



# HEART TO HEART



RADIO SAI LISTENER'S JOURNAL



## A PERFECT DISCIPLE



COVER STORY

**THE STORY OF JOHN S HISLOP**

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PRANAMS AT THE LOTUS FEET

# Journal

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# Between You and Us

Dear Readers,

The 2nd of July is the sacred festival of Guru Purnima. The spiritual calendar at Prasanthi Nilayam starts with Guru Purnima every year and it is the most important event after Swami's Birthday celebrations. Why does Swami give such importance to this festival? Let us go back to the 1940s, when Swami declared His Avatarhood, to get a clue to the answer. On that occasion, Swami sang,

*Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam, Dusthara Bhava saagara tharanam*

Worship the feet of the Guru and cross the ocean of Birth and Death!

Swami has always emphasized that implicit Faith in one's Guru is the quickest and surest way to Self realisation. He often quotes the story of King Janaka of ancient India who obtained self realisation in a split second because of his complete and total surrender to his Guru, Ashtavakra. Even in the recent times, there is the example of a renowned saint in India, Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj (1897-1981) who exemplified the power of implicit faith in the Guru. When asked how he attained the Knowledge of the atman, the saint said

"My Guru ordered me to attend to the sense 'I am' and to give attention to nothing else. I just obeyed. I did not follow any particular course of breathing, or meditation, or study of scriptures. Whatever happened, I would turn away my attention from it and remain with the sense 'I am'. It may look too simple, even crude. My only reason for doing it was that my Guru told me so. Yet it worked!"

Today, we have the good fortune of Swami, whom we all revere as the Avatar, teaching us day in and day out

*"You are not the body. You are not the ephemeral ego. You are Divine! You are verily GOD!"*

How many of us really pay heed to His words is the question that we should ask ourselves this Guru Purnima. You may say that it is difficult to really get established in the faith that we are Divine. Difficult? Yes. Impossible? No. There are a number of exemplary devotees of Swami who have achieved that state because of their efforts and His Grace. Dr. John S Hislop is one such man. H2H is privileged to carry a cover story on this great devotee in this issue.

Apart from this, we have a story, by Ted Henry, on a special group of American Christians called the 'Amish'. They are a living example of 'being in the world, but not of the world'. Makes an interesting reading.

Readers have been requesting us to revive the feature 'Getting Spiritually Better' for the past few weeks. We thank them for their appreciation and are happy to restart the feature again, starting this issue.

The feature 'Down memory lane' which carried lots of beautiful pictures of Swami from the past, has been renamed as 'Divine Impressions' to give it a wider scope.

Hope you enjoy this issue of H2H and continue to support us in this noble endeavour. Happy Guru Purnima!

In Sai Service  
SGH team

# A Perfect Disciple

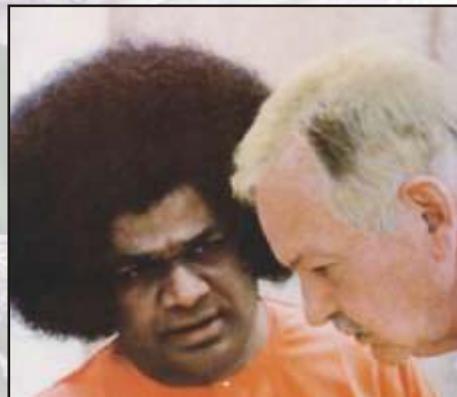
The Story of Dr John S Hislop

July 2nd is the holy festival of Guru Purnima. A day when homage is paid to the Guru. A day on which all of us across the world express gratitude to Bhagavan, the Universal teacher, for guiding us on the path to lasting peace. Yes, that is a good thing-to be grateful to one's Guru. But what does Bhagavan himself want? Praises, we know, mean nothing to Him. What really matters to Him is how much we walk along the path shown by Him. That, He says, is the greatest way to pay Him a tribute. A Teacher is known by His students, a painter by His art, and a sculptor by his sculptures. A Guru is known by His disciples and an Avatar by his devotees. The perfect devotee who surrenders to the Lord, the Guru, and practises His teachings is the one in whom the Glory of the Lord is reflected most. He becomes a cause, an instrument in bringing several others into the orbit of the Transforming Love of God. He is the one who pays real homage to His Guru. One such devotee of Bhagawan was John S Hislop.

Dr. John S Hislop was one of the fine instruments used by Bhagavan Baba to spread His Message across the continents. Hislop to Swami came via the Theosophy/Meditation route. It all started when as a young man of eighteen he had gone to Tahiti in the Pacific in search of adventure. There he met a priest who told him about Theosophy. As soon as Hislop returned to Los Angeles, he joined the Theosophical Society because he wanted to serve humanity. Soon he became actively involved with the establishment set up in Ojai, California, by Dr. Annie Besant, a pillar of the Theosophy movement. It was in Ojai that Hislop came into contact with J.Krishnamurthi [from India] who was being projected by Annie Besant as a 'World Teacher'. About this experience, Hislop says, "Krishnamurthi and Besant were giant figures who filled the horizon, and it seemed to me that they and

only they had found the truth of life. I feel eternally grateful to Dr. Besant and Krishnamurthi for their great kindness and great patience with an undisciplined man. But wisdom was not born in me as a follower of Krishnamurthi."

In between, Hislop went through higher education, finally receiving his doctorate in the School of Education in the University of California, Los Angeles Campus [UCLA]. Thereafter he taught for a while and later switched to business, where he



Hislop With Baba was quite successful. He also got married to Victoria, who shared his passion for philosophical enlightenment. Together, Hislop and Victoria drifted from one Guru to another, ending up in the fifties with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who by then had hit the headlines in the West. Twenty five years of search for that 'something' had passed but that 'something' was still not in sight.

The year is 1958. Hislop comes to India to help Mahesh Yogi in setting up an Academy for Meditation in the Himalayas. Being an American, he is at first mistaken to be a CIA agent (!) but later allowed to do his work. At this stage Hislop takes a break and goes to Burma to learn Vipassana Meditation practised by Buddhists. Hislop finds that the Buddhist style of meditation is fascinating and wonderful but, in his

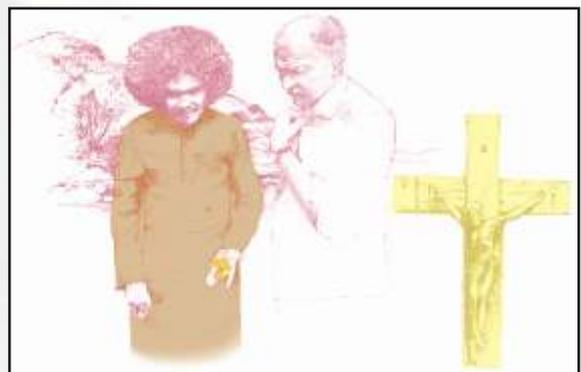
words,

*The Buddhist way was a way of the intellect and the mind. And despite my great appreciation and gratitude for having found the discipline, I felt that my heart was dry; it was a Western heart with very little love left in it. We [Hislop and his wife] had begun to realise that the Vipassana discipline could be dangerous for a life in the world and that to pursue it properly one should become a monk.....*

Around this time, Burma had begun to look inwards, closing its borders to foreigners. So, it did not seem possible to stay back in Burma and become a monk. Yet, Hislop clung to Vipassana, lacking an alternative. A few more years passed, and then....

*My wife and I first heard of Baba in 1968 through a description of Him given to a friend of mine by a lady who had visited India. She had brought back some sacred ash [Vibhuti], a beautiful ring as a gift to her from the miraculous nature of Baba, and she had many fascinating stories to tell. One special remark struck fire. The lady said that she felt a change in her character while with Baba, and the change persisted even after she returned home. This statement had a strong impact on my mind. Could there be a man, was there a man living today whose being was so subtle, so powerful, so mysterious, so Divine, that He could change a human Heart?*

*If it were indeed true that such a man lived in today's world, then nothing else in my life could equal the urgency of seeking Him out. I prayed that through His Grace and kindness, He might touch my dry Heart*



The Crucifix Episode

## A Perfect Disciple

The Story of Dr John S Hislop

*and make it alive and vibrant.*

*My wife and I heard the story of Baba on a Monday, and the same week we were aboard a plane to India. ....*

Hislop continues:

*Upon meeting Baba, I knew at once, without doubt, that for me, here was the true source of Wisdom. .... It is difficult and probably impossible to express in words the effect upon myself of that first meeting with Baba. My entire being was profoundly affected and changed. Immediately, Baba became the centre of my life, and has remained so. In His presence at that first meeting, the world fell away from me, my entire consciousness was drawn inward and, at a most subtle level of awareness, Baba appeared in my Heart as Love. Love was unmistakable and that Baba was this Love was equally unmistakable. It seemed to me that only God Himself could enter my Heart as Love and, since then, this feeling of Divine Presence has never changed. .... I found to my great surprise that although I had always used an intellectual approach to spiritual life, the devotional path became very natural to me as soon as I encountered Baba.*

Swami gave Hislop innumerable experiences so that the latter could get a feel for all aspects of Divinity. Baba also granted Hislop any number of Interviews, answered his questions in detail, came to his rescue during illness, saved him from disaster, created unusual objects for him and once even blessed him with a vision of Krishna. A sample now of a few these, in Hislop's own words. We start with the famous episode dealing with the creation by Baba of a crucifix for Hislop. Interestingly, the crucifix was created on Mahasivarathri Day in the year 1973, deep in the forest! This holy festival was celebrated by Baba in the company of a small group almost in privacy, and not before massive crowds as normally happens. Let us hear Hislop recall the event:

*The crucifix was created by Baba on a most*

*auspicious day, Mahasivarathri. .... The evening before, we were told to be ready in the early morning for a trip; and that when the cars were loaded and ready we would know the destination. Swami had decided that only a handful of people would be with Him....*

*Our destination was the Bandipur Game Sanctuary in Bandipur Forest, several hours away from the city of Mysore. We arrived at the Forest rest-house in the early afternoon. Later we took various winding roads hoping to come upon one of the Forest's wild elephant herds. .... the elephants remained in their secret places*



The Crucifix

*and not even one was seen. But the drive through the hills had another and more important objective. ....*

*As we crossed a bridge above a sandy, dry riverbed, Baba indicated that this would be the place. ... The cars halted at the side of the road, and we started to climb down the bank to the sandy river bottom. I was beside Baba. As we passed a bush, Swami broke off two twigs, placed them together and asked me, "What is this, Hislop?" "Well Swami, it is a cross," I answered. Baba then closed His fingers over the twigs and directed three somewhat slow breaths into His fist, between thumb and forefinger. Then He*

*opened His hand to reveal a Christ figure on a Cross, and He gave it to me. He said, "This shows Christ as he really was at the time he left his body, not as artists have imagined him. His stomach is pulled in and his ribs are all showing. He had no food for eight days."*

*I looked at the crucifix but found no words. Baba then continued: "The cross is made of wood from the actual cross on which Christ was crucified. To find some of the wood after 2000 years took a little time! The image is of Christ after he died. It is a dead face." I noticed something odd and asked, "Swami, what is that hole at the top of the cross?" Baba replied that the cross had been originally hung from a standard.*

A little while after the materialisation of the cross, Sivarathri was celebrated on the sandy river bed with devotees singing Bhajan and Baba bringing out a Lingam to mark the holy day and the significance of Creation - quite a change from the normal circumstances under which Sivarathri is celebrated.

