

**Sai Pearls of Wisdom,
Part 42-A**

**I AM I, MS SUBBALAKSHMI, YOGIS
April 3rd, 2023**

**Om Sri Sai Ram
Prasanthi Sandesh**

Om Sri Sai Ram

Welcome to Sai Pearls of Wisdom.

One summer, Swami was in Kodaikanal. A few students, teachers and devotees accompanied Him. One morning, Swami told all of them, "Whoever answers My question correctly, I will reward him with a special gift!"

On hearing this, everyone, especially the students, got very excited.

Swami then asked, "Who am I? Who am I?"

Most of the students answered loudly in one voice, "God!"

Swami replied, "Not correct!"

One student said, "*Shiva-Shakti Swaroopa!*"

Swami now said, "Not correct!"

Then second student, "Sri Krishna has incarnated again!"

Swami laughed and said, "Not correct!"

Another student said, "*Sarva Devatha Swaroopa!*"

Swami once again replied, "Not correct!"

Finally everyone told Him, "Swami, please tell us who You are!"

Swami answered, "I am I! I am I!"

Initially, everyone burst into laughter. But as Swami started explaining in a serious tone, there was pin drop silence.

Swami explained, “I is the basis of everything! When you say, ‘I am this!’ or ‘I am that!’ a feeling of *Dvaita* – duality is expressed. ‘I am I’ expresses *Advaita* – non-duality. I am recognised by many names such as God, *Atma*, *Brahman*, Sri Krishna, Sri Rama, Shiva, Allah and Jesus. But this ‘I’-ness of *Advaita* is the Ultimate Truth!”

Swami’s teachings reflect the essence of all knowledge. One of the many devotees of Swami is the world-famous cricketer Sri Sunil Gavaskar. Since 1970, the Gavaskar family have been devotees of Baba. But Sunil visited Prasanthi Nilayam for the first time only in 1982. After blessing him with an interview, Swami took him to the Boys Hostel. All the students had gathered in the Prayer Hall.

Swami made Sunil sit next to Him and said to him, “Today is Bakrid. So tell the students about the importance of this festival!”

Sunil replied, “Swami, I have no knowledge about Islam, Quran or Bakrid! How can I speak about it?”

Swami told him, “You just stand in front of the mic. Everything will be alright!”

Sunil obeyed Swami’s directive and he spoke on Islam and Bakrid for about 12 minutes. His speech drew a loud applause.

As he returned to his seat, Swami said, “Didn’t I tell you that you will be able to speak?”

Sunil only folded his hands in reverence to Swami. Today, after so many years, Sunil in wonder says, “I really don’t remember anything that I spoke! It was Swami who spoke through me!” That’s what Sunil Gavaskar said.

On 23rd November 1926, *Shiva-Shakti Swaroopa* – Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba incarnated on earth. On the very next day, Yogi Aurobindo announced in his *ashram*: “Yesterday Lord Sri Krishna Himself has incarnated on earth in human form. He will lead all of humanity on the righteous path. In this mortal land, this power will light the *Atma Jyothi* in each and every heart. His voice will reach the ears of millions. Today, God has incarnated on earth!”

Thousands of years ago, the sages Bhrigu, Agasthya, Vasishta and Shuka Muni have written in great detail about Bhagavan Baba’s Advent in their respective *Nadi Granthas*. In 1957, after the conclusion of the Divine Life Convention held at Venkatagiri, Swami Sacchidananda declared, “Sri Sathya Sai Baba is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is the *Atma* that dwells in every living being and is the Embodiment of Truth, Awareness and Bliss!”

Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh and Sri Maha Purushji have accepted the supremacy of Bhagavan Baba. Swami Chinmayananda, Swami Amritananda, who is the disciple of Ramana Maharishi, Sri Godavari Matha of Sakori, Sri Devi Tai have all expressed reverential feelings about Bhagavan Baba's greatness and Divinity.

The great Yogiraj Parama Puja Niya Gagangiri Maharaj has spoken about *Yogishwar* Sri Sathya Sai Baba as follows: "In our country, from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari there are many secret places where many *Sadhus* and *yogis* have been engrossed in sitting in penance over thousands of years. Even if you collect all their yoga, *Samarthya* – the spiritual yogic power, it will pale in front of Sri Sathya Sai's effulgence!"

Devara Baba whose physical age is over 400 years, resides at Tirtharaj Prayaga in a sacred spot where all the 3 sacred rivers – Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi - merge. He has expressed, "Bhagavan Baba is Lord Shiva Himself! He is *Para Brahma Swaroopa!*"

The well-known author of the world famous book *Yogi Kathamritha*, Swami Paramahansa Yogananda has said, "God has incarnated on earth in South India and is well-known by the name Sai Baba!"

In the same *Yogi Kathamritha*, there is a reference to Mahavatar Baba or Babaji whose age is over a thousand years. He says, "I am familiar with all the 3 Shiva incarnations. I had *darshan* of Shirdi Sai! I take *darshan* of the present incarnation, Sri Sathya Sai! I also know about the future Prema Sai Avatar!"

In this way, millions of devotees from all over the world are fortunate to be blessed with the *darshan* of *Yogishwar* Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who is the Lord of all *yogis*.

Well, when *Parama Puja Asaram Bapuji* went for Bhagavan Baba's *darshan* in September 2004, he said, "Bhagavan Baba is Lord Krishna Himself." Many known and unknown *Yogis* have uttered similar words about Swami.

