

PROF. ANIL KUMAR'S SAI PEARLS OF WISDOM SATSANG:
BABA'S CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS

"Sai Pearls Of Wisdom"
Part Six

December 4th, 2002

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram!

With Pranams to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan!
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Swelling on Swami's Cheek
July 2002

Now we shall move on to more of Bhagavan's conversations in July. Well, you know, during Guru Purnima, all of us noticed a swelling on the right side of Swami's face. Most of you must have noticed it. He gave an explanation at the end of one of His discourses. The swelling was so bad -- very red in colour -- and we did not know how He was managing with it.

We asked Bhagavan, "What is this? Why is it? What can we learn from this experience? It is so painful to watch. How are You able to bear it?"

Bhagavan said, "Any doctor will tell you that the pain is excruciating. It is terrible pain. It will last for 21 days and, if it gets really serious, it will also affect the brain."

The severity of the problem He was experiencing was so great that we were not able to look at it. In spite of the swelling and the terrible pain, Bhagavan gave four or five discourses. How was that possible? I know that at one time, He could not open His mouth fully, but just this much. (*Anil Kumar demonstrates by opening his own mouth just a little.*) Nor could He eat. That was the severity of the illness.

So we asked, "Bhagavan, why don't You cure Yourself from the pain and the swelling? Why don't You cure Yourself?"

Bhagavan answered, "I will never cure Myself. I will cure your problems. I don't cure any of My problems. But in response to your prayers, in response to your wish, in response to your yearning, I will cure Myself, but not until then." That is what Bhagavan said.

"Don't You feel the pain, Swami? Isn't it painful for You?"

Bhagavan's answer is very important. He said, "I don't consider Myself as the body. I am not this body. So, I don't take any swelling or any complaint of this body seriously. It is not a source of pain for Me because I don't identify Myself with this body. Do you understand? I am not the body. So, I don't feel the pain at all."

I would like to bring your attention to one or two points, which are mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita*. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, it clearly states: "God is blemish-less. God has no attributes, no pain whatsoever. God is in the body, but the body is not in God. All attributes function or operate because God is in them. But these attributes are not in Him."

How He carried out the day's schedule, how He moved around the auditorium, talking to all the delegates who attended the conference, without eating any food, was amazing! We could not believe it. That is the secret of His Divinity.

I would like to share an important point with all of you: After a few days, there was no more swelling on Swami's face. Everything was perfect. Somehow I picked up the courage to ask Swami, "Swami, are You OK now? I don't see any swelling. Very good, Swami! We are happy!"

Do you know what Baba said? "Anil Kumar, look here. A small swelling slowly increased to the size of an orange. It was that big! Slowly, as the size increased, the pain also increased. But today, since it has subsided and is totally gone, see here -- there isn't even a mark (or scar) of any kind! Whenever you have a boil, whenever there is any cut, you will still be left with a mark, even after it is healed. Though this was such a large swelling, now after it has healed, there is no trace of its previous presence."

This is Divinity! This is Divinity! All of us were taken by surprise when Bhagavan explained that. The lesson is this: *badha* or 'pain' is *bodha* or a 'teaching'. God suffers to teach us. God's apparent external pain is also a chance to communicate a lesson to the devotees. That is the underlying secret behind this suffering.

Swami Blessed Him

In July, a very important elderly person came to see Bhagavan. I don't need to mention his name, but the message is important. He was 83 years old. He said, "Swami, bless me. I am now 83. I want to go to my native place. Please bless me."

Swami blessed him, presented him with some new clothes and even some money to cover the tailor's stitching charges (*Laughter*). He also gave his wife a new sari. Then Swami spoke about this gentleman to those present.

Later that same day, another man said, "Swami, I will be celebrating my 60th birthday."
"Oh, I see."

He is also a very important person. Good! (We are all important. But that important person happened to be there that day. We important persons were not there on that day. We are available on other days!) (*Laughter*)

So this person said, "Swami, I just completed 60 years and my birthday is next week." He was quite elegant, active and well-dressed, and did not look too old.

Swami said, "*Hmm*. Take it." He presented him a very fine chocolate-coloured suit and 3,000 rupees for the stitching charges. He also gave him a beautiful new shirt.

So I took a chance...I said, "Swami, my 60th birthday is also coming." Then He said, "Oh, there is still plenty of time. Don't worry!" (*Laughter*)

"No One Knows My Age"

It is in this context that Bhagavan made a statement that will be of interest to all of you. He said, "Here is a man who said that he has now crossed 83 years old. Another man here says that he has just completed 60 years. But I can tell you that no one knows My age! No one knows My age!"