A couple of years later, some American devotees asked Swami about the cross materialised for Hislop. Baba replied:

*Yes, I made it for him. When I went to look for the wood, every particle of the cross had disintegrated and returned to the elements. I reached out to the elements and reconstituted sufficient material for a small cross. Very seldom does Swami interfere with Nature, but occasionally, for a devotee, it will be done."*

The story of the cross does not quite end with its physical materialisation. Hislop had a strange experience a few months later, when the cross was being shown to a few friends. This is what he says:

*Within a few weeks we were back in our home in Mexico and were soon to witness an amazing series of events in relation to the crucifix. .... [One day] the time was about 5 P.M. On this afternoon, the sky along the Mexican coast was clear and peaceful. But suddenly without warning, there was a loud*

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Shiyarathri at Bandhipur crash of thunder and as our eyes turned towards the windows, lightning flashed from a dark cloud where a moment before there had been only clear sky. A violent wind rushed through the house, causing windows and doors to open and shut with such force that the glass was in danger of shattering. The curtains were flying in all directions. We were much startled by this turn of events, but my wife at once said, "It is 5 P.M., the time Christ died on the cross, and what is now happening is described in the Bible." She later brought a Bible and we looked through until we found the pertinent paragraph, which said that at the moment Christ gave up His life, a violent storm arose with lightning and thunder, and winds rent the curtains of the temple. We concluded that we had witnessed a wonder totally beyond our power of imagination. Before our eyes had occurred nothing less than a recapitulation of events related to crucifixion. The following day, newspapers in San Diego carried a brief story commenting on the sudden and mysterious storm that had arisen without warning on the Mexican coast, near Ensenada. .... A year or so later, I sent a description of the event to Dr. Eruch B. Fanibanda for his book, *Vision of the Divine*. He showed the memo to Baba. After reading the memo, Baba said that the event had occurred as described and that the significance attributed to it was correct.

Bhagavan Baba has saved innumerable devotees from danger and imminent disaster, when they appealed to Him. Swami saved Hislop also, but Hislop's experience was one with a big difference.

One evening in 1973, we left Brindavan at

about 8 P.M. to return to Bangalore. There were five of us in the taxi, plus the driver. The Bangalore road is only two lanes. Some miles from Brindavan, we overtook a bus. Although the driver of our taxi saw some lights ahead, he estimated that there was plenty of time to pass the bus. He could not have been more mistaken – the lights ahead were that of a car moving at a very high speed towards us. ....

In this particular area, the layout of the road was also deadly. The road was under repair, and there was a high bank of dirt and rocks covering the side of the road. Thus, there was no possibility of the oncoming car being able to swerve off the road. We, too, could not take evasive action, for the bus was on our left and the road-repair material on the right, and by this time the oncoming car was directly in front of us. A foolish driver in that car and an equally foolish driver in our taxi! .... The lights of the oncoming car now struck directly into the windscreen of our taxi. The cars could not have been more than a second or so apart. We were stunned. Not one of us remembered Baba or called out to Him. We felt we were as good as dead, and we instinctively tensed for the crash. But at that very moment something happened that was without any rational explanation. At one moment the two cars were upon each other, about to be smashed in a fatal head-on collision. The very next moment, the oncoming car was behind us, and we were continuing to pass the bus with a clear road ahead. Looking back, we could see the red tail-lamp of the other car. There was no crash. ....

The next day we drove out to Brindavan as usual at 8 A.M. so as to be waiting near the veranda for Baba to appear for morning Darshan. As soon as He came into the room, I touched the Lotus feet and said, "We want to thank Baba for saving our lives last night."

Baba smiled and said, "Yes,

that was a close one. You were so shocked that not even one of you called out for Swami! But Swami saved you anyway." Then He turned to a group of men and in Telugu told them the entire story of the incident. I then said, "Swami, You must have altered time and space in order to save us." Baba just smiled and did not answer. From time to time, Swami has orchestrated situations wherein devotees have been blessed to see Him in some of the other forms He is worshipped in. Hislop was among the lucky few to get a glimpse of Baba as Sri Krishna. That story follows, in Hislop's own words:

A number of years ago I was in Baba's car. He was in the rear seat with two other persons. I was in the front seat with the driver. We were on our way to Puttaparthi. Driving in the car with Baba is a fascinating experience. ....

At some point in the journey, perhaps about half-way, Baba was talking and I turned to look. My breathing stopped and was transfixed. I could not credit my eyes. ....

What transfixed my movement and stopped my breathing now, was His face. .... The Baba I knew was not there! Instead, there was a face of the most extra-ordinary beauty – quite different in shape and cast from the features of our beloved Sai. The charm was so great, so poignant, that my heart seemed to twist, almost as though it were in pain. Never in my life, not in photos, nor in paintings by great artists have I seen a face of such exquisite beauty. It was beyond imagination and concept, totally beyond experience.



The Vision of Krishna

## A Perfect Disciple

The Story of Dr John S Hislop

*And His colour was blue. Not just blue, not the blue with which artists paint Sri Krishna, but a deep blue like the velvet blue that can sometimes be seen in a dark sky, like a blue that I have, at times, seen from the deck of a ship thousands of miles from the shores of the Pacific Ocean. I do not know how else to describe it. I could not take my eyes from Baba's face. .... The two men sitting with Baba were beginning to look at me with somewhat puzzled expressions. ....*

*After a few miles, Sri Vittal Rao (on Baba's left) asked me, "Hislop, why were you staring at Swami like that?"*

*Instead of answering, I directed a question to Baba, "Swami, what was that blue colour?"*

*He replied, "Oh! That? Whenever there is something of unfathomable depth, it appears deep blue." That was the end of the conversation about the incident. Naturally, the thought had come to mind that maybe this was Lord Krishna, but neither then, nor at any time in connection with this experience, did I ever mention Krishna to Baba.*

*There the matter rested until November, 1975. ....*

One day, shortly before Birthday, Swami called a family for Interview. Hislop also was called. Swami spent some time talking to the family and then turned to Hislop. Over now to Hislop for that part of the story:

*After a while, Baba said to me, "Hislop, tell them about your experiences."*

*I complied and, after mentioning some incidents, I told them the same story [about seeing a deep blue face]. ... The man was deeply impressed and words broke from his lips, "Oh! That had to be Lord Krishna!"*

*Baba smiled and said, "Yes, that was Krishna; not the Krishna pictured by artists and imagined by writers. I showed Hislop the REAL KRISHNA."*

*Hislop was clearly a specially chosen one for he had many wonderful experiences like few*

*have been blessed to have. Here is Hislop's description of one of them that helped him to eventually see Swami everywhere.*

*After I had been going to Prasanti Nilayam for about three years, coming back to America, as I got off the plane, I felt that Swami's head and shoulders were superimposed on mine. I felt that way. I was aware of the hair. So I said, "Well, welcome to America, Swami!" That feeling lasted for three years. Every place I would go, there would be Swami standing in the room. When I would talk to people at the Centre, Swami would be standing behind every person in that room! Behind every person would be Swami's head. When I look at the wall there would be a row of Swamis standing along the wall. That vision finally came to an end, and I told Swami, "Swami, that phenomenon has come to an end now." Swami said, "Hislop, don't you know that all phenomena come to an end?" He added, "You have had that vision of Swami without any effort on your part whatsoever. Now you have to deliberately see Swami wherever you look!" So I do that.*

*Here is another of those unique Hislop-experiences:*

*One time, Swami went to Madras and arrived unexpectedly at the house of His hostess. You know, when the Avatar come to visit your house, I am sure you would want to have something with which to greet Him – some flowers or a tray of food or something to welcome the Lord to your house. That was the case with this hostess too.*

*Swami came to the door and knocked. The hostess answered, saw Swami standing there, and exclaimed, Oh Swami, Swami, I am so happy to see You. But Swami, You didn't tell me that you were coming, and I don't have anything to welcome you with. I don't have flowers or fruit. I don't have anything." The poor lady was quite distraught. So Swami said, "Don't worry, don't worry." Then He turned around and beckoned at the car.*

*Out of the car came two angels with wings, carrying a big silver tray, loaded with fruit and flowers and everything the hostess would need to welcome Swami. The angels brought this tray up to the house and gave it to the hostess. Then Swami turned to the angels and waved them back to the car. They floated back to the car, folded their wings, got into the car, and disappeared!*

*Later on, as the years went by, Swami acquired another vehicle. He had a bus, and He would take the students for excursions in the bus. One time, He took them on an excursion to Madras.*

*First, He went to the house of the hostess, where He would be staying the students would be staying someplace else. When the hostess came to the door and saw the busload of students, she went back inside her house and brought out the silver tray. It was still there, and she told the students the story of the angels with wings. ....*

After many years of wandering and unfulfilled yearning, Swami finally drew Hislop to Himself, granting him the blessing of Divine proximity. Hislop, for his part, took full advantage of the opportunity given, not for himself but for the sake of humanity. He became a roving ambassador, and through his talks as well his books [widely known justifiably], Hislop did yeoman service in spreading Sai's Message far and wide. Even when afflicted by cancer, he did not hesitate to travel and speak about the Lord he had discovered. He says:

*In this modern society, a dry and joyless life is the general experience. Witness the frantic*



