

Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE —

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AURA of SHIRDI SAI

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Editorial

First Word

From Agra, we took a break to visit Keoladeo Ghana National Park (Rajasthan) 60 kilometers away on Jaipur Highway. It was enchanting. The Guide Paras Mal was wearing a locket of Sai Baba and was happy to learn we too were devoted to Shirdi Sai Baba.

With salutations to Sai Baba, he started the visit. "Let your weaknesses show. It is as titillating and attractive as showing a bit of your slip," As I adjusted my binoculars, all set to catch sight of rare birds, I was not prepared for tips on seduction or philosophy if you please. But, my guide would not begin bird watching before pointing out Prosopis Juliflora, a small tree, almost a shrub. Soon I was able to recognize it everywhere in the forest. The guide was saying, "This Juliflora is almost perfect and we do not want it in the forest. Perfection is for Parabrahma like Sai Baba; we humans must learn to accept and show our weaknesses, for one that hinges our relationships. When you let your weakness show, remember, it must be a conscious act; you are making it your strength."

Paras Mal, our guide explained why: "Juliflora has no smell, no secretions, so it does not attract insects. This is like some people who try to sellotape all their weaknesses. This makes them very difficult to live with. When they show some weakness, they show they are human. This is like some Mahatmas who live away from society in isolation. Sai Baba lived with the poor and took care of them".

The guide continued as to how Sai Baba interacted with his devotees. "Other humans can interact with such saints, draw solace from them, feel superior to them sometimes, feel equal to them at other times, or feel comfortable. Do not be an unrelenting perfectionist like Juliflora, You may be difficult to put up with. We feed on each other's weaknesses as birds feed on the insects attracted by shrubs." That was the first lesson.

The second was, "In the obsession with perfection, we become defensive about our failings. Juliflora is defensive and so has thorn-like flowers. No one likes to be pricked and so cattle and other birds and animals fear it, just as people who lack confidence are offensive. Do not have an inferiority complex like Juliflora. Here is more, Juliflora becomes very thick and dense and so does not allow free movement of animals in the forest.

"Do not be judgmental and fill your head with notions of what is right or be 'holier-than-thou'. No one can get through to you then." My guide continued, with the third lesson: "Juliflora produces many pods with seeds. It does not add anything to the nutrition of the animals. Instead, if taken in large quantities, it can be poisonous to them. So, too, as devotees of Sai Baba, remember to remain useful to the people around you".

He continued, "Pursuing perfection for the self alone, even if you are highly productive, if you are not useful to fellow beings does not add to your quality of life unless you distribute your learning and share the pursuit with people around you. Sai Baba wants us to distribute our wealth and knowledge to the needy. He shared the food obtained from five houses among dogs, pigs, sparrows, and those around him. He practically demonstrated that he takes care of their interests too."

Our guide added a note of caution. "Because of the many pods it produces, it multiplies very fast and so farmers fear it will become a weed. Observe restraint in all your endeavors, for, if you are as intelligent as Juliflora, you are bound to succeed and succeed in leaps and bounds. But that will cause fear around you, for people will feel you will take away their share. So do not spread yourself at not being good and do good at the speed of Juliflora. Live and let live, as the adage goes."

Juliflora is mostly used as firewood. As devotees of Sai Baba, we should use our talents and mind wisely, visualize our Master and always follow his dictum – 'Be good and do good'. Otherwise, people will use us for the most destructive end. So do not miss the tree for the wood, like Juliflora."

The guide gave us a lesson in Trust and on this 101st 'Punya Tithi' of Sai Baba let us dedicate ourselves in the service of humanity.

A Dip in to Vishnu Sahasranama-11

Sahasranama Answers Why We Run Away from Ourselves?

By: Seetha 'Priya'

The only person we must live with, all through our lives, is ourselves. That is why the first person we need to make peace with, is our own self. Do we have the strength to be alone? Do we look at ourselves compassionately? Do we spend time enriching our inner selves? Or, do we berate and belittle ourselves?

If we are leading a flawed existence, we will have many mental and emotional forces working against us. That is one reason why people run away from themselves. They do this in various ways. Some over socialize or go from one activity to another without pausing and leaving time to breathe. Everything is one big rush, with a packed schedule of engagements and things to do.

Rushing around, we have little time to think. This can affect our personality development and spiritual evolution. But the moment realization sets in that self-discovery requires an investment of time and energy, we seek moments of privacy, we invest time in spiritual pursuits, we set aside some time and we turn to Vishnu Sahasranama, meditation – all ways to discover our real selves.

The tenth shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is an eye-opener in this aspect.

**'Sureshah Sharanam Sharma
Vishwaretah Prajabhava
Ahah Samvatsaro Vyalah
Pratyayah Sarvadarshanah'**



Lord Vishnu is 'Suresha' the Lord of Devas, is the refuge for all as 'Sharana', He is the blissful 'Sharma' and happens to be 'Vishwaretah' the cause and source of the Universe. He is 'Prajabhava' the source of all beings. He is 'Aha' the day, 'Samvatsara' the year, 'Vyala' difficult to grasp, Absolute Consciousness 'Pratyaya' who is Omnispective 'Sarvadarshanah'.

When we trace the lives of Nana Saheb Chandorkar and Dasa Ganu Maharaj we find them to be great apostles of Sai Baba. Initially, they refused to even bow down to Sai Maharaj. The author of Sai Satcharitra, Hemadpant was through and through a non-believer. In all these great devotees we find that they have developed a single gift or a few gifts and made it to the top. Earlier the life of such people was in a mess and it was Sai Baba who blessed them meaningfully with a blissful life.

Some would like to make a 360-degree turn once they realize who they really are. That becomes difficult. Some have this realization at the time of impending death. Since we are creatures of long habits, it becomes difficult to all of a sudden change direction.

Once we are in the quest for self-discovery, we begin to think differently. We realize the newness of life every morning. We do not always hit sixes, but we are able, to some extent, to control our lives and make

amends for what went wrong.

Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji prescribed Vishnu Sahasranama as the great means of 'self-discovery'. It is the kind of power that comes from living a good life. When we discover our true selves, our attitudes to work and play will change. We will not feel the need to run away from every mistake we may have made, and neither will we rest on our laurels. Instead, we will find that we relate to others and all beings in the universe in a much more meaningful way.

Vishnu Sahasranama will make us feel less and less, the need to compare ourselves to others. Comparison can be unhealthy when it makes us feel inadequate, jealous, or envious of the success of others. That is because we have not discovered our self-worth.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji states "Self-worth is not about reaching the top. Self-worth is all about discovering our own potential and coordinates. There is a purpose and a divine plan for each of us. In the fulfillment of that plan lies our true destiny. We will then no longer feel the urge to run away from ourselves because we will have discovered the secret in the inner core of our beings that makes us face everything in the best way possible without fear or ill-feeling.

A few of Sai Baba's assurances are:

- "Without some special bonds of past lives, no one comes to us. May it be a dog, pig, or a fly. So do not repulse anybody." (*Sai Satcharitra* - Chapter 3, Ovi-81)
- "How will anyone be longing for worldly pleasures, who thinks of my name, worships me, studies me, whose holy readings are of me, who meditates on me and who continuously thinks of me?" (*Sai Satcharitra* - Chapter 3, Ovi-16)
- "I am under my devotees' obligations. I am always beside them. I am always hungry for love. I am at their beck and call." (*Sai Satcharitra* - Chapter 11, Ovi-76)
- "Unless I so desire who can cross his threshold? Who will get 'darshan' by his own volition or come to Shirdi? (*Sai Satcharitra* - Chapter 35, Ovi-153-154)
- "None can come here unless I bring him." (*Sai Satcharitra* - Chapter 35, Ovi-153).

Last Moments...

By: Dr. G. R. Vijayakumar

Who isn't fascinated by what happens at the moment of death, and what happens after death? Sri Narasimha Swamiji was able to describe the process that happens when our souls are ready to leave their physical bodies, in his book, 'Life of Sai Baba. He reminds us, "Time creates and time alone kills. This is the inevitable law of time," explaining Baba's Mahasamadhi 101 years ago on 15th October 1918 and then proceeds to describe the process of death, step by step.

According to Sri Narasimha Swamiji, it is through the chakra system of a human being that the soul withdraws from the base upwards. First, the element of earth is withdrawn from the Muladhara chakra, the root plexus, and this is the dissolution of the earth element. It moves upwards to the Svadhishtana chakra, the sacral plexus, the place of the water element. The earth element is converted into water. You may feel this when someone is dying because their hands and feet will suddenly become cold. This is the dissolution of the water element.

Then, the water element is withdrawn upwards from the svadhishtana chakra and it accumulates in the Nabhi chakra, in the region of the solar plexus, above the navel.

Water is then converted into the fire

element, and the region above the navel becomes warm.

This is the dissolution of the fire element. Then, fire is gradually withdrawn from the solar plexus to the Anahata, Hridaya chakra, the heart plexus, where it is converted into the air element, mixing with the breath of the heart region. Often, the whole body begins to tremble. This is the dissolution of the air element.

After that, the air of the cardiac plexus is withdrawn to the Vishuddhi chakra, the throat plexus, as ether. A sound is produced in the throat, indicating the dissolution of the ether element. The lower portion of the body is now dead and these Pancha bhutas, five elements have been dissolved.

Once the sound in the throat is produced, what happens next? The principle of Brahman, the Brahmtattva that is found in the individual soul is then withdrawn — it merges back into the Virat principle. At this precise moment, the 'eyes are turned back'. The soul may exit through the

eyes, ears, or mouth.

If the soul has been liberated, it exits from the point on the back of the head known as *Brahmarandhra*, which is at the twelfth chakra. You may have seen people in bygone days wearing a choti, small ponytail on the back of their heads.



That is the place of brahmarandhra.

Then, what happens after death? Our physical bodies are recycled back into the pool of atoms of matter, but what about the other bodies — subtle bodies and souls? Depending on their vibratory level, there are infinite possibilities for their onward journey at the moment of death. We create a vibratory blueprint according to how we live our life on Earth, and at the moment of death, our subtle bodies and souls go to the dimension that corresponds with that blueprint. The soul finds its level and its dimension according to the level of purity of the subtle body and its own potency.

