasana knew very well what was Dharma but they never put it into practice. They were also aware what was truth, yet they followed the path of untruth. It is sheer foolishness to forget all that is divine and follow all that is worldly. This type of foolishness is on the rise these days. Therefore, man today should develop divine feelings.

A True Devotee Follows God's Command Implicitly

Divinity is beyond all attributes. What is God? The love that is immanent in everyone is God. Love is



Everything happens according to the feelings of your heart. Good and bad feelings are the main cause of your good fortune and misfortune. You should become fortunate. To become fortunate, you should cultivate good qualities which build your character. When you cultivate good qualities, you develop good tendencies. Only such a virtuous person will undertake good deeds. How should one perform actions? Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preetyartham (do all actions to please God). Then whatever work he undertakes, he will consider it as the work of God. Such a person will have only good thoughts.

God. It is present in everyone. The way God gives His love to one and all, man should also love everyone in the same manner. Love deserves highest worship. *Ananto Vai Prema* (Love is limitless and immeasurable). It should be considered as divine. Nobody can buy love like a commodity, howsoever wealthy, intelligent and



powerful he may be. It cannot be given or taken on rent or loan. It is present everywhere in its totality. But today people are treating love as business. We should attain love only through love. This is the primary goal of man. Today man is acquiring many types of education and power. He is occupying many positions of authority. But this is not important. We should attain the deservedness to earn this sacred love. It is to teach this supreme principle of love that the Vedas developed into many branches and sub-branches. What is the form of the principle of love? It has no form. Yet, it can be experienced in all forms. It acquires the form to which it is projected. If someone asks, what is the form of air, we can say it has no form. But air exists. Without air we cannot live. How can we determine its form? When it is pumped into a football, it acquires the form of the football. When you fill it in a balloon, it acquires the form of balloon. Similarly, love acquires the form of the person in whom it is projected.

Similar is the case with water. It has no form of its own. It acquires the form of the container in which it is put. Hence, love can be manifested only through a form. Today man sees only the outer form and does not see the inner feelings. He follows only the Pravritti Marg (path of worldliness) and does not understand Nivritti Marg (path of spirituality) at all. What is the meaning of devotion? People think that doing Dhyana (meditation), Japa (recitation) and Namasmara (chanting the name of God) is Bhakti. However, there are nine paths of devotion. *Sravanam* (listening), *Kirtanam* (singing), *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on Vishnu), *Padasevanam* (serving His Lotus Feet), *Vandanam* (salutation), *Archanam* (worship), *Dasyam* (servitude), *Sneham* (friendship), *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender).



By associating with bad company, a person becomes bad and by keeping company with good people, he acquires virtues. Therefore, we should have good company and good things around us. You think that Swami gives rings, watches and talismans for the satisfaction of your worldly desires. This is a great mistake. Do not think like that. When you wear these sacred objects, you will develop sacred feelings. These are the steps which lead you to noble and virtuous life in future.



What is that which comes before Atmanivedanam in these nine paths of devotion? That is Sneham (friendship). Total surrender comes only after friendship. Till then, total surrender is not possible. What is the meaning of surrender? It is not giving something. It is to offer oneself. First, we should develop friendship. What does friendship mean? Is it merely to say 'hello, hello'? No, no. In true friendship, bodies may be different but life principle is one. There should be the same feelings in both. Friendship is also termed as 'Maitri' or 'Mai – tri'. 'Mai' means I ; 'tri' means three, viz., body, mind and spirit. There should be total unity of body, mind and spirit. That is true friendship.

The same is to be said about surrender. Total surrender means the surrender of body, mind and spirit. Then only can we attain divinity. So long as we maintain the difference of I and you, we cannot attain divinity. That is why Lord Krishna said in the Gita, *Mamaivamsho Jivaloke Jivabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal

Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). He declared, "Everyone is an aspect of My Divinity, and every being is a part of My Self." Hence, you are not a separate entity. You consider yourself separate only due to your body attachment. We should follow the command of God in order to develop friendship with Him. The type of devotion the devotees have today is such that their selfishness is uppermost in their mind. They do not follow the command of God. Then, what is the meaning of your Bhakti? Why should God talk to you and give command? When you do not put into practice what God tells you to do, then where is your devotion? You should lead your life according to the command of God and follow it in everything you do in life. This is the true path. That is why Purandaradasa said, "Oh God! I am born again in this world because I forgot You. If only I had installed You in my heart, I would not have been born again." There is only one cause of all doubts, that is body attachment. Doubts do not leave you till you give up body attachment. Think for a while.

Who provides food to sustain the tadpole in the crevices of a rock? Who waters a growing plant on the top of a cliff? Who has painted the several colours on the plumes of a peacock and who has made the parrot look so attractive with its multi-hued feathers? (Kannada Poem)

Trees grow on stones in mountainous regions. Who provides water and manure and looks after their growth? It is God only who does all this. Who has given such beautiful colours to the peacock? Howsoever great painter one may be, he cannot give such natural colours to his paintings. What a great artist God is! How beautiful is the red beak of a green parrot! Who has created it? Can scientists understand this? They think this is only some sort of natural phenomenon. It

is not so. You can understand this truth only when you follow Nivritti Marg.

Everything happens by the Will of God. Nothing happens without His Will in this world. We should develop such firm faith. Many people consider themselves poor and inferior but this is not true. That is why Purandaradasa said, "Oh God! How can I be poor when You are there? How can I be a stranger? No, no. You are the only doer. It is only You who impart knowledge to me, who show me the right path, who protect me and who punish me. There is nothing that is not there in Your hands. You have every right over me. Then how can I be an orphan? If I am an orphan, You will not exercise Your right on me. I am Yours. That is why You exercise Your right on me."

