

#### **AUM SRI SAI RAM**

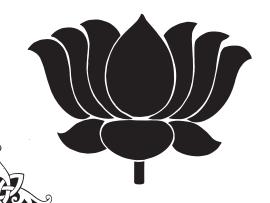


On the occasion of 89th birthday celebrations of



Bhagawan Sri Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we offer at his divine lotus feet this Eternal Real Knowledge
"Nithya Sathya Bodha" taught to us by himself

Ever in your service Swami,



Your Children,

N. Visalakshi Gyani Baile D. Ravi Kumar



# NITHYA SATHYA BODHA

(Divine Nectarine Messages)

# By NOONE VISALAKSHI

Translated by

**GYANI BAILE** 

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**NOONE VISALAKSHI**, Apt 1, Sai Balaji Towers, Opp. Vasavi Puttaparthi, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh - Pin Code 515 134, except for brief passages quoted in book review.

This book can be exported from India only by the Publishers - **NOONE VISALAKSHI**, G 1, Sai Balaji Towers, Opp. Vasavi, Puttaparthi, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh - Pin Code 515 134 (India).

International Standard Book Number 978-0-9799892-3-0

First Edition: October 2014

Price:

Published by:

#### **NOONE VISALAKSHI**

G 1, Sai Balaji Towers, Opp. Vasavi Puttaparthi, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh

Printer: Sri Venkateswara Printers,

Bandala Bazaar, GUNTUR- 522 003. A.P.

On March 1, 2013 Swami said with a smile:

"I am saying this to you for your own benefit. This knowledge will blossom the wisdom latent in you. I am teaching this to you continually (*Nithya*). It is '*Sathya Vidya*' which means the teaching that bestows on you that knowledge which is never changing, real, and eternal. Bring it one more time into your awareness that this is '*Nithya Sathya Bodha*'."

'Nithya Sathya Bodha' translates to Eternal Real Knowledge.

On Sept 13, 2014, Swami dictated the following inner meaning about the cover page:

"As soon as *Jivi* (individual) enters the divine ocean of love and peace, its heart lotus will soak the divine effulgent rays of spiritual knowledge (*Jnana Bhaskara*) and start blossoming. In place of the six evil qualities (*ari shadvargas*) residing in the *Jivi* till then, *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prem*, *ahimsa*, *daya* will enter and make the *Jivi* open the life book called *satsang*, *nissang*. The goal and destination of this higher journey is that state of complete detachment (*nirmohatva stithi*) where *Jivi* recognizes the divinity within. Every atom of that *Jivi* who is in that state emanates divinity as divine fragrance spread throughout the universe. That divine melodious kingly sound is the prayerful sound of AUM. These waves of divinity will reach and craft you into divine souls and embodiments of divinity (*divya atmas*, *divya swarupas*), this is that divine kingly picture."

We offer our humble and grateful *pranams* (obeisance) at the divine lotus feet of Bhagawan Sri Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba for giving us such a lovely thoughtful cover picture imbibed with spiritual vibrations ......

Ever in service at Sai's feet,

Mother Child Child

N. Visalakshi D.Ravi Kumar Gyani Baile

#### **Author's Foreword**

I offer my humble *pranams* (obeisance) at the divine lotus feet of Bhagawan Sri Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I am offering thankful *namaskars* (salutations) to Bhagawan for giving me the desire to deliver this book to the readers, and the auspicious resolve to give needed spiritual food to *Jivis*.

It is an undisputable fact that every Jivi (individualized soul) who takes birth arrives to fulfill its Karma. But why did that Jivi come? What is it doing? What is its destination tomorrow? Where will it reach? One who asks these questions to oneself will have to adopt some sort of spiritual life and take a step in the direction of sadhana (spiritual practices). To reach those lofty heights of spiritual peaks it is very necessary to have the guidance of Gurus and Sadgurus. Recognizing that need the Kali Yuga Avatar Bhagawan Baba made direct appearance in front of the eyes and compassionately showered his nectar of love upon Jivis by handing these nectar drops. I believe those humans who imbibe these nectar drops will definitely take a step forward in their sadhana and reach quickly their desired destination. Bhagawan Baba has reminded the Jivis many a time that they are not born to eat, sleep, drink, and die. Instead you are born so that you become aware of 'you' (Self). He said if you forget humanness then you will not be recognized as a human. He further said it is ok if you did not become a madhava (God) even though you can, but at least live like a human. Once in a while He handed these precious gems with boundless love to his children who are sadhaks making the effort to attain madhava-hood (God hood). He inspired us to bring out these precious pearls with the good intention that they are brought together and changed into a beautiful necklace to become worthy of adorning Bhagawan's neck only when we change ourselves and strive for the transcendental goal of life. We must do deep inner inquiry of these gems handed to us by Bhagawan and through inner churning discover the indwelling Atma rama (Atma) and attain inner peace. The principle and goals of Avatars and the paths chosen to accomplish those goals cannot possibly be understood by humans except when Avatar himself sketches it out. I am hoping that you get soaked in this downpour of His grace upon his children, and reap a bountiful crop. Let us journey together hand in hand on this divine path.

Ever in Sai service, servant at Sai's feet.

Child of Sai

N. Visalakshi

#### Foreword by Gyani

This book contains conversations between Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and N. Visalakshi (Amma) in her meditative state. It will certainly open the minds of many seekers and will make them think hard about the purpose of life, what peace and happiness is, and how to attain them. It contains common queries from seekers in various stages of their spiritual journey. Bhagawan Baba gave responses to them that are amazingly clear with day to day, easy to understand examples. The Q&A touches on varieties of subjects like *Sadhana* (spiritual practices), faith, confidence, peace, happiness, human will, need of a Guru, mind and its control, meditation, purity, desires, liberation, how to earn God's grace, how to please God, why are Yogis and God born etc. One of them is an amazing inner locution between Amma and Swami regarding who he is and what is his real form? Many a time in the book Swami explained many things using his own life as an example. Also some of the common understanding and fallacies about spirituality are set right in these Q&A.

I and my deceased wife, Shivangini, are Sathya Sai Baba devotees since 1997 and Swami called her a *Jivan Muktha* in 2004 before she left her body in 2005. My spiritual journey picked up speed after she left because it became my sole purpose in life. After my retirement in 2009 I had been coming to Puttaparthi for 4 – 5 months a year during the winter time and rest of the time I live in USA where I worked and lived for the last 40 years. I wrote my deceased wife's experiences with Bhagawan Sathya Sai Baba and published them as two books – 'Inner Experiences', and 'Making of a Yogini' which were later translated into Telugu under titles 'Antargata Anubhavalu', 'Sai Shivangini' and in Hindi as 'Antharik Anubhav'.

In 2012 February I visited Amma Visalakshi at Sri Sathya Sai Anugraha Gruham, a senior citizen home, in Puttaparthi for the first time and took an immediate liking to her due to her cheerful, loving smile and soft nature. I read her first book in Telugu titled *Sri Sathya Sai Divya Anugraha Kadali Tharangalu* (waves of divine grace on Ocean). I interacted with her very frequently when I was in Parthi and shared many spiritual experiences and understanding. I have also been a witness to how Amma shared her spiritual knowledge, experience, and advice with Ravi in helping him evolve further. Ravi is a young bachelor who stays at the ashram as Amma's child and does Seva while pursuing his spiritual quest. I am very fortunate to know both of them.

Since Dec 2013 I started translating occasionally the messages in this book into English. In one of the messages Swami elaborated on *Gayatri Mantra* that I used as a *Kriya* (procedure) on Maha Shiv Ratri night in Kulwant Hall to control my mind and stay God centered. It greatly helped my spiritual growth. It is a great technique for mind control and invoking the entire energies in us for lighting up our intellect. In March 2014 we were discussing one of the messages on *Karma Yoga* when we had some doubts that could not be resolved between the three of us. That night Swami clarified our doubts in Amma's meditation and told her word by word what to write and those divine words are printed as is in this book.

I left to US in March but was brought back in April, '14. Although the purpose of my return changed after I arrived, it was utilized to translate this book into English along with practicing *Karma Yoga*. Under Swami's guidance, Amma started entering into my meditations and teaching and helping me with some yogic techniques that have greatly enhanced my spiritual journey. I am greatly indebted to Amma as *Guru* for the assistance she provided me in advancing my spiritual journey.

Learning from this book is a continuous process and one has to read it again and again. Once we get an experience of a teaching the same old message takes on a new dimension. I learned many things from this book and experienced some of them practically. Here are a few examples – How important virtues are; how dangerous senses are; *Sarvasya Sharanagati* is the only way to liberation and it can come from both devotion and *Jnana*; only one *Atma*, a *Guru*, can enhance the spiritual state of another and there is no other way; *Karma* is present in every instant of our life and extremely powerful; with the help of Swami learned about tolerance and forbearance through experiences and interactions with a variety of people. I hope the reader of this book gets as much out of it as I did.

In my life history, 2014 is a year worthy to be written in golden letters. I am greatly indebted to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba as God and *Sadguru* for this magnificent spiritual journey.

I would like to suggest the readers to read the glossary first, particularly for those who do not have a decent knowledge of the terms or concepts of *Sanatan Dharma* or *Vedanta*.

Ever in Sai service.

Gyani Baile

#### Foreword by Ravi

Firstly, I offer my humble *pranams* at the lotus feet of my guru, *sadguru* and god Bhagawan Sri Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba for the guidance he is giving me in many forms and in many ways for my spiritual upliftment. In my spiritual and worldly enhancement, my parents D.V. Prasada Rao and D. Vara Laxmi are a great support. Also, thanks to Visalakshi Amma and Gyani sir who are adding beauty to my life by guiding & guarding me in my spiritual enhancement.

Because of my parents, I got an opportunity to have darshan of Bhagawan for the first time in the year 2001 and then swami gave a chance to participate in the service activities couple of times in Prashanti Nilayam and have his darshan. After doing job for few years, in 2011 I came to Puttaparthi and was volunteering in swami's organization during which I got introduced to Amma. Currently with the divine grace of Swami, I am being carried forward on the path of spirituality by staying with Amma and doing service in the old age home 'Sri Sathya Sai Anugraha Gruham' which is built as per the divine will and guidance.

Few days after getting in touch with Amma, using Amma as a medium, Swami started giving spiritual messages and instructions on what spiritual practice (sadhana) to be done to bring transformation in me. In the beginning I did not have faith that Swami himself is guiding me through Amma. Being a witness to many miracles, inner experiences and the transformation that I observed in me through the tests conducted by Swami gradually strengthened faith and confidence that Swami himself is making me to tread along the path to reach the goal of life under his supervision. Amma with her immense love, forbearance and peaceful nature is playing a key role in my spiritual progress. Even today, Amma is instrumental in passing suggestions given by Swami, help me practice them and experience the change. Likewise Gyani sir is lending me his helping hand in my spiritual upliftment. Sharing this immense treasure named by Swami as 'Nithya Sathya Bodha' with others is helping me to inquire, ponder over and comprehend the inner meanings of his messages and put into practice at least few of them. Swami has quoted the following regarding the messages he conveyed in this book.

"Anything that is conveyed by me is for your good. By practicing these preachings, you should uncover the latent wisdom in yourself. I am preaching this to you every moment. Once again realize that this eternal knowledge which remained and will remain unaltered confers true wisdom upon you."

Personally, Swami's messages are helpful in realizing and putting into practice the ways to overcome tendencies like laziness, anger, body consciousness, impatience and attachment that are hidden in me. Swami has given answers with examples so that anyone can understand them easily for questions like "What is the necessity of doing any spiritual practice (*sadhana*)? What kind of spiritual practice (*sadhana*)?", and such others that normally arise to a spiritual aspirant who is at any level treading on the path of spirituality. It is nothing but the divine will to share this immense treasure so that many can benefit out of it.

Action when performed with devotion is true wisdom. In the process of gaining such wisdom, how to overcome the evil tendencies and be pure? The root cause of any problem is the mind which always seeks unreal and transient. How to focus the mind on the real which is my true Self? What is the need of doing a spiritual practice (*sadhana*) regularly for long time? What is meditation? How to meditate? What is life? How to overcome the obstacles that arise in life? How to safely reach the goal of life? What is the need and importance of a guru? This book gives you insightful answers to these and many other questions.

Swami said that a being caught in the hands of a *sadguru* and a being caught in the mouth of a tiger can never escape. Today we are all so fortunate for getting an opportunity to be in the safe hands of the *guru*, *sadguru* and God Bhagawan Sri Sri Sri Sathya Sai Baba. For spiritual aspirants and for those who quest for spiritual knowledge, I am sure they find answer to at least one of their questions.

Thank you so much Swami for showering tremendous love upon us.

Swamy,

Your Child...

D. Ravi kumar

#### **Gayatri Mantra Elaboration**

- Q. Swami, please give elaboration on *Gayatri Mantra*.
- A. *Gayatri* energy (*shakti*) is permeating the whole universe. Once we establish connection with that *shakti* one gains control of the subtle nature (*Sookshma Prakriti*).
- Q. What will human (manava) gain from that?
- A. This makes it possible to acquire all potencies/ riches (*sakala sampada*) residing in all regions which are connected to the physical (*bhoutika*), psychical (*manasika*), and the soul (*Atma*).
- Q. In what way, Swami?
- A. Subtle nerves (*Nadis*') originating from various limbs are spread in the entire body. When some of the *Nadis* combine or join, then they are called knots (*Granthi*). In the human body varieties of energies (*shaktis*) get integrated into various *Granthis*. As the specific *mantras* (given below) are chanted, the energies associated with the corresponding *Granthis* get manifested or externalized.

Om – As we utter this, the region that is 6 inches above the head

**Bhur** – As we utter this, the region that is 4 inches above the right eye

**Bhuvah** – As we utter this, the region that is 3inches above the third eye (in between eyebrows)

**Suvah** – As we utter this, the region that is 4 inches above the left eye

Tat – These help in awakening the energy (shakti) called "Saphalya" that is residing in the Granthi called "Tapini" located near Ajna chakra (between eyebrows)

Sa – To awaken the energy called "Parakramamu" that is in Granthi called "Saphalata" which is in the left eye

Vi — To awaken the energy called "Palana" that is residing in Granthi called "Vishwa" which is in the right eye

- *Tur* To awaken the energy called "*Mangala-karam*" that is in *Granthi* called "*Thushti*" which is in the left ear
- Va To obtain the *siddhi* of energy called "Yogam" that dwells in Granthi called "Varadha" which is in the right ear
- **Re** To obtain the *siddhi* of energy called "*Prema*" that is inherent in Granthi called "Revathi" which is centered in the nose bone
- Ni To awaken the Sam-Jna containing energy called "Ghana" that exists in Granthi called "Sookshma" which is in the upper lip
- Yam To awaken the energy called "Tejam" that is residing in Granthi called "Jnana" which is in the lower lip
- **Bhar** To awaken the energy called "Rakshana" that is located in Granthi called "Bharga" which is in the neck/ throat region
- Go To awaken the energy called "Buddhi" that is in Granthi called "Gomathi" which is in the neck near adam's apple closer to the vertebrae (Kanta Koopam)
- To awaken the energy called "Gamanam" that dwells in Granthi called
   "Devika" which is in the front part of the left chest
- Va To acquire the Siddhi "Nishta" that is located in Granthi called "Vara-hi" which is in the front part of the right chest
- Sya To awaken the energy called "Dharana" that is inherent in Granthi called "Sim-hini" which is above the stomach where the lower ribs join (right above Sternum)
- Dhee To awaken the energy called "Prana" that is residing in Granthi called
   "Dhyana" which is in the Kaleyamu (liver)
- Ma To awaken the energy called "Sam-yama" that is present in Granthi called "Mar-yada" which is in the small intestine (Plehamu)
- To awaken the energy called "Tapo" that dwells in Granthi called "Sphuta" which is in the navel.
- To awaken the energy called "Doora-darshita" that is inherent in Granthi called "Medha" which is in the bottom of the spine.

- Yo To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Anthar-Nihitamu" that exists in Granthi called "Yoga-Maya" which is in the left shoulder
- To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Ut-padana" that is in Granthi called "Yogini" which is in the right shoulder
- Nah To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Sara-sata" that is residing in Granthi called "Dharini" which is in the right elbow.
- Pra To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Adarsha" that is located in Granthi called "Pra-bhava" which is in the left elbow.
- Cho To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Sa-hasamu" that is exists in Granthi called "Ooshma" which is in the right wrist.
- Da To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Vivekamu" that is inherent in Granthi called "Drushya" which is in the right palm.
- Yat To awaken the energy (shakti) called "Seva" that dwells in Granthi called "Nir-anjana" which is in the left palm.

In this manner there is a close connection between the 24 syllables of *Gayatri Mantra* with 24 *Granthis* located in different parts of our body, and the 24 energies inherent in these *Granthis*. Number 9 indicates the *Brahma Thatwa* (Brahman principle) that is immune to any changes. Number 8 indicates the principle of Maya (*Maya Thatwam*).

# Divine Nectarine Messages

#### Nithya Sathya Bodha

#### 1. What are the causes for not holding our mind still?

You are unable to hold your mind still for the following reasons:

- Illness (*vyadhi*) the physical body does not cooperate
- Dullness (*jadathwa*) of the mind
- Doubt (*samshaya*) in understanding the nature of a thing; doubt if the desired outcome will happen when one pursues a thing,
- Danger in not pursuing the path of *Yoga*
- Weariness (*alasata*) due to excess *Tamo Guna* (lethargy/ procrastination) one lacks effort and *Sraddha* (faith)
- Attachment (anuraag) attracted to sensory pleasures and pursuits
- Illusion (*bhranti*) to confuse one thing with another
- Unable to reach to higher stages Unable to reach the advanced or refined levels of *Samadhi* (transcendental state or equal mindedness)
- Loss of *Samadhi* state after reaching the state of *Samadhi* (transcendence, equal mindedness), unable to stay there longer.

These nine things make your mind unsteady or restless. All these hindrances are overcome by meditating on AUM.

#### 2. How to control mind?

Mind comes under control through detachment and constant practice (*abhyasa*). Also with practice of discrimination (*viveka*), mind slowly turns away from sense based activities and establishes in the Self. When this practice is done carefully, constantly, and for a long time, the mind will become one pointed and firm.

#### 3. How to make mind one pointed?

It is very important to make mind firmly one pointed. We need to put a fence around tender plants. Once it becomes a fully grown tree it does not need that kind of protection anymore. One needs to be rooted in human values and ideals. Once your *Buddhi* (intellect/ discrimination) determines the right path, one needs to be ready to lay down their life in its pursuit. To make that determination it is absolutely necessary to be virtuous. If one surrenders to God, then all the hurdles in becoming one pointed are destroyed leading to the experience of *Atma (Atma Sakshatkar)*.

#### 4. How to purify mind?

One can know *Atma* only with pure mind and subtle intellect. *Buddhi* gets sharpened by discriminating between real over unreal. One begets this discrimination by feeding mind with healthy food called constant contemplation on God, and by not letting it have the food it seeks. Your thoughts need to dwell on the name and form of God. As you do this, you will realize that you are always with what is pure and permanent. Then you will obtain pure and lasting bliss. This is why I advocate so much importance to name chanting (*Nama Smarana*) as spiritual practice (*sadhana*). For chanting and contemplation, select a name and form but do not speak negatively about other names and forms. Behave like a lady who lives in a joint family. She respects her in-laws, husband's brothers and looks after them. But her heart is centered on her husband i.e. any name and form you select, the center of your heart will be on that name and form only. A stage will come when you cannot let go of that name and form i.e. your heart is stolen by that name and form.

#### 5. What is needed to succeed in *Sadhana*?

For success in *sadhana* discipline (*krama sikshana*) is essential. To succeed in this world, one must have self confidence first and then self sacrifice. If you do not have these three, your life has no meaning. When a river flows helter-skelter one builds a barrier. Till the water merges into the ocean one uses the water for useful purposes. Likewise the thoughts that come on their own without any goal are made systematic by the barrier of *sadhana*. We need to get them to take the form of selflessness and merge them in the ocean of self confidence. This is vital for acquiring the three qualities of sacrifice, self confidence, and discipline. No matter how delicious a food item is, it takes only a drop of kerosene to ruin it. Therefore any amount of *sadhana* will not yield a result if there is no discipline.

#### 6. How should spiritual progress be and how to attain it, Swami?

Just the way one assesses the grade one belongs to in a school, one need to assess the state of their own spiritual progress. Next decide to go from that grade to the next grade utilizing all your energy and strength. Then you will definitely earn God's grace. Do not get discouraged and do not bargain with God. Without straying from the goal, it is enough if you proceed step by step towards it. Be very careful

of things that make you egoistic – pride of wealth, pride of scholarship, and pride of your position. Do not look to find fault in others. Instead find your own.

#### 7. How should *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) be?

Once decided to move forward in Sadhana, one must remain firm without wavering even once. When a bus is moving on the dirt road, a cloud of dust is following behind it. Once the bus stops, the dust cloud lands on the faces of the passengers. Therefore be always on the move which means to stay firmly immersed in Sadhana (spiritual practice). Then the dust of worldly attractions and distractions will not cover your face. If you do not proceed forward in your spiritual journey due to the vasanas (impressions, impulses) of the worldly things, then you will be in this dust cloud forever. You have accomplished many great things in life. You have toiled very hard to get them. The age from 16 to 30 is very important. Once you go past that it will never come back. Do not get into wrong paths. During this stage you must walk in the footsteps of God. Just knowing is not enough. You must put the teachings into practice. Lead a moral and ethical life in an exemplary way to beget a life filled with happiness. At times a life experience will cause pain and suffering. At other times same life experience makes one happy. Mind is the reason and cause because its nature is erratic and fickle. We must control this quality of mind and properly utilize the resulting free time. There are many who are suffering because no one is teaching and showing them the path. Why the delay when God himself is showing the path? Do you doubt that He will not lead you to the shore? Get up! Cleanse the dirt in you and become pure.

- 8. What are the regulations in Sadhana?
- In fact discipline is the first step for the direct experience of Atma (Atma Sakshatkar). During this endeavor I am calling this as first step because nowadays many people are unable to bear the discomforts and difficulties; yet they desire to obtain great and grand things. On your own dedicating yourself to discipline will take you towards happiness and bliss.
- Just the way gravitational force pulls everything down, so does the force of Tamas (lethargy, dullness, procrastination) constantly drags you down (spiritually). Therefore you must always be careful and alert.

• Just the way a brass cooking vessel is scrubbed clean, similarly you must scrub your mind with *sadhana* like *japa* (name chanting) or *meditation*.

Never leave the rigor of discipline. Once you reach the state of fullness (realization) you need not think about regulations, discipline etc. When you meditate you select a form or an object to meditate upon. That object or form, meditator, and meditation should all become one. Only then you will succeed. One can attain complete one-pointedness in meditation. This is the path to be followed by my devotee who adheres to my directions. Never doubt it. Duty is duty no matter where you are placed to volunteer - Canteen, Kulwant Hall, outside etc. Is it not? Do not feel disappointed because this *seva* (selfless service) is *seva* to God. Do not be saddened because you are unable to get *Darshan* or something else that you wanted to attain. If I want to give *Darshan* to you, I have no hindrances. You will get greater spiritual benefit with this line of thinking.

#### 9. How must a devotee face the trials and tribulations?

When one is submerged in the grief of a loss or danger, resort to chanting the name of God (*Japa*), immerse yourself in prayers and remembering God. It will give you confidence, courage, and lead you to the ideals of Truth. More trials and tribulations are seen among those who get closer to God. But remind yourself that God hands you the strength to weather any kind of storm. People laugh at these devotees and call them insane. But the devotee knows that he is in the hospital called Grace, firmly believes in destiny, and has faith in God. They face the venomous attacks of the world with a smile and discard them, because they have realized the secret power of Self confidence.

#### 10. Spiritually can there be a comparison among *sadhaks* (aspirants)?

Aspirants might clamor saying they had been practicing *Sadhana* for this many or that many years. They might agonize over how many years they had been visiting Swami, and yet the ones who came later advanced farther. They might feel bad thinking what is their state? While feeling this hurt they get jealous and forgetting their stage of *Sadhana* start vicious rumors on fellow *sadhaks*' and lose whatever they gained spiritually. You strike a stone 20 times and it did not break. Another came and hit the same stone twice and it broke right away. Yet that stone actually broke after 22 strikes. Similarly the causal body (*karana shareera*) that came from last life into this life has last life's *Sadhana* hidden in it, and those

results are experienced in this life. This is the higher, spiritual meaning of human life.

#### 11. What regulations must one follow to progress in *Sadhana* (spiritual practice)?

Surround yourself with people who are dedicated to a life of higher ideals and virtues. They will encourage you to move forward in reaching your goal. By this you will gain purity of mind. In order for medicine to be fully efficacious, one must strictly follow the dietary regimen prescribed by the doctor. Your 'car' battery will be charged whether you go to Puttaparthi or to any other holy shrine. In the least, it will become the goal of your pilgrimage. Recharge your battery called Sadhana (spiritual practice). Once you return home do not keep your car idle which will make the battery lose its charge. Drive it around then the battery will maintain its charge on its own. Similarly if we do not engage in the company of good and god-minded people (satsang); good behavior; name chanting; bhajan; reading of Holy Scriptures; then all of the battery charge will be wasted. Now a day's man got used to speak as he wishes and do what he likes. He is not controlling himself either with his intellect, or good values, or out of decency. Medicine is for the sick and not for one who is healthy. Also not for the one who is dead. Advice is for those who are inquisitive; have doubts; and are concerned. Why would others need it? Desire, anger, attachment, greed, pride, and jealousy make their way into you and rule you. Man is in such an illusion that these six thieves who entered slyly into the house are being honored as its owners. Wake up! If you don't face these thieves they will plunder your treasure. Do not lose this great opportunity given to you.

#### 12. What are the obstacles faced by a *Sadhak*? How to overcome them?

Passions like anger, pride and others lower one down to the level of a mad person. At times it lowers one to the level of an animal. Therefore one must recognize the *Vijnana*, *Prajnana*, *Sujnana* present inside them, and turn them in the right direction and attain the highest level of bliss. Losing power and control over your senses is the cause for all kinds of difficulties, confusions, and disturbances. You let your senses go whichever way they please. Because of letting the senses go wild without control, one is unable to show proper discrimination. One is unable to think properly and calmly and hence drifts into wrong thoughts and wrong actions. Anger is like an intoxicant. It propels you from inside into wrong actions. It is the

root cause of all sins. It is a huge demon. Anger leads you to commit all other sins. We all know about *Sage Viswamitra*. All the merit he earned by *Tapas* (austerities) got wiped out with one bad bout of anger. One second of anger destroyed the merit earned in thousands of years of *Tapas*. Remove the layer of fog hindering you. Identify the things that are pulling you down and destroy them completely. Believe that you are *Atma swarupa*, *Nitya swarupa*, and *Ananda swarupa* (Eternal, blissful, form of Atma). Then every action (*karma*) will turn into a sacrifice (*Yajna*), and worship (*pooja*). Thus your ear, eye, tongue, foot will stop being traps to ruin you, instead they will become instruments of your redemption. Save yourself by transforming *Tamo Guna* (lethargic quality) into *Tapo Guna* (austerity). Open your heart and it will allow you to attain divine light (*param jyothi*).

#### 13. How to control mind Swami?

You cannot experience *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Existence – Consciousness – Bliss) as long as you are in *Avidya*, which means unawareness of spiritual knowledge will keep you in ignorance. *Saint Tukaram* was asked how to control the monkey mind which makes a man run after sensory pleasures. He replied, 'let the monkey mind run but you just stay silently where you are. Do not let the body follow the monkey mind. Tell that mind 'I will not give you the body as your servant', then mind gets under control and gets defeated.' Just the way there is a method to tear down a house, so also there is a method to tear down the complicated issue called mind.

#### 14. Does location have an impact on *Sadhana* (spiritual practice)?

Aspirant must always examine everything carefully. Wherever the aspirant spends his life, that location has an effect on him. I have told you once before about the peace one gets in holy places like *Mathura*, *Kasi* etc. Till *Ganges* reaches the ocean, it stays holy every inch of its way. Yet along its shores of *Hrisikesh*, *Haridwar*, *Kasi* there are places filled with special spiritual vibrations that help in purifying *sadhaks* at all levels of their *sadhana*. A *sadhak* seeking one-pointedness must always exercise care.

#### 15. What must one do to become a *Jnani* (enlightened soul)?

Yoga means eliminating the actions and reactions of mind (*Chitta Vritti Nirodha*). All waves and turbulences in the inner lake of consciousness must be

eliminated. Do not create any waves of anger or desires either on the surface or in the deep recesses of consciousness whose nature is peace and tranquility. This equal mindedness is the sign of *Jnana*. *Sadhana* is the medicine for all sources of restlessness. Discrimination (*Vivek*) and Contemplation (*Vichar*) is the prescribed diet. This means that we need to cleanse out all the impurities and non-virtues.

#### 16. What is Bhakti (devotion)?

After offering all of your desires and mind to God, yearning to obtain His Grace is *Bhakti* (devotion). One meaning of *Bhakti* is servitude; selfless service is the second meaning; and third meaning is friendship tinged with fear. Not separating from God is *Bhakti*. At any time, at any place, at any occasion, and in any surroundings, not even a little separation must occur. To describe *Bhakti* in one word is gratefulness. Without the wick of *Bhakti*, man's life called lamp will be unlit. You must gain good character. Good character (*Samskar*) means removal of bad habits, bad thoughts, and bad qualities; and improving good habits and good qualities. You must become good, it is not necessary to become great.

#### 17. What is the importance of confidence (vishwas) in human life?

A *Jiva* starts making a plan to build a house to live in. After deciding to build, it (*jiva*) erects the walls and thinks it did a great job and shows satisfaction looking at it. But feeling satisfied looking at the walls is a waste if there is no roof irrespective of how much one builds, is it not? You built the walls with expensive marble construction. That is you built the walls called values that are much needed for life but if you forget to cover it with the roof called confidence, then that house is not fit to live in, is it not? Confidence gives the ability to live in it. Nearness to God is this confidence. There are many attractions to divert you. When darkness is covering up your mind, you must welcome any small light that can illumine the way for you to walk. Today God is providing you this ability out of great love. You must be fully ready to receive it.

#### 18. How to get mind highly energized (*Uthejam*), Swami?

Uthejam means performing what you can do with unbounded enthusiasm and energy. This state can sweet-talk your mind to taste a little bit of the good habits and say to it "this is very delicious, try it once and you will understand its power, it can pulverize even huge mountains, why do you want to refuse such

good food? If you listen to what I say, both you and I will be better-of." With this sweet-talk, your mind will be delighted like a small child; gets ready to do whatever you wish; enthusiastically takes you onto the road called *sadhana* and lodges you in the vehicle called permanent happiness. Once you board the right vehicle then it is the duty of the vehicle to get you to your destination on time. But to attain anything, effort and perseverance is key. Even poison filled cobra forgets everything and starts dancing to snake charmer's tune. Likewise, if you feed your mind with name chanting softly, gently and delightfully, it will listen first and then experience peace followed by little ecstasy. In the end you will see your chosen form dancing inside you meaning your heart will get the experience of climbing the peaks of joy and bliss. During this time the mind watches all of it, gets happy, becomes energetic (*Uthejam*) and makes 'you' (*Jiva*) energized and leads you to higher journey.

#### 19. Swami, how must a Sadhak (aspirant) conduct his spiritual journey?

Remember one thing. You decided to raise a sapling. In order for it to grow healthy, you have to follow certain safety measures. When the sapling is small, you put a fence around it so that animals don't graze it. Once it grows a bit you put in a support stick so that the plant grows erect. You also tie it with a string so that it crawls up with the string support. When branches from other plants interfere, you prune them so that it continues its crawl. Likewise is the state and journey of a Jivi (individual). Therefore to grow well Guru's guidance is necessary. After that the protection of the Jivi from the six evil qualities (ari shadvargas) is the responsibility of the Guru, similar to protection from grazing animals. That is, the sapling you chose to plant in the ground is the method and type of sadhana you chose to practice. Just the way the sapling sprouts out of ground, your sadhana will start as a small sprout inside you and grows due to practice. Guru monitors, which is like fence around it, and provides assistance for the sapling to grow healthy. The sadhana you do by turning inward makes your connection with me stronger, creates a path between you and me, like the string, to fulfill your desire to reach me. As you climb upward using this string, you will encounter, on and off, the enemies that are still hidden inside you. As soon as these enemies sprout, prune them using your discriminating intellect (Buddhi). The plant will grow upward without any obstacles reaching the state of Sat-Chit-Anand and realizes that everything is Atma. The Jivi who realizes this will enjoy constant happiness and experiences bliss absolute (Brahm-ananda).

#### 20. How to control senses, Swami?

Earlier the senses are excited, earlier they get tired. Then you need to tell senses 'see you acted as you wished, is there any happiness in it? Why do you need to fight for something that is not there? This body has come to give sufficient happiness to lead a pure life. I am not going to let you do the activities you are planning to do which will result in ruining this body. From this moment you will have to listen to what I say'. This is how you need to get senses into your control.

#### 21. What must one do to fulfill higher ideals (aasayam)?

You have gone into a forest to obtain a log. To avoid procuring it illegally, you get permission from the forest officer. That officer gets pleased because you sought permission instead of stealing it. Hence he shows you a tree and asks you to cut and take it. He says 'this is a good tree, useful, and will last you a long time'. Over and above, he provides an axe to use for cutting.

You requested the officer; got his permission; out of pity he selected a tree for you; hence without wasting time you must make the effort to obtain the life you sought. The spiritual life you seek is the tree. The spiritual *sadhana* I prescribe to you is the axe I gave you. Start cutting the tree. If you don't start and just keep watching, will the axe go strike the tree on its own? You need to make a resolve (*sankalpa*) to hold the axe in your hands, go near the tree, and decide to strike it. All these need to come together only then your resolve would succeed, isn't it?

#### 22. How to break out of attachment (*Moha*)?

Sense of possession (mamakar) is like a big bush. There are many cruel animals hiding in the bush waiting for you to put your hand in it so that they can bite. One should not become victim to this bite called attachment. One should not submit to this attachment called mamakar. To avoid becoming the target of these cruel animals in the bush means, using the subtle faculty of detachment (Vairagya) start removing this bondage bit by bit, then the cruel animals hiding in the bush will realize that it is not safe for them, hence they will search and migrate to another bush. Therefore Vairagya (detachment) is the only Sadhana (spiritual discipline) that will bring you out safely from the strong chains of attachment. Only a Guru can show the way to acquire this spiritual discipline (Sadhana).

23. What are the biggest enemies that a *Sadhak* (aspirant) encounters? What are their impacts?

First and Foremost, there are three great enemies that are lurking.

- 1) Desire
- 2) Anger
- 3) Egoism (Abhimaan).

This egoism (*Abhimaan*) is never alone by itself. It keeps its friend Anger right next to it. One interesting point to note, Anger is the best in class among the six inner enemies (*Ari Shadvargas*). Because this Anger has promised the other 5 *Ari Shadvargas* that it will help them at any time under all circumstances and situations. That is why it stays right next to each of them and is always ready to help.

Desire is a fascinating thing. Once one gives in to what it asks for, then there is no stopping as to what it can ask. It does not have any sense as to whether it is something that one can ask for or not? Instead without any appropriateness it keeps on saying 'I want it, want it, and want it' and that is all it does. If its work is not done, then it calls on its friend (Anger) right next to it and asks for its help. This friend who already has a kind heart says 'You really don't have to ask me for help. In general I render help without asking. Now that you are asking me, what kind of a friend would I be if I don't render help to you' and gets ready to express its love profusely.

Egoism (*Abhimaan*) is a play thing that keeps you in the play all the time because it creates a state in you where you start believing what is impermanent as permanent. In the end you will forget what is illusion and start believing what is around you as permanent. You must get out of its illusory power (*Maya*). You must say to it every instant 'You are impermanent. Do not play around with me. I found out what is permanent. The one who is permanent does not expect anything from me. You are around only for a short time, why do you expect and desire in so many ways? You might gain from these desires but I do not. Why should I do things that have no gain and face difficulties due to it?' Ask this question, wait and see what the reply is. These thieves will preach *Adharma* saying 'You might not gain from it but I do. Therefore I will take shelter in you and will do my work. I need shelter hence I am in you to do my work. It is your *Dharma* to honor those who take your

shelter' and eventually drive you to a suicidal state. Hence you must completely destroy these thieves. Recognize your real permanent *Self*. Once we recognize these enemies we need to keep a distance from them. Transient pleasures that last a few moments can never give bliss.

#### 24. What are the benefits of *Sadhana*?

Desire and Anger, Pride and Attachment (*Ahamkar, Mamakaram*) are inseparable pairs. These have to be destroyed together in pairs. If you destroy one, then the other will bring it back to life by donating life force (*Prana bhiksha*) to it. Hence it is best to destroy them together. One way or other if one does not work hard, one cannot get the result or benefit. Yet one must make the effort to let go of that result. When one begins to do *Tapas* (penance) for God, he would realize after the direct experience (*Atma Sakshatkar*) that he and God are one. Goal and result of *Sadhana* is direct experience (*Sakshatkar*). This *Sadhana* takes one to develop disinterest and detachment (*Virakti, Vairagya*). With the good intention of using these two to gain the direct experience (*Sakshatkar*), it is right time for you to take this to be a *Yajna* (spiritual effort) to bring needed order into your life. This effort is to create turmoil deep inside you and in that depth, find the one residing in there. Just the way the geologists examine to find the location and amount of water underground, similarly it is God's work to find the deep down buried thoughts produced due to the confluence of soul and body and drive them out.

#### 25. What is the effect of qualities (*Gunas*) on man?

In an Exam or a Test the score one gets is directly related to the responses or answers one writes, neither less nor more. Sometimes you might get a score of 50 or 60 while at another time you might get a very poor score. In case one gets a score short of passing grade by 2 or 3 points, then the examiner might give you those 2-3 points as grace and help you pass the exam. This is true in *Sadhana* also. Less progress in *Sadhana* is bad like failing to make the grade. If there is good progress *Grace* will compliment you and take you forward. In order to receive the desired result you need to have balance in the three qualities (*Gunas – Sathwa, Rajas, and Tamas*). These three *Gunas* are binding. Humans are tied by them like a cow whose front feet, back feet, and its neck and horns are tied down. How can the poor cow move if it is tied down like that? *Sathwa Guna* is like a gold rope, *Rajo Guna* is like brass rope, and *Tamo Guna* is like iron rope. Although there is

difference in monetary value of each of the 3 ropes, yet each of them tightly tie down the individual. Therefore you must not get tied down by any of the 3 *Gunas*.

## 26. With respect to *Sadhana* what is the prominence of faith and confidence, Swami?

Faith and Confidence are the two qualities that every human must possess. If you let go of these two then it is like a journey not knowing which way one is going. If you have a lot of faith in the goal you seek, then confidence will help you reach that objective. That is why in the spiritual field faith and confidence are like two eyes. If God says a thing or gives a direction then one must follow it with infinite Faith. Why did He say it? Why should one do it? What does one gain from it? How much can we accomplish? If one wastes time in these kinds of questions, then the time given by God gets used up. Invariably you have to take another birth. If one does not have Faith in that life also then history will repeat itself. Like this no matter how many lives you take if one does not have Faith and Confidence then one cannot escape birth and death cycle (*punarapi jananam* – *punarpi maranam*).

#### 27. What is the need of divine grace to earn *Jnana*?

Recognize the reason why you have been given this transient body, and the organs given for body's use. They are not given for the outburst of Ari Shadvargas six bad qualities (kama (desire), krodha (anger), moha (attachment), lobha (greed), mada (pride), matsarya (jealousy). They are to be used just the way they were used when you were a little child. If you are using them for other purposes then your Ajnana is on the rise. Instead you must increase your Jnana. In order for this *Jnana* to increase you have to bathe in the ocean of Divine Grace. You stepped into the water at the shore in order to enter into this ocean. You might think it is enough to get your feet wet because you are afraid of drowning or due to other reasons and hence you sit by the shore safely and start bathing. Along with the water the sand on the shore will get on your body and will irk you. You will lose the cleanliness that you already had and get irritated. The reason for this is lack of faith in your own self. Once you gain strong faith then you can go a little bit farther into the ocean and you will be able to safely take the bath without the irksome sand getting on to you. You can relax. You can get rid of the attachments and bondages and enjoy the equanimity.

