the debt, or at least be keen to avoid causing harm to the person who helped them while in distress. Today however, with pomp and pride, people reveal that they are ignorant, filled with egoism and conceit. Running after momentary joy, they exile themselves from the Kingdom of God. The value of human birth is to attain divinity. Contemplate on this unique good luck of a human birth you are gifted with. Dedicate your days to thoughts of God, and to ideas that elevate and inspire. Welcome opportunities to express gratitude, broaden your heart and deepen your faith.

31.05.2012

All the variety in taste, colour, smell of the multiform food items, when considered fairly and squarely, are mere drugs to cure the illness of hunger; all the drinks that man has invented are but medications to alleviate the disease of thirst. Most people today suffer from an ailment of the senses and they try the quack remedies of recreation, pleasures, picnics, banquets, dances only to find that their fever has not subsided. This illness will subside only when the invisible virus is rendered ineffective and that will happen only when the rays of jnaana (wisdom) fall upon it. A true doctor interested in curing you of all illness, will advise what is hitha (beneficial) for you to restore your health, instead of that which is priya (pleasant); your Guru is such a doctor. Obey Him, even when His prescription is unpalatable, for your fever can be cured only by Him. Prefer the beneficial to the pleasant, for the pleasant might lead you down the sliding path into the bottomless pit.

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Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(May 2012)

1.05.2012
Speech is the armament of every human being. Animals have fleetness of foot, sharpness of claw, fang, horn, tusk, beak, talon, etc. But human beings are gifted with speech as a faculty, as their armament. The very first lesson in the primer, for a spiritual aspirant is "Control of Speech." Through the sweetness of your speech, you can disarm all opposition and defeat all the designs of hatred. Sweetness makes you Pashupathi (Divine). Harshness makes you pashu (Bestial). Mere outward politeness or sweetness is hypocrisy. Sincere speech must flow from the real sweetness of heart, a heart filled with love. Remove all evil from the pellucid lake of your mind and make it a fit abode for the Divine.

2.05.2012
Many kites may fly high in the sky, but they are all lifted and kept high by the same air, the same wind; the kites have no separate will of their own. Pots of water in which the Sun is reflected may be many, but the Sun is one! The very same current runs through and activates all appliances. This is the meaning of the scriptures quote "Ïsaavaasyam idam sarvam" - God is present in everyone in equal measure, nothing more nothing less! Service is best built on this strong foundation of "Thath-Thwam-asi" - That and This are the same; there is only One, there is no other! All help that you give, is help given to yourself; all service is to the Self alone. When another is poor, you cannot be rich. When another is in distress, you cannot have joy. Always remember that help and service that is rendered to the deserving, is done to the Self alone.

being to whom He denies blessings. Grace manifests itself by quenching the flames within your heart and confers bliss which desire, anger and miserliness can never confer. God is immanent and eternal. Follow the path and obey the ideals laid down by the Lord with relentless discipline. Your mind will be purified and divine grace will be reflected therein.

29.05.2012
Life is not a mathematical formula, where 2 plus 2 always equals 4. To some, it may be 3, and to others, 5. It depends on how each values the number '2'. In the spiritual path, each one has to move forward from where they already are, with the light of the lamp which every one holds in their own hands. Strive to diagnose your own character and discover the faults that are infesting it; do not try to analyse the qualities of others and seek to spot their defects. This self-examination is very necessary to bring to light the deficiencies that will undermine your spiritual career. Demons are typically too conceited to bend before the Lord; they put too much trust in arms and numbers, ignoring the subtler and stronger forces of the spirit, which can annihilate the vices within oneself. Never try to hide your faults; be ashamed of them and endeavour to cleanse them fast.

30.05.2012
I must condemn the absence of gratitude which is rampant amongst people today. People today are humble and obedient until their wishes are fulfilled. Once their desires are satisfied, they sometimes even try to ruin the person who helped to realize it. This behaviour does not befit human beings. One must be conscious of benefits derived and be eager to repay

divine. The number of stages in this journey is as many as the number of hearts in this universe! Each pilgrim moves at their own speed and with the Name and Form that inspires them.

27.05.2012

Each one gets the result that their spiritual practice (sadhana) deserves, that their acts in this and previous births grant them. In the epic Ramayana, the demon king Ravana had scholarship, strength, wealth, power, authority and even the grace of God - but the virus of lust and pride which lodged in his mind brought about his destruction, despite all attainments. He could not dwell in peace and joy for a moment after the infection started to work. Life is a constant campaign against many foes, it is a battle with obstacles, temptations, hardships and hesitations. These enemies are present within every being and so the battle is incessant and perpetual. Each one differs from another, in this struggle against the inner attackers. Like the virus that thrives on the bloodstream, the vices of lust, greed, hate, malice, pride and envy sap the energy and faith of human beings and reduce them to untimely fall. Hence, always remember this - Virtue is strength, vice is weakness.

28.05.2012

The Law of Karma is not an irreversible iron law. Dedication to the divine and purification of thoughts, words and deeds invite divine benediction. The effects of karma can be modified and its rigour, mitigated through grace. When vices hold sway over your heart, it becomes foul and sooty. The flames of desire, anger and miserliness (kaama, krodha and lobha) leave char within your heart. Do not despair or lose heart if vices trouble you. There is no place where God is not present. There is no

3.05.2012

Cultivate an atmosphere of love and co-operation with one and all, and you can ensure joy for ever more. Do not seek arguments to keep away from others; seek rather ways of working together for the common good. The sense of 'I' and 'mine' scotch love and co-operation. Reduce them to the minimum and then start serving the needy and the distressed. Develop character as well as intelligence and health. The most reliable source of strength is not in money, or kinsmen, or physical acumen, but in yourself, the Atman. Delve deep and draw sustenance from it; see it in all; serve it in all. Discipline is another key trait. Every individual and every nation must learn to control the wild nature of passions and emotions; yielding to them brings only ruin. Discipline, self-control, desire to serve - these are the weapons that even the weakest can use, and win the battle of life.

4.05.2012

Do not aspire to be a servant of God, working for wages; you reduce yourself to that level if you ask for this and that from Him in return for the praise that you offer or the sacrifice you do! Also, let go of the bargaining attitude in your mind, and do not feel disappointed that God did not give you desirable objects in return for all the troubles you took to please Him. Do not calculate profit, do not count on returns, do not plan for the consequences! Do, since it is your duty and you have to do! That is true puja (worship). Dedicate the deed as well as the consequences to Him. Then you become His own and not a labourer demanding wages. That is the highest level a devotee (bhaktha) can attain through sadhana (spiritual effort).

5.05.2012
The heart contains the precious treasure of bliss (Ananda) but people do not know the key to open the lock! The key to open the door to bliss is Namasmarana - repetition of the Name of the Lord with a pure heart. Purify the heart with the instruments of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Love (Sathya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema). Always endeavour to do good to others, to think well and speak well of them. This practice will wear away your egoism, and attachment to things that cater to your pleasures. Do not behave like birds and beasts, ever engaged in earning a living or rearing a family. Struggle for higher and nobler goals using the talents with which you are endowed!

6.05.2012
The scriptures teach, "Maathru devo bhava", meaning 'Revere your Mother as God'. You must revere your mother, who has brought you up with love, care and sacrifice. However famous one may be, if one does not honour their mother, they do not deserve respect. A person whose heart is so hard that it does not melt at the pleadings of the mother, deserves nothing but ridicule. This feeling of love and respect should also apply to the country which gave birth to you. You must hold your country in high esteem and follow its culture. Revere your own mother-tongue and learn to use it well. At the same time, you should not develop dislike or hatred against other languages or countries. Make yourselves a fit instrument to protect, love and care for your mother and motherland.

7.05.2012
Some consider themselves great because they have vast property or wealth. But the real wealth and genuine

different; but the basis, the inspiration, the latent potency, or the base is the same. Like electricity, God too operates through all instruments, and awards the consequences of all the activities done by everyone; He is the inner motivator of all beings.

25.05.2012
Everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses, foibles and fears, skills and handicaps, so no one prescription can be suggested for all. It is necessary for every individual to do a rigorous self-examination to remove all evil from oneself. A patient has to take the prescribed drugs and follow the instructions that are beneficial to cure the ailment. The patient cannot ask for sweet medicines and comfort. So too people are normally attached to physical comfort and objective pleasure and try to hide their defects, instead of trying to remove them. People buy dark coloured clothes, so that they may not reveal its dirt; they do not prefer white clothes, for they show plainly their soiled condition. But, do not try to hide your dirt in darkness; be repentful of soiled natures and endeavour to cleanse them fast.

26.05.2012
The difference between human and demon (Maanava and Daanava) is just this – human beings should have morality, self-control and compassion (Dharma, Dhama and Daya). Demons do not have these, nor do they consider them as desirable characteristics; they ignore them and pay no heed to the prompting of these virtues. On the contrary, these three are in fact the essential qualities of every man. Every being in the universe is a pilgrim on the path from demon to human to

be obtained and it should be used for Righteous purposes. Desire must be directed to Liberation from bondage – not to forging of new chains or adding further links in the chain of birth and death. Devoid of Righteousness and Desire for Liberation, human beings will be reduced to the level of beasts and birds.

23.05.2012

When you try to cook a meal, you may have with you all the materials you need – rice, dal (lentils), salt, lime, spices, vegetables, etc. But unless you have fire to cook these, the dish cannot be prepared. So too, all forms of worship, contemplation, yoga or meditation are ineffective if the knowledge of one's basic Reality and Identity is not there to warm up the process. The Atma is the source and spring of all joy and peace; this has to be cognised and dwelt upon. Without this realisation, human life is an opportunity that is lost. Awareness of one's true identity is the sign of wisdom, the lighting of the lamp which scatters darkness.

24.05.2012

When you want breeze, you start the fan; when you want light, you switch on the lamp; when you want to cook, you light the stove; when you want to address a vast audience, you arrange a mike and loudspeakers and switch them on. If it is printing you require, you operate the printer with a knob. Consider these as separate operations and you will notice that they are unrelated to one another. Light and air, heat and sound, are unconnected; they are distinct in every way, it would seem. But for all these, the Kartha, the energizer, is the same - the electric current. The expressions and manifestations may be

greatness is virtue which earns the grace of God. In the epic Mahabharatha, the Kauravas had everything that the world honoured and envied - arms, ambition, friends, allies, forces and riches. But God was not on their side, for they were wicked. In the end, they reaped disaster and disgrace. From this, you can infer that all the things that the world prides on having, are momentary pleasures. They appear to give happiness when they come, but leave us with grief when they disappear and the joy is temporary. However the grace of God persists without change at all times and all places. It is pure, uncontaminated, unchanging, complete and mighty. Endeavour to earn this grace and the joy that flows from it.

8.05.2012

I must warn you against two infectious diseases that are rampant today. They are selfishness and the habit of reviling others. Investigate and examine, then you have the right to pronounce judgement. When you truly do this you will realize that the Self is better served, by serving others than criticising them. You will soon come to the conclusion that there are far more useful ways of spending the little time you have here in this life than ridiculing or praising others. Do not concern yourself with the faults and excellences of others. Instead care earnestly and sincerely about your own faults. Foster more carefully and sincerely, your own best qualities. This is my advice to you today.

