

# Aura of Shirdi Sai



**SaiAura**  
I AM EVERYWHERE —

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**SaiAura**  
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happy  
दशहरा



# Editorial

## The First Word

In 1979, I took my mother to Shirdi with the promise that Sai Baba's Samadhi communicates with the devotees, and she will have an amazing experience. Those days there was not much of a crowd, and we could sit freely in the Samadhi Mandir and contemplate on Sai Maharaj.



My mother felt that Baba did not respond. She was in a complaining mood. At that time, Shyama's son Uddhav Rao Deshpande who was standing next to her greeted her and asked me the exact problem. When I told him that she was disappointed that Lord Sainath has not communicated with her, Uddhav Rao Deshpande held her by hand and led her to 'Guru Sthan', made her do 'Pradakshina' of Gurusthan three times, bow down, contemplate for a while, and leisurely brought her back to Samadhi Mandir and asked her to sit still in front of Baba's Samadhi for thirty minutes closing her eyes.

At the end of her meditation, my mother explained to Uddhav Rao Deshpande how Sai Baba blessed her in those thirty minutes. Later he took us to his residence and showed us all the holy articles granted by Sai Baba.

Uddhav Rao gave her the message – 'Get yourself mentored by Sai Baba's Samadhi and the Neem tree in the Gurusthan and you will have everything'.

We may not be able to scientifically explain Baba's promise – 'The bones in My Samadhi takes care of the welfare of my devotees. I communicate with my devotees'. We take his word forever. Ever since Baba descended on the earth, we consider him as Parabrahman 'Sadguru' and our Loving God.

Uddhav Rao's message – 'Mentored by Baba's Samadhi and the holy neem tree' took me to Greek mythology, Icarus may have failed to fly like a bird despite his father Daedalus attaching large feathered wings to his back. But that could have been the starting point for our ambitious venture – from Leonardo da Vinci's design attempts and the Wright Brothers' maiden flight to other pioneers after them – to navigate the skies in flying machines ranging from small and

medium airplanes and helicopters to the massive Concord.

Design-engineering of buildings that stay cool on the inside despite soaring temperatures outside is inspired by the structure and ventilation of termite mounds whose interiors enjoy the air-conditioner effect.

By extension, Mentored by Baba's Samadhi and the holy neem tree took me to Nature magazine, which reflects on why Indigenous people in the Americas have planted beans alongside corn and squash for thousands of years. The beans enrich the soil with nitrogen; the corn stalks support the twining beans and protect them from the pests and stress that the beans would be subject to if they grew along the ground; the squash suppresses weeds. Clearly, the answer is that there is immense strength and purpose in a collaborative effort.

Every year in the Serengeti in Tanzania, a great migration of animals takes place: You will find that the wildebeest and the zebra always migrate together in huge hordes, and I've always wondered why. The answer: The zebra eats the long grass, and the wildebeest subsists on the short grass, thereby complementing each other's eating preferences. The zebra's vision is sharp whereas the wildebeest has a heightened sense of hearing and smell. It is all about collaboration for mutual benefit and survival.

As we greet our readers on the 103<sup>rd</sup> Mahasamadhi anniversary, we request them to visualize Lord Sainath in every creature, 'mentored by his Mahasamadhi and the holy neem tree at Guru Sthan'.





# Time Was Limited - Task Was Limitless

**By: Shreyas Devaraj**

The whole world is just an illusion.

Lord Sainath, the one non-dual Brahman alone exists, there is no duality at all.

Sai Baba, our Loving God has not become the universe, but the universe is not, and God Sai is.

Is the sun changed in the least, if it reflects in a liquor pot or the holy Ganga?

Unity of the one Brahman is the ultimate, the goal.

Knowledge is not meant for exhibition.

Renunciation and complete devotion to God Sainath is the only final aim of human life.

O Fool! abandon the desire for amassing wealth, cultivate good thoughts in mind.

Devote your mind to righteousness and let dispassion be your law. Content your mind with what you earn through the deeds, performed by your previous Karma.

Ever remember that riches bring grief, Indeed, no joy abides in them. A rich man even fears his own son, this happens everywhere.

Loving God Sainath is both the material and the efficient cause through MAYA but not in reality.



# Mahasamadhi Day Message

**By: Swami Satchidananda**  
(Anandashram Kanhangad)

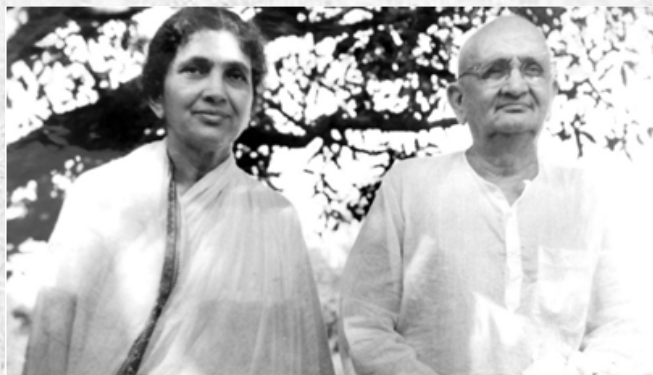


**S**ai Baba is eradicating the agony of distressed with his divine powers even after his 'Mahasamadhi' in 1918. The aspirants are guided by Sai Baba to meditate on him, to have compassion, and serve mankind as service to Sai Baba. His grace comes through deep devotion and faith.

When he was in the physical body, Baba told selfless renounced life was sufficient for Mhalsapathi. He enjoined 'Dhyana' to Nana Saheb Chandorkar. Pure emotion and intense devotion were adequate but fully rewarding to Megha. Dasa Ganu's capacity as a 'Kirthankar' lead him to liberation. Baba's Kripa was manifold.

Our adorations to beloved Papa, Swami Ramdas who considered holy Mother Krishnabai as the supreme Mother of the universe and in their honor let us chant 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'. Mother Krishnabai quoted that the 'Gita' says that it is extremely difficult to cross the river of 'Maya' except through surrender to Him and Namasmara (7-14).

The river of Maya gets filled by the rains in the form of three 'Gunas' that cause the flood of delusion. There are many dangers like whirlpools of hatred, big fishes of arrogance, and waves of desires in this river. Someone plunges into the river trusting his intellectual strength but vanishes without a trace. Another one may try to ride a float in the form of the Vedas, but he gets devoured by fish in the form of arrogance. Someone else may try to cross the river trusting his youthful energy, but he gets chewed by a crocodile in the form of sensual pleasures. Some try the float



of 'yajnas', but they get stuck in the rocks of heavenly pleasures. If a sage can understand an evil mind, or if a fish can swallow the hook, or if a ghost will be afraid of a timid person, only then living beings can cross the river of Maya!

So, what is the way to cross this river of Maya? Only those who have their 'Sadguru' Lord Sainath as the boatman in the boat of Self-realization, who have discarded their ego and all the 'vikalpa' or doubts, who have given up 'Moha' can cross the river of Maya.

Our Anandashram at Kanhangad in Kasaragod district of Kerala vibrates with devotees chanting 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'.

On this 'Mahasamadhi' day of Sai Baba let us pray to Him for intense and one-pointed devotion. 'How can we obtain one-pointed concentration?' We always remember anything that gives us maximum happiness, anything that gives us maximum sorrow, anything that gives us maximum pain. Without effort, we can remember those things. So, if we understand, at least intellectually, that by communing with Lord Sainath, we will be able to get more peace and happiness than by any other means, we will be able to remember Him always. For this, naturally, we must discard those that do not give happiness and those that distract us from our efforts to attain Him.

The difficulty arises only when we have not tasted even a bit of that peace and bliss that Lord Sainath can give us. All of us experience this peace in the company of Lord Sainath as the greatest effect of Satsang. The moment you sit before Lord Sainath, you can experience unearthly peace and joy. Our



effort must be to maintain that peace and joy and discard everything that stands in the way.

