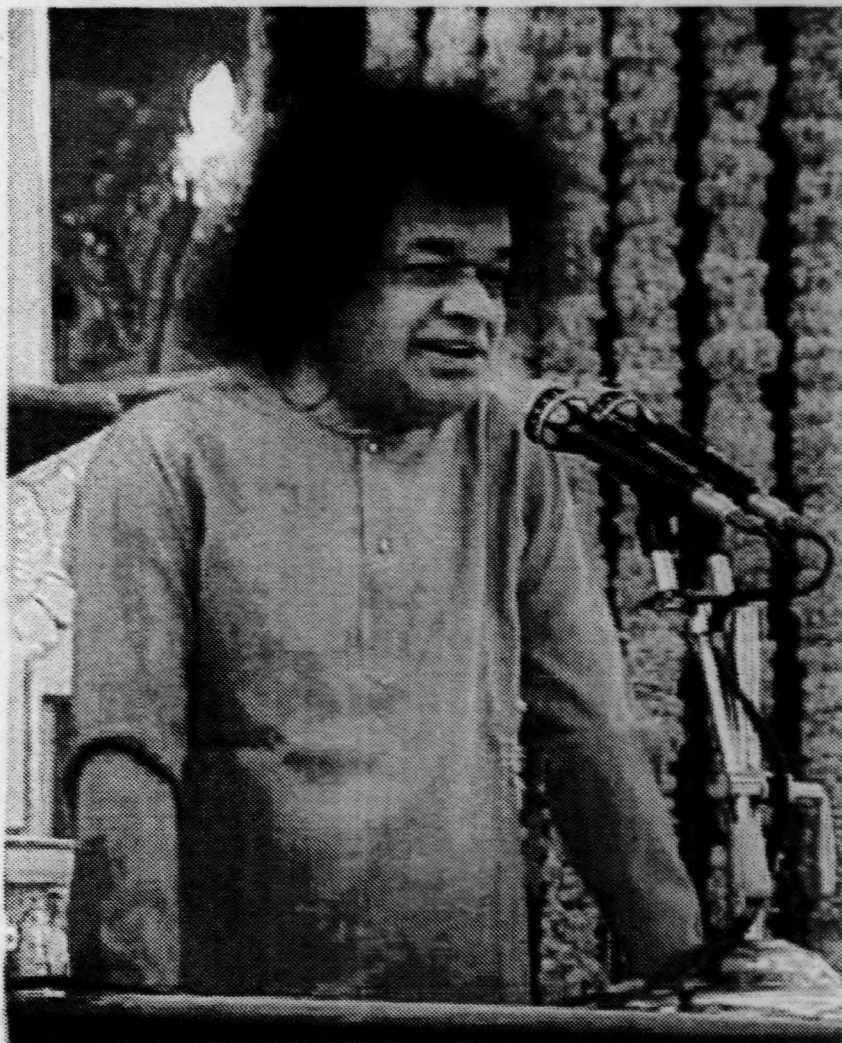


Bhagawan's Discourse To The American Devotees



Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

**July 27, 2002
Mandir at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Embodiments of Love!

Many of you who have assembled here have made repeated visits to Prasanthi Nilayam in the past. You have come here many times and spent a lot of money. Why are you coming? You are coming here to experience bliss. Are you experiencing bliss? No. Where is bliss? Only when you investigate and find out where real bliss is, you can experience it. You are searching for bliss by going to many places, doing many *sadhanas*, doing *bhajans* and visiting many gurus. But still you don't experience bliss. What is the use of reading many books? Are you practicing at least one or two teachings of Swami? Without practicing Bhagawan's teachings what is the use of coming again and again? Many times I have taught about *Sathya* (Truth), *Dharma* (Righteousness), and *Shanthi* (Peace).