#### 28. What would a *Sadhak* learn in the company of the holy (*sat purush*)?

Satsang (company of good and holy) helps you to get together with people whose character is similar to yours. It lights up the light that is inside you and makes you find what you are searching for. Satsang is to meet the Sat in the Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) that you utter while singing the glory of God. The basis for this whole creation is Existence which is permanent and that is what is called Sat. The mind that does not know the light called Permanent Existence (Sathyam, Sat) that is in you, then whatever Sathyam you recognize you need to stay with it and contemplate on it. By staying with that Sathyam, the light in you lights up as an unceasing light source giving rise to illumination. Darkness will leave. When man is born as Ajnani and wants to become a Jnani, listening to Satpurush (holy men), following their advice, and experiencing their touch will turn them into *Inanis* and *Param Hamsas* (highly ascended masters). You must have complete surrender (Saranagati) to your Guru. In this path of Saranagati the big obstacles are Ego/Pride and Attachment (Ahamkar, Mamakaram). Eon after eon (Yuga after Yuga) they came with you, took deep roots and got entwined into your individuality. One must use the instruments of discrimination (viveka) and detachment (vairagya) not only to remove them by cutting the ties, but by totally uprooting them. Every day you must grow not only physically but spiritually. Spiritual progress without Karma (action) is very difficult. Even Jnani has to do Karmas. But just like a swan that comes out of the water and by merely swapping its wings, gets its wings and feathers as dry as before it entered the water, similarly Karmas do not have any effect on *Jnani*. They do Karmas without Ego and Desire. Their nature is to desire social welfare, and engulf themselves in Karmas for societal benefit. Hence they are unaffected by anything in the world.

#### 29. What is the goal of austerity (*Yajna*) called *Sadhana* (spiritual effort)?

The one who conquers their senses is *Rudra* (symbolically a form of Lord Shiva). The goal of *Sadhana* is to control the senses and emerge as *Rudra*. No matter what, changing from humanness to Godliness is the goal of all internal spiritual effort (*Antarik Yajna*). All the *Yajnas* and *Yagas* are performed to gain sense control. When animal qualities are burned up in the *Yajna* as offerings (*samidhilu*) into the fire, then you are left with only good qualities (*Sadgunas*) giving you a blissful experience, and leaves you in a enchanting blissful state. This

blissful enchantment is divinity. One can only experience this blissful enchanting divinity but cannot be shown or explained.

#### 31. What things must a *Sadhak* be careful of?

You must do *Sadhana* (spiritual practices) under the direction of a capable person who knows your inclinations and your health. Over enthusiasm and lack of discipline must be shunned. If *viveka* (discrimination) is lacking, *Sadhana* gets boring. If the temperature increases beyond limits the brick inside the furnace gets ruined. If the bleach is added disproportionately it ruins all the clothes in the wash load. When your conversation with neighbors gets longer, what is cooking on the stove gets overdone. It is very important for a *Sadhak* to be awake, alert, careful, and bright. Many a time *Yoga* turns into *Roga* (sickness) due to lack of Self enquiry.

#### 30. How do we attain peace, bliss, and love, Swami?

Don't go astray based on what you see. What you cannot see with your eyes is even greater (*visishtamu*). Man has inside him the entire happiness and bliss as well as all the methods and tools for bringing it out. But he is caught in terrible ignorance of not knowing what is inside him. In order to get hold of the inner spring of peace and bliss, first thing that needs to go is the desire to satisfy sense pleasures. You are not making any effort towards that. There is no peace, or love, or truth in home, society, race, and the world. You are living in a competitive world filled with desires, lust, passions, anger, and strife. Even twins are on different paths. Real peace, love, and truth can be had only when we have God as the goal and guide. Ceaseless name chanting is a sign of *Saranagati* (surrender) and that is enough. Ceaseless awareness of *Soham* is called unbroken *Hamsa Japa*. It provides release from suffering, fear, and trouble. If mind goes then there is no more attachment. *Moha Kshaya* is *Moksha* (liberation is destruction of attachment.)

#### 32. What is needed for leading a life of higher ideals (yogya maina jivanam)?

Spiritual progress and bliss are dependent on effort saturated with discipline. It comes from severe, difficult effort and not through comfortable and easy methods. When one has regulated habits, one pointed mind, forgoes the sense pleasures, and faith in *Atma* then life becomes worth living. One who does not know the path cannot reach the goal. One who does not have the goal cannot pick the path and

cannot walk on it. Before you begin your journey you must have right understanding of the goal and the path.

- 33. Swami, what is the difference between one person and the next?

  There is a lot of variation among people. In general there are four types.
- First type is one who is tired of the physical ailments and difficulties. He is called *Arthi*.
- Second type is the one who is longing for prosperity, power, money, self-interest, and progeny. He is called *Artharthi*.
- Third type is one who is deeply longing for knowledge of the Self (*Atma Jnana*). He spends his time reading religious scriptures and other holy literature. All the time he is moving about with spiritual aspirants, adopts what is useful to him, and moves forward in his *Sadhana*. He is called *Jignasu* (keen seeker).
- Fourth one is *Jnani*. He is immersed in the principle of *Brahman* (*Brahma Thathwam*).
- 34. Swami, we are fortunate to receive your grace.

If you have confidence (*vishwas*) I will take on all of your tendencies (*samskars*) onto my body and will save you by destroying your *karma*. The fruit of God's grace depends on the feelings of the devotee. Swami's real form is beyond the entire demi Gods and deities (*sakala devatatita*), it is the great principle (*Maha Thathwam*) that is the beyond the forms of all demi Gods. Blessed are those who could get my sight, touch, and speech.

35. What must we do to have you reside in our hearts?

If your heart is cleansed with the water of love, and detergent of prayer and repentance, stains called desires could get removed. Then I will fill that heart with my Grace.

36. Are birth and death unavoidable for *Jivi*, Swami?

All that is being told to you in detail is closely related to the birth and death cycle. One who has not given room in their life for spiritual transformation falls

into the birth and death cycle, again and again. In this process they will have to face many difficulties. In order not to get stuck in it, one has to surrender (*Sharanagati*) to me no matter who it is. They need to have 100% confidence in me. That is enough and I will take the responsibility of everything else.

### 37. Swami, they say we must lose body attachment, instead develop attachment to *Atma*?

Certainly. Only they have the *Atma-drishti* (awareness of *Atma*) who understands that body is transient and mind is a restless monkey. The one who constantly has *Atma-drishti* (awareness of *Atma*) in his heart is liberated. Body is like a water bubble. Knowing that it is transient, yet you are leading a life relying on it. As long as you have body attachment, you have to suffer lifelong with the pairs of loss-gain, happiness-sorrow, and sin-virtue. Only indweller of the body is permanent. They call that '*Atma*'. The name of your body is given by your parents. Without name it is difficult to recognize a form. 'Visalakshi' name is a sign of your body. 'Sathya Sai Baba' name proves this body. Since you are wearing this transient body and living in this external world, hence you need to follow some of these external gross worldly attributes. But all these are created by your vision. What you cannot see is the Truth (*Sathyam*). That is *Atma*. Therefore if someone asks you who you are, your reply ought to be 'I am *Atma*'.

#### 38. What does *Jnana* mean, Swami?

Human being's desires become mind. Speech comes from this mind. Bad feelings, bad ideas, and bad thoughts are occurring due to these desires. Why did God give the eyes? To see good and not to see bad. Do you know for what ears are given? Hear good things. Why mouth is given? Speak good things. Sanctify every organ given to you. In this manner the blessed body given to you should be offered back to God and not to others. He gives you what all you need. But you have to keep only God in your mind. Anywhere you see is God. Sky is God, Earth is God, and Humanity is God. God is present in all. God is always present in your breath in the sound of AUM. When you realize this principle it becomes real *Jnana*.

39. Swami, does God bestow his grace on devotees and *Sadhaks* (spiritual aspirants)? How to obtain God's grace?

Everyone is a spiritual aspirant! Never be careless to Guru's commands. Do not move around with conceit. Behave with humility and obedience. Every *Sadhak* can gain purity only when good deeds (*Sat-karmas*) are done. Purity will beget realization, *Jnana* (*Jnana Siddhi*). Whenever one finds time follow at least one of the nine steps of devotion – *Sravanam* (listening), *keerthanam* (singing the glory of God), *Vishnu smaranam* (name chanting, *japa*), *pada sevanam* (serving God's feet, serving mankind), *Archanam* (propitiating God through rites and rituals), *vandanam* (seeing and revering everything as God), *Dasyam* (serving Lord as a servant does to his master), *sakhyam* (seeing the Lord as a friend, philosopher, and guide), *Atma Nivedanam* (total surrender to God). If you follow anyone of them you will get God's grace. God will get close to you and becomes your treasure.

Sage Valmiki (wrote Ramayan), Kuchela (destitute childhood friend of Lord Krishna), Dhruv (child raised to the position of pole star, sss 08), Prahlada (invoked the man-lion Narasimha Avatar) and others are examples for this. Sabari had no capabilities, yet she listened with concentration to what sages were teaching sitting under the trees while surviving on roots and tubers, transformed all her activities into austerities (Tapas). When you do your activities with feeling of dedication to God then you will not do wrong at all. Therefore God's grace can be earned without fail when we do all activities with the feeling to please God; do Seva (service) to Guru; be obedient to Guru; and be in Guru's company (being close to him).

Sage *Vyasa* (who codified *Vedas*) had many disciples who would come to him for study of *Vedas* (*Veda adhyayan*). First disciple was *Vaisham-payana*. He followed *Guru's* commands with devotion, faith, humility, and obedience and made his life worthwhile. *Vidya* (Education with values) is that which teaches *Sadgunas* (good qualities), *Sadbuddhi* (good intellect), *Sathya Nirati* (steadfast in truth), *Bhakti* (devotion), *Krama Shikshana* (discipline), and *Kartavya Palana* (carrying out of duties). The one who learns such *Vidya*, which is worth learning, is a student. In this manner *Vaisham-payana* learned from his *Guru* and established a *Guru Kula*. *Guru Kula* means *Guru's* home, a residence for disciples. Whatever *Guru* ate he used to provide the same to his disciples as *Prasadam* (sanctified food). They used to spend day and night with the *Guru*. That is, due to their feeling and devotion towards their *Guru* their education was noble, and with unwavering devotion and faith they gained a place in God's heart.

#### 40. Swami, among the paths of *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jnana* which is superior?

When both God and body work to earn, then that earning needs to be shared by both. But God is not desirous or greedy for wealth. In the name of *Naivedya* (food offering to God) one breaks a coconut, after offering they would negotiate with God saying half the coconut is their share as *Prasad* (blessed food). This character trait belongs to man but not to God. God only gives but does not take. He wishes for love and devotion only. Then the question is who should be given the share that belongs to God. In this world all are God's children. Many among them lead a life in dire poverty. Hence if the share of the earning that belongs to him is given to these poor children in some form or other, he feels happy. Serving the poor is the best way to earn God's grace.

In this manner when human effort, also known as *Dharma*, is accompanied with God's grace then I declare that victory is certain. The path of *Karma* is putting in human effort and following *Dharma*. The way to obtain God's grace is the path of devotion (*Bhakti*). Meeting of these two, *Bhakti* and *Karma*, is *Jnana*. Therefore when daily activities (*Karmas*) are performed with *Dharmic* intellect, in a God pleasing manner, and the results of those *Karmas* are offered to God accompanied with the feeling of oneness 'I am not the body, I am Atma' is *Jnana*. Real victory is to acquire this *Jnana*. In the bliss of this victory the charioteer is *Sathya* and *Dharma* is the bridge (*Sarathi*, *Varadhi*).

#### 41. When does body (*Deha*) transform beautifully into a temple (*Devalaya*)?

Just by having a body, it does not become a temple. It needs to be recognized that when the body is joined with devotion, one experiences the temple in it which makes their life worthwhile. How so? One takes a bath for cleanliness. Similarly when something is done with intellect joined with God feeling, it is considered *Abhisekam* (ritual of giving bath to the idol) and that water (*shudhodakam*) is taken with reverence after touching it to one's eyes. Then the water brought from anywhere will become holy like the water of river *Ganges*. No matter what, the prominence and importance in a ritual is the holy feeling with which one performs the activities and not for the material things used in the ritual. Therefore devotion accompanied with humility and reverence gives the experience of the body as a temple.

#### 42. Swami, why is Pride (ahambhava) considered bad?

In this world there are some who do not recognize the person in front of them as human. On top of that, out of illusion they think they are dignified, great and express their pride. Actually that conceit is the characteristic of Pride (ahambhava). That leads to the downfall of man. You see many examples in history where great men and warriors got ruined due to this quality of Pride. On the contrary there are many who received accolades from masses as great men by adopting humility, respectfulness, and graciousness. Discrimination (Vivek) is the quality of the humble. It should not be taken as a weakness. Although God like, Jesus Christ never claimed he is equivalent to God. In the form of man he appeared and moved about as a servant of God. When he was crucified he welcomed death with humility. One who is arrogant always runs the danger of insult and ridicule. But one who has humility earns respect. It is enough if one knows this.

#### 43.Q. Swami, who is considered wise (Viveki)?

- A. When the confluence of time, action (*karma*), and cause occur then one gets into a state of non-attainment. A discriminating man recognizes and hence gains from it. This person is called wise (*Viveki*).
- Q. What is the difference between *Avadhuta* and *Brahman* (God)?
- A. It is the *experience* of an *Avadhuta* that they are *Brahman* (God) and that *Brahman* (God) is everything (*sarvasvamu*). But my *state* is that I am *Brahman* (God) and I am everything.
- Q. Swami, I could not understand the secret in this minor difference.
- A. Avadhuta is liberated from the entire worldly attachments and his consciousness is merged in me experiencing the state of divine bliss (Brahmananda). He has no individuality. Since there is no individuality, there is no resolve (Sankalpa). I am there in the great resolve (Maha Sankalpa) and in the entire energy (Maha Shakti) of the creation. I am also there in the forms of Maya Shakti called Jivas (individualized souls). The Avadhuta who is immersed in me has to take rebirth if I order him to. My form is Sat-Chit-Ananda (existence, consciousness, bliss) enjoined with resolve (Sankalpa). While Avadhuta's form is Sat-Chit-Ananda (existence, consciousness, bliss) but their resolve is destroyed.

- Q. Once seeds are fried they do not sprout anymore. After attaining *Brahma Inana* they themselves are *Brahman* (God), then how is their rebirth possible?
- A. It is the *dharma* of the Nature (*Srushti Dharma*) that once seeds are fried they do not sprout again. To make those fried seeds to sprout again is the power and capacity of the Creator. Actually my *Avatar* took place to demonstrate the evidence of Truth (*Sathya Nirupana*).

#### 44. Who is considered a *Yogi*, Swami?

Yogis are those fortunate ones who have unquestionably understood who I am and what my nature is. They completely understand that human birth is granted so that it can rise up to my state. Yogis know that unlike animals only humans can rise to my level. They rightly understand where to reach after death, and they do reach there. In the fire of Jnana they burn up unnecessary things and hence they attain their purpose. Each organ in your body is affected by a presiding deity for that organ. When a Yogi goes into a state of transcendence (samadhi) and has the experience of Atma (Atma Sakshatkar) the 16 aspects merge into their elements (Bhutas). Yogi's energies in their physical body merge in the elements in the deep recesses of the universe.

45. Swami, it is said that till *Aham* (Ego) is destroyed there is no liberation. What is the state of a *Yogi*?

Actions (*Karmas*) are performed due to the inspiration of *Aham* (Ego). *Aham* is light of consciousness bound by the rules and regulations of mind and intellect. The Yogi who has *Atma Sakshatkar* does not have previous lives *Karma phala* (results of actions) anymore. Till the Ego's activities are destroyed *Atma Sakshatkar* does not happen. Hence when the *Yogi* has *Atma Sakshatkar*, *Karmas*, their fruits (results), hub of the Ego and its illusory activities (*Maya Jaal*) are all absorbed in the eternal God (*Paramatma*). Yogi gets immersed in *Paramatma* and loses his individuality. *Paramatma* is of the form of Energy and Self. When *Karmas* and its ensuing results (fruits) wipe out, *Yogi* loses awareness of his body and stays in the state of Godhood. *Paramatma* could exhibit his divine miracles (*leelas*) through the *Yogi* who is in this *Siddha Avastha* (state of super natural powers).

#### 46. Swami, if one has faith can one attain anything?

The state of Jivi's mind is a laughable matter. On one side they state that God is the root cause for everything. On the other side, they express their inability to perform the role assigned to them by God. Does this mean they were the doers? Are they the doers in future? Yet he states that he has faith. If one has full faith one can walk with closed eyes. Humans make all kind of plans in the present for the things they want to accomplish a year from now. What is the reason? They have faith that they will live long. Yet they know death is not in their hands. It is because the faith is so strong that they make detailed firm plans for the future. When they make such detailed plans for petty worldly things, is a plan not needed to know things that are useful and beneficial? Because you imagined it to be big, what you want to accomplish looks like a mountain. It gives thoughts that you cannot tackle therefore it becomes a mountain. You keep thinking about how to climb it? Hence what must you do? If you can use your discrimination (viveka) you would know that you can climb the mountain very easily by turning into a mouse. The reason you are imagining an easy task to be insurmountable is due to not utilizing the faith you have.

#### 47. Swami, it seems very difficult for us humans to become *Madhava* (God)?

What is in this world which is not difficult? Listen, when you want something bad enough then you do not care about the difficulties encountered. You do not stop your effort no matter how many obstacles come in your way. For worldly comforts many impossible tasks have been accomplished by so many of them that you and I are aware of? But when it comes to God many of them quit even before making the effort. If only people take out a few minutes and observe me keenly, they will recognize that every second of my life is an evidence of 'my life is my message'. But no one really does that. When man's life is like my life then he will easily merge in me.

#### 48. Swami, what are faith and confidence (Shradha, Vishwas)?

For man to progress it is important to have faith (*Shradha*) along with solid confidence (*Vishwas*). *Shradha* means complete faith along with agreement. Confidence (*Vishwas*) is gained through experience. No matter what we seek, we need to be able to live with confidence as the basis. We must continually have the

confidence that in time of need help will arrive. Along with confidence if we have a sense of security then it becomes Self-confidence (*Atma Vishwas*).

49. Swami, what is the relationship between *Shakti* (power, energy) and *Jnana* (wisdom)?

Jnana (knowledge) without Energy (Shakti) leads to apathy. Energy (Shakti) without Jnana (knowledge) is blind and leads to catastrophe. Therefore with Jnana (knowledge) one must get freed from the bondages of the Prakriti (Nature, world). After that, one must earn liberation through the grace of Shakti (Energy). Shakti must receive approval from Jnana (knowledge). Consciousness is called Purusha (male principle). That which does karma (action) is called Prakriti (Nature).

#### 50. How to obtain God's grace?

To obtain God's grace one must have complete devotion and confidence in God. Not only that, one must engage in activities that are pleasing to God. But human nature is as such that in any work they do only self interest and selfishness are considered, but neglects to think about the one who actually makes it happen. Any work one does, there has to be some 'intelligence' (*Prajna*). There is no result without '*Prajna*'. That *Prajna* is *Brahman* (formless God). What you understand as human effort is actually '*Daiva Prajna*' (God's intelligence). It happens due to God's inspiration. Man gets egoistic thinking that he is doing everything. But he is unable to recognize the truth that God is using him as an instrument in accomplishing everything. He is unable to understand this. One can get God's grace if they understand this.

- 51.Q Is it possible to know you? Swami, can we know who you are?
- A. I am I. I am also the universal mother and father form who is pervading each and every atom in this creation, which is made up of the five elements (*Pancha Bhutas* earth, water, fire, air, space). I am the form of Guru for the entire creation.
- Q. Therefore you do not have a form or attributes (qualities or *gunas*). Is that it?
- A. To be without form is a form by itself. To be without attributes (*gunas*) is an attribute in itself. For form formless (*sakara nirakara*) and attribute –

attribute-less (saguna - nirguna), the basis for both is I and hence beyond all of them (Atheetha).

## 52. If all is you, why do individuals (*Jivis*) go through ups and downs?

In you, there is both you and I. You who is inside you is *jivi* (individual). I, who is inside you is *Paramatma* (God, Cosmic soul, SELF). As long as you have doer ship, you cannot be I. Till then you will have the dualities of life – happy and sad, loss and gain, sin and merit – and cannot come out of it. When the 'you' inside you diminishes the 'I' inside you expands, only then you will get closer to me. As you get closer to me your responsibilities keep disappearing. When you become my responsibility, you attain auspiciousness.

#### 53. Is liberation possible only for those who are in oneness (*Adwaitha*), Swami?

If you and I are apart, there is no loss in that. When your ego (ahamkar) is destroyed and yet both of us stay in state of duality (Dwaitha), it will still be auspicious. When you know that everything is happening due to my grace and you are only a temporary phenomenon then you can stay in the state of bliss (Ananda Stithi). End of attachment (Moha+kshaya) is liberation (Moksha). Therefore even in duality (Dwaitha) liberation (Moha) is entirely achievable. When you are in a state of extreme nearness to me, I reveal myself through you. When all of my powers reveal through you and your ego is wiped out, then the attachment in you is destroyed. In this excellent Adwaitha state you will attain bliss. There is no attachment hence this is also liberation. When the ego in you is obliterated and doer ship is completely destroyed, there is no more 'you' in you but only 'I' is left over. Therefore in Adwaitha state also one can get liberation. Whether you are in duality (Dwaitha) or in qualified monism (vishisht-adwaitha) or in monism (Adwaitha), the state of bliss (Brahmananda) is one. One cannot reach it by word or by mind but only through experience.

## 54. Swami, is commitment a must have for Sadhaks?

To cross the flood of ceaseless birth and death cycle, one greatly needs the bridge of commitment. It should be strong and safe. If not the rising waves will drag you into the ocean, filled with sharks called desire and anger. If one misses even one of the three – mind (*Manasik*) austerity, speech (*Vachak*) austerity, and body (*Kayak*) austerity – then the light of the *Atma* will not shine. One needs all

the three – wick, oil, and lamp holder for a light. Body is the lamp holder, mind is the oil, and tongue is the wick. All three need to be in good condition.

#### 55. What is the austerity of the body (*kayak tapas*), Swami?

Kayak tapas is when it uses the power and cleverness of the mind for doing – selfless service to others, praying to God, singing the glory of God, visiting the places where God is worshipped with many different names, controlling the senses and avoiding paths of danger, and walking in the path shown by God. Do selfless service to people who are sick, and to orphans. Do useful work like following the moral regulations.

#### 56. What is austerity of speech (*Vachak tapas*)?

Excessive speech must be avoided. Do not use wasteful statements. Do not talk behind the back of others or criticize or blame them. Never talk harshly. Speak softly and sweetly. Always chant the name of God in your mind. Any man's greatness is dependent on his character and its refinement. It does not depend on his power, wealth, and position. Therefore make effort to first improve your good character and good qualities.

## 57. Swami, does one do Sadhana for inner purity (antar shuddhi)?

Yes. Your first goal should be inner purity (antar shuddhi). The cup you drink out of, which side do you clean more, inner or outer? You have good vegetables, tamarind juice, peppers, salt etc. The cook might know how to cook well and you might also have a nice cooking range. But the copper vessel you cook in is not coated with protective coating, then the sambar (Indian soup) you cook will become dangerous due to copper poisoning and becomes inedible. It will be poisonous if consumed. Good actions and good behavior (Satkarma, Sadachar) will insulate the copper (heart) from contact with sambar (thoughts, emotions etc) and protect it. Gayatri sandhya vandan when done three times a day (dawn, dusk, and noon) acts as a protective coating to your heart where strong emotions, thoughts, impulses and impressions are cooked. The driver of an Elephant (mahout) uses a hook to gain control and makes it perform many things in a circus ring, likewise your Sadhana will subdue all of your tendencies. Therefore do not lose this great opportunity.

58. One who is centered on God is a contented *Yogi*, one who is delighting in sense pleasures is a *Bhogi*, and the one who is of poor health is called a *Rogi*. How is that Swami?

In order to attain the four human goals of *Dharma* (righteous duty), *Artha* (prosperity), *Kama* (desire), *Moksha* (liberation), first and foremost need is a healthy mind and a healthy body. *Rogam* (disease) is a feeling of not well (*asukam*). This is a mental and physical state that arises out of lack of self-control, and equanimity. This occurs due to two reasons – bad food and bad thoughts. It is better and wise to prevent an illness than to run after them with medications after it already occurred or gone out of control. That is why they say the one who is centered on God is a contented *Yogi*, one who is delighting in the sense pleasures is a *Bhogi*, and the one who is of poor health is called a *Rogi*.

- 59.Q. Swami, what kind of *sadhana* do *yogis* perform by 'binding the six chakras'?
- A. Yogis rotate their life force (*prana shakti*) up and down the six chakras *Ajna* (third eye location), *Vishuddha* (behind adam's apple), *Anahata* (middle of chest), *Manipura* (navel region), *Svadhishthana* (above genital region), and *Muladhara* (at the base of spine). The time it takes to do one up and down procedure (*Kriya*) is equivalent to one year's worth of spiritual growth occurring naturally.
- Q. A *Yogi* can do this based on his *sankalpa* (resolve)?
- A. Yes he can do that.
- Q. So can he do this to others who are related to him?
- A. No. Contemplate on the arrival of *Avatars* (incarnations of God). God and Yogis arrive to make evident their real nature and purpose of incarnation, and at the same time make people get thoughts in their mind in accordance with their *Prarabdha karma* and reap the ensuing results.
- Q. So the (*Jivis*) individuals are born to reap the results of their *karma*. Then what is the inner meaning of *Yogis* and God taking birth also?
- A. *Jivis* karma is *Prarabdha karma*. They take birth to experience the fruits (results) of this *karma* which is an accepted experiential fact. Then why is

God taking birth? So that he can move around with these *Jivis* as a contemporary to elevate their spiritual state by: help them understand the way of life they need to adopt to reduce the burden of their *karma*; tell them that they have not come for themselves but for their body which came to fulfill its *karma*; demonstrate to them by using his own body for noble deeds, noble thoughts, and noble feelings so that they can see and emulate. They (God and *Yogis*) arrive on Earth wearing a body to alter the *Jivis* spiritual state and assist them on higher journey while helping them reduce the burden of their *karma*.

#### 60. What is it that man must let go? And what is it that he must attain?

Man must let go his body consciousness and must attain God (*para brahmam*). What we let go is not who we are. What is not possible to let go and not possible to change, that eternal truth is your real form. They call it *Atma*. That *Atma* is *Paramatma* (God). Nobody is capable of letting it go. Leaving body is like leaving one house and going to another. Birth and death are body related and not *Atma* related.

# 61. Swami, I think pollution in the environment is ruining the humans. Please tell us more about it.

Name chanting (Nama Smarana) prevents pollution (kalushyam) and cleanses the environment. Hence when every person chants God's name wholeheartedly in the morning, and recognizes the God residing in their heart, then where would the pollution come from? Chanting the AUM (sound form of God) in Brahma muhurta is healthy, pleasant and beneficial. By chanting the name again and again, you are not only happy yourself but spreading happiness to others too. This will generate good feelings and good thoughts in you every day, and if you begin the day with them you can stay happy and enthusiastic. You will attain self satisfaction. If a few of you get together and conduct Satsang you will be able to learn and know many things. Why did we get this life? What is its goal? Once in a while if people did a little bit of this enquiry, humans would not have ended up into this state of degradation. When these enquiries are conducted once in a while, one would know the meaning of 'Isa vasyam idam sarvam' (God is pervading everything). One would understand that the Atma in them is the same as in others.

One can experience 'eko vasi sarva bhuta antaratma' (the same God is in every one). This will help in stopping the downfall of human race.

- Q. Then spiritual transformation must occur now, isn't it Swami?
- A. It has to happen. Today in the world under the name of religions there is no end to the quarrels, riots, violence, and atrocities. It is due to man not understanding things properly which is the root cause of this era of destruction. Religion, Mind, Man have to be restored into the right path. Kindness, love, compassion, sympathy, harmony among all religions, spiritual lectures and teachings, all of these will give knowledge of *Atmic* Bliss (*Atma Ananda*). Spiritual transformation revolution must happen. Only then human race will be revitalized.
- 62. Please give a message for those travelling on the path of devotion (*Bhakti*), Swami?

As long as we think the joys *and* pleasures of the senses are real and permanent, one cannot get absorbed in God. When one surrenders their possessions, ego, wealth, and life to God, then the protection of God (*Abhaya hasta*) will remove the worldly life calamities. These give rise to anguish, grief, and misery. In order to go beyond them, one surrenders to the Lord. God is easily accessible through devotion. Of all the paths, the path of devotion (*Bhakti*) is easier.

### 63. Swami, what is it that man must know and attain?

Sadhana is the key that will open and show the beauty and treasure of Atma. All of Sadhana is internal churning. In 8.4 million living species human birth is at the highest, zenith. Human is a man of intellect. In spite of being a specie of intellect (Buddhi Jivi), man is spending all of his time in the attractions and enticements of Mother Nature, and not giving any time to the higher goals and ideals of real life. Man is in the middle of birth and death and he needs to understand this middle state. Sooner or later he has to become successful in this understanding. Because he has to reach his final home eventually!

64. Those who are on *sadhana* path face a lot of difficulties. How many types are they?

You all are with gunas and need to know God who is without *gunas*. Those who enter and travel this *sadhana* path face many obstacles. These constraints are called *Malas*' (impurities).

- Anava-malamu it means spiritual knowledge comes in waves, and does not stay firm.
- *Karmika malamu* Even though *Guru* and *Jnana purush* (highly learned teacher) is teaching higher knowledge (*Jnana Bodha*) and mind is engaged in it, yet it keeps wavering.
- *Maya malamu* Even unknowingly (*parakuna*) it does not let one have curiosity or enquire (*Jignasa*) about God.
- *Mayeya malamu* that which makes one's mind constantly engage in evil thoughts and sinful acts
- Thirodhaana malamu This does not let your mind go towards Nirguna Parbrahmam (formless, attributeless divinity) but instead takes you to all other Gods and deities. It is the effect of this mala to waste time and make one go through the miseries of birth and death cycle.

When a spiritual aspirant wants to earn experience of *Atma* by going beyond these 5 impurities, they need to be habituated to moral discipline.

## 65. What is higher ideal of life, Swami?

Although an ideal man is guided to lead a life of humbleness and abide in *Dharma*, yet it makes one's life worthwhile only when one loves God in all times and all conditions. The higher truth and meaning of life is to be fully attached to this divinity.

## 66. Swami, what is the inner meaning of Prakriti and Purush(a)?

Prakriti (Nature) has the three Gunas of Sathwa, Rajas, and Thamas. He is called Purush(a) who does not succumb to the Prakriti and goes beyond it. That is why Prakriti is compared with female principle (Sthree Thathwa). Sthree word has three syllables of Sa, tha, ra which are portrayed as the Sathwa, Rajas, Thamo

gunas. Although Nature is spoken of as female gender, every being irrespective of gender has three *Gunas* and hence considered female. God is the highest and greatest *Purush(a)* who is beyond and above the three *Gunas* and hence he is the only one who is *Purush(a)*. To know such *Tri Guna Theeta* (one who is beyond the three *Gunas*) and *Guna Rahita* (without any gunas) is the highest inner meaning of individual *Sadhana*.

## 67. Swami, does one get *Atma Darshan* (experience of *Atman*) only through *Seva*?

Through *Seva* (selfless service), mind gets pure and heart expands. One attains kindness, love, and compassion. Once it becomes the abode of such divine qualities, darkness of illusion (*Ajnana*) and egoism departs. Attachment disappears. Therefore everyone must dedicate themselves to *Seva*. Through this *Seva* as you begin to find out about yourself you will get inner bliss. That is the vision of *Sat* (existence). That is the bliss of *Atma* experience.

## 68. Swami, I think it is impossible to describe God.

To see the moon one does not need any kind of a lamp. Moon can be seen by the moonlight that emanates from it. Similarly if we are to say about God, human vocabulary does not have the power and capacity. Hence the only refuge is what god said about himself.

#### 69. Does following Ashrama Dharma an obstacle in reaching the goal?

To center and concentrate mind on God, to purify the evil qualities of mind, and to worship God through thought, word, and speech, *Dharmas* (duties) and procedures of neither *Ashramas* nor *Varnas* (Castes) are obstacles in any manner. There are four *Ashramas* in a human life with their righteous, obligatory, ethical, and moral duties called *Dharmas – Brahmacharya* (Student stage), *Grihastha* (Householder stage), *Vanaprastha* (retirement from active life and detachment from worldly things), and *Sanyasa* (stage of total immersion in God thought). One's thoughts and feelings need to be unconcerned and indifferent to – the differences in *Varnas* (castes), *Ashramas*, and gender; that our body is real and permanent; and that this world is true and everlasting.

## 70. Do all the three paths of *Karma*, *Bhakti*, and *Jnana* lead a man to his goal?

One can say 100 out of 100. God comes first, then World and lastly 'I'. In order to get release from the cycle of birth and death, you have to become a *Sadhak* (spiritual aspirant) sooner or later. Now it is all upside down. 'I' comes first and God comes last. You can get hold of God through any one of the three paths of *Karma*, *Bhakti*, or *Jnana*. You can travel in train either in first class, second class, or third class. Destination is one and the same. Put them in practice. All of them are different parts of the same sunshine.

## 71. Swami, please let us know about the principles (*Thathwas*') in human?

Man must pay attention to the 24 principles (*Thathwas'*) – 5 organs of action (*Karmendriyas*), 5 senses (*Jnanendriyas*, organs of knowledge), 5 life breaths (*Pranas*), 5 elements (*Pancha Bhutas*); rest 4 are Mind (*Manas*), Intellect (*Buddhi*), Sub Conscious (*Chitta*), Ego (*Ahamkar*). 25<sup>th</sup> is *Jiva* (individualized consciousness). On one side of it is the 26<sup>th</sup> *Paramatma* (God, Cosmic Consciousness, *Sathyam*, Truth) and on the other side of it is Ego (*Ahamkar*). *Jiva* gives light to the 24 principles and has to drag all of them to *Sathyam*, the 26<sup>th</sup> one. If it illuminates them, then all of them will disappear. They all are children of *Maya* i.e. *Ajnana*, darkness, hence they cannot survive in the light (knowledge) of pure consciousness.

# 72. Swami, how does one get vision (direct experience) of Truth (*Sathya Sandarshan*)?

Bottle Gourd submerges in water. But very same bottle gourd floats when it dries out. Similarly when everything inside you dries out, you will be floating on the ocean called *Bhav Sagar* (world, creation). That is, remove desires and attachments in you. Let go of hurry and worry, then you float unaffected on the waters of opportunities and changes. When these waters vaporize you can rise to the sky. You will be buoyant. Reduce your burdens. Get rid of wealth and baggage. Then you can rise to greater heights. 'chitta vritti nirodhame yogam' Inhibition of thought waves in the mind is union. This will prevent the thought waves that disturb the inner consciousness. These thought waves increase your burden. You must get freed from the desires that drag you down. You need to have keen desire to get into the presence of Truth (sathyam, permanent). The Truth inside you is waiting for you. It is like a man wading in knee deep waters and dying of thirst, likewise man is suffering while holding the panacea of all illnesses in his palm.

#### 73. When does one get peace in life?

Do not get stuck too deeply in the meshes of life due to increased attachment. Keep your passions in your control. There is turbulence and waves only at the surface of an ocean. There is peace deep inside. So when you dive deep inside you, then you will be free from the turbulence of the waves. You need to recognize that there are many things that do not have permanent value. Hence you must shove them aside. Only hang on to that which is permanent. You have to use discrimination to recognize what is valuable and what is useless garbage.

### 74. What are the qualities one must improve?

You should have good habits, develop a broad vision, and your inner vision should get strong and increasingly one pointed. You need to recognize the omnipresence of God and oneness among human beings. You need to learn tolerance, forbearance, generosity, and attitude of selfless service (*Seva*). When you are at home after returning from pilgrimage, while recollecting your experiences make a resolve to obtain even higher, valuable, and real experiences of knowing God. Make appropriate resolutions to attain this goal and step forward. I will bless you so that you step forward in the right direction.

#### 75. How to develop a good and holy relationship (Sat sambandh) with God?

Dhyana (meditation) increases Jnana, and Japa (name chanting, singing) increases devotion (Bhakti). These two will purify your heart from the putrid smell of Ego and Pride. When one sings God's name with various delicate nuances, one will be able to develop a relationship with God through the chains of love (Bhakti). At the right time due to their individual effort and keen interest, God will give them an experience that is personal to them. 'Na sreyo niyamam vina' (No good comes without discipline). Without discipline there is no progress. Self control increases your capacity and power. Discipline increases its efficacy.

## 76. How must one perform *Karma*, Swami?

Human being has many desires. Steadily one must reduce these desires. Learn to help others and not just look out for personal self. Whatever you do, do it for the satisfaction of your heart. Perform *Karma* for Self satisfaction (*Atma Trupti*). You love your body for sometime but later you are unable to love it. Although you

think it is yours yet a time will come when you are unable to love it. At that time you can experience the real Self.

# 77. What are the obstacles for *Atma Sandarshan* (vision or direct experience of *Atma*)?

Worldly people vision is limited to the external outwardly form. Outwardly form is like a package. We can see the real thing only after removing the packing. Divinity is hidden in the Nature (*Prakriti*) covered up by the five elements (*Pancha Bhutas* – earth, water, fire, air, space). It is not visible because man is covered up by *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Moha*, *Lobha*, *Mada*, *Matsarya* (Desire, Anger, Attachment, Greed, Pride, and Jealousy). When we remove the packing we get to directly experience the beautiful God form. We should not limit our vision to packing only. Till we open and look inside we cannot see the beautiful thing inside.

### 78. In order to climb to higher peaks of spirituality, what must we know, Swami?

Just the way when you climb mountain peaks you wear trekking shoes, goggles, and carry a trekking pole, similarly to climb the spiritual mountain you need to let go of external vision using the goggles called God vision (thought), only then you would understand creation. The basis for creation is desire. Wherever is the source of creation, it is also the place of residence of the one responsible for dissolution. How so? The place where desire dies is the cemetery. This is the place where all individuals Jivis reach a state of nothingness by letting go of all the things they acquire and possess during their life journey. Here it dissolves you after it makes you do powerful Karma (actions) based on the desires you took from your mind. It proves to you that there is nothing, and merges you into its energy Shakti. Cemetery and birthplace have an inseparable relationship. Both of them are opportunities to perform Karma. You wish to escape the consequences of birth and death. For that, you have to work on and work till your mind is purified. You cannot attain it till you become one with Atma qualitatively (Tad-atmyam) and not with the body which is a result of the trade between Atma and body mind complex. If you do not make an effort combined with discipline to do some Sadhana, Grace will not descend on you.

## 79. How not to get affected by abuse, praise, and rejection, Swami?

Body consciousness is an obstacle in the effort to know your Self. In what context does this body consciousness arise? If someone criticizes you in a small way, you feel bad. Actually, who are you? Are you this body that is fair or dark or yellow? If you are this body, why do you leave it and go? Where do you go? You do not even bid good bye to your kith and kin, relatives, and teachers who educated you. You don't even tell them your whereabouts when you leave? You don't know the place or address of where you are going. So is this what your self is? No. No one has the right to discipline your real Self, which is pure, permanent, and real. May I give you an example? When you are walking on the road your shadow falls on both good and bad things (dust and dirt) alongside the road. Does that dirt stick to you? It is your shadow, isn't it? Then why does it not stick to you? The reason is you are separate from your shadow. Similarly, you need to recognize that you are separate from your body. Why do you feel bad when your body is criticized? This hurt belongs to the body and not to you, did you understand?

#### 80. What obstacles must a *sadhak* overcome?

First and foremost, one must overcome the six inner enemies *Ari Shadvargas*. Through *Atma Jnana* (Self-Knowledge) one can gain complete control over senses, mind and intellect. Just the way a thermometer lets one know the temperature of the body, your talk, behavior, and conduct will indicate the inclinations and contents of your mind, which in turn indicates the temperature of your worldly fever. These should not be contaminated with passions like hatred and pride but should always be kept *Sathwic*. One must speak calmly while inducing calmness in others. While rolling in the dirt called animalistic behavior, is it possible to get near God? Worldly desires and material riches are obstacles in attaining liberation (*Moksha*). In line with one's goals, one must invite the right atmosphere. You must not get ruined by the darkness of illusion-ignorance, *Ajnana*. Life is a bridge over the ocean of continual change. Cross over it, but do not build a house on it. Demolish the six inner enemies *Ari Shadvargas* that degrade the natural and blissful human life. After waywardness gets stilled one must ascend to the state of *Yoga* (union) and realize the divine grandeur of *Atma*.

## 81. What is the basis for attaining bliss, Swami?

Real morning comes with the rise of the bliss in an individual and not from the physical sunrise that we see at every day break. Bliss gives beauty to life. This confluence of bliss and beauty is the *Atma*. Bliss is your food now. Basis for food is rain. *Yajna* is the basis for rain. *Karma* is the basis for *Yajna*. *Veda* is the basis for *Karma*. *Brahma* (God) is the basis for *Veda*. Troubles and losses are due to the decrease in God's (*Brahma's*) grace. God's name is *Veda*. Flow of this *Yajna* is invisible to all just like the flow of our conscience. The sacrifices to be offered in *Yajna* are Ego, Desire and Attachment.

## 82. How to break out of Egoism (Abhimaan)?

Egoism is like an iron fort. One must make the effort to break through this iron fort. If one subjects it to iron-melting heat then it will melt and allow you to find the path to go inside. That is, do name chanting (*nama smarana*) till it generates the heat in you to break open the doors of egoism, so that you can earn the entry into your own private inner quarters (*Antah puram*).

