

The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar

*“My Life Is My Message”
Part 1*

September 18, 2011

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

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

AN URGE TO DO MORE

It feels like years and years since we last met. I apologise to you for missing some of these Sunday study circle classes in recent weeks.

With your kind permission, on a personal note (and hoping you don't misunderstand me), when I look back, I have spent about forty years living with Swami and propagating His Message. Twenty years were spent outside Prashanthi Nilayam, and twenty years were spent working right under His nose.

When Bhagavan was no longer in His physical body, somehow I developed this feeling within myself (it may be meaningful or meaningless) and started asking, 'What is my role today? What can I do? Shall I simply sit for *bhajans* and then go home? Shall I teach at the university? I do that anyway. What else can I do?' Having given four decades of my life to Swami's movement, I thought, 'This is not enough. I should do something more.'

Moreover, having been very close to the Sai organisation for twenty years, having visited so many villages over these long years, I know most of them, as well as the psychology of the devotees, the Sai movement, and the various activities of the organisation. So I felt an urge within me that I should visit a few places and try to encourage our brothers and sisters, as some are confused or doubtful, while others are totally frustrated and down in spirits. Most of them need a definite direction. So without anybody's instruction, I volunteered and was ready to leave that very moment.

It was during that time that all the twenty-three district presidents from the state of Andhra Pradesh came to me and asked me to visit as many of their districts as possible. I told them that since I am still in service in the university as an honorary professor, it might not be possible to visit all the districts. “Let us see how we can go about it,” I said. Instead of saying, “Impossible” or “Not necessary” (that not being my temperament) I said, “Let's see how to go about it.” Then I said, “Let me begin with East Godavari.”

VISIT TO EAST AND WEST GODAVARI DISTRICTS

So I went to East Godavari District in the state of Andhra Pradesh. I spent four days there and went around to some of the important places. Bhagavan visited East Godavari district twenty times! Two—zero. Twenty times! And not only that, He also visited many people's residences.

There are many people who still happily recall Swami's visit to their homes. Be it a tiled house or a hut, Swami went in. We have photographs of Swami walking on the compound or parapet walls, or of Swami standing on the roof of a house to give *darshan* to thousands in East Godavari!

Not only that, their devotion and spirit of sacrifice are so high that for all the national and international conferences held here in Prashanthi, truck-loads of rice are sent from East Godavari and thousands of *seva dals* participate. They don't claim any badge or residence, or any front row seating—nothing like that! They don't have such stupid ideologies, no. They are real devotees.

So I thought that I should visit them, and I gave about nine talks. And see what Bhagavan did: every meeting, all over East Godavari, was attended by no less than ten thousand people! At the same time, I was also able to visit some of the famous temples in that district.

When I was about to complete my visit of East Godavari, a delegation from West Godavari arrived. They said, “You cannot avoid our district! You should visit our district also!”

I answered, “Yes!”

They demanded, “We won't leave you unless you give us specific dates.”

Then I said, “Give me four or five days of breathing time, and then I'll get back to you.”

So I went to West Godavari and spent about four days there. West Godavari is a district where the Sai organisation has grown tremendously. There is no village without a Sai centre. There is no person who does not know Swami. All of them are Swami's devotees. They implement all service activities, *in toto*, exactly. I was there for four days and addressed about six gatherings, which were also very well attended.

VISIT TO BHILAI, CHATTISGARH

Then an invitation suddenly came from Bhilai in Chattisgarh. Travelling by road would take two days each way, but I cannot abscond for that long. (People notice one's absence more than one's presence!) (*Laughter*) So I am aware of my limitations and explained that to them.

They said, “Sir, no problem! You come by flight.” So I went to Bhilai and spent about a day and a half there. There were four meetings on the same day, the last of which concluded at 12:30 midnight!

The devotees were so eager; they wanted somebody to talk to them. If you go there, you will see how they are. I am not a fool to consider that my popularity brought them there. I am not an idiot to think that I am the only speaker born on earth. Not yet! Still I have some sanity. *(Laughter)*

People are anxious to hear about Swami, to know about some things. They want to be consoled, they want to be encouraged; they want somebody to help them deepen and strengthen their faith in Swami. Perhaps Swami prompted that idea within me, which made me visit all these places.

I tell you all this as an explanation for my absence for the last couple of Sunday sessions, which might have made some people think, ‘This man isn’t ever going to return!’ *(Laughter)* It’s not like that. I’m back, and we’ll have our sessions for at least a month, no problem.

