

Ankita Children

The use of the term children for the pupils or disciples of a master is very ancient and very common. Guru Gita²²³ says, that the *Guru* removes the eight bonds of the child by cutting them off with his knife of mercy, the bonds being *Daya, Lajja, Bhayam, Ninda, Kulam, Vidya, Dhanam* and *Seelam*.

Karuna Khadgapatena

Chitva Pascashtakam sciscoh.

this means, Having cut off the eight bonds of the child that is the pupil by using his mercy, which may be viewed or termed as the knife. We have earlier referred in this book to the intimate relation between the *Guru* and the *sishta* that prevailed in ancient days in the *Gurukulas* and which must still prevail in the case of very ardent *sishtas* who get everything from the *Guru*, and who hope to achieve all that they want from the *Guru*. The *Guru* and his wife were father and mother to the pupil and fulfilled or more than fulfilled the functions of the God-father and Godmother. This was specially easy in those days, because the pupil left his parents, home and village and went as a tender child into the care and custody of the *Guru* remaining there till he attained majority, his interest being identified with the interest of the *Guru*. As an excellent illustration, it was pointed out that the pupil Arum gave up his life to save the water, needed for irrigating the fields of his master, from being lost to him. It has also been shown that the *Guru* himself should give up his life for the sake of his pupil. Baba expressly stated²²⁴ that he was giving up his very life for the sake of his devotee who is constantly dwelling and relying entirely upon him. In *Srimad Bhagavata*,

Rishabha says to his sons that a person who hesitates to save the life of his *sisya* is not fit to be called a *Guru*. Such being the intimate relation between *Guru* and pupil, one can easily understand that every possible facility is afforded to the *sisya* to rise to the full height of his stature, as the *Guru* himself being a man of perfect realisation, the *sisya* attains to the same. There being mutual love between the two and no sense of rivalry, everything known to the *Guru* is imparted. In more selfish persons, for example a father partitioning property between himself and his sons, the former conceals something and does not give a share to the son. Worldly *Gurus*, fearing that the pupil might eclipse their reputation, withhold sometimes part of their knowledge or power from the pupil. It was however recognised as part of the work of a perfect *Guru* that he should turn the *sisya* into his own likeness. The contrast between *Chintamani* and the *Guru* is that *Chintamani* or *Kalpataru Kamadhenu* gives only what is prayed for, but the *Guru* gives more than what is known and what can be prayed for, such as altering the nature and being of the *sisya* who knows not what he is and needs, and gives himself away to the *sisya* by converting him into his likeness. God-realisation or Self realisation is not a thing given, but the pupil is given the necessary preparation and facilities to attain the state. Then, the saying of Tukaram becomes true.

Apana Sarika Karitat Tatkal.

this means, The *Samartha Guru* turns the *sisya* immediately into his own likeness. Allowing some latitude for hyperbole for purposes of effect, there is substantial truth in this saying. Hence one may recognise that the highest use which any sane man can make of a *Guru* is to get the very highest benefit possible, namely, Self-realisation and God-realisation.

This is the highest but in the vast circle of *sadhakas* and of our readers, there are many who would not think of the highest at all, but would have their own hankerings or longings, which are by no means to be treated with contempt. For instance, the achievement of the position of an *Ankita* child may be referred to as one of the smaller or preliminary gains of the *sisyas* when approaching a

Samartha Sadguru. What *Ankita* means will be seen by the following stanza, which is part of Narayana's daily *Arati* song sung in places like Sakori and Shirdi.

Jo Saducha Ankita Jiva Jhala

Tyacha Ase Bhara Niranjanala.

this means, Where a *sadhu* has earmarked a pupil as one for whom he undertakes complete responsibility for both spiritual and temporal welfare and for the entire period of his life or lives, there every responsibility concerning that pupil's welfare rests upon the shoulders of that *Niranjan*, that is, one who is almost God in respect of his power and nature. This appears to be a truism or platitude, but is really a revelation of the existence of *Niranjans* and their *Ankitas* in present day life. *Niranjan* strictly means having no *Maya* or having crossed the borders of *Maya*²²⁵.

