



Rose Petals

Extracts from
Sri Babuji's Satsangs

The Unique Mahima of Shirdi Sai Baba

GURUJI: They say that Baba is a man of miracles, but he never materialized anything. Such things he called *chamatkar*, and he emphatically said, "We don't do *chamatkar*."

DEVOTEE: So then what did he call those superhuman acts?

GURUJI: To him it is just like a mother caring for her child. But if you want to call it a miracle, it's okay. When a baby feels hungry and milk suddenly just materializes and flows from the mother's breast, is it not a miracle? As long as the child needs the milk, it comes; and when the need is gone, it automatically diminishes. It is a miracle that every mother does and every child experiences, and yet it is so natural. And Baba experiences it like that, so naturally.

DEVOTEE: But we don't experience it like that, do we?

GURUJI: That is why you call it a miracle! I call it natural mothering. Baba is taking care of us like a loving mother. What you call a miracle is natural mothering to a Satguru like Sai Baba.



Guruji in Shirdi, 2006



DEVOTEE: Many miracles were seen in Baba's life. As well as fulfilling a person's need, was there any other purpose to them?

GURUJI: With Sai Baba almost all his miracles carry a transforming effect on the experiencer. This is very rare in any saint. The so-called supernatural acts or so-called miracles that happened around him always carried a teaching, which pushed a transformation. You can see that in his biography, to some extent. Just try to imagine yourself in the place of any of the devotees who experienced a miracle with Baba, and you will see.

In this way, Baba's biography is his teaching. There was no verbal teaching, no separate teaching, in fact. Baba taught through his acts. With regards to *chamatkar* they only baffle the experiencer's mind, but with Baba, the miracles carry a teaching. For example, if people came

for money, Baba didn't simply give it, or say, "Go there and you will find money," nor would someone come and just hand it over to them. No, Baba would try to make it seem as if it had simply happened naturally, but the experimenter knew that there was more to it than that.

There was a devotee, for instance, who used to come to Shirdi from time to time who was a big manager in a cotton mill in Bombay. At one point he had some trouble with the management so he resigned and was unemployed. Almost a year passed and he was having difficulty maintaining himself. He was in the financial doldrums. One day he decided, "What am I doing simply whiling away my time in Bombay? Let's go to Shirdi and at least stay in Baba's presence for two or three months until I get another job."

So he went to Shirdi and by then he was experiencing bitter poverty. As he entered the mosque Baba greeted him, "Oh *avo*, *seth*, *avo*. Come, rich man, come." (A wealthy man is called a *seth*.) "Come *seth*, come!"

The man felt embarrassed. "See, Baba is ridiculing my poverty. He is calling me a rich man, a *seth*. I am not a *seth* now." and he went and sat down.

Baba asked, "What is your programme?"

Then he said, "I want to stay a few months here, Baba."

"No! Go to Bombay!" Baba said. "Start for Bombay immediately!"

That man was baffled. "I only came just now and he is already asking me to go away! Oh, even Baba is only thinking of rich people. I'm a poor man, that is why he doesn't want me to stay here." Then he said, "Okay, Baba, as you have ordered it, I will go."

Then when Baba was giving him *udi* he said firmly, "Go via Pune!" Nobody goes to Bombay from Shirdi via Pune. It is ridiculous! It is a completely different route. Yet, "Go to Bombay via this route!" he said.

So the man went to Pune, and, just as he got off the train, he met somebody who was the proprietor of a cotton mill and who said he had just been thinking of him. A manager's post had been vacant in his mill for about a month and he was wondering, "Who is the right person for the job?" Actually, the mill owner knew this man and thought he would be suitable for the post, but he didn't know his address or how to reach him, so he couldn't do anything. But when the man got off the train in the busy railway station, the mill owner was right there and saw him immediately.

"Oh, I was actually looking for you! What are you doing now?"

"I'm not doing anything."

"Will you accept a post in my mill?" he asked.

"Oh, very happily I will!"

"Okay, then come to Bombay tomorrow. I'll be back there by then."

So he went to Bombay, he got the appointment, and he did become a *seth*, in fact.

