

## God's Love is Equal for All

**G**od's love is indeed equal toward all. A fragrant flower emits the same fragrance irrespective of the hand it is held in; be it the left hand or the right. It is not for God to treat one with liking and another with dislike. But man, by his nature, feels guilty and tries to see anomalies in God. A man, with his worldly intelligence, cannot properly understand the Divine. How can a fish vendor evaluate precious gems? As is the thought, so is the fruit. Each one differentiates good and bad as per his own outlook and thus experiencing the good and the bad, binds himself with self-inflicted worry.

The axe ruthlessly chops off the sandalwood tree. But the sandalwood tree, without any malice or anger, leaves its fragrance on the axe that cuts it. So does Divinity. Out of ignorance, pride, arrogance, or blinded by self-indulgence, men may undermine God in a number of ways, in thought and word. Some might even think that they could cause pain to God by speaking ill of Him. But these do not affect God. Even to such cynical men, He grants His goodness and good will.

Good and bad are two sides of the same coin. The citizens of Ayodhya were greatly devoted and dedicated to Lord Ramachandra. However, disregarding all their prayers, He proceeded to leave for exile. The same people who had shown love, loyalty, and devotion toward Lord Rama became angry with Him for going against their wishes. They criticized Lord Rama saying, "We mistook Rama to be soft and sweet at heart, like butter and nectar. Never did we imagine that He would turn out to be so cold, with a heart of a stone."

Now, this criticism is a reaction that contradicts the praises showered earlier. That is how everything inherently has components of pleasure and pain, gain and loss, praise and censure, etc. Good men and bad men, both cause sorrow to the Divine. In fact, believers and non-believers, both speak ill of Him! Both, the good and the bad are violent toward the Divine! What is the inner meaning of 'violence' here? How can we consider it to be violence? On reasoning out, it is understood that separation from the good and association with the bad are the reasons for the root cause of sorrow. Thus, separation and association both can cause sorrow. That is why the Divine blesses both equally.

What exactly is this blessing? He blesses that one may never suffer the association of bad men or the separation from the good men. To get in touch with good men and to break up with bad men should be the basic practice of a human being. Then again,



both these association and separation are born within our heart. The nectar and the poison were produced from the same sea. The nectar gave happiness and the poison led to sorrow. The nectar rose to fame and the poison became infamous. Hence, one should cultivate goodness in pursuit of the great glory that the human beings can reach. Man

today craves for meritorious positions but doesn't come forward to perform meritorious deeds. He refuses to accept the results of his sin but is ever ready to commit acts of sin. This is the basic problem. "*punyasya phalam ichhanti, punyam na kurvanti maanavah; na papa phalam icchanti, papam kurvanti yathatah*". (If you do not desire a bad outcome, do not embark upon a bad activity. When you desire good results, take the initiative to perform good deeds only.)

The principles of good and bad are inherent in humanity. In some, the good and bad principles are fused together. The crow consumes bitter *neem* [tree indigenous to India] with relish. The cuckoo relishes sweet mango. In the same way, some men desire worldly pleasures, which they firmly believe to be the source of happiness and run after those. Good men aspire only to experience love and Divinity and crave for these. Good and bad are inherent in the nature of both these types.

Goodness is always accompanied by suffering. In the eyes of the world, it is a lowly and deprived way of life. But, then, the wish-fulfilling tree is merely a tree belonging to the lower forms of life. The ocean that gives precious gems is all salt water. So, when the good and the bad within human nature is analyzed deeply, it is seen that good and bad arise out of one's wishful thoughts and have nothing to do with the object that is judged.

Man must duly persevere to take noble ideas to heart and experience the happiness thereof. Man must foster the principle of love within himself. Giving and forgiving—by these alone can we fill our life with love. By getting and forgetting, selfishness grows. Forgetting the favors taken from others is the prime reason for growing selfishness. Hence, to develop love in us we should go on giving and forgiving.

**Source:** *My Dear Students, Vol. 1*

## Sai and Sufi Tradition: An Islamic View

The *Sufi* tradition found its milestone of *advaitic* thought in the beliefs of Ibn-al-Arabi (1165-1240) and the widespread acceptance of his theory of *Wahdat-al-Wujud* [unity of being]. Al-Arabi is nearer to *Vedic* and Baba's teaching than any other Sufi outside India. A keen student of Sai literature will find similarities in ideas and imagery between Baba's discourses and Al-Arabi's writing. Four ideas of Al-Arabi are significant.

(i) According to Al-Arabi, the One and the many are two aspects of the One. "The One reveals Himself in the many ... it is like a source of light from which an infinite number of lights are derived ... it is like a mighty sea on the surface of which we observe countless waves, forever appearing and disappearing." The two aspects of One reality were called *tanzih* [*nirguna*—formless] and *tasbih* [*sadguna*—good qualities] by Al-Arabi.

