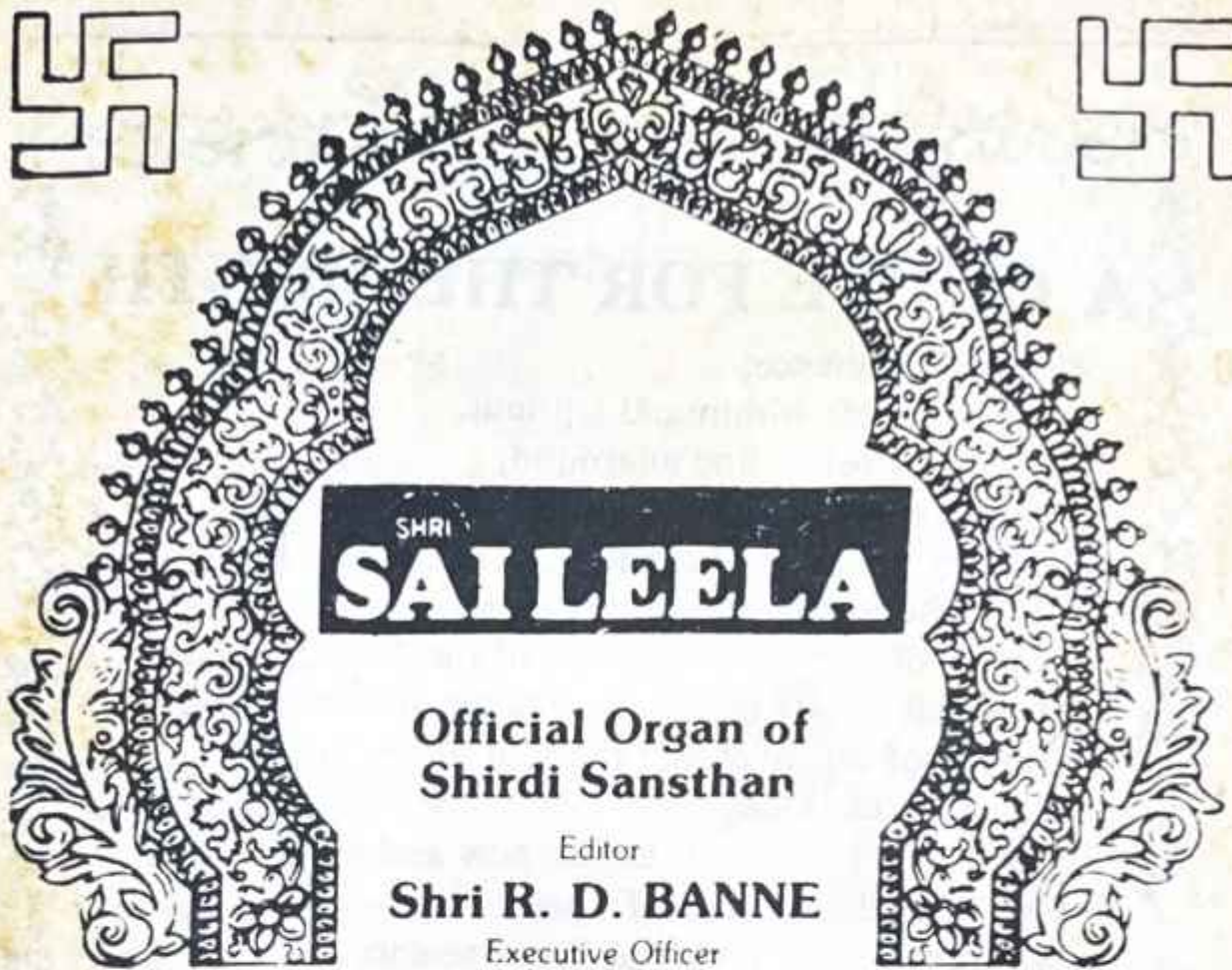


SHRI
SAI LEELA

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF SHIRDI SANSTHAN





SHRI
SAILEELA

**Official Organ of
Shirdi Sansthan**

Editor

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Executive Officer
Shirdi Sansthan of
Shri Sai Baba

Executive Editors:

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B Sc., S T C., R B Pravin

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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

Adorable Presence,
Thou, who art within and without,
Above and below and allaround,
Thou who art interpenetrating,
The very selves of our beings,
Thou who art the eye of our eyes,
The ear of our ears, the heart of our hearts,
The mind of our minds, the breath of our breaths,
The life of our lives and the soul of our souls,
Bless us, dear God,
To be aware of Thy Presence now and here,
This is all that we ask of Thee,
May all of us be aware of Thy Presence
In the east and the west and in the north and the south.
May peace and goodwill abide among ourselves,
This is our earnest Prayer,
May peace be unto all.

OM... OM.... OM.....

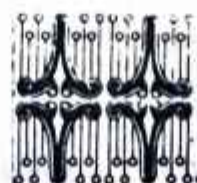
By: Swami Ramdas of Anand Ashram.

SHRI SAI LEELA

FEBRUARY 1988

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SPECIAL REQUESTS

My father, Shri H.D. Venkatesha Iyer is now turning eighty and is indeed a devout soul, who has led a religious life all along. He is an avid reader of 'Sai Sai-Charita' and has a great reverence for Lord Sainath. True to the Sai-spirit inherent in him he has never wanted a life of ease. He will be doing something or the other and keeps himself busy.

In his younger days due to some physical malady he lost his hearing capacity. But Lord Sainath has blessed him with other faculties compensating for this loss. Though 80 and feeling a bit alienated by his deafness, he has no intention of lessening his contact with life.

Before shopping for his birthday gift last May, we asked for his suggestions and he carefully lettered the following list:

1. Hearing is not everything. So include me in your conversation by just looking at me.
2. Life, for me, says that duties come first. Time left over is for fun. Somehow duties and fun have been a happy marriage. Please dignify by giving me duties like cleaning, folding clothes and watering plants.
3. Look at me. Smile at me. Touch me. When I can look directly into your eyes and smile at your dear faces and touch your dear hands, then I am a person.

My mind mused over what Lord Sainath said, "My master told me to give bounteously to all that ask. No one listens to me for wisdom. My treasury is open. I say 'dig', none will take any pains. I said 'dig out the treasure and cart it away'. What is to become of us. i.e. this bodily life? Earth will return to the earth, and the air will return to the air. This opportunity will not return."

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A TIME TO BEGIN AGAIN

So many people look forward to retirement as a joyous period of re-discovery in their golden years but only find frustration. My parents went through that and it nearly sank them.

Dad had been a contributor all his life. As a senior Police Officer in Andhra Pradesh, he was known for his honesty, integrity and hard task-mastership. He won every medal and honour his profession had to bestow.

His first few months of retirement in 1977 were as active as ever. Then a sudden illness — a sort of minor heart attack — brought him to a halt. His mind remained clear but his spirit had been damaged. He was suffering from a heart ailment, technically called Aortic Stenosis with Incontinence, since 1966 and had ignored the pleas for a open heart surgery. This made him weak and dizzy; even the smallest activity left him exhausted. Social life ceased and outside interests faded.

Dad's spirits sagged and so did mother's. She could accept retirement of dad from service as a warning for him to slow down and enjoy life. But, why this? She was amazed.

Instead of rejoicing that dad was still alive, mother was full of self-pity. Here was she in mid-fifties, tied to a semi-invalid.

My mother and dad had always been quite religious as they are from a God-fearing families. In fact they had been members of the local Ram-Mandir committee, helped finance it, held every office. But the walk with the spirit had eluded them. It was at this juncture that Lord Sainath entered in their life.

My dad's brother-in-law, Dr. A. Prabhakar Rao is a Senior Eye Specialist in the Government of Andhra Pradesh and is a staunch Sai-devotee. He advised my parents to worship Lord Sainath. At first they were not very interested, feeling that 'this sort of thing' was intended chiefly for young people. When they heard of Dr. Rao's story, they began to wonder. Dad asked the learned doctor, "What do you know that I don't know?" This radiantly Sai-ful Dr. Rao introduced my parents to Lord Sainath, and words fail to describe as to how their life had been transformed.

And so, drawn by a hunger they scarcely understood, mother and dad began worshipping Lord Sainath and started reading Sai-



Sat-Charita. It took some time getting used to for my parents, especially the idea of praying aloud in front of Lord Sainath. But seeing the joy and vitality of others who had experienced Lord Sainath's grace made my parents yearn for this extension of their faith.

Mother began praying for dad's health. Today, healed of her affliction, she gets up at dawn and has long fellowship with Lord Sainath. Even amidst her busy household chores, she never tires of letting others know about Lord Sainath.

Dad had a thicker wall of reserve to break down after all those years of service in Police. He began with short, stumbling prayers to Lord Sainath, seeking healing of his ailments. It came about less dramatically, but just as sure. His eyes had been so weak that reading was impossible. Slowly his sight began to improve and soon he was devouring all the books he could find on the blessings and gifts of Lord Sainath. He started establishing contacts with Sai-bandhus initially in the twin cities of Hyderabad and today his Sai-horizons have extended to entire India.

My parents visited Shirdi in 1980 and subsequently have been making frequent trips. They have come under the magnetic spell of Lord Sainath. They had found a joy they had never had before, a deeper patience with children, a faith in Sai that lifted them when things looked bleak.

Lord Sainath had become the centre of their life. When they had yielded their hearts to Him, He had uplifted their spirit and then on, dad and mother had belonged to Lord Sainath. As they speak of Lord Sainath now, the joy and wonder of Sai's compassion fill their faces.

After dad fully surrendered to Sai, the Lord blessed him with a unique miracle. On the 16th November 1983, as he was worshipping Lord Sainath, a beam of light rays emanated from Sai's photograph and burnt a circular area around his left nipple. That was the Master's grace on dad as it completely got rid of his heart ailment. The doctors who had known dad's condition earlier were amazed at the way Lord Sainath healed him, which would otherwise require open-heart-surgery (details P. 41 of December '84 issue of Sri Sai Leela). Since then dad has been as active as a dynamic youth.

Soon Lord Sainath gave him a vision that would put to work the talents he had developed over a life time. Dad was struck with the difficulty of certain concepts in Sai Sat-Charita, difficulty which prevents many people from expressing on Lord Sainath and His bountiful gifts. He started a bi-lingual (English and Telugu) monthly magazine SAI PRABHA with the active help of Sai-bandhus all over the country, with a goal to point the way to deeper faith and more creative living. He has associated with 'Sai-Nam' propagation and is now putting all his know-how in organisation part. When Vijayawada Sai-bandhus conducted 49-day long incessant 'Nama-japam' dad and mother actively took part in that programme. They toured different districts of Andhra Pradesh carrying the 'Holy Padukas' and Kufni of Lord Sainath in December, 1985. They are associated with several Sai-temples all over the country. Now 24 hours a day is not enough for them. They talk Sai, they breathe Sai and live Sai.

Retirement! What a wonderful opportunity to work for the Lord! So much to do, so much to learn, so many all around who need to know Lord Sainath. Having no longer a need to make a name or career for themselves, mother and dad are free to serve Him. As for the relationship between my parents and our relatives, what Sai-fellowship our families have together now! With Lord Sainath in the centre, there is more love between us than was ever possible before.

How I wish all retirement could be to fuller life!

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Book Review: "SHRI SAI SAROVAR"

This unique life history of Shri Sai Baba consisting of 1500 pages in demi size and in two volumes has been recently (i.e. on 12 July 1987) published in Gujarati language. So far such a big book on Shri Sai Baba has not been published in any language. All the information about Sai Baba and His devotees collected by Shri Dabholkar, H.H. Narasimha Swamiji, Shri Dadasaheb Khaparde, Swami Saisharananand and found in their books/diaries in Marathi, Gujarati and English, has been included in this book. In addition, information found in books of Shri Amidas Mehta, Shri Balkrishna Dev Mamaltdar, Prof. Narke, Shri Wamanrao Gokhale — all these not much known — has also been presented in this book. There are detailed life-sketches of Shri Upasani Maharaj Shri Mota, Shri Rang Avadhoot, Sant Shantavanji Maharaj, Swami Shri Rambaba and host of other saints who were connected with Shri Sai Baba or Shri Dattatreya. There are not only extracts from Marathi and Sanskrit 'araties', bhajans and stotras recited at Shirdi which have been quoted at appropriate places with translation in Gujarati, but Shri Sai Ashtottarshat Namavali composed by H.H. Narasimha Swami and 1008 names (Nama-Sankiratan) of Shri Dattatreya composed by Shri Rang Avadhoot Maharaj has also been fully included with explanations in Gujarati. The author has interviewed a number of devotees who had personally seen Sri Baba in His life-time and collected some quite interesting details not known or published hetherto. In short this book is so comprehensive in its presentation of information regarding Sri Baba and His devotees that it could very well be considered and worshipped as 'Shri Sai Mahabharat' or 'Shri Sai Encyclopaedia' — although the caption 'Shri Sai Sarovar' also means a big lake of information and knowledge about Shri Sai.

A special feature of this book is that according to the author, Shri Sai Baba was 'ayonija' (not born of a woman) but appeared on His own at Shirdi out of the cave underneath the sared Neam Tree, at mid-night on 10th August, 1848 (Shalivahan Shake 1771, Shravan Vadya 8 — the date and time similar to those of Lord Krishna's birth), and was seen by the villagers the next morning. The author has with great efforts managed to get an horoscope (kundali) prepared, based on the time and date of Baba's appearance, (pragatya), from a well-known astrologer in Gujarat and printed it in his book, tally-

ing almost over 90 p.c. with that of Lord Krishna. Of course this being a very debatable question, everyone may not be convinced.

The book is voluminous as a result of the author's great study and research, but it does not make a dry reading. On the contrary it is a lucid devotional work written by a great Sai devotee and the language is very simple and interesting to read. Although it is not composed in verse like Hemadpant's Marathi Shri Sai-Sat-Charitā, its Gujarati prose is full of poetic picturesque figures of speech such as simile, alliteration etc. There are simple black and white pictures also at appropriate places. The author has written this book for the daily reading (parayana) by the Sai devotees and hence at the beginning of every chapter there are obeisances to Shri Ganesh and other Gods and Goddesses, saints and elders; and in between, the fruits of reading, are also narrated, as in other religious books.

The greatest wonder is that the author is said to have studied only upto 3rd standard in vernacular (Gujarati) and does not at all understand English, Marathi or Sanskrit. It is therefore a great mystery as to how he managed to get the English rendition of H.H. Narasimha Swami and Shri Dadasaheb Khaparde, Marathi and Sanskrit poetic compositions of Das Ganu Maharaj, Upasani Maharaj and Shri K.J. Bhishma translated and understood them in Gujarati from somebody else and then himself rendered them in beautiful Gujarati language like an eminent literary writer. Looking at this unbelievably difficult achievement of Shri Jarmanwala and his great attachment to Shri Sai Baba, one is inclined to believe without hesitation the author's statement that he commenced writing this book under direct instructions from Baba Himself. Otherwise how was it ever possible for such an ordinary and not very literate person to gift such a beautiful and scholarly work to the reading public?

To sum up, I feel that such of the readers of 'Shri Sai Leela', who can understand Gujarati even a little, should purchase and read this book to benefit themselves. They will not only come to know quite a bit more about Shri Sai Baba and His devotees hitherto not much known but will also benefit in their spiritual progress as a result thereof.

