

The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar

*“Mahashivaratri”
(Part 2)*

February 07, 2010

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of our most beloved Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

SHIVARATRI – NEW DIMENSION

We are now very close to the celebration of Shivaratri, what we call Mahashivaratri, which falls on Friday, the 12th of this month. I have been giving a series of talks on Shivaratri. We had one already with a Russian group; this is the second talk.

Shivaratri, what is it? Why is it celebrated? We will have a new dimension of thought on the same subject this morning. I would like talk to you and give you references for your study.

SAI BABA IS THE MANIFESTATION OF LORD SHIVA

It was in the year 1998, on the 15th of February, that Bhagavan said He is Lord Shiva and that He and Shiva are one. Why? That day in February 1998 just happened to be Monday. Monday in the Telugu language is called *somawara*. S-O-M-A-W-A-R-A; it means ‘Monday’. Bhagavan also said on that day, “Today is *somawara*, Monday, and this body was born on *somawara*.” He further mentioned that Shiva is called Somasekhara, and thus clearly established that He is the very manifestation of Lord Shiva. Let me say just one or two more points about this.

TO BE SUCCESSFUL, MIND HAS TO FOLLOW INTELLECT, NOT SENSES

The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. The head stands for the intellect. Now what should happen? The mind should follow the intellect; for when the mind follows the intellect, life will be proper, safe and secure. However, unfortunately today, what is happening? The intellect is following the mind, and the mind is following the senses. When the mind follows the senses and the intellect follows the mind, this will take you to the total ruin of your life. Therefore, for life to blossom in full, and for life to be successful, the mind has to follow the intellect.

BY PRAYING TO SHIVA, WE CAN BE A MASTERMIND

Shiva is called Somasekhara, but Shiva is also called Chandrakaladhara. *Chandra* means 'moon', while *kala* refers to the different facets, the different shades, or the different aspects of the moon, and *dhara* means 'bearing'. So, Chandrakaladhara means that 'Shiva has the moon on His head'. That is the meaning.

I would like to recall to your mind what Baba said some time back. He said, "Master the mind, and be a mastermind. Master the mind and be a mastermind." This means that you should not follow your mind. No! You should master the mind, not be a slave to your mind. You should be the master of your mind. That mind is the moon, or *chandra*. By praying to Lord Shiva, who carries the moon on His head, by His grace we will be able to master the mind and be a mastermind.

SAI AND SHIVA HAVE MATTED HAIR

The second point is this: in the year 1998, in the *Sanathana Sarathi*, on page 313, Baba referred to another important aspect of Lord Shiva. He said that Shiva is Jataajutadhara. What does *jataajuta* mean? It means 'matted hair', 'mop of hair', 'curling hair', or 'a lot of hair'. *Dhara* means 'the one who has'. Shiva had matted hair, and you see Baba with a mop of hair—*jataajuta*, Jataajutadhara. Today, Sathya Sai Baba looks like Jataajutadhara, or Lord Shiva with matted hair.

RUDRA SPEAKS ABOUT A CROWN OF HAIR

Well, what does it all mean? There is one formal worship of Lord Shiva that you hear in the Mandir today. I know many foreigners know it by heart, surprisingly enough. Believe me, I feel ashamed when many foreigners repeat *Rudra*. *Rudra* is the part of the *Vedas* that describes Lord Shiva. *Rudra* is a composition in Sanskrit in praise of Shiva, and as I said, many foreigners know it. They recite it in correct intonation, diction, pronunciation and elucidation, having an enviable standard.

So, in the *Rudra* part of the *Veda*, which is composed in praise of Lord Shiva, this is written:

*Namah Kapardine Ca Vyuptakeshaya Ca
Hari Keshayopavitine Pushtanam Pataye Namo*

I repeat:

Hari Keshayopavitine Pushtanam Pataye Namo

These are the two *mantras* from *Rudra*. They speak of the hair that Shiva has. Baba also has a crown of hair; therefore, He is called Keshakeeriti. *Keerita* means 'crown', and *kesha* means 'hair'. So, Baba may be said to have a crown of hair.

BABA, THE DIVINE MAGNET, WILL ATTRACT THE WHOLE COSMOS

Here, in this context, I would like to mention what Baba said in the year 1998 (page 313 of the 12th issue of *Sanathana Sarathi*.) Baba mentioned an incident that happened when He visited East Africa. A Dr. Patel was the main instrument and played a very important role in taking Bhagavan to East Africa. Baba's programme there was worked out by Dr. Patel.

Swami mentioned that Dr. Patel gave Swami a brush to comb His hair. Baba says that the brush had many points of iron and that this brush got stuck to His hair immediately, as if the hair was a magnet. Baba's body is indeed a Divine magnet. Baba's hair is a magnet. Therefore, this brush with iron points got stuck to His hair. Baba says that His whole body, all Divinity, has a magnetic effect or an attractive force that is drawing the whole world very close to Him. So, Baba, the Divine magnet, draws the whole cosmos towards Him. That is what Swami said.

There is a book written by a great scholar of Sanskrit by the name of Sri Ghandikota Subba Rao (who is no more). He served in the atomic energy division attached to the United Nations Organisation for a quarter century in New York. After retirement, he settled in Prashanthi Nilayam until his end. While there, he wrote a book by the name of *Saithree*. In that book, on page 84, a certain incident is mentioned. What is it?

BABA HAS WATER ON HIS HEAD

Here is the incident mentioned in this book, which happened in the childhood of Baba. You all know that it is advisable to a head-bath at least once a week, unless it is possible to do so every day. In India, this is what we do: we apply some oil on the head and then wash it with soap. So, one day, Swami's mother, Eswamma, was washing Sathya Sai Baba's head. When she was doing this, Baba said, "You don't have to put water on My head, for there is plenty of water there already."

What was the water that was already on His head? That is Ganga, or the Ganges. So what happened when Eswamma put her hand on His head? Water poured out to such an extent that all the clothes of Eswamma were made wet. Water came out like a spring, as though from a fountain, from the head of the young Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Not only that, but along with Eswamma, there were one or two helpers who also got their clothes wet because of this flow of water. Thus, He is Gangadhara, having the Ganges on His head.

SHIVA HAS THE GANGES ON HIS HEAD

Shiva is called Gangadhara. He has got Ganga or the Ganges River on His head. *Dhara* means 'the one who bears'. So, Gangadhara means 'the one who has the Ganga on His head'. Thus, Lord Shiva is called Gangadhara, as is Baba.