Bhagavan did not comment any further on this statement. But I started reflecting on one of His earlier statements. In one of His poems, He said: "God has neither a beginning nor an end, neither birth nor death. He is non-dual. God is existence. There is nothing like appearance and disappearance for God."

So when Baba says, "No one knows My age", it means that He is infinite. His so-called November 23rd 'Birthday' is only the age of His body, not of His Divinity. That is one explanation.

The second explanation is that He is 77 years old this year. However, in the previous Incarnation, He came as Shirdi; while in earlier ages, He came as Krishna and as Rama. So, who can say His true age? He has manifested from time-to-time, from age-to-age, in response to prayers and according to a designed, stipulated program for establishing Peace, Love, Truth and Righteousness. So, in this Sathya Sai form, in this current body, we know His age. But we cannot say His *true* age because He has taken so many different forms from age-to-age.

Therefore, Bhagavan is correct when He says, "No one knows My *actual* date of birth." It is because He was *never born*! Further I can also say, "Bhagavan is never born *nor will He ever leave us*."

Instead of trying to figure out His age, we can put it this way: Bhagavan is a Cosmic visitor. He is here as a visitor, having neither a beginning nor an end. His statement about no one knowing His birth-date is an indirect way of communicating His Divinity to all of us.

"Don't Waste"

Another afternoon, He started reading letters in front of us. He opened an envelope and took out the letter. A boy had written two lines on a long white sheet of paper. There were only two lines on the top. The rest of it was blank. What did Baba say?

He tore it there and gave that remaining white paper to a boy saying, "You use it. I don't want you to waste anything, not even white paper." Further Baba said, "Don't waste food. Food is God. Don't waste time. Time waste is Life waste. Time is God. Don't waste energy. Don't waste water. Don't waste money. Waste of money is evil." He taught these wonderful lessons to the boys who were assembled that afternoon.

I recall one of Bhagavan's visits to the boys' hostel. He got out of the car and immediately He said, "Hey, come here! On the third floor, a fellow has not turned off the water tap there in the bathroom. Go and close the tap! After using it, you should turn the water off. You should not let the tap run and waste water." That's what Bhagavan said.

You must have also noticed that when He calls you for an interview, Bhagavan goes into the room first. As you all go in and sit down, He switches on the fan Himself and the moment you leave, He will turn it off. Why? "Don't waste energy. Don't waste electricity." Bhagavan sets the finest example for all of us to learn from His own life. That is why Bhagavan has every authority to say, "My life is My message. My life is My message." As He does not waste anything, we should follow His example and not waste anything either.

The Orphanage

On another day in July, Bhagavan somehow started talking about the orphanage. You know, about 61 orphans have been adopted by Bhagavan. He is taking care of them. Bhagavan provides them with food and clothing, a place to live and an education. Bhagavan has also deposited one *lakh* of rupees in every child's name in a fixed deposit account. After completing their studies, this money (along with the accrued interest) will enable them to get a good start in life.

You should have seen boys on the day of their arrival. It was such a wonderful sight! Bhagavan gave each boy a beautiful quality suitcase. Each suitcase was full. There was a cup, a plate, a mirror, toothpaste, a brush, underwear and clothes. Everything that a boy might need was in that suitcase. He gave one suitcase to each boy. The excited boys opened their suitcases, counted the number of things, closed the suitcases, and then again opened the suitcases! (*Laughter*)

While strolling around the Round buildings on an evening walk, I peeped through the windows and noticed that the boys were extremely happy, looking at the suitcases given to them by Bhagavan. My nature is to share with Swami whatever I see.

So I said, "Swami, the boys are very excited."

"Why? You seem to be excited!" (*Laughter*)

"Yes, Swami! I am excited, yes."

"Why?"

"Because when I see the boys getting excited, naturally I am excited too."

He asked, "What happened?"

"Swami, they opened their suitcases, checking out their clothes. Each boy was showing his things to the other. The suitcases were of different colours. They were beautiful suitcases."

And then Bhagavan said, "*Eh!* I gave them each three sets of clothes the day they arrived here."

"Three sets? Swami, is that necessary?"

"Why not? It is very necessary!"

"How, Swami?"

"One set is to wear at home, one set is for *Nagarsankirtan* and *bhajans*, and one set is for school. So, there are three sets."

"Oh, Swami, very good!"

I wanted Swami to explain further, "Excellent, Swami."

Bhagavan said, "It seems that an initial expense of two *crores* has been spent for this project, including the amount deposited for each boy."

