

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

"Sai Pearls Of Wisdom"
Part Seven

December 11th, 2002

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

Sai Ram!

With Pranams to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Month of August 2002

This evening we'll be completing the course of conversations we had with Bhagavan during the month of August. I am glad to know there is such a good response to these conversations for which I do not take any personal credit. I am well aware of the interest in hearing about the conversations transacted on the verandah, since people have no access to them. So it is with no personal credit or glorification that I am pleased to give them to you. I am glad there has been a very good response from Sai devotees all over the world.

"Consider This Body as an Instrument"

That evening in August, Swami started speaking about certain spiritual aspects -- deep philosophical aspects. Each sentence was very important for every one of us.

The first statement He made was: "Consider this body as an instrument."

This statement is significant for more than one reason. We consider this body as ourselves. Rather we identify ourselves with this body, which is not true, because the body goes on changing from time-to-time or may even expire at any moment, without any formal announcement. So how can we consider that we are the body? What is the value of having this body? The answer is simple. The body is an instrument, that's all. The body is to be used as an

instrument for the realization of the purpose for which it is meant. The body is given or obtained because of the process of birth. However, we are born in order *not* to be born again. It is to this end that the body has to be used as a powerful instrument in the Divine Mission.

The second statement Baba made was this: “Know that God is the Master of this body -- God is the owner of this body.”

Let me just comment on this as some explanation is needed. Some elaboration will help you to understand the seriousness, the gravity, depth and profundity of this statement. It is for this reason that I want to explain further.

Do we consider that God is the Master of our bodies? We may say so, but without having any experience of it. If we consider God as the Master of this body, then all our actions would be godly, all our thoughts would be Divine, all our actions would be sacred and all our words would be full of Truth. But in reality, it is not so. Often our words are full of lies, our actions are selfish and our thoughts are self-centered. If we still declare that God is the Master of this body, it is utterly ridiculous. So, not only by word but also in spirit, we have to accept that God is the Master of this body, which will be reflected by our thought, words and actions.

And the third statement Baba made was: “Reduce or cut short your body attachment.”

What does this mean? Because we are attached to this body, we suffer more than we should. When there is the awareness of, “I am not the body”, the intensity of suffering or the gravity of suffering will be less. Not that there won't be suffering. There'll be pain, but it will be less painful than it might have been. So our attitude will change. Our attitude toward life will change when we are less attached to our body and when we are less identified with our body. That's what Bhagavan told us.

And then the question came, “Why are we attached to this body? What does it lead to? Where does it lead us?” Here is the answer Bhagavan gave: “Our illusion is responsible for this body attachment, which leads to grief or misery or sadness.”

There's no benefit or advantage, after all, in identifying with the body as it brings suffering and misery, that's all. The cause for this body attachment

happens to be illusion or delusion. Bhagavan does not want us to be mistaken about this. He does not want us to identify ourselves with this body.

And then came the question, “Swami, then what is delusion? What is illusion?”

Bhagavan mentioned again that evening the same oft-repeated quote, the famous illustration from the Upanishads: “There lies a rope, but you mistake it to be a snake. In fact, it’s not a snake -- it’s only a rope. It’s only your mistaken identity. It’s only your wrong identification that made you confused and totally fear-stricken. You run away from it, thinking it’s a snake; but actually it’s not a snake. It’s only rope. So mistaken identification or mistaken identity is what is called ‘illusion’. The reality is not understood. We go by falsification; we go by super imposition. That is responsible for illusion, which leads to fear.”

Then He gave an example. It seems a young man was crying. A noble and aware soul happened to pass by and he asked, “Young man, why are you crying, my boy? What makes you cry?”

This young man said, “I lost my mother. My mother who loved me so much is no more. I lost my mother and that’s why I’m crying.”

And this wise man said, “Where has she gone? Your mother is lying right here. Your mother is very much here -- you have not lost her. She’s here, so why do you cry?”

This story helps us to understand that the mother’s body was still there, but not her life. So if the boy considered only the body, then the mother was not lost as her body was right there. But still the boy cried because, even though his mother’s body was there, it was not his mother in reality. Why? Her life was gone. So this mistaken identification with the body, the wrong identification with the body, is what is called ‘illusion’ or ‘delusion’, which leads to subsequent fear and sadness. That’s what Bhagavan has said.

Bhagavan gave another example: “To think that ‘I am Indian’, to think that ‘I am Russian’, to think ‘I am American’ is also an illusion. It is an illusion because, though you were born in America and are therefore an American, you are *not* America. You were born in America and hence you are American by citizenship, but you are *not* America. You are different. Now you are visiting here in India, so you are not the place you normally live. You are *not* your profession; you are *not* your gender -- you are *beyond* all that. The reality is none of these. The true Self is above all of them.”

