

## ***Talk Given by Professor Anil Kumar in Kobe, Japan***

### ***“Questions and Answers Session”***

***June 6, 2010***

***Sir, we ardently pray for permission from Bhagavan to ask you questions on spiritual subjects that will enlighten our path.***

Good. Please go on. So, are you doing the translation for this talk?

***A REQUEST TO HEAR MORE OF THE EXPERIENCES WITH BHAGAVAN***

***Sir, we heard earlier that you have been translating Swami's discourses for the past 20 years. So, based on your knowledge about the teachings of our Beloved Lord we pray from the depth of our hearts for answers on attaining the spiritual goal. Some of these questions are put forth by devotees who are present here.***

***But first, on behalf of everyone present here, I would like to ask you to tell us even more about your experiences with Bhagavan. Those stories make us feel so blissful.***

Has the request been endorsed by the office bearers? (Laughter)

***Yes, sir.***

Do you have their permission? They are seated here.

***It has been permitted, sir. The volunteers have agreed to that.***

We have to have some discipline, isn't that so? And especially since those at the top (the office bearers) are here, I would like to abide by their rules and command.

Since experiences with Swami are heavenly and they give an experience of paradise, we will try to go on the 'Sai Airlines' and experience it!

***(Anil Kumar sings "Kailasa vasa Mahadeva...") (Applause)***

#### ***BHAGAVAN APPOINTS THE PRINCIPAL OF BRINDAVAN COLLEGE***

When Bhagavan Baba told me at Madras to join His college as the Principal of the Brindavan campus in Whitefield, outside of Bangalore, I was not then prepared to go. There were several reasons. My children were studying professional courses and the daughters were in medical college. My mother and in-laws who were aged were living with us. So, all these were heavy responsibilities at home. I could not simply resign and go to Bangalore.

But at Madras, He said: "I am appointing you as the Principal of the Brindavan College."

I said, "Swami, I have not brought my certificates. Without verification of my certificates, how can You appoint me?"

Baba said, "I am the Chancellor of the University. I don't need to verify certificates; I am appointing you. You go and report."

That is how I was roped into His College. I went to Bangalore, but still I wanted to escape. My parent college, the Christian college, was to re-open in July. I wanted to gain time.

So I said, "Swami, my parent college re-opens next month."

He said, "Let them re-open next month. You join My college this month."

I asked, "Swami, how can I receive two salaries?"

He said, "This is summer vacation time, but our college re-opens now. You receive the salary there and work here." (*Laughter*) I had no option.

### *THE FIRST NIGHT IN BRINDAVAN*

I took over the Bangalore College as the Principal. I was all alone as my family was back home. I come from a joint family. For someone who hails from a joint family, it is not easy to live alone. Then too, Brindavan was like being in a forest. When Swami is not there, even the street lights are out. There is no traffic, not even street dogs! (*Laughter*)

I was living in a bungalow, whereas all the boys and teachers stayed in the hostel. The climate is windy in Bangalore, and in Brindavan there were a lot of trees. As the wind passes through the trees, you hear this sound. (*Anil Kumar makes a howling spooky sound*). That was the 'song'.

And in Bangalore, the lizards also make a sound (*Laughter*). And in the house, there were a number of lizards all making this peculiar sound. (*Anil Kumar mimics a lizard voice*) (*Laughter*)

So with the wind and the lizards, imagine a fellow who has to live there! (*Laughter*) Then, as the lorries pass by in the street, the headlights fall on the window and shadows were formed on the wall. I used to see lot of horror movies in those days, and all these shadows on the walls and the outside 'music' greatly disturbed me. The place was frightening! I closed the door and came out of the bungalow. It was completely dark. I could neither go outside nor inside. I called for the watchman.

He came and said, "Sir, what do you want?"

"Arree, sit here. When were you born? Who are your parents? Who are your parents-in-law?"

I wanted him to talk until sunrise (*Laughter*). Somehow that night passed like a nightmare.

Next day I prayed within myself, “If there is an action replay of the previous night’s events, Swami, I will run away from here without informing You! (*Laughter*) I don’t want this ‘Principal’ position—it is enough if I live!”

I think God was afraid of my position. He gave me a good sleep that night, otherwise I would have left!

### *The FIRST AND LAST COOKING EXPERIENCE IN BRINDAVAN*

I used to have meals in the canteen in Brindavan. In the state of Karnataka, the food is bland with no spices at all. In Andhra Pradesh, my state, I was used to very hot stuff—one hundred percent spicy! In Bangalore, Karnataka, there was no salt, no chilli powder, and only some sort of paste on the plate. (*Laughter*) You could not identify what was *sambar* (a spicy tomato and vegetable dish), and what was curry, and what was spice! All looked like *Brahma padartha*—non-dual substance! (*Laughter*)

I was crying at the dining table every day, “*Abba*, I cannot take it! What can I do?”

