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A Special Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar

“Eighty-Five Years of Love”

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Sai Ram

Greetings to everybody on the eve of the 85th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Baba!

PRASHANTI NILAYAM HAS GOT A BEAUTIFUL FACELIFT

We are all very much excited about this event. Right now, right from the railway station up to the gates of Prashanti Nilayam, you see such nicely made decorations and arches. All the devotees who visit this place will be so happy to see Bhagavan’s huge pictures everywhere! The railway station is specially decorated with Swami’s pictures, in both directions, roughly about 8’ to 10’ in size, and every picture is wrapped with silken cloth, draped in the form of a pyramid. You have fifteen blocks like that at the station, with Bhagavan’s huge pictures on each side. Above every picture is this nice arch of silken cloth, while Swami’s quotations are at the bottom of every picture.

The whole station is lit up and nicely illuminated. At the centre there is a peacock feathers’ decoration made of silk cloth and at the centre is Bhagavan’s picture with green lights all around it. The station has different coloured bulbs, running in a serial order. My friends, I can say, it is paradise on Earth! You will certainly have a heavenly experience as you get down there.

Approaching Prashanti Nilayam, there are eight arches. You have to drive under all these arches. Every arch has got beautiful carvings on the pillars and also at the centre, including beautiful pictures of Bhagavan. As you come from the railway station, you will notice that each arch has been given a name symbolising Divinity. What are these names? Sabda Brahmamayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Sreemayi, Vaangmayi and so on, all representing different names of Divinity. These are written at the centre of every arch.

Now, when you go from Prashanti Nilayam back to the railway station, every arch will have on its other side a name pertaining to the nine forms of devotion. *Navavidha bhakthi marga* is comprised of *Sravanam* (listening), *Keertanam* (singing), *Padasevanam* (servitude), *Dasyam* (spirit of service), *Sneham* (friendship) and so on. Like that you have the names of the nine forms of devotion written on each of the arches.

To make it crystal clear, on every arch you have one name on the front, based on the eight forms of Divinity. As you return back, every arch will display another name, referring to the nine paths of devotion. Apart from the obvious aesthetic value, it gives you a spiritual outlook. It is so beautiful to see all those arches!

Now close by, as you come out of the railway station, you will see all those blocks with Swami's pictures. Then you will drive straight on the road until you reach the main turn-off circle. As you turn left to reach Prashanti Nilayam, there you notice a new permanent structure—a very big arch made out of concrete, cement and steel. It has got the appearance of the entrance gates of Tirupathi! It has the appearance of the Warangal of the Kakatiya culture!

So a permanent arch of beauty and grandeur is there at that main turn-off point. Now as you reach Prashanti Nilayam, on the main road, you will see a very big arch at the entrance. It is beautifully carved, full of Indian art and culture. In other words, all of Prashanti Nilayam has got a beautiful facelift.

85TH BIRTHDAY IS A VERY BIG EVENT

I should also tell you that for ten days, right from 15th to 24th of November, all the devotees—thousands and thousands of devotees--will have breakfast, lunch, afternoon snacks and dinner at night totally free of cost; it is all offered free as *prasadam* for ten days! And thousands of *seva dals* are on duty there. They have specially erected places, with hundreds of counters and barricades built so that devotees can go in queues to the head tables where different items are served. The orderliness, the cleanliness, the silence, the unparalleled discipline excels all expectations, remaining unbeaten and top class. That is the mystery of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I also know that the taste of the items is very good. Our experience tells us that any offering to God which we receive back as *prasadam* is bound to be tasty. There are food choices according to your preferences too: for the North Indians and also special food for the South Indians. There is also the western canteen. Name the food, you will get it there. Southern, northern or western, you will get it all.

Then in the evenings, we have music programs every day from top artists of international fame, who consider it a matter of privilege, a matter of fortune, a result of the merit accrued over the past several lives, to come here and present their programs in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

On 17th November morning, we are going to have the mass marriages. About eighty-five couples are going to be married in the presence of Swami.

Then again, as usual, the 19th November is going to be Ladies' Day. The Chief Guest for the occasion is the President of India, the First Lady of the nation, Hon'ble Shrimati Pratibha Patil. And then on 20th November, we have the International Conference for the delegates, particularly those who represent many different nations. They will chalk out programs for the coming years and make organisational changes wherever necessary.

