





AURA of SHIRDI SAI

(A Sai Aura Publication)

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

t's been a little over five months since Sai Aura team was graced by the honors of having the inauguration of our e-Magazine 'Aura of Shirdi Sai' by Mrs. Rubal Agrawal, the recently appointed first and foremost woman Chief Executive Officer of Shri Saibaba Sansthan Trust (SSST), Shirdi. It was a pleasant experience meeting with Mrs. Agrawal, knowing her background as an able and energetic government official appointed by the State of Maharashtra. The encounter led me to imagine the sea of opportunity that SSST further has, to grow leaps and bounds under her executive leadership. The informal dialog between us was not just limited to the SSST temple complex as a facility but also led us to discuss the literature on Sai Baba and its distribution to the young, talented and devoted Sai community. Post the launch of the e-Magazine, as the Sai Aura team eagerly awaits to hear feedback from its devoted Sai readers and learn about opportunities for improvements, I now begin to think of what the role of SSST can and will play for the future of digital media. My mind soon wanders back to my last visit to Shirdi.

Having traveled from the USA when the sun was sweltering hot, while the tender grass blades were ravaging due to the peak summer month of July, Shirdi's monsoon winds were a soothing relief and an open-armed welcome. As I arrived in Shirdi, I began to wonder how can I, a Non-resident Indian and unfamiliar Sai Devotee get through the SSST's unknown territory and to its executive leadership tier. All I had on hand was Dr. Suresh Haware, Chairman of SSST's phone number. Not having any prior introduction to the SSST's inner workings, I was just marching into Sai Baba's Kingdom, with undeterred faith telling myself "Baba will come to my rescue". After docilely paying obeisance to Baba in his most desired resting place - The Samadhi Mandir, I gathered the information of the location of the Sansthan's Executive Offices. I decisively walked into the walls of the Sansthan's official terrain expecting an ambiance that would be quiet and screaming for some human activity. God!!! What was I thinking? The building was hustle bustle with activities and it reminded me more of a township than a temple's office, which was being managed with, not just devotion to Baba but also at most care for the influx of Sai Devotees that would be visiting Shirdi to pay their respect to their most revered Sadguru and Parabrahma.

Having made no prior appointment, I eagerly, yet patiently waited in the halls and rooms of the Sansthan for my opportunity to meet Dr. Haware. Bottled water quenched

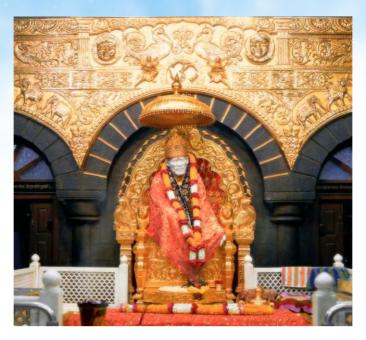


All My senses left their places and concentrated themselves in My eyes, and My eyes concentrated on Him. Thus was My Guru, the sole object of My meditation and I was conscious of none else.

—Sai Baba







my thirst while few rounds of steaming hot and most flavorful masala chai fed my appetite for 'What and How' question that has always had its primal spot in my thinking cap about the way forward for Sai Aura. The wait itself did not go wasted. It not only gave me an opportunity to connect to several other devotees and office bearers of the SSST, it also exposed me to a plethora of information that Shirdi was prepping for the first time in its history -- Shri Sai Baba Sansthan was organizing the first ever Media Conference under the Chairmanship of Dr. Suresh Haware on Sunday, 30th July 2017, in Shirdi. Could the timing of my visit be any better than this? Baba was again holding my hand with his loving care as I was getting ready to walk the path of the publishing world.

Soon enough, the wait came to an end and I was ushered into a small roomful of people that sat in copious attentiveness. As I introduced myself to Dr. Haware, I was humbled by the openness and willingness of everyone present there to listen to the proposal that Baba had propelled into my hand and mind. It gave me a great opportunity to exchange ideas with the Sansthan executives about the role of Aura of Shirdi Sai in a digital medium.

After submitting the mission and vision of Aura of Shirdi Sai with Mrs. Agrawal, Dr. Haware, and other key SSST board members, it was a pleasant surprise when both Mrs. Agrawal and Dr. Haware gave an open invitation to collaborate in promulgating the messages of Baba in both the eastern and western communities. Before I realized, I had an overwhelming invitation to participate in the Media Conference to be held on July 30th, 2017.

Though unable to participate in the media conference in-person, through my discussions with the SSST executive leadership I soon realized that the media conference was SSST's mechanism for supporting the media that has provided it with an immaculate publicity for the various News items sent to it through the SSST, Shirdi, through the medium of external newspaper / Channel. The Sansthan hoped that the media will continue the work hereafter as well especially given that SSST, Shirdi will be organizing a Shri Saibaba Samadhi Centenary Year between 01 OCTOBER 2017 and 18 OCTOBER 2018. To provide wide publicity in all corners of the world in terms of information and dissemination about all the programs and initiatives that would be undertaken during this Centenary Year, SSST had decided to hold a ONE DAY gathering of representatives from the SAI periodicals across India (Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly,

Bimonthly, Quarterly and Religious Channels (Sai Channel, Serial, Documentary) at Shirdi. The Sansthan organized free-of-cost accommodation, food, VIP Darshan and other facilities for the representatives of the Periodicals/ Channels if the travel arrangements were individually handled by the participants.

The conference was an enormous success with a large attendance from Representatives of various Sai Baba periodicals, magazines and TV channels from around 14 States of India. The event was presided over by Sansthan Vice Chairman Mr. Chandrashekhar Kadam, Chief Executive Officer Mrs. Rubal Agrawal, Trustees Mr. Bhausaheb Wakchaure, Mr. Bipindada Kolhe, Dy. District Collector Mr. Manoj Ghodepatil, Dy. Executive Officer Dr. Sandeep Aher, Chief Accounts Officer Mr. Babasaheb Ghorpade, Administrative Officers to include Mr. Suryabhan Game, Uttam Gondkar, Dilip Ugale, Ashok Auti, and Public Relations Officer Mr. Mohan Yadav.

Representatives from various Sai Periodicals and Spiritual TV Channels used the forum to express their thoughts and ideas to propagate Sai messages and Sansthan's initiatives. Keynote speakers at the conference included Sansthan Trustees Mr. Bhausaheb Wakchaure, Mr. Bipindada Kolhe and eminent Documentary Producer Mr. Nitin Desai. The event was introduced by Smt. Rubal Agrawal and vote of thanks was delivered by Deputy District Collector Mr. Manoj Ghodepatil

Addressing the conference attendees, Dr. Suresh Haware informed that the more than 250 Sai-media representatives from 69 periodicals, 9 TV Channels and 10 Serials and documentaries producers from 14 States of India have participated in this Sai Patrika Conference. He encouraged the Sai-journalists to perform every work with a self-confidence stating that all virtuous deeds and services, especially those done to the needy are akin to service to Sai Baba. The message of service to the Bhaktas which includes, Organ Donation, Education and others should reach all the Sai devotees.

Addressing the representatives of the Sai Media, Dr. Haware highlighted the initiatives taken by the Sansthan to celebrate the centenary celebrations of Shri Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi. This is the first time that one of the major temples in India is involving various stakeholders in organizing the celebrations. Many initiatives were taken and major among them were:

- SHIRDI SAI GLOBAL FOUNDATION, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2016: A
 Global Summit of Shri Sai Temple Trustees over 11th and 12th December 2016 at
 Shirdi was organized. The summit was a forum to exchange ideas on Shri Sai Baba
 Samadhi Centenary Year Celebrations 2017-18 and Global Sai Movement.
 Representatives of more than 1,100 temples from across the world were in Shirdi
 for this summit. The representatives included 43 foreign delegates, who maintain
 Sai temples in their respective countries'. Mr. Suresh Haware is the chairman of
 this trust.
- Many devotees bring Palkhi to Shirdi during the key festival days. As a part of involving the devotees in the Seva Karikram of the Sansthan, the Sansthan had organized a Shri Sai Sevak Conference which was held in Shirdi on 14th June 2017. An appeal was made to register the names for Shri Sai Sevak Yojana with the Sansthan. Consequently, the Sansthan received an overwhelming response. All in all, 570 Palanquin Groups registered their names in this Yojana. Out of which 520 groups will be given an opportunity to serve in the beginning. The number of Palanquin groups registering their names with the Sansthan continues to grow.
- As it is a standard practice of devotees who visit Tirupathi offer Hair to Lord Venkateshwara, so also the Shirdi Sansthan had decided the offering of Blood



donation as a standard practice in Shirdi. The Blood Donation Center was inaugurated by Dr. Haware.

- A glimpse was given into the key initiatives that are being taken up by the Sansthan which include:
- During Saibaba Samadhi Centenary Celebration Year 12 special programs will be organized. A paper-based special publication covering the programs at Shirdi as well as Paduka Darshan Celebrations both in India and other countries.
- A library will be set up in the New Bus Stand and all literature relating to Saibaba will be available there.
- A stall will be provided wherein literature on Saibaba brought out by various organizations in the country will be displayed for viewing and purchase
- Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi has planned to arrange various religious and cultural programs. On behalf of Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi a festival of 'Shri Sai Paduka Darshan' will be organized in every district of Maharashtra, and all the States across the Country, as well as at 25 nations around the World.
- Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi has planned to organize various Cultural & Spiritual programs by nationally and internationally acclaimed, highly reputed and renowned artists in Shirdi. These Cultural and Spiritual performances will be 'Service at the Lotus Feet of Shri Sai Baba' with no remuneration.
- A Project to make Shirdi City as a Smart City and to install CCTV Cameras at various places for security purpose has been planned and will be executed with the cooperation of the Department of Information and Technology, Government of Maharashtra.
- Many initiatives for providing better amenities for the pilgrims visiting Shirdi during the year 2017 -2018 has been planned to include parking lots, a place for stay, cultural activities, planetarium, 3D parks, tree plantation etc.
- Sai Movement is the largest in the World. There are 8,000 Sai Temples across India and the number of Sai Temples abroad is more than 500. Dr. Haware further said that the Trust is considering the translation of Shri Sai Satcharitra in 100 languages.

Given the array of initiatives that are being taken up in small, medium and large scale by the Sansthan, 'Aura of Shirdi Sai' team is eager to collaborate with SSST to promote and distribute the ideas in electronic format across the globe. As Dr. Haware stated, 'Aura of Shirdi Sai's motto for collaboration is: 'Service to Sansthan, is Service to Sai Baba' and we stand by with self-confidence to collaborate with Sansthan for information delivery and distribution.

Aum Sai Ram

Yours truly

Prathibha G.



reation and creator are the focal points of every action that goes on in this universe. As years go by, there is a tremendous amount of progress that has taken place in science and technology areas which has led to the creation of the Almighty being either ignored or taken for granted. Human race considers itself as the ultimate creation in this universe. Humans are inventing new gadgets that are ruling their life by making life easy for them. As population of human being grows leaps and bounds, forests are shrinking, and other living beings' population is diminishing. The naiveté and innocence we are born with depletes slowly as we develop negative traits like jealousy, pride, hatred, ego and lust. We are born with an inquisitive mind to know everything and by research based searches we attempt to conquer majority of the problems we encounter in our life. In due course after defeated either by natural calamities or newer diseases and inability to balance ourselves, we eventually realize there is a power beyond us 'the Almighty'. In contrast, animals, plants and every other creation of God seem to sense natural calamities way ahead of time and retain the natural form as created by God. Failure to balance ourselves with nature is the root cause of all our problems. More focus is given to man-made rules and man created sects thus making our life miserable and difficult to lead normally. Eyes fail to see, ears fail to hear, and all senses are diverted towards artificial forces rather than to focus on God created!!!!

Every living being must thus strike a balance between his duties in the phenomenal world and his obligation to the supreme source of life. Man is indissolubly linked with nature and the absolute or Almighty. Though this absolute power remains aloof from the world of flux it controls it, sustains it and is the backdrop of life, intelligence, and power. The Almighty cannot be seen or grasped, but can be felt by the pure hearted. All religious rituals and practices are intended to cultivate the purity of mind, heart and a state of dispassion, the combination of which can usher in peace of mind. These in turn establish a firm anchor for human to reach the perceptual God and to ultimately merge into the absolute.

We search for the Almighty everywhere. Embarking on this spiritual quest our energies are vastly depleted



Barring your name and form, there exists in you, as well as in all beings, a sense of Being or Consciousness of Existence.

—Sri Sai Baba

and most choose to concede. However, when we find a Guru who is showing the right path (by way of his life) and from whom we can seek guidance, our quest becomes easier and successful. Shri Sai Baba said "I wanted nothing but the Guru and He (Guru) wanted nothing but the intense love from me. I meditated on nothing but the Guru and had no goal or object other than the Guru. Unceasingly fixed upon Him was my mind. He always protected me by His glance. The Guru never blew any mantra into my ear. By His grace, I attained my present state. Making the Guru the sole object of one's thought and actions, one attains the supreme goal. This is the only truth my Guru taught me".

Shri Sai Baba lived a life which revealed his aim to take devotees on a good path, to establish a society above the petty feelings of religion, caste, social differences and see God in other living forms. That which cannot be absorbed by knowledge, study of scriptures, pilgrimage or by observing fast and rituals is easily attained by the grace of Guru. A mere touch or look from the Guru redeems us from all our sins.

Shri Sai Baba's fame increased after his Mahasamadhi on 15th October 1918 is a proof that he serves an essential need of the current generation that is tortured by the mounting social and economic problems. One or the other religion is practiced all over the world supposedly for the betterment of the human race and peace all over. Slogan mongering, and obsolete rituals do not often give the equal amount of peace needed at the same pace the present time needs. Life everywhere has become overly competitive. Human wants are endless and are incapable of being satisfied except by dishonest practices. Power struggles bound to end up in wars, while modern war weapons are bound to embroil all nations into a world conflagration and destroy most of the earth. Population explosion is outrunning the food production

and intensive use of chemical fertilizers is impoverishing the soil fertility and with every increased dose of fertilizers, the productivity has been dwindling and polluting the earth and its resources and make human race prone to newer diseases.

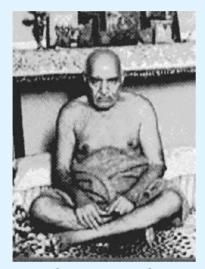
Rapid, unprincipled and profit-oriented industrialization has brought all these kinds of pollution in most parts of the earth. Man is the evil genius who has not cooperated with nature and has only exploited it and nature now is wreaking its vengeance upon man. The beauty and virility of natural life have yielded its place to the drudgery and smokiness of modern life.

Man is a social-animal and is not born to live alone. He must live in the natural society. Human life is entwined in relationships, relation with nature and human society, relation with the near and dear ones. Shri Sai Baba himself often felt the tyranny of Maya, although he was a Fakir and he often said so. How much more difficult, it is for an average, frail human being to withstand the tyranny of Maya? But one must try and establish a proper relationship between the universal soul or God, the absolute source of life and the fastchanging phenomenal world which is perpetually in a flux and therefore, cannot contribute to true happiness.

The very way, in which Shri Baba lived, is an example for all of us to follow. His teachings and practices do not contradict even the most modern trends of thought. In this issue, we explore how a young lad appeared in Shirdi out of nowhere and led a pious life, what the reactions of the villagers were and other details of the mysterious young lad who later set an example to the world by his way of simple living, high thinking and became famous by the name "SAI".

Sandhya Udtha

Unto HIS fold



Shri Upasani Baba

one can declare himself/herself as a devotee, disciple or descendant of Baba. It is He (Sainath) who bestows the title on us. Pujya Shri Narasimha Swamiji's love for his Sadguru Shri Sainath made Swamiji the apostle of Baba. After personal tragedies, Swamiji wandered for Eleven years in search of peace and Guru to guide him. He was disappointed and dejected in life. It was 29th August Sravan Poornima day Narasimha Swamiji got up at 4:00 am and was in a pensive mood. He made up his mind to leave Upasani Baba's ashram once and for all. He was firmly convinced that he is not destined to get peace of mind in this birth. Narasimha Swamiji was afraid that Upasani Baba might influence him to reverse the decision if he conveyed his intention to get back to Chennai (previously known as Madras). So, from a distance, he bowed down to Upasani Maharaj and mentally sought his permission to leave.

Narasimha Swamiji came out of the ashram and as he was crossing the cremation ground, a six-foot-tall, well-built man of Pathan origin accosted him and questioned him as to where he was headed to. Swamiji confided

about his journey and disappointments and that he was heading home. This gentleman requested Swamiji to have 'darshan' of Sai Baba's 'samadhi' at Shirdi and said he may be benefited spiritually there. This meet was the turning point not only in Swamiji's life but for all the devotees of Shri Sai Baba. This apostle of Sai Baba not only spread Sai literature, but his living style was exemplary for the devotees then and now after nearly hundred years of Samadhi.

