



Shraddha. Saburi.

SAI SANDESH

The official monthly newsletter of

OM SAI MANDIR

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION



Love All. Serve All.

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August 2007

Volume 4, Issue 8

LIFE SIZE STATUES OF SAI BABA

Two life size, marble statues of Sai Baba will soon be adorning the temple's altar. Devotees interested in contributing toward this cause may contact the temple's management at 1.718.461.0454.

Checks could be made in the name of Om Sai Mandir and mailed to 45-11 Smart Street, Flushing, NY 11355.



PLEASURE IS AN INTERVAL BETWEEN TWO PAINS BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

The journey of life can be likened to a joy ride in a giant wheel since the upturns and downturns of the wheel closely mimic the ups and downs of human life, both alternating successively. The truth is that pain and pleasure follow one another inevitably, and pleasure is nothing but an interval between two pains. Yet, we feel so elated when circumstances are favorable and frown at the very thought of experiencing an unpleasant situation.

Swami often says that if we evaluate our lives closely, we will realize that we suffer for only a quarter of our life, while the rest is spent in happiness. Yet, even this short duration appears to be unbearable for most of us. The desire to avoid pain keeps us on a constant emotional roller coaster--we are elated when good things happen and become despondent during tough times. By acting in this manner, we are essentially allowing external situations to control our emotions and not vice versa.

It is only through constant practice of equanimity--remaining unaffected by circumstances--that we can remain in bliss regardless of what happens around us. Prahalada was one devotee who had achieved this state of equanimity even when he was a mere child. At the orders of the demon, Hiranyakashyapa, Prahlada was subjected to unbearable torments, such as being thrown from the top of a hill, subjected to harassment from terrifying demons, thrown in blazing fire, and many unmentionable atrocities. Even at that tender age, he bore all these inflictions with a smile on his face, bliss in his heart, and the incessant chanting his favorite mantra "Om Namō Narayana". Can we compare our troubles to the ones faced by this tender child? Constant naama smarana (remembrance of the divine name) was a potent armor that shielded this child from several fatal situations.

Prahlad has set a beautiful example that can be emulated by one and all. He demonstrated to mankind that during tough times--and even otherwise--we should resort to the chanting of the divine name just the way we cover ourselves with a blanket when it becomes extremely cold.

The painful circumstances we are subjected to are like the purifying fire. A slab of gold when passed through a furnace becomes malleable and worthy of being molded into precious ornaments. Our essence is like pure gold and when we pass through painful situations, we are purified and become worthy of being molded into worthy instruments that can be adorned by the Divine.

During the time of Shirdi Sai Baba, one Kashinath Upasani came to Him in search of enlightenment. Baba asked him to stay in Shirdi for four years, during which Upasani was subjected to numerous difficulties. When he would complain to Baba about this, the latter would revert with the response, "The more you suffer now, the better is for your future. I am with you." These words were prophetic considering the fact that Kashinath Upasani was transformed from an ordinary human being to a great master within a short span of four years. The pure gold that came as Kashinath Upasani was molded into a perfect master by being subjected to the fire of innumerable trials, tribulations, and tests. The final outcome was that Upasani achieved the final state of blessedness in which there was nothing but endless bliss.

During one of His discourses, Swami said that when compared with the cosmic time, our life on earth is not even a fraction of a second. If such be the case, what difference does it make whether we live in a hut or a palace. True happiness comes from loving God and only such love can free us from all our shackles.

SAI WISDOM

The Divine manifests itself in many forms. God is worshipped in many forms for the joy to be derived from it. The primary duty of human beings is to recognise that though the paths indicated by the various religions are different, the goal is One. Love, sacrifice, compassion, morality, integrity and similar qualities are common to all religions. In different ways all religions seek to promote unity in diversity.

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, August 01, 2007

MIND BOGGLING MIRACLES OF SAI BABA: HOW SWAMI ASSUMED 1400 FORMS

During a power failure, once Swami visited the student's hostel. 1400 students were living in that hostel and all stood obediently in front of their beloved Lord. In the darkness, Swami accosted one boy and said, "Atul, I have something for you. Don't tell anyone." Swami then placed a laddu in the boy's hand.

At that very moment the power was restored and when Atul looked around, he found all 1400 boys trying to hide something behind them. Such is the power of the Lord--incomprehensible, beyond the limited perceptions of human understanding. In a trice the Lord had manifested Himself to all 1400 students. In the Krishna Avatar, God had performed a similar leela by assuming numerous forms, one for each gopi. In the present incarnation as Sai, He continues to perform mind boggling miracles for the delight of his devotees.

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES: POWER RESTORED

In 2005, there was a severe power failure during a hot summer evening. It was late at night and, much to our dismay, ours was the only apartment that was without power. We were concerned about temperature-sensitive medicines that were in our refrigerator, but despite our best efforts the power was not restored.

Our building superintendent did his best too, but was unsuccessful. Finally, after many hours of struggle, he decided to call an electrician the following day.

Before giving up, however, we invoked Baba from the bottom of our heart. Much to the amazement of our super, and to our delight, the power was miraculously restored the moment we sought Baba's assistance. Seeing this miracle, the super, too, was awestruck and even to this day he asks us to pray to Baba for his welfare. Strange are the ways of the Lord.

Sri Rudra Abhishekam - Daily

For the welfare of humanity, Sri Rudra Abhishekam is being performed eleven times a day for a period of 121 days. The prayers start at 8.00 A.M. and continue until 11.30 A.M. All are welcome to participate.