"Swami, isn't that excessive? Is it necessary?"

"Yes, it is very necessary!"

And then He made a very important statement for everyone: "Whatever I say, I do. Whatever I do, I say. Whatever I do, whatever I say is just one and the same. I don't say one thing and do something different. I don't do one thing and say something different. No! Whatever I say and do are exactly the same. I am full of Truth. That is My way of life."

It is important for all of us to understand this, so that there will be harmony or unity of thought, word and deed.

Three Hundred Doctors

A couple of days later, I saw Bhagavan distributing *saris* to a few ladies. Then He slowly walked towards us. Next I saw Bhagavan talking to a few gentlemen. Naturally, I was curious to know who they were. But I did not dare to ask, "Who are they, Swami?"

Remember, I am not supposed to ask! But seeing my face, which had a big question mark written on it, (*Laughter*) Bhagavan Himself began to explain:

He asked, "Have you seen the ladies there?"

I could not say, "I have seen" because I have not come here to see ladies. (*Laughter*) I could not say, "I have not seen" because I *did* see them! (*Laughter*) So, I simply smiled. (*Laughter*)

Then He explained, "They are the lady doctors. The men doctors are on this side. I gave them clothes. You know, they are all doctors with post-graduate degrees, surgeons, physicians -- top doctors."

Now it was time for me to ask for more information from Bhagavan.

"Swami, where do they come from?"

A reasonable question -- nothing to do with lady doctors or anything like that! It was quite a convenient question that would not embarrass Swami.

"Where do they come from?"

"They are from Madras."

Oh! Swami, Madras? I see many doctors, Swami."

"Many? 300 doctors have come from Madras!"

"Oh! 300?"

"Yes, 300 are here."

"Swami, why are they here?"

"They came on tour."

"An excursion?" (*Laughter*)

"*Chi, chi!* Not an excursion! (*Laughter*) No, no! They visited villages all along the way, organised medical camps and finally reached here for Swami's blessings. They came here for Swami's blessings, after doing service in different villages and organising medical camps at different places."

"Oh, Swami, I see. I thought it was just a weekend visit."

"No, no! It is *not* entertainment, no."

"Oh, I see! Swami, anything else?"

"Ah, yes!"

"What?"

"Do you know that all of them can sing *bhajans* well?"

"How should I know? When did they sing? Doctors -- where do they sing? Not in the surgery theatre!"

"They sing *bhajans*, but not in the medical camp. They do evening *bhajans*."

"Oh, I see, Swami. They also sing *bhajans*!"

"And then further, some of the doctors can also chant the Vedas. They do Vedic chanting."

"Doctors chanting Vedas?"

"Yes, they can do it!"

Then Swami must have understood, "This fellow (Anil Kumar) does not seem to believe anything that I say!" (*Laughter*) You know, we cannot hide anything from Swami!

Immediately Swami called one doctor from the ladies' side -- a Mrs. Hemadri or some name like that (I don't remember her name). She came forward. She had also written a book. She came up to Swami.

"How many of you have come?"

"300, Swami."

"What have you done?"

"Medical camps."

"Where?"

"In several villages."

This verified every statement that He had said to me, as if we were in a police station (*Laughter*) or in a courtroom! So He made her say all that.

Swami said, "Oh, only medical camp?"

"No, Swami, we organised *bhajans* also."

"Oh, *bhajans* also?" (*Laughter*)

He started looking at me sarcastically. (*Laughter*)

"Ah! All of you sing?"

"Swami, some of them know Vedic chanting also." (*Laughter*)

Then Bhagavan said, "In these days, particularly for doctors, money is God. And for them to sacrifice like this -- to organise medical camps and to sing *bhajans* for everybody – this is possible only in the Sathya Sai Organisation. Only Sai devotees will do that. Nobody else will do that."

Therefore, this is the best example for everyone to emulate and to learn in our own individual way.

Examined in the Super Speciality Hospital August 2002

In August 2002, I went to the Super Speciality Hospital for a check-up. The doctor said, "Anil Kumar, you had better have a check-up." I have some pain in my joints. They said I might have a gout problem. The doctor told me, "You better come and get yourself examined in the Super Speciality Hospital."

Well, I went to the hospital and visited there for the first time as a patient. Of course, I had been there on the Inauguration Day, translating for Swami, but not since then. Why? I'm afraid of hospitals. I'm afraid of doctors. I don't like to see doctors because I might be reminded of my non-existent diseases! (*Laughter*) And I don't want to see the patients suffering. Why torture myself unnecessarily? So I don't usually go to the hospital. This time I had to go because they asked me to go for a check-up.

