

SHRI SHIRDI SAIBABA'S AKRA VACHANAE OR ELEVEN PROMISES

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper are to analyse the Shirdi Sai Baba's Eleven Promises light the path to be taken on a spiritual journey by a devotee who yearns for spiritual progress. The type of research was a normative research with legal, historical, and conceptual approach. Research is conducted qualitatively with library research within primary and secondary legal sources. The outcomes of the research indicate that this journey has 11 steps, 11 stages and 11 prerequisites or 'life changing' qualifications that bring about a deep spiritual understanding of Baba's words. There are five Karma Indriyas, five Jnana Indriyas, and the one Anthakarna Chatushtaya that rules them. It is with their help that this journey of life is undertaken. The Anthakarna Chatushtaya consists of the mana or mind chitta or conscience, buddhi or intellect and ahamkar or ego. The five Karma Indriyas are touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. The five Jnana Indriyas are skin, tongue, nose, eyes and ears.

Key Words: Karma Indriyas, Jnana Indriyas, anthakarna Chatushtaya, Chitta, Ahamkar.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. ELEVEN PROMISES OF SHIRDI SAI BABA

The eleven promises have a deep spiritual meaning; if they are only taken literally, then one will not achieve anything and this journey will be unfruitful. Thus one has to ponder and meditate on the deeper meaning and decipher what Baba said in each and every promise. We must then try our utmost to inculcate them in our lives.

1.2. FIRST PROMISE

“One who steps on the soil of Shirdi,
All this difficulties will be warded off.”

This means that one who steps on the pure soil of Shirdi, all his sufferings will come to an end. Shirdi is that pious land on which Sai Baba, an incarnation of Lord Dattatreya – the Trinity God, appeared for the benefit, for the upliftment of His devotees. An incarnation that was and is fully for His devotees, bound to the Love incarnates bound to a mortal coil, is called the “Karma Kshetra”, resting place, home or place for this particular form to operate from, to spread the name, love, message of God, far and wide. During the course of this mortal journey when we go to Shirdi, we are actually entering the realms of our “true home”. Shirdi is that pious land which was the home adorned by the incarnation of the Lord God Himself – Sai Baba, to bless us with His Leelas. We get a very different kind of comfort, a rare contentment fills our heart, when we go to Shirdi. Its only because of this different, amazing and

pious feel that our pure, real self surfaces once we touch the soil of Shirdi. We are peaceful, an amazing peace fills us, a wondrous joy engulfs us and we experience that even today, in the horrendous pace of life there is a piece of land on this earth that is a part of the same, yet totally different, as it is amazingly, differently, pious and pure.

It is this satiation, this peace, the feel of true contentment that gives us a feel of our own true selves, a feel that we experience the minute we touch this pious land – SHIRDI. This pious land gets us face to face with our true self, where the artificial faces of this mortal coil are shed off one by one those innumerable artificial faces adorned by us due to the frightening pace of Maya. That is why Baba has said: *“One who steps on the soil of Shirdi, his sufferings will come to an end”*.

1.3. SHIRDI – AN ABODE OF SANCTITY

The Lord’s Grace is felt the minute we touch the soil of Shirdi. Some feel that their long stuck up work was accomplished and some are lost in the flow of divine vibrations they receive from here. A child may be far from his mother but he always gets her feel whenever he remembers her but when he is close to her, in her close proximity, then the flow of love and protection he gets in his mothers arms is far superior to just her thought. Similarly going to Shirdi is like getting the mothers embrace, through we were never deprived of her love even while we were far away. Shirdi is the pure threshold of our true, pious unblemished inner self. Shirdi is the self illuminative Brahmand inside each one of us. When we talk of putting an end to our suffering by stepping on the pure soil of Shirdi, we are actually talking of turning our thoughts, our vision, our entire self inwards to the light inside us. This is the real meaning of stepping on the soil of Shirdi. Turn your vision inside your own self to achieve the true self within, even while dwelling in this mortal coil.

Living anywhere in the world praying to Sai is like making a detailed plan of our life, but once we step on the soil of Shirdi the plan gets a proper stamp-is endorsed by *“Sai Naam”* and once the green signal is given in the form of the stamp then there is no problem in executing the same, i.e., entering, enjoying and always living in the realms of the Shirdi inside us, where bodily sufferings are like passing clouds which only give us a cool feel, cool breeze and move on.

1.4. SECOND PROMISE

*“Climbing the steps of the Samadhi
Generations of sorrow and suffering shall cease”*

One who steps on any one of the three steps of the Samadhi is actually crushing generations of sorrow under his or her feet. To climb up to the pious Samadhi and to reach inside the safe arms of the Dwarakamai one has to step on three steps, hence to reach the desired resting place. These three steps, in both the uplifting destinations, i.e., Samadhi Mandir and Dwarakamai depict the three stages of life – childhood, youth and old age. To cross the border, the threshold of life, to be enhanced from the body to the soul, to enter into the realms of spirituality, Bliss and liberation or moksha one has to cross the three stages traversed by this body, by making these three stages a means for our final deliverance, for the

attainment of God. Baba's Samadhi in Shirdi is a true representation of this entire creation, the true identity of our life is concealed in this pious Samadhi.

