

Vinayaka Worship Ranks First

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in His discourse in the Prashanthi Mandir on Ganesh Chaturthi Day spoke about the qualities of Lord Ganesha and their significance.

*One may have mastered the Vedantic texts
And perfected the art of expounding them;
If his mind is not well filled with good qualities,
His scholarship is like the crop grown on barren soil.
If you cannot comprehend the Swami in front of you
And wander in search of God all over,
You are like the man who went in quest of ghee
While having butter in his hand.*

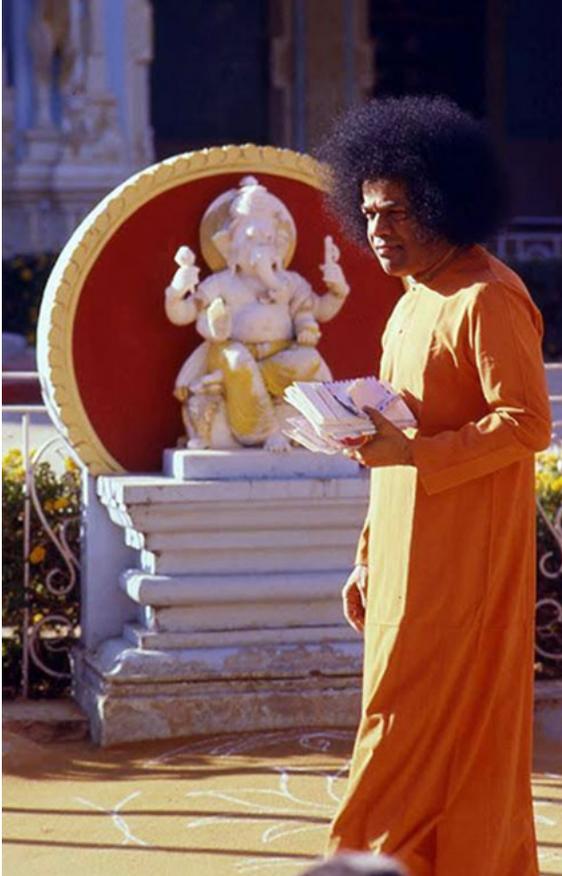
Embodiments of Divine Love! *Prakriti* (the phenomenal world) is what is directly apparent to man and that deludes him. It is an aggregation of objects. In its natural state, every object is mutable. Such impermanent objects are incapable of giving enduring *Ananda* (bliss). The object that gives you pleasure is transient. The individual who experiences that pleasure is also impermanent. How can an impermanent being derive lasting bliss from a perishable object?

It is, therefore, necessary at the outset to forget the impermanent so that one may be qualified to experience the eternal and unchanging Reality.

The presence of three *gunas* in the cosmos

The entire cosmos is a manifestation of the three *gunas*: *Satwa*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. They have been identified with the three colors: white, red, and black. It is impossible for man to conceive of a world without these three qualities. It is not possible to find in nature a situation in which these three qualities are present in equal measure. When the *satwic* quality is predominant, the *rajasic* and *tamasic* qualities are quiescent. When the *rajasic* quality is dominant, the other two are subdued. When the *tamasic* quality is dominant, *satwa* and *rajas* are subdued. It is seldom that all the three qualities are equally balanced and in harmony with each other.

Likewise in the human body these three qualities are present in every limb. It will be clear that these three qualities are manifest in the physical universe, in the human body, and in the human mind. The *Shrutis* (sacred texts) have also declared that the universe is made up of these three qualities.



With reference to man, there is the view that there are three states: *prakriti*, *avidya*, and *maya*. In course of time, the term *prakriti* was applied to man's body. In some parts of the country, people are in the habit of referring to individuals as *prakriti*. In North Canara, people say: "My *prakriti* is not well," when they want to convey that their body is not well. *Prakriti* refers to that which is subject to all kinds of *vikriti* (distortions and changes). This *prakriti* is the basis of all creation.

The second term is *avidya*. *Avidya* means that which is the opposite of knowledge. *Avidya* makes one treat what is unreal as real and what is real as unreal and thereby deludes him and makes him pursue sensual pleasures. This *avidya* follows *prakriti* in the world as a shadow. Because of this *avidya*, man is unable to recognize his true nature. *Avidya* is the cause of man's inability to comprehend

his true form. As long as *avidya* remains, man can never be free from troubles.

Combined power of *prakriti*, *maya*, and *avidya*

The third term is *maya*. *Maya* is the delusion that makes one imagine the presence of that which is not present. As long as this state of *bhrama* (delusion) remains, it is impossible to comprehend the *Brahmam* (the Omni-Self).

