

# Part 03 | Experiences with Swami | Prof K Anil Kumar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dvth-wRYNgQ>

We can't tell these, how can we tell Him? He said, "You come." I immediately said, "I'll come, Swami."

I still had some fear inside. I wanted to escape, but He asked, and I could not say 'No.'

"We will go from here to Hyderabad. You too come with me. We already reserved the ticket. Come."

"But Anil Kumar...," He said. I thought there was a wrench being thrown here.

Ramabrahmam garu came there. "Did you see Ramabrahmam? I asked him to come after becoming a college Principal and he jumped here."

"Anil Kumar will come," said Swami.

If I remember the years I spent with Swami in this life, I remember the Dasara, Birthday, and Shivaratri celebrations in this sacred land.

The ones I've seen in this sacred land. I've heard the greatest scholars orate during Dasara celebrations.

Not ordinary people. There is a Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry garu, who has the four Vedas on his tongue.

Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastry garu, Uppuluri Ganapathi Sastry garu, who are great Vedantins and great Pundits.

Every evening Swami would ask a Pundit to speak, then there would be Swami's discourse.

I told you they were great scholars, not ordinary people. Sribhashyam Appalachari garu, wow, not an ordinary person.

I don't think we can even write his name without a spelling error. That's how they were.

They were the sort who received grand awards and honours. I will tell you about some gems.

Sribhashyam Appalachari garu was a great man. He is someone who gained fame and reputation in the Godavari districts.

A prominent person. An eminent Vedic scholar. Sribhashyam Appalachari garu. He came to Swami during Dasara of 1972.

I sat and watched. It all seemed strange to me. I still feel that way. Everything is a new experience.

Nothing feels old. Everything is always ever new. He got on the stage and said one thing.

It is still ringing in my ears. What did he say? "You call Him Sathya Sai." Swami was seated right there.

"He is not Sathya Sai. I'm telling you - He is Sathya Sai." He used a different spelling. "Why is He Sathya Sai?"

"Because He is One who reclines on the truth, He is Sathya Sai," he said.

I really liked the inner meaning of Swami as One who reclines on the truth, as described by Sribhashyam Appalachari garu.

Deepala Pichchayya Sastry garu was a great Pundit from Nellore. He was short, he was a humorist, he was a great speaker.

He was short, so Swami always said, "Sastry, are you taller or am I taller?"

He would say, "No Swami, You are taller." Swami would say, "I look taller because of My hair. I'm actually shorter than you."

He used to be that close with Pichchayya Sastry garu. But Swami would mind even the smallest mistakes.

However much He loves, He also scolds that much. Everyone knew Deepala Pichchayya Sastry garu.

When his summer courses were conducted in Bengaluru, there were more than a thousand students who attended them.

Many great, great Pundits like LK Jha and Nani Phalkiwala would also participate. People like us are nothing.

We are nobody in front of them. They were great scholars who gained fame in the country.

He asked Pichchayya Sastry garu to come on the 17th or so. By mistake, he arrived on the 18th or 19th.

He was late by a day. As he was entering Brindavan in Bengaluru, all the VIPs were standing in a row.

The Brindavan gardens were there. Lord Sai was in the building, and He was slowly, slowly climbing down the stairs.

He had a slight smile on His face. He came forward and said, "Hello, Pichchayya Sastry, when did you come?"

"Swami, I came just now," he said. "Is that so? Very happy. You are in Brahmananda (divine bliss), isn't it?" He said.

None of us understood. His face shrank. Will one who is in divine bliss have a frown on his face?

I wondered what was going on here. Later Swami said, "Look Pichchayya Sastry, would the President's chauffeur be a taxi driver?"

"Would he be a taxi driver in a bus stand, if he was driving the President's car? You must learn this. You are a Pundit, what can I do?"

He slowly came walking to me and said, "He was supposed to come two days ago." Kasu Brahmananda Reddy was the chief minister then.

"He came late because he wanted to attend a meeting to honour him." That is why He said Brahmananda, divine bliss.

That is Brahmanandam, divine bliss. What should we learn from this? This is for me, I don't relate it to everyone.

With this mouth that has praised Baba's fame and glory, I cannot praise anyone else.

It does not even come out of my mouth. What can I do? You may call it my strength, or my weakness.

After praising Swami, I cannot do it to anyone else with this mouth, that's it. I don't have the craving to be invited all over the world, or to attend all those meetings.

Sai mission, that's all. Just like "I will herald the virtues of the son of Dasharatha," my intention is only to herald the essence of Sai.

Nothing else. In this way, I have seen many great Pundits. Sistla Chandramouli Sastry garu was from Nandigama, Krishna district.

He is an elderly man, who walks with a cane. Swami is the embodiment of grace. You all might have seen the Poornachandra Auditorium.

There are steps there. Swami came down the stairs, held his hand, helped him climb the steps, had a chair put on the stage, set the chair next to His chair, made him sit, and asked him to speak. Where is Swami, and where are we?

What simplicity! Swami says in His discourses, "Lord Krishna became a mere driver of Arjuna's chariot."

"The driver is not greater than the owner. In terms of position, Arjuna has the higher position, not Krishna."

"But Krishna became a charioteer. What does this mean? God does not have highs and lows."

The one who is in the higher position is Him, the one who is in the lower position is also Him, they are both Him.

