

SHRI
SAI LEELA

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Shirdi Sansthan**

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**To spread the message of SHRI SAI
BABA all the world over is the aim and
object of Shri Sai Leela**

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*The Editor does not accept responsibility for the views expressed in
the articles published.*



A Quote For The Month

Laugh and the world laughs with you,
Weep and you weep alone:
For this brave old earth must borrow its mirth,
It has sorrow enough of its own.
Sing and the hills will answer,
Sigh! it is lost in the air;
The echoes do bound a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.
Rejoice and men will seek you,
Grieve and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not want your woe.
Be glad and your friends are many,
Be sad and you lose them all.
There is none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.
Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by;
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no one can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

• Ella Wheeler Wilcox

SHREE SAI LEELA

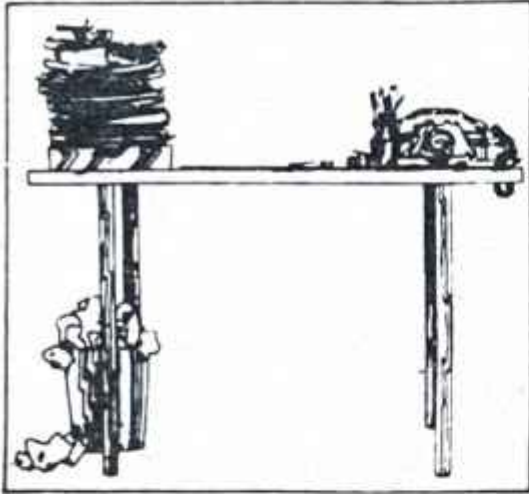
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EDITORIAL



1987 is here and we bring our readers "Greetings" for the New Year! May the new year bring us all closer in spirit to Baba and reveal to us the mainspring of lasting happiness, peace and prosperity which is within us!

It has become a matter of custom for us to wish each other a "Happy New Year" when a new year begins, but how little thought do we

bestow on what exactly we are wishing our friends. For most of us happiness and prosperity can only be measured in terms of worldly achievements and worldly possessions, so that our good wishes are supposed to refer to these. In fact, many of our friends may take a serious offence if we wished them happiness in any other terms — especially in matters spiritual.

But how faulty and misleading is our measuring rod! We forget — sometimes we are quite ignorant — that the real happiness is within and does not depend on the world outside. Applause of the people gladdens our hearts; a mere hint of a success goes to our head like heady wine; most insignificant of our achievements are as a grand conquest; — all conspire to flatter the ego and become the source of our "happiness". Alas, we forget that such happiness is as short-lived as its source and the praises of the world are but a lip-service.

Where then, should we seek our lasting happiness, our enduring achievement? We, who have Baba as our Guru to illumine our path need not have any doubts. For "Shri Sai-Satcharita" says,

"Seek honour in the court of God;
Of the Lord alone, beseech Mercy,
Strive for His Grace,
Rather than for the world's applause.
People will nod appreciatively,
But should it turn your head so?"

Seek through intense devotion to move your Chosen
Deity to compassion,
And to express its joy through perspiration.

(One of the *ashta bhavas*)

(Chapter VI, 36-37)

And the author of "Shri Sai-Satcharita" adds a small prayer to this: "Grant that I may find joy in such striving; that all the senses be seized by such a devotional urge, so that the sensual desires may be transformed completely and sprout into devotional worship"

This is the fount of real peace and happiness and it is this peace, this happiness, that we, as devotees of Shri Sai should wish each other in the coming year!



IF HE CAME TO YOUR HOUSE....?

Would you meet Him at the door with arms outstretched in
welcome?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in?
Or hide some magazines, and put 'SAI SATCHARITA' where
they'd been?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some Sai-bhajan
books out?

Could you let Sainath walk right in, or would you rush about?

And I wonder — if Sai spent a day or two with you,

Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you go right on saying the things you always say?

Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would you take Sainath with you everywhere you'd planned to go?

Or would you change your plans for a day or two?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends?

Or would you hope they stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on?

Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things that you would do,
If Lord Sainath came in person to spend some time with you.

— Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar

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SAINT DNYANESHWAR

(We reproduce by courtesy the following article from the pen of Smt. Savitri Khanolkar which appeared in the August, 1978 issue of Prabuddha Bharat. The writer, a deep student of Maharashtrian saints has told in brief the eventful and remarkable life-story of the doyen of the saints in Maharashtra. The author although European by birth, has been completely Indianised after her marriage with the late Major General V.R. Khanolkar.)

As the mist lay slumbering on the silent river, two little shadows moved lightly on the path skirting the contours of the water. The mist muffled sound and darkness in a soft eerie substance which seemed to part easily before the steps of the young boys. They wore only loin cloths and no upper garments. They held hands and moved as if they were completely free of worldly concern. Their heads lifted up with a slight tilt of independence seen only in Self-realized yogis. Their eyes full of tenderness were intent on some inner purpose. Well, the eldest was Nivriddhi who could have been a little over ten years old, and the younger was Dnyaneshwar, his middle brother two years his junior. On what could they be intent, skimming thus through the nebulous haze of pre-dawn hours?

Soon Nivriddhi pointed out the sacred Audumbara¹ tree by the Godavari river where Rishi Gautama taught back in hoary antiquity.

'Dyani, this is the place. Come, let us both sit under the sacred tree and do pay attention to what I'm about to say.'

'O Nivriddhi, my beloved elder brother,' pleaded Dnyaneshwar, 'as you are my guru, let me sit at your blessed feet so that I may worship you and imbibe fully your teachings.'

And so it came to pass, as one says in stories that happened long long ago, that the elder child initiated his little brother in the mystery of unfathomable Brahman and the whole universe.

What passed between them can best be assessed by their own lives and teachings.

Let us linger a while yet near the Audumbara tree as the river mists slowly rise and the light of Dnyaneshwar's eyes seem to brighten while day is already on the threshold. And so, the inner Light of Knowledge blazed forth in tune with the newly risen sun illuminating the world. Placing his forehead tenderly on his brother's feet, Dnyaneshwar with tears of love streaming down his adoring face, worshipped Nivriddhi with all his heart.

A few days later it was Dnyaneshwar's turn to initiate his younger brother Sopana and sister Mukta. Sopana must have been over six and little Mukta four or five, yet such was their inner strength and grasp of spiritual Truths combined with the holy background of their upbringing, that these successive initiations passed the sacred knowledge as from one lamp to another with ease and conviction that left no place or corner vacant for the stealing in of darkness or doubt.

Their parents were Vitthal Pant and Rakhumai, Brahmins from Apegaon and Alandi. Due to a misunderstanding between Vitthal Pant and his guru, the great Ramananda of Kashi, he was forced to relinquish sannyasa and return to the life of a householder which he had long since renounced. Such unprecedented behaviour in times of Brahminical influence was instrumental in the whole family becoming ostracized. Nivriddhi was born in 1273 and Jnaneshwar in 1275. The irate pandits of Alandi adamantly refused Vitthal Pant permission to initiate his sons in the ways of Brahminhood; in other words, to enable them to wear the sacred thread. Finally, moved by his humble supplications, they relented and referred him to the more learned pandits of Pratisthana (Paithan). So the little family in their peregrinations came to settle down for a while at Tryambakeshwar on the banks of the Godavari.

It was during one of their peregrinations on the Brahmagiri before daylight, that a tiger suddenly pounced on the little group, scattering them in all directions. Nivriddhi, the



eldest boy, fled into the recesses of the mountain, losing his way so completely that he chanced to enter a deep cave where an enchanting sight met his eyes. In the dancing lights of wood and cowdung fires, he saw humans and animals mingling in undisturbed harmony. Was he not greeted by a tiger similar to the one that had given them such fright? The big cat lay sprawled at the feet of some yogi lost in deep meditation. Back to back were deer and panthers, birds of all kinds and even snakes coiled peacefully round pillars of branches. Nivriddhi approached cautiously and discovered from one of the anchorites moving about the place that the yogi in meditation was their guru Gahininath, a disciple of Gorakshanath. The yogi opened his eyes and looked reflectively at the shy young boy who seemed transparent with purity and vibrant with the inner forces of introspection and self-discipline. The boy stood as it were at the very gates of arduous path of Self-realization.

'Come here, child; who are you and how did you come here?' said the yogi.

Most humbly Nivriddhi fell at his feet and related the events that brought him there. The yogi smiled and assured him that his coming was no accident, for his guru had correctly predicted it and urged him to initiate Nivriddhi, demanding that in turn Nivriddhi should initiate Dnyaneshwar who was destined to bring salvation to many.

When the perfect guru meets the right disciple, time is no factor in imparting knowledge. Within eight days Nivriddhi learnt all that there was to know. All four heavenly children were indeed ready to receive that pure knowledge of yoga. It was already ingrained in their soul, and the act of initiation was actually the revealing or rekindling of that existing fire of Truth.

When their parents saw that all their children shone with the inner effulgence of Self-realization, radiating love that is divine, they left them to proceed to Prayag (Allahabad) at the confluence of the three sacred rivers, where they offered their lives to the One unchangeable Infinite.

This left the children free to wander where the will of God took them, so they headed for Pratisthana. After rescuing the children from exhaustion the pandits of the sacred city confronted them with a haughty rebuttal of their claims, and the priests refused to give them the letter of purification from their parent's sins. There ensued an argument with the children until Dnyaneshwar quoted the Vedas to the great irritation of the head priest, who snapped: 'Do not trifle with the Vedas for you are all out-castes!' But Dnyaneshwar patiently argued that the Vedas were being misinterpreted and that all creatures were free to recite them. Even the heavy he-buffalo passing by the temple gates was no exception. Amidst loud guffaws, the Brahmins ordered the buffalo to be brought into the assembly hall and then with incredulous stares asked the fearless boy standing humbly before them whether the animal possessed that knowledge. Dnyaneshwar without any hesitation assured them that it was so, for the Self indeed was manifest in the whole universe whether consciously or unconsciously. The Brahmins roared with laughter and said: 'Well, let the buffalo recite the Vedas!' Still unruffled, Dnyaneshwar appealed to the Divine within the beast and spoke to him softly, gently stroking his forehead. The boy began to recite a passage in the Rig-Veda which describes the sacred letter *Aum* and from then on, the buffalo took over and chanted the Rig-Veda in a deep and sonorous voice.

The heart of the pandits underwent an instant change and while true introspection caused them at first to remain glued to their seats they suddenly rose as one man and humbly prostrated and surrendered to the slender feet of the child they now regarded as Divine knowledge incarnate.

Censure and praise did not affect the young ones. They accepted both in their serene way and then proceeded on their journey and settled for some years in a village called Nevase where Dnyaneshwar, still in his early teens, composed his Marathi translation of the Gita with his original commentaries, and other immortal works of philosophy such as *Amritanubhava*, as well as verses of pure enraptured love of God. Seldom has one so young been seen



to achieve and combine the sublime goals of knowledge and devotion at one and the same time. It seems as if Dnyaneshwar swam freely in both currents and so proved them to be one. In fact all the four children did the same with the greatest ease. True to his humble nature, Dnyaneshwar attributed his success and achievements entirely to the grace of his guru Nivrutti.

Meanwhile the Alandi Brahmins also underwent a change in their attitude to the holy family and in sincere repentance begged them to return to their homeland. Once in Alandi, they made several more disciples including a formidable yogi said to be 1,400 years old who practised Hatha-Yoga, by which he renewed his body cells at regular intervals. Changdeva, as he was called, gave up his arrogance and supernatural powers and meekly accepted young Mukta as his guru.

We must remember also that in Maharashtra of seven centuries ago, two main thought-currents were predominant among the masses: that of the Nathas and the other, the Varkari Sampradaya of the devotees of the Vitthal of Pandharpur. Dnyaneshwar was quick to sense the need of the illiterate villagers; their constant yearning for a personal God they could feel as their own and confide in. Whatever they got from religion came through the mouths of pandits who spoke as they pleased, since none else knew Sanskrit. Dnyaneshwar brought them the Gita in their own language and embellished it with such vivid commentaries as charmed his audience wherever he taught. He named his work the *Bhavartha Dipika* later known as the *Dnyaneshwari*. This was followed by the *Amritanubhava*, a treatise expounding his own philosophy, as subtle and profound as his own heart.

The young ones made several pilgrimages to the sacred city of Pandharpur where they mingled with other saints and encouraged the popular feelings of devotion to a God who was both personal and impersonal, who was their constant friend and yet was everywhere in all things. The other saints, who numbered over a score, were no less worthy of admiration. They all had their trials and tribulations and came out of the fire ordeal unscathed, with their faith intact. Most of

them belonged to the lower castes or were even outcastes. This did not prevent them from realizing the truth of Vedantic Oneness which they achieved without the least effort or tuition. All they knew was complete surrender to God, and that act itself opened the door to the knowledge of the Self.

Does this not go to prove that the paths of knowledge and devotion converge into one through the sincerity of the devotee?

Their matchless verses proclaim ceaselessly the fact that 'O Lord, Thou art ever One, not two!' (*duja nahi!*). Even the little maidservant of Namadeva, the saint Janabai, declares the same in all her songs overflowing with pure love of Panduranga (Krishna). So did the *mali* (gardener) Sawata: 'Thou art the well, the ropes, the bucket and the bullocks and the water flowing in peak to the blossoming plants which Thou art!'

Kanhopatra, the courtesan turned devotee of later centuries, cries to her Lord: 'The devotees are but your other forms'.

Namadeva the tailor left his meal to chase a dog who had stolen a piece of bread from his plate, exclaiming: 'O Lord, please take this ghee too, lest your stomach ache after eating dry bread.'

This innate conviction of the Oneness of the Universal Spirit singles out the Maharashtrian devotees as a class of their own, far above the concept of dualism. Besides, they all shared the same humility, the same love of God and of all his devotees, nay, of all creation. They all renounced every desire for worldly possessions and attained complete unattachment. Neither were they given to ostentatiousness or spectacular fits like epileptics. They led quite normal lives.

They were the most combination of Dnyana and Bhakti, which they practised every moment of their lives. True yogis par excellence. Apart from a few like Dnyaneshwar and his family, they were all householders.



Dnyaneshwar was chosen unanimously the leader of the Varkaris, the devotees of Vitthal (otherwise known as Pandurang). His deep philosophy never clashed with his teachings on Bhakti, a similarity with the great Shankaracharya. Those devotees had no inkling of differences between castes and creeds. Shiva was extolled as much as Vishnu, both merged into the One same Divinity. Their pure hearts were utterly free from petty bigotry, pride, lust, envy and other mind-shrinking feelings.

Saint Dnyaneshwar and Saint Namadeva found joy in each other's company and became close friends. They were the first proponents of Hari Sankirtana or the mass singing of the names of God. It is still remembered in South India where every Kirtana begins with due salutation and respect to these two saints.

When he approached his twenties, Dnyaneshwar left for a pilgrimage to the North, accompanied by his faithful friends Namadeva and other saints. They preached as far off as Punjab.

On their return, there were great rejoicings in Pandharpur where Kirtanas rocked the temple with the force of unison. It was the high tide of an ocean of joy with devotees and saints dancing in waves of bliss. By that time not only Pandharpur but the whole of Maharashtra burst forth like a forest of flowers as Kirtanas swayed villages and towns with the compulsive force of their dancing and singing the blessed names of God to their heart's content. Maharashtra resounded thus with the purifying names of 'Rama, Krishna, Hari, Vitthal, Pandurang!' to which they danced in complete abandon of worldly cares, without awareness of the physical world, totally intoxicated with the bliss of the Lord.