9.05.2012

When you hold a currency note in your hand and say proudly, "This is mine", that note laughs at you, for it says, "Oh, how many thousands have I known, who have taken pride like this!" Consider all objects that you collect here, in this life, as

given on “trust” to be used in this caravanserai, during your pilgrimage in the field of action (Karmakshetra). You have to return them when you leave – they belong to another. The body is but a tent in the journey of life. Don’t fondle the delusion - ‘my body’. Pine for the Indweller, Dehi. Discover the immortal “I” and know that it is the spark of God, present in you. Live in the companionship of the Supreme.

10.05.2012

Love for the Lord should not degenerate into fanaticism and hatred of other names and forms. In the current times, this type of cancer is affecting many eminent people; you must do well to avoid it. Believe that all who revere the Lord and walk in fear of sin are your brothers and sisters, your nearest kith and kin. Their dress or language or skin colour or the methods they adopt to express their reverence and fear to the Divine are not at all important. Sugar dolls are valued for the sugar, not for the shapes given by the manufacturer, be it elephant, dog, lion, cat, rat, jackal or whatever. People buy the sugar doll for its sweetness, not the shape. So too, people are drawn to the same God, as He is sweet and grants bliss.

11.05.2012

People prefer to burn the sandalwood tree for sale as charcoal, as they do not know the value of sandalwood. The goals people set before themselves, are to win comforts and peace. That surely is the proper thing to do, but they stop after this step in the journey, mistaking the pseudo for real. One believes that if they get two full meals a day, a few yards of cloth to wear and a roof over their head with a few sundry superfluities, they have reached the goal in life! They may have certainly reached

lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride and hatred. They can emerge any time. What do you have in store to put them out? Always keep a ready stock of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence in plenty. These five will help you scotch the flames of your six enemies, whenever they are lit; these values are very effective extinguishers.

21.05.2012

The body is subject to destruction, sooner or later. Everyone is aware of this. Yet everyone is apprehensive of death; no one is eager to face the last moment. All that is born has to die someday - death is inevitable and unavoidable! To unlock the key to this paradoxical experience, ask thus: What is it that meets with death? What is it that leaves and what is it that remains? The answer: it is the body that dies and falls. What does not perish is the Atma. You delude yourselves into thinking that it is the Atma or “you” that dies; that is incorrect. The Atma (Self) has nothing to do with death or birth. It is eternal, true and pure. Realize and remember that you are the eternal, true and pure Atma - you are not the body.

22.05.2012

Life is raised on four pillars – Righteousness, Wealth, Desire and Liberation (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha). When two key pillars, Righteousness and Liberation, are lost, it is a struggle to survive with the remaining two - Desire and Wealth. Then, naturally grief, greed, pretence and anxiety afflict human beings. Each pillar must cooperate and complement the other three pillars. Righteousness must interpenetrate and strengthen Wealth and Desire, so that Liberation can be attained. Through Righteousness alone, wealth for living must

18.05.2012
Each person eats to satisfy one's hunger. So too, each one of you must discover the best way to appease your spiritual hunger as well. Do not be led away by the scorn or recommendations of others. Consult your own reality that you create by quietening your senses and controlling your mind; there is a voice that you can hear in that silence. The true sign of your having listened to that voice is your behaviour! A large tree is held and fed by its small roots that dive into the silent earth. So too, if you go deep into the silence of your inner consciousness, your spiritual blossoming is assured.

19.05.2012
The recognition of one's innate Divinity, and the regulation of one's daily life in accordance with that Truth are the guiding stars for those who are caught in the currents of strife and struggle. Without that Self-Knowledge life becomes a farce, a mockery! Acquiring this awareness of the Self makes life earnest, sweet and fruitful. Many people are not aware of this noble goal in the pilgrimage of life. They put their faith in things outside themselves and plan to derive joy from and through them, and end up experiencing pain and disaster. Know that all joys spring e only from the heart within you. When you experience joy from worldly objects or people, realize that it is your own joy being reflected back to you.