What is this delusion? Here, for instance, is a rope. But in the twilight of dusk, one mistakes it for a snake. When a lamp is brought, it is found that there is only the rope. The snake was never there, and the rope was always there. Only the momentary delusion caused the appearance of the snake and the absence of the rope. This is called *maya*. It makes one imagine the presence of what is not there and not perceive what is really there. To believe in the existence of that which is nonexistent and in the non-existence of that which is the real truth is the effect of *Maya*. It is the combined power of these three—*Prakriti*, *Avidya* and *Maya* which accounts for man forgetting his true nature.

Man often imagines that he has accomplished many things. Presuming that all that he achieves are entirely due to his own efforts and abilities, he deludes himself and forges his own bonds. He forgets the truth that there is a higher power that is the driving force for action as well as the author of the results thereof. This is the primary nature of *bhrama* (delusion).

Prayer to Vinayaka gets rid of delusion

To get rid of this delusion and enable man to comprehend his inherent divine nature, the ancient sages taught a prayer. This prayer is the one that is addressed to Vinayaka.

Who is Vinayaka? In the *sloka* beginning with the words, "*Shuklaambaradharam Vishnum*," only the form of the deity is described. But there is another inner meaning for the name Vinayaka. "*Shuklaambaradharam*" means: one who is clad in white. "*Vishnum*": means He is all-pervading. "*Shashivarnam*": means His complexion is grey like that of ash. "*Chaturbhujam*": means He has four arms. "*Prasannavadanam*" means: He has always a pleasing mien. "*Sarva-vighnopasanthaye*" means: for the removal of all obstacles, "*Dhyaayeth*" means: meditate (on Him). Vinayaka is the deity who removes all bad qualities, instils good qualities, and confers peace on the devotee who meditates on Him.

This is how the theistic believers interpret this prayer. The atheists have made a parody of it by construing the prayer as a description of a donkey, which carried white clothes on its back, is ash-grey in color, wanders everywhere, has four legs, and has a bland look.

There is no master above Vinayaka

The Vinayaka-principle, however, has only one meaning, which is relevant to everyone irrespective of whether he is a believer or a non-believer. "Vinayaka" means that He is totally a master of Himself. He has no master above Him; He does not depend' on anyone. He is also called Ganapathi. This term means He is the lord of the *ganas*—a class of divine entities. This term also means that He is the master of the intellect and discriminating power in man. He possesses great intelligence and knowledge. Such knowledge issues from a pure and sacred mind. This knowledge leads to *vijnana* (wisdom). Because He is the master of *buddhi* (intelligence) and *siddhi* (wisdom or realization), He is described as the Lord of Buddhi and Siddhi. Buddhi and Siddhi are referred to as the consorts of Vinayaka.

The mouse is the vehicle of Vinayaka. What is the inner significance of the mouse? The mouse is considered as the embodiment of the sense of smell. The mouse is a symbol of the attachment to worldly *vasanas* (tendencies). It is well known that if you want to catch a mouse you place a strong-smelling edible inside the mousetrap. The mouse also symbolizes the darkness of night. The mouse can see well in the dark. As Vinayaka's vehicle, the mouse signifies an object that leads man from darkness to light. The Vinayaka-principle, thus, means that which removes all the

bad qualities, bad practices, and bad thoughts in men and inculcates good qualities, good conduct, and good thoughts.

Another name for Vinayaka is "Vighneshwara." Eashwara is one who is endowed with every conceivable form of wealth: riches, knowledge, health, bliss, beauty, etc. Vighneshwara is the promoter of all these forms of wealth and removes all obstacles to their enjoyment. He confers all these forms of wealth on those who worship him. Vinayaka is described as "*Prathama Vandana*" (the first deity who should be worshipped). As everyone in the world desires wealth and prosperity, everyone offers the first place for worship to Vigneshwara.

It is only when the inner meanings of various aspects relating to the Divine are understood that worship can be offered to the Divine meaningfully. Unfortunately, as only the superficial and worldly meanings of the scriptural texts are expounded these days, men's devotion is growing weaker continually. It is essential for everyone to understand the inner meaning of the Vedantic texts.

Faith in God should never waver

One may have immense faith in God. But from time to time, the power of *maya* may undermine this faith. In *Mahabharata* even staunch devotees of Krishna like Dharmaja and Arjuna displayed hesitancy in acting up to the advice of Krishna and had to be taught their duty through Bhishma and Draupadi, respectively.

Faith in God should never waver. In no circumstance should anyone go against the injunctions of the Divine. Whatever worship one may offer, however intensely one may meditate, if one transgresses the commands of the Lord, these devotional practices become futile. The reason is that the Divine has no selfish objective or aim. It is out of small-minded selfish motives that people act against the sacred commands of the Lord. Even small acts of transgression may in due course assume dangerous proportions.

