



SAI LEELA



**Saving the child from
the Blacksmith's Bhatti**



60 Paise

1976

SHRI SAI LEELA

JANUARY 1976

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Real meaning of Life

Modern India, alas! is turning, more and more, always from the "Way of the Heart," and is surrendering to the way of imitation,—imitation of the West. Modern India is becoming weaker everyday: for imitation is emasculation. The deeper spirit of India calls for men who, forsaking themselves and going the way of the Rishis in the service of the poor and broken ones, realise that the meaning of life is not wealth nor power, but compassion, sympathy, love.

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EDITORIAL

Proper Outlook

Our outlook on the human beings and objects in this world is not impartial. We always have some opinions in favour of certain persons or things and we almost have a nausea for certain other things. Some persons have these opinions from the beginning and some opinions are formed by them later on because of their varied experiences in life; but when we behave like this, we forget that all objects are the creation of the same god and when we show dislike or disrespect for a few of his creations, we are showing disrespect for our creator himself!

Under such circumstances we must examine our likes and dislikes and find out how far they are correct. We must also try to see whether our outlook requires any correction and if it is required, we have to find if we can correct it and have a proper outlook on this world. If we refer to the fifth canto of Shrimad-bhagwadgeeta we get some direction in this respect.

After Lord Krishna explained to Arjuna in the earlier cantoes the Sankhyayog and Karmayog, Arjuna's mind got confused. He could not choose between the two and hence at the beginning of the fifth canto Arjuna puts a question to Lord Krishna and requests him to explain definitely as to which of the two was better to follow and also wholesome for him. Lord Krishna was a persistent advisor. He was always ready to answer any number of queries of his favourite disciple Arjuna. He therefore explains in the fifth canto Karmasanyasyoga.

Lord Krishna again explains that when any person does all the things in this world without expecting any fruit therefrom and dedicates all his actions to Brahma or God, then his actions have no effect on him. He has no attachment for anything and no

action is said to have been done by him. In the second canto when Lord Krishna was explaining Sankhyayoga to Arjuna, he asked him to explain how a Sthitapradnya may be recognised. There also the question of keeping the intellect neutral was raised by Lord Krishna and he said almost on the above lines that the Sthitapradnya does not have attachment to the fruit of the deeds he does and keeps himself aloof from the worldly affairs.

In the third canto while explaining Karmayoga to Arjuna Lord Krishna again tells him that like a learned person you do your duty without hankering after its fruit. He further says that such a person gets Moksha in the end. In the fifth canto Lord Krishna does not simply explain the theory. He becomes more clear by giving concrete directions as to what he means by neutral intellect. That shloka runs thus :

विद्याविनयसंनने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥५।१८॥

The meaning of the above shloka is that a learned person (Pandit) looks equally on a Brahmin, who is endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a chandala.

In the days of Mahabharata the learning consisted mainly of study of religious books and a Pandit was a person not well-versed in archery or horse-riding or mace-fighting, but a man who knew the Shastras very well and was well-conversant with the principles of religion. Thus the word Pandit used here by Lord Krishna is nothing but the synonym of the word Sadhu or a sage. In the above shloka Lord Krishna has selected two extremes of the society viz. a Brahmin and a chandala. In the days of Mahabharata the society held a Brahmin in high esteem and when he was endowed with learning and humility, then the society would naturally have high regard for such a man. The chandala was supposed to have been born in that community because of his bad deeds and sins of past life and hence he was actually despised. Hence by making the mention of these two, Lord Krishna has to

suggest the neutral outlook of a learned person or a sage on all the communities in the society.

Among the animals also the Lord has cited three species viz. a cow, an elephant and a dog. If we consider the outlook of the society on these three animals we will find great incongruity. The cow was perhaps considered sacred because she gave milk, her dung was found useful as a manure for the field, and the bullock, who was the main instrument of agriculture, was also got from her. Thus because of her utility the cow might have been considered sacred. Similarly because of his grandeur, his utility in warfare and other usefulness to the society, the elephant also must have been esteemed by the society; but the third animal mentioned by Lord Krishna was never liked by the society. In modern days, of course, the rich are always keeping a dog as a pet or in fact to possess a dog as a pet is an indication of wealth. The dogs are also being trained and used for investigating crimes; but in the Mahabharata time a dog was despised. He was never considered to be holy. A cow was considered auspicious but a dog was considered inauspicious. Thus Lord Krishna has cited three animals which belonged to different levels of popularity and said that the Pandit (sage) looks equally on them. He looks on them with untainted eye. Lord Krishna has thus suggested neutral outlook on all objects and living beings in this world. A person well-versed in Shastras is thus expected to have a neutral outlook on the world. He should not have unnecessary and ill-founded dislikes and likes about things in this world.

If we look at the lives of the sages in different parts of the world, the first thing that strikes us is their neutral outlook on life. It is perhaps the other way. A person becomes a sage when he has a neutral outlook on life. Because of this outlook he does not take more fancy for a thing nor does he despise other things. Right from Dnyaneshwar to Tukaram, if we analyse the lives of the saints or sages we see this neutral outlook on life. The Brahmins of Paithan ill-treated Dnyaneshwar and his brethren but they never got ruffled. They remained neutral. The result

was that their names even are not known to the history; but even after seven centuries the name of Dnyaneshwar is held in high esteem and his criticism of Geeta is being studied by more and more people, because there is hardly any book that has reached that level.

The life of Tukaram also teaches us the same moral. Rameshwarbhat and a number of other people tried to ridicule Tukaram. They even ordered him to throw away his Abhangas in the Indrayani river; but he did not allow himself to be ruffled. He behaved equally with all. Mumbaji, who was envying him like anything, once beat Tukaram's buffalo with a stick; but the result was that the marks of the thrashing were seen on Tukaram's back. This shows that Tukaram had sympathy not only for the human beings but also for the animal world. This clearly shows his neutral outlook on life. He is also reported to have refused the costly articles sent to him by Chhatrapati Shiwaji Maharaj as present, as he considered the stones, the earth and wealth at par with each other.

The life of Eknath also indicates the same thing. Only one incident will prove his neutral outlook on life. Once when he was going to the Godavari in the blazing Sun, he saw the child of a Harijan walking in the hot sand. Seeing that the child would scorch his feet, though Ekanath was a Brahmin, he did not think for a moment and at once picked up the child and carried it. Such an act was absolutely against the ethics of those days; but Saint Eknath did not care for it, because of his neutral outlook on life. Some other incidents in his life like feeding the Harijans on the Shraddha day before the Brahmins were fed and the incident when he gave the sacred water of the Ganges to the donkey who was totally restless and was rolling in the hot sand due to thirst, go also to point out his neutral outlook on the human being and the animals in this world.

One similar incident is told in the life of saint Namdeo. Once when he was taking his lunch, a dog came and snatched away

the bread from his dish. Saint Namdeo was taking ghee and milk along with the bread; but seeing that the bread itself was carried away he was not upset. He, on the other hand, felt sympathy for the dog and he ran after the dog in order that he may not relish the dry bread and hence he should also take the milk and ghee along with the bread.

The above incidents, quoted from the lives of a few former saints, indicate their neutral attitude towards life. The lives of Guru Nanak, Saint Kabir and other saints are also full of such incidents. Saint Mirabai and the Greek Philosopher Socrates even took poison that was offered to them. Apart from these ancient saints if we consider the lives of some modern saints like Shri Guru (from the Gurucharitra), Shri Wasudevanand Saraswati, Shri Gondawalekar Maharaj, Akkalkotkar Maharaj, Shri Sai Baba or Shri Upasani Maharaj, we have to come to the conclusion that they had a neutral outlook on life. They never had any attachment for any person or thing. Their main object in taking birth in this world was to give solace to the living beings in this world and hence they showered their favours evenly on all the persons who came into their contact, like the Moon or Sun who shower their rays equally on a lofty skyscraper of a multimillionaire and a humble hut of a poor person.

The incidents from the lives of some of the saints mentioned above might be known to every body; but we should particularly look at the life of Shri Sai Baba. He was never looking to the cast or creed or even the sex of his devotee. The rich or the poor was also no consideration for him. The learning or illiteracy of a person was also not considered by him. Multimillionaire like Shri Buty, solicitors like Kakasaheb Dixit and other people with status like Shri Dadholkar (Hemadpant) and Nanasaheb Chandorkar were also among his devotees. At the same time Baijabai, Laxmibai, leper devotee Shri Shinde, Mhalsapati, Tatyapa Kote Patil and such other ordinary people also found a place among his favourite devotees.

His monetary favours were also not reserved for any cast, creed or religion. He gave liberally to all. He even did not consider the religion as bar. Among his devotees we find the Hindus, Muslims and even Parsees in larges numbers. He lived in the Masjid, lighted a fire and took interest in the festivals like Ramnawani, Dasara, Gokul Ashtami and the Bhajan. He thus appears to have a neutral outlook on different religions in this world. He took food offered to him by Baijabai as well as by some forward people of advanced community.