Daivi hi Eshaa Gunamayee Mama May a Duratyaya

Mameva Ye Prapadyante May am Etam Tarantite.

that is, This three fold *Guna*²²⁶ constituting My *Maya* is hard indeed for anyone to cross. But he who takes refuge and surrenders *Tan, Man Dan* to Me Iswara crosses this *Maya*. So, *Niranjan* is one who has crossed the three-fold *Maya* who has identified himself with Iswara and is possessed of *Ashtaiswarya* divine powers that can bear every responsibility of another soul without regard to place, time, or extent of time, that is, whether it is generations or centuries. One may be aghast at the idea that any responsibility can be undertaken indefinitely or for centuries. But Baba, being a *Niranjan* expressly undertook such responsibility. When Mahlasapathy was afraid that the Muslims would come and beat him for worshipping Baba with, sandal paste after he left the Mosque premises, Baba assured him that neither those nor any other persons could molest him either in this life or in any future lives of his. Baba told the Bandra youth, who prayed to him that he should be always with him in future lives, that he had already been along with him in previous lives and had been looking after him, and that for the three more lives that were necessary for him to be born to work out his remaining *karma*, Baba would be reborn and be with him. Similar assurances were given for indefinite periods to M.B. Rege. One reading the

Gospel of Sai Baba²²⁷, would notice that Baba referred to ten thousand years back, saying 'I was here ten thousand years ago'. He told Shama that for 72 *janmas* or births he had been with him and that he had never touched him at all till then. That is, he recalls events of 72 *janmas*, and knows he has been protecting his devotee all these *janmas* that is, over 2,000 years. Especially in this *janma* when Shama, an almost illiterate and helpless villager was obliged to depend entirely upon Baba, Baba looked after all his interests and provided him and his children also with means of subsistence, with comforts, with safety, and position as he provided so many others. When G.G. Narke was introduced to Baba, Baba declared that he had known him for 30 *janmas*. If a *janma* is roughly taken to be even 30 years, this takes us nearly a thousand years back. Hence, to give an undertaking which appears to be indefinite in point of time, is nothing for a *Niranjana*. The undertaking is also unconditional and indefinate in respect of the sort of attacks that may befall a *sishya*. Sri Rama said,

Sakrudeva Prapannaya Tava Asmi Iticha Yachate

Abhayam Sarva Bhutebhyo Dadami Etat Vratam Mama.

this means, If a person once surrenders and takes refuge with me saying, I am yours, I undertake to protect him from all creatures. This is my vow. Sri Rama does not limit either the time or the nature of the attack upon his dependants seeking protection. Similarly Baba, who is nothing but Sai Rama, gave undertakings indefinite in point of time, persons, or things, attacking devotees or the place. As far as we are able to see, both Ayodhya Rama and Shirdi Sai Rama kept up the promises that they made. See how Baba protected Gown and the coward Basappa, birth after birth²²⁸.

Some people thought and some may think even now that a *Niranjan* or God realised soul is wasting his time and attention in attending to such trifles as looking after the needs and comforts of the body of persons age after age and in place after place. In Baba's Gospel, it is pointed out that a devotee named Damia Rasne objected to people going to Baba for temporal benefits, employment, money, children and cure of disease²²⁹. Baba said in response to a devotee who

objected to people going to Baba for temporal benefit such as employment, money, children, cure of disease.

"Do not do that. My men first come to me on account of that only. They get their heart's desires fulfilled, and comfortably placed in life, they then follow me and progress further. I bring my men to me from long distances under many pleas. I seek them and bring them to me. They do not come of their own accord. I bring them to me".

