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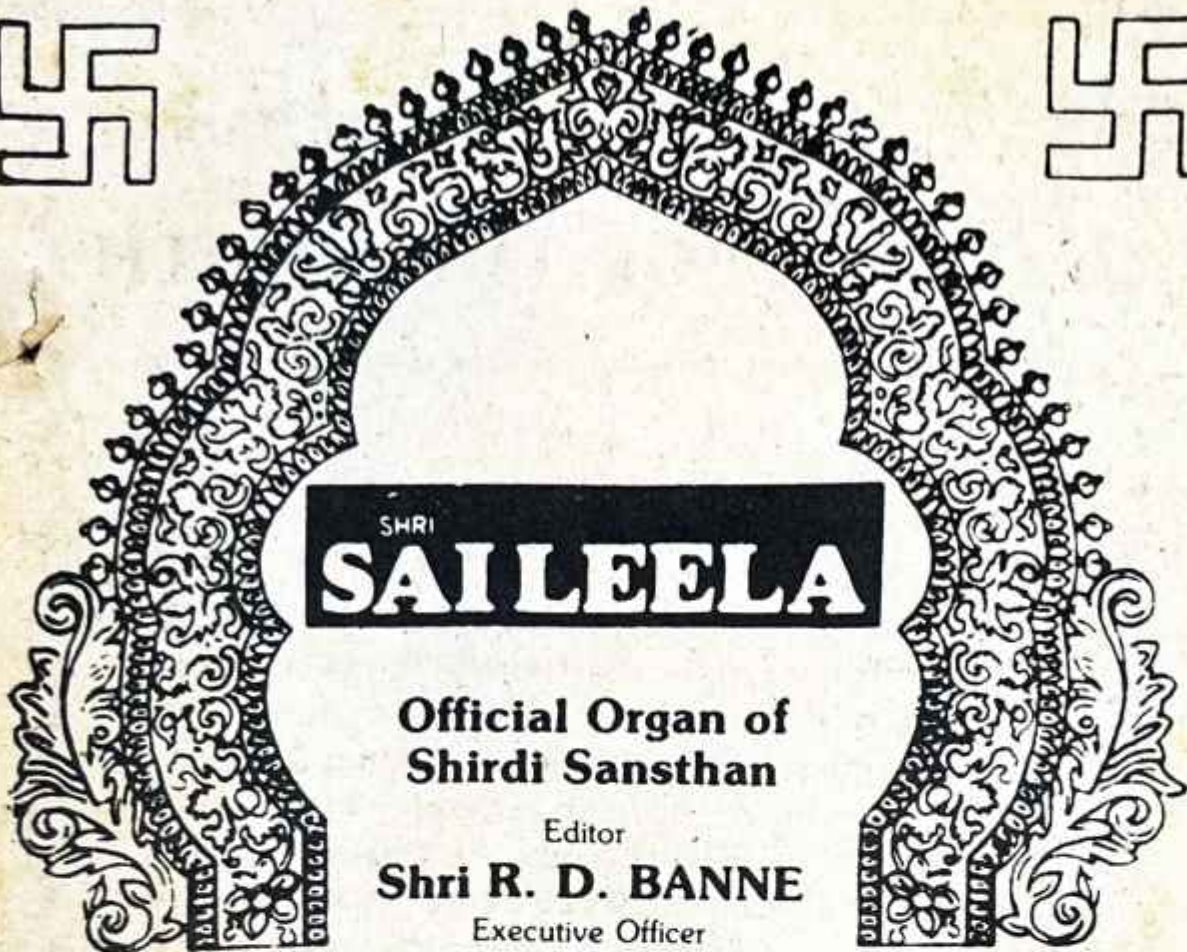
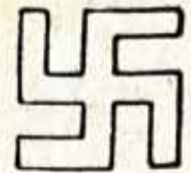
March 1988)

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SAI LEELA

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF SHIRDI SANSTHAN





SHRI
SAILEELA

**Official Organ of
Shirdi Sansthan**

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Shri Sai Baba

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

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the articles published.*



A QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

Q: Is fasting necessary to the conquering of one's own mind?

An: As to fasting, Rama says, do not starve or overfeed. Both extremes are to be avoided. Sometimes fasting comes naturally, we feel within ourselves a natural desire to abstain from eating. Such instincts of the heart should be obeyed, but at other times the inner self tells you to take nourishment. Follow these instincts. Fasting should be taken as a help but it should not master us. People often fast because it is forced upon them they then become servants of this slavery of fasting. Rama does not countenance slavery. True fasting means ridding ourselves of all selfish designs, desires, not feeding them but purging ourselves wholly of them.*

* *Swami Rama Tirtha*

SHRI SAI LEELA

MARCH — 1988

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ME BABA'S PROSTEGE

I came to know about Sri Baba in late fifties i.e. 1958 or so! One Leela Sai came to Trivandrum and was staying at Dr. Narayan Nair's house. She used to predict the future of the people who visited her, with Baba's blessings. My mother, a young widow with five children, also went to her for her help and guidance. Slowly she brought a photograph of Baba and kept it in her pooja room. That is how I started worshipping Sri Baba. Then I read many books and as a result was completely drawn to Him!

In 1961, I got married to an army officer, and left my home town to stay with him in the North. As soon as we reached there, my husband got orders to move to Goa for military operations. I was left all alone in that hill station. That was my 1st time to be away from home. I stayed all alone in that huge building, our house, with no neighbours near-by. Then came the 1962 Chinese aggression. It was a very bad experience for me. Silently I prayed to Sri Baba to give me enough strength to go through all these crises. Things were happening so suddenly that we did not have time to think about any thing else. My husband was posted from his original battalion to another Bn. Sri Baba knew what was going to happen to that Bn. When I now look back I can see so clearly all His love and protection for me, nay, for us.

We came to the new place Hyderabad, and the preparation for the move was going on. In the mean time I fell sick and underwent some treatment. As a newly married and sick person, I was very much upset about the whole thing. On top of it, my mother-in-law wrote to my husband saying that astrologically there was a possibility of early widowhood to me. I started crying and did not know what to do except pray to Sri Baba. Somehow my husband was left back in the 'Rear Party'. Otherwise I don't think he would be alive to-day. I was so overjoyed by His kindness and grace and thanked Him immensely.

I have an innate feeling that He always protects me. As a young girl I have seen a person like Sri Baba with the headgear etc. He used to come to our house for alms. The same person came to my house after so many years when I was in distress. Again it was connected with my husband. He was in the field area and I was not getting any letters from him. So many days passed but no news, whatsoever. I was naturally worried. That was the time Sri Baba came to

our door step. I gave him some money and He disappeared. After few hours the postman delivered my husband's letter to me. See, how Gracious my Baba is!

I can narrate so many incidents. When I was a young woman my parents, grand parents and other members of the family were staying in a double-storied, terraced building. One day my kid and myself and sister were playing near the terrace. The minute we moved out of that place the whole terrace collapsed where we had been playing a little ago. Thank God we both were saved by Baba's Grace. I remember my mother saying, "She has got some protection, otherwise see what would have happened to her". I was so shocked at the sudden event that I could not imagine what would have been our fate had the terrace collapsed while we were in its neighbour-hood! Sri Baba only saved us from that calamity.

As the years rolled on I began and continue to leave everything to Him. I have complete faith in Him. After my marriage most of the time I was in and out of the hospital. I had three major operations. During those times only Sri Baba helped me to keep calm and quiet. With His blessings I always came out of the hospital without any damage to my health.

Then we came to Bangalore to settle down. To get a site in Bangalore is very difficult for obvious reasons. As soon as we reached there we started applying to the B.D.A. 3 or 4 times we applied and afterwards we completely forgot about it. In the mean time I was involved in collecting some money for a Sai Baba temple there. I did collect some money and handed over to the persons concerned. During that time in 1983 on a Sri Ramanavmi day the post-man brought a letter for me. When I opened it I was overjoyed by the contents. It was an allotment letter for a site from B.D.A. authorities. See, how kind and helpful Sri Baba is! So friends have complete faith in Him. He will lookafter you, not only here in this world but hereafter too.

OM SRI SAI RAM

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Bangalore.*



BABA LOOKSAFTER US IF WE LOOK TO HIM
OR
EVEN IF WE MAKE FRIENDS WITH HIS
DEVOTEES

After reading the article "Baba the Saviour" contributed by Sri D.V. Krishna Murthy from Nandyal in January, 1987 issue of Sai Leela, I would like to express that "Sai looks after us even if we make friends with Sai's devotees". Sri Krishna Murthy has been my friend for the last few years. He retired as Headmaster and I am going to retire soon. My wife reached Sai in December, '84 and his wife in December, '85. Sai granted extension of life to them many times as prayed for by us. In May, 1981, Sri Krishna Murthy invited us to attend a Sat Sangh at his house which was addressed by Sri Sam Charan Baba, an ardent devotee of Sai. Moved by his devotional speech, my wife and my self started worshipping Sai. Sri Krishna Murthy encouraged and advised me not to be depressed. I surrendered to Sai and I was able to carry on my duties as Headmaster only by uttering Sai's name. This brought me name and some reputation to the institution. My wife, a known diabetic patient used to sing Sai Bhajan and always looked at Sai's portrait hung in front of her bed, whenever she felt that she was to leave the earthly world.

As we had no children, we adopted a boy. He was eighteen and my wife had a desire to celebrate his marriage. As he was very young I hesitated but left every thing to Sai. One day in July, '84 at 2 P.M. her condition became worse. Her body became cold and she could not breath. Her brother who was there began to weep. I stood before Sai's portrait and requested to grant extension of life until she witnessed the marriage of the boy. I rubbed Sai's Prasad on her body. In five minutes she was alright. In August, 1984 we celebrated the marriage of the boy with my wife's brother's daughter who was sixteen. My wife passed away in December, 1984.

After my wife's death I prayed to Sai to bless me with a grand daughter to fill the gap in the house, caused by my wife's demise. As desired by me, in November, '85, a female baby was born and she was named after Sai (Sai Saraswathi). My grand-daughter has been a solace to me. The baby is lulled by singing Sai Bhajan. Thanks to Sri Sai Charan Baba and my friend Shri Krishna Murthy who put

me on Sai's path. Those who have chosen the path of Sai have no feelings of pain, sorrow and sin. Sai helps those who helps the needy. Once we seek his asylum we will not be thrown out by Sai.

"JAI SAI RAM"

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CHANGES

Things change
Friendships fade
Money is spent out
Glories forgotten
Power is lost
Seasons change
So do people
Day turns to night,
Sorrow to joy,
Pain to pleasure,
Rules are broken,
Promises forgotten,
Trust betrayed,
Life ends,
Love cools,
Hate dies,
stars fall
Things change....
But God Sainath is ever as before.

*M. Rama Rao,
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IF HE CAME TO MY HOUSE....!!

If Lord Sai Nath came to my house,
First I shall hide Him from my spouse,
To avoid unnecessary questions,
I shall have to answer creating tensions.

I shall take Him straight to my room,
Make Him seated comfortably and assume,
That it is time for Him to consume,
Some delicacies prepared for the noon.

Once He shows His contentment by burping,
I shall take Him to the garden in front for resting,
And fan Him quietly while He sways on the swing,
Till He lays down for deep slumbering.

In the meanwhile I shall go inside,
To attend to my daily chores which I set aside,
When He had entered suddenly from outside,
Leaving everything, I ran to welcome Him with arms outstretched.

Before it is time for Him to wake up,
The table is laid with tea, snacks and ketchup,
With attractive flower arrangement for pleasant get up,
The curtains drawn aside, while He freshens up.

Sitting next to Him I shall cherish,
My dream come true to see Him relish,
All the preparations served in the dish,
Although the dinner is also without meat or fish.

I leave it to Him to stay overnight with me,
Or bless other devotees at Shirdi during Shejarti,
If I am blessed, I shall wake Him with Kakad arti,
Till He stays, I shall serve Him as my Deity.

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SAI SAMARTH'S LEELA

Sri Sai Baba is available to His devotees even after His Mahasamadhi and this has been the experience of thousands of sincere bhaktas all over the world. True to this statement made by devotee Sri N.N. Shalla of New Delhi in his article "Sai Baba Image of Self-effacement" published in Shri Sai Leela in December, '86, I desire to narrate to share my happiness of the divine bliss I experienced by the grace of our Lord SAI BABA, the omnipresent with all my Sai brothers and sisters.

On a particular day, I was travelling by an express night bus from Bangalore to Bellary on official duty. On the mid-way the bus driver and stopped the bus for a few minutes and informed the passengers to ease themselves. I got down from the bus and after answering the nature's call, drank the sweet water of two small coconuts to quench my thirst at mid-night. After a short interval of time, the bus again started its journey, piercing its way through the darkness of the night. All passengers made their efforts to sleep in their sitting posture. The sweet water from two cocanuts started its function and made my bladder inside to swell. I felt uneasy and uncomfortable as I had the severe urge to answer nature's call again. Any amount of my controlling that urge became useless and the discomfort in the lower abdomen was unbearable due to the swelling of the bladder with the accumulation therein. No words could describe my agony in that situation. I was afraid and felt ashamed of myself to request the driver to stop the bus for a while for enabling me to get down for nature's call when all other co-passangers were in their deep slumber. I was looking out eagerly for the approach of my destination so that I could get down to ease myself but there was no such symptom as two more hours of journey was left behind to reach my destination.

When the pain became extremely unbearable, I cried out to our Swamy SAI SAMARTH and prayed in my heart of hearts to stop the bus under some pretext or other so that I could get down and ease myself. What a wonder it was! My humble prayer reached instantly our Lord Sainath, the Omnipresent and indweller of the heart, as Draupadi's prayer reached Lord Krishna when her saree was pulled off in the darbar hall of Dutchasana. The speeding bus was suddenly stopped to my surprise and astonishment. The driver of the bus simply got down on his own from the bus with a tinful of



water and dissappeared in the darkness of the night. The Omnipresent SAI SAMARTH on hearing my prayer had created a similar urge in the driver in order to relieve the sufferings of His dear devotee. Who can speak adequately of His leelas!

I wholeheartedly thanked our Lord and got down from the bus to ease myself without any loss of time. I rushed myself to a nearby bush to ease, but to my dismay, I couldn't ease myself at all, perhaps due to control for a long time as well as anxiety. I was afraid whether I may have to board the bus again without getting myself relieved of my problem and continue to undergo the torture again in the bus. Though several minutes passed, there was no relief for me. Again I turned to our Lord SAINATH and prayed to save me in my critical position. Relief came instantly as my prayer was answered by the all prevading benefactor SAI SAMARTH and I was completely relieved of my problem in the next few minutes. What a joy it was for me at that moment. It can't be expressed in words. I prostrated to our Lord SAINATH in my heart for coming to my succour in a miraculous manner in that midnight and then I boarded the bus. The bus driver unaware of the miracle of our swamy, returned to the bus with his empty tin and resumed driving.

When the bus reached my destination after some hours of journey, I got down from the bus and expressed my gratitude to the driver in whom our Lord Samarth Sai had manifested Himself and acted His divine drama in His own way to relieve the sufferings of His dear devotee. My humble pranams at the Lotus Feet of our Lord SAMARTH SAINATH PRABHU.

JAI SAI RAM

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**SAI, EMBODIMENT OF LOVE,
PLEASE, 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 help me, Sai Hesitate not!*

*When I throw myself on thy tender
Love of a Father and Saviour,
Sai do Help me!*

*When my heart is cast down
on failure at seeing no good
Come-from my efforts, Sai Help me!*

*When I feel impatient,
And restless
Sai help me!*

*When I am ill And my head and
Hands do not work and I feel
Lonely, Sai help me!*

*Always, in spite of my weakness,
Failures and short-comings of every kind,
Sai Help me, and never for-sake me please!*

*Dear Lord, I pray thee
Accept my prostrations
In making an impossible
Thing possible by Thy grace.*

*Stephen
Lovenest House,
G-Bhatt, Merces,
Panaji Goa (India)*



S(elf) A(m) I

Salutations to Sri Sai Nath, our Samartha Sadguru who was designated by the Almighty to guide the masses caught up in the whirlpool of worldliness and to steer them clear towards God-realization. Self-awareness is the spiritual goal of all human beings and though Jnana Marga is the direct path of self-enquiry, it has proved an up-hill task requiring herculean effort and was given up even by Pujya Narasimha Swamy, the apostle of Sri Sai Nath.

