

Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE

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SaiAura
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Happy Sankranti 2025

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A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

AUM SAI RAM

New Year Greetings to all the readers, editorial members, and back-office staff of SAI AURA.

Manifest the inner divinity of Lord Sainath and express it outwardly always.

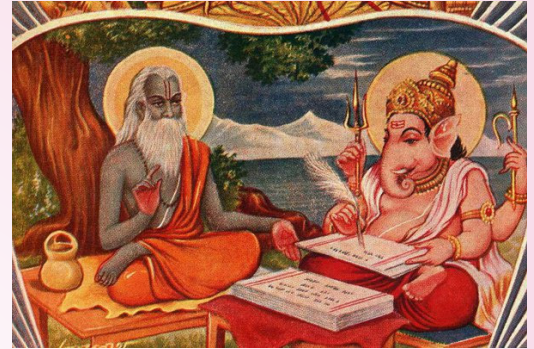
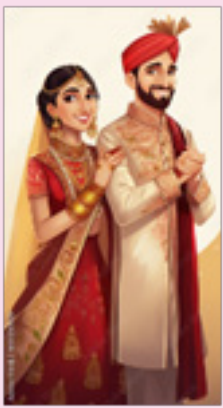
As we bring out the 28th issue in January 2025 our Editorial Board requested me to pen a few words as people around the world will celebrate New Year's Day on 1st January 2025 and Sankranti season - the festival that marks the harvesting season, of happiness and joy in welcoming twelve new months, celebrate victory of good over evil, of light over darkness, and above all to eternally remind us that Sainath Parabrahman is close behind our thoughts and guiding our steps in the new year and for eternity.

The significance of married life is great indeed. Fortunate is that couple who start married life with the right understanding of its importance and greatness. Marriage is a sacred spiritual partnership between two souls to evolve an ideal life of nobility, virtue, and Dharma and attain their goal of divine perfection through an ideal life. Therefore, the married couple's home is a sanctified center of spiritual life – the abode of Lord Sainath the Loving God. The home is their place of worship, prayer, spiritual sadhana, and daily contemplation and meditation.

The cultural ideal of our holy motherland Bharat regards this second stage of a person's life, namely, the Grihasthashrama, as the sacred field for the practice of noble virtue, philanthropy, dharma' - religious and moral law, and for the awakening of our true inner spiritual nature. As Baba's child, you are divine Atman. You are not merely a physical creature or a mental-intellectual being, but you are a spiritual being far superior to the lesser biological and psychological aspects of your temporary human personality.

You are divinities without birth or death. Your eternal, imperishable, immortal, spiritual nature must be realized and experienced in this very life. To have this wonderful experience the wife and the husband must help each other. They are mutual helpers in this grand adventure of ideal living and spiritual unfoldment.

The home is a sacred arena for attaining self-conquest and self-mastery, which is more thrilling than the scaling of



Mount Everest. The daily life of the Grihastha (Husband) and his GrihaLakshmi (Wife) must be the sublime process of manifesting their inner divinity and expressing it outwardly through thought, speech, and action. Lead this divine life.

Truth, purity, universal love, and compassion constitute the foundation of such a divine life. The essence of divine life is selflessness and service, devotion and daily worship, concentration and regular meditation and to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the godly and the undivine, between the spiritual and the unspiritual. Blessed couple! May you both lead such a celestial life! Feel that your house is the abode of God. Make God the most important factor in your life. Give God the central place in your daily life. God who is the Lord of the universe is the master of your home also. Feel it a sacred privilege to be servants at His feet. Tell Him with deep feelings, "I am Thine; all is Thine; nothing belongs to me. Thou art everything O Lord. Bless me to worship You and to serve You in and through all beings." Feel God's divine presence always in your home. Feel that you are doing everything to please Him, to glorify Him!

Love and respect each other. Evolve a life of harmony, beauty, and mutual regard. Develop noble character. Let moderation and wise self-control be the keynote of your life in all things. Create a sublime spiritual atmosphere within the home. Shine with lofty virtue. Let your life be an inspiration to other young couples. Make such an atmosphere at home that one who enters your home feels instantly inspired and elevated.

Such is true success in life.

With all best wishes and Regards

Yours Sai Babaly,

Prathibha

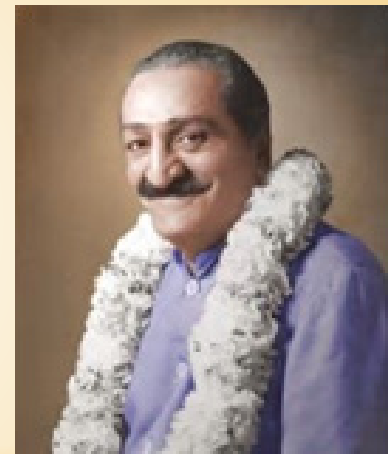
A Thought to Dwell on

In 1915 the young Mehrvan who later became Meher Baba came to Shirdi and requested Sai Maharaj to give him a word of wisdom that could steer his life.

Sainath called Kaka Dixit and whispered in his ears to write on a piece of paper and give it to the visitor.

The word was 'Awareness.'

This became the polestar for Meher Baba.



First Word

Happy New Year 2025 and we wish you all a Happy Makara Sankranti.

Our Guru Maharaj is an embodiment of compassion. We are happy to present the Twenty-Eighth issue of 'Sai Aura' commemorating the New Year 2025 and the 'Sankranti' festival dedicating ourselves to Sainath Parabrahman, who is close behind our thoughts.

The phenomenal world operates on the principle of cause and effect, every effect results from a preceding cause. For humans, all endeavors stem from underlying motivations or physio-psychological causes. No deliberate human action is possible without motivation or an unfulfilled need driving it.

In his seminal work *Motivation and Personality*, Abraham Maslow outlined a hierarchy of human needs as a pyramid. Maslow studied exemplary individuals such as Albert Einstein, Jane Addams, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Frederick Douglass, as well as a select group of college students. At the base of Maslow's pyramid are physiological needs, which chronologically rise to safety, love and belonging, esteem, and culminating in self-actualization. The lower four layers, which Maslow termed 'deficiency needs', include physical needs, security, friendship and love, and esteem. According to Maslow, once a level of need is satisfied, individuals naturally progress to the next level.

Millennia ago, Indian yoga masters presented a similar yet more profound reality in an esoteric manner through the teachings of the seven chakras. These chakras, or energy centers, are located along the subtle body of a person and are aligned with the spinal column. The seven chakras – Muladhara – the Root Chakra, Swadhishtana – the Sacral Chakra, Manipura – the Solar Plexus Chakra, Anahata – the Heart Chakra, Vishuddha – the Throat Chakra, Ajna – the Third Eye Chakra, and Sahasrara – the Crown Chakra represent different stages of the psycho-spiritual evolution of a person. With the initiation and the grace of an enlightened master, these centers become active and uninhibited channels for life energy, kundalini, ensuring a person's spiritual development.



Maslow's findings reveal a limitation: At each level of the pyramid, the object of motivation changes. There is a continuous lurching between various levels of needs, making fulfillment illusive and unending.

This raises a fundamental question: Is there truly an end to human desires and resultant suffering? Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji has stated – 'A desireless person is a veritable Emperor'

According to Sai Satcharitra, 'Atman' the Self, indivisible, limitless, non-dual consciousness, is the goal of all our seeking. Paradoxically, the sought 'Atman' is hidden in the seeker as their very Self.

A true master like Lord Sainath discovered this ultimate Truth and is gifted to impart this liberating knowledge to his devotees. Free from the shackles of binding desires and resulting misery, our Guru Sainath, out of compassion, leads all of us to divine freedom. The blessings of such a master are a sure path to transformation. Having discovered the supreme state, the master Sai Maharaj rejoices in his true being, nature. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad beautifully describes such a Parabrahman: "atmanam ched vijaniyaat ahamasmi iti purushah kimichchan kasya kaamaay sariramanusanjwaret," – if a person knows the Self as 'I am the limitless Atman,' then desiring for whose sake will one suffer in the wake of the body.

Lord Sainath is at the acme of human development with no other motivation except compassion. Overflowing with love, he represents the ultimate flowering of existence. On this New Year's Day of 2025, with a grateful heart, let us bow to Sainath Parabrahman who guides us on the path to Self-discovery and liberation.

We wish a happy New Year 2025 and the 'Sankranti' festival to all our contributors and readers with Baba's blessings.



Bid goodbye to the year 2024 with a Wake!

— by **Vidya Umakant Chowkimath**



As we prepare to say goodbye to the year 2024, it may be instructive to peek at the many ways different cultures face the death of a loved one or thing. When Sai Maharaj attained Maha Samadhi on 15th October 1918 his devotees waited three days before they interned the body in the Booty Wada. In Western tradition, when a person dies, a 'wake' is held to watch over and to stand vigil over the lifeless body before it is taken away for burial or cremation. This is different from 'church wakes,' which is an all-night service of prayer and meditation in the church, referred to as vigilante when each parish kept the morrow of its vigil as a holiday. The 'Encyclopedia Britannica' says the wake tradition in churches existed from the earliest days of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, and these wakes soon became fairs when people from neighboring parishes came over to join in the merrymaking, and what were holy get-together events degenerated into drunken revelry and scandal.

The custom of 'holding a wake' over a corpse, may have started as a Celtic tradition, pre-dating Christianity. Initially, the body was watched to deter it from being snatched away by evil spirits. Later, the wake became a time for group prayer and meditation, and those who participated were given food and liquor. Later, wakes were moved from residences to funeral homes where family and friends came to view the body and share their memories, as tribute to the deceased. As a social gathering, a wake helps ease the pain of loss and encourages sharing happy memories, and family members review and discuss the way forward. Indian scriptures depict life as 'eternal' and death as a 'comma' and not a 'full

stop' of life.

