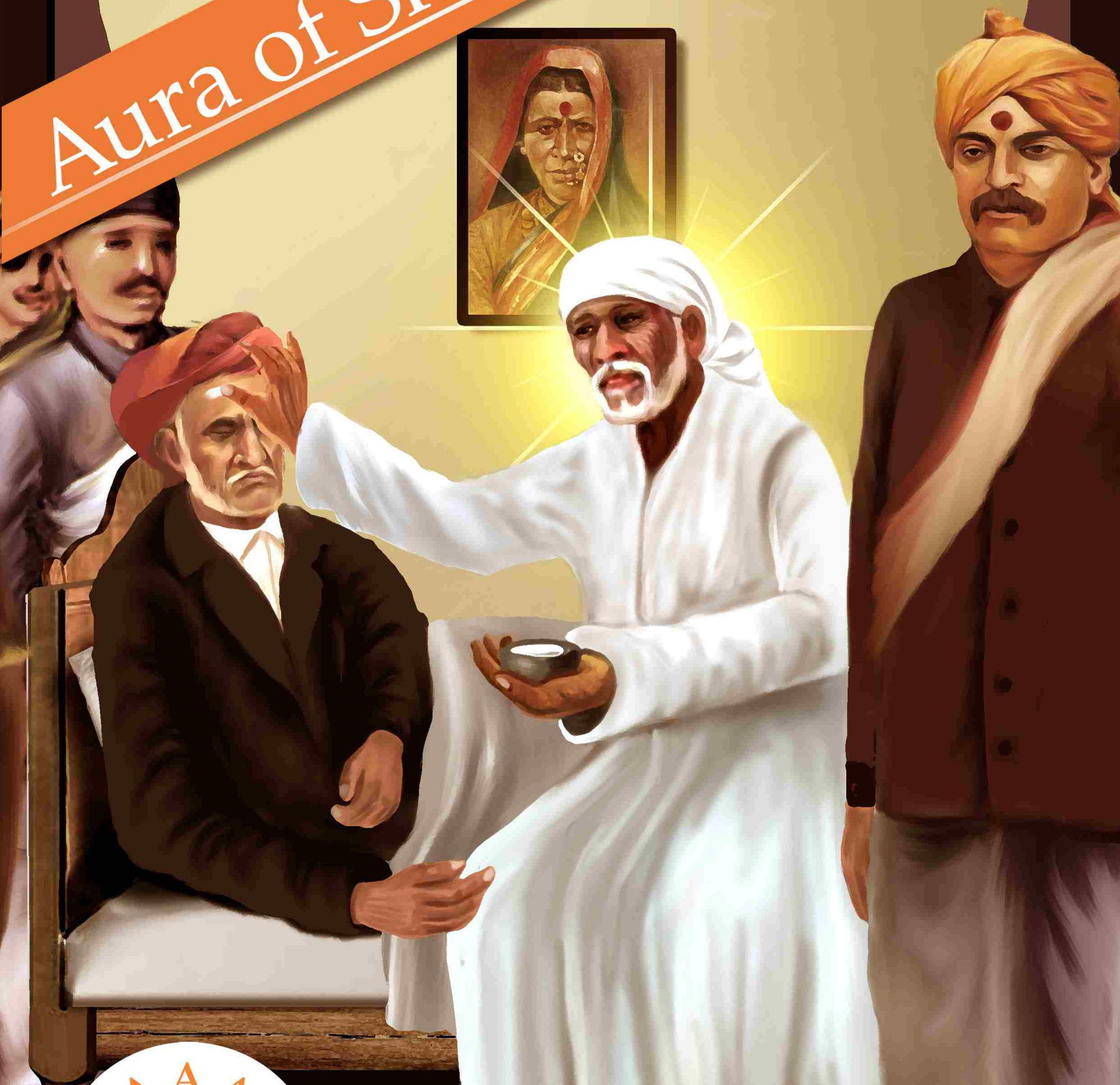


Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE —

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The First Word

*S*ri Narasimha Swamiji's masterpiece 'The Life of Sai Baba' is unique in all respects. His reference to Don Quixote - hero of the novel by a Spanish author Cervantes - was only solved when I attended a Conference at World Health Organization in Geneva in 2012.

His brains addled with reading too many chivalric romances of medieval knights who rescue damsels in distress and battle dragons, an impecunious hidalgo, a minor Spanish nobleman, adopts the name of Don Quixote, dons a rusty suit of armor and, astride a broken-down old nag named Rocinante, with his faithful squire, Sancho Panza, riding behind him on a donkey, sets off to become a knight-errant himself. The crazed don tilts against windmills, with disastrous results, and pays court to an imaginary beauty whom he calls Dulcinea. This is the skeletal plot of the novel written by Miguel de Cervantes more than 400 years ago. It gave the English language the word 'quixotic', after the protagonist, which means highly idealistic. It is also deemed by critics to be one of the greatest novels ever written.

Really? A tragi-comic satire about an old loony who goes to his deathbed still enrapt in a fool's paradise of his own making, one of the greatest novels of all time? Why? Perhaps because Don Quixote is an allegory about what all great novels are or should be.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji summed up the function of the novel in two words: 'Only connect'. Connect? With whom, or what? Well, the writer with the reader, of course. And the individual reader with other readers, thousands, maybe millions, who over time - in the case of Cervantes over 400 years - vicariously connect with each other through the shared experience of entering the imagination and consciousness of the writer who has created a make-believe world of universal relevance.

How do we, Sai devotee living in the 21st century context of the internet, and Twitter and globalization and climate change, find any resonance with a Spanish madman who made himself believe he was a knight from the Middle Ages?

There is a song which sums up what Don Quixote is all about: "To dream the impossible dream/ To fight the unbeatable foe/ To bear with unbearable sorrow/ To run where the brave dare not go/ To reach the unreachable star."

Clad in our mortal vestment we are, in a sense, all Don Quixotes. Sai Baba is close behind our thoughts, and in every moment, he is taking care of us. We must, all of us, perforce dream the impossible dream of hope, withstand the unbeatable foe of fate, bear with the unbearable sorrow of inevitable loss, and reach for the unreachable star of some transcendence, which alone gives meaning not only to our single, solitary lives, but as blessed children of Sai Baba

The true quest of Don Quixote is the quest of the spirit to enjoin the unitary one to the manifold many, the individual to the infinite. This is the universal truth of Don Quixote which Sri Narasimha Swamiji refers to in his messages - We are all born, and must all die, and in between find what meaning we can in our shared legacy of joy and sorrow, gain and loss, triumph and tragedy.

As we celebrate the 101st 'Punya Thithi of Sai Baba we should reflect in our minds inescapable unity of humanity. Don Quixote is the antithesis of the Sartrean axiom "Hell is other people." Through the divine madness of his anti-hero, Cervantes affords us a glimpse of a heaven created when one and the many can be merged in a single destiny, indivisible.

Yearning of A Sai Devotee

By: Shreyas Devaraj

Of what use are the
Hands that do not worship Lord Sainath
Mere branches of a tree;
Eyes that do not look at Lord Sainath
Mere holes on a wall;
Ears that do not listen to the stories of Sai Satcharitra
Mere vestigial appendages – fly whisks;
Throat that does not extol Lord Sainath
Mere rattling chatter-box;
Body that does not belong to Lord Sainath
Mere bag of skin;
Life that does not think of Lord Sainath
Mere bubble of water;
Man who does not love Lord Sainath
Mere walking animal.
Of what use if
One does not worship the Lord of Lords.
One does not praise the supremacy of Lord Sainath
One does not think of truth and compassion;
Of what use to have been born a man
Mere mother's labor lost.
Lord! Bless me with
Worship of your Lotus Feet
In separate friendship with your devotees
Eternal compassion towards all the beings,
Nothing more- nothing more! My Lord!

Even before taking Samadhi, Baba made sure, both the Hindu and Islamic rituals were conducted, once again showing that He belonged to Oneness. By hearing the Holy Book of Lord Rama and offering food and having devotional songs sung in praise of Prophet Mohamed, Baba was ready to drop His body.

A Dip in Vishnu Sahasranama: Sahasranama Way of Overcoming Karma

By: Seetha Priya

*W*hy is a person born with everything in life, while other struggles to fulfill even his basic needs? A silver spoon for some, and not even a small piece of bread for another? This is hard to digest and understand. Who decides it anyway? Do we just follow a course as over algorithms set by a fate maker?

Ramana Bhagwan pondered 'Who am I?' and Buddha was intrigued seeing a child, an old man and a corpse; the answers eventually led him to salvation.