He is beyond duality, pervading the cosmos. Why? Because He is the embodiment of wisdom.

He is wisdom. That is why He does not have these differences. Swami came down and helped him climb the steps.

He made Sistla Chandramouli Sastry garu sit next to His chair. He is an elderly man and wore a silk Dhoti.

A red silk Dhoti, I remember. There was a fan below. Because of the breeze from the fan, his Dhoti was flapping like a flag.

The Dhoti style of Andhriles can be tricky. Their calves can be seen in the Andhra Dhoti style.

The Marwadi Dhoti style is very different, wrapping the legs. He had worn his Dhoti in the Andhra style.

There were 30,000 people watching. The breeze was blowing and his Dhoti was flapping, and his legs were showing.

Swami was watching. His Dhoti would flap and Swami would adjust it. It would flap again and He would adjust it again.

Throughout the lecture. That is Bhagawan. We would never see Him making fun or mockery of this situation.

That is His character. When Swami is honouring all these people, He is respecting Himself.

Because He is the true form of Goddess Saraswati, He is respecting the Goddess Saraswati in you.

He is respecting Himself. I remember well, Chandramouli Sastry garu describing this.

Burra Subramanya Sastry garu could be called as the grandfather of Harikathas in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

After Adibhatla Narayana Raju, he is the greatest one. How he sings! Swami would sit and watch.

He made him sing Hari Kathas twice. He also figured it out, and sang it from an Advaita Vedantic standpoint.

How did he sing it from an Advaitic standpoint? He started telling the story of Sati Sakkubai, and he said,

"Sakkubai became such a devotee," he said on stage, while Swami was seated there, "that she saw the form of Krishna everywhere."

"She had Darshan of the form of Vishnu everywhere. She had Darshan of God everywhere."

"Everyone around her were forms of God. Even when her mother-in-law asked her to grind the flour,"

"Not a little, but a whole sackful. By morning, it was all done. Sati Sakkubai just sat there and by morning the flour was ground."

"Lord Krishna ground the flour Himself. Why? Because the grinding stone was Krishna, the flour was Krishna, and the person grinding it was Krishna."

"This devotee is also a form of Krishna. The Brahman that is in every being is one," he explained in terms of Advaita.

Swami was very happy, and He immediately waved His hand and said, "Take it." Swami is always charmed when someone explains something in a new, and Advaitic way.

But I should also tell you about another incident in this context. There are some Pundits who are dogmatic.

They don't know the ways of Swami. He called one person in the afternoon and asked him to speak.

He began describing Krishna's play of divine love. He was describing them very ecstatically.

Rasalilas comprise of Lord Krishna's postures when accompanied by the Gopikas.

As he was a Pundit, he added an extra dose of romance. Swami was seated there. No one knows. There were 30,000 people.

He sat there and did this. What is that? A signal to the people at the back to cut the mic.

They cut his mic because He does not like these descriptions of romance.

"Very good, Bangaru, the time is up. Swami's discourse is over, very good," and He made him sit down.

There is this, and there is that. Divakarula Venkatavadhani garu, Kalluri Veerabhadra Rao garu, such elite Pundits came to Him!

They are not ordinary people. They are great men, wow! All such Pundits would speak in front of Swami.

Sometimes there were speeches in English. And necessarily, there were speeches in Telugu.

All the Dasara celebrations in Swami's presence happened under the direction of Kuppa Sivarama Bairagi Sastry garu.

After Bairagi Sastry garu, the next person to come in for Dasara celebrations was Pydimarri Venkateswarulu garu.

Bairagi Sastry garu was a resident of Tenali. He was short, and he used to hop around the stage, as he was making arrangements for the Yajna.

He was a great man, and Swami was very fond of him. He was a great Pundit in the sciences of Jyotish, Vaastu and Vedam.

For every Dasara, Swami would have him give the first speech. But because he was such a great Pundit, we could not understand him well.

He would speak about the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads, the Gita, but we did not have that kind of knowledge.

But we would listen. We must pray to the Goddess Saraswati in him. He would speak very well.

Swami would speak next. During one Dasara, because Bairagi Sastry garu was from Tenali, we were travelling in the same train.

The train stopped in Dharmavaram. Dharmavaram is famous for breakfast items, both then and now.

When the train stopped everyone got down and had Idlis, Vadas and coffees. Bairagi Sastry garu and his wife were sitting next to each other on the platform. All the people crowded around him. He was the chief priest in Prasanthi Nilayam during Dasara.

Because he was there, everyone came to have his Darshan. Everyone gathered around. The women didn't stop there.

Swami materialises a golden necklace on the Purnahuti day of Dasara for the wife of the chief priest.

He materialises this necklace for the wife of the chief priest among the priests. So He materialised it for his wife that year.

He would give them every year, and He gave it that year too. All the women started tugging at the necklace.

Their devotion is such that they wanted to see it. They fell on her to take Namaskaram.

The men too went over. I was standing in a corner. What would he think if I didn't go? He would think that this sour-faced man was crying over here.

He might think, "Is he jealous? Or does he not care about me?" I thought and went over.

I went straight to him and asked, "I heard that Swami gave a necklace to grandmother?"

He said, "Yes, that's why they all came to see it." And then he asked, "Anil Kumar, can I say something to you?"