Baba had also said that, *"though I will cast off this mortal coil but my Samadhi will talk and communicate with everyone, as I will be "ever alive" from My Samadhi"*. So Baba's Samadhi is a resting place for the physical aspect of the Para Brahma that incarnated on earth and it is also the foundation of the ever alive spiritual or Godly self of the Lord Almighty. So the steps of the Samadhi are a direct ticket to the shores beyond, for Atmic elation, towards the Atman and bodily suffering automatically ends.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The material to be discussed in this paper is the Eleven promises or preachings of Shirdi Sai Baba who has made to His devotees that He has always stood by and made us experience. Each word uttered by Lord Sai is, in fact, Lord's own *Vani* or *Brahma Vakya*, which we have to assimilate to the depths of our heart and bathe in blissful joy, once we understand the same.

3. METHOD OF RESEARCH

The type of research used in this paper is normative research, reviewing the Shirdi Sai Baba's each promise is drenched with love and filled with pure, pious feelings. These precious promises are for each living being, entire humanity, in fact, for the human race itself.

3.1. THIRD PROMISE

"Even after I cast off this mortal coil. I will come running to the call of my devotees and for their benefit alone"

In this promise Baba has introduced us clearly to His Omnipresence, conveying that His being with His devotees is not dependant on, or a slave of a mortal coil. The body is subject to decay, hence it will cast off one day but the Lord God "always" comes running to any call of love from His devotees. No parameters of a body can bind "Him" from reaching His devotees in any form or the way He desires. After shedding off His mortal coil, even today Baba is "ever alive" for His devotees, in fact for one and all and is till date playing His Leelas for our benefit and upliftment. Wherever and whenever a devotee calls Him, that He appears in one way or another, without any delay, always protecting His devotees. In fact after shedding off His mortal coil He is illuminating this entire creation in a more Omnipresent, divine, formless self. That divinity which could never be concealed by the bondages of this mortal coil. He had adorned a coil to elevate, liberate, we mortal beings, who are always bound to things and happenings. For Baba, this body was only a cover of glass which was covering an ever illuminative light, like a burning candle. Even if this glass cover exists or is not there but the light from the candle will always illuminate everything, spreading far and wide.

3.1.1. FOURTH PROMISE

"Have full faith in your heart and the Samadhi will fulfill all your wishes"

In this promise Baba is not only introducing us to the pious feel of the Samadhi, hence introducing us to His immortal reality, inherent in the Samadhi but is also guiding and reminding us to

pay great attention towards the feelings of our mind, i.e., to keep our mind, our thoughts, clean and unblemished. To save *humanity* from narrow way of thinking, from the closed narrow inner thoughts, that Baba explained to us in this promise that His Samadhi itself will act as “*His alive form*” hence progressing us on the path of hope and faith. Even though Baba’s bodily form will not be visible but His Samadhi will be like His visible form, enhancing and spreading the fragrance of love and faith. It will act like a magnet, which will pull innumerable broken, rusted iron filings towards itself, hence giving us a feel of the touch stone, i.e., *Parasmani* to polish our devotion, love, surrender, and making our faith “*firm*” and unshakable like Himself, i.e., Sai. Baba has assured us that if we have “full faith” in our heart, then all our desires will be fulfilled by the grace of the Samadhi.

3.1.2. FIFTH PROMISE

*“Know that I am ever alive,
Experience and realize the truth”*

This promise, like all others, is also undoubtedly for our benefit alone as Baba knew that after His Mahasamadhi, once He is alive in His omnipresent form, we mortals bound to a body will try to search Him in the limited parameters of this body. To enhance us from this small way of thinking, Baba said that He is “*ever alive*”, at times in a form, as Sai, and at others is Omnipresent in every speck, each being, in me, in you, in fact everywhere. The authenticity of the promise, this Vachan can be felt by everyone, each being, even today, as the experiences that devotees got while Baba was in a body, we can feel even today, after Baba’s Mahasamadhi. Even today Baba comes running to the call of a devotee, the call may be from anywhere, from Shirdi itself or from across Seven Seas but His reply, different and Unique in each case, is the one that pleases the Lord and annihilates the devotee. His shedding off the mortal coil does not hinder Him from reaching anyone, anywhere, anytime, as He is Omnipresent. His Omnipresence many times, in fact over and over again by the medium of His teachings, precious sayings, visions and miracles. His Samadhi is illuminating this entire creation. One may be in any corner of the world but Baba shows His Divine Glimpse to one and all, by appearing to His devotees in innumerable ways, He satiates them.

