

*The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar*

*“Christmas 2009”  
(Part 2)*

*December 20, 2009*

*OM...OM...OM...*

*Sai Ram*

*With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

In continuation of last week’s talk on Christmas, we have this morning some other view points, some other dimensions, to this celebration of Holy Christmas, which is fast approaching. Today in Prashanthi Nilayam, you will find all the overseas devotees practising Christmas carols. The whole campus is full of music, guitars, drums and people from all countries practising Christmas carols, because they are ready to sing in front of Bhagavan, who Himself is the second coming of Christ. We find people running and jumping in joy, full of smiles, indicating the festivity and gaiety of the Christmas season.

***IF YOU FOLLOW ME, YOU WILL BE FREE FROM DEATH***

Let us go into the study of Christmas, from the viewpoint of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Jesus says, “If you follow Me, you will be free from death. You will attain the state of immortality.” “If you follow Me” means if we follow His teachings. That’s what we do today in the Mandir: *Mruthyorma Amrutham Gamaya . . . Led me from mortality to immortality.* By following the sacred text, by following the Divine Master and His teachings, implementing these teachings in our daily lives, we go beyond death and reach immortality or eternity. That’s what is said in John 5:24 – “I tell you the truth. Whoever hears My words, and believes Him who has sent Me, has eternal life and will not be condemned. He has crossed over from death to life.”

So we should not only believe Him, we should follow Him if we want the life of immortality, attaining the state of *nirvana*, *moksha* or liberation. Let us follow God. That’s what Baba says. “Follow the Master. Follow the Divine Master.” And then again, let all of us know that Jesus moved amongst us as per the will of His Father in heaven. That Father is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Jesus Himself declared, “I am here at His behest and His command.”

In John 8:28-29, He says, "I am from God. I am from My Father. I am sent from Him. I am not separate from Him. And I do not do anything without being dictated by Him." That is the reason why the teachings of Jesus are very much like those of the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I am just publicising all that I have heard from Him, as Jesus Himself declared, "I repeat those I heard from my Father." Similarly, the Father, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's statements, and the statements of His son, Jesus, are parallel in their approach and their practical application.

Further Jesus says, "My Father is with Me." It means that he is not far away from Him; in other words, consciousness is aware that Supreme God is within every one of us. That Son of God feels that everyone is a child of God because He is the only Father. We are all His children.

In that way, if we feel Him within us, naturally we are the Son of God. You are not away from Him. "The One who has sent Me is with Me. I always do what pleases Him" – John 8:42. Therefore my friends, it is very clear, the Father and the Son are one. They communicate the same, mean the same, and expect all of us to follow their commands and teachings for our own salvation. Here I quote another author, Albert Eckhart, who wrote long back in the year 1968, his observations on the differences between Christ and Sathya Sai Baba.

What are the differences, according to him?

Eckhart clearly mentions that Christ's life and miracles are mentioned in the Holy Bible only, whereas Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's miracles and teachings are recorded by many, many people. Thousands of books are written about His teachings, miracles, and experiences all over the world, in all possible languages. Therefore, things have been taking place in a bigger dimension today.

#### *MIRACLES OF BABA ARE EXPERIENCED TODAY IN FRONT OF OUR EYES*

The next point: Eckhart says, we see Baba alive today, moving in our midst, demonstrating those miracles. The miracles of Christ are read as stated in the Bible. The miracles of Baba are experienced today in front of our eyes. We do not have to go through any record. We don't have to go through any scripture. You see them in action alive, happening today in the contemporary world. That's what he says.

But Albert Eckhart at the same time observes another point. They may belong to different periods of time, but their words, the essence of their teachings, and their natures are identical. It is really a very good observation indeed.

Another point of observation by Albert Eckhart: Christ's message spread after His crucifixion. Christ's glory is known after His crucifixion. After Christ's death on the cross, people have realised the loss of the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, even while being alive today in this body, His glory, His teachings, and His miracles are spreading far and wide. His message has spread globally and His activities and programmes are undertaken on a large scale throughout the world.