The miraculous escape

## A Perfect Disciple

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*excursion to Madras.*

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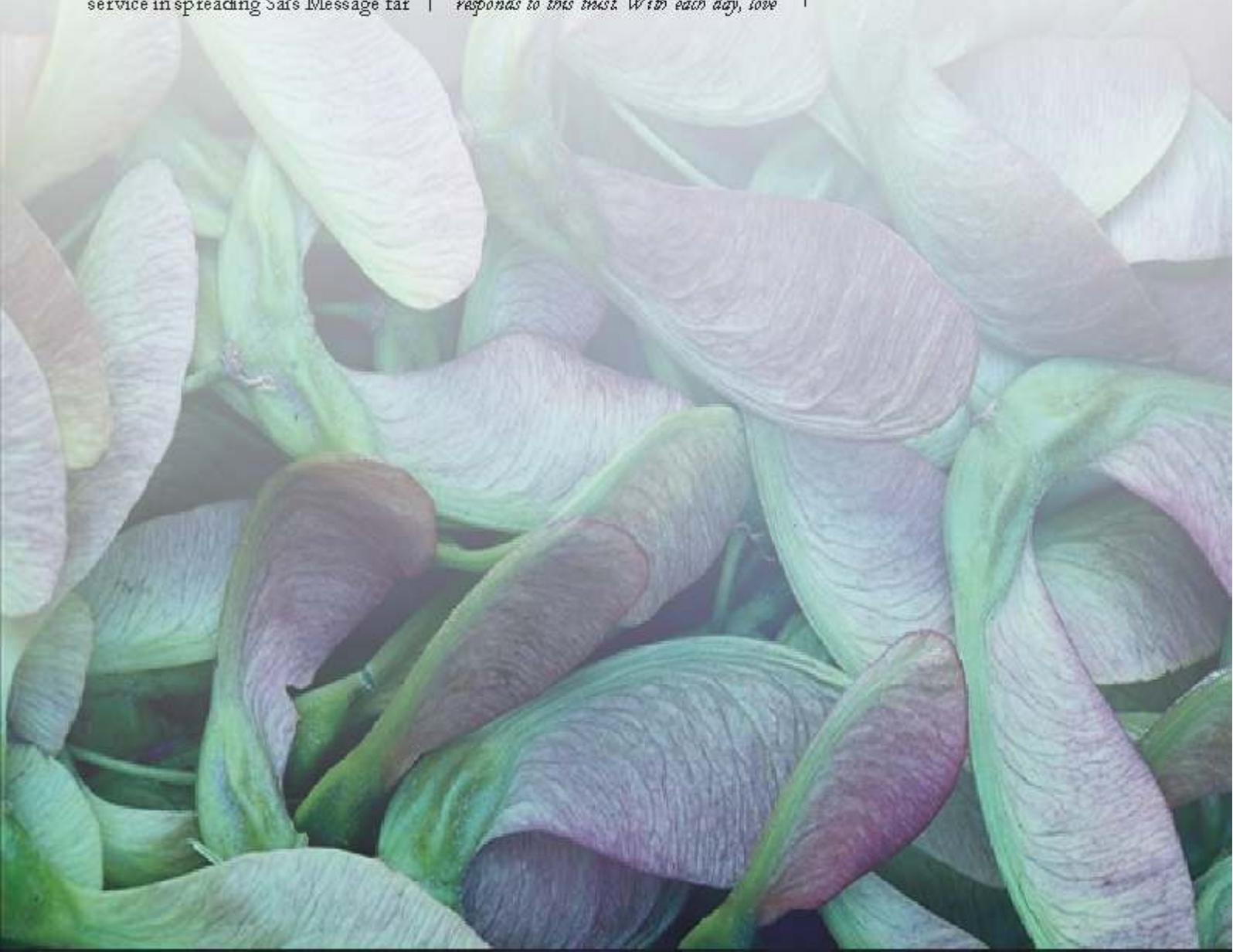
and wide. Even when afflicted by cancer, he did not hesitate to travel and speak about the Lord he had discovered. He says:

*In this modern society, a dry and joyless life is the general experience. Witness the frantic search for distraction and pleasure the world over. An almost universal prayer springs up from adult persons caught up in today's culture: O Lord, may there be a new season of Spring in my heart. May the river of Love flow deep and strong again in my heart!"*

*Here, to me, is one of the most wonderful miracles of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The fettered heart, turning to Baba, can break free from all bondage. Seeing Him, being sure that He will never abandon, is a most wonderful feeling. With joy, the heart responds to this trust. With each day, love*

*for Baba grows stronger and stronger. He is the Divine Mother and the Divine Father to His devotee. One may love Him without reserve, without guard, without fear . . . . .*

Hislop constantly chanted Baba's Name, right till the very end. As he gave up the mortal coil, friends gathered around him kept chanting the sacred OM, even as the soul journeyed to its eternal resting-place, the Divine Lotus Feet. Some time later, Swami asked an American devotee on the veranda, "Where is Hislop?" The devotee looked up, as if to signify that Hislop was in heaven. Baba then said, "He has come to Me. Good man, always thinking of and working for Swami." There cannot be a better eulogy.



## Divine Madness



It is clear that the leelas of God are inexplicable and infinite. It is ludicrous to seek the whereabouts of the Divine, who is omnipresent. Uttara was one who recognised the omnipresence of God. Recognising her supreme devotion Krishna was prepared to change His plans. People should realise that God responds only to deep and genuine devotion. Verbal supplications will not suffice. The devotee must acquire the yearning that will melt the heart of God. Even butter which is so soft melts only when heat is applied. Likewise, the warmth of Bhakti (love of the Lord) has to be applied to the butter of the human heart to make it melt. It was their intense devotion which made Krishna dwell in the hearts of Gopikas. They became God-intoxicated. Once, when Krishna disappeared from their midst, they started searching for him everywhere, among the trees and the bushes of Brindavan, oblivious to every-thing else. Their appeals to the creepers to tell them whether their Krishna was hiding amongst them might seem "hysterical". But it would be a good thing if such "hysterical" love of God filled people's hearts today. The world will be a calmer and better place.

Some people talk caustically to Sai devotees saying: "You have gone crazy over Sai Baba". This craziness is sublime madness. There are all kinds of lunatics in the mental hospital, many of whom pose difficult problems for the doctors. If some God-mad devotee sits in a corner chanting God's name, what a relief he would be to the doctors! If you develop this kind of sublime madness, you will be supremely fortunate indeed! Everyone should be crazy about God. Only then they will get rid of the mad craving for wealth and the things of the world. The craze for money is the cause of all the ills in the world. With the result that the desire for God declines.

Because of the craze for riches, all other evil qualities like pride, greed, envy and hatred have grown among mankind. Wealth is, indeed, needed, but it is the wealth of Divine Grace and the treasure of Divine Love. That alone is lasting. All other things are transient.

## Purifying One 'Self'

Dear Reader,

Welcome back to the feature 'Getting Spiritually Better' which we had suspended a few weeks back. We are happy to resume it with many interesting topics in the pipeline. Like earlier, 'additional notes' and 'points to ponder' on the main theme are presented. We hope this will be useful in your study circles. Any feedback on or articles for this feature are welcome.

After a break, we resume our series: Getting Spiritually Better. In the last article in this series, we discussed the nature of the Atma at length. Some readers felt it was too heavy and that has been commented upon in some of our Reflection articles. The Atma is supposed to be absolutely Pure. In that case there is a puzzle, which is what we start with this time.

Some people have a doubt: "It is said



The Water is Pure, only the container is distorted

That I am the Atma. The Atma is

Pure. But I am also told I have to get rid of impurity. If I am the Atma, how then can I be impure? What is this double talk?"

Good point. This is the sort of doubt that often assails the seeker. In this part of our continuing series, we shall try to clarify the doubt. All of us are aware of the question that is often

asked: "Who am I?" The proper and spiritual answer to this is: "I am the Atma." Unfortunately, the matter does not quite end there where practical aspects are concerned. At the practical level, we are not just the 'bare' unadorned Atma but the embodied Atma, or Jivatma as one sometimes says. Whereas the 'bare' Atma is like the free atmosphere, the Jivatama is like the air confined inside a balloon. The Jivatama thus exhibits the characteristics of confinement, whereas the Atma does not. What this means in practical terms is that whereas the Atma is pure, the Jivatma as an entity can be impure. Even here, we must be careful in our statement. The Jivatma, it was said earlier, is the embodied Atma, or Atma resident in a gross and subtle body. It is the bodies that are impure and not the Atma resident within. The Subtle body, it has been mentioned in earlier articles, is nothing but the Mind. Basically the Mind is pure to start with, but it can and does get contaminated by wandering all over the external world, dragged of course by the senses. Thus, the impurity that one must get rid of is essentially the contamination associated with the

senses – the five senses of perception [Karmendriyas, as they are called], and the five senses of cognition [Jnanendriyas, as they are called]. It all comes back to 'Mind & Sense Control' which we have elaborated upon earlier. Swami explains the perception of 'impurity' as follows. He says: Suppose we take crystal clear and pure water and put it in a coloured bottle, say, red. Then, from outside, the water in the bottle could be mistaken to be a fluid red in colour.

This conclusion is evidently not correct. It is the bottle that is red and not the fluid inside. Thus, the Conscience [which is the analogue of the air trapped in a balloon] of even a wicked man is always pure; it is a different matter if the man does not pay heed to his Conscience. By itself, the Conscience per se IS pure. Even if it does not make its presence felt, the Conscience, nevertheless, IS there.

Achievement of Internal Purity [Anthakarana Suddhi] must be a prime target for one on the spiritual path. In simple terms, this translates as harmony of thought, word and deed. One should not think one thing, say another, and do yet another. Such inconsistency is the hallmark of imperfection, and must be avoided.

Swami has given a number of simple yet effective recipes for ensuring internal purity. He often says, for example [citing the Buddha]: See no evil, hear no evil, do no evil. Another of His maxims is:

BEND THE BODY  
MEND THE SENSES  
END THE MIND!

Bend the body means 'do not yield to the cravings of the body' [e.g., for being lazy]. 'Mend the senses' tell us to keep the senses under strict control; they start all the trouble. When steps one and two are fully implemented, then the Mind dissolves, and the Spirit becomes free. In the language used earlier, the balloon bursts, and the air confined within it merges with the atmosphere – in spiritual terms, the Jivatma achieves Liberation, merging with the Eternal Atma.

## Purifying One 'Self'

Two useful analogies may be given regarding how the Atma, though embodied, remains pure and unaffected. Consider first a nice ripe mango. Suppose it is left to become over ripe and then rot. Clearly, the fruit at this stage is not eatable. However, the seed within is not affected and can in fact be safely planted to produce another tree yielding good fruits.

The second analogy: Consider a movie screen. On this is projected a film that depicts earthquakes, torrential rains and floods, raging forest fires etc. At the end of the movie, the screen is there just as before – naturally. It has not been made wet by the floods, not torn asunder by the earthquake, nor burnt by the fire – it is ridiculous to think that it would be. In the same way, the Atma within the embodied one is unaffected by the impurity of the body and the mind holding the Atma.