UPCOMING DASARA AND GRAM SEVA

Before actually commencing the topic of the day, let me tell you that the twenty-eighth of this month is the first day or the commencement of the Dasara celebrations. *Kalasa Sthapana* marks the beginning of the ceremony, and then it is spread over the next nine days. The concluding session, called *Poornahuti*, takes place on the sixth of October.

All the students will be busy with *gram seva* (village seva) activity from September twenty-eighth till October sixth during this Dasara period. Therefore, you can inform your friends and prepare yourself for the festival.

Next week we will have a few thoughts concerning Dasara, as a kind of preparation. As a teacher, I feel that it is necessary to take up the topics that are important and relevant today. If I talk about something that has no relevance or application to the present moment, I feel myself to be outdated. So to qualify myself as a teacher—more so in honour of my four decades of service in that profession—next week we will have a few words on Dasara as a matter of preparation for the festival.

THE DIVINE DECLARATION: “MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE”

This week I have a special topic. In fact, I feel I should do a series of talks on this topic. Today is an opening talk, and we will continue this topic later. The title of this talk is: “My Life Is My Message”. We’ll have a series of talks on this topic in the weeks to come, interspersed with other topics suitable or appropriate to the occasion, such as the Dasara festival.

Long ago, a group of organisers visited Prashanthi Nilayam and had an audience with Swami. They requested Swami, “Bhagavan, we want a message from You! We are going to bring out a souvenir pamphlet.” They were *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* organisers, top people at the national level and dedicated workers.

“Give us some message to publish in our souvenir pamphlet,” they asked.

Our Baba immediately said, “My life is My message.” That’s all. “My life is My message.”

My friends, this means Swami doesn’t have to give us any special message: His life itself is His message. We hear many people quoting this statement repeatedly. This statement is not new to us. We have heard it a number of times.

Some enthusiasts go a step further and they say, “Let our life be Your message.” That’s a far distant goal. “Let my life be Your message” is not that easy. It may be desired, and after a couple of lives we may be somewhere in that vicinity! But right now, we have to think of Baba’s statement, “My life is My message.”

What do I mean by this? And what is my idea in choosing this title for this morning’s talk and more such talks to come in the future?

AN AVATAR IS A ROLE MODEL

My friends, the *Avatar* has come down on earth with a purpose: to set a model for all of us, to be a role model. The form of an *Avatar* is as temporary as anybody else’s. The body of an *Avatar* is like any of ours. An *Avatar* in human form is subject to birth, growth, and also an end, just like all of us. In the case of our physical body, however, this is due to the effects of our *karma* or past actions; so our withdrawal from the body—or the end of this life—is not in our hands.

Why is this? Because unless our *karmic* cycle is exhausted, we will not be permitted to say goodbye to this planet! It is *karma* that decides our appearance and disappearance—our birth and death—whereas in the case of an *Avatar* or incarnation, their appearance and disappearance happen as per their will. They come when they want to and they go when they decide. We have no say in the matter. Even if you ask them to stay for some more time, they don’t, because they have their own schedule or Divine will.

So in spite of the fact that many doctors—thirty-two of them, both from India and abroad—treated Swami, He had decided to go. You cannot hold Him here. He had decided to go.

Many people ask me, “Then why the illness of twenty-seven days?” That was preparation for all the devotees to meet the situation. If that long period of preparation had not been given, many more people would have found their berths in the next world, not here!

So as I understand it, even the hospitalisation is out of compassion. In other words, my friends, whatever the *Avatar* does on the physical, psychological, intellectual, or any other plane, sets a model for all of us. His life is a role model for us.

THE LIFE OF AN AVATAR IS EXEMPLARY

Therefore, when we repeat these words of Swami’s, “My Life is My message,” what does it mean? How did He act as a son? As a grandson, how did He serve? As a friend, how did He behave? As a student, how did He conduct Himself? How did He emerge as the most successful teacher? How was He as a guest or as a host?

Swami played different roles in our lives, and if we care to delve deeply into His biography, we will see how ideal He has always been. How sublime our lives would be if we followed His path!

His life is a message for everybody. It is a message for all times. It is a guideline for everyone to emulate and follow—similar to the life of Sri Ramachandra, or the gospel of Sri Krishna, or the life of Jesus Christ, Guru Gobind Singh, Buddha, or Mahaveera. Their lives carry a message for everyone to follow and adopt. They are all role models.

Therefore, I am collecting material from different sources so that the events of Swami's life will be beneficial to all of us. My life is useless for you, and your life is equally useless to me. Both of our lives are worthless to others! (*Laughter*) In contrast, the life of an *Avatar* is useful to everybody. This is why I am collecting material, so that we get charged and inspired by His life story.

