

Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE

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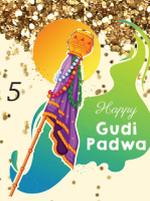


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First Word

None of us can refrain from action. The Gita offers a masterclass on what action to take and how to perform it well.

As we enter into April Issue of Sai Aura, we have Rama Navami celebrations associated with Sai Baba's Jayanti. Each person has understood Sai Baba from a standpoint that appealed to his own natural disposition. Jnani, a person of intellect, saw the Sai Satcharita as a book of Vedanta. Bhakt, a person of emotion and faith, found it to be a book of devotion. Karmyogi, a person of action, looked at it as a treatise on rightful action. Sai Satcharita takes us towards God-realization through various paths — Jnana Yog, Bhakti Yog, and Karma Yog. And Lord Sainath has put all these three paths on the same pedestal.

"Such pious persons have become my followers whose sins have been destroyed and they have understood me." – (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

Lord Sainath says that no one can refrain from action. Even inaction is action. While sitting idle, our mind is still working in the form of continuous thoughts, emotions and feelings; body is functioning by way of breathing, blood circulation, and digestion. Lord Sainath says that he too is at work continuously to take care of his creation.

"The whole universe is my home. I am myself Vasudev and all-pervading God. I am myself the Parabrahma." – (Chap 9, Ovi 47)

What actions need to be taken up and how they can be performed well — all of this is explained in the sacred text.

The first tenet: Perform your duty without laying claim to fruits of action; and non-attention to the reward of work should not push you to inaction. Then, what is the use of performing actions when one cannot get any reward from them?

While the general motive to act is to get benefits, none can be sure that the actions so performed will lead to the desired results. The idea to accept that the result is not in our hands seems reasonable and practical. If a student preparing for an exam is perpetually engaged in thinking anxiously whether he will pass or fail, there is every chance that he may not have any time left to prepare for his exams, and thus he is most likely to fail.

The second tenet focuses on how to perform one's duty: Yogah Karmasu Kausalam — 'yog is skill in action', that is executing the work skillfully, perfectly, without any distraction. The work must be performed with single-minded concentration. When horses want to run in different directions to enjoy the pleasures on the way, the chariot is bound to suffer in reaching its destination.

The third tenet is to perform action by abiding in yog, that is by being in a state of equanimity, free of attachment or aversion, preference or prejudice, desire or anger, honor or dishonor. Only then such actions will take the right shape.

The fourth tenet is to follow one's swadharma, work that falls to our lot from hour to hour, as assigned by society for the larger good. Swadharma of a parent is to accept the responsibility of nurturing and bring up his children well. The swadharma of a soldier is to fight and defend the nation at any cost, and not to run away from the battlefield.

"One who concentrates on ME, for him nothing is difficult. But the moment he forgets ME, Maya will attack him." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 143-148)

The fifth tenet is to dedicate every action undertaken to the Supreme Lord and surrender the fruits of action to Him. It means that every action should be performed in a spirit of worship and detachment, and that there should be no sense of doership, 'I am the doer'. All actions are to be seen as being done at His behest.

The sixth tenet is that the results of all your work should be accepted as if they are gifts of the Supreme Lord. Any action performed may result in success or failure, honor or dishonor, gain or loss. Cultivation of this attitude of acceptance will prevent you from becoming restless, upset or depressed. This is the most delicate area where we suffer and may take extreme steps such as suicide, or retaliation. Action can lead to bondage or freedom.

The final tenet is that all work undertaken throughout one's life should lead to the purification of one's mind and heart, and God-realization. Otherwise, the whole life is deemed wasted, and an opportunity lost in reaching greater heights of consciousness. To achieve and maintain balance of mind may seem like a tough task but let us make a beginning anyway.

Baba's Assurance is:

"Whatever is perceived is my image only, whether it is a worm, an ant, a poor wretch or a king." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 143-148)





The Light of the World

“Spiritual Truth that Sai Baba is close behind our thoughts does not need an external witness”

“For a fairman, there is nothing to be called bad. Any adversity of life, provided a step for his growth, provided he knows how to utilize it That’s how Sai Baba wills”.

“Moksha (Realization) is not to be sought in haven or on earth or in the nether regions. It is synonymous with Self-Realization and devotion to Sai Baba.

It is not anything to be got afresh, for it is already there to be realized. Such realization arises with the elimination of ignorance and Sai Baba’s grace descends”.

“Illumination is unqualified by the limitations of objects. Deliberation is qualified by the limitations pertaining to the objects seen, and is the forerunner of their clear definition of Sai Baba’s blessings”.

“Take the first step in Shradda. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step”.

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go in attaining Sai Bliss”.

“Determination is the power that sees one through all frustrations and obstacles”.

— by **Shreyas Devaraj**



Invoking Sai Baba's Blessings

— by **Swami Santananda Puri Maharaj**

Vashishta Guha, Himalayas

Our invocation to Lord Sainath to bless the entire humanity.

God is known as the Creator. What does He create -- the universe, elements, or souls? Many people believe that everything is God's creation, and all that happens on Earth is done by God. Human beings merely are the instruments who execute His will. This would inter alia mean that God is behind every crime being committed by people. Such a belief encourages people to blame God for their misdeeds, misfortunes and sufferings.

"When devotion is practiced, ignorance is destroyed and knowledge dawns." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 50, Ovi 117)

God, however, is universally regarded as the Supreme Being, ever-pure, benevolent and merciful. If everything we do was truly His will, then real peace, happiness and bliss would not have eluded us but would have prevailed on Earth, which unfortunately is not the case.

The idea of God directing all activity on Earth is carried further by some people, who hold that He guides the behavior of the elements too. Not a leaf can stir without His command, they say. But the forces of nature are governed by well-defined laws of science. God does not create souls, either. Matter, souls and God are all eternal, and life is the interplay of these three forces. God's role can be broadly classified into three categories -- creation, sustenance and destruction. It is really the recreation of a new world order, destruction of the old one and sustenance of the new order.

"Those who love me the most, they see me always before them. Without me their universe is desolate. They have only my stories on their lips." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 44, Ovi 148)

God performs the first task by changing the quality of our consciousness. Human consciousness, which shapes our attitude and behavior, is at the root of everything we see in the world. Modern amenities and scientific inventions have all sprung from human minds, and so have the social, economic, and environmental crises brought about by our wrong behavior. Many of the things we see around us today did not exist a few centuries ago, because the kind of human consciousness that has created them did not exist earlier.



To bring about complete transformation and to change the world from hell to heaven, God changes our consciousness. When a critical mass of people shifts to a higher quality of consciousness and starts to think and act based on the human soul's innate qualities of peace, purity, love, and truth, their flaws and the problems they create disappear. Concomitantly, the old order, in which people are spiritually weak, and their actions are, therefore, influenced by vices such as anger, greed, ego, and lust, crumbles, when misguided human behavior precipitates cataclysmic events. These events bring about drastic changes in the world, paving the way for the dawn of the new world order, or the Golden Age. This very planet becomes a paradise when everyone becomes the best they can be, in terms of their humane qualities, thinking, and behavior. That flawless world is governed by those with the highest spiritual qualities and virtues.