To sum up: The Atma is ever Pure, even when ensconced in a human body. In an individual, the Atma plays many roles; for example, it provides the prime motive power for all the vital forces and actions. Above all, it plays the role of Conscience. To give an analogy, consider an electric motor. The motor runs on electric power. Atma is like the electric power. If the motor malfunctions, the current cannot be blamed; it is because of problems with the motor itself – the windings might have got damaged, the bearings might have worn out, the shaft might have got bent, and so on. In the same way, the Atma remains Pure, even while residing within an evil person. The evil associated with the person is entirely related to the 'casing', i.e., the senses and the Mind. It is these that must be cleaned if the person is to become Pure. Becoming Pure does not mean making the Atma Pure!

Some food for thought: Sometimes, the answer to the question "Who am I?" is given as: "I am I." Sage Ramana

often did this. Swami too sometimes says this. Why? What is the difference, if any, compared to the answer considered above, viz., "I am the Atma"? Think about it!



The Screen of Atma is untouched

### ADDITIONAL NOTES RELATING TO THE ABOVE

! The above material deals with what might loosely be called "Spiritual Impurity".

! To talk of impurity, one must have a reference that is 100 % Pure. In Spirituality, God is that reference. We shall start with the axiom that God is Eternally Pure, always without Blemish, and totally Unsullied.

! OK, granted that God is Pure. Baba says that man also is God. Does that mean that man also is 100 % Pure? All indications are that this is not so. Clearly, something is wrong somewhere, is it not?

! Not really. God certainly is Totally Pure. As for man, DEEP within, he is Pure for sure; but his outside is generally dirty.

! How come, if man also is God?

! Swami gives a clue to the resolution of this problem. Recall that He often tells us: "I know I am God but you do not."

! How is that? Because man is BELOW the senses whereas God is always ABOVE the senses – that is why.

! Then does it mean that remaining below the senses has something to do

with man's impurity? Yes of course, in fact, everything!

! How do senses spoil Purity? Simple. Senses allow the six enemies of man to enter the Mind. They are: Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya, i. e., Desire, Anger, Greed coupled with Miserliness, Attachment, Pride, and Jealousy. These are the sources of contamination.

! The starting point is really desire. If desire is strictly checked and controlled, then the rest is taken care of.. That is why it is often said:

Man - Desires = God

! QUESTION: "But can not one have legitimate desires? How can such desires be called an impurity? A man is engaged in business. He wants to succeed. How can that wish be dubbed an impurity?" ANSWER: "Impurity is anything that differentiates or distances one from God. God does not have any desires, including the so-called legitimate desires!"

! QUESTION: "But is this not asking for the Moon?" ANSWER: "Not really. Man has come from God. Life is given to enable man to get back to the source, namely God. God is Pure. Only the Pure can combine with the Pure. Oil cannot mix with water. Only water can mix with water. Therefore, if man wants Bliss, then he must reunite with God. If he wants to reunite with God, then he must try to be as Pure as possible. Anything that comes in the way of this reunion, no matter how legitimate it might seem, IS an impurity. Tough luck, but that is the way it is!"

! An example to illustrate the above point. Imagine a passenger who boards a train say in Bangalore and wants to go to Delhi. On the way, the train stops at a big station. If the passenger becomes curious, gets out, and starts exploring that city, the train

## Purifying One 'Self'

might leave without him! He would then have to get into another train and continue. But it might happen that due to habit, he might again get down at another station and once again miss the train! Our Journey to God must not be a sequence of interruptions like this. However, that is what is really happening in the case of most of us, though we are not aware of it. This example teaches us that distractions inevitably cause delays. Hence, impurity is anything that delays man's journey to God. All the items listed earlier, are great obstructions.

! OK. Agreed that one must try to become Pure. So what must one do? Simple. To start with, we must purge ourselves of various animal qualities like anger, for example. That is why Baba often advises that whenever we are seized with anger and the like, we should repeatedly tell ourselves, "I am not an animal; I am a human being".

! But that alone is not enough. One must aspire for a higher status, and keep on reminding oneself, "I am not merely a human; I am God!" Hence the Vedic injunctions like: *Aham Brahmasmi*, meaning, "I am God!"

! QUESTION: "Is it not a crime, a blasphemy to declare I am God?"  
ANSWER: "Not if it is said the right way. Right way means that one does not say this as a proud announcement to the world, but as a reminder to one's own self about how one should conduct oneself."

! QUESTION AGAIN: "What does that mean?"  
ANSWER: "It means that like God, one must aim at being the Embodiment of compassion, forbearance, selfless Love, etc."

! OK, agreed all that is desirable, but is it not a tall order to ask man to become 100 % Pure like God?

Is that ever possible? Has anyone ever done it?" Ah, this is precisely where God's Infinite compassion comes into play! If, unmindful of whether we are going to succeed or not, we just say, "God, I love you dearly. I AM going to do this, and I know You will help me," then, God, appreciating our faith, will unite us with Him even before we have become perfectly Pure.

! But this is incredible! Yes it is, and that is what God's Infinite compassion is really all about. We do not realise that God is not expecting 100 % success from us. He just wants to know how serious we are.

! In other words, all we have to do is to convince God that we don't care about success and failure, and that we are REALLY determined to reunite with Him; that for this, we are prepared to do anything, make any sacrifice, and even attempt to become 100 % Pure. If we start making the effort with this conviction, then God will forgive imperfections and reach out for us! That is God!!

! Look up the story of Kannappa Nayanar in, *Message of the Lord*, page 381. This is the story of a young son of a hunter chieftain. This boy is uncouth, totally oblivious of the scriptures, etc. But he loves God

intensely, and is ready to make any sacrifice. Once he proves his intentions, God immediately reaches out for him, without waiting for full purity or whatever. God tests only the quality of our faith and not our Purity! Thank God for that, because that offers real hope!

! Recall our earlier article entitled: *The Good and the Bad* [ARUN: no 7. H2H, vol. 2 issue 2]. It was stated there that in Creation, first there was inert gross matter. From that came plants. From plants evolved animals. And from animals evolved man. These steps constitute the LOWER of phase of evolution. After this comes the higher phase in which man rises to the level of God, from Whom he originally came. This ascent is possible only with focus on INTERNAL Purity – note, Internal Purity! That is very important.

! In turn, that precisely is where Mind and Sense regulation assumes importance. Hope you agree!

! Can you try and list the different ways in which the Mind gets seduced by the senses, and what we must do to prevent that? If you have some nice methods, why don't you share with others via H2H?



Stop not till you reach the destination

# The Amish - Among God's Most Private And Shy Devotees

Ted Henry

Dear Reader,

All of us are so keen to be "modern", in the process eager to copy the latest fashions from other places. What follows is an article about a remarkable group of people called the Amish. They live in America, often hailed as the land of milk and honey, El Dorado, the ultimate in modernity and all that. Yet, the Amish prefer to drive around in horse-drawn carriages, even though Cadillacs may whiz past. Not for them the business of "keeping up with Jones". In effect, what the Amish tradition proves is that if the Mind is strong, one can practice ceiling on desires even when living next door to the greatest attractions in the world. We thank Ted Henry for contributing this interesting article. Do you have similar things to report? Why don't you get in touch with us?

Jai Sai Ram. SGH Team.

Whether you are walking down the main street of Hartville, Millersburg or Sugar Creek, Ohio, invariably you will hear them coming. The galloping hooves of a single horse pulling a black buggy is a familiar sound in North East Ohio. Inside those buggies are Amish people. The married men are always bearded, the women wear bonnets and dresses using hooks and eyes instead of buttons. All Amish men, women and children wear a basic style of clothing that was popular in the 1800s.

This part of America where I grew up is dotted with small towns and villages where many Amish live. The Amish are a conservative Christian sect that arrived in my hometown of Canton, Ohio in 1835. Like Sai Baba, they preach only love. They stress humility, family, community and separation from the world. Today there are Amish living in 22 states in America and in parts of Canada.

The Amish in America live simple farm lives. Their strict religious beliefs do not allow them to use electricity, telephones, modern dress, cars, trucks or motorized vehicles. I first met the Amish in 1962 when my father's hardware store was relocated from Canton to Hartville, Ohio. My first job at the new store was to construct an elaborate hitching post in the parking lot to which the Amish could tie their horses. It was a familiar site to pass slow moving Amish buggies on the highway and to

see the warm dim glow of burning kerosene lanterns in their homes.



The Amish quickly became frequent and loyal customers in my father's store and always paid for their purchases with cash. I found them to be kind, loving, intelligent and extremely dedicated to their Christian beliefs.

Almost always the Amish build their own schools, enabling their children to remain in close proximity with one another when they are away from the family farms and businesses.

Even in America there were serious differences among the Amish. These led to various schisms over the years. In Hartville where I lived, religious differences resulted in these people becoming members of two sub groups. The Amish is the more conservative group and Mennonites, members of the Evangelical Mennonite Church have become the more liberal.

Most Mennonites I knew in Hartville,

did allow the use of electricity, phones, cars and trucks in their daily lives and it was a prominent local Mennonite by the name of Howard Miller who eventually came to purchase my father's hardware store several decades ago. His family now owns one of the largest hardware and farm supply stores in America.

The pictures supplied for this article came from people I met at Spectrum Publications in Orrville, Ohio. The photographs depict a simple life lived mostly in the rural regions of one of the most industrialized states of North America. This results in a cultural clash in some people's eyes, but in this mix you can also find a special harmony and even beauty as lifestyles of the new and old peacefully exist together.

You won't see any close-ups of people's faces in these photographs because Amish generally don't like to have their pictures taken. Permission was granted for these photographs as long as the camera was kept at a distance.

According to The History Of The Amish, by Steven Nolt, Our People, by Levi Miller, and other publications, the Amish are a private people who believe God has kept them together despite pressure from the modern world to change. The women never cut their hair, which they wear in a bun on the back of the head. They wear a white prayer head

# The Amish - Among God's Most Private And Shy Devotees

Ted Henry



Anabaptist groups as Mennonites.

Because so many main stream Christians were against them, many Anabaptists and Mennonites fled to the mountain ranges of Switzerland and southern Germany. It was here that began the Amish tradition of farming and holding services in homes rather than in churches.

As a result of religious persecution many members parted from the core group under the leadership of Elder Jakob Amman of Switzerland. Because of Amman's influence they soon became known as Amish

world, something that Sai devotees would readily understand.

The Amish follow a code of conduct called the Ordnung. It is the Amish blueprint for expected behavior and it relates to private, public and ceremonial life. The Ordnung does not translate well into English and perhaps the best way to understand this term is to think of it as an ordering of the whole way of life.

Another important way in which the Amish are different from others living in America is that the Amish do not pay Social Security tax. Self sufficiency is the Amish community's answer to government aid programs and they are permitted by law to be exempt from this tax. The Amish have a long history of taking care of their own members. They do not have retirement communities or nursing homes and in most cases each family member takes care of their own.

