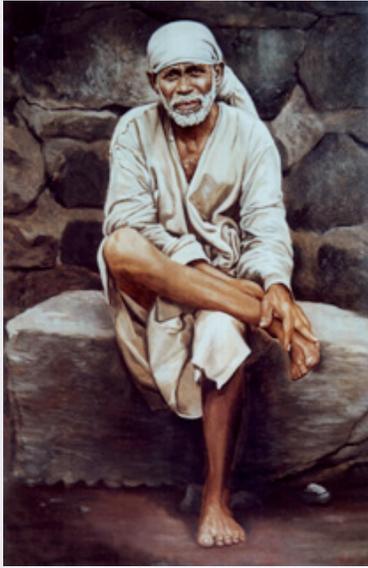




The Old Man's Darshan

as told
by our Guruji



**During the satsang of
December 7th 2005
our beloved Guruji
told us once again
one of his favourite parables.**

There was an old man who had some yearning in his heart to get the sakshatkar, the divine vision, of Lord Vishnu. So, as explained in the sastras, he went to a forest, sat under a tree and started doing tapas - controlling his senses, focussing, concentrating, and contemplating "Who am I?", doing yoga, raja yoga, hatha yoga, all these yogas.

But he was very sincere and was practising all that he had heard and read.

One day the divine minstrel, the Angel Gabriel of the Hindu mythology, Narada, happened to see this fellow. And somehow he liked him intuitively so he went to the old man and asked him, "Who are you? Where have you come from? What is your name? What are you doing?"

The old man was very happy to have the darshan of such a great sage like Narada. Narada asked him if he had any wishes.

“No, I don’t have any wishes,” said the old man, “I only have one question, O great sage, the next time you go to visit Vishnu in his abode Vaikunta, just ask him when he is going to give me darshan.”

Narada replied, "Oh, it is a simple question, I'll take care of it, don't worry about it." And he went away.

Some years passed and he clean forgot about it. And then one day, when he happened to visit Vaikunta, while chatting with Vishnu he suddenly remembered the old man, and he asked, "Oh, my Lord, I forgot to ask you something. A long time ago I met a poor sadhu who was doing very intense tapas, a sincere and honest man, I liked him very much. He had a wish - when are you going to give him darshan?"

And Lord Vishnu said, "I am sorry, Narada, I think it will take a long time. So long that he has to take many births, as many births as the leaves of the tree under which he is sitting. That means some millions of births until I give him darshan."

"Oh, I am so sorry. But he is... that fellow is a very nice chap, he is a nice man."

"What can I do? That is his prarabdha, his destiny. I can't help it," Vishnu said.

And after some time Narada happened to be on the same path as before and saw the old man. But he didn't want to give him the sad tidings and so he was just passing by, ignoring him when the old man saw Narada and immediately ran up to him and said, "Oh great sage, why are you so angry with me? What wrong have I done? Last time, without my even asking you, you came to me and gave me your darshan. And today you are just going away, ignoring me."

“Oh, nothing, nothing, I am just busy, I am not angry with you. How are you? Is everything going well?”

“Everything is going well, but what about my question to Vishnu?”

Then Narada said, “Don’t worry, don’t worry about it. You are doing well. Go ahead. Lord Vishnu will definitely grace you. Vishnu’s grace is always fully on you. Go ahead, you are doing well.”

“No, no. I want the answer to my question.” said the old man

He replied, “Don’t worry about the answer. Just keep going” He didn’t want to discourage that fellow. But the man insisted and insisted, so at last Narada had no choice.

“What can I say, you poor fellow? Lord Vishnu said that you won’t get his darshan till you take as many births as the leaves of the tree under which you are sitting.”

Narada thought, ‘Oh, my god, this man will die with a heart attack, after listening to such sad news.’

But surprisingly the man started dancing with joy and ecstasy. "Oh, my god, the Lord promised that he will give me darshan! He'll give me darshan!" He went on dancing and dancing. At that very moment Lord Vishnu appeared and gave him darshan.

And then it was the turn of Narada. Actually he sincerely wished Vishnu would give the old man darshan, but having told him the truth, he felt a fool!

After some time when he had gone away, Narada started finding fault with the Lord, "What is that? What have you done? You have made a fool of me in front of him! You told me that you wouldn't give him darshan and when I told him that you immediately appeared and gave him darshan. What will he think of me!?"

Vishnu said,

“What can I do, Narada? According to his prarabdha, his karma, he had to undergo many births in order to get darshan from me. However, when you told him that I was going to give him darshan, even after so many births, the very hope that he would eventually receive darshan gave him so much happiness and ecstasy, that in that state of ecstasy, all the karma of all these years which he had to undergo was burned.

And now he was ready. That is why I gave him darshan immediately. It is not in my hands. What can I do? Actually, I didn't mean to fool you, it just happened like that. What can I do? I am helpless."

After telling us the story Guruji commented:

This could be received in two ways:

'Oh, my god! I have to take so many births. Can't he burn all this karma? Isn't he capable of doing it? People say that in God's grace there is always love - what love is it?'

or, 'Yes! He is going to give me darshan.'

He's so happy he becomes ecstatic about it and has a positive attitude. Happiness, ecstatic happiness, is the key to darshan.

And that is why, if anybody puts the question to me, "How long is the process? Oh, it takes so many births" there is no answer to it. It could be this minute, or it may take forever. "How long?" is a meaningless question.

How much longing you have, how much long-ing you have. So how long means how long. That is the answer. As long as you have the long-ing, the long-est longing.