Then Bhagavan related another beautiful example: “The whole world is like a beautiful mansion, like a beautiful building, and each room is a country. But to consider this room to be the only one in the building is foolishness. This building has so many rooms -- some of this type and so many of that type. All the rooms together make one building.

Similarly, the whole world is one mansion, and the rooms are the different countries. What is it that separates us? What is it that differentiates us? What is it that demarcates us? Only the walls of caste, community, race, nationality, creed, cadre, that’s all. When all these walls are removed, when all these narrow chains are cut off, then we are all One -- one caste of humanity and one religion of Love. The realization of Oneness is the Truth. The experience of diversity, multiplicity and plurality is the delusion.” That’s what Bhagavan said that evening.

Finally He concluded saying, “Boys, develop broadmindedness. Expansion is life; contraction is death. Have broadmindedness and vastness of the spirit. Understand that there you will find bliss, not in contraction or in narrow-mindedness. “

“Money and Sai Baba Will Never Go Together”

Now I move on to the next episode. This incident is an example from Bhagavan’s life. Swami was sitting on His chair when He suddenly called a gentleman from the devotees -- an elderly person, an old man, wearing a *dhoti* with a long shirt.

“Come here!”

The man came forward. Bhagavan introduced him to all of us. He said this man was a correspondent for a chain of schools in the State of Karnataka.

Then He looked at him seriously and said, “What is it that you are doing there in those schools? You have named your schools after Me. All your schools are named as ‘Sri Sathya Sai’ schools, but you are collecting money. You are collecting fees. You are collecting money for examinations, sports, library and all that. That is very bad. You cannot bear My name and collect money. Money and Sai Baba will never go together. You cannot have My Name if you want to collect money like that. I am dead against any fund-raising. Do you understand?”

That gentleman started shivering. “Swami, I beg Your pardon. I understand.”

And Baba said, “Immediately after your return, refund all the money. Refund it all and write to Me. Only then will I permit you to enter Prashanti Nilayam, not otherwise. It is not proper on your part to put education on sale -- like selling toothpaste or a matchbox. You cannot have education for sale. I don’t like it. Don’t do that.”

“Give Brand New Clothes If You Want to Call It Seva”

Further Swami also made a comment: “Some people offer old used clothes to people and announce they are doing service. What are you really doing? Distributing old clothes. This is *not* charity. It is *not* sacrifice. You are simply cleaning out the junk, that’s all (*Laughter*). So, if you want to give clothes, you should give *brand-new* clothes. Only then you can call it a donation, sacrifice or *seva*. Don’t give worn-out, torn-out, old, used clothes and call it charity. That’s all drama; it is all a stunt. I don’t want you to do that.” That’s what Bhagavan said.

In this context, I should tell you that in Karnataka State, it costs a donation of 25 *lakhs* per student for medical school! This is *in addition* to the regular college fees and the cost of boarding or lodging. They have to pay *in advance* a donation of 25 *lakhs*! Only then will they get accepted.

Swami laughed and laughed and said, “Instead of studying medicine, if you keep those 25 *lakhs* in the bank, plus the 5 *lakhs* for the college fee, tuition fee, sports fee, games fee, exam fee, library fee, and the 10 more *lakhs* for food and accommodation, that’s around 35 *lakhs*. If you kept all of that in the bank, you would get 35,000 *rupees* (monthly) as interest. With that, you could sit cross-legged without studying. You would be a *maharaja* -- a king! Then why go to college? Why study?”

So, education today has become a mockery. For lower kindergarten in Bangalore, you have to pay a donation of 25,000 *rupees*! Just for a three-year-old child to get into L.K.G. - lower kindergarten - a donation of 25,000 *rupees* is required! Education has become so commercial, and Bhagavan is dead-set against that. He doesn’t like it.

And lastly Swami said, “If you want to start institutions in My name, take Me as the ideal and know that whatever I say is Truth. You can verify it wherever you go. My path is very clear and righteous. My words are nothing but Truth. I am an ideal to all of you.” That’s what Bhagavan said that evening.

“Ramayana Has a Message To Convey”

Now we come to the next episode for the month of August 2002. Swami, most unusually that evening, sat in His chair after interviews. He was in a relaxed mood and, while looking at me said nicely, "Ask Me some questions."

We didn't know what to ask or what not to ask, what type of questions He wanted, what His mood was. (*Laughter*)

"Swami?"

"Yes! Ask some questions."

Then I thought the convenient thing to do would be to ask a question on the *Ramayana* -- that would be less risky. (*Laughter*) If I asked some questions on deep philosophy, He might say, "You selfish fellow, so many students are here. Ask questions that will be useful to them." If I said, "Swami, grant me an interview tomorrow" He might say, "That's not a question. You are a selfish fellow! Fish is better than selfish."