Think of your parents or your forefathers who are no more with us. A gentleman once came and said to me, "Do you know how my father was?" Why should I want to know about his father? That gentleman, however, wanted to tell me.

So I said, "Oh! Tell me about him."

"He was a man of truth!"

"*Aha...* Good!"

"He was a man of principle."

"Okay."

"Do you know how good my mother is?" I, too, have a mother. So why should I want to know about your mother? (*Laughter*) But he wanted to tell me about her too.

"My mother takes meticulous care."

"*Aha...* I see!"

"My mother is loved by everyone in the neighbourhood."

"*Aha...* Very good!"

We get inspired by thinking of our parents and forefathers and the lives that they led, the popularity they enjoyed, and the principles they followed. The discipline they had will continue to inspire us. Fathers' Day and Mothers' Day are occasions in remembrance of gratitude to our parents, to draw inspiration from their lives.

When human lives are so sublime and ideal, how about the life of an *Avatar*? The life of an *Avatar* is exemplary, ideal, and most practical and perfect for everybody to emulate and follow.

So that's why I have chosen this topic, even though "My life is My message" is a quotation known to everyone.

This is not going to be merely a quotation. This is an inquiry into the 'why' and 'how'. Why do we say His life is His message? How does it benefit us? How does it elevate our lives? How does it improve the quality of our lives? With those ideas in mind, we'll make a deep study of the subject.

SWAMI ALWAYS GIVES AND NEVER TAKES

Every *Avatar* has an agenda. No *Avatar* comes without a purpose. Baba has said, "I have three important points." These are three glorious declarations, three glorious affirmations. What are they?

Number one: this *Avatar* gives and gives, He never takes. This *Avatar* never takes, He never receives. He just keeps giving and giving.

M.S. Subbulakshmi was an internationally-known singer. None can ever equal her. We can say she is the singer of the century of *Carnatic* music. A great lady! When Swami materialised a chain for her, she said, "Swami, everyone expects me to raise funds for their institutions. I have not met anyone who has given me anything like this!"

Swami said to her, "I am the only one who gives and never takes!"

So this is Baba's first declaration, which we should learn from Him. We, too, should try to give and give, and see that we take less and less.

Living in a community, we are interdependent and cannot totally avoid receiving. But it is enough if we are not parasites; it is enough if we don't go on begging from everybody. Let us try to give, and let us share whatever little we have. This is the first principle of Baba, which we should cultivate over time.

SWAMI NEVER GOES BACK ON A PROMISE

The second declaration of Baba is, "Once I give a promise, I never go back."

Once Swami remarked to a student, "*Arre...* If you promise Me, I will see that you'll get first class in the examination." The boy said that he was ready to promise Swami.

"*Arre* boys, you promise, but then you miss your promise tomorrow," said Swami. "I don't miss My promises. When I give a promise, I see that it is fulfilled." This is the second declaration of Baba that we should remember.

We need to introspect and see to what extent we copy Him here. We make many promises but we do not keep them. Politicians are known for the promises they make on the platform. At the end of the meeting, if we say, "Oh honourable sir, you made such-and-such a promise," he might say, "Did I say that?" (*Laughter*) Or, "I didn't mean that!" Or, "The media misrepresented it!" (*Laughter*)

God is not like that. Once He says 'yes', He will abide by that. His declaration and action happen simultaneously. If Swami says, "I will construct a *mandir* in your village," immediately the work starts! It is not a five-year plan or a ten-year plan, or a next lifetime plan. It's not like that.

Declaration and action should take place simultaneously. Swami Himself gave an example: if you shoot a revolver, the sound is heard at the same time as the bullet is released. You don't hear the sound today and wait for the bullet to be released tomorrow. Both occur at the same time. This is the most repeated example of Bhagavan Baba's actions.

Therefore, we also have to understand that once we make a promise, we should live up to it. We should never go back on it. We should never say, "I didn't mean that!"

THERE IS NO QUESTION OF RETREAT FOR SWAMI

Baba's declaration, "My life is My message" is not a simple statement, as many people think. No, no! It's not a simple statement. There are many things that come under this subject.

The third point Swami said is this: "Once I start doing something, there is no question of retreat. There's no question of going back. It's forward, onward! Never backward! I don't go back. Once I start, that's it."

Once He said, "Next year there will be a hospital here." Though there was no bank account for that project, still the hospital was built and running within one year!

Then He said, "Next year, seven hundred villages will receive water." Yes! Once He says it, He starts doing it. Once the work starts, He never goes back. Why? He's so determined.