Then it was Jesus who told all His disciples, come on! Go and spread My message to different cross-sections of society! Go and teach. Make people aware of this. That was the command of Jesus Christ.

And today, what does Bhagavan Baba say? His mission is for the entire humanity. That whole humanity belongs to one caste – the caste of humanity. They have only one language, and that language is the language of the heart. And there is only one God, who is omnipresent. There is only one religion – the religion of love. This oneness brings the entire humanity together. That is what is done today, as we are experiencing it.

### *MESSAGES ARE MEANT FOR EVERYBODY*

We notice another similarity between both. Christ's message is meant for both sets of people – literate and illiterate, innocent and ignorant; at the same time, the ignorant and scholars of eminence and prominence.

Similarly, Baba's message today is meant for everybody. Ask any old lady who is illiterate, "How do you feel about Swami's lecture?" She will say that she has not heard such a talk till this day.

If you ask the topmost scientist, "What do you think about Baba's message?" he would say it is scientific.

If you ask any Vedic scholar, he would say, "No Veda has ever explained it in this way."

Therefore my friends, the talks and the teachings of Jesus and Sri Sathya Sai Baba are meant for all cross-sections of society. They are not focused on only one category of people. It is meant for everybody. Their teachings are universal in their approach. They are cosmic. Therefore this identity, this similarity of touching the hearts of everybody, is unique in the case of Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *DIVINE MAGNETIC POWER*

We also read from the Holy Bible that Jesus climbed up the mountain top and thousands of people were attracted to Him. They run to see Him. He is surrounded by huge crowds. That's what we notice in the Holy Bible.

Today, when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba comes for *darshan*, thousands of people are eager to see Him. When He goes on visits to places like Delhi, Bombay (Mumbai) and Madras (Chennai), people run after Him, as they did a few years ago in North India and long ago in East Africa. Thousands and thousands of people – heads of governments included – are waiting and waiting for a glimpse of the Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This Divine magnetic power was in Jesus then and also in Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba today.

### *DIVINITY, WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE*

We also notice another similarity. Christ started teaching at the age of twelve. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba started teaching at the age of fourteen. They are teachers from their childhood. They are not scholars by study. No! Because they are Divinity incarnated, wisdom personified, knowledge walking on two feet, embodiments of wisdom. Wisdom is expressed in their words and thoughts. Therefore, both of them are *gurus* from their childhood, as we notice from their biographies. This is really amazing.

In India, we come across a great scholar by the name of Dr. Diwakar – a great exponent of Indian culture. He wrote many books. He said one thing: a village of a hundred people, cut-off

from the maddening crowds, has become a centre of global attraction. Can there be a better miracle than this? Can there be a higher miracle than this? The miracle of miracles is Prashanthi Nilayam and what it is today. That is the feeling of Dr. Diwakar.

### *BABA SAYS THE EGO HAS TO BE CUT*

What about the explanation of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the symbol of the cross. The cross is a symbol of crucifixion. Baba says the central one is that the 'I'-ness or the ego has to be cut. That's what Baba says. Jesus is also against all kinds of expressions of ego. He condemned ego outright.

That is the significance of wearing the cross. The cross is not only important for Christians. It is equally important to everybody. No one can afford to be egoistic. In fact, there is no reason to be egoistic at all. Humility is the hallmark of a devotee.

### *THE STATEMENTS OF CHRIST AND BABA ARE OF FATHOMLESS DEPTH*

Though the statements appear to be so simple, the statements of both Jesus and Sathya Sai Baba have profound meaning and profundity, depth, and inner significance. If you just listen to their teachings, you may think that you have understood. You will conclude they are simple statements. No! They are of fathomless depth. Volumes can be written on each and every statement made by Jesus then and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba now. That is another parallel that I would like to draw your attention to.

### *JESUS MOVED AMONG HIS DISCIPLES HAND IN HAND*

Jesus moved among His disciples as a friend, as their colleague, though He was aware of His Divinity and of the fact that He was the only begotten Son of God. Yet He moved among His disciples hand-in-hand as their friend.

