



Sathya Sai Newsletter
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SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

September, 1977

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DEVOTION

DEVOTION TO THE LORD IS ONLY A FORM OF DISCIPLINE TO REACH THE GOAL. THE SEEKER SHOULD NOT STOP WITH THE ACQUISITION OF DEVOTION; HE SHOULD PAY ATTENTION NOT SO MUCH TO THE DEVOTION OR LOVE THAT HE HAS TOWARDS THE LORD, BUT TO THE LOVE AND GRACE THAT THE LORD BESTOWS ON HIM! HE MUST BE ALWAYS EAGER TO FIND OUT WHICH BEHAVIOR OF HIS, WHAT ACTS OF HIS, WILL BE THE MOST PLEASING TO THE LORD, WILL FILL THE LORD WITH ANANDAM*. INQUIRE ABOUT THAT, YEARN FOR THAT, CARRY OUT THE THINGS THAT WILL SECURE THAT OBJECTIVE, BE ENGAGED IN ACTS CONDUCTIVE TO GAIN - THAT IS REAL BHAKTI.

*Bliss

-BABA

(from GEETHA VAHINI)

QUOTATIONS FROM THE TEACHINGS OF SATHYA SAI BABA

Happiness is essential for God Realization. It is one of the major gates to Divinity. It is not just a fault if a person is not happy; it is one of the most serious of all faults. It is a barrier to God Realization. Most people are unhappy because of worldly pursuits, attachments, enjoyments; too much interested in the world. To get free of this fault, a person has to be told of the seriousness of the fault. He should realize that desire is never-ending, like the waves of the sea.

* * *

One can attain equanimity even in the midst of wild animals. But it is difficult to win it while among worldly-minded men. Sadhana will be affected by the company one keeps.

* * *

God is called Chitta-chora (the Stealer of hearts). But He is no ordinary Thief. He awakens while He steals; He is loved more if He steals. He makes people richer by His thievery.

* * *

Freedom or Liberation is not gained by the perfection of the small self, but by indifference (Upeksha) to both perfection and imperfection. If you are not ready to relinquish the relative, limited identity, then spend your energy in perfecting it: that way time will be best utilized. But that is not the ultimate. In God, perfection or imperfection do not exist. Vibhakti or division, divergence, confrontation of opposites, is not Bhakti (union, at-one-ment).

* * *

No tree will yield fruits the moment you plant the seedling in your backyard. To reach that stage, you have to foster it with care over a long period of time, is it not? Similarly, whatever result you seek, you have to follow carefully, without break, the preparatory disciplines. Sadhakas (aspirants) must always be aware of this. The yearning must be directed away from "how to be born" to "how to die"! For birth depends on how death takes place.

SAI FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SATHYA SAI REGIONAL RETREAT: California - Announcing a West Coast Regional retreat and 24-hour (Akhand) Bhajan at the Cottontail Ranch, Woodland Hills, California (off Malibu Canyon), beginning 6 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 11, 1977 and ending at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977. The retreat was arranged by a group of Central Committee Directors after the July Directors meeting, when considerable interest was expressed in a Regional Retreat. Along the lines of the Northeastern Regional Retreats, a varied program of bhajan, study circle, bal vikas presentation, etc. is being planned. The cost is \$20.00 per person (adults and children), including meals and cabin accommodations. Space is available on a first come basis, as the ranch will accommodate only 200 people. Please make reservations as early in advance as possible, by sending a check made out to Sai Retreat, 7911 Willoughby Ave., Los Angeles, CA, 90046. You may call 213 656-9373 for information. A complete program, details, and directions will be sent upon receipt of reservations.

THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER was prepared by members of the Sathya Sai Baba Centers of Manhattan and Pound Ridge, New York, and coordinated by the Communication Committee. Printing and distribution of the Newsletter will now be carried out by a Newsletter Publication Committee in the New York area with editorial supervision by the Communication Committee. All correspondence and subscriptions should still be mailed to the Communication Committee's Soquel, California address.

WORLD COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS: The World Council of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations has announced the following worldwide programs for this year:

1. There will be an Akhand (continuous, unbroken) Bhajan at all Sathya Sai Centers throughout the world, beginning at 6:00 p.m. on November 12 and ending at 6:00 p.m. on November 13. More information will be sent to American centers by the Bhajan Committee.
2. On December 25, all Sathya Sai Bal Vikas students will participate in service activities among the handicapped in their respective areas.

SEVA AND BHAJAN COLUMNS: Starting with this Newsletter, each issue will have one column devoted to Bhajan and one devoted to service activities for the general guidance and information of devotees and Sathya Sai centers.

THE NEWSLETTER HAS RECENTLY RECEIVED a large number of devotional poems and testimonials of personal spiritual experiences. We have enjoyed reading these materials but, unfortunately, it is beyond the size and scope of the Newsletter to publish them. We suggest that poetry and personal articles be submitted to Sanathana Sarathi which traditionally has published a wonderful selection of devotional articles and poetry.

ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTD.

TWO NEW BOOKS are available from the Book Center in Tustin:
Sadhana, The Inward Path, Quotations from Sai Baba's discourses; and
Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, Discourses at the Summer Course
held in Ootacamund in 1976. Also, Sai Baba Avatar: A New Journey Into
Power and Glory by Howard Murphet will be available in October.

ADDITIONAL SATHYA SAI BABA CENTERS ARE: Sathya Sai Baba Center of:
Claremont, CA, 777 N. Indian Hill Blvd., Claremont, CA, 91711;

Virginia Rinehart.

Mt. Shasta, CA, P.O. Box 847, Mt. Shasta, CA, 96067; Ted Thompson.
Temecula, CA, General Delivery, Temecula, CA, 92390, E.P. Gonzales.
Planetarium Station, NY, 162 W. 83rd St., N.Y., NY 10024; W. Zulkoski.
Pound Ridge, NY, c/o Goldbergs, Donbrook Rd., Pound Ridge, NY 10576;
Howard Levin.

Grants Pass, Oregon, 1151 Summit Loop Dr., Enchanted Acres, Grants
Pass, Oregon 97526; Dr. Wilma Bronkey.

Memphis Tennessee, 3439 Starsdale, Memphis TN 38118; Dr. M.K. Mohanty.
Nashville, Tennessee, 1141 Lebanon Rd. Apt. E 41, Nashville, TN 37210.

The Sathya Sai Baba Center of Kaneohe, Hawaii is now called the Sathya
Sai Baba Center of Manoa. Its new address is 2360 Liloa Rise, Honolulu,
Hawaii 96822; M.D. Lenhoff, Pres. The Sathya Sai Baba Center of Madison,
Wisconsin has changed its address to 2206 Center Ave., Madison, Wisconsin
53704. The Sathya Sai Baba Center of Riverside, California has changed
its address to 186 W. 8th St., San Bernadino, CA 92410; M. Patience, Pres.
The Sathya Sai Baba Center of South Jersey has changed its address to
668 Chatham Rd. Somerdale, NJ 08083.

INDIAN FESTIVAL DATES: The following are the approximate dates of
festivals usually celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam between September
1977 and April 1978.

September 6 (Tuesday),	Sri Krishna Jayanti ("Krishna's Birthday")
September 16 (Friday),	Vinayaka Chaturthi (Ganesh Pooja)
October 13 (Thursday),	Navarathri Festival (First Day of Dasara)
October 21 (Friday),	Vaishnava (Saraswati Pooja)
October 22 (Saturday),	Vijaya Dasami (Last Day of Dasara)
November 10 (Thursday),	Deepavali (Festival of Lights)
November 23 (Wednesday),	Birthday of Sathya Sai Baba
December 21 (Wednesday),	Vaikuntha Ekadasi
January 14 (Saturday),	Sankranti (Pongal)
March 7 (Tuesday),	Maha Sivaratri
April 8 (Saturday),	Samvatsaradi (Telugu New Year)
April 14 (Friday),	Tamil New Year

EXCERPTS FROM BABA'S DISCOURSES AT 1977 SUMMER SCHOOL:

There is no God without Creation, no Creation without God.

Milk changes easily into curd. Thus the Shakti of Paramatma easily becomes Creation. The marriage of Rama and Sita is symbolic of the confluence of the Paramatma and Creation.

The Ramayana symbolizes the coming together of two divine aspects. Sita means "born out of the Earth" and symbolizes all the beauty of Creation. The marriage of Rama and Sita represents the auspicious moment for coming together of Atma and Jiva. It represents the auspicious moment of fixing our minds on God.

You must understand the need to give and sacrifice. What cannot be acquired through work and through learning can only be acquired through sacrifice. You must learn the inner meaning of sacrifice. If fruit is not sacrificed to eating, it will rot. If the breath is not exhaled, you will suffocate. If the blood is not circulated, the heart will stop. Learn the importance of sacrifice. If you have bad qualities, like praising yourself, sacrifice them.

Without practical experience, theoretical knowledge is like a signpost. The signpost cannot take us to the destination. It only indicates the path. To reach the destination, constant effort is required; it is essential.

A swimmer pushes back the water to move forward. In the same way, in this life-cycle it is the duty of every being to move forward, forgetting the past and leaving it behind. Like the swimmer: if he does not move forward, pushing the water behind him, he sinks.

THOUGHTS ON SEVA

The American Sathya Sai Baba Centers are now beginning to focus more clearly on service activities. "Serve as much as you can, serve as lovingly as you can, serve as quietly as you can. Don't worry about the results, just thank God for the chance to serve." Applying this lesson in the United States poses some special opportunities and problems for Sai devotees. Many centers have found challenging and worthwhile activities and have shared their experience with us, so that other centers may have specific examples to follow:

Prison assistance - visiting and corresponding with prisoners; teaching in prisons and in organizations aiding former prisoners.