Pujya Swamiji, Sai devotees are well aware, first approached Sri Ramana Maharshi seeking solace and spiritual enlightenment. In his book *Self-Realisation — Life and Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi* (Edn.8) he frankly admits his incompetence to pursue this path. To quote his own words "Few have analysed and understood his (Maharshi's) attitude and realization on matters of vital interests. More than twenty years back even *Seshadri Swami* a great *tapasvin* failed to see through this Swamy. How can others, puny souls make it out. Yet, having started a biography one has to face the task as it is the mark of wisdom to complete what is begun". Pujya Shri Narasimha Swamiji's words sound very humble; yet it remains an undisputed fact, his work, the first of its kind, attracted people not only from other parts of India but also the famous English journalist Paul Brunton to come over to India and also paved the way for his widely read book, "A Search in Secret India."

As Sai Nath was the Guru earmarked for Narasimha Swamiji, he was advised in a silent manner, say in Dakshinamurti's style to go westward to Shirdi, in as much as the same way when Paul Brunton approached the living sage of Kanchi, Sri Sankaracharya, the Senior, was directed verbally to go to Tiruvannamalai, the abode of Maharshi (Ibid). By choice or accident — nay by Sai's divine will we are all drawn towards SAI, the saviour of mankind.

Beloved Sai Nath has Himself declared pointing to his chest — "This Brahmin can bring lacs of men on the white path and take them to their destination. This is a Brahmin's masjid". (Sai Sat-Charita Edn. 10. P. 39, Footnote). Having received this assurance from Sai Nath Himself, one has to sit silently and ponder over the word SAI which will reveal a fund of meaning with spiritual significance. The abbreviation SAI stands for *Self Awakening Institute*; Sai Nath as the teacher, organizer, administrator, all func-

tions rolled into one admits in His School. His children with no caste or colour distinction without any discrimination whatsoever and also without any age restriction. Nay, He goes beyond space and time in the matter of selection. One cannot think of a more suitable example of Sai's choice than our Pujya Narasimha Swamiji in this regard.

What should a Sadhaka do? As Hemadpant points out in Sri Sai-Sat-Charita, he should develop firm faith packed by intelligence and to which he should add patience." Thus equipped, a Sai devotee should go on remembering Sai's divine form and constantly chant SAI, SAI; the reverse of SAI is ISA meaning Lord, and the fruit of Sai manthra japa is realization of self. In other words the Sadhak merges with SAI and becomes SAI as he discovers the truth of the Mahavakya (Upanishad saying) "Aham Brahma Asmi". I am Brahma, i.e. Self Am I.

Sai Nath has given us in a nut-shell the essence of Gita, the cream of the Upanishad, the profound truth of Vedanta easy to understand and practise, where the means and the end are not divorced from each other but where Jivatma is linked with Paramatma. Let us prostrate before Sai Nath and "Arise and Awake and stop not till the Goal is reached" (Katha Upanishad III:14)

JAI SAI NATH

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HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS

In December, 1984, I had a problem in Uterus and underwent a major surgery in abdomen in January, '85. After the operation I grew weak as I am past fifty-five. I needed help for everything, even to turn over or sit up in bed. It was very discouraging and uncomfortable.

One day, feeling utterly helpless, I complained to my Sai-half, Sri R. Radhakrishnan: "Why do I keep on living? What good am I? I am just a nuisance. I can't do anything for anyone."

My beloved Sai-half was preparing himself to go to Shirdi for participating in the SAI LEELA Meet scheduled for 27th and 28th January, '85. He answered with a smile: "Oh, I don't know about it. I think there is something you can do. You can pray to Lord Sainath for the sake of others".

What a good timely medicine that was! There, flat on my back, I began to pray for my fellow-patients, for the doctors and nurses, for Sai-bandhus, for anyone who came to my mind. And as I did that, I found I was moping less, and focussing more on the world outside. Without knowing it, I was getting out of myself, out into the world — if only in spirit. And eventually I was there physically too!

In fact, my health improved so much so that a year later, I could accompany my husband to Shirdi in February, '86 for the Annual Gathering of Sai Leela Contributors and later to Vijayawada to participate in the Akhanda Sai-nama Saptha Saptaham.

Today living at home, I am able to take care of myself and yet I am still following that excellent prescription for feeling myself useful to others.

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A SAI-GIFT INDEED

This was a soul-stirring incident that I experienced when I was in U.S.A. in 1984-85. I was waiting for my husband in the Hospital, on a cold forenoon in December, 1984.

I noticed a young mother, about six months pregnant. She was holding a year-old child, a little girl in her arms. Squirming nearby was another little girl who had a brace on her foot. I thought to myself: 'Oh, she should not be having another child. She has too much to do now'.

'That is a pitiable family' I said to the nurse after they had gone into the Examination Room with the doctor.

"Not at all" the nurse answered: "Those children are the most fortunate I have ever known. They are adopted. The parents thought they would never have children of their own, so they chose babies who needed love more than a normal child. They can well afford to give them the help that will overcome their handicaps in a few years." I was told that the one-year old in her arms was blind!

I really felt like adoring the couple. They had really understood God's love and they had gone the second mile. Now they would have an added blessing, what they had always hoped for — a sister or brother for their two adopted children.

This was indeed a Sai-lesson for me. As I offered a short prayer: 'Om Jai Jagadeesa Hare, Sai Jai Jagadeesa Hare' the young mother returned from the doctor's room. She smiled at me and as I returned her smile, I recalled Sainath's words: "Shri Hari will be certainly pleased if you give water to the thirsty, bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked and your verandah to strangers for sitting and resting'.

I thanked Lord Sainath heartily for this first hand evidence of Sai-love!

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SELF-REALISATION THROUGH SRI BABA'S WAY

*Guru Madhye Stitam Viswam
Viswa Madhya Sthito Guru
Gururviswam Nachaanyosthi
Tasmai Sree Guravenamah.*

Salutations to Sri Baba who is Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omni-present.

In the present materialistic way of life, many people do not care to remember and meditate on God. They are always busy with their mundane activities and hence are mentally restless. They seem fed up with the monotony and the mechanical routine in their day to day life. Dejection, drudgery and dullness become, in due course, a part of their life. Clarity of thought and tranquility, therefore, elude such people. The lost mental peace and tranquility will automatically return, Alas, if only they care to find sometime in their daily life to remember our Maker and sit in meditation on Him for a few minutes at least, as peace and tranquility are corollary to grateful remembrance of God, the controller and protector of the Universe. This habit should become an integral part of every one's life. Indeed, it was very much so, far before.

All sadanas for spiritual enlightenment, such as daily japa, tapas, yoga, satsanga, study of the spiritual scriptures, doing bhajans, acquisition of knowledge of Vedas and Upanishads, daily abishekam and poojas, listening to and learning of puranas are all of no avail to a person desiring to become a "Brahmagnani" unless and until he has developed a sincere and heartfelt devotion to God and thus has learned to see God both in animate and in-animate and in existence and non-existence; to acquire and adopt this attitude and this vision, there appears to be two ways. The first one is Nishkamyā Karma and the other is development of sahaja samadhī in which a person, while living an ordinary man's life, constantly and continuously lives with the thought of God. In the process He becomes God Himself.

Nishkamyā Karma is one in which a person apparently lives a worldly life in its ordinary sense, while mentally consecrating every-action of his to God such that the reaction or the fruits of action belong to God alone and not to him, the doer. In other words, this

karma is rendered in a dispassionate manner in letter and spirit. Such a person is completely devoid of hatred for any one and anything. Human-beings, animals & birds, plants and trees are all one and the same, Almighty's manifestations. Such a man, while living in this world, lives in Heavens. He receives the ultimate end with a smile characteristic of such persons. While in life, he becomes a living God on account of His purity in thought, word and deed. Detachment, dispassion and consecration of all to God produces Godliness in Him.

The second method of realisation of self or God is through attainment of sahaja samadhi state. This is verily difficult of attainment. But with the necessary determination and the unflinching faith in the All-Merciful God, a person can attain to this state of super-consciousness in this very life. Such a person is not affected by pairs of opposites. Hunger & thirst do not disturb him. Climatical changes do not affect him the least. Rich or poor, sickness or robust health do not disturb him. He is in the nature of God in all ways. The Universe is His temple, the manifest and the unmanifest are the same God which He lives every moment of his life. Such a person is a walking God in Himself and has the power to control and command the panchabhudas, the five elements.

Our Shirdi Sai Baba is an example to the point in focus. All through His life, He spoke of God, He preached God and helped needy people as God Himself. He at times chastised those who came to Him with vile thoughts and wicked notions but even such people were dramatically transformed by His Will. He always advocated unflinching faith in God., utmost devotion and Shraddha and Shaburi.

Let us behold the oneness of spirit in everything, the oneness of the goal of all religions thus live a Godly life in this very birth.

Bow to Sri Sai & Peace to all. !

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ONLY WAY TO HAPPINESS

One day during my Sai-Pooja, I was bemoaning the fact that there was so much imperfection in me, when suddenly I heard the sweet voice of Lord Sainath saying, "But do you love Me?" At once my whole being was bursting with the love for Lord Sainath in floods. From that day to this, my mind has been absorbed in one thought : 'I am in love with my Divine Mother — Lord Sainath and in that love my life is surrendered to Him, to do as Sainath wishes". I have complete faith in Him, I know that His Love will never fail me.

Lord Sainath loves all of us in the same way. The sun shines equally on the charcoal and on the diamond. One cannot say that the sun is partial because the diamond reflects more light than the charcoal. Similarly, the light of Lord Sainath's love shines equally on all. We must become like the diamond, which receives and reflects His light.

We should unceasingly take the Sai-nama-japam- OM SAI SRI SAI JAYA JAYA SAI — not in absent-mindedness, but with full attention. Sai-communion requires our utmost concentration. No matter what we are doing outwardly; our inner mind be absorbed in the One, ever whispering : "Sainath : Thou art my only love".

I was in Madras on the 19th November, 1986 in order to participate in the marriage function of Sai-brother M.V. Venkatesam's daughter Sow. Nirmala of Secunderabad. I attended the wedding, as per His command. It was in the early hours of the 19th Nov. '86 — may be around 5.15 A.M., the Kakad Arathi' time at Shirdi, I had a dream in which the Senior Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Kanchi-Kamakoti Peetam granted me a darshan. This Paramacharya is our 'family Guru' and considered to be the 'living God' on this earth. My late father had the rare privilege of being the class mate of Kanchi Paramacharya in his 'Poorvasaram' at Villupuram.

I was thrilled when the Parmacharya appeared in my dream. I prostrated at his holy feet praying that my 'ego' should be completely removed by his grace. He nodded his assent and the dream also came to an end. For me Kanchi Acharya is Lord Sainath and vice versa.

By his grace on the 24th November '86, I visited Kanchi along with my brother, Sri R. Subramanian. It, being a Karthika Monday, was a very auspicious day. We had darshan of Sri Paramacharya to our heart's content and we were blessed by him. Later we visited all the important temples and we were full of bliss and profound joy.

Lord Sainath urged us to seek God in Him, for only with our consciousness anchored in Him can we win the battle of life. When we are brought face to face with difficult times in this everchanging world, we must turn divine warriors. Why wait for life to take us by surprise, to disillusion us, to beat us down? Let us cultivate devotion for Lord Sainath now and begin our search for Him. He who is with us in times of peace will not forsake us in the hours of trials.

Let us set aside some time every day for worshipping Lord Sainath — for a deep, joyous communion with Him. Out of the 24 hours each day give one hour to the Divine, Beloved Lord Sainath. Wise is that man who takes to heart this advice. "Life is sweet and death a dream; joy is sweet and sorrow a dream, when Thy song flows through me" so said Paramahansa Yogananda (Cosmic chants).

Lord Sainath, "Thou art wisdom, Thou art Bliss, Thou art Love, Thou art our Saviour and That is our Reality."

BOW TO SRI SAI PEACE BE TO ALL!

OM TAT SAT

— *R. Radhakrishnan*
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(Karnataka)





I SAW THE HAND OF SAI

“What happens to all has happened to your son” said Buddha with compassion. The widow was consoled. Revealing the truth was Buddha’s miracle. It is useful to all at all times.

— The Way of Buddha

* * * * *

I have always believed in Lord Sainath. But over the years my beliefs about who Sainath is, and what He can do have changed. It was not until my son was gravely ill two years ago that I learned that you can believe in Sainath while yet not knowing Him at all.

Know, knowledge, logic. When I was young, those were the words I wanted to live by. I read great books of the western world and out of my reading formed my strongest beliefs. I believed in logic, in the mind’s ability to put all creation into neat, rational categories.

At the same time I was growing up in a strongly orthodox Hindu family, and so I believed in God. But I insisted and my insistence caused a lot of arguments that God Himself was also a Being bound by logic and His own natural laws. I guess I pictured God as a great scientist. Miracles? No, God could not and would not break laws that way.

It was at this juncture, in the early fifties, that I came under the magnetic spell of Lord Sainath through that great apostle, H.H. Narasimha Swamiji, when I was a student at Mysore.

I turned to Lord SAINATH. His spirit answered: “I don’t simply want belief that I exist. I want you, your will, your life, your dreams, your goals, your very being. And I want your faith, faith that I am sufficient for all your needs”. My despair overcame my logic and I yielded all to Him. But just saying you have faith is not the same as having it. In my mind, I still had Lord Sainath in a box.

May be that is why I never thought to pray to Lord Sainath, when my eldest son, Chi, Nagaraj came home from his school one day in 1984 and said he did not feel well. What would Lord Sainath care about Flu?

Our local doctor who my wife Vimala and I had consulted was not very alarmed about Nagaraj’s illness at first. “It is really not too

serious" the doctor assured us, "just a bad case of flu complicated by a little acidosis. Give him this medicine and in a few days he will be fine".

But Nagaraj was not fine, not at all. The medicine worked for a day or so, but then his symptoms — the gagging, choking, swollen face etc., came back more violently. His small frame started sinking and emaciation had set in. My cousin, Dr. K.S. Srinivasan, who was then a Senior Scientist at Central Food Institute, Mysore had come to our place and on seeing my son's grave illness suggested that we take him to Mysore for further treatment.

The doctors at Mysore, after an initial examination and laboratory investigations told me: "... We think your son has Nephritis. It is a terminal kidney disease...." He paused, and I could feel the blood running from my face, "But we have found that in children there is a good chance of recovery. Your son has a fifty percent chance of being as good as new".

In the next couple of days we learnt that the X-rays showed that my son's kidneys are badly infected. The odds were not in our favour. I looked at my wife Vimala, watching the tears well up in her eyes, as a huge lump formed in my throat. We were too shocked, too upset to even talk. All afternoon we sat at our son's bedside watching. I searched in the doctor's eyes for an answer, for some glimmer of hope, and got nothing. I could only cry in desperation.

Later in the evening, our cousins gave words of encouragement. And for a fleeting moment, I thought I saw in my wife's eyes the spark of hope that I had been looking for from the doctors.

By next day, that spark of hope had ignited a flame of confidence in her. "I turned Nagaraj's life over to Lord Sainath last night," she told me excitedly, before we were even out of bed, "I feel a real peace about what is going to happen, that Sai-will is going to be done".