20.05.2012
When fire rages and gets destructive, you immediately try to put it out by throwing sand and water, is it not? In most buildings, people keep a stock of these in readiness. Are you aware that you have six flames burning inside you? They are

a milestone, but the joy one derives from that milestone is paltry. This joy is mixed with grief and it easily turns into pain; it is harmful to others and has in it, some pride, envy, malice, greed and other harmful ingredients. Do not neglect the grand opportunity and take this life to be just human. Dedicate this life to discover the immortal Self present within you.

12.05.2012
The great child devotee, Prahlada, knew the truth that this entire world is filled with God. So when the Lord appeared before him and was eager to grant him a boon, he asked not for long life, wealth or fame but to assuage the pain and sorrow of all beings. Prahlada knew that God was manifest as every being in this Universe and serving God was to serve those manifestations and give them relief and joy. So too your tongue must justify its presence by sweet soothing words, and your hand by soft and harmless acts. The body must be spent in upa-vaasa, meaning doing acts that take you nearer to God. True Upavasa on holy days means not mere fasting, it connotes that all your thoughts, deeds and words on that day, must be about God, you should spend the day 'near' Him, ín Him, and for Him.

13.05.2012
As the carpenter shapes the wood, the blacksmith moulds the iron and the goldsmith creates beautiful ornaments out of gold, the Lord too shapes every being in His own way. Know that the Lord is the basis for the existence of every being in this Universe. With this knowledge lose all fear. Exercise discrimination at all times and use the spiritual wisdom you possess, to your advantage. The tiny sparrow sits on the storm

tossed bough, because it knows that its wings are strong. It does not depend upon the swaying branch to sustain it. Similarly fully rely on the grace of God, earn it and keep it. Then whatever be the magnitude of the calamity you face, you can survive it without any harm.

14.05.2012

Remember always that it is easy to do what is pleasant but 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 the sword-thrusts of the path fraught with danger. As a matter of fact, no road is a bed of roses. Life is a battlefield - a Dharmakshetra, where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, hatred and anger, that rise up in your hearts. It is sheer cowardice to yield to them as they turn you into beasts.

15.05.2012

An empty iron box gets value when it contains jewels. So too the body will be honoured when it contains the jewel of Divine consciousness and the gems called virtues. Life has to be lived through for the opportunities it provides to unfold human values. Otherwise one becomes a burden upon earth, a mere consumer of food. Life is a steady march towards the goal; it is not a meaningless term of imprisonment or a casual picnic. Even if you have no steady faith in God or in any particular Name or Form of that Immanent Power, start by controlling the vagaries of the mind, the pulls of the ego, and the attractions of sense-attachments. Be helpful to others; then your conscience itself will appreciate you and keep you happy and content, though others may not thank you.

16.05.2012

Do not be upset by calamities, instead take them as acts of Grace. If someone loses a hand in an accident, that person must believe that it was the Lord's Grace that saved his or her life. When you believe that nothing can happen without His resolve, you will realize that everything that occurs in your life, has a value added to it. You may be neglecting a creeper in your backyard, but if a sage passes by and says that it is a rare drug that can cure one from snake bite, you will erect a fence around it and not allow children to pluck its leaves even for fun, is it not? Understand thoroughly that the Lord is the cause, the source of all. And with this knowledge, deal with everyone in a humble and reverent manner. This is the path that will lead you quickly to the goal.

17.05.2012

Service, in all its forms, wherever undertaken, is essentially spiritual discipline; a form of mental clean-up. If one does not consider service thus, the urge to serve is bound to ebb and grow dry, or it may meander into pride and pomp. Just think for a moment - are you serving God or is God serving you? When you offer milk to a hungry child, or a blanket to a shivering brother on the pavement, you are but placing a gift of God, into the hands of another gift of God! You are reposing the gift of God in a repository of the Divine Principle! Always remember - God serves! And He allows you to claim that you have served! Without His will, not even a single blade of grass can quiver in the breeze. Fill every moment with gratitude to the Giver and the Recipient of all gifts!