A great word from a great man, "This body itself goes, would the rings from Him remain? Would the necklaces from Him remain?"

"We do not know when this body will go. Why should we display these?" he said.

I thought, "Sir, why are you talking in this way? I shall give you a slipper so you can slap my face."

That was the kind of man Bairagi Sastry garu was. But I didn't stop. I said, "This body is not permanent."

"Swami gave gifts for this body. Why do you think He gave them? Does He not know that it is impermanent?"

"Why did He give them?" I asked. This was his response, "It is a sign of His love and grace, not because it is permanent."

"He is showing His love in this form." That was a great message that I remember well.

In the Poornachandra Auditorium, there was another person who was a great speaker and a great man.

Who was he? Sri Rama Sharan, whose given name was Kundurti Venkatanarsayya garu. He has an Ashram in Buddam, near Bapatla.

He was a great, great man, an author of more than a hundred books. He was one who had the grace of Lord Rama on him.

He would eat only the rice he picked while chanting the name of Rama. He would drink water while chanting the name of Rama.

He cooks his food while chanting the name of Rama. He wears a Dhoti and upper cloth with the name of Rama on them. Everything is the name of Rama.

He had more than 10,000 disciples in the state of Andhra Pradesh and the neighbouring states.

His speech was wonderful. He wrote about 30 to 40 volumes on the Bhagavatam.

He wrote many texts on the name of Rama. He was the complexion of a Bangenapalli mango.

He was so fair that I felt why was I like this? He had a radiance. Those who meditate, do Sadhana, and observe rituals, emit a radiance.

They have a special kind of attraction. It is not something we can attain using powders and creams.

It comes from the grace of God. I have a lot of love and respect for Rama Sharan. He speaks very well.

He would grasp everyone's attention in meetings. I would sometimes listen to his speeches.

I once wondered what it would be like to interview him. I went to his house and said, "Sir, please speak."

He asked me who I was and my background. Then he said, "Alright, I have time, so sit down."

If you listen to him, your hair will stand on end. He said, "Back then, there was a place called Nagayalanka in Krishna district."

"I was speaking about Ramayana in Nagayalanka." Rama Sharan garu speaks for months when he goes to places.

He speaks in many places in the state of Andhra Pradesh. He does not even carry a piece of paper. As he speaks, Goddess Saraswati speaks. He said, "When I was speaking in Nagayalanka, my disciples attended."

"They asked, "Guru garu, why do you still speak about Rama? How long will you speak about Ayodhya Rama, Sita Rama,"

""Pattabhi Rama and Kalyana Rama?" I said, "What are you saying? Did you lose your senses?"" "What are you saying?" he said. And they responded, "No Sir, that Rama became this Rama and took birth in Puttaparthi."

"His servant came for Him. His people came to recognize Him. Sir, go and have this Rama's Darshan. Why the old editions still?"

His disciples told him. He said, "Shut up and go," and since he is an elderly man, they left.

I'm saying this in his words. He also wrote it all in a book about Swami. He got a fever that morning.

102 degrees of temperature. He wondered what happened. He had to give a speech that evening.

"My disciple had just told me about Rama coming as Lord Sai, and Sai Rama, and took birth in Parthi."

They said, "Lord Vishnu Himself took an Avatar to be born on this earth, see Him in Parthi."

"If my Rama is truly that Sai Baba, my fever should go down," he said. Can Swami not take on his challenge?

As soon as he thought that, his fever started going down. His ego was hurt that He was reducing his fever from a distance.

"Where is Nagayalanka and where is Puttaparthi? Why is it going down for me?" he thought.

He said, "Anil Kumar, I took a dip in the pond so that my fever would go up. But it did not go up."

"I ate potato fry to help my fever go up. It did not," he said. So he decided to get His Darshan.

After the speech, he told his disciples, "I'm going to Puttaparthi, for Baba's Darshan." And he came.

He sat on the platform in Guntur railway station, waiting for the Amaravati Express.

He was an elderly man, suffering from fever for two days. He became very weak.

He lay down on a bench on the platform. Is Puttaparthi close enough to travel? He must take two trains and a bus.

Who would go there? He thought he would go home instead, since he did not have strength.

At that time 2 or 3 devotees of Baba came in. They said, "Sir, we are also going to Puttaparthi.

We will take you with us."

He thought, "Oh, He is not letting me go. First, He reduced my fever, and when I wanted to go home, He sent these people."

He thought there was something going on. He went along with them. They reached Puttaparthi at 1 PM in the afternoon.

This is by taking the Amaravati Express, and after changing trains and buses. What food can we get at 1 PM?

That was during Dasara time. Swami's Darshan was at 5 PM. He didn't know where to stay, what to do, or what to eat.

That was his first time visiting. You must have seen the Prasanthi Nilayam board at the gate.

He stood at the board that says 'Prasanthi Nilayam Township.' He looked at Swami's building and said loudly, "Swami!"

"I came for Your Darshan. I did not come. You called me. They are saying You won't come out until 5 in the evening."

"If You are my Rama, You must give me Darshan now," he said. He never gives Darshan at 1 in the afternoon.

As soon as he said that, Swami opened His door and came walking quickly. "Hey Rama Sharan," He called by name.

He thought, "Oh, Swami knows my name?" He said, "Did your fever go away?" He thought, "Oh, He even knows I had a fever."

