

1. INTRODUCTION



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“Only the foolish among men seek to satisfy themselves from the limited counterfeit happiness through worldly objectives. The wise know better....can the lake, which strikes us as invitingly charming so long as the mirage is on, quench one’s thirst? If one deludes himself with the belief that it can and runs towards the non-existent sheet of water, he can only get more thirsty. No other benefit can accrue to him.

Therefore, one should learn Atma Vidya, the process by which one becomes aware of one’s Atmic Reality; that is, one’s Divinity. By learning and living it, one can quench his own thirst and help to quench the thirst of all mankind.” (Vidya V 48)

THE WISDOM OF SATHYA SAI

Lord Sathya Sai Baba defines the word Vidya as the ‘educational process’, the ‘real teaching’, the ‘supreme wisdom’. It is the fuel for the fire of spiritual yearning. Without such knowledge and guidance the fire remains but a bed of coals steadily losing its warmth and glow.

Sathya means Truth. Lord Sai has said on many occasions that He has come to teach, “to repaint the signposts on the highway to God”. Without His words, the vast majority of the peoples of the world stumble along, driven by petty desires, grievances and jealousies, or weighed down by grief, sadness and disappointment with occasional bursts of temporary happiness. We are a lost tribe, uncomfortable and fearful of our fate, yet unaware that the eternal joy and happiness we all seek is but a hair’s breadth away.

Of course the illusion of happiness abounds on all sides; yet, underneath the surface of fun and pleasure, there lies great pain, despair and longing. In Australia we have no starvation, high standards of material welfare, education, sanitation and housing; and we are regarded by many as a peaceful country with an enviable multicultural harmony. Yet, in the midst of all this plenty, it has one of the highest rates of youth suicide in the world. How can this be?

One can only conclude that our society has lost its foundation of love and wisdom, and that the crumbling walls of Inner Knowing are exposing our youth to the dangers of greed, anger, envy, hate, pride and lust. So many of our young people look forward and see only darkness, both within and without. They are the canaries in the coal mine, dying from exposure to the gases of deceit and meaninglessness.

Lord Sathya Sai Baba has come at such a time to awaken us from this dream which comfortably accommodates youth suicide, politics without principle and business immorality. He has said that every word He speaks or writes has within it the potential for awakening: that any one sentence or phrase, if repeated and acted upon, is enough to bring lasting peace and joy to the diligent seeker.

In the teachings of Sathya Sai we have before us the greatest collection of written wisdom ever made available to the human race. It is pure, unadulterated by the mists of time and reinterpretation of scholars. It is complete, untouched by the decaying effects of war, religious

strife, neglect and privilege. It is immediately applicable to our age, to all cultures and climes, to all peoples and religions. With this wisdom, and the personal transformation it can produce when put into daily practice, we can re-lay the foundations for a happy and moral society, we can re-build the temple walls for a higher, lasting peace within ourselves.

Each one of us has latent unbounded wisdom waiting to be discovered. When two or more seekers after Truth gather together to share their limited understandings, the tiny flame of wisdom in each one is fanned into a bright fire by the enlightening words of the other. By discussing the great spiritual truths of Lord Sai, and indeed of all great religions, we can follow the path of the words and come to an understanding of the deeper meanings and the wisdom they contain.

Clearly it is not enough to make a decision to love God, and from then on to sing His praises and adorn His ornamental forms with garlands and jewels. We have seen that, unless we understand the words 'love' and 'God' and understand how to experience and live that Love, we will be light years away from achieving lasting happiness and universal peace.

To reach such an understanding, we need to devote time and effort to study and discuss the timeless wisdom of Lord Sai and other great Messengers from God.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As with the first volume of 'Study Circles for Divinity', this second volume will be of great value to those with the role of facilitator in a Study Circle. It will also be useful for those individuals seeking a resource book for studying particular aspects or themes of the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba.

This book is ideal for the individual seeker who wishes to study a particular theme. This could include:

- The person who is struggling with a particular difficulty in life, such as lack of self-confidence, the death of a loved one or a broken relationship.
- The person who is endeavouring to resolve some confusion about a spiritual conundrum or principle, such as why we suffer or have 'accidents'.
- The writer who is preparing material for a book, article or talk on one of the different topics covered. For these people, each quotation is accompanied by its source, so that the reader can turn to it and read more about the subject or context.
- Seekers who are interested in comparing the words of Sathya Sai Baba with those of other great spiritual Teachers. Each section commences with relevant sayings from G.J.Gurdjieff, Sri Aurobindo, Paramahansa Yogananda, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and other notables from history. This is an important aspect of the book when we consider the emphasis Lord Sai places on the essential unity underlying all of the major religions and the one unchanging Truth.