SAI'S WATER PROJECT

What is happening today is that we have a water project undertaken by the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai *Sujala Sravanthi* Drinking Water Supply. Baba is supplying pure drinking water to the entire district of Anantapur, in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Today, 750 villages in and around the Anantapur area of Puttaparthi receive pure drinking water. Not only that, the Medak district of Andhra Pradesh, Mehboobnagar in Andhra Pradesh, and also Chennai in Tamil Nadu are all benefiting from the Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Supply Project. This is called "Sri Sathya Sai *Sujala Sravanthi*" in Sanskrit. So, Swami is Gangadhara Sai: He has Ganga in plenty that allows Him to supply water to all these districts.

SHIVA HAS THREE EYES

Now I would like to draw your attention to another incident mentioned in *Sai Vandana*, on page 165, published in 1990. This incident was mentioned by Professor Dr. A V Lakshmi Narasimham in this way:

We describe Shiva as Trinetradhara. *Tri* means 'three', *netra* means 'eyes', and *dhara* means 'the one who has'. So Shiva is known as having three eyes: "the three-eyed one". What are these three eyes? Some say that the three eyes represent periods of time, i.e. the past, present and future. However, *trikala* refers to these three periods of time.

SHIVA'S THIRD EYE OPENS DURING ANNIHILATION

The centre eye, some people say, is the eye of wisdom, the third eye in mythology, or the place where there is fire. When Shiva opens His third eye, it is called *pralaya*, or 'annihilation'. Everything will be destroyed when Shiva opens His third eye because there is fire only there. This is also another interpretation.

SACRED ASH POURED FROM SAI'S THIRD EYE

In the book *Sai Vandana*, the learned professor, who is here and has been with Swami for the last 36 years, mentions a very interesting incident. You see, it seems that a boy was working there, sitting very close to Swami. Baba knew of a particular interest this boy had—cricket. While working there very close to Swami, he had been thinking of a cricket match that was going on, and Swami said, "Don't worry, my boy" and Swami gave the latest score from the match, i.e. how many runs and how many wickets. Then, the boy was very happy. Without ever going over there, without ever watching television, Baba was giving the boy the latest cricket score.

And so, the boy asked, "Swami, do you have three eyes? I see two eyes now, but You must have a third eye to be able to watch the cricket match going on elsewhere in a big city like Bombay, Calcutta, or Madras. Being here, You must see with Your third eye what is happening elsewhere, and therefore, You are telling me the cricket score. How do you know what happened?"

Baba immediately showed His third eye to this boy and from His third eye there was a shower of *vibhuthi*, a fountain of *vibhuthi*. That fountain of *vibhuthi* had a flow of such pressure that the boy was thrown to one corner of the room, actually pushed to one corner of the room! That is the power of the third eye of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

SAI AND SHIVA'S THIRD EYE WILL BURN ALL OUR SINS

So, Lord Shiva is called Trinetradhara, or "the one with three eyes". Likewise, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is called Trinetradhara. This third eye, which has got fire in it, has the ability to burn all of our sins when opened. Sins are burnt to ashes by the opening of His third eye; that is what it is.

The same book already mentioned, *Sai Vandana*, published in the year 1990, has a story about another aspect of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, this time on page 2eleven. The author of this article, Sai Giridhara, mentions an interesting incident there. In addition, there is another article there, contributed by Dr. Eswaran in the year 2007 on page 170, marking the occasion of *Ati Rudra Maha Yajna*. Eswaran mentions the same thing as Sai Giridhara.

What is this all about? I am giving you these references, my friends, because they will support all my statements. By providing all this information to you, it will establish my accountability and the credibility of the statements I am making this morning.

SHIVA HAS POISON IN HIS NECK

Lord Shiva is also called Halahaladhara. Regarding Halahaladhara, we have already considered a few aspects like Somasekhara, Jataajutadhara, Gangadhara, and Trinethra. Now we think of Lord Shiva as Halahaladhara. *Dhara* means 'the one who has', and *halahala* refers to poison. Shiva contains poison in his neck. So, *halahala* means 'poison', and *dhara* means 'the one who has' *halahala*. Not only that, but Shiva has snakes around his neck—Pannagadhara. *Pannaga* means 'snakes'.

PRAY TO SIVA TO PROTECT US AGAINST ALL THESE EVIL TENDENCIES

Halahaladhara and Pannagadhara, what do they mean? What exactly do you mean by that? The poison of our problems, the poison of worldly attractions, and the poison of sensual pleasures are all contained in His neck so that we are not affected by any one of these evil propensities or evil tendencies. Moreover, by reciting Shiva's *nama* or name, and by praying to Him, by saying His glorious name, it will act as an antidote to all these evils and sins. So to protect us against all the poison of evil tendencies, we should pray to Lord Shiva.

SAI HAS POISON IN HIS NECK

Let us go into the biography of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. In His childhood, somebody served *vadas* to Baba. V-A-D-A-S is a south Indian dish. *Vadas* are circular in their form, brown in colour (due to being deep fried), and quite hot stuff. What did some people do during His childhood days?

Some envious people mixed poison in these *vadas* and served them to Him. Poison was served to Baba. However, He ate all the *vadas* and nothing happened to Him. Knowing that there was poison in the *vadas*, put in there by a particular person who happened to be near Swami, Swami called him. Baba came close to him, excused him, and pardoned him. That is the compassion of Swami.

Poison will kill you, and poison will kill me. But poison cannot kill Sathya Sai Baba. Why? Because He has poison in His neck, Halahaladhara. If He bears poison in His body, what can poison in *vadas* do to Him? Lord Shiva is Halahaladhara; so also is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

SAI TRANSFORMS BAD PEOPLE BY HIS COMPASSION

Lord Shiva has snakes around His neck, so He is known as Pannagadhara. *Pannaga* means 'snakes' or 'evil forces'. However, these snakes cannot bite or harm Lord Shiva. Similarly, people who are full of jealousy, full of envy, full of pride, and people who are interested in character assassination are snakes that cannot harm or defame Baba. These things cannot damage His fame. This is impossible because He is Pannagadhara. By his compassionate hand, He will transform them; by His mercy, He will pardon them. On the other hand, these things will only enhance His glory, mystery, and Divinity, so that the whole world will come to know of Him much more than ever before.

FIRE ON BABA'S HUT

Do you know what happened in His younger days when Baba was resting in a hut? Some people set that hut ablaze, set fire to it. But nothing happened to Baba. Why? As the hut was burning, suddenly the sky opened up and rain fell only on that particular hut, nowhere else. So the fire was extinguished and nothing happened to Baba! Why? It is because of His Divinity.