Fill your Heart with Divine Feelings

All are the embodiments of God. Know this truth and make efforts to attain God. Otherwise, what is the use of all types of education and high positions you acquire? You will have respect so far as you hold the position. Once the position goes, who will give you respect? Only those who attain the proximity of God will be respected wherever they may be.

God is your sole refuge wherever you may be,

In a forest, in the sky, in a city or a village, on the top of a mountain or in the middle of deep sea. (Telugu Poem)

If He fulfils all your desires, you consider Him as Daivamu (God). Otherwise, you call Him Dayyamu (demon). In fact, one who considers God as demon is himself a demon.

Do not make your heart the house of Dayyam (demon) of worldly desires; fill it with Daya (compassion). When you fill a tank with pure water, only pure water will flow from the taps connected



to it. But when you fill it with dirty water, dirty water will come out of the taps. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as are the feelings, so is the result). God manifests before you according to the feelings of your heart. The same thing is said in the Ramayana also. Who is Rama? Who is Yama (God of death)? In fact, Yama is Rama, Rama is Yama. They are not different from each other. Vibhishana who took refuge at the feet of Rama saw Him as God. But for Ravana who took to evil path, He was Yama. Similarly, Prahlada who constantly chanted "Om Namo Narayanaya" saw Narayana as God. But the same Narayana became Yama for Hiranyakasipu who observed differences on the basis of name and form. For Kamsa who harboured evil qualities and tortured his own sister in a most heartless manner, Krishna appeared as Yama. But Kamsa's father Ugrasena saw Krishna as God. Therefore, Rama and Yama are not different from each other.

Everything happens according to the feelings of your heart. Good and bad feelings are the main cause of your good fortune and misfortune. You should become fortunate. To become fortunate, you should cultivate good qualities which build your character. When you cultivate good qualities, you develop good tendencies. Only such a virtuous person will undertake good deeds. How should one perform actions? *Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preetyartham* (do all actions to please God). Then whatever work man undertakes, he will consider it as the work of God. Such a person will have only good thoughts. Bad thoughts will not come near him. We should perform all our worldly duties with our heart filled with divine feelings. The same type of lesson was taught by Max Muller to all those who went to study ICS in

When we sow a Karma, we reap a tendency. When we sow a tendency, we reap character. When we sow character, we reap destiny. Therefore, destiny depends upon character, character depends upon tendency, tendency depends upon action and action depends upon thoughts. Hence, good thoughts are the fundamental basis of our good fortune.

England. After completing his studies, an ICS officer, went to meet Max Muller. At that time Max Muller was translating the Vedas. There was no such great Sanskrit scholar like him even in Bharat. He translated many Vedic texts into English. He aspired that if he was to be born again, he should be born in Bharat! He considered himself most fortunate if he could put the dust of Bharat on his forehead. The ICS officer went to see Max Muller who was filled with such feelings of love and enthusiasm for Bharat.

The officer sent in his visiting card. At that time, Max Muller was trying to understand the meaning of the Gita Sloka:

*Kavim Puranamanushasitaram
Anoraniyansamanusmarenya,
Sarvasya Dhataramachintyarupam
Adityavarnam Tamasa Parastat.*

(He who contemplates on the all-wise, ageless Being, the ruler of all, subtler than the subtle, the universal sustainer, beyond human conception of all forms, refulgent like the sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance, he reaches verily that Supreme Divine Purusha or God.)

He was thinking as to what is the meaning of this verse. Then he saw the visiting card. What was written on the card? The name of the ICS officer given on the card was, Chaturvedi Amareswara Sastri. Seeing this, Max Muller was filled with happiness and asked his servant to prepare two cups of tea. He thought, "I do

that he had come from India. Then Max Muller said, "I am translating the Vedas. Since you are Chaturvedi Sastri (master of the Vedas), kindly tell me the meaning of this Sloka." Then the ICS officer replied that he did not know anything about the Vedas and he considered them to be of no use. Max Muller was shocked to hear



Max Muller of Germany held the Vedas in high esteem. He translated the Vedas into English and imparted the sublime knowledge of the Vedas and Indian culture to the students of Oxford University and to the candidates of Indian Civil Service (ICS) in England. His book, "India – What can it Teach us?" describes the profound teachings of the Vedas and pristine glory of Indian culture. What does India teach to the world? It teaches, Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak truth, practise righteousness), Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava (revere your mother and father as God). He said, "These are the four main pillars of the edifice of the Indian culture."

not know even one Veda properly. But here is Chaturvedi Sastri, whose very name indicates that he is the master of four Vedas. How fortunate I am to meet such a great person!" That very moment, Max Muller went out and escorted the ICS officer to his room, saying, "I am very fortunate to meet you." He offered him a seat and served him tea. When Max Muller asked where the officer had come from, he replied

this. "What is this? Having come from Bharat and bearing the name Chaturvedi Sastri, he is criticising the Vedas. How unfortunate! It is my bad luck that I have met such a person."