The publication of the present compilation and the earlier volume of 'Study Circles for Divinity' is not a proclamation that it is the only material deserving of discussion in a Study Circle. Sai Baba encourages us to study the wisdom and wealth of all the great teachers.

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Material from the many Holy Scriptures may be studied and discussed, and is often fruitfully led by a member who adheres to the particular faith from which the material is drawn. Here it is advisable for the Study Circle convenor to be well-prepared with material from the words and pen of Sathya Sai, so that discussion does not falter in fruitless discussion about the accuracy or otherwise of certain phrases.

It must be remembered that almost all spiritual material in English has been translated from the original language of a Master, including that from Sathya Sai Baba who usually delivers His discourses in Telegu. It is unproductive to argue the meaning of a particular word. It is more productive to discuss the general meaning of what is being said. Always remember that even if we put into practice just one instruction of Lord Sai or other great Teachers with diligence, the rewards will be immense.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF SOURCES

Sources are not given for the quotes from the Teachers and Masters other than Sathya Sai Baba. Due to the passage of time, the uncertainties of translation, the existence of various versions, and familiarity with these texts the inclusion of the source did not appear necessary. Further, Lord Sai is taken to be the most recent and thus accurately-recorded teacher of Truth and, as such, identification of sources in relation to His words seemed necessary.

The following notations are used at the end of each quotation:

- 031192 would mean that the words were given in a discourse on the particular date, in this case on the 3rd November 1992. The discourse appearing in *Sanathana Sarathi* or 'Sathya Sai Speaks' indicates the date on which the discourse was given, with very few exceptions. Only the last two digits of the year are given, so that 92 represents 1992 and 09 means 2009.
- SSB 93,45 would indicate the quotation comes from a discourse reported in the 'Summer Showers in Brindavan' series, in the year 1993 and appears on page 45.
- Prasanthi V 17 would come from the Vahini series, in this case from 'Prasanthi (Supreme Peace) Vahini' and appears on page 17. The page number varies in some editions, but the quotation can be found if the adjacent pages are searched.
- SSS Vol.6 1966 201 would indicate that the quotation is from an undated divine discourse given sometime in 1966 and reproduced on page 201 in Volume 6 of the 'Sathya Sai Speaks' series.
- SS Oct 88,269 indicates page 269 in the October 1988 issue of *Sanathana Sarathi* and may refer to an article by a Sai devotee, or a divine discourse lacking the exact date of presentation.
- CSSB 93 means page 93 in the book by Dr John Hislop titled 'Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba', 1978 Edition.
- SSS Vol 15 Box 264 means that the quotation is in a 'box' on page 264 in Volume 15 of the 'Sathya Sai Speaks' series without any date or source given as to when Sai baba said or wrote the words.

- DBG 33 238 means that the quote can be found on page 238 of the book titled 'Discourses on the Bhagavad Gita, compiled and edited by Al Drucker, published March 1988. The number 33 means the thirty-third discourse on the Gita given by Sathya Sai Baba, during 34 days of evening discourses on this topic in August/September of 1984, to His college students at Prasanthi Nilayam, India.
- PD 2 84 means that the quote can be found on page 84 of Prema Dhara Part 2. Prema Dhara Part 1 and 2 are collections of letters written by Sathya Sai Baba to His students, teachers and others.

CONCLUSION

Each one of us is an actor in a play which is being directed by the Divine Hand and whose end is already written. Our role is to play the part we have been given with enthusiasm and to the best of our ability. It is our destiny to awaken to the One Self which abides in all. Some of us are not yet aware that we are in the play, while others are playing their part with varying degrees of awareness. However, without a doubt, each one of us is destined to become a star whose love and wisdom will illumine the world. Even those who now see only darkness will awaken eventually to sweet love and lasting joy.

The material in this book is only a minute fraction of the Truth which Sathya Sai Baba continues to reveal to the world. By studying and implementing this Truth we can become co-directors in the play whose final act is love, perfect equanimity and bliss.

It is our humble wish that this small selection of the vast wisdom teachings given to us by Sathya Sai Baba, compiled in the following sections and chapters, will be of some assistance to fellow travellers on the Path to the Divine. May the words of Lord Sathya Sai Baba and those of the other great Teachers and Masters resonate within the hearts of all aspirants and Study Circle participants.