People full of envy cannot burn Him, and people full of jealousy cannot bite Him. Why? It is because of Pannagadhara. He has got snakes around His neck. The snakes are the symbols of jealousy and envy; they cannot bite Him. That is what it means.

SAI AND SHIVA WEAR TIGER'S SKIN

Now I would like to recall another incident that is recorded clearly in *Pannaga*. Shiva is called Vyagrambharadhara.

*Hey Jaya Sai Shankara Jaya Abhayankara
Hey Shiva Shankara Jaya Pralayankara
Sambha Sadashiva Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He
Jaya Gangadhara Jaya Bimbadhara
Vyagrambaradhara Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He
Jaya Sai Shankara Jaya Abhayankara
Hey Shiva Shankara Jaya Pralayankara*

Jaya Ganghadhara Jaya Pralayankara

We have considered this already.

Jaya Bhimbadhara

We have also discussed this.

Vyagrambaradhara

This point I am going to explain now.

Vyagrambaradhara

Vyagra means 'tiger'. Shiva wears the tiger's skin; the skin of a tiger is the only piece of cloth that He wears. This is why He is also known as Vyagrambardhara. *Ambara* means 'dress'. *Vyagra* is the tiger's skin, which is used as a covering. What does this mean? A tiger is a wild animal; a tiger represents animal qualities. So when the tiger skin is worn as the dress, as a piece of clothing, this means that you are killing animal qualities and killing the cruelty that is harmful to nature. The tiger represents cruelty, violence, and hatred. So when Swami wears that, and when Lord Shiva wears the *vyagrambara*, the skin of a tiger, it signifies the killing or annihilation of all our animal qualities or any such temperaments within us.

COLLECTOR GIVES BABA A TIGER SKIN

Now let us recall one thing that happened in Swami's childhood days. Those were still the days of the British rule in India. Baba was a boy then. Once when Baba was sitting alone, two people came close to Him.

They asked, "Are you Sai Baba?"

Swami said, “Yes I am. What do you want?”

They said, “The District Collector is waiting over there.”

Baba asked, “What for?”

They said, “The District Collector is in his jeep now.”

Baba asked, “Jeep?”

The two men then said, “He came to this locality hunting wild animals. He killed a tiger, and now he is trying to go back; but the jeep is not starting. There is some trouble with the jeep.” So his problem was how to go back. The men explained: “The District Collector is a British man. Swami! Somebody said you are a man of miracles. You are the only one who can help that District Collector get back as his jeep broke down on the way.”

Then, immediately, Bhagavan said, “It is the mistake of your District Collector. Why should he have killed the tiger? Why should he kill it? That tiger has two little cubs crying for milk; they are crying for their mother, and the District Collector killed that tiger. That is his mistake. Now, tell your District Collector to take these two cubs, which are crying for milk, and hand them over to the forest department in the zoo there. They will feed those two little cubs. That is my order. If he does it, then I will make the jeep run as usual.”

The District Collector, on coming to know this, came and fell at the Feet of Baba.

He said, “Pardon me, Swami! Pardon me, Swami. I will certainly hand over the cubs to the zoo people. Swami, I have a request.”

Swami asked, “What?”

The District Collector said, “I will give you this tiger’s skin, the tiger I have killed. I would like to give you this tiger’s skin as an offering.”

Swami said, “Yes.”

That is the tiger skin that you find in the Mandir even today. On Swami’s chair is the tiger skin presented by that British Collector back in those days. Swami used to take this tiger skin wherever He went in those days. Now you find it in the Mandir.

*Vyagrambara Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He Shiva Hara He
Jaya Sai Shankara Jaya Pralayanakara*

So Shiva has got a tiger’s skin, and Swami’s chair also has this tiger’s skin on it. That is what you find today.

SERVING SWAMI IS PENANCE, SO THERE IS NO NEED TO GO TO THE HIMALAYAS
I shall also tell you a funny thing that happened a long time back. There were some boys once who were helping to set things right in the storeroom. While they were arranging things and cleaning the storeroom, they saw the tiger’s skin. Immediately they looked at Swami.

Swami said, “Array, boys, take this tiger skin. Wear this, go to Himalayas, and do some *tapas*, or penance.”

The boys cried, “Swami!”

Baba said, “Yes, you two go there.” And immediately Swami laughed and said, “You don’t have to go to the Himalayas; no, no. Serving Swami is penance. Being with Swami is penance.”

That is what He said. Therefore, on this holy day of Shivaratri, when we pray to Lord Shiva, Baba understands that it is enough penance and enough meditation. That is what I would like you to know now.

TRIDENT IN SHIVALINGAM MATERIALIZED IN 1974

Again, on the 21st of February 1974, on Mahashivaratri day, Baba mentioned an interesting thing. Shiva is Trishuladhari. What is *trishula*? It is a trident which has three points on top and an iron rod supporting them; that is, an iron rod with three needle-like iron spikes above. That’s a *trishula*.

Baba materialised a *linga* that year, in 1974, on the 21st of February. He materialised the Shiva *lingam* and said, “Look at this Shiva *lingam*, the Shiva *lingam* that emerged out of Me. Watch it, and you will find the trident, the *trishula*, in that Shiva *lingam*.” He also said, “Watch that Shiva *lingam* that has emerged. It goes on changing its colours, it goes on changing its shape, and you will find the *trishula* there, also.”

WORSHIP SHIVA WITH BILVA LEAVES MEANS SURRENDER TO LORD’S FEET

On this day of Shivaratri, people worship the Shiva *lingam* with Bilva *pathra*. Bilva is a tree with *pathra* or leaves having three leaflets. So on the day of Shivaratri, we worship the Shiva *lingam* with Bilva leaves.

The three leaflets signify the three basic qualities we have: the *thamasic* quality or inertia, the *rajasic* quality or emotion, and the *sathwic* quality or a balanced, pious nature. All of us have these three qualities. They are the qualities of nature. When we offer the Bilva *pathra*, which has three leaflets, we mean to say, “Oh, God, I offer myself unto You. I surrender at Your Feet.” That is the meaning of the Bilva *pathra*, with which we worship Lord Shiva on this day.

Swami also said in the year 1974, in the April edition of *Sanathana Sarathi*, on page 55, that Shiva is also called Nandishwara. We have been learning all these names: Jatadhara, Somasekhara, Halahaladhara, and Gangadhara—these are all the names of Lord Shiva.