Associate with Good People and Keep Good Things with you

You can see that the faith and sacred feelings the overseas people have are lacking in many



Bharatiyas who drink Bharat's sacred water, eat its food and breathe its air. From that day, Max Muller thought to himself, "There is no need for me to go to Bharat. Now my mind is sacred, pure and steady. I do not know what will be the condition of my mind when I associate with such people of Bharat." *Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are.* By associating with bad company, a person becomes bad and by keeping company with good people he acquires virtues. Therefore, we should have good company and good things around us. You think that Swami gives rings, watches and talismans for the satisfaction of your worldly desires. This is a great mistake. Do not think like that. When you wear these sacred objects, you will develop sacred feelings. These are the steps which lead you to noble and virtuous life in future. That is why Sita told Rama during their sojourn in the forest, "Rama! You are dressed like a hermit and are living in a forest after giving up all royal comforts and luxuries. You had every right to enjoy these royal comforts but You sacrificed them on Your own. You have come to the forest to lead a noble life. Then, why are You carrying bow and arrows with You? If You keep them with You, You will develop a tendency to commit violence."

Whatever type of things we carry with us, our feelings also develop accordingly. Children know it very well, if they have a pen in their hand they will start writing something or the other either on their hand or on the wall. Writing like this is their habit. If they have a knife in their hand, they will start cutting their nails or poke it into a wooden stick. They will do something or the other like that. This is the tendency of their previous life of a monkey. Hence, you should never keep such things with you. *Sathyam Kanthasya*

Bhushanam (truth is the true necklace). We should speak only the truth, which is the form of God. *Hastasya Bhushanam Danam* (charity is the ornament of the hand). In addition to performing charity with your hand, you should also wear the rings or other articles given to you by God out of His grace. Many people think that they need not wear them. Only those who do not know the reality think like that. There are many such sacred teachings in the Bharatiya culture.

You should know the real meaning of culture. Culture is that which brings about refinement. How? When the paddy crop becomes ripe, do we eat it along with the husk that covers it? No. First, we remove the paddy from grass, then we remove the husk and obtain rice which we cook. Then only it becomes our food. Refinement includes separating paddy from grass, removing the husk that covers it, and cooking the rice on fire. Refinement consists of removing all that is unnecessary and unwanted. The price of a bag of paddy may be two hundred rupees. But a bag of rice after refinement may be valued at one thousand rupees. With refinement, the value of a thing also increases manifold. Then, what is the meaning of refinement? Refinement means to throw away all that is bad and cultivate all that is good. This is what is called 'way of life'. Without going through these processes of refinement, paddy has little value. There are many things like that. This is a silver plate. If the silver remains silver, we cannot make any use of it. When it is burnt in fire, beaten with hammer and moulded into a plate, it becomes useful to us.

This is a cloth. How has it acquired this form of cloth? First we have cotton. From cotton, we



make threads and weave the threads to make cloth. Only then can we make use of it. This is what we call 'way of life'. Refinement means converting things from their raw form into useful items. For everything, refinement is essential. When we come from outside, we wash our feet before entering the house. Why do we do it? While moving outside, many harmful bacteria may stick to our feet. That is why we should wash our feet. Purification is necessary for everything. Before eating their food, Brahmins perform "Aaposhanam". They take water in their hand and sprinkle it around the plate of food while chanting, "Pranaya Namah, Apanaya Namah, Vyanaya Namah, Udanaya Namah, Samanaya Namah." In this way, they worship the five life principles. Why do they sprinkle water all around their plate? This is also a form of purification. During the process of serving the food and eating it, ants and other small insects may try to enter the plate of food. When you put water around the plate, they cannot enter the plate. You can see, even for such small matters, the culture of Bharat has appropriate solutions. You cannot find even a single meaningless word in this culture. Bharat is the birthplace of such a great culture. Only those who do not know the meaning of these practices consider them as useless.

Students should Understand the Greatness of Indian Culture

People who do not know do not accept that they do not know. They pose as if they know everything. That is sheer foolishness. One should make efforts to know what one does not know. All powers and potentialities are enshrined in the principle of divinity. The Vedic Mantras are also suffused with divine powers. The entire world consists of Padartha (matter). For example, this is a
rose flower. The word 'rose'

denotes this particular flower. Similarly, the word 'handkerchief' denotes this particular cloth. In this way, all objects in this world denote the meaning of words. But there are words which have another meaning behind their common meaning. Take, for example, the word 'Akshara'. The word 'Akshara' contains in it a great spiritual principle. What is the real meaning of the word 'Akshara'? People think that 'Akshara' means a letter of the alphabet. But in the language of the Vedanta, 'Akshara' denotes that which is eternal. God is described as 'Akshara Swarupa' (eternal divine principle). The word 'Akshara' contains two syllables – "A-Kshara". 'Kshara' means that which is perishable, i.e., Jivatma (individual soul). 'Akshara' means imperishable, i.e., Paramatma (God). The former is temporary entity while the latter is the eternal divine principle. The word 'Akshara' denotes the union of Jivatma and Paramatma. There is eternal principle in the ephemeral and ephemeral entity in the eternal. There is an inner meaning in many such words of the Vedas. This is what we have to understand from our culture.

Students! There is so much for you to know about Indian culture. It gives you guidance in the performance of all your functions. Every word of the Vedas and Puranas (mythological texts) has a charm and attraction of its own.