Well, then in the evening, Bhagavan asked, "Why did you go?"

"Where, Swami?" (*Laughter*)

"Hey! Where did you go?"

"Swami, I went to the college. I am still working there."

"No, no! After, after!"

I had classes first and then after that, I went to the hospital. So Swami asked, "After, after?"

"Swami, I went to the hospital." (*Laughter*)

Then He said, "Ah, what happened?"

"It is Buckingham Palace!"

Now, I thought, it is time for me to explain to Bhagavan about how beautiful the hospital is! (*Laughter*) "Swami, my condition is not that severe. I am quite fine. My only problem is that I have some pain in my toe. As the doctors wanted me to get a check-up, I went to the hospital. The building, the dome, the lawns, the flowers and the lovely gardens - it doesn't look like a hospital!"

"If it is not a hospital, then what is it?" He said.

"It is like Buckingham Palace! (*Laughter*) I felt as if I was going to attend a wedding reception. It is so beautiful! I found smiling patients and attendants. I didn't find any long, serious faces, reflecting the critical condition of the patients. Everyone was fine and all were laughing. So, it was as though I was at a wedding, not at a hospital."

"And then, just inside the entrance, I saw an idol of Lord Vigneshvara or Vinayaka. Well, I did my *namaskaar*. There is such a beautiful Vinayaka just under the dome. I have not seen the likes of it anywhere, Swami -- not anywhere!"

"Why?" He said.

"Because its size is so big and it is so dark in colour. It is made up of polished, shining granite -- such a beautiful idol, Swami." And then I said, "Inside the dome, at the centre, there are *huge* pictures of Swami, very beautiful, six to eight feet in size -- a beautiful collection, such wonderful pictures of Swami."

"Oh ho! Is this the first time you have been there?"

"Yes, Swami, the first time! I pray that it is also the last time (*Laughter*) because I don't want to go there as a sick person."

Then He laughed and said, "All right! Where did you go?"

"Swami, I walked along the corridors. The flooring, the colour of the flooring, and the matching colour of the walls -- *ah*, it is so beautiful! The floor is so shiny that I could see my own reflection there. It is so clean that, even if milk were to spill out of a glass, we could collect it and pour it back into the glass again!"

He said, "Oh, you like it?" The Lord is so happy because it is His own creation. It is His

own. So He's asking, "Ah, you like it?"

"Yes, Swami! Not only that. I didn't find any spots on the walls. The walls are so clean. The flooring is so clean. I was very happy. There was not even a blade of grass or a piece of paper anywhere. It is so clean, Swami."

And then I said, "Swami, I also saw blackboards in front of every doctor's room and in front of the surgical theatres with letters written in gold. What a beautiful combination of colours -- the flooring is ash-coloured, the wall is biscuit-coloured, and the board is black with letters in gold. So, the hospital is very colourful. It is so nice, Swami."

"What Did You Do There?"

"Oh, I see! So you liked it? What did you do there? Let me know. Were you simply watching the flooring there?" (*Laughter*)

"Oh, no, no, Swami! I went to the biochemistry lab."

"What did you do there?"

"I got a blood test."

"Oh, I see. What happened there?"

"Usually the biochemistry lab smells of tincture, Dettol and other horrible stuff. You can really feel sick in the laboratory. Though we are healthy, we will certainly fall sick in the laboratory. That is the kind of biochemistry labs found everywhere."

"Oh, I see! And how is this lab?" Swami asked.

"This lab doesn't smell at all!"

"Oh, I see."

"I didn't see any bandages left on the ground. I didn't see anybody crying. And the staff-training nurse took the blood sample very nicely and neatly. I was afraid because she pulled my hand (*Anil Kumar demonstrated*) and levelled the needle like that. But she put it in such a soft way, engaging me in conversation: 'How are you, Sir? We hear you give wonderful talks.' *ZOPP!* And that was that! (*Laughter*) By the time I replied, she had already drawn the blood! She did it so nicely. Swami, they do very dedicated service. I am very happy about it."

"And then outside this biochemistry lab, I saw a number of people sitting on the benches there. They were in the line, in a queue, to get the results of the tests taken. But looking at them, I could not figure out who was a patient and who was an attendant because both the attendants and the patients were equally joyful and smiling. So, how to distinguish them? Therefore, Your hospital is a place full of smiles, comfort and

health.”

"Ah! You like it?"

"Very much, Swami. And then, where did you go?"

"Swami, I went to the bone specialist.”

“Why?”