Like the clouds in the sky that are brought together or dispersed by the winds, the passage of time brings about for man the union or separation of associates and happiness or sorrow. Time is the form of God. It should not be wasted. It is to understand such sacred truths that festivals like *Ganesa Chaturthi* are celebrated.

Ganesa's intelligence

How did Vinayaka acquire *siddhi* (supreme powers)? His parents held a contest for their two sons—Ganesa and Subrahmanya. They said they would offer their grace in the form of a fruit to whoever came first in circumambulating the universe. The younger son, Subrahmanya, set out immediately on his peacock to go round the universe.

On seeing Subrahmanya approaching his parents almost at the end of his trip, Vinayaka, who had been quietly sitting all the while, got up and went round the parents and sat down. Parvathi observed that Subrahmanya, who had taken so

much trouble to go round the universe, should be declared the winner. Parameswara asked Vigneshwara what was the inner significance of his going round the parents. Ganesa replied: "The entire universe is permeated by both of you. The entire creation is a manifestation of the Shiva-Shakti form. It is an act of delusion to attempt to go round this phenomenal universe. To go round both of you is the true circumambulation of cosmos." Then Parvati exclaimed: "Yours is the fruit." Ganesa became the Lord of *ganas* (the Divine hosts). Eashwara was so much impressed with the supreme intelligence of Vinayaka that He told him: "All those who wish to worship Me will offer their worship first to you."

Such was the grace showered on Vinayaka. What is the reason? Ganesa's faith in the Lord and His omnipresence. The right path for all people is to develop faith in God and lead godly lives.

Vighneshwara is also regarded as *gaja thelivi* (one endowed with the wisdom of the elephant). The elephant is noted for its supreme intelligence. It is also known for its absolute loyalty to its master. It is ready to sacrifice its life itself for the sake of its master.

The direct proof of this is Sai Gita (Bhagavan's elephant). Ordinarily hundreds of cars will be passing on the road. Sai Gita will take no notice of them. But when Swami's car happens to pass that way, it will instinctively notice it. It will rush to the road raising its familiar cry. What love for Swami! It will be no exaggeration if faith is equated with the elephant.

When an elephant moves among the bushes, its path turns into a regular passage for all animals. It is thus a pacesetter for all animals.

Vinayaka is a leader for all deities. Faith in Vinayaka should be developed as the exemplar for all deities and he should be worshipped as the embodiment of Divinity.

Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 24

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37 Birthday Sweeties from Baba on His 37th Birthday

1. Cling to God; that is the clue to *Bhakti*.
2. *Bhakti* confers real *shakti*.
3. While exhaling, renounce the *jagat*.
4. While inhaling, announce, "I am *Brahmam*."
5. From his words, you know the man.
6. Sensual joy is the road to sorrow.
7. *Prema* is for man the very *prana*.
8. Time is the hook to trap the unwary.
9. If you have *shanta* you have Vedanta.
10. The *jatendriya* is the *Yatindra*.
11. Papa is the fruit of *kopa*.
12. Truth cures all ills.
13. Doubt is the virus that attacks faith.
14. The high road to the seat of God is *daya*.
15. *Dharma* makes man human.
16. *Jnana* earned means *Brahmam* reached.
17. *Sanmarga* has as *sara, samarsha*.
18. *Jaya* over the *manas*; that is genuine *jaya*.
19. Self-confidence is born of confident action.
20. *Tyaga* is the surest reward for all *yoga*.
21. S. S. *seva* for safe voyage across the sea of *samsara*.
22. Deceit drives you on to destruction.
23. Anger breeds danger.
24. Hatred mis-shapes and mars.
25. Detachment confers the bliss divine.
26. The clever are caught in coils.
27. Worldliness is just a whirl of worry.
28. Prasanthi! Its splendor is *param jyoti*.
29. *Sadhaka*! Beware of the *roga* named *Bhoga*.
30. Argument is only suicidal armament.
31. Riches force the head to swell.
32. There is no strength greater than virtue.
33. Conduct is the test of caste.
34. Revile another; you revile but yourself!
35. Wound another; it is you who bleeds!
36. It is not wise to step beyond the bounds.
37. Do not rush to praise when power is won; see how it is used.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, August 1962