Some of us will return to physical existence because we are attached to people and things in this physical world that draws us back. That is the play of our samskaras. We may have died many times before this life, and after we die, we will become someone else. This cycle goes on and on, life after life, until we reach the state of moksha that yogis have perfected. Then we become eligible to carry on to the other subtler dimensions, where there is no need for a physical body. It all depends on the vibrational potency; we have created during the life we lived. There are many possibilities. And what about those souls that are liberated? Does it mean they will not be reincarnated? Not necessarily. A liberated soul has the total, absolute freedom to be born again or not. Sai Baba continues to live in this world protecting devotees and Sri Narasimha Swamiji, called it 'freedom from freedom'. Sai Baba takes different forms and hence glorified as 'Apantaratma'.

Sai Baba has shown how best to lead our lives on Earth. In Sai Satcharitra, a person's character is usually defined according to the three Gunas,

the three manifested forces in Nature — saatvik, rajasik, and tamasik. But this is a broad categorization, and often portrayed in a limited, judgmental way: for example, a saatvik person is seen as holy and pure, a rajasik person is seen as restless and desire-based, and a tamasik person is seen as ignorant and stupid. This view does not appreciate the balancing, complementary nature of all three Gunas and their role in our lives. Also, even if we are saatvik in nature, there is a whole spectrum of saatvikta; if we are tamasik, there is a whole spectrum of tamasikta; if we are rajasik, there is a whole spectrum of rajasikta. Being Sai devotees, each of us is a unique blend of the three Gunas, so there are infinite combinations of the three. Accordingly, there are infinite dimensions to which souls are attracted. Based on the vibratory level of the subtle bodies and the soul, they will find a matching dimension — they cannot go anywhere else. This is the significance of Baba's Mahasamadhi.

Another question people ask is: "Can I purify myself at the moment of death so that my soul reaches a vibratory level in tune with a higher dimension?" It doesn't work that way, because you cannot achieve something at the last moment.

Death may happen at any moment — where is the guarantee that you will kick the bucket at the age of 99 or 100? So, to be ready for the next dimension, it is better to prepare yourself well by cultivating a pure, refined vibratory level. And what is that pure vibration? It is the vibration of love. Such a preparation means living a lifestyle as a devotee of Sai Baba where you are always ready for the last moment.

How can there be a possibility of death for him whose glory is the Supreme Spirit? He who is the embodiment of detachment, how can existence or non-existence have any effect on him?

—Sai Satcharitra, Chapter 42, Ovi 146

When You Write Your Own Obituary

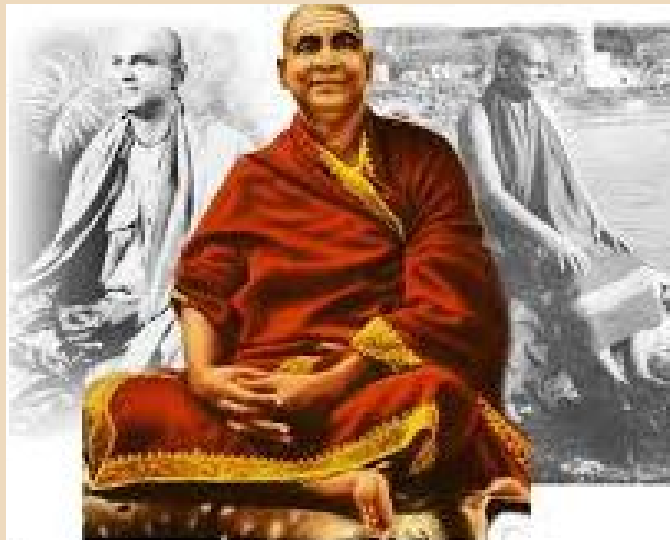
By: Swami Sivananda

When someone passes away, we talk of “untimely death”, how unfair it is to be snatched away unexpectedly, and so on. True, but no one knows when the Grim Reaper comes knocking at one's door. A letter that a monk in our Ashram wrote addressing his illness and state of mind has been doing the rounds and is being described as an obituary he wrote for himself whereas he was simply expressing his feelings, at a certain point in his life when things seemed to have turned upside down all of a sudden. A quirk of fate, as some may put it. And the letter has touched our hearts and moistened our eyes. The Mahasamadhi of Shirdi Sai Baba on 15th October 1918 signifies this point. Sai Baba has declared that he would live forever and the bones in his tomb would take care of devotees' welfare.

The significance of Baba's Mahasamadhi is that life is eternal, and death is only a comma, not a full stop. The Atman is ever-living and his own giving up the body earlier in 1886 for three days to get rid of his Asthmatic attacks is writing his own obituary. Sai Baba wanted his devotees to consider every day as his last day on this earth and therefore to be good and do good.

But yes, a famous British Journalist who settled at Rishikesh near our Ashram did write his own obituary, for a lark, when he was in the prime of his youth. He, till the end, was vigorously engaged with the subject of death. He wrote an obituary for himself when he was still a young man and included the following epitaph:

*“Here lies one who spared neither man nor God
Waste not your tears on him, he was a sod
Writing nasty things, he regarded as great fun
Thank the Lord he is dead, this son of a gun.”*



He was into his nineties and every day, almost, he would say, was lived out in suspense. He was tangentially different from Sai Baba.

Would the end come today? Tomorrow? But his interest in the topic was more philosophical than morbid, even a quest to get to the bottom of the mys-tery, if possible; he suggested to our Ashram he could be 'buried at Ganga' as an eco-friendly alternative.

So what is it about death that its very mention makes some furious, feel humilia-ted, even angry and offended, while a few others turn philo-sophical, accepting, even poetic? Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi shows how he accepted it.

A Monk in our Ashram posted a question with great enthusiasm, in our Satsang, inviting all to write in their obituary as Sai Baba prepared for his last moments. The outcome? A deathly silence.

Writing your own obituary could be viewed as an act of vanity, or as an exercise in self-evaluation, or as one that seeks to imagine how one might be perceived. Or simply, it might just be something that one would like written about oneself, post-death.

Personally, I find epitaphs far more entertaining, thought-provoking, and in some cases, quite hilarious. When Mel Blanc, who did voice-overs for cartoon characters like Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Porky Pig died, his family

carried out his wish expressed in his will that his gravestone should carry the words, "That's All, Folks!" This was how episodes of Porky Pig would sign off at the end, and that's all Mel wanted his gravestone to say. And it cannot but bring a smile to one's face.

Coming back to the British Journalist near our Ashram he was a self-professed atheist. He didn't believe in reincarnation and the afterlife; at other times, he would say he was agnostic, and his only religion, if he had one, was ahimsa, nonviolence. He had the following epitaph fixed in the cemetery at Rishikesh

*Here lies an Atheist
All dressed up
And no place to go.*

"Light of Consciousness which illumines our experiences is not like the light of a fire. The light of the fire can illumine only objects that are there, but the Light of Consciousness also illumines the objects that are not there. It is the Light of Consciousness that illumines for us not only light but also darkness. When the room is dark, we are aware that it is dark. The awareness of the darkness is because of the Light of Consciousness in us. This Consciousness is the Awarer in me who brings to me the awareness of things that exist and things that do not exist. It is the Light of all lights; It is the Eternal Light."

— **Swami Chinmayananda**

No One Ever Dies

By: Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji

Sri Narasimha Swamiji was walking through the streets of Mylapore in Madras along with his associates when he heard a wailing sound from a house nearby. A death had occurred there, and relatives were crying bitterly over the demise of their dear one. He moved on, feeling sympathy for them. After some days, when he happened to pass through the same street, he remembered the house where he had heard sobbing sounds earlier. But now no perceptible change was visible thereafter the death that seemed to have brought profound sorrow. The initial shock of death seemed to have subsided and all normal activities went on as usual. 'How soon and how smoothly we come to terms with death,' wondered Sri Narasimha Swamiji.

What is death all about? Does knowledge of death help us lead a better life? He explained to us the significance of Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi. He explained many studies on the subject of death. It was young Nachiketa, son of Saint Vajasravas, who went right into the abode of Dharmaraja, the God of Death, to get to the bottom of the mystery surrounding the death.

After having met Dharmaraja and receiving advice from him, Nachiketa returned with the knowledge that death happens only to the body and not to the Atman, Self, which lives on. "Atman is neither born nor does it die. It did not spring from anything and nothing sprang from it. The atman, which is unborn and eternal, is not slain even when the body is destroyed," said Yama Dharmaraja. Na jayate mriyate va vipascit, Kathopanishad, 2:18. Once the atman is realized, there is no death and no birth, either.

In 1886, Sai Baba was suffering from episodes of breathlessness. He slept on the lap of Mhalsapati and gave up his life for three days. He had told Mhalsapati to guard his body for three days at the end of which he will come back to life. Even though the body was lifeless, and the villagers insisted on Baba's interment, Mhalsapati was stubborn in protecting Baba's body. Baba came back to life and lived upto 1918.



Venkataraman, a youth from Madurai, once pondered over the question, 'What is death all about?' It came while he was sitting alone in a room on the first floor of his uncle's house when suddenly a violent fear of death overwhelmed him. He felt he was going to die for no particular reason. He started thinking what to do about it. The fear made him introspect. 'What is death? What is it that is dying?'

He then dramatized the scene of death. He pretended to be a corpse to make the experience as real as possible. He held his breath and kept his mouth closed, pressing the lips tightly together so that no sound could come out. He said to himself: 'This body is dead. It will be carried to the crematorium, burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of the body am I dead? Is the body 'I'? This body is silent and inert, but I feel the full force of my personality and even the sound of 'I' within myself, as apart from the body. So, 'I' am a spirit, a thing transcending the body. The material body dies but the spirit transcending it cannot be touched by death. That means I am the deathless spirit, the indestructible conscious entity.'

The experience brought Self-realization to him and he came to be known as Ramana Maharshi, the jivanmukta — liberated even while alive. This death



experience is engraved at the entrance of Dakshina-murthy Temple near Sri Ramanashramam in Tiruvannamalai.

It's a great wonder that even if we hear about death, witness the death of our near and dear ones, in

the corner of our hearts, most of us still think that our time of death will never come. Even a person in advanced age would be planning for a future ahead. Even if he falls sick, he would like to be taken to the best hospital. Is he not ignorant?

