

Inherit Sai Wealth: Love

The following discourse by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was given on His birthday in 1986. He declared that man has forgotten his true divine nature and is immersed in the vain pursuit of material pleasures instead. To realize the Divine love is the easiest path.

This great motherland of ours, which produced high-souled men who spread its glory across the continents;

*This heroic land that won its freedom from occidental adventurers;
This sacred land that achieved eminence in music, literature, and the fine arts;
Being born in this land of beauty resplendent with artistic achievements,
It is the supreme duty of all ye devotees
To protect the treasure of dharma bequeathed to you by Bharat Mata!*

Embodiments of the divine! The land of *Bharat* [India] resembles an orange fruit. The religions and communities are the pieces in it. The numerous occupations pursued by the people are like the seeds. To be born in a country with such rich variety is itself a blessing. It is a land that should shine in all its glory by manifesting unity.

From very early times Bharat has been proclaiming to the world its faith in God and the godly life. "Let all the worlds be happy" has been the avowed ideal of Hindu society. The good fortune of those who are born in such a country is beyond praise.

Both pain and pleasure are impostors

Man is essentially divine in nature. Owing to various factors man tends to forget his inherent divinity (*sat-chit-ananda*). The veil of ignorance that conceals the divinity in him cannot be removed easily. Neither wealth, position, nor scholarship can rid him of this malaise. *Atma-jnana* (knowledge of the Self) alone can provide the remedy. You should not be misled by the pleasures derived from possessions, position, or prosperity. These are transient things, which come and go. Pain and pleasure are incidental to human existence like kith and kin. Man should endeavor to realize his true nature, experience his inherent divinity, and not yield to the temptations of the moment. Both pain and pleasure are impostors. Man should not allow himself to be led astray by them.



The Self transcends time and space. It is eternal and unchanging. Enquiry into the nature of the Self is the message of the perennial philosophy. It is also the primary duty of man.

The sages declared that the body is a perishable ragbag, teeming with ills. Giving up attachment to it, man should seek refuge in God. The five elements can affect only the body but can have no effect on the Spirit.

Purity and Divinity

The body, mind, and *atma* (spirit) constitute a human being. The three demonstrate the nature of man and enable him to grow to his true stature. They represent the three concepts of action, awareness, and realization. The body is the instrument for practicing *dharma* [righteousness]. It is the means of discharging all one's duties. The mind is the source of good and bad

thoughts. The world is understood only through the mind. It is the instrument for judging between right and wrong, the impermanent and the everlasting. It represents awareness or understanding. The *atma* represents the pure, effulgent, eternal, and unchanging consciousness. It shines within man as illuminating flame. The *Shastras* [scriptures] have characterized it as Divine. The *Upanishads* [scriptures] have declared that God dwells in the cave of the heart. The Bible has declared that the Divine can be experienced only through purity of the heart. The Quran also declares that purity of heart is essential for experiencing God. Guru Nanak declared that only through good thoughts, good speech, and good actions can one realize the Divine. All faiths are one in proclaiming the supreme importance of purity of heart.

Man, however, has forgotten his true divine nature and is immersed in the vain pursuit of material pleasures. In the process he has ignored right conduct and is

prey to many ills. Men regard *dharma* as merely ethical conduct in daily life. But this is not so. *Dharma* really means recognition of the universal consciousness that is in each individual and acting on the basis of the unity of that consciousness. When this consciousness in man is enveloped in the ego, it assumes the form of three *gunas* (*satwa, rajas, tamas*). When the divine nature of this consciousness is realized, it is transformed into *atma dharma*—the *dharma* of the Self. True *dharma* is the realization of the unity of the Omni-Self.

Atma-dharma and Para-dharma

All worldly duties and activities bear the imprint of three *gunas*. *Swadharma* [personal duties] refers to *atmadharma* (the *dharma* of the Spirit). *Para dharma* is *dharma* (duties) relating to the world. The worldly duties are ephemeral and subject to change. They have been changing all through the ages. These should not be treated on a par with *atma-dharma*. Among these worldly duties, there are duties like *varna-dharma* (functional duties), *ashram-dharma* (duties relating to one's stage in life), and others.

These duties have been laid down to help man in leading his worldly life. But beyond them is the *atma dharma*, which must be observed for Self-realization. By solely adhering to worldly duties, man remains at the animal level. Through the discipline of the mind, man may rise to the human level. But it is only when the physical and mental duties are linked to the spiritual discipline that *atma dharma* is observed. The body performs actions, the mind distinguishes between right and wrong. The *atma* functions as the Witness. Although these three appear to differ from each other, they are inter-related. It is only when the three are integrated and harmonized that man can achieve self-fulfillment.

