



CHAPTER 9
THE ONSET OF CHOLERA





When Swami was seven years old, diseases like cholera and plague began to spread in the nearby villages. Many people died and the atmosphere was surcharged with mortal fear.



People stopped their children from going out, out of the fear that they might get those diseases.



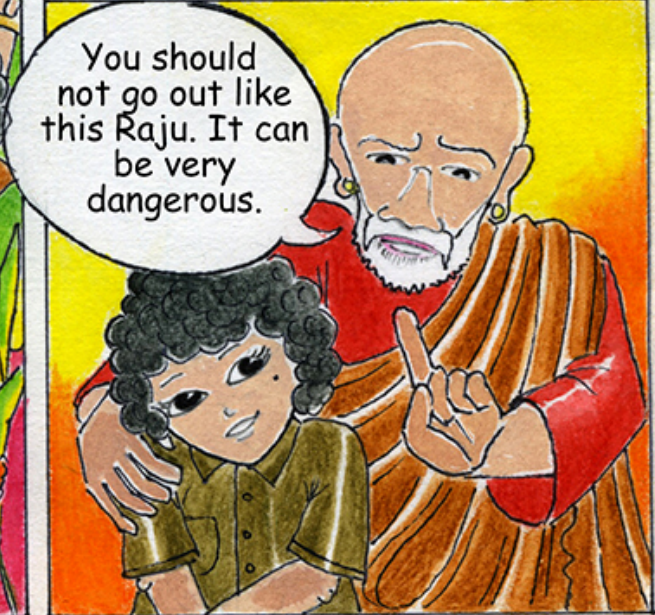
Kondama Raju feared for his beloved Sathya's life. He confined Him to the house and did not allow even His sisters to visit Him.



However, Sathya was able to go out every now and then without His grandfather's knowledge.



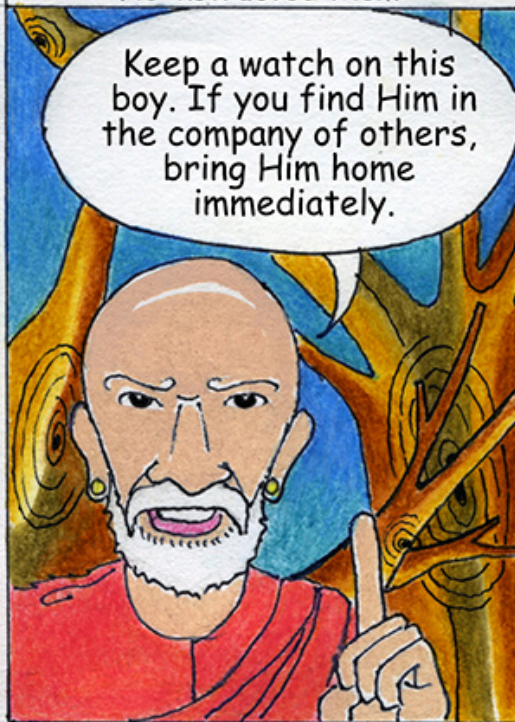
Later, when he came to know about it, he lovingly pleaded with his dear Raju-



A hunting community called Boyas lived in the same street as Kondama Raju's house.



Kondama Raju directed some of them to be Sathya's bodyguards. He instructed them-



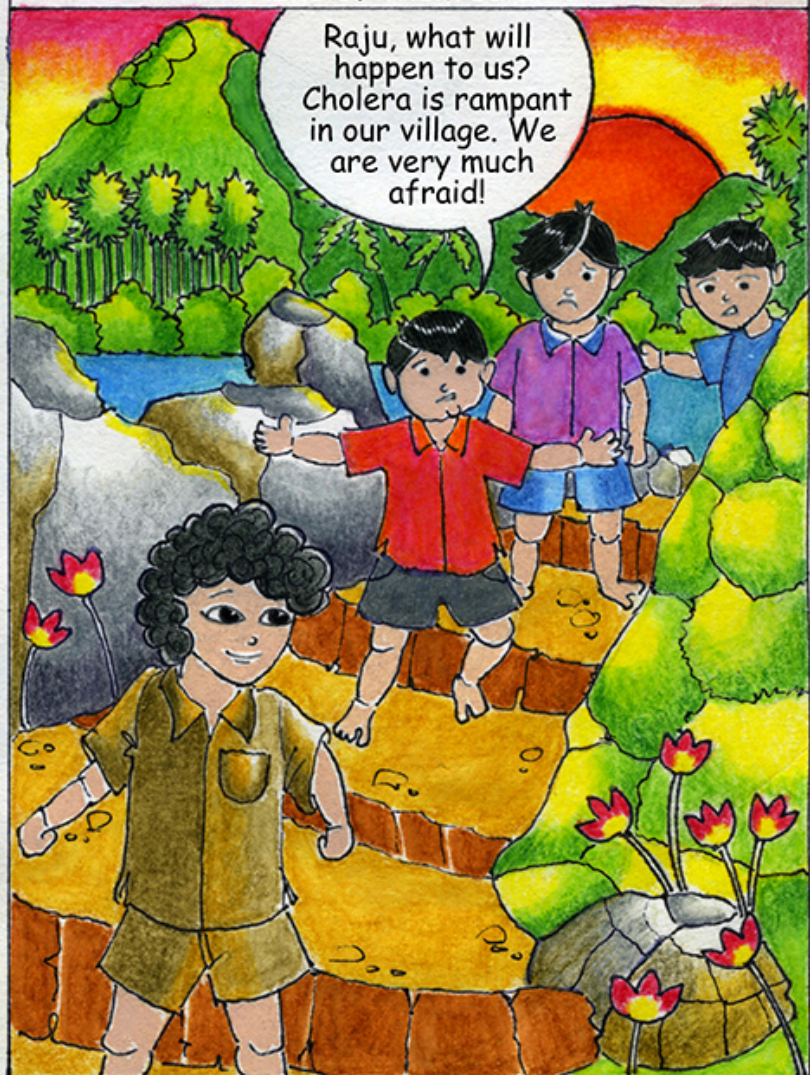
Sathya's movements couldn't be monitored despite such precautions.



