

Part 05 | Experiences with Swami | Prof K Anil Kumar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my2AMTKnk10>

Mr. Hira was a very, very influential man. 100% devotee, even more than that.

"The plane got delayed. If he had to come back he'll cry. What to do? So I stopped an Air India flight for 5 minutes for him."

I went to Thailand from there. Here was the real story. I went to Thailand but I didn't have a visa. If we don't have a visa, they will send us back. He is God. What influence, where Puttaparthi? What Lord, You came till here? I was surprised.

Before Swami, with Swami

In this way, experiencing Swami at many stages, receiving from His nectarine hands, the way a sculptor carves a sculpture, all Sai devotees are those who have been sculpted by His hands.

When we learn about Swami, we must look back at personal life. I'm telling this to everyone.

How are we today? And how were we before coming to Swami?

Everyone should question this to themselves. How are we today? Are we healthy? Are we wealthy? What's our wealth? Our happiness.

Our wealth. Our health is our greatest blessing. Our contentment is our wealth. These are what Swami gave us.

Were we like this in the past? No. In the past, whatever we earned was not enough.

However high position we got to, was not enough. Always restless. Always running. Never spent a few minutes in silence.

Never at peace. Never going within. Always bad tempered. Because of Swami's grace we learned what is inner bliss,

what is inner satisfaction, what is inner self, what is this life for, and other subjects clearly.

In each of our lives, His hand is over us. It makes us Sai conscious. We are filled with the consciousness of Sai.

There is nothing else. We are always in that consciousness. In this context, I will give you some examples.

Trip to Argentina

How is Sai consciousness? I went to Argentina. It's very nice. It is famous for farming and agriculture.

Across the country, there are concrete statues of cows, wherever we go. I wondered why there were so many cows.

That's Argentina's fame. They are very loving. A woman called Moira Pruden was assigned to me as a translator.

Moira Pruden would translate all my speeches, and I would speak. As I was looking at the cows in wonder, she said,

"Anil Kumar, are you reminded of Gokulam?" As I was looking at the cows there, that woman was looking at the cows here.

Who are the devotees? Me or her? Wow, Swami, by sending me to so many places, You are showing me how small I am.

You are showing me the low level I'm at, what levels the other people are at, and how much more I should grow.

Perhaps, You are sending me to receive this training. That's what I thought, not that I'm there to speak, or that they are learning.

Besides Moira Pruden, there was another person in Argentina, in Buenos Aires, called Martin. He has a motorcycle shop. He was always with me. With them, I went to the Cataratas waterfalls where water was falling from thousands of feet high.

Into depths of thousands of feet below, water was falling from thousands of feet high. Water everywhere.

Wow! Lord of Mount Kailash, Bhagawan, Lord Sai. This is Kailash. To go there, we need to take a train.

That train goes through the forests. Forest everywhere. They stop at one place. There is an enclosed area made with wires, in the shape of an arch.

We must walk through it. Two policemen accompany us, to keep wild animals from attacking us. Everywhere water, plenty of water. We went up the mountain and came down. It was all a forest.

When we climb down, there were the waterfalls. How beautiful! I wanted to see it at nighttime.

If it is this beautiful in the morning, how much more beautiful it must be at night. Especially on moonlit nights. So I went again at night. Since there was water everywhere, it all looked like silver.

Is there silver here? What is this bright water? What's all this brightness? I wondered where it was coming from.

As I was going through the forest Moira Pruden said, "Anil Kumar, is it not like your Kadugodi?"

The Bengaluru railway station is called Kadugodi. She asked if Kadugodi was like that.

My God, I heard about Krishna consciousness, this must be Sai consciousness.

They get reminded of Swami, Prasanthi Nilayam. At every step, they would think and talk about Swami.

Argentina was really great. It was beautiful. They have a dance called the Tango. Tango is a famous dance.

But the tango dance would be a little awkward for Indians. They are half-naked. Someone asked if I wanted to see tango.

I said, "Sure, why not?" I didn't know the details. Even if we want to watch, we shouldn't.

Our image will get damaged. They will think Anil Kumar goes and sees these things, disgustingly.

I said, "Why not?" He said, "Anil Kumar, that's very strong, you know? It's alright, we will arrange a tango dance, a little Sattwic tango dance."

A person called John Banner comes here every year. He is 6 feet tall. He is the President of Latin America.

He said, "We'll arrange it a little Sattwic. This is totally a Tamasic dance. They arranged the dance for that night.

It was in a man called Francisco's house. His wife's name was Heidi. They arranged it there. Tango dance in Buenos Aires. They made it quite Sattwic. It was watchable. I held on to my reputation.

From there, they took me to a school in Argentina. In the management of that school, there were parliamentarians, legislators, accountants, engineers, and other representatives from various divisions were within that management committee.

They asked me if I would come tomorrow. I said, "Of course, I will come." That meeting started at 9 O'clock in the morning.

It kept going until 4:30 in the evening. All the members were seated. Everyone was talking. Believe me, when I saw how they were teaching Education in Human Values in classes in Argentina, I still cannot believe it.

I listened to everything. It was joyful watching everyone participate. Then they said they would ask questions.

I said, "Please ask." They started asking me. Imagine yourself in my situation. They said, "Mr. Anil Kumar,"

"How to teach about Satya, truth, at a primary school level? What to teach at a secondary school level?"

"How to teach at college level? How to guide at university and PhD levels? Would you tell us?" They asked.

I was dead. What could I say about so many levels? "Alright, I will certainly tell you. But this time is not enough."

"I will send you detailed notes. I will send you detailed text. You can sit and study them. This is not something that's done with a lecture."

I said that and escaped. Meaning, I did not know. What I understood there was that we talk about human values, human values,

I feel maybe those values themselves will lose value because of us. How much knowledge!

Let's see what you can speak about at college level. What will you say at university PhD level?

If they ask, what to say? What I know is only Bal Vikas knowledge. How many times can I talk about that?

It's a revelation to me. I thought it was great. After that was finished, I went to that school.

I saw the toys that the school children made. I saw them made with clay. I saw them made with wood.