## 83. How is the company of holy (sat purush) helpful to a spiritual aspirant?

Always make an effort to join a satsang (company of the holy) and realize all the benefits of such company. Satsang takes you to detachment, and detachment brings you liberation. One should never submit to hopelessness and despair. Face losses and misery with happiness. They help in making your character strong. You will see diamond among stones. In order to find or mine the gold, you need to light the wick of the dynamite before blasting it. In order to derive the full benefit of medicine one must strictly follow the diet restriction recommended by the doctor. You can benefit from Satsang only after you purify your mind. Only then you can experience Atma Ananda (Bliss of Atma). When you give in to bad thoughts and habits, you will not receive the fragrant smell emanating from the sanctified company of holy people as you come across them. Ensure that you are surrounded by people who are dedicated to higher spiritual goals. They will encourage you in your sadhana to move forward towards your goal. You will attain purity of mind (chitta shuddhi). Satsang steadily withdraws you from activities that are binding. As human is born in Ignorance (*Ajnana*), there is a process to improve oneself. That process is visitation (darshan) of holy people (sat purush), hear their words, converse with them, follow and implement their advice. If one adopts such a process it will turn an ignorant person (*Ajnani*) into a *param hamsa* (highly achieved master), a *Jnani* (realized soul).

#### 84. Life seems difficult. Please let us know how to face these difficulties, Swami?

Many people go to an ocean beach to enjoy. They watch the ocean water, the foam, and the waves on the surface and appreciate it by saying 'so nice, so nice' and feel happy. If they feel happy by just looking at it, when are they going to experience it? By mere looking they feel so happy, then how much more happiness can be had by experiencing it. This ocean is teaching us the reality of life. The water in the ocean is life. The waves make us realize the ups and downs, happiness - misery, gains - losses, in many incidents that we encounter in life. The foam on the surface is the fruit or results that we experience. How long does the foam stay? What does it merge into? We experience and enjoy it for a mere moment and then it merges back into life. There is no end to it. As long as 'you' are there, this continues on. At least once gather courage, get hold of the navigator called peace and go a little deeper into the waters of life. Then the water will submerge you. When you realize that danger is ahead, the navigator (peace) who knows how to swim will get hold of you, take you inside safely, let you enjoy happiness as long as you wish, and drop you back safely at your place before departing. That is, after you walk as far as you can in life, then you will come across dangerous and deep waters of life. If you pray at that time a navigator called Guru will be ready to provide you help. He will take you safely inside ocean or into life and without drowning brings you back to the shore. In the ocean there are plenty of life threatening mammals. He protects you from them. That is, many bad qualities that can harm you related to the ari shadvargas (six bad qualities) that stay inside you, draw energy and strength from you, and in the end destroy you while strongly ensuring their own survival. To destroy these bad qualities one needs a skillful hunter, hence the great need and necessity of a Guru. Do not lose either of the opportunity that comes your way and given to you.

## 85. What must one do to reach our life goal faster, Swami?

That is a huge desire indeed. In proportion to its size one has to pay for it. If you wish to journey by a train or a bus or a plane, you will have to pay the proper fare in proportion to the mode of transportation chosen. The fares are not the same for all three. Speed of the journey impacts the fare. You can chose a bus or train for

normal journey but if you want to reach quickly you need to chose the plane and pay accordingly. The coin of the spiritual realm is *Sadhana*. I respond to you in the same intensity as you call me, but the call must be for me. When you call me, it is I who will respond.

86. What is happening and will happen is God's will (*sankalpa*). Then is there something called human will (*sankalpa*), Swami?

Yes, everything is my will (sankalpa) but humans are not living in a state of surrender (saranagati). Sankalp (resolve) is mine but it has to be according to the actions (karmas) done by individuals (jivis). Where did this karma come from? You might say 'everything is your (God's) resolve'. I gave you discriminating intellect. You push aside this intellect and instead use your mind to commit actions, then how can the results of those actions be my sankalp? Humans are enmeshed in the chains of desire, stuck in the wasp nest of Maya (illusion); push aside the auspicious will of the Lord and do what they please; and then say it is God's will; how can I agree to that? When your decisions and determinations come from your heart then it is God's will. What you do by listening to your mind under the influence of Maya is your own sankalp (free will). You have to undergo the consequences (results) of these actions. When you have complete surrender, every thought and action that you perform will be auspicious. One can also call this total surrender (sarvasya sharanagati).

87. Swami, please tell us about Liberation, *Jivan Mukti*, and no rebirth (*Janma Rahitya*)?

Liberation (*Moksha*) means no more relationships or attachments related to the human life. I invite you into my kingdom once you let go all of your ties and attachments related with your human birth and get ready to reach me. My kingdom is named Liberation (*Moksha*). All the wealth of merits you earned in your prior lives makes it possible for you to stay in my kingdom. *Jivi's* (individual souls) reach there and enjoy the bliss. They call it kingdom of *Moksha* (liberation). They do not have rebirth.

Jivan Mukti is a great achievement because while continuing to live they fully experience and enjoy God. Just imagine how great is this individual's state which enjoys and experiences God in their day to day life. It means one is completely merged with me and into me; earns the state of no 'me or mine'. Since there is no separation or individuality, where would he come back from? Just the way the food that gets digested, then gets assimilated into the body with no particular form and gives energy; similarly you will merge into me. This gives energy to life and existence.

Third one is no rebirth (*jivana rahityam*). Those who attain this have lead a superior life in their past lives and due to the merit earned will have a superior life even now. In case if it is an ordinary life, they will lead a life with superior ideals and lofty character. 'Shitoshna Sukha Dukhesu' meaning they experience equanimity and are called 'Stitha Prajna'. They take everything they experience as a gift of God and they have nothing more or new to experience in life. Even if they experience something new, they take it as God's gift. Once they leave life they reach near God.

All three are similar and close to each other. How so? It is like the servants or guards (in the kingdom) who can come up to King's palace. If one is a minister, one has access even to various rooms in the King's palace without restriction but cannot enter the inner (or queen's) quarters. In case of King and Queen, they can go about and experience anytime anywhere. Therefore if one attains that state and knows their status, they can earn a place in the inner quarters provided by God.

## 88. What kind of precautions a *sadhak* must take towards desire and anger, Swami?

First and foremost one must attain sense control. Desires are expressed though words. This desire emerges from the mind. One must gently remind the mind of its desires and ensuing difficulties and suffering. Whatever is taken in must always be free of impurities and be *Sathwic* (good and pure). Sound, sight, opinions, feelings, relationships, and influences should always enhance respectfulness, humbleness, gentleness, equanimity, and equal treatment. Anger is like an intoxicant. When your desire is not fulfilled, anger immediately comes to its aid and assures support to the desire. Death is waiting like a tiger in the bush. Hence do not waste any more time in discarding lethargy and anger. Stay calm in the middle of storms. Stay in the company of people with equanimity because even by chance if you get angry,

their peacefulness will come to your aid in dousing your anger. Hence if you get hold of one, you will gain the other. You must move among people who have spiritual interests. When you make desserts and keep them covered and protected (in a glass case), insects cannot reach them. If you leave them unprotected, insects will land on them causing diseases. Likewise the good qualities in you if left unprotected would get exposed to bad qualities like the insects and make it a waste. Therefore protect the good qualities. *Guru's* company or nearness is capable of this protection. Make your life worthwhile by having ever increasing and plenty of unwavering devotion and confidence towards your *Guru* and their company.

# 89. When would we be able to listen to God's voice? Please elaborate on his Omniscience, Swami?

To listen to melodious music one must have properly functioning ears. Only when one becomes silent, one can hear the sound of God's footsteps. The reverberation of that sound inspires waves of incredible happiness. In order to get touched by those waves one has to enter into that ocean. When you leave the life of attachment and hatred and instead lead a life of joy and happiness, then the indwelling God will always select you. You are inside the ocean, yet you ask where the water is? Is this innocence? Or is it egoism? While being in the creation produced by Divine Mother (Nature), if you wonder where you are is like searching for water while being in the water. What is all around you and above you is Divine Mother's (Nature's) creation. You are forgetting that you are like a tiny subatomic particle in this creation. Do not forget that.

## 90. How does God's grace protect an individual (*Jivi*)?

When you perform your duty, God gets more enthusiastic in satiating the hunger of his children. Whatever seeds are sown in the spiritual field, they will have to sprout. With God's *sankalp* (resolution) a heavy downpour of his grace (rain) washed away the seeds in the ground underneath a rock. Due to no sunlight they could not germinate and are eagerly and anxiously waiting to sprout. The time has come for them to sprout. Hence another very heavy downpour of rain (grace) pushes the same seeds, which got blown away last night, and brings them back into the ground from underneath the stones to allow them to sprout. Same downpour became the cause for both.

When the *Karmas* of *Jiva* are strong and deep rooted, this rain called grace pushes you aside. After resting some time you realize your state; await; you destroy your ignorance; as soon as rays of sunlight of *Jnana* fall upon you the *buddhi* inside desires *Atma sakshatkar* (experience of Atma); pines again for downpour of rain (God's grace); seeing its struggle the all merciful God sends a heavy downpour (grace); brings the seeds under the stone back to the field which is very fertile. Therefore the right time for growing the right crop has arrived. Do not let this opportunity slip away due to carelessness. Do not waste your time. Out of compassion this opportunity is given to you, utilize it and make the effort to reach me.

#### 91. Swami, we are unable to practice your teachings the way you want us to.

Yes, that is true. Even I am saddened by it. I took a form and walked among you. After teaching repeatedly, I awaited every moment thinking I would find at least one person. Now after leaving my physical form, I still am left with this waiting only. Prarabda Karmas (consequences of past actions) of the Jivas (individualized souls) are strong and very deep rooted. I want to save them but if they shove my helping hand aside and run away, even God cannot do anything in that circumstance. I taught them till my throat went dry then, and even now I am doing the same. Not only are they not listening, but they have doubts like why is Swami showing so much interest in me? A huge doubt on if this is believable? After climbing a mountain peak very carefully, if you carelessly put your foot at the edge you are bound to fall into the deep gorge. Therefore after carefully climbing the mountain, you must exercise even more care while standing on the peak. If you waste what is given to you by carelessly squandering it due to lack of proper sadhana and poor effort, you will not get this nectarine time again. Without wasting this nectar, grab it in both of your palms, drink as much as you like, and make effort till the 'I' (Self) in you starts shining. I am waiting for this with hope. This is not your anticipation but God's anticipation. Since ancient times there were many occasions when God ran after the devotees, and even today the situation is the same.

#### 92. Swami, is individual's actions (*Jivi's karmas*) the cause of rebirths?

Life is a *Rangavalli* (Indian colorful folk art). It looks beautiful because it is nicely drawn with many colors. Similarly man gets immersed in life with all of its attachments and relationships making it very colorful, producing the illusion that

it is real and permanent. But the basis for the colorful Indian folk art is the dots because that is how one starts drawing. If you look at it from that viewpoint, it is the line you draw from one dot to the other which makes the beautiful patterns. If this connecting line were not to be drawn, the dots remain as dots. Similarly, it is the *Karmas* that you do are like the lines that connect one life to the next. All other beings around you are similarly connected. All of it put together becomes a giant colorful Indian folk art (*Rangavalli*). The basis for this colorful folk art is the dots.

Similarly the basis for this life is *Karma*. Do good *Karmas* (*sat karmas*), think good. Do not get furious. Destroy anger completely. Greed will enslave you and make you helpless. Attachment, pride, jealousy will become like wild elephants unable to be tied down by any chains and you will eventually reach a state of exhaustion and collapse. Therefore do not give in to their song and dance. In order to create a beautiful colorful folk art, you need to first put the dots in that order and then draw the lines between them. I am giving guidance to make that beautiful colorful folk art. Unscramble the secret of birth through these values you are receiving. Take my teachings to understand the difference between who am I and who are you? Wake up! Don't continue to sleep in ignorance (*Tamas*). Don't become far away nomads. Remember the bond between me and you. Out of innocence or forgetfulness, do not take my movements as ordinary and waste your time.

## 93. They say liberation is attained through *Bhakti*. How is that, Swami?

*Bhakti* (devotion) takes you toward *Shakti* (Nature, Energy). *Shakti* gifts you with *Yukti* (skill, technique). This *Yukti* gets you interested in worthwhile spiritual pursuits. In this manner *Bhakti* matures eventually leading to liberation.

Physical heart (organ) is different from spiritual heart. God is encased and enshrined in the spiritual heart. Once you earn a place in this heart then you would actually experience the spirituality inside you. Slowly and step by step, the discipline practiced by you will submit to your rules and regulations. Your transformation and behavior (*parivartan*, *pravartan*) will decide the result (fruit) you will receive.

## 94. Swami, it is our good fortune to get divine messages directly from you.

As per your prayers, it is my duty to improve the state of your mind and grant you the spiritual state you desired. I am fulfilling my duty whether you follow my teachings or not. It is the good luck of a student to get a good teacher. In spite of getting a good teacher, if the student does not study well, or studies well but

does not write the exams with care, then how will he earn a good score? This is the state of affairs today. Things are happening in the reverse order i.e. teachers are searching for students. There is a reason for this. The situation is that based on the enquiries made by the students the teachers are searching for disciples. Whatever is given to you, integrate into your life and make progress. I am fulfilling my duty as mother and as *Guru* by working for your progress every second. It is time to move forward, step by step towards your goal with plenty of faith and confidence. Time passed is time lost. Utilize the available time for your good.

#### 95. Do all need to do same type of *Sadhana*, Swami?

Medicine and dietary restriction is not same for all illnesses. The treatment given varies with the patient and the disease. Doctor identifies the illness. Similarly for every individual the treatment is decided based on their previous life's and current life's *samskars* (tendencies). You do not know medical field. But if you speak as if you know everything, then should the physician prescribe what he deems right or what you think is right? Responsibility of the doctor is to give medicine to remove the illness of the patient. Therefore once you come to the doctor to get cured, hand over the treatment to him. God waits till the impressions and impulses of the world stop flaring up in you. One must completely let go of the physical and worldly impressions and impulses (*vasanas*). *Sanyasa* means complete detachment.

#### 96. How does one get direct experience (sakshatkar) of God?

God is in you. He is not separate from you. When you do the right *Sadhana*, He will manifest from within you. But you are not recognizing that. In order to recognize you must develop comprehensive and total selfless love. Only then the embodiment of love will manifest. No *Sadhana* will bear fruit where there is no love.

## 97. What should our state be to get close to God, Swami?

To come close to God means to become like the ash that is completely burnt. Just the way this ash is no longer capable of further change, similarly all the *Gunas* (qualities – *Sathwa*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*) need to be destroyed and become incapable of further change only then God will accept.

#### 98. How should a Sadhak face insults and blame?

Sages like Jayadev, Tukaram, Kabir, Gauranga, Ramakrishna, Ramdas experienced trials and tribulations in order to see and experience God, and finally merged in Him. In the temples of human memory they have earned a permanent place. You must take blames and insults happily in life. Face them. Even Avatars could not escape the dirty blames from depraved. When a kokila (Asian Koel bird) is seen, crows chase it to hurt. Saintly people become targets of jealousy from the wicked (alpulu). Saints always became targets of hatred, jealousy, and abuse from cruel people. Lord Krishna had to face these hurdles from the time of his birth till his last moments. At every step He was chased by hatred, blames, causeless abuses, and defamation. The love and light spread by Lord Krishna raised intolerable jealousy which resorted to demonic acts of ruining His name and His message. They tried hard to ruin his resolutions and divert him away. But Truth won. The fog of blames and abuse might cover up Truth for some time, but victory is certain. Do not give ear or pay heed to the people who spread causeless blames and untruths. Do not pawn your mind. Move forward courageously. Take what is being handed to you every moment with love and show gratitude by putting them into practice. Is it possible to forget those who provide food, those who serve, and those who feed you with love? Is there anything more ungrateful? There is a great necessity to straighten one's life and move forward with mental maturity.

## 99. How should our state be to surrender to you, Swami?

Man must dedicate himself to follow the sacred path of 'no desires'. There are hurdles in offering oneself to this path. In this world it is not possible to enter the house of a rich man or a high ranking official without any barriers. There will be a guard at the door who will enquire into the purpose of the visit. If there are rules and regulations in entering into the house of worldly officials and rich men who are limited, then it is not surprising that there are rules and regulations to abide by in order to enter the house of limitless Divinity. At His main door there are two guards who will stop you. Their names are *Shama* and *Dama* which means effort and tolerance (perseverance). Without possessing these two it is not possible to enter the house of Divinity. To attain the experience of *Atma (Atma Praapti)* and the Truth (*Sathya*), ancients laid down a royal path as *Sadhana* (spiritual practice), then why keep journeying through the by lanes strewn with thorns? Practice the

prescribed name chanting (*Japa*) and meditation (*Dhyana*). Seek and learn from the experienced. Do pooja with flowers; chant the name with rosary only till you reach a higher goal. When you do pooja with flowers, the benefit goes to the tree and flower. What do you gain? In order for you to benefit, cleanse the evil qualities in you. God desires the lotus flower of purity that will then bloom in your heart. You must strive to give this flower to God.

#### 100. How to earn success in life?

There are two paths to success in life.

- Prayer
- Meditation

Prayer will make you reach and appeal at the feet of God. Meditation will make God come to you, meaning come down to you. It makes you to rise up to His state i.e. instead of one above and the other below it makes both of them to be in one state. Through prayer what (God) grants you freedom, meditation is the royal path to it. One must control the wild senses. You will fall if God does not hold you. No matter what you do or where you are, always have confidence that God placed you there to do that work. Then it becomes knowledge and a spiritual practice. Keep getting closer to God every day, in every thought, every word, and every action. It will give you great amount of bliss. It will get you real liberation.

#### 101. How to control desires?

Worthwhile thing to know in spiritual life is control of desires. Offer individual will to God's will. One must elevate all thoughts, words, and actions as prayer to God. When demon King *Ravan* died, *Mandodari* his wife wailed as follows "Except your desire you have conquered all of your enemies. You are a scholar, and you have made most powerful of your enemies to submit to you. Yet you became a slave to your desire which became the cause of your downfall." Just the way a magnifying lens can concentrate Sun's rays to burn grass or paper, similarly concentration combined with earnestness will burn away the seeds of desires. That is why meditate for at least 5 min everyday during twilight time in the morning and evening and do it with earnestness (*shradha*).

#### 102. What is necessary to attain *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*?

A contented man who is centered on God is a Yogi. One who delights in sensory pleasures is a *Bhogi*. One who is filled with illnesses is a *Rogi*. First and foremost one needs healthy body and mind to attain *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*. Illness means a feeling of unhappiness. It is a state of mind and body resulting from disturbed equanimity and self control. There are two reasons for its cause – evil food and evil thoughts. It is wise to prevent instead of waiting till the illness appears or becomes uncontrollable, and then running after medicines. It is not enough that one does meditation, name chanting, and *japa sadhanas* but along with their positive effects one needs to lead a life with higher goals that are conducive to good thoughts.

- 103. How many types of *sadhanas* are there? Which is the best among them? There are three types of *sadhanas* (spiritual practices):
  - *Meena sadhana* (fish *sadhana*) A fish can live only in water. When one ponders about that life, then they can understand. Just like that meditating alone is *meena sadhana*. If they do it among people, their *sadhana* does not become fruitful.
  - *Mruga sadhana* (animal *sadhana*) When one is able to concentrate only in the presence of others is *mruga sadhana*. One is unable to concentrate elsewhere like in water. Some can concentrate only in the company of others but not alone. When alone they start thinking about family problems and issues.
  - *Kurma sadhana* (tortoise *sadhana*) Tortoise can live both on land and in water equally. To be able to concentrate alone or in a group is called *kurma sadhana*. This is the state a *sadhak* must attain.

## 104. How would one know the Ultimate Truth, Swami?

You need to have self confidence. You need to have confidence in your ability to stick to the rigid timetable of *sadhana* (spiritual practice), and your ability to attain the goal of liberation. If one does not have confidence on the wave, how will they have confidence on the ocean? By exercising skill and intellect a lump of steel can be made into a beautiful watch. Then through discrimination (*viveka*) and

detachment (vairagya), can one not transform into a Sage that knows the ultimate Truth? The sacred texts of all religions assist man in reaching his permanent and peaceful state. These are all stations in the path of attaining one's goal. You stay there for some time. It tells you how to reach to the next station in your ongoing journey. You proceed to the next station. In the spiritual journey, a sadhak ordinarily shows a kind of unhappiness (nirasana) towards the obstacles he faces. But one must take these as tests to make one fearless. Before hanging a picture on the wall, you would move the nail to see if it is sturdy enough. Similarly you have your equal-mindedness (sama - dhi) which means through equal mind earn the changeless, steady, unfading *Jnana* (knowledge). In order to earn this *Jnana*, get rid of the ignorance (Ajnana), be alert to the movements in your sadhana, and step forward. You need to know that the teaching methods of a Guru varies. One medicine does not work for all illnesses, based on illness appropriate medicine needs to be used. After the treatment is over, illness is reduced, one is declared free, then there are no more diet restrictions. Till one gains detachment, treatment is necessary. I am the Doctor.

#### 105. How must a beginner practice meditation?

When you sit down for meditation, first utter few chants and prayers (*Slokas'*, *Stotras'*) of God. This will focus the scattered mind and helps in obtaining the initial results (fruits) towards the desired goal. While you chant the name, slowly and gently imagine the form associated with that name and hold it in front of your mind's eye. If your mind drifts away from *Nama-smarana* (name chanting), direct it to the form associated with that name. If it drifts away from the form, bring it back to the name. Let the mind dwell on the sweetness of one or the other. Soon this will bring the mind under control. Whichever form you imagined and pleasing to your heart, it will get imprinted in your chitta (sub-consciousness). Eventually when God wants to fulfill the desire of the devotee He presents Himself in that form (*sakshatkar chitram*). This method is good for beginners and is called *Japa Hita Dhyana* (Meditation aided by name and form).

After tasting the sweetness in this method, increase the amount of time you meditate daily, and if you are able to turn your mind to the peace and happiness you experienced earlier, then you have tasted the fruits (benefits) of meditation. After this bliss becomes a part of your nature.

#### 106. Is time management necessary for above meditation, Swami?

Make an effort to wake up at *Brahma Muhurta* (3 am onwards). As soon as you wake up, sit down to meditate. In the beginning you might need an alarm to wake you up. Slowly as your mind starts seeking meditation and starts enjoying the happiness therein, you will wake up naturally. The ritual of bathing will wake up your senses and drags you in different directions hindering the progress and results of meditation. Meditation combined with discipline is essential. Although a little difficult initially but once this tamed mind gets used to the discipline, it will soon be ready to follow directions. Therefore follow the advice of practicing *sadhana* everyday without break, begin the effort to know the pure being (*sat padarth*) called 'You' (Self), and make your life worthwhile by attaining your higher nature.

## 107. How does one get peace through meditation?

You must do *Japa Hita Dhyana* (see Q. 105 above) everyday without a break. Then a day will surely come when you are not: thinking of evil thoughts; craving for *tamasik* food and drink; contact with disgusting things; making bad and evil plans; get offended, hurt, and be sorrowful; get defamed or resort to evil ideas. This is possible when you do meditation deeply and regularly. Then you will be in the nearness of God in an unimaginable state of peace.

## 108. What is the first and foremost effort during meditation?

Chose a comfortable seat that helps you to sit still, but not fall asleep or get irritable. Take the form that you like as the object of your meditation. Bring this form of mine in front of your mind's eye and stop the senses from straying away. If not, contemplate on the incidents from stories in Holy Scriptures (*Puranas*) or on miracles done by Swami. Using intellect as the painting hand, strong feelings as paint brush, and name on the tongue, start drawing Swami's picture mentally. Draw it from top to bottom and bottom to top as you meditate. This will seal the mind of the devotee with the form of the Lord he loves. This is the first effort needed to meditate. Through this one gains the stability of the mind, and of the self.

## 109. Whose help does one need to progress spiritually?

You don't even know what a pebble stone is, how can you think of constructing a huge edifice with that stone? First learn in detail about what you

want to build. Then if you start building the mansion or whatever you are trying to build, it would be safe and sturdy. When you hand over the work to an engineer, he would know what measurements to give to ensure the safety of the building. Hence your building will be safe. Now you have turned over the building of your life to an engineer called God. This engineer handed over the 7 by 24 (day and night) responsibility to a good contractor (a *Guru*). There is not much to do for you till the building is complete. The engineer monitors the work periodically. Based on what you pay (*sadhana*), the engineer (God) will get your building ready quickly. Therefore giving money (*sadhana*) is your responsibility while getting the building ready is God's responsibility.

# 110. Swami who is called *Jnana siddhas* (ascended masters with powers of *Jnana*)?

In this world our mind goes after many things related to desire and opposite gender. Dispersing your mind like this and hindering your one pointedness is a sign of Ignorance (*Avidya*). Using subtle analysis and contemplation you need to find and get rid of the desires lingering in the dark corners of our heart. Gain victory over mind. Then you will become calm minded and a *Jnana siddha* (one who has acquired the power of *Jnana*). *Japa* and meditation (*dhyana*) without elimination of desire is useless. Only one who is saved is the one who constantly lives in *Sadbhav* (goodwill for others).

#### 111. How does one get freed from rebirth cycle?

As long as man has thoughts and desires, he cannot escape rebirth. When man is completely free from resolve and desire, then he is liberated from the cycle of birth and death.

## 112. How to remove the darkness of Ignorance (*Ajnana*)?

Vedas and scriptures (Shastras) shine the light to show the path to man. No matter how bright the light is, it is all darkness for a blind person. Light is the only path to those who are falling down, lost confidence and fickle minded. Scriptures show us how to obtain permanent bliss. In ignorance man is pursuing the temporary happiness that is filled with sins and dangers. Whatever happiness he is attaining, senses are burning it to ashes. They are unruly servants that are ordering the mind,

their master. You must bring that mind in your control. Then these servants (senses) will be at your feet to serve you.

Mind is the emperor and senses are the soldiers. But the emperor is not listening to his prime minister, Intellect (*Buddhi*), and only heeding to the soldiers. Hence soldiers are ruling the emperor and the kingdom. Let *Buddhi* (intellect) rule once and in a minute the soldiers (senses) will be back in the tent and mind (emperor) will save itself. In the heart cave, *Atma* is the Sun whose light is not visible due to the cover of dark dense clouds of worldly attachment. No matter how much effort one makes, the fog of poor discrimination is not letting one progress. The wind of repentance must dissipate these clouds. Then the accumulated ignorance will perish and you will be able to realize the *Atma*. Mak this effort of mine fruitful for you. Do not fall back into Ignorance. If you let go of this helping hand now, soon you will have no one to show you the way.

#### 113. How should be the behavior of a Sadhak, Swami?

When faulty thinking gets hold of you like a leech, you have to analyze and discriminate those thoughts and alter your behavior. Do not try to find fault in others character. It is very important to do self analysis to remove the faults that negatively affect your spiritual nature. People buy dark colored clothes because it does not show the dirt and dust that falls on them easily. They do not like white clothes because spots are easily visible. But do not try to hide your faults and shortcomings, instead be ashamed of them. Take a step forward to hastily remove them.

I am advising you not to pay heed to lies that are produced by jealousy and selfishness, instead arrange yourself a *satsang* (company of holy and god thought) where you share about holy things and truths. There you will study Holy Scriptures and share God's leelas (plays and miracles). Why waste your valuable time in critiquing others behaviors and counting their faults? You must clearly understand yourself what expands your heart (consciousness) and what makes you restless and disturbed. Then tightly hang on to the first one and let go of the other. No matter how much I try and teach, you are hearing and then letting it go. What is the use? Put into practice even a little bit of what you heard and learned. Although I am teaching thousands of people but only those count who put them into practice.

#### 114. To stay healthy and blissful, what must one do Swami?

Anything that is taken inside must always be pure and *Sathwic*. The food or the impressions that you take in must be pure. Word, vision, opinions, impressions, learnings, relationships, impacts, all these must enhance respect, humbleness, equal treatment, and equal mindedness. Mind is important for health and happiness, hence only those thoughts are to be entertained which do not have negative influence. To keep mind steady *satsang*, *japa*, and *dhyana* are necessary. Only this kind of food should be supplied to mind. Proof of rain is in the wetness of the ground. Proof of devotion (Bhakti) is in the peace of the devotee (*Bhakta*). If one is at peace one can win over success – failure, fame – blame, gains – losses.

#### 115. What must one pay attention to with respect to Sadhana?

Any amount of *Sadhana* will not bear fruit without love. In a day you waste a lot of time. If I tell you to do something, you respond saying there is no time. God is embodiment of time, hence do not waste time. Maintain steadiness of mind. Seeds must be planted at the right time to get a crop at needed time. If you don't plant the seeds and keep waiting for the crop, where would the crop come from? Likewise you have not even planted the seeds of *Sadhana* in the field of your heart, then how could you expect their results right away? You have to give sufficient time for them to grow. You need to add fertilizer for their growth. Then you will get a healthy crop exceeding the expectations of the farmer.

For daily spiritual progress one needs to take a lot of help and assistance from outside to clean up their way of living so that they can reach the goal. Fulfill your duties without an eye on the result. There is someone else who will give you the results. Your focus needs to be centered on your spiritual yearning and not on the result. Understand the secret of life. You must attain the goal of life. This is the inner meaning of *Sadhana*. The commotion ought not to be for the results of your effort but for its sacrifice. *Rishis* and *Munis* (*sages* and *yogis*) of the past have attained it after thousands of years of *Tapas* (austerities). This *sadhana* will help you cross the ocean.

## 116. What does liberation (Moksha) mean? Is it possible for everyone?

Freedom from all attachment is liberation (*Moksha*). It means journeying from impermanent, transient, and inert (*An-Atma*) principle to the pure, permanent,

unchanging Truth (*Atma*) principle. Is this possible for everyone? Why not? It is possible for anyone who acquired the qualifications. One must make the right effort and attain it. People doing *sadhana* are attaining it even now. Every diseased person is qualified to take the medicine. There is no distinction that one can and the other cannot. But everyone cannot afford to take expensive medicines due to lack of resources. Similarly anyone who has the capacity can take the medicine called God's grace and remove the disease of attachment (*Bhava-roga*).

#### 117. Swami, what effort must one make to know who they are?

When one wants to see their image they need to stand in front of a mirror. If you turn away from it and say I am unable to see my image, what is the answer for that? Because you are looking at the opposite side, you are seeing outside world and not your image. Even if you don't turn toward the side of the mirror, instead pull the mirror to your front using your discrimination and intellect. Then the mirror will be between you and the world and you yourself will start who am I enquiry. I am making you understand this so that you will make the effort. My blessings are always with the *sadhak*. If you do not follow what is told, then I do not do anything but merely witness. Once you make the promise to God and He is ready to hold your hand, even then if you are not ready to extend the hand then what am I to do?

# 118. Why does a devotee need to wait a long time for the vision of God (sakshatkar)?

God gives a long waiting period to the devotee because that will cleanse him. It teaches him patience and tolerance. Then he will be ready for complete surrender to God.

## 119. How does the feeling of oneness (*Ekatma Bhava*) manifest?

'I' is the basis for everything. Duality manifests when you say I am this, or I am that. When we say 'I am I' we are indicating the feeling of oneness or *Adwaitha*. 'I' is referred to with many names. It is referred to as God, *Atma, Brahman, Sri Krishna, Sri Rama, Shiva, Allah, Jesus* etc. This oneness feeling is for the purpose of sanctifying the mind (*Anthakaran*) of the devotee.

#### 120. How to make life worthwhile (fruitful), Swami?

Life span allotted to you is steadily reducing. Wake up from the sleep of Ignorance (*Ajnana*). Direct your thoughts in the right direction. Treat this body as an instrument only. To spend your life in taking care of your body only is not the quality of humanness. Do not lose the purpose or goal of your life in merely crying over the past or dreaming about the future. I have told you before and I am telling you again that the seed of the future is present, and the fruit of the present is future. If you set right your current situation, only then you will reap superior results in the future. You may be watering the field every day, but if there is a hole in the field all the water will go out through that hole. Likewise are the senses. Sensory pleasure is this hole. Gate to liberation is in this human body itself. Therefore everyone needs to carefully cultivate and make their life fruitful. Other beings are capable of sensory pleasures but they cannot attain liberation.

#### 121. What is needed to reach to lofty heights in our life, Swami?

Anyone wishing to build a structure must first decide the plan for proper foundation, size of the structure, and how it is going to be made. Instead of constructing a building without a plan and then tearing it down because something is wrong with it, if one starts with the right plan it will result in a nice building. One starts erecting the first floor over the foundation. Till that floor is built stairs are not needed. Once it is constructed one needs the stairs. Similarly, one need not put in a lot of effort for leading an average life because God has provided adequately for that. One goes to college and obtains a degree only when one wants to have higher education in this life.

Similarly if one wants to climb to lofty heights in life, how will they climb if they just keep looking at it? If you proceed along the stairs, you will be able to climb to higher levels. Proceed from the foundation of life by using the stairs of faith to reach the goal of Self confidence. To reach this goal one needs a device called God's grace. When would you complete the building if you keep constructing a little and then breaking it down? When would you climb up? If you keep gaining and losing faith, how will you accomplish your goal? You should never lose faith in either your *sadhana* (spiritual practice) or your *Guru*. Once you step on the stairs, do not doubt your ability to climb them. Gather all your energy and make the effort to reach the goal, sooner or a little later.

#### 122. What is Samskar (good character)? How to obtain good Samskars?

Good character (*Samskar*) means removal of bad habits, bad thoughts, bad qualities, and improve good habits and good qualities. You must become good but it is not necessary to become great. Sage *Valmiki* (before he became sage) decided to use his courage and bravery for committing cruel acts (highway robbery). Today children are showing their courage and enthusiasm towards unnecessary things and not paying attention to the important sense control. Due to *darshan* (sight) and *sparshan* (touch) of sages, *Valmiki* transformed and used the same courage and bravery for becoming a *Maharshi* (Sage), a poet (*Kavi*), and produced the great epic *Ramayan*. If one understands the greatness of *Sparshan* (touch) and show it in behavior, one will reach to great heights.

## 123. How to ask God what you are seeking?

Whatever is your wish or yearning, it gets fulfilled. If your intention is appropriate, then God's grace will be equally appropriate. That is, your thoughts must always be focused on what you want to achieve. If your mind is always in God thought then your senses, meaning speech and mind the two primary ones, will seek your refuge. One time Lord Brahma was pleased with the austerities (Tapas) performed and decided to give a boon. He appeared to the devotee and said to him "I will give you a boon but you must ask for it in only one sentence". Immediately the devotee said "I don't want hundreds of births. Grant me liberation in this life right now." Right away Lord Brahma said I already told you that I will grant the first thing you ask for therefore I am granting you the first thing that you uttered. Hence God is ready to grant you what you wish for but you must use discrimination in what to ask. That is, your words must always be ready to follow your orders. You must practice the austerity of speech (Vaak tapas). What one wants to say, and what one wants to ask must be ready first. Lord Hanuman can be taken as an example in this respect. He went in search of mother Sita and upon his return, while still about 100 yards away from Lord Rama, Hanuman uttered the first sentence "Sita, I found". Either in front of God or elsewhere, one must control the speech and say what they want to tell or what they want to ask. Therefore in order for my blessings to bear fruit, your wish or yearning must be correct. I had to say so much just to make this point. Step towards higher divine goals by shaping time and situation to your benefit.

## 124. Swami, in what way Moha (attachment) is an obstacle for spiritual progress?

Moha (desire), Anuraag (attachment), Anubandh (bondage) create jealousy, partiality, and illusions which become obstacles to experience the very essence (sath padarth) called 'You' (Self). They hide the Truth and make Buddhi (discriminating intellect) dysfunctional. Attachment (Raga) is a big disease (Roga) for one who is on a spiritual quest and not suitable for a Yogi. One must get freed from partiality, illusions, and strong attachments. If you have habits and customs, it is difficult to get rid of them. What seems like a floating bag of clothes in a flooded river is in reality a bear floating by. One jumps into the river to fetch that bag of clothes, instead the bear grabs him tightly and unable to escape one gets drowned. Similarly, you got hold of what you thought was a treasure i.e. you jumped in, grabbed it, unable to escape its clutches, and hence got bound by it. Pray for release from these bondages. For now you got hold of God, do not let go. Pray if you can for release from the worldly attachments.

#### 125. Swami, what is the meaning of seeing rays of light while doing meditation?

This is one of the methods of meditation. The rays of light that you see are the tiny sparks of light that are generated by body organs. When you combine these and bring them into your forehead and stabilize them in the position of third eye, then meditation will get little firmer.

## 126. What food restrictions must we follow, Swami?

Sathwic food is best and beneficial. That is foods that are spicy, salty, bitter, sour, and tart are to be taken in moderation. This will help in keeping away the evil qualities, ari shadvargas (six bad qualities). It will stop the thoughts that incite mind. Do not take oily foods in excess. Do not overeat. It increases and sustains Tamasic qualities. It will cause physical heaviness, sleep, tiredness, procrastination, and increases laziness leading one to become incapable of accomplishing anything.

If one takes in excess the foods that were forbidden in *Sathwic* category, it will increase *Rajasic* quality to a great extent that is evil qualities (*ari shadvargas*) become out of control, and will make you a target of blinding lust and blazing anger leading to your spiritual destruction. Once in a week if you reduce the amount of food you take, it is good for you and for the country. In order for food to be *Sathwic*, it should make your body and mind healthy and strong. It should not be

too salty, too bitter, too hot (temperature), too sweet or too sour. One should not eat it when it is piping hot. Do not eat foods that make you thirsty. Limit and control are the bywords to go by. Do not eat water cooked foods the following day for it will do you harm. Any fried or oil cooked foods to be eaten before it smells bad. *Rajasic* food is opposite to the *Sathwic* food. It is overly salty, sweet, hot (temperature), bitter and has strong odor. This kind of food causes excitement with intoxicating effect. Taste and Lust are great enemies of man. Therefore you must be careful about what you eat. Taste and lust will take you to hell. Do not try to satisfy all the desires or bad interests of your tongue. Do not become a sacrificial goat to your lust and taste. Take *Sathwic* food in the company of *Sathwic* people.

## 127. In what way sleep is enemy to *sadhana*. How to conquer sleep?

Sleep is a very dangerous enemy. It brings anger along with it. When sleep is prevented, it says 'you are pushing me aside i.e. my strength is not sufficient. I will bring my siblings and then we will see who is going to win.' It calls its sibling anger, demonstrates its strength and wins. It is a deadly enemy that turns your mental state upside down and backside up, which in turn makes you lose your virtuous qualities entirely. While it is in the budding stage, one must try to destroy it. This sleep is a wall (obstacle) to clear in order to know oneself. This wall has to be broken down. In order to break it one must use the sword called 'beware and alert' and make the effort to break as soon as it arises.

#### 128. What are Adwaitha, Dwaitha, and Visishta Adwaitha? Which is superior?

Adwaitha (Monism) means you and God are one. Faith that there is nothing else separate is Adwaitha. Dwaitha makes you feel and experience that you and I are different i.e. we are separate from each other. Visishta Adwaitha means you, I, and the one that experiences are separate. Here one views three different things. Of all the three, Adwaitha feeling and understanding is very great. Here there is neither three nor two. It is a feeling that all that is, is only one. This lets one know the principle of Atma (Atma Thathwa). People in ordinary state cannot exhibit and experience this principle of Atma. Only those who are in an advanced spiritual state can experience and exhibit this state. To experience a state that is same as God's is neither easy nor ordinary. It is an extraordinary spiritual state. This is also called Ananya Bhakti.

Difficulties arise with those who are in a state of *Visishta Adwaitha*. How so? They say God exists. But He is not in them or with them. He is elsewhere in some other place. I am over here. There is someone else who is there to receive what God has to offer. This is how he divides himself into three and loses the inseparable relationship with God (*Avinabhava sambandh*). The one in *Dwaitha* feels that 'You (God) are there, and I need not worry'. The one in *Adwaitha* feels that I am in God so nothing to worry. Whichever way, one who lives in the feeling of *Adwaitha* is a great evolved soul.

# 129. What are the characteristics of *Sathwa Guna*, *Rajo Guna*, and *Tamo Guna*, Swami?

Seeking the fruit (results) of action is the characteristic of *Rajo Guna*. If the result of an action does not give personal benefit then shunning the action is the characteristic of *Tamo Guna*. Although knowing the result of an action, performing the action with disinterest and without expectation is the characteristic of *Sathwa Guna*. Based on the clothing and the speech one cannot decide who is a *Sadhu* (a renunciate). Only *Gunas* will decide. Capacity to do good is available to entire beings. Hence increasing the goodness in all is the path for the welfare of the world.

## 130. Swami, with what attitude one must do *Karma* (action)?

Utilize the power of *Karma* that can escape even the clutches of God of time (*kala purush*). Principle of *Karma* (*Karma sidhanth*) gives you hope and desire (*asha*). As is *Karma* so is the consequence. Do not increase your bondage by desiring the fruits of *Karma*. Offer the fruit (result) of your *Karma* at the feet of God. Let that sing the glory of God (*Stuthi*). Let that make God more effulgent. Do not heed the losses and victories due to *Karma*. Increase your capacity to offer the fruits of your *Karma* to God, and sharing your happiness with your fellow beings. Leave the losses and victories to God. The one who can lead you by the hand is holding your hand and leading you, then why do you need to worry?