"Not only I, but my tomb would be speaking, moving and communicating with those who surrender themselves whole heartedly to me." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 25, Ovi 105-108)

They are the divine beings who are worshipped to this day in temples as Lakshmi, Narayan, Ram and Sita. These deities are human souls who attained their full potential by elevating their awareness and living by the best principles of spiritual wisdom, Rajyog meditation and universal values. It is through these elevated beings or deity souls that God sustains the new world order.



A Dip into Vishnu Sahasranama-19 & 20: Game of Life

— by **Seetha Priya**

Can we know and change our destiny? Is everything in the world predestined? According to some, the world is created by God. Even a leaf will not move without his wish; the world is God's leela - play. This is the Bhakti Marg view. They accept everything, good and bad, as God's wish.



Others believe that God has created the entire world. He created all physical things, all forms of energies, and the mind. Everything emanates from God. He has also created crores of jivatmas, souls, and given them full freedom. He has also created the law of karma which rules the world. He bound himself by this law.

In the Mahabharata, it is said that Krishna was resting under a tree. A hunter mistook him for a deer and shot an arrow at him, severely wounding him. When he realized his mistake, the hunter started weeping and cursing himself for hurting Krishna. Krishna consoled him and said that he was not responsible for his act and that in his previous birth, he was Rama, and the hunter was Vali.

He shot Vali with his arrow by hiding behind a tree. As a result, Vali died. Vali had done nothing to harm Rama. Hence, in this birth, he shot Krishna. After consoling him, Krishna died.

The Nineteenth shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –
**Mahabuddhihi Mahaveeryo
Mahashaktihi Mahadyutihi
Anirdeshyavapuhu Shreemanameyatma
Mahadridruck**

Lord Vishnu is of mighty intellect (Mahabuddhi), is of great energy (Mahaveerya), is of great power (Mahashakti), of great splendor (Mahadyuti) and has an Indefinable form (Anirdeshyavapu). This Lord of everything auspicious (Shreeman) is unfathomable (Ameyatma) and supporter of mountains (Mahadridruck) like Mandara and Govardhan.

The Twentieth shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –
**Maheshwaso Mahibharta
Srinivasah Satam Gatihi
Aniruddah Suranando
Govindo Govidam Patih**

As mighty Lord Ramachandra with his bow (Maheshwasa) protected this earth (Mahibharta), Lord Vishnu is the dwelling place for Lakshmi (Srinivasa). He is always unobstructed as a refuge of the good (Satam Gatihi), in making Gods glad (Surananda), who could be known through the Vedas (Govinda) and is the Lord of the wise (Govidam Pati).

Human life is a game of division and reunion, hide and seek. The One becomes many; the many eventually reunite with the Source. The One hides, the many seek to reunite. To prolong the game long enough to be interesting, the Creator has planted in man three powerful instincts: ego, sex and love.

Ego is a dividing instinct. It makes the individual aware of its independent existence, its needs, opinions and aspirations. Ego, although divisive, is a necessity for survival as well as for

accomplishments uniquely human. It is the ego that drives a child to excel in school, and an adult to excel at the workplace. When a person feels he has seen enough of the world, and turns consciously to spirituality, he presses into service the same instrument that made him excel in the material sphere. The decision 'I will give a new direction to my life' also starts with 'I'.

Sex is a uniting instinct, and so is love. The two together are a formidable combination, which we call erotic love. Erotic love ensures procreation. However, the ultimate aim of human life is not procreation but reunion with the Source. Therefore, after serving the purpose of procreation, sex and love might as well get divorced from each other. At least three seeds for the divorce have also been planted in us. The first is the sense of guilt associated with erotic love. The second seed is that sex as a source of pleasure dwindles with time, and eventually fails to satisfy. The third seed is parenthood. Once the children arrive, erotic love gets elevated to the level of parental love. Parental love is unconditional and survives even rebuffs in return.

Further purification of love is the way to finding the One that hides in everyone and everything. Parenthood trains a person in a pure form of love. Still purer is the love that is universal. It is love extended to those around us irrespective of their superficial relationship that gives a practical expression to the deeper relationship that binds all of us because we have come from the same Source. The expression eventually leads to reunion with the Source. Life is full of triggers for such purification and expansion. Negative triggers are sorrow and suffering, and a positive trigger is the joy that comes from expanding the circle of love beyond the biological family. These triggers are a 'call to heaven', to which, as Sri Aurobindo says in Savitri, not many respond.

Ego divides while sex unites; both are much-maligned necessary evils. Love is the master-key to the reunion with the Source that we seek. Sex joins love as a temporary expedient to serve the purpose of procreation. The limitations and pitfalls of ego and sex push and pull a person towards purer forms of love. Going through the motions of life, seeing through the illusion of separation, and finally arriving at the Reality of oneness is the game of human life, as designed by the Master Coach, the Divine. Sri Aurobindo, towards the end of Savitri, says the last word in spiritual wisdom in a few simple words: "To feel love and oneness is to live."

"You may go anywhere on the face of this earth, I am always with you. I reside in your heart, and I am within you" – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 15, Ovi 67-73)





Message of Lord Sainath's Blessings

— by **Zarine Taraporevala**
Sivanesan Swamiji Ashram, Shiridi



May Lord Sainath and Guru Maharaj Sivanesan Swamiji bless all Sai devotees.

"I never take anything from anyone gratis. I do not ask all and sundry. I only take dakshina from those to whom the Fakir points out."— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 35, Ovi 129-131)

Saguna Brahman, Qualified Consciousness, is the cause of the creation of the universe. In other words, the universe has originated from Brahman.

But if Brahman or Bhagwan created the universe, a very pertinent question arises about the availability of the material or stuff from which the universe was made. Saguna Brahman also needs the material to create the universe just as the potter needs clay to make his pots. A potter obtains his clay from the earth. So then has Brahman also obtained the material from someone else? The material and its owner from whom Saguna Brahman borrowed it must have existed even before the Brahman came into being, and that this owner is bigger than Saguna Brahman has to be admitted.

It has already been accepted that Brahman is non-causal. Nothing existed before it. And so, the material from which the universe is made could not have existed before Brahman.

What could be the material out of which Saguna Brahman made this universe if nothing existed before or beyond it? The universe, which is so visibly existent, could not have been created out of nothing. The only material available to Saguna Brahman for creation was its own Self. Hence, it must be accepted that this creation is only Saguna Brahman metamorphosed into all that we find in the universe.