All Sai Devotees accept Lord Sainath as the Supreme Being, all-powerful, all-merciful, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. They pray to Him in all humility. They never demand anything from Him. Prayers are answered according to the quality, sincerity, and depth of the prayer. Some are not answered, for reasons known to Him only. Even if the prayers bring a delayed response or are never answered, the devotees do not give Him up. They cling to Him with all love and devotion. If they reject Him, what can they hold on to? Lord Sainath is our only refuge. All are not praying in the same way or for the same thing; so also, the response. Whether the response is there



or not, you should continue praying to Him. Such prayer will surely, even if it does not bring the desired result, purify your mind, and will stand you in good stead in your spiritual life. Pray to see Lord Sainath as the entire Manifestation. Never be satisfied with anything less than the highest realization of our oneness with Lord Sainath and seeing Him as the entire manifestation and always contemplate 'He is in you, and you are in Him'.

Baba's Mahasamadhi is a reminder for us to only pray to Lord Sainath to give us more and more love and devotion for Him and make our aspirations intense so that our minds may ever dwell on Him. 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Ram'.



**everyone,**  
Gifted with divine,  
But some never open,  
their package to look within.

*Dr. Ravin Singh's  
Poetical Message*



# A Dip into Vishnu Sahasranama-15 &16: Sahasranama is Love Supreme

By: Seetha 'Priya'

**T**he Master of all creation can best answer that. But the understanding is that the Supreme One loved us so much that He willed us into existence. All creation is an outpouring of His love. The entity we call God is pure love. We are an expression of His infinite love. The selfsame love is manifest in every aspect, in every atom of the universe. As a part of Him, we too, in essence, are simply love.

According to the Vedas, the Supreme felt a need to manifest in the world. Thus, was born the idea of creation. Born of God's love, we are heirs to His legacy. Why not live life magnanimously like our divine parent? Everything God created, fills us with awe, is vast and larger than life. Yet, we fail to grasp the lesson.

At some point, we all question ourselves: 'What is the purpose of my life?' The answer is simple, but we complicate everything. We imagine it to be something so deep and far-fetched that we may discover it only at the tailend of our life. For instance, moksha post-death! Instead, all you need to do is recite Vishnu Sahasranama, live in the present; live with love, joy, bliss, and awareness. That's purposeful living.

The Fifteenth shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –

**Lokadhyakshaha Suradhyakshaho**

**Dharmadhyakshah Kritakritaha**

**Chaturatma Chaturvyhah**

**Chaturdamstrscha Chaturbhujah;**

Lord Vishnu is the Lord of the worlds (Lokadhyakshaha), Lord of Devas (Suradhyaksha), Cognizer of Dharma (Dharmadhyaksha) is also the Doer and the Non-Doer (Kritakritaha). He is skillful and charming (Chaturatma). Has four-fold arrangement to run the world (Chaturvyhah). He is a Destroyer having four teeth (Chaturdamstra) and a Creator with four arms (Chaturbhujah).



The Sixteenth Shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is-

**Bhrajishnur Bhojanam**

**Bhokta Sahishnuhr Jagadadijaha**

**Anagho Vijayo Jeta**

**Viswayonir Punarvasuhu;**

The Radiant (Bhrajishnu) Lord Vishnu is the food Himself (Bhojanam), the enjoyer (Bhokta,) and the Endurer (Sahishnu), and happens to be the first-born in the universe (Jagadadija). He is sinless (Anagha), successful (Vijaya), transcending all (Jeta), source of the universe (Viswayoni), and the one who creates and lives in the universe (Punarvasu)

As we drive from Bengaluru to Tiruchirapalli and dozens of small villages and hamlets during summer holidays, the 'Sumaithangi' is a common sight, usually placed in the shade of a tamarind tree, providing succor to yatris from the sweltering heat. At first glance, to a stranger, the two vertical granite stone columns holding up one horizontal stone slab would look like a crude version of the gateway to a Japanese Shinto shrine. While the Shinto Gateway called Torii symbolizes the transition from the mundane to the sublime and sacred, the simple Sumaithangi – Tamil for 'load bearer' – is designed to let the pilgrim and farmer



unburden themselves of their baggage during their long journey by foot and rest their weary muscles.

This was also my platform for explaining two shlokas of Vishnu Sahasranama to my wife on the concept of 'Love Supreme' from a lifeless object. Interestingly, there seems to be a possible etymological link between the Japanese Torii which means bird perch, and the Indian Torana, which translates as the gateway, usually ornate and meant to be welcoming of visitors. Perhaps it denotes the point of taking flight from the known to the unknown, as birds are wont to do, as they perch a while before taking off. Most sacred gateways in the countries of Southeast Asia could be traced to the Indian Torana concept, perhaps transmitted along with Buddhist philosophy that went from India to the Far East.

We would generally stop at one of these spots to take a lunch break when the tall, large, stainless steel tiffin carrier with its many containers would be taken out and food served on banana leaves – lemon rice, idli, tamarind rice, curd rice, pickles, and pappadams. The vessels were all lined up on the sumaithangi after wiping it down with a wet cloth. Once done, the empty containers would go back into the boot of the car, and the sumaithangi was wiped clean, and we would be on our way.

I knew the significance and utility of the sumaithangi, that it was meant for travelers to unburden themselves as they took a break. What a wonderful concept, I thought to myself, trying to correlate the empty tiffin carrier with emptying the mind of burdens. We also recited Vishnu Sahasranama and felt why cannot we have a virtual sumaithangi to unburden ourselves of all our worries, fears, and anxieties? We may or may not

pick them up again, but even if we did, the load would be better organized with some reflection and perspective. Some burdens may disappear forever, and the journey forward is rendered less difficult. Your sumaithangi could be our God Lord Sainath, a dear friend or relative, who listens to us with empathy and understanding. In Christianity,



the confession box and priest serve as sumaithangi to believers. Or you could just pour your heart out to a stone.

Lord Sainath has advised us to see him in all living and inanimate objects. It is not uncommon to liken the stone to a load bearer, something that is resilient and patient, much like the Patience Stone known as Syngue Sabour in Afghan lore. The Patience Stone is believed to 'absorb the plight of those who confide in it' similar to what happens when we recite Vishnu Sahasranama. Tamil homegrown wisdom advises troubled souls to find a secluded place and pour out all fears and worries into an empty pot, then smash it to pieces, a kind of catharsis that is pacific and healing rather than yelling at those you think are responsible for your plight. It is eco-friendly, too!



## Kaka Dixit's Diary

# Hanuman Inspires Humility Courage and Strength

In those days, there was no regular worship of Baba except accepting garlands brought by the devotees. But later on, Baba started allowing devotees to apply sandal paste to his forehead and offer him flowers. Dada Kelkar did pooja and applied sandal paste.

On that day, Nanavalli dressed like Hanuman along with his friends all dressed like monkeys were dancing in front of Baba. Everybody was amused.

Suddenly Baba asked Dada Kelkar to take me to Hanuman Mandir and narrate details of Hanuman's humility and courage.

We took Pooja materials and went to Hanuman Mandir. After worship, we sat down and as guided by Baba, Dada Kelkar narrated the story of Hanuman's humility.

When Valmiki completed his Ramayana, Narada said, 'It is good, but Hanuman's is better'. A perplexed Valmiki set out to find Hanuman and reached Kadali Vana, the grove of plantains, where he found Hanuman's Ramayana inscribed on seven broad leaves of a banana tree. He read it and found it to be perfect. He started to cry. 'Is it so bad?' asked Hanuman. 'No, it is so good, that after reading your Ramayana no one will read my Ramayana,' replied Valmiki.

Without hesitation, Hanuman simply tore up the seven banana leaves, saying 'Now no one will ever read Hanuman's Ramayana.' A stunned Valmiki asked Hanuman why he had destroyed his beautiful work. Hanuman said, 'You seem to need your Ramayana more than I need



mine. You wrote so that the world remembers Valmiki; I wrote so that I remember Ram. Ram is an indelible part of me; he is in my heart, soul, body and, mind.'

Valmiki's writing was inspired by ambition whereas Hanuman's inspiration was his pure devotion and affection for Ram. That's why Hanuman's Ramayana read so much

better; it was his way of expressing his deep love for Ram. Hanuman did this without the expectation that his exquisitely written Ramayana will make him famous. That Hanuman destroyed what he had written shows his utter humility and lack of interest in self-promotion or glory. He was just a genuine bhakta of Ram who happened to express himself in writing, and the perfection of that expression and his willingness to also tear up the writing, reveals that he was full of equanimity.

Hanuman needed no validation from the outside; nor did he wish the focus to be on him. He just did his karma, spontaneously, with no expectations. He was just content with something that was well done. Whether it would make him famous or not, was of no consideration.