Shri Sai Baba liked the human beings from all communities, similarly he had communion with all sorts of beings in the animal world. The incident where he said, that the chapaties offered to the dog and pig were received by him, show his neutral attitude towards all living beings. The very fact that he allowed the crows and dogs to partake freely out of the food that he kept in Dwar-kamai and out of which he himself ate, shows his neutral attitude prominently. The incidents of the two goats, the lizards on the wall, the story of the snake and the frog and the story of the tiger who was brought to his feet by a Darveshi, also show his liking for the animal world. His liking and love for his favourite horse Shyamsundar also shows his attitude towards the animal life.

The examples, quoted above, fully express the neutral attitude which is the proper attitude towards this world, which we all should try to cultivate. The likes and dislikes referred to in the beginning of the article are the main cause of our unrest and sorrow. The saints and sages lived a peaceful life full of joy because they never had such strong likes and dislikes as we have and hence they had only joy in life. There was no wrath or dispise in their character and therefore, they had no quarrels, no feuds in their life. Hence if we also want to have real pleasure and peace in this life, we should follow Shri Sai Baba, whose devotees we call ourselves, in adopting this neutral outlook on the things and living beings in this world, as that is the proper attitude we should have towards all the creations of the great creator, who has created every thing in this world, including ourselves.

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

By · Swami Chinmayananda

HOPE FOR ALL

If a philosophy of life is intellectually attractive but too high for anyone to live, it becomes a utopian dream, and not a practical way-of-life. Our Aryan forefathers had no patience with idealism that is not rooted in realism --- that is not practical enough to live in life. The Rishis were not more idealists and poets, trying to escape from the problems of life into some misty haven of fancied perfections and imagined glories. They were athirst to live the highest life of harmony, peace and beauty, of achievements and service to the world. As such the way-of-life described as "a life of intense activity undertaken in the Yagna-sprit", though it may look a bit far-fetched and beyond the reach of all, Krishna labours here to assure Arjuna that it is an easy and practical philosophy of co-operative activities which anyone with intelligence and courage can fully understand and richly live.

In all "co-operative endeavours in the field of material wealth" (dravya yagna) the core of success lies in the inspiration of the common vision and in the intensity of individual dedication (jnana Yagna). Therefore, this mental and intellectual preparedness is more important and sacred than actual physical team-work (Sreyaan dravyamayaat yagnaat Gyana Yagnaha Parantapaha). For all selfish actions, prompted by personal desires (sarva karmaakhilam Partha) end in the wisdom of higher (Gyanam parisamaapvate).

Naturally this knowledge of the Higher (Gyanam) becomes of supreme importance to each one of us. This can be known only through a teacher who is living it. By attuning ourselves to

him alone we can intuitively come to realise how he feels and acts in the world of ever-changing circumstances. When a student has attained full attunement with his teacher then the teacher transfers this deep and profound vision to the student (Upadeks-yanti te gyanam gyaninaha tithwadarsinaha). This is the knowledge by comprehending which all our confusions end, and we never more re-enter the self-created hell of sorrows caused by the ego and its endless baser passions.

It is an observable law of nature that sorrows gather a greater poignancy when they come to us and become our personal tragedies. A cosmic problem is no problem at all when compared to a world problem. But a world-problem dwindles into insignificance when it is compared with a national disaster. A world war is almost nothing compared to a disastrous earthquake in one's own country. Again, a treacherous 'flood' in one part of the country is something we overlook when there is a 'domestic-tragedy, in the family. In fact, the most poignant sorrows are our own individual personal losses and inner emotional tensions.

In short, the more we expand our ego, in our sincere identifications with the world of things and beings the less painful is a tragedy happening to us --- consequently, more becomes our own equipoise and balance. End the ego and live the blissful life of fruitful activities in the world. When one cultivates love for the entire world, he shall feel his own oneness with the universe. He then comes to perceive the entire life clothed in the Divine Light of the Self; an enchanting ecstatic embrace of all in the One Infinite Self, the Lord (Yena bhootanyaseshena draksyasi Atmani Yatho mayi).

At this juncture, an ordinary man of the world may come to feel deffident to come to this spiritual way-of-life only because of the very glory and beauty of this noblest state-of-living. He hesitates, doubts, desperates whether he can ever enter the portals of the Lord's palace. The Lord consoles every such pessimistic seeker and confidently declares, (iv-36) "Even if you

be the most sinful among the sinful, yet, by the raft of knowledge you shall indeed, go across all sin". We are acutely conscious of our imperfections, and often we refuse to strive because we lack confidence in our own ability and strength. The Lord here encourages man, "Even if you are the most sinful among all sinners" (Api cedasi papebhyaha sarvebhyaha papakrttamaha) there is yet hope for you. Wake up! Come to live the larger Awareness Divine. When once you have woken up, all the crimes committed in your dream are automatically excused --- awake and thus rise above the ego-sense. "By the boat of knowledge you shall, indeed, go across all sins". (sarvam gyanaplavenaiva vrjinam santarishyasi).

But, after all one has to suffer the consequences of what one has already perpetrated in the ignorant past. The eternal justice must be satisfied. All these words in the **Sastras** can only be idle consolations to the sinners. If not, then the law of **Karma** is disobeyed --- flouted. Thus, some intelligent students may argue. Krishna anticipates them and announces, (IV-37) "**As blazing fire reduces wood to ashes, so too Arjuna, does the fire of knowledge reduce all Karmas to ashes**". The term "**Karma**" here is used to indicate the "**Vasanas**" left over by the selfish, desire-prompted action of the past. These **Vasanas** tickle new actions, producing joy or sorrow to the individual, according to the quality of the "**Vasanas**" --- good or bad.

Bad **Vasanas** are called "sins", when we contrast them with good **Vasanas**. But even the best of **Vasanas**, is also a sorrow-breeding "sin" when it is compared with the Infinite Bliss, which is Nature of the Divine Self in us. "Just as wood is reduced by fire to ashes," (Yathaa indhaamsi samiddhognirbhasmasaat kurute arjuna), so are all **Karmas (Vasanas)** reduced to ashes by the fire-of-knowledge. Actions done in dream cannot carry over to yield a result in the waking-state. Similarly, "sins" gathered in the ego-centric state of existence cannot reach the the State of Pure Self. The "dreamer" did the dream-crimes, and the "dreamer" must suffer the consequences. On waking up there is

no more the "dreamer", and it is not the Law of Karma that for the sins of the "dreamer" the "waker" should suffer.

Similarly the ego did commit sins, and the ego must suffer their consequences. But in the "Awakened", the ego ends — the Self alone IS. Hence the Lord announces that in the State of Wisdom, the "sins" of the past are all burnt up, and they can no longer provide any more dualistic experiences. There is hope even for the worst of us.

(Courtsey: Geeta Office, Powai)

SAINATH

The seat of Majesty, Omnipotence Divine,
Lies in the midst of Shirdi's sacred Shrine.
There, at the Mandir's heart, Samadhi lies
Of Holy Sainath, Who eternally beautifies
The lives of all who come near Him,
And fills the heart's cup to the very brim.

All praise and victory to Shirdi's Saint,
Whose Power can cleanse the mind of every taint.
Within the flame of Baba's sacred Dhuni
Lies wealth far greater than all your money,
This wealth is Man-God's living Grace —
Which always with devotees' ardour can keep pace!

The Grace of Sai Baba saves from sorrow
As it was yesterday, so shall it be tomorrow:
Perfection's Majesty is quite Eternal:
Sai Baba IS the Gods's Supernal!

— Nitya Nirmal Bhau

"Miracle" or "Divine Favour"

Reading quite a number of articles and experiences of Bhaktas, my mind had been agitated whether what Shri Sai did and is doing even now can be termed Miracles. Dictionary meanings of miracle are 'A supernatural event, Hyperbolically, a marvel, a wonder to speak with exaggeration.' My mind refused to accept that Baba ever performed miracles, as per the sense of meaning of the word.

There can be marvels and wonders, but all of them cannot be termed Divine Favours.

Sitting at a distance of hundreds or even thousands of miles away, HIS helping hand had been extended to HIS bhaktas, who deserved. Two quite obese fellows fall down from a tonga in Poona. This could mean death or at least very serious injuries. But HIS hands were stretched from Shirdi to support them. A child fell down from upper storey in Nasik and was not at all even scratched. On asking he says that Baba took him in HIS arms. A bhakta leaves Shirdi rather late by tonga for Kopergaon. A few miles away the tonga axle breaks down and he is stranded with his wife and child on a lonely and dangerous road about mid-night. HE keeps waiting for him like a servant and arranges for his night shelter. In the morning he is allowed to go after getting from Baba a part of HIS begged food and Udi. Many who had killer diseases, had no issues or their children died in infancy were suitably helped by Baba. A doctor bhakta staying with HIM was so much in pain due to guinea worm abcesses that he prayed for the punishment of sins to be spread into his ten next 'janmas'. Baba tells him why wait that long to suffer; I will clear off your sins in ten days. Abdul, perchance (but contrived by Baba) puts his foot on his suffering leg and all the guinea worms came out and in a few days he was fully cured. People were saved from drowning and from sure death, from

wild animals in the jungle. Another one gets water on an absolutely dry hill when he was dying of thirst, by just being told to lift the stone on which he was sitting. There are too many such Divine Favours, and it is not possible to describe all here. The above are just a very small fraction of the same. I may quote two such favours, bestowed on this self and family. Travelling by car from Bombay to Delhi, with family, having only one male member just about 7/8 years old, the carburetor started throwing our petrol like a fountain. Before I could decide to try cleaning the same, as I had seen my workshop doing, a taxi came from behind. We were then some 30 miles away from Indore and the next town was also rather more than that far. The taxiwala remarked, "you have chosen the right people to stop and help as we are both mechanics" In minutes they put the fault right. Similarly travelling after a few years, the car stopped suddenly and I was at wits end as all efforts to re-start failed. Just then a Fiat came from the opposite side and stopped to help. They said just the same words, as the taxiwalas. I said "it is not the first time and it is my Baba, who has done this both the times"

