



AURA of SHIRDI SAI

(A Sai Aura Publication)

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Chief Editor : Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar Editor : Amit Gattadahalli

Advisory Board : Chikballapur Shankarnarayan Dinesh

Sanjay M. Padia

Website : www.AuraofShirdiSai.org

Cover Design : Venkatesh R.
Videography : Goutham Nerusu

Website Design and Developed by: Unbound Codes

Address : No. 32, 'Ranganatha Kempammadevi Nilaya'

1st Floor, 10 C Main, 1st Block Jayanagar Bengaluru, Karnataka 560011, INDIA

Phone : +91-9110408988 (WhatsApp only)

+1-7035982213

E-Mail : info@AuraOfShirdiSai.org

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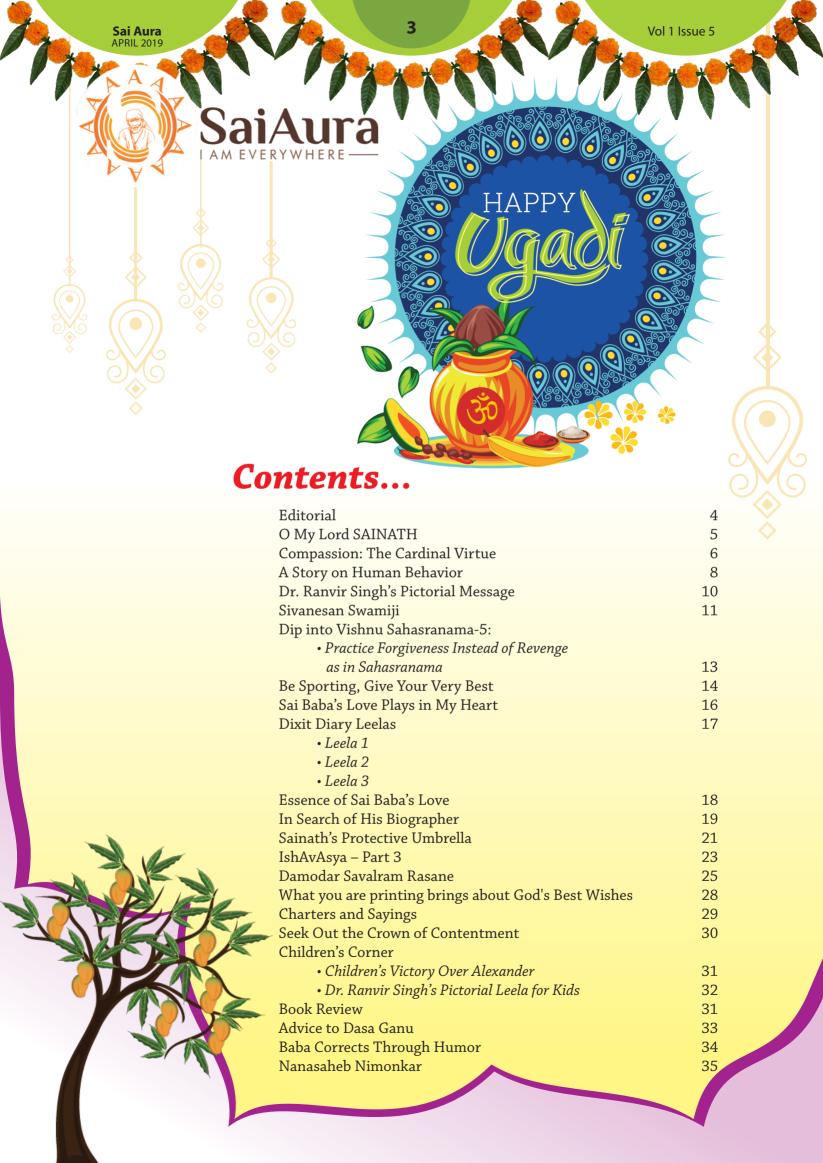
232/4, 4th Main Srinivasanagar Bengaluru, Karnataka 560050, INDIA

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First Word

saw a movie at Las Vegas USA during my short visit in May 2017. In this film a devotee had the opportunity to take God's job. He found out quickly that God is bombarded with endless complaints and prayers from billions of people requesting things, all at the same time. In fact, in this humorous movie, when God checked his email there were millions of email messages of complaints and requests. It may be a funny film, but it has some truth in it.

EDITORIAL

We pray to Sai Baba because we want blessings to come just the way we want. We include an instruction manual with our prayer telling Sai Baba how we want those blessings to come. When they don't come the way we want, we disregard the fact that Si Baba sent his blessings anyway. If we look back on the blessings later in life, we realize that what Sai Baba sent us was far better than what we had imagined or asked for.

Will a mother allow the child to have poison, even if the child demands it and throws a tantrum? Instead, the mother will give the child what is best for him. The child may not realize it at that time but as the child grows, the child is grateful for all the things the mother denied him that were ultimately not good. Sai Satcharitra has many references, as Sai Baba refered to light, fire, moon, radiance and effulgence in several instances in his interactions as practical aspects of the bondage of human existence. In the Gita, when Arjuna beholds the cosmic form of Krishna, he says: "If the splendor of a thousand suns were to blaze forth all at once in the sky, that would be the splendor of that Paramatma". Arjuna is able to see a spectrum of colors in that exalted form exuding a blazing radiance.

Let us recall the poem 'Lead kindly light' by John Newman. Here the light being referred to is Lord Almighty and the poet prays that he is encircled by the darkness of gloom and, although during his youth, pride ruled his will, the time has come when he no longer can find his own way. He prays the 'Kindly Light' to lead him on the right path.

We often hear great men urging us to follow the Guru within, but perhaps when we sit before his 'samadhi' shrine that Sai Baba blesses us in an inimitable manner. We always invoke Sai Baba to shed light on us: "Lead us from unreal to real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality".

Our prayers should be for the blessings in general, for Sai Baba knows best what is good for us. Praying for something has some pitfalls. There is a danger of disappointment, depression and loss of faith. But when we don't pray for anything other than what Sai Baba wants to give there is no danger of disappointment. The two paise 'Dakshina' of 'Shradda' and 'Saburi' leads us to this stage.

May Sai Baba bless us all.

O My Lord SAINATH

by Dr. A.R. Mohapatra

Lord Sainath! You are Omnipotent You are Omniscient You are in all.

O Lord Sainath! You are kind and great Love and blessed Truth and beauty.

O Lord Sainath! You are power of all powers Sweet and sublime Pure and perfect.

O Lord Sainath! You are Soul of all self God of the Universe Friend of all.

O Lord Sainath! You are within and without Forms or no forms Qualities or no qualities.

O Lord Sainath! You are Thy grace supreme Doer of all good Destiny of all JIVAS

O Lord Sainath! You are the principal guide Shelter of all Devotion of devotees.

O Lord Sainath! You are eternal creation Sustainer of all Destroyer of the universe

COMPASSION: THE CARDINAL VIRTUE

by **Sri Narasimha Swamiji**

of the question 'What should be the object of one's love?', Shankaracharya in his 'Prashnottara Ratnamalika' answers, 'kindness towards the miserable and friendship with the good'. He goes to say that even the Gods offer their salutations 'to the one whose main virtue is daya, and kindness'. For devotees of Sai Baba, compassion is the highest virtue.

Compassion means placing one's mind in the other's favor, to understand the other from his own perspective. It involves active sympathy or willingness to share the pain of others and to alleviate their suffering.

The dictionary meaning of compassion is "sympathetic pity and concern for others". Compassion is the state of mind in which one sees all living beings as part or extension of one's own self. In it everyone's suffering is seen as one's own suffering. It is an attempt to ease the suffering of all living beings, including the ones who are strangers; even those who are one's foes.

Compassion is not a passive state of mind. It is not merely wishing for the happiness of others but adopting means and engaging in acts that lead to the removal of such suffering. It is an active endeavor to free others from their suffering.

Genuine compassion according to Sai Baba must have both wisdom and loving kindness. That is, understanding the nature of suffering (wisdom), and experience intimacy and empathy with other sentiment beings(loving kindness).

Sai Baba led a life in which there is no 'other' in compassion. Í am Brahman, so are you'. Since all

beings are manifestation of Brahma, there is an essential identity between all beings. There is no boundary separating a person from all else in the universe. So, alienation from others amounts to alienation from oneself.

While Baba was on his begging rounds, two or three dogs followed him wagging their tails. The mothers who happily offered food to Baba never even once bothered about these hungry dogs! Baba was aware of this!

On reaching the mosque, Baba would lovingly call the dogs, the birds and the pigs that watched him from a distance. He would pour the contents of his sack and tumbler into a stone bowl kept at the entrance. The dogs and pigs rushed, and the birds swooped to feast on this free-for-all meals! Baba moved away to light up his 'chillum' while these creatures barked, growled and clamored – but ate together their daily fare which they got without any effort. Baba watched it all as he smoked but never chased them away.

Satisfied with the feast, the animals moved away leaving only a little for Baba. Baba then came near the bowl and ate the cribbles left for him! With that he satisfied his hunger – as he did in those early days! Baba was God in human garb and practiced what he preached. He believed that divinity is present in all creatures. To show disrespect towards them is like disregarding the divinity that existed in each of them!

Apart from this, in the initial stages, Baba was the village Doctor. He used to treat all diseases. Whether it was Leprosy, Plague or Cholera he

used to treat all patients. For Baba Saheb Dengale and his brother Nana Saheb Dengale from Neemgaon, he gave progeny. He treated eye disorders tying up with mashed anacardium nuts.

Sai Aura

In his early days at Shirdi, Baba had undertaken the mission of service to the sick and disabled. He would visit them, treat them and nurse them at their homes with herbs and medicinal plants. Sitting near them He would reassure them with His sweet and compassionate words. His loving behavior made them happy and their bodies and minds recovered in no time! The miracle on the Deepawali day in 1860, attracted many villagers from the neighborhood to seek his blessings and hopes of divine healing many incurable diseases and other miseries. Many lepers had come for cure!