The Amish live a simple life because they believe life is meant to be simple. As Christians they believe they are supposed to remain committed to peace and that faith calls for them to lead a lifestyle of discipleship and good works. They stress that belief must result in practice. The Christian faith for them is empty if it results mostly in doctrine. They succeed as followers by living their faith and by putting long standing Christian views into everyday practice.

covering if they are married and a black one if they are single. No jewellery of any kind is ever worn.

Amish are pacifists and oppose all forms of violence, even self defence. They settled in Canton and other mostly rural areas of America's Mid West after persecution and several congregational splits led them to leave Alsace-Lorraine and Bavaria.

The Pennsylvania Dutch Centre in America maintains a thorough history of the Amish. The roots of all current Amish and Mennonite groups go back to the Reformation. Originally they were part of an Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian group in Europe. The Anabaptist part of their name stems from the fact that they did not believe in baptism for the young. It was their belief that only adults who had confessed their faith should be baptized. Because of this, many early Anabaptists were put to death as heretics by both Catholics and Protestants.

A former Catholic priest named Menno Simons joined the Anabaptist movement. His writings and leadership united many of the



Mennonites, although often they are simply referred to as Amish.

In matters of faith the Amish might be closer to the teachings of Sai Baba than to the practices of other Christians. A part of the Bible that is often quoted during Amish worship services comes from Romans 12:2. "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that it may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God".

The Amish are taught to live a life that is separate from the world. These private people don't shun the outside world as much as they choose to focus more on the interior



## From Your Heart

(Answers to Questions received by Radio Sai from a Chinese Devotee)

**QUESTION:** *Is everything God's will? If so, then why does Swami come in human form to teach, when He could just command everybody to be good and etc.?*

**ANSWER:** The question whether everything is God's will, has been addressed in a recent broadcast as also in a H2H article. So it is not necessary to repeat all of that once more. But the second part of the question merits a reply. It is interesting that Hislop asked something similar a long time ago. The essence of Swami's reply is as follows:

In what happens in Creation, we ought to make a distinction between the macro and the micro. At the macro level, everything that happens is certainly by God's will. While the macro is essentially contained in the Laws governing the Universe [and everything within it including us humans], the micro is shaped largely by local factors, shall we say. That this is the way it shall be so is no doubt God's will. Having said that, one must also say that [in the realm of duality], God does not micromanage. So what does God do, and who does the micro managing? This is best understood by considering a class Teacher and students. The Teacher imparts learning and teaches, and there comes a time when there is an examination. The students take the exams while the Teacher stays out of it. He plays a role in coaching students, but it is the responsibility of the students to study, learn, absorb and pass the examination. We readily accept all this in life; in fact we will not have it any other way. Will any parent who wants his children to really learn, send them [his children]

to a school where the authorities pass and promote without bothering about what students have learnt? Will the degree or diploma awarded by such a school carry any weight or command any respect anywhere? Why don't we accept that God too can have similar expectations?

When God created man, He said, "Son, I send you out into the world to improve yourself and come back to Me." If man forgets, then God teaches. It is like a student being given coaching if he fails. But in the ultimate analysis, it is the student who must take the test and pass. There is no escape from it. So it is with man – he must pass in the test called life.

People ask: "But why on earth does God do this?" We ask: "Why on earth did Shakespeare write Hamlet, King John or whatever?" Can we ask such questions? Do we ever ask such a question? A poet or a dramatist writes the plays he wants. If human a playwright can have that freedom, then why not God who is the ultimate Dramatist? Creation is after all His play, is it not?

By the way, can oil mix with water? Don't we know that it is only water that can mix with water? So, when we must merge back with God [from whom we have come] we have to become Pure ourselves, and life is an examination. No pass, no merger, just as one does not get a driver's license without passing a driving test. May be in some places one can buy a driver's license but unfortunately [or should we say fortunately?!], there is no corruption in God's Kingdom!

In short, God comes to teach the lessons we have forgotten so that we may pass the ultimate test that gives us the eligibility to become one with Him.

**QUESTION:** *What kind of feeling will the body feel when the radiation of "Love" shines towards it?*

**ANSWER:** We are not sure what exactly is meant by this question. But this we can say; Love emanates from the Heart of the person from whom it radiates. And it is the Heart of the receiver that really responds. What the receiver says or does on receiving this Love and experiencing it in his or her Heart is a secondary phenomenon.

For example: Say when Swami is giving Darshan He smiles at a devotee. The smile of Baba is an external manifestation of His Love, which really radiates from His Heart. The devotee sees the smile and his Heart is immediately filled with joy. So, it is the Heart that responds first. Once the devotee is filled with joy, he in turn beams, smiles and so on.

In short, the important thing is how the Heart responds and not how the body responds. If the Heart responds in the proper way, we can be sure that body and the Mind would follow suit in an appropriate manner, which, however, may vary from person to person. For example, one person may excitedly share that experience with others by talking about it. Others may record it in their diary and treasure that moment. Yet others may break into a song or poetry, and so on. The manifestations may vary but they all happen because the Heart is touched - that is the important thing.

**QUESTION:** *What are the ways one can show which can mean Love? I know that Love is giving and forgiving.*

**ANSWER:** Love is a basic feeling that originates in the Heart. When it comes out, it can manifest in a variety of ways. For example, it can manifest

## From Your Heart

as giving and forgiving, as mentioned above. It can manifest as forbearance [Kshama], something to which Swami attaches a lot of importance. It can manifest as an urge to serve selflessly. It can manifest as a simple smile and kind words. It can manifest as a determination to adhere firmly to Truth and Righteousness. And so on. Just go through the epic volumes entitled Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram by Kasturi. The noble author describes so many instances in the life of Baba. Study those instances and see how they represent manifestations of Swami's Love. After such an exercise, anyone would be able to understand better, what precisely is meant by Selfless Love.

**QUESTION:** When Swami says we should identify ourselves as God, then when we reach that state, will we be able to do things what Swami does like miracles?

**ANSWER:** Let us first consider this miracle business. This has come up many times but since the question gets asked again and again, it is perhaps desirable to repeat what Swami has already said about this matter.

First and foremost, Swami does not quite like the word miracle. That word seems to suggest some unnatural thing has been done by Swami. He says that He does not do a miracle like a magician does a trick or magic. Swami wills that something happen and it happens – it is natural for Him. He sees a person in distress. He shows His Love and wants to comfort that person. He wills and vibhuti manifests immediately. He then gives that vibhuti to the devotee who is filled with relief and joy. What He wills just happens and that is what we call a miracle.

OK, why do not similar things

happen when we will for something to happen? Swami has explained that also. He says that only the wishes of a Pure Person come true. Moreover, the wish must be selfless. Incidentally, that is why Swami never cures Himself, except when He takes on the illness of others. For example, He has cured the fracture of so many people; and yet when He fractured His leg last year, He underwent an operation. That is typical of His selflessness.

Does it mean that when a person becomes very Pure, his wishes would automatically come true? Yes, and Swami has confirmed that. However, when humans use such power, what they have accumulated becomes drained – in this respect, the Avatar is unique; His reservoir is Infinite and there is no such thing as depletion, as Swami has clarified.

We now come to the part of the question where it is said if we identify ourselves with God would we be able, etc. If one thinks carefully, there is a built-in contradiction in this statement. When an individual identifies totally with God, where is the question anymore of individuality for that person? After total identification, there is no longer any I and God; there is only God. So if any "miracle" is done it is not by that person but by God! Of course, to wipe out that distinction between the individual and God is not easy. However, life is given to us to reduce that difference as much as we can.

**QUESTION:** Is Jesus the son of Swami or is Swami Jesus himself?

**ANSWER:** As we have tried to explain on many occasions, in Spirituality, we must, when we ask a question, be clear from which point of view we are raising the question. Basically, there are two perspectives

available, that of DUALITY, or that of ONENESS. In the dual picture, God is held to be separate from individuals. Thus, in this picture, Jesus is the Son of God. On the other hand, in the picture of ONENESS, there is only God or Swami and nothing else, which means that not only Jesus but everything under the Sun is Swami, though may be in disguise!

Swami says the devotee starts off from the dual state since that is the natural starting point for all of us. Through self-improvement, one attains the destination. Thus it is that Jesus first said: I am the Messenger of God. Then, after some spiritual evolution, he said, I am the Son of God. When he finally was ready, Jesus said, I and my Father are One. That is what evolution is all about.

In short, for a person not so evolved, Jesus is the Son of God. But for an evolved person, not only Jesus but everything is God and nothing but God.

**QUESTION:** What is the easiest way to Liberation?

**ANSWER:** We are not sure what exactly the questioner means by Liberation. Normally it means freedom from birth and death. That freedom comes when one is rid of bondage. Let us at this point turn to Swami. He says: "Man is tempted by the pleasures of the world and when he gets lost with involvement in those pleasures, he thinks that someone or something is binding him down. No other person is responsible for bondage. The moment he gives up the pleasures and detaches himself, he will be free. That is the way to free oneself from bondage."

In other words: Liberation means getting out of bondage. This bondage is self-imposed. We willingly

## From Your Heart

become slaves of desires and attachments, and then become bonded. So, the way to become liberated is to give up desires and attachments. When we do so, we become liberated. We impose bondage on ourselves, and it is up to us to shake off that bondage.

**QUESTION:** Swami once said that spirituality does not mean worshipping God, then what are the activities of spirituality, is it Sadhana [spiritual service]?

**ANSWER:** Once again, we are not sure if Swami is being quoted properly. But be that as it may, it is pertinent to ask, “What is meant by being spiritual?” Perhaps the best

way of approaching this question is by recognising first that the word Spirituality is actually connected to the word Spirit, which is another word for the Universal Soul that Swami refers to as the Atma. Once we accept this, then being spiritual means essentially that one acts recognising that one is the Atma and not just a body. If a person is obsessed with the notion that he is the body, then that person would give in to sensual pleasures, because after all the senses are connected with the body. Such actions go against the nature of the Atma and therefore cannot be called spiritual. In other words, those actions alone can be described as truly spiritual that reflect the Divinity latent in human beings.

Actions performed selflessly and with Pure Love fall in this category. When a person forgets and forgives, that is being spiritual. When a person shows compassion, that is being spiritual. When a person shows forbearance that is being spiritual. We now turn to the word Sadhana used by our listener. Swami has said that Sadhana essentially means getting rid of the bad in us; it is thus like a purification or filtering process. Through Sadhana one becomes more and more pure; correspondingly, the actions of the person become more and more spiritual. We hope this is clear.