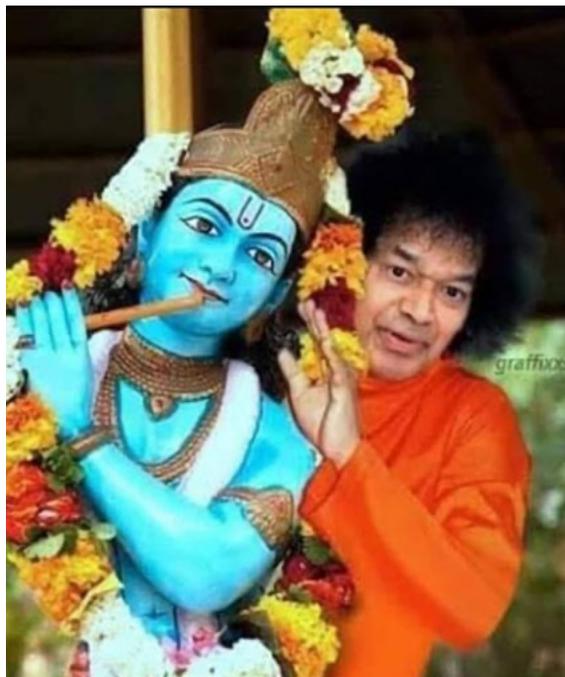
Madhura Bhakti

Bhagavan Baba in His discourse for Krishnashtami spoke about Radha and her various qualities and her love for Lord Krishna.

Radha

The [river] Yamuna's bank: Calm.... charm.... inspiration... thrill. The cool breeze brings soft and sweet to the ear the strains of Divine Music from the flute that Krishna plays on. Radha comes down from the high sand dune toward the waterline with a big pot on her hip. Halfway through, she stands stiff for she hears her name being wafted by the wind from where Krishna was.... "Radha", "Radha". With wide open eyes, she looked on all the four sides. No one could be seen anywhere. Absolutely uninhabited area. Krishna was ever thus.

She fell on the sands in a faint. The pot was still in the fold of her hands. Radha awoke to the reality. "There is no place where you are not. The call arose from you alone; no one else can be so soft and sweet, so sincere, and so true. But let me ask you just for this boon. You made us all act our roles; we played our parts as best we could. You urged us to laugh and to weep. You enjoyed both to your heart's content. I have had enough. Please, please let me go back to where I belong.



I dressed myself in desire and in disappointment, in anger and anticipation, anxiety and aspiration. I bedecked myself with the garlands of sensual reactions—melodious sound, smooth touch, ambrosial taste, bewitching sights, and bewildering fragrance. I had on my ankles the jingle of illusion. I have won the applause and the jeering of the world. When I sang, delusion marked time and played on the *tabla* [drums] to spur me on. The *tamasic* and *rajasic* natures in me encouraged me to dance, providing the background music. Now my limbs fail; I am sick of the whole affair; may the play end, so far as I am concerned. Please, please agree to this prayer."

Dhara

But Krishna did not agree. He approached nearer and nearer. The Lord is a clear mirror where the pure heart is reflected clear. Radha was His image, the embodiment of His ecstasy. Radha is the *Aahlaadini Shakti* [the pleasure potency] of Krishna

and so they are inseparable, indivisible. That is the very reason why Krishna called 'Radha' 'Radha' when she made her appearance on the [river] Yamuna bank.

Radha continued, "This is the best chance for me to lay this gem at Thy feet. Alas, it is still uncut and dull. I was misled so long into the belief that the world is sweet, but it is bitter, of astringent taste, unpleasant, and I have had enough. I am, as you know, *prakriti*, *dhara*, pronounced as Radha. So, I am burdened with the three *gunas*—the *satwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Since *Prakriti* is feminine, I am perforce feminine, too."

Stri

This is the truth. *Prakriti* is feminine and so its representative, Radha, is also a *Stri* or Woman. The *Sanskrit* word *Stri* has three component consonants—*sa*, *ta*, and *ra*. These consonants signify the three *gunas* in that order—*sa* meaning the *Satwaguna*, *ta* meaning the *Tamoguna*, and *ra* meaning the *Rajoguna*. Women have the *satwaguna* in ample measure. They are by nature helpful, tender, compassionate, humble, and trustful. Next, they have also a good measure of *tamoguna*. They are timid, shy, and unenterprising. It is good that women are such. They have been endowed by nature with only a small dose of *rajoguna*. Of course, this is the general truth; there may be exceptions where the *rajoguna* predominates and the *tamoguna* recedes into the background. *Rajoguna* makes women aggressively bold, adventurous, and pursuing freedom from restraint. The day when *rajoguna* is accepted as a mark of womanhood, that day will mark the beginning of the end of femininity.