At one time He said, "If the funds are not available for the water project, I will even auction Prashanthi Nilayam! I would mortgage it." This means that once work is started, there is no question of going backward. Simply, it should be accomplished. There should be total completion, with no postponement. This is a lesson to all of us.

On the other hand, what do we do? We say, "I should not be angry from tomorrow." (*Laughter*) And then within one hour, we are even angrier than ever before! We decide not to hurt anybody or we decide to respect the feelings of others, with full consideration that your feeling is as important as my feeling. But after half an hour, we again become domineering, and the dirty ego raises its head. Though we want to proceed in our *sadhana*, that day has not yet arrived.

I am not talking about other people! Let me give my own example. I feel that, at least on Thursday night, I should fast, by skipping dinner. But what happens? Usually I eat dinner at eight o'clock. But the day I decide to fast, I am already feeling very hungry at six o'clock! (*Laughter*) In advance! And by seven o'clock, there is this nice smell coming from the kitchen! (*Laughter*) So I postpone the fasting till the next week. (*Laughter*) And that week has not arrived yet! (*Laughter*) Years have gone by, but 'next week' has not yet come!

That's how our *sadhana* is. But Bhagavan says that once He starts, there is no question of going back. Only forward, forward! Onward, onward! No question of going backward, no retreat.

These three vows or declarations that He made are very much worth emulating. To repeat, the three vows are: first, giving and not taking; second, keeping one's word or promise; and third, going forward until the goal is reached, which means not going back, postponing, cancelling or putting a full stop on something previously determined. This is the first important consideration about Swami's declaration, "My life is My message."

As I said earlier, for forty years I have observed Swami—twenty years in close quarters and twenty years in the organisation. So these points I'm telling you here are not based on statements collected from books, nor are they hypothetical conjectures, hallucinations, imaginations, or mere interpretations.

BE ACTIVE: TRANSFORM ALL ACTIVITY INTO SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

Next major observation: if you watch Swami prior to 2003 (after 2003 it was a different story), He was very active, very alert. Yes! We never saw Him sitting relaxed. We never saw Him wasting His time. We never saw Him gossiping. We never saw Him sitting alone or eating alone. He was always in the company of others. Always! He was always teaching something or the other, always helping somebody, always thinking of various welfare projects. Ever active!

Very interestingly, in those days He used to give *darshan* at 6:15 am or 6:30 am. At 6:30 am He was highly energetic and very fresh. Evening *bhajans* in those days were between 6pm and 7pm. Even at the end of *bhajans*, He was as fresh as in the morning! So Baba at 6 am was just as fresh as Baba at 7 pm! He was always very fresh and very active. But we fellows say, "Because He is God, He is like that." No, the *Avatar* doesn't say that. He wants us to be active, as active as Himself.

Some of us are active, super-active sometimes, inactive or passive later, or active under certain conditions—conditional activity! I am active provided you are inactive! (*Laughter*) Activity is an inborn, latent, immanent, Divine quality within all of us. You cannot be active because of some external agency, because of some external influence. You can be active all by yourself.

Somebody asked Swami, "Swami, it's amazing and very surprising to see You smiling, very active and dynamic throughout the day! Why are You like that? Why?" (If He were inactive, we would ask, "Why are You inactive?") But He was active so we asked, "Why are You active?" We don't spare anybody, be He God or our friend! (*Laughter*)

Then He said, "You know why I am active? So that *you* may be active! And secondly, so you will turn to God, because all activity ends or transforms into spiritual activity."

TURNING GODWARD

After some time, every activity takes on a different dimension altogether. A simple example: many people, when employed, are very busy with their jobs, salaries, bank accounts, interest rates, gold rates, plots, sites, flats and properties—and also busy changing their will every day! (*Laughter*) Or they are very busy changing their cars. After retirement, after the age of sixty or sixty-five, they realise that their activity needs a total change—a paradigm shift!

The kind of struggle they have gone through until now cannot continue. It is useless. My friends, no son ever said, "My father has given me enough money." Every son will say that some other

man has given more money to his son, even while we have given our life for them, and continue to struggle till the last breath. This is not life!

True life begins after retirement. As long as we have jobs, life is mechanical. While in service, our life is for the family, for bread-winning and maintenance, and to settle the children. Real life starts after retirement. We live for ourselves after retirement. We cannot live any more for others in the family.

Even if you wanted to live for them, they would say, “We don’t want you, understand? All your ideas are outdated, plus; your style of living is different from modern life. Our tastes are different from your tastes; our generation is different from your generation. It is better for you to maintain your self-respect by keeping quiet! (*Laughter*) If you cannot, there are many homes for the aged.” (*Laughter*) Nobody wants you then!

