



Rose Petals

Extracts from Sri Babuji's Satsangs

Darshan

DEVOTEE: I would like to ask some questions about darshan. As I understand it, darshan means 'seeing' in relationship to a Sadguru or a form of God. What does that 'seeing' actually mean? Is the benefit in the way we see or is it in being seen? Do we try to embed the form in the mind, so as never to forget it, or focus on the internal experience of being in the Guru's presence? Is there a way of being in darshan that is most beneficial? I have so many questions!

GURUJI: For all these questions there is one example I can give you to help you understand better: When you see a movie, you're not simply seeing images moving on a screen. You say, "I'm watching a movie", but what is really happening there? An interaction is going on, you identify yourself with the characters on the screen: you laugh, you cry, you get disappointed, you get angry or you may even get bored. You say you *see* a movie, but actually you aren't just seeing a movie, you're experiencing it. And just as you see a movie, you see Baba – that is darshan. It's that simple. You're not just seeing, you're experiencing something.



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DEVOTEE: How can we get the most out of those moments with you in darshan?

GURUJI: I don't know how you can get the most out of it, but I know I come to take your darshan. I don't come to the satsang hall to give darshan, I come to receive darshan. Yes, I'm experiencing it and enjoying it!

Who am I to give darshan to anyone? It is the exalted state of Sai Baba that pulls us all to have his darshan with love and devotion. When I sit in front of all the devotees to have darshan of Baba, I am reminded of the Vedic hymn about the thousand-headed being: *Sahasra sheersha purushaha, sahas-raksha sahasrapath* – The Purusha, the Supreme Being, who has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. With thousands of heads and thousands of eyes Sai Baba is giving darshan and bestowing his gracious look. I feel I am having darshan of that universal form.



DEVOTEE: Why is so much said about the glance of the guru and its value?

GURUJI: Because it conveys love. Because you love the guru and what comes from the guru is love. The glance he gives you floods you with love. That is the content, the value, the governor's signature on our currency. [Guruji laughs] In fact it's not the glance, something else is going on, some interaction is going on.

The best example I can give you is when you watch a movie. It's not that the characters will come and talk to you, but there's an interaction going on. You identify yourself with something else, a role. If even with a movie such an interaction is going on, why not with Baba who, objectively speaking, really is interacting with you. Or if you can't see the objectivity in it, at least experience it as if you're seeing a movie.

Darshan is 'seeing' and 'being' and 'experiencing', all together. It is not simply seeing. And when seeing and being is happening, the result is 'becoming'.

DEVOTEE: Becoming?

GURUJI: Seeing, being, and becoming.

DEVOTEE: Isn't 'being seen' also an ingredient? Some texts seem to say that darshan is complete only if the guru also sees you, as well as your seeing him.

GURUJI: Yes, he sees! How can it be incomplete?!

DEVOTEE: That if the guru doesn't look at you, while you may see him, then it's not really darshan.

GURUJI: Is this the only way he has to look at you? [Guruji stares pointedly with wide eyes] [laughter] No! There are so many ways for him. We can only see in our usual way, but he has a thousand ways to look at us!

DEVOTEE: Ah, that's great!

GURUJI: We have only two eyes, but Baba has thousands, unlimited numbers of eyes.

DEVOTEE: Guruji, you said 'becoming' – is that a promise? [laughter]

GURUJI: Yes, a promise without compromise! [Guruji laughs]



DEVOTEE: Guruji, what is the *divya drishti*, the divine sight of the guru?

GURUJI: Any seeing which perceives the divinity everywhere is the divine *drishti*. The guru sees divinity everywhere, that is why his look is divine. And if you can see him as the divinity, yes, that is also *divya drishti*.



DEVOTEE: Is it possible to love the guru as he loves us?

GURUJI: Yes. When you become one with him, it is possible. And why does he love us? Is there something attractive in us that he loves us so much? Nothing. Everybody loves, above all things, their own selves. We are limited and there's so much which makes us love or hate or whatever. But for him, he sees himself in everything. To us it seems he is loving us, but to him he loves himself – he sees his own self everywhere. His look denotes that.

There really is no example or analogy to describe this accurately. But at least to understand it vaguely, imagine the look of a mother, when she looks at her newborn baby immediately after the delivery. Till then the baby has been a part of her, a part of her own self, not a separate entity. After the birth, that first look! It's as if she is seeing a part of herself. Then slowly the interaction begins – the child cries and wants to be given milk. The look loses its initial intensity, the initial feeling and experience of oneness.

That look which perceives everything as part of oneself is called *divya drishti*. To look at something and experience that this is also I, not different from me. To be able to see like that is *hamsa*, is *soham*, *so-aham*. It is myself. Whatever it is, it is I.



DEVOTEE: What is very interesting and rather odd for me is this opposition between the sacred and the ordinary world. During darshan we are very reverent and devotional, then when darshan is over our ordinary life resumes as usual.

