



Rose Petals

Extracts from Sri Babuji's Satsangs

The Guru Principle

DEVOTEE: Are we always connected to the Sadguru even if we don't know it?

GURUJI: You are connected even before you actually meet him. For you the meeting point is when you physically see him, but for him the meeting point is far, far, far before, a time you've never thought of or even imagined. And all the circumstances in your life have simply led you to this first meeting. In that way he has already been working on you. This is why, when people came and prostrated for the first time to Baba and someone introduced them as so-and-so, Baba would say, "Arre! Listen to me. I have known him for the last ninety births. You need not introduce him. I know him, I brought him here!" – like that he used to speak. Once, when Shama¹ accompanied Professor Narke² to the masjid and introduced him for the first time to Baba, Baba replied, "You introduce him to me! I have known him for thirty generations".



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DEVOTEE: Does it mean before Sai Baba took his present birth he was taking care of them?

GURUJI: In another form. He would have been working in another form.

DEVOTEE: So afterwards as well, when he is not in his body, he is working on us?

GURUJI: The principle working through Sai Baba is the same, and he may be working through different forms also. Baba said, "I am one among the forms. To whom I am karmically related, to their needs I will cater."

For instance, a cell in the body is disturbed – let us say it is itchy – it needs help. Another cell in the body will then cater to its needs. And if something else is needed elsewhere, another part of the body will cater to it. It's not that Sai Baba is the only person catering to all the millions. It's the principle working through Sai Baba that is catering to all these people.

¹ Madhava Rao Deshpande, alias Shama, an old and close devotee of Sri Sai Baba.

² Professor G. G. Narke from Poona, an eminent devotee of Sri Sai Baba.



DEVOTEE: Am I right in thinking that you said Baba does not reincarnate?

GURUJI: Yes.

DEVOTEE: Then what about his saying he'll reincarnate again and again as long as devotees need him?

GURUJI: That is not reincarnation, but incarnation. There's a lot of difference between reincarnation and incarnation.

DEVOTEE: Could you mention those differences?

GURUJI: If you think that Baba is an incarnation of the guru principle, then according to the needs of the devotees and the times, the guru principle will take different forms. A reincarnation means – Sai Baba passed away here and his soul will go and take another body and then he'll come again. In that case, that person, the limited person whom we call Sai Baba, is taking birth in different forms. That is reincarnation.

Incarnation is when the teaching principle assumes a certain form to cater to the needs of devotees. If you think of such an incarnation – if at all you want to call it that – as the guru principle catering to all devotees' needs, then as time changes, it may assume different forms. If we accept this, then we have to accept that all the Sadgurus who came before Sai Baba were also incarnations of the same principle.

DEVOTEE: Who would be other examples of the guru principle?

GURUJI: Kabir was considered an incarnation of god, according to the Kabir Panth.

DEVOTEE: Aren't Buddha and Christ other incarnations of the guru principle?

GURUJI: You yourself are saying it. Yes, it's like that.

DEVOTEE: You said if we accept that Sai Baba is an example of the guru principle, then we have to accept there were others before him. But there must be limits to those who were true incarnations of the guru principle.

GURUJI: Yes, but there were many. I only said there should have been many.

DEVOTEE: But not all?

GURUJI: That we do not know. There should be some; whether this one or that one was an incarnation or not, we do not know because our concepts differ from religion to religion. Anyhow the saints of the past may not be catering to the present needs. Maybe, after a hundred or two hundred years, some people may think Sai Baba no longer caters to their needs and some other form may appear. Because our needs change, the times change, the forms in which our needs are expressed change, so the guru principle takes another form.

For example, an elementary school teacher caters to the needs of children at an elementary level. Compared to the postgraduate level, an elementary school teacher is not a teacher. But what I am saying is, right from the elementary to the postgraduate level, each teacher represents the same teaching principle, catering to different needs. That is what I call the guru principle.



DEVOTEE: Guruji, does everyone have a Sadguru?

GURUJI: Yes, they do. But the Sadguru has his own ways and means when to make them aware that his particular form is the Sadguru for them. Not that we choose, that we are aware of the Sadguru; the Sadguru's influence on us is already there, even when we are not aware of it.