So we should live for ourselves after retirement by following the spiritual life, turning all our energy and activity towards spiritual life. Just as when you are going to New York, and you take one flight as far as Frankfurt, and then a totally different flight from Frankfurt to New York, we have to change from the material flight to the spiritual flight. Therefore, Baba’s activity, Baba’s dynamism, Baba’s enthusiasm is to make us turn to God, to the spiritual dimension.

“I am the role model,” Baba said. How can He say this? All His activity is for everybody else, nothing for Himself! In spite of all His activity, He sits during *bhajan* sessions morning and evening, after giving instructions to people on how to run the administration and giving spiritual messages to individuals in group interviews. That is His style of life.

The real style of life consists in spiritualising our lifestyle. Spiritualising is somewhat like adding colour to water—be it red or green or blue. So let us make our life colourful by making it spiritual, by thinking of others, by helping others, by making others happy, by thinking of God, and by thinking of moments of eternity. That’s the second observation I have remarked about Swami.

FEEDBACK IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

These are all very interesting things. I don’t know about you, but I felt so happy collecting the information supporting this talk, “My Life Is My Message”.

Believe me when I tell you that at the end of His talk on Dasara or on His Birthday, for example, Swami would ask me, “How did you like the talk? Did you like My talk? How was it? Was Swami’s talk nice?”

Swami asked for my comment about His talk! *Hari Om!* (*Laughter*) Shall I say, “Not satisfactory”? (*Laughter*) Shall I say, “It’s very nice”? Who am I to say ‘very nice’? What guts do I have to say ‘not nice’?

Then I would say, “Swami, wonderful, very nice!”

But Swami won’t keep quiet there. “What were the points you liked?” (*Laughter*) Swami has X-ray eyes, not external eyes—X-ray eyes! “What are the points?” He would ask.

I knew I would get such a question, (*Laughter*) so I was prepared with certain points. “Swami, these points are excellent!” Then He would give a second lecture, explaining every point again. So, there was one hour talk outside, followed by half an hour session inside, highlighting these points!

What does this mean? It means that people should care for the opinion of others. You may think you are a good speaker, but how do others like your talk? You may think your talk is too high, but others may feel it is too low. You may think it is grand, but others may think it is too fundamental. You may think it is too complex, but others may say, “We don’t want that!” You should care for others’ opinions and learn how they receive what you say. In other words, feedback is absolutely necessary. We should learn that from Swami.

SWAMI, THE VISWAPATHI

When Srinivasa Guest House, near the Ganesha gate, was inaugurated, Swami took me there personally and showed me around. “How do you like the building?” He asked.

Should I say, “Very nice”? All buildings are nice, so what is exceptional here? I cannot say, “It’s good.” Then He will ask if the other buildings are not good! Swami will put you in such a position.

So I said, “The house of *Rashtrapathi* (the President of India) is really wonderful and magnificent, but You being *Viswapathi* (President of *Viswa* or the universe) deserve this sort of wonderful, excellent building, Swami! You are *Viswapathi*, President of *Viswa*, or Lord of the universe! When *Rashtrapathi* has such a good building, *Viswapathi* should have a better building like this one. This really deserves You, Swami!”

He was so happy that He took me down and told everybody, “You know what this man’s comment is? (*Laughter*) This is *Viswapathi*’s building! And he says it’s better than *Rashtrapathi* building!” He liked that.

This means we cannot be indifferent to others’ opinions. I tell my boys in the class also, “*Arre*, if you sleep, what difference does it make whether I teach or not?” Our students are really great—they are saints: without any effort they can go into *samadhi* immediately, within no time! (*Laughter*)

The point is that we need to learn from Swami. When you care for others’ opinions, when you want to know how others are receiving you, or how you are accepted, it means you are humble and simple. Caring for others’ opinions is an expression of simplicity and humility. In fact, Baba doesn’t have to ask. He’s so simple, so humble and egoless.

On the other hand, if it is suggested that we ask the students how they are following what we teach, some of us teachers will say, “Why should I ask? If they have a high enough standard, they will follow me! If they have no standard, then they cannot follow.” That is the height of ego! So to declare that you are great yourself is the height of ego! It will take some lives to come out of it.

Baba is the best example of egoless-ness. He'll ask you, "How do you like it?" "Do you like it?" Then if you like it, He'll ask, "Why?" Even at dinner He will ask, "How do you like it?" "Do you like this sweet? Is it good?"

"Very good!"