#### 131. Swami, Why am I unable to have Divine Experience (*Divya Anubhuti*)?

When an iron needle is not attracted by the magnet, then it is the fault of the dirt on the iron needle. If God does not come to the devotee, the fault lies in the heart of the devotee. It is not as pure as it should be. If you have faith in yourself or

in God then that is enough. In fact who are you really? Whether you know it or not each one of you is an embodiment of divine *Atma* (*Divya Atma Swaroopulu*). Some medicines are applied on the surface, likewise some *Karmas*, some *Sadhanas* that we perform are like that. Once we know the inner meaning of these *Karmas* and *Sadhanas*, it is like ingesting those medicines into our body. *Bhagavad Gita* is the gist of all the *Upanishads* and it tells us how to purify and sanctify your inner life. Virtues (*Sadgunas*) like Kindness, Love, Compassion, Sympathy, and Sacrifice will make one to be recognized as a *Bhakta* or a *Jnani* or one detached from the world. Afterwards they become *Jnanis* and are protected. To reach a certain goal one must climb stair by stair and cannot leap directly to it (Divine Experience).

#### 132. How to get mind stable?

Treat the mind as a small child. The child needs to get to a stage of day by day improvement in intelligence; following the path of goodness; and realizing that everything that is seen is product of *Maya* (illusion). Till the child gets to that stage you must keep increasing *Satsang* (company of the holy), remove the fears within, and stabilize its vision on the goal. Never use force on the mind. It will submit to your teaching when treated with gentleness and patience. Make it get disenchanted so it gives up its restlessness. With knowledge of *Atma Jnana* (what is real and unreal) remove its *Ajnana* (delusion). Increase its enthusiasm for *Brahma Sakshatkar* (direct experience of *Brahman*).

#### 133. To reach life's goal, how must one alter their feelings, Swami?

You must pay more attention to your journey that is getting closer to its end with every Sunrise. You may have seen processions of chariots with deities called *Rathotsavams*. These are highly decorated with flags, garlands of green leaves and flowers. Many skilled people drag them accompanied by singing with various Indian musical instruments (*Shankh* (*conch*), *Sannai etc*). Many with varieties of skills like dancing, wrestling, etc perform in front of it as it is dragged slowly. Thousands of people watch and surround the chariots in the street. Their eyes go naturally to all these performances yet they feel very happy when they join their palms and bow to the deities in the chariot. All the festive stuff going on is not that important. For some it is inconsequential.

Similarly in the festivities of life the chariot is your body. The deity in the body is *Atma*. Earning, spending, laughing, crying, injuring, healing are all varieties of daily acrobatics in the circus of life, although unimportant compared to worshipping God, and attaining *Atma*. Body is the chariot and Intellect is the charioteer being dragged with the ropes of blind attachment (*vyamoham*) on the road called desires. *Moksha* or liberation is its goal. The owner who is in the chariot is the creator (*Moola Virat Atma Swarupa*). He says thus 'The chariot you are pulling must be viewed as above. Instead people are being pulled and pushed by the desires and needs getting caught in the terrible merry go round of birth to death. It is not crossing any milestones or bridges in the journey. Unable to see any progress. Not paying attention to the method of travel. If you do not do any disciplined effort or *Sadhana*, then Grace will not descend.'

## 134. Swami, we are very fortunate to receive your darshan, sparshan, and sambashan.

In daily life every act is to be performed with God thought in mind, and one must sanctify their life by living in constant presence of God. Due to the good deeds (*punya*) of your past lives, you are able to speak and spend time with me who is the form of *Chidananda* (consciousness-bliss); is *Sad Guru*; is God who moves around with you; is very form of love; is a person you can talk to; is shining light of *Dharma*; the very touch of my feet gives experience of *Sat*; my words are like words of *Veda*; and my life is my message. The degree to which the devotee seeks shelter in God, He in turn surrenders to the devotee 100 times more.

# 135. In search of God why does one need to control the *Jnanaendriyas* (senses), Swami?

The obstacles in search of God are the food and entertainment (*Ahar, Vihar*) one engages in. To sustain body, food is necessary. A spiritual aspirant should take primarily *Sathwic* food. One who cannot conquer taste will not attain peace. He should not be over talkative. Mouth is performing two functions of tasting and speaking. Out of the five organs of knowledge, mouth has two functions. Rest of the organs of ear, tongue, eye, and skin are performing only one function each. If one controls the mouth, then one has the possibility of overcoming the other organs

of knowledge (*Inanendriyas*). This is an important step for *sadhana*. If butter is not melted then it means heat was insufficient, similarly if one does not reach divinity then *sadhana* must be insufficient, isn't it? In search of God, organs of knowledge play a very significant role.

#### 136. What does God expect, Swami?

God does not approve pride of wealth, pride of power, race, caste, sub caste, divisions, pride of social class, or pride of skin and beauty. The one who leads righteous life is a devotee and dear to God. Everyone has kindness in their heart, and to use it for the good is the duty of man. '*Hrid-daya-m*' (heart) contains syllables and in the middle of them is *Daya* which means compassion. We must justify that name.

When man loves and is loved in thought, word, and deed, only then he becomes eligible for God's love. Loving God is the real devotion. When you look into the eyes of one in front of you, you see your own image in their eyes. You see your own face when you peer into their eyes. When you realize that as you praise or insult another person you are doing that to your own self, then you would recognize that everyone is God, and hence love them. To love everyone is the primary duty of a spiritual aspirant (*Sadhak*). The pinnacle of love is God. Goal of devotion (*Bhakti*) is God who has the form of *Sathyam* (Truth), *Shivam* (auspiciousness), and *Sundaram* (beauty).

- 137.Q. What are *Anandam* (bliss), *Paravasyam* (ecstasy), *and Harsham* (happiness), Swami?
- A. Bliss (*Anandam*) is related to God. A yogi experiences ecstasy (*paravashyam*). One who does not have any desires he experiences *harsham*. Entire beings have access to happiness but invariably it is followed by unhappiness and sadness.
- Q. In order to grant the state of *Ananda* does God stay receptive to individuals (*jivas*)?
- A. God is very close to the physical, mental, and spiritual consciousness of living beings. He is *Smurtra gami* which means he is of the nature of responding to devotees call immediately. He is extremely capable of

removing the losses and difficulties of his devotees and dependents and grant them happiness in this world and beyond.

- Q. Ok Swami. Then why do yogis get liberated of their *karmic bondage*?
- A. They do *Tapas* (austerity), *Japa* and *Dhyana* (name chanting and meditation). They do not keep the fruits or benefits of those austerities. They give it away for the welfare of the entire creation. To protect from *Aadi Vyadhis*, they give away the fruits of their austerities to devotees, that is anyone who does *Sadhana*, and in turn they get freed from their own *karmic* bondage.

138. When one is at a higher spiritual state, do they call *Purusha* and *Prakriti* as *Brahman* (God) and *Maya* (Nature)? Please give an example, Swami?

I am the example for this. I left home, renounced the worldly ties (*Samsara*) at the age of 14. After renouncing I declared that I am *Brahman* (one God) similarly I made it known that I am *Maya*. *Maya* is that power (*Shakti*, energy) which puts a limit on *Brahman*, who is unlimited with infinite attributes. Even though born in Puttaparthi and being unlimited *Brahman*, I operated with limitation under the influence of *Maya*. After crossing age 14, I declared clearly that I am the form of unlimited *Brahman* and am no more under the influence of *Maya*. I indicated that I am that eternal transcendental principle (*para Thathwa*) incarnated to uplift the devotees (*Bhaktas*).

## 139. Swami, What is Sharanagati?

They keep saying *Sharanagati*, *Sharanagati*. But, how to do *Sharanagati*? One time a devotee asked me 'Swami, how to do *Sharanagati* (Surrender, Refuge)?' Immediately I said 'where is you doing *Sharanagati*? First do name chanting (*Nama smarana*) and that is enough. God will seek your *Sharanagati*'. *Nama smarana* (chanting the name) will make God take refuge in the devotee.

Sharanagati begins with by being an instrument in the hands of God, who is all love and Omnipotent, with the feeling that he is the basis and he is everything. In this state the devotee walks the path indicated by God and proceeds forward through circumstances beyond his imagination and capacity. The goal of this journey is feeling of oneness. This state experiences oneness with the creation. All the dualities like loss-gain, happiness-sorrow, sin-virtue, and creation-creator merge into the feeling of oneness (*ekatma bhava*). Recognizing the principle of Truth

(Sathya Thathwam) that there is only one and no two (Ekatma Bhava), gives the experience of Brahman or Atma or Sai.

- 140.Q. Swami, when you give *darshan* you seem ordinary (like others). How to understand this?
- A. Ordinary? Me? I am seen in Prashanti Nilayam where I appear in my cosmic form. You might ask, how so? This super mind is visible everywhere in how I am cleverly modifying the live sculptures (people) into doing beneficial selfless service. This is vision of *Sathya* (Truth). This is direct perception of *Atma (Atma Sakshatkar)*. It is this marvelous power emitting soft beatific smiles; silently spreading the waves of love; and giving unforgettable charming experiences making all hearts ecstatic. This is the greatest miracle beyond everything in this world.
- Q. When this God is *Guru*, is there a need for another *Guru*? What is that need?
- A. Very much needed, because the one who can take full energy and power from me is the *Sad Guru*. I am playing both of these roles. One who takes some power and energy from me and uses it to help and assist others in attaining higher spiritual states is a *Guru*. One who does not yield, dishearten, or delight in woman or wealth; hot or cold; fame or blame; and is in equanimity (*Sthita Prajna*), beyond dualities, constantly in awareness, and destroys attachment is a *Guru*. He can grant liberation very easily.
- 141. Swami, is there a place where your love does not pervade?

Not. There is no place this love does not pervade. This Sai is universal family. Sai love has no limits. I am closely related to all (*Atma bandhuvu*). I have been saying 'expansion is my life'. Expansion is the characteristic of life while contraction is the characteristic of death. Born as a human, one must progressively grow and mature like this. That is why I opened and gave to the world the grand epic called my life. My life is filled with sacrifice and great austerity (*Maha Yajna*) because I am the *Yajna Purush* (receiver of all the oblations offered in a *Yajna*, *God*).

- 142.Q. Your devotees know Sai but how about others?
- A. Using *Sai* as a synonym for words *Brahman* or *Atma* is the inner meaning and the hidden meaning (*niguda-arthamu*). With your limited mind and

intellect as the basis, do not get deluded into thinking that this visible beautiful 5 feet 3 inches form is Sai. Bound by *Maya* and *delusion* (*Maya*, *Moha*), do not think that Sai means the form that is visible to the eyes and nothing else.

- Q. So Swami, how will we have *darshan* (experience) of your real form?
- A. I am giving you the direct perception (*sakshatkar*) of my real form. You did not understand? Are you going to say 'what that real form is?' It is Universal Love; Universal Mother's Love; Love unsullied with the interest of selfishness or self centeredness; Pure Love; Fire like Pure Love; Love like the fire of *Yajna* that even uplifts small insects (*Shalabalu*) that fall into it; Love that removes the dirt from metals thrown into it; Love that will convert iron into gold by mere touch; Love that will chisel and create beautiful forms out of stones; Love that makes every part into a beautiful shape just like a woodworker does using a planer (*chitrika*); Love that is like the first rain that quenches the thirst of dried cracked ground. There is no end to the metaphors describing this Love. Human intellectual equipment can never know or measure the depth, expansion, height, quality, quantity, or the density of the principle of *Sai* (*Sai Thathwam*).

## 143. Swami, does a *Yogi* not have ego?

If *Yogi* thinks that he possesses these capabilities and miraculous powers, then *Paramatma* will puncture his Ego. In order for the *Yogi* to be used as an instrument, his ego must merge in *Paramatma*. As man pursues a hundred thousand ways to ruin himself, God pursues a million ways to uplift him. That is exactly what is happening now.

144. Swami, having obtained the unlimited divine experience after your visitation (*darshan*), this body and mind floats in miraculous out of this world vibrations?

Yes. It is very much needed. One experiences uninterrupted bliss as a result of – reminiscing the scenes repeatedly after *Darshan*; intense divine bliss experience and tears of joy; during bhajans experiencing heartfelt vibrations of divine energy when uttering God's name loudly; and conversing about Swami till next darshan. While experiencing all this, unknowingly one reduces one's burden of bad *Karma*.

## 145. How should the disciple be? What must he learn?

First and foremost he must have humbleness and obedience. If one does not have these they can never be a good student. One must learn holy divine knowledge (*Bhavya, Divya Vidya*) with devotion, discipline, and dedication. One who learns like that is a disciple. Worldly life that is transient, unreal, and unsteady is based on the permanent, real, and steady *Brahma Vidya* (knowledge of *Brahman*). This must be understood and experienced through study circles and contemplation, leading to liberation. This is the state beyond birth and death.

## 146. For a *Guru* to confer such a state, certainly *Sad Guru* must bless, hold, and lead the *Guru*. Is not it Swami?

Definitely! Help of the *Sad Guru* will certainly be there for the *Guru* to complete the work assigned to him. There are many children whose life goal is first *Guru*, then *Sad Guru*, and God after that. There are many who are struggling in the illusion that knowledge of Nature and World is important, and think that is *Vidya*. They have to be taken across the shore and that is the responsibility of the *Guru*. Self-confidence is the first station in the ascent onto the peak called divine life. Without getting contented with the first stage, using devotion and faith as support, as one proceeds forward exceptional new change takes place in their understanding. They will realize with delight and amazement that Swami's divine hand is behind it. Inner transformation will definitely develop. This transformation is magnificent and beyond human intelligence.

## 147. What kind of knowledge (*Vidya*) does this *Guru* impart?

The one who teaches *Para Vidya* (knowledge of the beyond, *Atma*) is the *Guru*. That knowledge by which all other knowledge is known; that which is the ultimate basis (*moola adhaar*); that which is divine light; that which is *Jnana*; that which is indivisible; that which is consciousness; that which is there in past, present and future; that which is worshipped in the three worlds; that which destroys illusion and attachment; that which is permanent Truth; that which is unmoving; that which is of the form of pure, tranquil, and liberating; that is *Para Vidya*. The one who teaches that is the *Guru*.

148. Swami, why did you make this life a never ending ordeal? Why it cannot be a little rest, a bit of entertainment, happiness, and a little peaceful?

I knew you would make these kinds of complaints. That is why I gave you a few concessions. Listen to what I am going to say! Why be so fearful of these tests? Even during that time I am present in your heart. The questions you cannot find answers for, I am ever present to give them to you. You only need to use your intellect vigilantly and think of me, that is enough. Would you find a better opportunity than this anywhere? In this world for the tests you take, there is no opportunity to ask someone and then write the answers. But you are given that opportunity for the tests God subjects you.

- Q. How does one know these tests?
- A. Only human is given the capacity to use his discriminating intelligence to perform work. This state of consciousness is at the rock bottom in some, in the middle in some, while some have this consciousness at a prominent level.

#### 149. What is needed to obtain bliss?

People want bliss (*Atma Ananda*) but they hesitate to do *Sadhana* (spiritual effort). They are not willing to spend a dime. They do not like or put up with even an iota of difficulty. Yet they expect liberation to drop out of the sky and land in their lap. In their mind they want the direct experience of God (*pratyaksha*) without any difficulties. As sage *Yagna-valkya* was leaving home for spiritual pursuits, he gave Gold and cows to his wife *Maitreyi*. At that time she asked him 'would all these be helpful for her spiritual pursuit (*Sadhana*)?' He replied that compared to spiritual prosperity called the direct experience, they (gold and cows) are much less and impermanent. Upon hearing that she forgo those and instead asked for the wealth of *Tapas* (austerity) and *Shradha* (unfaltering faith). Through these she sought for bliss and attained liberation (*Moksha*).

## 150. Swami, what is the meaning of 'Bhava grahi Janardana?'

When the body filled with feeling and emotion (*Bhava mayam*) becomes filled with God thought, in that second it transforms from *Jiva* to *Shiva*, *Nara* to *Narayana*, *Manava* to *Madhava*, and *Purusha* to *Purushottama* (individual to God).

Bhava grahi Janardana (God knows the feelings of devotee) means that. The higher meaning of that is, God knows and accepts the holy feelings of a person offering the food and not the cleanliness of the food items or its preparation. That is, only God can know your feelings. Your fellow beings cannot know your feelings. Reason for this is God does not have any feelings of his own. The inner and higher meaning is that your feelings in your body are his feelings. You may have understood it. It means when you join your feelings (with his no feelings) and respond, it gives rise to differences with others feelings, which then leads to conflicts is a common well known fact. The saying 'deham devalayam, bhavam saranagati' (body is a temple, feeling is surrender) which means 'surrender is the feeling of the body as a temple' and that can be seen when the devotee feels the form of God and his glory, it takes him into indefinable head splitting ecstasy making his body a temple and his heart the form of God. Observe here that this is limited to personal experience only, unreachable and understandable by any other method. So what it means is, although in that state body is like a temple but is not evident. It is understood in an instant when it is intermingled with devotion.

## 151. Swami, what are arishta panchakamulu?

In the past, the state of *Guru Kula* (abode of Guru) used to be like this. Students used to abide for learning and strictly followed the regulations. Any student who violated the orders was not even allowed in that vicinity. Any person who possessed the five bad qualities (*akara panchaka arishtamulu*) each starting with A was not tolerated. The first of the five qualities starting with A is carelessness *Alakshya*. Second one is *Avinaya* (lack of humility). Third one is *Ahamkar* (egotism). Fourth one is *Asuya* (jealousy). Fifth one is *Asabhyata* (indecency). Anyone possessing these five would not even qualify as a student.

Do not be careless. Do not exhibit arrogance. Egotism is even more dangerous. Jealousy is a cardinal sin. Indecency is while being a human, yet living contrary to the noble feelings one must possess to live in the society.

152. What is the reason for disciples not getting right transformation in spite of being near *Guru*, Swami? What is the reaction of the *Gurus* towards these disciples?

Previous lives *karmas* (actions), worldly tendencies (*vishaya vasanas*) together increase doubts and wrong notions (*apoha*). Narrow mindedness, arrogance, priority to personal happiness keeps one away from the feet of ascended

masters (*siddha purushas*). Although the ascended masters possess a lot of *Siddhis* (powers), *Vairagya* (detachment), and *Jnana*, yet for the spiritual ascendance of ordinary people and *sadhaks* (aspirants), they behave and act like ordinary people and show love, friendship towards them, so that they can feel kinship and get transformed. But these disciples entertain different notions, feelings towards *Gurus* and contaminate their own life. They engage in bad publicity. Assistance shows up for doing bad. Such people go through hell life after life.

Real *Mahatmas, Siddha Purushas* are hard to detect. Even a tiny glance of theirs falls on you, it brings about a lot of change. Whatever they say, it is said with your benefit in mind. Through variety of methods they improve the *Sadhana* of the aspirants and put them on the path to liberation. No matter what, do not lose the company of ascended masters like *Mahatmas, Sadgurus,* and *Siddha purushas*. Never ever leave their proximity. Patiently take refuge in them. Everything takes time. Keep waiting. Patiently wait. Either in their presence or behind their back, one should never criticize the *Gurus*. They are oceans of compassion. Relish that flow of compassion.

## 153. How do *Yogis* and *Gurus* help the world?

Only those who obtained the grace of God are born as humans, a rare opportunity. God keeps the doors of liberation open for humans. Many ascended masters (*Mahatmas*, *Siddha purushas*) eagerly want to evolve and send them through the doors of liberation. They are ready to take part in the difficulties, miseries, and fears faced by man and ready to teach him the *sadhana* so that those do not come back again into his life again. *Gurus* are continually working to help man escape the grip of senses and lend a protecting hand to him to lead a spiritual life. They have only one desire that man should lead a life of dignity, happiness, and contentment. Towards that, they use their spiritual energy to charge mother earth so that divine vibrations encircling it are enhanced. Those who use this energy, sent incognito, lead a happy life. Just like the Sun upon sunrise fills the world with sunlight, a *Guru* by the light rays of his *Jnana* makes the *Sadhak* shine. *Gurus* do their own work in teaching detachment (*Vairagya*) while giving them knowledge, love, *Sadhana*, and deep affection.

154. Do all *Gurus* impart the same teachings? Do they all belong to the same category?

Not ordinary *Gurus*. Only spiritual *Gurus* are considered as *Gurus* and they are of eight types.

- *Bodha Guru Bodha Guru* is one who only reads scriptures and teaches. He gives eagerness and encouragement in line with the injunctions in the scriptures.
- *Veda Guru* Teaches the meanings of Truth, Reality and makes them experts in this knowledge and turns them towards God.
- *Nishidda Guru* He teaches actions that yield fruits, results (*kamya karmas*) like ritualistic actions that yield happiness in this world and beyond.
- *Kamya Guru* One who makes you conduct meritorious work (*punya karmas*) that yield happiness in this world and the other.
- *Vachaka Guru* He teaches you the principle of *Yoga* (union with God) and makes you experience the divine principle of *Atma*.
- Soochaka Guru He helps you control your senses by teaching you six good qualities (Shad Sampatti) shama, dama, uparati, titiksha, sraddha, samadhana mind control, control of senses, self withdrawal, endurance, faith, contemplation of Reality.
- *Karana Guru* begets you to experience the constant contemplation of the oneness of *Jiva* and *Brahman (Jiva Brahmaikya Anusandhan)*.
- *Vihita Guru* Clears all kinds of doubts and cleanses the mind. After cleansing and purifying your mind he makes you recognize the principle of *Atman*.

Out of these the *Karana Guru* who begets the experience of constant contemplation of the oneness of *Jiva* (individual) and *Brahman* (cosmic consciousness) is most important. He teaches the relationship between these two, the object and the reflection i.e. *Brahman* and *Jiva*. He is the real *Guru*. Everyone must try to get the grace of that *Guru*. Practice all *Vidyas* (teachings of the *Guru*, all methods) with humility, obedience, faith, and devotion. Earn the love of the *Guru*. One who begets the grace of *Guru* can accomplish anything.

155. Swami, does the *Guru Brahma*, *Guru Vishnu*... *sloka* (scriptural aphorism) mean that *Guru* is the direct form of the *Trinity*? or Is there a different meaning to it?

Lord *Brahma* creates the universe from his divine resolve (*sankalpa*). Lord *Vishnu* with his resolve (*sankalpa*) sustains the world and Lord *Easwara* dissolves (*laya*) it. It is said that this *trinity* is present in the *Guru* form, and *trinity* form is *Guru*. Having obtained the extremely difficult to get human birth, individual forgets why they came on earth as to what to do, where to go, instead like a kid spends time playing, eating, and enjoying with parents. To make him aware that this is not life, a process is put in place called *Akshara Abhyasa* (learning alphabets on a slate with chalk). The youngster is made to practice on the slate the *pancha-akshari* (5 letters) *maha mantra* '*Om Namah Sivaya*' which conveys to him 'learn the letters that never perish and merge in that imperishable principle of *Para Brahman* (God)'. The power of this *mantra* sustains and protects the youngster and makes his life worthwhile. Likewise an adult individual (*jivi*) gets similar process from the *Guru*. He enhances the vision of Truth (*Jnana Drishti*) in the *jivi* hence becomes *Guru Brahma*. It means the creator of *Jnana* is *Guru*.

Vidya (education) that began with childhood is practiced with discipline and when used with good ideas, equal mindedness, and on righteous path it becomes the characteristic of good Vidya. Peace, tolerance, forbearance, equal mindedness are the principle of Vishnu (Vishnu Thathwam). Receiving education (Vidya) with the help of a Guru possessing these qualities; entering all fields armed with this education and humility; earning deservedness; gaining wealth due to deservedness; following the path of Dharma (righteous duties) facilitated by wealth; leading to the attainment of worldly and spiritual gains is Vishnu principle (Vishnu Thathwam). That is why Guru is Vishnu.

Now, *Maheswara* (last of the trinity) is giver of *Jnana* (*Jnana Data*). *Maheswara* is that spiritual *Guru* (*Adhyatmic Guru*) who tells you the following: reminds you that born as a human perform your allotted duties according to *Dharma* and then to return back to your place of origin; tells you about using not only physical and worldly but also spiritual education just the way you were told on *Akshara Abhyasa* day (learning alphabets on a slate with chalk); reminds you of *Vidya* that does not perish i.e. get absorbed in the imperishable God and merge in the propitious auspiciousness (*Shivam*).

Hence the inner meaning of the word *Guru* is the one who gets rid of the darkness called *Ajnana* (Ignorance) and shows the path of light *Jnana*. Although mother is the first *Guru* yet the one who grants *Jnana*, gives worldly knowledge and knowledge of discrimination (*Loka Jnana*, *Vichakshana Jnana*), and helps and supports in attaining divinity is *Guru*. Hence *Guru* is of the form of Trinity.

## 156. Can everyone who reached *Guru's* nearness attain high spiritual state?

How can we say that? Egoism hidden in people will not let them go near *Gurus, Mahatmas* (elevated souls), and *Siddha Purushas* (ascended master with mystical powers). Even if they reach them, it will not let them get dedicated with faith. They may seem like they are near a *Guru*, but the necessary change and growth does not take place. Because of this reason they waste a lot of time. Some of them misuse the rare human birth. If one wants to escape from senses, desires, attachments, only solution is living near and under the guidance of *Sadgurus*, and *Mahatmas*. They play hide and seek with *Gurus* due to their petty selfishness and egoistic behavior. *Mahatmas* understand their conduct. Yet they do not get angry but try again and again. Ordinary people and *Sadhaks* may leave a *Guru* but *Gurus* indirectly do not leave them and constantly try to guide them on to the right path.

## 157. Only when humility is joined with faith it leads to higher journey. Isn't this true Swami?

You thought well. Where there is humility, there has to be faith. In case if it is not there, then it will steadily come. For Sai's word is the word of Truth. I say many, many things and those who listen and put it into practice, for them they are words of Truth. As a part of that if one does selfless service (*Seva*), I said I will save them. There are many, many situations like this. Those who do not have faith in these will not have love. One without love will not get peace. One without peace will not enter the path of Truth. Bliss is a void for one who does not tread the path of Truth. One who has no Bliss then there is no God for them. So to enjoy Bliss one must tread the path of Truth. Therefore, where there is faith, there is love. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is Truth. Where there is Truth, there is Bliss. Where there is Bliss, there is God. Root cause for all of this is Faith.

## 158. Swami, how should 'Suchi' be?

Which 'Suchi' (cleanliness)? Is it external 'Suchi'? Or is it internal 'Suchi'? One must improve their internal and external 'Suchi' (cleanliness). One cannot become 'Suchi' by cleaning up the external body. Inner cleanliness is essential and needed. If sambar (Indian soup) is cooked in uncoated metal vessel it gets poisoned with rust. Similarly when the inner vessel called heart is coated with selfless love (prema) then any dish cooked in it will stay pure and clean. Therefore inner cleanliness is very needed for every human. Do not let in any unholy thoughts, any evil intentions, and any bad ideas. Instead fill your heart with love for God and sanctify it. With the love as coating, one can cook anything in it. Therefore inner cleanliness is much needed. To match it, external cleanliness needs to be improved also. This is called 'Suchi'.

The leftover word *Daksha* (see question 159) means one needs to become a 'daksha'. What is this? No matter what the difficulties or sufferings, one does not let go of God. One should become a good 'daksha'. One who has this kind of dedication (diksha) is called a 'daksha'. That is, one does not change one's feelings under any circumstances, towards any person, and in any changing situations of time-action-duty (kala, karma, kartavya). One needs to strictly avoid Rajo Guna (passion/ desire based attributes) characteristics of like – dislike, desirable – undesirable, hateful etc. Political ideas and feelings are not to be entertained in one's heart. These are the deserving values of a 'daksha'. That is one who is dedicated to these values is a 'daksha'.

You started with asking something else. I know but why are you asking from in-between? Does it mean you know the meaning of the rest of it? Let me hear what you know. First say the complete couplet (*sloka*, *aphorism*) you wanted to ask about.

159. Swami said 'Say the meaning you know, say it understandably' and made me articulate this explanation of an aphorism from *Bhagavad Gita* 

Anapeksha Suchir Daksha, udasino gata vyataha

Sarvarambha parityagi, Yomad bhakta samey priyaha

I will tell the meaning I know about *anapeksha*, Swami. Please correct if it's in error. Your devotees should be free of desires. Free of wants. How can a human

equipped with body, senses, and intellect be free of wants? They would have some or other desires. At one end there are sense pleasures that are quick gratifying, and on the other hand there are desires that are beyond senses. Rest of the wants and desires are in one of them or the other. But how would we live without any desires? I think they say *anapeksha* (without wants) meaning to be without selfish wants. But how is this possible, please let us know Swami?

A. You said it well. You also asked questions well. Can I tell you a nice way out? There is nothing wrong in seeking your desires. But utilize them for pleasing God, and you can experience your desires. With the feeling of all action towards pleasing God ('sarva karma bhagavat preetyartham'), develop and improve noble feelings and follow the ones that are sathya and nitya (Truth, Eternal). Then you will become one without desires, when you enjoy everything towards pleasing God without the distinction of yours and mine. It is alright to seek unattained desires, and removal of worldly desires. But today human has too many worldly desires and very few that are spiritual. But the divinity in both of them is only one. Then what is the basis that fulfills these wants? Suchir Daksha' (dedication to inner outer cleanliness) is greatly needed that you mentioned above.

160. So one with that kind of *anapeksha Suchir Daksha* (without wants, dedicated to inner outer cleanliness) can be called *udaseena* (indifferent)?

Yes. It means one needs to be detached to everything. He should not give opportunity to feelings of distinction like this is mine and that is yours. He must stay indifferent (*udaseen*). While experiencing or enjoying he must have the feeling of indifference under any circumstances.

161. Ok Swami. They said here *Gata Vyataha*, please tell us what is the inner meaning?

It means one should not feel bad in the least about what happened in the past or what is in future. Past is past. It is never going to return. Future is uncertain. Without mulling over the past or thinking about the future, only think of the present as you enter into your activities. In the present when you attain anything with right dedication, then you gained victory in all respects. This is the root cause today for humans who are not in the present and have become targets of turmoil in all aspects. He constantly feels bad about the past effort that failed. What does one gain by it? He gets apprehensive in many ways about upcoming future. What is approaching

is not yours. What is the value of worrying about what is buried in the bowels of time? Hence focus in the present and dedicate yourself to your work activity because that is the seed. It is this seed that operates both the past and future. You are forgetting about this seed and worrying about the past trees or the upcoming future trees. Hence we need to keep focus in the present. Only then human can win all kinds of victory.

## 162. Swami, does *Sarvarambha Parityagi* mean let go of the worries and renounce everything?

Yes. You need to get rid of all kinds of desires and egotism. As long as egotism persists human cannot accomplish even a little spiritual progress. In many different ways man is getting ruined because of egotism. Egoism is terrible. As long as egoism is there, no one will respect the individual including their spouse, children, and kith and kin although outwardly they might just pretend. They will not love at all. Hence you must view egoism as an enemy to human. Therefore one must be on alert not to give an opportunity for egoism to strike root in us. If one gives up only this they would understand what humanness is.

## 163. Swami, what is the meaning of 'Yo mad-bhakta samey-priyaha' (sloka from Gita)?

Only those devotees who possess the qualities mentioned above are dear to me. I am stating clearly that the rest of them are not. You will have to develop these kinds of qualities if you want to have close relationship with God; you want to receive the right kind of love; and want to attain the state and position of permanent Truth. To deserve God's love, you have to develop these qualities without fail. On the surface some people say *Namaskaram* (Indian greeting). Inside it is all *kaaram* (spicy red hot pepper). It is no use to say many *Namaskarams*' while your heart is filled and burning with *kaaram*. You must fill your heart with sacred qualities. Pride, self-conceit comes from this egotism. One must improve humility if one wants to get rid of egotism. As long as egotism persists, qualities like anger, jealousy, hatred, and pride will chase you.

164. So Swami, to get rid of bad qualities if one focuses first and foremost in activities like meditation, rituals (*pujas*) etc. can one attain some peace?

No. As long as one has the duo of egotism and anger in their heart, they would not even have little peace no matter how many rituals they do; how many holy vows (*Vratam*) they perform; how many spiritual practices (*Sadhana*) they engage in. So first and foremost human must get rid of egotism. This egotism is connected with sense of possession (*mamakara*). Therefore you need to get rid of it. You might feel that you are doing rituals, performing vows, and doing spiritual practices, but none of these activities will reach me.

Human body granted by God must be used for the right purpose and not waste it in wrong activites. This will waste the entire life. You must recognize the difference between *Jiva* and *Atma*. Individual is *Jiva*. *Samishti* (Society) is God. The one who is present in all of us is God (*Atma*). Hence you must move from the individual principle (*Vyakti Thathwam*) and enter into unity (of all) principle (*Samishti Thathwam*). Only then divinity can be attained. If you cannot understand this then no matter how many *Shlokas* (verses from scriptures) you read or memorize, you will be left with only grief (*shoka*). If you want to avoid this, then you need to develop and foster the good qualities. When you become the abode of delightful principle of love and turn into a drop of that nectarine love, then the omnipresent God will set in your heart and accept your praises and honor. God will grant you the state of *Adwaitha* (principle of oneness).

## 165. Swami, it seems impossible not to have desires entirely?

You need to understand an important thing here. One thing can be done with respect to freedom from desires. It is to change the direction of the desires. Instead of desiring the worldly pleasures, develop intense desire for God and obtain that bliss which only he can grant. In this manner when the worldly desires are directed towards God all issues are resolved.

166. Swami, it seems easy as you say that we need to change the direction of our desires, but is it possible?

I am saying it one more time. Focus all your thoughts on me. Have devotion for me. Worship me; center your attention on me; offer everything that you do to me. When you do this, you will certainly reach me. You all are my very dear devotees

hence I am making this vow. I have told you many things. After hearing all of them you may still be confused a bit. Therefore I will tell you even more clearly. If you do not understand spiritual philosophy (*Adhyatmic Vedanta*), it is ok. Only surrender to me (*Saranagati*). Surrender to me completely. Whatever is your obligatory duty (*Dharma*) do it with the attitude of offering it to me. I am giving you the pledge that I will take care of everything else.

- Q. Swami, you said it very clearly and completely?
- A. Yes. I have told you a profound, deep truth. This is not just for you only. I am saying this to the entire humanity. I have taught you the permanent truth. This is my message to humanity. One who listens to it with faith and devotion and follows it becomes near and dear to me. Those who broadcast this message will also be near and dear to me. Those who follow it will be freed from the wrong path and attain higher spiritual states and higher worlds (*Uttama gati, Uttama lokas*).

## 167. Swami, what is 'inner voice' (Antarvani)?

Animals do not possess this kind of inner instrument (*Antah Karan – manas, buddhi, chitta, and ahamkar* – mind, intellect, sub-consciousness, and ego). They do not have the discrimination if something is good or bad. In humans, the compassionate God inside them makes them hear his words due to which they have the discriminating ability to tell right from wrong. God's voice is 'inner voice' (*Antarvani*). In other words, humans can hear what God is saying from inside of them.

## 168. Swami, to obtain God's grace how must our feelings be?

A living that cannot attain God's grace is not a living at all. A life that cannot attain God's love is not a life at all. Therefore take up spiritual path, do the necessary *Sadhana* and earn the love and grace of Sai. Remember that life is an austerity (*Yajna*), a sacrifice. Every work you do is an appeal to God. If you do your daily work with the attitude of surrender (*Saranagati*) and intelligence to dedicate it to God (*samarpan*), then even your sleep will become *Samadhi* (transcendental state). What else can it be?

169. It seems the burden of *karma* is increasing due to not doing them as an offering to God. How to understand this Swami?

You asked a good question. Till one gets rid of the Illusion, one must stay in that darkness. They have to acquire the understanding that they need to light a lamp. One big issue is that elderly people agonize over the things in the past. While younger people float in imaginations, and thoughts of the future. They are not living in the present hence suffering so much.

170. Swami, nowadays whatever you say or do is taken wrongly. Why does this happen?

One disease of delusion called lack of faith is spreading rapidly and severely among people. It is burning up the tender roots of confidence and ruining the life. One does not have the right to judge yet they pretend and give judgment. Doubt, anger, hate, and illness must not be allowed to increase even a bit. They need to be severed in the bud. That itself will provide the evidence to improve your faith.

- Q. Swami, is it possible to understand you?
- A. If you wish to understand me then you need to experience me. You need to know me as a result of direct experience. The effort you make each day to know me is ever new and will be different from prior day. That is why the effort to know me is a waste.
- 171. Swami, while undergoing *Prarabda Karma* if one has the good luck of your *darshan* (visitation), what should they wish for?

When God smiles, comes near you, and asks you what you want? Then the bliss and complete detachment (*Anand, Paripoorna Vairagya*) that breaks out in one's heart will make them not feel like asking even about their ailments. This you know. You are always experiencing this state. When an individual is enjoying this state then where is the question of suffering the *Prarabda* (*Karma* of past life)? Just like the anesthetic given by the doctor makes one not feel the pain, similarly when the time comes to experience *Prarabda*, the *darshan* (vision) of God makes one experience the non-dual unique state of bliss which makes them forget the difficulties and sorrows. Therefore when one recognizes the arrival of God (*Avatar*),

they will leave the physical gross world and reach this state. That is why they praise God by saying he is the giver of happiness and comforts of this world and beyond.

172. Swami, those who experienced invaluable peace in your physical presence, are they now able to obtain same peace from your subtle form also?

The divine energy from this form sanctifies those who are in physical proximity. The divine energy emanating from subtle form sanctifies the entire earth. The divine energy from causal form (*karana roopam*) sanctifies millions of universes. (*Maha Karana Sarira*) The state of Super Consciousness is ever in Sat-Chit-Ananda *Adwaitha* state in great tranquility and peace. The divine energy that emanates from it sanctifies *sameepya*, *salokya*, *sayujya* states of *Avadhutas*, *Amsavatars*, *Maha Siddha purushas*, *Maha Yogis* etc. When my divine name is chanted then, I am present there in an imperceptible state. I show my presence through divine miracles *leelas*.

## 173. How are we to understand your Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence?

I am that beginning less eternal principle (*Aadi Thathwam*) which is rooted everywhere all the time. Based on the need at various places I manifest myself there. If not manifest it does not mean I am not there. In the living beings I am manifest in the five sheaths (*Koshas*) – *Annamaya kosha*, *Pranamaya kosha*, *Manomaya kosha*, *Vijnanamaya kosha*, and *Anandamaya kosha*. It is my presence which allows their individual functioning. When I give an experience to you about my presence in one of the sheaths, then you feel that I am present there. It does not mean that I am not there if I do not give you an experience. I am everywhere all the time. Entire knowledge and experiences are at my feet. When someone understands that everything is happening due to my resolve (*sankalpa*) then they can reach me and enjoy the divine bliss.

## 174. In order to have God thought (*Sat chintana*) in the end, one must try now onward?

Yes. One who is in the illusion of body cannot understand the principle of *Atma*. Body consciousness is not permanent. It is very necessary to know what thought and state one must have at the time of death. To know that state one does

all the *Sadhanas* during their lifetime. The result of the *Sadhanas* is to have holy thought (*Sat chintana*) in the end. Cause and effect are inseparable. As is the dough, so is the bread. As is *Sadhana*, so is next spiritual state (*Sad gati*). Therefore the holy thought in the end is a sign of the next spiritual state (*Sad gati*). Whatever we do during life journey, we will think of that only in the end.

End is not something far away. For the impermanent bodies every second is the end. Whatever we think during the end time creates the future circumstances. That is the foundation for rebirth. If one thinks of God at that end time, he gets my thoughts i.e. he reaches me. Every action and every *Sadhana* should be aimed at purifying the time of death. The *sadhana* should be aimed at having holy thought (*Sat chintana*) i.e. thought of *AUM* (God) in the end.

#### 175. How should one's actions be as related to food and entertainment?

Eating light leads to living longer and healthier. Without fail if one prays twice a day, it gives strength and courage. It gives energy to withstand illness. When someone gives you a glass of water, you say immediately 'thank you'. Then how much gratitude one must show to God who is protecting you from harm? Actions must be dedicated to God then it will give wellness to mind and body. One gives rest to physical machinery also and they cannot be driven incessantly. In that case, what must you do in case of the delicate and intricate human body? Skip a meal once a week. It is good for you and for the country. Take only water. This will remove the dirt in your body. Animals and birds are protecting their health by following food discipline. Only a healthy person is able to forget his body focus, offer his thoughts and feelings to God and derive happiness from that. Ill health is unavoidable result of laziness and lethargy. Good health is the unavoidable result of strict living. Do your own work. Your health will definitely improve. Contentment is a great tonic. Use your body as a boat with two oars of devotion (*Bhakti*) and detachment (*Virakti*) to row yourself across the ocean of life.

