

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

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

Dusshera
October 2003

Human mind has a natural propensity to delve into the unknown mysteries of nature. What a man already knows, does not interest him as much as what he newly discovers. This new discovery again loses importance when newer ones comes to his knowledge. If such discoveries are logically explainable through scientific methods to which his mind is attuned, then it's acceptance is spontaneous and easier. It is so because the human brain is conditioned to think and understand the world around or solve problems through the use of such reasoning faculties. Where he is confronted with a new discovery, fact or revelation, which his logical intellect fails to comprehend or even if it comprehends, fails to accept, there arises a problem. This is the predicament which most of the devotees face many a times when facing the inscrutable aspects of a Masters personality or actions.

Even if they would like to believe in unexplainable phenomena happening around a Master, yet their mind continues to play its favorite game of doubting again and again. At times they believe that such unexplainable faculties which are known as subtle powers creating miracles are with the Masters or they believe that the Master being at the highest spiritual level reached by a human being, are capable of using such powers in a subtle way not known to the ordinary human beings.

When in a state of devotional, contemplative mood they experience and accept these unexplainable phenomena more easily than when they are operating in their normal state of mind guided by the common human intellect. Thus, they waver between acceptance and rejection and are unable to be in a stable state of mind. Quoting an example from Shri Sai Satcharitra, when the grocer shop owners refused to give Oil to Baba on a Deepawali day, the Master burnt the lamps throughout the night with water in the most miraculous way. As to why on that day and at that time Baba wanted to demonstrate His power is a separate issue, but fact remains that it is not easy for any ordinary human being to accept such an unexplainable and inscrutable phenomenon as a reality. Those devotees, who were a witness to this miracle, suddenly realized that Shri Shirdi Sai was no common Sadhu but was a divine personality with occult powers. Such was the electrifying effect of this miracle at that time that the suspicious and mischievous village folks immediately turned to a group of devotees. This is the typical human reaction to anything surprising, sudden or

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unexplainable when it happens. However, this does not mean that their minds had fully accepted this fact and that they had no further questions to ask to Baba having accepted him as the all powerful divine entity. If one goes further through Shri Sai Satcharitra, one would see that hundreds of events/activities around Baba were happening in the most miraculous way. In fact, at the first stage it is the news about the miracles that spread like wild fire and brought many devotees to him from far and wide. Once they came to Baba, the great Master started guiding and helping them, both through visible and invisible methods in the path of spiritual evolution. The treatment given to each devotees was in accordance with his requirements, which the Master surely knew.

No doubt, many of the close devotees coming from outside and some belonging to Shirdi, who were in daily contact with Baba, witnessed and experienced His miracles and divine play as a daily affair at Shirdi. Faith was generated in them because of the immense help they used to receive from Baba, some times, in the ordinary way and at times, in the most unexpected manner.

When a man after a long period of distressed suffers desperation and then suddenly help comes from the most unexpected quarters, he thanks God, calling it an act of divine mercy. Babas devotees, in thousands, staying in different parts of the country used to get such help at the most crucial moments of their life. Such divine interventions, in other words, can be called the 'Grace of the Master' or 'Compassion' or 'Kripa'. For example Shyama, an ardent devotee of Baba at Shirdi was bitten by snake. Baba without use of any medicines saved him only by a command. Mainatai, the daughter of Nana Saheb Chandorkar at Jamner had serious delivery complications but a man sent by Baba reached the house of Chandorkar with the help of a mysterious Tangewalla with Baba's Udi at the most critical moment. Chandorkar, a Magistrate, with all his pride and intellect was just shocked. Hundreds of examples regarding Babas help received by his devotees unexpectedly, far away from Shirdi, not only when Shri Sai was in his physical embodiment, but also as on today have been recorded. A very large number of them belong to the intellectual and educated group who would never have believed what they experienced, if such miracles were told by some one else.

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Herein comes the main question about the faith in the Master. Should miracles be the only factor/plinth of such faith even if a Master is capable of creating such miracles?

The first problem that arises when faith is dependent only on miracles created by a Saint or Master is that the devotee becomes miracle dependent.

I have seen some devotees not doing what they are ordinarily supposed to do and then pray for help in a crisis. For example, if a child is not studying well, instead of taking care of his education through the available means, and time, they run to the temples more frequently to get blessing for the child's success as if a miracle would solve their mundane problems.

Nature, which is the manifested spirit of God tells human beings, "I have given you a body, a mind and a soul. I have created the facilities on this earth. Put them to the best possible use for your good and that of others". The house in which we stay, the food we eat, the electricity we use, the doctor we consult, as much as the temple we visit all are created by God. But not being able to do what God has empowered us to do but merely wishing for miracles to happen is treading an illusory path. Secondly, those devotees who only depend on the powers of miracles of a Master will lose faith if the miracle prayed for does not take place. After all miracles are also dependent on the laws of Karma i.e. they are a result of his noble deeds of the past and takes place only if he deserve to get such miraculous helps. The worst is that if some problems are solved through miracles but later the desired help does not take place, faith gets easily shaken. It is again in the nature of mind that human beings are prone to think more of a single negative quality of a man even if he has many other positive qualities. They lament on a single failure forgetting that they had many successes in the past.

Undoubtedly, if the faith is based on these powers of miracles of the Master, then such a devotee is actually loving the Master's miracles more than the Master himself. This is a conditional devotion where as true devotion or love of the Master, in the real sense of the term cannot be conditional. On the other hand, the true devotees, even when

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experiencing the acts of compassion of the Master or miraculous help, neither pray for it nor depend on it. Tolerating the pleasures and pains of life, they continue to do their best for the cause of the Masters. To them the biggest miracle happens slowly but steadily. They conquer their weakness of mind to depend on miracles and stand out of their own in the world as great personalities of faith.

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