There are and were in the past, many a Godmen who performed miracles of producing Udi, lockets, rings, gold dollars of particular year (now extinct), watches, bottles of Scotch whisky of an absolutely unknown brand, japamalas, photos and pictures of some gods, alone or along with their own photos, sweetmeats, made only in a far off place, fruits, absolutely out of season and different ones on the one and the same tree, panch-dhatu images of gods (statues), etc., etc. These are all marvels and miracles. Where is the trace of Divine Favour in these? In some cases they have cured sick people also. Such acts can be called Divine Favours BUT the law of average would prove that anyone can bless for cure and that certain percentage of cases would be cured. Such cases would be well advertised by the persons concerned and others, who know them. What about those many people who were promised or blessed for cure and certain other matters, but were never cured and died and others who never achieved

their objects? Such cases are never known and/or reported. I happen to know at least two such cases.

A recent book written by a foreign Godman, goes to say about someone who lived about 100/200 years ago in the Continent and performed miracles, like the ones stated above. He, the writer, based his statement on a book wherein the performer stated that he had some spirit under his command with the aid of a mantra, given to him by some Yogi. These spirits worked faster than sound and produced things out of nothing with their command on nature. The author stayed with the Godman for quite a long time and thus had the chance of observing him very closely with a critical mind. He was granted certain favours but I feel, the biggest favour is the money, he is making on royalty of that book, which is selling in lakhs in India as well as abroad.

One fellow who came to Baba, as commanded by his Guru, could produce 'pedas' as and when and where he wished. Baba forbade him to do this ever again but for his satisfaction gave him the boon of producing hot Udi without the help of any mantra but by just thinking of HIM and asking for the favour.

Some may say that BABA also performed miracles when HE lighted earthen lamps with water and turned currants with seeds into the variety without seeds, as one newly arrived person did not like these with seeds and mentally wished to have been given seedless ones. Well, Baba did both these acts BUT the aim was to sow seeds of faith in the oil-mongers and make them desist in future from telling lies and telling the latter gentleman that his manager (who was the cause of his coming to Baba) was really in the service of God and not just a juggler or magician. These and some others were done without asking the people concerned or even before a called audience.

I would like to know the views of my fellow Sai Bhakta on this point, if I am in the wrong. It is also requested that if my point of argument is correct, future writers of experience

should use the term "Divine Favour" instead of "Miracle" or "Chamatkar" as the latter is nearest equivalent of miracle.

Readers must have seen recent reports in the papers about a Jew from Israel who had the miraculous power of turning forks, knives, etc. crooked by just looking at them. He demonstrated this miracle in the Continent, USA and many other countries. In U. K. his this miracle was televised and it is alleged that the viewers saw even many things in their houses becoming crooked during his programme on the television. Such a power cannot be called Divine Favour. He is also alleged to say that he has some spirit to obey his wishes.

May Shri Sai bestow 'Nishtha' and 'Saburi' on one and all!

V. B. Nandwani

Above Central Bank Building, 55 L. J. Road, Bombay, 16



ANNOUNCEMENT

We are glad to announce that the second gathering of the contributors to Shri Sai Leela Magazine will be held at Shirdi in the middle of February 1976. The detailed programme will be announced in the next issue—Editor.

SHRI GURUCHARITRA

By :- Shri S. N. Huddar

(Continued from December 1975 issue)

CHAPTER 24

Trivikram Bharati Sees Vishwaroop of Shri Guru

Kumasi is a village near Ganagapur. Here lived Trivikram Bharati, who had studied three Vedas. He was a devotee of Shri Narahari. Hearing the name of Shri Guru, he said, 'Such kind of high living does not become a sanyasi.' He criticised Shri Guru in this way.

Shri Guru asked Gramadhipati to arrange for going to Kumasi. Elephant, horses, pagentry and musicians were gathered. Shri Guru was seated in a palkhi and a grand procession started towards Kumasi.

As usual Trivikram was worshipping Narahari in his mind. But he could not see the shrine of Narahari in meditation. He saw Shri Guru coming from the riverside in procession. He saw all the persons were sanyasis with sticks in hand and having the appearance of Shri Narahari. He was amazed. He fell flat before the procession praying, 'You are Trimurti God, Guru of the universe. I could not know you due to my ignorance. Kindly disclose yourself in your real form. You are all-pervading Nar-sinha Saraswati. I see here that all are yatis having the same appearance. I cannot recognise you and bow to you. I have committed many sins but I have been doing your 'manaspuja' daily. It seems that it is bearing fruit today, and I have the pleasure to see thyself. You have descended for the liberation of the ignorant persons like us. So kindly show me your real hallowed form.'

Being praised by Trivikram in this way, Shri Guru appeared before him in his real form in the procession. Shri Guru said to him, 'You have been criticising me and have called me a pretender. Just tell me who is a pretender.'

Trivikram said, 'Kindly pardon me. Wipe off my ignorance. I am sinking in the sea of ignorance. Give me a lift in the boat of knowledge and take me with you. Shri Krishna showed Vishwaroop to Arjuna. Similarly you have favoured me by showing your universal form. Oh Guru of the Universe, your greatness cannot be fully described by people like me.'

Shri Guru: 'You have known the Paramartha. You will not have any birth hereafter.' Blessing Trivikram Shri Guru returned back to Ganagapur.

CHAPTER 25

Impudent Brahmins Vanity

There was a cruel Muslim king in Vidura. He used to call the Brahmins, ask them to recite Vedas and explain their meaning. He would then give money to such Brahmins. He would say that if Brahmins kill animals in sacrifices, then why should they blame us for killing animals?

One day two Brahmins, knowing three Vedas, came to the king and said to him, 'If there are any learned Brahmins in your city, call them to discuss with us on all the four Vedas.'

The king enquired, but no learned Brahmin came forward to discuss with these Brahmins. So the king greeted the two Brahmins, giving them clothes and money.

The Brahmins, out of vanity, chanted Vedas before Muslims and criticised other Brahmins. They decided to visit other places in the country and discuss Vedas with Brahmins and obtain

victory certificates from them. In course of time they came to Kumasi and invited Trivikram Bharati for discussion or else demanded a certificate for victory.

Trivikram Bharati humbly declined to discuss. But due to their persistence he said, 'My Gurudeo resides at Ganagapur. Let us go there. You will be given certificates if necessary.'

Trivikram Bharati and the two Bramins came to Ganagapur. Trivikram bowed to Shri Guru and told him why those Brahmins had come there.

Shri Guru asked the Brahmins 'Why do you want to discuss? We being sanyasis do not give any importance to victory or defeat. What will you gain by such discussion?'

The Brahmins said, 'We have roamed all over the country and have won victory everywhere. Here we have several certificates of victory. Hence you and Trivikram can both discuss with us.'

Shri Guru: 'Vanity results in destruction. What was Bali's fate? What did Banasur gain? Ravana and Kauravas have also perished. Even Brahma and others do not know all the Vedas. So think over again and give up the idea of discussing.'

Still the impudent Brahmins insisted to have a discussion.

CHAPTER. 26

Vedas Analysed

Shri Gurn said, 'Even Rishis had to take great pains to learn Vedas. In Kaliyug the span of life being short, it is impossible to learn all the Vedas completely.'

Bharadwaj asked Brahmadeo to teach him the Vedas. Brahmadeo showed him three heaps of Vedas, which appeared huge as hills. Bharadwaj was stunned to see them. He th

requested Brahmadeo to give as much of the Vedas as he could learn. Brahmadeo gave him three hand-fulls of Vedas. He could not study even these. Mantras of the three Vedas were separated, which formed the fourth Veda—Atharva Veda.

Vyas, the incarnation of Shri Vishnu, taught these four Vedas to his four disciples. He narrated Rigveda to 'Pail'. It was tall and of a prominent neck. It had a sharp sight and was as bright as the Sun. It's Gotra was Atri, it's God Brahma, it's Chhand (metre)—Gayatri and Upaveda Ayurveda. It has 5 parts and 6 Brahmans and Arans.

Vyas narrated 'Vaishampayan', the second disciple, Yajurveda, which is full of rituals for different sacrifices. It was 5-Ratni tall. It's Gotra was Bharadwaj, it was thin and its Chhand was Trishtup. Its God was Mahavishnu. It was also as bright as the Sun and its Upaveda was Dhanurveda. It has 86 parts.

Samveda is the third Veda, which pleases by its music. Vyas narrated this to 'Jaimini' his third disciple. It is 6-Ratni tall, calm and controlled. Its lips are red, and it has a stick in its hand. Its Gotra is Kashyap, Guru is Rudra, and Chhand is Jati. Its Upaveda is Gandharva. It is divided in many parts.