"You ate a lot of potatoes, for the fever to come back, is that right?" He said. "I tried, Swami," he said.

"I know how austere you are. I know that you cook and eat your own food. I arranged cooking utensils and a stove in South Prasanthi."

"I arranged for all the lentils, grains and vegetables there. Stay happily in that room and come at 5 O'clock in the evening," He said.

He thought, "What is this? Did I give a telegram to Him that I was coming? Did I send a message?"

"Is this the time that He would come downstairs? Does He know who I am? I came with contrary feelings and He is treating me this way?"

"This much honour for me?" he thought, went to his room, cooked, ate, rested and went to the Poornachandra Auditorium at 5 O'clock.

Why would they make him sit in the front line? He was anonymous here. They sent him to the back.

On top of that, he had a bald head, a tuft, a Dhoti and a top cloth. But his complexion was divine.

But there was no necessity for complexion here. Who would care about him? He went and sat in some 40th line.

At 5 O'clock in the evening, the indigo blue curtain pierced open, and Swami started coming out into Poornachandra Auditorium.

The orange robed One, the One whose smiles adorn His lotus face, came walking slowly, smiling.

Swami has a habit. Before His discourse, before He is seated on the stage, He will look at everyone there.

He would go to the end of the Poornachandra hall. He goes walking all the way to the end.

As He was walking, He blessed everyone and went to the end of the Poornachandra hall.

He saw Rama Sharran garu in the 40th row. "Hey Rama Sharan, why are you sitting here? Come, come," He called him.

He held his hand, made him walk through the Poornachandra Auditorium, had him climb the steps to the stage,

and made him sit in the chair next to His. That is Sai Baba. We are mistaken if we think we are coming here because we're crazy.

The people who come here are not those without a house or home. Every devotee is someone who has had a special, specific, inner experience.

Every single one. He sat surprised. After Vedam was completed, Swami said, "Rama Sharan, will you speak?"

He thought, "Did He know my name? Did He know that I got fever? Did He arrange a room for me? Did He call me by name?"

"Did He just ask me to give a speech? Did He know all these?" he was surprised.

Rama Sharan garu really likes to speak about devotion. He was going to speak about devotion.

Swami looked at him and said, "Rama Sharan, speak about wisdom." He was going to speak about devotion.

But now about wisdom. He is a great Pundit, so he spoke very well about wisdom. He had a booming voice.

They were all like that. Madhavarao Sharma garu, Rama Sharan garu, Malladi Chandrasekhar Sastry garu from Vijayawada.

Even if there were 10,000 people, their voice would reach the back, without needing a mic. That's how great they are. They were born with a purpose. He spoke and sat down. Then there was Swami's discourse.

He sat right next to Swami in a chair. I'm saying this in his words. "Swami stood up and started to speak."

"The One who is speaking next to me is not Sathya Sai Baba. He is the One who is tall and strong, and lotus-eyed."

"He is One who has a wide chest, wearing a crown, standing next to me. I had a Darshan of Lord Ramachandra," he said.

Where? In Poornachandra Auditorium. Not in his dreams. Right here. Not as an illusion. In reality.

Ignorant people may not know this. What can we do? But those who know Rama Sharan garu, or read his books would know.



"Swami gave a discourse, and then sat down next to me. Swami's curly hair," meaning ringlets of hair,

"as they were touching me, wow, what can I say? My entire body shivered. What ecstasy."

"The Rama that I have been singing praises about, am I sitting next to Him? Did I speak in front of Him?"

"Are His hairs touching me? Did His sweet hands help me walk to the stage? This life of mine is a blessing of Rama," he thought.

The speeches were completed. He took leave from Swami and went to his room to have a meal, and went to bed.

The next day, Purnahuti was completed, and all the Pundits were leaving, each going back to their destinations.

Swami honours all the Pundits with rewards. Cash. He gives cash rewards to all the Pundits, since that's their livelihood.

He gives it to all of them, and blesses them. He gives them clothes. There is, will not be, anyone else but Him who can do better honours.

Not a little. Even our breath can get suffocated from it. That's the way He does the honouring ceremonies.

He did not give anything to Rama Sharan garu. Swami went back into the interview room.

All the Pundits were coming out. There were many disciples of Rama Sharan garu who said, "Our Guru didn't receive anything."

"How can there not be a place for merit even with Sai Baba? How can he not be recognized even here?"

"Did He not recognize our Guru?" the disciples were upset. Is He any less? He opened the door and called him in, "Rama Sharan, come in."

Especially. He came in and embraced Swami. "Rama Sharan, you are Me, and I am you. You are Me, you are Me, you are Me."

"We are both the same," He said. Hearing that from Bhagawan Himself, what else do we need in this lifetime?

Tears of joy were flowing. Swami blessed Rama Sharan, and with a wave of His hand, created a golden image of Goddess Lakshmi about this size.

Rama Sharan said, "Swami, why do I need Goddess Lakshmi? I sold all my farms. I spent all my money on printing my books."

"Today I don't have any wealth or properties. I don't need them either. I will go give some speech, and eat with the devotees."

"Wherever I'm starting from, they give me a ticket, and I go, so I have no need for money. Swami, why do I need Goddess Lakshmi?"

Swami said, "Rama Sharan, do you think I do not know why you need Goddess Lakshmi? One book is in print."