THE BULL IS WORSHIPPED BECAUSE OF ITS CONSTANT ATTENTION ON SHIVA

Nandishwara is also the name of Lord Shiva. What does Nandi mean? Nandi means ‘bull’. Shiva is called Nandishwara because the bull is the chariot of Lord Shiva. Baba mentioned this in His discourse in the year 1974. The bull, which is the chariot of Shiva, is totally surrendered to Shiva. If you go to any of Shiva’s temples, you will find Nandi, the bull, looking at Shiva. This stare is straight, focused, without deviation, without side looks, and without any kind of diversion of attention whatsoever. It is focused entirely on the Shiva *linga*.

Therefore, Nandi the bull, with full concentration on Shiva, has become an object of worship today. People who go to Shiva's temple salute Nandi also. In other words, if you surrender to God, you will be held in esteem. You will be held in respect and you will be worshipped just as Nandi is worshipped. So Nandishwara is another name for Lord Shiva.

NANDISHWARA: THE MERGER OF INDIVIDUAL AND COSMIC SOULS

Baba mentioned another point: Nandi, the bull, has two horns. When you go to the Shiva temple, you should look at Shiva from between the two horns of Nandi. The two horns are there, so you should look at Shiva, watching Him through the two horns. Why?

Nandi is the individual soul, while Shiva is the cosmic soul. You will see the similarities in their identities, the merger of the individual soul in the cosmic soul, and realise that man and God are one. That is what it is, Nandishwara.

NO MEDIATOR BETWEEN MAN AND GOD

It is also a tradition that no one should pass between Nandi and the Shiva *linga* in any Shiva temple. People go and walk behind Nandi, the bull, but no one walks in between the Shiva *linga* and Nandi. What does this mean? It means that no one can stand between man and God. There is a direct connection between man and God. There is no mediator and no interference whatsoever. Bhagavan Baba explained this that year.

NANDISHWARA – THE GIVER OF BLISS

Here in this context I would like to give you another interpretation that Baba gave. *Nanda* means 'bliss', *nandi* means 'the giver of bliss' or 'the one who blesses you'. This is *nandi*. So *nanda* is 'bliss' and *nandi* is 'the giver of bliss'. So Baba is Nandishwara: He grants bliss to all of you, and we become blissful by praying to Him. That is what it is.

SAI MATERIALISES VIBHUTHI AND SHIVA HAS VIBHUTHI ALL OVER HIS BODY

I should also bring to your attention to certain points that Baba made regarding *vibhuthi*. Baba materialises *vibhuthi* for many people. Sai devotees often wear *vibhuthi* at the centre of their eyebrows. *Vibhuthi* means 'sacred ash'. Just as ladies will have a vermilion central dot in between the eyebrows, Sai devotees will place *vibhuthi* there. Swami has mentioned a few points regarding this sacred ash. That is why we also sing songs about it:

*Vibhuti Sundara Sai Ram Sai Ram Sai Ram Sathya Sai Ram
Gangadhara Hara Samba Sadashiva Sai Ram Sathya Sai Ram*

Sundara means 'beauty', so *vibhuthi sundara* means 'the beauty of *vibhuthi* or the sacred ash'. Baba materialises *vibhuthi*, and we also find *vibhuthi* all over the body of Lord Shiva.

VIBHUTHI SIGNIFIES THE EIGHT FORMS OF WEALTH

Vibhuthi has another meaning: the whole of creation is the *vibhuthi* of God, the manifestation of God, the creation of God, the mystery of God. All of this is *vibhuthi*. Baba mentions a few names: *vibhuthi* signifies *asthaiswarya* or 'the eight forms of wealth'. *Astha* means 'eight' and *iswarya* means 'wealth'. So, *asthaiswarya* means 'wealth in its eight forms'.

For example, health is wealth, knowledge is wealth, reputation and a good name are wealth, energy is wealth, agricultural grain is wealth, and knowledge and wisdom are wealth. Thus,

wealth in its eight forms is called *asthaiswarya*. *Vibhuthi* signifies these eight forms of wealth. By praying to Lord Shiva and to Baba we will acquire and possess all these eight forms of wealth. This is what it is.

ALL THAT IS CREATED RETURNS TO ASH

Baba also gave another meaning to this. Lord Shiva has got *vibhuthi* smeared all over His body. What does this mean? It means that anything that is created will eventually be reduced to ash. Everything that you burn, whether it be living or not, will be reduced to ashes, which is the ultimate and final physical state. So, all that is created will end as sacred ash only. What a pity it is! We think of 'cash' and we think of 'crash', but we forget the 'ash' to which we (the body) will be reduced when the end comes. So *vibhuthi* is the ultimate fate of the whole of creation.

VIBHUTHI WILL GET US OUT OF CYCLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH

Swami gave another meaning of *vibhuthi*. *Vibhuthi* means 'vastness', 'that which is expansive', 'that which is immortal', 'that which is nectarine', or 'that which has a power' and which will take you beyond the cycle of birth and death. My friends, we are caught in the cycle of birth and death. To get out of this cycle, we should have *vibhuthi* with us. We should sing in praise of *vibhuthi* with full awareness of what *vibhuthi* is.

TAKING VIBHUTHI WILL MAKE YOU FREE FROM ALL WORLDLY DESIRES

The *vibhuthi* materialised by Baba, as we take it in, will make you free from all your worldly desires, will make you give up all your animosities, all your enmity, and all the bitterness and hatred that you might have. All that can be given up by consuming *vibhuthi*—that is what Swami said.

Swami also mentioned another point. Why does He materialise *vibhuthi*? There are two purposes. One is *raksha*: it will save you from danger that might threaten you in the future. *Raksha* is a kind of protective measure, a lifebelt, a life jacket; and as a protective measure, it saves you from impending danger.

Raksha turns to *rakshana*, or 'protection at the point of danger'. *Rakshana* saves you from any danger at a particular moment. One aspect deals with the future—that is what *raksha* refers to. Another aspect deals with the moment when your life is in danger. This is *rakshana*. Swami says that He materialises *vibhuthi* for this purpose.

SHIVA AS LINGESHWARA

We also call Shiva as Lingeshwara. Shiva is in the form of a *linga*, and we say *linga* in praise of the *linga*. Shiva takes the form of a *linga*, so he is known as Lingeshwara.

