

Om Sri Sai Ram

VASANTHA SAI BRINDAVAN SATSANG

By Sri Vasantha Sai

(The reincarnation of the embodiment of love, Radha and the one who has unparalleled spiritual experiences with Lord Sai Krishna, Sri Sathya Sai Baba)

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PREFACE

Straight away we give thanks to Him who makes all things possible, for this short but powerful expression of higher wisdom and we humbly offer it at the lotus feet of Lord Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

In May and June of 2002, a parallel flow of Prema love accompanied Bhagavan Sai Baba's summer discourses on spirituality. Vasantha Sai, having recently finished a six-week tour of the Delhi area was asked to come to Whitefield and stay by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. She was in turn asked by a few devotees for daily morning satsang and meditation sessions.

In the two and half weeks that followed, the fortunate persons who attended these daily outpourings of love experienced divine gifts, divine love, divine discourses, uplifting bhajans, and the spiritual rewards that come from satsang. "Vasantha Sai Brindavan_Satsang" is the surprising result. It contains all the above elements revealed to the reader in seven discourses and a chapter describing the unique Sai Baba divine leelas that daily accompanied her activities at Whitefield, Brindavan.

Until now, rarely has she given extended extemporaneous talks on high spiritual topics and the eternal wisdom. Speaking mainly in her native Tamil and through different interpreters (who somehow seemed to appear just when needed) this collection of her heart felt expressions were assembled from cassette transcription of the English translation and from the notes taken by devotees. Where the tape was unclear Vasantha Sai herself was consulted regarding the correct content and meanings. Her language of the heart crossed verbal barriers of communication as evidenced by the international composition of the gatherings. Czechs, Dutch, Venezuelan, Iranian, USA, UK groups and many others experienced the real egoless Prema of Radha.

On the final day Swami gave a message to all who participated. He said, "If you join satsang you remove yourself from the company of bad habits and bad people. Your desires and attachment fall away. You get an unwavering and steady mind. He who has a steady mind can achieve Jeevan mukthi (attaining God while in the body)".

The authoress wishes to express her love and gratitude to all who contributed the daily outpourings of flowers, prasad and most importantly of love. Om Sri Sai Ram.

Chapter 1

Early Sadhana

I was born in the small remote south Indian village of Vadakkampatti in the state of Tamil Nadu. During my early years, I expressed devotion by writing over a thousand songs and poems in praise of Lord Krishna. I had in mind as my goal in life to merge with the Lord like the Tamil Saint Andal. Father was a freedom fighter with Gandhi. Mother died when I was very young so my grandmother raised me. I attended an English Christian Boarding School where because of my Vaishnavite upbringing I suffered some ridicule from classmates who wouldn't accept me. During these times I prayed to Lord Jesus to help me through these difficulties. By age 15, my family had arranged for my marriage and suddenly I found myself 21 years old and raising three children.

Father had taught me to keep a spiritual journal from a young age. Now I felt it was time to re-evaluate and refocus my life. What had happened? What had become of my dream to merge like Andal and Meera with God? Suddenly I was a Mother with many duties to perform. How has it happened? After some reflection, I decided to renew my life's quest to merge with the Lord despite my many household duties and I immediately began to live a very disciplined life toward this end. I decided on a life with no waste of time, money, food or energy where thoughts would be always on the Lord. I will lead an ideal life in spite of the difficulties of a householder's life. I chanted the Lord's name up to 50,000 times a day. I took time for meditation in the early hours of the morning, at noon and at 4 p.m. I started fasting in different ways. I would do without sugar or salt for a month or longer at a time.

At the beginning of each day I write OM SRI SAI RAM with vibuthi on the countertop and even on the food I'm cooking. The cooking stove to me is the sacrificial fire. Every act is done with the thought of Bhagavan. In this way it becomes yoga. If I'm peeling an orange I think, "*Orange*: move the R to the end and you get O! Anger! So, remember to Omit anger. *Bread*: B stands for Baba's, R for Radha's, E for every, A for atom is, D for divine".

In this way I look for the spiritual significance or connotation in common household routines. So do all your chores with full Prema. Do these with no attachments to the results or fruits of your labor. In this way loving vibrations are spread in the food and throughout the home, village, country and world.

After the padukas arrived in 1992, many miracles began happening during this time. In visions I had the blessings of many great saints. Eventually Swami revealed to me that I was Radha herself.

Chapter 2

Body Consciousness

It is important to remember - one: the impermanence of the body and two: the permanence or eternal nature of the Atma. From early in life we are only told about the body. But no one tells us anything about the Atma. Consequently, one's focus is

on bodily wants and needs; beauty, food, exercise physical health and sense orientated experience. Does this last for long? The physical body is here but a “a minute.”

Who you really are is the eternal Atma. What beautifies the Atma? Good thoughts, good words, good deeds beautify it. Today people tell their children to take their vitamins and eat their food, drink their milk and generally encourage them to think of themselves only as this physical body. They neglect to pass on the more important knowledge of one’s inner beauty and health. Make Baba’s name the “vitamins” for the Atma. Inner nutrition for the Atma comes from bhajan, meditation, namas, and constant thought and remembrance of God. Yogis are sustained by these thoughts of God. For thousands of years they have been living in remote places with meager food but their life is still maintained and sustained. How is this? Only when we leave body consciousness can we really began thinking about God. To reduce body consciousness start by remembering that this body is not permanent. As Swami often reminds us, you are not just this water bubble.

For healing of the body think of Bhagavan and get assistance. The body loses its ability to heal itself by becoming overly dependent on outside medicines and treatment. Avoid looking at yourself excessively in the mirror. Even this can diminish body awareness. The common greeting nowadays is “how are you feeling?” Begin focusing on the spiritual and eternal aspects of who you are. Ask, “How is your sadhana?” instead of “how are you feeling?”

So how do we treat this temporary body of ours? The body is an instrument we use to know God. If it is used otherwise, attachment will arise and imprison us in mundane worldly life. Use the body like a necessary tool, as if it were a grinder or food processor in the kitchen. You pick it up. It performs the task and then you put it back on the counter.

How do we learn about the Atma or Atma Vidya? Most of our time is spent in getting an education and then in performing work at our home or office. All other karmic achievements are nothing in comparison to separating the mind from the Atma. In other words the most important work in life is learning who you really are by acquiring knowledge of the divine Atma. Even when man goes to the moon what does he bring back? He gathers some dust and rocks and returns. What kind of use of valuable resources is this? Man spends so much energy on external things but doesn’t know a thing about himself, who he really is or where he is going!

We can count the sand but how many births have we had because of this ignorance? We must break this cycle of rebirth and achieve life’s goal of liberation. Hanuman (Rama’s devoted servant) said he saw Rama in three different ways:

1. When in the physical form, Hanuman saw himself as the servant of Rama. (I am Your servant).
2. In the subtle state he saw himself as part of Rama. (I am a part of You.)
3. As Atma, he said, he is one with Rama. (You and I are one).

Because of love and devotion otherwise uncontrollable diseases have been cured. Instead of the exterior path let us find and follow the alternative interior path. Man is now mounting great efforts to reach Mars but I have travelled there and many other places with Swami without leaving Vadakkampatti. All things are within our body. All is in you. Sai Ram.