Sai Baba is a role model of our Vedic prayer:

"My He protect us together

Nourish us together

May our studies shine and be effective and

May we not hate others."

Our motto should be:

"Be good and do good

Simple living and high thinking."

Our prayers should be -

"Let noble thoughts come to us from every side"

In short, compassion is the most efficacious way for all to realize Sai Baba. It equally applies to the learned and the illiterate. At the very first step of Sai-Bhakti all distinctions of birth, and social status vanishes. Once we develop compassion, Sai Baba will ensure our steady progress.

A Story on Human Behavior

by Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji

hen I was with Sri Narasimha Swamiji at Madras in the early nineteen forties, a devotee came to him and confessed that she resented a prominent devotee of All India Sai Samaj. Sri Narasimha Swamiji said to her, "Go to her immediately. Don't try to justify yourself. Tell her that you have had unkind thoughts about her. Be humble and ask for forgiveness."

The woman said, "I can't forget the hurt she had inflicted on me."But Sri Narasimha Swamiji told her that she holds a grudge against her and there is a danger of hurt leading to hatred which makes her miserable. Sai Baba has stated that the 'Divine' has assumed different names and forms and has manifested in realized persons so that they could guide sincere seekers on the path of transcendence. Some great spiritual experiences bestowed upon disciples through their Guru may not be even known to the Guru. This is because Divine Consciousness is utilizing the form of the physical Guru as an instrument to help genuine seekers in their evolution. Thus, all Gurus, avatars and prophets put together represent 'One Reality'. This Divine Consciousness is timeless and omniscient. 'Dakshinamurthy' is the teacher of all teachers.

When we surrender ourselves before the Divine, this seed of omniscience is positioned in us and in due course of time it sprouts and flourishes, thereby dissolving all falsehoods. Whenever a seeker has the sincere aspiration to progress, Divine Consciousness graciously appears on the scene either in its original formless state or by assuming a form to guide the person. There are some seekers who keep on searching for an ideal Guru! What is required is



deep faith. Do not bother about external attributes or practices.

Sai Baba is close behind our thoughts as an avatar of Divine Consciousness. His devotees do not require mantra, tantra, pothi, pilgrimage, fasting, rituals and study of love because He himself is the final destination to be sought (Satchidananda). He is love, truth, ananda.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji told the devotee that had approached him the story of Sai Baba serving a common fakir Jawahar Ali who visited Shirdi sometime in 1870 and claimed to be the Guru of Sai Baba. He knew Koran by heart. He was a good conversationist. Besides Koran, he had studied Ramayana, Gita, Bhagavatha etc., from which he used to quote profusely and had won arguments

with many scholars. This had made him very proud! He started scheming a plan! He thought that Sai Baba was an ordinary and immature fakir and as such could be easily controlled!

Many devotees came and touched Baba's feet. He also treated a few patients with his herbal medicines. Jawahar Ali watched all this. He moved through Baba's devotees, enquiring them about Baba. Then he began to believe that Baba knew some witchcraft. His mind began to think that he should learn this witchcraft from Baba! To achieve his own end Jawahar Ali had planned to separate Baba from his devotees in Shirdi.

Both went to Rahata. Sai Baba was serving Jawahar Ali like a menial servant. It was intolerable. At last Shirdi villagers were able to bring back both Baba and Jawahar Ali. Devidas was happy that Sai Baba had come back to Shirdi. However, he did not like the idea of Jawahar Ali staying with Sai Baba and calling himself the Guru of a divine personality! He decided to put an end to this.

Destiny also desired it! Janakidas arrived in Shirdi after four days. He was also a great saint like Devidas. While in Shirdi, Devidas stayed in Maruthi temple and Janakidas stayed in Mahadev temple.

With the arrival of Janakidas in Shirdi, Devidas thought out a plan. For four days, Devidas had watched Sai Baba serving Jawahar Ali like an ordinary menial. Jawahar Ali's arrogance had come down, but his boasting had increased. He would never miss an opportunity to exhibit his learning of the Hindu and Muslim scriptures. Devidas decided to put Jawahar Ali's knowledge to test. He invited Jawahar Ali to take part in a debate between Janakidas and himself on spirituality. Devidas invited villagers from Rahata and other places to attend it. The open place outside Chawadi was selected as the venue. Jawahar Ali, whose knowledge was only limited to vain boastings was confident of winning over Devidas and Janakidas. The ground in front of the Chawadi was filled on debate day to capacity

with crowd from different places apart from the local public.

Jawahar Ali was given the first opportunity to speak. He was an eloquent speaker, quoted profusely from Koran, Gita, Ramayana and other classics and tried to prove the superiority of Islam religion and Koran above all. The audience was spellbound by Jawahar Ali's lecture and people wondered as to how Devidas would defend!

Devidas challenged Jawahar Ali in the beginning itself. He said, "One who has not understood his own religion has no right to meddle with other religions and their scriptures!" Jawahar Ali was furious! He shouted—"What? You want to talk about our holy Koran?" "Yes, about Koran and Islam! I want to clearly point out as to how you have misunderstood your own religion." It was an open accusation by Devidas. "That is fine! I want you to teach me Koran now so that I understand it!" Jawahar Ali spoke to ridicule him.

One after the other, Devidas quoted from Koran in Persian language and interpreted in an impressive manner. He compared them with references to Gita, similar thoughts in Buddhist scriptures and hymns from the Bible.

In a very simple and lucid style, Devidas explained the tenets of Islam in a very convincing manner. For the first time, the rustic villagers were exposed to an intimate knowledge of various religions. The Hindus among the audience learnt about Islam and realized as to how they had misunderstood their Muslim brothers. Similarly, the Muslims felt elevated to learn the noble principles of their religion from a Hindu saint and also had a clear insight about Hinduism.

Devidas spoke for two hours. He was shining with a divine luster. People were deeply immersed in his discourse. They came to reality only when Devidas completed his speech. Everyone turned to see how Jawahar Ali would defend himself. To their surprise, he was not there. He had already sneaked away! This is indeed a lesson to shed arrogance.

Dr. Ranvir Singh's Pictorial Message



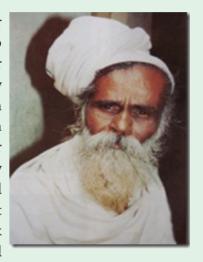
Sivanesan Swamiji

by Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar

RI Sivanesan Swamiji introduced Nama Japa by chanting "Om Sai Sri Sai Jaya Jaya Sai" by groups. He advised the devotees about 'Pradakshina' around the Gurusthan, Nanda Deep and Dutta Mandir for their good. During the four and a half decades, that Swamiji spent in Shirdi, he became the best apostle of Sai Baba. Sree Sivanesan Swamiji was born as the third and last child of Smt. Alamelu and Shri. Muthaiah on 12th April 1927 on the holy day of Ramnavami in Peria Nayakkan Palayam in Coimbatore District in Tamil Nadu. He was born with the blessings of Lord Ram. At the time of his birth, the child had already two front teeth and a 'jata' (a small tuft of hair at the back of the head) and the astrologers foretold that he would not lead the life of a householder but would become an ascetic or sanyasi. From his early childhood, he started withdrawing from the worldly matters and used to be alone, calm and meditative and sometimes used to forget about his food. He was fond of loneliness.

He had very fond memories of his maternal grandmother at whose home he spent lot of time happily and was also liking his paternal uncle who had a good collection of books which he greatly loved. He had for maleducation only upto the eighth standard but did not like further studies, even though he belonged to a family of good standing with comfortable means. He had a wonderful memory. He was originally an atheist and later became a devotee of Baba.

Later on, he worked as a Record Room Assistant in the High Court in Madras on a temporary basis for a short time. He also worked as a helper in the Electricity Department on daily wages in Coimbatore for some time at a very young age and actually he was not eligible to work based on his age and



used to hide himself in the nearby fields when the Inspecting officials were visiting the Department. He also worked as a sales assistant in a bookshop which he liked very much because he loved reading books. But as he showed more interest in reading the books than in selling them, he was removed from the job.

After the death of his mother, he left his home and did not return to his native place. He had developed lot of interest towards spiritual learning. He reached Bombay in his wanderings during 1944 at 17 years of age. He did many sundry jobs for his livelihood. He also worked as a railway porter at a railway station. He was fond of meditating and was also meditating in the seashore area.

Later he met Muthaiah Swamiji, who also hailed from Coimbatore District. Though Muthaiah Swamiji was a householder, he considered Swamiji as his GURU and achieved some spiritual progress from his guidance and learnt about meditation and vedanta. For some

time, he stayed in Bombay and then moved to the 'math' of Sree Nityanand Swamiji at Vajreshwari where he had achieved much spiritual progress. Then he moved to Tryambakeshwar, in Nasik District and was with Mauni Baba in that place. He then finally left for Shirdi in 1953.

Finally, he made Shirdi his home. But in Shirdi, there was no place for him to stay and sleep and no scope for him to get food. He was sleeping here and there, living on a cup of tea and sometimes was eating some flowers and many times starved himself. With Baba's Grace, he got some shelter and was getting some food daily. When he arrived at Shirdi, he brought with him some books which he considered as his treasure as he liked the books and was interested in reading them. He was spending his time in Shirdi by doing seve (services) at all the temples in Shirdi, including Dwarakamai, Chavadi and Lendi Bagh. All other time he spent in deep meditation.

On being pleased with his dedicated services, the Shirdi Sai Sansthan allowed him to sleep in a room adjoining the Dwarakamai. As he knew several languages, he was entrusted with the work of writing names and addresses on the envelopes used for sending Udi as 'prasad' to the devotees who sent money orders to Shirdi. In return for these services, the Sansthan started paying him Rs.15/- per month as honorarium. The honorarium money was utilized by him for the needs of the devotees and others. He was concentrating more on decorating the Chavadi especially for the 'Palki' procession on Thursdays.