What is Truth (*Sathya*)? There are three syllables in the word '*Sathya*' - *sath*, *aa*, *yaa*. *Sath* is permanent. That is life. *Aa* stands for *annamu* (food). *Yaa* is the procedure for this investigation. For life, food is

essential. *Yaa* is Sun (not son) who provides the food. For the *Sath* which is life you need *Aa* which is *annamu* (food) and Sun is essential for providing food. So, *Sathya* means: by the grace of Sun God you appease hunger and lead a comfortable life.

There is another way to look at this - *Sa*, *Tha*, *Yaa*. When you consider it in the reverse order, *Yaa* stands for *Yama* and *Niyama* of *sadhanas*. That leads to *Tha* which is *Thathwa* (Reality) which in turn leads to *Sa* which is divinity. When you do austerities with *Yama* and *Niyama*, you experience divinity. Man should talk less and do more *sadhana*. You come here for spiritual *sadhana*, and how can you progress when you indulge in too much talking even here? Today you undertake spiritual practices like penance, *japa*, worship, and meditation. You can never attain divinity by such routine practices.

Buddha did many spiritual practices, visited many places, read many books, and visited many gurus. But he found futility in all of them. Then he inquired what the gifts of God

are. When we make use of God's gifts properly, we can experience peace and happiness. For example, God has given us the tongue. We should use it properly by speaking sacred words to others, so that they can understand. Buddha inquired if he was doing this or not. God has gifted us five senses, five life breaths i.e., *prana*, *apaana*, *vyana*, *udaana* and *samaana*. Space (*Aakaasha*) is awareness. Wind is life. Fire is effulgence. Water is life. You are not making proper use of these gifts of God. First, Buddha realized that the tongue is given to speak soft, sweet, truthful, and noble words. Then he inquired whether he was speaking words which are sweet and useful to others, or only for his selfish purposes.

After such thorough investigation, he threw away all the books finding they were not useful. Then he sat under the *bodhi* tree (peepul tree, *Ficus religiosa*). He first realized the importance of *Samyak Vaak* (sacred speech). So he prayed that he should speak only truthful, sacred and noble words beneficial to others. Later he closed his eyes. Eyes are

given to see the world and God. But he realized that he was using his eyes to see the unreal and transitory world but not God. He felt disgusted with the futility of this world full of sorrow. He found the world to be the source of all sorrows and misery, but not happiness. Thus he realized the value of *Samyak Dristhi* (sacred vision). After realizing the importance of good speech and good vision, he inquired about good speaking and good listening. Then he realized that he was not saying any words useful to others, and thus his life was being wasted. Merit lies in helping others, and it is sinful to hurt others. Next, he realized the importance of *Samyak Shravanam* (sacred hearing). Thus he felt he should see good, hear good, and speak good. Then he realized the fundamental basis for all these is *Samyak Hridayam* (sacred heart). If you have a good heart, you have good speech, good hearing, and good vision. The heart may be compared to a generator and the power that comes from it makes the ears, eyes, and speech function. Finally he came to the conclusion

of *Samyak Bhavam* (sacred feelings). For everything feelings are important. If you don't have good feelings, you cannot have good speech, or good vision, or good hearing. *Bhava Shuddhi* is *Jnana Siddhi* i.e., purity of thought leads to the realization of wisdom. Wisdom (*Jnana*) cannot be realized by reading books. Thus he acquired good speech, good vision, good hearing, and good vibration.

Ultimately he inquired how all these were going to be useful for the society and the world. Then he realized the need for *Samyak Karma* (sacred work). Instead of doing good work, if you are thinking about the world, collecting the information about the world, and are involved in mundane activities, it would be useless.

In Gujarat, there was a great devotee named Patel. He had money, possessions, conveniences, conveyances, and children. He used to sit for meditation as soon as he got up in the morning. Once his friend who was a businessman from America came to meet with him. Patel sent

him a message that he would see him after his meditation was over. After a long wait when Patel showed up, his friend asked him why he was meditating when he had plenty of money, comforts, children and all the conveniences. Then Patel replied he was praying not for worldly objects which he had in abundance but only for what he did not have, namely peace and bliss which God alone could give. Then the American realized the sacred feelings of Bharatiyas (Indians). He admired their attitude of giving up what they have and desiring what is in the possession of God. So you should all pray for the things which only God can provide. Secondly, bliss is also only His gift. Peace and Bliss are not in the world, and are only the Lord's gifts. In the world you find only pieces not peace. You can experience bliss only in the presence of God. So you should pray to God only for peace and bliss. After such inquiry, Buddha prayed for sacred vision.