Chapter 3

Bhakthi Yoga

Whatever you see with your physical eyes is Bhutaakash. Whatever you see inside when you close your eyes is Chitakash. Yesterday I said that one can have visions internally by prayer and by meditation. Swami was telling the same. Chidakash is the Atma. By continuous sadhana, all that is in Bhutaakash (in the cosmos) can be seen in the cosmic mind or Chidakash. Yesterday I said that the scientists are spending so much money, time and effort to go to the moon. Whereas, by practicing sadhana and with internal vision, I have seen the moon. Swami made it possible. So also Swami took me to Mars. Before the scientists could go I have gone there already. Swami too has reflected these thoughts that one can see anything if he wants. By true prayer and through sadhana one can achieve anything he desires. Then Bhagavan himself takes us to all these worlds.

Is going to all these different places the result we truly want from our sadhana? What is the fruit of our sadhana? It is to reach Chidakash. This means the Atma. What is Chidakash? It is Aham Brahmasmi, the state of realizing oneself as the divine Atma (or Aham Brahmasmi). So, true sadhana reaches Chitakash first (the mind) and then Chidakash (the cosmic mind). When one attains Chidakash he realizes Aham Brahmasmi.

Swami has said that the 'I' principle in every one of us is the Atma. But *when you identify the I with the body it is not the Atma*. When you ask yourself who you are you say, "I'm Vasantha I am 63 years old". So this I is in relation to the body but this is not the I that I'm talking about. *The real 'I' is the Atma*. So one has to think what was I before the birth of this body and what will I become after its death? Only when you address these questions and ask yourself who you really are, can you learn the truth of your identity. So one has to go above and beyond body consciousness.

There are two I's. The first "I" relates to body consciousness and the second, the big "I" is the Atma, God. How do we attain this state of Aham Brahmasmi? One first has to go on the path of devotion or bhakthi. Bhakthi at its conclusion becomes jnana, wisdom. It is said that the path of wisdom is dry. So bhakthi and jnana can be taken as the two guidelines for reaching this state of Aham Brahmasmi.

There are two kinds of Bhakthi: Saguna and Nirguna. Saguna means praying to God with form. For instance, all of us as devotees pray to and worship Sathya Sai Baba as a physical form. Whereas, Nirguna upasana is worship of the formless God. This latter form of worship is possible only for people of wisdom, saints and seers. For ordinary people Saguna upasana is the easiest kind of bhakthi to follow. For an example of Saguna upasana we take Lakshmana in the Ramayana.

Lakshmana never left Rama even for a moment. He was always with Rama. Just as a fish suffers when it is out of water, Lakshmana would suffer from separation from Rama. He always wanted to be with Rama and this is Saguna upasana. Before going to the forest Rama told Lakshmana to stay behind and take care of the kingdom and the kingly duties. Lakshmana said it is his duty to take care of the kingdom but because of his love for his brother he wanted to go to the forest. He gave an example, how can a swan lift up a mountain in the Himalayas? He could do it but he wanted to go with his brother to the forest. He didn't want to take on the burden of running a kingdom. This is the state of Saguna upasaka, the one who worships God with form.

The other brother Baratha was away from the kingdom in another place called Nandigram. After Baratha came back, he was told by Rama to take care of the kingdom and do his duties. Baratha like Lakshmana didn't want to do it but because of his brother's command he consented. Half way through he was not very happy so he came back and asked him for his padukas so that he would keep the padukas in place of his brother to rule the kingdom. So he returned to his kingdom and stayed in a small village, placed his brother's padukas in a chair and ruled, as his brother would have done. Because of his love and worship of his brother he stayed for 14 years thinking of his brother and eventually he even looked just like Rama.

So you see he was separated from his brother but still in part he was with him and this becomes Nirguna upasana. Lakshmana as Saguna upasaka was always with his brother, whereas Baratha was Nirguna upasaka, because *he was always thinking of him*. Both reach the same God.

Saguna upasaka is like a small child. He depends on the form of God. He always wants proximity to Him and thinks of Him as his mother, father, guru, and friend. Just as a mother would not part from her child, in the same way the Saguna Bhakthas cannot be away from worshiping their favorite form.

The Bhakthi sadhaka can start with Saguna but must progress to Nirguna. When does he attain such a state? Only when higher wisdom dawns does he see God in all forms. So for the ripening of bhakthi, wisdom has to appear. Nirguna upasana is like the state of a child who is away from the parent and grown up and can take care of his own needs. He is very independent. In Nirguna upasana he is also on the path of wisdom and he sees God as omnipresent. So, he doesn't need a form. This is Nirguna upasana.

What are the characteristics of a bhaktha?

1. He has no hatred for anyone or anything in creation.
2. He should be a friend to all and compassionate to all
3. There is no 'I or my' ness in him.
4. He should have equanimity in both pain and pleasure.

5. He always has a sense of self-containment. Such a person is a yogi. A yogi is one of complete equilibrium. What is the reason for his containment? He has no needs, no desires nor wants or complaints. There is only one and the only one is God. He doesn't have any worldly desires in his mind. Expectation might lead to disappointment. If one never expects anything he is never disappointed. So he doesn't have any worldly desires or any expectations from the world. Dasaratha said desires are the reason for all sadness. Such a devotee is 'my priya' says Krishna. He has a very strong will and strong determination. One who dedicates his mind and intellect to me is my priya, nearest and dearest.

6. He is not displeased with anyone and no one is displeased with him. He doesn't make other people angry. How can we stop others from being angry with us? This was a constant question in my mind. What is the solution? What we can do is to show no reaction to their anger. After all it is due to their ignorance that they are angry with us. So it may not have to cause a reaction in us. We should show kindness.

Take the example of a Prahlada, a devotee of Lord Narayana. His own father was against him because his son refused to chant his name. Instead Prahlada chanted Lord Narayana's name and this angered his father who punished him. He was punished in various ways like being thrown off the top of a mountain. But nothing affected Prahlada because he was always chanting the name. When he was thrown off the mountain he was saved from certain death. How was this possible? Later he was

given poison. He chanted God's name took the poison and was not affected in anyway. Similarly he was nearly trampled by an elephant but escaped injury. It was because of his equanimity and his thought of God that he escaped. He was not affected by any of these punishments because of his union with God. Because he was established in himself and always at peace with himself, nothing affected him. So you see, if we are not displeased with others, and do not displease others nothing will affect us in anyway.

7. He has no trace of desire. None at all. Whatever comes he takes it as the prasadam of God.

8. He is totally pure both internally and externally.

9. He shows the same love towards all. Shows no partiality in his relations with people.

10. He is always happy. Nothing brings pain to him. He knows no grief. He is ever blissful.

11. Whatever he does he dedicates it to the lotus feet of the Lord. Each and every action that comes from him is dedicated to the Lord.

Other qualities of a bhaktha:

- He remains free from good and bad actions. He has no attachment. As a result neither good nor bad action binds him. All the fruits of his action are dedicated to God and so God takes the responsibility for them. Such a bhaktha is called a bhakthimaan.
- He has no permanent place of residence. Where God puts him that is his residence. So you can see in the life of a sanyasi, he doesn't stay in one place. He is always on the move.
- He has a stable and balanced mind.

A bhaktha is described in the Gita as follows:

1. *Nahrishyate* - He has nothing to rejoice about other than God. No other worldly object gives him the joy that God gives. Joy arises when one gets what one likes or when one loses what one dislikes. The devotee does not have such a joy that is not permanent. He wants only God. He has no mind for worldly happiness. No desires. Swami says 'Die mind'. This happens when desires go. Then you have the dia...mond. (But our hearts are full of desires).