On 21st November in the evening, we have a presentation by the students of the Sri Sathya Sai University.

On 22nd November morning, we have the Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai University, where the graduates and the post-graduates, and those who are eligible for doctoral degrees, will receive their degrees. The Chief Guest to deliver the Convocation address will be the Prime Minister of India, Hon'ble Dr. Manmohan Singh. Dr. Manmohan Singh, as you know, is a highly accomplished economist of international fame, and a former student of Cambridge University in England (like Harvard University in the USA) and a very close associate of Amartya Sen, the Nobel Laureate in Economics from England. Dr. Manmohan Singh is one of the leading personalities in world leadership. He is recognised as an international statesman and a devotee of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He is going to deliver the Convocation Address on the 22nd morning.

On 23rd November morning, we will have a special celebration marking the 85th Birthday of the Advent of the Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This program will take place in Sri Sathya Sai Hill View Stadium, which accommodates 2-3 *lakh* (300 thousand) devotees or more. Special decorations and special arrangements are under way for this occasion.

There in the International Indoor Stadium, an exhibition is arranged with emphasis on the village integrated programs. Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Program is going on in a big way all over this country. I understand that this exhibition is going to be very attractive to all the devotees, and is nearing completion. This exhibition will be open to the public.

Thus my friends, 85th Birthday is a very big event in the history of mankind. It is a great occasion for the devotees of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba all the world over. It is our good luck and great fortune to be alive this day and to have the privilege of watching these celebrations. Therefore my friends, let me first of all greet you all, on the eve of Bhagavan's Birthday.

Once again, may Bhagavan help us grow further and further on the spiritual path. May we grow in faith and devotion to Him. May we dedicate our lives to the spirit of service, and ultimately experience Him within. May Bhagavan bless you and your families!

THE MESSAGE OF BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

I would like to share with you a few of my thoughts on the message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba because His message is very important. His message will guide all of humanity in the years to come. So it is absolutely necessary for all of us to know His message. If time permits, God willing, I have plans to share with the viewers of saiwisdom.com website the different aspects of Sai's message. What are Baba's views on family? What does He expect from children? What sort of relationship should there be between a mother and her child? What kind of relationship should prevail between a husband and wife? What does He mean by a family? What are Baba's views on society and social responsibilities? What is the role of women in society? Like that we can classify Baba's message, His doctrine, His gospel, and His philosophy under different headings. I want to share with you that treasure of wisdom, that gold mine of knowledge, so that we all will be benefitted and conduct ourselves according to His Divine message.

For this morning, let me just say a few points about the Divine message. My friends, if you want to look at the sun, torchlight will not help you. Candles cannot help you, nor can electric bulbs. To see the sun, sunlight is necessary; you can see the sun through sunlight only. If you want to see the moon, moonlight is the only medium. Likewise to know Baba's message, we should take Baba's help only.

He Himself expressed what His message is, how it looks and what it aims at. My friends, I also know that most of you do not know the Telugu language. You cannot follow that language. However, most of you must have heard His Divine discourses when you happened to visit Prashanti Nilayam earlier. You must have heard His Divine voice and His Divine language, even if you did not understand it thoroughly. Therefore, in order to help you understand, I shall give the original text in Telugu followed by the English translation so that you will have the joy of listening to the original and the satisfaction of having known its meaning in English.

How does He describe His own message in His own discourse:

Madhuramaina Baasha Manjulagalamuto

It is a sweet language, a nectarous language, sung with a melodious voice.

Bhaktakoti Hrudini Bhartacheyu

This Divine Message will satisfy the entire gathering, whether they be literate or illiterate, doctors, engineers, professionals, lawyers or those who are totally uneducated, whether young or old, both scientists and academicians. The entire gathering will be extremely happy and pleased with His Divine discourse.