"Arre boy, serve him some more!" (*Laughter*)

He will never say, "These are the items left for you. See you tomorrow!" He won't say that. We must learn this humility and simplicity from Him.

My friends, the statements I am telling you are declarations of Baba. Please don't think they are the conclusions of Anil Kumar. Don't make that mistake! These are not my conclusions—I am not that big a fool yet! These are His Divine declarations. I have all the references with me.

"ALL BELONG TO ME AND I BELONG TO ALL"

Another point is this: He doesn't observe any difference between people, like 'His own' and 'others'. He will never say, "These are my people and those people are different from Me." These people--those people, my people--your people, this kind of distinction does not exist for Baba.

A simple example: some fool once said, "Swami, Your hospital is very nice!"

Baba said, "What! 'My' hospital and 'your' hospital? Where have you learnt this? This is *our* college, *our* hospital, *our* Mandir! Don't say 'Your' college! Don't say that!"

Swami has no distinction of 'mine' and 'thine'. Everything belongs to everybody. That's another thing we have to learn from Him.

Sometimes we say, "These are my family members, let me talk to them." Or we may say, "I've got my staff. I should talk to them." But Baba has no secrecy. He said, "All belong to Me and I belong to all." There is no question of some people belonging to Him and not others.

Then there are people who say, "I am close to Swami."

Please take this as a correct statement, based on my forty years of close observation. If anyone says, "I am close to Swami," take him to be a madcap! It is total madness! Nobody can be close to Him and nobody can be distant from Him.

You cannot say, "Sir, I am sitting in the fiftieth row, so I am away from Swami; but you are close to Swami." You may be sitting close, in the first row, but your mind may be at the market place; whereas the fellow in the last row is thinking of Swami only. Therefore, never believe anyone who says, "I'm close to Swami!" because it's not true. And never pity anyone who says, "I am distant from Him." No, no, no!

So, you cannot be distant, nor can you be near. The feeling depends upon your awareness. If you feel, "I am close to Him," yes, you are! If you feel, "I have nothing to do with Him," there you

are! It's all based upon your psychology, your feelings, and your attitude. But Swami is Swami. That's what He said.

"LOVE IS MY ENERGY"

Another point is this: we think Swami has Divine power, Divine energy. Someone asked, "Swami, is this all Divine power? Is this all Divine energy?" (We like to take a convenient position: "You are Divine so You go Your way, while I am human so this is my way." This is an escapist philosophy, a philosophy of convenience.)

Do you know what Baba has said in this regard? When someone asked, "Swami, is this all Divine energy?" Baba said, "No! It is not acquired; it is nothing spiritual or Divine. It is natural. This energy is natural."

"If it's natural, why is it that I'm not as energetic as You are?" If it's natural, we should also be energetic, yet we are not. We are not as energetic as Baba. Why?

When we go to Kodaikanal or certain places like that, Swami will not eat even a spoonful of rice or anything else. He is on an empty stomach and yet so very active, whereas we fellows take repeated doses! Our tank (stomach) is always full, but we are still weak. In contrast, He doesn't take anything and is so energetic. Why?

He gave this answer: "I am so energetic because of My love. Love is My energy. I love everybody. I have nothing of My own. I am not selfish, therefore I am always energetic."

So those of us who always complain of weakness should understand that it is our own weakness due to selfishness; it is the weakness of self-centeredness. But if we have that love, we will naturally be as energetic as Baba.

PRIDE AND EGO ARE THE TWO REASONS FOR DOUBT

Then somebody said, "Swami, sometimes we doubt Your statements." Though we say 'sometimes', we doubt most of the times (*Laughter*) because doubt is in our personality. If anyone says, "I have no doubt!" beware of him, because he is full of doubts! We are human beings, so we have doubts. "Swami, what is the origin of doubt?"

Baba gave this answer. There are two reasons why we entertain doubts: one is pride and the other is ego. Pride and ego—these two are different. Ego is body identification, while pride is a spirit of superiority. It is a complex, a feeling that 'I am superior to you'; 'I am more than you'. It is utter nonsense! Then, it is not enough that you say you are superior to me; you also want others to know it! But some people can't wait that long, so they declare, "I am superior to everybody." *Hari Om!*

My friends, the point is that ego and pride are the two reasons responsible for the presence of doubt in our lives. Once these two are gone, the Divine teachings will be absorbed without any hesitation.

LEARN PATIENCE FROM SWAMI

“My life is My message,” Baba says.

Once someone asked, “Swami, what is it that I can learn from You right now? I have seen You, Bhagavan. What is it I can learn from You right now? Not after six months’ training or one month’s intensive training! *Adhella mudiyadhu!*” (“All that is not possible!”)

