



NEW YEAR MESSAGE 2017

At times, people claiming to be on the spiritual path, say that they have no use for money and matters. On the other hand, people carrying on with material pursuits say that they need money and material things always. This is a mono-theistic view towards life and not a practical one towards human existence. The European writer Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel proclaims the theory of “Spirit Alone Is” whereas Karl Marx proclaims “Matter Alone Is”. Life is a synthesis of matter and spirit. A balanced life means the maintenance of a balance between spirit and matter in the right proportion. It is the spirit or soul which holds a dynamic human body in an organic form. Without the medium of a material body, the spirit cannot manifest itself and without the spirit within, the organic body is nothing but a dead substance. One needs to have a strong body to carry on with the spiritual practices. Therefore, the Yogis of yore always emphasized about the maintenance of physical excellence. Yoga and pranayama are the prescriptions. One may theoretically assert the existence of a subtle body within a gross body. However, the particles of the subtle body are basically gross in nature. The gravitational and magnetic forces also consist of material forces only. These two aspects of human life are balanced by the mind. Mind has two components: Imagination and Desire.

All the activities of the human being emanate due to imaginations and desires of various types. Saints like Shirdi Sai Baba always emphasized on the control of mind as a sine qua non to spiritual advancement. They also knew that it is not easy for a human being to control the two fundamental ingredients of the mind, i.e., imagination and desire so easily and within a short period of time. Examples show that Baba for decades, tried hard to evolve the minds of His devotees from its sheer grossness to lofty heights. He was keen to know the way in which His devotees used to think. He often asked His

devotees as to what they talked in Dixit wada or in some other place when they came to meet him.

Two anecdotes from Shri Sai Satcharita would explain the point.

Once Hemadpant and Balasaheb Bhate were sitting in Dixit Wada having a heated argument on whether one needs a guru. The discussion went on for some time and in the end remained inconclusive with both men losing their peace of mind. Later when both went with others to the Masjid, Baba asked Kakasaheb Dixit “What was going on in the wada? What was all that dispute about? And what was this Hemadpant saying?” Between the wada and the Masjid is a considerable distance. How then did Baba know about this incident? This shows Baba’s all pervasiveness and omniscience as He could read the minds of all, no matter at what distance they may be from Him.¹

Nanasaheb was once sitting in the Masjid when a Mohammedan gentleman from Bijapur came with his family to see Baba. On seeing veiled ladies with him, Nanasaheb wanted to go away, but Baba prevented him from doing so. When one of the ladies removed her veil for saluting Baba’s feet, Nanasaheb, who had a glimpse of her face, was extremely attracted by her beauty. Knowing Nana’s restlessness of mind, Baba spoke to him after the lady had left the place, “Nana, why are you getting agitated in vain? Let the senses do their allotted work or duty, we should not meddle with their work. God had created this beautiful world and it is our duty to appreciate its beauty. This again shows how Baba knew what was going through His devotee’s mind and how He helped them to control it and evolve.²

We should sincerely pray for getting the inner strength of mind and ethical conduct.

Jai Shri Sai

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¹ Indira Kher (1999). Shri Sai Satcharita: The Life and Teachings of Shirdi Sai Baba. Sterling: New Delhi, Translated from the original version in Marathi by Govind R. Dabholkar. See chapter 2.

² *ibid.*, chapter 49