Those toys were very nice. They all speak Spanish. I don't know Spanish. They don't know English.

I'm at the mercy of the translator. And so it went on. But I did understand one thing.

'Gracias.' 'Gracias' means 'Thank you.' 'Adiós' means 'Bye Bye.' '¿Cómo está?' means 'How are you?'

I learned those. That's it. It took me 5 days to learn these. Argentina is so nicely soaked in Baba completely.

It was very nice. Leonardo Gutter is the Chairman for the Latin countries. He also attended.

I went to all the places. It was very nice. After that, I must tell you something.

Visiting Mexico and Brazil

I visited a lot of Latin American countries. Which ones? Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, I saw all these.

Spanish speaking belt. In Brazil, they speak Portuguese. But in Mexico again, it's Spanish. Argentina is Spanish. Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, all of these belong to the Latin American belt.

I went to all those. I probably stayed for 3 days at each place. It was really great.

I went to Mexico. There was a man called Louis Nunes. That couple hosted me. They had young children.

The next morning, I would have to leave that place. Two children came to me, the children of the Louis Nunes couple.

They gave me a piece of paper written in English. They had it written to say, "Dear Anil Kumar Uncle,"

"You're leaving tomorrow morning. This is the last night you're spending with us."

"We love you, Uncle! We pray and wait for your early return," and they gave me kisses and ran away.

Who knows what past life relationship it might have been. How to believe this?

I had tears in my eyes as I was leaving them. They had tears in their eyes to see me leave.

Where from? We don't speak the same language. We live thousands of miles apart.

Where did this come from? As our college students sing, "That's the bond of love."

Singing is easy, but we must understand that bond. That's the bond of love.

That bond of love is the bond of Sai. That's how I saw it in Mexico. Mexico has an ancient fame. However many historical constructions we have in the country of Bharat, there too they have that many historical buildings.

It would take 5 days to see them all. If I went to visit them, who would do the meetings?

I was going for the meetings. I didn't go for sightseeing. I must talk about Swami. The syringe must be filled completely.

That was my intention. That's what I spoke. Somewhere in Mexico, deep in the city, close to the forest, in a wide open space, they held a meeting. Everyone was seated. The dais was high. When I saw the dais, I got excited.

I started speaking, and someone was translating. There was a woman named Ytes who was translating.

By the end of my speech, 2 or 3 people started dancing. This table is in the way, or I would have shown you what it was like.

Mexican dance is so simple, so easy. They place their hands on their waist, and they step to 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2... and so on.

They were dancing there, and I saw it. I started dancing on the stage. They were blown away.

It was really great. Because we should mix with them. After going there, we should become one of them.

We can't tighten our nerves, as if we have a disease. We must become like one of their family.

Swami is our father. It was great seeing the Mexican architecture. Even though I couldn't see them all, I saw partially.

Then they said, "Sir, we will take you to a picnic tomorrow." I thought, instead of speeches everyday, I should see the country.

I said, "Let's go." It was like a thick forest. When we went inside, there was a large lake. There are boats in the lake. Everyone who visits can go in a boat. It was great. Newly married couples sit in those boats and they have a band playing for them as well. They go around dancing. It was a sight to enjoy. So we went. All the devotees sat in mine. "Let's do one thing. They're a marriage party. They're doing wedding dance and music. Let's do it our way."

I said, "Let's sing Bhajans." It is a great blessing that Swami gave us, that across the world everyone sings the same Bhajans. There are no Argentinian Bhajans or Indian Bhajans. They started singing. There was an excitement in ours. Believe me, all the boats around also came to us. The band people started playing our Bhajans. Swami, this is Your glory. This is Your compassion, I thought. So the boat trip in Mexico was great. Mexico City was first class. I thanked God, and as I was leaving, a woman came to me. She was the Sevadal Convenor for Mexico. She knew some English. She said, "Mr. Anil Kumar," and I said, "Yes?"

"You are singing here, good, you're dancing here, better, but..." I said, "What happened?" "You're going to Brazil from here. Don't sing. Don't dance." "It is a very dangerous place." I asked, "Why?" "Brazil loves music and dance. When you started there won't be anyone to hear your speech." "Everyone will be dancing. Some of them will come on the stage. You won't be able to stop them."

"So be careful," she said. I said, "Okay." I went to Brazil. It was first class. There is a place called Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Rio de Janeiro is tall, like the hill of Lord Venkateswara, the Tirupati hills. On one hill there was a statue of Christ, the height of 40 feet. How did it look? He had his arms stretched across, as if your grandfather is waiting for you. When I saw that Christ, it felt like he was calling, "Have you come? Come, come." There are steps to go up. For those whose bodies don't cooperate, there is also a ramp. I went and saw the statue of Christ. It was very nice. At the bottom of the hill were all trees. All around was water. In the middle was an island. I thought it was wonderful. So Brazil was really great. I saw it and I was returning. I still had a half an hour's time in the airport. What to do? Everyone had come along, to send me off, as if they were sending their daughter to her in-laws. I thought this was good. What to do for a half-hour? I said, "Let's do Bhajan." In the airport. They started it. The airport officers came to see if they were a gang of thieves, and what the song and dance was about. So all the police stood all around us in the airport. These people explained, "He came from India." "We are singing Sai Baba Bhajans." They said, "Okay," and they too sat and started singing along. For how long? Just before the plane was about to leave, they announced, "Last call." If we don't go at that time, that's it. Hari Om Tat Sat. You won't have another chance.

They announced, "Last call, Anil Kumar." Until then, I had them continue to sing. I went running to catch that flight in Brazil. In that way, I covered Argentina, Mexico and Brazil in one trip.

Swami's grace was really great. I must share one thing. I told you about the water in Argentina, that it was all silver.

The water falls from a height of several thousands of feet. By the way, foreigners are foreigners. They have us climb on the boat, and they take us through the waterfalls. When the water falls on us from that height, we get really scared.

I thought, "My God!" But even if I'm scared inside, I must look like this on the outside. Because I'm a guest. What to do? They sent us underneath the waterfalls.