It is not the preaching of Sai Baba but His actions, and life are a lesson for us. Likewise, an incident in Swamiji's life teaches us to share with all and not to give any possession, creation the label of belonging; all belongs to the Almighty. Narasimha Swamiji visiting the samadhi of Sai Baba is a memorable event in his life. Sai Baba like a magnificent wave of fire engulfed each and every one of



Sri Narasimha Swamiji after a padapuja in 1948

the millions of cells of Narasimha Swamiji. It was new life for Swamiji; the old body of Narasimha Swamiji was no more and it transformed into Sai Swaroopi Narasimha Swamiji. Everything happened in a split second and Narasimha Swamiji became a realized soul then and there.

Great soul's, saints, and sages are aware of our thoughts. Some of us are taught by mere glance and some learn only by the presence of a divine soul. Hence, often it is said just by being in the company of a Satpurusha you are uplifted. It was in 1941 one fine evening myself and my wife Sharada were introduced to Shri Narasimha Swamiji. He was feeding sparrows sitting on an arm chair.

Our opening conversation with Swamiji very curiously enough started with a topic on which I and my wife were poles apart in our opinion. My contention was once we decide to adopt Sai Baba as our deity we should do all the pooja's (worship), namely Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Ganesh etc., to Sai Baba only and no Individual pooja's to the individual deities are to be done. My wife's opinion was to the contrary that while we do pooja to Sai Baba, we should continue pooja's to various deities and also Sai Baba, as individual deities represent particular aspects, while Sai Baba represents the whole.

Swamiji started thus: "Sharada, you see this body of mine, you call it Swamiji, I want to eat, then I use my mouth; I want to hear, then I use my ear; I want to walk, the I use my legs; so on and so forth. For every act I desire to do, I use a particular limb. Each limb is not identified as Swamiji but as one belonging to Swamiji. When you think of Swamiji, you think of him as one piece, but when

any one of the acts say walking, eating etc., comes to your mind, you think of the particular limb. Thus, the limb has its purpose and should be utilised separately but all limbs collectively made the unit and the unit has its purpose. While you respect the unit as an entity, you need not discard the limb as an individual of the whole unit."

A perfect answer to our unexpressed question!

Swamiji conquered us and made me an active member of the Sai Samaj. I was also the Secretary for some time.

I may quote a very simple instance which reflected Swamiji's anxiety to put Sai Baba at everybody's disposal and to prove that He is nobody's private property or preserve. We had published the book "Wonderous Saint" and the lawyer-mind that I had made me add a note: "All rights reserved' so that the contents may not be misquoted or misused. Swamiji, on seeing the printed books, was furious and asked me if I had bought Sai Baba lock stock and barrel that! should 'reserve all rights' in the book. He directed me to correct 'all' to 'no' which I accepted to do but postponed it to the evening. But when I arrived at the Samaj in the evening, I saw Swamiji himself vigorously correcting the word 'all' to 'no'.

Though Swamiji is not physically with us, he is watching from above carefully. Once in 1962, I had a problem in my office and was feeling the absence of Swamiji, as I used to run on such occasions to him to seek a solution earlier. Next morning, my wife told me that Swamiji appeared to her in a dream and told her 'why does OKV think I am not there. I am here. He will get over this problem soon.'

> By O.K. Varada Rao Source: Sai Padananda



Whoever you may come across, in this house or outside of it, or on the way, they are all my manifestations; I pervade them all truly and always

—Sai Baba

The Stranger at My Door





Mrs. Seetha Vijayakumar

had almost turned the woman away on that bleak, rainy day. She was a bentover, poorly clad woman who had been slowly walking down our place, going from door to door. I was curious because she only had time to say a few words before the door was shut in her face.

The rain had been falling steadily all day. So had been my spirits. We had little money, (being the month end for a salaried employee) and time hung heavily on my hands and I did not like living in a Godforsaken forest area like ours, while my husband Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar was on duty in his hospital. At that time, I was so full of doubts and questions that I had no faith in anything or anybody.

Then the woman knocked at my door.



"Madam" she said, trembling with cold, "do you have any house-work that I can do? I can scrub floors or do anything. I have hungry children at home and no money....."

"I am sorry" I stammered, "I wish I could help you, but I can't".

"Well, thank you anyway," she said and turned to go.

Immediately I looked at Sai in the big photograph that adorns our drawing room. He looked as if He was making fun of me, as to what kind of a Sai devotee I was.

I ran to the door and called to her "Please come back". She did, wiping the rain water from her face.

"Let me give you hot tea", I heard myself saying.

"Why, God bless you" she said: "You are a good Bhakta of Shirdi Sai Baba".

The words startled me — "a good Bhakta of Shirdi Sai Baba".

I gave something to eat and she ate quickly, in the manner of a person who lives with hunger. Then she looked around the house and spotted my pile of clothes waiting for ironing to be done. Despite my protests, she began to iron.

I gave all the money I had in the house — just some change, and some sweets I had bought for the children. Then we talked about the things that make the world and its people good or bad.

When she left she thanked me for all I had done for her. I watched her begin again her slow measured journey down the street. But she had started me on a journey, too.

I began the journey towards the faith I now have — a faith that has seen me through many crises and made me more aware of others.

"Share with him thy bread of blessing, sorrow's burden share; When thy heart enfolds a brother, God is there."

Source: Shri Sai Leela Magazine

etermination is the power from which devotion springs and loving attachment to God; this sort of attachment brings a state of constant joy and peace in life. The eternity following any form of such divinity is immense and there are so many forms of devotion, described variously by different schools of thought. The actual philosophy uttered in depth of Saint's preaching is to seek 'Moksha'. Through such form of life and living phenomenon, they conquer this worldly atmosphere; no aspirations knock them, nothing disturbs their attention, they see only God in all. Saints never come from the world of conspiracy, their thought of mind flows in natural fulfillment; they appear in substantial form of an enigma. "Saints and Sages are the medium through which God tries to dispel the darkness in our lives" Never bound by any human relations, they only relate to the ultimate, they belong to a vision from God i.e. Godliness and finally they leave their physical body for the next superficial appearance. From where they come, they reach the same.

Dixit's Dairy

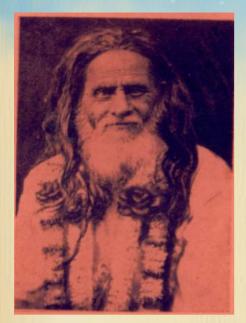
Experiences of Captain V.G. Hate Bikaner

Dr. Hate was a staunch devotee of Shri Sainath Maharaj. He stayed in Shirdi for many days. While at Gwalior one day in the evening, one Saluram, a Marathi gentleman came to meet him. While conversing with Dr. Hate, he states that his son has gone missing from the house and he and his wife are very sad. Dr. Hate had full faith in Shri Sainath Maharaj



Hari Sitaram Dixit

Hence Dr. Hate advised him to go to Shirdi and take Baba's darshan and he would soon meet his son. After some days this Saluram received a letter from his son stating he had gone to Mesopotamia to partake in war without informing anyone. On informing Dr. Hate about the same, he asked Saluram to visit Shirdi immediately and take Baba's darshan. Instead of following Dr. Hate's direction, Saluram left with his family to meet his son at Mumbai. He met his son, but his son was laid with high fever and his son was in precarious condition. Seeing his son in this condition he took him to Dr. Hate at Gwalior for treatment. Dr. Hate said, "You have lost the way by not taking Baba's darshan yet. Go to Shirdi immediately and place your son at the feet of Shri Sainath Maharaj, he will get well". Saluram asked Dr. Hate for an introductory letter, Dr. Hate said, it is not required but I am giving you a thing, hand over the same to Shri Sainath", and then he removed a One rupee coin from the Box and gave it to Saluram. Dr. Hate's sole intention was to receive the same as prasad from Shri Sai and preserve the same without any motto. Saluram went to Shirdi. After taking Baba's darshan, he placed a rupee coin in Baba's hand. Baba returned the Rupee coin asking Saluram to return the same to the person who gave it. Dr. Hate's wish was to get that coin back as prasad and Baba knowing about the wish returned the same rupee coin as per Dr. Hate's wish. Saluram returned to Gwalior met Dr. Hate and told him about Sai Samartha's darshan at Shirdi and the complete recovery of his son's health. Along with this good news, Saluram handed over the rupee coin touched by Baba to Dr. Hate. Dr. Hate rose from his seat to bow and pay his gratitude to his Samarth Sadguru with a rupee received as prasad from Baba. He felt that was not the coin he gave to Saluram. He returned the said coin to Saluram saying, "this is not the coin I gave you". Saluram was perplexed. He returned home with the said coin. Saluram returned the next day with another rupee coin and placed the same in Dr. Hate's palm. On receiving the said coin Dr. Hate felt sure that this is the coin he gave it to Saluram. Saluram then explained the said mistake occurred due to his wife's mistake.



Kush Bhav

Experience of Shri. Vasudev Sitaram Ratjankar

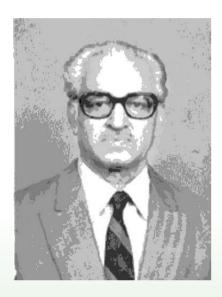
Around 1908 I came to know of Shri Sai Maharaj Leela's from Kush Bhav (Krishna Natha Buva Niraj Gavkar Joshi). At many places devout persons used to invite Kush Bhav to perform Shri Sai Puja with devotion and respect. Accordingly, it went on for several days in our village. One day, Kush Bhav's Shri Sai puja was fixed at Sitaram Bhatji Ghate's house. Since he was known person, I had the privilege of attending and seeing the pooja performed. Some invitees were discussing the power of curing from Bhav's theertha prasad offered to people participating in the puja. While Shri Sai Maharaja's feet must bless my residence (means a thought that Sai devotee Kush Bhav must perform puja at my place was running in my mind) Kush Bhav smiled and said, "I would like to visit your house tomorrow." I was fully satisfied when I heard these words of Kush Bhav. I returned home thinking about the arrangement pertaining to the puja to be

performed next at my place. I reached home and informed everyone at home about the puja next day. At dawn, my mother Ganga Bhai had a dream, "one ochre donned Mahatma with a Kamandalu came straight to the house, my mother offered him asana to sit but Mahatma stood on it and my mother offered pranams at the holy feet". Then she woke and narrated the dream to every one of us but none of us gave any importance to it. On the same day, I went again to witness the puja. Maharaj on concluding the puja, while teertha prasad was being distributed when my turn to receive came to the teertha prasad, he lifted Shri Sai Maharaj's photo kept for puja and offered it to me with permission to worship Baba regularly and offer manasa puja. Accordingly, I returned with Shri Sai Baba's photo to my place and then compared with dawn incidence and narrated the same to my family. Everyone felt much satisfied. I invited Kush Bhav for food and perform puja thereafter. I slowly started the worship of Baba and started knowing Him too. Later I came to know of many devotees visiting Shirdi and narrating their experiences of miracles on their return. This made me feel I also must visit Shirdi to seek Baba's darshan and earn goodness. This occurred in 1912 on British Emperor's visit to India. As such one Shivdas Ghate gave me the train ticket to Kopergaon brought for one of his relatives visiting Kopargaon which was cancelled and paved the way for Vasudev Sitaram Ratjankar to visit Shirdi. Thinking this as an invitation from Baba to visit Shirdi, skipped seeking British Emperor's glimpse. I had multiple experiences and blessing of Shri Sainath from the visit, thus paving the way to write series of verses that led to experience a miracle which one can hardly imagine and narrate.

Copy of Sri. Vasudev Sitaram Ratjankar's letter to Sri Sitaram Dixit

hen asked, His only reply was "Brahma is my father, Maya is my mother and this Universe is my house." No conflict of opinion exists however as to His being an extra-ordinary incarnation of God or the highest of perfect beings. Brahman by His Maya Power manifests itself as human being, when irreligion stalks unchecked in this world. He comes and places religion on sound foundations dispelling the clouds of doubts and inflexibility. He descends in particular to protect the good, the saintly and to destroy the bad and the wicked.

Is It Necessary for A Sadguru To Be Alive?



Lt. Col. M.B. Nimbalkar

Ince the days of Upanishads, the necessity of a spiritual preceptor (Sadguru) for attaining God-Realization has been considered indispensable. For instance, the Mundaka Upanishad says:

To know That one should, holding sacrificial sticks in hands, go to a Guru who is both a scholar and established in Brahman

In Geeta, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna:

"Know that by long prostration, by question, and service, the wise who have realized the Truth will instruct thee in (that) Knowledge".

Sant Tukaram from Maharashtra says the same thing:

"No shelter other than Sadguru is to be found. He turns the shishya (disciple) immediately into his own likeness".

And Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa also reaffirms it:

"When going to a strange country one must abide by directions of the guide who knows the way. So, in trying to reach God one must implicitly follow the advice of one single Guru who knows the way to God." (693)

Shri Sai Baba also confirmed the necessity of a Sadguru for Self-Realization. In Chapter 2 of Shri Sai Sat Charitra. We know how Shri Sai Baba convinced Shri Dabholkar that a Guru is a must, by ridiculously addressing him as "Hemadpant" on account of his hot discussion with Shri Balasaheb Bhate on the very first day of his arrival in Shirdi. Also in Chapter 32, the story of 4 aspirants (including Baba Himself) in search of God and Baba's ultimate success in Self-realization does to complete surrender to a Guru are explicit proofs of Baba's views in the matter.

Thus, there is no question about the necessity of a Sadguru for Self-Realization. The question is whether he should be a living person, or whether a non-living person can be accepted. If an aspirant (sadhaka) can find a perfect Sadguru in flesh and blood, nothing like it. It is easy then for him to serve the Sadguru in person and secure his favors. He can listen to his talks and discuss any doubts with him. In rare and fortunate cases such as that of Swami Vivekananda, a Sadguru may procure a divine vision to his disciple by a mere touch of the hand alone (shaktipaat).

What to do if a living Sadguru is not available?

But how and where to find such a perfect preceptor (Sadguru)? Swami Vivekananda has rightly said:



"There are many Gurus who, though immersed in ignorance, yet, in the pride of their hearts, fancy they know everything and not only do not stop there but offer to take others on their shoulders and thus the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch." (III. 47)

A perfect preceptor is he "who has himself crossed the terrible ocean of life and without any idea of gain to himself, helps others also to cross the ocean." Finding such a Guru is like the fabled pearl-oyster succeeding in catching a drop of the marvelous Swati rain, to convert into a beautiful pearl.



Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa

Hence, if one is not lucky enough to get such a perfect Master, an aspirant should consider any God or Goddess such as Shiva, Rama, Krishna or Durga as a Guru. Shri Ramakrishna has said, "Who is whose Guru (spiritual guide and teacher)? God alone is the guide and Guru of the universe." (687). So, if one approaches God with sincerity, earnest prayers, and deep longing, He will surely guide him towards spiritual uplift and if really necessary will send a living Sadguru to him.

Alternatively, the aspirant should consider great saints, like Ramana Maharshi of Arunachalam, Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineshwar, Swami Samarth of Akkalkot, or Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi, who have cast off their mortal bodies, as Sadguru. These saints, although not living physically, do exist with subtle bodies in the universe and are able to contact and even appear before their devotees in person. Shri Sai Baba has said:

"Believe Me, though I pass away, My bones in My tomb would be speaking, moving, and communicating with those who would surrender themselves wholeheartedly to Me. Do not be anxious that I would be absent from you. You will hear My bones speaking and discussing your welfare."

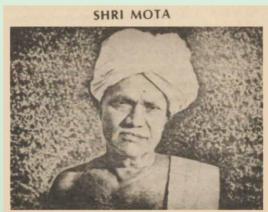
(Shri Sai-Sat-Charita, Chapter- 25)

Examples of non-living Gurus

In Maharashtra in early 17th century, Samarth Ramdas, a famous saint, and Guru of Shivaji the Great, did not have a living Guru. Instead, he considered Shri Rama (the 7th incarnation of Shri Vishnu) as his Guru and as a result Ramdas while in meditation, received Mantropadesh from Shri Rama in person.

Other two examples are from this century and refer to Shri Sai Baba guiding His devotees in spiritual matters long after His samadhi. First one is about His Holiness Narasimha Swamiji, Founder-President of the All India Sai Samaj of Chennai (previously named as Madras), and who was responsible for the spread of Sai Cult in India especially, in the South in the 1930s. In his early life, Swamiji was a leading legal practitioner and a Member of Madras Legislative Council. In 1925 his son and daughter fell into a well unexpectedly and died. As a result, he developed great renunciation in life and set out in search of a Guru. He went to Arunachal, Pandharpur, Nasik, Dwarka, Ked-gaon (Narayan Bet), and Sakori, and met living saints like Ramana Maharshi and others like Meher Baba, Narayan Maharaj, and Upasani Maharaj but was not satisfied. At last in 1933, he went to pay his homage to the samadhi of Shri Sai Baba at Shirdi and got attached there permanently. He met and interviewed more than 60 devotees who had personally seen Shri Sai Baba and after a great study and research wrote 4 volumes on the life of Shri Sai Baba and a number of useful books on Charters and Teachings of Shri Sai Baba. He used to consider Shri Sai Baba as his sole Sadguru, so much so that whenever being photographed, he would sit with Shri Sai Baba's photo on his lap. Thus, even 18 years after Baba's Samadhi, Shri Narasimha Swamiji under Baba's guidance and inspiration reached a very high state of spirituality and was honored and respected as a great saint in the South.