So I thought it would be convenient and safe to ask a question on the *Ramayana*. I said, "Swami, there are so many epics in Hindu Vedanta. The story of Krishna is '*Bhagavatha*'. The story of Rama is '*Ramayana*'. The story of the Pandavas and the Kauravas and their battle at Kurukshetra is '*Mahabharatha*'. These three are important epics. There is so much mythology, yet these three are prominent. I have one question. "

"What is it? Ask."

"We have so many versions of the *Ramayana*: A great saint named Tulsidas wrote his own version of *Ramayana* called '*Ramacharitamanas*'. Valmiki composed the original *Ramayana*. A woman by the name of Molla wrote another *Ramayana* -- the '*Molla Ramayana*'. There's a gentleman named Kamban who wrote yet another *Ramayana*, the '*Kamban Ramayana*'. Sage Vyasa wrote still another spiritual *Ramayana*, the '*Adhyatma Ramayana*'. What are all these? Which one is true? (*Laughter*) Why so many? Why isn't it so with the other epics? Why aren't there a lot of *Mahabharatha*'s? Why are there only a lot of *Ramayana*'s? Isn't it confusing? Of all the versions, which one is correct? Which one should I follow? Which one is authentic?"

Then Bhagavan laughed. He was so compassionate. He said, "There are so many versions of the *Ramayana* because it has a message to convey on how one should behave -- at the individual level, in one's social conduct and

ethical nature as a householder, as a brother, as a ruler, as a husband, as a friend and as an ideal man. All these aspects are dealt with very well in the *Ramayana*. The social, ethical, moral, individual and political roles -- all these roles are put together and rolled into one, dealt with in detail in that holy epic, the *Ramayana*.

Each author focused on one of these aspects. Thus we have so many *Ramayana*'s. Some have dealt in depth with the devotional aspect. Some have dealt with the social aspect or the individual aspect. The perfected, multi-dimensional aspects of the *Ramayana* have been dealt with by many people on different occasions in different periods of time. Therefore, we have many versions of *Ramayana*." That's what Bhagavan has said.

**"If You Have Total Faith In God,
You Will Never Question His Actions"**

Then I realised that it would be all right for me to take a risk, as His mood seemed good. Hence, He would be lenient. I took the risk and said, "Swami, if Krishna is God, how can He afford to be partial to the Pandavas? Can God be partial? The Kauravas are also His children. He should be impartial. The whole *Mahabharatha* shows Krishna's total partiality toward the Pandavas. So, how can He be God? I can't reconcile it. I know fully well that You are going to support Krishna because You are that same Krishna. But still I am not able to understand it. Please explain."

Bhagavan said, "All your misnomers, all your misconceptions, all your misapprehensions are signs of your total, utter and complete ignorance. (*Laughter*) Your ignorance is responsible for this confusion, for this sorry state of affairs. Secondly, you do not have total faith in Krishna as God. If you had total faith in God, you would never question His actions. If you say Krishna was partial, and if He was partial, can He be God? It means that you have no faith in Krishna as God. So, absence of faith, lack of devotion and ignorance are responsible for such a lopsided view or wrong impression."

"Oh, I see." Now it is my turn to respond. "OK, Swami, but how do You justify that? How do You justify Krishna being partial to the Pandavas? That is my question. I am ignorant; I lack faith; I am sufficiently foolish -- I accept that. But what is Your answer to my question about Krishna being partial to the Pandavas? Can He do that?"

Then Swami said, "All right, I'll give you a straight answer. The Pandavas followed Krishna completely. The Pandavas followed Krishna's command

totally, fully and unconditionally and, because they followed Krishna totally, He supported them. They were completely devoted to Him. It wasn't partial, conditional or part-time devotion. Theirs was total devotion. In times of humiliation, in times of pleasure and pain, in challenging situations and in war, they followed Krishna totally. So Krishna supported them. How can you say He was partial?"

"Oh Swami! My case is lost. (*Laughter*) Now I understand. God cannot be partial. He may *look* partial, but only because of *our* ignorance. So, if God is to support us, if God is to stand by us, we have got to follow His command totally. We must develop trust in Him unconditionally."

Swami said, "Had you known this earlier, you would not have asked this question!" (*Laughter*)

Then I said, "Swami, You said Yourself that I am a man of ignorance. So naturally I asked this question. (*Laughter*) My question is justifiable, while Your answer made me free from ignorance. I am no longer ignorant of the facts." (*Laughter*)

Everyone joined in the laughter. With that, the evening session concluded.