That the author Shri Maganlal T. Jarmanwala deserves loving



respects and hearty felicitations from all of us Sai devotees, is my humble opinion.

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TO SWAMIJI — WITH LOVE

“Teach me Thyself, O Lord Sainath, or through Guru sent by you” — I prayed.

In response, I found SAIPADANANDA RADHAKRISHNA
SWAMIJI,

A true APOSTLE OF LOVE, growling with wisdom rare,

Myrrh of devotion I poured from the cup of my heart;

He took from the start,

In his den of VISHNU-SAHASRA-NAMAM he remained,

Caring naught for the world — neither its riches nor acclaim.

He spoke forth truth with an extreme unsteadied non-chalance,

Heeding not judgemental consequence,

But since 14th January 1980 never again his voice speaks to human
ear,

Empty now the familiar easy-chair at Bangalore Sai-shrine

The astral Swamiji has leapt into all-embracing space

To dwell in his den eternal

This earth, he made too poorer a place.

*R. Subramanian,
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Villivakkum, Madras 600 049.*

SAI BABA OF SHIRDI, THE WONDER OF THE AGE

The more a devotee learns about Sai Baba of Shirdi, the more is he filled with genuine wonder at his marvellous Incarnation. Of all the saints, seers, mystics and godmen who have appeared in this holy land of ours (Bharatavarsha, the name itself is sonorous and sweet) in the present age, Sai Baba of Shirdi towers over all of them by his uniqueness as an "Avataar" of god and so worshipped as such without doubt or reservation.

The greatest of His "Gunaas" was his catholicity, which drew to Him both Hindus and Moslems with an overwhelming preponderance of the former. The most significant phenomenon of Sai Baba was, though residing in the mosque of the village (it must be said that it was His second choice, the first being the Kandobha temple from which He was forbidden, curiously enough by the first man Mahlsapathy in Shirdi to start worship of Him as god on earth) and appearing for all purposes as a moslem (though actually a brahmin born) He showed the wonderful catholicity of the Hindu and did things not to the liking of Moslems according to their faith but because of His mystic power, the moslems submitted to Him with a meekness and humility though a few tried to register their protests at the unislamic ways that Baba adopted.

A few instances alone will convince one, a Sai devotee or not about the immeasurable greatness of this 'Avataar', in the matter of tolerance or catholicity.

Some muslim divines keeping the company of Baba objected to Mahlsapathy applying sandal paste on the neck and forehead (in addition to placing flowers at His feet) in his worship of Baba inside the masjid. So out of fear one day, Mahlsapathy submitted his worship standing outside the masjid. Baba saw this and asked Mahlsapathy to go in as usual and do his "Puja" permitting him even to the extent of daubing His entire body with sandal paste. No moslem dared to open his mouth. To continue with Baba and sandal paste, one Dr. Pandit marked the forehead of Baba with sandal paste in three horizontal lines (in the belief that Baba was his brahmin guru Dhopeswar Kaka Maharaj) and when a moslem devotee pointed to Baba the unislamicness of the worship, He replied quietly that if the Hindus believed Him as their god there was no objection that could be raised against this form of their worship. Needless to say the muslim was silenced.



More thrilling is the action of Lakshman Mama (Uncle of Shama) when following the injunction of Baba in a dream he offered in full to the Body of Baba on 16th October 1918, both in the morning and noon, the day following the passing away of Baba viz. 15th October, 1918, "Aarati", in spite of the protests of the moslems sitting by the side of Baba's body. Can conviction of regarding Baba as god go beyond this step or action of Lakshman Mama? Indeed it cannot.

Das Ganu's "Akhandha Bhajana" before the "Sammadhi" of Baba deserves special mention. Following a dream vision accorded by Baba, Das Ganu hastened from Sholapur to Shirdi to perform this concluding act of devotion and adoration of the Deity he worshipped.

It must be remembered parallelly with the above that Baba Himself communicated his passing away (or Allah calling Him) to his muslim devotees and even divines in them and what was more arranged in Islamic fashion the ceremonial offerings connected with His passing away from earth.

Two other illustrious examples of Baba may be cited. Even the distinguished devotee Kakasaheb Dixit invited the wrath of Baba by an indiscreet action. When one day while massaging the legs of Baba he spoke disparagingly of Christ and Christianity, Baba ordered him of and only after Dixit expressed his genuine repentance permitted him to do the service again. When Bada Baba or Fakir Baba (one held with respect as Shirdi Baba Himself) brought to Baba's presence a Hindu he had converted to Islam, Baba slapped the convert on the cheek, saying, "Ah, you have changed your father!"

What do all the illustrations in this written article signify? The immense mystic power of Baba as an Incarnation of god and His wonderful catholicism which He taught to all by His own example are only too evident.

SAI RAM:

SAI RAM:

SAI RAM:

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THE CLAIMING PRAYER

GOD HAS GIVEN US MANY PROMISES... AND IT IS UPTO US TO MEET THE CONDITION AND CALIM THEM.....

I first became aware of the claiming prayer back in March, 1986 when I was a guest of Sai-sister Mrs. Durga Sanathkumar at Coimbatore. I noticed a strange sentence written on the flyleaf of her book "SAI BABA'S CHARTERS AND SYAINGS":-

"It is the word of a gentleman of the most strict and sacred honour, so there is an end of it!" — David Livingstone. Underneath the inscription, Mrs. Durga had signed her own name.

When I asked Mrs. Durga for an explanation of the words, she thumped the cover of her book and said, "In these pages are the living words of the living God — Sai Baba. These words include a lot of promises, many of them with conditions attached. But they were not meant just for the contemporaries of Sai Baba. Indeed they were meant for us, too. All we have to do is to meet the conditions, then step up and claim them."

She was silent for a moment. Then she said: "Remember how I promised my grandson Jagan to take him down to get a toy-train this Saturday?" I nodded. "Well I would be a poor grandma if I failed to keep promises like that to my grandson. And if I am conscientious enough to want to keep my word, how much more so is Sai Baba."

This brought to my memory as to how David Livingstone in 1896 faced as grave a peril as at any other time during his 16 years in Africa. David Livingstone was passing through the wild country of the native chief Mburuma, who was hostile and had been seeking to rouse the countryside against the white man's expedition. Reports had been coming in that natives had been creeping towards the camp. For Livingstone, Jesus Christ was close behind his thoughts and the holy Bible gave him a word of encouragement: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go Ye therefore, and teach all nations.... and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18,19,20). Livingstone felt the presence of Jesus Christ in these words of the Bible.

The next morning Livingstone, still calm, directed the crossing



of the river by his 114 men and their oxen, while Mburuma and his tribesmen watched from the jungle's edge.

The Missionary reserved for himself the last place in the last canoe. One native-bearer fearful of treachery, pleaded with Livingstone, not to give the Chief a chance to shoot him in the back.

“Tell him to observe that I am not afraid” — Livingstone replied. Then with dignity he thanked the astonished natives, wished them God's peace and walked slowly to the canoe. No one molested him.

Livingstone had made the claiming prayer. For himself and his company he had claimed Jesus's promise: “Lo, I am with you always”. And He of the sacred honour had fulfilled His word. God's presence had given Livingstone such a nobility of bearing that even savages should have felt it, as was evident later.

Livingstone's experience made such an impression on me that those words in Mrs. Durga's book have been associated in my mind with the claiming prayer ever since.

Reading of Sai Sat-Charita or Baba's charters and Sayings is not a dull chore. I read these holy books daily because they tell me so much about the character and ways of Sai Baba. I find myself eager to know how Sai Baba dealt with men and women in every imaginable circumstance, so that I can have some idea how He might deal with me.

This has made me understand that Sai Baba means that all lives be lived in co-operation with Him, His friendship, His plans for us; His grace is awaiting each of us, provided we want Him in our lives.

And then the point of the claiming prayer became clearer: — **THE RICHES OF GRACE MUST BE CLAIMED** — ‘You look to Me : I look after you’.

The process goes like this:-

- ★ Sai Baba had made a promise.
- ★ If conditions are attached to it, we should do our best to meet them.
- ★ We make an act at a specific time and place of claiming this promise.
- ★ Sai Baba fulfills the promise in His own time and way.

How practical the Claiming Prayer can be was illustrated by a Sai-sister, who is a young Bank Manager's wife at Coimbatore.

Before marrying Sri P.J. Narasimhulu in 1980, Smt. Umadevi had been a happy-go-lucky girl. Being the youngest daughter of a rich business-magnate, she had a comfortable and glamorous life. Upon marriage, Smt. Umadevi made the decision to give up her glamorous life and be a good housewife and a lovable mother. In the years since, she has never compromised with that decision. But little did Smt. Umadevi know how difficult the transition would be....

By 1983, Smt. Umadevi was a proud mother of a bonny son and a chubby daughter. Soon she felt herself at the end of all physical and spiritual resources. Always tired, she could never see over the top of the mountain of home chores and social obligations. Nor could she find time even for a few minutes of quietness and prayer. She was near a nervous collapse.

Smt. Umadevi's first opportunity to think through the situation came during a visit to 'Naga-Sai Temple' of Coimbatore. At the august presence of Sai-Maharaj, she determined to pray her way through to some answers. She placed before Lord Sainath three acute problems:


- ★ There was simply too much work. She felt like a servant in own home. How could one woman be a maid, laundress, mother, wife?
- ★ Constant interruptions from friends and relatives through visits and telephone calls.
- ★ The need for a daily quiet time. How could she manage all that?

"That evening Sai Baba gave me an insight into every problem", Smt. Umadevi told me. "Sai Baba answered me in His Eleven charters. He did not take away my difficulties, but he showed me how to handle each situation by claiming His strength....."

Here is the guidance Smt. Umadevi feels she received from Sai Baba.:

For too much work and feeling like a servant in her own home:

Accept your role. If you give Me your willingness, I will do the rest. Above all do not feel sorry for yourself. Did not Sai Baba



count Himself servant of Javar Ali? (Ch. 5 of Sat-Charita) Did not Sai Baba count Himself servant of all? (Ch. 10 in which Baba offers His pranams to His devotees). It is the worrying about tomorrow and the next week that is making you feel your load is unbearable. Claim my strength one day at a time with this promise: "Cast you burden on Me, I shall surely carry it".

When interruptions come:

Treat them as Sai Baba did. There were many times when He yearned to be left alone too. Yet He reacted to interruptions, not by resisting or resenting them, but by accepting and using them to teach and help people. Claim His help in treating your interruptions His way.

Finding a quiet time:

With young children in the home there will be few uninterrupted stretches of time. So watch for free minutes throughout the day to remember Sai Baba. Then face up to how much you really want to pray. Claim this promise for the quiet heart: "For Sai Baba is not the author of confusion, but of peace...."

Now there is abundant evidence of how fully Smt. Umadevi's claiming prayers were answered. There still are interruptions. Yet desperation and threat of a breakdown have given way to a quiet effectiveness. Rarely have I seen a more successful wife, mother and a devout Sai-sister.

I believe the claiming prayer to be a crown of all ways of prayer because it necessarily means a two-way communication between Sai Baba and His devotee. This interchange results in perspective and deepening insight into our problem and Sai Baba's way of meeting it.

For sometime as Mrs. Durga Sanathkumar pointed out to me there are conditions attached to Sai Baba's promises. To illustrate:- the condition for material blessing is that we give priority to Sai-bliss and contentment. The condition for peace is high: humbling ourselves as nothing before Lord Sainath, praying and turning from evil. There is nothing like our total surrender to Lord Sainath as He knows our past, present and future. He shapes our destiny according to what we deserve. Let us live in the spirit of the verse — 'Wherever the Lord has placed you, there you must blossom in His honour.'

Doing our best to meet Sai Baba's conditions inevitably gives us renewed faith to claim a particular promise for ourselves. Then we wait for fulfillment secure in the knowledge of a God who cannot lie and that one who believes in Sai Baba will never be disappointed.

The Claiming Prayer is the most incisive way of prayer that I know, resting its case as it does on that "Word of a gentleman of the most strict and sacred honour."



FAITH IS THE ANSWER

"When you have peace in every movement of your body, and peace in your thinking, and in your will-power, and peace in your love, and peace and God in your ambitions, remember you have connected God with your life."

— Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

My mind raced backwards retracing my steps for the day on Sunday the 9th November, 1986. I could remember carrying the package containing two framed photographs, of Kanchi Acharyas and His Holiness Saipadananda Radhakrishna Swamiji. I thought I had put it in my hand-bag, but now, back home, I could not find it anywhere in the bag. The package was gone.

I recalled the events of the past two days. On the morning of 7th November, 1986, my colleague, Sai-brother Sri V.R.S. Mani met me in the hospital. He had just returned from a trip to Ranipet, where he had the good fortune of having darshan of Shankaracharyas of both Sringeri and Kanchi Mutts. When I heard this, I told him that Shirdi Sansthan had gifted me a coloured picture of Kanchi Acharyas in February 1984, when I took part in the Annual Gathering of Sai Leela Contributors. Though I am yet to have their 'darshan' physically, it was again Sai-will that I have lost the photograph gifted by the Sansthan.

Lord Sainath is closely watching us. Soon after Sri Mani left, the post man came in and handed me a registered cover from Sai-brother Sri R. Subramanian of Madras. He had sent me 'Kanchi-Prasad' and a glazed photograph of 'Kanchi Triveni' depicting the three Acharyas. I was really taken aback at this unique Sai-grace on me.



So on the 9th November, 1986, when I went to Kotagiri, I took the photograph 'Kanchi Triveni' and a spare photograph of His Holiness Saipadananda Radhakrishna Swamiji, for getting them framed. The owner of the Frame Works complimented me on my having such a nice photograph of 'Kanchi Acharyas'. He did a good job of framing the two photographs.

But now my gift was gone and with it my good cheer. I felt defeated and desperately sad, for I had taken it as unique Sai-grace on me. It would indeed be a 'Sai leela' to recover the lost package but I could try. A call to the frame-works turned out to be futile. Then there was nothing to do but retrace my route and hope.

Why are more precious things so easily lost? I wondered. Perhaps this is simply what happens, I thought. Things of importance are neglected, not intentionally, but like the gift I had, they are lost to us just the same. Other things take their place and our life goes on. It is not really a tragedy, but it is not the same anymore either. Still it seemed unfair somehow.

Three days passed. I had reconciled to losing my precious gift. On the evening of the 12th November, 1986, one gentleman called on me and asked, "Did you lose a package....?"

Suddenly I came to life. "Yes, yes.... You found it?". He had found it along the side of a table in a bakery. Then it came to me. I had placed the package on the table while I fished for change and then had completely forgotten it. Suddenly the whole affair was comic. How absurd it must have appeared?

He exclaimed: "Such pretty photographs, I knew somebody must be feeling sad about having lost them."

He returned the photographs to me. "Sorry, I had to open the package, as it was the only way to learn the name of the shop. They told me it was yours."

I told him, "I cannot thank you enough".

"You are lucky. I was the last person to visit the shop and the package was lying on the table unclaimed. God guided me to restore it to its owner."

I was overcome with gratitude as he had devoted time and effort to locate me and see personally that the two photographs reached my hands. A stranger who cared!

He had given me Lord Sainath's gift, the gift of love. And now I wanted to give, too, as he had, to others and I would begin tonight with our family — 'Things are not always lost forever', I told myself, the battered box under my arm proved that. They can be re-discovered if we try.