Man has only one home; but woman has two that she must guard from ill-fame—the home where she was born and brought up and the home of the husband she has chosen to live with for life. When she breaks all rules and runs unbridled into freedom, she becomes dangerous to the reputation and good name of both families—that of her parents and that of her parents-in-law. Indian culture and spiritual traditions awarded a high place to woman, since upon her rested the strength of the entire social fabric. She is the companion and guide of her husband, the earliest teacher of the children, the example for their social attitudes, the model for their speech, the guardian of their health and mental happiness. She is called the *ardhangi* of the husband—the 'half body'. There are many temples where God is worshipped as *Ardha-narishwara*, half woman and half man (the right half being male and the left half female). The honor and glory of a country were held to be in the hands of the women.

Abala

Whenever a religious rite was performed, or the Gods or manes propitiated by some ritual, the husband must have by his side the wife, too. Or else, the rite or ritual was ineffectual. That was the status given to the wedded wife in the religious scriptures in India. No charitable gift can be valid until the wife indicated her agreement by sanctifying the gift at the time it was made. Of course, she had no authority to perform these rites by herself, as she likes. Hence, she was called *abala*, 'without power'. The power meant here is 'spiritual power over rites'. Unfortunately, the use

of this word has become so widespread that women, too, had come to believe that they were fundamentally weak and powerless in all fields. This is a big mistake; only authorization to perform rituals was denied.

When Rama decided on performing an *Ashwamedha* sacrifice, the objection was raised that Sita was away as an exile in the forest, and so without his spouse he was not entitled to perform the *Ashwamedha*. Some sages discovered that there was a provision to have a golden idol of the absent wife by the side of the principal officiator, and so a golden idol of Sita was made and placed in position by the side of Rama before the *Yajna* began. *Abala* does not mean lack of physical or mental strength. The wife makes the home of her husband a temple, a school, a council chamber, and a hermitage.

Madhura

Radha lived the life of an ideal woman as per the standards set by the *Sanathana Dharma*, and fixing her thoughts all the time on the Lord in pure un-bargaining devotion she secured the bliss of merging with Him. Hers was the type of *bhakti* [devotion] called, in the scriptures, *Madhura*. There are six streams of *bhakti*, all flowing toward the Lord and characteristic of six different types of spiritual attitudes. They are *shanta* (serene), *sakhya* (friendly), *dasya* (servitude), *vatsalya* (parental love), *anuraga* (deep attachment to Krishna), and *madhura* (sweet). *Madhura* is the highest among all the six, since it gives the maximum bliss. Milk is curdled, churned, butter produced and clarified into *ghee* [clarified butter]. *Ghee* is the end, the ultimum. So, too, *madhura bhakti* is the last word, so far as the experience of the mergence in the Lord is concerned. The journey ends and the feet stop when the goal is reached. When the *madhura* experience is achieved, there is nowhere else to go; nothing more to do. The totality of God is experienced in *madhura bhakti*, His *poorna* aspect, His *prema* aspect.

Shanta

In *shanta bhakti*, the aspirant practices equanimity and considers all that happens to him as the gift of the grace of God. Therefore, he is unaffected by success or failure; he is ever grateful for whatever God grants him. In *sakhya bhakti*, the aspirant takes God as his incessant counsellor, confidante, companion, and mate. He feels the constant presence of the Lord and is never unaware of Him. In *dasya bhakti*, the aspirant feels that he is the servant, the instrument of the Lord, and revels in the role that God gives him on the stage of life. In the *vatsalya bhakti*, the aspirant loves the Lord as the mother loves her Child—with tenderness, anxiety, compassion, vigilance etc. In *anuraga bhakti*, the aspirant is deeply attached to the manifestations of the Lord, to whatever he deems as emanations of Divinity and he is highly pleased when he gets the chance to serve as such.

Prema

Since man has as his essential characteristic the quality of Love, he has only to foster it and tend it so that he might love the Lord to the fullest, that is to say, love the Lord's Creation as much as the Lord Himself is loved. Then, the tree of Life will yield

the sweet fruit of *madhura bhakti*. The fruit will have the bitter skin of I-ness and My-ness. This has to be removed. Certain egoistic desires and attributes might persist as 'seeds'; these, too, must be removed before the sweet pulp of love is offered to the Lord. When Radha said that she had the vesture of desire and anger, she meant that she was unaffected by them. When she said that she was wearing the five elements contacted by the five senses in five distinct ways—sight, smell, taste, touch, and sound—as a 'garland' round her neck, she meant that she was not contaminated by the contacts. Naturally, the Lord knew that all of her was dedicated to Divinity. This is the sign of *madhura bhakti*. The Lord said, this *prema* has no alloy, it is free from blemish, it is full, it is free. So, He granted the final consummation to Radha.

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, August 1978

POETRY



The Game is Yours

You tell me—Follow the master,
But the Master is the Monkey-mind!
You urge: Face the devil,
Six devils stare at me!
And Fight to the end, You Insist,
I am already at my wit's end!
Finish the game, You demand,
Lord, I am not the player, but played upon!