What is sacred vision? You should see all good things. In general, people in the world hurt others, but

do not help them. The people who help have good hearts. This is the message of God in the Gita and Bhagavatha. Bhagavatha preached that helping others is a meritorious action, and hurting others is sinful action. So “Help Ever and Hurt Never”. You should feed hungry persons and that will give you satisfaction. Your words should be sacred. People use harsh words. You should always speak softly and sweetly using nectarine words. But sweet utterances can come only if the heart is full of sweetness. So you should fill your heart with peace, bliss and sweetness. Once you fill your heart thus, your words will also be sweet and peaceful.

Thus you should develop these five virtues of *Samyak Drishti* (sacred vision), *Samyak Sravanam* (sacred hearing), *Samyak Vaak* (sacred speech), *Samyak Hridayam* (sacred heart), and *Samyak Karma* (sacred work). That’s why Bhagawan says: “See No Evil, See What Is Good”, “Hear No Evil, Hear What Is Good”, “Speak No Evil, Say What Is Good”, “Think No Evil, Think What Is Good”, and “Do No Evil,

Do What Is Good”. “This Is The Way To God”. So these five are the gifts of God. Buddha’s cousin, brother Ananda, did not know this truth, and he was crying at the deathbed of Buddha. Watching this, Buddha told him that it was not good or proper for him to cry when Buddha was experiencing bliss. Also He chided him saying, “Your name is Ananda which means you should be in bliss and not sad”. He told him also to be happy and blissful, but not jealous when He was experiencing bliss. Buddha told him to give up jealousy and then breathed His last. Then Ananda realized the truth. He felt remorseful that in his life he did not help others and did not give happiness to others, nor did he enjoy any happiness. He felt the purpose of life is to fulfill the meaning of the title MAN – ‘M’ which stands for *Maya* (illusion), and the message is to give up *Maya*. ‘A’ stands for *Atma* (Self) and the message is to experience *Atmic* Consciousness. ‘N’ stands for *Nirvana* (liberation). It is sad that having the title MAN, he is not able to give up *Maya* and experience *Atma* and attain *Nirvana*.

What is the purpose of life? Man has to get rid of *Maya*. *Maya* is to believe that the unreal is real. There is nothing permanent and real in this world and all things are passing clouds. What is the purpose and use of human life with all the knowledge and the intelligence when one behaves like an animal? At least animals have a reason and season, but nowadays man does not have reason or a season. This is disgusting.

As a man, one should develop *Prajnana* (spiritual awareness). Veda and Bhagavatha have taught the following four principles:

1. "*Prajnanam Brahma*". God has given man *Prajnanam* but man is misusing this and having bad thoughts. *Prajnanam* is not worldly knowledge, but it is constant integrated awareness which is a gift from God. So one should manifest this awareness.
2. "*Tat-Twam-Asi*", means "That Thou Art". You should realize that God is not separate from you, and that God is in you, and you are in God.

3. "*Ayam Atma Brahma*" (I am *Atma Brahma*.) means that you are not man, but you are *Atma* and *Brahma*. Being Brahman if you do not realize that you are *Atma*, what is the use of your life and all the education you acquire? You should realize the truth "I am I" - that you are with God and you are in God and God is in you.
4. "*Aham Brahmasmi*". Realize the truth that you are God. As a separate individual you are *Jeeva*, and as cosmic Self you are God. God is unity in diversity. Without realizing this, there is no use reading books or giving lectures. At least practice one or two teachings of Swami. Even at the worldly level, are you helping anyone? "Help Ever and Hurt Never." Never use any harsh or hurtful words. The words come from the heart, and if you fill your heart with sacredness, your words also will be good. If you want to speak good words, you should fill your heart with good feelings.

