



# Rose Petals

Extracts from  
Sri Babuji's Satsangs

## Two Paise: Nishtha & Saburi

Radha Bai Deshmukh came to Baba for *upadesh*, got none, and resolved upon *satyagraha*. She started fasting, which should end only with her death or with *upadesh* from Baba, whichever occurred first. After three days of her fruitless fast I interceded with Baba on her behalf and requested Him to utter some divine name in her presence. Baba sent for her and addressed her thus,

“Mother, why do you think of dying and torture yourself? Take pity on me, your child. I am a beggar. Look here, my guru was a great saint and highly merciful. I fatigued myself in trying to serve him and yet he did not utter any mantra in my ear. Instead, he first shaved me clean and then begged of me, two pice. What he wanted was not metallic coin – he did not care even for gold – but only *nishtha* and *saburi*. I gave these to him at once and he was pleased.”

– Sri Sai Baba's Charters and Sayings, No. 137



Gurujī in Shirdi, 2006



GURUJI: *Nishtha* is one of the *paisa* Baba asked for as *dakshina*. It means paying attention, keeping our mind on our purpose, asking ourselves, “What do we want, where are we going, what are we doing?” Remaining steady and devoted to our purpose whatever comes, whether palatable or not, whether happy or unhappy, just persevering in it, that is *nishtha*. It is natural to any beggar, in fact – a real beggar perseveres! If someone doesn't give, or chases him away, he won't go. He'll keep on asking, “Sir, one rupee, one rupee,” but he doesn't go. He sticks to his purpose, he'll keep pursuing it. Learn *nishtha* from him.

The other *paisa* Baba asked for was *saburi*. *Saburi* is happily waiting, not complaining, “Oh, this is too much, I can’t take it!” or getting disappointed and easily frustrated, or giving up out of impatience. Waiting cheerfully, with patience and love, that is *saburi*.



GURUJI: The story of Siddiq Falke comes in the *Sri Sai Satcharita*. He came to Baba after having done the Hajj pilgrimage and Baba didn’t even allow him to step into Dwarkamai. He told him he could take *darshan* from a distance only and that he should not enter Dwarkamai at all. And so Falke waited for nine months in Shirdi.

In fact, it was a shame, wasn’t it? For a Hajji not to enter a *masjid* – how he would have felt! Yet this Hajji Falke waited for nine months and his patience was so exemplary that at the end he used to dine with Baba. Very few people were allowed to sit in Dwarkamai and dine with Baba – only nine or ten – but Siddiq Falke was chosen. This man who was so ill-treated before – *so-called* ill-treatment, of course – was so much honoured later. What was the reason? What gave him that? His patience, his *saburi*. What was the basis for his *saburi*? His love. “What’s the use of my staying in Shirdi? I don’t even get the chance to enter Dwarkamai!” He never thought like that. He knew why Baba was making him wait, and he waited and waited and waited, and he got what he wanted. That is *saburi*.



GURUJI: *Nishtha* doesn’t mean “faith”. *Nishtha* should actually be translated as “unflinching perseverance”. Why unflinching? Because what “flinches” you are your likes and dislikes, so unflinching means *na-ishta* (no likes). Everybody has their own likes and dislikes, their own pulls, their own brand of preferences; all these are called *ishtas* in Sanskrit. That is what is meant by *ishta*: it is your liking, something chosen by you. So “*na-ishta*” means “no-*ishta*” – no liking, no choice. So, among all your *ishtas*, one *ishta* (our object of love) should be there first! Holding onto one *ishta* amongst all the rest is *nishtha* – this is the unflinching devotion Baba asked for. Love becomes unflinching when the pull towards the object of love becomes stronger than our other pulls – then this pull itself gradually pulls you away from the others, and your love becomes unflinching and steady; that is *nishtha*.



DEVOTEE: Do *nishtha* and *saburi* mean that our relationship to suffering changes, or that we actually experience suffering less because now it has an underlying purpose?

GURUJI: It all depends on how you relate to your reason for suffering, and to its object. For example, see the difference between waiting at the airport for your boss or for your Beloved. Suppose your boss is coming and you’ve been sent to receive him. You arrive with a name tag and you’re standing there when an announcer says, “This flight is delayed two hours for technical reasons.” Just see, during the next two hours, how you suffer! You feel anxious and stressed by the waiting, you’re impatient for it to be over. But if your Beloved’s flight is delayed by two hours, even though you must also wait, it’s a different kind of suffering, you almost enjoy it. With your boss, if you don’t wait you will lose your job; there are longterm consequences to not staying. Here, with no consequences and nothing to lose by not waiting,

even if the flight is four hours late, still you will stay. Why? Because the longer we wait, once the flight comes in and we glimpse our Beloved, the greater our enjoyment is! We feel the extra two hours was worth it, no problem. We love to stand there, we enjoy the waiting, we enjoy the anticipation of seeing our Beloved! Just the thought of seeing him makes us happy! Even the waiting is so thrilling, we enjoy it! And this actually changes the whole quality of waiting: it ceases to be waiting in fact. Instead, the waiting for becomes waiting upon. You know the difference between these two, hmm? Waiting upon our Beloved. This is true *saburi*.



GURUJI: *Na-ishta* means no *ishta*, there's no "my *ishta*", there's no "your" choice or liking. Always keeping your focus, keeping your object in view, always mindful of why you've come – that is *nishtha*. Always that attention, that carefulness, that focus – that is *nishtha*.



GURUJI: Suppose our Beloved is arriving by train and we want to be at the station to meet him. We arrive already one hour before the scheduled time to ensure we won't be late. We are looking forward so much to seeing him that we are waiting happily – this is *saburi*. And while waiting, in order to be ready to receive him, there are several things that need to be done: we have to enquire about the platform, check the time of arrival, find out the compartment, then stand at the right place and be alert. Our waiting and eagerly looking in the direction of the expected arrival won't make the train come sooner. But when it comes, we are prepared, we are able to glimpse our Beloved as soon as the train comes in, and we are ready to receive him. All these preparations are what *sadhana* is about – it is the art of "happily waiting", the art of readiness and receptivity.



DEVOTEE: In the *Sri Sai Satcharita* it is written that Baba's guru first got Baba's head shaved and then asked him for two *paise*. Does that mean that only after all his thoughts were cleared that he was asked for *nishtha* and *saburi*?

GURUJI: If everything else goes, then what remains is *nishtha* and *saburi* – total, loving attention, waiting upon the guru. That is *nishtha – saburi*.

DEVOTEE: That's what remains?

GURUJI: That's what remains. These were the only two *paise* that actually remained with him – and even these were to be given as *dakshina*!



Guruji's voice