“No,” said Ramana Maharshi. It is not due to ignorance that he thinks he would live on. Deep within, he has the knowledge that he is the deathless Self. He knows that the spirit within, the Self that shines as 'I am', would never die. He is unconsciously aware that the experience of 'I am', which is not related to the body, is everlasting and eternal.

This is, in short, the significance of Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi, and we should always remember that no one ever dies.

Sai Baba is Sat-Chit-Anand

O' Death! Consider thy existence vis-s-vis that of Sai Baba
Thou art merely a particle of dust under his feet
For in death, he lives for ever
And provides relief from the miseries of life
To one and all who take to him
Think over!

Who is great
You – The Annihilator
Or Sai – The Creator?
You might have perished His body
But Sai – The eternal
Lives on forever!

O' Sai! When I have caught hold of your hand firmly
And surrendered to you heart and soul
How can the vessel within me remain empty?
It is another thing
The vessel is unaware of this fact
Sai Baba is the Supreme Master, Parabrahman
Sai Baba is the 'Truth' Incarnate,
Sai Baba is the Pure Consciousness,
Sai Baba is the 'Bliss' Incarnate,
Sai Baba is Satyam, Shivam, Sundram
Sat- Chita- Anand.

By Shreyas Devaraj

A Good Question

By: Sri Narasimha Swamiji

Is there no way out of the suffering that this life sometimes seems to be? Suffering is not what is happening to us, but how we see what is happening to us”.

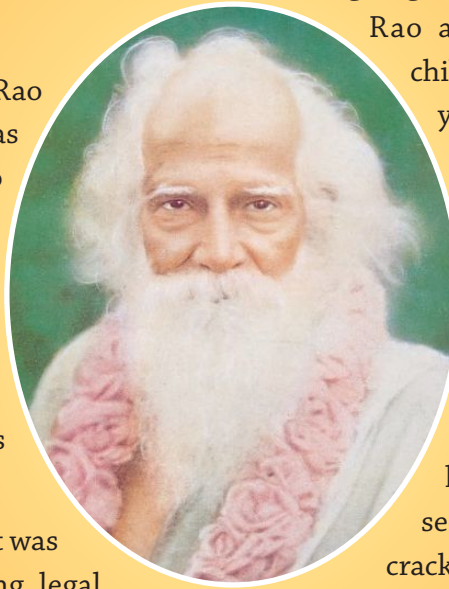
“Swamiji,” Sri O.K.Vaarada Rao said to me the other day, “life has taught me that one must go through one's journey alone.” He was a bit unsettled, even distraught, as he had recently fallen prey to a fraudulent land deal leading him through a financial loss of one year's pension.

The Solicitor concluded that it was Rao's negligence in not seeking legal clearance that was behind this disaster, for he'd not shared his transaction details with his friends either. Understandably, the police couldn't do much because the deal was in another state in India.

In the larger scheme of things, it's nothing: to lose one year's worth of pension when you've been earning for more than four decades. But, as is the way of loss, it is rarely about the absolute nature of the loss itself or its magnitude and more about how victimized we feel.

An unexpected, undesirable incident can catch even the wisest completely off guard. It took Varada Rao more than two weeks to come to terms with the fact that he was tricked.

His wife Sharada, on the other hand, was as cool as the winter breeze and didn't so much as even blink at this monetary loss. Two people



under the same roof, bearing the same loss, are affected differently. What a beautiful and intriguing world we live in. “I've seen,” Varada Rao added, recounting his difficult childhood, “that no one is there when you are suffering. Only your grit and God's grace help a person sail through. No one else can help.”

I knew where he was coming from because many people, I meet feel utterly lonely when they are down. They are usually not alone, but even with all the help around, loneliness seems to seep in like water through cracks — cracks in our consciousness, and our understanding of ourselves and our view of life.

That's why Sai Baba deemed the right view of life as one of the most important elements of Self-realization. “What is ours remains with us” I reminded Rao of the story of Veerabhadrapa and Channabasappa in Sai Satcharitra;

Krishna, too, repeatedly reminds Arjuna about the impermanent nature of everything and that one must navigate through the duality of life with courage.

Forget things, Krishna says, one day even all the people you love, or hate won't be in your life or you in theirs. So, what are you brooding over? Loss in and of life is not a question of if but when. Whatever we are attached to or hold dear in our hearts, losing it is only a matter of time. It is inevitable.

"Of course," I said to Varada Rao, "no one can partake of our suffering. It's a personal matter. Just like no one else will feel full if you have a hearty meal, or hungry if you are deprived of one."

"However," I continued, "they can share your loss, they can share your pain. You may not pass on the fulfillment of a good meal, but you can share your food with them. Thereafter, whether they feel full or foul is up to them. And, that's what suffering is: it is not what is happening to us, but how we see what is happening to us. It is not the actual situation but our interpretation of it that governs our feelings. Change the interpretation and feelings change on their own."

You can't change your feelings by just wanting to change them, no matter how desperate or



strong-willed you may be. You need to find out what is evoking these emotions in you. Go to the source. It could be an incident or a set of incidents, certain people, and so on. Then ask yourself if you wish to feel differently. If

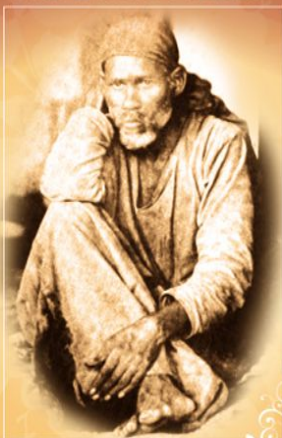
so, begin with the assumption that nothing or no one else is going to change.

They are where they always have been; they are exactly where they are supposed to be.

Develop a broader view; distract yourself positively; look at the brighter side; practice loving-kindness towards yourself and others, and gradually, your perspective will begin to shift. When it does, everything else will shift with it.

This is Sai Baba's 'Sankalpa'

Shirdi Sai Baba The Divine Healer



Raj Chopra

Book Review

Shirdi Sai Baba – The Divine Healer

Authored by: Raj Chopra

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Price: Rs. 100

Today there are many books on Shirdi Sai Baba. But this book Shirdi Sai Baba: The Divine Healer, is different. It is a systematic, thematic presentation of glimpses into Baba's miracles, His omniscience, His omnipotence, and His omnipresence. But the main focus has been on Baba's divine healing prowess and the devices.

Reviewed by: **Capt. V.K. Kadam**

Dixit Interprets Self-cultivation



Patanjali yoga offers a path of self-cultivation; the word cultivation stands as much for spiritual care as for agriculture, writes Hari Sitaram Dixit in his memoirs

In 1909, H.S.Dixit met an ascetic in a hill cave in the outskirts of Nagpur. The ascetic possessed nothing but a thick, cotton blanket, a napkin, a dhoti, and a wooden water-pot. For 21 years of his life, he had lived there at the cave, where he spoke to his visitors only through a window. But he mainly became famous for writing one of the most important comments on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.

He told Dixit that he will soon meet a Mahatma and through him, he will gain Self-realization. What Dixit needs is self-cultivation. This spiritual practice is concerned with bringing about a fundamental change in oneself. In his Yoga Sutras, 1:33, Patanjali writes about self-cultivation, which translators use for the Sanskrit term *Bhavana*, deriving from the Sanskrit root *bhu* for 'becoming'. More precisely, Patanjali writes about the cultivation of kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Patanjali describes in so far, a path of self-cultivation, as his practice of yoga is aimed at *kaivalya*, isolation, or complete salvation. Once this state occurs, the practitioner is no longer the

same, for he realizes what his true Purusha, Self, is and, therefore, sees the world with different eyes. Through the help of Mirikars, Dixit meets Sai Baba. He becomes an ardent devotee with a total surrender to the Guru.

In 1918, Baba permitted Dixit to build a Wada at Shirdi, and Dixit was permitted to wear saffron robes and settle down at Shirdi.

The correct type of cultivation does not know anything about compulsion either external or internal. There is no 'you become better, more flexible, stronger'. Instead of coercive flawlessness, it stands for acceptance and sees the alleged imperfections as part of the whole. Cultivation brings us into resonance with the world and, thus, with ourselves and the ego dissolves completely.

Sai Baba advised Dixit to follow Patanjali on his path of self-cultivation. We do not necessarily have to follow the strict ascetic path. Cultivation can also be done in everyday life and so many other areas.



Source of Divine Love

By: C.S. Dinesh

Sai Satcharitra has fifty-three Chapters. Hemadpant contributed fifty-two chapters while the Epilogue was done by B.V. Deo which is an index of the book content. Therefore, practically it is Fifty-two chapters. Anything associated with Sai Baba has a deeper meaning which will be divine and not easy to understand. Fifty-two stands for five and two added to be precisely seven. The number seven is incredible as we come across Seven Sages – Sapta Rishis, Seven Colours of VIBGYOR. Seven Oceans – SaptaSagars, a week has seven days, Sapta-Dweepas, SaptaLokas, Sapta rivers, above these are Seven Chakras of body which precisely signifies Seven Seas - Bhavsagar. When we surpass Bhavsagar or Seven virtual spiritual chakras, we have attained MUKTI or liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Seven Wonders of the world and the list is continuous. All these are eternal. Sai Baba is also eternal and his glories are eternal.

When we do Parayan of Sai Satcharitra we should not read it ending as we read a novel or any fiction. It should not be stopped just like that casually at the concluding chapter but we should continue to read the first chapter again after finishing the week's Parayan. Whenever Bhagawat Gita is completely chanted, after the last chapter, we again chant the initial few verses of the first chapter and then only formally conclude the Gita parayan. Similarly, we as devotees of Sai Baba should continue to read the divine poti of Sai Satcharitra again and again. Seven stands for weekdays which has no end and it will continue to repeat. Sai Baba did

not advocate any sort of rituals but strongly insisted on 'Nama Smarana'. Reading a few pages of the divine poti Sai Satcharitra will enable us to take his name every day in our life.