Who is Sai Baba? "You may ask where I am now and how I can meet you now. But I am within your heart and we can meet without any effort." (Sai Satcharitra Chapter 44, Ovi 162)

Karma is a mystical word in Indian texts; it has also been adapted in the English language, and refers to our actions and their outcomes, which are akin to the cause and effect principles.

As he recited the sixth shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama, Bhishma lying on a bed of arrows that pierced every inch of his body, wondered in agony as to what actions of past had led him to this excruciating pain and humiliation. He asked Lord Krishna, "I have scanned my 72 previous lives, but could not find a single action which could have resulted in my lying here on this bed of arrows.

Then Krishna explained to him that in his 73rd life Bhishma as a child, had playfully pierced a



sharp thorn into an insect. That action resulted in his current suffering.

When Appa Kulkarni died soon after meeting Nana Chandorkar to persuade him to visit Shirdi, Sai Baba pacified the young widow that 'Appa has fulfilled his assignment and he is not entangled in the cycle of births and deaths'. Appa Kulkarni did not rest until he conveyed Baba's message to Nana Saheb. 'Before you act, you have freedom, but after you act, the effect of that action will follow you whether you want it to or not. That is the law of karma. You are a free agent, but when you perform a certain act, you will reap the results of that action.

As an arrow which has been shot cannot be recalled, so too your action which automatically results in karma; good or bad, however it may be.

The sixth shloka of Sahasranama is –

'Aprameyah Hrishiksha Padmanabha
Amaraprabhu

Vishwakarma Manu Swashta Sthavishta
Sthaviro Dhruvah'

Lord Vishnu is indefinable as 'Aprameya' and is 'Hrishiksha' to be the Lord of the senses in performing karmas. As 'Padmanabha', the Lord of the whole universe. In regulating individual karma, Lord Vishnu is 'Amaraprabhu' the Lord of the immortals and 'Vishwakarma' the creator the universe. He is 'Manu' the thinker, 'Swashta' the reducer, 'Sthavishta' the biggest and ultimately 'Sthaviro Dhruvah' the old and firm.

In this way, there are many ways and means that Lord Vishnu mitigates, lessens or eradicates

our karmas from fruition. Sai Baba is Lord Vishnu. Start thinking positively which will help the effects of past actions, rather than accepting failure with an excuse that, 'It must be my karma. I can't seem to succeed in anything,' and so on, and make a greater effort.

Sai Baba gives us the wisdom to help us to make the right choices in life so that we are not influenced by our samskaras. As 'Aprameya' and 'Hrishiksha', Sai Baba inspires us to resist our bad habits. Wisdom and discrimination help us to understand the nature of people with whom we associate and this, in turn, helps us choose whom we associate with. Wisdom enables us to know which desires we should try to fulfill and which we should drop.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji analyzes this doctrine of Karma as most people do not analyze themselves, and so never realize how bound they are by influences of past actions. Begin to analyze yourselves more, to understand why you are as you are. You may have noticed that some children are born with certain moods and habits. They brought these tendencies from the past; for in this life they have not yet had time to form such patterns of behavior.

Our lives are getting increasingly complex day by day. Vishnu Sahasranama enables us to exercise good judgement in our everyday lives so that we are not likely to get into trouble. Vishnu Sahasranama gives the wisdom to what benefits us and the will power to follow what wisdom says.

Baba had given permission to Buti to build a Temple near Dwarka Mai, in 1915. It was clear that Baba Himself chose His final resting place. All assumed a grand Temple was being built in honor of his God, Lord Krishna. Not many realized that by referring to the Masjid as Masjid Mai or Dwarka Mai, the abode of Lord Krishna, Baba was going to take care of His children after He dropped His body, from the Temple meant for Lord Krishna. He called the Masjid Dwarka Mai, telling all the importance of the Goddess. That He lived in the shelter of the Goddess. He was as loving, as a Mother can be.



Empathy, The Cream of Sai Philosophy



Linguists and philologists worldwide have come to the unanimous conclusion that one of the most beautiful words in all languages is 'empathy'. In Persian, 'empathy is called taghayyun, yakdali or yaksimt tasavvur. Now the question is: What exactly is empathy?

Let me define it in the words of English poet William Blake, "Empathy is when you and me are no different/ Each soul is me, each man's my friend." It's a sublime sense of inter-connectivity. Empathy is far greater than sympathy. The latter is more of a lip-service whereas the former is emotional merging.

A close study of Sai Baba's life reveals that the recurrent theme of his mysticism, is empathy. One spirit of universal connectivity runs through all creatures, living or non-living – wrote Hemadpant in Sai Satcharitra when this lofty realization dawned on him when he met Sai Baba.

In fact, empathy is not just the spirit of Indian mysticism but also of all saints in general.

Leonard Lewisohn writes in 'An Introduction to the History of Modern Persian Mysticism' that "Empathy is the cornerstone of Persian and Islamic mysticism." All Persian and Arab mystics might have been inspired by the idea of empathy

By Sri Narasimha Swamiji

in Upanishadic universality. The concept of Aham Brahmasmi – I am Truth – became An-Al-Haq in Sai Baba's oft-repeated quotes. And what's An-Al-Haq or Aham Brahmasmi? It's the merging of an individual's soul into the Universal Being. This is spiritual empathy or Sai Baba's uniformity of Oneness.

The very notion of Oneness is the spiritual manifestation of empathy. Mystics, especially Sai Baba, believed that the whole of humankind is interrelated on an emotional plane with just one predominant craving regulating all lives on earth. That cementing bond is empathy. Amir Khusro defines it thus: "When there's one universal chetna, life-spirit or consciousness, that you and I are blessed with, it's useless to distinguish among humankind." In other words, we're all the same; offshoots and branches of the same tree.

Empathy provides a universal vision and profound insights into mind and matter. Coleman Bark writes in his book 'Rumi' that the great mystic wouldn't even kick a piece of stone because he believed that even a stone had a level of consciousness and it, too, deserved respect! Elsewhere Rumi wrote, "I feel the same degree of love even for a stone as I believe that it also belongs to me".

Universal empathy sublimates into state of self-immersion and the whole of humankind appears to be a big family. One can clearly hear and discern the echoes of the Upanishadic philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in Sai Baba's life.

In this age of differences and worldwide turmoil, the imbibing of empathy and acceptance of universal sameness can save all of us. Otherwise, we are likely to be condemned to be doomed.

*I*t was in 1949. Both Sri Narasimha Swamiji and I went to Nandi Hills in Karnataka for a short vacation. Sri Narasimha Swamiji wanted to complete the second volume of his masterpiece 'Life of Sai Baba'.

Dressed in a cool cotton shirt and comfortable white dhoti, the avuncular man with the mirthful eyes, is walking around at a leisurely pace, and

and so also cultivation of fragrant flowers like roses. The hill station is designed to facilitate extensive rest. Recuperation and spiritual mentoring, promoting personal inner experience, opportunity to learn and contribute. We could see few people meditating under a couple of trees. Accommodation is available and more is coming up, with several houses, children's

Straight from The Heart

By Sri. Radhakrishna Swamiji

examines the leaves and flowers of plants all around him with loving interest. It was a guest house on the hill station, a sprawling house that has more flora than buildings. Sri Narasimha Swamiji preferred to stay here during every summer season to pursue his writing work. The center of activity has always been at Mylapore in Chennai, where Sri Narasimha Swamiji carried on the Sai-prachar work. Sri Narasimha Swamiji spots us. Walking with outstretched hands and drawing closer to us, he extends a palm, displaying a beautiful leaf with serrated but rounded edges whose fragrance reminds one of the eucalyptus and also citronella. 'Yes', he says, animatedly, 'this is indeed a hybrid containing both!' And so, the discussion begins with plants and their healing properties, and why it is so important to live in sync with nature. And to be able to breathe in fresh air, free of pollutants.

At Nandi hills, we could see farming of vegetables, herbs and fruits were in full swing —



play center and other facilities.

Though buildings are under construction, everything is neat and clean, and the atmosphere is suffused with peace. Any waste wood — mostly from fallen trees—have been transformed into beautiful works of art that are also of practical use like benches, swings, garden seats and tables. Everything seems to be designed to complement and celebrate nature rather than violate it and that is what warms your heart right at the start.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji's mission of taking Sai Baba to people is what he called 'Heartfulness Practices', that includes not just Sai-pooja, chanting of Ashtothara and Sahasranama, meditation, prayers, bhajans but also something very exciting, called 'Brighter Minds' that is specially designed for youngsters and children. In Sai Vidyalaya at Mylapore, Sri Narasimha Swamiji introduced Heartfulness Practices to children which "nurture our souls, removes all that keep them hidden, and set free that spark of childlike

innocence and wonder that makes life truly meaningful as devotees of Sai Baba". Sri Narasimha Swamiji is always very enthused by the wonderful progress being made by youngsters in Sai Vidyalaya at Mylapore.

