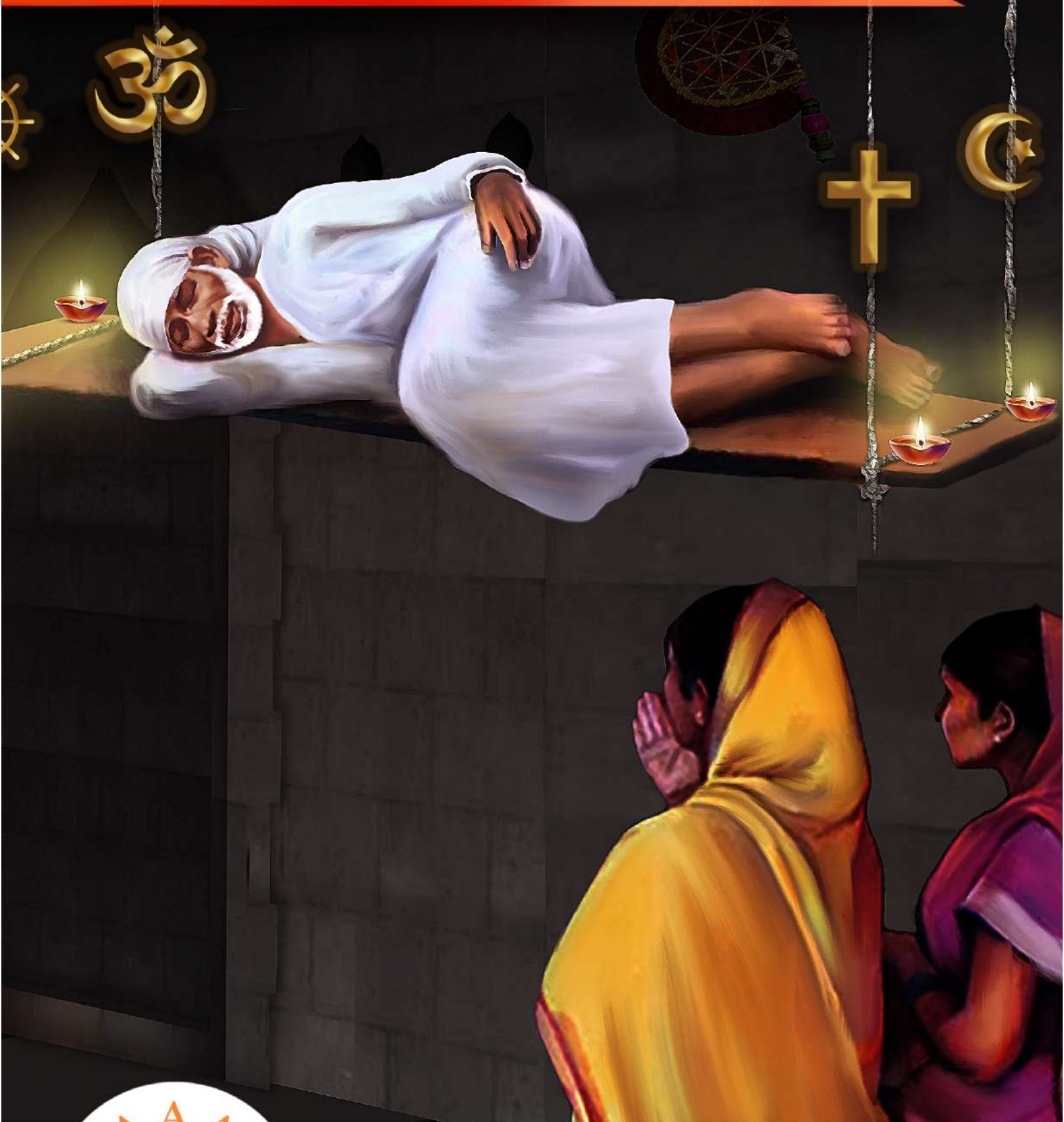


# Aura of Shirdi Sai



**SaiAura**  
I AM EVERYWHERE —

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**SaiAura**  
I AM EVERYWHERE



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## First Word

We are presenting this issue of 'Sai Aura' commemorating the 105th 'Punya Tithi' of Sai Maharaj.

I just finished reading a novel by the American author, Jodi Picoult, called 'The Book of Two Ways' in which the female protagonist, Dawn, is a 'Geriatric Assistant' but the author named her as 'death doula' but corrected it to 'Angel Ulima'. Sai Baba before his 'Maha Samadhi' gifted nine one-rupee coins to Mother Laxmibai Shinde.

I'd never come across the term 'death doula' before and discovered that the word doula comes from the Greek for 'server', and a death doula is a person who helps the terminally ill come to terms with their impending and inevitable demise. Anyway, the author has replaced the word 'death doula' with 'Angel Ulima';

Recollecting Baba's Maha Samadhi and how he prepared for it, 'Angel Ulima's' work involves planning practical details before and after the end of life, teaching meditational practices to help patients reflect on the lives they've lived and the legacy of memories they'll leave behind, and explaining the physical and mental stages of the inescapable process called death.

In effect, an 'Angel Ulima' is like a midwife who helps to give birth to death, easing a person through the labor of shedding one's mortality.

Far from being morbidly depressing, the novel is engagingly uplifting as narrated in the first person by the appropriately named Dawn who has taught herself and teaches others, to view death not as a mournful end, in the manner Sai Baba attained his Maha Samadhi on the 15th October 1918, but as an integral completion of the act of existence; death as an affirmation of the life that we've lived, and without which death itself could not have been.

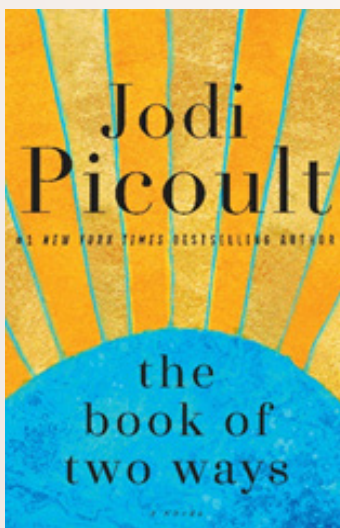
Angel Ulimas, also known as End-of-Life Doulas (EOLDs), do not give any kind of medication to their patients, with whom they form deep emotional and psychological bonds.

By and largely self-taught, Angel Ulimas are an active part of a network called 'Geriatric Positive', a social and spiritual movement that seeks to demystify the passing of life and dispel the shadowy silence that shrouds everything associated with death, which compounds the sense of isolation which accompanies the termination of existence.

As Dawn puts it, her job is to be there for her client, in whatever way is required at any given moment, whether it is to talk openly and frankly about the taboo subject of dying, or to sit in the comfort of companionable silence, or cater to a sudden desire to "eat chocolate ice cream at 3 o'clock in the morning".

In a parallel narrative, Dawn who was a Spiritual Counsellor influenced by the eternal living Shirdi Sai Baba before embarking upon the vocation of a Nursing Assistant, talks about the pharaonic Book of Two Ways which deals with the eternal cycle of death and regeneration.

Though Picoult does not establish the link, The Book of 'Two Ways'



echoes the significance of Sai Baba's Maha Samadhi and those people in the evening of life, to prepare the spirit for its final journey.

In one of the most memorable passages in the novel, Dawn initiates her client – a talented artist with stage four cancer – into a rite of passage which might well have been derived from the conversation of 'Yama and Nachiketa' and which severs the bonds of earthly attachment.



The client is instructed to lie on her back, palms folded across the chest, eyes closed, and take volitional leave, one by one, of the devices and desires the ego is subject to, from ambition and the lures of material possession to the longings and fears of love, and the loss of love.

Typically, 'Geriatric Assistants' do not subscribe to any religious doctrine. When her client asks her what happens after death, Dawn does not conjure a rose-tinted picture of an Afterlife of eternal bliss. Instead, she replies that she does not know. Death is a mystery. But it is preceded by the greater, and more wonderous, mystery called life.

We are aware that Appa Kulkarni collapsed and died at Nana Chandorkar's office at Kopargaon soon after conveying Baba's message. Justice Tatya Saheb Noolkar took treatment for Diabetes Carbuncle under the guidance of his Doctor-Son and before his last breath had Baba's 'Pada-Tirth'. Megha, Vijayanand, Radhakrishna Mai, and many others crossed to the other world with Baba's 'Ashirvad' Blessed be their memory.

We wish all our readers a happy and purposeful life on this occasion of the 105th 'Maha Samadhi' of Sai Maharaj.

"The fool in me claims to understand the mystery of Sai Maharaj. That one who is bottomless, who can gauge its depth"

**Dada J.P. Vaswani.**

"The grace of Sai is lying scattered all around, Those who desire may carry cart loads of it  
Of what avail would lamenting be, When birds have eaten away the crop"

**Sri Narasimha swamiji**

"The heart that nurtures hatred cannot come close to Sai  
The abode of Sai can only be a pure and 'Satwik' Heart"

**Sri Radhakrishna Swamyji.**





## Thought to dwell on



Hari Vinayak Sathe in 1945 in an interview with Sri Narasimha Swamiji recorded – “Baba told me to annihilate my ego. To become nothing. Not even zero. The English zero is written like an O and the Sindhi zero is written simply as a dot. My beloved Master urged me to become the Sindhi zero, a dot, a nothing. Once your ego is annihilated, you will acknowledge His presence in everything around you, birds, animals, trees, plants, fruits, flowers, and human beings – and experience Sai Maharaj’s awareness.