I had the feeling of beginning all over again. As I bow down to Lord Sainath, Kanchi Acharyas and Radhakrishna Swamiji, I would remember — 'A great Sai-leela happened there....'

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SRI SAI BABA CAME TO ME

"Let My man be at any distance, a thousand khoss away from Me, he will be drawn to Shirdi like a sparrow with a thread to its feet."

— Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi

Even as I worked, I could feel it moving in, circling more tightly around me, focussed and unswerving, like a wild animal sure of its prey.

Cold sweat began to moisten my forehead. In slow motion, my hands went with the business of cross-checking the entries in the stock register. 'Keep working as if nothing is happening', I told myself, 'May be it will go away.'

It was a cold morning in February, '86. The panic, the fear of losing control over myself circled closer. My heart drummed. I began to pant and tremble. An unpleasant floating sensation rippled through me. From the stores, I could see our Tea Factory bustling with activity. If I could go back to office and sit at my table, just for a couple of minutes, I knew I would calm down, feel safe again.

Suppose you get out on the street and start screaming hysterically?



Right now, my throat dry, I was trying to swallow the urge to do exactly that.

What if our factory workers hear you?

They will think, you are a mental case.

But I am not....I am not.

I knew what the name for my trouble was — 'Agaraphobia', a chronic state of fear. But who out there had ever heard of Agaraphobia. That was one of the problems. People did not know about it and doctors had not found a standard form of treatment.

I wanted to run, but fear weighed my feet. The conflict tore at me. It seemed I had two brains — a weak one, well-intentioned fighting for sanity and self-control; a stronger-one, hell-bent on destruction, inviting stress and negative thoughts. My whole being fell like a battleground. At any moment, I might be blown apart.

I could work no longer. I sought permission to go home. With the least of physical strength, I made it to the bed and, exhausted, I slept.

When I awoke, a few hours later the immobilising panic was gone. But it had been replaced by tension. I turned on my back and began counting breathing process my doctor had taught me.

The learned Psychiatrist whom I had consulted, had told me that I was suffering from Agaraphobia — "It starts with anxiety — the kind anybody can feel it, something like missing a train, going to doctor, job pressure, an argument etc., When stresses build up, certain people may experience sudden panic. The symptoms make them feel as if they are going crazy." The psychiatrist had taught me a few relaxation methods.

I am not fortunate yet to be blessed with a child and this has been the cause of my anxiety. The agaraphobia had begun in 1976 and increasingly over the years it had affected me, my work and my family.

It was in May, 1986, that our company had a new Medical Officer in Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar. He is deeply religious and has implicit faith in Lord Sainath. I felt a desperate urge to speak out and Dr. Vijayakumar gave me a patient hearing. He invited me to his residence wherein he gifted me a photograph of Shirdi Sai Baba with His 'Udhi'. He asked me to start worshipping Sai Baba which would certainly help me overcome my agaraphobia.

On that night after 'Sai Baba came to our house', in the far corners of myself I felt a stirring. Was it starting again — the panic???

'SHIRDI SAI BABA' — the name exploded from my lips like a cork under pressure. And then the words poured out. "Sai Baba. I am so alone, unless you are there to help me. I need you to be in control of my life because I cannot be, and I cannot go on tormenting myself and my family this way — I have been talking to myself for all these years and it has not done any good. From now on I am talking to you.... You are in charge of everything. The fear, the panic, the whole mess I cannot handle...."

For the first time since my teenage years — when I had become convinced that God did not love me — I found talking to Lord Sainath instead of myself. I asked Sai Baba, 'Either let me get well or let me die and have peace.'

I indeed felt a positive response. I started taking 'Sai-Udhi' instead of medicine. I subscribed to 'Sai Leela' magazine and started reading about Sai Baba and His help. My mind has gradually become cool and quiet. I can only say, 'Sainath, Thank you...Thank you.'

My Sai-worship has not yet 'cured' me as yet but I no longer feel helpless or that I am fighting this tedious fear alone, trapped in my own private hell. I am armed with the knowledge and the security of a support in Shirdi Sai Baba. How wonderful it is to talk to Lord Sainath when I feel distress or want to share a triumph.

I still have panic attacks now and then. By talking to Lord Sainath I have learned to let Him help me handle them. I feel re-born spiritually and psychologically.

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ZEN BUDDHISM

(By courtesy of "Prabuddha Bharat" of the Ramakrishna Mission, we publish an article for the benefit of the readers of 'Sai Leela' by Prof. D.C. Gupta of the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, which appeared in the issue of Prabuddha Bharat, January, 1974)

A great teacher came from India. In spite of the legends which have grown round the name of Bodhidharma in China, it seems impossible to doubt that he arrived at Canton and preached a doctrine which was called Buddhism, though in the form in which it is reported in Chinese literature it seems more like Vedantism expressed in Buddhist terminology. Bodhidharma, the reputed founder of Zen in the Far East, seems to have been a native in the Dravidian provinces. He arrived in China about A.D. 520. He there became the first Chinese Patriarch but only in the sense of being the head of his special sect. His teaching is summed up in four well-known lines:

A special tradition outside the scriptures:
Not to depend on books or letters:
To point, direct to the heart of man:
To see (one's own) nature and become Buddha.

Study of the scriptures, prayer, and even good works are all equally in vain. All that man need do is to turn his gaze inward and see the Buddha in his own heart.

Zen in Japan has three divisions often reckoned as separate sects, the Rinzai, Soto, and Obaku. The Soto is the largest Buddhist denomination in the country. It was introduced from China some time after the beginning of the thirteenth century. There is, however, a slight difference of method and teaching between the Soto and Rinzai. The former emphasizes the importance of moral training and gradual development for obtaining enlightenment; the latter insists that enlightenment is rather a sudden revelation which cannot be caused or accelerated by study. The former holds that a good life is alike the cause and result of enlightenment. The word 'enlightenment' is a rendering of satori in Japanese. It is a new view of life and the universe, which must be felt. It will prove satisfying, and be 'the purifier and liberator of life', breaking down the prison walls in which the intellect is said to confine us. Satori is commonly

described as a convulsion which upsets and destroys all one's old ideas.

In the teaching quoted above, Bodhidharma insists that religion means nothing but the vision of the Buddha-nature in one's own heart; and to those to whom it comes it gives light and deliverance. Now if we substitute *atman* for Buddha-nature the doctrine closely resembles our well-known passages of the Upanishads. (There are notable verbal coincidences. Thus it is said that the Buddha-nature reveals itself in dreams; that it embraces the whole universe and yet is so small that a needle cannot prick it.) There is no doubt that the closest Indian analogy to Bodhidharma's doctrine is offered by some utterances of the Upanishads. 'To see into one's nature and become Buddha' is really the same idea as that Brahman, the eternal and universal Spirit, is identical with the indwelling self in every man. It is also true that there is a striking likeness between the thought of Zen and such passages as those which say: 'You cannot think of it with thought, hear it with the ear, see it with sight, breathe it with the breath, etc. (Kena-Upanishad, 1. 5-9)

The Soto was not so influential in China — where it was known as Tsao-Tung — as was the Rinzai (Lin-chi); but it has had great success in Japan. It lays stress on the need for silent introspection as a preparation for enlightenment, and also on ethics. It regards the knowledge of the Buddha-nature (or Brahman), as an end in itself, all-satisfying and all-engrossing. When once the eye of the spirit is opened to the divine vision, nothing more is said about worship or conduct or any human ideal. But the Lin-chi (Rinzai) school held that it is necessary to have Enlightenment after Enlightenment, that is to say, that the inner illumination must display itself in a good life. The Lin-chi (Rinzai) was introduced into Japan by Eisai (1215) and the Tsao-Tung (Soto) by Dogen (1253), both of whom studied in China. Dogen, often called Shoyodaichi, a posthumous title conferred on him in 1880, built the magnificent monastery of Eihei-ji near Fukui in Echizen.

I have gone through a little manual called 'The Buddhist Way of Practice according to the Soto Sect', which sums up its doctrine by saying that the most important things are to understand the nature of life and death and to realize that our own hearts are the Buddha himself. The Soto is also less open to any charge of ex-



travagance and lays greater stress on the need of good conduct and morality in the spiritual life, whereas the Rinzai, without being in the least open to the charge of immorality, emphasizes the importance of sudden spiritual enlightenment without insisting strongly that a good life is the best training for such an enlightenment and the sure result of it.

The Ox-tending: The eternal purity of the Buddha-nature (or Brahman)

Zen has a curious possession which may be called either literature of art, in the set Ox-tending pictures, each supplied with an explanation in prose and a quatrain of verses. The pictures are said to have been drawn by Kakuan, a Chinese monk of the Rinzai school who lived about A.D. 1100.

The first picture is called Looking for the Ox, that is to say one's own soul. (The metaphor seems to be an old one in Zen. Hyakujo or Pai-Chang, a Chinese Zen Philosopher, A.D. 720-814 is reported to have said that to seek for the Buddha is like seeking for an Ox while one is riding on it). It represents a man exhausted and in despair, following an unending path and vainly searching while he hears nothing but the song of the evening cicadas.

In the second picture he is still searching but has discovered the tracks of the Ox. This is explained as meaning that he has begun to study philosophy and various doctrines. He cannot yet distinguish truth and falsehood or good and evil: Still he has found some traces of what he seeks.

The third picture represents a great stride. The man sees the Ox: he begins to understand the uselessness of mere book-learning and to realize that the road to Enlightenment really lies through the trifles of everyday life. Something new is working harmoniously in all his senses and all his activities, unseen and inseparable, like the salt in sea water.

At last he catches the Ox, which in picture four is seen attached by a cord but not being led. The beast is still too unruly and refuses to be broken in, 'owing to the overwhelming pressure of the objective world.' The Ox rushes up to a plateau and sometimes seems lost in the mountain mists. Nevertheless he is gradually broken in.

In the next picture the Ox is seen following the man, who leads him by a nose cord. 'Things oppress us not because of an objective world but because of a self-deceiving mind.... Never let yourself be separated from the whip and tether.'

In the sixth picture, the struggle is over. The man is leisurely proceeding home riding on the Ox, playing as he goes simple ditties on a rustic flute. 'What need to tell that he is now one of those that know?'

The Ox now disappears and the man is left alone. In picture seven we see him sitting outside his house with his whip and the cord lying beside him as if he were asleep and the comment is: 'When you know that what you need is not the snare or net, but hare or fish that they were meant to catch, it is like gold separated from the dross, or like the moon rising out of the clouds.'


The eighth picture is something new, not only in this series of drawings but in Buddhist art. It is merely a blank: a circular frame enclosing nothing at all. The title is simply, 'the Ox and the man both gone out of sight, and the following are extracts from the comments: 'All confusion is set aside and serenity alone prevails; even the idea of holiness does not obtain. He does not linger where the Buddha is, and where there is no Buddha he passes on....

'Who has ever surveyed the vastness of heaven?

Over the blazing furnace not a flake of snow can fall.'

The ninth picture, though not an absolute blank, shows only a few flowers and leaves of grass or some suggestion of a landscape. The comment runs thus: 'Pure from the very beginning, he receives no defilement. He watches the growth and decay of things with form and abides himself secure in Wu-wei. (This is a well-known Taoist phrase, meaning something like absence of self-assertion). He does not identify himself with transformations: What has he to do with self-discipline? Water is blue and mountains green. He sits and watches how things change.' But this life of lonely contemplation is by no means held up as the last word.

The tenth picture is called 'Entering the city with bliss-bestowing hands' and represents a rotund, smiling personage carrying bags full of what are no doubt good things. The comment informs us that none knows his inner life but that he goes into the



market-place and consorts with wine-bibbers and butchers: he and they all become Buddhas.

The text does not give any general summary of the meaning of the whole series of pictures, but it is usually briefly explained by saying that the Ox is the Buddha nature in every one: you must find it but must not make too much of it. Goso (or Hoyen), a famous Chinese teacher of Zen who died in A.D. 1104, often indicated to his pupil that he had a slight fault but for some time could not be induced to give it a name. At last he said, 'Well, the fact is you have too much Zen about you', and added, when pressed to explain what was the harm of that, 'It turns one's stomach.'



A WORD

A Loving Word... May heal and bless.
A Timely Word... May lessen stress.
A Brutal Word... May smite and kill.
A Bitter Word... May hate instill.
A Careless Word... May kindle strife.
A Cruel Word... May wreck a life.
A Gracious Word... May smooth the way.
A Joyous Word... May light the day!!!

AUM SHANTI

NINE DIVINE WORDS

LORD — It is the Supreme Word of Scriptures.
BABA — It is the Divine Name of Aum Sai Baba.
LOVE — It is the Gift of the heart.
READ — It is the source of Wisdom.
PRAY — It is the answer for every need.
HOPE — It is the nectar of thoughts.
YOGA — It is the secret of youthfulness.
WORK — It is the service of the Spirit.
GLAD — It is the melody of the soul!!

AUM SHANTI

Dr. Babaji I.C.S.

BABA — The All Pervading and Omnipresent One


I would like to describe my first trip to Shirdi and the day I received the first copy of Sai Leela.

I had taken a vow in July, 1986 to visit Shirdi when I was faced with a grave problem. The problem was solved by the Grace of Baba. As it is well known no one can just visit Shirdi without His call and in my case it was brought about by the vow.

I had booked four tickets for Sunday the 26th October, 1986, for myself, my sister and two of my good friends. One of these friends Shri Pradeep Kumar, an ardent devotee of Baba, had presented me with a Sai Baba ring and also with the english copy of Sai-Sat-Charita in 1981-82 and thus 'introduced' me to Sai. When the day of the journey arrived three of us assembled near the booking counter but we failed to spot our other friend. The bus arrived and on requesting the conductor to wait for some time Mr. Pradeep went to locate our friend but was not successful. Later after we had returned from Shirdi we enquired from the friend and was told that he had been waiting near the hotel at the turning and could not spot us. (The distance between the counter and the hotel is hardly a few meters). After settling ourselves, a silly thought (and I do not know how and why) flashed regarding the wastage of the ticket, for my aunty had decided to accompany us but did not. When the conductor informed that we could collect back the refund for the cancellation, it appeared that he had read my mind.

We had a comfortable journey and on reaching Shirdi in the early hours the next day stayed at a lodge. After bath and with the puja materials we entered the Dwarkamai and had a heartfelt darshan of Baba. Mr. Pradeep was surprised since there was practically no crowd on that day as he had had experiences of heavy crowds whenever he had visited Shirdi. We saw all the places where Baba had lived and moved and the garden created by His Grace. When we neared the book stall Pradeep asked me to subscribe for the Sai Leela Magazine. To tell you all the truth, since 1982-83 I had planned to subscribe for the same and had even taken the address from him but could not subscribe. After paying for the subscription we went to the Dwarkamai for the afternoon Aarti.

I was spell bound and enthralled by the bhajans and though I did not know the words I kept repeating "Sai Baba, Sai Baba".



When I happened to look at His statue it appeared to me that He was smiling gently and swaying His head to the tune of the bhajans. The sight moved me so deeply that I wept silently and was reluctant to move from the spot even when the bhajans were over. After accepting the prasad we had a good lunch served at the mess and boarded the bus for the return journey. By His Grace the whole trip had been safe and successful.