"Sainath's will?" — I said angrily. "What kind of God makes little boys sick? He does not care." And I rolled over. Peace? Sai-will? No, my little son would need more than that to get well.

But my anger did not stop me from trying to reason with Lord Sainath. The whole day I begged and pleaded and screamed at Lord Sainath, daring to ask Him to disprove my skepticism, trying to goad Him into action.



“Who do you think you are?” I shouted once. “Why are you doing this to my son? He is only 12. Everybody says you are such a loving God, why don’t you show it?” I yelled until I was exhausted. Finally, convinced my arguments were falling on deaf ears, I headed to the hospital.

I was told that there is a temple of Shirdi Sai Baba at Mysore. We went there and offered our respects. Suddenly this unjust God spoke to me. I felt His presence, soothing my still-hot anger. And I heard His voice, gentle, reassuring. He reminded me that I had made a commitment to Him, that I had promised to trust Him with my life, my all. And He had promised to take care of me, in all circumstances. “Take Me out of the box you have put Me in.” He said: “and let Me work.” By the time I left the Sai-temple my heart was beating wildly. I sat for a few moments longer and uttered but two words in reply to all that had happened: ‘Forgive me’.

By the time I returned from the temple, I knew what I needed to do as clearly as if someone had given me written instructions. There had been no change in my son’s condition. Placing my shaking hands on my son, I prayed to Lord Sainath as I never believed I would ever pray: “Lord Sainath: forgive my ego, for trying to make you what I want you to be. If you will, heal my son and if you won’t, that is alright too. I will trust you. But, please, do either right now”.

That was all. There are no lightening flashes, no glows, no surges of emotion, like the rushing mind. I calmly sat down and began to wait for Lord Sainath’s answer. There was only one difference. For the first time in my life, I knew I was going to get one.

Over the next two weeks, my son underwent a battery of tests, consultations and sub-consultations with leading doctors of Mysore. But with every report, I could hear Lord Sainath saying to me: “I am, and I care”.

A slow improvement came over my son. One regimen of drugs suited his system. Even the doctors were amazed to see the progress he made and one of them remarked: “I think we have been privileged to witness an act of God.... it is a definite miracle”?

And this time I was not about to argue. At last I fully believed in Lord Sainath whose love knows no bounds.... not the bounds of logic, not the hold of natural laws. FAITH — that is what I know

had.... that and the knowledge that one's belief in Lord Sainath is essentially hollow if the belief is not founded on faith.

H.V. Srinivasan

Land Lord

DEVARAYASAMUDRAM 563 127

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A THURSDAY SAI MESSAGE

I had the privilege of having 'darshan' of Lord Sainath in the Sai-temple at New York, when we went to the U.S.A. in 1984. I came across an unforgettable incident on a Thursday evening.

An elderly white-haired Gujrath-born Sai-brother was next to me. After the worship, I noticed that this brother put a small slip of paper, but no money in the 'Arathi' plate. Just then, a gust of wind from the open window blew the paper on to the floor. Bending over to retrieve it, I could not help but see these words printed in large letters : "I will pray one hour a day".

I became curious and as such requested him to explain the message he had put in the 'Arathi' plate. What he told me is quite moving.

His wife had died following a long and very expensive illness and he had been forced to sell his home to pay medical bills. Now he lived with his married daughter. "I am too old to work and I have no money" he said: "But I can pray. Lord Sainath has assured, "If you spread your palms with devotion before Me, I am with you day and night'. So He is taking care of me."

His story brought to my mind Sai Babā's assurance — 'I always think of him who remembers Me' and reminded me once again that when we give sincerely what we have, no gift brought before Lord Sainath is too small or insignificant.

— *Mrs. Usha Ranganathan*
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THE SYMBOLISM OF BABA OF SHIRDI EXPLAINING HIS OMNISCIENCE

Being an Incarnation of the Brahman, the omniscience of Baba of Shirdi is too well known to all His devotees. This omniscience it was that came to succour the devotees even whenever unknown to themselves, problems arose to be solved. The god-devotee relationship reached an exceleis, showing how sincerity of worship of Baba as god personified was reciprocated by Baba in ways which at first looked mysterious but later to thrill the devotees inwardly with emotions inexpressible. Baba's methods were symbolic and so His greatness was revealed only after the events took place. A few illustrations given in this article are as convincing as edifying to a Sai "Bakta" or not.

The Tarkhads of Poona, husband and wife, belonged to the category of uninitiated devotees of Baba. On one visit to Shirdi they had taken their servant with them who was suffering from intense pain in the waist. Mr. Tarkhad appeared before Baba in the absence of a hospital in Shirdi. Baba complained to Tarkhad of having unbearable pain in His own leg and when some one asked Baba for the remedy, the reply from Him was that certain green leaves when split and warmed over the fire and applied to the region of pain will relieve the pain. Tarkhad at once divined that it was to his own servant that Baba was suggesting the treatment and after verifying from Baba that the leaves were Aloe leaves found near the Lendi (brook) found the leaves and applied the same on his servant according to the instructions of Baba and no doubt the servant was cured. See the symbolic way of Baba's interest in the servant of Tarkhads and does it not fill one with amazement as well as conviction of Baba's greatness?

W. Pradhan, another great devotee of Baba, following the reading of Das Ganu's "Bakta Lilamrita" describing the miracles of Baba was to experience the revelation of Baba's greatness as in the case of Tarkhad and in a way almost similar to Tarkhad's. Pradhan went to Shirdi in the company of the two sons of Chandorkar and did his full-hearted obeisance and paid the "Dakshina" as demanded by Baba and experienced spiritual bliss. The same evening Baba gave a hint of His omniscience to Pradhan by touching His limbs on one side and remarking of experiencing excruciating pain which would disappear in two or four days. Baba appeared perfectly healthy at the time, but Pradhan was to learn of

the symbolism of Baba only after returning to Bombay. Baba with His infinite kindness had so arranged that Pradhan could catch the Punjab Mail and reach Bombay earlier. Imagine Pradhan's surprise and astonishment on arrival at his house to find that his mother was stricken with partial paralysis, the ailment corresponding exactly to what Baba complained of on Himself at Shirdi. According to the doctor attending her condition was highly critical. With full faith in Baba and with prayer in his mind to Him Pradhan administered on his mother the "Udi" and the "Paada Theertham" (part of "Paada theertham" the result of worship of Baba by Chandorkar, a very unusual performance by Chandorkar himself). The mother recovered in two instead of four days to the wonder of all.

The two cases cited above are very clear illustrations of two phenomena. One is the symbolic way of Baba showing His omniscience and the other more edifying is the love which Baba reciprocated to his devotees worshipping Him as god Almighty.

Baba of Shirdi is a most unique phenomenon of the modern age and is it any wonder His devotees and worshippers are increasing day by day?

SAI RAM ! SAI RAM ! SAI RAM !

— C.R. Narayanan,
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Mylapore, Madras 600 004.



IN THE WORD OF PRAISE —

*In the word of praise
or taunt of blame
In friend or foe
and weal or woe
In calumny or fame
With equal vision I see the same
Sri Sai playing the maya game.*

— P.J. Reddy
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SAI — THE SAVIOUR — SHIRDI AN ABODE OF BLISS

To millions of devotees spread all over the country Shirdi is an Abode of Bliss. Shri Sainath by his inspiring gospel of humanism elevated it and made it a place which enables you to discover our hidden potential. It does not ask for abstinence and isolation from natural human life. Here you are in the midst of the voice of reason, of compassion and harmony which uplifts man so that he becomes the instrument of God.

You come across a vastly different composition of devotees free of the foul odour of fear and suspicion and familiar with our ancient culture. There is an obvious lesson in this situation. The devotees' experience — the supreme satisfaction of being able to give and do for others and display a unique spirit of mutual tolerance towards-different religions. Men of eminence, intellectuals and nationalists who came in contact with Sri Sainath felt elevated to glorious heights. Their thoughts and emotions have been moulded by the great Master.

Sai devotees have a common urge and aspiration. Here you feel the greatness of the power you are seeking. There is a new warmth, respect and affection in their minds. A wholesome influence is arising which is expected to assert itself. We owe it to Sainath to join together and halt the process of decay of reason and rationality.

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT

I would like to narrate my experience to Sai brotheres and sisters. Since I happen to be the eldest son of our family, burden of responsibilities is on my shoulders. After getting my degree, I had done many odd jobs and a good job was only a dream. At this juncture, my friend, Sri K. Radha Krishna asked me to pray to Sri SAI BABA for getting rid of my worries. From that day onwards, I have been worshipping Sri Sai with utmost devotion.

As necessary, I was appearing for different competitive examinations including the ones by Banking Service Recruitment Board, Railways, etc. etc. I passed the bank test at last though, earlier, I had not succeeded in three attempts. After a few days, I received a letter from B.S.R.B., Hyderabad, asking me to appear before the interviewing Board at Vijayawada on March 11, 1986.

Before the receipt of this letter, I had decided to visit SHIRDI on March 3, 1986. At this stage, I could not decide whether to put off my visit or to prepare for the interview and visit Shirdi afterwards. My friends advised me to cancel the visit at least for the time being. Even the members of my family suggested to me to first prepare for the interview. I was in a dilemma as to what to do. Then I approached my friend R. Radha Krishnaji, for his advice. He said that if I cast my burden on Sri SAI, He would get the things done smoothly. I did as he said and fixed the 3rd March, 1986 as the date for my journey to Shirdi.

I reached SHIRDI safely on March 4, 1986 and had darshan of Sri Sai Baba. After staying for three days there, I came back to my place, Masulipatnam, on the 9th morning with bounteous blessings of the Master, Sri Sai.

And now there was only one day for me to prepare for the interview to be held on March 11, 1986. I attended the interview and answered all the simple questions put to me. By the grace of Sai, I did my best in the interview. My friends and relatives did not expect my selection to come through as I had not prepared for it well enough. Just my luck! I was selected as a clerk in Andhra Bank and posted at Tanuku. That is how Sri Sai helped me to get an employment, I firmly believe.

If you earn the grace of Sai, you are reinforced with so much strength that you can carry out the most difficult tasks, successfully.

May Sai bless us all !

J. Faghuram,
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MACHILIPATNAM
(Andhra Pradesh)



TEACHINGS OF SAI BABA AND DATTATREYA

Sai Baba, when he was in flesh and blood, assured his devotees that he would be active even from his tomb after His Mahasamadhi. The experiences of his devotees everywhere in the country prove it. Sai Baba is Dattatreya to his devotees as he is blessing and directly guiding those earnest seekers who accept him and surrender to him without any reservation.

Sai-devotees who accept Sai-sat-charitra as their authoritative scripture, accept with equal reverence that Sai Baba is Dattatreya, who is a full incarnation of God and accept him as their greatest teacher. They accord the same position and importance to 'Avadhootagita' attributed to Dattatreya as they do to Sai-Sat-charitra. Indeed both are divine songs; they shower infinite compassion and eternal wisdom on suffering humanity.

The essence of Sai — Datta philosophy is the 'oneness of the individual soul with the universal soul'. This is explained briefly as follows :

Datta Philosophy

1. *World of Plurality*: "The world of objects is a jugglery akin to a mirage in the desert and the one immutable and auspicious alone is real.
2. The sages declare in many ways that all is God and that one is never the body and therefore one has neither birth nor death.
3. That individual who neglects his immortal self which is his real nature, like the despicable crow is speeding towards hell.
4. *Means to attain Mukti*: Know that with form to be unreal and the formless alone to be eternal. By absorbing this instruction rebirth is destroyed.
5. *Advice to the mind*: O mind, give up finitude, abandon it; give up even the notion that 'I have renounced'. The pure and immortal principle will destroy, like poison both renunciation and non-renunciation.
6. *Facing challenges of life*: What I do, what I eat, what oblation I offer, what I give — they do not concern me because I am the ever pure, unborn and immaculate one.
7. *Concept of 'Jeevanmukti'*: The state of liberation while still living in this body, is alone "Jeevanmukti". If it is a state that is

attained after the fall of the body, then even dogs and pigs will attain it.

8. Even now, Dattatreya is blessing and guiding those earnest seekers who accept Him and surrender to Him.

SAI Philosophy

1. Look to me and I will look after you. Trust in the Guru fully. This is the only sadhana. Guru is all the Gods.
2. If one meditates on Me, repeats My name, sings My deeds, and is thus transformed into Me, his Karma is destroyed. I will stay by his side always.
3. Give up all desires and dwell upon GOD-IN-ALL. If the mind is thus concentrated, the goal is achieved.
4. If you make Me the sole object of your thoughts and aims, you will attain 'Paramartha' the supreme goal.
5. Meditate on Me either as with form or as formless, mere Anand. If that is hard, then think of my form, just as you see it here. Think of it day and night. With such meditation, the mind dissolves into unity.
6. My Guru asked me for two pice: I gave them to him. What he asked for was (i) Faith (Sradha) and (ii) Patience (Saburi) i.e. cheerful endurance.
7. Be the real and true sons of Dwarakāmayi. What is to become of us? Earth will return to earth and breath will return to the air. This opportunity will not return. Sit quiet. I will do the needful. I will take you to the goal.
8. My tomb will speak and move with those who make Me their sole refuge. I shall be active and vigorous from the tomb also.

Salutations to Lord Sainath, who is Dattatreya Himself incarnated to bless us. He is bound to His devotees. He, the indivisible and mighty, and the embodiment of the greatest bliss is ever calm and composed. He is a promoter of good fortune. He is beyond the worlds and incomprehensive; yet He is the warder of all fears of 'samsara'. Lord Sainath is a veritable sea of kindness. He is the supreme God; He is absolute Bliss.

— P.K. Kapoor
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THE FENCE OF TRUST

"Mankind is engaged in an eternal quest for that 'something else' he hopes will bring him happiness, complete and unending. For those individual souls who have sought and found God the search is over. He is that Something Else."

— Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

* * * * *

It was on Highway 17, in the west coast that our car broke down on the 14th March, 1981. We were on our way to Mundakayam in Kottayam district of Kerala, as my Sai-half, Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar was transferred there. We had halted at the holy Guruvayoor the previous night and had continued our journey on the 14th morning. I hoped the trouble with our car was not bad, because we had to be at Mundakayam that evening.

But a look at the car's rear left wheel made my husband feel that the axle must have snapped. Even though I was worried, I did not want to talk. Instead I started reminding myself of the wonderful way Lord Sainath had led us during the thick and thin of our life and His sustained help. If Lord Sainath could do so much, I thought, surely He could help us overcome the present situation also.

We had stranded at a small roadside village — 'Karukutty' — midway between Trichur and Cochin. What shall we do? I thought. Knowing that we would never find a mechanic on a Sunday and with hardly Rs. 300/- in my purse, I had a sinking feeling of being hopelessly stranded.

I looked at my watch. It was 11.15 a.m. The sun was bright and it was very hot. 'Trust in Lord Sainath and He will care for all your needs ! Surely we have a need now, I thought. Somewhat hesitatingly I prayed to Lord Sainath for help, wondering how He would get us out of this mess.

There was a small house closeby. But we did not really expect to get any help from strangers. Feeling pessimistic, my husband went and knocked at the door anyway. When a man appeared, we told him of our problem. To our great surprise, he came near the car to have a look at it.

Right away he suspected the Joint-star to be damaged and the

axle broken. He said : "I can talk to my friend in the garage 1 km away' from here. Don't worry. Even if it is a holiday, I will ask him to help you." He added : "Where are you headed ?"

My husband replied, "We have to be at Mundakayam this evening. I have been transferred there."

"Mundakayam" he exclaimed, "Why! that is my native town". Then he took my husband to his friend's garage one kilometre away.

I watched him with hesitancy. When we first came to Kerala in 1978, we had some bad experiences with strangers that had left me a bit wary and suspicious about future encounters. Why should this man want to help us? Or was he trying to fool us for some reason? Anyway I left everything to Lord Sainath.