All this happened within a week. Do you think it was all a simple coincidence? If Baba had just said, "Go home!" and he had met that person in Bombay, it would have been a different matter, but Baba purposely said, "Go via Pune!" And the meeting happened in a railway station, where there are hundreds of people, and where even just one second is enough to miss a person, yet he got down from the compartment exactly when the mill owner was there! So accurate, as if everything had been planned exactly.

Just think how that devotee must have experienced it! He not only experienced that Sai Baba gave him a job, but also how miraculously the whole thing unfolded.



GURUJI: Sai "miracles" seem so natural. We receive his kindness, mercy, protection and grace from the people around us. When we pray to Baba – for example, "I am in dire need of money. Please help me Baba," – Baba does not place a *lakh* of rupees under our pillow as we

sleep. Someone will come to us at the right moment and advise us, "Do it this way and your problem will be solved." If we follow their advice, circumstances turn favourable for us, our needs are fulfilled and the problem is solved.

Baba does his *leelas* in this way – he is not performing magic tricks. This is the special feature of Baba's so-called miracles: whatever help we get is from the people around us and the surrounding circumstances. This is his approach when responding not only to our mundane everyday needs, but also to our spiritual needs. That is why he has said, "I have no spiritual heirs. I will answer the needs of my devotees even from my *samadhi*."



GURUJI: With Baba, if we are worried about a problem, someone will come and show us the way; it flashes upon us as the answer to our problem although the person who advises us does not know that this is the solution we were longing for.

This was Baba's way even when he was in the body. He would never give discourses on Vedanta, or directly answer questions on philosophy, but people used to ask him and he would answer in his own way. Once when somebody asked such a question, Baba answered, "Go and attend the *pothi*." "*Pothi*" means *parayana*, devotional reading, and some of the devotees were sitting together every day and reading aloud a few pages of *Eknath Bhagawat*.

This man went there, and just as he came in, they were reading a chapter in which Eknath Maharaj was answering precisely the same question he had asked Baba! The devotee who was reading the passage didn't know that this man had already asked Sai Baba that same question. It was a regular reading and there was no guarantee that he would go there directly. He could have stopped for a cup of chai in the canteen, or for a chitchat with a friend, or he could have gone to his room, to the toilet, whatever. But just as he sat down, the question was addressed and answered! Baba had said, "Go to the *pothi* and your question will be answered." Just look at the stage management of Baba!



GURUJI: Before I went to Poondi, I was very hectically reading all the scriptures. They all extol the efficacy of *tirthas* and going to *kshetras* [places of pilgrimage, holy places] and I had a doubt: why do saints – who are completely fulfilled and have attained their ultimate object – why do they need to go to *tirthas*? In the Puranas we see that many saints visit *tirthas*, and different holy places. I wondered, what is the need for them to do that? What more holiness do they need? Are they in need of holiness? Or do they need some polishing of their holiness? [Guruji laughs] Why?

I was thinking about this one day when I was outside, and of all the *slokas* and all the different references in the Puranas, when suddenly there was a big gust of wind. Then, a piece of very old notepaper, which somebody had used as packaging for some peanuts or something, came and just dashed against my face. I caught it and opened it and then I saw: it was a page from the *Narada Bhakti Sutras*, with exactly the sutra where somebody asks Narada, "Why do holy men go to holy places?" and Narada gives the answer, "Holy men go to holy places in order to make the holy places holy." [Guruji laughs] That was the *sloka*!

Then I thought, "Oh! If Baba wishes, he can give an answer wherever we are." That is why I always tell you when you say, "What Guruji, you are going away! What are we going to do?" No need to worry. Baba is so great – you will get your answers!



DEVOTEE: Sai Baba did not give philosophical teachings in the way that some saints do, did he?

GURUJI: No, no. Nobody expected such a thing from him. The moment they went to him they saw the power, they were aware of their helplessness, they sought help and they got it. By getting the help they also got the message. So every *leela*, every incident, every miracle that you see, every experience that you read conveys a message – the message which some other saints taught verbally. Nobody felt any lack that Baba did not teach, because they were so fulfilled. There was no need for that. Teaching is needed in order to get that experience of fulfilment and to get rid of our helplessness. When that is spontaneously achieved in his presence, what is the need of any other thing?



Guruji's voice