Dada Kelkar told one more version of the same story. One story says Hanuman engraved his Ramayana with his nails on rocks in the Himalayas where he had gone to do penance. And Valmiki was taking his Ramayana to Shiva for his blessings and that was when the Valmiki-Hanuman encounter took place, and Hanuman is said to have simply picked up the engraved stones and dumped them into the ocean.

Stories related to Hanuman exalt the virtues of selflessness, love, faith, devotion, humility, self-esteem, inner strength, and self-confidence besides the need to cultivate the ability to act without







worrying about the fruit of that action. Further Dada Kelkar told me that this is what inspired Tulsidas to write of Hanuman in the following words, in his Ramcharitmanas: 'Greater than Ram is the servant of Ram.'

Hanuman is renowned for his courage and strength, both physical and mental. This is why Tulsidas composed forty verses in praise of Hanuman, called the 'Hanuman Chalisa' that is recited by all young and old, who invoke Hanuman's grace, to overcome fear and become strong.

By then Nana Saheb Chandorkar also came to



Hanuman Mandir and joined our discussion. Nana Saheb added One verse on Hanuman which describes him as the bestower of the eight Siddhis, the supernatural powers named Anima, Garima, Mahima, Laghima, Prapti, Prakamya, Isitva and, Vastitva. And the nine Nidhis -- divine treasures named Mahapadma, Padma, Sankha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nila, and Kharva. This boon is granted to Hanuman by Mother Sita, daughter of Janaka.'

We went back to Masjid and bowed to Sai Maharaj as we visualized Hanuman in him.



let the children,  
COME TO ME !!  
Do not hinder them,  
THEY BELONGS ...  
The kingdom of GOD.  
TRULY SAY : whoever does not receive ..  
The kingdom of GOD like a child, shall not enter it !!

*Dr. Ravin Singh's  
Pictorial Message for Kids*



# Sai Baba's Game of Cricket

**By: Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar**

Cricket is more than a game; it offers many options as player, umpire, coach, health psychologist, commentator, scorer, analyst, and reporter, for instance. When we closely observe Cricket as we do 'Parayan' of Sai Satcharita we get a parallel between cricket and the game of a Sai devotee's life; hence we can name it as 'Hemadpant's cricket'.

Let's visualize the batsman as jivatma; pavilion as parakalpam – heaven and or hell; ground as the world; pitch as samsara; crease as the limit and stand as part of the family. The batsman steps out of the pavilion, walks to the ground, reaches the pitch where he waits within the crease and takes his stand to play his game. Similarly, every jivatma steps out of paralokam and into this world and becomes part of samsara, where he plays his role within the limits set for him. The Sai Satcharita says, "Once your punya, good deeds get over, you get ejected from heaven to earth".

To take the metaphor further, imagine the bowler as Yama, the God of Death; bat as Viveka, intellect; ball as manas, mind; the six balls as the seasons; overs as years; three stumps as the gunas -- sattva, rajas, tamas; bails as prana, life; the ten fielders as ten indriyas; umpire as Atma; bowled out as natural death, caught out as disease via indriyas, run out as an accident, hit wicket as suicide and leg before wicket as body-consciousness.

The bowler is interested to get the batsman out and keeps bowling to him every over, each consisting of six balls. We invoke Sai Maharaj's guidance. Even if the bowler manages to get the bails off, the batsman is declared out apart from the ball hitting either or all three stumps, being caught by one of the ten fielders, hitting his own wicket, getting himself run out, or appeal

upheld for the leg-before wicket. But during this process, the batsman uses his bat to defend the three stumps or attacks the bowler and scores runs.

Yama hurls thoughts at the jivatma, who uses Viveka from Sai to manage the mind, guard life, and defend the gunas. Seasons come and go. His senses could give way and he could succumb to death by any cause.

When the play ends, one is happy or sad. The non-striker needs someone along. The scorer, like Chitragupta who counts your deeds, keeps account. The commentator is a teacher like Dasganu Maharaj who informs us of higher goals and purposes of worshipping Sai Baba. Scoring a century is like living to be one hundred years old. The boundary is – dharma, artha, kama, moksha. Purusharthas are granted to a jivatma when he leads a dutiful life just as a batsman who drives the ball to the boundary, scores four runs without running for it.

Sixers are like the six qualities of an evolved person - gnyaana, vairagya, ishvarathvam, Tejas, Lakshmi, keerti. The next game is rebirth, a jivatma's second chance to improve.

In the game of life, be conscious. Use your bat skillfully and play every ball wisely, defend, attack, or leave it. Once you understand your samsara and ways of Yama, you may step outside limits or crease to score faster. Beware of Yama and the ten indriyas; they will try to take you out. Be careful, avoid accidents, never think of suicide. Never get so body-conscious that you fall a victim to any disease. Seasons will come and go, but you need to emerge as a strong player.





# Spotlight on Kulkarni Trio

**By: Chakor Ajagaonkar**

Sai Baba came to Shirdi for the first time in 1854 and after his advent in 1858, he permanently stayed in Shirdi. Shankar Kulkarni was the Village Physician by tradition and inheritance. Sai Baba initially treated the villagers by giving herbs and he became very popular as his treatment was successful, and he did not charge any fees for his services.



Afterward, he was distributing Udi from Dhuni as a panacea for all ailments. This brought down Kulkarni Physician's practice and triggered jealousy and hatred towards Sai Baba. He scoffed at Baba begging from five houses. When Baba planned to light 108 lamps for Deepawali, he instigated the oil vendors to refuse to give oil in charity to Baba. However, Sai Baba used water to light the lamps and he became even more popular! Then Kulkarni Physician attempted to immolate Baba on a midnight after a Deepawali day and manipulate as if it was a freak accident of Dhuni. It also failed as Kulkarni saw Baba's slaughtered body. Baba was practicing 'Khand Yoga' in which body parts of Baba were thrown in all directions! Thus, at every step, Kulkarni Physician acted as a villain to Baba. But his wife Parvati was a pious woman who adored Baba. During the Ramanavami procession, while trying to stop his wife from joining the procession, Kulkarni Physician met with a freak accident and lost his eyesight. At the request of his wife, Kulkarni Physician was restored eyesight. Then onwards, Kulkarni Physician lived a life of complete devotion to Sai Baba till the end.

The Second Kulkarni in Baba's life, Atmaram Keshav Ananth Kulkarni popularly known as 'Appa Kulkarni' was the revenue accountant or Karnam of Shirdi village. He was aged 25 and a devotee of Baba, and in 1895 Baba sent Atmaram Kulkarni as an emissary to bring Nanasaheb Chandorkar, then Deputy Collector of Kopergaonto Shirdi. Though diffident, he decided to invite Nanasaheb Chandorkar

to Shirdi to see Baba. Nanasaheb was surprised as to how a begging fakir could invite him to see him. Nanasaheb declined Baba's invitation and did not visit Shirdi. But Baba repeated his invitation for the second and third time. During his third visit Atmaram Kulkarni who was running high temperature went to Kopergaon Deputy Collector's office and after reminding Nanasaheb of Baba's invitation falls dead at the office itself due to plague. His body was brought to Shirdi, and Baba attended his last rites. At that time, Baba pronounced that six more persons shall die of plague in Shirdi. Atmaram Anant Kulkarni's widow stayed in Shirdi. In Chapter 25 of Sai Satcharitra, Hemadpant makes another reference to Atmaram Kulkarni when Baba asks Damu Anna in 1910 to go over to Atmaram Kulkarni's house for lunch as he was depressed due to his sister's untimely demise.

The third Kulkarni was Appasaheb Kulkarni who was a Revenue Officer at Thana, and he was worshipping Baba's picture presented to him by Balasaheb Bhate, in 1917. With utmost devotion, he did the worship. He offered flowers, sandal-paste, and naivedya daily to Baba in the picture and desired very much to have a darshan of Baba. In this connection Sai Satcharitra authoritatively states in Chapter 33 that seeing Baba's picture with unswerving devotion amounts to seeing him. Once Appa Saheb while working in Thana, had to go on a tour to Bhivandi for a week. In his absence, a fakir visited Appasaheb's house. His family observed that he resembled Sai Baba. When he returned home Appasaheb Kulkarni received 9 consecrated coins from the fakir, none other than Baba. He also received Udi, sacred rice, flower petals, and a strand of Baba's hair which brought to him good luck and spiritual progress. He later had 'darshan' of Sai Baba at Shirdi. He got drawn towards Sai Baba only in 1917 but achieved a great deal spiritually in a short time.