Things like health, employment and other such concerns may appear to be trifles to outsiders but to the concerned devotees, they bulk so large as to shut out all idea of spirit or spiritual progress, and therefore great *Gurus*, *Samarthas* like Sai make use of the devotees' necessity to turn them into highly grateful devotees and persons prepared to march on under Baba's guidance towards the goal through the way that he may chalk out. In fact he said truly that though devotees thought that they themselves were going to Baba for such relief, it was Baba working unseen with them that was pulling them like a boy pulling a bird with a string. Baba, "However distant, even thousands of miles away, my people might be, I draw them to myself, just as we pull birds to us with a string tied to their foot".

Baba recognised no doubt the importance of *Paramartha*, that is, reaching the goal of life²³⁰, proclaiming that taking the devotees to their goal was his function, and incidentally for that he might take so many other steps. Baba having assumed responsibility for his *sishyas* regarded them as his trust and himself as their trustee. He said²³¹, 'I will not allow my devotees to be lost. I will account to God for all those that have been given to me', that is, all his *Ankita* children.

When the position of an *Ankita* child seems to be so grand and excellent, it is a wonder that people brush that idea aside and run after trifles and gewgaws. Baba said about himself, to Mrs. Kashibai Kanitkar of Poona²³². This is a *Brahmin*, a white *Brahmin*, a pure *Brahmin*. This *Brahmin* will lead lakhs of people to the *Subhra marga* and take them to the Goal right up to the end. This is a *Brahmin's* masjid.

To this *Ankita* child, the author, Baba gives many high and precious gifts and gives them even unasked. The mother does not wait for the child to say that the child is hungry but at the appropriate time gives it excellent food. Similarly acts the mother Baba. The wish of serious minded people is,

Anayasena Maranam Vina dainyena Jivanam

Dehi me Kripayo Sambho Raksha Raksha Maheswara.

this means, O Maheswara Siva, graciously grant me two things, first, a life lived without misery and secondly, a painless death at the close. Sri Sai without waiting for such a prayer from H.S. Dixit assured him soon after he went to Shirdi of both. As for life and the things of life, he told him, '*Arre Kaka, Tula Kalji Kasli, Maje Sara Kalji Ahe*'. That is, 'O Dixit, why have you any cares or worries? All care and responsibility are mine'. As for the second, Baba said that he would carry him, *Kaka*, in a *vimana*. Usually happy souls who go to Heaven after leaving the earth are said to be carried in a *vimana*. Tukaram who went with his human body to heaven is said to have got into a *vimana* that came to him. Srimad Bhagavata²³³ say that by *vimana*, happy souls are taken up to Heaven and enjoy in Heaven. In the case of Mr. Dixit, no visible vehicle arrived at his death, but his death was extremely happy and absolutely without pain. He had spent long hours in blissful communion with Baba along with Hemad Pant alias Anna Saheb Dhabolkar. Both went to board the train at Ville Parle, Kaka to go to Bombay and Dhabolkar to go to his own station. Looking at their watches they found that they were three minutes late, but luckily for them, when they went to the platform, the train also was three minutes late, and they were able to board it. Having got into comfortable berths, Kaka remarked to his friend, How gracious Sai Baba is! We ourselves are late and Sai has made the train late for us, for if it had already arrived in time and gone away, we would have to be stuck up for long hours. Shortly after that Dixit got into a comatose condition, and his friend thought that he was trying to sleep and put bolsters behind him. But the friend discovered that there was no breathing and no sign of hearing or of life. Thus the actual death was so peaceful, so quick and so happy. If this is not being carried in a *vimana*, what else is it? If one gushes with joy and gratitude to Baba at the

time of death, one reaches Baba. Such a happy death Baba has given to others also. But talking of *Ankita* children, Dixit is preeminently a model of the *Ankita* child. About the death being painless, we must add that it is not merely the question of absence of pain at the particular moment of death. What preceeds and what follows must all be lumped together. What is that which follows death? Life in the hereafter. The Gita²³⁴ says,

Yam Yam Vapi Smaran Bhavam Tyajati Ante Kalebaram

Tarn Tarn Eva Eti Kounteya Sada Tadbhava Bhavitah.

this means, Whatever form or object a person thinks of all the while and at the moment of death, he is transformed into that object after death, that is, in the next life.