Soon they returned with the person in charge of the Garage. he explained that he was not a professional mechanic but that he knew something about cars. After carefully examining our car, he gave us the bad news : a broken axle, a burnt bearing. I thought : 'In this village there is no way to get the parts. Being Sunday the shops would be closed even in Cochin or Trichur. Even this man who had gone so far out of the way already, probably could not help us now'.

"My friend at Chalukudy has a junk yard.... Chalukudy is hardly 5 km from here", the stranger said suddenly, "I am going to see if I can find the parts you need". I was stunned by his kindness, yet anxiety gnawed at me once more. Why should this man want to be so helpful? What would he want in return? In that hot noon the minutes passed slowly for me and my husband, but I had plenty to think about in the strange chain of events that brought us there. To find such a man, who has access to a garage, even to spare parts was a lot to think about.

At 1 p.m the man returned. "I found a part I think will do it", he said cheerfully. With the help of two boys of the garage he fit it on the wheel after nearly an hour's efforts. "Drive her down the road and see how she runs", he said ultimately.

Again I had to wonder. What kind of a man is this? How does he know we won't drive off without paying?

The car ran beautifully and my husband returned to our friend. "How much do I owe you for all you have done, Sir" — my husband asked.



He smiled and said — “I don’t know. You just pay what you want to. If you don’t have any money, that’s okay, too”.

My heart was full as I said — “Nothing can compensate for what you have done but I have to pay something. I can’t let you do so much for nothing”. I took my purse and gave him one hundred rupees — not much for an afternoon’s work and running here and there. However he returned fifty rupees saying that he was content with the other fifty rupees.

Before we left we thanked him from the depths of our hearts, and I wished my Malayalam were better to say all I felt. When we arrived at Mundakayam in the night, I suddenly realised that I had not even asked him his name.

Since that day, I have done a lot of thinking about the strange sequence of events, about the basic goodness of people; about the kindness hidden in the remote villages of this great country.

Was it all happenstance? No. I believe Lord Sainath led us through that trouble to teach me a lesson — a lesson in willingness not only to trust others, but also to forever put my trust completely in His unique and mighty powers. Lord Sainath used that episode to show me just how He really loves us, cares for us and guides us in all situations. I should never have doubted that something I thought I knew, I never will again.

— Mrs. Seetha Vijayakumar
W/o. Dr. G.R. Vijayakumar
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THE PERFECT MAN

Those that taste THAT, are fulfilled. They are the perfect ones and they wander no more.”

(from Sukhmani of Guru Arjun)

* * * * *

Sai Baba was a perfect Master. The ideal of every Sai-devotee should be to strive to be as perfect as Sai Baba. It was Jesus who said : “Be ye perfect — even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Even as Sai Baba is perfect, even so must we aspire for perfection.

Sai Baba has stated that MAYA teased him often — “the inevitable Maya teases me often.” Though I forgot myself, I cannot forget her.” She always envelops me...: this maya teases God, Brahma and others, then what to speak of a poor fakhir like me? Those who take refuge in the Lord will be freed from Her clutches by HIS grace...”

Sai Baba spoke to us of the three faces, the three prongs of MAYA :

1. The first one is pleasure, sense gratification. See how pleasures draw us. The cinema, the T.V., the Radio, the club, the hotel etc., draw us and rise up within us desires. And it is desires that make us wander. The whole world is running after and dancing to the tune of desires. This dance of desires, Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji said, is the dance to death. If you would be perfect, keep away from desires, control desires; do not let desires control you.
2. The second prong of maya is wealth. See how people run after wealth. They keep on amassing wealth, more and more. They may not have time to spend it. Suddenly death comes and pounces upon them. And leaving all their millions behind, they move on empty-handed to the eternity.
3. The third face of maya is name, fame, earthly greatness. There are people who shun pleasures, who keep away from wealth, but who want name and fame, popularity and publicity. They want the applause of the people. They too are prisoners of maya and do not attain perfection.

Dear Sai-brothers and Sai-sisters: keep away from these three snares — pleasure, wealth and power. Sing the holy name of SAI. Sing it again and again with love and longing of the heart, with tears in your eyes — and give the service of love to those who suffer and are in pain — and you too will grow in perfection and you too will be filled with SAI-BLISS, the joy that no ending knows !

— R. Subramanian
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Villivakkum,
Madras-600 049.



SAI-WAY TO SALVATION

*"Evil would die a natural death; and nothing transient be desired,
And error from the soul would pass; and leave the senses pure and strong
As sunbeams, but the best, alas has neither memory nor tongue".*

— *Coventry Patmore : Life of Life*

* * * * *

One of my colleagues died in March, 1986 at a tender age of 37. During his short tenure as a doctor, he had earned the respect and admiration of both professionals and patients, especially for his love and compassion to the sick and disabled. This doctor had reached the pinnacle of success in his chosen field, and enjoyed the status and financial rewards that accompany such accomplishment. He had tasted every good thing, by the standards of the world.

At the staff-meeting following his death, a five-minute eulogy was read by a member of his department. Then the Chairman invited the entire staff to stand, for one minute of silence in memory of the fallen colleague. I have no idea what the other staff members contemplated during that pause, but I can tell what went through my mind.

I was asking : "Lord Sainath Is this what it all comes down to? We sweat and worry and labour to achieve a place in life, to impress our fellow-men with our competence. We take ourselves so seriously, over-reacting to the insignificant events of each passing day. Then finally, even for the brightest amongst us, all these experiences fade into history and our life is summarised with a five-minute eulogy and sixty seconds of silence. It hardly seems worth the effort, Lord."

But I was also struck by the collective inadequacy of that Staff-meeting to deal with the questions raised by our friend's death. Where had he gone? Would he live again? Will we see him on the other side? Why was he born? Were his deeds observed and recorded by a loving God? Is there meaning to life beyond our investigative research and expensive automobiles? The silent response by learned men and women in that staff-meeting symbolised our inability to cope with these issues.

Then a wave of relief spread over me as I thought about the message of Sai Baba : "Wherever you are, if you think of me, I am

there at any time you please." His assurance: "Believe Me, though I pass away. My bones in My tomb will give you hope, and confidence. Not only Myself but My tomb would be speaking, moving and communicating with those, who surrender themselves wholeheartedly to Me." It provides the only satisfactory explanation for why we are here and where we are going to. The final heart-beat for a Sai-devotee is not the mysterious conclusion to a meaningless existence. It is, rather, the grand beginning to a life that will never end. That is why we can proclaim, even at the graveside of a loved one : "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (I Corinthians 15 : 55)". In fact, Sai Baba told Shama that they were together for 72 births.

How extremely important it is for the man of the home to know the answer to these perplexing questions, and be able to lead his family in the path of righteousness. When he accepts that spiritual responsibility as Sai Baba intends, the entire family is likely to follow his example. Sai asked: "Give me two-pice dakshina — Nishta and Saburi, i.e. faith and patience." This issue is of such significance that I feel compelled to set down here my convictions regarding the basic plan of salvation. Perhaps someone will comprehend the Sai-message for the first time through reading these words, which is my prayer.

I used to ponder over a difficult question that appeared unanswerable at the time. It seemed strange that God would incarnate as Sai Baba and live amidst us for over eighty years and undergo sufferings for the benefit of His devotees. I reasoned that God, as Creator of the universe, was in charge of everything. That entitled Him to make His own rules and establish His own boundaries.*It seemed to me that God could have provided any plan of salvation He chose — anything that suited His fancy.

Sai Baba's aid was daily sought by so many hundreds during His life. He said to G.S. Khaparde that constant attention to the thousands that sought his aid ruined his system and would continue to ruin it till the fleshy tabernacle should break, and that he did not mind the trouble and loss, as he cared more for his devotees, than for his own life or comfort. This is the cross he bore for decades — the cross he was nailed to. From that cross, his soul has ascended and regained its spiritual perfection and is blessing all devotees.

I could not comprehend why He would put Himself through such grief and sorrows on our behalf when He could have offered a



less costly plan of salvation. I struggled with this issue as a Sai-child and was perplexed by the questions it raised. H.H. Narasimha Swamiji provided me the answer in one of His 'Mahasamadhi Messages' : "The central truth of Sai Baba's life is : 'A life spent in sacrifice and loving service is life; And that a life spent in indulgence and other ways is death'." If all of us do but strive to reach this ideal, our individual and natural goals are sure to be achieved. "Deserve and you will get it" so said Sai.

It is interesting to look back on the things that troubled us in earlier days. I now have a better understanding of Sai Baba's plan of salvation and what motivated it. And the explanation is of great significance for me, because it deals with the very essence of Sai-philosophy.

Here, then, is my concept of the plan of salvation and why Sai's physical death was necessary; It begins, as it should, with an understanding of Sai Baba's nature. Throughout Sai Satcharitra, the Almighty is represented by two uncompromising characteristics "His love and His justice". Both of these aspects are reflected in everything God does, and none of His actions will ever contradict either one.

The love and justice of God were especially evident when He created us — human beings. Obviously, He could have 'programmed' us to love Him and obey His laws. This could have been accomplished by creating us as highly sophisticated robots or puppets. He did, in fact, program the brains of lower animals, causing birds to build a certain kind of nest and wolves to kill wounded deers. They have no choice in the matter. My pet-dog plays an assortment of wired-in behaviour about which neither of us has a choice. For example, he cannot help barking when the front-bell rings. Nor can he keep from gobbling his food as though he would never get another meal. God has imposed instinctual behaviour in him, which operates without learning.

But Lord Sainath elected to put no instinctual behaviour in mankind, leaving it free to learn. This explains the utter helplessness of human infants, who are the most dependent of all creatures at birth. They lack the initial advantages of unlearned responses, but will later run circles around the brightest animals with 'locked-in' reactions. Such is the nature of our humanness.

By granting us freedom of choice, therefore, Lord Sainath gave


meaning to our love. He sought our devotion, but refused to demand it. However the moment He created this choice, it became inevitable that He would eventually be faced with man's sin. Sai Baba told people that if they quarrelled with and hurt each other his heart was burning within him and that, if they endured each other's faults and attacks with patience, his heart was rejoicing. In His own mosque Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Parsis have stood side by side in their adoration to Him, the great Guru of all. Far from destroying each other, they are building each other's temples, mosques and sacred structures, and helping each other to have unmolested celebrations in the same building. The Hindus rebuilt his mosque and a brahmin devotee of his, Upasini Baba, built a mosque next to his own temple. The Muslims perform their 'Idd' in the same mosque without noise and when the turn for the Hindu worship in the same place comes up, the Muslim brother beats the drum in the mosque to help Hindu-worship.

In spite of Sainath's advocating 'Saburi' we do come across stray instances wherein Sai-devotees lose their calmness and confront each other, with the most serious dilemma of all time. Sai Baba's love for His devotees is unlimited and He forgives His disobedient children. The Bible says : "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." (Psalm 103 : 13). That is an analogy I can comprehend. I know how I pity my children when they have done wrong. My inclination is to forgive them.

Lord Sainath is close behind our thoughts. In every moment of our life his declaration comes true : "Be wherever you may, you may remember this always, I ever know whatever you do or say."

But in spite of Sai Baba's great love, His justice required complete obedience. It demanded repentance and punishment for disobedience. So herein was a serious conflict within Sai Baba's nature. If He destroyed the human race, as His justice would require in response to our sinful disobedience, His love would have been violated; but if He ignored our sins, His justice would have been sacrificed. Yet neither aspect could be compromised.

But Sai Baba, in His marvellous wisdom proposed a solution to that awful dilemma: "Do not try to get Mantra or Upadesha from anybody. Make Me the sole object of your thought and actions and you will no doubt attain 'Paramartha'. Look at Me whole-heartedly and I, in turn look at you similarly." Years after His Mahasamadhi,



when Kaka Dixit had a doubt as to how he could attain the 'devotional status' of Nava-nathas (Chapter 45) Sai Baba cleared his dilemma through a dream-vision to Anand Rao Pakhade : "... Devotion in the form of bow to, or worship of Guru's feet is sufficient."

This understanding of the plan of salvation is not based on guesses and suppositions, of course. It is drawn from the literal interpretation of Sai's word. This message is in fact, the primary theme of Sai Satcharitra.

Isn't that a beautiful explanation of Sai Baba's purpose here on earth? It makes clear why Sai Baba's plan necessarily involved his own exchange of life with Thathya Patil. Only by paying this incredible price could He harmonise the potential contradiction between love and justice, and provide a 'way of escape' for mankind. It also explains why there is no other means. Sai Baba said : "simple remembrance of my name as SAI SAI will do away with sins of speech and hearing" (Chapter 3).

Just how does a person proceed, now to accept this plan and follow the risen Lord? Prof. G.G. Narke in 1936 said : "Sai Baba is now in the flesh, and when he was in flesh he was in the state in which he is now". We are aware that there is no change in Sai Baba. "He was, He is and will ever be an Apantaratma". The Bible says : "Anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10 : 13)". So the first obligation for anyone is to accept what Sai Baba did as being for him personally.

But as I understand the Sai-philosophy there is a second responsibility. "Are there still some among you who hold that 'only believing' is enough? Well, remember that the demons believe this too — so strongly that they tremble in terror ! Fool ! When will you ever learn that 'believing' is useless without doing what God wants you to? Faith that does not result in good deeds is not real faith (James : 2 : 19-20)". So something else is required. While it is true that you could 'work' your way into salvation, you cannot do enough good deeds to earn it — repentance is still an important part of the process.

'Repentance' is a word that is often misunderstood. What does it really mean? Sapatnekar's incident in Chapter 48 of Sai Satcharita defined repentance as having three parts to it. The first is Conviction. You have to know what is right before you can do what

is right; and you have to know what is wrong in order to avoid those misbehaviours. Repentance also involves a deep awareness that you stand guilty before the Lord. When Sapatnekar went and placed his head at the holy feet of Sai Baba, he seemed to have no real awareness of his own sin and guilt. He had no 'contrition' of heart. That is why Sai Baba rebuked him 'Get out'.

But where does this spirit of repentance originate from? It must come through the teaching — 'Look to Me, I look after you'. We should have this relationship with Lord Sainath. Sainath must be so important that you will allow Him to turn your life around and change your behaviours. In summary, then, repentance includes conviction, knowing right from wrong, then contrition, being aware of your guilt and sin, and finally, a resulting change of mind and heart and behaviour. We are aware that Sapatnekar led a blissful life after Sainath ultimately blessed him.

I think it would be helpful to give an example of the kind of prayer that a person might pray if he understands what I have been writing and wants to accept Sai Baba as his own Lord and Saviour. Let me express it in this way :

"Lord Sainath : I do not have anything valuable to offer except myself and my love. I accept your control of my life, and intend to serve you, obey you and follow you. You have my past, my future, my family, my money and my time. Nothing will I withhold. Thank you for loving me and forgiving me and making me your own."

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SAI BRETHREN — BEWARE OF CONFIDENCE TRICKSTERS

It was a dry noon on 16.10.87. I just had my meal and entered the hall. My wife, the only other member of the house, was still at her dining plate in the kitchen. Through the half-open main door of the hall I noticed somebody knocking at the gate of the compound. The calling bell was not used though its button was conspicuous beside the gate. I approached him. He was a middle aged man with 'kum kum' on his forehead. He was thin and wore 'Lalchi' and 'dhoti'. He opened a book in which a small photo of Shirdi Sai Baba was kept. The book was in 'Devanagari' script. He was still outside the gate. He started conversation in Hindi with Marathi accent. I two replied in my faltering Hindi. It went on like this.

He: "Do you recognise this photo?"

I: "Yes. It is Shirdi Sai Baba."

He: "Did you ever visit Shirdi?"

I: "Yes, only once in November, '86."