No one to-day can even picture in his mind the bliss of what these Kirtanas must have been when one recalls that they were conducted and attended by scores of fully self-realized saints! God's name rose like a lion's roar invading the whole firmament. It transformed, it revived and bathed the entire universe in peace and flooded it with pure love. Blessed, blessed indeed is Maharashtra to have nurtured these great souls at one and the same time!

It was after such a Kirtana that Dnyaneshwar confided in his friend Namadeva that the time had come for him to leave this world. The news so stunned Namadeva that he was unable to comprehend. Dnyaneshwar who had always been his friend, his support, to leave them all, just like that? His mute entreaty could not shake the young yogi's resolve. 'No, Namya, I have completed all the work I had come to do and now I must leave this body by wilful Samadhi at Alandi.'

Namadeva's tears brought together all the devotees who joined their entreaties to Namadeva's. Namadeva felt that even Pandurang expressed his sorrow at such a young life about to be forsaken. But Dnyaneshwar soothingly and ever so gently gave them hope in the serenity of the Infinite. 'Let Pandurang keep you and guide you. Don't grieve. I shall only leave my body. I shall always be with you.'

They had to bow to the inevitable and to the will of God who worked through them in His mysterious ways. Namadeva left us eyewitness accounts of these events, as well as biographies of other saints. His rendering of Dnyaneshwar's departure from this world is so moving, his pangs of separation so deep that one cannot remain unmoved by his heart-rending verses.

There must have been millions of devotees and saints present at Alandi where the fasting crowds regaled themselves with five days and nights of uninterrupted Kirtanas. The river Indrayani seemed to overflow her banks with delight.

Then, on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of Kartika (November-December), Dnyaneshwar bathed and put on the new ochre cloth (gerua). They marked his body with auspicious signs and slowly and tenderly led him to the final resting place of his youthful body. Yes, he was barely twentyone! The pit had been dug to the left of the Siddheshwar temple, at the foot of an Ajana tree. They spread a deerskin, relates Namadeva, and showered fragrant petals.

The incessant singing and dancing went on, radiating joy around Dnyaneshwar. Yet Namadeva, Sopana and Mukta



could not forget their grief and pangs of agony at the coming separation. Namadeva could not bear to look at the freshly dug pit without feeling the loss of him on whom he had come to depend so much. 'O Dnyanoba, you have been our father and mother. How shall life go on without you?'

Accompanied by the saints Dnyaneshwar worshipped at the Shiva temple (Siddheshwar) and Namadeva poured the sanctified flowers in his hands. Then as Kirtanas redoubled in power and the name of Govinda rent the air, the heavens seemed to add heavenly Vinas and Mridangas². Walking in front of the two elder brothers were Sopana and Mukta. Dnyaneshwar embraced each in turn and Namadeva, who was too upset to utter a word, silently wept on his friend's breast. The singing of Hari's name continued unabated. 'Alas', cried Namadeva as tears rolled down his face, 'my heart is suffering unbearable torments!'

Dnyaneshwar stood in their midst like a moonbeam of tender light, bowing to them all in humble leave-taking. Namadeva, Mukta and others threw themselves sobbing at his feet in a futile effort at dissuading him. Dnyaneshwar now could do no more than hand them all over to the care of Shri Vitthal, and with an infinite smile of love gave them assurance that he indeed would always remain their all in all.

With the assent of Nivritti, Dnyaneshwar slowly descended to the waiting *asana* (seat). After bowing to all the directions, he sat there, his hands in *abhaya mudra*³ resting on his lap. With his mind fixed in one single purpose, he concentrated on the rise of the Kundalini Shakti (power). Stage by stage the serpentine power rose and crossed the six *chakras* (psychic centres), abandoning them no sooner it awakened them; and finally piercing the Brahmarandhra, or top of the head, he merged where he had always belonged, in the formless state of the Self. Cries of 'Glory to Dnyaneshwar' resounded on all sides while Kirtanas never ceased and flowers fell in showers upon him. With tears in their eyes, the villagers rolled a heavy slab of stone and closed the aperture for ever

Nivritti, Sopana, Mukta and Changadev also abandoned their mortal coils within a year of Dnyaneshwar's becoming one with Brahman.

1. A type of fig tree, *Ficus glomerata*.
2. The Vina is a kind of stringed musical instrument. The Mridanga is a type of double drum.
3. A kind of hand gesture in the Tantra literature assuring fearlessness.



WONDROUS LOVE

“Everybody knows how a cow loves her infant calf. Her udder is always full and when the calf wants milk and dashes at the udder, out comes the milk in an unceasing flow. The love of a mother is peculiar, extraordinary, disinterested and has no parallel on earth. Sadguru showers this motherly love on his disciples. Baba demonstrated the same love for me. Although earlier also I had visited Shirdi, and everytime came back with his special blessings, this latest visit was an especial one for me. I was to celebrate my birthday in Shirdi and pray to Baba to make my life meaningful and fill it with intense Bhakti. However, I could not get tickets for 12th but got for 15th January, 1986 and I took it as Baba's Will that I should celebrate my birthday on 16th, instead of 13th, at Shirdi.

Early in the morning on 15th January, I reached Lodi Road Temple, which is a mini-Shirdi for us devotees staying in and around Delhi, at around 5.45 A.M. to pick up my friend Rajani, who was to accompany me to Shirdi. Though Baba was still sleeping in blanket, acknowledging our presence, he made the pujari (who was preparing for kakad arti) give us both one garland each from Baba's padukas. This was signal enough for me that our Shirdi trip would be successful.

We caught Punjab Mail and mid-way Baba saved our train from meeting with an accident and as a result, the train



was delayed by an hour. Meanwhile another devotee from Delhi, whom we called uncle, who was also travelling by the same train to Shirdi, came in and inquired if we wanted anything to eat or drink etc. He was very kind and narrated some of his experiences of Baba's grace and after an hour or so left our compartment, assuring us that we need not worry for anything in Shirdi as he would be helping us to find a place to stay. It was all Baba's Grace in action. We reached Manmad at around 7 A.M. and after taking bath and eating breakfast in a nearby hotel, we started for Shirdi and reached there around 10.30 or so. By the grace of our Master, we got a comfortable room in Gurusthan.

After purchasing puja-material, we made our way to the Samadhi Mandir and joined a long queue anxious enough for 'HIS' darshan. Slowly, we reached His shrine at around 11-45 A.M. and I offered my neivedya (flowers and box of sweets) that I had specially brought for Baba from Delhi. Baba accepted them with great love. The Pujari kept back in my 'Thali' two bunches of rose flowers. With tears in our eyes we came back to our room. I felt as if Baba greeted me saying 'Happy Birthday'. After the noon-arti the uncle from Delhi, told us that, we were supposed to take our lunch in 'Sai Prashad' as Baba's special guests! I was amazed at the loving care of our Sai-mother. So, that day we had both our meals in the dining hall as Baba's guests.

In the afternoon, we started Pradakshinas of Baba's samadhi and after completing them, I prayed to Baba and said "O my kind Mother! Always love me, protect me and never forsake me. Make me an instrument of Thy Will and mould me as you wish. I am yours and am surrendering myself to thee. O'my Mother! grant me also your glance of grace and never be indifferent to me". After such thoughts I was lucky to get a morsel of Baba's Bhog.

Before chavadi procession, we touched Baba's Holy shoes and 'danda' and prayed to Him. In Chavadi, beautiful bhajans filled me with supreme Bliss. The whole day I was feeling Baba's unique care and love in even small matters.

After chavadi procession, I went for Shej Arti and during the Arti, I saw life in Baba's beautiful idol. I saw His face

moving and seeing people praying and singing His arti. Then He turned around and looked at us — and Lo! Baba had granted me His glance of Grace that I was longing for. Indeed, it was a very rare gift for me, on that particular day.

The next day also during “Mangal Snan” and Kakad Arti I felt very happy and blissful.

Seeking His blessings and with cherished memories, we left Shirdi at 4 O'clock in the evening for Delhi.

His wondrous motherly love and care reminds me of a quote from Bible — “See! I will not forget you, I have carved you on the palm of my hand.... I have called you by your name.... You are mine.... You are precious to me.... I love you” (Isaiah)

— *Vijaya Lakshmi Verma*
7A/164, Faridabad
HARYANA



For the kind attention of the Readers.

Parabrahma Shri Satguru Sainath Maharajni Janava Jog Vigato Temaj Chanatkaro By Amidas Bhavanidas Mehta, Manager, The British Photo Enlarging Company, 91, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. (Printers : Daftar Ashkara Press, 1918).

The above-mentioned book written in Gujarathi by one of the ardent devotees of Shri Baba finds a mention in verse 31, of Chapter II of Shri Sai-Sat-Charita by Hemadpant. The Sansthan wishes to reprint and publish the said book and make it available to devotees conversant with Gujarathi.

Readers who happen to have a copy of the said book are requested to get in touch with the Sansthan.

The book will be xeroxed and then returned in tact to the owner and his name will find a mention in the Reprint.



WHAT IS SANKEERTAN

In the last article 'why we should do Sankeertan' was elucidated. As human beings are seized with all types of Yeeti Baadhaas (earthly troubles) Ahamkaara and Mamakaaras (I and Mine) JARAAMARANA BHAYA (fear of old age and death) DHANAABHAVA RINA BAADHA (want of Money and indebtedness) and such other upteen troubles they find no time to do Sankeertan. The simplest of all paths to attain salvation is only through Sankeertan.

But what is 'SANKEERTAN'? Is it mere uttering of the Lord's name? Are there any different varieties of Sankeertan? "सम्यक् कीर्तनं संकीर्तनं". To praise the Lord very well is Sankeertan. There is another definition of a different type. "सम्यक् प्रकारेण देवता नामोच्चारणं संकीर्तनं"- uttering God's name in a proper manner is Sankeertan. Sreedhara Swamy also defines Sankeertan as "नामोच्चारणं". In his opinion perhaps mere uttering of the Lord's name is enough. "सम्यक्प्रकारेण" (in a proper manner) looks to have been deliberately omitted by him. The Lord is 'VISHWAROOPA', SAHASHRANAAMA, GUNARAHITA, VISWA VYAAPAKA, GUNAATEETA. We owe our existence to HIM. When we stoop low to praise our unworthy masters with all sycophancy just to gain small favours, should we not praise HIM if we want to get rid of all our troubles and attain Moksha? We take all care while praising our Bosses. We adopt all types of methods. We praise them at the proper moment. We select proper words and epithets to crow over their qualities. We know pretty well that they are unworthy of such eulogies. Yet we do praise them. Lord is worthy of all our praise. Who else deserves? We need not be poor in epithets to praise Him for HE is our saviour. But the Lord pleases Himself if we just recite his name. श्रीराम राम रामेति रमे रामे मनोरमे सहस्रनाम तत्तुल्यं राम नाम वरानने.'

Lord Shiva says reciting the name 'SRIRAMA' is equivalent to reciting the Lord's thousand names. Just by saying 'NARAYANA' AJAMILA attained Vishnuloka. अपवित्रः पवित्रो वा सर्वावस्थां गतोपि वा यस्महेत् पुण्डरीकाक्षं स बाह्याभ्यन्तरः शुचिः

Just by rememberring the lord we become pious and clean mentally and physically. So, as Sreedharaswamy says mere uttering of the Lord's name is enough. Only sincerity is required. However, any embellishment here and there

will add to our mental satisfaction.

Is there any difference between Japa and Sankeertan? One is namasmaran the other is Naamochcharanam. IN Japa we recite the Lord's name or a Mantra not audibly. We hear it inwardly only, moving the lips without giving out the sound, concentrating all our faculties and mind on the Lord. But Sankeertan is different. संकीर्तनं येदं उच्चैरेव प्रशस्तं.

Sankeertanam should be aloud. Reciting the Lord's name or singing songs in HIS praise or telling the Lord's Leelas should be aloud. It is not individualistic. We have to enjoy the fruits of Naama Sankeertan with all the members of a congregation. "संकीर्तनं बहुभिः मिलित्वा तद्गानसुखं श्रीकृष्णमानं.

We should join with others in singing the songs and thus get the pleasure of it. "भक्तिरसे निमग्नेर्जनैः स्वकी येष्ट देवताप्रीत्यर्थं उच्चस्तरेण गानपूर्वकं क्रियमाणं स्तवनं कीर्तनमिति कथ्यते"

The main feature of Sankeertan is to get oneself immersed in that imperishable pleasure by reciting the Lord's name with others who are also placed in a similar situation.

Keertan is of three types :- Kathakeertan, Gaanakeertan and Naamakeertan. Katha keertan means to think of the Lord and his Leelas by hearing or saying stories about Him. This aspect mainly exists in Harikathaas in which HIS stories are told through music. Music is an essential part of Sankeertan whether it is Kathaa, Gaana or Naama Sankeertan. गानपूर्वकं क्रियमाणं स्तवनं कीर्तनं. Gaana keertan is a method adopted by some Bhaktaas by singing songs composed in praise of the Lord or depicting his Leelaas. Foremost among the Bhaktaas who followed this way are Meera Bai, Chaitanya Mahaaprabhu, Tulsidas, Kabir Das, Surdas, Tukaaram, Thyaga Raja, Bhakta Raamadas, Annamachaarya etc. But Naama Sankeertan is a way that can be followed by all whether he is a literate or an illiterate. This is the easiest of all the various types of Sankeertan.

But whichever path we may adopt, the prime thing that is required is one should contemplate on the Lord (One's Ishta Devata) while doing Sankeertan. We may feel that it is difficult. But we attain this by regularly doing Sankeertan. People forget themselves and dance, sing, weep and laugh like mad people forgetting themselves and the surroundings



while doing Sankeertan. It is infectious. Not only the Sankeertankaar but others also experience it. When Sri Chaitanya Prabhu used to sing in all ecstasy even animals used to enjoy the Sankeertan.

घ्यायेत्तु मनसा मन्त्रं जिह्वोष्ठेन विचालयेत् ।
न कम्पयेत्सिरोग्रीवान् दत्तान् नैव प्रकाशयेत् ॥

Baba was very fond of Naama Sankeertan. Daily, Bhajan used to be conducted in his Durbar. Sri Dasganu Maharaj used to do Harikathaa Sankeertan. Sankeertan was very dear and pleasing to Lord Saibaba. Hence, O' Sai Bhaktaas! Whatever be the form please do Sankeertan sharing with others the pleasure of Sankeertan.

R.V.V.L. NARASIMHA RAO,
"SAIPAADA RANU"



SAI BABA'S 68TH MAHA SAMADHI CELEBRATIONS

The 68th Mahasamadhi Day celebrations of Sri Sai Baba were held from *12th October to 19th October, 1986* in the Sri Sai Spiritual Centre, Bangalore, during which period *H.H. Sri Narasimha Swamiji's Aradhana* was also celebrated.

Vishnusahasranama Parayana and Go-Pooja were conducted on 17-10-1986 and on 18-10-1986, H.H. Sri Narasimha Swamiji's Aradhana was celebrated.

On 19-10-1986 Vishnu Sahasranama Homa was conducted in the morning and in the noon, a large number of devotees and poor were fed. In the evening there was procession of Sai Baba's picture across the main streets of Thyagarajanagar with Nadaswarams, Veda Gosha and Bhajans. Hundreds of devotees attended the procession. The celebrations concluded with Mahamangalarathi at 10.30 p.m.