Once Gajendra (king of elephants) was caught by a crocodile and was unable to escape from its clutches. Then, it prayed loudly and prayed hard, "Oh Easwara! Oh bestower of boons! Come and protect me." God responded to its prayer immediately and saved it. On the basis of this incident, some people questioned, "How far is God?" Some foolish intellectuals said, "God is as far away as
He can hear the cry of an



elephant.” What a great foolishness! God does not need to go from one place to another. Whatever form of God you pray to, God assumes that very form. Some people pray to God, “Oh God! Be with me and protect me.” They can only hear the steps of God behind them. Those who pray, “Oh God! Can’t You see my difficulties and my crying?”, they see only the eyes of God. Those who pray, “Can’t You hear my cry and prayers?”, they can see only His ears, because God has His ears and eyes everywhere. A similar incident happened in Shirdi.

Once Shirdi Sai Baba told a devotee, “Oh madcap! I am always with you and I am always present at your back.” After walking some distance, that devotee turned back and saw but he did not find Baba there. Then he thought that Baba had told him a lie, “He told me that he will be behind my back. But he is not to be seen.” He went back to Baba and said, “Oh Baba! You are such a great person. How could you tell a lie? You promised that you would be at my back. But when I looked behind me, I did not find you.” Baba replied, “Oh Saitan (devil)!

... *Continued from page 205*

He not make your mind float in the ocean of Samsara (worldliness)? Cross the ocean of Samsara by changing the mind into a bridge. Use this bridge to cross this vast ocean and kill the demons of lust and anger. For this, you must do Bhajan and sing the glories of God. Bhajan is very necessary to realise the glory of the Divine Name. When so many people do Bhajan together, the prayer from the heart of at least one or two will reach God. Won’t even one person among so many have a sacred heart? Hence, there is a great possibility of your melting the heart of God by community

Is this your intelligence? When you looked behind, you turned your back also. Hence, I also turned to be at your back.” See! When the devotee looked behind, his back also turned. That is why he could not see Baba, who was at his back all the time. The words of God are mysterious, wonderful and have a deeper meaning. Not all can understand God. So, do not try to understand God. Follow His command. That is your duty.

You have to know so much about God. Nobody can completely understand God. Outwardly, God may appear to be an ordinary person, but He can reveal His transcendental powers at any time, which is not possible for ordinary mortals. Therefore, perform your duty. Offer your heart to God. That is your foremost duty. Then all your doubts will be removed.

(Bhagavan brought His Divine Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram ...*”)

– **From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 17th June 1996.**

singing. Bhajan is very necessary to melt the heart of God. When you do Nagar Sankirtan early in the morning, everybody will get up and hear the Divine Name. Hearing the Name of God as soon as they wake up will fill them with great bliss and enthusiasm. Therefore, constantly remember the Name of God; never forget it. This is the most noble path. This is true spiritual practice. When you do this, you will be immensely blessed.

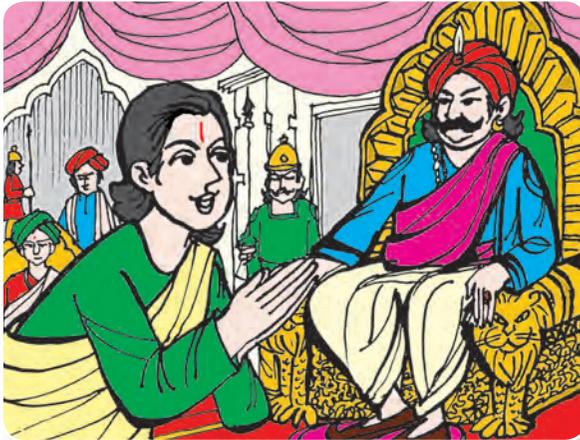
– **From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan, Whitefield (Bangalore) on 24th May 2008.**

Who can Attain Liberation?

ONCE A KING CALLED A BIG assembly of learned men, poets and scholars of mythology in his court. The learned men delivered very good lectures on the Vedas, mythology and history in this assembly. Suddenly, the king put this question to the learned men, "Oh revered scholars! There are so many great men among you in this assembly. Who among you can really attain liberation?" The entire assembly was stunned into silence by this question of the king. None among the learned men came forward to answer this question. Then a very ordinary person came forward and said, "Oh king! *Nenu*



All started whispering to each other how such an ordinary man could answer such a profound question.



When learned men could not answer the question of the king, an ordinary man came forward and made a simple statement to the surprise of the king and the learned men.

*Pote Povachchu** (It can be attained when I go)." All were surprised by this statement of this ordinary man. They also became jealous of him and started whispering to each other: "This man has no knowledge of the Vedas, the

Gita, the Brahma Sutras, the mythological texts or history. Yet he has the courage to give such an answer to this profound question. What is the inner meaning of his statement?"

The king called him near and asked him in a serious tone, "On what basis have you made this statement? Does it not amount to disrespect to so many learned men who are present in this court?" This ordinary man stood up, joined his hands in all humility and said, "Please forgive me, oh king! Going of 'I' means giving up one's ego. When 'I' is attached to the body, it gives rise to ego. Man attains deservedness for liberation only when he gives up body attachment." In this way, he explained the inner meaning of his statement.

* "*Nenu Pote Povachchu*" also means, it can be attained when 'I' (ego) goes.

THE IDEAL DISCIPLE

Gita will remove man's Moha (delusion), destroy his Vishada (grief) and develop his Smriti (recognition of the Self) if he becomes the ideal disciple of the Lord like Arjuna, observed Bhagavan while delivering a Discourse on the Gita at Nainital (Uttarakhand) on 24th June 1961.