Sooti Maata Paliki Sookshma Dharmambule Cheppuchundu Sai Oppumeera

Now He has described how He speaks: He conveys the Divine message straightaway, without beating around the bush. There is nothing left to your imagination, nothing to hallucinate about. Each point is conveyed directly and straightforwardly. The subtler things, those secrets, the inner significance of philosophy and Vedanta are conveyed to us in a most appropriate way by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

HIS MESSAGE IS SWEETER THAN SUGARCANE OR GRAPE JUICE

This is how He has described His own discourse. I don't think that we will match that description. I don't think we can describe His message in this way. That's why I have chosen to quote Him rather than depend upon my own narration. Then how does He speak further about it?

Swami Himself says:

Ikshu Rasamu Kanna Draksha Rasamu Kanna

It is sweeter than sugarcane or grape juice.

Puvvu Kanna Paapa Navvu Kanna

It is more beautiful than the smile of a baby in a cradle or in a swing.

It is more beautiful than the blossoming of a flower.

Madhura Mohanamulu Sri Sai Palakulu

His words are so beautiful, so appropriate, nectarine and more beautiful than the smile of a baby, more beautiful than a blossoming flower, sweeter than grape juice, sweeter than sugarcane juice. What else, what more could be commented on this?

HIS EYES ARE FULL OF COMPASSION, KINDNESS AND MERCY

Before Swami starts giving His *darshan*, all people who are seated there start talking among themselves, in a low tone of course. They may be whispering, but when Swami starts giving His *darshan*, you find silence abiding. No more whispers, no more talk! All eyes are focused on Swami as He comes slowly, gently, sweetly, nicely with a smiling face in His wheelchair, assisted by the boy behind and with top people on either side, plus security guards behind. He comes with all royal dignity, with all royal majesty, splendour, and wonder. Bhagavan moves on and on along the *darshan* lines. Well, how does it look? Baba Himself spoke about it in a poem. He describes the whole thing, so therefore let me quote Him:

Kannulandeppudu Kaarunya Drushtiye

His eyes are full of compassion, full of kindness, full of mercy

Palukulu Eppudu Preethilolukuchundu

When He looks at His devotees and asks, “When did you come?” or “Where did you come from?” or “Are you okay?” . . . what soothing words they are! How supportive they are, how consoling they are, and how encouraging they are. His words are so sweet,

and His looks are so gentle and compassionate. One look cures an ailing patient, while another look corrects a devotee; yet another look will unburden the heaviness of a problem for a devotee, while another look will encourage someone. Therefore, His looks and words are multi-dimensional and multi-purposeful.

Nagumomu Tanayandhu Amrutha Bhavame

That smiling face of Swami—we never see Him with a serious face—He always smiles! That bliss is God and God is bliss. Swami is always blissful. When He starts coming towards you and smiles, you begin to smile. He smiles to make everybody smile. He smiles so that there are no more tears of sorrow or grief. Problems, worries, anxieties are no more! The looks, the talk, and the face of Bhagavan are totally Divine.

Tanayandhu Amritha Bhavame

He has that nectarine feeling within. He wishes for the welfare of the vast humanity. He wants everybody to live long, lead a healthy life, a spiritual life, a life of fulfillment. That is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Finally, in the same poem, He says:

Hrudayamadeppudu Mudamugoorchu

The moment you think of Him, you are joyful. The moment you read His literature, you are very happy. The moment you locate His picture, you are ecstatic. The moment you start singing, you are blissful. Therefore, the very thought of Baba, the very *bhajan* of Baba, the very picture of Baba is very delightful, joyful and blissful.

WHATEVER BABA SPEAKS IS NOTHING BUT TRUTH

Now, whatever Swami speaks is nothing but Truth—truth, truth, the ultimate Truth. How do you say that? Let me quote what Baba has said:

Grandhambulanniyu Gaalinchu Choodaga

Sathya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

Go through any number of books anywhere in the world; you will understand whatever Baba speaks is nothing but Truth.

Vedamulanniyu Vedhaku Choochinagaani

Satya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

You may go through the whole, infinite knowledge of the *Vedas*, or you may go through your own scripture—the *Holy Bible*, the *Koran* or the *Dhammapada*. Whatever your scripture, you will find Baba's message there because He speaks nothing but Truth.

Sastramulanniyu Chuchinagaani

Sathya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

You may go through any number of interpretations or any number of explanations on the scriptures; you will come to know that Swami speaks Truth only. Whatever He has said is true, that you will certainly understand.