Start now, for the time is short and the journey is long. Annihilate yourself, and behold the vision of Sai the Divine.

## A Challenge To Death



O'Death! Consider thy existence  
vis-s-vis that of Sai Baba  
Thou art merely a particle of dust under his feet  
For in Mahasamadhi, he lives forever  
And provides relief from the miseries of life  
To one and all who take to him  
Think over! Oh death.  
Who is great?  
You – The Annihilator  
Or Sai Baba – The Creator?  
You have perished His body  
But Sai – The eternal  
Lives on forever  
As he is the compassionate mother of all,  
who comes running at our call,  
takes pity on us  
and picks us up in her arms,  
understanding our needs as children  
O' Sai come and occupy the seat  
In the temple of our hearts.  
Our eyes have hardened like stone  
Awaiting your arrival.

— by **Vidyut Maneklal**



## A Dip into Vishnu Sahasranama-26: Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle in Sahasranama

— by **Seetha Priya**



Heisenberg's 'Uncertainty Principle' also called the 'Indeterminacy Principle', was proposed in 1927 by the German physicist Werner Heisenberg. It had a profound impact on classical physics as it questioned the very foundation of all scientific investigation and observation. Newtonian physics not only believed in the accuracy of measurement but also that all information could be defined and used to predict the future course of the particle.

Heisenberg cleared this misconception and made the bold proposition that there is a lower limit to this precision, making our knowledge of a particle inherently uncertain. This revolutionary insight is a realization that parameters that define the position and the velocity of an object cannot be measured exactly on our cognitive abilities.

Brahman Satyam, Jagat Mithya — 'Jagat, the one which exists due to constant change, is based on or is being tended by Brahman, which is Satya, changeless existence.

Is Brahman that 'hidden, real world ruled by causality' alluded by Heisenberg, the backdrop of reality, on which the manifest universe and its inherent, illusory nature, uncertainty are founded?

Brahman, the all-pervasive consciousness, is not restricted to the conditioned consciousness which manifests at the level of the brain.

The 26th shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is -

**Suprasada Prasannatma Viswadrig  
Viswavasuhu**

**Satkarta Satkritahs Sadhurjanh  
Narayano Naraha**

Lord Vishnu the gracious (Suprasada) is delightful (Prasannatma), supports the cosmos (Viswadrig) and no doubt enjoys the multiform (Viswavasuhu). He has always done good (Satkarta) and worshipped (Satkrita) by the righteous (Sadhu), as he is the Disintegrator (Jahnu) and as the Abode of Atman (Narayana) happens to be the leader (Nara).

Sai Baba used to beg from five houses. He wanted to light a few oil lamps. He was not certain of getting oil from the shopkeepers. However, he tried Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.

One evening villagers could not refrain from watching Baba who left the mosque to collect alms. It was quite an unusual time for Baba to beg! He had not done it before! He went to Nandu's shop.

"What can I do for you, Baba?" Nandu politely asked.

"Oh! Give me a little oil! That is all!" Baba extended his tumbler.

"Oil? At this hour?" Nandu Marwadi hesitated! According to his custom, giving oil in the evening was considered inauspicious.

Baba assured him - "It is all right Nandu! Lakshmi will come to your doorstep! Believe me!"

Without any argument, Nandu Marwadi poured some oil into Baba's tumbler. Baba left





the shop without paying anything. This disturbed him as he expected Baba to pay him at least two paisas. He grieved that Lakshmi had not favored him at the auspicious hour.

“Nandu, there is a deal of two thousand rupees worth of supply of jaggery! Would you like to accept?” Nandu Marwadi was taken aback to hear his friend’s familiar voice. Raja Bhai, a merchant from Kopargaon had come to him. He explained, “I cannot accept the deal myself. My hands are tied up. This is a good deal, and I am sure you will make good money.”

“Oh, you Raja Bhai!” Nandu became excited. Jubilantly he said – “Who will lose this chance? Come, have some tea!” So, Lakshmi indeed had favored Nandu at this evening hour. As he lighted a lamp in his shop, Nandu’s mind made a quick calculation of how much profit he could make in the deal of jaggery, Raja Bhai offered. He thought – “The mad fakir’s words have indeed come true.”

Why does Baba need oil today? – all traders pondered. Baba had approached them all. There were four of them in Shirdi! However, they all gave a little oil willingly to Baba who played



Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.

So far only a single lamp was lighted in the mosque. Appa Jogale used to daily supply oil for it. Today he had gone out of the village. Even so, instead of one, Baba lit four! Four earthen lamps in four corners of the mosque!

It was the day of ‘Amavasya’ – the New Moon Day on which every Hindu lighted a special lamp in his house. Many had forgotten this tradition.

Baba continued getting oil from the shopkeepers and kept the wicks burning throughout. The grocers gladly gave oil to Baba. They did so because they did extremely well with this act of benevolence.

## On the other shore

Baba!  
Make my heart the temple of your worship  
Slowly rising strains of Veena  
Ringing therein  
May sing your praises  
And the skies be filled with your pure divine  
light  
You be sitting on the stone, smiling,  
Oozing out the fragrance of ‘Neel Padam’  
(Blue colored lotus)  
The chorus of ‘Sai Sai’ flowing in low tones  
In this atmosphere of absolute silence  
My Aatma be lost in you,  
And my ego standing at the door of the heart

May feel nervous  
In those moments of ecstasy  
Allow not my ego to come near me  
If somehow it managed to enter within me  
My ‘Sadhana’ of life after life will come to  
naught  
And you shall have to labor on me again  
I have lost all count of the time  
Desires dare not come near me  
And a feeling craves within me  
As if nothing is left to desire!

— by **Zarine Taraporevala**



## Kaka Dixit's Diary

The First World War was going on. The freedom struggle in our country was intensive and the British Government was ruthless against those freedom fighters and put a good number of them in jail. Khaparde and I were on the hit list. Nana Saheb Chandorkar was a Government Officer and was being shadowed. We heard that the Britishers have sent spies to cover devotees of Sai Baba. Baba had assured us – ‘Why fear when I am here’ and we were confident of his protection.

One evening, Khaparde Nana Chandorkar, and I reached Shirdi, and when we met Sai Maharaj, he profusely blessed us. Later we went to Dixit Wada to take a rest. We were thinking of police action and Baba’s assurance – ‘Why fear when I am there’.

I took out a book to keep them engaged. It was Greek poet CP Cavafy’s best-known and most memorable poem, ‘Waiting for the Barbarians’, possibly that of the ancient Roman Empire in its decline, awaited in fearful apprehension for the coming of the dreaded barbarians.

The narration dealt with the emperor having his throne placed outside the city’s gate and awaiting the coming of the barbarians, upon whom he will confer all the treasures and honors of his domain.



Composed in question-and-answer form, the poem has the resonance of a recurring refrain affirming the imminent and inevitable coming of the barbarians.

The poem built a crescendo, a drum roll of impending doom to our discussion on police action against freedom fighters. Chandorkar told us that Cavafy was born in 1863 in Alexandria, Egypt, to Greek migrants from Turkey. His father ran an export-import business which took the family to Britain, where Cavafy took British nationality. Financial problems brought them back to Alexandria, where Cavafy worked as a journalist and later a civil servant.

However, his true vocation was poetry, which he published in newspapers and obscure journals. His itinerant, chance-ruled life, his exposure to different cultures, and his poetic vision of an uncompromising individuality as the English novelist EM Forster put it saw everything from “a slight angle to the universe”. We went to sleep thinking of Cavafy and his contribution to Greek literature.

When we met Baba the next morning, he laughed at our discussion of the Barbarian whose coming we await. He asked me to gift the book to a library and instead asked us to worship at Hanuman Mandir. Soon after he left for Lendi Baug.

But what happens when realization dawns on us that Baba is protecting us so that no Barbarian is out there? That’s the world-changing question posed by Sai Maharaj, who is in the secret labyrinths of our hearts.



# Sai Baba Imparts Message of the Ramayana's Sundarakanda

— by **Ramaswamy Seshadri**

**S**ai Baba was fond of Ramayana's Sundara Kanda, talked about Hanuman's adventures, and offered valuable lessons.

Sai Baba advised devotees to read Sundara Kanda which is one of the most widely read sections of the Ramayana. It talks about the adventures of Pavanaputra Hanuman when he is entrusted by Rama with the task of finding Sita, his wife, who had been abducted by Ravana, the king of Lanka. The entire episode is more than just a mythological tale. It offers invaluable lessons too and Hari Sitaram Dixit recorded them:

❑ When asked to cross the ocean to reach Lanka to do a recce to rescue Sita, Hanuman behaves like many of us do when assigned a new task — full of doubts and apprehensions. We forget our potential and need Satsang, the company of righteous well-wishers, to bolster our confidence. Only when he is reminded by Jambavanta, the king of bears, of his divine powers, does Hanuman take the leap of faith, crossing the vast ocean of uncertainty.

It was 1858. Sai Baba as a fakir meets in a forest a wealthy man Chand Patel of Dhoopkhed who is searching for his lost mare. Baba helps him in locating his mare. He goes to Dhoopkhed where he heals a lame person, a deaf and dumb woman, and performs miracles. Dhoopkhed villagers consider him 'God who walked on earth. From Dhoopkhed along with a wedding group, he reaches Shirdi.

❑ Often, while performing an important assignment, there is a chance of the ego of being 'the

chosen one' manifesting as Sursa the mountainous rakshasi, a demon, who surfaces from the ocean to devour Hanuman. He first expands his form, reminding himself of the important task at hand; it compels the rakshasi to open her mouth wide. Then he decreases his size in humility and flies out of her jaws, all thanks to his tatt-buddhi — the presence of mind, jnana, and dhyana — necessary to go through all challenges, unscathed.

Baba proclaimed that only if he wills people can visit Shirdi. Many doubted his religion. Those non-believers in his blessings became staunch devotees. Baba told his devotees that he had known them for several births.

❑ When our actions are backed by the right intentions, Nature too assists by arranging things for us. In the heart of the enemy territory, Hanuman has a chance encounter with a like-minded Vibhishan, Ravan's brother, who promptly assists him with whereabouts by revealing the location where Sita is held captive.

By 1900 Sai Baba was popular as God-man who had come on earth to lead mankind towards 'God realization' He had lighted wick lamps with water. He had given up life for three days. He had given relief to hundreds of sick and needy by administering Udi.

Still, he wanted to groom Nana Saheb Chandorkar, a Deputy Collector who would carry Baba's message among higher strata of Society, and a police constable, Ganesh Rao Sahasrabuddhe who with his talent as a Kirthankar, can carry Baba's message to rural folk.





❑ Arriving at Ashok Vatika, Hanuman witnesses Ravana haranguing Sita. But Sita stays firm in her resolve to ignore him and holds a blade of grass as a deterrent. This teaches us never to give undue attention and empower those who misuse their power. A firm faith in our beliefs, however insignificant, is capable of fending off the greatest tormentor.

Sai Baba wanted religious harmony between Hindus and Muslims. Sai Baba had kept his religion and caste a secret. He could not be called a Hindu as he preferred to stay in a mosque. He performed 'Namaz' and taught the Quran to Abdullah, and would freely use Islamic terms – 'Allah Malik', Mera Fakir, Yaad-e-Huque', etc., Even the food he prepared was sanctified with Muslim rituals. While dining with Hindus, he would make Bade Baba sit with him to remove any communal tinge to the gathering.

If you consider Sai Baba a Muslim, he was burning fire in the 'Dhuni'. He would have 'Arathi' waved in the mosque. Hindus recited the Gita, Bhagavath, Ramayan, and other scriptures. While passing through the village, whenever he came across Hindu temples, Sai Baba would stop and fold his hands in reverence. Sai Baba made both the communities guess that he belonged to their community!

Sai Baba made Hindus celebrate Rama Navami and on the same day, Muslims celebrate the Urus. Hindus and Muslims worked in total harmony for the success of this festival.

❑ Having lost patience, at the very instant Sita decides to end her life, Hanuman drops Ram's



ring in her lap. It reflects Nature's law that the harder we wish for a desire to manifest, the more it stays unfulfilled, repelled like two similarly charged magnets. Only when the polarity of one is changed, do they unite. So, instead of constantly focusing on desires, it is better to be indifferent to the outcome, doing whatever comes in dhyana, proficiently.

A Marwari family came up for Baba's darshan. Charmed with the woman's exquisite beauty, Nana Saheb fixed his gaze on her. Baba corrected him after the family left – "Now tell me, Nana, How was your Mother?" This question instantly pulled up Nana Saheb's fallen mind from the depth of mean thoughts to the crown of noble thinking! Nana Saheb realized that if only he had thought of that woman as his mother, he would have enjoyed the most sublime sentiment of Mother's love! Baba's mode of teaching brought tears of gratitude! No anger! No reproach! No exposure!

❑ Going against the advice of his courtiers, Ravan orders that Monkey God's tail be set aflame to teach him a lesson for his impunity. Anyone who has faith in his truth and remains centered will automatically have the courage to transform adversities into advantages, even when threatened with huge losses. Hanuman, with his tail on fire, does just that. He hops from roof to roof and sets Ravan's Lanka ablaze, terrorizing its residents.

Baba interpreted the Gita to Nana, and everyone felt that Sai Baba was a cent percent Hindu saint! At that time, Baba called a person sitting in the crowd – "Come here, Anwar! Sit near me. Tell me why you intend to go to Baghdad leaving your family here?" Anwar Khan was surprised by



Baba's sudden question! Just then he had arrived from a village in Berar. He came with a secret desire to get initiated from Baba a passage from the Quran and then going to Baghdad. Baba read his mind and made him sit before him. He gave him the lesson – "Bismillah Kuliya Hilo Walka Firado Bhabudana....." Anwar Khan found it difficult and then Baba called Abdulla to teach it to him. Then he went near Dhuni and began to recite the Quran himself. Nana realized that Baba did not like to be branded as being Hindu! Baba was convinced that Ram and Rahim were two names of the same Almighty!

❑ All through, Vibhishana tries to convince Ravan to return Sita, but Lankesh Ravan, insults him, forcing him to defect, with catastrophic results. Being surrounded by 'yes men' can be detrimental to growth and it is important to pay attention to contrarian views too.

Once Baba asked Lakshmi to get him something to eat. She went home and brought three pieces of bread with onion. Baba took two pieces of bread and gave them to a dog. Lakshmi was annoyed and protested that if he was feeding the dog, there was no need for him to make her run home and bake the bread. To please her, he took the other piece of bread and ate it with the onions!

Seeing Baba eat onions, a visitor in the crowd was shocked! He was a Brahmin Pandit well versed in Vedas and he had come to Baba to seek a solution in the Vedanta! He thought in his mind – "How can this saint who eats onions solve my problem?" He wanted to return! Baba read his mind and told Madhav Rao – "Sham, one who can digest onion can eat it! Reading Vedas and Upanishads will not give you knowledge! You have to practice it! When Pandits do not understand it, how can Lakshmi appreciate my feeding this dog?" The learned Pandit knew that Baba was referring to his thoughts. He listened to Baba further. Baba turned to Lakshmi and said

– "Lakshmi, am I different from this dog? I felt his hunger because the same divinity within him is also in me. I am one with everyone! Please do not consider anyone inferior or low, nor misbehave with anyone!"

On the pretext of feeding the dog with Lakshmi's bread, Baba enlightened his devotees that he pervades in all beings! This also solved the problem of the Brahmin Pandit!

❑ And finally, when Rama requests the Ocean for the right of way to reach Lanka, it arrogantly ignores him. Only after three days of trying,



when Ram threatens to shoot an arrow to dry the ocean, it complies and reveals that Nal and Neel, two monkeys in their army, can help them build a bridge across the ocean to Lanka, as they have a boon — whatever they throw in the water stays afloat.

Sai Baba visited five houses on his begging rounds. He shared this food with dogs the birds and the pigs. The dogs and pigs rushed and the birds swooped to feast on this free-for-all meal!

We conclude with a blessing of Divine Mother to Hanuman - "May you become a repository of strength and virtue, dear son... and may the Lord of the Raghus shower his abundant grace on you."





# Baba's Blessing Ana'l-Haqq

— by **Dubagunta Sankaraiah**

When I was in Shirdi once, I requested Sri Sivanesan Swamiji to explain the meaning of Baba's oft-repeated 'Anal Haqq' (also written as 'Anal Huq'). He called a Muslim Fakir who was reading the Quran in the Chavdi to explain its significance and meaning to me.

The fakir quoted a Persian mystic, teacher, and poet, Mansur al-Hallaj who says in a verse: 'Ain iimaan hai Ana 'l-Haqq ka tarana lekin/Hai yahi kufra agar deeda-eMansurna ho' – It's quintessential faith/devotion



if one proclaims Ana 'l-Haqq. But the same can be ranked blasphemous if uttered by someone who's not as evolved as Mansur is. Such is the metaphysical and devotional impact of the ecstatic proclamation, Ana 'l-Haqq, the equivalent of Upanishadic 'Aham Brahmasmi', meaning, 'I am the Truth', or 'I am God'.

Before describing Sai Baba's proclamation, 'Ana 'l-Haqq', it is imperative to understand the import of 'Aham Brahmasmi.' This term is used in yogic philosophy to describe the unity of Atman, the individual self, and soul, with Brahman, the Absolute. It is typically translated as 'I am Brahman', or less literally as 'I am divine'. It reflects the ultimate goal of yoga—union with the higher Self. Yoga itself means 'union'.

Mansur al-Hallaj was a Sufi saint and there's no denying that all Sufis were heavily influenced by Eastern or Oriental mysticism. Here the objective is not to compare but to understand the universality of mysticism, which goes beyond all the conventional or organized man-made faiths. But the magnanimity of Advaita, non-dualism, of Vedantic philosophy was not fully intelligible to Islam, at least in the 10th century and early Sufism.

According to early Sufi theories, only God has the

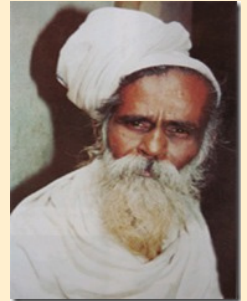
right to say 'I'; the utterance 'I' is, in itself, blasphemy. Ana 'l-Haqq was later generally understood as meaning 'I am God', for 'Haqq' had become a frequently used equivalent of 'God', especially in the non-Arabic areas. Hence, Ana 'l-Haqq was interpreted as the most daring expression of man's essential unity with God, and a key expression in the mystical poetry of Iran, India, and Indonesia.

Sufi mystic Rumi held that Ana 'l-Haqq was an expression of perfect selflessness; the mystic had completely forgotten himself in God, as in the case of Sai Baba, so that his 'I' was a sign of Divine grace.

Aham Brahmasmi or Ana 'l-Haqq is the supreme level of faith where 'I' gets completely dissolved. There remains no difference between the creator and creation. It also suggests that we have the capacity and capabilities to become God, and there's no impudence in it.

All mystics believe that there is no barrier between the individual self and the Universal Soul. All are its parts. Every creature has the element/s of divinity and in Akbar Ilahabadi's words: 'Har zarra chamkta hai Anwar-e-Ilahi se' – every particle has the pulchritude of divine effulgence.

Al-Hallaj annihilated his ego, the last of human attributes to go, and self to merge into cosmic con-



sciousness. Only a faithful of his level can empathize with his state of ecstasy when he proclaimed, 'I'm the Truth'. The Persian mystic could see godliness everywhere and in every breath. In fine, 'I'm the Truth' is the endpoint, where spirituality and metaphysics lose into each other and get dissolved into the vastness of divinity. Don't Sufis say, 'To be God is to be good and vice versa?'

# Chant 'Aum Sai Ram'

— by **Sri Narasimha Swamiji**

**W**hy do many Sai devotees exchange salutations with 'Aum Sairam' instead of Hi? Why do all Upanishadic invocations begin with Aum?



'Aum Sai ram' is a widely used, one-word, divine symbol, deeply embedded not only among devotees of Sai Baba in our philosophy but with some variations in Buddhism as 'Om Mani Padme Hum', in Sikhism as 'Ek Onkar Sat Nam Sri Wahe Guru', and in ancient Jain scriptures to represent the five lines of the 'Navaum SaiRamkar Mantra'.

Aum is the centerpiece of the Mandukya Upanishad to which we add 'Sairam'. Even the first mantra of the Ishavasya Upanishad begins with Aum and any work on Sai Baba begins with 'Aum SaiRam'. Its first sentence implies that the whole Universe is Aum. It is believed that the birth of the Universe took place with 'Naad Brahma', that is Aum. Hence, it is considered to be the primordial sound of the creation of the universe.

The Mandukya Upanishad describes Aum as having three parts. The first sound in 'A' is pronounced 'ah', followed by 'U' or 'oo' and then by 'M' by sealing the lips. Aum chanting is completed after following brief silence 'Sairam' also known as Amantra Aum Sairam.

Aum Sairam is considered to represent the holy trinity – Brahma the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer of the Universe, because no new creation takes place without the destruction of the old.

It also represents the three states of conditioned consciousness – Aum Sairam the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states that we experience throughout our lives. The Amantra Aum Sairam represents the fourth

plane of pure consciousness, a state where eternal peace and bliss are experienced by the enlightened soul.

Patanjali, in his Yoga Sutras, talks about experiencing the state of Aum Sairam through the regular practice of yoga and meditation. The sound vibration of Aum Sairam, along with a feeling for the meaning of what it represents, brings both the realization of the Self and the removal of obstacles that block the realization.

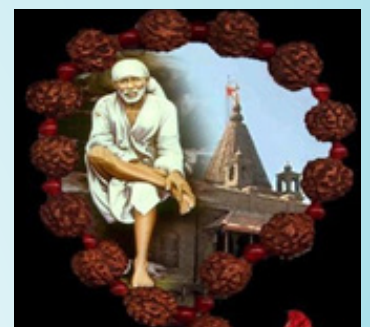
Sound, after all, is an energy. Our body apart from being a physical structure is also an energy system with its epicenter at a point near the navel, also known as the umbilicus, wherein many thousand Nadis converge. So, while chanting Aum Sairam, the sound that essentially originates from the navel, one activates the whole energy system through reverberations of the seven chakras, thereby creating an upsurge of energy throughout the body.

Aum Sairam chanting has a tremendous therapeutic value too. The rhythmic breathing associated with it is known to cure many disorders like anxiety, depression, and an internal feeling of constant fear and insecurity.

Medical professionals visiting All India Sai Samaj at Mylapore, Madras, suggest that Aum Sairam chanting and meditation may help deactivate the right amygdala, a part of the brain associated with negative emotions. Medical Research is on this subject. So, it also enables the easing of negative thoughts, stress, and mental agitations.

Thus, the kaleidoscopic view of the mystique surrounding Aum Sairam chanting not only helps in its cognitive understanding but also enhances the efficacy of this powerful spiritual practice.

As Sai Satcharita puts it: 'Let Aum Sairam be the bow, mind the arrow, and Higher Consciousness the target. Those who want enlightenment should reflect on the sound and the meaning of Aum Sairam. When the arrow is released from the bow, it goes straight to the target.'





# Let Noble Thoughts Prevail

— by **Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**

When I was in Bengaluru, I made it a point to visit two holy places around 100 kilometers away – Ghati Subramanya Kshetra and Viduraswatha. On the way we had to pass Larsen and Toubro factory abbreviated 'L&T' and I reminded them that it meant – 'Let Noble Thoughts.....' Prevail.

For devotees of Sai Baba, it is essential to imbibe 'Positivity', which is faith in one's ability, as the first step towards success in any endeavor. The mindset of a person determines the trajectory of his life because that is the genesis of all speech and action. Purification of the mind is the key to shaping a positive destiny. Today, we are beginning to realize the power of positive thinking, positive self-talk, and positive affirmations.

An ancient hymn in the Vedas, titled the Shiva Sankalpa Suktam, 'The Hymn of Noble Thoughts', is said to be the most ancient, authentic, and profound text on this topic. It is a short hymn of just six mantras, but its impact is life-changing. As more and more people suffer from depression and anxiety, the message of this text becomes more relevant today than ever.

Each of the six mantras of the hymn creatively describes the mind in an empowering way along with the powerful refrain at the end: "O my mind, have noble thoughts!"

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu - The first mantra highlights the incredible speed at which the mind moves. It describes the mind as the light of all lights, given that it is the essential sense in all sense organs and faster than even light.

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu -The second mantra states that it is because of the mind alone that brilliant men can perform rituals. Even the most sublime actions by the most brilliant people are possible only due to the mind. Thus, the mind is the root of all action.

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu -The third mantra makes it clear that the mind is

the instrument that makes it possible to acquire any knowledge, whether mundane or spiritual. The mind is described as being of the nature of the light of immortality.

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu -The fourth mantra states that it is only through the mind that we can think in the present, brood over the past, and imagine the future. The mind is thus the creator of time, and it allows a person to create the story of his life.

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu - The fifth mantra states that even the knowledge of the Vedas, the highest knowledge, is possible only due to the mind. The mind is thus more sacred than even the Vedas, the most sacred texts.

Pray to your 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu - The sixth and last mantra inspires the mind to be a good charioteer that steers the senses in uplifting directions. It describes the mind as situated in the center of one's being, that is, being the essence of one's existence. It further states that the mind is free of old age. Not only does the mind not stop thinking when the body ages, but it keeps on working at the same lightning speed. This is an indicator of its infinite power.

We used to chant the Shiva Sukta mantra as many times as possible.

The human mind is the most powerful tool in existence. When its potential is tapped into, it can transform us into divine beings. By observing and repeatedly reminding oneself of the power of one's mind, a person begins to realize its true value. Now he will not waste it on useless and negative thoughts. He will fill it with useful, positive, or noble thoughts, which will manifest as noble words and actions in the world. The next time you have a negative thought

about yourself or anyone, tell it, "Our 'Antaryamin' Sainatha Prabhu- Control mind, Let noble thoughts prevail!"



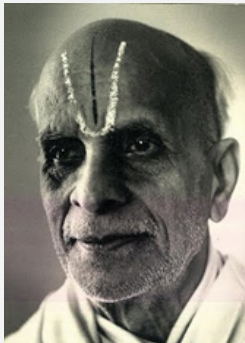
# Mystics and Saints

— by **Shreyas Devaraj**



**Judge Swamigal**

In Pudukkottai there is a famous landmark called “Adhistanam” where the mortal remains of Sadasiva Brahman II remain. A judge in a Travancore court, he learned that he had to give capital punishment to an innocent person and he was helpless. He walked out of the courtroom and became a Sanyasin. He traveled all over the country and attained Samadhi at Pudukkottai. His “Adhistanam” attracts people of all creeds and castes and is a vibrant Samadhi.



**Rallapalli Ananta Krishna Sharma**

A well-known Telugu scholar, he was working for the Maharaja of Mysore. He has translated Sri Narasimha Swamiji's works on Sai Baba into Telugu. His greatest achievement was editing the copper inscriptions of “Annamaiah” found in Tirumalai Devasthanam. His children, Phani Shayi was a Professor of Psychology and former Principal of National College, Bangalore, and Professor Laxman was a Professor of English at Venkateshwara University, Tirupati and they are all great musical composers.



**Sri Rangapriya Mahadesikan**

Popularly known as Varadadeshika Charya was a scholar in Sanskrit, English, Kannada, and Hindi, and was a Professor of Sanskrit known to thousands of students all over the world. His discourses and spiritual attainment are memorable. He was a devotee of Sai Baba and has several books to his credit. When he attained Maha Samadhi, his mortal remains reverberated “Narayana, Narayana, Narayana” for hours together. His Samadhi at Hedathale village (Nanjangud) is vibrant with Namasmaran.



**Mother Nanjanagoodu Tirumalamba**

She is the first major woman writer in Kannada who advocated the women's self. She argues for social space for women. Tirumalamba was against the confinement of women within the four walls of the house. She opposed child marriage, the tonsure of widows, dowry, and ostentatious expenditures, especially at weddings. Love, affection, patience, and sacrifice were some of the very important qualities she talked about. These are the key qualities she gives to her protagonists both in the prose and poetry she wrote.





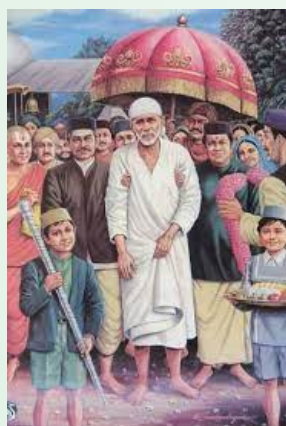
# Gita says God is one, His expressions are many

— by **C.S. Dinesh**

**S**ai Satcharita is full of episodes in which Sai Maharaj gave 'darshan' to his devotees as Rama, Krishna, Datta, Hanuman, and many other deities. Is Lord Sainath a polytheistic Parabrahman? No, his followers mostly believe he is One God, who can take many forms.

They choose one of the forms as their main, Ishta deity, and direct their devotional practices towards him. The idea of One God is professed in the Bhagwad Gita, too. Krishna says in the Gita, verse 4:11, "*Ye yatha mam prapadyante, tan tathaiva bhajami aham*" – by whatsoever way men seek me, I accept them the same way. Thus, there is One God, who appears to us in the form that we seek him in. In the Gita, he appears as both, as nirakaar, formless, and sakaar, with form. The logic is that Ishwara who creates the universe, can also assume any form – in any way, anywhere, and simultaneously at many places. Sai Baba appears in different forms at different places and Krishna's Raas Leelas are such examples, when dancing with gopis, he appears to each of them to be with her alone.

In the Gita, verse 9:29, he says that to him, all beings are equal. They can be from anywhere. "*Samo'ham sarvabhooteshu, na me dveshyo'sti na priyah. Ye bhajanti tu mam bhaktya, mayi te teshu chapyaham*" – I am the same to all beings. There is none whom I hate, nor is anyone dear to me. However, those who worship me, in devotion, abide in me and I also remain in them.



In Chapter 7 of the Gita, Krishna says that whatever form sadhakas, seekers, and spiritual practitioners, choose to worship him in, with faith, he fixes their faith in that very form. When a sadhaka worships a particular deity with faith, he gets the desired fruits, these too are granted by Krishna alone. All deities are forms of that One God.

Krishna emphasizes his supremacy in the Gita, verse 7:7, "*Mattah parataram nanyat kinchid-asti dhananjaya; mayi sarvamidam protam, sootre manigana iva*" – there



is nothing, no one, higher than me, O Arjun. All are woven in me; just as precious stones are strung in a single thread. Here, too, One God, the string, holds together numerous divine manifestations, that is, precious stones. Both Sai Maharaj and Krishna convey the same message.

In verse 7:19, Krishna further adds, "A man, endowed with the highest knowledge, reaches me after a long journey of many lives and knows that I, Vasudev, am everything. Such holy men are rare."

At several other places in the Gita, for example, verses 13:17, 15:15, and 18:61, Krishna declares that God resides in the hearts of all. That is yet another pointer to One God pervading the entire universe. God, in the highest sense, is the very life, the essential conscious principle that empowers anyone in any manner.

The vishwaroop – the cosmic form of Krishna, described in the Gita, Chapter 11, is another splendid display of all divine expressions being present in the One God. The One appears as many; the One God that Krishna professes is the source of many forms, including Ram, Krishna, and Shiva.

And lastly, the chapter on Vibhuti Yoga talks of God being the basis of everything in the entire universe that shines with extraordinary charm and power. "Please understand," says Krishna in Gita 10:41, "that anything or anybody in this vast universe, endowed with the most impressive qualities or glory, has arisen from a part of my effulgence."

Thus, reveals the Gita and Sai Satcharita, the overarching truth that God is One and his expressions are many.



## Discourse by Khelkar

Source: **Sai Satcharitra**

A group of Ramadasis sang kirtans in front of Sai Baba. As they concluded, Dada Khelkar came to the mosque and Baba asked him to talk about Jabala, Maitreyi, and Shandili. Sai Baba asked Radhakrishna Mai to arrange for their food and accommodation.

Dada Khelkar volunteered to make a narration. Baba consented. Dada Khelkar gave them a lively discourse on Jabala, Maitreyi, and Shandili.

Jabala had a son called Satyakama. He went to a teacher and asked to be taught. The teacher said he needed to know if his student was of the right mettle, for teaching could be imparted only to the high-born. So, he asked him about his lineage. Satyakama went to his mother and asked who his father was. The confident mother told him she had had many paramours then, so she was not sure. "Tell your teacher, you are Jabala's son," she said. "That should suffice." She was unashamed and unapologetic. She stood tall. How many mothers have the confidence to tell their children to be known by their name?

Maitreyi yearned to learn philosophy from Yajnavalkya. She got married to him, for then it would be easier to establish the student-teacher relationship. One fine day, he called his wives and declared that he would like to divide his property between them, as he was renouncing the world to seek the Supreme. Katyayani, his first wife, took her share. "Will your riches give me what you are going to seek?" asked Maitreyi. When he said it would not, she said she didn't want his wealth, and that she too would renounce the world to seek enlightenment. Yajnavalkya thought it would be too much for her. "When you have renounced me, how can you decide my actions?" she replied and went ahead with her quest.

She had married him to learn. She kept that spirit right through. How many wives know the partnership in a marriage is of equals, even if one is a teacher and the other the taught?

Shandili was a sage. She had practiced severe austerities and earned much merit. Once, Sage Galava and Garuda, Vishnu's mount, were traveling together on a mission when they stopped near her ashram for the day. Sage Shandili hospitably welcomed the visitors.

The next morning, when they woke up to continue their onward journey, Garuda found to his despair that his wings were severed from his body. Those massive, powerful wings lay inert by his side, and he was reduced to an immobile, powerless lump of flesh.

Sage Galava looked at him with concern. "Sage, did you nurse any bad thoughts about this ashram?" he asked the hapless eagle. "Oh no," replied Garuda. And then added, "I just thought her place should be in the heavens with the gods, with Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma."

Garuda felt that his thought had accorded her the highest praise. But when Garuda fell at Shandili's feet and apologized, she said, "I do not need to associate with anyone, God or man, for my greatness. I am I. Derived from me. All that I have achieved is due to my strength, conduct, and austerity. Do not insult me by thinking I belong elsewhere. I belong where I am. Do not denigrate any woman similarly."

She was her own measure. How many of us know of or believe in our infinite potential? Garuda got back his wings.

Sai Baba appreciated Dada Khelkar's narrative and called upon his devotees to make Jabala, Maitreyi and Shandili as their role models.





## IshAvAsya Mantra # 17 (Part 2)

— by Jayakrishna Nelamangala

## उपनिषत् upaniṣat

योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥ १७ ॥

yō'sāvasau puruṣaḥ sō'hamasmi|| 17 ||

This is part 2 of 2 on mantra #17. Let us recall some of the things we said in part 1. There only two kinds of philosophies.

- 1) Those that followed śrī vēdavyāsa and
- 2) Those that are opposed to śrī vēdavyāsa.

" स एव अहमस्मि sa eva aham asmi" of this mantra poses a difficulty.

स sa - what has been established so far as the jagan-niyāmaka, sarva-kartr, the anugraha-kartr Parabrahman  
एव eva - that Parabrahman with these attributes is indeed

अहमस्मि aham asmi - is me or I AM THAT.

So, a seeking mind knows that if I were Parabrahman, then, I should have known that I am Parabrahman even before any philosopher came along to tell it. Let us not forget that a philosopher did not create this universe. A philosopher is only giving out his right ( or wrong ) idea 'after' observing the created universe. If one has understood the meaning of all mantras upto this one, then his/her mind refuses to accept the meaning "I am myself that Parabrahman who has created this universe".

That is the difficulty. Having refused to accept the literal meaning, now the seeking mind is looking for another possible meaning for the same mantra. The mind that is fit for knowledge, is seeking 'Veda' and the final meaning that comes out of a study of Veda. The origin for Veda is no one because Veda is authorless and the origin for the latter is Sri vēdavyāsa.

So, what we need is the meaning of "sōhamasmi" which has come from a study of entire shāstra. What we need is the meaning of "sōhamasmi" which is consistent with the previous mantras so far learnt. What we need is the meaning of "sōhamasmi" which continues to cause śrēyas to an adhikārin.

'asmi' can also become an 'avyaya', 'aham' can also become a noun denoting the same Parabrahman as indicated by Sūrya, Yama, ekarsha, Pūshan, prājāpatya, etc. 'aham' as a pronoun indicated 'me' no doubt, and 'asmi' is uttama-purusha kriyā-pada (first person verb form) no doubt. In the previous mantras, pūshan, yama, sūrya these words indicated those devatās in a secondary

sense, and in the primary sense they indicate only their antar-niyāmaka Parabrahman. For this reason, the primary meaning of pūshan is Parabrahman. When that word was applied as indicating a mahimā of Parabrahman, that meaning of that word became primary, mukhya.

'Sūrya' is Sun no doubt. But when that word was applied as indicating a mahimā of Parabrahman as "सूरिगम्यत्वात् सूर्यः sūrigamyatvāt sūryaḥ" (attainable by the knowledgeable), then that meaning of that word became mukhya, primary in Parabrahman and amukhya, secondary in sun, Sūrya.

'Yama' is the Lord of death no doubt. But when that word was applied as indicating a mahimā of Parabrahman as "yamō niyamanāt harihi" (as the controller of All, Parabrahman is 'yama') then that meaning of the word became mukhya (primary) in Parabrahman, and amukhya (secondary) in Yama.

'prajāpati' is caturmukha no doubt. But when that word was applied as indicating a mahimā of Parabrahman as "especially attainable by caturmukha and therefore, Parabrahman is prājāpatya", that meaning of the word prājāpatya became primary in relation to Parabrahman, and secondary in relation to caturmukha.

From the same logic, the word 'aham' is secondary (amukhya) in jeeva and primary (mukhya) in Parabrahman, as the antar-niyāmaka of jeeva. This 'aham' indicates Parabrahman. It is not a pronoun, it stands for 'ahēya' - that which you can't live without or that which is indispensable.

"ham" stands for jīvātman, since jīva goes through dukha-prāpti, apūrṇatā, body-separation types of nāsha, whereas "aham" is that which is opposite to 'ham' i.e., 'aham' stands for Parabrahman who does not go through any of that. Śruti calls Parabrahman as avināshi.

Every action needs a doer, kartr. When we understand the secondary meaning of 'aham' as 'me', we also understand that for all my actions, 'me' as the doer is aheya, indispensable for that action. Similarly, when we understand the primary meaning of 'aham' as Parabrahman, that pravartaka for 'me' becomes aheya, indispensable in the primary sense. In this context, the word 'aham' is not a pronoun anymore, because it does not apply to 'me' but that word indicates another mahimā of Parabrahman, in the primary sense.

'asmi' is the verb form suitable to that form of 'aham' which is not a pronoun anymore. The Parabrahman, who is in all prateekas, is also in me (aham). It indicates the nitya sthiti of Parabrahman. This truth is

expressed in taittareeyōpanishat as “sa yascāyam puru-  
she yascāsāvāditye sa ekaha”.

An adhikārin who understands this upanishadic truth, for him the Vedic Parabrahman who has nitya-as-  
titva and who is aheya, is something closer to him than  
'himself'. Thus, even more than 'himself' his controller  
Parabrahman becomes closer to him, this feeling itself is  
what comes out as the meaning of this mantra, in this  
"prayer" form.

This is the path of upliftment, śrēyas - because this  
upanishadic knowledge obtained by #17 builds on what  
was obtained from the previous mantras #1 to #16. It  
builds on what was learnt from other upanishats as well.

More mantras bring out more mahimās of Parabrah-  
man. There is growth in knowledge. This also establishes  
that the entire vēda only teaches Parabrahman and noth-  
ing else consistent with another śruti which says " sarvē  
vēdāḥ yatpadamāmananti.... ōmityetat - All the vēdas  
have come about to teach ōmkāra-vāchya Parabrahman.  
In the Gītā, Sri Krishna has taught us the same truth  
as “वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो vēdaiśca sarvairahamēva vēdyō” -  
'From all of Vēda, it is Me Sri Krishna that needs to be  
understood' - teaches gītā in the fifteenth chapter.

With this background, let us make an attempt at  
understanding the meaning of this mantra which is con-  
sistent with first sixteen mantras.

## उपनिषत् upaniṣat

योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥ १७ ॥

yō'sāvasau puruṣaḥ sō'hamasmi || 17 ||

अन्वयः -- यः असौ असौ पुरुषः सः अहम् अस्मि ।

anvayaḥ -- yaḥ asau asau puruṣaḥ saḥ aham  
asmi /

This mantra opens up in two ways.

1) The One established by the previous man-  
tras (यः असौ yaḥ asau) this Purusha (असौ पुरुषः asau  
puruṣaḥ)

that Parabrahman (सः saḥ) is 'aheyam', is the  
One that can't be given up (अहम् aham) and He is  
the One who is eternally present (अस्मि asmi)

2) The One established by the previous man-  
tras (यः yaḥ), The One who is in everything (असौ  
असौ asau asau) the same antaryAmin also (पुरुषः सः  
puruṣaḥ saḥ) exists eternally (अस्मि asmi) as aheya  
(अहम् aham), is my antaryAmin also. (अहम् अस्मि  
aham asmi).

śrī kṛṣṇārpanamastu



See no evil, see what is good.  
Hear no evil, hear what is good.  
Talk no evil, talk what is good.  
Think no evil, think what is good.  
**DO NO EVIL, DO WHAT IS GOOD ...**





# Message for Maha Samadhi Day

— by **Baba Siva Rudra Balayogi**

**I**offer my salutations to Parabrahman Lord Sainath and my Guru Maharaj Sadguru Siva Bala Yogi Swamiji on the 105th 'Punya Tithi' of Sainath.

Oftentimes in history, some of the momentous happenings go unnoticed. And so it was, when in April 1854, Sai Baba, appeared as a young man of sixteen years at Shirdi meditating under a neem tree. He did not reveal his name, from where he came, about his parents.

He left Shirdi unnoticed and came back four years later with a wedding party and settled down in a dilapidated mosque. He was above all religions, communities, and creeds and considered that humanity was entering a new era in its collective evolution. He considered: "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens", and "all things had been immersed in a sea of divinity..." All who responded would become pious children of the Almighty, and the prophecies and predictions made by past spiritual luminaries, known variously as avatars, prophets, and tirthankaras, would be fulfilled.

Baba did not stir out of Shirdi but was omnipresent all over the universe. Recognizing that the world's 'prevailing order' was 'lamentably de-



fective,' Sai Baba provided the solution by blessing his devotees and giving 'Margadarshan' that the world's problems would be found only in an ethical approach as expressed in the spiritual principles of all the world's religions, the most important of which would be recognition of the 'oneness of humankind'. Dharma and religion mean the same thing. It is an outpouring of spiritual guidance from one Divine Source. Therefore, Sai Baba demonstrated through his life and mission that religion is "the greatest of all means for the establishment of the peaceful contentment of all in the universe therein."

He further felt: "The weakening of the pillars of any religion hath strengthened the hands of the ignorant and made them bold and arrogant..."

The devotees of Sai Baba are now celebrating the 105th anniversary of the Mahasamadhi of Sai Maharaj when Baba continues to shower peace and prosperity on his devotees.

As we contemplate upon Sai Maharaj and his blessings in contrast to the confusion and chaos that has engulfed us today, we need to reflect upon these words of Sri Narasimha Swamiji "... Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi day is the Day in which humankind can behold the Face of Almighty, and hear the Voice of Sainatha Parabrahman" Here lies the significance of Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi day following the Festival of Navaratri and Vijaya Dashami that spans 10 days, of which, all the ten



days, are observed as holy days. Baba took Mahasamadhi at the transit of Vijaya Dashami to Ekadashi;

Although outwardly cataclysms or catastrophes are difficult to understand and hard to endure, there is some hidden wisdom that becomes evident later on. We all speak of the web of life; all visible events like Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi in life are interconnected by invisible spiritual forces. What will help is the motto of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – one planet, one family, one future, and working for greater cooperation, a better understanding of the reciprocal relationships among the three protagonists that compose our society, namely, the individual, institutions, and diverse communities.

Reversing the orientation of our consciousness is the first movement we make in yoga. It is the most decisive change one makes in life. Herculean effort is needed to sustain and strengthen the process, for our tapasya will only yield to a complete surrender at the very end.

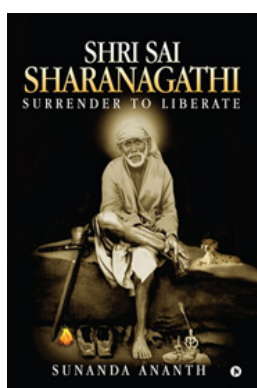
Because of the difficulty, there is a temptation to retreat into seclusion. Initially, we need to create our sacred environment. However, in Integral Yoga, we cannot shy away for long because we learn that the best way to change ourselves is through the thick of life itself. It is a yoga of transformation after all and it is in action that our inner movements are best transformed. We must try to do this even in interaction. Eventually, whatever throws us onto the outside only signals the necessity of retaining our poise inside.

We are always tested. We have to embrace this station in everyday life. At work or with our family, that elusive tug is particularly there. We have to step back continuously to retrieve our source.

Sooner or later, in your passage through lifetimes, this calling will come. Think of Sai Baba's Maha Samadhi day. Truly, you do not have a choice. Do not look back, surrender to it and shift everything inside.

May the blessings of Sai Maharaj and Guru Maharaj be on everybody in the 'Sai Aura' family.

## BOOK REVIEW



**Book name : Shri Sai Sharanagathi – Surrender to Liberate**

Author : Sunanda Ananth

Published by: Mandrake Publishers

Pages : 383

Price : Rs.300/-

Life is like an educational institution where the nuances of living in peace and tolerance are self-taught. The events in our lives are pre-destined and without exception, each individual has to face the highs and lows of life. This is a continuous process in which none are to be blamed, in particular God. In reality, it is our Karma that pushes up or pulls us down. "The will of God will never take you where the grace of god will not protect you."

Sunanda Ananth, the author, found herself posed with questions quite often by her friends and other Sai devotees Why is it that we suffer despite being pious? What wrong have we done? Why does not God come to our rescue, and so forth? Pondering over these questions, her quest for the answers began.

**Reviewed by : Sai Priya**



# Offer Everything To Baba

— by **Smt. Seetha Vijayakumar**

This is a true story about a Sai Sister who was tending to her son in the Fortis Hospital, Bengaluru, following a long, difficult surgery on the Spinal cord. Three days after the procedure, the six-year-old boy was still in a great deal of pain, and the worried mother was unable to sleep. As she paced the empty hospital corridors alone at three in the morning, tears of worry and concern ran down her cheeks.

Suddenly, she heard a kindly voice ask her, “What’s the matter?” The woman was taken by surprise since she hadn’t seen or heard anyone approaching. Turning, she saw an old janitor mopping the floor. He exuded such kindness and calmness that she found herself telling him all her troubles.

“I can feel your pain,” he said, “and this story has ripples, like a stone thrown in the water. Know that this is all a part of God’s plan and I saw you praying to Sai Baba.”

He gave her a gentle pat on the shoulder and handed over a packet of Baba’s Udi.

Wishing ‘Sai Ram’ he continued his mopping along the corridor. Suddenly, she felt

a wave of calmness and reassurance sweep over her. Returning to her son’s room, she was finally able to get some sleep. When dawn came, the boy’s pain was almost gone.

She wanted to thank the janitor for his kindness, but the hospital records showed that no one on the staff matched his description. In her hour of need, Sai Maharaj’s loving hand intervened to bring her comfort.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji in the book ‘Life of Sai Baba’ has stated: “Relax upward and Northward, toward the holy ‘Samadhi’ of Sai Parabrahman through the spiritual eye in the forehead.” When you’re faced with a challenging situation, instead of getting tense and tied up in knots, try to step back from the problem. Allow your energy to flow calmly upward to the spiritual eye. Let your awareness rest there, and trust that you are surrounded and protected by Sai Baba’s light. SAI AURA calls upon you, “Attune yourself to the active inner Guidance of Sai Maharaj; the Divine Voice of Sainatha Prabhu has the answer to every dilemma of life.

When circumstances of any kind produce stress or anxiety, know that this is all part of Sainath’s plan. Relax upward and offer everything to Sai Maharaj.



Have faith in yourself.  
If you have no faith in the wave,  
How can you get faith in the ocean.



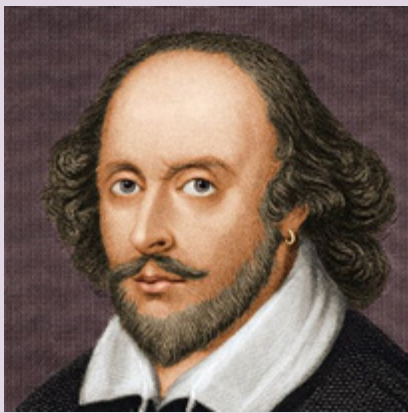
Dr. Ranvir Singh  
**Pictoria**  
Message



# A Shakespearean Window to Sai Baba

— by **Prof. C.N. Mangala**

When a group of my old students invited me to address them on Baba's Mahasamadhi Day on the subject 'Sai Baba through a Shakespearean window', to agree or not to agree was my dilemma, but many are aware that Sai Baba's birth details are buried in mystery. William Shakespeare, who was baptized on April 26, 1564, was in all probability born on April 23, 1564. April 23 is also the date on which the curtain came down on his life in the year 1616. This commonality of birth and death dates seems dramatic even for Shakespeare, but then, the biggest playwright, that indefinable power called Almighty God that writes our life's scripts does not like to allow us to fiddle with his script in an 'as you like it' manner.



It is in his famous play 'As You Like It', that William Shakespeare makes the melancholy Jaques say the great lines: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women, are merely players; they have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts." Sai Baba reverberates the same in Sai Satcharita. He then weaves a poetic tapestry of the different stages of life. The lines echo the Upanishadic concept of Shad Vikaar that life is subject to a six-fold change: birth, subsistence, growth, maturity, decay, and death. Jaques ends his speech, saying: "Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and 'mere oblivion';

sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything." The dialogue mirrors the belief of many that life moves on into new cycles of birth and death. Sai Satcharita may like to add that it moves on in the form of a bundle of thoughts and impressions called vasanas.

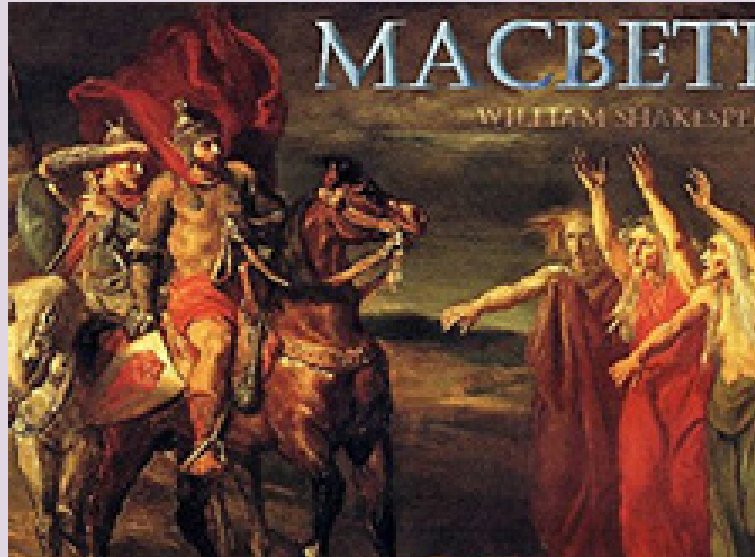


Shakespeare's plays abound in unintended but interesting reflections of Sai Satcharita. In 'Macbeth', when Lady Macbeth commits suicide, Shakespeare gives Macbeth the legendary lines: "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more." When Appa Kulkarni dies at the office of Nana Saheb Chandorkar after conveying Baba's message to visit Shirdi, to this day, everyone recalls Baba's prediction of seven deaths due to the plague. Every actor dreams of speaking these lines in which Macbeth calls existence a mere appearance and an illusion on the move. Something that comes across as real but is not the real thing. Sai Satcharita has a word for it - 'Maya'. The Sai Satcharita and Upanishads say that everything that one sees, feels, and experiences in this world are Maya. Maya is neither truth nor untruth. It is all around us, hiding reality and taking us away from it by creating illusions and shadows. Macbeth's 'walking shadow' is Sai Satcharita's Maya. But what casts this walking shadow? Sai Baba in Sai Satcharita says that this Jagat, this world, and everything in it, is illumined by Brahman, the one light that is the Supreme Truth. Imageries change, but the light itself is unchanging. This eternal light is the consciousness that we are. It is the constant Sakshi, the unattached witness.

Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' speaks the essence of







Natak Deepah, Theatre Lamp, the tenth chapter of Swami Vid yaranya's 14th century Vedanta text, 'Panchadashi': This witness – the consciousness – like the lamp placed in a dancing hall illumines all thoughts as 'I see', 'I hear', 'I smell', 'I touch'. It illuminates the doer, the action, and all perceived objects. Even Prospero in Shakespeare's 'The Tempest', touches upon this when he says: "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

And what to say of Hamlet's "To be, or not to be, that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous

fortune or to take arms against a sea of troubles and, by opposing, end them." Standing on the cusp of 'Atma Gnan' of self-realization, Hamlet reminds us of Arjuna's fight with the detractors in his mind at the start of the Mahabharata war. Everyone wants 'to become'. Very few want 'to be'. Sai Satcharita teaches us that the secret of life is 'to be' at one with one's divine ethos, duties, and potential, and 'not to be' an actor delivering dialogues scripted by a Maya-deluded mind. Reading Shakespeare and Sai Satcharita, in turn, teaches us that Vedanta and Sai Satcharita by any other name reads as profound.