After our return I did not think about the arrival of the Sai Leela since it takes time for despatch to new subscribers. On Wednesday 26th November, 1986 I was thinking to write to the office and enquire regarding the Sai Leela but some how it was postponed for the next day. On the next day (Thursday) I received the first issue of the Sai Leela. This made me to resolve to write about the trip for the benefit of all Sai devotees. Even this was delayed but finally Baba made me sit and write it out on Thursday 15th January, '87. All has been made and will be made possible by the All Pervading and Omnipresent One Sri Sai Baba.

OM SAI RAM

Sai Bhaktha.



TRUE SAI — SACRIFICE

"Not by action, not by progeny, not even by pelf, but by renunciation alone is Immortality attained."

Kaivalya Upanishad

Lord Sainath came on this earth as the Supreme Philosopher — Avadhoota so that the true meaning and purpose of sacrifice may be revealed to mankind. Sai Baba called upon his devotees: "Have regard for 'Rinanutandha'. Whoever or whatever creature comes to you, do not drive it away but receive it with due consideration. Give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty and clothes to the naked. Then God will be pleased."

Sai Baba is a true incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. The special feature of Dattatreya is hidden in His birth to sage Atri and Anasuya and in the example of his life itself. This is brought about by the Dattatreya Upanishad. Atri symbolises penance in the scriptures and Anasuya represents freedom from jealousy. When

penance and freedom from jealousy unite, the highest truth emerges as Dattatreya. The Supreme God gave Himself as Datta to Atri and Anasuya. Datta therefore means not only that which is given but also the idea of 'giving' — giving without desire for reward or self-less giving. The whole life of Dattatreya shows us that this 'giving selflessly' is true renunciation or sacrifice.

Why is that idea of renunciation or sacrifice so important? Sai Baba once said (Baba's charters & Sayings — 497), "My father found a bar-maid selling date-toddy in a garden to two hundred Rohillas, took to her and got sons by her. She refused to go with him and favoured many. Worms developed on her feet. As she was my father's wife, I tended her feet and cured her. She died later."

It was Baba's intention that his children should respect each other and be of service to each other. "If anyone begs of you anything, if that be in your hand or power, and if you can grant the request or get it granted, do so. Don't say 'NO'. If you have nothing to give, give a suave 'no', do not get angry with him. If you do not like to part with what you have, do not say falsely that you have nothing to give. Decline to give it in polite terms and say that circumstances or desires stand in the way."

Sai Baba gave his life to extend the life of Tatyasa Patil. This is indeed true renunciation.

What exactly is the kind of renunciation which gives immortality as attained by Sai Baba? Sai Baba himself embodies this type of renunciation. His nature is of the highest state that can be attained. Real renunciation is the giving up of the notion of 'I' and mine, not the mere abandoning of duties. He who lives a life of utterly selfless giving has no ego. He becomes everything, for there is no higher state than Sai Baba, the Absolute Truth.

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A SAI-RENDEZVOUS!

“Unless there is some relationship or connection nobody goes anywhere.”

Sai Baba

The Ootty bus bumped along, shivering in the cold of a Nilgiris winter. I sat dejectedly near the exit door, watching the passengers get off one by one. The bus had been crowded downtown, but now only the driver and two other persons were left, one near the front and the other at the very back.

I stared unseemingly out of the window, watching the buildings and people flit past like pages in a familiar, dusty book. The Nilgiris, we had been here for almost a year now and things were not going as expected. So many people, so many dreams, and everyone fighting to get to the top..... Did I really have it in me? Sometimes the ever-green estates seemed huge, terrifying people-eating, lonely. Goals that had been clear when we came here seemed to be falling apart.

The old man at the front of the bus was shivering in the cold, and the woman at the back was staring out of the window in a distracted way. Oh, well.... we all have our problems, I thought.

We had our own problems; problems of settling down, the change from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu, kids had to learn Tamil. Somehow I had a chunk of despair in the pit of my stomach. The thought of my kids struggling through their studies made the pain in my stomach worse.

The bus lurched to a stop at a red light. I glanced at the woman sitting on the rear seat. She was tall, well-dressed, middle-aged and intelligent-looking, yet there was something about her.... I guardedly stole another glance. She turned her face and the look of naked pain in her eyes shot through me with the force of a physical punch, hitting me in the stomach, right where it hurt.

I looked away, feeling I had seen something forbidden, something too private.

Then it came over me, strong and appealing, the urge to go and sit beside her. It was Lord Sainath's command to me.

I cannot go and sit beside a stranger in an empty bus, I reasoned. She will think I am out of my mind.

Again Lord Sainath's urge came, stronger and more irresistible; 'Go and sit beside her. Show her that you identify with her.'

I got up, went to the back of the bus and sat next to her.

"Excuse me" I said, to my surprise, "but I wanted to come over and sit with you. You seem to be so sad...."

She turned and looked me full into the face, her dark eyes wide with astonishment. Then she covered her face with her hand and began to cry quietly.

I felt her pain welling up in me and spilling out of my eyes. Gently, I took her hand and we sat without a word, tears spilling down both of our faces on to our clasped hands.

"I just wanted to tell you that it is going to be all right" I began, "I don't know what the problem is, and you don't need to tell me, but it is going to be all right...."

She was shaking her head.

"I can't believe this" she said, "I have never had anything like this happening to me in my life."

I put my other arm around the back of the seat and gripped her shoulders in a sisterly hug. She was so much like me, I had to strengthen her, or in some way we would all be weaker.

"It's okay" I said, "you have a lot of strength inside you."


"No" she said miserably, "I don't have any strength."

"Yes" I said, "it is there inside you... and God is with you."

She looked at me, half-smiling, half-crying.

"This is incredible", she said, "I have never felt so horribly shattered and alone in all my life.... and you, a perfect stranger.... I can't believe this is happening to me. Who are you? Would you give me your name and address?"

I fumbled for a pen and paper, and in my purse found a copy of the booklet "THUS SPAKE SAI BABA". Just a few days earlier, my husband, Dr. Vijayakumar had received 25 copies of the booklet "THUS SPAKE SAI BABA" from Sai-uncle S. Krishna Murthy of Shirdi Sai Bhakta Samajam, 4-3-111, 4th Cross, Ramannapet, Guntur (Andhra Pradesh). I had kept a copy of this booklet and since I could not get a paper, I wrote my name and address on this booklet and gave it to her, realising how strange a real



name and address looked in the middle of an experience like this. She put this booklet in her purse and glanced out of the bus window,

“Oh, my goodness” she said, “I am going to miss my stop. Bless you, I will never forget this, as long as I live. I will write to you.”

She bid me good-bye, and was off the bus. I sat with my head in an absolute whirl until I realised it was my stop and got off.

The pavement seemed carpeted under my feet, and a curious sense of discovery raced through me. What had I said to that woman! ‘It is going to be alright. You have a lot of strength down inside you and God is with you.’ Had I said that, or had she said it to me?

Somehow in my busy schedule I forgot this incident. Three days later I had a letter with an unfamiliar name and address. I had not asked her name, allowing her to remain anonymous if she wanted to; but there it was, in a bold clear script. I opened the envelope slowly, feeling I was treading on hallowed ground.

“Dear friend: This was a holy experience for me. Today when you came and sat beside me.....”

The rest of the letter blurred in front of me, a jumble of words explaining a maze of human suffering. Eagerly my eyes went back to the first line — ‘a holy experience’. That was what it had been for me as well; and unexpected moment when two human beings had dared to fully accept each other and found themselves face to face with God.

She was happy to be introduced to Sai Baba through the small booklet “THUS SPAKE SAI BABA”. She wanted to read more about Sai and had sought information about Him. She had in particular liked Sai Maharaj’s advice: “Be calm and quiet. *Uge Muge Chup Karo*, Everything will come to you by His will. God is the Master. Allah Malik.”

I folded the letter reverentially and thanked Lord Sainath for this unique experience. After this experience whenever I travel in a bus, I sit surrounded by a cloud of awe, wondering what is inside each of those faces staring impassively into space, absorbed in worlds within worlds, and within each of them the breath of the Eternal — Almighty Lord Sainath.

As I pen these lines, Sainath is close behind my thoughts. The new position and place that Sainath has brought us! We could take it. And whatever was good to do here, I had it in me to do I was not alone.

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SAI KING OF LOVE...HELP ME

In every need let me come to you
with humble Trust saying, Sai help me!
In all my doubts, perplexities and
Temptations, Sai help me.
In hours of loneliness, weariness
And trials, Sai help me!
In the failure of my plans and hopes,
In disappointments, troubles and sorrows, Sai help me!
When others fail me and thy grace
Alone can assist me, Sai help me!
When I throw myself on thy tender feet of
Love as a father and saviour, Sai help me!
When my heart is cast down by failure at seeing no good
Come from my efforts, Sai help me.
When I feel Impatient,
And I do irritate, Sai help me!
When I am ill and my head and hands cannot work
And I am lonely, Sai help me!
Always, Always, in spite of weakness,
Falls and short-comings of every kind,
Sai help me, and never for-sake me.
Dear Lord I pray thee
Accept the sacrifice I make
In making the impossible possible by Thy grace.

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Merces, Panaji Goa. (India)*



MIRACLES WORKED BY SHIRDI SAI BABA IN MY LIFE

'If you know about Sai Baba what I know about Him, you will call Him the MASTER of all creation.'

Meher Baba

The incident herein described bears ample testimony to the above-quoted assertion of Shri Meher Baba regarding Shirdi Sai Baba's absolute mastery over all creation, animate and inanimate. Indeed, we can realise that **IN REALITY THE CREATOR AND THE CREATION ARE ONE**, the latter being but the ocular demonstration of the former. This is in consonance with the latest discovery in the light of post-nuclear research in the frontiers of science according to which **ALL MANIFESTED NATURE IS ONLY A PHENOMENON OF THOUGHT BEHIND WHICH IS THE THINKER**. This in turn reflects and reiterates the Biblical enunciation regarding the origin of creation viz., 'Let there be light' said God, and there was light, and the Upanishadic axiom viz., **SWAYAM SAMKALPA SAM SIDDI**" i.e., God's manifestation in concrete form according to His Will. **IT IS AS GOD'S INCARNATION THAT BABA HAS REPEATEDLY, BOTH DURING HIS INCARNATE STAY AT SHIRDI AND AFTER HIS MAHASAMADHI, GIVEN RECURRING PROOF OF THIS DIVINE ASPECT. AS A DIRECT COROLLARY OF THIS, FORCES OF NATURE LIKE RAIN, STORM, LIGHTNING, FIRE, ETC., BOWED TO HIS WILL.** The present instance is an example of this.

We celebrated the marriage of our youngest son Dr. V. Satyanarayana Sai, a life-member of the Sansthan, now a lecturer in A.P.S. University, Rewa, M.P., on April 5, 1981 at Rayagada in Orissa. We were returning to Rewa via Raipur by the morning passenger train from Waltair on the 7th of the month. We had not known that apart from the inconveniences incidental to travelling a long distance by passenger train, we were unwittingly in for an ordeal. We learnt later that people of the region avoid this train as a rule. The route traverses a tribal area more or less entirely dependent for sustenance on the internal sale and export of the forest product without any middlemen by the tribals themselves. The summer is the season for mangoes and the jack-fruit's in unbelievable abundance of Nature's bounty which has to be seen to

be believed. At every stop came an unending stream of the girijans carrying the maximum possible load of the above items and literally hurling themselves and their burdens helter-skelter through the doors and windows into the compartments nearest to them. No railway control even if tried could stem that onslaught, as it were, at any cost. The result was the compartments were literally jam-packed and choking. It was a frightful situation in which one did not have any space to move at all. Even the lavatories were full so that we were obliged with unshed tears to hold our souls in patience till we reached Raipur, a matter of twelve hours of torture since to detrain too was physically impossible.

However, that is not only anticipating things too soon but also overlooking the terrible ordeal of near annihilation of the compartment in the burst of flames before that. For, this is what happened all of a sudden without any one anticipating it.

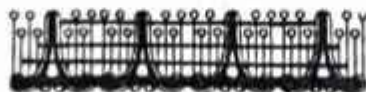
One of our party consisting of my eldest son, the newly married couple and my wife besides myself, (I think it was the first) said that smoke was issuing from the fan above; from a few wisps at first, it suddenly swelled to clouds, slowly filling the compartment. It took a little time to realise the potential danger it portended. It was obvious, that there was spontaneous ignition in the wiring possibly due to a short circuit, which if not checked at once would prove dangerous. My son Chi. Satyanarayan immediately tugged at the chain to stop the train. Unfortunately it gave way. We became frantic.

It is imperative to mention here that EVEN IN SUCH A TENSE SITUATION PREGNANT WITH DANGER, THE GIRIJANS PACKING THE COMPARTMENT JUST CONTINUED SITTING WITH THEIR SPHINX-LIKE FACES AND FAR AWAY LOOKS, UNMOVED, UNFLAPPABLE, AS IF LOST IN CONTEMPLATION LIKE 'TAPASVINS' ENTRENCHED IN THEIR FIRM FAITH THAT "GOD IS IN HIS HEAVEN AND ALL IS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD". IT WAS AN OBJECT-LESSON FOR US TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS TO TRUST GOD IN TOTO, what Baba meant when He beseeched his devotees to cast their burdens on Him and keep QUIET letting Him take care and provide all we need. INDEED, IT SHAMED ME INTO KNOWING HOW MUCH BELOW THEIR STANDARD — IN TRUTH HOW HYPOCRITICAL — MY FICKLE FAITH WAS. Theirs was RESIGNATION flowing from complete SURRENDER.

Presently, the train stopped at a station and the Asst. Guard happened to pass by. When he was told of our predicament and requested for urgent redress, he just remarked with the utmost callousness, "Marjao!" and passed on as if he were Fate's own minion! He clearly smelt of liquor. We had no alternative except to fall back upon our Unfailing Source of Succour, Baba, and to pray. RIGHTLY HAS DR. ALEXIS CARREL, THE GREAT MEDICAL SCIENTIST AND SAVANT, AVERRED THAT IT IS NOT THE ATOM THAT WILL PROVIDE THE INFINITE SOURCE OF POWER FOR THE FUTURE FOR HUMANITY BUT PRAYER, FOR WHEN YOU PRAY WITH ALL YOUR HEART YOU ARE LINKED TO THAT DYNAMO THAT SPINS THE UNIVERSE."

The All-merciful and solicitous Baba ever on the alert as BHAKTHA PARAADINA did come to the rescue in a most unexpected and dramatic manner before danger completely overwhelmed us. IN A SPLIT SECOND, THE SKIES DARKENED WITH GATHERING CLOUDS AND THERE BEGAN A DOWNPOUR WHICH CONTINUED FOR OVER AN HOUR, LASHING ON ALL SIDES, PARTLY FLOODING THE COMPARTMENT AND COMPLETELY SMOTHERING OUT THE SMOKE AND THE THREATENED CONFLAGRATION!

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"SAI'S INVISIBLE HANDS & WATCHFULNESS"

It is an established fact that our beloved Sai Baba always keeps a watchful eye over His devotees and extends His invisible hands far and wide to their aid, when they are in trouble. Any action or even thought cannot miss His compassionate eyes. There are enough of evidences to testify to this during Baba's life time, as well as, in the present days too long after He left His mortal-coil. To ensure His Grace we should only have "ABSOLUTE SURRENDER" to Him."


Once, Justice Rege, a renowned devotee of Baba, was in great trouble in the dead of night at Mhow Railway Station, while on his way to Shirdi. It happened during the critical period of WORLD WAR I. The entire train in which he was travelling was suddenly requisitioned for Military Transport and all the passengers including himself were ordered to get down immediately. When all pleas against the said order failed, he had to resort to the only other alternative-to pray to Almighty Baba for help.