3.1.3. SIXTH PROMISE

*“Show unto me he who has sought
refuge and has been turned away”*

Baba has said in the Shri Sai Satcharita that “people come to me like pots that have been placed upside down”. i.e., we are unable to imbibe what He really wants to grant us. We mortals are mere puppets in the hands of Maya. We are born of Maya, its Maya that sustains us, we are deluded in one way or another by Maya and we only yearn for the same in innumerable ways. We do worship the Lord but our thirst for Maya is ever alive. We go to the temple, worship Him but desires that surface are only material. That is why Sai Baba says, “*My lap, my pious embrace is lying empty*”. Further Baba has said, “Just reach me with open arms or tell me your needs, i.e., true needs of the soul”. Baba has also said in the Sai Satcharita that good thoughts always bear fruit by His Grace alone.

3.1.4. SEVENTH PROMISE

*“As are your feelings towards me,
So is the colour of ‘My’ inner self”*

Its our true inner feelings than can ferry us across this ocean of Mundane Existence. If our thoughts, our feelings are good then the off shoots of our Karmic cycle will also be visibly good, pleasing to our mind. If our inner self is filled with malice, hatred then even outwardly exhibited good behaviour or sweet words will not fill our life with sweetness. This entire creation is the Lord’s abode as He is Omnipresent. So if we move on the path of life with a clean and pure inner self them we will surely be recipients of the same feeling from the innumerable forms of the Lord, i.e., other beings. So its the feelings of our mind that pave our Karmic cycle and its these deeds that either reward or punish us, as we sow so shall we reap. Baba’s promise here enhances us towards the development of a pure pious inner self. It shows us the path, where we can shed off outer artificiality and be adorned by the beauty of a pious inner self.

3.1.5. EIGHTH PROMISE

*“All your Burden I will bear,
This promise will be ever true”*

The Lord may turn the direction of our life towards good deeds as Rama, Krishna, or Sai or in any other incarnated form by bearing the weight of karmic engulfment of our lives on His shoulders. He would carry us from the mire of sorrow to make us reach the unknown, unimaginable heights of joy, of bliss. We mortals are actually mere puppets in the hands of the Lord Almighty, the thread of our life is in His Divine hands. He makes us move, makes us dance to his tune, in life, as He feels like, whenever and whichever form but we are unable to see this invisible thread that controls us fully. Everything, may it be any work, deed, devotion, love, surrender, all is under the lords supervision, under His control, that is why Baba has said, *“I will bear all your burden. My promise will never be false.*

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. NINTH PROMISE

*“Come take all the help you desire, as what
you have asked for is not too far”*

We have often heard that the seed of happiness is hidden in sorrow, it is darkness alone that assures, that light will follow, we learn to get up and walk straight only after a fall, similarly its by the Lords Grace alone that we mortals can see or visualize the real mission of our life, i.e., deliverance by riding the vehicle of His Name even amid our wants and desires, while yearning for materialism, yet always calling or remembering the Lord. That is why Baba has said, *“Come take all the help you desire, as what you have asked for is not too far”*. We will take the spiritual flight, filled with the Lords love, to ultimately merge into love itself and love is nothing but God or as we say *“GOD is LOVE”*.

4.2. TENTH PROMISE

*“I will never be able to pay his debt,
who is always rapt in Me”*

A devotee who is ever chanting His Name, is rapt in the Lords love, is ever eager to get the Lord's glimpse, the Lord too is in search of such a devotee. The Lord is indebted to such a devotee as He cannot stay away from such loving devotion shown towards Him, He is always seen around His devotee, tied to His love. That is why Sai Baba has said, "I will never be able to pay his debt, who is always rapt in me". Embrace SAI, seat Him in the casket of your heart with your mind, body deeds, speech, i.e., completely, that even while dwelling in this body our soul gets a feel of being liberated, crossing the gives and takes the debts of this body and hence the soul merges into the super soul.

4.3. ELEVENTH PROMISE

*"That devotee is great who
has no other refuge but 'ME'.*

For example we need food when we are hungry, water alone can quench our thirst, joy alone puts an end to sorrow, one desirous of Maya can only dance to the jingling sound of coins. But a rare one wants, yearns and calls for the Lord alone in all situations-hunger, thirst, joy or sorrow. Such a one alone wants to "always" get a "feel" of His Lord, such a devotee is very dear to the Lord, is great. It is the Lords name alone that gets a glow on such a devotees face, the one who loses himself or herself in Lords devotion, His love and nothing else pleases such a one, he finds joy only in losing himself in the Lords lap as he knows nothing else but the Lord, such a one indeed is a "great" devotee. Such a devotee is really great and rare who has no place of rest or refuge in this world except Sai, Sai and Sai alone.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on results and discussion above, to conclude that, Thus this spiritual journey starts with the first promise "when your feet touch the soil of Shirdi your sufferings will be prevented", and ends at the feet of Lord Sainath. The devotee who is a seeker of Salvation has to bring about these changes in himself, with the aid of these Promises. And this is what Baba is trying to teach us through these Promises. Hence, we should not take the literal meaning of his Sayings, but meditate on them and try to decipher their deeper meaning. I fervently hope that each and every devotee will embark on this spiritual journey and find refuge at Baba's feet.

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