

Reminiscence Of The Divine

(Divine Discourse delivered on the occasion of the 62nd Anniversary of the Declaration of Avatarhood – October 20, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

*“On October 20, 1940, which happened to be a Sunday,
Swami lost the collar pin and with that the veil of Maya disappeared.
The worldly attachment left Him in the form of the collar pin.
He left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.
This happened after a visit to Hampi.”*

Embodiments of Love!

It happened when I was at Uravakonda. The Corporation Commissioner of Bellary had a dream in which he was directed to go to a particular house in Uravakonda and bring Sathyam to Bellary. At the same time, his wife also had a dream in which she was directed to accompany her husband and bring Sathyam with them. They thought Sathyam would be a great and famous personality. Now My height is a little above five feet. I was much shorter those days. I used to wear a shorts and a shirt. I was 14-years old at that time. As I came out of the house, the Corporation Commissioner and his wife at once recognized Me to be the same person who had appeared in their dream. They felt extremely happy and prostrated before Me on the road itself. They were unmindful of the fact that I was a small boy. I was on My way to school with a few books in My hand.

The Commissioner and his wife approached Seshama Raju, the elder brother of this body, and requested him: “Please bring Sathya to Bellary today. You may have to apply for leave but does not matter.” One cannot say no to a person of the status of the Corporation Commissioner. Hence, Seshama Raju approached the Head

Master of the school Kameswar Rao with a request to grant him leave. He also explained to him the reason for his taking leave. Kameswar Rao was very fond of Me. He said, “You may take Sathya to Bellary or wherever you want. You do not need to seek my permission in this regard.” He even gave his car to take Me to Bellary.

The Commissioner and his wife played host to us for three days. They took us to the Virupaksha temple in the nearby Hampi Kshetra. Seshama Raju and his wife told Me to remain outside the temple and keep a watch over their belongings as they would go inside to have *darshan* of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. As soon as they entered the temple, to their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum where the deity is supposed to be standing. Seshama Raju could not believe his eyes. He thought, “Why did he come here when I told him specifically to remain outside and take care of our belongings?” He at once came out of the temple only to find Me standing there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was not convinced. He told his wife, “You go outside and keep a watch over Sathya. Do not allow him to go

anywhere. Meanwhile, I will go inside and see whether he is still there.” She did accordingly. He again saw a smiling Sathya standing in the sanctum sanctorum. The Corporation Commissioner was also a witness to all this. He recognized My divinity. When they came out of the temple, he caught hold of Seshama Raju’s hands and said, “Raju, do not be under the impression that Sathya is your brother. He is not an ordinary person. You are deluded seeing His physical form. There is divine power in Him.”

We came back to the Commissioner’s house, had our food there and started our return journey to Uravakonda. The Commissioner wanted to give Me a gift. He said that he would get four pairs of shorts and shirts stitched for Me. I firmly told him that I would not accept even one. He did not want to force Me either. Then his wife suggested that a gold collar pin would be an appropriate gift for Me. In those days, it was a matter of prestige for children to wear a collar pin. Immediately, he bought a gold collar pin and put it on the collar of My shirt. I protested. Under any circumstances, I never accepted anything from others. But Seshama Raju insisted that I accept the gift. He said that my refusal to accept the gift would amount to showing disrespect to the Commissioner. So I obeyed him.

After returning from Hampi, I was going to school wearing the collar-pin. The pin dropped on the way and could not be traced. A major change took place in Me. Worldly attachment left Me in the guise of a collar-pin. I decided to embark on My mission to alleviate the sufferings of My devotees.

I threw away the books and entered the garden of the Excise Commissioner Hanumantha Rao. He was an ardent devotee. Seeing Me, he told his wife to prepare various delicacies. But I did not touch any of those preparations. Seshama Raju came there and forced Me to return home. He then sent a telegram to Puttaparthi asking Pedda Venkatma Raju Garu and Easwaramma Garu to come immediately to Uravagonda. In those days, it used to take one week for the telegram to reach. One of the schoolboys was also sent as a messenger to Puttaparthi. When they arrived, Seshama Raju brought them to Me. Easwaramma pleaded with Me, with tears in her eyes, “Sathya, come, let us go back to Your brother’s house.” But, I did not agree. “If you want Me to come, I will go with you to Puttaparthi. I will go of My own accord and make the villagers happy.”

