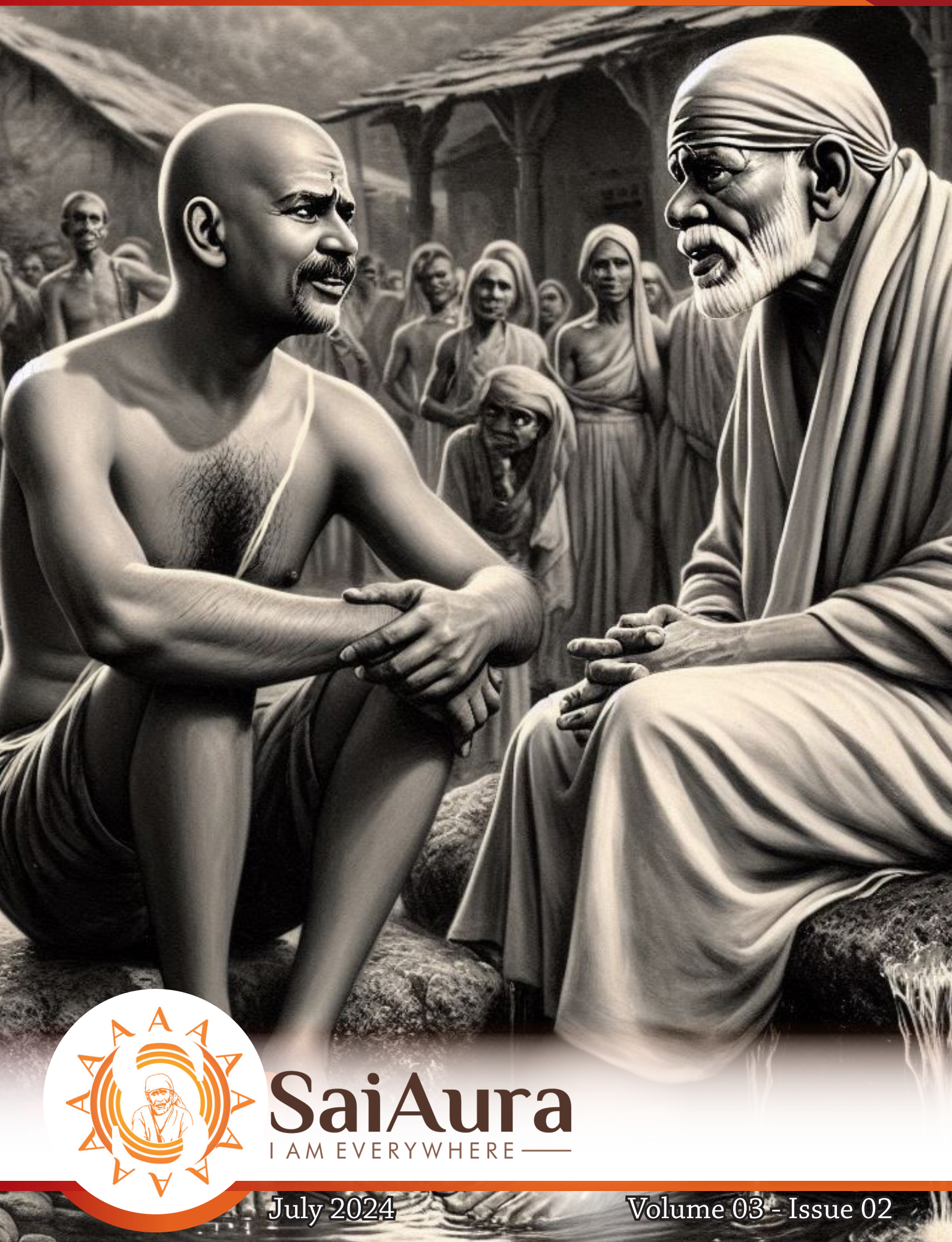


Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE —

July 2024

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All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Bengaluru, India.



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE



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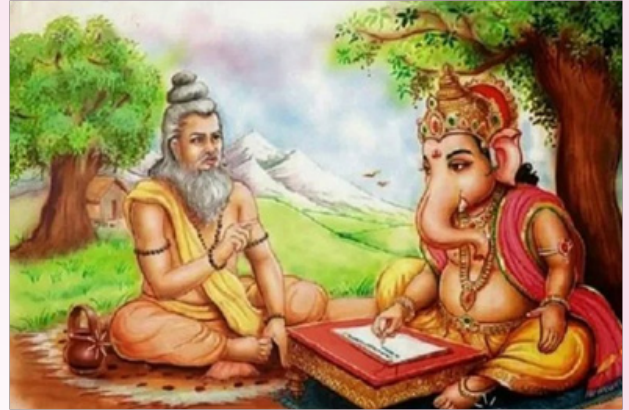
A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

GURU POORNIMA MESSAGE

AUM SAI RAM

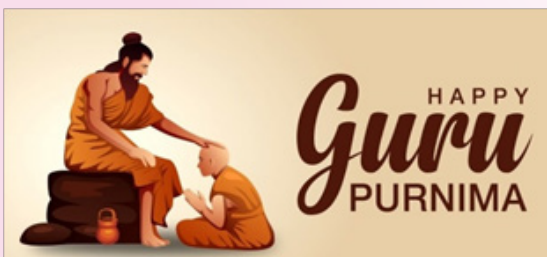
Greetings to all the readers, editorial members, and back-office staff of SAI AURA.

As we bring out this Twenty-Sixth issue (Guru Poornima issue) in July 2024 our Editorial Board has requested me to pen a few words as people around the world will celebrate Guru Poornima and the customary celebrations in reverential salutations to our Guru Maharaj, Lord Sainath welcoming the season, the festival of the Guru, to mark our total surrender to Guru for happiness on the victory of good over evil.



The first issue of Sai Aura was launched on 'Guru Poornima' Day in 2017. Why do we worship the GURU our Sainath Maharaj exclusively on 'Guru Poornima' also called 'Vyasa Poornima Day'? Kabir says: '*Sab dharti kagaz karu, lekhni sab vanray, saat samundra ki masi karu, Guru gun likha na jaye*' – If the whole Earth is transformed into paper with all the big trees of the forest made into pens; if the entire water in the seven oceans is transformed into writing ink; if for eternity I was to write the glory of the Guru, it would not be enough. Such is the greatness of the Guru.

The special day of Guru Poornima, also known as Vyasa Poornima Day, is dedicated to expressing our gratitude, devotion, appreciation, and recognition for all we have gained from various teachers. In our culture, parents are our first Gurus. Then, those who taught us in school from the first alphabet in kindergarten to all our numerous teachers, be it in the field of music, dance, business management, or in any profession – all represent our Gurus. What have we been able to do on our own?



knowledge. We can never say enough about it and about the Guru who reveals to us this supreme Truth. This knowledge was imparted at the beginning of creation in the Vedas. It was Sage Veda Vyasa who gathered all the scattered mantras of the Vedas and compiled them into four volumes and that is why his very name is Veda Vyasa. Vyasa is the one who edits, and the one who compiles. Vyasa also means a diameter. Just as a circle does not have a beginning or an end, knowledge of the Truth does not have a beginning or an end. Knowledge of the *Sab dharti kagaz karu, lekhni sab vanray, saat samundra ki masi karu, Guru gun likha na jaye*. Infinite itself does not have a limit. Still, one who can measure the breadth

Of all the knowledge in the universe, it is the spiritual knowledge that reveals to us our Self – our oneness with the Infinite – and liberates us from all limitations, bondage, and suffering. This is the greatest



of that knowledge, one who can connect every point in that circle is called Vyasa. Also, Vyasa means one who does not sit. He did not sit or take a rest but worked with extraordinary dynamism to ensure the survival of this knowledge that would build a culture of dharma and spirituality – for the next yuga.

Therefore, Vyasa Poornima is Guru or Teachers' Day. We remember our entire Guru Parampara that starts from the Divine Himself, from Ishwara Himself as 'Dakshina Murthy. It is said that Veda Vyasa is an incarnation (avatar) of Maha Vishnu (Narayana) and Adi Shankaracharya is the incarnation of Shankara. Veda Vyasa compiled the Vedas, Adi Shankaracharya wrote the commentary on Upanishads; Veda Vyasa composed the Mahabharata in which we find the jewels, the Bhagavad Gita and Vishnu Sahasranama, Adi Shankara wrote a commentary on them; Veda Vyasa connected all the points in the Brahma Sutra, Adi Shankaracharya wrote the bhashya, the commentary, on it, to make it clear.

At the same time, Adi Shankara spread the knowledge of the Vedas with missionary zeal so that we could return to our Vedic culture with complete clarity and understand the comprehensive significance of the spiritual path, the place of rituals, the different practices, and how to do them in a manner to re-establish Vedic culture. This is the love of the great gurus.

The crucial point is that inculcating the requisite qualities and gaining and spreading this knowledge, gives us not just temporary pleasures – but absolute Bliss. Our offering to the lotus feet of our teachers is to treasure what they have taught us and make our own lives pure and noble. Even if we follow and live just one teaching of the guru, which was given to us with love and supreme 'kripa', compassion, our life will not only be enriched, but we will be able to enrich the lives of many.

Our greetings to all.

Yours SAI BABALy

Prathibha

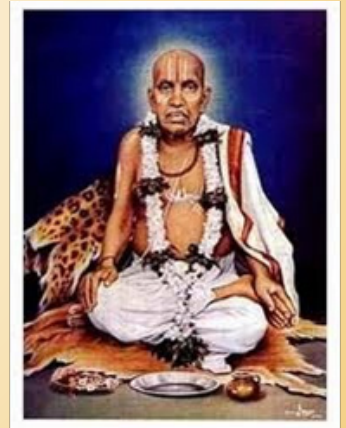
A Thought to Dwell on



Nana Saheb Chandorkar along with Ganesh Rao Sahasrabudhe visited Sai Maharaj for the first time in 1892. Sai Baba was looking for someone who would glorify his life and bring many devotees to his fold.