# 176. God is praised as *shodasa kala prapoorna* (complete with 16 excellences). Why is that Swami?

Five organs of action (*Karmendriyas*), five senses (*Jnanendriyas*, organs of knowledge), five sheaths (*Koshas*), and heart make up 16. Whoever is in control of these 16 is equivalent to being God. When you do *Namaskar* to God and give 16 rupees as an offering it means 'I am unable to control these 16 therefore I am

handing them over to you (God). If I leave them to others they will not be able to manage them'.

#### 177. Swami, is a transformational shift in the state of society needed?

You recognized it well. Society is association of individuals. Improving one individual is insufficient. Society will progress only when individuals have unity, good conduct, and higher ideals. When society is well then the country will progress. If spiritual transformation is brought forward for the transformational shift in the status of all, then the entire society will progress for sure.

## 178. Swami, Is spiritual transformation useful to humanity?

Today in the world under the name of religions there is no end to the quarrels, riots, violence, and atrocities. It is due to man not understanding things properly. It is the root cause of this era of destruction. Religion, Mind, Man have to be restored into the right path. Kindness; love; compassion; sympathy; harmony among all religions; spiritual lectures and teachings; all of these will teach knowledge of *Atma Ananda* (Atmic Bliss). Spiritual transformation revolution must happen. Only then human race will be revitalized.

## 179. How should our feelings be, Swami?

Everyone must possess and improve higher ideals, expansive feelings, and faith. Once these thoughts are implemented then there will no room for tainted feelings, ill will, and malice. The differences that exist among people will disappear. Mere teaching will not bring transformation, it comes only by following and doing. When this change comes, then he will change into a real human (*manava*). Then they can attain what they aspire for.

#### 180. What is the reason for the current awful state of human being?

Devotion without humanness is useless. Then where is the fullness of humanity? Man has been born for hundreds of thousands of years, yet his humanness is still going through birthing pains. Now we see man only in the form of a human. One cannot find a man with humanness. We can see collaboration and helpfulness among animals but not among men. If a small piece of sugar is seen by an ant, it brings all other ants with it to carry it back. If a crow sees discarded food, it brings other crows and they all eat together. But man is living contrary to this in disunity.

#### 181. First and foremost what sadhana must we do, Swami?

I always give good advice. The weakness of your heart and the contamination in your mind is hiding the divinity inside you. As soon as you realize this, then understand that you have recognized your ailment. Once the illness is diagnosed, then it won't take long to cure it. You need to question yourself by saying what *Sadhana* must you do first? Love the entire living beings with pure heart. Love and serve selflessly. Recognize that the *Atma* (consciousness) that is shining in you is in all of them. Loving entire living beings means loving yourself.

## 182. Swami, please let us know the way to see God (*Madhava*) in man (*manava*).

When you feel that 'help to man is help to God' (*manava seva is Madhav seva*), then you would be able to see God in man (*Madhava in manava*). In order to see God, first and foremost you need to recognize humanness. Without recognizing humanness experiencing God is impossible. Without fail, service to humanity is the way to experience God.

## 183. Can one get experience of God with only selfless service?

Seva (selfless service) is like a spice that gives the taste of bliss to life. There is purity in Seva. Through Seva one can earn appreciation from God also. As a Sevak (one who does Seva) and a reliable guard Hanuman earned great accolades. Instead of speaking about Seva, one must demonstrate it.

## 184. Swami, what is the goal of human?

When we analyze and understand the 24 *Thathwas* (principles) of man, nothing remains. They all are visible truths but not permanent transcendental Truth. They are the moving, changing, transient, untruths. Know this. Your mind would know the external form of world. Out of many imaginations and creations of *Maya*, its first resolve took the form of creation. It is all due to mixing of the five elements in various proportions (see *panchikritam*). To know this man is given nose, tongue, eye, skin, and ears. Therefore, 'I am not the body' means nature, cosmos, all beings and things are not 'I' or not *Atma*. All these appear like *Atma*. In deep sleep senses, mind, and cause will disappear and ego dissolves in itself. Hence deep sleep (*sushupti*) is compared to *Samadhi*. It is in bliss. Wakeful (awake) state gives that knowledge to it. Therefore awareness of the wakeful (awake) state and bliss in the

deep sleep state give knowledge (*Jnana*). When one gets both then it is the sign and goal of victory. *Samadhi* means undistracted (one-pointed) intellect. *Samadhi* means *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

#### 185. What is needed for an ideal state (*adarsh stithi*)?

For an ideal state one needs intellect based on Truth, and a consciousness that does not tolerate narrow mindedness and pollution. One needs these two aspects first. This wealth (*Aasthi*) makes one a believer (*Asthik*). Intellect (*Buddhi*) depends quite a bit on the questions you ask based on your day to day issues (*moulika samasya*).

## 186. What is the inner meaning of *Yajna* (fire ceremony)?

When we learn the inner meaning of the *Yajnas* that are performed outwardly only then we will recognize their significance. These *Yajnas* are not performed for the sake of the individual self but for the benefit of the world (*Lok Kalyan*). As soon as the evil qualities of anger, jealousy, and hatred arise we must make the effort to sacrifice them on the sacrificial altar called mind. External *Yajnas* are performed once a year in one place or other. But the *Yajna* altar inside is always with us no matter where we go. It is always with us like a shadow irrespective of time and place. Hence as soon as the evil qualities arise in us we need to make the effort to kill them. Only then we will deserve God's grace. The day we get rid of the evil qualities Godliness will arise the same day.

## 187. What must one know in order to take a step forward in *sadhana*?

In the battle that one wages on inner enemies there is a difference between individuals. Everyone receives results in proportion to their spiritual efforts (sadhana), and their Karmas (results) of this and past lives. In spiritual journey, based on the light that one holds in their hand everyone needs to move forward at a pace suitable to them. You cannot taste or experience Sat Chit Ananda (existence-awareness-bliss) as long as you are in Illusion (avidya), in ignorance (Ajnana), and without discipline. You can never attain Sat Chit Ananda. You are wearing a three pendant chain in your neck. One is black colored Tamas, second one red colored Rajas, and the third one white colored Sathwa Guna. Deny that you are bound by these Gunas (qualities), because no matter when the three pendant chain

has to slip away. You need to become like a baby who does not have jealousy (asuya), hatred (dwesham), and greed (lobham). You have to go beyond your family boundary and view the whole world with compassion. Once you can do that then you are ready to take the first step to cross the threshold of Maya.

#### 188. In what way do God and *Guru* assist a *sadhak* (aspirant)?

There is plenty of water below the ground. At some spots one has to dig deep to find water. But in some places, like near rivers, one can find water easily by digging a little bit because there is greater amount of water in the ground (water table is high). So is life. How so? In the ground called life, God's grace is like water. This is present in each one of us. *Guru* is like the river. One can find God's grace through the grace of *Guru*. To manifest what is hidden inside you is God's work. Therefore God by assigning the work to *Guru* searches and pulls out what is buried deep and spread inside the individual *Jivi*. To bring out the buried water one needs mechanical equipment. Electricity is needed to run this machine. This invisible electricity is God. The machine called *Guru*, by taking this electricity in needed amount, pulls out the divine energy hidden inside you through *sadhana*, spiritual practices. Along with the water there are lots of minerals below ground. These minerals are virtues. Through these virtues, *Guru* pulls out the divine energy in plenty and makes it available. When this machine (*Guru*) is strong then one gets lot more water (God's grace, divine energy) than expected in a short time.

## 189. Swami, in what way can we compare the spiritual journey of a Sadhak?

Your own *Sadhana* will help you overcome the six evil qualities (*Ari Shadvargas*) (desire, anger, attachment, greed, pride, jealousy). If these mountains do not exist or if you do not climb them and are on the ground, then there is no fear of falling down. You become alert only when you climb the mountain. If any one of these six evil qualities takes shelter in you, it will elevate you to the height of Mt. Everest. Due to lack of alertness one falls down from there. The fall makes you incapable of walking anymore. That is the reason why these evil qualities are compared to mountains. These mountains throw down a person into the depths of hell (*Patal, lower worlds*).

Life of man is a huge ocean. One needs to climb the boat of *Sadhana* to travel this ocean. If there are holes in the boat then water seeps in and will sink the boat. If the boat sinks, then death due to drowning is certain. You must take care

that the boat does not develop holes. In case if it develops a hole, then you need to demonstrate the intelligence to plug it else life will be a loss. Therefore, one must learn well the skill of climbing this mountain. Or with the help of those who know this skill, reach the shores of the ocean safely. Through this *Vidya* (skill), develop in plenty the qualities of peace, tolerance, love, compassion, and forgiveness. It is indeed an art to navigate the boat called life safely to the shore.

## 190. How should the feelings be of those who come to prostrate at your *Samadhi* (Tomb)?

Many people are coming to visit the Samadhi of this body. No one is recognizing the indweller. They are prostrating repeatedly to this Samadhi. To attain the state of equanimity is the state of *Samadhi*. This is not visible in any of them.

## 191. What is the significance of a *Guru*? Why is company of a *Guru* necessary?

Guru gives through totally selfless thoughts and prayers, the food necessary for the body and makes you understand that you are not the body. He makes you constantly be aware that you are 'you' (Self) and gives you protection in his surroundings. Company of Guru is for this protection. Your life is like a stone. Assume that it comes into the hands of a good sculptor who recognizes your inherent qualities and sculpts a nice form that is useful for many and makes it deserving to receive the namaskars (greetings) of millions. God is the sculptor who is doing this work in making you deserving first and then raises you to an esteemed position. The work of a Guru, Sadguru is to make you forget that you are the body and make you realize that you are its indweller. Instead if you leave the stone in the hands of a crazy person, he will break it into pieces.

This means that if you hand the stone called life into the hands of a person who is still in the grips of ignorance then he would turn it into something that is neither useful to him nor to others. Therefore it is the work of a wise person to put that stone in the hands of a skilled sculptor. This work can be done by a *Guru*. *Sadguru* gives the training to this *Guru*. That very *Sadguru* is holding your hand and helping you walk. Protect the treasure of your *Jnana* so your life does not get wasted through the pot holes called attachment; use two hands called faith to block these pot holes; reach and retain the state you desire. Mould your life to the way I wish it to be, and here on hoping that you will deliver what I aspire from you.

#### 192. What kind of confidence (Vishwas) must one have towards their Guru?

Whether you have an experience once or ten times, that incident must show unimaginable change in you. That itself will create a line of thinking which will take you to higher realms. Remember the dialogue between Lord *Krishna* and *Arjun*. Lord *Krishna* showed a crow and asked '*Arjun*, is it a crow?' *Arjun* replied, 'it is whatever you say, and not what I think it is'. Lord *Krishna* replied, 'this is to test your state of mind'. Similarly whatever *Guru*, *Sadguru* says you should be able to follow unquestioningly. This is called confidence. A *Guru* is not the way you wish him to be because that *Guru* is an instrument in the hands of the *Sadguru*. Whatever *Sadguru* tells him, he is ever ready to follow it. He is not concerned about the good or bad. *Sadguru* selects one who is in that state of mind as his child and gives him to assist another *Jivi* who is making the effort to lift himself into higher states of consciousness. A *prani* (living being) that falls prey to a tiger, and a *Jivi* (individualized soul) who falls into the hands of a *Sadguru* cannot escape! (*Puli nota badda praani*, *Sadguru chetha badda jivi*, *tappinchuko ledu* - Swami's words in Telugu!)

#### 193. What kind of a resolve is needed for a *sadhak*?

It is ok for one not to believe unless supported by personal experience. Come and experience. It is no use if one fine day you visit and say I have seen Sathya Sai Baba, he wears a long robe, has lot of hair and leave the following day. If you keep wasting and whiling away time, how will you know me? Jump in after deciding to examine me, and learn about me. Thousands have come now and in the past. Many of them did not have a desire to know me. Many who had the desire did not know that psychic experience is more valuable than sensory experience. After knowing this value, one must not let go till they attain it. As long as you are here physically but mentally roaming about, you will not be able to put into practice what I am telling you. If you are unable to practice, no matter how much I teach, it will not bear fruit. I have been telling in different ways, many methods, and in many varieties. My hope is at least one of them may appeal to you.

## 194. How to achieve a happy life?

In this field called human life, *Jiva* (individual soul) is a farmer (*karshakudu*). In front of the *Jivi* heaps of seeds are there, one called good and the other bad. Next to you there are people who are skilled and experienced in selecting the good

seeds from bad. Using their advice select the good seeds and plant them. If planted at the right time, that is when life is still good, plenty of rain called God's grace will fall yielding a good crop. Likewise, when man uses discrimination and performs good deeds (*sat karmas*) the results will be good too. This way he can make life happy.

#### 195. How to face weaknesses and criticism, Swami?

Stay away from untruth, anger, and jealousy. These are cowardly qualities and equivalent to death. They are qualities of the weak. When you believe that you are less than what you actually are, it gives rise to 'weakness'. You think you are the husk covering the seed. Actually you are the seed. As long as you think you are *Aham Asmi* (limited self), you cannot escape fear. But when you realize that you are *Brahman* (*Aham Brahmasmi*), you will receive indomitable power. Stay cool even if someone abuses you. Reply sweetly 'O, I am surprised that my behavior felt that way to you'. Smile instead of feeling hurt. Even Swami could not escape the vicious rumors spread by these strange but proficient liars. When you hear the abuses, smile and stay calm and peaceful. Even extremely cruel hearts when softened, divinity sprouts in there. The treasure earned by a wise man (*Jnani*) is contentment.

## 196. How does a full moon assist an aspirant (sadhak)?

*Poornima* (full moon) day assists and helps an aspirant in their *sadhana*. God is complete with 16 *Kalas*' (*Sodasha kala*, 16 *aspects*) which means he is fully effulgent in all the 16 *Kalas*. This means on this day you must obtain full blessings and begin to remove the evil qualities in you, one by one, till your mental state becomes empty of evil qualities like the day of *Amavasya* (new moon). Then add a virtue, one by one, till the full moon day and shine like the full moon does. This is the permanent *sadhana* and must be practiced as long as one is alive.

## 197. How is a *Guru* helpful in sanctifying and uplifting one's life?

Guru cautions you, and your life. Periodically Guru makes the effort to wake you up when you slide into Ignorance. He makes you aware of the eternal Truth and assists you to journey towards it. You cannot reach the state you seek if you do not have the desire to know; do not have curiosity to know what is unknown

and attain it. When you feed a hungry man, he eats in earnestness. Instead when you feed a man who has no hunger, he considers it a punishment and rejects it.

Guru is the gardener who nourishes the sapling but the responsibility of planting the sapling is yours. Before you reach the Guru if you already planted the sapling then the gardener will let you know how to make it grow well and healthy. He does not add anything new to it. Instead he can make it grow quick and healthy and not let it grow wildly. That is, you could not recognize the treasure already in your house. But the one who knows can dig out the treasure and give it to you to get rid of your poverty. In short he shows you how to obtain it and how to utilize it correctly. Else you will misuse the treasure. *Karma* and *Upasana* (methods of worship) suitable for you are dependent on your *Ashrama Dharma* and your *Gunas* (*Varnas*). Even nectar would be dangerous if you drink it through your nose.

For every *sadhak* there is an individualized way to lead life, a method to progress spiritually, and a path towards liberation. A *Guru* knows what is beneficial and suitable for you. It does not mean a *Guru* is partial and jealous. He does not prescribe the same striped shirt for all. He delivers only what is needed and how much is needed by each. It is difficult to get the right *Guru*. And here you have found the *Guru*, *Sadguru*, and God! You must utilize this rare opportunity wisely, sanctify and attain the goal of life.

## 198. How to overcome Egoism?

Egoism is extremely dangerous. It is like alcohol which takes our senses in the wrong direction. The good qualities of Intellect (*Buddhi*) and Heart (*Hridaya*) are evident only in those who are humble and respectful. Pride does not let your head bend. It stands like steel which neither bends nor breaks. If one makes effort and succeeds in bending it then one is truly a strong person. You must make effort to acquire this strength. Do not get into the habit of getting interested in things leading to worldly desires and sensual pleasures. Whenever you feel proud of your possessions and accomplishments, think for a minute of the time when you will have to leave all these behind and go empty handed (death). In order to lose the egoistic feeling one needs to follow:

- Mind silence
- Cleanliness
- Selfless service

## Nithya Sathya Bodha

- Love
- Free of hatred

There is a role for each and everyone in the drama created by God. Blaming others is a sin and hence do not insult, criticize, or hurt others. This in itself is a great spiritual practice (*sadhana*).

#### 199. What kind of concentration must a *sadhak* have?

Some of you come to me and say 'Swami, I am unable to concentrate'. It brings a smile to me when I hear these words, and at their ignorance. Even a car driver commands the skill of concentration. If there are people conversing either next to him or behind him, he does not get distracted. He keeps his eyes on the road with one pointed concentration. That is why Lord *Krishna* asks *Arjun* after the discourse on *Gita* 'did you hear me with *ekagra shradha* (one-pointed earnestness)?' Arjun, being a good disciple while standing in between the two armies on the battle field, replied that he heard it with *ekagra shradha*. You must practice that kind of concentration and that practice itself will keep you in the right spiritual state.

## 200. Swami, How long should one do sadhana (spiritual practice)?

What you will receive and when you will receive is all dependent on His grace. A spiritual aspirant (*sadhak*) must meditate in order not to get diverted from their path. Rest is all His grace. It is not dependent on how many days or how long you do *sadhana* (spiritual practice). In order to reach the goal some might take few lifetimes while others might take few days. It is dependent on the degree of their Faith (*shradha*), Devotion (*Bhakti*), and spiritual practice (*sadhana*). No one can determine the reasons or causes.

#### 201. What is needed for a happy life?

To lead a happy life one needs two things -Dhyana (meditation) and Dhanya (grains/ food). To sustain the body one needs Dhanya (food). To enter into the temple of God inside us and get immersed in his miracles and glory, one needs to meditate.

- 202. Swami, please let us know the regulations that spiritual aspirants (*sadhaks*) must follow?
- Do not pay heed to the doubts/ skepticism of people whose mind/ intellect is worldly. They will try to divert you away from the royal road of discrimination (*viveka*) and detachment (*vairagya*) into the by lanes. Not only saints but even *Avatars* became targets to the criticism made by these depraved people. In that case how can *sadhaks* who are trying to expand or universalize their love escape from such criticism?
- Give secondary importance to the world.
- Getting rid of worldly entanglements should be given primary importance.
- When a child playing with the toys leaves them aside and starts crying, then mother rushes to the child. Similarly when you lose interest towards physical attachments and cry for God, Divine Mother comes running to you. Express desire from the bottom of your heart and yearn soulfully. Only then you will obtain the grace of *Sesha Sai* (Sai reclining on the five headed serpent *Sesha*).

## 203. What is God's grace like?

When food is eaten from the plate as it is made and served, it tastes fresh, delicious, and one feels like having a second serving. Instead if one keeps the freshly served plate aside, and later starts critiquing the food saying it is cold, dry and not tasty, then it is not the fault of the chef. It is the fault of the one who is eating. When the food is served hot off the stove, one should be ready to eat it. On the top of it if one adds clarified butter (Ghee) called faith to it then the hunger (*Bhukti*) of the devotee (*Bhokta*) is satiated, making him eligible to reach the shores of liberation (*Mukthi*).

## 204. Should the state of Oneness (Adwaitha) be one's goal, Swami?

Yes. You need to make the effort to understand this secret. Only with effort you would know that the one who loves, and the one who is loved are *Narayana* (God). Ensure that *Sad Guru's* hold on you never gets loosened.

- 205.Q. No one can see Divinity. It is not something that can be seen or advertised, isn't it Swami?
- A. Yes. The divine bliss that one experiences from their own direct experience is Divinity. You see some advertisements in some of the newspapers where they are advertising erroneous things. Did you observe?
- Q. I noticed it, Swami. It is their foolishness. If they are really humans they would not advertise such wrong things.
- A. Printing in newspaper things that are hearsay and speaking whatever they please is a serious mistake. Those who read and who hear should understand the truth. If one conducts themselves by the truth then there is no need for punishment. Unable to control sense organs (*Indriyas*), and unable to leave body consciousness, one is forgetting the principle of the *Atma* (*Atma Thathwa*). You are merely following the nature of your mind, organs of action (*Karmendriyas*) and organs of knowledge (*Jnanendriyas*) in you. You are ignoring the Truth in you and following that which is impermanent, and transient.

## 206. Swami, please tell us about the nature of mind?

It is like a fly that lands on beautiful smelling flowers as well as on a heap of filth. How can you trust something that lands in good and bad? Mind is a mad monkey and body is like a bubble on water. You are depending on this kind of body and mind for leading your life. You will recognize that you are embodiments of *Atma* when you let go and forget the body, senses and contemplate on the principle of *Atma*.

207. How should our attitude be when we are performing any work, Swami?

More than 'self', it is 'help' that makes you realize the principle of *Atma*. Help is much better than self. When you think that whatever you do and follow, it is being done for the satisfaction of *Atma* then you have understood the principle of *Atma*.

208. Swami, please tell us about the principle of Love (*Prema Thathwa*)?

When the flowing river is right next to you, leaving that aside you are wishing for dew drops to quench your thirst. It means, disregarding the love that one has and instead struggles for worldly things. If you deposit the wealth of love in the bank of your heart then it will not be lost, instead it keeps on doubling. There could be a robbery somewhere but in this bank called heart there can never be any robbery. There are no doors or locks to it. Even without them it remains as truth eternal.

- Q. Where does this principle of love *Prema* originate? Where does it end?
- A. It begins in the principle of servitude (*dasoham*), and ends in the principle of *Soham* (I am that).
- Q. Then how should this love be?
- A. It should be with the feeling of complete surrender. Are they praying to God with that feeling? Today this feeling of surrender is not visible anywhere. Man is craving for transient things unable to recognize the principle of love. The reason for this is selfishness has increased, higher ideals decreased. Narrow mindedness increased and broadness decreased. Wants have grown, ideals decreased. By letting go of divine feelings, man has fallen into difficulties and is getting depressed, weakened, and wasted. Heart without love is same as a graveyard. Only love can establish and prove the sacred divinity. The one who cannot know his self how can he know anything else? This is what is happening in this world now. Every man is trying to know the entire world. But he is not trying to know who he is. Right enquiry is following this with conscience as your witness. But man today is either following his mind or body. Hence we are facing so many trials and tribulations.

209. Swami, please comment on the wealth of spiritual knowledge one must acquire?

When you worship and meditate with devotion and *Jnana* (spiritual knowledge), it will happen. What will happen? You will have the discrimination to know what is right and wrong, just and unjust in all the things that are happening around you. Once you have this discrimination, what will happen? Man falls into greed and attachment (*lobha*, *moha*) when they think what is just as unjust, and unjust as just in all the things happening around them. The cause for getting trapped by greed, attachment, desire, uncalled for anger are due to not knowing the difference between just and unjust, right and wrong. Hence discrimination is very, very

important for man. Those who have not performed subtle *sadhana* (spiritual practice) to improve their discriminating knowledge, they themselves would not know how they will react at what instant. This means one needs a method of *sadhana* for this discrimination to develop in a pure manner.

When you sing with devotion you are leaving everything to God and there is no pride. Due to no pride there is no ego caused rigid opinion in any work you do, and it is left to God due to which, the work gets done very easily. The result from this work whether it is something you like or dislike, you will get into the habit of taking it as God's gift. Therefore no matter what the result is it will not make you elated, dejected, or submissive. Therefore to reach this state of equal mindedness, the effort or sadhana is chanting the name of God (nama smarana). If Bhakti does not accompany, it leads to egoism. Hence through discrimination one knows the right and wrong, just and unjust, and that the world is full of illusion. What is the meaning of this? Maya does not mean that there is nothing, instead it means something is here for now but will not be there forever. It is seen as if it is there i.e. you had a dream last night, at that time it was real. After you wake up in the morning you realize it was Maya. Let us consider one more example. When a rope is mistaken for snake and as long as it was thought to be a snake one goes through fear. Once you realize it is rope then you know the snake was Maya. Similarly you are living in this world giving in to the Maya like physical attractions. But when you understand and come out of it, then you would know that it was Maya. Therefore for that understanding to go from misunderstanding to right understanding, the power to do so is in *Jnana* combined with devotion. I have given you a long and deep message.

One more thing 'Durguna di Shadripulu Jayinche Karyamu Telusu' (I know how to overcome the six evil qualities residing in us). In both of them above (impure discrimination, Maya) there is a real cause. What all that is happening to you is not happening due to external reasons. One is unable to overcome the 'Shadripulu' that is the six enemies (six evil qualities) inside them. Hence one is facing difficulties externally. One is unable to surmount the desire in them hence there are many attractions outside that are tantalizing. One is unable to realize their anger therefore there are many people and situations in the external world that incite anger in them. Likewise whatever weakness one has, there is a situation in the outside world which manifests that weakness. This weakness gains strength gets bigger and it grows. Hence every situation in this world is teaching a lesson which is that

one still has weaknesses inside them. Therefore once you know that, when outside circumstances get you depressed one should not externalize those feelings, instead one should make corrections to them inside. I am stressing this indirectly. How to make these corrections and how to live with those six evil qualities, *Jnana* teaches you that. That is *Jnana* combined with devotion. There is only one thing you need to do, worship God with *Jnana* combined with devotion. This is indeed true!

Saint *Tyagaraja* who was in poverty yet when the King sent him the expensive jewelry, precious stones, he rejected them. '*Nidhi chala sukhama? Ramuni Seva Sannidhi chala sukhama?*' (what gives more happiness, wealth or serving Lord Rama?). Saying this he rejected the riches and held his attention instead on Lord *Rama*. Is this an ordinary accomplishment? It is easy to think about it. In these kinds of circumstances many of you would switch a job in a jiffy if you get a good pay hike. Therefore this greed and desire are not easy to shake loose. Great saint *Tyaga Raja* showed how he could bind down those strong evil six qualities. He was in that state hence he could say it in his (*Kritis*) musical compositions '*Mayadari Shadripulu Jayinche Karyamu Naku Telusunayya*' (I know how to overcome the six evil qualities of *Maya*).

One must acquire the *Jnana* combined with devotion, recognize and remove the obstacles with discrimination and experience the real Truth. That wealth of *Jnana* will earn a permanent seat (lifetime eternal membership) in the heart of God.

## 210. Please let us know how to travel in the path of *Bhakti* (devotion), Swami?

To speak on this topic let us take this most important 9 letter sentence "God exists". All day if you can think about it, feel it, follow it, enjoy it and spread it to others then there is no other greater good than this for the world. 'God exists' is not just a mere thought. One must follow the voice of God with thought, word, and action. While relishing its bliss and spreading it to others means one is seeking the good of the public. Towards this, what does the heart of a devotee say, let us see. "Lord! Worldly happiness and comforts are so enticing, then how much more attractive and enticing you must be." In this manner God presence is experienced with wholehearted agreement. Later one finds out what qualifications must one have to get God's grace, then one has reached the first step of devotion.

Observe, now I will tell you how to travel on this path of devotion? Riches, pleasures, wealth of knowledge, and grandeur of scholarship, none of these will lead you to God's grace. There is only one way to reach God and that is love. In today's world to get success in any field one might obtain it through bribery. But God cannot be reached by resorting to cleverness or wrong means. God is very close to you. Open the door of illusion, remove the curtain of ignorance (Ajnana), open the closed eye and that is all, he will be right in front of you. Although practicing love and travelling on righteous path, yet it is not that easy to obtain God's grace. Every step of the way you will be faced with many obstacles, many criticisms, many difficulties, and hostile situations with many. Besides this there are the worldly attractions and enticements where no one lends you a helping hand to overcome them, instead devotee is considered crazy. The one who is keen on worldly enjoyments sees one with devotion to God as a crazy person. That is why he ridicules the devotee. Likewise for a God devotee, one who is keenly into worldly things looks like a crazy person, a fool, and a blind person. Among all the crazy things that tie down and harm a person, God craziness is the only one that does not harm instead it benefits you greatly. This world is ruined to a great degree due to crazy leaders. But no ruin came about due to crazy devotees. Politicians who do not have good skills adopt crazy courses of action resulting in untold harm to society. Due to crazy devotees only harmony, peace, brother hood, and love increases.

Can I tell you a small story to illustrate this? One time a *Sadhu* (renunciate) came to town. People came in masses to meet the *Sadhu* and get his blessings. One big trader who heard about the saintly *Sadhu* came with his entourage to visit and get his blessings. He brought expensive gifts and offered them to the *Sadhu*. He did not even glance at them. Trader saw the *Sadhu's* shining eyes, pure look, and his effulgence and said this, "*Mahatma!* You are a great person, an evolved saintly soul. You are really great." *Sadhu* asked "Why do you say that?" Trader replied with devotion "For sake of God you have sacrificed all worldly pleasures. You are really a great man." *Sadhu* said "In that case you are actually greater than I". Trader looked confused and asked "How so?" *Sadhu* replied with a smile "For the sake of worldly things and pleasures you have renounced God".

A great percentage of people think that the goal of life is to be able to enjoy the worldly pleasures, the one who provides them is God, and think that devotion is like a business. There are some who are overly clever, and ask "if you live in Puttaparthi, do you get illnesses too?" One must feel pity at their ignorance and foolishness. Actually hate for God, is that not egoism? I, who am ever easily attainable through devotion (*Bhatka Sulabh*), give this answer to those people, listen! God aversion people gather around you and say "You sit in one corner saying *Rama! Krishna! Govinda!* Does chanting the name of God fetch you food and clothing?" and with similar questions try to divert you away from God. These fools do not know that God can give not only food but also nectar to his devotees. God's name alone is enough. It has enormous power. All it takes for the devotee to get God's grace is – one breath while chanting the name of God; one sign; a call filled with intensity of devotion; and a shout coming from heart rending unbearable separation. Faith in that almighty God is devotee's breath.

Have you not heard the words of devotees soaked in Lord's compassion? Some say the life process as arranged by God is better than what the life insurance/annuity companies can do. Others say God is the only one who gives faultless advice. Who else can bear the burden of this entire creation If not him? When one has complete faith their devotion and surrender will protect them. God never forgets the devotee, it is the devotee who forgets God. God never lets go of his devotees. It is the devotee who lets go of God.

I polish my devotee by a testing process which makes them shine like Gold. I keep watching to see if my devotee will seek complete surrender or let go and run away. I will give a hand so that one adapts to tough sense control and equal mindedness while I subject them to difficulties, and at the same time I give them the inner strength to face them. I play the role of a navigator who navigates one across the ocean (*Bhav Sagar*) avoiding the eddy currents and whirlpools. Many miracles have been and being created in the lives of many people, making them float on the waves of bliss. I got many to taste the divine and transcendental bliss that one gets in the nearness of God. All this is possible with devotion and by not any other means. That is why in the field of spirituality devotion (*Bhakti*) has such a predominant place.

211. Swami, when relatives, parents, and children hinder the journey to reach you, are we to bypass them or give in to them? Unable to understand it.

All of you may have observed that the devotees with complete faith, love, and surrender to God face conflicts with not only outsiders, but also from family members and relatives. It is very natural for a devotee to face the circumstance

where their own folks become enemies. I will remind you again. Did Saint *Tyaga Raja's* devotion get respect from his brother and sister-in-law? Did *Sakku Bai's* devotion get recognized by her mother-in-law? Did Saint *Tukaram's* wife praise his devotion? Today my devotees face similar situations. But during that time the real devotee needs to respond like this. Even *Vedas* said that anyone coming in their journey to God, one needs to abandon them.

Now I am, as the *Veda Purusha* (God), telling you that anything that tries to divert you away from God need to be abandoned, even if it is your mother. As an example, in *Ramanaya* Lord *Rama's* brother *Bharat* rejected his mother *Kaikeyi* and left; *Prahlada* forsook his father *Hiranyakasipu* who ordered him not to contemplate on *Hari* (God); King Bali negated his *Guru Shukracharya* and got ready to offer everything including himself to Lord *Vishnu* (God); when King *Ravan* got into conflict with Lord *Rama* (*Avatar*) his own brother *Vibishan* rejected him and joined Lord *Rama*; Saint *Mira Bai* abandoned her husband and left to *Dwaraka* when he hindered her relationship with God. Hence the close relationship that a devotee has with God cannot be hindered by anyone.

When one joins the college of devotion, the devotee has to take many tests right away which are the difficulties he has to face. If one does not take the test, then no higher grade. Those who cannot bear the hardships will not gain God's grace and direct experience of God (*Daiva Sakshatkar*). In fact if *Hiranyaksa*, *Hiranyakasipu* were not there would it have been possible for *Prahlada* to get *Daiva Sakshatkar*? Due to many hardships *Prahlada* suffered, his devotion became world renowned. Although the hardships keep visiting again and again the real devotee's faith does not lose its grip. He treats hardships and happiness as a gift of God. *Prahlada* did not think about anything other than God. In his view an elephant, a snake, poison, and fire were all forms of *Narayan* (God). How can they harm him?

The *Rajas* and *Tamas* gunas that engulf your heart and hurt you are like *Hiranyakasipu*, and God's name is like *Nara-simha Avatar* (man-lion incarnation that saved *Prahlada*) to those gunas. Just the way physicians give calcium tablets, vitamin tablets, iron tablets for removing some deficiency, in similar manner the tablet of *Name Chanting* will get rid of the disease called disturbances of mind. Praise God with full heart. God's name on the tongue is like a lamp on the door threshold, it sheds light both inside and outside. It is a boon to the devotees to find

Name Chanting which is such an easy way to sanctify one's life. It is an undeniable fact that my grace on the devotees is in abundance. Am I asking you to go through hardships like *Prahlada* did? I am not asking you to wait in anticipation for many, many years like *Sabari* did. I did not ask you to perform severe austerities in the jungle like *Dhruva* did. I did not ask you to call for me with raised trunk like elephant *Gajendra* did (in *Bhagavat katha*). I did not ask you to renounce everything like King *Bali* did. I did not ask you to drink poison like *Mira Bai* did. Not only that, I told you repeatedly how God's love is, did I not?

One thing I want to say very strongly. In the disturbance filled ocean called time, you heroically plunged in many times and got hold of Sai's Grace which is like a very precious and rare pearl. Be careful that it does not slip out of your hand and fall into abyss. Hang on to the pearl tight. Pray for the bliss it can give, to fill you permanently. This is the only way to make your life fruitful.

212. Swami, does one recognize the divinity in them only after they let go of egoism and attachment?

You recognized well. 'Swashwaram Swayam Jyotihi, Swarupam Sarva Rakshanam' God is shining as illuminating light and full protector in all the bodies. Once you recognize this principle it becomes very easy to control your egoism and attachment. Light of the Self is in your own body. Swarupam Sarva Rakshanam the protector is within your own body. Since time immemorial the following inquiry has been going on, is there God or not? What is the path to reach God? This became a difficult knotty problem. Many Rishis and Yogis have recognized the solution to this problem by their cleverness; by the strength of their austerities (*Tapo balam*); by their scholarship; and by their strong resolutions leading to austerities over a long period of time. How? 'Vedaha Metam Purusham Mahantam, Aditya Varnam Tamasah Parastat' These great saints and seers have declared to the world that they have found the Cosmic Person's divine energy that is brilliant shining light beyond the darkness of ignorance. They shared everything as to where they searched and where they found. They searched and understood that there is an indweller within you in your conscience, in divine feeling, in personalized God (Easwara). Everyone should reach to that state. One should recognize the Omnipresent and experience it. One should recognize the indweller in each one of you. That is why, I who has the cosmic form has come down to your state to explain and make all of you understand, and show it by doing. Is there a better luck than this? Does it exist at all?

# 213. Swami, please elaborate on *Pravritti* (worldly, binding), and *Nivritti* (renunciation)?

Human life is like an ocean filled with enormous waves of confluence and divergence, union and separation. So there is no escape from difficulties-losses. This is the nature (*dharma*) of *Pravritti*. But *Nivritti* nature is different. When a child says to mother "Mom, I am hungry", *Pravritti* mother says "Child, eat food it will satiate your hunger". But *Nivritti* mother does not say like that. She says "Child, eat food if you are hungry" but she will give him good advice asking him to use proper discrimination as to what food to take when, where, and how? And to take what is good and healthy. She will give advice that by eating anything that is accessible because one is hungry, will only result in upset stomach. *Nivritti* mother says do not eat food that harms your health. This is the *Dharma* (righteous duty) of the *Nivritti*.

Vedas explain very well the principles of Pravritti, and Nivritti. There is nothing wrong in desiring what one needs. But desire must have a limit. One must follow the limits of what to eat and how much. Do not speak whatever you feel like. Do not eat whatever you can get hold of. Do not say whatever your mind thinks. One must inquire as to what is to be said when, to whom, and how? What you say must not be hurting to others. You must nicely follow the principles of Pravritti, Nivritti. Pravritti is the nature of Prakriti (Nature, Creation) while Nivritti is the nature of Atma. Pravritti teaches you narrow mindedness (principle of contraction) while Nivritti expands your heart wide (principle of expansion). Hence you must primarily follow Nivritti.

## 214. Swami, among the three paths of *Karma, Bhakti, Jnana* which one should a *sadhak* select?

Path of *Karma* is like a beautiful flower. *Bhakti* path is a raw fruit, and path of *Jnana* is like a ripe fruit. These three are not separate. A tree cannot yield a raw fruit without flowering. Without *Karma*, inclination for the path of *Bhakti* does not develop. One cannot get a ripe fruit without the raw fruit. That is without *Bhakti*, the maturity of *Jnana* will not occur. To reach the peak called *Jnana*, you have to

experience *Bhakti*. If one wants to bring their life to a state of ripeness in *Bhakti*, one must engage in *Karma* which is like raw fruit in this case.

Therefore one obtains *Bhakti* due to *Karma*, and *Jnana* due to *Bhakti*. It is not possible to experience *Bhakti* without *Karma*, and *Jnana* without *Bhakti*. These three paths have only one and the same goal.

We can use one more example. The three stones supporting a cooking vessel (wood fuel) can be called the *Yogas* of *Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana*. One need to pour water in the vessel, then rice, and then the fire is lit. Only then the rice will cook. Cooking vessel is *Bhakti*, water is *Karma*, and fire is *Jnana*. Rice gets cooked only when these three come together. You cannot cook without any one of them. Likewise you will not reach your goal without any one of these. Without flower there is no raw fruit, and no ripe fruit without the raw fruit. These are not separate. These are steps to liberation (*Moksha*).

Hence there is no *Bhakti* without *Karma*, and no *Jnana* without *Bhakti*. Goal of these three paths is one and that is liberation. They are like the *Trinity* and *Triveni sangam* (confluence of three rivers, considered holy).

#### 215. In what way should we offer ourselves to God?

I do not desire anything else from you except you seeking refuge (*Sharanagati*) in me. I am not awaiting anything else. Once you understand how to completely surrender to me (*sarvasya sharanagati*), then I will get involved in your affairs. Then you have no need to fear anything. But your behavior shows that you don't have conviction. To surrender means letting go of your problems, sorrows, anguish, concerns and the rest. You handover all of them to me completely, including the worry and anticipation. You have complete confidence that your entire burden is mine, when you offer yourself completely to me, when you rely on me totally, then I can do anything for you. And I will. If you expect me to do the way you desire then you do not have faith in me. When devotee takes refuge in God, He immediately assumes responsibility. Devotee has no need to be worried and he should not. After taking shelter in God if a devotee laments, then he has no confidence in God handling his burden. Man is forgetting human values by drifting away from disciplined life and hence destroying his future.

216. In what way does a disciple, who has joined the *Sadguru*, alter his way of life?

Contemplation on scriptures and Guru's teachings can be attained through self effort. Sadguru is Jnana Surya (as bright as Sun, full of Jnana) who can make the effort and drive out the darkness of Ignorance in the heart cave of the disciple. He can destroy that. Therefore the light of his grace is greater than the light of the Sun. When a relationship is developed between the Sadguru who is a Brahma *Jnani* and the disciple, *Atma Jnana* (experience of the Self) can be easily attained. This is possible **only** when one *Atma* establishes a constant remembrance and union (Anusandhan) with another Atma. One Atma gets inspiration (prerana) from another Atma only. Atma will not blossom (vikas) by reading scriptures. For the light of the Atma to shine, one who can receive the needed inspiration energy is a disciple. The disciple needs to have the deservedness to receive this inspiration energy from the Guru. Spiritual contemplation does not come till heart becomes pure. Disciples who have unwavering faith are the only ones who deserve to receive the Guru's teaching. When real intense desire, passionate anxiety begins due to spiritual contemplation to attain Atma, then God himself will come to you in the form of Sadguru and gives you Self-knowledge. This is the Truth. Knowledge of scriptures, spiritual expositions, oratory, learned speeches etc are not the indicators. These are useful only for demonstrating scholarship but not for spiritual contemplation. They are not at all of use for Sadhana. The Sadguru who personally experiences the Atma (Atma darshan) is the only one who can generate the spiritual inspiration in the disciple. Atma Jnana (direct experience of Atma) can only be attained when the teachings of Guru are received with a fully mature heart, and by following the Guru's orders with purity of thought, word, and deed (trikarana shuddhi). After one receives the teachings (upadesh) of the Guru, the aspirant (sadhak) stays focused on his goal, travels the predetermined path, although he received the teachings from a Guru with Atma Jnana, yet he will not get Atma Sakshatkar (direct experience) without making the effort to put it into practice what has been learned. Without fail, one quality disciple must have after taking shelter of Sad Guru is the intensity of desire and anxiety to attain Atma Sakshatkar.