All my clothes got wet. Somehow I came outside. Then I understood how senseless I am. Why? Because I had my passport in my pocket. So that too must have gotten wet. Who would allow me with this wet passport? If the passport is ripped or damaged, they will put me in jail.

Who would allow me? I thought how senseless I was. As soon as I came back to my room, the person called Martin came.

He said, "Anil Kumar, give me your passport." I gave it to him and he brought a hair dryer from somewhere.

And he started heating up the passport the way you would fry a Papadam. It was sturdy enough, and got back to normal. In the airport they asked me, "Have you been to Cataratas?"

Cataratas are the waterfalls. I said, "Yes, yes, how do you know?" He said, "Your passport tells."

And then he said, "Oh, I see." That was the trip to Mexico, Brazil and Argentina in one belt. I wanted to talk about my foreign trips. This is a post-lunch session, so we should be leisurely.

Swami's loving sendoff to the Far East

When I was in Bengaluru in 1991, Swami sent me to 3 countries, Thailand, Japan, and Hong Kong.

As He was sending me, I was thinking, "Who would send me? Is this for real?" At that time, there was a person named Hira, the one who built the building here.

He asked, "Swami, we want Anil Kumar." How could He say no to him? This airport was built by a single man's donation of 10 crores, in those days.

He was the one who did it. A great devotee. His name was Hira Punjabi. He has a chain of hotels all over Japan.

Each one has 200 rooms. Very rich fellow. But down to earth. He says, "Sairam Ji, Sairam Ji." He asked Swami, so what can Swami say? He said, "Alright, take him." From there, after I came who would give me a passport?

We are all from Guntur. Even if I had a passport, where would I go? I need a passport, a visa. I was looking around.

Swami asked, "Anil Kumar, did you get your passport?" How would it come? I said, "No, Swami."

The next day was Sunday. We don't receive anything on Sundays. Swami came walking and said, "Did you get the passport?"

I said, "Swami, today is Sunday, there is no post or courier delivery." He said, "Is that so? Swami's courier will come."

"Go home," He said. By the time I went home, it was ready. The passport, with visas to 3 countries, stamped and ready.

They arrived. That's our Swami. Nobody can do it, impossible! I felt really wonderful.

Later I found out that Swami told Hira, "Anil Kumar is living here. If you can take care of the passport and visas, only then will I send Anil Kumar."

He thought it was a test of his devotion. He made all the arrangements and had them delivered.

I was about to go to Japan for the first time. The next day was my travel to Japan.

At that Swami called all His students and said, "Your Principal is going to Japan. Japan," and He had ice cream served to everyone.

"Take it, come on, come on," He said, "Anil Kumar, come here. You still have time. Here, take this." It was an ash coloured suit.

It was amazing. And a tie. "Is it nice?" I said, "Your grace, Swami." He asked, "Do you know how much this tie costs?"

I said, "I don't know, Swami." He said, "800 Rupees. It's like a loin cloth. It's a waste of even 8 Rupees."

"What are these ties and things? Alright, you can wear it. For a foreign country right?" He said.

"Tomorrow morning it will come, try it on, and come here. Tomorrow morning it will come," He said.

Look, He said that the evening before, and by next morning the suit is ready. Swami had it tailored in Bengaluru.

I used to stay right next to Swami's bungalow. The suit arrived there. Swami sent word, "Besides preening in his suit, doesn't he need to show it to Me?"

"Does he have any sense? Ask him to wear the suit and come here," He said. Immediately, I wore the suit. He also said, "Tell his wife to come too." We both went.

He took a photo with us both. That's the one in our house today, where I wore that suit.

He said, "Very happy." Truly, He was like a parent who enjoys seeing His daughter and son-in-law,

or seeing His son and daughter-in-law, I saw in Him an ideal parent. He was looking with satisfaction.

"Very happy. Your husband will be going. Everything will be fine. I will look after you. Don't worry," He said to her.

And then He created a watch with precious stones and gave it to her. She was very happy.

"Good? Very happy. You can leave. Don't roam around in this suit. Go home, get dressed as usual and come," He said.

I said, "Alright, Swami." I came back dressed as usual. He sent word that night, "Tell him to come for breakfast tomorrow morning."

"I will be here. He will join," He said. I came for breakfast. Swami had Pesarattu and Upma made.

He knows that I'm a food lover. He said, "You won't find these there. Take another one. Have more Upma."

Little by little. I don't remember my father-in-law asking me to eat. That's how Swami's love is.

"Take another one. You won't find it there," He made me eat. "May you live long, healthy and spread Swami's message."

"Everyone will be happy. Alright?" He blessed me with a full heart, came along until the door and Swami said "Ta Ta."

Then I set off. There used to be a person in Bengaluru called Balram who used to drive Swami's car.

"Hey Balram, drop off Anil Kumar at the airport," He said. Balram came and dropped me off at the airport.

Everything was fine until then. Now starts the story. The plane wasn't coming. I had to go from Bengaluru to Bombay.

In Indian Airlines. Then I had to go from Bombay to Japan in Air India. When would I get to Bombay?

How about Japan? This Indian Airlines flight is still not here. "Swami, all my students gave a big party."

"They all felt so happy. You gave me breakfast and ice cream. Now, how can I go back home in return post?"

Don't embarrass me in front of other people, O my Sai, why don't You come to me?

It is time to comfort me. It is a Ghantasala song. Don't embarrass me in front of everyone. They will think, "Why did my Principal come back?"

What else is there? That's when the plane arrived. I got on board and went to Bombay.

Normally domestic flights are delayed. If they are not delayed they are not ours. It must be delayed.

But international flights are not delayed because of competition. They arrive on time.

As soon as I reached, there was an announcement in the mic. "Anil Kumar, passenger to Japan, last call," they said.

I ran and got on board the plane and they closed the door. So until the very end, Swami had me in tension.

Visit to Japan and Mr Hira

I reached Tokyo, Japan. Everyone in Japan is short. Are they school children? College children? But some of them were grandmothers as well.

One grandmother is this tall, and another grandmother is only this tall. They're like this.

Their feet are like pancakes. They speak in Japanese language. They speak like Chin-chin-chung

I thought it was fun. By the time I got there, Hira had come. He took me to his home in his car.