Then, wait no more; my King,
Take up arms, and occupy This land;
And to this famished soul
Let Thy Panchajanya Sing.
The monkey shall go,
The devils will flee,
The fight shall be done,
And the game is, as always,
Yours, and yours, and yours.

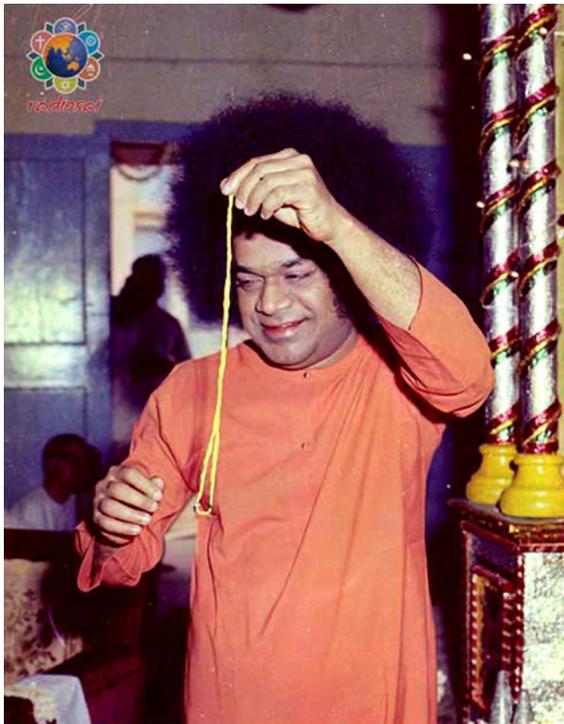
—**B. H. Miers**

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, August 1978

Baba the Indweller

Sai Baba of Shirdi is renowned for almighty Power, Infinite Mercy, and Boundless Love. Most of the literature about Him is in Marathi wherein He is described as the Divine Incarnation who, out of His immeasurable Grace, pierced the barriers of physical space and assuming different forms, saved lives miraculously, protected devotees from calamities, cured diseases, kept off epidemics, and controlled the elements.

I visited Shirdi often and I have instances of His Grace and timely help in difficulties. In fact, He once gave me *darshan* in 1948, when we were living in a small room in a chawl and had a very meager income. I was taken by surprise by His miracle. He made me hold out my palms in the form of a cup and down came the stream of holy water from His fingers. He then blessed our family with all prosperity and happiness and instantly disappeared. From that day we find ourselves above want and are a contended happy family. Whenever problems arise and difficulties crop up, we think of Him and the way is clear!



Long before most of the devotees in Bombay had heard about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the present *Avatar* of Sai Baba of Shirdi, it was an established fact that He was on a spiritual mission of giving solace to the distressed and leading the people of all castes and creeds steadily on to a path of righteous life, mental peace, and spiritual progress. Some fortunate families in Bombay who were caught in the Divine spell of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba used to visit Puttaparthi and come away with the precious gift of His Grace. Literature on the life and mission of Bhagavan passed from hand to hand and spread His message of *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, and *prema*. The readers were convinced that Sri Sathya Sai Baba was the re-incarnation of Lord Shri Ram, Sri Krishna, and Sai Baba of Shirdi.

By 1963 we, too, had an attractive photograph of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and read books about Him. Thus, the way was laid for our pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam.

All of us went for Bhagavan's blessings on Guru Poonima of the year 1964 when He distributed *amrita* [ambrosia] to thousands out of a silver bowl that never showed

signs of emptying. During our stay there and especially the interview, we were convinced of His Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence.

In the course of the interview, He materialized a locket with the image of Shirdi Sai Baba on one side and Lord Krishna on the other and He presented it to my wife. We were astounded when Baba said to my daughter, "I know you are praying to me, during *bhajan* time, in the study circle in your institution." How He knew of the fact that there is study circle in our institution and that she thought of Him there, He alone knows!

On 22nd August 1965 in Prasanthi Nilayam Prayer Hall in His Divine Presence, with all the religious rights and the sacred *mantras* recited by the learned Shastris of the *Veda Pathashala* and the ardent assembly of devotees witnessing in solemn silence, my daughter's marriage was performed. Bhagavan materialized the sacred *Mangala-sutra* of typical Maharashtrian pattern and performed the *kanyadan* Himself. It was the happiest and most fortunate day in our life. Our attitude toward Bhagavan became one of surrender, total and complete. We returned with the conviction that He is really the Indweller in the hearts of all.