DEVOTEE: So no human being in this world is left without some kind of true spiritual guidance should he or she sincerely seek it? I mean not just a form of god but a specific spiritual entity who is potentially responsible for that person?

GURUJI: Actually, they don't exist like 'entities', which is also a relative word. Rather, it is that power of 'making one fulfilled' that is embedded in our life itself. That principle is manifested when the right time comes in one form or another. But it is the principle. When I speak about the Sadguru, what I am talking about is the principle. All of nature is comprised of positive and negative pulls. Take physics for instance. Everything contains something: the neutron, the electron, the positron and these things, and the electron is always pulled towards the centre, to become one with the nucleus. That principle of fulfilment which doesn't make you depend on any of the other usual means to fulfilment is what I call the Sadguru. That force is there in every being, because every being craves fulfilment. It is embedded in life so naturally that it is part of life itself, almost biologically. As long as it is there, when the time comes, that principle itself will take the form of one Sadguru or another.

We usually think it is due to the Sadguru that we become aware of the possibility of spiritual experience with him or her. But the point is, it is because we are already ready for it, that we are susceptible to having the experience, and that is why we are getting it. Why are all these people who live around me not aware of it? Why? Because it is that principle: when one is ready for it, when the force becomes sufficient, then it relates itself to a particular form that appears and you go to him or her. Then, gradually, all your other pulls become submerged in that particular pull. When I say, "everybody has a Sadguru", I am talking about this principle of everyone's desire, the urge, the innate urge to get that fulfilment which is not dependent on any of our usual means by which we are accustomed to getting it. Everybody wants that ultimate fulfilment but they can't get it, so they go on seeking by more and more means, and more and more means, accumulating more means, mistaking the means for the fulfilment. But still the longing is there. Some people may be aware of it or not, intellectually, but that principle of trying to transcend this dependence, this helplessness, remains. That desire, and the concrete form of the principle or power that fulfills it, I call the Sadguru.



DEVOTEE: What we are really searching for is a fulfilment that does not depend on outer objects, that is, an independent fulfilment. But isn't relying on the Sadguru for our fulfilment another dependency?

GURUJI: Yes. First it starts as a dependency, but that dependency will make you so independent that you come not to depend upon anything. And if you really depend upon the Sadguru, the principle of the Sadguru, if you really depend upon it – it seems now that you are, but when you really depend upon it, then you realize that you're not dependent at all – that is the paradox.

DEVOTEE: How does that happen, Guruji?

GURUJI: If you depend! [laughter]

DEVOTEE: Dependency implies a dichotomy, a separation of one thing from another. Yet what you're saying is, once this true dependence comes, there is no longer dependency.

GURUJI: Yes. When you experience it, you realize it is not actually dependence. First it starts as a kind of a dependence but as it continues it deepens. Before, the dependency was a negative experience, because it felt like a need, which is something we lack. But this dependency becomes such that the very experience of it gives fulfilment, because it is no longer a dependency based on need. There are no other words for it, so I say 'dependency'. That is why I always avoid calling it 'surrender', 'submission', 'dependency,' because these words we use in our common experience all have a negative connotation. But when it comes to this kind of dependency, it is different, even though we use the same word for it, because there are no words to explain it or express it better.



DEVOTEE: But are we dependent on a principle or a human being? Because you were talking about a principle which then takes a form.

GURUJI: If it takes a form and it's the form which makes that principle more concrete, then it appears that we are depending on the form also. Yes.

DEVOTEE: Because to me, I feel I'm dependent only on the form, not the principle. How can I depend on a principle? It's so abstract, the principle.

GURUJI: Then the concrete will take you to the abstract. Because whatever you think, the form stands for the principle. So it will make you realize the principle.

DEVOTEE: But, Guruji, why should I want to realize the principle if I've got the form?

GURUJI: No, you need not! Not that you want to realize it – the form wants you to realize it! [laughter]

DEVOTEE: But why, Guruji, why? Why do we have to go from the concrete to the abstract?

GURUJI: Because He's nothing, nothing but that principle.



DEVOTEE: Would you please say more about the guru principle? What are its qualities?