(ii) Al-Arabi used the term "emanation" to mean the constant appearance of form of the same Reality.

(iii) Al-Arabi's idea of the perfect man is equated with logos [word of God] and the spirit-giving principle immanent in the universe.

(iv) Like Baba, Al-Arabi rejected the place of reason in understanding the purpose of human existence. Baba gives the example of the same electric current running through different electric devices. Al-Arabi gives the image of light passing through colored glasses to suggest One Reality manifesting itself in men of different abilities. Intuition, not reason, reveals the purpose of existence. The purpose of life is to realize the divine union that already exists between God and man. Al-Arabi advised Sufis that tolerance, human compassion, and fellowship were indispensable features of spiritual life. Like Baba, he also urged that the Divine exists and is worshipped in all religions. Instinctively Al-Arabi believed in the one Universal God. I recall what Baba said in one of His discourses: "The monistic concept of divinity expounded to Arjuna by Krishna in *Bhagavad Gita* harmonizes the teachings of all religions and reconciles all traditions." (Summer Showers: 1979, P. 119)

Considering love to be the highest manifestation of God, Al-Arabi declared:

My heart has become the receptacle of every ' form';  
It is a pasture for gazelles (objects of love)  
A convent for Christian monks,  
And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's *Ka'ba*  
and the tablets of *Torah* and the Book of the *Quran*.  
I follow the religion of love, whichever way its camels take.  
For this is my religion and my faith.



The major branch of *Sufi* tradition that developed in India observed this broader horizon of divinity and love, whether it flourished in the valley of Kashmir and was called the *Rishi-Sufi* order or welcomed the *Nath Yogis* [Yogis of the Shiva tradition] to its assemblies and learned *Hatha-Yoga* from them. The *Baul* Movement [group of mystic minstrels] in Bengal during the 15th century followed the same ideal of Unity of God. A popular group of Muslim and Hindu singers, the Bauls were 'men of hearts', non-dualistic and mystical; they used songs in the tradition of *Chaitanya*.

The popularity of *Vaishnavite* [worship of Vishnu] themes in *Sufi Sama* [music recitals] was widespread as it induced ecstasy. In 1566 a *Sufi* dictionary of Hindi songs was compiled, which among other things explained the Krishna theme and symbolism in *Sufi* terminology. These are only a few examples from a treasure-house of a million others to suggest the

direction in which Indian Sufi tradition was moving. The growing emphasis on the universal concept of love was a strong trend that has found its goal in the presence of Sai. "The path of love is the royal road that leads mankind to Me."

(Baba: *Who is Sai*)

To the *Sufi* seeker the goal is important and not sectarianism and dialectics. The secret of this goal is best described by Masud-i-Bak, a Sufi from Delhi. All names, says the mystic, refer to the One name, in all forms only the one face is hidden, and in all religions one road is concealed. This is the Truth that Sai embodies.

Continue your worship of your chosen God along the lines already familiar to you. Then you will find that you are coming nearer to Me, for all names are Mine and all forms are Mine.

(Baba: *Why I Incarnate*)

## Eight roses

They worshipped Him with flowers and songs, with camphor and prayers. They entreated Him with tears and sighs. They waited on Him with folded hands and smiling lips. He remained unmoved, reclining on the sky-blue swing of the heart. And in the fragrance of flowers, in the rhythm of the music, in the silence of tears and smiles He hid from them—the Subtlest of the Subtle. "I do not cause either joy or grief," He said, "you are the designer of both these chains that bind you." And all that He asked for was their love and devotion presented to Him as the eight flowers of non-violence, sense-control, compassion to all living beings, forbearance, *shanti* [peace], meditation, and truth.

A *Sufi* would pluck these flowers and offer them to Him for they have grown in his garden for centuries. The ten qualities that all the *Sufis* were expected to cultivate and that were repeated in *Sufi* literature and nourished in *Sufi* tradition were an elaboration of the eight "good qualities" Baba has pointed out (*Sanathana Sarathi*, June 1981, pp. 142-45). Of these, peace and truth are most significant because they are also the attributes of the Divine Beloved.

However, the eight good qualities are signs of a pure heart, the shrine for the Lord. "I am the dweller in the temple of every heart," says Sai. "Make your best endeavor to worship at the temple of the heart," advised the Sufi, Abdullah Ansari.

*Para bhakti* [pure, transparent, and simple devotion] can only be offered in the bowl of service to society for "he who takes care of man takes care of God" (Ibn al-Arabi). It is only then that the fortunate one-in-a million devotee reaches the doors and experiences the significance of the *Quranic* greeting: "peace—a word from thy Lord, most merciful." An ancient promise that might have taken 1000 years or more is fulfilled as the Divine voice welcomes.

