

2. Sai As Inner Resident

The Chair of your temple (*mandir*) committee said just now that I have come a great distance, after an arduous journey, and he thanked Me for what he called My kindness. Let Me tell you that it is your penance (*tapas*) that has brought Me here today. I have come and stayed in this town four or five times before, but this is the first occasion on which I am directly conferring bliss (*anandam*) on so many thousands of people. This is the consequence of the years of devotional singing (*bhajan*) done at this place by sincere devotees, the months of toil and exertion undergone by Chari and others to construct this temple, get this idol ready, and make all arrangements for this function.

He also said that the reign of Sai had been established and that this unprecedentedly vast audience of persons from this city and the surrounding areas is proof of that fact.

Well, you are seeing signs of widespread Godliness, no doubt. More and more lectures, more and more books, more and more spiritual groups are evident; more people go on pilgrimage; more and more temples are being renovated; all types of sacrificial rites (*yagnas*) are arranged and carried out; thousands gather and disperse. In all countries and in all languages, men are praying more and more, turning toward the Lord for the blessing of courage and equanimity. These are days of doubt, anxiety, fear, division, and distress, so people need consolation and support. Even scientists who were all along proud that they could explain the universe and put it into a formula are getting humble on seeing the vaster and vaster vistas spreading before them at every step.

Lesson that all thinking men are learning

Dr. Bhagavantam was telling Me how scientists are baffled; they open one door after another with tremendous effort, only to enter a corridor that has a dozen closed doors challenging them to further effort! It is a never-ending process, this pursuit of the objective world (*prakriti*), this attempt to unravel the mysteries of illusion (*maya*). If you yearn for joy and peace, turn rather to the Lord, who lays down the Law; that is the lesson that all thinking people are learning now.

But attending such meetings, sitting quietly like this and listening to Me, is not enough. A person who claims to have gone to the shore of the sea and played with the waves must produce as evidence at least a pair of wet feet, is it not? So too, when you come to this sea of company of the pious (*sathsanga*) and share the waves of bliss, the proof is in the eye becoming wet with weeping; in the heart that exults when another is happy. Even when you listen, gather the honey as the bee does when it visits the flowers.

The Chair said the world is becoming full of Sai (*Saimayam*), that the name of Sai (*Sainamam*) is on everyone's lips. I want it to go deeper. And I do not insist that it should be the Name "Sai". The world must become full of the Supreme Soul (*Paramatma-mayam*); that is all, however many Names and Forms that the Supreme Soul may have on the lips of people and before their mental eyes. It is the same substance poured into different moulds. Like sugar dolls that children seek, cats and dogs, cows and horses, they are all of the self-same sweetness; this child prefers this shape and this name; the other one weeps for another doll. The same divine substance appears in different times and places, assuming different Names. When the forces of evil and hatred overwhelm them, the Good accept the Lord as their Charioteer, and He enables them to overpower foes.

“Establishment of righteousness is My Task”

This day deserves to be recorded in letters of gold because of this reason. Moreover, this day is unique because it is rare that an *Avatar* installs the idol of another. I Myself find it rather amusing. Of course, Rama installed the *Sivalinga* at Rameswaram before He started out for Lanka for the extermination of the evil-doers. Now, there is no question of extermination. My task is the establishment of righteousness (*dharma samsthaapanam*). And now that I am entering on this task of this Incarnation, I am also installing this idol prior to that task.

It is now over 18 years since the Manifestation of Sai as hooded snake (*naga*) took place on this spot, but it has taken you all these years to complete the erection of the temple and the installation of the Image. Well, the years accumulated to 18 not without reason. It is all in the Plan. Eighteen is a mystic number, having a profound meaning. I find 18 persons in the podium here; they represent the 18 officiators of the ritual-sacrifice (*yajna*): 6 for the world (*jagath*); 6 for time (*kala*); 3 for the mind, thought, and intellect (*manas, chitha, and buddhi*); the pair that perform the ritual-sacrifice as the initiated couple; and lastly, *Atma*, the Witness.

