

PROF. ANIL KUMAR'S SAI PEARLS OF WISDOM SATSANG:
BABA'S CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS

**"Sai Pearls of Wisdom"
Part Eleven**

January 29th, 2003

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

Sai Ram!

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan!
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

**29TH OF JANUARY 2003
VEMANA'S TRANSFORMATION**

Let me commence this session with what happened today, this evening, just one or two hours ago. Right now there is one district by the name of Kadapa , in the State of Andhra Pradesh, a few hours drive from here. The whole district is celebrating a grand festival to commemorate the life and work of great men and women born there.

Four eminent people were born there in the district of Kadapa . One was a great sage by the name of Veerabrahmendra Swamy, a great sage, who foretold thousands and thousands of years ago about what is happening today. This is called *Kalajana* – *Kala*, the time, and *Jnana*, the knowledge of the future. He predicted long ago what is happening today, and he was born there in that place.

Also there is a great singer by the name of Annamacharya, whose songs are very, very popular. He was also born there. In addition, a saint by the name of Vemana happened to be born there. And two poets, Pothana and Peddanna, also had their births there. So, to commemorate these events, the whole district is rejoicing and celebrating. I happened to make a mention of this to Swami, and that triggered the whole substance of this evening's episode.

What He said was this: "You know, one poet by the name of Vemana was born there."

"Yes, Swami, I know."

Then He started telling us about Vemana. This grand poet Vemana was brought up by his brother and sister-in-law. He had lost both of his parents, and somehow, as ill luck would have it, he had fallen prey to all the vices or bad habits. He even became a womaniser. And that lady (the woman he was seeing) wanted Vemana to get the necklace of his sister-in-law, which was very precious and costly. She insisted that he should get the necklace of his sister-in-law and present it to her. So, Vemana literally stole the necklace and gave it to that lady.

But his sister-in-law could understand and called Vemana. She said to him, "Look here! Had you asked me, I would have given it myself. Why did you steal that way? It's not good on your part." And further she said, "Look here, Vemana! I have been wearing that necklace everyday as a routine, but I do not find anything special about it. So, how is it that your girlfriend wants it? How is it that she will be extremely happy with my necklace only? I don't know. Evidently she wants to snatch away my necklace, you understand." That's what she said. Immediately, he repented. Transformation started in him.

His brother had only one daughter and Vemana loved her very much - more than his own life. He treated his brother's daughter as his own daughter, even more than that. Suddenly that girl died. Then what Vemana did was, he caught hold of the photo of that little girl and he hugged it and went on crying for the death of the lost child. He went on crying. The sister-in-law noticed this. She wanted to teach him a lesson. She took that photograph, tore it and burnt it. He went on crying further and further.

"Why did you do that? I liked that photo of the girl whom I loved very much."

Then the sister-in-law explained, "Look here - after all, you imagine her in that photo. That's why she is alive to you. But the body is here no more. Instead of the photo of your brother's daughter, you can have the picture of God and cry for Him, but not for the lost child."

That moment the spirit of renunciation and the sense of detachment started in him. He left his home, and from then on, he led the life of a *yogi*, a saint. Later, he composed a number of poems. Almost all citizens of Andhra Pradesh know his poems very well. Bhagavan explained that whole episode to us.

KRISHNADEVARAYA AND RAYALASEEMA

And then I asked, "Swami. This part of the state, including Chittoor, Kadapa, Kurnool and Anantapur, this part of Andhra Pradesh is called Rayalaseema. Why, Swami?"

Baba said, "Because it was ruled by a king by name Krishnadevaraya. Krishnadevaraya ruled this part; so it is called 'Rayalaseema'."

"Swami, is this such a great place?"

He said, "Yes." Then Bhagavan said that there were no states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in those days. The country was not divided on a linguistic basis at that time. Krishnadevaraya was a great king who ruled the whole kingdom. He was a patron of literature and fine art.

Next Swami said, "Look here, there is one village by the name of Karnatakapalli. Karnatakapalli is very close to Puttaparthi. 'Karnataka' is actually the State of Karnataka, but this village also bears that name, which only means it (this area) was all one composite unit, ruled by that king, Krishnadevaraya."

"Swami, how nice it is: Krishnadevaraya, who was such a fair patron of literature and a poet himself, had eight great scholars in his court. It is very well known." That's what I said.