Another example is about Mota Maharaj of Gujarat. He left his body recently i.e. in 1976. He had been in a state of liberation (jeevan-mukta) since 1939. He was



initiated initially by Dhuniwale Dada of Saikheda and Upasani Baba who were living then. But he also used to consider Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur and Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi, although not in their mortal coil then as one with the above living saints and used to address them as his Sadgurus only. Actually, there is a miracle in Mota Maharaj's life. In 1938 (20 years after His Mahasamadhi), Shri Sai Baba appeared in person twice before Mota Maharaj Karachi, tested him as a disciple and explained to him in detail, the yogic process that is needed for Self-Realization. Then, on 29th March 1939, Ram Navami Day at Kashi (Varanasi), Shri Sai Baba gave Mota, the great experience of non-duality and fixed him as a Self-Realized soul forever. No wonder Mota Maharaj in his autobiography says, "He (Shri Sai Baba) gave final touches to my spiritual progress."

The above are the experiences of great spiritual giants. But even a person like me who is at the lowest rung of spiritual progress, get constant guidance and inspiration from Shri Sai Baba (who is not in body today) having considered Him as my sole Sadguru for the last 10-12 years. Required religious books have come to me automatically. Desires of visiting Shirdi and other far-off places of pilgrimage have been fulfilled unexpectedly without any physical strain or without any necessity of spending a single paisa. My difficulties in understanding Sanskrit scriptures and other philosophical books have been solved either during my daily reading of Shri Sai Satcharitra or by a sudden flash of realization. Best of all, with Baba's great grace, this humble person, who has been a soldier wielding a rifle all his life, has been inspired to wield a pen that too on philosophical and religious subjects and with quite a reasonable success. Isn't this something as good as or more than being under the guidance of a Sadguru in flesh and blood??

Advantages of a non-living Guru

Actually, there are some advantages in having a Sadguru who is not in his mortal coil. Having no opportunity of seeing him in person, we usually form a mental picture of his personality and behavior by seeing his photograph or painting and by hearing about his divine qualities and miraculous powers. Thus, our faith and devotion to such a Sadguru are always great and unshakable. On the contrary, if the Sadguru is living, we are likely to be irked by his physical defects, awkward behavior, and dirty habits, if any, and thus there is a danger of our doubting his greatness and dignity and losing our faith in him. The real and great saints purposely behave in an irritating and crazy manner and ordinary persons cannot understand their import.

Another advantage is that since such a Sadguru is not in their human form, we are not likely to be led away or cheated by his outward show or advertisement through his pet (and probably paid) followers. In the case of a Sadguru who has attained samadhi, his greatness is already known, fully tested, and there is no danger of being cheated. Some living Gurus fall a prey to great honor, rich comforts and heaps of money offered to them by their devotees and thus lose their spiritual status. They render themselves to be unable to lead their disciples to Self-Realization. There is no such danger of disillusionment in the case of a Sadguru who has already left his human body.

Importance of a disciple.

In spiritual matters, it is not enough to secure a perfect preceptor (Sadguru) only. The disciple or the aspirant himself must have acquired a status necessary to receive the favor. He should have real renunciation (non-attachment), should have conquered all the senses and have an earnest desire for Self-Realization. This is exactly what Shri Sai Baba told Bapusaheb Jog who asked Him as to when will Baba bless him (Sai Satcharitra Chapter. 44).

"I shall consider you blessed when you will renounce all attachments, conquer lust and palate, and getting rid of all impediments, serve God wholeheartedly and resort to the begging bowl (accept sanyas)."

And the same was illustrated to all the assembled devotees, when in Chapter 16-17, Baba disposed off a rich gentleman come to Him for Brahma-jnan (Self-Realization) saying, "Roll up your bundle of Brahma viz. currency notes. Unless you completely get rid of your avarice or greed, you will not get the real Brahma."

And how differently Baba treated, Nanasaheb Chandorkar, Kaka Saheb Dixit, and Upasani? Baba Himself sent for Nanasaheb not once but thrice. To fetch Kaka Saheb He sent Madhavrao Deshpande to Ahmednagar and Upasani though not willing to stay on at Shirdi, Baba forced him to return in 10 days by using His divine powers.

So, if an aspirant is not able to find a suitable Sadguru, he should not get disappointed but without spending any more time and energy in search, should continue his sadhana incessantly. Swami Vivekananda has rightly said:

"It is a mysterious law of nature that as soon as the field is ready, the seed must come, as soon as the soul wants religion, the transmitter of religious force must come. 'The seeking sinner meeteth the seeking savior'. When the power that attracts in the receiving soul is full and ripe, the power which answers to the attraction must come." (IV 22-23)

Conclusion

Shri Sai Baba in Chapter 2 of Sai Satcharitra, after taunting Shri Dabholkar (Hemadpant) for his argument with Mr. Bhate, asserted that without a Guru there is no Self-Realization. Also in Chapter 32, Sai Baba narrated the story of four aspirants in search of God and concluded that a guide in the form of a Sadguru is essential for this purpose. But the same Shri Sai Baba in Chapter 44 has also said that after He discards His mortal body, His devotees can still attain Self-Realization by surrendering to Him completely.

"I feel indebted to him who surrenders himself completely to Me and ever remembers Me. I shall repay his debt by giving him Salvation (Self-Realization)..... So leaving out pride and egoism and with no trace of them, you should surrender yourself to Me who am seated in your heart."

Similarly, in shloka 34 of Chapter 4 of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna although Himself a Seer of Truth (and jagat-guru) advises Arjuna to approach the wise who have realized the Truth. But the same Lord Krishna has later asked Arjuna to surrender completely to Himself and promised to save him from downfall.

Sarva dharmaan parityajya maam ekam sharanam vraja ahatn twam sarva paapebhyo mokshayishaami maa suchah

- (Ch. 18/66)

(Abandoning all Dharmas (of the body, mind, and intellect) take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.)

Thus, Shri Sai Baba Himself and Lord Krishna too have solved the question of aspirants who are unable to find a living Sadguru.

When such great authorities are available to us why should we have any doubts or get disappointed? Moreover, to Sai Devotees, I would accost them in the following words of Shri Madhavrao Deshpande (Shama) addressed to Shri Kaka Saheb Dixit who had become despondent on reading the discourse of nine Nathas on Bhakti in Chapter 2 of Ekanathi Bhagawat.

"It is a pity that one who by his good luck got such a jewel (Guru) as Baba, should cry out so abjectly. If he has unwavering faith in Baba, why should he feel restless? Where is the cause for fear and anxiety?" (Chapter 45, Sai Satcharitra)

Source: Shri Saileela Magazine

Tomewhere around 1854 in the village of Shirdi people saw a young lad sitting under the Neem tree, His state at this point of time was "Wearing torn and tattered clothes; Sitting wherever it pleased; Appearing as a mad person however absorbed in Brahma! Sometimes, the lad would go and sit at the stream; sometimes underneath a particular margosa tree near the village wall; sometimes in somebody's farm; the clothes on His body were tattered; on and off He put on a ferocious appearance. He appeared to the ordinary persons as mad, because of these and similar modes of behavior. But soon, people's erroneous misconception was removed and people of Shirdi realized the worth of this young lad". Nana Chopdar's mother was the first person who noticed Sai doing meditation not minding heat or cold. She would often talk about the marvel of Baba's ways and his behavior. Villagers heard about this lad and they were simply amused to see him. He neither associated with any at daytime nor was scared of any during night. The news spread to the neighboring villages also. People rushed to Shirdi to have his darshan. 'Where this lad could have come from?' was the one question that puzzled everyone's mind.

A Dip into Vishnu SahasRaNama

Templates of Activity in The Introductory Verse of SahasRaNama

he Vishnu SahasRaNama lays down a unique template which maps out each activity in the universe through the prism of chanting one thousand names of the Lord. Even as it presents a chant structure, through which all phenomena are seen, the SahasRaNama, at another level, goes deep into the metaphysical dimension of the empirical world.

The SahasRaNama begins with the word 'VisWam' the Universe, the Cosmos. In the Vedic language, 'VisWam' means 'Brahma'- Omkara – Aum which on elaboration constitutes the Sapta Vyahritis. Vyahritis mean words. The first sounds produced while creating the Universe are called Vyahritis. And the seven worlds that constitute the Universe go aptly by the name of these Vyahritis – Óm Bhuhu Bhuvah Suvah Mahaha Janaha Tapaha Satyam'.

Creation involves movement, which in turn produces sound. There is no movement without sound. So, creation and sound, though they mean different, are really one and inseparable. Thus, the whole creation, the universe, is contained in Sapta Vyahritis which constitute the first word of Sahas RaNama, 'VisWam'

'Óm VisWam VishNuh VaShatKaRaHa BhuTaBhavYa BhaVath PraBhuh BhuTaKrit BhuTaBhriTh BhaVah BhuTatMa

BhuTaKrit BhuTaBhriTh BhaVah BhuTatMa BhuTaBhaVaNah'



Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar

The whole of the SahasRaNama is the elaboration of this word 'VisWam'. From the first word, the SahasRaNama explains in so many words and expressions what the Brahman is. In the next eight words of the opening verse, the conception of the word 'VisWam' has been explained in a nutshell. In other words, the entire summary of the SahasRaNama has been explained in the opening verse. Therefore, in these first nine words the entire concept of SahasRaNama has been abridged.

'VisWam' is described as the Universe. 'VishNuh' is omnipresent and all-pervading. For how long has he been omnipresent and all-pervading is answered in 'BhuTa BhavYa BhaVath PraBhuh' - which indicates that He is the Lord of the Past, the Present and the Future. 'BhuTa Krit' means He is the Creator of all beings. He does not stop with creation, but He sustains and protects them as 'BhuTa BhriTh' and as 'BhaVah' protects them lovingly. He is the Self of Beings 'BhuTatMa'. Sai Baba has confirmed in Sai Satcharitra that He exists in every being as Ántaryamin. Ultimately as 'BhuTa BhaVaNah' He IS THE Generator and Evolver of all beings.

Thus, the whole philosophy taught and practiced by Sai Baba is compressed in this first shloka or verse which is comprised of nine words. He constitutes the entire Universe. He is all-pervading. He is everywhere, and everything is under His sweet control. He is the Master of the Past, the Present and the Future, having neither a beginning nor an end. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Evolver and Lover of all beings. He is the Soul of the existence and nothing exists Except Him. He resides in every being. Every Sai devotee recites this condensed philosophy in the first shloka of Vishnu Sahas Ra Nama as he pays obeisance to Sai Baba.

Sai Baba told his devotees: "I see myself everywhere. There is no place without me. There is nothing else but me, my eyes are in every place, keeping a watch on my devotees on the evil and the good. No one can escape" (Sai Satcharitra, Chapter 14, Ovi 48).

This 'VisWam' is central to the understanding of the laws of the universe and recitation of Vishnu SahasRaNama is an 'Yajna' for all Sai devotees.



'YajNa' means sacrificial offering where oblations of 'Havis' like ghee are offered into the sacred fire. 'YajNa' means to adore or worship. However, the word 'YajNaGuhYam' (982) in SahasRaNama means a deed performed without desire for the result.

The sacrificial yajNa in present time may be substituted by dharma. No greater tribute has been paid to 'Pitru Seva' than that paid by Rama while addressing Seetha before embarking on 'VanaVasa'. While the sentiment of obeisance to father, mother, teacher and guest is stressed, the word 'Anna' is inserted to ultimately indicate the importance of 'Annadan'.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji visited Mysore in 1940s for Sai Pravchar. Sri Rallapalli Ananthakrishna Sharma was Telugu Pandit in Maharaja's durbar and was greatly influenced by Sri Narasimha Swamiji's greatness (incidentally Sharma's son, Prof. R.A. Phani Shayi was my teacher at National College, Bengaluru in midsixties) and informed the Maharaja. The Maharaja sent an invitation through the Diwan, Mirza Ismail to Sri Narasimha Swamiji to visit the palace and have lunch. Swamiji accepted the invitation and called on the Maharaja. When lunch was served, he mixed everything served on the leaf into a big ball, took out three fistfuls and kept it aside. Swamiji fed the major portion to cows in the 'Goshala' and took only the three fistfuls for himself! The Maharaja was greatly impressed.

The Maharaja, Sri Jaya Chamaraja Wodeyer interacted with Sri Narasimha Swamiji on 'Divya Nama



Smaran' and other philosophical questions. He asked Swamiji five questions. His first question, "Do you know where mortals go to after death?" Swamiji answered that for him Sai Baba as God Almighty pervades the entire universe and mortals are absorbed into this 'perfect consciousness'. The second



question, "Do you know from where people come when they are reborn?" Swamiji answered that they will arise from the same God Sai Baba who pervades the universe. The third question, "What are the paths through which the soul ascends?" Swamiji offered two paths – 'Bhakti Marga' by propitiating the Almighty through 'Divya Nama Smaran' – chanting Vishnu SahasRaNama and 'Karma yoga'- doing everything without any expectation.

The Maharaja's last question was, the significance of offering five oblations in an yajNa. Sri Narasimha Swamiji answered this question quoting the templates from Vishnu SahasRaNama. The first template is that 'VisWam' the entire universe is fire and all existence follow this cycle of fire. The next altar is of clouds, where the fuel is the air from which arises rain. The third altar is earth where the fuel is time, from which arises food. The fourth altar is man, where the fuel is food, from which arises the seed. The fifth altar is woman, to whom the seed is offered as oblation, and from which arises the fetus.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji viewed 'VisWam' the creation at all levels as a sort of yajNa, sacrifice, where all activity is interconnected. The birth of a child is not just a simple outcome between man and woman. Swamiji stated that a child is conceived from every cell of the universe. The notion of 'my child' and 'your child' is a misunderstanding of the basic laws of the universe. Swamiji told the Maharaja that the inter connectedness of the universe and contemplation of this principle of five templates, is true meditation into the essence of things.

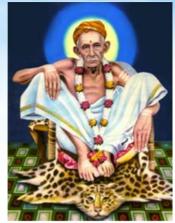
'Óm VisWam VishNuh VaShatKaRaHa BhuTaBhavYa BhaVath PraBhuh

BhuTaKrit BhuTaBhriTh BhaVah BhuTatMa BhuTaBhaVaNah'

It prompts us to look beyond the obvious, to delve deep into the fundamentals of whatever we see, hear or touch. This introductory verse of SahasRaNama reminds us of 'Tat Tvam Asi' that each of us comes from,

and are that Self, the Athman, nothing less. We are all the part Sai Parabrahman.

Lord Sainath has groomed his devotees to view life on the spiritual discipline of the emptying out of the sense of self, of the ego. When a profound dilemma arises, let us remember Lord Sainath



Shri Siddharuda Swamy

close behind our thoughts and pray to him to grant us emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths.

Attachment is what causes problems and you need to guard yourself against it. I may have all basic requirements like bed, pillow, blanket, mosquito-net but I am not attached to them. I can enjoy a comfortable life; I can take it or leave it.

Sai Baba says that attachment causes suffering. Relieving suffering by giving up everything is not the right way, you do not have to renounce everything and go away, although it is easy to do so

Sri Narasimha Swamiji in his masterpiece 'The Life of Sai Baba' has stated that everyone of us is 'paripurna' or totally fulfilled, completely satisfied. For some reason you may not know it. Ignorance of your fullness causes an imaginary void.

Sai Baba accepts you as his own and gives knowledge of your fullness. Once you experience fullness, you will be independent of the world. Sai Baba also prescribes the technique of obtaining the world so that you are comfortable at any stage in life. In short, devotion to Sai Baba enables you to gain the world and not be bound to it

Sai Baba's grace having created and supported the notion of our own and the other, also has taught us to overcome the unhelpful side of this tendency. So how is it that we, as Sai devotees, end up doing absolutely the opposite? If such approaches and attitudes pain us or make us unhappy, how very important it is to re-commit to learning our lesson in 'total surrender' to Sai Baba and doing our best to live at his will! He removes the ignorance that conceals Him within yourself. Lust, anger, pride, jealousy, attachment and delusion form the basis of ignorance. Removal of these six passions enables us to experience 'Self' within ourselves and within everyone else. It leads us to experience that blissful oneness with all – 'Aham BrahmasMi'

handsome he was that love dwelled in the hearts of people in Shirdi. He never had habit of visiting anyone in the village; he just lived near the neem tree day and night. He remained alone but worldly. It was everyone's inquisitiveness to talk about him and everyone was quite puzzled, from where he got such extra ordinary qualities in that tender age; Moreover, how could he stay alone in the open day and night? The young lad surpassed even the greatest among men, the very incarnation of perfect desertion. One day a local man was possessed by Lord Khandoba (deity worshipped as a

manifestation of Lord Shiva) and people questioned him about the strange boy who lived in their midst. They were directed to dig at a particular spot under the tree where the young man lived.