He: "I have come to you at the instance of Lord Shirdi Sai Baba. Last night I participated in a Sai bhajan programme in Birla Mandir on Naubat pahad and there Lord Sai Baba prompted me to visit you. We do not visit any house unless ordained by Baba."

He appeared to me as a genuine devotee of Shirdi Sai Baba and I gave credence to what he said.

He: "Will you please give me some water to drink?"

I: "By all means. Please come in."

I opened the gate, allowed him into the hall and offered a chair, he declined it and sat on the floor near the wall adorned by two big photos of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. While I was bringing water from the kitchen my wife asked me who he was. I told her that he appeared to be Sai Baba's devotee. But she cautioned me not to give any money on Fridays to anybody.

I gave him water, requested him to wait for 2 minutes, went to the toilet and returned. He asked me to show my right hand. Peeping into it he started studying the lines and narrated some of the past events in my life almost correctly as follows.

He — "You are not a rich man but people around you think that you are well-to-do". "You came up in your life on

your own due to your wife's stars and changed departments in your service. You are not after amassing wealth and do not want to harm anybody. You always desire peace in your life. You do service to people and they do not reciprocate it. Your thumb is stiff which indicates that you are a man of strong will. Recently Shirdi Sai Baba came to your house in the form of a Fakir but you could not recognise him and turned him away."

This is a fact. I took the Fakir to be a professional beggar.

He — "A few days ago you ran the risk of an accident but Sai Baba averted it."

This is also true. Just a week ago before this man arrived I lost balance on my scooter which skidded while crossing a road when the back wheel came into contact with a loose stone. The scooter swerved to my left and I was about to fall down but I felt some body pushed me up to regain my balance and I could cross the road before an A.P.S.R.T. Bus coming in that direction crushed me and the vehicle under its wheels. I felt at once that it was Lord Sai Baba who came to my rescue at the moment. I did not disclose this to any body, even to my wife.

He — "You have two issues — Girls. Is it?"

I — "Yes. But the elder one passed away at the age of 21 years after completing her B.Sc. and getting married."

He — "Do not tell me any-thing else. I will tell you. Your daughter's marriage came off unexpectedly without your effort." (This is a fact).

At this stage another man entered the Portico and stood outside the open main door. He was well built, chubby and taller than the first man. He wore white 'Dhoti' and 'Lalchi' and had 'Kum-Kum' on his forehead giving the appearance of a religious man. He asked the first man to come out early as they were to attend another programme where tea as kept ready and people were waiting for them. The first man asked him to come in and wait for a few minutes. I allowed him inside and showed him the chair but he too declined it and sat on the floor.

I offered to get tea prepared for them but they refused. The first man continued his narration.



He :— “As I already told you, we attended a ‘Bhajan’ programme at Birla Mandir on Naubat Pahad last night. There one of the participants uttered a lie. While returning home after the programme, he broke his hand in a scooter accident nearby. He managed to return to us in the Mandir and I told him that Baba would never tolerate lies. He begged me to invoke Baba’s blessings and I gave him reluctantly some ‘Vibhuti’ with a warning not tell lies in future.”

The second man confirmed this story.

I — “There is a theory that Sri Satya Sai Baba of Puttaparthi is the re-incarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba. What are your comments?”

He — “I have not seen Satya Sai Baba and I never visited Puttaparthi. We are devotees of Shirdi Sai Baba Only.”

I wanted to continue this discussion but he did not permit me to do so. He resumed his palmistry.

He — “You live upto 90 years.” Your daughter is childless. Do not worry. She will have two children. She will conceive and deliver a male child in 1988”.

I was indeed enraptured with ecstasy by this statement as I have been yearning for it since a long time.

He — “You will buy a car in place of your scooter in 1988”.

This is an impossibility as I am a retired person. So I did not take this seriously and simply laughed away but he reiterated that it would come true.

He — “Do not sleep cross legged. Do not shave on Thursdays. Do not use your fore finger to clean your teeth. Use always a tooth brush.”

In fact I always use a tooth brush.

He — “*Lord Shirdi Sai Baba gives you ‘darshan’ in your dream on ‘Diwali’ night i.e., 22.10.1987., Thursday — Remember it is ‘Diwali’ coming next week.*”

My joy knew no bounds at this, being an ardent devotee of Shirdi Sai Baba and my faith in the soothsayer was getting reinforced.

I thought that his prophecy was over and requested him and his companion to have their food in my house. He begged excuse saying that they would certainly come and dine with us after I begot my grandson in 1988.

At his behest I called my wife who was still in the kitchen doing some cleaning work. He made her sit on my left side and do 'Pranam' to my feet, I being her 'Pati Dev'. (It was declared so by him) She does not know Hindi, I acted as her translator. He started reading her left palm as follows.

He — "Your wife is a Mahalakshmi. Due to her stars you came up in your life. She lives upto 82 years. She is very talkative and indiscriminately liberal in feeding others. Next Friday i.e. 23.10.87 you take a lottery ticket in her name. She gets Rs. one lakh. But you are not that lucky. But you never get a lottery in your name. Your wife is sure to get if the ticket is taken on the Friday after Diwali. Do not forget this."

I was not at all enticed by his assertion as our life taught us that luck would never favour us either in our domestic life or in service matters and laughed at his suggestion, but agreed to follow his advice as his assertion was so credulous that I decided to give it a trial.

By this time he drew both of us almost completely into his grip and he started coming out in his true colours which we could not suspect — faith transcending our reason.

He — "We perform Sai Bhajans regularly at Sai Mandirs around Dadar in Bombay".

(He named some places but unfortunately I am unable to recollect them).

He — "Have you ever visited those Mandirs?"

I — "No. We visited the Sai Mandir at Panaswadi only twice or thrice and offered our prayers.

He — "Yes at Panaswadi too there is a Sai Mandir. We now require some funds for white washing and colouring etc., of some Sai Mandirs where we perform Bhajans. Can you donate some amount? It is left to your will. You can give any amount you can afford."

I — "Yes."



I went inside and brought Rs. 101/-. He directed me to bring a small mat. I brought it. He placed the book on the mat and opened the page wherein Sai Baba's Photo was kept. He instructed me to place the amount on the photo.

He — "Tell me in the name of Baba, whether you are parting with this sum wholeheartedly without succumbing to pressure."

He asked this question thrice and each time I answered in the affirmative. He closed his eyes for a while covering his ears with his hands and then returned the amount of Rs. 101/- to my wife saying that Sai Baba desired it so. He warned me not to use that amount as it was hers.

He — "Are you prepared to donate your wrist watch? If so bring it."

I said "yes", brought it and placed it on Baba's photo. He again ascertained from me thrice that I was willingly donating it. He closed his eyes and ears as before and returned the watch to me saying it was Baba's desire.

At this moment the second man intervened to say that Baba would not accept any thing from any body.

He — "Can you contribute Rs. 1000/- for Baba's work?"

I was shocked and embarrassed at this question as it was too much for a retired person without any other means of income to contribute such a huge amount. Apart from this I was really doubtful whether I had that much balance with me. I am not in the habit of maintaining accounts for writing diaries. So I expressed my doubt regarding availability of so much amount with me.

He — "No. You have that amount with you. Go and See."
(He told his emphatically twice.)

I took it to be a test of my devotion to Baba. Though I became a little shaky initially, I soon regained my composure. I went inside and found a balance of a little over Rs. 1000/- with me. I brought Rs. 1000/- and placed it on Baba's Photo.

He — "Do you willingly offer it to Baba?"
(He asked me his question thrice one again).

I — "Yes. All I have is given to me by Baba the Almighty".

This time he did not return the amount to me and allowed it to remain on Baba's Photo.

He then turned to my wife and asked her whether she could offer her Gold Bangles to Baba. As mentioned earlier she too came under his spell completely. This process started the moment she sat before him. So she forgot her belief that no money should be paid to anybody on Fridays.

The Gold Bangles demanded by him were not there on her hands. Yet she agreed to donate them and went inside to search for them.

Some time ago we kept the few gold ornaments she had in my daughter's residence in Bombay, to escape the risk of decoities rampant at that time in Hyderabad outskirts.

My daughter, in her recent visit to Hyderabad in August, 1987, brought back a few of them and advised her mother to wear them atleast on festive occasions. My daughter herself kept the items in the Almirah. My wife had not taken them out since then. Her memory is as poor as her health. She was really not sure which of the items were here.

After searching the Almirah she could not trace the Bangles. She declared so to me from inside. I conveyed this to him.

He — "No. They are certainly here".

I asked my wife to search again which she did in vain and told me so. When I conveyed this again to him he reiterated with more emphasis that the bangles were here undoubtedly. My wife conducted a third search and said that she could not trace the bangles but instead she found her *gold chain*.

As I firmly believed in the man's words, I thought that the Bangles might have been misplaced; if I challenged his suggestion and in case they were found later I would be deemed a liar depriving me consequently of the grace of Lord Baba. So I asked her to bring the gold chain. In fact I did not know the weight of either the gold chain or the bangles. I never cared to ascertain this. They were actually given by her parents though a small amount was contributed by me for the purpose.

My wife brought the gold chain and placed it on Baba's Photo. He asked her thrice as usual whether she would willingly surrender it to Baba and she said "YES". *He did not return it.*



At his request my wife brought some 'KUM — KUM', turmeric powder and a few incense sticks. He then performed 'PUJA' with 'KUM — KUM' & HALDI on Baba's Photo and got the incense sticks lighted. He made my wife bring some sugar. He got some of it placed in his empty *left hand*, closed it and swung it around Baba's photos on the wall as an oblation chanting "SAI RAM, SAI RAM".

When he opened the palm before us, miraculously a small heap of 'VIBHUTI' *materialised* on its broad side along with some sugar deposited in the centre separately.

He declared "*This is BABA'S Prasad from Shirdi*" and asked me too to say so. He wanted me to smell the Vibhuti. It had pleasant fragrance. He applied some of it to my forehead and gave some sugar to me to eat. He put the residue of "VIBHUDI & SUGAR" into his mouth.

He turned to my wife, took again some sugar into his *empty left hand* and repeated the same ritual and *materialised* fragrant 'Vibhuti' and sugar as before. He applied Vibhuti to her forehead, gave some sugar to her and consumed the rest.

At his request my wife brought some "KARPUR" and placed it in his right hand. He got it lighted by her. He performed "ARATI" to Baba's Photos on the wall and after we offered our 'PRANAMS' to it, he gulped the 'Karpur' with its burning flame.

Reminding us about Baba's 'Darshan' to me on Diwali night and purchasing lottery ticket by my wife on the following Friday, he wound up his establishment along with an amount of Rs. 1000/- and the gold chain offered by us. He asked us to construct a SAI BABA'S Mandir in our precincts soon after my wife got the lottery amount and promised to visit us again then and perform Sai Bhajan in my house. He advised us to visit Shirdi after getting the Lottery prize.

Cautioning us not to reveal our "DONATIONS" to any body, he took leave of us along with his companion and walked out honourably.

Even while they were leaving, doubts started lingering in our minds about their integrity as they did not return the large amount and the Gold chain as was done in earlier offerings and as to why we were asked not to inform anybody especially when the second man declared that Baba would not accept any thing from anybody. But

we did not venture to raise the point for fear of breaking our affirmation before Baba's Photo that we offered them willingly *My wife informed me later that the weight of the 22 Carats gold chain was about 9 sovereigns (72 grams).*

My inner conscience discouraged me from suspecting any foul play and advised me to wait till 'DIWALI' to see whether Baba would give me his 'darshan'.

My wife suggested that we should even wait till she tried her luck at a lottery on Friday (23.10.87).

We were terribly disappointed on both the counts. Neither 'SAI BABA' gave me 'DARSHAN' on DIWALI night nor my wife got any prize on any of the Lottery tickets she purchased on the specified Friday.

On 25.10.87 I learnt from my daughter in Bombay on phone that the gold bangles were with her only there.

Realisation came to us too late to conclude beyond doubt that the man and his accomplice were seasoned "TANTRIC" confidence Tricksters who accomplished their task with meticulous care and dexterity exploiting our deep faith in 'SAI BABA'. My age, experience and reason vanished before their master minded trickery. I did not care either to enquire their names at any stage or to demand receipts for our so called "DONATIONS".

I should confess that we fell victims to the cheats mainly due to blind belief in every-body appearing in the name of 'SAI BABA' in whom we have immense and unshaken faith and *Fervent desire to beget a grand child.*

We were not at all lured by avarice to get rich overnight with easy money through a lottery. We did buy lottery tickets on the TANTRIC'S advice in order to test his credentials and arrive at a firm conclusion about his bonafides.

This incident happened for the first time in the six decades of my life.

Desire is the source of grief but *some-times* human weakness causes temptation to invoke Lord's blessings to obtain material gains.



Let us surrender ourselves totally before our LORD SAINATH with a clean mind and He will certainly take care of us.

OM SRI SAI NATH

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“SAI GREETES NEW YEAR — 1987”

On the morning of December 31, 1986 while taking morning tea, I was wondering telling my wife and children, casually, that how lucky we would be — if we receive “NEW YEAR GREETINGS” from Sri BABA Himself. They also agreed with me.

I returned home from office as usual at 6-30 p.m. My wife handed over to me a cover, addressed to me and told me that we had received New Year Greetings from ‘BABA’ as desired by us in the morning. There was no indication on the cover from where and by whom it was sent. I then opened the cover and found the ‘BABA’ photo with some sacred sayings inside. There was no indication even on the photo by whom the cover was sent. I could see only my residential address written by hand on the cover.

Out of curiosity, I examined the place of posting of the cover. To my utter surprise, I found that the cover was posted at ‘SHIR-DI’ on 23-12-1986. This I found out from the Post Office date stamp on the envelope.

We can assume from the above that ‘BABA’ Himself appeared in our house as desired by us, on the eve of New Year. We felt very happy. We have kept the photo for our daily puja.

From this, one of the Eleven sayings of Baba i.e. “IF YOU LOOK TO ME, I WILL LOOK AFTER YOU” is proved.

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श्री साईलीला मार्च १९८८

हिन्दी विभाग

अनुक्रमणिका

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साँई महात्म्य

साँई जिसके साथ है,
उसकी क्या बात है।

साँई जिसका पालनहार
उसे नहीं कोई दरकार।

साँई जिसका रक्षक है,
उसका कौन भक्षक है।

साँई का जो प्यारा है,
जग में सबसे न्यारा है।

साँई को जो देता मान,
उसका जग करता गुणगान।

— सुरेन्द्र सिंह कुशवाह,
युनाइटेड बैंक ऑफ इण्डिया,
२३२, अन्धेर देव, जबलपूर (म. प्र.).



साई-कृपा

साईबाबा! मेरे भगवान!! असम्भव को सम्भव कर देनेवाले मेरे बाबा!!! बाबा मेरे प्रति सदैव कृपालु रहे। पल-पल में मेरे साथ रहे। मैंने अपनी समस्त चिन्ताएं बाबा पर छोड़ दीं और बाबा मेरा सब भार वहन करते रहे। मैंने जब-जब बाबा से जो मांगा वही पाया। माता-पिता का, भाई के प्रति अटूट विश्वास रहा और साई ने कभी वह विश्वास टूटने नहीं दिया। भौतिक समस्यायें, कठिनाईयां तो आती रहीं, पर उचित समयपर बाबा ने उनका निवारण भी किया। मां को असाध्य बिमारी से मुक्ति दिलाई, कई बार पिता के जीवन की रक्षा की, समय-समय पर मेरी पुकार सुनी। ऐसे भगवान को कैसे कृतज्ञता दरसाऊं। कैसे धन्यवाद दूं!! गूंगे के गुड़ को कैसे शब्द दूं!!!

