

Sai Pearls of Wisdom, Part 48-A

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**Om Sri Sai Ram
Prasanthi Sandesh**

Sai Pearls of Wisdom welcomes you.

We have been basking in the biographic details of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We are all very immersed in joy. We have been getting responses from the listeners conveying their ecstasy, excitement on listening to these episodes. Now let's get into today's session.

Narasimha Das would narrate later that, "Baba, as Sathyam, had told my father that the granite stone on which He had sat, was very holy and those who worshipped it will have their wishes fulfilled. On the Advent of the Holy Grand Declaration, it became the first platform for Sri Sathya Sai Baba and was further sanctified. The stone stands as a symbol of the Divine miracles of Bala Sathya Sai."

"Later, my father was transferred to another place. The person who occupied our house had no children. Then my father told him to worship the stone and narrated its entire history. The gentleman and his wife prayed and worshipped the stone with great devotion and fervour. By the Grace of Baba, they were blessed with a son."

News spread all over Uravakonda that Baba would soon be leaving for Puttaparthi. When Tammi Raju and his wife heard that Baba was leaving, they invited Him for lunch and served Him with great affection. Tammi Raju's wife lamented tearfully that she would never see Him again. Consoling her, the compassionate Baba showed her successively all the *Dasavatars* – Ten Incarnations, on His chest.

Young Sitarama Rao felt very sad at parting from Baba. But Baba assured him and other classmates as well, "You are My schoolmates, My companions. I will be with you all again -- not now, but in a later birth. I can see you around Me much later, when I am with a long white beard!"

Narasimha Das would recollect Baba's last visit to their house: "He sent word that He would be leaving for Puttaparthi and that He would like to have lunch. He and all His relatives came. My parents did *Pada Pooja* to Him and His parents and garlanded them.

He asked my parents to bring the Shirdi statue. My mother brought it and kept it on a small round wooden platform, where she offered fruits and coconut. A photograph was taken.”

“A bus belonging to one Gattu Ramalingappa was brought to the house for Baba to board and it left with musical accompaniments to honour Baba. While getting into the bus, Baba told my crying mother not to feel bad, for He was always with her. With devotional songs and music, they bade Him farewell!”

History had been made at Uravakonda. The pious family, now burdened with the gift of the Divine Presence, returned together to Puttaparthi where a new beginning was to be made.

Well, that’s all the story with regard to His stay in Uravakonda.

Now, a new chapter in His biography starts from now on! We could rather say, “The Mission begins!” It was the beginning of a new phase in the life of Sathya Narayana Raju, as well (as) in the lives of those around. No more would He be addressed by their name. He was now Sai Baba, sometimes called Bala Sai.

The momentous day at Uravakonda had made a tremendous impact and people held Him in awe. It was a test of faith for the inhabitants of Puttaparthi to accept their former village boy Sathya as Sathya Sai Baba. The birth pangs of this new era of joy were painful, for while some looked with wonder or sympathy at the Raju’s family, others expressed hostility, disdain or sceptic disapproval.

However, associates would later remember that at times Baba had to be physically restrained since He was charged with intense energy. Two or more people had to hold His limbs tightly lest He should be overcome by uncontrollable power coming through Him. The elders insisted that He be kept under close observation.

The bus journey from Uravakonda culminated at Bukkapatnam, from where He walked briskly across the tank to Puttaparthi. Although the Chitravathi river was in spate, He walked through the flood waters with ease. Surprisingly, His clothes did not get wet! Others could neither follow Him nor keep (up) with Him.

Chinna Babaiah, a close associate, would recall later: “After a few days, His parents brought Him to Puttaparthi. He had spells of unconsciousness now and then. Soon after His arrival, He started *bhajan* singing with the Shirdi Baba idol in front of Him. He waved His hand, brought *Vibuthi*, fruits and the other articles of worship, yes, and gave these to the assembled throng. I teased Him, “Poor Sathya Narayana, You have learnt a lot at Uravakonda!”

“I used to move about with Raju. We would go on adventurous outings together, like boys want to, yes? My parents would scold me, “You are after a Bhatraju), the (inferior) community to which Swami belongs! He will spoil you. Mind your work!”

For a while, Baba stayed alone in the only room of His father. He had a picture of Shirdi Sai Baba and would always pray and recite *dandakam* – repeated chanting of God’s name. He would also sing *bhajans*, all by Himself. One day out of curiosity, two of His cousins – Jayamma and Lakshmi Devamma – both daughters of Venkata Subba Raju went and sat behind Him.