SAI BABA MATERIALISED A NETHRALINGAM

Do you know what Baba did? He visited certain places like Kasi and Banaras. He visited Badari, Somnath and Kasi. These are all places of Shiva temples. What did He do there? He reinforced energy into those *lingas*, which are installed there in the sanctum sanctorum. In that sanctum sanctorum, you will find a Shiva *linga*. We call it *gharbagudi*: that *Shiva linga* was reinforced with energy by the visit of Baba. That is what many scholars have said. By His Divine visit, all those temples of worship were re-energised, recharged, and revitalised. That is what we say. Baba also materialised a *nethralingam* there in Badari. *Nethralingam!* (*Nethra* means 'eye'.)

SAI BABA AS VIRUPAKSHA IN HAMPI

Also, there is a very interesting thing that you must have noticed that happened in His school days. Baba went along with His brother and some top people in Hampi and visited a temple by the name of Virupaksha. Baba was there, and stood outside the temple to watch over the belongings of all these people. His brother and elders went into the temple to pay respects to the deity Virupaksha. There in Virupaksha, in Hampi Virupaksha temple, what did they see?

They saw Baba there in the temple. They saw Sathya Sai Baba there in the Virupaksha temple. His brother was surprised! Why? “My Sathyam, my younger brother is there outside the temple, so how is it that I find Him in the temple?” Immediately he came out of the temple and found Sathya Sai Baba outside. So, it is a living proof that Virupaksha, Lord Shiva, is very much the same as Sathya Sai Baba.

UNITY BETWEEN BABA AND LORD SHIVA IN SHRAVANABELAGOLA

Another incident happened in the state of Karnataka at a place by the name of Shravanabelagola. It was there where some people saw Sathya Sai Baba in the *lingam*, establishing a unity between Baba and Lord Shiva.

SAI AND SHIVA AS YOGESHWARASESWARA

We also call Shiva Yogeshwaraseswara. Yogeshwaraseswara is the *yogi* of all *yogis*—the topmost *yogi*. Who is a *yogi*? A *yogi* is totally spiritual, a *yogi* is totally Divine, a *yogi* is transcendental, and a *yogi* is non-dual. Lord Krishna is known as Yogeshwara, while Shiva is Yogeshwaraseswara, or the topmost of all *yogis*. That is why in the *Rudra*, as I said in the beginning, in the Sanskrit composition rendered in praise of Shiva, we say:

Yoginam Pataye Namah Yoginam Pataye Namah

My salutations to You, oh Shiva, the *yogi* of all *yogis*. Oh Swami, You are the goal of all *yogis*, and You are a *yogi* unto yourself.

You know what happened? Swami is the goal of all *yogis*. You must have heard of this next incident. In the Himalayas, there is a place by the name of Narayanaguha. A few *yogis* once came to visit Swami. Swami then materialised a bowl and told these *yogis* to take the bowl with them to Narayanaguha in the Himalayas, where they were staying.

Swami said, “You all are meditating, I know. I know that you are praying, as you are in deep penance. I am materialising this *akshaya patra*, this bowl, so that you will have food in plenty. There is enough for all of you. All eleven *yogis* will have enough food in this bowl. Your lunch and dinner are taken care of by Me.”

So these *yogis* will have their food out of this *akshaya patra*, the food bowl materialised by Bhagavan Baba because He is *Yogeshwaraseswara*. Sai is the goal of all *yogis*.

SAI AS DOCTOR OF DOCTORS - BHISHAGVARYA

Now, I should also mention to you that Sathya Sai, the Lord Shiva, is Bhishagvarya, or ‘the doctor of doctors’. Sathya Sai Baba is a *bhishag*, which means ‘doctor’. Bhishagvarya means ‘the topmost doctor’ or ‘the doctor of doctors’. He cures the disease of *bhavaroga*, or the disease of birth and death.

He also cures physical diseases. I know of Baba materialising tablets, and I have seen Baba materialising capsules. A bottle of tablets was once materialised by Baba for the Vice-Chancellor of the Vedic University from Tirupathi. His name is Professor Dr. Raghunathaacharya. This professor received a bottle of tablets materialised by Baba.

BABA MATERIALISES EYE-DROPS FOR ANIL KUMAR'S WIFE

Baba also materialised eye drops for my wife, when she met with an accident near Banaganapalli, in the Kurnool district. The bus in which we were travelling met with an accident, and the people seated in the front sustained severe damage. Bleeding heavily, the driver fell on the steering wheel and the people in the front had multiple fractures. My wife, who was sitting behind them, had pieces of glass enter into her eye.

By the time we came to Prashanthi Nilayam, Swami was waiting at the door. Immediately, He sent her to the hospital. He sent all the injured people to the hospital, and there they were given medical attention and treatment immediately. Later, when my wife came for *darshan*, Baba materialised eye drops for her and came to me and said, "Don't worry, nothing happened to her eye. There are glass pieces in her eye, but nothing will happen. I will take care of her. Put these eye-drops in." Baba is Bhishagvarya.

I am sorry to mention this miracle that happened in our family because I only rarely mention personal things. I don't normally do that. Somehow, it just came out like that because Baba is Bhishagvarya, the doctor of doctors. So, as proof I am giving my own personal miracle.

SHIVA AS DOCTOR OF DOCTORS

Then that is why in the *Veda* and in *Rudra*, it is clearly said:

*Prathamo Daivyo Bhishak Vishva Bheshaji Vishvaha Bheshaji
Shiva Rudrasya Bheshaji*

These are the *mantras* praising Lord Shiva as the doctor of all doctors. Baba is the doctor of all doctors.

SAI AND SHIVA AS MASTERS OF ALL MEDICINAL PLANTS

Vaidhyanatha is the master of all doctors. Not only that, we have also got so many medicinal plants. Today, through all the western countries, people are showing a keen interest in these medicinal plants. Research is going on in a big way all over the west; this is the interest in *ayurveda*. Many western people are very much interested in this branch of medicine, this curing of diseases with herbs. And who is the master of these medicinal plants? Lord Shiva Bhagavan is. That is why it is clearly said in the *Rudra* part of the *Veda*:

Bhuvantaye Varivaskrtayaushadhinam Pataye Namah

*O Master of these medicinal plants,
Help us to come out of these physical ailments and grant us long life.*

That is what is said.

Then, we also praise Bhagavan to make all of us free from all diseases; so it is also said:

Grame Asminnanaturah

Let this whole village be free from all ailments and diseases.

In Puttaparthi, in those early days, there was not even a primary health centre. People often died helplessly because of the lack of medical care. Today, however, we have the Sri Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital, the Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, and Eswaramma medical mobile vans.

