

**Sai Pearls of Wisdom,
Part 47-D**

**WORSHIP OF BABA, PEDDA BOTTU – SARADAMMA
August 22nd, 2023**

**Om Sri Sai Ram
Prasanthi Sandesh**

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, Sai Pearls of Wisdom welcomes you.

Seshama Raju, the brother of Bhagavan, records the strange happenings that preceded the Declaration.

He would recall this way: “A change came over as soon as we returned from Hampi. When throwing away the books Raju said, “That boy indeed is Myself! I Myself am that boy!”

Word was sent to the school. Running home, I was astounded at seeing Him. There was a striking brilliance in His face.

I asked, “How long will you remain a boy?”

He replied, “Till *Maya* arrives!”

I could not make out what He said. Through science I understood (that) ‘mother’ was meant. We sent word and summoned her. For the three days it took for the parents to arrive, He had no meals or anything; no food at all! Nor did He utter a word!

Meanwhile the parents arrived. He wanted Mother to serve food and bring some water. He washed their feet. Mixing rice, tamarind soup, pickles and chutney altogether and sprinkling holy water on it, He had mother serve three morsels and added, “*Maya* is got out of the way!” As He was uttering these words, a bright light flashed, and creeping onto the wall behind, (it) departed!”

That was the narration of the happenings before He declared Himself as an *Avatar*.

Now, Seshama Raju went on to add two strange, though unverifiable details. Raju had earlier given him a ten-rupee note, a big amount in those days, for purposes of worship. He had seen it himself, moving about on its own.

Narasimha Das and Subbu Ratnamma would also recall the happenings of those momentous days. Together they gave a credible account.

Subbu Ratnamma would say, "By the time Sathyam came back from the Hospet visit, I had a younger sister. He took her and said, "You too fell in the *Maya*!" Then He named her Sai Prabha. He showed us the gold collar pin presented by the Bellary Municipal Chairman.

Das, Narasimha Murthy and I heard the school bell. We followed Sathyam to the school. As soon as we entered the school compound, He showed us the collar pin again and said it was a nice ornament for His collar. We heard the second bell. Narasimha Murthy and Sathyam went to their class.

I went to my class and my brother went to his class. Sri Seshama Raju Garu was my class teacher and he was teaching Telugu. Within ten minutes I tell you, Sathyam left His classroom and came to my class crying, and told Sri Seshama Raju, "I have lost My collar pin!"

Seshama Raju got angry and said, "Don't tell me anything! Go and tell your sister-in-law!"

Sathyam did not speak further, but walked out. He went to His classroom and took up His books. When our friend Narasimha Murthy asked Him what had happened and where He was going, He said, "Everything is *Maya*!" and walked out of the class.

"Father told me that when he noticed Him outside the school, He saw a load of brilliant light around Him! Father spoke to Him."

Sathyam then went to His brother's house, threw down His books and said that He did not want to go to school. We are told that He sat at a corner of the house. He did not talk much! He was only uttering, "Everything is *Maya*! Everything is *Maya*!"

Slowly people started to come in. He did not say anything. Someone sent a word for Seshama Raju, but he could not extract anything from Sathyam or understand His state of consciousness.

Somebody rushed out to call my father. He came and partially recognizing Sathyam's Divinity, He said, "He's not Sathyam! He's Sai Baba Himself!" and prostrated before Him.

He said, "Sathyam, You said that You would not come for lunch. All the children are hungry and are waiting!"

Sathyam immediately got up and said, "Let's go!"

All this time, we were at school and then we heard about Sathyam during lunch time. We all ran to His house. When Sathyam got up and walked out, we could not follow Him as He walked very fast.

Well, these are things you know that Seshama Raju mentioned; and Narasimha Das and Subbu Ratnamma mentioned. What more things wonder us than this? Wonderful!

Narasimha Das adds, "My mother had just delivered a baby girl but He asked her, "Where is the boy?"

My mother, thinking that He was referring to me, said, "My dear Sathyam! Dasu has not yet returned from school."

Then Swami asked in (a) deep tone, "No! Where is your boy?"

My father, who was nearby, came running and said, "Sathyam, my dear child! What is the matter?"

Immediately Sathyam said, "I am not Sathyam! I am Baba! I have to live for *Vishwa Shanthi* – welfare of mankind. Allow Me to do My work!"

Hearing these words, my father was stunned and noticing the bright illumination surrounding His form, he prostrated at His Feet! My father, (with) an unshaken devotion for Sai Baba, spread a tiger skin on the rough stone in front of our house."

This is the narration of Narasimha Das. Das further remembers that Raju sat quietly on the stone. After ten minutes, my father asked Him, "Are You ready for lunch?"

He immediately got up and had a few morsels of food which my mother gave, and (He) was completely immersed in Himself for two full days.

Subbu Ratnamma continues, "We started *bhajan* and *Pooja* with incense offerings. He did not get up. My father put a velvet pillow under His head. At *Arathi*, He opened His eyes which had turned red!"

He said, "I want to go to Puttaparthi!"

Narasimha Das completes the account thus, "He got up and wanted to go to His brother's house. My father requested Him, "You should be my guest for lunch before you leave for Puttaparthi!"

