

[Editor's note. This discourse appears in Samuel Sandweiss's *Holy Man and the Psychiatrist* and on a video by Richard Bock]

For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of evildoers and for establishing righteousness on a firm footing, I incarnate from age to age. Whenever disharmony (*asanthi*) overwhelms the world, the Lord will incarnate in human form to establish the modes of earning peace (*prasanthi*) and to reeducate the human community in the paths of peace. At the present time, strife and discord have robbed peace and unity from the family, the school, the society, the religions, the cities, and the state.

The arrival of the Lord is also anxiously awaited by saints and sages. Spiritual aspirants (*sadhus*) prayed and I have come. My main tasks are fostering of the *Vedas* (Hindu scriptures) and fostering of the devotees. Your virtue, your self-control, your detachment, your faith, your steadfastness —these are the signs by which people read of my glory. You can lay claim to be a devotee only when you have placed yourself in my hands fully and completely with no trace of ego. You can enjoy the bliss through the experience the *Avatar* confers. The *Avatar* behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship, but rises into his superhuman heights so that mankind can aspire to reach the heights, and through that aspiration actually reach him. Realizing the Lord within you as the motivator is the task for which he comes in human form.

Avatars like Rama and Krishna had to kill one or more individuals who could be identified as enemies of the righteous (*dharmic*) way of life, and thus restore the practice of virtue. But now there is no one fully good, so who deserves the protection of God? All are tainted by wickedness, so who will survive if the *Avatar* decides to uproot? Therefore, I have come to correct the intelligence (*buddhi*), by various means. I have to counsel, help, command, condemn and stand by as a friend and well wisher to all, so that they may give up evil propensities and, recognizing the straight mark, tread it and reach the goal. I have to reveal to the people the worth of the *Vedas*, the *Sastras*, and the spiritual texts that lay down the norms. If you will accept me and say, "Yes," I too will respond and say, "Yes, yes, yes." If you deny and say "No," I also echo "No." Come, examine, experience, have faith. This is the method of utilizing me.

I do not mention Sai Baba in any of my discourses, but I bear the name as *Avatar* of Sai Baba. I do not appreciate in the least the distinction between the various appearances of God: Sai, Rama, Krishna, etc. I do not proclaim that this is more important or that is less important. Continue your worship of your chosen God along lines already familiar to you; then you will find that you are coming nearer to me. For all names are mine, and all forms are mine. There is no need to change your chosen God and adopt a new one when you have seen me and heard me.

Every step in the career of the *Avatar* is predetermined. Rama came to feed the roots truth (*sathyā*) and righteousness (*dharmā*). Krishna came to foster peace (*santhi*), and love (*prema*). Now, all these four are in danger of being dried up. That is why the present *Avatar* has come. The righteousness that has fled to the forests has to be brought back into the villages and towns. The anti-righteousness that is ruining the villages and towns must be driven back into the jungle.

I have come to give you the key of the treasure of bliss *ananda*, to teach you how to tap that spring, for you have forgotten the way to blessedness. If you waste this time of saving yourselves, it is just your fate. You have come to get from me tinsel and trash, the petty little cures

and promotions, worldly joys and comforts. Very few of you desire to get from me the thing that I have come to give you: namely, liberation itself. Even among these few, those who stick to the path of spiritual practice and succeed are a handful.

Your worldly intelligence cannot fathom the ways of God. He cannot be recognized by mere cleverness of intelligence. You may benefit from God, but you cannot explain him. Your explanations are merely guesses, attempts to cloak your ignorance in pompous expressions. Bring something into your daily practice as evidence of your having known the secret of the higher life from me. Show that you have greater brotherliness. Speak with more sweetness and self-control. Bear defeat as well as victory with calm resignation.

I am always aware of the future and the past as well as the present of every one of you, so I am not so moved by mercy. Since I know the past, the background, the reaction is different. It is your consequence of evil deliberately done in the previous birth, so I allow your suffering to continue, often modified by some little compensation. I do not cause either joy or grief. You are the designer of both these chains that bind you. I am the embodiment of bliss (*Anandaswarupa*). Come, take bliss (*ananda*) from me, dwell on that bliss, and be full of peace (*santhi*).

My acts are the foundations on which I am building my work, the task for which I have come. All the miraculous acts that you observe are to be interpreted so. The foundation for a dam requires a variety of materials. Without these it will not last and hold back the waters. An incarnation of the Lord has to be used in various ways by man for his uplift.

The Lord has no intention to publicize himself. I do not need publicity, nor does any other *Avatar* of the Lord. What are you daring to publicize? Me? What do you know about me? You speak one thing about me today and another tomorrow. Your faith has not become unshakable. You praise me when things go well and blame me when things go wrong. When you start publicity you descend to the level of those who compete in collecting plenty by decrying others and extolling themselves.

Where money is calculated, garnered or exhibited to demonstrate one's achievements, I will not be present. I come only where sincerity and faith and surrender are valued. Only inferior minds will revel in publicity and self-aggrandizement. These have no relevance in the case of *Avatars*. *Avatars* need no advertisement.