A great saint named Thiruthonda Alvar realized that he was not separate from God and that God was residing in him. He said to God, "I and You are One". That's why Bhagawan says repeatedly, "Never consider God as separate from You". God is *bridaya vasi* (resident of the heart), *antharyami* (indweller) and *Atma swarup* (embodiment of *Atma*). When you say I, it refers to *Atma*.

You should always remember that God is with you, in you, around you, above you, and below you. You should realize this fundamental truth. Many do spiritual practices, but they don't get any permanent results. These practices are like passing clouds. People get up in the morning and do *japa* and meditation. But these practices should be practical, not temporary and imaginary. God neither comes nor goes but is eternal and infinite. You don't need to search for God anywhere; rather turn your vision inward. When you see all the faces in the outside world, they are in fact projections of what is already in you. So everything is reflection, reaction,

and resound of your inner being. You feel sad that somebody is criticizing you. No one is criticizing you. You are criticizing yourself. You think others are hurting you. In fact, there are no others.

Jesus also mentioned 'JOY' which denotes 'J' Jesus first, 'O' others next, and 'Y' you last. Finally, you should realize that you are Jesus and that you are God. When you repeatedly think that you are God and you are not separate from God, you verily become God. If you consider that God is separate from you, God will always remain separate from you. God is not separate from you; God is in you and you are in God. You should first realize this truth. You do many spiritual practices and also service activities in the organization. As long as you consider yourself as a man and have the feeling of I, you should serve others. Then slowly you will realize that the one you are serving is your reflection, reaction, and resound. God is One, the Goal is One, but it appears as many in the society. You should see the unity in the society because unity is divinity. Then only,

your spiritual practices will have fulfillment.

Today you read many books without doing any practice. Swami stands for practical science, not platform speeches. You do not need to do a lot, just at least do one teaching. Even when you do one sincerely, you will be redeemed. Are you at least following one of the teachings of Bhagawan? No. Then what is the use? Having come to Bhagawan, you should practice His teachings and share them with others. You do not need to go into the streets and publicize. First share your love and start this at home by respecting parents, and loving brothers and sisters. Sharing love is your first spiritual *sadhana*. When you see somebody is suffering, you should try your best to help. However, do within the limitations of your capabilities, but not beyond. If you do this in excess, beyond limits, that will be harmful to you. If you do it in *Mita* (limit) and *Hita* (beneficial), it will lead you to success. Hence the saying, “*Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina*”, “No success without discipline.” If you don’t follow discipline, it results

in danger. If you are thirsty, you need only a glass of water, but not the entire water of the Ganges river. But nowadays people’s desires are unrealistic. Similarly when you are hungry, you just eat enough to appease your hunger, but you don’t need bags of rice. You may have all things, but you may not survive until tomorrow. You should have everything within limits, but not in excess.

Swami is repeatedly warning that many people are misusing Swami’s name. The people who misuse Swami’s name will face the consequences.

When you do spiritual practices like *bhajan*, it should come from the heart and others should be able to join. First Gurunanak started community *bhajans*. One is happier doing *bhajans* with others than doing them alone. So *Samyak Bhajan* (community *bhajans*) are very good. When you are alone at home, you may do them yourself. But you should join the community and sing the glory of God. If you don’t like to join the

community *bhajans*, you may do them alone.

You should see no one is hurt by your actions. To the extent possible, you should teach only good. When outsiders come, explain Bhagawan's teachings clearly. Your explanations should be based on your experience. Then it will go to their hearts.

Embodiments of Love!

There are many devotees in this world. Devotion is there, but not of the proper type. One should first understand what is meant by devotion and spirituality. Spirituality means eliminating animal tendencies and divinizing human qualities. This is real *sadhana* (spirituality). Spirituality does not merely mean doing *japa*, meditation and *bhajan*. You have to kill the bestial temperament in you. Man's life is fulfilled only when animal qualities are annihilated and human qualities are transformed into divine qualities.