By then Sri Narasimha Swamiji introduced us to two boys, Anand and Chaitanya who are in the Tenth Standard in a regular school; the children have come to see Sri Narasimha Swamiji to attend to his needs. Anand says he is an archer, and that he aims better when he is blind-folded! What? Blindfolded? I ask him to explain what he just said, and this is what he had to say, as Sri Narasimha Swamiji pipes in with a huge smile, "He hits bull's eye blindfolded!"

"Yes," says Anand who says he first examines the target with all his five senses, and absorbs the visual in his mind, and then gets blindfolded. "I can concentrate and focus better this way," he says. "I use my sense of smell and just let go of the arrow." And this is not all, both Anand and Chaitanya can read anything, blindfolded. And play football, too, blindfolded! Sri Narasimha Swamiji requests the boys to demonstrate their skill and they are very happy indeed, to do so.

I write something on a piece of paper and pass it to Anand who is now blind-folded with a thickly padded cloth. He caresses the paper, then places it before his nose, smells it, and says, 'Good Boy'— which is what I wrote!

"All our senses are connected to the brain," he says when he hears our collective gasp. Another visitor hands a card to Chaitanya, and I get stressed, thinking, that is difficult, why is he giving the child a dense card with so many names

and titles? But before you can say 'card', Chaitanya reads the entire card — name, designation, address, et al. 'O my God, this is incredible!' we all exclaim. And this is with just four years of practice.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji beams, saying, "See, this is what children can do when they practice observing with all senses, and Sai Baba's grace helps them to concentrate.... I always, say, Sai-worship is the icing on the cake, it is such a delight." That is why we work on the heart, says Sri Narasimha Swamiji, pointing out that the moment you clean the heart, Sai Baba becomes the mentor.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji continued, "We cannot do it if we try now, but children can do it. We make them listen to Bhairavi and while listening to it, you go to sleep. As you listen to it, it activates certain centers in your brain. You keep up the practice of keeping all centers of the brain active. Even a blind could regain eyesight. He told us that in Andamans one particular island had all residents blind. Sri Narasimha Swamiji sent one of his Doctor devotees to that island who diagnosed that they were suffering from a congenital cataract. Sri Narasimha Swamiji arranged for funds from All India Sai Samaj so that all the 800 blind residents were operated and could get vision.

In propagating Sai Baba to people Sri Narasimha Swamiji looked forward to a new generation of young, creative minds whose creativity may never wane with Sai Baba's blessings.

Bannemiya, was a known Wali, a friend of Allah, and Baba had spent time with Him, after Baba had left Shirdi for the first and last time only to return after four years. Bannemiya, looked up at the sky and tears began to roll down His cheeks. "Nau din, nau tarikh, Allah Mia, apne duniya le jayega, marzi Allah Ki." Meaning, On the ninth day and ninth night, Allah will call Me to His world, it is the will of our Allah. As per the Islamic calendar, the ninth day and ninth month, called the Night of the Massacre, fell also in the holy month of Ramzan.

A Memorable Meeting of Apostle of Peace with Apostle of Sai Baba

E Stanley Jones
(1884–1973)
was an American

20th-century Methodist Christian missionary. He is remembered chiefly for his interreligious lectures. His friendship for the cause of Indian self-determination allowed him to become a friend of leaders like Gandhi and Nehru and a great saint like Sri Narasimha Swamiji.

He is considered as an 'Apostle of Peace'.

Jones was born in Baltimore, Maryland on January 3, 1884. He was educated in Baltimore schools and Kentucky. He was called to missionary service in India. He traveled to India in 1907 and began working with poor and backward castes, including Dalits. He became a close friend of many leaders in the Indian Independence movement and became known for his interfaith work. He said, "Peace is a by-product of conditions out of which peace naturally comes. If reconciliation is God's chief business, it is ours—between man and God, between man and himself, and between man and man.

In 1948, he met Sri Narasimha Swamiji at Chennai and their interaction is a memorable event for Sai devotees. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji has jotted down this memorable event.

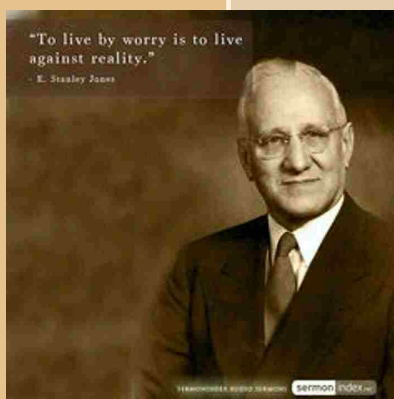
E Stanley Jones first met Sri Narasimha Swamiji in 1948. He went into an upstairs room to find him sitting on a bed, surrounded by scores of papers. After a warm greeting by both men, Jones cut right to the technological heart of the matter when he asked Sri Narasimha Swamiji point blank: "How can we make Christianity naturalized in India, not a foreign thing, identified with a foreign Government and a foreign people, but a part of the national life of India and contributing its power to India's uplift? What would you, as one of the Torch-bearers of Sai movement in India, tell me, a Christian, to do in order to make this possible?"

Sri Narasimha Swamiji's reply was something that Jones would put into practice for the rest of his life, and it is indeed something that all Christians should seek to uphold. Sri Narasimha Swamiji said: 'First, I

By: Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar

would suggest that all of you Christians and missionaries must begin to live more like Jesus Christ.

Second, practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity. Fourth, study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find the good that is within them, in order to have a more sympathetic approach to the people". The two of them would meet on several occasions in the years following. Sri Narasimha



Swamiji gave him a quote from Chandogya Upanishad: "The Atman is hidden in the lotus of the heart. Those who see themselves in all creatures go day by day into the world of Brahman hidden in the heart. Established in peace, they raise above shackles and they remain free from fear and those who know this live day after day in heaven in this very life. Sai Baba called upon his devotees to visualize him in all beings and with this implicit faith in Sri

Narasimha Swamiji, Jones adopted this model. The two apostles met on a few occasions later and became very close friends.

In various theological seminaries Jones referred to Sai Baba and his work became interdenominational and worldwide. He helped to reestablish the Indian "Ashram" (or forest retreat) as a means of drawing men and women together for days at a time to an in-depth study of their own spiritual natures and quest, and what the different faiths offered.

He was in constant touch with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Japanese leaders trying to avert war. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his reconciliation work.

In 1963, Stanley Jones received the Gandhi Peace Award. [Dr. Jones had become a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi, and after Gandhi's assassination wrote a biography on his life. It is noted that later in time, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. told Jones' daughter, Eunice, that it was this biography that inspired him to "non-violence" in the Civil Rights Movement.

He gave up his mortal coil on January 25, 1973 in Bareilly India.

Directing Your Destiny

By: *Chikballapur Shankarnarayan Dinesh*

*I*s life predestined? Or is it in our hands? With competition intensifying, changes accelerating and many unpredictable and uncontrollable factors determining results in today's complex world, many people are reexamining the belief that the individual can shape his destiny.

A brilliant student, for instance, despite diligent studies, gets average marks, whereas a mediocre student, with last-minute cramming, gets high grades. Are we unwitting players in a cosmic lottery, with chance as the supreme arbiter? Or are results handed down by a Sadguru as Sai Baba?

In this connection Sai Baba made eleven promises which he is keeping true to his words to this day and for sure this will continue forever. His promises are eternal. Baba has given eleven guidelines which we will understand to make our life a noble one. Some of these guidelines are those that Baba being a saint was following them Himself and others are those that He expected devotees to be aware.

Shraddha

Shraddha is Bhakti or intense love. But this is starting of spiritual path where duality exists, and some ambitions are there for this life. Shraddha is attitude towards higher in form of belief.

Saburi

This is mentioned as ANANYA BHAKTI in Narada Bhakti Sutra. Saburi is void of Karma phala for worldly gains. This is second and ultimate step to reach Baba with humility.

Baba tells Hemadpant when he goes to market and eats groundnuts without taking name of Baba. Also, Baba tells this to Thembe swamy when he feels guilty after eating coconut in journey back to Shirdi which was supposed to be given to Baba. This coconut was given by Vasudevanand Swamy of VishakPatnam.

The way baba protects and listens to prayer of devotees: Baba Either fulfills the wishes of the devotees immediately or takes some time to fulfill, or never complies the request. Also, Achara (Performance), Vichara (Thoughts), and Prachara (Preaching) are to be in consistence with each other.

Principles of character: a) Equanimity (Samta), b) Mercy (Kshamata), c) Empathy (Mamata), d) Humbleness (Namrata)

Baba had control over five elements. Earth, Air, Space, Fire, and Water

Baba was commander of five main elements viz Bhoomi, Akasha, Vayu, Jala and Agni. His very name takes care of our disasters. Hence Sai is everything to us.