"If anyone has given me one rupee as 'Dakshina', I have given ten times more in return, accurately."— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 35, Ovi 129-131)

The entire universe is formed from Saguna Brah-

man. It is only this which is manifested as this creation. To say that Brahman is present in a book means that the book is a separate entity and Brahman occupies that entity. This gives the impression of two separate entities – Brahman and the book which appears to be outside Saguna Brahman. This is completely incorrect as it has already been established that everything is made by an of Brahman; It has assumed the shape of everything. Hence the correct thing to say would be that the book is Brahman or that it has assumed the shape of a book also. This shows that the book and Brahman are not two separate entities and that the book did not exist before Brahman. This alone is the correct expression, for Brahman is infinite and eternal and nothing can exist beyond or before It. The book could not have existed before Brahman. In fact, nothing could have existed before Brahman. Every speck of dust is only Brahman.

Brahman is the cause of the entire creation, and it is the collective name for Prakriti and Purush. Which of the two then forms the creation? Prakriti is a unique force – a principle, the only function of which is to qualify Purush.

"The Fakir asks from only those to whom He is indebted."— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 35, Ovi 129-131)

Purush cannot perform the tremendous task of giving Prakriti the form of creation. Prakriti does not assume the shape of the creation and it is only Purush who could take these forms. Hence, the stuff of which the entire creation is made is Purush. Prakriti qualifies Purush to give Him different forms and Purush has to follow the designs of Prakriti. For example, a potter shapes a lump of clay according to his designs. The lump of clay is comparable to Purush and the potter who provides the force, to Prakriti. Similarly, Prakriti gives all these shapes to Purush according to Her wish to create this universe.





Kaka Dixit Diary



Three devotees from Punjab arrived at Shirdi to pay their obeisance to Sai Maharaj. Baba who spoke to them in Bhojpuri and Urdu welcomed them and asked me to arrange for their accommodation and Mother Radhakrishna Mai to provide them food. He went on to eulogize Guru Gobind Singh. In fact, Guru Gobind Singh was termed as a secular saint by Sai Maharaj.

Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikh religion, was an apostle of peace, unity, and love. He taught us about the brotherhood of mankind, and gave the universal message of equality, mutual respect, and well-being for the whole of mankind.

Nanak Devji was a pioneer of interfaith dialogue of his times. He was in continuous dialog with people of other faiths throughout his lifetime. The Siddha Goshti is an example of such a dialog that is enshrined in the Guru Granth Sahib. It gives in detail the interaction between Guru Nanak and Hindu Siddhas, in which the ascetics ask numerous questions about God, life, spirituality, salvation, renunciation, truth, and meditation and Nanakji patiently responds to the same.

Guru Nanak Dev travelled to various religious places of diverse faiths with his associate Bhai Mardana, a Muslim bard, and preached that we should share our views and ideas throughout our lives. The Guru Granth Sahib quotes him as saying: “**Jab lag dunia rahiai Nanak kichh suniai kichh kahiai,**” meaning, as long as we are in this world, O Nanak, we must listen to others, as well as express ourselves to others.

There is an incident mentioned in his Janamsakhi, biography, about the time when Guru Nanak Dev was travelling to Multan and was greeted by

Sufi saints. The Sufi saints had already heard about the popularity of Nanak and were insecure about how easily the Sikh guru brought solace to people. The Sufis wanted to keep Nanak away from Multan knowing that he had followers at various places. A gift was brought for Nanak with extreme care. It was an earthen bowl full of milk to the brim. Any awkward step would have spilt the milk. When Guru Nanak Dev looked at the gift, he understood the allegory behind the pot full of milk. He went and brought a jasmine petal and placed it on top of the milk and returned the bowl. Bhai Mardana was surprised to see all this and asked Nanak the reason behind the jasmine petal. The Guru explained that the pot full of milk signified that there were many religious teachers in Multan and the Sufis feared that adding one more would result in the displacement of another.

But Guru Nanak wanted to tell them that he had no intention of displacing anyone; he only wanted to add the fragrance of his teachings. Just as jasmine brought fragrance to milk, similarly his teachings would add to the teachings of the Sufi saints.



The message was that there was always the scope for living in a multi-religious society and one needed to be open-minded to accept things. We should spread goodness around us so that people may accept us.

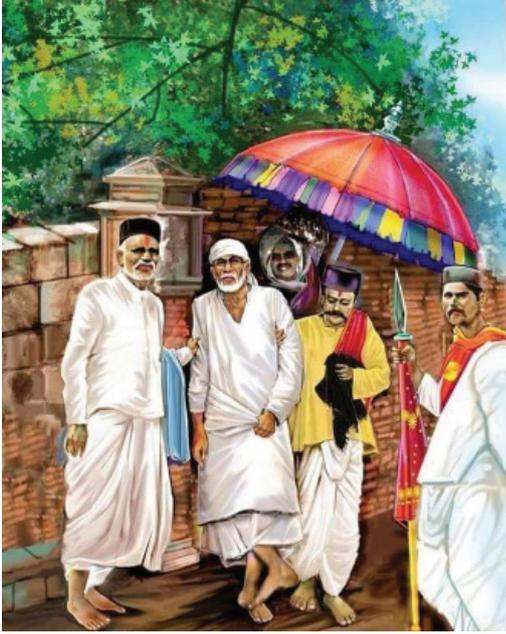
Today we see that people of all faiths, caste and nationalities visit gurudwaras and partake of the langar, which is an embodiment of the teachings of Nanak.

Guru Nanak foresaw the future and initiated the process of inter-faith dialogue and cooperation at his times and his teachings are relevant for this contemporary world.



Sai Baba connects each other

— by **Shri Narasimha Swamiji**



The essence of being human is illustrated beautifully through a Sai Satcharita proverb, and this was often recalled by Sai Devotees “I am a person through other people. My humanity is tied to yours.”

He would explain it as follows: “One of the sayings in Sai Brotherhood is the essence of being human. Sai Brotherhood speaks particularly about the fact that you can’t exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the entire world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity.” That is, the butterfly effect is as true among peoples of the world as it true in the intricate web of nature, wherein all beings, animate and inanimate, are closely interconnected.

“Not only I, but my tomb would be speaking, moving and communicating with those who surrender themselves whole heartedly to me.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 25, Ovi 05-108)

Summary of Sai Baba’s philosophy is as ‘I am because of who we all are.’ Such an attitude would likely lead us to the essence of the summum bonum philosophy that denotes the “fundamental principle on which some system of ethics is based, that is, the aim of actions, which, if consistently pursued, will lead to the best possible life.”

Dixit in his diary speaks about the social work in terms of its impact on ethical and social issues that require deeper understanding coming from a wider, humanistic perspective. Something that is desperately needed, in a world being riven by meaningless divisions and conflicts.

When we dehumanize others, we end up dehumanizing ourselves, said Sai Baba, who felt that to heal both spirit and body, one had to learn to look at the positive aspects of any person, group or situation rather than focus only on the negative aspects. Both Dixit and Nanasahab Chandorkar stressed on the significance of magnanimity, reconciliation and forgiveness rather than on revenge and retribution. This was the spirit in which the people lived in Shirdi. Sai Baba induced love and fellowship among people to overcome all the unpleasantness and tragedies, inspire forgiveness and herald a new era of hope, faith and love that would lead to peaceful and dignified co-existence.