Embodiments of Love!

You are doing many types of spiritual practices. But most importantly, help the needy and distressed. Help others. There is no

higher spiritual practice than this. Swami says, "Charity is the ornament for the hands, not bracelets. Truth is the ornament for the neck, not necklaces. Listening to the scriptures, and *dharma* is the ornament for the ears. These are the real precious jewels for the human body. Only truth should come from the throat."

Embodiments of Love!

Women do lot of work. (Some doctors are also doing sincere work without any selfishness). Women are feeling sad that they are not able to do more work. But they are not independent. If they are really independent, they would have spent more time serving. Women have their husbands who are like bondage for them. Naturally they have to follow their husbands and serve them. In fact, they serve their husbands, respect them, and make them happy. To help others is the real spiritual practice. Even if you cannot do much, at least make others happy by speaking good words.

(Bhagawan asked Dr. Goldstein if he has any questions, and that He would answer them.)

Dr. Goldstein: Swami, in the service conference some questions were asked by delegates. They wanted to know if the Sathya Sai Organization activities can be affiliated with any other humanitarian organizations?

Swami: In my opinion, there should not be any kind of affiliation. You do service according to your own rules and regulations. There should not be any comparison with other organizations. They do their way, and you do your own way.

Dr. Goldstein: Devotees are asking how they can bring Swami's message to the public, and how the Sathya Sai Organization can interact with the public and bring Bhagawan's teachings to them? Also how can they bring knowledge of Swami and the advent of the Avatar to the public?

Swami: In order to bring Bhagawan's message to the public, poetry and literary gimmicks are not necessary. But your practice of Swami's

teachings in your life will be the best message for the public.

In foreign countries, some Indians are claiming themselves to be Swami's devotees, and they are telling many lies using the name of Swami for collecting money. Some claim they are constructing temples and schools for Swami, and they collect money. These are all blatant lies. Swami has not accepted any money for any purpose. So be careful, and keep those people at a distance who approach you for money in the name of Sai.

Dr. Goldstein: Many devotees are asking how the centers in the various countries can be a better reflection of spirituality within their own society? The selection of *bhajans*, the appearance of the Sai Baba Centers, and all of the programs should be a function of each culture because Swami has planted the seed of Divinity in the land of every country all over the world.

Swami: Each country should follow its own procedure and culture but not compare themselves with others. You should not imitate others.

Swami is not stretching His hand to ask anything from anybody. Swami says "I am not a 'beggar', but I am 'bigger' in good thoughts". Bhagawan declares His life is His message and you should follow the example of Swami's life. Do what pleases Swami and definitely you will attain divinity. There is no other spiritual practice higher than that. Spiritual practice really means respecting and following Swami's teachings. Importantly, you should respect all. Don't expect others to respect you. Even if others do not respect you, you should respect others because the same divinity resides in all. When you respect everyone, you respect God. Even if anyone criticizes you or abuses you, still you should respect him. Even if he criticizes you, you should not criticize in return. Then only there will be transformation in the other person. You should remain silent and fill your heart with love. There is nothing higher than love. Swami's entire property is only love. All of you have share in my property. So all of you are shareholders in the property of Bhagawan. Wherever

you do service, Bhagawan is with you, in you, and around you.

Embodiments of Love!

Many of you come and go, but you are not able to understand Swami's teachings and put them in practice. You need not do any spiritual practice. But respect everyone and talk with love. Even if they are not devotees they are bound to change. First there should be transformation in you; then the whole world will be transformed.