2. *Nadweshi* - One does not have any hatred. A devotee loves God and sees God in all and loves everyone. When we hate somebody our hatred is reflected in him or her and he hates us back. In the same way, love is also reflected. This is the reason why the whole world loves great saints, seers and realized souls. Swami gives love, love, love. That is His reflection reaction and resound. So we see that Bhagavan is attracting all these millions and millions of people it is because of His love being reflected back again and again. So if we also love people the same love is reflected to ourselves and there can be no room for any hatred. It is like looking into a mirror. Whatever you see is reflected back. When we show love, the love is reflected back.

3. *Nashoshati* - One is not affected by worldly things. No grief. The devotee is in a blissful ocean of love.

4. *Nakankshati*- One has no desire except God. Buddha said desire is the root of all evil. Turn your minds to God and call on Him. Why want perishable objects? The eternal Lord is waiting to answer our call.

In the Bhakthi Yoga Chapter 12 of the Gita, eight stanzas called “Amirthashtakam” (the eight nectarine verses); end with ‘such a one is my loving bhaktha’. So says Krishna about every devotee with these qualities.

Chapter 4

Bhakthi Yoga - Part 2

In continuation with yesterday’s talk on Bhakthi Yoga, I will give two or three more qualities of bhakthas. One quality is fearlessness. For spiritual practices fearlessness is essential. Yesterday in his discourse Swami was telling about Prahlada. Where did Prahlada get that iron will? It was because of his fearlessness. His father put him through many life threatening dangers and punishments but he was fearless and unafraid of anything. This is very important quality for sadhana.

In my case when I was a small child I was very much afraid and apprehensive. I was afraid of my father and grandparents and was also brought up in a very protective atmosphere that made me even more fearful. I never used to sleep alone. I never went alone anywhere even inside the house. This was also true in regard with things to do with the body. Even if I had a small headache, I would immediately want to go see the doctor. It’s a small village so there were no good doctors and so for treatment I had to be taken to Madurai, which is some distance away. Even in such circumstances I wanted to be taken to a doctor. Later after I came to know about Swami, my first prayer to him was to remove my fear. Afterwards I began thinking why am I so afraid of everything? I realized then that body consciousness is the main reason for fear. If there is no body consciousness then there is no fear.

Think about your own life. When you have a fever or headache you immediately think about your body and worry about your health. So body consciousness and fear are linked. Immediately we run to the doctor. So we must begin thinking that we are not this body! We are divine souls of God, Atma, and there is no relation between body and Atma. If we have this realization then we will not have attachment towards the body. In the Gita Lord Krishna says that Atma is indestructible. It is not burned by fire or drenched by water and cannot be dried by air. So unlike the body, the Atma doesn’t undergo any suffering at all. If this knowledge dawns on us, we will not be affected by fear. We will realize that we have to identify with the Atma not the body.

Since Prahlada had this state of mind he could undergo any amount of suffering. He had the wisdom that nothing could affect him. He was always in the thought of God chanting, “Om Namo Narayana” and the repetition of the name saved him from all dangerous situations. So fearlessness is one of the most important qualities of a Bhaktha.

The sign of truth is fearlessness. Gandhi followed non-violence and truth. His fearlessness made it possible. In the 16th chapter of the Gita divine qualities and demonic qualities are given. So you can see the Gita reflects the war between the Pandavas, the good and the Kauravas, the evil. Again, it is the war between the good qualities and the bad qualities. Just as the opposing armies faced each other, so bad

qualities face-off against good qualities. The commander -in- chief of good qualities is truth, which manifests as fearlessness. But it is not enough to be commander without some support from behind. The backing for truth is non-violence and its companion humility. *Truth is the hallmark of fearlessness and non-violence is the hallmark of humility.* So how do truth and humility go hand in hand?

If you know that you are following truth, you have a bit of ego (pride) that you are following the truth. So we should have humility alongside of truth to protect us from this error. It has been said in the Gita that if you have truth and humility all other good qualities are also included. This is the reason Bhagavan has stated the main quality for a devotee is fearlessness. Gandhi had truth and non-violence as his two eyes and that is why an ordinary soul becomes a mahatma. We also can become a mahatma if we follow these good qualities. These qualities are the most welcomed and loved by Bhagavan.

Another quality is silence. What is silence? Some go into silence once a week as a practice. It is a good practice but they tend to write on to paper what they want to communicate to others. The mouth doesn't speak but their hands speak by writing. . There is no use being silent for one day when you are still in communication with people.

So again what is the silence I'm referring to? It is a thoughtless state... thoughtless of the world but with the thought of God. So at least one day we should be in this silent state. Swami always says don't talk so much, talk less. He says this because too much verbal communication is a hurdle to spiritual advancement. That is why silence has been given so much importance.

Swami was saying people talk and gossip even in darshan and in the darshan line. We think we alone are thinking of Swami while it's the others who are gossiping. Swami says you are sitting there and have your mind on all kinds of things. So how is this any different than talking? In order to grasp the grace of Bhagavan we must maintain silence. Only then will it sink in. If we talk and are not silent, we don't get the vibrations. So silence is a very important quality.

Chapter 5

Nature of the Mind

Today the talk is going to be on the nature of the mind. The mind is a bundle of thoughts. If there is no thought, there is no mind. The thoughtless state is called "die mind". As Swami always says, if you don't have any thought then "die mind becomes diamond". How can you be without any thought? You can derive peace only from this thoughtless state of mind so it is our aim to achieve this thoughtless state. If you take a piece of cloth and remove the thread there is no cloth at all. Similarly, if you remove the thoughts in the mind then there is no mind.

Here is an example showing how our mind acts. This incident took place yesterday following afternoon bhajans with Swami. We were walking down the path from the ashram Fred, Eddie, Vinod, Yamini, Ann and myself. After a while, Eddie turned back and Vinod stopped at a fruit stand. I asked Fred what they were doing and heard him say the word "pineapple". As soon as I heard the word pineapple, immediately in my mind I thought that Vinod has gone to get a pineapple. As soon as

this thought came I saw Vinod's form in my mind. Then the thought arose that Vinod is from Canada. As soon as Canada came into mind I was reminded what S.V. had told me. S.V. had said I should get Vinod's email address. This thought in turn reminded me of S.V.'s son. The thought of S.V.'s son reminded me of an incident that he had told me. It was about his friend's mother who has a severe kidney problem and S.V.'s son had requested that I pray for her. So you see from hearing the one word pineapple, I was reminded of this whole chain of memories. So the mind has connected all these thoughts in to one single chain.

This mind can be compared to a computer. If you were to search the name Sathya Sai on the Internet, it would bring you from all the other sources the information related to these two words "Sathya Sai" Our mind is also like a computer. It has been told and holds many incidents. It has not only recorded and stored events of the present life but also holds all the information from previous births. So like the computer when we relate to a word all that is related to that word is brought to mind. In a fraction of a second you get all this information. The mind is very fast and travels at the speed of 8,000 km. So says Swami. My eyes discerned the action of Eddie turning back. Then I heard the word spoken by Fred, 'pineapple'. So all the five senses work around that single word. All the other senses are pulled along and together they bring all the information connected with that word to mind.

Instead of gathering information from the surroundings one can internalize the mind. Once the mind is internalized, all the senses are internalized. So when one thinks only about God the mind and the thoughts are all centered around God. All the sounds we hear would be related to God. All songs we listen to. When we see something, all sight would be related to divinity.

In the same way all the other sense organs would relate to divinity. Only when the mind is externalized does it create attachments. And this is the reason for our sorrows and troubles whereas if the mind is internalized there would be no sorrows. So if the mind is only attached to God there is no pain. Only body attachment causes pain because it is body consciousness.