SWAMI VIDYANANDA, IN THE Hindi Address which he read just now, welcomed Me to this Nainital, describing its beautiful scenery and praising its climate. Well, that is taking Me to be an outsider who has to be formally invited and welcomed. I am in your Satsang (gathering),

beauty of character and conduct which you are seeking to acquire by the constant study of the Gita. I came to the Gita Satsang to see all of you, because I bless all efforts by man to raise himself by study and Sadhana. *Mad*

The Gita is the greatest harmoniser of all yogas. As a matter of fact, once you make Gita the guiding star of your life, the way you act will be Karma Yoga, the way you feel will be Bhakti Yoga, the way you reason will be Jnana Yoga. It will become automatically so. What you do must be in line with Dharma; what you feel must foster Prema; what you think must reveal Sathya.



for wherever the Gita is studied, I am, and will be present. More than the external beauty of Nature, I value the

Bhakta Yatra Gayanti Tatra Tishtami Narada
(wherever My devotees sing My glory, I install Myself there)

is the declaration. In fact, the Lord is always there and everywhere whether you sing of Him or not. Singing only makes Him manifest like the radio receiver which catches the tune from ether when it is tuned to the correct wavelength. The current is flowing ever; when you fix the bulb, you will get the light.

Complete Surrender will Get God's Response

The Bhagavadgita is a textbook for all mankind, giving the secrets of spiritual science in clear and simple terms. But it will be useful only when the reader has as much detachment as Arjuna had when Krishna started the discourse. If you surrender to the Lord as Arjuna did, you have the deservedness to get the teaching of the Gita which will remove all your Vishada (grief). The Gita will act on the mental system when your detachment and surrender are strong and complete. What business have others with it? What profit can they draw from it?

Arjuna, the greatest Bowman of those days, anxious since years to destroy the wicked Kauravas who had angered him by merciless and systematic vendetta, suddenly got disinterested in everything that he thought precious until that moment! "Of what avail is victory in the field of battle?" asked this hero of a thousand encounters! "Nor do I see any good from killing kinsmen in battle," said the warrior who had vowed to wipe out the Kauravas! "I do not wish to kill them, though they may wish to kill me; I shall lay down my arms; I shall die unresisting" wailed this foremost Kshatriya (warrior). "I would rather beg from door to door and live on alms," said this scion of the imperial line. In short, his mind had become ripe for the illumination. He had the Lord Himself as Guru by his side and he knew it. He asked Him: "I am groping

An emperor, while sleeping, dreams that he is a beggar; he wears tattered clothes and cries piteously before other people's doors for a morsel of food; no one listens to his clamour; he can no longer contain his sorrow. He weeps aloud which wakes up his mother. She comes and wakes him up from that dream. Now, the mother need not tell him, "Listen to me, you are the emperor. You are not a beggar." He knows it as soon as he awakes. The recognition of the Self is gained as soon as the delusion goes, the delusion that this dream-world is real!

in ignorance; I am confused; I do not know what is Dharma and what is Adharma." He sought discipleship and laid himself at the feet of Krishna in self-surrender.

Anyone anywhere who reaches that stage of spiritual surrender will get the response from Krishna, and He will teach the Gita from the chariot driven by Him in the battlefield of his heart.

End Delusion and Gain Recognition of the Self

The purpose of the Gita is to remove Moha (delusion). It was Moha which overwhelmed Arjuna and made him feel that he was the doer, whereas the truth is, he was but an instrument.

So Krishna asks him at the end of the discourse, "Has your



delusion born out of Ajnana (ignorance) been fully destroyed?” For, like a good teacher, Krishna is evidently quite willing to resort to some other means or to discourse a little longer in order to make the pupil understand the teaching. But Arjuna is a good student. He declares, “*Nashto Moha* (my delusion is destroyed). I have gained recognition.” Now



what is the recognition he has gained? The recognition of the Self or Atma. He has seen himself basically as the Atma, and he has seen the world and all objects as superimpositions on the

Atma due to Maya (delusion). An emperor, while sleeping, dreams that he is a beggar; he wears tattered clothes and cries piteously before other people’s doors for a morsel of food; no one listens to his clamour; he can no longer contain his sorrow. He weeps aloud which wakes up his mother. She comes and wakes him up from that dream. Now, the mother need not tell him, “Listen to me, you are the emperor. You are not a beggar.” He knows it as soon as he awakes. The recognition of the

I came to the Gita Satsang to see all of you, because I bless all efforts by man to raise himself by study and Sadhana. Mad Bhakta Yatra Gayanti Tatra Tishtami Narada (wherever My devotees sing My glory, I install Myself there) is the declaration. In fact, the Lord is always there and everywhere whether you sing of Him or not. Singing only makes Him manifest, like the radio receiver which catches the tune from ether when it is tuned to the correct wavelength. The current is flowing ever; when you fix the bulb, you will get the light.

Self is gained as soon as the delusion goes, the delusion that this dream-world is real!

A prince who falls into the hands of a forest tribe while yet a child, and behaves like one of them, does not thereby lose his princehood. Rescue him and he knows he is a prince. So, too, Arjuna says, “*Smriti Labdha* (I have got back my memory), I have gained recognition. I know myself; I



am Thyself!” The study of the Gita must end in this result; your Satsang must have this consummation as your goal.