Earlier Swami mentioned a devotee by name, Patel, who was praying to God for peace and bliss. But modern man has limitless desires. Though he has plenty, still he wants more. What is the use of having plenty if it is not put for good and sacred use? Sacred use does not mean giving money indiscriminately to anyone who asks. You should help only the deserving man. Watching your giving nature, many people may run after you. If you give to everyone without discrimination that becomes misuse of money and it is a mistake to do so. You should discriminate if it is good or bad,

right or wrong and then give for good use only. Then only the purpose is fulfilled. All organizations have their eyes on America now because it has lots of money. Though it is a rich country, it is really poor. Who is the poorest man in the world? The one who has many desires is the poorest man. He who has much satisfaction is the richest man. Keep these two principles in your mind.

In my view, you should never give any scope to doubts. By the remembrance of God, all the doubts will be cleared. Some doubts come and go in this world; they are like passing clouds. You should not be mindful of these passing clouds.

You may face some difficulties, losses and sorrows in life, but you should not worry about them. Consider that they are all good for you. When you get difficulties say, "This is good for me. This is good for me. God has given these troubles and difficulties for my good". So do not be troubled and disappointed. Your disappointment is appointment for Me. If you develop those

kinds of good feelings, you will have bliss. If you experience depression out of disappointment, even God will not come close to you. If you consider disappointment as a gift from God, then He will come to you and relieve you of your difficulties.

Some youngsters have many doubts. This is because of their ignorance. You have to blame yourself, not others. You should not accuse or criticize anybody. You should always be blissful. Every Sai devotee should lead a blissful life.

In my opinion, food is very important. As is the food, so is the head. As is the head, so is God. Food, head, and God are interrelated. Americans find it difficult to give up eating meat. Bhagawan will not force you to give up. It is good to give up eating meat, because it will help you to develop *Satwik* (sacred) tendencies. Our thoughts depend on the food we eat. Bad food is the main cause for all bad thoughts. You have to exercise control on these three: drinking alcohol, eating meat, and smoking. They deplete all the good thoughts from you.

After smoking, if you breathe forcibly on a white cloth, you will find a yellowish-black spot on the cloth. It is like poison, and you are taking it inside. This will lead to many diseases like heart ailments, asthma, eosinophilia, and stomach disorders. All these diseases are due to smoking.

Eating meat is very bad. Why do you want to eat meat? Do you think you need to eat meat because it contains vitamins and proteins? You can have plenty of protein by eating curds (yogurt), pulses and drinking milk. Do you think you can get better protein than these by eating meat? Now I am going to tell you a secret. In countries like Singapore, Malaysia and Germany, because of nuclear explosions, due to nuclear testing, the seawater is polluted. With this the creatures in the waters consume this poison (nuclear pollutants). When you eat these creatures, you also take part of the poison. This leads to cancer. Because of this even children in countries like Singapore and Malaysia suffer from cancer of the head and other parts of the body.

There is lot of polluted food in this world and this harms human beings. Modern day doctors say that the increased detection of incidence of cancer nowadays is due to better diagnostic facilities, and in the olden days it went undetected. They say this merely to justify themselves. In earlier days there were some incidences of cancer but it was not this rampant. In those days they used to call it a growth. Nowadays if there is any little swelling everyone including the doctors are alarmed that it may be cancer. They want to do tests for everything to rule out cancer. If you take pure and sacred food, cancer will not come anywhere near you. Cases of cancer are increasing because of the pollution of air, water and food. Once cancer sets in, it is not possible to cure it. So you should take good food to prevent illness and lead a healthy, happy life.

Embodiments of Love!

Lead a happy, healthy, peaceful, and long life. What is the use of good health when you do not have peace? Be healthy, happy and share the happiness with others.

(Upon conclusion of His Divine Discourse, one of the devotees asked Swami when the swelling on His face would go down. For several weeks preceding Guru Poornima, Swami had developed a large area of swelling on his right cheek. It had subsided substantially by Guru Poornima, but was still evident.)