Nana Saheb was a Deputy Collector and with his spiritual background wielded great influence with the upper strata of the society, while his orderly Ganesh Rao was a talented person being a born poet and a singer, was popular as

a cheap 'Tamasha Man' among the rural masses. Baba foresaw that Nana Saheb would reach the higher echelons of society and Ganesh Rao as a 'Kirtankar' would reach the masses. On the very first visit, Baba showed them 'Triveni Sangam' on his holy feet. Nana Saheb Chandorkar then onwards distributed notebooks to devotees to record Baba's miracles for posterity. Hence, before 1892, recorded Sai miracles were few. Nana Chandorkar was the earliest Sai Pracharak.



First Word**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS
A QUANTUM LEAP FOR SAI DEVOTEES**

We are happy to present this issue of SAI AURA commemorating the Guru Poornima in July 2024.

On this occasion, perhaps 'SAI AURA' editorial members are in absolute support of Sai Baba's merciful blessingstaking over the work of human intelligence. The reasons are clear why 'Sai Aura' is supported by such a strange phenomenon.



First, what we call the human mind is itself a biocomputer. Just because you are born with it does not make much difference. A better computer can be implanted by Sai Maharaj in your mind – far more efficient, far more intelligent, far more comprehensive.

Every new thing has been opposed by religions, by religious leaders vehemently, because every new thing changes the whole structure of human life. For example, computers can change all the stupidity that man has shown throughout history. SAI AURA does not think that computers like to create war, exploit people, or discriminate between different religions. between man and woman.

A computer is simply a tremendous instrument, which gives you immense possibilities that are not available to you biologically. It can be a thousand times superior to Albert Einstein. Naturally, a computer can produce a science far more fundamental, far more real, not changing every day because discoveries go on happening and old discoveries become out of date. A computer can reach the center of reality. It can reveal to you whatever you want. It is an instrument in your hands. It is not a danger. Because it will be doing all intelligent, intellectual, and mental work...you are left very simply to relax in meditation. A computer is not Christian, Hindu, or Mohammedan. It is simply a mechanical device created by human consciousness. In return, it can help human consciousness to reach its highest potential. Then you can meditate, you can dance, you can sing, you can go on world trips.





The problem arises because we cannot think of a solution. The solution is simple. You were paid because you were producing. Now a robot is producing more, many times more, and it is not being paid. It is needless for you to remain unemployed, hungry, or poor.

If the entire world is unemployed and has enough money to enjoy, will anyone join the army? People will join carnivals and circuses. All kinds of celebrations

will happen, and there is no need for wars.

But people are afraid because they cannot conceive of a certain possibility in which people do not suffer. The question is when these computers take the place of intelligence. But those computers, far superior in intelligence, are in your hands. You are not in their hands, so there is no problem.

It is a great blessing. What man's intellect has done is very small. When computers take over, so much can be accomplished that there will be no need for anybody to be hungry, poor, a thief, or a judge, because these all belong to the same profession – judges and thieves, criminals and lawmakers. There is no need for anybody to be poor and affluent.

It can become a quantum leap. It can break away from the past and all conditionings of the past.

Our greetings to all for a happy and fulfilling Guru Poornima.

* * *



The Garden of Sai Bhakti

Today the garden of Sai Bhakti Is in full bloom,
And the trees are laden with fruits.

Whosoever desires could pluck them,
And carry cartloads of them.

Baba has made them invaluable,
May be! Never again

This opportunity shall come your way.
Hurry up, hurry up,
For time waits for no one
And your Sai Maharaj is waiting for you.

—by **Sai Raghu**



When the first King saw a wilting flower

— by **Paras Mal Jain**

One day three Jain monks visited Shirdi. Baba greeted them with sugarcane juice and enquired from them about Jain mythology.

Baba explained after the monks left for Punatambe, that a chieftain called Naabhi, and his wife, Marudeva, had a baby named Rishabh. Rishabh became the first king and the first Tirthankara of the Jaina tradition. Baba told his devotees that he would explain the significance of offering sugarcane juice.

Also known as Adinath, Rishabh taught people how to live: from establishing the institution of marriage, adopting life skills, and cooking, to art, metallurgy, and even the Brahmi script. He gave them values and skills, such as 'asteya', not stealing another's property, and 'Satya', not telling lies. He ruled for a long time. There came a point when he felt he had done his job. Once when he was sitting in the garden, he observed a flower wilt. Slowly, many visions of the impermanence of life began to fill his head. That day he decided to renounce his kingdom. Sai Maharaj explained that the act of giving up his kingdom and all riches to search for the Truth that is lasting and permanent in this impermanent world came as the lesson of aparigraha, non-possession. That was his day of realization. Before renouncing the world, he gave some important advice to his children about how to live in this world, equality to all being the most important, thereby laying the foundation for 'ahimsa'.

He stood in the 'kayotsarga mudra' immersed in meditation. During that time, he uncovered a new idiom

for a good life and the need to follow the four principles of ahimsa, aparigraha, asteya, and Satya – the destruction of desire. Baba reiterated his teachings encrypted in Sai Satcharitra.



As Upasani Maharaj did his penance in Khandoba Mandir during 1911-14, He neither ate nor drank, neither spoke nor slept. In that 'stillness' mudra he remained, unmoving, for six months. At the end of this period, suddenly, people found stirrings in the body of the still Adinath. Not only did Bhagwan Rishabh stir, He began walking barefoot

towards the city of Vinita.

People thronged with all kinds of delicacies to eat, but Bhagwan Rishabh did not accept a morsel.

He went wandering from place-to-place begging for alms. For six months he did not get even a morsel. The year was now over. One night, Shreyans, son of King Somaprabha and grandson of Rishabh, had a dream that a black mountain had turned white after it was bathed in milk. Shreyans is an important figure. He is Adinath's grandson who was later incarnated as Mahavir. In his dream and from his recollection of his past lives, when he saw that Bhagwan Rishabh walked into town, Shreyans knew he had to serve him 'iksuras', i.e. sugarcane juice. Adinath accepted that and, therefore, the race came to be known as the 'Ikshvakus'. The body that had become dark due to lack of food was now aglow, true to Shreyans's dream.

Sai Maharaj says among many other things that Rishabh taught people was what to feed a monk and how to live as one. It is also in this context that Adinath explains what kind of food may be partaken of so that the adherence to non-violence is complete. One should eat food as a bee draws nectar from a flower without harming it or as a cow graze on the grass without uprooting it. Baba justified his offering of sugarcane juice to Jain monks.



Mystics and Saints

— by **Shreyas Devaraj**

Bharam Uma Maheswara Rao (1922 -2000)

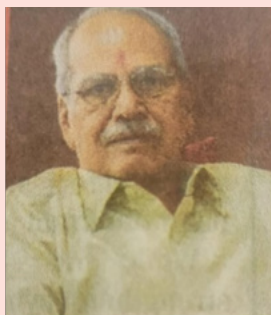


Born in Guntur (Andhra Pradesh) he was a District Superintendent of Police in Andhra Pradesh and had a distinguished career. He had a valvular disorder of the heart. Baba in a dream vision told him that he would make him alright. Accordingly in 1983 from Baba's portrait, a beam of light emerged and burnt a concentric ring around his left nipple. From then onwards his heart problem disappeared. Baba told him in a dream vision that he was Nana Saheb Chandorkar reborn. He used to get messages of philosophical truth which he recorded faithfully and published in eleven volumes. He engaged himself actively in Sai Prachar. Starting the publication of SAI PRABHA magazine gladly assisted him. Uma Maheswara Rao attained 'Sadgati' in 2000.



Baroda. Around 1939, he was drawn to Sri Narasimha Swamiji's activities of All India Sai Samaj at Mylapore, Chennai. Varada Rao became the first Secretary of the Sai Samaj. He laid down the policies and procedures for the Sai Samaj to be on a firm footing. His wife, Smt. Sarada with her literary acumen volunteered to note down whatever Sri Narasimha Swamiji dictated, and all the 2000-plus pages of Sai literature are due to the short-hand skills of Smt. Sarada Rao. Varada Rao also mobilized funds for renovating the ancient Chowdeswari temple at Nandyal, from where Nanda Vaidiks come from.

Sri T.A. Ram Nathen (1924-2004)



Popularly known as TAR, he was born in Kerala and settled in Kolkata. He had a remarkable style of writing referring himself to the third number. He doled out charity to the needy with a picture of Sai Baba and 'Udi'. The greatest service he did was bringing together tens and hundreds of Sai devotees through 'Postal Sai Satsang'. He was a person of moderate and had completely eradicated his ego.

Sri O.K. Varada Rao(1922-2004)

Varada Rao was the Son-in-law of Justice Somayya of Chennai High Court and was employed by the Bank of

Mother Poolamma

Nobody knows the details of her life. She was revered as a mystic saint as she took part in the 49-day long 'Akhandai Sai Nama Saptaha' held at Stella Mary's College, Vijayawada in 1985. She used different varieties of flowers to decorate several pictures of



Sai Maharaj. With the blessings of Sai Maharaj, she used to give solutions to all who sought relief. A prominent miracle that she foretold was Baba's arrival for 'Bhiksha' on a particular day. When there was no water supply, Mother Poolamma told people that all vessels would be full of water



In The Company of Sai Maharaj

— by **Dr. G R Vijayakumar**

Nana Saheb Chandorkar was in great anguish when his son-in-law had an untimely demise and was worried about his young, widowed daughter. Baba consoled him in the mosque but that was inadequate to still the mind of Nana Saheb.

The next morning when Baba started his morning walk to Lendi Baug, He sent word to Nana Saheb Chandorkar to join him in his walk. The conversation between the two is memorable for eternity.

As Sai Maharaj and Nana Saheb were having a conversation it was a cold day and the rivulet Lendi with its flowing waters was making a benedictory invocation to Sai Maharaj. Sai Maharaj stopped; he asked Nana Saheb – “What does this flowing Lendi water remind you of?” Nana Saheb answered, “It reminds me of my mind and its restless thoughts”. Sai Maharaj said, “Yes, the mind is neutral like water. It is neither good nor bad. In the flowing water the wind creates waves as desires and fears produce thoughts.”

said, “Yes, I know. That is the reason why I came to meet you. I want to learn from you.”

Sai Maharaj smiled at Nana Saheb and said – “You can’t calm the waves of the ocean by holding the water and not letting it move. What is necessary is

to stop the wind. Your thoughts, desires, and fears are like the wind, you need to calm them down. You can learn to control them by controlling your attention, focus, and actions, only then the ocean of your mind be calm.