Highly learned Vyas narrated 'Sumantu', his fourth disciple, the fourth 'Atharvaveda'. Its God is Devesh, Gotra is Baijan, Chhanda is Swachhanda and Upaveda is Astra Shastra. It has 9 parts and 5 kalpas.

No one can know all these four fully. Knowing only a part of the Vedas, how do you say you know all the Vedas?

Due to knowledge of Veda, Brahmins were highly respected in the past. They were called Gods-of-the-earth—Bhoosur. Even kings worshipped them. Three great gods were under their control due to the strength of the Vedas. Indra and other Gods were afraid of the Brahmins as they could turn a straw into a mountain and a mountain into a straw. Shri Vishnu also respected the Brahmins.

In Kaliyug the Brahmins have given up the Vedic-path and so their power is lost. They serve lower classes, sell Vedas. Though there are several parts of the Vedas, many parts are lost.

You say that you know four Vedas, but do you know the end of any Veda? So do not persist for discussion, Better you go away from here. Do not waste your lives in vanity.'

The impudent Brahmins could not appreciate Shri Guru's advice and they still said, 'Either discuss with us or give us a certificate to that effect.'

Shri Guru was enraged to see their attitude. He said, 'Let it be as you desire. Just as a rat cuts the sides of a box of a serpent or a butterfly jumps on a lamp, you are digging your own grave.'

CHAPTER 27

Harijan Becomes A Learned Brahmin

Shri Guru saw a man passing by. He asked his disciples to call him. He was a Harijan. He bowed to Shri Guru and prayed for liberation.

Shri Guru gave a stick to a disciple and asked him to draw seven parallel lines. On doing this Shri Guru asked the Harijan to cross a line. The Harijan crossed the first line and Shri Guru asked him who he was. He said he was a Kirat. On crossing the second line, he had more knowledge. On crossing the third he said he was a Gangasut i. e. a boatman. On crossing the fourth he became a Shudra. On crossing the fifth he became Somdatta Vaishya. On crossing the sixth he was a Kshatriya named Godavery. On crossing the seventh line, he said, 'I am a Brahmin. I know Vedas, Shastras, Vyakran and my name is Adhyapak (Teacher).'

Shri Guru said, 'These two Brahmins have come to discuss Vedashastras. You may discuss with them.' So saying he asked him to apply enchanted vibhuti to his body due to which he looked more bright.

Seeing this miracle, the Brahmins began to tremble with fear and started getting pain in the heart. They fell on the feet of Shri Guru and said, 'We are great offenders. Kindly forgive us and liberate us. You are incarnation of three Gods and Guru of the world. Your greatness is indescribable.'

Shri Guru said, 'You have harassed Trivikram Muni and have committed many other offences. You will become Brahma-Rakshasas and have to suffer for your sins.'

The Brahmins again entreated, 'How shall we be free from this worldly sea?'

Shri Guru: 'You shall be Brahma-Rakshasas for twelve years. Shuknarayan, a Brahmin will come and advise you and then your sins will be wiped off and you will be liberated. You go to the river now.' The Brahmins went to the river. They had severe heart-pain and they died. They lived as Brahma-Rakshasas and after twelve years they were liberated.

The Harijan Brahmin said to Shri Guru, 'I was a Brahmin, then how was I degenerated? What sins had I committed? Kindly enlighten me.'

(to be continued)



A Search For the Birth Place of Shri Sai Baba

[Intrigued by the mystery shrouding the birth, birth place and family background of Shri Sai Baba, the writer, Shri Kher, paid a personal visit to Pathri along with his wife, picked up clues that were casually dropped in the conversation, pursued them with zeal, patiently culled the evidence and pieced it together with detachment. All evidence, he avers, points to Pathri as the birth place of Shri Sai Baba and the Yajurvedi Deshastha Brahmin family of the Bhusaris as the one in which Baba chose to take his birth. He makes a plea incidentally for the construction of a memorial on the spot consecrated by Baba's birth. The views of our readers on the conclusions arrived at by Shri Kher will be welcome.

Editor]

"Sai Baba was neither a Hindu nor a Muslim but above both". Thus spoke Shri S. B. Dhumal an ardent devotee of Sai Baba and a leading lawyer of Nasik in reply to a question of a District Magistrate.* This reply is undoubtedly wise and replete with meaning. A man of God, whatever be his caste or colour, is worthy of our respect. A popular Marathi saying discourages the search for the origin of a river and the birth of a sage, for the fear, that the researcher may be disappointed with their humble beginnings. Whatever might have been the truth of this adage, the dictum is no longer valid. In this age of fast advancing technology, when all values are in a melting pot, even "every formula of every religion has to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent".+ The extended truth is applicable also to holy personages who have left

* B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experience of Sri Sai Baba, Part I, All India Sai Samaj, Madras, 3rd Edn, 1965, p. 48.

+ M. K. Gandhi, in Search of the Supreme, Vol. I. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1961, P. 148.

their foot-prints on the sands of time. Those who have read Prof. Erik H. Erikson's "Gandhi's Truth" which describes "a westerner's and a psychoanalyst's search for the historical presence of Mahatma Gandhi and for the meaning of what he called Truth",[£] will grasp the full implication of this statement. Researching into the questions as to the place of Sai Baba's birth, the family in which he was born etc. may give us a historical hindsight into the later events in Sai Baba's life. In this belief my wife and I made a pilgrimage to the "birth place" of Sai Baba in Marathwada in June, 1975 and the outcome of our search is stated in this article.

Before I do so let me record briefly the information available about the appearance of Sai Baba, his dress, his food habits, his surroundings in Shirdi and the theories put forward about his place of birth and his family.

Sai Baba was well-built and had arms which reached upto his knees. He was of medium height and had a fair yellowish complexion. But "one's first impression about him was derived from his eyes". There was such power and penetration in them that none could continue to look at him without feeling that Sai Baba was reading him through and through.[§] His ears were pierced [£] and he was not circumcised[‡] indicating that he must have been a Hindu. But he dressed like a Fakir and lived in an old tumble-down mosque which was strangely called by him as Dwarkamai (द्वारकामाई). A sacred fire (धुनि) was

£ Erik H. Erikson, Gandhi's Truth, w. w. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1969, p. 9

§ B. V. Narasimha Swami, Devotees' Experiences of Sri Sai Baba; Part I, All India Sai Samaj, Madras 3rd Edn, 1965, p-92

£ G. R. Dabholkar, Shri Sai Satcharita (written in Marathi), Shri Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi, 8th Edn. 1972, Chap. VII, 13.

‡ Swami Saisharananda, Shri Sai Baba. (written in Gujarati). 1966, 6th Edn., p. 17

constantly burning in the mosque and devotees were allowed to worship him with fanfare including blowing of conches and ringing of bells.

In the courtyard outside the mosque was a Tulsi Brindaban. Ramanavami was celebrated by His Hindu devotees in the courtyard, in which, Sai Baba joyfully participated. At the same time, he had no objection to the local Muslims taking out a Sandal (सदल) procession on the same day. He was catholic in his food habits, and is said to have partaken meat and fish in the Company of fellow-fakirs. The name of "Allah Malik" was constantly on the tip of his tongue. Yet, he appeared in the garb of Rama, Krishna, Ganesh, Shiva, Hanuman, or the guru of the devotee concerned. He had intimate knowledge of Bhagwad Gita as his exposition to Shri Nanasaheb Chandorkar demonstrated. But he also recited the first chapter of Koran in the company of Muslims. He was known to be fluent in many languages, but none knew how and when he acquired such mastery. All in all, he was a phenomenon, and all that one can truly say of him was that he was cast in the mould of renowned yogis of yore, with deep influence of Sufism on him. It is significant to note in this connection, that in examination on commission issued by a Court, Sai Baba stated in reply to one of the questions that his "creed" or religion" was Kabir.*

Mr. H. S. Dikshit, Solicitor and the most selfless devotee of Sai Baba, who sacrificed his all in the cause of his Sadguru, says in his foreword to Shri Sai Satcharita (श्री साईसच्चरित) £ as follows: There is no reliable information as to where he was born and who were his parents. But it can be stated authoritatively that he must have had links with the Nizam's State later called Hyderabad State which under the Scheme of Reorganization of States in 1956.

* B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Sri Sai Baba, Part II, All India Sai Samaj, Madras, 3rd Edn. 1965, p-46

£ G. R. Dabholkar, Shri Saisatcharita (written in Marathi), Shri Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi, 8th Edn 1972.

was divided on linguistic lines and merged with Andhra Pradesh, Karnatak and Maharashtra). In his conversation there were often references to places like Sailu, Jalna, Manavat, Pathri, Parabhani, Aurangabad, Bhir and Bedar. Once a visitor from Pathri came to Shirdi for Sai Baba's **darshan**. Sai Baba gathering information about conditions in Pathri, enquired with him about many leading citizens of Pathri. This suggests that he had special knowledge of Pathri but it cannot be stated with certainty that he was born in Pathri. It cannot be said also definitely whether Sai Baba was a Brahmin or Muslim by birth.£

Mhalsapati, one of the earliest devotees of Sai Baba, has stated that Sai Baba had told him that he (Sai Baba) was born in a Brahmin family at Pathri and his parents had handed him over to a Fakir in his childhood. Soon after Sai Baba had given him this information, a person from Pathri, who had come on business to a nearby village called Korhala had visited Shirdi, when Sai Baba, had asked him about several residents of Pathri by their names.¶ Mhalsapati Bhagat was a man of a truth and integrity and was held in high esteem even by Sai Baba because of his **vairagya** (वैराग्य). His testimony is therefore, important and can be said to be indisputable.+

Sai Baba discouraged any questions about his parentage and said that Purush (पुरुष) was his father and Maya (माया) was his mother. A life long researcher and biographer observes that Sai Baba's birth remains a mystery and he had not met any individual who had direct knowledge about it 7

£ G. R. Dabholkar Shri Sai Satcharita (written in Marathi) Shri Sai Sansthan Shirdi 8th Edn 1972 (Foreword by H. S. Dikshit p-1

¶ "Miscellaneous Topics," Shri Sai Leela, April, 1925, P 179

+ B. V. Narasimhaswami, Life of Sai Baba, Vol. I, All India Sai Samaj, 1955, pp-13-14

£ Ibid, p-12

Another person whose testimony is weighty is Shri Vaman Prangovind Patel, Solicitor, who since he donned the robes of a Sannyasi in 1953, is known as Swami Saisharananand. The new name itself indicates the extent of his reverence for and devotion to Sai Baba. We must examine his credentials further in detail, if we are to accept what he says on the subject matter, in his biography of Sai Baba written in Gujarati. *

Shri V. P. Patel was born in 1889 and is still living. He graduated with philosophy from Elphinstone College, Bombay in 1910 and passed his LL B. in 1912. Like Swami Vivekanand, he wanted to see God face to face. He met many Sadhus but none could satisfy his desire. Finally, his father suggested that he should visit Sai Baba. So once in 1911, he travelled from Bombay to Kopergaon by train and reached Shirdi by a tonga. When he reached Shirdi, Sai Baba was standing under the famous Neem tree near Sathewada. The tongawala pointed out Sai Baba to Shri Patel. Young Patel alighted and prostrated himself before Sai Baba. Imagine his wonder, when Sai Baba exclaimed to him. "God is, why do you say He is not?" Swamiji (Shri Patel) personally narrated to the writer an account of his first encounter with Sai Baba, under the Neem tree in the fateful year 1911, which was to change the whole life of young Patel. All his doubts were silenced and he felt that he was in the presence of a Master whom he could accept as his Sadguru, and surrender to him his all. In 1913, when Patel visited Shirdi during the summer vacation, Sai Baba detained him at Shirdi for eleven months, and one day without being asked, was given permission to leave Shirdi. During his long stay, Patel was sent on begging rounds by Sai Baba, and he came into close and intimate contact with Baba. Sai Baba affectionately nick-named him "Babu".+ In course of

* Swami Saisharanananda, Shri Sai Baba, 6th Edn 1966

+ Sadanand Chendvankar, "Parama Saibhakti Shri Saisharanananda" (परम साईभक्त श्री साईशरणानंद). Shri Sai Leela. (Marathi edition) September, 1975, p. 4. at p. 6

time, Shri Patel became a solicitor and practised, but his real interest lay in matters moral and spiritual. Patel is a Savant and has written extensively for Sastu Sahitya-Vardhak Karyalaya. He has also rendered Shri Sai-Satcharita into Chaste but simple Gujarati verse. His biography of Sai Baba in Gujarati is a must for every serious student of Sai Baba and his tenets.

With these preparatory remarks about Swami Sai-Sharanananda, let us now turn to his narration of Sai Baba. He says that it is indisputable that Sai Baba considered himself a Brahmin and he got annoyed with anyone who suggested that he was not a Brahmin. In 1912, Patel's father was suffering from dropsy and there was no hope of cure. In December of that year, Patel visited Shirdi. Reading his thoughts, Sai Baba asked him to get his father to Shirdi. But the thought crossed his mind, would his orthodox father come to one who looked like a Muslim? Immediately, Baba intercepted with the remark, "Am I not a Brahmin?" Swamiji also records that the oldest devotee of Sai Baba, Mhalsapati, had been told by Baba himself that he was born in a Yajurvedi Deshastha Brahmin family at Pathri and he was handed over to a Fakir as a child. £

The tale of Sai Baba's birth is also described in article by Sunamra Sundar ¶ as said to have been narrated to him by the noted saint Madhavnath, a summary of which appears at page 16 of Swami Sai-Sharanananda's biography of Sai Baba. The story goes that there was a Yajurvedi Deshastha Brahmin in Pathri who had three sons. Sai Baba was the eldest. When Sai Baba was five years old, a Fakir came to the Brahmin and said "Give me my own". The Brahmin replied, "Everything I have is yours". Thereupon, the Fakir asked for the eldest son and took him away. He reappeared after four years, and with the consent of the Brahmin, again took away the boy for three more years. From

£ Swami Saisharanananda, Shri Sai Baba, 6th Edn. 1966, pp-14-15

¶ Shri Sai Leela, July-September 1942, pp-359-372

the age of twelve to eighteen, Sai Baba remained incognito and was seen at Shirdi under the neem tree when he was nineteen.

Yet another version is contained in the biography of Satya Sai Baba, who claims to be a reincarnation of Sai Baba of Shirdi. Swami Sai-Sharananand refers to this story at pages 13 and 27-28 in his biography of Sai Baba of Shirdi. It appears that Sai Baba's parents were residents of Pathri. His father was Gangabhava and Devagiramma was his mother. They were a pious couple and were devotees of the Lord Shankar. As they had no issue they were sad. However, through the practice of penance they obtained a boon from Shankar-Parvati and as a result, Shankar took birth in their family as Sai Baba. Gradually, Gangabhava became more and more absorbed in his tapas, and he decided to renounce the world. Devagiramma insisted on accompanying him. So, both of them retired to a forest, abandoning Sai Baba under a tree. A Fakir and his spouse were passing by. They saw the child, and regarding it as a gift of Allah adopted it and brought it up until Sai was 12. Later the Fakir was pressurized by local Muslims to turn him out as he was fond of playing with a Shiva Linga which he won in a game he played with the son of the local Zamindar. So began his wandering along the banks of Godavari, in the course of which, he came to Aurangabad. There he encountered Chand Patil of Dhupkhed, who recovered his lost mare through the grace of Sai. The later part of his life story is known to all.

And so Pathri, was our destination! Yet we knew so little about Pathri, when we planned to visit it. The history of Pathri which is recorded hereinafter was collected only after our return, from discussions with a learned friend who is a noted authority on the mediaeval history of the Deccan.

Pathri which was in early mediaeval times known as Parthapur, is situated 80 to 85 miles south-east of Devagiri (Doulatabad

and about 2 miles south-west, from the confluence of Vidarbha (Mangale) and Godavari rivers. It was a part of Vidarbha Kingdom which was ruled by the Yadavas of Deogiri and was a seat of mathematical learning.£ As Pathri was a part of the Yadava Kingdom, its history is a part of the history of Devagiri or Daulatabad. It was the village, the Kulkarni Vatan of which was held by a family which rose to great eminence in the days of the Bahamanis. Bahira or Bhairav Kulkarni (chaudhari) of this family who probably had migrated to Vijayanagar and entered the service of that Kingdom was in about 1440, captured by Bahamani troops and brought to Bidar. Here the Sultan appreciative of the intelligence and general behaviour of Bahiru enrolled him in royal service after converting him to Islam. Bhairav now became Malik Hasan and in course of time rising to eminence, he was given the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk and was made governor of a Bahmani province. His son Ahmed founded the Nizamshahi dynasty of Ahmednagar (1489) when the Bahmani Kingdom broke into five fragments. Finally, the Subhedar of Moguls in the Deccan, the Nizam established his domain over the territory of Daulatabad including Pathri and Pathri has since been a Taluka place.

Pathri is about 10 to 12 miles from Manwat Road Railway Station on the Manmad-Secunderabad Line. When we decided in 1975 Summer, to camp at Pathri for a few days, to get authentic information about Sai Baba's early life, Manwat had come into prominence because of a series of Murders which showed diabolical pre-planning. By June, we had established links with a family at Pathri who were to be our hosts. Our host was none other than Shri Dinkarrao Vasudeo Chaudhari, a scion of the famous Chaudhari family at Pathri, with a long history behind them. Shri Dinkarrao Chaudhari is a progressive farmer and a lawyer. He was a perfect host. He regarded us and our mission as his own and rendered us all assistance.

£ S. B. Dikshit, History of Indian Astronomy (written in Marathi) Aryabhushan Press, Poona, 2nd Edn. 1931, pp-267, 269 and 278

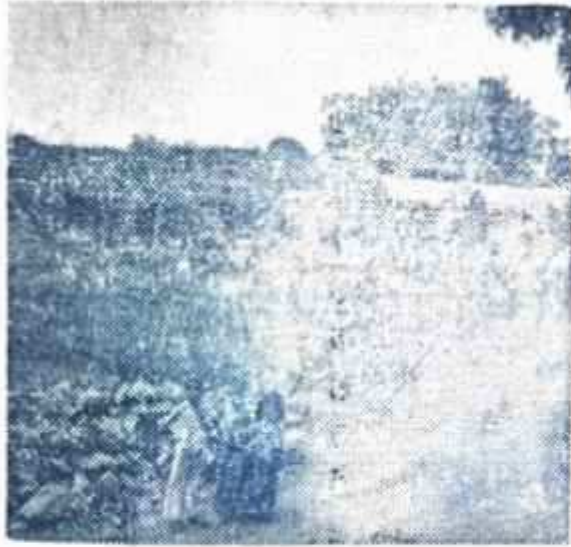
There are a number of branches of Chaudhari family at Pathri, but most of them live in the fortress which dates back to about fourteenth century. Shri Dinkarrao Chaudhari has now constructed a house just outside the fortress, where he lives. It was our abode during our halt in Pathri. On 21st June evening, when we sat in the verandh overlooking the fortress, in an informal conversation, Dinkarrao made a point which caught my attention. He said, that years ago, his late father Vasudeorao had pointed to one Bhau Bhusari in Pathri, and remarked at the sad plight of the family descendant of Sai Baba! The next day, some Muslim clients of Dinkarrao who had come for consultation stated that according to their information Sai Baba was born in a Brahmin family of Pathri, but was taken away by a Wali when a child, and what happened later was not known. This also furnished another clue. So, we promptly commenced with the task of making a complete list of all Brahmin families of Pathri. Brahmins in Pathri are all Deshastha Brahmins, either Rigvedi or Yajurvedi. There are no Brahmins of any other sect or sub-caste. This list was made while we made the rounds of Pathri going from door to door, interviewing all old residents, Brahmins or otherwise. In discussions, it came to light that the family deity (कुलदैवत) of most



Hanuman Temple on the
out skirts of Pathri

of the Brahmin families in Pathri is either Goddess Renuka of Mahur or Yogeshwari of Ambejogai. There was only one exception. That is Bhusari family. Incidentally, Bhusaris are Yajurvedi Deshastha Brahmins. Their family deity is Hanuman of Kumbharbavdi on the outskirts of Pathri. So our minds began working frantically. We recalled the great devotion and respect Sai Baba had for Rama and Hanuman, and mused, "Could it be that our search had at last

borne fruit". With alacrity, we made our way to Vaishnav Gali, where we examined with reverence the ruins of Bhusari House (House No. 4-438-61) for it is no longer standing, and proceeded silently to pay our respects to Hanuman of Panchbavadi. There is also a "Lendi" River skirting Pathri and we were reminded



Ancestral house of
Bhusaries at Pathri

of "Lendi Baug" at Shirdi. The association between the two is obvious. Similarity between the Marathi spoken by Sai Baba and the language spoken in Marathwada, generally, was also noticeable. We were most impressed by the fact that the language spoken by all the strata of the Society, from the lowest to the highest, is uniform and there is no difference even in the speech of the elite.

The population of Pathri is about 10,000. In its appearance, Pathri is as it must have been

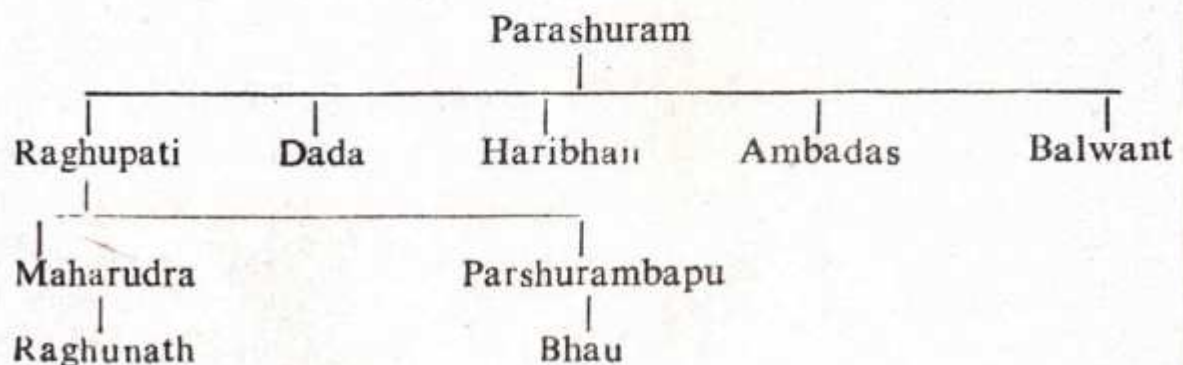
centuries back. Progress has hardly touched it. Only during the last few years, electricity has been brought to its door-step, and link established with the other parts through the State Transport Service. But otherwise life is placid, as it must have been, in the olden days. My mind was carried back to the time when Sai Baba was born. No exact date or year of his birth is known. For that matter, there is also difference of opinion about the time of his arrival in Shirdi. According to Shri Sai Satcharita, he first came to Shirdi in 1854, vanished and reappeared in 1858, and settled down. According to Shri Narsimhaswami † who is supported by Shri M. W. Pradhan + Sai Baba first arrived in

‡ B. V. Narasimhaswami, Life of Sai Baba, Vol I, All India Sai Samaj, Madras. p-13

+ M. W. Pradhan, Sai Baba of Shirdi. Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi, 7th Edn. 1973, p-25

Shirdi in 1872. All that we know is that Sai Baba breathed his last on 15th October, 1918. And one can only guess how old he must have been from his photographs that are available.

Can we then say with reasonable certainty that Sai Baba was born in Bhusari family? Excepting the information given by a prominent citizen of Pathri to his son on the subject, is there any circumstantial evidence? To collect this, if possible, I decided to pursue the matter further. I opened correspondence with Prof. Raghunath Maharudra Bhusari who owns the house of Bhusaris at Pathri. He was professor of Marathi in Osmania University and later Principal of a Government College, from which post, he retired sixteen years ago, and settled down in Hyderabad. He was born in Pathri and had his early education there. When he was eight, he lost his father. At the age of twelve, he left Pathri and went to Parabhani, a district town, for further education. After matriculating he moved to Hyderabad from where he graduated in Arts, standing third in the University. This won him a scholarship for M. A. at the Calcutta University, which he completed successfully. Prof. Bhusari states that Konedada was their first known ancestor. No information is available about the next two generations, but the family tree of three later generations is known which is reproduced below :-



Prof. Bhusari further states that he had learnt from his grandmother, when he was a child, that Haribhau, Ambadas and Balwant had all left Pathri for good. While Haribhau might have gone in search of God, the latter two had gone to seek their fortune. In the next generation, Parshurambapu had also taken

sannyas at Manjartha (In Bhir District), which is situated at the confluence of Godavari and Sindhufena. His son Bhau who was not much educated, and died in poverty, was the person about whose condition Shri Vasudeorao Chaudhari had an occasion to speak to his son Dinkarrao. This is sufficient evidence to confirm that the Bhusari family of Pathri has produced persons of higher urges and impulses. Could it not be that Shri Haribhau Bhusari was Sai Baba ? I wonder !

The theory advanced above is probable. I discussed it jointly with an experienced lawyer and a reputed historian and both of them agreed that it could be so. I do not wish to add anything further. I leave the matter to the readers to judge for themselves. Since I decided to pen this article , I have learnt that the residents of Pathri are keen to acquire Bhusari House property at Pathri and to erect on it a memorial to the sacred memory of Sai Baba. May their efforts be crowned with success. ★

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Bombay 52



SAINT RAMDAS

By Dr. S. D. Parchure M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued from December 1975 issue)

The religious minded people of those days showed great interest in Keertan. The saints therefore, took advantage of these religious inclinations of the people in order to spread the message of devotion to god. Saint Ramdas also, like other prominent saints, used to perform keertan wherever he would get audience. Ambejogai was already famous because of the temple of the goddess and because it was the abode of the great saint Dasopant. Hence saint Ramdas was sure to get good audience for his keertan. He therefore performed a keertan there. Saint Ramdas was lustrous because of his penance and youth. He had good personality and sound knowledge. Therefore his keertan was much appreciated by the audience and they were much impressed by the philosophy expounded by him. One old resident of Jamb happened to be in Ambejogai and having come to know that an illustrious sadhu maharaj was performing keertan on that day, he attended the keertan of saint Ramdas. On seeing the face and stature of Ramdas, he started feeling that he had seen the sadhu maharaj somewhere before this; but he could not recollect where exactly he had seen him. The keertan started and from the style of speaking and from the voice of Ramdas the old gentleman at once thought that he must be the Narayan, who ran away from the marriage altar years before. The curiosity to know the facts made the old man quite restless; but it was against the ethics of the keertan to say something in the middle. So he waited somehow till the keertan was over. No sooner Ramdas said the last verse of the keertan, the gentleman approached him and said, "Sir, may I request you to allow me to talk to your goodself something in private?" Listening to this odd request from an unknown person, Ramdas did not know what to do. He however replied, "There is nothing private

SAINT RAMDAS

By Dr. S. D. Parchure M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued from December 1975 issue)

The religious minded people of those days showed great interest in Keertan. The saints therefore, took advantage of these religious inclinations of the people in order to spread the message of devotion to god. Saint Ramdas also, like other prominent saints, used to perform keertan wherever he would get audience. Ambejogai was already famous because of the temple of the goddess and because it was the abode of the great saint Dasopant. Hence saint Ramdas was sure to get good audience for his keertan. He therefore performed a keertan there. Saint Ramdas was illustrious because of his penance and youth. He had good personality and sound knowledge. Therefore his keertan was much appreciated by the audience and they were much impressed by the philosophy expounded by him. One old resident of Jamb happened to be in Ambejogai and having come to know that an illustrious sadhu maharaj was performing keertan on that day, he attended the keertan of saint Ramdas. On seeing the face and stature of Ramdas, he started feeling that he had seen the sadhu maharaj somewhere before this; but he could not recollect where exactly he had seen him. The keertan started and from the style of speaking and from the voice of Ramdas the old gentleman at once thought that he must be the Narayan, who ran away from the marriage altar year before. The curiosity to know the facts made the old man quite restless; but it was against the ethics of the keertan to say something in the middle. So he waited somehow till the keertan was over. No sooner Ramdas said the last verse of the keertan, the gentleman approached him and said, "Sir, may I request you to allow me to talk to your goodself something in private?" Listening to this odd request from an unknown person, Ramdas did not know what to do. He however replied, "There is nothing private

those days people, who used to go to beg for alms from door to door, used to sing some such verses before they used to be given alms. It was also a practice of the lady in the house to give alms to the person who would come at the door and ask for alms by singing such verses. When Ranubai, the mother of Ramdas, heard the verses sung by Ramdas, she directed her daughter-in-law, the wife of the elder brother of Ramdas, Gangadhar, to give alms to the mendicant. She came out of the house to give alms to saint Ramdas, but he would not accept the same. She was baffled at this peculiar behaviour of the mendicant as that was least expected by her.

The mendicant, however, solved the riddle. He said, "This is not the usual mendicant who will go away when alms are given to him." When Ranubai heard these words of the mendicant she said, "Is that not my Narayan? Oh Narayan, after how many years you have remembered me? How are you, my son?" Ramdas at once rushed inside the house. He bowed down before his mother and touched her feet.

Ramdas noticed that his mother was sitting down and she was groping to find him out. Before however he could enquire about it, Ranubai herself said, "Narayan, why did you go away in that fashion? I thought that you would never meet me again in this life. The tears from my eyes have been flowing continuously from the day you went away. Because of this continuous sorrow, look here, I have become completely blind. Now you are coming to me after so many years and you must have now developed into a grown up man. But I am so unlucky that I will not be able to see you at all." Saying so she again started shading tears.

Ramdas consoled his mother and said, "Ma, I have got altogether different temperament. I am not a man who would take interest in family life. I want to go out of all this. Hence I have chosen my line, but do not be sorry. Your elder son, my elder brother Gngadhar is with you. He will take care of you; but

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It was a great ordeal in those days to go on a pilgrimage on foot. There were no proper roads. Some roads were infested with thieves, burglars and such other bad elements who were likely to harm your life. Sometimes people had to go through hilly places and mountain passes, where the wild animals used to attack the travellers, but in spite of all these dangers, saint Ramdas completed his pilgrimage of the whole of India in a period of nearly twelve years. Ramdas had left his house with a definite aim in life. He had to do something in his life. That thing, however, was not definite in his mind. During the course of his pilgrimage all over India, he did not move only as a religious minded pilgrim. He wanted to do something for the people, who were reduced to a very bad condition due to various reasons. Throughout these twelve years, therefore he was clearly observing the conditions of the people and scanning the reasons for reducing them to that state of affairs. He was constantly, enquiring with his fellow pilgrims and was trying to understand their reaction to the conditions prevailing in India in those days. This observation of the condition and the mental state of the masses of India more or less prompted Ramdas to chalk out his future programme for the uplift of the people. This pilgrimage was therefore the base of the future life of Ramdas. He was now about thirtysix years old and his mature thoughts and bright personality attracted the people, who came in his contact. From now onwards he, therefore, started adopting some persons as his disciples.

In order to know what Ramdas saw in the country in those days, there is sufficient evidence in his 'Dasbodh', but in addition to that we can refer to a few books written by his contemporaries. The important books giving an account of the time of Ramdas are as follows:—

1. A book written by an Italian traveller Manucei by name. He was in India from 1656 to 1708 A. D. He had therefore seen the complete reign of the Mogal Emperor Aurangzeb.

2. A French traveller Tavernier by name visited India six times during the period from 1631 to 1668 A. D. He was a dealer in precious stones. He had met Shahistakhan and Aurangzeb. He had moved in India from Surat to Dacca and from Agra to Madras. His book is named 'Tavernier's Travels in India.'

3. Another Frenchman Bernier was in India from 1656 to 1668 A. D. He has written a book named 'Bernier's Travels in the Mogal Empire.'

4. Mohamed Kasim Farishta was a historian of that time. He has written accounts of his time in Persian. John Briggs has translated this book in four parts.

5. Elliot and Dawson have published in eight parts 'The History of India as told by her own historians.' These books contain the English translation of the diaries written by several diary writers at the courts of different kings, Nawabs and Sultans in India.

All the above books written by the contemporaries of Ramdas are eye-witness accounts and it is difficult to doubt their authenticity. From these books we know that the Mohamedans and the Portuguese were committing atrocities in India at that time. The Mogals and their Nobles were oppressing the people in Northern India. In the South similar arson and looting was carried on by the Bahamani kings and the Portuguese. The four main things mentioned in the aforesaid books are:—

1. Looting and arson.
2. Kidnapping and seducing women.
3. Razing Hindu temples to ground, breaking idols in the temples and converting them into mosques and churches.
4. Forcible conversion of the people to Mohamedanism or to Christianity.

When saint Ramdas saw the atrocities, described above, by his own eyes, he knew the real problems of the people. The insecurity felt by the people, the Hindus who were serving the Mohamedans were themselves fighting against their own people, the Hindus had lost all their confidence in themselves, they had no unity and such other difficulties faced by the Hindu population of those days pained Ramdas to a great extent and he decided to launch a campaign against these evils. His main object was to create confidence in the people, organise them and make them unite together for fighting against the Mohamedans and the Portuguese aggression. The people in those days were religious minded. To them religion was even more important than life itself. Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj sacrificed his life rather than getting converted to Islam. Saint Ramdas had judged this correctly and he decided to start awakening in the minds of the Hindus on religious grounds. His future activities therefore, moved in this direction.

(to be continued)

Light on the Path to the Infinite

Float on! Float on!
And may your little lights
Be not put out by wind or storm!
Let them enter the hearts of some
Who aspire to the Infinite!

SHREE KRISHNA

Krishna was the divine shepherd, the artist who kept man and beast spell bound on the meadows of Govardhan as he played his flute. Of Krishna's pranks in Gokul, his exploits in tackling the dark force and his sports in Brindavan the poet is never wearied in singing. Not content with singing the glories of Krishna in the Mahabharata, Veda Vyasa, the Bhagwan rishi has produced Shrimad Bhagavata Purana, the fountain from which have emerged inexhaustible streams of legends, songs and teachings of Lord Krishna. Mira, Jayadeva and Lord Gouranga were inspired by Bhagavat to give the world the sweetest fruits of their devotion and poetry. Their works are more than poetry. They are recited as musical compositions by the best artists of our land. Krishna Leela is a popular theme for drama and music. Krishna **nama** is chosen with delight for singing in bhajan parties.

What is there in Krishna that he is so much fancied and Krishna worship moves us to ecstasy? Krishna is the symbol, the very image of grace, universal love in its loftiest form. "Vishva Prem" (Universal love) is the right royal road to attain Krishna. He teaches in the Gita the 'sama darshna' (equal vision) **bhava** of the learned and the humble pundit, who looks upon the Brahmin, the cow, the elephant, the dog and low born who eats the dog as merely different forms of one life. Forms vary but the life stream that flows in them is one and the same. This teaching may be grasped intellectually, but realization of the teaching and living it can alone help in the growth of universal love. Krishna is perceived in every being and in the depths of of one's heart. Poet Subhramanya Bharati sings. "Nandalala, I see you in the wings of the crow and in the green leaves of the trees". That is the way to develop **vishva prem**.

In the bhajan parties the congregation combines their voices and their hearts. They sing the glories of Krishna in one voice

and with a single heart. They are lifted to a higher plane and they attain Krishna Consciousness. It may be seen that bhajans form a principal item in the programme of the Krishna Conscious movement. The singers go out and as they sing, they radiate currents of joy and love over a wide range. This Krishna prem (love of Krishna) illumines, purifies and exalts the sadhak. But this is to be preserved and preserved afresh and permanently.

Bhagavat Gita is the message for the modern man and is now accepted as a gospel the world over. A unique feature of the Gita is that its teachings help the saint, the philosopher and also the materialists. It presents a synthesis of Karma yoga, bhakti yoga, gyana yoga, sankhya and yoga darshanas. It was given to prince Arjuna when he was despondent, unable to choose whether to fight or to renounce the weapon. Lord Krishna showed Arjuna how renunciation was only escapism and that it suited Arjuna as a soldier to face the situation and fight. Lord Krishna was himself a householder and so was Arjuna, but he should remain as "padma patra ivambhasa"(water drops on the lotus leaf), live in the world, discharging his duties, at the same time, retaining an awareness within and remain detached "Yogah Karmasu Kausalam" (Yoga is skill in action) is a teaching of the Gita.

In the Sai Baba Ashtotram occurs a nama "Shri Krishna Rama Siva Marutyadi roopaya namaha; "It may be seen that Krishna" holds the first place in this nama. Sai Baba loved to associate with Krishna by giving the name-"DWARKA MAYI" to the dilapidated mosque in Shirdi where he lived and tended the sacred fire. That fire is kept glowing even now yielding the sacred Udhi. He recommended Srimad Bhagavat for devotional reading. He favoured Das Ganu Maharaj with "Sakshatkara" (appearing himself) as Vitobha of Pandharpur. Gopal Rao Butty, a millionaire, built a temple for Krishna in Shirdi. The mortal remains of Sai Baba lie interned in this building demonstrating, in clear and unmistakable terms that Sai Baba is not different from Lord Krishna. What was planned as Krishna Mandir in Shirdi

has become Samadhi mandir. Sai devotees see Sai Baba in Lord Krishna.

Lord Krishna declares in the Gita that He incarnates from age to age to restore dharma and establish it firmly whenever dark forces rise and try to unsettle it. In the present situation which calls for the coming of Lord Krishna, it behoves all devotees to invoke Him by organizing special service, bhajan and discourses on His life as often as possible.

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अनाथ के नाथ

मेरी लाज बचाओ । साई !
तुम बिन कौन है मेरा साई;
नाते रिश्ते सब झूटे, कौन किसका भाई ।
मेरी लाज बचाओ साई !

तुम बिन जीवन पंख बिन पंछी
एक सहारा केवल तेरा, तु है कृष्ण मित्ताई !
मेरी लाज बचाओ, साई !

मोह माया के फन्दे, डाल लिया गले मे,
मन पर नही काबु मन अपनाओ साई !
मेरी लाज बचाओ साई !

विरह पीडित हृदय विश्राम नही मुझे
शान्ति प्राप्ति का साधन तु ही केवल साई !
मेरी लाज बचाओ साई !

गुंडेराव पटवारी

एम्. एफ्. जे. कॉलेज, जिल्हा, पोष्ट, बिदर (कर्नाटक राज्य)

कर्मयोगी

(गतांकसे आगे)

कर्मयोग को धारण करने वाले पुष्प को उसके लक्षणों व गुणों के सूक्ष्म निरीक्षण के पश्चात् ही जाना जा सकता है। दुखों के प्राप्त होने पर वह विचलित नहीं होता और उसका मन उद्वेगरहित रहता है। वह दुखों को धैर्य से सहन कर लेता है। सुखों की प्राप्ति में भी वह निर्विकार रहता है और वह अधिक सुखों की इच्छा नहीं करता। शुभाशुभ की प्राप्ति पर न वह प्रसन्न होता है और न द्वेष करता है। न वह किसी से भयभीत होता है और न वह किसी पर क्रोध ही करता है। उसको किसी सांसारिक वस्तु या व्यक्ति के प्रति कोई गग नहीं रहता। उसकी सभी इंद्रियाँ उसके नियंत्रण में रहती हैं और वह समुद्र की भांति विकाररहित स्थित रहता है। वह किसी प्रकार के प्रमाद में नहीं पड़ता। उसके संपूर्ण कार्य और कामना संकल्परहित होते हैं। वह आशा रहित होकर अपने आप में जो कुछ भी प्राप्त हो उसमें ही संतुष्ट रहता है। वह द्वेषों से परे, ईर्ष्या रहित व सिद्धि असिद्धि में समान मानवाका रहता है। मन से संपूर्ण कामनाओं का त्याग करके वह परमात्मा में ही संतुष्ट रहता है।

महात्मा गांधीजी अफ्रीका में रहते हुये श्वेतों द्वारा तरह तरह के कष्ट देने पर भी विचलित नहीं हुये। उनकी काया पर हमला होने पर भी वे उद्वेगरहित बने रहे। अपने शारीरिक सुखों की उन्होंने कभी पर्वाह नहीं की और न उनको प्राप्त करने की इच्छा ही कभी व्यक्त की। लन्दन से वकालत पास करके और वहाँ के वातावरण में रह चुकने के पश्चात् भी उन्होंने पाश्चात्य वेषभूषा का सहजता से परित्याग करके एक छोटी सी धोती और उत्तरीय में ही संतोष रखा और अपने शारीरिक सुखों को तिलांजलि दे दी। अंग्रेजों की शक्तिशाली सरकार से भारतीय स्वतंत्रता के लिये संघर्ष करते हुये वे उनसे कभी भयभीत नहीं हुये। जीवन में कई बार आमरण उपवास करके उन्होंने स्पष्ट कर दिया कि उन्हें मृत्यु का कोई भय नहीं है। शत्रु द्वारा बार बार पीडित होने पर भी उन्होंने ईर्ष्या, द्वेष व क्रोध के वशीभूत हो कभी बदलेकी भावना प्रदर्शित नहीं की। अंग्रेजों की भारत से सकुशल वापसी इसका सबूत है। कड़े नियमों का पालन, समय की पावन्दी, और उनका शारीरिक अनुशासन उनके इंद्रिय निग्रह गुण को प्रदर्शित करता

है। उनको अपने मार्ग से विचलित करने के लिये अंग्रेज सरकार उन पर समय समय पर विपत्तियों के पहाड़ ढाती रहती थी परन्तु वे समुद्र की भांति विकार रहित बने रहते थे और अपने मार्ग पर दृढ़ता से आगे बढ़ते रहते थे। अपने शरीर निर्वाह के लिये उन्हें जो कुछ भी प्राप्त होता था उसमें वे संतुष्ट रहते थे। बकरी का दूध। कुछ फुलके व शाक उनके भोजन की आवश्यकता के लिये यथेष्ट था। अंग्रेज सरकार की वायदाविलाफी और असफलतायें हाथ लगने पर भी वे निरुत्साहित और पथभ्रष्ट नहीं हुये वग्न उनके कदम् दृढ़ता से आगे बढ़ते गये। अंततः सफलता उनके चरणों को चूमने दौड़ पड़ी। ऐसा क्यों न हो जबकि उनका अंतःकरण राम में अनुरक्त और रामनाम से सदैव झंकृत होता रहता था। अपने राम को हृदय के भासन पर बैठकर तथा उसमें ही संतुष्ट होकर उन्होंने सर्व कामनाओं का त्याग कर दिया। जिस हृदय को अविनाशी राम ने भर दिया। वहाँ भौतिक कामनायें कैसे ठहर सकती हैं। जीवन के अवसान में कर्मयोगी की परीक्षा हुई। वहाँ भी वे खरे उतरे। राम राम का जय घोष करते हुये वे मृत्युलोक से विदा हो श्रीराम के शाश्वत धाम में जा पहुँचे।

अंतकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मन्दावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥८१॥

उपरोक्त विवेचन से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि कर्मयोग का आचरण करने के लिये निम्नलिखित प्राथमिक आवश्यकतायें हैं :-

- (१) बुद्धिमत् की संसार से ऊँची स्थिति हो। वे सांसारिक पदार्थों व प्राणियों में लिपायमान न हों।
- (२) शरीर, इंद्रियों, मन व बुद्धि पूर्ण रूप से उनके नियंत्रण में हों।
- (३) शरीर में भ्रंशकार का अभाव हो।
- (४) अंतःकरण में त्याग और समता की भावना हो।
- (५) विश्व की श्रेष्ठतम वस्तुओं से भी श्रेष्ठ अविनाशी की प्राप्ति के लिये व्याकुलता, लगन व तत्परता हो।

इस आधार पर ही कर्मयोग की साधना फल फूल सकती है। जीवन में प्रतिक्षण कर्म होता ही रहता है। अतएव जीवन ही साधना है। ऐसा समझकर अपनी जीवनधारा को परमेश्वर से जोड़ने के लिये मोड़ देना चाहिये।

दीनानाथ टी. गुप्ता

रेल्वे क्वार्टर्स, नं. अर. बी. २/२५७/५
रेल्वे स्टेशनके सामने जबलपूर (म. प्र.)

श्री साईनाथ वाचनालय, शिर्डी.

Publications of Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Shirdi

The prices of the publications are as follows:-

1. Shri Sai Satcharita (Marathi)	Rs. 15.00
2. Shri Sai Satcharita (English)	Rs. 6.25
3. Shri Sai Satcharita (Gujrati)	Rs. 4.50
4. Shri Sai Satcharita (Hindi)	Rs. 7.25
5. Shri Sai Satcharita (Kanarese)	Rs. 4.25
6. Shri Sai Baba Jeevitacharitam (Telugu)	Rs. 8.00
7. do do (Sindhi)	Rs. 10.00
8. Shri Sainath Stawanmanjiri & Sumananjali	Rs. 0.20
9. do do (Gujarati)	Rs. 0.30
10. Four Adhyayas by Dasganu (Marathi)	Rs. 0.25
11. Sagoonopasana (Marathi or Gujrati)	Rs. 0.20
12. Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi by Pradhan	Rs. 1.00
13. Sai Leelamrit (Marathi)	Rs. 4.75
14. Sai Baba in Pictures	Rs. 2.00
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