Baba asked them, “Why don’t you sing?”

They replied, “We cannot sing!”

Baba said, “You can! Make a beginning!”

They slowly started to sing and later became proficient. He would call them *Paatala Ammayalu*, ‘The Singing Girls’. Baba’s uncles, Venkatrama Raju and Venkata Subba Raju, played the harmonium and the percussion respectively. Sometimes Baba would wait until the sisters arrived to start the *bhajan* session.

Many people (were) coming to Baba seeking His help in solving their problems, most of which were related to evil spirits, chronic ailments and miscarriages. Most of these visitors were villagers for whom advanced medicine was unobtainable. They treated themselves with indigenous medicines attributing any cure or the absence of one to super-natural intervention. The practise of black magic was rampant and superstitions helped in making weak minds vulnerable to psychic manipulations, making incidents of possession common.

Baba was the last resort for such helpless people and they flocked in great numbers, seeking His presence. Soon these acts of healing became acts of immense love and grace, for they are not only made those less fortunate ones well again, but also sought to make them spiritually whole, a more complete soul.

Baba’s healing was a transformation through love, and transformation to love. One must realize that those who came actually responded to an inner call, which was spiritual in nature. The story of Subadramma of Patralapalli Pattnam, near Kadiri, is a telling example of the above.

Subadramma gave birth to six children – all of whom died at birth. Adding to this miserable state of affairs she was apparently influenced by an evil spirit which often troubled her. The family believed that the miscarriages were the influence of an evil spirit.

Subadramma was desperate for relief. The next time she was in the family way, she heard about Baba and the miraculous powers through friends and relatives. She went to Puttaparthi full of hope at the end of October 1943. Once there, she was overtaken by an illness that was again attributed to (the) influence of an evil spirit.

Baba materialized a banana and asked her to eat it in His presence. He also gave her a cup of water to drink. Baba then gave her holy rice and assured her that she would be blessed with a male child in three month's time. He also mentioned that she would have an easy delivery and that she need not have any more fear. Moved by her plight, He blessed her with some more holy rice and told her to keep it under her pillow during the delivery. Blessing her again, He sent her away.

True to His promise, Subadramma gave birth to a male child without any problem on 4th of January, 1944. Three months later, when Baba was camping at a place called Kuttagulla, she went there with the child to express her gratitude to Him. Baba took the child up in His hands and playfully patted him on the cheek. In response, the child cried out aloud and relieved itself on Baba's robe. Baba lovingly named the boy 'Sainath'.

On another occasion, when Baba was still living in His parents' house, some villagers from a neighbouring village brought a man whose hands and legs were tied. They said that evil spirits had possessed him. He had attacked and even bitten many people.

Baba had the man's hands and legs untied and brought before Him. He took the man inside the room and closed the door. After half an hour, the door opened. The man emerged completely normal and transformed.

However, these uncommon happenings did not justify to the local people how someone could be so different from the others. They wondered, 'Was it an evil spirit that possessed Baba? Or as others claimed, 'Was He divine?'

They felt the need to test and certify His Divinity by village standards. The day came when the elders of Puttaparthi, with Karnam Subbamma amongst them, approached Baba to test His Divinity. Baba, with a lantern in His hand, took some of them into a room, asking others to wait outside.

After they went into the room, Baba closed the door and sat in a chair. He then asked, "What is it, children? What proof do you want?"

They replied (that) they wanted some proof. The lantern went out and the room became dark. A brilliant light emerged from nowhere. The room was filled with the radiant light and they saw Baba as Maha Vishnu, sitting on the serpent couch. The fierce-looking snake spread the skin of its neck into a hood and extended its forked tongue.

The group trembled in fear and said, "Enough, Swami! We cannot bear it! Please take it away!"

Instantaneously, the lantern came on and they saw Baba sitting in the chair as before. Overwhelmed by the vision, they tried to touch His Feet, begging His pardon, but Baba told them, "Don't do it. You are elders!"

Thus, a new chapter of healing, a new chapter of miraculous wonders started when He reached Puttaparthi. Perhaps the Divine Mission started from here.

We heard what all that had happened in other places like Kamalapuram, Uravakonda and Bukkapatnam. And now we will be concentrating on His Divine mission in Puttaparthi.

Thank you for your time.