Sai Maharaj further added – “Suppose the ocean can disregard the wind, what would happen then? You can’t control the wind in nature, but you can calm the winds in your mind. Learn to focus your mind, develop willpower and discipline, and learn to meditate. Only then can you control your mind and calm your inner world; then you will be able to control the world around you.”

And how do we cultivate the stillness of mind? The best way is to embrace silence, which will bring about profound changes in our lives. We will find that this silence allows us to reconnect with our



Sai Maharaj then asked Nana Saheb to imagine that he was in a boat in a stormy ocean. Nana replied – “Certainly not.” Sai Maharaj responded – “You are right; your mind is there all the time, within this storm. Most people are in a rudderless boat in the middle of a stormy ocean, and they do not realize it. The minds of people are restless. Thoughts of all kinds come and go incessantly, agitating their minds like ocean waves.” Nana Saheb



inner selves, better understand the world, and nurture genuine connections. We will then find the power to thrive amidst the noise of modern life. This silence can be found not just in quiet places, but the environment is also important. But it can be cultivated by stopping ourselves now and then for introspection and self-reflection. This quiet break in which you breathe slowly contemplating the Almighty will cheer you up. Being still will

replenish whatever energy you have lost due to anguish and make you return to a calm peaceful center in your soul. This stillness allows time and space to self-reflect and hear our thoughts

Baba thus advised Nana Saheb Chandorkar to come out of his miserable state of mind and maintain silence through deep meditations. They returned to the mosque and by then Nana Saheb was glowing with cheerfulness.

One Day Sainath Maharaj Spoke to Me

— by **S. Sai Priya**



One day Lord Sainath spoke to me thus in my ears:
Why do you always remain engrossed in acts seeking distinct recognition?
Sometimes you write poetry and sometimes you talk of Bhakti
All this is the reflection of your ego
When you have recognized your Sai,
You shall stop talking like this,
Neither would you compose a poem or pen an article
You shall enter the portals of your heart
And experience 'Paramananda'
Which is beyond words.
Your whole existence shall then start talking the language
Which no other human can express
O ignorant one, stop idle chats
Give up your showy attitude
Lose yourself completely to Sai Maharaj
And enjoy the bliss of your being.

In the Guru Poornima Festival, We Celebrate Sai Brotherhood

By: Dr. A. Ramaswamy Iyengar

The scenes of Guru Poornima celebrations across the country and the world appear to carry one message, 'Life is life with others.' It is life from, for, and with one another. Human life is always lived in communities. We are social beings. Even the Divine Guru Dakshina Moorthy loves the one who loves other beings, and man's glory lies in being a member of a big family.

On the one hand, we are bound by Guru Disciple relationship ties – parents, spouse, and children; on the other, we are linked with every individual in society, whether near or far. It is given to man to link himself with those who constitute his ancestry in the form of a 'Gothra' to a particular Sage and to think of those who could be his posterity. Marriages are performed depending on this lineage. Therefore, we should live, work, and die for society by rising above our kinship. Vidura Niti says: 'Sacrifice the interest of an individual for the sake of the family; sacrifice the interest of the family for the sake of the village; sacrifice the interest of the village for the sake of the country.'

Sai Maharaj implores us to rise above kinship in the larger interest of society and consider the entire universe as our family in the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. This philosophy of Sai Satcharitra transcends man-made boundaries of caste, origin, religion, race, and geographical divisions.

On 'Guru Poornima' day Sai Maharaj told his devotees about an incident in Mahabharata. While in exile, Kunti and the five Pandavas had to take up

different jobs for their sustenance by concealing their true identities. One day, Kunti saw the lady of the house where she was employed, weeping profusely. When inquired, the woman who was a widow shared her impending misfortune with Kunti and said that there lives a demon nearby, who would often attack their village, looting and devouring the villagers. When villagers pleaded with him to stop wanton killings, the demon agreed but on the condition that once a month, the villagers on their own accord would send to him one

person for him to feed on, along with grains and other eatables for his monthly requirement. This coming month, it was the turn of her family to sacrifice a family member. Since her son was her only surviving kin, she would lose everything and be rendered childless.

Kunti was moved. Full of gratitude for that woman, she thought, 'I have five sons even if I lose one still, I'd be left with four, but

this widow would become childless, I should help her out.' She consulted her sons. All of them eagerly offered to go instead of the widow's boy, but Kunti chose Bhima, because of his prowess in one-to-one combat. Rest, we all know. But the point is that Kunti was willing to sacrifice her son for the larger good.

Our duty towards our neighbors, the concept of universal brotherhood, and fraternity of mankind, and compassion towards all living beings – are often echoed in Sai Satcharitra. Baba has pointed out that the main prayer for all of us is for peace and happiness, not in a particular place or country but in the entire Universe. The hymn,

'Aum Dyauh Shaantir-Antarikssam Shaantih, Prthivii Shaantir-Aapah Shaantir-Ossadhyah Shaantih |

Vanaspatayah Shaantir-Vishvedevaah Shaantir-Brahma Shaantih Sarvam Shaantih Shaantir-Eva Shaantih Saa Maa Shaantir-Edhi | Aum Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih | |'

conveys this lofty ideal.



When Goddess Parvati Guided Devas to Know Brahma

— by **Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**

A Pundit came to Shirdi and requested Sai Maharaj's permission to give a discourse on Kena Upanishad in the mosque. Sai Maharaj readily agreed.

The discourse started. When asked by a devotee, "Kenesitam patati presitam manah" – by whom and who's will the mind be directed towards objects – in the opening lines of the Kena Upanishad, the Pravachankar narrates a parable of three gods and the goddesses. Placing it in the context of a war, the story narrates how the righteous forces, Devas, have prevailed over the violators, the Asuras.

Now having won, Devas are congratulating themselves and gloating over their victory and the special powers that enabled it. The story goes, therein appears a brilliant Luminous form 'Yaksha'. Gods are taken aback at this luminous form and feel challenged by the radiance of this Being. They ask the fire God 'Agni' to find out who this Being is. Agni introduces himself as a God with the special power to burn and turn to ashes everything in the Universe. The Yaksha places a blade of grass in front of Agni and tells him to burn it, or else shed this vanity of strength. With all his skills, Agni is unable to burn the blade of grass and withdraws, his spirits deflated.

Gods then call upon 'Vayu' to challenge and get to know this enigmatic Yaksha figure. Vayu too is called upon by the Yaksha to show his special powers. But with all his powers to blow away everything in his path, Vayu is unable to move the blade of grass, and retreats in despondency, his ego shattered.

Finally, Indra, the king of the Gods, is exhorted to find out who

this Being is, but even as he approaches the Yaksha, the Being disappears before his eyes. Indra is bewildered at not even being asked by the Yaksha to show his powers.

In his 'Bhashya' on the Kena Upanishad, Adi Shankara alludes to the cause behind the sudden disappearance of the Yaksha figure, stating that Indra was the vainest of the gods, and the greater this

vanity and self-absorption, the farther the divine grace drifts away from that person. The ego and divinity are diametrically opposite.

Indra stands rooted, perplexed at the turn of events, his jignasa, his desire to know this Being intensifies. The seeking of the truth puts him in a reflective state of mind and gets the better of his self-absorption. As his vanity gets subsumed in his seeking, Parvati, the great Goddess, appears in front of him in a splendiferous form, Shobhavati Uma Haimavati – the omniscient consciousness of creation. She tells Indra that the Being that had vanished was indeed Brahman. In revealing the existence of Brahman to him and Devas, she guides them to the realization that it was Brahman who drove Gods to victory over the Asuras and they are but instruments.

Suddenly Bayaja Maa came there and waved 'Pancharati' to Sai Maharaj. The Pravachankar immediately declared that Sai Maharaj was the 'Parabrahman'.

The power of Brahman, the Kenopanishad states, is to be intuited in every state of mind, Pratibodha-viditammatam, as it is witness to all states of consciousness, and thereby Tadvanam, that which is most adorable. The Pravachankar closes with two similes of the way Brahman is realized, as in a flash of lightning, or like in the flapping of an eyelid. Mother Goddess Parvati - the creative 'Prakriti', guides us to understand the spiritual essence of this flash of Brahman by removing the 'I-syndrome' which is ego or arrogance.



Crafting Connections and Shaping Destinies

— by **S.C. Gupta**

Bapu Saheb Booty brought a person named Ram Lal from Nagpur. When he sat before Sai Maharaj, Baba gazed at him with marvel at the dexterity of his small hands. With his omnipresence Baba proclaimed the visitor to be a professional magician, working with an audience at close quarters, it was as though he was gifted with a separate brain in the nimble fingers of his ambidextrous hands.

The visitor accepted Baba's statement and showed some tricks like materializing sweets to children. Baba explained that humans are homo faber, creators of objects, made possible because of the opposable thumb, quite different from other primates. We can grasp tools firmly, sew tiny stitches, and even sign between narrow dotted lines. Baba called the hand a 'tool of tools.' Nana Saheb added that manual work requires handling simple accepted tasks. Technical tasks work with the hands and the brain, while an artist, and a sign language interpreter, combine the fingers, brain, and emotion to communicate.

Baba asked the visitor to return to the place where they originally belonged. Baba advised him to use his magic in the service of the poor. Materializing objects only transfers from one place and amounts to stealing and depriving someone's hard-earned money.

When we returned to Dixit Wada, we felt that despite thousands of daily tasks, very few of us look closely at our own or others' hands. Women are better at this, especially when wearing jewelry and manicuring. Dixit stated that 'Man' in 'manicure', comes from the Latin 'manus', hand, with derivatives manual, manufacture, manuscript, and manipulate. The Greek word for 'hand' is 'kheiro', chiro as seen in chirography – handwriting.

The digital age has led to more uses, typing, and sending messages. 'Digital' originates from the Latin 'digitus', a finger, traditionally used for counting. Hands and lips are the most sensitive parts of our anatomy. They are sensitive to texture, temperature sensing, touching, and reading, as in Braille.

Positive relational connotations include – handshake, army salute, waving, affectional hands holding, and comforting hand on the shoulder of a grieving person. Negative uses are rude and obscene finger gestures, threatening finger-pointing, and making a fist to cause harm. Psychologically, handling refers to problem-solving, and managing conflicting or stressful

emotional situations to avoid impulsive reactions such as 'flying off the handle.' Hand movements can reveal emotional states – fidgeting, sweating, and shaking.