In Puttaparthi, we have the Sri Sathya Sai Eswaramma Trust, and the Trust has the Eswaramma medical mobile van. This van goes to all the villages in and around Puttaparthi and Prashanthi Nilayam, taking care of all the villagers. They treat patients. All villagers greet these doctors. The whole village has a festive look. All villagers are highly grateful to the team of doctors who visit every week. See that. That is what it is. Therefore:

Grame Asminnanaturah

Let all ailments leave these villages.

SAI AND SHIVA AS MRITYUNJAYA

Lord Shiva is called Mrityunjaya, 'the one who conquered death'. Is it possible for anybody to conquer death? Yes! Shiva conquered death, and Baba has made dead people come back to life. By praying to Lord Shiva, Markandeya, who died, was brought back to life. Markandeya, a devotee of Shiva, was not permitted to die. He could not die because Shiva resurrected him. Likewise, by the touch of Jesus Christ, Lazarus was brought back to life. Lazarus rose from the dead by the touch of Jesus Christ. *Mrityunjaya* means 'win over death'.

BABA MADE DEAD PEOPLE COME BACK TO LIFE

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba made Mr. Cowan, a man from Los Angeles (in the United States of America), come back to life. Cowan died at Madras at a time when the All India Conference was taking place. Baba then went to the dead body and brought Cowan back to life.

There is another case, that of Radhakrishnayya Chetty, from Kuppam. When he died, he was brought back to life by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. And yet another one: Brigadier Bose died in the Poornachandra Auditorium during the Navaratri celebrations. He collapsed, and Swami walked down from the stage, came close to him, and brought him back to life as well.

So *Mrityunjaya* means 'the one who conquered death'. This is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

SAI IS SHANKARA HIMSELF

I shall now also tell you of an incident narrated by Sri Kasturi, in his book, *Sri Sathya Sai Prema Sudha Shrivanthi*. On page 357, Kasturi mentions a very important incident. In the early days, a devotee by the name of Seshagiri Rao composed many *mantras* in praise of Baba and many *mantras* extolling Him. There, in *Ashtothara Sata Namavali*, were listed 108 names in praise of Baba written in Sanskrit.

In that place, this Seshagiri Rao used the word ‘Shankara *amsa*’, which means, “Oh Baba, you are a part of Shankara, You are a spark of Shankara.” *Amsa* means ‘a part’ or ‘a spark’ of Shankara.

When Seshagiri Rao read that *mantra*, Swami said, “Not Shankara *amsa*, but Shankara. Write down Shankara, not a spark of Shankara. So, total Shankara—not only a spark or part. I am Shankara, Lord Shiva.”

Om Sri Shankaraya Namah

Baba is Shankara Himself.

FIRST BHAJAN OF SAI

My friends, what was the first *bhajan* sung by Baba?

*Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam
Dustara Bhava Sagara Tarananum
Guru Maharaj Guru Jai Jai
Sai Natha Sat Guru Jai Jai*

*Om Namah Shivaya Om Nama Shivaya Om Nama Shivaya Shivaya Namom Om
Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Aruna Sivom
Omkararam Baba Omkararam Baba Omkara Baba Om Namom Baba
Om Namah Shivaya Om Nama Shivaya Om Nama Shivaya Namom Om*

See, the first *bhajan* itself means, “I am Lord Shiva.” He revealed that Shiva and He are the one Shiva.

Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Aruna Sivom

Arunachala, in Thiruvannamalai, where Ramana Maharshi stayed, there is a temple of Lord Shiva.

Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Arunachala Shiva Aruna Sivom

“I am Lord Shiva.” That is His declaration. *Manasa Bhajare* means “contemplate while singing in praise of Shiva.” That is His command, and the meaning of the very first *bhajan* song of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

SAI AND SHIVA AS OMKARA RUPINAM

We also know Lord Shiva and Baba as *Omkara Rupinam*. *Omkara Rupinam* is the very form of *Omkara*, or the primal sound *Om*. In one of the *bhajans*, we say that *Om, Om, Om* is added for every *mantra* prefix. *Om* is there; *Omkara*. Therefore, *Omkara Rupinam* is the form of Lord Shiva.

SAI AND SHIVA – BEYOND THREE ATTRIBUTES

Trigunatitham, or Lord Shiva, is beyond the three attributes—*Trigunatitha*. Baba is unaffected by these three attributes.

SAI AND SHIVA AS ETERNAL WITNESS

Sarva Karma Saakshi Bhutham

He is the eternal witness.

*Sarvantarayami Sathya Sai Rama
Sarva Mantra Rupa Sathya Sai Rama
Sarva Karma Saakshi Bhoota Sathya Sai Ram
Saranu Saranu Saranu Sathya Sai Rama*

Sarva means 'everything', *karma* means 'actions', and *sakshi* means 'the witness'. He is the witness to all our actions. *Vandhe Sri Sathya Sai*: my humble salutations to Shiva *Padha Pankajam*. *Shiva Padha Pankajam*: my humble salutations to the Lotus Feet of Lord Shiva, to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY IN SHIVA'S FAMILY

Now I should mention something about Lord Shiva's family. Today, my friends, people say that there is no harmony at home. The husband and wife do not agree, the children will never pay heed to their parents, and there is disharmony, disunity, and distrust among the members of the family.

To all of us, Baba has a message to convey: Lord Shiva's family, with all its contradictions, with all its opposites, a paradoxical family, conveys a message to all of us that we can have unity in diversity. We can have harmony at home in spite of all contradictions. Things need not be complementary. Things may be contradictory, yet we can establish unity in our families by worshipping Lord Shiva. Why?

The chariot of Shiva is a bull, while the chariot of his wife, Parvathi, is a lion. The lion and bull will never go together. Not only that, but the face of the eldest son, Ganesh, is that of an elephant—*Gajaanana Aanana*. *Gaja* means 'elephant', and *Gajaanana* is 'the face of an elephant'. Remember, the chariot of the mother is a lion. Here also, the elephant and lion can never go together; the elephant cannot dream of a lion.

So, Swami, you are Parvathi:

Simha Vahini Sai Narayani

Swami, You have got *simha*, the lion, as your chariot. You have also got the bull as your chariot:

Nandishwara Hey Parameshwara

You are Nandishwara, so You have got the bull as your chariot, Swami. Your eldest son has the face of an elephant, and the elephant and lion can never go together. However, they are all together in the family.

So, in spite of all contradictions, Shiva's family is together. Likewise, by surrendering to Lord Shiva and by praying to Baba, although we may have different temperaments, we can exist together.