Sai Baba made me contemplate a color wheel which is a round, flat disk made of paper or cardboard. The outer edge is painted or colored with stripes for each of the seven colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. When the wheel is spun quickly, the colors blend and turn into white. As it spins at high speed, only a pure white wheel with no hint of any of the rainbow colors is seen.

As a child, I was often amazed at how all the colors can turn into white. But what I did not realize is that it is the other way around. It is white light that is the only color, but through a process of dispersion, it breaks up into the different colors of the rainbow.

Each color has its own wavelength. As light passes through different materials, those substances reflect light at various wavelengths, giving the appearance of different colors. But there is only one color—pure white light.

Similarly, if we look at humanity, we see on the outer surface a variety of people with different hair colors, eye colors, and skin colors. While outer colors may vary, the underlying color of all humanity is the same. That color is light.

After I started worshipping Sai Baba I realized our soul as our true essence. The differences among us are only due to the different vestures in which that Light – our Soul is embodied.

Just as white light manifests as the seven colors of the rainbow when it passes through different types of matter, similarly, the Light of the soul is one, even though it inhabits physical bodies having many different colors.

At our physical level, all we see are our physical differences. When we develop spiritual consciousness, we experience that the same Light of God is within each person. We are all united at the level of the soul.

When we reach that level of awareness, we start to see all living beings as one big family of the Creator. We no longer differentiate between people based on outer form and custom. We recognize that there is beauty in diversity. We start treating all people with love and respect because we know at their very core is the same essence of which we are made. Then we realize as to why Sai Baba advised us – 'See me in all beings'. If we want to get a small glimpse of how this is possible, we need only look at our primitive technology today. We think we are very

advanced, but it is just a small beginning for what humanity will develop in the future. If we look at the Internet, we find that all information is available to us by logging onto different sites. The server that hosts all the sites is a storehouse of all the information on all the sites. By logging on we access all the information we want.

Our God – Sai Baba is like a giant server that hosts all our individual souls or websites. Thus, all knowledge about us is known to Sai Baba - the God. He is also able to simultaneously know what is happening to each of us every second at the same time. When we tap into that spiritual consciousness and merge into the ocean of God, we too have access to all consciousness.

We can attain spiritual consciousness by focusing our attention on meditation and contemplation. Then, we contact our true nature, our Soul, and discover it is one with Sai Baba our God, the Source of divine love. Then we will experience peace and bliss.



Before sleeping in the night,
pray wholeheartedly.

**"God, I do not know whether my actions,
Since morning are good or bad.
I offer all of them to YOU.**

I do not know whether ..

I will be alive - tomorrow morning.

Protect me. My pranama to YOU," and then sleep."

After waking up in the morning pray,

"God, by YOUR grace I am still alive.

I do not know what I will be doing till tonight.

Please give me the wisdom not to sin. My pranama to YOU. "

Pray with devotion. If you do this every day that is enough ...



**Dr. Ranvir Singh's
Pictorial Message for Children**

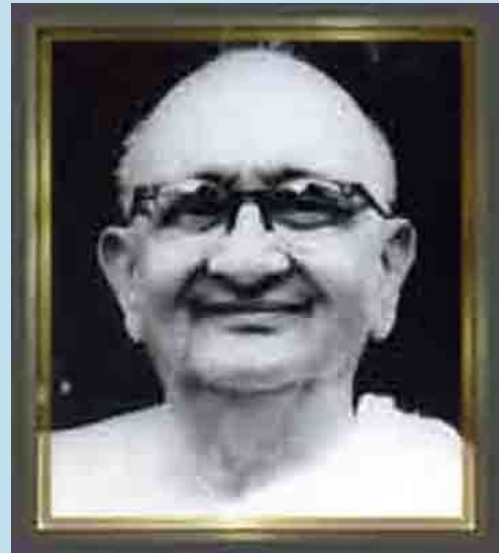
Sai Way to Riddle of Life

By: Swami Ramdas

Suppose you are on top of a hill and view at a distance, shooting up from the edge of a cliff, the branches of a tree, they appear to you to be suspended and growing in the air. You wonder at the sight. You question yourself as to how a tree could grow and appear in the air without a prop to stand upon. You do not stop at that. You proceed towards the strange sight with the great eagerness to solve the mystery. You approach the very brink of the cliff where the branches were seen. Now you peep down and what do you behold? You find that the branches belong to a tall tree having its root far down at the base of a deep precipice. Now your wonder has ceased. You have discovered the root of the illusive appearance and everything is clear to you. Your riddle is solved. Sai Baba is close behind your thoughts and when you seek his guidance, Sai Baba assures you - "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". - Shri Sai Satcharitra (Chap 44, Ovi 162)

So, it is with life. For you, it proves to be a perplexing riddle, so long as you have not seen the source of it. The appearances delude you and you are asking yourself: "Where did I come from? Who am I? Whence is the universe?" You cudgel your brain with these questions and strive hard with all the powers of your thought to find a solution for them. If you merely stand where you are and think and discuss within yourself however much you may, still you are far away from the solution. With zeal and earnestness, you must walk the distance that takes you to the place where you can get the vision to your Source.

The path to the Source of your and world's being is not without. You have to go within yourself. You must go past your senses, mind, and intellect; you must traverse beyond all limits, conditions, and tastes, and then alone will you have the fullest vision and



realization of your Immortal Root. This Immortal Root is also the Root of all that exists- the visible and the invisible worlds, and all beings and creatures in them. Sai Baba assures you - "If you recite 'Sai, Sai,' always, I will take you beyond the seven seas. If you believe in these words, you will be certainly benefited". - (Chap 13, Ovis 11-13)

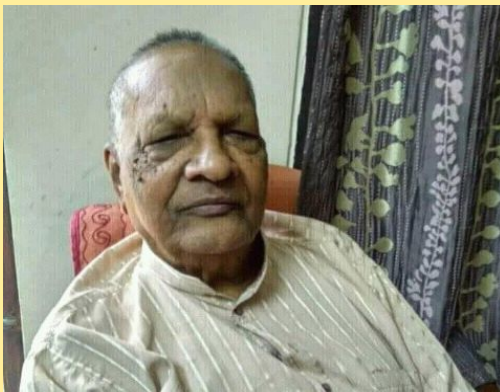
Now you realize that from one common existence has evolved a variety of manifests observed all around you. Your perplexity becomes extinct. The knotty problems of your life are solved once and for all. You know that you are one with all lives- one with the entire universe. Infinity is your true existence. Eternal bliss is your real nature. Birth, change, and death are passing and playful events in your Cosmic Life and Spirit. Sai Baba attained Mahasamadhi in 1918 but he is eternally living and taking care of you. Your life, in tune with the infinite God, has now reached the haven where everlasting felicity and peace dwells. In one word, you have realized your Supreme Godhead. Sai Baba has stated - "Such pious persons have become my followers whose sins have been destroyed and they have understood me." - (Sai Satcharitra Chap 13, Ovis 11-13)

Gadge Maharaj

Sai Baba Blessed Social Reformer

By: D. Sankaraiah

We conducted 'Akanda Sai Nama Japam' at Amaravati town in Maharashtra in 1986. This holy place reminds us of three great personalities.



G.S. Khaparde a leading lawyer went to Sai Baba and stayed at Shirdi in 1909 to protect himself against imprisonment in freedom struggle as well as to get his son protected against the Plague epidemic.

Upasani Maharaj practiced Ayurveda here before he went to Shirdi.

For devotees of Sai Baba, Gadge Maharaj (23 February 1876 - 20 December 1956) was a mendicant-saint blessed by Sai Baba and became a social reformer after Sai Baba advised him. He was feeding sparrows and Sai Baba told him that he should give plenty and not count the grains. He lived in voluntary poverty and wandered to different villages promoting social justice and initiating reforms, especially related to sanitation. He is still revered by the common people in India and remains a source of inspiration for various political parties and non-government organizations.



Life and career

His original name was Debuji Zhingraji Janorkar. He was born in Shendgaon village in present-day Anjangaon Surji Taluka in Amaravati District of Maharashtra in the washerman family. A public teacher, he traveled from one place to another wearing his food pan upturned on his head and carrying his trademark broom. When he entered a village, he would instantly start cleaning the gutters and roads of the village. Villagers gave him money, Babaji used that for the progress of society. Maharaj built schools, dharmashalas, and animal shelters.

Sai Baba promoted 'Nama Smaran'. Similarly, Gadge Maharaj conducted his discourses in the form of "Kirtans" in which he would emphasize values like service to humanity





Samadhi of Gadge Maharaj

and compassion. During his Kirtans, he would educate people against blind faiths and rituals. He would use Dohas by Saint Kabir in his discourses apart from reverentially worshipping Sai Baba. He exhorted people to stop animal sacrifice as part of religious rituals and campaigned against vices such as alcohol abuse.

He tried to embody the values that he preached: hard work, simple living, and selfless service to the poor. He left his family (wife and three children) in 1905 to pursue this path.

Maharaj met Sai Baba and Meher Baba several times. Meher Baba indicated that Maharaj was



Gadge Maharaj with Sai Baba and Meher Baba

on the sixth plane of consciousness. Maharaj invited Meher Baba to Pandharpur and on 6th November 1954 thousands of people had Maharaj and Meher Baba's darshan.

Maharaj attained Mahasamdhi on 20th December 1956 on his way to Amaravati, on the banks of river Pedhi near Walgaon. The Government of Maharashtra started the Sant Gadge Baba Gram Swachata Abhiyan project in 2000-01 in his honor. This program awards prizes to villagers, who maintain clean villages. Besides, the Government of India instituted a National Award for Sanitation and Water in his honor. The University of Amaravati has also been named in his honor.

Ovis from Sai Satcharitra, Chapter 42, Ovis 70-78

- ❖ "The Masjid has collapsed. All the grocers and oil mongers of Shirdi troubled me a lot, so I am leaving that place".
- ❖ "Therefore I have come here. Cover my body with Bakhkhal flowers. Fulfill this desire of mine. Come quickly to Shirdi".
- ❖ Why did Baba like Dassera only? Because it was one out of the three and a half auspicious days in the year (when there is no need to find out the 'muhurat' or auspicious time). All know very well that an auspicious time for departure is valued or chosen.
- ❖ It is also not proper to say this. One who is beyond birth or death, how could there be a departure for him or the necessity of an auspicious time for it?
- ❖ One who is not bound by religion or otherwise; one who has control over all attachments; one who has no ascending of his vital life force – what is Niryan for him?