Tasmat Sarveshu Kaleshu Mam Anusmara Yuddhyacha

Mayi Arpita Mono bhuddhih Mam Eva Eshyasi Asamschayam

this means, Therefore at all times, O, Arjuna, think of Me and carry on your fight. With your mind and reason resting on Me, when you die, you will surely reach Me without doubt. These are highly important stanzas of the Bhagavad Gita, and people at the close of their lives are naturally very anxious to see that they attain the goal of life by thinking of God at the moment of their death and thus reach Him. As this concerns the ultimate object of being, one cannot overestimate any help that can be rendered to the devotee to gain it. Some superficial people might fancy that the whole thing is very easy, that at the moment of death, to think of God at once. For instance, keep a friend *Sathi Akaraka* by at the moment of death to remind one of God! They may be sustained in such a view by what happened to *Ajamila*. *Ajamila* was once a noble and pure soul studying the *Vedas*, thinking of God, and living righteously. All of a sudden his ways changed, and he discarded a virtuous young wife for no reason and took to a mistress of low caste, and was living with her and got several children from her, the youngest of whom was named *Narayana*. When leading such a degraded life, death overtook him. At the moment of death, he suddenly out of affection, called out for his youngest child saying, *Narayana*. Then his breathing stopped. Naturally he ought to have been taken to Hell for punishment for all his degraded life.

Therefore, *Yama dhutas* promptly appeared on the scene. Just at the same moment, angels appeared by his side in order to take him to Heaven. *The Yama dhutas* wondered and argued with the angels stating that the dead person was a sinner fit only for Hell. But the angels pointed out that the last word that he uttered with his breath was *Narayana*, a name of God. Then *Yama's* messengers said that was only the name of his child that he called out and that he was not calling out for God. Then the angels explained.

Ayamhi Kritanirveso janmakotyamhasamapi
Sanketyam Parihasyam va Sthobham Helanam eva va
Vaikuntha nama grahanam Asceshagha haram Viduh²³⁶

this means, That the name of God whether uttered involuntarily by a man merely as a sort of token for some worldly thing or out of joke²³⁷ or fun or for purpose of an oath or for any other reason, still has its value and being uttered at the moment of death, all his sins are wiped out and the utterer must go to Heaven. Therefore *Ajamila* was ultimately taken to Heaven. But all are not *Ajamilas* and all have not his luck. Sai is the best *Sathi Akaraka*. Therefore a verse in Pandava Gita²³⁸ says,

Krishna twadiya Pada Pankaja Panjarantam
Adhyaiva Me Viscatu Manasa Raja hamsah
Pranaprayanasamaye Kapavata Pittaih
Kanthavarodhanavidhow Smaranam Kutaste.

this means, O Krishna, at the time of my death, when the three humours of the body that is wind, phlegm, and bile, choke the throat, where is the chance of my uttering your name?²³⁹ So, immediately now, let my mind, which is a *Raja Hamsa* enter the cage of your lotus feet, This is the same in effect as²⁴⁰ and means, Let us remember God now and be in Him at once.

Sri Sai Baba made and makes His *Ankita* children remember Him and pronounce his name constantly by giving them frequent opportunities so many times each day by perpetual provision of comforts and necessities, pain and trouble, enough to compel frequent or constant prayer, humble supplication and

providing *satsang* and surroundings of various sorts serving as reminders of his gracious, powerful yet merciful and many sided personality.

One preliminary question may be raised by some as to what exactly *Ankita* children denotes and how they are different from ordinary children. Has Baba got ordinary children and again *Ankita* children? It looks a somewhat crude notion to have children for whom you have no responsibility. Of all persons, Baba will be the last to avoid responsibility for children. Baba recognised that devotees in general were his children, and he also affirmed his determination to protect them. Baba said²⁴¹, You devotees are my children. 'I am your father. You have to get everything from me. You should not say like that and say Sai is not God'. This was addressed to Narke's friends who went and complained to him that Narke was saying that Baba was a man. Baba was pointing out that those devotees who were relying upon him entirely for all their benefits were getting those benefits merely because they were feeling that they were children of Baba, *Babacha Lekhru*, and that his responsibility was there in respect of those who felt that they were his children. Baba may create that feeling no doubt, but one must begin with some sort of rudimentary feeling at least that he is Baba's child and begin to make efforts to love him as the father and provider. Therefore we may say that as a rule, normal children who feel that they are children and look to their father for help and provision, do get such help and provision, and in the spiritual field, those who feel that they are children of Baba, especially by total surrender to him of all their interests and activities, time, trouble and wealth to him, are especially His children²⁴². Baba says, 'If any one casts his burden on me and thinks of me, I look after all his concerns'²⁴³. Here is the undertaking of the responsibility of looking after all the concerns of the devotee, and the condition of it is that the devotee should cast all his burdens on Baba and think of Baba all the while as the provider. Baba says²⁴⁴, Look to me and I look to you. 'Trust in the *Guru* fully'²⁴⁵. He adds, If one devotes his entire mind to me and rests in Me, he need fear nothing for body and soul. If one sees Me and Me alone and listens to talks about Me, and is devoted to me alone, he will reach God, *Chaitanya*. This is the modern paraphrase of what Sri Krishna said,

Man Manabhava Madbhakto madyaji Main Namaskuru

Mameva eshyasi yuktva Evam Atmanam Mat parayanah.

Complete responsibility is undertaken by Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita in respect of any one who treats Sri Krishna as his *parayana* that is, the be all and end all of his existence, and who turns his mind, worship, observances, and prostrations all to Him²⁴⁶. He says²⁴⁷, Repeat my name. Seek refuge in Me. This refuge is *Prapatti*. The Gospel closes²⁴⁸, with

Ananyasachintayantomam Ye janah Paryu Upasate

TeshamNityabhiyuktanam Yoga Kshemam Vahamyaham²⁴⁹,

this means, If one thinks of Me and Me alone and resorts to Me completely, and is ever attached to Me, I look after his interests in obtaining and securing benefits. This is the same as Baba's undertaking. Now so far we have referred to the declarations of the *Dvapara Yuga* Krishna and the *Kali Yuga* Sai showing that where there is a divine protection offered to any person and it is accepted, then, as Narayana says in his *Arati* song, the devotee becomes *Ankita* and the entire responsibility for him is undertaken by the *Niranjana*, Divine. It is quite obvious that if any person feels that he is a child of Baba and that he has sufficiently surrendered and is making every endeavour to make the surrender complete, Baba²⁵⁰ comes forward to undertake all his burdens, and that makes the devotee *Ankita*. For all practical purposes, a real devotee who really surrenders himself or tries his utmost to surrender himself, will surely be an *Ankita* child, that is, a person for whom Sri Krishna will bear responsibilities. These declarations of undertaking were in the Gita already before Baba appeared in the flesh, but how few came forward to surrender and ask for the undertaking to be fulfilled by Sri Krishna? This is a great defect in humanity. What is freely preferred is not appreciated. Faith is not vigorously forthcoming at the time it ought to be forthcoming. The consequence of lack of faith is that there is no readiness to take up the position of a child or devotee, to surrender oneself, and to await with confidence the performance of the promises made in the Bhagavad Gita and the Gospel of Sai. As pointed out in the Chandogya Upanishad, prayers in order to be effective, must be believed in. When you pray for any object, believe that you

are getting it. That is the surest way of getting it. If you are really a surrendered child, you will feel that the parent is there ready to confer it. Numerous previous experiences would strengthen that belief. This is really as it ought to be. Unfortunately, what ought to be is not always the fact. People do not surrender, do not believe that they are getting benefits, and consequently there are a few cases reported of *Ankita* children of Krishna, but when the season comes, belief comes, and there is a large number of surrendering and believing persons. The lack of faith that is prevalent even after hundreds of cases of super human, miraculous aid being given by Baba to his *Ankita* children, is something astonishing. Of course there are parallels. We find one example in what Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa quotes, that is, the story of belief in the efficacy of Ganges water to wash away sin. The following is the verse,

Ganga papam sasci tapam Dainyam Kalpa taruh tatha

Papam Tapamcha Dainyamcha Hanti Sadhu Samagamah

this means, the Ganges water destroys sin. This has been repeated millions of times, and yet how many people believe in it? That is illustrated by the following account. Siva, wanting to show Parvati how little belief, people had told her to take the form of a very old *Sumangali* lady and to sit on the banks of the Ganges. He himself took the form of a very old husband of hers just now dead or dying. Parvati was crying out to all the people who gathered round, that her misfortune was making her a widow, but that some great wise man had said, 'Your husband will have a sudden death, but if somebody that is sinless puts in a drop of Ganges water into his mouth, he will revive'. So, the lady cried out and asked the crowd of people who had been taking bath in the Ganges, 'Is there no one who is sinless and who will put a drop of water in my husband's mouth?' No one was forthcoming. Each man was fully conscious of his sins and could not believe that the Ganges bath had absolved him of his sins. One young man came up and said, 'Mother! Wait. I am a sinner. But I shall have a dip in the Ganges. My sins being absolved, I will come with a drop of Ganges water and revive your husband'. And as he had the faith, his bath and the water he brought, revived her husband. This shows how rare is faith in the purificatory potency of Ganges

amongst vast masses of Hindus even though the praise of Ganges is sung by almost every Hindu and is known to every Hindu as washing away all sins, but not accepted with powerful faith.

Development of faith is a very large question, and if one arranges all the facts known to him, that is, after careful observation, he would notice first and foremost that faith develops where necessity makes one develop it. If it is to my interest to believe that a certain prayer will save me, I begin to believe in the efficacy of that prayer. If somebody thinks some practice is harmful, whether it is really harmful or not, he will certainly avoid that as he thinks that his interest is imperilled thereby. This is a far reaching principle and may be very largely utilised by those who make arrangements for the development of faith amongst large classes that approach them. Just as success begets success, faith begets faith. In order to develop faith in the *Guru*, the *Guru* must show himself to be expecting faith and deserving of faith. No faith will be placed in a person with patent defects, who is loose in his expressions, who is otherwise unworthy of trust or confidence. If a *Guru* commits such mistakes, faith is not likely to develop towards him. If, on the other hand, the *Guru* shows himself ready to do everything that a powerful *Guru* should do, and actually demonstrates his ability to do what faith expects and demands, then faith is readily placed in him. This is mainly the method by which faith in Baba has spread and is spreading now. We shall give one illustration. A propagandist went to Velappadi near Vellore and after his delivering an enthusiastic lecture about Sai's greatness, his wonderful powers of cure, and his uniform kindness to the poor, the wretched, the high class and the low class, at the close of the lecture, faith had been roused in some of the audience. One of them brought a young child of ten months and said that for eight months that child was having fits and God alone knew how it was to survive. Then suddenly the lecturer had the inspiration or the idea that in the name of Baba, he should take some *udhi* and apply it to the child and say 'hence forward, no fits should attack this child'. That was done. This was a prayer and an assertion. He returned from the village, and it was noticed that the child was really free from such attacks, thereafter. Henceforth, the whole village began to

believe in Sai Baba. Similarly where an educational officer's wife had hysterical fits and requested the propagandist to go and give her Sai Baba's blessings, the lecturer took up a picture of Sai Baba, made a very brief worship and offered *Kalpura Arati* to the Baba picture, and offered it to the patient telling her that she was Sai's child, that Sai was all powerful and that he could keep at bay any hysterical or other attack, whatever may be the source of the attack, and then he returned. So long as the lady remained in that place Kakinada, she had no recurrence of hysterical fits. This naturally roused faith in a large number of people all around. These are very common instances, and in fact it is such instances that partly explain how Sai Baba, who was not known outside Maharashtra twenty years ago, in 1932 A.D. is now known throughout the length and breadth of India. Coming to practical methods, if any one should ask, 'What is the actual step I am to take in order to develop enough faith to become Baba's *Ankita* child', the first answer is remove all influences adverse to faith. For instance, association with scoffers, with flippanant persons, with violent and wicked persons should be avoided. Close association with highly respectable and eminent philosopehrs and thinkers who complacently declare that they have no faith in Sai or in Rama is dangerous. Pride in being a philosopher adopting the principle of Descartes namely, 'Doubt all things' ad libitem or ad infinitum is ruinous, The Gita says,

Sams cayatma vinas cyati

that is, The perpetual doubter perishes. The opposite of it, namely the company of *sadhus* or ordinary believers in Sai, should be sought. Gatherings of *bhaktas* either for *bhajan* or worship or study or lecture should all be attended as far as possible. There is one supreme rule. Repetition strengthens every habit, and faith is a mental habit. If for example, at the beginning I have no faith in Sai Baba's doing something that is prayed for, then I must force myself to have that faith on the first occasion, next a second occasion, a third occasion, and so on. If I profess or compel myself to have faith often, say a dozen times, faith will become a habit with me, 'I do believe, I will believe, that Sai will help me'. He always helps the poor and wretched even the scoffing *Akkalkote vakil*. Here one

is taught an important psychological law. People despise external observances thinking that they are excrescences in religion, and that it is only the spirit or essentials that are wanted. But this is ignoring one very important fact. The external and internal are closely associated. You hardly ever get at the internal without an external. For instance, if I want nectar or coffee, there must be a cup or vessel carrying it to me. Words and meanings appear to be external and internal. Yet they are so much imbedded in each other. *Vagartha viva sampriktou*. Above all, the association of the external and the internal operates in a very powerful way unseen and unnoticed. Let us take hypnotised subjects and sleeping or dreaming subjects as best instances for exemplifying the working of this law that the external and the internal have a very close connection and that the one draws the other with it. A person is hypnotised, and though nothing at all is said to him, his body is arranged in a pugilistic attitude with his fists stretched out ready for fighting and himself ready to deliver and receive attacks. Though nothing is said, the man if asked to speak, speaks fiercely and in a mood of attack. He is bellicose. Similarly, if a hypnotised patient is made to kneel down or fully prostrate, and his palms are arranged in *Anjali* fashion, that is invoking the grace of God, then though nothing is said, the man at once becomes humble and prayerful in mood. If asked, 'What is this?' he would say, 'I am praying to God'. It is the attitude of prostration and invocation that brings on the ideas of invoking God. These may be multiplied and infinite, but the present instances will suffice to show that the external and the internal have a very close association, and any one who is anxious to develop his faith should see that in himself, in his surroundings, in his library, in his company, and in everything around him, the externals are always suggestive or productive of faith. Above all the mind must be directed to faith, and how is that done? The company that we keep, our reading, practical details of *puja*, prayer, acts of service, preaching, then meditation, then yogic concentration, and above all a steady habit of prayer for the growth of one's faith and of another that one is interested in these will work wonders. Faith is a cultivable plant and requires proper selection of field, seed manure, and irrigation. One can develop, this subject at great length. Suffice it to

say that those who are desirous of developing faith in Sai Baba to become his *Ankita* children should begin with an ardent desire to become such, to repeat that resolve to themselves time and again, often and often, and they should make use of every opportunity that advances their eligibility for becoming his *Ankita* children. And above all, the extent to which they are prepared to make sacrifices to please Baba so that he may adopt them as *Ankita* children, will be a very important factor. Make reverent *parayana* or daily study of the Gospel of Baba²⁵¹ which deals with that subject. That will change even a stony heart.