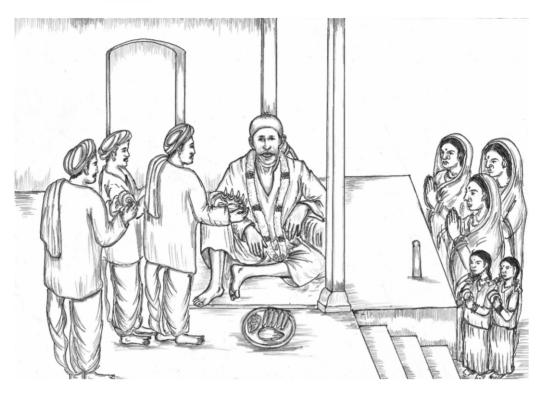


Lord Khandoba

Here is an instance from the life of Sri Narasimha Swamiji. He was staying in Siddharuda Ashram in Hubballi of Karnataka in 1929. Siddharuda Swamiji asked his pupils how they could tell when the night had ended, and the day had begun. "Could it be", asked one of the inmates, "when you can see an animal in the distance and tell whether it is a sheep or a dog?" "No" answered Siddharuda Swamijii. "Is it when you can look at a tree in the distance and tell whether it is a banyan tree or bilva tree?" Again, Siddharuda Swamiji answered "No". The impatient pupils were looking forward to what reply Sri Narasimha Swamiji would give.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji gave an epoch-making reply: "It is when you can look on the face of any man or woman and see that it is your sister or brother. Because if you cannot see this, it is still night."

Experiences from Sai Sudha August 1941



went to Sakuri with our revered B. V. Narasimha Swamy. I met a leper beggar on the roadside of Rahata, and instead of giving anything I promised to pay on my return, but I entirely forgot about it and returned to Shirdi. In 'Dwarakamayi' I was praying and instead of Baba in the portrait, the leper appeared to me. Shocked I at once ran to Swamiji and explained to him the incident. He advised me to put four annas into the 'Hundi,' which I did

immediately and went for 'Arati' in Samadhi Mandir and I saw the figure of a leper in place of Baba. I became perplexed and prayed to Baba to forgive me for my indifference and apathy towards the leper. On my way back, the bus stopped at the



1/4 Anna not in circulation now

same place. The same leper came to me and begged me alone when there were several passengers on the bus. I then gave him four annas which satisfied my soul.

I had a mind to visit Pandharpur. So, I cast lots. I got a



Baba in Dwarakamayi

favorable reply but there was a heavy rainfall. By Baba's grace, I reached Dhond without any trouble due to rain on the way. At Dhond Railway station I met an officer who made kind inquiries about my journey. I told him that I was bound to Pandharpur. He told me he would go along with me up to Kurudwadi. Meanwhile, I asked him about Pandharpur as I was





Vittoba Udi Packet

very strange to those parts. I reached Kurudwadi and ran up to purchase the ticket. So, I entirely forgot about him. But he came to me hurriedly and told me that he had changed his mind to go to Pandharpur and show me all the important places there. I thought that Baba had sent this officer to help me as I had my own doubts about the place. We reached Pandharpur Railway station. He himself arranged a tonga (horse-driven carriage) for me and paid for it too. He took me to a Dharmasala and left me there after arranging everything for me. He took leave of me saying that he would meet me in the evening if I only thought of him. I then went to 'Chandrabhaga' and had my bath. I purchased four garlands and worshipped Vittobha by placing two garlands around his neck and two around Rukmani's.

I then went to a hotel and had my meal. Later on, I went directly to Railway Station. Owing to tiresome journey during the previous night, had a nap in which I saw the two garlands which I had placed around the neck of Vittobha, on the Mahasamadhi of Sai Baba of Shirdi. I at once woke up and became bewildered. Then it struck me that Baba was Vittobha too. One's devotion to any form reaches the Almighty ultimately. This clearly shows how Baba takes care of his devotees even in travel and worship. From this incident, I realized that the strange officer who helped me all through was no other than Baba himself.

By a devotee

Baba helping the Benefactor

Sai Baba has been helping me at all times. In order to prove this, I cite one very important incident. I have a benefactor. He was appointed to a prominent position. Normally he should have continued for three years in that position. But to his great surprise, he was asked to vacate the position for someone although he was there for less than ten months. Newspapers published that he was asked to go on leave. I saw it. From that day forward, I prayed to Baba for six days to the effect that he should not be disturbed from there. There was no response from Baba. I then took a vow that I would fast till he was reposted there. I continued my fast for fourteen days. Then Baba showed me some signs that my benefactor would be retained there. I was not satisfied with this. I again prayed to Baba for clarification. Then Baba sat beside the Head of the Department and made him pass the retention order. I saw it clearly in the picture of Baba and I at once wrote to my benefactor that he would not be disturbed from there. Accordingly, newspapers published that he would continue in his position until the end of his term. I broke my fast after offering special pooja to Baba. This proves that Sai Baba is ever ready to help his devotees at all times according to Rinanubandham.

By a devotee

I am a native of Kalahasti, Chittor District and residing at No. 71, Gopuram Street, Ranganyakulpeta, Nellore. One day, M. Hanumantha Rao, Clerk, District Board Engineer's Office Nellore, a friend of mine told me he wants members for the temple to run its program's satisfactorily. Before this, I had also heard about Sri Sai Baba and I immediately became a member of the temple by paying 0-8-0 a month.

On Friday the 4th, at about 8:30 am my wife was stung by a big scorpion. My nephew who was in the house came in search of me and advised me to bring a doctor immediately. I went to a relative of mine who is a doctor and found his dispensary closed. I then went to Dr.



Rajagopalachari and requested him to visit my house and give the necessary injection to provide an immediate cure. He told me that it is of no use giving any injection. I, at last, went to the temple next to his dispensary and prayed to Sai Baba and took some Udi in an envelope and reached my house by 9:30 am. I saw my wife crying in the house. I immediately applied the Udi to the place where the scorpion had stung and rubbed over it. I mixed little Udi in the water and have her drink it while I also poured a drop of it on her eye. After this, she suffered for 15 minutes or so and she slept well. She got up after an hour and told me that she was happy and not feeling any kind of pain even at the place where the scorpion had stung. Thus, I had the miracle cure with the aid of Sri Sai Baba's Udi. Then I was advised by my wife to bring a photo of Baba so that we may perform puja daily in our house. Hence, I went to Dr. Rajagopalachari and purchased one photo of Sri Sai Baba. My wife and children, and I performed puja (worship) and ate our meals at about 2:00 pm on that day. From that day onward we have been regularly worshipping Baba and performing puja in our house.

I sincerely believe that this is nothing but Sri Sai Baba's grace in response to my seeking refuge in him.

By Saraswathi Ramaswamy Sastry

District Board Engineer, Cocanada

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My son Parathasarthi, a 12-year-old and 4th form student was regularly attending to the worship of Sri Sai Baba at my pleader friend and neighbor S. Subba Rao's house every Thursday for the last six months. He is a staunch devotee of Sai Baba. In the month of May 1941, he was attacked by an acute Typhoid fever. Though he was treated by a doctor, he could not take medicine or diet until and unless Baba's Udi and Thirtham (holy water associated with a temple or deity.) was mixed in it. His condition became critical; but when Baba's name was uttered, he would open his mouth to swallow Udi and Thirtham that was put into his mouth. He got Baba's photo by his bedside and would insist on us to decorate it with flowers every day. The doctor also almost gave up on the case as being beyond care; but my son was intense in his faith and when conscious he insisted that Baba's Udi and Thirtham should be given to him. My son has recovered contrary to my expectation. His intense faith has had the desired effect. Consequently, I have sent Rs. 5 (five) to Shirdi towards Baba's Dakshina.

By Sri. D.Sreenivasayya BA 1st Grade Pleader, Gooty.



Samadhi of Baba's former Guru Where he first sat (Shirdi)

I have been regularly performing the worship of Baba every Thursday. Devotees were increasing in number week after week. In addition to this, I celebrated Guru Poornima for Baba on 7th, 8th, and 9th with musical instruments, etc. Many people of the town became devotees and joined in the worship. The above-noted boy Parthasarathi, son of pleader D. Sreenivasayya, was cured of Typhoid fever on an account of intense faith in Baba as is clear from the father's report. A good number of young students also attend Thursday's worship and recite Baba's Ashtothara Namavali and Dandakam. Baba's Udi is immensely helping the devotees in more ways than one.

By S. Subba Rao, Pleader, Gooty.

Baba's Udi Mahima

A devotee from Kanjeevaram writes on 22-5-'41 to a friend in Madras, as outlined below:

"The Vibhuthi which you gave me is giving a good effect. Not only for children but also for the older generation. The other child, that is Jagannadham, was not talking and now he is slowly speaking.

So, I request you to kindly send me some good quantity of Vibhuthi".



I heard the name of Sri Sai Baba for the first time in my life during December 1940, when I attended the Bhajan which was started by Mr. V. S. V. Iyer at Nandi Mansion, 120 B. Rash Behari Venue, Calcutta. Sri V. S. V. Iyer was kind enough to give me a photo of Baba and asked me to start praying.

Hardly a month had elapsed since I started praying when I had series of experiences to prove that Baba always looks to his devotees. It will take pages for me to write the experiences, but I am outlining the below important experiences I had.

My fourth son, Murthy who is now 3 ½ years old was suffering from weeping eczema for the last 2 ½ years. This infection had affected both his hands and legs. He was suffering a great deal and could not get any relief in spite of the best medical help given to him in Calcutta.

One day my wife had a dream to start Bhajan in our house every Thursday (which is now being conducted most successfully at our residence at Shankar Villa) and Baba assured that my child will be cured of this awful disease. Immediately after the Bhajan was over, we all jointly appealed to Baba to give relief to my child. Next day (Friday) at about 6:00 am, a Bengali gentleman called

me and requested me to show my child. He told me that the child is suffering from weeping eczema and he could find out a remedy for the child. He asked me to get the ordinary coal tar, heat it up, applying to the affected parts and spread Udi over the same. He guaranteed a cure within 3 days of using this remedy.

Strange as it would seem, 3 days after the application of the remedy, the affected parts were completely healed and now my child has completely recovered. Doctors were unable to explain the strange phenomena in the child's case and they all gave up on it saying it hopeless and incurable disease.

My child is growing stronger and stronger since then and enjoys Baba's grace. He always sings Baba's songs and dances before his photo. Is this not Baba's grace toward his devotee?

In addition to the above, I have been saved from a Railway accident when I was touring South India last February. I was also saved from an attack of Cholera.

By Sri. S.R.SwamyJoint Secretary
Sri Sai Baba Bhakta Samajam Calcutta.

hen they dug, bricks were found underneath a flat stone. When the stone was removed, a corridor (cave) was seen in which four lamps were ablaze, the corridor led to a cellar where a cow mouth shaped structure, wooden boards and necklaces were seen. The place was so impressive, it mystified all. God Khandoba said about Sai 'This lad practiced meditation here for 12 years'. Hearing this, devotees of God khandoba were thrilled and they started questioning the young lad. On being questioned the young man had explained that the site of the excavation was the place where his Guru had lived. In later years, the devotees of Sai Baba came to believe that it must have been for this reason that he spent sixty years of his life in an obscure village like Shirdi. They closed the corridor as before. Mahalsapathi and other devotees regarded this as resting place (samadhi sthana) of Baba's guru and prostrated before it. Now well known as Gurusthan in Shirdi, which is the heart of the temple premises. Anyone who offers incense sticks on Thrusday and Friday is benefited.

Aum Sai Shri Sai Jaya Sai



Sri Dubagunta Sankaraiah

hri Dubagunta Sankaraiah, a Sai devotee who has been associated with spreading the name of Sai throughout the length and breadth of India, including remote places of Andhra Pradesh by Nama Japa 'Aum Sai Sri Sai Jaya Sai' has got his own innumerable experiences with Baba to narrate. Most of these Leelas have been written by Shri Sankaraiah himself and published in many magazines including Shri Saileela magazine.

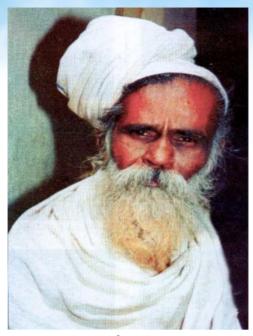
Baba's presence through a medium is something of an enigma but when one comes across Baba Himself one has skepticism about the happening. A blissful experience which one does not become conscious of until one comes out of the Maya (facade) God has created. Shri Sainath could anticipate devotee's requests, their aims, and virtues. His love is unique and apt for the one who seeks aid.

Shri Sankariah recalls with a lot of glee, his most overwhelming incident of life. This incident happened in August 1985 when he went to Secundrabad railway office accompanied by Shri MLN Prasad of Vijayawada to enquire the position of representation that was submitted in the context of erecting Baba's photo at Vijayawada railway station. Sri Prasad was actively associated with the then proposed Akhanda Sai Nama Saptha Sapthaha (nonstop chanting of Sai's Name for 49 days) in Sai Mandir, near Stella College, Vijayawada.

In due course of the conversation, Shri Prasad discussed of a few Sai devotees who were spreading rumours about the organisers (Shri Sankaraiah being one of them). A genuine person is deeply hurt when even an inkling of such thing takes place. Since Shri Sankaraiah's aim was to spread the name of Sai and invoke devotion in all, he was taken aback by such an accusation. Shri Prasad also advised Sankaraiahji not to mingle with such crowd as they were not in favour of the Naam jap (reciting name of God) program. This attitude also created doubts on the motive of this programme.

On hearing this, Shri Sankaraiah was very disturbed and felt like committing suicide under the moving train. With a devastated mind, he was roaming near Alpha hotel, Secundrabad, where he waited for his company bus (Balanagar IDPL) to arrive at his office. His thoughts were still wandering around the conversation with Prasad, thinking how people could spread false rumours to such an extent and how Baba had allowed such things to take place. Baba is aware of everything and is waiting for His devotee's call. Baba's help comes to those who merely seeks His help sincerely.

Shri Sankaraiah was in such frame of mind that he did not think about anything but the insult he felt out of those remarks. Little does one realize that



Sivaneshan Swamy

those who try to hurt us sometimes end up by doing us a favour. The favour here is precious and cannot be depicted. When in such state of mind, a tall fakir who was draped in a striped lungi (a type of Sarong, a garment worn around waist in regions where the heat and humidity creates an unpleasant climate for trousers.) as lower garment and a dirty towel as an upper garment, with joli (bag) and tumbler approached him out of nowhere. On seeing the fakir, Sankaraiah picked a four anna coin from his pocket and dropped in his tumbler. An interesting conversation then began.

Fakir: Oh! Char anna mujhe kyun? (What for is this 25 paisa for?)

Sankaraiah: Please take it. Where have you come from?

Fakir: Mere mandir se (from my temple)

Sanakaraiah: Where is your Mandir?

Fakir: Sab Jagah (everywhere!!)

S: Baba's function is about to take place but few people are doing gadbad. (Creating mischief)

F: No gadbad, Sab hojayega! (Everything will be done)

S: Have you ever visited Shirdi?

F: Shirdi jaaneko kya soch na? Manmad se jaao, Kopargaon se nao mile hain (is there a need to think in order to visit Shirdi? Go via Manmad, else it is 9 miles away from Kopargaon)

S: I know very well as I visited several times, I am asking about you.

F: (Uninterested to drag the conversation) Mere Mandir ko jaane ka time hogaya.

Sankaraiah then removed a card from his pocket that had the Baba's picture on one side and program details (in Telugu) on the other side. Without even a glance, the fakir said he didn't understand Telugu and departed.

On boarding the bus, Sankaraiah started recollecting the strange happenings and felt that Fakir he met could be Sai Baba. He shared this incident with Sri Prasad who was delighted about it. The same evening, Shri Priyanath Guptaji who was closely associated with Sivanesan Swamiji and Dattaghad, Kallur came to visit Sankaraiah. He also confirmed it was none other than Sai Baba and interpreted Manmad as 'Mann' (Mind) and 'Mar" (kill), ie. To visit Shirdi one has to kill one's mind out of impure devotion (Kopar in 'Kopagaon means Pure coconut) and 9 miles meant 9 types of devotion. Guptaji also said despite the Fakir indicating at every instant of the conversation, that he was not an ordinary beggar; Sankaraiahji couldn't make out it was Baba.

Sankaraiah visited Shirdi next day as planned before this incident. As usual, he spent most of his time with Shri Sivaneshan Swamiji. After Noon Arati, Swamiji was picking half burnt incense sticks near the tiger statue, Dwakaramai while collecting Swamiji declared "Manmad means, kill your mind". Dumbfound to hear this abrupt comment from Swamiji who was absolutely not informed of the previous day's incident, Sankaraiah embraced Swamiji as tears sprang to his eyes. Crying aloud Sankaraiah asked Swamiji, "Was it Sai Baba whom I met at railway station??!!!!"

Sankariah was disillusioned for not being able to identify Baba and the chance to prostrate at His feet. Swamiji said, "Even greatest of the spiritual personalities couldn't recognize God when He appeared before them in human form, you need not feel bad as you are nothing compared to them". As predicted by the Fakir, the program went on to be a huge success and people who visited accoladed it as "Na bhuto, Na bhavishyati" In Shri. Sankaraiah's words "this is one of the precious moments of my life. I cherish and feel content as I could give four annas to Baba Himself".