"You are writing it about Bhagavatam. You need to give money to the printing press. That is why I'm giving it to you, do you understand?"

"Take it," He said. But Swami immediately took it back and changed it into a chain.

It became a chain, and the image of Goddess Lakshmi was embossed on it. He took it and took leave of Swami.

He came back to Nagayalanka. The disciples were overjoyed seeing their Guru, "Our Guru was graced by Rama, and had Darshan of Lord Sri Rama, wow!"

There is a big pond in Nagayalanka. In villages, people bathe in those ponds. They don't need bathrooms and geysers.

That is the reason they were able to live long. As he was bathing in the Nagayalanka pond, the chain slipped away into the water.

It was lost. He felt very sad, since it was so precious to him. He spoke for some time in Nagayalanka and with great sadness he came to Puttaparthi.

Swami said, "Rama Sharan, come." With tears in his eyes, he said, "Swami, I lost the locket You gave me."

"I'm unfortunate." He said, "Your bill cleared in the press. You don't have any debts. Why do you need Lakshmi? She came back to Me."

"You don't need Goddess Lakshmi anymore. You settled your debts. That's why that Lakshmi came back to Me," said Swami.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is One who is competent to soothe even impossible situations.

What can we talk about His competence? How to describe His omniscience? How to praise Him?

What is enough, how much ever we talk about it? Howard Murphet was a writer who introduced Swami to the Western countries.

Howard Murphet. He was a writer in English. He was a member of the Theosophical Society.

He became a devotee of Baba. Look at the irony. Theosophical society members would not approve.

He became a devotee of Swami and wrote a book about Swami. Its name is 'Man of Miracles.'

Amarendra garu translated it into Telugu. Its name is 'Adbhuta Murti.'

Those books are wonderful gems. It's a small book. We can read it on a train journey.

As we read Adbhuta Murti, or the Man of Miracles, wow, the sweetness of singing the name of Sai gives bliss.

It is so blissful that we cannot hold back our tears. That's how good those books are.

That Murphet came to Swami. Swami said, "Hey Murphet, are you perfect?"

"Why does He think I'm perfect?" he thought. Some of the devotees explained, "You had a fracture recently."

"To ask whether you are well again, Swami asked if you're perfect," they said.

As soon as he arrived, he was invited into the room, and him and his wife Iris were given a room in the bungalow next door, in Bengaluru.

Meals twice a day with Swami. Coffees and teas and breakfasts sitting next to Swami everyday.

Who recognizes us? Who recognizes our scholarly proficiency?

There are those who recognize and respect power, wealth, fame but who can recognize an ordinary devotee?

That is Sathya Sai Baba. He took Murphet along with Him to Horsley Hills in Madanapalle.

He took him to Madras. That's how close Murphet was. I saw that great man here.

I also happened to see him in Australia, by Swami's grace. I was also able to see all these Pundits.

I think to myself how fortunate I am. There are many musical artists. There are many great musical virtuosos who performed on the Poornachandra stage.

A singer who did not sing in front of Him is not a singer at all. Swami invited all the famous singers.

There is no one who did not sing for Him. Among those, Adinarayana Rao garu came with his group of singers.

He was a famous musician who is the husband of Anjali Devi. He came here.

Swami arranged for his performance. All the songs that we sing today, including Susheela's, were tuned by Adinarayana Rao.

They are very beautiful. Swami likes them very much. Especially the Jhoola song. He would sing those.

I like to know about everyone and then tell everyone else about them. That's my profession.

Among the international mediums of broadcasting, they say the most important one is the BBC. British Broadcasting Corporation. But in the Sathya Sai world, ABC is just as famous. Anil Kumar Broadcasting Corporation.

If I hear it, I will speak about it, for sure. Don't tell me, but if you tell me, don't cry later.

There was an incident where Swami said humorously, "Anil Kumar, will you work in the Trust Office? After you retire?"

I said, "I would be useless, Swami." He asked, "Why do you say that?" I said, "I cannot talk about Trust information outside."

"My tongue cannot hide anything. I can't even calculate the cost of vegetables, how can I do accounting in the Trust?"

"I would be useless Swami, please excuse me," I said. That's how it is with Swami.

I went to the room of the couple, Adinarayana Rao and Anjali Devi, and met them there.

Anjali Devi hosted me very well because they see me with Swami. Otherwise they would have said, "Why did you come now, at such an odd time?"

Because they saw me next to Him, they said, "Come in, Sir." I got used to this in this system.

I went to them and asked, "Sir, please narrate one or two of your experiences. I will share it with others."

They agreed. There was a movie called Suvarna Sundari during my childhood. The one who produced that movie was Anjali Devi.

Anjali Productions. Its Director was Narayana Rao garu. Even in those days, it made a profit of 1 crore rupees.

I'm telling you in Swami's words. It made a profit of 1 crore rupees. Adinarayana Rao and Anjali started talking.

Swami had shared the same incident with me and the students when we were in Kodaikanal.

Swami narrated the same incidents that they narrated. That is why I'm sharing them here. Why is it being narrated so many times? For the sake of authenticity. Establishment of the credibility, the accountability.

That is why I'm telling you. When money comes will it stay? They wanted more, so they produced another movie.

It was a complete shave, without needing to go to Tirupati. Swami always says this: "Head bald, purse empty, no need to go to Tirupati."