Bhagavan: Baba had a) Aishvarya (Wealth) b) Keerti (Fame) c) Shourya (Power) d) Dharma (Righteousness) e) Gyan (Wisdom) f) Vairagya (Dispassion)

Baba desired to follow few norms:

- Be merciful towards animals.
- Don't be harsh on people coming for alms.
- Don't fast as I am residing in you and it hurts me.
- Always be soft in nature and don't be angry or

harsh

- Do Namajapa regularly
- Do Annadaan to needy people
- Never claim that your religion is superior to others

Baba had siddhis akin to Hanuman's Ashta siddhi

- Anima (Be Humble)
- Garima (Stay Committed)
- Mahima (Think Big)
- Laghima (Forgive and Forget)
- Prakasha
- Prakamyam
- Ishtitvam
- Vishtitvam

Staunch devotees of Baba 9 gems or silver coins

- Mhalsapati
- Shyama
- Taty Kote Patil
- Nana Saheb Chandorkar
- Das Ganu
- Kaka Saheb Dixit
- H.V. Sathe
- Bapusaheb Buti
- Hemadpant
- Golden coin among devotees - Upasini Maharaj
- Eleven assurances Baba had given while living



are still experienced by people till now and the prominent ones are:

- I am ever living to help and guide all who come to me, who surrender to me and who seek refuge in me.
- There shall be no want in the house of my devotee

When we completely rely on Sai Baba, some people fear that lazy people may opportunistically argue, "As Baba takes care, why work hard?" and so become irresponsible and fatalistic. However, devotion to Sai Baba does not justify fatalism because the Mahabharata clarifies, "Destiny determines the results of our actions, not our actions themselves."

When people are uninformed about the role of destiny in determining results, failures make them feel hopeless. "I am worthless and cannot do anything well," they say, even when they have the potential to perform well in the future. Consequently, today, many needlessly suffer from an inferiority complex, low self-esteem, depression and self-pity.

Sai Baba in the Sai Satcharitra has stated that though we don't determine the result, we do play a significant role. The farmer must plough the field for favorable rainfall to produce crops. Similarly, we must endeavor for destiny to produce results. Hence, Sai Baba urges us to perform our duty without attachment.

From Dixit's Narration

One afternoon in 1910, Hari Sitaram Dixit was sitting in front of Sai Baba at Dwarakamai. Suddenly, Baba told him "Arey Kaka, I am taking care of your entire welfare. Do not worry. Right now, proceed to Vile Parle.". Dixit left for Mumbai and when he reached home the next morning, he found that at the exact time when Baba told him those words, his daughter in his Vile Parle residence while trying to open a cupboard had an accidental fall and some mysterious force had pushed her aside. Otherwise the child would have been killed. Dixit was convinced of Sai Baba's protective umbrella on him and his family members.

Life after Death

By: Smt. Seetha Vijayakumar

I attended an interactive Lecture-demonstration at New Delhi in 1986 when Raymond Moody interviewed a number of people who had a 'death' experience. My husband had delivered the key-note address in which he had referred to Sai Baba giving up his body and re-entering it after three days. The main theme of his lecture was how Baba is active from his tomb years after his Mahasamadhi.

Raymond Moody described as to how dead people moved on to the other side of death, and, after some time came back. From their accounts, and those of others, who have had similar experiences, we get a glimpse of what happens after death. Some of them told Moody that they could hear the doctors declare them as dead. After this, they suddenly found themselves outside of their own bodies, but still in the same house, the same hall, the same rooms, with which they were familiar.

They could see their own bodies from a distance, as though they were mere spectators. Some of them said they watched the doctors prick their arms and inject drugs into their bodies. All this while, though they were separate from their bodies, and watched their bodies as spectators, they continued to have a subtle sense of identification with their bodies.

They did not yet feel that the bodies no longer belonged to them. It was only after some time, that they got accustomed to their odd conditions, and began to realize that they had left their physical bodies and were now in new bodies, altogether different from the physical bodies.

In new bodies, they were overwhelmed by intense feelings of joy, love and peace. Soon they found that some of their relatives and friends, who had already passed on, had come to meet them. This gave them a feeling of surprise, for they felt that they were still alive. How could the dead ones meet them? Then, what then? Then they saw something, which is difficult to describe in words. They saw a light, dazzling light, a light so dazzling that it was as though a hundred thousand suns shone simultaneously.

Out of this light stepped forth a Being of Light, a Form of Light. Different people saw different forms — depending upon the ishta deva they worshipped during the period of their earthly life. As many of those, whom Moody interviewed, were Christians, they identified the 'Being of Light' as Christ. A Jewish man and woman identified the Light as

an Angel. A man, who had no religious beliefs, simply identified what he saw as a Being of Light. This is an important thing for us to note.

When a man dies, when a man drops the physical body, he encounters a Being of Light, who may take the form of Krishna or Rama, of the Buddha or Jesus, of Sai Baba or Ramana, of Moses or Muhammad, of Mira or Mahavira, of Nanak or Kabir, of Zoroaster or Baha'u'llah or of some other God-man depending on his religious background and beliefs.

When I drop the physical body, I shall encounter this being or Form of Light. What will happen to me then? Then, every single thing that I have done, since the day I was born, will appear to me in a panoramic view. It is, as though, I shall have to witness a movie of my life — every detail of it, every little thing that I have done either in public or in private, in light is continued presence or in darkness, before the eyes of men or unseen by anyone — all the things that I have done will

appear to me in a panoramic view. Imagine my condition at that time. For I have done so many things in darkness, believing that nobody knows about them, that nobody can know about them.

For years I thought over these matters and perhaps Sai Baba felt that I should be given a practical experience of 'Life after death' and also demonstrate his continued presence. In August

2007, I developed end-stage Kidney failure and was admitted to the ICU of a major hospital at Bengaluru. My husband desperate at the hopeless situation had kept his fingers crossed. Since he is a Doctor, as a special case he was permitted to sit next to me, and I knew he was engaged in chanting 'Om Sai Sri Sai' japa. Suddenly I saw Sai Baba coming near me with a reassuring smile and holding my right shoulder — 'Don't worry my child — I will take care of you'. I was under the ventilator and beckoned the Nurse to take it out and give me a paper and pen. I wrote out that 'Sai Baba is here' and gave it to my husband. Baba blessed me and disappeared.

It was 2 am and my recovery was miraculous and the very next morning I requested the hospital to send me home. In a week's time I was back to total normalcy.

I shall be filled with a feeling of remorse and repentance. My head will hang low, when all those things will appear to me, as in a movie. And they will be seen by the Being of Light, the great Sai Maharaj standing by my side. How would I like my Krishna, my Buddha, my Jesus, the beloved of my heart, like to see the many things that I thought were hidden from everyone?

But friends, at the same time, I shall have another wonderful feeling. I will feel that in the presence of the Being of Light — in the presence of Sai Baba, Krishna or Buddha or Jesus — I am in the presence of total and absolute love, a being, who though knows everything about me, yet totally accepts me.

(Editor's note – Smt. Seetha Vijayakumar lived for three more years after this incident and merged in Sai Baba on 6th January 2010)

The first indication Baba gave about making preparations of leaving His body was two years before His Samadhi, in the year 1916. People had crossed the village border to enter Shirdi to pay their respects to Baba and the moment they arrived He flew into a rage, which was unseen before. It was Vijayadasami or Dasera, and two years later on the same day, Dussehra though according to a few astrologers it was on Ekadashi Baba would take Samadhi. Baba removed His bandana, which He rarely did in front of devotees, tore His kafni, removed His undergarment, called langot, and threw them all into Dhuni Mai.





Meet Sai Baba in The Himalayan Shrines

By *B.S. Krishna Murthy*

It's known as 'Devbhoomi' — Land of Gods — but Himalaya is also the land of unique temples that add to the intrigue and mystique of the hills. When we made a pilgrimage of 'Kailas' parikrama and 'Manas Sarovar' in 2012 we not only had 'darshan' in unique temples but also at every step we had Sai Baba's blessings.

At 'Muktinath' as we trekked to the temple we had 'darshan' of Sai Baba before we entered the main sanctum. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar are worshipped here and the priest is a woman. The sanctum is surrounded by 108 streams of water which lead on to form Gandaki river. My friend Vijayakumar dared to take bath in all these 108 streams chanting Sai Baba's name and Vishnu Sahasranama.