At the Feet of Manik Prabhu



By: Seetha Vijayakumar

Manik Prabhu Maharaj is a contemporary of Sai Baba and a few references to him are noted in Sai Satcharitra. He is regarded as an incarnation of Dattatreya by the people of Datta Sampraday.

On our way from Bidar to Gulbarga, my husband stopped at Maniknagar, for 'Datta Prasad' as I was complaining of my distaste for Garlic in the food served at the Medical College guest house where we stayed!

Prabhu's philosophy, the "Sakalamata Siddhanta" is similar to Sai Baba and rests on the principles of Advaita Vedanta. Prabhu strongly advocated the essential oneness of all religions. Prabhu's Muslim devotees revered him as an incarnation of Mehboob Subhani whereas his Lingayat devotees saw him as a form of Basavanna. Prabhu composed numerous Bhajans and Padas in various languages such as Marathi, Kannada, Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit.

Sai Baba of Shirdi, Swami Samarth of Akkalkot, Bramhachaitanya of Gondavale, and many other contemporary saints are believed to have visited Maniknagar to interact with Prabhu on matters of deep spiritual wisdom.

Manik Prabhu was born to Manohar Naik and Baya Devi, a Deshastha Rigvedi Brahmin couple, on 22nd December 1817 (Margashirsha Pournima - Datta Jayanti, in his maternal grandparent's house at Ladwanti near Basavakalyan (now in the Bidar district of Karnataka).

He did not have schooling. Later Prabhu traveled on foot as a wandering Yogi across the length and breadth of the country covering all places of religious

importance such as Varanasi, Haridwar, Mathura, Badri, Puri, Dwarka, Girnar, Tirupati, and Rameshwaram. Some of his Muslim devotees believe that he visited the Shrine of Mehboob Subhani at Baghdad. After completing his spiritual journey across the country, Prabhu finally decided to settle on the banks of the rivulets Viraja and Guruganga in the year 1845 which later came to be known as Maniknagar (a place near Humnabad in Bidar District of Karnataka)



Prabhu stayed in a simple hut and ate only the 'Madhukari Bhiksha' (alms) which his shishyas (disciples) would bring from the nearby villages. Usually, he dressed in very simple clothes and established the GAADI (spiritual

seat) of Lord Dattatreya in the very hut where he used to reside. This Gaadi is a symbol of 'Nirguna Bramha'. The unique thing about it was that he did not place an idol or spiritual icon on the GAADI and instead decided to keep it empty. The idea behind it was that his devotees could visualize the PARABRAMHA (the supreme reality), in whatever form they liked and worship him accordingly.

Prabhu Darbar

The name and fame of Manik Prabhu spread quickly like a wildfire and people of all religions, sects and communities started flocking to Maniknagar. Prabhu used to hold a gathering everyday called DARBAR where thousands of people visited him and sought his blessings. Prabhu guided his devotees in spiritual matters and even helped them overcome their material difficulties.

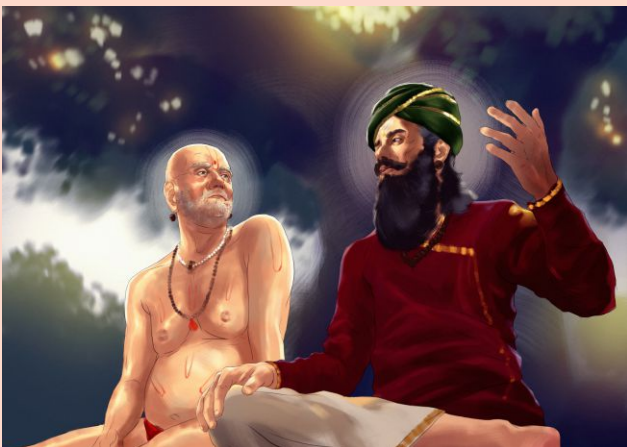


*A painting depicting
Shri Sai Baba's visit to Maniknagar.*

Stories of his miracles and eyewitness accounts, which bear testimony to how he brought succor to the distressed and the sorrowing, to the afflicted and the wronged, who, ardently and with deep faith and devotion sought his spiritual intervention are available. He never claimed credit for any such incident and always said that it is 'Datta Prabhu's Leela'. He is also believed to have given Darshan to a devotee in the Divine form of Goddess Tulaja Bhavani and accepted the devotee's offerings. Many such stories are compiled in the official biography of Shri Manik Prabhu by Ganesh Raghunath Kulkarni.

Visits of Spiritual personalities

Shri Swami Samarth is also believed to have visited Prabhu before settling at Akkalkot. According to Shri Manik Prabhu Charitra, Swami Maharaj



stayed at Maniknagar for six long months. Shri Manik Prabhu and Shri Swami Samarth used to sit under the holy Audumbar tree.

Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi visited Prabhu as a young Fakeer may be in subtle form around 1860. According to the tale, Prabhu was sitting in his Darbar when Sai

Baba arrived. Sai Baba asked Prabhu to fill his Lota. Prabhu instructed Tatya Saheb, his brother who was sitting beside him, to fill the lota. Tatya tried to fill the lota while speaking to someone else. Even after putting hundreds of coins, the Lota would not fill. Tatya was astonished and gave the Lota to Prabhu. Prabhu put 5 Dates and some flowers in it. The Lota filled immediately. Sai Baba took the dates and flowers and said that this was enough for him.

Sai Baba at Dwarakamayi told his devotees that he was returning from Manik Prabhu and poured back the coins which were many times more than the original coins put in the Lota by Tatya Saheb.

Shri Bramha Chaitanya of Gondavale also visited Prabhu at Maniknagar. The Shankaracharya of Sringeri at the time, Jagadguru Ugra Narasimha Bharati Swamiji paid a visit to Maniknagar during Prabhu's time. Prabhu welcomed the Shankaracharya with due honors and the Shankaracharya appreciated Prabhu's noble work.

Sanjivani Mahasamadhi



*Shri Manik Prabhu's
Sanjivani Mahasamadhi at Maniknagar.*

In 1865, Prabhu felt that it was time for him to take Mahasamadhi. The annual Datta Jayanti Utsav had already begun. Then he sat in the pit of the Samadhi and asked his aides to close the pit from all sides. Prabhu attained Sanjivani Samadhi, a state of meditative blissful consciousness. Eyewitness accounts suggest that Prabhu left his physical body by the yogic way of Samadhi on the evening of Ekadashi around 5 PM. Prabhu's devotees believe that he is sitting in the Sanjeevan Samadhi and answering their prayers even to this day.

Maniknagar is the only Datta-Peetha where a



Guru-Parampara exists for the spiritual guidance of the devotees.

The Sampradaya is called SAKALAMATA as it involves and assimilates all sects and creeds. It is not at all antagonistic to them but only means to supplement them.



Shri Manik Prabhu Jayanti - Rajopachar Mahapooja

People believe that Manik Prabhu was a reincarnation of Lord Dattatreya. The Manik Prabhu Temple is located on the confluence of two holy rivulets Viraja and Guru Ganga. The village of Maniknagar is built around this temple and is located on the high ground slopes.

DEAR CHILDREN

Ignorance is Like Dust in the Eye

Namo Sai Nathaya

To realize Sai Baba is our real and eternal nature. We are always part of Lord Sainath, but through ignorance, we come to believe we are perishable bodies and changing individual souls only. What is needed is to remove this veil of ignorance and reveal Sai Baba in us.

Here is an instance. A man traveling in the train, when peeping outside the window, got coal dust into his eyes. His eyes started to irritate, and the man became restless and unhappy — his eyes reddened. He tried to remove the dust by rubbing the eyes with his handkerchief, but the speck of dust could not be dislodged. Soon after he got down from the train and reached home, he asked his mother to remove the dust by pouring oil into the affected eye. When the mother did so, the dust came off and the irritation stopped.

Now the man exclaimed, "Oh! how happy I am!" The question now is — after the removal of foreign matter from the eyes, did he get any new happiness, or did he only recover the happiness that he had lost for the time being? It is certainly the latter. But when he was relieved of the irritation, he felt at first as though he had got new happiness. So, in the case of an ignorant soul, the removal of ignorance means the recovering of Divine Consciousness of Sai Baba in us, being obsessed with illusion. We are eternally one with Lord Sainath, only the false sense of separation must go.

Yours SAI BABALy

SAI AURA Team

IshAvAsya Mantra #8 (Part 1)

By: Jayakrishna Nelamangala

Previously we learnt that misery is caused by attachment and lack of knowledge of paramātmā is the cause for attachment. When things of the world are understood devoid of the knowledge of Paramātmā, then they cause delusion and misery. On the other hand, for the knowledgeable who has gotten the knowledge of Vedic Brahman, this whole chain of misery is not there for him, just as its cause the delusion is also not there for him. Thus, the knowledgeable is always without misery. The upanishat asks, for such a knowledgeable, where is the question of misery? Where is the question of delusion?

A question may arise. How is it that by the mere knowledge of Parabrahman there is no mOha and shOkā? What has one got to do with the other? To answer this question, the upanishat teaches the next mantra starting with the word “sa” and so on.

उपनिषत् Upaniṣat

सपर्यगात्सुक्रम् अकायम् अव्रणम् अस्नाविरं

शुद्धम् अपापविद्धम् ।

कविर्मनीषी परिभूयः स्वयम्भूयाथा

तथ्यतोऽर्थान्वयदधात्साश्चतीभ्यस्समाम्यः ॥ ८ ॥

saparyagātsukram akāyamavraṇamasnāviraṁ
śuddhamapāpavidham |

kavirmanīṣīparibhūḥ svayambhūḥ

yāthātathyatō'rthān vyadadhātśāsvatībhyas-
samābhyah ॥ 8 ॥

स 'sa' means 'that person' and in the context it means 'that knowledgeable person' and पर्यगात् paryagāt – reached i.e., he became the one who attained. Attained what? Again, in the context the word 'Brahman' must be read along and understood as 'that knowledge person having attained Vedic Brahman'.