Swami: "It will go down tomorrow. Diseases like smallpox, chickenpox, and typhoid run their usual course of time. Similarly, even this glandular swelling lasts for 21 days. No medicine would help it. Diet has to be controlled and observed carefully. After 21 days it subsides spontaneously. Today it is 19th day and by day after tomorrow it should be gone. Today being the 19th day, it already decreased and there is not much swelling. By taking the illness on Myself from that other person, I gave comfort to him. Bearing the ailment patiently, I do not waste any time. How many discourses I am giving and how much work I am doing! The swelling started near the joint of the right cheek. It was difficult even to talk and drink water. When the International Seva

Conference started, the All India President, Mr. Srinivasan, requested Swami to give a discourse. When I tried I could not even speak. Then I felt what is the use if I can't give happiness to all these people? Then I willed that the swelling should move from the joint to a forward point. I do not cure Myself because then it becomes selfish. There is no selfishness in Me. On the 13th day I shifted the swelling. That day it was an unbearable and excruciating pain. I preach to everybody to get rid of the body attachment and develop attachment to *Atma* (Self). So I had to show by example not to have body attachment and to ignore the terrible pain. That's how I could do so much work and give these many discourses. I do not take any holidays like you. No Sunday or any other holidays. Only holy days for Swami. I do not pay much attention to the ailment as it comes and goes. Still two more days are remaining. Day after tomorrow, it will be normal. You may not be aware, but the swelling was of the size of a ripe orange. No one should feel sad that Swami has taken this illness. These

things come and go. Who invited them and who bids farewell to them? They come and go. But you have to control your thoughts. If you pay too much attention to the illness it will cause you more pain. One child was suffering, and the principal of the school sent a telegram to the parents of the child. The parents took the child to the doctor, and the doctor said it could not be cured, the child had to undergo suffering. The child was crying all the time without eating and drinking. I went by car to the school, and called the child along with the parents into a room. I asked the boy, "What do you want?" He wanted the pain to be removed. I said, "I will remove the pain; you tell me the food you like". He wanted biscuits as he had not eaten for three days. I materialized the biscuits, fed him, blessed him, and told him to go to his classroom in the school. The parents were concerned and wanted to take the child home. But I told the child to stay in the school. Then he returned to the classroom, and he had no pain. That's how I took his illness upon Myself. I do many

things like this. Once I took upon Myself the paralysis of a devotee. There was a devotee by name Krishnappa, a vendor of flowers in Bangalore. He suffered from paralysis, and he had a large family to support. So I took over his paralysis upon Myself. Even though I take it upon Myself, I don't cure Myself. If I cure Myself it becomes selfish. There was a mother of three children in Nainital who lost her husband. She was working as a clerk, and there was no body to support her. She felt sad for the demise of her husband, and she used to work day and night to support the family. While going to the office, she suffered a heart attack. I was in Bangalore at that time when this happened in Nainital. I said, "Laxmi, do not fear". At that time I left My body, and the students who were with Me were all worried. Then I came back and told them not to worry, but to take Me upstairs. So I took upon Myself the heart attack, and she became well and the children were happy. The second day I sent a telegram to her asking her to come to Brindavan. She came

along with her children. I called them privately, and told them not to worry and to go back to work. I took upon Myself the illness for nine days and could not move. I suffered and then got better. Sometimes I have to take these illnesses. This happens to all Avatars. This happened to the Shirdi Avatar and the Krishna Avatar. Though all these are not recorded, all incarnations have taken over the sufferings of devotees. God does His duty whether it is recorded or not. I am ready to take the sufferings of anyone when they cannot bear it. I am ready, ready, and ever ready for this. These incidents do not come as obstacles

in the way of God. Everything will go on as usual. As you have seen during the last 15 days I attended all the functions; I had to do lots of work and give many discourses. Doctors come and advise me to take rest. I don't want and I don't need any rest. It is a mistake to think that I will become healthy by taking rest. Doing work while undergoing suffering is My rest."

(This was followed by *bhajans* by the American devotees and concluded with *arathi*).

❧ Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
July 27, 2002
Mandir at Prasanthi Nilayam

Audio cassette of this discourse – with Swami's voice and Prof. Kumar translating – is available for \$4.00 from:
Sathya Sai Book Center, 305 West First Street, Tustin, CA 92780-3108.
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