### *BABA IS OUR FRIEND*

Today, as we see Swami, moving among students, among devotees, we see Him as a close friend.

*(Anil Kumar sings)*

*Bhakta Sakha Bhagavan  
Hey Bhakta Sakha Bhagavan  
Bhakta Sakha Bhagavan  
Krishna Murari Bhava Bhaya Hari*

In this *bhajan*, you must have come across the stanza *Bhakta Sakha Bhagavan*. It means that He is our friend. I will give you a simple illustration:

Swami gave an interview to a family along with their son who is studying here. Swami went on praising the son: "He is exceptional, he is highly disciplined, number one in the class..." He said those things. Then Swami detained the boy in the interview room and allowed his parents to leave. Then Baba looked deeply into the eyes of the boy, "Arre boy, I know what you are. I know what you are. But I praised you in front of your parents. Why? I am your trusted friend. I want to transform you. I am not going to reveal all your secrets to your parents. I am your trusted friend.

I want to change you.” Thereafter, what a transformation took place in the boy! He became a gold medallist subsequently.

(Anil Kumar sings)

### *Bhakṭa Sakṣi Bhagavan*

God moves as a close friend. That’s what we have noticed in the life of Jesus also.

And then, we also notice another very important point.

### *BY THE VERY TOUCH OF CHRIST, EVIL SPIRITS RUN AWAY*

By the presence of Jesus, by the very touch of Christ, the evil spirits ran away. At times we come across people possessed by evil spirits and demons. Those who are possessed by demons or evil spirits behave in a crazy way, in a funny way. Sometimes they even turn violent. But by the touch of Christ or by the very look of Christ, that devotee would be free from all the effects of the evil spirit. All the demons would run away from that spot.

We find the same thing in the life of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Right from His childhood, many people from neighbouring villages with problems of this nature used to come to Him. Baba suddenly shouted, “Go! Go! Get out!” He commanded the evil spirit to get out so that the victim is free from further suffering. That’s what we find in both these cases.

### *THE INNER SIGNIFICANCE*

Both Jesus and Sathya Sai Baba have not come to establish a new religion.

Christ reformed the existing religion. Christ corrected certain patterns of life, certain rituals, and certain practices of those times. He has taken the existing religion to a higher state of unfoldment, to a higher level of comprehension, to greater heights. He has not started a new religion.

The same thing holds true for Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He has not come to start a new religion. In fact, by His advent all religions are energised. All religions have got a new life-force today because Swami believes and propagates the unity of religions. So my point is that both Jesus and Baba never had any intention of starting a new religion. Their idea is to explain the inner significance, not the outer ritualistic external actions.

That’s why Jesus condemned killing the animals in the church. Baba condemns killing of animals equally vehemently.

Jesus also opposed the collection of money. Baba is also against the collection of money right from the beginning or any exploitation in the name of religion. Both of them condemned vehemently these points of view in unequivocal terms.

### *REACTION, REFLECTION AND RESOUND*

Friends, I would like to draw your attention to another point. Though Jesus has not made any special mention of rebirth, as we go through some of the statements made by Him, we understand that Jesus indirectly indicated this rebirth or *punarjanma*.

What does He say? Christ clearly said, “You reap what you sow.” Or “As you sow, so you reap.”

Baba says, “If you sow the seeds of a *neem* tree, you don’t get mangoes. If you sow the seeds of a cucumber, you cannot get the fruits of a bitter gourd. As you sow, so you reap.”

Therefore, birth and rebirth depend upon our actions. The whole system works on reaction, reflection and resound, according to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Then how about their teachings? It was Jesus who said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, whereas we are in search of the Kingdom of Heaven elsewhere. We think heaven is located at a long distance from here. No! Kingdom of Heaven is within you.