"God Is Only One, Not Two"

Now I will move to the next episode in the month of August 2002. Bhagavan began with some serious remarks, again along a philosophical, spiritual line of thought. When we listen to others, we don't have doubts. We don't have any doubts when listening to others because we don't listen to them totally. But because we listen to Swami in rapt attention, we get doubts. I think you'll agree with me. We don't listen to others with total attention, but when God is speaking to us, we are in total awareness. We try to take in every word; and hence, some doubt arises: "Is it possible? Can I practise this? Why am I thinking about this since so long?" Naturally, there's a wide scope for doubts.

If we ask some questions of other *gurus*, they may give some evasive replies, as if escaping the question. Therefore, their answers are not satisfactory to us. But courtesy demands that we say, "Thank you, very nice answer" even if it was *not* nice. But in the case of Swami, it is totally different. His answers are straight and simple. He will drive the point straight home. There's no question whatsoever of doubt or ambiguity.

That evening Swami mentioned this statement: “*Ekam Evadvitiam Brahma.*” It is a very wonderful statement that everybody should be familiar with and should know by heart -- should learn and repeat. It is worth knowing. What is the meaning? *Ekam* means ‘one’. *Eva* means ‘only’ – so, ‘only One’. *Advitiam Brahma – Brahma* is God. *Advitiam* means ‘not two’. So, the meaning is, “God is One -- only One and not two.”

“Swami, one doubt.”

“What?”

“When You say, ‘God is only One’, isn’t that enough? Why do You need to say, ‘not two’? I know I am very poor in mathematics – agreed. But if You say ‘only One’, that is enough. I can understand. So, why say ‘not two’? *Eva* means ‘only one’ – good, that makes sense. But, *Advitiam Brahma* means ‘not two’. Why should You say that? Why?”

Then Swami said, “Look here, it is said for emphasis in order to give additional significance. Then there is no chance for any misunderstanding, digression, perversion, misrepresentation or misinterpretation. God said clearly, “*Ekam Eva Advitiam Brahma.* God is only One, not two.”

Prajnana, Sujnana, Vijnana, Jnana

“OK, Swami, here’s another thing: please explain, ‘*Prajnanam Brahma*’.” This is also a *Mahavakya* (a Divine axiom). It is not difficult to remember. I want all of you to keep this statement in mind and reflect upon it. It is a beautiful statement. All statements are beautiful, but we can remember more easily those that are simple.

I am not a scholar of Sanskrit. Only these statements that are often repeated by Bhagavan I can certainly remember and quote them in my talks. It may look as if I am a Sanskrit scholar. But I tell you, I am not (*Laughter*) and I don’t want to be either because God knows all languages. I don’t need to learn Sanskrit to make God understand my language. God knows all languages. I don’t need to learn a complicated language at this age and complicate my life, no. I can manage with my language. I can manage with my ideas. I can make God understand and get replies to questions I have. So, I don’t need to know Sanskrit except for certain statements, which are very simple and easy to remember, like ‘*Prajnanam Brahma*’.

“Ah, Swami, please explain this *Mahavakya*, this great statement, a very profound statement, ‘*Prajnanam Brahma*’. What does it mean, Swami?”

He asked, “How do you understand it?”

He wanted me to explain in order to expose me to everybody. (*Laughter*) Very well, I take delight in this. Why not? If I am a source of entertainment for God and my students, what more could I want? (*Laughter*) If in my answering, everybody laughs at my expense, then very good! I want every evening to be like that, yes! At least I am not a killjoy. In fact, I am entertainment for God. God laughs and the boys laugh. Why not? If laughter is the remedy, seriousness is the sickness. Bliss is God; misery is the world. So, why can't we laugh?

Then Bhagavan said, “Tell me what you understand about ‘*Prajnanam Brahma*’.”

I said, “Swami, ‘Knowledge is God’. *Prajnanam* means ‘knowledge’ and Brahma is God. So it means, ‘Knowledge is God’.”

Swami said in His usual way, “You are completely wrong!” (*Laughter*)

Very good! I was not shocked, as I am always wrong. But I congratulated myself because my wrong answers provoked Him to speak further along these subject lines. Yes! So I always hope to give the wrong answers. Why not? All right, let Him say what He wants to.

Then Bhagavan explained, “There are four forms of knowledge. First is *Jnana*, second is *Vijnana*, third is *Sujnana* and fourth is *Prajnana*. “

“Oh I see. I didn't know there were four types of knowledge.”

Swami began to explain, “First, *Jnana*, what is *Jnana*? All information, all knowledge, all worldly information is *Jnana*. Everyone has this. Material knowledge, secular knowledge, education, humanities, science, technology -- that is all *Jnana*.”

“I see.”