Baba said, “What you have to learn from Me right now is patience. Patience!”

“Oh Swami... Patience?”

“Yes!”

“How?”

“Observe Me. My life is My message. I talk to people, I direct people, I read letters, and I listen to your problems and then give solutions. I meet thousands and thousands of people every day. But I never lose my patience.”

Whereas if a student asks, “Sir, I have a doubt” . . . the teacher answers, “Meet me tomorrow at ten o’clock!” (cleverly arranging a time when he will not be available!) (*Laughter*)

Swami will never say, “Meet Me later.” No, now itself! “See My patience, because I do so many things every day, yet I have time for everybody. You can learn this patience right now.”

IT IS STRANGE THAT WE HAVE NOT CHANGED

Bhagavan, as I look at You, as I watch You, there is something that seems rather funny, mysterious, and inexplicable. It is very strange and peculiar. What is it that is strange?

My friends, you must have understood by now: I have collected all Divine declarations appropriate to this topic, “My Life Is My Message” and I have put these points in a question and answer format, so that we can apply it in our individual lives. This is my teaching technique.

Now back to the point: “What is it that is strange here? What is peculiar here?” Let us look into it. There are some people who are egoistic and proud. When you we ask them, “How long have you been here?” they may say they’ve been here for ten or twenty years, and yet there seems to have been no change at all. Only the calendar has changed. (*Laughter*) That won’t do!

Some others will feel surprised, “How come this fellow seems to be worse than a stone?” If you sit on the same stone every day, it gets polished at least! But this fellow is worse than a stone! (*Laughter*)

Now, Baba says this, “What is it that is peculiar? What is it that is strange? You see Me every day, you listen to My talks, you have been here for a long time and our association is long enough. What is peculiar and strange is that you have not changed! You have not changed. You continue to be same.”

Though Baba is in our midst, though He talks to us, sings, dines, and moves in our midst, still we continue to be same. This is peculiar and strange—it is peculiar even to Him, so what about to you and me? If it doesn't seem peculiar, it is because it is a part of the game we are playing, remaining what we are throughout our lives.

In Kodaikanal, Swami gives so much liberty that you can joke with Him. Once in a jovial mood, He said, "Anil Kumar, all seem to be serious. Come on, you say something."

Then I said, "Swami, in the competition between God and man, man has won and God has lost!"

Immediately He said, "What happened to you? (*Laughter*) Are you crazy?" All the boys started laughing.

Then I explained, "God has taken *Dasavatars*, ten *Avatars* or Divine Incarnations. Why? The first incarnation failed to change me (*Laughter*), so the second incarnation had to come. The second incarnation failed to change me, so the third incarnation came. Ten incarnations could not change me! Shirdi Sai could not change me, Sathya Sai is attempting... Let us hope Prema Sai may succeed!" (*Laughter*)

"God has been failing the March and September exams! He never got through the examination because He could not change me. So man is victorious over God's defeat!" I dared to say. (*Laughter*)

Swami was laughing and laughing. He was laughing so hard He could have fallen out of His chair! (*Laughter*)

He said, "You are correct! You fellows are like that!" (*Laughter*)

Then I said, "Swami, at the same time, we are not unhappy. Though we have not changed, we are not unhappy. We don't take it as an insult that we have not changed. We even take the credit."

"*Yemi* (What) credit? You fail and you take the credit?" asks Baba.

"Yes, Swami! We fail and we take the credit. The reason is so that we give You the chance to come again! (*Laughter*) If I am transformed, if I am one with God, if I realise that I am God—that You and I are Divine, that You and I are one—where is the chance for You to come back? (*Laughter*) So I am also quite considerate towards You!" (*Laughter*) Therefore, we give that chance to God to come back again.

So this is the peculiarity: that we remain as we have been in spite of a long period of association and in spite of listening to so many discourses. We make claims of seniority, but in reality there is no individual transformation.

BLISS IS MY ENERGY

There was a devotee in those days named Dr. Bhagvantham, a well-known scientist of international reputation, a physicist. He was Advisor to the Defence Council of India. He was the

former Vice-Chancellor of Andhra and Osmania Universities. Oh, he was a great man, a very great man! He was a scientist and so he observed Swami. He used to stay in Poornachandra Auditorium, next to Swami's room. He was a scholar in English, Telugu, and Sanskrit! He observed Swami every day and joined Him at the dining table throughout the year.

Once Dr. Bhagvantham asked Swami, "For this small amount of food You eat, You may get only one or two hundred calories of energy; but for the work You do, You should have twelve hundred calories of energy or even more! The food that You eat gives You just a few calories of energy. For the work You do, You need more energy, more calories, but You are not taking them. How are You able to manage?"