# “ Happy Guru Purnima “

## The Circus

Once when I was a teenager, my father and I were standing in line to buy tickets for the circus. Finally, there was only one family between us and the ticket counter. This family made a big impression on me. There were eight children, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell they didn't have a lot of money. Their clothes were not expensive, but they were clean. The children were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents, holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, elephants and other acts they would see that night. One could sense they had never been to the circus before. It promised to be a highlight of their young lives. The father and mother were at the head of the pack standing proud as could be. The mother was holding her husband's hand, looking up at him as if to say, "You're my knight in shining armor." He was smiling and basking in pride, looking at her as if to reply, "You got that right." The ticket lady asked the father how many tickets he wanted. He proudly responded, "Please let me buy eight children's tickets and two adult tickets so I can take my family to the circus." The ticket lady quoted the price. The man's wife let go of his hand, her head dropped, the man's lip began to quiver. The father leaned a little closer and asked, "How much did you say?" The ticket lady again quoted the price. The man didn't have enough money. How was he supposed to turn and

tell his eight kids that he didn't have enough money to take them to the circus? Seeing what was going on, my dad put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a \$20 bill and dropped it on the ground. (We were not wealthy in any sense of the word!) My father reached down, picked up the bill, tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me, sir, this fell out of your pocket." The man knew what was going on. He wasn't begging for a handout but certainly appreciated the help in a desperate, heartbreaking, embarrassing situation. He looked straight into my dad's eyes, took my

dad's hand in both of his, squeezed tightly onto the \$20 bill, and with his lip quivering and a tear streaming down his cheek, he replied, "Thank you, thank you, sir. This really means a lot to me and my family." My father and I went back to our car and drove home. We didn't go to the circus that night, but we didn't go without.



Dan Clark  
"A 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul"  
Editor: Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

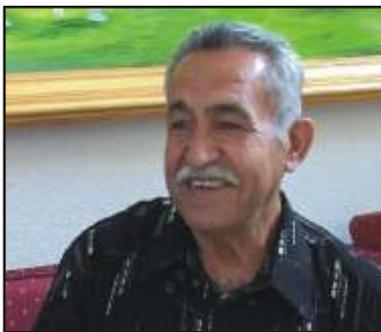
## The Call

by Dr.G.Venkataraman



**O**ne day in late May this year when I was in Brindavan, someone told me that there were a couple of people from Iraq. Immediately I became alert. I have seen devotees from Iran regularly, and also from Turkey occasionally. Some years ago, I even saw a group from Egypt. But from Iraq, and that too at the present time? Naturally I was very keen to meet these persons. I contacted a few persons in the Brindavan Ashram, and a couple of days after that around noon time, an elderly looking gentleman accompanied by a lady in a black dress came to the Guest House where I was staying. The conversation started. Soon I was at the edge of my seat. Why? Read on!

The gentleman told me that his name was Gen. Yassin Dawood Suleiman. He was from Baghdad, yes Baghdad. He was once the Director of Baghdad Police but resigned from his job in 1977 when he was asked to do something that went against his Conscience. Soon after that he left the country, went first to Turkey and then to Bulgaria. He switched to business and prospered. After the fall of Saddam Hussein he came back to Iraq. He was happy to be back in his country but not at all happy with what was going on, particularly the violence. The Americans, it seems,



asked Gen. Yassin to take over once again as the Director of Baghdad Police but he refused, saying he was not prepared to serve under occupation forces. Meanwhile, with each passing day he became more and

more troubled by the violence, which showed no signs of declining but only increasing. And then, about two months ago, in the midst of his constant prayers to Allah for the restoration of Peace in his troubled land, Gen. Yassin felt he was getting some kind of

a call from Inside. It was not very clear but some Inner Force was urging him on to do something and go somewhere; but he just could not make out what it was all about; just that he kept on feeling this Inner Urge. Shortly after that he felt he was being told “to go and see a holy man”. A holy man, but where? Some days later he felt that he must go to India in order to see this “holy man.”

Gen. Yassin then told his wife Ameera Ali that they both were going to India.

“What for?”

“I don’t quite know, but I feel I must go to India.”

“But we don’t know anyone there.”

“May be, but I think the holy man is there.”

“Which holy man?”

“I don’t know!”

“You mean we should go to India without knowing where and meet someone we don’t know who?”

“May be it sounds like that to you but I strongly feel we must go. Things will work out.”

Reluctantly, the lady agreed to accompany her husband on a truly unknown voyage. Gen Yassin told me that Baghdad airport is closed to civilian traffic and therefore he and his wife had to come to India via the land route – first up to the border between Iraq and Iran, then cross over to Iran, then travel through Iran, then cross over into Pakistan through the border in Baluchistan, travel through Pakistan and then cross over to India. The couple travelled by bus, taxi, and train; all the time the General was sure he would reach his unknown destination while his wife was accompanying him not with any deep faith in this mysterious pilgrimage but out of love and concern for her husband.

It appears that from Pakistan they came to India by bus and landed in Amritsar. In Amritsar someone told him that he must go South. So the Iraqi couple took another bus and landed in Delhi. Someone guided them to the Railway Station. So he landed in the Delhi Railway Station. He now had to buy tickets but where to? He asked for a holy place to go to. Looks like someone then told him to buy tickets to Dharmavaram. When I talked to him, Gen. Yassin could not quite pronounce the name Dharmavaram. He was struggling with the word but was sure it started with D. He then said, “You know the girl at the ticketing counter said, ‘Why do you want to buy a ticket to Dharmavaram? I shall give you tickets for a train that goes direct to Puttaparthi!’ I said, OK. That is how I landed in Puttaparthi Railway Station. And when I got out I saw Baba’s picture. Immediately my Heart jumped for I knew this was whom I wanted to see!”

So from the station the couple came to the Ashram but were disappointed to hear that Swami was not there; He was away in Whitefield? Now where was that? Meanwhile he decided he would worry about that later; he was happy he knew whom he was seeking. He told me that he went to

## The Call

by Dr.G.Venkataraman



the Ashram and prayed. He added that he was quite used to praying in Churches during his exile. In Delhi, he visited a Buddhist temple and prayed there.

By the way, it took Y a s s i n o n l y TWENTY FOUR DAYS to reach Puttaparthi from Baghdad! Twenty

four days, can you believe that?! Amazing is it not? What faith! To complete the story, Yassin met a German devotee in the Ashram, an old hand apparently, and hearing this remarkable tale from Yassin, he said, "Listen, I am going to Whitefield tomorrow. You can come with me."

And thus it was that Yassin and his wife finally landed in Brindavan. By Swami's Grace, they were accommodated in the Ashram, and when I met him, he had already been there for several days. And how happy he was! His eyes were shining and his voice was full of joy. And while he was speaking to me, his wife was often praying. He was constantly telling me about how wonderful it was to see BABA SWAMI, as he referred to our beloved Swami. The General was constantly telling me that Baba should save his people and bring peace to his conflict-torn land. He was really feeling for his people.

By sheer luck, we managed to video tape the entire conversation. In a recent broadcast over Radio Sai, we played the audio part. I hope you were able to listen to the story as he told me. I cannot obviously show you the video here but you can see video stills of my meeting with this gentleman who was led by a 'Hidden Hand'. That is God and that is His Attractive Power or Aakarshana Shakti, as Swami refers to it.

Quietly he performs His wonders, while most of us try to excel each other in trivializing Him in incredible ways! Should we do that? By the way, let me tell you that this is not an isolated incident. Let me conclude by narrating an incident about which I heard from Mr. Tajmool Hussein of Trinidad.

One day some years ago, a rich man in Trinidad [of African descent] was driving very fast in his Mercedes. It was not just fast driving but absolutely rash driving. He wanted to

crash and die! Obviously, serious problems. Just then he heard a voice saying, "Come to Prashanti." The man was startled, and slowed down slightly. He was all alone in the car and yet he heard a clear voice speaking to him. Even as he was wondering, he heard the voice giving the same message a second and then a third time. The man now stopped and pondered. There sure was something in what he heard. He did not quite know what the message meant but he decided then and there that suicide could wait.

Prashanti!! Now what on earth was that and where was it? He didn't know of course, but the One who was pulling him, would He leave a loose end like that? As is to be expected, when

this man began to make enquiries, one thing led to another – he met some Sai devotees, heard about Prashanti Nilayam and Swami. So there really was a



Prashanti Nilayam. And there was someone there calling him. So he came to Prashanti, saw Swami, and not only had His Darshan, but even got an interview.

Those of you who listen to our broadcasts would recall an interview in which Mr. V.Srinivasan describes how he was guided by Swami to go to a country in the Far East and stop a suicide there, a suicide about which Mr. Srinivasan knew nothing about!

Swami has saved so many from self destruction in this manner. It is just amazing how He calls people to himself just at the right time. The question is how many of us respond to it and redeem ourselves.

Jai Sai Ram. G.VENKATARAMAN.

## Catch The Pun And Have Fun



**T**o a devotee, Baba once asked, “How do you spell wife?” “W-I-F-E”, the devotee responded. Then making an acronym of the word ‘wife’, Baba mischievously teased the devotee saying, “it means Worries Invited For Ever”. The devotee put on a downcast expression. Baba to cheer up the devotee changed it instantaneously saying, “No – it’s Wisdom Invited For Ever”.

In another instance, Baba remarked to a devotee, “What interests you is not Divine but ‘deep wine’”. Similarly, He said to a group of devotees once, “I know your committees, they are all ‘Come-To-Tea’”.

Instances like this are galore when

Baba through practical jokes has conveyed penetrating and profound messages that one cannot forget so easily. Anybody who has had the good fortune of interacting or observing Baba at close quarters would know how often Baba puns with words, splits words and plays with the words. Everything He does is soaked with his all conquering love and has a definite purpose though it may appear childlike to the naïve. Through His wise and witty words, Baba, not only gives us so much joy and happiness, but also teaches us the most profound spiritual truths in a manner even a child can understand. Having said all this, now, we have for you a simple exercise which we are sure you will enjoy it. Down below

are a list of simple, nay, apparently simple words which Baba has often punned or split to give us new insights and fresh perspectives. All you have to do is to tell us how Baba has often punned or re-examined these words for our benefit.

## Catch The Pun And Have Fun

1. Diamond
2. Technology
3. Devotion
4. Silence
5. Properties
6. Hrudaya
7. Samsara
8. History
9. Politics
10. Mankind
11. Samaadhi

12. Sadhana
13. Radha
14. Baba says,
  - a) "People crave for interviews, but what is important is \_\_\_\_\_."
  - b) "One should study to be \_\_\_\_\_."
  - c) "The only way to immortality from mortality is removal of \_\_\_\_\_."
15. Vinayaka
16. Sai baba a

“ Happy  
Guru Purnima “

## Catch The Pun And Have Fun

### Answers

#### 1. Diamond = die mind

Baba says that one must 'die' one's mind, meaning get rid of or conquer one's mind to become invaluable and lustrous like diamond.

