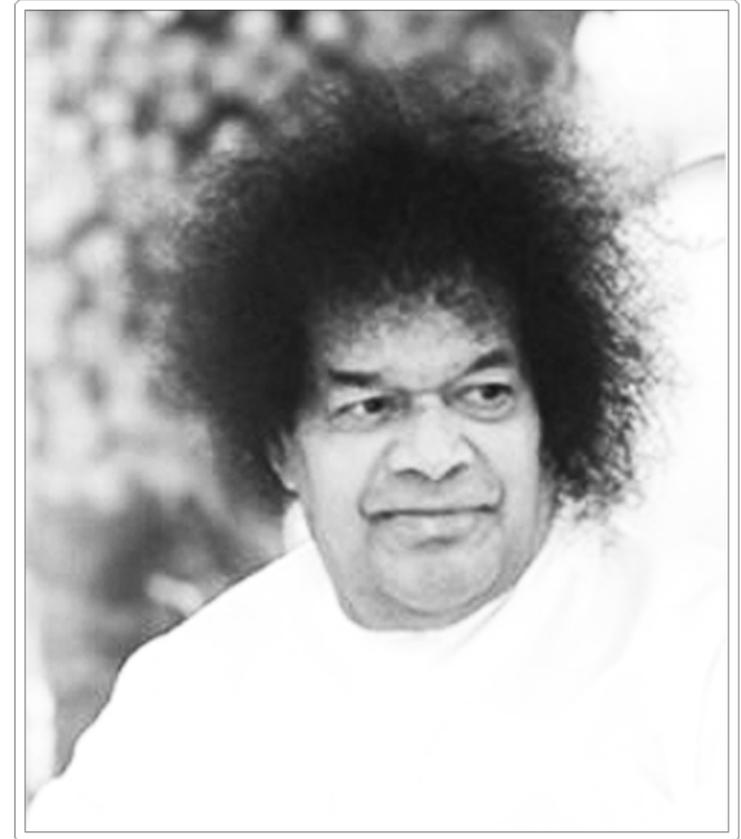


best one can get. But if the copper vessel used for cooking is not tinned, the sambar (soup) will turn into something dangerous; that which cannot be consumed. The dish prepared becomes poisonous if the interior of the vessel is unfit for cooking. So too, you must cleanse your inner being. Sathkarma (virtuous deeds) and Sadachara (good habits) along with prayers act as lining for the vessel of your heart (hridaya pathra), where emotions, impulses and instincts are cooking. Prayer will tame all the instincts like a wild elephant is trained to perform tricks in a circus ring.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(February 2012)

1.02.2012

The task of every Avatar has been to protect the sadhus, punish the wicked and support right conduct (Dharma). By sadhus, I do not mean monks and ascetics alone, as it is generally understood. It means the ones who practice goodness, uprightness and virtue (sadhu-guna). Note that these can be possessed by animals and even insects. The promotion of Sathwa guna (purity) is the best means of fostering sadhus. Being the embodiment of this sacred Guna, the Avatar fosters it wherever people practising virtues are found. Sadhu also implies those persons who do not swerve from their duty, whatever be the temptation or threat. All those who follow right conduct, (Sadachara), who are virtuous (Sadsheela), who adhere to truth (Sathya), who yearn for the Divine presence (Sannidhi) of the Lord (Sarveswara), who observe Sad-dharma, who consider all (Sarvajana) as equal (Samaana); all of them are dear to Me and deserve My special attention.

2.02.2012

Service to your fellow beings is more needed than service to the Lord. In fact, serving a person is equal to serving the Lord Himself. That is the path of true devotion. For what greater means can there be to please God than that of pleasing His children? The scripture Purusha Suktha describes God as having a thousand heads, eyes and feet. That is to say, every living being is God. Though there is a mention of a thousand heads, there is no mention of a thousand hearts, there is only one heart. The same blood circulates through all the heads, eyes, feet and limbs. When you tend to the limb, you tend to the individual. When you serve a human being, you serve God. When your goal is to serve and adore God, every step will yield you a spring of joy, and every moment, every opportunity is a valuable gift from Him.

they feel bound, miserable, limited, weak and agitated. Why? They imagine thus, and so they are shaped by the mind which is the source of that imagination. They are ignorant of their reality. How then can one be freed from this delusion? If you desire to overtake a train, you must speed in a car or board a plane. A vehicle slower than the train will not help. So too if you intend to overcome the delusion of your mind, you must establish yourself in God. The delusion of Maanavasakthi (human-power) arising out of the mind can be overcome only by the attainment of Divine Power (Daivasakthi). One prayer that promotes the acquisition of Divine Power is the repetition of the Gayathri Mantra.