“Always remember me only. Believe in me heart and soul. Pray without selfish motives and you will attain your welfare.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 25, Ovi 05-108)

Sai Baba provides one with a strong sense of community “to override divisions and heal the scarred collective psyche”. What we are as individuals is the sum of all that went before us; of all that we experience now and of all that could possibly happen in the future.

“Without some special bonds of past lives no one comes to us. May it be a dog, a pig or a fly. So do not repulse anybody.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 81)





Empowering Sahasranama

— by **Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**

Shama made a query with Dasganu Maharaj as to why Sai Baba was particular that he should recite Vishnu Sahasranama and for this purpose he had given him a book of Vishnu Sahasranama from a visiting Ramadasi. Dasganu Maharaj explained to Shama preciousness of Vishnu Sahasranama and its recitation a panacea for all problems. Dasganu told Shama a story from Mahabharata and he included this in all his Kirthans also.

The Mahabharata story told by Dasganu Maharaj is as follows

There is a story in the Mahabharata which I find more edifying, enlightening and uplifting than even the Bhagwad Gita. Now that the war is over and the Pandavas are reinstated, Krishna decides to call it a day and go home to Dwaraka. On the way he meets an old acquaintance, Utanga, a revered Brahmin. Krishna alights from the chariot and salutes Utanga who asks him, "How are you, Krishna? Do your kin the Pandavas and the Kauravas keep well?"

Krishna was surprised. "It appears you are not in the swim. An earth-shaking war took place between the Pandavas and Kauravas. the Kauravas all perished and...." Utanga was enraged.

"Krishna, why did you allow this tragedy to take place? I will curse you for your lapse." Krishna was alarmed. Already there were some heavy curses on his

head, including that ominous one of Gandhari. He said, "Revered Brahmin, hear me out first and if you still feel like cursing me, go ahead. I am Brahman, the world-stuff. I divide myself into infinite pairs of opposites acting upon one another and that is how the world happens."

"I am both pairs of opposites, at once. I am happiness and misery. I am gain and loss. I am success and failure. I am both winner and loser. I am the killer and the killed. I am the virtuous, and the sinner. I am love and hate. I am violence and non-violence. I am the hunting and the hunted, the preying and the preyed, the raping and the raped, the criminal and the victim, the attacking and the attacked. I am the ruling and the ruled, the exploiting and the exploited, the abusing and the abused. I am the millionaire, and the slum-dweller. I am the Brahmin, and I myself am the Chandala, the lowliest...."

Utanga said, "Krishna, you opened my eyes of jnana. I won't curse you." Krishna heaved a sigh of relief. For me, this is the stabiliser of yoga and jnana.

In the Mahabharata, the story of Utanga doesn't end where we left it just now. Krishna asks Utanga to ask a boon, whatever boon. Utanga says the jnana Krishna just imparted him is the greatest boon and he wants no other boon. When Krishna pressed him further, he casually asked for a simple favor, only to please Krishna: "Krishna, if ever I happen to be parched with thirst and couldn't find drinking water anywhere, please arrange to send me some water." "So be it," Krishna said, and took leave of Utanga.

A few days on, Utanga happened to be parched with thirst and couldn't find drinking water. He remembered Krishna and prayed him to send some drinking water. Just then a Chandala came by — dirty, drunk, and singing bawdy songs. He offered the water in his skin bag, which Utanga promptly refused. The Chandala went his way, singing his bawdy song.

A while later Krishna appeared, crest-fallen. Utanga asked, "What's the matter with you, Krishna? Where is the water?" Krishna said, "Revered Brahmin, I lost face because of you. When you cried for water, I asked Indra to supply you some water. 'Why water,' Indra said, 'I will give him the divine elixir, amrit. But I will approach him in the guise of a Chandala. Is that okay?' 'It's okay,' I said. 'Utanga is a great jnani, he won't mind.' Indra doubted it and I betted on it. I lost my bet and now I can't show my face to Indra."

That is why Bhishmacharya advised Vishnu Sahasranama recitation to Yudhishtira for all life's problems.

Shirdi Sansthan has introduced recitation of Vishnu Sahasranama in the mornings as a part of worshipping Sai Baba.





Meeting Sapatnekar at Pune

— by **Dubagunta Sankaraiah**



In 1979, after attending the Sai Leela Contributors convention, I accompanied Sai brother Lt. Col. Nimbalkar to Pune and I had the privilege of meeting Swami Rambaba, a 120-year old saint who had visited Baba in 1914 and had come down to Pune. Then we went to Sapatnekar's residence to meet his son Dinakar and had the blissful opportunity of listening to the great Sai Leela of his birth. We met Mahadev Sapatnekar's wife Parvatibai and son Dinakar.

Dinakar was the third son of Mahadev and Parvatibai and held the position of a judge in the State of Maharashtra and later retired. At the time of interview, Dinakar was 68 years old. Lt. Col. Nimbalkar also interviewed at the same time his mother Parvatibai Sapatnekar, who was 88 years old at that time.

Sapatneka's son, Dinakar disclosed another interesting fact about his father, Mahadev and said that he was a devotee of Sri Datta and would frequently go to Gangapur. Dinakar's mother, Parvatibai Sapatnekar narrated, in the interview, all her experiences with Baba. She said that she was married at the age of 13. Her husband was practicing as a lawyer at Akkalkot, and his parents were staying at

Madhegaon.

Dinakar narrated the circumstances under which his parents visited Sai Baba in 1913 and how Baba blessed them with 7 children, and he was the 3rd son of his parents. After one year in 1915, Mahadev was blessed with a son and the boy was named as Muralidhar. His parents went to Shirdi with the boy when he was eight months old. Afterwards two more sons were born to them, and they were named as Bhaskar and Dinakar, Dinakar being the youngest. They again visited Shirdi with all the sons. In all Mahadev had eight sons and one daughter. Only then she realized the full meaning of the boon granted to them by Baba. When she went to Shirdi for the first time, Baba said, "Take! One, two, three, four! Take as many as you want." In this way Baba blessed them with children. Thus, Baba gave them as many children as they desired.

Mahadev prayed for implicit faith in Sai Baba.

Parvatibai Sapatnekar was alive for 65 years after Baba's Mahasamadhi. She passed away on 30th October 1983. She was a blessed lady who had the opportunity of seeing Baba when he was in mortal coil and witnessed the Grace of Baba and the miracles in her family. We are fortunate to have received the firsthand information of her experiences with Sai directly from her.



Sai Rama Navami Message

— by **J P Vaswani**

Spiritual Head, Vaswani Mission, Pune



Devotees of Sai Baba asked him as to when is his birthday. Sai Baba replied that they could celebrate his birthday on the Rama Navami day. So, Rama Navami is always celebrated as Sai Rama Navami.

The significance of Rama is not in the situations he faced in his life. The significance is with how much gracefulness he conducted himself through this series of events that occurred to him.