The body on its own does not know hunger thirst or cold. Only when the mind is attached to it does it recognize these feelings. Here is an example from my life. One morning at 10 a.m., I felt a little hungry. Geetha was there and I asked her to bring something to eat. Before Geetha could bring something, devotees arrived. I was in satsang with the devotees followed by bhajans and suddenly when they left it was 2:30 in the afternoon. All that time I felt no hunger at all. Only after they left was I reminded of my hunger. All this time where was my hunger? So when the mind is with God it did not have feeling or hunger. As soon as I came back to body consciousness, I was reminded of my hunger. On another occasion early in the morning around 4 a.m., Geetha told me it was very cold and took a blanket to cover herself. Until then I didn't realize it was cold. But after Geetha said it was cold, I too wanted a blanket. From these happenings you can understand that if there were no body consciousness you wouldn't feel heat or cold, hunger or thirst.

As soon as you hear the word it brings the form in to the mind. It is because of the word that you have the feeling. So our mind is cheating us so we should be very careful. How is it that until then we had not known any temperature changes only upon hearing the word do you see or feel the changes? Many rishis and sages do penance in the mountains and for years. They are not affected by any changes in the weather conditions because their mind is with God. If you are always in the thought of God we will not have any bodily feelings. So you can see that wherever your mind is

your senses are in that place. I'll repeat this. Wherever your mind is the senses are also present in the same place. If your mind is with the world then your senses are working with the mind. If your mind is with God then the senses are also with God. So nothing affects us. Only when you are with body consciousness are you affected by sickness.

For three days I had a very bad cold and a fever. People around me made me feel I was sick and made me lie down. They told me to take rest. But what I did, I went to have a bath with cold water. After the bath I rested for 10 minutes took some Vicks and then some devotees from Orissa came to see me. They were asked to leave so I could take rest. I said I didn't need rest. After 10 minutes of talking (with the devotees) my fever left me and I was all right. Devotees said to take me to a doctor but I said no I would just take vibuthi as medicine. If I had gone to doctor I would have taken more rest for 3 days and told to stay in bed. When the mind is with the body the sickness becomes worse. Whereas if you turn your mind toward God, the body takes care of itself and becomes cured. We should not exaggerate any sickness. We should have full faith in ourselves. If we have full faith there will be no fear and no sickness will affect us.

If you see a cockroach in the daytime you get scared. At night you sleep even if the cockroaches are all around you, even if anything crosses over you in your sleep. Who is protecting you when you are asleep? During the daytime you are so worried and scared about this and that. You run around shutting the windows and closing the doors. Why this and what is the reason? In sleep you have deep peace. What is the reason for this peace? The reason is you have surrendered yourself to God. You also have faith that you will wake up in the morning and that you are with God and that He protects you. So why be afraid in the daytime? There was no fear (while sleeping) in the night because at night, you don't have any body consciousness. All your senses and mind are under control so you won't know if there were any cockroaches or bugs around. Whereas when you get up in the morning your senses are working and you are aware of all that happens. Even when you are awake, you should check your mind and your senses.

. How can you keep your senses under check? Watch your senses as Swami often says, so that you can control your senses. If you are aware of where your senses are (and what they are doing), then you can help them be with God consciousness.

The first step for controlling the senses is not to have fear. Fear is the main reason for illness. In order not to have fear one needs faith. If one has faith and fearlessness one can surely turn the mind toward God. What should we do to have faith and fearlessness? Our outlook should be changed it should be good. In the case of animals like tigers, lions their eyes are always moving because by nature these animals are very cruel. Because of their nature their outlook is also very cruel. The same way if our nature is good, our outlook and vision is also good. If our vision is good then creation is also good.

Faith is a very important principle created by God in man. If we have the faith that all are good then we will have belief in ourselves and in others. These days we don't even believe our neighbors nor have faith in them. We go to bed every night with faith that we will get up the next morning. Even animals sleep then though they are always watchful. We should not have any fear that we will be afflicted by anyone or thing. If we have faith and belief in others then we will not have any fear. Because it is only God that resides in every person's heart. If we love everyone without hatred then we will receive only love. You have to detach the mind from the body and turn it

towards God. In order to turn the mind to God one has to watch the mind and the thoughts. Then we will not be cheated by the mind.

As related in the beginning of this talk, we saw that by using "thought chains", our mind takes us to many different places. So there is also mental energy being spent in all these thoughts and it is a waste of energy. You can save this energy by concentrating in one pointed thought on God. Instead of spending it on many different thoughts have only one thought and that is of God. If there was a rainfall on a mountain the water flows in all directions and is wasted. But if the water were to run down a valley it forms a river and becomes very useful to others. The same way if you focus your thoughts on God you get a lot of energy. Whereas, we waste a lot of energy by allowing our mind to think along many different chains of thought. Our mind is a treasure house of energy. We should learn to conserve its mental energies.

Swami said the other day that all paths are inherent in the mind. All these can be used by us and controlled by us. These paths will manifest once we turn our minds towards God. You have seen in the life and times of great rishis and saints they had a lot of power under their control. Their very presence shows their powers. In front of them you feel very quiet and your problems are solved. When we go to see Swami we are very quiet and in the same way our problems seem to dissolve. The reason is because of this tremendous energy. Rishis and saints also do not externalize their energy. It is in them and they can control it. This is the reason their energy works in the subtle way to benefit humanity.

In the case of ordinary human beings we spend this energy in body consciousness. As a result, our problems always exist. One has to train the mind to be with God thought. If you practice this then your mind and senses will not waver away from God. This is the first sadhana. One has to know the nature of one's mind and guide it toward God. This will lead to victory. The victory is gaining liberation. The liberation is here itself right now! Only by the thoughtless state can one attain liberation. If you can be in a thoughtless state in meditation then it will take you to an experience of bliss. When you sit in meditation you get all kinds of thoughts. One has to keep practicing to reach this thoughtless state. Only through constant practice can one be in this thoughtless state and be only with the thought of God. Swami preaches this thoughtless state. With Swami's grace we pray to Him that we gain this thoughtless state.

Chapter 6

The Nature of Prema

There are three kinds of Prema or Love. The first is self-gratification, the love dependent on your self-satisfaction. The second kind is when you expect love in return. There is a give and take policy. The third is the true love, which is extolled as Prema, and it is the most selfless. It is pure love for God. It is only for God for the sake of God and it expects nothing in return. There are no desires. There is nothing you want from God. It is only for God and God alone. What are the outward signs of this Prema? How will we know it when we see it?

One who has this Prema sacrifices himself and his body and even his life to God. He will undergo hardships of the body for God. For over fifty years I have been doing penance to attain God. Aspiring and yearning for God, my body and mind have

suffered from much penance and many spiritual sadhanas. I have undertaken them with the one and only motive to attain God.

* * * *

Radha and Krishna are the embodiments of Prema. The perfect example of Prema is Radha. Radha's life is the Prema principle. It stands for the principle of Prema. Once Rukmini and Sathyabama asked Krishna how is it that he is always with thoughts of Radha and how much more powerful is Radha's love than theirs. Krishna did not reply to this question. A few days later Krishna suffered from stomach pain so all those queens around Him were wondering what treatment to give Him. So the Lord said the medicine for the pain is the water that is used for foot washing. So He proceeds to ask Rukmini to give the water that has been used to wash her feet. She refused this request saying that it would be a big sin to give the water that has been used for washing of feet. In the same way the others refused to give because it is wrong to give water that has been used, to the Lord Himself. So Lord Krishna sent a messenger to the Gokul to find someone to get Him the water. This messenger immediately came back with the needed water. Krishna asked, "Who gave this water?" The messenger replied, "It is from Radha". Krishna asked the messenger "what did Radha tell you when you asked for this water?" The messenger said that as soon as the news reached Radha that He was suffering from stomach pain and He needs the water that is used to clean the feet, she immediately gave the water to him and did not ask him anything or tell him anything. So Krishna took the water and His stomach pain was relieved.