Bhagavan Baba says, "The celestial beings coming from *Deva Loka* are also yearning for My *darshan!*" An incident which illustrates the truth of this statement was witnessed by one of Swami's ardent devotees, Sri Raja Reddy. This happened quite a few years ago. It was *Vaikunta Ekadasi*, a day of exceptional sanctity. It is described as a glorious day when Lord Sri Mahavishnu gives *darshan* to His devotees at the northern gate of His celestial abode, *Vaikunta*.

On that night, Sri Raja Reddy was sleeping on the veranda on the first floor of Prasanthi Nilayam. Around midnight he woke up. He noticed through the slightly opened door of Swami's room an effulgent illumination. Being curious, he drew closer and peeped through the gap between the doors. He was astonished at what he saw. Several celestial beings were taking turns to bow down in reverence at the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba. Swami was reclining on the bed and accepting their homage. Seven effulgent masses of bright light were seen around Swami's bed. The vision startled Raja

Reddy. He quickly closed the door and went back to his bed on the veranda totally stunned.

Next day, he enquired with Swami about this heavenly experience. Swami explained, “They are all celestial beings – *Devathas*. They had come for My *darshan*. What you saw as the seven masses of bright light were the *Saptha Rishis* – the seven great *Rishis*! As I protect you with My blessings, you are still alive. Otherwise, the moment you set your eyes on that scene, you would have been reduced to ashes!” Just this one incident alone is enough to reveal Swami’s glory.

Many great personalities representing different faiths honoured Swami. In 1968, there was a Pir named Haji Baba. There was a Pir named Haji Baba who lived in Nairobi. At that time, he was 92 years old. He was known to have performed many miracles such as controlling the 5 elements, healing the sick from incurable diseases. He used to say, “My area of work is limited to Karachi, East Africa, United Kingdom and a few other countries. But Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba works for the entire world. There is no limit(s) to His work!” When he said this about Swami, it was the 42nd year of Baba’s Advent. Today in the 82nd year of the Advent of this Yugavatar, we find that every word spoken by the Pir has come true. That’s what Bhagavan Baba is!

Swami says that He has incarnated on earth only for the upliftment of all mankind. And true to His word, He is constantly engaged in overseeing that each one’s life is sanctified and filled with auspiciousness.

The story of the world famous vocalist, Smt. MS Subbalakshmi tells us about the ‘Mangala *Karaaya Roopa*’ of Bhagavan Baba. Smt. Subbalakshmi was well-known (the) world over as the *Sus-swara* Lakshmi, right from childhood. She had offered her devotion to God through *Nada-Upasana* and she had accepted this path to lead her to liberation. A deep reader will be surprised to know that this well-known singer’s life was full of calamity and misfortunes. Maybe this was one reason for her music being full of *Bhakti Rasa*!

When she embarked upon her career, she had enacted the role of Mirabai in a movie. Her melodious voice and gifted acting abilities were lauded in this role. Then onwards until her last moment, she only sang devotional songs. She donated all her earnings to charitable institutions and led a saintly life. Smt. MS Subbalakshmi was blessed with Swami’s first *darshan* in 1975 at Brindavan. With tearful eyes and intense devotion, she bowed down in reverence and placed her head on Swami’s Lotus Feet.

Swami said to her, “Come! Since the past 10 years, you have been waiting for this *Padanamaska*! Take it now!”

Why did Swami say this? Ten years prior to this, Smt. Subbalakshmi heard about Swami’s Divinity from one of her friends. But her husband Sri Sadasivam was not ready to believe in Swami. Just like other noble ladies, she did not go anywhere without her husband’s permission or his company. She therefore requested this friend to offer

Pranams to Swami on her behalf and bring *Prasadam* for her. When her friend told this to Swami, He said, "I know. Her husband Sadasivam is not ready to come here. But one day, he will come!" Saying so, He gave *Prasadam* for Subbalakshmi.

As per Swami's words, that day dawned after 10 long years and finally Smt. Subbalakshmi and her husband arrived for Swami's *darshan*. During this time, she was passing through the most arduous phase of her life. Swami gave her *Padanamaskar* and also blessed her with an interview. After coming out of the interview room, Smt. Subbalakshmi said, "I have been privileged to receive the bliss of Swami's *darshan* in person, only as a reward for my penance of several years!"

The couple were recipients of this bliss several times at Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan and Sundaram. Subbalakshmi recorded several *bhajans* of Swami in her golden voice. She also lent her voice to record a lyric, '*Sai Ram Chiluka*' which was composed by Swami Himself. Swami showered His boundless Grace on her several times.

In 1982, her daughter was seriously ill. At that time, Swami kept both of them in His divine presence at Brindavan for over a month.

When Subbalakshmi was asked the question, "How did you become a devotee of Swami?" with humility she replied, "People speak about Swami's glory and how He rescues His devotees from calamities. But as far as I am concerned, His biggest miracle is the one, when He casts His loving and compassionate glance on you and you experience a peace which is indescribable! There is a sense of security one experiences in His presence, and besides that, one realizes the truth through His words each of which is a sacred *mantra*. I feel that during *Kali Yuga*, Lord Sri Krishna has incarnated on earth to protect the people. We are really fortunate to be living during the time when the ever-compassionate Swami has incarnated on earth!"

Once a devotee of Swami was travelling from Chennai to Puttaparthi. He asked Subbalakshmi, "*Amma*, tomorrow I am leaving for Prasanthi Nilayam. Do you want to send a message for Swami?"

Choked with emotion, she folded her hands before Swami's photographs in her house and said, "What can I say to God? Before any desire enters my heart, He fulfils it!" A few days later, she merged with God! Bhagavan Baba blessed Subbalakshmi and filled her life with auspiciousness.

May He also make our lives auspicious, is our heartfelt prayer at the Lotus Feet of *Mangala Karaaya*, Swami!

Thank you! We will meet later! Sai Ram!