My wife used to come to Bangalore every month, travelling seventeen hours by bus! In seventeen hours, you can go to London for breakfast and return. In the same time period here, the bus has not yet reached Bangalore from my home town! (*Laughter*) This monthly journey continued for some time.

My wife took pity upon me. She said, “Why don’t you cook some rice at least, so that you can mix pickles in the rice and eat it that way?” I don’t know anything about cooking. Even today, I haven’t learnt it. I can neither cook nor ‘cook-up’ (‘cook-up’ meaning ‘to concoct or contrive’). But she wrote some points about how to cook some *dal* (legumes) and rice.

She wrote on the reverse side of the calendar sheet so that I did not lose it. “Point number one: clean the rice cooker. And point two: put a glass of rice inside. Three: switch on the stove. Wait for fifteen minutes until you hear three whistles. Five: switch the stove off. And number six: After sometime, take the lid off the rice cooker.” So saying, she left for home. (*Laughter*)

It was the first day of my cooking. I referred to her instructions and I tried to cook the rice. The fifteen minutes were over, but the whistling did not start. My wife said three whistles would come, but it did not sound even once nor would the lid open. I felt like breaking the cooker! (*Laughter*) Somehow I left it all and went to the Mandir. Some lecturers were there and Baba climbed down the stairs. He looked at me.

### *SWAMI IS ALL-KNOWING*

He asked, “How is the cooking, sir?” He was laughing and everybody started laughing.

“Swami, I do not know how to cook. My wife wrote about listening for three whistles, but even the first whistle did not blow—and the lid was stuck tight and wouldn’t open. What can I do?”

Swami said, “You are foolish. You poured only rice in the cooker without giving it water!” (*Laughter*)

That was the beautiful first and last cooking experience in Brindavan. (*Laughter and applause*)

Finally Baba said, “You cannot learn cooking. Don’t worry. Get a bottle of pickles from the kitchen and rice from the hostel and manage that way—but don’t cook.” (*Laughter*) This is one experience I cannot forget!

### *THE DARSHAN BATH*

Staying in Bangalore, I got used to having a bath in hot water. The pipes and pump in India are far better than in this country. Here you have to turn different taps in different directions—you have to spend half an hour studying how to operate them! (*Laughter*) I think you fellows should keep some notes in the bathroom on how to use the pump.

Anyway, I had a heater with me to get hot water. I went to Puttaparthi to attend a meeting and took the heater with me. But, the water was still not hot enough, even after half an hour. There was a power failure. So what should I do? It was *darshan* time (when Baba comes out to see the public) already. So I had a partial bath or *khanda snana*, sprayed some fragrance over me (that my daughter had sent from America), and wore a nice suit.

At *darshan*, Baba came along slowly and walked towards me. He stood in front of me. Then I knew something was going to happen! (*Laughter*)

He lifted up both of His hands and said, “Some people come for *darshan* without a bath.” (*Laughter*)

There were students and staff there. I was afraid that a student would ask me the next day, “Sir, have you had your bath?” (*Laughter*)

I said, “Swami, please forgive me.”

Swami said, “Puttaparthi is a hot place, can’t you have a cold-water bath?”

I said, “OK, Swami.”

### *SWAMI IS OMNIPRESENT*

He then called a group of ten devotees from America into the interview room. I rushed back to my room, thinking it might take at least twenty to thirty minutes for Him to come out of the interview room. The power supply had resumed and two buckets of hot water were readied. I had a bath. *Ah, ha*, it was enough for one week! Half my soap was used! I changed my suit, sprayed myself all over again, and came back to sit for *darshan*. The interview was over and *bhajans* had started. Usually Swami sits and then goes to the dining hall, but He didn’t go to the dining hall that morning.

He again walked towards me and said, “An ordinary bath is enough, sir, not an extraordinary bath”. (*Laughter*)

“Bhagavan?”

“You used half of your soap!”

He then asked, “Where am I? I am in your bathroom, I am in your bedroom, and I am in your soap also . . . remember that.”

And then He turned back and said, “Don’t worry (over privacy)—it will be as normal as before, OK? It is only to tell you that I know. I won’t mention the bathroom details again.”

This is one incident that I cannot forget!

### *BIRTHDAY SWEETS*

October 25th is my birthday and I was in Puttaparthi alone at that time. I love a special Andhra recipe, a sweet *puri* (deep-fried dough). It is home made and not prepared in hotels. My wife sent me six sweet *puris*, nicely packed, through a friend. I wanted to eat them but had no time to myself. People were always in my room asking about the miracles of Baba or they asked me about doubts they had. *Arre!* ‘When can I have the sweets?’

Then I decided. Let me eat them in the morning during *darshan* time because everyone will go for *darshan*. I closed the door, bolted it from the inside (*Laughter*) and switched off the light so that people will think that the Principal has left for *darshan*.