Every Leela teaches us what Baba tried to enlighten us during His time and now. Even after Baba's Samadhi, as Baba assured He will come to rescue His children whenever required, even if they are thousands of miles away, he did ensure to deliver on his assurance. Blessed is this devotee of Baba whose heartburn became a hearty blessing of Baba.

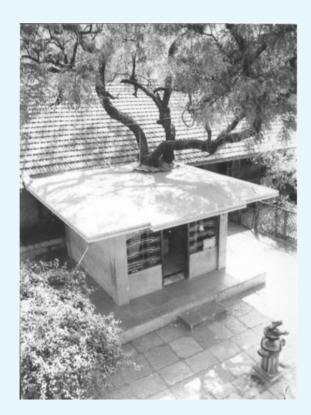
By: Sandhya Udtha



"You may go anywhere in this world, and there I go with you. My adobe is your heart; I dwell within you. Am the one who abide in your heart, it is me, you should always worship. Even in the hearts of all living creatures, it is I alone, who dwell in all".

–Sai Baba





Gurusthan with Sathewada in the background

hy Sai baba chose Shirdi? Shirdi a place unknown to the world, lying away from the fertile banks of the Godavari river, a sacred river that has given shelter and nurtured many a saint and seer from ancient times. In a district that's cradling the Puntamba town, where Changdev, the great, is taking his eternal rest. Newasa town where Sant Gyaneshwar lived and wrote holy and illustrious work on the Gita and many other towns and villages were there in Ahmednagar better known and holier than Shirdi, that had no history whatsoever to seek or boast of and nothing to connect her with any Sant or Saint. Shirdi the scholars say, is a corruption of Sheeladhi, meaning a strong mind or a strong heart was ruled by a Yadav king when, it was simply a large cemetery. But then Baba did prefer Shirdi to other places that were better known and renowned as spiritual centers. Why did Baba not prefer Trimbak or Nasik, Paithan or Puntamba and a host of other holier places? For it was here in Shirdi, the nameless place, that there grew a tree that sheltered a grave the holy tomb of a holy saint, whose Name Sai Baba has not disclosed. He was Babas guru a realized soul that had taken its eternal rest. And there under in Samadhi lay centuries since, a soul that Baba had himself previously served as a faithful disciple of the divine master.

Manmad to Shirdi....

he above Leela very clearly gives us an indication about the importance of Manmad and Kopargaon railway stations connected to Shri Sai Baba. Manmad Railway station played a vital role in the Leelas (enigmatic happenings) and writing of sacred Book Shri Sai Satchaitra by Shri Govind Raghunath Dhabholkar. His travel to Shirdi; he was on friendly terms with Kakasaheb Dixit and Nanasaheb Chandorkar. They pressed him to go to Shirdi and have Baba's Darshan and he promised them he will do so. But an event meanwhile prevented him from going to Shirdi. His friend's son at Lonavala fell ill and his friend tried all possible means, physical and spiritual, but the fever would not abate. At length he got his Guru to sit by the side of his son's bed. This sort of guarding his son against death was to no avail and the young lad died.

Hearing this Dhabholkar was disheveled and thought, 'what was the efficacy of the Guru, if he could not save my friend's son? If the Guru can't do anything for us, why should I go to Shirdi at all?' Thinking in this way, he postponed his trip to Shirdi. However, the inevitable must happen and it happened in his case as follows.

Shri Nanasaheb Chandorkar, who was a Prant (place, area) Officer, was going on tour to Bassein. From Thana he came to Dadar and was waiting for a train bound for Bassein. Meanwhile, a Bandra Local turned up and he sat in it and came to Bandra and sent for Dhabolkar. He took him to task for putting off Shirdi trip. Nana's argument for his Shirdi trip was convincing and agreeable, and so he decided to go to Shirdi. That same night he packed his bag and started for Shirdi. He planned to go to Dadar and catch a train to Manmad. As he sat in the train headed for





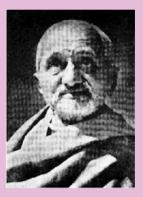
Manmad Station

Dadar, a Mohammedan gentleman came hurriedly to him and seeing his paraphernalia asked Dhabolkar where he was bound to. Dhabolkar told him his plan and he was guided by the gentleman to go to Boribunder and not get down at Dadar for, Manmad Mail does not halt at Dadar at all. If this little advice was not given to him at the nick of time Dhabholkar's enthusiasm to reach Shirdi would have lessened again. He would not have reached Shirdi next day as planned and many more doubts would have assailed him. But that was not to be; as fortune favoured him, he reached Shirdi and the rest is history; we have our Shri Sai Satcharita.

In Chapter 46

Remembering Shri Sainath's words "After doing Kashi and Prayag I will be ahead of you". Shama's hair stood up and he burst into tears. His throat choked, and he began to sob looking at Baba's portrait in Gayawala's home. (This incident was at Gaya) Gayawala thought that Shama was scared of plague prevailing there and therefore was crying. Shama enquired of Gayawala whence he got Baba's portrait which was hanging in his home. Gayawala replied that he had 200 or 300 agents working at Manmad and Punatambe looking after the convenience of the pilgrims to Gaya and from them, he heard about Baba's fame. About 12 years ago he went to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan. There he expressed his wish to have Baba's portrait hung in Shama's house and with Baba's permission Shama had given it to him. This was the same portrait Shama was looking at and remembering Baba's words, "After doing Kashi and Prayag I will be ahead of you". Gayawala's joy knew no bounds when he learnt that the same Shama who obliged him before, was his guest now. Gayawala gave him a right royal welcome. He was a very rich man. He arranged a palanquin and made Shama ride an elephant and attended to all his comforts and conveniences in a grand manner.

served him with all my heart for years together for more than 12 years. The duties I had imposed on myself for him were very arduous. He never left his seat



Swami Sharan Anand

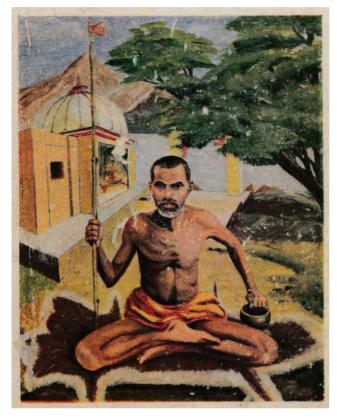
for any purpose, not even to answer calls of nature. Merged in meditation forever, he entirely forgot that he had a body, mind etc. He ate, passed urine and stool etc. there on his seat. I fed him, changed his clothes, Swept: I kept his seat always clean. As a reward of this he awarded me his blessings saying, "Wherever you are, here or even beyond the, seven seas, I will be ever with you to guard and protect you." Right at the start he had asked me to pay his fees; and upon asking what his fees were, he coolly said "his fees were only two pice;" and these pice were not the government currency I had been using but his two pice fees consisted of two things Nishta faithabsolute faith and Saboori-patience. I readily gave him these two pice and though I was very eager to obtain from his holy mouth some holy spell or formula which I could go on chanting and repeating he uttered nothing into ears. He simply said, "I shall ever be with you protecting, by my mere loving glance in the manner a tortoise protects his young ones by mere glance". The entire credit of all this glory of mine goes to this Guru Master. It is the outcome of his blessing. On another occasion He said to Swami Sai Sharan Anand "My Guru's (Master's) name is Roshan Sha Mian"

(Source Shri Sai the Superman by Swami Sai Sharan Anand)

In Chapter 50

Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati

We come to the next story, which shows how Saints love each other with fraternal affection. Once Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati, known as Shri Tembe Swami encamped at Rajamahendri (Andhra Pradesh), on the banks of Godavari. He was a devout, orthodox, Jnani and Yogi Bhakta of the God Dattatreya. One Pundalikrao, a



Sri Vasudevananda Saraswathi

pleader of Nanded (Nizam State) went to see him, with some friends. While they were talking with him, names of Shirdi and Sai Baba were casually mentioned. Hearing Baba's name, Swami bowed and taking a coconut gave it to Pundalikrao and said, "Offer this to my brother Sai, with my pranam (respectful greeting) and request Him not to forget me, but ever love me." He also added that Swamis do not generally bow to others, but in this case, an exception had to be made. Pundalikrao consented to take the fruit and his message to Baba. Swami was right in calling Baba a brother, for as he maintained an Agnihotra (Sacred fire) day and night, in his orthodox fashion; Baba too kept His Agnihotra, i.e., Dhuni ever burning in the Masjid.



Manmad Railway station

One month later Pundalikrao and others left for Shirdi with the coconut and reached Manmad. They felt thirsty and went to a rivulet for drinking water. As water should not be drunk on an empty stomach, they took out some refreshments, i.e., Chivda (flattened rice mixed with spice). Chivda tasted pungent and in order to soften it, someone suggested and broke the coconut and mixed its scrapings with it. Thus they made the Chivda more tasty and palatable. Unfortunately, the coconut they used turned out to be the same one that was entrusted to Pundalikrao by Tembe Swami. As they neared Shirdi, Pundalikrao remembered his promise of giving the coconut to Shri Sai Baba and was very sorry to learn that it was broken and utilized. Fearing Baba's anger he came to Shirdi; Baba the all-pervading God knew about the coconut from Tembe Swami.

He asked Pundalikrao first to give the things sent by His brother (Tembe Swamy). Pundalikrao held onto Baba's feet confessing his guilt and negligence and asked for Baba's pardon. He offered to give another fruit as a substitute, but Baba refused to accept it saying that the worth of that coconut was by far, many times more than an ordinary one and that it could not be replaced by another one. Then Baba added, "Now you need not worry yourself any more about the matter. It was on account of my wish that the coconut was entrusted to you, and ultimately broken on the way; why should you take the responsibility of the actions on you? Do not entertain the sense of doership in doing good, as well as for bad deeds; be entirely prideless and egoless in all things and thus your spiritual progress will be rapid." What a beautiful spiritual instruction Baba gave! These are only few references given for Manmad from Shri Sai Satcharitra.

Mention of Kopargaon

in Shri Sai Satcharitra and the happenings...



Kopergaon Railway Station

opargaon is around 9 miles from Shirdi (SSS Chapter 4) and to visit Shirdi one has to cross Kopergaon. As stated in the Sai Satcharitra, the fame of Saibaba spread throughout India and devotees from various places visited Shirdi. We have read about devotees coming from North, South, East, and West of India to Shirdi. Kopargaon is a very important place for the devotees of

Saibaba even today. The trains arriving at Shirdi have to cross Kopargaon. In the days when Saibaba was physically present the only link to Shirdi was through Kopargaon. Hundred years ago Kopargaon was a full-fledged railway station and sole mode of transport back then.

To visit Shirdi pure devotion like Kopar (tender coconut inside) and 9 miles which meant 9 types of



Godavari near Kopergaon



Tender Coconut

devotion is needed as enumerated in Sai Satcharitra. Today Kopargaon is a holy place and is a town and municipality located in Ahmednagar District of State of Maharashtra on

the banks of river Godavari. The one and only temple of Daityaguru Shukracharya (Demons Guru) is located at Kopargaon. During Baba's mortal times, a vidya or an art called Sanjivani Vidya was performed here to bring a dead person back alive. The main feature of this temple is any of the pooja, vidhi, marriage, Narayan Nag bali poojan, kal sarpa poojan can be performed here without any muhurat (auspicious time) and with best effects as said in Hindu holy books.

Other Saints who have considered the place holy include Janardhan Maharaj and Jungli Maharaj. Kopargaon was once recognized by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru as the Sugar bowl of the country.

Chapter 6

Shri Gopalrao Gund who was a Circle Inspector at Kopargaon a great devotee of Baba had three wives, but had no children. With Sai Baba's blessings, he was blessed with a son. Overjoyed he planned an event of celebrating a fair or 'Urs'. He placed the idea for

consideration before other Shirdi devotees. They all approved of the idea and got Sai Baba's permission and blessings in the year 1897. (The concept of Urs exists even to this day and is celebrated with enthusiasm. The devotees refer to their saints as lovers of God, the beloved. The celebration of Urs in many cases includes the singing of religious music such as Qawwali. The celebration also features food samples, bazaar, and various kinds of shops).

Chapter 9

Tatya Kote Patil wanted to go to Kopargaon bazaar (village fair) in a Tonga (a horse-driven carriage). He hastily came into the Masjid, saluted Baba and said that he is going to Kopargaon bazaar. Baba the Omniscient Omnipresent said, "Don't make haste, stop a little, let go the bazaar, don't go out of the village". On seeing his anxiety to go, Baba asked him at least to take Shama (Madhavrao Deshpande) along with him. Not giving any heed to Baba's instructions Tatya Kote left. One of the horses was very active and restless after passing Sawul well, it began to gallop rashly and a sprain in its waist made it fall. The impact made Tatya fall off the carriage but he was not seriously hurt. However, he was reminded of Baba's words and repented for not heeding to them.

Chapter 29

It was in the year 1916 that a Madrasi Bhajani Mela (Party of the Ramadasi Panth) started on a Pilgrimage to



the holy city of Banaras. The Party consisted of a man, his wife, daughter, and sister-in-law. On their way, the party heard that there lived at Shirdi in Kopargaon Taluka, Ahmednagar District, a great sage named Sai Baba, who was calm and composed and was very liberal in distributing money every day to His Bhaktas and to skillful persons, who went and showed their skill there.

Chapter 33

This Leela is very famous and favourite of Sai devotees. Nana Chandorkar was at Jamner in 1904, working as Mamlatdar. His daughter Mainatai, who had come for her childbirth was undergoing deathlike pangs of labour for a number of days in spite of efforts of midwives and other religious remedies like Nava chandi Havana etc. Baba's grace was being begged by Nana by

incessant prayers. Baba was at Shirdi. He heard the call of Nana. Shri Ramgirbuva Gosavi (Bapugir) was leaving Shirdi by this time to reach his home village. Baba gave him Adkar's Aarti and Udi and asked him to stay at Nana's house for a couple of days before proceeding to his home village. Bapugir had only two rupees with him which was hardly sufficient to purchase a railway ticket from Kopargaon to Jalgaon. He did not know how to reach Jamner. Baba assured him of Allah's help. When Bapugir got down at Jalgaon, a tonga driver came seeking him. He carried him to Jamner and disappeared. This was Baba's Leela. Bapugir gave Udi to Mainatai. Nana sung the Aarti before Baba's shrine and prayed. Miraculously, Mainatai was saved. She delivered a male child who was hale and hearty.

aba's life can always be interpreted metaphorically as well as literally. Accordingly one should not to be astonished if we say that Roshan Shah spoken of by Baba did exit in flesh and blood and Baba strenuously served him for over twelve years. It seems Roshan Shah thereafter cast off his mortal coil-his-body-and Baba entombed him under or near the neem tree at present found in Shirdi Navalkar's wada. When the previous owner of this Wada Sathe wanted to put up a story and



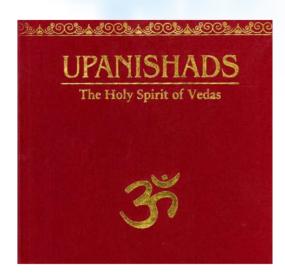
Gurusthan with Sathewada in the background, now Sathewada is dismanteled

terrace, at the time of putting a stair case he unearthed a tomb in under-ground cellar or a cave under the tree, Baba was asked as to what should be done about the tomb and the cave? Baba said that, "that place belonged to His elders and it should neither be disturbed nor opened but it should be covered up with a stone as before."

(Source: Shri Sai the Superman by Swami Sai Sharan Anand)



॥ ॐ श्रीगुरुभ्योनमः हरिः ॐ ॥ || AUM Shrl GurubhyOnamaha || harihi AUM ||



Introduction to UPANISHATS

he word 'Upanishat' has several meanings. 'Upa' means that which elevates us and takes us higher. 'Upa' also means near, nishat means 'sitting down'. upanishat is learnt at the feet of a Guru. The conclusion portion of Veda is called upanishat. Veda can be classified in different ways from different perspectives. Physical divisions of Veda into rig-yajus-sAma-atharva and divisions by content as mantra-brAhmaNa-AraNyaka-upanishat, and upanishat is also called 'vedAnta' since it is the final portion. To give an analogy, it is like divisions in a pizza. We can physically divide a Pizza into 4 slices and give it to four This is what Sri VedavyAsa did, he recompartmentalized the already divided Veda into four - rig-yajus-sAma-atharva and gave it to four of his students. A pizza can also be divided by its content as layer of crust-cheese-sauce-toppings. Just as a slice of pizza would have all the four layers, so also, there are sAma-veda upanishats such as chAndOgya and kEna, yajur-vEda upanishats such as brihadAraNyaka, IshAvAsya, kaTOpanisht and taittareeya, atharva-vEda upanishats such as munDaka, mAnDooka, shat-prashna and rig-vEda upanishat such as AitarEya. Upanishat also means 'secret science'. It is brahma-vidya, or the science of Brahman. VedAnta, as the name suggests, is the final meaning that comes out of a study of Veda and that meaning is given by none other than Sri VedavyAsa. He wrote what are called brahma-sootras in order to fix the meaning of Veda. He gave us bhagavad-geetA as part of mahAbhArata containing the gist of all upanishats.