“Because the problem is with my toe. The doctor spoke to me so nicely that I forgot to mention my problem! (*Laughter*) Then he had to say, 'What brought you here?' Swami, this wouldn't happen anywhere else!”

“I came to know later that the heart section and the eye department are equally efficient. The people who come here are dedicated to serve You. I also know that the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, boys and girls who have very high degrees, acumen and gold medals, are working in the Super Speciality Hospital. They are working there as an act of service because of their devotion to You. This would not happen anywhere else. I am so happy, Swami.”

“And not only that, Bhagavan. I want to tell you another thing: I wanted to get my blood pressure checked. That's all. I figured that I should get it done now instead of being asked to do so later. So, what to do? Immediately I went to one very big hall where there were heart patients. It was a very big hall with a dark blue floor and white walls -- a very big room! Swami, I was so happy to see such a big hall with *only four beds!* Many other Indian hospitals would have made that big hall into at least six or ten rooms, with two patients in each room! In this hospital, Bhagavan has only four beds. That is a very big hall, which would have been divided into 6 to 8 rooms by any commercial hospitals.”

"*Hmm!* So you liked that too?"

"Very much, Swami!"

“I Spoke to One Nurse”

“I should also tell You, Swami, one more thing that happened.”

"What?"

"I spoke to a nurse.”

"You spoke to a nurse? Did you just go there to talk to everybody?"

"No, I wanted to know about Your hospital. I called one nurse and said, 'Look here, sister. Where were you before you came here?'"

She said, 'Sir, I was in Bangalore before I came here.'

"Then what did you ask?" Swami said.

"This was my second question, Swami: 'Why did you leave that job and come here? Why did you leave Bangalore? Why are you here?'"

"She said, 'Here I am serving Swami directly. This is a great opportunity for service and so I am here.'"

"My third question to her was: 'What is the difference between your work in Bangalore and your work here in Prasanthi Nilayam?'"

Swami asked, "Ah! What did she say? What did she say?" (*Laughter*)

"Swami, she said, 'The work is the same in both places. The seriousness of the work and the quality of the work is similar in both the places. But the difference here is that we don't feel tired. We don't feel tired here at all, though we do a lot of work. We are very healthy and we are very happy. Though the work is tiring, I am not tired. I am always energetic. That is the difference between that place and this place.'"

The Power of Nagarsankirtan

"And then I went to the hospital canteen."

"Oh, you always believe in eating!" (*Laughter*)

"Swami, I believe that food is God and food must be worshipped! (*Laughter*) So I went there to the canteen. I found a 74-year-old man working there! So I said, 'Sir, why do you work here at your age?'"

"He said, 'Anil Kumar, by working here, I am healthy. At home, I am sick. So I am here.'"
"Oh, I see. That is the secret of health -- oh good! Sir, what do you do here?"

"He said, 'I do three jobs: one is canteen accounts; the second is providing accommodation to the attendants of the patients; and the third job, I maintain the records.'"

"Oh sir, at 74 years! I cannot imagine how much you must have worked when you were thirty or forty -- when you were young! How are you able to work like that at this age?"

"That man said, 'Look, Anil Kumar, I attend *Nagarsankirtan* every morning. The energy that I get by attending *Nagarsankirtan* is responsible for all of my activity.'"

To be very honest, you know, I don't attend *Nagarsankirtan* because I have to prepare and read a lot and do so much work -- writing articles, books and publications. If I were to attend *Nagarsankirtan*, I would end up sleeping in my classroom! My 'teachings' may

then put the students to sleep! When that grand old man said that his energy was because of attending *Nagarsankirtan*, it was something very interesting to hear about -- the power of *Nagarsankirtan*."

A Teacher Attends on a Sick Student

In one of the rooms, I saw a young lady sitting on a chair next to a young boy who was lying down. Out of curiosity, I went in. "Hello boy, what is the trouble?"

He said, "I was wheezing, so I was admitted here."

Then I looked at the young lady. "Are you related?"

That lady said, "Sir, this boy is from our school, the Sri Sathya Sai Primary School. I am his teacher. I am attending on him."

"You are attending on him?"

"Yes! Four of us teachers are taking turns here attending on this boy."

"Bhagavan, nowhere does a teacher attend to a sick boy. Nowhere! Impossible. It is only out of pure Love. The boy was smiling, though he was sick. Love -- that's what we find in the Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions. The teacher conducted herself more like the mother of the child than like a teacher. His own mother wouldn't have served him as much as this teacher did, which is really great!"

Later, a few girls came to me. "Sir, we are from Anantapur campus. We are working here in the hospital."