Shortly afterwards the miracle happened and the train was allowed to pass as per schedule with the passengers already on board. Justice Rege reached Shirdi the next morning. On seeing him Baba exclaimed "This man gave me no rest last night. All the time he was crying... Baba! Baba! Help me, help me out": These words of Baba clarified, without doubt, the abrupt easing out of the situation the previous night.

What a Divine Super Power of Baba! He was all the time sitting in one place at Shirdi and His invisible Hands playing miracles in all directions, however far or near for the welfare of His devotees!

The above episode took place during the life time of Baba. Now let us come to another episode, which happened 3 years after Baba's Maha-Samadhi. Once Narain Rao, a devotee of Baba, fell seriously ill and there was no hope of his survival. He became extremely weak and emaciated and was totally pinned up to the bed. But he did not lose faith in Baba, on whom he was meditating all the time and was waiting calmly to breath his last. One night Baba appeared before him and consoled him, "Narain Rao! Don't worry! Your 'Life Span' has been extended and you will have complete recovery within a week". What a miracle! He got out of bed exactly within the specified time and enjoyed a long and healthy life by the Grace of our beloved Lord Sainath.

Long 68 years have passed since Baba left His mortal coil. All these years up to the present day, we are blessed to see multitude of His such "Leelas". We are fortunate to reciprocate the multifarious experiences of the same by the devotees through the columns of this esteemed Journal. In the present context, I am also tempted to narrate one of my recent personal experiences, which runs as under.....



I happen to be the President of the Committee of Management of a reputed teaching institution complex at Kanpur (U.P.). In the year 1982, some self-interested persons dragged us into litigation in the High Court at Allahabad. They put forth a number of vague charges with the intention of grabbing power for themselves. They were, however, successful in getting imposed certain financial restraint on us.

Though I am confident about Baba's extraordinary Divine Powers, but as a matter of principle I hesitate to disturb Baba in seeking His intervention in such personal matters of temporal gain. More over, it was a collective case involving the whole lot of 129 members of the Parent Body including my own self on one side and on the other side about a couple of persons, who tried to create the deadlock.

However, the writ was contested by us in the best interests of the Institution. Several dates of hearing followed without any tangible progress and we were experiencing great difficulty on account of the High Court's Stay order on financial operations for long eleven months.

One such hearing was fixed for the 16th August 1983. While I was sending my representative to Allahabad on the due date, a peculiar thought of silent appeal crept into my mind in the following way...

"Baba! People here know that I am a humble devotee of yours and I always advocate so highly your 'Super Powers'. My harassment in the present case for the last many months may react in them to under-estimate your Powers. So, do tell me Baba! How shall I stand any offending out-burst against you?" This particular thought was haunting me through out the day and night till the return of my representative from the High Court at Allahabad.

Lo! What a pleasant surprise-awaited me the next morning when my representative returned from Allahabad to give us the heartening and unexpected news about abrupt closure of the case in our favour. All the fake charges, levelled against us, were nullified one by one and the 'Stay' imposed on us was vacated forthwith.

Dear Readers! You may be well aware that once a case is admitted in the High Court it takes years together or even decades to be finalised. But in this particular case, how did it terminate so

abruptly? Is it not a clear proof of MIRACLE OF THE INVISIBLE HAND of our Lord Sainath and His WATCHFULNESS?

Tears rolled down my cheeks in solemn gratitude to our Supreme Protector and Saviour and gratification derived therefrom.

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AT THE FEET OF MASTER

“Give the power of attorney to God and live in the world feeling that you are merely the servant obeying the commands that everything belongs to Him”.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

I am now 80 years old. Sai Baba came into my life in 1961. Day by day my faith in Sai Baba gained momentum and now I am content having surrendered to His will. Somehow Sai Baba never prompted me to visit Shirdi until 1982. In spite of my best efforts, I could not make this only pilgrimage till 1987, January. That is why Sai Baba said, ‘Unless there is some relationship nobody goes anywhere’.

Sai brother Gundu Rao Patwari of Bidar in 1984 advised me in one of his letters that I should be at Sai Baba’s feet at Shirdi at least once a year. I replied to him that Sai Baba was seated deep in my heart and as the Sai-Ashtotharamala says ‘OM THIRTHAYA’ I visualise all the holy places enshrined from the head to toe of Sai Baba.

But my longing to visit Shirdi did not materialise till January, ’87. The D-day was fixed on 22nd January, 1987.

I consider Sai Baba as incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. I sought the help of Sai-brother Ramakothi Narayana Rao of Bangalore to prepare a colour photograph of Sai Baba embossed with different poses of Dattatreya with 108 ‘Sri Ramaya Namaha’ written in the background. I had a desire to get this photograph consecrated at Shirdi.



On the day of departure to Shirdi, just before leaving our residence, I looked at the photograph of my late grand-daughter Sri B.R. Jyothi (18 year old Jyothi was promoted to Sai-bliss in the early part of 1986). Though Sai Baba had taken away my grand-daughter JYOTHI I prayed to light the Gnana JYOTHI in my heart. With tears in my eyes I recalled Sai Baba telling Appa Kulkarni's wife when she bemoaned her husband's death, "Appa wants to change his kufni before I do. Let Appa go. The wise ones never grieve death; but the fools do. The five pranas were sent to us during life. Now the lender claims back his own and they ought to be returned."

My wife and self, son Venkata Rao and daughter-in-law Dr. Mrs. Vinoda and their son Chi. Sai-Bharath all travelled by Nizamuddin Express to Manmad on the night of 22nd January '87. Since there was a delay of one hour on the way, Sai Baba prompted us to get down at Ahmednagar and proceed to Shirdi by bus. We reached Shirdi by 8 p.m. on 23-1-'87. We had no difficulty in securing accommodation. We entered the holy precincts of Samadhi Mandir just in time for 'Shejarathi'.

I was thrilled to the core. I was in deep communion with the Master. It was as if I was looking at my father himself. Sai Baba welcomed us with His graceful eyes.

We had adequate rest at night and the next morning we participated in the 'Kakad Aarthi'. After this we joined the queue for getting coupons for Abhishek. For a moment I visualised our life in the cage looking for the grace of the Sai Master to release us from the bondage of life and rebirth.

After a long wait, we were led into the Samadhi Mandir hall and were made to perform 'mass-pooja'. I was just thinking as to how and why Sai Baba made me wait for over twenty-five years to visit Shirdi. Perhaps the time was not ripe. The higher regions one has to traverse are not charted out in any map or book. They can be hardly described in advance with reference to the station of each individual in the spiritual plane. But absence of a map or a book is never felt by a Sai-devotee because he has the all-seeing eye with the powerful hand of the loving and beloved Sai Maharaj with him at every place and time and that will light up his path, forewarn of the dangers that are to be avoided and point the way to the goal, infuse the needed strength and enthusiasm, the discernment and illumination that will eventually take one to the goal.

I could see a couple of sparrows on the roof which recalled to my memory the Lord's guiding hand to H.H. Narasimha Swamiji when he was in search of a guru. As we climbed up the steps to holy Samadhi with the motto 'Alps on alps will arise and the highest peak will be reached at the distant future.'

"I trust that good will fall
At last, far off, at last to all
And every winter change to spring"

I was in deep bliss to touch Sai Baba's Samadhi as well as the statue. For me it was fondling my own parents. As I was worshipping Sai Baba my mind raised a question as to whether it was proper to pray for anything at all as Sai Maharaj is all-knowing and all powerful.

We were unfortunate in not being able to perform 'Sathyanarayan Pooja' as it was restricted only to 90 members. It is also Sai-will perhaps. Then we visited Dwarakamayi. Sai's statement came ringing into my ears, "However oppressed and troubled one may be, as soon as he steps in the Masjid, he is on the pathway to happiness. The fakhir is very kind and will bless you." I recited Vishnusahasra Namam sitting by the side of Dhuni. I also recalled the Ramadasa incident and resolved to show samatha towards all.

As we were sitting in the Dwarakamayi a cat came and boldly sat beside us. My grandson fed it with bread pieces. For me it was Sai Baba in the form of that cat. We visited Chavadi, Lendi Baug, Gurusthan etc., and could feel Sai's presence wherever we went.

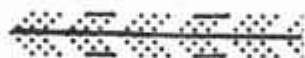
We place our fullest trust in His love, foresight and providence for us and for all and will gladly accept apparent evils that may befall us as a first step towards ultimate benefit. Faith in Sai Baba and His teachings increases and should increase with every suffering we endure. As Kunti put it "The mere abundance of good makes us forget God — and it is the occurrence of trouble that makes us think of Him at least." At each suffering, let us pray not merely for relief but for increased power of vision to recognise His real kindness that draws us more and more to Him and thus improves us step by step in His own inimitable way. Let us ask for increased power to endure evil and good with equal vision and practised by Sai: 'SAMATA leading to ASANGA'.



These were the thoughts that Sai prompted me to dwell on when we were taking food in the 'Bojan Grih' which can accommodate 2000 persons at one time. Sai was dancing at this Annadan.

My short visit to Shirdi confirmed what Dhupal expressed: "Where is Baba gone? He is still existing and helping." One that walks through the holy soil of Shirdi will be thoroughly convinced of the perfect truth of the above. Sri M.B.Reghe expressed this most tersely: "Baba is God; to me He is not gone." Sai Baba is the all pervading and guiding power that shapes the ends of the devotees' way of the universe. This is the great and most precious truth that everyone should care to establish himself in. Let everyone of us always remember this and progress spiritually. We will prosper by our constant remembrance and protection of Sai Baba.

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A MISSION SAI-DIVINE

"Make my soul Thy temple, make my heart Thine altar, make my love Thy home, may Thy love shine forever on the sanctuary of my devotion, and may I be able to awaken Thy love in all hearts."

Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

In the Lord Sainath's transcendent aspect, the Absolute, He is unreachable by human thought; but in His immanent structure, externalising Himself in man and nature — He is near and approachable, the Refuge and Redeemer of every creature.

In Sai Satcharitra, Lord Sainath's Immanence is symbolised as the Mother that presides with watchful love over the destinies of His countless devotees and over the developments in their day to day life. It is this personalised aspect of Lord Sainath that may be said to have 'longings' for the rightful behaviour of His children and to answer gladly their prayers.

Sai-brother K. Ananthapadmanabha Rao of Tanuku (Andhra Pradesh) wrote to me in July 1986 that one of his bosom-friends,

Sai-brother M.V. Venkatesam, a Section Officer in Railways at Secunderabad was laid up with a serious fever for over one month and was not responding to any type of medical treatment. He had added that even experts had not been able to diagnose the case and as such was looking forward to the inevitable. Sri Rao had asked me to pray to Lord Sainath to rescue Sri Venkatesam from the jaws of death.


Lord Sainath has given us parents, brothers, cousins, wife, children and friends so that we learn to love Him with the varied expressions and natural variations of all types of relationships. Tears rolled down my cheeks on reading the letter of Sri Rao. I rushed to Lord Sainath and poured out my anguish.

Lord Sainath: "Teach me to use the gift of Thy love in my heart to expand endlessly my sympathies. May I pass from the boundaries of family affections into a larger realm of Sai-brotherhood and service to all. Let me not tarry, fascinated by rewarding feelings of usefulness, in even those noble regions — the farthest reaches of human solicitude. Inspire me to affirm that you will certainly save Sai-brother M.V. Venkatesam from this cruel fever. Please heal him fast...."

Immediately I got a positive response from Lord Sainath. I could visualise Lord Sainath rushing to the rescue of Sri Venkatesam. I enclosed 'Sai-Udhi' with a photograph of Sainath and sent them to Sri Venkatesam, with Sai's assurances to my prayers: "...You are indeed a child of Lord Sainath. His immortal life energy pervades all your body cells. Your whole being is vibrant with His presence....You will be soon back to normalcy..."

In fact at the same time, quite a number of Sai-brothers and Sai-sisters whom Sri Anantha Padmanabha Rao had apprised of Sri Venkatesam's illness, were also praying fervently to Lord Sainath. As soon as Sri Venkatesam received the 'Sai-prasad', the fever-demon which had gripped him for over one month was chastised by Lord Sainath. From that moment onwards, the high temperature started declining and within a week Sri Venkatesam returned to the normal temperature. In the next fortnight he was back in his desk at the Railways.

Sri Venkatesam was wonderstruck at this Sai-miracle. Lord Sainath in the meanwhile blessed with a suitable match to his se-



cond daughter, Nirmala and the marriage was fixed on the 19th November, 1986.

In the first week of November, 1986, I received an affectionate letter and the wedding invitation from Sri Venkatesam. I placed them at the holy feet of Lord Sainath and invoked His blessings on the young couple. Lord Sainath commanded me to attend the marriage. I had no plans to visit Madras in November '86 and was in a dilemma. But I cannot disregard Baba's directions. Absence of the clamour of egostitical desires enables us to hear and heed the guiding voice within. My position was the same as that of Bapu-girbhuva who was asked by Sai Baba to go over to Jamner at the time of confinement of Nana Sahib's daughter, Mainna Thai.

'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt' — I prayed to Lord Sainath. No karma accrues to the man who rightfully enacts his part in the drama of earthly life. In accordance with Sai-will, I left Hubli for Madras on the 15th November, 1986.

My brother and eldest daughter were surprised at my unscheduled visit to Madras. In the early hours of the 19th November, 1986, I had a dream-vision. Our family-Guru, His Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya the Senior Pontiff of Kanchi Kamakothi Mutt blessed me with his darshan. I consider the Kanchi-Pontiff to be 'Living God' and to me he is not different from Lord Sainath. In my dream, I prostrated at his holy feet and requested him to remove my ego: 'My ego struts in pride saying 'I AM THOU'. Ignoring the tiny boasting masquerades, I shall seek Lord Sainath, fragrant with countless humilities. Ever instruct me in my identity, O Lord! May I only hear Thy whisper 'I AM THOU'....' The Kanchi Paramacharya nodded his assent and the dream-vision ended. I woke up and looked at the clock. The time, (5.15 a.m.) reminded the 'Kakad Arathi' at Shirdi.

I got ready to attend the wedding. I requested my brother R. Subramanian and his friend, Sai-brother Nagarajan to accompany me to the wedding of Sri Venkatesam's daughter. We all reached Kalyan-Mantap by 11 a.m. The choultry was full of people in glittering attires. The bride and the bridegroom were seated on the dais and they appeared like Goddess Lakshmi and God Narayana. My eyes were searching for the bride's father, Sri M.V. Venkatesam. He was not to be seen anywhere. I made enquiries and was told that he was busy inside and would come out soon.

But Lord Sainath seated deep in my heart did not allow me to sit quiet in one corner. He made me frantically search for Sai Brother Venkatesam. At last I located him in a room lying unconscious. I could see anxious relatives around him fanning and making attempts to regain his consciousness. Nobody could explain his present condition — whether it was due to exhaustion or any other ailment.

My heart bled at this pathetic sight. Instantaneously I prayed to Lord Sainath, applied Sai-Udhi on Sri Venkatesam's forehead and administered a pinch of Sai-Udhi into his mouth. I made a frantic prayer to Lord Sainath to heal Sri Venkatesam by re-charging him with His cosmic energy.