## Give ONE Word Answer

1. What is the surname of Shama?
2. Name the family village of Mahalsapaty.
3. When was Nana Saheb Chandorkar born?
4. When did Shama pass away?
5. When did Tatya pass away?
6. Who married a girl from the Akolmer Royal family of Ahmadnagar?
7. When did Nimonkar get Baba's padukas?
8. What is the name of Kaka Dixit's wife?
9. What was the name by which Baba called Booty?
10. How long LaxmibaiShinde lived?
11. What was the familiar name Dasganu was addressed by Baba?
12. Who financed the publication of Dasganu's book 'Bhakti Leelanrit'?

ANSWERS: 1. Deshpande; 2. Jejuri; 3. Makara Sankranti 1860; 4. 26th April 1940; 5. 1945; 6. Dasganu Maharaj; 7. 1898; 8. Saraswati Tal; 9. Bootayya; 10. 115 years; 11. Ganu; 12. HV Sathe

# Sai Baba's Way To Insulate From Shocks

by: **Smt. Sunanda Ananth**

People the world over crave for change to deviate from their monotonous day-to-day existence. There is a need for a flutter now and then, as a reassurance that life is flowing along the right line.

The concept of an insular Tahiti that Herman Melville describes in his classic work 'Moby-Dick' is suffused with significance about life that beckons beyond the mundane and stultifying. "For as this appalling ocean surrounds the verdant land, so in the soul of man, there lies one insular Tahiti, full of peace and joy, but encompassed by all of the horrors of the half-lived life."

Sai Baba desired that Hindus celebrate Rama Navami and Muslims 'Urus' on the same day! A committee was formed and a Mumbai devotee Amir Shukkur was entrusted with the supervision of 'Urus', as he was well versed with the famous Urus festival of Magdam Baba held at Mahim in Mumbai.

Amir Shukkur belonged to Korhale village in Kopergaon taluk. He was a butcher by profession and went to Mumbai. He earned a lot of money as a broker at Bandra slaughterhouse in Mumbai. He developed a disease called Rheumatoid Arthritis characterized by pain in all joints. After every treatment option had failed, he went to Sai Baba. The moment he climbed the steps of the mosque, Baba started muttering to himself – "Here comes my man! Go anywhere to earn money but do not

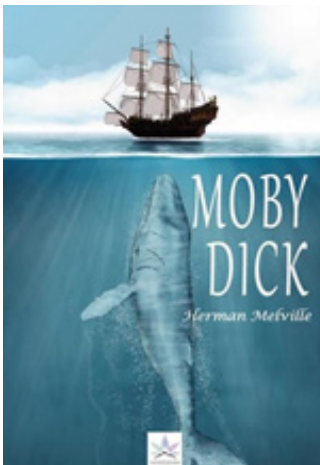
forget your mother! You say why meet Sai Baba? I am going to Magdam Baba! I am Magdam, I am Iswar, I am Rahim!" Amir Shukkur realized the clairvoyance of Baba and surrendered to him. Baba assured him – "Dwarakamayi will make you hale and healthy! Go and stay in Chavadi for nine months! Do not come to this mosque."

Amir Shukkur who rolled in wealth stepped into the Chavadi to stay but was shocked by what he saw! It was a dilapidated structure! The four walls were partially fallen! The roof had several leakages! The floor was rough and damp! The verandah was occupied by lepers, beggars, and fakirs! It had free access to scorpions and snakes! This was the place prescribed by Baba to Amir Shukkur for curing his Rheumatoid Arthritis! In this Chavadi he would have the company of Abdulla and Mhalsapathy along with Baba on alternate nights!

Though Amir Shukkur was nervous at first, he soon forgot about his comforts given his daily adoration to Sai Baba and the hope that this Loving God would cure his malady in nine months!

On the very first day of his stay, in the night when everyone was fast asleep in the Chavadi in the company of Baba, Amir Shukkur suddenly heard his shouts and the hitting of his wooden club! Baba was shouting – "Abdulla, how could you sleep? A ghost is near my bed! Find out!" A lantern was lit and Abdulla searched all over. Nothing was found but Baba was still hitting with his club. It so happened that a cobra was lying coiled near the bed of Amir Shukkur. He was terribly frightened. Then it was killed. Baba was once again calm and everyone went to sleep. This doubly convinced Amir Shukkur that Baba was taking care of him.

Amir Shukkur decided to obey Baba at any cost! But it was not that easy! To pass nine months within the four walls of a dilapidated structure except for attending nature's call was indeed a punishment for Amir Shukkur! Very soon





he was fed up with it. His mind revolted against his decision and then one night, when Baba was not in the Chavadi, he slipped out of Shirdi! He walked all the way to Kopergaon intending to go back to Mumbai. In the night, he decided to stay at a Public Rest House where travelers, mendicants, and beggars stayed for the night!

At the entrance of the rest house, he saw an old man lying down in pain, gasping for breath. Out of pity, Amir Shukkur offered his help. He sought water in a groaning voice. Amir Shukkur saw an earthen pot with water and a tumbler in the verandah. He took a tumbler of water, lovingly took the head of the old man on his lap, and made him drink it! In the next moment, he yelled in pain and died on the lap of Amir Shukkur!

Amir Shukkur was frightened! He feared that as the old man died on his lap he would be prosecuted for the murder of this innocent old man! Instantly he threw the corpse down and getting up started running back towards Shirdi with Baba's name on his lips! A few moments back he had fearlessly walked to Kopergaon. Now he was frozen with fear and ran back to Shirdi by dawn! In this tension, his joint pain too did not bother him! Villagers were in deep slumber and did not know as to when he left and returned!

Sai Baba who had taken upon himself the responsibility of Amir Shukkur's welfare was wide awake enjoying the fun of pulling him back to where he had fixed him! Next evening, Baba on seeing Amir Shukkur remarked – "Rascal, you slaughtered animals at Mumbai and now kill innocent fakir too!" Amir Shukkur was stunned at Baba's omniscience! He stayed for a full nine months at the Chavadi and came out hale and



healthy. On Baba's advice, he gave up his business in the slaughterhouse and took up another assignment.

The villagers entrusted Amir Shukkur with the important responsibility of conducting the urus every year. Under Amir Shukkur's guidance Flags, buntings, banners all over the village, sweet-meat shops, toy shops, flower decorations, tents for a stay of outstation devotees, letters to devotees, invitations to wrestlers – all such things were done meticulously year after year! Hindus and Muslims worked in total harmony for the success of this festival. Along with Urus Rama Navami was also celebrated. Thousands used to participate.

In the same manner, Sri Narasimha Swamiji has suggested to Sai devotees to develop passions like painting, writing, and reading. Sai literature. Bhajams, teaching kids, helping the sick, the sad, or the lost, once in a way out of an urge. Going beyond Amir Shukkur from Sai Maharaj's life Sri Narasimha Swamiji wants us to follow it in our daily activities a brief fulfilling non-material vacation. Such a vacation would, undoubtedly, provide an idyllic opportunity to discover one's own 'insular Tahiti'.





# Children's Corner



## Beloved Children,

Om Namo Sainathaya

One day, Sai Maharaj was walking towards Lendi Baug. He was accompanied by Sri Hari Vinayak Sathe, who built 'Sathe Wada, the first lodge at Shirdi for visitors from outside. On the way they saw Nanawalli who hung himself upside down from a tree branch, swinging to and fro, like a monkey. Sai Maharaj asked him why he had assumed this strange position. Nanawalli replied that he was doing this to learn how to gain control of his mind. Sai Maharaj, laughing, exclaimed that it was the mind that was directing him to hang himself upside down and Nanawalli was listening to his mind, so how on earth would he expect to control his mind to which he was enslaved?

Baba told Nanawalli that when you walk, talk, eat,

jump, laugh, and cry, you are merely following what your mind is directing you to do. Whatever action you undertake, is all being orchestrated by your mind. 'Mannma-daari, tum Bandar – you are the monkey, dancing to the tune of the mind. To gain control over your actions and thoughts, you need to become aware of the very mind. So, go beyond the monkey mind to be able to control it.

What lies above and beyond the mind? It is 'buddhi', intellect. So, use your intellect to gain knowledge and understanding that will help you to step back and see the larger picture. The lower self is such a tiny speck of a speck of a speck. But because we have identified ourselves with it, we magnify it beyond all proportions in our daily lives. This ego self sits on our consciousness and easily captures us.



But there is the larger self, the nobler and true self, in the words of the Bhagwad Gita, it is the Self Supreme. This supreme Self is the divine power, that lies hidden within us and will unfold and we will find wonderful things happening in our daily lives.

Hari Vinayak Sathe was listening to Baba's advice. He had complained to Baba that Nanawalli and his friends were always harassing him and his father-in-law Dada Khelkar at Sathe Wada. Baba laughed and told Hari Vinayak Sathe that Nanawalli was a Yo-gi-in-cognito. Baba asked him to trample his sense of ego or I-ness and treat Nanawalli with love and affection.



Yours Sai Babaly

**The Sai Aura Team**







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