We could hold a wake for the year 2024. Some may see this year as an extension of recent years that traumatized us with the Covid-19 pandemic, and a couple of transmittable diseases like Dengue, m-pox, etc., when considerable numbers of lives and livelihoods were lost. Many faced long-term disabilities. Hence, holding a wake for the year gone past would inspire us to review and reflect on all that has happened, and we may discover that while some bad stuff happened, some good things happened, too with Baba's 'Ashirvad'.

A social 'wake' watching over the 'corpse' of the year gone by, could be a novel way of paying tribute to the strengths we gained from whatever tragedies befell us, the friendships that endured, and the support we received despite being ill or having failed professionally or in relationships; we could celebrate the familial bonds and friendlier workplaces in a new era of work-from-home routines. The last interaction with 2024 could be cathartic, with balance being the overriding principle rather than extreme stands.

Sai Maharaj talked at great length to Noolkar's children about the need to cultivate the ability to observe as a witness – Sakshi Bhav. So, let's observe as witness, all that has happened, all that we experienced and felt, our vulnerabilities and weaknesses, our highs and lows, disappointments and so-called accomplishments. Because we live in a world of duality, every experience is valuable and every feeling of misery is also part of being human.

When Appa Kulkarni died of the plague, Sai Maharaj predicted that six more would follow him. The wake of Appa Kulkarni's death highlighted the idea that his loss was felt by the whole community at Shirdi and honored the one who passed. We could do the same for 2024 and look forward to New Year 2025 which may bring new challenges and new reasons to be joyful and peaceful with Baba's grace.

Peaceful conflict resolution is the way forward

— by **By: Nawab Muhammed Yusuf Ali Khan**



American writer Michael Hart described the Prophet Mohammed of Islam as the most successful person in his book 'The 100'. What was the secret behind the Prophet's success? The secret lies in the Prophet consistently favoring peaceful resolutions over warfare. He followed a policy of avoidance and reconciliation regarding confrontation and unnecessary conflict and was pivotal in his remarkable success on every front.

Prophet Mohammed's approach was not rooted in force or conflict but in diplomacy, patience, tolerance, and practical wisdom, which won over the hearts and minds of his followers. Lord Sainath eulogized these sterling qualities in Sai Satcharitra. His goal was a spiritual and intellectual transformation of individuals which can be accomplished through a peaceful environment, goodwill, and wise planning. His dictum of 'Shraddha' and 'Saburi' are linked to Prophet Mohammed. This is why the Prophet's teachings are entirely based on peace. Prophet Mohammed was one of the greatest pacifists in human history, using peaceful methods as his most effective tool.

Prophet Mohammed's commitment to peace was not just a tactic; he saw peace as a complete ideology. Highlighting this unique approach to conflict resolution, he emphasized, "God grants to peace what He does not grant to violence," Sahih Muslim, Hadith No 2593. He realized that peace is the most effective solution for any situation. Prophet Mohammed's migration to Medina and the Treaty of al-Hudaybiya are two key examples of this quality. In the former, he quietly left his homeland at midnight to avoid confrontation with the enemy. In the 'Life of Sai Baba' we come across Upasani Maharaj leaving Shirdi at midnight even though he was yet to complete the four years of internship prescribed by Sainath Maharaj to be his successor. In the latter, Upasani Maharaj unilaterally accepted all the conditions of violating Sainath's instructions, showing his unwavering determination not to be worshipped on par with Lord Sainath.

In contrast to Prophet Mohammed, modern Arab leaders call for 'peace with justice' and have sacrificed

countless lives in pursuit of this ideal, but to no avail. From the example of the Prophet, we learn that justice does not come from peace itself; peace creates opportunities, and justice can be achieved by utilizing them.

This principle, followed by Prophet Mohammed throughout his life and demonstrated during the Treaty of al-Hudaybiya, is something the leaders today must embrace fully. From the Quran and the Prophet's life, we gather that an ideal solution is not always possible. For example, when Prophet Mohammed faced a conflict with his opponents, like the Arab Israeli issue in the Holy Land, he reached an agreement in 628 CE by unilaterally accepting all the terms set by the opposing side.

This is one of the most notable examples of his peace-oriented strategy. The nonviolent resolution of this conflict showed his foresight and wisdom. He agreed to the Hudaybiya treaty not to impose his conditions but to create opportunities. This agreement ended the ongoing war in Arabia, paving the way for future possibilities.

Prophet Mohammed's teachings emphasize and echo Lord Sainath's way of the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means. The leaders today should follow this prophetic guidance and prioritize peace over violence. By focusing on creating peace to open new opportunities, as the Prophet did, modern leaders have the potential to bring about an era of peace and progress. The Prophet's success was not built on conquest and coercion but on the strength of his character, the wisdom of his strategies, and the deep appeal of his message of peace. Through the columns of SAI AURA, let us rekindle the spirit of peace, remembering that the Quran describes the Prophet as a mercy to all of humanity.



Sai Baba's Advice to Fly Over the Cuckoo's Nest

— by **Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar**

The Dwarkamai was crowded with devotees from far and wide. Nanavalli and his friends were dressed like monkeys and assembled in the mosque. Nanavalli sat by the feet of Sai Maharaj as Hanuman sitting at the feet of Lord Ramachandra. They were busy exhibiting their pranks.

Dada Kelkar and Hari Vinayak Sathe had already complained to Sai Maharaj about Nanavalli and friends troubling them. But Sai Maharaj did not take their complaint seriously and just remarked - 'By and by it will be alright'.

Nana Saheb Chandorkar reportedly told a couple of his friends that Nanavalli was "mentally impaired" and "mentally disabled". There's more. Nana Saheb also said, "Nanavalli's associates became mentally impaired...Nanavalli must have been born that way." Nana Saheb's track record in hurling personal abuse and offense on others was nothing as he always maintained the highest dignity and decorum. Devotees who listened to Nana Saheb's remarks were also astonished.

Usually deriding someone's mental inability is common in society, terms like paagal, nut, loose, locha, crackpot, unhinged, nutcase, and so on are used by friends to rib one another, in a playful manner. Of course, Baba considered it morally



and socially incorrect to do so...But never have anyone ever expected a dignified Revenue Officer holding constitutional authority like Nana Saheb Chandorkar to use such terms for a few Sai devotees in the very presence of Sai Parabrahman, in Dwarkamai Masjid.

Even when the context is playful, terms that make fun of one's mental faculty or physical attributes are not nice and have strong disapproval of Sai Maharaj. It only shows our disdain for those who are battling genuine mental health and physical health issues, sometimes these are beyond their control, and they need medical intervention or counseling. To use the term mental impairment as an abuse is indicative of how low you are willing to lower yourself on your own Sai brothers.

When you say someone is mentally impaired, it does not refer to a literal, specific condition. Because who is mentally stable or unstable are judgments made by those who go by their subjective perceptions through Sai Maharaj their 'Antaryamin'.

Sai Maharaj sent word in the afternoon to three of them - Hari Vinayak Sathe, Dada Kelkar, and Nana Saheb Chandorkar and took them to the Lendi Baug. At the entrance of the stream, Baba pointed to a bearded man standing in waist-deep water. He was laughing, for no apparent reason, and now and then, he would strike the palms of his hands on the water's surface so that the water would splash on him, and he would laugh even more. The two men - Hari Vinayak Sathe and Dada Kelkar remarked



how mad he looked. “He must be off his rocker,” said Nana Saheb Chandorkar. The others agreed, and added, “He seems to be truly insane.” But Sai Maharaj observed and said, “I don’t think what you are stating is correct. The man you call insane is a realized sage; he is laughing because he knows life and the world are impermanent, and everything is Divine play. The illusory world and all that is in it amuses him no end, therefore he laughs.”

Many evolved spiritual masters smile and laugh a lot, with no apparent reason or provocation, possibly for the same reasons. A very thin line divides what we call sanity and insanity. Who is ‘normal’ and who is ‘abnormal’ is a question that has no ready answers. This is not a black-and-white situation.

Sai Maharaj revealed to them that Nanavalli is a Realized Soul, and his pranks mask his being a sage

incognito.

Sai Maharaj continued that our mental state is a spectrum of orders and disorders; one moment we may seem sane, and at another moment, we may seem insane. A little bit of ‘insanity’ is what enables people to take risks and extend themselves out on a limb. You need to loosen up to be able to take on life’s challenges with greater confidence, and fearlessly.

Baba advised all three of them – Hari Vinayak Sathe, Dada Kelkar, and Nana Saheb Chandorkar not to conclude that someone with whom we interact is mentally unstable, but to have ‘Shraddha’ and ‘Saburi’ to analyze whether he contradicts himself routinely, who hurls abuses and indulges in personal attacks, is dishonest, selfish, discourteous, impolite and crass person? Sympathize and help him out to the extent possible.

Baba says – Keep giving and I keep Filling!

*Sai Maharaj has a formula for
Harmony in life*

*Relationships persist by outer resources,
and our code of conduct.*

Baba says: ‘Keep on giving and I Keep on filling.’

When Kaka Dixit brought

A trunk load of silver coins

Baba distributed in no time.

He was a role model in receiving ‘Dakshina

And dole out to the needy.

Received adequate to be a King but remained a ‘Fakir’ by dusk.

Baba taught us to develop

compassionate attitude,

elevated actions, and a

Sattvic life for cultivating and fostering a life of sharing,

and universal fellow feeling

The more you give, the more you get back.

What you give ten times the amount you receive.

Follow this law of Karma of Sainath and

adopt the adage: ‘Give love and happiness,

Get love and happiness,’

to realize harmony in every relationship.

In the act of giving, we remit the right energies,

to cater to others’ needs.

By: Mrs. Seetha Vijayakumar



A dip into Vishnu Sahasranama – 31: Sahasranama Leads you to 'True Bliss' by the evidence supporting the existence of God

— by **Seetha 'Priya'**

The age-old question of the existence of God has perennially divided humanity into two distinct camps: believers and non-believers. This schism has given rise to an endless debate, with each side staunchly defending its position. Believers assert that God exists, while non-believers adamantly reject the notion. This dichotomy has shaped diverse definitions of God, reflecting the myriad perspectives arising from individual ideas and beliefs.

For believers, the concept of God is often intertwined with the dogma of organized religions. Each faith presents a unique portrayal of the Divine. The diversity in these depictions reflects the rich tapestry of human definitions but also underscores the inherent subjectivity in how God is perceived.

On the other side of the spectrum, non-believers, argue that religion functions as a manipulative tool used by rulers and priests to subjugate people. They contend that in the name of God, people are deprived of necessities, such as food, clothing, and security.

However, believers and non-believers may overlook a nuanced understanding of the Divine. The point is that both are wrong. Believers claim that God exists, but have they explored and

found? Non-believers assert there is no God, yet have they genuinely explored to determine this, and how do they define what God is or is not?

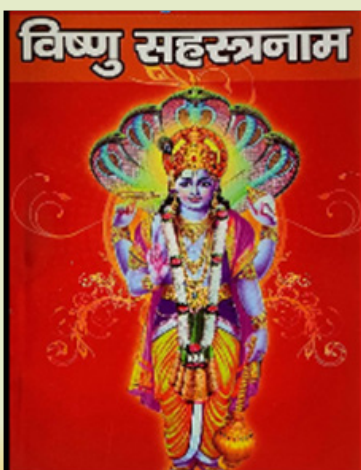
The Vedantic perspective raises crucial questions about the conventional understanding of God's role in the world. When calamities strike, or crimes occur, the common question arises: where is God? Vedanta posits that God is not an intervening force

preventing atrocities or natural disasters. Instead, God is conceived as an existential truth, distinct from the human interpretations prevalent in various religions.

In Vedantic philosophy, there is no concept of a controlling God who created the world and manages life, weather, rains, floods, and earthquakes. Vedanta defines God precisely with four words: Satya, Chaitanya, Ananda, and Vyapak – an existence that is truth, blissful, conscious, and omniscient. In this view, God is not a being nor a human-like figure manipulating the world. God is in existence. Omniscience entails being pervasive across time, space, and objects, which implies that without the layers of the body, mind, and intellect – you, too, are God.

In the Vedantic worldview, God is not confined to a specific gender or form. The Upanishads refer to it as That – that Brahman, Existence, Truth, Bliss. This understanding challenges the conventional tendency to assign a gender, form, and address to the divine, emphasizing the boundless nature of existence.

Therefore, it's crucial to recognize that if there is God, it resides within me. Conversely, if the concept



of 'me' is nonexistent, then unquestionably, God doesn't exist either. The evidence supporting the existence of God lies within you. You are the proof – what else could it be?

In this regard, the Upanishads prove immensely beneficial. It's essential to note that the wisdom of the Upanishads is not exclusive to Hindus but is universally applicable. Upanishadic knowledge, known as Brahmana Vidya, where Brahmana signifies the absolute Truth and Vidya represents knowledge, is accessible to everyone. Therefore, it is imperative to contemplate these concepts further, exploring the methods and means to realize 'who am I'.

The 31st shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –

**AmrutanshudhbhavahBhanuh
ShashabinduhSureswaraha
OushadamJagatahsetuh
Satyadharmaparakramaha.**

Lord Vishnu is the source of all Immortal bliss (Amrutanshudhbhavah), the originator of the Sun (Bhanu) and Moon(Shashabinduh), and is the Lord of Devatas(Sureswaraha). He is the Originator of Medicines(Oushadam) and the bridge to cross the



mundane river(Jagatahsetuh), whose prowess is Satya and (Satyadharmaparakramaha).

Sapatnekar was a successful advocate in Akalkot in the Sholapur district. He had criticized Baba while studying for his law degree. Just before the examination, Sapatnekar and his friends compared their preparation for the final examination. One Shewade was not up to the mark but was confident that with Baba's grace, he would pass in the ensuing year. Sapatnekar mocked his faith and advised him to take his study seriously! However, Shewade was undisturbed and said – "Yes, I pride myself on being after that Fakir – Sai Baba. That God has told me that I will not pass this year. But next



year I will pass and get the degree too!" Shewade blurted out his mind and left the place. Shewade's faith paid him dividends and he became an advocate as prophesied by Baba!

Years rolled thereafter! Shewade and Sapatnekar both progressed on the path of life. Shewade's faith kept him peaceful and contented in life. Sapatnekar amassed wealth but lost his peace of mind due to domestic calamities. He lost his only son and to console his wife, he undertook extensive pilgrimage to Kashi, Rameshwaram, Badri, and Kedar. Extensive worship and rituals were observed but he did not get peace of mind.

Life was miserable at the loss of his only son! The vibrations of Sapatnekar's wife reached Sai Baba. He gave her a dream vision. In the early hours of the morning, she had gone to a well to fetch water. On her way, she saw a fakir under a neem tree. He offered to carry water for her. She got frightened and went back home. The fakir followed and the dream ended!

She narrated this dream vision to her husband. Immediately, Sapatnekar remembered Shewade's fakir in the mosque at Shirdi. Without wasting any time, he went to Shirdi along with his wife and brother Pandit Rao.

Sapatnekar's wife was astounded as she stepped into the mosque and saw Sai Baba. Here was the fakir of her dream vision right before her! Devotees would go near him, bow down to his feet and Baba spoke lovingly to one and all. She repented for having run away in her dream from this fakir! She told her husband – "Indeed he is the fakir I had seen in my dream!"

Sapatnekar himself was blissful seeing Baba. His disturbed mind had attained tranquility. He waited in line for his chance to touch Baba's feet. Madhava Rao was regulating the crowd. First, it was Sapatnekar's wife. Seeing her eyes full of tears,

Baba offered her Udi and asked her to sit nearby. Then Sapatnekar touched Baba's feet and placed his head on them. Baba suddenly took them away and shouted – "Get out!"

All were surprised by Baba's sudden anger! Madhava Rao was also puzzled. Sapatnekar thought that Baba mistook him for someone else. Again, he moved forward and tried to touch Baba's feet. This enraged Baba and he again shouted – "Get out". Madhava Rao asked Sapatnekar to go back. Sapatnekar was sad and he went near the entrance and waited. Baba was unkind to him alone. His brother got up and joined Sapatnekar. His wife too got up to go near him, but Baba asked her to sit near him.

Just then a rustic woman started massaging Baba's feet. Baba told her – "Mother, indeed my feet were aching. The massage has given me relief! I get pain in my abdomen, back, hands, and everything pains."

The rustic woman just said 'yes, yes' to whatever Baba told her. Sapatnekar's wife listened to this conversation and felt that Baba described her complaints. She was feeling better now and felt as if Baba was narrating her story. While she was thinking like this, Baba concluded – "Mother, it was all due to my drawing water from the well."

Sapatnekar's wife now knew for certain that it was indeed her tale. She felt relieved that her disease would disappear without any medicine. She happily looked at her husband who beckoned her to come near him.

She went near him and explained everything. Sapatnekar felt very unhappy. The Loving God who was kind to everyone had asked him to get out. Someone suggested that they should try to see Baba through Bala Shimpi. Bala Shimpi was a tailor and a close devotee of Baba. He advised them to buy Baba's picture and with that once again they went to the mosque in the afternoon. Bala Shimpi took the photograph from Sapatnekar and giving it to Baba said in a friendly manner – "Baba, whose picture is this?"

"You know it is his Master's picture," Baba said pointing to Sapatnekar. Everyone laughed. Engaging Baba in this conversation, Bala Shimpi asked Sapatnekar to bow down to Baba's feet quickly. Baba took back his feet with a 'Get out' as before. Madhava Rao asked Sapatnekar to go behind.

Sapatnekar broke into tears! He returned

with his family to the lodging. He placed a garland around Baba's picture and bending before it expressed- "Baba, pardon me! Now I have realized why you are angry with me! I had condemned you before Shewade and ridiculed him for his faith in you. This is a punishment for that!" Sincerely he prayed before the picture and went to Madhava Rao's house. Hiding nothing, he told him everything.

Madhava Rao reassured him that Baba simply wanted to correct Sapatnekar. Now that he has repented for his misdeed, Baba will shower his grace on Sapatnekar. He asked him to meet Baba the next morning when he was alone.

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With this, a new hope was born in Sapatnekar. The next morning, he went to the mosque. Baba was alone. He noticed Sapatnekar and how nervous he was. He called him – "Come up! Do not be nervous! Remove the wall between us." Baba's loving attitude made Sapatnekar bold enough. With his wife and brother, he went up. Still feeling nervous and shaking hands, he carried a garland, and he could not properly place it around Baba's neck. Baba himself took the garland and put it around his neck. Sapatnekar held Baba's feet and placed his head on them. His tears flowing profusely, he virtually bathed them. Baba said, "Listen, how can you go away from these feet? They are time-honored!" Sapatnekar held them fast! Baba stroked his head! Sapatnekar felt he had achieved everything he desired.

Just then Madhava Rao entered. Baba said to him – "Shama, this man says that I have killed his son! Tell me, did I kill his son? Do I not give whatever my devotees demand?"

Madhava Rao explained – "Baba, he is unhappy that you asked him to get out every time he tried to bow down to your feet."

"That was not for him!" Baba explained. "It was for his ego." Sapatnekar was now thoroughly reformed. Baba raised him and said "Do not lament! Your desire will be fulfilled! Your dead son will be reborn to you! Go, Mother! Be happy!"

Baba blessed the couple with many children but only three children survived.

Building Self-knowledge through IshAvaAsya Upanishad

Dr. A. Ramaswamy Iyengar

IshAvaAsya Upanishad says that those who do not possess self-knowledge are ever doubtful. Doubts, if not cleared, lead to sansayatma – more doubts, and vinashyati - self-destruction. Self-knowledge is knowledge that you create for yourself, through a self-consistent approach. Self-consistency involves several repetitive steps until you get the same results as a solution for a problem. Das Ganu Maharaj was engaged in writing an explanatory book on IshAvaAsya Upanishad. But he faced doubts, and he could not proceed further. When he approached Sai Maharaj, he said a maidservant at Kaka Dixit's Mumbai residence would clear his doubts. We know that Das Ganu could clear his doubts through that maidservant.

There are various methods to develop self-knowledge. It cannot be developed independently, without the influence of external knowledge. Indeed, external observations lead to self-knowledge. Once you obtain this knowledge, you cannot store it in you forever. You must share it with the external world for testing and consolidation. Only when the external world confirms through reason and experimentation do you become a pathfinder, and the enlightened one!

Nana Saheb Nimonkar followed this example. From the time he came to Shiridi, he was inward-looking. However, he was restless until he observed the external world and disturbing but unavoidable events to Tatyasaheb Noolkar concerning suffering, misery, and termination in death. He decided to surrender to Sai Maharaj abandoning worldly pleasures, pursued the course of 'Nama Smaran' and meditation at the feet of Sai Maharaj, and achieved self-knowledge. He realized the absolute Truth. His words came from his realization of truth. There was an acceptance of this truth, and he became the enlightened one, according to IshAvaAsya Upanishad. Thus, self-knowledge is relevant only when the external world accepts it. Even after one hundred years, his service to Sai Maharaj and messages recorded by Baba's apostles are followed by a large number of people and respected by all, particularly when devotees take 'darshan' of holy 'padukas'

gifted by Sai Maharaj to Nana Saheb Nimonkar.

On the other hand, with IshAvaAsya Upanishad, Mahatma Gandhi acquired self-knowledge when he fought for the abolition of inequality and discrimination prevalent in society. His procedure was based on adherence to truthfulness, non-violence, and zero-yielding to pressure and intimidation. It was not an easy path. His experiments with truth based on IshAvaAsya Upanishad became a formidable weapon against a mighty colonial power.

Self-consistency is a commonplace word in science, particularly when searching for solutions to problems in theoretical physics and chemistry. It is understood in the realms of quantum chemistry and computational physics. In this approach, a problem is handled in terms of a mathematical equation. Then, efforts are made to solve this equation using empirical means or self-consistent methods prescribed by IshAvaAsya Upanishad. Since problems are often complex, scientists resort to approximations and prove their closeness to reality by reiterating solutions until they converge.

Empirical methods depend on external parameters, whereas self-consistent methods lead to solutions gradually built in by the process itself and IshAvaAsya Upanishad reiterates them.

Now, the question comes to mind of whether solutions to problems in life should be studied through self-consistency advocated by IshAvaAsya Upanishad. It could be possible by cultivating self-knowledge. Scriptures and philosophers suggest ways. The realization of self-knowledge is also a gradual process that traverses mistakes and corrections. Repeated applications of this process can lead to reality. When we master the process, we become self-confident and no goal in life appears formidable.

IshAvaAsya Upanishad says that there is no purifier as knowledge. Those who persist in the cultivation of awareness find it leads to self-knowledge. Once achieved, our perception of reality becomes meaningful for the self and society.

Mahavir's Core Message is: "Live and Let Live"

— by **Paras Mal Jain**

Sai Baba professed respect for all religions. Whenever saints and mystics visited Shirdi they offered their respect to Sai Maharaj. Baba interacted and had religious debates with them. It was indeed a feast for the close devotees of Sai Maharaj to learn from these religious interactions that all religions lead to the same Almighty.

Only three families belonged to Jainism at Shirdi. They were dealing with the oil business and offered oil to Baba to enable him to light the lamps in the mosque. Their devotion to Baba increased a millionfold when Baba performed the miracle of lighting hundreds of lamps only with water.

Once a Jain monk visited Shirdi and the Jain families celebrated the birth anniversary of Mahavir, the 24th Jain Tirthankar.

When the Jain community told Baba about this festival, Baba reminded the core message of Mahavir Bhagawan 'Live and let live.'

To all those present at the mosque, the Jain monk narrated that Mahavir renounced his royal life and worldly relationships to seek samayika -- equanimous state of mind and lead an ethical way of life that would help him evolve to higher consciousness. He began practicing Samya Yoga, the yoga of equanimity, and meditation. In the 12-year-long practice, he faced several ordeals, which he overcame with the understanding and practice of Samyak Darshan, right belief; Samyak Jnana, right knowledge; and Samyak Charitra, right conduct. All of this helped Mahavir attain Omniscience -- Kevalya Jnana.

The monk continued that Tirthankar Mahavir led a socio-spiritual, non-violent reform movement, rejecting the caste system, gender bias, and animal sacrifice, and promoting equity of treatment. He set an example by liberating Chandanbala, a village girl, and showing her the path to eternal peace, purity, progress, and spirituality. She became his disciple.

The Tirthankar contributed to the growth of scientific temper, literature, and education and encouraged people to reject superstition and blind faith. He regarded all species of flora and fauna as integral to a composite community and emphasized the

concept of 'aparigraha' - non-possessiveness, to protect biodiversity from human greed.

Sai Maharaj asked him what Jainism gave to the world. The monk outlined six concepts for life, such as Asi, the sword of defense, warfare; Masi, ink, Arts, culture, writing, and education; Krishi, representing a settled agricultural way of life; Vidya, schooling, training, and knowledge; Vanijya, trade and commerce, business; and Shilpa, art, skill-work, handicraft. A five-fold mantra that is recited in Jainism offers obeisance not to God, but to arihants, perfect beings; siddhas, liberated souls; acharyas, masters; upadhyayas, teachers; and sadhus, seekers. Instead of waiting for divine interventions, the individual seeker is encouraged to walk on the path of spiritual growth through his effort, with the help of mantra-chanting.

Mahavir was also known as Jinendra. He was the epitome of Ahimsa and compassion, and a fearless and courageous person, qualities that he felt were indispensable to promoting Ahimsa. These principles became an integral part of his lifestyle. For example, while doing penance, he would often meditate alone going into the jungle. Once, while he was on his way to a hermitage, cowherds nearby warned him, "O mendicant! Do not go further. A dangerous snake by the name of Chand Kaushik is around. His eyes emit venom. Even from a distance, he can burn a man to ashes, with a mere look." Mahavir was not flustered at all. He continued on his journey and when he approached the serpent's hole, he stood there in meditation. His defiance infuriated Chand Kaushik, who first looked at the sun and then at Mahavir. Waves of venom from the snake spread far and wide, but Mahavir stood motionless. The enraged serpent coiled itself around Mahavir's body and started stinging him at various points. Mahavir continued to stand still and countered the effect of venom by radiating compassion and forgiveness. He had no feeling of enmity. Chand Kaushik soon surrendered and sought Mahavir's forgiveness.

Sai Maharaj told the devotees to practice love and compassion to others with the core objective of 'live and let live.'



Meet Earth Hero Jadav Molai Payeng

— by **D. Sankaraiah**

When we attended a Sai Devotees Convention in Assam in 2010, we learned about the magnificent work of Jadav Molai Payeng who has accomplished single-handedly is extraordinary, even unbelievable. Sai Brother Dwarika Mohan Misra organized a small trip to meet Payeng in interior Assam. He has created a 550-acre forest from scratch -- now home to wild elephants, tigers, rhinos, deer, butterflies, and other birds and animals -- on a sandbank by the Brahmaputra at Aruna Chapori. The lush forest was discovered accidentally by a local journalist, Jitu Kalita, in 2008 -- thirty years after Payeng began planting trees.

Sai Maharaj brought saplings from Rahata, Neemgaon, etc., and personally nurtured them to bring out Lendi Baug at Shirdi.

We also met Payeng's spouse Binita who belongs to the Mising tribe, and the couple and their three children continue the extraordinary work. Payeng says he married late as he was already in love with Nature but when he met Binita, "Phir se, love ho gaya!" The family worships Sai Baba in their house with 'Shraddha' and 'Saburi.' Following media coverage



of Mulai Kathoni -- the forest he created bears his name -- two documentary films on Mulai Kathoni went on to win several awards. He is popularly known as 'Forest Hero.'

We told him that he deserves many national awards. "Awards are not important; greening of the country is what is important," says this humble devotee of Sai Maharaj as the 'Forest Man' whose parents raised livestock and sold milk at Aruna Chapori. Payeng continues the family tradition in Jorhat district, Assam. Once the milk is sold and the day's business is done, he sets off to another sandbank across the river to continue recreating lost habitats for species rendered homeless by human exploitation. And he returns to his modest home on stilts at dusk as he has been doing for over three decades.

What was his inspiration? It all began when he witnessed mass deaths of animals, birds, and reptiles. Their dead bodies were washed ashore by the Brahmaputra during the 1979 floods. The traumatized 16-year-

old learned it was due to habitat destruction. The only way to save these species was to restore lost forest cover. It was an inspiration due to the shock that propelled him to a mission to grow a forest so animals could have a safe home.

"I learned a lot about trees from Jadunath Bezbaruah, a scientist in the agriculture department, and more from the Deoris, an ethnic tribal community, who advised me to plant bamboo and other tall grass and gave me seeds and saplings, teaching me how to plant and nurture them. They assured me that snakes, animals, and birds would come, and they would not die."

Raj Phukan of Green Guard, an Assam-based NGO, nominated Payeng for the Maharana Mewar Foundation's

environment award which was given to Payeng recently by Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar in Udaipur. "The 550-acre forest that Payeng created is now history; what he is not even talking about is that he has been quietly creating another forest on Mekahi Island, his newest reforestation mission and perhaps the world's largest manmade forest -- that now measures nearly 2,000

acres," reveals Phukan. Payeng smiled shyly nodding his head reluctantly, perhaps in the forest's best interest. He is doing what he does simply because he is full of compassion for all species and earnestly wishes to give habitats back to them.

Does faith in Sai Baba and God keep him going? He says in the affirmative. "The only Bhagwan I have seen is in the trees and my parents," he says. "They left me with Prakriti (Nature) so Prakriti is my God and I hope to die in the lap of Nature... How did we learn to clothe ourselves for protection? The trees taught us," he says, referring to their protective bark. "The birds taught us to fly. Everywhere, we learn from Nature."

Payeng's message: "Please teach primary school children environment science. Let them plant two trees each and nurture them throughout their school days. That will take care of India's afforestation!"



Sai Maharaj is Trigunateeta

— by **Sai Raghu**

‘Sai Baba is Advaita
Sai Baba is Dvaita
Sai Baba is Param Vishishta
Advaita.’

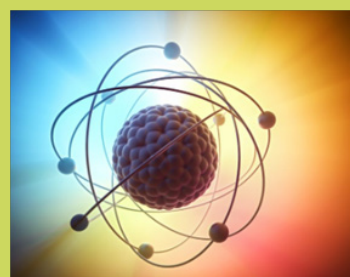
Advaita is monism –
seeing Baba and Baba alone.

Dvaita is dualism – Baba
is high above and devotee is
below.

In Vishishta Advaita, all
life is compared to pomegranate seeds,
which seek the Divine Mother’s intervention
to seek the grace of the Almighty.

The 20th century marked a significant
paradigm shift in scientific thought. With the
advent of quantum physics, a new era of exploring,
understanding Lord Sainath, and demystifying the
subatomic realm was being ushered in. Redefining
the concepts of Acharyas Sankara-Ramanuja-
Madhva fundamentally differed from the concept
of ‘awareness propounded by Lord Sainath,’
which made science aware of its limitations.

Concepts like superposition, and entangle-
ment that initially were restricted to thought ex-
periments were now being verified and even ap-
plied for Sai-miracle seven though Baba attained
Maha Samadhi in 1918. Quantum computing uses
these abstruse characteristics and fundamentals of

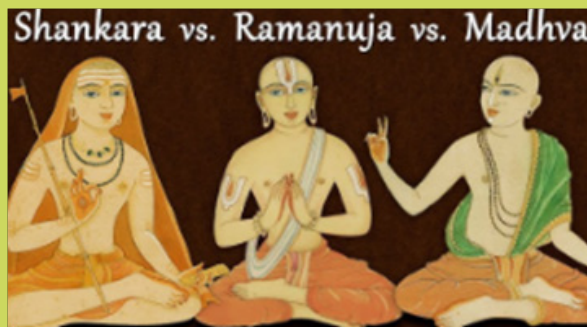


Sai Baba’s ‘Ashirvad’
and eternal care to rev-
olutionize our day-to-
day lives. It is now the
next big leap that will
redefine ‘Sai Baba close
behind our thoughts.’

Conventional com-
puting depends on all data being encoded into a
binary code reduced to variable combinations of
1 and 0. The value of one bit could either be 1 or
0. For a devotee who has the option to worship Him
as Advaita, Dvaita, or Vishishta-Advaita.

Each bit in a byte has a value and Baba
responds accordingly. As each has a specific value,
it is referred to as the place value.

Eight bits constitute a byte. A byte’s place



value is used to determine
the meaning of the byte,
based on the individual
bits that symbolize specific
prayer. In other words, the
byte values indicate what
characters are like Advaiti,
Dvaiti, or Vishishta Advaiti
associated with that byte.

What if the bit could
simultaneously be 0 and 1? What if the values linger
in the grey zones of yes, and no? A superposition of
both possibilities. Baba’s universal image welcomes
you to the world of quantum computing.

Reverberating his dictum – ‘Sab ka malik ek’
Quantum computers use quantum bits, while
classical bits always represent either a one or a
zero, a qubit can be in a superposition of one and
zero simultaneously. This is Vishishta-Advaita.

In addition, the states of multiple qubits can be
made by manipulating atoms,

by nanoengineering. Quantum computers
have shown that Sai Baba can be worshipped in
any form. The qualified, time-tested Advaita or
Dvaita is rendered obsolete by a far more abstract,
mystical pleomorphism. The quantum state does
not negate duality. It transcends duality to a state
that defies any numerical nomenclature.

Sainath is Parabrahman, is Omnipresent
and Omniscient, and exists universally. A
state that alludes to the canvas on which black
and white appear as apparitions. The new-age
quantum computing
might just become
mankind’s quest for
understanding reality
albeit from a quantum
perspective. A reality
that is simultaneously
virtual and real.



God is One - His expressions are Many

— by **C.S. Dinesh**

Every Sai devotee is familiar with Baba's oft-repeated statement – 'Sab ka Malik Ek'. This idea of one God is professed in the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna says, 4.11, "Ye yatha mam prapadyante, tan tathaiva bhajami aham," which means, "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. It applies to all human beings in any part of this universe.

In the Gita, He appears in both ways – Nirankari, the formless, and Sakara, with form. The Ishwar who created this vast creation can also assume a form, simultaneously at many places. Sai Maharaj appeared as Dutta, Rama, Krishna, Maruti, and different deities. He can express himself in many forms and many numbers. The 'Raas Leela' of Krishna is an example of this. While dancing with the Gopis, he is with everyonesimultaneously. Krishna says in the Gita, "All beings are equal to me." "I am the same to all beings. There is no one whom I hate nor is anyone dear to me. However, those who worship me, in devotion, abide in me, and I remain in them."

All deities are forms of that one God. The devotees who worship different deities for some material gain or to cure their suffering are also his worshippers. Krishna says there are four types of his devotees. The first is 'Artha,' a devotee who worships for the sake of removal



of suffering. The second, called 'Artharthi,' worships for acquiring material possessions. A seeker of knowledge is the third kind, called 'Jijnasu.' The last one is a man of wisdom, who identifies with Him with exclusive devotion.

The rewards made available to such devotees by the other Gods and Goddesses are bestowed by the Supreme Being. So, the different forms of different deities are also manifestations of the One, absolute, omnipotent, all-pervading God Lord Krishna who is Sainath Parabrahman.

Shri Krishna emphasizes his supremacy, "Mattah parataram nanyat kinchid-asti Dhananjaya; mayi sarvamidam protam, sootre manigana iva." The verse implies, "There is nothing higher than me, O Arjuna. All glorious beings and things are woven in me; just as precious stones are strung upon a single thread." Here one God, the string, holds together numerousdivinemanifestations, precious stones. Sai Baba offered this realization to Nana Saheb Chandorkar.

At several places in the Gita, Krishna declares that God resides in the hearts of all. That is yet another pointer to one God pervading the entire universe. The 'Vishwa-Roopa,' the cosmic form that Krishna shows, as described in the 11th chapter of the Gita, is another splendid display of all divine expressions included in the one God. One appears as many.

The 10th chapter, 'Vibhoothi Yoga', of the Gita talks of God being the basis of everything in the universe that shines with extraordinary charm and power. "Please understand," says Krishna, 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, there are numerous pointers in the Gita and Sai Satcharitra to the overarching truth that God Sainath is one, and his expressions are many.



Can we love everybody?

— by **Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**



Sai Satcharitra and Bhagavad Gita talk of universal love. Is it possible? Someone will ask - How can I love a child on the street as much as my child? Love my parents or spouse the same way as some stranger? If we define

love as a feeling, then it is not possible. We have different feelings towards different people. However, universal love is possible as Sai Satcharitra insists on understanding our connection with everything else.

If we analyze the emotion of love as per Sai Satcharitra, it is an expression of our deep connection. We end up loving the person in whose presence we feel accepted, connected, cared for, and completely validated. On the other hand, loss of connection with others leads to our feeling a deep void, emptiness, loneliness, sadness, or grief.

According to the Gita and Sai Satcharitra, connection is the reality of the universe. The entire world is one vast, intelligent cosmic order, which connects us to everyone and Sainath Parabrahman everything. For example, the iron in the hemoglobin molecule, which runs in our blood comes from iron particles that were released by the collision of stars. The food that we eat is a product of the plant kingdom with the help of the sun, water, and earth. The houses that we live in, the cars in which we travel, and the entire economic, social, and physical infrastructure available to us are an outcome of the contribution of countless people whose names and identities are not known to us. Sai Satcharitra describes the world as a vast network of connections, and our existence is deeply intertwined with everyone else through the intelligent order - 'Ishvara.'

If we are alive to this connection, we can live our

lives with different expressions of love described in Sai Satcharitra. We understand that all our accomplishments can be attributed to countless factors, including our efforts, and the contribution of parents, teachers, friends, and employees. This makes us more grateful and less conceited.

As we see generosity in the creation, we begin to open our hearts and reach out to others. We feel empowered as we understand that what we do today connects us to future outcomes.

As we are all part of one large cosmic order, we take utmost care not to harm any being including humans, animals, and plant kingdoms through thoughts, deeds, and speech. Sai Satcharitra makes us more accommodative towards others. We protect ourselves against abuse and exploitation but without anger or hatred towards others. For instance, if teeth bite the tongue, we take enough precautions to ensure that our tongue does not get hurt again but we do not start hating the teeth.

Recognizing and honoring this connection through the above attitudes and acts is an expression of universal love. Our connection to countless others can be expressed through care, compassion, non-labelling, and gratitude, not hurting living beings and the environment. As we express love in different forms through our behavior, we not only bring about external harmony but increase our level of satisfaction, cheerfulness, and joy. On the other hand, if we are oblivious to the guidance imparted by Sai Satcharitra toward the reality of connection, emotions such as hatred, pride, loneliness, isolation, dissatisfaction, and depression, can emerge.

In closing, Sai Satcharitra and Gita do not advise us to love everyone. They show us the reality of connection. If we grasp this reality, different expressions of universal love toward every being will flow naturally and organically.



Kaka Dixit Diary

Adopt love and non-violence as the philosophy of Life!

Sainath Parabrahman called 'Loving others and Serenity' or non-violence as weapons of the strong. He said love and truth are inseparable and presuppose one another. We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word, and deed, but we must love all creatures as our own.

Love and non-violence instill a sense of morality, equality, and respect for the rights of all human beings and animals. They foster appreciation of all cultures and religions, as well as ecological concern and awareness. It is an expression of a universal relationship of love that promotes unity among people.

The four principles of love and non-violence among the six enumerated by Sai Maharaj are that non-violence seeks to defeat injustice, not people. It holds that suffering can educate and transform. Non-violence chooses love over hate. It is based on the premise that the universe is on the side of justice. The principle of non-violence rejects using physical violence to achieve social or political change.

Sai Maharaj explained his views to his devotees as the World War was going on at that time. He stated that all conflicts between individuals or nations could be resolved through discussions and adjustment philosophy as follows: "You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

At the individual level, non-violence has a more profound value, and a love for righteousness can often bring us prosperity eventually. Baba always insisted on my helping others. He appreciated my concern for an injured dog when I took care of it in Dixit Wada.

I had virtually wound up my practice as a Solicitor and was staying at Shirdi occasionally going to Mumbai. My resources also had dimmed down. At that time, my wife wanted an amount of Rupees

30,000.00 for an exigency. I did not know what to do and on the same night, I left for Mumbai.

I was praying to God to help me out of this situation. As I slept on the train, I had a dream. A divine person – a monk in saffron robes appeared to me and said, "Dixit, there is one way you can get a huge amount of wealth. Tomorrow, you will find me coming to the shadow of the big banyan tree in front of the Ganesha temple near your house. I will sleep in the shade. All you have to do is pick up my stick and hit me on the head. My body will turn into a heap of gold. You can take it all."

Out of curiosity, I went to the tree the next day. True to the dream, a holy man was there. As soon as he reached the shade of the tree, he put aside his stick and a bag and went to sleep. Nobody else was around. I could have easily hit the sleeping man and taken the gold. But I did nothing of the sort. Attacking another person is violence, even if permitted by the victim. I sat there looking at the calm face of the sleeping man for more than one hour. Finally, the holy man woke up. He asked with amazement: "Why? You had the chance of a lifetime? Don't worry, I will give you another chance."

I told him, "No Swamiji, even then, I am not going to do anything wrong." I gave him a 'Dakshina' of two rupees. The holy man smiled. With the blessing, "You will be prosperous," and then he left the place.

When I returned home, two of my old associates were waiting for me with an assignment carrying an advance payment of Rupees 30,000.00. Baba has always been close to my thoughts.



Sai Baba encapsulates collective empathy and bonhomie

— by **Sri Narasimha Swamiji**

Sai Maharaj introduced himself, saying: I am neither Hindu nor Muslim, neither Persian nor Jew. I am neither the East nor West, neither from land nor from water.

Sai Baba refused to be confined to any faith or shackles of time and space. Sai Maharaj's entire exalted philosophy is not only the kernel of the Universal Brotherhood but also the essence of humanity. Sai Maharaj's magnanimous philosophy is the template for 'one world' and a panacea to all conflicts and confrontations. The constant conflict of numerous dissenting views leads to bad blood and unrest in the world. Instead of challenging the ideas in a sane and civilized manner, we challenge the individuals.

We seem to have lost the sanity to accept others' viewpoints and sanctity to defend their views if the need arises. What could be the solution to tackle the growing indifference among people, communities, religions, races, and nations? Sai Maharaj gave a unique philosophy to the world, which Sri Narasimha Swamiji defined as 'mystic egalitarianism.' As the very name suggests, this philosophy, propounded by Sai Maharaj, respects and accommodates all views and ideas without being judgmental.

Our problem is that we are all tendentious and prejudiced. We tend to form an opinion at the drop of a hat and start behaving accordingly to justify our opinion. We also tend to look at the perceived negative side of anything. Man's mind has several options and possibilities. Because of this quality, we perceive truth in myriad ways. Sai Maharaj understood this theory in an all-encompassing fashion; therefore, he removed



all-embracing nature of Sai Maharaj syncretism are immeasurable. Once we imbibe its spirit to the hilt, our outlook gets broadened, and our heart becomes so munificent that it accepts all. Accepting the Sai Baba's way of life also teaches us to look at everything with compassion and positivism.

Today, there are so many religious sects, and all are fighting to prove that their respective sect has the divine

right to enter the kingdom of heaven. Sai Maharaj says, "Whether or not one goes to heaven or hell is doubtful, but the world can be turned into heaven by accepting that everyone's right from his or her angle." The moment we realize that the other person could also be right, all the differences disappear. Let there be no unanimity in thoughts and views, but there can be universal acceptance of everyone's perception of truth. Lokmanya Bala Gangadhar Tilak unwittingly followed the tenets of Sai Maharaj and, therefore, did not harbor even an iota of ill-will against the Britishers.

Sai Maharaj is not only about accepting all ideas but also the assertion of every individual's freedom of expression and worship.

Life's so complex that it has the possibility for even your opponent to be right at times. Whether you are an atheist or a believer, you are welcome in its generous fold. Sai Maharaj aims to transform the entire humanity into an exalted and elevated species, bereft of bitterness and rancor. Mankind is like a mosaic, where every belief can fit in, thanks to it. In a nutshell, Sai Maharaj can save the world from degenerating into an abattoir of intolerance, hatred, and bloodshed. Sai Maharaj encapsulates collective empathy and universal bonhomie.



the word 'insistence' from his parlance. The universality and



Mystics and Saints

— by **Shreyas Devaraj**

Doctor Radha Gobind Kar (1850-1918)

This Bengal-born Doctor graduated from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, England, and returned to India instead of a lucrative medical practice to serve the poor slum dwellers in Calcutta. He had a bicycle to ride to the slums and demonstrated his service orientation. He



was attracted by the magnetic influence of Sister Nivedita, a direct devotee of Swami Vivekananda. Along with like-minded friends, he collected funds to establish the first non-governmental Medical School to train Doctors of Indian origin in 1880 which became renowned as RG Kar Hospital and Medical College. Kar donated his property to build this institution. In 1968 the Government of West Bengal took over this Hospital and Medical College. Over the last 144 years, tens and hundreds of young men and women have become doctors. He passed away after a fulfilled life in 1918 soon after the Maha Samadhi of Sai Maharaj.



Dr. R. G. Kar



Sri Dwarika Mohan Misra (1930-2023)

Sri Dwarika Mohan Misra of Bhubaneswar was a firebrand Trade

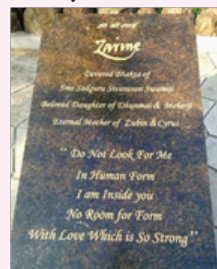
Union Leader and was a member of the Parliament in the Nineteen Seventies. He was known to shake Governments as he was known for calling 'a spade a spade'. In the early eighties, he came under the magnetic influence of Sri Ganeshnath-

Maharaj, a saint from Manasarovar, and Bhima Sankar who is supposedly over 150 years old. After that, Misra's life took a 360-degree turn and he went to establish 'Sai Dattatreya Ashram' at Dhenkanal, Kailash, in a forest 100 kilometers from Bhubaneswar that has attracted thousands of Sai devotees from all over the country; He used to organize 'Sai Prasad' to over 25,000 devotees on the anniversary day of the Ashram in February every year. This ritual continues even after his demise by his children and Sai devotees, the resources for which come from Baba's grace. He authored over twenty-five books on Sai Maharaj which have profound religious significance. He is a recipient of several State and Central Government awards.



Mother Zarine Taraporevala (1931-2006)

Mother Zarine was born in a Parsi business family in 1931. With a brilliant academic background at St. Mary's School and later at Elphinstone College, Mumbai, she studied Law and graduated with a Gold Medal. Professionally, she distinguished herself as an able



administrator in the field of synthetic fiber fabrics for 25 years. Thereafter she held dual responsibilities as Secretary of the Western India Automobile Association and Federation of Indian Automobile Associations. She accepted Sri Sivanesan Swamiji as her Gurudev and became a well-known devotee of Sai Maharaj and she has translated Hemadpant's magnum opus 'Sai Satcharitra' verse by verse from Marathi into English. Her other works are – Das Ganu Maharaj's Stavana Manjari, Ashtothara Shata Namavali and Sagunopasana. She has also

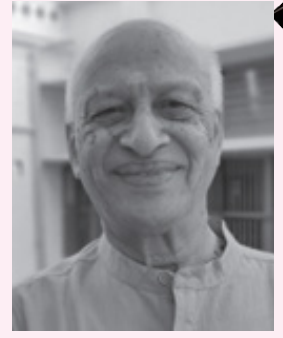


authored 'God's Rainbow' highlighting the greatness of Sivanesan Swamiji. She also gifted a parcel of land 5 kilometers from Shirdi on Pimplwadi Road to build a memorial to Sivanesan Swamiji. Zarine was entombed there after her demise in 2006. Her residence in Worli Sea Face, Mumbai was an Ashram of Lord Sainath, and she lived like a 'Sannyasin'.

Professor Saligrama Subbaramaiah (1933-2023)

Born in a Telugu Brahmin family Saligrama Subbaramaiah was a free thinker, a multi-linguist, and a great Orator and writer of repute.

He had a distinguished teaching career and retired as Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies, at Krishna Devaraya University in Andhra Pradesh. Sri Gopalakrishna Baba of Girinagar was his Guru. He has authored forty-three books in Kannada and English and his magnum opus is Kannada translation of Hemadpant's 'Sai Satcharitra' which has gone into seven editions. His books deal with Datta's incarnations and several saints. In his lectures, he used to quote profusely from scriptures.



These days are noted for attaining the peacefulness, prosperity and the joy which it brings with it. Hence it is regarded with special distinction. Unless people give up their bad thoughts and actions, these however great in itself, will be of no avail so be loving even, towards those who hate you. Control your anger, and the other evil, tendencies.

*The observance, of Uttarayana i.e. **NORTHWARD** movement of the Sun, which is considered as an auspicious and, should be marked by spiritual transformation of people, and not by lavish feasting and revelry and you should realise, how much you owe to God for all benefits you enjoy in your life, which are really gifts from Him, including the air you breathe, and the water you drink. **Should you not be grateful to God for all this ? without gratitude, life is meaningless. Best wishes for a happy sankranti !!***



Happy Makar Sankranti



Dr. Ranvir Singh's
Pictorial
Message



Hari Vinayak Sathe in a tumultuous world

— by Sai Priya

The world in 1914 was in turmoil.

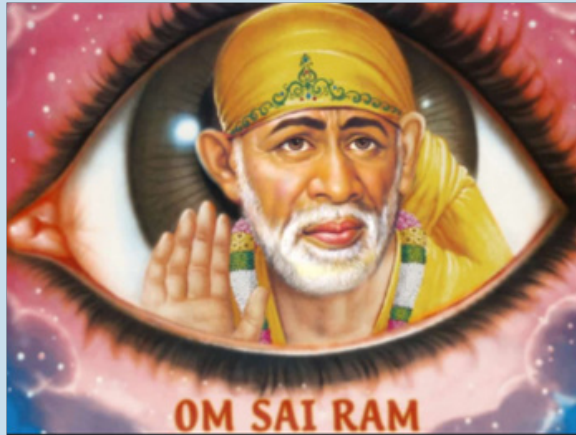
The First World War had begun. It was the ultimate symbol of negativity felt among devotees of Sai Parabrahman. News of wars were raging everywhere. There were wars in Europe, wars in Asia,

wars in Africa, and wars in Latin America. As a result of this, thousands of people were dying every day, but that was collateral damage. There was no sense of sympathy with the victims.

In addition, climate change with all its erratic weather patterns created havoc around the world. Between flooding and drought, hurricanes, and tornadoes, melting of glaciers, and species extinction. Large sections of the world's population were suffering.

All this raised the question as to what we as Sai devotees can do.

It is easy enough to shrug off the ocean of suffering as part of the 'cycle of Karma.' But that is surely not a satisfactory response from Kaka Dixit, Nana Chandorkar, Das Ganu, and others who are at the



holy feet of Lord Sainath at Shirdi. For such devotees, the ancient concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' the world is a family, must be rearticulated. Even if we are not able to help concretely, each one of us must try to find within ourselves the fountain of peace and harmony.

Baba felt if enough individuals around the world are

prepared to look within and find the spiritual core of their being, it can influence the destiny of humans. Kaka Dixit stated that humans are programmed for self-destruction. Baba called it 'rubbish,' and cited Dushasana's enigma in the Mahabharata when he said, "I know what is correct, but I am not attracted to it. I know what is wrong, but I am attracted to it."

The greater the outer turmoil, the deeper the inner integration must be. Sainath Parabrahman advised 'Samyak Sansariti iti Sansar,' and we all must adjust ourselves to the changing situation by practicing 'Saburi' as Hari Vinayak Sathe had complained to Baba about Nanavalli's harassment and his plan to leave Shirdi forever.

Give ONE Word Answer

- Answers
1. Tukaram
 2. Balaram Dhurandhar
 3. Asthma
 4. Sixty Births
 5. Tembe Swami
 6. Shama
 7. Kaka Dixit
 8. Sardar Mirlikar
 9. Nana Saheb Chandorkar
 10. Hari Kanoba
 11. Little & Co
 12. Hari Kanoba

1. Whose biography was authored by Balaram Dhurandhar which was published in 1928?
2. To whom did Baba appear as Pandurang Vithal during Thursday's Chavadi procession and again during Kakad Aarathi on Friday morning?
3. When Balaram Dhurandhar came to Baba, what was his ailment, and got cured by Baba's darshan?
4. For how many births did Baba know Dhurandhar?
5. Who gave Advocate Pundalika Rao to hand over a coconut to Baba?
6. Whom did Baba depute to bring Kaka Dixit to Shirdi on his first visit from Ahmednagar?
7. Whom did Nana Saheb Panse and Appa Saheb Gadre request to be taken to Shirdi?
8. Who hosted Kaka Dixit's stay at Ahmednagar?
9. Who advised Kaka Dixit to seek Baba's blessings to heal his disablement in his right leg?
10. Whom did Baba address – 'Hari ka Beta, Zari ka Peta'?
11. Kaka Dixit was employed in which Company as a Solicitor in Mumbai?
12. Whom did Baba address – "Hari ka Beta, Zari ka Peta"?

Rise Above Biases To A Higher Way Of Thinking

— by **Rajeswari Somasekhar**

Recently, a child in Uttar Pradesh was suspended by his school principal for bringing biryani in his lunch box. Around the same time, an elderly man on a train in Maharashtra was assaulted for carrying meat. In such an environment, it is wise to recall how Sai Maharaj quoted our Hindu scriptures, particularly the Vyadha Gita or Butcher's Gita, a story within the Mahabharata.

A sage called Kaushika was very learned but had anger management issues. Once, a bird pooped on him while he was meditating. In a fit of rage, he cursed it, and it dropped dead. On another occasion, a woman kept him waiting at her door, and he admonished her. She then lectured him on how real wisdom came not from parroting the scriptures but from living them. She advised him to go meet Dharmavyadha, the butcher of Mithila, to understand the real meaning of righteous living. Though surprised, Kaushika was humble enough to follow her advice. Sure enough, his life transformed.

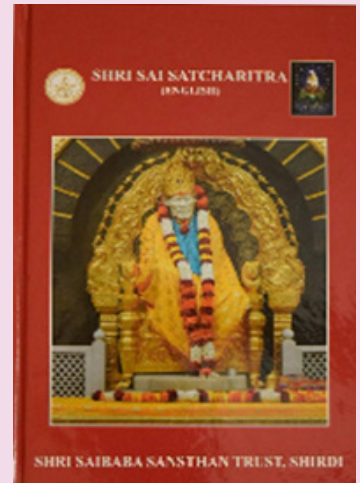
The epics and myths within our scriptures and Sai Satcharitra are sources of deep ideas that cut through the boring predictable rational mind into subtle spaces that challenge you to navigate the paradox of existence. How else would Sainath Parabrahman explain that a scavenger crow called Kakbhushundi unfolded the entire Ramayana to Garuda Deva, the king of the birds? Tulsidas was turning hierarchies and certitudes on his head.



These stories suggest that you can find wisdom in the most unlikely places – like from a butcher or a crow. Truth reveals itself occasionally – sometimes playfully, often momentarily if you are

open and willing to pause. It is like that miniature

painting of a tree with pretty white flowers falling to the ground. It is a simple pastoral image. But when you observe it closely and join the dots, the flowers form an image of Krishna, a metaphor for playfulness and wisdom and the ultimate Truth of all things.



The embarrassingly ruthless Hinduism that periodically dominates the narrative of what is an inclusive, expansive faith in its essence, has little to do with Hinduism. The Sai Satcharitra and Upanishads are about the unity of all beings and rely on gorgeous metaphors from nature: While bees gather nectar from many different flowers, honey is one. Within the deceptively linear storyline of epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana lie embedded many hologram stories filled with a magic realism that subtly nudges you into challenging yourself and rising above your biases, beyond binary thought, into a higher way of thinking. But these are never prescriptions, they are disguised in hints and riddles that first throw you off and then, if you are lucky, tweak the infrastructure of your thoughts into leading a far more harmonious, rewarding life.

According to Sai Satcharitra, no one is good or bad, right or wrong, there is simply consequence governed by the laws of the universe – the same laws that make the sunrise every day and the apple fall from the tree. Gravity does not matter whether you are rich or poor, or left or right-leaning. In the end, there is only a vast undifferentiated consciousness of Sainath Parabrahman from which all beings come and into which we all dissolve the honey we all secretly crave.



Reality Presented by Vasishta and Ashtavakra

— by **By: Ramaswamy Seshadri**

Sai Maharaj during his interactions with devotees used to quote Sage Vasishta and Ashtavakra. Many commentaries have been written on the two wisdom works, one by Sage Vasishta containing the essence of his interaction with Prince Rama, and the other, by Sage Ashtavakra, answering questions posed to him by King Janaka, the father of Sita.



Baba advised devotees to read both works as these contain valuable nuggets of deep insights that help one to come to grips with what is real and what is unreal.

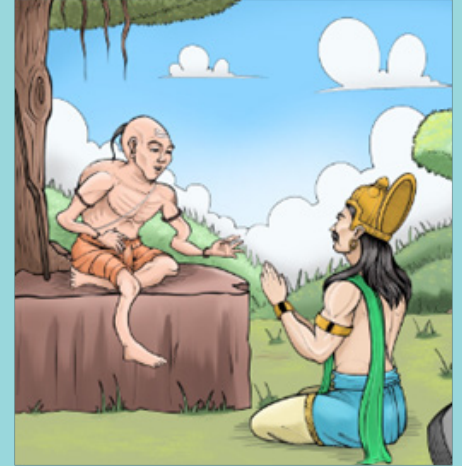
Since much is lost in translation, there are those authors who try to 'transcreate' verse, in effect, taking a bit of poetic license to interpret and present what the verse or text is trying to convey. And Sri Narasimha Swamiji in his work 'Sainath Mananam' has attempted to "time travel into the depths of the mind," in which he presents thoughts found in Yoga Vasishta and Ashtavakra Gita in 108 poems.



"You enter a dream for the heck of it / And know not the way to exit route / From the world you brought alive / In sleep, awake to desires manifest / In the raging flame that consumes / Your being stranded amidst embers / Aglow, each spark ignites your mind / Where the forest green will grow anew / Once upon a time in the future past / Luring the hunter once more / In pursuit of the game you love." Titled 'The Dreamer,' this is one among the many lyrical presentations that take one down the transcendental path, throwing open the way to realms beyond, and offering tantalizing glimpses of treasures yet to be discovered.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji refers to Yoga Vasishta profusely in his work 'Life of Sai Baba'. According to Swamiji, the Yoga Vasishta is quite dark in the open-

ing chapters as it elaborates on the depressed state of mind experienced by the young Prince Rama who is uncertain of his present and his future as king. Sage Vasishta, in an attempt to gently lead the way out of the gloom felt by the prince, successfully engages him in a series of questions and answers that serve to lighten the king-designate's burden, somewhat, and show him the light.



In the process, we, Sai devotees too, get glimpses of wonderfully expressed elaborations on subjects we dread most, like death. Writes Sri Narasimha Swamiji, "In hopelessness is hidden / The hope of life in death / Of the wandering mind / running amok here to there...."

A common thread running through the works of both Vasishta and Ashtavakra is that of the need to maintain loving detachment. This is well articulated by Janaka when he says, "Infinite is, indeed, my wealth of which nothing is mine. If Mithila is burnt, nothing that is mine is burnt." That is to say, the true Self is infinite, boundless, all-pervasive, formless, subtle, and free. According to Ashtavakra, whether you are a king or a beggar, you shine only when you are unattached. This is what Sai Maharaj wanted his devotees to imbibe.

When Kaka Dixit came to Shirdi he was contesting the elections and Baba advised him thus – 'A king, an administrator, a head of state, is expected to carry out his duties while remaining unattached, free of greed, free of boundedness. This is what makes a true leader.' Service to all is another given, which is why Nana Saheb Chandorkar as Deputy Collector would often remark, "Collector means chief servant in the district." Sai Baba meant this not only means selfless service, but it also means equanimity and humility that give no space for the ego.



Restful Sleep and Vishnu as Ananthasayana

—By: *Smt. Sunanda Anant*



A friend would phone me at the stroke of midnight and wish me luck on my birthday, but I would have no recollection of our zero-hour exchange when I woke up. She would tease me that I was such a baby, and yet, would go through the midnight ritual each year, knowing fully well that I would be 'dead to the world' at

that unearthly hour. But with the technology boom and advancing years, alas, a night of undisturbed eight hours of sleep is becoming a pipe dream, and I started listening to recorded Vishnu Sahasranama recitation before I sleep.

I started thinking about snakes, particularly 'Ananta Padmanabha.' Das Ganu Maharaj has explained about snakes and Ananta in his work 'Sant Leelamrit.' Sai Maharaj also interacted with Das Ganu Maharaj when he described Lord Sainath himself as Ananta Padmanabha.

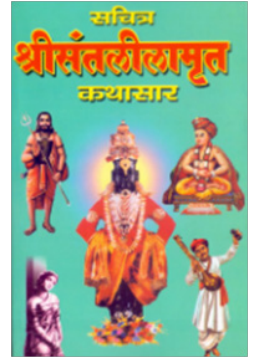
Das Ganu quotes that Vishnu the Sustainer is depicted as Ananta Padmanabha or Ananthasayana, lying on the cosmic serpent that coils itself into a bed, positioning its many hoods as a canopy. Vishnu goes into deep slumber on this bed floating on the milky ocean, his head resting on his palm. During 'Chaturmaasa', the four-month-long rainy season, Vishnu remains in deep sleep as Ananta Padmanabha. This is his way of unwinding after working hard, and it is believed that when he wakes up refreshed, creation gets rejuvenated and energized.

Sant Leelamrit quotes mythologies across cultures to give importance to sleep and some of them have special gods of sleep. The Sandman in Scandinavian and other northern European folk tales sprinkles magical dust or sand on the eyes of children to put them to sleep and enjoy sweet dreams. In Roman mythology, Somnus, the god of sleep, has a thousand sons including Morpheus, all associated with sleep and dreams. Hypnos is the god of sleep in Greek my-

thology.

The snake or serpent on which Vishnu sleeps stands for subliminal nature or innate wisdom, trickery or temptation, evil power or fertility, sexuality, spirituality, death or rebirth, fear, fascination, or both, in different religious traditions. In tantra, the image of two snakes entwined around a central staff, shows the reconciliation of opposite strands in a person, typifying the basic form of DNA, the building blocks of life, called nucleotides.

Das Ganu states that Adi Shesha or Shesha Naga, the thousand-headed snake, represents kala purusha, eternal time. He sustains the world at the time of the mahapralay - the great dissolution, so that new creation can occur.



Adi Shesha, also called Ananta, is limitless and endless. It is emblematic of Maha-kundalini Shakti, a great serpent power, which keeps existence wrapped in its fold. In human beings, this power is contained in three-and-a-half coils at the base of the spine and is called prana kundalini, individualized energy, or Agni Sarpa, fire-snake. It remains dormant in the Muladhara chakra, the lowest of seven psycho-energetic centers in the subtle body. When awakened by yogic,

tantric, or other spiritual practices, it reaches the Sahasrara chakra at the crown of the head.

The power of the Supreme works at both micro and macro levels in the body – the upward current is symbolic of Ananta, the downward of the poisonous snake Vasuki. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita – ‘Of serpents I am Vasuki...Of the Nagas, I am Ananta.’

Ananta in Ananta Padmanabha is also a symbol of Prakriti, nature, comprising five elements.

Das Ganu’s explanation is superb. The Earth is said to be supported by Adi Shesha. Under his majestic hood, rests Vishnu, with his consort Lakshmi, Goddess of beauty, prosperity, and good fortune. Garuda, Vishnu’s mount, symbolizes the human spirit that tames five instinctive vices – lust, anger, greed, infatuation, and pride – represented by the five ugly heads of Kaliya Naga which Krishna, Vishnu’s incarnation, crushed. Shesha Naga’s popular incarnations are Balarama, elder brother of Krishna, Lakshmana,

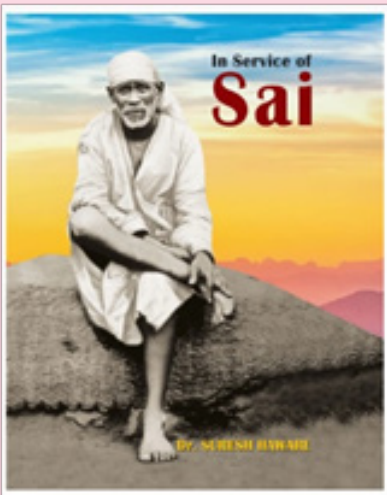
younger brother of Rama, and Patanjali, compiler of ‘Yoga Sutra,’ who is half-man and half-serpent.

In religious lore, both the Buddha and Guru Nanak were guarded by snakes during meditation. The symbol of Parshvanath, 23rd Jain Tirthankar, is a snake. He is called Panibhushana, one who is adorned by snakes.

Snakes are the progeny of sage Kashyapa and his wife Kadru. Many Hindu temples have snakes, Naga images for worship, or snake motifs on the main entrance because of the belief that they have a divine purpose in creation of which we are not aware. Expiatory rites are prescribed in the Dharma Shastras so that one can relieve oneself of sin caused by killing a snake.

Snakes preserve the balance of nature and symbolize the renewal of life. They shed worn-out skin as a part of the growing process, called ecdysis. Most snakes are non-poisonous.

BOOK REVIEW



Title : IN SERVICE OF SAI
 Author : Dr Suresh Haware
 Publisher : Prabhat Prakashan, Mumbai
 Pages : 533 Hardbound
 Cost : Rupees 750.00

This is a comprehensive biography of Shirdi Sai Baba and how we can serve closely behind our thoughts by Dr. Suresh Haware. The author came under the magnetic spell of Sai Maharaj and undertook many activities by visualizing him in every moment of life, as a role model to others. There are references to other contemporary saints. The author has stressed reverence for additional saints.

Reviewed by: **Lakshmi Narayana Sharma**



**Don't HURRY,
 Don't WORRY,
 Because, "HARI"
 WILL TAKE CARE,
 OF YOU, therefore,
 Stay blessed with a strong,
 SteadFast Faith and Patience...**

**DON'T WORRY
 DON'T HURRY**



Be A Sweet Child
 Dr. Ravish Singh's
 Pictorial Message for Kids





The MelodyFlows only through a Knot-free Flute

Beloved Children,
Aum Namō Sainathaya

Sainath Parabrahman narrated to children at Shirdi a story in the Puranas about Krishna's flute. Rukmini, Krishna's wife, asked the flute, "What is the secret to Krishna keeping you so close to him always? It is only when he bathes that he leaves you behind." The flute replied, "I do not know. The one thing I do know is that I am empty. I do not have any inner blocks. I am ready for the Lord to take over me entirely." I am close to his thoughts.

Das Ganu Maharaj, who is an accomplished poet commented on this story, beautifully describing the sweetness of the flute and three lessons to be learned from it. First, the flute is sweet because it only sings when it is blown. In contrast, people open their mouths and talk when not required. Second, the flute played well resulting in melody. Likewise, people should ensure that whatever they say is always sweet. Finally, the melody and sweetness flow through a flute because it is free of knots.

Sant Kabir said, "Aisee Vani Boliye, Man Ka Aapa Khoye, Auran ko Sheetal Kare, Aap bhi Sheetal



Hoye." This translates into, "Speak in a manner that makes others feel calm, and you will also become calm, bereft of ego."

The Upanishads call this Hridaya Granthi. People are noisy because there are many knots within. They are not empty; therefore, the sweetness of their beings does not emerge. The flute only sings when it is blown into; its melody is sweet when it sings, and it is free from inner knots.

Sai Baba nodded his approval and called upon children to be empty like the flute. If one is empty as a flute, there is an understanding that is beyond

words – wordless wisdom. Our entire education system is based on words, Shabda. Hence, the Vedas say words try to unfold the truth; however, it cannot be grasped through words. Listening is an art, and teaching is an art. Only when



these two arts meet, can the music flow.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji records in his book 'Life of Sai Baba' - there was a particularly anxious son. He was tense because his friends were receiving presents from their parents; however, his father did not give him anything. He had completed his education and got a job in Pune. He expected something from his father. The son thought, "I have passed my exams and got a job in Pune. My father will surely give me something." He always wanted a motorcycle. He expressed his wish to his father, but since the father was a retired old man, it was not possible. The father told his son, "Now that you have graduated and got a job in Pune I will give you a gift." He gave his son a copy of the Bhagavad Gita. The son was not pleased with the gift. Disgusted, he took the book, placed it in his luggage, and left for Pune.

Within a few days of reaching Pune, he received the news that his father died. He remembered the gift his father gave him – the Bhagavad Gita that he had not bothered to open. He took out the Gita, and as he turned the pages, a key fell. This was when he realized that his father had indeed bought him a motorcycle and placed the key in the Gita.

Yours SAI BABALy
THE SAI AURA team



Complimentary Copy. Not for Sale.