Lord Sainath rushes to His devotees. Soon Sri Venkatesam regained his senses much to the amazement of his relatives. He looked at me and said: "Are you not Radhakrishnan of Hubli?"

I was stunned. I had not met him earlier and wondered as to how he could recognise me. Pat came his reply: "Lord Sainath guided me.... My child Radhakrishnan has come from Hubli... Get up... welcome him".

Sri Venkatesam was very happy to see me. He introduced me to his relatives. I blessed the young couple. We were all reminiscent of Lord Sainath in every moment of our life. 'No matter what our activities, let us hear our soul speaking of Thee, Lord Sainath — may our hearts ceaselessly repeat OM SRI SAI JAI SAI JAI SAI SAI'.

Divine recollection is the simplest way to achieve Sai-communion. Our inner assertion of spiritual identity is sufficient to operate the law for fulfilment of prayers. From the depths of my own experience, I am reminded of Sai's glorious assurance: "If you spread your palms with devotion before Me, I am with you day and night".

Lord Sainath is so real to His devotees! Every word they have said about Him is true, but His play is shrouded in mystery. Our seeking Sai Baba must be continuous. We cannot summon Sai by a little cry, it must be unceasing, and not quelled by toys of money, fame and human love. When our desire is only for Him, He will come. Then our lessons in the world are finished. We are filled evermore with the joy of the Infinite. "He works for Me alone,



who makes Me his goal, who lovingly surrenders himself to Me, who is non-attached to My delusive cosmic-dream worlds, who bears ill-will towards none beholding Me in all, he enters My being (Bhagavad Gita XI:55).''

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SACRIFICE — TRUTH (SAI) — SERVICE¹

Sai Baba is God Incarnate — Paramatma (Supreme Self). He is Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent. He is *Antaryamin* as expressed by him and showed in his life. He is Antaryami in the hearts of all beings like sky. Sagunopasana, personal God, Isvarah rather Nirgunopasana (Imperishable Brahman) is advocated as in Gita (XII 1, 5 and 12) for Sagunopasana is easier and preferable one that practically leads one into Nirguna. He finds God everywhere, in every thing, animate or inanimate, for he realises that God is *Sarvagathudu, Sarvopagathudu* (All-pervading). Great Bhakta Prahlada says to his father Hiranyakasipa that Hari is everywhere; there is no place where he is not:-

“INDUGALA DANDU LEDANI, SANDEHAMU
VALADU CHAKRI SARVOPAGATHUM DENDENDU
VEDAKI CHUCHINA, NANDANDE
GALADU DAANAVAAGRANI! VINTE”

Baba pushed his arm into Dhuni and saved the life of a child that slipped from the waist of the mother who forgot and ran hastily on the call of her husband. When Megha expressed his vision to Baba, Baba told him that he threw Akshata and said, “Megha, draw a Trident” as an order and when Megha expressed that he thought it as a vision, Baba rejoined and said, “I require no door to enter, I have no form nor any extension; I always live everywhere. I carry on, as a wire-puller, all the actions of the man who trusts in Me² and merges in Me². Baba is the living and moving Supreme Incarnate. He is PARABRAHMAN³. He is pure consciousness. His sweet nectar-like words and advice to devotees after Arati

vouchsafe and prove the same — vide Shri Sai Satcharita in English by Shri N.V. Gunaji, 10th Edn. at PP 13-14. Shri Baba's long discourse to a rich person, lubdah who sought Brahma-Jnana or Self-realisation quickly enunciate the characteristics of Brahman and exemplify the way of teaching of Baba,— vide in the above book referred to, at pages 89-92. further therein at P. 91, he said that sitting in the Masjidmai (Dwarakamai) He will never speak any untruth. See also at P. 99. He is *Satvasyasatya*. He is *Satva Swarupa*. Mrs. Tarkhed threw a piece of bread to a dog which gulped it and Baba said to her that He is Jeeva in that dog and he will be roaming in all forms. In reality He is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Para Brahman — Ekaatma Pratyayasaram — (Maandukyopanishad). Whoever offers whatever (Patram, Pushpam, Phalam and Thoyam) is Bhakti (Devotion) and purity of heart He accepts. It can be seen in the very words of Baba to Hemadpant when he came from Shama with Namaskars of Shama as his Dakshina to Him (Baba).

He is *Sadguru* — Gururgariyaan — Trimurti — Incarnate, whose love and mercy has no bounds. What all we require in his own words are Nishta (Firm faith) (Sradha) and Saburi (Patience or perseverance). (Satcharita P. 98). Faith is the basis. "Sradhaanurupena Phalahetukatvat". Who has no Sradha has no Sadgati. "Sradhavaan Iabhate Jnanam; Jnanam labdva Param Santim Achirena Adhigacckati" — (Gita IV:39). "Earnestness alone makes life eternal" Goeth. Without patience or perserverance nothing can be achieved. He is "Saa Yi" — Satvashakthi Beejakshara Samputi — 'Iem'. In other words He cares and protects by Satvaguna, all his devotees like mother who nurtures and nourishes and lead them on right path and make them realise Self-Paramartha — Kaivalya or Nirvana. His way of teaching is unique, Supreme and Superb.

Baba is *Premavatara* — Love Incarnate. "Saa parama Premarupa". *Premaradham* has two wheels — Sacrifice and Service. His religion. is Gita religion. After all, what is religion. Religion is a way of life, for realisation of self. His religion is religion of oneness — Atmaiva Kevalam Sarvam. He and his life is pinnacle of Sacrifice. Tagi-Gitartha or Gitarahasya. "Tyaganikena Amrutatva Maanasuh" — Kaivalyopanishad. His way of life is one of sacrifice like Lord Shiva. He is *Tyagaraj*. He took others' difficulties as His and suffered sweetly in furtherance of their cause.

He led his life as Parivrajaka taking Sanyasa Deeksha as His core of life. Service is his motto; Sarvabhutahiterataah. He is *Sadashiva* — *Sarvamangala Swarupa* — *Sarva Jnanamrutha Teerda* (Punya) *Pada*. Utter self surrender to His feet (Gurupada) Saranagati will make one's life rich. Simple remembrance, utterance and hearing of his very name (Sai, Sai) will nullify all sins of speech and hearing. He is Sarvasamah^s. He is Sarvabhutatma Bhutatma. He is Nitya Satyam. Who can express Him? He (Sai-Isa) is Real, Truth. "Yadasti tat satyam".

'Om Shri Sai Nathaya Namah
Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!
Om Tat Sat'

*Sri M. Sreedhara Rao, B.A., B.L.,
Addl. District & Sessions Judge,
KHAMMAM.*

1. The author on Mukkoti Ekadasi Day i.e. on 10-1-87 while meditating on 'Sai', His grace dawned on him and his heart reflected on 'Sai' as to who He is? What He is? Answer came suggesting the title of the present subject. I trust that who reads this subject daily, their desires will be fulfilled by Lord Sai. What all you have to do is, while reading it, intuitively His name, meditate on his form and realise. (See Sat-Charita P. 249).
2. Me — as God — Consciousness Existence — Satcharita P. 240.
3. "Brahmeri Paramatmeti Bhagavaniti Sabdyate" Srimad Bhagavantha (See also Gita XIII 22, 33) Anaadi Matparam Brahmana Sattannasa Dutyate Gita XIII : 12 .
4. "Atmaanam Radhinam Viddhi"
"Samatvam Yoga Utchyate" — Gita.
"Atmaanam Satatam Viddhi"
"Sarvataika Nirantaram" — Avadhuta Gita.
5. In Vishnu Sahasranamas God is described as "Samah" — Ekameva Samam Tatvam.



श्री साईलीला
फरवरी १९८८
हिन्दी विभाग
अनुक्रमणिका

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“साई महिमा”

वो खुशानसीब है, जो दर पे तेरे आता है।
वो खुशानसीब है, जो दिल से तुझको ध्याता है ॥
तेरी रहमत से बनती है, बिगड़ी सबकी।
तेरी रहमत से बदलती है, तकदीर सबकी ॥
तेरे नाम का जाम पिया जिसने,
उसकी मदहोशी क्या कहने।
दुनियाँ बदली मानों उसकी,
मुफ़लिसी का उसका सौरा टले ॥
दुःख पाये न वो इन्सान कभी,
श्रद्धा से जो सर को झुकाता है।
'उदी' को रखे जो पास सदा,
और तेरे गुण जो गाता है ॥
तेरे दर्शन की 'बाबा', बस चाहत है मुझको।
मैं आता रहूँ, तू बुलाता रहे, यही तो ख्वाहिश है मुझको ॥

— सुरेश सुखीजा

१ ए/ २२ ए, फरीदाबाद-१२१ ००१.

श्री साई सत्चरित

६ वाँ अध्याय — शेष भाग

- १००- सातारा ज़िले में 'वृद्धकवठे' नामक स्थान में एक मन्दिर है,
१०१. जिससे वे सम्बद्ध थे और प्रत्येक वर्ष दो उत्सवों के अवसर पर अर्थात् आसाढ़ी एकादशी (जुलाई-अगस्त में) तथा चैत्र के महीने (मार्च-अप्रैल में) रामनवमी पर कीर्तन करने के लिए वार्षिक भत्ता पाते थे।
१०२. मुगल बादशाह (अकबर) के राजपत्र के अनुसार (मन्दिर के) देवता के लिए दो हज़ार चार सौ रुपए की धनराशि नियत थी और संस्था की प्रबन्ध-समिती द्वारा तदनुसार व्यय की जाती थी।
१०३. इन दो अवसरों पर कीर्तन के लिए सातारकर को तीस रुपए का भत्ता मिलता था। किन्तु इस वर्ष कवठे के ग्रामवासी विषूचिका के उद्रेक का सामना कर रहे थे।
१०४. अतएव, रामनवमी के उत्सव नहीं मनाए जासके। सातारकर को कवठे से पत्र प्राप्त हुए जिनमें उन्हें सूचित किया गया कि ग्राम को परित्यक्त कर दिया गया है, अतएव वे वहाँ (अब) केवल अगले वर्ष ही आवें।
१०५. संक्षेप में, उन्होंने राम की सेवा करने और भत्ता प्राप्त करने का अवसर खो दिया। किन्तु तब उन्हें शिरडी जाने का अवसर प्राप्त होगया और वे इस सम्बन्ध में दीक्षित से मिले।
१०६. दीक्षित बाबा के महान भक्त थे और सातारकर को पूरा विश्वास था कि यदि दीक्षित उनकी सहायता करने के लिए सहमत होजावेंगे, तो वे आत्म-हित तथा आध्यात्मिक लाभ के लिए शिरडी जाने में समर्थ होंगे।
१०७. अतएव उन्होंने दीक्षित से कहा कि क्योंकि वे 'कवठे' में अपने वार्षिक धन्धे के लिए नहीं जासके, इसलिए उन्होंने

बाबा के दर्शन करने का तथा उनके समक्ष कीर्तन करने का विचार किया था।

१०८. दीक्षित ने यह स्पष्ट किया कि इसकी कोई प्रत्याभूति (गारन्टी) नहीं है कि उन्हें पारिश्रमिक मिलेगा ही, क्योंकि यह सब बाबा की इच्छा पर निर्भर करता था और यहाँ तक कि कीर्तन के लिए भी उनकी अनुमति की आवश्यकता होगी।
१०९. जब वे इस प्रकार वार्तालाप कर रहे थे, तभी काका महाजनी अचानक उपस्थित हो गए और उन्होंने शिरडी से (लाया गया) प्रसाद तथा ऊदी (पवित्र भस्म) वितरित की, जिसे सातारकर ने शुभ शकुन समझा।
- ११०- महाजनी ठीक उसी समय शिरडी से लौटे थे। उन्होंने
११२. सूचित किया कि वहाँ सब कुशल-मंगल थी और उसके बाद वे अपने निवास-स्थान को लौट आए। दीक्षित ने सातारकर से गंभीरता से कहा कि वे बाबा से उनकी अनुमति के लिए प्रार्थना करेंगे और उसके प्राप्त होते ही उन्हें सूचित करेंगे। और आगे, यह कि उनका पत्र प्राप्त होने पर सातारकर को मार्गव्यय की चिन्ता न करते हुए शिरडी के लिए प्रस्थान कर देना चाहिए। उन्हें यह आशंका न होना चाहिए कि मार्ग-व्यय उन्हें वहन करना पड़ेगा।
११३. बाद में दीक्षित बाबा से मिले जिन्होंने तत्परता से अनुमति प्रदान कर दी। और फिर बालाबुवा शिरडी आए और उन्होंने जी भर कर बाबा के दर्शन किए।
११४. बाबाने भी बड़ी प्रसन्नता के साथ अपने सामने बालाबुवा द्वारा रामनवमी के समारोह तथा उत्सव को सम्पन्न करवाया।
११५. बालाबुवा अपनी ओर से प्रसन्न थे कि उनका उद्येश्य पूरा

हो गया। साईंभी प्रसन्न थे। इस प्रकार प्रत्येक व्यक्ति सन्तुष्ट था।

११६. बाबा द्वारा भुगतान का निर्देश दिए जाने के अनुसार एक सौ पचास रुपए का उदार पारिश्रमिक प्राप्त करने पर बालाबुवा अत्यन्त प्रसन्न थे।
११७. और बुवा प्रसन्न क्यों न होते जब बाबा ने कवठे में उनकी पाँच वर्षों में अर्जित की जाने वाली धनराशि एक ही उत्सव में उन्हें प्रदान कर दी?
११८. बाद में, जब दासगणू एक बार शिरडी में थे, (तब) बाबा ने लोगों द्वारा अनुयय-विनय किए जाने पर प्रत्येक वर्ष रामनवमी के उत्सव पर कीर्तन करने का कार्य उन्हें सौंप दिया।
११९. तब से लेकर आज तक रामजन्म का उत्सव धूमधाम तथा तड़क-भड़क के साथ मनाया जाता है। सबको, यहाँ तक कि निम्नतम (वर्ग के व्यक्तियों) को भी अत्यधिक आनन्दित करते हुए यथेष्टता से भोजन कराया जाता है।
१२०. समाधि-मन्दिर के मुख्य द्वार पर सुरीले वाद्य-यंत्रों की संगत में बाबा के नाम का आलाप आसमान में गूँज उठता है और वायुमंडल आनन्द से परिपूर्ण हो जाता है।
१२१. मेला और उर्स आरंभ करने की भाँति, जीर्ण-शीर्ण मस्जिद का पुनरुद्धार करने का विचार भी गोपाल गुंड के ध्यान में आया।
१२२. इस प्रबल प्रेरणा के साथ कि पुनरुद्धार भी उन्हें ही करना चाहिए, उन्होंने पत्थर तैयार करवाए।
१२३. किन्तु यह निर्दिष्ट था कि यह कार्य गुंड को नहीं करना था। बाबा की योजना के अनुसार इस विशिष्ट कार्य के लिए अवसर बाद में उपस्थित हुआ।