Head bald, purse empty, no need to go to Tirupati since the shave is complete. Swami uses that proverb.

The second movie that Anjali Devi produced failed and they took a loss. They wanted to die.

They thought suicide was the only way, and both of them got into a car. I'm telling you what Swami said, direct from the horse's mouth.

They sat in the car in Madras and reached Mahabalipuram. The ocean is very near in Mahabalipuram.

Their intention was to drive the car straight into the ocean, and happily give up their lives.

They started driving the car to the ocean when they heard a shout, "Hey, stop!"

"Who is calling me now? Am I afraid because I wanted to die? Is my mind saying this?"

He opened the door and stepped out. He didn't see anyone. Again he decided to die.

Is there anyone who can die twice? If he goes, he goes once, not this time or that time.

He thought and sat and started driving again. "Can you not hear? Get down," they heard loudly.

By then he was nervous. He got out and thought, "It must be Baba. Who else can stop me?" and came straight to Puttaparthi.

Swami, in the interview room, said, "Adinarayana Rao, gone. Today would have been the 2nd day since you were gone."

"Is it up to you to give up your life? Am I not here for you?" He scolded him loudly, gave an interview, and blessed him.

That is Sai Baba. Anjali Devi has a lot of devotion for Swami. The land that the Sundaram building in Madras is on belonged to Anjali Devi.

She wrote it off to Swami's trust and on that land, the Sundaram building was built.

It is very, very beautiful. As I'm speaking about Anjali, I must tell you this as well.

We went to Madras one time, along with Swami. We were in Sundaram, with Swami.

Swami said, "Anil Kumar, let's go to Anjali's house tomorrow for lunch. We'll go at 10 O'clock."

"The meals here are not that good." I said, "Yes Swami, it's not good." He said, "Why? Why is it not good?"

"What Swami, I want some curry or pickle, but as soon as we sit, they serve us Sambar, Swami."

"I'm not able to bear this Sambar Abhishekam," I said. "Oh, in that way?" He said. "They don't let us eat the items first, they serve us Sambar as soon as we come," I said.

"I know, that is their way. Your way is of the Gongura pickle. Everyone has their own eating habits."

"I'm watching. We'll go to Anjali's house tomorrow," He said. Then He said, "Our boys will come."

"As soon as they come downstairs, take them all in a line and have them sit in Anjali's house. Lunch there."

"Alright? It is your responsibility to take them all there," He said. I said, "Yes, Swami."

"However, there will be many movie stars coming too. Anjali Devi was there for 45 years."

"These boys are young. They will be staring. I will kill them. This is a warning to you also, be careful."

"Don't look around," He said. "Yes, Swami," I said. We went upstairs. The next day dawned.

Joga Rao garu and I were staying in the same room. He was in luxury. He was a romantic and he was a person who tasted luxury.

If we opened the window in our room, we could see Anjali Devi's room. He said, "Anil Kumar, the actors will be coming. Let's watch."

I said, "Swami said to me that the boys cannot look at them, and He asked me to escort them. How can you ask me to look?"

"Sir, don't trap me, please," I said. He said, "Hey, nothing will happen. I'm here. Don't worry, open it."

We opened the window and looked. There were Kanchana, Krishna Kumari, Janaki, Jaya Prada, Jaya Sudha, and everyone there.

Him and I watched them. But the time was running. Swami said 10 O'clock. I quickly went downstairs.

"Hmm, is it over?" He said. I asked, "What is over, Swami?" He said, "Are you done looking?"

"Who, Swami?" I asked. He said, "That's a lie. Did you and Joga Rao open the window and look at the movie people?"

"We looked, Swami, because of Joga Rao...," I said. "Shut your mouth. You also wanted to look," He said.

"Why do you blame Joga Rao? You also wanted to look," He said. "Whatever, Swami," I said.

"Alright. Boys, come down," He said. All the young men came downstairs. He said, "Take them with you."

I took them in a line and had them seated. Then Swami came. Where should I sit?

Swami's table is like this and He asked me to sit right next to the table. "Sit here and eat," He said.

Then He said, "Eat slowly. I eat quickly. But I will just sit here, for your sake. Eat slowly," He said.

"I know you are struggling with your meals. Sit here," He said. Serving started.

Anjali Devi had been living in Madras for 45 years. As they started serving, she started it again, the Sambar Abhishekam.

I thought I would die. Swami looked at me and gave a half-smile. He called, "Anjali, come here."

"Wait, hold the Sambar. Where are the pickles? Don't you keep pickles?" in a Godavari accent.

Anjali is from Kakinada. In that accent, "What, Anjali, don't you keep pickles?" said Swami.

She was shocked. "Oh, does Swami eat pickles?" she asked. "Why? Swami doesn't eat, but Anil Kumar eats them," He said.

"You can serve him, right? Stop this, and bring that," He said. Then they brought out mango pickles.

"Alright, you can go. You can eat, Anil Kumar," He said. Who would believe that this happened?

Who can I tell? Can I believe myself? Are these the Vedas or the Upanishads? These are the essence of the Vedas, Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

There is nothing greater than experience. All that is theory. Spiritual rhetoric is all theory.

This is practical. Technology. Science is Vedanta. Technology is experience.

I thought, "Wow!" We finished our lunch. He said, "All good?" and asked the boys to leave.