Veda is one. Its object is one. Veda is the language of

It is therefore present in every idea of Brahman. Knowledge is expressed by speech. The knowledge of Brahman also has its own expression. That expression is Shruti or Veda. Shruti does not limit Brahman by speech. It is rather the process of finding out the expression for presenting the notion of the absolute completeness of Brahman. As stated earlier, from different perspectives, such a Shruti may be divided as rig-yajus-sAma-atharva or as prose-poetryintonation or as mantra-brAhmaNa-AraNyakaupanishat. The entire Veda is there for one purpose which is to teach the God that is the Supreme Most. Parabrahman is eternal, The Veda which reveals Him, is also eternal. Veda as an expression of Brahman is present, because Brahman is present. In this sense Shruti is nitya. The Veda which is always present is reinstalled the same way it was before. Rig-vEda says, soorya chandramasou dhAtA yathA poorvam akalpayat. To the extent that it is indispensable it is the expression of the fullness of Brahman. So, even by implication it does not modify Brahman. Hence it is defectless, nirdOsha. Because Shruti is nitya and nirdOsha, it is its own standard. It is all comprehensive. Its truth is selfestablished (svatah pramANa. That which is a generator of knowledge is called pramANa. The truth that Shruti is eternal i.e., nitya, defectless i.e., nirdOsha and selfevident i.e., svatah-pramANa, implies that it is free from all personal elements. All this has to be found out through an inquiry into Veda consisting of shravaNamanana-nidhidhyAsanA i.e vEda-vicAra-jignyAsA or inquiry in short. ShravaNa is the study of Veda by

listening, Manana is contemplating on what is heard, and finally nidhidhyAsanA is the application and leading the life of what is heard and contemplated upon. Unless and until there is this inquiry, the nature of Veda remains unknown. What is the nature of Veda? Veda itself has to teach it. It is not something that others can enforce on Veda.

So, while understanding Veda or upanishats, it is mandatory that the principles laid out by Sri VedavyAsa in the brahma-sootras have to be adhered to. For this reason, brahma-sootras (also known as Uttara-mImAmsA) has the name VedAnta. Again, the father of Vedaanta is Sri VedavyAsa. Only when this method is followed, Veda is pramANa. Till then, it stays merely as textual authority. Authority and pramANa can be quite opposed to each other. One need not be the other. Knowing the difference between Veda as authority and Veda as pramANa, is the first step in understanding upanishats. From this perspective, there are only two schools of thought-Those that followed Brahma-sootras in understanding Veda and those that did not.

Upanishat poses the question and also answers the question as to what the purpose of all of Veda is. The nature of Veda is to reveal Parabrahman. SriKrishNa in the fifteenth chapter of the GeetA, answers it as "vedaisca sarvaihi ahamEva vedyo" - From all of Veda, only Me i.e., SriKrishNa must be understood. Just as eye is the pramANa for the color green, so also Veda is the pramANa for the knowledge of Parabrahman. So, there are two things to be discovered: Veda and what is revealed by Veda. The knowledge generated by perception is definite and clear. This is why, a blue pen is a blue pen to all, irrespective of one's faith, background and fittedness for knowledge. On the other hand, what is revealed by Agama such as Veda is very vague to begin with. Inquiry brings definiteness in the knowledge generated by Agama.

In conclusion, we observe that consistency is a primary feature of true knowledge, whereas internal inconsistencies point to the fact that, after all, that knowledge was never true knowledge. The fact that different thinkers gave as different ideas starting from the same Veda, is an indicator to the richness of content in the Veda. Although one may start anywhere in the quest for upanishadic knowledge, one should not end where one started. We don't let a child be in first grade forever, but we don't mind being stuck in a certain faith forever!!. The medicine for all such bane is a proper study of Veda in the light of brahma-sootras. There is no alternative to vedOpanishats.

Harihi Om tatsat,

JayakrishNa Nelamangala



Rao Bahadur H. V. Sathe

athe Saheb one of Babas devotees acquired the surrounding land near the samadhi and the neem tree and constructed a building with verandahs on all the four sides.

This is the same building and the same wada which was the original central meeting place of the pilgrims which was always crowded and there was a lot of hustle and bustle there.

When Sathe built a platform round the neem tree and an upper floor south north – he indicated this underground cell when the staircase was laid

Under the staircase facing south is a beautiful niche opposite which is the platform where the devotees sit facing the north

On Thursdays and Fridays after sunset anyone who smears the ground with cow dung and burns incense even for a moment will be blessed by God.

In 2007 the Gurusthan was modified based on the advice of horticulturists as the Neem tree was not growing properly, the small temple which enclosed the Neem tree was dismantled and a lot of open space was created for the Neem tree to grow.

THE CHARTERS AND SAYINGS ANALYSIS

he Charters and Sayings of Sri Sai Baba compiled by B.V.Narasimha Swamy is a gospel to be reassured by every Sai devotee and should be read for understanding Sai Baba's sayings regarding various things of in our daily life. It also contains the views of Sai Baba on various aspects of life and how to behave in a particular situation. It would be correct to say that it is a guide of the sayings of Sai Baba in tabular form. An attempt is being made to present some of the sayings of Sai Baba, vis-à-vis the teachings in Sai Satcharitra for a better understanding.

Magna Carta means "a document constituting a fundamental guarantee of rights and privileges". The purpose of Sai Baba coming to earth and spending his time among the devotees was to put us on the right path in life by his way of living and teachings. Sai Satcharitra has many instances about the assurances given by Baba that he will take care of His devotees., He has also stated in Chapter 2 of Sai Satcharitra about the necessity of a Guru for the question raised by Hemadpant Dabholkar, When Hemadpant wanted to leave Shirdi and Kakasaheb Dixit approached Baba for permission, Baba Said, "Yes". Then someone asked - "Baba, where to go?" Baba said, "High up." Then the man said, "How is the way?" Baba said, "There are many ways leading there; there is one way also from here (Shirdi). The way is difficult. There are tigers and wolves in the jungles on the way." Kakasaheb asked, "But Baba, what if we take a guide with us?" Baba answered, "Then there is no difficulty. The guide will take you straight to your destination, avoiding wolves, tigers and ditches etc. on the way. If there be no guide, there is the danger of your being lost in the jungles or falling into ditches." Mr. Dabholkar was present on this occasion and he thought that this was the answer Baba gave to the question whether Guru was a necessity and he thereupon took the hint that no discussion of the problem, whether man is free or bound, is of any use in spiritual matters. On the contrary, real Paramartha is

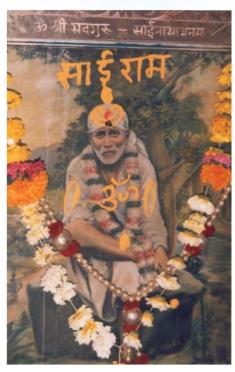


possible only as the result of the teachings of the Guru, as is illustrated in Chapter 2 of the original work in the instances of great Avatars like Rama and Krishna, who had to submit themselves to their Gurus, Vasishtha and Sandipani respectively, for getting self- realization and that the only virtues necessary for such progress are faith and patience.

Sai Baba's Sanction and Promise

In Chapter 3 Sai Baba said, "If a man utters My name with love, I shall fulfill all his wishes, increase his devotion. And if he sings earnestly My life and My deeds, him I shall beset in front and back and on all sides. Those devotees, who are attached to Me, heart and soul, will naturally feel happiness, when they hear these stories. Believe Me that if anybody sings My Leelas, I will give him infinite joy and everlasting contentment. It is My special characteristic to free any person, who surrenders completely to Me, and who does worship Me faithfully, and who remembers Me, and meditates on Me constantly. How can they be conscious of worldly objects and sensations, who utter My name, who worship Me, who think of My stories and My life and who thus always remember Me? I shall draw out My devotees from the jaws of Death. If My stories are listened to, all the diseases will be got rid of. So, hear My stories with respect; and think and meditate on them, assimilate them. This is the way of happiness and contentment. The pride and egoism of My devotees will vanish, the mind of the hearers will be set at rest; and if it has wholehearted and complete faith, it will be one with Supreme Consciousness. The simple remembrance of My name as 'Sai, Sai' will do away with sins of speech and hearing".

Sai Baba loved His devotees a lot or rather He was a slave of His devotees' There are many instances in Sai Satcharitra which illustrates of mere remembrance of Sai and he was there to help his devotees. Below are some of the promises Sai Baba has made to His devotees and listed out in Sri Sai Baba's Charters and Sayings written by Shri B.V. Narasimha Swamy.



Baba sitting on stone

Magna Carta

(Baba's promises in His own name)

- 9. My eye (of vigilant supervision) is ever on those who love me.
- Whatever you do, wherever you may be, ever bear this in mind, that I am always aware of everything you do.
- 10. If one ever meditates on me, repeats my name, signs my deeds, and is thus transformed into me, one's Karma is destroyed. I stay by his side always.
- 11. You should have truth always with you. then I shall be always with you, wherever you are, and at all times.
- 12. I will be with you, whenever and wherever you think of me. Do not fear.
- 13. If one perpetually thinks of me, and makes me his sole refuge, I am his debtor and will give my head to save him.
- 14. If, one ever dwells on me in his mind and will not even taste food before offering it to me, I am his slave. so also if he hungers and thirsts after me, and treats all else as unimportant.

- **15**. I am (Bhaktaparadeena) the bond slave of my devotees, I love devotion.
- 16. He who withdraws his heart from wife, child and parents and loves me is My real lover and he merges in Me like a river in the sea.

Saibaba also said one should one should have utmost faith in the Guru and the Guru is very anxious to help the devotees as the ultimate aim of the Guru is to take the devotee to the path of Salvation.



M.B. Rege

17. Saibaba: The key of my treasury is now placed in your hands. Ask for anything you want, Rs. 5 to 100 a month or what you will and I will give it to you.

Devotee (MBRage) declines to ask.

- SB: Ask something, I am anxious to give you.
- D: Is it agreed that you will grant anything I ask for?
- SB: Yes
- D: Then, Baba, I want this. In this and in any future birth that may befall me, you should never part from me. You should always be with me.
- SB: Yes, I shall be with you, inside and outside you, whatever you may be or do.
- 18. My devotee feels Me in you, in himself and in all creatures and sees all as his Guru. He will become myself.

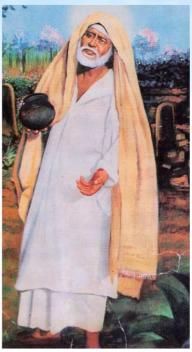
In Chapter 43 and 44 of Sai Satcharitra Sai said He who loves Me most, always sees Me. The whole world is desolate to him without Me, he tells no stories but Mine. He ceaselessly meditates upon Me and always chants My name. I feel indebted to him who surrenders himself completely to Me and ever remembers Me. I shall repay his debt by giving him salvation (self-realization). I am dependent on him who thinks and hungers after Me and who does not eat anything without first offering it to Me. He who thus comes to Me, becomes one with Me, just as a river gets to the sea and becomes merged (one) with it. So leaving out pride and egoism and with no trace of them, you should surrender yourself to Me Who am seated in your heart."

Who is this ME?

Sai Baba expounded many a time Who this ME (or I) is. He said "You need not go far or anywhere in search of Me. Barring your name and form, there exists in you, as well as in all beings, a sense of Being or Consciousness of Existence. That is Myself. Knowing this, you see Me inside yourself, as well as in all beings. If you practice this, you will realize all-pervasiveness, and thus attain oneness with Me."

Baba often said "He who carps and cavils at others, pierces Me in the heart and injures Me, but he that suffers and endures, pleases Me most." Baba thus pervades all beings and creatures and besets them on all sides. He likes nothing but love to all beings. Such nectar, pure auspicious ambrosia always flowed from Baba's lips. He therefore, concludes - Those who lovingly sing Baba's fame and those who hear the same with devotion, both become one with Sai.

- 19. If you make me the sole object of your thoughts and aims, you will gain Paramartha. (supreme Goal)
 Look to me; I will look to you.
 - Trust the Guru fully. That is the only sadhana. Guru is all the Gods.
- 20. If one devotes his entire mind to me and rests in me, he need fear nothing for body and soul. If one sees me and me alone and listens to talk about me and is devoted to me alone, he will reach God (Chaitanya). He who worships me as Nitya, Suddha and Buddha comes to me.
- 21. Those who perpetually repeat my name reach their goal.
- 22. Simply say "Sai" "Sai" with heart overflowing. I care not for show of respect and forms, I rest in such devotees.
- 23. Repeat my name. seek refuge in me. But to know 'who I am" have Sravana and Manana.
- $24.\ Iam formless and everywhere.$
- 25. If anyone casts his burden on me and thinks of me, I look after all his concerns.
- 26. Yes; you can place your burdens on me.
- 27. In the abode of my devotees, there will be no dearth for food and clothing.
- 28. You devotees are my children. I am your father. You have to get everything from me. So you should not talk like that (and say Sai is not God).
- 29. Why are you anxious? I take all care of you.



Baba with a begging bowl

- 30. Sit quiet, Uge Muge. I will do the needful. I will take you to the end.
- 31. Go Everything will be provided, Babugir.

 I will provide for you, Ganu

 I will provide for Manker's son.
- 32. Why do you fear? Am I not here (where you go to ease yourself?)
- 33. Stay here, treat it as your house Governor came with a lance to pierce Dada (G.S.K). I had a tussle with him and drove him out. Finally, I conciliated him.
 - Why should any fear, When I am here?
- 34. When this baby sleeps we have to stand by, keep awake and watch or take trouble.
- 35. I will not allow my devotees to come to harm. I have to take thought for my devotees. And if a devotee is about to fall, I stretch out my hands, and thus with four, four (i.e. a number of), outstretched hands at time to support him, I will not let him fall.

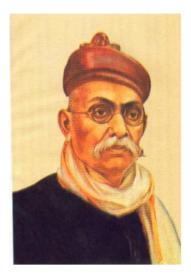
So, from the above sayings from Sai Baba, we can conclude that Sai Baba is a God who walked on earth and He has made umpteen assurances as to how he will take care of His devotees and those who place their trust in him.

By V V. Leeladhar

Source: Shri Sai Satcharitra, Sri Sai Baba's Charters and Sayings by Shri B.V. Narasimha Swamy



SHARING SHARING SFULL

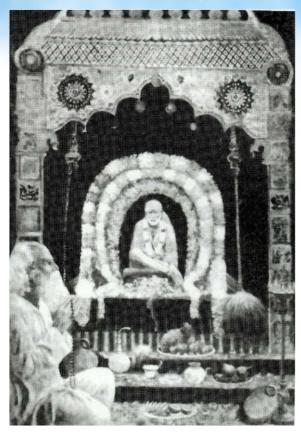


Anna Saheb Dhabolkar alias Hemadripanth

n general, everyone likes wit and humor. However, none like to be a target of such jokes. But Baba's methods were peculiar; when it was accompanied by gestures, it was very interesting and instructive. Therefore, people did not mind if they were held individually to scoff at. The author of Shri Sai Satcharitha, Shri Govindrao Raghunath Dhabholkar gives an insight into an incident during Shri Sai Baba's time which was directed towards him and involved him directly. He narrates his own experience as below.

"In Shirdi, bazaar was held every Sunday and enormous number of people from the neighboring villages came there. They erected booths and stall on the street to sell their wares and commodities. Every noon, Masjid was crowded more or less; but on Sunday, it was crowded to suffocation. On one such day, Hemadpant (Govindrao Raghunath Dhabholkar) sat in front of Baba, shampooing His Legs and muttering God's name. Shama was on Baba's left, Vamanrao to His right Shriman Booty and Kakasaheb Dixit and others were also present there. Then Shama laughed and said to Annasaheb "See! Some grains seem to have stuck to the sleeve of your coat". So saying he touched the sleeve and found that there were some more grains. Hemadpant straightened his left forearm to see what the matter was; all were amazed to see some grains of gram come rolling down and were picked up by few who were sitting there.

This incident provided a subject matter for a comic story for all. Everybody present began to wonder and said something or other as to how the grains found their way into the sleeve of the coat and lodged there so long. Hemadpant (Govindrao Raghunath Dhabholkar) also could not guess how they got into his sleeve. When nobody could give any satisfactory explanation in this matter and everybody was wondering about this mystery, this is when Baba speaks: "This fellow (Govindrao Raghunath Dhabholkar) has got the bad habit of eating alone. Today is a bazaar day and he was



Narasimha Swamy in All india Sai Samaj

there chewing grams alone. I know his habit and these grams are a proof of it. What wonder is there in this matter?"

Hemadpant in a state of shock sadly said to Baba "Baba, I never know of eating things alone; then why do you thrust this bad habit on me? I have not yet seen Shirdi bazar. I never went to the bazar today, then how could I buy grams and how could I eat them if I had not bought them? I never eat anything unless I share it with others present near me".

