29.09.2012

The Government, the administration and the people (prabhuthwam, adhikaaris and praja) are like the three blades of an electric fan; when all three rotate together in the same direction and at the same speed, they conduce to comfort. Anger, malice, greed, envy - all these are obstacles in the path of love and cooperation. They lower man from the Divine to the animal level. Bear with others with patience and understanding; practise forbearance and sympathy. Try to discover points of contact rather than that of conflict. Spread brotherliness and deepen kindness through knowledge. Then without fail, life shall become worthwhile.

30.09.2012

You must expand your love as much as you can. That is how kulaabhimanam, mathaabhimanam and deshaabimanam - affection for one's community, one's religion and one's country becomes desirable and commendable. If, instead of love, these create hatred towards other communities, religions and countries, then they become poisonous. Love your religion, such that you may practice it with greater faith! When each one practices one's religion with faith, there can be no hatred in this world, for all religions are built on the principle of universal love. Let the purity which you are manifest itself; endeavour to express it in your activities - that is what pleases Me and wins My grace.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(September 2012)

1.09.2012

The spiritual aspirant is given to wonder which one is better or true - the Saguna (with form) aspect or the Nirguna (formless) aspect of God. Understand that they are like ice and water. Though water is formless, it takes the form of the vessel which contains it. Water and ice are one and the same. Similarly there is no difference between the two forms of worship. In the spiritual journey, Saguna and Nirguna meditation are like the right and left feet. When you worship a form of the Lord, bear in mind the underlying formless aspect. Remember that God's Glory can never be contained through words or forms of worship. Similarly, during the Nirguna meditation, do not lose faith or diminish the majesty or glory that the Form carries. The final step, however, must be the auspicious right foot, the Nirguna aspect.

2.09.2012

To tame anger and other negative emotions is a hard and slow process, which requires patience, persistence and time. There was once a huge wrestler who was strutting along a street, proud of his physical strength and victory over many rivals. As he passed by, an innocent middle aged woman laughed at his stature. The wrestler observed this, gnashed his teeth in anger and was about to pounce on her. The woman retorted, "How can you consider yourself strong when you cannot even take a woman's laughter calmly?" The wrestler, in a split second, realized his folly and hung his head in shame. Forbearance (Sahana) is the best spiritual practice (Sadhana). Practice forbearance and fortitude - this is the foremost and greatest lesson from the scriptures.

27.09.2012

Instead of indulging in vain prattle, glorify God and walk in His path and pray to Him. Spend the allotted span of years in the contemplation and the adoration of the Almighty, not in servile praise of the feeble, the futile and the weak. Life is an opportunity afforded to each, not to merely eat and drink, but to achieve something nobler and grander: to master oneself and merge in the Reality. The discipline must come from within, not from without; people must control themselves through their own innate strength, not get controlled through fear of someone or desire for temporary gain. Self-control promotes self-reliance, self-knowledge and self-advancement.

28.09.2012

There are some people, who always condemn themselves and their lives, and aspire for the grace of God to save them. They think that jeeva (individual) and Deva (Almighty) are two separate entities and can never merge or unite. This is untrue. Sin is not the real nature of human beings. They are repositories of peace, joy, truth and justice and are pure, good, loving and wise. Endeavour to express through your actions, the purity that you are. This pleases the Lord and He will shower His grace. Pray for even those who express greed or hate, sympathize with their ignorance and pray that their steps may be directed towards justice and love. Expand your love to as wide a circle as possible. Prayer has great efficacy. Cultivate the universal vision and pray for the peace and happiness of all mankind, of all animate and inanimate things.

25.09.2012

The body is the temple of God, He is the resident of the heart, and intelligence (Buddhi) is the lamp that is lit in its altar. Protect the lamp and its glow from the wind that blows through the windows of the senses and threatens to put them out. Close the windows, do not keep them open for dire attraction from objects. Keep your intellect sharp, so that it may cut the mind into a diamond and convert it into a blaze of light, instead of being a dull pebble. Discrimination is an important instrument of spiritual progress. Attachment, affection, and interests - these create prejudice, partiality, and illusion. They hide the truth and dull the intelligence. The reasoning faculty must be employed to distinguish between the limited and the unlimited, the temporary and the Eternal.

26.09.2012

When a few tiny stones get mixed in rice and get between the teeth, one laments in disgust that the plate of rice is but a plate of stones. It is human nature to exaggerate in order to create an impression. Often, people treat joy as incidental and insignificant and dwell more on grief and pain. Do not give in during times of trouble. The root-cause for losses, troubles, poverty and difficulties is the loss of self-confidence and enthusiasm. The secret of strength and courage lies within you. Good people and well-wishers imbued with spontaneity, sacrifice and a spirit of detachment are very much present amongst us. Have faith and do not despair or lose faith in yourself or God. With sincere faith, act, speak and think in a manner that God is pleased and surrender yourself to Him completely. Be pure, be simple, be sincere and He will answer your agonising call.

3.09.2012

Every individual soul is destined to lose its separate name and form and merge in the Formless and Nameless. Some believe that since the particular, individual soul is caught up in birth and death, it can never attain the merger with the eternal. No! Using the opportunity of this birth, you must strive to break the bonds and cleanse yourself from sin. Attaining merger with Divinity is the only goal worth striving for. The scriptures have laid down the steps to attain peace, contentment and joy. Get acquainted with them through the learned people and experience these virtues. Never forget this – the first and most important step in the spiritual path is to remove the weeds in the garden of your heart, by plucking away the bushes of lust and greed, hate and pride. Clear the ground thus, and plant the fragrant flowering plants of love, and the sweet fruits of virtue will soon emerge.

4.09.2012

How can you serve the Lord in others, when the senses drag you away from that service? How can you serve when passions peep in, to tarnish the love that inspires that service? Letting one's senses have their way, by directing them on the objective world of tastes, smells, shapes, melodies and softnesses is to fall into a bottomless pit. The Lord of the World is engaged in spreading ananda (bliss) in this world; you too should be engaged in this noble task of spreading ananda around. The control and the sublimation of the senses is the most important and essential thing for this.

5.09.2012

Teachers should try to impart the finest education at minimum cost and make children lead pure and noble lives. Without

being bound by considerations of hours of work, teachers must when necessary, be prepared to put in extra hours to remove the doubts of students and help them to complete their assignments. Teachers, this is your duty. Holding fast to Truth, you must make Righteousness, Peace, Love and Nonviolence, the guideposts for your life, at all times. You should not limit yourself to imparting the five human values alone. You must also create the environment which will be conducive to the practice of these basic values. When you have dedication and devotion, you will be able to face all the challenges in the discharge of your duties. If teachers play their role properly, they have the power to transform the entire nation.

6.09.2012

Earning wealth is one of the legitimate objectives of human endeavour, without a doubt. It is one of the four objectives (purusharthaas) of every human life, the four being - righteousness, earning wealth, desire and liberation. The order they are mentioned in, has a purpose too. Righteousness has to direct and control the process of earning wealth and liberation has to be the regulating factor for one's desires. All wealth accruing through unrighteous means is to be treated with contempt as unworthy. All desires that do not subserve the one supreme need for liberation are to be given up as beneath one's dignity. So the spiritual basis of righteousness and liberation must be the root of both the pursuit of wealth and fulfilment of other desires.

7.09.2012

You are on a journey through the stream of life from one act to another – it is one continuous activity, marked by karma

23.09.2012

This is an ancient observation true even today – that most people spend their childhood in pranks and play, their youth in sports, pleasure and pastime, middle age in plans and schemes to pile up a fortune, and old age in hospitals trying to bolster failing health through failing wealth. Earning and spending, one fills their time with work and worry. People are busy with a number of attempts to earn happiness, but success is little and short-lived. The only panacea for all ills, the effort that will result in total victory is the control of the mind, which is the master of the senses. Every sense organ is an outlet for energy that binds one to the objective world. The senses are induced by the mind to move out and attach themselves to objects. You must make the mind submit to viveka (wisdom), which discriminates between right and wrong. Then the mind, instead of harming, will help you.

24.09.2012

Those who plan to raise the standard of living today are watering the branches, the leaves and the blossoms of the tree of life. Instead, to nurture the tree, you must foster and water the root. So too, to lead a good life, you must foster and water the virtues, which are the roots, so that the flowers of actions, words and thoughts may bloom in fragrance and yield the fruit of service (seva), and the sweet juice of joy (ananda). Planning for food, clothing and shelter is only promoting the well-being of the cart. Also plan for the horse, which is the mind. The mind has to use the food, the clothing, the shelter and other objects in the Universe for the high purpose of escaping from the bonds of the ego to the Universal.

21.09.2012

To protect valuables, jewels, legal documents and precious metals like silver and gold from thieves, you go to the banks and deposit them in the safe vaults or lockers. Thus, you dismiss the anxiety in your minds, are freed from worry and are able to sleep in peace at your homes. So too, you must surrender to the Lord, your jewels of intelligence, brilliance and capacity to serve. Most importantly, you attach a lot of value to your ego – leave it also to His care. Then you will be very happy. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna – Maam Ekam Sharanam Vraja - Surrender to Me alone. Then, He assures, Maa suchah - You need not grieve at all.

22.09.2012

Statesmen and elected representatives declare that they are trying their best to develop the resources, natural and human, and to provide on the basis of those resources, food, clothing, shelter, education, employment, security and health to the people. But the development of the moral and spiritual resources are neglected and the provision of peace and spiritual happiness is ignored. Happiness and peace do not necessarily follow when people are fed and clothed well, comfortably housed and highly educated, well employed or when there is no injury to health or security. There are quite a large number of people who have all these in plenty but are yet worried, in pain or discontented. Peace and happiness depend on what lies within and not on outer skill or riches. Every being is fundamentally Divine and so, the more one manifests the divine attributes of Love, Justice, Truth and Peace, the more joy one shall be able to give and receive.

throughout. It would be a pity, if you do not know the right technique of performing karma (actions). Just as the fruit on a tree depends upon the seed, the soil, the manure, the tending of the gardener and the fence, the results of your actions too reflect a variety of factors, such as the tendencies and consequences of the activities in previous lives. A potter makes pots and pans from the clay in the earth and so it is called mrinmaya (material and ephemeral). But you are Chinmaya (spiritual and transcendental) for Brahma, the Divine Potter, has made you from Truth (Sath), Consciousness (Chith) and Bliss (Ananda). Understand this difference and shape your actions. Act in accordance with what you profess to be; that is the real Dharma (righteousness).

8.09.2012

You have accumulated wealth with great care, by thousands of acts of self denial, by giving up comforts and convenience, saving in this item and that, spending less and earning more. Banks are happy to take deposits from you, maintain it safely and allow you to make use of it when needed. You believe your money will help you when you are in trouble in this world. But then, when your money grows and becomes attractive, your kith and kin, near and dear, start fighting for it causing you anxiety and fear. Taxes also take away a large share – thieves and crooks wait for an opportunity to take some part of it. Don’t forget that a day will come when you have to leave all this pile and go empty handed. Your savings will not travel with you, nor be considered where you go. Hence it is now time to grow your spiritual efforts – that alone will give you peace and joy here and thereafter.

9.09.2012

Never forget that you are Divine, that you are righteousness personified. Your duty (dharma) is to cultivate your faculties for the great adventure of realizing your oneness with the Divine. To accomplish that, your mind and intelligence must be fixed on your chosen Lord. You must meditate on Him in solitude and silence. Cultivate concentration. If your attention is distracted, no progress can be made. However, if you practice meditation in silence and solitude, you will be able to establish and retain that silence even in the busiest thoroughfares. Talk less, deliberately think more and practise discrimination. Then you can empty the mind of impulses, prejudices and preferences. In this manner you must strive to realize your true nature.

10.09.2012

Open your account with the Divine Bank which receives deposits and maintains your accounts in strict confidence. Every little transaction - a good deed, noble thought, or a kind word is accurately credited and accounted for. The bank also keeps a record of your debits – indifferent, bad or unkind thought, word or deed. Also this Divine Banker, truly cares for your feelings and consciously whispers warnings from the heart when you overdraw your limits, when truth and right conduct are infringed. It also warns you without fail when your desires enslave you or when your wealth is unchecked. No one can sue you for the deposits you make in this Bank. No tax-man can take away your earnings, nor can any crook lay his hands on your property in this Bank. Come, open your deposits with the Divine Banker and grow in prosperity, here and hereafter.

Lord Vinayaka's blessings for the successful completion of the task. When you pray to Him and seek His blessings, all your efforts will meet with success. Lord Vinayaka's elephant-head denotes that He can be compared to an elephant in intelligence, which always thinks twice before setting its foot forward. Lord Vinayaka is full of wisdom. The name Ganapati denotes that He is full of vijnana (higher wisdom), sujnana (discriminatory wisdom), and prajnana (constant integrated awareness). People today forget the underlying meaning in the name Ganapati and engage themselves in mere rituals. You may not perform any rituals, but never give up worshipping Lord Vinayaka.

20.09.2012

It is always preferable to approach God for the fulfilment of your wants, rather than cringe before others, who themselves are but tools in the hands of God. In his own silent way, God will transform the mind and turn it towards spiritual practices and successful spiritual pilgrimage. He cannot allow his children to lose their way and suffer in the jungle. When you approach God and seek his help and guidance, you have taken the first step to save yourself. You are then led to accept His will as your own. Thus, you achieve peace. God draws you to Him to re-form and re-shape you. God is a kind of smith, who repairs broken, leaky, and damaged 'human-ware'. He is adept at fixing broken hearts, fragile minds, warped intellects, feeble resolutions and fading faith. Come to Him with hands that salute in prayer, hands that are eager to serve. Then, He fills them with loads of Grace.

17.09.2012

When a man is suffering from the effects of cobra-bite, they give him chillies to chew; the idea is that the ailing person will not feel the spicy taste, if the poison is still in his system. So too, when the poison of worldly sensualism is there, worship, japam (contemplation), and dhyanam (meditation) - all of this will taste drab and dismal. Above all, insist on the senses obeying you when you command them to desist from dragging you. Or else you are like a car without a brake. With the senses under control, your intelligence will become clear to reflect the Glory of God that pervades the Universe. That is the teaching of the scriptures. Steady faith alone can help you earn victory. Hold on till the realization is rewarded to you.

18.09.2012

The word Dhanam (wealth) means any valued possession, an object of affection. It does not merely mean riches and precious metals. The most valued possession of human beings is Self-Knowledge. Arjuna earned this, and hence was called 'Dhananjaya'. Anyone can earn riches or money – even crooks, dacoits and pirates amass money. True wealth, worthy of deposits in the Divine Bank, is earned only by those who struggle to be virtuous, detached, humble and holy. Do not underestimate the value of this deposit. Your meritorious noble deeds, your purity, the selfless love that you manifest with your fellow beings – bring to God these precious commodities and He will readily accept them as deposits to your credit.

19.09.2012

Lord Vinayaka is the leader of all, He has no leaders or master. Whenever a new task is undertaken, it is customary to invoke

11.09.2012

True nature of a human being is divine. This innate nature is to be found in children; at that stage one is untouched by the pulls and stresses of the senses. So the child revels in its own reality - in joy, peace and love. As you grow make that stage steady, so that you may lead a dharmic (righteous) life. That is your duty. To discover your reality and to dwell in Divine Peace, you need not give up the world and take to asceticism. Detachment is the crucial boon you must win for yourself. You can cultivate it as easily at home as you can in the jungle! In addition, when you fix your mind on truth, you become dearer to God.

12.09.2012

While you should develop the habit of saving money in a bank for the sake of old age and rainy days, you must also start the habit of making deposits in the Spiritual Bank, so that you can truly be 'saved'. The currency and metals accepted in the Divine Bank are Truth, Love and Right Conduct. All words, feelings, actions, thoughts ringing with purity of these metals will be gladly accepted as deposits. So, as you take care of your savings deposit in the many worldly banks, you must make it a point to have an account and grow it in the Bank of the Divine too. When you are hard-pressed for money, you approach your bank seeking loans. The bank will help you, but only in proportion to your deposits. Similarly your Divine Banker will save you from distress and grief very quickly, if you have deposited with Him the wealth of Truth, Love, Right Conduct and Peace.

13.09.2012

The Bhagavad Gita recommends that you bring any of these – leaf, flower, fruit or water (pathram, pushpam, phalam and thoyam) when you come to the Lord; that when going to the presence of elders and saints, one should not go empty handed. But the Lord does not want any of these. When you demand a thing, you must be prepared to pay a price, equal to its value. If you are seeking the Divine, offer something divine. Love, Peace, Righteousness and Truth are Divine. Bring Me these or any one of these and I shall most gladly accept the gift. Do not offer the Lord mere flowers that fade, fruits that rot, leaves that dry or water that evaporates.

14.09.2012

In spite of warnings, admonitions, advice and appeals that one should not submerge themselves in the trivial and the transitory, people are still drawn towards misery by defects in their understanding. Hatred, greed, factions and fights are prevalent because God is discarded as superfluous or as superstition. The scriptures are the records of the thoughts and experiences of pure and unprejudiced love-filled seekers of truth. You will do well, if you trust them. They clearly explain the following tenets: Love alone prevails, Detachment is your true wealth, Unity alone is the truth and God alone should be your goal in life. Just as when light from the oil-based lamp gets dull, its wick is adjusted or fuel is added, it is about time the nobler and higher impulses of all human beings are invigorated. That alone will save you from calamity. You must desire for your liberation from the bonds you have woven around yourself.

15.09.2012

When you are in need of money, you can borrow capital from banks, that is, if you mortgage land, jewels or property you have earned or inherited from parents or ancestors. The Divine Banker also lets you to draw upon the deposits made through noble acts from previous births. That is why, at times, you find some people, who are wicked and cruel, mean and miserly, appear to lead happy lives, free from pain and grief. These are drawn upon from deposits made in the past and they are entitled to that happiness. Overdrafts or loans help you tide over temporary crisis and will be available only in proportion to the value of mortgages or deposits. In the Divine Bank, you can be fully protected from distress and grief when you earn the Grace of God (Anugraha). Engage in noble deeds, good thoughts, good feelings, and good company and be in constant contemplation of the Divine, God's Grace will be showered on you.

16.09.2012

Be firm to not discard the one Name and Form you have selected carefully; even if someone speaks ill about them. Hold fast to your chosen deity and save yourselves. At the same time, do not cavil at others' chosen deities. Undermining the faith of another or disturbing your own - both are wrong. Faith is a plant of slow growth. Its roots go deep into the heart. Silence is the best spiritual practice to guard faith. Hence I insist that you adopt this as the first and most important step in your spiritual journey. The Lord's feet, eyes and face is compared to the Lotus, because He is like the Lotus - unaffected by the environment it is in. You too, must be smiling at all times, imparting joy to all around you and making their burden lighter.