"Alright, Anjali Devi's daughters and sons-in-law have come. I need to talk to them."

"I will give them an interview. You can leave," He said. I said, "Yes, Swami." Sundaram is right next to Anjali Devi's house.

As I was leaving He said, "Come here. After you came downstairs, there were more movie stars."

"You did not see them. Joga Rao and you can look at them too, and then go," He said.

"You missed some of them. You can look at the rest of them." What a divine romance it is!

Quite unbelievable. Incomprehensible. Beyond the stretch of our imagination. We cannot imagine it. I said, "Yes, Swami." That's how my Madras trip happened. In the evening, there's a place called Abbotsbury in Madras. They conducted a musical programme to honour Swami. Who was the one who participated in it? Janaki. She was singing beautifully. There is a song that goes, "The cows are white, but Krishna is black...", which is really beautiful. In that song, Janaki folds her tongue and sings, "The cows are white, Krishna is black..." Swami loves it so much, He laughs holding His stomach. She sings like a child. He says, "Sing again, sing again." Then she sings it again. The specialty in that movie is... I think Kamal Hasan was the hero in it, and I think the movie was Saptapadi, I don't remember well. But Kamal Hasan was the hero, I remember. That movie was released in all languages. She selected Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada. She would sing each stanza in Telugu, then Tamil, then Kannada. She sang each stanza in all 3 languages. Swami said, "Can you see? That's Bhakti. That's how Bhakti is. That's what steadfastness looks like." I saw Swami appreciate and enjoy that cine poetry and singing in Janaki. There were big screens in Abbotsbury. Really big. They're bigger than the screens in the Hill View Stadium. They set them up in all 4 directions. As Swami was walking, the cameras were focused on Him. Everyone could see Him on all the screens. Everyone gets Darshan. I was the State President then. Swami likes to pinch. He asked, "Did you see?" What else can we do if not look at the screens? He asked, "Do you have them in Andhra?" He was trying to pinch me. "Do you have them in Andhra?" He said. If I said 'No' I would lose my face. Especially since I was the Andhra State President. But even if I wanted to say 'Yes' they were really not there. What to do? I said, "How can they not have them in Madras, Swami? The investors in Andhra are who set these up here." "These studios are those screens. We don't have studios in Andhra, so where would we get them, Swami?" "You can agree that you don't have them. You don't have to give Me excuses," He said, smiling to Himself. That's how that trip happened. From there, I was to go with Swami to Hyderabad. Swami's next visit was Hyderabad. Where would I get off in Madras? At first, I got off at Madras University. Swami looked at me and said, "Hey, Medical Entrance, come here." He used to call me Medical Entrance for a while. Because I used to teach those lessons a lot. I used to teach at least 10 classes everyday. 10 periods a day. 100 Rupees each period, down payment, in those days. I used to teach that. "Hey, when did you come?" He asked. Sundaram is very beautiful. As He climbed down the stairs He said, "Where are you staying?"

I said, "Swami, Madras University." He said, "Oh! Madras University!"

"Who let you in there?" He said. I said, "They didn't let me in, Swami. I reserved it." He said, "Oh? You went because Sathyamurthy reserved it."

"Isn't it?" He asked. I said, "Yes, Swami, Sathyamurthy garu reserved it." He said, "You don't need to stay at Madras University."

"Come here. You can stay in the room next to mine. What will you do there?" He said.

I said, "But my luggage there..." He said, "Luggage? The Sevalal can bring them. You come." I came and Swami personally climbed up the stairs and showed me every room there.

He showed me the entire Sundaram building personally. "Is it good?" He asked. I said, "It's really nice, Swami."

"Do you like it that much? Do you know its name?" He asked. I said, "Sundaram, Swami."

"That's why it's beautiful. Sundaram. I named it Myself," He said.

I said, "Yes, Swami, who else can name it, Swami?" He showed me everything. There was a verandah in that building.

There was a Jhoola there. He said, "It's Swami's Jhoola. They set it up for Swami."

"Is it nice?" He asked. I said, "It's not good, Swami." He said, "What? Not nice? What happened to you?"

I said, "Why would an empty Jhoola be nice, Swami? If You sit in it, then it will be nice."

"Oh, is that so?" He said and went and sat in it. "Is it nice?" He asked. I said, "I'm still not satisfied, Swami."

"Why?" He asked. I said, "I should push the swing, Swami." He said, "Is that so? Alright."

I pushed the swing a few times. "Are you satisfied now? Alright, very happy. Let's go," He said and we came downstairs.

That day passed in that way. The next evening, unexpectedly, He called me into the interview room in the Sundaram building.

"You came from Madras. We will go from here to Hyderabad. You come along with Me," He said.

"We have the tickets reserved. You can come," He said. "But Anil Kumar..." He said. I thought I was going to be trapped.

I asked, "What, Swami?" He said, "Will you come to My college as Principal?"

I asked, "Your college, Swami?" He said, "Yes, the college in Bengaluru. It's not right. It's like a horror house."

"There is nobody to look after it. Will you come to join My college as Principal?" He asked.

Who is the One who is asking? The Lord Himself. Would I say I would think about it? Or should I say I would check with my wife?

I had elderly people in my house. Mother-in-law and father-in-law, who were elderly.

Four children were at home. One daughter was studying medicine. Another daughter was in the final year of Intermediate.

Another daughter was in the final year of MA. My son was studying Engineering.

He asked me, "Will you come?" What should I do? How can I leave all of them and go?

My mother was there too. I cannot say these things to Him, how can I?

He said, "You come." I immediately said, "I will come, Swami." I was nervous inside.

I wanted to escape. But He asked, and I could not say 'No.' While I was there, Ramabrahmam garu came.

He said, "Ramabrahmam, did you see? I asked him to come as a college Principal, and he jumped from there to here."

Swami said, "Anil Kumar will come." In that way I was stamped to go to Bengaluru college.

This was in Madras. I can never forget it. But I also wanted to escape.

Why? Family responsibilities were one reason. Secondly, I knew that it would be difficult to work for Him.

We pray to God, our wishes are fulfilled, but we cannot work. It's difficult. Why?

I have some relatives who came back because they could not work here, and because they could not withstand the tests here.

It would not be appropriate to name their names. One of them is someone Swami educated from childhood.

From childhood. The second person was Amarendra garu. The third person was Swami's translator.

All three of them are my relatives. They came back by return ticket. My sister said, "Are you thinking of going?"

I said, "I gave Him my word that I would come. So I should go." She said, "Do you think you're greater than those three?"

I did not. She said, "You will need to come back just like them." I said, "Alright, what can we do? If I must come back, what can I do?"

My father-in-law stood in the doorway and said, "If He is God, He would not have called you."

"Very well. If I were a man, I would not be here. I must go, certainly," I said.

I gave my word. You can clearly see the incident when I joined Swami's college. I came.

Swami, myself, HJ Dora, and Magunta Subbarama Reddy, who is an MP today, he too came in the same flight.

We came to Hyderabad. Meals at Sathyamurthy garu's house are really amazing.

If we had a choice, we must eat those meals. Swami tells His college students, "We are going to Sathyamurthy's house for lunch."

"Eat a light breakfast. Leave some space." He had that kind of fondness for Sathyamurthy garu.

Swami performed his daughters' weddings, sons' weddings, and also named them all.

Two of his sons studied here. Sanjay was one, and Ravi Shankar was another one who studied near Swami.

Both of them were gold medalists. Great history. The meals were good. But what about the college?

"Oh my God," I thought. As we were leaving I said, "Swami, can I take Your leave?"

"Leave for what? Come with me. Where will you go?" He said. It was as if He bound me.

If He wants you, He won't let you move. If He doesn't want you, even if you hide in a hole, He will send you away.

I thought I was done for. I said, "Yes, Swami." He said, "Alright, let's go to Hyderabad." I went to Hyderabad.

The people in Hyderabad were not expecting Swami. They did not make proper arrangements.

They set up a small stool and set the mic on it. Similar to setting up for Bhajans. In Madras, there were huge screens.

Those arrangements were terrific. These arrangements here were horrific. I thought why is it like this? He said, "Anil Kumar, is this nice?" He wanted to pinch me.



I said, "Somehow, Swami." He said, "You saw what it was like in Madras. You saw their arrangements."

"Look at your Andhra," He said. What to say to Him? I said, "Swami, there is a lot more discipline in Madras."

"In Andhra, there is more devotion, Swami," I said. He said, "Oh? How do you know?"

I said, "Because Swami was born in the state of Andhra Pradesh. That is the evidence of devotion."

"What is that knack? Can you not say that they did not do well?" He asked. I said, "How can I say that, Swami? I'm the President, Swami." He said, "Alright, wait, wait."

Swami had done something in Madras. He climbed up the steps in Sundaram, and turned right to His room.

Swami was showing me around. There was one Sevalal standing at each turning of the steps.

He asked one of them, "What is your name?" He said, "Murugan," or something like that.

He asked, "What are you doing?" He said, "Professor, Mechanical Engineering, Guindy Engineering College."

Swami... Then we turned the other way. He asked, "What is your name?" He told Him.

He asked, "What do you do?" He said, "Swami, I'm from the Indian Institute of Technology, Professor of Electronics, Swami."

Everyone was that way. They were all big professors. He said, "Anil Kumar, are there people like this in Andhra?"

I said, "There is no IIT in Andhra, Swami, so where can I bring them from?" He said, "Oh, that's a good answer."

He asked, "Are there people with big jobs?" I said, "No Swami, in Andhra, our only job is devotion to Swami."

"Not salaries and degrees," I said. He said, "Shut your mouth. You are saying these with a knack."

He is happy. As if He did not know? You should see how much love He has for the Godavari districts.

I will tell you about those too, slowly. Love for sweets or young coconuts from the Godavari districts, when they come.

They bring those sweets to Puttaparthi. You may not believe me, but our students fill a steel bowl with sweets and bring them to Swami.

Swami says, "These sweets are from East Godavari, come on, come on," to the foreigners like Goldstein.

"Very sweet. You don't get them anywhere," He would say. How graceful, how much joy in giving when He says, "Come on, come on."

So He does not lack love. This is all to tease me. I said, "Yes, Swami." Then He said, "Come to Brindavan on the day of Panchami."

"Take charge," He said. There were several people there. What can I say? I said, "Yes, Swami."

He did not let me speak. If at all possible, I wanted to escape. He was nailing me, as if to a wall.

I thought, "Alright, Swami," and came back to Guntur. This was my entry into Swami's college started at Madras.