In many religious and spiritual symbols, we have Hamsa, open hand, known as the Hand of Fatima in Islam, and the Hand or eye of Miriam in Judaism, as a defense against the evil eye. Hamsa, Arabic Khamsa, five, in Indian tradition refers to the five

senses. Referring to the divine, our finger points upward 'All is in her hands.' While praying, our open or folded palms indicate receptivity to blessings.

One devotee whom Baba transformed by performing magic tricks is worthy of mention here. Kusha Bhau alias Krishnaji Kashinath Joshi came to Sai Baba in 1908. He had learned black magic from a 'Mantrik' and used to wear an iron bangle. At Shirdi, he impressed devotees by pulling eatables out of 'thin air' and making money. When Baba learned about him, he sent word to him and impressed him that it was stealing as he was transferring the material from another place. Baba asked him to beg for his food. Kusha Bhau repented and broke his iron bangle. He started reading 'Bodhamrit of Samarth Ramdas' and doing 108 parayans of



'Guru Charitra'. When Kusha Bhaure formed, Baba conferred a boon to him the ability to produce 'Udi' in his palm. He distributed this Udi to devotees and became a renowned Sai Pracharak.

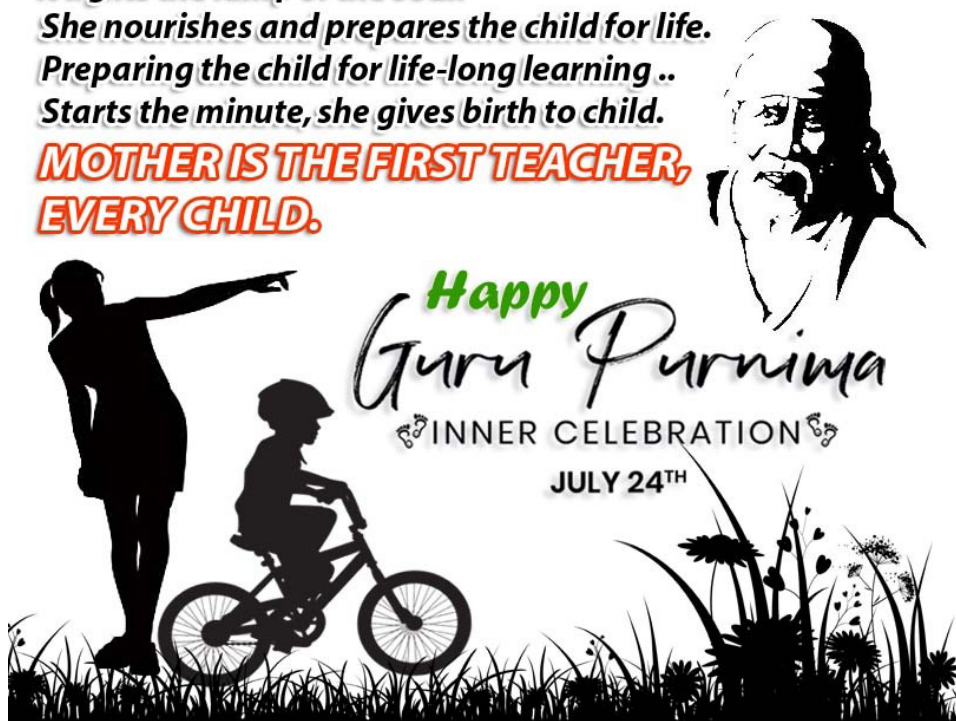
Kusha Bhau led a saintly life and passed away on 19th February 1944. His associates have built a memorial at Mirajgaon. Sri Narasimha Swamiji met Kusha Bhau in 1936 and received Udi materialized by Kusha Bhau.

In conclusion, it is good to remember that hands are not just a physical assemblage of bones, muscles, and nerves but conveyors of thoughts, emotions,

and deep significance. In Michelangelo's Creation of Adam painting, a divine finger reaches out to infuse prana, the breath of life, into the man's finger. In being grateful for the gift of life, our commitment needs to be harm avoidance and to reach out with healing hands and intention to all in need physically or otherwise.

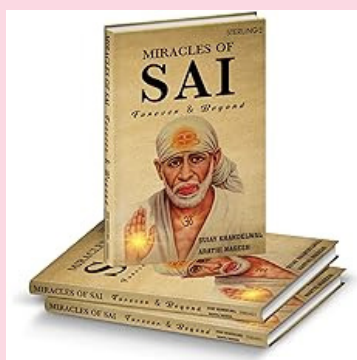
We do not hold the world's solution in our hands, but we do have our hands to work towards solving the world's problems. When we meet Sai Maharaj, pointed out Sri Narasimha Swamiji, "He will look at our hands."

**The mother not only gives life to the child,
It lights the lamp of the soul.
She nourishes and prepares the child for life.
Preparing the child for life-long learning ..
Starts the minute, she gives birth to child.
MOTHER IS THE FIRST TEACHER,
EVERY CHILD.**



Dr. Ranvir Singh's
Pictorial
Message

BOOK REVIEW



Title : Miracles of Sai: Forever and Beyond

Author : Arathi Nagesh and Sujay Khandelwal

Publisher : Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi

Language : English

Paperback : 232 pages

Item Weight : 1 kg

Price : Rs.300/-

Country of Origin : India

Shirdi Sai Baba is considered 'Parabrahman' throughout the time. He was in mortal coil, believed, and preached two important virtues – Shraddha and Saburi. He loved plants, animals, and humans alike—the form of existence of any being made no difference to the ever-empathetic and kind Baba.

His love of light (Diya) is known to all Sai devotees. When the oil traders of Shirdi refused to give oil to Baba to light His Diyas, He lit them by pouring water from His begging bowl.

The aim of this book is on the same lines – to spread love and light to one and all. The stories of 36 devotees in this book stand as a testimony to the miracles Baba can perform in our lives. Let us do our bit in imbibing and spreading the love and light of Shirdi Sai and may the world be blessed abundantly by this loving Sadguru Maharaj.

An invaluable addition to the Sai family.

Reviewed by: A. Shruthi

A dip into Sahasranama – 29: Sahasranama leads to ‘Diksha’

— by **Seetha ‘Priya’**

René Descartes, a 17th-century French philosopher, studied in-depth Vishnu Sahasranama and other scriptures and introduced the statement ‘I think, therefore I am’, as a fundamental element of his philosophical method of self-inquiry. He started doubting everything, the external world, and its existence, to find an undeniable starting point to know the self.

In his meditations, Descartes realized that while he could doubt everything, he couldn’t doubt that he was doubting. The very act of doubt required a thinking entity. With this realization, he formulated the famous proposition that thinking is evidence of existence. If one is doubting, questioning, or thinking in any way, it implies the existence of a thinking self. It underscores the priority of consciousness and self-awareness in the process of philosophical inquiry on Lord Vishnu.

The philosophical concepts of ‘I think, therefore I am’ and ‘Neti, Neti’ as well as ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ of Vedanta share common threads of self-inquiry and understanding but unfold within distinct philosophical frame-works and have unmistakable emphases of Vishnu Sahasranama.



While the proposition ‘I think, therefore I am’ serves as a foundational certainty, centers on self-awareness, and establishes a starting point for knowledge,

‘Neti, Neti’ – Not This, Not This, is a method of negation, where seekers systematically negate aspects of the self and the world to reach an understanding of Brahman, the ultimate reality. It is a broader framework for understanding the true nature of reality including not only the material world and thinking processes but also extends to the negation of the body, mind, and other aspects of the phenomenal world.

Similarly, Sai Baba often repeated ‘Tat Tvam Asi’, translating to ‘That Thou Art’, highlighting the inquiry into the nature of the self and the realization of its identity with the ultimate reality. This concept goes beyond thinking, involving a profound experiential understanding achieved through spiritual insight and contemplation. It conveys that Brahman is identical to Atman, the individual self. This concept emphasizes the unity of the individual soul with cosmic reality, highlighting the interconnectedness of all existence.

While both Descartes and Vedanta explore the nature of self-awareness and existence, ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ goes beyond individual thinking and self-awareness to assert a profound identity between the personal self and the ultimate reality. The Vedantic concept is more inclusive, addressing the oneness of all existence, whereas Descartes’ focus remained on the certainty of individual consciousness.

However, these three philosophical ideas collectively illustrate diverse approaches to self-inquiry and understanding, offering valuable perspectives for contemplation.

The 29th shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –

Subhujo Durdharo Vagmi
Mahendro Vasudo Vasuhu
Naikaroopo Brihadroopah
Shipivishtah Prakashanaha

Lord Vishnu is of creative prowess (Subhuja), beyond comprehension (Durdhara), from whom proceeds the speech (Vagmi). He is the Lord of Lords (Mahendra) and the giver (Vasuda) of wealth (Vasu). He has numerous forms (Naikaroopa), few could be huge (Brihadroopa), and like Sun (Shipivishtah) is the Illuminator (Prakashana).

Sai Baba told Nana Chandorkar and Ganesh Rao – “When you say ‘Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheshwara’ you confirm that Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu and Guru is Maheshwara. The alternate meaning is that Brahma is Guru, Vishnu is also Guru and Maheshwara is Guru too! Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara – three different forms of the same God!” He gave a new meaning! Baba continued – “Then what is wrong if Hindu devotees see in me these three forms and adore me as ‘Sadguru’?” Baba put up a straight question.

Ganesh Rao spoke bluntly, “Then your feet should be considered a sacred place of pilgrimage.” Baba replied – “Right you are! That is why I say you have darshan of my feet and you will have the merit of visiting Prayag.” Ganesh Rao was also outspoken – “Baba, I do not see Ganga or Yamuna in these two feet. I do not have the insight.”

Baba happily said - “Good. At last, you accept it! That is why one needs a spiritual guide!”

Ganesh Rao replied – “Baba, I will accept you as a spiritual guide, a Sadguru, provided I see Ganga and Yamuna within your feet! Your sacred

feet must prove they are ‘Theertha Raj Prayag’ themselves!”