TWO BROTHERS: BUKKARAYA AND CHIKKARAYA

Swami said, "Look here: There were two brothers. One brother's name was Bukkaraya. He was responsible for the water tank in Bukkapatnam. And his own brother, by the name of Chikkaraya, was responsible for the tank in Dharmavaram. Unless the Bukkapatnam tank was full, the Dharmavaram tank would not receive any water. In this way, the two tanks co-existed. Only when the one tank in Bukkapatnam was full, did the excess water go to Dharmavaram; otherwise that second tank would never be full."

"Therefore, the two brothers, Bukkaraya and Chikkaraya, made a decision. They said that they would not see each other - they would not come face-to-face to see each other - until both the tanks were ready, full of water, for the benefit of the people."

"So finally, they got the water storage tanks ready. And Bukkaraya went towards Dharmavaram to see his brother, to express his gratitude, while at the same time Chikkaraya also started traveling to see his brother. Both of them met at one place (en route) and expressed their gratitude, shedding tears and hugging each other. And, that place where they greeted each other is called Kanumukkala. Kanumukkala is the name of that village. *Kanu* means the 'eye' and *mukkula* means 'to pay respect.' Later the name of the village was changed to Kanumukkala."

Swami started explaining the historical background of these places. I was extremely happy.

You also must have noticed that here, in these parts, they address gents in particular with the name: 'Anna, Anna'. 'Anna' means 'brother'. They say, "Anna, Anna." They call everybody 'Anna'. Why, my maid also calls me 'Anna', yes, yes. (*Laughter*) And the *dhobi* (washerman) also calls me 'Anna'. So, 'Anna' is a reverential address or a reverential form of greeting. OK.

POET THENALI RAMAKRISHNA

Then Bhagavan mentioned a very interesting story about a poet by the name of Thenali Ramakrishna. Thenali Ramakrishna was a poet in the court of Krishnadevaraya. He was a very interesting poet - a poet of fun, frolic, retort and humour.

Swami talked about two episodes relating to the life of Thenali Ramakrishna. It seems what happened was that the other pundits and scholars in the court were feeling very jealous of Thenali Ramakrishna because he was very close to the king. These sort of jealous people were there down through the ages. They are not only here now for the first time. (*Laughter*) They were there, right since forever. Yes. So, in the open court, they challenged Thenali Ramakrishna.

"Oh King, let this poet explain why there is no hair on the palm (of the hand). While hair is everywhere, hair is not growing there on the palm. Why? Let him explain an answer to our open challenge."

Thenali Ramakrishna, the poet, got up and said, "Your Majesty, I will explain. There is no hair on my palm because I have been receiving all the gifts from you. There has been no time for the hair to grow." (*Laughter*)

Then the king laughed and said, "Oh ho, I see. But how is it that the others don't have hair? Why?"

Then Thenali Ramakrishna said, "As you were giving the gifts, the others were feeling very jealous. They kept rubbing their hands together out of jealousy and so the hair did not grow." (*Laughter*) That's how Thenali Ramakrishna's sense of humour was.

And then Bhagavan mentioned another episode relating to the life of Thenali Ramakrishna. It seems the king presented Thenali Ramakrishna with some diamonds, precious stones and gold. On the way to his home, some thieves noticed Thenali Ramakrishna carrying these precious stones and things, and they wanted to steal them. They decided to do this, and they went to his house that night. They were about to take away the jewels when the poet got up. Noticing this man, the thieves ran out of the house and hid themselves behind the well. Thenali Ramakrishna, being so intelligent, came out of the house.

You must have seen Indian wells, with a bucket, a rope and a pulley. This is how people take the water out. So, Thenali Ramakrishna went to the well and drew up some water. He put some into his mouth and started gargling, and afterward he spit it out, right where the thieves were hiding! The fellow Thenali Ramakrishna was a very smart guy, hmm? (*Laughter*) And then Thenali Ramakrishna picked up some cloth and bundled some stones inside and threw them into the well.

He told his wife, "Look here, the precious jewels cannot be kept at our residence because thieves may step in any time. So out of precaution, I am throwing them into the well."

But, he did not actually throw the jewels in the well. Instead it was just a bundle of stones. However, the thieves didn't know this. They thought the jewels were in the well, and they wanted to take them away. So, the whole night they worked at emptying the well, drawing water out of it. (*Laughter*)

The next morning Thenali Ramakrishna got up and said, "Thank you, sirs. The fields were without water till now. They needed to be watered, and now you have done it free of cost. I am very grateful to you." (*Laughter*) That's what Bhagavan said this afternoon.

25TH OF JANUARY, 2003 PROVIDED THEY COME FOR ME

Now, let me take you back to the 25th of January 2003. (We are going backwards, you know.) One very big man, a chairman – rather, a president of an international club - came to see Swami. Swami made him sit and wait, as is usual with Him. (*Laughter*)

I said, "Swami, I came to know some international chairman (or president) is here."

He said, "What if? Everyone must wait for Me."

"OK, Swami. Then is there no hope of meeting You immediately? No chance?"

Baba said, "People come to Me for various reasons - for their business prospects, for their family problems, to have their desires fulfilled. But those who have come to Me *for Me*, I'll certainly meet them immediately after their arrival here. I'll certainly grant them an interview, provided they have come *for Me*. But many people don't come for that. They come to fulfil their own personal desires or personal comforts." That's what Bhagavan said.

PEOPLE RESPOND TO THREAT ONLY

At that moment, I made a comment. "Swami, as I read the newspaper, well, I am very much pained. There is agitation everywhere, mass killing everywhere, violence everywhere. I am very much disturbed. Swami. What is all this?"

Then Swami said, "There is only a difference in degree of violence. Violence is spread everywhere." Then He gave one example.

"See a frog and a snake. Snake is ready to swallow the frog; behind the snake there is a peacock, ready to eat the snake. So, the frog stands the threat of being killed by the snake, and the snake stands the threat of being eaten by the peacock. That's how violence is going on everywhere - one trying to finish off the other."

Here He made a beautiful remark, which will be of immense interest to all of us:

"It is unfortunate today that people fear punishment. They fear anything that is bad. If a man says he is going to kill someone, people are afraid of him. If someone says he is going to burn their house, people are afraid of such a threat. But people are not afraid of certain good things, which they could not do till now. They are not afraid of certain good things, which they should have done already by now. It is unfortunate that people respond to threat only." That's what He said on 25th January 2003.

24TH OF JANUARY 2003

PERSONALITY IS VERY IMPORTANT

Now we come to an episode from the 24th of January 2003. Swami started speaking about many aspects.

He said, "Personality is very important. Personality is very important."

I said, "Swami, personality? I have quite a good personality (in local usage, 'personality' means 'physique')." (*Laughter*)

Then He said, "It is not this personality - not physical personality. Behaviour, manners, courtesy, etiquette, discipline - altogether *they* constitute what you call personality. This (character) personality is very important."

It is in this context He said, "Who is a boy? The one with 'boyish' behaviour is a boy. Who is a man? The one with 'manners' is a man." That's the definition He has given.

KNOW THE FEELINGS OF SOCIETY

Then He started talking about what had happened. "You know, one boy who sits there on the veranda unknowingly walked into the interview room while I was coming out of the room at the same time. His head hit My head. Immediately the boy went inside and started crying, "Swami, I am sorry, very sorry. I did not notice."

Baba said, "Look here, it doesn't matter if your head hits My head, or if My head is hitting your head. There is no difference at all. We can move shoulder-to-shoulder, no problem. But think of the devotees outside. They will all think that here is a boy who has no manners, who has no discipline: 'How can he simply walk into the interview room and hit Swami's head?' That's how people will feel. I know your love for Me and you know how much I love you. Apart from that, you should also know the feelings of the society, the feelings of the community." That's what Bhagavan said.

And it is in this context that Swami said, "Boys, I don't want anything from you for having given you all free education during the period of your study here. I don't expect anything from you. However, always maintain dignity and respect. You shall not compromise on these two, dignity and respect – the dignity of the institution and

your self-respect. Well, that amounts to gratitude, which you can express to Me In this way for having been benefited by this institution.”

Here Swami said, “That’s why I tell you boys not to say, ‘Thank you’, because I am not a third person. It is My *duty* to serve you, so you don’t have to say, ‘Thanks.’” But He added, “From the point of view of society, you may have to say, ‘Thank you.’ I know in My heart-of-hearts that you don’t have to do so. But society - the culture of each place and the manners expected of you - may demand that you say, ‘Thank you.’” That’s what Bhagavan said then.

CONSIDERATION FOR WHAT OTHERS THINK

It is in this context, Swami mentioned a former student, who is currently serving as the Principal of the Brindavan campus. His name is Sanjay Sahani. He is the youngest Principal of Swami’s institutions. He was a student of this college. Swami started telling us about him.

“Here is a boy who, while coming from Delhi by train along with his sister, refused to sit by her side. Why? Because both of them were quite young and others did not know that they were brother and sister. Others might mistake their relationship. So he wanted her to sit away from him, among the women. And he sat separately there among the men. After coming to Bangalore, he made her sit in a car where other ladies traveled, and he traveled by a different car with a group of men. Though they are brother and sister, that’s how they traveled. Why? Because the feeling of the society also must be taken into account.”

In this context Baba said, “There may be an old man who is playing with a young girl; but the society will not misunderstand them, because they will think that the old fellow is the grandfather and the young girl is the granddaughter. But youngsters - a man and a woman - though they may be brother and sister, at the same time, others will not understand this in the right way because of their age. So, you should always conduct yourself taking into consideration what others think about you.” This is what Bhagavan has said.

“Because of his sterling character and stern discipline, today Sanjay Sahani is serving as the Principal there at the Brindavan campus. He has come to occupy such a high position because of his sterling character.” That’s what Bhagavan said.

Now I should also tell you that here, looking at the boys, Swami said, “My friends, these are not merely instructions given to the boys. They are messages for all Sai devotees, young and old, not only for now but even for the future.” This message has to be borne in mind. After all, the situation was an excuse for Him to convey His teachings. I think you have got my point.

Bhagavan said, “The way you dress should be fitting. It should be in accordance to the institution where you were brought up. Seeing your very dress and your behaviour, people should be able to make out, ‘Here is a boy from Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.’ You won’t have to tell anybody. Your very dress and behaviour should be self-explanatory to which institution you belong.”

And here Swami commented, “It is unfortunate that some people wear the dress that would frighten even animals. (*Laughter*) That’s not the dress that I want you to wear. Also, if you want to sing, sing at home and practise there in the college, the Music College. But don’t sing on the streets and make yourself cheap. The words that you speak should be soft and acceptable, so nice. You should not talk loudly on the streets like rowdies.” That’s what Bhagavan has said.

DRONACHARYA

In this context He said, “Sometimes teachers also commit a mistake.” We should also get our quota. (*Laughter*) Swami gave the example of a teacher from the *Mahabharata*, a great epic of this country. There was one teacher by the name of Drona. Drona taught archery to all the Pandavas and Kauravas. Towards the end, one disciple whose name was Arjuna asked Dronacharya, “My Lord, I have completed my studies at your lotus feet. I want to express my gratitude. I want to offer something as a token of love and gratitude towards you.”

And Dronacharya replied, “Look here, Arjuna, I was insulted long ago by a king called Drupada. The king insulted me. I want you to drive him here. Drag him, tie him up to your chariot, and bring him to face me. Then only will my revenge be pacified. Accordingly, Arjuna went all the way and brought King Drupada.

There in the battlefield, the same Dronacharya, on hearing a statement - only half of the statement, not the full statement - died immediately. What was it? The statement made in the open battlefield was this: “Look here, Aswatthama died - Aswatthama. Aswatthama died.” Who was Aswatthama? He was the son of Drona. Upon hearing of the death of his son, Drona immediately left his body.

But there was another half of the statement that he did not hear. Aswatthama was also the name of an elephant. So many elephants were there on the battlefield, and an elephant bearing the name of Aswatthama had died. However, Drona heard only the first part of the statement, and he thought that his son, who went by the name of Aswatthama, had died. But actually it was not his son, but rather the elephant named Aswatthama that had died.

What happened to his emotions? What happened to his balanced state of mind? Being a teacher, could he act like that? He was totally revengeful there. He was totally attached. This is the mistake of a teacher.

“Swami, I have a small doubt.”

“Hmm, what’s your doubt?”

“When the teacher wanted this to be done - when he insisted that King Drupada, who had earlier insulted him, be dragged and brought to face him - what is it that the disciple could do? He should express his gratitude by fulfilling the desire of his *guru*. So, how can he say, ‘No’?”

Baba, the Ultimate, will never leave you with the last word. (*Laughter*)

Then He immediately said, “No, no, no. Arjuna, his disciple, should have pleaded with him with folded hands, instead of doing what the guru said: ‘Oh Sir, how can I go and attack King Drupada, who is *your* enemy? He has not done anything to me. He has never done me any harm. Am I justified in going over there and bringing him here, dragging him along the street? Is it justifiable, my Lord?’ He should have pleaded like this with his *guru*.”

“Swami, that’s right. I stand corrected,” I said.

WHEN GOD SAYS

Here Swami made one statement, which we should always remember: “You can question anybody. You can contradict anybody. You can explain your position, your standpoint, to anybody - mother, father, teacher, anybody. However, when *God* says to do something, you *must* do it, that’s all. You should not question or reason

why. *It has to be done immediately.* There is no question of any alternative.” That’s what Bhagavan said.

MUSIC COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

And then, looking at the students from the Music College, our compassionate Bhagavan made the following remarks.

“How many students from the Music College are here? Stand up, stand up,” He said. A few boys got up and then He started telling them, “Look here, it is not enough if you learn music alone. It is necessary that you learn a language like English. You should learn the English language. You should learn other subjects also: physics, chemistry, politics, history and economics. You should also get degrees like the other boys because you cannot earn your livelihood solely depending upon music. You cannot live only by music. You cannot earn enough through music throughout your life. It is not possible. So you need to study other subjects also.”

He did not stop there. “All lecturers come along.” He made them sit there and He said, “You coach these boys so that they’ll be learning other subjects also, along with the other students of our Institute.” What a concern He has. What a sympathetic view He holds. Well, I am not able to describe it.

And then He looked at those boys and said, “I know your background. Some of you could not continue your studies over there because you are very poor. I know the parents of some of you are very old and are living on a pension, which is a pittance after all. So, I am telling you now, My boys, don’t trouble your parents; don’t strain them. Now I am telling you that I am going to give you *all* scholarships. You already have free education. The only thing is that you have to pay for your food. But in your cases, in the cases of the Music College boys, I am going to give you all scholarships, so that your boarding charges and food expenses are met with. I will also give you pocket money for the *dhobi* (washerman), for the barber, for oil and other expenses. I am going to give you money.” That’s what Bhagavan said.

What a statement this is. That is true Love. Then I understood that Love on two Feet is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. At that time, Bhagavan said to all the boys, “Look here, see that you please your parents. Serve your mother, serve your father, be courteous to your teacher. It is your duty.”

SWAMI IS IN YOU

Then He looked at the Vice Chancellor and asked, “Vice Chancellor, what did you tell the boys this morning?”

The Vice Chancellor said, “Swami, I told the boys this morning, ‘Have a feeling that Swami is by your side everywhere, all the time, so that you’ll be very, very careful in your talk and in your behaviour.’”

Swami said, “You are wrong. (*Laughter*) Why did you say, ‘Swami is by your side?’ You are wrong. Swami is *in* you, not by your side. Swami is in you.”

This is a beautiful statement for the benefit of all the devotees all the world over, to know and experience that Bhagavan is *within* every one of us. That brings us to the close of the 24th of January 2003 episode.

22ND OF JANUARY 2003

SAGE THYAGARAJA

Now I come to the 22nd of January 2003. All of you must have noticed Bhagavan proceeding to the Music College that morning. Am I right? Have you not seen Bhagavan going to the Music College that morning? You must have seen Him.

Why did He go there? The 22nd of January happens to be a day of celebration where all musicians, especially classical musicians, commemorate the life and work of a great celestial singer *cum* devotee named Thyagaraja.

Thyagaraja is very famous for his classical music, a very great devotee *par excellence*. To commemorate his life and his message, all musicians celebrate the 22nd of January as a day of worship to Saint Thyagaraja. This year, as it is one year since the Music College has been established, and as Swami happened to be here on 22nd January, they all prayed to Swami to attend their function that morning.

Swami, in His infinite mercy, went there around 7:30 AM and He stayed there till 9:30 in the morning – for two hours! I don't think that He has given that long a time to anybody else. What did He do there? All the students of all the Institutions were invited, plus teachers and guests - all were there. It was fully packed. He went around to each of them, blessing everybody.

And, He sat in one place. At the Music College, there is a beautiful elevation there, with the two violins and *tabla* - one on each and every corner. It is a beautiful elevation. I am speaking about that. And Swami sat there with all the students in front of Him. A little distance from the dais, twenty well-dressed children sat, and behind them, six more students also. All these twenty are vocalists and the six behind them were playing on the *veena*. They all started singing together the songs composed by Saint Thyagaraja.

There is one place by the name of Guruvayur, where all singers gather once every year. From the topmost singer down to the amateur, all gather there and sing together in chorus the compositions of Saint Thyagaraja. I was reminded of that scene when all of them started singing here. So beautiful! They sang about fifteen songs.

Swami, to my knowledge, never gave that long a time to any senior artist. Such an outpouring of Love was not because of their excellence. They are still children, so it was not the highest standard of music. These children, the Music College boys, were giving a programme for the first time. This is what made Him sit there patiently and appreciate them. Then He distributed *prasad*. After that, I expected Swami to give a discourse, but there was no time. He returned back to the Mandir for the *arathi*.

That evening, He came as usual and stood in front of us. He asked, "Anil Kumar, how was the music today?"

"Very fine, Swami."

"How do you know?"

"Swami, I heard it."

"But you are not an expert in music - you don't know music. So how do you know if it is a good standard?" (*Laughter*)

"Swami, I represent the audience who was assembled there in large numbers. I need not be a musician or a professional or a Music College lecturer to decide the standard. I represent all those who sat there." He laughed and laughed. (*Laughter*)

And then He said, "Very nice."

Then I said, "Swami, one disappointment."

"Why? What disappointment? I gave them two hours time. What disappointment is there? Why?"

"Swami, we expected a Divine discourse. We were not fortunate enough to have Your discourse this morning."

"Ah, it's all right, it's all right. You enjoyed the music. The boys presented their programme. That is enough."

But my prayer, deep within me, must have provoked Him to speak further on this topic of Thyagaraja that evening.

"The father of Thyagaraja happened to be Ramabrahman and the mother of Thyagaraja was Sita. Like Rama and Sita, the father and mother had those same two names. Lord Rama appeared in the dream of the father of Thyagaraja and told him in the dream, 'A great devotee is going to be born into your family.' Soon that dream came true."

Then Bhagavan said, "All the compositions of Sage Thyagaraja are based on his personal experiences. They may not be of poetic excellence. They are not literary pieces. No. They are all based on the events of his life."

It seems once he was asked by his teacher to give a music programme in the court of the king of Thanjavur. Thyagaraja went there and, as he entered the court hall, he started singing in praise of everybody.

"I'll give you the meaning of the song, if not the text: 'There are so many great people assembled here! My humble salutations to everyone of you. There may be a number of great people here. Everywhere, my humble salutations to all of you.' That is the meaning of that song, which is very, very popular. On listening to that song, everyone was happy and was literally touched by the very feeling with which he composed and rendered that song." That's what Bhagavan told us.

But his brother was feeling very jealous of Thyagaraja. This is a common thing, jealousy, you know. It is not born only in this atomic age or computer age; it has been there right from the time of Adam and Eve! So, his brother was feeling very jealous. What did he do? He threw the idols of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita into the Kaveri River. He threw them away as he thought it was because of Thyagaraja's excessive spirituality that he won all the name and fame. So, he removed all the idols and threw them into the Kaveri River.

Then Thyagaraja was crying for the missing idols every day. One day, in the morning when he was having his bath there in the Kaveri River, suddenly something touched his feet. He just bent down and collected some things with his hands. What were they? They were the idols of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita! He picked up those idols and started carrying them home, while singing this song:

"Come home, Rama, Lakshmana! Let us go to our home. Oh Lord, I missed you all of these days." He was singing in praise of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita like this. Extending to them a hearty welcome back home, he composed another song, which is also very, very famous in South India. Then, Thyagaraja also sang one song, where the meaning is that Rama is his father and Sita is his mother - no one else. That was his level of devotion.

23RD OF JANUARY 2003
DARSHAN TO SAGES IN THE HIMALAYAS

Now, I go on to the 23rd of January 2003. Suddenly, Swami started explaining about His earlier days, fifty years back.

“You know, Anil Kumar, I went to the Himalayas.”

“Swami, did You?”

“Yes”

“Alone?”

“No, no, no. Two hundred people accompanied Me.” (*Laughter*)

“I see. How was the food, Swami?”

“There was always one advance party to go beforehand and cook for us.”

“Oh, very good, Swami. All people accompanied You?”

“Yes. “

Mother Easwaramma also accompanied Him during that trip to North India, to the pilgrim centres like Prayaga, Bhadri and Kedarnath. These are all pilgrim centres there in the Himalayan mountain range.

And then Swami started telling, “There was one governor, named Ramakrishna Rao. This governor was a very short man, shorter than Baba. And he was an expert in thirteen languages, a great scholar. He made all the arrangements for Baba’s trip. He made Bhagavan stay there in his palace, in his guest house, giving Him all royal reception wherever Bhagavan went.”

Then I said, “Swami, is it not very cold there in the Himalayas?”

“Yes.”

“Swami, did You wear any coat or sweater?”

“No, no, no, no, only one piece (gown), that’s all. No coat, no sweater, no blanket.”

“Oh, I see, Swami. How was the footwear?”

“No foot wear. I was simply walking.”

“On ice?”

“Yes, on ice only.”

Oh, how nice it is to walk on ice! (*Laughter*) We can imagine, very difficult.

“Swami, how long, how long did You walk?”

“Eighteen kilometres on ice.”

“Swami, everybody? You made everybody also walk on ice barefooted?”

“No, no, no, there were so many donkeys to carry them there. And the guides also literally carried those who could not walk. Some were physically lifted by people who were paid for that service, but I walked all along.”

“Oh, Swami, *ahh*.” Then Swami said that Governor Ramakrishna brought some canvas shoes for Him, and forced Bhagavan to wear them. And Bhagavan wore the canvas shoes. But, as the shoes were brand new, Swami developed blisters on His

Feet. After some time, He could not walk even a single step. So He removed the shoes. When Governor Ramakrishna saw the blisters, he started crying.

To add to this, the wife of the governor also saw this and she said, "Come here. What nonsense you have done! You have given a new pair of shoes to Bhagavan and now you see the blisters on His Feet. Don't you have any commonsense?"

So the governor had to cry on two grounds (*Laughter*): first, for the inconvenience which he had given to Swami, and second, for the heavy banging from the 'home front', from his beloved wife. (*Laughter*)

Swami was explaining all of these things. Then I said, "Swami, in "*Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*", it is written that some sages there in the caves of the Himalayas had Your *Darshan*. Am I right?"

"Yes, yes. There in the Himalayas, there are some valleys. There are so many curves and bends, and you have to pass through narrow passages. I made everybody stay back. I visited those caves and gave My *Darshan* to some sages. I spoke to them. They were waiting since long for My *Darshan*." That's what Bhagavan told us.

THEY LIFTED MY CAR

And then Swami started laughing, all of a sudden.

"Swami, what? What happened?"

"Oh, I visited Punjab also."

"Oh, I see Swami."

You know, Punjabis wear turbans. You must know that. And the ladies will cover their heads with their saris. Have you seen? It looks something like a veil. So, there were all veils on this side and all turbans on that side - the men and women."

"Oh, Swami."

"There were thousands - a very big crowd."

"I see."

"There was no space for My car to go, as it was so fully packed."

"Swami, then what happened?"

"Four Punjabis, all well-built with their muscle power, lifted My car. They carried Me straight to the dais, from where I addressed the gathering." That's how Bhagavan recalled those days.

RAMESH AND SURESH COULD NOT BEAR SEPARATION

And Swami also talked about attachment. Attachment to Bhagavan should be so intense and intimate, like that of two of His previous classmates, Ramesh and Suresh. They could not bear separation from Swami, so they took another birth as Jack and Jill (Swami's two pet dogs), who stayed with Him.

And now, let me not mention their names, but they have taken this birth as two sisters. It may be out of place if I mention their names, as they belong to a royal family, the two sisters. So, Ramesh and Suresh, who were born as Jack and Jill, are now

born as sisters. Their husbands are Bhagavan's devotees, and one gentleman is already here. Please don't tempt me to mention their names. (*Laughter*)

BOYS SHOULD FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS SCRUPULOUSLY

And then, Bhagavan was talking about how the boys should follow His instructions scrupulously.

He said, "Look here, sometime back I told one student, 'You stay here. Don't go home.' That boy kept quiet. Then after some days I said, 'You are a rash driver. Don't ride any motorcycles.' I told him - but that boy left this place.

While driving rashly on the motorcycle, he met with an accident and he was hospitalised. Bhagavan went to see him in the hospital. That boy, shedding tears, said, 'Swami, it is my mistake. You warned me not to ride the motorbike. This is a tragedy of my own making. I have to blame myself. But anyway, I am glad that You have come here to give me Your *Darshan* in the last moment of my life.' With folded hands, catching the hands of Bhagavan, he died there on the bed." That's what Bhagavan said.

Therefore, we may not understand the meaning of Swami's words immediately. We may not know their implications immediately and we may not understand the significance then and there itself. But, with the passage of time, we will come to know why Bhagavan said what He did on that day, but not till then.

I KNOW YOU FOR THE LAST TEN LIVES

Then the topic switched over to many of the artistes who visited Bhagavan fifty years ago. He mentioned the names of a number of artistes: dancers, singers, vocalists, instrumental musicians - so many people. He went on mentioning all the names.

I asked, "Swami, one gentleman, Chowdayya, a violinist, has he come here, Swami?"

"Yes, he came. He gave a performance."

"I see, Swami. Then Dwaramvenkata Swamy, also a violinist - Swami, did he come here?"

"Yes, he came here."

Any name I was telling, He said they were here.

And then Swami said, "One fellow by the name of Gaggayya came."

"Oh, he was also here?"

"Nagayya, a film actor, was also here."

Like that, He was mentioning so many names.

Then I said, "Swami, Ghantasala, a playback singer in Telugu, a very famous man, did he come to this place?"

"Yes, he came."

"Oh, I see."

"He stayed with Me for two months."

"I see."

And Swami said, "He followed Me wherever I went."

“Mmhmm?”

“But, he came here during the last stages.”

Then I picked up, “Swami, I heard the speech of Ghantasala.”

“Speech? No, no, he’s a musician. What speech?”

“No, Swami, before the music programme, he spoke a few words.”

Swami said, “What did he say?”

Ghantasala, the famous playback singer, was totally down with cancer when he came here for the first time. Swami never looked at him. He returned to his room in East Prashanti and started crying, “Oh God, is this the way You treat me, when I am known to everybody. You have ignored me. I am insulted, Bhagavan. I am humiliated. People will laugh at me. Is it on purpose that You do like this?”

And he composed a song in Telugu there, which you must have heard here a number of times. And then one day, after *bhajans*, he was lying on his bed without a shirt - just a towel over him. He was very sick at that time, lying on the bed, crying for Baba’s help. Suddenly, Ghantasala heard a sound. He lifted his head and saw the door being opened - and Bhagavan coming into the room! Bhagavan came in, sat on the bed and applied *vibhuthi* all over his body.

“Don’t worry, Ghantasala, I know you for the last ten lives. I assure you that your name will be remembered in South India so long as sun, moon and stars shine. You’ll be remembered as the top-most singer.”

So saying, Bhagavan left. Then, that man composed another song: “Ah what a nice day it is! Bhagavan came with a smiling face. I could not see You, oh Lord, because of the tears coming across the sky on the surface of my eyeballs. (*Laughter*). The eyes were not helping me to see You because they are totally wet, with the tears rolling down. How can I see You, my Lord? But blessed is this day because of Your Divine visit!”

That is the meaning of that song, which is also repeated by our boys. That’s what I said about this episode and Swami said, “Yes, yes, yes, yes.”

SINGER M.S. SUBBALAKSHMI

Then I should also mention another episode. There is a lady by the name of M.S. Subbalakshmi. M.S. Subbalakshmi is a very, very great lady. She is a great singer and she received the highest award - a national award. Not only that, she is the only singer who was permitted to render a classical music programme in New York during one of the sessions of the United Nations Organization. At the end of the music concert, all the heads of governments stood and gave her a standing ovation. Such a great lady is Baba’s devotee. When she sings, her voice goes to a very high pitch.

Swami said, “Oh, she comes here regularly.”

“Oh, I see, Swami. I heard her words also, Swami.”

“What did she say?”

“Swami, she said that wherever she goes, wherever she gives a concert, she donates some funds to every institution. Almost all big institutions have received fabulous amounts from her, through her music concerts. That’s what she said in a public meeting.”

“She further added, ‘There is one place I have been to where nothing is expected from me. No one asks anything from me. And I met a great personality, who materialised a chain of 100 diamonds and gave it to me on the dais. He is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.’ There was thunderous applause and ovation listening to her statement.” This I told Swami and everybody heard and they were very, very happy about it.

That brings us to a close of all the episodes from the month of January, early 2003. In the next session we will take up the rest. Thank you very much.

**Professor Anil Kumar closed the talk by singing the bhajan,
“Chandra Kirana Kula Mandana Ram”**

**OM...OM...OM...
Om Asato Maa Sad Gamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya
Mrtyormaa Amrtam Gamaya**

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

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti