

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

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

RAMNAVAMI

April 1999

Devotees of Sri Sai often ask me a question, “why is it that even if I have surrendered to Baba, my condition financial, physical, social, official or even spiritual does not improve?” Or that “I prayed to Baba for the last one week for the cure of my son, why is he not being cured?” There are hundreds/ thousands who ask the same questions. Most people want to have the desired result to their problems within the desired time, with the desired method and to the desired extent. Some people even say that they would visit Shirdi or temple of Baba if their wishes are fulfilled.

The main problem is the conviction of people about their faith / surrender to Baba. The qualities, sacrifice and time needed for establishing closer contact with a Sadguru cannot be done in the way we do in our ordinary life with people around. In a social relationship people generally have a limited approach pre-calculating mutual benefit. Any deviation or non-fulfillments of anticipated reaction from the other side spoils/stops such a relationship easily. Today, even in a family set-up relations are in a large number of cases built on such considerations. These norms are changeable from society and from time to time. But when these norms are applied in relation to the spiritual world or in relation to a Sadguru, it becomes a nonstarter from the beginning.

Bhakti Marg at its highest point leads to ‘surrender’. Surrender means giving-away our mind, body and soul to the deity or Sadguru. Having given so, the devotee is to realize that what ever happens to his body, mind and soul is done by the Sadguru. Also, he has to use these three for the work of the Sadguru. Since any thing and every thing happening to him is done by the Sadgurus, he has nothing to be happy about, nothing to be sorry about, nothing to complain against and nothing to desire - not materially or mentally but also spiritually. This state of actual surrender can be achieved by a few only in a million of spiritual aspirants over a few lives and that too, with the help and kindness of Guru.

How many of the people, who say that they have surrendered to Baba fall in this category? Baba was once sitting in Dwarakamayi Masjid, and was telling about His relationship with His Guru who had given Him severe tests.

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Once Baba was tied by His legs and hanged in a well for a few hours. When the Guru on return asked Him as to how He felt, Baba said that it was nice. He had nothing at all to complain and was happy about what the Guru had done. In this context Baba asked the devotees sitting around Him as to how many of them can be His disciple the way in which He was a disciple of His Guru. None had the courage to come up to that expectation. Therefore, simply to say, feel or show that one is surrendered is not correct because a surrendered man will have no desires and no complaints. He would only follow the path laid down by Baba and expressed in two words i.e. *shraddha* (faith) and *saburi* (patience):

SHRADDHA

- means devotional faith
- faith that Baba is the Almighty and Protector; that both good and bad happenings of the devotee's life are controlled by Him,
- to happily acknowledge and patiently tolerate all vicissitudes of life with equanimity.
- to realize that Baba is always with him, around him,
- to be able to sacrifice any thing and every thing for the cause of the Master in the manner prescribed by Him.
- to follow His dictates in letter and spirit, what-ever be the consequences.
- to hold on to Baba exclusively and not
- to run to different deities/temples for different purposes.

SABURI

- i.e. patience means taking actions as mentioned before without complaint, either external or mental, and go on living normally keeping faith in Baba.

How many people can really do so? If not, one should think on the word 'surrender' continuously before considering himself to be a great devotee. It is wiser to think of what we can do for Baba's work than think what Baba can do for

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us. To get perfect association with a Perfect Master, the person concerned must be a perfect devotee. Baba used to say that a devotee will experience Him as per his *bhava* means inner thought process. Imperfect mind will reflect imperfect image of the Sadguru and the person will get imperfect results. It is not easy to achieve this state of mind and it is also not correct to use the word 'surrendered' so easily without understanding its full implications. The better path would be to develop the qualities prescribed by the Sadguru gradually living in the world like an ordinary man enjoying and suffering happiness and unhappiness with the Guru in heart.

Om Shri Sai

C. B. Satpathy