# How to Deal With Fear, Suffering, and Death: In the Light of Baba's Mahasamadhi

**By: Sri Narasimha Swamiji**

**H**ope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. In the 'Life of Sai Baba', we should observe dying is important. It's as important as living because birth and death inter-are.

Sai Baba said, "Anything that is born must die." If there is birth, then there must be death also. If the right is there, the left must be there also. If there is a beginning, then there must be an end. The true nature of all things is not to be born, not to die, not to arrive, and not to depart. If your dear one has just died, you may have a difficult time overcoming your loss. But look deeper. Because we are attached to one of the forms, one of the many manifestations of that person, we suffer and feel sad. The person we love is still there but, in our delusion, we cannot recognize him and say: "He no longer is." We ask, "Where are you? Why did you leave me all alone?" Our pain is great because of our misunderstanding. Our beloved is manifesting in a different form. If we understand this, then we will suffer less. To reduce suffering and face our fear, it helps to stabilize the mind through 'Nama Smaran' and contemplation. Breathing is the vehicle that carries concentration. It directs your mind to the object of your 'Dhyana'. Through the awareness of breathing, we begin to direct the mind towards recognizing reality – our Antaryamin Sai Baba.

Here is a rare photograph of Lokamanya Tilak and G.S.Kharpade in a political rally in Mumbai. The British Government virtually organized a manhunt for the two of them and we know that Kharpade took Baba's shelter to avoid imprisonment. Like them, many have suffered

umpteens miseries.

A chant of Vishnu Sahasranama before the picture of Lord Sainath which is recited daily in our residences goes like this: "With my adoration to Lord Vishnu, breathing in and out, I know I am of the nature to die; I cannot escape death. I am of the nature to grow old; I cannot escape old age. I am of the nature to get sick. Because I have a body, I cannot avoid sickness. Everything I cherish, treasure, and cling to today, I will have to abandon one day. The only thing I can carry with me is the fruit of my action. I cannot bring along with me anything else except the fruit of my actions in terms of thought, speech, and bodily acts."

As we think of Baba's Mahasamadhi, we can recognize this reality and smile. This is the practice of facing our fear. Fear is always there within us – the fear of getting old, getting sick, dying, or being abandoned by our loved ones. It is human to be fearful and to worry about it. Lord Sainath advised us not to suppress these fears but to invite them to the upper level of our consciousness, recognize them and smile at them. Every time your fear is invited up, every time you recognize it and smile at it, your fear loses some of its strength. When it returns to the depth of your consciousness, it returns as a smaller seed. This practice should be carried out every day, especially when you are feeling mentally and physically strong. And while practicing, if your mind gets distracted, just bring your attention back to your Breath to Baba's assurance -

"You may ask where I am now and how I can meet you now. But I am within your heart, and we can meet without any effort".

– Shri Sai Baba (*Chap 44, Ovi 162*).





# In Good Spirits

**By: Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**

**A**lmost every human activity is directed towards happiness. Though we perform many functions for ourselves, our family, and society, we do it all for the sake of our happiness. Ultimately, all actions, spiritual or material, are traced back to one's urge for happiness. But the concept of happiness differs from one person to another. This leads us to ask, 'What constitutes happiness which is everlasting and common to all? What is the source of happiness?' Adi Shankara said, "Let us light the lamp inside and find the treasure of happiness there."

The individual believes that happiness-causing elements such as family relations, position, and possession all exist outside of him. The desire for wealth, for example, can be misleading. A millionaire from Nagpur, Balasaheb Booty came to Sai Baba in quest of spirituality. He met Baba at Dwarakamayai. Looking at his serene and pleasant face, the impressed Booty asked: "What makes you so happy?" Baba said, "I am happy not because of what I have but because of what I am."

In his Vairagya Shatakam, Saint Bhartrihari says: "Even if wealth stays with us for some time, it would certainly leave us one day." Then, what difference does it make if we discard it now or later? When we renounce wealth voluntarily, such self-control gives us infinite bliss. Whatever 'Dakshina' money Sai Baba collected, he distributed to one and all. He collected hundreds of rupees but ultimately remained a fakir. He used to say that "God is a friend of the poor"



Sri Narasimha Swamiji said: "Shiva made over all his possessions to Vishnu, wandered in jungles and cemeteries and lived on food received from begging. For Shiva, non-possession is higher in the scale of happiness than possession."

The modern individual may not agree. He would say he cannot think on the lines of renunciation because he is part of a common endeavor for the progress of humanity. The Bhagwad Gita does not deny this. It says, "Continue doing the duties assigned to you. You need not renounce anything of value. What you need to renounce is the 'I' notion (ego). Discard the 'sense of doership' which is done with a personal motivation."

Happiness is not something that is acquired anew. It is already there. It is ignorance that overshadows happiness. The moment jnana, Self-knowledge, dawns, it leads to real happiness. What needs to be done is to remove the obstacle.

Everyone loves his parents, his God, relations, and friends, but his first love is towards himself. He who knows his real Self remains happy because Self-knowledge is Brahmananda — "I am Brahman, Nityananda, and Satchitananda" — bliss arising out of truth and consciousness.

**HAPPINESS IS A STATE BEYOND THE MIND WHICH DISTRACTS THE INDIVIDUAL FROM THE PATH OF TRUTH.**





## Dattaram Dwarakanath Neroy: Artist Par Excellence

**By: Dubagunta Sankaraiah**

**S**hri Dattaram Dwarkanath Neroy popularly known as D.D. Neroy was born on 29<sup>th</sup> February 1896. D.D. Neroy was born in a large family of six children. His father was Dwarkanath Bhau Neroy who was the founder of D.B. Neroy & Co in 1898. D.B. Neroy was educated at the Sir. J.J. School of Art, Mumbai and was soon recognized as a pioneer in the art of hand engraving on boxwood (Block makers & offset plate makers). His father D.B. Neroy passed away at the age of 47 due to pneumonia. D.D. Neroy was aged 22 years old and assumed control of the firm being the eldest son. He underwent higher training in England and Germany and was a gold medalist from Hamburg.

D.D. Neroy was a great devotee of Sai Baba. He visited Shirdi many times as a young lad. During one of his visits in 1918, he had the grace and blessings of SAINATH at Shirdi and it was a “Sakshatkar” (revelation) by Sai Baba, his Guru, mentor, and perfect master whose directions he followed meticulously as a humble devotee. D.D. Neroy took the photo of Baba sitting on the stone which was an original one as it contained his signature also on the photo (see in the photo). The



dimensions of this original photograph of Sai Baba sitting on stone are 6' by 4'.

The Ashirwad photo identical to the one here was painted by notable artist S. M. Pandit. D.D. Neroy made blocks and printed several copies of photos of Baba sitting on stone and Baba's Ashirwad photo. Though the Ashirwad photo was

painted by S.M.Pandit, D.D.Neroy took up the task of making the block and printing several copies. He made mass distribution of such photo prints of Baba sitting on the stone and Ashirwad photo. He used to donate several prints of both photos of Baba to the



Sai Sansthan, Shirdi every year. His mission was just to distribute, distribute and distribute Baba's blessings in the form of photographs to reach families/homes all over India and to reach Baba's blessings to all corners of the world. Thus D.D.Neroy was instrumental in propagating about Baba through these two varieties of photos. Baba's photographs were never sold but were always distributed free by him.

D.D. Neroy was a very kind hearted person. He had done a lot of social service activities like providing food, education to the poor and orphan children, and financial assistance to poor people for conducting marriages of their children, etc., But he never disclosed his social service activities.

The story of the photograph of BABA SITTING ON THE STONE, for which Neroy made blocks and prints thereof, was a transcendental and mystical occurrence that was kept as a secret between Baba and Neroy, and he did not allow others to make a propaganda about it. This is how Sai Baba wished it to be and Neroy just obeyed his master's wish. Neroy also made many photo prints of Baba with one of the eleven sayings printed below them. Usually, he would mention Baba's assurance, “If you look to Me, I look to you.” This photo was taken with the consent of Baba by D.D. Neroy. Neroy had signed only one photo of Baba and this photo is placed in the Mangal Karyalay



of Shri Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi.