Krishna then told Rukmini and Sathyabama "when I asked you for this water you didn't give me because you thought you would incur sin. Whereas in the case of Radha she didn't worry about what would happen to her, she immediately gave the water". Radha had no thoughts about herself. That is the reason she could immediately give whatever was needed for Krishna. Now you know the height of divine Prema for the Lord, a Prema that doesn't have thoughts about one's own self. Radha is always ready to give whatever is needed and even more.... even her own life for Krishna.

One should be ready at all times to give whatever is asked for Bhagavan's sake and be willing to sacrifice anything for His sake. Now Bhagavan is asking for love from us. So what are we doing about it? We are not giving Him the love he is asking for. We give our love only to family and friends but we will not give it to Bhagavan. Even when I was a small child I had immense love for Lord Krishna. I had the one and only thought that I should attain Krishna. Once I came to know that Sathya Sai Baba was Lord Krishna my love turned to him. In my own world in my small village I had my bhakthi and devotion for Krishna. There was no one else in my little world except Bhagavan and myself. In this situation I wrote many songs and poems about Lord Krishna. In one of my poems I wrote:

Would that I be a speck of sand in Puttapparthi
Would that I be the water that fills the Chitravathi
Would that I be padukas that are worn on by Swami
Would that I be the step on the staircase
Where Bhagavan walks,
Then his feet would always be on me.

I was always crying and crying, "I don't want this body. I want to be blade of grass at your Brindavan or Puttapparathi." Like this I wrote my own songs. The same feelings translate to Krishna during the earlier period of my life when I wrote:

Would that I be the flute that you play,
Would that I be the butter that you eat,
Would that I be the peacock feather on your head.

My world was a separate one in which there was nobody other than Bhagavan and myself and there was absolutely no room for anyone other than us. As it was then, so now it is Bhagavan's will that I write my experiences in the form of books so the whole world would know and be benefited. Only after I started writing books and the books were published did I come to know of a world that existed beyond us.

Like the life of Lord Buddha, I was inside the four walls of my house. I didn't have any relation with the outer world until after the books were published. Only after people started coming to me did I become aware of all the problems of the world. They told me about their problems and difficulties. Swami told me to give them Prema Shakthi. Prema Shakthi is the power of my penance and the result of my penance. Not only to people but also to rivers like the Ganga, Chitravathi and the Cauvery I have given Prema Shakthi. Swami said that those people who take baths or use the river water would also get Prema Shakthi. The Prema Shakthi that people receive from me kindles in them a love for Bhagavan. It is more pronounced if received directly from me.

Once Swami said that because I have been yearning for Him all these years and I did all penance and spiritual sadhana that I should now be enjoying a state of bliss. He conferred this boon on me but I refused this state because only when all people of the world attain this state will I accept it. I refused this state because if I was the only one enjoying bliss, it would be like using a stolen property. I had this good quality instilled in me from a young age to share whatever I got with others. So when Swami said I should enjoy the state of bliss, in this situation this quality arose. This is the reason why I said I would not enjoy this state until the whole world gets it.

It is very difficult for one who has always been in thought of Swami, who is always in God Consciousness to come out of that state and be in this world with others, in body consciousness. When I'm alone and only with Swami, I don't have any consciousness of the world or my body. As Swami has asked me to spread the message of Prema, I am doing all this for your sake and writing all these books and sharing my experiences with you, but it is very difficult for me. It is like living in a world that is not my own.

When foreigners come to India, at first they find it very difficult to accommodate themselves to Indian culture. It is very hard to adjust to the food and the way things are done. A devotee who stayed with me from Australia found it very difficult to accommodate herself to conditions at Vadakkampatti; the food, the daily routine, the language, the weather, etc. In the same way I suffer one hundred fold when I come out of Bhagavan's world to be with others. I don't know what to say, what to speak, how to act... I don't even know how to explain my state to you. I find it very difficult. Swami has pulled me into this world and the only example I can give to help you understand what I am experiencing is that of the case of foreigners.

You can imagine my plight. My feelings are not only from this Kali Yuga but also from Dwapara Yuga from when I was Radha. How can you know how deep and how pure my love for God is? How can I come out of that world and be with you and mingle with you? That is the reason why I find it very difficult. It is only because of Bhagavan that I am doing this.

In the same way Bhagavan is telling ordinary people that they are not just the circle of their family. Being in a family is like being in a prison. In the case of prisoners who are let out for a while, they are then taken back into the four walls of the prison. You yourself have created a prison around yourself called family. You can see that your love is only for the members of the family. You should come out of this small circle. You have locked your Prema up in this prison. First give liberation to your own love, your own Prema. This love that Bhagavan has given you and that dwells in your heart is waiting to spread its wings and come out (fly over the prison walls of family and friends). Only when you release yourself from the hold of the family can the Prema spread out and reach all people. This Prema is not just the property of your family members. It is the property of the whole world. In the same way we are not just the property of our families but we belong to the whole world. We are all brothers and sisters. So why should you have love only for family members. Should you not give it to others also?

The relation that binds you and the family is not Prema but attachment. Only when the bonds are broken and this love spreads out in to the world is it called Prema. Swami is giving us this message that our Prema should be for each and every person of this world. We have a small circle of friends. We should keep enlarging this circle from 5 or 6 to 20 or 30 until the whole world becomes your circle of friends. Whenever you meet a friend you are so happy. In the darshan line if you see someone you know, you say hello, hi. So you can see how, if you have known someone, your love flows from you to them. If you can have this love for everyone, how wonderful it would be. The whole world would be in love with you.

It is a fact if you can love everyone, the same love will be reflected back to you. I have three children. Now I have no thoughts about them. I have left them but now the whole world has become my children and they call me Amma, Amma. I share my love with those around me as if they are my children. Why can't you also do the same? If you love others, the others will have the same love for you. There is only one thing in the world that really matters and that is Prema. If you can have this pure love, there is nothing like it. Everybody would love you and you would live in a world of love.

Along with Prema is shama (forbearance) and shanti (peace). In the worldly life we have no peace of mind. As Swami says we don't have peace of mind, we have 'pieces of mind'. The one and only way to have total peace is to show Prema. Prema doesn't mean that you have to leave family life. The family members are also recipients of pure love but Prema reaches others also. So this pure love without any attachment for all is pure Prema and Radha is the perfect example for Prema. When you love everyone without selfishness because of pure selfless love, the whole world loves you. I do not even expect anything from Bhagavan, how can I expect anything from the world. The motherly love that holds no expectation expecting nothing in return is pure love and this is the love that I show for my people, my children. Motherly love is a pure form of Prema.

Prema is Radha and Radha is Krishna. All three are one and the same. Krishna is Prema and Radha also is Prema. One can say Prema is the experience, Krishna is

the one who is experienced and Radha is the one having the experience. So all three, the experience, the one who is experienced and the one having the experience become one and the same. They merge. This merger is called *Triputi*. This is the state of Jeevan mukthi, the one who is liberated in life. Every one of us can attain this state of Jeevan mukthi.

Let us see one instance showing the power of this Prema. Once Udhava was sent by Krishna to Brindavan as a messenger to the Gopis. When he arrived at the Gokulam, he saw the pain in the hearts of the Gopis who were separated from Krishna. The Gopis took Udhava to all the places where they had played with Krishna and he saw that the whole of Brindavan was crying from the separation from Lord Krishna. Even the trees and the leaves and the grass were all dried up and crying. Udhava saw tears on the leaves and the blades of grass. He saw that the rocks of the hill Govardhana were melting with love. Udhava felt that because of the pain of separation and yearning and of the Gopis, the rocks and leaves and trees of Brindavan were also crying. It was also reflected on them. Udhava was wonderstruck how such pure and unsullied Prema could make even the trees and the plants reflect these feelings. One can think how is all this possible? Can it really happen? Do plants and trees have feelings...have tears?

Here is an example from my own life. Once on the occasion of my birthday, we did a homa (ritual worship) at Vadakkampatti. Many people had come there for the occasion. We were sitting around the sacrificial fire and adding ghee to the fire. Some people were chanting mantras while the ghee was added. At that time I was in a state of bliss with no consciousness, so I didn't know what I was doing. My hand was automatically pouring ghee into the fire and not really under my control. My hand movements were not steady. Then a person who was there said this is not the proper way to pour the ghee and so he held my arm showing me how to put or pour the ghee. Once or twice I could follow what he said but again I was merged in consciousness with Bhagavan and I couldn't do it properly. Again and again he repeated how I should do it. Anyhow, it came to an end and it was time for Poornahuthi (final oblations) and I was in deep meditation. After the final oblations were over I was called to give arathi to Bhagavan. When I was giving the arathi, I felt Swami was there. Swami was there near the chair and so I immediately showed the arathi to Swami where he was standing.

The same elderly man when he saw me showing arathi away from Bhagavan's picture took my hand by force and took the arathi lamp out of my hand. He said, "You don't even know how to show the arathi". He began showing it to Bhagavan's picture. As soon as he grabbed the lamp from my hand, two camphors jumped out of the arathi lamp and fell to the floor. The camphors that fell out landed exactly at the same place where I had seen Swami's feet. They continued burning for some time. All the devotees present there were taken aback and as they watched the flames continued to burn for a long time. Later I told them the reason and they were not surprised.

My whole life is yearning and crying for Bhagavan. My life is just love for Bhagavan. So every tree, every window and wall of my house knows of my love for Bhagavan. They knew I had been treated wrongly and that I was upset that day.

People and the surroundings receive Prema Shakthi from my vibrations and my presence. Inanimate objects feel the power of Prema too. There is no use performing ritual worship rites without this Prema. True love has to be the basis. The Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas tell us to go beyond body consciousness. I am in such

a state of awareness, but through their ignorance, people cause me to come back to body consciousness.

My Prema started as love for Bhagavan. Now it reaches to all corners of the universe and to all people and things. This is how we all should be. This is how the power of Prema can kindle love in more and more living things. The source of this Prema is God Himself and it can be reflected throughout creation. Give us all universal Prema. That is the desired effect.

We should have Prema love and discrimination as the supreme principals and goals of our life. This will take us to the Lord. Love should be our main shield, keeping feelings of hurt and anger away from us. I sincerely hope your coming to this satsang will help instill this principle of love in you.

Give love to the last breath. Melt your body like a candle giving itself to the flame. Spread the light of love. Sai Ram

Chapter 7

The Unfinished Discourse

“From the moment my feet touched the sands of Brindavan....?”

Editor's note: The authoress abruptly stopped speaking. With tears running down her cheeks in rivulets she never finished this intriguing opening to her description of the recent visit to the Krishna Avatar's boyhood home. The words wouldn't come. She tried to choke back the crying and carry on. Her fingers were flicking away the tears. All present were caught in the grip of Radha's love and longed for her story to be told, but she was unable to continue. Further requests by those present proved fruitless, only prompting continued tears. Some things like the depth of feeling in the heart can never be known. The depths and leelas of divine love are unfathomable and inscrutable.

Chapter 8

Korakumba and Karma Yoga

Some time ago there was a potter named Korakumba. To make pots he used to stamp up and down on the clay to prepare it for the kiln. He used to constantly remember God and clap his hands singing bhajans all the time while he still kept stamping on the clay. His wife's name was Padmavathi. They had a small boy baby. One day the wife had to go fetch water at the well. It was some distance away, so she asked Korakumba to look after the baby. Now, Korakumba, while stamping the clay, was immersed in the thought of God as always. So he was singing and thinking of God.

The little boy came down and started crawling towards Korakumba. Since Korakumba was immersed in the thought of God he didn't notice the small child creeping toward him. Along with the clay he started stamping also on the child and the child was totally crushed by his feet.

When his wife returned she started looking for the child. While she was searching she observed that the clay was full of blood and then she started screaming at her husband. The body was totally dismembered; hands, legs and limbs were torn apart. The wife began wailing. Then Korakumba came to console her. He told her he was very sorry and tried to lift the baby, but she swore at him, "by God Panduranga, don't touch me again".

From that day onwards he swore he'd never touch his wife or anything touched by her because of her oath. So he started taking care of the entire household and housework in addition to his regular duties. The wife became very worried as she had nothing to do anymore and he was working so hard. He had kept his promise.

She felt very sad that he was doing all the work so she went to her father's house and ask her father to get her younger sister married to her husband. Initially, Korakumba refused to marry her but later he accepted because he thought it was becoming a bit too much work to take care of the house and all that goes along with it and his potter's job. He thought, 'if this is God's will then let it happen'. So he decided to marry his wife's younger sister.

Soon after the marriage, his new bride and his wife began the journey back to the village. While they were parting, her father looked at his son-in-law and said 'in the name of Vitthala you should take care of both my daughters and treat them equally and the same in every respect'. So they all came back home and in keeping with the second promise, he treated them both equally.

Once again Korakumba found himself starting over doing everything himself. His work became manifold because he had to take care of two wives, the household work and his own job.

Both wives now became very concerned and worried not knowing how to help their husband. So they decided to go and just touch his hand today and see what happens. While he was in bed and fast asleep, one went to either side of the bed and caught hold of his hand and then they both fell asleep.

When he woke up he noticed both his hands were being touched by his wives. He immediately got up and chopped off both his hands. When the wives saw this they couldn't bear it and felt very sorry thinking what a big sin they had incurred.

On this same day one of his younger brothers who had been off on a pilgrimage, returned. His brother had gone on a pilgrimage because the fire used to bake the clay pots had caused an accidental death. A little kitten was resting in one of the pots but he had failed to notice and fired the pots and the kitten died. So to wash away that sin he went on a pilgrimage. As soon as he returned he started to take care of the entire house, his brother, the housework, making the clay pots and going to the marketplace.

The pots were so beautiful that everyone came to him to buy pots. For a long time they lived in this same way. Once they went to a festival, Vaikunta Ekadasi, in Pandaripuram. The whole night at Pandaripuram, there were bhajans, lectures and satsang. At that time the great saint Nama Dev was present. He was singing bhajans and telling spiritual stories to the large crowd that had gathered there. When he was singing those songs the entire audience was mesmerized as they sang along with him.

Korakumba, even though he had lost both hands, kept time by hitting his wrists together and singing. At that time both his hands began to grow! The whole crowd was overwhelmed by witnessing this...at seeing this. At that time his wife, Padmavathi went to Nama Dev and told him 'just like my husband's hands were restored, I would like my baby back'. Nama Dev told her "you must pray to Bhagavan" Padmavathi then went to the shrine where she prayed continuously asking for the babies return. After long and repeated requests the baby came out of the sanctum sanctorum.

Again, this was witnessed by the entire crowd that had gathered there. Then Nama Dev said that 'the one who stayed with you and helped you all this time was not your brother but Vittala himself, there in the form of your brother'.

From this we can infer what kind of a bhaktha that Korakumba was. This is what is called Karma yoga. Korakumba was an ordinary potter but still because of his love and devotion and sincere heartfelt feelings for God he was able to bring God to his own house.

Then the Lord told him that since your old hands are lost, these new hands are not bound by your promise anymore. Those promises are over and you are free to start leading a normal life again.

From this we can infer the great power and strength of Karma Yoga. If the practice of karma yoga was able to bring God from above down to your house where he did all the work for you, then we have to think how great karma yoga is.

That is why the third chapter of the Gita stresses Karma yoga. One must put it into every day practice. We have to first submit all our actions to God before we do anything. In this way you make a yoga out of all your everyday activities.

Kabir was a weaver by profession but became a great yogi. So it is not that one job is better than another but that everything can be transformed into yoga by constantly repeating the name of God. So that is Karma Yoga.

There is a book called Bhaktha Vijayam that speaks of all the glories of Panduranga. Many such devotees have transformed their ordinary professions to become yogis by following Karma yoga. The Gita speaks of one such yogi who lived long ago in the forest. Once when he was in meditation a crow made a "dropping" on his head. Immediately he looked at the bird and he turned it to ashes.

Soon after that he left the forest to beg for alms and stopped in front of a house and said, "Bhavate bikshaamdhehe", which means, give me something to eat or drink or alms. At that time the lady of the house after some delay comes to him with alms. This rishi gets very angry with her for keeping him waiting and he looks at her sternly for being so late. The lady of the house says you can't look at me like that for being late and you can't turn me into ashes like you did the bird. The rishi was very surprised and asked her how she knew what happened in the forest.

She said I may be an ordinary housewife but I dedicated all my actions to God and that's why wisdom has dawned in me. If you want to know about this go meet my guru Thuladaran in a small shop. So the rishi goes in search of Thuladaran and finds him just selling things made by others and weighing them out. However the rishi notices that Thuladaran can always guess the weight of the item exactly, as he always puts just the right amount of weight on the scales to balance it. The pointer is always in the center, never to one side or the other irrespective of the customer (albeit) a small person or an adult.

After work the rishi asks Thuladaran, 'how did you get your wisdom'? I submit all my actions to God and I do this with whole hearted devotion and without forsaking righteousness at anytime.

If you want to know more about this go and meet a butcher who lives in a far away village. The rishi thought to himself. How can a butcher who leads a life of cutting up animals ever know anything about wisdom? But, He goes anyhow and notices the butcher is surrounded by cut up meat and flesh, which he is buying and selling. The rishi is not very happy at seeing this.

The rishi talks to the butcher who tells him this is the family business that I just inherited. That is why I have followed this profession. I have no likes or dislikes about the job. I submit everything to God.

All these people are Karma yogis: the housewife, the merchant and the butcher. While these simple working people were able to control their temper and had attained a level of wisdom, the rishi who lived in the forest and did penance couldn't even control his temper. So we see there is no necessity to go to the forest and do penance. It is enough if you submit all your actions to God. Then that action becomes Karma yoga.

In this Kali Yuga, the most important thing that one has to learn from the Gita is Karma yoga. By attributing all their actions to God and continuing in whatever profession they were already involved in, these three simple people proved they are far superior to the rishi who was in the deep jungle. It doesn't matter if you are in the jungle or outside (in the jungle of the city and everyday life). What has to transform is inside of you. Our anger and negative qualities have to be changed by us. We have to reform ourselves. stoppp This is what Baba repeats. Each one of you has to transform/reform yourself! Every day we have to take note of our positive and negative qualities and try as hard as we can to remove those negative traits. The more we make this effective in our lives the more we determine to change ourselves we improve in our sadhana. We should stop looking with the external eye and start looking inward, thus making our mind look inside not outside. There is nothing in this exterior world. Only when we start looking and analyzing inside, do we know the beauty of looking inside.

The 13th chapter of the Gita which I wanted to talk about today speaks of shetra. Shetra means the body. Shetrajna means the Atma that resides inside the body. The knowledge of the body and the Atma is dealt with in this chapter called 'Shetra Shetrajna Vibhaga Yoga'. The first thing we have to know is that the body is subject to destruction. The Atma is immortal. Each and every day the body under goes transformation and change. Yesterday, we were children. Then we became youth and tomorrow we reach middle age eventually grow old and die. That which witnesses all these actions is the Atma. Atma is different and separate from the body. We should learn the art of separating the Atma from the body.

Since our body consciousness is more than the Atmic consciousness, we spend more time focusing on the body than the Atma. Always we are thinking have we lost weight or gained weight. We concentrate so much on our physical self that we finally get disease. We spend so much time on finding ways and means to sustain the body. How do we make our inner self-strong and beautiful? How we beautify our inner selves is something we neglect. The knowledge of Atma or strengthening and beautification of the Atma is called Para vidya. The knowledge of the body is apara jnana. Only if you have the knowledge of the body can you give up body consciousness. Only if we know the impermanence of the body, the defects of the

body, etc. can we truly concentrate on Atma vidya. So the first step we have to take is to separate the body from the Atma. Most of the time, we have 'I' consciousness. But in all of us, there lives only one God who is the Antaryami (the indweller). We have different looking bodies on the exterior, but inside in all of us, the soul is alike. He is jeevatma or Paramatma. So we should never cultivate enmity or hatred toward anyone. We should understand that by hurting or torturing others we hurt and torture ourselves.

Likewise when someone does harm to you we should learn to bear it. The Gita says that ahimsa or non-violence is very important. One has to observe non-violence even in heart and thoughts. One should learn tolerance and bear without malice any harm that has been incurred. That is why Jesus said if someone strikes you on the cheek to turn the other cheek.

Let me give a brief example. When we eat something hard sometimes we accidentally bite our tongue. Do we remove the teeth and throw them away? No, of course we don't. Because we are aware that the teeth and tongue belong to us. Likewise, if another person harms you, if you relate to the above and think he is part of you and one in whom Bhagavan resides, you won't feel like hurting him. One should attain samha shristi, which means looking at everyone with an equal eye. When you realize each and everyone is the Lord (Bhagavan), then another person's harm to you will not affect you in any way.

Once we have attained such equanimity of mind, only then will we be able to understand paravidya or the knowledge of Atma. The first step in attaining this Atmic knowledge is to lose body consciousness. We should direct all our consciousness toward God. There is an equivalent thing spoken about in the Gita. The tortoise pulls its head, legs and tail into its body shell when it is in danger. Similarly, we must pull all our five senses inside ourselves at all times because there is more danger in the external world. If you can turn yourselves inward and look internally, then you will attain lots of peace and happiness. There is only sadness and misery in the external world, nothing else. Each one of us has lived for a long time now. How many days have been entirely very happy ones? If you think back there was not one day spent in total happiness and joy.

So instead of continually looking at the external world, start looking internally. Only then we will attain a lot of peace and bliss. Do we not gain that happiness by looking at or having darshan of Bhagavan?

For this we have to do a lot of practice. Over here (at the ashram of Swami) we are surrounded by a lot of happiness and peace, but once we return home we have to get back into our daily routine and a lot of problems are awaiting us. How do we bring this situation into our homes and make it practical? It is by looking inward and seeing Bhagavan inside us at all times. If we transform ourselves and go back home totally surrendering ourselves to Bhagavan, he will take care of each and every action of ours and fulfill all of our desires just like he took care of Korakumba who had totally surrendered himself to God.

Chapter Nine

Divine Satsang Leelas and Miracles

Wax streaks on Swami's picture

That morning in satsang Amma was talking about Prema. She gave the definition of Prema as sacrificing one's life and melting one's body for the love of God. She further enjoined each person to melt the body like a candle giving itself to the flame...spread the light of love... give, sacrifice and burn the body so the light of Prema love can spread throughout the world.

Further discussions with devotees during the afternoon and evening included continuing inquiry into Prema. Later that day Eddy saw a stream of wax coming down from the top of Sai Baba's picture and splitting into two streams about a third of the way down toward the bottom of the picture.

Later in meditation, Amma asked Swami what is the meaning of this wax on the photo. Swami said that only wax lines can show that you (as Radha) are burning your body. Not honey, kumkum, amritham or vibuthi can reveal the proof of Radha's Prema. Swami said that Radha is the definition of Prema and used the wax on the photo to prove what Amma, as the re-incarnation of Radha, had talked about earlier in satsang. We offer this little poem based on His words.

*Like the candle melts
Itself in flame,
Giving light to all the same,
This body too must melt
In sacrifice to spread the light.
To all the worlds below and above
Till all have felt Prema bright.
This is Radha's Love!*

The Higher Wisdom

For the past several evenings a small group of close devotees were laughing, singing bhajan, and talking about many spiritual topics with Amma. After a similar session on the 31st of May, Eddy noticed what looked like scratch marks on another photo of Swami that was on the altar. Two lines crossed each other at nearly a right angle. The lines crossed near the heart area of Sai Baba's picture. Looking closer Eddy remarked that light seemed to be in the lines. The following day Yamini (who translated for Amma during many of the satsangs) made the same comment upon seeing the picture for the first time.

Next morning in meditation, Amma asked Swami about these new lines that had appeared on His picture.

Swami: What you are talking, joking, singing, laughing and speaking about is all the higher wisdom! I am very happy. So I show the rays of the sun. The sun is the symbol of wisdom and the sun's rays are the mark of the higher wisdom. Even when you are joking and laughing, you are talking only about Swami...nothing else. Your mind and body are focused on Me.

A Divine Gift From Swami

On the last day of morning satsang some drops of an unknown liquid appeared on Sai Baba's picture in the flat where Amma was staying. It was early in the morning and she was preparing to go to Swami's morning darshan. At first it was thought to be honey or amrita, but instead of tasting it to find out Amma said to wait. She thought they were oil drops.

At the last satsang, the altar continued to be blessed with beautiful flowers and graced with fruits from the participants. A feeling of love permeated the place. After meditation Amma said that Swami had confirmed that oil drops had manifested on His picture in the morning. Oil is the symbol of the removing of karma (karma samhara) and by Bhagavan's grace; the karma's of those who attended satsang all those days has been reduced or removed. This includes those who were helping behind the scenes and were not always able to attend. Everyone received; all were in various stages of surprise!

Later in the afternoon all devotees gathered at San Jay Café across from the ashram to bid farewell to Amma and have some ice cream. Shankara, the owner and manager had been attending satsang until the starting time was changed from 9:30 am to 11 am. He was unable to participate further because his presence was required at work.

When he saw Amma sit down, he came over to tell her about a dream he had last night. In the dream Amma came to him in the same sari she was now wearing and told him she had come to bless him because he had attended satsang. In the same dream she told Shankara that Swami had asked her to visit and bless him and to bless all those who attended. All who were present were in a state of wonder at how what Swami had told Amma in meditation at noon was confirmed right in front of them by Shankara's dream.

A Message From Swami About Satsang

In her noon meditation 6/6/02 Swami asked Amma to relay the following words regarding satsang.

Swami: If you join satsang you remove yourself from the company of bad habits and bad people. Your desires and attachment fall away. You get an unwavering and steady mind. He who has a steady mind can achieve Jeevan mukthi (attaining God while in the body).

Vasantha: This is from a sloka as quoted by Swami. He asked me to tell it to all who attended. From this we can know the power of talking, thinking and singing about God!

Strong Proof

Vasantha: After bhajan we were sitting in Ann's house and I told Fred that this time last month, we were in meditation at the Vashista Cave.

(This was the one-month 'anniversary' of the spiritual merger that took place later that night.) A short time later the current went off and we sat in the dark. When the power was switched back on Eddy got up to get something in the kitchen and noticed that Swami's picture on the wall had changed. Blotches and horizontal lines of a rose-colored hue appeared on the right side of Sai Baba's body. So, on the morning of the 17th at 4 am (coincidentally the time of the merger) Vasantha asked Swami the meaning of this.

Swami: Last month on this day you merged with me. At that time I told you I will give you some strong proof in Whitefield. Rose petals are the color of pink and that pink was the color of Radha's complexion. Thus those patches are appearing in the right side of my body. (Radha's half).

Shakthi and Vibuthi

Swami told Amma during her meditation to give Dulcie and Desmond (two long time Sai devotees) the Atma Sanyasi initiation. This transfer of Shakthi is done by pouring water from the Ganges over Amma's hands and then on to the recipients' hands. The ceremony took place at Ann's house. At completion of the entire ceremony Dulcie sat up on the edge of the bed that doubled as a sofa. When she looked down at her left hand a big surprise was in store for her. A look of disbelief crept over her face. "There is vibuthi all over my hand," she said in a hushed voice. We were all amazed and crowded around her to see. The vibuthi itself was very white and fresh and found mainly on the backside of the hand. So as Vasantha said in relaying this story, "So, it was accepted by Swami and he blessed both of them."

Recently Dulcie has had some illness and difficulties, so, Dhanwantri Shakthi was also given at Swami's request. When this was completed again there was freshly materialized vibuthi on a certain finger on her right hand.

Now she had been told by a gem specialist familiar with subtle energy that she should wear her birthstone on the ring finger of her right hand. They were not sure if this was the proper thing to do, so, had not taken action. But the vibuthi that appeared was in the shape of a ring and on the same finger as suggested by the gem specialist. Consequently they took this as confirmation from Swami that she needs to wear such a ring.

Lord of the Rings

One day at satsang just before meditation Nicola from the U.K. gave Amma a new ring she had purchased only that morning with the help of a friend. Her friend was also there for meditation.

Vasantha: She asked me to put it on my finger (as a way of blessing it). I did this. Afterwards I gave it back to her without thinking about it. I forgot I was wearing it.

Eddy happened to look at the white clear jewel and saw to his surprise Swamis' image there. All who were there could see Swami standing deep inside the white stone of the ring. Nicola attended the satsangs regularly and sang bhajans beautifully.

Leo Asks for Confirmation

On the last day of satsang, Leo from Holland wrote a letter to Swami telling Him he wanted to follow Amma's teachings and asking Swami for confirmation of Vasantha Sai and her teachings by accepting the letter.

That morning in darshan Leo got first token line and was seated in the front row along the carpet inside the mandir. When Swami came he saw Leo and directly took the letter. He then gave Leo a strong look directly into the eyes. This was proof enough for Leo and in exactly the same way Swami confirmed this writer's request two and half years ago for confirmation of Vasantha Sai.