Gita is the Greatest Harmoniser of all Yogas

Do not be enamoured of the skill exhibited by some Pandit who can recite the Gita in record time or write the whole of it on a postcard or repeat it upside down or reel off commentaries. A man walked on the beach, played with the waves, and had a dip in the water; yet his feet were not wet! No, there is no miracle in this. This is what happens to many scholars who wade in the sea of the Gita. In the Durbar Hall, when the Maharana is arriving to seat himself on the throne, the couriers call out his polysyllabic titles, but in daily conversation his short name is used; his principality is but a tiny State. Similarly, the Pandit may have great pomp before others but to himself, in the secrecy of his own conscience, he is a small man indeed. Real greatness depends upon the Sadhana (spiritual discipline) and the success achieved in it, in Anushthana (practise of religious austerities) and in Nishtha (firm faith).

It is said, “*Uttishta, Jagrata, Prapya Varannibodhata*” (arise, awake, go to the noble men and learn from them the secret of attaining divinity). But the goal is not somewhere distant, towards which you need to march. It is not some place where you have to go. It is just the opening of the eye, the removal of the veil, the waking from the dream, the lighting of the Jnana Deepa (lamp of spiritual wisdom).

To get the fruit of Gita Parayana (study of the Gita), Ekagrata (one-pointed concentration) is essential. Krishna asks Arjuna, “Has this been heard by you with an attentive mind? Have you heard it without distraction?” For, the battlefield where they were had plenty of distractions to disturb the concentration of Arjuna’s mind from the invaluable lesson he was receiving from Krishna. It is really admirable that Arjuna seated in the chariot between the two armies managed to master his mind and rid it of all the passions with which it was filled when he rode in for the fray! Truly, he is an ideal disciple. You should thank him for eliciting the Bhagavadgita from Krishna for humanity.

There are people who argue that the Gita teaches this yoga more than that. This shows only their partisan nature. Once you begin to practise the Gita, such ideas as trying to exhibit your superior scholarship by propounding a new theory or meaning will vanish. The Gita is the greatest harmoniser of all yogas. As a matter of fact, once you make Gita the guiding star of your life, the way you act will be Karma Yoga, the way you feel will be Bhakti Yoga, the way you reason will be Jnana Yoga. It will become automatically so. What you do must be in line with Dharma; what you feel must foster Prema; what you think must reveal Sathya. Then this Satsang will be blessed with Santhi, even Prasanthi (supreme peace).

– **From Bhagavan’s Discourse at Gita Satsang, Nainital, 24th June 1961.**

Prayer is a forceful weapon, much more effective than any bomb. The word is an effective instrument; it can move mountains. In these critical times, everyone of you should pray deeply and sincerely for the peace and prosperity of the world.

– *Baba*

NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

SOUTH AFRICA

AN ENTHUSIASTIC GATHERING of 7,000 devotees assembled at Chatsworth, Durban for a national rally of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of South Africa held on 22nd and 23rd March 2008. The two-day event was spiritually uplifting in which Bhagavan's life and message were shared through drama and dance, music and prayer, talks and discussion. The programme began with a beautiful and inspiring dance entitled "Feathers on the Breath of God" by Sai Youth depicting the life of Bhagavan. A significant feature of the weekend was a drama on the three phases of the Avatar's life: Leelas (divine sports), Mahimas (miracles), and Upadesha (message). Devotees of different ages and localities – many of them Sai Youth who have completed their Educare Diploma Course from Sri Sathya Sai Institute of South Africa – worked tirelessly to create this art from the heart. Devotees were also treated to a few



A two-day national rally of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of South Africa was held at Chatsworth, Durban on 22nd and 23rd March 2008 in which more than 7,000 devotees took part. Many spiritually uplifting programmes marked the celebration of the event.

vocal and instrumental musical programmes. Raviraj Nasery sang soulful songs in praise of the Lord. This musical programme transported the listeners to Prasanthi. This was followed by a Sitar recital that maintained the sanctified mood. Later, a local group of talented singers delighted everyone with soul-elevating Bhajans. One significant feature of this national rally was the honour shown to the elders of the Sathya Sai Organisation of South Africa. The first speaker was Dr. Kamala Patel, a respected elder of the Organisation. She won the hearts and minds of the audience with her simple yet engaging anecdotes and experiences with Swami over past 35 years. The second speaker was Smt. S. A. Pather, aged 93, who inspired listeners with her experiences from the earliest days of the Sathya Sai Organisation in South Africa. On 23rd March (Easter Sunday), the proceedings started with an inspirational talk delivered by Dr. Ramachandiran Cooppan, an endocrinologist from Harvard University, USA. Finally, a fitting tribute was paid to the pioneers of the South African Sai Organisation with a short DVD presentation about the history of the Sai Organisation in South Africa. All were humbled and were grateful to Bhagavan for the many years of grace He has bestowed upon the people of this nation.

CANADA

On 30th March 2008, Sai volunteers in Ottawa, Canada visited Sheppard's of Good Hope homeless shelter to prepare a healthy vegetarian meal for the inmates. Twenty-seven volunteers sang Bhajans and cut vegetables to prepare the full meal for the needy. This is

a monthly project that regularly serves 300 to 350 needy people.

Other community outreach activities included distribution of personal hygiene care kits to the needy and sandwich distribution. In addition, 61 packages of school supplies were prepared for distribution to children in war-ravaged countries during Christmas time.

A workshop for training Sathya Sai Education teachers was conducted in Ottawa, Canada from 12th to 13th January 2008 which was attended by 31 participants. The workshop revitalised the teachers, and revealed practical steps to improve the quality of instruction in SSE classes while addressing the needs of students of different ages. Much attention was also given to the subject of curriculum development and a course syllabus. But perhaps the single most important lesson was that the life of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba should be studied as an ideal for everyone to emulate, students and teachers alike.