Baba says:

*Swarga Manuga Veru Suralokamanduna Ledhu  
Narula Yende Amara Yundu*

*Heaven is not a separate world.  
It is within you.*

*Paapa Manuga Paradesamanduna Ledhu  
Taanu Cheyu Panula Tagili Yundu*

*Hell is not separate.  
The sin, the sinful actions are enough of a hell.  
The heaven is within you.*

That’s what Bhagavan Baba also says.

That is the similarity between the teachings of both of them. Baba also says that the teacher is within you. God is within you.

Now I go to the next aspect.

### ***CHRIST AND BABA GIVE EQUAL IMPORTANCE TO WOMEN***

Christ has given importance to women. I really find it very funny that there is a women’s liberation movement in the modern world. You don’t have to fight for that. Long ago, Jesus gave respect, recognition and importance to women. In the Bible you find characters such as Mary, Magdalene, and Martha – these are all the women who are very famous. Christ always had sympathy, consideration and respect for women. Such an illustrious example we find in the Holy Bible when we see how Jesus excused that lady who committed adultery.

Today Sathya Sai Baba has started five colleges exclusively for women. The first college started by Baba is for women only at Anantapur, quite close to Puttaparthi – a one and a half hour drive

from here. There are other colleges in Jaipur, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar – all Sri Sathya Sai Colleges for Women.

Further, the role of women is very much stressed upon by Baba in His Divine discourses. The nineteenth of November is observed as International Ladies Day here in the Divine presence.

This kind of similarity between the two, Christ and Baba, giving equal importance to women, sometimes mentioning their exalted position, is something amazing – something to be noted by all those who feel that women are not given their due share. No. Certainly not!

### *PEACE AND HAPPINESS*

What is the teaching of Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ clearly said that His advent is to give us plenty of pleasure and joy and bliss. He is ready to give you that blissful state -- peace abiding, limitless joy. That is the message of Jesus Christ. He never wants you to cry; He never wants you to be sad. He wants you to be happy.

Coming to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, He always says, “Never put on a castor oil face. Be happy, be happy, be happy – then I will be happy.” Also, “Your happiness is My food,” says Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Therefore, the quintessence, the essence of the message of these two Incarnations and great personalities is to shed joy and bliss among those who come to them, looking forward to their help and seeking their refuge.

### *THE FACE OF JESUS IS EFFULGENT AND BRILLIANT*

How about the face of Jesus? How about the eyes of Jesus? The eyes of Jesus, as we look into the pictures, are like shining stars. The face of Jesus is effulgent and brilliant, full of sympathy, compassion and concern for humanity. The very statue or picture of Jesus will certainly move you and literally touch your heart. It will even make you emotional and deeply touched.

I had the occasion to see Jesus’ statue in Brazil, Christ the Redeemer. I visited Rio de Janeiro. Rio in Brazil is noted all over the world. There, on the mountain top, is Jesus’ statue, forty feet in height with both the arms stretched. I saw in that idol a grandfather waiting for the arrival of his grandchild. I saw in that statue God, Shirdi Bhagavan, waiting for His devotee.

### *BABA’S EYES ARE FULL OF COMPASSION*

And therefore, in the eyes of Baba:

*Kanulandepudu Karunaya Drishtiye*

*His eyes are full of compassion.*

*Mudamumadeppudu Hrudayamudeppudu Mudamu Goorchu*

*And His heart, His feelings will make you joyful, will make you happy, will make you blissful.*

*Palukulu Yepudu Preetilu Olukuchundu*

*His talk is so sweet and soft.*

*Tana Yendu Amrita Bhavame*

*He has in Him the nectarine feeling, same as Jesus.*

### ***LOVE ALL, SERVE ALL***

Jesus, the Redeemer, was full of compassion and love for humanity, which reflected very much in His actions, His words, and His movements. That's what we find today in Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba also.

Another point, whatever may be written about Jesus Christ (you may go through the whole Bible) all will come down to one word. The essence of the teachings of Jesus Christ can be summarised. It can all be put into one word.