217. Can one say spouse, children, properties etc in this physical world as *Bhav Sagar*?

You see a lot of *pundits* (learned people) in this world. After studying well the holy texts like *Vedas, Upanishads* they give discourses in gatherings, enthrall the audiences with their oratory, scholarship and making them happy. They get lot of recognition and awards and earn a lot of money. They are teaching spiritual knowledge (*Jnana Bodha*) and yet you can observe that they are in a way still in spiritual ignorance (*Ajnana*). You may have observed in them traits like pride of scholarship, looking down on others, anger at slight incidents of error, inappropriate behavior, behave as slaves to desire, and show anger in their daily life. Despite so much scholarship and ability to teach, the body consciousness and self conceit stays and survives in them because of *Maya Shakti* (power of *Maya*). It is not surprising to see those who do not know get trapped by *Maya*, but even the ones who know everything, get sucked into the quicksand is the most remarkable, unimaginable ability of *Maya Shakti*.

Many living beings say that they are thrown helter-skelter by the ocean of worldly existence (*Bhav Sagar*). After all what is *Bhav Sagar*? Spouse, taking care of the children, happiness-sorrow, worries, irritations, illnesses, separation from relatives etc are spoken of as *samsar sagar* (ocean of *samsara*). Many think that they are unable to swim across that. But actually that is not true. *Jivi* (individual) keeps coming and going between the birth and death cycles is called *samsar*. *Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam*, *Punarapi Janani Jathare Shayanam* (caught up in this cycle of birth and death; time and again, experiencing the agony of staying in the mother's womb). This is the ocean of worldly existence (*bhav sagar*). This is the state of all of them who are living in the illusion and ignorance that they are the body. This illusion is created by *Maya*.

Till the knowledge is gained by *Jivi* that the vision created world is *Mithya* (neither real nor unreal), and all pervasive *Paramatma* is *Sathya* (Truth) and he himself is That, this *samsara* is not going to leave him. As soon as this knowledge is gained that very moment he is *Paramatma* and not *Jivi*. He crosses the *samsara sagar* because he gains the state where he knows the rest of the individuals (*Jivis*) are also *Paramatma* (God). *Maya* makes the indivisible *Atma* to be seen as separate bodies made out of five elements *Pancha Bhutas*. This is the most remarkable and unimaginable ability (*aghatitha ghatana paatavam*).

218. What is *Sanyasa* (renunciation)? What is *Tyaga* (sacrifice)? What is their nature (*swarupa*)? Please let us know Swami.

You asked a good question. I will give you a good answer also. You may have heard of *pundits* (learned people) saying *Sanyasa* as having no desires and *Tyaga* is to let go of the results of one's actions. It is somewhat true but not completely.

Listen to my opinion about the three fold *Tyaga* (sacrifice). One should never let go of the actions of *Yaga* (sacrificial rites), *Dana* (charity), and *Tapas* (austerities). These purify one's mind. It is my firm opinion that those holy rites and rituals (*Yajna*, *Yaga*) need to be performed without the feeling of doer-ship and without expectation of any returns. It is never just to let go of obligatory *karmas*. Fearing physical difficulties one should not stop doing the *Karmas*. It is not possible for embodied humans to let go of *Karmas* entirely. Hence the one who lets go of the fruits (results) of *Karma* is a real *Tyagi*.

Individuals with bad traits feel that they are doing everything and act with egoism. He is a wise man who understands clearly what *Dharma-Adharma* (righteousness-non-righteousness) enshrines in terms of attachment-non attachment (*pravritti* – *nivritti*), duties – non duties (*kartvya- akartavya*), fears-fearlessness, and bondage-liberation. Neither in the deities and demi Gods, nor in the three worlds, there is anything which is beyond the Nature (*Prakriti*) born *gunas* of *Sathwa-Rajas-Thamas*.

### 219. Please tell us something about the human desire and hope (Asha)?

Human being's desire (*Asha*) is greater than his breath (*Shwasa*). Even if breath (*Shwasa*) stops, desire (*Asha*) does not die. Actually every moment of life, desire keeps a human from dying. In gambling one might lose every round but what keeps them going is the hope that they might win the last round. Otherwise a great person like *Dharma Raja* (eldest brother of *Pandavas* in *Mahabharat*) lost all of his possessions, lost his brothers but hope did not die and unable to control himself he ended up losing his spouse *Draupadi* to *Kauravas*.

One must have *Asha* (hope, desire) but not *Nir-asha* (no hope, desire less). But today's man has illegitimate hopes and desires (*Dur-Asha*). When *Asha* crosses the bounds, it becomes *Durasha*. This leads to all afflictions. Desire for the family to have sufficient food, clothes, place to live and working hard for it is not wrong.

This is a natural desire and working for it in the righteous way gives happiness. Needs are different from wants and wishes.

Food is taken to satiate hunger. Instead going to a five star hotel, delicately picking up the expensive food using fancy cutlery, and tasting food with great relish is not a need but an extravagance and showoff. In order for one to have these dinner-and-drink parties one needs to have adequate financial strength. The wages and remuneration one gets by doing hard physical labor all day, or working in an office using their skills is just sufficient to eke out a decent living for their family. This then leads them to look into alternative sources of income. They start searching for income sources with least or no effort. Either bypassing the job duties, or by violating the codes and conducts of employment, one resorts to illegal income. One starts going down the path of immorality. One then accumulates a lot of money, gold, properties, and vehicles. No matter how much one earns, they are not satisfied. They get into the illusion that happy life comes from this wealth. But actually it is the beginning of his miserable life. Day by day his life gets filled with fear. Anxiousness to protect his wealth leads to irregular diet, and steadily his health degrades. Slowly pharmaceutical diet grows. Tension increases and blood pressure grows. Along the way he gets raided by anti corruption bureau and tax man. Loses respect in society. His name gets ridiculed and the same tongues that used to praise him in parties start insulting publicly. No one comes to his aid in time of need. After everything is lost what is left finally? When one turns back and looks, it is emptiness (Shoonyam). Everyday many people are ending up like this on the street, struggling for livelihood. Since unable to beg, many are committing suicide and yet man does not realize. As wealth increases problems increase also. It takes him closer to Samadhi (here it means death).

Hence if one is contented with what they have, and within that if one lends a helping hand to others, one can lead a happy life in this world irrespective of the other world. Would you agree that for happy life contentment is the most important spiritual practice (*Sadhana*)?

220. Swami, it is said that all deities, all pilgrimage centers are in our body. How is that?

Yes, it is worth knowing. All deities reside in human body. They are the presiding deities of various parts and organs of the body – *Tyaga Raja* is in

mooladhara (chakra at the base of the spine), Jambukeswara in Svadhishthana (chakra above the genitals), Kalahasti Easwara in Manipurak (chakra at navel), Natraj in Anahata (chakra at heart), Vishweswara in Ajna (chakra in between eyebrows), kalahasti-easwara in Vishuddha (chakra behind adam's apple), and Sri kanteswara in Sahasrahara (chakra at the top of the head). Entire holy pilgrimage centers are in the human body – Kedarnath in the forehead, Amaravati in the tip of the nose, Kurukshetra in the chest, and Prayag in the heart. Not only these but the astrological planets have a special place also – Sun in Nada chakra, Rahu in the face, Brihaspati in Manipurak chakra, Moon in Bindu Chakra, Angarak in eyes, Budh in heart, Shukra in Svadhishthana, Shani in navel, and Ketu in stomach. Countless mountains and rivers are also in specific places in the human body. Everything that is in the outside world can be found in the human body. This body is like a subtle world. That is why it is called pindanda (micro cosmos).

221. Swami, we desire that you respond to our imaginations, hopes the way we like them. This is ignorance (*Ajnana*), isn't it?

Without doubt! When God appears in front of you and tells you that he is pleased with your devotion and would like to grant you a wish, then what would you wish for? You would wish for an arrangement that would give you the entire comforts and happiness, or you would plead for a life without difficulties or sorrow, or you would wish for a variety of desires that will make your life a bed of roses. But you would never get ready to bear the burden of your past lives *karmas*. Because you imagine yourself to be an embodiment of goodness in your past life, when you did only meritorious deeds and never did any wrong. Hence you expect God should respond accordingly to your thoughts and desires, and grant your wishes. But you don't ask and question yourself even once, if you indeed are an embodiment of goodness? Or if your desire appropriate?

An aspirant who is walking on my path of love and service must ask this question. Because it was I who taught the *Gita* in the past and now you are in my presence and having my *darshan*, hence in line with that you must get ready to bear the series of difficulties if necessary. Only then you will get close to God and attain my divine love. If *pandavas* did not go through dire insult in the royal court of *kauravas*, would they have got Lord *Krishna's* divine grace? *Sabari* as a stone in the dust awaited and hence received divine grace of Lord *Rama*. From childhood to old age she renounced all enjoyments and all her life waited for Lord *Rama*,

otherwise would she have got his grace? Therefore while praying to God, go through the experiences of happiness-sorrow that come your way due to the past *Karma*.

You might have a genuine doubt arising in your minds. What is the use of faith in God if one has to suffer the miseries of past Karma? Faith in God will make you experience the miseries without feeling them. Shall I tell you a story as an example? A very rich man after a long wait, begotten a child and started raising the child with pamper. When he showed the birth planetary chart of the child to the pundits, they said the child's life span is only 15 years which made the rich man very sad. He went to his Guru and told him the sad news. Guru asked him not to grieve but to have faith in God, spend time in constant name chanting (nama smarana) of God, and to do good and meritorious work. Do not think of your child, God will look after him. As Guru told him, the rich man spent his time doing a lot of meritorious work. After some years he had a dream where he saw his child pass away and he wept incessantly. He woke up wondering if this was just a dream, went over to his Guru, and told him about the dream with grief. His eyes were blood shot and face puffed up due to grieving. Then Guru said "Son! You had to suffer the demise and separation of your child. You have suffered already. But your child did not die. You experienced your Karma and received God's grace, both of them are fulfilled." God's grace acts like this. He will make you experience your Karma without you realizing it. That is why you must have unwavering faith in God. This is a life truth one must realize and follow. You get frightened at facing the difficulties and problems of life. Fear in a devotee is a demonstration of lack of faith in God. No matter how dire the difficulties are, be ready to experience them with unwavering faith. I will remove them as easily as removing cotton balls. I will get the opportunity to do good to you only after you experience your Karma consequences. Happiness or Sorrow, take them as God's gift.

# 222. Is doing *Karma* using proper God given discrimination considered good or meritorious work?

You recognized it well. The inspiration (*prerana*) in our mind is the foundation to do work. The method of assessing the appropriateness of the work using intellect like whether it is good or bad, proper or improper, is called discriminating knowledge (*Vichakshana Jnanam*). In this context the most important thing to know is in what way *Karma* is performed? This means for doing *Karma* the thought or plan in the mind is primary. Senses perform that work the way mind

dictates. Senses are not responsible for the good or bad of those actions, neither to their effect or their causes. That is thoughts and plans are primary. Senses perform work only to the extent of mind thought.

### 223. When one is angry the following phrase is used casually, are you a human or an animal? Please elaborate on this Swami?

Out of 8.4 million species only human is given the ability to go from *Jivatvam* to Shivatwam, Naratwam to Narayanatwam, Manavatvam to Madhavatvam (all these mean ascending from individual, man, human level to that of God), and the reason is only human's body is constructed to have higher vision. Human spine is constructed vertical giving them the ability to see above, below, and straight ahead. Rest of the animals have lower vision but not higher. Reason being their spine is constructed horizontal and not vertical and their vision can look ahead and below. All their life goes in earning food and increasing progeny, they are limited to their self. They have no responsibility to maintain a family. Since their responsibility is to protect their own life, they do not have thought or feeling of sin or hurting other beings. Reason for that is God has not given them the discriminating intellect to know the difference or recognition or the impact of sin- merit, happiness-sadness, and good-bad. When a human who is given the discriminating intellect but behaves contrary to that then it is natural to say, are you a human or an animal? Not only that, when man loses his discriminating intellect he exhibits anger the worst of the six bad qualities Ari Shadvargas, forgets himself starts uttering indecent phrases and in anger he himself utters 'I am not man but an animal'.

#### 224. Swami, in this worldly way of life who is without fear?

Yes what you said is right. Man today has many kinds of fears. The one engaged in worldly pleasures is fearful of ill health. One indulging in sensual pleasure is fearful of illness, born in high caste one is fearful of degrading themselves in society; wealthy are fearful of increased taxes from the government rules; one living quietly is fearful of being considered weak; physically strong are fearful of enemies who are stronger than them; good looking people are afraid of old age; learned (*pundiths*) are afraid of back and forth debaters; and good people are afraid of the wicked. In the end there is the fear of death. Hence everything on this earth is a fear for the embodied. Yet among them there is only one who is fearless. These are the ones who became detached (*Vairagya*). That is they are beyond desire,

attachment and hate. In all circumstances they are in God thought and beyond like-dislike, desire-hate dualities. For them God is their shelter and refuge. Whole creation is in God's control and God is in devotee's possession, hence it can be said unquestionably that the real devotee does not have any fear from anyone, anything or any circumstances. Therefore at all times, all places, and in all circumstances, contemplation of God is supreme. This is the path of knowledge (*Jnana Marga*). Those who follow this path with faith are considered as blessed souls.

#### 225. What is the goal of human life? In what direction is it going?

Opportunity to escape from rebirth i.e. no more birth is given only to humans. Did you understand? It means the option of no more birth is given only to human birth, therefore utilize and reach out for this opportunity appropriately. Life must be utilized for the purpose for which human birth is given. A worthwhile life is not possible if spent in wasteful activities. Every person is destined to one purpose or other. The goal of life is to recognize this purpose, make the effort, and be successful in attaining it. To explain this great truth to the humans, Avatars take on human form and make humanity aware of it. Become great men with good qualities like equanimity, calm mind, free of anger and egotism, kind heart, and service to God. Do not be slaves to objects and worldly pleasures, and with discipline and dedication spend the life in the service of God. Only then man experiences self satisfaction and happiness. You will achieve a meaningful life and the road to liberation gets easier. What else can be the goal? and its path?

#### 226. Swami, what bondages is man getting trapped in?

Man today is getting tied down by seven different ropes i.e. attachments. 1) Body 2) *Karma* (results of past actions) 3) Attachment (*Raga*) 4) Hatred (*Dwesham*) 5) Egotism (*Ahamkar*) 6) Authority, Rights (*Adhikaram*) 7) Ignorance (*Ajnana*).

Ignorance (*Ajnana*) is born out of indiscrimination. Indiscrimination is born out of Egotism. Egotism is born out of hatred. Hatred is born out of attachment. Attachment is born out of *Karma*. Body is born out of *Karma* hence it is the basis of body. Attachment is the cause of *Karma*. Attachment is based on hatred. For hatred, Egotism is the base. For Egotism, indiscrimination is the base. For indiscrimination, Ignorance is the basis. First Ignorance must be destroyed. Darkness

must go. No matter how hard you struggle the darkness does not leave. If a small lamp is lit, the darkness goes. God's name is the lamp light. In order to get rid of ignorance (*Tamas*) the lamp of *Jnana* needs to be lit. To develop *Jnana* one needs to take shelter of the boat called God's name. There are only two that are vital. One is charity (*danam*) and the other is name-chanting (*Namam*) i.e. food charity and God's name. With these two wings one can uplift life and experience the essence of divinity.

# 227. Therefore can one get this good *Bhakti* (*Sad Bhakti*) anywhere anytime (*Sarvatra*)? Please give us a solution on how to attain it?

This Sad Bhakti is not available everywhere anytime. It is available only through the company of the holy and virtuous (Sajjana Sangatyam). But worldly tendency is that no one shows an inclination towards it. There are two reasons. One is that the company of the holy and virtuous does not suit them. Second is the requirement of how to conduct oneself in their company. This company is like a medicine one takes when they are sick. It may be bitter when taken but it cures the illness. It is like an iron chain. Using the chain one can climb up and it will not break in between. It shows the way to get freed from worldly company. It helps in reaching a state of mind where attachment and hatred are obliterated and encourages the practice to face mind inward. Due to that reason it inspires good intellect that engages in contemplation of Atma (Atma Vicharana), and sorting out things that are permanent/impermanent (Nitya Anitya). Lastly it makes one realize that they are not the body, instead they are instruments in the hands of God and get more inclined to relying on the Self. It shows the way to develop aversion for worldly things, and indifference towards worldly ties and relations. Necessary transformation takes place in man due to increased confidence in the scriptures because of Sajjana Sangatyam, and due to the company of *Jnanis* (realized souls).

#### 228. Swami, is Mind the root cause of all misunderstandings?

Yes, for all misunderstandings mind is the root cause. When you recognize this well, you will be better off. Distilled water is pure and free of contamination. When it rains the water collected at that time in a container is also pure. Drink that and it will cause no ailments. When that water is mixed with other waters and chemicals it changes. Likewise, you yourself are contaminating your mind with desires. Mind goes bad due to these desires. You should never contaminate mind

and must keep it pure. When you get any desire you must shove it aside by saying 'that is terrible, it will only spoil my mind'. Therefore what you need to learn now is, along with reading spiritual texts you need to remove your illusions and make your mind free of contamination.

#### 229. Swami, please elaborate a little on detachment (*Vairagya*)?

God has given heart, mind, and intellect for the sake of peace of mind. But today man is losing peace and happiness. What good is having so many things but no peace and happiness? *Jantu naam nara janma durlabam*. This is describing that human birth is extremely difficult to get. Are you living in sync with that? You are not using in the right way what is granted to you by God. You are not contemplating with the right state of mind. You are not keeping your heart pure. Hence man is getting farther away from peace due to which he is losing happiness. Life without peace and happiness, is that a life?

Some great people make the effort to attain the goal of detachment (*Vairagya*). But what is detachment (*Vairagya*)? Detachment is not leaving spouse, possessions and going into a forest. One must firmly believe that this gross form is inert (*Jada*). Firmly believe that the subtle form (*sookshma prapancha*) is of the form of illusion (*Maya Swarupa*). Causal form (*karana swarupa*) is to be taken as a reflection. In this manner when one understands well the meaning of these three then *Vairagya* can be attained naturally.

But man today is behaving contrary to these three. He is thinking that the subtle world is the right and real goal. He is considering human birth, a causal form, as heaven (*Vaikunta*). Man does not have any relationship with the gross, subtle, and causal forms. We must have faith in the super causal form of God. Therefore have faith that entire gross world's essential nature is inert. There is no consciousness in this inert, and cannot obtain through it. Life in the subtle is *Maya* (illusion). *Maya* means 'it is not there'. Causal form is a reflection and not the object that is reflected. When it is not the object then why have faith in it as one? When these three are understood well only then one can attain *Vairagya*.

230. Swami, please let us know about *Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga*, and *Sanyasa Yoga*?

With the intention of doing good to others (*Sat Sankalpa*), you do actions like giving peace to those who are suffering, actions done for their physical comforts, providing for their physical needs to make them happy, all these are called *Sat Karma*, good or meritorious work. From this state when one moves higher as a part of their *Sadhana*, and start building steps for others spiritual progress while making steps for their own and move ahead is called *Karma Yoga*.

In this *Karma Yoga* individual ascends in spirituality. Therefore when you assist and facilitate others spiritual growth then it is *Yoga*. Since it is involved with action (*Karma*) hence it is *Karma Yoga*. It is not possible for you to estimate the benefits of *Karma Yoga*. Earning money without a goal one accumulates millions, and in the end it ends up purposeless. But in *Karma Yoga* the earning is integrated with a higher goal, hence the value of accumulated spiritual wealth increases many times, making one a King (*Raja*). This meritorious enormous wealth is called *Raja Yoga*.

When the meritorious wealth (*Punya Sampada*) earned by *Raja Yoga* is utilized for the benefit of the world without selfishness and self interest, this sacrifice and renunciation is called *Sanyasa Yoga*. It is a state of complete sacrifice without any feelings of mine and yours or high and low. It is to be recognized as *Sanyasa* when one sacrifices everything entirely realizing the difference between body and the indwelling God.

231. Swami, to attain the vision of *Atma (Atma sandarshan)* do we need to overcome six bad qualities *Ari Shadvargas*?

As you said one has to overcome the *Ari Shadvargas*. Along with that one must attain *Hari Shadvargas*. The six things that facilitate the journey to *Hari* (God) are *Sathya* (Truth), *Dharma* (Righteous duty), *Shanti* (Peace), *Prema* (Love), *Ahimsa* (Non-violence), *Daya* (compassion) and they can be called *Hari Shadvargas*. For the path of renunciation (*nivritti*) these are very important and hence there is a need to know them in detail.

• Sathya (Truth): What is Sathya? Brahman (God) is Sathya. Everything else is Mithya (neither real nor unreal). This is understood only through contemplation on Self (Atma Vicharana) and difficult to express in words.

One who lives in body illusion thinks that whatever is seen is Truth. But that is not correct. Truth stays unchanged in past, present, and future (*Trikala Badhyam*). That never changes. That is why *Brahman* is *Sathya*. In this world everything undergoes change. To say the way it is seen is a 'fact' (*nijam*) but not Truth (*Sathya*). But the person who lives by values must always state the facts. Yet it needs to be pleasant and not harsh. It should not hurt anyone. There are many great people who sacrificed for *Sathya*. Using them as role models there is a need to live by the Truth (*Sathya jivanam*).

- Dharma (Righteous Duty): The second one in Hari Shadvargas is Dharma. It is said 'Sathyam Nasti Paro Dharma' which means that there is no Dharma (righteous duty) higher than the Truth (Sathya). Sathya is Dharma. Form of Dharma is God. That is why Lord Sri Rama was eulogized as 'Ramo Vigrahavan Dharmaha' (Rama was personification of Dharma). 'Dharmo Rakshita Rakshitaha' the one who protects Dharma is always protected by Dharma. There are many Dharmas one need to follow in their daily life. Everyone has to follow their own Dharma. How to follow is illustrated very well in Bhagavad Gita. 'Sarva Dharmaan Parityajya Mamekam Sharanam Vraja' says Lord Krishna. It means push aside all worldly Dharma and take refuge in God. From spiritual point there is only one Dharma and that is Atma Dharma. Everyone must follow that.
- Shanti (Peace): Everyone is running after peace under the illusion that it is in things, and in the world. But actually it is within you. All those who say 'I want peace', if they let go of the egoism 'I' and the desire 'want' they will attain peace. It is not available in stores. It is available only inside you in your inner shop called 'inner peace'.
- *Prema* (Love): This is the fourth one in *Hari Shadvargas*. Its birthplace is God. Hence love is God. Some people express love profusely in their words. But love is not limited to lips. If there is water in the 'tank' only then it will come in the 'tap'. Similarly when heart is filled with love it expresses through the physical organs of the body. Love that comes out of a pure heart is always pure love. Love that emanates from the heart jumps right back into it. It is not related to the body but related to God. What is thought of as love in the worldly way is actually not love. One can call it affection, attachment, endearment, maternal affection but not love. When we examine incarnations

of God with devotion then we would understand love. You will notice a lot in my discourses and writings the following saying: Love all, serve all. Start your day with love, fill the day with love, and end the day with love. You may have understood by now why I did that. In a ritual one takes water from the river in one's palm and then offers it back into the river (*tarpanam*), likewise an individual who spends the day in God's love and then offers it back to God must be recognized as a highly sacred deed.

- Ahimsa (Non-violence): You may have observed it in my Avatar activities very clearly. I have given it utmost importance. Because during Lord Rama and Lord Krishna Avatars a few demons were killed and use of Dharma was revived. In this Kali Yuga there are a lot of evil and bad people. If all of them are punished then who is left? Hence I am resurrecting many lives on to the path of Ahimsa with the goal of transformation with love. Starting with Lord Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi the path of Ahimsa followed by many is very great.
- Daya (Compassion): The last one in Hari Shadvargas is compassion Daya. The one who does not have compassion cannot be called a human. Heart with compassion is the temple of God. HE has extraordinary compassion. To reach him, compassion will assist greatly. Therefore have compassion for all the living beings while mingling with them. One who lives with human values is called a human.

All these values actually arose out of God and they are in his shelter. Hence I do not need to stress further that for those who are in search of God these values are very useful.

Desire, Anger, attachment, greed, pride, and jealousy (*Ari Shadvargas*) will take human to deep recesses of hell while *Hari Shadvargas* of *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shanti*, *Prema*, *Ahimsa*, and *Daya* will take man to lofty spiritual levels closer to God. These can only come from God's grace. When human takes shelter in these values, the six evil qualities *Ari Shadvargas* have no choice but to retreat. When these are gotten rid of, you can experience and enjoy what is left that is 'you' (Self). This will put you on the last step towards direct experience of *Atma* and help you climb the peak.

232. Kindness is the only way to get blessed no matter who they are - demons, humans, or highly intelligent. Please elaborate on this, Swami?

Yes. You asked a good question. Let them be kings on earth, or humans, or demons, or very intelligent, in order to become blessed one has to obtain God's grace. No matter how much one possesses, it is not possible without God's grace to gain real victory in life, or to attain the highest goal of human birth. Those who are slaves to desires (*Kama*) and deep attachments (*Moha*) will never get God's grace. Wanting something is *Kama*, not understanding or knowing the reality is *Moha*. Wanting something brings along a binding. Because whatever one wants to have, till that is obtained mind will not have peace. Hence mind keeps going in many directions saying 'want this, want that'. This is a sign of desire.

Moha stands so tall (overpowering) in one's mind that it covers up the actual fact or a thing. These two (Moha, Kama) are like Vikshepa and Avarana powers (energies). Vikshepa means mind going in many directions that is waywardness. Avarana means superimposition. Both of these are occurring in the same mind. You must realize that one who is slave to these has submitted to his mind. You might ask, is it wrong to submit to mind? It is definitely wrong. Mind is a tool given to you for use and it should not become the master. It looks comical to onlookers. It is like an owner of the house who is dressed up and sitting like the gatekeeper. Imagine how comical and humorous it looks to those on the outside. Nowadays your lives are like that.

Your mind, although a tool, is leading your life like an authoritative owner. It is making you follow it, as it likes, and you are not using your intellect, instead you are going along with it saying I want this or that. You chase what your mind likes and hate what it does not want which means you are following your mind. Then how are you leading your mind? You are getting deceived by *Maya*. You are unable to know the real inside you. God in the form of *Avatar* is near you, and he is telling you what is true, yet you are taking that truth only to the degree and the way you want it. So you are able to see only through the layers of *Maya* but unable to know what is underneath. Call it a secret or a limit but you are unable to do these two things. All these people are slaves to *Kama* and *Moha*. How can these people get God's grace?

233. Swami, you say do not become 'Siri Das' (slave to wealth) but become 'Hari Das' (slave to God). Please elaborate on that?

These are the words uttered by many with great experience because one never knows when the prosperity of wealth arrives and when it leaves. Time goes through up and down cycle. Those who are at the top do come down to the bottom and vice versa. Therefore one should not take pride in their financial strength. There are many things that cannot be obtained with money. You can buy with money 'aram' (comforts) but not 'aa rama' (that Rama (God)). To buy comforts 'aram', worldly money is sufficient. To reach that 'Rama' (God) one needs purity (Atma shuddhi) and will power (Atma shakti).

One can buy a bed with money but not the sleep. With wealth one can buy a home; all the amenities; bed room; a foam bed to sleep nicely; but cannot buy sleep. As you lay down, thoughts will not let you sleep. Even if you get sleep it is disturbed with sleep talk, nightmares, babbling etc. Mind is filled with thoughts and disturbances. Money can buy medicine but not sleep, health, and longevity. Why? Medicine is made by man. But longevity and health are granted by God. Money can buy the books but not the knowledge and wisdom in it. Why? You bought the books with money and put it in the library but the intelligence to read, understand, and to implement cannot be bought with money. You can buy eye glasses with money but not the sight. You can buy any object with money but not the *Sad Guru*. Because, the accumulated balance of good work (*sukruta vishesham*) over many, many lives earns you the opportunity to serve at Sad Guru's feet. You can buy any object with money but not God. You cannot attain God with money. You can buy any pleasurable things with money but not the spiritual happiness, bliss. Why? Enjoyable things will provide you with limited happiness. But attaining God begets you unlimited bliss. Hence do not be proud for possessing wealth. Do not think that all those who have money are happy, and those who do not are unhappy.

Yet, one must have wealth but it should not be the final goal of life. If one thinks wealth is everything, they get jealous when they come across one with more wealth. Friendships and relationships are ruined by that. Therefore do not love wealth (*Dhanam*) but love the character (*Gunam*). Do not become '*Siri Das*' (slave of wealth) but become '*Hari Das*' (slave to God). Enjoy and experience the sweetness of life.

#### 234. Swami, what qualities must a real *Bhakta* (devotee) possess?

Humility (*Nir-adambarata*), calmness (*nischalata*), unselfish, and complete surrender (*sampoorna sharanagati*) are the qualities a real *Bhakta* must have. These are ornaments that make a real *Bhakta* shine. God himself comes in search of such *Bhaktas* to bestow grace on them. Real *Bhakti* is to pray intensely and plead for direct experience (*Jnana Bhiksha*) in the bowl of his heart, and not the worldly pleasures. To think of God there are no restrictions of time, place, race, religion, or caste. The very emotion to think of God is auspicious time in itself.

#### 235. What is the way to think for one who is under the control of senses (*Indriyas*)?

Even in a small way they will attain the state they seek if they think as follows. Greater than senses is mind (*Manas*). Intellect (*Buddhi*) is greater than mind. *Atma* is greater than intellect. Seeking shelter in *Atma* one learns the fact of life that *Atma* leads to spiritual growth (*Purogati*) else one goes downhill, this then helps in losing conceit and pride. One gets firmer in Self confidence making their life a blessing. They will get right understanding that worldly pleasures are poisonous and happiness of *Atma* is nectarine. True wealth is God thought. They will experience the hazard of forgetting God. That auspicious moment becomes the grasping branch for the mind's hidden willpower to get hold of God. This comes into experience only through remembrance of God.

Instead, under the guise of devotion (*Bhakti*) people engage in time bound rituals like 108 names of God (*Ashtottaram*), 1008 names of God puja (*Sahasranama Archana*), repetition of God's name by writing (*likhita japa*), chanting scriptures (*parayan*). By doing these they will never attain complete single pointed devotion (*Ananya Bhakti*).

There are several reasons for the ineffectiveness of the above rituals. First, these give importance to time and place requirements. Second, pomp and show is given importance while the mind continues to run around during the ritual. How can there be a chance to get God's grace when one seeks and prays for worldly comforts? This does not even enter their mind while they do their normal ritual activities and hence it falls under ordinary devotion. The day one understands without doubt that in order to lose body attachment and gain Self confidence one must deploy all the available time in normal daily living on God thought, then that day is the ground breaking ceremony for *Ananya Bhakti*. Human birth does not

become worthwhile if only a part of their daily living time is allocated to spirituality. For how can one immersed in the fears of life obtain confidence (*Vishwas*) in God?

#### 236. Swami, please show us the way to remove the *Maya* of 'I', ego self?

Egoism and *Karma* bondage are the effects of God's illusory power (*Shiva's Mithya Shakti*). These are called *Anava Mala* (impurity of limitation), *Karma*, and *Maya*. By surrendering your ego to God one can go past the *anava mala* and obtain his grace.

By offering the fruits of your *Karma* to God; blossoming the feeling that only God is working through various organs and one is just a witness; feeling that one is just an instrument in his hands which destroys the feeling of 'I am the doer'; the second impurity *Karma* can be removed and you will suffer no more due to them. This is how you need to get rid of the second impurity and you will not get bound or suffer due to *Karmas*.

The third impurity *Maya* can be removed by uttering the *panchakshari* mantra (*Aum Namah Sivaya*), by serving the *Guru*, and by hearing and contemplating on many *leelas* (sport, miracles) of God.

The *Rajas guna* (quality of passion, desire etc) can be transformed into *Sathwic guna* (quality of serenity, love etc) by adopting many of the good qualities (*Sad gunas*), eating *Sathwic* food, chanting the name of God (*panchakshari*), and the company of the good and holy (*Satsang*). Then the ego self will become extinct and becomes one with Lord *Shiva* (God). Good inclinations like *Japa* (name chanting), meditation, and *Guru* to disciple teachings will remove the bad qualities of attachment, greed, hate, anger, jealousy, and then you get to enjoy the bliss of *Shiva* (*Shiva Ananda*). Serve your *Guru* and make your heart pure. Kill the tastes of the six evil qualities.

Turn your mind inward. Destroy the gross, subtle, and causal bodies. Go past the five sheaths (Koshas) encasing the *Atma* – body sheath, life force sheath, mind sheath, intellect sheath and bliss sheath. Be a witness to the states of Awake, Dream, and Deep Sleep. Turn away from body and material consciousness. Facing inward, reach the state of *Turiya* (super consciousness) the world of Lord Shiva. Reach the state of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* which is beyond body, mind, and sub consciousness. Go beyond the worldly knowledge, intellect, and intelligence. Open the divine eyes called *Atma Jnana* in your Shiva's third eye (eye brow center). Go

beyond thought, will, experience and enter the state of unwavering peace (*param shanti*) or state of no thought/ resolutions (*nis-sankalp-avastha*) or *Shiva Nirvana*.

#### 237. Swami, what is the reason for the human to degrade in value?

Pure gold (Aparanji) is quite glittering. It has higher value too. But when we add metals like silver, copper, brass to it not only does it lose its shine but it also loses its value. In similar manner by birth the human heart is like pure gold. But as one grows up one adds desires like silver, copper, brass and loses his value. Human values emerged with the human. Forgetting the values he possesses, he is entering into Asathya, Adharma (pursuing non Truth, non-righteousness) due to excessive desires and losing his divinity. There is no unity in his thought, word, and deed. What he is thinking he is unable to say, and what he is saying he is unable to do. Mind goes one way, and actions are going the other way. This is the state of man today. He is meant to become a Mahatma (great holy person) but instead he is turning into a *Duratma* (evil person). Many people ask 'Swami, evil is increasing day by day in this world. When would this straighten?' This evil is not coming from somewhere and growing. It comes from man only. When man purifies his feelings, the whole world will look pure. There are no defects in the world. Bad is always chasing the good. Else the good does not manifest. Man is yielding to the effects of Nature, happiness-sorrow, and losing his essential nature and reality. He is lowering his own value.

#### 238. Swami, why is censure and criticism of others (*Para ninda*) a great sin?

Regarding this I will tell you a small story, listen. Sage *Narada* who constantly roams the three worlds went to hell once and there he saw a hill that surprised him. He found out that it is the hill of sin belonging to a king who does daily feeding of the poor (*Anna Daan*) for earning merit (*Punya*). During the *Anna Daan* the food was getting contaminated due to negligence because of which the king accumulated sin the size of the hill. Sage felt pity for the king. He went to the king and advised him "daily at night go to your daughters inner quarters, close the doors, stay there all night and come out in the morning". Also told him that he need to make sure the food contamination does not occur during feeding of the poor (*Anna daan*). The king started following the advice. In a short time the word spread all over the kingdom by word of mouth that the king is being indecent with his daughter. King did not do anything wrong but could not escape the censure. After some time Sage

*Narada* visited hell again. The hill that he saw before which was king's sin, got reduced in size by greater than 3/4<sup>th</sup> which made him happy. I don't need to tell you separately as to why it happened. It can be called cleaning the sins of those in front of us with the tongue.

The right path for not committing sin is not to think about others sins, do good actions (*Sat Karma*) using discrimination (*Viveka*), turn mind inward and make effort towards spiritual progress. But who does like that? People go to *Varnasi* and take a dip in the river *Ganges* with the eagerness to get rid of their sins. They go to temples and do physical actions of remorse and utter "*Papoham, Papa sambhava, raksha raksha*". This means that instead of not committing sins, they go on doing them and at the same time they want to get rid of them. You keep pleading repeatedly that you do not want the results of your sins and yet you take a quick step forward to commit them. You keep hoping for the results of good actions yet you do not engage a bit in doing them. Hope for one thing while the effort is towards a different thing. How can one have faith that this will give right result? It is your duty to make the right effort towards what you desire and hope for.

Hence the first thing you need to correct is your mind set and this is every person's duty. One needs to think about how to change their mind set? If one believes that the inspiration for actions by thought, word, and deed is God, then all actions will nicely change into meritorious actions. Take every work as God's work; think that all actions are for God's sake. After offering to God even war has become an austerity *Yajna* (*Mahabharat war*). Pushing aside God even if austerities were performed, it became a war (*Daksha Yajna*).

Good behavior and actions emerge from *Satsang* (company of good and holy) which will increase devotion to God. Those who want to get close to God naturally stay away from bad and evil actions. Also one can understand that there is nothing better than *Seva* (selfless service). *Seva* destroys egoism. Love, compassion, and renunciation are present in *Seva*. Where there is renunciation, there will be no selfishness. Therefore the bad thoughts, bad actions that come from selfishness will change, hence it is possible for one to stay away from them because of *Seva*. Luck does not arrive accidentally. Bad luck is not handed out without discrimination. When past lives good actions (*punya karma*) give results at once, it is called luck. It is in your hands whether to do good actions and hence reap good luck, or do bad actions and beget bad luck.

#### 239. Swami, what is Swa-Dharma and Para-Dharma?

Ensure that there is no selfishness in anything you do or say. Let go of pride, self conceit (*Deha Abhimana*), cultivate pride towards your country (*Desha Abhimana*). If there is no country (*desh*), where is the body (*deha*)? People talk about free will (*Swechha*). What is free will? 'This is what I like. I will do according to my free will, who is going to question me?' Only those who are entitled to ask will do so. Others might not know, but how about God? The tricks and drama that you play may not be known to others but cannot escape God. When the time comes God will make you stand as culprits. Before that stage arrives you must get on to the right path. Is Free will to roam around like dogs? No, no. *Swa* + *Ichha* = *Swechha* (self + will = free will) which means there are both *Swa-Dharma* and *Para-Dharma*. *Swa-Dharma* means *Dharma* of *Easwara* (God) and *Para-Dharma* means *Deha Dharma* (*Dharma* of body).

You have not come into this world for the *Dharma* of body. Hence follow *Swa-Dharma* or *Atma Dharma*. Only then your life will be worthwhile. Now people are interpreting whichever way they like. *Brahmins* think it is *Brahmin's Dharma*, *Vaishyas* think it is *Vaishya's Dharma*, *Kshatriyas* think it is *Kshatriya's Dharma*, and *Shudras* think it is *Shudra's Dharma*. These are caste (*Varna*) based *Dharmas*. One must adhere to *Swa-Dharma* and not *Varna Ashrama Dharmas*. So what you must follow is *Swa-Dharma*.

### 240. We like to bind you down in our heart and experience you, How to do that, Swami?

Stop, stop. I am always a captive of the heart. I select only pure hearts before agreeing to reside in them. But today's human believes in God only when his desires are fulfilled. They do rites and rituals like *pujas* and *bhajans*. When desires are not fulfilled they curse God and lose their faith. They arrive to the conclusion that there is no God. Blindly start believing in people. He concludes they are his real friends and in the process gets horribly deceived. They forget that only God is their closest dearest friend. They are losing God due to polluted mind. When anyone special visits your home, first you get your house clean and beautiful to give them a warm welcome. When God himself wants to enter your heart, are you keeping the seat of your heart clean and pure? Are you emptying out envy, jealousy, and

hate? Are you able to fill it with only love? If not how would God enter your heart? How will he set up residence in a heart devoid of love? The fault lies in you.

You are not recognizing that you are responsible for the *Karma* (actions) you do, and instead you are faulting God and collecting more demerit (*paap*). Is this appropriate? It is not feasible for God to reside in a contaminated heart. Even for this impermanent physical body, you set down a mat or pillow before you sit due to the dirt on the floor. How can you think it is not necessary to keep the heart clean for God to sit in it? When the heart is impure God cannot reside in it. God is ever present but cannot be seen if the heart is not very pure. As long as there is water in the pot one can see the reflection of the Sun. But one cannot see it when there is no water. Human body is like a pot. In the pot called body, divinity reflects very nicely as long as there is water called love. But if the water called love is not there, the reflection of divinity cannot be seen. This love is related to the heart. It is not the love that grows in an instant and diminishes in the next. God is tied down and experienced in a love filled heart.

241. While in devotee's hearts God takes the responsibility to remove the *Vasanas* from previous lives. Please elaborate on this, Swami.