Then I opened the box. (*Laughter*) I started eating and . . . one, two, three, four, five, six *puris* were all over in one go! And then I put some cloves in my mouth so that no one could detect that I had eaten those sweets.

### *SWAMI IS OMNISCIENT AND GIVING*

I sat in the *darshan* place. Swami slowly walked by. Usually He goes around the ladies’ and boys’ side and completes a circle, but that special morning He walked towards me, avoiding all the crowds. Then I knew some entertainment was going to take place at my cost! Walking across the veranda, He looked at me and at my stomach. (*Anil Kumar makes a gesture indicating a full stomach.*)

Swami said, “Aahh, safe? Your stomach is like an iron safe with all the six *puris* inside! Couldn’t you give one or two to your friends? Why did you eat everything?”

But He went on to say, “I know . . . today is your birthday.”

“Yes, Swami.”

He then materialised some *vibhuthi* (sacred ash) and gave me *prasadam* (blessed or sacred food). That is another experience that I will never forget.

### *SWAMI REMEMBERS EVERYTHING*

One day Swami was distributing *saris* to the Anantapur college girls. And at the finish, He still had one *sari* in His hands. In those days when Swami walked, we didn’t know if He walked or floated or danced. He walked that way close to me and threw the *sari* onto my lap. A *sari* for me? (*Laughter*)

“Swami?”

He said, "It is for you, you wear it." (*Laughter*)

"Me wearing it, Swami?" All were laughing on the veranda. I said, "Not in this life, Swami!"

"Why should you wait for another lifetime to wear it? You can wear it now!"

Then I understood He was not going to leave me alone. I said, "Swami, if I wear a *sari*, I will be more beautiful than all the girls here!" (*Laughter*)

He laughed and laughed and said, "Oh, I see, that is a different matter then."

So I took the *sari* to the room. At that time there was a conversation taking place between my wife and a neighbour lady. As I was going to the room, I heard a little bit of the conversation.

My wife was saying to the neighbour lady, "Today is my birthday. My husband has forgotten my birthday. He did not greet me. My situation is always like that—always Baba's activities—but he forgets the children's and wife's birthdays. He is always busy." She was feeling so badly, and talking to the neighbour about it.

Then when I gave her the *sari*, she jumped in joy. "You don't remember my birthday, but Swami remembers it at least!" (*Laughter*)

This is yet another experience that I don't forget.

*(Anil Kumar sings "Meera ke Radha Prabhu Murali Gopal...")*

#### *ENJOY CREATION WITH THE AWARENESS OF THE CREATOR*

***Sir, may I ask you this question on behalf of one of the devotees: "Out of His infinite love, God has given us this wonderful world to live in. If that is so, don't you think that the purpose of our life is to experience the love of God in this world rather than running after liberation? What do you think?"***

You can enjoy life. You can experience life. You can love the world and live in the world but do it with awareness. This creation is the reflection of the Creator. The Creator is God, creation is nature. If you have that feeling, you will enjoy the world respectfully. So experience the world prayerfully and love nature reverentially.

Another point: If you know the creation, you may not know the Creator; but if you know the Creator, you can know the creation.

Once, Baba materialised a ring. He said, "It is a beautiful ring with big shiny red stones." We wanted to see it. So, all of us rushed to that boy to see the beautiful ring. Baba was sitting there and said, "I created the ring and you are all looking at the ring, but not Me. I created that. And this is how you run after creation, forgetting the Creator."

If film actors (like Rishi Kapoor) come to Puttaparthi, the boys go to see them. Boys are boys, after all.

Baba says to them, "Have you fellows come to see Me, or are you coming here to see them?"

That is a pity. Once the film actors Sridevi and Anil Kapoor came to Ooty (a hill town in Tamil Nadu state) for a film shooting.

One fellow came and asked, "Swami, Sridevi and Anil Kapoor are here for the shooting and they want to come for *darshan*. Shall I ask them to come?" That was in the earlier period of my life with Swami and I did not know how He would react to this.

Swami said, "No, do not let them come."

I asked, "Why not, Swami? They are also devotees. Can't they come for *darshan*? What is the harm?"

Swami said, "Why should they come?"

"We can see them too, Swami," I said.

Swami remarked, "You have come to see Swami, not Sridevi and Anil Kapoor."

So, to see Swami amounts to having seen everything. With awareness of the Creator, you can enjoy the creation.

### *ACCEPT THE DIVINE WILL AS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD*

***We think that we have free will. We have read somewhere that Swami said that we have no free will. Everything is already decided by God. What do you think about this? Can you explain the real meaning of free will?***

*(Anil Kumar sings "Purandara Ranga Hare Vittala...")*

Human will is different from Divine will. Human will arises from the mind, whereas Divine will is universal consciousness. Human will chooses, while Divine will is choice-less awareness. Human will is external and driven by the senses, but Divine will is internal and beyond senses. Human will may or may not happen, but Divine will is sure to happen. Finally, human will is known to you, but Divine will is not known to you.