Dharma, artha, kama and *moksha*—the four *purusharthas*—are the aims of life. It is only when *artha* (the acquisition of wealth) and *kama* (the fulfillment of desires) are linked to *dharma* (righteousness) that *moksha* (liberation) can be easily achieved. But if *artha* and *kama* are divorced from *dharma*, there can be no peace or happiness. *Moksha* is freedom from delusion.

"All this is permeated by the Divine"

The word *manava* (man) means one who is not new. Man has been taking many births and is caught up in the endless cycle of desires, differences, and discord. He must get out of this vicious circle by recognizing that the divine is immanent in everything. Society itself should be regarded as a manifestation of the Divine. The *Upanishad* has declared: "*Isavasyam idam sarvam*" ("All this is permeated by the Divine.")

The stars are Brahman; The Sun is Brahman.
The Moon is Brahman; water is Brahman.
Heaven is Brahman; Vaikunta is Brahman
Father is Brahman; Mother is Brahman.
All wealth is Brahman; Brahman is the
creator, the protector, and the destroyer.

*Time is Brahmam; The body is Brahmam.
Nature is Brahmam; Life is Brahmam.
This assemblage is Brahmam; Truth is Brahmam.
The Sai who is declaring this is also Brahmam.*

Brahmam permeates everything in the cosmos. There is nothing other than *Brahmam*. When *Brahmam* is immanent in everything, how can we search for Him? Where is He to be found? When the entire universe is His abode, how can you locate the road or the entrance to it? The Lord of the universe is the Lord enshrined in your heart. If you play on your heartstrings with ecstasy, the heart will be *Vaikunta* [heaven] itself.

The Divine wealth of love

The Lord has endowed you with all His wealth and Divine potentialities. You are inheritors of this wealth. You have to discover what that wealth is.

Sai's wealth is pure, selfless, and boundless Love. This is the truth.

It is not the edifices you see here that are Sai's wealth. It is pure, selfless Love alone. You must inherit this Love, fill yourselves with it, and offer it to the world. This is your supreme responsibility as Sai devotees.

What is it that you can offer to the Lord who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and all-knowing? The various things you offer to God are given out of delusion.

*Can the Lord who permeates the universe be confined in a temple?
To one who has the effulgence of a billion suns, what lamp can you
light?
His truth is beyond the comprehension of Brahma and Hara.
How can others comprehend Him?
What name can be given to One who is all things?
What food can you offer to one who holds the cosmos in His stomach?*

You become devoted for your own sake. Whatever the name or form in which you worship the Lord, He will respond. He is the provider of everything, who fulfills every wish. Whether the devotee is one in distress or craving for some object, or a seeker, or a *jnani*, God responds according to the measure of his devotion.

Embodiments of the Divine! To realize the divine, Love is the easiest path. Just as you can see the moon only with the light of the moon, God, who is the embodiment of Love, can be reached through Love. Regard Love as your life breath. Love was the first quality to emerge in the creative process. All other qualities came after it. Therefore, fill your hearts with love and base your life on it.

Who can be regarded as the greatest conqueror?

Man's thoughts are filled with various types of attachments and aversions. Attachment and hatred are dominant qualities in man. They are the evil planets that bedevil man's life.

Once, Totaka, a disciple of Sri Sankaracharya, asked the guru; "Master, in this world who can be regarded as the greatest conqueror?" Sri Sankaracharya replied; "Only the person who has acquired mastery over his senses is the greatest conqueror—not those who may conquer kingdoms, scale the Himalayas, or master all knowledge."

Prahlada told his father Hiranyakasipu, "You want to conquer the three worlds, but you are failing to conquer your senses." One who has not mastered his internal enemies like anger, hatred, etc., how can he hope to conquer his external enemies? The inner enemies can be conquered only by one means: love. It is essential to make our life worthwhile by practicing love, by subduing the six internal enemies (anger, envy, etc.), and dedicating all our actions to God.

The world is in turmoil. At this juncture, it is the duty of devotees to realize the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and counteract the evil forces that are inflicting innumerable troubles on mankind. Resorting to the potent weapon of love, they should try to serve humanity and eradicate the forces of violence and unrighteousness that are rampant today.

