

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

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

Dusherra / MahaSamadhi Message

October 2008

In chapter 47 of the “Shri Sai Satcharitra” written by Late Shri Govind Raghunath Dabholkar (Hemadpant), there is a story told by Shri Sai Nath Maharaj to one of his devotees. Baba has depicted the story as His own experience with two characters – Veerbhadrapa (a snake) and Bassappa (a frog) with whom He had relationship in their earlier lives. As the story goes, Baba once heard the painful sound of a frog, when he was moving in a village. Being moved by the painful sound he searched for the frog and found him on the river shore and saw that a snake was trying to swallow it. Baba had divine capabilities of knowing the past, present and future of all those who came in contact with him. On seeing the snake and the frog in the situation of deadly animosity, he tried to separate them by reminding them of their inimical relationship in their past life. Baba told the snake i.e. Veerbhadrapa, that he and the frog had killed each other in the past life due to a bitter rivalry. As a consequence of their evil deeds, they were born in the form of a snake and a frog and since their evil thoughts against each other had been carried forward to the present life, they were unconsciously propelled to restart the fight in this manner. He advised the snake to let go of the frog so that the seed of enmity between them brought forward from the past life is not carried forward to the next life. Listening to what Baba said, Veerbhadrapa (the snake) released the frog (Bassappa) who jumped to the river and escaped. This depiction is in the style of a beautiful parable told to children in Hindu folklores. However, an in-depth understanding would reveal that Shri Sai Nath Maharaj was propounding the basic tenets of “Karma” (Karma Theory) of Indian Spiritual Science.

The first principle is that the reactions of actions (good and evil both) of the past lives are bound to come into play in the next life (or lives). Those with whom one had good relationship in the past life will be friends in the next life and those with whom one had bad relationship in the past lives will become enemies. The second principle is that the law of nature through its unseen mechanism will bring them together and precipitate the good or bad events as ordained from the past. The third principle is that due to the play of “Maya” (Human Illusions created by nature) such human relationships will be established in the form of any social relationship e.g. friend – friend, brother – brother, husband – wife, master – servant, father – son, lover – beloved etc. Such relationship can even be extended to a human being – animals / birds relationship or animal – animal relationship. Baba was categorical in making the statement that no one develops some sort of a relationship with another person unless there has been a relationship brought forward from previous life (lives) even if one doesn’t remember the past life experiences. In our daily life we experience that many a times the so called social relationships lead to unpleasant /acrimonious events. We also experience that sometimes person(s) with whom we have no family /social relationships become our best friends. History is full of such instances of bitter animosity between fathers and sons, brothers and brothers, husbands and wives leading to a miserable state of existence and mutual destruction. Unless something is done in the current life of the individuals to end this continued state of antagonism, it will spread over few lives more.

Shri Sai Nath Maharaj therefore prescribed to the snake and the frog that they should not indulge in further actions of rivalry and that they should wipe-out the evil thoughts towards each other to burn the seed of antagonism. This is what most of the spiritual masters like Lord Buddha and Christ preached and practiced. In short, the principle is to “Forgive and Forget”. Many people try to practice this principle as advised by the masters in their life. However, problems arise and the best benefit doesn’t accrue to them due to limited or partial understanding of this concept. In a set of relationships people mostly try to adjust because of certain social /economic compunctions and forgive the actual or perceived injustice they think has been committed against them. Some people at times think that they have forgiven when actually they haven’t. The act of forgiving can never be complete without forgetting. Such acts of forgiveness can at best be termed as temporary solutions because usually in unguarded or stressful moments the old negative thoughts re-appear with double vengeance. It is

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difficult to forgive others when one thinks that he is totally correct or is less blameworthy than the other person who is totally wrong or mostly blameworthy. It is more difficult for the person whose memory is more intense and long lived to re-adjust /forgive his actual or perceived adversary.

It is easier for simple, egoless or light hearted people to wash-out the feelings of hurt and naturalise / normalise the course of life. The more the grudge one carries against someone, consciously and sub-consciously, the more miserable he becomes, cloistered in the cave of his memory. Psycho-analysis reveals that if one person intensely and continuously picturises another person as his enemy, the other person, even if he is not his enemy, will gradually develop adverse feelings towards the originator of such negative thoughts. This is the most common method of creating enemies through our sub-conscious thought process. Similarly by generating positive thoughts towards others one can create friends. "I can forgive, but I can't forget, is only another way of saying, I will not forgive. Forgiveness ought to be like a cancelled note – tore in two and burned up, so that it never can be shown against one" – Henry W. Beecher. And Mahatma Gandhi said "the weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong".

In view of what has been stated, one cannot but agree with the prescription of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba given to His devotees while narrating the story of Veerbhadrappa (a snake) and Bassappa (a frog). The only way to get mental peace and evolution in life is to control the negative thought processes generated in our mind so that one doesn't create further negative 'Karma' which one has to suffer in the same life or the next chain of lives. May Shri Sai bless us all to get out of our negative 'Samskaras' reflected in our thoughts and consequential activities. Jai Shri Sai.

Shri C. B. Satpathy