



# Rose Petals

Extracts from  
Sri Babuji's Satsangs

## Guruji's Baba

DEVOTEE: How did you come to Baba, Guruji?

GURUJI: It's not that I "came" to Baba. I always liked looking at him. And whenever I looked at his photo, it was almost as if he were alive, as if he was interacting and responding to me – not that he was appearing or "giving messages" – not like that! But whenever I looked at him there was something that was so dynamic, there was so much rapport between him and me.



DEVOTEE: Would you share your first experience of Baba?

GURUJI: First, second, third...there is nothing like that! My experience was that when I looked at him, even when I was a small boy, somehow I always felt attracted. There was a sense of belonging. That could be called my first experience.

I didn't know what Baba was, I didn't know his name – nothing! When I was a boy there was a photo of him in our house and I used to ask my grandmother who he was. All the gods and goddesses had crowns and jewels, some looked human, some had animal faces – there were various kinds – but he looked different from them. He looked so human, like any ordinary person. He was the only one among the whole pantheon that was like that.

So I used to ask my grandmother, "Who is he?"

She didn't know anything about Baba, but she was a teacher and she never said, "I don't know." [Laughter] Elementary school teachers never say "I don't know" to children! [Guruji chuckles] They'll give an answer to everything, whatever the question, even about the relativity theory they'll say something! So when I asked, "Who is that Sai Baba?" she said, "He's a big Siva *bhakta*."

"And what is he doing?"

In the picture, there was a small horse and some hills or mountains. I think those paintings can still be seen, if you look in the old houses.

"He lives in the Himalayas and is doing *tapas*."

"On whom is he doing *tapas*?" – because what we knew about *tapas* was only from the movies. [Guruji laughs] In movies like "Bhukailash", they used to do *tapas* on Siva. So, "On whom is he doing *tapas*?"



Guru Purnima, 2003

“On Siva!”

She used to give answers spontaneously. So, a Siva *bhakta* living in the Himalayas – that was the picture I had! That’s all. My grandmother didn’t know anything about him, not even that he had lived in Shirdi. I too didn’t know anything about him, but somehow I had a feeling... Whenever I entered the shrine in our house, I used to look at him more and more. Somehow I liked him, he looked so tangible, so human, someone with whom I could easily relate. The other figures looked so strange to me.

That was my first experience – and that was also my first knowledge of Baba. It was not because somebody told me about Baba, his greatness, his *mahima*, that I got attracted to him. Without any knowledge about him, I got attracted.

I didn’t read about Baba’s life for a long time and I went to Shirdi only in 1977. But whenever I thought of a Satguru or somebody who could help me, who could do something for me, who could be so understanding, with love and affection, and who would respond just like a parent when a small child asks for something – how the parent gives – that is how Baba appeared to me.

And I couldn’t think of anything else. I was not conditioned by any tradition, any devotion, any gods, goddesses, temples. I was fortunate in not having all those influences [Guruji chuckles], so my mind was clean, like a piece of white paper. So only Baba’s picture was there.



DEVOTEE: At what point did you recognize Baba as your Satguru?

GURUJI: I didn’t “choose” Baba like that. It was not that at a certain point I felt, “Oh, now Baba is my Satguru, I will take him!” No! Because I have to use these words – “my Satguru” – I talk like that, but it’s not the feeling in my heart. If you ask me, “Who is your Satguru?” Yes, Baba is my Satguru. That is the word you are familiar with, so I use it. But I don’t see it like that, because that sounds rather formal, as if there is some underlying motive in it, some relationship in which he wants something from me and I have to do something, or some principle, some philosophy, some metaphysics, all that stuff – but I don’t have that feeling. To me he’s my caretaker, my parent, my grandfather... just like that.



GURUJI: At college I was very closely associated with a professor, my English lecturer; he was like a guru – though not a spiritual guru – and I was almost like his pet. He didn’t have any devotion or spiritual tinge at all, but he belonged to the same department as Bharadwaja Master<sup>1</sup>. Master was head of the Department of English. I started sitting every day with Bharadwaja Master, as I had been sitting with the English lecturer, though that had been mostly about English. During that period, the English lecturer was transferred. Before he left he saw a picture of Baba in a shop, and because Bharadwaja Master was a Sai devotee, he bought it and presented it to him. About a week or ten days later, Master presented it to me. I had the picture with me when I went to say goodbye to the English lecturer.

“Oh, that is the picture I presented to Bharadwaja! Has he given it to you?” he said.

So it was almost like Baba handing me over to Master. It was so symbolic to me.

I took the picture home with me. There was already a small picture of Baba in my house, but this was a big one. When I got home that night and wanted to install it, to my amazement,

---

<sup>1</sup> Guruji is referring to his guru, Master E. Bharadwaja (1938–1989).

the other Baba photo had gone! The frame was there, but there was no Baba picture: the frame was empty!

DEVOTEE: Why? What happened?

GURUJI: What happened was – rats! [Guruji laughs] It was an old photo. A rat had taken the photo from the frame and eaten it. Later we found some of the pieces in a corner. It happened on exactly the same day. In the morning that photo was there, and when I got back to Kota<sup>2</sup> at about 1 or 2 that night and went to the puja room – shock! (Laughter) Everybody in the house was shocked. “What happened? What happened?”