The upanishat answers the question that was mentioned earlier, by describing the characteristics of Vedic Brahman.

Shukram means one who is without sōka अकार्यलिङ्गदेहरहितम् akāyam means liṅgadēharahitam – one without subtle body अव्रणं avraṇam – the word 'avraṇa' stands for 'undivided' or 'without parts' व्रणं vraṇam – the word vraṇa has the meaning सञ्चूर्णनं sañcūrṇana – 'dividing into pieces'. Hence 'avraṇam' stands for 'undivided'. स्तोकोव्रणः stōkōvraṇaḥ –

vraṇam is applied in the sense of divided into pieces, therefore stOkO means that which is in pieces.

Divisions are possible with reference to time, space and attributes. A thing such as a pot has a beginning and has an end in the time line. Before it was manufactured, the pot was not there. Such an absence is also known as “praak-abhaava”, similarly when the pot is destroyed, there is the absence of pot which is termed as “pradhvamsa-abhaava”. In terms of time, the pot's existence is 'divided' from non-existence to existence, and from existence to non-existence.

Paramaatman is described as 'avraṇam' because Parabrahman as taught by Veda is eternally present and Vedic God does not have such divisions in terms of time.

Similarly, attributes of a Pot are not permanent either. It goes through deformations, decoloration and what not. Some attributes are lost, new attributes are gained.

The pot is said to be divided in terms of attributes. Vedic Brahman is Complete “poornamadaha poornamidam”, Vedic Brahman is not divided in terms of attributes - 'avraṇam'.

स्नाव snāva means muscle. Existence of muscle implies existence of bones, flesh, etc, all the seven dhātus that this gross body is made of. Vedic Brahman does not have a gross body like we do. Hence the upanishat teaches Him as अस्नाविरं asnāviraṁ - without the gross body.

शुद्धं śuddham - Vedic Brahman is the cause of sanctity, i.e., all that we consider as Pavitra such as the Veda, the cow, the Ganges-river etc., all of them get their sanctity because of Brahman.

This is the “pavitraaNaampavitram yo mangalaa-naam ca mangalam” concept. For the same reason, Vedic Brahman there is question of sin in Vedic Brahman. The upanishat teaches Him as अपापविद्धम् apāpavidham - It is 'apApavidham' - not tainted by any sin. Brahman is the cause of Sanctity. The root causes of sin (which are gross and subtle bodies) are simply absent in Brahman. Absence of causes indicates absence of their effect. This is how, Vedic Brahman is known as Sinless. Having reached such a Vedic Brahman, the knowledgeable who has reached

such a Vedic Brahman attains a similar form of being sinless and thus there is the absence of misery and delusion.

उपनिषत् *upaniṣat*

सपर्यगात्सुक्रम् अकायम् अव्रणम् अस्नाविरंशुद्धम् अपापविद्धम् ।

*saparyagātsukram akāyam
avraṇam asnāviraṁśuddham apāpaviddham |*

सपर्यगात् *saparyagāt* - That knowledgeable attained Brahman. But merely because of that, can we say that there is absence of misery and delusion? is answered as:

सुक्रम् *śukram* - Brahman is without shOka,

अकायम् *akāyam* - He is without subtle body,

अव्रणम् *avraṇam* - He is undivided with reference to time i.e He is Eternal, He is Undivided with reference to Attributes i.e., He is Complete.

अस्नाविरं *asnāviraṁ* - Parabrahman is without gross body

शुद्धम् *śuddham* - Parabrahman is *paavana-pavitra*, is the cause for sacredness

अपापविद्धम् *apāpaviddham*- He is without Blemish, He is without gross and subtle physical bodies which are the root cause for sin and misery. For the one who attains saaroopya with such a Brahman, it is indeed true that he is also without misery and delusion.

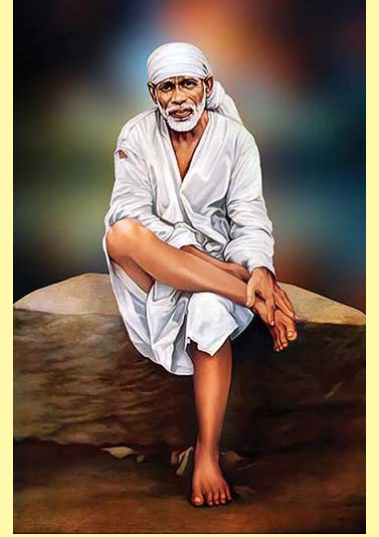
One question may arise. If God is said to be without any gross body or subtle body, then, how can He be the Creator of this universe? If God has no limbs at all, then how can He create this universe? This question arises because, in this world, a potter who has no hands and has no legs simply can not create any pot.

In the next part, we will study the upanishat further and understand how the upanishat answers this question.

Shree krishNArpaNamastu.

Give one-word answers

1. To whom did Baba promise that he will take him in 'vimana'?
2. Which God did Balram Durandhare see in Baba and got cured of asthma?
3. Name of the devotee with 'Zari Peta' to whom Baba restored his new sandals.
4. Where did Baba attain Maha Samadhi on October 15th 1918?
5. On which Hindu thithi did Baba take Samadhi?
6. Name of Shevade's classmate who mocked at Baba?
7. To whom did Baba give his darshan at Gaya as already promised to him.
8. To whom did Baba appear in a dream soon after Maha Samadhi to continue performing his puja.
9. Indicating his departure from this world, Baba bemoaned on what precious object.
10. Who was the person Baba directed to summon Nana Chandorkar?
11. Who was the local physician at Shirdi who was jealous of Baba?
12. Who addressed Sai Baba as 'Mama'(Mother's brother)??



- Answers:**
1. Kaka Dixit
 2. Vitthoba
 3. Hari Khanoba
 4. Dwaraka Mayi Masjid
 5. Vijaya Dasami transit to Ekadashi
 6. Saptanekar
 7. Shama
 8. Laxman Mama Joshi
 9. A brick given by his Guru
 10. Appa Kulkarni
 11. Shankar Kulkarni
 12. Taty Patil

Life is PERFECT

When the Inner Light is lit by Sai Parabrahman
And mingles with outer radiance,
There is one Consciousness Supreme Sainath
Permeating and enveloping all beings.
As one mass of a luminous substance
Splits into countless stars,
So, one Truth — Lord Sainath — reveals Himself
In million forms, in a million ways;
Each part is whole, each life is perfect,
Sainath indwelling, self-expressed.

In the unborn life of the Atman
There is a birth of the body — a gateway
That opens the vistas of an Existence
That thought cannot gauge, Lord Sainath
And words can scarcely compass, Lord Sainath
A boundless Consciousness permeating as Sai Parabrahman
Embracing, absorbing everything seen and unseen,
Still vibrant with Love and joy.
Such is your real Self and nature, Lord Sainath
A concrete embodiment, Lord Sainath
Of the ineffable light, power, and wisdom.

By: B. Rajeshwari

Shuddhananda Bharati

A Versatile Genius

By: Kulasekhara Perumal



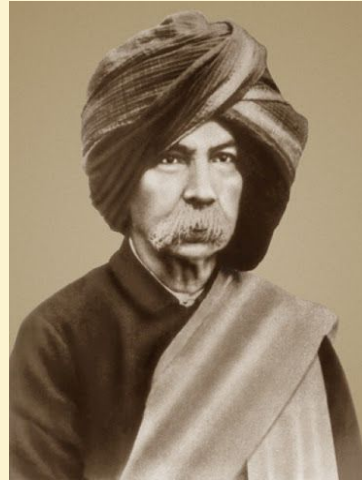
Kavi Yogi Maharishi Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati (11 May 1897 – 7 March 1990) was a great philosopher and poet. His teachings are focused mainly on the search for God in Self, through the Sama Yoga practice he created.

Bharati was born in Sivaganga 40 kilometer from Madurai in Tamil Nadu in South India and attained Jeeva Samadhi in Sholapuram near Sivaganga.

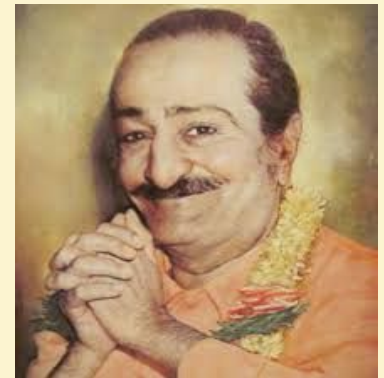
He was a genius having spent all his life in the company of great personalities. He came to Shirdi in 1915 at the age of 18 and on the same day Lokamanya Bala Gangadhar Tilak came to seek Baba's blessings for freedom struggle, Meher Baba as a young man of 25 years was sent by Hazrat Baba Jan and Khaparde family from Amaravati. Tilak came in the guise of a peasant and Sai Baba sent him back assuring that India will get independence in due course. He gave spiritual instructions to Meher Baba and sent him to Upasani Maharaj. Khaparde was made to stay back for nine months.



Tilak



Khaparde



Meher Baba

On seeing Shuddananda, Baba said 'Books bring Bhrama not Brahma'. Shuddananda was well versed in Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam and could quote any of the scriptures extempore. Shuddananda later confided in Baba that he could not concentrate during meditation. Sai Baba gave neem leaves to eat which were sweet to taste and detained Shuddananda for three months at Shirdi and told him to help Upasani Maharaj. Baba's advice to Shuddananda was that he will meet a great Mahatma in later life and on his guidance will attain Self-realization. Shuddananda went to Ramana Bhagawan in Tiruvannamalai and then practiced silence at Pondicherry for twenty years, from 1940 to 1960, in the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother Mirra Alfassa.

Bharati always lived alone, without an Ashram, stating that:

“There are enough groups on Earth, we must unite them and not create new ones.”

Honors

In 1984 the Raja Rajan Award of One Lakh rupees was given to Bharati by the Tamil University in Tanjore, effectively proffering the honor of Doctor of Literature.

The title Shuddhananda (pure bliss) was given to him by Jnana Siddha in the Himalayas who gave him several mystic powers too.

The Sringeri Jagadguru Shiva Abhinava Narasimha Bharati gave him the name of Kavi Yogi Bharati when he was 12 years old.

Swami Sivananda conferred on him the title of Maharishi (great visionary) as he has composed over 3000 poems and made him preside over a few annual conferences of Divine Life Society.

Teachings

Bharati's ideals are found in the teachings of Sama Yoga, a system that he founded. It is a synthesis of material science and spiritual yoga. Sama Yoga is also the basis of future spiritual socialism according to Sivananda.

A mysterious saint in the Himalayas Gnana Siddha initiated him in Mahaturya Samadhi, the highest plane in spiritual development. He had intimate contact with Ramana Maharshi, Shirdi Sai Baba, Siddharudar, Sri Aurobindo, Sri Seshadri Swamigal, and Avatar Meher Baba.

He traveled all over the world several times and spread his ideals and India's celebrated culture and values. He established Yoga Samaj Centers at Vadalur and Chennai and published his books. He founded the Shuddhananda Bharati Desiya Vidyalayam High School in Sholapuram village, near Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu in 1979. In his school, Shuddhananda Bharati worked like a young man of twenty. When he was asked his age, he used to answer: “My age is Courage!” The Yogi wrote over three hundred works in English, French, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, and Sanskrit; five thousand songs,



and 1500 poems in French. The magnum opus of the man conscious of the presence of God in him, Bharata Shakti, (in 50,000 verses) described his ideal: only One Humanity living in communion with only One God in a transformed world! Bharata Shakti is a monumental and unique work. The Yogi depicts the essence of all the religions, of all the prophets and saints, all the approaches of Yoga and all the cultures on an allegorical fabric. It is a book for any age that all spiritual researchers and all nations should read and meditate on.

As a boy of eight years, the Divine Force called upon him to serve the nation while he embraced the Holy Feet of Sri Meenakshi Amman, in the temple at Madurai, Tamil Nadu. In the wake of that Grace, he made his life-long spiritual pilgrimage with song-thrills, acquiring wisdom through meditation and association with Great men of his times.

He was a tireless volunteer of the Indian National Congress during the freedom struggle and had contacts with Great Leaders like Lokmanya Tilak, Gandhiji, Nethaji, V.V.S. Ayyar, V.O.C. Chidambaram Pillai (the first Indian to sail a commercial ship against the British), Poet Subrahmanya Bharati, Subramania Siva, M.N.Roy, Raja Mahendra Pratap and Shenbaga Raman. He served as an editor for 'Swarajya' (Tamil), 'Bala Bharati', 'Iyarkkai' (Nature in Tamil), and 'Samarasa Bodhini'. He campaigned against the evils of untouchability, liquor, and the slaughter of animals in the name of God.

He lived in Sholapuram during his last years guiding the samaj and the school. He attained JeevaSamadhi on 7th March 1990. Kaviyogi, during his life, was ever healthy, smiling, simple, and active.

Swamiji Explains The Sudarshana Mantra

By: Ramaswamy Seshadri

Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji took us to Devarayana Durga near Tumkur 70 kilometer from Bengaluru. As we proceeded to climb the hill, Swamiji stopped at the holy spring of 'Namada Chilume' and sat for meditation. After sometime smoke started coming out of the spring and Swamiji asked a devotee to put his hand and take out an object from within the spring. It was a Sudarshana yantra covered with moss. It was cleaned and reverentially worshipped by all of us. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji initiated us into Sudarshana Mantra and explained the meaning in a contemplative mood after Sai Bhajans and Vishnu Sahasranama chanting. Swamiji invoked the blessings of Sai Baba and explained the meaning of the Sudarshana mantra



translates to “God of the wheel/disc”.

The Sudarshana Chakra

The derivation of the word Sudarshana is from two Sanskrit words, “Su” meaning auspicious and “Dharshana” meaning vision.



Hence, the word Sudharshana translates to “auspicious vision” or “divine vision”. Sai Baba advised his devotees to visualize him in all beings. The chakra clears the path to attaining salvation. The Sudharshana chakra has 108 blades. The blades find the evil and destroy them. As a result, this chakra is the most powerful among all of Lord Vishnu's weapon. The disc also generates a lot of heat as it is an aspect of Lord Agni. The smoke symbolized this when we took out the Yantra from Namada Chilume. Swamiji said, Sudarshana Chakra is not just the representation of Lord Vishnu, it is also an object worthy of worship. It is a personification of Sai Baba.

What is the Maha Sudarshana Mantra?

Lord Sudarshana is the manifestation of Lord Vishnu. He holds Sudarshana chakra on his rear right hand. Additionally, in his other three hands, he holds a conch, mace, and a lotus flower. When Lord Vishnu is holding the Sudarshana Chakra, he is also worshipped as Lord Sudharshana. Lord Vishnu also uses his chakra to put an end to the sufferings of his devotees. In Tamil, he is worshipped as Chakrathalwar, which

The Sudarshana Chakra contains a circular ring. The circle is surrounded by fire, thus

representing the Sun god. The circular ring depicts the destruction of evil forces. It also represents the victory of good over evil. Additionally, this chakra also seeks out its enemies in the directions. As a result, it is considered the protector of Dharma.

What is the MahaSudarshana Mantra?

The MahaSudarshana Mantra is a powerful and auspicious mantra that will help remove unnecessary elements from your life. As a result, chanting the mantra not only has religious benefits, but it also heals a person physically, mentally, and emotionally. Also, reciting the powerful Maha Sudarshana Mantra will help you invoke the blessings of Sai Baba as Lord Vishnu.

The Mantra

Om Kleem
 Krishnaaya Govindaaya
 Gopeejana Vallabhaya
 Paraya Param Purushaaya Paramathmane
 Para Karma Manthra Yanthra Tanthra
 Oushadha Astra Shastrani
 Samhara Mrithiyur Mochaya
 Om Namoh Bhagavathey
 Maha Sudarshanaya
 Deepthrey Jwala Pareethaya
 Sarwa Digkchobhanakaraye
 Hum Phat Bhrahmaney
 Param Jyothishe Namaha
 Om Namoh Bhagavathey Sudarshanaya

Maha Sudarshana Mantra Meaning

The meaning of the Sudarshana Maha Mantra is:

“O Lord Krishna, you are the protector and controller of the universe. You are also supreme



being and the beloved of the gopikas. O Paramathma, protect me from all sorts of evils. You are the Lord who has the entire world in His hands. You are also the one who holds the Sudarshana chakra and destroys the evil in all eight directions. I now completely surrender myself to you.”

We all worshipped at the Yoga Narasimha temple after handing over the Sudarshana Yantra to the temple priests. Even now it is there, and they recollect Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji's visit and the miracle of Sudarshana Yantra obtained at Namada Chilume.

Before leaving the temple, Swamiji prayed - “O Sudarshana! The fiery radiance, possessing the power of millions of Suns, please pull us out of our ignorance and lead us to Vaikuntha.” – Skanda Purana.

Sudarshana is the key to prosperity and happiness. It radiates energy for the mortal world. He ushers in the life force. With the blessings of Sudarshana Mantra, let us straighten our backs, generate positive energy, and lead a conflict-free life.

Whether the sun is seemingly traveling to the north or the south, he who has not to undertake the journey at all, and whose life force merges with the Supreme where he is, it is like the light of the lamp being extinguished and it becoming dark. —Sai Satcharitra, Chapter 42, Ovi 80.

In Search of Enlightenment

By: Mrs. Sita Shri



A story narrated by Sri Upasani Maharaj to Sri Narasimha Swamiji about a young woman who came to Shirdi to seek enlightenment from Sai Baba is about how she is so resolute and steadfast that she doesn't engage with any mundane matter whatsoever. She stayed by herself at Sathe Wada so that the milieu would be

conducive and perhaps, even catalyze the process of enlightenment. Much to her chagrin, enlightenment eluded her even after a committed and sincere effort on the path. One full moon night, she was walking, holding a frail bamboo pail of water gingerly in her hands and looking at the reflection of the moon in the water. All of a sudden, the pail broke. The water poured down. There was no water and hence, no moon. This was the moment of her enlightenment

When one walks towards enlightenment, seeking it from outside as a destination with space and time coordinates, it seems to go farther and farther. Enlightenment is not a salubrious hill station or railway station at the junction of a particular longitude and latitude that can be reached after a certain time. One ends up walking in circles even after a passionate and demanding journey.

All of us are in a paradoxical situation –where we hold on to the delicate sheaths of mind and body as if they are

the vehicles to draw us to enlightenment. More often than not, they lead us astray, far away from truth and realization. While in reality, shedding attachments to body and mind is the first step to enlightenment.

Enlightenment is understood as the state of realization of the ultimate truth when the individual consciousness expands and is in complete synchrony with the Supreme Consciousness. It is an undistinguished state where the individual experiences the Supreme within. This is the realization of the formless existence within the illusory form or the limitless reality within the limited corporeal existence of the individual. The veil of ignorance is drawn aside, and the truth stands revealed in a magical moment.

As the story of the woman ascetic conveys, enlightenment has to come from within and it is not available outside waiting for us to reach it. The answer lies embedded within us and it is for us to realize it. We are but a manifestation of the single source or reality and that is hardcoded within each manifested form.

When existence revolves obsessively around the mundane and the matters of mind and body, lifetime fizzles out like grains of sand held in a fist, without truth being realized. The frail bamboo basket could figuratively be taken as our body and the water and the reflection of the moon, as our mind and thoughts. Once an individual break free from identification with body, mind, and thoughts, untruth vanishes, paving the way for truth; darkness vanishes, letting the light shine within and mortality dissolves in the boundless ocean of immortality.

Talking about enlightenment, one thinks of the metaphor of Krishna's flute which is a message for us to be like a piece of hollow, empty bamboo; ready to receive the waves of the eternal, blissful breath of the Supreme Consciousness. The state of the bamboo flute alludes to an enlightened state.

Hence, enlightenment is not an inert piece of knowledge, but realization sprung from a deep experience within.

Picture details:

- (1) Godavari Ma,
- (2) With Meher Baba at Sakori Ashram,
- (3) With Upasani Maharaj



Abdulla Baba



Baba used to quote some passages from the Koran and immediately Abdul was writing down in a book, called "The Utterances of Baba". Abdul considered it as a very sacred book. He used to consult this book for the purpose of prophecy. Baba used to

pour water and move in different directions perhaps with chanting of mantras in Lendibagh at noontime and at that time nobody was allowed to move in that area except Abdul who had the rare privilege.