He was keen in helping the devotees in the spiritual path He encouraged devotees to set up Sai Baba temples in their own towns and villages in India and abroad with Dhuni with perpetual light and fire. He began to have a vast following because of his innate urge to serve people. The practice of performing Akanda Nama Japa by chanting "Om Sai Sri Sai Jaya Jaya Sai", by groups of devotees was started by him. Thus, he was also instrumental for spreading the messages of Baba to all the places.

His life was simple. His clothes consisted of cotton towel wrapped round his waist, a Maharashtrian vestment with a pocket and half sleeves, and a small towel wrapped round his head to cover his long hair as a turban as shown in his picture above. All items of dress, dhotis, shawls and sweaters presented to him were not at all used by him but distributed to the poor and needy. Even three days before his Mahasamadhi, he arranged distribution of the blankets and bed sheets, received during his short period of illness. He always slept on the floor, spreading a blanket and thick bedspread on the floor; his seat was a gunnysack, with a paper stuffed pillowcase as a bolster. He did not care for the scorching sun and the rain and distributed the umbrellas he received. He did not wear any footwear during his entire stay in Shirdi and always moved with bare feet.

He sang several bhajans which he knew by heart in sweet voice, some of which he himself had composed and the devotees got some of these bhajans printed in booklets. He believed and advised the devotees in Dhuni Puja and participation in Satyanarayana Puja for their good. He strongly advocated 'Anna-dana' as the best charity.

He breathed his last at 00.10 hrs on Monday, 12th February 1996, at Shirdi and merged with Sai Baba; Many believe that the swinging of the lantern in the Dwarakamai indicated this merger. Sivanesan Swamiji's samadhi was built in Shirdi, off Pimpalwadi Road, two and a half kilometers awayby Smt. Zarine and her associates.

Swamiji often sang: "Haridwar, Mathura, Kashi Shirdi mein teerth saare hain, Sai Baba ke charano mein Charo dhama hamare hain." conveying the meaning that Shirdi is a pilgrimage place in which Haridwar, Mathura and Kashi are all embraced and encompassed. All the four great places of worship are found at Sai Baba's Holy Feet.

Dip into Vishnu Sahasranama-5:

Practice Forgiveness Instead of Revenge as In Sahasranama

by Seetha 'Priya'

lmost every day of our lives, we face experiences, big or small, which is inescapable. One has two options either ignore it or try to take some counter measure. The first option is a form of forgiveness, while the other amounts to seeking revenge. Which is the better option? We must decide by looking at the outcome, for that will be the determining factor.

Forgiveness is the better option, for it is based on a proven formula for saving yourself from even worse experiences. For example, forgiveness saves you from unworthy distractions, saves your precious time, and saves you from creating even more problems. It is an instant solution to any problem. On the contrary taking revenge is bound to complicate the problem, for that means making everything from bad to verse. Where forgiveness can buy time, taking revenge just wastes without any benefit.

In such a situation, people are generally prone

to place the onus for the predicament entirely upon others. But this is an unwise reaction. The better plan is to examine one's own role in the affair. In other words, if you are having some sad experience, don't focus on the other party. Think about your own self and adopt a course of action better for you. At many times in our lives we are faced with two kinds of choices – thinking against the other and pro-self-thinking. Thinking against others makes you descend to the brute level, whereas pro-self-thinking elevates you to a higher plane of human behavior.

The fourth Shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama denotes forgiveness as a full-stop and revenge punctuated by commas. It is –

'Sarvah Sharvah Shivah Sthanuh Bhootadhihi Nidhihi Avyayaha

Sambhavaha Bhavano Bharta Prabhavah Prabhu-reeshwarah'



Our Para Brahman Lord Sainath is 'Sarva' the all in all for us, 'Sharva' the destroyer of all our disturbances and negative aspects, the constant 'Sthanuh' as the source of all beings – 'Bhootadhi', his lotus feet is our 'Nidhihi' where we rest in peace and it is unchangeable the 'Avyayaha'. Lord Sainath is the Manifestation as 'Sambhavaha', He is the distributor as in 'Bhavana' and ultimately as 'Bharta' sustains us. Sai Baba is of superior origin as in 'Prabhavah' and powerful as 'Prabhu' and indeed the great as 'Eshwara'.

Therefore, when we surrender to Lord Sainath, he instills in us forgiveness to end an unwanted situation. Otherwise it will extend endlessly. Forgiveness maintains your positive thinking uninterruptedly while revenge fosters negativity. And negative thinking can lead to all kinds of evil actions.

Dada Kelkhar was in-charge of Sathe wada and he was running it ruthlessly. When a devotee was cutting onions in the wada, Kelkhar objected and insulted her. When she came to Sai Baba, he corrected her not to adopt a tit-for-tat policy, as it might lead to a chain of action-reaction. Sai Baba demonstrated that forgiveness puts an end to the problem once and for all, while a tit-for-tat only aggravates and prolongs it. Shama argued with Baba that the policy of forgiveness will only encourage others to further wrongdoing. Sai Baba said it runs counter to the law of nature.

Bhishma in the Sahasranama points out the word 'Sharva' that the Lord destroys every disturbance of human being who is born with an ego and a conscience. If you follow the tit-for-tat policy, it will arouse the ego of the other party, whereas if you follow the policy of forgiveness, it will activate the other person's conscience. It is a fact that in controversial matters, the conscience always plays a positive role.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji in his masterpiece 'Life of Sai Baba' states that forgiveness and revenge are two different moral cultures. The culture of forgiveness helps in the building of a better society where positive values flourish, the spirit of cooperation prevails, where desperate groups come together and turn themselves into a peaceful society. The outcome of vengefulness is quite the reverse. A revenge culture creates an environment of mistrust, in which everyone takes others to be his rivals. This rules out the growth of a healthy society.

Sooner or later, everyone is bound to do something wrong. Then the saying 'To err is human' should be borne in mind. This being so, taking revenge means making not just one mistake, but making mistake after mistake. On the contrary, forgiveness means undoing wrongs with rights. If to err is human, to forgive is even more human.

Hemadpant prays to Sai Baba –

"Destroy from their roots evil tendencies and argumentative habits.

Let our tongues get a passion for chanting the name, O'pure, Sairaya!

"Grant to me the ability to love you so intensely that I may forget all my

Resolves, doubts, even my body and home. Take away my ego also

"Make me ever remember your name and forget all other things.

Remove the restlessness of the mind and make it steady and calm.

"If you just clasp us, the darkness of night of our ignorance will vanish and

We shall live happily in your light. What more can we desire?

"That you made us drink the nectar of your life story and awakened us

From our slumber is due to your grace. Isn't this something extra-ordinary"

(Sai Satcharita Chapter 25, Ovi 117-121)

BE SPORTING, GIVE YOUR VERY BEST

by B. Rajeshwari

here is a joke about Jesus viewing a football match between 'Catholic Conquerors' and 'Protestant Punchers'. Both teams were excellent, the match was exciting and applauded appreciatively. Then the Punchers scored. Again, Jesus jumped up, whistled and clapped riotously. Puzzled, a spectator near him asked, "Which side are you shouting for?" Jesus replied, "I am not cheering for any side. I am just enjoying the game!"The man turned to his neighbor and sneered, "Hmmm, look at the atheist".

If Rama, Krishna, Sai Baba or any other Mahatma was asked which team he was for, and which against, would any of them choose just one and condemn others? I think not. Many might also frown upon juxtaposing sports with spirituality. The entire Sai Satcharitra revolves around the theme – 'Give the best of yourself'.

Around 1870 or so, a Rohilla came to Shirdi and he was more of a nuisance as he disturbed



everybody's sleep. Nobody knew from where he came, and no one knew when he would leave! He was a nuisance as he would be reciting loudly the kalams from the Koran in the dead of the night and walking along the streets

of the village, unmindful of what others felt! He did not sleep nor allowed anyone to sleep peacefully!

This went on every night. Baba listened to Rohilla's recitations peacefully. Tatya and Mhalsapathy could not even sleep for a minute and were feeling miserable. They could not do anything as Baba was enjoying it.

The hard working villagers spent their nights cursing for want of sleep! Ultimately, they approached Baba for help. Baba calmly listened to them but supported Rohilla. Baba pacified the villagers – "Brothers, he is the only man who takes God's name day and night! I know it disturbs you. He is troubled by his wife. To avoid it, he is chanting Koran. How can I stop him? He will repeat them till he gets tired one day and will leave this place! Let us bear with him till such time and enjoy the bliss of the Divine name!"

The villagers could argue no more. Rohilla did not have any wife. What Baba matters, ever! That night the villagers slept happily.

Sport' stems from the old French expression 'desporter' derived from the Latin 'deportare'. Sai Baba encouraged Gymnastics and other community sports. In fact he not only actively participated in those events but also set up the practice of shaking hands, embrace or share a meal after the intense contest.

You cannot cross a yawning chasm with a series of little jumps; only mighty leap would work. So, be sporting. Sri Narasimha Swamiji concludes, "Give life your very best, spend your life on what really matters and lasts forever."

Sai Baba's Love Plays in My Heart

by Usha Ranganathan

n the temple of my heart Dwells a beautiful babe Of surpassing charm Its name is Sai Baba's love It wanders freely inside the temple Throwing light wherever it goes A festival of flowers of varied hues Adorn the soft pathway The pools of crystal water shine Here and there in its light The tiny birds with multi-dyed feather Fly lightly over the bewitching scene Strains of the music fill the fragrant air Throbbing with sweetest 'OM SAI RAM' Sai Baba's love hovers all things Sai Baba's presence permeates space Sai Baba smiles – a smile unique Radiating joy and peace for ever and ever And Sai Baba manifests the entire universe

Now it alone is – all is it.

Dixit's Dairy

Leela 1

Sai Aura

Two or three days after Baba's Samadhi, He appeared at Santacruz to the sister-in-law of Shri. M.W. Pradhan, in her sleep and told her, "You have a Pitambar (Yellow cloth) in your bag. Send it to Shirdi for being used as a cover over my tomb". She had kept that Pitambar aside for several years and had clean forgotten all about it. After waking up in the morning, she informed Shri. M.W. Pradhan of her dream. The Pitambar was taken out of the bag and was sent to Shirdi. It was thereafter being used (1923) to cover the Samadhi.

