

Sri Shirdi Sai Baba

Life - Who is Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi

In mid 19th century, a young bearded man with sparkling eyes took shelter in a mosque, in Shirdi Village (of Maharashtra State, in India) . No one knew anything about this stranger who hardly spoke a word.

Gradually the curious villagers started offering food to the man, but he never asked anything from them. Sometimes he shared his food with the animals. Soon the young fakir, as he was started to be addressed, started expressing his view points with few elderly villagers. His simple language of expression and his special power of solving the problems of poor, needy and destitutes soon made this less known fakir, known as Sri Sai Baba. As the days passed, devotees started streaming into Shirdi in ever growing numbers. The village was fast becoming a centre of pilgrimage. As gifts and presentations flowed in, the pomp and ceremony of Sai worship were evolving. Everyday Sai Baba would be a pauper having distributed all among the needy and the poor. But Sai Baba's life of a Fakir remained calm, undisturbed, unaltered and therein is the saint's Spiritual glory.

People also realized that this "Baba" was no ordinary person but a person with extraordinary godly powers. Such powers are not known or present in normal human beings. Baba preached his principle of love and faith in humanity to all his disciples. He always felt anguished over the fact that all those who came to him were more for their own personal problems and not for attaining the ultimate goal of reaching God which he felt could be attained only by true service to humanity.

Sai Baba strongly believed in uniformity of religion and he never distinguished anyone on the basis of caste, creed or religion. He always made it a point not to return empty handed those who had come to him in their hour of need and grief. He performed miracles to alleviate the suffering of poor people. On one occasion he restored the eyes of a blind elderly and in another occasion he lighted a lantern with water when there was no oil to burn it.

As all good things have to end ultimately "Baba" also left his body on his own will on 15th Oct. 1918, leaving his millions of believers and followers crying. His body was laid in the Samadhi Mandir called "Buthy Wada", which he had asked his disciples to build before his death.



Teachings and Practices

Sai Baba was Unique, in that; he lived his message through the Essence of his Being. His life and relationship with the common man was his teaching. The immense energy that was manifest in the body of Sai was moving and is still moving in a mysterious way, creating and recreating itself everywhere, beyond the comprehension of time and space. Yet, he lived with the common folk as a penniless fakir, wearing a torn kafni, sleeping over a mat while resting his head on a brick, begging for his food. He radiated a mysterious smile and a deep inward look, of a peace that passes' all understanding. He was always and ever aware of what transpired within the hearts and minds of everyone, whether they be, his devotees or not. This Omnipresent and Omniscient Sri Sai Baba who left his mortal body in 1918, is the living spiritual force that is drawing people from all walks of life, from all parts of the world, into his fold, today. Sri Sai Baba lived as only a "God descended on Earth" and served the mankind, to free them from the clutches of fear.

All were treated by him alike. Under his umbrella, both the Hindus and Muslims happily took part in each others religious festivals. The caste scheme of the Hindus had no relevance with Shri Sai. He had introduced the tradition of group worship, group prayer and group dining for all. He even showed highest compassion for animals and birds and encouraged his devotees to feed and take care of them. He recognized no difference in temporal status of human beings. He refused to accept food brought in silver and gold utensils from a queen but relished a single ROTI (hand-made bread) of a beggar woman and showered all His blessings.

- He practiced and preached humanism and universal brotherhood - prophet like.

- He established the superiority of love and compassion above egoism - Christ-like.

- He taught simplicity of livelihood and excellence of human virtue reflected in day to day conduct, Buddha-like.

- He said that God penetrates everything and lives in every being, and as well that God is the essence of each of them – Hindu like.

Sai Baba left no written works, no spiritual heirs and anointed no disciples. He belonged equally to all, and all belonged equally to him.

SHRADHA

SABURI