BOLIVIA

From 12th to 15th February 2008, the Doctor Percy Boland Municipal Hospital for Women in Santa Cruz, Bolivia hosted Sri Sathya Sai Human Values Seminar. The four-day seminar attended by 207 staff members was designed to help medical professionals infuse human values into their work. Participants learned how the five human values, especially love, can be even more important than medicine in bringing patients back to good health. Feedback from the medical professionals who attended the seminar confirmed that this was a very inspiring event. Many doctors commented that the Human Values Seminar helped them to be more effective in their professional practice. It also made them



With the help of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Bolivia, the Doctor Percy Boland Municipal Hospital for Women in Santa Cruz, Bolivia hosted a Sri Sathya Sai Human Values Seminar from 12th to 15th February 2008 in which 207 staff members of the hospital took part. The seminar was designed to help medical professionals to infuse human values into their work.

happier while doing their work. The hospital administration has agreed to follow-up the Human Values Seminar by stipulating one human value to be practised by the staff every month, using materials supplied by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation.

SULTANATE OF OMAN

On 28th March 2008, Sai devotees of Oman celebrated Al Mawlid Al Nabawi Al Sharif (Prophet Mohammad's birthday) in Muscat at the Al Ansari Recreation Hall. It was a grand, multi-faith celebration attended by about 130 people, and began with the recitation of the Quran and 99 names of Allah, followed by Naat reading (Naat-e-Rasool-e-Maqbool). A Naat (Persian) is a poetry that specifically praises the Islamic Prophet Mohammad. It is the Islamic equivalent of hymn or Bhajan. Various speakers kept the audience captivated with the artistic portrayal of the life and teachings of Prophet Mohammad. Two beautifully sung Bhajans added lustre to the divine atmosphere.

But the one thread common in all parts of the programme





Sai devotees of Oman organised a multi-faith function to celebrate Prophet Mohammad's birthday at the Al Ansari Recreation Hall on 28th March 2008. The programme included recitation of the Quran, Bhajans and speeches of speakers from different faiths.

binding them all together was Bhagavan's Message of Sarva Dharma – that the one God has many names and forms. At the conclusion of the two-hour programme, brothers and sisters of different faiths dispersed, radiating universal love.

MAURITIUS

On 6th April 2008, Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Mauritius was invited by the Centre Islamique des Mourides De L'Ocean Indien to participate and perform in the celebration of Yaum Un Nabi at the Le Printemps Hall in Vacoas. This day cherishes the birth of Prophet Mohammad. Over 300 people of Muslim faith attended the event. In an affirmation of unity, Hindu Sai devotees were dressed in traditional Muslim attire. Several Sai devotees including Bal Vikas children sang Sarva Dharma Bhajans and Sai Qawalis. One could feel the flow of divine love between the audience and the performers. The previous President of Mauritius, Cassam Uteem, was the chief guest. In his speech, he appreciated the work being done by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation



Sai devotees and Bal Vikas children of Mauritius participated in the birthday celebrations of Prophet Mohammad in Vacoas, Mauritius on 6th April 2008. The picture shows Bal Vikas children performing a Qawali on this occasion.

in Mauritius. He drew parallels between Bhagavan's teachings on unity of faiths and those of Prophet Mohammad and assured closer collaborative service activities with Sri Sathya Sai Organisation. The President of the Centre Islamique des Mourides De L'Ocean Indien, Raffick Hattea, stated that his community had heartily cherished the participation of Sai devotees. Furthermore, he highlighted the role played by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation in various service activities as well as the preservation and protection of the environment while drawing parallels with those of Prophet Mohammad. This participation of Sai devotees in a national festival marked a first in activities of national unity and spiritual integration.

KAZAKHSTAN

From 11th to 13th April 2008, a medical cum service camp was held in Bersuat village located 100 kilometres from the capital city of Astana in Kazakhstan. This was the seventh camp in the country focusing on medical service, educare and Narayana Seva. In the medical camp,





A medical cum service camp was held in Bersuat village, Kazakhstan from 11th to 13th April 2008 which focused on medical services, educate and Narayana Seva. The picture shows the deliberations of the educate programme on this occasion.

450 patients were seen by a medical team comprising specialists in internal medicine, paediatrics, ENT, gerontology, dentistry and physical therapy. Fifty-three volunteers including 19 youth provided loving service. In addition, a team of eight teachers taught human values-based lessons to local school children. A film was shown depicting Bhagavan lovingly conversing with His students. In this film, the First Lady of Kazakhstan, Sara Nazarbayeva quoted Bhagavan and stated that it is important to love everyone and to live in love. Service activities consisted of the distribution of 20 food packets and repair and maintenance work at a nearby school including its gymnasium, which needed repair for the past 20 years. The repair work, which was of a relatively large magnitude, was completed in a record time with divine grace. The event concluded with a concert by the school students and Sai volunteers to an audience of about 200. The public expressed their gratitude and hoped that Sai volunteers would visit them again. All the volunteers

experienced Bhagavan's Divine Love through their loving service.

– Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

B H A R A T

Andhra Pradesh: Vizianagaram district gave Amruta Kalasams (food provisions) to 15 selected families in Belagam village on 3rd May 2008. The district came to the rescue of 410 fire victim families in Jonnaguddi area of Vizianagaram town by giving utensils and clothes. This district dug a drinking water well in Kothur village.

West Godavari district conducted a free medical camp in Kummararevu village, treating 250 patients. Cataract operations were done for 5 selected eye patients. The district gave Amruta Kalasams to 18 poor families in Dadivalli village.