Leela 2

Dwarkanath Pradhan came to Shirdi for Shri Baba's Darshan. He brought a letter with him from his father-in-law addressed to Shri. Baba, in which the illness of Mrs. Pradhan was mentioned. He handed over the letter to Shri. Baba who held that letter upside down and just murmured "Is she going". I (H.S. Dixit) heard those words; but the other could not hear clearly. The letter was read out. The sickness of Mrs. Pradhan

was mentioned therein. After reading out the letter Dwarkanath asked Shri. Baba, "When shall I bring my wife?" Baba replied, "In four days she will come". Exactly after four days that lady expired, and the devotees wondered.

Leela 3

One day when H.S. Dixit was at Shirdi, at 2 p.m, Baba asked him, "Has Pradhan come?" Shri Dixit said, "No" further he added "Baba, shall I send for him?"

"Yes!" Baba replied.

The day when Shri Baba remembered M.W. Pradhan, he was in the High Court of Bombay and while sitting with some people, all of a sudden, he fell down unconscious. At the time of falling he remembered Baba. Seeing M.W. Pradhan in unconscious condition his friends ran up to assist him and to restore him to consciousness; but after a while he himself got up without any one's help and went home to Santacruz by train. The next day BalaShimpi of Shirdi came to Pradhan at Bombay with Baba's Udi and a letter from H.S. Dixit mentioning that Baba was remembering him on the previous day.

This is an excellent instance showing how Baba runs to the help of his devotees in trouble.

Amir Shukkur belonged to Korhale village in Kopergoan taluk. He was a butcher by profession and went to Mumbai. He earned a lot of money as a broker in Bandra slaughter house at Mumbai. He developed a disease called Rheumatoid Arthritis characterized with pain in all joints. After all treatments 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.

Essence of Sai Baba's Love

by Smt.Maheshwari

evotees of Sai Baba may think the hand of Sai Baba behind everything that happens. Human tendency is to blame God for misfortunes, bad luck, failure, sickness, sorrows, someone's death or even any disasters. But these do not come from Lord Sainath at all. Sri Narasimha Swamiji says, "God does not cause our misfortunes. Some are caused by bad luck, others are caused by people, and still others are simply an inevitable consequence of our being human and mortal, living in a world of inflexible natural laws."

The painful things that happen to us are not punishment for our misbehavior as we presume, nor are they in any way a grand design on God's part. Because the tragedy is not God's will, we need not feel betrayed by God when tragedy strikes. Instead, we can turn to him for help for overcoming it; we can tell ourselves that God is as outraged by the tragedy as we are.

Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji has pointed out that no one is free of all sorrows. There always comes a day in our lives when we experience bereavement, bad luck, sickness, defamation, or any other setback and in our pain and sorrow so much so that we let guilt, jealousy, and self-imposed loneliness make the bad situation even worse. Our sorrows can bring understanding as well as pain. Pain makes us sensitive, compassionate and attentive. Out of love and sorrow can come a compassion that endures. What is important is not luxury but love, not wealth but wisdom, not gold but goodness. Out of love may come sorrow but out of sorrow can come light for others who dwell in darkness. Out of the light we bring to others will come light for ourselves -- the light of solace, strength, of transfiguring and consecrating purpose.

We must laud God and tell him that we need to have hope, hope that our suffering has not been in vain, hope that eventually all suffering will be overcome, and hope that eventually we are always his partners in life. Baba's message 'You look to me, I shall look to you' is the essence of Baba's love towards us.



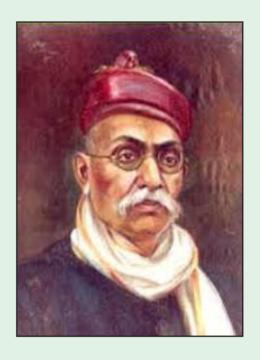
IN SEARCH OF HIS BIOGRAPHER

by B.S. Krishna Murthy

nna Saheb Dabholkar was a special devotee of Sai Baba, as he was His biographer. He was the Residential Magistrate in Mumbai and was a self-made man. He had come up in life through hardship and was proud of his achievement. He was of strong conviction that for a person to attain a status life all that is required was hard work and scholarship. Anna Saheb Dabholkar, Kaka Dixit and Nana Sahib Chandorkar were friends and whenever they met, they would discuss Vedas, Upanishads and philosophy.But they had divergent views. Kaka Dixit was immediately drawn towards Sai Baba in the very first meeting. Nana Sahib Chandorkar was prejudiced at first and it took sometime for him to be an ardent devotee. Anna Saheb Dabholkar was a great scholar and Sai Baba desired that his services should be made available as biographer. Even though aware of his views, Sai Baba prompted Kaka Dixit to guide Anna Saheb Dabholkar to have Sai Baba's darshan.

Sai Aura

When Kaka Dixit described his visit to Shirdi and termed Sai Baba as his Sadguru, Anna Saheb Dabholkar ridiculed him – "Dixit, excuse me!I thought that with your education and background of visiting several countries, you will be a little more sensible than any of us. With one visit to a fakir in a mosque, you are calling him a Sadguru! It is simply idiotic! How can any Sadguru protect you? A man should stand on his feet and look after his own progress! For that you do not require a Sadguru! Look at myself! I studied up to fifth class, then passed Pleader's course, became a Munshi, then a Deputy Collector and ultimately a Resident Magistrate too! I read the Vedas, I



studied philosophy and all this without a Sadguru! Compared to me you are far more educated and learned! Why do you need a Sadguruatall?"

During this period, the glory of Baba had dazzled the world! Dabholkar too had heard many stories about him through number of reliable people. This had set him rethinking about his own opinion. Even Nana Saheb Chandorkar had told him so much about Sai Baba, being a judge himself, he decided to study all details personally before forming his own opinion and coming to any conclusion. He knew that Kaka Dixit's infatuation for Sai Baba was increasing day by day. He had seen that irrespective of what others thought, Dixit visited Shirdi quite often. Under the circumstances, as promised to Dixit's wife, Dabholkar felt he must meet the fakir in Shirdi to

assess his own opinion and decide the matter once for all! For that he planned to visit Shirdi after Holi festival.

But Sai Baba had a different plan. On the night prior to Holi festival, Baba appeared in Dabholkar's dream and told him that he was going to visit them next day for lunch! Dabholkar had seen Baba's picture at Kaka Dixit's house. So he could guess it was Sai Baba who appeared in the dream. He woke up with a start. Nana Chandorkar had also told him that Baba visited people in dreams too. That made him believe that he would certainly pay him a visit next day and have lunch with them. He was glad! He thought that would save his trip to Shirdi as he could thrash out the matter with Sai Baba personally at his own place. And if it is proved that he is a real saint he would be a follower like Dixit!

Next morning Dabholkar asked his wife to prepare a little extra food for Sai Baba who was expected for lunch. She was immensely happy! She had heard a lot about this great saint. Since her husband was prejudiced against him, she could not visit Shirdi as many of her relatives did. Naturally she was very happy now that Baba was visiting them Himself. Dabholkar invited many of his relatives for lunch on account of Holi festival. For Sai Baba, Dabholkar 's wife prepared special sweets!

The guests arrived! Wooden seats were arranged on the floor. Between two rows a special seat was placed for Sai Baba. Rangoli was drawn and leaves were placed. Food was served. The guests occupied their seats having waited long for Sai Baba. It was noon and everybody was hungry. Dabholkar was restless and was moving in and out eagerly waiting for Sai Baba. He had simply informed the guests that Sai Baba is coming. He

did not tell them it was a dream vision. Now he was wondering that a rational minded person like him has fallen flat for a dream vision! Atlast he bolted the door and sat for lunch. There was a knock on the door and a call 'Anna Saheb, Anna Saheb' was heard. Everyone thought that Sai Baba has come!

When the door was opened, an old friend Ali Mohamed Peerbhoy and his friend were at the door. They had a small packet in their hands. They profusely apologized when they saw many guests about to partake food. Ali Mohamed Peerbhoy handed over the packet and said – "Sorry Anna Saheb, we did not know you were taking food. We have brought this packet for you. Take this. I will tell you the background later." They left.

When the packet was uncovered, Dabholkar saw a portrait of Sai Baba! He reverentially placed it on the special seat meant for Sai Baba. He told his guests about his dream vision on the previous night. They all had food!

Much later Dabholkar was told by Ali Mohamed Peerbhoy that his spiritual Mentor had commanded him to remove all pictures and images of saints from his house as it was against their religion. He had thrown all of them in the sea at Bandra. However, this portrait was left out by mistake. He had an intuition that Dabholkar would love to keep it he had brought it to him!

This incident convinced Dabholkar that Sai Baba is a super power and his hostile attitude softened! Later he visited Shirdi. Sai Baba called him 'Hemadpant' and gave him the task of compiling details of his life. That is how Sai Satcharitra was composed. Even before he could have his physical darshan, Sai Baba went in search of his biographer.



Sainath's Protective Umbrella

By Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar

It was a perilous journey in the Himalayas amidst snow-storm, rainfall and severe cold. Helicopter services were cancelled. The only option was palanquin costing Rs.12,000 or a horse. I chose the palanquin. Walking slowly over snow-covered mud and ice, the boys avoided holes in the ice. Some holes were so big that you could see a river flowing underneath. We passed a big rock next to the river and I could see several pilgrims taking bath before entering the holy cave.

After trekking 48 kilometers, we arrived at the steps leading to the holy cave. The young men helped me get off the palanquin and said, 'Uncle, we will wait here for you'. I started walking up a few steps and soon became aware of the high

altitude. I stopped, caught my breath, and walked up another few steps. I was glad to see that I was not the only one who had to rest. Even people younger than me had to stop for a while.