#### 2. Technology = trick knowledge

Technology, today, is basically doing tricks with knowledge.

#### 3. Devotion = deep ocean

Devotion is like a deep ocean. In the ocean, one must dive deep to get the precious gems, diving in shallow waters is not of much consequence. Likewise, to get results one's devotion must be steadfast and sincere, shallow devotion will only give hollow results.

#### 4. Silence = sai lens

Baba often says, "Only in the depth of silence the voice of God can be heard." Therefore, to experience divine one must first learn to quieten his senses.

#### 5. Properties = Proper ties

Baba says that the worldly properties that we attach so much importance are only ties that bind us to this world. They are not the proper ties that we should be associated with. Only true property is Divine grace and love, which is eternal and ever lasting.

Z

#### 6. Hrudaya = hrud + daya

Hrudaya is the sanskrit term for heart. 'Daya' means compassion. Therefore, hrudaya (or heart) means that which is full of compassion.

#### 7. Samsara = Sam (meaning, some or little) + sara

Samsara is the sanskrit word for the world. 'Sara' means essence. Hence, it means the world has little sum and substance. To the enlightened, this world is an illusion.

#### 8. History = HIS + story

Only that story is true History which talks about His advent, His miracles, His messages.

#### 9. Politics – poly (or many) tricks

Current day politics is only tricks, some more tricks and many more tricks. Sincere politicians are an endangered

species.

#### 10. Mankind = Men + kindness

To be addressed as mankind, all men must have kindness in their heart and should learn to love one another, Baba says.

#### 11. Samaadhi = Sama (equilibrium) + dhi (intellect)

Samaadhi is the super-conscious state when an aspirant realises God. An aspirant reaches that stage when he has perfect equipoise, symmetry with himself and his surroundings.

#### 12. Sadhana – Sa (good or divine) + dhana (or wealth)

Sadhana refers to spiritual practises. Spiritual practises and good deeds are our true wealth and not the worldly possessions, Baba often emphasises.

#### 13. Radha – dhara (stream) of aradhana (prayer).

Radha was one of the greatest devotees of Lord Krishna. Her life was a saga of prayer and devotion which is reflected in her name, Baba has explained.

#### 14. Baba says, "People crave for interviews, but what is important is Inner view."

"One should study to be Steady."

"The only way to immortality from mortality is removal of Immorality."

#### 15. Vinayaka = Vi(No) + Nayaka (master)

Lord Ganesha, who is also addressed as Vinayaka, is the one without a master. There is none second to him. He is the master of all masters

#### 16. Sai Baba = Sa (divine) + Aayee (mother) + Baba (father).

Thus, Baba very name means that He is the Divine mother and father of one and all.

## Brindavan Roundup 2004



Hemareddy Mallamma, a drama

A slew of activities brought the month of May to a close and auspiciously ushered in the month of June.

On May 20th, 2004, Swami had clothes distributed to the Bhajan singers at Bangalore as a sign of His appreciation for their service to Him. These group of singers, both men and women, practice assiduously the year round, so that they could sing for their Lord when He is resident in Brindavan for 2 or 3 months during the summer. They lead the Bhajans on Thursday morning and on Sundays. This group was initially formed by Swami Himself and He nourished and took an active part in training them in the early years.

On May 27th, 2004, the Bala Vikas children of the education wing of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations, Karnataka region staged a drama entitled "Shiva Bhakte" in the Divine Presence at the Sai Kishan Kalyana Mantap in Brindavan, Bangalore. This drama outlines the story of Malamma, of the Hemareddy family. She is an ardent



Lord Ganesha, at the Institute, all dressed up

devotee of Lord Mallikarjuna and sees Him in everyone. Her in-laws do not like her habit of always feeding the beggars who come to the door, and send her away to live alone in the forest, away from the rest of the family. Reaping the fruit of their bad actions,

their crop fails. Malamma however, prays ardently to Lord Mallikarjuna to show mercy to the Hemareddy family. The Lord grants her prayer and they reap a golden harvest. Malamma's relatives apologise and lovingly take her back in their midst.

Once a woman, having heard that Malamma was able to reap a bountiful harvest after sowing grains of sand as she had given away the seeds to the needy, tries to do the same but was disappointed. Because only true devotion is rewarded by the Lord. All the depth of feeling was brought out by the children and thoroughly enjoyed by one and all.

On May 28th, 2004, Sai Gitanjali, celebrated their 7th anniversary in the Divine Presence. The Sai Gitanjali Center was opened by Swami in 1997 to provide a building



Anniversary of Sai Geetanjali

for educational activities, run a library, provide vocational guidance and specialized medical consultancy, and run a literary center, all free of charge. After a morning of enchanting Bhajans in the Divine Presence, prasadam was distributed to all.

June 3rd signaled a milestone in the lives of the young students of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. This day marked the beginning of the academic year. The boys welcomed Swami to Sai Ramesh Hall to the sonorous sounds of Vedic chants. One could see that Swami was visibly pleased. The Vedic chants were followed by melodious bhajans sung by the students. At the conclusion of the morning festivities, the joy was shared with all devotees by the distribution of sumptuous prasadam to all present. The students then walked to the Institute building from Sai Ramesh Hall to begin their academic year. And yes, they all prayed to Lord Ganesha (Whom they had nicely dressed up earlier) in front of the Institute building to remove all obstacles from their path in this new academic year.

The evening of June 3rd saw the performance of yet

## Brindavan Roundup 2004

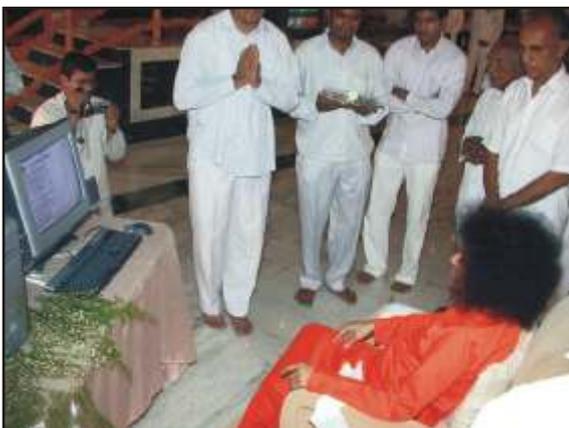


Children from Sai Darshan

another drama entitled “Naradana Nataka” by the members and children of Sai Darshan. Sai Darshan works for the upliftment of the slum children of Bangalore who acted in this play also. The play centered around Sathyabhama’s jealousy and Indra’s selfishness. Sathyabhama covets the Parijatha flower at any cost because she hears that Rukmini has received one such flower at the hands of Krishna. Krishna fulfils her wish. However, when the time comes to part with the Parijatha tree, Indra forgets Krishna’s Divinity and all the help he has received from Krishna and calls Him a common thief.

It is Sage Narada who creates the entire drama to open the eyes of Rukmini and Sathyabhama and to show us mortals the lessons to be drawn from the “leelas” of Divinity which are continuing even to this day. Swami was pleased with the performance of these slum children and manifested a golden chain for the young boy who played the part of Sage Narada. On morning of June 5th, 2004, Swami inaugurated an exhibition entitled ‘Educare, the Vedas of the 21st century’. After inaugurating the exhibition, He went around the exhibits and blessed all the organizers. He also sat and watched an entire computer presentation specially prepared for Him.

On June 7th, 2004, Swami left Brindavan and departed to Puttaparthi.

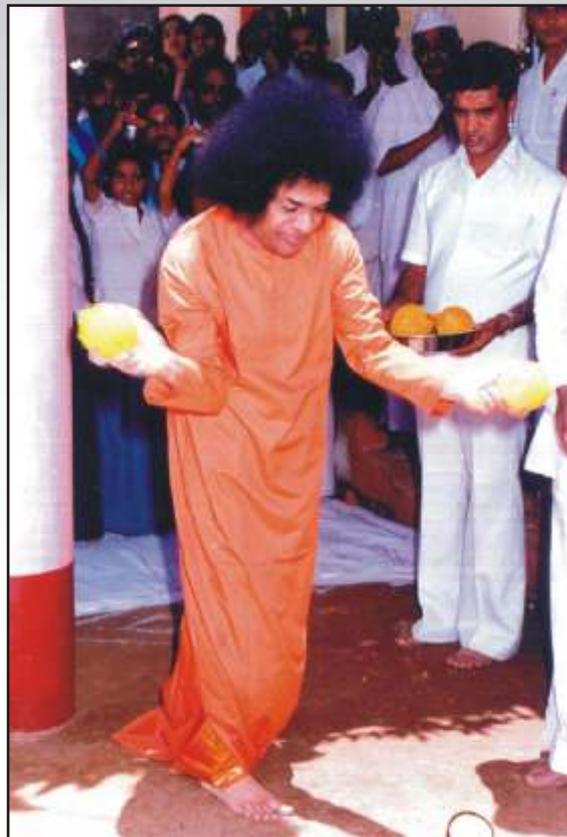


Educare, the Veda of the 21st century

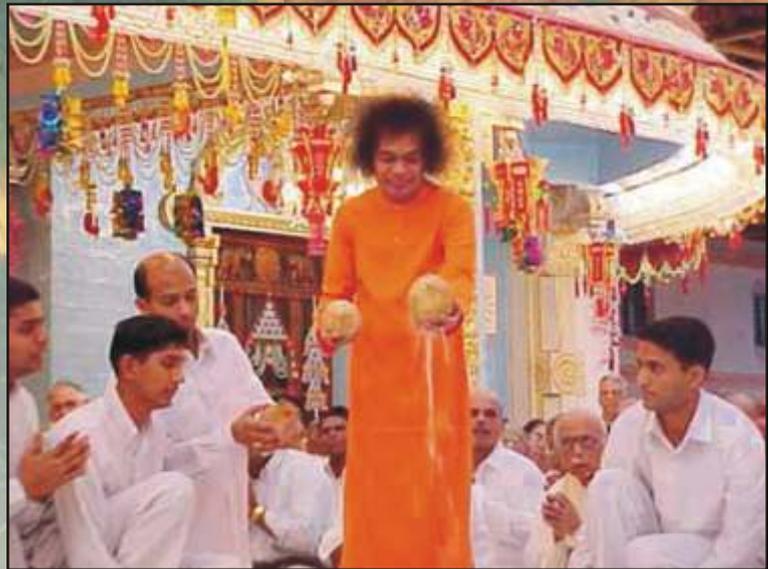
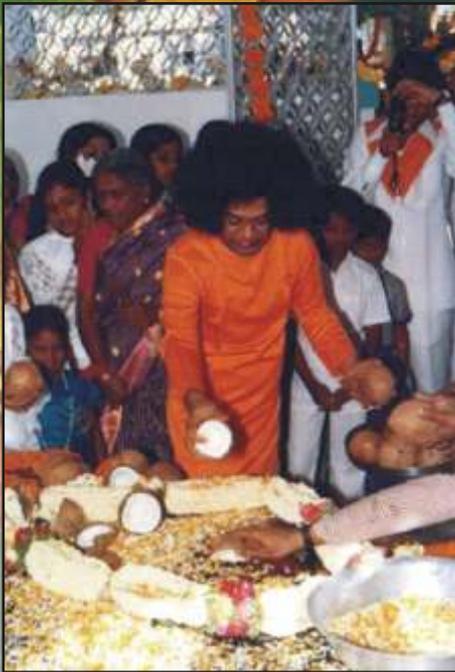
## The Coconut

The coconut is a symbol of the heart. Before it is offered to God, all the outer fibre has to be removed. This means, spiritually, removing the Tamasic (evil) tendencies from our heart. The shell of the coconut symbolises the Rajo guna in us. The white kernel inside the coconut represents the Satwa guna. What we have to offer to God is a pure heart, without the Tamasic and Rajasic qualities such as anger, hatred and attachment. It is this purity of heart that must be manifested in making any offering to God and not the mechanical breaking of a coconut as a meaningless ritual.