I am installing the *Nagasayi* (statue of Shirdi Sai with hooded snake) in the temple, but that is just a symbolic act. I require that at that very moment, chosen because it is very auspicious, you should instal Him in your heart; make Him your inner resident (*hridaya-sthaayi*, heart level)!

Have a correct scale of values

What exactly is the meaning of “Sai Baba”? *Sai* means *Sahasrapadhma* (thousand lotuses), *sakshatkara* (realisation, direct experience of the Lord), etc., *Ayi* means mother, and *baba* means father. Thus, “Sai Baba” means He who is both Father and Mother and the Goal of all *yogic* endeavour — the ever-merciful Mother, the All-wise Father, and the Goal of spiritual efforts. When you are groping in a dark room, you must seize the chance when someone brings a lamp into the room. Hurriedly collect your belongings scattered there, or discover where they are located, or do whatever else you need. Similarly, make the best of this chance when the Lord has come in human form to your very door and get ready to save yourself from disaster.

The undue importance now attached to the satisfaction of sensual desires must diminish as the result of your association with sacred books and saintly personages. You know that the dream world is a fantastic world of nonsense, where fifty years are compressed into five minutes and where weird incidents and things are taken as actually present and experienced. But let Me tell you that from the stage of Realisation, even the waking stage, when you analyse the dreams and declare them as invalid, is equally without validity. Therefore, have a sense of values, a scale of values rather; give everything, everyone, its worth or their worth, not a whit more.

Five sheaths encase the *Atma* and hide its splendour from revealing itself. Make all these pure and shining. The physical sheath (*annamaya kosa*) must be purified by good, clean, pure food; the vital sheath (*pranamaya kosa*) by calm, steady breathing and an equanimous temper; the mental sheath (*manomaya kosa*) by holy thoughts and emotions, untouched by attachment to senses or unaffected by joy or grief; the wisdom sheath (*vijnanamaya kosa*) by contemplation of the reality; and the bliss sheath (*anandamaya kosa*) by getting immersed in the ecstasy of God-realisation.

Do not run after all and sundry

Stick to your faith; do not change your loyalty as soon as something happens or someone whispers. Do not

pull down Sai Baba's picture from the wall and hang some other picture there at the first disappointment. Leave all to Him; let His Will be carried out — that should be your attitude. Unless you go through the rough and the smooth, how can you be hardened? Welcome the light and the shade, the sun and the rain. Do not think that only those who worship a picture or image with pompous paraphernalia are devotees. Whoever walks straight along the moral path, whoever acts as they speak and speaks as they have seen, whoever melts at another's woe and exults at another's joy — they are devotees, perhaps greater devotees.

Baba is beyond the keenest intellect, the sharpest brain. Why, even the seven sages (*rishis*) failed to grasp the Sublimity of Godhead. Mahlaspathi, Das Ganu, Mudholkar, Kaka Saheb saw but the fringe; Dadha had just a glimpse. So do not try to delve into Me; develop faith and derive bliss (*ananda*) through love (*prema*). That is the utmost you can do; do that and benefit. Do not run after all and sundry who blabber textbook stuff and wear the cloak of fakir-hood (mendicancy). Examine, judge, and admire. Examine the daily conduct, the motive, the outlook, the trend of the advice, the coordination between what is said and what is done.

When you join the congregational music of divine Names, as you did some time ago, you had to sing in tune with the rest, is it not? Otherwise, your voice becomes harsh to the ear; it grates. So too, a life that is not in tune with the plan that the Lord has laid down spoils the melody, grates, and is felt to be a disturbance. Hence, follow the Divine Plan. That is to say, have one hand on the path of Supreme Reality (*Brahma-marga*) and the other on the path of righteousness (*dharma-marga*). These two will take you across and over the sea of birth and death.

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Devotion, sacred knowledge (*jnana*) and detachment are the three stages of spiritual progress. Devotion is the primary school stage; it leads one on to sacred knowledge, the high school stage; by means of sacred knowledge, everything is cognised as Supreme Reality (*Brahmam*) and the attitude of detachment is established. That is the college stage of the education of the Self.

Sathya Sai Baba