बाबा ने मुझे क्या नहीं दिया, जैसा मैंने चाहा, वैसा ही साईकृपा से पाया। संतान, वांछित नौकरी सभी बाबा ने मुझे दिया। मैं बचपन से ही अपने पिता को कालेज के छात्रों को पढ़ाते देखती, तो मेरी भी यही इच्छा होती कि भविष्य में, मैं भी कालेज में ही अध्ययन करूं। जैसे मैंने इस क्षेत्र में आने के लिये अध्ययन करने के लिये जितने परिश्रम की आवश्यकता होती है, उसका आधा भी परिश्रम कभी नहीं किया, पर फल मुझे अपनी इच्छा के अनुरूप ही सदैव प्राप्त हुआ।

मेरी तीव्र इच्छा शक्ति व बाबा के प्रति अटूट विश्वास के कारण ही मेरी नियुक्ति महाविद्यालय में ही हुई किन्तु तदर्थ रूप में मैं इससे सदैव चिन्तित रहती थी। न तो कोई सुविधा की पात्रता थी और न ही सम्मान, साथ ही मुझे यह भी चिन्ता रहती थी कि मेरा नियमितीकरण होगा या नहीं। वैसे मेरे पिता, जो महाविद्यालय में प्रोफेसर हैं और साई के अनन्य भक्त, वे मुझे सदैव साई पर भरोसा रखने के लिये कहते थे। साथ हमेशा वे यही कहते थे कि तुम्हारा नियमितीकरण अवश्य होगा। और हुआभी वही। बाबा ने मेरी यहां भी सहायता की और आज उनकी कृपा से मैं नियमित सहायक प्राध्यापक के पद पर कार्य कर रही हूँ। ऐसे जाने कितने भक्तों को साई मनोवांछित फल देते रहे हैं और आज भी दे रहे हैं। ऐसे भगवान बाबा को शब्दों में धन्यवाद दूं! बाबा की महिमा कह सकने की समर्थ वाणी तो प्राप्त नहीं हो सकती, अतएव मौन कृतज्ञता ही बाबा के प्रति धन्यवाद हो सकता है।

— प्रो. श्रीमती इन्दु मिश्र,
सहायक प्राध्यापक (अर्थशास्त्र),
रा. दु. शा. स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय,
मण्डला (म.प्र.) — ४८१ ६६१.



मानवता का प्रमुख तीर्थ

भारत धर्म, संस्कृति और अध्यात्म का केन्द्र है और इसके जीते-जागते प्रमाण यहां के मन्दिर, पूजास्थल और स्मारक हैं। भारत का वास्तुशिल्प और स्थापत्य, इन्ही मन्दिरों और स्मारकों में देखने को मिलता है।

जिस प्रकार इस्लाम धर्मावलंबियों के लिये 'काबा' महत्व रखता है, वही महत्व ईसाईयों के लिये वेटीकन सिटी (रोम) का है। इसी प्रकार साईबाबा के भक्तों के लिये 'शिर्डी' महत्व रखता है। इस स्थान का महत्व, न केवल साईबाबा के मन्दिर और उनकी प्राणवान प्रतिमा से है, बल्कि इसका महत्व इस बात से भी है कि यहां सभी धर्मों और जातियों के लोग आकर अपनी मनोकामना की पूर्ति हेतु प्रार्थना करते हैं।

शिर्डी में प्रसिद्ध मन्दिर द्वारकामाई का है, इसकी विशेषता यह है कि यहां पहुंचने पर एक अलौकिक और स्वर्गिक आनन्द की अनुभूति होती है। यहां हजारों भक्त आकर मन वांछित फल पाते हैं। शायद ही किसी को यहां से निराश होकर लौटना पड़ा हो। सभी धर्मों और जाति के लोगों का आगमन इस बात का प्रमाण है कि शिर्डी एक पवित्र-स्थल के साथ-साथ मानवता का प्रमुख तीर्थ भी है। यहां धनाढ्य व्यक्ति और निर्धन व्यक्ति में खड़े होकर अपने श्रद्धासुमन 'बाबा' को समर्पित करते हैं। इस प्रकार की समानता भारत में शायद ही किसी देवस्थान में देखने को मिले।

शिर्डी के बाबा मानवता के प्रतीक रहे हैं और इसी कारण यहां मानवता को अत्यधिक महत्व दिया जाता है। यहां आये सभी तीर्थयात्रियों, श्रद्धालु, भक्तों और पर्यटकों के लिये आवास, भोजन, स्नान, विश्राम आदि की पर्याप्त एवं प्रशंसनीय व्यवस्था है। यहां कार्य करनेवाले कर्मचारी वैतनिक दृष्टि से नहीं, प्रत्युत सेवाभाव को दृष्टिगत रखते हुए रखे जाते हैं। ऐसा करके बाबा के प्रति कृतज्ञता का मान लेकर अपने जीवन को धन्य समझते हैं।

सचमूच शिर्डी एक पवित्र तीर्थ स्थल है। मानवता और उसकी सेवा का अनुपम केन्द्र है। यहीं वह स्थान है, जहां भारत की अनेकता में एकता के दर्शन होते हैं।

— सुरेशचंद्र जोशी,
शासकीय आवासगृह,
एफ २/४, ऋषिनगर,
शापिंग काम्प्लेक्स, उज्जैन.





जीव उद्धारक गुरूपर्व एक दृष्टिकोण

भगवान का स्वरूप क्या है? हम उसे साकार या निराकार मानते हैं। सगुण एवं निर्गुण क्या है?

वेद शास्त्रों ने भगवान को साकार माना है। निराकार केवल आत्मा है। फिर भगवान की आत्मा साकार कैसे हो सकती है? वेद वक्ताओं ने वर्णन किया है कि भगवान की आत्मा के एक अंश से ही विश्व की रचना हुई है। और दूसरे अंश को आत्मा अर्थात् जीवात्मा नाम से कहा गया है।

जैसे जीव शरीर करके साकार और आत्मा करके निराकार है। प्रत्येक जीव और जीवात्मा एक ही है। दोनों ही वह ब्रह्म निराकार भी है, और साकार भी है। उस परमपिता के सगुण रूप में प्राप्त होने के लिए ही वेद वक्ताओं ने प्रार्थना की है। प्रार्थना और स्तुति सगुण की ही की जाती है। निर्गुण का केवल ध्यान किया जा सकता है। रक्षा के लिए अथवा सगुण रूपसे प्रसाद खाने के लिए और कर्म, धर्म सिखाने के लिए सभी वेद वक्ताओं ने भगवान को बुलाया।

भगवान पालनकर्ता विष्णु, कल्याणकर्ता शिव और ज्ञानदाता होने से गुरु नाम से पुकारा है। वास्तव में भगवान का आदि रूप गुरु ही है, वही शंकर, वही नित्य, अचल, विमल है। शास्त्रों में भगवान का दो प्रकार से अवतार माना जाता है, नित्य और निमित्त। निमित्त अवतार विष्णु, परब्रह्म आत्मा के अंश रूप में निमित्त होता है। जैसे रावण, कंस आदि निशाचरों को नष्ट करने के लिए भगवान राम कृष्ण हुए। सगुण व निर्गुण दोनों ब्रह्म के रूप हैं। और भगवान श्रीकृष्ण ने अर्जुन को यही उपदेश दिया। यही ज्ञान, यही उपदेश गीता, रामायण, महाभारत, बाईबिल और गुरुवाणी ने समझाया, जो कि समय के महापुरुष, समय के तत्वदर्शी गुरु ही हमें आध्यात्मिक तत्व द्वारा जीवों का उत्थान होगा। धर्मगीता में ग्यारहवें अध्याय में इसे ब्रह्म स्वरूप कहा गया है। रामायण में कहा है: परम प्रकाश रूप दीन राती। न चाहिये इसे किछु दिया, धृतताती । परम प्रकाश

गायत्री मंत्र में:- भर्गो देवस्य, कहा गया है। ज्योति स्वरूप।

कुरान में:- नुरे इलाही, कहा गया है।

गुरुवाणी:- चांदना, सतनाम, कहा गया है।

बाईबिल:- Devine of light कहा गया है।

प्रत्येक जीव (भक्त) की यही इच्छा होती है कि हमें उस सत्ताधारी, परमपिता, परमात्मा के स्वरूप का दर्शन हो। उनसे हम कुछ बोले, वह हमारी सुने। उसके नाम में हम लीन हो जाये। उस सच्चिदानन्द में हम डूब जाये। जिस प्रकार सूरज के बिना रात्रि का अन्धकार न मिट सकता। जिसके लिए कहा गया है,

राकापति षोडस उगे। तारागण समुदाय।

सकल गिरिन्ह दिव लाईये। बिन रैन न जाए।

जब जीव, यह प्रकाश रूप में देखता है, उसे हमारे धर्म शास्त्रों में, ब्रह्मज्ञान, ब्रह्मप्रकाश, ब्रह्मस्वरूप कहा गया है। जब तक वह ज्ञान, वह प्रकाश, वह नाद शरीर में स्थित है, तब तक वह चेतन है। उसके बाद सारी इंद्रियें लुप्त हो जाती हैं।

सारी इंद्रियों का प्रकाश (शक्ति) नष्ट हो जाता है। वह कौनसी वस्तु है, जो इस शरीर से निकल जाती है।

इसी प्रकार वह चेतन शक्ति हमारे अन्दर है। मन मंदिर में है। मन मंदिर में रहनेवाले स्वामी मंदिर में स्थित है, तब उस स्वामी का भी तो कुछ नाम होगा ही। वह नाम क्या है! जिस नाम को 'श्री हनुमानजी ने अपने हृदय में जाना और हृदय में ही जपा था। वही नाम हर एक जीव में निरंतर रम रहा है। कबीर साहब ने कहा है: मन को अगर बांधना है, तो बाह्य जगत पूजा विधि से नहीं होगा। मंत्र, पाठ, माला, आदि से नहीं होगा। कहते हैं,

माला तो कर में फिरे जीभ फिरे मूखमांहि ।

मनुआं तो दशो दिसा फिरे, यह तो सूमिरन नाहि ।

जिस नाम का आदि है, और जाप बंद होने के बाद अन्त होता है, तो वह निरन्तर और अखंड नहीं है। श्रीकृष्ण महाराज ने कहा है, निरन्तर सूमिरन कर और कर्म भी कर। वह नाम वाणी का विषय नहीं है, बाह्य नाम बाह्य अक्षरों से बने हुये हैं। वह समय से नष्ट होनेवाले हैं। लेकिन जो सतनाम है, वह अक्षरों से परे है। बाह्य नाम नश्वर है। बाह्य नाम के लिए जीभ, कंठ, तालू, ओठ की आवश्यकता होती है, लेकिन सत्यनाम को किसी की सहायता सोते, जागते, बैठते हुये रात दिन स्वतः ही अपने आप मन के द्वारा ले सकते हैं। मंत्र, तंत्र और यंत्रों द्वारा अपने चंचल मन को बांध नहीं सकते। क्योंकि वह नश्वर है।

परम प्रकाश, नूर चांदना, सोलह स्वर, छत्तीस व्यंजन से परे है। गुरुनानक देवजी कहते हैं:- आदि सच, जुगादि सच, हैं भी सच, होसी भी सच ।

उठत बैठत सोवत, जागत नाम ।

कहे नानक सदभये तिनके काम ।

एको सूमरो नानका, लज थल रहयों समाय ।

दूजा काहें सूमरियें, जनमें तें मर जाए ।

इसलिए उस परमपिता परमात्मा के साथ, उसकी अपनी भाषा में ही बातचीत की जा सकती है। ज्यों व्यक्ति (जीव) ब्रह्म मुहूर्त में जागकर उस परमेश्वर के स्मरण में मन लगाता है, जिसके फलस्वरूप उसे सर्वत्र परमात्माही दिखाई देने लग जाता है। प्रेम को मन में बसाकर, ज्यों व्यक्ति परमेश्वर की स्मृति में मन को जोड़ता है, उसके हृदय में सदा सूख और शांति का निवास होता है। परन्तु वह स्मृति, भक्ति, शक्ति और वह ज्ञान नेत्र (ज्ञानचक्षु) गुरु से ही प्राप्त होती है। गुरु द्वारा ही जीव का प्रभु से अन्तर दूर होता है।

ज्यों-ज्यों जीवकी स्मृति (मन को नाम में जोड़ता) उस नाम में जो की हमारे हर



स्वांसों में रम रहा, उसमें लगती हैं, त्यों-त्यों कितना भी दूराचारी हो, वह भी भ्रष्टाचार त्यागकर परमेश्वर के गुणकीर्तन करनेवाला स्वभाव बना लेता है। वस्तुतः नाम में डुबकी लगाना ही ६८ तीर्थों का स्थान है। प्रभु चरणों की प्रीति मनुष्य के मन में प्रकाश कर देती है, अखिल विश्व में उसे परमात्मा ही दिखाई देने लगता है। उसको पाप के प्रहार का कोई भय नहीं रहता और न ही उसे मृत्यु की कोई आशंका रहती है।

श्री तुलसीदासजी कहते हैं,

ब्रह्म राम ते नामु बड़ वरदायक वर दानि ।

रामचरित सत कोटि महं लिय महेश जिय जानि ।

इस तरह ब्रह्म और श्रीरामचंद्रजी से भी नाम महान है। जिस नाम को शिवजी ने भगवान श्रीरामचंद्रजी के सौ करोड़ चरित्रों से अपने हृदय में जाना। जिस ईश्वर के अंश से ब्रह्मा, विष्णु, महेश और पूर्ण ब्रह्म उत्पन्न हुए हैं। उसेही परब्रह्म कहा गया है। जिस जीव ने उस परम नाम में चित्त को लगाया, जिस को सूमिरन की लगन लगी हो, जिसके हृदय में प्रभु का प्रेम उत्पन्न हुआ है। उसकी आत्मा निर्मल शुद्ध और पवित्र हो जाती है। सूमिरन से मन की मलिनता धूल जाती है, परन्तु यह भक्ति उसके अनुग्रह से ही प्राप्त होती है। माया से चिरा हुआ जीव संसार की चिन्ताओं, दुःखों, क्लेशों के गहरे गढ़े में गिर जाता है। और प्रभु का निकास मानो एक ऐसे उच्च स्थान पर स्थित है, जहां शीतलता ही शीतलता, शांति ही शांति है।

जिस जीव पर प्रभु की अनुकम्पा होती है। उसको पहले यह समझ में आता है कि मनुष्य इस पृथ्वी पर किसी विशेष कर्तव्य की पूर्ति के लिए आया है। उन्नत, दिव्य अध्यात्म दशा पर मनुष्य तबही पहुंच सकता है। यदि सूमिरन के जीने पर चढना शुरू कर दें। इस आत्मोसर्ग के बिना यह सूमिरन का उद्गम जिस तरह आकाश (ब्रह्मांड) की बातें सुनकर कीटों के हृदय में वहां पहुंचने की इच्छा उत्पन्न हो जाए। किन्तु यह भी सत्य है कि प्रभु की इच्छा में अपनी इच्छा को वही मनुष्य मिलाते हैं, जिन पर परमेश्वर की दया हो।

इस आध्यात्मिक स्थिति पर पहुंचे हुए जीव पर परमात्मा के अनुग्रह का द्वार खुल जाता, उसे सर्वत्र अपने ही अपने दिखाई देने लगते हैं। सब ओर प्रभु ही नजर आता है। अब माया उसे ढग नहीं सकती। आत्मा बलवान हो जाता है। जिसमें गुरु शब्द की मुद्रा गढ़ी जाती है, अर्थात् जिस अवस्था में सत्गुरु ने वाणी की रचना की है। उक्त जीवन आचार के शिष्य को भी वह वाणी उसी अवस्था में पहुंचा देती है। इसलिए कहां है,

गुरु को कीजिए दण्डवत, कोटि कोटि प्रणाम ।

कीट न जान भृंग को, गुरु करले आप समान ।

सेवक के हृदय में गुरुचरणों के नाखून जैसे चमकते हैं, जैसे मणि चमकती है। उस स्मरण से ही हृदय में दिव्य अलौकिक दृष्टि होती है। गुरुचरणों के नाखूनों का सुन्दर प्रकाश मोह रूपी अंधकार को नष्ट कर देता है, हृदय के निर्मल नेत्र खुल

जाते हैं, और संसार रूपी रात्रि के सब दुःख अर्थात् जन्म मरण के दुःख मिट जाते हैं। ऐसे ही दुख, ज्ञान से सर्वप्रकार के विघ्नों से छूट जाता है। परन्तु दुख अज्ञान से होता है। ज्ञान तों गुरु के ध्यान से मिलता, ध्यान गुरुमूर्तिका, पूजा गुरुचरणों की, मंत्र गुरु के वचन का और मोक्ष गुरु की कृपा है।

भक्ति दान मोहे दीजिए, गुरु देवन के देव ।

और न कुछ चाहिये, निसदिन चरणान सेव ॥

गुरु महाराज के चरणों में सादर समर्पित

— शरद कुमार गुल्हाने,

श्री साईभक्त मंडली,

श्री शिव साई मंदीर (मिडलैड),

खमरिया, जबलपूर, म.प्र.