In those days, I used to lead the school prayer at the loving insistence of the headmaster. He would say, “Raju, you may be young, but your prayer melts our hearts.” The day after I left the school, another boy, who used to sit close to Me in the class, was asked to lead the prayer. When he went on the dais, he broke down in tears remembering Me. All the students and teachers were in tears, and the prayer meeting was cancelled. They wanted to accompany Me to Puttaparthi. But how was it possible to accommodate so many of them in this village? Then I told Kameswar Rao to somehow convince the boys not to follow Me.

In the classroom, three of us used to share a desk - Myself in the middle, flanked by Ramesh and Suresh on

either side. They were not too well in their studies. Whenever teachers asked them questions, they would give the answers prompted by Me. It was the time of our E.S.L.C. public exams. Our register numbers were such that we had to sit separately, quite at a distance from each other. It was not possible for them to copy. They were much worried. I infused courage in them saying, "You don't need to write anything. You just attend the examination and feign to write the examination. I will take care of the rest". The duration of the examination was two hours. I completed My answer paper in just 10 minutes. I took some more papers from the invigilator and wrote the answers in Ramesh's handwriting. After completing it, I took another set of papers and wrote the answers in Suresh's handwriting. I also wrote their names on the answer sheets. When the final bell rang, all the students got up, and I silently placed all the three papers on the table of the examiner. Nobody raised any objection. The results were announced on the following day and only we three got first class. The teachers were surprised as to how Ramesh and Suresh also got first class. There was no scope for any doubt. They could not have copied from Me, since we were seated far from each other. Their answer sheets were in their own handwriting. The local people were overjoyed. They carried us on their shoulders, and took us in a grand procession. Those two boys had such intimate relationship with Me. When I left Uravakonda, Ramesh and Suresh could not bear the separation from Me. Ramesh, utterly dejected, fell into a well and died. The second boy went on repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ." and ultimately turned mad. He was

taken to various mental hospitals, but there was no improvement. Finally his parents came to Me and prayed, "Raju, he will be cured of his madness if he sees You at least once. Please come and see him." I went to the mental hospital to see him. He was continuously repeating "Raju, Raju, Raju ." Seeing Me, he shed tears, fell at My feet and breathed His last. They had surrendered themselves to Me. They prayed that they should never be separated from Me.

When I came to Puttaparthi, Karanam Subbamma gave one acre of land near Sathyabhama temple where a small house was built. There I used to live. The same Ramesh and Suresh were born again as two puppies, and came to Me. The sister of Mysore Maharaja named them Jack and Jill. They were always with Me.

One day the Maharani of Mysore came to have My *Darshan*. She was a great devotee and a highly orthodox woman. She would perform Puja with flowers everyday. She would personally pluck the flowers after sanctifying the plants by sprinkling water and milk. As there were no proper roads to Puttaparthi, she alighted from the car at Karnatakanagepalli and walked the rest of the distance to Old Mandir. There used to be a small shed where the Pedda Venkama Raju Kalyana Mandapam stands now. The Maharani decided to rest for the night in the Mandir. The driver had his dinner and was returning to Karnatakanagepalli where the car was parked. I told Jack to accompany the driver and show him the way. Jack walked in the front and the driver followed. Jack slept under the car. Next morning, the driver

started the car not knowing that Jack was sleeping under it. The wheel of the car ran over the back of Jack and its backbone broke. Jack dragged itself across the river, wailing all the while. A washerman named Subbanna used to take care of the Old Mandir day and night. He was very loyal and considered Swami as his very life. He came running to Me and said, "Swami, Jack might have met with an accident. It is coming wailing in pain. I came out at once. Jack came close to Me, wailing loudly, fell at My feet and breathed its last. It was buried behind the Old Mandir and a Brindavanam was erected. As per My instructions, it was built by the side, not at the center. I told there should be a place for another Samadhi. As Jack had passed away, Jill stopped eating food and died after a few days. It was also buried by the side of Jack's Samadhi. In this manner, Ramesh and Suresh did penance to be with Me. Even after their death, they took birth as dogs to be with Me.