For a while, I wondered as to how I would climb the steep row of 200 steps. Lord Sainath watched my helplessness and sent me help. A girl of 19-20 years came near me and asked me in Hindi, 'Brother, do you need any assistance?'Even before I nodded, she took my hand and slowly led my way. As we climbed, she gave me water to drink and bottled 'Fruity' juice.

As soon as we reached the level walkway inside the holy cave, I felt completely overwhelmed. The combination of exhaustion, high altitude, shortage of breath, and intense emotion as I was imbibing the sheer power of the place made me



stop. There were only a few more steps up to the ice lingam, but I had to sit down. It could not have been more intense if I had walked straight into Lord Shiva's arms. Tears were rolling down from the corners of my eyes as my young friend made me sit on a small wooden bench in the cave. An army man walked by, looking at me as I sat there overcome with feeling.

Sai Aura

I sat there for around fifteen minutes. In the meanwhile, my friend brought some cashews and raisins to be offered to Lord Shiva. There remained only a few steps up through a brass gate, and I was before the Lord. Since it was hardly two weeks of the beginning of Amarnath yatra, the ice lingam remained virtually intact. My heart was so full. I think if the divine vibration in the cave would have been any stronger, I would have fainted. I handed cashews and raisins to one young priest for offering to Lord Shiva. I got overwhelmed and had to go back down the steps and sit on the bench to compose myself.

The priest came down the steps to hand me the Prasad that I had forgotten. Another priest came and filled my arms with more Prasad and put 'vibhuti' on my forehead. The policeman came and put wooden shoes on my feet. 'You must be cold', he said. An old man carrying a small bucket used a ladle to pour hot rice pudding Prasad, with lots of saffron into a paper cup and handed it to me. So much love, so much kindness.

The Amarnath cave is very high and wide but not as deep as I had imagined. I saw the two pigeons flying in the cave. My young friend told me that they are the immortal pigeons having heard Lord Shiva narrating the 'secret of immortality' to Mother Parvati. I was still sitting on the bench and felt a bit self-conscious for having shown so much emotion.

There are three ice lingams in the cave. My young friend told me that the large ice lingam is

worshipped as Lord Shiva. The ice lingam next to Lord Shiva is worshipped as Mother Parvati and next to the Mother is Ganesha. The area is protected by a grill, most probably to prevent devotees tossing items at the lingams. When I looked intently at the lingams, I felt visualizing the Trinity – Sai Baba, Sri Narasimha Swamiji and Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji blessing me!

As more people started to come into the inner cave, the friendly priest gestured for us to move. At least two hours must have passed since I first entered the holy cave. I could never have stayed this long

Suddenly my young friend asked me about my 'lunch'. Even though I gave an evasive reply, she ran somewhere and brought me some 'chapati and sabjee'. She also took care that I need not strain myself to go elsewhere to wash my hands! On the other hand, she washed her hands and took care to feed me as my mother fed me when I was a child!

The innocent, loving kindness this young lady had bestowed on me touched me deeply. I felt that she was indeed my sister, and I was not just a rhetorical 'Bhaiya'. We must have been siblings in some earlier births! I wanted to make her happy and all I had to give was my gratitude and some money. I handed her a five hundred rupees note as a gift before I got into the palanquin. She tried to push back the note. I told her that it was an affectionate gift from her brother! I was awarded with a smile I shall treasure forever.

I asked her name. She replied 'Vaishnavi'. It was indeed Vaishnodevi who had come in her form to help me. She had carefully held my hand and supported lest I should fall on the slippery path! She fed me like her son! She had also managed a plastic raincoat for me! She was waving at me as I got hoisted on to the palanquin on my return journey.

ISHAVASYA PART 3

by JayakrishNa Nelamangala

॥ ॐ श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः हरिः ॐ॥

n the previous mantra, we learnt that it is necessary that we derive the meaning of Veda from brahma-mImAmsA-shAstra (which is another name for vedAnta) which also has the name uttara-mImAmsA of bAdarAyaNa. In the geetA, it is confirmed that the maker of vedAnta is none other than VedavyAsa. Readers are encouraged to study the geetA fifteenth chapter shloka "vedaiscasarvairahameva vedyovedAntakrit vedavitevacAham".

Just as it is necessary that coveting for worldly things is to be given up, so also performing one's prescribed duty is a pre-requisite for obtaining the knowledge of Parabrahman, from the Veda. This upanishat makes this point clear in the next mantra.

कुर्वन्नेवेहकर्माणिजिजीविषेत्शतँसमाः। एवंत्वयिनान्यथेतोस्तिनकर्मलिप्यतेनरे॥2॥ kurvannevehakarmANijij IviShetSata~MsamAH | evaMtvayinAnyathetostina karma lipyatenare | | 2 | |

उपनिषत् upaniShat

This meaning of this mantra opens up in two ways: for one who has the indirect knowledge paroksha-jnyAna) and for the one who has direct knowledge (aparOksha-jnyAna). By listening, understanding and contemplating on what is understood, one gets the indirect knowledge. It is called indirect because, it is not in the direct experience of the knower. When we study vedOpanishats, we often will be reading and

listening to someone else's description of his experience. This is similar to the knowledge of swimming, when you have never been in a pool of water. You have only read about swimming and heard about swimming. You have only seen others swimming, and this is paroksha type of knowledge of swimming.

Descriptions of experiences of joy, sorrow etc., are mere words just like any other set of words. After reading them, there is no rule that the reader should also experience it the same way that the author did. Experience by itself is highly subjective, limited to just that one person and is non-verifiable by others. So, mere experience cannot be taken as the universal pramANa. Similarly, a mere word description that is in no one's experience remains a fiction and so cannot be the highest pramANa either. Observing these truths, vedAnta has taught us

"शास्त्रार्थयुक्तो अनुभवः प्रमाण उत्तमं "shAstrArthayukto anubhavaH pramANaMuttamaM".

The best pramANa is experience that is in line with shAstrArtha. Here the object of that knowledge is Parabrahman as given by Veda. For the person with 'fittedness', these two stages of knowledge viz., indirect and direct, are the two growth stages. There is a common knowledge that, all the performance of karma is needed only at the 'indirect' stage, and that it is not required at the 'direct' stage. This second mantra of this upanishat teaches us that, both a parOkshajnyAnI and an aparOksha-jnyAnI equally need to perform karma in the form of worship of God.

karma without jnyAna and jnyAna without karma, are only so called.

Sai Aura

It is jnyAna in one form that gets to be called as karma, nd it is jnyAna in another form that gets to be called as bhakti, it is jnyAna in yet another form that gets to be called as vairAgya. In the bhagavadgeetA, Lord SriKrishNa has brought out these facts as, 'na ca sanyasanAdeva siddhiM samadhigacchati' and so on.

One who does not perform karma that is prescribed in shAstra, the effects of that non-performance will stick to him. This is how it has always been understood in vedAnta of Sri VedavyAsa from immemorial times. In another work called nAradeeya-purANa, Sri VedavyAsa teaches

"अज्ञस्यकर्मलिप्येतकृष्णोपास्तिं अकुर्वतः। ज्ञानिनोपियतोहासआनन्दस्यभवेत्धुवं। अतोअलेपेपिलेपस्यादतःकार्यैवसासदा"

One who does not have knowledge, 'karma-phala' will stick to him. Who is the one who does not have knowledge? is elaborated as "कृष्णोपास्तिं अकुर्वतः"-one who does not have "upAsanA" on SriKrishNa. Previously it was mentioned that brahma-jignyAsA or inquiry is of the form shravaNa-manana-dhyAna.

This dhyAna is also called upAsanA / tapas / nidhidhyAsanA. Without manana i.e., contemplation there is no dhyAna.

Without learning in shravaNa, there is no contemplation. Thus, when dhyAna is mentioned, all the three are automatically mentioned. We should remember all these important facts when we study shAstra. Thus, the 'ajnya' mentioned here is the one who has not gotten his knowledge through brahma-jignyAsA. Even for the knowledgeable, the Ananda in his

mukti gets diminished without a doubt and for this reason, those who are considered not to be smeared by karma, even for them, karma will smear. Therefore, the upAsanA in the form of brahma-jignyAsA or veda-vicAra-jignyAsA must be done without a break. For an 'ajnya' who is clueless about this brahma-jignyAsA, how can he escape from the smear of karma? This is the gist. Since karma and jnyAna are not two seperate entities, karma is jnyAna-roopa-karma which is also called vidyA-karma elsewhere. In the geetA, SriKrishNa stresses the fact that karma needs to be done for the sake of jnyAna, then only it becomes karma-yOga.

With this background, we may now study the second mantra of IshAvAsya.

उपनिषत् upaniShat

कुर्वन्नेवेहकर्माणिजिजीविषेत्शतँसमाः। एवंत्वयिनान्यथेतोस्तिनकर्मलिप्यतेनरे॥२॥ kurvannevehakarmANi jijIviShetSata~MsamAH | evaMtvayinAnyathetostina karma lipyatenare | | 2 | |

One should live his/her full life, by the performance of prescribed duties without fail, the nishkAma-karma which is performed as worship of God. To you who is doing such a vidyA-karma, although you are a mere mortal human being, that karma does not stick to you, i.e., you will get "fit" for the knowledge of Vedic Brahman, and there is no other way.

What is that other way? If we don't do this vidyA-karma in this manner (therefore an ajnyAnI) then thepApa-karma 'will' stick to us. A person considered jnyAnI who does not perform karma, is no exception either.

Shree krishNArpaNamastu

Damodar Savalram Rasane

by **Smt. Maniamma**

amodar Savalram Rasane alias Anna Rasane, or simply Savalram Rasane, S/o Kasar originally belonged to Ahmednagar and later moved to Poona. Baba used to call him as Damia. He was a very humble man and began as a poor bangle seller. His first wife did not have any issue. He married a second wife and even then, he did not have any issue. Out of curiosity, he had consulted astrologers and they said that Ketu was in the fifth place in his horoscope and that he would not get any issue. In course of time, his business improved and became rich. But he was not happy as he did not have an issue. At that time, he heard about Baba and his miracles. He went to Shirdi for the first time in 1895 with an intention of seeking Baba's blessings for getting issue. Their family deity is Devi Renuka-Jagadamba Maata of Rashin village and hence the Surname Rasane has been associated with all the family members and the descendants.

A devotee sent to Baba a parcel of excellent Goa mangoes and Baba was distributing the mangoes to the children present in the masjid. But Baba kept separately 8 mangoes. The children wanted some more mangoes; but Baba said that the eight mangoes were meant for Damia, but children said that Damia was not there in the masjid. But Baba said that Damia was on his way at Kopergaon and would be coming shortly to Shirdi. But when Baba went out, they stole 4 out of the eight mangoes, leaving 4 only for Damia. Damia came to the masjid and offered garlands and chadaretc to Baba. Then Baba gave him four mangoes and asked him to give them to his wife. Damia asked which wife he should give the fruits. Then Baba asked him to give them to his junior wife. Baba also said that his second wife would have eight



children and the first two would be boys. Baba also asked him to name the first two boys as Daulat Shah and Thana Shah in that order. Damia immediately noted down the names in his note book. He got children in the same order as Baba told him and it took him fifteen years for all the children to be born. Thus, Baba changed the adverse effects of his planetary influence for his good even though astrological predictions were otherwise. What is not possible for God? As four mangoes were stolen by the children, so four out of his eight children, did not survive. Thus, he was having four children surviving and were hale and healthy. His first two sons were accordingly named as per Baba's orders and besides these names they also had their usual Hindu names. Baba knew his arrival much before he actually came to Shirdi.

Savalram got children in spite of adverse planetary position in his horoscope. So, he was

very happy and became the means of broadcasting Baba's powers and miracles and Baba's fame thus spread to far off places due to his efforts, in different directions in the neighborhood during 1895 to 1897 itself.

He always took Baba's advice and acted upon and the results were always good. Once he had an appeal in the High Court and the lawyer had written to him to come to Bombay. At that time, he was in Shirdi and Baba detained him and did not give permission to go to Bombay. In spite of this, the outcome of the appeal was in his favor.

At the time of selecting a bride for his eldest son, Daulat Shah alias Nana Saheb Rasane, he received offers from several girls and then he approached and requested Baba to select a girl out of them. Then Baba selected a poor girl and Nana Rasane married that girl and the marriage took place at Pandharpur and Shama attended the marriage as Baba's representative. Nana Rasane's family was happy and prosperous. Damia's children improved his business and kept up his father's tradition of doing propaganda about Baba and extending generosity wherever needed. Nana Rasane was a Trustee of Sai Baba Sansthan for some time and also achieved some spiritual development.

Once Nanasaheb Dengle brought a big silver plate full of various dainties and begged Baba to eat. Baba shouted out at him and then a black dog came there and licked up some of the food. Nanasaheb Dengle who was there nearby looked at this happening with unhappiness and felt internally. "Is it for this pariah dog that I prepared all this?" Baba perhaps read his mind and at once threw away the plate with all the contents at him and said, "Take it away". Baba would appear in the shape of any creature or any body and taste the food. Savalram observed this event.

He knew that Baba would treat all creatures and men of low position and caste as equals without any discrimination. Once when he went to Baba and knowing that he would not be interested in coming to his lodging for the dinner which he wanted to offer to Baba, he requested Baba to send Bala Patel, his attendant belonging to a low caste as a guest. Baba accepted his request but said, "Don't cry Dhut, Dhut at him" and asked him not to humiliate the guest by giving him a place far away from your own place of dining for which he agreed. When the meals were prepared, he kept one plate with the food items for Baba and then called out, "Baba, come!". A black dog came in and ate from the plate. He waited with respect till it finished its meal and then only offered meals to others and he also took his food along with Bala Patel who also sat near him and took food.

Damia's mind was always thinking about Baba and often he felt that Baba was everywhere. On some occasions Baba abused him and also beat him sometimes fiercely. But he always knew that just like Akkalkote Maharaj, abuses and blows had altogether a different and deeper meaning and also resulted finally in auspicious endings. So, he never resented or grumbled against such treatment from Baba.

Baba sometimes was asking the Muslims to do their namaz and then would allow them to read the Quran in the masjid; he had also talked with the moulvis on their religion.

Damia's experiences with Baba were not fully known to Das Gunu Maharaj or Dabholkar. But his experiences and other instances came to light when Savalram was interviewed by Sri Narasimhaswamiji in 1936. In the interview, he also said that Baba was helping him even after his Mahasamadhi and that Baba sometimes appeared before him.

In the year following his first visit to Shirdi, Ramanavami Utsav celebrations were started in Shirdi and at that time as a token of his gratitude to Baba, he arranged at his cost a grand ceremony of "The standards Procession" and he continued that Standard Procession for next 40 years, by providing one ornamental standard on that occasion every year.

Regarding business consultations with Baba, once he got a proposal from a cotton broker from Bombay about speculating in cotton as he was having substantial cash with him. His broker told that he could safely speculate and earn quickly several lakhs. He immediately wrote to Shama with a request to ask Baba for permission for this speculative trade. When the letter came to Baba, immediately Baba said that Damia wanted to catch at the sky, his head was wrong, he was thinking in terms of lakhs and asked Shama to write back, saying that his present position was not bad and ask him not to think of lakhs. Inspite of this reply, Damia then went to Shirdi and while massaging Baba's legs, he requested again for permission and also offered a share in profits to Baba. Baba flatly refused and said that he did not want money at all. Baba also said, "I am God. I have vast powers" Baba again said that he could command large amounts at will, but he had no need for wealth. Baba replied expressly that he did not wish to get involved in any Samsara (like sharing profits). So Damia gave up that idea.

Sai Aura

On another occasion, he went to Shirdi and there he expressly asked Baba if he could trade in grain, wheat, etc. Baba said that the prices would fall and that he would have to sell at a lower price than the purchase price. He gave up that proposal. But when he mentioned the views of Baba to a merchant-friend, that friend explained to him how Baba's views became untrue by the steady rise in prices for next many days. But after one or two months, there were heavy rains and the prices suddenly fell and the grain traders incurred heavy losses. Baba thus saved him from similar loss.

There was a theft of a jewel box containing nose ornament belonging to his wife, usually that ornament was considered as sacred, in his house. The ornament was stolen by a servant who had worked in his house for as long as thirty years. This gave a shock to him. He then wept before Baba's photo in his house. When he went to Shirdi, Baba asked Shama to give him a good feast and a coating of sandal paste. Baba also said that

he was always with Savalram. The next day, the servant returned the jewel box and prayed for pardon.

When his sister died, he was upset very much. He did not care for life and developed detachment in worldly matters. When he went to Baba, Baba pacified him with Upadesh and made him eat a feast of Pooran Poli (a sweet dish) in the house of Appa Kulkarni and get sandal paste applied.

He never initiated any activity without consulting Baba and taking his permission. When Baba was in the mortal coil, he went to Shirdi and asked him directly. After 1918, he was still consulting Baba, by casting chits etc. and Baba was guiding him even after his Mahasamadhi.

Once when he sat at Baba's feet along with many others, he had two questions in his mind and Baba gave answers to both.

1). There was a huge crowd around Baba in the masjid. His doubt was whether all of them could get benefit from Baba. To this Baba said. "Look at the mango tree in blossom. If all flowers turned fruit what a splendid crop it would be! But do they? Most fall off (either as flowers or as unripe fruits, by wind, etc.) Very few remain".

II) His second question was about himself. "If Baba were to pass away, how hopelessly adrift I would be and how am I to fare then? To this, Baba said that he would be with him whenever he thought of Baba and wherever he thought of Baba. That promise Baba had kept up before 1918 and even after his Mahasamadhi. The portrait of Savalram Rasane was also kept along with the portraits of other close devotees in the Samadhi Mandir.

His son, Nana Saheb had only one son and then Damia went to Shirdi and prayed to Baba for a second grandson at Baba's Mahasamadhi and thereafter a grandson was born. Damia also achieved spiritual progress and with contentment, passed away in January 1941 at the age of 89 years. Shri. ShrikantRasane, Grandson of Nana Saheb Rasane is in Pune.

What you are printing brings about God's Best Wishes

Original Source: **Sai Leela Magazine**, Year 1923

Translated by **Shri. K.W. Deshpande**

ne of my friends is advocate in High Court. Once this man and Baba were in a room at his first visit. Baba asked him, "Why should one chant, 'Shri Ram Jay Ram'?". Baba repeated same chanting after few minutes. The advocate realized that his guru has given him this "Mantra" and Baba is asking him to follow the same.

Once a man from Thane visited Baba and Baba told him to worship "Maruti", He could not understand the meaning of His order. When he went home someone asked him whether he worships 'Maruti'. He told, 'Yes. There is temple of Panchamukhi Hanuman near my house, and without worshipping him, I do not take food". That means Baba has supported firmly his worship of "Hanuman". Baba had no separate mission or organization.

He used to firm up one's faith in whom one worships. People from various religions, different faiths used to approach Him, but He never used to change one's faith. But when somebody misses his path of worship, Baba used to bring him back on his faith. Everybody has experienced that Baba used to help each one in his practice whether 'Yoga', 'Karma', 'Dhyan', or 'Path'

Once my friend visited Baba and Baba called him, "Welcome Ramdas". Initially he could not find any reason; but suddenly he found out the reason and told, "For last two years I have been chanting Ram naam; but nobody knows about it, not even my family members". Obviously, Maharaj had indicated the same thing.

Sai Baba attained Mahasamadhi in 1918 and Shirdi thereafter generally faded out of public memory. People visiting Shirdi were very few and by 1936, hardly ten people visited on any day. Close devotees of Sai Baba thought that his power was over as in the case of any contemporary saint. Sai Baba's Samadhi was being worshipped like a Muslim Darga!