१२४. ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि बाबा की इच्छा थी कि मस्जिद का पुनरुद्धार नानासाहेब चान्दोरकर द्वारा हो और फर्श पर पत्थर जड़ने का कार्य बाद में काकासाहेब दीक्षित द्वारा हो।
१२५. बाद में ठीक ऐसा ही हुआ। म्हालसापति की मध्यस्थता से बाबा ने (मस्जिद के) पुनरुद्धार के लिए अनुमति दे दी, यद्यपि इसके पूर्व अनेक लोगों ने बाबा की अनुमति प्राप्त करने का व्यर्थ ही प्रयास किया था।
१२६. जब रात भर में फर्श पर पत्थर जड़ने का कार्य पूरा होगया, तब उसके ठीक दूसरे दिन बाबा मस्जिद में लौट आए।
१२७. यह सन् उन्नीस सौ ग्यारह की बात है, जब काफी परेशानी के बाद तथा भगीरथ प्रयास से एक ओसारा (सभामंडप) खड़ा किया गया; अनेक बार लोग भय से कांप उठे।
१२८. यह कार्य भी उसी प्रकार तथा वैसी ही परिस्थितियों के अन्तर्गत भक्तोंद्वारा रातोंरात पूरा कर लिया गया।
१२९. रात में भक्त बहुत प्रयास करके स्तम्भों के चारों ओर की मिट्टी को कूट-पीट कर उन्हें सुदृढ़ करते थे, किन्तु प्रातःकाल बाबा उन्हें उखाड़ फेंकते थे। और फिर भक्त उन्हें पुनः स्थापित करने के अवसर को अधिगत करते थे। इस प्रकार उनके धैर्य की परीक्षा ली गई।
१३०. सबने कमर कसली और अपने उद्देश्य का अनुशीलन करने के लिए रातदिन एक कर दिया। इस प्रकार उन्होंने कठोर परिश्रम किया।
१३१. दीक्षित के मन में यह विचार स्वतः उठा कि वह स्थान जो मूल रूप से एक खुला प्रांगण था और जिसके अन्दर एक छोटा सा घेरा था, ओसारा (सभामंडप) के लिए उपयुक्त स्थल होगा।

१३२. लोहे के खंभे तथा कोनी-कोष्ठक (एंगिल-ब्रैकेट) अभीष्ट मूल्य पर प्राप्त किए गए और उन्हें गाड़ने का कार्य ऐसे दिनों में किया गया जब बाबा चावड़ी में, दूरी पर, रहते थे।
१३३. भक्त बड़े प्रयास से रातोंरात कार्य करके खंभों को खड़ा करते थे किन्तु जिस क्षण बाबा चावड़ी से लौटते थे उसी क्षण वे उन्हें उखाड़ डालते थे।
१३४. एक अवसर पर अत्यन्त कुपित बाबा ने एक हाथ से तात्या की गर्दन दबोच ली और दूसरे हाथ से खंभे की खींचातानी आरंभ कर दी।
१३५. खंभे को उग्रता से झकझोरते हुए उन्होंने उसे शिथिल कर दिया, तात्या के सिर से पगड़ी खींचली और दियासलाई से उसमें आग लगाकर उसे गड्ढे में फेंक दिया।
१३६. उस समय उनके नेत्र अग्नि-पिण्डों जैसे प्रतीत हो रहे थे। तब उनका सामना कौन कर सकता था? किसी में (यह) साहस न था।
१३७. तभी उन्होंने अपनी जेब में हाथ डाला, एक रुपया निकाला और उसे वहाँ (गड्ढे में) फेंक दिया जैसे किसी शुभारंभ को चिन्हित किया गया हो।
१३८. और फिर गालियों और अभिशापों की बौछार होने लगी, जिससे बहुत भयभीत हुए। एक जटिल स्थिति उत्पन्न हो गई थी। किन्तु कैसे?
१३९. लोग इस अशुभ परिणति से हैरान थे और उत्सुक थे कि उसे कैसे रोका जाए।
१४०. भागोजी शिन्दे साहस बटोर कर सावधानीपूर्वक बाबा तक गए। किन्तु वे भी (उनके क्रोध के) सुगम शिकार हुए और

- उनके द्वारा उनके साथ निष्ठुरता से हाथापाई की गई।
१४१. यहाँ तक कि माधवराव बाबा द्वारा (फेंके गए) ईट के ढेलों से नहीं बच सके। उन सभी लोगों को, जिन्होंने हस्तक्षेप करने का साहस किया, इसी प्रकार बाबा का अनुग्रह प्राप्त हुआ।
१४२. जब लोग यह विवाद कर रहे थे कि बाबा के पास कौन जाए और तात्या को कैसे बचाया जाए तभी बाबा का क्रोध प्रशमित होगया और वे शान्त हो गए।
१४३. तुरन्त दूकानदार को सुनहरे किनारे की पगड़ी के साथ आहूत किया गया, जिसे बाबा ने तात्या के सिर पर ऐसे राजा की भाँति बाँध दिया, जो (उपहारवत) प्रतिष्ठा का प्रतीक प्रदान कर रहा हो।
१४४. लोग हैरान थे कि बाबा सहसा कुपित क्यों हुए और उन्होंने इतने हल्ला-गुल्ला और खलबली के साथ तात्या के प्रति दुर्व्यवहार क्यों किया।
१४५. एक क्षण बाबा कुपित हो जाते थे तो दूसरे ही क्षण वे शान्त तथा शीतल होजाते थे। लोग उनकी चित्त-वृत्ति के इस आकस्मिक परिवर्तन का कारण जानने में असमर्थ थे।
१४६. कभी वे शान्त तथा अनुद्विग्न रहते थे और सुखदता से वार्तालाप करते थे। किन्तु कभी वे पलभर में अथवा बिना किसी प्रत्यक्ष कारण के उत्तेजित होजाते थे।
१४७. बाबा की ऐसी ही कथाएँ हैं जो ध्यान आकृष्ट करने के लिए परस्पर होड़ लगाती हैं। वर्णनकर्ता हैरान है और यह नहीं जानता कि किसका उल्लेख किया जाए और किसे अव्यक्त रखा जाए। किन्तु यह चुनाव करने के लिए मैं कौन (होता) हूँ?
१४८. मैं चुनाव में असमर्थ हूँ। अवसर के अनुसार जो भी कथा

उपयुक्त हैं वह पाठक (श्रोता) तक पहुँचेगी और उसके हृदय को आनन्द से भर देगी।

- १४९- अगले अध्याय में पाठक (श्रोता) के लिए बाबा के हिन्दू
१५१. अथवा मुसलमान होने के सम्बन्ध में उन कथनों को प्रस्तुत किया जाएगा, जिन्हें पूर्व में वयोवृद्ध लोगों से एकत्र किया गया है; दक्षिणा (पुरोहितों तथा पवित्र व्यक्तियों को यथावसर दी गई धन राशि) के रूप में एकत्र की गई धन-राशि का बाबा पुराने मन्दिरों के जीर्णोद्धार के लिए किस प्रकार उपयोग करते थे; धोति-पोति (आन्तरिक अवयवों की सफाई) तथा खंडयोग (इच्छानुसार शरीर के अंगों को पृथक करना और फिर उन्हें जोड़ देना) के माध्यम से वे अपने शरीर को कैसे आत्मनियंत्रण में रखते थे और वे दूसरों के हितार्थ कैसे परिश्रम करते थे तथा अपने भक्तों की विपदाओं से कैसे रक्षा करते थे।

आपका कल्याण हो। यहाँ शक्तिमान श्री साई की श्रद्धास्पद जीवनी में 'रामजन्मोत्सव की कथा आदि' शीर्षक छटवाँ अध्याय समाप्त होता है, जिसकी सन्तों तथा सज्जनों से प्रेरित होकर उनके भक्त हेमाडपन्त ने रचना की।



शिरडी डायरी

४-२-१९१२

प्रातः मैं जल्दी जाग गया, काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ और तब प्रार्थना किया। जब मैं स्नान कर रहा था तभी दो महाशय नारायणराव बामनगांवकर की तलाश में आये। वे लिंगायत शास्त्री थे। बड़े को शिवानन्द शास्त्री के नाम से पुकारते थे। उनके साथ दो महिलायें भी हैं। ये महिलायें ब्राह्मण हैं। उनमें से बड़ी को ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई कहते हैं। करीब तीन वर्ष पहले वह एक लिंगायत महिला — नियानन्द बाई से नासिक में मिली थीं। उसे योगिनी सिद्ध थी और उसने ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई को प्रशिक्षित किया था। हम लोगों ने साईं महाराज के बाहर जाते और फिर उनके मसजिद वापस लौटने पर दर्शन किये। ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई ने उनकी पूजा किया और बहुत ही लय-ताल में दो आरती गायीं। मध्याह्न आरती के बाद मैंने अपना भोजन किया और थोड़ी देर विश्राम किया। तब दीक्षित द्वारा पुराण पाठ हुआ और तब हम लोग साईं बाबा के उनके संध्याकालीन चहलकदमी के समय दर्शन करने गये। रात्रि में वाड़ा आरती के पश्चात् श्री दीक्षित का पुराण पाठ हुआ तब भीष्म ने भजन गाये। महिलाओं-ब्रह्मानन्दीबाई और उनकी सहचरी ने बहुत सुन्दर ढंग से गाने गाये और हम लोगों ने भजन का भरपूर आनन्द लिया। शिवानन्द शास्त्री ने भी गीत गाये। शास्त्री और महिलायें नासिक से आये थे। वे वहां के मूल निवासी हैं।

५-२-१९१२

प्रातः जैसे ही मैंने अपनी प्रार्थना समाप्त किया राजाराम पन्त दीक्षित नागपुर से आ गये। वह काका साहब दीक्षित के बड़े भाई हैं। वह साईं साहब के दर्शनार्थ गये। मैं अपनी कक्षा में गया जहां बापू साहब जोग, उपासनी शास्त्री, शिवानन्द शास्त्री, ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई तथा दूसरों के साथ पञ्चदशी का पाठ किया तथा अमृतानुभव का पद्य पढ़ा। हम लोगों ने साईं साहब के बाहर जाते समय दर्शन किये और उनके लौटने पर मसजिद गया। वह मेरे प्रति बड़े दयालु थे, कुछ शब्द बोले तथा आरती के बाद सबको बिदा करके मुझे नाम लेकर पुकारा तथा आलस्य त्यागकर समस्त स्त्री-बच्चों की देख-भाल का उपदेश दिया। श्रीमती लक्ष्मीबाई कांजलगी को आज एक रोटी का टुकड़ा दिया गया तथा राधाकृष्णा बाई के साथ जाकर खाने का आदेश हुआ। यह एक बहुत बड़ा सौभाग्य है। अब से वह प्रसन्न रहेगी। मैंने शिवानन्द शास्त्री, ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई तथा उनके साथ के अन्य लोगों को आज दिन का भोजन अपने साथ करने के लिये आमंत्रित किया। इसके बाद मैं कुछ क्षणों के लिये लेट गया। तब दीक्षित ने रामायण-पाठ किया और बाद में हम लोगों ने साईं बाबा के उनके घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये। वाड़ा आरती के बाद सेज आरती हुई और रात्रि में ब्रह्मानन्दी बाई ने बहुत मधुर भजन गाये। यह कार्यक्रम अर्धरात्रि के बाद तक चलता रहा। मेरे जाने का प्रकरण आज पुनः शुरू हुआ। यह कल निश्चित हो सकता है।

परमतीर्थ श्रीक्षेत्र शिरडी

भारत भूमि के अनेकों पावन स्थानों पर तीर्थयात्रा व देवदर्शन का लाभ हो सकता है। सभी स्थानों का अपना अपना इतिहास और परम्परा है। यात्रि अपनी अपनी श्रद्धा के अनुसार तीर्थ का लाभ पाते हैं। इस स्थानों पर अधिकांश लोग एक धर्म अथवा सम्प्रदाय के जाते हैं। अन्य लोग कम जाते हैं। कहीं कहीं तो अन्य लोगों का प्रवेश वर्जित भी है।

साधारण तौर पर संत महात्माओं के स्थान पर जो तीर्थ बन गए हैं, यह विशेषता ही कि वहां सभी धर्म के लोग जाते हैं, क्योंकि इन महान पुरुषों ने अपने जीवन काल में जाति-पांति का भेदभाव मिटाया, ऊंच नीच का भेदभाव मिटाया। फलस्वरूप प्रायः नित्य ही इन स्थानों पर सर्व धर्म सम्मेलन होता रहता है।

इस कलियुग के एक अवतार श्री साईबाबा की शिरडी का वर्णन तो कठिन है क्योंकि हृदय अनुभूति को शब्दों में कैसे व्यक्त किया जा सकता है, फिर भी बाबा की आज्ञा व अनुकम्पासे एक प्रयास कर रहा हूँ।

बाबा ने आपको बुलाया तो समझ लीजिए कि प्रभू कृपा का एक विशेष अवसर प्राप्त हो गया। करोड़ों लोग हैं, पर लाखों ही जा पाते हैं। सभी क्यों नहीं? क्या जबभी जो चाहे जा सकता है। क्या, नहीं जाने की अवस्था में होते हुए भी चला जाता है, खिंचा चला आता है! क्या, जाने के बाद उतने दिन रह सकता है, जितना वह सोचता है, या शीघ्र लौटकर आ सकता है। कैसी अद्भुत दैव शक्ति है हमारे बाबा की, जिनकी सत्ता के बगैर पत्ता भी नहीं हिल सकता।

धन्य हैं वे भक्त, जो उनका निरन्तर स्मरण करते हैं, और पूर्ण रूप से उनकी शरण में हैं। अपने कर्तापन का अहंकार खो चुके हैं, ऐसे भक्तों के लिए श्रीक्षेत्र शिरडी देव लोक, इन्द्रपुरी, वैकुण्ठ अथवा स्वर्गसमान है। आप बाबा का नामस्मरण करते हुए, सबों के सहयोग से प्रसन्न चित्त अवस्था में शिरडी आ गए। जब बसस्टाप से शांति निवास पहुंचे, तो वहां आफिस में आपके निवास की व्यवस्था हो गई। बाबा आपकी आवश्यकतानुसार प्रबन्ध कर देंगे।

आपने स्नान करके वस्त्र बदले और बाबा के दर्शन को चले। समाधि मंदिर में प्रवेश के समय आपने पढ़ा, "अनन्त कोटि ब्रह्माण्डनायक राजाधिराज योगिराज परब्रह्म सच्चिदानंद सद्गुरु साईनाथ महाराज की जय" सामने की भव्य मूर्ति को देखते ही रोमांच हो गया। सब ओर सजावट, फोटो, साफ सफाई और व्यवस्था देखते ही बनती है। जल्दी मत कीजिए! शांति से इस पवित्र वातावरण में अपने आप को आत्मसात करने से अपार आनन्द प्राप्त होगा। लगेगा कि ऐसी अनुभूति पहले कभी नहीं हुई।

आपका ध्यान बाबा के ११ वचनों पर गया। इतने सीधे शब्दों में इतनी गहरी बातों ने कुछ ही पलों में आपको झकझोर दिया। संशय के पर्दे हट गए। आपकी बातचीत बाबा से होने लगी। आपके मन मंदिर के एक कोने में आप है, दूसरी

ओर बाबा बैठे हैं। कर लो खुलकर बातें — जैसे माता-पिता, बंधू, सखा से करते हैं। वहीं शंका समाधान हो गया। अब यह आपकी मनः स्थिति पर आधारित है कि आप बाबा की बातों पर प्रसन्न हो जाएं, हंसने लगे, अत्यन्त प्रसन्नता की अवस्था में रोने लगे, या पायश्चित की अवस्था में रो पड़ें। खैर जो होता है, होने दीजिए, फलस्वरूप आप अनुभव कर रहे हैं कि शारीरिक मानसिक व आध्यात्मिक स्तर बदल रहे हैं।

आपने पूजा का सामान पुजारीजी को दिया। बाबाके गले से फूलों का हार उतारकर आपका फूलों का हार बाबा को पहना दिया। उतारा हुआ हार प्रसाद रूप में आपको प्राप्त हो गया। आपने बाबा की पादुका पर मस्तक टिका कर प्रणाम किया और नारियल व प्रसाद लेकर समाधि के पिछवाड़े से आप बाहर आए। नारियल तोड़कर आपने प्रसाद बांटा, खुद लिया और साथ में रख लिया।

समाधि मंदिर में नित्य ४ बार आरती होती है। काकड़ आरती प्रातः सवा पाँच बजे, मध्याह्न आरती दोपहर १२ बजे, संध्या आरती सायंकाल ६ बजे व शेजारती रात्रि १० बजे। इन आरतियों में सम्मिलित होकर आप अपनी तीर्थ यात्रा का पूर्ण लाभ उठाइए। यदि किसी कारणवश उपस्थित न रह सको, तो जहांभी हो आरती की आवाज तो सुनाई देती है — ध्यान में बैठ जाओ और आनन्द प्राप्त करो।

बाबा के अभिषेक के लिए विशेष व्यवस्था है, जिसके अंतर्गत ८०० कूपन रोज बांटे जाते हैं। अत्यधिक भीड़ के कारण सामूहिक अभिषेक होता है। बाबा की मूर्ति को हार पहनाने व नतमस्तक प्रणाम करने का अवसर प्राप्त होता है। वैसे सिर्फ दर्शन के लिए भी लाइन लगती है। रविवार व गुरुवार को दर्शन करने का नम्बर भी एक घंटे के बाद आए। सभी दिन व सभी समय बाबा का ही है। श्रद्धानुसार, सुविधानुसार आप दर्शन, मनन, भजन, स्मरण की दिनचर्या बना सकते हैं।

आपने द्वारकामाई में प्रवेश किया — सुन्दर स्वच्छ विशाल हाल है। दाहिनी ओर बाबा का विशाल तजोमय फोटो और वह शिला है, जिस पर बाबा बैठते थे। उसी शिला में बाबा की पादुका बनी है। आपने नतमस्तक होकर प्रणाम किया और बाबा को निहारते रहे। वहीं तुलसी वृंदावन है। अब आप बाएँ ओर उपर को चढ़े। बाबा का फोटो व पादुका के दर्शन किए। पास ही अनाज की बोरी, आटा पीसने की हाथ चक्की, मस्जिद की पूजा का स्थान, पवित्र जलपात्रों के दर्शन के पश्चात् आप बाबा की धूनी के दर्शनों में मग्न हो गए। बाबा की यह अनन्त धूनी एक निरन्तर यज्ञ है। आपको अनुभव हो रहा है कि संसार के पाप इसमें भस्म हो रहे हैं। इसकी ज्वाला की तेजी आपको शारीरिक, मानसिक व आध्यात्मिक तेज प्रदान कर रही है। आपको तत्त्वज्ञान प्राप्त हो रहा है कि संसार क्षणिक है, आप कुछ समय के लिए इस भवसागर की यात्रा पर हैं और अन्त में पांचो तत्व बिखर जाएंगे। धूनी की उदी आपको चेतावनी देती है कि अहंकार मत करना, एक दिन सब भस्म हो जाएगा। उदी ही एक ऐसी वस्तु है, जो परिवर्तनशील नहीं है। परिवर्तन की श्रृंखला में आखिरि मंजिल को प्राप्त कर चुकी है, इसीलिए तो असम्भव को सम्भव

में बदल देने की क्षमता रखती है यह उदी! उदी तो बाबा का अपार खजाना है, बाबा कहते हैं, "लूट सके तो लूट- अन्तकाल पछताएगा जब प्राण जाएंगे छूट" लौटते वक्त आपने बाबा के रथ, स्तम्भ और चुल्हे के दर्शन किए।

चावडी — गांव के लोगों के मिलने झुलने की जगह! बाबा अपने प्रिय भक्तों के साथ हर दूसरे दिन इसी स्थान पर रात्रि में विश्राम करते थे। आपने इसमें प्रवेश किया। दाईं ओर एक कक्ष में बाबा का फोटो ऊंचे आसन पर स्थापित है। वहीं एक विशाल फोटो दिवाल के सहारे है। ये सभी फोटो स्पष्ट करते हैं कि बाबा का निराकार रूप साकार रूप में आ गया है। आप यही बैठकर मनन करते हैं। इस कक्ष में महिलाएं प्रवेश नहीं करती। इसके बाहर के भाग में बाबा की पहिएदार कुर्सी व विश्राम करने के लिए लकड़ी का तख्ता आदि वस्तुएं हैं। आपको साईं सच्चरित की बातें याद आ गईं, जो इस स्थान से जुड़ी हैं।

गुरु स्थान — समाधि मंदिर के पीछे गुरुस्थान है। नींबू वृक्ष के एक भाग की पत्तियां कड़वी नहीं हैं। बाबा की मूर्ति, गुरुस्थान, बाबा की पादुका व फोटो के दर्शन आप करते हैं। फोटो को जरा गौर से देखिए — महान आत्माओं के दर्शन होंगे, "जया मनी जैसा भाव, तया तैसा अनुभव"। सामने की बैंच पर बैठकर सद्गुरु साइनाथ और उनके सद्गुरु का स्मरण करो। सैकड़ों भक्तगण लोमान का धूप दे रहे हैं, अपने कष्टों से मुक्ति पा रहे हैं, श्रद्धा से नींबूवृक्ष के सुखे पत्ते फर्श पर से उठाकर प्रसन्न हो रहे हैं। बाहर की बैंचों पर भक्त चाय पी रहे हैं। उधर साफसफाईवाले अपने कार्य में तत्पर हैं। इतनी भीड़ के बावजूद सभी ओर सीमेन्ट की पक्की फर्श स्वच्छ नज़र आती है। बाजार से पूजा का सामान व फूलों के हार लिए प्रसन्न चित्त भक्तों को समाधि मंदिर जाते व लौटते देखकर कितना आनन्द आता है। बाबा का बड़ा रथ — समाधि मंदिर, भक्तनिवास व शांतीनिवास के बीच एक उद्यान है, जिसमें बाबा के एक भक्त ने पूर्ण आकार का रथ भेंट किया है। रथ, घोड़े, सजावट, चालक, भक्त और खुद बाबा इन सभी की भावभंगिमा देखते ही बनती है। जगह जगह भक्त फोटो खींच रहे हैं, उद्यान में बैठने के लिए बैंचों की व्यवस्था है।

लेंडी बाग — आप जब लेंडी बाग की ओर चले, तो बाबा के अनन्य भक्तों की समाधि के दर्शन हो गए। बाग में घुसतेही बाएँ ओर हिरन, मोर आदि पक्षी और हरभरा बाग देखतेही मन प्रसन्न हो गया। बाग का मुख्य मार्ग हरियाली से परिपूर्ण है। आगे वह कुआ है, जहां से बाबा पानी लाते थे। कुआ में दीपक जल रहा है, मोटर पंप चल रहा है। अनेकों सीमेन्ट बैंचों पर भक्त समुदाय बैठा है। आपने नंदादीप व दत्त भगवान के दर्शन किए। वहीं भक्त व बाबा के घोड़े की समाधि है। अब आप भी एक बैंच पर बैठ गए। आपका नामस्मरण चालू है। समाधि मंदिर से प्रसारित मधुर गीत, भजन, प्रवचन आदि के कार्यक्रम आप सुन रहे हैं। धीरे धीरे सायंकाल का समय रात्रि में बदल रहा है और आप मानो इन्द्र देव के बाग में विराजमान हैं।

संस्थान की सुचारू व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत आपको ४० पैसे में चाय, ५० पैसे में हलवे का प्रसाद, २ रुपये में नाश्ता व ३ रुपये में भरपेट भोजन प्राप्त होता है। सवाल कम कीमत का ही नहीं है, विशेषता है इन सभी खाद्य वस्तुओं के निराले स्वाद की, एक प्रकार के आशीर्वाद की! भोजन के लिए जब लाइन में खड़े हो, तो भक्तों से बातें कीजिए, बड़ा आनन्द आएगा। कुछ लोग ५ दिन पैदल चलकर बम्बई से शिरडी आए हैं। पैर सूज गए हैं, छाले पड़ गए हैं पर बाबा की भक्ति की मस्ती में झुम रहे हैं।

आपको मालूम होता है कि भोजन गृह में करीब १००० भक्त साथ बैठकर भोजन कर सकते हैं, इसके बाहर के बड़े हाल में व उसके बाहर बड़ी लम्बी लाइन में भक्तों की संख्या का कौन हिसाब लगा सकता है! संस्था की पाठशाला, अस्पताल, वाचनालय, मंगल कार्यालय आदि के बारे में आपको जानकारी प्राप्त हुई। अब आप बाजार में बाबा की फोटो, मूर्ति, लाकेट, अंगूठी आदि खरीद रहे हैं — अपने लिए, अपने प्रियजनों व अन्य गुरु बंधुओं के लिए! तीर्थ यात्रा की यही तो यादगारे हैं। आपका रिजरवेशन हो चुका है। अब प्रस्थान करने का समय आया। आपने बाबा को समाधि मंदिर, द्वारकामाई, चावड़ी व गुरुस्थान पर नतमस्तक होकर प्रणाम किया, आज्ञा ली और चले बसस्टाप की ओर! पांच आगे बढ़ते हैं, मन पीछे की ओर जाता है। बाबा ने कहा — क्यों चिन्ता करता है, तेरे साथ तो हूं, तू याद करेगा तू पास ही पाएगा। आपकी आंखों से प्रेमाश्रु बहने लगे, जैसे ही बस रवाना हुई आपने कहा, "सद्गुरु साइनाथ महाराज की जय!"

— शिवदत्त रामपाल जोशी

७ अर्चना, महात्मा गांधी रोड, घाटकोपर (पूर्व),

बंबई-४०० ०७७.



॥ श्री साई नाम-रस ॥

कैसा रचा है यह ब्रह्माण्ड जिसमें पड़ी सांस की डोरी ।
जीभ बनी पनिहारिन नित पीती साईनाम-रस चोरी-चोरी ॥
जब करते प्रणायाम तो १६ = ६४ = ३२ अजपा-नाम हैं आते ।
तब वे ही प्राणी जन्य-मरण से बन-शुद्ध, बुद्ध, मुक्त हो जाते ॥
सुन ऐ भक्त! मेरा साई है निर्गुण-सगुण, ब्रह्म-आनंद ।
वह नित बसे हमारे मनमें, जहां जलती है ज्योति अखण्ड ॥
हर सांस-सौंस में साई-साई, एक मधुर ध्वनि बोले ।
उस साई की छबि वो ही देखै जो भीतर की आंखे खोले ॥
जो देह-भाव को छोड़, खेलै — ब्रह्म-संग नित होली ।
जीभ बनी पनिहारिन नित पीती साई नाम-रस चोरी-चोरी ॥

— डा. दुर्गाप्रसाद शुक्ल
४८०, कुम्हार मण्डी,
कानपुर छावनी-४.



साई आया मैं तेरे दरबार में

साई आया हूँ मैं तेरी शरण में
अपना जीवन मैंने किया मुझे सम्पत्ति
अब जीवन का रक्षक मैंने तुझे बनाया
मेरे जीवन का सुख दुख है तेरे हाथ में
जीवन में अपनी उन्नति को समझूंगा तेरा प्रसाद
आया हूँ बाबा तेरी शरण में
तेरा नाम लेकर
साई करूंगा सारा कार्य
मिलेगी सफलता मुझे
ऐसी है पूरी आस

— कन्हैया मल्होत्रा
सी. १/२, सी.सी. आई,
नयागाव सिमेंट फैक्ट्री,
पो. नयागाव-४५८ ४६८,
जिला- मन्दासौर (मध्य प्रदेश).

- : साई का आशीष : —

साई का आशीष लेते जा
जा स्वर्ग का तुझको द्वार मिले
किसकी ना कभी तुझे याद आए
शिरडी में इतना प्यार मिले....
साई का आशीष लेते जा
जा दुःखो से पला तू दुनिया में
दलित है यहाँ नाम तेरा
लोगों का भला बुरा सुनते जा
कार्य से अपने ना हिल-डूल तू
होगी साई की रहम नजर
संसार में तुझको सुख मिले
साई का आशीष लेते जा....
साई से बंधा तेरा नाता है
शिरडी में तेरा दाता है
दुनिया से तेरा क्या वास्ता है?
शिरडी ही तेरा रास्ता है
ॐ चलते-चलते शिरडी जा
ॐ स्वर्ग का तुझको द्वार मिले
किसकी ना कभी तुझे याद आए
शिरडी में इतना प्यार मिले ॥

— मोहन सोनवणे
नवागाव, ता. नवापूर,
जि. धूळे.



: साई :

सबसे मधूर नाम
...साईनाम ।
सबसे पवित्र धाम
...साईधाम ॥
सबसे अच्छा कर्म
...साईपूजा ।
सबसे बड़ा योगी
...साईराजा ॥
सबसे महान भक्ती
...साईभक्ती ।
सबसे निराली शक्ती
...साई शक्ती ॥
ऐसा मेरा साई
...सबसे निराला ।
साई है सभी
...भक्तों का रखवाला ॥

— मिलीन्द बारटक्के
ग्राम तथा पोस्ट हरनई,
ता. दापोली,
जिला : रत्नागिरी.

साई महिमा

जिस घर में होती है, साई भजनमाला ।
रहता वहीं हमारा "साई" भोला ॥
जिस गाँवमें होता है, साई भक्तोंका मेला ।
आता वहीं हमारा "बाबा" शिरडीवाला ॥
जिनके मन मंदिर में बसी है, साई मूर्ती ।
होती है, उसकी जगत में किर्ती ॥ ॥
बसा है जिसके तन-मन में साई ।
उसके जैसा दुनिया में दूजा न कोई ॥
पूजा हैं, जिसने साईनाम का मंत्र ।
सही है, उसका भवसागर तारक तंत्र ॥
तेरेही नामस्मरण की 'साई' मुझे है, प्यास ।
"बाबा" यही है, शशी की आखरी साँस ॥

— शशीकला रेवणकर

बालाजी नगर,
अंबरनाथ,
ठाणे-४२१ ५०१.

भक्त और भगवान

मैं तरुवर तू मेरा माली किस दर जाऊँ किसे रिझाऊँ
धूप छाँव तेरी रखवाली तू है दाता मैं हूँ सवाली,
चरणो तक साई कैसे पहुँचू मैं तरुवर तू मेरा माली
माया ने हथकड़ी लगा दी. धूप छाँव तेरी रखवाली
भजन कीर्तन बजती ताली गीत मेरे हंसते हैं मुझपर
द्वारिका माई रचे दीवाली छबि मेरी हो रही है काली
बार बार नित शीश झुकाऊँ दरस दिखाओ अभय करो साई
भर दे झोली मेरी खाली, मिट जाए यह भेद की जाली,
मैं तरुवर तू मेरा माली मैं तरुवर तू मेरा माली
धूप छाँव तेरी रखवाली धूप छाँव तेरी रखवाली
चिंता की अग्नि मे झुलसूँ
जैसे पतझर में कोई डाली

— साईदास विजय

१३५१/५-XII, आर.के. पुरम,
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