~Mahadeo Mangesh Pinge
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, July 1969

God Never Changes

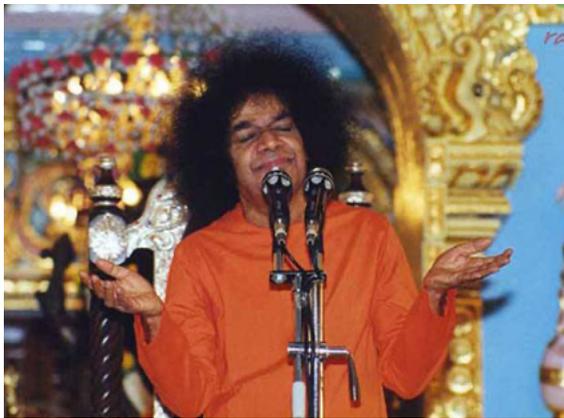
I love miracles. I love to witness them. They make me feel happy. In the presence of a miracle, it seems there is nothing impossible in this world with God. When I see or hear of a miracle, I feel God is near at hand, before my eyes.

It is God who can perform miracles; the rest of us can at best produce magic, which is only delicious illusion; there is nothing permanent about it. The miracles of Bhagavan have an enduring value; they create faith and hope, which is something to live by. Dominated by His supreme intelligence these miracles are possible; if the universe is dominated by a Spirit that is all love, truth, and joy, then miracles are possible that are all love, truth, and joy. When that spirit descends into flesh, incarnates as the *Avatar*, this miracle itself would make further miracles a reality.

Throughout all the miracle-stories of Bhagavan there is the unmistakable positive note of His Divine authority. Let us not forget that He takes upon Himself the death pangs of sincere devotees those who call out to Him in despair and then He seems to suffer it. But He is as great in His suffering for others as He is oblivious and majestic in supreme unconcern about Himself.

He is and has to be His own healer; with one part He heals that part of His body that has gone numb with paralysis; the Shiva in Him cures the Parvati in Him that is prostrate with paralysis.

In India miracles after miracles have followed in the footsteps of the Divine incarnations. The pages of the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavata* will bear eloquent testimony to the innumerable miracles wrought by the *Avatars* as object lessons for humanity. Let us take the case of that perfect example of a human television set that relayed happenings on the battlefield of Kurukshetra to Prince Dhritarashtra. Krishna Dwaipayana endowed Sanjaya with clairvoyance and clairaudience so that He could not only see what was going on in the battlefield but could also hear what the heroes were saying; and Sanjaya began to relate the events on the battlefield and conversations between Lord Krishna and Arjuna and out of this narration of Sanjaya was born the immortal *Gita*. So the birth of *Gita* is to be seen in a miracle and the miracle is by a Divine Personality, Veda Vyasa. Take again, how a stone produced that destructive force called Narasimha that killed Hiranyakasipu and the devotee was saved.



As we grow in the knowledge and love of Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba, we grow in the understanding of His miracles. They are meant to emphasize the supremacy of the Divine over nature, the power of spirit over matter. Bhagavan has come to bring spiritual uplift to us, to save us from our misdeeds. He has come to convince us of the Existence of God and His Kingdom of Righteousness. He showers blessings to heal us of bodily infirmity. He has come not only to heal the body but to heal the heart that is sick, a far harder task. He has come to help us to help ourselves from our own folly, from the powers of darkness and ignorance. Some people think that mere prayers and faith can perform miracles. But only the Divine Spirit of God—the Savita—the Life Giver can manifest miracles.

There is another aspect of Bhagavan's miracles that has not received proper emphasis. I refer to its Holiness. It is burning Holiness. It burns the dross away; the pure gold of evolved personality remains. Did not Baba's Holiness shatter the naked *Sadhu's* pretense? The *Sadhu* was sent from the town where he was displaying not only nudity of body but nakedness of spirit. A whole life spent in a fruitless make-believe was destroyed in a moment by Baba's Holiness.

Notice the same holiness, which convinced Kalpagiri, whose soul was heavy with a murder that He had committed, to go to the police, surrender himself, confess His guilt and undergo the sentence. And Kalpagiri, unable to stand before that Holiness, determined to surrender himself and take the punishment and obey Baba even unto

death. 'Go, confess, and undergo cheerfully whatever punishment they give you. You will not be hanged. I promise you that your neck shall wear a *Japamala* (rosary), which I shall myself put around it. Come to Me after the sentence is over.' That burning Holiness drove Kalpagiri to atone for the evil deed.