There is a cellar in which Indra has lighted a lamp ages ago. Like Sai Baba's 'Dhuni' even now the lamp is burning. The cellar opens for only one day a year. Devotees are not allowed to enter it. Even the priest enters the shrine blindfolded. The belief is that Nagraj, the king of snakes, remains inside the temple with his 'mani', or jewel and one is not supposed to look for the smallest of windows, and great care and secrecy is maintained.

The owner of a small ration shop, Heera Bugyali, told us "It is commonly believed that Latu is the brother of mountain goddess Nanda Devi. He was once going towards Kailash Parvat to meet her and halted his journey at this village. Feeling thirsty, he asked a local woman for water. She said that water was kept in one of the three earthen pots inside the house. However, he inadvertently drank liquor kept in one of the pots and his tongue fell to the ground. Nanda Devi subsequently appeared and said at this place Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar will be worshipped as 'Muktinath'.

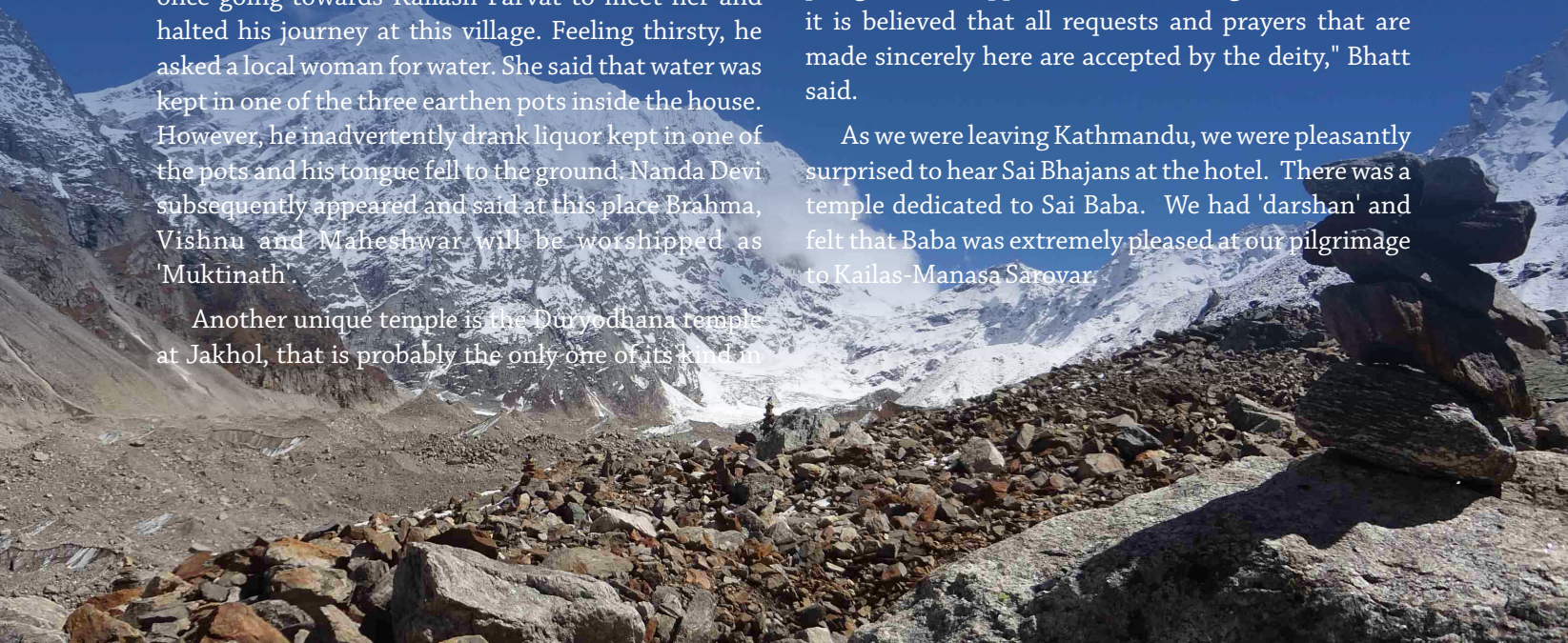
Another unique temple is the Duryodhana temple at Jakhol, that is probably the only one of its kind in

the country. Interestingly, while local historians say that the temple's deity is Duryodhana, many villagers refuse to acknowledge it as a Kaurava shrine, instead claiming that the temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva. The priest told us "Since a negative image is associated with Duryodhana, many locals shy away from admitting that the temple is dedicated to him". He showed us Sai Baba idol with a trident

Among the thousands of other shrines scattered across the Himalayan state, a few also stand out for the beliefs associated with them. Like the Kamleshwar Mahadev temple near Manokamna. The shrine, dedicated to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, attracts childless couples from across the world, since the belief is that those who perform rituals here with sincerity are blessed with progeny.

Providing details, Devendra Bhatt, who is a member of the temple committee, said, "During Baikunth Chaturdashi, the temple organizes a three-day fair and, on the last day, the couples coming here have to hold lit earthen diyas overnight inside the temple premises. There have been hundreds and thousands of couples whose prayers have been answered and they have come back to thank for the blessings." The mythological story behind the temple is that Lord Ram had pledged to offer 1,000 flowers but he fell short of one flower. "In order to fulfill his pledge, Ram chopped off one of his fingers. Since then, it is believed that all requests and prayers that are made sincerely here are accepted by the deity," Bhatt said.

As we were leaving Kathmandu, we were pleasantly surprised to hear Sai Bhajans at the hotel. There was a temple dedicated to Sai Baba. We had 'darshan' and felt that Baba was extremely pleased at our pilgrimage to Kailas-Manasa Sarovar.



Two Days Before Mahasamadhi

**Source: 'The Loving God'
by Dr. G. R. Vijayakumar**

*O*n 13th October 1918, placing his hands on Buti's shoulder, Baba went to see Buti's Wada. Madhava Rao, Kaka Dixit and others followed. Bhagoji held an umbrella over Baba's head to cover him against bright sunshine.

Baba was happy with the Wada and the temple in it. He said, "Shama, this is beautiful! I feel like coming to stay here myself!" Buti was happy and told him, "Then why not shift here immediately, Baba."

Baba said – "Oh, no! I just blurt like that! I have passed my life in that mosque! You have all come to see me there! You turned my Masjid into a Mandir! You have made this fakir as your Madhav! That is your greatness! I got everything therein. But have the same feeling for the entire mankind. See Madhav in every man! That would be the right reward of my mission. That would be my true worship!"

Buti felt highly elevated that the money spent on the Wada was worth it! The Mandir was immensely liked by Baba!

Baba came out of the temple and said to Madhava Rao – "Shama, all these people have come from outside and given me boundless love! But you all in this village have actually brought me up – from my tender age to what I am today! Indeed, I cannot repay this debt of Shirdi village! When I came here, I was a boy of sixteen years and I have spent over sixty years with you all in your loving company! A beggar like me you accepted as



God! When I used to go out for my begging rounds, I would meet you all. Now, Shama it is difficult for me to walk! Still I feel like seeing all once again!" Baba was immensely emotional that day! Hence Madhava Rao said – "Let us go around the village, Baba, slowly, slowly."

Baba took Shama's support and moved towards the village. Others were following. On his way Baba would stop before all the village temples, fold his hands before deities to express his reverence and then proceed again. He always respected the Hindu Gods! He would personally

offer flowers from Lendi Baug, enquire whether regular worship is done and offer financial help and would look after renovation of old temples. He would advise his Hindu devotees to offer worship at these temples. The only thing he hated most was when these people worshipped stone idols but ill-treated humans!

His age-old feet moved slowly. When he reached the cemetery, he remembered Megha. He sat there for a few minutes. He halted near Kondaji's house and enquired about the three carpenter brothers. Going ahead he met the children of Appa Jogale, Kashiram Tailor and recollected the fragrance of their departed parents' love for him. In all houses, Baba saw his pictures being reverentially worshipped!

He arrived at Vaman Potter's house. He was no more, and his children and grandchildren welcomed Baba. Baba blessed the children and recollected as to how Vaman supplied one hundred eight earthen lamps for him to light on a 'Deepawali' night!

Madhava Rao remembered all those miracles of Baba! All his obligations! All his acts of nobility! He began to wonder why Baba was so much emotional today!

Baba moved ahead. He came across Appa Kulkarni's house. When his widow bowed down to him, he recollected Appa's efforts in making Nana Saheb Chandorkar and Dasa Ganu come to Shirdi! He went to Kulkarni Physician's house

and the old man was deeply meditating on Sai Baba! He looked at his wife's picture and recollected her devotion.

Baba walked ahead! The news that Baba is going around the village reached Lakshmi Bai Shinde. Quickly she baked one crisp bread, applied ghee to it and keeping it ready with chutney and jaggery in a plate, she awaited Baba's arrival. Baba blessed her and ate the bread she gave.