The same is true with Sathya Sai Baba's message, which has been published in sixty-three volumes. The content of all that is there in the sixty-three volumes can be summarised into a single word. What is it? A four letter word: LOVE. Jesus, the Gospels, and the Holy Bible speak of love only.

Sathya Sai Baba's message all these years, right from childhood, is also focused on this love. What kind of love? Jesus changed the system prevailing at that time. It is not life for life, tooth for tooth. Love thy neighbour as thy self. "If anybody slaps you on one cheek, show him the other cheek," says Jesus Christ. Don't retort, don't retaliate. Love.

What does Baba say? "Love all, serve all." Love your enemy also. There cannot be anything other than love. That is something in common between the two Incarnations.

Baba goes a step further. "Start the day with love, fill the day with love, spend the day with love and end the day with love. That is the way to God." That is the importance of love.

### ***LOVE IS GOD, GOD IS LOVE***

The other name of Jesus is love. Love is Jesus, Jesus is love. Love is God, God is love. That is something spectacular, amazing, fantastic, and mind-boggling. That Divine love brought all of us close to these great personalities who came for the entire humanity – Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### ***A PURE HEART IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD***

We also find both of them condemning theft, adultery, anger, pride, pomp, show, avarice and greed. Both of them condemn straightaway, in unambiguous and clear-cut terms. They want us to cultivate love instead of any negative qualities.

It is Jesus who said people with a pure heart will be able to see God. Then they are liberated because they see God. How do they see God? With their pure heart.

What does Baba say? "Pure heart is the temple of God." See the similarity.

*Iswara Hruddha Eso Arjuna Tishtathi Bharata*

This is what the *Bhagavad Gita* says: Krishna installs Himself in the altar of a pure heart.

### *KNOW YOURSELF*

What does Jesus say? “Know your Self.” Be honest unto yourself. Be honest and straight forward. “Know your Self,” says Jesus Christ.

### *I AM GOD*

What does Baba say?

“*Kaun hum?*” Put this question to yourself. “*Kaun hum?* Who am I?”

The reply should be, “*Sohum. Sohum.* I am God. I am you,” says Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *SEEK OUT OUR OWN FAULTS AND OTHERS' MERITS*

Jesus says do not look at a mole in the eye of the others, forgetting a beam in your own eye. Find a beam in your own eye, rather than look at a mole in the eyes of others. It means you are anxious to find fault in others, ignoring your own mistakes.

What does Baba say? “Seek out your own faults and others’ merits.” You have no business to criticise anybody, says Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Further, Jesus says, never judge. “Judge not, lest thou shall be judged.”

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says that by constantly judging others and by constantly branding others, “You are bad, you are bad,” and you become much worse than them. It is not your duty to think about the bad in others if he is already bad. By pointing out that bad quality, you think of that bad quality and ultimately you become much worse than the other fellow.

That is the similarity between the teachings of the two.

### *GIVE UP BAD COMPANY*

Jesus says, don’t speak to everybody. No! Even if you speak spiritual matters with everybody, it may not get into their heads. It is something like throwing pearls in front of swine. Why do you throw pearls in front of a swine, which does not know their value?

Similarly Baba says to never be in the company of non-believers. “Join good company. Run away from bad company.”

*Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam Tyaja Durjana Samsargam*

*Give up bad company. Adore and join the good company.*

That’s what Baba says.

### *JESUS STANDS FOR LOVE AND FORGIVENESS*

Jesus stands for two important qualities: Love and forgiveness.

Actually speaking, it is only love that can forgive. If you are not able to forgive, it means there is no love. So love and forgiveness are the twin principles in the life and mission of Lord Jesus Christ.

What does Baba say about this?

### *SPIRITUALITY IS GIVING AND FORGIVING*

“Spirituality is giving and forgiving.” But how are we today? We get and forget. Baba wants us to give and forgive, whereas we get and forget. That is another point that we should know.

### *RITUALS DO NOT GUARANTEE A PLACE IN HEAVEN*

It is clearly said by Jesus that they only shall get into the Kingdom of Heaven who follow Me, not everybody. Our rituals do not guarantee a place in heaven.

Baba also says that repetition of God’s name or holding a talisman or wearing ochre robes will not take you to heaven. Following His command, teachings and principles scrupulously in letter and in spirit will only grant you liberation – not mere observance of external features.

### *GOD WILL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU*

It is Jesus who said, “I will be with you always. Understand this. I will be with you till the end of this age. I am always with you.” He gave an assurance. That is Jesus Christ.

And what does Baba say? Baba says, “I am with you, in you, below you, above you, around you. I am always in you.” Further, Baba even said, “You and I are not different. We are one.” That’s what Baba said.

Jesus laid importance to faith. Jesus said that with faith and love you are sure to attain liberation. And Baba says that love is liberation and faith is your breath. There cannot be anything more than this.

I can also tell you another important point here.

When Jesus restored sight or vision to a blind man, the blind man said, “Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Thank you God.” Immediately Jesus looked at him with compassion and told him that it was his faith that cured him. “Your faith restored your eyesight. Grow in faith more.”

That’s what Baba also says: “Faith is important. Faith will certainly give you all kinds of Divine qualities and will ultimately take you to the kingdom of Heaven.”

We should also know another important point: God is in everyone. Yes.

Jesus says, “I am successful. All this power - Oh God, it is Yours.” Jesus says that all His power is from His Holy Father. All the miracles He is able to perform are because of His Father.

Baba also says that when you people do certain things, accomplish certain things, attain certain things, and are successful, understand that you are doing it because of the grace and will of God. You are only instruments in the hands of God. You cannot take the credit on your own, says Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *SEEK REFUGE AT THE FEET OF OUR LORD*

Then Jesus said those who are carrying the heavy burden of life, those who are tired, come to Me. I shall grant you peace. That's what Jesus said. If we are to have relief and if we are to be free from the heavy burden of life, we should seek refuge at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What does Baba say? Come here with all your loads and loads of suffering and complaints, worries and anxieties. Come and lay them at My feet. "Take from Me *ananda*. Go back with *ananda*, leaving all your burdens at My feet," says Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. What an assurance it is!

### *TRANSFORMATION BY CHRIST AND BABA*

Jesus always moved among innocent people, among ordinary people, among fishermen, and brought in them an amazing, unbelievable, enormous change and transformation.

And today, there are many devotees whose lives are transformed after Baba has come into their lives. They are selfless, full of love, full of consideration and full of concern for everybody. They are no more selfish. Non-vegetarians have become vegetarians and many are non-smokers today. Many are teetotallers today.

That is the power of transformation. The ability to transform is in the hands of the Divine Incarnations, Jesus Christ and Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Why?

Dr. Sandweiss from San Diego, California, said that when Baba looked at him for the first time, he felt he was hammered. "The stone in me melted. The stone in my heart melted and turned into butter." That is the power behind the Divine looks and behind the Divine glance. Therefore, that brilliance, that effulgence, that light is always there – noticeable in both Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Baranowski, the scientist, noticed pink as an aura around Swami. That pink colour is so infinite and all-encompassing that even his camera and his Kirlian photographic skills could not completely capture it. Pink stands for love and Jesus had that kind of aura, that kind of grace of love. It is really very satisfying to note that both are the same in this aspect.

### *CHRIST AND BABA WANT US TO LEAD A SIMPLE LIFE*

We also notice another point: Christ and Baba want us to lead a simple life – a very simple life. Life is not to be spent in extravagance and luxury. No! There should be simple living so that we will be blessed by God. If we are humble, we are blessed. If we are meek, we are blessed. Understand that. It is in this simplicity and humility that we find Divinity. This we have to know. That is the teaching of Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *LOVE FOR CHILDREN*

Jesus loved children immensely. He also said, unless you are a child, you shall not enter into the doors of heaven. Child means innocence.