Ganesh Rao openly challenged Baba! Baba was not angry. He needed Ganesh Rao in his mission for the welfare of mankind. He decided to oblige him. The entire gathering of devotees got up to watch! There was now pin-drop silence in the mosque! All eyes were fixed on Baba’s feet. Baba stretched them and said – “Alright Ganu, look at my feet attentively now! Look!”

The moment Baba uttered the last word, water gushed out from both the toes of his divine feet! Distinctly two different streams of Ganga and Yamuna! As their water flowed both currents mingled into one and looked like the confluence of the great Ganga and Yamuna at Prayag! A wave of joy passed over the entire gathering and cheerfully shouted ‘Jaikar’ to Baba.

Ganesh Rao was convinced of Baba’s divinity. He accepted him as his Sadguru. He visualized him as God Vithal of Pandharpur. Ganesh Rao accepted his defeat. Now he prostrated to Baba’s feet accepting him as ‘Sadguru’ – “Sainath you are my Sadguru indeed! Please initiate me into a ‘Mantra’ and accept me as your disciple.”

Baba told him – “No! never! Dear Ganu, I have never initiated anyone in a ‘Mantra.’ My own Guru has never done it! For twelve years I served him. He loved me and protected me.

Likewise, even if I do not initiate you into a ‘mantra’, I am always with you! You will have my protection forever! Remember this much – YOU LOOK TO ME – I LOOK TO YOU!”

Because of Ganesh Rao, everybody had a feast of an important discourse by Baba! Baba’s great saying – ‘You look to me; I look to you’ came into existence on this momentous day!



Kaka Dixit Diary

Decoding 'Tat Tvam Asi' To Reshape Our Reality

Sai Maharaj explained the profound wisdom recorded in one of the four Mahavakyas, 'Tat Tvam Asi' from Chhandogya Upanishad. He beckons us to explore the profound interconnectedness that permeates our existence. Even the smallest drop in the ocean contains the same water as a huge wave. Similarly, a bubble whether small or big, is the same water. All forms of humans or other sentient beings, while appearing different, are singular. Sai Maharaj wanted his devotees to understand this nondual existence represented the highest knowledge.

But before understanding God, you must know who you are. Who is asking the question? Who wishes to know God? Who wishes to know the reality, the truth? So, you begin by understanding your existence first, and what is here is exactly similar there. If you understand human structure and function, everybody has one heart, two lungs, two kidneys, two legs, two eyes, two ears – there's no difference. Everybody has the same red blood and has the same systems that run the body – no difference.

Similarly, all bodies are composed of the same five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Everyone breathes the same air, and everyone possesses the same cosmic energy. So, there is just Oneness, and everyone shares the same 'I'. If you understand this 'I', then you will find that at its core, there is a

non-dual existence. You and I are not two different entities – neither a Kaka Dixit the devotee nor Sai Baba the Guru. Both are one. Baba concluded that this realization is termed non-dual, representing the

highest knowledge that only a few blessed ones understand, Tat Tvam Asi – I am That Maharaj.

This profound truth of Sai Maharaj takes out the burdens of the mind, body, and bondages, along with ignorance and darkness, when understood, get blown away. When I am not in this body-mind unit, the limitations or weaknesses of the mind and body are not mine. I am neither inferior nor superior to anyone.

Comparatively, Sai Maharaj took an onion and started peeling it to reveal layer after layer, but in the end, nothing remained. Similarly, peeling off the layers of the body – realizing I am not the body, not the five senses, not the senses of action, not the mind, not the intellect reveals the pure Self.

Yet, the strong association and identification with the body and mind challenges understanding this truth. It takes time to fathom how, if I am not the body, then who am I? The association is deep, subtle, and complex. Understanding this depth of knowledge and reaching the point where clarity emerges requires a sattvic, purified mind – untouched by desires, ambitions, and pursuing material success. People who are busy with such pursuits are not in touch with reality.

It takes time. Baba himself has stated – 'By and by you will understand'. A yogic, calm mind, a disciplined body, and a centered intellect are necessary to grasp and absorb these jewels of knowledge of 'Tat Tvam Asi'. This understanding makes us rich, contented, and happy by recognizing 'I am That'.



Four Gates To Access Yoga Vashista's Wisdom

— by **Smt. Sunanda Ananth**

Sai Baba frequently advised devotees to read Yoga Vasistha and to follow it in their lives. Sai Baba pointed out that amid the peace and tranquility that prevailed in Ayodhya, Prince Rama once found traces of sorrow among people. He pondered questions such as: What is the meaning of life which consists of sorrows? How can one end the repetitive nature of this life? Is liberation possible, how? As if to answer his questions, Sage Vishwamitra persuaded Rama's father King Dashrath to let the prince accompany him to the forest. Sage Vishwamitra, who wanted the young prince to receive the best education, took him to Sage Vasishtha, one of the Saptarishis. From Vasishtha, Rama received Vedantic knowledge and emerged enlightened. The dialogue between Sage Vasishtha and Rama is the central theme of 'Yoga Vasishtha', a great philosophical text, believed to have been written by Sage Valmiki.



Sai Maharaj associated Dasganu Maharaj and Dada Kelkar to interpret Yoga Vasistha. Capturing the essence of Vedanta, Yoga Vasistha is a storehouse of Atma Jnana, the highest spiritual knowledge, but it is not easily accessible to all. Baba insisted that one must pass through four gates to access its wisdom: i.e., Shanti, mind at peace; Trupti or Santosha, contentment; Satsang, association of the wise; and Atma Vichara, self-enquiry. Baba told his devotees that even if we keep the company of one of these, we are sure to be introduced to the other three.

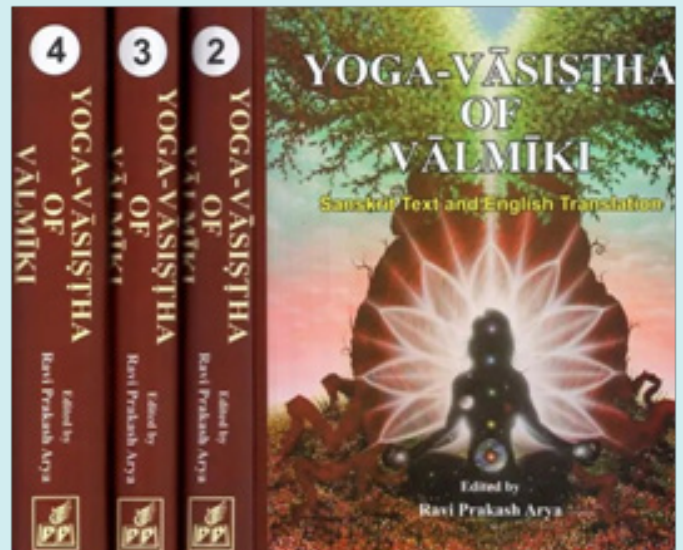
The first qualification is the mind that is pure, perfect, and always at peace. Mind projects false notions of 'I', and ego, and creates differences and diversities. We are disturbed when our mind is turned outward, and we become peaceful when the mind is turned inward. Most of our problems arise because we identify ourselves with the mind. Addressing Rama, Sage Vasishtha says: "He who wears the armor of self-control becomes knowledgeable and reaches the highest state of excellence. He whose mind is at peace is free from dualities such as likes and dislikes, attachment and aversions, pleasure and pain." Yoga Vasistha recommends yoga to control and quieten the mind.

Entry to the second gate is possible for those who find happiness in being content. Lasting happiness comes not by acquiring more but by renouncing the needless. It is best to be satisfied with what one has. We should indeed be ambitious enough to reach a higher goal, but if we are not content with what we have, we will only end up in regret.

The third gate underscores the importance of Satsang, keeping the company of the wise, the spiritually evolved. In the verses of 'Bhaja Govindam', Adi Shankaracharya says: "From Satsang, association with the learned, comes non-attachment, from non-attachment comes freedom from delusion and freedom comes self-awareness which paves a contact with sages one can reach the highest state of spiritual fulfillment.

The fourth gate advises us to do 'Atma Vichara', self-inquiry. If we intensely search within and inquire who we are, we will realize that we are neither the body nor the mind. The body will perish one day, and the mind is merely a bundle of thoughts. The intense Self-enquiry would lead us to the realization that we are the ever-existing Self, which gives us the consciousness of our existence.

Sai Maharaj has stated that 'Yoga Vasistha' is not addressed exclusively to Rama, who is already an 'Uttama Purusha' (Purushothama), perfection personified, but to all spiritual aspirants in the present age.



Varkari Yatra At Shirdi

— by **Rajeshwari Somasekhar**

In Sai Satcharitra, we see several references that Sai Maharaj is no different from Lord Pandharinath. We also come across a Varkari named Gauli Buva visiting Shirdi once every year. Lord Sainath asked Dada Saheb Khaparde to record The Varkari Yatra for posterity.

Ashadhi Ekadashi marks the culmination of the 'pilgrims' progress' that carries the palkis of Sant Dnyaneshwar and Sant Tukaram, from Alandi and Dehu, respectively, to the temple town of Pandharpur in Solapur district, Maharashtra. This ocean of devotees, one of the largest gatherings of pilgrims in the world, gloats in ecstasy on reaching Pandharpur and meeting their beloved Lord Vithoba. After Baba's Maha Samadhi in 1918, devotees carry an exclusive 'palki' for Sai Maharaj and devotees pay their obeisance to Sai Maharaj at Shirdi both ways.



The Varkaris, as these pilgrims are called, hail from all walks of life to participate in this annual walk of over 250 km, spread over 21 days. The atmosphere is charged with bhakti and devotees are oblivious to physical discomfort or exertion. They address one another as Mauli, mother, a nickname for Sant Dnyaneshwar. This nickname stems from a matriarchal bond the Varkaris share with Dnyaneshwar, a bond that is an alchemy of faith, love, trust, respect, devotion, adulation, and abject surrender. Sai devotees address Baba as 'Mother Sai'.

Dnyaneshwar was truly a saint ahead of his time. He compiled three spiritual texts in his brief earthly sojourn: the Gnaneshwari, Anubhavamrut, and Changdev Pasashti. Changdev Pasashti is a discourse of 65 verses addressed to a yogi named Changdev.

