

SPW PART 31- B

FUNNY MOMENTS WITH SWAMI

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh

I would like to share with you two of very humorous experiences I had with Swami. To tell you very honestly, Swami could bear with me for 25 long years, keeping me very close to Him and He want (me) to translate His discourses. That apart, wherever He is upset with boys, particularly when they do not act in the way He wants, He avoids them for some time. That most of the people call it as 'treatment'. Treatment! But God could not be away from these boys whom He loves so much for long. Somehow that will, they will patch up and normalcy returns, returns.

But what happens is when He is upset, He goes into the interview room without talking, without talking to boys and then He comes out of the room and then sits there on the dais. That's all! While giving *Darshan* He will be passing by that side first, ladies side, and then gents' side, then old people, people on wheel chairs, then students waiting, then veranda, He makes a circle like that! Whatever you know, in Sai Kulwant Hall there are pillars. Swami has to walk along that line where pillars are located. But to avoid boys, He wants to, He, He, what He did was, to hide Himself to avoid the boys without falling on His Feet, He comes on the other side of the pillar, rubbing His shoulders so closely indicating clearly that He is avoiding them. I noticed it. This is happening for a couple of days. I am praying that when Swami would give an opportunity to patch up. It happened! He made me an instrument.

Then He called me for interview and said, "What news, Anil Kumar?"

Then I said, "Swami, there in mythology, we learned an anecdote, where Sri Mahavishnu in the form of Narasimha, Narasimhavatara, Narasimhavatara came out of the pillar and blessed Prahlada, killed his father Hiranyakasipu. The story is Hiranyakasipu is the demon. His son is Prahlada, a great devotee of par excellence. Life went on like that! Father tortured him to convert him. He never wanted him to say, 'Narayana'. No! He sent him to schooling, instructing teachers to see that he will give up the name of Narayana. He didn't do that and teachers expressed their helplessness. And when he returned home, he said, because he loved the son but still he wanted to give him number of chances.

He asked him, "What is it that you have learnt there from your teachers?"

He started repeating, "Narayana! Narayana!"

He was fed up. He whipped him. But he did not give up the name Narayana. Not only that, even serpents were allowed to bite him. He did not give up His name, and I mean,

he was allowed to be trampled by elephants. He did not give up Rama's, I mean, Narayana's name. He was thrown from the mountain tops. Nothing happened! Such a devotee Prahlada was the son of Hiranyakasipu!

One day Hiranyakasipu challenged him. "Do you think that your Narayana is there in this pillar?"

Prahlada said, "Why not?"

Then Hiranyakasipu, using all his might, looking at the pillar ferociously, it was at that time, God inside the pillar – Sri Mahavishnu, in the form of Narasimhavatara, Narasimhavatara came out of the pillar, out of the pillar, and killed Hiranyakasipu there and blessed Prahlada.

And then Swami's interpretation was that pillar is nothing but your own body identification. When once you give up this body identification, Sri Mahavishnu, who is inside you, will manifest in the form of Narasimhavatara. Narasimha means what you call lion, the king of the forest, the best! Therefore, God comes out when you give up this body identification. That is the interpretation, Swami gave!

Looking at Him, "Swami, there is the interpretation You said. There is the story of Prahlada You narrated. Quite interesting and ringing in my ears even today!"

"But I have one doubt, Swami!"

"Yes, yes. Tell Me what happened!"

"Swami, in response to the prayers of Prahlada, Lord Sri Mahavishnu came out of the pillar in the form of Narasimhavatara. But today, our devotion is not of that state, of that stage. You are annoyed and upset with us! You are just giving *Darshan*, rubbing Your shoulder close to that pillar only to avoid us. So our dear Lord, who was, who is outside the pillar, now getting into the pillar, Swami! Prahlada made Swami come out of the pillar; we made our Swami to get into the pillar. Swami, that is our pitiable condition."

Believe me or not, Swami laughed and laughed and laughed and liked the joke, liked the joke, and then He got up and then came out of the interview room, started talking with the boys as before. That made me thrilled! This experience I will never forget in my life.

I will also share with you another experience. There in Kodaikanal, all boys on the last day of our trip, the boys were crying and ah singing songs, not in a joyful mood, very sorrowful and melancholic.

Swami didn't like that. He told boys, "Arre! I brought you here, kept you here for one month long and gave you what all you wanted, what all I wished to give you, blessed you with number of opportunities. Why do you cry?"

The boys said, "We don't want to go, Swami. We will be here."

Baba said, "I have to go back. College, school admissions will start. I have to take care of the administration in Prasanthi Nilayam. We must go. If you want, you stay. I will go to Kodaikanal, I mean go to Puttaparthi", Swami said.

Boys said, "No, no, no, Swami!"

It was at that time Swami asked me to speak. "Anil Kumar, the boys are upset. To make them cheerful speak something."

Then I got up and said, "Swami, I seek your apology, beg me, I-I beg your pardon. I beg your pardon, Swami! My apologies to You if I take some liberty to joke at this moment."

Swami said, "OK, OK, OK, carry on!"

Then I said, "Swami. You always say, 'You are God, you are God.' But I am not able to believe it."

Then said Swami said, "Oh, if you are not God, you are a he-buffalo!" Everybody laughed and then Swami said, "Come on, speak!"

Then I started speaking. "Swami says I am God! Now my name is Sathya Sai Baba, right! I am God now." Swami was staring at me. All boys were very much excited to see what is going on there.

And then I started speaking, "As Sathya Sai Baba, as God, I must get up at 3.30 or 4'o clock in the morning, which is impossible for me to get up at this stage. Then, as Sathya Sai Baba, I should have only some glass of water and then get down to be ready by 6'o clock, talk to ashram heads, give them instructions and start giving *Darshan*. Left to me, impossible!"

"To have a glass of water and come down like that, I will be completing, at least two cups of coffee before I come to *Darshan*." Then I continued. As Sathya Sai Baba, I should start giving *Darshan* right from where ladies are seated there. As I go along the lines, I see many of the ladies sitting in the front row always, every day, not giving chances to the newcomers, not giving chances for freshers. They only sit in the front row. See that! So they are going to take the birth of the slabs or the stones on which they sit," and joked, and that is what I said. "And then proceed further slowly, and then comes towards the elderly people, gents. They give letters, letters. 'Swami, joint pains! 'Swami, conjunctivitis!' 'Swami, arthritis!' 'Swami, pneumonitis! Swami!' These are the only things. Not even one letter thanking Swami for taking care of us this long; thanking Swami for all the things that He has given and blessed us with. Nobody, no thanks letter, always requests, demands.

“Swami, let my son get a green card.” “Let my daughter get married soon.” “Son with a big dowry and daughter should get married without a dowry.” “Swami, my pension is awaited. See that I get my pension.” “Swami, my promotion” These are only letters of demand.

And then slowly Swami will look at the students. What do they write? “Swami, You give me interview and not to the other boy whom I don’t like.” Another fellow writes, ‘Swami, give me chain, not to the other fellow, my enemy!’ Like this – “Give me chains, give me rings, give me watches and not to others.” See that!

Then Swami comes, walks along the veranda, where all Heads, VIPs are seated there. What do they write (in) letters? “Swami, remove that fellow! Kick him out of ashram. He is a regular fellow; he is in-disciplined” All letters of complaint. ‘Remove him, Kick him out’ – those letters.

And then, Swami calls some people, devotees for an interview. He wants, as Sathya Sai Baba, I am supposed to speak divine matters; but devotees go on asking, “I want this! I want this!” What to do? I am helpless.

Then somehow complete the interview, sit there in the *bhajan* hall as Sathya Sai Baba. I want my students to sing some songs, *bhajans*, reflecting unity of faiths, unity of religions. They don’t sing at all. I want them to sing fast songs. I want them to sing certain songs where there will be, all devotees would be able to join chorus, where everybody would participate. They don’t do that!

Then I go for lunch to the dining hall at the end of the Arathi. Along with me some special guests, members of the Central Trust, also seated along with me for lunch. All items are served to everybody - sweets and hots, a royal banquet. And I as Sathya Sai Baba should be satisfied with ragi malt only – no ice creams, no sweets, no hots; just ragi, ragi malt made into some balls, just very little, have some butter milk or have some rasam, finish off; while all others that are joining me at the dining table, they will have ice creams, fruit salads, sweets, hots. I will have to be satisfied with that! I cannot do that, impossible! I like ice creams, I like sweets. As Sathya Sai Baba, I should not eat! What am I to do? As Sathya Sai Baba, I should receive these complaint letters, these letters of requests. Like I am fed up with this! This kind of thing is repeated every day, over years!

Swami was laughing (*Laughter*). All people laughed and hilarious laughter! And then finally I said, “Swami, I am not in a hurry to become God! Let me take my own time! Let me have ice creams, sweets, hots – hot, hot pickles. As a human being, let me be happy, Swami! I am not in a hurry to become God. You are God! Let me worship You! Let me speak in praise of You!”, and thus I concluded my talk.

Sai Ram! We will meet later.