The conversation goes as per Baba's prediction and Baba says:" It is true that you give to the persons present; but if none be nearby, what could you or I do but do you remember Me before eating? Am I not always with you? Then do you offer Me anything before you eat?" Let our love and faith be so strong for Baba that we feel His presence always with us to make Him part of our every action.

Does such thought make us commit any wrong deed?

Sometime in 1954 or so, a man from a nearby village came to All India Sai Samaj in Mylapore, Madras (Chennai, Tamilnadu) and handed Shri Panini Rao, Secretary of the Samaj, a magnificent bunch of grapes, saying, "I have brought the finest grapes my vineyard has produced." Shri Rao smiled, "I will take them to Shri

Narasimha Swamiji immediately and he will be delighted with this offering." But the villager said, "No, no, I brought them for you for whenever I come to Sai Samaj, you welcome me. When my crop was destroyed, and I needed help, you offered me money and food. I hope this bunch of grapes will remind you of the sun's love, the rain's beauty and the miracle of Sai Baba who made them grow so fine".

Shri Rao held the bunch of grapes. It looked full and luscious. He was not tempted to devour the grapes alone. So, he decided to offer it to Shri Sai Baba. At that moment, Shri Narasimha Swamiji was performing Tulasi Archana (offering Basil leaves to the idol of the deity and singing the praise of the Lord) to Sai Baba.

Shri Narasimha Swamiji offered the bunch of grapes to Shri Sai Baba. Just before distributing it to all the devotees he thought of Shri Varada Rao, a devotee who was working for the Bank of Baroda. Shri Varada Rao was not keeping good health for quite some time, and just as the thought entered Swamiji's mind, this devotee entered the temple. Swamiji offered the grapes to Shri Varada Rao.

However, the grapes did not stay with Shri Varada Rao for long. He reflected, "Shri Subramanian, the cook who prepares 'Naivedya' to Baba also has been feeding me such nourishing meals to help me recover. I am sure he will enjoy these." He found the cook preparing 'prasad' (food offering made for the deity and then distributed amongst the devotees) and offered him the grapes saying, "These are for you. You work so hard. Take a moment to sit and enjoy these."

Subramanian was amazed at the beauty of the grapes and then he thought of the newest entrant to his section. He decided to gift them to the youngster as he felt he might be bit lonely without his family, and also make him understand that the grace of Lord Sainath is seen even in the smallest details of creation.

When the novice received them, his heart was filled with the Glory of Lord Sainath, for he had never seen such beautiful bunch of grapes. He placed them on a plate and took it to the exit point to distribute to all devotees. The first person to receive was Shri Panini Rao himself. He was amazed that his concept of sharing joy had come a full circle! Grapes were distributed to everyone present there. Such thought of sharing changed many hands however the end result was the words of Sainath were followed "to share".

Source: Shri Sai Satcharitha, Chapter 24 Sai Sudha

By: Dr. C. Dwarakanath Gupta



hen one is in deep thought, then work of Baba's leelas becomes a part of life. It can even be coincidence but the love for Sai Baba makes one dedicate all actions to Him. Years ago, I met a few dedicated Sai devotees and had formed a spiritual bond with them. Our goal was to share the leelas of Baba and visit places in and around Shirdi. We all came from different cities and our congregation place was Shirdi. It was an immense joy to plan our trips and share Sai Baba's leelas. During one such meet in 2011, my friend and I were sitting in Mukha Darshan hall right in front of Shri Sainath's idol. We sat looking at Baba, soaking in his grace and enjoying the bliss the Mandir offered. My friend, who is a very kind-hearted dedicated person always found enigmatic experiences a very normal part of her life. As we sat there, few devotees were distributing Prasad to all present. A man carrying a cardboard box was distributing bunches of green grapes. My dear friend glanced at the box and prayed to Sai Baba expressing her wish to receive black grapes. The place we were sitting in was the Samadhi Mandir where people throng to get their wishes fulfilled. Here was a devotee whose desire was not only insignificant but also negligible. I looked at the person who was distributing the grapes. He was carrying a box of green grapes. I made no attempt to neither test nor ask Sainath to grant the wish, as the wish sounded simple yet a silly one to make. My thought was, "Why should



Narasimha Swamy and Sai Baba

Shri Sai Baba hear and grant such silly wish?" So, I just smiled at my friend while we extended our palms when it was our turn to receive the grapes. I looked at my bunch of green grapes and Lo! Black grapes in my dear blessed friend's palm. None got black grapes except her. The Leela of sharing grapes and joy in full circle, experienced by Shri Panini Rao reminded me of my experience and confirms our belief that Sainath is omniscient and omnipresent. Strange are your ways Sai Baba. You make us speechless unable to verbalize and express our enigmatic experiences.



"See how selfish people are when it suits them they leave their companion. So attach yourself to one who will never forsake you. Ones you entrust yourself to the hands of sadguru you do not have to worry 'I never forsake any one who relies on me"

—Sai Baba



GURU'S GRACE

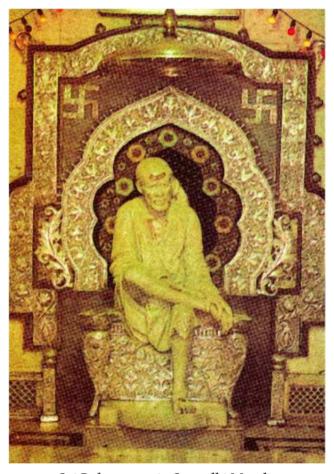


Sanjay Padia

ai brother Shri Chandranath Laha of Standard Chartered Bank and myself drew up an itinerary early June 1986 to pay a visit to Shirdi on the auspicious day of 68th Mahasamadhi of Shirdi Sai Baba. It struck to us later that it would be crowded and hence we revised our itinerary to visit Shirdi in September 1986. This was Chandranath's first visit to Shirdi. We booked our tickets from Howrah on '2 UP Bombay Mail' scheduled to steam off on 27th September 1986.

Little did we realize then that it was Sai who prompted us to revise our itinerary. Three days before the scheduled date of departure, our "City of Joy" was hit by torrential rains for 3 days continuously leaving the city temporarily a "City of Sorrow". Naturally I could not contact Chandranath to know from him if we were to leave Howrah on the scheduled date at all and if so how to reach Howrah without conveyance. On Friday the 26th September 1986 our city was submerged under 3 feet of water. Hope of our departure the next day became fainter and fainter as, after a lull, it again rained cats and dogs.

But to our surprise, 27th September began with a sunny morning and the water level receded to a great



Sai Baba statue in Samadhi Mandir

extent letting a few transport operators to venture out after 3 full days of lack of business. This revived our spirit and we both met on 27th morning at State Bank of India (Netaji Subhas Road Branch) to get a few Travellers' Cheques. Bank staff hesitated to issue on the ground of trains not having plied for the last three days. But Shri Chandranath requested them to issue us the cheques at our own risk.

Because we felt that the trains would be cancelled or perhaps would depart from outer stations of Howrah, we left early at 4.30 p.m. There was by Sai's grace no rain at



all during the day saves for a brief but light shower in the afternoon.

At Howrah, we found that several trains were not plying and frequent announcements over the mike also confirmed that. However, only two trains were scheduled to depart on that day on the S.E.R. Route the 9 Up Jagannath Express and 2 Up Bombay Mail. Sai grace manifested itself on that occasion and we were relieved that BABA did want us to visit His Mausoleum.

Though the train departed an hour late at 9 p.m we reached Nasik on schedule at 3.40 a.m. Next day by Sai's grace could visit many important pilgrim spots in the town (Nasik).

On Tuesday morning 30th September we found ourselves safe and sound at Shirdi. At once I dashed off a letter from Sai Baba International Hotel to Shri Ram Nathenji who I thought would be anxious about our

safety and timely arrival. I had already posted a letter to my family members from Nasik giving them an account of our safe journey.

During the two and a half days we stayed at Shirdi, we performed Abhishek to Baba's Holy Samadhi and met many resident devotees notable among them being late Martand Mahalsapathy Baba. Recollecting the circumstances we were placed in during the day of our departure (27th September) we still believe the trip could not have been accomplished without our Guru's Grace.

"I draw my devotee to me like a sparrow with a string tied to its feet even though he may be thousand miles away from me."

Shirdi Sai Baba

By **Sanjay M. Padia,** Source: Shri Saileela Magazine



Death and life are manifestation of God's activity.
You cannot separate the two. God permeates all.
However (in fact) none is born

Samadhi in Music REVEALS ONENESS

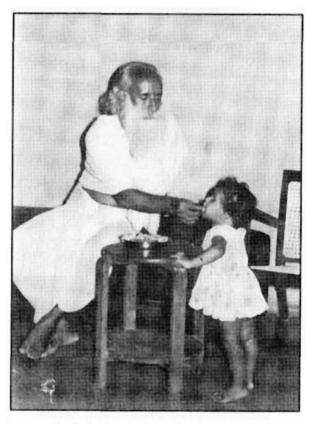
Baba, in his younger days was fond of singing and dancing in ecstasy, reciting poems and songs by great saints of North India. When wandering Sadhus took a sojourn in Shirdi, he used to tie tiny bells to his feet and dance at the 'Takia'. Sai Baba indulged in this kind of excursion for twenty to thirty years from the time he settled in 'Dwarakamayi'. However, after he gave up his body for three days in 1890 and returned to life, he used to sing occult songs of Kabir. Many times, wandering singers, dancing troupes, qawwals and tamasha artists used to visit the mosque to present their talent before Sai Baba.

Before he attained 'Mahasamadhi' in 1918, he arranged concerts, samkirtans, reading of the Koran and 'Hari Vijaya'. Baba inspired Bhishma, an adept composer and poet to write five poems on his Guru aspect as Satchidananda. Bhishma also composed Sagunopasana for Baba's daily arati, adapting abhangs on Vittal, poems of Adkar, Dasa Ganu, Upasani and traditional shlokas. The booklet was printed by Kaka Dixit. Sagunopasana thus became a daily upasana channel in book form.

The great vocal singer Abdul Karim Khan arrived in Shirdi and satiated Baba's ears with his classical Bhakti Sangeet in 1915. Keeping these facts in mind, Sri Narasimha Swamiji arranged devotional music concerts every year.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji knew the intricacies of music. He has explained identification of the notes or 'swaras' in music, as a child identifies his father, mother, grandparents and siblings. When a student of music is at the initial stages of learning, his ears are sensitized to recognize all the swaras, and distinguish them from each other.

This is 'Pa', the 'Achala Swara' or unchanging note, like the 'Sa'; and this 'Ma', at the centre of the galaxy of notes, this is the tired 'Teevra Ma', this is the 'Shanta' or



Radhakrishna Swamiji feeding a child

peaceful 'Shuddha Ma'; this is 'Re' or 'Rishabha', guardian of the 'Sa'; this the third note or 'Gandhar', whose magic lies in a direct vibration with the 'Sa'; this is 'Dha', is mesmerizing that it can lead to a deep state of trance; and this is 'Ni', ever so hungry for the 'Sa'.

This is also called 'Swara Nilai' or establishing the swaras and their specific applications in different ragas. Just as in relationships, familiarity with swaras is cultivated through endless cycles of repetition, years of labour which will make the student know them all like the back of his hand. This is the stage of 'Swara Jnana', enlightenment about swaras.



A hundred emotional colours will be discovered through the relationships between the twelve swaras. Cascade the 'Sa' down from the 'Ga' in the raga 'Hindoli', to get that magical hue (not be repeated in any other raga). Develop the haunt of 'Dha' in the raga 'Puriya Dhanashri', a most poignant note (despite the scientific 'Ga-Ni Samvada' or dialogistic positions of 'Ga' and 'Ni' in the raga). 'Swara Sambhandam', develops relationships of the swaras, the more complex the relationships, the more enchanting the music.

In fact, as 'Swara Sadhana' proceeds, an immense variety of exercises in several ragas, and some amount of composing, will also start. With the musical materials at hand, there will be assembling and reassembling of the components of musical features of the singer or style as each raga will find its own expression and the river of music will flow. The flow creates emotional kaleidoscopes in the raga, rich paragraphs of colour, and marks a new stage in the artist's struggle to come to his own.

The world will listen to how well the ragas have been crafted, and how well the musician has brought the music of his masters – and of his tradition – alive, animated by his own creativity. Few may be aware that the music and the musician will continue to mature, even if he is too old to perform, or when swaras melt down completely, each merging with the other.

All the relationships of life become one ecstatic whole, symbolizing that one relationship. As in Samadhi, when relationships are without differences, like the stage when a dying man looks at all the loved ones of his life surrounding his bed as he sleeps for the last time.

Therefore, Sri Narasimha Swamiji said about the stage of Samadhi in music – "all the swaras begin to seem joined together, not separate" – to bring the journey of life full circle, reaching the underlying unity of all life and its basic connectedness.

By: Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji



Do not hanker after the goods of Shirdi SAI; Do just hunger for the bonds with Shirdi SAI



SRI SAI IS OUR ANTARYAMI

commenced parayana (spiritual adherence almost always involves an assigned reading of a spiritual literature/book from beginning to end on consecutive days without any break in reading followed by a spiritual offering to God) of sacred Gurucharithra on 17th July 1986 and completed on Gurupoornima day, on 21st July 1986. My sons Sai Niranjan and Manohar too completed Shri Satcharithra parayana on the same day. We three did parayana strictly observing 'Upavasa' (fasting) throughout the period, except eating little 'phalahara' (fruits) in the evening after pooja (worship). At first, we thought of going to Shirdi on 3rd August and later on, I decided to start on 4th on 'Chaturdasi' before new moon day which is considered as the most inauspicious especially for travel by many people. But, I was quite confident that by Baba's grace all would be well, as our minds were centered on Baba and Baba alone.

We reached Guntakal junction by 2:30 P.M. A train bound for Bombay was ready on the platform. We immediately got into a compartment expecting that the train would start soon and thus hoping to reach Daund junction by 3:00 A.M next day (5th August). The compartment was fully packed and there was not enough space even to stand. At once we got down expecting to go by the next train scheduled at 3:30 P.M. We drank tea and were awaiting the departure of the halted train and the arrival of the Navajeevan Express. But Lo! the train at the station did not move at all though it was 4:00 P.M.

I enquired of the Railway porter who informed that Navajeevan was expected soon. We decided to travel by that train in the hope of securing comfortable seating at least. It was 4:30 P.M but the position remained same. We again stepped into a compartment of the train already parked on the platform that was bound for Bombay with the same discomfort of the crowd; we again got down expecting to board the next train. It was 4:50

P.M and there was no trace of Navajeevan express. The halted train did not move and our anxiety grew worse. With determination to travel by the waiting train, we once again stepped into the same compartment and sat down on the floor near the door as all available space had already been occupied. Immediately a man stepped in and took his seat by our side. He, on his own accord, informed that we had done better in concluding to travel by the same train as no other trains would come from Madras for Bombay due to derailment of a goods wagon between Madras and Guntakal. The train which we boarded, had arrived from Bombay about four hours earlier at Guntakal and the same was being sent back to Bombay instead of to Madras on account of the aforesaid accident ahead. He also emphasized that if we failed to travel by that train, we would have to wait for more than 24 hours at Guntakal itself for any other train bound for Bombay. Had not this stranger come suddenly and informed about the facts, we would have got down again for the third time as well. Does this not remind us the scene wherein Shri Hemadipant was informed by a Muslim gentleman at Dadar to go to Boribander to catch another train for Shirdi as Manmad Express would not stop at Dadar? Had this miracle not taken place then, Shri Hemadipant would not have reached Shirdi in time as programmed, and many a suspicion would have arisen in his mind about Sai Baba's greatness, as it were. Sai leelas are known to Him alone and He would guide His devotees on the right path readily at all costs. With least difficulty, we reached Shirdi on time by 7:00 P.M. on 5th, and I along with the boys Manohar and Dinakar, attended evening arati too.

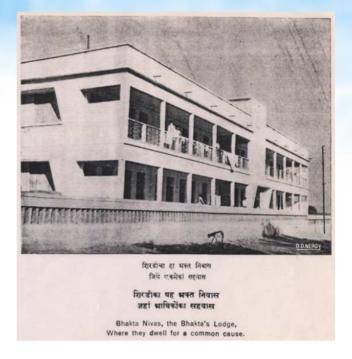
Reception Officer at Shirdi was very kind enough to allot us a room in Bhakthinivas on my request, and permitted us to stay till the 8th (Friday). On the 7th, at Dwarakamai, a young man was introduced by Shri Shivanesan Swamy. He told us about his pilgrimage to



holy places. He asked me to deliver Baba's Udi which he would give me on 8th morning, to a particular gentleman in Nandyal, who in turn would deliver the same to a teacher there. I accepted his request. He again, on his own accord, stated that the gentleman at Nandyal to whom Udi had to be delivered in the first instance, was a man of more worldly attachments than of Sai devotion, though he styled himself as an ardent Sai devotee. He left me for his prayers. I immediately thought that this young devotee should not hand over Udi for delivery at Nandyal, and thus I should avoid contacting him. In my opinion, the so-called Sai devotee was ill-famed. Again, on the same evening the young devotee met me in sacred Samadhi Mandir and informed me that he would be ready by 5:00 A.M on the 8th in Dwarakamai when he would hand over Udi along with a garland. At once I prayed to Baba that the young devotee should not hand over Udi and garland on the morning of 8th for delivery to the gentleman at Nandyal.