“Second, *Vijnana*. *Vijnana* is the knowledge based on investigation, cause and effect, experimentation, observation and inference. So, *Vijnana* is science and

technology. *Jnana*, *Vijnana* -- the third one is *Sujnana*. What is *Sujnana*? *Sujnana* is spiritual knowledge.”

“Oh I see.”

“The fourth one is *Prajnana*. What is *Prajnana*? *Prajnana* is your very being. *Prajnana* is your very Self. *Prajnana* is awareness. *Prajnana* is ‘Constant Integrated Awareness’. That Supreme Self, knowledge of the Self, awareness of the Self, the very core of your life, the very being of your life, that is called *Prajnana*. That *Prajnanam Brahma*, that *Prajnana* is Divine. That’s the reason why Vedanta says, ‘You are the Children of Immortality. You are the Children of Eternity. You are the embodiments of Divine Atma.’”

Why? At the core, I am Divine. On the periphery, I am human. Just like an orange fruit that is covered by the rind or the skin, inside there is sweet juice. Similarly, the peripheral name and form separate me from my true reality -- the Self. That true reality of the Self is *Prajnana* or awareness.

When I close my eyes, turn inward, think of my very being and ask myself, “Who am I?” I answer that I am *not* the body; I am *not* the intellect; I am *not* the mind; I am *not* the five senses or actions; I am *not* the five life sheaths; I am *not* the five elements. I am the eternal *Atma*, the Supreme Spirit. This is what is called the theory of negation or ‘*Nethi-Nethi*’ (*‘not that-not that’*) By negating what you are not, you arrive at what you really are.

What you really are is the Supreme Self -- that Consciousness, that awareness, that experience of the true Self is called *Prajnana*. Once you experience that *Prajnana*, the true Self, it expands, becoming cosmic. You will experience the whole Cosmos, the whole Universe, as Divine. Every entity in this world, every object in this world, be it microcosm or macrocosm, will appear Divine from the standpoint of the Self. Through the lens or spectrum of *Prajnana*, which is the awareness or knowledge of the Self, we’ll have cosmic vision. That’s what Bhagavan told us that afternoon.

Doctors from Bombay

We come to the close of August 2002 with this last episode. It so happened that that afternoon, I suddenly received a message to report to the Mandir immediately. I didn’t have enough time to have my usual hot coffee. I am used to very, very hot coffee. (There is never any compromise in its temperature – it must be very hot!) So I didn’t have any time for that coffee. I simply ran out. I

could not risk being late because I knew the punishment that would follow -- so I ran!

I saw many people inside the Mandir who had already assembled there by that time. I came to know later that they were all doctors from Bombay -- about 500 of them. Yes, 200 ladies and 300 gents -- all of them doctors. They came to visit Prashanti Nilayam and see Bhagavan. They had already visited the Super Speciality Hospital in Bangalore the previous day; and that morning they had visited the Super Speciality Hospital in Prashanti Nilayam. Now they were all waiting for an interview. Bhagavan gave them a mass interview, not individual ones. I was blessed to be there to translate His talk, and in so doing, I got to enjoy it as well.

Though translation is a difficult and challenging job, translating is worth it because I am a student of Sai literature. I'm very much interested in the Sai Message, so it doesn't matter what people think about me. I will take any opportunity to translate, like this one with the doctors. It doesn't matter if I commit mistakes or if I am corrected quite often, much to the amusement of all. It just doesn't matter. Sometimes I even forget to translate, and instead I say, "Abba! What a statement, Swami!" (*Laughter*)

Then, in such moments, Swami replies, "What happened to you? You are here to translate whatever I say. (*Laughter*) What is this ecstasy? Come back to your senses." (*Laughter*)

Then I tell Him, "Swami, I'm not a mechanical loudspeaker (*Laughter*) I am not an electronic gadget. I am also a devotee. I love Your message. I'm sorry." And then I translate. So that's how I take it.

"The Whole Life Is Artificial Today"

That day Swami began speaking to the group. Suddenly, he turned to a 70 year-old doctor and said, "You underwent heart surgery, right?"

The doctor said, "Yes, Swami."

"Oh, all right. This morning you visited the Super Speciality Hospital and had another check up, right?"

"Yes, Swami."

Then He said, "I know -- you are a doctor and *a/so* a patient. That doesn't matter. I know, very good. All the doctors said that you are fine now, right?"

"Yes, Swami."

Then He said, "I may be here, but I know all that is happening everywhere -- I know."

This doctor said, "Swami, I have a pacemaker inside. With this pacemaker, I am able to manage. It is artificial, Swami."

Swami said, "Everyone is artificial in this world, not only you. All life is artificial today. Don't worry. Not only your pacemaker! (*Laughter*) Everyone is artificial. All life is artificial. Don't worry."