Mr. Hira is a very, very influential man. 100% devotee, even more than that. I've never seen a devotee like that.

He took my luggage himself and put it in his car. He is so much of a devotee, and such an influential man.

Apparently they call this man when they elect the Prime Minister of Japan.

They ask him for his opinion. Those are the kinds of people who are Swami's devotees.

We think we're great for twirling the moustache of a mushroom. We're after all mushrooms in front of that man.

He gave us at least this much eligibility. That is our greatness. He came and put my luggage in his car.

A highly influential man. He took me straight home. It's a big palace. A very rich man. Every city has one of his hotels. When we got out, he said, "Shall we go to our prayer room?" I'm not used to that. My norm is to first go and change out of my clothes, get some coffee, and then think about prayer later.

He said a prayer as soon as we got there. As if that was the norm I said, "Why not? We shall go."

In my mind I was thinking, "Just get me a coffee first, and then we'll see later." But I said, "Yes, yes," and went along. We sat in the prayer room in silence. There is a lift in their house. He gave me those rooms. Even today, I'm surprised that there were many servants in the house, but he would set up the hot water for me personally. He would serve me breakfast personally. He would serve me lunch himself. "Swami, Swami has sent you, Mr. Anil Kumar."

Japanese people bow, "Swami has sent you." Arigatōgozaimasu. Konbanwa. Konnichiwa are words for Good Morning, Good Evening, etc.

This was in '91. I thought this was good. He served me everything. I was invited to the All Japan Sathya Sai Convention.

I was invited to that meeting. So we went to that meeting. Everyone there was Japanese. All of them spoke Japanese. Who would listen to me? But they gave earphones to all the thousands of people.

Why? To hear my incomprehensible language? I didn't understand. If I ask, I would look embarrassing.

Even if I didn't know, I should look like I knew. I said, "Very nice, you gave out earphones to everyone, very fine."

"Yes, Anil Kumar, your speech will be automatically translated into Japanese language. Automatic. Simultaneous translation."

"As you speak, it goes out in the Japanese language. They will all be listening." I said, "Yes, yes, I know."

Though I don't know. Everybody listened. The time was spent well. I don't know whether Mr. Hira thought I was the Prime Minister or the President, there were 4 people posted around me. Sevadal members. If I do this, one of them would bring a coffee.

If I do that, he would bring an ice cream. If I didn't do this or that, it would be safer. Otherwise they would constantly be giving me something. Even if there are many items, the accommodation inside is very little.

What is this, I thought. I wanted to escape from them. I wanted to mingle with the devotees, and talk with the devotees. But this protection squad was coming with me. I need to escape from them.

They gave me a big hall, and no one was allowed to come into the hall. Two people were posted at the gate.

It was like it would be if Swami came. I said, "Please stay here. I'll come right back," and went into the people.

I went and talked to all the people. I didn't know the language. Just showing my 32 teeth to them, and seeing their 32 teeth.

Smiling with teeth like the Twin Colgate Dental Cream. Taking photos with all of them.

And so it went on. After that day, I stayed on for 2 more days in Tokyo. They showed me a museum there.

The museum was very great. There was a large river, and there were 7 bridges over it. Our ship goes through them. They showed me that as well. It was very nice. After that, there is a place called Kobe.

Kobe, in Japan. I went to Kobe. In Kobe, I stayed at Ram Chugani's (Sindhis) house. Tokyo is a great city.

Kobe is more like our Puttaparthi. It was good. I stayed in their house. They didn't have any dogs or cats.

It was very nice. The specialty of Japan is having a pair of slippers to walk around in the house. Another pair of slippers for walking in the bathroom. Another pair for the dining hall.

They are coloured differently. We should remember them and wear them accordingly. This was a catastrophe for me. Always confusing. Like college students' match the following.

I didn't know which would go where. Then they would... and I would wear them and go.

That's how I stayed at Kobe. They were very affectionate in Kobe. Ram Chugani has 2 sons and 2 daughters.

Wife is Kamala, I think. They are an active couple in the Sathya Sai Organization. Wealthy people.

I'm letting go of my shame and telling you, that it was the first time I saw in Tokyo that you could talk on the phone in a car.

As soon as I got off in Tokyo, Hira asked me, "Anil Kumar, would you speak to your wife that you landed here?"

"Where from? From here?" "Yes," and he took it out, a cordless phone to talk. I didn't want to show that this was all new to me.

I should look like this was all normal to me. I talked. In Ram Chugani's house, I saw for the first time that they stop the car outside,

and presses a button on a remote control. The shutters automatically open up. What would happen if someone got stuck in the shutters?

It was opening up fast. That was the first time I saw that. It was very nice. After seeing all the electronics,

I was very much surprised. I thought it was very nice. There were 2 or 3 meetings in Kobe.

They were very loving. A lot of love. We can't take in all that love. Shall I say unbearable?

Unbearable love. But it's not torturous. It's not torture, but very loving. They would cook rice for me.

I also brought some pickles with me. I would mix those in and eat. From Kobe, I went to a place called Osaka.

From there I went to Hiroshima. Hiroshima is the place which was bombed first during the world war.

They showed me Hiroshima. Hiroshima and Nagasaki - these two are the places heavily bombed during the first war.

I saw Hiroshima. They built up everything. The city that was burnt to ashes was rebuilt completely.

That's Japan. It was very nice. They showed me a woman. It was a small town. Everyone was gone.

This woman alone was alive. She is a Sai devotee, they said. Swami protected her. He took everyone else back to Him, with love.

She alone remained. Very good. Hiroshima is a beautiful city. I saw that too. Then I went to Nagoya.

There too, our students were there. They were in Nagoya, Tokyo, there is no place our students are not in.

They come running, "O Sir, O Sir." As soon as I saw their faces, I was happy. I sat with them.

After this was completed in Japan, I thought everything went well. I talked about Swami everywhere.

Swami's presence in Hong Kong

From Japan, the next place to get to was Hong Kong. I had to go on Cathay Pacific Airlines.

When did these incidents happen? 1991. I sat in Cathay Pacific Airlines. There were a lot of people who had relatives in Kobe.

Sindhis. Ram Chugani said, "It would be nice seeing all my relatives. I will also come with you."

"Come along, why not?" I said. What is it to me? No son-in-law would be treated like this.

No prince would receive this much honour. That's Bhagawan's grace. I sat proudly.

He sat next to me. In planes, they give us biscuits, or slices of lemon, or magazines. Maybe not to die of fear.

Otherwise, why would we need magazines? They gave us a magazine. Its name was Discovery magazine.

I was browsing through it for time pass. There were photos of cameras, projectors, and other electronics.

Those photos were wonderful. As I was turning the pages, right in the centre, please believe me,

there were 2 large photos, of Shirdi Baba and Sathya Sai Baba. In a Discovery magazine, a commercial magazine,

You landed here, Swami? I thought. Why did I think that? As the flight was going, I said to Ram Chugani,

"Whether in a forest, or in the sky, or in the city, or in a village, on a mountain, or in the middle of the lake,"

"Sai will never forget you," He said. "Today we're flying in the air. Would Swami remember us?" I said.

He said, "I should ask you. Why are you asking me? What can I tell you, Sir?"

As I was talking to him, I was turning the pages of the magazine, and there the two photos of Baba showed up.

"Hey, I'm here," is the meaning. I felt very happy. While I was there, I had reached Japan, and as I was entering Hira's house,

at the same time, Swami was talking to all the students in Brindavan, Bengaluru.

He sent word to my wife, "Anil Kumar has reached. Don't worry." Nobody gave him any letters or emails or any mails.

He looked around and said to the students, "Hey, your Principal's heart is racing. His flight was delayed, poor thing."

"If he had to come back he'll cry. What to do? So I stopped the Air India flight for 5 minutes, just for him."

"He went and is on his way now." That is Baba, the One who can delay the flights, the One who can delay the trains, for His devotees.

He said that to them here. Running commentary. So after that, we went to Hong Kong.

In Hong Kong, as I was getting off the flight, I called the air hostess. "Madam, can I take this magazine?"

No one asks for magazines. She may have thought I was from the labour colony. What's it to me what she thinks?

Our Swami's photos are in it. I want those. She looked up and down at me. She probably thought I was a villager.

"Yes, why not? You can take it," she said. I took it. As soon as I got off at Hong Kong, there was a lecture.

As I was speaking at the lecture, I said, "I had a doubt in the plane. Swami, You said You would be with us, within us, around us."

"Is it true? You said You would be in the sky and the water, is it true? As I had these doubts, I saw these photos of Swami in this magazine.

"Please look," I turned the pages. No photos. I still had to stay there for 4 more days. Who would believe me?

They will throw me in the ocean, "What nonsense he's speaking." I was just short of crying.

What to show them? Who would believe me? "Here are the photos," I said. There was nothing there. Luckily, Ram Chugani was next to me, and he stood up. "There were photos in there. I saw them."

"Anil Kumar garu showed them to me. They're not here now. What can we do? They were there," he said.

If he didn't say that, I would have earned an ill reputation the size of the Himalayan mountain.

Everyone listened. Then I went to the Hong Kong University. It was really nice. Next to Hong Kong is a place called Kowloon.

I went there too. It's a nice place. Small place, but very crowded. A pleader invited me to their house.

His name was Lin Ong. I went. There were 50 stories or so. I was afraid he would ask me to climb up.

My legs would be done. I was going to ask him to let me go. There was a lift. We went up in the lift.

Myself and Lin Ong, Advocate. As soon as we went, he opened the door. There was a line of Swami's photos.

He asked, "Would you wash your feet?" I said, "Oh why not? I'm just searching for the tap."

If I said I don't wash my feet, wouldn't I lose my face? I said I was looking for the tap, then I washed my feet and sat down.

He said, "Let's meditate." I closed my eyes and sat. While we sat, I heard a sound. When I opened my eyes to see what the sound was,

there were pearls falling from Swami's photo. Is this true? I saw them with my own eyes.

Next to it, Vibhuti was pouring down on the Shirdi Baba statue. How ever many Gods we have in India, there are that many for the Chinese people as well.

They are both thickly populated countries with human beings and Gods. It was full of them.

There is a village goddess called Kunyam. They had a statue that they worshipped. As I was watching there was Kumkum along the parting in her hair.

I have all these photos. Pearls falling on one side, Vibhuti falling on another side, and then Kunyam. I thought, "Swami,"

"this is what You brought me here to see. Very happy," I thought and then I left that place.

There I stayed in the house of a student, called Chandru. He lives there, doing business.

I stayed in their house. I met everyone there and sang Bhajans. In one of the Bhajans, all age groups sing together.

From a 3 year old to 90 years old, one after another after another, the same Bhajan. Wow, the first of its kind.

It was very cute, and made me happy. In that way, I experienced a lot of nice incidents.

It was surrounded by an ocean. In the middle was the city of Hong Kong. There was a person there.

Sakrani. He is the President of Hong Kong city. Newly married. He looked neat. Sindhis are good looking people, with a fair complexion.

They introduced him as a newly married groom, and I said "Good!" He has a car like Swami's.

It looked exactly like a Jaguar car. So I started calling him Jaguar from then on, "Hey Jaguar," and he would come running.

In this way, they all had closeness, affection, love, the Sai bond, that crossed the oceans. What to say?

Unless we see it, we would not know. While I was in Hong Kong, Swami was talking to the college students in Brindavan.

"What do you think? He is finding out there what Swami is. Now he understands," like cricket commentary.

Oh my God. I was getting phone calls that Swami said this, or that. Meaning, "Be careful. I'm watching you."

Visiting Thailand and Jum Sai

That's how I took it. I was very careful. After seeing all of Hong Kong, I went to Thailand. That's when the real story started.

I went to Thailand but I didn't have a visa. If we don't have a visa, they send us back.

If we have a passport, we can get off. If we don't have a visa, we can return. That's it.

They stopped me at the gate. I looked around pitifully. Everyone in Thailand and Hong Kong is short, they all look alike.

They look like dough balls. When I went to Thailand, they said I was not allowed in. I had a meeting that evening.

What to do? I wanted to ask but he didn't know the language. He is Thai. He couldn't speak to me since I didn't know Thai.

Great, this is like a blind fellow leading another blind fellow. I stood there pitifully.

I stood at the counter. Someone passed in front of the counter. He was wearing a thick blue suit.

White shirt, blue tie which had stars on it. He was fair complexioned. All their faces were alike.

I didn't know who I saw and who I didn't. All the same, the same personality. Unless we see them everyday, we couldn't recognize them.

He quickly came walking to me. I could not cross the counter. It was the International Immigration Counter.

To cross the Immigration Counter, I would need security permission. But he did not care, and walked up to me.

"Are you Mr. Anil Kumar?" he asked. I said, "Yes, Sir." "Oh I see, you are from Puttaparthi?" he asked. I said, "Yes."

"I'm Jum Sai, from Thailand. I'm related to the royal family in Thailand. I'm a member of the parliament."

"You seem to be very much worried. What is your problem?" "My name is Jum Sai, I'm related to the royal family."

"I'm a member of the parliament. You seem to be worried. What is your problem?" he asked.

"Sir, I don't have a visa. They are asking me to go back. What should I do?" I asked. He said, "Nothing, just follow me."

I went along with him. No one stopped me. He is a member of the parliament, and related to royal family.

Who would stop someone from the royal family? So we went through. What about my luggage? I asked, "How about my baggage?" He said, "It'll come there." By the time we went out, it arrived at the car.

From there I went to Thailand. It was really great. But it was not as wealthy a country as Japan. But it was a place of historical importance. Thailand is great. Bangkok is a wonderful city.

In the royal family, in the palace of the king, scenes from the Ramayana are carved into the walls.

The book of Ramayana. Where is Thailand? Where is Ramayana? Has it spread that far? That's what Swami talks about.

In the most sacred land of Bharat, forbearance is the real beauty. Out of all the rituals, the most rigorous penance is of truth and character.

What other sweet feeling can exist in our country, other than the feeling of love for the mother?

Our country's moral code says character is more important than life itself. But this has been burnt down in the name of freedom.

Did Swami sing this for no reason? Did Swami take birth in this country for no reason?

I felt that when I saw all the tales of Ramayana. Another time He said, "Since eras and aeons ago,"

Wow! The fame of the motherland of Bharat. Swami, You are the One who brings fame to the motherland of Bharat.

You are the fame, I thought. I saw all the Ramayana there and talked to everyone there.

Thailand is very beautiful. Many movies are shot there too. I saw some of those sights as well.

Two meetings happened there. I completed the Thailand trip as well. To say Thank You, they say "Śwāṣḍī khàawp"

To say Goodbye, they say 'khop khun khap.' In Japanese, they say 'Arigatōgozaimasu,' to imply, "When did you come?"

I picked up some of these words. They sang Bhajans really well in Japan. They sing in all the countries.

They sang a song which was all in Japanese. The same tunes, but in Japanese.

Kamisama Kamisama, Haato no Uchinaru Kamisama Kagirinai Ai no Hikari de, Miteshite Kudasai Kamisama

Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare. That's that song.

I learnt that song there. There was also another...

Ai no Kamisama, Ai no Kamisama, Umi yori Fukai Ai no Kamisama, that's it.

That's also our Bhajan. They sit systematically in the Bhajan hall. There is a large board. On that board they have the 1st song, 2nd song, 3rd song.

In front of everyone, they have the Bhajans in front of them in Japanese. It's the same in Japan and Thailand.

You won't find anyone looking this way and that way. Everyone would have their eyes closed.

What Sir, that's who God is. What influence, where is Puttaparthi? You came all the way here?

I was surprised. I finished up there and came back to Swami. He looked at me and said, "Hello Sir, come on."

"Everything went well. Very happy. What happened?" I started. Bhajans were going on inside.

I should let Him go before the Bhajans end. I kept talking and He kept listening.

At one point He said, "Is the stock complete?" I said, "No Swami, there is a lot more."

"I will have you speak tomorrow, don't rush. Wait, wait. Good, good." We came outside. Hira had also come. It was Guru Poornima.

The day after I came was Guru Poornima. Hira had come for that. He called Hira inside. "Were Anil Kumar's speeches good?" He asked. "Wonderful, Swami," he said. "That's fine, that it was wonderful," He said.

He is like a mother. He doesn't like someone else praising. Because that would put an evil eye.

Only He can praise. "Wonderful is fine, he spoke? Did you give him any gifts? He gave so many speeches."

"What did you give him?" He asked. "Swami, when we gave him gifts, he said No, Swami," he said. "Did he not take anything?"

"He didn't take anything, Swami," he said. "That is Anil Kumar," He said, went inside, brought 3 Kanchi silk Saris in a bag, gave to me, and said, "Give them to your 3 daughters. You didn't take anything there. Tell them Swami is giving you these."

On the evening of Guru Poornima, He asked me to speak at Poornachandra about this visit.

Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand. I was getting excited. I felt like I was there. Those cassettes are probably still here, if you want to look.

Swami kept laughing through out. Non-stop laughter. Hilarious laughter. How much He was laughing.

I gave my speech that way. I laughed and said something, that I'm telling you to keep in mind.

"If we are not careful the Japanese people will come. They will lift up all of Prasanthi Nilayam and hijack it."

"There is no use crying then. Only the Chitravathi will remain here for us." Swami laughed out loud.

I narrated such jokes and incidents. After that was Swami's discourse. You must remember that He always has the upper hand.

His is the last word. No matter how good you speak, His is last and final. Speaking about many things,

He said, "Our Anil Kumar has been seeing Swami in Brindavan and Prasanthi Nilayam, which are in India."

"He is having Darshan of Swami here and thinking this is all Swami is. As Annamacharya said, "how much ever one can think of Him, that is all You are."

"In the same way, Anil Kumar saw Swami here and thought that is all Swami is. In order for him to know who Swami is, I sent him there."

"He must have understood now," He said. That's when I understood, my God. That's how it happened, the visit to the Far East countries.

By God's grace, it went well. The trips that happened later were Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, I saw those 3.

I took my pickles to Brazil. They said they would die eating those. They thought the pickles were Prasadam.

They thought it was Gongura (variation of hibiscus leaves) and Tamarind Prasadam. Each foreigner would come and ask. What to tell them?

I gave them. The spiciness was going to the head, but they said, "Very nice, very nice." The heat was going to the head.

They were thinking it was Prasadam and drinking water. My stock was over. I still had another country to visit.

Last halt was Argentina. As I was thinking what to do, I called my daughter. "My stock is over because everyone ate it as Prasadam."

"What to do?" I asked. She said, "I'll send it by post. You'll get it via FedEx." She sent it from America.

By the time I got there, the pickles were already there, ready. Then Leonardo Gutter said, "Before the arrival of the Professor, his pickles reached here."

"His pickles came before him." In that way, it all went on in a fun way.

In the same way, I also saw Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Venezuela, Columbia, in Latin America.

Peru, this is all Latin America, South America. I went to every country in that belt.

Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Venezuela, Columbia and Peru

They looked after me very lovingly. I will tell you the important incidents that happened there. All the details are unnecessary. Because these are not for praising me. What is there to praise me? Minus Swami, I'm zero. I know that. I hear it more than my own heartbeat, "After all, after all, what are you?" my heartbeat says.

So it's not my intention to talk about myself. Swami's glory. I went to a place called Peru.

In Peru, I stayed in the capital, Lima. I went to a meeting there. Two young women came with a thick book.

Bhajans. There were probably a 1000 of them. They put that book in my lap and said, "Uncle, select your favourite Bhajans and we will sing them."

"Out of a 1000 Bhajans, choose one of the following, we are ready" said the people in Peru.

We can't sing even 10 songs. We will need a tune. I said, "I love all Bhajans. What can I say if you ask for my favourites?"

"You sing any Bhajan, I love it," I said. I escaped. Because if I asked one that I didn't know and they asked me how it goes, I'm doomed.

I said, "Sing whatever you want, it's my favourite Bhajan." They sang well. I don't know what happened there,

In the city of Lima, suddenly my body became stiff. My legs could not move. My arms could not move.

They became stiff. I was to leave early the next morning. There was Machu Picchu near there, one of the 7 wonders of the world.

I was supposed to go there for sightseeing. They made a reservation for me. I was supposed to go to Machu Picchu.

They carried me that way into the car. The young woman whose house I was staying in Lima came.

"Will you listen to me, Uncle?" she asked. "If it were my father, I would not have let him go."

"You cannot leave in this state. Please," she said. "Why do you say if it were your father? I'm equal to your father."

"I will drop my tour," I said. I stayed at their house. They did a lot of Seva. They called a doctor home who treated me.

That was very nice. There they have another special dance in Thailand. I saw that dance as well.

I saw everything, and it was all good, I thought. There were a lot of Sai devotees in Guatemala.

There were a lot. In Guatemala, an old woman came to me, a foreigner. She asked, "Are you Mr. Anil Kumar?"

I thought, "Is there a doubt?" I said, "Yes, Ma'am." She asked, "You're the translator?" I said, "Yes, Ma'am."

"You're translating a Swami's speech. Your translation of Swami's sentence, Satchidananda, is wrong," she said.

"It's wrong. Satchidananda is not true translation that you made. High time that you correct it," she said.

I was shocked. "Ma'am, I'm proud that I did not translate it correctly. Why? Because you caught it."

"In this far away country, in a very different language, you saying that my translation of Swami is wrong, I'm proud of it."

"I want to take Padanamaskar of your feet," I said. In that way, there are people who study Swami's literature so thoroughly.

I saw another man in Argentina. He asked, "Did you know Tripura Rahasyam?" He asked if I read the book, Tripura Rahasyam.

I don't know any secrets, let alone the secrets of Tripura Rahasyam. "Well, I heard about it, but I have not gone through," I said.

I told him I had heard about it but didn't read it. He said, "Oh, I see," and started talking about it.

Who can do this? Where is the Sanatana Dharma? Where is the Vedic Dharma? Where are the scriptures?

It has crossed oceans and spread far and wide. Because of whom? "Whomever we look at is chanting the name of Sathya Sai daily."

"Whomever we hear, is singing the Bhajans of Sathya Sai daily. Whichever country we go, there is daily studying of Sathya Sai."

Swami had said that, and I saw it there. Learning from those books, I thought it was wonderful.

I took my leave from everyone and left. The Latin American trip was really marvellous, to cherish for many lives to come.

It is something to remember for several lives, not the city and its architecture and scenic beauty, but their devotion and love.

Would I ever have that kind of love? Would I have that kind of devotion for Swami in any life to come?

I thought of this in my mind over and over again, and I was sad that I was so far behind them.

That's how Latin America is. In the same way, I saw all the Far East countries such as Japan.

I don't know if this is true or a dream. If I say all this, would anyone believe me? Because I have photos to show, it's alright.

Otherwise no one would believe me. I myself can't believe it, let alone someone else.

In that state, at another time, Swami sent me to Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore.

He sent me there. To Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. I went. Malaysia was wonderful.

Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore

In Malaysia, they have Indian names on all the sign boards. I thought it was beautiful. It's not my intention to talk about Malaysia.

It's not to advertise that I went there. My intention is to say that the youth wing is very strong.

There is a man called Jagadeeshan. He is dynamite. He is someone who received honours from the government of Malaysia.

A strong man. He sings very well. He writes songs. He did great. I saw all that and enjoyed it.

At one time, Malaysia's capital was Kuala Lumpur. They moved it to a place called Putrajaya.

Putrajaya is our word. I went and saw it. Malaysia was very nice. There was a large meeting.

It was a huge stadium. About 50,000 people, fully packed. Who are we? We are not even worth the cost of a card.

They came to listen to my speech. Am I a Nobel prize winner? No. A national poet? Not at all.

A great artist? No. What is this crowd? We saw that around Swami. And now here.

They came there, all the 50,000 in that auditorium. Malaysia Auditorium is very nice.

As I was coming back after that speech, I got a small letter, from the Foreign Minister, Malaysia.

He invited me to his office, "Please come to my office. We'll be waiting." I called our Sevalal and said, "Come in your suits."

"We should not look like beggars. We're going on Swami's behalf. To look poor is not spiritual."

"If poverty is spiritual, there are many people in the bus stand. They all should be spiritual too."

"Who told you? Go well-dressed." Swami had given out suits to everyone during the inauguration of the Super Specialty Hospital.

Swami told them to have their suits tailored. He asked all the doctors to come to the medical conference in suits.

"I didn't ask you to come looking poor. Go and wear your suits," I said, and we went to the Foreign Office.

There were two large flags at the back, of Malaysia and India. Him and I. Swami made me receive the honour of an ambassador or a minister visiting.

Is this true? Is it believable? He held a press conference. I answered all the questions in the press conference.

He was very happy. He honoured me and sent me off. That's how the Malaysia trip happened.

From there I went to Indonesia. Indonesia is also quite nice. Our students are also working there, the Mirpuris.

Mohan Mirpuri from Jakarta is the one who had the music college constructed here.

I went to Indonesia. That was very nice. The surprising thing is that Manmohan Singh had just gone to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Whichever hotel he had stayed at, I had stayed at the same hotel. Here I had stayed in Ragappa's Hotel in Puttaparthi, and got hot water on the street for 25 Paise. But there I stayed at the same hotel as Manmohan Singh.

Is that true, or is this true? "This is true, this is your level. Your level is Rangappa level. I showed you My level by sending you there."

"That's the level I created. This is your true level," I felt like Swami said that.

I stayed at those hotels. There is a place called Borobudur. When I went to Borobudur, there was a tunnel.

Like a lion's mouth. We should stick our hand inside. There is an idol of Buddha inside. If we touch it, there is no rebirth.

However much I stretched my arm, I could not touch it. That's why they probably said "If we touch..."

How can we touch it that quickly? We must get rebirth, suffer greatly, get scolded, we must have all these things.

How can we simply get rid of another life? I couldn't reach it. I stuck my other hand. In the end I said, "Buddha Bhagawan,"

"this is Your grace," I thought and stuck it in. I somehow touched with one of my fingers. I thought, great, no more rebirth.

So Indonesia was really nice. I saw their Bhajans. Also in Indonesia, there is a place called Bali. Bali is a very famous place. If there is any country which is totally Hindu it is Bali.

Everyone is Hindu in Bali. Indonesia is Muslim. Malaysia is Muslims. We don't know where this Bali came from.

In front of every house is a Tulsi plant, lighting lamps. In front of every house. Wow, even as I was entering the city,

there was a tall statue of Ghatotkacha, as if saying, "Hai, Hai, leader, Hai Ghatotkacha!"

If we go further in, there were statues of Arjuna and Krishna, 40 or 50 feet high. They were great.

So, seeing Hindu statues and Hindu culture in Bali, I thought my life was redeemed.

From there, they took me to an Ashram. I asked what the Ashram was. "This is the Ashram where Markandeya did penance," he said.

"Who told you? Did Markandeya tell you that he did penance here?" How can we ask that?

I don't have much faith in his words. We don't have the same faith in belief, as we have in disbelief.

That's why Baba said, "Not having the two eyes of faith, today's people of the planet have gone blind."

"Let go of your doubts and reach the presence of Sai," He says, but does the doubt let go of me?

We have this doubt. Then he said, "The cows here are in a special colour. The backside is white. This doesn't occur anywhere else."

That is Markandeya Maharshi's. I saw them there, and those cows' descendants are still there today.

I saw things like this. In this way, I visited Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia. Singapore was interesting.

There are many of our students there. Many of them. Each one said, "Sir, please come for lunch tomorrow," or "Breakfast tomorrow..."

"Let's just meet in one place. I can't eat this many breakfasts and lunches," I had to tell them.

I have a lot of love for students. They don't need to be my subject. If they are students, I have a lot of affection for them.

They too have the same kind of love. The gardens in Singapore were so amazing that the Mysore gardens don't hold up.

They were that beautiful. I saw all those. There was one another one. If there are elderly people at the top,

they must come down. Singapore is a small country. Very small. It is highly populated. It is difficult to find houses for rent.

Singapore is a compact place. How about the elderly people? Then they showed me. There is something that looks like a wheelchair.

They sit in it and wear the belt. They press a button. It climbs down the staircase and brings them downstairs.

We may need this someday, I thought. I also went to the old age homes that Sathya Sai Organizations are managing.

In those old age homes, there are games for the elderly, music for the elderly, dance for the elderly,

are they old? They were younger than us. I saw elderly people look young in Singapore, and now I'm seeing in Puttaparthi.

There is no elderly person here in Puttaparthi. There isn't, will not be, and won't ever come.

Everyone thinks he is young, unless they go to the hospital and have their BP checked.

Even if we tell them they are old, they won't believe us. That's how Swami raised us in this environment.

I saw all of Singapore and enjoyed it, and eventually returned. In travelling to so many countries, I only learnt, but did not teach anything.

I only found out that I was at such a low level, but never dreamt that my level is high.

When I worked in AC College in Guntur, I used to ride a bicycle to and fro. I would teach Medical Entrance classes for 10 or 11 hours a day.

In Swami's shadow and protection, under Swami's divine and holy sky, there were nothing but aeroplanes.

So from cycle to flights. No cars or anything in between. Straight. That's how Swami made me go around.

That is why I have an immense love for Him. Who would give more than that? What more can you achieve?

What more is beyond that? Who are there who achieved all that? Those memories have bound me to this place.

In an ocean of suffering, in the canals of tears, if I'm still like this, it is because of those memories, and His mercy.

It is not because of the respect and special treatment here, and I don't need them either.

In this way, Swami took me around to all those foreign countries. I told them briefly, according to the law of Arundhati.

What is the law of Arundhati? The Arundhati that they show to couples on their wedding day. The Arundhati that even the priest can't see.

They say, "Yes, yes," in order to leave and go. In that way, I told them briefly according to the law of Arundhati.

There are many more topics to talk about.