On all the above days thousands of Sai devotees thronged to the Centre to offer their respects and prayers to Sri Sai Baba.

BABA THE SAVIOUR

Baba used to help those who turned to him for help. It is not only my experience, but also of other Sai devotees, that He continues to help his devotees more so even after his Mahasamadhi in 1918. He is the supreme Spirit and can control all elements of nature including Life and Death. Here is an incident in my life which goes to prove that he had control even over life and death; and He is the "Supreme Lord".

When I was transferred to Pattikonda I fixed up a house which I came to know later, was haunted by evil spirits. Even the owners of the house did not want to occupy it. I tried to change the house but to no purpose, so I prayed to Baba to save my wife from any calamity. One evening when I returned from office, I found her suffering from severe breathing trouble. Our two children were weeping. I immediately brought my family doctor who treated her and told me that she would improve shortly, and left my house.

However her gasping for breath continued and her condition became serious. With tears in her eyes, she asked me to look after the children well. I consoled her saying that there was nothing to worry as long as Baba was with us. I gave her 'Udhi' and prayed to Him to save her life and thereby my family from ruin. I ran up to the doctor and brought him, who on seeing her condition was worried, as the condition was very critical and serious. He asked me to take her to the Government Hospital, Adoni, 50 k.m. from Pattikonda. As it was late, I was helpless and desperate but I was sure that Baba would save her life. The doctor asked me to request the Samithi President to spare his jeep. Taking his suggestion as a direction from Baba, I left at 10 p.m. to call on him. Fortunately the President was there in the room, as he had returned from Kurnool only the same evening. When I explained the situation, he immediately asked his driver to take us to Adoni in his jeep. I felt that it was all Baba's pre-arrangement for helping me. Tears rolled down my eyes for the unbounded help Baba gave to me at the critical time.

It was by his grace that the doctor was also ready to follow us in jeep. It was about 11.30 p.m. or so. My wife was



lying on my lap in the front seat near the driver. The doctor with my two children and an attendant were seated behind us. Her condition was becoming worse and I was chanting Baba's name all the while.

When we were just two to three K.M. away from Adoni, which was visible in the light of the town, the head lights of the jeep failed and the vehicle was stopped as it was risky to drive in the darkness. We were just outside a visible place of our hope and help. I was confused and prayed to Baba to do as he pleased. But I was sure that he would do something to help us. Just at that time to our joy and surprise a lorry was coming to Adoni with bright head lights. Everything happens by Baba's grace. I was sure He wouldn't leave his devotees to suffer in the mid-ocean. The driver started the vehicle and reached the Hospital with the help of that light from behind us. It was about 2 A.M. and we came to know that the doctor was away at Kurnool. Dr. Seetha came to the Hospital and was shocked at the serious condition of the patient. She arranged the oxygen apparatus and gave her the required injection and waited for some time. She told that she was having only one vial which was required in her medical chest. She remarked that if there was a delay of even 10 minutes, my wife would have been lost for ever to us. She also stated that she never came across such a serious "Cardiac attack" till then.

There was only one Vyal of injection for our use with her and if it were not there all our efforts would have failed, as we could not have got it from medical shop especially at that hour of the night. We were waiting eagerly by her bed side chanting the name "Sai Ram" all the while. At about 5.30 A.M. by Baba's grace she opened her eyes and talked to us. She had improved a lot. If Baba had not sent that lorry with brilliant lights, we would never have reached Adoni and the family would have been ruined. Thus Baba helped me at the right time and saved not only my wife's life but also saved the family from ruin. So brother devotees! Baba's ways are unfathomable and his unfailing mercy and love are always with those who depend on him.

May Baba Bless all.

Shri D.V.K. Krishnamurthy
30-25, Sri Sai Nilayam, Srinivasa Nagar,
Nandyal-518 501 (A.P.).

'HOW I CAME IN CONTACT WITH SRI SAI'

It was in the year, 1980, August 13th, that I was placed under suspension (I work in the City Civil Court) and the suspension ran for nearly 6 months, till 16th January 81, when I was re-instated. I would like to mention here how I came in contact and got firm faith in Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi.

After suspension, one day I went to see my sister, and my brother-in-law was also present, when I told them my problems and that my mind was in a state of confusion and was not calm. He (my brother-in-law) got up and went to the pooja room and brought out a book and gave it to me and said, 'Read this book any number of times, with faith and devotion, you will achieve what you desire and will get peace of mind'. So saying he handed over the book. I took and opened the book and turned some pages here and there and when I came to the photograph of Sri Sai, I put my hand on His feet and prayed. What my brother-in-law says, must come true as he is a great devotee of yours and one day I too shall be one. That book was 'Sri Sai Charitra'.

I started reading the book with great devotion, and in Chapter 15th there is an instance wherein one Mr. Cholkar was present at a Keertan of Sri Sai, and he mentally prayed that his services be made permanent as he was a poor man with large family to support. When I read this I thought what a co-incidence this was and that is why Baba sent me to my sister's place. I prayed that I was suspended for no fault of mine and that I should be re-instated and posted to a Court of my choice. Baba has said in His Eleven Sayings, 'I shall guide and help all those who come to me, surrender to me with heart and soul'. Now I write this article to confirm the faith in Him of others, I am His devotee and visit Shirdi every year, and He looks after me in times of danger and also solves my problems.

Pray to Sri Sai, to give peace and Happiness to all.

I. Prathap

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NEW SAI TEMPLES — SIGNIFICANCE AND SOCIAL ASPECT.

With the spread of Sai-devotion, we frequently learn about construction of Sai Temples in various States. Though this would provide an opportunity for Sai-devotees scattered all over India to come closer and thereby promote love, it should not be forgotten that Saibaba strove to bring about social reforms through eradication of evil customs, besides being of great help to aspirants in the matter of spiritual enlightenment.

As for elevation of the aspirants in spiritual field, Baba's teachings have been followed by millions as can be seen from the increase in the number of His devotees day by day — so much so that barriers of States and languages have almost been smashed through medium of Sai-devotion. This, all will agree, is an amazing feat of Baba's divine power.

As for second aspect of Baba's mission viz. social reforms, a great deal has to be done by His devotees. Sai-devotees have to play an important role in moulding the attitude of society to suit Sai-doctrine. We visualize Sai as the force of good battling with the forces of evil. This, of course, is to be achieved by following the teachings of Baba and in the light of His deeds.

From the talks of Baba with His close devotees who would assemble in Dwarkamai, it would be seen that He attached utmost importance to social reforms. In the course of conversation, Baba would often point out social evils through fables for he firmly believed that these evils are the root cause of all sufferings. Many evil customs such as observance of untouchability, animal sacrifice, woman-torture and the like still prevail blocking the way of progress of the society (of late more evils such as spread of liquor and narcotics, indiscipline among youngsters, violence etc. have been added and have become a great concern for the rulers and the respected elders in the society).

In order to tackle the above problems, Sai devotees have to launch a drive through teachings of Sai so as to bring

about a change in the attitude of people. This would be in conformity with second aspect of Baba's mission viz. social reforms. Apart from arranging religious functions in newly built Sai Temples, devotees should pay attention to eradicate the various evils cited above, especially in villages. This should become a *code of conduct* for all Sai-devotees. In other words, while arranging programmes in newly built Sai Temples, importance should be attached to eradication of social evils through sermons as also by keeping a vigil with the help of appointed Sai-volunteers who would constantly watch activities in their village and report events to respected elders in the village who had taken initiative in constructing Sai Temple. This system, if adopted as an experiment, may put an end to various social evils.

May the newly constructed Sai temples become source of joy to aspirants and centres of social reforms.

S.N. Awachat
Section Supervisor,
Indian Globe Chambers,
4th Floor, Fort, Bombay 400 001.

AN EARNEST APPEAL

Subscribers to "Shri Sai Leela" (English or Marathi) are requested to always quote their Roll or Registration Number whenever they happen to communicate with Sansthan Office regarding non-receipt or otherwise of Sai Leela or renewal of their subscription etc. Also while remitting M.O./D.D., they should invariably mention their specific object behind the payment with a view to avoiding unnecessary correspondence and delay in action by Sansthan Office. Issues of Shri Sai Leela are posted to every live subscriber invariably by the 3rd week of the month at the latest. Delay in Postal transit may be kept in mind.



SAI'S GRACIOUS MIRACLES TO FORCE MY RE-ADMISSION IN HIS BLISSFUL FOLD.

The year 1982 is a year to be reminisced and a year to reckon with for me as it was during that year I was readmitted to Sai Parivar like a failed old student getting readmitted to an Educational Institution.

I had known about Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi earlier from my boyhood days. When I was studying in a High School at Chitradurga during 1964-65, I chanced to visit Shri Sai Mandir every Thursday along with my dear mother in one Dr. Rama Rao's house near by.

Being a young lad of only 13 years, I was greatly impressed by the conspicuous, intense devotion of Dr. Rama Rao and his family and other visiting devotees there. Ironically enough my visits to Sai Mandir were not born out of any real piety on my part to Sai Baba the Great as by my boyish inquisitiveness to listen to the sweet melody of the devout bhajans and to pamper my palate, with the sweeter still, Baba's Prasad distributed invariably at the close of the function everyday.

And at home it came my way perchance to conduct Sai Pooja as and when my father, a State level Officer in the Educational Department of the Karnataka State, happened to be out of station on official tours. And in deference to the wishes of my father I did the Pooja not with the necessary devotion or shradhdha but mechanically as a matter of daily routine in the family.

When all was thus well, before long as irony of fate would have it, to our utter and unbearable shock my father was snatched away from our midst as a result of an acute heart attack. The untimely and premature death of the only earning member and the head of the family deprived us all of his august and imposing presence amidst us, his ever-affectionate touch and loving care. My young widowed mother and we, her five children, were thrown to suffer the consequential loneliness in this world and were bereft of the sense of security and the comforts of a well-looked after and disciplined family.

Despite being young but not so young, I knew to the best of my knowledge and belief that my father was all along enjoying the unanimous and unsolicited admiration of not only the entire officialdom but also of the public outside for his honesty and uprightness in service till his passing away. After his disappearance from the face of the material world, the so-called entire circle of friends and colleagues and also our close relations who were hitherto crowding at my father's office and residence for favours of all kinds now began to exhibit, unashamedly though, an uncanny indifference and disregard. With tears in my eyes I had to be a passive and helpless witness to the pinching sigh of grief and anguish of my mother and the pitiable condition of the youngsters, the youngest of whom was still on the lap of the indulgent mother. The egoism and the basic selfishness of man perhaps has no limits or remedy. As one of the direct and immediate consequences of the abrupt cessation of income to the family, sizable as it was, I had to discontinue my high school studies just to save a few coins and to be of help to my mother in her daily routine.

Under the circumstances, with no prospect of any immediate relief to the deprived family it was thought wise and expedient to leave Chitradurga and shift to Bangalore where my father had managed to erect a small and modest house, which was our only asset.

And yes! we moved to Bangalore and occupied our house with a view to settling down once and for all. Life became really miserable to us with no monetary income; but with an unflinching faith in the Omini-potent and All-merciful God, my mother and I struggled on and on to keep our body and soul together. Imagine the pathetic condition of a middle class family in a city like Bangalore when cost of living was shooting up almost every day. As we, the children were growing up in age, the demands of the family were also naturally growing more and more. And what would the young helpless mother do except console and pacify us with soothing words while praying inwardly for better days to dawn. Upon her fond and persuasive goading I began to put in efforts in a small measure to resume my interrupted studies and by His Grace came out successful in my S.S.L.C.



Examinations in due course. It should be called the most trying and difficult period for our family as a whole. Feeling desolate and dejected and unable to bear up the seemingly insurmountable financial difficulties and the plight of our family, many a time I wished to attempt to suicide myself or to desert the house. But on every such occasion an unseen power held me back and advised me to face life as it came to me boldly.

On the advice of my mother and other elders I approached the Government for employment as the legitimate ward of a deceased Government Servant and was fortunately offered the post of a second division clerk on compassionate grounds, in the Educational Department. I joined duty in the year 1974 and have since been working.

My first younger sister who had already come of age was married to an M.D. in the year 1973 and the couple are now settled in Princeton, U.S.A. and reported to be happy and peaceful. Gentlemen, this is another concrete proof of the unfailing protection and Mercy of God, for can we, by any stretch of imagination expect a Doctor of Medicine willing to wed a girl from a comparatively poorer family when mounting demands of dowry are so rampant in our society? No. we can never. But had not God willed otherwise in our favour?

Subsequently in the year 1977, God blessed me with a loving and understanding wife and I am a father of three children now.

My first younger brother got his B.D.S. Degree from the Bangalore Dental College and is now prosecuting his higher studies in U.S.A. My youngest brother is flourishing with a lucrative business of his own using his ambassador Car. My youngest sister has also been recently married to a businessman in Bangalore itself and the couple is well off.

I was often driven to wonder as to how all the above mentioned good things took place in my family at the proper time while the family itself was passing through hard days with a very meagre income. It thrills me and shakes to the nerve whenever I happen to compare the happenings in the

family following my father's demise to the condition now obtaining in which we are looked upon by the society with respect and love. Ofcourse we are self-sufficient in every way.

Although my material and worldly life was apparently satisfactory and there was nothing to feel agreived about, personally I was restless and there was constantly a sense of emptiness in me; I could not possibly find out what was wanting in me innately. Had I been with my father at his beside, I could have in all probability sought his mature guidance and advice as I would do from a Guru. This state of mind then made me wander about visiting Ashrams in quest of peace and tranquility that would keep me steady in the household.

Not too long after, I was invited to attend the marriage of a good friend of mine at Brindavan, White Field, Bangalore. When I reached the place of the function at 9 a.m. I witnessed a large number of devotees, both Indians and Foreigners, eagerly waiting for the gracious darshan of Shri Satya Sai Baba while some others were rendering devoutly melodious bhajans.

In the atmosphere surcharged with divine vibrations, when I was watching the goings-on of the function in the Kalyana Mantapa, my eyes accidently fell on a book with a gentleman on my left. Curiously I dared to ask him much against my wont as to what book it was and if I may please see it. When the gentleman, obviously a devotee of Shri Sai Baba, handed me the book in his inimitable humble manner, I was taken by utter surprise, to find that it was Shri Sai Satcharitra in Kannada version, with a majestic and magnanimous picture of Sai Baba on the outer cover. I felt overwhelmed with an inexplicable joy and surprise at the very sight of this wonderful good old man after a long lapse and a sense of gratification and fullfilment were felt running through my veins. I felt elated and exalted for an unknown reason. Where was this old prophet all these years? And from where has he now come to my sight so unexpectedly? It would be no exaggeration to state that I felt I was back again with my own father infusing in me a sense of security and bliss. I could not withhold my tears of joy and weepingly



querried from the owner of the book as to where I could obtain a copy for my own reading. I was blessed with the address of the author and a copy from him subsequently. My frequent questioning and my wonderment at the mystery of the creation with its variety and immensity were all answered to my entire satisfaction. The restlessness and the unexplained tension in my head also vanished never to return. In the innermost chambers of my heart, I felt that it was Sai Baba who had been rendering succour all these years, although I had forgotten him after we moved to Bangalore.

Not only myself but the whole family have now become staunch devotees of Sai Baba and are worshipping him with renewed strength and devotion.

At His behest I visited Shri Shirdi twice and drank to my heart's content the nectar of His love and Grace. I am hopeful to the core that He shall take me there once more this year along with my family.