GURUJI: Love. A love that always wants all other people to feel love and to love, so there is no experience of dependency, no dichotomy, no difference anywhere. Not only that the form [Sadguru] experiences the whole creation as part of himself, but he wants all the other parts to have the same experience of love as he experiences.



DEVOTEE: So then it's our Self-love and the need for fulfilment that creates the Sadguru. Isn't this an act of love?

GURUJI: Yes, what I call love is this principle. Actually, to explain to you in another way why you are here, I see it is because of love. There is no other thing. There are no other attractions here, around me, which will make you happy. In fact there are many things which could make you unhappy. [laughter] It is not so titillating to our ego; it is always so upsetting, so offending; no promises; no assurances; no reassurances. But that experience of "yes, we are happy here" – even though sometimes we may not be happy – still we don't find anywhere else where we're happier. Maybe you are not totally happy but still this is better, there is no other go. At least, like this, there has to be one experience – one experience that "there is no other way for me. This is the way for my fulfilment, I can't see any other way." This is the starting point in our spiritual life. This is what the Veda also says, "*Nanya pantha vidyate ayanaya*" – there is no other *pantha*, no other way, "*na anya pantha*" – no other path (to go)! When someone comes to that state, that decision, then his spiritual journey begins. And that awareness, that realization, is an expression of love. He is bound to that *pantha* – to that path, to that object, to that means or whatever you want to call it – by love.

DEVOTEE: Guruji, isn't that part of a verse from the *Purusha Suktam* of the Rigveda?

GURUJI: "*Nanya pantha vidyate ayanaya*". Yes, from the *Purusha Suktam*.

DEVOTEE: Didn't the rishis believe that there was no other way than the profound truth revealed in the Vedas?

GURUJI: They felt it like that. Whether ancient or modern the mind is the same, the sense of fulfilment is the same, the desire is the same, the suffering is the same – and how we experience it is the same.



DEVOTEE: For Baba, also, are things endlessly unfolding?

GURUJI: Yes, definitely. Endlessly unfolding. He is not a static person – no, I don't see him like that at all. He is so paradoxical. Even if you say he is perfect, so there is nothing further for him, I don't agree with that. He is so perfect that he is infinitely growing and growing and growing. There is no end to it. What we see is that element of growth, that principle of growth, of continuous unfoldment. That is more beautiful. I don't like to see him as a plucked flower. He's a flower on the tree. [Guruji laughs]

DEVOTEE: So he embodies that principle?

GURUJI: He embodies that principle.

DEVOTEE: And nothing is ever complete.

GURUJI: Nothing is ever complete. But every time it feels as if it is complete it goes on completing, completing itself. The Complete trying to complete itself. That is the beauty of the principle.

DEVOTEE: Isn't all life trying to do that? To complete itself?

GURUJI: Yes. Unless we understand this principle of *rasa*³ and the aesthetics of Beauty the Complete trying to complete itself – then we can't understand many of the scriptures also. Everything begins and ends here: "Brahman is perfect. The whole world manifested from Brahman." But why did it manifest? The scriptures say, "Maya (illusion), or Avidya (ignorance)." But how did that Maya manifest? They say, "Brahman manifested the whole world from Himself." But why has He to manifest anything? Is there no other work for Him? [laughter] If Brahman is really perfect, complete, fulfilled, satisfied, why does He have to manifest Himself in so many forms? Where is the necessity for Him to do that? Or, if you say it was not Brahman, it was something else, Maya, where does this Maya come from if Brahman is everywhere, complete? Or if so, then Brahman is not complete, He is only finite. So these problems will persist unless you understand this principle of *rasa*. That Brahman not only exists, but exists to create more existence, to see more and more beauty, to enjoy Himself more and more, simply because it is His nature, His joy, to create and fulfill Himself, it's part of His Self-enjoyment. Not that He is incomplete, nor finite, nor imperfect, but rather the Perfect trying to see its perfection, enjoying and experiencing His own perfection. It is a very, very subtle concept, the principle of *rasa*, and the Sadguru also embodies it.



Guruji's voice

³ 'Rasa' (Skt. juice; delight); principle of delight in Indian aesthetics; the subtle state of experiencing a generalized delight in existence.