"I see. Good! What do you do on Sunday? Sunday is a holiday. What do you do then?" I thought they would come to the Mandir for *bhajans*.

But those girls said, 'No, sir. There is a small village behind the Super Speciality Hospital called Bidupalli."

These girls go there and serve in that village by organising *Bal Vikas* classes, where they teach the children the *Vedas* and *bhajans*. That is their service on Sundays, after a hectic six-day week, which is also occupied with studies. Then, the seventh day is spent in social service. Can you believe it? Will it happen anywhere else? That is something very special about Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions.

"Then, Bhagavan," I said to myself, "Bhagavan, You are unparalleled, unequalled -- none can equal You. You alone can do it. To inspire everybody, to prompt everybody to such an extent that they do service even on a holiday, even at a time when they feel like relaxing -- You *are* God. There is no doubt about it. No one else would be able to do that."

That is what I said to myself, and I also shared the same thought with Bhagavan.

“I Belong to You”

On another evening in August, when Swami was sitting in His chair, He suddenly said to one boy, "Give me the letter." That boy started running, walking very close to me -- so closely that he almost touched me.

Bhagavan was very serious. He said, "You boys should learn manners. When your teachers are seated there, should you jump over them? Should you walk like that, touching them? You should not do that! Our institution is a moral institution. You should respect your teachers. You should respect your elders. You should not sit along with them. You should take the next seat. This is not the way."

Then He made an important statement. He said, "Boys, you can touch Me. You can pull Me. You can be very close to Me because I belong to you. You are Mine. But you cannot behave like that with your teachers."

This is Bhagavan's beautiful statement, where He has claimed students as His property: "You can push Me, you can touch Me, but towards elders and teachers, and in the society, you should always show proper respect. You should slowly come in a line, while coming for *darshan*. You should not push others."

“You Should Tell Them How to Behave Properly”

And then He looked at me seriously and said, "You don't tell these things to boys. You are responsible."

"Swami, yes, I understand."

"You should tell them how to behave properly. You teachers don't tell them. Parents don't tell them either. How do you expect them to learn?"

"Well, You are here to tell them, Swami." That's what I said to myself. These are things that parents and the teachers don't teach, so Bhagavan takes it upon Himself as His duty to teach them – manners, courtesy, (good) behaviour. It was really shocking to learn that day.

How about the rest of society? Students are competing to get better ranks. Students are competing with each other for good marks. But they don't compete with each other for good conduct, good behaviour or to be good and ideal students. Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions teach them the spirit of idealism -- how to conduct oneself in society. These institutions are unique.

A Lecture on Marketing

One fine evening in August, Swami looked at the boys, "Hey, boys! You are all MBA boys, right?"

They are students of MBA classes -- Master of Business Administration.

"You are all MBA boys, right?"

"Yes, Swami."

"Oh, I see!"

And then He said, "What is the lesson you learned this morning in the classroom? What was taught to you?"

The boys said, "Swami, we had a very good lecture on marketing."

And Swami said, "Ah! Marketing? Very good! What is your specialisation?"

"Marketing, Swami!"

"And your specialisation?"

"Marketing, Swami."

"What Is Marketing?"

"Oh, I see! Then, what is marketing? Tell Me! What is marketing?"

Though they were specialising in marketing, they could not tell Him the specifics of the marketing class. (*Laughter*) One fellow said, "Swami, marketing is a place where goods are sold."

Baba said, "You are wrong."

Then another fellow said, "Marketing has three -- production, distribution and sales. These three constitute marketing."

Swami said, "You are also wrong."

See that! How He spiritualises mundane, worldly subjects. Marketing is a worldly subject of the MBA program. But He made it *spiritual* -- He divinised it!

Then Baba said, "The whole life is marketing -- eating, drinking, breathing -- everything is marketing!"

"Swami, marketing?"

"Yes! You breathe oxygen and release carbon dioxide. This is marketing. So, it is there in every activity of your life. For example in nutrition, there is loading and unloading.

That is all marketing. So, why not in the human body?"

"Today, Marketing Is Not Proper"

And then I said, "Swami, there is some talk outside about marketing."

I was not sure of the aspects of marketing or MBA. But I thought that it is my business to keep Swami seated for some more time on the chair and to keep Him engaged in speaking, so that many will have *darshan* and I will have more material to share with devotees! Whether it is my subject or not, my object is to interfere (*Laughter*) and to prolong the dialogue!

So I said, "Swami, people say that marketing is not proceeding along sound lines today? Would you please tell us why? Why is marketing is not proceeding in a healthy way? Why?"