GURUJI: It's good. It's good that at least we feel the sacred for a few minutes. Because the more worldly and profane we are, the more we can feel the difference, the contrast.

DEVOTEE: How do we bring this experience of the sacred that we have in darshan more into our ordinary lives?

GURUJI: That all depends upon the purpose of your being here. If your purpose in being here is to experience what you experience during the few minutes of darshan, then you try to prolong it as much as possible. And people have different approaches, different ways of prolonging it. There is no one particular way, "This is the way to prolong it, or that is the way to prolong it." No! Or if you don't want to prolong it, at least it is good that we don't disturb other people.

Everything depends upon your purpose, why you are here. Usually people tend to forget it. And even if I tell you, "This is how you have to conduct yourself," it becomes a routine ritual and then there is no use to it. It is true that there is a difference between the sacred and the profane, as you said; it's a good point. But our purpose is to prolong the experience of darshan to such an extent that there will be no difference. The dividing line between sacred and profane has to be erased. The profane is sacred, and the sacred seems to be profane. Everything becomes one in that exalted emotion.



GURUJI: If anybody comes to me it is Baba's will, not mine. I try in all possible ways to repel them. [laughter] But if they still come, it means that it's Baba's power bringing them to me, and I enjoy that. When I see them, I see Baba's power, I see Baba in them.

It always reminds me of what the *Purusha Sutra* says, "*Sahasra sheersha purushaha, sahasraksha sahasrapath*" – that Purusha, that Baba, who has a thousand heads, legs and hands has come to give me darshan – I enjoy it. And I don't have any delusion I am helping anybody, I am simply enjoying Baba's ways. I am honestly saying it is Baba who helps you, not me.

DEVOTEE: Guruji, how can we see Baba in everything? How can we achieve that?

GURUJI: I am not asking you to see Baba in everything. Just be aware of what Baba said, "In every living creature I am there." It is enough to remember that. Not trying to superimpose our image of Baba on others, saying Baba, Baba, Baba. That's not it. [laughter] When we relate to people, the awareness that Baba is in all living creatures is enough. And even if that awareness is not there, no problem. First try to see Baba in yourself, then we'll think of seeing Baba in others. If we cannot see Baba in ourselves, how can we see him in others? If Baba is in every creature, is he not in us, too? If he is within us, how is he within us? Where is he living? Where is he hiding? Try to find out. Then we can try to find him in all other hearts also.

Even if Baba is there and what he said is true, have we made our own heart a fitting home for him? So make it clean, just as, when I come, you clean the flat, put flowers and make everything ready. Like that, try to do the same thing in your heart.

DEVOTEE: And how do we make our hearts clean?

GURUJI: How do you make the flat clean when I come? You know what I like. You know, for example, that mosquito repellent is not good for me and so you make sure there isn't any around. Like that, there are so many things. You know what Baba likes and you try to remove what he doesn't like. Remove them, and Baba will come and live there happily. Then you can see him every day. You can have an interview, you can have darshan, every day, whenever you like. He comes and resides in your own flat here [Guruji points to his heart].



DEVOTEE: Guruji, I want as many darshans of you as possible. When you're walking by, how do I get your attention so you will stop and look at me?

GURUJI: It is natural when we are walking through a garden and the flowers are fresh, we feel like standing there and looking at them. If the flowers' freshness is gone, what is there to look at? So, don't be like the dried flowers – always keep up that freshness. Then Baba will make me stand there and look at you. Because what I see in you is that freshness, that blooming, that sap, that fragrance. Being a 'senior devotee' should not kill that freshness. Do you want to be a dried flower or a budding, blooming flower with lots of fragrance? Let our minds be like blossoming flowers which we offer at the feet of Baba, let them not be withered and dried. Always feel it's the first time when coming for darshan. Then you are free from the past, "We are seniors, they are newcomers, we are like this, they are like that." All these things are like the scorching sun which makes the flower wither and dry away. Nobody should feel they are 'senior'. Once we feel we are senior, we are ready to retire! [Guruji laughs] Keep up that sap! Every time is the first time – it should be like that.

When, describing Rama's form Valmiki says, "*Kshanakshane yannavata ramaneya roopam*," it means, *Kshanakshane* – every moment, every instant; *yannavata* – it's new, renewed; *Ramaneya roopam* – Rama's form. That is, whenever you see his form, it is always new; when looking at his face you never get bored. Like that, in every moment Baba's form is so beautiful, constantly changing and renewing itself, so every moment feels like the first time you are seeing him. This *kshanakshane yannavata*, this ever-newness, permeates your whole life, your whole spiritual experience. Every instant is alive, full of sap, full of life. Then you'll be in real contact with me, or with Baba, or with Essence, or with whatever you want to call it. Experiencing that newness, that freshness, is the real darshan.