People seeking liberation and a graceful life sought Rama because they understood and had the wisdom to see that even with lots of management, external situations can go wrong at any moment. You may have everything organized, but if a cyclone hits you, it can take away everything. "Oh, it will not happen to me," is a foolish way to live. "Even if it happens, I will go through it gracefully," is a wise way to live. People sought Rama because they saw this phenomenal wisdom. Though life became a continuous series of disasters, never once did he waver from his truthfulness, from the fundamentals of life that he set up for himself. He just hung on to what he had to do and conducted his life with utmost balance.

So, people worship Rama not because of the success in his life, but for the gracefulness with which he conducted the most difficult moments. That is what is valued; that is the highest value in one's life. It is not the question of how much you have, what you did, what happened or what did not happen. Whatever happened, how did you conduct yourself? That is what determines the quality of who you are. You may make a billion dollars because the market is doing well. That does not mean anything. It is a social situation.

Sai Baba gave darshan to several devotees as Ramachandra confirming that Rama and Sai Baba are one and the same.



IshAvAsya Mantra # 12

Previously it was established that tattva-jāna is the cause for mukti and tattva-jāna demands recognition and rejection of all that is avidyā.

The next mantra #12 makes it explicit that Brahman is All-Creator is directly implied by the word 'Ishāvāsyā' and it is not a meaning that is indirectly inferred. In the previous mantra, the word 'vidyā' was used to denote tattva-jāna and In this mantra, by the word 'sambhooti' All-Creatorship of Vedic Brahman, is mentioned. From this, it is known that tattva-jāna and sarva-kartrutva-jāna are the same idea. 'vidyā' and 'sambhooti' are the same idea. For this reason, this mantra serves as an explanation for the previous mantra.

One who does dhyāna that Vedic Parabrahman, is only merely the Creator, and not the destroyer is worse off than the one who thinks that Parabrahman is not the Creator.

Just as the rejection of avidyā is included in vidyā, so also, the knowledge that Parabrahman is the Destroyer must be included in the knowledge that Parabrahman is the Creator and that is when the correct knowledge of All-creatorship of Brahman gets established, otherwise not.

Just as greater doom is predicted for one who only indulges in vidyā without indulging in rejection of avidyā, so also greater doom is predicted for one who merely indulges in the thought that Parabrahman is the Creator, and not the Destructor. This means, both Creatorship and Destructorship – both Doership must be understood in their complete sense. If there is a thing in this universe that is deemed to be not created, or if there is a thing that is only partly created, then it is anyathā-jāna and tamas is its result. Even if All-creatorship is accepted and All-Destructorship is not accepted, then it is mithyā-jāna. It results in a greater tamas. The thought that Parabrahman is not संहारकर्तृ saḥāra-karṭṛ, indicates a certain weakness in Parabrahman. That is why such a thought is a grave mistake.

Those who understand that Parabrahman's All-destructorship is His very svarūpa, the Destructorship ac-

tivity of the Lord brings joy to them because such an activity is an extension of the wonderful Creative activity of the same Lord. For this reason, knowing the All-Creatorship of Vedic Brahman through a proper study of philosophy is the means for emancipation. The knowledge that Parabrahman is सर्वसंहारकर्तृ sarvasahāra-karṭṛ is hidden in the knowledge that Parabrahman is सर्वसृष्टिकर्तृ sarvasṛṣṭi-karṭṛ. One who understands Parabrahman as merely the सर्वसृष्टिकर्तृ sarvasṛṣṭi-karṭṛ, rejects the fact that Parabrahman is संहारकर्तृ saḥāra-karṭṛ and prays to his God of understanding to create various laukika sukha such that no danger ever occurs to them, such a prayer is in a way ordering God what to do. It is not knowledge. It is merely an attempt to show that he himself is his own controller. When the All-Destructorship of Parabrahman is understood in the knowledge of All-Creatorship of the same Parabrahman, there is no scope for mithyā-jāna. From this, sacrificing selfishness and through that an attempt towards acquiring knowledge is born.

With this background, we may now translate the 12th mantra as follows:

उपनिषत् upaniṣat

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।

ततो भूय इव ते तमो य ऊ सम्भूत्याँ रताः ॥ १२ ॥

andham tamaḥ praviśanti

yē'sambhūtim upāsate |

tatō bhūya iva tē tamō ya

u sambhūtyāṁ ratāḥ || 12 ||

Those who (ये yē) meditate that (उपासते upāsate) Vedic Brahman is not the All-Creator (असम्भूतिं asambhūtim) they will enter into (प्रविशन्ति praviśanti) darkness (अन्धं तमः andham tamaḥ). Even greater darkness than that darkness (ततो भूय तमो tatō bhūya tamō) is indeed (ऊ u) clearly (इव iva) there for those that are (य ते ya tē) immersed merely in the knowledge (रताः ratāḥ) that Vedic Brahman is the All-Creator (सम्भूत्याँ sambhūtyāṁ) i.e., those who don't know that He is also the All-Destructor (सम्भूत्याँ रताः sambhūtyāṁ ratāḥ).



EQUALITY AND FRATERNITY

“Like the oil latent in oil seeds
Like ghee latent in milk
Like fragrance latent in flower
Like juice latent in fruit
Like fire latent in faggot
Sai Maharaj is immanent in every
human being”.

“Innocence of a child is ignorance
Innocence of a perfect Master is wisdom”
“The fulfilment of knowledge
is wisdom, knowledge can be imparted,
but wisdom is to be gained by self-effort
And Sai Baba’s blessings”

“Obedience is more than love,
Love is a gift from the Beloved

to the Lover, whereas obedience is
an offering from the shishya to the guru”

“Qualification implies limitations,
whereas its absence due to

Sai Baba’s grace implies its
unlimited grace par excellence”.

“Sai Philosophy is more a moral code than a religion”.

“A heart inspired with invincibility
can win the reward of Sai Baba’s infinite bliss”.

— by **B Rajeshwari**





A Tale of Sixteen and a half rupees

— by **Seetha Vijayakumar**

This was an occasion where Dikshit was reading the second chapter of 'Eknathi Bhagwat' along with Balasaheb Bhatte and while he was thus engaged there came a message that Sai Baba had asked for a dakshina of sixteen and a half rupees, from Dikshit.

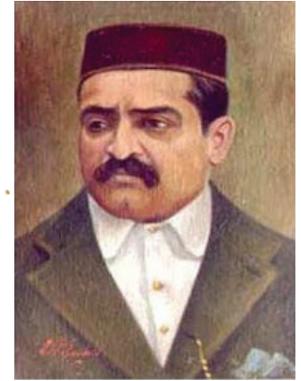
Dikshit did not have any money. The message had come from Bapusaheb Buti who had also been asked to listen to Dikshit's reading.

Dikshit began to ponder upon the request for sixteen and a half rupee dakshina, which was a rather unusual sum to ask. He therefore concluded that somehow that amount had something to do with the reading of that day's part of Eknathi Bhagwat.

