Birthday Message

In the beginningless and endless Stream of Time, night and day, summer and winter, roll endlessly on; they are carried mercilessly on over the Universe by the flood. The term of living beings diminishes with every day. While being carried forward in the flood, man is surprisingly unaware of his fate; he never spends a thought on his fast declining life-term, He is blind in his ignorance.

Riches and wealth are short-lived; office and authority are temporary; the life-breath is a flickering flame in the wind. Youth is a three-day fair. Pleasures and fortunes are bundles of sorrow. Knowing this, if man devotes this limited term of life to the service of the Lord, then, he is indeed blessed.

Seek refuge at the Feet of the Lord even before the life-breath flies out of the cage of the body. It is an open cage! Any moment, the bird may fly into the outer regions. That is the fact. The ignorant do not realise this; they beat their drums and proclaim proudly how rich they are or how happy they are, surrounded by their sons and grandsons. Alas, the very physical frame which is so carefully nourished since birth rots and falls aside. What then shall we say of those who feel that these other things are "mine"? Theirs is but the delusion of an insane mind. Everything is untrue, everything is impermanent; castles in the air, constructions in dreams.

Contemplate on this Truth; approach Shri Hari and glorify Him; that alone can confer on you permanent Joy.

Inside the room called Body, in the strong box called the Heart, the precious gem of jnaana exists; four wily thieves *kaama, krodha, lobha* and *asuuya---lust,* anger, greed and envy---are lying in wait to rob it. Awake to the danger before it is too late; reinforce yourself with the support of the Universal Guardian the Lord, and keep the gem intact. That will make you rich in *prema,* rich in *shaanthi.*

When Bliss is attained there is no grief

When the clouds that hide the face of the moon are wafted by the winds, the moon shines clear and cool; so too, when the clouds of egoism are wafted away, the mind of man will shine pure and full, with its own native light. That is the stage of Bliss. When that is attained, there is no more grief. Where there is the lamp, there darkness cannot exist. The lamp *of jnaana* once lit never dies, never fades, never flickers. The *aanandha* and the *shaanthi* too never fade, never flicker. But the *aanandha* and the *shaanthi* that men seek from the objects of the world prompted by their senses flicker fast and fade and die. They satisfy for a moment a foolish craze. They are attained through lust, anger, hate and envy and so, they are false and fickle. Control and conquer these; then only can you acquire real *Aanandha* and *Shaanthi.* You can not only acquire these, you can become these.

What do the wars of mankind teach, except this, that lust, anger, hate and envy are evil forces that haunt man? Examine the anarchy and the lawlessness, the chaos ,and killings that have arisen in the world today. They are the products of these forces. Why, even the ills of your bodies and of your homes are but the consequence of these evils.. Unaware of the faults and failings in oneself, man imputes faults and foists failings on others and starts blaming and hurting them. This is sin; this gives you a feeling of innocence and exultation for a while, but, cannot confer anything other than worry, grief and pain.

Spiritual aspirants must control anger

Hate and envy distort man's true charm. Anger is the fuel for all varieties of sin. Just look at yourself in a mirror, when you are attacked by anger, and you will discover that you are then akin to Suurpanakha or Lankini of ancient times. The *Rajo guna* that is over-powering you then is the *Raakshasa* trait you must learn to avoid. Those aspiring for success in the spiritual field must therefore decide to control anger, to subdue the vagaries of the mind with its changing resolution to do and not to do things. They must put down their mental agitations and worries and see that they do not create worry in others also. They must convince themselves that in every one there is *Shivam,* recognisable as *swaasam* (breath); they must develop *Vishwaprema* (Universal love) and demonstrate it in their words and deeds. May you all win *sathyam, shaanthi* and *sukham* through these means. May you merge in the source of all *Aanandham.*

There is also another point. The *Shaasthras* say that envy, greed, lust, anger are all *vyaadhi kaaranam* (sources of disease). Those afflicted with these qualifies may consume the most healthy food; but, it will not give them health. They will suffer from various digestive and nervous troubles. Therefore, devotees and those aspiring to be liberated, must cut asunder these evil tendencies with the sharp sword *of jnaana* (spiritual wisdom). They must pray to the Lord to save them from contact with these foul characteristics. From this very moment, pray for the Grace which will enable you to control and conquer them. Deepen your faith in God. Expand *your prema* and take into its fold, the whole of mankind. There is no alternative path for the *bhaktha.*

> *You should not be ever entangled in the meshes of this world and its problems.*
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> *Try to escape into the purer air of the spirit as often as you can, taking the name of the Lord on your tongue.*
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> *Of the 24 hours of the day, have 6hours for your individual needs, 6 hours for the service of the others, 6 hours for sleep and 6 for dwelling in the Presence of the Lord. Those six hours will endow you with the strength of steel*
>
> *Sathya Sai Baaba*