Gayatrimantramu Ghanamuga Cheppinagani

Sathya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

We repeat *mantras*. Of all the *mantras*, the Gayathri *mantra* is very popular: *Om Bhur Bhuvah Suvah, Tat Savitur Varenyam, Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi, Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayaat*. This is the Gayatri *mantra*. Some take “Om Sri Sai Ram” as a *mantra*. You may use any *mantra* with the name of your favorite God. While repeating the name of your chosen God, you will know that whatever Swami speaks is Truth. Swami is Truth, Truth is God and God is Truth. Live in Truth.

Dharmasastramulu Tarachi Tarachi Chooda

Sathya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

Various books are available today which speak about the way we need to lead our lives, a code of conduct, the law—what is expected of an individual, how an ideal person should lead his life, what an ideal society is, what the social norms are, what social behavior is. All these books are available all over the world. When you go through them, you will know that Swami referred to them all. Whatever He speaks is quite true, duly certified by all of such literature available throughout the world today.

Stotra Paatamulanu Shodinchi Choodaga

Sathya Sai Paluku Sathya Vaaku

Make an in-depth study, make a thorough inquiry, do search and research, and you will come to know that whatever He says is Truth, nothing but Truth.

That’s how Baba describes His own Divine discourses. We can’t match that description; we can’t describe like that. Therefore, I resorted to quoting Him directly from His literature.

DO NOT ENTERTAIN ANY DIFFERENCES . . . SERVE AND CHANT HIS NAME

Now, what’s Swami’s message all about? What are its aims and objectives? That’s what He says here in this poem. He wants us to speak according to this message wherever we go, following His examples. What are the objectives?

Kulamata dweshalu Kooladroyudattanchu

Cheyetthi Bodhanan Cheyavalayu

As you speak, see that you do not entertain any differences, see that you do not support any apartheid or racial discrimination, any differences or division . . . nothing. Your talk should be broad-based. You should never divide any community.

Deenula Sevaye Divya Maargamattanchu

Palumaaru Gettiga Paluka Valeyu

Show them the Divine path. What is it? The path of service: service is the only Divine path. That's what you can say.

Naama Chintana Naruni Naami Sannidhi Cherchi

See that when you repeat His Name, it takes you directly to Him; it takes you directly to His proximity. It will give you the experience of nearness and dearness. It will give you total identification within, by chanting His Name and singing His Glory.

Amrutatwa Mandichu Nanagavalayu

Can there be anything sweeter than God's name? Can there be anything sweeter than Sai *bhajans*. It is immortal, it is nectarine. Understand this.

Bhakthi Viswasambu Baagugaa Kalavaare

Manavaaralani Mudamandavaleyu

THOSE WHO HAVE BHAKTHI AND VISWASA ARE YOUR TRUE FRIENDS

We have so many friends. We say, “He is my friend, he is my relation. They are my relatives, so I belong to them and they belong to me.” Nonsense! Who belongs to whom? Who belongs to you? Those who have *bhakthi* (devotion) and *viswasa* (faith). These two are the basic qualifications to be your friend, to be your relative. In other words, all those who have devotion and faith are your relatives; do not consider any other useless stuff or garbage as a qualification. A true relation has got that faith and devotion.

Gnana Bodhalu Narulaku Cheyuvaaru

Isthulanduru Spastamu Yentayeni

Who are the people you like? Film stars, politicians, leaders, handsome people, beautiful people—are these the people you like? Baba clearly says that those who share pearls of wisdom, who speak on philosophy and spirituality, who speak on eternal values, those people are liked by everybody. They are the people whom you should like, not just any person on the street. Who are the persons you like? Yes, I like those who share with me the pearls or gems of knowledge, the diamonds of *Vedic* texts—that should be our preference.

Bheda Bhavambu Vidanaadi Preethi Thoda

Kalasiyundina Saiki Kalguprema

This is the secret, my friends. Follow that. How do you win Sai’s love? How do you get Sai’s love? How to bask in the love of Sai? He gives the secret: have no differences, stand in unity and move among all with love and friendship. “I love you” means you love each other because all are love. Love is Baba and Baba is love.