Jivi (individual soul) gets born to experience the results of its Karma. In every birth, last life's qualities (Gunas) keep returning whether good or bad. These are called Vasanas. In order for Jivi to get liberation (Moksha) these bad vasanas have to be destroyed. When a devotee's heart is filled with listening to God stories and praise of the Lord, he does not contemplate (Dhyasa) on anything else. His mind is ever immersed in the nectar of God thought sadhana (practice). Hence God stays steady in that mind and does great good to those devotees. He is sajjana hitakari (one who does good to saintly people) and hence destroys the bad Vasanas of his devotees. Then the Jivi becomes deserving for liberation. When God himself stays firm in the hearts of the devotees then what is there to fear?

God enters into their hearts only after he grants them *Jnana* through *Bhakti*. Due to God's presence the bad *Vasanas* of the devotees disappear. Then they spend time in reading God related texts, doing selfless service for elderly devotees which helps in firming up their devotion. There is none else who is worthy of praise and glory than God. If one has one pointed devotion (*Ananya Bhakti*) in this God (*Paramatma*) then their devotion will take root and become steadfast. That is, the

devotion will be unwavering. That devotion will not be subject to illusions or projections. It stays very firmly in God. None of the desires of *Rajo Guna*, *Tamo Guna* will come near this devotee. These will fade away and their *Sathwic* mind will be floating in permanent bliss. That is *Brahmananda*. That is liberation.

#### 242. Swami, where does our spiritual journey begin?

You spiritual journey begins from your heart. That is your field. Journey begins when one thinks from the bottom of their heart 'I need to transform'. This heralding is the beginning or creation of your spiritual life ('Srujana leka Srushti'). The doer for this is Lord Brahma (the creator).

Your hearts that are filled with weeds since a long time needs to be deweeded. Field needs to be ploughed. This plowing might take some time. To do this very plowing, time is given. Spiritual cultivation in this field (heart) makes divine bliss possible. This spiritual cultivation is a sign of *Karma*, focus for human effort, and is yoga of sustenance (*Stithi yogam*). Lord *Vishnu* (sustainer) is the basis for this i.e. it is the effort to digest the all pervading principle.

The tools and instruments given to do this are mind = Madaka, Nagali and Gunas = bulls. One must plow with the help of these. This means that one must use the mind to do sadhana of heart and not the sadhana of world. This is distinctive of sustenance. The way Nagali (plowing instrument, mind) plows is dependent on the bulls (Gunas). Wild bulls do not listen and run here and there. This is the sign of Rajo Guna. Lazy bulls unable to move go at a slow pace resulting in loss of blade (mind) sharpness. This is the sign of Tamo Guna. Only well trained and well behaved bulls (Gunas) are useful for proper plowing. These are the signs of Sathwic Guna. They are the best. Till these bulls (Gunas) become well behaved they need to be trained by using the whip of discrimination (Viveka). Bulls (Gunas) that stray are brought back to behave well by this whip (discrimination). The farmer who does farming uses the whip (discrimination) every time the bulls (Gunas) misbehave reminding us of Lord Shiva, the destroyer among trinity.

When the work of creator, sustainer, and destroyer is done once in a while on the heart, which is like infertile land will become fertile, precious and will expand and flourish. With these expansive hearts men become brilliant and gain happiness in this playing field called world. In the world beyond, they will attain peace. This is the teaching I give to your mind.

#### 243. Swami, what is life? Many are struggling to understand it.

This world attracts you in all different ways. It does not let man's thoughts, intellect, and memories go beyond its boundaries. Man is immersed in the intoxication of temporary happiness provided by the five senses and unable to think about what is ahead and what is going to happen. Another name for man is *Vyakti*. The one who can make what is *avyaktam* (unmanifested, transcendental) into *Vyaktam* (manifest, perceptible) is called a *Vyakti*. Hidden divinity is the nature and principle of transcendental. When man recognizes this principle, he will and would become one who made his humanness worthwhile. By learning the spiritual knowledge and internalizing it with purity, one enjoys the imperceptible divine bliss. Life is sharing that bliss with all.

But man is wasting a lot of his time due to increased body consciousness; reduced divine feelings; in maintaining his body and looks; and hence becoming a slave to physical happiness. By this he is losing the spiritual bliss that is real, permanent, and truth. What is life? Many people view life as having good sleep, sufficient food, plenty of clothing, and house filled with children and lively grand children. This is a fact. But this is only one part of life. It is not the complete picture. Life is not just enjoying the comforts. When you attain the bliss of *Atma* only then you become one who has experienced the full divinity. Senses are very powerful. Your entire body is pervaded by divine *Atma* principle.

In the epic *Maha Bharat*, *Bhagavad Gita* is like its navel. Upon contemplation and comparison, the *Sathya* and *Dharma* in our body is *Dharma Raja* (eldest of the five brothers *Pandavas*). The power (*Shakti*) of nature (*Prakriti*) is *Draupadi* (spouse of *pandavas*). *Pavan's* son *Bheem* (second of *Pandavas*) is *Antah Karana* that is the breathing in – breathing out life force (*Prana*). *Arjun* (third of *Pandavas*) is the strength of the mind and intellect. *Nakul* and *Sahadev* (last of the *Pandavas*) are *Karmendriyas* (5 organs of action) and *Jnanendriyas* (5 organs of knowledge). God is integrating these five different functions into one. Today man is not striving for this unity (like the 5 brothers were united). Instead of integrating he is dividing all these. Hence divinity is not visible in man.

Through my teachings I want to see this divinity in you, but the *sadhana* (practice) of oneness is getting extinct. Absence of love is increasing among humans and body consciousness is increasing. God is present in each of you but in your eyes he is getting invisible. Therefore you must fulfill your life by acquiring human

values. If one cannot recognize the God who is present in all, what value is all that you do and what I say? Is this not true? Tell me? Understand my anguish. Man should not just remain a man. He must know his duty and transform into an embodiment of love. I showed it in practice but how many of you are able to understand and practice? Now there is publicity, teachings, and presentations on the human values of *Truth, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, Ahimsa*. But it is not being shown by example. It must be experienced and practiced.

Publicity and presentations do not gain anything. World never changes by that. When you present by practice only then it becomes an ideal to follow. There is nothing in this world exceeding humanness. What is the cause of unrest and uproar today? Saying one thing and doing another. Say what you think, do what you say. Spiritual life is not to be taken as living alone or being lonely. Unity in humanity needs to be practiced, experienced, enjoyed, and distribution of that happiness to others is spirituality. Doing *Bhajans* and rituals is not spirituality. These are *sat karmas* (good deeds) and they need to be done. They are first steps in spirituality. There is no higher spirituality or life than filling your heart with love and spreading that love.

244. Swami, the people who take refuge in you also encounter difficulties. Then what is the state of the devotee at that time?

The difficulties you are referring to are not really difficulties. They are steps to make you reach God. If you travel the path of faith and confidence, then only you can put your foot on the step of surrender (*Sharanagati*). Although difficulties keep coming again and again, the confidence of the devotee is not shaken. He takes happiness and miseries as gifts of God. He does not complain about anything to God.

Can I tell you a little story in this context? One time Lord *Rama* and *Lakshman* went to *Pampa* Lake to take a bath. They stuck their arrows in mud before they stepped into the lake. After bathing Lord *Rama* pulled out his arrows from the mud. He saw the wetness of blood on the end of the arrow. *Rama* was disturbed that accidentally he may have killed something. *Lakshman* as directed by *Rama* removed some mud and saw a wounded frog. Seeing it Lord *Rama* said as follows, "why did you not make sound as soon as the arrow pierced you? When a snake gets hold of you, you make so much sound?" The frog as it was taking its last

breath said as follows, "Swami, when a snake gets hold of me I would pray O *Rama* save me! But when the arrow of *Rama* pierces me who should I pray to?" Anyone who has that much firm confidence, devotion, and *Shradha* (faith), they would have the feeling that this whole world is pervaded by *Vishnu* (God). When there is no feeling of you and I, then where is the room for fear and grief? Those who are experiencing and enjoying the bliss of name chanting (*nama smarana*) do not face anxiety, anguish, and turmoil. Real peace of mind is in God thought.

245. Swami, what is the inner meaning of *Yajna* (fire ritual)? They say one must perform this rite together with spouse. Why?

It is said that in order to be the owner performer of the ritual their spouse need to join. The inner meaning of this is that spouse is Shradha (faith, trust, and belief). When the feeling of God (Brahmatwa Bhavana) is joined by Shradha (faith, trust, and belief) only then the Yajna is complete. For Brahma (creator), Shradha is the spouse (Saraswati). Your heart is the dais (Vedika), your body is the fire pit (Yajna gundam), your hair is the darba grass, your desires are small wood sticks (samidhalu), your lust is Ghee, and your anger is beastliness. The power of austerity (Tapas) is the fire. Tapas means unity of thought, word, and deed. This Tapas is the brightness that comes from the flame of austerity, which is the Yajna of the mind. Form of the speech is Rig Veda. Uttering from your mouth words that are holy, truthful, and beneficial to others are the mantras of Rig Veda. Your eyes are Yajur Veda. If you examine this world with purified vision then it is the essence of Yajur Veda. Stotras (praising hymns) are Sama Veda. Essence of this Veda is contemplation with divine holy thoughts and feelings. Hence you do not need to perform rituals like Yajnas, Yagas in external fire pits and daises. Yet till the inner thoughts and feelings are improved to this stage, you need to perform these external rituals.

Among all *Yajnas, Jnana Yajna* is the very best and efficacious. You will not find anything about *Jnana Yagna* in holy texts. Performing actions without egoism, and selfishness is *Jnana Yajna*. The doer of all *Yajnas* is God. He stands as the leader who is the doer, enjoyer, and one who supports. Those who wish to earn God's grace must view their daily life as a fire sacrifice (*Yajna*) ritual, desires as small wood sticks used in the fire (*samidhalu*), lust as the *Ghee* (clarified butter) poured into the fire, and perform the *Yajna* and give up animal qualities as the final sacrificial oblation into the fire. This is the essence of *Yajna*.

#### 246. Swami, are love and compassion (prema, daya) one and the same?

In the entire good qualities love has primary importance. Second name of love is compassion. As you love it keeps increasing infinitely. Saint *Tukaram* gave an amazing description (*nirvachana*) for this. He said 'elders say that attaining God with the feeling of oneness is *Jnana*. *Adwaitha darshan* is *Jnana darshan*. But reaching you by this path, is that an ordinary thing to do? It is not possible for ordinary humans therefore I have no need for this path of *Jnana*. *Japa*, *Tapas* and other difficult *sadhanas* I cannot do. I have the ability to gain control of you with love. Bless me so that this love increases.' He desired God to increase his love.

Some call the strong affection (*anuraag*) between two people as love, others say the power of desire between man and an object as love, and some others say the relation between man and a topic as love. In my view it is selfish love. Because that love seeks self interest and hence cannot be pure love. Love is not like a debt which is exchanged back and forth. Pure love is devoid of selfishness. Only through this pure love one has the opportunity to attain God. Life without love, loveless destination, and lack of love can never reach the goal. In order to plough the heart for planting, the primary tool is love. Just the way rays of light were born out of Sun, and waves out of the ocean, similarly love is born out of God. Therefore love is the form of God. In order to have a vision of God it is through love only. But love is to be used for the sake of love only and not for selfish purpose.

Where is the place where I am not? I am in every person, in every substance your eye sees, and every place you walk. In each and every atom, I am there in the form of the atom. Would a place exist where I am not? Is there? *Sarva Bhuta Antaratma* (in dweller of all beings) is not limited to just humans. From ants to creator *Brahma* the life principle is present as principle of *Atma*, principle of oneness. I said that in the past in *Gita* and I am saying it now. Divinity is in every being. Divine quality of love needs to be spread to every living being. Doing *bhajans* (singing names) of God while committing violence on individual (*Jiva*) and performing *puja* (worship) of God while hurting individual (*Jiva*) is counter to oneness. *Jiva* is *Brahman* and *Brahman* is *Jiva* (individual soul and cosmic soul/god are no different).

It is not enough to weave nice words like compassion (*Daya*). Help remove difficulties of the ones suffering and assist as many as possible. That is why I say a heart full of compassion is a temple. Who is following this? For all of you I am

Kamadhenu, Kalpa Vriksh (celestial cow that grants boons, wish fulfilling tree). You must enjoy the milk from this Kamadhenu. Take spiritual wealth from this Kalpa Vriksh and make your life worthwhile. Rain that falls on dark soil turns dark, and it turns red when it falls on red soil. Same rain when it falls in ocean turns salty and relatively sweet in the river. Similarly, though love is the form of God yet depending on the maturity of an individual's heart it changes to selfish, selfless, self interest, and divine. This is the reason why God is described as Guna Rahita (devoid or beyond attributes Gunas). Actually no changes take place or can occur in God.

Man's state of mind (*Bhava*) goes through changes (thoughts and feelings). These thoughts and feelings take on many forms. One who has real and complete faith does not undergo changes. Love that is in the changeless, truthful, and pure heart does not change or waver. God is love hence only through love one can reach this form of love. That sanctified love is what I seek from you. Always have me in your heart and acquire the *Jnana* (wisdom) to view all with compassion and love. *Jnana Yoga* has unparalleled capacity to take *Jivatma* (individualized soul) to *Paramatma* (cosmic soul). Necessary deservedness for this can be attained by constant God thought, and lovingly chanting the name of God. This deservedness gets you the direct experience of the Omnipresent.

247. Swami, people who meditate solicit this and that from you. Soliciting spiritual progress also seems inappropriate. How far is this proper? Is soliciting appropriate or not?

Never do meditation desiring something from God. No one knows what valuable divine riches are in God's bank of Grace. No one knows what I plan to give to the one who earned my Grace. By asking God for trivial things and playful toys man is losing his divine power. While soliciting, you praise God by describing him as 'you are ocean of mercy (*karuna sagar*), you are a friend in need (*apad bandhava*), and you are the protector of orphan (*anatha rakshak*)'.

This does not make God happy instead he gets disgusted. In the ancient times the *Yogis*, *Rishis* described and praised God this way, but it was for the good of the world not out of self interest. For the man today everything is coupled with selfishness, in the end he even gets down to business level with God, and tries to pull God down to that level. He got habituated to praising political leaders and in the end he is trying to praise God in the same manner with *stuthi* and *stotra* (hymns,

praise). Today's man is slipping into a worse state than these people. This is very sad. Everyone needs to transform. They must follow the principle of surrender (*Sharanagati Thathwa*). Man must attain the state that God alone can revitalize him completely. One needs to merge their very presence in God through constant focus (*Dhyasa*) on meditation just like one focuses on breathing, and thinking of God constantly as a spiritual austerity. You need to and be able to make your connection with God even stronger. You need to earn sufficient deservedness to do that.

While seeing God as a picture; putting flowers, sacred rice (*akshita*) on the picture; worshipping with 108 names (*Ashtottara*); singing glories of God (*Kirtan*); entreating God with your this and that desires; no matter how much you remind him about all the rituals you do, it is a futile exercise with no results. If you cannot make God a part of your life, there is no gain in what you do. God has great enthusiasm to talk to you, play with you, sing with you, and this is why he descends in the human form and moves about among you. He desires human form for this reason. When you view me as a friend and playmate, you become dearer to me. When you address me 'O dear friend, O gem of my heart, O friend' and make me one with you, that is, when you recognize me as your indweller and behave accordingly, I derive bliss from it.

Experience me fully and enjoy. Put away your business attitude. Even now bring the change in yourself. There is nothing else that you need to give me, provide me, and I do not desire anything else from you. When you treat me as your friend, I will be very close to you. You can please me as much as you like. When you are close to me only then your wants will be fulfilled. Saint *Thyaga Raja* did many austerities, millions of name chanting (*japa*) and got the direct experience of the eternal truth (God). When he invited Lord *Rama* to his home he considered him someone very close and could invite him like this 'Come! Come to my home O *Raghuvara*, *sukumara*, I bow to you *Dasarath kumara*, steer me for I cannot bear it'. You also invite me with that much nearness and I am ready to respond. Push aside your difficulties-losses; happiness-sorrow; joy-grief; let go of selfishness and self-interest in any circumstance or situation; and think of yourself as 'you', and me as 'you'. In that very instant I will appear in my essential nature, give you the direct experience (*Atma Sakshatkar*), and as the indweller in you I await to answer you always. This is the appropriate method and desire.

#### 248. Swami, how are we to consider human life as a superior birth?

Among mountain peaks like Himalayas; among water bodies like Ocean; among trees like banyan tree (*Aswatha*); among elephants like *Iravata* (a celestial elephant); among weapons like thunder bolt (*Vajrayudham*); among cows like *Kamadhenu* (celestial wish fulfilling cow); among rivers like *Ganges* (most sacred Indian river); among education (*Vidyas*) like spiritual education (*Adhyatmic Vidya*); among alphabets like the first alphabet A; among nominal compounds (*samasa*) like the *Dvanda Samasa*; among *chants* like the *chant* of AUM (*omkaar*); among meters (*chandas*) like *Gayatri chandas*; among months like the month of Maarga-shira (November); like head among the entire organs of man; in the head it is like mind (*manas*), like intellect (*buddhi*), like knowledge (*Jnana*), like *Vijnana* (knowledge by inference, cause and effect, investigation etc.), like *Sujnana* (wisdom, spiritual knowledge), like *Prajnana* (awareness, higher wisdom); similarly in the entire living beings man has a distinguished place.

As any living being in this world one can take birth, grow, and die. But to be born as a human rich in knowledge is difficult. There are 8.4 million species. The highest living being among them is human. Surprisingly in the entire living beings human is born crying as he comes out of mother's womb as a birth right. Peculiarly, as he comes out crying the newborn utters 'kwa, kwa, kwa' and the letters in this sound are full of meaning. In Sanskrit the language of the Gods (*Devas*'), language nectarine, language of the *Vedas*, language of the angels (*Geerwana*), the word 'kwa' means where? This question glittered in the mind of a *jivi* (individualized soul) that is born as a human, and he is the only one who sought an answer for it.

#### 249. Why should one do meditation (*Dhyana*)?

Meditation (*Dhyana*) frees you from dualities like happiness-sorrow, losses-difficulties, sadness, fear and illusion etc. After getting rid of these it gets you closer to divinity. *Dhyana* does not mean to think of one or the other. Meditating on a form or a name and feeling or experiencing complete immersion in it is ordinary or worldly meditation or *Apara Dhyana*. This can stay on for some time and then might change but it is not spiritual or *Para Dhyana*. Just like an iron thrown in fire gets red hot and becomes one with the fire, similarly meditator, meditation, and object of meditation (*dhyanam*, *dhyata*, *dhyeya*) should become one. This is "*Niravadhika*" *Dhyana* (Infinite or endless meditation). One must meditate to merge these three into one. Actually that is the purpose of meditation.

250. What is the difference in ordinary devotion, and complete single pointed devotion (*Ananya Bhakti*)?

From the moment *Jivis* (individuals) enter mother's womb in the form of embryo (*pinda*), the journey from mother's womb into the cosmic womb (world) and onward through life till the last breath, every moment is filled with fear, grief, sorrow and nothing else. It is because all *Jivis* bodies are born out of *Karma*. The ongoing sequence of births is for experiencing the results of prior births actions (*Karmas*). No rebirth (*Janma Rahityam*) is the only one that can grant fearlessness. With faith and confidence that God is the only refuge and nothing else one completely surrenders (*Sarvasya Sharanagati*) to God, then they attain the state of no rebirth. Such firm faith and confidence is called *Bhakti* (devotion) which does not let a *sadhak* drift even for a moment from God thought. This is called as *Ananya Bhakti*. It is this devotion which always prays for nearness and contemplation of God. All other activities are seeking for selfish desires from God and one who understands these readily knows the difference between ordinary devotion and *Ananya Bhakti*.

251. Swami, many people ask me that some are born rich, some born poor, and some are born handicapped and struggle in life. What is the reason?

Everyone knows that sin is incurred through one's actions i.e. *karma*. The reason is when you do good deeds, good begets you and when you do bad deeds, bad begets you, and this belief is completely internalized in you. When one does auspicious actions, one gets results that are *Sathwic* like happiness, knowledge and similar pure results. *Rajasic* actions give sorrow, and *Tamasic* actions yield ignorance (*Ajnana*). If there is no seed there is no fruit. When there is the seed called deservedness (*prapti*), there is the opportunity to get fruit.

Hence it is very clear that every action that you do must be done with forethought. Yet there are a few hard to digest bitter experiences in life. There are those who are in high positions who engage in illegal immoral acts and enjoy the comforts and pleasures; others who commit criminal activities yet have a high stature in the society; many of you are in the illusion that God gives all those luxuries to them despite their actions. Some are born happy and enjoy complete good health. Others are born unlucky. They are physically handicapped. Few are born mentally handicapped. Who is the one who gave them such birth? Some

might question or debate about God who is equal minded (*Sama Drishti*) and yet this prejudice exists. One might conjecture how these differences come about in the kingdom of God.

God is not the cause of good luck or bad luck, happiness or struggles of man. The root cause is the actions performed in previous lives. They themselves have done these actions (*swayam krutam*). One's physical characteristics and behaviors, and inherited qualities are all the effects of past life's *Karmas. Kauravas, Pandavas* (*Maha Bharat* war) can be taken as examples of experiencing the fruits of their *Karma*, either happiness or sorrow. Evil *Kauravas* were enjoying the comforts which were results of the good *Karmas*, although they were engaged in evil actions. While *pandavas* were undergoing difficulties which were due to past bad actions, even while they were doing good *Karmas*. This is the difference between one with discrimination (*Viveka*) and one without. When experiencing difficulties, one takes them as the results of past bad actions and does not get anger or frustration at God. Instead they do good *karma*, help others and remember God's name, all these are signs of good discrimination. When one is enjoying the fruits of good actions, if they do meritorious work it will take them closer to God. This is the sign of lofty character.

#### 252. Swami, people say they do not have peace of mind. Why is that?

They think today is full moon day, but darkness begins from tomorrow onwards. They say today is *Amavasya* (new moon day) but from tomorrow moon will grow in size. In a similar manner happiness and difficulty is relative which keeps coming and going. Relatives do not stay, they only come and go. Likewise your difficulties and happiness come and go. Relationships come in the middle and leave. But God is not like that. He is *apad bandhava* (protector of the distressed). He is with you, beside you, like your eye, in you and protects you like the eye lid does to the eye. One must earn the necessary required deservedness for that. That deservedness is possible through constant God thought. If you are in constant God thought, he will take care of you financially, spiritually, worldly, physically, and *dharmically*. You will get real joy and happiness through peace of mind which in turn comes from spiritual contemplation. This spiritual contemplation gives you unimaginable contentment. This contentment brings you real happiness.

Regarding the anger that gets rid of happiness, I will give an advice to those who analyze with intelligence. All difficulties come so as to bring happiness.

Happiness is in between two miseries. One must earn sufficient forbearance and capacity to face these losses, difficulties, and miseries. God's grace is the only power that can help you face them. To obtain divine grace you need to resurrect yourself. Speak every word after assessing it well. You need to keep hatred and egoism under good control. Never develop hatred against anyone. If circumstances instigate anger, you need to keep it under control. That situation should not even arise. One will face many bad results due to anger. Not only that, old age symptoms will begin early. That is why always be smiling. Smile is a sign of divinity. It increases closeness with God. Those devotees are very dear to me who got rid of egoism, attachment, are equal minded in happiness and misery, and have tolerance. This is impossible for average spiritual seeker. It is very difficult. As long as your inclination is to diverge from God's commands, it is very difficult. It will be easier after you understand the oneness of God and the divinity in man.

- 253.Q. Swami, please give another small advice to keep us happy. If it is big we may not be able to follow.
- A. (gentle smile) everything is small for Swami. They are big in your eyes. Ok. The secret of being happy is not doing what you like. When you like what you have to do, then one gets happiness.
- Q. Swami that seems like very difficult work?
- A. Is that right? When you understand that everything entirely belongs to God, then it means *Jnana* dawned in you.

### Conversation between Brahmini and Bharani

'Sri Sathya Sai Anugraha Gruham' is an old age home opened in Nov 2011 by the grace and guidance of Swami. The ashram has a small dairy with 5 cows which supply the milk used by the residents of the Ashram. In early 2014, a cow named *Brahmini* gave birth to a baby cow which was named *Bharani*. In about a month after birth *Bharani* left its mortal coil. Just before *Bharani* departed, a very mature and elevated spiritual conversation took place between the mother and daughter that Swami has elaborated.

(S - Swami; V - Visalakshi)

- V. *Bharani* must have done a lot of *sadhana* in its previous life in order for it to leave its body and reach your presence in only a few days after it was born. Swami, I think that is why it took birth as a cow, received many *pujas* (at the *Anugraha Gruham* ashram they do *puja* to cows every morning) and attained the highest state (*parama padam*).
- S. You thought well. As you assumed, it was born to a highly accomplished spiritual parents in its last life. It was a lifelong celibate (*Brahmachari*) and with the blessings of its parents performed *Japa, Tapas*, and *Yajna kriyas*, and attained 94.6% of its life goal of liberation. It had a long time desire to take birth as an elevated cow. It pursued the principle of *Brahma Thathwa* which means even in dreams its thoughts did not drift towards conjugal relationship. Not only that at the last second, it prayed for a birth in a spiritual environment due to which it was granted a highly elevated mother's womb.
- V. So just like it prayed in its last life, it took birth in *Brahmini's* womb and came into this world? Did it achieve freedom from rebirth, Swami?
- S. Yes. Everyone based on their previous life's *Karmas* comes to this world to experience the consequences by taking up a body with different name, form, and qualities (*Gunas*). This applies to 8.4 million life species. Through God, who confers the consequences, they take birth accordingly to experience the *Karmic* fruits. Once *Karmas* are experienced either they take a future birth, or based on their deservedness they reach the state of no rebirth, liberation. This is what the established teaching of *Karma* points out.

- V. Did *Bharani* finish the work it came for? What was the work? It was a small child, what *Karma* did it finish? What did it experience? How did it complete it? All these are doubts.
- S. These are not your doubts. In your state these questions arise only to bring out the answers that are useful for many others. It is very clear that all the embodied beings acquired or brought their forms through and from God and not by any other means. No matter what comes, whichever way it comes, whosoever gives it, one must utilize the form in a preset time and then return it to the one who gave it. It does not depend on the likes or dislikes of the *Jivi*. But based on their life style and the path they followed and experienced till the end, they turn into a *Yogi* and petition God to complete the rest of their *sadhana*. God approves the petition and grants them the next life.

Bharani was left over with very little Karma. How much amount of samskar (good character) it must have accumulated in order to attain this exalted state? It took birth in the womb of a mother like *Brahmini*. This mother can be compared to Sai Gita (Swami's deceased pet elephant), an extraordinary celibate (ghotaka brahmachari). Bharani is not born out of fornication but by a veterinarian injecting Brahmini with sperm for conception (this is a common practice in India). This is a karana janma (not karma janma) i.e. born for a cause and not due to karma. She gave birth to a Yogi (Bharani). It is the phenomena of this Yogi that from birth it lived as an embodiment of bliss. It has a big circular birth mark on its Sahasrahara (top of the head) which means its Sahasrahara chakra was open from birth. There is nothing more for it to attain or acquire. That is why it received Namaskars from birth and through those *Namaskars* it granted merit (punya) to them and in turn it achieved liberation very quickly (at the Anugraha Gruham ashram they worship cow everyday and do Namaskars to them). Mother Brahmini and child Bharani had long conversations for two days where the mother with exemplary character gave beneficial advice to the child. This precious and exalted advice is worth following by all mothers. Here is the conversation between them from which one can imagine their lofty character.

Brahmini: I have taken birth as God dictated. Do you know the cause of this birth? As mother cow to give milk to children (*amrith dhara*, here children refer to people also). I heralded the good resolution of birthing and giving milk to people, by making loud sounds when I came of age

under God's command to demonstrate the nature's mating routine. Because of that I gave birth to you and attained the merit of giving nectarine milk to all. As mother I would advice that being born as a cow you should do the same and acquire this great merit (*punya*).

Bharani: So you are saying to attain merit in life we must share good with many others. But to give meritorious and sanctifying milk to others we must first have sanctified food. As God dictates, as is food so are thoughts. My true belief is that the food provided to us is filled with selfish motives and is contaminating the milk with selfishness and instead of giving milk filled with *Jnana*, I will end up giving milk tainted with ignorance (*Ajnana*) and earn demerit. This *sankalp* (resolve) body that is almost near its goal will deteriorate and go backward is my honest opinion. As mother what is your response?

Brahmini: What you said is true. The spiritual state that you attained can be said to be higher than mine because since the time I took birth it has deteriorated. Because I am a mother I got overtaken by allure and personal interest, hence wanted you to stay for longer time. I think as a child you are setting your mother right.

Bharani: I do not know your spiritual state. But the reason I have come for is already underway, that is I improved the samskar and state of those who did namaskar to me. What I received from their namaskar has completed the little bit more I needed to acquire. As mother if you agree I will continue my journey in relinquishing my birth to God and take up a place in his heart. As mother do not give importance to worldly bondages and let me go. Take my last Namaskar, I need to bow down at my mother's feet. By offering my namaskars to my body related mother and grandmother (Brahmini was born at this ashram to a cow named Sindhuja), I am taking my final farewell.

Brahmini: I know how evolved you are in your spiritual state. As mother I tried to bind you with selfish motive. Now my selfish motives are completely erased. Both of us need to sanctify and liberate our lives granted by God. As mother I am granting you freedom. It is your wish to take your last breath while looking at your mother and merge in God. Go ahead, I am blessing you. From this day onwards I will pray incessantly for the

ashram inhabitants who are drinking my milk to get rid of their ignorance and evolve higher spiritually, by giving them milk filled with spiritual vibrations which in turn will make me a *Karma Yogi* and attain *Jivan Mukthi*. Without fail put your vision on Bhagawan's feet and take leave.

Bharani: I offer my namaskar to this magnanimous mother and to Bhagawan. Did you understand the inner meaning of my name Bharani? Shine just like a star in the galaxy, lead a life like lightning, stay in the star galaxy permanently like Dhruva, and watch you from there. Time is flying by, Good bye!

Swami: Both of you are sanctified souls, meritorious souls, prayerful souls and *Atma Sakshatkar* (direct experience of *Atma*) souls. Take my blessings and welcome to enter into me. I gave my divine *darshan* (vision) to both of them. *Brahmini* experienced that bliss and gave her grateful *namaskar* loudly. (I was there along with rest of *ashramites* when I heard the loud sound made by *Brahmini*)

# **Divine Conversations**

(Summary of the divine conversations between Swami and Visalakshi) Swami (S) and Visalakshi (V)

- V. Swami, Man is not improving his inner vision.
- S. Yes the spiritual state of one who has developed inner vision tends to be different. One gets degraded by their narrow mindedness and their thoughts. They bow down to God and yet they assign their own human limitations to him. When will maturity and wisdom arise in them?
- V. It is quite difficult to converse with people who are not mentally mature, Swami.
- S. Yes. Their thought process is neither mature nor totally undeveloped.
- V. Swami, Does that mean that their thoughts are bound within their mental state?
- S. Of course. One is unable to move higher in their mental abilities from this helpless state. As they progress in their spiritual *sadhana* (practices), they will understand the principle of divinity. That is, if they grow out of the limitation of thinking that this body is Sai and God, then they will be able to grow out of their worldly nature and see God pervading the entire creation.
- V. Then would they see it as God pervading the totality?
- S. Entire creation is *Vishnu mayam* (pervaded by God). God is present in the entire world but one cannot see till they examine and enquire. Otherwise only world is visible. Why God is not visible? One needs forbearance, *Sadhana* (spiritual practices), and *Shraddha* (implicit faith and trust) to get that vision.
- V. Then how is one to have your *darshan* (visions)?
- S. To see Moon one does not need a lamp. One can see it with the help of moonlight. In same way to speak about God, human speech is insufficient in power. Therefore the words of God speaking about himself are the only refuge.

- V. Swami, is man to develop a relationship with God in everything?
- S. In daily life every act is to be performed with God thought in mind and one must sanctify their life by living in constant presence of God. Due to the good deeds (*punya*) of your past lives you are able to speak and spend time with me who is the form of *Chidananda* (consciousness-bliss); is *Sad Guru*; is God who moves around with you; is very form of love; is a person you can talk to; is shining light of *Dharma*; the very touch of my feet gives experience of *Sat*; my words like words of *Veda*; and my life is my message.
- V. Yes Swami. How are we to express our gratitude for this extraordinary opportunity?
- S: The degree to which the devotee seeks shelter in God, HE in turn surrenders to you 100 times more.
- V. We are blessed, Swami.



- S. How long does the mango pickle last in a ceramic jar?
- V. More than a year, Swami.
- S. Then how long does it stay in this jar (human body as the jar)?
- V. Less than half a day Swami.
- S. What is in this body, it is a garbage dump. Everything is in the mind. That is why this body needs to be viewed as an instrument to attain the knowledge of the Self.
- V. For this, is it necessary to have a *Guru*?
- S. Whole life is passing away in the illusions of body and mind. You, who do not know the way, need a *Guru* who knows the way. Using your discrimination you need to pick out your *Sad Guru* and offer your heart.

- V. Yes Swami. We are very lucky to find you as our *Sad Guru*.
- S. It is your great fortune that you found the *Avatar* as your *Sad Guru*. A *Sad Guru* would never let his disciple fall, degrade, or get ruined.
- V. That is why we need your grace, Swami.
- S. *Bangaru* (my precious one), my grace (*Anugraha*) is always there if your *Grahas* (astrological planets) are alright.
- V. What does *Grahas* need to be alright mean, Swami?
- S. *Grahas* does not mean planets like *Rahu*, *Ketu* (two planets represent illomen). It means *Raga* and *Dwesh* (attachment and hatred). One needs to get rid of them first.
- V. Swami, you tell us such a good thing.
- S I always tell good things. Your inner divinity is buried due to the weakness in your heart and the dirt in your mind. As soon as you recognize this, in that instant you have understood the disease causing your misery. Once you identified the disease, how long does it take to mitigate it? Ask yourself what is the *sadhana* you must do first? Love entire living beings with blemish less heart. Help them selflessly and love them. The very same *Atma* in you is also shining in all of them. Loving entire beings means you love your Self.
- V. How should one face suffering and grief?
- S. Get into the habit of surrendering to God. Learn to face what you would encounter in this path of surrender. It is enough if you start thinking that everything is God, you are prisoners in his kingdom of love, and that you are safe in his hands. Increase your love towards God who is the form of love. Do not give room in your heart to disbelief and doubt. Do not have questions or suspicions about my love.

Why my troubles are not over? Why am I unable to move quicker in my *sadhana*? Why Swami did not acknowledge my presence? Why he did not speak to me? These thoughts agonize you. Do not think that I do not know your suffering. Do not think or feel that I am disregarding you. Just because I

do not speak to you, do not think that I do not have love for you. If I do not have this love then why would I incarnate? Think about it. Recognize my love as compared to yours. It is filled with agony. Understand my agony. I did not come because I have no other work. My work is to turn you towards *Sadhana*. No matter what you say or do, I am not going to forget my purpose. I will not feel bad about what you say or do because I am not *manava* (human) but *madhava* (God incarnate).

- V. Swami, does one need to meditate for long to attain your love?
- S. When you do meditation for longer periods, your vision and mind will be constantly thinking about me. I desire you to attain that state.



- V. Swami, Is the purpose of *Avatar* to transform man?
- S. That which transforms and that which gets transformed must occur in the era of Sathya Sai. That which transforms is God, and that which gets transformed is *Jivi* (individualized soul). I am with you, in you, letting you know about these two and their condition, and watching you every moment in this journey.
- V. Swami, can we say man has forgotten his *Dharma*?
- S. If the whole world performs their assigned duties, my play will be very simple. But these *Maya* driven *Jivis* (individuals) who brought their bodies to fulfill certain cause and work (*karya karana nimitta*), forget both, and instead start hankering for something else. Shall I tell you a little allegory? You head out to a farmers market with the intention to buy something. You meet someone in the market and start chit chatting and forget the purpose. Then what would you end up doing? You forgot what you went for and return home. What you

thought of making at home cannot be made. By then you are tired and need rest. Later when you are ready, the market may be closed or the item you wanted may not be available. In order to acquire that thing, farmers market needs to be open again, you need to remember, at that time you need to have the money to buy, the need for that thing you wanted to buy must still exist, and you need to have time and energy. Even if you gathered all these what is the use if the thing you wanted to buy is not available? Because you forgot the cause and reason why you came into this world, you are coming again and again into this world and getting entrapped in worldly affairs. Understand that mind is very mischievous. If one lives by setting it straight as soon as it strays, then one will definitely attain lofty spiritual state.



- V. Swami, what else is our duty as *Jivis* but to make you happy?
- S. Can I give a small example? As humans you get trapped in the vortex of desires, beget children, and push those children into this same vortex. And then say 'Oh my goodness! I finally fulfilled my responsibilities and now I am relieved.' But the knowledge never dawns on him that he is doing something wrong. As mother and father if they reveal the secret of birth, teach the purpose why one comes into this world, help the child advance in their spiritual state, and if successful in doing so, they will improve their own state, and for sure will secure a place in my heart. That is blissful to me. But it is an awful sad state to stay in ignorance of thinking that their duty is to merely fulfill the physical needs.

- V. Swami, Guru is needed for knowing the goal of life? Once we know the way then is there any more getting lost?
- S. Till one knows the way very well, one needs the guidance of one who knows the way. In case if one exhibits egoism thinking they know everything, they will get lost. Then there will be no one to tell or show them the way. At that time your spiritual state is headed downward. The one who shows the way is *Guru*. That goal is *Atma Sakshatkar* (direct perception of *Atma*).



- V. It is said that the good or bad consequences are befitting the actions (*karmas*). How is that Swami?
- S. One feels like looking repeatedly at a face that reflects good thoughts and feelings. When one puts on a castor oil face as if someone took away all their belongings, one does not feel like looking at that face. Some can act one way while feeling the opposite way. They are tricksters and they can do anything. The *Gunas* one possesses becomes their nature (*swabhava*). This nature becomes their desires. These desires become actions (*Karmas*). There are consequences for all the four. I am the selfless master who hands out, right then, the appropriate consequence to the action. This master is amazingly great at assessing their life and position accurately, while handing out the consequence. In the physical world when one adds up all the four the score should be higher. But here the one who gets lower score is better because they are reducing their negative qualities (*Gunas*).
- V. Swami, what is needed to enjoy lasting bliss (*Nityananda*). How do we attain those from you?
- S. If you get your vessel ready, obtain the items, and get them ready for cooking, then I can make them so that they are ready to be consumed. You need to be ready to receive. The eagerness in you to receive needs to be twice that of my eagerness to give. This is what I am waiting for. If the items are taken in right proportion then the cooking will be delicious. Those who consume will take

second helpings, again and again. It is all in the hands of those who are cooking. This is the list of items needed for this cooking: 1. Peace (*Shanti*) 2. Self control (*nigraha*) 3. Regulation (*kattadi*) 4. Control of Taste 5. Control of sight 6. Egoism must die 7. Ability to converse with God 8. Must recognize one's own divinity 9. Excess of compassion 10. Dispassion (*Nirliptata*) 11. Feeling of oneness. One must let go of *Un-Atma Bhava* (feeling for everything that is not *Atma*).



- S. At times it is good to want to spend time entertainingly.
- V. In what way, Swami?
- S. You can stray a bit from your thoughts and then return back to your original state. But one should not forget their original state. That is the thing called 'you' (Self) should never forget its location and its state. One can call this meditation.
- V. That is, 'I' is kept in awareness while letting mind stray with the confidence that one can bring it back. This way mind is relaxed a bit and then the 'I', one's mind and thoughts are brought into a steady and stable state. Is this right?
- S. You made a good effort in understanding and asking. A *Jivi* who is thirsty or hungry has the desire and eagerness to gulp down the food items in front, at once. But if one tries to eat with that much eagerness, one consumes a small quantity only. Instead if one proceeds to eat slowly, they might consume more. Similarly your mind has too much hunger. And it wishes to approach the worldly items and consume them. Where is the thought of transcendental (God) when the desire for these worldly items is not gone yet? Hence do not let the mind indulge in worldly things, and it is necessary to have a method and focus to keep it centered on spirituality (God).

- V. Would you call that equanimity?
- S. Equanimity is a state to take and treat all things equally.
- V. How is that possible, Swami?
- S. What is latent in you got frozen due to *samskars* from many lives. Hence it needs to be exposed to a little heat.
- V. What kind of heat Swami?
- S. There is a fire called *samskar* (good ones) already in you. Air called *Dhyana* is needed for that *samskar* to keep it from extinguishing. So if that air is provided, it lights up the fire of *Jnana*, melts the *Ghee* (butter) called divinity, emits bright flames, burns up the *Ari Shadvargas*, and merges in the illuminating *Atma Thathwa* (principle of Atma).



- V. When 'I' is pervading everything then what is there to go? What is there to come? Who gets liberated? Feeling of duality does not exist? In case a *Jivan Mukta* takes birth again, do they need to suffer? All these are interrelated questions, Swami.
- S. When *Jivi* gets that much knowledge of *Atma* there is nothing more to know. Who left earlier? Who came now? Going and coming is the *Dharma* of the body. The knowledge that it is the body that experiences is *Jnana*. As *Avatar Purusha* I took birth, that is, this body is born out of *sankalp* (resolve) and not the body of a *Jivan Mukta*. Then why did this body suffer? What suffered? What *Karma* from what state and condition had to be experienced? This needs to be inquired. One can find answer in that.