Even if you cannot perform any other kind of worship or *sadhana*, service to society will help you to sanctify your life. Of the nine forms of devotion, *seva* (service) is most important. Through service, complete surrender of the self can be achieved.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 19

*Fellowmen and the world must be seen ever in the mirror of sat-chit-ananda.
Kinship based on this recognition will alone last. That is the Sai kinship.*

~Baba

"Baba, the Gardener"

There is a wise gardener:
Hair of early morning spider's webs.
Skin of rainbow dewdrops.
Hands of sun-kissed butterfly wings.

Eyes of newborn suns.
Limbs of love,
Nose of rose.
Heart of the singing universe.
Feet of the fulfilled family.
Heaven rests on His sparkling smile.

Nails of thorns,
He weeds sunken souls!
Sows seeds.
In Truth
His garden grows.
His flowers are we
The Gardener within.

~Anthony, Malta

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Dec. 1971

When Women are Honored

The following discourse was delivered by Bhagavan Baba on First Ladies Day November 19, 1995 in the Poornachandra Auditorium. He encouraged the ladies to change themselves and help to change the men and the children. They should develop the qualities of sympathy, compassion, love, and sacrifice.

Asthiram Jeevanam loke (Life in this phenomenal world is impermanent)
Yaddhrishyam tannashyam (Whatever is perceived is bound to pass away some time or other)
Asthiram yauvanam dhanam (Youth and wealth are transient)
Asthiram dhaara puthraadih (Wife and children will pass away)
Sathyam Keerthi dhvayam sthiram (Only Truth and fame endure).

Embodiments of Love! In this infinite universe, among the myriads of living beings humanity is eminent. Among human beings, it is a privilege to be born as a woman. There are many examples to demonstrate the preeminence of women.

Was not Rama born as a Divine incarnation in Kausalya's womb?
Did not Lava and Kusha (the twins) become great because they were born to Sita?
Was it not Jeejabai's loving care that made Shivaji great?
Was it not Putlibai's piety that made Gandhi a Mahatma?

All the greater sages and saints, heroes and warriors were born to women who made them great. Woman is the Goddess of Nature.

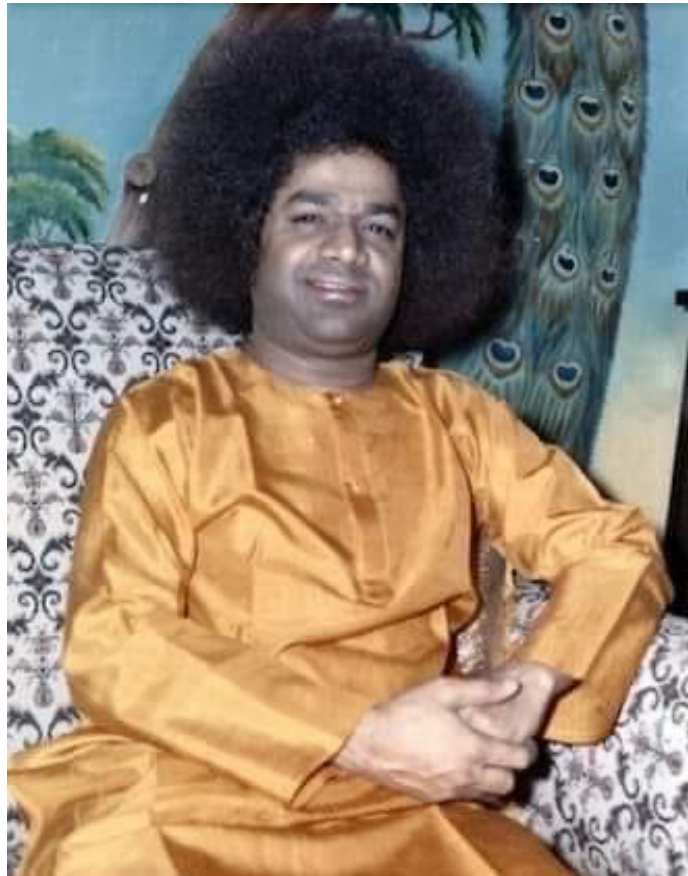
Gayatri, which enshrines the essence of the *Vedas*, is a goddess, venerated as *Veda Mata* (the mother of the *Vedas*).

It is obvious that feminine birth is estimable, adorable, and sublime. The *Veda* also adores the feminine principle in various ways. *Vedic* rituals and practices accord a high place to women.

Feminine aspect of Divinity

The woman is adored under different names as Sathyavati, Anyavati, Angavati and Nidanavati. Sathyavati proclaims the truth that the Divine pervades the cosmos, God is not separate from *prakriti* (nature). Nature is a form of the Divine. The *Veda* testifies to the omnipresence of the Divine like the presence of butter in every drop of milk.

Next is Angavati. The five elements are present everywhere in the universe: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These elements vary in subtlety in a progressive order. The *Veda* declares that even the five elements are manifestations of the Divine. This aspect of nature is called Angavati.



The Anyavati principle points out which deity is responsible for what function and describes the deity's special characteristics. Easwara is described as *Trishul-dhari* (the bearer of the Trident) and *Trinetra dhari* (the deity with three eyes). Vishnu is described as the bearer of the conch, the discus, and the mace. Krishna is described as one having the peacock's feather (on His head). Rama is described as the wielder of the bow. The Anyavati ritual worships the different deities with their distinctive features.

The Nidanavati ritual lays down nine different ways in which the Divine can be worshipped, such as listening, chanting the name, etc.

All forms of worship are presided over by these four feminine deities. Though the names are different, the goal is one.

Women should be revered

From ancient times, the feminine aspect of the Divine has been worshipped in various ways. The *Veda* declares that where women are honored and esteemed, there divinity is present with all its potency. Unfortunately, today men consider it demeaning to honor women. This is utterly wrong and is a sign of ignorance.

Stree (Woman) is Grihalakshmi (the Goddess of Prosperity for the home). She is hailed as *Dharmapatni* (the virtuous spouse). She is called *Illalu* (the mistress of the house) and *Ardhangi* (the better half). People gloat over petty titles conferred on them. But women have been conferred the highest titles that are valid for all time. A home without a woman is a jungle.

Men should realize the high status of women and honor and respect them accordingly. They should not make women weep and shed tears. A home where the woman sheds tears will be ruined. Men should give an honorable place for women and lead a respectable life.

The archetypal woman is described as *Adishakti* (the primal source of all energy) having a whole array of powers. She is hailed as the mother of the *amritasyaputrah* (children of immortality).

The *trigunas* in the word "*Stree*"

The word *Stree* is made up of three, consonants, "*Sa*", "*Ta*" and "*Ra*". "*Sa*" signifies the *satwic* [pure] nature of women. It also represents the triple aspects of experiencing divinity *salokyam* (vision of the Divine), *sameepyam* (proximity) and *sayujyam* (mergence). "*Ta*" signifies the *tamasic* [ignorance] quality. But this *tamasic* quality is not indolence and slothfulness. It includes qualities like humility, kindness, and modesty. This means that women begin with qualities like meekness and modesty so that they may serve the family and society in the right spirit. There is a saying in Andhra Pradesh: "Judge a house by its mistress."

"*Ra*" represents the *rajoguna* [activity]. This does not mean pugnacity and querulousness. This quality signifies the preparedness of women, where necessary, even to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their honor and the honor of their family. *Bharat's* [India] history is full of examples of women who fought valiantly and gave up their lives to protect their husbands and their honor.

Stree thus represents the combination of the three *gunas* [qualities]. Woman, who should be highly honored for these qualities, is being treated as *abala* (weaker vessel) and assigned an inferior status.

It will not be out of place to mention here that women who have wielded power in *Bharat* or other countries have proved themselves to be exceptionally able and

successful. There have been many kings in Britain, but no one ruled the country so well as Queen Victoria. Her rule was marked by righteousness, prosperity, and efficiency. There was no discontent during her reign. In more recent times, Indira Gandhi ran the Government with courage and consummate skill. She was prepared for any sacrifice in the interests of the country. Among Prime Ministers, she headed the Government for over 12 years. Many others had only brief tenures!

There are several organizations that are being run by women with great dedication and zeal for the benefit of the people. Valmiki extolled the sweetness of womanhood. What is the cause of this sweetness? The spirit of sacrifice is the cause, according to Valmiki.

Spirit of sacrifice is found only in women

A mother is ready to sacrifice everything, even her life, for the sake of her child. Such a spirit is to be found only among women. If a child is grievously ill, the father may say that the child may as well die. But the mother will try to save the child at any cost. It is for this reason that woman is described as *tyagamurti*, the embodiment of sacrifice. Men do not have the same spirit of sacrifice as women. Men may present a heroic pose, but do not have the determination and perseverance to carry on the struggle to the end. Valmiki described woman as the *bhakti swaroopini* (embodiment of devotion). Man was described as *jnanaswaroopa* [embodiment of knowledge]. The *jnani* has limited access to the divine mansion. But the woman devotee has access to innermost apartments. The preeminent status accorded to women will be evident from all the ancient scriptures.

In this context, the role of women as mothers should be understood. The great hero, Shivaji, was molded entirely by the teachings of his mother. Rama was taught by his mother Kausalya to follow the sacred path of *dharma*. The lives of the great show to what extent they were the products of their mothers.

Gandhiji became a staunch adherent of truth after a lesson he learnt from his mother, who could not bear her son telling a lie even to make her break her fast.

It is the mothers who make their children take to the right path, not so much the fathers. Today we find the fathers teaching the children to utter lies. For instance, when the telephone rings in the house, the father who is in the house tells his son to inform the caller that the father is not at home.

The practice of fathers allowing the sons to go astray has a long ancestry. It started in the *Dwapara Yuga* with Dhritarashtra, father of Duryodhana [from *Mahabharata*]. Whatever evil deeds his son did, Dhritarashtra used to say he was a good man. Fathers who allow their sons to go astray are not real fathers at all. Prahlada observed; "Only he is a father who advises the son to seek God. Only he is a true guru who instructs the pupil about God."

The mother is the first preceptor for the child

Mothers in ancient days used to teach the children about right conduct, morality, and devotion. The first preceptor for a child is the mother. For this reason, *Bharatiya* culture gave the first place to the mother among the four persons to be revered as divine: mother, father, guru, and guest. The mother gets the first place because she bears the child in the womb for nine months and nourishes him with her own blood.

Even in mentioning the names of deities, the first place is given to the goddess, as in Sita-Rama, Parvati-Parameshwara and Lakshmi-Narayana, and the reason for the feminine name getting priority is that she is *Prakriti swaroopini*—the embodiment of *prakriti* (nature). The implication in this usage is that you should realize God through the propitiation of *prakriti*.

Earn the blessings of the mother

In this world, all things are transient. Only righteousness and good name endure. How is one to acquire a good name? By revering the mother. Never go against the wishes of the mother. The son who causes pain to the mother can never be happy. Hence, earn the blessing of the mother.

In this context, it should be noted that Russians observe December 8th as Ladies Day. On that day the women have free time. The men must do the cooking. The women go out to do service in hospitals and other places.

Men and women must understand each other so that they can live in harmony in the family. Today people want to live happily but not to lead ideal lives. Parents, for instance, do not set a good example to the children. In the modern age, the father does not instruct the children properly and the children do not pay heed to the words of the mother. Most fathers today behave like Dhritarashtra. Where there are some good children leading a pious life, the fathers rebuke them, saying, "Have you gone crazy? Don't take part in *bhajans* or social service." Parents who behave in this manner are like Hiranyakasipu, who could not tolerate his son worshipping Hari. Today we have many parents like Dhritarashtra and Hiranyakasipu, but few who encourage their children to adhere to righteousness.

Children today do not relish edifying works like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavatam*. They waste their time reading trash. Parents should see that children do not read bad books.

Now for a few words of advice to women. It is found that women are given to excessive talking. From today you must take a pledge not to indulge in talking. Women are found talking not only in the auditorium but even in the *bhajan mandir*. Men are fond of strolling around as they please. They observe no restraints as to where they should not go and what places they should avoid. If women observe restraint in speech and men control their movements, it will be good for both.

Ladies' day should be observed every year

If the nation must prosper, improvement must start with the parents. Without peace and harmony at home, there can be no peace in the nation. This message should be propagated throughout the country on every November 19th by observing it as Ladies' Day. You should teach people how to run their homes well and how to bring up children on the right lines. You must deal calmly and tactfully with the men if they are not cooperating. Though *Ravana* was evil minded, his noble wife, *Mandodari*, tried to correct him as much as possible. She advised him strongly not to keep *Sita* in Lanka, but to restore her to Rama.

From today learn to see the good in others and examine your own defects. Thereby you will benefit both ways. Those who go about finding faults in others are like dogs that go after cast-off shoes.

Call to women

Embodiments of Love! Mistakes may sometimes be committed in the organization. See that they do not recur. Buddha learnt the proper lesson through a single experience of seeing an old man, a sick man, and a dead corpse. He understood the entire nature of human existence from this. People today have similar experiences over and over again. But their minds remain unchanged. Every experience should bring out a change. For years you listen to Swami's discourses. How many have changed? How many have developed good qualities? Very few indeed.

Develop pure thoughts wherever you may be. Only then your visit to Prasanthi Nilayam at great expense would have served a purpose.

As today is a sacred day dedicated to women, they should change themselves and help to change the men and the children. They should develop the qualities of sympathy, compassion, love, and sacrifice. Study the lives of our great women, who were models of patience, fortitude, compassion, and sacrifice. I desire that you should take up the reins of leadership and bring peace and prosperity to the nation by leading ideal lives.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 28

Visit *Sai Sarathi* on the web at SaiSarathi.com

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To submit text or photos, please email them to "editor@SaiSarathi.com."

Journey Into Light

N. Sai Adithya is an alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School in Prasanthi Nilayam. In the following article he shares the miraculous experiences that he and his family had with Bhagavan Baba.

Swami always says, "I am in you, with you, above you, around you, below you." Swami has been with us from time immemorial, for many lives, even though we don't know. However, when He chooses to show His presence, He does it in the most inexplicable ways. We call them miracles, but our Lord calls them His visiting cards. Every one of us has many such experiences, which stand as a testimony to how much Swami loves us and cares for us. The following are a few experiences that took place in my family, and I am grateful to Swami for all that He has done.

It was the year 1992. My mother was 28 weeks pregnant and went into premature labor. The doctors tried to avert the delivery for fear that the fetus would die. *Vibhuti* [sacred ash] was applied and the contractions stopped. Again at 32 weeks she was hospitalized, and they decided to deliver the baby.

The doctors administered medicine to my mother, but the fetus reacted badly to the medicine and the heart stopped beating. The baby had to be delivered immediately. My grandfather had to administer the anesthetic and my father, a doctor, had to assist the delivery as no one else was around. After two minutes, I was delivered lifeless.

My grandfather had to attend to my mother first. By that time, 40 minutes had passed since my heart had stopped beating. I was small, bluish grey in color, not breathing, and without any heart beats. My grandfather rubbed my heart and pushed oxygen into my lungs to try and get my heart beating. He was praying to Swami for help. After five minutes, he heard an inner voice saying, "Let go! What are you trying to do, create a monster in the house?" He realized what it meant, you may get the heart beating, but you cannot give life to a dead brain. My grandfather managed to get the heart beating to half the normal rate. But my body color did not change. Everyone was chanting "Sai Ram" continuously. I was kept in an intensive care crib.

My father went home, prayed to Swami, and lit an incense stick in the prayer room. Swami showed His presence there. The ash from the burnt incense stick remained stiff, without falling, in the shape of letter 'S'. At the hospital, they could smell whiffs of Jasmine around the crib.

Overnight, some 'mysterious hand' had pulled out the feeding tube. When my grandfather came at 5 a.m., I had no limb movement. My grandfather did not re-insert the feeding tube but took me to my mother. Miraculously I began drinking milk and my limbs began to move.

I slowly improved and went home on the fifth day. For the next few months, the CD with Swami chanting the *Gayatri Mantra* was played round the clock. The following week my grandfather came to Prashanti Nilayam and thanked Swami. He asked Swami to name the child as He had given the life. Swami took my photo, which was taken when I was a few days old, and wrote 'Sai Adithya' on its back.

From the time I was very young, I used to feel sad while leaving Prashanti Nilayam. I used to tell Swami about this and ask Him whether I could study in His school. He would say, "Not now." The time was not ripe.

Then in October 2003, I came to Puttaparthi with my parents for about three weeks. The day came for us to leave. We were leaving at about 5 p.m., which meant we would have to get up just before the *bhajan* [devotional singing]. When Swami came in



His golf cart in the verandah, He signaled to my father with His hand that He should come to the back to see Him. My father was still seated when the *bhajan* started. I was wondering what was going on, because sitting on the side I did not know the happenings on the verandah.

After the *Aarti* [waving the flame] Swami got into the golf cart and then saw my father and asked us to go for the interview. I got up and went inside. Swami asked me if I wanted to join the school in the sixth class. I replied in the affirmative. He told me to come in the last week of May and He would make me join the school.

In April 2004, I left my school in Australia and came to Prashanti Nilayam at the end of May. Two weeks went by, but Swami did not say anything. I became very sad. One day I broke down and cried for a long time. Within a few days, on 22nd June we received a phone call saying that Swami had asked me to join the school on Monday, 24th June, it being an auspicious day. Thus, on 24th June 2004 I entered the portals of His school.

When I was in seventh class, Swami asked my father what I wanted to do when I grew up. My father thought for a while and then said that I wanted to do medicine. Swami became extremely happy and smiled. So, it was decided that I would be a doctor. It was possible for me to do math or biology after tenth class and then do medicine. I wanted to ask Swami for guidance.

During the *Sahasra Poorna Chandra Darshana Mahotsavam*, I dozed off during the study hours. In my dreams, I was sitting on the stage in the stadium during the proceedings. Swami got up from His chair and walked toward me. I got up and asked Swami whether to do math or biology. Swami was about to answer when my dream abruptly ended as the teacher had woken me up. I felt a little sad but soon forgot about it.

As the New Year dawned, I decided to ask Swami as soon as possible as to what subject to take in 11th class. On the night of January 2nd I had a dream. I was sitting outside when someone informed me that Swami wanted to see me. I got up and ran inside a room where Swami was seated on a chair. This room did not look like the interview room. I asked, "Swami, math or biology?" Swami replied, "Biology." Then Swami said something in *Telugu* and I told Swami, "You know that I don't know *Telugu*, Swami." Then Swami said in English that I could get better marks. So, I decided to take Biology in 11th class.

These few instances show how Swami guides us in our lives always. He knows what is best for us even if we may not think so. Swami is always there to guide and help us whether it is physically or through other means. He is our best friend, and we should learn to talk to Him in heart. If we do this, He will respond, and we will be uplifted. One must not waste this opportunity to be with God. One's life should be made such that this will be the last and he will merge back into Him.

When I was very small, Swami created a chain for me. The pendant was a leaf with an image of Sai Krishna on it. I soon started to chew the pendant as I was still a small boy and it developed into a habit. However much my parents tried to stop me, I would not [stop]. One day the pendant broke off the chain. It was then that I realized my mistake, but it was too late.

In the next few interviews that we had, my mother would show Swami the pendant and ask Him to fix it. Finally, Swami told me to keep it at home and told me, "Krishna is in your heart." This teaches us that God is inside us and we need not go searching for Him. He is always within us, guiding and guarding us. Once we realize this, we will be free from the cycle of birth and death.

~N. Sai Adithya

Source: *Sai Chandana 2010* (85th Birthday Offering)

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

Baba & His Omnipresence

Hislop: One regards himself as a son of Swami. Swami is as the mother and we confide in Him directly, if possible, but if not then by prayer and by writing to him.

Sai: There is an endless flow of letters coming to Swami. Swami reads all the letters, and about 10 a.m. the letters are burned. Swami does everything Himself, so everything is done right. Swami never sleeps. In the middle of the night, He turns off the light and rests in bed because if the light is on, devotees gather. Swami has no need of sleep. But men need at least four hours of sleep; it is essential for them. People think that Baba rests in the afternoon until 4 p.m. But He never rests. He is never tired. He is always working. People are upset when three or four relatives visit. But Baba's visitors are endless. Baba is attending to every detail of His schools and colleges, and to the millions of His devotees. And for most people the responsibility for their work rests elsewhere, but Baba is responsible for the results as well as for the work.

Hislop: Baba is responsible also for His other worlds, is He not?

Sai: Yes. For saints, rishis, yogis everywhere, Swami is attending to the guidance, protection, and welfare of these wherever they may be.

Hislop: I mean, Swami is responsible for the entire universe, not just this world?

Sai: It is like this. Baba is the switch. The switch is turned on and all goes forward automatically. As the key is turned in a car, then all parts of the car work automatically. In a similar way, the universe is automatically regulated. So-called 'miracles' are not miracles, nor do they prove divinity. Baba's endless work in all the worlds is easy, no weight, always happy—that is the 'miracle.'

Hislop: Considering the endless problems that Swami deals within this world, it is strange that He is always in bliss, always happy.

Sai: Regardless of events, Swami is always happy, always blissful.

Hislop: Please excuse a question that may seem rude: Swami seems to have different moods. What does this mean?

Sai: A boat glides over the flood but does not allow the flood to enter it. Just as one is at peace in a boat into which no water comes, no worries or concerns enter into Baba's state of bliss. But ordinary men do not do the same as Baba. They allow 'water,' all sorts of worries and concerns to enter the 'boat,' and there is no

happiness, no bliss, no peace of mind. Baba's bliss is ever present, regardless of the world. Consider, Baba each month must meet an expense budget of hundreds of thousands of rupees. On His shoulders rest all the affairs of the schools, the ashram, the people within His physical circle, the interviews, the petitions, the correspondence, the problems. That is on the body level. At the same time, on the mental level, Baba is with those who yearn for God, no matter in what area of the world, saints, yogis, rishis, spiritual aspirants everywhere, watching them, guiding them, fostering every movement of heart or mind toward God. But Baba is untouched by all this. His bliss is constant, unchanging. Even outwardly His bliss is constant, even though it may appear that He is angry, impatient, aloof, distant. The 'anger' is just sound because the sound of anger is necessary to correct certain situations. In like fashion, 'aloofness' or 'distance' is just the appropriate role at that time and place. In fact, Baba's love is constant and unchanging, just as is His bliss.

Hislop: Baba has the inconceivably immense task of the universe. How can He afford to spend time talking to people like us?

Sai: Baba, with His limitless bodies, is everywhere doing the tasks, 'a thousand heads, hands, feet—*Sahasra sheersha purushah sahasraksha sahasrapad.*' It is just this body that sits here talking with you. That is Baba's omnipresence. The *Avatar* is beyond the five elements. He is the Creator. Arjuna was the controller, Krishna the Creator. Science is outside; wisdom is inside. Man, turning outward, creates machines, but there his control ends. Witness the three dead astronauts of a few months ago. God is not subject to any limitation. He is the Creator of the elements, their Modifier, their Preserver, their Destroyer.

Hislop: The *Avatar* is never born, but He appears to take birth in a body which then gradually grows to full size in the ordinary way. The bodies that one sees are impermanent, and Baba does not look to be different.

Sai: The *Avatar* takes only the one body such as you have described. The difference is that men come into bodies with tendencies and the results of actions. Baba takes this body without any tendencies, completely free, no desires, no attachments, always happy.

Hislop: When one sees Baba as a form amongst all the perishable forms, cannot one point to Him as the one reality amongst all these perishable dream-like forms?

Sai: Yes. The one reality is Baba. 'Baba' means, Being, Awareness, Bliss, Atma, one Reality.

Source: Conversations with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought of the MONTH

Your Relationship with God

What is the meaning of *satsang* (good company)? *Sath* is the name of Divinity. It is changeless in all the periods of time. It is eternal and is present in you. You have to understand this eternal principle. To do so, you have to be in communion with *Sath*.

Milk is very happy in the company of water. The combination of water and milk can be termed *satsang*. That is ideal friendship. When the milk is boiled on a stove, the water gets evaporated. The milk, unable to bear the separation from water, tries to jump into the fire. The moment you sprinkle some water on the boiling milk, it gets pacified. The milk is happy on being united with its friend.

The same relationship exists between *nara* (individual) and *Narayana* (God). God is very happy when the individual joins His company. But God feels very sad when the individual diverts his attention from Him and gets immersed in worldly pleasures. Once the individual surrenders completely to God, He is happy again. Due to the effects of *Kali* [Iron] age, the individual separates himself from God. The individual may not feel sad, but God feels sad because His friend, the individual, is parting ways with Him.

“True Meaning of Satsang,” *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol 31

What is that you need to do to make God happy? You should go close to God and worship Him with a sense of surrender. This is for your own sake. God does not ask for anything. Child sits on the lap of mother for its own satisfaction. When the child goes near its mother, she showers her love. When you want to be close to God, you do not need to go through sacred texts or undertake great spiritual exercises. Rituals and reading of holy texts are only worldly actions. They are meant only to give external satisfaction, but one must make efforts to experience inner satisfaction.

“God Wants Only Selfless Love,” *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol 31

You all know that *Deepavali* [Festival of Lights] is approaching. With one candle you can light the other lamps. That candle is Divinity, and the lamps are individuals. It is only one Divinity that protects and sustains all. Light the lamp of Love in you.

Even worldly activities will become spiritual if you have Love. You can do your office work or business, you can also take care of your family; but whatever you do, do it as an offering to God. Let every activity be pleasing unto God. That is true devotion.

You should offer only your pure love and sacrifice. The relation between a devotee and God is only heart to heart and Love to Love.

“Let Every Activity be Pleasing unto God,” *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol 31