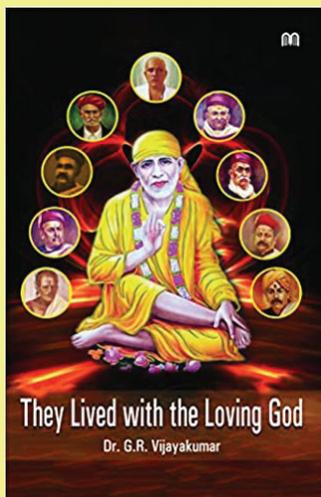
Buti, meanwhile, sat as directed by Baba to listen to the reading Bhagwat and in time Dikshit came to the verse 'Kayena vaacha,' which was an exposition of what Bhagwat dharma meant made by one of the sons of Rishabh Muni. The Verse meant: "Whatever I do through my body, speech, mind, organs, intellect, ego and nature (prarabdha - karma at birth) I offer to Narayan who is beyond everything, after pronouncing His name.

Dikshit had hardly completed reading Eknath's extensive commentary on the Bhagwat when another messenger came from Baba asking Buti to return. This intrigued Dikshit even more. Was there any connection between Baba's demand for sixteen and a half rupees and the stanza 'kayena vaacha' he had just completed reading? Mentally Dikshit added up the units mentioned in the verse: body 1, speech 1, mind (manas) 1, intellect 1, ego 1, organs 10, nature 1/2. But it all totaled up to 15 ½. But then, Dikshit told himself, Baba had asked specifically for 16½ rupees. He scrutinized the commentary of Eknath again and found out that though there is no mention of *chitta* (discursive faculty including memory) in the original stanza in Eknath's commentary there is exposition also on *chitta* Now that totaled 16 ½. From this Dikshit understood that Sai Baba's object in asking for 16 ½ 'rupees' dakshina in effect meant that he wanted all those ingredients, kaaya, vaacha, manas, indriyas, etc. to be offered to the Lord.

Thus, Dikshit understood the significance of a Dakshina of rupees sixteen and a half.



BOOK REVIEW



Title	: They Lived with the Loving God
Author	: Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar
Publisher	: Mandrake Publisher, Bhopal (Available through Amazon)
Price	: Rs. 299/-
Reviewed by	: B. B. Lakshminarasimhan

Sai Baba touched the lives of many people from all walks of life who had been looking for an anchorage for stabilization. He gave them a healing touch and inspired them to lead a spiritual life.

"They Lived with the Loving God" is a biography of Sai Baba and 54 associates written in a simple and a lucid style. Sai Baba's life with his associates is a journey of Atma, to transcend body consciousness; not for piecemeal happiness, but to attain infinite bliss, Ananda; a journey to dismantle our imaginary theorems and become free; a freedom attained much prior to death. The game of life is all about this. The journey of life may continue for one or more lifetimes until the Infinite is attained. The book will give the reader to get a deeper insight into Sai Baba's life, his code of conduct, words of wisdom and also the innumerable miracles he performed.



Remembering Galwankar

— by **Ramaswamy Seshadri**



Our Guru Bandu Sri Gopal Rao Inamdar took me and Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji on a visit to Mumbai in 1978 to visit the house of Rao Sahib Yeshwant Janardhan Galwankar.

Rao Sahib Yeshwant Janardhan Galwankar was one of the prominent members of the Sai Baba Sansthan Committee and Editor of the Sai Leela Masik for some years.

Yeshwant Janardhan Galwankar was the son-in-law of Anna Saheb Dabholkar or Hemadpant (author of Sri Sai Satcharitra). He was working as a Superintendent in the Home department of the Bombay Secretariat. He was taken to Shirdi by his father-in-law four or five times for darshan of Baba. In his first visit he did not get any strong impression about Baba, and this might be due to his young age. Dabholkar's contacts with Baba also made him visit Shirdi later and in course of time in the subsequent visits, he developed more interest and devotion in Baba.

Once Baba appeared in his dream and asked for Rs. 2 as dakshina. After he woke up, he decided to send Rs. 2 by money order to Shirdi and he did send. Baba in the dream asked him to follow two directions, the first one - behave with honesty and integrity, (relating to his official position) and second one - be chaste and sexually pure. Galwankar said that he had followed those two directions without fail and with great care.

However, his visit to Shirdi in 1917 had created a great impression on him. When he went to the masjid for Baba's darshan, Baba placed his palm over his head and this had a strong impact on him and at that time, he went into an ecstatic trance. He forgot himself and about the surroundings during that state of trance. Later he understood that Baba spoke about him and told the people in the masjid that Galwankar had integrity and purity already in previous births, that Baba placed Galwankar in his present mother's womb and that Galwankar continued the same integrity and purity even in his present birth. Subsequently his faith in Baba increased manifold and then he went to Baba with full faith during Christmas and other vacations. Baba did not give him any Upadesh except what he told him in the dream.

He heard Baba saying that Baba was not a person having the 3-½ cubits height of body, but he was present everywhere and that the devotees should

see him in every place. It was Galwankar's firm belief that through Baba's indirect inspiration only he was able to read the Gita, the Bhagavata and Eknath.

As he was totally involved in his official duties and work and also being comparatively young, he was not in a position to develop closer contact with Baba before 1918. But after Baba's Mahasamadhi, he became more serious in life and got attracted towards Baba.

In 1921, he went on a pilgrimage with his family and visited Prayag and Kasi. In Baradwajashram at Prayag, he prayed to Baba to arrange darshan of any saint. Sometime after leaving the Baradwajashram, they saw a saint on the roadside. The accompanying guide said that this particular saint would visit Prayag once in seven years or so. But he picked up courage by Baba's Grace and approached the saint. And the saint, instead of becoming angry, welcomed him with raised arms saying, "Come child." They were all blessed by the saint. In this way, Baba answered his prayer immediately in that year. In this fashion, he developed his religious bent and started paying more attention towards his spiritual development.

Later in 1932, he had a dream in which Baba appeared and asked him, "What do you want?" His reply was, "I want prem (love) and only prem." Then Baba blessed him saying, "You will have prem" and disappeared. After that dream, he had spells of prem gushing through him while meditating, while reading and even on other occasions. Thus, after Baba's Mahasamadhi, his devotion towards Baba made his life nobler and more spiritual.

Yeshwant Janardhan Galwankar passed away in 1945.

We had a darshan of kafni given to him by Sai Baba and had a blissful time.





Sai Baba as Gitacharya

— by **Dinesh Chikaballapur**



Irrespective of whether one is a renunciate or a householder, the words of wisdom contained in the Bhagwad Gita teach us the method of leading a balanced life -- a life that attaches equal importance to the spiritual aspect of life and attainment of proficiency in worldly affairs. The Gita urges repeatedly that one should live in the world like a lotus-leaf, which remains pure and untainted despite being surrounded by filthy water.

“If sweetness can be separated from jaggery, if the ocean can be separated from the waves, if the eyes can see without light, then only can my simple devotee be separated from me.”

— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 19, Ovi 212-215)

The Gita opens with a vivid description of men and things on the eve of the great battle of Kurukshetra. At the eleventh-hour, Arjuna’s mind is tormented at the sight of his venerable preceptors, sires and grandsires, sons and grandsons who are present in the battlefield. The very thought of fratricidal carnage and bloodshed that would ensue causes untold agony to his delicate mind — so much so that he puts aside his bow and arrow and is in no mental condition to fight.

It is ironical that despite being a householder belonging to the warrior caste, Arjuna conducts himself like a sannyasin and puts up a plausible plea for abstention from activity and for withdrawing from the world, an ideal which was popular among certain sects at the time when the Gita was written. Significantly, his reluctance to fight is not an outcome of utter dispassion; it is because his mind is governed by false passion.

The Gita elaborates on whether action or renunciation of action is better and concludes that action is a better option. The discourse on Sankhya Yog lays stress on renunciation of action. This is because every deed, irrespective of whether it is good or bad, brings about its natural effect and binds one to the world, posing an impediment to liberation. It is, therefore, argued that one must renounce all action and become a sannyasin.

“Sit wherever you are and ask me. Why do you wander from place to place? I will satisfy your curiosity. Have this much faith.”

— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 20, Ovi 79-80)

At the same time, the teacher of the Gita asserts that abstention from action is just not possible. This is because nature is at work on a constant basis. The teacher of the Gita does not reject the world as a mere illusion and action as a snare. He advocates leading an active life in the world with the inner life anchored in the eternal spirit. The Gita thus is a mandate for action; it teaches that perfection can be attained even while doing one’s duties.

“Destroy speech and all other senses. Make the mind steadfast. Then subvert the mind. Penetrate deep into the intellect.”

— Shri Sai Baba (Chap 16, Ovi 93-98)

Gandhi in his commentary on the Gita opined that it is not desire that vitiates the action but selfish desire, which is the desire for fruit; and if an end is put to this selfish desire, the action performed won’t be binding. The abandonment of the desire for fruit encompasses both ‘sannyas’ and ‘tyag’, both having the etymological meaning ‘give up’. In this context, the person who completely abstains from performing action is not a sannyasin but only an idler or hypocrite.

Krishna says in the Gita: “He who performs all actions in a spirit of surrender to the Eternal Being, abandoning attachment, is as unaffected by sin as a lotus-leaf by filthy water.” The Gita thus advocates detachment from desires and not cessation from work.



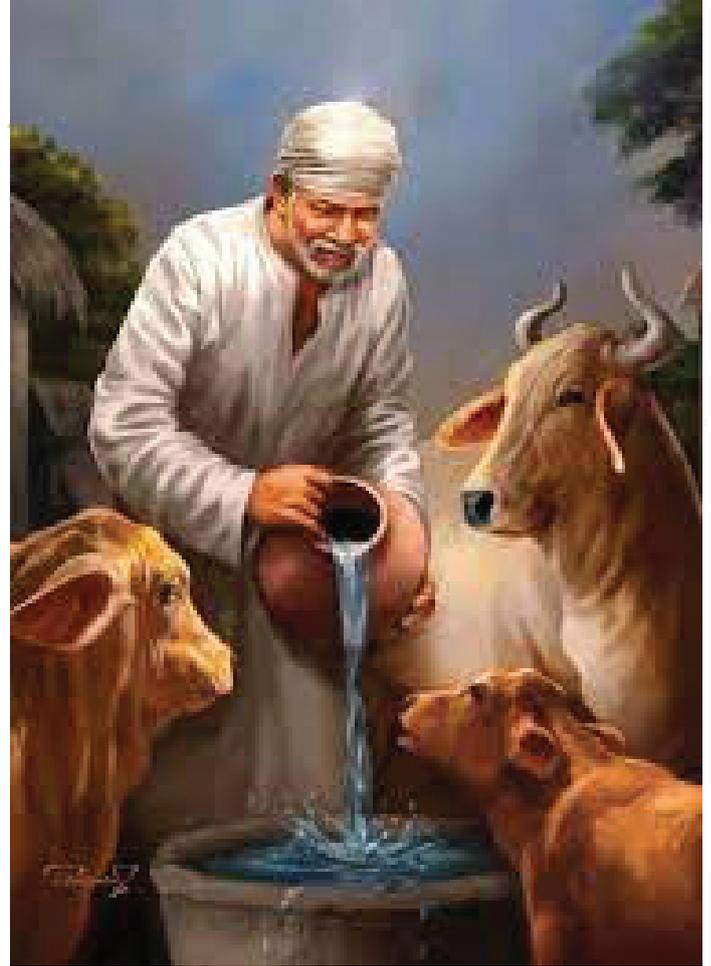


Moksha to Buffalo

— by **Dr. G R Vijayakumar**

Sai Baba looked not only after the material well-being of a devotee but also his spiritual welfare. One morning Sai Baba told Mrs. Jog: “Tai, a she-buffalo will come to your backdoor in the afternoon. Feed her well with puranpolis with ghee applied to them.”

Mrs. Jog faithfully prepared puranpolis, offered naivedya to Sai Baba and in the afternoon noticed a she-buffalo standing at her backdoor as predicted by Sai Baba. Mrs. Jog was at first happy that the animal consumed puranpolis to her heart's content but was upset when in a short time the buffalo sat down, was indisposed and died on the spot! Frightened, she examined all the vessels used for cooking, including the one in which puran was cooked to see whether any extraneous material had fallen into them. She noticed nothing of the kind. She was thoroughly fazed. If the buffalo had died as a result of being overfed, the sin of its death would be on her head. From a strictly mundane point of view, if the owner of the buffalo came to know that it had died after being fed on puranpolis, he could hold Mrs. Jog responsible for the death of the animal. The protector of devotees is ultimately the Lord. So, she took refuge in Sai Baba and apprising him of the facts admitted that she was disconcerted. Baba assured her that there was no reason to worry. He said: “The owner cannot harass you. Spir-



itually you have committed no wrong. There was only one desire left in the buffalo; to eat puranpolis. I satisfied its desire, working through you. The she-buffalo will now be released from its yoni (class or nature) and will be born again and merit a good birth. There is no need for any anxiety on your part.”

It was a revelation to Mrs. Jog and an insight into Baba's way of functioning.



Children's Corner



Om Namō Sainathaya

How Lord Sainath Guides us!

DEAR CHILDREN

As the world enters another holiday season against the backdrop of a global pandemic, vacationing in distant lands may not be in the cards.

We usually seek places that are relaxing, enjoyable, and beautiful. Yet going on an outer vacation is often stressful. We have to earn money for the trip; book tickets; undergo the rigors of travel, find the right accommodations and food service. Often, we return from a vacation more exhausted than we had left.

However, there is still hope for a different kind of vacation that will leave us refreshed, rejuvenated, and happy. A vacation that will fill us with relaxation of our body, mind, and spirit, and put us into a state of tremendous love, joy and bliss. What would such a vacation look like?