Sathya's intentions were not to disobey His elders. He wanted to teach the children to never fear anything. A group of boys, out of love for Raju, would stealthily come to His home to be with Him.



A deep affection for Sathya made the young lads move with Him constantly. One day, out of fear, one of them said-



Sathya was waiting for this question. He spoke to them thus-

This body is bound to perish however much you try to protect it. Hence, don't be afraid of death but make efforts to keep the disease away. Remember the name of the Lord at all times.



Sathya suggested to them that they should burn an oil lamp in a prominent place in the village at six in the evening and sing bhajans.



The children went round the entire village singing bhajans, In those days people were afraid of ghosts and there were instructions to not step beyond the Sathyabhama temple after five in the evening. Sathya told the children-

There are no ghosts or devils at all. Be brave and chant the name of the lord, who is very much immanent in us.



People of Puttaparthi never used to wake up before seven in the morning. The sound of the bhajans was like an alarm for all.



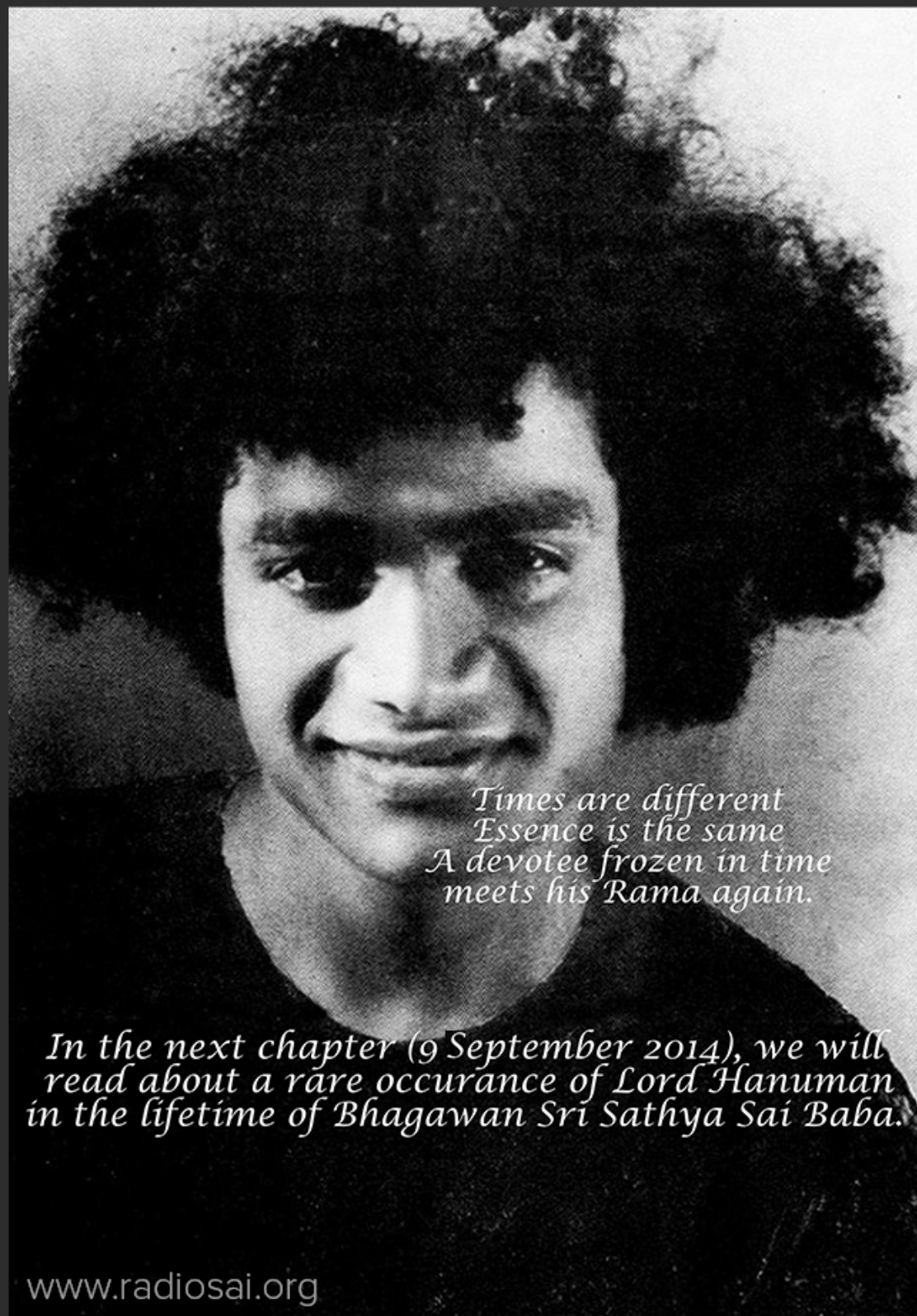
The boys started their 'Nagar Sankirtan' at five. People woke up, took bath and offered their prayers in such a holy atmosphere. Hence, these boys changed the lifestyle of the people too.



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With jingle bells tied to their legs and castanets in their hands, this fearless group marched up to the Chitravathi river. In three days they had covered the entire village. Cholera and plague left forever.





*Times are different
Essence is the same
A devotee frozen in time
meets his Rama again.*

*In the next chapter (9 September 2014), we will
read about a rare occurrence of Lord Hanuman
in the lifetime of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.*

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