Prior to 1940, all over India, hardly anyone knew about Sai Baba or heard of the place 'Shirdi'. But today we find temples of Sai Baba in nooks and corners of the country. Associations of Sai devotees, Satsangs, Samajs are in plenty. Many have given Baba's name to their children. Many shops, institutions, industries bear Sai Baba's name. Shirdi is now on the international map and lakhs of people visit Shirdi to seek Baba's blessings.

Charters and Sayings

by Shri Narasimha Swamiji

510. In 1914, Ramanavami season, when myriads flocked to Baba, an old woman was shouting.

Old Woman: "Hallo! take pity upon me, an old woman! Hallo, Baba, give me your darsan".

Shama went out and elbowed his way back with her into Sai Baba's presence. She melted into tears and held Baba with both her arms round his waist.

Baba: Mother! how long have I waited for you! Have you brought anything for me to eat?

Old Woman: Here is a piece of stale flat bread and an onion. I started my journey with one flat bread and two onions. But tired by journey, I ate at a stream in the morning and ate off half the cake with one onion. Here is the remainder. You had better eat it.

Baba: (crunching the stale bread and eating it with gusto). How sweet, O mother, is your bread!

578: M.B.R was identifying himself with Baba and in 1915, on Rama Navami. Tried to get Baba's approval and sanction for that identification. At

Rama Navami, numerous devotees placed new clothes before Baba so that he may touch and return them. M.B.R. brought a very fine pacca muslin (bought for Rs.85/-) kept it inside his shirt and then bowing to Baba slyly thrust the muslin under Baba's gadi, when no one noticed it. MBR was resolved that if Baba cared for his love, the muslin should be retained and not returned by Baba, as Baba and he, were one. When all clothes were returned, Baba got up.

Baba: I say, clear off all that lies on the gadi (mattress) and dust it.

The mattress was removed, and the muslin packet was revealed.

Baba: (Picking it up and spreading it out) "Hallo! What is this! Muslin! I am not going to return this. This is mine."

Baba then wore it over his body and turning to M.B.R said: "Do I not look nice in this?"

M.B.R was overjoyed to see that Baba recognized that he and MBR were one and accepted the present in that spirit.

Mhalsapathy was a goldsmith by caste and profession. He was an uneducated young man. Khandoba was his family deity. With his own money he had built a temple for Khandoba at Shirdi. He led a life of poverty but always remained contented, with implicit faith in God. He was possessed with the spirit of Khandoba and when he was in a trance, he solved many problems of the villagers. He was detached to worldly pleasures. This led him on to spiritual path and made him highly respected by the villagers.

Seek Out the Crown of Contentment

by D. Sankaraiah

ost of us are familiar with story of a man who had a hen which laid a golden egg every day. He lived selling it. One day he thought to himself, why not kill the hen that lays golden eggs and take out all the eggs at one time? He killed the hen but did not get even one egg. The egg he used to earn hid daily living was also now lost. All this happened due to his greed and ignorance.

Greed always leads to destruction. Sri Narasimha Swamiji has stated that a greedy man remains hungry even after acquiring the entire world. But the man who is content is full even with one piece of bread. If we learn to overcome greed, we can attain a status even higher than that of an Emperor, for it is contentment that makes us hold our head high and be at peace with whatever we have.

A rich man came to Sai Baba seeking Brahma Jnana. He appeared to be in great haste and told Baba to teach 'Brahma Jnana' as the coachman would demand waiting charges. Baba spoke ahead - "Listen dear, what is wrong if the poor coachman gets two rupees more as waiting charges? You are asking for great knowledge of 'Brahma Jnana' - but you cannot get rid of this infatuation for money. How can one have 'Brahma Jnana' like this? To acquire that great knowledge of 'Brahma Jnana' one must strip off these coats of attachments! Attachments cause ego - a desire to possess! This fascination to possess creates infatuation, greed, lust, anger, pride and jealousy in human beings. These are the six enemies - 'Ari Shadwargas' which keep man away from Brahma – the God! With this greed for wealth a man does not recognize a man, father forgets his own son, wife knows not her husband, a brother is not a brother, a friend is not a friend! The only relative a man recognizes is money! Let me tell you a story - that of a frog and of a cobra!" This is the story of Veerabhadrappa and Channabasappa who carried the enmity for three births. Baba spoke to that visitor asking for 'Brahma Jnana' - "So, did you see what happens with infatuation for money? You have come here seeking 'Brahma Jnana' while you are carrying a



pack of greed in your pocket! Brahma means the understanding of oneness of soul – 'Aham Brahmasmi' which means 'I am Brahman myself'!Iam the entire universe! This feeling itself is the essence of 'Brahma Jnana'.

Baba pointed out —"This poor man is a part of that Brahma. To give him five rupees for his return journey I have been trying hard. You have two hundred rupees in your pocket and even after seeing me struggling to get a loan of five rupees, you do not want to help me! You are sitting on a heap of money! Spend some money in charity and have the blessings of those who are deprived of divine grace. With that you will realize 'Brahma Jnana'!" The visitor took out the bundle of notes. It was exactly two hundred rupees! He gave five rupees to the devotee who needed it for his return journey. With Baba's blessings he returned to his place.

True pleasures do not lie in chasing wealth madly. We need only that much wealth as will support and foster our character and our spiritual qualities, not otherwise.

Shakespeare said – "My crown is in my heart, not on my head; not decked with diamonds or gemstones not to be seen. My crown is contentment which the Kings do not enjoy."

Children's Victory Over Alexander

by R. Seshadri

y Guru Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji was fond of children. He used to tell them – Take out the word 'IMPOSSIBLE' from your life.

The Greek Emperor Alexander was victorious against all rulers in the world. He destroyed men and material, and nobody could defeat him. As he was victorious in a series of wars information reached a city that he was expected to invade a prosperous city in North India. People were scared of the massive destruction that Alexander and his army would cause in a chorus.

However, one young man was confident of victory against Alexander. He was a poet. He composed a heart-rendering poem and taught it to children.

Next day, when Alexander entered the city with his army, he did not come across soldiers but a group of lovely children in their uniform holding colored buntings and flowers. They were singing in a chorus-"O mighty Alexander. We welcome you to this Children home. We have no desire to wage a war with you. Give us an opportunity to learn, play and live in peace".

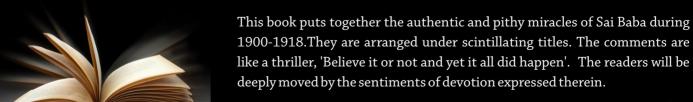
Alexander was delighted and ordered the soldiers to return. When children said 'Victory to Alexander' he countered – 'No, no. It is not my victory. Your love has defeated me'

World needs love and affection.

Book Review

Sai Baba's 261 Leelas, Author - Balakrishna Panday,

Published by Sterling Paperbacks, New Delhi - 110020 Pp - 190 pages Price -Rs.125/-



—Capt. V.K. Kadam



Let your whole life be a spiritual song.

Believe that God is everywhere at all times, and derive strength, comfort, and joy by singing His glory in His presence.

om sai namo namah sri sai namo namah jai jai sai namo namah sadguru sai namo namah Dr. Ranvir Singh's

Pictorial Leela

for Kids



Remember only a burning candle can be used to light other candles.

An unlit candle cannot light the other unlit candles.

So too only the one who earned wisdom can enlighten others who are in ignorance.

One who is not illumined, cannot illumine others, who are dwelling in the darkness, of maya: So you must strive, to light your own candle, from the Universal Light and from there transmit, illumination to all, who seek and strive.

You can light more than thousand of

candles from a single candle.



Advice to Dasa Ganu

ana Saheb and his orderly Ganesh Rao witnessed the miracle of Ganga gushing out of Baba's feet on their first visit to Shirdi. That night Ganesh Rao composed a song on this event. Next day, when he went to Shirdi, on Baba's direction, Ganesh Rao sang it. Everyone liked the song. But Baba said: "Ganu, you are such a beautiful poet and yet you take pride in composing erotic songs to sell for the lower taste! What a tragedy of a divine gift?" Ganesh Rao was embarrassed! Baba further said: "You compose erotic songs, write cheap plays and watch filthy shows! Ganu dear, God has bestowed on you a gifted pen – not for writing dirty stuff, but for

praising His glory through beautiful compositions. Write devotional songs and sing them with devotion! Praise and sing the greatness of saints in kirthans! My fakir will look after your welfare! Will you not listen to me?"

Baba's appealing advice touched the core of Ganesh Rao. He was fond of composing erotic poetry. But now Sai Baba's omniscience dominated his imagination. He was a changed man! He started thinking that he was wasting his birth as a Brahmin in composing cheap dirty stuff for Tamashawallas! He decided that he should compose devotional songs and become a good Kirthankar.

Guru's Grace

"Everything needs Guru's grace. When Guru's grace descends, the heart blossoms forth like a lotus when the sun shines upon it. When thus opened, he feels that his heart encompasses the whole world of his relationships and shapes his conduct and destiny through the promptings of his heart.

A kind heart is a spring of joy to all within its reach. So let everyone allow his or her heart to speak and tread in the paths of spiritual life refreshing the shade of Truth and Love.

I feel forlorn in Sai-Love. He has possessed me and I have surrendered my all to that 'Living Chaitanya.'

—Sri Narasimha Swamiji

"All things are possible to him, who believes, they are less difficult to him who hopes, they are easier to him who loves, and still more easy to him who practices and perseveres in these three virtues."

—Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji

(from a message for Guru Poornima)

Baba Corrects Through H

aba's way of teaching through humor was also unique! Anna Chinchnikar, who was past his fifties, was once massaging Baba's right hand. Sitting at the left was Venubai Kaujalgi, an aged widow who kneaded Baba's abdominal muscles. With not adequate space they were virtually cramped. This old mother Venubai Kaujalgi was popularly called 'Maushi' by everybody. Her way of kneading Baba's abdominal muscles was unique. She used



to give full pressure on Baba's belly as if she was kneading the ball of flour to make papads! Because of her sincere devotion, Baba endured her massaging!