28.02.2012

The word Jnana also means, the eagerness to realise the Atma thathwa (the Principle of the Atma) through inquiry from those with spiritual experience. If you are anxious to get this wisdom or experience, go to realised souls and win their grace. Study well their moods and manners, and await the chance to ask them for the help. When doubts arise, approach them calmly and courageously. No amount of sea water can slake one's thirst. Similarly any hours of study of the scriptures will not help in solving our doubts. Jnana or the ultimate wisdom, can be won only from and through elders who have experienced the absolute. Serve them and win their love. Only then can this precious Jnana be won.

29.02.2012

Inner cleanliness should be your first aim. You may have fine vegetables, excellent spices, salt and the best of pulses; the cook may be a master of the art. The oven you use may be the

25.02.2012

The aim of all human effort is to achieve the oneness that lies behind all the plurality. Without accomplishing this, one cannot be in peace. No amount of repetition of the shanthy manthra (hymn of peace) is capable of granting that. The same current activates the many seemingly distinct instruments like the bulb, the mike, the fan, the refrigerator, the tape recorder, the stove, etc. The Guru is the one who reveals to you that invisible current. The guru is like the stranger who entered the cottage of a poor man and announced that underneath the floor in his home, lies hidden a precious treasure which he can own, by a few minutes of digging. And for this the Guru deserves your gratitude.

26.02.2012

Perform abhisheka (ceremonial bath given to the Deity) to the Atma-linga (the Divine within), with the waters of your own pure mental impulses (Chittha-vritthi). What is true yajna (ceremonial sacrifice)? Giving in charity accumulated wealth is Dravya yajnam. When all physical and mental activities are utilised for sadhana (spiritual discipline) it is Thapo yajna. Doing karma (action) but yet remaining unbound by it, is Yoga Yajna. When the chittha (mind) moves in one direction and the indriyas (sense organs) move in another, the person is doubly confused. So keep attachment afar. When you accomplish this, every act of yours becomes a sacrifice (Yajna). Whatever you speak becomes a holy mantra; and the place where you plant your foot is rendered holy.

27.02.2012

All beings are Divine, and the Lord dwells in their hearts. Yet

3.02.2012

Virtuous character is found in Nature, and among the animals and birds as well. In the epic Ramayana, the eagle Jatayu was saved as a result of his virtuous nature (Guna). That is the reason why several monkeys too were given a chance to serve and be blessed with His grace. The same reason prompted the Lord to bless the squirrels who contributed to building the bridge in the epic. A monk or devotee is not made by a string of beads, an ochre robe and a stick in the hand. The clothes one wears and the language one has on the tongue do not decide who is a virtuous person and who is not; it is one's conduct that settles it. Even animals have the potentiality to be good. Fostering goodness everywhere in everyone is the best means of ensuring the welfare of the world.

4.02.2012

It is dedication to the Lord that sanctifies all activities. He is the prompter, executor, the giver of the required strength and skill, and the one who enjoys the fruit thereof. So dedication must come naturally to you, for all is His, and nothing is yours! Your duty is to believe that He is the impeller of your activities and draw strength from that belief. Until the wound heals and the new skin hardens, the bandage must protect the place. So too, until reality within is realized, the balm of faith, holy company and holy thoughts must be applied to the ego-affected mind. Develop good habits, mix in the company of the pious, do good deeds and serve those in distress - all these steps will lead you into the glorious path of Self-Knowledge. Take to this discipline from now and save yourselves from grief and distress. I bless that you get the will to do so and to persist until success is won.

5.02.2012

In Mahabharatha, Krishna declared to Arjuna that fostering of Dharma is His work. The term Sadhu refers to one who does not deviate from his duty. The wicked revel in creating trouble for such men and in indulging in acts contrary to the injunctions of the scriptures. What then is the establishment of Dharma? It is acting strictly according to the tenets laid down in the scriptures; spreading among people the glory and the splendour of a life lived in Dharma; stabilising reverence towards the holy scriptures, towards God, Avatars and Paramapurushas (evolved souls) and the Sadhana (spiritual practices) that leads to liberation and blessedness beyond this life. It is called Dharma-samsthaapana, Dharmarakshana or Dharmodधारana (establishment, protection or revival of righteousness). "Whatever I do, it is for this high purpose; nothing is for My own advancement. Those who know this secret can escape birth and death," said Krishna.

6.02.2012

Remember always that it is easy to do what is pleasant. But it is very difficult to be engaged in what is beneficial. Not all that is pleasant is profitable. Success comes to those who give up the path strewn with roses and brave the hammer blows and sword thrusts of the path fraught with danger. As a matter of fact, no road is strewn with rose petals. Life is a battle field (a Dharmakshetra), where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, of hatred and anger that rise up in your hearts; it is sheer cowardice to yield to these enemies that turn you into beasts. Meet all obstacles with courage. Difficulties make you tough and strong.

Jnani is unshaken, steady and ever jubilant! The Jnanis may be engaged in karma (actions) but they are not affected in the least by it, as they have no eye on the fruit of their actions.

23.02.2012

Though your parents have endowed you with this physical body (deha), it is the Guru who points out to you the Indweller of the body. To make the gold more amenable to ornament making, it is alloyed by the addition of a little silver or copper. So too in order to manifest the multiple variety of Nature, the Brahmathathwam (Divine essence) is converted into an alloy, with the addition of a little egoism or mamakaaram. The Guru teaches one to regain the pure unalloyed state through the process of Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyaasam (Listening to, recapitulating and meditating on God's glories). Through this process, one can understand that the individual Self is one and the same as the Divine Self and is infact facet of the same entity.

24.02.2012

Both the form (swarupa) and the nature (swabhava) of the Atma is such that it is unaffected and uninfluenced by anything that is ephemeral. The soul has no birth or death, hunger or thirst, grief or delusion! Birth and death are characteristics of the body; grief and delusion are afflictions of the mind. Do not assign any status to these; know yourself as the Atma, the Divine Self. Give up all delusion and become unattached. Do not be like the porous blotting paper that gets tainted with whatever it comes in contact with. Be the lotus leaf in the marshy lake of this samsara (worldly existence); do not get smeared with the mud around you. Be in the world, yet outside it.

sacredness. The heart then is filled with peace and bliss and becomes the temple of God. There is no use in just thinking of God on Shivarathri, once a year. Every day, every night, every minute, you should think of Divinity and sanctify your time. You yourself are truly Shiva, the Divine. Try to understand and recognize this principle of Shiva Tatva (Divine essence) which is indeed your own reality.

21.02.2012

By the time it rains, if seeds have not been sown, will there be any crop in the field? If seeds are sown but there is no rain, will any cultivation happen? Both rain and seeds are needed for the harvest to be reaped. Likewise, Divine Grace will bear fruit only when there is human effort too. When there are good thoughts in the mind, they will be reflected as noble actions; on the other hand if the thoughts are ill-disposed, the fruits thereof will be equally bad. Different devotees are bound to differ in their ways of worshiping God. But whatever the method of worship, there must be one-pointed devotion. Love towards God is devotion. Love towards the world is attachment. Develop love for God.

22.02.2012

The wise one (Jnani) is ever happy and this happiness does not depend on objects outside. You may wonder how; it is because such people are content with whatever happens to them, well or ill, as they are convinced that the Lord's will must prevail. Want of this contentment is a sign of a ajnani (unwise person). The ajnani piles one wish on another, builds one plan after another and pines perpetually; he or she worries and sets one's own heart ablaze with greed. On the other hand, the

7.02.2012

To feel that the Lord is away, afar or separate from you is Paroksha jnana (indirect knowledge). To feel that the Lord who is immanent in the universe is in you also as the Atman - that is Aparoksha jnana (directly experienced). If all activity is moved by the dedicatory spirit, the Chittha (inner conscience) can be rendered pure. Only such can recognise the divine nature of the Lord's birth and actions (Janma and Karma), said Krishna. All cannot so recognise the Divine. Yet no one should avoid contact with the Divine. Also remember that the punishment of the wicked is also part of the Divine Mission. Those who transgress the limits set and indulge in akarma (inaction), anyaya (injustice) and anaachaara (immorality), and roam about caught in the coils of ahamkaara (egoism) will be punished. Utilise every chance given to you to be good and do good. There should not be any lapse on your part.

8.02.2012

Only those who are free from attachment, hatred, fear and anger; who are immersed in the name and form of the Lord, knowing of no other support than Him; and are sanctified by the knowledge of the Atma, can grasp Divinity. Those who seek the Lord without deviation, possessing Truth, Love and Right Conduct, will attain Him. This is absolutely true; give up any doubt you may have! People render their inner consciousness impure by ignorantly dwelling on the objective world. They take delight in mere sabda, rasa, gandha, (sound, taste, smell) etc. When they seek objective pleasure they are tempted to secure the objects that give pleasure; foiled in the attempt, they get restless, hateful and afraid. Fear robs one of his mental resources. It creates anger that cannot be easily

pacified. Thus desire, anger and fear are aroused one after the other and these three must be removed to realize the Lord.

9.02.2012

The best way to get rid of desire, anger and hatred is to strike at the very taproot of the tree - the mistaken belief that you are the body, with this name and form, senses, intelligence and mind. This is the luggage you are carrying. Don't you say, my nose, my book, my umbrella? Who is this 'I' that calls all these 'mine'? That is the real 'you'! It was present, when you were born, when you were sleeping forgetting everything else including your body and its afflictions. That 'I' cannot be harmed, it does not change, it knows no birth and death. Learn the discipline that makes you aware of this truth and you will be ever free and bold. This is true knowledge (atmavidya), which the preceptors and sages have gleaned for you. You too must, one day or the other learn this and save yourselves. All have to reach the goal, travelling along the path of wisdom.

10.02.2012

Some are always worn out by ills that affect the body; they are called the Aarthas. There are others who are worried by the struggle for prosperity, power, property, fame, etc.; they are Artha-arthis. The third type are those that yearn for the realisation of the Atma, and such people read the scriptures, move in the company of spiritual aspirants, act along the lines of scriptures - sadachara (Right Conduct), and are always motivated to reach the Lord; they are called Jijnaasus. The fourth is the Jnani, who is ever immersed in the Divine. I am like the Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling divine tree). My task is to give each what they ask for, without any prejudice or favouritism.

can roam around, destroy crops and cause loss and harm to others. In the process it may get beaten for the mischief done. Similarly, the mind must be bound by certain regulations and limits. As long as man lives within certain rules and disciplines, he will be able to maintain a good name and lead a happy and useful life. Once he crosses these limits he will go astray.

19.02.2012

Karma as such has no capacity to bind; it is the conceit, 'I am the doer' that brings about the attachment and the bondage. Again, it is the desire for the fruit of action that produces the bondage. For example: the zero gets value only when in association with a digit. Karma is zero; the feeling of 'doership' when associated with Karma breeds bondage. So give up the sense of 'I' and the Karma that you do will never harm you. Karma done without any desire for the fruits thereof will not produce impulses; that is to say, there will be no impulse for birth even. The spiritual aspirants of the past, performed Karma with this high ideal in view. They never felt that they were the 'doers' or 'enjoyers of the fruits' of any act. The Lord did, the Lord gave the fruit and the Lord enjoyed the fruit - that was their conviction! You too should cultivate that faith.

20.02.2012

Shivarathri is the day when one tries to establish friendship between the mind and God. Shivarathri makes one aware of the fact that the same Divinity is all-pervasive and is to be found everywhere. It is said that Shiva lives in Kailasa. But where is it? Kailasa means joy and bliss. It means that God lives in our minds, that are filled with joy and delight. How can one get this joy? It comes when we develop purity, steadfastness and

are your friends. These are your true relatives who will always accompany you and be with you. When you have this kind of relationship, when you treasure such friendship, you will be able to break the bonds of the world and be free. Think of Divinity every minute of your life. Light has value only when there is darkness; it has no value by itself. In times of trouble and sorrow, whenever problems arise, evoke the principle of Divinity. It will certainly shed illumination and light in moments of darkness and bring joy to you.

17.02.2012

The Atma (Soul) is inherently devoid of attachment. It has no awareness of its own needs or nature of its possessions. It has no 'I' or 'mine' for these are the marks of ajnana (Illusion). Only those afflicted with ajnana will suffer from the ego or the sense of 'mine'. Though it may appear to ordinary eyes that 'I am the doer', the truth is 'I am a non-doer'! Not only this, the effect of action (karma) does not cease as soon as it is finished. Karma yields fruits; the results of Karma breed desire for them; and that in turn results in impulses for further Karma. These impulses bring about further births. Thus Karma can lead to the cycle of births and deaths; it is a vicious whirlpool, making you revolve round and round, and finally dragging you down into the depths. Hence do not put your faith on this world and the objects of the world. Cultivate and practice detachment!