These verses attempt to elucidate the ultimate truth of the very nature of existence. He explains that the tattva, essence, emerges as a 'Will' by manifesting as an intensification of consciousness – the Self, Drishta, seer, and rarefaction that becomes Drishya, seen, the material world, which is connected by

the process of darshan. This trinity emerges simultaneously. After the 'Will' is fulfilled, this trinity merges as a wave of knowledge in the very essence from which it emerged. He says that consciousness, to remain conscious, must constantly go on becoming self-conscious.

In one of the verses, Sant Dnyaneshwar says: "The being of consciousness to becoming of consciousness



is a holo-movement that is in a perpetual continuum." This observer-centric approach is what contemporary Quantum Physics now confirms.

Dasganu Maharaj in later years settled down in Pandharpur and propagated the tenets of the saint Dnyaneshwar in his 'Pravachans'. He dwelt on 'from being to becoming'.

The search for answers in the tangible domain leads only to the intangible conclusions of saint Dnyaneshwar. Dasganu Maharaj refers to this as Swasamvedya. Dnyaneshwar very unambiguously elucidates the ultimate truth. The entire universe is a cosmic dance of differential frequencies. We need to realize this truth to foster harmony and ensure our salvation.

The Varkari Yatra, the march of pilgrims is a reminder for us to embark on a journey of consciousness from becoming to being to the lotus feet of Lord Sainath.



Gita's Golden Rules To Perfect Dhyan

— by **C.S. Dinesh**

A devotee had mailed Sai Maharaj a copy of Tilak's book in Marathi 'Gita Rahasya' (Secret of the Gita). Baba reverentially kept the book on his head and while giving it to Nana Saheb Nimonkar enlisted three qualities – Honesty, Humility, and Faith in oneself – as cardinal points to be eligible to receive its grace.

The Bhagavad Gita is the golden path that presents to its readers a variety of yogic systems that enable them to experience the Ultimate Beatitude. The conspicuous feature of this path is that it attaches equal importance to both the spiritual and worldly aspects of life. Seekers often complain that as soon as they sit to meditate, all sorts of turbulent thoughts begin to rush into their minds, causing untold distraction. This happens because of the deep-rooted tendency of the mind to move in the pleasure garden of the senses. Sai Baba clearly explains that 'Chitta' is the mind-stuff, and the 'Vrittis' are the waves and ripples rising within it. These Vrittis are our universe comprising myriad objects.



We cannot see the bottom of the lake because its surface is filled with waves. One can glimpse at the bottom when the waves have subsided, and the water is calm. The bottom of the lake, thus, is our true Self; the lake is the Chitta, and the waves, the Vrittis.

In Chapter VI of the Gita, which elaborates on Dhyan Yoga, Krishna enlightens us on how a seeker



endeavors to disconnect the mind from sensual pleasures and shift its focus inwards, making it calm and serene. Sri Narasimha Swamiji explains that the "human mind is turned outwards. Yoga attempts to explore the inner world. We must divest our

minds of all sensual desires, abstract our attention from all external objects, and absorb it in the object of meditation," in Gita 6:10. In his Discourse, Krishna lays down the golden principles for meditation. He recommends using an asana made from Kusha grass – a bad conductor of electricity. This helps conserve the powerful spiritual currents generated within the body during meditation; Gita 6:11.

Secondly, while practicing meditation, the seeker should firmly hold his body, head, and neck erect and still without looking around. This helps the smooth flow of the life current from the sensory nerve branches through the spine; Gita 6:13. Thirdly, Krishna asserts that the seeker should exercise utmost moderation in his eating and sleeping habits. Yoga, he says, is not possible for that yogi who eats a lot, nor for him who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much nor for him who is constantly awake; Gita 6:16. Rajasic food items like meat, eggs, pickles should be strictly avoided as these give rise to carnal cravings.

Lastly, he attaches significant importance to the practice of brahmacharya. That yogi who has preserved his vital force by the vow of celibacy and sublimated it into Ojas, conversion of sexual energy into spiritual energy, can practice steady meditation for an extended period without distraction. Without continence, it is impossible to attain success in yoga; Gita 6:14.

Thus, yoga is not about reaching God. It is more about disciplining the mind and shifting its focus toward the Self. We may conclude with the Gita verse 6:15: "The yogi of subdued mind, ever keeping himself thus harmonized, attains to peace, the Supreme Nirvana, which abides in me."



IshAvAsya Mantra #20

— by **Jayakrishna Nelamangala**

॥ ॐ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः हरिः ॐ ॥
॥ ॐ śrī gurubhyo namaḥ hariḥ ॐ ॥

Mantra #20

Knowledge is of two kinds - direct and indirect. In the path of knowledge, indirect knowledge of Parabrahman is obtained by - study, contemplation and meditation. The one who has obtained his indirect knowledge of Parabrahman in this manner, prays to God to give him His direct knowledge. Even then he won't be emancipated. Again, he prays to God for His Grace which finally liberates him from the cycle of bondage. In total, both the means and the end are due to the Grace of Parabrahman. Without that Grace, by themselves they are neither the means nor the end. This point is brought out by the next upanishat mantra, which happens to be the last mantra of this upanishat.

उपनिषत् upaniṣat

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्
विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो
भूयिष्ठां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम ॥ २० ॥

*agnē naya supathā rāyē asmān
viśvāni dēva vayunāni vidvān /
yuyōdhyasmajjuhurāṇamēnō
bhūyīṣṭhā tē nama ukti vidhēma || 20 ||*

Let us first understand the terms such agni, rāya, dēva etc that are found in this mantra.

This body or this dependent world that God has put in motion and because of this etymological meaning, God is the primary meaning for the

word “agni”. One should study “oṃ tattu samanyasyaat oṃ” of the brahma-sootras to get a better handle on the demand set by Sri Vedavyāsa, about the importance of understanding Parabrahman from all Vedic words such as Agni.

How much sādhanā is enough? When can we say it is complete? Only Parabrahman is capable of that knowledge, not us. Understanding it in this form, it removes the ahamkāra that I have done so much sādhanā that I deserve mōksha, etc.

The word rāya generally means wealth, and in particular because we are talking of the highest kind of wealth, it can not be anything else but mōkṣa.

The word dēva stands for two ideas, both coming from the root word ‘dyu’ - prakāśaka and krīḍāmaya. The readers are encouraged to study upanishats, brahma-sootras and bhagavad-geeta to a get better understanding of how these terms are used in vēdānta.

In the second line of the mantra there is the phrase ‘bhūyīṣṭhā tē nama ukti vidhēma’ which translates to:

All we can give you (ते ते) is our sādhanā, in the form of jñāna-bhakti (भूयिष्ठां bhūyīṣṭā) and with this jñāna-bhakti we will say (विधेम vidhēma) the utterance (उक्तिम् uktim) ‘namah’ (नम nama).

“Bhakti- jñāna” is interchangeably used, they are not really separate from one another. Bhakti in shāstra is full of jñāna. Jñāna without bhakti and bhakti without jñāna are neither shāstraic bhakti nor shāstraic jñāna. The two are not separate, one cannot exist without the other, in shāstra. We should not get this mixed up for



bhakti in the loukika sense. In the loukika sense, a devotee need not be knowledgeable; a knowledgeable person need not be a devotee. For example, in the mundane world, academic scholars need not be devotees. Similarly, in the mundane world, one may have blind devotion without proper knowledge of what he is devoted to. That is why, the words such as 'bhakti' have to be understood in the shāstraic context and not in the mundane context.

The Parabrahman who is sarva-pravartaka and is denoted by the word "agni" has to give us the mōksha and take us out of the cycles of samsāra. When the mantra teaches an adhikārin that mōksha is the wealth, it means that mōksha-sādhana is Parabrahman.

The word 'yuyōdhi' comes from the root word 'yuyu' which has the meaning 'to separate'. Please remember, these mantras are all part of a

prayer.

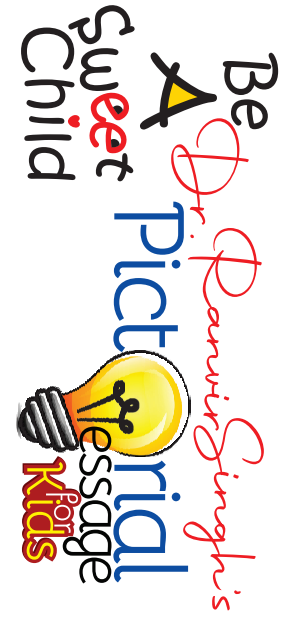
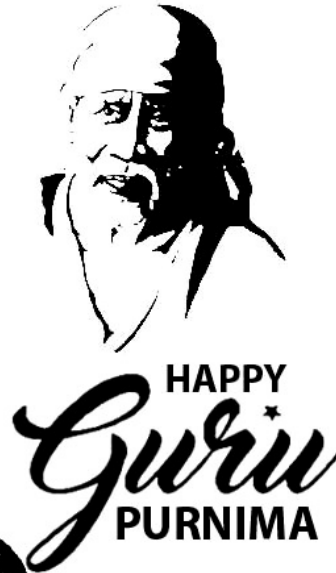
The word 'vayuna' stands for knowledge. This usage of the word is there in Agama elsewhere too. Then there is the word 'juhurāṇa' which means 'that which makes us insignificant'. Our sins make us incomplete and insignificant. God has to remove them. What is "pāpa" sin? Whatever is destructive to our śrēyas and upliftment is pāpa or sin. This can be removed only by Parabrahman, and there is no other way. Only He should purify us. This is the gist. Also, study taittareeya "tasmin sahasra shākhe nibhagāhaM tvayi mruje svāhā".

In return, what can we offer? The upanishat has given the answer.

With this background, we will make an attempt to study the final mantra of this upanishat in the next posting.

śri kṛiṣṇārpaṇamastu.

mother,
the greatest Guru.



Get Ready to Dance With Both Arms Free

— by **Ramaswamy Seshadri**

After Radhakrishna Mayi came to Shirdi, Baba called her residence 'School'. Baba sent devotees to find out their calibre and confirm their spiritual aspirations.

Sai Baba often offered teaching stories, rather than moralistic preaching. Teaching Stories invite us to step across a threshold, as it were, to more wholesome ways of seeing and being in the world. Often, they remind us of our higher goals and purpose that we can so easily lose sight of.