Next was Tatya's house. Baba remembered his mother Bayaja Maa. He recollected as to how she used to tread the jungle path to feed him those days. He saw Tatya who was bed-ridden. He cheered him up! He applied Udi on his forehead and assured him that he will take care of his welfare! He declared that Tatya was not going to die! Someone else will take his place. He did not disclose as to who that someone else was! On hearing about Tatya, somebody brought sweets. Baba distributed sweets to all those present! While others were jubilant and out of anxiety, deep in his heart Madhava Rao wondered as to whether this 'someone' who has to take the place of Tatya is Sai Baba himself!

Baba went around the houses of other devotees in Shirdi. Ultimately, he reached the mosque. He fell sick with fever. Even then he kept sitting resting against a cushion. He gave darshan to thousands of devotees.

Diverse Wavelengths

Sai Baba responded to his devotees in different wavelengths- anger for some, love for some, clairvoyance, rebuke shouting or even ignore. Spiritual advices too were different. Mrs. Khaparde was told to constantly chant 'Rajaram Rajaram'. Rao Bahadur M.W. Pradhan of Mumbai was advised to recite 'Shri Ram, Jai Ram, Jai Jai Ram,' a mantra earlier prescribed by his family Pontiff but was not being followed. Kaka Dixit was told to read 'Eknath Bhagawat' and Bhavartha Ramayan. Prof G.G. Narke was asked to read "Yoga Vasistha". Shama was to recite 'Vishnu Sahasranama'. M.B. Rege was told to simply remember him. Sai Satcharitra clearly says, "You should not do anything because your Guru does so but should follow only what has been told to you".

By: Sanjay Padia

Children's Corner

Children of Immortality!
Remember that you are blessed
By Lord Sainath

Live up to his image, in every way, in all planes.
Live in his grace!

Walk this earth with your heads held high,
Your spirits soaring...
Your hearts open to Love...
And believe in yourself and Sai within you.
Then all will go well.

Earth is but a manifestation of Lord Sainath.
Made out of Lord Sainath's Life!

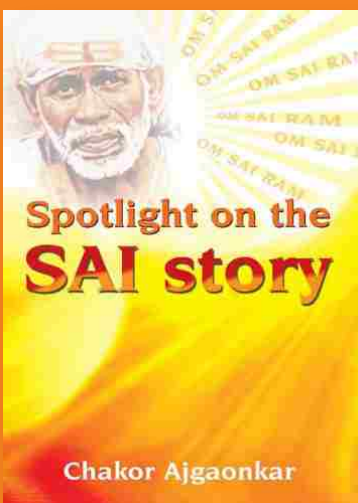
Wherever you look, Lord Sainath is there.
Wherever you walk, Lord Sainath is there.
Whomsoever you contact, Lord Sainath is that person.
He is in each, in all his Splendour.

See Lord Sainath everywhere,
Talk to him and love him,
Who is in each.

Then from each, Lord Sainath will respond
And bring you into Glory.
You cannot see him in one place and not in another,
For Lord Sainath fills all space.

Live... Live... Live... in perfect accordance
With Lord Sainath's will, and wonders will ensue.

by Sivanesan Swamiji



Book Review

Spotlight on the SAI Story, by Chakor Ajgaonkar

Spotlight on the Sai Story is Sai Baba's life and philosophy retold in new light in historical chronology and spiritual potency with aroma and luster of avatar grace. Like a love-thirsty bird, the author sings of the enchanting glory of the divine incarnation that is Sai Baba. With each page that is turned, the book makes the reader feel as if he is face to face with Baba, interacting with him, and experiencing his love and grace.

This book is published by Sterling Paperbacks, New Delhi-110020. Priced at Rs.125. A good addition to Sai-literature.

Reviewed by Smt. Maheshwari



Mantra #4

by Jayakrishna Nelamangala

In this mantra, the paramAtma tattva that is established in this upanishat, is elaborated.

The upanishat is expounding the nature of Vedic Brahman. It uses terms such as 'anejat', 'ekam' and so on. These words carry within themselves the reason how they become attributes of Parabrahman. For this reason, a word denoting an attribute of Parabrahman, is not applicable to anything else. One who is a serious student of veda, must keep this discipline intact. Unless there is this discipline, knowledge of Vedic Brahman is not possible.

उपनिषत्: upanishat

अनेजदेकम्मनसो जवीयो

नैनददेवाप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत् |

तत्धावतो अन्यान्अत्येति तिष्ठत्

तस्मिन्अपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥४॥

anējadēkam manasō javīyō |

nainaddēvāpnuvan purvamarśat |

tat dhāvatō anyān atyēti tiṣṭhat |

tasmin apō mātariśvā dadhāti || 4 ||

Before we make an attempt at translating the upanishat mantra, let us understand a few words that are in the mantra.

The root word 'एजू ējr' has the meaning कंपने 'kamanē – to shake (with fear). Paramaatma-svarūpa is 'अनेजत् anejat', that which does not shake, because it has absolutely no defects such as fear. As compared to the mind, it is even faster. This Parabrahma-svarūpa, even the divinities did not understand completely. On the other hand, Brahman is eternally present prior to all, by its own nature.

The word एकम् ēkam is loaded with many meanings. It is not talking about the numerical values one, two, three etc., at all, it is rather talking about the Oneness of the principle taught in the Veda. Without going into too many details, we will just mention here

that Ekam stands for the one-ness of Vedic Brahman i.e., Vedic Brahman has no internal differences within Himself. There is no स्वगतभेद svagatabhēda within Brahman. Some philosophies wrongly understand this as 'apart from Brahman, there is no second entity', which by the way, Veda never taught. Brahman is Eka means Brahman is svarAt or svatantra. Brahman is Eka means He is the All-Doer. Brahman is Eka means His one attribute stands for all His other attributes. A vast study of brahma-mImAmsA-shAstra along with vedOpanishats is necessary to understand this concept of 'ekatva' of Brahman. For our purpose, we will simply use the term 'eka' to mean primary, 'pradhAna'.

The root word 'ṛṣa' has the meaning 'knowledge'. Brahman knows it all. That Vedic Brahman by being stationary, overcomes others going with speed. Vedic Brahman, stays having crossed them over, because of His Unimaginable Powers and also because of His Omnipresence.

The word 'apaha' means the works of merit i.e, सत्कर्म satkarma. The word 'apaha' has the etymological meaning 'that which protects all around'. Works of merit that are performed by living beings, protect them all around. The upanishat teaches that, mātariśva submits such works of merit in Parabrahman.

The Vedic concept of मातरिश्वा mātariśva is mentioned in several upanishats such as षट्-प्रश्न षट्प्राश्ना , बृहदारण्यक bṛhadāraṇyaka and so on. In the rig-veda, there is a sookta called बळित्था-सूक्त baLitthA-sookta which mentions 'mātariśva' as vAyu, the vital breath i.e., prANa. mātariśva is मुख्य-वायु mukhya-vāyu.

Even the divinities who are of a higher order, are not able to completely comprehend Parabrahman of the Veda. This is why no one, no one including those divinities can claim to be themselves that Vedic

Parabrahman. This mantra mentions this truth as "नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन् nainaddēvāpnuvan'.

In this mantra, as teaching परब्रह्मस्वरूप Parabrahma svarūpa, निर्भयत्व nirbhayatva, अचिन्त्यशक्तित्व acintya shaktitva and सर्वगतत्व sarvagatatva have been taught. One should not assign popular ordinary meanings to these words and be content with it. All of shāstra is there to expound this Greatness of Paramaatman. It needs a study of entire shāstra to understand the mutual relationships between the attributes of Parabrahman that have been taught in this mantra.

We may understand the expression 'नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन्' 'nainaddevAapnuvan' in two ways:

- divinities do not understand God completely or
- because of His Completeness, divinities do not understand Him fully.

The second meaning is superior to the first one, since it upholds the Completeness of God. The first one simply elaborating on a certain ignorance which negates completeness in the portion of god that divinities understood. The greatness of a knowledgeable person depends on how well he has understood his own limitation in understanding that Completeness of Vedic Brahman. In the knowledge that 'It is impossible to know that Completeness' all the other pieces of knowledge necessary for it are hidden. For this reason, it is not lack of knowledge, but it is the result of comprehensive contemplation on what is studied. A student with fittedness for shāstra need to contemplate on the suitability of these two meanings.