And then He said, "Ah, where is your heart? Where is your heart?"

"Swami, it is inside."

"*Oh ho*, your heart is inside, but art is outside. So, when the art comes from the heart, it will be interesting. But today, even the art is also artificial. Art is not coming from the heart, so all life is artificial."

That's what Swami said. Oh, there were peals of laughter and cheers, and everybody started laughing.

"Oh Doctors, Look At Me!"

Then Swami said, "Oh doctors, look at Me. I am 77. I don't have glasses. I can see any remote object, yes, and I have no pain or suffering at anytime. I don't take any pills or tonics -- nothing. After all, I eat only a small handful of *ragi* malt. That's all -- just *ragi* malt. I don't have any coffee or tea, or a breakfast of *idly*, *vada* or *dosas* like you fellows eat. I take only *ragi* malt. And on the next day, I have the same food, with nothing else in between. You must understand that I am quite strong and energetic."

"How is my weight? For the last 55 years, I am 108 pounds. It has not changed. Check my BP -- perfect, normal blood pressure. You may wonder, 'How is this possible?' First thing, I have total control of My diet or food. I don't eat all that stuff like *kurma-burma* that you eat." (*Kurma* is a preparation of spicy vegetables. Swami makes a pun of this word *Kurma* with Burma to

make 'Kurma- Burma'. Burma is the name of the country, as you know.) "So, I don't eat all that spicy stuff, no, no, no, believe me or not."

"I don't know what appetite is. I don't know what hunger is. I just don't know. I am never hungry, no. But if there are some guests, in order to give them some company, I pretend to eat, that's all."

My friends, please believe me. I have been at the dining table with Swami thousands of times. I am not speaking with any pride, but in all humility and respect, dear brothers and sisters. You know me sufficiently by now to understand that I am not a man of show and publicity. In all humility, I tell you this: If we start eating like Baba, we'll be 'no more' (dead) tomorrow -- simply finished! (*Laughter*) Wonder of wonders, He just mixes some rice and some *rasam* (*in those days – now He takes just ragi malt*) like this. (*Anil Kumar demonstrates how quickly it happened.*) *Hari Om Tat Sat!* Then He will get up and go. (*Laughter*) I don't know what kind of eating that is!

There is a gentleman who keeps serving Swamiji. Swami will say, "Hey, I'll ask you to leave! I don't want more, I don't want anymore." He will never say, "I want more", while we will never say, "I don't want anymore." (*Laughter*) In just the opposite way we say, "Welcome, my dear". We are so courteous! We welcome all the dishes because food is God! (*Laughter*) We should welcome God, you know. (*Laughter*) We should not be discourteous. But the living God says 'no' to food, so it's really very interesting.

"Where Is Gayathri? Gayathri Is Everywhere"

Then one doctor asked Swami a question: "Swami, would You please explain to us about Gayathri?"

My friends, all these statements are recorded. Nothing is fabricated or left to my imagination. For your information, for the last 27 months, all these things have been published in the Telugu version of *Sanathana Sarathi*. Since there has been a heavy demand for this material from the English-speaking devotees, I am now providing it. I am telling you this now in order to establish credibility and to make you convinced of the authenticity.

Bhagavan said, "Oh doctor, you want to know about Gayathri? Where is Gayathri?"

If that question was asked of you or me, we'd say, "Gayathri is inside."

"Where?"

"In Prashanti Nilayam."

“Where?”

“In front of the Post Office.” (*Laughter*)

“Where???”

“In front of the fourth Round Building.”

“Oh I see.” (*That is the place where the Gayathri temple is physically located inside the ashram.*) Then Baba said, “No. Gayathri is everywhere -- in you, with you, above you, below you, around you -- everywhere.” Let us be convinced of this statement. God is omnipresent. God is omniscient. God is omnipotent. God is everywhere. To say that Gayathri is only inside or only in front of the Post Office is ridiculous. Gayathri is in you, with you, above you, everywhere. That’s what Bhagavan said.

Then He began to explain the *Gayathri Mantra*. He said that there are three important parts in *Gayathri Mantra*. One deals with the health of the body; one relates to lifespan or longevity; the third part relates to the spirit or *Atma*. These are the three aspects dealt with in the *Gayathri Mantra*. Is that clear?

The first aspect, which relates to the body, is called Gayathri. The second aspect, which relates to our life span or the life principle, is Savithri. The third one -- spirit, Consciousness, *Atma*, the soul -- is Saraswathi. So, *Gayathri Mantra* has three aspects -- Gayathri, Savithri and Saraswathi, or body, life and *Atma*, meaning the spirit or Consciousness. Is that clear? (I have been a teacher for the last 40 years, so I don’t think I need to doubt my efficiency as a teacher, right? Since you indicate that you are following what I am saying, I am happy.)