At about 4:15 A.M. on 8th, I went to Dwarakamayi to offer prayers and obtain Baba's permission to leave Shirdi. But the doors were not open. I sat on the steps awaiting the arrival of the priest. The young devotee was also present. He came to me and talked about some matter and never touched the subject of giving Udi and garland to me, of which he had been repeatedly telling me the previous day. Later the doors were opened and I placed my head at the Lotus feet of Sri Sai prayed to grant me permission to leave Shirdi for home by 6:00 A.M. bus. A rose flower fell on my head in token of Baba's permission to go home. My joy knew no bounds, and I was filled with mental bliss as a result of this. We came to bus stand at Shirdi and got into a bus at 5:45 A.M. Baba is our Antaryami and He would make things happen as per the wishes of his trusted devotees. I assured my son Sai Niranjan that we would definitely catch the connecting train at Daund by 1:30 P.M. When we reached Daund, it was announced that the train which was supposed to depart at 1:30 p.m. had been cancelled and any other train from Bombay towards Madras was not expected due to the boulders having fallen on the railway track near Pune. I was disappointed, but my intuition was telling me that the train would definitely come.

At 3:30 P.M. it was again announced that the train that was supposed to arrive at 1:30 P.M. was arriving at



Daund by 3:45 P.M. and thus, we were relieved of acute anxiety. If no train from Bombay came on that day as earlier announced, I would not have been in a position to reach Nandyal on the 9th for fulfilling my promise to my friends in my village to go meet a lawyer in the morning of the 10th in connection with a case involving an amount of nearly 4 lakhs. My prayers to Baba to have the train come to Daund at least by evening were fruitful. We boarded the train and secured comfortable seats too, quite contrary to our anticipation and information. We reached home safely by 3:00 p.m. on the 9th But for Sri Sai's grace, I would not have returned home on the 9th evening and thus my promise to my friends to meet the lawyer on the 10th morning could not have been kept up. Their trust in me to accompany them to meet the lawyer was thus accomplished.

Oh! Sai brothers and Sai sisters, Sri Sai is here with us even now, to guide us, satisfy us, and to make things happen for us as per our wishes, provided we completely surrender to him with devotion, Nishta, and Saburi. Sri Sai is our Antaryami and thoughts of us would materialize as Baba hears us being within us.

By **D.L. Kanta Rao** Source: Shri Saileela Magazine

Avoid needless disputations and avoid falsehood.

— Sai Baba



PICTORIAL LEELA

by Ranvir

Good people face more obstacles in life -

A tree which has plenty of fruits cannot escape the blows of the stones.

Nobody will throw a stone at a tree which has no fruits.

When good people meet with obstacles, it becomes amply clear and evident

that the tree-like good person has very tasty and good fruits which are sought after.

It is only pure gold that is put in fire and faces hammer strokes.

It is only a pure diamond which gets cut with so many facets.

If it is not precious diamond, it will not be cut into so many different ways and its value will also be less.

In the same manner, good people, noble men and the people who are born with a higher purpose in this world,

face a number of obstacles but they should meet those obstacles and overcome them with courage and achieve their goal

without leaving the sacred path of truth and forbearance.

Therefore, irrespective of what others say

and irrespective of how others ridicule,

how so many obstacles you may encounter, without leaving the sacred path,

one should engage in good actions,

without losing courage, with forbearance, one should achieve success.







on Sai Satcharitra based on Chapter 4

⊥.	for preservation of and eradication of	c) Wadi d) Shirdi
	unrighteousness. a) Varnasharamdharma b) Rich and good people c) Poor and good people d) Kaliyug	10. Females dedicated to goddess Khandoba are called a) Devadasi b) Jogini c) Matangi d) Muralis
2.	What are the four stages of speech a) Brahmana, Kshtreya, Vaishya and Shudra b) Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari c) Very good, Good, Bad and ugly d) Hot, cool, action and agitated	11. Which saint of Maharastra brought glory to Paithan in the district of Aurangabad a) Ekanath b) Namdev c) Muktabai d) Gorakumbhar 12. "This, truly, Pandarinath incarnate, the Refuge of the friendless and destitute, the All merciful one' who said the above lines a) Das Ganu b) Gaulibua c) Hemadripanth d) Kaka Saheb Dixit 13. "Yes, Yes, Vithal will appear in form before you Only the devotee must have faith enough" to whom did Saibaba utter these words a) Kaka Saheb Dixit b) Nanasaheb Chandorkar c) Das Ganu d) Gaulibua
3.	How many puranas are there in the Hindu Dharma a)10 b) 12 c) 9 d)18	
4.	The meaning of Kirtans is a) Singing the glory of gods	
	b) Singing glory of Demons c) Listening to glory of gods d) Songs sung in marriages	
5.	Gangapur, Narsimhawadi, Audumbar and Bhillawadi are holy places associated with which God	
0	a) Shiva b) Krishna c) Dattatreya d) Vittal	14. Saibaba uttered "Vitthal Patil had come, isn't it? And you did meet him, I am sure" to which devotee. a) Kaka Saheb Dixit b) Das Ganu c) Nanasaheb Chandorkar d) Hemadripanth
6.	Godavari river is also called by which other name a) Sarayu b) Gomati c) Ganga d) Gautala	
7.	Which turns iron into gold a) Copper b) Parees (Parasmani) c) Alchemist d) Magicians	15. "He makes no food offerings to the gods any more He keeps me hungry too. Even Vitthal, He has kep without food." To whom did Saibaba utter these
8	Saint Ramdas a saint of Maharastra left the banks of to appear on the banks of a) Krishna and Godavari	words a) Das Ganu b) Goulibua c) Kakasaheb Dixit d) Bhagavantrao Kshirsagar (Source: Shri Sa Satcharitha translated from Marati to English by Indira Kher
	b) Narmada and Godavari c) Narmada and Krishna d) Godavari and Krishna	
9.	Saint Ramdas had his Samadhi at	ламекs: 1-A; Z-B; 3-D; 4-A; 5-С; 6-B; 7-B; 8-D; 9-B; 10-D;

Gift I Ask For

O Sai Mother, The one gift that I ask for, is that of your kind grace, love and mercy. May I never lose the sight of your holy feet, and always seek refuge in them. May I always follow the path shown by thee Abide in 'Self and follow thee With 'Shraddha' and 'Saburi' in my heart, may I surrender my Tan-Man-Dhan to thee Dear Mother, kindly accept this humble offering from me Make this body 'Shirdi' and come to live in it. I shall wash your feet with my tears and kiss them till eternity. Grant me your glance of grace and do not be indifferent to me. Abide in me and fill this heart with intense Bhakti. When the time for departure comes Let thy name be

within me and without me
The one gift that I ask for,

is to love me, forgive me but never forsake me.

By Dr. Vijay Lakshmi VermaShri Saileela Magazine



PICTORIAL LEELA FOR KIDS

by Ranvir



What is the secret of love?

If you think it belongs to you,

then you 📦 love ...

You love your mother. Why?

Because she belongs to you.

You love your toys because the toys belong to you.

You love that which belongs to you.

If you think the entire world belongs to you,

that all are your brothers and sisters, then you will love everyone.

It is only when you don't believe that they are yours ...

that you are unable to love.

Think all are your brothers, all are your sisters, then you can love everyone.

Is There No God? No Saint? No Mantra?



Sai Baba statue in All India Sai Samaj Chennai

uring the monsoon of 1949, the disease of polio was raging in an epidemic form in and around Bombay. S. M. Banerjee from Calcutta shares an experience about his son who was one and half year old then. The kid was struck with polio and within two days both his legs were paralyzed up to the lumber region so he could neither sit up nor stand.

Polio was considered an epidemic and he was removed to the isolation ward of J J Hospital, Bombay, which was specially allotted for Polio patients by Bombay Municipality and patients were not allowed to be kept at home as it was considered extremely infectious.

After admitting him there, Dr. Cohello, a Child Specialist from Bombay who was the Doctor in charge of



the ward sent for me. He too was affected by polio and was paralyzed of lower limbs due to which he walked with crutches. He called me and said "Young man, I have no treatment to offer for your son as I have no medicines for this disease". Go and pray to God, who alone can do something for your son was his advice.

It was a situation were the mind stops working and every solution offered by others is followed blindly without any reasoning. People who get into trouble cast their eyes in about every direction in a quest for relief; is there no God? Is there no Saint? Is there no Mantra? When S. M. Banerjee grieved if there was not anything that will come to his rescue? He and his wife had a vivid experience.

At such a stage one person in their neighborhood connected with Sai Baba advises them to trust Sai Baba. S. M. Banerjee in distress runs up to Baba with the assurance given by the neighbor that Sai Baba is not only living and helpful but He is the only person that can help one in such junctures. The more vital the need the more strong is the faith. It is the need, as we already stated, that creates faith.

The scenario of the hospital ward was grim and tragic. It was full of children who were struck with Polio. The disease is called ascending polio as it starts from the legs and climbs up the body in quick stages. As soon as it reaches the chest, the child finds difficulty in breathing and starts frothing. At that stage, some of them are put in iron lungs for giving artificial breathing; but if the paralyses spread further to the neck, the child would die.

The treatment used was rather painful. The doctors used to extract the spinal fluid from the spinal cord and give very hot fomentation on the spinal cords with the result that the patients used to shout and cry. Only children were provided with beds, but the mothers, most of who had to stay with the children, had either to sit on a stool or sleep on the floor for the whole day and night.

S. M. Banerjee recalls his experience with Baba. Those days he was working with the Central Railways and after completion of his training, he was posted as a leave reserve to gain experience. During this crisis of his son, he could not get leave as the Engineer in charge of Manmad had proceeded on leave, so he was ordered to go

there. Hence, after leaving his son and wife at the hospital, he had to proceed to Manmad for work according to rules; he could not leave his Headquarters or Section without permission from the higher authorities. He was only permitted to return to Bombay on weekends, i.e. Sunday to visit his son and wife.

Just after his arrival at Manmad, one of his Trolley man asked him about his problem and upon hearing the facts told him that there is a tomb of a great saint named Sai Baba, very near at Shirdi and if he prayed to Him, the child will be cured. He gave him a small picture of Sai Baba, which was kept at his bedside table in the Rest House. After this, he used to pray for a few minutes to Sai Baba before going to sleep at night and started visiting his family at Bombay every Sunday.

In the hospital, his wife had to practically sit by the side of her son's bed on a stool for the whole night. In the morning, after the Doctor's round was over by 10 am she used to go to a friend's flat nearby to have bath, food and few hours sleep till 4 P.M. During this period, her mother used to be with the child. This routine continued for three weeks and there was no further improvement or deterioration, in the Childs condition.

On the 21st night, she felt extremely tired and after her son slept, the mother slept soundly on the floor beside his bed. Around midnight, the boy woke up; not seeing his mother he got up sat on the bed and got down on the floor. He stood on his legs and started walking towards his mother. Seeing this, all the nurses rushed and caught him up. But, thereafter, there was no looking back the child got well. He was the first child who came away 'walking' from the Polio ward six weeks after admission. It was a miracle as even Dr. Cohello admitted. The Benerjee's visited Shirdi for thanks giving and since then they are deeply indebted to Sai Baba. The boy is now healthy and subsequently became the Captain of the Cricket team at IIT, Kharagpur in 1969. Today, he is a Chemical Engineer and a U. S. citizen. During their life time they have experienced innumerable miracles of Baba in all the crises life unfolds and are deeply indebted to Him forever.

By S M Benerjee

Source: Shri Saileela Magazine

Do not disregard offers of food; served dish should not be thrust away.

— Sai Baba



You and I Are Not Different

his is an anecdote, narrated by Late Shri Vithalrao Marathe, former Shirdi Sansthan Musician, and Keertankar, at a Satyanarayan puja at Shirdi.

Keertankar vividly remembered the day Baba's Leela bechanced. It was a frigid winter morning in Shirdi. It was way too early in the day and the Sun was still trying to make his appearance. He had well hidden behind the clouds and the mercury on the thermometer was hovering low. Shirdi was still half-awake to its usual midday hustle bustle energy of the crowd. The gray sky contributed toward the appearance of serenity and the scenery was just apt for some high burning firepit. Baba was, as usual, sitting in the Dwarkamai facing South toward the Dhuni. Though the temperature was bone piercingly cold, the Dhuni was burning at low intensity. Baba was feeling cold. He appeared like he was on the lookout for someone. His eyes were fixated toward the door of the Masjid Mai more than usual. Suddenly Baba's gaze eased with the certitude of his gaze now focused on the Dhuni. At that instance, in walked two well-built pious Pathans to take Shri Baba's darshan. After paying their most revered obeisance to Baba they sat in front of Him shivering in the piercing cold. Baba's gaze was now filled with love and mischievousness. It was like he was waiting for a drama to unfold itself in front of him. One of the Pathan's started to inch toward the Dhuni Mai to imbibe in the warmth of the Fire God, Agni who was calm with utmost respect to Baba. At that very instant, a thought came to the Pathan's mind, "How fine would it be, if we could get a cup of hot tea at this time!". He instantly dismissed the thought reinforcing himself with his frail blanket as he concluded that it is irrational to expect hot tea in that remote village especially at the wee hour of the morning, where tea may not even be known to some.

At that moment, Sagun Meru Naik, a dedicated and disciplined devotee of Baba came to Dwarkamai for his



Sagun Meru Naik

morning darshan of Shri Sai Baba. Sagun Naik operated a small eatery and gift shop that sold sundries to the devotees visiting Shirdi. He often brought the most important morning meal for Baba. So as was the tradition, after bowing to Him, he asked Shri Sainath what he should bring for His breakfast. Baba said, "Sagun, go and bring quickly a kettleful of piping hot tea." Sagun was wonderstruck as he had never ever seen Baba drinking tea. His devotion toward Baba prevailed over his reasoning. So, without asking any question he went home and returned soon with a kettle full of flavored steaming chai.

The Pathans were baffled! They drank the tea to their heart's content indulging in the warmth of the tea that traveled down their esophagus and traversed through the veins of the system. The Pathan had never expressed his wish for tea to anyone. Yet Shri Baba had seen through his mind. He realized Shri Baba pronto was not only an ordinary holy man but a Superman, who was in harmony with every being, all-knowing and all-seeing!

By Amit G

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QUIZ FOR KIDS

on Sai Satcharitra based on Chapter 4

1) Shirdi is in the taluk of Ahmednagar. B) Nevasa A) Kopergaon D) Sangamner C) Nagar 2) Shirdi is very near to which of the following river? B) Tungabadra A) Krishna D) Godavari C) Ganga 3) Sai Baba used to walk to these two places every A) Lendi and Chavadi B) Lendi and Kandoba Temple C) Chavadi and Khandoba Temple D) Khandoba Temple and Khanifnath Mandir 4) Who is the presiding God of Pandarpur? A) Rama B) Brahma D) Vittoba C) Shiva 5) Shirdi is around ____ miles from Kopergaon A)8 B) 9 C)10D) 15 6) Which devotee stayed 8 months in Pandarpur and 4 months on banks of Godavari? A) Kakasaheb Dixit B) Hemadripanth

D) Shama

- 7) Sai Baba used to always utter which of the following words?A) SairamB) Allah MalikC) Hare RamD) Hare Krishna
- 8) Who had the darshan of Vithal in his meditation?
 - A) Shama B) Das Ganu C) Kakasaheb Dixit D) H V Sathe
- 9) Which tree did Sai Baba held sacred?A) NeemB) PeepulC) AudambarD) Ashwattha
- 10) Kakasaheb Dixit built a house or wada for himself in Shirdi, what is the name of the building called?
 - A) Sathe Wada B) Buty Wada C) Dixit Wada D) Navalkar Wada

Based on Chapter 4 of Sai Satcharitra

by N.V.Gunaji

Answers: 1-A Kopergaon; 2-D Godavari; 3-A Lendi and Chavadi; 4-D Vittoba; 5-B 9 Miles; 6-C Goulibua; 7-B Allah Malik; 8-C Kakasaheb Dixit; 9-A Neem; 10-C Dixit Wada

usic has a profound impact on our emotions. Different types of music induce different brain rhythms. Music is a very personal thing. The lyrics and the rhythm of the music associated with the song brings out the sentiment of the lyricist and the singer to fore. This soul touching song/bhajan brings out the emotional attachment Aaditya has for Sainath. It is no surprise that the boy (Aaditya Dhananjay Marathe) who sings praise of Baba is grandson of Shri Saidas Ramchandra Marathe who served as pujari in Shirdi Sai Sansthan. The atmosphere in the house is full of bhakti (devotion) for Shri Sainath and every member in the family is connected closely to Baba. Aaditya Dhananjay Marathe's father and uncle both work for Shirdi Sai Sansthan. It is truly said Baba does take care for generations to go...

"I take care of my men, generation after generation, birth after birth" Sai Baba

C) Goulibua



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