What if we could experience a vacation that did not cost anything and in which we could instantly travel to and experience unimaginable vistas more beautiful than anything ever seen in this world? What if we could tap into a restful peace that washed away our troubles and stayed with us even when we returned from the journey? What if we could take this trip anytime we wanted, as many times as we wished, by just closing our eyes?

This journey is not imaginary. Many enlightened beings and spiritual masters have taken this inner vacation.

It is a vacation where we stay at home and spend our time with Lord Sainath. He is an ocean of joy, happiness, love, and bliss. To vacation with the Divine would be to swim in this ocean of happiness. Lord Sainath is available to all of us. It is simply a question of where we focus our attention. If we are continually distracted by the activities of the outer world, we will

remain oblivious to the everlasting love and bliss of Supreme within us. Our true self, the soul, rejoices in closeness to Lord Sainath, and we can experience this through meditation.

People have been practicing meditation for centuries. Meditation has been proven to benefit both our bodies and minds. During the day our mind is filled with thoughts. When we sit for meditation and focus our attention, we begin to quieten the mind. We become at peace with ourselves and are not bothered by the problems around us. By meditating regularly, we develop sustained concentration. This increase in concentration coupled with reduced stress and tension, renewed energy, and improved relationships, helps us achieve success in our worldly activities. We become more efficient and productive and are better equipped to deal with life's challenges.

Meditation is the art of inverting our attention from the world outside to that within. Sightseeing in the physical world may attract our senses with interesting and beautiful sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings. Yet inner sightseeing dazzles us. The inner voyage thrills our soul with bliss, love and joy that far surpass any sensory delights experienced in this physical world. It empowers our soul, and we rise into dimensions of higher consciousness. The empowered soul a tremendous source of wisdom, love, and power. This is a purely spiritual experience.

So, this holiday season, rather than focus on the attractions of the outer world, why not take some time to meditate and focus on the joys of the inner world?

"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, Ovi 11-13)

Yours SAI BABALy
THE SAI AURA TEAM

"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 Baba (Chap 44, Ovi 162)

"Would you have the All? Then renounce all you have for the love of Him who is our All-in-All!".

—Shri Narasimha Swamiji

"What allures the sense is ugliness: what fascinates the soul is Beauty".

—Shri Radakrishna Swamiji



*Just as a son or daughter,
is a rightful heir to the ..
father's property,*



Every one of you have a equal claim to ..
God's property of the truth, love, forbearance,
peace and the empathy.

Pictorial
Message
Minds

Dr. Ranvir Singh's

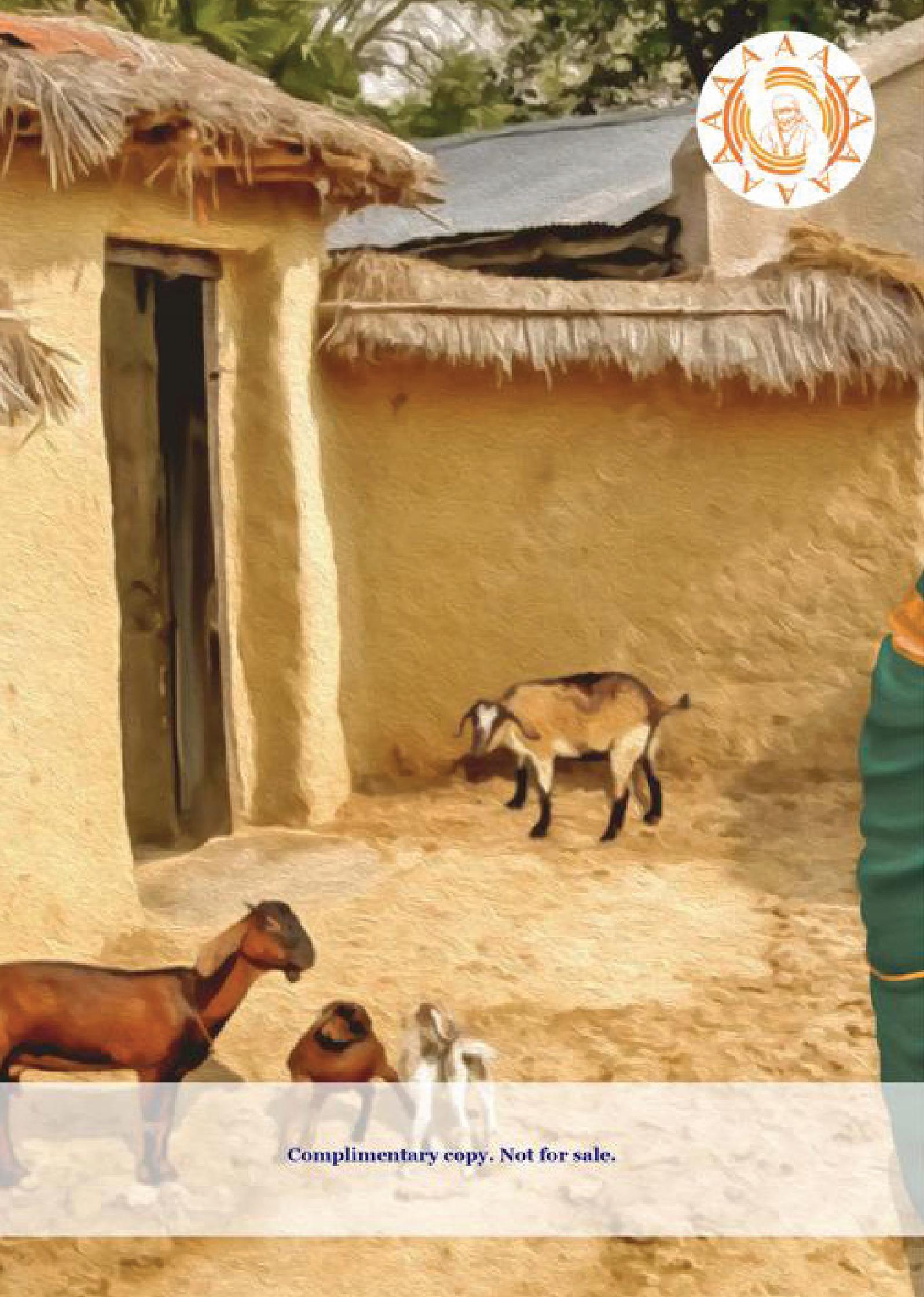


Patience is all the strength one needs.
those anxious to live in joy ...
must always be doing good with patience.

Dr. Ranvir Singh's
Pictorial
Message

Give
ONE
Word
Answer

1. What is Hemadpant's original name?
2. From where did Javar Ali come to Shiridi?
3. What is the lineage of Hemadpant?
4. Who is Adhunik Tukaram?
5. What was the deity represented by Akkalkot Maharaj?
6. Who bore the cost of Padukas at Guru Sthan?
7. Who composed the shloka at Guru Sthan?
8. What is Chitali?
9. When did Taty Patil pass away?
10. Where is the Samadhi memorial of Dasganu Maharaj?
11. Who started the first restaurant at Shiridi?
12. Where did Gangir Maharaj establish his ashram?



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