- V. Why does a *karana shareera* (body due to Will) go through difficulties and suffering Swami?
- S. Although it is out of *sankalp*, this body is a human body and not something that dropped out of the sky. For the onlookers it undergoes difficulties and happiness just like them, shows them how to experience them lightly, at the same time liberating those who are ready to get liberated, while binding those who are to be bound, brings charm to this drama called play of *Maya* (*'Maya Kriditha'*).
- V. When you are making the drama charming, then why *Karmas* for man? Why their burden? What are all these? Are these all a drama too?
- S. Yes it is a drama. Did not understand? I have placed many *Karmas* in front of you i.e. you buy a basketful of toys for your grandchild to play with. When the child cries you bring the basket and pour it in front of him. The child picks out what he likes and plays with it. Likewise I have placed many attractions, like toys, in front of you. Along with it I gave you discrimination. Whatever they take using their intellect and discrimination, and the way they take it decides the result (fruit) they get. This is called *Karma*. Handing out the results of those *Karmas* is my work. This is a play for me.
- V. Then what about the pawns in this play Swami?
- S. You seem to have lot of anxiety to know this? Anxiety one must not have. *Jignasa* (inquiry) one must have. Did you understand?
- V. So Swami, is showing interest in what is to be known and experienced from you as human is called *Jignasa*?
- S. One can say 100 percent. If a *Jivi* keeps on desiring one thing after another related to the world we unknowingly say 'why are you so anxious?' One needs to have inquiry related to higher truths and ideals (*Jignasa* with *ashayam*).

- V. Can one say that *Jignasa* must be combined with subject understanding?
- S. Yes, for sure. You must not only change into *Jnanis* but need to help others in changing too. Take my blessings in plenty, full, and abundantly (*dandiga*, *menduga*, *ninduga*).

- V. How should peace be, Swami?
- S. The thing you call 'I' should be in a state of equanimity. When the thing called 'I' meets up with Sat, one gets the divine experience. That is mixing with a sweet thing and becoming delicious. This state is a feeling unreachable by language, desires to just stay in the present, and renounce the future. This present is the basis for future and past. Always it is present (*Vartaman*) and it is where all actions occur (kartaman). Never forget your original state. Remembering the role you have come to play on the stage called world, you should not forget who you are and what your duty is? I am chasing you and will continue to chase you so that you remember who you are. It is my work to make you run even if you get tired. Once I start anything there are no stops in it. I have that kind of dedication to work (karya disha). I will turn those who recognize me into effulgent beings and take them to the state they deserve. This is the Truth. There is no possibility of escape for a *prani* (living being) that falls prey to a tiger, and a Jivi (individualized soul) who falls into the hands of a Sadguru! (Puli nota badda praani, Sadguru chetha badda jivi, tappinchukune prasakte ledu)
- V. What is the inner meaning of this Swami?
- S. A *prani* (living being) that falls prey to a tiger means if body is recognized as something that always deteriorates and gets destroyed then the body consciousness will be lost, and you will fall in the hands of a *Sad Guru* who can give you the direct experience of the Self. In falling prey to a tiger or to

death what is lost is only body. The goal of a *Jivi* is to lose the impermanent body consciousness. Then the feeling of oneness occurs to *Jivi* and it floats in that which is pure, permanent, and Truth.

- V. It is our great fortune today to fall into the hands of the Sad Guru, Swami
- S. Depending on how fast you walk you will reach your goal that quickly. That is the reason for granting you human birth. Offer *Guru Dakshina* (gift to Guru) copiously and attain complete surrender (*sarvasya sharanagati*). You may imagine a lot. But I will not do all that you have thought. I am a great master who works per his time table. I am a tough task master who expects his students to be good. If I will it, I can do a lot. But you have created your own boundary and are able to see within those limits only.



- V. Swami, it is said Puttaparthi is *Yogya Bhoomi* (land of capability, eligibility).
- S. This Puttaparthi is the abode of *Yogis*. *Yogi's Yogya Bhoomi* (land eligible for *Yogis*). Recognizing the spiritual state of *Yogis* I invite the eligible ones and bring them here not only to protect them but to grant them their due and deserving spiritual state. I use them as an instrument for the benefit of the world at large based on my Will, Intention, and Thought (*Sankalp Vikalp*), and then once the work is over, I clean them thoroughly and keep them safely in my home. No one is given access to them. When I see the need I take them out, use them, once work is over, I clean them again because the instrument is mine, and the work is mine. Hence it is my responsibility to keep them safe. No matter how big the work, any type of work, the instrument has to do it because it is only an instrument. Whatever the work the owner assigns it, the job of the instrument is to do the work assigned without any objection. It never forgets that it is just an instrument, hence it does its work very easily. Such deserving instruments are *Yogis*.

- V. So can we recognize those *Jivis* who are in a state where nothing is theirs i.e. those who attained complete surrender (*sarvasya sharanagati*) as *Yogis*?
- S. Yes. To attain this deserving state, it takes many lives of *Sadhana* which then leads to complete surrender (*sarvasya sharanagati*). It is impossible to attain for ordinary *Jivis*. They cannot even imagine it. Therefore if one practices some degree of spirituality in every life, after some lives they will get a desire to know this goal and to pursue this path. When the thoughts are not even in this direction where would one go? That is why I am anxious for all of you. I am after you because those of you who have come on this path might stray or might relax and take it easy then what will happen to you. After all I am a mother and just like you want your children to progress, likewise I desire the progress of my children. Physical mothers are striving so hard for worldly desires, then what about me?



- V. Swami, please let us know the way to have *darshan* (vision) of *Madhava* (God)?
- S. When you believe in serving man as serving God (*Manava sevaye Madhava seva*) then you can see God in man. To see *Madhava* you must recognize humanness first. Without recognizing humanness experiencing Godliness is impossible. Therefore to have a vision of *Madhava* serving man is the way.
- V. Swami, does one get experience of God only with selfless service?
- S. Seva (selfless service) is like a spice that gives the taste of bliss to life. Seva has purity and through Seva one can experience love. Expansion of heart takes place. By Seva one can also earn appreciation from God. As a Sevak (one who does Seva) and a trustworthy guard Hanuman earned great accolades. Instead of speaking about Seva, one must demonstrate it.

- V. Can one also get *Atma Darshan* (experience of Atman) only through *Seva*?
- S. Through *Seva* one gets their mind pure and expands their heart. Heart becomes abode for pure and holy feelings and emotions. One gains qualities like kindness, love, and compassion. When such godly qualities are gained, one loses *Ajnana* (illusion). One loses egoism. Attachment disappears. Therefore everyone must dedicate themselves to *Seva*. Through this *Seva* when you begin to find out about yourself, you will get inner bliss. That is the *darshan* of *Sat* (existence). That is the bliss of *Atma*.
- V. Through this can a *Jivi* experience humanness fully?
- S. Devotion lacking in humanness is useless. Then where is fullness of humanness? Man has been born for hundreds of thousands of years, yet his humanness is still going through birthing pains. Now we see man only in the form of a human. One cannot find a man with humanness. We can see collaboration and helpfulness among animals but not among men. If a small piece of sugar is seen by an ant, it brings all other ants with it to carry it back. If a crow sees discarded food, it brings other crows and they all eat together. But man is living contrary to this in disunity.
- V. Man ought to have these noble feelings, right Swami?
- S. Yes. Everyone must possess and improve these higher ideals, expansion in feelings, and faith. Once these ideas are implemented then there will no room for tainted feelings, ill will, and malice. The differences that exist among people will disappear. Teaching alone does not bring transformation. It comes by following and doing. When this change comes, then he will change into a real human (*manava*). Then they can get what they aspire for.
- V. This man will be pure in character and humble in nature. Is that right Swami?
- S. Although the ideal man is guided to lead a life of humbleness and abide in *Dharma*, but one's life becomes sanctified when they love God in all times and in all conditions. The higher truth and meaning of life is to be fully attached to this divinity.
- V. Swami, it is our good fortune that we are able to get your *darshan* (vision).
- S. Yes it is your good fortune. A while back a brilliantly shining bee with divine light used to come out twice a day from a lotus called Prashanti Nilayam and

lovingly savored the nectar that was brimming from the lotus hearts of the devotees. That honey gathering process (*Brama-rathwam*) was incomparable and unimaginable. That is *Sathyam* (Truth), *Shivam* (auspiciousness), and *Sundaram* (beauty).

### **Brief Q&A Section**

- V. How does one get real happiness, Swami?
- S. When one removes worldly attachments.
- V. What brings harm to man?
- S. Anger.
- V. Whom does God draw near him?
- S. One without anger.
- V. Who are the real thieves?
- S. Those immersed in worldly pleasures.
- V. How should our thoughts be day and night?
- S. Knowledge that life is impermanent and can be destroyed in a second (*kshana banguram*).
- V. What is an ideal quality, Swami?
- S. Giving charity to poor, and helping the needy.
- V. Who is a real *Jnani* (wise man)?
- S. One who has far sight, discrimination, and enthusiasm.
- V. Who is a blind person?
- S. One who does not know his mistakes, one who has desire for worldly pleasures, one who has no faith in God, and one who cannot tolerate goodness.
- V. What is beneficial to the soul (*Atma*)?
- S. Unquestioning faith in *Dharma* (moral, obligatory, and ethical duties).

- V. What is equivalent to poison?
- S. Criticism of Guru.
- V. What brings infamy?
- S. Anger, Greed, Selfishness, Egoism, Jealousy, and hatred.
- V. How should our thoughts be?
- S. In contemplation of God.
- V. Who is a *Guru*?
- S. One who takes great interest in the welfare of his disciples and followers.
- V. What is needed for *sadhana* of Liberation (*Moksha*)?
- S. *Jnana* and *Viveka* (Wisdom and discrimination).
- V. Who is a good person?
- S. One who has good mind.
- V. What should everyone aspire for?
- S. Intellect inclined to help others.
- V. What is our enemy?
- S. Not having the determination to pursue life's goal.
- V. What makes human fear the most?
- S. Death.
- V. Who is a real leader?
- S. While seeking every ones well being, tirelessly pursues the goal.

- V. What is pleasant to human ears?
- S. Discourses by wise men, and praising the glory of God.
- V. How to preserve one's honor?
- S. By not seeking help from people who are unethical, and evil.
- V. What is the root cause of worry?
- S. Discontentment, and unjust desire for others wealth.
- V. What is the worst action?
- S. Working for selfishness.
- V. What is ideal life?
- S. A life that does not commit any sins.
- V. What is discrimination (*Viveka*)?
- S. To put into practice the good ideals one has read.
- V. What is it that is like the drop of water on a lotus leaf?
- S. Physical pleasure, Wealth, and Youth.
- V. What type of a person is calm and cool like moonlight?
- S. Saints and Sages who are *Jnanis*.
- V. What is contemptible work?
- S. To do *seva* to mean and petty people.
- V. Who is a *Viveki* (discriminating)?
- S. One who has unlimited wealth of *Jnana* (wisdom).

- V. What is *Sathyam*?
- S. Love and compassion for entire living beings *Bhoota Daya*.
- V. When does one have happiness?
- S. When one gets the company of the good and holy.
- V. Who can remove all our difficulties and problems?
- S. All powerful God.
- V. What produces harm to our lives?
- S. Evil actions.
- V. Who is a lame person?
- S. One who has not visited holy pilgrimage centers.
- V. What should we seek?
- S. Compassion, kindness towards poor, devotion towards saints and sages, respect towards *Guru* and parents.
- V. Who is a *Sadhu* (holy man, ascetic, sage)?
- S. One who has good qualities, and a *Inani*.
- V. Who is a mean person?
- S. One who engages in bad activities.
- V. Who is a *Vishwa Vijetha* (one who conquered the world)?
- S. One who has Truth, Dharma, Peace, and Love (Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema).
- V. Who is worthy of worship?
- S. The one who has compassion and humanness.

- V. Who can earn love and affection from people?
- S. One who is truthful, and has compassion for entire living beings (*sarva bhoota daya*).
- V. What path should we follow?
- S. The path of *Dharma* (moral, ethical, obligatory duties).
- V. Who is deaf?
- S. One who is not interested in listening to the discussions of *sat purush* (good and holy).
- V. Who is mute?
- S. One who utters lies, and does not speak of good.
- V. What is called charity?
- S. Helping the deserving with humility and without expectations.
- V. Who is a real friend?
- S. One who keeps you away from evil actions.
- V. In life, what is it that is like a flash?
- S. Life that is immersed in worldliness.
- V. What is it that is rare and invaluable in the world?
- S. Charity with compassion, Wisdom (*Jnana*) without egoism, unshakeable courage, sharing wealth (good qualities) with others.
- V. What is it that is contemptible, loathsome?
- S. Craving for others wealth, prosperity.
- V. What is ideal quality?

- S. Giving, giving, giving. Helping the needy, and giving to the poor.
- V. Who is deserving of respect?
- S. One who is unostentatious, and of humble nature.
- V. Who is victorious in this world?
- S. One who has qualities of truth, compassion, and charity.
- V. Who does goddess of prosperity (Maha Lakshmi) select?
- S. One who is hard working and not lazy, one who follows *Dharma*, and one who respects elders and parents.
- V. Who should we be friendly with?
- S. One who follows the path of justice, avoid those who lack morality, and are greedy.
- V. Who is mean?
- S. One who finds faults in others, earns by unjust means, and contemptible.
- V. How should our thoughts be?
- S. Towards contemplation of God.
- V. What should one pray for?
- S. Good education, mental and physical health.
- V. What brings defame, Swami?
- S. Anger, greed, selfishness, egoism, jealousy and hatred.
- V. What kind of things should one show keen interest in?
- S. Morality, Integrity, Dedication, Efficiency and Expertise in the work they do.
- V. What are valuable prosperities (*sampada*)?

- S. Timeliness, alertness, presence of mind, and sturdiness of body.
- V. What is the real strength of a person?
- S. Courage. It is said 'courage is *Lakshmi*, and boldness is *Lakshmi*'.
- V. What is evil action?
- S. To harm those who are good and holy (*sat purush*).
- V. How to become best?
- S. To perform actions with expertise, with feeling of dedication, and unswerving in attaining the goal.
- V. What is the root cause for our suffering?
- S. Bad thoughts, hatred, anger, jealousy, egoism, and pride.
- V. Who can become wealthy?
- S. Those with devotion to God, and selflessly helping others.
- V. Who are not to be believed?
- S. Do not trust those who lie.
- V. What is real wealth?
- S. Health.
- V. Who is contented?
- S. One who does regular *Seva* (selfless service), and has children with good character.
- V. What is it that one cannot control?
- S. Mind and thoughts.
- V. What is heaven on Earth?
- S. Contentment.

- V. What is armor of protection?
- S. Devotion to God, and good actions you perform.
- V. Who is worthy of worship?
- S. Parents, Guru, God and Mahatmas (great saints).
- V. Who is like God?
- S. One who has *Sad vidya* (knowledge of One *Sat*), one who is dedicated to duty, one whose nature is selflessly helping others, one who has faith that everything is God's grace.

"Money, mind, and life (*Vittam, Chittam, Jeevitham*) are all temporary. Lord *Yama* (lord of death) has no mercy. Bodies are transient, wealth is impermanent, and death is nearby. Desire, Anger, and Greed are thieves waiting to steal the diamond called *Jnana*. Man is bound by hope and worry. Span of life is steadily decreasing. Prosperities are like dreams, and Youth is like a fading flower. Life span is like a flash in the sky. Mother, father, relatives, brothers, and money are impermanent. Life is full of misery, old age is painful, spouse is cause of misery, marriage is suffering, and the very ocean of life (*samsara sagar*) is filled with suffering. In order to escape from these one needs to engage in study of spiritual books, doing beneficial actions (*sat karma*), intellect inclined to help others, unpretentious, and of tranquil mind. Else death is stalking you constantly and can devour at any moment. Today using this wonderful opportunity in the form of contest between us, I am sending a word of caution to be careful. Be happy."

What started as entertaining situation, in the end turned spiritual to bring out the beauty and sweetness in life. It ended auspiciously by receiving blessings.



# **Glossary**

Glossary for this English translation of the original Telugu book 'Nithya Sathya Bodha' is put together for two reasons. First, this is a translation and has lot of original Telugu and Sanskrit words. Secondly it is put together with those folks in mind who are not too familiar with spirituality or Sanatan Dharma which covers Vedas, Vedanta, Puranas, and what is now called Hinduism. There are a few fundamental concepts upon which the content of this book relies on, and they are explained first before the alphabetical list of terms and their meaning.

Brahman – 'Brunhati iti Brahman' that which always expands, has no form, no qualities or Gunas. Hence it is beyond words, description, and mind – all these three need a form or quality to express. Closest description given by the sages for Brahman is Sat-Chit-Anand (existence-awareness-bliss). It is not three things but only one like Sun, Sunlight, and warmth of Sun define only one entity, and one cannot exist without the other. It is called super or supreme consciousness, chit, chaitanya, Shiva. It is also referred as Atma, God, Paramatma, Para-brahman etc. In Christian terms it is Spirit, to the best of my understanding. It is eternal, immutable, and indestructible hence Nithya. The active force behind creation is Shakti which is the latent power of Brahman or Shiva. It is called Moola Prakriti or Pradhana.

A first resolve (cause) to create occurs in this entity called *Brahman*. That is the first great *karma* which means action and all other *karmas* that are taking place later are in line with that. The latent energy *Shakti* manifests, becomes active and creation ensues with the sound of AUM (big bang?). The world of cause and effect called *Prakriti* is born. *Prakriti* or *Mother Nature* is causal matter, energy, life force. *Prakriti* is called *Maya* by Vedanta. Both *Maya* and *Brahman* are *Anadi* (beginning less) because the concept of time gets born inside *Prakriti*. (A simple analogy is the beginning of a dream cannot be measured in terms of the dream-time which gets born and dies with the dream).

The first product that comes from *Prakriti* is the principle of great intelligence called *Mahat Thatwa*. *Gunas* (*Sathwa*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*), *Prana* (cosmic life force), *Tanmatras* (rudimentary elements, atoms), *pancha bhutas* (five elements), *panchikaran* (mixing and combining) etc. takes place to bring forth this manifested creation – animate and inanimate.

In micro-cosmic terms, the super consciousness is called *Purusha* and the corresponding energy or life-force called *Prakriti*. These two, *Purusha* and *Prakriti* (*Nithya* and *Maya*), are present as common factors in every man and being. *Purusha* and *Prakriti* refer to individual consciousness and individual energy. The *Shiva-Shakti* aspect is present in each and every part of creation as *Purusha-Prakriti*. *Purusha* is the male aspect and represents consciousness or knowledge. *Prakriti* is the female aspect, irrespective of gender, and represents energy. The *Shiva-Shakti* element is macro-cosmic while the *Purusha-Prakriti* element is micro-cosmic. Both emanate from the same source namely *Brahman*.

Prakriti or Maya characteristics are constant continual change and/ or movement right from sub-atomic, molecule to entire galaxies and universes. Everything that is not super consciousness or pure consciousness is Prakriti which includes all animate beings (8.4 million species), all inanimate objects, five elements (Pancha Bhutas), three qualities (Gunas), organs of action, organs of knowledge, pranas (5 vital breaths); gross, subtle, and causal bodies, and Antahkarana (mind, intellect, sub conscious, ego). All these are also called Jada meaning inert, that is, it has no consciousness or chaitanya of its own. Although Antahkarana (mind) seems animate due to reflected consciousness from Atma.

Atma, Paramatma or Brahman or Para-brahman are not different in quality. Atma is present in all beings and is a part, a ray of light of Paramatma. Following Space analogy helps in grasping this relationship. Space is present everywhere all the time; all individuals or objects occupy space; there is not an inch of the object or individual where space does not exist; just like Atma space does not move, get wet, get cleaved, or get burned; when the object moves the space occupied by it becomes one with the entire space seamlessly; at no time does the quality of space change with or without the object; it is just like an unaffected witness. Atma and Paramatma have similar relationship with each other and with the objects and beings in creation.

Atma present in a being is also called Purusha. Jiva-atma (Jivatma) is the reflection of the Atma within an individual. It is like a wave of an ocean. Jivatma, Atma, Paramatma are transcendental to the material energy, are of the nature of consciousness. It is this Jivatma, reflected consciousness, that wanders from embodiment to embodiment, and after a long process of development and experience again returns to unite with  $\hat{A}tm\hat{a}$ . The soul, Jivatma, that has manifested itself in a

form, however, does not identify with its divine essence but rather with its attributes, the physical body, the mind, the thoughts, etc. The aim of the path of Yoga is to dispel this illusion. *Atma* in an individual is encased in five sheaths – gross body, life-force (*prana*), mind, intellect, and bliss. One has to go past all the five to experience the *Atma*. Read Q. 71 where Swami marvelously explains the commonality in all beings and the role of *Jiva* in human being.

Humans have all the five sheaths (*Koshas*) while other beings have some of them. Most of the animal species have the first three sheaths and so on. Out of 8.4 million species only human has the opportunity to penetrate all the five sheaths and experience *Atma* because of the presence of the last two sheaths. The external structure may be different but the inner core is the same in all.

What is the basis for the wandering of *Jivatma* from embodiment to embodiment? It is *Karma*, action. *Karma* is performed at three levels – thought, word, and deed. In this cause and effect world for every action there is a reaction, so it is for *Karma*. As one takes up an embodiment, a very large part of their life – relationships, environment, circumstances, roles, physical and mental abilities, experiences – is pre-determined by the cumulative consequences of all the actions performed from previous embodiments. How one takes these consequences and with what attitude they move forward sets the stage for their next embodiment. There is only one exit door to this birth and death cycle and that is liberation. Else the reincarnation goes on and on.

In *Vedanta* there is really no heaven and hell somewhere outside of this world. It is only good and bad consequences and they are experienced right in this world, and the option to cycle back and forth between human and other species is open, not as punishment but as an opportunity to refine. So, one is personally responsible for their destiny 100 percent. One will eventually get tired of chasing the mirages externally and turn their journey inward to the source without any exception. If one makes a conscious effort, the process of return can be speeded up.

Aadi Vyadhis first diseases, body consciousness is considered the first

human disease

Abhiman Egoism; Deha- Abhiman means body consciousness

Adwaitha Monism, no two; It is concerned only with Bondage and

Liberation, Ignorance and Illumination. It is known as

*Vedantha*. It posits God is not outside the cosmos, He became the cosmos, and He is all that is. What we see and operate with is due to projection and illusion, *Mithya*.

Ahambhav Pride

Ahar, Vihar Ahar is food; Vihar is entertainment; Both are food to senses

& mind.

Ahamkar egotism; Pride; focus is on 'I' – I am rich, a scholar etc.

Ajnana Ignorance, responsible for man's baser qualities and traits,

non awareness of reality (Maya), Avidya,

Alakshya carelessness

Anandam Bliss; See Q 137

Ananya Bhakti Devotion that HE is not separate from you; Devotion where

only God exists and world does not; see Q 250 to understand

further

Anava malam Impurity of smallness, impurity of ignorance

Antah Karan mind (Manas), intellect (Buddhi), sub-conscious (chitta), and

ego (Ahamkar); integrates input from the five senses;

An-Atma Everything in creation is a mix of Atma and Anatma. All of

Prakriti is Anatma not Atma (not consciousness)

Anuraag deep attachment; infatuation

Artha Prosperity; Wealth

Asabhyata indecency

Ashramas Sanatan Dharma defines four stages for human life in pursuit

of the four human goals laid out; See elaboration in the end

Asuya Jealousy

Atma See explanation at the beginning of Glossary

Atma Sakshatkar Direct experience of Atma

Atma Sandarshan Vision or direct experience of Atma

Ashramas See explanation at the end

Ari shadvargas Kama, Krodha, Moha, Lobha, Mada, Matsarya (Desire,

Anger, Attachment, Greed, Pride, and Jealousy)

Avatar God, Mahat Thathwa appears with a form to assist in the

ascent of man to Godhood, protection of virtuous, and revive use of *Dharma*. The potency (*Amsha*) of this appearance varies with the need of the time. *Poorna Avatar* appears with

full 16 potencies.

Avinaya lack of humility

Avadhuta An ascetic who is beyond time and place, gave up everything,

and at times appears in more than one place; See Swami's

definition in Q. 43

Bhakti Devotion; Love for God; Nine steps in Bhakti, Read Q. 39;

There are four types of *Bhaktas* (those with *Bhakti*) read Q.

33

Bhava-roga disease of Attachment

Bhav Sagar Birth and Death cycle; See Q. 217 for elaboration

Bhoutika Physical, Material

Bhutas Elements (see Pancha Bhutas)

Brahma The creator among trinity, creative aspect of Brahman

Brahmananda Bliss absolute; infinite bliss; Paramananda; Adwaitha

ananda; source for this is Atma; unlike happiness and joy

triggered by external things

Brahma Sakshatkar Direct experience of Brahman, super consciousness, beyond

senses and mind

Brahma muhurta 3 am to 6 am or till dawn, 1.5 hrs before sunrise

Brahman See above and Maya

Brahmanda Entire creation, Macrocosm

Buddhi generally defined as intellect; Buddhi has three qualities –

intelligence (medha shakti), discrimination (viveka shakti),

wisdom (Vijnana shakti). As Buddhi gets subtler it transforms

and gains these energies progressively.

Chakras intersection of Nadis; Sahasrahara (chakra at the top of the

head), *Ajna* (third eye location), *Vishuddha* (behind adam's apple), *Anahata* (middle of chest), *Manipurak* (navel region), *Svadhishthana* (above genital region), and *Muladhara* (at the

base of spine)

Chitta Mind; sub conscious part of mind; repository of memories,

Vasanas

Daksha Yajna King Daksha conducted a great Yajna (fire ceremony),

purposely insulted Lord Shiva (one of Trinity) resulting in

death and destruction.

Darshan Sight; Visitation;

Sparshan Touch;

Sambashan Speech; All three are related to contact with divine and holy

persons

Dharma Moral, obligatory, and righteous duty; way of living; human

effort; Sanatan Dharma means Ancient or Eternal way of

living.

Dhyana Meditation

Dhanya grains like rice, wheat etc; It also means food

Divya Anubhuti Divine experience

Drishti Sight; Awareness

Dwaitha Dualism; The dualists posit that the Cosmos is a vast machine

designed and operated by God

Dwesham Hatred

Ekagra sradha one-pointed earnestness

Gayatri Mantra considered the mother of all mantras; first revealed in

meditation to Sage Viswamitra for the benefit of world

Nithya	Sathya	Bodha

(Nithya Sathya	<b>Bodha</b> (175)
Ganges	holiest river in India; originates in Himalayas; it was brought down from heavens by Sage <i>Bharadwaj</i> with his austerity ( <i>tapas</i> ) for human welfare.
Gunas	Attributes; Qualities; part of the basic raw materials used in creation; – <i>Sathwa</i> , <i>Rajas</i> , and <i>Thamas</i> ;
Guna-atheetha	Beyond Gunas;
Guru	There are many types of Gurus; read Q. 154 for elaboration; <i>Karana Guru</i> who begets you constant contemplation of oneness of <i>Jiva</i> and <i>Brahman</i> is most important.
Hari Shadvargas	Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteous duty), Shanti (Peace), Prema (Love), Ahimsa (Non-violence), and Daya (compassion); See Q. 231
Harsham	Happiness; See Q 137
Hridaya	Spiritual heart; <i>Daya</i> is compassion; no compassion, no heart!
Hrisikesh,	well known pilgrimage centers on the shore of Ganges at
Haridwar	the foothills of Himalayas
Jada	Inert; Entire <i>Prakriti</i> is <i>Jada</i>
Jadathwa	Dullness; inertness; emotionless
Jivi, Jivatma	Individualized soul; genderless; consciousness of same quality as super consciousness but governed by the limitation of the body, mind, intellect complex
Janma Rahitya	No more rebirth;
Jnana	Direct experience of <i>Atma</i> ; Also used for Knowledge, worldly knowledge; <i>Jnani</i> is one with <i>Jnana</i> , direct experience of <i>Atma</i>

Spiritual Knowledge effulgent like Sun; Divine Light Jnana Bhaskara

One who has spiritual knowledge and experience Jnana purush

Jivan Rahityam out of birth and death cycle; liberation Jivan mukthi liberated while still in body; an exalted spiritual state; one

with God while still in body; Jivan muktha – one who attained

Jivan mukthi

*Kalpa Vriksh* wish fulfilling tree symbolically; *siddhi* power due to *tapas*;

one who has *siddhi* realizes what one wishes for;

Kama Desire; not just Lust

Kamadhenu celestial cow that grants boons symbolically; siddhi power

due to tapas; when one subdues all desires

*Kasi* holiest pilgrimage center in India; on banks of Ganges; main

deity is Vishweshara Lingam;

Karma prescribed actions in scriptures; actions of thought, word,

and deed; it is also used in place of destiny; see Q. 214 for

Karma, Bhakti, Jnana

Karma Yoga See Q 230 for a great revelation by Swami

Kriya procedure, method; see Q. 59 that explains a Kriya; a method

of cleansing Chakras (buried Vasanas in sub conscious)

Koshas Sheaths; Atma is encased in 5 sheaths – sheath of food

(*Annamaya kosha*), sheath of life force (*Pranamaya kosha*), sheath of mind (*Manomaya kosha*), sheath of knowledge (*Vijnanamaya kosha*), and sheath of bliss (*Anandamaya kosha*). Each sheath is subtler than the previous and as one's *Buddhi* gets subtler, one penetrates them. Read SSS Vol 21

Ch 9

Krama sikshana discipline, regulation

Krama baddham systematic, orderly, organized

Madhava God; Lord Krishna's another name; master of cosmos or

Prakriti

Mahatmas great men; great saints and holy people; ascended masters

Maha Karana Sarira super causal body

Malamu, Mala impurity; obstacles inherent; constraints

Nithya	Sathua	Bodha

Mamakar Sense of possession; feeling of 'mine'; attachment to ownership Manaya Thathwas Principles of a human; there are 24, common to all humans; they are 5 organs of action (Karmendriyas), 5 senses (*Inanendriyas*, organs of knowledge), 5 life breaths (*Pranas*), 5 elements (Pancha Bhutas); rest 4 are Mind (Manas), Intellect (Buddhi), Sub Conscious (Chitta), Ego (Ahamkar). Manasika mental; mind based; psychical Maya power and energy of Brahman, as milk becomes yogurt Brahma is turned into creation by Maya, Brahman controls Maya, it is an attribute of the mind, name for non-existent phenomena like mirage, neither real nor unreal; one experiences the world hence not Mithya unreal, it keeps changing hence not real. Adi Shankara said 'Brahma Satyam, Jagat Mithya' Brahman is Truth, world is Mithya. Moksha removal or destruction of attachments which cause rebirths: liberation: freedom Nadis subtle nerves spread all through the human body; 70000+ of them Nivritti Path of renunciation; good in the long run; See Q. 213 Knots; location where various nadis meet or combine Granthis Nama Smarana Chanting the name of God; helps in controlling mind; removing impressions, impulses; similar efficacy as meditation

Nissang Aloneness; detachment;

Nirguna without Gunas

Nirguna Parabrahmam formless, attribute less God, Brahman

Nirodha Elimination; removal

Paap demerit, bad consequences

Pancha-akshari Maha mantra 'Om Namah Shivaya' written in Sanskrit it is 5

letters

Pancha Bhutas Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space; During creation Space comes

first, then air, fire, water, earth successively.

Panchikritam complicated process of mixing and proportioning of the five

elements; makes man a mix of 5 elements and produces diversity in qualities; See 'Trigunas and Pancha Bhutas'

section in Sathya Sai Speaks vol 23. (SSS 23)

Pandavas Two factions in the great epic 'Mahabharat'; Pandavas

Kauravas represented the good and righteous while

Kauravas were

Draupadi evil and greed; Insult of Draupadi, Pandavas spouse, Gita, Krishnalead to war between the cousins; Lord Krishna was on the side of Dharma

(pandavas) and taught the great

spiritual science 'Bhagavad Gita' to Arjun (Pandava

brother) on the battle field.

Para Thathwa Eternal transcendental principle

Parabrahman The Supreme Omni-Will, Brahman, God

Paramatma Super consciousness, Cosmic soul, God

Param Jyothi Divine Light; Light of consciousness;

Paravasyam Ecstasy; See Q 137

Patal Hell; posited in Puranas

Pindanda Microcosm

Prahlada son of a demon king Hiranyakasipu; as a young child got

devoted to *Vishnu* whom his father hates; rejects his father; with his devotion, faith, and confidence manifests man-lion *Narasimha Avatar* who kills his father; a symbol of pure

devotion, faith, and confidence.

Nithya	Sathua	Bodha

Prarabda Karmas consequences of past actions from past lives experienced in

this life

Prakriti Nature; Creation; everything that is not pure consciousness;

see above

Pravritti Worldly; Binding; Pleasant in the short run; See Q. 213

Pundit learned person; well versed; scholar; expert; another name

for a priest

Punya merit, good consequences to be reaped later

Puranas Scriptures that came about after the Vedas; they were real

occurrences put together to explain profound truths of the *Vedas* to common masses; Hence it is said if any message is

conflicting with Vedas, then Vedas take precedence.

Purusha Atma in an individual; see above

Purusharthas Sanatan Dharma prescribes that there are four goals to human

life – *Dharma* (moral, obligatory, righteous duty), *Artha* (prosperity), *Kama* (Desire, not just lust), *Moksha* (Liberation). Prosperity needs to be attained using *Dharma*,

and desires to be entertained with Moksha as goal.

Raja Yoga See Q 230 for a great revelation by Swami

Rajas Guna Likes and dislikes; passion; intense desire and result driven

actions;

Rangoli art is a decoration with multi colors; Indian folk art;

colorful designs in courtyard or front door on a daily basis

and or at festivals

Rathotsavams procession of chariot with deities dragged by devotees on

some holy occasions, festivals

Ramayan A great epic of sanatan dharma; life story of Lord Rama, an

Avatar in the Treta Yuga, one Yuga before the Dwapara Yuga

(Lord Krishna's Avatar)

Sabari In Ramayana epic, she waits till old age waiting for Lord

Rama's visit and gets liberated, a symbol of resilience

Sadachar Moral and righteous behavior

Sadguru Among Gurus a great ascended master, a Brahma Jnani, one

who can transmit the full power of God, an Avadhuta

Sadgunas Kindness, Love, Compassion, Sympathy, and Sacrifice

Sadhana spiritual practices; austerities; meditation, selfless service;

name chanting, devotion singing; reading scriptures;

practicing virtues; eliminating vices;

Saguna With Gunas; Saguna Brahman – God with attributes

sajjana hitakari always seeks benefit of good and holy

Samadhi Sama means equal, dhi means intellect; equal minded;

transcendental state; also spelt as Samadhee

samanvaya harmonize

Samishti Society; entire living beings

Samsara Birth and death cycle; commonly misunderstood as 'Spouse,

raising children, happiness-sorrow, worries, irritations,

illnesses, separation'; See Q. 217 for elaboration

Samskars Character; Good Qualities See Q. 16, 122

Sandhya vandan Rites performed at dawn, dusk, and mid day; usually Gayatri

Sankalpa Will; Resolution; Thought

Sanyasa Yoga See Q 230 for a great revelation by Swami

Sat-Chit-Ananda Existence – Consciousness – Bliss; one thing but perceived

by senses as three like rose – beautiful look, fragrant smell,

soft petals; see beginning of Glossary

Sathwa Guna Qualities like compassion, love, equanimity, happiness,

charity, calmness, non-voilence etc.;

Satkarma Karma that earns merit; selfless service; helping the needy

Satsang Company of the good and holy; that which keeps you in God

thought; extremely essential for someone to get going on

spiritual path;

Sarvasya Complete, Everything;

Sat chintana God thought

Satyam Truth; that which remains constant in past, present, future;

not a fact which is true for a period of time but not permanent;

God

Shaktis Energies, powers

Sharanagati Surrender, Refuge

Shad(t) Sampatti shama (mind control), dama (control of senses), uparati (self

withdrawal), titiksha (endurance), sraddha (faith),

samadhana (contemplation of Reality)

Shankh Conch; used to make sound to herald an event; a message of

alert

Shivam auspiciousness

Shradha Unwavering Faith; implicit Faith; Earnestness;

Siddha Purushas An ascended master who has acquired great occult powers

Soham I am That; Inhaling Exhaling makes this sound of So-ham;

also called Hamsa Gayatri

Soul Atma; individualized soul is Jivatma

Srushti Nature; Creation

Stitha Prajna Equanimity; beyond dualities

Spirit Sanatan Dharma calls it soul; supreme consciousness; pure

consciousness

Sundaram Beauty

Sushupti deep sleep

Swadharma Atma Dharma; Dharma of God; See Q. 239

Swarupa one's own form; real nature;

Tamas Guna Irrationality; darkness of Ignorance; Lethargy;

Procrastination; misunderstanding and wrong conclusions;

sense of possessiveness; attachment; dullness

Thathwa Principle; Nature

Trinity Creation, Sustenance, Mergence; Aspects of God (Brahman,

*Shiva*) as creator is referred to as *Brahma* (not *Brahman*), as sustainer *Vishnu*, as dissolver *Shiva* (not *Brahman*; this is similar to city called New York and a state called New York)

*Tyaga* Sacrifice

Varnas Castes: Gita defines them based on Gunas: See elaboration

in the end

Vasanas Buried impulses, impressions, desires, likes-dislikes etc; both

good and bad; these are in our sub conscious and spring out in the right conditions; imperative that all these be removed

before one attains liberation.

Vidyukta karmas Obligatory karmas, moral and ethical responsibilities;

Virakti Disinterest; Disgust;

Viveka Discrimination

Vijnana Knowledge gained by investigation, experimentation, cause

and effect, and inference;

Prajnana Supreme Self; Constant Integrated Awareness; pure

awareness; 'Prajnanam Brahma' - hence we are called

children of immortality

Sujnana Spiritual knowledge

Vairagya Detachment

Vidya Knowledge, Experience; Atma Vidya – Self Knowledge; Para

Vidya - Transcendental knowledge; Brahma Vidya -

Knowledge of Brahman

Visishtadwaitha qualified monism, It posits three entities—God, the Atma,

and Nature, and speaks of an integration of the three

Vishnu God aspect as sustainer; one among trinity; other two are

Brahma, Shiva

Vishwas Confidence; at times it is used as Faith also

Vriththi, vritti Thought wave,

Vyashti Individual

Vyamoham Blind attachment

Vyashti Individual as a part of samashti (society)

Yajna, Yaga Large scale fire ceremonies performed at a large scale with

propitiating priests as guided by the Vedas for many different purposes – fulfilling one's desires and wishes, purification

of eco system, and general welfare

Yoga Union with God

#### **Varnas**

Bhagavad Gita states that God has created the four Varnas based on Gunas (not inherited factors) – Brahmins (Priests and clergy), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (traders, farmers, suppliers), and Shudras (maintenance or labor force to keep the society day to day functional).

Varnas are nothing but division of work based on *gunas* (qualities). Any society that has Teachers, Preachers, Protectors, Warriors, Traders, Business, Support, Labor, and Service activities is essentially following the division of work that is necessary for the society to operate harmoniously and successfully. All societies have this division of activity or work. In order for this division of activity to function properly, it requires the society to have people who are equipped with appropriate skills, characteristics, and nature (inclination) so as to match the above divisions of work. Another important thing to note, the number of people needed in the above division varies based on the activity i.e. a society needs far less teachers and preachers than support, labor and service roles. Further, the separation of duties is essential for ensuring justice and avoiding conflicts of interest.

Rita Bruce has written a book titled 'Love of Conscience', where Swami said human nature is one energy that is divided into four aspects. They are Intellect, Discrimination, Emotional, and Physical. All of us are equipped with the four aspects but we are programmed to have one of them as primary energy. This *program* aligns with the division of activities that is essential for the harmonious functioning of each and every society.

#### **Ashramas**

Sanatan Dharma prescribes that there are four goals to human life – Dharma (moral, obligatory, righteous duty), Artha (prosperity), Kama (Desire, not just lust), Moksha (Liberation). Prosperity needs to be attained using Dharma, and desires to be entertained with Moksha as goal.

It further went ahead and divided human's life into four stages, based on age and responsibilities, for pursuing the above four goals. They are called *Ashramas* (stages). There are four *Ashramas* in a human life each with their righteous, obligatory, ethical, and moral duties called *Dharma*. They are *Brahmacharya* (Student stage), *Grihastha* (Householder stage), *Vanaprastha* (retirement from active life and detachment from worldly things), and *Sanyasa* (stage of total immersion in God thought).

*Grihastha* (Householder stage) is considered a pillar for upholding of the other three *Ashramas*, and proper functioning of society.

ISBN-13: 978-0-9799892-3-0

# Mānasa Bhajare Guru Charanam