DEVOTEE: Did you think it was inauspicious?

GURUJI: Yes, it was definitely inauspicious – that was Baba’s picture! But Baba was already there – the new big picture. So I moved all the other pictures to one side – because like in any normal Hindu household there were many – and then placed the big Baba picture there.

I used to sit in that room just looking at Baba. I did not know any *sadhanas*. I did not know about Baba. I hadn’t read his biography. I did not know he was a Satguru and was going to help me, or that he had powers. I knew nothing. But when I sat in front of him, that feeling of being intensely troubled, like having a severe migraine, lifted. So I needed to sit more, more, more. The moment that I went away, it started again. So I used to sit for hours and hours – not as a *sadhana*, not that somebody had told me to do it, but out of need, that is what I am saying, out of my own migraine headache. By “migraine headache” I don’t mean a physical headache; I didn’t have any headaches at all. It was a different matter, a kind of internal migraine.



DEVOTEE: Did it happen suddenly for you? That one day you didn’t have much to do with Baba and the next day suddenly Baba was the object of your love, completely, totally? Did it happen like that?

GURUJI: Something was there which I did not know: love for something. My mind was struggling for something. When I saw Baba I realized, “Oh, this is the one I have been searching for.”

DEVOTEE: Was that recognition of Baba as your object of love enough, or was it just the beginning?

GURUJI: It was the beginning.

DEVOTEE: The beginning of what, Guruji?

GURUJI: The beginning of trying to experience it in a more and more concrete way. For example, when you need accommodation, you look for a good house and you go on looking. You have an idea of what a good house is, you have your own specification, your own concept, and you try to see each house. “No, it’s not that, it’s not that, it’s not that.” Then you see one, “Ah, this is the one! This is the right one.” But that is not the end, it is the beginning. You have to see who the owner of the house is, what the rent is, whether it fits your purse, and whether the owner will actually give it or not; there are so many things. So it is only the beginning. It is the end of something and the beginning of something else.



---

<sup>2</sup> The small town in Andhra Pradesh where Guruji’s family was living at the time.

DEVOTEE: Everyone in the world is searching for security of some kind. For some people it's in relationship, for others it's their family, or money, or whatever. I know this may sound like an odd question, but in my heart, I'd like to ask it: what is your security, Guruji?

GURUJI: Baba!

DEVOTEE: You find all your needs met through him, in the same way that worldly people find their security in...

GURUJI: Yes! I don't feel the lack of anything. Baba gives me everything. It is more than security, because security is that which protects what we have, or protects us from any further danger, but this is almost a kind of a wish-fulfilling tree. It not only protects what we have and secures us from further impending danger, but it also fulfils our wishes.



GURUJI: What is very important is that sense of belonging, that experience, that remembrance, "I belong to Baba and Baba belongs to me!" That is enough. As long as you remember this, that is real *smarana*. *Smarana* means "remembrance".

DEVOTEE: Will the belonging always be there, not dependent on getting what I ask from Baba?

GURUJI: If you have that sense of belonging, then even if Baba doesn't give, that experience won't go. For instance, you have a child. You very much expect her to pass her school exam, but she doesn't. Do you stop loving your child? Why do you still love her? Because she belongs to you! Whether Baba gives or not, once you have that experience of belonging, *everything* is done. That is enough. It sounds so simple, but it is not. What we are all trying to achieve is that: to realize that sense of belonging, that identity.



GURUJI: The enquiry, "Who am I?" is a question of one's identity; people experience their identity in different ways. Some people may experience it as "I am *atma*, I am Brahma, I am Ishwara, I am the son of Sai Baba, I am the son of Arunachala. I belong to him, he belongs to me." Ramana Maharshi said he felt possessed – "*avesham*" was the word he used. Because it belongs to you, you want to possess it, you want to experience it.

That "possessiveness" is not a negative thing; it is beautiful, in fact, to be possessed by a greater identity. And that sense of identity is the crux, it is what transforms, because all our thoughts and all our emotions are based on it. Once our identity starts changing and transforming, then our whole life and all our experiences also start transforming. That is the root: identity. That is why Bhagavan said, "Know who you are. Who am I? Who am I?" First know your identity. Don't try to identify yourself, but know your identity. There is a difference. Unless we lose the present identity we won't get the real identity, whatever it is. Bhagavan didn't say what it is, but it's enough if *we* know *our* real identity.



GURUJI: If you get something, some happiness, you share it with others. I saw a treasure in Sai Baba. I experienced something. When you come here, I share my experience with you. I don't call anybody, but I don't refuse anybody. Why? Because Baba himself said, "Whoever

comes to you, remember that I have sent them. They have come to you because of the karmic relations that you have with them.”

So because of past karmic relations we are all sitting here like this. And I treat you as Baba’s *prasad*. I want to respect you. I have to do all that I can. What I can do? I can only share. That is what I am doing. It is all an expression of my love towards Sai Baba.



Guruji's voice