The establishment of righteousness (*dharma*): that is my aim. The teaching of *dharma*, the spread of *dharma*: that is my object. These miracles, as you call them, are just a means toward that end. Some of you remark that Ramakrishna Paramahansa (an Indian saint) said that yogic powers (*siddhis*) are obstructions in the path of the spiritual aspirant. Yes, yogic powers may lead the spiritual aspirant astray. Without being involved in them, he has to keep straight on. His ego will bring him down if he yields to the temptation of demonstrating his yogic powers. That is the correct advice that every aspirant should heed. But the mistake lies in equating me with a spiritual aspirant, like the one whom Ramakrishna wanted to help, guide, and warn. These yogic powers are just in the nature of the *Avatar* —the creation of things with intent to protect and give joy is spontaneous and lasting. Creation, preservation, and dissolution can be accomplished only by the Almighty ... no one else can.

Cynics carp without knowledge. If they learn the *sastras* or scriptures, or if they cultivate direct experience, they can understand me. Your innate laziness prevents you from the spiritual exercises necessary to discover the nature of God. This laziness should go. It has to be driven out

of man's nature in whatever shape it appears. That is my mission. My task is not merely to cure and console and remove individual misery but is something far more important. The removal of misery and distress is incidental to my mission. My main task is the reestablishment of the *Vedas* and *sastras* (spiritual scriptures), and revealing the knowledge about them to all people. This task will succeed. It will not be limited. It will not be slowed down. When the Lord decides and wills, his divine will cannot be hindered.

You must have heard people say that mine is all magic. But the manifestation of divine power must not be interpreted in terms of magic. Magicians play their tricks for earning their maintenance, worldly fame, and wealth. They are based on falsehood, and they thrive on deceit, but this body could never stoop to such a low level. This body has come through the Lord's resolve to come. That resolve is intended to uphold truth (*sathya*). Divine resolve is always true resolve. Remember there is nothing that divine power cannot accomplish. It can transmute earth into sky and sky into earth. To doubt this is to prove that you are too weak to grasp great things, the grandeur of the universe.

I have come to instruct all in the essence of the *Vedas*, to shower on all this precious gift, to protect the ancient wisdom (*sanathana_dharma*) and preserve it. My mission is to spread happiness, so I am always ready to come among you not once, but twice or thrice —as often as you want me.

Many of you probably think that since people from all parts of India, and even foreign countries outside India, come to Puttaparthi, they must be pouring their contributions into the coffers of the Nilayam (Prasanthi Nilayam: name of Sai Baba's ashram). But let me declare the truth. I do not take anything from anyone except their love and devotion. This has been my consistent practice for the last many years. People who come here are giving me just the wealth of faith, devotion, and love. That is all.

Many of you come to me with problems of health and mental worry of one sort or another. They are mere baits by which you have been brought here. The main purpose is that you may have grace and strengthen your faith in the divine. Problems and worries are really to be welcomed, because they teach you the lessons of humility and reverence. Running after external things produces all this discontent. That type of desire has no end. Once you have become a slave to the senses, they will not leave hold until you are dead. It is an unquenchable thirst. But I call you to me and even grant worldly boons so that you may turn God-ward. No *Avatar* has done like this before, going among the masses, counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, and directing them along the path of truth, righteousness, peace and love (*sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema*).

My activities and movements will never be altered, whoever may pass whatever opinion on them. I shall not modify my plans for the establishment of righteousness (*dharmasthapana*), my discourses, or my movements. I have stuck to this determination for many years and I am engaged in the task for which I have come: that is, to inculcate faith in the path of the highest spiritual peace (*prasanthi*). I shall not stop or retract a step.

Not even the biggest scientist can understand me by means of his laboratory knowledge. I am always full of bliss. Whatever may happen, nothing can come in the way of my smile. That is why I am able to impart joy to you and make your burden lighter. I never exult when I am extolled, nor shrink when I am reviled.

Few have realized my purpose and significance, but I am not worried. When things that are not in me are attributed to me, why should I worry? When things that are in me are mentioned, why should I exult? For me it is always, "Yes, yes, yes." If you give all and surrender to the Lord, he will guard and guide you. The Lord has come for just this task. He is declaring that he will do so, and that it is the very task that has brought him here.

I know the agitations of your heart and its aspirations, but you do not know my heart. I react to the pain that you undergo and to the joy that you feel, for I am in your heart. I am the dweller in the temple of every heart. Do not lose contact and company, for it is only when the coal is in contact with the live embers that it can also become live ember.

Cultivate a nearness with me in the heart and it will be rewarded. Then you too will acquire a fraction of that supreme love. This is a great chance. Be confident that you will all be liberated. Know that you are saved. Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life will be happy for all and full of joy, and that the golden age will recur. Let me assure you that this divine body (*dharmaswarupa*) has not come in vain. It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon humanity.