The chariot of the second son, Subramanya, is a peacock, while there are snakes around the head of Lord Shiva. Snakes and peacocks are dire enemies. But here they are together. Therefore, if we want to be together in perfect harmony, with all contradictions, we have to pray to Lord Shiva and pray to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

IN PRASHANTHI NILAYAM WE HAVE PEOPLE OF ALL RELIGIONS

For your information, here in Prashanthi Nilayam, we have people of all religions. Outside of here, Muslims are opposed to Hindus, and there is even a division among Muslims—for example, between Iraqis and those from Iran. Also, outside of here, there is division among Hindus; they don't see eye-to-eye with each other. In front of Baba, however, we are all united: Christians, Muslims, and Hindus move together. Here you will find Iranians wearing white cloth singing:

*Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai Gopala Bala Bala Radhe Krishna Jai
Krishna Jai Krishna Jai Krishna Jai
Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Jai*

Yes, Iranians sing in praise of Baba and Krishna. Those from the United Arab Republic are praising Krishna, and Christians also sing:

Shivaya Parameshwaraya Chandrasekharaya Namah Om

Here Christians and Hindus sing in praise of Allah. All Hindus sing in praise of Jehova, in praise of Jesus Christ. Here all gods are praised. God is one, though names are many. Unity is the centre. So, unity is the centre of attraction located in Prashanthi Nilayam, the Abode of Supreme Peace. That is what I would like to share with you.

MEANING OF SHIVAM AND SAVAM

Then further, there is *Shivam*. *Shivam* means 'auspicious', 'vitality', 'life'. So, life is auspicious, and life is the vital force. Thus, everybody is *Shivam*. Everybody is *Shivam*, full of life. Without this *Shivam*, it is only *savam*, 'a dead body'. So *savam* is death, while *Shivam* is life. This is what Bhagavan explains.

Where is life, *Shivam*? Where is this life? How do you say that? There is breath, or *soham*, *soham*, *soham*. This is what is called *Hamsa Gayathri*. With our breath, we repeat this holy *mantra* 21,600 times a day. This speaks of life's vitality.

EVERYBODY IS A COMBINATION OF SHIVA AND PARVATHI

This body is called *arvathi*, the wife of Shiva. The body is matter. The body is *pravritti*, that which is outward or external. It is all matter, while Shiva is the life inside, or *nivritthi*. This is known as *Purusha*, the supreme life force. So, Shiva is the life, and Parvati is the body—my body, your body, every body. It is all a combination of Shiva and Parvati—matter and energy, or the outer and inner. That is what Baba has said.

SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOUR TO SHED BAD BEHAVIOUR

Therefore, my friends, on Shivaratri day, what is our spiritual path? What should be our *sadhana*? What should we do for our spiritual endeavour, our spiritual efforts? Baba clearly advises us to leave off all ugliness, all dirt—the dirt in our mind—and give up all bad thoughts and behaviour, running away from bad company. This should be our main *sadhana* we undertake during this Shivaratri and during the rest of our lives.

GO BEYOND THE SENSES ON SHIVARATRI DAY

Baba has clearly said that sins are out of senses and that senses are the cause of the sins committed. Let us transcend the senses; let us go beyond the senses by contemplating on Lord Shiva on this day of Shivaratri.

NAMASMARANA AND BHAJAN SHOULD BE OUT OF THE SOURCE

And then, as we sing in praise of Shiva during Shivaratri, Baba advises us not do it out of force, so that so many people will be watching us. No! *Namasmarana* or *bhajan* should not be out of force, but out of the source. It should be out of the source in your heart. That is what Bhagavan said. Why?

God will look into the source, your heart, and not at the force out of your lips. He is Bhavapriya: He is carried by your *bhava* or feeling, not *bahiya* or external act. Baba is not Bahiyapriya, carried away by externals; He is Bhavapriya. He is after your feelings and sentiments.

ON SHIVARATRI NIGHT, AWAKE TO THE INNER SELF

On this day of Shivaratri, we are awake throughout the night, and vigilant. *Jaagarna* is being awake, vigilant. Yes, but merely being awake will not grant liberation. Most of the night watchmen are awake throughout the night, but they do not attain liberation. No! Nurses on duty are awake throughout night, just like bus drivers and truck drivers. Those who are on duty at that time are awake, but that is not liberation.

You must be awake to the inner Self, alert to the inner Self, aware of the inner Self. That is what inner vigilance is. Being vigilant and absorbed in the awareness, or *jaagarna*, on Shivaratri night, that is what Bhagavan has explained.

NO MOON ON SHIVARATRI NIGHT

In the year 1999, in His discourse, Baba explained certain points: the moon has 16 shades or aspects. These are the 16 *shodashakala sodasha*. *Kala* means 'the shades of the light'. The moon will be losing one after another. On Shivaratri day, only one streak on the moon is left; only one line is left. By contemplating on Lord Shiva, even on the last streak, the last shade of the moon also disappears.

As I mentioned in the beginning, the moon is the mind; the moon is the presiding deity of the mind. When the moon disappears, losing all of its 16 shades—*kalashodasha sodashakala*—the moon disappears totally. It is a totally dark night.

WHEN THE MIND IS WITHDRAWN, YOU ARE GOD

When the mind is annihilated, when the mind is devoid of thought, when the mind is withdrawn, when the mind is annihilated, then you and I are Divine. We are human because of this mind. Once the mind is withdrawn, you are God. That is what Baba explained in His discourse in the year 1999.

YOU AND GOD ARE ONE

Also in the year 1997, Baba said, “You and God are one.” Understand this. In 1997, He said this. But you still don’t know it. Why? You don’t know it yet because of your body attachment and worldly attachments. The body and worldly attachments are responsible for your forgetful nature. You think you are separate from God because of these two things.

TO SHUN NEGATIVITY YOU SHOULD KNOW THE ONENESS OF DIVINITY

In the year 1996, He stated another point. Shivaratri is the auspicious night when you have to be away from all negativity, a night when you should be away from all hatred and bitterness against anybody. Then you can know the oneness of Divinity. *Ekatva* means ‘oneness of Divinity’. That is the true celebration of Shivaratri in full awareness.

TURN TO GOD WHO IS SHIVAM OR AUSPICIOUSNESS

Shivam means ‘auspicious’. What is auspicious here? To turn to God is most auspicious, so *Shivam* indicates that we should go onward, forward and Godward. That is the command of Bhagavan.

We should also know that Divinity is in everyone:

Eswara Sarva Bhuthanam.

Sarva means ‘all’, *bhuthanam* means ‘beings’, and *Eswara* means ‘God’. God is present in all beings; let us understand that.