Karimnagar district conducted Akhanda Namasmarana for 40 days in Bejjanki village from 10th April 2008 to 20th May 2008 and carried out Narayana Seva at its conclusion. The district conducted an eye check-up camp in Bandalingapur village, examined 300 patients and carried out cataract operations for 36 people. The district came to the rescue of 11 fire victim families in Jaina Thanda village by giving cooking vessels, new clothes and food provisions.

Vizag district distributed tricycles to 83 physically challenged persons. It arranged an exhibition "Science and Spirituality" in Kancharapalem village from 4th May 2008 to 7th May 2008.

Gujarat: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Anand organised 21 free mass marriages at Chikhodara on 20th April 2008. The marriages were conducted



as per the rituals. Mangal Sutra (sacred thread worn by married women), clothes and all household articles were given to all the couples.

A free heart check-up camp was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Valsad with the cooperation of Rajkot Heart Hospital at Adarsh Hospital, Valsad on 20th April 2008. 163 patients from more than 15 villages were checked. Five patients were called for operation during May at Rajkot Hospital and 30 were advised angiography. Another free heart check-up camp was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Amalsad with the cooperation of Rajkot Heart Hospital at Andhkesvar Mahadev, Amalsad on 4th May 2008. 300 patients were checked, 26 were called for operation during May at Rajkot Hospital and 40 were advised angiography.

On 4th May 2008, a blood donation camp was organised by the Maroli Seva Samithi, where 118 units of blood were collected. Another camp was organised at Manjalpore, Vadodara by the Vadodara Seva Samithi, in which 92 units of blood were collected.

On Easwaramma Day, a cultural programme was organised by Bal Vikas students. On this occasion, four tricycles were distributed to the needy by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Valsad. Until now, the Samithi has distributed 176 tricycles.

Maharashtra: Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Maharashtra and Goa launched 12 fully-equipped mobile medical vans to provide free healthcare facilities to disadvantaged sections of society living in rural and slum areas at their doorstep. In a function organised at the Sachivalaya Gymkhana, Mumbai on 13th May 2008, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Sri Vilasrao



Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Maharashtra and Goa launched 12 medical vans under Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme to provide healthcare facilities to rural population and city slums of 12 districts of Maharashtra on 13th May 2008.

Deshmukh inaugurated this laudable project of the Sai Organisation and handed over the keys of 12 vans to the office bearers of 12 districts of the Sai Organisation in the presence of many dignitaries including Sri Suresh Shetty, Minister for Health, Sri Ashok Chavan, Minister for Industries, Smt. Snehlata Deshmukh, former Vice Chancellor of Mumbai University and Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, a renowned musician. On this occasion, the Chief Minister and other speakers expressed gratitude to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for providing this “Sri Sathya Sai Mobile Medicare Project” under the Village Integrated Programme of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation.

Tamil Nadu: A summer camp for rural Bal Vikas children was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Samithi, Neyveli from 30th April 2008 to 2nd May 2008 as part of Easwaramma Day celebrations. 150 rural Bal Vikas children from the villages adopted under Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme, participated in the programme comprising events like drawing, rural games and sports, Bhajan training, value-oriented games, Sloka recitation and Veda chanting. All the Bal Vikas children were provided with footwear and caps to protect them from the sun and heat of the summer and each individual child was given a briefing



Sri Sathya Sai Samithi, Neyveli organised a summer camp for rural Bal Vikas children from 30th April to 2nd May 2008 in which 150 Bal Vikas children from the villages adopted by the Sai Organisation took part.

on personal hygiene, cleanliness and upkeep of their house and sanitation. 25 Sai Youth, 15 Bal Vikas Gurus and 20 Sai Seva Dal volunteers, both gents and ladies, participated in the programme.

Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand: The Sai Organisation of Lucknow recently adopted Tehetna village under Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme. This village of 108 families is situated on the bank of the River

Gomti. After carrying out a detailed house-to-house survey, the critical needs of the village were identified – medical care, clothing, health and hygiene. No drainage system or toilets existed in the village. A homoeopathic medical camp was organised the very next Sunday wherein clothes and blankets were also distributed. Within a short period of two months, the village now has a proper cemented drainage system. 18 low-cost toilets have so far been constructed with the help of villagers who themselves dug the drains and the soak-pits for the toilets. The building material and the masons were provided by the Sai Organisation. Regular Bal Vikas classes, educational coaching to students, physical training for young boys are now being held in the village. Recently, a vocational training programme was organised wherein the village ladies were taught how to make pickles, jam and articles of daily use. With Swami's grace, this village now resounds with chants of "Sai Ram" wherever the Seva Dal members go and has pictures and sayings of Bhagavan at the village entrance and all over the village.

NOTICE

In view of the increase in the cost of paper and printing, we are compelled to revise the annual subscription rates of English and Telugu editions of Sanathana Sarathi with effect from 1st September 2008 as detailed below:

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Surrender your Ego

The vision of the Virat (Cosmic Form) is given to those who surrender their ego, take refuge in the Lord (as Arjuna did) and imbibe with care the Gita sung by the Lord in the silence of their heart. God is omnipresent. He is the inner motivator of every particle of the universe. To declare that He is amenable only to your style of worship and that He will answer only the name that you have learnt to use is to insult His omniscience and His glory. See Him in all; serve Him in all; revere Him in all. Pray, "Let the whole world prosper; let all mankind be happy."

– *Baba*

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