They often contradict. That is why people get frustrated, disappointed and depressed. "Why is this not happening? I expected this, but it has not happened. Why?" So, all your expectations, actions and thoughts are based on an independent human will. But the Divine will has nothing to do with your will. You want to become the collector, but the Divine will make you an engineer. If you want to marry a beautiful person, the Divine will has you marry the ugliest fellow on earth!

Is there a way out now? Instead of questioning 'why' or 'why not', let us learn to accept the Divine will as His grace and gift. Reconcile with it. Whatever is the Divine will, know that it is for your good.

I took bioscience to become a doctor. But I have become a professor. Today, I feel the Divine will to make me a professor was better for me because of my softness! Had I become a doctor, I

would have been crying too, along with the patient. I would not be able to collect the fees. I would have been an utter failure as a doctor. Though it was a disappointment then, I find today that the Divine will was best for me. I don't have to see sickly faces. I can see the smiling faces of my boys, and laugh and sing with them, continuing to be an ever-green hero.

A teacher has no age, for your information. All other people age, but not a teacher! After a few years, some of my students come to see me in Puttaparthi. It is sometimes very difficult to identify them. Some of them have become fat and some have wrinkles on their faces. To quote Baba, "Castor oil faces." No teacher is ever like that—none have castor oil faces. We professors are always happy because we are with boys who look like Hollywood or Bollywood stars, so we always remain young at heart.

Therefore the Divine will is ultimately for your own good. The human will, if fulfilled, may not be for your good. Am I clear?

### *SAI SERVICE CONNECTS YOU TO GOD*

***What is the purpose of our Sai organisation—is it to realise our real self as God, or to serve human beings? In other words, are we a spiritual organisation or a seva (service) organisation?***

You are asking this in front of office bearers of the organisation! Sir, remove him! No, just joking.

A seva (service) organisation is different from a spiritual organisation. The Sai Organisation is a spiritual organisation. The Rotary Club or the Lions Club, etc. are service organisations. The difference is that in service organisations, the one who serves is superior to the one who is served. I give you clothes—mine is the upper hand. You receive clothes—you are at the lower level. But in a spiritual organisation, the one who receives has the upper hand. The one who gives is at the lower level. In other words, "I thank you for having given me an opportunity to serve you." That is why we say it is a spiritual organisation. That is what Narayana seva means: service to the God within all. So with secular service organisations, the receiver thanks the donor; but here in the Sai organisation, the contributor thanks the receiver. It is just the opposite. There, it is a matter of publicity, with newspaper clippings and photos to show others how much money was spent on giving the service.

Here is a simple example: A fellow donated a ceiling fan to a temple. He prays every day that there should be a power failure so that the ceiling fan won't rotate. Somebody asks him, "Why do you pray for that?" He said, "My name is written on the three blades of the ceiling fan. If the fan rotates, who will read my name? So let there be a power failure so that all can read my name." (*Laughter*)

That is what happens there. But here, the service is rendered to God, which is personal and confidential as well—a matter between me and my God. There, service is an obligation while here, service is a duty. A man with a spiritual bent of mind always has an inclination for service, whereas in those other clubs it is optional—you may or may not do the service. There, service is an experiment. This time they may experiment with distributing clothes and next time experiment with distributing food. But here it is an experience. You give to get the experience but not to experiment. Here in the spiritual field, we experience spirituality when we serve. We serve to experience the oneness with God. There, we do it out of kindness or charity.

Therefore the Sathya Sai Organisation is a spiritual service organisation, connecting the devotee to Baba through service. Service connects you to Baba. If you serve here, He will know about it there.

A simple example: He sits on the dais when *prasadam* is distributed to the devotees. He calls the boys and says, "You have not given to the thirteenth lady in the fiftieth row. Go and give." It means in this service of *prasadam* distribution, He lets you know that He knows everything.

Once when I was there as a Principal in Brindavan, He wanted me to distribute *laddus* (small sweet balls). I had no idea at all how to do it, so I called two lecturers to distribute them.

Swami came out of the room and said, "I could have asked those lecturers to distribute the *laddus* but I wanted you to do it. I wanted to bless you with this opportunity of service, but you are losing that opportunity by asking them to do it. Never do that. Whomsoever I ask should be the one to do what is asked. You cannot deputise on My behalf."

*(Anil Kumar ends by singing Hara Shiva Shankara Shashankā Shankara....)*

*Om . . . Om . . . Om  
Asato Maa Sadgamaya  
Tamaso Maa Jyotirgamaya  
Mrityormaa Amritgamaya*

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!  
Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!  
Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai!*

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*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*