SHANKARA MEANS GOD IS THE GIVER OF ALL ENERGY

Shiva has another name—Shankara. *Shan* means ‘all that is good’, *kara* means ‘the giver’, and *shan* means ‘energy’. *Kara* is ‘the giver’. I have energy, and you have energy. God is the giver of this energy. Energy is not your property. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed, according to the kinetic theory of energy. Energy is existent, energy is original, and energy is ever lasting and indestructible. You are energy, and Shankara is the source of that energy. Just as the breeze is everywhere, energy is everywhere, as Bhagavan has said.

PRAY TO SHANKARA TO GRANT US BLISS

Sham means ‘he gives that’. What does He give? He gives *ananda* or bliss. *Kara* means ‘the giver’, so He is the giver of *ananda*. What kind of bliss are we talking about? We are talking about *Brahmaananda* (supreme bliss), *Advaitananda* (non-dual bliss), *Nithyananda* (eternal bliss), and *Saachinanda* (the effulgent, ever-fresh blissful state). That is what Shankara is. So by praying to Eswara, we will be blissful in our lives, as Eswara is the controller of the eight forms of wealth.

SHANKARA – THE GENERATOR

To bring you to an ordinary level of understanding: electricity is everywhere, and it is something that you have not produced. Magnetic waves give magnetic power, while electricity gives the power of heat. *Shan* means ‘energy’, while *kara* means ‘the giver’. The giver of heat and the generator is God Himself, or Shankara.

LET FAITH BE YOUR BREATH

In the year 1993, Swami made another point. You have no *visvaasa*. *Visvaasa* means 'faith'. In fact, your *svaasa* (breath) should be your *visvaasa*. Your breath should be your faith. (*Svaasa* means 'breath'.) *Visvaasa* is faith, so let your breath of faith continue throughout your life and live long.

Today, we have no *visvaasa* (faith) so we have no Shiva with us. We have no Shiva. Why? We don't have Shiva because there is no *sraddha*, or 'sincerity', 'forbearance', or 'concentrated effort'. *Sraddha* is Parvati, indicating sincerity of purpose. When you have sincerity of purpose, or Parvathi, you will have Lord Shiva with *visvaasa* (faith) throughout the breathing (*svaasa*) process (your entire life). That is how Bhagavan explains *svaasa-visvaasa*.

HUMAN LIFE IS A COMBINATION OF SHIVA-SHAKTHI

In a discourse in 1993 Baba explained that human life is *Manavatwa*, which is the combination of Shiva-Shakthi, or matter and energy.

PRAYING TO SIVA TO FREE US OF ELEVEN SUFFERINGS

And Swami also explains that on Shivaratri day, by praying to Baba and Lord Shiva, we will be free from eleven sufferings. There are eleven types of suffering, eleven kinds of disasters, eleven types of hazards, and eleven types of difficulties—these are called *ekaadasha rudras*. *Dasha* means 'ten', and *ekaadasha* means 'eleven'. *Rudras* are pain-causing forces, pain-generating forces. So there are eleven *ekaadasha rudras*, or pain-causing forces.

What are they? Baba explains that five are *karmendriyas*, or the senses of action, and five are *jnanendreyas*, the five senses of cognition. There are five senses of action and five senses of cognition—so ten plus one mind equals eleven. These are the *ekaadasha rudras*, the eleven *rudras*, which are the sources of pain and suffering. To be free from these eleven agonising forces, let us pray to Lord Shiva on Shivaratri. That is what Baba has said.

SAI AND SHIVA ARE MASTERS OF ALL THREE WORLDS, TIME, AND QUALITIES

Now, we should also understand *Eswaratva*. *Eswaratva* means 'Divinity'. Divinity is the controller of the three *gunas*, or the three basic qualities of creation. *Triloka* means 'the three worlds'. What are these three worlds? They are the gross body, the subtle body, and the causal body. *Trikaala* refers to the three periods of time: that is, the past, present and future.

So, *triloka* refers to the three worlds: the gross, subtle, and causal. *Triguna* refers to the three qualities of *sathwa*, *rajas*, and *thamo gunas*. *Trikala* refers to the three periods of time—past, present and future. The Master of all these three is Eswara. *Eswaratva* is the master. Bhagavan Baba is Lord Shankara Shiva Himself.

SHIVA HAS NO FORM

Finally, for all our names we have a prefix (e.g., Sri, Sri So-and-so). For Sri Anil Kumar, Sri Satish, and Sri Lakhi, 'Sri' is added. Just as in English, we say Mr. So-and-so, here in *Sanathana Dharma*, we say 'Sri'.

What do we mean by 'Sri'? The body is temporary; the body is sure to vanish. But God in me is eternal. The body is temporary, but the indweller is permanent. So 'Sri' applies to that which is permanent, the immortal Divinity within me, while it is only the body that is mortal.

So the point is that we say 'Sri Rama' because Rama had a physical body, and also had 'Sri' or Divinity within Him. Sri Krishna is the same: Krishna had a mortal body, and also 'Sri' or Divinity within Him.

But we don't say 'Sri Shankara', 'Sri Shambo', or 'Sri Shiva'. No! Why? Because Shiva has no form, Shankara has no form, Shambo has no form. These are all names of Lord Shiva who is beyond the body. He is beyond—the formless, nameless God. That is why He has no 'Sri' in front of His name. That is how Baba explained it.

SHIVA HAS TOTAL CONTROL OF HIS SENSES

Shiva also has total control of his senses. *Indriya* refers to 'the senses', and *nigraha* means 'control'. So He has total mastery over his senses.

He is *Bola* Shankara, *Bola* Shankara, *Bola* Shankara.

Bola Shankara Bol
Shiva Bola Shankara Bol

There is a *bhajan* song called *Bola Shankara*. God is easily pleased by us singing His glory. But He is Divine as He has mastery over His senses.

May that Lord Shiva abide in us.
May that Lord Shiva awaken us.
May that Lord Shiva grant us liberation out of this cycle of birth and death.

May this Shivaratri be a holy Shivaratri, a spiritual Shivaratri, an uplifting Shivaratri, a Divine Shivaratri, an enlivening Shivaratri, an energising Shivaratri, and an immortal Shivaratri as you realise that you and He are one, that I and you are one, that we and He are one, and that only God has myriad forms.

Jai Sai Ram.

OM...OM...OM...

Asato Maa Sadgamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotirgamaya
Mrityormaa Amritamgamaya

Om Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