Neroy lived at the gallery premises and made short visits to his home at Khotachi Wadi, Mumbai, where the entire family lived together. The home-cooked food was sent by his wife Anandibai morning and evening regularly. He had two male servants Gangaram and Vishram who stayed with him and even made arrangements for sleeping in this workplace. Neroy was also closely associated with the famous artists of Mumbai Shri. S. M. Pandit, Mulgaonkar, Hebbar, B.V. Talim, to name a few. These artists painted for Neroy to make blocks of their paintings. Neroy used to visit Shirdi regularly even after Baba's Mahasamadhi and used to distribute Baba's Photographs to devotees. The family has continued this legacy left behind by D.D. Neroy.

Neroy's wonderful service of Sai-Prachar by free distribution of Baba's photos - one sitting on the stone and another - Ashirwad, is noteworthy and praiseworthy. It seems Baba entrusts a unique task to each of his Bhaktas, and the task of distributing Baba's photos was well accomplished by Neroy.

Neroy was also devoted to Kamu Baba, a saint at Girgaum, Mumbai. Neroy got the portrait of Baba sitting on the stone made and mounted it on an ornate frame. Then with the help of four men, he took it to Girgaum and offered it to his Guru. Kamu Baba appreciated the portrait and the kind gesture but refused to accept it. He told Neroy to take it to Shirdi and place it in the Sabhamandap of the Dwarakamai. Dejected he sat at his Guru's feet and said, "It took me three years to make this portrait and one and a half months to get it framed. Never mind the expense, now you reject it?" To this, Kamu Baba calmly said that it was not a question of rejecting it, but 'my keen

desire in asking you to take it to Shirdi and place it in the Sabhamandap in the Dwarakamai where thousands of devotees would have the benefit of seeing and praying to it.' Thus, this portrait came to be installed in the Sabhamandap of the Dwarakamai. This was the original Photograph which was taken with Baba's consent.

The ancestral Neroy house at Khotachi Wadi, Girgaum, Mumbai stands tall and strong, where today, the fourth generation family members of the Neroy household still reside.

Subhashchandra Dattaram Neroy, the youngest son of D.D. Neroy, further took up and carried ahead of the family business but passed away in 2012, leaving behind his wife Mrs. Rohini Subhashchandra Neroy. Their eldest daughter Mrs. Ghayathri Neroy Desai, and two Sons Sundeep S. Neroy and Ram S. Neroy who today continue the family business of Block Making and offset processing while the daughter runs the art gallery business in the name & style of R.D.D. Neroy Gallery in the same premises where Neroy's business began in the beginning. In this gallery, there is a 3' by 4' photograph of Sai Baba painted by D.D. Neroy and signed by him as well. Here Baba's arati is conducted every Thursday. Smt. Ghayathri, the granddaughter of Shri. D D Neroy confirms that the photograph is an original one and it has the signature of her grandfather. She also states that over the years, many people have successfully removed the signature with the use of the latest technology and are selling the photographs as the original photograph of Sai Baba. Even to this day, if anybody visits the Gallery, they can see the beautiful painting of Sainath Ashirwad by Shri S.M. Pandit having the copyright stamp of D.D. Neroy. Baba's photographs were never sold but were always distributed free.

D.D. Neroy can be seen with Anandibai Neroy, his spouse in the side picture. Blessed was the family full of devotion to Baba.

D.D. Neroy thus enjoyed a rare privilege to paint the famous portrait of Sai Baba sitting on the stone. Additionally, upon being guided by Kamu Baba, he placed it in Dwarakamai for the benefit of numerous Sai Bhaktas, who have derived immense joy being able to view the portrait even decades after Baba's Mahasamadhi.





# The Power of Sai Baba's Love

**By: Dinesh Chikkaballapur**

**A**fter my retirement, I settled down in Mumbai and rendered Sai Satcharitra 'ovi to ovi' first in Kannada and later into English. During this holy task, two kinds of power have come into play in my life – the love of power and the power of love. The motivation underlying these two is vastly different – is it all about ourselves, or is it all about others? The first is demonstrated by Bhagoji Shinde who



served Sai Maharaj, and the second is exemplified by Kaka Saheb Dixit, and others extending humanitarian assistance and bringing solace to the sick and the needy.

What we do all depends on the way we look at life. In 1944 when there was a severe drought in Madras and surrounding areas and many were starving for food, Sri Narasimha Swamiji distributed food to the needy from donations collected for the construction of the Sai temple. Swamiji, without missing a beat, told his associates: “Lord Sainath did not call me to build a temple but to help starving people in front of me.” Swamiji believed in living his life one day at a time because we have the power to change the world only one life at a time.

The power and strength of love are recounted by Sri R.K. Bhatnagar of Aligarh at the Annual Convention of Contributors to Sai Leela magazine held at Shirdi in February 1979 presided over by Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji in the story about Dashrath Manjhi, a poor laborer in a village - Gehlaur near Gaya in Bihar. His wife Falguni Devi died in need of medical help. So, Manjhi single-handedly forged a road through the mountains, working with a hammer and chisel for 22 years. He built the road that shortened the distance between the hospital and his village from 75 kilometers to 5 kilometers.

It is an oft-repeated religious belief that God brings good out of evil. It is a service to Lord Sainath. Without denying all the grief, suffering, and sorrow that the epidemic Plague brought to Atmaram Appa Kulkarni and six other residents of Shirdi, in 1895 when Nana Saheb Chandorkar and Ganesh Rao Sahasrabuddhe

(who later became a Kirthankar as Dasganu Maharaj) came to Sai Baba's fold, it has brought humanity together. Let us ponder on the five suggestions made by Dasganu Maharaj in one of his Harikatha's dealing with Baba's help to mitigate suffering.

Dasganu makes five suggestions - First, be on the lookout for the unexpected ways that Lord Sainath may be working in this crisis. What unforeseen good might Lord Sainath bring out of this mess? Second, the Plague epidemic could be seen as an invitation from Lord Sainath to you to serve others. Third, refocus on what is most important in this life. Fourth, spend more time with Lord Sainath in prayer. Fifth, connect more deeply with the people in your life – Service to humanity is service to Sai Maharaj. All of these are unexceptionable suggestions.

The power of love can save not only lives but transform them. This is true not only of human beings but also of human beings in relationship with animals. A 'Bright Side' story talks about a man who observed an eight-year-old girl in a store. She was talking to a dog, petting it, and smiling. Her parents were standing at one side looking happy. This onlooker later learned that their daughter was autistic and that it was the first time they'd heard her talk using full sentences.

Sri Narasimha Swamiji concluded: “Someday after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we shall harness for Lord Sainath the energies of love and then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.” Let us pray, look forward to and move towards this day.



# The Pinnacle of the Temple of Bhakti

**-B. Rajeshwari**

Attachment creates bondage  
while love bestows freedom.

How who always does right actions and lives  
the way of God is the dearest of Lord Sainath.  
He is sure to reap the fruit of his right  
actions in the heaven above.  
Without the heat of the fever of this  
worldly life, repentance is not possible and  
without repentance, sin does not leave one.

One has to first understand the road map  
of his spiritual destination to reach Sai Parabrahman  
and then vigorously, consistently, and diligently  
continue the Sadhana, until the journey is  
complete. 'Sraddha and 'Saburi'  
Patience and Faith in Sai Maharaj can  
overcome mountains.

Where there is the state of  
Lord Sainath and devotee being one,  
there the SIDDHIS are all, ready to serve.  
All that we are is the result of  
what we have thought.

Bhakti is a real genuine search  
after Lord Sainath, a search beginning,  
Continuing and ending in Love Divine.  
When all the desires that dwell in  
the heart is cast away, then does  
the mortal become immortal.



# IshAvAsya: Mantra #10

By: Jayakrishna Nelamangala

||Aum Shree Gurubhyo Namaha Harihi Aum||

In the previous mantra, a clear distinction was made between belief and knowledge because they are quite opposite to each other. Often, the presence of one indicates the lack of another. When we believe in something, it simply means we don't know about it. We don't know about it probably because we have not yet discovered the source of knowledge for it. The truth of knowledge is intrinsic to that knowledge. It does not come from external sources. Without getting into too much detail, I will just mention that this concept is what is called “प्रामाण्यस्वतस्त्व prāmānya-svatastva”.