Once as Rama Navami approached, Mother Radhakrishna Mayi was busy cleaning up decorative material for putting up at the mosque with many colors. The pattern was simple and splendid.

That afternoon, a friend Radhakrishna Mayi had not met after she left Pandharpur came to visit her. Seeing her the Radhakrishna Mayi exclaimed: "Dear sister friend! I am so happy to see you. Do come in, you must be tired from the long journey, let me first fetch you something cool to drink."

When Radhakrishna Mayi was in the kitchen, her friend looked around and noticed the gorgeous decorative material and the silk threads shimmering in the wicker basket beside it. She knew they could not be found in Shirdi; Radhakrishna Mayi must have travelled far to Kopergaon for them. They were so beautiful that she could not resist the impulse. She reached over and snatched one of the metallic lamps, tucking it under her saree.

When Radhakrishna Mayi returned from the kitchen and set down the glasses, she noticed one lamp missing. She realized with a heavy heart that her friend had taken it. She thought for a moment; she did not want to confront the woman and shame her, nor did she want to remain quiet about what she had noticed and had saddened her.

As they finished their drinks and chatted for a while, she stood up, "Sister-friend", she said, "This is a wonderful day, we should celebrate our coming



together. Do get up and let's dance together." Hesitantly her friend agreed, "Yes, let us dance."

They stood up and Radhakrishna Mayi raised both her arms high and began to sing a song of friendship and sisterhood. She smiled as she began to spin and turn in slow circular motions that grew faster and more joyfully

abandoned. She closed her eyes, turning away from her guest as she sang her song, giving her the space to return the metallic lamp. Her friend began to dance too, but stiffly, uncomfortably, with both her arms pressed close to her sides, holding the lamp tightly underneath in her saree by one of her arms.

When Radhakrishna Mayi noticed this, she said, "Come, come, sister-friend, this is no way to celebrate. Are you sad? Are you worried? Look, dance like me with both your arms raised!"

The friend then raised one of her arms but kept the other pressed tightly against her side. Seeing this Radhakrishna Mayi said, "It is such a joyful day, close your eyes, open your arms wide, dance freely and joyfully. Look at me. Like this!" Radhakrishna Mayi continued to dance, arms flung wide, spinning, turning, and swaying with joy.



The friend looked down and quietly returned the lamp and said, "I am sorry, I have stolen it." She sought forgiveness from Radhakrishna Mayi. By then, a boy came running to Radhakrishna Mayi. He told her Baba's instructions to her to gift the lamp to her friend. He also had sent a one-rupee silver coin as 'Dakshina'.

Three Chairs of Sai Stalwarts

— by **D. Sankaraiah**

Hari Sitaram Dixit sought Baba's permission to build a Wada in 1910. It was meant for him to stay and for visiting pilgrims. In the 1970s, Dixit Wada was used as a dining hall for pilgrims while the upstairs room remained a Memorial to Kaka Dixit with three chairs wherein three Sai Stalwarts used to discuss Sai Maharaj for hours together.

Dr. S.D. Parchure, the then Executive Editor showed these chairs and explained that one chair represents solitude, the second for friendship, and the third one for society.



Late Shri Nana Saheb Chandorkar

Nana Saheb Chandorkar availed Dixit Wada for solitude and Contemplation and for propagating Sai Maharaj among the higher strata of society. He came to Shirdi in 1892. He brought over two thousand devotees to Baba. Nana Saheb Chandorkar and Dasganu are the earliest

Sai-Pracharakas. He used to read and re-read books and scriptures and most often discussed with Sai Maharaj. Gita Parayan, meditation kept him busy at Dixit Wada.

The space or chair for solitude was suitable for Nana Saheb even though he was not an introvert. We



Late Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar

wholeheartedly agree with Nana Saheb Chandorkar's words: "I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time." But the more extroverted among the three of them focus on the second or third — giving at least connectivity among other friends who were devoted to Baba.

The second chair belongs to Anna Saheb Dabholkar who was given the title 'Hemadpant' by Sai Baba. This again works in different ways. Some of us have a few close friendships, others believe that everyone they meet deserves the title 'friend'. We find it interesting how Anna Saheb Dabholkar had clear ideas on friendship. He spoke of friends as those who 'elevate one another' — and bring out the best in each other. It is a two-way process; to nurture



and to be nurtured; being a giver and a receiver.

The third chair is a reminder of our relationship with society. Kaka Dixit or Hari Sitaram Dixit was a man of, for, and to the society. He was a widely respected Solicitor, and the British Government feared him. For Dixit, society was an active involvement. He did whatever he could to make the world better.

The thing is that all three of these needs of solitude, friendship, and society are deeply necessary for each of us, but balance is important for our well-being.

The three Sai Stalwarts used to meet in a conclave till they were absorbed into Sai Maharaj. Nana Saheb Chandorkar passed peacefully



Late Shri Hari Sitaram Dixit

at Kalyan on 21st August 1921 - Ekadashi day, at the age of sixty-one. Sai Baba had assured Kaka Dixit a trip to heaven through a divine aircraft and accordingly while traveling to Mumbai from Shirdi on 5th July 1926- Ekadashi day in full Dhyana on Sai Maharaj, at the age of Sixty-two. Anna Saheb Dabholkar passed away on 20th July 1929 – Ekadashi day at his Bandra residence at the age of seventy years in full contemplation of Sainath Parabrahman.

Baba has blessed them with all three, concentrating too much time on anyone adversely affecting the others. It is good to reflect — and self-reflection can be a first-chair task — about which chair you spend excessive time on, to the detriment of the other two. Are you not just self-reflective but rather, too self-absorbed? Do you give too much importance to friends, to be liked by them, and for asocial image, using the interactions to avoid understanding yourself better? Do you work for a 'noble cause' yet damage personal relationships? How do you give these compelling and often competing needs of solitude,

friendship, and society each their due?

We would also like to think that the three chairs could stand for three aspects of spirituality, helping us frame various aspects of our spiritual life. Solitude allows us to spend time on self-discovery and is an ongoing process. Here we would like to use the words from Divine Life Society, Rishikesh to consider how "...We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things we ought not to have done..." This covers everything at any given moment in our lives.

As for our friendships, when we engage with one another person face to face and in real time, we allow ourselves and others to be vulnerable, share, celebrate, and learn. This is our key to developing empathy.

And as we begin to see, all three of our spiritual chairs connect: our understanding of self, and caring personal connections pave the way for our social sensitivity and commitment.

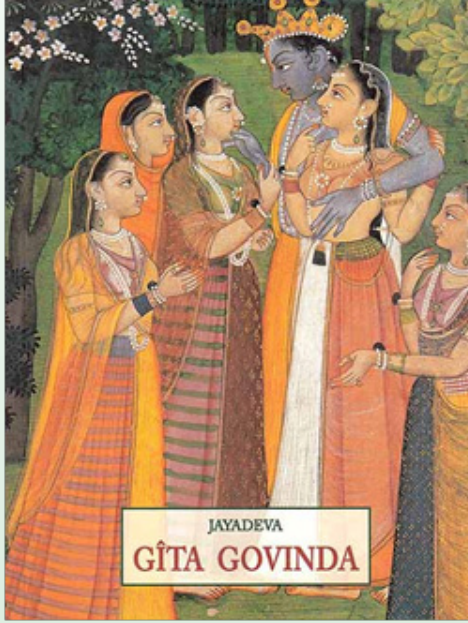
Give ONE Word Answer

1. Whose Son-in-law was Prof. G.G. Narke?
2. Where did Nana Saheb Chandorkar and Ganesh Rao Sahasrabuddhe have a near-death experience on a hill near Kopergaon just before their first visit to Shirdi in 1893?
3. When did Kanyakumari Sthan start at Sakori?
4. To whom did Baba prescribe a concoction of Senna to control diarrhea?
5. For what condition of Nana Saheb Chandorkar, Baba advised him to eat 'Burfy'?
6. In which year did Hemadpant pass away?
7. What was the disease Bhimaji Patil was suffering from when he came to Baba to receive treatment?
8. Name the Parsi Businessman from whom Dasganu Maharaj got an invitation to perform a 'Kirthan on Sai Maharaj' at Nanded.
9. What did Dattopant of Harda ask from Baba?
10. What miracle did Nana Saheb Chandorkar witness when he visited Baba for the first time?
11. When Baba attained Maha Samadhi in 1918, a young fakir took part in the final rites and later lived up to 1989. Who is this saint from Mumbai?
12. To Whom did Baba appear in a dream vision after his Maha Samadhi to perform 'Arati' and worship his mortal remains?

‘Triplove, Distraction, Separation and Union’

— by **Dwarika Mohan Misra**

How relevant is Jayadeva’s Gita Govinda for devotees of Sai Baba? Lucknow-born Guru Pali Chandra, Zurich-based kathak exponent, has reinvented and reinterpreted the 12th-century Sanskrit work as inspiration in Bhakti literature and for those facing relationship challenges. She reveals how the poetic work relates to the environment, with Krishna as a tree and Gopis as creepers clinging to him, symbolizing the interconnectedness of all life and matter as they coexist in concord emblematic of Lord Sainath.



being together. It means understanding, trusting, and believing in each other. And most importantly, empowering each other,” says Guru Pali Chandra, who along with her team has rendered the entire Gita Govinda for posterity. The text that’s long inspired literature, music, and paintings, and has been performed in Odissi and Mohiniyattam, is now in Kathak.

“Gita Govinda is all about Keli, amorous sport; viraha, separation; and kaivalya, detachment, and liberation,” says Chandra. It essays the relationship between

At Sai Dattatreya Ashram, Bhubaneswar every year, we arrange the Kathakali performance of Gita Govinda. Even at Shirdi public recitals are organized to remind Sai devotees of Dasganu Maharaj’s kirtans.

A simple, relatable, love story — that is what Jayadeva’s Gita Govinda is. Spread over 12 sargas, chapters, and 24 prabandhas, sections, this Sanskrit text tells us the story of Radha and Krishna’s love, set on the banks of River Yamuna. One of the reasons why Krishna is known as Jagat Guru, the Guru of the world, is that each moment of his life is a teaching. It is apparent even in this 12th-century text.

“Through Radha and Krishna’s love story, the Gita Govinda illustrates that love does not mean just

Krishna, Radha, and Gopis and reveals ashtanayika, the heroine’s eight moods. As fiction, it brings to life love, distraction, jealousy and anger, repentance and forgiveness. Above all, it asserts the importance of venting emotions by all genders. “Boys should feel free to cry, too, as Krishna does in Gita Govinda,” she explains.



The relationship between Krishna and Gopis may be bhakti rasa, as Paramatman and Jivatma. Chandra says she prefers interpreting the story at the human level, with Krishna and Radhika as two lovers smitten with each other. When Krishna gets distracted by Gopis, an annoyed, jealous Radhika begins to feel that the moon and sandal paste that cool the body is now burning her; she wants to destroy whatever she sees, but soon realizes that this is the effect of her separation from Krishna who is now ca-



vorting with Gopis in Vrindavan. A distraught Radha with messy hair and smudged kajal pours her heart out to her dear Sakhi -a friend, who plays a pivotal role as mediator and messenger, calming Radha and conveying her feelings to Krishna. The Sakhi asks Radha to take refuge in nature and not lament.

Krishna rushes to Radha, contrite, weeping, he begs her forgiveness. Radha is experiencing anxiety, jealousy, confusion, and loneliness, which, the Sakhi tells Krishna, is all because of him.

Krishna woos Radha, “Tvamsi mama Jivanam, Tvamsi mama Bhushanam...” – “You are my life, you are my ornament”, and he says “Pad PallavUdharam” – your feet are my crown. Crying, Krishna declares Radha as the reason for his existence. Having thus made up, Radha demands that Krishna smooth her hair, erase the smudged kajal from her eyes, and straighten the messed-up bed that was decorated for them – she does not misuse the power she has over him but asserts her right as Krishna makes up with her.

Krishna invites her into his home and at each stage of intimacy, seeks Radha’s permission, for consent of the woman is paramount. Krishna asks Radha to take his flute, every breath, and the peacock feather that crowns his head; he will give up anything so long as he can be with his beloved Radha.

“As a dancer, it is important to relate to what

people go through and help them experience art within themselves,” says Chandra who, with her team, spent five years researching and reinterpreting Gita Govinda, performing each prabandha and digitizing it so that future generations can enjoy Jayadeva’s romantic and inspiring poetry that one can closely identify with. Now Gita Govinda dance recital is organized all over the world.



Supported by Natyasutra — all prabandhas of the Gita Govinda have been performed, filmed in the tropical forests of Kerala and specially designed sets, and launched online. Art connoisseurs, dance schools, teachers and students can watch, download, learn, and perform. “The whole idea is that the coming generations can remember and appreciate the true idea of love and harmony,” says Chandra.

“Mind moves objects. The mind creates death. Mind molds the life, Mind is a congregation of attitudes. Hence concentrate on Sai Maharaj to control your mind.”

—Dada J. P. Vaswani

“When you become a devotee of Sai Maharaj, remember prosperity and victory are your slaves, peace and happiness are your birthrights, your Soul becomes infinitely powerful.”

- Sri Narasimha Swamiji

“With Recitation of Vishnu Sahasranama daily Your interests will be with vigilant understanding.”

- Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji



CHILDREN'S CORNER

— by **Smt. Sunanda Ananth**

Beloved Children,
Aum Namō Sainathaya

The 'Sai Aura' team entrusted me to take fifteen children from Chennai to Shirdi. As the aircraft took off, we chanted Vishnu Sahasranama. As we finished the Sahasranama, Garuda Deva appeared at my window with a group of eagles. Garuda Deva said to me introducing himself as 'Vainateya' and has come to navigate the group as per Lord Vishnu's instructions.

He spoke to me in whispers with a sigh. "You humans are such misguided creatures. You must have some awful teachers."

Garuda Deva continued - "I'm a soaring eagle, sharp of eye. I smelt smoke even this high, I looked down from



the sky. Nests were burning, I asked why, and I got this reply: It is a communal fight, and they are destroying the environment. Sai Baba preached 'Ram and Rahim are one. Hindus, Muslims, and Christians are all children of one God.' Garuda Deva told me to inculcate among the children that Lord Shiva represents the element of 'Earth' at Kanchipuram, 'Vayu or Air' at Kalahasti, 'Fire' at Tiruvannamalai, 'Sky' at Chidambaram and the element of 'Water' at Jambukeswar (Trichy). Tell these children about these five elements and how to safeguard the natural elements.

You are all proceeding to the abode of Sai Baba the Parabrahman and wish you all the best."

Garuda Deva added - "I can't understand them at all. For us birds, large and small, Earth, Water, Wind, and Sun, keep every one of us alive. We feel the Wind God under our wings. We see the Sun and other elements as we fly across. But humans kill one another as Hindus, Muslims, or Christians as custodians of God. We birds find it very odd. We can't understand your hue and cry. We've never seen dead birds fly, to come and tell us after they die, about any God in their sky."

"We birds pray as we wish, and so does every animal

and creature like fish. Our 'Sumurga' has taught us well, 'Don't create heaven or hell.' A bird who says she will not pray will do as she may. If another says, 'I dislike the Sun,' he flies at night for food and fun. Humans go to lands afar. The five elements - Earth, Sun, Sky, Wind, and Water, we wonder at their wanton slaughter." "Down there, I notice wars are fought in the name of religion, territory, and natural resources.

"If it were indeed true that a merciful God cared for you, he'd have killed these murderers all and made the mildest stand tall. But that has not happened, we well know. These evil ones flourish and grow. Your meekest just sigh and sigh, hoping for better, when they die. And though none has returned after dying, they keep on blindly trying, for heaven promised afterlife, by those causing all this strife."

As the aircraft was about to land at Shirdi, Garuda Deva told me- "I have settled down at 'Bendina Navile' as per our Guru Maharaj - Sri Ramanuja Acharya's 'Sankalpa'. Bendina Navile is a small town along the Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway. Take a right turn at Mandya to reach Nagamangala and the last few kilometers to Bendina Navile. Bring these children over there and my two consorts will happily feed and bless them.

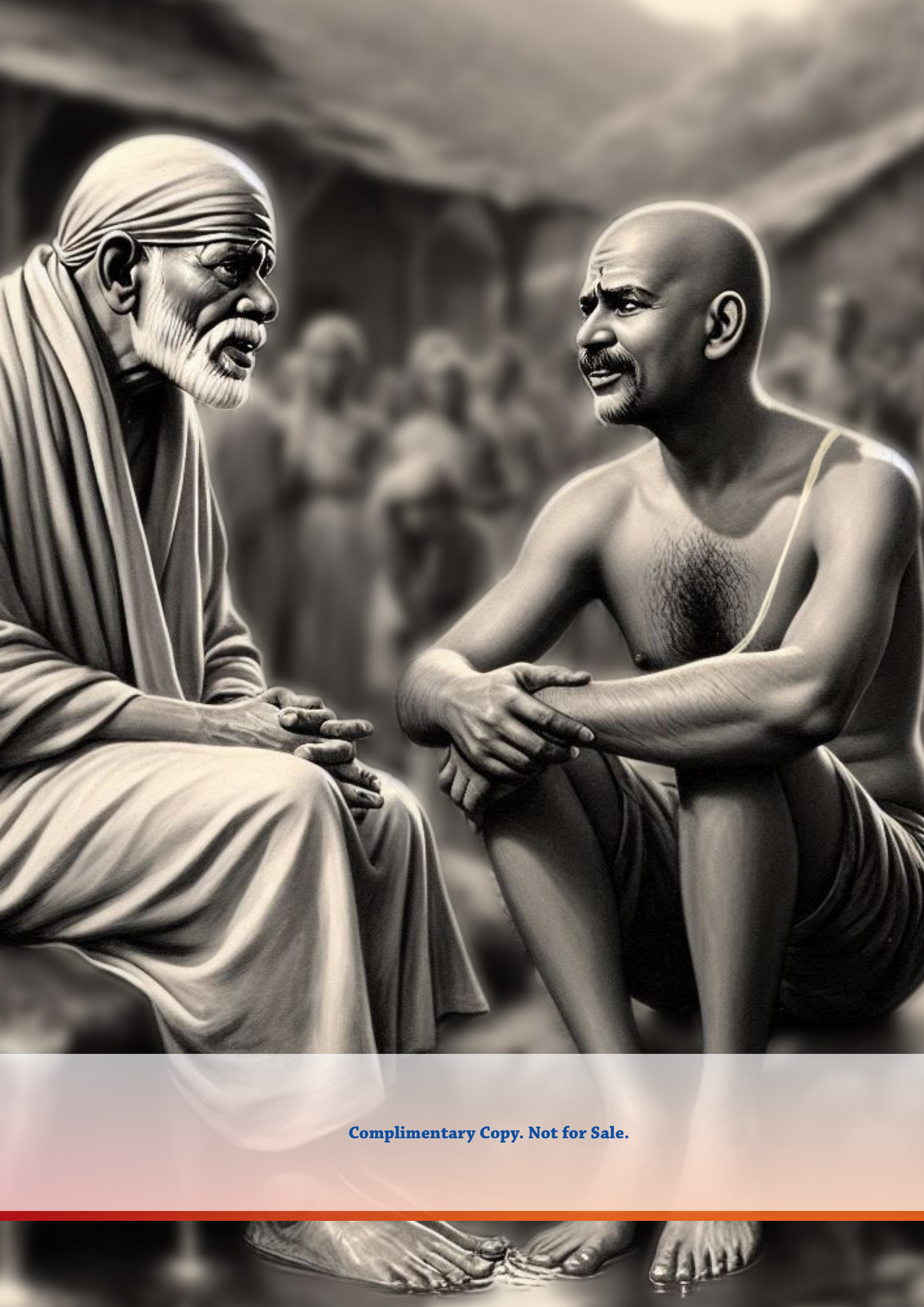
"Away from your violence that I see, I stay in the sky, flying free, with our living gods, who I tell, 'Please keep us birds and animals well.' Garuda Deva added,

We have thought of Sai Maharaj and what Garuda Deva said, what if we'd been like them instead, and never hated people for how they prayed, what a difference that would've made."

Later Sunanda Aunty took the children to Sai Maharaj's abode at Shirdi.



Yours SAI BABALy
THE SAI AURA team



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