18.02.2012

The most important reason for bondage is giving too much freedom to the mind. When an animal is tethered to a post, it will not be able to go elsewhere. It cannot show anger or violence or do harm to any person. But if it is let loose, it

Can any fault be imputed to the Sun shining its rays? The rays of the Sun fall equally upon all that are directly in their way; but if someone is behind something else, inside a closed room for instance, how can the Sun illumine them? Cultivate higher yearnings and receive accordingly!

11.02.2012

Develop love for all. Do not think that a person is superior or more devoted than the rest. Do not look down upon anyone as a disturbance and nuisance. If you have love for God, you will love all, for God is in every one. You sing bhajans (devotional songs) which say "God is all, God is in everyone" (Antha Sai Mayam). If that is true, how can you have love for God alone? You have pictures of God in your home or in the temple. If anyone speaks ill of any of them, do you like it? You don't! So too, when you treat anyone harshly or speak rudely to anyone, you are treating Me harshly. When you are insulting anyone, you are insulting Me. I desire that you should conduct yourselves in a loving, harmonious and peaceful manner at all times! Serve everyone gladly, as you would serve Me.

12.02.2012

Life is a tree of delusion, with all its branches, leaves and flowers of maya. You can realize this, when all your acts are dedicated offerings to God. See Him as the sap that runs through every cell; the Sun that is warming and building each atom. See Him in all and worship Him through all, for He is all. Engage in activity, filling it with devotion. It is devotion that sanctifies. A piece of paper is almost a trash, but if the contents of a certificate are written on it, you value and treasure it; it becomes a passport for

promotion in life. Hence it is the bhaava (feelings behind an act) that matters, and not baahya (outward pomp and show). Without knowing this secret of transforming every action into an act of worship, people suffer from disappointment and grief. In sacred places of worship, stones of little value are shaped as Divine forms or idols. But when the feeling of devotion transmutes the idol, it become the highest treasure for the human mind.

13.02.2012

The Lord, like a lump of sugar, is sweetness all over. All differences and distinctions are the illusions of people with body consciousness. Consider this example: A mother having four children does not give the other three as much attention and care as she gives to the child in the cradle. Even if the child does not call out for it, she is ever vigilant to give it food. The other three come and ask her for food and things to play with. Observing this, you cannot pronounce her a bad mother or a partial mother. The mother adjusts her activities to the capacity and ability of the child. So too, though the entire world is His, though all are His children, He graces and blesses each one according to one's capacity and ability. To ascribe any fault to such selfless, sincere, simple, ever-blissful Providence is like attributing darkness to the Sun - it is an act of sheer ignorance!

14.02.2012

If there is a boil on the body, we apply some ointment and cover it with a bandage until it heals. If you do not do this, it is likely to become septic and cause great harm later on. Now and then one has to clean it with pure water, apply the

ointment again and put on a new bandage. In the same way in our life, there is this particular boil which has come up in our body, in the form of 'I', (ahamkara and mamakara). If you want to really cure this boil of 'I', you will have to wash it every day with the waters of love, apply the ointment of faith and tie the bandage of humility around it. This will cure the disease that has erupted with this boil of 'I'.

15.02.2012

In the Geetha Lord Krishna says, "Arjuna! People give up revering and seeking Me, their very own Self. How foolish of them! They are not anxious to reach Me; but pursue lesser attainments that are untrue and transitory. The reason for this strange behaviour is the desire for quick results. People seek only that which is available here and now; that which is in a concrete form and is capable of being grasped by their senses; they are carried away by the attraction of flimsy pleasures. People also do not generally have the needed patience. They attach greater importance to the gross body, (sthula sarira). The achievement of Jnana (wisdom) is the true inner victory; it is won after long and arduous struggle. The few who are spiritually minded yearn for the Divine. Such wise people are indeed blessed. Look upon every act as but the execution of His order and as leading to His grace."

16.02.2012

There are no permanent mothers in the world, the only permanent mother is the Divine Mother. You must always remind yourself that you are part of a spiritual family. Truth is your father, Love is your mother, Wisdom is your son, Peace is your daughter, Devotion is your brother, and Yogis