Bhagavan is also very fond of children. We often find Him moving amongst primary school children. We always hear Him speaking highly of children because a child is innocent. That innocence is Divine and spiritual. That innocence is a cause of firm faith in God. Therefore, both of them are surrounded by children quite often.

### *SOFTER THAN BUTTER, HARDER THAN DIAMOND*

At times, we find Jesus and Baba exercising their authority. Sometimes they appear as if they are full of fury and anger. Jesus was against the collection of money. Jesus was against all scholars. Jesus was against selfish fellows. Jesus said that those who lived on giving loans to people and money lending should be whipped and thrown out of the church. So harsh! He was not prepared for this kind of money dealing and lending. He was very seriously angry at them. But at the next moment, He was so soft, cool, calm, and composed – softer than butter, but harder than a diamond.

They are very hard and tough so as to correct us; but they are very soft within. They exercise their authority and command, to see that we tread along the path chosen by them.

Sometimes Baba is also very strict and serious. He openly says, “I am strict and serious to correct you. It is not My nature – just hailstones that hit your body, but melt very soon. My heart melts very soon. I appear to be very hard, rough and tough to correct you. It is not My nature.” You will find the same thing in Jesus Christ also.

Humility and authority are the two qualities that we find in Jesus and Baba: humility as a demonstration to the entire humanity to emulate and copy, and authority to command us to tread along the right path chosen by them – a *dharmic* way and a spiritual way of life.

### *CHRIST AND BABA BOTH PERFORM NUMEROUS MIRACLES*

Another common feature about them both is that they are men of eminence. They are personalities who performed miracles, unbelievable, unheard of in the history of humanity. The number of miracles that Jesus performed then and the number of miracles that we see happening today are quite unbelievable. This is something common between both of them.

The Bible says that Jesus had such healing power that He cured leprosy, that He cured many diseases of the devotees who visited Him. This is recorded in the Holy Bible.

*Sathyam Shivam Sundaram*, the biography of Sathya Sai Baba, will tell you how He healed so many incurable diseases of His devotees.

The Holy Bible records that Lazarus rose from the dead. Christ made Lazarus come back to life after he was dead and gone. A dead man, by the name of Lazarus, is brought back to life. That is the miracle of Jesus Christ. Lazarus rose from the dead, says the Holy Bible.

How about Baba? Have you not come across common instances where He raised people from the dead? Have you not come across the instance where Radhakrishna Shetty was revived? Yes. That is what is common between them.

Then Jesus attended a wedding and by His touch He converted a big container full of water into wine, enough to serve everybody. Water is converted into wine by the touch of Jesus.

Baba, as a boy, converted water into petrol. When the car stopped on its way, when the driver was helpless, Bhagavan went to him and said, “Come on! Get a pot full of water and pour it into the machine.” By His touch, water was transformed into petrol as recorded in history.

We also find Baba transforming a stone into Krishna's idol made of candy, so sweet. That is the miraculous power of Jesus and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *CHRIST AND BABA HAVE FULL CONTROL OVER NATURE*

Jesus had full control over nature. Yes. A raging ocean, an ocean in turmoil, a cyclonic effect was pacified by Jesus Christ. He could order the ocean to be calm when it was rising high. Control over nature was a miraculous power of Jesus Christ. We also know Christ was walking in the empty air. We also know Jesus was walking on the surface of the ocean. *Wah!* So the other name for 'miracle' is Jesus Christ.

And today what do we find? What do you find? As a boy, Swami one day told His friends, let us have a running race. They all started running. Who will come first? While these boys could run a little distance, Baba was already there on the mountain top. He could transcend the distance.

Go through the book written by Indra Devi of United States of America. There she writes, when there was a forest fire around the building where they were camping for a *sadhana* camp, they started chanting Baba's name and the whole fire was extinguished. Therefore, His control over nature.

There are many more examples. I am just giving you one or two instances for your study and information. Control over nature is common to both.

When we think of the miracles of Jesus, we somehow feel the Holy Bible did not mention all of them. They only mentioned a few. In fact the miracles of Jesus are even more, infinite. They cannot all be written about because they are unlimited.