OM SAI MANDIR'S ACTIVITIES

DAILY ARATIS

Kakad Arati: 8.00 A.M.
Madhyana Arati: 12.00 P.M.
Dhoop Arati: 6.00 P.M.
Sheja Arati: 8.00 P.M.

SPECIAL BHAJANS

Every Thursday: 7.00 P.M.-8.30 P.M.
Every Sunday: 2.00 P.M.-3.00 P.M.
SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.: Daily
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE): Daily at the Mandir
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE) FOR HOMELESS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 1 P.M. Call
718-461-0454

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

Archana: \$11
Abishekam: \$51
Satyanarayana Vrata: \$81
Vahana Puja: \$15
Annadan: \$251
To sponsor pujas, call (718) 461-0454.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 2007

Mon., August 27: Onam
Tue., August 28: Raksha Bandhan/Rakhi Poornima

September 2007

Tue., September 04: Sri Krishna Janmashtami/Krishnashtami
Sat., September 15: Ganesh Chaturthi/Siddhivinayak Chowthi
Fri., September 28: Shirdi Sai Baba's Birthday

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THE DEVOTION OF HANUMAN BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

Once, Hanuman noticed Mother Sita applying the sacred vermilion mark to her forehead. With child-like devotion he asked, "Mother, why do you apply the vermilion to your forehead?" The compassionate mother responded by saying, "Son, I apply the mark as a symbol of my devotion to my husband and also because the practice will help my husband live a long and healthy life."

Hanuman was intelligence personified but when it came to Rama, he always demonstrated extreme child-like simplicity. The mother's words were imprinted on his pure heart and he rushed to apply buckets of vermilion all over his divine body.

When Rama questioned why Hanuman had indulged in such an act, pat came the response, "Lord, if the application of a little vermilion on my beloved mother's forehead can secure a long and healthy life for you, how much longer would it be if I were to apply it all over my body. It is for this reason that I applied the sacred vermilion all over my body." This child-like simplicity and sincere devotion touched Rama's heart and His divine eyes were filled with tears of love.

For the sake of God, Hanuman was willing to go to any extent. What a beautiful example he has set before us.

EXPERIENCE IS THE BEST TEACHER ADAPTED FROM OKA CHINNA KATHA

One day, Brighu, the son of Varuna approached, his father and asked, "Father! Will you enlighten me about Brahman (God)?" Sage Varuna replied endearingly, "Son, none can enlighten anyone on Brahman. One has to experience through meditation. Go and do meditation and carry on self-enquiry. I bless you."

Brighu went into a forest and sat for meditation. He used to carry on self-enquiry too. He used to contemplate on several questions related to the spiritual world. One day, he thought, "What is the most essential thing that is necessary for the existence of all living beings in general and man in particular? It must be food," he decided. Man lives, grows and works only because of food. The most essential thing for life is food, so food is Brahman." He ran to his father and

said: "Father, I know what is Brahman. Food is Brahman." Varuna replied with a smile, "No, my son, food is not Brahman. Go and meditate."

Brighu went to the forest and continued his tapas for some more time. One day he thought, "Food may be essential, but unless there is energy, how can the food be digested? What is that energy? It must be prana (vital air) so prana is Brahman." So, he went to his father and said, "Father, I know what is Brahman, Prana is Brahman." Varuna replied, "No, my son, go and meditate for some more days."

Brighu obeyed his father's command. He continued his meditation. One day he thought, "Food is essential, prana is essential, but what is more essential? Unless one has desire to live and to eat, of what avail is food and prana? The seat of desire is mind. So Manas is Brahman," he decided. Brighu reported about his discovery and said, "Father, Manas is Brahman." Varuna smiled and said, "Son, no, Manas is not Brahman. Go and do tapas for some more days."

Brighu continued his meditation. One day he thought, "Food is essential, prana is essential, manas is also essential, but what is still more essential? Unless one is able to distinguish and discriminate between good and evil, of what use is this life? What is the seat of this discriminating faculty? It is intellect, vijnan. So vijnan is Brahman," he decided. Brighu went and told his father, "Father, vijnan is Brahman". Varuna once again said, "Son, no, vijnan is not Brahman. Go and do tapas for some more days."

Brighu once again continued to do tapas. One day he thought, "Food gives strength, prana energises, manas causes desires, and vijnan endows man with discrimination (viveka). But, I must find out what is the ultimate goal of man's life. I have to experience it." Having thus resolved, he went into deep meditation again.

One day, he experienced ineffable joy and he sat utterly unconscious of the outside world. That day, Varuna came to the forest in search of his son. He was happy to see his son in samadhi. From the effulgence which shone on Brighu's face, he knew that his son had realised that Bliss is Brahman.

In the upanishadic age, parents and preceptors used to encourage their pupils to ask questions, yet they would not give them immediate answers. They would advise them to carry on self enquiry and find out the answers for themselves.

Experience is the best teacher.

GURU POORNIMA CELEBRATIONS - JULY 29, 2007



OM SAI MANDIR
A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Om Sai Mandir is organized exclusively for charitable, religious purposes and is a non profit organization, exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contributions made to Om Sai Mandir are tax deductible and can be mailed to:

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Have a suggestion, article, or idea for *Sai Sandesh*? Please e-mail our editorial team at saisandesh@omsaimandir.org

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