He agreed (to eat) before returning to Seshama Raju's.

Two or three days later, His parents and other relatives arrived. Sometime during the day following the momentous one, when not many people were around, Eswaramma and Seshama Raju approached Baba.

Eswaramma pleaded, “We are in *Maya*! We are *Maya*! But You are free from *Maya*, and we will not interfere. We’ll not argue. You can be whatever You are, but not in the Himalayas, not in the caves and hills, not away from us! Give me Your word that you’ll remain in Puttaparthi. Let Your devotees come there. We welcome them gladly and (will) treat them kindly!”

Baba agreed. “I have chosen Puttaparthi as My *Kshetra*!” He announced that, “The boon is granted -- not to you, but to the village, (to) the world itself! I shall leave this place and come back to Puttaparthi on Thursday!”

He further promised not to wear the ascetic’s ochre robes for some time. Eswaramma was greatly pleased. She could at least be near her son at all times.

Her happiness turned to embarrassment when Pandit Narayana Shastri came and touched her feet. “Swami’s mother,” he said, “Swami’s mother!”

One day, soon after the Declaration, an elderly lady approached the young Baba in the midst of this entire hubbub. Baba beckoned her to come close near Him. Then in Hindi, less heard in those parts, Baba said, “My child, at last you have arrived!”

To the stranger, it was a gush of old memories. Nothing much has changed. The voice and the tone were the same. Only the face looked younger. She remembered the time, two decades ago, when she had spoken to Sai Baba of Shirdi. Everything was the same, excepting the face. The lady had been born as the daughter of a Shirdi devotee who was a Collector in the Nizam’s Dominion.

Baba Himself had named her Sarada. She married early and lost all her four children. On one of her many visits to Shirdi Sai, whom she had been visiting from the age of three, she sought the boon of spiritual liberation from Baba. He made her promise upon oath that she would not reveal it to anyone until the time came. And then He made the historical declaration to her, “I will be reborn in Andhra, and you will then stay with Me forever!”

That was in 1917, a year before Sai Baba of Shirdi left His body. She later set upon an orphanage called Sai Sadan. During one of her fund-raising campaigns when she was camping somewhere near Uravakonda, she heard of Raju – a boy who claimed He was Sai Baba of Shirdi come again. She was determined to see Him. Her mind was at peace when the young boy spoke to her in Hindi.

That was not all!

The young Baba stretched out His hand and asked, “Let Me have the balance of sixteen rupees you owe Me!”

“Balance? Sixteen Rupees?” The lady was puzzled.

“Yes, indeed! Don’t you remember saving for the Dasara celebration festivities at Shirdi? You lent forty rupees out of it once to Balaram, remember? You sent only that sum for the celebrations! The balance due to Me is sixteen rupees! It is not simple arithmetic?”

“Oh My God!” the lady exclaimed. Who could ever remember such a trivial thing, even after such a long time, except Baba?

“I don’t need your money! It is only to assure you and reassure you of My Shirdi identity that I recall this. Besides this, it is to build your trust in Me, which you still lack! No wonder you sat by Me without touching My Feet!

In years to come, Sarada would come to Me later (and be) known as Saradamma, Shirdi Amma and Pedda Bottu!” Why? Because of that big dot on the forehead.

She would leave her Sai Sadan and come to settle down at Puttaparthi, where she would remain until her death on Christmas Day, 1986.

B V Narasimha Swamy, who wrote the Life of Shirdi Sai Baba in detail and established Sai Samaj in Madras, went to see this boy who claimed Himself to be Sai Baba.

He said to Seshama Raju, “Though we do *Prachar* – propagation of Sai Baba, we have not been as effective as this boy in spreading the name of Sai Baba. Whether He is an incarnation or not of Sai Baba, only time will tell!” He would also write about it in *Sai Sudha* magazine, the official organ of Shirdi Sai Samaj.

Later, when Baba would visit Kamalapuram after the Declaration, Boyapaati Venkata Subbaiah, a classmate of His school days at Kamalapuram, would ask Him what gave Him His spiritual powers.

Baba would put him off in a lighter vein by giving a quizzical reply, “One day Shirdi Baba appeared to me and put five items of food on a golden plate. After eating that food, I obtained this power!”

Anjaneyulu had taken a very significant step by inviting Baba to sit on ‘*Sai Baba Gondu*’ – *Gond* here meaning ‘boulder’. He made it clear that for him, both Raju and Sai Baba of Shirdi were one and the same. The spontaneous recognition can be indulgently compared to Mhalsapati spontaneously calling Sai Baba at Shirdi, ‘*Ya Sai!*’ *Ya Sai!*’ (which means) “Welcome Sai!” thus recognizing who He actually was!

In that respect, Anjaneyulu was the first devotee of this Sai Baba reborn. Years later, Baba was to say that Anjaneyulu was the first person to recognize Him as Sai Baba.

We will continue in the next session. Hope you all enjoy all these details relating to His childhood. And in this brief talk, I could bring to you a narration how Sarada or Pedda Bottu or Saradamma, who followed Shirdi Baba, who was with Shirdi Baba for some time, joined Sathya Sai Baba, having recognized that both are same, and spent the remaining part of her life and breathed her last.

We will meet in the next session. Thank you for your time.