Howard Murphet says that if Sathya Sai Baba's miracles are to be written, the whole ocean should be transformed into ink, and trees should be made into pens, and the earth should be used as paper to write all these miracles. It means that the boundless and countless miracles that are happening are really wonderful.

Baba could appear in two places. One form is away from the other by six hundred miles. He appeared at two places on the same day at the same time. He manifested as a nurse and helped a lady at the time of delivery. There are many such miracles.

### *ASK AND PRAY FOR GOD*

But Baba made one statement, "I am giving you all this until I finally give you what I decided to give you." It means that He goes on giving what we ask for, but when we ask, "Oh God, I want You," He is ready to give Himself to us. We should ask for and pray for God, not for tinsel and trash, not for mundane momentary things. That is what we should understand here.

Baba narrated certain events relating to the life of Christ, not recorded in the Holy Bible and not known to Christians themselves, because what happened in the life of Jesus from the age of twelve to thirty is not known to many people. What did Jesus do from the age of twelve to thirty, no one knows! Baba describes what all had happened during that time. How could He say that? That is how Baba links, how Baba establishes His speciality.

It is possible because both are one and the same. Both are totally Divine. So, there is no surprise when we understand this principle. There is nothing new about it. He can speak of

Himself. When Baba speaks about the life of Jesus during that period which is not recorded or known, it means He is speaking about Himself. That's how I look at it.

All these episodes are recorded by Richard Bock from California, United States of America. They are all recorded and made into a film which I recommend for you to view, so that we will come to know certain new dimensions of the life and mission of Jesus Christ.

### *CHRISTMAS IS CELEBRATED IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE HERE*

Further, some of the prominent Christians, great scholars, pastors, and bishops like Ron Ling and Peter Phipps, (all pastors working in church of a very high order), all said in one voice: Christmas here is holy; Christmas is celebrated in the best way possible here in Prashanthi Nilayam. It is more Divine and holier here than the celebration of Christmas all over the west. That is their feeling and experience.

Once Baba materialised a cross for John Hislop. Baba told him that it was made from the same wood on which Jesus was crucified. That is His uniqueness. That is His identity. That is His oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ.

One day, Hislop was holding that cross in his hand. He was looking at it. Suddenly, clouds appeared -- thunder showers, thunderbolts, hailstones, rain, a whirlwind. The time was five o' clock in the evening. The next day, on enquiry, Hislop came to know that the weather was dry, no clouds and no rain. But he experienced lightning and thunder at five o' clock on that day. What does it mean? It was the same day and time that Jesus was crucified. It was exactly at that moment Jesus was crucified. He experienced this by holding the cross materialised for him by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. See what a wonderful thing this is!

### *BABA AND THE FATHER OF CHRIST ARE ONE AND THE SAME*

One day in 1972 on Christmas day, Baba said that Christ declared, "He that has sent Me shall come again." People have not understood that statement. "He that has sent Me shall come again bearing the name Sathya," pointing to Himself. "He will have a halo of hair round Him, showing His hair like a crown." That's what He said. And further pointing to Himself, Bhagavan said, "What Christ said of the return of His Father is this personality."

Now I think we are absolutely clear that Baba and the Father of Christ are one and the same. Baba is cosmic Christ.

One day Hislop asked Swami, "Have you sent Jesus of Nazareth?" Baba said, "Yes."

Hislop asked Swami, "Is Jesus Your only begotten Son? Are you the Father?" Swami said, "Yes."

Therefore, we have to understand that Baba is the Father and Jesus is His Son, and that Jesus is His messenger.

So many years have passed since the crucifixion of Jesus. People have been celebrating Christmas for several hundreds of years now. Today amongst Christians, their belief is that Baba is the cosmic Christ.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Glory unto Him! May Christ, the Saviour, be with you forever and forever! May Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba bless you with prosperity!

May peace be abiding! May the joy be limitless! May bliss be with you forever and ever!

Amen! Sai Ram!

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