Bhagavan said, "Today marketing is not proper. Something is wrong because there are more imports than exports. We go on importing, but there is less exporting. This is the mistake in our marketing."

Further He said, "People go by fashion, external fashion. They don't think of reality."

Then I said, "Swami, is fashion a wrong thing? Yes, I want to look fashionable. Why not? I like fashion -- a good dress and all that. Why not? Is anything wrong about following fashion?"

He said, "There is nothing wrong if you are after some fashion. But in trying to look fashionable, if you imitate others, that is totally wrong. Imitation is wrong."

For example, look at jeans. People wear jeans abroad because jeans fit in there. But if I wear jeans here, my skin will peel off because this is such a hot place! (*Laughter*) As this is a hot place, jeans won't fit in with this climate. So the fellow wearing jeans here is imitating. That is why jeans are very costly. Each pair costs 300 rupees or 400 rupees.

(Two boys from the audience who accompanied Anil Kumar said, '900 rupees!')

900 rupees! You see, these boys also wear jeans. (*Laughter*) For 900 rupees! See that? Why? It's American. They are United States of America jeans, why not? It's imitation. Therefore, these things have been going on here that are not good marketing practices.

Swami Knows All

And suddenly He looked at one boy and said, "Boy, what are you studying?"

He said, "Swami, I am an MBA student."

"Before that, what did you do?"

"Swami, I completed engineering."

"Oh, I see!

Then I was just wondering, why should He ask so many details? Why?

Swami said, "A four-year course in engineering?"

"Yes, Swami."

"No, no, no! You took 5½ years to complete engineering because you failed."

Nobody knew this until Swami said it outloud. We were all just thinking that he was an engineer.

And then He said, "Of course, there is nothing wrong with that. I said it only to let you know that I know -- only to let you know I know."

And then He said, "No, it is not your mistake. The examination was postponed every time and they conducted the examination at a time when you were not prepared. So, it is not your fault. It is the mistake of the University for postponing the exams like that."

That is how Swami defended the boy.

Names and Their Significance

Then there was another interesting discussion that month.

Swami asked the boys, "What are your names?"

They said, "Sathya...Rakhal...Rao."

And then Baba said, "Hey, boys! I will tell you a small story about names. Your name should not be confusing. Your name should be straight, so that others will not be confused."

I was wondering, "Confusing names? Can names confuse people?" Yes!

Then Bhagavan told us a story: It seems that a newly married couple started their life in a city. One day the postman delivered a letter and the husband picked it up. That letter was actually for his wife. But the husband opened the letter – the censure board! He read that letter. What were the contents?

"I love you very much. We were together for a long time. I cannot forget our days. I am waiting for those days to return. We should have dinner together. We were never away from each other all these years. I am coming to see you very soon."

He thought to himself, "Someone loves my wife more than I love her!" He was very wonderstruck. And there at the bottom, he looked at the signature. The signature was 'Lakshmi Narayan'. 'Lakshmi' is the name of a girl. But this fellow did not see 'Lakshmi' properly. 'Narayan' is the name of a man. He thought, "Oh ho! My wife has had an affair with Narayan, I see. Let me be careful. Let me see."

Then he waited for Monday when that Lakshmi Narayan would come home. He was waiting at the door with a stick to beat both Lakshmi Narayan and his wife! (*Laughter*) He was hiding behind the door. Someone came to the house and he could hear that person talking to his wife. And this fellow overheard the conversation:

"Hey, Lakshmi! When did you come?"

"Just now. I am so glad to see you. I wrote you a letter. Did you not receive it?"

"No, no!" (Obviously not, as the letter was picked up by the husband!) "I didn't know that."

"But you must have seen my letter. How are you? I am so glad that you got married. I came to see how you are."

"Oh, I see! You also got married?"

"Yes, I did get married. My husband's name is Narayan. So now I'm 'Lakshmi Narayan'."

Now this man understood! Lakshmi Narayan -- Narayan is the husband's name, Lakshmi is her name. So, this fellow had mistakenly assumed that a man was coming to have an affair with his wife!

Swami narrated this story and then told everybody, "So be careful with a name. Don't get into trouble when you get married. Don't let your wife misunderstand you!"

That is what He said.

Sound In Silence

Then in the month of August, another wonderful thing happened! Bhagavan gave me an opportunity to talk to Him, as He does every day because of His infinite mercy, not necessarily due to my deservedness. (I am very open about that.)