"I am *anandaswarupa* [embodiment of bliss]. Come, take *ananda* from Me, dwell in that *ananda* or bliss and be full of *shanti* or peace."

(Baba: *Why I Incarnate*)

~Zeba Bashiruddin

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, April 1982

## Lead into Gold

*In 1967 Howard Murphet, the author of the book Man of Miracles, spoke at a public meeting in Chennai [Madras in Southern India] in the presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Following is a transcription of that speech.*

It is indeed a great privilege and joy to be given this opportunity of speaking a few words to you in the presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

But what can I say to you, His followers—many of you *bhaktas* [devotees] of long standing who know His works and words much better than I do? Well, perhaps you may find some interest in hearing how skeptics of the Western world had the good fortune to meet Him, what He means to me, and what I think is His significance to the world.

The mass of men in the West—and unfortunately, I'm afraid, a growing number in India, too—are materialists who do not believe in the remote possibility of what we call 'miracles'. The main cause of this state of mind is, I believe, the spurt ahead that physical science has taken over the last century. Having learned a good deal, men think they know a lot. Anything that appears to contradict the set of fundamental laws they have formulated is not acceptable. It cannot exist! There must be some mistake, some poor observation, some fraud, and some trickery!

A cautious approach is no doubt necessary to the progress of science. But how easily it can degenerate into prejudice, cynicism, and a closed mind!

This attitude is more prevalent in those countries most affected by what is called 'scientific progress'. But, of course, not all in the West are so conditioned. Many, for example, in the Roman Catholic religion—and some outside it—believe in the well-tested and authenticated healing miracles at Lourdes, France. Moreover, there are, and always have been, those seers, prophets, and poets who discern the divine beneath the surface of mundane things. To the self-satisfied cynics, to the blind materialists, Francis Thompson, the English poet says:

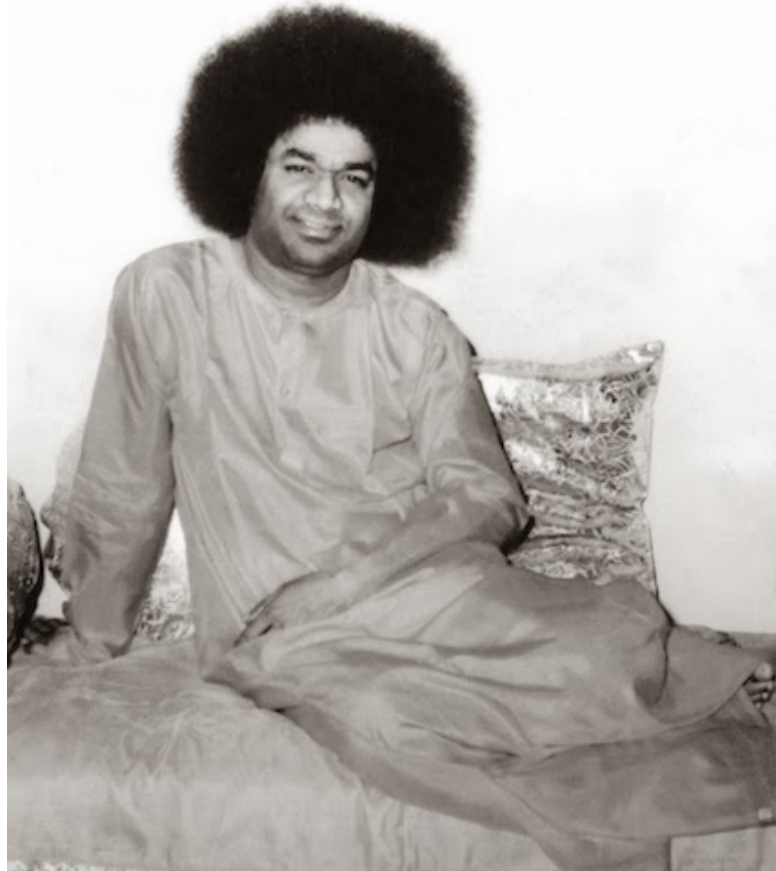
*"The angels keep their ancient places;  
Move but a stone and start a wing.  
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,  
That miss the many-splendored thing.*

I hope that I myself was not a cynic when I came to India. I know that I was a skeptic, but not an incurable one. I had read, of course, of the great miracle-workers and teachers of India's past. I hoped that some might still exist today. I hoped—yet hardly dared to hope—that I might even meet one. For underneath, like all men, I longed for the 'many-splendored thing'.

But I must say that my approach has always been the cautious, scientific one. Like St. Thomas—whose bones, they say, lie buried here in Madras—I needed to see and to touch for myself in order to believe.

It was here in this city—through a strange network of circumstances that I can only say was Sai Baba's grace—that I met Sai Baba. Later I went to His *Ashram* in 'Prasanthi Nilayam'. The map shows this as being in Andhra Pradesh, but to me it's a place 'half-way between heaven and earth'.

As Christ was kind to Thomas, Baba was kind to me. On many occasions I saw and touched miraculous, incredible things, so that now I know beyond any doubt that in the presence of Sai Baba these things do happen.



This is not the time to tell you about my specific experiences. You all have your own joy-making, love-evoking collection of miraculous experiences with Baba. Or if you haven't, you shall with faith. But since Baba granted me the permission, and great privilege, of writing a book on him, I have talked to many devotees and heard their wonderful stories. These are all a part of the supreme story of Sai Baba in this Incarnation.

Well, having established to the satisfaction of my critical self that miracles do take place, what then? What does it mean? I am not one of these people who say—as I have heard people in this city say—"Miracles, so what?" As if they could perform one themselves any morning before breakfast!

Surely these happenings demonstrate, as no words can, the reality of the non-physical worlds. "Actions speak louder than words", is one of our clichés. The word is powerful—but in the 'word made flesh'—we see its power dramatically. Then it becomes a strong buttress for our tottering faith.

There are, we know, various levels of magic, and all of them—high or low—prove the existence of occult laws, of the reality of worlds within worlds. But the high magic—the Divine Immaculate Science—of a great Master goes further than this.

By its copious and constant flow, by its selfless, ego-less purity, by the love and benevolence that motivate it, we know that it comes from the high divine level; it is a concrete proof of the spiritual plane and of spiritual law. In a sense it is God talking to us—talking not in tongues, but in deeds.

But in the quarter-century record of breathtaking Sai miracles—those gracious gifts from some mysterious dimension, the conquest of space and time to bring help to devotees in distress at great distances, the healing of bodies, and perhaps more important still, the healing of souls, the giving of the strength necessary to face *karmic* suffering, and to grow in spiritual stature as a result of that suffering... But in all these, we must not lose sight of the greatest miracle of all. This is the miracle of His *prema*—His Divine love. The really miraculous thing about this, it seems to me, is that while UNIVERSAL, going out to all men, it is at the same time INDIVIDUAL. You feel it beamed directly and blissfully on you. As one of His *bhaktas* (devotees) put it, "Every person thinks that Baba loves him the most."

Yes, this pure love—universal yet individualized—is the central miracle from which all the others come, as by-products. The main end-product of this stream of *prema* is to raise us to a knowledge of our true spiritual selves—to a realization of our oneness with all life, and with the Author of all life.

How few there have been through whom has flowed this miraculous river of pure, ego-less love, with its attendant whirls and eddies of the lesser miracles! How lucky, how blessed we are to have known such a One on earth, and to be with Him still!

And when time must take us away from the Beloved Form that is the great focus of this Light, shall we be desolate? We should not be, if we have understood Him alright. He Himself has said that our *Guru* must be found within our hearts. Experiencing the outer *Guru*, trying to raise our own lives to the level of His purity, love, and truth, must lead us to hear His echo within the core of our hearts. And thus, we are helped to realize the ever-abiding inner *Guru*, that is God. Then we shall never be desolate.

Many have tried to solve the mystery of the great miracle-workers. Eliphas Levi, writing of those who acquired the high magic, says—"To command nature we must be above nature by resistance to her attractions." Arthur Osborne says in 'The Mountain Path' that when powers appear in a person at an early age, it's probably because that person attained such a state of purity in his last incarnation that power flows through him unimpeded in this. But it seems to me that the truth may go even deeper. There is, for instance, the profound Indian metaphysics of *Avatars*



[incarnations] to be explored and understood. Even so, could we ever really understand?

Sai Baba Himself tells us that we cannot solve His mystery. Better than trying, He suggests, is to just dive into Him. Better than the mental gymnastics, that get us nowhere, is a dive into the refreshing lake of Divine Love. Through *bhakti* [devotion] we will come to *jnana* [knowledge].

I find that trying to write a book about Him is like attempting to put the universe into a small room; doing an article on Him is like squeezing a mountain into a jam-jar. Enclosing Him in this short talk is like putting the ocean into an inkbottle.

I can only say in conclusion and in summary that, like many before me—but unlike Caesar—'I came, I saw, and I was conquered.' I saw purity and high spiritual power; I saw *prema*, *sathya* [truth]—all those things toward which man strives through many lifetimes. Seeing all this, who would not be a devotee?

And, of course, for the spiritual gifts He gives, it is quite impossible to thank Him in words. Words are such feeble things! Nor is there anything He wants from us except, in His own graphic phrases, "the unsullied blossoms of pure hearts, and the fruit offerings of good deeds." In another place He says, "Come to me with empty hands—I shall fill them with gifts and grace. If your hands are full, what am I to fill them with."

Our empty hands must be outward signs and symbols of an inner purity and submission; hearts and minds must be emptied of dross to receive the gift of grace—the supreme love that transmutes the lead of earthly natures into the gold of the divine spiritual man.

~Howard Murphet

**Source:** *Sanathana Sarathi*, June 1967

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To submit text or photos, please email them to "[editor@SaiSarathi.com](mailto:editor@SaiSarathi.com)."

## Immortal Devotees of the Lord

*The inextricable relationship between the devotees and the Lord, a relationship maintained by unassailable and unflinching faith on the one side and a continuous and loving care for the devotee on the other, was the central theme of the series of discourses given by Bhagavan during the ten-day Summer Course to students held in Brindavan from May 20th to May 30th, 1995. Bhagavan took up for each discourse one episode from the Bhagavatam to bring out illuminating lessons about the nature of devotion and significant role of the Divine in coming to the rescue of the devotee.*

Reproduced here are stories narrated by Bhagavan from 21-5-1995 to 29-5-1995.

### **The Krishna Avatar**

(From the first discourse on 21-5-1995)

There are four qualifications needed by anyone to understand the underlying significance of the *Bhagavatam*, which describes devotion as a bridge between the Divine and the devotees. They are:

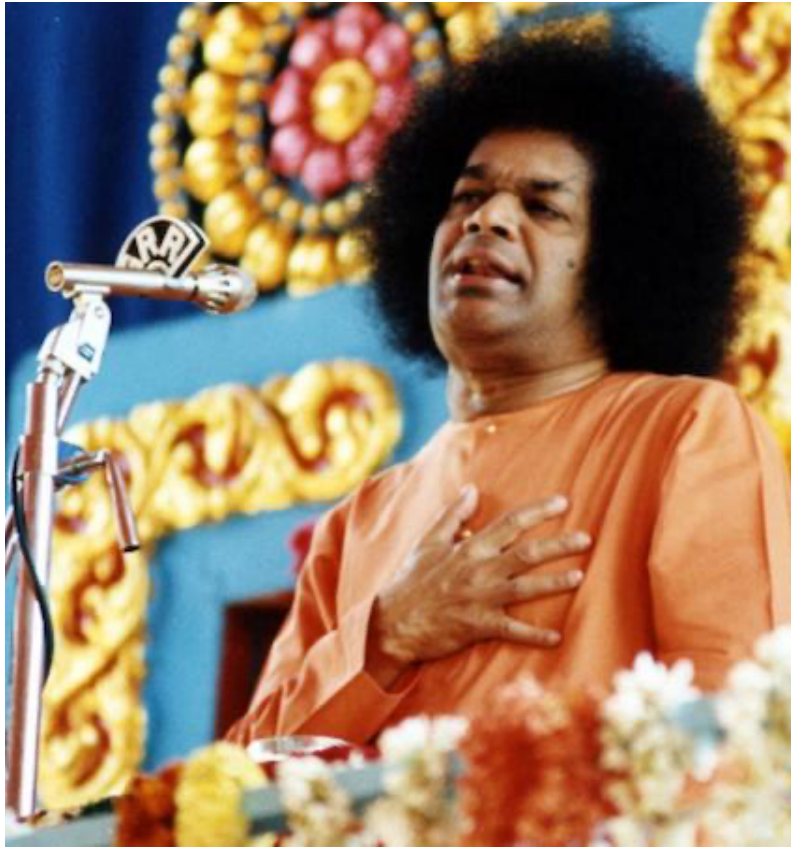
1. Flee from evil company.
2. Seek the company of the pious.
3. Indulge always in meritorious deeds.
4. Discriminate between the eternal and the transient.

Shura, a king of the Yadava dynasty, had two sons, Ugrasena and Devaka. The former had a son, Kamsa, and the latter had only one daughter, Devaki. Kamsa had great affection for Devaki and considered her as his own sister and celebrated her marriage to Vasudeva with great enthusiasm. When he was driving the chariot of the newlywed couple to take them to the bridegroom's place, an ethereal voice declared that the eighth child of Devaki would kill him. Kamsa, on hearing this voice, immediately unsheathed his sword and decided to kill Devaki on the spot to prevent the predicted catastrophe. At once Vasudeva gave Kamsa his assurance, that he would hand over all Devaki's newborn babies to Kamsa and appealed to him to spare Devaki. Kamsa relented and allowed them to go. The pious Vasudeva kept his word and handed over each child as it was born to Kamsa. On learning from Narada that the threat to his life might come from any one of Devaki's children, Kamsa killed six of them.

The Magadha Emperor, Jarasand, gave his daughters in marriage to Kamsa. [The latter] harbored increasing hatred against the Yadavas, from whom he apprehended the threat to his life, and also because, according to Narada's words to Kamsa, the gods were to incarnate as Yadavas with the advent of Krishna.

God made His master plan to punish the wicked and help the pious and pure devotees. Vasudeva's other wife, Rohini, was staying at Nanda's house away from Kamsa's tyranny. The Lord by His *maya shakti* (deluding power) transferred Devaki's seventh child to

Rohini's womb. He was Balarama (who was always with Krishna after he grew up). He was also called *Sankarshana* (transferred from one womb to another).



The Lord incarnated as Krishna, the eighth child of Devaki, and both Devaki and Vasudeva had a vision of the effulgent form of the Lord, who directed Vasudeva to take the newborn child to Repalle (Gokulam), a village on the other bank of the Yamuna. According to the Divine plan all the warders were fast asleep, and the doors and gates of the prison in which Kamsa has confined Vasudeva and Devaki opened of their own accord. The river in flood gave way, while Adishesha protected the child from the torrential rains as he was being carried in a basket by Vasudeva. No power can stand against the Divine Will. The child was exchanged with the girl child that born to

Yashoda, without anyone knowing about it, due to *Yogamaya* [Hindu Goddess personifying Divine illusory power].

The child brought by Vasudeva to his cell started to cry and immediately the warders woke up and informed Kamsa, who rushed to the prison. He seized the baby and lifted it to kill, but the baby escaped from his clutches, went up in the air, and announced that the slayer of Kamsa had taken birth and was alive somewhere else. Enraged by this, Kamsa started killing all newborn babies. He sent his demons to Repalle also, but Krishna, even as a tiny babe, destroyed all of them.

Yashoda had *vatsalya* (maternal love) for Krishna at the physical level, while the *gopikas* [milk maidens] of Gokulam had real devotion that was symbolically demonstrated by Krishna, who used to go after their butter rather than receive that offered by his mother Yashoda. Butter here signifies the spiritual heart of the devotee, which Krishna shared as the Divine. Krishna demonstrated to the innocent devotees of Repalle His Divine power in several ways.

**Source:** *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 28

# Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

## *Glimpses of Baba*

(From "The Movement," California)

*(I was in the United States in September-October 1974, visiting Sathya Sai Centers. The California newspaper named "The Movement" devoted to an exposition of the spiritual life interviewed me in Tustin, California, regarding Baba. As the interviewer asked very interesting questions, I was made spontaneously to comment on aspects of Baba's personality on which I do not always dwell. ~ Prof. Vinayak Krishna Gokak)*

**Movement Newspaper:** I have the feeling, Dr. Gokak, that being with you is like being with Baba, in a vicarious way of course.

**Dr. Gokak:** Well, He asked me to go to America, and He said, "I'll take care of you in every way." My prayer to Him is that I should be worthy of Him; whatever I say or do should not be unworthy of a man representing Baba. He said, "I'll help you in every little way." So far I have nothing to regret.

**M. N.:** Does Baba ever speak through you? Do you sometimes hear His voice?

**D. G.:** In dreams, yes.

**M. N.:** How about during the day when you're involved in doing something, or contemplating doing something?

**D. G.:** I don't hear Him, but suddenly there is guidance. There is no doubt about that! As long as I'm going right. I am guided. The moment I go wrong, I know that I am going wrong, and I correct myself. That moment of knowledge, self-knowledge, is where He steps in. I can't say that I hear this, but it is there in the system.

**M. N.:** Like an alarm clock.

**D. G.:** It has been like that all these days. I very clearly see what He is doing for me.

**M. N.:** Is this your first trip to the United States?

**D. G.:** No, I was here 15 years ago on an academic assignment. I was the head of a delegation to report on reforms in examinations of higher education in universities.

**M. N.:** Have you been surprised by anything that you've seen here this time?

**D. G.:** This time I am in a different kind of company. For the greater part of each day, I have been with Sai devotees. Wherever I've gone there has been so much love.

I have been spoiled! I have been so well looked after. There has been so much love showered on me that I cannot tell India from America.

Looking at the young people, because on my last trip I spoke with many of them, I find a very significant change. At that time, they were asking questions about India, about what happens there, exotic questions; but now they ask me about time, about eternity, and things like that. They are greatly interested. This is a very significant change.

**M. N.:** I've heard you say that living so close to Baba you sometimes can get "burned." To what does this refer?

**D. G.:** It means that He is all perfection. In that Light around Him, no iota of untruth can survive. No insincerity can have any place around him. No double standards. But we are imperfect; therefore, we are human. In our dealings with Him we will sometimes try to impose this imperfection on Him without our knowledge. He is very sorry for us because He knows that we are going to get "burned." He can't help it; He, Himself, can't help us when we are getting burned because this is a very natural thing. But if one understands what is happening that it is the impurity within one that is being burned, then one can stand it all right. Plus, there is Baba's grace. While this is happening, His love still flows to the person. This is what saves and heals him. This is what I referred to. You are on top of a volcano; this is perfection.

The moment you go slightly wrong in what you do, you are blown up. This is a critical moment in one's life; he may or may not survive it.

In a fit of ego, one may go away. He is hurt; he is deeply hurt. If he goes, he goes, it's his loss. There is no compromise. As Baba has said, "The nearer and dearer you are, the greater are your chances of getting burnt." In becoming worthy of Him, you have to burn a great deal. This is what happens to everyone around Him.

**M. N.:** The "burning" then is purification?

**D. G.:** Yes, it is all the same.

**M. N.:** What is an *Avatar*?

**D. G.:** An *Avatar* is one who is a physical projection of a ray from the Transcendental Plane, that aspect of God that is above the universe; the third aspect. From that aspect there is a ray that is not subject to the cosmic laws. The human being who is a God-man, an *Avatar*, is a descendant from the Transcendental Plane. He is Spirit in all It's glory, transcending cosmic laws. The God-Man represents man in the highest awareness.

**M. N.:** It must be strange at times relating to Baba, being so close to Him, and knowing Him. How do you relate to Him, as a close friend or as a vehicle for God to come through this shell called Sai Baba? How do you relate to that situation?

**D. G.:** He's the friend I love, the God I fear, and Krishna at whose enigmatic hands I love to be slain, making myself immortal. This is how I relate to Him. I am prepared for everything. For my doing, for my undoing, for all that. And I am also prepared for the human relationship. In the morning, when I am in the next room and the *Avatar* walks in and says, "Do you have a shaving brush?" I give Him mine because He has forgotten His own. I relate to Him in this way also. He is so intensely human. He can be so Divine.

**M. N.:** Does this seem like a paradox to you?

**D. G.:** No. Even when I am aware of all that He stands for, when I am near Him and He jokes with me I forget all that He is and I begin to talk as a friend. It is only when I get away from Him and come to America, for example, and see what is happening to Him in all these homes, all these photographs everywhere, that I say, "Is this Baba with whom I'm staying?" I begin to experience a sense of awe.

Once I said to him, "When will you show me Your cosmic form?" He said, "Wait, wait, I will show you." He said, "Why do you think I have taken you so close to Me? For that reason, I have taken you close." Actually I don't know what else He is going to show but what I have seen already (laughter). When I am near Him, I still forget that He is Baba. I think of Him as very great and all that and near to me. I can take liberties and joke now and then when He smiles, not otherwise (laughter). But then I forget the rest of it. When I go to other places and see *Vibhuti* (sacred ash) showering in photographs and images appearing from nowhere and people going into ecstasy repeating His name, then I say, "Yes, this is the Cosmic Form."

**M. N.:** What do you think of astrology, palmistry, psychic readings, and other such things?

**D. G.:** I'm an amateur palmist. One morning I was sitting in my room looking at a particular point in my own palm that refused to grow. Baba happened to come in at that moment. He asked me what I was doing. I couldn't explain, I was rather shy. But He knew and He asked me, "Do you know palmistry?" I said, "Several years ago I read some books on palmistry." He said, "Come on, read My palm!"

When He held out His hand, it was not for me to say, "No." So, I spent some time looking at His palm. In fact, I was quite interested as it was the palm of an *Avatar*. I only know Western palmistry. There is Indian palmistry in which signs of discs and conchs reveal if a person is an *Avatar*. Unfortunately, I had not studied this, so I was unable to apply these tests to His palm. I used all I knew from Western palmistry and said, "This palm reveals no traces of *Avatarhood*." Then he said, "Good, proceed."

After all, how can the physical body bear on it traces of the *Avatar*; it doesn't." So, I was quite satisfied that I was a good palmist. But He probably said this to satisfy me. Then I proceeded to look for the signs of the supreme power that He exercises among us. Being an amateur, I was unable to locate many of the signs. But I did find some of them. He saw that I was fumbling, and seeing another young man near, He said, "Look at his palm. Tell me whether he is going to marry or not."

I tried all my palmistry cleverness and spent some time regarding his palm. I thought he was going to marry, but I didn't want to be dogmatic in the presence of Baba. He might change anything. If I said, "Yes, he is going to marry!" then He might see to it that he would never marry at all and falsify this prediction. So I said, "There are tendencies toward marriage on this palm, and if Baba wills, he may marry." As it turned out, he married after two or three years, making my prediction right. But he went into this marriage with full permission from Swami.

Palmistry and astrology can anticipate certain possibilities in human life. Some things, of course, depend on the science of astrology and palmistry, but much more depends upon the astrologist and palmist. One must have something of a psychic attunement with the object whose fortune he is going to read. If this is there then everything comes out correct.

There is an English story about an astrologer who told a subject that he was going to kill someone at eight o'clock the next evening. The whole day this person kept himself indoors. The time was 7:30, 7:45, 7:50; he kept himself indoors. He didn't want to take any chances. If he stayed in his room, who could he kill except himself? He knew he was not going to commit suicide. At 7:50 he came out of his room. He left for an evening walk, greatly relieved that he had falsified this prophecy. As he was walking along, he met this astrologer and he said, "Such a false prophecy came from you! You don't know your own job!!!" And he hit him in the face. The man fell dead on the spot! So, the astrologer was killed, and the prophecy came true.

There are these possibilities both in palmistry and astrology, but Baba has also told us that the moment a man has realized his soul, he ceases to be a creature of circumstance. He ceases to be swayed by his own destiny. What rules him is not the stars, but his own soul. He consciously shapes his own life as he chooses. At this point, astrology and palmistry lose their meaning.

**Source:** *Sanathana Sarathi*, Jan. 1975

(To be continued)

# Thought of the MONTH

## Love

Men who are devoted to Me are full of love. They always stand by *dharma* or righteousness. They speak the truth. Their hearts melt with mercy. They are devoid of wrong conduct. They avoid sin. They will renounce everything gladly. They act in moderation. They are always engaged in doing good to others.

They are not selfish. They are worried by no doubts. They do not lend their ears to flattery.

– Baba

You should cultivate an attitude of inseparable attachment to the Lord, who is your very self. If He is a flower, you should feel yourself as a bee that sucks its honey. If He is a tree, you must be a creeper that clings to it. If He is a cliff, then feel that you are a cascade running over it. If He is the sky, be the tiny star that twinkles in it. Above all, be conscious of the truth that you and He are bound by the Supreme love. If you feel this acutely with subtle intelligence, then the journey will be quick, and the goal can be achieved.

*Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 5*

If you view the world with love, it will appear as filled with love. On the other hand, if you view it with hatred, everything will appear antagonistic to you. Eyes filled with love shine with brightness and cheerfulness. On the contrary eyes filled with hatred appear bloodshot and fearful. Your thoughts determine your actions whether good or bad. The external world will reflect your thoughts. You must consider the entire universe as a temple of God. You must regard all that is beautiful and great in Nature—the lofty mountains, the vast oceans, the stars in the sky—as proclaiming the glory and power of the Divine. The sweet fragrance of flowers or the delectable juice of fruits should also be regarded as tokens of God's love and compassion.

*Divine Discourse, July 24, 1983*

Love develops divine power in you. There is nothing that love cannot conquer in this world. Sages performed penance in dense forests infested with wild animals. They did not possess any weapon for self-protection. The weapon that protects them is their intense love and yearning for God. They tame the wild beasts with their power of love and transform them into docile beings. You should not merely exist as a human being in form. Speak good, see good, do good, and be good. Divinity will manifest in you only when your conduct is good.

*Divine Discourse, Sep 9, 2002*



When you win God's love, His compassion will flow unto you. Love gives and forgives. Ego gets and forgets. Live without hating others, condemning others, or seeking faults in others. Doing good to others is the only meritorious act. Doing evil is the most heinous sin. When you feel you cannot do good, at least desist from doing evil; that itself is a meritorious service. Do not try to discover the differences, discover unity.

*Divine Discourse, April 4, 1975*

Install God in the altar of your heart and meditate on Him constantly. Despite sorrow, difficulties, and calamities that you may encounter, hold on to Him firmly. They trouble your body, not you—for, you are separate from your body. We cultivate qualities like anger, jealousy, envy, and pride due to our contact with the outside world. Only when we get rid of these qualities, we enjoy peace. Therefore, we must start our spiritual journey with truth and righteousness. When truth and righteousness go together, peace will reign. Peace brings love. Where there is peace, there hatred cannot be. When we develop hatred against someone, it means the spring of love has dried up in our heart. When there is love in our heart, we do not get angry, even if someone accuses us. Hence always follow the motto, "Love All, Serve All."

*Divine Discourse, Feb 23, 2009*