YOU ARE THE VERY SAME DIVINE PERSONALITY

Now comes another point: Oh God, I have not witnessed the miracles of Lord Sri Rama because he belonged to thousands and thousands of years in the past. That age is called *Thretha Yuga*. I do not know who Krishna was; I do not know how people enjoyed His proximity. He too belonged to the past, the *Dwapara Yuga*. Baba, my prayer is this: I have not experienced you then as Rama, and I have not experienced you long ago as Krishna. I do not know whether I lived then or not. I have no remembrance at all. I do not know Your message then. I have not experienced You as Rama or Krishna. I do not know them, my Lord. But I have one prayer:

Naadu Kaajaladinka Eenadu Swami

Oh Swami! Then cannot be now; that period cannot be now. The present is present. Present is not past; I cannot re-live my past. I do not know of my past, my Lord. I am in the present. Bhagavan, I know You were there then and You are here now. The very same Swami who was there long ago as Rama, the same Swami existed in the past and lived as Krishna, I know that. I do not know what I was, or where I was; but I know You were there then, You are here now and You will be there in the future.

Neevu Naadunu Needunu Nivekqana

Then and now, you are the very same Divine personality. You are totally Divine, an *Avatar*, then and now. So Swami, my prayer is this:

Naati Praaptini Vosagi Nannelukommu

Swami, whatever You conferred then, whatever the blessings You showered then, whatever experiences You granted then, thousands and thousands of years ago to those devotees, Swami, I beg of you and I prostrate myself at Thy Lotus Feet. With folded hands I pray, Bhagavan: please bless me today and help me experience You and realise You. Help me to serve You now so I will not regret or repent for not having been born then, as You are here now. Now I can experience all the previous *Avatars*, and experience Your message and mission as well.

Baalagopaala Venugopaalabaala

Nannukavumu Deva Sri Saideva

Oh Krishna, Sai Krishna, bless me with all the experiences of Your previous incarnations. Bhagavan, we also know that You are the Truth, that You speak Truth, that You propagate Truth, that You revive human values, and that You have come down on earth for the emancipation of the entire humanity.

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL WITH YOU, BHAGAVAN

The whole society has become mechanical today. There is no harmony at home and no unity in society. Life has become goal-less like a rudder-less boat. Life has become tasteless and we just live like a vegetable—purposeless and aimless. Swami, being Your contemporaries, having been blessed to listen to Your discourses and having been privileged to see You every time, we found some meaning to our lives and some purpose for our lives. Life is beautiful with You, Bhagavan. Life is meaningful with You, Swami.

You have taught us the spirit of equality and the spirit of equanimity—how to face the challenges of life, how to lead a balanced life, how to lead a life of devotion, how to lead a life of service, how to share, how to care, how to serve. You taught us all this, Bhagavan. What a loss it would have been had I not come to You, Swami? Had You not been here in our midst today, humanity would have sustained irreparable loss. All of humanity would have been put to severe loss, beyond all estimates.

Today humanity lives in happiness and bliss in Your company, Swami. People of all religions sit at Your Lotus Feet. People of all age groups listen to Your talk. The whole world is at Your Feet, waiting for Your command: waiting and waiting for Your Divine *darshan* so that we may experience You within as we go back to our places after these celebrations.

Swami, on behalf of all your devotees, I pray to You to bless us all. In particular, I pray in all humility . . . I invoke Baba's blessings on all those who serve on saiwisdom.com

website. Today this website shares so much, supplying enormously to Sai literature while publishing in many languages. So many people are serving in this way anonymously, not expecting anything, which is the biggest service—service of the highest order.

To know You is great, to have been blessed by You is greater, and to spread Your message is the greatest of all. Therefore, this greatest service is rendered by this team of devotees from all over the world, speaking many different languages. Bhagavan, we offer all this to Your lotus feet. Meanwhile, all this literature has come out in the form of books published by Your Book and Publication Trust. I pray to You to bless everybody who is associated with this magnificent, stupendous, wonderful program of sharing Your knowledge with the whole world through this website, saiwisdom.com.

May Bhagavan be with you forever and ever!

May Bhagavan shower His choicest Blessings on all of you and your families!

Jai Sai Ram!

Thank you.

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