The upanishat teaches that, living beings perform karma, as instigated by मुख्यवायु mukhya-vāyu and their meritorious deeds are submitted by मुख्यवायु mukhya-vāyu in Parabrahman. Here, the meritorious deed is the विद्याकर्म vidyākarma, the karma that is done for the sake of knowledge, as worship of God without any desire for results. Such an action is seen in a person with fittedness for shaastra, because of मुख्यवायु mukhya-vāyu. That individual is not the author of that action. मुख्यवायु mukhya-vāyu submits it in Vedic Brahman means

मुख्यवायु mukhya-vāyu fully understands that the primary author behind that action was Parabrahman, for the action that was performed by his instigation.

This upanishat teaches, "पूर्वमर्षत्" which is explained as 'अगमत्पूर्वमेव स्वभावतः'. The world cannot know Vedic Brahman, because of His Completeness. On the other hand, there is no beginning to the natural knowledge of Vedic Brahman who has the knowledge of Himself. This must be properly understood. There are two aspects to the knowledge of Vedic Brahman.

- That the Vedic Brahman is Self-dependent and
- That the world is dependent on such a Self-dependent Vedic Brahman.

The gist of these two is one and the same. Moreover, when we talk about knowledge of Vedic Brahman as it is, both the knowledge of the world and the knowledge of Brahman, both are included as they are. This is the Omniscience of Vedic Brahman. By the property 'पूर्वमेव pūrvamēva' it is known that the knowledge of Vedic Brahman is distinct and different from our knowledge. The way our knowledge works, first a thing must be present and only then it may be known (or not known). When it is known, the beginning (ādi) of our knowledge is in the vastu itself. Vedic Brahman has the knowledge of the type 'anādi'. It does not depend on a thing being present before that knowledge. By the greatness of that knowledge, the existence (consisting of sattā-svarūpa-pramiti-pravrutti) of the thing gets created. Thus, paramaatma jnyaana creates everything. The property of His sarvagatatva (omnipresence) is established in this mantra which emphasizes the fact that He is present in everything which was established in earlier mantras. For this reason, no one can exceed Vedic Brahman. Vedic Brahman is in the front of all, is in the back of all, is with all. Study muṇḍaka which teaches,

"ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्तात् ब्रह्म
पश्चात् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्च उत्तरेण ।
अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठं ॥

(मुण्डक ४.१४)

brahmaivēdamamṛtaṁ purastāt brahma paścāt
brahma dakṣiṇataśca uttarēṇa | adhaścōrdhvaṁ ca

prasṅtam brahmaivēdam viśvamidaṁ variṣṭhaṁ ||

One who has well understood this tattva is mukhya-vāyu. All else is the function of mukhya-vāyu. Study Shat-prashṇa which teaches "अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितं | arā iva rathanābhau prāṇē sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam" – ṣaṭ-prashṇa (ii.5). Mukhya-vāyu, the knower of Paramātma-tattva, all that he instigates in this world, understands them as the work of Parabrahman. This is what gets to be called समर्पण samarpaṇa. The adhikāri who studies and understands this, is eligible to submit all his functions in Paramaatma.

The upanishat teaches 'आ समन्तात् पालयन्तीति व्युत्पत्त्या अपः कर्माणि' 'ā samantāt pālayantīti vyutpattiyā apaḥ karmāṇi' what is the karma that protects all around? Person indulging in karma, thinking he is the doer, is performing karma that is sinful. Hence, the nishkaama karma performed by the knowledgeable in the form of worship of God is the one that protects all around. The knowledgeable knows he has no independence in either that karma or in the saadhana. This knowledge is the true meaning of 'bhagavad-arpaṇa'. For this reason, the karma performed by one who has direct knowledge of Brahman is said to be 'karma' 'तत्कर्मति प्राहुः यत्कृतं ब्रह्मदर्शिना tat karmēti prāhuḥ yat kṛtam brahma-darśinā. Obtaining this knowledge of paramaatma is obtaining paramaatma. Observe how the word 'obtained' aapnuvan has the meaning 'knew' vyajaanan. All these have to be properly studied and heavily contemplated upon.

With this background, let us try to understand the meaning of upanishat mantra #4.

उपनिषत्: upanishat

अनेजदेकमनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवाप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत् |

तत्धावतो अन्यान् अत्येति तिष्ठत्

तस्मिन् अपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ||४||

anējadēkam manasō javīyō |

nainaddēvāpnuvan purvamarśat |

tat dhāvatō anyān atyēti tiṣṭhat |

tasmin apō mātariśvā dadhāti || 4 ||

That Parabrahman has nothing that can control Him (अनेजत् anējat), and is primary pradhāna

(एकम् ēkam), and is faster than mind (मनसो जवीयो manasō javīyō). This Brahma-svarūpa because is Complete, devas did not and do not understand it fully (नैनद्देवाप्नुवन् nainaddēvāpnuvan). That brahma-tattva from anādi-kāla i.e., beginningless-time has Complete Knowledge by Brahman's very nature (पूर्वमर्षत् purvamarśat). That Brahma-tattva (तत् tat) staying at one place (तिष्ठत् tiṣṭhat) outruns everyone else (धावतो अन्यान् अत्येति dhāvatō anyān atyēti) because It is Omnipotent achintya-shakti and because It is Omnipresent sarva-gata. In that Parabrahman, (तस्मिन् tasmin) mukhya-vāyu submits (मातरिश्वा दधाति mātariśvā dadhāti) all puṇya-karmas. (अपो apō) that were performed because of his instigation.

NOTES:

To help us understand the Upanishad in the traditional manner, in the commentary for this mantra, the brahmANDa-purANa is quoted as follows:

अनेजत्निर्भयत्वात्तदेकम्प्राधान्यस्तथा ।

सम्यक्ज्ञातुम्अशक्यत्वात्अगम्यमत्तत्सुरैरपि ।

स्वयम्तु सर्वान्अगमत्पूर्वमेव स्वभावतः ।

अचिन्त्यशक्तितश्चैव सर्वगत्वाच्च तत्परम् ।

द्रवतो अत्येति संतिष्ठत्तस्मिन्कर्माण्यधान्मरुत् ।

मारुत्येव यतश्चेष्टा सर्वा ताम्हरये अर्पयेत् ।

इति ब्रह्माण्डे ।

anējat nirbhayatvāt tadēkam prādhānyastathā. samyak jñātum aśakyatvāt agamyam tat surairapi. svayam tu sarvān agamat pūrvamēva svabhāvataḥ. acintya śaktitaścaiva sarvagatvācca tatparam. dravatō atyēti saṁtiṣṭhat tasmin karmāṇi adhān marut. mārutyēva yataścēṣṭā sarvā tām harayē arpayēt | iti brahmāṇḍē.

What we should notice here is the fact that the Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa of śrī vēdavyāsa follows closely this upanishat. As following Shrutī, although a smritī, that purāṇa becomes a pramāṇa. We should also notice that the meaning given here is what श्रीवेदव्यास śrī vēdavyāsa has given. We should not lose such traditional meaning when it is available. This also tells us that any other way of interpreting this mantra would not be the traditional way.

Is Yoga about



Achievement or Awareness?



by: V.S. Kuber

One of the key differences that one finds between the yoga that is popular in the West and that which is taught by traditionally trained Indian gurus of India is the idea of achievement. In the West, yoga is marketed as an achievement: the achievement of a particular body posture and a body type, which demands constant measurement and monitoring. But Sai Baba was an exponent of Yoga and is not interested in achievement. He is more interested in awareness, in using the body, the breath and the mind as tools to make one self-aware of not just the body, breath and mind, but things within and without. Achievement versus awareness is the fundamental difference between western and Sai Baba's wisdom.

When we use the word western, what do we actually mean? We mean management of the body using Greek principles. In Greek mythology, people are always shown as athletic. Gods, like Apollo and Artemis, and heroes, like Atlanta, are celebrated for their racing abilities and the typical Greek body-type, which is highly muscular. These stories are about achievement. The victor was crowned with a laurel wreath, because there was an association of the surge of adrenaline, exhilaration and triumph with the ambrosia of the gods. It was the moment when one connected with the divine. Hence, the Greek heroes were constantly focused on aggressive achievement. Now, add to this a scientific or business element and you will find people focusing on the

measuring and monitoring the achievement of a target. One is pushed by one's coach and cheerleaders to do better and better.

There is both reward and benefit and one sees this in athletic traditions; but now it has percolated into Yoga traditions, where one is continuously being cheered to achieve a particular posture, a particular number or to tone your body to a particular goal. It becomes all about the objective. This is very different from the traditional model where yoga was primarily a tool to make one self-aware.

As per scientific research, the human body is bombarded with various forms of stimuli. The human consciousness restricts the number of stimuli that one analyses in order to prevent the mind from going into overdrive by the onslaught. This process of constricting of the consciousness is seen as knotting, crumpling or rippling of the consciousness, in Hindu traditions. Knotting, crumpling and rippling is accelerated in humans due to imagination – imagined hungers and fears. The purpose of yoga is to unravel, unknot and uncrumple it. This leads to the expansion of the consciousness that makes us increasingly aware. Yoga is the technique used for this unravelling. Observation and awareness play a very critical role in the practice of Yoga.