He went to the police, surrendered himself, confessed his guilt, was tried for murder, and sentenced to death in due course of law. Bhagavan's assurance flowered into reality and the President intervened with His prerogative of mercy. Kalpagiri's life was saved. Once again, the verse of the *Gita* has come to life: "My devotees can never perish". The Lord was as true when He uttered that on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in the dim past as He is today. Then it was Lord Krishna who held out that assurance. Today it is Sathya Sai Bhagavan. God never changes; yes, He changes never.

Man has to master two foes -- Kala and Kama, the ravaging tactics of Time and the undermining strategy of Desire. He must not allow Time to rob him of strength and vitality too soon; he must not allow Desire to lead him astray from the search for Shiva—who mastered both Kala and Kama. He subdued Kala or Yama in the Markandeya episode; He burnt Kama, when he dared draw Him into his bond.

~Baba

~A. K. Das, Bar-at-Law

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, July 1969

Thought of the MONTH

How to Ensure Rest for the Mind

The clock, to all appearances, keeps on ticking away continuously. But this is really not the case. It is not continuous, for there is, one can notice, a short pause between one tick and the next. That is the interval of rest. But the mind does not have even this short interval between one thought and the next. And in the continuous succession of thoughts, there is no order or relationship. This adds to the confusion and concern. This is the main source of ill-health in man.

We are at present planning and preparing for physical rest and recreation and we know that even machines need hours of rest! But we have neglected the duty of ensuring rest for the mind. *Dhyana* (meditation) is the name for the period of rest we provide for the busy and wayward mind. The heart is engaged, like the ticking of the clock, in beats, but a new pulse of energy is generated between one

beat and another. It makes for the flow, regardless of the past or the future moments. It is a constant flux toward a goal.

The swimmer in the river must push aside the waters in front to the sides and to kick the waters to the back so that he can move forward straight and fast. Forcing the water back is the act that takes him forward. That is to say, do not attach importance to it, throw it back, give it up, renounce; that alone can help you to progress even an inch. Instead, man collects and stores, accumulates and takes pride in what he holds firm, regardless of the preciousness of the human trait of renunciation.

So we sink into material possessions, victories, and vagaries. We do not float or swim across the temptations. We must try to discover and learn the means of progress... When the tiny squirrel decided to share in building the passage across the sea, did it not receive the blessings of Lord Rama? The squirrel knew that its help could only be infinitesimal, but the feeling of dedication that prompted it won the grace of God.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 16 (1983)

A restless mind is another important source of ill health. Man is constantly afflicted with some source of worry or other. He is never free from anxiety. Why? Because he is identifying himself with the body. How did he acquire this body? Through his past activities and deeds. What were they caused by? By the twin pulls of love and hate. How did they originate? They were born out of the entanglement in duality, in the opposites. And why does he get snared by them? Ignorance of the Truth, the *ONE*. You must know that each one is a pilgrim, and each life is but a stage in the journey toward the city of liberation.

This body is a resthouse in which we stay for a short time during the pilgrimage. The mind is the caretaker, the watchman in the choultry where we rest. We are not to treat him as if he is master or owner. But we ought to take care that the house we are privileged to occupy is not damaged or polluted. We must take good care of it and its furnishings and treat the watchman politely.

The pilgrim is either helped or handicapped by the antics of the mind. The mind has as its warp and woof desire or thirst for something or other, getting some gain or avoiding some loss. Desire arises from attachment, often the consequence of delusion. Desire distorts and denigrates the mind. It keeps the mind incessantly agitated. No sheet of water can be calm when stones are dropping on it, and if there is a perpetual shower of desires, the mind, too, will be pitifully restless.

The *ananda* (bliss) that emanates from the *atma* in man has, in fact, to be stored with the help of the *buddhi* as channel, in the reservoir, the mind. That is its genuine function. But if the reservoir has many cracks and crevices, namely the senses, the *ananda* will be frittered away, and the reservoir will be rendered dry. When the hunger of the senses is sought to be appeased, the mind becomes vacillating and

wayward. The mind is the master of the senses. That is its legitimate role. The senses are the servants. When the master serves the servants, he loses his self-respect and falls in the esteem of all.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 15 (1981-82)

Flying hither and thither, higher and higher, the bird has at last to perch on a tree for rest. So, too, even the richest and the most powerful man seeks rest, peace (*shanti*). Peace can be got only in one shop, in inner reality. The senses will drag you along into a mire, which submerges you deeper and deeper in alternate joy and grief, prolonged discontent. Only contemplation of unity can remove fear, rivalry, envy, greed, desire—all feelings that prompt discontent. Every other avenue can give only pseudo-contentment, and a day will come when you will throw away all these playthings and toys and cry, “Lord! Grant me unruffled peace.” The bandit Valmiki prayed so; the confirmed atheist, too, has one day to pray for peace and rest.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 1 (1953-60)