Abdul was born in 1871 at Nanded on the bank of the Tapti river in Khandesh and was the son of the Sultan of Nanded. His father was conferred with the title of 'Sultan' and called 'Chotu Sultan of Nanded' village. Abdul was married to Umran Rao Bi and had a son. He was staying with Sufi fakir, Amiruddin Baba in Nanded. When he was staying with fakir Amiruddin in Nanded, Sai Baba appeared in 1889 in the dream of fakir Amiruddin, delivered two mangoes to him, and asked him to deliver the mangoes to Abdul and send him to Shirdi. Amiruddin Baba was surprised to find two ripe mangoes materialized near him and gave the mangoes to Abdul and sent him immediately to Sai Baba at Shirdi. He came to Shirdi at the age of 18 years in the year 1889.

Accordingly, Abdul came to Shirdi and when he arrived in the masjid, Baba welcomed him, saying "mera kavala aala" "My crow has come". Baba used to call him "Mera Cowa", my crow, or "Halalkhor", scavenger. Baba asked him to devote his services entirely to Baba. Accordingly, he was cleaning the



By Bondada Janardhana Rao

masjid, feeding oil to the lamps in the masjid, Lendi Bagh, and Chavadi. He was also sweeping and cleaning all streets near the masjid. He was living in the area adjoining the masjid which later became the stable. He was continuously attending on Baba and rendering all the services with devotion to Baba. Baba advised him to eat less and sleep for a shorter time which he followed. In Shirdi he worked as a dedicated Sevak, doing all kinds of menial jobs. Having no money he even begged for his food. He strictly followed Baba's instructions 'eat little and sleep little'.

He used to read the Koran sitting near Baba in the masjid. Baba now and then used to open a page in Koran and would ask him to read that page and sometimes used to quote some other passages from the Koran and immediately Abdul was writing down in a book all the utterances that were coming from the mouth of Baba. Abdul used to write the utterances of Baba in the book either in Devanagari or in Modi (Marathi Shorthand) script. Baba told him about Islam and Sufism occasionally. The utterances may pertain to Muslim and Sufi principles with many quotations in Arabic. The fact that Baba was familiar with both the Islamic and Sufi traditions has been brought out by this utterances book. He noted down all such statements that came out from the mouth of Baba to preserve them as they were considered as sacred. This book came to be known as Baba's Utterances book and Abdul considered it as a very sacred book. Later on, this book was found very useful in that whenever any person facing any problem and desirous of knowing the solution and the outcome in the future, was approaching him and Abdul was opening the book and the page that was opened would give solution and tell the future and the solutions indicated proved correct in several cases. In many cases, this book was used to provide the purpose of prophecy also. Once, Mr. Gadgil, a lawyer

approached Abdul and asked him regarding his son that whether he would return from England or permanently settle there? Abdul referred to the book and told him that he would return. And this proved to be true. His son returned to India with his English wife and kids. Over time, Abdul came to be known as Abdul Baba. An attempt was made in 1997 by Marianne Warren and V.B. Kher who tried to transliterate into English Baba's Utterances book as written down in Devanagari and Urdu scripts by Abdul Baba. In this attempt, they came to know that the utterances have revealed Baba's wonderful knowledge of Islam and Sufism.

Dr. Pillai was an ardent devotee, who was suffering from pain due to guinea-worms in his leg. He once told Kakasaheb Dixit that his pain became most excruciating and that he would prefer death over suffering from pain and he also expressed that he knew that his severe suffering was due to his past karma and asked Dixit to convey to Baba his feelings and request Baba to stop the pain and transfer the working of his past Karma (actions in previous births) to ten of his future births. Dixit went to Baba and told him his request. Then Baba, being moved by his request, said to Dixit, "Tell him to be fearless. Why should he suffer for ten births? In ten days he can work out the sufferings and consequences of his past Karma. While I am here to give him temporal and spiritual welfare, why should he pray for death? Bring him here on somebody's back and let us work and finish his sufferings once for all". The doctor was brought in that condition and was seated on Baba's right side. Baba gave him the bolster and asked him to stretch his legs and lie down comfortably. Baba also said that a crow would come and peck him, and then he would recover. While this conversation was going on, Abdul Baba who always cleaned the masjid and trimmed the lamps, turned up in the masjid. While Abdul was attending to his work of trimming, his foot accidentally fell upon the stretched leg of Dr. Pillai. The leg was already swollen and when Abdul's foot fell upon it and pressed it, all the seven guinea-worms were squeezed out at once. The pain at once became unbearable and Dr. Pillai bawled out loudly. After some time, he calmed down and began to sing and cry alternately. Then Pillai enquired when the crow would come for pecking. Baba said, "Did you not see the

crow? He won't come again. Abdul was the crow. Now go and rest yourself in the Wada and you will be soon all right." By application of the Udi and by taking it in the stomach with water, and without taking any other treatment or medicine, the disease was completely cured in ten days as promised by Baba.

In the Lendi Bagh where Nanda Deep was kept, Baba used to sit behind the Lendi pillar and Abdul used to keep near Baba two pots full of water. Baba sitting near the pots would go on pouring the water in various directions. Baba also would get up from the Lendi place and walk a few steps in each direction and go on gazing towards that direction. What Baba was doing was not known to anybody and it was also not known whether Baba while pouring the water and moving in that direction, was chanting any mantras. Nobody was allowed to move in that area at that mid-day time when Baba was doing these offerings except Abdul who had the rare privilege of observing such rare events. Baba advised him to eat less and sleep for a few hours only and also advised him to understand the Koran while reading it. Even after Baba's Mahasamadhi, Baba was protecting Abdul Baba.

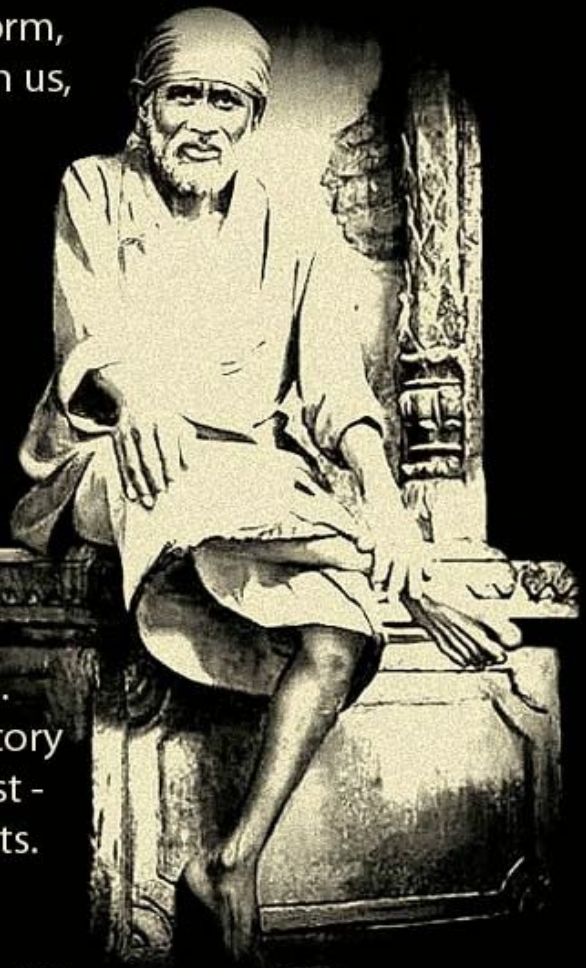
In about 1927 Abdul Baba was staying in the thatched mud house where Radhakrishna Mai was staying earlier. That was a very old cottage. Once it so happened that Abdul Baba was reading the Koran in that mud house and suddenly the cottage collapsed, and he was almost buried in the debris. However, he was not injured due to Baba's Grace. After the Mahasamadhi of Baba, Abdul was taking care of and looking after the shrine of Baba till 1922. He was cleaning, decorating the shrine with flowers, and performing other ritual services. After the offering of food to Baba as prasadam, he was getting a portion of prasadam for his sustenance and he was receiving and living on the dakshina offered by the devotees. He was also living in a room in the shrine. This system continued till 1922. Dixit, a staunch devotee of Baba approached in 1922 the Ahmednagar District Court for permission to set up a Public Trust to administer the shrine and got permission from the Court. At this stage, Abdul Baba, induced by some of his well-wishers, approached the Court, claiming that he was the legal heir to Sai Baba and that he had every right to manage the shrine and thus challenged the formation of the Trust. The court with Baba's Grace

held that there was no Math or Ashram and that there was no heir or successor to Sai Baba and that nobody was entitled as heir or successor to Sai Baba. Thus he lost the case and consequently was prevented from having any connection with the maintenance of the shrine. He was refused free food and asked to vacate the room occupied by him in the shrine. After some time, the Sansthan relaxed these severe restrictions and Abdul Baba was allowed again to participate in the maintenance of the shrine till his death in April

1954. Abdul Baba lived for 36 years after Mahasamadhi of Baba and served Baba for the longest period till 1954. After his death in 1954, he was buried in the complex of Samadhi Mandir near Lendi Bhag. His original small dwelling house is located just across from the Chavadi. The main room in that house was converted as a memorial to the memory of Abdul Baba and visitors can visit and pay homage to Abdul Baba. He was an ankitha bhakta who devoted his entire life in the service to Baba.

Dr. Ranvir Singh's Pictorial Message

Once Lord takes on deluding human form,
He moves with us, mixes and dines with us,
Behaves as our very own kinsman,
a well-wisher, a friend, and a guide and,
also saves us from many a calamities,
that threatened to overwhelm us.
He showered divine mercy on us and,
solved the toughest problems that ..
defied solution, in very simple ways.
when He was near and dear to us,
we were carried away by pride that ..
we had His grace and did not try
to fill ourselves with that supreme joy,
to dive deep into the flood of His grace.
we sought from Him mere external victory
and temporal benefits, ignoring the vast -
treasure that could have filled our hearts.
we never contemplated on His reality.
***we might be born many times over,
But, can we ever have such a friend and kinsman again ?***





Complimentary copy. Not for sale.