First the collar pin was lost; then I stopped going to school and parents arrived and brought Me here. Owing to all these changes, I left Uravakonda. After I came here, many people from Bangalore and Mysore started visiting this place in their cars. Maharani of Mysore, coffee planter Sakamma, Desaraj Arasu, the maternal uncle of Mysore Maharaja were among those who used to come here. One day they prayed, "it is difficult for us to come here often. Hence, please come and settle in Mysore. We shall build a big mansion for You." I told, "I don't want palatial buildings. I want to be here." That night, mother Easwamma came to Me with tears in her eyes and said, "Swami, people want to take You here

and there for their selfish purposes. If you leave Puttaparthi, I will give up My life. Please promise me that You will remain in Puttaparthi for ever." I gave her My word that I would never leave Puttaparthi. It is for this reason that I have constructed many buildings in the Ashram for the comfort and convenience of devotees.

When I made it clear that I would not leave Puttaparthi, Sakamma and the maternal uncle of Mysore Maharaja decided to build a Mandir, a little away from the village. They acquired ten acres of land here and started the construction work. An ardent devotee by name Vittal Rao volunteered to oversee the construction work. He was a forest officer during the British regime. He is the father of Jayamma (Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath) who spoke earlier. He supervised the construction work. R.N. Rao from Madras, Neeladri Rao, the son-in-law of Pitapuram Maharaja, the son-in-law of Baroda Maharaja, all of them took active interest in the construction work. As all of them joined hands, the Mandir was constructed in a very short period. As it was wartime, it was very difficult to procure iron for the construction work. They overcame all such hurdles with sincerity and devotion. They prayed that I should not go there till the construction was over, lest I may be put to inconvenience. Such was their love for Me.

I always fulfill My promise made to the devotees. Whatever I do is for the happiness of the devotees. I don't need anything for Myself. I don't have any desires.

They worked day and night, made payments to the labourers, and saw to it that the construction was completed successfully. Jayamma was very young at that time. Every Sunday Vittal Rao used to come here in his car to pay wages to laborers. Jayamma would insist that she be allowed to accompany him. Vittal Rao was very fond of his daughter. He used to get food prepared in Bangalore itself and bring his daughter along with him. She has been serving Swami for the last 60 years. She came to Me when this body was 17 years old. Now this body is approaching its 77th Birthday. She would visit Prasanthi Nilayam very frequently and would learn Swami's *Bhajans* and sing His glory. In this manner, she developed sacred feelings and intense devotion for Swami. One should have *Prapti* (deservedness) to experience divine proximity. One cannot get it for the mere asking. It cannot be denied either. One gets it out of the merits accrued over past lives. Their family has been the recipient of bounteous grace. I was moved by her repeated reference to Venkamma Garu (Swami's elder sister) in her speech.

Venkamma Garu used to cook food for Swami. Jayamma used to be with her always to learn cooking. They had such intimate friendship. Later Parvatamma Garu (Venkamma Garu's younger sister) also came here. They used to bring food for Swami by turn, one in the morning and the other in the evening. They were concerned that it was not safe to allow others to prepare food for Swami. They extracted a promise from Me that I would eat the food prepared by them only. They served Me till their very last breath.

They were in Manipal Hospital, Bangalore, at the time of their passing away.

Venkamma was taken from here to Bangalore in an unconscious state. She had never opened her eyes. I went to her and called, 'Venkamma'. She instantly opened her eyes and saw Swami. She offered her *Namaskar* to Me by taking My hands close to her eyes. She shed tears and left her mortal coil.

The same happened in the case of Parvatamma also. She was also unconscious when she was taken to Bangalore. I went to her and called out her name. She immediately opened her eyes, shed tears and breathed her last. So long as they were alive, they served Swami by bringing food everyday, morning and evening. Such intimate relationship with the Lord is the result of merits of past lives. It cannot be acquired by human effort. They never cared for their ill-health and continued to serve Swami with love. Their lives were sanctified.

Even to this day, food is received from their houses. Seshama Raju's son lives here. Easwaramma's son Janakiramaiah also stays here. You all know him. His wife prepares and brings food for Me, likewise Parvatamma's daughter also brings food for Me. In this manner, they are serving Swami everyday. I don't take food at night. Every morning, they bring food for Me. Such is the intimate relationship that Swami has with this family. Some incarnations were due to the prayers of their parents; but, in Swami's case, it is different. I decided that, so and so should be the father and so and so

should be the mother. This body has not taken birth in the ordinary mortal way.

Though Karnam Subbamma was not physically related to this body, emotionally, she was closely attached to Swami. She used to think of Swami day in and day out. She requested Me to stay in her house. She was prepared to vacate the house for My sake. Many relatives argued with her, "Being a Brahmin, how are you allowing a Kshatriya to stay in your house?" She said, "I don't go to anybody's house. None of you need come to my house. It is enough if I have Swami with me." Such was her devotion and determination. She had only one desire. She prayed, "I should see your beautiful form when I leave my body." I said I would certainly fulfil her desire.