The implication of the previous mantra #9 is that, correct knowledge is to be obtained and incorrect knowledge is to be recognized and rejected as such. Both are needed and if we don't do both, greater doom is predicted. This next mantra #10 teaches that, both are needed not only for avoiding the greater doom, but also for reaching the highest good. Every philosopher makes an attempt to meet this demand set by the upanishat. Based on one's capacity for knowledge, he tries to sort out correct knowledge from incorrect knowledge. You can see this happening through out the growth of दर्शनसंप्रदाय darśanasapradāya where each thinker has examined the previous school of thought.

In this mantra #10, the upanishat has used the words vidyā and avidyā. vidyā stands for correct knowledge (तत्त्वज्ञान tattvajāna) and avidyā is its opposite which is incorrect knowledge (मिथ्याज्ञान mithyājāna). This mantra is saying that there are two parts to the highest good. One part is caused by vidyā and the other part is by avidyā. But the philosophical question is, how can avidyā bring about the highest good? It does not make sense at all. So, the only correct way to understand this mantra is to understand it consistent with what the upanishat has taught us in the previous mantra. The nature of true knowledge is that it is internally consistent. Inconsistency is an indication of wrong-knowledge.

The mantra teaches, “इति शुश्रुम iti śuśruma” meaning “thus we have heard”. The very word 'thus' indicates the fact that it has been there from time immemorial. Heard from who? is answered as “येनस्तद्विचक्षिरे yēnastadvicacākṣirē” - heard from those knowledgeable who taught us conclusively. But who could that possibly be?

This unbroken chain of knowledge that has been passed on from immemorial times actually indicates the apourusheyatva of the Veda.

With this background, let us make an attempt at studying mantra #10 keeping in mind what was learnt in mantra #9.

## उपनिषत् Upaniṣat

अन्यदेवाऽहुर्विद्यया अन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।

इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षिरे ॥ १० ॥

anya dēvā'hurvidyāyānyadāhuravidyāyā |

iti śuśruma dhīrāṇā yēnastadvicacākṣirē || 10 ||

The elderly and the wise say that (आहुः āhuḥ) one part of mōksha (अन्यदेव anyadēva) is obtained by correct knowledge (विद्यया vidyāyā), and the other part (अन्यद् anyat) by the recognition and rejection of incorrect knowledge (अविद्यया avidyāyā). We have heard it like this (इतिशुश्रुम itiśuśruma), from those elderly knowledgeable (धीराणां dhīrāṇā) who have (ये yē) conclusively explained (विचक्षिरे vicacākṣirē) that mōksha-sādhana (तद् tad) to us (नः naḥ).

Śrīsaṅkara has taken the words vidyā and avidyā to mean 'devatā-jāna' and 'karma' respectively. Hence, for previous mantra #9, “विद्यार्यरताः vidyāyāmratāḥ” śrīsaṅkara teaches, “those who do not perform karma, but are immersed only in devatā-jāna, there is a greater andhan-tamas for them”. Accordingly, in this mantra, śrīsaṅkarateaches “anyadeva” as “prithageva” and concludes that devata-jāna and karma give different results and quotes “विद्ययादेवलोको vidyāyādēvalōkō” and “कर्मणापितृलोक karmanāpitṛlōka”.

Śrīranga-rāmānuja has taken the words vidyā and avidyā to be 'स्वाधिकारोचितकर्मपरित्यागेनविद्या svādhikārōcita karma parityāgēnavidyā' i.e., knowledge without karma and 'vidyāvidhuraṁ karma' i.e., karma without knowledge. Hence, for the previous mantra #9, विद्यार्यरताः vidyāyāmratāḥ śrīranga-rāmānuja teaches, “those who do not perform the karma that is prescribed to them” there is greater andhan-tamas for them as compared to “those that perform karma without knowledge”. So, in this mantra, “anyadeva” is teaching mōksha-sādhana is different from 'knowledge without karma' and it is also different from 'karma without knowledge' because, 'knowledge along with performing varnāshrama-dharma' is the mōksha-sādhana.

Śrīmadhva has taken the words vidyā and avidyā to be yathārtha and ayathārtha- knowledge that grasps its object as it is and knowledge that grasps its object as the object is not. Accordingly, in this mantra 'anyadeva' - one part of moksha is obtained by vidyā and the other part is obtained by recognizing and rejecting avidyā.



# Sai Satcharita and Reincarnation

**By: Ramaswamy Seshadri**

Interestingly, major religions that originated outside India -- Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--as well as those that originated in India, like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism talk of the soul that survives the body after death.

The soul, on a certain plane of consideration, is indestructible according to all great religions of the world. Sai Baba and Sai Satcharitra have repeatedly stressed this aspect and the soul shows up not just once on earth but many times.

Krishna does not mince words when he says, "O Arjuna, both you and I have had many lives!". Sai Baba told Shama that they were together for 72 births. That implies that the soul does not die when the body does. Krishna uses this insight to help Arjuna overcome his anxiety over the possibility of his kith and kin ceasing to be passed away.

In an appealing illustration, Krishna says a soul takes a new body just as we pick up new clothes after discarding old ones. In the context of spiritual practices, the scenario that the BhagwadGita presents to us is that of a soul 'learning and growing' and, at the end of many lives, attaining perfection.

A rare few breathe their last with loving remembrance of God. They reach the abode of God and do not come back to earth. When Justice Tatyasaheb Noolkar breathed his last, Baba said that he has no rebirth. Baba promised H.S. Dixit that he will take him in a 'Vimana' i.e., an easy transit to the other shore. Baba stopped Swami Vijayananda from proceeding to Manas Sarovar and prepared him to read scriptures for two weeks before he passed away on the lap of Bade Baba. Seven days before his Mahasamdhhi he blessed an ailing tiger to give up its life right in his presence.

The overwhelming majority of us, as per our karma -- good or bad actions -- have a next life. Future life following the present one can be in



environments better than the present one or in worse settings. The good news is that it is in our hands. If we live this life well, performing more virtuous deeds, we will receive a body in the next life that facilitates further upward growth. If instead, we mess up our present life with sinful acts, we will find ourselves in bodies -- families and surroundings -- that make it more difficult for us to rise on the spiritual path.

Sai Baba has assured that those of us with a lot of merits to our credit will go to celestial regions; those with very bad records will go to netherworlds marked by suffering, and those with a blend of good and bad karma to their credit are brought to the human sphere without any delay.

The Gita is perfectly in line with the Upanishads and Sai Satcharitra, which lay down the law of karma. In spirit, the law of karma is no different from the western saying, "As you sow, so shall you reap!" A mantra in the Kathopanishad declares that a soul is reborn in accordance with "what it did" and "what it learned". This highlights the place for spiritual education.

Beginning with an enhanced sense of right and wrong, Sai Baba has urged us to regularly do 'parayan' of Sai Satcharita to study the science of the soul and rise above mere body-consciousness keeping Sai Baba close behind our thoughts. We are the spirit blessed by Lord Sainath, of the nature of pure consciousness of Sai Parabrahman, and our attachment to the physical body lies at the root of countless mistakes we commit. Moksha, liberation, is the happy end of this long story of our devotion to Lord Sainath.



# Remove Ignorance During Navaratri

By: **Sanjay Padia**

**N**avaratri is a great occasion for all in Bengal. Following Vijayadashami, Sai devotees celebrate Baba's Mahasamadhi to pay homage to the Parabrahman.

The nine nights and days of Navaratri indicate the darkness of ignorance present in us and ways to bring in the light of knowledge that will remove the darkness. Sai Baba says in the Sai Satcharita that because of ignorance, humanity is suffering. Devi, the feminine aspect of nature, is venerated during Navaratri. The first three days are dedicated to Durga, the destroyer of inertia; the next three days to Lakshmi to overcome passion and the last three days to Saraswati to embrace the pure aspect of nature. On the tenth day - on Vijayadashami, celebrates the victory over all these three - tamas, rajas, and sattva. With Baba's 'Seemolanghan' at the transit of Vijayadashami to Ekadashi, you are in for radiant life.

