



RAMNAVAMI MESSAGE 2007

OM SAI

“The Friend and Foe Syndrome”

When in distress we seek for someone to help us. We pray God for His divine intervention. We try to cash on the social position of our relatives and friends alike for that purpose. However we do not, at times, get the desired help, all our efforts notwithstanding. On the other hand, at times, someone unexpectedly appears on the scene and helps us. Then we thank God for sending such a helpful friend. Thereafter while introducing this friend to others we address him as “my friend”. In this context keeping in view the basic principles of the Hindu karma theory as pronounced in our scriptures and practiced by the spiritual masters, a moot question need to be answered i.e. does or does not the cause and effect dynamics operate here? The karma theory would say that this helpful friend was an associated character of a certain past life and was to pay back the good act of rendering help as Rinanubandh (payment of the past debts). It means that by one’s deeds of the past life (lives), one has earned this friend. Be as it may, let us examine this issue from the point of view of the sudden appearance of an enemy at a certain distressful point of time in life. Our immediate reaction begins from annoyance and leads to revenge ex-anger. There after we normally start vilifying him and address him as “my enemy”. Thus, our entire life sees the world as full of “my friends” and “my enemies”. But if “our friends” were created by our past deeds, which we glorify secretly then is it not logical that “our enemies” must have been created by certain acts committed by us in the past life (lives). Let us therefore agree to say that in our lives “my friends” and “my enemies” have to be equally addressed to, as both have been created by me and are “mine”. Since both of them have been created due to karmic bandhan (Rinanubandh) isn’t it our duty to neutralize the effects of both in this life so that we don’t carry forward the seeds of cause-effect to the next life. Herein karma theory would say that a friend returns the pleasurable experience(s) as we had given same or similar pleasurable experiences to him in past life. Similarly an enemy would pay back the unpleasant or painful experience(s) because we had given him same or similar painful experience(s) in the past. When facing a situation of unhappiness created by the enemy we have two options to deal with him-either by going through

painful experience(s) we neutralize its effects or by reacting adversely we carry forward a chain of reaction to future lives. Here comes in the wisdom of saints like Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. The story of the frog and snake named as Chenbassapa and Veerbhadrapa respectively as illustrated in Shri Sai Satcharitra is a pointer towards the correct answer to our question. Shri Sai Baba has advised his devotees not to react sharply and adversely towards enemies with equal and opposite negativities but to allow negative effects of past karmas reflected through the enemy to neutralize gradually. This highly evolved and critical theory of Karma (cause and effects) can perhaps be better understood through a simple example. Suppose one releases an arrow from a bow, then what happens! The arrow at the release point will move with the highest velocity and will gradually slow down due to mid-air friction and take a curvaceous path due to the gravity of earth before hitting the target. However, the moment it hits the target or failing which hits the earth, its force is neutralized. This means that more the distance the arrow travels the less momentum it creates at the impact point. Greater distance means greater time and less impact. When we assimilate the basic principles of these two theories of metaphysics and physics, we come to the conclusion that instead of directly reacting to an enemies' wrath, it is wiser to show a little tolerance and allow time to reduce the impact of the enemies' conduct. When Shri Sai Baba spoke of "Saburi" it included this aspect of handling of enemies with patience and consideration. This message of the seers handed over to the human society from time to time is unfortunately lost sight of and that is the cause of most of the social malice that we face today.

Let us pray Shri Sai to give us the intellect and wisdom to make tomorrow's world a happier place to stay by following his principle of "Shraddha" and "Saburi"