Once I went to Madras acceding to a devotee's prayer. Subbamma was in Bukkapatnam at that time. She was staying with her mother. By the time I returned from Madras, Subbamma had breathed her last. When I came here, people came running to Me and said, "Swami, Your Subbamma passed away last night." Immediately, I turned the car and went to Bukkapatnam straight-away. Her body was kept in the verandah, covered with a cloth. The entire household was grief-stricken. Once Swami makes a promise, He will certainly fulfill it under any circumstances. I removed the cloth covering the body. As she had passed away the previous night, ants were crawling all over her body. I called out, "Subbamma". She opened her eyes. This news spread like wildfire within no time. The people of Bukkapatnam started crowding the place telling each

other that Subbamma was brought back to life. Subbamma's mother was hundred years old at that time. I told her to bring a glass of water with a Tulasi leaf soaked in it. I put Tulasi leaf in Subbamma's mouth and made her drink some water. I said, "Subbamma, I have kept up My promise. Now, you may close your eyes peacefully." She said, "Swami, what more do I need? I am leaving blissfully." Shedding tears of joy, she held My hands and breathed her last. I never go back on My promise, I always keep up My promise under any circumstances. In this manner, the Words are inadequate to describe Subbamma's service. During the Krishna Avatar, mother Yashoda could love and serve Krishna more than mother Devaki.

In those days, Easwamma and Subbamma used to converse with each other through the window in the wall separating their houses. They could not visit each other's house because their husbands were not on talking terms. But Easwamma had a cordial relationship with Subbamma.

The parents of this body were chosen by Me. Pedda Venkama Raju used to help the devotees visiting Swami. He used to run to Bukkapatnam even for a coconut or provisions required by the devotees. One day, he came to the Mandir and expressed his desire to talk to Me. I had already called a group for an interview. I took him inside. He said, "Swami, I should not leave behind any debt. I had a small shop. I might have forgotten to return a *paisa* or two to someone. Hence, I request you to distribute food to the poor on the 12th day after my demise." He took out

some money and placed it in My hands, saying, "It is my hard earned money. You may use it for feeding the poor. He also mentioned that he had kept a few bags of rice and jaggery required for that purpose. After this, he went home, slept and died peacefully.

Easwaramma also had such a sacred end. She used to follow Me wherever I went. She came to Brindavan to attend the Summer Course. She felt very happy seeing so many students. She even served water to them during their lunch. She used to say "It is because of Swami that we are able to witness such a grand event." One day, breakfast was served to the students as usual. Easwaramma too had her breakfast. Venkamma, who used to look after her needs, was by her side at that time. Easwaramma was pounding betel nut in a mortar. I could hear the sound from upstairs. All of a sudden, she cried out, "Swami, Swami, Swami." I said, "I am coming, I am coming." I came down immediately and she breathed her last. She had absolutely no suffering at all, not even a mild headache. Their lives were sanctified as they were selected by Swami.

Ramesh and Suresh considered Swami as their very life breath. Though they were very young, they had intense love for Swami. Knowing that I did not have money with Me, Ramesh got two pairs of dresses stitched for Me and kept them in My desk with a note, "If you do not accept them, I will give up my life." I refused them saying, "Our

friendship and love should not be built on the basis of giving and taking. Ours is heart to heart relationship with pure love. We should share only love. There should be no material transaction". Right from then till this day, I never accepted anything from others. I always conduct Myself in accordance with the principle of Help ever, Hurt never. This has been My motto. I never harmed anyone. I derive great joy in helping others. That is why I tell the devotees to always pray, *Loka Samasthah Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) All should be happy, healthy and blissful. With such sacred motive, I have been spreading the message of love to the entire world. My students are My biggest property. The students of the Primary School, Higher Secondary School and the Institute are always with Me. They do not leave Swami and Swami cannot be without them. My life is for the sake of humanity at large. The happiness of people is the happiness of Swami. I have no interest in celebrating My Birthdays. But the devotees would not leave Me. They want to have different celebrations, but I do not want any. I consider your birthday as My Birthday. The day you are happy is truly My Birthday. Though bodies are different, you should not give room for any differences. All are one, be alike to everyone. The relationship that Swami has with the devotees is not of a worldly nature. It is relationship based on Divine love.