In his masterpiece 'Life of Sai Baba' Sri Narasimha Swamiji says, 'Go on listening till you understand'. We have a gross body and deep within is the subtle body and our soul which is consciousness, awareness. Rakshasa in the gross form has a gross body and represents our disorganized energy. When anger, hatred, and jealousy exist, they generate disorganized energy; it makes you miserable. Whereas if you have compassion, love, caring, and silence within, as advised by Sai Baba, it is organized energy, godly energy. Disorganized energy is a demon.

Each demon in the Navaratri story represents a type of disorderliness.

In each of the thirteen chapters of Devi Mahatmyam, there are demons, namely, Madhu and Kaitabha and also Mahishasura, Chunda-Munda, Shumbha-Nishumbha. When all these demons are killed, ignorance is destroyed.

The tenth day also celebrates the defeat of Ravana by Rama. Ravana's ten heads signify negative energies and an impure mind. Rama symbolizes Atma, the soul and

Sita stands for hridaya, the heart. Therefore, listening to scriptures and performing service help to purify the mind.

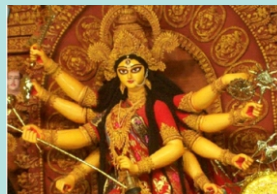
Practice 'Nama Smaran'. Simply go on chanting 'Sai Ram'. Mana, mind in Sanskrit, when purified with Nama Smaran, by devotion and understanding, becomes Nama. Our manaha has to become namah 'Sri Sainathaya'. When there is no devotion and no spiritual exposure, your mind will become Ravana and it will keep going round and round in a vicious circle.

The heart is pure and loving but the impure mind is the culprit. The Dashamukhi mind represented by Ravana is destroyed during Navaratri, hence we say Asahara, destroying the ten negatives.

Lakshmana is intellect. He is always loyal to Rama which is Atma. Hanuman represents courage and intuition. He is not a monkey, but he is a different being altogether. Scriptures say that the only person who had mastered the nine systems of grammar was Hanuman. He is called Nava-vyakarana-parangata. At present, there is only one system of grammar which is the Patanjali or Panini system of grammar. We have lost all these eight systems of grammar. But the Ramayana mentions that Hanuman was the knower of all the nine systems of grammar.

With the help of Hanuman's courage and support of Lakshmana's intellect, Sita, the heart, is brought back to Rama - the Atma, by the destruction of Ravana - the impure mind. This is indeed the Dashahara. This is followed by Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi day which reminds Baba close behind our thoughts.

There is Sai Rama in all of us, the consciousness, the awareness. There is Lakshmana the intellect which is also in us. There is Ravana the impure mind that is also in us. By sadhana of worshipping Lord Sainath, our mind becomes pure, then the mind unites with the soul, the ultimate destination called moksha, which is Self-realization.





# At the feet of Anandmayi Ma

**By: Seetha Vijayakumar**

**I**t was December 1977. I was just married and accompanied my husband to Calcutta as he was given an examination assignment. Mother Sarojini Devarajulu who was a pioneer Sai devotee came to the University Guesthouse and welcomed me to stay at her residence in Calcutta South.

At that time, she was in the process of establishing a Sai Baba Mandir at 29, Jatin Das Road. Within a few hours of my reaching her residence, Sarojini Devarajulu told me about a 'Satsang of Sai devotees in a neighboring bungalow, and little did I know that we will meet a great Saint Anandmayi Ma there.

Sarojini Devarajulu introduced me to the holy Mother as a young Sai devotee from Bangalore. As I offered my Pranams, she enquired about Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji and asked me to convey her 'Namaskarams' to Swamiji.

It was a big bungalow and the devotees sat on the lawn. On one side was a podium on which a photograph of Sai Baba and Krishna were placed with floral decorations. Anandamayi Ma spoke in Bengali about Sai Baba as 'Parabrahman'.

The Satsang was an informal one. Anandamayi Ma's smile was infectious. A devotee asked Anandamayi Ma: "To what caste do you belong and where is your home"? She responded, "From your worldly standpoint this body belongs to East Bengal and is Brahmin by caste; but if you think beyond these artificial distinctions, you will understand that this body is a member of one human family".

Anandamayi Ma's approach transcended all barriers of caste and religion and endeared her to all.

Little wonder that wherever she went, people from different walks of life thronged just to have a glimpse of her. Though I did not understand Bengali, Sarojini Devarajulu told me that Anandamayi Ma taught profound spiritual truths in simple language, devoid of jargon and complexity, which an average person could easily understand. These were based on direct experience of Truth in deep meditation and were not from books. I was told that even as a child, Ma showed signs of being highly evolved spiritually; the moment she heard the Divine Name being chanted, she would spontaneously slip into a spiritual trance for hours together.

With her intuitive knowledge, she declared in that 'Satsang that everything that one perceives is because of



Divine Light, that the outer light originates from an inner light, and that the light of the Self is the same in all. "Whether one worships Sai Baba, Krishna, Rama or Kali, one worships that one Light which pervades all things".

During this informal interaction with Sai devotees, she spoke of a mystical experience that culminated in the realization of the eternal Self. Seeing her own body as a luminous figure expand infinitely in all directions, she simultaneously saw other forms of light emanate from the Divine Light which appeared in different hues—sometimes bluish, sometimes yellowish, and at other times crimson. Seeing these lights of great brilliance, she experienced a dazzling luminosity encompassing the entire cosmos within her being.

A realization then dawned upon Ma, that which remains unchanged and eternal is the Supreme Truth, and to realize this Truth is the supreme calling of every human being. Through regular practice of meditation and contemplation on Lord Sainath, combined with chanting 'Om SaiRam', the seeker will get Sai's Ashirvad.

The path of Divine contemplation, said Ma, is akin to walking on the razor's edge; only a Sai devotee with implicit faith in Sai Maharaj who remains steadfast in his practice and adopts an attitude of unconditional surrender, will have the free flow of blessings from the Supreme, Lord Sainath, "just as a bucketful of water comes out of a well only when the rope to which the bucket is tied is being pulled".

Anandamayi Ma invited us to visit her Ashram. She presented me a sky blue color saree with a thin red border and a shawl to my husband. As we were leaving, Anandamayi Ma said "I am coming to Bangalore". She blessed us at Bangalore too in 1979.



# Sai-way to Mind Your Mind

**By: Usha Ranganathan**

**S**ai Baba and Sai Satcharita offer a few suggestions that can help you stay centered while navigating life's challenges, be they physical or financial.

Life is a blessing, but it does not seem like one when we are in a tough situation, maybe because of bad health, stress at work, job loss, strained relationships, or any illness. Understanding that we are Sai devotees and Sai Baba is close behind our thoughts and guarding us always who we are, what is mind and how does it function, can equip us to deal better with life's challenges.

Let me ask you what is the happiest moment of your life? Let's say it is traveling to Switzerland with your darling, surrounded by beautiful scenery and good food. If so, how many hours of all that can you enjoy? After a point, you want to shut your senses and cut yourself from the whole, wide, beautiful, ecstatic, and enthralling world and go into the darkness called sleep, that too deep sleep, in which there is nothing worldly. Ultimately, it is this state that rejuvenates, refurbishes, and energizes you.

One simple technique to stay centered is to take a short break wherever you are. Close your eyes and observe your normal breathing and simply focus your gaze at Lord Sainath's lotus feet. Try not to blink for that time. Do this for five-ten minutes, then return to work. Repeat this four hours later. All you need to do is to breathe properly because this very breath is life.

There are too many things that need to be addressed



daily. A Sai Devotee knows how to be happy by himself. Money can buy you clothes, food, a roof over your head, but you are most comfortable in your well-worn, loose T-shirt and half pants or a cotton kaftan. Remember Baba's dress of Kafni and lungi. True in a way happiness will come from within and not from outside, a lesson learned by Dasganu when he went to Kaka Dixit's place as per Baba's instructions for clarification of few doubts while translating Ishavasya Upanishad into Marathi. Make time for yourself when no one bothers you, like in deep sleep; create a silent space in your mind.

See things in the right perspective, don't go overboard. Keep in mind: sab ho jayega — everything will get done. Do your work, go easy, instead of rushing around in a hurry, in anger.

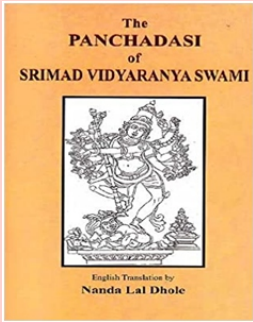
Fears will be there if we don't understand one fundamental thing: Everything comes with a manufacturing and an expiry date. The same goes for a flask on the table and our human body. All living sentient beings die one day. Teach your children this truth. Embrace it. If the flask on your table breaks, you could cry all day for it and be sad, or go out and get another one, and be happy. Similarly, when one body goes, another will be there. As long as there are desires in your mind, you would need a body to fulfill those desires. This phenomenon has been attested by enlightened beings in all religions,

If we don't want misery, don't analyze too much, don't judge too much, don't expect too much. This way, you can strike that balance which you deserve, work then will become joy. This balance comes from your mind



# Panchadasi to Panchasutras

By: Maheshwari S Kumar



It was a fine morning at Shirdi in 1914. Kaka Dixit was doing his 'Parayan' of Panchadasi. At one point Upasani Maharaj intervened and was giving precepts. The topic was how to keep the balance of mind in pleasant and unpleasant situations. Dada Kelkar asked: 'Heat is heat and cool is cool. How can I avoid feeling joy in my success in life and not feel the pain of losing a dear family member during an epidemic of Plague?'

Upasani Maharaj replied: 'Yes, the experiences of happiness and unhappiness would be different in both cases. But what also comes along is attachment to happy situations and an aversion to unhappy ones. While going through any kind of situation, one must consciously avoid these two things. Eventually, the incident will pass, but the attachment or aversion to it might linger on. And this creates sadness. We only have to watch out for this.'



**Srimad Vidyaranya Swami**  
(1296-1391)  
12<sup>th</sup> Pontiff of Sringeri Mutt

Panchadasi explains five reasons why we should neither hang on to pleasant situations nor avoid unpleasant ones.

Nana Saheb Chandorkar said life is never fully under anyone's control. It keeps throwing surprises at everyone. Despite our aversion to them, extreme heat and extreme cold are part of nature's cycle, as are day and night, light and darkness. Why not accept the cycle of pleasant and unpleasant events as inevitable and move on?



Kaka Dixit felt we must understand the non-permanent nature of each experience. We have a lot of happy and sad experiences in our life. It is difficult to expect a series of only pleasant ones. As the saying goes, 'no king laughs always and no beggar wails always.' Both have their share of happy and unhappy feelings. All experiences are temporary. One has to think 'this too will pass'.



Dasganu Maharaj intervened, if we can see the other side of the experience, with a discriminating mind, we will not be too elated or depressed in moments of happiness and unhappiness. While going through a happy situation, we often do not notice the negative things that are taking place simultaneously in our life. For example, acquiring a lot of wealth, and position could also make us arrogant. We may spoil our habits with the availability of excessive wealth.



As opposed to that, when we are passing through a difficult phase, we often become sensitive towards others, remember God, and become prayerful. We struggle to come out of the

tough phase and as a result become stronger. If we see our life in retrospect, we will notice that many events which appeared to be difficult at that time became a turning point in our life for greater progress.



Anna Saheb Dabholkar felt that comforts in life often lead to dependence. If there is habitual dependence on comfort, there is always a fear of losing it. And suppose it ends, you would be more miserable because of your strong attachment to it. So also, if you fear or apprehend an unfavorable event, it makes you

unhappy right away, even though it has yet to take place.

Ultimately Booty summed up, most major situations related to wealth and longevity are also part of destiny. They come because of our past karmas. Wisdom lies in accepting them as such, with equanimity.



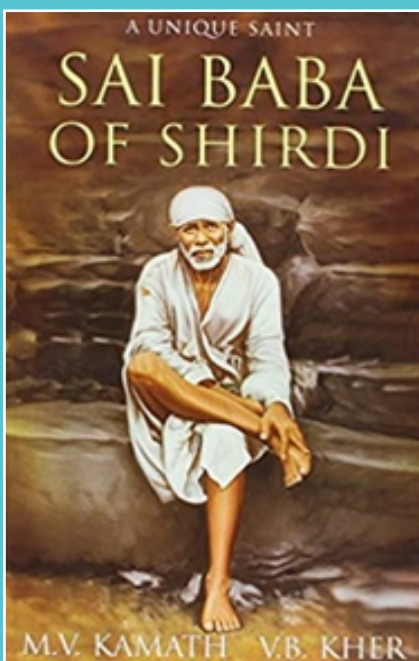
By then Sainath Maharaj along with Shama, who had gone to Lendi Bagh entered Sathe Wada and greeted everybody saying – “So you have ironed out 'Pancha Sutras' to combat calamities.”

Then everybody dispersed for noon arathi.

*“A Sai devotee must never forget that if he waits for better times to come, he may have to wait till eternity. Begin where you are with whatever you have with every action you perform, every feeling and emotion that wakes up within you is recorded with Lord Sainath. Now is the time and here is the place.”*

*—Dada J. P. Vaswani*

## Book Review



**Title :** Sai Baba of Shirdi  
**Authors :** M.V. Kamath and V.B. Kher  
**Publisher :** Jaico Books New Delhi  
**Cost :** Rupees. 365  
**Pages :** 341

This book is a complete account of the life of Sai Baba and his miracles. It is a complete picture of a life of piety, full of miracles and devotion, written with inspiration and care. The stories are so touching that even in this age of doubt and disbelief, the authors show how Lord Sainath reaches out and still speaks to people who turn to Him in utmost faith.

It can be said about this book – 'Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others, cannot keep it away from themselves'.

**Reviewed by S. Sai Priya**



Om Namō Sainathaya

## Childrens' Corner

## How Lord Sainath Guides us!

Dear Children,

A devotee's daughter had requested Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji to come and pray with her father. When the Swamiji arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows. An empty chair sat beside his bed. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit. "I guess you were expecting me," he said. "No, Swamiji" said the father. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji then remarked, "I saw the empty chair and I figured you knew I was going to show up." "Oh yeah, the chair," said the bedridden man. "I have never told anyone this, not even my daughter," said the man. "But all of my life I have never known how to pray. At Sai Mandir, I used to listen to Bhajans, but it went right over my head. I abandoned even visit to temple or pray," the old man continued, "until one day, four years ago, my best friend who is a staunch devotee of Lord Sainath said to me, 'Bhaskar, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with the Loving God Sai Baba. Here is what I suggest. Sit down in a chair; place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Lord Sainath the God in that chair. It's not spooky because he promised, 'I will be with you

always'. Then just speak to him in the same way you're doing with me right now.' So, I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it for a couple of hours every day. I'm careful though, if my daughter were to see me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to an asylum." Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old man to continue the journey. Then he chanted Vishnu Sahasranama and prayed with him to Lord Sainath, applied Udi to him, and returned to the Mandir. Two nights later the daughter called to tell Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji that her daddy had died that afternoon. "Did he die in peace?" Swamiji asked. "Yes, when I left the house about at two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me he loved me, and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange about his death. Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on the chair beside the bed. What do you make of that?" Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji wiped a tear from his eye and said, "I wish we could all go like that."

Yours SAI BABALy  
THE SAI AURA TEAM



## Give one-word answer:

1. Which disease relapsed to Balaram Dhurandhar on the day of Baba's Mahasamadhi?
2. In Chavadi Procession which God was visualized by Sapatnekar?
3. What was Sai Baba's advice to Kaka Dixit just before his Mahasamadhi?
4. Where did Upasani establish his Ashram?
5. What was the name of the advocate who was given a coconut to be handed over to Sai Baba by Vasudevananda Saraswati at Rajamundry?
6. Who was with Kaka Dixit as he passed away on the train on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1926?
7. Who referred Somadeva Swami to visit Sai Baba at Shirdi?
8. In whose hotel did Narayana Rao Jani work?
9. Where did Nana Saheb perform his eldest son's marriage?
10. From which place did Captain Hate hailed?
11. What was the selfless contribution of Balaji Patil Newaskar at Shirdi?
12. What was that broke into two pieces before Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi that got Him upset?

ANSWERS: 1. Asthma; 2. Pandurangavital; 3. Lunch; 4. Sakori; 5. Pundalika Rao; 6. Hemadpant; 7. Bhatji Dixit of Nagpur; 8. Ramachandra Vaman Modak; 9. Gwalior; 10. Bikaner; 11. Cleaning Baba's path; 12. Breaking of the brick.





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