बालेंगी अस्थियाँ
मेरी

विश्वास करो भक्तो
मैं तुम्हें न छोड़कर जाऊँगा ।
मेरी समाधि से
ये अस्थियाँ मेरी
ढारस तुम्हें बधायेंगी ।
यह समाधि मेरी
मेरी ही भाँति
पहुँचेगी तुम तक
बोलेगी तुमसे
यदि तुम मेरे प्रति
अर्पित हो ।
मत भ्रम में पड़ना
कि मैं तुम्हारे पास नहीं
पुकारना कहीं भी
ये अस्थियाँ बोलेंगी वहीं ।

ओ३म् भगवते साई देवाय नमः ।

जिह्वा मेरी
उतावली हो

जिह्वा मेरी उतावली हो
कुछ वावली हो
तेरा ही नाम
रटने को अभिराम ।
षड्रस चखने की इच्छा
तू इसकी दुर्बल कर
चर्चा दूसरों के दोषों की
करने में क्यों तत्पर?
बस इसके अग्र भाग पर
प्रतिष्ठित हो नाम तेरा
आवागमन के बंधन का
कट जाय सब घेरा ।

ओ३म् भगवते साई देवाय नमः ।



ऐसा भक्त बनाओ

सहज भाव से उठें वृत्तियाँ
 तेरी इच्छाओं के अनुकूल
 आये तेरा आदेश पूर्व ईसके
 मैं कर्म करूँ तदनुरूप।
 तब जानूँ यह मेरा उर
 चलता तेरे इंगित पर।
 यदि आज्ञा सुनकर
 ही पालन करने में तत्पर
 हैं न्यूनता अवश्य कोई
 मुझमें हे साईं गुरुवर।
 क्यों यह मेरा हिया
 न तुझमें लगता है निरन्तर
 यह भी तू कर देगा क्षमा
 हे उदारमना
 पर यह अपराध न बने मुझसे
 बचने की विधि सोचता रहूँ
 केवल बना स्थगित-कर्मा।

ओ३म् भगवते साईं देवाय नमः।



हम सहें घात-संघात

पूर्व जन्म के कर्म
 हमारे साथ लगे हैं
 छोड़ेंगे वे नहीं हमें
 कितना ही हम छटपटाँय।
 क्यों फिर हम न झेल जायें
 धूप छाँह की सारी ऋतुएँ?
 यदि हो जाये कृपा साईं की
 तो संभव हैं सभी विपर्यय
 कर्मों और फलों का।
 मीठे-कड़वे फल अन्यथा
 सबको हैं खाने
 न उनसे हैं निस्तार
 निषिद्ध पथ मन-माने।
 अपना जीवन भी ले लें
 नहीं उसमें भी कोई त्राण
 प्रेत योनि में कर प्रवेश
 इतस्ततः भटकेंगे प्राण।
 श्रेयस्कर अतएव यही
 हम सहें घात-संघात
 मन को स्थिर प्रभु-चरणों में
 रख, रोके सारा उत्पात।

ओ३म् भगवते साईं देवाय नमः।

डॉक्टर पुरुषोत्तम शर्मा,
 १११/२७९, हर्षनगर,
 कानपूर (यु.पी.) — २०८०१२.

शिरडी डायरी

६-२-१९१२

मैं प्रातः उठा और काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ। माधवराव देशपांडे ने बतलाया कि मुझे आज घर वापस जाने की अनुमति मिल जायेगी। इसलिये मैं उनके और बामनगांवकर के साथ प्रातः ७.३० पर साईसाहब की सेवा में गया और साईसाहब ने मुझसे दोपहर बाद आने के लिये कहा। इसलिये हम लोग वापस लौट आये तथा मैंने दैनिक कार्यक्रम प्रारम्भ कर दिये। मैंने उपासनी और बापूसाहब जोग के साथ पञ्चादशी का पाठ किया, साई महाराज के बाहर जाते समय दर्शन किये तथा मध्याह्न आरती में शामिल हुए। ब्रह्मानन्दीबाई ने वहाँ एक आरती तथा कुछ पद गाये। बापूसाहब जोग को अपनी पेन्शन लेने कोपरगांव जाना था, इसलिये आरती जल्द समाप्त हो गयी।

दोपहर के भोजन के बाद मैं और बामनगांवकर मसजिद गये। काकासाहब दीक्षित वहीं थे। साईसाहब ने कहा कि हम लोग कल जा सकते हैं। माधवराव देशपांडे भी वहाँ आये। साईसाहब ने कहा कि वह काफी असें से विचार कर रहे हैं, तथा दिन-रात सोचते हैं। सब चोर थे लेकिन हमें उनसे निपटना था। उन्होंने कहा कि उन्होंने ईश्वर की दिन-रात प्रार्थना किया कि उनमें सुधार हो या हटायें जाय, किन्तु ईश्वर की तरफ से देर है तथा खुले रूप में व्यवहार एवम् विनती को नहीं स्वीकार करते हैं। वह एक या दो माह तक प्रतीक्षा करेंगे तब देखेंगे, किन्तु जीवित अथवा मृत वह अपनी प्रार्थना पूरी करायेंगे। वह तेलिन या वाणी के पास न जायेंगे और न उनसे भीख मांगेंगे। लोग भले तथा समर्पित नहीं हैं। वे अपने मस्तिष्क में भी अस्थिर से हैं। उन्होंने आगे कहा कि कुछ मित्रगण एक साथ एकत्रित होंगे, दैविक ज्ञान की चर्चा करते, बैठते तथा ध्यान लगाते हैं। उन्होंने कुछ हजार रुपयों का जिक्र किया किन्तु मुझे स्मरण नहीं कि उन्होंने किस संदर्भ में यह कहा। मैं तब वापस आया और हमने दीक्षित द्वारा रामायण और पुराण पाठ सुना। बाद में हम लोग, जब वह घूमने निकल रहे थे, दर्शनार्थ गए। वह प्रसन्न मुद्रा में थे। श्री. राजाराम पन्त दीक्षित आज खण्डवा गए। उपासनी शास्त्री की पत्नी का स्वर्गवास हो गया। दुखद समाचार पत्र द्वारा प्राप्त हुआ। मैं, दीक्षित और माधवराव के साथ उपासनी के पास गया, उनको समवेदना प्रकट किया तथा उनको वाड़ा साथ लिवा लाये। ऐसा मालूम हुआ कि फकीर बाबा ने मेरे वापस जाने के विषय में कहा और साईबाबा ने जबाब दिया कि मैंने (उन्होंने) उसको (मुझे) कहा है कि मैं कल जाऊंगा। मेरी पत्नी ने जब मेरे जाने के विषय में कहा, साईबाबा ने कहा कि मैंने व्यक्तिगतरूप से स्वीकृति के लिये नहीं कहा है इसलिये वह नहीं कहेंगे। बाद में मैं भी तुरन्त वहाँ पहुंचा और साईबाबा ने कहा कि मैं दादा भाटे से पांच सौ रुपये और किसी अन्य से दो सौ रुपये लेकर उन सबको उन्हें दिये बिना नहीं जा सकूंगा। रात्रि में वाड़ा

आरती बापूसाहब जोंग के कोपरगांव से लौटने पर कुछ देर से हुई। ब्रह्मानन्दीबाई एवम् शिवानन्द शास्त्री के भजन हुए और भीष्म के भी।

७-२-१९१२

मैं प्रातः जल्दी उठा, प्रार्थना किया तथा अपनी नियमित पञ्चदशी कक्षा अर्पित किया। मैं साई महाराज के पास आज्ञा के लिये नहीं गया। मैंने उनके बाहर जाते समय दर्शन किये और उनके वापस लौटने पर मसजिद गया। मैंने देखा कि साईमहाराज बैठे थे तथा सामने एक व्यक्ति अपने द्वारा बन्दर को सिद्धलाई गयी करामतों का प्रदर्शन करवा रहा था। वहां एक पेशेवर गवैया और नृत्यांगना भी थी। उसकी आवाज मधुर थी तथा उसने धार्मिक गीत गाये। बाद में ब्रह्मानन्दीबाई और उनकी सहचरी सालूबाई और शिवानन्द शास्त्री आये। उन्होंने पूजा किया और ब्रह्मानन्दीबाई, जिसे वे लोग माई साहब कहते हैं, ने बहुत सुन्दर ढंग से गाया। साई साहब ने सिंहासन आदि-आदि लाने के लिये आदेश दिये और सब कुछ व्यवस्थित कर दिया गया, हम लोग अपने स्थानों पर खड़े रहे। माई साहब ने फिर बहुत ही सुन्दर ढंग से दो गीत गाये कि हम लोग मंत्रमुग्ध खड़े रहे। मैं सोचता हूँ कि साई साहब ने उन्हें पसन्द किया। तब हम लोगों ने नियमित आरती को और अपने दोपहर के भोजन के लिये वापस आये। माई साहब तथा उनके साथियों ने मेरे निवास पर भोजन किया। भोजनोपरान्त बामनगांवकर और माई साहब अपने साथियों के साथ साई साहब के पास वापस लौटने की अनुमति मांगने गये। माई साहब और सालूबाई ने अनुमति प्राप्त कर बैलगाड़ी से प्रस्थान किया। शिवानन्द शास्त्री और बामनगांवकर साई महाराज द्वारा रोक लिये जाने के कारण रूक गये। मैं लेट गया और अच्छी नींद आयी। फिर दीक्षित ने रामायण पाठ किया। तत्पश्चात् मैंने दासबोध का पाठ किया। हम सबने साई साहब के उनके साथ घूमने जाने के समय दर्शन किये और वाड़ा आरती के बाद हम सभी सेज आरती में सम्मिलित हुए। रात्रि में भीष्म ने भागवत और श्री. दीक्षित ने रामायण का पाठ किया।

८-२-१९१२

मैं प्रातः काकड़ आरती के लिये उठा और उसके बाद दैनिक कार्यक्रम प्रारम्भ किये। नारायणराव बामनगांवकर ने वापस लौटने की अनुमति प्राप्त कर ली। मेरी पत्नी की कुछ वस्तुएं उसे अमरावती पहुंचानी थीं, इसलिये वह टांगा से खाना हुए। उनके जाने के पूर्व मेरे रिश्तेदार, जो सातारा के मुतालिक थे — कारभारी के पुत्र — गणपतराव- तिल संक्रान्ति के रिवाजों के अनुसार कुछ तिलादि की भेंट लेकर आ गये। उनमें कुछ शक्कर और तिल आदि से बड़े कलात्मक ढंग की बनी हुई सामग्री होती है। इन तीन सप्ताहों में बलवन्त पहली बार बाहर निकला और मसजिद तक गया और साई महाराज के चरणों में अपना सिर नवाया। उसमें अब तक सुधार हुआ है। गणपतराव की इच्छा है कि मेरा पुत्र बलवन्त उनके साथ रंगपंचमी मनाने के लिये सातारा जाय। मैंने उनसे साईमहाराज की अनुमति मांगने के लिये कहा।

मध्याह्न आरती नियमित विधि से हुई सिवा इसके कि अन्त में साई साहब ने कुछ क्रोध का प्रदर्शन किया। हम लोगों ने दोपहर का समय सदैव की तरह बिताया — दीक्षित ने रामायण पाठ किया तथा मैं स्वयं दासबोध पढ़ता रहा। हम लोगों ने प्रातः अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा आयोजित की। हम लोगों ने साई साहब के सायं घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये। बम्बई से श्री. कुलकर्णी यहां आये हैं। उनकी यहां एक प्रयोगशाला है, जिसमें स्थानीय खनिजों आदि-आदि का परीक्षण किया जाता है। उन्होंने बताया कि उन्होंने मुझे सन् १९०७ में सूरत में देखा था। हम बैठ कर पुरानी चीजों के सम्बन्ध में चर्चा करते रहे। रात्रि में भीष्म के भजन हुए तथा दीक्षित ने रामायण पढ़ा।

९-२-१९१२

मैं नियमित रूप से जाग गया, प्रार्थना किया और पञ्चदशी कक्षा में शामिल हुआ। इसी बीच हम लोगों ने साई महाराज के बाहर जाते हुए दर्शन किये। कक्षा समाप्त होने पर मसजिद गया। साईबाबा बहुत अच्छी मुद्रा में थे। नवयुवक किश्या, जिसे हम लोग पिश्या कह कर पुकारते हैं — यहां रोज की तरह आया। उसे देखकर साई साहब ने कहा कि पिश्या अपने पूर्व जन्म में एक रोहिला था, वह बहुत भला आदमी था, बहुत देर तक प्रार्थना किया करता था और साई साहब के बाबा के यहां मेहमान बनकर आया। उनकी (साईबाबा की) एक बहिन थी, जो अलग रहा करती थीं। और साईबाबा तब स्वयं एक नवयुवक थे तथा उन्होंने खेल-खेल में राय दे दी कि रोहिला को उससे विवाह कर लेना चाहिए। ऐसा होना ही था तथा उसने यथासमय उससे विवाह किया। रोहिला अपनी पत्नी के साथ काफी समय तक यहां रहा और अन्त में उसके साथ चला गया, कहां-कोई नहीं जान सका। वह मर गया, और साई साहब ने अपनी वर्तमान माता के गर्भ में उसे धारण करा दिया। पिश्या, उन्होंने कहा, अत्यन्त भाग्यशाली होगा तथा हजारों का रक्षक होगा। मध्याह्न आरती नियमितरूप से हुई। उस समय साई साहब ने शिवानन्द शास्त्री से कुछ कहा तथा संकेत किये। दुर्भाग्य से शास्त्री उनके महत्व को नहीं ग्रहण कर सका। साई साहब ने बापू साहब जोग से भी संकेत किये। धाणा के अधिवक्ता (वकील) श्री. ओक यहीं हैं। मैंने उनसे बाबा गुप्ते तथा अन्य मित्रों को स्मरण कराने के लिये कहा।

१०-२-१९१२

मैं काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ। प्रातः गणपतराव ने मेरे पुत्र बलवन्त के साथ सातारा जाने की अनुमति प्राप्त कर ली। माधवराव देशपाण्डे उस समय उन लोगों के साथ थे। मैंने बापू साहब जोग, उपासनी और श्रीमती लक्ष्मीबाई कांजलगी के साथ अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा आयोजित की और इसके बाद मैं मसजिद गया। साईबाबा बड़ी प्रसन्न मुद्रा में थे और कहा कि उनका धड़ (शरीर का ऊपरी भाग) पैरों से अलग कर दिया गया था, जिससे वह धड़ को उठा सकते थे किन्तु पैरों को नहीं। उन्होंने बताया कि उनका तेली के साथ एक संघर्ष हुआ। जब वह युवा थे, उन्होंने

पारिवारिक उद्देश्य से धन प्राप्त किया तथा वह ऋण के भुगतान स्वरूप देनदार की सेवा (कार्य) करने को राजी हुए किन्तु उन्होंने पाया कि वह कार्य (सेवा) नहीं कर सके, अतः उन्होंने अपनी आँखों में भिलावा तथा शरीर में शार लगा लिया और रुग्ण हो गये। वह एक वर्ष तक रुग्ण रहे, किन्तु जैसे ही वह स्वस्थ हुए उन्होंने रात-दिन काम करके ऋण अदा कर दिया। वह बैठे बड़ी प्रसन्न मुद्रा में बातें करते रहे किन्तु मध्याह्न आरती के अन्त में अधीरता के लक्षण प्रदर्शित करने शुरू कर दिये। नासिक के वकील श्री. गद्रे यहां हैं।

११-२-१९१२

प्रातः जब तक मैंने अपनी प्रार्थना समाप्त किया, मैंने देखा कि श्री. गद्रे जाग गए हैं और बैठकर उनके साथ बातें करता रहा। उन्होंने वापस जाने की अनुमति प्राप्त कर ली और नासिक चले गए। हम लोगों ने साई साहब के बाहर जाते समय दर्शन किये और अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा आयोजित किया, जिसमें उपासनी, बापू साहब जोग, श्रीमती कांजलगी, श्री लेले — जो नासिक जनपद के रेवेन्यू इन्स्पेक्टर हैं — उपस्थित हुए। वह एक भले व्यक्ति मालूम पड़ते हैं और साई महाराज उन्हें बहुत चाहते हैं। मैं नियमित रूप से, जब साईबाबा मसजिद वापस लौटे तब मसजिद गया और वहां बहुत लोगों को बैठे पाया। उनमें से अधिकांश अजनबी थे। उनमें से एक अकोला पुलिस के थे, जिन्होंने मुझे देखते ही कहा कि — उन्होंने अपने पद से त्यागपत्र दे दिया है और अब नागपुर के बैरिस्टर गोविन्दराव देशमुख के यहां सेवारत हैं। मध्याह्न आरती और भोजन के बाद मैं कुछ देर के लिये लेट गया और तब दीक्षित के पुराण-रामायण पाठ में शामिल हुआ। बाद में हम लोगों ने साईबाबा के उनके सायं घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये और श्री. लेले के मिलने पर उनके साथ खड़ा बातें करता रहा। सायं वाड़ा आरती के बाद सेज-आरती हुई, फिर भीष्म का भागवत पाठ तथा श्री. दीक्षित का रामायण-वाचन हुआ। शिवानन्द शास्त्री को आज लौटने की अनुमति नहीं मिली।

१३-२-१९१२

श्री. दीक्षित ने रामायण-पाठ किया और तब हम लोग मसजिद गये। जैसे ही मैंने प्रवेश किया — साई महाराज ने मुझे ऊदी दिया। अतः इसका भाव मैंने यह निकाला कि मुझे चले जाने का आदेश है। इसके बाद ही उन्होंने कहा — “तुमसे जाने के लिये कौने कहता है? बैठ जाओ।” तब वह बैठे प्रसन्नता से बातें करते रहे और कहा कि अब जो गाय श्री. दीक्षित के पास है, वह मूलरूप में म्हालसापती की थी। तब वह औरंगाबाद गयी, फिर जालना और अब वापस लौटकर श्री. दीक्षित की सम्पत्ति के रूप में है। भगवान जाने यह किसकी सम्पत्ति है? मेरी तरफ देखते हुए उन्होंने कहा — “जिसे ईश्वर में दृढ़ विश्वास है — किसी अन्य वस्तु की इच्छा नहीं करता है।” मेरी पत्नी तथा अन्य व्यक्ति वहां थे। हम लोगों ने उनके सायं

घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये। तब वाड़ा आरती और बाद में सेज आरती सम्पन्न हुई। रात्रि में भीष्म के भजन और दीक्षित ने रामायण का वाचन किया। साईबाबा ने आज दोनों ही मध्यान्ह आरती और सेज आरती के बाद विशेष रूप से मेरा नाम लेकर बुलाया और वाड़ा वापस जाने के लिये कहा था।

१४-२-१९१२

मैं जल्दी जाग गया, काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ और इस तथ्य से महान आश्चर्य में पड़ा कि साईबाबा ने चावड़ी से जाते समय वह अपने छोटे से सटके (डंडे) से पूर्व, उत्तर ओर दक्षिण की ओर मार्ग सा बनाते जा रहे थे। तब वह साधारणतया कठोर शब्द करते हुए आगे बढ़े। हम लोगों ने अपनी नियमित पञ्चदशी कक्षा आयोजित की, साई बाबा के बाहर जाने पर दर्शन किये और बाद में हमेशा की तरह मसजिद गये। साईबाबा ने दो कहानियां सुनाई। एक में — एक यात्री था, जिसकी प्रातः एक राक्षस से भेंट हुई। यात्री ने उसे देखकर एक अपशकुन समझा किन्तु आगे बढ़ने पर उसे दो कुएं मिले, जिनके मीठे पानी से उसकी प्यास बुझ गयी। जब उसे भूख लगी तब वह एक आदमी से मिला, जिसने अपनी पत्नी की राय से उसे खाना खिलाया। उसने एक खेत देखा, जिसमें मक्का पकी थी और उसे हुरदा (लावा) की इच्छा हुई। खेत के स्वामी ने उसे वह दिया। इस तरह यात्री प्रसन्न हुआ और खुशी-खुशी धूम्रपान करता हुआ आगे बढ़ा। जिस जंगल से वह निकल रहा था उसमें एक चीता मिला, तब वह हिम्मत खो बैठा और उसने अपने को एक गुफा में छिपा लिया। चीता बहुत बड़ा था और उसकी तलाश करता रहा। साईबाबा उसी राह से निकल रहे थे, उस यात्री में साहस पैदा किया, उसे बाहर निकाला और उसे उसकी राह पर ले जाकर कहा — “चीता कोई अहित नहीं करेगा जब तक कि तुम उसे हानि नहीं पहुंचाओगे।” दूसरी कहानी थी कि — साईबाबा के चार भाई थे, जिनमें से एक बाहर जाया करता था, भिक्षाटन करता और पका हुआ भोजन, रोटी और मक्का लाता। उसकी पत्नी उसमें से आवश्यकता से ज्यादा उनके माता-पिता को दे दिया करती थी लेकिन सभी भाइयों को भूखा रखती थी। तब साईबाबा को एक ठेका मिला, वह धन घर ले आये और हर एक को खाना दिया, यहां तक कि सम्पन्न भाई को भी। बाद में भाई को कोढ़ हो गया। हर एक ने उसका तिरस्कार किया। पिता ने उसे निकाल दिया। तब साईबाबा उसे खिलाया करते थे और उसके आराम की व्यवस्था करते थे। अन्त में वह भाई मर गया। मध्यान्ह आरती नियमित ढंग से समाप्त हुई और इसके बाद हम लोगों ने अपना भोजन किया और कुछ आराम किया। शिवानन्द शास्त्री और विजयदुर्ग के ठाकूर आज चले गये। स्थानीय स्वामी के व्याही ने आज सभी को एक भोज दिया। मैंने इन्कार कर दिया किन्तु अन्य लोग गये। सायं घूमने जाते समय साईबाबा ने पूछा कि मैं क्यों नहीं गया तब मैंने उनसे सत्यता कह दी कि मैं दोपहर बाद वापस भोजन नहीं कर सकता। साईबाबा कुछ चिन्तित से दीखे, पूर्व और पश्चिम की ओर

घूर कर देखा तथा हम सभी के साथ सदैव प्रयोग होनेवाले शब्दों — “वाड़ा जाओ।” — कह कर विदा किया। रात्रि में भीष्म के भजन हुए और दीक्षित का रामायण-पाठ।

१५-२-१९१२

नित्य की तरह जाग गया, प्रार्थना किया और अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा — उपासनी शास्त्री, बापू साहब जोग और श्रीमती कांजलगी के साथ आयोजित किया। हम लोगों ने साई साहब के बाहर जाते हुए दर्शन किये और फिर अपनी कक्षा जारी रखी। तत्पश्चात् मैं सदैव की भांति मसजिद गया और बैठकर, जो साई साहब कह रहे थे, सुनता रहा। वह प्रसन्न मुद्रा में थे और कहा कि — उन्होंने कठिन परिश्रम किया है, बिना भोजन के महीनों रहे हैं, “काला टाकल”, नीम और अन्य वृक्षों की पत्तियां खायीं हैं। उन्होंने कहा, ईश्वर उनके प्रति दयालु था, क्योंकि जीवन कभी समाप्त नहीं हुआ यद्यपि शरीर का मांस खत्म हो गया और हड्डियों के लड़खड़ा कर समाप्त होने का पूरा भय था। मध्यान्ह आरती सदैव की तरह सम्पन्न हुई, इसके बाद हम लोग अपने भोजन के लिये लौटे। मेरी पत्नी तथा अन्य लोगों ने कल शिवरात्री के पर्व पर कोपरगांव जाने की इच्छा व्यक्त की। साई साहब ने इसे अनावश्यक समझा किन्तु उन लोगों ने कहना जारी रखा और अन्ततः एक प्रकार से अनुमति प्राप्त कर ली। आज दोपहर के बाद दादा केळकर के लाभार्थ परमामृत कक्षा का आयोजन किया। हम लोगों ने अधिक प्रगति नहीं किया क्योंकि यह पहला दिन था। हम लोगों ने साई महाराज के साथ घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये तब वाड़ा आरती के बाद सेज आरती में शामिल हुए। बाला साहब भी शामिल हुए। मेरे पहले वह मोर्छल (मोर के पूंछ का बना) लेकर चला करते थे। अतः मैंने उन्हें फिर से वही काम सौंप दिया। उनके स्थान पर मुझे एक पंखा मिला। बाला साहब भाटे ने आशाजनक प्रगति किया है।

१६-२-१९१२

मैं काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ। साई साहब ने कड़े शब्दों का किन्तु अत्यन्त मोहकता के साथ प्रदर्शन किया। हम लोगों ने प्रातः अपनी पञ्चदशी की कक्षा प्रार्थना के पश्चात् आयोजित की। मेरी पत्नी तथा अन्य लोग कोपरगांव नहीं जा सके क्योंकि उन्हें कोई बैलगाड़ी नहीं मिल सकी। हम लोगों ने साईबाबा के बाहर निकलते समय दर्शन किये। श्री. मोरगांवकर आ गये हैं और परा पूजा का अनुवाद उन्होंने वितरित किया। कल्याण-भिवण्डी से एक शास्त्री पधारे। वह बापू साहब जोग के साथ ठहरे हैं तथा बहुत भले शान्त प्रकृति-व्यक्ति हैं। शिवरात्रि के उपलक्ष में हम लोगों ने व्रत रखा।

१७-२-१९१२

मैं प्रातः तड़के उठा, प्रार्थना किया तथा उपासनी, बापू साहब जोग, कल्याण के कुण्टे शास्त्री और मोरगांवकर के साथ अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा का आयोजन किया। आज हम लोगों ने तृतीय अध्याय समाप्त किया। हम लोगों ने साईबाबा के बाहर

जाते और फिर जब वह वापस लौटे तब दर्शन किये। वह बहुत प्रसन्न मुद्रा में थे तथा मसखरी (मजाक) भी करते थे। मध्याह्न आरती नियमित ढंग से समाप्त हुई, तत्पश्चात् हम लोगों ने अपना भोजन किया। श्री. दीक्षित अपने पुत्र के (मूंज संस्कार) यज्ञोपवीत के लिये नागपूर जाने की सोच रहे हैं। वह यहां से अधिक से अधिक लोगों को साथ ले जाना चाह रहे हैं लेकिन हर बात साई साहब के हुक्म पर निर्भर हैं, जिसे वही देंगे। दोपहर बाद दीक्षित का रामायण पाठ हुआ तब हम लोगों ने अपनी परमामृत कक्षा लगायी तथा अच्छी प्रगति किया। बाद में हम लोगों ने साई महाराज के घूमने जाते समय दर्शन किये। फिर वाड़ा आरती तथा सेज आरती सम्पन्न हुई। सेज आरती में बड़ा पंखा मुझे मिला। हम लोगों के लौटने पर भिवण्डी के कुण्टे शास्त्री ने कीर्तन किया। उन्होंने उत्तर गोग्रहण की कथा सुनायी। वह एक वयोवृद्ध व्यक्ति है तथा उनकी उम्र, जो ८० वर्ष है, को देखते हुए कार्यक्षमता, शक्ति तथा हर प्रकार कार्यशैली आश्चर्यजनक और प्रशंसनीय हैं। श्री. दीक्षित ने रामायण का पाठ किया और भीष्म ने भागवत पढ़ा।

१८-२-१९१२

माधवराव देशपाण्डे ने मुझे प्रातः जगाया और प्रार्थना के बाद काकड़ आरती में शामिल हुआ। साई साहब शान्त रहे और सदैव की भांति इसके बाद कही जाने वाली कठोर शब्दावली आज बहुत ही धीमी थी। श्री. दीक्षित अपने पुत्र के यज्ञोपवीत संस्कार में नागपूर जाने का विचार कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने मुझे भी अपने साथ ले जाने के लिये साईबाबा से कहा और एक टालनेवाला उत्तर पाया। मैं लगभग यह निश्चित समझता हूँ कि मुझे जाने की अनुमति नहीं मिलेगी। मेरी पत्नी जाने के लिये बहुत उत्सुक है। जबकि मैं, उपासनी, शास्त्री, बापूसाहब जोग तथा अन्य लोग अपनी पञ्चदशी कक्षा में थे, श्री. नानासाहब चांदोरकर आये और श्री. दीक्षित के साथ बैठे। मैं उनसे अपनी कक्षा के बाद, जब साई साहब के दर्शनार्थ गया, मिला। साई साहब उनके साथ उसी प्रकार तेली, वामन तात्या, अप्पा कोटे आदि-आदि के विषय में बातें करते रहे। मध्याह्न आरती नियमित ढंग से सम्पन्न हुई, सिवाय इसके कि अन्त में साईबाबा कुछ अधीर हो गये और लोगों को जल्दी चले जाने को कहा। मैंने अपना भोजन श्री. दीक्षित के यहां नाना साहब चांदोरकर के साथ किया और फिर मैंने चांदोरकर से वही पुरानी वार्ता जारी रखने को कहा, जो उनके यहां पिछली अल्पकालीन आवास के समय अधूरी छूट गयी थी। इन्होंने कहा कि मामला साईबाबा के हाथ में है। वह अपने साथ एक नकली बगीचा और एक बड़ा सा चांद, जो हम लोग ब्याह-शादियों के अवसर पर सजावट में लगाते हैं, लाये हैं। इसके लिये राधाकृष्णबाई ने आदेश किया था। मैं कुछ देर के लिये लेट गया। तब नाना साहब लगभग ४ बजे चले गये और श्री. दीक्षित ने रामायण का पाठ किया। बाद में हम लोगों ने अपनी परमामृत कक्षा आयोजित की और तत्पश्चात् सायं साईबाबा के घूमने जाते समय दर्शनार्थ गया। 'चाँद' में रोशनी की गयी तथा उससे एक आकर्षक शानदार

प्रकाश निकला। मेरी पत्नी ने अमरावती वापस जाने के लिये अपनी प्रार्थना को दुहराया और सदैव की तरह साई साहब द्वारा टालनेवाला उत्तर मिला। वाड़ा आरती के बाद श्री. दीक्षित और माधवराव देशपाण्डे को कल प्रातः जाने की तैयारी करना था इसलिये शीघ्र समाप्त कर दिया गया।



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