

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

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

DUSSEHRA
October 2000

Baba took *Samadhi* eighty-two years back. In the case of Spiritual Masters, departure of the soul from the body is not termed as death but as *Samadhi*. For these great divine souls, *Samadhi* indicates a voluntary process of leaving the body at will in a pre-decided moment. It also means that during the process of moving-out from their gross human bodies and entering into their body-less divine state, they are in a state of full consciousness. This volitional act of departure indicates that the gross body is no more an effective instrument for them to carry on their responsibilities and, therefore, they decide to leave. There are umpteen numbers of examples to establish that Sadgurus, in some way or the other, had given prior indications about their departure earlier.

Sri Sainath had given a clear indication, in 1916, on the day of Vijaya Dashmi that His departure is not far-off. Also, His premonitions on the death of Tatyia Kote Patil and the breaking of the brick, which was a gift of His Guru and His life-long possession, were indicators. Sri Sai Satcharitra has given a vivid account about Sri Sai Baba's last days.

So far so good, but does it prove the end of the role of the Sadguru in relation to the souls that He had drawn towards Himself from far and near and with whom He had '*Rinanubandha*', a karmic relationship established during many past lives? Although, many religious and spiritual people hold the view that a master after leaving his human body cannot help the disciples yet in the case of Sri Sainath the experience of the disciples has been quite different. I have had the opportunity of knowing some of the devotees of Baba who had been with Him before His departure. I have spoken with some of them and also got recorded their experiences through some ardent devotees. All of them categorically confirmed that many unexplainable and miraculous events with relation to Baba is still happening around their existence as it used to be earlier when Baba was there in His physical body at Shirdi.

Most of the books written on Baba's life history and devotee's experience undoubtedly establish the happening of certain miracles experienced by Sai devotees, not only before the departure of Baba but even today. Earlier, there were thousands of devotees mostly confined to Maharashtra. But, today the increase in the number of Sai devotees is

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an astounding Phenomenon which is difficult to explain, but more difficult to deny. More than a thousand temples of Sri Sai have come up in India and other hundreds are in the process of construction at various stages. Where it is not possible for devotees to build Baba's temples separately, small and big statues have been installed inside precincts of temple complexes housing other deities.

In states like UP, Bihar, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, etc. in North India where there were only one or two temples, today a number of temples have come up within a period of last five or six years. In far-off places like Pithoragarh Hills of UP, Andaman Nicobar Islands and remotest places of Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, etc, Baba's temples have been constructed. Abroad in many countries like USA, UK, Canada, Cuba, His temples, places of devotional congregations and devotees are ever on the increase. A number of web-sites on Baba can be seen on the Internet.

At Shirdi the number of visitors per day average has crossed 35,000. The Shirdi Sai Baba Trust at Shirdi in order to cope with ever-increasing number of devotees has totally changed the face of Shirdi through suitable modifications and additions. The Shirdi of today is a different place than what it looked like two years back. The number of books written and being written on Baba and also the number of journals, magazines published by various Sai Organizations in different languages is very large. Except the Shirdi Sai Baba Trust of Shirdi – which is an official body, most of these activities are carried on ceaselessly by the devotees and other Sai Trusts out of their sheer love for Baba. Most of these institutions, besides carrying on regular religious activities in the temple, are contributing immensely towards the societal requirements like education, health and other humanitarian activities.

The activities concerning Sri Sainath today is so multidimensional and spread all over the country and abroad that one cannot comprehend its total effect in the lives of the devotees and its effects on the religious spiritual life of India and other places. The researchers on Baba of India and other countries, who have written a number of books on Him, need to take up thorough research on this aspect.

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This logically brings to mind one question – if after His departure, the spirit of Sri Sai is not active, then how are all these happening? Can it be believed to be a mere chance occurrence or there is a bigger or subtler law of nature, which is manifesting through these activities. Any sensitive mind with some amount of understanding of the spiritual history of the world will surely perceive the reality of a quietly emerging Sai movement. This movement is based on the principles of humanism, universalism, tolerance and mutual co-operation of the highest order. These are principles on the basis of which any civilized society exists and any religion continuous. We are all waiting for “dawning the Age of Sai” who I believe is the “Incarnation of the Age”. In this decade the world will see the emergence of international Sai movement and hundreds of temples will be built in a number of countries. History indicates that the role of the incarnations has been more pronounced after they had left their gross body.

The world needs someone to lead it and bring about unity among the strife-ridden and mutually intolerant religious, social and racial groups. Sri Sai preached and practiced the unity of the highest order based on the principles of love and tolerance in the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century. In this millennium it will lead the world in the path of peace and progress.

Om Shri Sai

C. B. Satpathy