

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

Guruji Shri C. B. Satpathy Message on the occasion of

GURU PURNIMA

July 2007

Devotees are often heard to be saying that Shri Sainath Maharaj or Baba is either angry with them or is not taking care of them as before for reasons which they fail to understand. Such an attitude indicates a highly personalized approach. It is a unique feature of the Sai faith that the devotees get highly emotionally attached to Him even though he has no more physical presence. Psychologically they depend a lot on Shri Shirdi Sai for solace, guidance and more importantly for getting a solution to their day to day mundane problems. For most of the devotees He is a part of their lives. They worship Him, they read about Him, they meditate on Him, they do Naamjaap, they talk about Him a lot without getting tired and the hold Lungers and even donate alms to beggars in his name. Some of the ardent devotees even before taking any food or drink offer it to Baba mentally. Like children they collect all sorts of photographs, trinkets and other articles related to Baba. Such activities are a pointer to the fact that they are ever in search of Baba in their mind and soul and wish to establish an intense relationship with Him.

It has been observed that a devotee when he first enters into the fold of Shri Sai Baba's divine and magnanimous personality gets attracted to him in a very short time which ordinary human reasoning can not explain. When Baba was there in Shirdi many of the devotees used to go into a spiritual trance or sort of emotional hype at the very look at Baba. Such examples find a depiction in Shri Sai Satcharitra and many other books like Khaparde's diary etc. Such was the attraction of the master that when a non believer like Balasaheb Bhate met Baba for the first time he just decided to stay back and settle down in Shirdi forever and later resigned from the government service only to serve Baba for the rest of his life.

Most of the devotees hold Baba's relation with them as their most prized possession. Baba before departing from his physical embodiment had assured his devotees that he would continue to protect them from his invisible abode. He had even said that whenever His devotees would call him earnestly he would make his presence felt in some way or the other and also render help to remove their difficulties. Incidents happening in the lives of most of the devotees after Baba had taken Samadhi show that Baba continues to keep his promise.

Thus Shri Sainath Maharaj continues to render love, assurance, protection and faith to all his devotees. At times being busy tackling their earthly problems, the devotees are not in a position to remember Baba as much as they used to do earlier. In such a situation, they feel an emotional vacuum in them. Lets just understand this sense of void in the devotee when the feeling towards the Sadguru reduces in its intensity through the example of the sun and the sunlight. The light rays continuously emanate from the sun and the sunlight falls on earth. When the sky is clouded the Sun's rays cannot be seen. Similarly, Baba's love and protection towards devotees flows continuously but some of the devotees do not experience it when their life is engulfed by worldly clouds.

Sai Nath maharaj often used to tell devotees at Shirdi in no uncertain terms that whosoever prays to him intensely and intimately would certainly receive His grace, help and experience. Once the teacher - pupil emotional rapport is established, the pupil is bound to go through a series of alternative emotional experiences. Sometimes he will feel flooded with loving emotions towards his master and sometimes he will feel a sense of emotional void. This bipolar emotional situation is not due to the change in the mood of the master as perceived by devotees because a perfect master is a perfect soul. The reason for such a feeling in the devotee lies in the devotee himself. Hence, whenever such a situation comes the devotee should not get bogged down under his own emotional pressures and feel frustrated. Instead he should pray Baba to stabilize his emotions towards Him. Every devotee should try to understand that a perfect master has a thousand things to do for benefit of innumerable number of devotees at the same time. Therefore to expect that the emotional

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impulses of each devotee would be immediately reciprocated by the master is not the correct approach. Such an unstable mental state of the devotee indicates a lack of faith in the master. If the devotee is convinced that the Sadguru is always busy in helping a large number of His devotees, at the same time, he (the devotee) should take care to see that he does not disturb the master for frivolous issues. The master is best left to carry on His magnificent and universal work. This understanding on the part of the devotee will make the master comfortable.

Shri C. B. Satpathy