Once Venubai Kaujalgi was kneading Baba's abdomen unknowingly her faces came close to Anna Chinchnikar. Venubai Kaujalgi remarked in lighter vein - "What Anna, you have become old but still you want to kiss me! What a shame? That too in front of your wife!"

This sparked a fire. Anna Chinchnikar was furious. He got up and shouted - "You old hog! You have lost all sense! You have a sin on your mind."Venubai Kaujalgi also lost her temper! Baba watched it all and enjoyed. At last he intervened and said - "Anna, why create a scene over an innocent fun? Why should you feel ashamed to kiss your own mother?"

The tense atmosphere in the mosque exploded with a bomb of laughter! Anna Chinchnikar felt ashamed of his act and the unnecessary row he created! He now realized that he should have told Venubai Kaujalgi – "O my mother, what is wrong if your son kissed you? Kiss me, mother, kiss me again and again!"

Nanasaheb Nimonkar

B. Uma Maheswara Rao

🗹 hankarrao Raghunath Deshpande alias Nanasaheb Nimonkar was from Nimon which was a small village 20 miles from Shirdi. Balwantrao who was father of Shama, was Nimonkar's uncle. Nanasaheb Nimonkar was Inamdar of Nimon. As he came from Nimon village, he was called Nanasaheb Nimonkar.

Nanasaheb Nimonkar was a special Magistrate of Sangamner and Village Chief of 5 villages in and around Nimon. He also owned many acres of land in Nimon village and was very affluent and a very influential person. He was married to Jayaji who hailed from Belapur. He left everything in his ancestral village and went along with his wife to Shirdi and settled there permanently to do service to Baba. Nana used to address Baba as "Deva" and Baba used to address Nana as "Matare Kaka". Nana served Baba till his Mahasamadhi with utmost love and devotion.

Nanasaheb Nimonkar first met Sai Baba at the Maruthi Temple at Rahata in 1890. Nana Saheb Nimonkar was the blessed devotee to whom Baba gave his Holy Padukas in the year 1898.

Once Balwantrao took Nimonkar to Baba saying, "People believe he is a mad fakir. I doubt if he is really mad, but you had better go with me, see him and give me your opinion." Whenever Balwantrao had gone to see Baba the latter kept him at a distance by taking up a brickbat and either flinging it or threatening to fling it at him. Thus He kept him away from going into the mosque. But when Balwantrao and Nimonkar went to see him, Baba did not fling any stone and they went near Baba. Nimonkar was attracted to



Late Shri Nanasaheb Nimonkar

Baba as soon as he saw Baba and on his return to home he told his uncle with certainty that Baba was a divine saint and not a mad fakir. Balwantrao could not understand as to why stones were hurled when he went to Baba earlier but not on the present occasion. For this Nimonkar said, "That is because you doubted if Baba was mad, but I did not". From that moment onwards, Nimonkar visited Baba several times.

Sri Ramanavami celebrations were permitted by Baba in the year 1911 in Shirdi. Every year, two new flags were ceremoniously carried in the procession and tied to the dome of the Dwarakamai by fixing permanently. Damodar Sevalram Rasane, a staunch devotee of Baba was supplying the green flag and Nimonkar was providing embroidered flag at the time of these celebrations. This tradition was continued by the descendants of Damodar Sevalram Rasane and those of Nimonkar for the supply of the respective flags. After Baba's Mahasamadhi, these flags were kept on Baba's Samadhi and Aarti was performed to them. After Lalkari Laghu Aarti was performed, then all the flags were taken in procession through the village with much dancing and merriment to Dwarakamai. Finally, the two flags were fixed on the top of the Dwarakamai, while the Ochere flag was fixed inside the Dwarakamai.

As Nanasaheb Nimonlar was a special Magistrate in Sangamner, he was frequently meeting Nanasaheb Chandorkar (Deputy Collector) who was also a devotee of Baba and both of them used to talk about Baba. When Nanasaheb Chandorkar started the idea of renovating the dilapidated masjid and collected subscriptions, Nimonkar also contributed some amount and in addition, he supervised the entire renovation work. Baba would not allow the workmen to do the work and thus the renovation work was being prevented by Baba. Baba however had great trust in Nimonkar who took it up when Baba slept at the chavadi and thus Nimonkar got the renovation work completed quickly.



He was always found to be with Baba either in the masjid or when Baba was moving within the Shirdri village. In the side picture, Baba was moving to Lendi garden during 1911-12 with Nimonkar standing on His right side.

Baba also showed his faith in Nimonkar by making him his banker during the years, 1916-18. As and when the funds were received, Baba used to hand them over to Nimonkar for safe custody. But Shama mistook that money given to Nimonkar as gifts. However, Nimonkar was affluent and was not in need of any monetary gifts. He kept Baba's money safely and intact. Nimonkar was getting an annual income of about 500 rupees from his estate and his son, Somanath Shankar Deshpande was Inspector of police in Pune who was also sending him money. Nimonkar did not want temporal gifts from Baba. But he desired and got gifts from Baba, far superior to monetary gifts, in the shape of his spiritual advancement. Out of the money he kept on behalf of Baba, Nimonkar was paying for Baba's expenses like buying Burfi sweet for distribution as presents to the people in the masjid and firewood for the dhuni and the like. Everyone in Shirdi called him "Kaka," and also Baba.

Once Nanasaheb's wife Jayaji wanted to go to Belapur as her son was seriously ill and stay there for some time. She made preparations to go there in consultation with Nimonkar. She consulted Baba for permission and Baba permitted her to go to Belapur. She informed Nana about the same. Nana agreed but asked her to return to Shirdi on the next day itself. Jayaji was not willing to return on the next day as the next day happened to be Amavasya Day and travelling on Amavasya Day was considered as inauspicious. Hence, she was in a dilemma. However, she wanted to take leave from Baba and went to Baba when he was standing near Sathewada on his way to Lendibagh. Nimonkar and others were also



present near Baba. At that time, Jayaji came and prostrated to Baba and asked permission to leave. Baba immediately told Jayaji to visit and stay in Belapur for 4 days and come back to Shirdi after meeting everyone there. Baba's words solved the dilemma in her mind and Nimonkar who was standing there also understood Baba's views. Thus both of them were satisfied with Baba's direction.

When Shama was bitten by a snake on his small finger, that part became poisonous. Somebody suggested that he should go to Shiva temple. At that moment, Nimonkar who was present there, said that he should first take Udi from Baba and then go. Then Shama ran to the masjid and Baba immediately saved him from the jaws of death just by simple words of command, instructing the poison to get down.

In the Chavadi Procession that used to take place between the masjid and chavadi, Nimonkar held over Baba's head, the white Umbrella which moved in a circle on its supporting stick with its pendants and tassels. While going in the procession, Baba would stop opposite to Maruthi Temple and wave his arms mystically, some fifteen or twenty times and would mutter some words, addressed to Maruthi. Baba was also doing similar things whenever he sat before the dhuni early morning every day. It was interpreted that Baba by doing these hand movements and muttering some words, was having communion with the Gods.

Nimonkar's daughter-in-law was in the family way and in 1916, her delivery was expected and Nimonkar and his wife started for Poona and visited Shirdi which was on the way. After Baba's darshan, they wanted leave to go to Poona, but Baba refused permission. Baba also told Nimonkar that he should stay by Baba's side, bury him and then leave Shirdi. Asked about the delivery, Baba replied, "Why are you anxious? God will help". Then Nimonkars stayed in Shirdi. And at Poona, no body was there to help his daughterin-law and when she got pains, she was taken to a hospital and there within an hour, she delivered a male child without the assistance of a doctor or nurse and the child was in good health. At that time in Shirdi in the masjid, Baba told Nimonkar that there was a woman who was taken to the hospital where she delivered a male child safely and Nimonkar understood that this matter referred to them.

Once Somnath Shankar Deshpande, CID Inspector at Poona and son of Nimonkar, started to go to his ancestral home in Nimon in 1917 where his brother's wife had recently delivered a child and on the way, he visited Shirdi and had darshan of Baba. When he took leave from Baba, Baba gave him udhi and asked him to save the child. But. Somnath took this advice of Baba as referring to his own boy travelling with him and gave him the udhi and left for Nimon. When he reached Nimon, his brother's new born child was in very bad health and the child's survival was

doubtful. Then he remembered Baba's words at his parting time and felt that the matter referred to this child only and he immediately looked for the udhi. But it was not available. Then he took the child on his own lap and prayed to Baba with lot of faith and devotion. Miraculously in a short while, the child picked up health and became normal. How kind was Baba to protect devotees and their children. The child was named Padmakar and when the child was taken to Shirdi after few months, Baba took the child in his lap and said, "Here is my Dutta" and hence Padmakar's name was changed as Dutta.

Nimonkar and Shama used to serve food daily to the devotees in the masjid. After all the food brought by devotees were mixed and offered to God and consecrated, Baba used to fill the platters and give them to Nimonkar and Shama for distribution to the devotees present in the masjid. Everyday these two had the fortune of serving the food with their hands in the masjid. The two considered the distribution of the naivedya as their regular religious duty and

performed the task with great love and devotion.

In "Shri Sai Sahasranamavali" & "Ashtotharam" composed by B.V. Narasimha Swamiji, special mention was made in verse 521 about the Granting of Holy Padukas by Baba to Nana Saheb Nimonkar and its meaning reads as "One who has bestowed spiritual bliss to Nimonkar by granting Padukas".

From 1890 onwards much before other important devotees started visiting or staying in Shirdi, Nanasaheb Nimonkar, though affluent and also a Special Magistrate, an Inamdar of Nimon, the Village Chief of five villages and also owned several acres of land in Nimon village, discarded all the assets and ignored all the positions and came with his wife and settled in Shirdi much before others, in the service of Baba till Baba's Mahasamadhi. He was also with Baba when Baba gave up his mortal coil. Such was his greatness and devotion, he had displayed towards.

Nimonkar passed away in January 1919.





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