Let us try this one afternoon: try to eat only one spoonful. By *darshan* time, let us look in the mirror. (*Laughter*) We won't feel like looking into the mirror! (*Laughter*) How was Baba so active and energetic though He ate so little? That was the question put to Him by the scientist.

You know what He said? "When you don't have energy, the doctors ask you to take vitamins such as B-complex, or they ask you to take more protein. The only vitamins and protein I have are happiness and bliss. My happiness is the protein. My bliss is the multi-vitamin tablet."

YOUR HAPPINESS IS MY FOOD

So, why am I not blissful? You say You are happy, and that is the secret. But why am I not like that?

Baba said, "Seeing you happy, I am happy. Making you happy, I am happy. Your happiness is My food. Therefore, I don't need any multi-vitamin tablets or protein."

This is important. We see many people who go on dumping food, and thereby increasing their dimensions! (*Laughter*) It is only more work for the weighing machine: the needle of the weighing machine keeps moving, and it doesn't stop. But the face! *Appa!* You feel like avoiding that face. We don't feel like meeting some people because they don't know how to smile. Poor fellows!

Some animals are better than them. Chimpanzees smile. Really! I run away from the fellows who don't smile. Why? Our life is already miserable, so why make it more miserable? (*Laughter*) To be happy, avoid such company. I avoid egoistic fellows. I avoid people with pride. And most importantly, I avoid serious people. Let them find a place in the hospital, not with me! (*Laughter*)

Baba is happy, but we are not happy. Why? Baba gave this reply. "I am ever happy because I make you happy. By making you happy, I am happy." On the other hand, we are happy by making others miserable! (*Laughter*)

How can you be happy with all the food, all the money, and all the position? Impossible! So, "*Nee anandame naa aahaaram!*" ("Your happiness is My food!") declared Bhagavan. "I don't need any proteins or vitamins."

I TAKE THE SUFFERING TO CREATE FAITH AND DEVOTION IN YOU

Then there is another doubt: “Swami, sometimes we feel that You are sick. We hear that there is no *darshan* because You had some pain, or some problems. When You are curing and giving relief to everybody, why should You still suffer?”

For example, if I am giving money to everybody, I cannot be poor. Unless I am rich, I cannot donate, right? So when Swami is giving relief to everybody, why should He suffer?

He gave the answer, “I take upon Myself the suffering and the pain of My devotees in order to create faith in them—in order to create faith in God—so that they can step into the kingdom of devotion, *bhakti samrajya*,” says Baba.

Ask anybody. Some will say, “You know, last year I had an accident.”

“Oh.”

“Swami saved me!” That accident brought him to Swami.

Then another fellow will say, “You know so-and-so in my family was on his deathbed. Swami saved him! Therefore I am here.”

All these experiences are given to us only to create faith in God and to take us to the kingdom of devotion, *bhakti samrajya*. Thus Baba said, “I tolerate and bear all the pain and suffering to create faith in you, so that you will step into that kingdom of devotion.”

WHO ARE THE BLESSED SOULS?

For our final point, we ask, “Swami, who are the blessed people? Who are the liberated souls? Who are the fellows who will have their place in the kingdom of heaven? Who are the people who have their places reserved in paradise? Who are those lucky people?”

He gave this answer: “Those people who experience My Divinity while I am in form, while I am in this body, those who experience My Divinity and enjoy *darshan*, experience *sparshan* (touch) and listen to *sambashan* (conversation) with that spiritual feeling, they are the liberated souls.”

Once I talked to an elderly man, “Sir, I saw you talking to Swami.”

He said, “I talk to Him every day,” which means he is like a machine. If he says, “Swami talks to me every day,” it is better you avoid him, because it has become mechanical!

My friends, when everything becomes a routine, we lose interest in life. Nothing should become a routine; nothing should be repetitive. Everything should be novel, fresh, and unique! Where there is something new, there we have life. Life is vital, life is ever-new. It is not the boredom of monotony or repetition.

Baba said, “Those devotees who enjoy My *darshan*, *sparshan*, and *sambashan* with a spiritual feeling, who experience Divinity while I am in form—they are the liberated souls, their lives are redeemed and fulfilled.” That’s what Swami declared.

That's all for this morning! We'll meet next week, same place and same time.

Thank you! Sai Ram! (*Applause*)

Om . . . Om . . . Om
Asato Maa Sadgamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotirgamaya
Mrityormaa Amritamgamaya

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

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

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

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