My fervent Pranams unto Him for ever and ever and sincere prayers to bless us all with the right vision of life Divine.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The 23rd All India Sai Devotees' Convention will be held at All India Sai Samaj, Mylapore, Madras 600 004 from 29-1-1987 to 1-2-1987 and Guru Bhakti will be the theme of the Convention. A marble idol of Sri Sai Baba will be installed on 2-2-1987. It is proposed to bring out a souvenir to mark the holy occasion.

PROPHET OF SECULARISM

Looking through the life of the Great Avatar, it appears his main mission was to weld the two major and other communities of this country together and cement their relations for a purposeful life. Despite many efforts made by some bakhtas to know His origin, it was not possible to confirm whether he came from Hindu or Muslim parents, and those who did some research were dumb-founded and enthralled by His grace so much so that they forgot their objective. The radiance of Lord over whelmed the enquirer so much that he would completely surrender himself to him by getting rid of ego and merge himself in Him, a position in which there is no knowing of caste or creed or nation. He could recite Quran Shareef with ease and yet He knew all Yogic practices. Those who have had the great karma of having His darshan have testified that 'if you think He was a Hindu He looked like a Yavan and if you thought Him to be a Yavan, He looked like a pious Hindu.' He celebrated the Hindu festival of Ram Navmi with great eclat and encouraged the Sandal procession of mohammedans. Wrestling bouts were arranged during these festivals and He gave good prizes to the winners. 'Gopal Kala' ceremony was religiously arranged on Gokul Astami and during Moharram a Tazia was prepared in Dwarkamayi and then taken in procession from there through the village of Shirdi. As is well known, the Dhuni was started in the mosque from the very beginning but on Id festivals, He allowed Mohammedans to perform Nimaz in the place. His ears were no doubt pierced according to the Hindu practice, but it is on record that he advocated the practice of circumcision. All the Hindu practices were usual with him, i.e. like grinding on the hand mill, blowing of the conch and bells, oblations in the fire, singing of Bhajans, worshipping of Baba's feet after a due wash. Even the best of Agnihotris and Ved Pathis fell at his august Feet and surrendered themselves to Him, even though some of them came to test Him.

There is a story recorded by Hemadpant that one Javhar Ali came to Shirdi and started living with Baba in the Masjid. Baba in His Grace allowed him to dominate Him so much so that Ali began calling Baba his disciple. This was chiefly on



account of his being a muslim theologian and because he could recite Koran in sweet tongue. Ali, being ignorant of the Greatness of Baba, tried to exploit him and when he was tested by the people and ultimately found wanting, he ran away from Shirdi and returned after many years to fall at Baba's feet and begged for forgiveness. It was a clean example of clearing away the ego of a so-called theologian and putting him on the correct path of a truly religious person.

Megha, a poor illiterate Brahmin, was motivated by his Master, Rao Bahadur H.V. Sathe out of good faith to go to Shirdi for darshan of the Lord. While travelling he learnt that Baba was a mussalman and so he shuddered at the prospect of falling at His Feet. When he arrived at the Masjid, Baba just on setting eyes on him told him that since he was a high caste Brahmin, and Baba a low Muslim, he would lose his caste by coming there and asked him to go away. Megha on hearing these words perspired from head to the foot and was perplexed as to how Baba came to know what was passing in his mind. Since he was not allowed entry into Dwarkamayi, he had to go away and came back after some years when on the intervention of a good Bhakhta of Baba, Megha was allowed entry. Seeing the innocence of the man, Baba felt pity on him and changed him from inside and in due course of time, Megha felt that Baba was an incarnation of Shiva. To worship his Shiva (Baba), he drank the washing of His Feet. He used to do this after worshipping at all the temples of Shirdi and when once he returned to Dwarkamayi without worshipping God Khandoba as the door of the temple was closed there, Baba sent him back saying that the door of the temple was open, and when he went again, the door of the Deity was really open and Megha performed his Puja there, after which only Baba accepted the Puja on Him.

Baba used to hear verses from Koran Shareef with great pleasure. Once a Rohilla, tall and fat came to Shirdi and stayed there because of Baba. Day and night he used to recite in a loud voice kalma and shout "*ALLA HO AKBAR*". The people of Shirdi tolerated this harsh noise and shouts for some time, but when they could get no sleep and got disturbed, they approached Baba requesting Him to check the Rohilla, but Baba told them to allow him to recite God's

name, as He liked to hear prayers to God better than anything else. As is well known, the name of *ALLAH* was always on his lips and He was always engrossed in self the outward happenings making no differences to him.

In those days, Shirdi was considered to ly within the limits of Pandharpur, a highly religious centre in Maharashtra, which itself is the southern-most centre of Dwarka, and therefore Baba gave the name Dwarkamayi to the old and dilapidated Masjid. This is the place which welcomes all people from all Varnas, religious sects and beliefs, nations and colours, with open arms. The one particular thing about coming to the abode of Baba was that no one could leave it without His permission and if anyone did so, he would invite calamities on himself, and if Baba ordered anyone to quit the Mosque, he could stay there no longer. Since He had the good of His people at His Heart, He sometimes gave them hints or suggestion, which people would obey with great pleasure, and if these were not acted upon or some deviation took place, calamities would befall them. An European gentleman, who came to Shirdi to see Baba, was asked to leave the next day but he did not heed the advice and left on his own schedule with the result that he met with an accident in his tonga on way to Kopergaon and had to be hospitalised there for some time.

It is believed that Sant Ramdas, who flourished in the seventeenth century, had also come with the mission of uniting the two major communities of India, in which he succeeded to a considerable extent. He persuaded Muslims not to injure the sentiments of their Hindu brethren by refraining from killing cows and protecting Hindu Idols in their temples. His influence on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was greatly responsible for latter's extreme secular way of ruling. Within a period of two centuries, however, the two communities again started splitting apart and it is then that Sai Nath Maharaj had to come to bridge the rising gulf.

He always uttered *Allah Malik* and advised people that *Ram* and *Rahim* are one and the same, and that there was not the slightest difference between them and it was sheer ignorance out of which their devotees fought between



themselves. He would say 'You ignorant folk, join hands and bring both the communities together, act sanely and thus you will gain your object of national unity. It is no good to argue on religion, because all religious tenets are mere truths and if you stick to them, *God* will protect you. Yoga, sacrifice, penance, knowledge and devotion to duty are the means to attain *God* and if you do not stick to these things, it is useless to think of any other thing. Return evil with good and do not retaliate. Think good for everybody, even for those whom you do not like for any reason.'

Sidik Falke was a good muslim gentleman from Kalyan, who after returning from *Haj*, came to *Shirdi* to obtain the grace of Baba. The Lord Sai Nath ignored him for nine months and did not allow him to step into the Masjid. Ultimately, Madhavrao Deshpande (Shama) who was very close to Baba, intervened and requested Baba to take pity on the old Haji. It is said that Baba told him that without the grace of *God*, nobody could enter the Masjid. To test the Haji, Baba told Shama to enquire from the Haji if he was prepared to pay Rs. 40,000 in instalments and when Shama came and replied that Haji was prepared to pay even forty lacs; again Baba told Shama that He was going to butcher a goat in the Masjid and asked to enquire if the Haji would like to have mutton, haunch or testicles of the goat. Shama returned with the reply that the old man would be happy to receive a small crumb from Baba's mud pot. On hearing the reply, Baba approached the Haji and advised him not to be proud of being a Haji and read the Holy Koran dutifully. Being admonished thus, the old man felt humbled and was happy that after all Baba had accepted him. Baba got a few baskets of mangoes purchased and sent to the resting place of the Haji and also gave him Rs. 55/- Himself. It is after this that the Haii was enlisted in Baba's Darbar. Similar is the incident of one Moolay Shastri of Nasik, who was an orthodox Agnihotri Brahmin, well read in six Shastras and respected by all. The shastri wanted to see Baba's hand to which He did not agree and instead offered him four plain-tains. After his usual ritual at his resting place, when Mooley Shastri again came to Baba, and when people began to worship Baba, he threw flowers at him from some distance. It is said that all of a sudden the Shastri did not find Baba at

His seat but saw his late Guru Ghilap Swami there. He was thrilled and became speechless for some time. Ultimately true sense dawned on him and he fell at Baba's feet and stood before Him with hands folded.

Amir Shakkar, a butcher, belonging to a village in Kopergaon had an attack of rheumatism, which put him to immense pain and so he came to Shirdi and prayed to Baba to relieve him. Baba placed him in Chavadi, where from Baba passed every morning and evening and every alternate day went there in procession to sleep there. Amir was lucky to get Baba's darshan often and it is thus that he got cured. One night Baba asked Abdul to see what was dashing against his bed. When Abdul brought the lamp, he found something moving near Amir's cushion. It was a serpent, moving its head up and down. The serpent was immediately done away with Baba's timely warning, the life of Amir Shakkar was saved.

One Fakir Pir Mohd of Malegaon, whom Baba called Bade Baba, once lived with Baba in the Masjid. An old sickly goat was got by somebody there and Baba asked Bade Baba to cut it at one stroke so as to offer it as an oblation. The Pir refused to do it. Then Baba asked Shama, so close a devotee, to kill it but he went to the wada and did not return. Baba's eyes then fell on Kakasaheb Dixit for the job. Though he was a high class Brahmin, he brought a knife and was ready to kill the goat. All the people present were wondering as to when Bade Baba, a Mohammedan, was unwilling to kill a life, how this pure Brahmin, who never knew killing, was prepared to do this heinous job. But, when his hand was just about to come down, Baba stopped him from doing the thing. It was a test for the devotee out of which he came out successful. The goat was then sent to a place called Takkyia, where fakirs used to sit, but before it could reach there, it fell dead on the way.

Baba was always encouraging people to utter God's name and in his presence made His Bhakhtas sing the name for seven days, which is called Namasaptaha. Once he asked *Das Ganu Maharaj* to do the Namasaptaha. Das Ganu was originally a devotee of Lord Vitthal, and so he put forward a



condition. He said that he would do it only if Baba assured him that Vitthal would appear on the seventh day. Baba assured him of this, saying that the Pandhari of Vitthal and Dwarka of Lord Krishna was also in Shirdi and that no one need come from outside. Vitthal would very much manifest himself and all that was required was devotee's earnestness to have the darshan. After the saptaha was over and when Kakasahib Dixit was sitting in meditation, he saw Vitthal in a vision. At noon, in the Durbar, Baba asked him if he had seen Vitthal. This was before all and in the evening a Hawker came to the Masjid for selling the pictures of Vitthal, which tallied exactly with the figure which Kaka Saheb had seen in the vision. This showed what Baba would do for his Bhaktas and how much he cared for them.

Sai Baba was an apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity, a beacon light to show us the way in life. It is on record that He guaranteed the welfare of his Bhaktas, announcing clearly that there would never be any dearth or scarcity of food and clothes in the homes of my devotees. It is my special characteristic that I look always to and provide for the welfare of those devotees who worship me whole-heartedly with their minds fixed on me. Fix your mind in remembering me always, so that it will not wander elsewhere, towards body, wealth and home. Then you will be calm, peaceful and care-free.' It is unfortunate that even after this clear exposition, we suffer in various ways because of our ignorance. It is high time we took Baba's words to heart, and without consideration of faith and religion, colour or region, love each other as brothers from the same family and raise this Nation to the same heights to which it once belonged.

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PURE DEVOTION PAYS.....

I learnt this at the tender age of 13, and it has only made my love for and faith in Baba all the more strong. Since then 'Sai Baba' is inscribed indelibly in letters of gold in my young mind.

It was just 7 or 8 months since we had returned from Zambia and with much difficulty I had got myself admitted in a good school in the 8th standard. Accomodation had been a problem, but soon, by the grace of Baba, we managed to get comfortable accomodation. From the new residence my school was about 22 kms. away and I had to travel by the local trains, and during the typical Bombay monsoons, it was obviously a great problem. Almost every other day I took ill. In the middle of the scholastic year, it was impossible to secure admission in any of the nearby schools were I to escape the incessant down-pour. Moreover, my 2nd language being French, it was necessary to get admission in a school that offered French. As far as our knowledge would go, there were no such schools in our area. It therefore was really an issue engaging the mind of all at home. But my parents did not lose hope. They kept on saying that Baba would find a way out for us.

On one fine day, my father's colleague told him of a school, quite close to our house, that offered French. But he also warned that admission should be a problem, since it was one of the best schools in the area, and a very strict one at that. It was indeed a thrilling news for us. We made inquiries here and there, but got the same reply; "It is futile to seek admission there".

Unexpectedly, all our relatives planned to make a weekend trip to Shirdi. We also joined them. I was pretty young then and I do not now recall the details of the trip. But one thing I remember very vividly. I remember sitting in the main Mandir and becoming oblivious of all around me while I concentrated only on the statue of Baba. Well, I did not have to tell Him my problem; it seemed as if He knew everything. I just sat there, and for the first time in my life, I experienced something new — something that I cannot define in words



even today. I must have sat there for an hour or so and all the time there was Baba in my mind. Since that day, each time I want to think of Him, I just have to close my eyes and right in the centre of forehead between my eyes, I can see Baba clearly. Sometimes I can see Him walking around in Shirdi, sometimes seated on the stone.

The very next day after returning home, my father and I went to the school and in a matter of fifteen minutes, I was enrolled as a student. No more details are required as every thing speaks for itself. Baba has become so much a part of me that I do not do anything without a thought of him. Since that event, I have been to Shirdi 4 to 5 times. A fortnight ago too, I had been to Him. Actually, there is no need to pray. He knows all that we need. You just have to look into those love-filled eyes with devotion and all your problems and worries melt away. I am almost 19 now and all these years have only strengthened 'our relationship'!!

My prostrations to SAI BABA.

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WHY GOOD PEOPLE SUFFER AND THE WICKED FLOURISH ?

The above question hovers in the minds of good people, so much so that at times they begin to doubt the existence of God. People versed in scriptural lore are prone to ask the said question very often. This happens mainly due to lack of knowledge of the cosmic law. Once Arjuna put the very question to Lord Krishna, the latter being the Supreme Judge in spiritual matters. The Lord, however, kept quiet for some days and one fine morning asked Arjuna to accompany Him.

Disguised as mendicants, they stood before the

mansion of a wealthy man in the town. As the Lord asked for alms, the man appeared shouting at the Lord with a contemptuous look, "Get out from here at once or else I may have to ask my servant to drive you out from my courtyard". The Lord quietly walked out, stood at a distance and blessed the wealthy man; — "May your riches multiply and bring you luxury — May you live happily in this mansion for hundred years". Arjuna, who witnessed Lord showering His grace on the arrogant wealthy man, got annoyed with the attitude of the Lord and remarked; "O Lord! how is that you bless this evil-doer who has just used harsh words and insulted you? What makes you to shower your grace on this arrogant man? "The Lord smiled and asked Arjuna to follow Him quietly. Then they made their way towards the house of a man; — poor and destitute. The man received the Lord and Arjuna, in the guise of brahmins, with a warm welcome and requested them to partake of the food which was being served in the inner room, nay he fed them by giving his share. After meals, the Lord called the poor man and his family members and said that before saying good-bye, he wanted to bless them; "May your cow die after fifteen years — May you and your family members die one by one thereafter". Saying this, the Lord left the house of the poor man, Arjuna following him with fury and doubt. "O Lord! What is wrong with you? You blessed that arrogant wealthy man who poured all sorts of abuses on us and cursed the poor helpless man who starved himself and fed us with his share." The Lord smiled and said. "Cool down Arjuna, I understand your unrest. Let me explain my attitude which seems to be strange from your point of view". Listen! The wealthy man was blessed by me so that he may indulge in activities which would tie him to the wheel of birth and death permanently. In other words, his so-called riches would, in due course, cause his complete ruin. Now as for poor man, what you regard as a curse is actually a boon for, through 'curse' of death I had the poor man, his cow and family members liberated from the wheel of birth and death. In other words, I put an end to their sufferings for, they would merge with me, a state saints and sages seek through meditation and hard penance". Delighted at the explanation of the Lord, Arjuna bowed down to Him with deep reverence.



