

36. Shirdi Baba's first miracle

SEEN physically Nature alone is perceived. But seen with the spiritual vision the entire universe is Bhagavaan alone. From the perspective of *Prema* (love) everything will appear Divine.

A young man who had studied Aadhi Shankara's Philosophy, came to me and said: "Svaami! Shankara says' *Brahma Sathyam: Jagath Mithya*. Please let me know what is the truth and what is unreal."

Svaami told him: "You simpleton! Leave it to Nature to demonstrate what is real and what is unreal. Concern yourself with knowing your own reality. There is no need for you to enquire into the nature of *Prakrithi* (the phenomenal universe). Do not argue." A man who is not aware of his own true nature, how is he competent to know about the reality or otherwise of the cosmos?

A man regards his visible body as real and the invisible Spirit as unreal. He does not realise that the invisible is the cause of his pleasure and pain. "Let no one imagine that beauty, youth and vitality will last for ever. Old age is looming ahead and will bring in its train all miseries."

Dheha and Dhehi

There are two entities in man: the *dheha* (body) and the *Dhehi* (the Indwelling spirit). The body is governed by three factors: *Vaatha* (wind), *Pittha* (bile) and *Kapha* (phlegm). The wind factor is responsible for 80 types of diseases. The bile accounts for 82 kinds of ailments, phlegm is the cause of 224 types of maladies. In all, the three account for 386 types of diseases. Recognising the multitude of disease to which the body is prone, the sages of yore sought to give up attachment to the body, while taking care of it for essential purposes.

Many of these diseases are insidious and hence may not be noticed in an apparently strong person. Disease lies hidden in almost every action of man from breathing to eating. The body by its nature is perishable. But the *Dhehi* (the Indwelling spirit) is undying. Through the impermanent body, the eternal spirit has to be experienced. Men are immersed in seeking the passing pleasures of the senses forgetting the lasting bliss to be derived from the spirit. People should realise that true happiness can be got only by union with God.

Some people imagine that God bestows excessive grace on a few, appears to be indifferent towards some others, and totally to ignore some others. All these are only the aberrations of the people having such thoughts. For God all are the same. You can see your true image only in a glass covered on the rear with the mercury of love. Everyone says he has not experienced God, it is not God's fault. The feeling that God favours some and not others is born of jealousy.

I would relate an episode from the boyhood years of Shirdi Baba.

Shirdi Baba and Venkuusa

When Shirdi Baba was about ten years of age, Patel took him to Venkuusa. Patel had a dream in which he was told: "Patel! You are not likely to live long. The boy whom you have brought up so far cannot be looked after by anyone. There is a person called Venkuusa in a certain place. You take the boy to him and leave him in his care."

Venkuusa was giving spiritual lessons to a number of boys. When the young lad was being brought to him, Venkuusa had a premonition of his coming. He called the lad: "Aaoji! Aaoji

(Come, Come). I have been waiting for you all these years." He spoke lovingly to the boy and asked him to go in and have his food.

From then onwards, Venkuusa developed great affection for the boy. Seeing this, the other students felt envious and started talking about him among themselves. "How is it that the teacher is showing so much love for the new boy? We have been here for years. He has not shown us such Love." This was the way some of them spoke. Some others said: "He is lucky to have such love." Some others remarked, "perhaps our teacher expects some money from Patel, who is a wealthy man."

Plan to kill Baba

The attachment between Venkuusa and the young Baba grew steadily from day to day. One day both of them were going to a forest called Sikhaara. After they had gone, the other boys drew up a plan to do away with the young Baba. "Then Venkuusa will have greater liking for us," they thought. They went to the forest and took rest behind a hut. One of the bigger boys, according to the plan they had already made, took a big brick and hurled it towards Baba. Venkuusa had great love for Baba. Immediately on noticing the brick, Venkuusa stood in front of Baba and let the brick hit him. What was aimed at Baba struck Venkuusa. Blood was streaming from Venkuusa's head.

Baba immediately tore a piece of cloth from his robe and bandaged Venkuusa's bleeding head. When Baba and Venkuusa were speaking about the wound caused to Venkuusa, some of the boys came rushing towards them bringing a dead body. That was the body of the boy who wanted to kill Baba. "Biter bit," says the proverb. (If you intend to harm others, you will be harming yourself).

The boys cried: "Guruji! Forgive us" and fell at his feet. Venkuusa told them: "Children! I have grown old. This young lad is carrying on all the work I was doing. Love alone can protect you. When there is no love no one can save you." On hearing these words, the boys fell at the feet of Baba and placed the dead body before him. Baba burst into laughter. Why did he laugh? Not because he felt that the boy who intended to kill him was dead. He knew that death could come at any time, in any place and in any situation. Even at the young age Baba had realised this truth relating to the body. Baba transcended time. Age did not matter to him. He was the Cosmic Person.

He told the boys: "Today this boy has died. Your turn may come tomorrow. No one is immortal."

The boys cried: "How can we explain this calamity to the parents?"

Baba told them: "Tell the parents what actually happened."

The boys realised that if they told the truth they would be put to shame. If they told what did not happen, they would be uttering falsehood. Recognising their dilemma, Baba asked them: "What is it you want now?"

"Please restore the life of this boy." Immediately Baba placed the head of the dead boy on his lap and passed his hand over it. The boy revived. This was Shirdi Baba's first miracle.

Dust unto dust

Students should realise that the body is made up of materials coming from the earth and will go back to the earth when life is extinct. The body is like a mud pot which serves its purpose for a

time and when it is broken, it becomes in the course of time one with the mud from which it was made. A seed sown in the ground grows into a tree with branches, flowers and fruits. All the things in the tree have come out of the earth. Likewise the body is made up of the five elements. It must be used properly.

The essence of *Vedhaantha* can be summed up in one sentence: "The *Aathma* in you is the same as the Divine." Only those who have this feeling can experience God.

Discourse in the Sai Kulwant Mandap on 20-8-1996 when Bhagavaan narrated the circumstances in which Shirdi Baba, as a young lad of ten years, performed his first miracle by restoring to life a dead boy, who had intended to kill him.

One's duty is to act; act well, act in fear of God: act within the bounds of morality; act in love; continue acting; the consequences will naturally follow as the fruit flows from the flower. One need not worry or exult. Act enthusiastically, with faith, success is yours.

Baba