It is not achieving the pose but focusing on what the muscle does. Is it contracted, is it relaxed, is it in the right position? We are focusing



on the coordination of the breath, the mind and the muscle and observing the connections of how the movement of the hips affects breathing. How the movement of an ankle affects posture. How the movement of a limb changes the way we sit. Thus, the more aware one is the more one understands. This impacts how one perceives the world, makes decisions and disciplines one's self. The world here is both the outer and inner. Our

awareness of who we are impacts our relationships.

Thus, there is no real separation between the eight limbs of Yoga, be it Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana or Samadhi. Each one impacts the other. Everything happens simultaneously. Just as one mixes all the masalas and gets the curry, one cannot distinguish the individual elements, but can enjoy the combined flavor of the mix.

The western model is focused on dissecting each segment and is now unable to make the fluid telescoping and mixing which is the essence of Indian thought. The point is fluidity and not fixity, awareness and not achievement. There is a letting go of desire to compete with the other as there is no victory to be achieved. It is only about being more aware and accepting one's body and life for what it is rather than what we want it to be. It is about correcting the imbalance and seeing the unseen tensions.

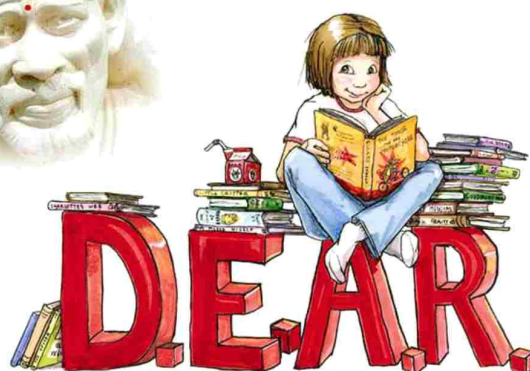
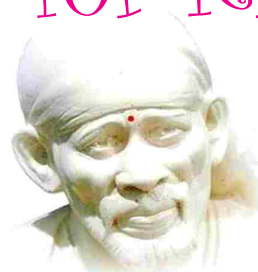
It is a very nonviolent approach to life, which has often been forgotten by the new corporate generation – a generation constantly trying to achieve its target, if not in the office, then in the gym. Such aggressive focus on goals makes us forget consequences of our decisions, at work, in life, and on the environment.

Charters and Sayings

138. Baba: *Our art is unique. Remember this. To get Atmajnan, dhyana is needed i.e., the Atma-anushtana that pacifies and carries the mind into Samadhi. So, give up all desires and dwell in your mind upon God in all. If the mind is thus concentrated the Goal is achieved.*

319. B: *They do not talk of saints as dying. They take samadhi. (Conferring about Kabir)*

Dr. Ranvir Singh's
Pictorial Message for Kids



When your heart is in your work,
"I AM" definitely present in it..

Never give up devotion.

**When you spend your time thinking of God and chanting His name,
you will never come to grief.**



**Follow the dictum, "Speak the truth, practice righteousness."
you are bound to emerge successful always.**

your good work will beget God's grace without fail.

Sin or merit comes only from your own deeds, not from outside.



Dr. Ranvir Singh's

Pictorial Message



Today, you do not find peace anywhere in the world.
you see only pieces !!!

In fact, people are breaking their own hearts into pieces.
How then can peace be acquired ?

***There is only one solution to this problem. - Love God.
Have faith in God. Surrender unto Him.***

Dedicate your whole life to God and carry on every activity ..
of yours as an offering to Him.

Let all your activities be helpful to others. - Help ever, hurt never.

If you wish to be happy, always pray for the welfare of others.

Baba Sai was always chanting Allah Malik, God is The Master and would keep telling one and all, 'Sabka Malik Ek Hain' which meant Everybody's God is One, but nobody really understood what He was trying to tell them, that God came before and beyond religion. In 1886, Baba told Mhalsapati to protect His body for three days and if He did not return back then to bury His body at a particular spot and put two flags for all those who wanted to come and pay respect. Saying this He left His body and medically He was declared dead. Mhalsapati did not get up for three days. Baba's head on his lap, he dared any of the authorities to come close to Baba. Baba's other disciples guarded The body. Baba had been suffering from severe asthma and His body had taken a toll from serving His children, day and night, those physically present and those not in Shirdi, but under His protection.

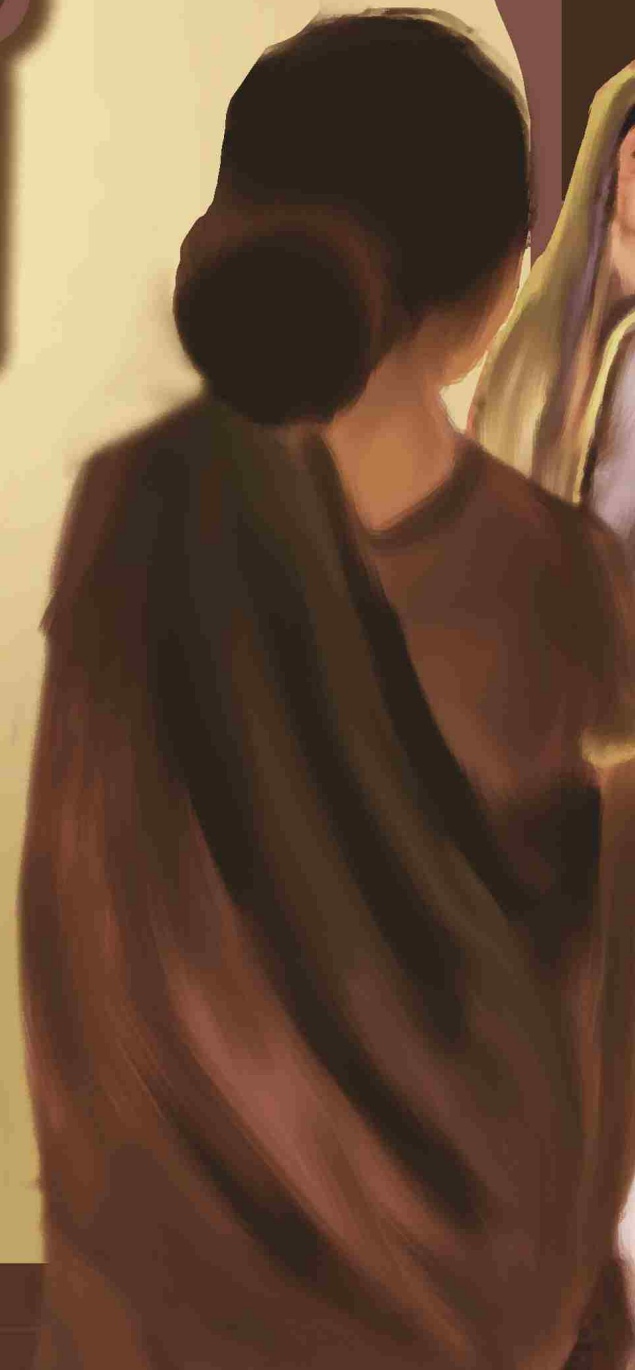
Relationship is Unique

Balagovind Upasani Sastry, younger brother of Upasani Maharaj went to Haridwar and Rishikesh in 1922. He met an ascetic who told him his past unsolicited including his family details and their intimate devotion to Sai Baba. He asked Balagovind to meet him again in the afternoon. Since Balagovind thought that his mother also should be blessed by the ascetic, he took her to the same spot but the ascetic was nowhere to be seen. Then he recalled Sai Baba's words – 'Nobody comes without a relationship'. A similar experience was faced by Mohite Baba when he visited Shirdi in 1950. He met a great Sadhu at Lendi Baugh. When he brought his associate, the Sadhu had disappeared. However, he was seen in the same place later. Mohite Baba realized that it was Lord Sainath himself who gave 'darshan only to him.

Blessing with Premonition

Mhalsapathy was a goldsmith by caste and profession. He was an uneducated young man. Khandoba was his family diety. With his own money he had built a temple for Khandoba at Shirdi. He led a life of poverty but always remained contented, with implicit faith in God. He was possessed with the spirit of Khandoba and when he was in trance, he solved many problems of the villagers. He was detached to worldly pleasures. This led him on to spiritual path and made him highly respected by the villagers. He had two daughters and Sai Baba blessed him with a son in 1897. He told Mhalsapathy to look after his son for 25 years. Indirectly Baba hinted that by then Mhalsapathy also would die. He died in 1922.

by Sanjay Padia



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Aradhana R.
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