I chose to ask some questions, "Swami, Ramana Maharshi made mention of the 'sound in silence'. The sound in silence -- *Nisabhda Brahman*: *Nisabhda* is silence and *Sabdha Brahman* is sound. 'Listen to the sound of silence.' That's what he said. Swami, is it possible? Ramana Maharshi also said that the best way of communication is silence. The best way to communicate is silence or *mounam*. I don't understand, Swami."

I continued, "Ramana Maharshi's whole message is very simple: Inquire thoroughly into your Self by asking yourself this question, 'Who am I?' That is the essence of the teaching of Ramana Maharshi. I don't understand anything, Swami. Please let me know."

(My friends, since most of you do not follow Telugu, you are not in a position to attend my Saturday talks. Every Saturday I give a talk at 7.30 PM in Telugu. I have been speaking on Bhagavan Ramana and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba -- their teachings and parallels. With God's Grace, we will take up that subject later on, after completing this project. Everything is recorded and the materials are available. My only ambition is to share this knowledge with as many people as possible, nothing personal. So, we will do it someday.)

Bhagavan gave a very beautiful explanation. What did Baba say? "In the state of silence, you will understand who you really are. The heart opens up in this state, and then you will understand who you truly are. Until the heart opens -- not the physical heart, not open-heart-surgery, no, I mean the spiritual heart -- when the heart opens up, you know your true Self, not until then. In the state of silence, when the mind is withdrawn, when we are in a thoughtless, wordless, speechless state, in an utter state of silence, then the heart opens up. You listen to the sound of *Omkar* from within, and you will know your true Self." That is what Bhagavan said.

"What Will I Get?"

Bhagavan also mentioned another thing.

"Swami, what do I get by knowing who I really am? What do I get? If I know my Self, what is the advantage? What is the benefit?"

We all approach things from the worldly point-of-view, so we want to know what we will get. "I attend *Nagarsankirtan*, so what will I get?" "I go and sit there, so what will I get?" We don't get anything! (*Laughter*) Until we stop this way of thinking, we will not get what is expected. We will not get what we should get because what we should get is a *transcendental experience*. It becomes a *transcendental* experience when we turn inward. So that is the journey to a higher step, which we should reach.

So, Bhagavan said, "By knowing your Self, the real 'I', you will know everything else. When your true Self is known, everything else is known."

"How?"

Bhagavan said, "Number nine and number one: There are two numbers here -- one and nine. Which is the bigger number? Which is higher than the other?"

We all said number nine.

Baba said, "No! One is higher than nine."

(I am already poor in mathematics. When Swami said this, I had to question my elementary arithmetic!) (*Laughter*)

"Swami, One is higher than nine? How is it possible?"

"Look here! One plus one is equal to nine. There cannot be nine without one. So, this 'one' is greater than the nine. Without the one, there is no nine. Without the one, there are none! So the One, the only One, the real One, which is your true Self, when that is known, the rest of the world is known." That's what Bhagavan said. What a nice interpretation!

"Learn the Art of Speaking from Hanuman"

Bhagavan mentioned another point. In the *Ramayana* you must have come across a character named Hanuman. After discussing Ramana Maharshi, then Swami began to talk about Hanuman.

Hanuman is a very, very intelligent person, known for his intellect and for his communication skills. He was the jewel in the entire *Ramayana* epic. Swami said, "One should learn the art of speaking from Hanuman. When enemies asked him, 'Who are you?' he did not say, 'I am so-and-so.' He said, 'I am the servant of Lord Rama.'

He is so humble, so soft and sweet in his conversation with everybody. One should know how to speak. And if you speak well, you will get a good name. If you speak nicely, you will have good friends. So, speaking is an art; speech is a talent." That is what Bhagavan has said.

"As you talk, '*Anudhvegacaram*': *udhvega* is 'temper'. When you speak, there should not be any temper, anger or emotion, no! *Sathyam*: your word should be full of truth; *priti*, acceptable and sweet with love; and *hitamsha*, for the good of others, soothing.

So whatever we say, it should not agitate others. It should be true and acceptable. It should be for the welfare of others, not hurt or ruin others." That is what Bhagavan said. "We should not be like a snake with a forked tongue. The snake with a forked tongue is poisonous. You should not be like that. You should be very careful as you speak."

So, we shall continue next time, OK? Thank you very much for listening to me in rapt attention. Thank you!

(1:08:57)

(Anil Kumar closed his satsang by leading a bhajan.)

SAI RAM!

**Om Asato Maa Sad Gamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya
Mrtyormaa Amrtam Gamaya**

**Om Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu
Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu
Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu**

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

**Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ji Ki Jai!
Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ji Ki Jai!
Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ji Ki Jai!**

Thank you!