The *Gayathri Mantra* has another aspect -- another plane or dimension. What is it?

***Om Bhur Bhuvah Suvaha
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayat.***

(*Anil Kumar chants the Gayathri Mantra.*)

Come on -- repeat it! (*Everyone present, all foreigners, chant three times the Gayathri Mantra.*) This is the *Gayathri Mantra*. I am glad that you can repeat it perfectly -- better than Indians themselves! (*Laughter*) Is that OK? Yes. I am so happy. I take this as a Sai miracle! I am not here to praise you or flatter you. The fact is that because of Baba’s Grace, you are able to repeat the *Gayathri*. It should be chanted perfectly. Good!

As I was saying, Swami said there are three fundamental aspects, namely Gayathri, Savithri and Saraswathi. Then He mentioned another thing: *Bhur, Bhuvah,*

Suvaha. These are three important words chanted in the *Gayathri Manthra*. What are they? *Bhur* is the body – inert. This is what is called ‘materialisation’ or the Gayathri aspect. “*Om Bhur Bhuvah*.” Next comes *Bhuvah*, which means ‘life’, the Savithri aspect or ‘vibration’. The third word, *Suvaha*, is the soul, spirit, *Atma*, the Saraswathi aspect or ‘radiation’. So, *Bhur* is the body materialisation or Gayathri. *Bhuvah* is life, Savithri or vibration. *Suvaha* is Saraswathi, *Atma* or radiation. Thus, materialisation, vibration and radiation relate to Gayathri, Savithri and Saraswathi -- the body, life and *Atma*.

Then suddenly Swami said, “Cloth is made up of threads. When the threads are removed, there’s no cloth, only cotton. Similarly, when you do not think of the past, there is no past at all. When you don’t think of the future, there’s no future. Past and future are the products of your thoughts. Like the threads in the cloth, when the threads of the past and the future are removed, the cloth or the mind totally vanishes. It totally disappears.”

And here Bhagavan said, “Live in the present; think of the present. The present is Divine. The present is life because past is death and future is uncertain. And in the present, think of duty as God and work as worship. That is the message of the present. The future is only hope – but there is no message. Where is the hope that one would live? The past has no message because it is gone. Only the present has a message. What is the message? Duty is God. Work is Worship.”

And then Bhagavan said, “Know and understand clearly that your body, mind, and senses are all negative and that the *Atma, Parabrahman*, the Consciousness, the soul is positive. Everything is negative in this world.”

And further He said, “I, *Brahman, Atma*, God, Spirit, Soul, Consciousness are all synonyms. They all mean the same, nothing to worry about.”

“This Lady I Met 40 Years Ago In Bombay”

Suddenly Swami looked at a doctor and said, “You visited the Super Speciality Hospital at Puttaparthi this morning. You must have seen the patient who got an injection costing 75,000 rupees, given without any expectation, not even of a ‘thanks’. That’s what you should know. You doctors should also know about the technicians in our hospital. They are two post-graduate students from our University, plus the dietitians are girls from our Anantapur Campus. You should know that.”

And then He turned to a lady and said, “You know, I met this lady 40 years ago in Bombay. Because she was strong, she is still alive. What a memory it is! Her house is very close to Dharmakshetra in Bombay. She lost her husband, and after some time, she wanted to get married again. I told her, ‘Don’t get married again. You have a baby. Take care of this child.’ Am I not right?”

That lady started crying. She’s a doctor now, doing a lot of service at the Dharmakshetra in Bombay -- a very eminent doctor.

Swami looked at that lady and said, "Had you gotten married again, you wouldn't have been a doctor like this. You wouldn't have been able to serve as much as you are doing now. You wouldn't have taken care of your baby."

And He immediately looked at another girl and said (*pointing to her*), "She is your daughter and she is also a doctor, I know. You are also a doctor, I know. You were just a baby back then."

Everybody was very much surprised. Swami looked at the girl and said, "Your mother sacrificed a lot. It is your duty to take care of her. Your life is everything to her, so serve her. It is your duty to make her happy. See that she'll never shed a tear. It's your duty."

That's what Bhagavan said and then immediately Bhagavan materialised earrings for the girl, and diamond earrings and a chain for her mother.

Then He blessed everybody: "May you all live a long, healthy and peaceful life." Then He distributed *prasadam* to everybody and had a number of group photos taken with them. With that, the August episodes comes to a close.

My Visit To Alike November 29th, 2002

This month, on the 29th of November, a very important event in my life happened, which I would very much like to share with you. The 29th of November was the 'Inauguration Day' for a hospital built by Bhagavan at a cost of one *crore rupees*. It is located at a place named 'Alike', a one-and-a-half-hour journey from Mangalore in the State of Karnataka.

Those people came and requested Bhagavan to inaugurate the hospital. The hospital was completed and the doctors were appointed and ready. Then Swami said, "I am so busy with devotees here, I am sending Anil Kumar to inaugurate the hospital."

I went to that auspicious event to inaugurate that hospital in the name of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The reception, the hospitality, the attention, the courtesy extended to me was as though Baba Himself were there. I went by flight to Mangalore and from there by car. Swami Himself gave me the airline ticket. He said, "I have the tickets ready. You go and they will receive you there by car."

A few things I know; I am familiar with a lot. But then sometimes I still get taken completely aback. My journey from Mangalore to Alike was something like our journey to Kodaikanal, full of mountain ranges and greenery, beautiful trees and a cool atmosphere, cloudy and wonderful -- like paradise! *Ah!* Tall jackfruit trees, betel nut trees, plantains, coconut trees and waterfalls -- *ah!* For one-and-a-half hours, how could I take it? I was extremely happy, my friends, I am fully aware of the truth I am sharing with you.

All along the route, there were a number of villages. Literate and illiterate, rich and poor, men and women, young and old, civilized and uncivilized; peasants, farmers and laborers; Hindus, Muslims and Christians -- whomever I saw on the way, believe me or not, they joined their hands and said, "Sai Ram! Sai Ram!" That's all. Later I came to know that they say the same thing to everybody -- they greet each other like that. I did not see a smoker. I did not see a drunkard. I did not hear anybody shouting. I did not hear anybody using abusive or objectionable language. All of them were peaceful and blissful. It was quite unbelievable!

Then I saw the town. Alike has five educational institutions, all built on mountaintops, which have 1500 students. The whole area is spread over 200 acres. You have to go by car to reach different places, as it is so vast! There are valley playgrounds and a stadium. The guesthouse is on another mountaintop. When I came out of the guesthouse and stood there on the terrace, I could enjoy the sunrise in the morning and the sunset in the evening. Behind me were mountain streams, while in front there were valleys, and further on, the educational institutions on the mountaintops. In the morning there were mists, clouds, patches of fog and skylarks. *Ah!* Heaven cannot be more beautiful than this. Yes, I mean every word that I say -- 100%!

Then some people started to serve me. Everything was kept ready, clean and perfect. I was served my morning coffee. It was *not* very, very hot. (*Laughter*) So I had a sip and then I left it there on the table. Within ten minutes, another gentleman brought hot, hot coffee. (*Laughter*) I tasted it. Then I started enquiring, "Boys, who are these two people (*referring to those two who were serving him*)?"

They said, "One is the Principal of the College and the other one is the Warden of the Hostel." Each one had two Ph.D. degrees! My friends, everything is subject to verification. Alike is a place where all of them are *brahmacharyas*, like *sanyasis* in their vows, unmarried like monks in a monastery or in the Catholic Church. All of them are unmarried. They wear a *lalchi* and a *lungi* such as the Tamilians wear (*simple white cotton cloth wore around the waist with a white towel over the shoulder*). It is very difficult to tell who has a Ph.D. degree and who has a Master's degree. All of them are like that -- very simple.

Then they took me to their Institutions -- so beautiful. All the students are boys. They all said, "*Sai Ram, Sir, Sai Ram, Sir.*" All of them know Vedic chanting. All of them are in musical bands. All of them do *bhajan* singing. Sai vision, Sai imagination and Sai ideals -- all of them have taken form and shape 100% there in Alike.

The moment I returned, Bhagavan said, "Come on, Anil Kumar, come on. How did you like that place?"

"Swami, it is of educational value. It is a spiritual camp. It is not a picnic -- certainly not a weekend joy trip for a change of scenery. It is a place of enlightenment. It is one thrilling, exciting experience."

Baba said, "That's why I sent you."

I showed Him all the photographs. The hospital was also built on a mountaintop -- a small building with lawns and flowers everywhere. The doctors are highly qualified and ready. Well, I could not believe it.

Earlier, there was one devotee who is now no longer with us. He was a *brahmacharya*, a *sanyasi*, who used to come here as a *Seva Dal* member. Inspired by the Divinity of Bhagavan, this devotee donated to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba the whole property -- 200 acres -- where these institutions are located today. His exemplary character inspired all the rest of the people there, and thus today we see all those educational institutions. With this I take leave of you.

1:16:30

May Bhagavan bless you!

***Professor Anil Kumar closed his talk with the bhajan,
"Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Babaji Ki. Jai!"***

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

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti