

25

SATHYA SAI



Newsletter

FALL
VOL. 5 NO. 1

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This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to Bhagavan
Sri Sathya Sai Baba



In this darkened world, it is difficult to move about truthfully, correctly and peacefully without knocking against some obstacle or other. How then are you to succeed? Light the lamp! Let it reveal the reality; get the light of Inana (wisdom) that will solve all the difficulties. You may claim that you live according to Dharma (righteousness). But, your basic flaw is that your acts are not done in the spirit of dedication. If so done, it gets stamped with the authentic mark of Dharma. Some clever folk might raise a doubt and ask "Can we then kill and injure, in the name of the Lord, dedicating the act to Him?" Well, how can a person get the attitude of dedicating all his activities to the Lord, without at the same time being pure in thought, word and deed? Love, Equanimity, Rectitude, Nonviolence - these are the attendant virtues of the servant of the Lord. How can cruelty and callousness coexist with these virtues? To have selflessness, the spirit of selfsacrifice and the spiritual eminence required for the dedicatory outlook, one must have first won the four characteristics Sathya (truth) Santham (equanimity) Prema (Love) Ahimsa (nonviolence). Devoid of these, mere naming will not make any deed a votive offering.

A DIVINE BIRTH

On 23rd November 1926, Baba took birth as Ratnakaran Sathyanarayan Raju in Puttaparthi, a village situated in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh.

On 23rd May 1940, the fourteen year old Sathyanarayan Raju announced Himself as Sai Baba. He called the members of the household around Him, and gave them sugar candy, flowers, balls of rice cooked in milk and sweets, all materialized from thin air by a mere wave of His hand. The neighbors also gathered around and Sathya's father, Venkappa Raju, could hardly squeeze himself through the crowd to enter his own home. Finally when he managed to get near his Son, he threatened to beat Him with a stick and demanded to know whether He was a God, a Ghost or a Madcap? Prompt came the announcement, *I am Sai Baba. I am Sai Baba. I belong to the Apastamba Sutra, (the school of sage Apastamba) and I am of the spiritual lineage of Bharadwaja; I am Sai Baba, I have come to ward off all your troubles. Keep your houses clean and pure.*

From VISION OF THE DIVINE

The 23rd of November is a most auspicious time, this is the 55th birthday* of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We are both humbled and elevated to know of this Divine Being. It is a profound privilege to speak His name, and a blessing to have been in the physical presence of the Avatar and experience the depth of love that flows from Him to all humanity.



*To remind our readers that, in India, a baby is considered to be one year old at the time of birth.

GLOBAL AKHANDA BHAJAN

Each year, nearing the time of Sri Baba's birthday, an Akhanda, or continuous bhajan, is held by His devotees throughout the world. It is our understanding that the date for this worldwide bhajan is established by Bhagavan personally. Therefore, the dates (this year November 8-9) may vary, but the time has remained the same, from 6:30 P.M. on a Saturday until 6:30 P.M. the following Sunday. These 24 hours are a time of singing to and about the Lord. Thereby most countries of the world and the many hundreds of Sathya Sai Baba Centers are able to participate in this pleasant task.

While there is singing in one area of the planet, the time changes so that music "circles the globe" heightening the God consciousness of all who are willing to open their hearts.

MESSAGE OF LOVE:

This program of Bhajan for 24 hours, continuously done, all around the world in all lands has therefore spread the message of Love through the names of the embodiment of Universal Love; it saturates the atmosphere with the thought of God and of the peace and joy that He showers. The Bhajan that is done here affects not only this particular area and its environment, but, it will transmute the entire atmosphere. Continue this attitude of devotion and humility, of service and tolerance and the atmosphere will not be polluted by hatred. Do not contaminate the air by voices of acrimony, scandal, insult or slander. Keep silent, when you feel like expressing such ideas; that is service to yourself and others.

THE ETERNAL SONG:

Life is a song; sing it. That is what Krishna taught through His life. Arjuna heard that song on the battlefield, where tensions were at their highest and when the fate of millions was to be decided by the sword. Krishna sang the Githa, for Arjuna to listen. Githa means 'song'. He sang, because He was Ananda, (bliss) wherever he was - in Gokulam, (place where cows are kept) on the banks of the Yamuna (a river) or at Kurukshetra (field of battle) between the warring armies.

You too must pass your days in song. Let your whole life be a Bhajan. Believe that God is everywhere at all times and derive

strength, comfort and joy, singing in your heart in His Presence the Glory of God. Let melody and harmony surge up from your hearts and let all take delight in the Love that you express through that song.

Taken from Bhagavan's Discourse, at the Conclusion of the Global Bhajan, at Prasanthi Nilayam, November 14, 1976.



CALENDAR

EVENTS AND HOLY DAYS OBSERVED AT THE ASHRAM OF
SRI SATHYA SAI BABA FOR THE REMAINING YEAR 1980

November 6,	Diwali, Festival of Lights
November 8-9,	Akhanda Bhajan, A special offering to the Lord celebrated by the singing of holy songs. See Global Akhanda Bhajan, page 3-4.
November 23,	The Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
December 25,	The Birthday of Jesus Christ

It is only in the depth of silence that the voice of God can be heard.

NEW BOOK AND TAPE

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Book
Center of America
P. O. Box 278
Tustin, CA 92680
Telephone: (714) 835-5206

- New Book: GUIDE TO INDIAN CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY is based on the Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, during the Summer Sessions of 1972, 1973 and 1974. The price is 65¢.
- New Tape: BC-5, DISCOURSE ON SRI SATHYA SAI BABA by Dr. Jack Hislop, August 1980. The price is \$3.75 (45 minutes).

NEW VIDEO CASSETTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

S.A.I. Foundation of Hollywood
7911 Willoughby Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90046
Telephone: (213) 656-9373

VIDEO CASSETTES

- Includes three films on one 2-hour video cassette SATHYA SAI BABA - HIS LIFE IS HIS MESSAGE, CELEBRATION, AND THE MESSAGE I BRING, in 1/2 inch VHS and Betamax, \$69 plus postage.
- AURA OF DIVINITY, the complete film in 1/2 inch VHS and Betamax, 60 minutes, \$49 plus postage.

The above video cassettes are now available for the Foreign consumer in PAL system. Cost is same as above plus postage.

NEW VIDEO CASSETTE

- VC-3 THE LOST YEARS OF JESUS 1/2 inch VHS and Betamax, 90 minutes, \$69 plus postage.

THE LOST YEARS OF JESUS is not available in PAL system.

BABA TALKS ABOUT LOVE

It was a warm July day in 1974 at Sri Baba's ashram in Prasanthi Nilayam, South India. A devotee was called upon by Baba for a coveted interview. Upon entering the Mandir the room was cool and seemed intimate with only a hand full of people present. They waited in respectful silence.

Sathya Sai Baba entered and gracefully sat on the floor, rather than His elaborately carved chair, saying *I just want to talk about love.*

He gathered the group closer to Him and continued: *Love is God. Truth is God. God is everywhere. Love is life. Love is God. Love is everything. Love is a wave which goes everywhere. Animals have love, but in human beings love is of a different grade. Animals forget the past and change relationships.*

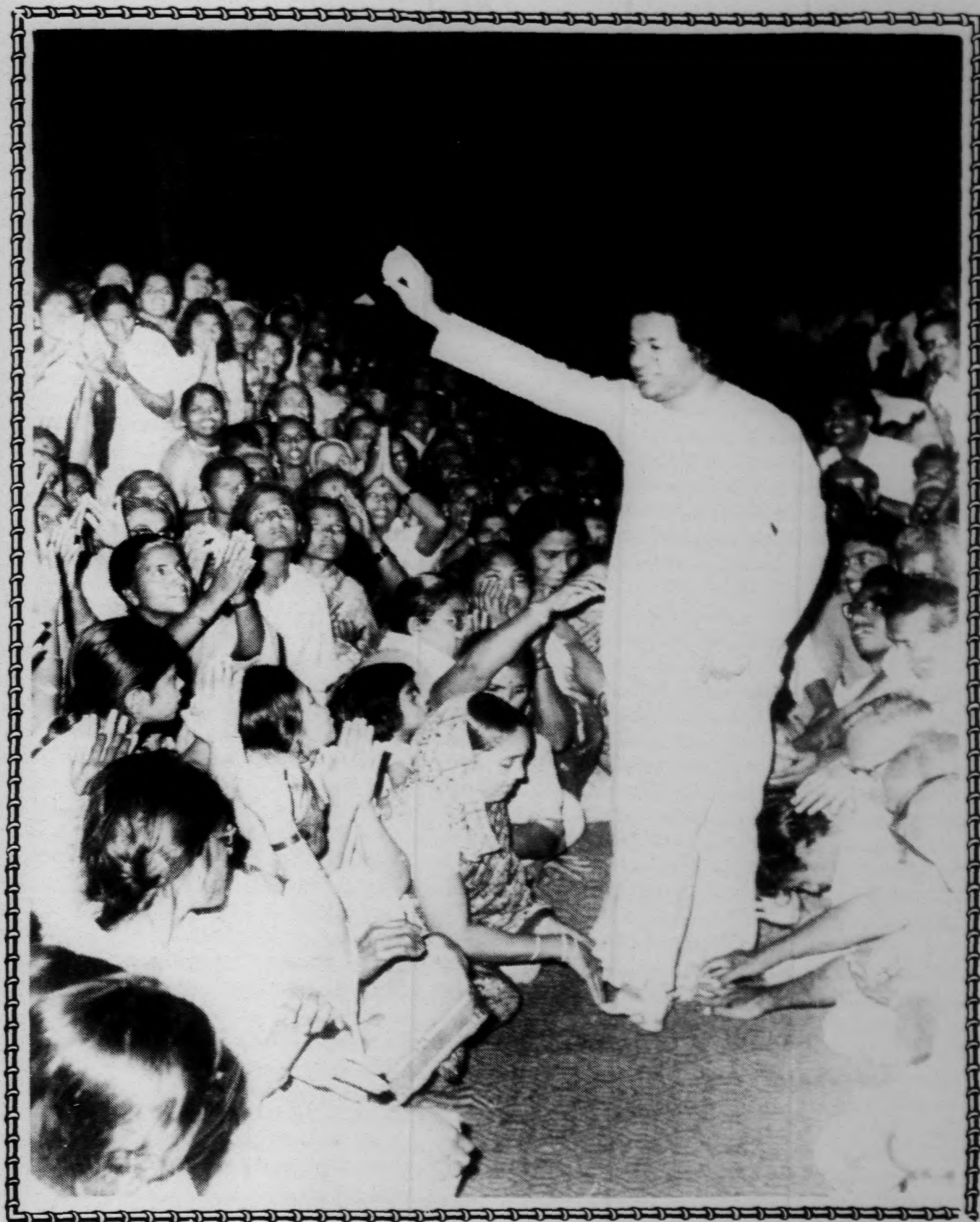
If you do not have divine grace all actions are without value. Love many people - each love is like a thread; many are strong. Love based on the divine is strong. Love takes the form of what it loves. Love based on the divine is strong.

Kinship love is selfish. Neighbor love is more capable but still limited. Real love takes root in the fact of the Atma (God within). Family love is like a light in one room. Neighbor love is like moonlight. You do not love all of them. Divine love is pure sunlight.

Sri Baba gently repeated his words for extra emphasis.

Pure love is expanding not contracting. Love is God. Live in love. Love is everything. He is happy who loves. To love many people makes you strong like threads make strong cloth when woven. Love takes the form of what it loves. If we see only God and good we become divine.

Please share your own experiences with our readers. No names will be used and we reserve the right to edit all material. Send to: Sathya Sai Newsletter, 6804 N. Joshua Tree Ln., Paradise Valley, Arizona 85253



CHILDREN'S CORNER

THE GURU

How are you? I am fine. Boy, when you come to Sai Baba land there's one thing you'd better remember. Don't wish for something unless you really want it.

The other day I was playing with my cars in the sand outside the courtyard. . . Yeah, you guessed it, Mom was inside praying and I was outside tired of playing with my cars all the time. I guess I was sad and feeling sorry for myself so I figured I'd talk to Sai Baba too!

"Dear Sai Baba," I said. "Please give me something exciting to do because I'm getting kind of tired of playing with these toys. . ."

Before I could even finish, I heard a tap, tap. I looked up to see a little old lady with a twinkle in her eyes holding a long stick. She was standing over me, looking down. I stood up, of course, Sai Baba says to respect the older people, but standing up, I couldn't see her face, so I sat down again.

"Hi, Mam," I said.

"Sai Ram," she said, smilingly and moved on. She was bent over so that her face was always turned towards the sandy soil.

I ran after her and sat in her path.

"How come you walk bent so close to the ground?" I asked.

"Because ," she said. "Each little grain of sand is chanting 'Sai Ram' and I want to hear every one. She smiled again and started to leave.

"Please wait," I cried. "I wish I could hear the sand or do something better than play with these old cars. My Mom spends all morning in the prayer hall and leaves me out here. . ."

"This is where you belong," the old lady said lovingly. "She belongs in there and you belong out here. She is doing her work and you are doing yours. Everything is correct. But tell me, would you like to be able to talk to the animals and understand their language?"

"Boy, would I," I cried.

"Achaa," she said and touched my head with her stick. "Good boy!" she muttered and moved away.

"No room, no room," I heard the crows calling from the top of the Mandir.

"No room, Ma, this is my special place."

The flock of crows spend all their time waiting on top of the prayer hall for a glimpse of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Each has her own four inches and sometimes one tries to push her way into another spot.

"I've been here since 7 o'clock and this is my space." All the crows started yelling at the new crow.

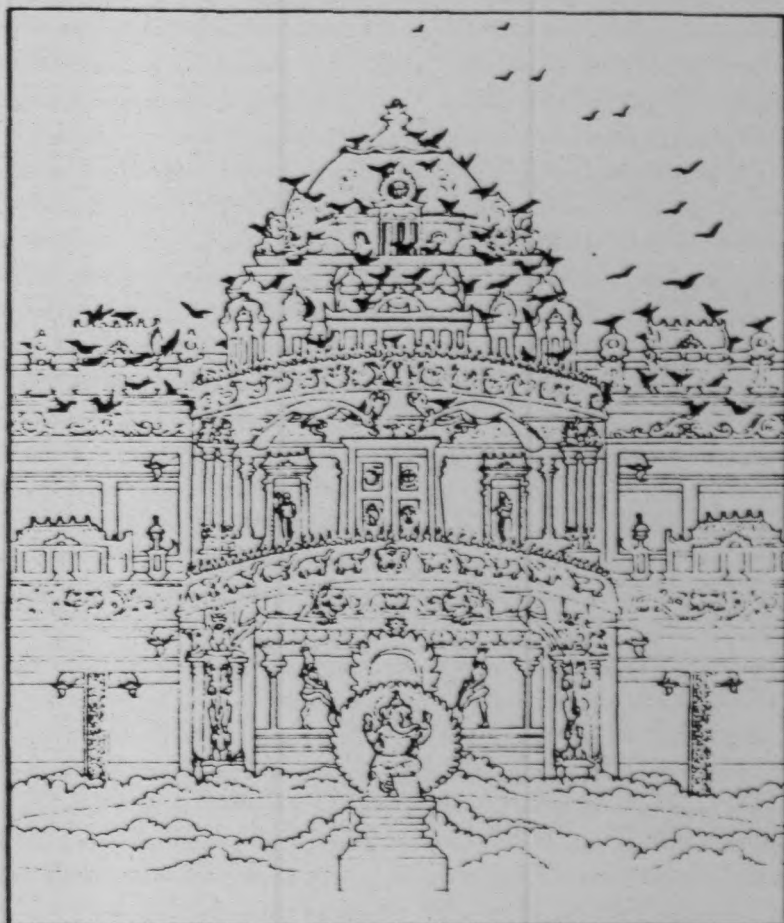
"Sounds familiar," I thought to myself. Mom says they sound like that inside too! Just then I saw a big old dog hurry by.

"I just know I saw an outsider pass by here." The dog peered around a tree and shook his head.

"Just won't do, you know, outsiders try to push their way in here. Give them an inch and they'll take a mile."

"What's the matter, Mr. Big Ears, why can't outsiders come in here?"

"Why?" the old dog sputtered, "Sai Ram, like most humans, you just don't understand. You see, lad, we dogs have our work too. We guard Sai Baba Land against the undesirables. Why, just the other day, a strange dog came in and. . .ah. . .made a loud noise in the inner courtyard. The Seva Dal ladies had a tizzy! It was very embarrassing until I hustled him out!" he said with importance.



"Oh, I see," I said.

"We ashram dogs would never do that, of course. We know our duty and we do it!"

"Gosh, Mr. Big Ears," I had no idea."

"Sai Ram lad, you humans just don't look at things from our view very often. Sathya Sai Baba says we're all one, you know."

"Even the undesirables?" I asked timidly, but he had run off again, sure that he'd seen another strange dog. I think Sri Baba keeps the people out who shouldn't be here but, I guess He likes us to keep busy.

"Om Om Om" I thought I could hear that sound that Mom makes in the morning when she starts the day.

"Om Om" It means God, I think.

"Om" and it seemed to be coming from the direction of the neem tree. I went to investigate.

"Om" I could hardly believe my eyes at such a strange sight. There, between the roots of the tree in a deep hole, was a nest of scorpions!

"Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram" . . I always say Baba's name a lot when I'm scared. I felt a little braver so I crept closer.

"Please sir, this is my place," I thought I'd run into another crow but it turned out to be a wren.

I just heard "Om" from this tree and came over to see what was happening. Then, I saw all these scorpions.

"They're meditating with their teacher, Guru Dev," explained the wren simply. "Don't you know who He is?"

"No."

"Oh well, I'm sorry. I thought everyone knew, but then you're a human, aren't you?"

"Yes, well. . .many years ago, when Sathya Sai Baba was a lad, a scorpion stung Him on the toe. The insect who stung Him, Guru Dev, here, tasted the food of God. He immediately entered a high state of joy and began doing spiritual practices.

I looked in and there was this very big old scorpion and about 10 other scorpions were all in a circle around him. Everyone was chanting "Om".

"He has been in a state of joyousness since he stung Sai Baba's toe. I didn't really understand what the wren was talking about.

"Sai Ram! There are scorpions down there!" I heard a voice yell and suddenly the small cave under the tree filled with water.

"Om" none of the scorpions seemed to care. They just continued to chant "Om" as one by one they sank under the water. Guru Dev was the last to sink. I saw a white light all around the roots of the tree and it grew and grew until I couldn't see where it stopped.

"Did you get stung?" The man with the water hose was looking at me kindly.

"No," I tried to say but there I was crying and I couldn't seem to stop.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes," I said and ran back to the courtyard.

"My place, my place."

The crows were at it again and the dogs and the wrens. Such a lot of talking all around that I couldn't think straight. I saw the little old lady tapping her way across the courtyard.

"Please, wait. . .could you tap my head again with your stick? I don't want to hear all the animals talking any more. I just want to play with my toy cars."

The little old woman looked at me thoughtfully.



"I thought you said that you were tired of waiting for your Mom all morning while she is praying to Sri Sathya Sai Baba."

I looked at the old lady again and then at her feet. Perfect little brown toes all smooth and clean like they'd just had a bath.

"You aren't an old lady, you're THE LORD," I exclaimed happily.

"Achaa," the Lord said. "I am this old lady and I am the crows and even the scorpion that bit this very toe!"

"Good Boy," Sri Baba said as I dove at the Lotus Feet.

When I looked up, I saw the bright orange robe and on the top, framed in a halo of fuzzy hair, the smiling golden face of Sathya Sai Baba. The Lord looked down at my cars.

"Achaaa, you play with your toys and I play with "Mine".

And that was the end of my adventure.

* * *

THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN AND SET TO MUSIC BY A BAL VIKAS
CHILDREN'S GROUP AGES 4 THROUGH 10 AND PERFORMED AT THE
SECOND MIDWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE THIS PAST SPRING 1980.

Baba is Love, He Loves us
He brings us joy and peace
He brings us truth and hope
He helps us when we are in trouble
Baba gives us all that we need
He is in all our hearts

Baba Loves us so, He is here to guide us
He brings the message of Love
Love everyone in the world
He takes care of us when we're alone
He helps us when we're afraid
He is in all our hearts



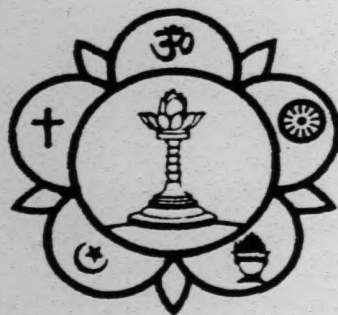
HEALTH INFORMATION FOR SAI FAMILY TRAVELERS

The Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas would like to pass on the following advice about the health and living conditions for Westerners visiting India.

1. Westerners visiting Sathya Sai Baba are urged to eat ONLY in the Ashram or College canteens, or in their own hotel in Bangalore if it has a modern, sanitary kitchen.
2. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be carefully cleaned and peeled and vegetables thoroughly cooked before eating.
3. Purchase and use your own eating utensils and keep them with you.
4. Observe fastidious hygiene at all times, especially after using toilet facilities.
5. Living accommodations should NOT be engaged in the villages surrounding Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan. At Prasanthi Nilayam, stay ONLY in the Ashram compound; at Brindavan, stay ONLY at a clean, well-maintained Bangalore hotel until such time as there are living facilities available within the Brindavan compound.
6. Before traveling to India, obtain a Gama Globulin injection for hepatitis phrophylaxis from your physician, and a booster injection in India if the length of your stay warrants it.
7. If anyone becomes ill while in India, report to the appropriate medical facility at Prasanthi Nilayam or Brindavan immediately; DO NOT DELAY. If you become ill upon returning home, see a physician promptly.
8. It is important that foreign visitors to India bring sufficient funds to live and eat well during their stay, or delay their visit until they have sufficient funds. There is a mistaken impression that one can live "for nothing" in India, and this is a false notion.
9. ALSO, FOREIGNERS MUST NOT BRING TAPE RECORDERS, CAMERAS, OR OTHER VALUABLE ARTICLES WITH THE INTENTION OF SELLING THESE ARTICLES IN INDIA; THIS CONSTITUTES SMUGGLING UNDER INDIAN LAW.

10. Careful and intelligent consideration of all aspects of your personal hygiene and health - cleanliness, diet, careful attention to illnesses, cuts, etc., and a sincere effort to avoid unsanitary places - will help you have a healthy and rewarding visit to India.

Medical Service Committee, Sathya Sai Baba Council of the Americas



WE ARE IN AWE

We are all in awe
Those of us who recognize you as God
And those of us who disbelieve
No matter what the inclination of our mind,
we cannot ignore You.

You cause us to turn in wonderment -
in love - in agitation - in much pondering;
Who is this Sai - we ask again and again?

Yet within our hearts there is a place that
knows - that yearns to lay aside all fear,
pride, ego and pretense and just be Your
loving child.

Every once in awhile, maya's (earthly illusion)
veil drops a little and we thrill at the evidence
of Your divinity so fully manifesting here and now.

We are all in awe, and our hopes and fears revolve
around You.

Our thoughts, pro and con, are filled with You and

For no one - no matter who - can remain indifferent
to Sri Sathya Sai Baba!

A Devotee -

FOR WOMEN

Modesty is essential for woman; it is her priceless jewel. It is against Dharma for a woman to overstep the limits of modesty; crossing the limits brings about many calamities. Why, the very glory of womanhood will be destroyed. Without modesty, woman is devoid of beauty and culture. Humility, purity of thought and manners, meekness, surrender to high ideals, sensitivity, sweetness of temper - the peculiar blend of all these qualities is modesty. It is the most invaluable of all jewels for women.

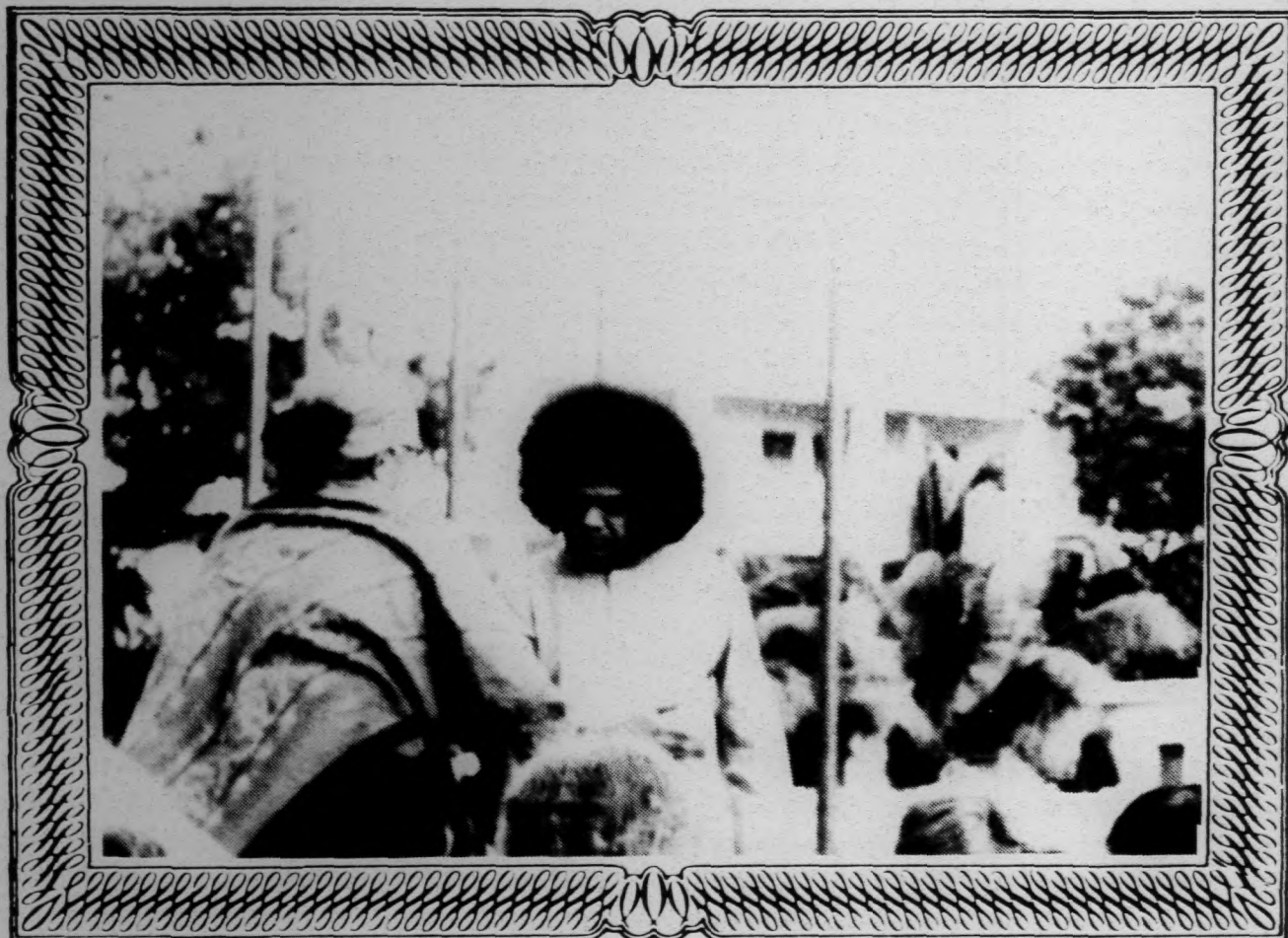
The modest woman will ever keep within limits through her innate sense of propriety. She becomes automatically aware which behavior is proper and which is improper. She will stick only to virtuous deeds and behavior. Modesty is the test of a woman's grandeur! If a woman has no modesty she is injuring the interests of womanhood itself, besides undermining her own personality. She is like a fragranceless flower which the world does not cherish or honor, or even approve. The absence of modesty makes life, for a woman, however rich in other accomplishments, a waste and a vacuum. Modesty lifts her to the heights of sublime holiness. The modest woman wields authority in the home and outside, in the community as well as in the world.

Some might interrupt and ask: "But, women who have swallowed all the compunctions of modesty are being honored today! They strut about with heads erect and the world honors them not a whit less." I have no need to acquaint myself with these activities of the present day world. I do not concern myself with them. They may be receiving honor and respect of a sort, but, the respect is not authorized or deserved. When honor is offered to the undeserving, it is tantamount to insult; to accept it when offered is to demean the very gift. It is not honor, but, flattery that is cast on the immodest by the selfish and the greedy. It is like spittle, dirty and unpleasant.

Of course, the modest woman will not crave for honor or praise. Her attention will always be on the limits which she should not transgress. Honor and praise come to her unasked and unnoticed. The honey in the flower or lotus does not crave for bees; they do not plead with the bees to come. Since they have tasted the sweetness, they themselves search for the flowers and rush in. They come,

because of the attachment between themselves and sweetness. So, too, is the relationship between the woman who knows the limits and the respect she evokes.

Dharma Vahini



SAI FAMILY ACTIVITIES, SPRING AND SUMMER 1980

EASTERN UNITED STATES

On May 23, the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Pound Ridge held their traditional three-hour bhajan to celebrate the day in 1940 when Swami first announced that He is Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Avatar. Devotees from Manhattan joined in observance of this sacred day. They started with a reading of the events of that day and concluded with distribution of prasad or holy food.

On Guru Poornima, July 27, the Pound Ridge Sathya Sai Baba Center was host to a regional meeting. Swami blessed them with beautiful weather and most of the activities took place outdoors. One hundred twenty devotees from Poughkeepsie, Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Washington D.C. gathered for a three-hour bhajan, then lunch and two hours of exchanging Baba stories. Throughout the day, videotapes of Baba were available for those who wished to see them. A recently formed singing group from the Pound Ridge Center (formed as a service project for entertaining patients in hospitals, nursing homes, etc.) sang during lunch.

* * *

The Bal Vikas children's teachers of the Northeastern United States held a conference in Manchester, Connecticut this summer 1980. Each teacher shared lesson plans and craft ideas that had worked well in the classroom. In the afternoon, the teachers split into discussion groups. Every teacher had something to contribute, many new ideas were introduced. The meeting turned out to be in inspiration to everyone.

The Sai activities are keeping the members of the Manchester Center busy. They have visited several Centers this summer. "It is a delight to be with Sai brothers and sisters, but especially when the foliage is still on the trees."

* * *

FROM CANADA

THE FIRST ANNUAL SUMMER (1980) COURSE ON SPIRITUALITY AND INDIAN CULTURE FOR YOUTHS FROM AGE 12 TO 25 YEARS WAS HELD AT WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Council of Canada organized the first annual summer course for one week on Spirituality and Indian Culture last

August 1980. Lectures covering topics such as Sai Baba Avatar, Fundamental Aspects of Sanathana Dharma (the Eternal Religion) Comparative Religion, Bhagavad Gita, Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, etc. were held. The lectures were in English and at a basic level so that the average teenager could follow them easily. They were intended to introduce the students to the immense spiritual heritage to which he or she is heir.

The lectures, approximately 30 to 40 minutes each, were followed by 20 to 30 minutes of questions and answers. Students were encouraged to ask questions and clarify their doubts. Persons over the age of 25 years could attend as silent observers.

The program was free of cost with boarding and lodging provided by the Sai families of Windsor.

The experiment done by the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Council of Canada proved to be most successful and may become an annual event. The students enjoyed the learning experience and one observer was quoted as saying: "It was wonderful to be with such beautiful people, the love and devotion they displayed to one another and to us is indicative of living in Sai love each and every day. The lectures were well researched and articulately presented. What a wonderful opportunity for these young people to become spiritually aware."

* * *

WESTERN UNITED STATES

Last September the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Phoenix hosted the second annual Sunbelt Retreat. Devotees and guests gathered in the pine covered mountains near Prescott, Arizona and shared satsang (the keeping of good and godly company) and fellowship.

The theme was "Sai Magnetism" and all thoughts and activities were keyed to the "Magnetism" of Sri Sathya Sai Baba who has said *Take one step toward me and I shall take a hundred toward you*".

The weekend spent in the company of other followers strengthened the faith of all participants. Several speakers brought more meaning to the experience by the sharing of their personal contacts with Bhagavan. Exchanging accounts and anecdotes of Baba's activities and the singing of holy songs seemed to be the perfect way to delve deeply into "Sai Magnetism".

An enthusiastic group from another Western Center is already planning the next Sathya Sai Baba Sunbelt Retreat 1981.

* * *

CHILDREN'S RETREAT

Last August the good people at the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Shady Cove, Oregon pioneered a Sai Children's Summer Retreat. The youngsters, most of whom had never been away from home or "Mommy", responded quickly to the curriculum offered at their Sai camp. Activities included the use of prayer, the repeating of God's name and the learning of spiritual material. It was stressed that these young (ages 6-9) devotees learn to function harmoniously within their own group, to share, show kindness and compassion. There was time for nutritious vegetarian meals, exercise, swimming, movies, and of course singing holy songs.

Each child returned home with a notebook of prayers and pictures, a head full of wonderful adventures, and heart full of love, and a hope of returning next year.

Sai Ram Shady Cove

* * *

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RETREAT

A twenty-six hour mini retreat was held at a beautiful ranch at Forest Knolls, Marin County, California on October 4 and 5. Hosted by the Sathya Sai Baba Center of San Francisco, the weekend was filled with bhajans, study circle, films and talks.

Eighty devotees from throughout the bay area took part in the program. Everyone left with their spiritual batteries charged.

* * *

Next issue there will be a full report on the Third World Conference and birthday celebration at Prasanthi Nilayam in India.

SATHYA SAI BABA CENTERS

Precede each location with Sathya Sai Baba Center of:

- MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, correction of phone number (414) 933-5443.
- EUGENE, OREGON, please delete.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The first of a multi part series with answers by
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The new film "Aura of Divinity" includes in its narration excerpts from an extended interview given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba to the Senior Editor of BLITZ news magazine in September of 1976. The first installment of the complete interview begins with this issue. Reprinted courtesy of BLITZ Publications, Bombay, India.

Q: At the outset, Swamiji, we would like to know something about your triple incarnation - past, present and future - that is, from Shirdi Sai Baba to Sathya Sai Baba and the Prema Sai Baba to come, according to your prophecy.

Baba: *First of all, you must grasp the complete oneness of the three incarnations of contemporary times with those of the past like Rama and Krishna. This is a difficult task. When people cannot understand the present, how can they comprehend the past? Every incarnation is full and complete in relation to the time, the environment and the task. There is no distinction between the various appearances of God as Rama, Krishna or Sai.*

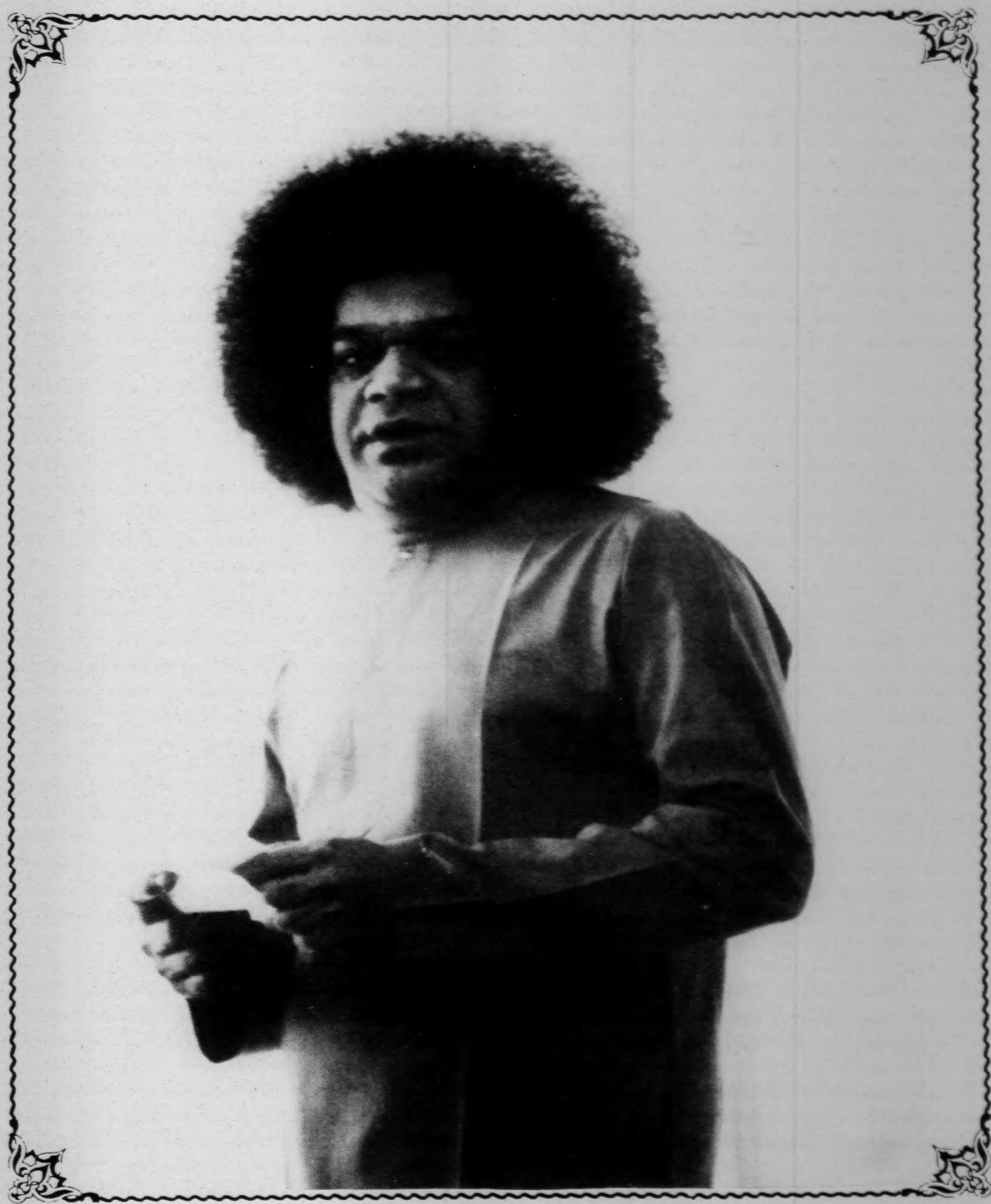
Rama came to feed the roots of Truth and Righteousness, Krishna followed to foster the plant of Peace and Love. Now these sacred principles are in danger of wholesale destruction by reason of human weakness under the onslaught of evil forces. They are overcoming the good, the spiritual and the divine in man. That is why the present Avatar has come invested with the totality of Cosmic power to save Dharma (righteousness) from anti-Dharma.

WHY GOD TAKES HUMAN FORM

Q: By the present Avatar, you mean Sai Baba?

Baba: *Yes, I incarnate from age to age, time to time, to save Dharma from anti-Dharma. Whenever strife, discord and disharmony overwhelm the world, God incarnates in human form to show mankind the way to love, harmony and peace.*

Continued



Q: That is understandable. But skeptics wonder why God should assume human form?

Baba: Because that is the only way to incarnate the God within man. The Avatar takes the human form and behaves in a human way so that humanity can feel kinship with Divinity. At the same time he rises to godly heights so that mankind also can aspire to reach God. The realisation of the indwelling God as the motivator of life is the task for which Avatars come in human form.

Previous Avatars like Rama and Krishna had to destroy a few individuals who could be identified as enemies of the godly way of life and thus restore the dharmic path. Today, however, wickedness has tainted so many that humanity itself stands under the threat of destruction. Therefore, in my present Avatar, I have come armed with the fullness of the power of formless God to correct mankind, raise human consciousness and put people back on the right path of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love to Divinity.

MESSAGE OF TRIPLE INCARNATION

Q: Why had this task to be divided into three separate incarnations of the Shirdi, Sathya and Prema Babas?

Baba: They are not separate. I have already mentioned the complete oneness of the three in the final objective of the mission. I will give you an example. Take a kilo of gur (a sweet substance). The whole of it tastes sweet. Next break it into small pieces. Each of them is sweet. Finally break them further into small grains. You find the same sweetness in them. So the difference is one of quantity and not quality. It is the same with the Avatars. Their tasks and powers requisite to them differ according to the time, the situation and the environment. But they belong to, and derive from one and the same Dharma Swarup or Divine Body.

Let us take the example of FRUIT. It begins with the SEED which grows into the TREE and from it comes the FRUIT. WORK can be compared to the SEED, WORSHIP to the TREE and WISDOM to the FRUIT.

The previous Avatar, Shirdi Baba, laid the base for secular integration and gave mankind the message of Duty is WORK. The mission of the present Avatar is to make everybody realize that the

same God or Divinity resides in everyone. People should respect, love and help each other irrespective of color or creed. Thus all work can become a way of worship. Finally, Prema Sai, the third Avatar, will promote the evangel news that not only does God reside in everybody, but everybody is God. That will be the final wisdom which will enable every man and woman to go to God.

The three Avatars carry the triple message of work, worship and wisdom.

MAN MUST DEVELOP INTO MANKIND

Q: So that is the holy mission and divine purpose of this triple incarnation?

Baba: To unite all mankind into one caste or family in the establishment of the unity - that is, Atmic realisation - in every man or woman, which is the basis on which the entire Cosmic design rests. Once this is realised, the common divine heritage that binds man to man and man to God will become apparent and Love shall prevail as the guiding light of the universe.

In the first place, MAN has to develop into MANKIND in the fullness of its integrated potential. At present mankind as such is absent in the world. there is no synthesis between thought, word and deed. Man today thinks one thing, says something different, and acts quite the contrary. So what we have is the individual man, confused, confounded and bombarded with contradictory thoughts. What we do not see is MANKIND in him motivated by good thoughts, good words and good deeds. We have to make him realise God within him to develop a synthesis correlating thought, word and deed.

EVANGEL OF LOVE AND DEVOTION

Once this primary lesson is taught in the family, the school, the college, the society, the cities, the states, the nations of the world, then man will become conscious of the fact that all mankind belongs to one family. As Christ preached, all are one, be alike to every one. The vital issue is the ONE-NESS: one caste, one class, one creed of humanity: and this can be achieved only by the surrender of one's self or ego to pure, selfless, universal love and devotion. Love is the basis,

the common denominator, and devotion the divine spark, the cementing, unifying, integrating factor between man and man, and man and God.

Let me give you an illustration. (Baba spreads his handkerchief on the ground between us). Here is a piece of cloth. As you see, it is all made of threads. Pull out the threads separately and the cloth becomes weak. Put them together and it is firm and strong. It is the same with mankind. Love binds it like the million, billion threads in cloth and Devotion reunites it with God. I, therefore, embody love and use it as my instrument to regenerate man and create the brotherhood of mankind with the help of the latter's devotion. I always say: Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. End the day with love. This is the quickest way, the surest path to God.

Life is love, enjoy it;
Life is a challenge, meet it;
Life is a song, sing it;
Life is a dream, realise it;
Life is a game, play it.

SHIRDI BABA INCARNATE

Q: Did Shirdi Baba actually claim that he will be born eight years after his death in 1918?

Baba: Yes, he did. This has been recorded by Kaka Dikshit as well as a number of other devotees who were with Shirdi Baba.

Q: What makes you so sure that you are Shirdi Baba incarnate:

Baba: The knowledge of my own authentic experience, of course. Since no one who knew Shirdi Baba is alive today, there is no evidence except my own knowledge and experience.

The very fact that I announced that I am Shirdi Baba 40 years ago, when I was only 10 and when nobody in this part of the South had known or even heard of Shirdi Baba, proves this fact.

DHARMA ALONE CAN SAVE THE WORLD

Q: The existing situation driven by evil forces to destruction as you have correctly analysed it, appears to suggest the inevitability of another Mahabharata-type (an epic relating to the battle of Kurukeshethra) war. Does this mean that the salvation for which you are working can be consummated only after a destructive war?

Baba: The evil must and shall be removed before such a catastrophe takes place. There will be minor wars and skirmishes, of course: these cannot be helped in the existing state of affairs. The Mahabharata war was a different issue altogether. Lord Krishna decreed it and, in fact, led Arjuna to the battlefield in order to rid the world of evil men and ungodly forces.

Today, as I told you, the evil is so widespread that humanity itself would be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust in the event of a world war. It is to prevent such a catastrophe that this Avatar has come to raise human consciousness above the existing syndrome of anger, hate, violence and war and save the world from disaster. This can be achieved only by the reestablishment of the brotherhood of mankind through the VEDAS, SHASTRAS and all religions with their evangel of DHARMA to liberate the human race from the chains of KARMA (the cycle of birth and death).

I always say: Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all the languages in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as valid so far as they do not extinguish the flame of UNITY.

GOD IS MAN MINUS DESIRE

Q: From what Baba has said, it seems there is not much difference of dichotomy between God and Man. Am I right?

Baba: Quite right, God is man and man is God. All of us have something of God, the divine spark, within us. All men are divine like myself, but with the Spirit embodied in human flesh and bone. The only difference is that they are unaware of this Godhood. They have come into this karmic prison

through the mistakes of many lives. I have taken this mortal form out of my own free will. They are bound to the body, while I am free of this bondage. The main difference is that they are shoved hither and thither by DESIRE but I have no desire except the supreme one to make them DESIRELESS.

Take paddy or rice by way of an illustration. Every grain of rice is enclosed in a husk. You have to remove the husk to get the grain of rice. Now husk and rice, both come from the same seed. Rice is the equivalent of God in man, while the husk can be compared to desire which reduces God to man. Therefore, my formula is:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{LIFE} + \text{DESIRE} &= \text{MAN} \\ \text{LIFE} - \text{DESIRE} &= \text{GOD}\end{aligned}$$

THE WAY TO SELF REALISATION

Q: In what way can life without desire make Gods of men?

Baba: Life without desire means the realisation of the pure, genuine Self that is Atma. Bound to desire, the Self degenerates into Selfishness. Atma turns into ego. The way of Self-realisation is to cleanse the Self of this ego of selfishness. Then you reach a state of consciousness beyond the mind or intellect revealing the true Self that is God. The mind is like a cloth that covers and stifles consciousness, the threads of which are desires. If we give up the desires, the threads fall and the cloth disappears revealing our true nature. This is what the VEDANTA (epic of ancient wisdom and knowledge) means when it enjoins that one must get rid of the ego to realise oneself.

Q: You mean that the mind of man as such creates the block between man and God?

Baba: Yes. One must make a distinction between the mind that is the ego, and the real self that is consciousness. The latter helps us to cross the frontiers of the ego-mind and become aware of oneself as the witness of Truth. Normally the scientist of the mind looks outside to what can be perceived by the senses existing in the world of the mind to ask: WHAT IS THIS? The scientist of consciousness on the other hand, always looks

inside to that which is beyond the senses or the grasp of the mind to ask: WHAT IS THAT?

One has, therefore, to rise beyond the mind to consciousness to achieve self-realisation. To gain the infinite, universal ATMA, the embodied self must break out of the puny, finite little prison of individuality. Desire belongs to the senses, the brain, the mind; once you become free of it, you realise the Self, Atma, consciousness, enlightenment, and become one with the Cosmic Power. Self realisation is God realisation. THUS MAN REACHES GOD.

PART II NEXT ISSUE, WINTER 1980-81



A HOLIDAY SUGGESTION

We of the Sathya Sai Newsletter wish to suggest that a subscription to an interested friend or family member would be a unique gift during the Holiday Season.

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A NEW ARRIVAL

We are happy to announce the birth of the SATHYA SAI BABA CHILDREN'S NEWSLETTER. It is issued quarterly and is created for children only.

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A publication has been developed for parents and teachers of Sai children entitled OM. It will present information for use in the classroom and will convey instructions from Sri Sathya Sai Baba regarding the teaching of children. OM is filled with useful reaching aids such as the psychology of children, stories, plays, a special topic each issue, and quotations from Swami speaking to Bal Vikas teachers. There are four to six issues planned for the coming year starting October 1980. This is a substantial amount of information useful to all those who are interested in the growth and development of the Sai children. One year subscription will cost \$12.

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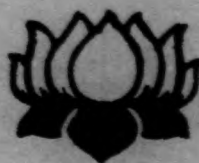
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