To sum up, the so called riches cause complete ruin whereas the good deeds lead a man towards the lotus feet of the Lord. That is why Saibaba ignored riches and attached utmost importance to good deeds.

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HOMAGE TO HIS HOLINESS SWAMI KESAVAI AHJI

Presiding over 5th Anniversary function of the Mahasamadhi of His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji under the auspices of Sri Sai Baba Bhaktha Samajam (Regd), Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir, Shenoy Nagar, Madras 600 030, in the evening of 14.8.'86 Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Bhaskaran, Judge, High Court, Madras said that the life, work and teachings of H.H. Swami Kesavaiahji are of eternal value and paid glorious tributes to the qualities of head and heart of H.H. Swami Kesavaiahji. He appealed to all to cherish the services of the Swamiji and said that the Swamiji's message of peace and his service to society were unique. The Swamiji had become a Guru to thousands of followers of Shirdi Sai Baba. Those who came to him were spiritually elevated. The Swamiji had dedicated his whole life to spread the message of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. Referring to the Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir, the great edifice, he said that he considered it as a temple, a house of God, constructed not by an ordinary human agency, but by a Godly person, H.H. Swami Kesavaiahji, who was able to do it by the blessings of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. The Hon'ble Judge also spoke on Guru Bhakthi and the role played by His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji in the spreading of Bhakthi and Sai cult. He congratulated the Samajam for the excellent work it was doing in propagating the ideals of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi.

Samajam celebrated the 5th Mahasamadhi day of its founder H.H. Swami Kesavaiahji with solemnity and devotion on 14th August, 1986, with a day long programme of puja, poor-feeding in the morning and public function in the evening at Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir, Shenoy Nagar, Madras.

Messages received from Mr. Justice P.R. Gokulakrishnan, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat, Ahmedabad and Mr. Justice Venkataswamy and Mr. Justice S. Swami Kannu, Judges, High Court of Madras and other notable personalities wishing the function a success were read out.

Earlier Shri M. Uttam Reddy, Chairman of the Samajam welcoming the gathering said that His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji, Founder of the Samajam had done more than any one else for spreading the message of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi, for over 40 years. The Samajam which was established as instrument for the propagation of the message of Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi was 25 years old.

Thousands of devotees circumambulated the Samadhi of Gurudev Swami Kesavaiahji. After the meeting Udhi and other items of prasadam were distributed to all the devotees and Sri Malaysia Vasudevan, Cine play back artist and party sang devotional songs.

Sri L. Narendradoss proposed the vote of thanks.

*Raja Krishan Moorthi,
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UNISON

Mammon-worship leads to division,
Sai-worship leads to unison!

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BABAJI IS STILL ALIVE!

I, Shri Chandubhai Mehta, my wife Smt. Manuben and my entire family are ardent devotees of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. We are residing very near Shirdi Sai temple, in Ahmedabad in a street named as Kavishar's Pole near Balahanuman Khadia.

We had been fortunate enough to serve Shri Swami Sai Sarananandji, for 17 years. We also accompanied Sai Sarananandji to Shirdi, a number of times. Our Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient God Shri Babaji has personally appeared to us many times and has given many experiences. Few of them are narrated below.

1. In 1980, between 12th and 15th March, a man dressed in silken shirt and dhoti came to my house one day, between 2 and 4 p.m. He gave a packet to my wife. My wife requested him to sit for a while. But, he went away without speaking anything. She opened the packet and found that there were 4½ tickets from Ahmedabad to Manmad by Navjivan Express. On my return from the office my wife told me of the above incident. I inquired with the Railway authorities and found that it was true. I firmly believe that it was Saibaba only who gave us the tickets. I told the incident to Swami Shri Sai Sarananandji and he also assured that Baba wanted us to go to Shirdi.

2. In 1981, between 12th and 15th March, a man came to my house between 12 and 2.00 p.m. and threw a packet. My daughter opened the packet and found that there were 4½ tickets from Ahmedabad to Manmad.

3. In 1982, on 12th March, between 2 and 4 p.m. a man looking like Rikshaw Driver came and gave one packet to my wife and went away. On opening the packet, she found 4½ tickets from Ahmedabad to Manmad by rail.

4. In 1983, on 15th March my wife and daughter went to have darshan of Swami Shri Sai Sarananandji's Samadhi at 14, Prakrutikunj Society, Shreyas Tekra, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad. My wife carried neivedya with her. The lady looking after the Samadhi asked her to clean a jar and then to put neivedya in it. As my wife inverted the jar for cleaning, there came out a bundle containing 4½ tickets (Reserved). This time I thought to preserve these tickets

as Prasad. Accordingly, I travelled on my own, on 30-4-83, I have still preserved the tickets, given by our Baba's own hands.

5. In 1984, on 15th March, in Shri Kusumben's residence (Kusumben is also an ardent devotee of Sai Baba and owner of the Hotel Capital, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad) a bundle of 4½ tickets and reservation form were lying, between Babaji's Photo and Swamiji's photo. Shri Kusumben gave us the bundle on the next day morning Aarti at Baba's temple in Surti Pole, Ahmedabad.

In 1985, in the morning of 12th January, as my wife came out of Surti's pole, for going home, a man appeared before her and said that he wanted to go to Gangasagar, but the ticket was not available. He gave one bundle to her. My wife requested him to come to my place, but he said he would come afterwards. The packet contained 2 mangoes, Udi and Rs.280/- for the tickets. A week before this incident, in a dream, my daughter saw Swamiji, asking for mangoes. We also offered mangoes as neivedya twice in a day in Sainath's temple.

This year, between 3rd and 4th January, a couple appeared before my wife, near the Sainath's temple, as she was coming out after morning Aarti. They told her that they had been going to Gangasagar every year for the last eleven years, but this time the tickets were not available. At 11 O'clock in the night of 4th January we had just slept and there was a knock on the door. My daughter woke up and found a packet containing two mangoes, Udi and Rs.280/-. She opened the door and went out in the street but she could not trace anybody.

Thus continuously for the last seven years, Babaji has been showering His blessings upon us. It is my firm belief that Babaji appears before the Bhaktas even after so many years of his Mahasamadhi on 15-10-1918. We continue to believe that Babaji is still alive. May He shower His blessings upon all of us.

Chandubhai Mehta





SADGURU SAINATH IS IMMORTAL HIS MIRACLES ARE INCREDIBLE & INFINITE.

To be frank, I knew nothing about Sri Shirdi Sai Baba earlier. One Mr. Rao, a retired Engineer has been staying in our colony for the past nearly two years with his family. They worship Sai on all days and conduct Bhajans on Thursdays. We, as neighbours, took part in all bhajans and thus became aware of Sai Baba and His leelas.

It is said that Chy. Syamala, daughter of Mr. Rao, is a gifted child and would sit in meditation for hours together during worship. While she is in *dhyān*, it appears, Baba gives *darshan* to her and talks to her. When she puts forth any of the problems of the devotees, Baba gives the solution to them. During Bhajans, the spirit of Baba speaks through Syamala, blesses all the devotees and answers their questions. Only with His grace and kind blessings we could perform the marriage of our daughter in May, 1985.

One night, in the month of December, 1985, while I was sleeping close to the window in my bed room, at about 2.00 A.M., I saw Sadguru Sainath inserting His hand through the window and showing His 'Abhayahastha' to me. On seeing this remarkable manifestation of His Omnipresence, I woke up in great pleasure and surprise and prayed to Him with folded hands. Meanwhile, I heard a big sound of breaking of the doors of the rear room of my house. Immediately I got up from my bed and switched on the lights. Then I saw three thieves throwing away the crow-bar and taking to their heels by jumping over the compound wall. Then only I understood that Baba had come to my room to wake me and to save me from the possible theft. Baba has thus proved His saying, 'Even when you sleep, I will be awake and watchful'. It is literally true that Baba always protects His devotees, who have full faith in Him.

Beginning from the last Datta Jayanthi day (26-12-85), Nama Saptha Saptaham was performed in Shirdi Sai Mandir at Vijayawada. I used to attend and participate in all Arthis throughout and receive thirtha prasadam. I had the good fortune of having the darshan of Baba's Padukas brought from Shirdi; meeting and receiving blessings from great devotees who came there. Soon after the completion of the Saptha Saptaham, with

the kind blessings and promptitude of Lord Sainath, I could visit the Holy Shirdi and have His darshan. The Blissful form of all pervading Sainath is indescribable. On return from Shirdi, as usual I have been attending the Thursday Bhajans in our colony and spending the spare time in reading Sai Satcharitra etc.

Chy. Syamala has not been keeping well for the past four days. I have been attending on her both morning and evening, enquiring about her health etc. On Monday 24-2-'86 afternoon, I was stunned to see the situation there and I was shaken to my bones. I could not control my agony — tears rolled down. Chy. Syamala, a beloved child of Baba was in bed with a paralytic attack, unable to move her right hand and right leg. I could not even speak for some time. I could not understand how this beloved child of Baba became a victim to this deadly disease. On enquiry, I came to know that Chy. Syamala was all right in the morning. At 9.30 A.M., it appears she complained of head-ache and heaviness in the head and went to bed to have some rest. After a while she became practically unconscious and continued to be like that for about four hours. No one could wake her up by any means. At 1.30 P.M. she opened her eyes by herself and expressed, in a very low voice, to her father, who was helplessly sitting by her bedside, that she was feeling very heavy and painful in the left half of her head, as though all the blood veins and nerves in that part were twisted and bundled up and also that she was not able to move the right leg and right hand and they were also heavy. It was considered by her father as a case of Cerebral Thrombosis and paralytic stroke of the right side. Immediately he tried to get the help of his cousin brother to secure the services of a Paralysis Specialist. But his cousin was not available. They were all in a confused mind and grief-stricken. I was helpless and unable to see her condition. I went back to my house and was eagerly awaiting my husband. As soon as he came back home, I explained the situation and we both came to see Syamala with the intention of taking her to a doctor.

In the meantime, thinking that Sadguru Sainath, the protector of all, alone can help them in this crisis, and with firm faith in Him, Mr. Rao took Syamala to Pooja mandir and made her to sit. She was asked to pray and meditate on Baba. On this occasion she was in meditation for 40 minutes. During this period, it appears Baba gave darshan to her, rubbed her head with His hand and said 'Why



fear when I am here'. He also said that her paralytic condition would disappear within five days, but wanted her to attend the Sai Mandir and do pradakshinas for three days—21 times each day. He also wanted her to take His Udi both morning and evening mixed in milk. After Baba's touch over the head, she felt a great relief in the head. Syamala's father said that there was no need to take her to any doctor, but requested our help in taking her to Sai Mandir.

In the evening at 7.30 P.M. myself along with my husband and Mr. Rao took her to Sai Baba's temple with great difficulty. Devotees present in the mandir felt very sad for the girl's pitiable condition. With great difficulty, I could manage and made her to complete 21 pradakshinas. After this we noticed a slight movement in the fingers of the right hand. The whole of the night, she was suffering with severe pain in the right leg and hand. She could not sleep.

On the second day again myself and my husband together with Mr. Rao took Syamala to the temple and started doing pradakshinas. As I did on the previous day, I had to hold her and somehow drag her with difficulty to go round the idol. After completing eleven pradakshinas, when the 12th was about to begin, by the grace of Baba, suddenly her right leg got released and she could freely walk around, with out any assistance. She jogged like a child with quick spacings and made more than forty pradakshinas. As arathi bell rang, she stopped and stood near one of the pillars. After arathi to Baba, she asked to fetch some water to drink. There was no water nearby. I found a big tumbler with water near Dwarakamai portrait. It appears the poojari used to keep that tumbler of water near Baba during nights. Without any thinking or hesitation, I brought that tumbler of water and gave it to Syamala. Lo! Baba's grace! Surprisingly Syamala held the glass tumbler with her right hand and quickly drank the water fully. Earlier the right leg and right hand were just like hanging snake-gourds without any control of movement. In the middle of the 2nd day pradakshinas, the leg got released and at the end, the hand started moving. It sent thrills of joy in me and I thanked Lord Sainath mentally. All those present in the mandir were struck with wonder and gazed steadily at her for some time. They all praised Baba for this miraculous leela. On the third day I was able to make Syamala do 21 pradakshinas without any difficulty.

Fourth day being Thursday, while Bhajan was going on as usual in their house, Baba entered the spirit of Syamala and blessed all the devotees. Baba said that Syamala would be completely relieved of the trouble by the next day i.e. 5th day (28-2-1986). He further wanted us to do Bhajan in Sai Mandir on 28-2-1986. We all felt very happy for Syamala being very fortunate. As a result of her poorvajanma sukutam and good deeds she has always been with Sainath, the Perfect Master and Personification of all knowledge, the God-state. In that Bhajan, Baba called one Mr. Sreenivasamurthy, a devotee, and said, 'You are suffering — is it not? Come tomorrow to Mandir, I shall get some Udi for you'.

On the 5th day, as ordained by Baba, Bhajan was going on in Sai Mandir. In the middle, Syamala could see Baba smiling and standing on the steps in the front with a stick in his hand. To bring Him in, Syamala went up to the steps. She did not know what had happened afterwards. Baba possessed Syamala and put Udi in her hand. She then walked in to the hall slowly, gave some Udi to Sreenivasamurthy as intimated on the previous day, and applied Udi to the foreheads of all the devotees present there. The good fortune of all of us in the Mandir on that day is indescribable.

Mr. Srinivasamurthy, an asthma patient suffering for a long time says, he is now free from the trouble after using the Udi for three days. The two difficult cases — Paralysis and Asthma were easily cured by Baba's Udi. Thus His leelas are incredible, Infinite and beyond our limited understanding. Baba is an ocean of love and kindness and bears the sufferings of his devotees patiently as his own. He is the Divine effulgence that offers His hand of protection to the devotees with all the cheerfulness. He is the personification of Rama, Krishna, Siva, Maruthi and all other deities. Our two hands are not enough to raise in His worship. Our voices are incapable of singing His praise adequately.

Jai Sadguru Sainath Maharaj ki jai
Jai Sadguru Sainath Maharaj ki jai
Jai Sadguru Sainath Maharaj ki jai.

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Vijayawada-10.*



REMEMBERING SRI NARASIMHA SWAMIJI

As the Sai Movement is racing towards the twentyfirst century with increasing awareness that Shri Sai Baba was Sri Rama or Sri Krishna who had been born in the modern world for the welfare of mankind as a Saviour, it is good to remember as a measure of thanksgiving the evocative role that Shirdi Sansthan is playing in providing opportunities to seekers of peace and educating the people with the warm-hearted participation of devotees through the medium of Shri Sai Leela journals.

In the divine enterprise of Sai service, the pioneering contribution of Sri Narasimha Swamiji of All-India Sai Samaj of Madras in spreading the Sai Message with the co-operation of Shirdi Sansthan is worthy of grateful remembrance. On the auspicious occasion of the installation of the marble statue of Samartha Sadguru Shri Sainath Maharaj in the Samaj temple in Madras, it is proposed to publish a souvenir to recount the work of the great Apostle of Shri Sai Baba, Sri Narasimha Swamiji in making Sri Sai Baba's name a household word everywhere in India.

As a journalist seeking Sai Grace to publish the souvenir with the co-operation of all the Sai organizations in the country and the devotees, I invite their participation in this sacred work with their messages and articles. I soulfully welcome their assent to associate their names with a project to felicitate the All-India Sai Samaj on this historic occasion. A copy of the souvenir will be sent to all the devotees and Sai Organizations participating in this sacred duty of remembering Sri Narasimha Swamiji, the founder of All-India Sai Samaj.

Vuppuluri Kalidas
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MADRAS-600 001.

श्री साईलीला
जनवरी १९८७

हिन्दी विभाग

अनुक्रमणिका

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९६. मोक्ष प्राप्ति के लिए वेदों द्वारा निर्धारित आचरण को चरितार्थ कीजिए, निषिद्ध तथा अनुचित आचार और उन सब (बातों) का परिहार कीजिए, जो उसकी उपलब्धि को प्रतिकूलता से प्रभावित करते हैं।
९७. जब आप अपने अन्तस्तल से यह अनुभव करने लगें कि आप न तो किसी कर्म के कर्ता हैं और न ही उसके फल के उपभोक्ता, तो यही परमात्मा के साथ एकलन के लिए उसके प्रति आत्मसमर्पण है।
९८. इस प्रकार आचरण करके यह भावना, कि आप किसी कर्म के कर्ता नहीं हैं, स्वभावतः उत्पन्न होती है। तथापि, कर्म का कभी त्याग नहीं किया जा सकता। जिसका त्याग किया जा सकता है, वह यह भावना है कि आप कर्ता हैं।
९९. जिस प्रकार कांटे से ही कांटे को निकाला जा सकता है, उसी प्रकार कर्म का अन्त कर्म के बिना नहीं किया जा सकता। केवल वास्तविक आत्म की अनुभूति कर्म को पराभूत कर सकती है।
१००. कर्म के फल की इच्छा को समाप्त कर देना कर्मफल के त्याग का असली रहस्य है। नित्य कर्मों का और विशेषतः निर्धारित कर्मों का निष्पादन 'शुद्ध आचरण का नियम' कहलाता है।
१०१. सभी कर्मों को ईश्वर को अर्पित कर देना और एक क्षण के लिए भी ईश्वर को विस्मृत कर देने पर दुःखी होना, नारद के अनुसार दूसरे प्रकार की भक्ति है।
१०२. भक्ति की अनेक प्रकारें हैं, प्रत्येक भक्ति दूसरे प्रकार की भक्ति की अपेक्षा विशिष्ट होती है। केवल गुरु की लीलाओं का स्मरण करके हम भवसागर को, उसके जल का स्पर्श किए बिना, पार कर लेंगे।

१०३. मैंने गुरु की लीलाओं को ध्यान से सुनने का मनोराग विकसित किया और उन पर मुग्ध हुआ। मैंने निश्चय किया अपने अनुभवों से मैं भी उनकी लीलाओं के विषय में लिखूँ।
१०४. और ऐसा हुआ कि एक बार जब मैं शिरडी में था, मैंने बाबा को मस्जिद में, जहाँ मैं उनसे मिलने गया था, गेहूँ पीसते हुए देखा।
१०५. मैं पहले इस घटना का सविस्तर वर्णन करूँगा। उसे शान्तिपूर्वक ध्यान से सुनिए (पढ़िए)। फिर यह ध्यान से सुनिए (पढ़िए) कि उसने मुझे साईं की जीवनी लिखने के लिए कैसे प्रेरित किया।
१०६. सुप्रसिद्ध साईं के सत्कार्यों का वर्णन, सबको परिवेष्टित करने वाले उनके प्रेम की चर्चा मन को पवित्र करेगी और (उससे) बुद्धि भी निर्मल होगी।
१०७. उनका कीर्तन, उनकी चमत्कारी कथाओं का श्रवण, कष्टों का तथा प्राणियों के लिए प्रासंगिक तीनों प्रकार की विपदाओं का अर्थात् दैहिक (जैसे व्यथा, बीमारी आदि), दैविक (जैसे वज्रपात से होनेवाला आघात, महामारी आदि) तथा भौतिक (जैसे भूकम्प, तूफान आदि) का निवारण करेगा।
१०८. मानव - जीवन की इन तीनों प्रकार की विपत्तियों से पीड़ित होकर जो (लोग) मोक्ष की इच्छा से प्रेरित होते हैं, (वे) अन्तर्मुखी हो जाते हैं, उनके (बाबा के) शरणागत होजाने के लिए उत्साहित होते हैं फिर वे आध्यात्मिक अनुभवों से सम्पन्न हो जाते हैं।
१०९. अब उनकी जीवनी और लीलाओं के आकर्षक विवरण पर ध्यान दीजिए। आप उनसे और उनकी अनुग्रहपूर्णता से आश्चर्यान्वित होंगे।
११०. एक दिन प्रातःकाल बाबा ने अपने दाँत साफ किए, चेहरा धोया और गेहूँ पीसना आरंभ कर दिया।

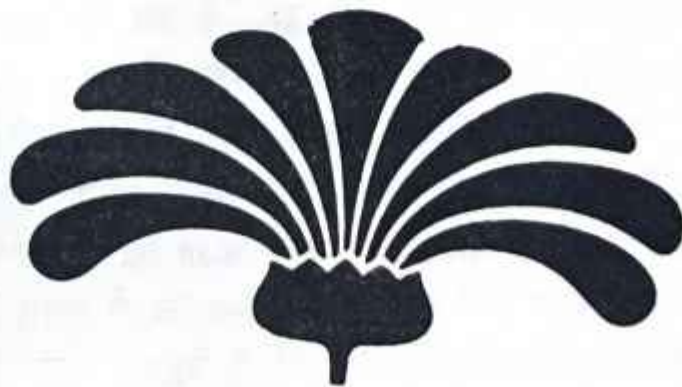
१११. उन्होंने अपने हाथ में सूप लिया, (फिर) वे बोरे के पास गए और उस में से गेहूँ की अनेक राशियाँ निकालकर सूप में डालीं ।
११२. इसके बाद उन्होंने भूमि पर एक खाली बोरा बिछा दिया, उस पर (हाथ से चलाई जाने वाली) चक्की को रखा और उसमें उसके खूँटे को ठोंक दिया, जिससे वह गेहूँ पीसते समय निकले नहीं ।
११३. फिर उन्होंने अपने अस्तियों को समेटा, अपने चोगा के फैलाव को व्यवस्थित किया और पैर फैलाकर चक्की के पास बैठ गए ।
११४. बाबा की गेहूँ पीसने की व्यग्रता पर मैं अत्यन्त विस्मित था क्योंकि उनके कोई स्वत्व न थे ही निजी सम्पत्ति ।
११५. बाबा ने चक्की के खूँटे को पकड़ा, गर्दन को नीचे झुकाया और चक्की को चलाया, जैसे वे अपकारी शक्तियों का दलन कर रहे हों ।
११६. मैंने अनेक सन्तों के दर्शन किए थे, किन्तु उनमें वे ही एकमात्र (गेहूँ) पीसनेवाले थे । केवल वे गेहूँ पीसने के आनन्द और कौतुक से अवगत थे ।
११७. लोग आश्चर्य से उनकी ओर ताक रहे थे, किन्तु यह पूछने का साहस किसी में न था कि वे क्या कर हैं । जब गाँव में यह समाचार फैला, तो स्त्री - पुरुष वस्तुतः दौड़े हुए आए ।
११८. (इस प्रकार) दौड़ी आनेवाली स्त्रियों में से चार ने, जो थककर चूर हो चुकी थीं, मस्जिद में प्रवेश किया और बाबा के हाथ से चक्की का खूँटा छीन कर उनसे झगड़ने लगीं ।
११९. बाबा ने उनसे तर्क किया, किन्तु उन्होंने तत्काल गेहूँ पीसना आरंभ कर दिया और गेहूँ पीसते समय उन्होंने बाबा की लीलाओं का गान किया ।
१२०. उनका स्नेह देखकर बाबा का क्रोध प्रशमित हो गया । क्रोध प्रेम में परिणत हो गया और वे मुस्कुराने लगे ।

१२१. एक पसेरी गेहूँ पीसा जाचुका था और सूप खाली हो गया था। तब उन स्त्रियों के मन में अनियंत्रित विचार - तरंगे उठना आरंभ हुई।
१२२. उन्होंने सोचा : बाबा स्वयं रोटी नहीं बनाते और भिक्षाटन करते हैं। वे इस आटा का क्या करेंगे?
१२३. बाबा अकेले हैं। उनकी न पत्नी है, न पुत्री। उनके न घर है, न परिवार। उन्हें इतने अधिक आटे की क्या आवश्यकता है?
१२४. उनमें से एक ने सोचा : “बाबा बड़े दयालु हैं। वास्तव में वे हमारे लिए गेहूँ पीस रहे थे। अब वे सब का सब हमें दे देंगे।”
१२५. उन सबने वस्तुतः सुखदाता से कल्पना की कि वे आटा को चार भागों में बाँट देंगे और हम चारों को एक - एक भाग दे देंगे।
१२६. केवल बाबा अपनी लीला का उद्देश्य जानते हैं, अन्य कोई उसका अनुमान नहीं लगा सकता। किन्तु (उन) स्त्रियोंने बाबा से उनका आटा लूट लेने का लोलुपता से विचार किया।
१२७. गेहूँ पीसा जाचुका था और आटा (चक्की के) बाहर की ओर बिखरा था। चक्की को दीवार से टिका दिया गया। स्त्रियों ने सूप को आटे से भर लिया और उसे (वे) अपने घर लेजाने के लिए उद्यत हुईं।
१२८. तब तक बाबा कुछ नहीं बोले। जब (उन) स्त्रियों ने आटा को चार भागों में बाँटा, तब वे इस प्रकार बोले :
१२९. “क्या तुम पागल (हो गई) हो? इस आटे को तुम कहाँ ले जा रही हो? क्या यह तुम्हारे बाप का (माल) है? (अब ऐसा करो कि) गाँव की सीमा पर जाओ और उसे वहाँ बिखेर दो।
१३०. लुटेरिनें! मुझे लूटने के लिए दौड़ती चली आई। “क्या तुमने मुझे गेहूँ उधार दिया था जो तुम उसे ले जाने की चेष्टा कर रही हो?”

१३१. तब वे स्त्रियाँ व्यथित हुईं उन्होंने अपनी लोलुपता के लिए लज्जा का अनुभव किया। फिर उन्होंने आपस में कानाफूसी की और अविलम्ब ग्राम - सीमा की ओर अग्रसर हुईं।
१३२. पहले कोई भी बाबा के आशय को न समझा सका। अन्ततः धैर्यपूर्वक प्रतीक्षा सफल हुई। बाबा विलक्षण थे।
१३३. तब मैंने आसपास के लोगों से पूछा कि बाबा ने इस प्रकार का आचरण क्यों किया; और उन्होंने मुझे बतलाया कि उन्होंने (बाबा ने) इसके द्वारा गाँव में रोग के फैलने का निवारण कर दिया था।
१३४. गेहूँ विषूचिका महामारी का प्रतीक था, जिसे उन्होंने चक्की में उसके शत्रु के रूप में पीस डाला। फिर (उस) आटे को गाँव की सीमा पर बिखेर देने का आदेश दिया गया।
१३५. आटा एक नाले के किनारे - किनारे बिखेरा गया और तभी से महामारी क्षीण होने लगी। (इस प्रकार) अनिष्ट का तत्काल निवारण कर दिया गया। बाबा की यह अलौकिक उपलब्धि थी।
१३६. गाँव विषूचिका की महामारी से ग्रस्त था। यह साईनाथ द्वारा प्रकल्पित प्रतिकार था।
१३७. जब मैंने (साईबाबा द्वारा) पीसने की यह प्रक्रिया देखी, तब मैं थोड़ा हक्का - बक्का हुआ। किन्तु, फिर बाद में, मैं इस कार्य और कारण (गेहूँ का बिखेरा जाना और महामारी के प्रकोप का क्षीण होना) मैं सम्बन्ध स्थापित करने की स्थिति में हो गया।
१३८. गेहूँ और महामारी में क्या सम्बन्ध हो सकता था? (इस क्रिया का) उद्देश्य कल्पनातीत था, (अतएव) मैंने इस ग्रन्थ की रचना करने का विचार किया।
१३९. मेरे मन में प्रेम की हिलोरें उठने लगीं और मैंने अनुभव किया कि मैं अपने सन्तोष के लिए बाबा की मधुर कथा का वर्णन करूँ।

१४०. हेमाड (लेखक) साईनाथ के प्रति आत्मसमर्पण करता है। यहीं मंगलकारी (इष्ट देवी-देवताओं) की स्तुति और सम्बन्धियों, मित्रों तथा सन्तों के प्रति वन्दना समाप्त होती है। महान गुरु को शाश्वत नमन।
१४१. अगले अध्याय में मैं अपनी क्षमता के अनुसार इस ग्रन्थ के उद्देश्य के विषय में, उन व्यक्तियों के विषय में जिनके लिए यह अभिप्रेत है, तथा अन्य सह - सम्बन्धित पहलुओं का वर्णन करूँगा, जिसे श्रोता (पाठक) शान्त मन से सुनें (पढ़ें)।
१४२. बाद में, यह भी स्पष्ट होगा कि यह हेमाडपन्त, इस 'श्री साई सत् चरित्र' (श्री साई की श्रद्धास्पद जीवनी) का रचनाकार, कौन है जो श्रोताओं (पाठकों) तथा लेखक के हित में है।

आपका कल्याण हो। यहाँ शक्तिमान श्री साई की श्रद्धास्पद जीवनी में 'मंगलकारी (इष्टों) की स्तुति' शीर्षक प्रथम अध्याय समाप्त होता है, जिसकी सन्तों तथा सज्जनों से प्रोत्साहित होकर, उनके भक्त हेमाडपन्त ने रचना की।



महामहिम श्री गणेश श्रीकृष्ण खापडें, एडवोकेट, अमरावती की "शिरडी डायरी

— डा. दुर्गा प्रसाद शुक्ल

४८०, कुम्हारमण्डी,
कानपुर छावनी - २०८ ००४.

मूल अंग्रेजी से हिन्दी रूपान्तरण : डा. दुर्गाप्रसाद शुक्ल

साई भक्त महामहिम श्री गणेश श्रीकृष्ण खापडें तत्कालीन सी.पी. और बरार-अब मध्य प्रदेश - अमरावती के एक सुप्रसिद्ध भाषाविद् विद्वान वकील थे। उनका राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन में भी महत्वपूर्ण योगदान था तथा वह पं. लोकमान्य बाल गंगाधर तिलक के दाहिने हाथ थे। वह वर्ष १८९७ में अमरावती में होने वाले अखिल भारतीय कांग्रेस कमेटी के वार्षिक अधिवेशन, जिसकी अध्यक्षता सर शंकरन नायर ने की थी, की स्वागत समिति के अध्यक्ष चुने गये थे। दादा खापडें जी पं. लोकमान्य बाल गंगाधर जी तिलक को लेकर १९ मई, १९१७ को साई बाबा का आशीर्वाद दिलाने शिरडी यात्रा पर भी गये थे। दादा खापडेंजी की ऐतिहासिक यात्रायें दिसम्बर १९१०, दिसं. से मार्च, १९११-१२, दिसं. १९१५, मई, १९१७, और मार्च १९१८ में क्रमशः ८, १०१, ३, १ और अज्ञात दिवसीय, अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण है — जो साई भक्तों के लिये बड़ी रोचक, ज्ञानवर्धक एवम् मननीय हैं, क्योंकि उन्होंने जो कुछ नित्य अपनी डायरी (अंग्रेजी भाषा) में लिखकर उसमें अपने शिरडी प्रवास के समय श्री दत्त-अवतार योगिराज सद्गुरु साई बाबा के उपदेशों, दैनिक क्रियाकलापों और लीलाओं के साथ-साथ उस पुण्य-धाम में नित्य होने वाले कार्यक्रमों एवम् घटनाक्रमों का जो सूक्ष्म, गम्भीर और हृदयग्राही सजीव चित्रण किया है वह आज के परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी उतना ही महत्वपूर्ण है तथा यह सिद्ध करता है कि पूज्य साई बाबा ने तब जो कुछ भी कहा था वह आज उससे कहीं अधिक स्वरूपवान दीखने में आता है।

बाबा ने कहा था- "मुझ पर पूर्ण विश्वास रखो, यद्यपि मैं देह त्याग दूंगा परन्तु फिर भी मेरी हड्डियां आशा और विश्वास का संचार करती रहेंगी। केवल मैं ही नहीं मेरी समाधि भी वार्तालाप करेगी और उन्हें आशा का सन्देश पहुंचाती रहेगी, जो अनन्य भाव से मेरे शरणागत होंगे। निराश न होना कि मैं तुमसे विदा हो जाऊंगा। तुम सदैव मेरी हड्डियों को भक्तों के कल्याणार्थ ही चिन्तित पावोगे। यदि मेरा निरन्तर स्मरण और मुझ पर दृढ़ विश्वास रखोगे तो तुम्हें अधिक लाभ होगा।"

आज भी श्री शिरडी-धाम में नित्य भक्तों की अपार भीड़ देखकर बाबा के उक्त वचन जब स्मरण हो आते हैं तब वहीँ दादा खापडें जी की डायरी के पन्ने पढ़कर जो सजीव चित्रण सामने आ जाता है उससे ऐसा भाषित होता है जैसे दादा खापडें

जी ने ७६ वर्ष पूर्व अपनी डायरी लिखकर एक चलचित्र का निर्माण कर दिया था जो युग-युग तक श्री शिरडी पावनधाम के रूप में यथावत् विद्यमान है और इस डायरी को पढ़ते हुए आज के स्वरूप में सब कुछ वही है — अवश्य कालक्रम भेद में कुछ ऊँचे-ऊँचे 'शान्ति' और 'भक्त' निवास आदि-आदि भक्तगणों की सुविधा के लिये और निर्मित हो गये हैं- जिस प्रकार उन्होंने अपने जीवन काल में भी किया था।

दादा खापर्डे जी की मूल डायरी अंग्रेजी भाषा में है जिसे कभी- (१९२४—२५ में) श्री साई लीला में प्रकाशित किया गया, किन्तु आज साइभक्तों के लिये दुर्लभ है। बाबा के भक्तगणों का परम सौभाग्य—श्री साई लीला- बम्बई ने अगस्त, ८५ से फरवरी, ८६ (सात अंको में) और फिर सम्मान्य श्री वी.बी. खेर जी द्वारा अप्रैल, ८६ के अंक में विशेष बहुमूल्य सूचनाओं की पूर्ति की गयी, किन्तु हिन्दी भाषी साई-भक्त इस श्री साई राम-रस से वंचित न रहें अस्तु दासानुदास ने बाबा की प्रेरणा से ही उनकी झांकी को हिन्दी में प्रेषित करने का प्रयास किया है। आशा है आज से ७६ वर्ष पूर्व लिखी गयी बाबा की लीलाओं का सजीव चित्रण करने वाली आदरणीय दादा खापर्डे जी की डायरी के पृष्ठ बाबा के- "श्रद्धा-सबूरी" और "प्रेम-भक्ति" का प्रसाद "सबका मालिक एक" के रूप में सिद्ध होगी, यही कामना है। अल्लाह मालिक — जय प्रभु साई नाथ।

(पहला प्रवास)

डायरी

(आठ दिवसीय)

५-१२-१९१०

हम लोग सायं ४ बजे शिरडी पहुंचे। हम लोग आर.बी. साठे द्वारा लोगों की सुविधा के लिये बनवाये गये वाड़ा में ठहरे। माधवराव देशपाण्डे बहुत ही विनम्र थे तथा उन्होंने हमारी सहायता की और हम लोगों के साथ अतिथि की तरह व्यवहार किया। वाड़ा में ही तात्या साहब नूलकर सपरिवार, बापू साहब जोग और बाबा साहब सहस्रबुद्धे भी हैं। हम सभी वहां पहुंच कर तुरन्त साई महाराज के दर्शनार्थ गये। वह मसजिद में थे। नमन् के पश्चात् मैंने तथा मेरे पुत्र ने साथ लाये फलों को भेंट किया और उनके (बाबा) कहने पर कुछ द्रव्य भी दिया। तब साई बाबा ने कहा कि- वह पिछले दो वर्षों और कुछ अधिक से स्वस्थ नहीं है और केवल जौ की रोटी खाकर तथा कुछ पानी के सहारे ही रहते हैं। उन्होंने अपना पैर दिखलाते हुए एक छोटे से फोड़े की ओर इशारा करते हुए कहा यह रेशेदार कीड़ा जिसे निकाला गया किन्तु रेशा यकायक टूट गया और वह फिर से दीखने लगा। उन्होंने कहा कि- सुना है उनका यह ठीक नहीं होगा जब तक कि वह अपने धाम नहीं चले जायेंगे। उन्होंने कहा कि वह इसे ध्यान में रखते हैं, बस इतना ही, क्योंकि उन्हें अपने निजी जीवन से कहीं अधिक लोगों के कल्याण की चिन्ता है। उन्होंने कहा कि उन्हें आराम नहीं मिलता क्योंकि लोग उन्हें परेशान करते हैं। इससे बचने का कोई उपाय भी नहीं है। तब उन्होंने हम लोगों को विदा किया। हम वापस

आये। सायंकाल के समय वाड़ा की ओर से निकले तब हम लोग गये तथा नमन किया। मैं और माधवराव देशपाण्डे एक साथ थे। हमारे अभिवादन के पश्चात् उन्होंने कहा- "वाड़ा जाओ और शान्ति से बैठो।" अतः मैं और माधवराव लौट आए। हम बैठे आपस में वार्ता करते रहे। उन्होंने बहुत सी लीलाओं (आश्चर्यों) का वर्णन किया।

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प्रातः घूमने गया और फिर स्नान करके हम सबने साई महाराज, जिनके सिर पर एक बड़ा सा जड़ाऊ छाता लगाया गया था, के दर्शन किये। बाद में हम लोग मसजिद गये। साई बाबा कुछ आवेश में प्रतीत हुए। फिर वह उठे और वहां इकट्ठा किया गया खाद्य-पदार्थ वितरित किया और ऊदी देते हुए हम लोगों से जाने को कहा। हम लोगों ने वैसा ही किया। दिन का भोजन ढाई बजे के बाद मिला। इसके बाद हम लोग बैठे बातें करते रहे और सायं साई महाराज के- जब वह घूमने निकले-दर्शन किये। बाद में हम लोग चावड़ी गये जहां साई महाराज रात्रि में सोते हैं। उनके साथ शाही छत्र, चांदी के दण्ड, चैवर और पंखा आदि आदि थे। स्थान अत्यन्त सुंदर ढंग से प्रकाशित किया गया था। राधाकृष्ण नाम की महिला रोशनी (आरती) लिये हुए बाहर आयी। मैंने उन्हें दूर से देखा। माधवराव देशपाण्डे ने कहा कि वह कल चले जायेंगे और एक दिन बाद वापस आवेंगे। उन्होंने साई महाराज से कहकर- स्वीकृति प्राप्त की।

७-१२-१९१०

प्रातः मेरी प्रार्थना के पश्चात् श्री बाला साहब भाटे, जो अवकाश प्राप्त मामलतदार है, वाड़ा आए और हमारे साथ बैठ कर वार्ता करते रहे। वह यहां कुछ समय से ठहरे हुए है तथा उनके मुखारबिन्दु पर एक अद्भुत शान्ति दीख पड़ती है। हम लोगों ने साई महाराज को बाहर जाते हुए दर्शन किये और उनके पास मसजिद में दोपहर के बाद गये। मैं, बाबा साहब सहस्त्रबुद्धे, मेरा पुत्र बाबा (बालकृष्ण), बापू साहब जोग और बच्चे एक साथ गये और वहां बैठे। साई महाराज हंसी के भाव में दीख पड़े। उन्होंने बाबा साहब सहस्त्रबुद्धे से पूछा-क्या वह बम्बई से आये है? बाबा साहब ने स्वीकारात्मक उत्तर दिया। तब बाबा साहब से प्रश्न किया गया- क्या वह बम्बई वापस जायेंगे? उन्होंने पुनः स्वीकारात्मक उत्तर दिया, किन्तु उन्होंने कहा कि यह परिस्थितियों पर निर्भर करता है कि वह निश्चितरूप से वहां रूकेंगे ही। साई महाराज ने कहा- "हां, यह सत्य है कि तुम्हें यहां कई कार्य करने हैं और कुछ आगे करने होंगे। तुम यहां चार या पांच दिनों तक रूकोगे। तुम स्वयं देखोगे कि तुम यहां हो। जो अनुभव हो रहे हैं वह सत्य है। वे कोरी कल्पनामात्र नहीं हैं। मैं यहां हजारों वर्ष पहले था।" साई महाराज मेरी ओर मुखातिब हुए और एक नये प्रकरण का श्री गणेश किया। उन्होंने कहा- "यह संसार अद्भुत है। सभी मेरे आश्रित हैं। मैं सभी को एक सा देखता हूँ किन्तु कुछ चोर हो जाते हैं तब मैं

उनके लिये क्या कर सकता हूँ? लोग जो स्वयं मृत्यु के समीप हैं, इच्छा करते हैं और दूसरों की मृत्यु की तैयारी करते हैं। उन्होंने मेरी भी बहुत ज्यादा अवहेलना की है। उन्होंने मुझे महान कष्ट दिया है लेकिन मैंने कुछ भी नहीं कहा। मैं शान्त रहा। ईश्वर महान है। उसके अधिकारी सर्वत्र हैं। वे सभी शक्तिवान हैं। प्रत्येक को अपनी परिस्थितियों से, जिनमें ईश्वर ने उसे रखा हुआ है, सन्तुष्ट रहना चाहिए, किन्तु मैं बहुत शक्ति सम्पन्न हूँ। मैं यहां आठ या दश हजार वर्ष पहले था।” मेरे पुत्र ने उनसे एक कथा कहने का अनुरोध किया जो उन्होंने पहले कभी कहा था। साईं महाराज ने पूछा- “कौन सी कथा थी?” मेरे पुत्र ने प्रत्युत्तर दिया कि वह क्या तीन भाइयों के विषय में थी जो मसजिद गये थे। उनमें से एक ने इच्छा किया कि वह बाहर जाये और भिक्षा मांगे। दूसरे ने ऐसा इसलिये नहीं चाहा कि वह ऐसा करे क्योंकि भिक्षा से मांग कर लाया गया भोजन अशुद्ध होगा जिससे उनका चौका अशुद्ध हो जायेगा। तीसरे भाई ने उत्तर दिया कि यदि खाना से चौका अशुद्ध हो जायेगा तो उसके पैर काट दिये जाने चाहिए आदि-आदि। साईं महाराज ने कहा कि यह एक सुन्दर कथा थी। वह जब प्रसन्न मुद्रा में होंगे तब एक दूसरी कथा सुनायेंगे। मेरे पुत्र ने कहा कि उसे नहीं मालूम कि ऐसा किस समय होगा? कहीं वह चला गया तब ऐसा हुआ तो उससे क्या लाभ होगा? इस पर साईं साहब ने उससे कहा कि उसे निश्चिन्त रहना चाहिए, क्योंकि उसके जाने के पहले ही कहानी सुनायी जायेगी। मैंने उनसे पूछा कि वह कल क्रोधित क्यों थे तब उन्होंने उत्तर दिया कि- तेली ने कुछ कह दिया था। तब मैंने पूछा कि वह आज भोजन वितरण के समय चिल्ला क्यों रहे थे- “मत मारो, मत मारो।” उन्होंने उत्तर दिया कि वह इसलिए चिल्लाये क्योंकि पाटिल परिवार झगड़ रहा था और आपस में बंट गया था। साईं साहब इतने अद्भुत मधुर-भाव से बोल रहे थे और बीच-बीच में असाधारण भाव-भंगिमा से मुस्कराते जाते थे कि उनकी वार्तालाप मेरी याददाश्त में सदैव-सदैव अमिट बनी रहेगी। दुर्भाग्य से दूसरे लोग आगये और बातचीत में अवरोध उत्पन्न हो गया। हम इससे बड़े दुखी थे, किन्तु क्या किया जा सकता था। हम इस पर बात-चीत करते हुए वापस लौट आये। तात्या साहब नूलकर वार्ता के प्रारम्भ में नहीं उपस्थित थे, क्योंकि बाद में आये थे। बाला साहब भाटे सायं आये और हम वार्ता से सम्बन्ध में बैठकर बातें करते रहे।

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प्रातः प्रार्थना के पश्चात् हम लोगों ने, जब वह (बाबा) अपने नियमित रूप से भ्रमने जा रहे थे, दर्शन किये। बाद में हम लोग दोपहर के बाद दर्शनार्थ गए किन्तु वापस होना पड़ा क्योंकि वह अपना पैर धो रहे थे। बाबा साहब सहस्रबुद्धे, मैं स्व, मेरा पुत्र और एक अन्य महाशय जो आज प्रातः आये थे, एक साथ गये और वापस लौटना पड़ा। तात्या साहब नूलकर हम लोगों के साथ नहीं गये थे। बाद

में हम पुनः गये किन्तु साई साहब ने हम सबों को जल्दी ही विदा दे दी। अतः हम लौट आए। ऐसा प्रतीत हुआ कि वह किसी बात को विचारने में तल्लीन थे। रात्रि में साई साहब चावडी में सोये और हम सभी जलूस देखने गये। वह अत्यन्त मनमोहक था। उक्त वर्णित महाशय, मेरा ऐसा विश्वास है कि एक पुलिस अधिकारी-हेड कान्स्टेबिल है। उन पर घूसखोरी का अपराध था और सत्र न्यायालय में उन पर मुकदमा चला था। उन्होंने प्रण किया था कि यदि वह विवाद से मुक्त होगये तो साई महाराज के दर्शन करेंगे। वह बरी हो गए (जीत गए) थे इसलिए अपने प्रण को निभाने के लिये आये थे। उन्हें देखकर साई महाराज द्रवित हुए और कहा- "तुम कुछ दिन वहां क्यों नहीं ठहरे? गरीब लोगों को निराशा हुई।" उन्होंने इसी बात को दो बार कहा। बाद में हम लोगों को मालूम हुआ कि उन महाशय के मित्रों ने उन्हें रुकने के लिये बहुत जोर दिया किन्तु उन्होंने उनके अनुरोध को नहीं पूरा किया। उन्होंने पहले कभी साई साहब को नहीं देखा था और वास्तव में नाहि साई साहब ने ही उन्हें पहले कभी देखा था। आश्चर्य तो इस बात का है कि साई महाराज उसे पहचान कैसे गये और जो उसने किया था- बतला दिया।

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मैं और मेरे पुत्र ने आज वापस लौटने का विचार किया। प्रातः प्रार्थना के पश्चात् जब हम नित्य की तरह साई महाराज के दर्शनार्थ गये उन्होंने मेरे पुत्र से पूछा कि क्या वह वापस जाने का विचार कर रहा है और कहा कि हम लोग वापस जा सकते हैं। हम लोगों ने सोचा कि आवश्यक स्वीकृति प्राप्त हो चुकी है और वापस लौटने की तैयारी प्रारम्भ करदी। बाबा (बालकृष्ण) ने पूरा सामान बांध लिया और यात्रा के लिए एक गाड़ी तय करली तथा दूसरी सामान ले चलने के लिये भी। वापसी यात्रा प्रारम्भ करने के पहले हम लोग साई महाराज के दर्शनार्थ दोपहर के बाद पहुंचे। मुझे देखकर साई महाराज ने कहा- "क्या सचमुच वापस जाने का इरादा है? मैंने उत्तर दिया- "मेरी इच्छा तो है किन्तु यदि आप स्वीकृति नहीं देंगे तो नहीं।" उन्होंने कहा- "तुम कल अथवा परसों जा सकते हो। यह हम सबका घर है। वाड़ा हमारा घर है और जब मैं यहां हूं तो किसी को डरने का क्या काम है? यह हम सबका घर है और तुम्हें भी इसे अपना घर जैसा समझना चाहिए।" मैं रुकने के लिए तैयार हो गया तथा वापसी यात्रा के कार्यक्रम रद्द कर दिये। हम बैठ कर वार्ता करने लगे। साई महाराज अत्यन्त प्रसन्न मुद्रा में थे तथा बहुत अच्छी अच्छी बातें कहीं किन्तु मुझे सन्देह है कि मैं उन्हें समझ सका।

१०-१२-१९१०

प्रातः प्रार्थना के पश्चात् मैंने अपने पुत्र बाबा से कहा कि साई महाराज से अपनी वापसी के सम्बन्ध में कभी कुछ मत कहना। वह सब जानते हैं और स्वयं जान जायेंगे कि कब हमें वापस भेजेंगे। नित्य की भांति हमने साई साहब के घूमने जाते

समय दर्शन किये और बाद में जब हम लोग मसजिद गये तो साई साहब बहुत प्रसन्न थे और उन्होंने एक नवजवान लड़की की पूर्व जिन्दगी की कथा सुनाई जो उनके साथ खेला करती थी। उन्होंने कहा कि वह एक कलाकार थी और उसकी मृत्यू होगयी तथा वह दफना दी गयी। साई साहब उसी रास्ते से गुजरे और उन्होंने एक रात्रि उसकी मजार (कब्र) के पास बिताया। वह उनके साथ होगयी। उन्होंने उसे एक बबूल के पेड़ पर रखा तब फिर यहां ले आये। उन्होंने कहा कि वह पहले कबीर थे और कपड़ा बुना करते थे। बात-चीत बड़ी उत्साहवर्धक थी। दोपहर के बाद वर्धा के श्री श्रीधरपन्त परांजपे एक दूसरे श्री पण्डित, दूसरे डाक्टर और तीसरे अन्य महाशय के साथ पधारे। अहमदनगर के श्री पटवर्धन (जूनियर) उनके साथ थे। मेरा पुत्र और वह पुराने कालेज समय के मित्र है। वे सभी साई साहब के दर्शनार्थ गये और हम सब भी उनके साथ-साथ गये। साई साहब ने उनके साथ भी वैसा ही व्यवहार किया जैसा कि वह सबके साथ करते है और पहले तेली फिर मारवाड़ी आदि-आदि के विषय में बातें कीं। फिर उन्होंने बने हुए औन बनने वाले भवनों के विषय में बात किया। - "दुनियां पागल होगयी है। हर आदमी ने बुरा सोंचने के तौरतरीके में अपना एक अनोखापन अपना रखा है। मैं उनकी तरह बराबरी नहीं कर सकता। इसलिये मैं कभी नहीं सुनता कि वे क्या कहते हैं? नाहि- उन्हें कभी जवाब देता हूं। मैं क्या जबाब दूं।" उन्होंने तब ऊदी का वितरण किया और हम सभी को वाड़ा वापस लौटने को कहा। उन्होंने जूनियर पटवर्धन को रूकने के लिए कहते हुए हमेशा की तरह "कल" जाने को कहा। मैं और बाबा साहब सहस्त्रबुद्धे वाड़ा लौट आये। ऐसा मालूम हुआ कि परांजपे और उनके साथी राधाकृष्ण नामक महिला के पास गये। बापू साहब जोग की पत्नी बीमार है। उसे बहुत ज्यादा फायदा हुआ है, जैसा कि साई साहब कहते है और वह कोई औषधि नहीं देते है किन्तु प्रत्यक्षरूप से उन्होंने आज धैर्य खो दिया और वापस जाना चाहती है। यहां तक कि बापू साहब जोग भी असमर्थ होकर उन्हें वापस ले जाने के लिए सहमत है। साई साहब ने जब वह जारहीं थीं बार-बार उनके विषय में पूछ-तांछ की। जब इस प्रकार सायंकाल बापू साहब जोग साई साहब के पास औपचारिक रूप से वापस जाने की आज्ञा प्राप्त करने के लिए तैयार हुए, तभी उनकी पत्नी ने कहा कि अब वह अपने से बहुत सुधार का अनुभव कर रहीं है अतः वापस जाने की इच्छा नहीं है। हम सभी को आश्चर्य हुआ।

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प्रातः अपनी प्रार्थना समाप्त करने के पश्चात् सफाई किया। बम्बई के श्री हरीभाऊ दीक्षित अपने कुछ साथियों- श्री तरखड, स्व. डा. आत्माराम पाण्डुरंग के पुत्र और श्री महाजनी जो अकोला के अन्ना साहब महाजनी के भाई है, के साथ हम सभी नित्य की तरह साई साहब के दर्शनार्थ गये और आज की बातचीत अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण और साथ ही दो प्रमुख घटनाओं के साथ हुई। साई महाराज ने कहा कि वह एक कोने

में बैठा करते थे तथा अपने नीचे के अंग को एक तोते के रूप में बदलना चाहते थे। परिवर्तन हुआ लेकिन वह एक वर्ष तक न जान सके और एक लाख रुपयों की हानि होगयी। तब वह एक ऐसे स्थान के नजदीक बैठने लगे जहां एक बड़ा सर्प जाग उठा और बड़ा क्रोधित था। वह उछलता था और नीचे गिर जाता था। यकायक उन्होंने फिर विषय परिवर्तन कर दिया और कहा कि वह एक जगह गये थे और वहां के पाटिल ने उन्हें तब तक नहीं जाने दिया जब तक एक बगीचा और उसके बीच पैदल घूमने के लिये एक मजबूत रास्ता नहीं बनाया गया। उन्होंने बताया कि उन्होंने दोनों कार्य पूरे किये। इसी बीच कुछ लोग अन्दर आगये। एक व्यक्ति से उन्होंने कहा- "तुम्हारी मेरे सिवा और कोई देखभाल करने वाला नहीं है।" चारों तरफ देखकर उन्होंने आगे कहा कि वह उनकी रिश्तेदार थी और एक रोहिला से व्याही गयी थी जिसने इस व्यक्ति को लूट लिया था। तब उन्होंने कहा कि दुनिया बड़ी खराब है। लोग अब पहले की तरह नहीं रह गये है। पहले वह पवित्र और सच्चे होते थे। अब वह विश्वास नहीं करते और बुराइयों की तरफ अधिक ध्यान देते है। तब उन्होंने आगे और कुछ कहा जिसे मैं नहीं समझ सका। यह सब कुछ उनके पिता, बाबा, और उनके एक के बाद दूसरा जन्म हो जाने के सम्बन्ध में था। अब घटनाओं में — श्री दीक्षित कुछ फल लाये थे। साई साहब ने कुछ खाये और बाकी दूसरों में बांट दिये। इस तालुका के मामलतदार बाला साहब वहां थे और कहा कि साई महाराज एक ही प्रकार के फल दे रहे थे। मेरे पुत्र ने अपने मित्र श्री पटवर्धन से कहा कि- भक्तद्वारा जितनी श्रद्धा-भावना के साथ जो फल भेंट किये जाते है, साई महाराज भी उन्हें उतने ही अंशों में स्वीकार करते अथवा नहीं करते है। मेरे पुत्र बाबा (बालकृष्ण) ने मुझसे भी यह बतलाने की कोशिश की और चाहा कि वही पटवर्धन के साथ किया जाय। इसमें कुछ सुगबुग (कानाफूसी) हुई और साई महाराज ने मेरी ओर एक तीक्ष्ण दृष्टि से घूर कर अद्भुत ढंग से देखा जिससे उनके क्रोध की चिंगारी झलक उठी। उन्होंने जानना चाहा कि मैंने क्या कहा। मैंने उत्तर दिया कि -"मैं कुछ नहीं कह रहा था, केवल बच्चे ही एक दूसरे से बातें कर रहे थे। उन्होंने मेरे पुत्र और पटवर्धन की ओर देखा और तुरन्त मनोभाव बदल दिये। अन्त में बाला साहब मिरीकर ने इंगित किया कि साई महाराज हरीभाऊ दीक्षित से ही लगातार वार्ता करते रहे। दोपहर में जब हम लोग भोजन कर रहे थे, श्री मिरीकर के पिता, जो अहमदनगर के इनामदार और विशेष मैजिस्ट्रेट है, पधारे। वह पुरानी पीढ़ी के एक बहुत सम्मान्य व्यक्ति है। मैं उनकी बातें बहुत पसन्द करता हूं। नित्य की भांति सायं हम लोगों ने साई साहब के दर्शन किये और रात्रि में बैठ कर बातें करते रहे तथा श्री नूलकर के पुत्र विश्वनाथ ने हर दिन की तरह भजन गाया।

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प्रातः प्रार्थना के पश्चात् हम लोगों ने उनके नियमित घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये और बैठ कर हम लोग आपस में बातें करने लगे। ऐसा प्रतीत हुआ कि- श्री

दीक्षित अब एक बिल्कुल नये रूप में परिवर्तित होगये है और अधिक समय प्रार्थना में ही लगाते है। उनका स्वभाव जो सदैव ही नम्र रहा है अब अनुपम मधुरता प्राप्त कर चुका था जो उनकी आन्तरिक शान्ति के कारण ही था। राव बहादुर राजाराम पन्त, दीक्षित पूलगांव से शीघ्र आगये। उन्होंने कहा कि जब उन्होंने नागपुर छोड़ा तब उनका विचार शिरडी आगमन का नहीं था किन्तु पूलगांव में उनके मष्तिस्क ने यकायक यह निर्णय ले लिया और तत्काल एक क्षण में उनकी यात्रा सम्पन्न होगयी। मैं उनको देखकर अत्यंत प्रसन्न था। बाद में हम सब साई साहब के दर्शनार्थ गये। मैं कुछ देर से पहुंचा इसलिये उन (साई बाबा) के द्वारा कही गयी एक दिलचस्प कहानी सुनने से वंचित रह गया। वह कथानकों के माध्यम से ही शिक्षा देते है। वह एक व्यक्ति के विषय में था जिसके पास एक सुन्दर घोड़ा था जिसके द्वारा वह जो चाहता कर सकता था, किन्तु वह कभी सवारी नहीं कर सका। उसे चारों ओर ले जाया गया और सभी तरह का प्रशिक्षण दिया गया जो बेमतलब रहा। अन्त में एक विद्वान ने राय दी कि उसे उसी जगह ले जाया जाय जहां से मूल रूप में लाया गया था। ऐसा ही किया गया और घोड़ा तब बिल्कुल जीन-लगाम से दुरूस्त होगया तथा लाभप्रद सिद्ध हुआ। मैंने कथानक का एक ही अंश सुना। तब उन्होंने पूछा कि- मैं कब वापस जा रहा हूं? मैंने उत्तर दिया कि- जब वह स्वयं आज्ञा प्रदान कर देंगे तभी मैं वापस जाऊंगा। उन्होंने जबाब दिया- "भोजन कर लेने के पश्चात् तुम आज जाओ।" और बाद में माधवराव देशपाण्डे के द्वारा मेरे लिये दही का प्रसाद भेजा। मैंने उसे भोजन के समय ग्रहण किया और इसके तुरन्त बाद साई साहब के दर्शनार्थ पहुंचा। जैसे ही मैं पहुंचा उन्होंने अपनी स्वीकृति की पुष्टि करदी। मेरे पुत्र ने स्वीकृति को निश्चित नहीं माना इसलिये उसने जोर देकर स्वीकृति के विषय में पूछा। साई महाराज जे मेरी और मेरे पुत्र के अतिरिक्त दूसरों से दक्षिणा के विषय में कहा। मेरे पास पैसे की कमी थी और ऐसा लगता है कि वह समझ रहे है। श्री नूलकर, श्री दीक्षित, श्री बापू साहब जोग, बाबा साहब सहस्रबुद्धे, माधवराव देशपाण्डे, बाला साहब भाटे, वासुदेव राव तथा अन्यो से नमस्कार कर हम लोग पटवर्धन, प्रधान, काका महाजनी, श्री तरखड और श्री भिडे जो आज ही आये थे, के साथ रवाना हुए। कोपरगांव में सायं ६.३० पर ट्रेन पकड़कर मनमाड पहुंचे। श्री भिडे येवला में ही उतर गये। मैं और मेरा पुत्र शीघ्र ही मनमाड से पंजाब मेल द्वारा रवाना हो जायेंगे।





बाबा-तुमको शत-शत प्रणाम

जब मुगल महीयों के द्वारा,
भ्रष्ट हुये सब धरा-धाम ।
तुम चमके शिर्डी के प्रांगण में,
आलोकित करने धर्म-धाम ।
तुम कृष्ण रूप, तुम रूद्र रूप,
तुम शक्ति रूप, तुम आदि राम ।
हे! मौन तपस्वी, हे! धर्म व्रती,
तुमको मेरा शत-शत प्रणाम ।

उस भेद-भाव के प्रचलन में,
तुम अलख जगाते अल्ला-राम ।
जिस ओर तुम्हारा स्वर गुँजे,
सब गा उठते जै अल्ला-राम ।
तुम जिधर चले, सब उधर चले,
सब मंत्र मुग्ध, सब साईं राम ।
हे! सफल चित्तरे, हे! राम दूत
तुम को मेरा शत-शत प्रणाम ।

क्या ग्राम-ग्राम, क्या नगर-नगर,
तेरी प्रतिमा का हृदय धाम ।
क्या डगर-डगर, क्या जन-जन में,
तेरी महिमा का अमिट नाम ।
हे! भेद-भाव के दुख हर्ता,
फिर हरो हमारा द्वेष-काम ।
हे! युग श्रष्टा हे! युगावतार
तुम को मेरा शत-शत प्रणाम ।

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