Baba



# The Coconut



# Glory of God

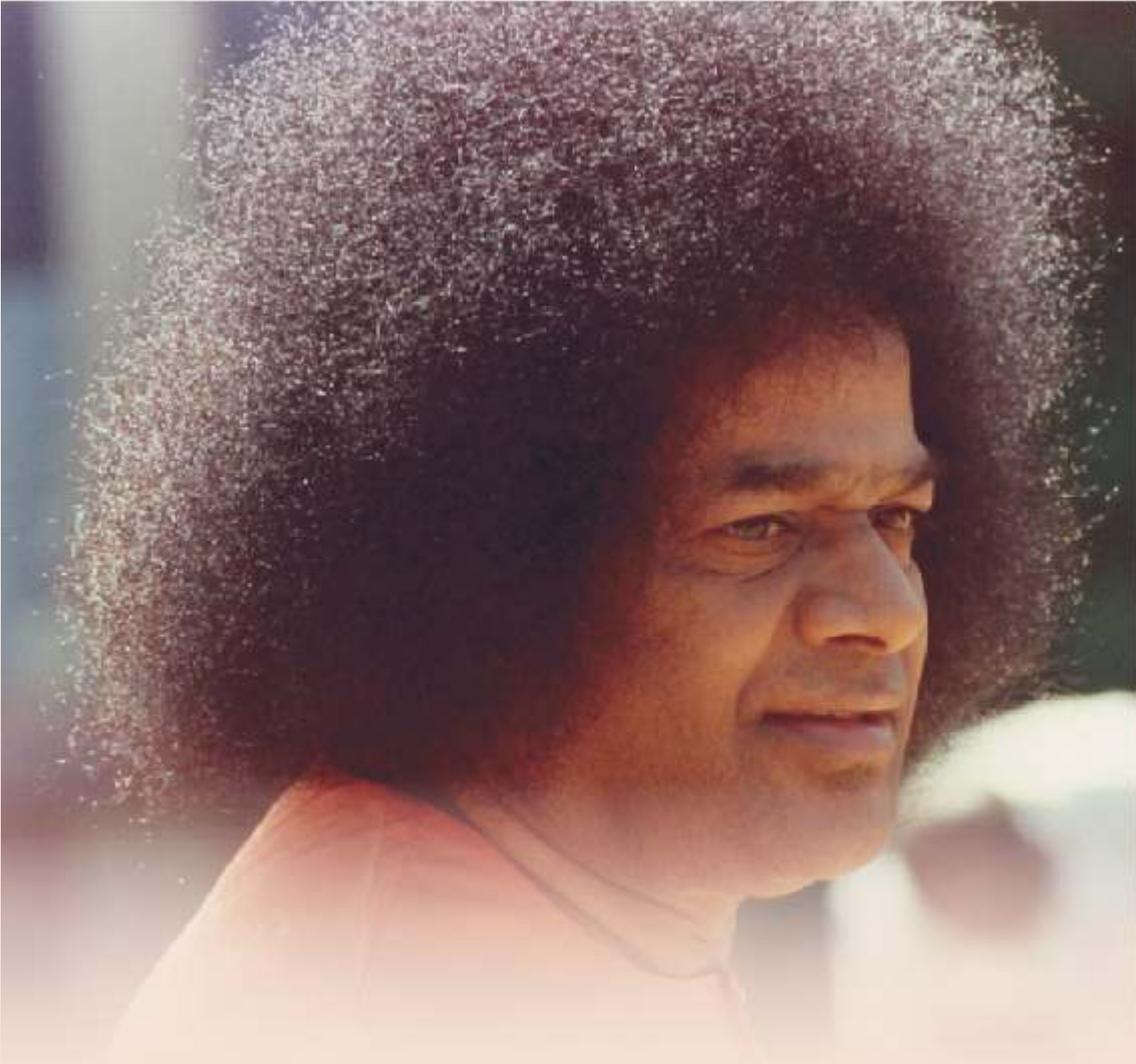
Dear Reader,

We present you some stunning pictures of the Grand Canyon, Arizona in USA. They were sent to us by sister Thavamalar of Singapore who was deeply touched by the beauty of the place. In her own words

'I had the opportunity to visit the Grand Canyon in Arizona, USA, the past week and I was so overwhelmed by the sheer beauty of His Handiwork. The incredible majesty of the Canyon and the vast expanse of it was such an awe-inspiring experience, it filled me with such a deep sense of insignificance that I felt like a speck of dust compared to the Canyon. I want to share some of the pictures I took.'

Enjoy the beauty.

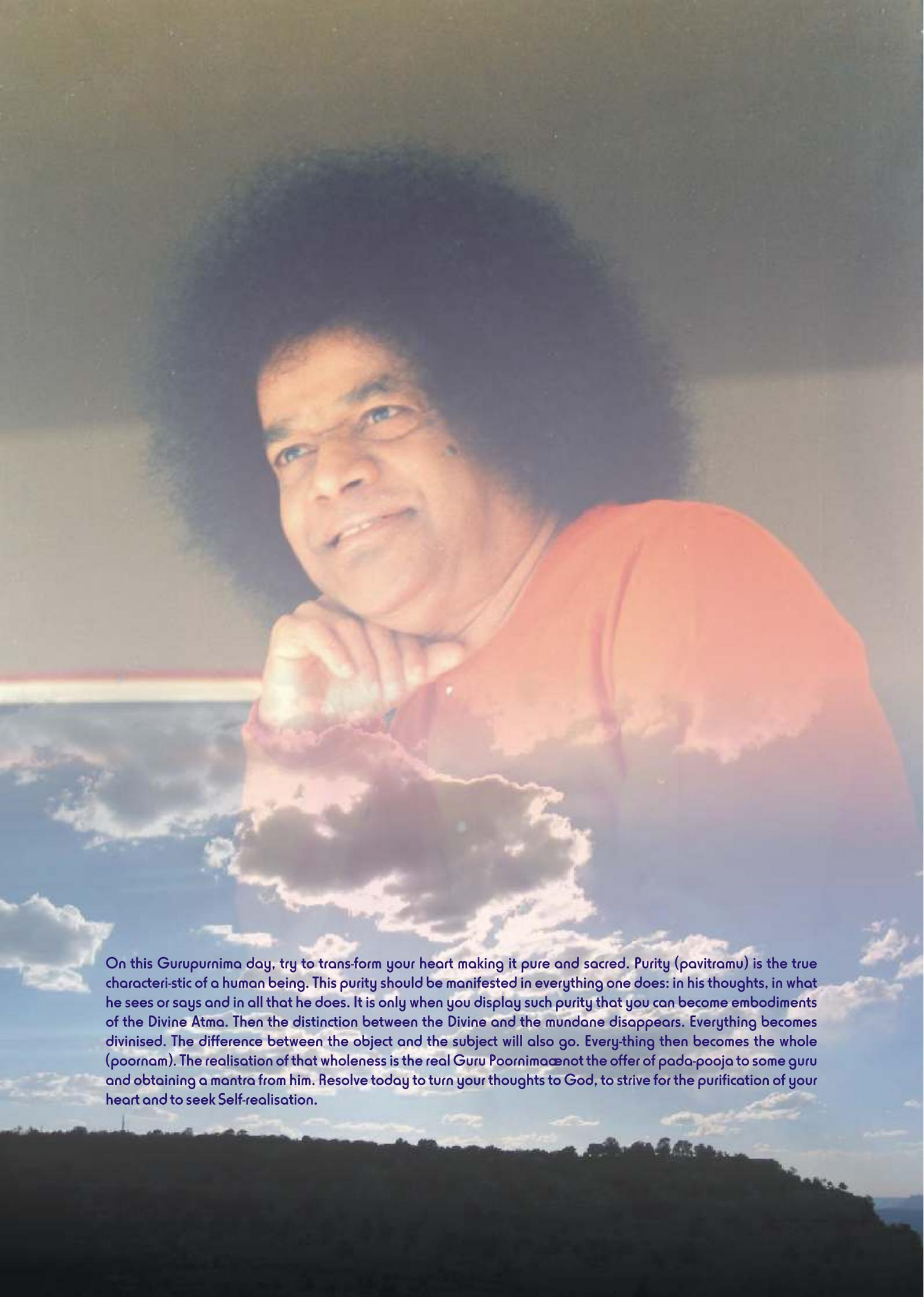
## WHAT DOES



## MEAN ?

“A man who can swallow a dog is Wise. A man who can swallow a pig is even better; he is a Yogi. A man who can swallow an elephant is the noblest of them all.”

This is what Swami once said. What does He mean by that? Send your answers to [h2h@radiosai.org](mailto:h2h@radiosai.org). We shall publish all letters with the correct answer! Don't forget to include your Name, and full address.



On this Gurupurnima day, try to transform your heart making it pure and sacred. Purity (pavitramu) is the true characteristic of a human being. This purity should be manifested in everything one does: in his thoughts, in what he sees or says and in all that he does. It is only when you display such purity that you can become embodiments of the Divine Atma. Then the distinction between the Divine and the mundane disappears. Everything becomes divinised. The difference between the object and the subject will also go. Everything then becomes the whole (poornam). The realisation of that wholeness is the real Guru Poornima—not the offer of pada-pooja to some guru and obtaining a mantra from him. Resolve today to turn your thoughts to God, to strive for the purification of your heart and to seek Self-realisation.



Love All | Serve All