Handicapped and blind assistance - tutoring those with special problems, reading to the blind, and similar projects.

Elderly assistance - at private and nursing homes, serving as companions and helpers, teaching arts and crafts, etc.

THOUGHTS ON SEVA CONTD.

Special education - volunteer work at schools and residences for children with special problems.

In most areas, well established service organizations (such as United Way) have many projects in need of volunteers. Serving in this manner leaves no room for promoting the name of Sai organizations, and most centers find that individual members prefer working in this way, as their own time permits.

The Medical-Seva Committee, headed by Dr. Pani in Bethesda, has carried out a full program of activities in recent years. They send medical supplies to the Puttaparthi and Whitefield hospitals, and veterinary supplies to Gokulam.

It has been suggested that as an aid in planning and coordinating service activities, a Service Committee might be formed in each Sai center. The chairpersons of these committees could meet at regional meetings and share their ideas and suggestions, and bring this information to all members of their respective centers. Such committees might also help new centers in forming a seva program.

Centers that are actively engaged in seva programs all seem to have common advice to other centers: start slowly but with dedication; do not strive for recognition or publicity, but adhere to the Sai ideal; let each individual find the type of seva most suited to his or her abilities; always encourage and assist those expressing interest in doing seva.

SOME SLOKAS OF BHAGAVAN

(from Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains)

Do you know why this life has been given to you?

It is not for searching for food and eking out a livelihood, but it is to enable you to search and search for God.

Do you know why you have been given vision and your eyes?

Is it for seeing everything that is around you? No, certainly not. It has been given to you to help you see the Supreme One, the Omnipotent Divinity.

Do you know why you have been given legs?

Are these legs given to you to go round all the streets and narrow lanes in a purposeless manner? No. They have been given to you so that you may visit the temple of God.

Do you know why you have been given your mouth?

Is it to utter all kinds of words? No. It has been given to you so that you might sing the glory of the Lord.

Do you know why you have been given a human body?

Is it to take you to all the corners of the world? No, that is not the purpose. You have been given this body so that you may demonstrate with its help the truth of the statement that the body is intended for doing good to other human beings.

BHAJAN: THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN SONG
(with sayings by Bhagavan in quotes)

"Bhajan must spread good will, love, ecstasy: it must cleanse the polluted atmosphere: it must invite all to share in the joy and peace."
"Some people question the propriety of calling on God by means of a multiplicity of names. But each name is indicative of only one aspect of divinity. It denotes a single part of the Supreme Personality. The eye, the nose, the mouth, the head, the finger, may be denoted by distinct words: but they all belong to the same individual. So too, one must remember that every name is but a facet, a part, a ray of the Supreme. The sadhana consists in recognizing and becoming aware of the One that supports the many. That is the precious gem of wisdom that one must secure and treasure."

Bhajan singing begins with the chanting of "Om" three times.
"'Om' is the primal sound inherent in the life breath. Every little movement results in sound; only you may not be able to hear because the range of your ear is limited. The falling of an eyelid over the eye makes a sound, the dropping of dew on a petal makes a sound. Any little agitation disturbing the calm is bound to produce sound. The sound caused by the primal movement that resulted in the enveloping of Brahman (the formless Supreme God) by self-evolved maya (creation) is the Pranava-sabda, or Om (the original sound)."
"As beads in the string, all letters and the sounds they represent are strung on the Pranava."
"It is like the seven colors of the sun's rays merging into one colorless brilliance."

"Begin with a vigorous song on Ganesha." This is Sai Baba's instruction. "Vinayaka or Ganesh or Ganapathi or Vighneswara, all indicate the Elephant-God, who is popular among the young and old, and who is worshipped as the very first deity, before regularly beginning any ceremony. He is the Lord of the Ganas or Divine Forces, inside and outside the human body (Ganapathi; pathi means Lord): He is the Lord who masters and overwhelms vighna or obstacles (Vighneswara). This is the natural effect of the fact that Ganapathi is the God of intelligence, Vidhya, or Buddhi." He is called Vidya Dayaka and Buddhi Pradayaka, meaning bestower of knowledge and intelligence.
"The elephant is proverbially the most intelligent among the mammals and it is a vegetarian, indicating its satwic (pure) nature. Ganapathi has the head of an elephant for it indicates the intelligence through which obstacles in the path of achievement, secular as well as spiritual, can be overcome." The names Gajavadana and Gajanana, refer to Ganesh as the elephant-faced one. Another name for him is "Subhanana," of bright countenance. "The countenance depicts inner calm, happiness and balance, inner grace and mercy, the consciousness of strength and sovereignty."

"The Ananda I derive from Bhajan, I do not get from anything else... Be sincere, feel in your hearts what you are singing with your voice."

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